

Of Brilliance & Belonging



A History of the Price & Dunne Family

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MY FATHER'S FAMILY: THE PRICES AND THE DUNNES. THE ARTISANS AND THE FARMERS. TOOL BOXES AND LAND. THE PRICES STREAMED FROM SEVERAL COUNTIES IN THE MIDLANDS OF ENGLAND — CARPENTERS, TAILORS, DRESSMAKERS, BLACKSMITHS. THE DUNNES WERE FARMERS, CHILDREN OF COUNTY GALWAY, IRELAND, MANY OF WHOM FOUND A NEW SENSE OF PLACE IN AMERICA. AMONG THEM WAS MY GRANDMOTHER BRIDGET DUNNE, WHO FOUND THE LOVE OF HER LIFE IN WALTER PRICE, THE TALL CARPENTER JUST BACK FROM THE GREAT WAR IN EUROPE. HERE IS WHAT BACKGROUND OUR FAMILY HAS GATHERED.

Part I. Price Family

The Prices of St. Louis

What's interesting to me about the Prices is their long history of craftsmanship — even though my dad, with his sunny-morning sociability, keen ear, and disinterest in fine handiwork, was more of a farmer, taking after the Dunnes, his mother's side.

My dad's Grandpa came from a family of carpenters. His Grandma, from a family of tailors.

William J. and Sarah Price migrated from their home in the Midlands of England to St. Louis, Missouri, in the midst of its Gilded Age building boom.

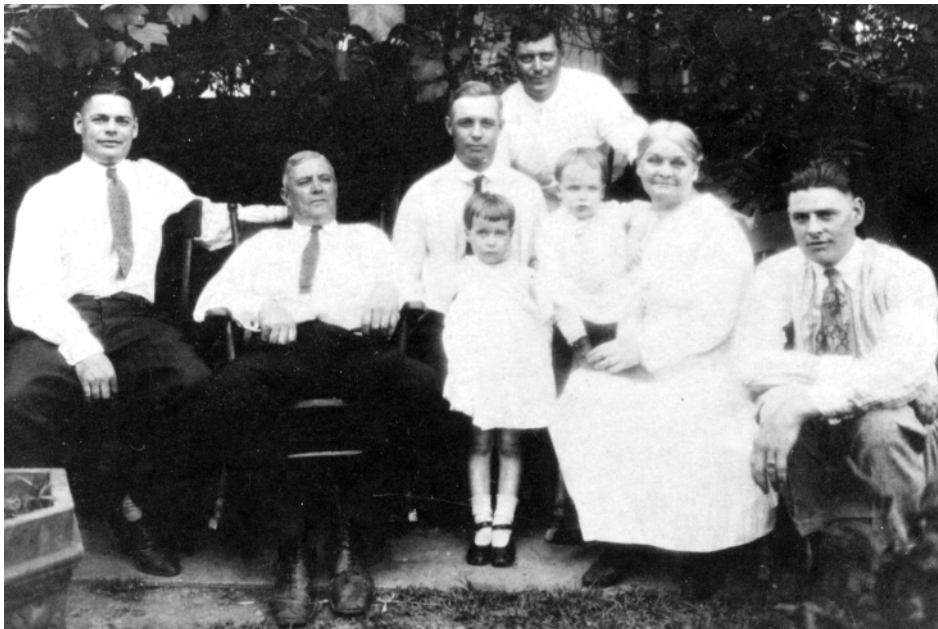
In his early years in St. Louis, WJ was a carpentry foreman on some of the large churches and apartment

buildings in the area around Union, Kingshighway, Delmar and Maryland. As the work (and the size of their family) increased, the Prices decided to go into business for themselves.

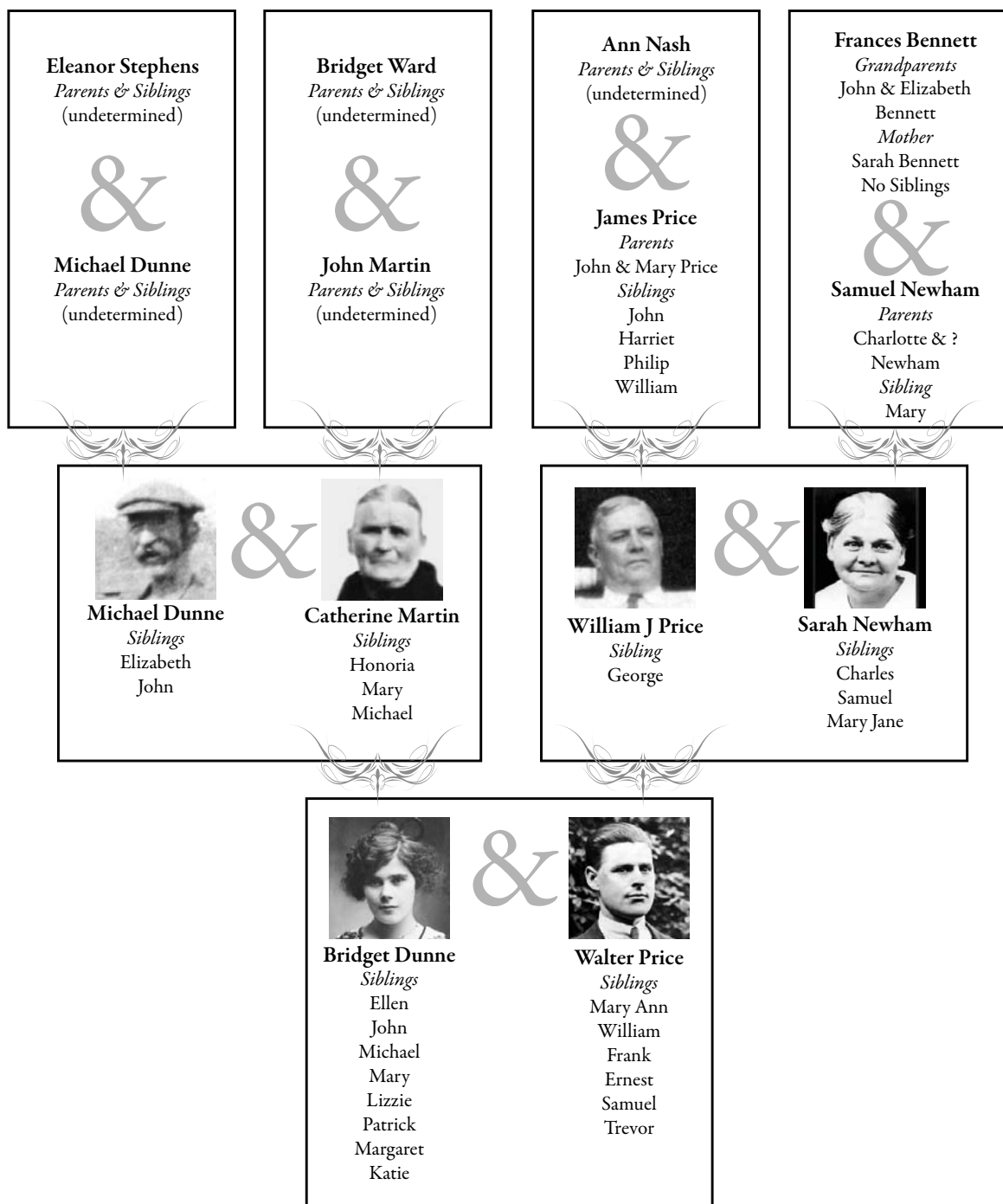
By 1910, the *WJ Price Company, Carpenter and Building Contractor* was in full swing.

