

The Rooneys of County Down

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Introduction

During the years following the Civil War, the northern states experienced a period of rapid inflation. The prices of land rose to levels undreamed of in those long ago pre-war days of 1860. During the war, Edmond McGraw and his son Michael had been farming a small 60 acre plot of land on Morgan Hill¹ among their fellow Irish immigrants in the town of Cuyler, Cortland Co., New York.

Cuyler had been carved out of the eastern end of the town of Truxton in 1858 in much the same manner as the formerly larger town of Truxton had been carved out of the southern portion of the town of Fabius when Cortland County was formed out of Onondaga County in 1808. The evidence of these divisions is still visible in the lot numbers originally assigned when the Military Tract was divided among the veterans of the Revolutionary War. The numbering of the 100 lots begins in northwest corner of Fabius and reaches 50 at the southeastern corner of the township with the lot count continuing uninterrupted on through to 100 with the second 50 lots being split between the Cortland County towns of Truxton and Cuyler.

At the end of the conflict Edmond and Mary (Ryan) McGraw's youngest son John returned to their Morgan Hill farm after completing his service in the Army. Before his enlistment at Fabius, NY in 1862 John had been working on the Patrick Gleason farm at the northern end of Morgan Hill. With the family back together and with the prices of land rising, Edmond, Michael and John banded together and purchased 255 acres on Labrador Hill in the northwestern corner of the adjacent town of Truxton. Although the new residence was on the northern portion of Kettlebail Road in the town of Truxton it was closer to the Village of Tully that was only 2 miles to the northwest on the Truxton-Tully Rd (West Hill road).

The early years on Labrador Hill went well despite the fact that the McGraw family had borrowed \$9,650 from Edward Miller of Tully to cover the \$10,000 purchase price of their new farm. At some point, Edmond's wife's nephew Thomas Sheahan was taken in as a partner. This might have been a sign that the McGraws were having trouble making the payments on the ten-year loan that would have had an annual payment of \$1200 per year. On March 1, 1872 Edmond took a one-year loan from Edward Miller for \$650², secured by his old property back in Cuyler on Lot 76 subdivision 2. They were never able to make the payment on this second loan.

In one of the Watson Letters,³ dated Wednesday, March 19, 1873, we gain some insight concerning the conditions prevailing in the Tully area. Mrs. Watson writes that it

is storming and blowing. "I think that I never saw such a long winter." Then there was "quite a thaw last week" followed by a big wind storm. Financially things were no better. "Cal Peters into bankruptcy. Creditors might get 25 cents on the dollar." "Miller sold out McGraw yesterday." [Tuesday, March 18, 1873] and finally "Mrs. L. Willis is selling out her stock today."

Evidently Miller didn't fully recoup his money on the Cuyler mortgage by "selling out," the McGraw family because he later foreclosed on the Cuyler property. Miller gained ownership of the Cuyler property after a public auction on the steps of the Cortland County Courthouse on April 28, 1874⁴.

It was downhill from there for the McGraws and Thomas Sheahan. The Kettlebail Road property also went into foreclosure and was sold at public auction "at the front door of the premises"⁵ on August 14, 1874. Edward Miller was the high bidder at \$6000 and became the owner of the Kettlebail Road property on Truxton lot 51 and 52.

The events of 1874 were precipitated by the Panic of 1873 but the McGraw family finances were in trouble before that fatal month of September 1873, when the stock market crashed. After the foreclosure the family scattered as they tried to find other work. John McGraw had married Ellen Comerford (a former Morgan Hill neighbor) in 1870 and had two small children: Mary (1871) and John J. McGraw (1873). The 1875 NYS census finds John McGraw and his family living next to Patrick Gleason on the northern end of Morgan Hill in Cuyler, NY. He might have been working for Patrick Gleason again as he did before he left and after returning from his service in the Civil War.

At some later point John and his family lived for a while on a very small farm on Shackham Road in the town of Truxton with his parents, Edmund and Mary McGraw. By the time of the 1880 census John had moved to a farm on the North Road in Truxton. His farm, which he was probably renting, was located on the east side of the road, across from his brother-in-law, Patrick Comerford, and also the school referred to as Truxton schoolhouse #2, that his children would have attended. This is where the family was living when Ellen and three of her children died in the late summer of 1883.

John's brother Michael was working on the O'Brien farm on the North Road in Truxton at the time of the 1875 NYS census. By the time of the 1880 census Michael McGraw was still single and was living and working on the James Miles farm on Mile High Road on the Tully side of the Tully-Fabius town border.

It was at this point that young Alice Rooney came into Michael McGraw's life. In 1881 Michael was 38 years old. As a student long ago at the Bardeen School, just north of the Kenney Settlement, he had impressed others with his mathematical abilities⁶. However, here he was, years later, recovering from a farm foreclosure, and working as a hired hand on someone else's farm. Not much to show for a life of hard work, but his luck was about to change. Alice Rooney, a young Irish girl from Co. Down, Ireland was on her way to America and needed someone to meet her boat in Albany, NY.

New Material

Attempting to make sense out of the many stories, legends and family traditions is like sifting these family narratives through a sieve constructed of the facts currently thought to be true. When new facts are discovered the sieve must be rewoven and the stories sent once more through the web of facts. Then comes the inevitable task of rationalizing the stories that got caught in the sieve. In the end, the story of the Rooney's is like an old carpet that won't lie flat – smooth it out in one area and a new bump just shows up somewhere else.

As more information is made available it becomes possible to try once more to unravel the Rooney mysteries. The new census information available online [NYS 1865, 1892 and 1905] through the Mormon's familysearch.org site has provided more details as to where various individuals were living and also more personal data. At the same time the earliest and clearest statements of the Rooney information were reviewed once again. The main channels of Rooney information were letters and conversations with Lucy Waters Sprague (b. 1923) and Mary McGraw Stoddard (b. 1914). Lucy's information was filtered through her mother Mayme McGraw Waters, Alice's eldest daughter. Mary was the daughter of John Arthur McGraw, one of Alice's sons. In addition Mary Stoddard worked for Mary Rooney McGraw and her sister Alice Rooney McGraw on weekends and during the summer when the sisters were living together after 1927. Therefore, much of Mary Stoddard's information came directly from Alice. This was not just a presumption on my part, Mary actually said that her information came from Alice herself. Both Mary Stoddard and Lucy Sprague agreed that Alice and Mary Rooney came to the U.S. together and the Rooney's early census information points to 1881 as being the year of their arrival. Mary Stoddard has Michael and John McGraw going to Albany to meet the Rooney girl's boat. Lucy's story has Michael and Orson Waters [Lucy's grandfather] going to Albany together. Orson's circumstances will be discussed below and it will be seen that he makes an unlikely companion.

In a letter from Agnes McGraw Currie, dated Sept. 2, 1969, there is another version of the story. "Aunt Mary who came to Truxton after mother did and married Uncle John..." Agnes was the youngest daughter of Alice and Michael McGraw, she was Mayme McGraw Waters' younger sister. Well now, what does one do with this piece of information? First, there is the fact that Agnes talks about coming to Truxton and not to America. We don't know where Mary Rooney was living between her arrival in the U.S. and her marriage to John McGraw in 1890, although it seems likely that it was in the Tully-Fabius area. So in a sense Mary did come to Truxton after Alice. Viewed in this manner Agnes' information is not in conflict with the information from Lucy and Mary Stoddard.

After the Rooney girls arrived in central New York they had to stay somewhere. There is some information concerning Alice but there is no information on where her sister Mary might have stayed. Mary Stoddard, who spent the most time with Alice, said she didn't remember Alice ever mentioning where she stayed immediately after her

arrival. Lucy's information is the only input we have on this subject. Lucy's story had Alice living and working in Apulia on a farm owned by a farmer named Casey. I had originally seen the Casey story in Doug Currie's family history⁷. In her correspondence Lucy had put the Casey story in a context that originally I had partially misunderstood and partially ignored.

The first problem with the Casey story is that there were no Caseys in Apulia in 1881. Over the years I have tried to fit every possible permutation of the elements of the story to the known facts at the time. Once I even tried to develop an analytical technique for probabilistically weighting the various story elements. This allowed a calculation of the probability of the various story combinations to determine the variation of the story that had the maximum probability. That approach never really worked out the way I had hoped. In the end, the best approach has turned out to be keeping the original statements of the stories, exactly as they were related to me, and to keep going back to them. Over time, with the accumulation of new data, it is possible to see more in these original statements each time they are read.

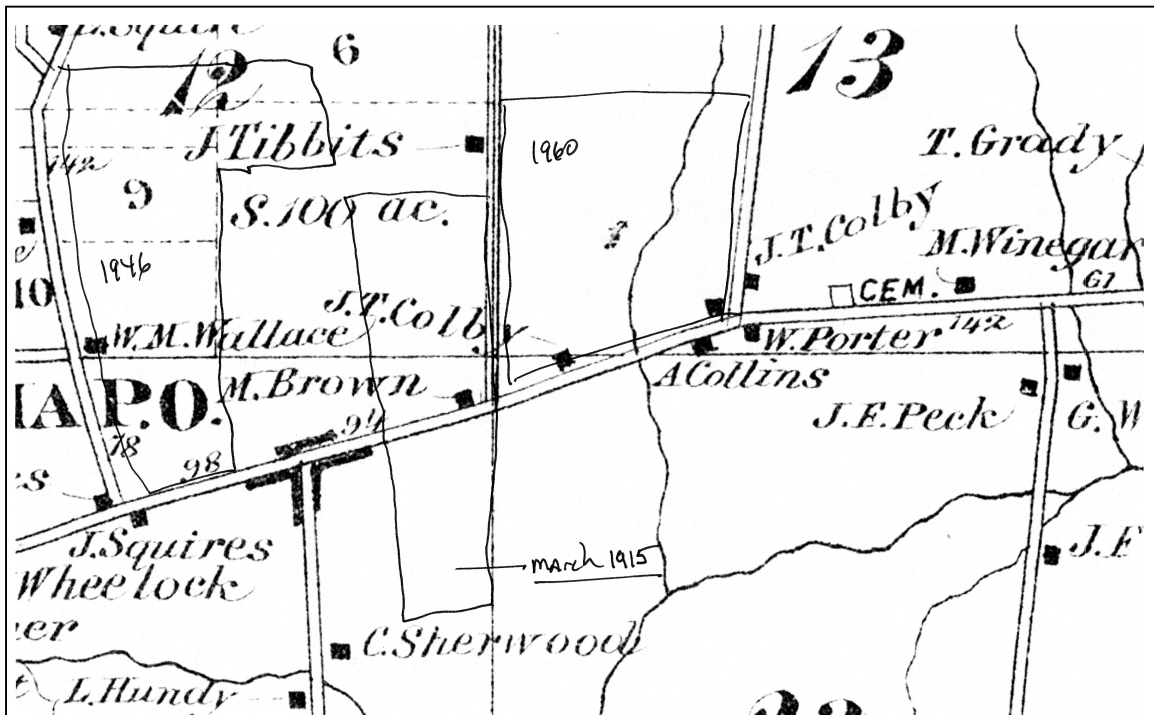
The difference in reading Lucy's story about the Casey farm this time was that I read it in context. Lucy's exact statement, in a November 16, 1999 letter, was as follows:

"We used to pass the Casey farm that mother said Grandma had lived in. She [Lucy's mother Mayme] was a friend of the Caseys. I remember hearing the name Dan and Neil Casey. I thought it was in Apulia Station or Apulia."

Part of the context was to understand what made Lucy's family "pass" the Casey farm. For many years through the late 1920s and the 1930s it was a tradition to visit grandma Alice in Truxton on Sundays. By 1919 Alice and Michael had 5 grandchildren. This number grew to 21 by 1929 and by 1939 the number rose to 29. Eventually, Alice's grandchildren numbered 31. The population of tiny Truxton would substantially increase during those Sunday visits. Mayme and Levi Waters lived in Fayetteville and their weekly journey to Truxton would bring them south, down Route 91 to the village of Fabius. They would then follow Route 91 west out of Fabius to the small hamlet Apulia a few miles down the road and then follow 91 as it turned south. Between Fabius and Apulia, Route 91 is also known as Route 80. Passing into Truxton, Route 91 is known as the North Road and they would have followed that to its termination at Main Street. A right turn and a block away, on the northwest corner of Prospect and Main, was grandma Alice's house.

This Casey farm that Lucy's mother pointed out to her had to have been located on Route 80 between Fabius and Apulia since Apulia Station was further down the road, past the turn to Truxton. The correct context was to realize that on one of those trips Lucy's mother was pointing out a farm in the 1930s, that was, at that time, owned by a Casey but not when Alice had stayed there in 1881. One can imagine the ease with which the misunderstanding developed upon hearing something like: "There's the Casey farm

(relative to 1930), that's where grandma Alice stayed (relative to 1881) when she first came to this country."



As is usually the case, solving one mystery just creates new questions. The owner of the Casey farm in 1881 was probably the Marcus Brown shown on the 1874 map above. Were the Rooney girls related to Marcus Brown or was there some other relative or family friend from Ireland living in the area? That search is still continuing, and will be discussed in more detail later in this paper.

The information contained in the various records and recollections are not consistent. The following statements summarize what is presently known or believed to be true about Alice, Mary and John Rooney's arrival and marriages in the U.S.

- Mary Rooney – arrived 1881 with Alice – married February 11, 1890 to John W. McGraw.
- John Rooney – arrived March 1886 – remained single – naturalized October 28, 1892

James Rooney and Mary Sloan of Tullyframe, Kilkeel parish, Co. Down, Ireland, had five children, three daughters and two sons. James was the eldest son and Mary was the eldest daughter. James remained in Ireland and never married and as the eldest son he probably inherited the family farm. Assuming James was the oldest child, then the sequence would be James, Mary, Alice, Martha and John. This information came in a letter dated 2/23/1970 from Mary Alice Cunningham Hennity who was the daughter of Martha Rooney Cunningham. Transcriptions of these letters are contained in the Appendix. Martha was the younger sister of Mary and Alice Rooney and she remained in Ireland. Only the women in the Rooney family married. James and John Rooney remained single so there were no male heirs to carry on the Rooney name. All three of the Rooney daughters had at least one child. Martha had three children. Alice had nine children, eight of whom survived infancy. Mary had one child, Mary Alice McGraw, who died in infancy.

