

James Donovan, 1853-1923

Family genealogy

READING ROOM

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JAMES DONOVAN, 1853-1923

of Bath, Wolfe Island, and Kingston, Ontario;
Rochester, New York; and Three Rivers, Michigan

Grandfather Donovan lived 15 years, three months, and two days after I, his first grandchild, was born. I have many memories of him; but how much more I could have learned of his early life if I had asked the questions I would now like to ask!

Note to all grandchildren: ask now! Some day you'll wish you had!

His birthday, on April 3, was always quietly observed. Even Christmas was quietly observed in his home. Across the street, in our home, there was always a Christmas tree surrounded by gifts and bright with ornaments. On that tree, invariably there were a few crisp new dollar bills, our gift from "Papa Don."

The year of his birth was probably 1853, as the 1861 census of Bath, Ontario, indicates.¹ His sister Mary Ann was two years older; Nellie was five years younger. Their birth dates are confirmed by baptismal records, but none has yet been found for James Donovan.

He was well educated for his time. That education began, of course, in the home on the shore of the Bay of Quinte where he and his five sisters and younger brother Daniel were born. James was the middle child. His brother Patrick (born in Ireland) and sisters Johanna and Mary Ann, along with their parents Richard and Margaret, were his first teachers.

Did the children wander down to the bay shore, one of the older ones holding the little brother's hand, and play among the scrubby cedars at the gravelly point near Finkle's Tavern?² Was the old bass-wood tree, the first whipping-post in Upper Canada,³ pointed out to him?

Did the family ride in a horse-drawn wagon or carriage to Bath, oldest village in the province of Ontario⁴, a mile or two east of their home?⁵ Or did they usually walk? Did they sometimes travel as far as Kingston on the first macadamized road in Ontario, completed only a few years earlier?⁶

Did they watch the construction of the town-hall in 1866? Were they, by that time, enrolled in the school at Bath?⁷ Had they heard the villagers talking of the bloody Civil War in the states to the south - states once united until the conflict of 1861-1865? Had it touched them in any way, or was the width of Lake Ontario sufficient to isolate these Canadian children?

At any rate, James "was educated in the schools of Bath, and in his early youth was apprenticed to the trade of carpentry, of which he became a master after four years of faithful work as a learner and a subordinate."⁸

Mary Ann's marriage in 1875 and Catherine's death in 1877 preceded James' marriage to Harriet Greenwood, daughter of Maxim and Elizabeth (Yott) Greenwood of Wolfe Island, on 28 April 1878.

The mystery of Patrick's and Daniel's disappearance remains to tantalize the family historian. Where? When? How? "They died when young men," is all we know.

Equally provocative is the question of when, where, and how the Donovan children of Bath met the Wolfe Islanders whom they married - James McCarthy, Harriet, Frank, and Joseph Greenwood.

The marriage of James and Harriet was, no doubt, solemnized at Sacred Heart Church on Wolfe Island, and there "in a little stone house" on the Front Road, west of the village of Marysville, and within sight of the St. Lawrence River, their son Oliver was born prematurely the following February 14. Mary Ann Donovan and Joseph Greenwood were sponsors when the infant was baptized nine days later by the Rev. Thomas J. Spratt.⁹

It was not the first grandchild for Richard and Margaret Donovan. Mary Ann had a son and a daughter before James and Harriet married. These three, however, were the only ones the grandmother lived to see. Margaret died in March 1880 and, sometime that same year, James took his wife and little son to Rochester, New York, where they lived for the next 11 years.

Cutler says that James "moved to New York state and there conducted a good business as a contractor and builder until 1891...."¹⁰ Family tradition says that he "built 21 houses for Sibley in Fox Ridge, NY. Old man Sibley died and his son decided not to finish the houses."

An inquiry about the latter statement brought the following reply in June 1974 from Miss Shirley Iversen of the Local History Division of the Rochester Public Library:

"After considerable searching, I discovered that the Fox Ridge farm belonged to Hiram Sibley (1807-1888) and was located in Cayuga County, New York. (While Mr. Sibley was a Rochester resident, his extensive land holdings were widely scattered.) The following describes the farm:

"On the Fox Ridge farm, through which the New York Central Railroad passes, where many seeds and bulbs are grown, he has reclaimed a swamp of six hundred acres, making of great value what was worthless in other hands, a kind of operation which affords him much delight.'

"Biographical Sketch of Hon. Hiram Sibley reprinted from Encyclopedia of Contemporary Biography of New York, Vol. 111. New York, Atlantic Publishing and Engraving Co., 1884.

"I have been unable to find the exact location of the farm. There has apparently never been a post office at Fox Ridge. The direct line of the New York Central Railroad passed through the townships of Mentz and Brutus, while the railroad's Auburn Branch crossed the townships of Aurelius and Sennett. . . ."

The Donovan family was living at 210 Monroe Avenue in Rochester when, on 2 May 1885, their second son was born and named Richard. The occupation of the father is given on Richard's birth certificate as "store keeper." Was this before or after he built the houses for Hiram Sibley? What kind of store did Grandfather Donovan keep? And where was Richard baptized? An inquiry to St. Mary's Church, 15 South Street, Rochester, in December 1974, brought the following reply:

"I regret that none of the above mentioned names appears in the records of St. Mary's Church. I am puzzled since 210 Monroe Ave. is in this parish. Sincerely yours, Msgr. James C. M'Aniff, pastor."

Family tradition states that James Donovan became a citizen of the United States while living in Rochester, thus making his wife and sons also United States citizens. An inquiry in December 1972, brought the following response from Charlotte A. King, Assistant Deputy County Clerk, Naturalization Clerk, Hall of Justice, Rochester:

"We wish to inform you that it is illegal to duplicate Naturalization records. We do have a James Donovan on our records, becoming a citizen on October 3, 1887. These records are very brief and contain no information pertinent to the person involved...."

We have a photograph of Harriet made at "studio of A. L. Lehnkering, 208 E. Main St., opposite Whitcomb House" in Rochester, and a photo of Richard, about 2 years old, made by Godfrey, "Sunbeam Gallery, 81 E. Main St." Do the names and addresses of these photographers give any clues to the family's whereabouts at that time? The photos show, certainly, that the family was prospering.

The Rochester years were good years, apparently; yet in 1891 Grandfather Donovan was lured farther west, to the little town of Three Rivers, in St. Joseph County, Mich., probably by the promise of still better opportunity for the use of his talents. Talents he had in abundance, and here in Three Rivers they blossomed. He went to work for Roberts, Throp and Company,¹¹ which later became Roberts Car and Wheel Company.¹²

In the years 1893-1895 James Donovan patented eight inventions, most of them improvements on car wheels and velocipedes which the Roberts, Throp Company manufactured. (The exception was a potato-bug killer.) These were assigned to the company for which he worked, and he received royalties on them for many years, later selling them outright to the company. This was the source of his fortune - not a large one by most standards, but considerable for his time.¹²

Where did the family live during those early years in Three Rivers? We know only that the home where they lived when I was a child, numbered then 619 Sixth Street, on the northwest corner of Sixth (now Main) and Madison Streets, was purchased by James Donovan on 23 June 1903 from Albert Lamphere for \$875.00. On 23 August 1913 he made a joint title with his wife, Harriet, and after her death the Probate Court assigned the property to Oliver and Margaret Donovan. The assignment was made on 14 Sept. 1934 after much litigation in the Ontario courts. Oliver and Margaret conveyed the property to Ora A. Avery on 24 June, 1936.¹³

Three Rivers had one great disadvantage for the Donovan family. There was no Catholic church in the town, and they were staunch Catholics. The nearest church was St. Edward's at Mendon, about 20 miles east. In 1884, Three Rivers had become a mission of Niles, later it was under Jackson, and finally under Mendon. The first Catholic church was built in Three Rivers in 1904,¹⁴ the Donovan family contributing generously to its construction and to its social and liturgical life. Not until 30 years after James Donovan's death, however, did it have a resident pastor.

Meanwhile, the pastor of St. Edward's came from Mendon twice a month and offered Sunday Mass in various homes, including that of the Donovan family. When their 12-year-old son, Richard, died in May 1897, he was buried in St. Edward's Cemetery at Mendon and his grave marked with a monument which still remains.

