



Gogebic Range Genealogical Society

P. O. Box 23
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www.GogebicRoots.org

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Editor Joe Carlson

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Our Mission Statement: To Promote And Assist With The Research And Preservation Of Genealogy And Family History Of The Gogebic Range Area. This Area Encompasses Gogebic County Michigan And Iron County Wisconsin.

Our Officers

Connie Noyes, President
Gary Harrington, V-Pres.
Pam Bretall, Secretary
Eddie Sandene, Treas.

Our Meetings

Our monthly meetings are held on the second Saturday of every month. They are held at the Bessemer Public Library. The meetings begin at 10:00AM and conclude at noon. Membership for one year is \$12.00. We also collect \$1 at all meetings.

Special Thanks to
Gogebic Community
College for printing
our newsletter.

**What's this? I've
researched my
family tree... and
apparently I don't
exist!**

Research Tips from our Members

IRISH GENALOGY
By Gary Harrington

In November my wife, Linda, and I traveled to the Emerald Isle for ten days of sight seeing and family searching. For reasons which will become more understandable after reading this article, we were more successful in the first endeavor. Ireland really is scenic, and emerald green even in November, helped in no small part by the almost daily rainfall, interrupted by a dose of two to four hours of sunshine. We rented a car and stayed in B and B's. Once we adjusted to driving the car with the steering wheel on the right and driving on the left side, we settled into a wonderful experience. We set aside only a day or two for heavy-duty genealogical business in Ireland;

however, I had done the requisite research prior to departure. Our genealogical goals were to trace our respective families (mine Deegan and Maher and Linda's Mahoney) back at least a generation. We had minimal information on Linda's great grandfather, who we know from census records was born in Canada. We haven't traced the family back to Ireland, so any hope of success in finding the correct Mahoney in Ireland was a long shot. I had more on my maternal great grandfather William Deegan, having performed the obligatory contacts of relatives. My grandmother had provided William's hometown of Roscrea, County Tipperary, but she was not sure of William's parent's names, which I obtained from his Iowa death certificate. His parents were James

Deegan and Katherine Maher. Keep in mind, the information on the death certificate is only as accurate as that given by the informant. In this case, the name differed from those from my grandmother. A great aunt provided further information, including the fact that William was somewhat mysterious, traveling much as a Home sewing machine salesman, but discussing little of himself. In fact, he tended to give different birth dates on each census and other records. I could at least place William's birth date around 1860 and his immigration in the mid-1870s.

Let's digress a moment and take a look at Irish history and how it presents an obstacle to family research. The Normans, who had taken over England, arrived in Ireland the latter part of the 12th century. From that time forward, Ireland was either controlled by or influenced by the English, suffering through periods of war, civil war or restrictions, such as the penal laws generated in the latter part of the 17th century. The outcome was a society in which Catholics had no legislative or social influence. The Deegans

were Catholic. Catholic Church records were non-existent for centuries. Fifteen-century-old monasteries and religious products such as the Book of Kells remain; however, few researchable church documents were developed until the 19th century. Most of the older churches and cathedrals standing today belong to the Church of Ireland, a spin-off from the English Anglican.

A day in William Deegan's Roscrea—We located the Catholic Church in Roscrea. It is a beautiful structure built in the second half of the 19th century. There was a mass in progress, so we left and returned an hour later. Then, we could find no one. As we were departing the church grounds in discouragement, we passed a woman headed to the church cemetery. She held her umbrella at an angle to appear to try to get by us unnoticed. I said something to her and she said she had been nervous, as "you never know whom you might meet in the graveyard." She obviously trusted us, as she proceeded to walk us two blocks down the street, stopping at a row house, where she knew a woman who had been a Deegan. No one home, so we headed back to the rectory with

our new friend. Fortunately, the priest was home. He agreed to meet us later at the church. We met him and spent an hour with him, poring over baptismal and marriage records. We found Deegans, but not my direct line. One problem in Irish research is the commonality of names—Every other male is either a Patrick, James, Thomas or other Christian name and almost every other family generation of female is a Mary. I concluded that the Deegans might have moved to Roscrea from Limerick, not far to the west, around 1850. Just enough tantalizing information to spawn further research at another time. The priest told me to write to his sacristan (sexton), as he was more familiar with the church documents.

