

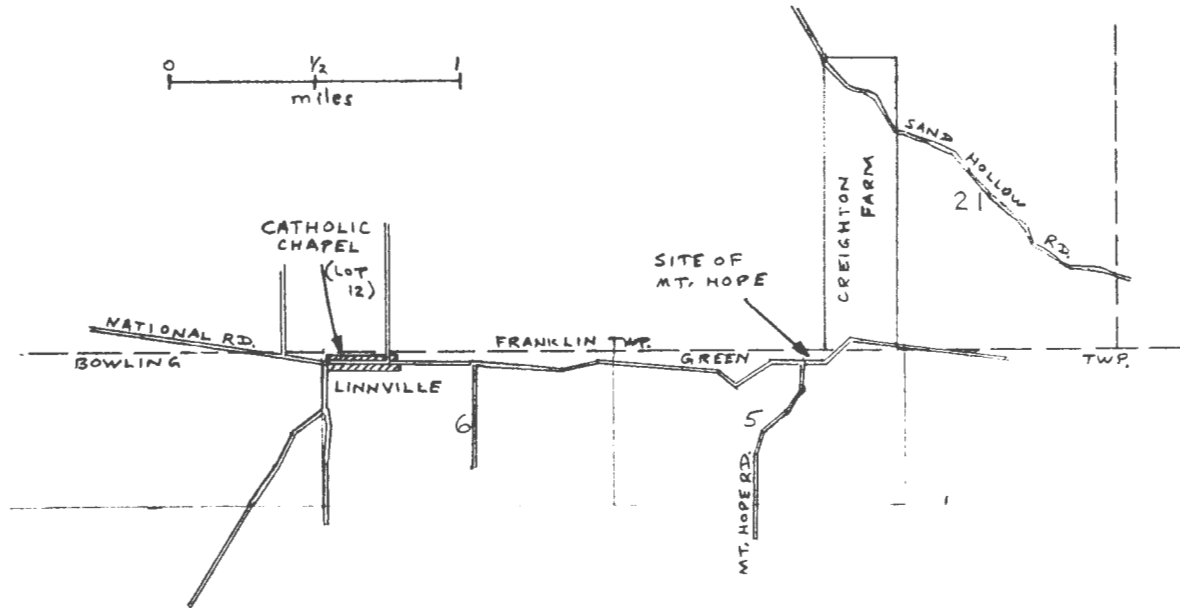


Barquilla de la Santa Maria

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Within the present boundaries of the diocese, the Creightons lived on a farm in Franklin Township, Licking County. They also owned part of the village of Mount Hope, home of many Irish laborers on the National Road. This community was served by visiting priests in a small chapel in nearby Linnville.

THE CREIGHTON OR McCRAREN FAMILY CATHOLIC PIONEERS IN OHIO AND OMAHA

by Donald M. Schlegel

James Creighton was the first of his family to leave his home in County Monaghan, Ireland and emigrate to the United States of America, early in the 19th century. His tombstone at Somerset Holy Trinity names his parish of birth and this has been interpreted as "Cleninbush". This must be Clontibret parish. James was followed across the ocean by his mother, Bridget, and by his siblings, Frank, Andrew, Christopher, John, Mary, and Michael. The story was handed down in the family that Bridget, the mother, had been evicted by her landlord in Ireland. The family moved from the east coast to Belmont County, Ohio, where Mrs. Creighton's remains lie in the Catholic cemetery at Beaver, once the site of St. Dominic Church. She died on August 24, 1842 at the age of 84 years, having lived for many years with her son Michael's family.

The name of this family has become famous as that of Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, for from this family came Edward Creighton, whose hard work formed the fortune that was the university's foundation. The family has been memorialized in a small book, Creighton: Biographical Sketches of Edward Creighton, John A. Creighton, Mary Lucretia Creighton, Sarah Emily Creighton by P. A. Mullens, S.J. (1) A copy of this book and other information on the family were recently given to the Society by member Ruth Fox of Reynoldsburg, a descendant of Michael Creighton.