Even after Immaculate Conception church was built in Three Rivers, the pastor from Mendon took dinner one Sunday a month with a Three Rivers family. Often, as I recall, it was with my grandparents. (The priest said two Masses on Sunday, alternating the early and late one between Mendon and Three Rivers, and in those days of strict fast from midnight, he touched neither food nor drink until after the late Mass.)

James and Harriet made frequent trips by train between Three Rivers and Kingston (and from there by the ferry to Wolfe Island). They never owned an automobile, as far as I know. Nellie had married Frank Greenwood while they lived in Rochester, and Johanna married Joseph Greenwood in 1891. They probably attended those weddings.

Did they go for Mary Ann's funeral in November 1891, or was the distance by train too far for such short notice? Sometime, certainly, they discussed with Jim McCarthy, Mary Ann's widower, the advantages of bringing his four children to Three Rivers, which he did before 1897, the year that his daughter Nellie married John Fitch.

In 1904, Jim McCarthy died and was buried in St. Edward's Cemetery at Mendon. These nephews and nieces, orphaned so early, must have been especially dear to my grandfather.

His father, Richard, had died at Wolfe Island in 1903. Nellie and Frank Greenwood had four children before that time. Johanna and Joseph Greenwood had a daughter. All were living on Wolfe Island.

Nellie's big farm home was on the Front Road, west of Marysville, facing the St. Lawrence. The first cement sidewalk on the Island is said to have been built here by my grandfather, a sidewalk leading from the front porch some 100 yards to the road where there was a hitching post and cement step for dismounting from the horse-drawn buggy. We photographed the house and sidewalk in July 1973.

Papa Don helped with other improvements on this farm, no doubt, and equipment built by him, including "Jigger," a model of the railroad car which he patented, were still behind this farm home in 1973.

Back in Michigan, in June 1906, Oliver, son of James and Harriet, married Margaret Mahana and purchased a house just across the street from them. There I was born in April 1908. A second grandchild arrived in June 1913 and was named James Ezra, but this little one, known ever after as "Little James," lived only seven months before succumbing to pneumonia.

In June 1914, Grandfather Donovan was present at the wedding of his niece, Edna (Johanna's daughter) to Eugene Reitzel at Sacred Heart Church, Wolfe Island, we know from the photograph made on the church steps which shows him (eyes and top of his head) immediately behind the bride. It is the only photo we have of him with the exception of a tin-type made earlier, in which he, Joseph Greenwood, and an unidentified man are standing side by side.

Five days after Christmas in 1914, another grandson was born in the house across the street in Three Rivers, and was named Robert Oliver. I was nearly seven years old by this time, and my memories are quite vivid. The grandparents' house faced ours and my grandfather, long retired, often sat on the front porch in the summer time, watching passersby, watching children at play, thinking, thinking. What do grandfathers think about?

In winter, the time was spent in the house. When I visited my grandparents, Papa Don often played Irish jigs and reels on his fiddle. Where did he learn that art? I have been told that he also played piano; that he accompanied his niece, Lillian (Nellie's daughter), when she played the violin.¹⁵

The house still stands (1975) much as it was then. On our visit to Three Rivers in July 1975, we were invited by the present occupants to come inside. What memories, after more than fifty years! The interior of the rooms seemed tiny, especially the dining room and kitchen where I had so often joined my grandparents in a meal. Papa Don, I recall, drank his tea from a mustache cup. Did you ever see one? It has a tiny bridge across one side to protect the mustache from dipping in the liquid contents.

The tiny downstairs bedroom was just north of the living room. Upstairs were three bedrooms, seldom used in my time, but one of them, I knew, had been my father's room before he married. They smelled sweetly of mustiness and whatever was used for combatting it. The bathroom at the top of the stairs had impressive marble fixtures. For many years I dreamed periodically of going up those stairs to that mysterious second floor of that little house, never fathoming the inscrutable secrets it held.

Papa Don had a sly, quiet wit. I remember his telling me that I could catch birds if I would sprinkle salt on their tails. I tried, but never got close enough of course, until one day I found in our front yard a stuffed bird, put there I learned later by Papa Don, just so I could catch it by the method he had recommended.

One thing I can't remember distinctly. Were his eyes blue and his hair sandy? I think so. Certainly they were in striking contrast to the dark eyes and black hair of his French Canadian wife.

On 20 July 1916, my grandparents purchased a home in Kingston for "three thousand dollars of lawful money of Canada," from "William Toner...administrator of the estate of the late Grace McCully...and Andrew McCully, her husband." James Donovan, Gentleman, and his wife were named Grantors of the Second Part. The property was "composed of part of Lot Number Two hundred and Sixty-seven (267) on the corner of Bay and Rideau Streets...."

There we visited them the following summer, my 2-year-old brother Bob leaving his footprint in the cement of newly made steps. I have only a vague memory of that visit, but a lasting impression of many soldiers in wheelchairs on Princess Street, Kingston's principal business district, soldiers with missing limbs and other injuries sustained in the European War which the United States had entered only that spring of 1917. Canada, as a part of Great Britain, had already been engaged in the combat since August 1914.¹⁶

In April 1921, Papa Don's fourth grandchild, my sister Margaret, was born in Three Rivers, in the same house where Little James, Bob, and I had arrived. When Margaret was four months old, our family moved to Flint and I, engrossed with the usual preoccupations of a 13-year-old, gave no thought to the possibility that this might be close to a final parting with Papa Don. Close it was, but not quite final.

In August 1922, my father and I made another visit to Kingston where my grandparents were living in the Rideau Street house. Most of our stay, however, was with Uncle Johnny Greenwood's family on Wolfe Island, where there were young cousins about my age.

On our final trip from Kingston to the Island (we were to return to the states by way of Cape Vincent on the south side of the Island), I snapped a photograph of Papa Don standing on the Kingston dock as the ferry boat pulled out into the St. Lawrence.

It was my last glimpse of him. He died the following year on July 18 in the Hotel Dieu Hospital at Kingston. My parents and brother attended the funeral and burial, having sent baby Margaret and me to Three Rivers to stay with relatives there. Canadian officials can not release information on cause of death, but I was told that Papa Don died when "poison from teeth extracted overtaxed kidneys."

The following obituary appeared in the Daily British Whig, 20 July 1923, page 16:

DONOVAN - at the Hotel Dieu, Kingston, on July 18, 1923, James Donovan, aged 63 years. Funeral will take place from his late residence, 64 Rideau Street, on Saturday morning at 8:30 Standard time to St. Linus church, Bath, where solemn requiem mass will be sung for the happy repose of his soul.

On 16 April 1923, my grandparents had executed Articles of Agreement with James C. Hopkinson, Grocer, and Jennie L. Hopkinson his wife, to sell the Rideau Street property for "five hundred dollars on the delivery hereof and the balance \$4100 by equal monthly payments..." The legal document, copy of which is in my possession, bears the signatures of "Jas Donovan," as he always signed it, and his wife Harriet.

James and Jennie Hopkinson "did not complete the agreement of sale... and abandoned all their rights...", according to the indenture made 23 August 1934 by the executor of Harriet's will. After much litigation, the property finally was granted to my parents, who sold it to purchase a home in Florida where they had lived since 1925.

1. Other records vary, the 1871 census stating his age as 14; Cutler's History giving his birth year as 1858; his marriage certificate giving his age (in 1878) as 23; and his obituary in the Kingston Whig-Standard giving his age (in 1923) as 63. He was probably 25 when he married and 70 when he died at the Hotel Dieu in Kingston, Ontario, 19 July 1923.

2. Harrington: History of the County of Lennox and Addington, Toronto, 1913, p.168.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Harrington, op.cit., p.166, quotes from an 1855 writer: "This quaint-looking Dutch town has long been a standard stopping place on the Bay of Quinte, and is much better known than many villages of four times its size. Its population exceeds 400 souls, it has a good many merchants' stores, twice as many machine shops, several factories, a shipyard, wharves, and warehouses, a custom-house, good inns, two churches, an academy or grammar school, a post-office, and a hundred other village adjuncts...."