The James Rooney Family

James Rooney
d. Before 1901

= **Mary Sloan**
d. Before 1901

James Rooney
b. 1853
Eldest son. Never married
Remained in Ireland

Mary Rooney
b. Apr. 21, 1859 Co. Down, Ir
Immigrated 1881
mar. Feb. 11, 1890
d. May 22, 1932 Truxton, bur. St.
Patrick's Cem., Truxton, NY

= **John William McGraw**
b. Jun 1844, Gleninchaveigh, Uppechurch,
Co. Tipperary
d. Nov. 8, 1926, Truxton
bur. St. Patrick's Cem., Truxton, NY

Alice Rooney
b. Aug. 31, 1860 Co. Down, Ir
Immigrated 1881
mar. Apr. 7, 1882
d. Jan. 20, 1940, Truxton
bur. St. Patrick's Cem., Truxton, NY

= **Michael William McGraw**
b. 1843, Drumdiha, Moyalliff, Co. Tipperary
d. Apr. 9, 1923, Truxton
bur. St. Patrick's Cem., Truxton, NY

Martha Rooney
b. 1870 (1901 census)
b. 1864 (1911 census)
Born in St. Colmans, Massforth.
Remained in Ireland

= **Arthur Cunningham**
b. 1869 Ireland

John Rooney
b. Oct. 4, 1868 Co. Down, Ir
Immigrated March 1886
Never married
d. 1913, Homer, NY
bur. St. Patrick's Cem., Truxton, NY

Arthur Cunningham and Martha Rooney

Martha Rooney
 b. 1870 (1901 census)
 b. 1864 (1911 census)
 Born in St. Colmans,
 Massforth. Remained in
 Ireland

= **Arthur Cunningham**
 b. 1869 Ireland

William John Cunningham
 b. 1893 Co. Down, Ireland
 b. Dec. 16, 1889 (Draft Card)
 b. 1890 (1901 census)
 d. 1966

= **Frances ? (#1)**
 b. 1898 Montana
 d. ~1921 Butte, Montana

James Cunningham
 b. June 22, 1917 Butte, Montana
 d. June 1987 Miles City, Carter, MT

= **Katherine Dwyer (#2)**
 b. Sept. 21, 1898 Cromhene, Co. Cork, Ireland
 d. Dec. 15, 1966 Butte, Montana

Arthur V. Cunningham
 b. April 27, 1923 Butte, Montana
 d. March 1969

Audrey R. Cunningham = **? Weistaner**
 b. May 13, 1928 Butte,
 Montana
 d. Oct. 8, 1995

Kenneth P. Cunningham
 b. 1930 Butte, Montana
 d. Nov. 12, 1999 Silver Bow Co., MT

Mary Alice Cunningham
 b. 1892
 Lived in Newry, Lisacre,
 Co. Down, Ireland
 d. Dec. 19, 1972
 bur. St. Colmans, Massforth,
 Co. Down

= **William Hennity**
 d. Sept. 19, 1966
 bur. St. Colmans, Massforth, Co. Down

Nora Hennity = **J. Donnan**
 Two children. Eldest
 born in 1954
 bur. St. Colmans,
 Massforth, Co. Down

Leo Hennity = **?**
 Child born 1963 & 1966
 d. Birmingham, England

Arthur Cunningham
 b. 1897
 Never married
 Remained in Ireland
 d. Mar. 22, 1987 (age 70)
 Slieve Roe Nursing Home,
 Kilkeel, Co. Down, Ir

William John Hennity = **?**

William Gerald Francis Hennity
 b. 1955

Alice Rooney

According to Lucy Sprague's version of the family tradition Michael W. McGraw, my g-grandfather, and his friend Orson Waters, Lucy's grandfather, had traveled to Albany, New York to meet Alice and Mary Rooney's boat when it arrived from Ireland. Michael probably took the train from Apulia Station to Syracuse and then transferred to the Albany train.

According to Lucy Sprague the Waters family was protestant and very anti-Catholic. However, they kept marrying Irish Catholic girls. The relationship between the families in the 1870s and again in later years was by way of marriage. Michael's brother John had married Ellen Comerford, the sister of Orson's first wife Margaret Comerford. The Comerfords and the McGraws had lived as neighbors on Morgan Hill in Cuyler in the 1850s and 1860s. Later, Orson's son Levi would marry Michael and Alice's eldest daughter Mayme Isabelle McGraw.

Orson had been a widower since July 12, 1872 when his first wife, Margaret Comerford Waters died. He remarried sometime in 1879 and his second wife, Lucy Andrews, herself a widow with three children, gave birth to their first child in February 1880. How would a newly married man, with three children of his own, three step children and a new infant manage to travel to Albany with a bachelor friend to escort two young single Irish girls back to Onondaga County? This Lucy would have to have been the world's most tolerant wife to let her new husband of less than two years go on that 19th century road trip with bachelor Michael McGraw. Orson Waters and Michael McGraw were living almost two towns apart. Michael was living on the James Miles farm on the Tully – Fabius town line just north of the present Route 80. Orson Waters had a farm on the top of Arab Hill that is presently in the Highland Forest County Park that was close to the Fabius – DeRuyter town line and about two miles south of the present Route 80. It doesn't seem likely that Michael would have asked Orson to go with him to Albany and even less likely that Orson's wife would have let him go.

Between the time of the June 1880 census and his marriage to Alice Rooney on April 7, 1882 Michael was probably living on the Miles farm on the Tully-Fabius border. After her arrival in America in 1881 we now believe that Alice, and perhaps also Mary, were living and working on the Marcus Brown farm. In the spring of 1882, with his marriage drawing closer, Michael needed to find some place for he and his bride to live. The typical space allotted to a hired man on the farm was hardly suitable for a new bride.

At this time Michael's parents, Edmond and Mary McGraw, were living on a very small 1-1/2 acre farm on Shackham Road in the Town of Truxton. The farm was owned by Michael's brother John who probably lived there with Edmond and Mary sometime between 1875 when he was living on Morgan Hill and 1880 when the census found him living on the North Road across the road from Schoolhouse #2. Michael and Alice might have moved on to the farm on Shackham Road with his parents sometime after their marriage in 1882 and remained there until at least 1892⁸.

In 1893 Michael and Alice purchased the farm on the North Road⁹ across from Robbins Road and became neighbors to the John Casey family. Their children attended school in Truxton Schoolhouse No. 2 about 2 miles up the North Road.

In the 1900 census Michael's occupation was given as a "stone mason." It is interesting to note that this hand written occupation of "stone mason" bears a striking resemblance to "store manager" which had also been described as one of Michael's occupations. That description might have been due to the slightly illegible handwriting in this census record.

At the time of the 1905 NYS census Michael and Alice were living on their farm on the North Road¹⁰ with all eight of their surviving children and no extra boarders, hired hands or servants. Michael's occupation was listed again as a "mason."

In 1910 Michael (age 67) and Alice McGraw were still living in the farmhouse on the North Road. They had been married 27 years and 8 of their 9 children were still living. Michael was a laborer. Four of their children were living at home at the time of the census: Edwin C. (age 20), Alice (age 13), Agnes E. (age 12) and William M. (age 10). Edwin's occupation was listed as a teacher in a public school. Although he was born as Edmond and went by Edward for most of his life this was the first time that the name Edwin had been associated with him.

The farm on the North Road was the McGraw homestead for almost 25 years. Around 1915, the farmhouse was destroyed by a fire whose details have been lost in time. According to Mary Stoddard the family moved to a temporary house on Upper Prospect Ave and remained there a short time until they bought the house at the corner of Prospect and Main in 1915¹¹. That would be their last house. Michael would die there on April 9, 1923. Later, Alice's sister Mary, herself also a widow by that time, would move in with Alice around 1927.

The house at Prospect and Main was tiny but it seemed large to the many grandchildren who descended upon Truxton and invaded the small house on Sunday visits to see grandma Alice. They numbered 29 in all and when they met up with their in-town cousins they proceeded to give Grandma's hand pump a good work out, threw "things" in the creek that ran through the back yard and made many visits to Kenney's Grocery store just across the street and down a ways.

Alice remained in this house until her death on January 20, 1940. Ownership of the house had been transferred earlier to Alice's sons Bill and Tom McGraw, in June 1938¹². Today that corner is the location of the Andy Tei Memorial.

Mary Rooney

Mary Rooney and her sister Alice arrived in the U.S. in 1881 and their younger brother John Rooney came to America in 1886. It wouldn't be unreasonable to conclude that Alice had played matchmaker and fixed her sister up with Michael's widowed brother John McGraw (his wife and three of their eight children had died in Aug-Sept

1883). John was living on a farm on the North Road before that tragic summer but had relocated to the village of Truxton at the urging of family shortly after the death of his wife and children. The remaining children had been split up and were living with relatives. Nellie, the youngest (b. 1883), according to tradition, was living with Michael and Alice. John J., the eldest son, had moved into the Truxton House Hotel, across Main Street from his father's rented house¹³, by the fall of 1885.

John married his second wife, the former Mary Rooney on February 11, 1890. His oldest surviving daughter, Anna, was Mary Rooney's bride maid. John purchased 6-1/2 acres in Truxton Lot 82 from Jeremiah O'Connor on November 26, 1890 and the deed was recorded at the Cortland County Courthouse on December 26, 1890¹⁴. However, in the Cortland County Directory for 1889 John McGraw was listed as the occupant of 6 acres of land in the Township of Truxton. This is most likely a reference to the land in Lot 82 that John purchased in 1890 and therefore he was probably renting the property prior to his purchase. This is the 6 acre property shown on the 1876 Truxton map as belonging to P. Hennessy. This property was located about 2 miles out of Truxton on West Hill Road. The location of the farmhouse on the 1876 Truxton map places the structure on the west side of West Hill Road heading out of the village of Truxton, on the way to the Village of Tully. On a family visit to Truxton as a young boy, my father pointed out to us the location of John McGraw's farm on West Hill Road. The house was no longer standing in the 1960's when our visit took place but the general location was consistent with the land records and the 1876 map.

According to Doug Currie¹⁵, "Mary was reported to have had at least two miscarriages during the early years, but apparently the marriage was a rocky one and after a period of time they separated." From other relatives I have heard the comment, "that marriage just didn't take." Mary Rooney McGraw's listing in the 1900 Fabius census will be described in more detail later. Here the focus will be one specific piece of information from that census. Mary was recorded as having given birth to one child who was no longer living at the time of the census. This was like a lightning bolt - no one had ever mentioned that Mary had given birth to a child. I wrote to the Truxton parish priest and the church records confirmed the fact. A daughter of John McGraw and Mary Rooney, named Mary Alice, was baptized on May 31, 1891. No date of birth or names of sponsors were given. The Truxton town clerk found a death record for a Mary A. McGraw. She was born July 22, 1891 and died of bronchitis nine days later on August 1, 1891. Mary's parents were listed as John McGraw and Mary Shaw. These records appear to contradict each other or suggest the existence of a second John and Mary McGraw living in Truxton in 1891. In a separate report¹⁶ these discrepancies were examined in detail and it was suggested that "Shaw" is really "Sloan," which was Mary Rooney's mother's maiden name. The baptismal date might really be July 31, that would be the day before Mary's death. Finally, the existence of John McGraw and Mary Rooney is well documented from their separate arrivals in the U.S. to their deaths and burials in Truxton. On the other hand, the death record itself is the only proof of the existence of a John McGraw and Mary Shaw.

By February 16, 1892 (the day of the NYS census) John and Mary were living apart¹⁷. The baby Mary Alice was not living with either of them. The death of their young child must have resurrected painful memories in John's mind of those tragic days back in the late summer of 1883 when he lost his first wife and three of their children. Depending on the circumstances of this death there might have been an element of blame that could have been tossed back and forth between John and Mary. The net result of all of this was that John and Mary separated and were living apart by early 1892. There would have been other problems in the marriage but the death of Mary Alice alone might have been enough to generate the stress that led to John and Mary's separation.

John McGraw was living with the Michael and Julia O'Brien family on Cheningo Road at the time of the 1892 census. Julia was a Comerford relative. She was the older sister of John's late wife, Ellen Comerford. Mary Rooney (not using her married name) was living with the Elias Parker family on West Hill Road. What became of John's property on the West Road is unknown at this time. John's eldest son (John J.) was in town for the winter after a baseball tour of the south had fallen apart in New Orleans¹⁸. He was staying at the O'Connor Hotel that was formerly known as the Truxton House, when Mary Twentymen Goddard had run it in the 1880's. This was the very hotel where John J. McGraw had lived for several years after his father chased him out of the house one cold rainy night in the fall of 1885¹⁹. John's daughter Anna was living in a boarding house in the city of Cortland but John's other children: Margaret, James and Nellie have not been found in the 1892 census. Nellie wasn't living with Michael and Alice McGraw at this time, contrary to what family tradition had said was the case.

At the time of the 1900 Truxton census²⁰, John McGraw was alone and boarding with John Miller, Jr. He gave his age as 54 (actually 56), his occupation as a "farm laborer" and his marital status as a widower. John's wife Mary wasn't living with him and was found living in the town of Fabius²¹. Michael and Alice McGraw had raised Nellie according to tradition, however Nellie wasn't shown as living with Michael in the 1900 census²². The children of John McGraw were missing from the Truxton census, but since the youngest (Nellie) would have been almost 17 years old they were probably all off on their own. John J. McGraw was living in Baltimore, MD pursuing his professional baseball career with the Baltimore Orioles. Although he was a professional baseball player John J. listed his occupation in the 1900 census²³ as "Saloon Keeper." This was perhaps in deference to the public opinion of ball players at that time.

Again from Doug Currie, "About 1903, she (Mary Rooney McGraw) was a cook in a hotel in Tully, in 1907 she lived in Apulia Station..." In the 1910 census Mary Rooney²⁴ was not using her married name again. She was living and working at a hotel on East Street in the village of Tully. She gave her age as 42 but did not give any marital information. She also did not give any immigration information.

In the 1910 census John McGraw was staying at the O'Connor Hotel that was run by John O'Connor. This was the same hotel, some twenty-five years earlier, that was known as the Truxton House when Mary Twentymen Goddard was running that

establishment. Even though his second wife was still alive and living in the village of Tully, John told the census enumerator that he was a widower.