In that book, Father Mullens first speaks of the first immigrant. "James Creighton, a native of County Monaghan, Ireland, came to America in 1805. Six years later, in Philadelphia, in St. Mary's Church, he was married to Bridget Hughes, a native of County Armagh, Ireland. After a year spent in Pittsburgh, Mr. Creighton moved to Belmont County, Ohio, in 1813, where he engaged in farming. Subsequently, in 1830, he moved to Licking County, in the same state, where he died on March 5th, 1842."

It is the marriage record of the couple that gives a first indication that the original family name was not Creighton. The marriage register of St. Joseph (and St. Mary) Church in Philadelphia lists no marriage between a James Creighton and a Bridget Hughes, but under the date of October 16, 1811 says that James McCraren and Bridget Hughes, both Catholics, were married before Rev. W. V. Harold, pastor of St. Mary's and Vicar General of the bishop of Philadelphia; witnesses were Patrick Hughes, Thomas McHenry, and Margaret Sweeny. (2) The name is confirmed by another record that matches the account handed down in the family. No record of immigration is found in either the Philadelphia passenger arrival lists or the emigration records in Ireland for a James Creighton in 1805. However, James McCrarin, age 21, a laborer from Clontibret Parish, County Monaghan, "intended to go on board" the Roe Buck at Newry, bound for Philadelphia, on July 16, 1805. (3) When he disembarked at Philadelphia on September 21, his name was recorded as J. McCraland. (4) (In this spelling one can almost hear James roll the second "r" of his surname!)

It must be more than a coincidence that this James McCraren was from Clontibret parish and emigrated in 1805, as did James Creighton, and married Bridget Hughes in 1811. The name McCraren is extremely rare, but a form of it does occur in an early record from Clontibret Parish. About 1665, among the heads of families under the care of Rev. James Duffy, Vicar of Clontibret, were both Thomas Crarne and Hugh Crarne -- apparently the same, rare name, without the prefix of "Mac". (5) The will of Francis Creighton, and moreso a land record of his brother Christopher, confirm this original family name.

The Creighton family traditions name six siblings of James's generation and the will of one of them, Francis, names a seventh. Francis died between January 9 and May 8, 1816. On the latter date his will was proved in the Guernsey County, Ohio Common Pleas Court. It is an interesting document and is quoted here in its entirety:

In the name of God amen. I Francis Creighton of Guernsey, Ohio being of sound mind and memory at the Signing of this my will thanks be to God for his Mercies to me Considering the uncertainty of life Do make this my last will and Testament In manner following that is to say, I give my soul to God and my Body to be Burid in the earth to the Resurrection of the Just. As for my personal Estate I Bequeath in the following Manner I Leave to my Brother Andrew my Boots and velvet trousers

and my day coat one flanel Shirt and drawers Likewise to Brother Jas. I Leave my Blue Coat and one flanel Shirt to my Brother Christopher I Leave my Big Coat Jacket and hat Likewise to Thomas B. Kirkpatrick I Leave my two pair of shoes and Likewise I do order and allow my executor to sell my plantation on the Mudy fork of Saltfork of Wills Creek Guernsey County Ohio at the expiration of two years from my death the monies arising from said Land I Bequeath in the following manner I order and allow my executor to put four Hundred Dollars out on Interest and my mother to draw the Interest year and yearly during her natural Life. And the Remainder of the money arising from said estate to be divided in the following manner Equally to be divided among my Lawful Brothers and Sister Mary in the manner following that is to say my single Brothers is to draw as much as my married Brothers and my Married Brothers Shares is to be divided equally betwixt them and their wives and after the death of my said mother I Bequeath the four hundred Dollars that she Draws the Interest of to be Divided in manner following fifty Dollars of said four hundred Dollars I Bequeath unto my Cosen Catherine McCernan Likewise Twenty five Dollars unto Edward Hughs in Leu of hundred Dollars that said Hughs Lent Michael McCraren Likewise Sixty Dollars to Mary [?] Brady Likewise to my Brother John Sixty Dollars Likewise unto Br. Michael Sixty dollars and the Remainder to be equally divided betwixt my Brothers Andrew Christopher and James and I do hereby By appoint Thos. B. Kirkpatrick my hole and sole Executor of this my last will and Testament and farther I do allow my executor to Borrow money in pay of my debts if any there be after my death upon the Credit of said Estate. Given under my hand and seal this 9th of January 1816.
(6)

The will raises two interesting questions: was the cousin's name of McCernan an copyist's error for McCraren, or was this perhaps the maiden name of Mrs. Bridget Creighton, the mother, or was it only the married name of an aunt or cousin? and, since Francis was paying a portion of the debt of Michael McCraren, was Michael the deceased father of the family? Thomas Kirkpatrick, a devisee and executor of the will, was a local Justice of the Peace.

