The Diary of Mary McKeon, an Irish American Domestic Servant

in Nineteenth Century America

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Abstract

What did young, single, unaccompanied Irish women experience when immigrating to the United States in the late nineteenth century? In this final project, I will explore primary and secondary sources that address their experiences, focusing on a diary written in 1883 by a young Irish domestic servant working in New Haven, Connecticut.

Mary McKeon, a sixteen-year-old girl from County Leitrim, Ireland, recorded her experiences as a domestic servant for two different families, as well as her own personal thoughts. Mary wrote down her personal experiences, providing a glimpse of what her life was like both inside and outside of her employer’s home. Though much of my research will show that many young women like Mary would be subjected to prejudice and discrimination due to their lack of understanding middle-class American values, which would give rise to the “Bridget” stereotype of a brutish, ill-mannered and incompetent domestic servant, not all Irish women experienced that discrimination and prejudice. Mary is one example of a domestic servant that was treated kindly by her employers and her story documents a more positive and supportive environment for this newly arrived young, single immigrant. Her diary also reveals her to be a young woman who worked to improve her language skills and her situation. And, through her diary, we get a glimpse of her strategies for ensuring an active social life, including access to courtship and marriage. By analyzing Mary’s diary and sharing my results in this final project, I hope to provide a more comprehensive view into the lives of these young women.
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In addition, I take full responsibility for this final project’s content, as well as for any errors it may contain.
Introduction

All along the Eastern seaboard of the United States, beginning before the American Revolution and continuing through much of the nineteenth century, Irish immigrants made their way in America. In the process they made themselves American, on city streets and in public halls. Popular perceptions and scholarly histories of Irish immigration to the United States focus primarily on the experience of Irish men. Irish women figured largely, if at all, as their beleaguered wives and mothers. However, many of the Irish women who immigrated to the United States were not only single but also unaccompanied. Of these females (especially between 1885 and 1920) an average of eighty-nine percent were single at the time of their departure, and most were under the age of twenty-four.¹ They had to make their own way in America, often as factory workers or in the garment industry. This thesis is particularly concerned with Irish immigrant women who found employment as domestic servants in the homes of middle-class American families in northeastern America. What kinds of challenges and opportunities did Irish domestics encounter? In what kinds of households did they work? What kind of work did they do? What kinds of relationships were forged with other servants as well as with members of the families that employed them? How did Irish domestics maintain their relationships with other Irish Americans and with friends and family in Ireland? How did domestic service shape Irish women’s experience of America more generally?

Using secondary sources to understand the general environment Irish women encountered when they arrived in America, and primary sources produced by or about

particular Irish women immigrants, I can discern the story of what these women experienced in their new country, even if the records of their first-hand experiences are incomplete. These sources also illuminate how individuals experienced this environment, how they navigated its challenges, and how they made themselves at home in America. In addition to published collections of letters and oral histories, I was fortunate to be given a copy of a transcription of a diary written by a young Irish domestic servant in 1880’s New Haven, Connecticut.

Much of the material available to researchers interested in the Irish female immigrant experience comes from letters that these young women sent home to their families in Ireland, or diaries that they kept. However, many of these have been lost or destroyed. Thankfully, one such diary was kept and preserved by a family member of the diary’s author, Mary McKeon. Mary’s story helps us understand and appreciate the day-to-day life of a young woman who left her family behind in hope of a better future.

Mary McKeon was like many young women who left their families in Ireland in the second half of the nineteenth century. Changes in Irish society after the upheaval caused by the Great Famine in 1845-1852 left young people with very limited prospects. The opportunity provided to them in the United States gave them a chance to make new lives for themselves. And the changes to American society after the U.S. Civil War of 1861-1865 provided immigrants the chance to work not just in the factories, mines and mills, but offered the chance for young women to work as domestic servants in the homes of the newly expanding middle class. But tensions between these young Irish women (who had grown up poor and Catholic) and their employers (mainly well-to-do and Protestant), along with the deep-seated prejudices against these newly arriving
immigrants, would give rise to the stereotype of Bridget – the maid who couldn’t clean or cook, was quick to anger, and who dressed and behaved “better” than her perceived station. Yet because of the demand for domestic servants among middle-class families in the second half of the nineteenth century, and the reluctance of native-born American women to perform these dirty and thankless chores, Irish women found themselves in demand.