At the time of the 1920 Census Mary McGraw, age 54, was living with the Patrick Comerford family in the village of Truxton²⁵. Patrick was the brother of John McGraw's first wife Ellen Comerford. Mary was recorded as being married (reference to her marriage to John W. McGraw) at the time of the census and told the enumerator that she had come to America in 1888 and had been naturalized in 1895. Her occupation was given as a servant to a private family, probably the Comerfords. The residence was on the Truxton State Road (Route 13) near the end of Kenney Brook Road.

The William and Anna Ryan family were living on the Truxton-Cuyler State Road. They had a boarder named John McGraw²⁶ who this time around, in contrast to his 1910 census information, listed his marital status as married. Even though both John and Mary McGraw acknowledged that they were married they were still living apart but in the same small village. John continued to board with the Ryan family after 1920.

On November 8, 1926 John McGraw died while he was boarding at the Truxton home of Anna Ryan who provided the information for his death certificate. Anna O'Brien Ryan was the widow of William Ryan who had died on April 26, 1926²⁷. Anna's parents were Michael O'Brien and Julia Comerford – Julia was the older sister of John's first wife Ellen Comerford. William Ryan was born in Skaneateles and his parents have not been identified yet. He is not thought to be related to any of the Upperchurch Ryans found in the Truxton area. The Comerfords, O'Briens and McGraws were all neighbors from the old days on Morgan Hill in Cuyler.

Once again from Doug Currie, "...and in 1927 [Mary] was living in Truxton with her sister Alice." The 1930 census shows Alice Rooney McGraw and Mary Rooney McGraw were living together at Alice's home at Prospect and Main in the Village of Truxton.

Analysis of the Rooney Age Puzzle

Alice Rooney McGraw

Census Year	Location	Age	Birth Year	Age at Marriage	Yr of Marriage	Immigration Year	Years in US
1892	Truxton	33	[1858]	-	-	-	-
1900	Truxton	44	Aug 1856	[17]	1883	1881	
1905	Truxton	45	[1859]	-	-	[1882]	23
1910	Truxton	50	[1859]	27	[1883]	1881	
1920	Truxton	59	[1860]	-	-	1883	
1930	Truxton	67	[1862]	21	[1883]	1883	

Numbers in brackets [...] indicate data inferred from actual data found in the census. The letters NA indicates the respondent did not provide the information. The 1892 NYS census contained very little information. Alice's age (33) takes a bit of deciphering to determine.

Mary Rooney McGraw

Census Year	Location	Age	Birth Year	Age at Marriage	Yr of Marriage	Immigration Year	Years in US
1892	Truxton	29	[1860]	-	-	-	
1900	Fabius	36	May 1864	[26]	1890	1882	
1905							
1910	Tully	42	[1867]	NA	-	NA	
1920	Truxton	54	[1865]			1888	
1930	Truxton	66	[1863]	25	[1888]	1886	

In 1892 and 1910 Mary was listed in the census records under Rooney. For the other census years Mary was listed under McGraw.

John Rooney

Census Year	Location	Age	Birth Year	Age at Marriage	Yr of Marriage	Immigration Year	Years in US
1892				-	-	-	
1900	Cortlandville	29	Oct 1870			1886	14
1905							
1910	Homer	39	[18701]		-	1886	[14]

The exact date of death is unknown but family tradition places it around 1913. John's naturalization papers (Oct. 28, 1892) give a date of birth of October, 1868.

Census Year	Census Date
1892	2/16/1892
1900	6/1/1900
1905	6/1/1905
1910	4/15/1910
1920	1/1/1920
1930	4/1/1930

The Rooney Sister's Death Certificate Information

Mary Rooney McGraw, b. April 21, 1859, died May 22, 1932

Informant: Mrs. Alice McGraw (sister)

Alice Rooney McGraw, b. Aug. 31, 1859, died January 20, 1940

Informant: Thos. McGraw (son)

If this information is to be believed then Mary and Alice were born only four months apart. A resolution to this problem is possible if it is assumed that the information on Mary's death certificate is more accurate because her sister Alice had provided it. On the other hand, Alice's death certificate information was supplied by one of her youngest sons, Thomas McGraw, who was living with his mother in the family home at the corner of Prospect and Main at the time of her death. While the year of her birth might be less accurate it can be assumed that Thomas did know his mother's birthday. There was a tradition in our family, propagated by Alice herself, that she came to America at age 16. Together with the census information, that gave 1881 as the year of her arrival, this would indicate her birth date was Aug. 31, 1865. In considering the death certificate information Alice's birthday of Aug. 31st is assumed to be correct and Mary's birthday of April 21 is also assumed to be correct. These dates are celebrated every year and would be remembered – it is the birth years that present more of a problem.

This story about coming to America at 16 was a tradition that Alice propagated to her daughter Mayme who passed it on to her daughter, Lucy Sprague. This is totally inconsistent with the census data and her death certificate information. I am officially tossing this family tradition out and declaring the whole thing to be a little white lie that Alice, for some reason, liked to tell the family.

Summary of Census and Death Certificate Information

Taken together these sources have Alice's birth year ranging from 1856 to 1865 while Mary's birth year range extends over the period 1859 to 1867. One trend that does show up in the census data is that Mary is consistently younger than Alice.

There is another family story, related by Lucy Sprague that shed some light on Alice's age. After their last child, William Michael (#9) was born in 1899 Alice threw her husband, Michael W. McGraw, out of their bedroom. This happened when she was 40, according to Alice's oldest daughter Mayme McGraw Waters, because he was an old man (57 years old) and she had given birth to nine children. This might not have happened at the same time that Michael was born but it probably happened a short time after his birth. This implies that Alice was born in 1859 or 1860. Alice's birth date from her death certificate was Aug. 31, 1859. The month and day are probably correct and if the year 1860 is taken as Alice's birth year, then the four month spacing problem between Mary and Alice goes away.

In the census records Mary was consistently younger than her sister Alice. Of course neither one of them would have known what the other one had earlier told the census taker until 1930 when they were living together in Alice's house on the corner of

Prospect and Main, in the village of Truxton. Even here it appears that Mary managed to make herself the younger of the two. One might wonder how that could have happened despite the fact that the two ladies obviously knew which of them was older. It might be imagined that initially Alice gave 67 for her age and Mary gave something like 68. Then, as the census taker was getting ready to leave, if Mary could have distracted Alice for a few moments, she could have said to the census taker, "Did I tell you 68? I'm so sorry, I meant 66." Two years later, when Mary died, Alice had her last chance to set the record straight by providing the information for Mary's death certificate. .

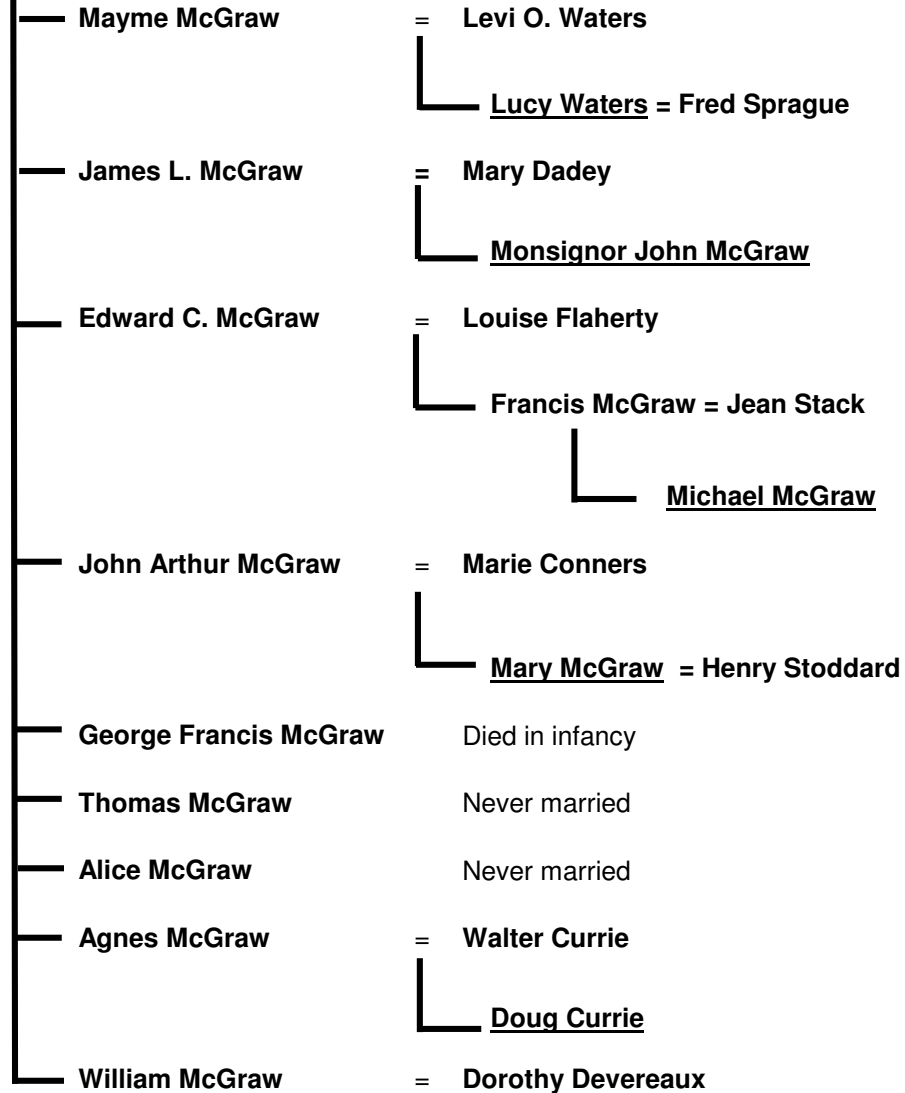
Descendants of Michael McGraw and Alice Rooney Mentioned in Document

Alice Rooney

b. Aug. 31, 1865
Immigrated 1881
mar. Apr. 7, 1882
d. Jan. 20, 1940, Truxton
bur. St. Patrick's Cem.,
Truxton, NY

= Michael William McGraw

b. 1843, Drumdiha, Moyaliff, Co. Tipperary
d. Apr. 9, 1923, Truxton
bur. St. Patrick's Cem., Truxton, NY



A more detailed family tree can be found in *The McGrath Family of Truxton, New York*.
Below are some family contacts.

Doug Currie 202 Pear Tree Drive Camillus, NY 13031 315-487-1666 DouglasDC11@aol.com	Michael McGraw 9108 Middlebie Dr. Austin, TX 78750 mfmcgraw@austin.rr.com
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Above is a picture of Alice Rooney McGraw and her eight children. The picture was taken in about 1924 or a little later. It was taken in the side yard of her house at the corner of Prospect and Main in the Village of Truxton, NY. Alice's house is out of the photo on the right. From left to right: Edward C., Tom, William, Alice, Agnes (Currrie), Art, Alice, James and Mayme (Waters). Her husband Michael is not in the picture because he died on April 9, 1923.

On the right is a portrait of Michael William McGraw. The year of the photo is unknown.



The Various John Rooneys

Of the three Rooney siblings from Co. Down, John Rooney left the most difficult trail to follow, if it can even be called a trail. It is difficult to track a single person and one with an ordinary sounding name like John Rooney doesn't make it any easier.

The following John Rooneys are listed in the order in which they would have first appeared in the U.S records. These men are four obviously different John Rooney's. The interest in these men is in being able to distinguish them in the various records and news items from John Rooney of Co. Down, Ireland who is #2 in the list below.

1. John C. Rooney - b. 1847; came to the US in 1880. In 1881 he married Ellen Barnwell (1846-1902). Died 1929. John and Ellen are buried in St. Leo's Cemetery, Tully, NY. Ellen Barnwell and Mary Barnwell are found in the 1870 census for Syracuse²⁸. Ellen alone was found in the 1889 census for Syracuse²⁹. Ellen and Mary were living in some sort of rooming house and were listed sequentially in the census. It is very likely that they are sisters or perhaps cousins. John and Ellen next show up in the 1900 census³⁰ living on a farm in Tully. They have been married 19 years and have no children. John is the older brother of James E. Rooney.
2. John Rooney (Co. Down) - b. Oct. 4, 1868, Co. Down; to U.S. March 1886; son of James Rooney and Mary Sloan. Died in railroad accident about 1913, buried in the McGraw plot St. Patrick's Cemetery, Truxton, NY
3. John Lawrence Rooney - b. Sept 4, 1887, Preble, NY, son of James E. Rooney and Mary A. Long. In Kansas at time of 1910 census. Nephew of John C. Rooney (#1 in this list.)
4. John Roney - b. 1875, to U.S. in 1893 - Farm laborer on the David H. Crane farm; Source 1905 NYS census - Eastern section of the 2nd Election District of Cortlandville³¹. Not found in the 1900, 1910 or 1920 census for Cortland or Onondaga County.

These are the ages of the various John Rooneys based only on their birth years shown above. This is NOT one of the age tables based on information from the census records. This table is for reference purposes when researching the various John Rooneys.

Ages	1880	1890	1900	1905	1910	1920	1930
1. John C. Rooney	33	43	53	58	63	73	d. 1929
2. John Rooney		22	32	37	42	d. 1913	
3. John L. Rooney		3	13	18	23	33	43
4. John Roney			25	30	35	45	55

John Rooney of Co. Down

According to his naturalization record John Rooney of County Down was living in Cortlandville, Cortland County, NY and was born on October 4, 1868 in Co. Down, Ireland. This makes him the ideal candidate for the younger brother of Alice and Mary Rooney. He came to the U.S. in March of 1886 and was naturalized on October 28, 1892. It is curious that he had Bernard Doud and Will J. McAuliff as witnesses to his

naturalization instead of one of his relatives who were living in the area. Despite having in-laws and two sisters living nearby John selected two friends as the witnesses for his naturalization. One was a saloon owner while the other was a bartender. There is probably an interesting story there.

Some Naturalization Record Confusion

At the top of one of John Rooney's naturalization forms were the words "NATURALIZATION UNDER EIGHTEEN YEARS." Since John Rooney was obviously over 18 years of age it must not have been the applicant's age that the "eighteen years" was referencing. The reference was probably related to how long the applicant had been in the U.S. prior to applying for citizenship.

I don't understand the reason for the insertion of the following italicized words into John Rooney's naturalization form

"...and that it [has been for the three years next preceding this application & now] is my bona fide intention to become a citizen of the United States..."

It almost sounds like John hadn't previously filed a "Declaration of Intent" document but was now retroactively asserting his previous intention.