Continuing with the stories of the siblings, Andrew died in Licking County, Ohio early in 1837; John was administrator of his estate and James was John's bondsman. (7) He seems to have died unmarried.

Christopher Creighton, who will be further discussed below, lived in Oxford Township, Guernsey County. He entered 164 acres in section 11, on the township's southern boundary, on November 21, 1807 under the name of Christopher McCrearen. (8) He left four daughters and four sons. (9) J. B. Furay, a 20th century descendant of the family, remarked in his notes that among Christopher's descendants was Charles Wesley Creighton, a Protestant minister living in Columbus.

John Creighton (1793-1865) married Anna Mary Barrighman or Barrickman in 1821 before a Methodist minister in Belmont County, in the days long before a Catholic priest lived nearby. However, he remained a member of the Catholic Church. They had five children. John and Mary seem to have begun the move west from Belmont County, with the coming of the crews building the National Road.

In January of 1831 John purchased 80 acres of farm land lying north of the new National Road and one mile east of Linnville, in Licking County (the west half of the northwest quarter of Section 21). On March 6, 1832 he purchased the

land on the National Road at that point (part of the west half of the southeast quarter of Section 5). (10) On this land had been platted the town of Mount Hope. This seems to have been the little village described in Violet Gray's Licking Valley, Land of Legend: "On Ed Morrison's place, east of Linnville, there was a little settlement of temporary shacks, or cabins, built by the contractor who was in charge of building the road through Bowling Green and Franklin townships. This is where the majority of the Catholic families lived. Phil Sheridan's father was one of the superintendents in charge of workmen at that time." (11) (It is interesting that the very word used to describe the dwellings, shack, is from the Irish word tseach, meaning "house".)

John purchased two lots in Etna, Licking County, in 1834 from Patrick and Sarah Ellen Boyle of Fairfield County, and may have made his home there for a time. (12) Felix McShane's notes say that John lived in Omaha, but died at the McShane home near New Lexington, Perry County, Ohio on September 14, 1865; he had been thrown from a horse on July 26 and never regained consciousness. His grave is at Somerset Holy Trinity. One of his sons was James or "long Jim" Creighton; this James was living in Springfield, Ohio in 1850 with his wife Sarah (McChristal). He was the cousin James who figured prominently in Edward Creighton's story.

Mary Creighton married Michael Brady, a veteran of the War of 1812, and had several children. Of these, Nancy married Andrew Arndt and lived near Tiffin, Ohio; Catherine Dillehay lived in Perry County and raised a large family; and Peter and Frank moved to Reidsburg, Wisconsin. Mary died in 1862 and her and Michael's graves are in St. Pius Cemetery, Perry County.

Michael Creighton married Rachel Condon in 1821 before the same Methodist minister as his brother John, but like John he remained a Catholic. He farmed 77 acres in Millwood Township, Guernsey County. He died in 1882 at the great age of 85 years and his remains were interred in the cemetery at old Beaver St. Dominic. The majority of the descendants of their nine children have held firmly to their Catholic Faith and intermarried with the Gallaghers and other families of the Temperanceville and surrounding Catholic communities. Among them is Sister Eloise Biedenbach of the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity, of Manitowoc, Wisconsin, whose novitiate she entered in 1954; she professed perpetual vows in 1959. She has been a teacher at the primary level in Woodsfield and Mingo Junction in the present Diocese of Steubenville and at Zanesville and Delaware in this Diocese. [Also among his descendants are at least two members of the Catholic Record Society.]