After World War I, the family began to operate as *Wm J Price & Sons, Carpenters & Builders*. All six sons were involved in the business at that time. With WJ's wife Sarah leading the way, business boomed and all but the oldest son bought their own homes. Everyone prospered. Then the Great Depression wiped them out.

Their business turned to repairing rather than building. Kingbury Place, Westmoreland Place, Portland Place, and the ABC Apartments were some of the areas where



William J. and Sarah Price, with four of their six sons and two of their grandchildren. L-R: Frank, WJ, Sam, Sam's daughter Elizabeth, Bill, Sam's son Samuel, Sarah, and Walter. About 1920.



Children
John M., Walter T., William, J. Patrick, Mary Ellen

27 Grandchildren
52 Great-grandchildren (as of 2009)

The Dunnes & the Prices

they worked. They were masters of their trade. But from the young viewpoint of my dad, they were the “richest family on the block in summer and the poorest in winter.”

**Patriarch: William James Price
(1859-1934)**

William James Price was born on 31 Jan 1859, in Sudbury (Uttoxeter, Derbyshire), England — the child of James Price and Ann Nash. An older brother George had died in infancy.

WJ was educated. At 15, in 1874, he graduated from the Lord Vernon School for Boys in Sudbury. Vernon was lord of the manor and sole owner of everything in Sudbury, so directly or indirectly, he was James Price’s employer.

The English census shows WJ moving around with his parents and their work within Sudbury: Aston (1861), Church Boughton (1871), and Foston & Scropton (1881). After his schooling, he took up the longstanding trade of his family: carpentry.

In 1881, at the age of 22, WJ met Sarah Elizabeth Newham and was married. (See Sarah’s entry below.) Around the beginning of 1884, as a married couple with two children, William James and Sarah Elizabeth Price migrated from England to America. The journey was heartbreaking; they lost their 2-year-old daughter to one of the fevers that haunted the ships of the North Atlantic.

They settled in St. Louis, Missouri. Or maybe “settled” is the wrong word. During their first years in St. Louis, they moved a lot. The City Directories find them at: 119 South Ewing (1884); Swan Ave near Boyle (1885); 2512a Dodier (1886); Laclede Hotel (1897); 4559 Cottage (1888); 2923 Semple (1895); 2501 Whittier (1899); 4239 Easton (1901); 1162 Aubert, with a carpenter shop at 4460 Finney (1905). They continued at Aubert throughout their lives, moving the shop there in 1907.

By 1896, their family of six sons was complete.

The Prices were members of the Episcopal Church on Euclid and Washington Av.

WJ (and later his sons) were active members in the Order of the Sons of St. George, Wellington Lodge #419. Founded in 1836 to oppose Irish coal miners known as the Molly Maguires, the lodge had evolved into a congenial fraternal benefit society for Englishmen residing in the U.S.

Cricket? As a young man, my father had this idea

that his grandfather WJ would periodically disappear to play cricket in Australia. Once he began gathering more factual information on the life and times of the Prices, this seemed unlikely. The story of WJ’s cricket-playing (and/or disappearances) remain a mystery.

WJ died on 28 June 1934. After being treated for 10 years with kidney trouble, he died from “acute cardiac dilatation and chronic myocarditis.” Heart failure. He was 75.

**Matriarch:
Sarah Elizabeth Newham Price
(1860-1927)**

Sarah Elizabeth Newham was the third of four children and oldest daughter of Samuel Newham (1831-1903) and Frances Bennett (1831-1908), who made their home in Witham on Hill, in the Bourne District of Lincolnshire. She was born on 15 April 1860.

As a young adult, she moved to Burton Upon Trent (Staffordshire). The 1881 census finds her working as a laundress and living at 161 Shobnall Street with her brother Charles (a tailor) and his wife Ruth, along with their brother Samuel H. (a brewer’s labourer).

There she met up with WJ Price who is living a short distance away in Foston & Scropton.

As fate would have it, she became pregnant. She and WJ travelled to her family’s home to get married in the fall of 1881, then returned Burton Upon Trent for the birth of Mary Ann before the end of the year.

After their son William was born in 1883, they emigrated to America. In St. Louis she had five more sons. According to my dad, it was Sarah’s fondest hope that her sons would all marry “Irish girls.” Maybe that was because the “Irish girls” in St. Louis worked as domestics, so they not only knew how to run a household but also developed refined tastes. Sarah might have thought that, having grown up on farms, with a strong sense of place, Irish girls could provide stability in a bustling urban world. And so five of her sons did just that — married young women from Ireland.

Sarah died in St. Louis at the age of 67 on 30 Jun 1927 (also listed as 1 July). Her death certificate lists the cause as “arteriosclerosis - contributory cardiac dilatation.”

***F**or WJ and
Sarah their
fresh start began
with tragedy—
the loss of their
oldest child.*

WJ & Sarah's Children

Here are a few facts about the seven children of WJ and Sarah Price. For most of them my data sources were their 1917 draft cards and the 1930 U.S. census.

MARY ANN Price was born in the 4th Quarter of 1881 in Burton Upon Trent (Derbyshire/Staffordshire), England. Her parents married 1 to 3 months before she was born.

Nothing is really known about Mary Ann, except the oral history of her death aboard the ship to America.



WILLIAM "BILL" Price was born in Sudbury (Derbyshire) England, in Aug 1883.

1900 census (age 17). Working as a carpenter's helper, most likely at his father's side.

1930 census (age 47). Living in the Melrose Apartments at 210 Sarah (at West Pine), with wife Magdalen (age 47, her parents from Germany). Working as a carpenter.

Bill died in Feb 1965, at 82.



FRANK PRICE was born in St. Louis in Feb 1887. In 1918, at age 31, he was inducted into the Army and sent to serve in France. (See section on World War I.)

1930 census (age 43). Working as a carpenter and living in his own home at 1160 Aubert (next door to his dad). His Ireland-born wife was Mary E Ward. They had a son, Frank Warren.

Frank later married Lula, who died in 1954.

He died in Mar 1947 at the age of 60.