6. Op. cit., p.157-158.

7. Op. cit., p.168: "The courts used to be held in the lower story of the school building...the noise from the exercises in the room above interrupted the proceedings...the multiplication table recited in unison by the junior class in the upper story...."

8. Cutler: History of St. Joseph County, Lewis Pub. Co., 1911, p.733.

9. Baptismal record at Sacred Heart Church, Wolfe Island.

10. Cutler: op. cit.

11. Michigan State Gazetteer and Business Directories, 1893-94 (p.1492) and 1895-96 (p.1588) lists "Roberts, Throp & Co. (capital \$250,000), Mnfrs. Threshers, Corn Shellers, Horse Power (s)? and Railway Specialties. Cyrus Roberts, Pres., J. W. French, V-P, M. H. Bumphrey Sec. & Treas." - letter of 5 Nov. 1975 from Michigan State Library.

12. Cutler, op. cit.: "At once entering the employ of the Roberts Car Wheel Company as a pattern maker, Mr. Donovan was soon advanced to general superintendent, and while holding that position invented and patented the Donovan Car Wheel and several minor devices quite extensively adopted by car manufacturers. In 1905 he resigned as superintendent, sold his patents and has since devoted himself to the care and development of his investments."

13. Letter of 2 Jan. 1976 from Janet C. Havens, St. Joseph County Abstract Office, Centreville, Mich.; also copies of deeds from Donna E. Donmyer, Register of Deeds, St. Joseph County.

14. Parish History of Immaculate Conception Parish, Three Rivers, contributed by Rev. David C. Adams, pastor, December 1972.

15. Letter from Vivian Colligan, January 1976.

16. Aunt Nellie, Papa Don's sister, had died 24 March 1917; her daughter Lillian (Greenwood) Matthews the previous December.

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THE RICHARD DONOVAN FAMILY OF BATH, ONTARIO

They came from Ireland to Ontario in the 1840s, this young couple with their small son. It was immediately after the time of the great famine in Ireland.¹

How did they come? Why did they come?

None of us now living ever knew our great-grandparents, Richard and Margaret (McCarthy) Donovan, or their eldest son Patrick. No photographs are known to exist. No signatures. They could not read or write, the Ontario census records tell us.

The tombstone in St. Linus Cemetery, Bath, Ontario, gives Richard's dates as 1813-1903 and Margaret's as 1821-1880. Their youngest daughter, Catharine (1864-1877) is also commemorated on the tombstone.

It is likely, however, that Richard was born later than 1813. The census of 1861 gives his age as 40 (which would make his birth year 1821), his occupation as laborer, and shows him living at Earnest Town [sic], county of Lennox and Addington, with wife and five children, all Roman Catholic. Margaret's age is given as 35, which would make her birth year 1826. The earliest records are likely to be most accurate.

Richard and Margaret were probably in their 20s when they sailed with their little son from Cork Harbor to a new life in a new world.²

Family tradition says that Richard's parents ran a hotel in Cork; that he had two brothers, Michael and Patrick, who also came to America; none could read or write so they got separated; a Michael Donovan in Rochester, NY, years later claimed relationship; he had two sons, one named Bill.

Nothing is known of the origin of Richard's wife, Margaret McCarthy. Was she too a native of Cork City? Since both Donovan and McCarthy are common surnames in Ireland, tracing their ancestry is difficult.

A search initiated at the Genealogical Office at Dublin Castle in 1975 resulted in the following report:

"In view of the wide and numerous distribution of the surname Donovan in Co. Cork, a successful outcome to the investigation will depend primarily on preliminary research which can be carried out in the U.S. or Canada, the object being to pinpoint the exact place of origin of the original settler from Ireland i.e. townland, village, parish.

"Primary source materials include Bible records, notes, old letters, diaries, memoirs, newspaper obituaries etc. to be sought among relatives. Public records which might reveal information include probate and marriage records, deeds, chancery and other court records, pension documents, passenger

lists, tombstone inscriptions and the vital records of town, county or state are also reliable primary sources...."

The four eldest living descendents of Richard and Margaret are Ruth Phillips of Three Rivers, Mich., Harold and Gael Hogan of Pontiac, Mich. (grandchildren of Mary Ann Donovan), and I (granddaughter of James Donovan).

Others include the McCarthy family, formerly of Three Rivers, now scattered in Florida and Arkansas (grandchildren of Mary Ann); the Rietzel family of Kitchener, Ont. (descendants of Johanna Donovan); the Whites and Greenwoods of Kingston and Wolfe Island, Ont. (grandchildren of Nellie Donovan), Marian Barr of Kalamazoo, Mich., Vivian Colligan of Bronx, NY, my brother Robert Donovan of Honolulu, Hawaii, and my sister, Margaret Stokes of Winter Park, Fla.

None of us has been able to produce much primary source material. The search continues, but we are so scattered, most of us so remote from the place where Richard and Margaret lived with their seven children, that hope of "a successful outcome" is dim. We wish, nevertheless, to record what is known of our ancestors before even this much is lost to posterity.

A biography of their son James,³ my grandfather, seems to suggest that Richard and Margaret may indeed have been descended from property-owners in Ireland. It is pleasant to imagine that they may have been less deeply affected by the famine than their rural countrymen; that they may have

had passage money for something better than their compatriots who suffered the trauma of steerage passengers on the arduous crossing. This is speculation. It would be good to know.

At any rate, they settled on a choice plot of land on the shore of the Bay of Quinte where they owned (?) or occupied 203 acres of Lot 6, Concession I, just west of the village of Bath⁴, and there their family was increased by four daughters and two sons: Johanna, Mary Ann, James, Ellen (Nellie), Daniel, and Catharine.

The 1871 census lists Richard as a farmer with seven children. These were the good years. The family was intact and prospering. The census gave Richard's age as 61 and Margaret's as 50 (both probably incorrect).

Records of some of the children's birth and baptismal dates were located in 1974 at St. Patrick's Church, Railton, Ont., where they were copied by Evelyn McIntyre, a volunteer from the Lennox and Addington Historical Society. Records of the three sons were missing; those for the four daughters were fairly complete.

On March 31, 1875, Richard paid \$8,000 "of lawful money of Canada...to Rowland Robinson Finkle, Wharfinger, [for]... that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situate and lying and being in the Township of Earnestown [sic] in the County of Lennox and Addington and Province of Ontario being composed of Lot Number Six in the First Concession of said Township excepting thereout the Seventy acres and twenty-five perches thereof conveyed by Charles Fuller Gildersleeve,

Rowland Robinson Finkle and Susan Finkle to Hassard Wilcox Purdy by deed bearing date the sixth day of May AD 1864...."

The handwritten legal document is in the Registry Office at Napanee, county seat of Lennox and Addington County.

A photocopy of it is in my possession. It refers to "Rickard Richard Donovan" as party of the first part, but does not contain his signature, not even his mark (X) as many such documents do. It does not name any members of his family.

Just five days later, on 5 April 1875, his 24-year-old daughter Mary Ann became the wife of James McCarthy, son of John McCarthy and Bridjet Lyons.⁵ She was apparently the first of the children to leave the home.

In 1877, his youngest child, 13-year-old Catharine, died. The Registrar General's Office in Toronto found no record of this death between the years 1875-1879 inclusive.

On 28 April 1878, James Donovan, second son of Richard, married Harriet Greenwood, daughter of Maxim Greenwood and Elizabeth Yott, at Wolfe Island, Ont.

No record has been found to show what became of Patrick and Daniel. Family tradition says they "died when young men." Patrick's name, however, is listed among the patrons of the Illustrated Historical Atlas...of 1898.⁶

The years 1880 and 1881 were years of tragedy for Richard -- tragedy and discouragement, no doubt. His wife Margaret died 19 March 1880, age 59, according to records in the Registrar General's Office.