Continuing with the story of the third sibling, James Creighton, it should be remarked that neither he nor any other member of the family appears in the Philadelphia city directories ca 1806 to 1811; nor do they appear in the 1810 federal census. Father Mullens continues in his 1901 book, "The little known about this hardy pioneer warrants the assertion, that he was a man of robust physique and strong character, which left its impress upon his children. A poor immigrant, he toiled arduously for the support of his large family -- in season and out of season. For, the produce of the farm being insufficient to maintain him, he was obliged to work on the construction of the pike-roads, when he should have been taking much-needed rest. He had not the means to give his children an education in the sense in which the word is now received, for education in those days was at a premium; but he early imbued them with

solid principles of justice and taught them lessons of practical value -- the necessity of caring for themselves -- the necessity of earnestness in life's battle, and the worth of self-reliance and determination. Living in the midst of people who despised his race and hated his religion, while he asked no favors, he would suffer no insults; and when injustice was done to him or his, he demanded and usually obtained ample satisfaction. The lives of his children are the best testimony to the example and teachings of this strong-minded pioneer; but they also reflect the character of his estimable spouse."

Mrs. James (Bridget Hughes) Creighton "was a worthy companion and a genuine helpmeet to her husband through the long years of struggle in those olden days of back-woods life in Ohio. The mother of nine children, and mistress of a household whose industry was never blessed with affluence, she had few hours for rest and leisure. Still this good lady found time to look after the instruction of her children in the essential points of Catholic belief, and she early trained them to practices of piety, which remained with them through life. It was mainly at her solicitation that Mr. Creighton moved from Belmont County to Licking County; and her motive in suggesting the change of residence was chiefly religious.

"She wished to be near the mission church which the Dominican Fathers had established at Somerset -- some twelve miles distant from the place in which Mr. Creighton finally settled. She had known instances of perversion among her neighbors, she had seen how the sons and daughters of good Catholics had forgotten the value of the Faith, transmitted through long lines of ancestors, who had even suffered persecution for conscience' sake, and she was solicitous that the precious boon which she had received from far distant kindred in her dear native Ireland, should be honored and preserved by her sons and daughters as their most valued inheritance."

Upon first reading the above remarks, one might wonder how much of this information Father Mullens obtained from authentic memories of the family. The mission at Beaver St. Dominic, not far from the home in Belmont County, was established in the mid-1820s and was remarkably strong. (13) Far from allowing many lapses from the faith, it attracted many converts, even before it had a resident priest, largely through the efforts and example of the Edmund Gallagher family and Father Fenwick, the Apostle of Ohio. However, a study of the Creighton family reveals the cause of Bridget's concern.

James's brother Christopher (ca 1783-1846) appears to have been the first of the family to come to Ohio, several years before Father Fenwick ever visited the state. As mentioned above, in 1807 he had entered land under the name of Christopher McCrearen, but by the time of his marriage, April 3, 1809, he had already begun to turn against his race and his religion. He was married to Margaret McKiggan by a Justice of the Peace; and by that date he had changed his name to the Scottish Creighton. (14) Margaret (1786-1840) was a Protestant and Christopher became a Methodist, according to family tradition, which is confirmed by the fact that the couple's graves are in the Methodist Protestant Cemetery in Oxford Township, Guernsey County.

James and Bridget and their family moved to their new home, in the western half of the southwest quarter or 80 acres of Section 21, lying just south of his brother John's farm and north and east of the Irish town of Mount Hope mentioned above in connection with John. James purchased the farm on February

9, 1832 and purchased John's adjoining 80 acres on October 3, 1836. (15) In 1839 he purchased four of the lots in Mount Hope, and in 1841 he purchased all of his brother John's interest in Mount Hope, amounting to twenty-four lots, along with all of the rest of the land in the half-quarter section lying north and west of the town. (16)

There was a Catholic chapel in Linnville that the Creightons and their Irish neighbors attended, a former Methodist church purchased in 1842 that was attended by the Dominican priests of Somerset and later by the pastors at Newark, at least until 1851. (17)