ERNEST PRICE was born in St. Louis in Jan 1889 and followed his brothers into the family carpentry business.

Ern married Helen "Auntie" Dunne, my grandmother's older sister, so that their child was my dad's "double cousin." (See section on the Dunne family.)

er's older sister, so that their child was my dad's "double cousin." (See section on the Dunne family.)

1930 census (age 41). Living at 5143 Cote Brillante, with Auntie (age 39) and son William E. (age 17, also known as Sonny).

In 1944, Ernest died at the age of 55.



SAMUEL PRICE was born in St. Louis on 5 May 1891. He worked as a carpenter.

1930 census (age 39). Living at 5703 Kennerly (his own home) with Ireland-born wife Margaret (age 41) and children Elizabeth (14), Samuel Jr. (11), Joseph (9), Rosemary (7), Freda [?] (male, 6), Frances (male, 1).



WALTER PRICE was my grandfather. He was born on 6 Mar 1893 in St. Louis.

At the age of 25, after he got his start as a carpenter, he was drafted into the Army and served on the Western Front in World War I as a combat engineer. (See section on World War I.)

In 1920 he married 26-year-old Bridget Dunne (see section on the Dunne family). Their first child was born at the end of the year. They had five children: Michael John "Jack" (1920), my father Walter Thomas "Curly" (1922), William James "Bill" (1925), Joseph Patrick "Pat" (1932), and Mary Ellen (1935).

1930 census (age 37). Living in their house at 5642 Theodosia Ave, with his wife Bridget and first three children.

Around 1936, (at Bridget's stern urging) Walter and his younger brother Tab went into the carpentry business for themselves. Bridget mortgaged the Theodosia house to buy them a truck. By 1940, they were starting to roll, but because of the threat of World War II, building materials became scarce. The brothers shifted to work on government projects, first at the TNT plant in Weldon Springs, Missouri, and later at the Army Engineering Depot in Granite City, Illinois.

On 6 June 1963, Walter stretched out on his bed after dinner and quietly passed away. It was the first loss of someone I adored.

Images of the Price brothers' signatures came from their 1917 Draft Registration cards, downloaded from Ancestry.com.



The Price family carpenter shop on Aubert. Thought to be the six brothers. Probably 1930s.

Worcestershire

Trevor Price

TREVOR "TAB" Price was the youngest child, born in June 1896. He was also a carpenter and also drafted to serve in World War I. (See section on World War I.)

1930 census (age 34). Living at his home on 4748 Spaulding, with his Ireland-born wife Nellie T., who was older than him (44).

Nellie died young and Tab went on to marry Bernice. They had two daughters, Carol and Patricia.

He died in October 1966.

The Prices in England

We go back in time now to look at earlier generations, starting with James Price and Ann Nash, who were WJ Price's parents.

James Price (1823-1904) was born in the civil parish of Mathon, tucked in the southwest corner of Worcestershire. He was the third child of six.

In the 19th century, the big landowner and lord of the manor was the Dean of Westminster Abbey, followed by a group of Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

Cider and perry orchards, grain crops, hay, and hops, are the staple growths. In the hop trade the parish is somewhat distinguished, the celebrated "Mathon whites" taking their names herefrom. Population of the parish upwards of 1,000... [from an 1868 Guide to Worcestershire].

The Prices were craftsmen. They had a shop in the village of Mathon, where James' father John and Uncle George worked as carpenters who specialized in making wheels. James' two younger brothers Philip and William also became carpenters there.

James' older sister Harriet worked as a servant for a

hops merchant for a while, then moved back home with her father after their mother Mary died.

James' oldest brother John worked as a laborer. We don't know what became of his brother Samuel.

Sudbury, Derbyshire

Still a teenager, James took off for parts north, settling in the parish of Sudbury, on the border between Staffordshire and Derbyshire. The area was also known as the "Appletree Hundred" and was solely owned by Lord Vernon.

In the "Hungry Forties" of the 19th century, no doubt James hoped to find better work in the north. My dad had information that James worked as a master carpenter in the employ of Lord Vernon, but the census records of his time show he spent his life as a laborer and coal miner.

At the age of 28, in 1851, James Price married the 19-year-old Ann Nash (1832-1904 or 1910).

Ann Nash's family has been hard to pin down. Judging from the English census data, the Nashes of Sudbury either lived in multi-generational households working as laborers or lived in others' households as servants.

Ann and James Price lived out their days together in the corner of Derbyshire where Ann was born, on the border of Staffordshire, along the Dove River.

They lost their first child George soon after he was born in 1852. In 1859, they had their only surviving child — William James (WJ), my great grandfather.

Five census records were found for the couple: 1851, 1861, 1871, 1891, and 1901.

In 1851, James and Ann were newlyweds, visiting with Samuel and Mary Woolley, an old couple on Dale Brooke in Sudbury. James' occupation is listed as "labourer."

In 1861, James (38) and Ann (29) were living with

the 2-year-old WJ in the hamlet of Aston. James worked as an agricultural labourer.

In 1871, they were living in the environs of Church Boughton. James is still a farm worker. Their son WJ was able to attend school at the Lord Vernon School for Boys, where he graduated in 1874.

By the census of 1881, we pick them up in the civil parish of Foston & Scropton, on or near Hay Lane (over the border in Staffordshire). James was working as a general labourer. They were living in a grocer's shop, where Ann was a shopkeeper and 22-year-old WJ was now a carpenter, following in the footsteps of his grandpa and uncles.

In 1891, James and Ann lived on Flacker's Lane in the parish of Doveridge. Their neighbors were the families of a dairy farmer, a groom, and a bricklayer. James is listed as a general labourer. By this time, their son WJ had married and taken his family to America.

In 1901, they were living in the same place. James was 78 and retired by then. He reported his past occupation as "collier" — a coal miner. This makes sense if you think that farm labor is seasonal work. When it's too cold to farm, you work in the mines.

In spite of their humble circumstances, James and Ann lived long lives. James died at the age of 80 in 1904. There are two possible death records for Ann, one in 1904 (when she would have been 72) and one in 1910 (age 78).

The Newhams of England (East Midlands)

My great-grandmother Sarah Elizabeth was the daughter of Samuel Newham (1831-1903) and Frances Bennett (1831-1908).