Sorting the Rooneys

The information below was developed over the past few years while trying to discover any possible connections between the Rooney family of Co. Down and the family of John L. Rooney in the Town of Tully, Onondaga Co. John L. Rooney is #3 on the list. Special thanks go to Greg Rooney who supplied a copy of his Rooney family genealogy and Marlene Parks who provided census records and the Naturalization Record for John Rooney of Co. Down. They were very helpful in sorting out some of the more obscure details in the life of John Rooney from County Down, Ireland.

The 1900 census finds John Rooney, age 29 (b. Oct. 1870)³², still single and working as a farm laborer in the town of Cortlandville, Cortland County. He could read, write and speak English and gave his year of immigration as 1886. This is John Rooney of Co. Down. The important point here is that he was a John Rooney who was NOT working on the railroad.

The 1910 census finds John Rooney, age 39, still single and working as a "hired man" on the dairy farm of Richard Ryan in the town of Homer, Cortland Co³³. Once again he was NOT working for the railroad, which distinguishes him from John L. Rooney who did work for the railroad.

Assuming his birthday of October 4th, from his naturalization papers, is correct and knowing that both the 1900 and 1910 census had census dates of June 1st and April 15th, respectively, then John Rooney's age, as given in both censuses indicate that he was born in the year 1870 and not 1868 as stated by him in his naturalization papers.

In light of the above information John Rooney of Co. Down is not the John Rooney mentioned in the *Tully Times* excerpts of 4/20/1907 and 5/18/1907. John Rooney, of Co. Down, doesn't appear to have been employed by the railroad during 1907 and as a farm laborer he certainly wasn't in a position to have someone working for him. However, since he died in an accident while unloading a railroad car in Homer around 1913 it would appear that he might have been employed by the railroad after his return from Ireland.

Shown below are items about a "John Rooney" in the Tully Times newspaper.

Tully Times, April 20, 1907 – Apulia Station – April 18 – "William McCallen, who has been night man at the D.L.&W. station for some time, has been transferred to Oswego, **John Rooney, of Onativia**, takes his place."

Tully Times, May 18, 1907 – Bromley – "L.P. Norton of Homer is working his farm this year. John Shanahan (Shanahan) of Syracuse is working for **John Rooney** and Corelon Van Denburg of Preble is helping his son, Marvin." [Bromley is an area in the southwestern portion of the town of Tully.]

John L. Rooney worked for the railroad while the John Rooney from Co. Down was a farm laborer at least until about 1910. The John Rooney in the first newspaper excerpt above was identified as being from Onativia. Greg's John L. Rooney was from Tully but that is not very far from Onativia. The John Rooney in the second clipping appears to be from the Bromley area of the town of Tully since no other location was associated with him. Since the John Shanahan in the clipping is working for this John Rooney it is probably safe to conclude that this John Rooney was a farmer. This John Rooney in the 2nd newspaper excerpt was the husband of Ellen Barnwell who appears as John Rooney No. 1 in the table above. In his obituary³⁴ it states that John was a former resident of Bromley.

John Rooney's (Co. Down) final years are recounted in a short phrase in a letter to Lucy Sprague, dated February 23, 1970 from Mary Alice Hennity, daughter of Martha Rooney and Arthur Cunningham. Mary Alice wrote, "...John Rooney who went to America, came back on a visit, returned to America, and died." The cadence of the wording in the letter makes me believe his death occurred shortly after he returned to America from his visit to Ireland. According to my information John was killed in an accident while he was unloading a railroad car in Homer, NY. At this time I cannot track down the source of the statement that John was "unloading" the railroad car³⁵. Even a quick search of the newspapers, covering the decades surrounding the new century (1900), will show that one did not have to be working for the railroad, or even be a passenger on a train, to be the victim of a railroad accident.

John Rooney's trip back to Ireland probably took place after 1910 (the date of William Cunningham's arrival in Truxton) and by 1913 he had died in a railroad accident. He is buried in the McGraw family plot along with his sisters Alice Rooney

McGraw and Mary Rooney McGraw and nine more family members in St. Patrick's Cemetery in Truxton, NY.

William John Cunningham

There is one more member of the Rooney family from Co. Down who makes an appearance in Truxton, although a brief one. At some point Alice, Mary and John Rooney's nephew, William John Cunningham came to America and stayed with Alice and Michael at their house on the North Road. After a while William moved on to Butte, Montana. There he married an Irish girl who was born in Montana and they had at least one child. According to Lucy Sprague she thought that William's wife had communicated via some letters for a while.

The Ellis Island database records a 20 year old William John Cunningham entering the U.S. on April 24, 1910 on the ship Cedric that had departed from Liverpool, England. William listed his father as Arthur Cunningham of Tullyframe, Lismore (Co. Down, Ireland). William's description was recorded as: Height-5'9"; Complexion-Dark; Hair-Dark; Eyes-Blue. His immediate destination was a friend named Henry Murphy of 42 Manning Blvd., West Albany, NY. William missed the 1910 census date of April 15th by only nine days so he wouldn't be picked up in the census record for another 10 years.

At some point William made his way to Truxton, NY and spent some time living with Michael and Alice. Later William moved on to Butte, Montana. Perhaps this visit from the old country is what motivated John Rooney to return to Ireland for a visit. But then again the two events might have happened in the opposite order. John could have returned to Ireland and invited William to come over to America.

Willie John, as he was known by the relatives, showed up in the 1920 census record for Centerville, Silver Bow County, Montana³⁶. Centerville is an area located on the north side of Butte. William's Montana born wife was named Frances, age 22, and they had a 2-year old son named James. His occupation indicated he was working in the mines. According to the census William was naturalized in 1913. This provides a hook as to where he was living in 1913 but I haven't tracked down his naturalization record yet. Since Alice and Michael's farm on the North Road was in ashes by 1915 Willie John's visit had to have occurred before that date.

On July 3, 1922 a marriage license³⁷ was issued to William John Cunningham and Catherine Dwyer. John was described as a 29 year old widower and 23 year old Catherine had not been married before. Catherine was born in Cromhene, Co. Cork to Miachel R. Dwyer and Katie Harrington. The date of the actual marriage is not known.

In the 1930 census³⁸ the Cunningham family has grown in size and was still living in Butte, Montana. William (40) and Catherine (30) now have four children: James (18), Arthur V. (7), Audrey R. (1-5/12) and Kenneth C. (3/12).

A search of the Social Security Death index for Cunningham did not turn up our William John Cunningham. This is a very well organized online database. The search

was for a William Cunningham born in 1890-1894 and one who had a Social Security card issued in Montana. A Catherine Cunningham, born September 21, 1898 was found in the index. Her Social Security card had been issued in 1965 and her last residence of record was Butte, Silver Bow county, Montana.

Only a single child from the marriage of William and Frances has been identified - James born about 1918. Searching the SS Death index for a James Cunningham, born about 1918, with a SS card issued in Montana brought up three individuals. Only one of the three also died in Montana - June 1987 in Miles City, MT. Although this is not a 100% certain identification of James it has been tentatively accepted for now. He might still be alive.

A search of the same index was made for James Cunningham's other siblings and tentative identifications were made based on the death information of these individuals. Arthur V. Cunningham died in 1969. Audrey R Cunningham possibly married a man named Weistaner and she died on October 8, 1995. Kenneth P. Cunningham died November 12, 1999 in Silver Bow Co., MT.

The Tully Connections

The major unanswered Rooney question is still this: Why did Alice and Mary Rooney come to America? Two young Irish girls, living in Co. Down don't just get up one morning, pack their bags and head for the next boat leaving for America. They came to America for a reason and the most likely reason would have been the presence of relatives or family friends already living in the Central New York area.

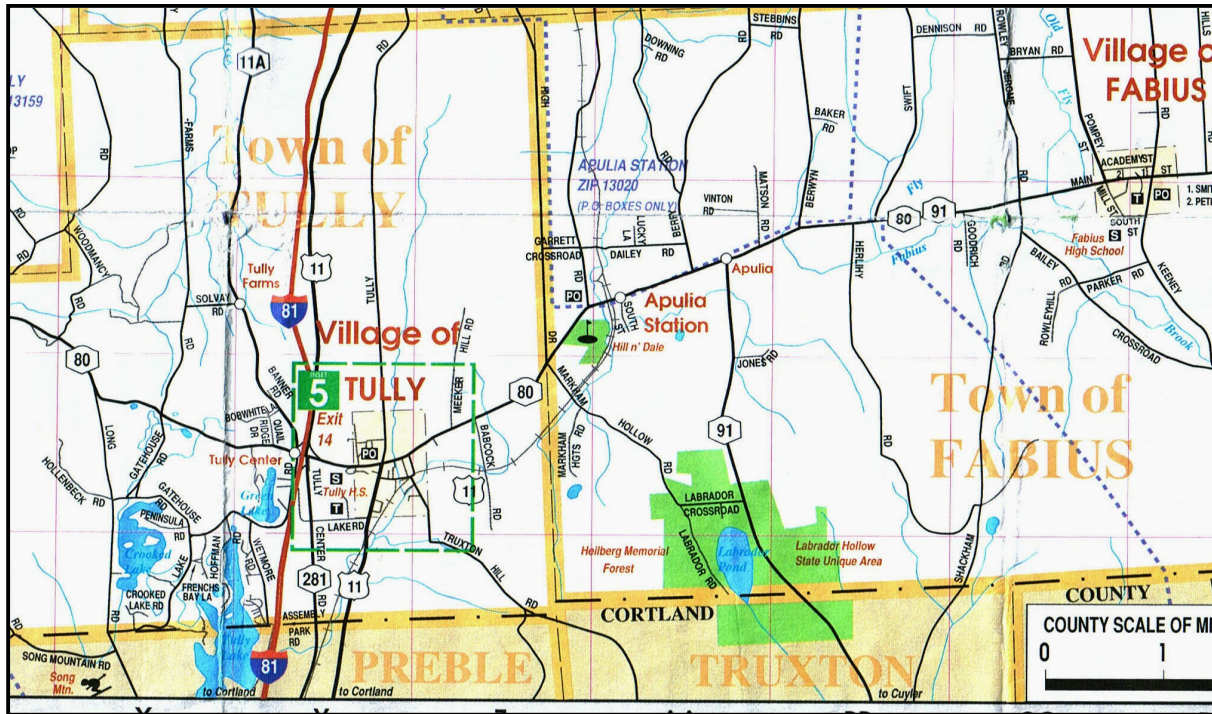
Based on several observed Tully connections, involving the McGraw family and the Rooneys from Co. Down, I believe the sponsoring friends or relatives of the Rooney girls were living in the Tully area. All of these locations mentioned below are located within a three mile radius.

1. 1868-1874 McGraw farm on Kettlebail Road – foreclosed in Aug. 1874 – 2 miles southeast of the Village of Tully.
2. Michael was working on the James Miles farm on the Tully side of the Fabius-Tully border in 1880 when “relatives” sent him to Albany and meet Alice and Mary's boat.
3. The “Casey” farm where Alice lived and worked right after coming to this country was in Apulia on the road to Tully.
4. Mary Rooney McGraw was cooking at a Tully Hotel in 1903.
5. Mary Rooney McGraw was living in Apulia Station in 1907, just a few miles east of the Village of Tully.

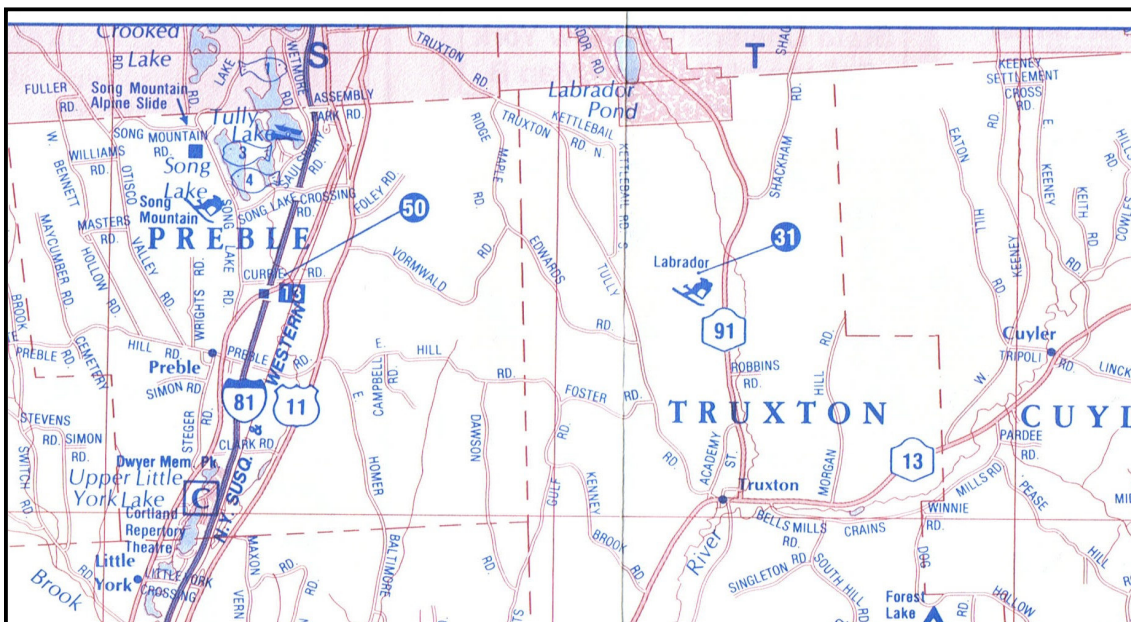
6. In 1910 Mary Rooney McGraw was listed in the census as Mary Rooney - not McGraw. She was living and working at a hotel in the village of Tully.
7. My uncle, the late John Casey of Apulia was the son of Neil Casey, one of the three Casey brothers raised in Truxton and who settled in Apulia, Town of Fabius. John attended St. Leo's Church in the Village of Tully and on many occasions he would tell me about this man he would see at the church that was the "spitting image" of my father (one of Alice's grandchildren) – but unfortunately he did not know the man's name. I never pursued it because there weren't any relatives that I was aware of in the area that John wouldn't already have known. But now, with this convergence of circumstantial evidence on the Tully area perhaps there is a relative there – maybe even a link to the Rooneys.
8. Lastly, and this is more coincidence than anything else, the Rooney girls came from the townland in Co. Down, Ireland, named Tullyframe and traveled to the town of Tully in Onondaga County.