On March 11, 1881, a year after Margaret's death, a "final order of Foreclosure" on Richard's property was made "by the said Court in a certain cause pending herein wherein Rowland Robinson Finkle is plaintiff and Rickard Richard Donovan (by Bill) and Thomas E. Howard made a party in the Masters Office are Defendants, It was ordered that the said Defendants should stand absolutely debarred and foreclosed of and from right title and equity of redemption of in and to the Mortgaged premises...." This legal document is also on record at Napanee, and a photocopy is in my possession.

In July 1973 we visited Bath and learned of the famous Finkle Tavern⁷ which stood for many years near where the Donovans raised their family. The tavern was demolished around 1900.⁸ We photographed the house which then (1973) stood on the same spot, and visited with the occupant. The property, we were told, is owned by Canada Cement LaFarge, and plans were underway for making a park along the waterfront.

Where did Richard go after losing his wife and his home? Probably to Wolfe Island where, about 1884, his daughter, Nellie married Frank Greenwood, brother of Harriet, and about 1891, his eldest daughter, Johanna, married Joseph Greenwood, another brother.

Son James, with his wife and young son Oliver, had gone to Rochester, NY in 1880 and to Three Rivers, Mich. in 1891.

Tragedy struck again on 17 Nov. 1891 when Mary Ann died at Wolfe Island, leaving four small children. Her husband, Jim McCarthy, eventually took the children to Three Rivers, Mich.

Richard died at Wolfe Island 12 Feb. 1903, age 86, according to records in the Registrar General's Office. He was buried at Bath and the monument was, no doubt, erected after this date.

¹For a detailed account of that terrible period, see Cecil Woodham-Smith's book, The Great Hunger, Harper, 1962.

²We assume they sailed from Cork, since family tradition gives their origin as Cork City. No positive records have yet been found. For a description of the hazardous crossing, see Oscar Handlin's Pulitzer prize-winning epic, The Uprooted, Little, Brown, 1951.

³Cutler's History of St. Joseph County, Lewis Pub. Co., 1911, p.733: "Michael settled in New York state, while Richard first located at Kingston, later purchasing a farm at Bath, eighteen miles west of that city. There the father spent the remainder of his life, rearing seven children and leaving them the heritage of an honorable name."

⁴Illustrated Historical Atlas of Frontenac, Lennox and Addington Counties, 1898 (see map of area fronting on Bay of Quinte)

⁵Record at St. Patrick's Church, Railton, Ont., copied by Evelyn McIntire.

⁶Op. cit., page 101.

⁷Herrington: History of the County of Lennox and Addington, Macmillan Company of Canada, Ltd., 1913. See photo of the Finkle Tavern, facing page 129. See also pages 155-161 for information about the tavern and the Finkle and Gildersleeve families, e.g. Henry Finkle, grandfather of R. R. Finkle, "was allotted lot number six in the first concession of Earnesttown. He built the first frameehouse in the township about the year 1800...built the first wharf upon the Bay of Quinte...kept for many years the only tavern between Kingston and York, and owned and operated several sailing vessels upon the lake and bay...."

"Henry Gildersleeve...attracted to the Finkle shipyard... married Lucretia (daughter of Widow Finkle)...beginning the shipbuilding industry of the Gildersleeve family, who for nearly a century have taken a prominent part in the navigation of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence...."

"R. R. Finkle, for many years the jovial wharfinger.... Henry Finkle...carried on a carriage factory at Newburgh and operated a line of stage coaches between Kingston and Napanee...."

⁸"The usual starting point [of horseback travel to York] was from Finkle's tavern...before any court-houses were built, Finkle's tavern was used for the purpose...the first execution by hanging in Canada...the victim...being swung from the limb of a tree near the old tavern...."

⁸Hutchison: It once rivalled city, page 9 of The Whig-Standard, June 29, 1973. This article also sketches the early history of the Finkle and Gildersleeve families.

Mary Ann Donovan McCarthy
1851-1891
and Her Descendants

MARY ANN DONOVAN McCARTHY
1851-1891
AND HER DESCENDENTS

by Eileen Hall
January 1978



MARY ANN DONOVAN McCARTHY
1851-1891
photo by Sheldon and Davis,
Kingston, Ontario

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MARY ANN DONOVAN, 1851-1891
of Bath and Wolfe Island, Ontario
and her children:

John, Nellie, James, Edna, and Frank McCarthy
of Wolfe Island, Ontario, Three Rivers, Michigan,
and Mishawauka, Indiana

Mary Ann Donovan was a stunningly beautiful woman. Some photographer¹ nearly a century ago, with a skill unsurpassed in our time, captured for posterity the radiance of her full round face crowned with dark curls, the eager light in her eyes, the hint of a smile on her lips.

The young man from Wolfe Island whom she married on 5 April 1875² must have found her ravishing. She was 24 years old,³ a robust young woman, born and reared on the farm on the Bay of Quinte and educated, no doubt, in the schools of Bath.

James McCarthy took her home to Wolfe Island where, within the next ten years, three sons and two daughters were born and where, on 18 November 1891, Mary Ann died, leaving her husband bereaved, his four small children motherless. (One child, James Thomas, born in 1880, had died in 1886.)

Mary Ann was "born 15 May 1851 and baptized 15 June 1851, after the marriage of Richard Donovan and Margret McCarthy of Ernestown. Sponsors were William Buckley and Honora Cahill. John O'Neill, priest."⁴

James McCarthy was born 24 July 1851, probably at Wolfe Island, and baptized 13 August 1851 at St. Mary's Cathedral, Kingston, Ontario. Wolfe Island was still a mission of St.



JAMES McCARTHY
1851-1904
photo by R. H. Furman,
Rochester, New York

Mary's. Earliest records at Sacred Heart Church, Wolfe Island, begin in July 1855. John McCarthy and Bridget Lyons, parents of James, were married at St. Mary's in 1848.

No one now living, so far as we know, remembers Mary Ann. All of her children and six of her grandchildren are now (1978) deceased. Her early life, before her marriage, can only be reconstructed from what we know of the family on the Bay of Quinte. This is described in our sketch of the Richard Donovan family and our biography of James Donovan, my grandfather.

When Mary Ann came as a bride to Wolfe Island, her father-in-law probably owned the $116\frac{1}{2}$ -acre, long, narrow lot number 21, facing the Front Road and the St. Lawrence River, between the properties of Charles Staley and Maxim Greenwood. At least, it is so shown on the map of the Island in the Illustrated Historical Atlas of 1898.

The Lyons families owned properties south of that long strip. The map also shows an almost square 100-acre farm in the name of James McCarthy, cut from the southern inland portions of lots 11, 12, 13, and 14. Probably somewhere in this vicinity the young couple cultivated their farm and reared their family during those $16\frac{1}{2}$ years of their marriage.

In April 1878, Mary Ann's brother James married one of the three lovely daughters of her French neighbors, Maxim and Elizabeth Greenwood. Harriet Greenwood was eight years younger than Mary Ann, and doubtless the two were friends. Mary Ann was godmother to Oliver, son of James and Harriet, at his baptism 23 February 1879.⁵

That is all we know of Mary Ann. James McCarthy, her widower, married again, according to Evelyn Thornton, a granddaughter, but the marriage was short-lived and in 1895 he took his four children to Three Rivers, Michigan, where the James Donovan family then lived. He died there in late fall 1904 and was buried in St. Edward's Cemetery, Mendon, where we photographed the marker at his grave in July 1975. Strangely neither church nor civil records of his death have been found.

Mary Ann's marker and that of her little son are in the old cemetery behind Sacred Heart Church, close to the southern boundary of the graveyard and about halfway between the eastern and western sides -- about 100 feet from either end. The child's name appears as G. T. McCarthy, although he was baptized James Thomas. Date of his death is given as 13 January 1886, age 5 years, 8 months.

A commemorative window, donated by Mary Ann and her husband, once graced the church, according to Marian Barr, another granddaughter. That structure was built in 1872 in a grove of eight acres where the present edifice now stands.⁷ What became of the window when the new Sacred Heart Church was erected in 1917?

¹Sheldon and Davis, Kingston, Ontario. Photo was owned by Ruth Phillips, a granddaughter, who died 25 February 1977 at Three Rivers, Michigan.

