

A Synopsis of the O'Malley and Conneely Family History

I'll start at the beginning; some period of time after the Big Bang our ancestors arrived in Ireland. The O'Malleys (Ó Maille) and Conneelys (Ó Conghaile) are from County Galway in the Connemara region of western Ireland. My Grandfather, John (Seán Ó Maille) was from the village of Doirin Dorach. My grandmother Bridget (Brid Ni Conghaile) was from Tir an Fhia (aka: Teeranea, Tiernee). The villages are on the island of Gorumna which is in the middle of three small islands connected via a series of bridges to the main land on the western Galway coast. This area is an Irish speaking community known as a Gaeltacht. Our ancestors spoke Irish as their primary language, not English.

Note: The Irish people refer to the language as Irish, not Gaelic, which is an English word.

I've been able to trace back to about the 1850s (the period of The Great Famine) to my Great grandparents Mathias O'Malley and Bridget McDonough. I don't have their birth certificates, but their names appear as the parents of their children from the birth records in a book called the Parish of Cararroe BOOK 2, at St MacDara's Church in Cararroe.

Great grandparents Mathias O'Malley and Bridget Conneely {**family name; Mhaitéis Mhóir*} had six O'Malley children:

- **John** **Birth: April 4, 1875** (my grandfather)
- Anne Birth: May 20, 1877 (married my grandmother's brother James)
- Matthew Birth: December 24, 1885
- Catherine Birth: November 25, 1888
- Bridget Birth: May 3, 1891
- Thomas Birth: April 29, 1894

Gr grandparents Patrick Conneely and Mary Herson {**family name; Patch Anna*} had eight Conneely children:

- **Bridget** **Birth: December 14, 1872** (my grandmother)
 - Note; Bridget was born during Ulysses S. Grant's first administration
- Patrick Birth: January 15, 1876+
- Michael Birth: January 15, 1876 +
- Anne (Nan) Birth: July 25, 1878
- James Birth: March 14, 1883 (married my grandfather's sister Anne)
- Bartley Birth: January 10, 1885
- Joe Birth: June 1, 1887
- Mary Birth: March 3, 1889
- John Birth: Sept 22 1891
- Thomas Birth: July 15, 1893

+twins

Grandmother Bridget Conneely was the first to immigrate to America. She arrived in Boston aboard the SS Peruvian on September 5th 1895 and worked as a maid in a Boston hotel. Grandfather John arrived in Boston on May 12th 1900 aboard the SS Hibernia. One job he had was as a "fireman" (shoveled coal into a furnace) at a building that still stands in Boston on the corner Boylston and Tremont St.

Bridget and John undoubtedly knew each from back home, the villages of Tir an Fhia and Doirin Darach are adjacent. They would have attended the same small church near the water in Tir an Fhia, which is now abandoned.

John and Bridget were married in Boston on January 10th 1904, they had five O'Malley children.

- Patrick Birth: January 29th, 1905
 - married Ellen Hayes, they had the following children:
 - David
 - Kevin
 - Ellen (Erin)
 - Susan

- Bridget Birth: October 14th 1906

- Matthais Birth: Sept 5th 1909
 - married Mary Alice Devitt, they had the following children:
 - John
 - Mathias Jr (Skip)
 - Joseph (Joe)
 - George
 - Maureen

- Mary Ellen Birth: April 13th 1912
 - Died: April 23 1913 from Pertussis (whooping cough).

- John Birth: November 5th 1915
 - married Mary Gavin, they had the following children:
 - John (Jack)
 - Mary Jane
 - Ann
 - Michael
 - Christine (Tina)
 - Robert (Bob) (*himself*)
 - Gerard (Gerry)

On the website (www.bomalley.net) there are a few documents and pictures of interest:

- Grandfather John O'Malley's Naturalization papers with his signature.
 - Grandmother Bridget didn't have to apply for citizenship. She was automatically granted it when her husband became a citizen.
- SS Peruvian ship log listing passenger 185, Bridget Connolly. She claimed to be 19 years old, but she was actually 23.
- US census records from 1910 – 1940. I listed some historical events to give a frame of reference of what was happening in the world at that time.
- The 1901 & 1910 Irish Census records for the O'Malleys and Conneelys.

A couple of notes about the documents;

- The spelling of names and dates can change from document to document. In the 1901 Irish Census records, the family name is Mailia. In the 1910 Census the spelling of the name is Ó Maille. I have seen the family name also as O'Maillis, Malia & Malley
- A son has the same surname as the father whereas the spelling of a wife or daughter's surname can vary, i.e. male Ó Maille, female Ni Mhaille, male Ó Conghaile, female Ni Conghaile, as well as other variations.
- On Grandfather John O'Malley's Naturalization papers his birthday is May 12th, the day he landed in Boston. His real birthday is April 4th.
- On various documents grandmother Bridget's age varies as does the spelling of her maiden name; Conneely, Connelly, Connolly, Conley.

***Family Name meaning:** The concept of an Irish family name comes from days gone by. Many people in the same village would have the same name because the Irish had a structured way of naming child:

- First son usually named for the father's father
- Second son named for the mother's father
- Third son named for the father
- Fourth son named for the father's eldest brother, etc...

In a single village you could have a grandfather, a father, uncles and cousins all with the same name. A family name is essentially a nickname, a way to distinguish who was who. My grandfather's name in *Bearla* (English) is John O'Malley. In Irish language documents his name would be Seán Ó Maille but if you were in the Leiter Moir-Gorumna-Lettermullen area he would be known as Seán Mhaitéis Mhóir (Seán from the family of Mhaitéis Mhóir). My Conneely ancestor's family name is Patch Anna. My grandmother's father, Patrick Conneely, would have been known as Padhraic Patch Anna. The assignment of a family name appears to be arbitrary. It could be a combination of a great grandfather and great grandmother's names or a distinguishing feature such as red hair (rua) or size, large (mhóir). I suspect my great grandfather Mathias was a large man, hence the family name Mhaitéis Mhóir. As far as I can determine family names are an oral record, I don't believe there are written records or standards of how a particular family name was formed.

I do like researching family history. It's like a giant jigsaw puzzle, every once and a while there is a eureka moment when I can fit another piece in. If there is anything I can correct, clarify or help with please let me know.

Is mise le meas*,
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**the meaning is sincerely but the literally translation is: "I am, with respect,*