We visited the National Library in Dublin and found few leads in the small genealogy room. There were people available to help, but other Americans had beaten us to them. It appeared that detailed assistance required hiring someone to help. One place we didn't visit was the Tipperary North Family History Research Centre in Nenagh, as our daughter had visited there a year

ago. She came away with many names, but no connections. Each county has a Family History Centre. I have a list of the e-mail and postal addresses. E-mail me and I'll send them to you. My address—
garyharri@gogebic.cc.mi.us

There is certain information needed before starting a search for your Irish ancestor. You should have the name of the family, the parish or townland in which they lived, and the approximate date. Probable starting points:

Person living around 1901 or 1911—Census returns (No census returns for 1861, 1871, 1881 and 1891).

Person living in 1840s, 1850s, and 1860's—The Primary Valuation, known as Griffith's Valuation (If you know the townland and parish, this is the most helpful document).

Living in the 1820s or 1830s-- the Tithe

Applotment Book

Two helpful web sites—

www.ireland-information.com/irishgenealogy and
www.ireland.travel.ie

I've just covered the surface, both in how to conduct Irish research, and specifically, how I need to pursue my William

Deegan's family. Others in the GRGS may have Irish successes. Don't hesitate to contact any of us for assistance.

Stories from our Members

WILLIAM "BILLY" TIEBEL 1888 - 1953

Not all persons with Black River Harbor ties lived or worked directly at the Harbor. Billy Tiebel was one such person whose name was legendary here, but who actually lived 'up' the Lake on a little creek some two miles east of Presque Isle, towards the little Carp. But it was to Black River that Billy would come, by wooden row boat when the Lake was open, or by snow shoes in the winter, to take his 1925 green Model T Ford waiting for him up the hill. With that he would drive to Auvinen's grocery store for supplies.

William Tiebel was born in Germany about 1888 or 1889. He served in the German Army before immigrating to Detroit, Michigan where he worked as a baker. There he married (c. 1920) Maria Amelia Rath who was born in October 1902 also in Germany and had immigrated to Detroit as

well. However, better opportunity or concerns about their German heritage brought them to the Upper Peninsula, first to Silver city and from there out to the creek that was to be called Tiebel's Creek. It was here, beginning in 1928 or 9 that Billie and Amelia carved out self-sufficient living using resources from the Lake and the Forest. He built his 2-room house from materials in the forest, constructing the beds and furniture. He hunted, trapped, fished, gardened, and even had goats to provide milk for the children.

The Sears and Wards catalogs must have been of great help to the family, for Billy would order things like goats and baby chickens which would come later by train to Ironwood. The depot agent would get word to Mr. Auvinen at Auvinen's Grocery, up the road from the harbor, who would pick up the animals and keep them until word could be gotten to Billy to come and get them. This he did, coming in his little wooden row-boat to the Harbor, hiking up the hill to his immaculate Model T Ford, driving the 9 miles to Auvinen's, picking up his animals and reversing the process when he was ready to return to his homestead.

To see the young goats make their 1st trip on Lake Superior in that tiny rowboat must have been exciting! Unfortunately, at the homestead the poor things joined a horse and a cow in being troubled by annoying flies, as one visitor in the 30's reported. In winter the Model T was stored with its wheels covered with burlap and the car put up on blocks. It was then that Billy relied on walking and snow shoes when transportation was needed. The cabin had 2 full-size bunk beds, one for Billy and little Billy, one for Amelia and Sonya with a crib for Margaret. Billy served as mid-wife for the delivery of their four children, as Doctors and Nurses were "stuff he didn't believe in," he said. Unfortunately the 1st daughter, Rosalie, developed gastric enteritis at the age of 9 months and died in spite of her mother's tender care. Since it was November, Billy and Amelia wrapped the little child's body and placed it in Billy's back-pack. He then snow-shoed the 10 or so miles through the woods to Black River Harbor where he stopped to warm himself at a local fisherman's house. Before he left he announced that baby Rosalie was in the back pack and he was

taking her into Bessemer for Amelia wanted a proper burial.