According to her grandson Felix McShane, Bridget (Hughes) Creighton was a first cousin of Archbishop John Hughes of New York. The Archbishop was the third son of Patrick and Margaret (McKenna) Hughes, born at Annaloughan, Clogher Parish, County Tyrone, in 1797. (18) Father Mullens continues with his description of Bridget (Hughes) Creighton: "Patient in adversity, industrious in poverty, pains-taking in the religious up-bringing of her children, gentle always and kind, she was a type of the good, Irish-Catholic wife and mother, whose life, simple and retired, but full of virtuous deeds is too little known and, alas! too little appreciated. Mrs. Creighton died in November, 1854, at Springfield, Ohio, where she had taken up her residence after the death of her husband. Her remains lie buried in Somerset, Perry County, Ohio, beside those of her husband."

(To be concluded)

NOTES

Thanks are extended to Mrs. Ruth Fox, who suggested this article and provided much data and encouragement; and to Betty Kealiher, Ruth Fox, and Emily Schlegel for help in finding deeds in Newark, Licking County.

- 1) Omaha: Creighton University, 1901.
- 2) Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia, Vol. XX (1909), page 133.
- 3) British Museum Additional MSS 35,932, page 47.
- 4) Tepper, Michael H., Passenger Arrivals at the Port of Philadelphia, 1800-1819; Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1986; page 465
- 5) Clogher Record, 1970, page 201.
- 6) Will book A, pages 26-27. With thanks to Lorle Porter of Muskingum College for her assistance in obtaining a copy.
- 7) Licking County, Ohio Probate Records, 1828-1904; Licking County Genealogical Society, 1975; p. 19
- 8) Ohio Auditor of State, Tract Book & Entries, Congress Lands, 22 Ranges, and U. S. Military Lands, Vol. 2, page 62
- 9) Guernsey County will, book B/151
- 10) Deed Record U/393 and Q/108
- 11) Bulletin, IX/252 (July/August, 1983)
- 12) Deed Record U/75)
- 13) See the Bulletin of August, 1988.
- 14) Belmont Co. marriage record B/23
- 15) Deed Record Z/626 and Q/456
- 16) Deed Records II/560 and LL/191
- 17) Bulletin, IX/251-252

- 18) Felix's statement is among those collected by J. B. Furay and provided to the Society by Mrs. Fox. The Archbishop's story is told by Rev. Henry A. Brann in John Hughes, First Archbishop of New York; New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1892.

ST. PATRICK MISSION, OLD WASHINGTON AND LEATHERWOOD
BAPTISMS IN EAST-CENTRAL GUERNSEY COUNTY
1829-1872

(Continued, from Vol. XIX, No. 9)

1856, continued

- July 13 In the church of St. Patrick, Washington, Ellen Lyons, daughter of Patrick and Ann, born March 27; spon. Daniel Gildea and Ann Finly. J. M. Jacquet
- Aug. 10 In the church of St. Patrick (Washington) Honora Hughes, daughter of John and Bridget, born July 15; spon. Lawrence Kelley and Mary Lockman. JMJ
- Oct. 12 In the church of St. Patrick, Washington, John Francis Gallagher, son of James and Susanna, born Aug. 27; spon. James and Susanna Carr. JMJ
- Nov. 10 Dennis Kelly, son of Owen and Lydia, born Aug. 17; spon. Thomas Ragan and Margaret O'Grady. JMJ
- Dec. 14 In the church of St. Patrick (Washington) Mary Regina Gallagher, daughter of John and Sara Ellen, born Nov. 16; spon. William McDaniel and Martha Hannon. JMJ