The maps on the following pages show the closeness of the Village of Tully, the Miles farm on Mile High Road, the hamlet of Apulia Station and the former McGraw farm on N. Kettlebail Road. From 1868 when they moved from Cuyler until they were foreclosed in August 1874 the McGraws were closely associated with Tully. The man from who they had borrowed their mortgage money, Edward Miller, lived and worked in the Village of Tully. Even later, Michael was working on a farm within walking distance of the Village of Tully in 1880.

The towns of Tully and Fabius along the southern border of Onondaga Co.



The towns of Preble, Truxton and a portion of Cuyler along the northern border of Cortland Co.



The Children of Michael Rooney and Mary Finlon

Emphasis on Immigration Year and spousal parents

Michael Rooney
b. Ireland

Mary Finlon
b. Ireland

Parents

John C. Rooney b. 1848 Co. Carlow, Ireland d. 1929 Immigration: 1880 [1910] 1874 [Obit]	= Ellen Barnwell (m. 1881) 1846 - 1908 Immigration: 1856 [Death Cert.]	Earliest record: 1870 census, Living in Syr with sister (cousin?) Mary
Catherine Rooney 1850 - 1926 Immigration: 1874 [1910, 1920]	= Michael Murphy (m. Bef 1877) 1839 - 1910 Immigration:	Edward D. Murphy Mary A.
James E. Rooney b. Feb 13, 1855 Co. Carlow, Ireland Naturalized - Oct. 10, 1878 d. Jun 26, 1930 Tully, NY Buried in St. Leo's Cemetery, Tully, NY Immigration: about 1870 [1900]	= Mary A. Long (m. Jan 1, 1880) b. Mar. 7, 1861 Preble, NY m. Jan. 1, 1880 Cortland, NY d. 1899 Tully, NY	John Long b. 1820 Cork, Ireland d. Apr. 7, 1890 Preble, NY Mary Connors b. Feb. 8, 1835 Ireland d. Oct. 24, 19116 Tully, NY
Elizabeth Rooney b. 1856 Ireland d. 1933 Otisco, NY Immigration: 1872 [1900]	= Patrick Murphy (m. 1880) 1850 - 1924 Immigration: 1851[1900]	Edward D. Murphy Mary A.
Patrick Rooney 1857 - 1923 Immigration: 1883 [1900] 1885 1920]	= Norah Ryan (m. 1890) 1864 - 1923 Immigration: 1884 [1900]	
Bridget Rooney b. 1860 Ireland d. 1930 Cortland, NY Immigration: 1876 [1920, 1930] 1877 [1900, 1910]	= Edward McEvoy (m. 1880) b. 1852 Otisco, NY d. 1930 NY	Robert McEvoy Hannorah Sullivan

It would appear that Michael Rooney and Mary Finlon never came to America and at least six of their children emigrated separately as single adults. Currently only Mary A. Long's parents are of interest for pursuing connections.

James Rooney of Tully, New York

Revised February 10, 2011

Michael Rooney

b. Ireland

= **Mary Finlon**

b. Ireland

James E. Rooney

b. 2/13/1855 in Ireland
Immigrated about 1870
Naturalized - Oct. 10, 1878
d. 6/26/1930 in Tully, NY
Buried in St. Leo's Cemetery,
Tully, NY

= **Mary A. Long**

b. Mar. 7, 1861 Preble, NY
m. Jan. 1, 1880 Cortland, NY
d. 1899 Tully, NY

Mary Rooney

b. 1880
mar. Nov. 22, 1900
d. May 1941
Tully

= **John C. Reagan**

b. 1875
d. 1954 Tully, NY

Helena Reagan =

b. 1904
d. 1948 NY
bur. St. Leo's, Tully

William "Bill" Ryan

Bur. St. Mary's, Cortland, NY

Anna Christine Reagan =

b. Dec. 25, 1914
m. July 9, 1937

Dr. William Ryan

b. Dec. 27, 1909 Syr.
Mar. July 9, 1937
d. Apr. 2, 1984 FL

Margaret A. Rooney

b. Aug. 24, 1883 Preble, NY
d. Nov. 3, 1955 Cortland, NY

= **Daniel Hastings**

Elizabeth C. Rooney

b. June 1885
d. Nov. 22, 1972 Utica, NY

= **Harry Bates**

Michael J. Rooney

b. 1881
d. 1962, DeWitt, NY

= **Ellen D. "Nellie" Daley**

b. 1883
d. 1961 DeWitt, NY

John Lawrence Rooney =

b. Sept. 4, 1887, Preble, NY
d. Mar. 10, 1968, Casper, Wyo.

Leota Anora Madeline Powers

b. Nov. 4, 1891 Hanover, Kansas
Mar. Nov. 17, 1914 Hanover, Kansas
d. May 22, 1971 Casper, WY

This partial listing of the descendants of James E. Rooney are presented here to show their connections to other individuals of current interest in this document. The Long family is of interest and is covered in more detail in a separate document. The Ryans might possibly be connected to the many Upperchurch Ryans found in Central New York. John Lawrence Rooney was #4 in the John Rooney table.

The Connection

In searching for the Rooney connection one is faced with the same challenge facing the fiction writer. Whatever scenario one comes up with it needs to be plausible with a reasonable probability that it could have actually happened. No “Hail Mary” scenarios that depend on several coincidences are permitted. Only reality is allowed to construct those types of low probability scenarios. Hence the saying, “Reality is stranger than fiction.”

Plausible Connections

1. Known relatives: Rooney, Sloan and Cunningham.
2. Neighbors in Ireland - next door neighbors and the rest of the residents of the townland of Tullyframe, found in 1863, and living in central NY in 1880.
3. Persons from Ireland, especially Northern Ireland, living in central NY in 1880.
4. Connection with Rooney's in the U.S. via marriages witnesses and baptismal sponsors.
5. Neighbors in central NY, born in Ireland, who arrived in U.S. prior to 1881.

Possible Connections but not proved or provable

1. Relative from another county in Ireland.
2. Relative who was a neighbor in Ireland but not found in Tullyframe in 1863.
3. Neighbor in Ireland who was gone by 1863.
4. Friend of a relation or of a friend.

Various Attempts at Uncovering the Rooney Connection(s) in Central NY

The traditional assumption has always been that Michael McGraw was sent to Albany to meet Alice and Mary by relatives or friends of the Rooneys. This connection is assumed to have been born in Ireland and had come to the U.S. prior to 1881. This person would have been a friend, neighbor or relative to the Rooneys back in Ireland. The Rooney girls would have most likely settled “near” this person upon their arrival in the U.S. Since Alice stayed in the town of Fabius on Rt 80 in Apulia it has been assumed that the connection lived “close to Apulia.”

Despite this belief, no such Rooney relative or friend has ever been positively identified. Described below are some of the possible connections that have been researched. They are listed in order of their decreasing probability. Since it is impossible to prove a negative, even some of the low probability connections remain on the list.

1. John C. Rooney - Ellen Barnwell

This was a Rooney who was living in Tully in 1900³⁹. He was John Rooney #1 from the above John Rooney table. According to his obit, John was born in December 1847 in Co. Carlow, Ireland. He is the older brother of James E. Rooney and he came to the U.S. in 1880 according to the 1900 census and was naturalized in 1883. According to his 1929 obit he arrived in the U.S. in 1874.

John and Ellen were married in 1881. Ellen was living in the city of Syracuse at the time of the 1870 and 1880 census. Ellen Barnwell⁴⁰ and her sister Mary⁴¹ were living

in some kind of boarding house in Syracuse, Ward 6, in 1870. By 1880 Ellen⁴² was living with the James Mix family in Syracuse's 4th Ward. Her sister Mary was not found in the 1880 census. The most likely scenario is that Mary got married and her name changed. Now the 6th ward was the same ward where Samuel Rooney⁴³ and his wife, the former Emmaline Meeker, were living. Their possible connection with the Rooney's of Co. Down is described later. A ward is fairly large, so living in the same ward is not evidence of a relationship or even an acquaintance, even though Sam Rooney did operate a well-known livery stable in downtown Syracuse.

2. James E. Rooney

On one of the previous pages there is a family tree of the Michael Rooney and Mary Finlon family. I have corresponded with a descendant of James E. Rooney over the years trying to find a connection between their Rooneys and the Rooneys of Co. Down. The naturalization record of one "James Roney," that appears to be that of James E. Rooney, has this family coming from Co. Carlow, Ireland. James Rooney is the father of John L. Rooney, who was John Rooney #4 in the John Rooney table. A Rooney family living in the Tully area around 1870 would help solve my Rooney puzzle. It might eventually turn out that James E. Rooney and John C. Rooney are related to the Rooney's of Co. Down but they just happen to come from Co. Carlow.

3. James Miles

It is absolutely certain that the McGraws were not related to the Rooneys prior to their arrival in America. At the time of the arrival of the Rooney girls, Michael McGraw was working on the James Miles farm just west of the Tully-Fabius border. Therefore, perhaps it was this Miles family that was the Rooney connection. Since Michael was working for James Miles, his trip to Albany would have needed Miles approval for him to be away from his job for a couple days. The most logical explanation would be that there was a connection between the Miles and Rooney families. Michael would want to be paid for those days he was away and why would Miles pay him if these girls weren't one of his relatives or friends?

In the Griffith's Valuation from County Down (1863-1864) there was a James Rooney living in the parish of Kilkeel in the townland of Tullyframe. That was the townland where Alice Rooney was born and her father was named James Rooney. In that same survey there were four Miles families living in County Down and one of them was a Mary Miles living in the townland of Greencastle in the same parish of Kilkeel as James Rooney. Although it isn't possible to nail down the exact relationship, if any, between these two families with this limited information it does make it possible that the Rooneys might have contacted the Miles family in Tully and asked them to have someone meet Alice and Mary's boat in Albany when it arrived from New York City.

4. James Miles family and the connection to the Meeker family. Neighbors and probably friends. Rooney - Meeker connection.

Located just west of the Tully-Fabius border is Meeker Hill. It is named after John Meeker who was one of the pioneer settlers of the town of Tully. He was very

successful as a farmer and was also responsible for establishing the first chain of grocery stores in New York State. On the southwest side of Meeker Hill is a very small cemetery containing two Meeker graves and one Miles grave. This skimpy piece of material is the only evidence of a possible connection between these two families other than the fact that their farms were located very close together, making them neighbors. The reason for trying to connect these two families is due to the fact that one of the Meeker girls married a Samuel Rooney of Syracuse.

The possible connections here are tenuous. There was a Rooney in Syracuse who married a Meeker, who used to live near the Miles farm in Tully where Michael McGraw lived and worked as a farm laborer in 1880, the year before he was asked to travel to Albany to meet the boat of Alice and Mary Rooney from Co. Down, Ireland.

5. O'Neil -

Living near the Marcus Brown farm in 1880 was a William O'Neill⁴⁴ who was a farmer in Apulia. This possible connection is only based on his Fabius location just prior to the Rooney girl's arrival and his surname, that is numerous in the province of Ulster in northern Ireland, where Co. Down is located. Much work remains to be done here.

6. A Savage Connection to Ireland?

This one is a real "Hail Mary" attempt to find a Rooney connection in central NY. The name Savage has connections back to Co. Down and the Savages, maybe not this particular family, were the first Irish settlers in Syracuse⁴⁵. However, all the connections described below are post Rooney arrival.

Edward McGraw was the third born child of Michael and Alice McGraw. He married Louise Flaherty of Truxton in 1919. Their second born child was my father, Francis Michael McGraw. He was born on the Flaherty farm in Truxton on the North Road on Dec. 20, 1922. His godparents were Mary Flaherty, cousin of Louise, and Francis Savage, who was another of Louise's cousins.

Francis Savage was a lawyer in Syracuse, NY, that is the largest city in central NY located north Cortland in Onondaga County. Edward and Louise's eldest child, daughter Marjorie, would later work in the law offices of Francis Savage. Francis had a brother named George who was a politician in Onondaga County.

7. Michael W. Rooney

This possible connection is a long shot for two reasons, but he was a Rooney and he was in central New York prior to 1881. What makes him a long shot is that he was last in the area 22 years before the arrival of the Rooney girls. Secondly, he was a priest. While he obviously met many people, over a wide area, in the performance of his priestly duties little is known about him. No references to him were found in the local newspapers of the day and the Google searches all reference him only in relation to his duties as a priest in the central New York area from 1857 - 1859. A search of the 1860 and 1870 census records for Michael Rooney failed to turn up any likely

candidates. In the “History of the diocese of Syracuse” Edited by William P. H. Hewitt Father M. W. Rooney received only a single mention with his name misspelled as “Roney.”⁴⁶

Searching for the Rooney Connection in Ireland

Griffith’s Valuation was conducted in Ireland, by Richard Griffith, from 1848 to 1863. His team started in the southern part of Ireland and then moved into the northern counties. The purpose of the valuation was to assess the value of the property occupied by the residents of the various counties for the levying of taxes. As such this was not a census, it only recorded the head of the household. Overlooked were other families living in the same household. Names could repeat because the purpose was to assess land occupation (not necessarily ownership), not to count individuals. Within a townland, identical names were handled by appending the name of the person’s father or some other distinguishing name. These names usually were not the nicknames that were in common use by individuals in areas with high surname densities. This was the case in Tullyframe with the Sloane families. However, in adjacent townlands there is the possibility of finding the same individual but there is not enough information to determine if the two same named individuals in different townlands are the same person.

The townland is the smallest administrative land unit in use in Ireland. Many townlands have existed for hundreds of years. An attempt was made to stabilize the townland names with the recording of the townland names found in the 1851 census, yet they continue to evolve. There were 86 parcels of land, totally 7000 acres in the townland of Tullyframe, Co. Down. With 80 heads of households this gives an average sized parcel of a little over an acre. As a point of comparison the McGraw farm on Kettlebail Road was 255 acres. Nearby Tullyframe was the townland of Maghera that contained 22 parcels of land totaling 283 acres that was approximately the same size as the McGraw arm.

Townlands in Ireland can be thought of as roughly equivalent to farms in the U.S. Where as the name, “the McGraw farm,” might persist in the minds of a few individuals for several generations it is not an official designation. In Ireland, the townland is an official designation and the names have persisted down through the centuries.