Nearest neighbors to the Tiebel family were the Speaker brothers who lived on a creek known as Speaker's Creek. They had a saw mill so it is possible Billy had some of his trees cut into lumber for his construction over there. Billy continued to enhance his little cabin by building a basement beneath it, with all concrete and materials coming in trips in his little wooden row boat. Windows came by boat, too, and Amelia dressed them with lace curtains for she liked things a bit 'fancy'. A fence was put around the yard, a log porch was added and guests were always welcome in this remote sanctuary. Grape vines grew well, as did many kinds of fruit trees. Amelia canned garden produce and deer meat and chickens, too. She stored everything she could in the basement for winter food. They wrapped apples in old newspapers and packed them in apple boxes to keep them all winter long. This, along with huge bags of flour and other staples, was adequate for this self-sufficient family.

Billy made the 1st suspension bridge that crossed Presque Isle while he was caretaker for that

park. It was during his caretaker period that he became known as Presque Isle Bill. He also did some roadwork to provide a bit of income when needed.

Billy and Amelia hoped their children would have proper educations so they made it a point to always speak English in the home. When Sonya was about 9 years old she was taken to live with the Superintendent of Schools so she could attend school, but when the family was told they must put Billy, 8 years old, and Margaret 6 years old, in school, William built a house near Connors for the family. Here, from 1945 on, the children could take a bus to school in Wakefield. Even though they were 'in town', this house, like the one at the Lake, had only kerosene lamps and an outdoor toilet. Instead of Lake Superior water, they had a well from which to haul their water.

Amelia was glad to move to town and never wanted to return to the Lake because life was so very hard there for her. We don't know if Billy missed the challenge of that rugged life or not. He died in the house in Connors in 1953, having suffered two heart attacks and refusing to go to the hospital. He still didn't believe in 'that stuff' his daughter Margaret said.

He was 65 years old. Amelia died in 1984 aged 81 years.

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From time-to-time, we'll enclose an item from the Ironwood Daily Globe. Here is one from Saturday, May 18, 1912

TERRIBLE ACCIDENT AT THE NORRIE MINE

At about eleven o'clock last Monday night, one of the worst accidents in the history of the mining industry of this range occurred at the Norrie mine in this city. The accident, which resulted in the death of seven men, and by which six more were entombed in the bowels of the earth for over twenty-four hours, and whose escape was the most fortunate, took place on the twentieth levelⁱ of A shaft.

There were 35 or 40 men working on the stopesⁱⁱ on this level, and, hearing a sound of caving, they all came out from the stopes into the main level. Shortly afterward the cave-in occurred, hundreds of tons of earth and rock came down into the main level.

The place where the ground fell was about 45 feet north of the foot wall and 280 feet west of the

shaft. The length of the cave, east and west was about 85 feet and the western limit 200 feet from the eastern line of the Ashland mine.

Following the cave, it was found that thirteen men had been caught by the fall, John Zembo, Frank Jasczak, Oscar Kangas, Chas. Nelemark, August Clys, Jacob Anderson, Vincent Zambrowitz, Bert Jacisin, Thos. Rusick, Geo. Hrenkin, Charles Majirski, John Tkatch and Peter Wilja.