1857

- Jan. 11 In the church of St. Patrick, Washington, Mary Helen Cunningham, daughter of Cornelius and Mary, born Jan. 3; spon. John and Bridget Early. JMJ
- March 9 Conditinally, Mary Elizabeth Kennedy, daughter of Patrick and Susanna, born Feb. 11; spon. Thomas Ragan and Susanna Carr. JMJ
- April 3 Christopher Thine, son of Christopher and Jane, born March 24; spon. Patrick Finten and Mary Mulligan. JMJ
- April 3 John Picket, son of Thomas and Ellen, born March 23; spon. Patrick Hunt and Mary Whalen. JMJ
- June 14 In the church of St. Patrick in Washington, William Rineheart, about 30 years old; spon. John Gallagher. JMJ
- July 13 A--- Alphonse Hidleback, son of George W. and Mary Meranda, born April 13; spon. Lucian Wicart and Susanna Gallagher. JMJ
- July 13 Elizabeth Helen O'Grady, daughter of Dennis and Margaret, born July 4; spon. John Deleny and Mary Ragan. JMJ
- Aug. 9 In the church of St. Patrick, at Washington, Catherine Early, daughter of John and Bridget, born 22 July?; spon. Daniel Gildea and Susanna Carr. JMJ
- Sept. 13 In the church of St. Patrick, Washington, Bridget Lyons, daughter of Patrick and Ann, born Aug. 14; spon. Patrick Kennedy and Mary Laughlin. JMJ
- Sept. 14 Sara Elizabeth Gallagher, daughter of Patrick and Sara Elizabeth, born Sept. 14, 1854; spon. James and Ann Gallagher. JMJ
- Nov. 9 Francis Patrick Ragan, son of Thomas and Mary, born Oct. 30; spon. Dennis O'Grady and Susanna Kennedy. JMJ

1858

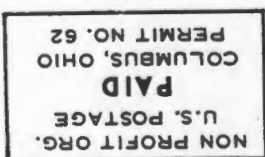
- Jan. 11 James Francis Meloi, son of Patrick and Margaret, born Dec. 7; spons. James and Sara Carr. JMJ
- Apr. 11 In the church of St. Patrick, Thomas Loughman, son of John and Catherine, born Nov. 4 last; spons. Daniel Gildea and Catherine Spence?. JMJ
- May 9 In the church of St. Patrick, James William Gallagher, son of John and Sara Hellen, born May 5; spons. Charles Delong and Ruth Gildea. JMJ
- May 10 James Whalen, son of Patrick and Bridget, born April 29; spons. Patrick Finton and Margaret Grady. JMJ
- July 11 In the church of St. Patrick, Michael White, son of Michael and Margaret, born April 27; spons. Patrick Nevil and Martha Rineheart. JMJ
- July 11 In the church of St. Patrick, Cecilia Gallagher, daughter of Charles and Cecilia, born May 17; spons. Cornelius Breslin and Bridget Meloy. JMJ
- Aug. 8 In the church of St. Patrick, John Flinn, son of Owen and Bridget, born May 23; spons. Patrick Kennedy and Mrs. Penn?. JMJ
- Aug. 8 In the church of St. Patrick, Helen McCloskey, daughter of Charles and Mary, born April 29; spons. James Carr and Catherine Gallagher. JMJ
- Sept. 12 In the church of St. Patrick, Thomas Mullon, son of Thomas and Hellen, born Aug. 1; spons. Roger F[1]aherty and Ann Pries?. JMJ
- Nov. 14 In the church of St. Patrick, Washington, Mary Catherine Gallagher, daughter of James and Susanna, born Nov. 11; spons. John and Ann Gallagher. JMJ
- Nov. 15 Mary Jacoba Kennedy, daughter of Patrick and Susanna, born Nov. 7; spons. James Carr and Mary Ragan. JMJ
- Dec. 7 In the church of St. Patrick, Washington, Margaret Ann Cunningham, daughter of Cornelius and Mary, born Dec. 5; spons. Cornelius and Mary Breslin. JMJ

1859

- Jan. 28 At New Gottingen, Emma Edwards, about 45 years old; spons. Susanna Gallagher. JMJ
- Feb. 13 In the church of St. Patrick, Washington, Ann Ryan, daughter of Christopher and Mary, born Nov. 23 last; spons. Patrick Whalen and Mary Dempsy. JMJ
- Feb. 13 In the church of St. Patrick, Washington, Mary Lawn, daughter of Edward and Mary, born Jan., 16; spons. John Gallagher and Susanna Carr. JMJ
- Feb. 14 Michael Kelly, son of Owen and Lydia, born Jan. 17; spons. Dennis O'Grady and Bridget Whalen. JMJ

(To be continued)

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