

Origins of the Foy and McKeon families

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The Foy Family

The Foy group which holds most interest for my biography is the family headed by Patrick Foy and Brigid Morley. Some remained in Ireland, but most migrated to the New York metropolitan area during the first decades of the 20th century.

In 1878, Patrick Foy (1848 - 1904) married Brigid Morley (1858 - 1903). The couple occupied a small farm in lower Garryedmond, Claremorris, County Mayo, Ireland. When Martin and Anthony Berry emigrated to Kansas in the middle 1880s, Patrick took over their farms in Garryedmond, demolished Martin's house and built a new house around 1890. The house still stands, renovated recently to welcome family members who might wish to visit and stay near the County Mayo home of the Foy's. [{1}](#)

Patrick and Brigid's thirteen children

Mary Foy (1880 - 1956) married Michael Mullin (1873-1927), a shopkeeper in Ballyhaunis. The couple took up residence above Michael's shop. The parish priest warned Michael that there was a price on his head (probably as a result of the land wars and advised him to go to America. Mary remained a few years with her daughter Josephine. The priest told her her place was with her husband, so she emigrated to New York, leaving Josephine in the care of the Foy's. She and Michael had two other daughters, Margaret and Mary. [{2}](#)

Ellen "Ellie" Foy (1881 - 1965) took over the care of the family after the death of her parents. She later married William Costello (??? - 1954) in 1925 and occupied the farm next to the Foy farm in Garryedmond.

Delia (baptized Bridget) Foy (1883 - 1965) emigrated to New Jersey in 1905. She returned to Ireland and then accompanied Josephine Mullin to the US in 1911. She married Michael Martin (1885 - 1956) in 1914. The couple lived in Elizabeth NJ and had three daughters, Catherine, Beatrice and Mary. {3}

John Foy (1885 - 1965) married Delia Costello (1895 - 1967) from the neighboring farm and took over the Foy family farm. The couple had four children: Patrick, Mai, John and Margaret. {4}

Margaret Foy (1886 - 1983) emigrated to New Jersey on 21 Sept 1906. She lived in Jersey City and other towns of New Jersey. She then moved close to Peg Mullin Kabriski in Queens NY, then returned to Ireland where she died. She did not marry.

Jane Foy (1888 - 1981) emigrated to New York in 1906. She settled in Mt. Kisco, NY where she met and married Thomas O'Grady (1891-1969) in 1915. The couple lived in Westchester County and Bronx. They had four children: Francis, Robert, Thomas and Jane. {5}

Patrick Foy (1890 - 1981) came to New York in 1911. He married Susan Olwell (?? - 1932) in Saint Patrick's Cathedral. The couple lived in Manhattan then Queens. Patrick followed his cousin Patrick Murray as a railroad conductor and then as a New York City policeman. {6}

Cecelia E Foy (1892 - 1960) came to New York in 1909. She did not marry. She became a nurse, served in France with the US Army during World War I, and died in California.

Honorio ("Hannah") Foy (1894 - 1925) came to New York in 1912. She became a nurse, served in France with the US Army during World War, and died of consumption. She married Charles William Anderson (1894 - 1952). The couple had no children.

Peter Joseph Foy (1895 - 1951) came to New York in 1914, and saw service in France during World War I. He married Virginia McKeon (1900 - 1941). The couple lived in Bronx NY and had two children: Peter Joseph and Richard Daniel. {Z}

Peter Foy had a *twin brother* who died shortly after birth.

Elizabeth Theresa Foy (1898 - 1937) came to New York in 1919. She lived with the Mullins in Woodlawn NY, then went upstate to care for Hannah and Charles Anderson. After Hannah's death in 1925, Elizabeth married widower Charles William Anderson(1894 - 1952). The couple had three children: Mary Patricia, Charles William and Robert Emmett. {8}

Luke Patrick Foy (1900 - 1920) developed consumption in Ireland and was brought to this country on Christmas Day 1919 by Cecelia Foy. He died in Westchester County and is the first Foy buried in the Foy family plot in Gate of Heaven Cemetery, Valhalla NY. The Foy tradition is that the plot was purchased by the three women: Cecelia, Hannah and Theresa for a (known) total price of US\$105.00.