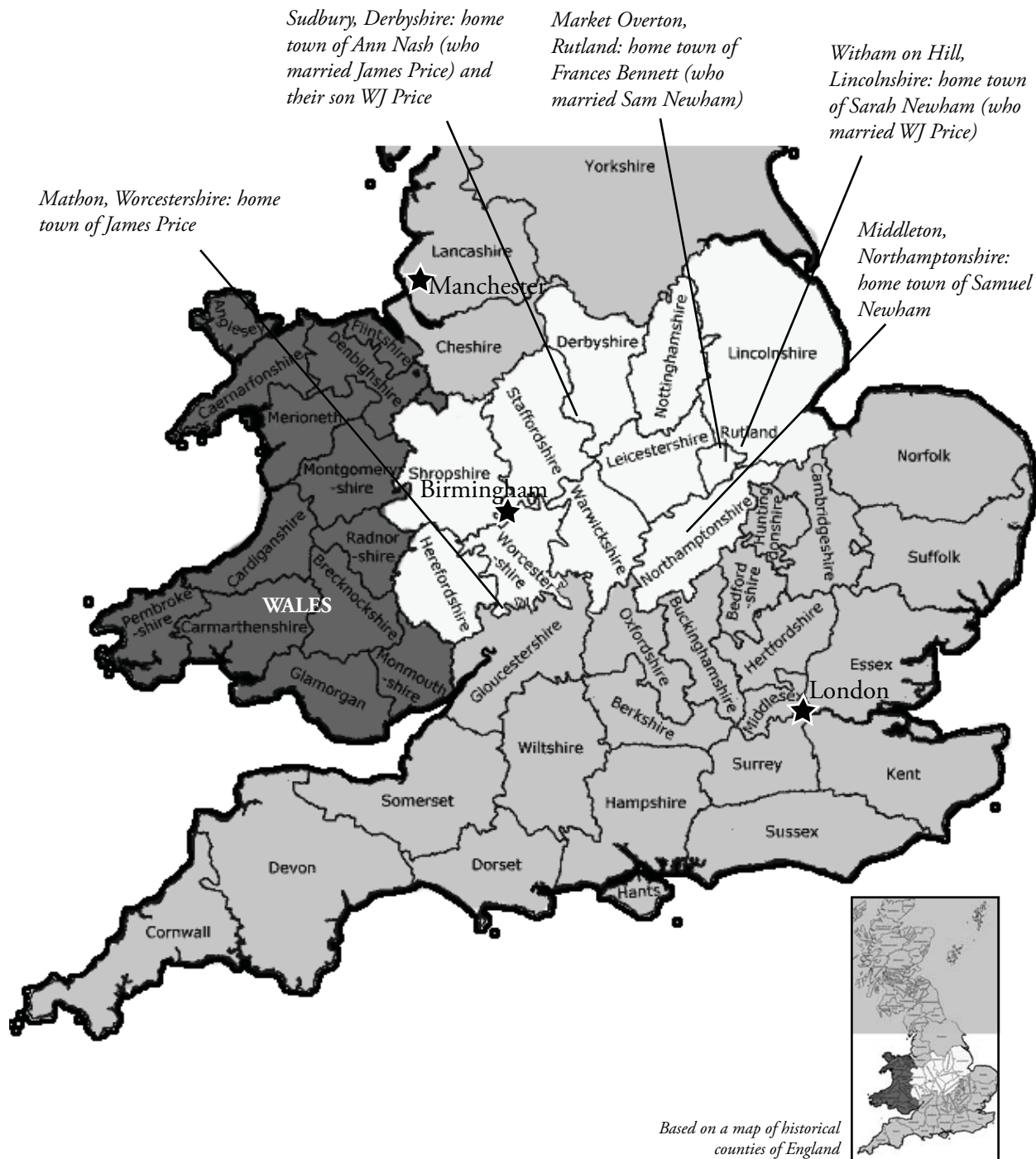
A look at England during the 1840s

When Jim Price left home, Queen Victoria was in the early years of her reign and the Industrial Revolution was in full swing. Due to the bad harvests that began in 1837s, the decade was known as the "Hungry Forties."

Friedrich Engels was beginning to write about the plight of the working class and Charles Dickens was popularizing it in books like *Oliver Twist*. Parliament was beginning to debate the role of government in regulating work conditions (like child labor) and dealing with the poor. The conditions in coal mines were horrific, with all manner of ugliness taking place among the men, women, and children who worked in them.

Map of English Origins

The 19th-century roots of the Price family have been traced to the cluster of English counties known as the Midlands (shown as white on this map).



The Bennetts

The Bennett family lived in Market Overton, Rutland. The head-of-household John Bennett (b. 1771) was a native of the town. He was a blacksmith. His wife Elizabeth (b. 1781) was born in Scotland.

The Bennetts had two daughters, Sarah Elizabeth (b. 1801) and Ann (b. 1821). Sarah was a dressmaker.

The third girl in the household was Frances Bennett (1831-1908), who appears to be Sarah's natural child and the grandchild of John and Elizabeth.

The Newhams

Samuel Newham (1831-1903) was a native of Middleton in Northamptonshire. He grew up with his older sister Mary (b. 1829) and his long-widowed mother Charlotte (1805-1866), who worked as both a lacemaker and a housekeeper.

We don't know much of Samuel's young adulthood, but by 1861 he is a master tailor in Witham on Hill, Lincolnshire, living with his wife Frances and their four children.

Their oldest son Samuel Henry (1856-1895) was a brewer's laborer in Staffordshire in 1881, then moved to Leicester where he worked as a storekeeper. His wife and he had a daughter Edith. He died young, at the age of 39.

His brother Charles Edward (b. 1858) was a tailor like his father. After their start in Burton Upon Trent (Staffordshire), he, his wife Ruth, and daughter Frances (b. 1882) moved back to Witham on Hill. They lived in the Black Dog Inn neighboring his parents. In later years, he turned to carpentry.

As referred to previously, in 1883 the third Newham child Sarah moved to America with WJ Price and their two oldest children. We'll never know what motivated these two to get up and go.

The youngest Newham sister was Mary Jane (b. 1865). In 1896, at the age of 31, she married a blacksmith Walter Ardin and they had 3 children: Sara Jane (b. 1896), Reginald F. (b. 1898) and Frances Nelly (b. 1900).



The 1901 census shows that Samuel and Frances Newham (now 70 years old) had taken in a grandchild, Henry Edward Newham. Henry is an infant, born in 1890 in Leicester, Leicestershire.

A likely scenario is that the child was born to their daughter Mary Jane. In 1890, she was still single — not married for another five years. If she got pregnant she

might have gone to her brother Charles' house in Leicester to have the child, whose birth was registered there.

Interestingly, Henry is the only descendant of Samuel and Frances to carry the Newham name forward. As far as we know, the two Newham sons had only daughters.



Samuel Newham died in 1903; Frances, in 1908. We don't know where Henry lived after his grandmother died, when he was 18. But we do know that he enlisted in the British Army seven years later, on 3 August 1915.

From the Lincolnshire Regiment, he was transferred to the Machine Gun Corps and got sent to the front. He fought in the Great War till he received a gunshot wound in early 1918. He qualified for a 30% veteran's pension due to a permanently disabled right arm. His last medical entry was in 1923 and then he disappears...