The work of searching for the men, whether dead or alive, was begun as soon as the mining officials were aware of the accident, and early Tuesday morning the bodies of John Zembo and Charles Majirski were found, they being covered by but a few feet of the caved ground. This showed that, had they taken a couple of steps more they would have escaped injury. Shortly before noon Tuesday, the rescuing party heard a tapping in the caved ground and were convinced that some of the men were alive. Locating the sound, they went to the rub below the 20th level, from which a drill hole was made up to the place in which the men were confined. This was only about twelve feet, and as soon as this hole was

through, a conversation was readily carried out with the imprisoned men. It was found that there were six of them, and that, they were uninjured with the exception of one man, who had one of his hands caught between an air pipe and the fallen timbers and was unable to extricate it. Every effort was then concentrated upon the rescue of the men who were known to be alive and the rescuing party holed through them at about ten o'clock Tuesday night. The men were in good condition, considering their terrible experience, and no trouble was experienced in getting them out, with the single exception of Vincent Zambrowitz, the man who was caught by the hand. He was the last one to be taken out, reaching the surface at 1:15 Wednesday morning. The rescued men were found in a small cross cut, just off the main level, Zambrowitz having been caught just at the corner of this cross cut and the level.

The six men rescued were Frank Jasczak, Oscar Kangas, August Clys, Jacob Anderson, Vincent Zambrowitz and George Hronkin.

Following the rescue of the above party, the work of searching for the bodies was continued and about

midnight Wednesday, the body of Charles Nelemark was found.

The dead:

Charles Nelemark, Finn, 52 years old, married, leaves wife and six children, two daughters, Sinjalytia, 22 years old and married, and Tynne, 11 years old; four sons, August, 17 years old; John, 9; Raffel 8 and Arne 6

John Tkatch, Slavonian, 28 years old; leaves wife and two children, John, 2 years old and Annie, 4 years old. Family lives on Tamarack street.

Bert Jacisin, Slavonian, 23 years old, leaves wife and two sons, Michael, 3 years old and Bert, 3 months old. Family lives on Tamarack streetⁱⁱⁱ

Thomas Rusick, Polish, 28 years old, leaves wife and three children; one son, Ladislav, 2 months old and Mary 2 years old. Family lives at North Pabst location.

John Zembo, Polish, 36 years old, leaves wife and one son, William, 2 years old and one daughter, Amelia, 5 years old. Family lives on Shamrock street.

Peter Wilja, Polish, 25 years old, single; mother, brothers and sisters living in Austria.

Charles Majirski, Slavonian, 20 yrs. Old, single. Father and mother living in Austria. Brother living in

Milwaukee, arrived in the city Thursday morning. Since writing the above the bodies of other men have been recovered, the last having been taken out early Thursday morning. The funeral of John Zembo was held Thursday at St. Michael's church, and that of Charles Majirski yesterday morning at the Holy Trinity church. The funeral of Charles Nelemark will be held today. The time of holding the funerals of the other four men has not yet been decided upon.

No good reason can be assigned by the officials of the mine for the cave-in, occurring as it did on the main level, where it was closely timbered and in very hard ground. There is a heavy capping of rock over this portion of the mine, and it is thought that a large mass of this rock came loose in some unknown manner and came down on the timbers, crushing them and causing the cave. A peculiar fact, is that the stopes, where the men were at work when they first heard the sound of caving, and which would naturally be the first to come in, stood intact after the fall of ground, and had the men remained where they were at work, none of them would have been injured. The accident

appears to be one of those unpreventable occurrences for which no one is to blame, which there seems no way of looking forward to, and which are connected with the hazards of underground mining.

ⁱ Levels are the horizontal tunnels extending off of the shaft.

There was from 85 to 110 feet between levels, so the twentieth level would be about 2,000 feet deep, or nearly $\frac{1}{2}$ mile underground.

ⁱⁱ A stope is steplike excavation formed by the removal of ore from around the mineshaft

ⁱⁱⁱ Bert Jacisin's grandson, Mike, is a charter member of the Gogebic Range Genealogical Society. His father is Michael, the 3 year old son of Bert.

**Genealogy
Workshop for
beginners--Watch
for further
announcements
April 27, 10:00 am to
noon, Room B-22
Gogebic Community
College**