²James McCarthy, age 23 years, son of John McCarty and Bridget Lyons of Wolfe Island, married Mary Ann Donevan, age 20 years, daughter of Richard Donevan and Margaret McCarty of Bath. Witnesses Thomas McCarty of Kingston and Johanna Donevan of Bath. From Mill Creek Mission (Odessa) parish register.

³Records vary but baptismal record is accurate. She was actually 24 at marriage, and 40 at death. Obituary in The Daily British Whig, Tuesday, 17 November 1891, states: "At Wolfe Island... Mary Ann Donovan, beloved wife of James McCarthy, aged 36 years." Burial record at Sacred Heart Church, Wolfe Island, signed by Nicholas Mosier and Francis Greenwood, gives date as 18 November 1891, her age as 37.

⁴Baptismal record from Mill Creek Mission register.

⁵Oliver's baptismal record at Sacred Heart Church, Wolfe Island.

⁶Ruth Phillips' letter of 25 May 1976: "I don't know what happened to our grandfather. He was sick for a short time, but I don't think anyone ever really knew. Marian is right. He died late fall before Harold was born on January 3. I remember it was a very cold day. Grandfather and Grandmother Fitch took care of us (Milt and me) for the day. It was quite a trip to Mendon in those days -- horse and carriage. Dad and Mother drove and took relatives."

⁷Cosgrove, Wolfe Island Past and Present, page 35.

I. EDWARD JOHN MCCARTHY, 1876-1948
 his children: Frances Mary, 1903-1911
 James William, 1904-1932

Mary Ann's eldest son was 15 years and eight months old when she died. He was born at Wolfe Island 4 March 1876 and baptized Edward John eight days later at Sacred Heart Church there. Sponsors were James Lyons and Mary Ann McCarthy. Father Thomas J. Spratt officiated.¹

As an adult, John reversed the baptismal names and was known as John E. McCarthy. He must have remembered his childhood on Wolfe Island but, for reasons unknown, preferred to claim the United States as his native land. Later records, including his death certificate and obituary, show Watertown, New York, as his birthplace.

In 1895, when John was 19, he accompanied his father and younger siblings to Michigan, where they made their home in Three Rivers. How long did John remain there? He was not living at home in July 1900 when the census was taken.

What drew him to Mishawaka, Indiana, just across the border from Michigan? Was he already there in July 1900? How long had he been there before he met and married Emma Klein at St. Joseph's Church?²

Two children were born to them, a daughter, Frances Mary, on 30 April 1903 (baptized 10 May at St. Joseph's Church), and a son, James William, on 7 October 1904 (baptized 16 October at St. Joseph's). Did the grandfather, James McCarthy, ever see these children before his death in late 1904?

In 1906, the family was living at 311 West Third Street, and John was working at the Mishawaka Woolen Manufacturing Company. They later moved to 810 West Third Street (1912 directory) where they lived at the time of John's death in 1948. In 1912 he was a packer for Hygrade Food Products Corporation.³

Their little daughter died of diphtheria 28 March 1911, and was buried in lot 61, St. Joseph's Cemetery.

Their son was married to Mary Murphy at St. Joseph's Church. He died 24 June 1932 of tuberculosis, a month before his son, also named James William, was born on 29 July 1932 (baptized 14 August). His widow later married James McIntee, who adopted her son into his family. James McCarthy McIntee was married to Joan Marie Haines at St. Joseph's Church on 6 November 1954, and was living (in 1976) in Bettendorf, Iowa.

John McCarthy's nieces and nephews in Three Rivers scarcely knew him. Typical is Marian Barr's statement: "I was in Mishawaka in 1941. We took Uncle Frank and Aunt Letha to visit. That was the first I ever met my Aunt [Emma] and Uncle [John]. I heard later that he died, but really never knew them. We never heard from them and were surprised to know they were my Aunt and Uncle."

John died of "heart disease" on 30 March 1948, age 72, after a 4-week illness. His funeral was held from St. Joseph's Church. Emma, his widow, survived until 1971, when she died on 2 July, age 89. She had been a resident for eight years at Cardinal Nursing Home in South Bend, Indiana, when she fell, fracturing her left hip, and was taken to St. Joseph's Hospital where, after 23 days, she succumbed to pneumonia and heart failure. She was buried from St. Monica's Church, Mishawaka. She, John, and James are buried on the northeast quarter of lot 39 in St. Joseph's Cemetery.⁴

¹Sacred Heart Church register, Wolfe Island, Ontario.

²All church records from St. Joseph's, Mishawaka, furnished by C. A. Suelzer, pastor, 22 August 1973.

³City directories consulted by Lois Kamm, librarian, 12 June 1973.

⁴St. Joseph's Church records, Mishawaka.

II. ELLEN TERESA (NELLIE) McCARTHY, 1878-1955
her children: Ruth Marian Fitch, 1898-1977
Milton James Fitch, 1900-1957

One of the pleasant memories of my childhood is that of an occasional visit to a farm a few miles south of my home in Three Rivers, Michigan. The sprawling farm buildings, the horses, cows, chickens, and other farm animals, the apple orchards, the waving fields of yellow wheat in the summertime, were all impressive to a little girl accustomed to a small town environment. It must have been less than ten miles from our home and my father's grocery store to that fragrant, fascinating expanse of field and sky and bustling activity.

The cousins who lived there were older than I. Ruth was ten years my senior, her brother Milton, two years younger than she. Their parents, John and Nellie Fitch, were somehow related to my father, I knew, but I had not yet begun to explore family kinships. That would come much later. I just breathed in the beauty of it all.

Ruth was among the first to whom I wrote in late 1972, when I started serious research into the family history. She replied on 4 January 1973: "...My mother passed away in 1955. My husband and I came here to live in 1957 when my brother and father both died within two weeks. My husband passed away in 1969. I am the last one of the family. I know very little about my mother's family. They came here from Canada when the children were young. The Fitch family has quite a history, the first Fitch being sent here as governor of Connecticut under English authority. I am a D.A.R. . . ."

In July 1975, when I visited Three Rivers for the first time (with one brief exception) since leaving for Florida 49 years earlier, I visited Ruth, "the last one of the family," and noted the grief and loneliness in her eyes and voice when reference was made to happy times long past. We continued to correspond until her death in February 1977.

Her mother, Ellen Teresa (Nellie) McCarthy, Mary Ann's eldest daughter, was born 16 February 1878 at Wolfe Island (just one year before my father) and baptized by Father Spratt at Sacred Heart Church. Sponsors were Maxim Greenwood and Ann Buggy.

Nellie was 17 when she came with her father and siblings to Michigan four years after her mother's death. She was, no doubt, as vivacious and attractive as her mother and sister, although we have no early photos to prove it. Certainly, one young man, John Coffin Fitch, found her charming and promptly made her his bride.

She was 19 and he was 18, the wedding certificate says. His obituary which gives his birthdate as 3 February 1888, is obviously in error. They were married 6 March 1897, F. W. Schaefer, Minister of the Gospel, officiating. Witnesses were John McCarthy, brother of the bride, and Mamie O'Keefe.¹ (Eleven years later, Mamie O'Keefe was my godmother at baptism.)

The young couple lived with his parents on that farm south of Three Rivers, where his family had lived for more than 100 years. There their daughter Ruth Marian was born 8 September 1898 and their son Milton James 23 August 1900.

The farm home burned in 1921, and all family records and photos were lost. Evelyn Thornton (nee McCarthy) was 11 years old and living in Three Rivers. She recalled years later: "I can remember coming home from school. Aunt Nellie was sitting in a chair and crying. My mother put a blanket around her. I looked at her and said, 'Aunt Nellie, what's the matter?' She couldn't talk to us.

"They had such a beautiful home, a regular country home, big high beds and all. Mother told me, 'Aunt Nellie's home burned.' They stayed with us a short time, then started building another little home. They first started building around a milk shed, and later built another beautiful home. That's why Ruth doesn't have those records and pictures."²

Sometime in the early 1920s, my grandmother, Harriet Donovan, and her brother, Frank Greenwood, from Wolfe Island, visited the Fitch family. It was certainly before January 1926, the date of Frank's death. Evidence of that visit is a snapshot given to me by Ruth in August 1975.