Single women having babies was not rare in 19th century England. In the 1860s, one in five births were out-of-wedlock in the East Midlands. But society and English law were officially intolerant of illegitimacy. So-called "baby farmers" thrived — unscrupulous people who extorted money from young women and their boyfriends to take the baby off their hands. Their motive was profit and if they couldn't hand off the babies fast enough, they drugged them up and let them starve.

The Bennetts didn't buy into this mean-spirited culture. Their granddaughter Frances became part of their family. Frances, in turn, made a home for her grandson Henry. I love to think of their kindness as a family theme.

World War I

Henry Newham wasn't the only family member in the Great War. My grandfather Walter Price and his brothers Frank and Tab were also there.

A family history that my father compiled listed my grandfather's division and regiment, that he was an engineer, and that he was involved in battles at Argonne and St. Mihiel.

My dad also told me that Armistice Day (now Veteran's Day) was a solemn drinking occasion for his dad and uncles Tab and Frank.

So, one day I stumbled onto a fat book: *American Armies and Battlefields in Europe during the Great War* and decided to check out my dad's facts. It was a thrilling moment to find Grandpa's Division and to verify his Regiment of Engineers — and then to see the movement of his Division plotted on giant fold-out maps. I felt I was touching the past, touching my grandfather's experience. Suddenly, that war was no longer an abstraction. I could see the trenches and the scorched landscape through his eyes. Where was he? What did he do?



The Great War was bloody chaos. My grandpa, who loved the orderliness of carpentry, was there.



Private Walter Price, Combat Engineer

The 89th Division of the National Army was drafted as part of the massive U.S. military build-up to go help the weary French and English beat back the Germans.

Walter Price was drafted into the 314th Engineers, nicknamed the "Middle West" or the "Rolling W." He was

The Man Who Loved Order

Grandpa Price lives for me only as a kindly and arthritic old man. As a retired carpenter with all kinds of can-do knowledge that his white collar children hadn't bothered to learn, he made the rounds to our houses to coach our parents on fix-it projects that he was too crippled to do himself. He believed in a job well-done. On one hot day, he watched my dad install a window in our garage. When my dad thought it was done, Grandpa said, "Okay, now rip it out and do it right."

He had a silent laugh, tears appearing in his eyes when something was really funny. He liked his beer — a glass of beer with Tabasco sauce was a Sunday brunch treat. He loved his grandchildren.

When I was about 13, my cousin Kathi and I sat on the porch with my grandfather watching cars approach the four-way intersection in front of our grandparents' apartment on Pernod and Brannon. It was summer, when there were hours of daylight to kill after supper. We watched cars as they rumbled up to the lights.

Grandpa created a task for us. We had to find a pattern in the parade of cars: red, white, and blue. Spot a red car. Is the next one white? Is the next one BLUE?! It wasn't a game or a contest. There was no winner or anything to win. We didn't keep score, just celebrated the pattern when it emerged from the randomness of traffic.

I was going to say we experienced the joy of separating signal from noise, like monitoring for intelligent radio waves from outer space. But where is the meaning in a chance sequence of red, white, and blue? Maybe it was more like visual music, picking up a thrilling drum roll among so much banging of pots and pans. Finding a pattern delighted my grandfather and so it delighted us.

25, single, and working in the family carpentry business. He was inducted on April 29, 1918; Tab, on May 27; and Frank, on June 27. They trained at Camp Funston, Kansas for considerably less time than the average of six months.

With the Price brothers on board, the 89th shipped out on June 12, 1918; landed in France on June 21; and began to make their way across France to the Western Front at St. Mihiel.

The Western Front of World War I was essentially a diagonal line across the eastern edge of France and into Brussels — a long bleeding gash of trench systems and barbed wire meant to catch enemy clothing and turn them into easy targets. The war had begun in 1914 and the Germans were winning. Americans to the rescue...

It took the 89th till 9 August to reach the front. Private Price, the carpenter who liked his work squared off and leveled, was officially in hell. There was no such thing as "quiet" on the Western Front. Death was all around.

The St. Mihiel offensive — a surprise attack by the Allies — raged between September 12 - 16. The 89th was part of the main attack. They won. The Americans proved particularly good at penetrating the wretched barbed wire entanglements that the Germans were famous for.

My grandfather's engineering regiment was way up

front. In the heat of battle, combat engineers used their skills to hack through the barbed wire, to build bridges and roads and to blow up other obstacles — whatever it took to ensure the troops could reach their targets and fight effectively.

Engineers were also trained to hinder enemy mobility by planting explosive charges to create obstacles, crater roads and destroy bridges.

One terrible day in the midst of this terrifying work, Walter turned to find his best buddy's head had been blown off.

In October, the 89th moved to the Meuse-Argonne region, about 40 miles away, to join another major offensive. They replaced divisions already worn out from battle.

They fought for weeks, till the 11th hour of 11 November. Armistice. The Germans gave up.

The European experience of World War I was an endless horror. But for 1,400,000 Americans, combat on the Western Front was only two months long. I would have never guessed that.

On 22 November the 89th became part of the Army of Occupation. The weather was cold and rainy and in many places the roads were nearly impassable. Most transportation lines were completely destroyed. The troops had not stopped working since the fierce battle at Argonne.

Form 2 2500 REGISTRATION CARD 632120		24-1-28 A	
1	Name in full <u>Walter Price</u> (Given name) <u>St. Louis, Mo.</u> (Residence)	1	Tall, medium, or short (specify which)? <u>tall</u> Slender, medium, or stout (which)? <u>medium</u>
2	Home address <u>1162 Aubert Ave</u> (Street) <u>St. Louis, Mo.</u> (City) (State)	2	Color of eyes? <u>Hazel</u> Color of hair? <u>dark</u> Bald? <u>no</u>
3	Date of birth <u>March 6th 1893</u> (Month) (Day) (Year)	3	Has person lost arm, leg, hand, foot, or both eyes, or is he otherwise disabled (specify)? <u>no</u>
4	Are you (1) a natural born citizen, (2) a naturalized citizen, (3) an alien, (4) or have you declared your intention (specify which)? <u>Natural born</u>	I certify that my answers are true, that the person registered has read his own answers, that I have witnessed his signature, and that all of his answers of which I have knowledge are true, except as follows:	
5	Where were you born? <u>St. Louis, Missouri</u> (Town) (State) (Nation)	<u>Charles H. Hensley</u> (Signature of registrar)	
6	Is not a citizen, of what country are you a citizen or subject? <u>Citizen</u>		
7	What is your present trade, occupation, or office? <u>Carpenter</u>	Precinct <u>6 WARD 25</u> City <u>St. Louis, Mo.</u> State <u>Mo.</u>	
8	By whom employed? <u>By Mr. Price & Sons</u>	<u>June 5, 1917</u> (Date of registration)	
9	Where employed? <u>St. Louis, Mo.</u>	<u>Called 8/23/17</u> (Date of call)	
10	Have you a father, mother, wife, child under 12, or a sister or brother under 12, wholly dependent on you for support (specify which)? <u>no</u>		
11	Married or single (which)? <u>Single</u> Race (specify which)? <u>Caucasian</u>		
12	What military service have you had? <u>none</u> branch <u>none</u>		
13	Do you claim exemptions (specify grounds)? <u>none</u>		
I affirm that I have verified above answers and that they are true. <u>Walter Price</u> (Signature of registrant)			

Draft registration card for Walter Price, 1917

After only a few days rest, they pushed into Germany and established headquarters at Kylburg.