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The McKeon family

There were many McKeons (and Barrys) who came to America during and shortly after the Great Hunger or Famine which occurred during the middle of the 19th century. My grandfather, Thomas McKeon(1861 - 1925) spent his teen years in Manhattan. Around the time of the Civil War the family moved across the East River to Hunters Point, which was across from 36th Street in Manhattan. A developer had purchased farmland in Hunters Point and turned it into a development for families living in Manhattan.

Thomas and his father John were *turners* or lathe operators. They may have relocated to Long Island because Henry Steinway moved his piano factory to Astoria and soon sent horse drawn trolleys south of Astoria to pick up and deliver workers for the factory.

Later Thomas became a fireman and eventually the Captain of a fire company in Maspeth LI.

Anna Clarissa Wearing's (1866 - 1939) background is somewhat more complicated. She was the daughter of George Wearing and Mary Reidy(1838 - 1914), the later from County Clare. George and Mary had two children, Anna and George. I can find no trace of George senior or junior in subsequent census records, so I suppose they both died soon after the Anna's birth.

Widow Mary Reidy Wearing married widower William Barry about 1873. The merged family included:

Catherine Barry(1864 - 1939) who married Peter Sherry and lived in North Bronx and Yonkers.

Anna Wearing Barry S(1866 - 1939) who married Thomas McKeon

Hannah Barry (1867 - 1912) who did not marry but lived several years with Catherine and Peter Sherry.

Elizabeth Cecelia Barry (1876 - 1959) who married Hugh

Casey and lived in New Jersey.

Mary Barry (1878 - 1970) who joined the Sisters of Charity and assumed the name Sister Theresa Magdalen. She worked in New Jersey schools and died at Convent Station NJ.

Nora Barry (1880 - 1952) did not marry, lived in Hoboken NJ, became a schoolteacher.

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The ten children of Thomas McKeon (1861 - 1925) and Anna Barry Wearing (1866 - 1939) :

John McKeon (1884 - 1967) married Emily ??? (1889 - 1971) lived early in Corona NY then relocated to Flushing NY, where John was an executive for Long Island Lighting Company. The couple had three children: Virginia, Laurence and Joan. {[9](#)}

Mary McKeon (1887 - 1926) married James Ronaghan (1886 - 1969) lived in Manhattan, but returned to the McKeon house in Elmhurst after she became sick. Mary and James had no children.

William McKeon (1889 - 1905) died young and is buried in Calvary Cemetery.

George McKeon (1891 - 1965) remained single. He was a salesman for several companies.

Francis Xavier McKeon (1894 - 1969) married (1921) Dorothy Moller (1891 - ???) from one of the founding families of Domino Sugar. Frank ran a trucking company, most of whose business was for Domino. Frank and Dorothy had two children, Eugene and Arthur. {[10](#)}

Virginia "Blossom" McKeon (1900 - 1941) married (1925) Peter Joseph Foy (1895 - 1951), a World War I veteran who engaged in the grocery business. The couple had two children: Peter Joseph and Richard Daniel [{7}](#).

Thomas McKeon (1902 - 1962) married Florence Byrnes (1905 - 1994) Thomas also worked for Long Island Lighting Company. The couple had one adopted son: Arthur. [{11}](#)

Leo McKeon (1905 - 1986) married Rose ??? (??? - ???). He worked at several trades, the last owning a limousine company. The couple had two children: Dolores and William. [{12}](#)

Anita McKeon (1908 - 1942) married (1935) Thomas Joseph Morley (1905 - 1981) a cousin of Peter Joseph Foy. The couple adopted a daughter: Mary Morley who married Richard Foy. [{13}](#)

Daniel Reidy McKeon (1911 - 1974) married (1942) Dorothy McAuliffe (1905 - 1977). He was a World War II veteran; after the war he owned a service station in Denver. The couple had two children: Anna and Daniel Jr. [{14}](#)

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