In addition to managing the farm, John operated the Fitch Vault Company for 35 years (1922-1957). He patented and sold vaults to put over caskets. Son Milton was a postal employee in Three Rivers, and also had riding stables across from the farm home.

Daughter Ruth attended Western Michigan College and Columbia University. On 20 June 1925, she was married to Dr. Albert J. Phillips, a graduate of Midland High School, Albion College, and the University of Michigan. Ruth taught school in Clio,

Michigan, where her husband was superintendent of the school system. They lived for a time in Lansing before returning to Three Rivers.

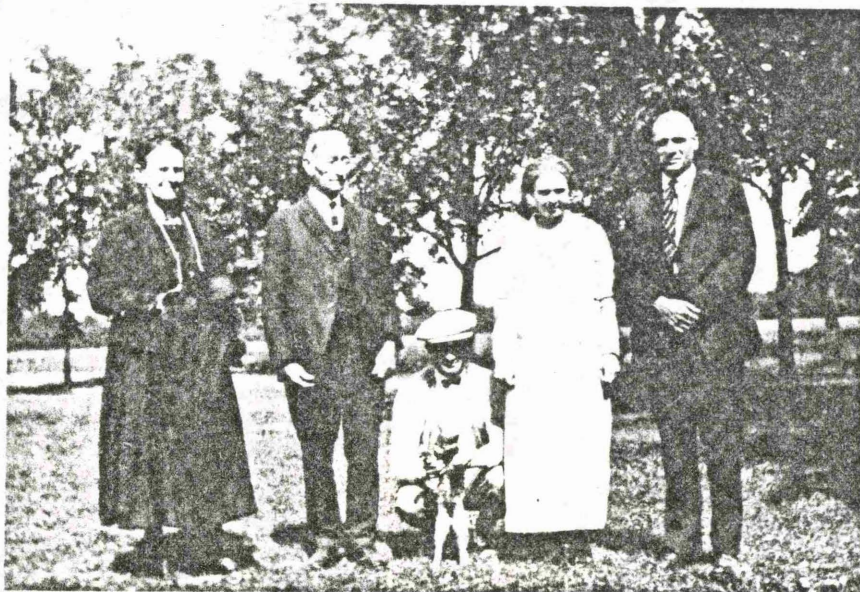
Nellie, the busy farm wife who had come to Michigan as a teen-ager, was a resident of St. Joseph County for more than 60 years. When she died on 15 August 1955, having "been in failing health for some time,"³ she was the last of Mary Ann's children to go, her sister Edna and brothers John, Frank, and little James Thomas, having preceeded her. She was buried in Riverside Cemetery after services at Austin Funeral Home in Three Rivers.

Two years later both Milton and John died, Milton on 20 October, his father on 2 November 1957. This double bereavement brought Ruth and her husband back to the farm near Three Rivers. There they enjoyed twelve more years together before Albert's death on 3 December 1969, when Ruth was left alone, "the last one of the family." She was a member of the First United Methodist Church, Three Rivers Woman's Club, St. Joseph County Retired Teachers Association, and other groups, at the time of her death on 25 February 1977.

¹Marriage certificate on file at St. Joseph County court house.

²Interview with Evelyn Thornton at her home in Jacksonville, Florida, 11 August 1973.

³Obituary from Three Rivers Commercial, Tuesday, 16 August 1955.



Harriet Donovan, widow of James, and her brother Frank Greenwood, widower of Ellen (Nellie) Donovan, visit John and Nellie Fitch (right) at their farm home south of Three Rivers, about 1925. Milton Fitch, center, with dog.

III. JAMES THOMAS McCARTHY, 1880-1886

Only from parish records at Sacred Heart Church, Wolfe Island, and from the cemetery census conducted by members of Ottawa Branch, Ontario Genealogical Society, did we learn of this child whose short life was spent on Wolfe Island. His brothers and sisters apparently left no memorial of him to their descendents. He was born 14 May 1880 and baptized two days later. Sponsors were Francis Greenwood and his wife Ellen (nee Donovan). Father Spratt officiated. He died 13 January 1886, according to the worn marker deciphered as "C.T. McCarthy" by OGS recorders. More careful investigation by Roy and Chris Smith subsequently showed the letters to be G.T., still not precisely correct, but the age 5 years, 8 months establishes the identity beyond question.

13



MARY EDNA MCCARTHY HOGAN
1881-1912

IV. MARY EDNA McCARTHY, 1881-1912
 her children: Harold Joseph Hogan
 Gael Patrick Hogan
 Marian Margaret Hogan

Photos of Mary Anne's youngest daughter, Edna, show her as lovely as her mother, although perhaps not as robust. She was nine years and nine months old when Mary Ann died.

The parish register at Sacred Heart Church, Wolfe Island, shows her birth date as 8 February 1881, her baptismal date as 5 March 1881, her name Mary Edna. Sponsors were Edward McCarthy and Ann Lyon; Father Spratt, priest.

Her tombstone in St. Edward's Cemetery, Mendon, Michigan, gives the birth year as 1884. Her death certificate gives 1883, "age at death 29 years, three months, 28 days." Actually, she was 31 when she succumbed at Borgess Hospital, Kalamazoo, Michigan, three weeks and five days after the birth of her third child, to the twin scourges of puerperal fever and acute hepatitis.

Her name, and her mother's, on some records, is shown as Marian, and this is the name given to the little daughter orphaned so early. Marian Margaret Hogan had brothers Harold Joseph and Gael Patrick. Kalamazoo is not far from Three Rivers where Edna's brother Frank and sister Nellie lived -- and where I was born four years before Edna's death. I never knew Edna, but sometimes I met her children when they visited the Fitch and McCarthy families in Three Rivers, hardly realizing then that Harold, Gael, and Marian were my cousins too.

Edna was 14 when she came with her father and siblings to Three Rivers. She probably attended public schools there, as her brother Frank did (and also my father, Oliver Donovan, her first cousin, two years her senior.)

She was married 9 June 1903, at St. Edward's Church, Mendon, to Thomas Matthew Hogan, son of Matthew and Anna (Carr) Hogan. Witnesses to the marriage were my father, Oliver Donovan, and Mary O'Keefe, later to become my godmother. Henry Kauffman, priest, officiated.

Tom Hogan was born at Vincennes, Indiana, on 14 January 1883 or 1884, according to his daughter. His father was from Ireland, his mother from England. Tom was a tailor, and the family lived on Eighth Street in Three Rivers, where their two sons were born. "Tom had a beautiful singing voice," his niece, Evelyn Thornton, told us.

After Edna's death, Tom remarried and, at one time, was employed as Superintendent of the Garment Shop for the Michigan Department of Corrections at Jackson. He died 29 September 1944 at the home of his daughter in Kalamazoo, and is buried in St. Edward's Cemetery, Mendon. Tombstone dates are 1884-1944.

Harold, eldest son of Tom and Edna, born 3 January 1905 at Three Rivers, married Lois Askey, daughter of P. H. and Martha (Holloway) Askew. They have two children, James and Patricia (Mrs. Michael Riharb), and four grandchildren, Kim and Mark Hogan, and Michelle and Lisa Riharb, all living (1977) in Pontiac, Mich.



Ellsworth and Marian (Hogan) Barr, with children John (in father's arms); Tom, left center; Lorraine, Patrick, Kathleen, front left to right, about 1952.

Gael Hogan, born 17 March 1907, married Garnet Acha. Their daughter Karen Ann (Mrs. Ralph Gates), and three grandchildren, Ralph, Lori, and Jeff Gates, also live in Pontiac (1977).

Marian, born 11 May 1912, was married 15 June 1940 at St. Augustine's Church, Kalamazoo, to James Ellsworth Barr, son of John William and Agatha Marie (Norris) Barr. Two of their eight children, James Michael and Mary Ann, died in infancy. The others are: Thomas Ellsworth, married to Elizabeth Ann Frazier; Kathleen Marie (Mrs. Tony Fytczyk); Lorraine Agatha (Mrs. John Ingram); Patrick William, married to Janeen Stembaugh; John Francis, married to Debbie Crego; and Daniel Hogan, a student at Western Michigan University (1977).