In early 1919, it was time to go home, but there weren't enough ships. For those who were waiting, a vast school system was formed to teach all the subjects taught in U.S. public schools. Soldiers were allowed leave to visit resorts in France and Germany. A great deal of entertainment was provided, including sports and games.

Private Walter Price arrived back in the United States on 23 May 1919, where he was honorably discharged. His brothers arrived within days of him — Tab on 17 May and Frank on 28 May.

No hell would be complete without the statisticians. The 89th Division spent 82 days at the front: Training, 0 days; in Sector, 54 days; in Battle, 28 days. Between the operations at St. Mihiel and Argonne, they clawed their way forward a whopping 30 miles. That's about a mile a day — think about it. And they were among the fast ones.

They were the 5th most efficient division in the American Army: of all the ground gained, they took over 6% of it. They also excelled (3rd place) at capturing German prisoners — 5061 of them. The cost: 1496 died in battle or from their wounds and 5625 were injured. About 7600 replacements were sent in over the course of their stay.

Is it any wonder why Veteran's Day was a solemn occasion for them?



Private Walter Price, Combat Engineer. About 1918.



Oil painting of half the houses in Ballaghduff, by M. Brennan (1973), from an earlier sketch by our cousin Philomena Stephens Kelly. Courtesy of Paddy & Josephine Collins.

Part II. Dunne Family

The Dunnes of Ballaghduff

What fascinates me about the Dunnes is the pluckiness and independence of their girls. Young Irish women taking off on their own to work in America, sister sponsoring sister, is a common story in post-famine Ireland. Girls get their courage, of course, from a strong mother who's not afraid to wave the frying pan when a frying pan needs waving. But it also helps to have a kind, indulgent father, who encourages them and who understands why good men need powerful, smart women. That's a strong theme in my perception of my grandmother's family.

And there is the land. Michael Dunne (1864-1942) and Catherine Martin (1866-1944) — my great-grandparents — were farmers in Ballaghduff, a tiny village in

the parish of Kilkerrin, County Galway, Ireland. They were married on 16 Jun 1889 at the Newbridge Catholic Chapel in Mount Bellew. Their children called them M'ma and D'da.

The Land

In the end they had his and her farms, my great-grandparents did. No one is quite sure of the legal details, but somehow M'ma got her mitts on property at Cooloo and moved to the new "home-house" about 12 kilometers to the south, while D'da continued to work the farm at Ballaghduff. The time was probably around 1910, after land reforms began letting farm tenants purchase property. Who knows what emotional breezes swirled around this transaction, but from an economic perspective, it was good business. In the long run, both elder sons were able to become landholders. Everyone pitched in to make both properties successful. Grandson Mick Dunne, the current patriarch of Cooloo, remembers the two farms sharing a horse. He would ride the horse to Ballaghduff; they would plow the land there; then they would ride the horse and plow down to Cooloo to do the same.

Historically, all the land in the area was owned by the D'Arcy family and farmers had long-term lease arrangements. In 1856, Griffith's Valuation of Ballaghduff listed 8 parcels worked by about 25 families, with the two largest areas run by 8 and 9 families each. By my grandmother's

The source for much of the information about the land is a history of Kilkerrin — "A Place of Genius and Gentility: Insights into Our Past," produced in 2000 by 18 residents of Kilkerrin (County Galway) who participated in a Certificate Course in Local History. Our cousin Josephine Collins was on the Editorial Board and contributed a chapter on "The Townland of Ballaghduff."

day, the property at Ballaghduff was worked by about 12 families who lived in two clusters a few hundred feet apart, in thatch-roofed houses. About a third of the 471 acres was bog, the turf being cut for heat and other uses. The rest ranged from good to poor as farmland goes and the families grew oats, barley, potatoes and turnips. They also maintained vegetable gardens, fowl, dairy cows, and pigs. A pig was slaughtered once a year for meat.

The texture of the land is as mesmerizing as Ireland's rocky coasts. But would be a mistake to romanticize it. The work was backbreaking. They were poor. Incomes were supplemented by sending young men to do winter work in the dangerous English coal mines. Still, there is no mistaking their love of the land.

Our cousin Philomena Stephens Kelly (1931-2000) became a school teacher in the area and described the land to Josephine Collins in the following interview:

Fr. Glynn... re-named Ballaghduff *Tír na nÓg* [Land of Eternal Youth]... We could field a team for a hurling match in Wall's field or a football team for a game in the lanes in Milltown... Our social life lacked nothing. A *princeam* (from the old English word "prinkum," meaning a caper or house dance) was organised in a few hours and these took place regularly. Our musicians were locals who played fiddle, tin whistles and in later years, the accordion. Songs were sung, poems recited and stories of other days were told. Gaelic words were used frequently and traces of the Gaelic era are found in the names of fields and gardens. In our village, *Baile Thoir* (east), households had narrow strips of land called "gits" probably from the Irish word *giota*, a small portion.

The *beairnín* or *bearnán rua* (translated as little gap or red gap) was a name given to fields in a part of the village where the grass took on a reddish hue in the autumn. Then there was *Coiléir an Áirne* (quarry of the sloe), *Moinín Árd* (high meadow) and *Moin Guail* or *gcúil* (bog of the hard, black turf or back bog)... *Gort a' bhealaigh* was another field name. It got its name from the path to school through the fields. Between Ballaghduff and Clooncunore are the askeys, from the Irish, *eascaí*, low-lying land by the river. One field was called the flax field, as flax was grown there. The "tow" was the rough or discarded flax. Men wove a plait of this to repair the flail. Linen sheets, towels and tablecloths were in every house. In the words of the poet, Wordsworth, "Bliss it was in that dawn to be alive. But to be young was very heaven."

Tír na nÓg is a mythical place beyond the edges of the map, reached only by invitation from the fairies. That was Ballaghduff.



*Michael Dunne, at his home with his horse and trap.
Early 20th century.*

Patriarch: Michael Dunne (1862-1942)

Michael Dunne was born in 1862 in Ballaghduff. According to the 1856 Griffith's Valuation, his parents Michael Dunne and Eleanor Stephens Dunne farmed a parcel of about 150 acres, communally with seven other families. There's a general impression that the Dunes had been evicted from some land "up north" — maybe during land reforms brought on by the Great Hunger — but the facts are unknown.