By using the Griffith’s Valuation and the Irish census records for 1901 and 1911, the stability of the surname distributions in the townland of Tullyframe can be demonstrated. One of the advantages of doing genealogy research in Ireland is the long term stability of these surname distributions. A search for the point of origin of Irish ancestors can be focused by knowing the areas where those surnames are found.

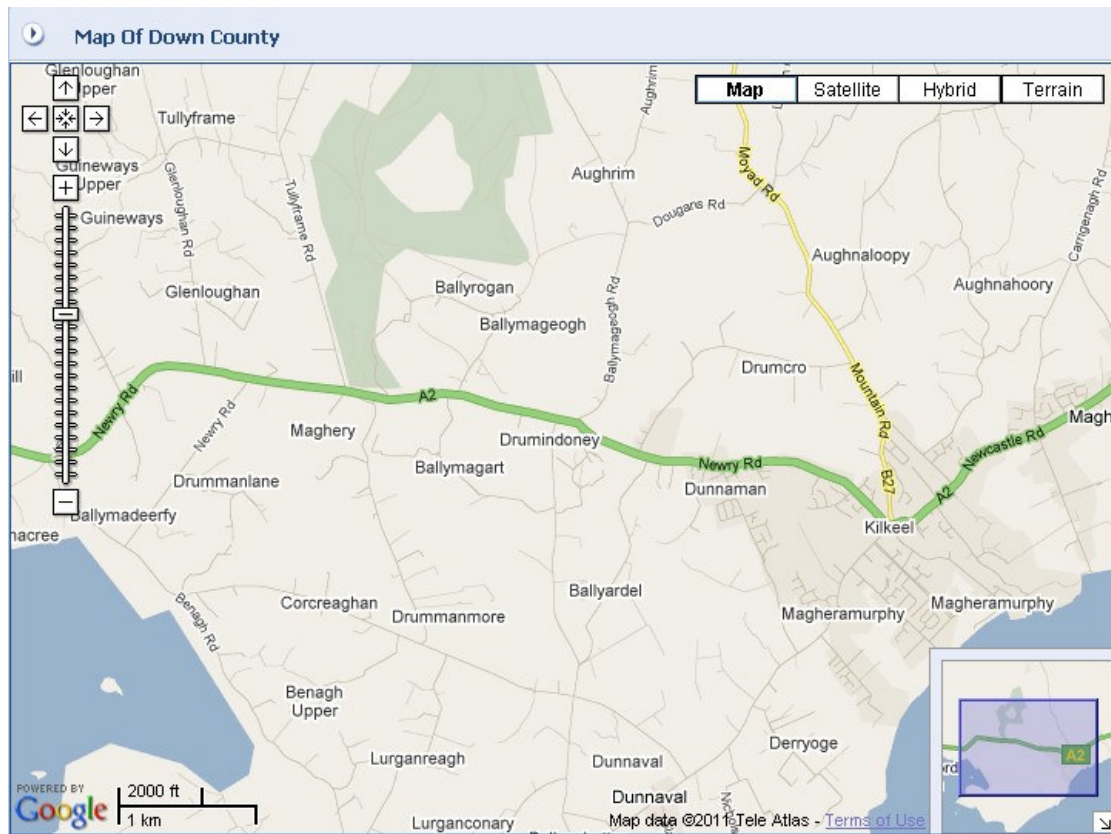
The search for the Rooney connection in the Tully-Fabius area in 1880 can also be conducted in Ireland. The names of all the families living in the town land of Tullyframe in 1863 are available and can be compared with the 1880 census results for the counties of Cortland and Onondaga. This is not a surefire path to success. There is a possibility that the name that is the object of this search had only one representative

family of that name living in Tullyframe and they might have already left Ireland by 1863. The large numbers of Sloanes and Cunninghams in Tullyframe increased the odds of a Tullyframe resident marrying into one of these families. James Rooney, Sr. married a Sloane and his daughter Martha married a Cunningham. Therefore these are two surnames that make the list.

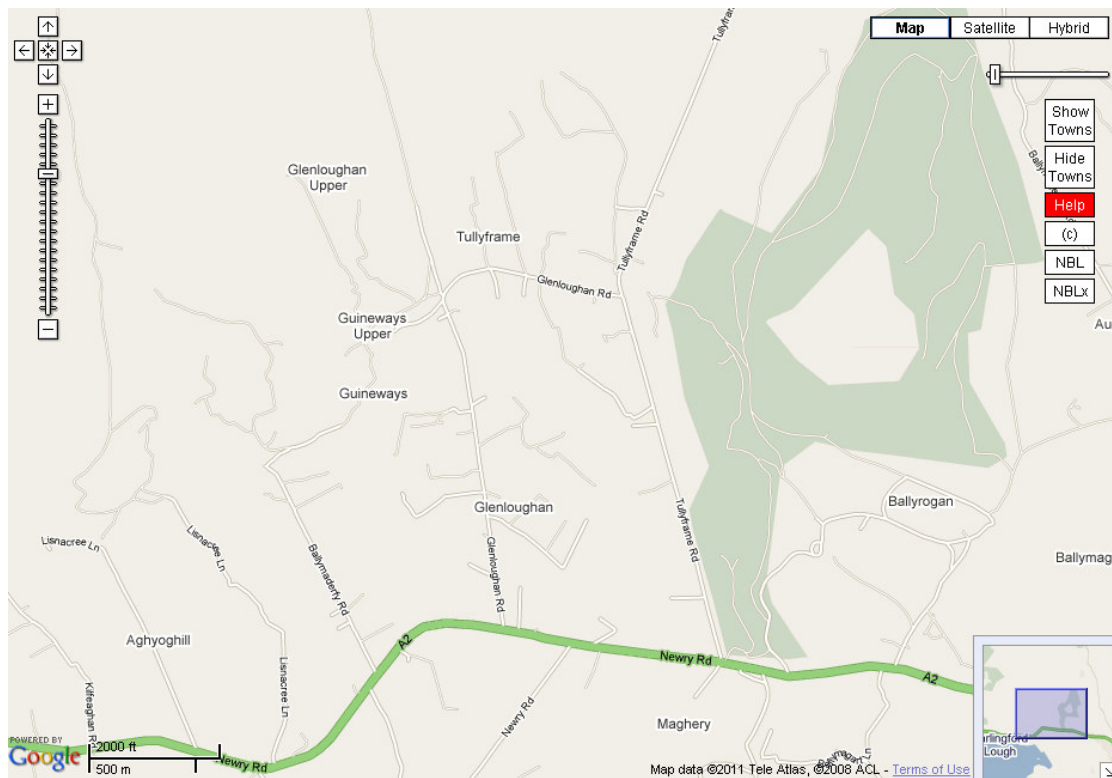
The Persistence of the Land Patterns

The rocky soil of Ireland tosses up a new batch of rocks every spring. The farmers would dutifully gather the rocks from the fields and pile them up on the boundaries of their property. This has left a legacy of stonewalls, many of them hundreds of years old, that define the shape of the properties in Ireland. The distinctive boundary patterns seen in the 1840 era maps used in carrying out the Griffith's Valuation can still be recognized in the satellite photos of today. The modern day satellite photos of the area, when overlaid with the Griffith's Valuation maps (circa 1840), display an astounding similarity. The stone wall boundaries and roads display an amazing degree of alignment considering that the old maps were made using technologies that are over 160 years old. This is extremely helpful when searching for ancestral homesteads back in Ireland.

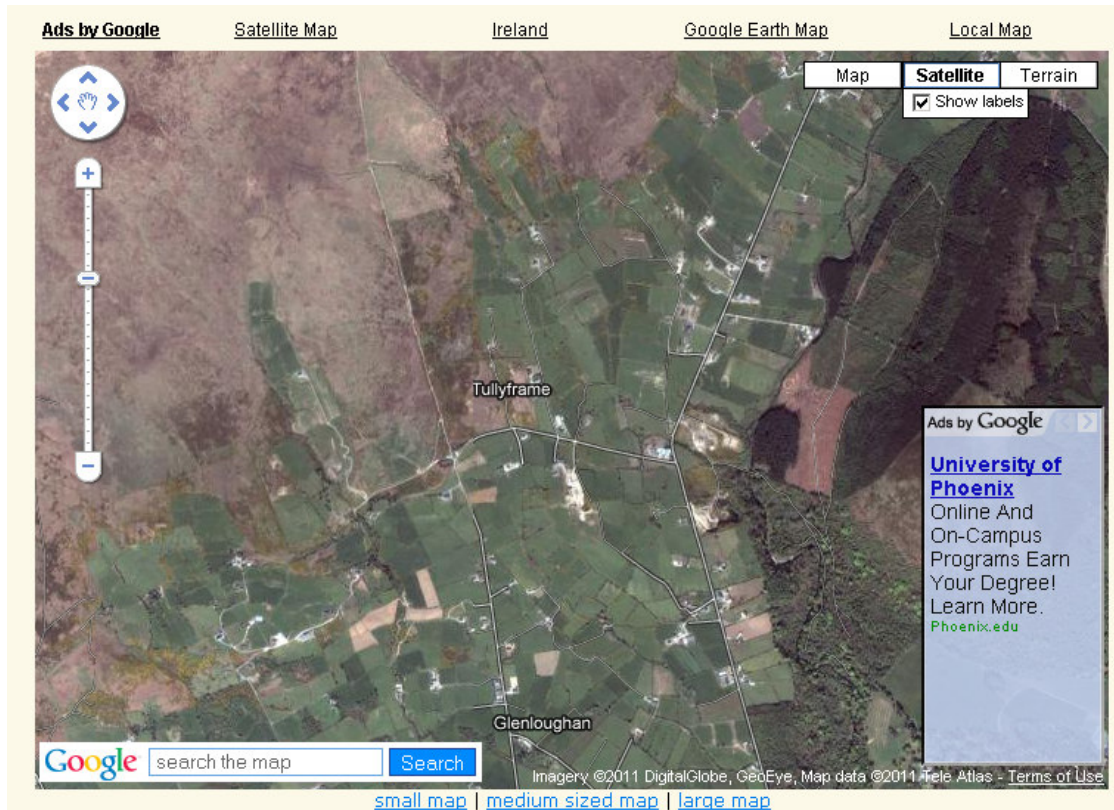
The Rooney property in the townland of Tullyframe in Kilkeel parish was labeled as parcel No. 77 in the Griffith's valuation. The land backed up to the Tullyframe Wood forest. Almost all the property in the townland of Tullyframe was owned by the Trustees of the Kilmorey Estate. In 1863 James Rooney, Sr. was the head of the household and the occupant of the almost rectangular shaped parcel consisting of a little over 2 acres. At the time of the 1901 and 1911 Irish census, his son, also named James Rooney, was the head of the household. His sister Martha, her husband Arthur Cunningham and their family were also living with him. In the 1911 census, although James was recorded as the land holder Martha's husband Arthur Cunningham was listed as the head of household. From the satellite photos it appears that the original homestead has been replaced by a more modern structure.



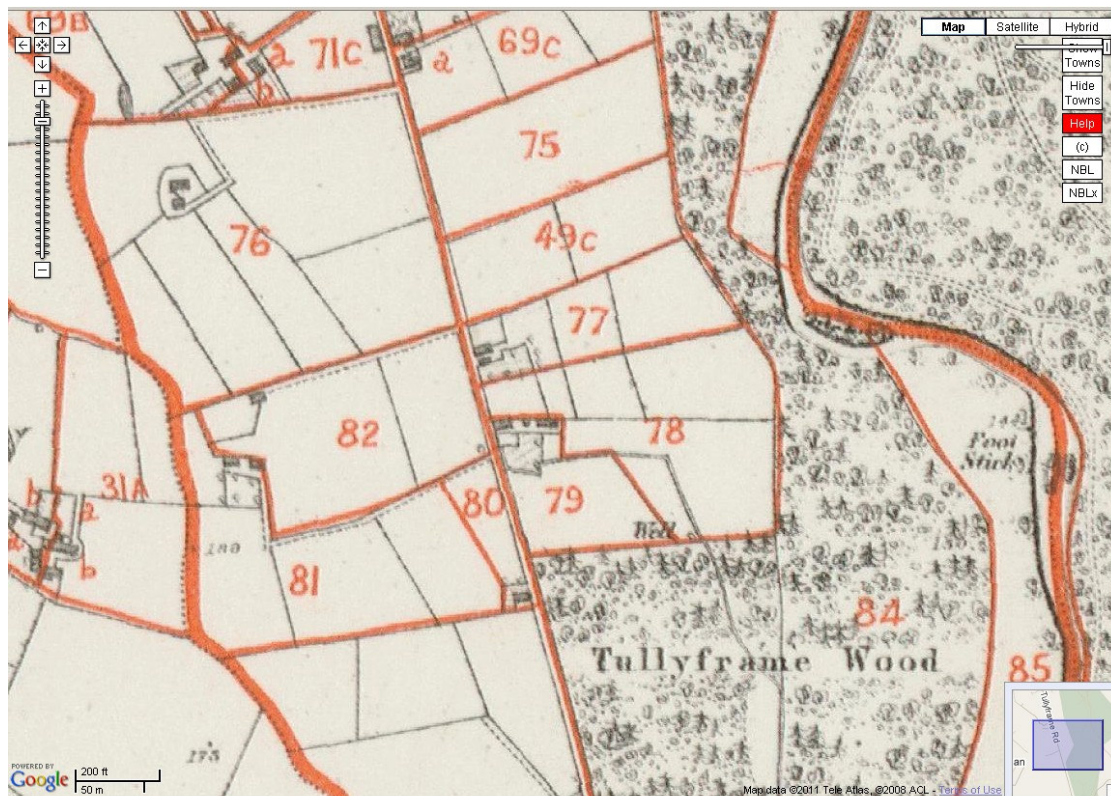
A map of the southern portion of Co. Down showing the town of Kilkeel and the townland of Tullyframe in the northwestern portion of the map.



A closer view of the townland of Tullyframe in the center of the map. The green area is known as the Tullyframe Wood.