Grandchildren are Andrew Joseph and Todd Michael Fytzyk; Scottie Michael and Cindy Michelle Ingram; Joshua James, Carrie Ann, Jessica Lynette, and Matthew James Barr.

V. GEORGE FRANCIS McCARTHY, 1884-1954
 his children: Mildred Marian, 1907-1963
 Evelyn Frances, 1909-
 Donald Edward, 1916-
 James Joseph, 1918-1944
 Francis Charles, 1924-
 John Robert (Jack), 1927-
 Terrance Patrick (Terry), 1929-

"Meet Frank McCarthy and his three sons in service -- Francis, James and Donald...the war has taken Frank away from his normal, peace-time pursuits -- and it's taken his three boys away from Three Rivers."

This introduction headed a sketch published sometime between June 1941 and June 1944 by Fairbanks-Morse and Company of Three

Rivers, one of a series "in tribute to the men and women of Fairbanks-Morse, whose determination to do their part in war work is an inspiring chapter in Three Rivers history."

The sketch is illustrated with a photograph of Frank McCarthy at work and smaller portraits of sons Donald, James, and Francis.

"If you could see Frank working as an external precision-grinder man in the Fairbanks-Morse general machine shop," the text continues, "you'd find him working with the same skill that has identified him as a Fairbanks-Morse craftsman since 1905.

"You'd find him working with a new determination, too. For [he] is looking forward to the day when his sons come back to Three Rivers. . . .

"Before the war, Frank's son, Francis, was a timekeeper in the Fairbanks-Morse weldry. Today he is a Seaman in the U. S. Navy, in training at Camp Peary, Va. Donald, too, is in the Navy -- a Petty Officer in the post office of the Naval Section Base in St. Petersburg, Fla. James is a Sergeant in the Army, stationed at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. . . ."

The tribute carries no date, but the three-year period is established by a later, briefer notice from the Three Rivers Daily Commercial, which states: "Mr. and Mrs. Frank McCarthy received word Sunday of the death of their son, Staff Sgt. James J. McCarthy who was killed in action over Germany Oct. 7, 1944. . . . He left for service June 12, 1941 and later enlisted in the air corps and was a gunner on a B-17. He

went overseas in June 1944. . . ."

Frank McCarthy, like his elder siblings, was born at Wolfe Island, Ontario. The date was 8 July 1884, seven years and four months before his mother died. He was baptized at Sacred Heart Church there on 13 July, with Joseph and Johanna Greenwood as sponsors, Father Spratt, priest. Johanna (nee Donovan) Greenwood was his mother's sister.

He was nine years old when he came to Three Rivers with his father, his brother John and sisters Nellie and Edna. The family lived on Eighth Street and Frank attended Second Ward School there. He was an excellent student, with the ability to absorb and memorize assignments at a single reading. One of his teachers remembered him as "the best pupil she ever had," according to his daughter, Evelyn Thornton.

Frank, however, left school early to go to work for the Sheffield Car Company, later Fairbanks-Morse. A company publication, printed in 1943, states that he "has been working steady for Fairbanks-Morse for thirty-eight years; back to the days of the Sheffield Car Co."

He had worked as a newsboy as early as 1899, as evidenced by a photo published 55 years later in the Three Rivers Commercial, showing a group of boys, newsbags over their shoulders, on the steps of the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern freight house. Frank was 15 that year.

The accompanying article by Gertrude T. Starr says, "The boys were down at the old Lake Shore and Michigan Southern depot every day except Sunday to meet the early evening train

from the north and there pick up their respective papers. . . . [They] worked for the J. T. Muncey News Agency carrying among other papers the Detroit Journal and Free Press. . . ."

On 12 June 1906, Frank McCarthy married Letha Sophia Hessmer, daughter of Herman and Sophia (Cushman) Hessmer, who also lived on Eighth Street. (This was 13 days before my father, Oliver Donovan, first cousin of Frank, married Margaret Mahana at St. Edward's rectory, Mendon.) Letha was born in Three Rivers 19 February 1886. She and Frank, their daughter Evelyn says, were the first couple married at Immaculate Conception Church, a mission at that time of St. Edward's, Mendon.

Their first two children were daughters, Mildred Marian and Evelyn Frances. Mildred was about a year older than I, Evelyn nearly two years younger than I. We lived only about two short blocks apart, they on Eighth Street, we on Sixth (now South Main) Street, and were close childhood friends.

The first three McCarthy sons, Donald, James, and Francis, were born in 1916, 1918, and 1924, respectively, while we still lived in Michigan; the others, Jack (1927) and Terry (1928) after my family moved to Florida.

After many years of separation, Evelyn and I were reunited when I learned that she was living in Jacksonville, 150 miles north of my Melbourne, Florida home. She has contributed extensive memories and memorabilia to this history.

She says: "My father always worked hard and believed in giving a day's work for his pay. The only vacation I remember his taking was a week [in 1953] to come to Florida for Terry's

wedding. My mother...also worked very hard for seven children. We always had plenty of good food. Mom baked twice a week. . . . She was a happy person. We were never told 'I love you.' They didn't have to tell us. We knew they did.

"They both worked hard for the church. My mother would clean, buy flowers for the altars, and help with the dinners. My father took care of the furnace in the old church. It smoked and wasn't very good. He was the usher, and we would spend Sunday afternoons counting the collection.

"When anyone was sick, my mother would take them food and bring their washing home with her. My parents, I love them, and thank God that they were mine."¹

Frank died suddenly at his home, 715 Eighth Street, on Sunday evening, 7 November 1954. Letha died the following year, on Monday afternoon, 10 October 1955, at the Three Rivers hospital "where she had been a patient for the past two weeks."² Both are buried in Riverside Cemetery, Three Rivers.

Their children:

Mildred married Harry Ryan, had a daughter Mary Letha, and lived in Cleveland, Ohio, where she died 13 January 1963. Mary is married to Nick Stipanovich and has children Lisa, Julie, Nicky, and Mark Daniel.

Evelyn married Walter Scott Thornton 5 August 1931 at St. Agnes Church, Cleveland. Their first child was born in Cleveland, four others in Jacksonville, and one (Daniel) in Charleston, S.C. William Scott married Jean Rivers; James Patrick married Gayle Tisher; Daniel McCarthy married Glyn Brawley;

Mary Ann married Robert H. Timmins; Peter Abner married Ann Floyd; Linda Mildred married Timothy L. Harris.

Evelyn's grandchildren are Scotty, Susan, Patrick, John, Gregory, Kathleen, Thomas Anthony, Daniel, Richard, Steven, Jack, Peter Abner, and Matthew Francis Thornton; Robert and Michael Timmins; and Christine Lynn Harris.

Donald Edward McCarthy married first Micky Bell and has a daughter Patricia. He married second Jane Brown and lives in Deland, Florida. Patricia is married to James McKay, lives in Jacksonville, Arkansas, and has three children.

James Joseph was married to Catherine Kearney of Three Rivers in 1943, the year preceding his death in the service of his country.

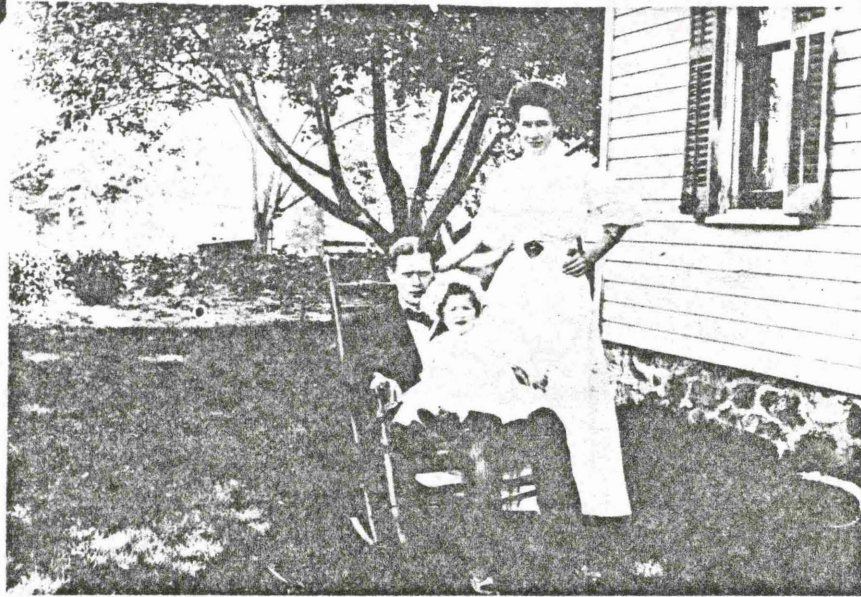
Francis Charles McCarthy married Juanita Sowers at Cleveland, Ohio, and now lives in Center Ridge, Arkansas. Their children are Maureen, Annette, Michael, Jane, Nancy, Loraine, Brian, Rosemary, and Joyce.