Michael's sister Elizabeth (Lizzie) married Tom Hanley, a local grocer and shopkeeper. They had six children. The Hanley's premises were torched about 1920 during the Irish War of Independence, due to their presumed IRA activities.

Michael had a brother John, who was born 23 Mar 1864. Nothing is known about him. The family thinks he may have emigrated to America.

Michael spoke both English and Irish. He could read but couldn't write. For his children's birth registrations, we have his X-mark.

He died on 5 June 1942 at the age of 80, with his registered cause of death as "senile decay," or old age.



From left to right: Sister-in-law Mary Crehan, sister Mary Coughlin, unknown girl, Catherine Martin Dunne, sister Honoria "Nora" Crehan. At Salthill beach resort, County Galway (Are we having fun yet?). Early 20th century.

Matriarch: Catherine Martin Dunne (1866-1944)

Catherine Martin was born 28 December 1866, the child of John Martin and Bridget Ward Martin. Her father was a laborer when she was born, but was a landholder by the time she married at the age of 23, on 16 June 1889 in the Catholic chapel at Mount Bellew. She married Michael Dunne.



Catherine Martin as a young woman.

There were five other children in the Martin family. They were raised in Rushestown, not far from Ballaghduff. The two older brothers left at a young age to live in America. Patrick lived in Boston and Peter lived in Ohio (see photo on last page).

Catherine's sister Honoria ("Nora") was born 13 Feb 1868 and went on to marry a Crehan.

Her sister Mary was born 26 August 1872 and married Peter Coughlin in 1893.

The three sisters had a wonderful practice of taking a vacation every year from the hardships of housekeeping and child-rearing. Their friend Teresa Costello ran the Glen View guesthouse at the legendary seaside resort of Salthill, to the west of Galway City on Galway Bay. They minimized their expenses by taking all their own food

and by bringing hunks of cured pork and bacon to their hostess.

The girls had a brother Michael, born 1 Sept 1870. Still a bachelor at the age of 37, poor Michael got himself in hot water by canoodling with a mentally disabled girl in the village. He was put on the boat to the America (see Ellen Dunne below) and died a bachelor in St. Louis.

Catherine Dunne spoke both English and Irish and could read and write.

She died of "senile decline" — old age — at the age of 78, on 25 November 1944.

Michael & Catherine's Children

Michael and Catherine Dunne had nine children — three boys and six girls. They were all born on the farm in Ballaghduff within the Parish of Kilkerrin (District of Glennamaddy), County Galway, Ireland.



From left to right: Patrick Dunne, Catherine Dunne Collins, Helen (Ellen) Dunne Price, Mary Dunne Stephens. About 1960. Courtesy of Maureen Collins.

Ellen/Helen Dunne Price

ELLEN DUNNE was the oldest child, born 12 Apr 1890. In 1907, at the age of 17, she left her home and family for America. In the company of her Uncle Michael (see above), she sailed on the RMS Carmania to the Port of New York, destined for the residence of their cousin Thomas Dunne on 2206 S. 12th St, St Louis, Missouri. Nine other residents of Kilkerrin were also on board, destined for other cities.

In St. Louis, she probably got work as a domestic till she married Ernest Price some time between 1910 and 1913. Ern was the third son of WJ and Sarah Price (see section on the Prices). As part of her assimilation, she decided to go by the name Helen.

Her only child William E. "Sonny" was born about 1913.

In 1914 she sponsored the passage of her sister Bridget to the U.S. and may have also sponsored the passages of sisters Maggie and Katie in the 1920s.

As of the 1930 U.S. census, "Auntie," Ern and their son were living at 5143 Cote Brillante. Her brother Patrick J Dunne (see below) was living with them.

Auntie died on 19 February 1967, in St Louis, Missouri. She had been a widow since 1944. Sadly, her only son died in his forties, several years before she did, around 1960.

John Dunne

JOHN WAS the oldest son, born 22 Aug 1891. As all the young men did in those days, John helped the family by working in the English coal mines when they could spare him from the farm.

He married Julia Fleming. Together they had seven children who survived infancy: Patrick "Patsy," Michael "Mick," Mary, Sean, Kitty [Monaghan], Julie [Furnival], and Carmel [Ghee]. Both Mary and Sean died in their teens. Julia died at the age of 48.

At some point, John became the main farmer of the land that his mother acquired at Cooloo.

He died in Ireland on 25 Aug 1972, at the age of 81.



Back row: Martin Stephens (son of Mary), Kitty Kilmartin (daughter of Lizzie), Michael Dunne, Katie and Peter Collins. Front row: Lill Collins (daughter of Katie), Mick Dunne (son of John), Paddy Collins (son of Katie), Paddy Kilmartin (son of Lizzie). Early 1950s. Courtesy of Paddy & Josephine Collins.

Michael Dunne

MICHAEL WAS born 1 Dec 1892 and was never married. He had a bum leg from working the English

mines as a youth.

As his parents aged, he took over the management of the farm in Ballaghduff. When his sister Lizzie became disabled he arranged for her care and became the primary guardian of her two children after she died. (See Lizzie below.)

Michael died on 13 Nov 1984, at the age of 92, in Ireland.



Bridget Dunne, about 1915.

Bridget Agnes Dunne Price

BRIDGET AGNES (my grandmother), born on 11 Apr 1894, was the second child to emigrate to America. In 1914, as she turned 20, her sister (then Mrs. Helen Price) sponsored her passage.

Leaving from the Cooloo farm at Moylough with her 22-year-old neighbor Katie Murphy, Bridget made her way to the port of Queenstown (now Cobh), where she boarded the same ship as her sister had — the Cunard liner RMS Carmania — and sailed to Boston. Her friend Katie stayed in Boston with her own sister, while Bridget caught the train to St. Louis. According to the ship records, she had \$10 to her name.

In St. Louis, Bridget got to work as a domestic. The (January) 1920 census shows her at age 25, living at a fine address: 5291 Westminster Place. Along with two other young women, she was employed in the service of George and Gertrude Whitelaw, a young couple with a 2-year-old son Charles.

Her sister Helen provided Bridget with one more thing: a husband. Through Helen, Bridget met Ern's

brother Walter.

Although Bridget and Walter undoubtedly met shortly after she arrived in St. Louis (Walter and Ern worked together in the family carpentry business), they didn't rush into marriage. Bridget earned an income and (if she's typical) probably sent most of it back to Ireland. And in 1918 Walter went off to war in Europe. They didn't get married till 1920 (some time after the January census), when Walter was 27. Their first child Jack was born in December that year.

They had five children: Michael John "Jack" (1920), my father Walter Thomas "Curly" (1922), William James "Bill" (1925), Joseph Patrick "Pat" (1932), and Mary Ellen [Groark] (1935).