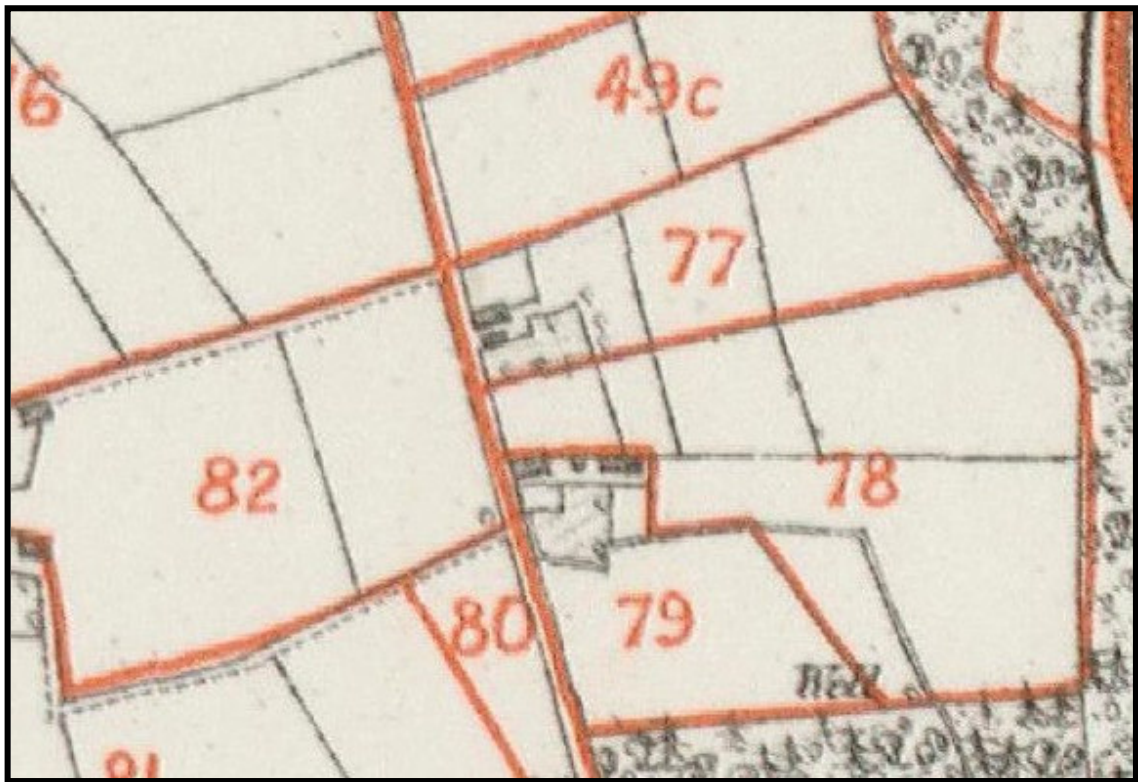
A satellite view of the townland of Tullyframe in the center of the map. This is approximately the same area shown on the map on the previous page.



A map of the townland of Tullyframe associated with the Griffith's Valuation from 1863. The Tullyframe Wood borders the eastern side of the Rooney land designated 77.



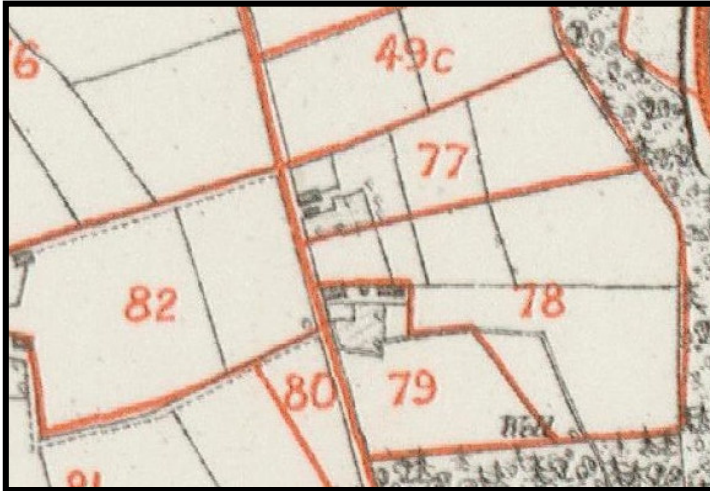
A satellite view of parcel #77 in the townland of Tullyframe. Comparison of this photo with the map below will demonstrate the persistence of the boundaries over 150 years.



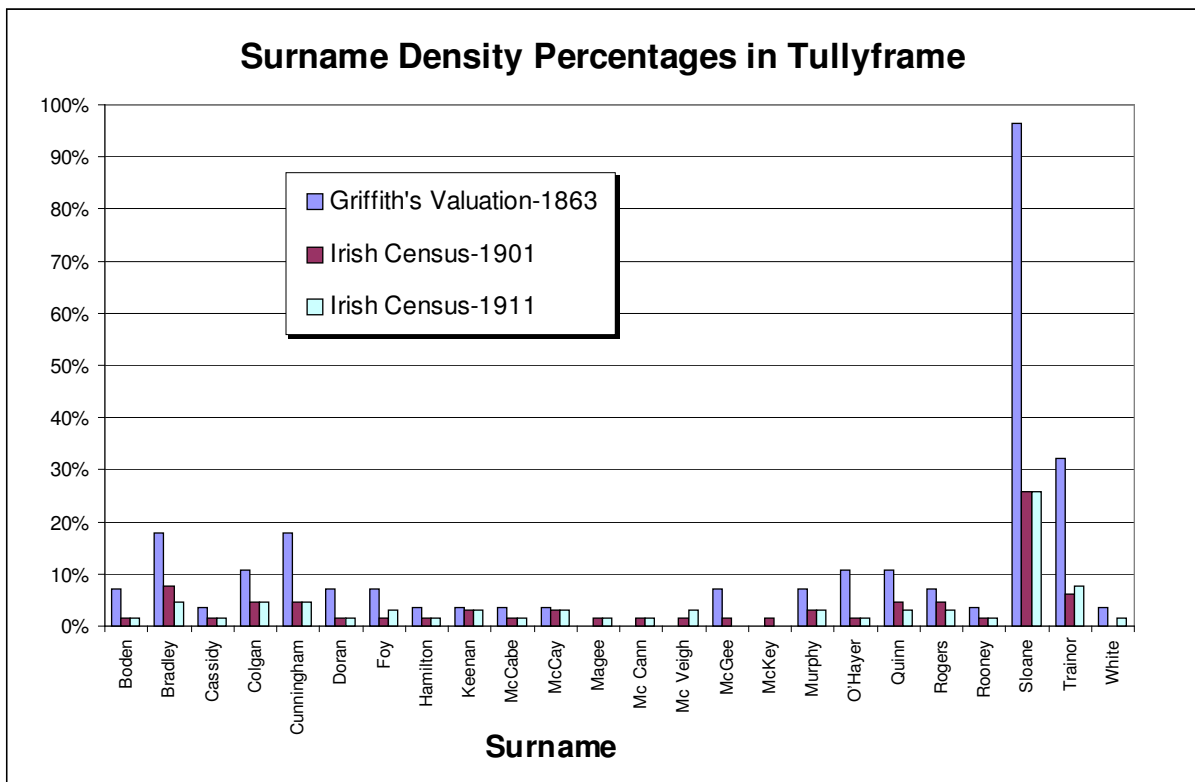
A map of the townland of Tullyframe associated with the Griffith's Valuation from 1863. The Rooney land is designated #77. Solid red lines represent the property lines.

The Immediate Neighbors of James Rooney (Parcel #77) in 1863

Name	Parcel	Name	Parcel
Elizabeth Sloan	49C	Hugh Hamilton	76
Daniel Cunningham	69ABC	Patrick Boden	78
Henry Quinn	75	Matthew Boden	79
Catherine Quinn	82a	Hugh Foy	80
Patrick Sloan (Teague)	82	Patrick Foy	81



These were the Rooney's immediate neighbors back in Tullyframe, Kilkeel parish, Co. Down, Ireland. They are logical surnames to search out in the 1880 census records of Onondaga and Cortland County in New York. The chances of success are slim but stranger things have happened before.



James Rooney in the Irish Census of 1901 and 1911

James was living on what was most likely the family homestead that he, as the eldest son, had inherited from his parents, probably upon the death of his father. A family of six persons was living in what was probably a stone walled house with a thatched roof. There were only three rooms in the house and two windows facing the front. The houses were classified into four categories in the census according to the type of walls and roof and the number of rooms and front facing windows. The best houses were rated 1st class. The Rooney house was rated 3rd class - one level above the bottom class. The family also had two out building in the 1901 census: a cow house and a barn.

James Rooney, the eldest child of James Rooney and Mary Sloan, was listed as the landholder in 1901 and 1911. Living with James was his sister Martha, her husband Arthur Cunningham and their children. In 1901 James Rooney was listed as the Head of the Household but in 1911 everyone was still there, except William John who had gone to America, and Arthur Cunningham was listed as the Head of Household and James Rooney was listed a his brother-in-law.

According to the 1911 census Martha and Arthur Cunningham had been married for 23 years and that places their wedding in the year 1888. They had only three children and all were still alive at the time of the 1911 census. A curious point comes up in the 1901 and 1911 census concerning the birthplaces of one of Martha and Arthur Cunningham's children. They were married in 1888, their eldest child William John (b. 1890), was born in Co. Down. Their youngest child Arthur (b. 1897) was also born in Co. Down. However, Mary Alice (b. 1892), their only daughter, was born in England. This was an unexpected result. There might be an interesting story here.

Name	1901		1911	
	Age	Birth Year	Age	Birth Year
James Rooney	48	1853	58	1853
Arthur Cunningham	32	1869	43	1868
Martha Cunningham	31	1870	47	1864
William John Cunningham	11	1890	-	-
Mary Cunningham	9	1892	19	1892
Arthur Cunningham	4	1897	14	1897

Conclusion

This revision of "*The Rooneys of Co. Down*" seemed to have a mind of its own. While I was trying to wrap up the process new information just kept opening up irresistible new avenues to pursue. In the end, several outstanding questions were answered, a few surprises were found and some new questions replaced those just answered.

The birth order of the Rooney siblings has finally been straightened out and Mary has emerged as the eldest daughter. The girls, Alice and Mary, came to the U.S. together in 1881. Alice stayed at the Marcus Brown farm in Apulia after her arrival. This same

farm was later owned by one of the Casey brothers, from Truxton, in the 1930's - hence the association of the Casey name. Their younger brother, John Rooney, left a more difficult trail, being a single person with a common name. An amusing story, believed to be about John, was discovered and in it he was described as a "well known character about town [Cortland]." A copy of this story is in the Appendix. His death in Homer, circa 1913, still needs confirmation.

During a search of newly available on line census records an extensive effort was made to fill in the gaps in Mary Rooney McGraw's records. It was discovered that Mary and John were separated by early 1892 after marrying in Feb. 1890. Coming as a total surprise, the 1900 census showed that Mary and John had had a child who died prior to 1900. The Truxton church records showed that a child named Mary Alice McGraw had been born to John McGraw and Mary Rooney around May 1891. The town of Truxton records showed that a child named Mary A. McGraw was born July 22, 1891 and died August 1, 1891. The discrepancies between these records are in the process of being resolved. The final resting place of Mary Alice McGraw still needs to be determined.

William John Cunningham, nephew of Mary, Alice and John, came to Truxton for a while and then moved on to Butte, MT. He has been tracked a little further. He married in Butte and had one child and then his wife died. He married a second time to Catherine Dwyer of Co. Cork and had three more children. All remained in the Butte area.

From Ireland, the Griffith's Valuation and the 1901 and 1911 Irish census records have just recently been made available online. The Rooneys who remained in Ireland were found in those records and the map of the Rooney homestead (1863) was also found. A satellite photo of the same area today provided an example of the remarkable persistence of the characteristic stonewall boundaries found throughout Ireland.

The last of the original Rooney questions is still open. Why did two young girls from Northern Ireland come to Central NY, that was filled with people from the southern part of Ireland? What was the Rooney connection to Central New York? The organization and methodology behind that search was described and some local subjects of interest were reviewed. The stretching of that search across the ocean to Ireland was described. Two other search avenues exist. A name found in the sponsors from the various Rooney related baptisms, one that is not an already known friend or relative, would be a possible connection candidate. The second avenue involves developing a list of surnames of the first Irish Catholics to arrive in each of the towns surrounding the villages of Tully and Apulia. This ensures another revision of this document is in the not too distant future.

APPENDIX

The Rooney of Co. Down Letters

Michael W. McGraw married Alice Rooney in April 7, 1882 and his brother, John W. McGraw married Alice's sister Mary as his second wife on February 11, 1890.

It usually falls to the female side of the family to maintain correspondence with the other family members. On the McGrath side of the family Mary Ryan McGrath was unable to write and communication broke down with those in Ireland. After many years we were able to re-establish communications with the Ryan side in Upperchurch Co. Tipperary in 2000. With the Rooney side of the family communication was maintained up through the 1970s. In the beginning Alice probably wrote home to Ireland and this was picked up by her eldest daughter Mayne McGraw Waters. This effort was carried on by Mayme's younger sister Agnes McGraw Currie and also by Mayme's daughter Lucy Waters Sprague. In 1970 these Rooney lines of communication broke down. Thanks to the Internet, communication with the Rooneys of Co. Down has been opened once again. Gerry Hennity, great-grandson of Martha Rooney Cunningham and I have recently exchanged e-mails.

From Agnes McGraw Currie – Sept. 2, 1969

"The only relatives (first cousin, Mary Alice) we know live in or near Newry in North Ireland. That is where Grandma (my Mother) [Alice Rooney McGraw] came from. They lived there on a small farm that her parents, and I think her grandparents, owned. The last letter I had from her and she had been very ill, and had to go live with her daughter in Kilkeel. We were there at her daughter's when we were in Ireland. Nice apartment."

"She, the mother, Mary Alice Hennity is a daughter of my mother's sister. Mother had two sisters and two brothers. Aunt Mary who came to Truxton after mother did and married Uncle John (father's brother [Michael W. McGraw]), the father of John J. McGraw (ballplayer). The other sister was the oldest and she stayed in Ireland and is the mother of Mary Alice, and a son who came to Truxton and then went out west, and no one has heard from him since. Mary Alice married William Hennity and their children are Nora and Leo. Nora had two small children about 3 and 2. Their son Leo and wife came while we were there and they (had) a baby about 9 months."

Follow up letter: From Lucy Waters Sprague – September 24, 1969

"Mary Alice Hennity is our first cousin on Mom's side (Rooney). Mom's sister, Martha married a Cunningham. She had two brothers, Artie, never married, whom we met at Nora's apt., and Willie John who came over and lived at our home on the North Road, Truxton, then went out to Butte, Montana, and got married and had some children. I believe his wife used to write at first but that was a long time ago."