John Robert (Jack) McCarthy married Mary Ellen Lott 28 August 1954 at Immaculate Conception Church, Three Rivers, and now lives in Brandon, Florida. Their children are Johnny Francis, James Lott, and Amy Margaret.

Terrance Patrick (Terry) McCarthy married Ann Cooper 20 June 1953 in Jacksonville, where they still live. Their children are Marian Cabrini, Theresa, Pauline, and Patrick.

¹Evelyn's letter of January 1976.

²Obituaries from Three Rivers Commercial.



Frank, Letha, and baby Mildred McCarthy, 1908.

THREE RIVERS (MICH.) COMMERCIAL

KILLED OVER GERMANY



Staff Sgt. James J. McCarthy was killed in action over Germany Oct. 7, 1944, according to information received yesterday by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Frank McCarthy.

Receive Word Death Of Son

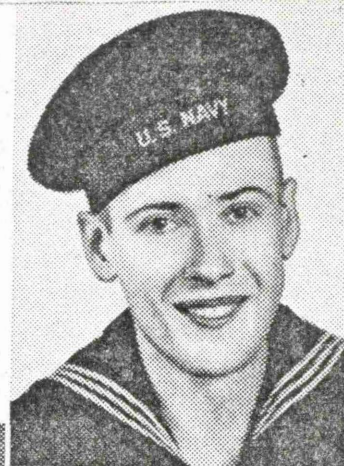
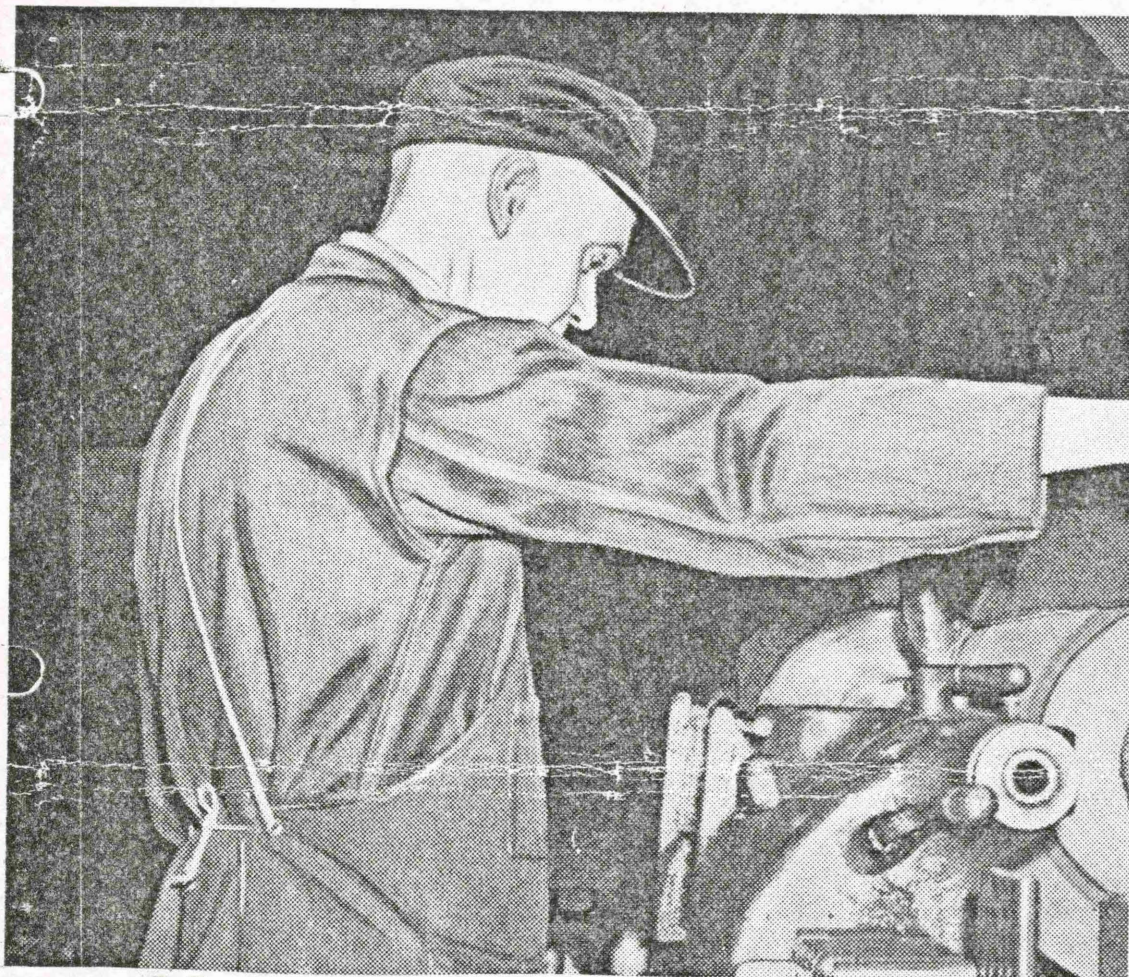
Staff Sgt. James J.
McCarthy, Army Air
Force, Killed Over
Germany

Mr. and Mrs. Frank McCarthy received word Sunday of the death of their son, Staff Sgt. James J. McCarthy who was killed in action over Germany Oct. 7, 1944.

He was born in Three Rivers Dec. 22, 1918. He graduated from Three Rivers high school in 1936 and was a member of the Immaculate Conception church of Three Rivers. Feb. 6, 1943 he was married to Catherine Kearney of Mishawaka, Ind. He left for service June 12, 1941 and later enlisted in the air corps and was a gunner on a B-17. He went overseas in June 1944.

Surviving are his parents, his wife, two sisters, Mrs. Mildred Ryan of Cleveland, Ohio, and Mrs. Evelyn Thornton of Jacksonville, Fla., four brothers, Donald and Francis in service in the Pacific, John and Terrence at home.

They Have an Ax to Grind with the Axis



DONALD MCCARTHY



JAMES MCCARTHY



FRANK MCCARTHY

MEET Frank McCarthy and his three sons in service—Francis, James and Donald. They're Three Rivers men, these four . . . with an ax to grind with the Axis! For the war has taken Frank away from his normal, peace-time pursuits—and it's taken his three boys away from Three Rivers.



IF you could see Frank working as an external precision-grinder man in the Fairbanks-Morse general machine shop, you'd find him working with the same skill that has identified him as a Fairbanks-Morse craftsman since 1905.

You'd find him working with a new determination, too. For Francis G. McCarthy—better known as Frank—is looking forward to the day when his sons come back to Three Rivers . . . and he's doing his bit to hasten that reunion.

Before the war, Frank's son, Francis, was a timekeeper in the Fairbanks-Morse weldry. Today he is a Seaman in the U. S. Navy, in training at Camp Peary, Va. Donald, too,

is in the Navy—a Petty Officer in the post office of the Naval Section Base in St. Petersburg, Fla. James is a Sergeant in the Army, stationed at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

This war, as Frank and his three sons will tell you, is grim, serious business. And that is why every Fairbanks-Morse employee at the Three Rivers plant is working so hard for victory these days . . . producing fighting equipment for our fighting sons in service.

Like Frank's three boys in uniform the men and women of Fairbanks-Morse have an ax to grind with the Axis . . . and they're putting a mighty, mighty keen edge on it.