The 1930 census finds them at the house where all the kids grew up: 5642 Theodosia Ave. Also living with them was Bridget's first cousin on her mother's side, John Coughlin (age 30), who had emigrated from Ireland in 1928 and was working as a carpenter.

After her motherly duties were done, Bridget made a career in fine catering at the toney St. Louis Women's Club on Lindell Boulevard. She continued making her dainty cucumber sandwiches till she was 80.

Bridget lived to see the births of all her 27 grandchildren. She died at 84 on 9 May 1978 in St Louis, Missouri.



Ballaghduff. Standing from L to R: Jack Daly, Jimmy Stephens [married to Mary Dunne], Paddy Stephens. On the cart, Mary Stephens (Paddy's wife), Julia McKee and John Stephens. Circa 1940s. Courtesy of Vera Stephens Whelan.

Mary Dunne Stephens

MARY WAS born on 28 Apr 1896. She was the eldest daughter to stay in Ireland. She married James Stephens and joined the multi-branched Stephens clan.

James' sister was Nora Stephens, who married into the Hession family (see note under Margaret Dunne Hession).

She and James had nine children. Five of them established themselves on the home turf: Noreen [Divilly], Martin, Philomena [Kelly], Ellen [McLoughlin], and Gretta [Stephens]. Two sons, Mike and Jack, emigrated to Chicago. Two daughters, Vera [Whelan] and Mary [Barry] had their passage to St. Louis, Missouri, sponsored by Mrs. Minnie Johnson, who had previously employed their Aunts Katie and Maggie. (They repaid the price of their voyage through their domestic work at Mrs. Johnson's mansion on Portland Place.)

Mary died at 85, on 7 April 1981, in Ireland.

Lizzie Dunne Kilmartin

LIZZIE, BORN 14 Jul 1898, was the star-crossed daughter. After marrying Martin Kilmartin, she had two children, Kitty and Paddy.

When Kitty and Paddy were toddlers (early 1920s?), Lizzie became pregnant. At the time of her delivery, a problem arose. Her sister Katie hired a car and drove her to a hospital in Dublin. Through their cousin Fr. Tom Hanley, they petitioned the Church to allow her to have a C-section. Despite Hanley's pleas, the bishop insisted that she have a natural childbirth, no matter what the consequences. As a result the baby was lost and Lizzie was paralyzed from the waist down for the remaining 16 years of her life.

According to her daughter, Lizzie was able to direct the household from her bed, making the children use mirrors to show her their chores were done. As her brother Michael took over informal guardianship of the children, he arranged for his nieces Vera Stephens, then Gretta Stephens to live with them to help out.

Lizzie's husband Martin, remembered as a lovable man, could not cope with the situation and went to live out his life in Birmingham, England.

Patrick J. Dunne



PAT WAS the third son, born 12 Feb 1900. He did his share of coal mining in England, but unlike his brothers, did not become a landholder.

In 1924, at age 24, he emigrated to St. Louis, Missouri.

The 1930 census finds him living with his sister Helen's family and unemployed. At some point thereafter, he married a widow

named Mary (last name forgotten). They had no children. Pat worked in a variety of jobs, from grave-digger to parking lot attendant. He always kept a large vegetable garden.

Pat died on 2 May 1975 in St. Louis, Missouri.

Margaret Dunne Hession

MAGGIE WAS born on 23 Apr 1902. In 1927, at age 25, she followed Helen, Bridget and Katie to America. She joined Katie working for Mrs. Johnson at 25 Portland Place. She wrote this letter to herself, which was found among her papers by her children:

31 oct. 1927. Margaret Dunne - Left home on Tuesday morning the 9th August 1927. And sailed from Queenstown on the S.S. Munchen on the 11th of August 1927. Landed in New York on Friday, 19th of August, took the train on Friday evening at 6 o'clock and landed in St. Louis on Saturday evening at 5 P.M. 20 August 1927. Signed Margaret Dunne, Cooloo Moylough.

At the 1930 census, she is still working for Minnie Johnson.

At age 32, on 23 Nov 1934, she married William "Bill" Hession (b. 6 Jul 1906; d. 26 Dec 1977) in St. Louis. The Hessions came from the same part of Ireland. Bill's uncle Patrick Hession (Ballyglunin, Abbey Knock Moy, Co Galway) was married to Nora Stephens, sister of James Stephens, who had married Maggie's sister Mary.

The Hessions moved to Chicago, Illinois, and had two boys, William and John.

Maggie died on 13 Jun 1982, in Chicago.



*Catherine "Katie" Dunne, in Florida. 1920s.
Courtesy of Maureen Collins.*

Catherine Dunne Collins

KATIE WAS the youngest child, born on 28 May 1905. Katie took advantage of the opportunity to emigrate, but decided to return home to Ireland.

She went to St. Louis in 1923 and got a job working as a servant for Mrs. Minnie Johnson. Life with Mrs. Johnson was very privileged. A couple of old photos show Katie traveling in Florida. The one above shows her in golfing togs.

Katie was planning to be married to a German-American in St. Louis when she decided to return to Ireland for a visit. On that visit she fell in love with her family's neighbor Peter Collins (son of Patrick Collins and Bridget Collins; died 1979) and decided to make her life in Ballaghduff.

The Collins couple had seven children: Norah, Theresa [Davis], Maureen, Lill, Bernie, Michael, and Paddy. Theresa emigrated to the United States and Maureen lived in England, Canada, and the U.S.

Katie died at the age of 88 on 29 Aug 1993, in Ireland.



DEDICATED TO MY DAD

This history began as the project of my dad, Walter T. “Curly” Price. In the 1980s, retired from his sales territory of paint and hardware stores, he adopted the new territory of his family history. My mother Kathleen joined him in his hobby. They loved their field trips back in time. Together they wrote the first edition of this story.

One of Curly’s research frustrations was that he couldn’t find anything about his grandmother Sarah Ne-wham. In 2005, when information got easily available online, I found her family for him — just a few months before he died. It was my last gift to him. In return he imparted to me his great curiosity and his delight in finding each new piece to the puzzle.

THANKS

On the other side of the Atlantic, my dad’s cousin Paddy Collins and his wife Josephine also got the family history bug. Their research and conversations with me helped pull together the Dunne side of the story. They provided me with copies of many original documents. Other cousins have contributed new facts and corrections.

Thanks to all who preserved old photographs — especially those with labels.

And vast loving gratitude to my mother who tackled the job of setting up, organizing and maintaining a Family Treemaker database for all the essential facts uncovered by her and my dad. Her database provided the building blocks of all that has followed.

And special thanks to my husband Jim Zimmer, for his love of history and his diligent editing.

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*In St. Louis, about 1930.
Back L-R: John Coughlin,
Pat Martin, Pat Dunne,
Walter Price, Pete Dunne.
Front L-R: Walter “Curly”
Price, Bill Price, Jack Price*