Mary arrived in New Haven, Connecticut in 1880 at the age of thirteen, and stayed with her aunt and uncle. She recorded her earliest work as a domestic servant in 1881. In January of 1883, she began keeping a diary of her work and life while she worked for the Killam family until March of 1883, then with her later employment with the Osborn family in New Haven until December of 1883.

Her diary, though incomplete, gives us a view into what her life was like both working and living in her mistress’ house and meeting with friends on her days off. In this diary, we can trace the early experiences of an Irish immigrant woman who would go on to become so thoroughly American that, when later visiting Ireland, she gave instructions that if she died she was to be buried “at home” in the United States. From this diary, we can learn three things about those early, formational experiences when Mary was learning to negotiate life in a new land.

First, unlike much of what has been written about the difficulties between Irish girls working as domestic servants and their middle-class employers, Mary’s employers treated her very well. She was included in many of her employers’ activities, and would sometimes be treated to her mistress making breakfast for her, reading to her and teaching her how to embroider! The families for whom Mary worked must have thought
highly of her to let her enjoy the kind of lifestyle that my research has shown was
definitely not shared by others who worked as domestic servants.

Second, as an immigrant who wanted to improve her status and capitalize on her
opportunities, Mary recognized the importance of aspiration and self-improvement. For
example, the diary indicates that Mary was naturally curious and loved to learn, and
perhaps had been taught to make note of what she saw and heard around her. She would
write down what appeared to be words she must have heard in daily conversation, as well
as poems that she may have found interesting. Though her spelling and grammar were
not perfect – after all, it was her own personal diary, so this was only meant for herself –
Mary was an industrious and curious young woman. She enjoyed sewing and embroidery,
reading, writing letters back home to family, and the company of her friends.

Third, through her diary, we get a glimpse of her strategies for ensuring herself an
active social life, including access to courtship and marriage. Included in her diary are
her personal thoughts of suitors, including one in particular. Dan Driscoll (whom she
usually wrote down as Dan D) was the young man that Mary wrote about most. She
would often write of her love for him, their arguments, and her doubts of whether they
would ever be together. Though we have to remember that she’s still a young girl of
sixteen, the diary can give us some insight on her personal feelings and the motivation
behind her move into town.

Taken together, these three aspects of her diary paint a picture for us of an active,
aspirational immigrant who did what she could within the systems she found herself in to
advance her own interests and create a home for herself in the United States.
Among the findings that I describe in this paper that were not known to those who previously studied Mary’s diary, I have discovered that:

- Mary came to America in 1880, and not 1883 as her granddaughter originally believed;

- She first worked for the Smythe family from May 1881 to November 1882;

- She then worked for the Killam family on Money Island, Connecticut from January 1883 to March 5, 1883;

- She then worked for the Osborn family at 232 York Street in New Haven, Connecticut beginning April 2, 1883. The diary is unclear when she left her employment with this family;

- Mary married Daniel Driscoll, moved to Branford, Connecticut, had nine children, and died in 1940.
Chapter 1. Leaving Home

Section A. The Great Famine

Why did so many young single women emigrate from Ireland during the nineteenth century? Many of these women who emigrated between the years of 1845 to 1852, known as the Great Potato Famine and also referred to in Gaelic as An Gorta Mor, The Great Hunger, were leaving a culture that no longer had a place for them; they were superfluous in an Ireland whose economy offered no way for them to make a living, and whose social structure had no use for them except marrying and bearing children.

Prior to the Famine, women held a favorable position in their families by managing and contributing to the household income. Women raised and sold livestock, vegetables and dairy products, and spun flax in their homes to earn an income. Partible inheritance, the practice of dividing the family’s land and assets equally among their children, was practiced among most farmers and there were sufficient opportunities for marriage as dowries were not mandatory; thus there was little reason to leave Ireland.