“Mary Alice did not move in with Nora until after her husband died... Nora’s husband is a fisherman for some concern. Her brother went to England and works there. The other boy was married and had a son and came to the house when we were there along with his wife and baby...”

“Our cousin Mary Alice, lived in Newry, not in the city, but out in the country. The address we wrote to was ‘Newry, Lisnacree, Co. Down, Ireland.’ Kilkeel is a village just about a mile cross lots from their house. It is on the ocean and right on the border of North and South Ireland (or Erie).” “We hired a taxi to take us from Newry, where we went on the train from Dublin, and stayed overnight. It was about a half or three-quarters of an hour ride to Mary Alice’s home. We had the taxi wait while we visited them. Then he came back and took us and Mary Alice to Nora’s apt. in Kilkeel. Then he waited and took us back to Newry for the night. We left the next morning for Dublin on the train.”

From Lucy Waters Sprague

Lucy Waters Sprague corresponded with her mother’s (Mayme McGraw Waters) cousin, Mary Alice, in Ireland. “She lived with her daughter Nora. After she died, there was no more correspondence. Nora would not write. My letters did not come back, but neither were they answered.”

The last correspondence was in 1970. Lucy sent her letters to Mrs. William Hennity (Mary Alice)
c/o her daughter Nora:
Mrs. J. Donnan
26 McGoldrick Villas
Derryogue, Kilkeel
Co. Down, North Ireland

“Msgr. John McGraw was ordained in Rome, Italy. Mother (Mayme), Uncle Jim (James Leo McGraw) and Aunt Mary (Mary Dady McGraw) and Aunt Agnes (Agnes McGraw Currie) went over for the ordination. They returned by way of Ireland and Father John said mass there.”

Letter Lucy received from Ireland

26 McGoldrick Villas
Derryogue, Kilkeel
23-2-70

My Dear Cousin & Family:

In reply to your very welcome letter and Christmas card received some time ago. Sorry to be so long in answering but you realize how it is at that time. I am not so active as I used to be and sometimes forgetful.

Pleased to hear about your family and that all are quite well. My family are all doing fine. T.G. Nora's two eldest are 16 years and William John's boy is 13 years. Leo's children are small yet. The eldest is seven and the next four.

You asked me about some names of your grandmother's family. Her mother's maiden name was Mary Sloan. Father's, James Rooney. They had five of a family. Eldest son, James Rooney. He never married. Eldest daughter, Mary Rooney. She went to America and married John McGraw. Your grandmother, Alice Rooney, who married Michael McGraw. My mother, Martha Rooney, who married Arthur Cunningham, and last John Rooney who went to America, came back on a visit, returned to America, and died.

I am sorry I can't tell you anything about your Grandfather's family. My mother used to tell us all the news but it is so long ago I don't remember.

My mother had three of us. William John, who went to America, married, died four years ago. (Myself) Mary Alice, who married William Hennity. He died three years ago. And Arthur who never married but is still alive on his own.

How the years go by and we never seem to notice until old age comes. Please write soon again as I miss your mother's letters very much.

The Rooneys are buried here in St. Colmans, Massforth, the church where we go to mass on Sundays, and where Father John McGraw said mass when he was here on his way home from Rome.

With Love,
God Bless.
Mary Alice (signed)

How many of a family have you and how many girls?

The Lonergan Connection

Michael Rooney = **Mary Finlon**
b. Ireland b. Ireland

Bridget Rooney = **Edward McEvoy**
b. 1860 Ireland b. Nov 22, 1852 Otisco, NY
d. 1930 Cortland, NY m. 1880
Immigration: d. Apr 25, 1930 NY
1876 [1920, 1930]
1877 [1900, 1910]

George Edward McEvoy = **Helen E. Kane**
b. Jan 24, 1893, Spafford, NY b. Apr 1896, NY
d. Oct 26, 1957, Preble, NY d. 1940, NY

Lawrence Lonergan
b. Nov. 1886
d. 1966
bur. St. Mary's, Cortland

Blanche Currie
b. 1895
d. 1996 Died at 102
bur. St. Mary's, Cortland

Marcella Louise McEvoy = **Paul Donald Lonergan**
b. Jan 16, 1930 Preble, NY b. Mar 22, 1926 Truxton, NY
m. Sept 25, 1950 St. Leo's, Tully, NY
d. Sept 27, 2004

ROONEY FELL FROM BRIDGE INTO SWIFT CURRENT BELOW

*Missstep Precipitated Him Into the River, and in the
Darkness He Struggled for the Shore—Almost
Exhausted, He Finally Reached Land.*

SPECIAL TO THE POST-STANDARD.

CORTLAND, April 4.—With water dripping from his only suit of clothes, hatless and covered with mud, Johnny Rooney, a well-known character about town appeared at the steel mill of Wickwire Bros.' factory early this morning and begged that he might enjoy a seat beside the hot furnace to dry out his soaked garments.

He had a half hour before fallen from the Traction Company bridge into the rushing waters of the Mohawk, but through fortune lived to tell the tale, and now only asked shelter that he might not have to wander about all night in his water-soaked garments.

Rooney was invited inside and given a comfortable seat before the huge furnace. He said that for the past three months he had been working on a farm near McGrawville. His visits to the city had been few and far between. Yesterday he took a leave of absence, and, as he said, came here to spend a few hours in recreation.

It was 1 o'clock before Rooney decided to go home, and then the cars for McGrawville had ceased to run. His only course was to walk, and walk he did, until his journey was abruptly brought to an end.

Down Elm street he went and started to cross the river by means of the trolley bridge. The night was dark and Rooney, as he says, was unable to see where he was travelling. In the middle of the bridge he walked over one side.

For a second he realized that he was floating rapidly through space, then with a splash he struck the water and sunk to the bottom. Arising quickly he struck out boldly to swim for the shore. The current was swift and the water-soaked clothes greatly impeded his progress.

After struggling for some time he reached shore, tired and nearly helpless. Wringing the water as best he could from his garments he started to walk for a place of shelter. All houses in that neighborhood were closed and it was not until he had walked for half an hour that he finally rounded up at Wickwire's.

Footnotes

- ¹ Purchased Cuyler Lot 76, subdivision 1 on November 10, 1855 - Deed Book 26, p. 107;
Sold Cuyler Lot 76, subdivision 1 on February 1, 1867 - Deed Book 46, p.372;
Purchased Cuyler Lot 76, subdivision 2 on February 27, 1868 - Deed Book 43, p.431.
All are found at the Cortland County Courthouse, Cortland, NY.
- ² Mortgage Book 11. p 524, Cortland County Courthouse, Cortland, NY.
- ³ The Watson Letters-Life and Times in Tully. These are a collection of 26 letters covering the period August 1, 1872 – October 22, 1873.
<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nyononda/LETTERS/watsontully.html>
The letters are from Margaret Watson to her son John Watson who was a telegraph operator in Oswego, NY. There were a couple weekly newspapers that showed up in Tully that Margaret regularly mailed to her son. In addition there was a satchel that was sent back and forth on the train to convey dirty laundry to Tully and clean clothes back to Oswego. John's father was a cooper in Tully and made several trips to Syracuse to find customers for his barrels. According to the letters he never picks up any business as the Syracuse merchants are buying their barrels cheaper from out West.
- ⁴ Deed Book 14, p. 365, Cortland County Courthouse, Cortland, NY.
- ⁵ Deed Book 57, p 376, Cortland County Courthouse, Cortland, NY.
- ⁶ "Keeney Settlement," by O.W. Webster, published in 1917, the author states "Michael McGraw, now of Truxton, New York, attended school at the Bardeen School House and at Keeney Settlement... he gained a reputation in his school days of being proficient in mathematics. There were few who equaled him in that branch of learning."
- ⁷ *A Genealogy of the McGraw's of Truxton, New York*, Doug Currie, Jan. 10, 1994, p.2.
- ⁸ 1892 NYS Census, Cortland County, Truxton, p 15; Film Number: 0843868; Digital Folder Number: 4370016; Image Number: 390
- ⁹ December 12, 1893 Purchase: Michael McGraw purchased a parcel of land in Truxton Lot 83 from Mary Jane Arnold, of the town of Tully, Onondaga County. The purchase price was nominally \$1.00 but the deed describes a series of payments required of Michael McGraw to be paid to Mary Jane Arnold totaling \$600 dollars plus interest. The size of the parcel in Lot 83 was 10 acres. Deed Book 94, Page 406. Cortland County Courthouse, Cortland, NY.
- ¹⁰ 1905 NYS census, Cortland County, Truxton, Page Number: 14; Line Number: 36; Film Number: 843869; Digital Folder Number: 4296294; Image Number: 00638
- ¹¹ 1915 Purchase: Mrs. Alice McGraw purchased a parcel of land in Truxton Lot 93 from Cornelius Dobbins and his wife. The purchase price is unknown because the actual document was not copied. Deed Book 128, Page 86. Cortland County Courthouse, Cortland, NY.
- ¹² June 1, 1938 - Sale: Mrs. Alice McGraw sold the above described property to her sons Thomas McGraw and William McGraw. The property is described in detail in this document but it is describing the land at the corner of Prospect and Main in Truxton. Deed Book 181, Page 56. Cortland County Courthouse, Cortland, NY.
- ¹³ *The Real McGraw*, Blanche McGraw, David McKay Company, NY, 1953, p. 29. The family moved "into a small frame house on Main Street, right across from Mrs. Goddard's hotel."

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- ¹⁴ John's property on West Hill Road. Deed Book 84, p.412. Cortland County Courthouse, Cortland, NY.
- ¹⁵ *A Genealogy of the McGraw's of Truxton, New York*, Doug Currie, Jan. 10, 1994, p.6
- ¹⁶ *Reconciliation of Baptismal Record and Death Certificate*, Michael F. McGraw, January 29, 2011.
- ¹⁷ 1892 NYS Census, Cortland Co.: John, Truxton, p.12; Mary, Truxton, p13, John J., Truxton, p. 11. Anna, Cortlandville ED07, p. 12.
- ¹⁸ *John McGraw*, Charles C. Alexander, Viking Penguin, NY, 1988, p 28.
- ¹⁹ *The Real McGraw*, Blanche McGraw, David McKay Company, NY, 1953, p. 30-32.
- ²⁰ 1900, NY, Cortland County, Truxton, T623\1020\Part2, Res. 145, Fam. 146
- ²¹ 1900, NY, Onondaga County, Fabius, T623\1135\173A
- ²² 1900, NY, Cortland County, Truxton, T623\1020\257B.
- ²³ 1900 MD, Baltimore Co, Baltimore 12th Ward, T623\612\267A. John was living with the family of his late wife, Minnie Doyle. The Michael Doyle family was living at 2738 St. Paul St.
- ²⁴ 1910 NY, Onondaga County, Village of Tully, T624\1055\106A, Res. 55, Fam.58.
- ²⁵ 1920, NY, Cortland County, Truxton, T625\1096\296B.
- ²⁶ 1920, NY, Cortland County, Truxton, T625\1096\298B.
- ²⁷ The Cortland Democrat, Friday, April 30, 1926.
- ²⁸ 1870 NY Onondaga County, Syracuse Ward 6, M593\1063\307B - Ellen (22) and Mary (20) Barnwell were both single and gave their occupations "Domestic." Both of their parents were foreign born.
- ²⁹ 1880 NY, Onondaga County, Syracuse Ward 4, T9\907\246A - Ellen (26) is single and gave her occupation as a domestic servant living in the James B. Mix household at 56 Hawley Street. Ellen was born in Ireland, as were both of her parents.
- ³⁰ 1900 NY, Onondaga County, Tully, T623\1138\191B - John's birth date was given as April, 1847 and Ellen's as June, 1850.
- ³¹ 1905 Census - John Roney - Cortlandville-ED02, Pg. 8, Img 9 (www.familysearch.org)
- ³² 1900 NY Cortland County, Cortlandville, T623\1020\193B, Res. 250, Fam. 297] [June 18, 1900].
- ³³ 1910 NY Cortland County, Homer, T624\934\212B.
- ³⁴ Obituary of John C. Rooney, Binghamton Press, January 17, 1929.
- ³⁵ Lucy Sprague letter dated Dec. 12, 1997: "John was killed in a train accident in Homer..." Lucy Sprague letter dated Aug. 5, 1999: "John was killed in a railroad accident in Homer." Doug Currie's paper: *A Genealogy of The McGraw's of Truxton, New York*: Jan. 10, 1994 - "...John apparently died in a train accident in East Homer, before 1920."
- ³⁶ 1920 Montana, Silver Bow, Centerville WD01; T625\976\230A - Res. 59, Fam. 59
- ³⁷ Montana County Marriages 1865-1950. LDS Film No. 1906957, Item 1 rn 14245, Digital folder no. 4278756, Image #662.
- ³⁸ 1930 Montana, Silver Bow County, Butte T626\1262\3B.
- ³⁹ 1900 NY Onondaga County, Tully T623\1138\191B.
- ⁴⁰ 1870 NY Onondaga County, Syracuse Ward 6, M593\1063\307B.
- ⁴¹ 1870 NY Onondaga County, Syracuse Ward 6, M593\1063\308A.
- ⁴² 1880 NY Onondaga County, Syracuse Ward 4, T9\907\246A.

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- ⁴³ 1870 NY Onondaga County, Syracuse Ward 6, M593\1063\351B. 1900 NY Onondaga County, Syracuse Ward 14, T624\1137\139B.
- ⁴⁴ 1880 NY Onondaga County, Fabius, T9\905\197A.
- ⁴⁵ *The Pioneer Irish of Onondaga*, Theresa Bannon, 1911, p. 75. “The family of John Savage is said to have been the first Irish family to locate in Syracuse. He came about 1821, when two hundred and fifty scattered people made the nucleus of the future city.”
- ⁴⁶ “History of the Diocese of Syracuse,” edited by William P. H. Hewitt, Catholic Sun Press, Syracuse, NY, 1909, p. 156. William Hewitt is the great grandson of Michael Gleason who was an important leader of the Irish community in the village of Salina around the middle of the 19th century. Michael received an extensive amount of coverage by Theresa Bannon in her 1911 book on *The Pioneer Irish of Onondaga*.