Ireland’s economy was mainly agrarian-based, with the potato being the staple crop of the rural poor beginning in the seventeenth century. The typical Irish peasant ate nearly ten to thirteen pounds of potatoes per day. Potatoes were an easy and plentiful crop to grow, and given the limited amount of land that the tenant farmers were allowed for their own subsistence – with just a small piece of land a family could feed themselves. Hasia Diner writes in her book, Erin’s Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in

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2 The potato first arrived to Ireland in 1589. Sir Walter Raleigh, British explorer and historian known for his expeditions to the Americas, first brought the potato to Ireland, most likely from South America, and planted them at his Irish estate near Cork, Ireland.

the Nineteenth Century, that potatoes “could be grown anywhere, even on the most minuscule of plots, and contained just enough nutrients to sustain the life of the poor.”4 And Christine Kinealy writes in This Great Calamity. The Irish Famine 1845-52, that, “by the 1840’s approximately two-fifths of the Irish population, that is over three million people, were relying on the potato as their staple food.”5

For the Irish, the potato had many positive benefits: they were easy to grow and cook, they were nutritious, and they would grow in infertile soil in bogs and on rocky hillsides, which was the only land available for Irish peasants to grow their food. However, being reliant on one crop is dangerous. This practice, which the Irish found out in devastating ways, makes a population vulnerable to food shortages. In 1845, a blight (caused by a fungus, phytophthora infestans) infected the potato crop, wiping out what was then the sole source of nutrition for the Irish peasant class. Since the Irish did not grow a variety of different potatoes and relied singularly on one type of potato, the Irish Lumper, the fungus destroyed the country’s main food source. The fungus caused mildew to form on all parts of the potato plant killing the plant and rendering its fruit inedible within a few days. The fungus was spread by airborne spores and spread rapidly therefore guaranteeing the maximum amount of crop damage in a short time period. According to information in the Atlas of the Great Irish Famine, “The potato blight made its first appearance in late summer 1845. There was another total potato crop failure in summer 1848 and it produced a second and even greater wave of emigrants, which

5 Christine Kinealy, This Great Calamity. The Irish Famine 1845-52 (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan Ltd., 1994), 5.
crested in 1851 and did not subside to pre-Famine levels until 1855.”

There had been earlier crop failures in Ireland, but these were not as devastating to the Irish peasant class as the Great Famine. Kinealy goes on to explain the total acreage affected by the potato blight below:

The extent of land under the potato crop reached a peak in 1845, when 2,516,000 acres of land, approximately one-third of the total acreage tilled, was for the use of this crop. In this year, which marked the first of a series of harvests ruined by a mysterious potato blight, an estimated 50 per cent of the potato crop was lost. By 1846, the extent under cultivation had fallen only to 1,999,000 acres, and blight had extended to all parts of Ireland. Twelve months later, the size of the crop had fallen drastically and disastrously to an estimated 284,000 acres, ironically a year of relatively limited blight.

The utter dependence on the potato as the only source of food would be a costly mistake. Between 1845 and 1851, over one million people -- mostly from the rural peasant class in the west -- either starved to death or were affected by diseases that starvation made worse. Over one million more were forced to leave their country to survive.

Since Great Britain conquered Ireland in the 1600s, farmland was controlled by landlords – many of them absent, living in Britain, and therefore removed from the day-to-day activities of their tenants. Britain’s economy at this time was based on exploiting the raw materials in its colonies, which were then shipped to England. There they would be manufactured into products that would be shipped back to the colonies and sold at inflated prices. High tariffs and other laws kept a tight rein on imports from countries

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7 Kinealy, *This Great Calamity. The Irish Famine 1845-52*, 6.
8 Census of Ireland, General Report of Commissioners, Table XXXVI, 1851, iv.
outside of the British Empire. Most of what was grown on farms in Ireland was exported, leaving little for the tenants to subsist on. The food that was available for purchase was unaffordable to the Irish. While millions were starving in Ireland, the British still expected meat, vegetables and grain exports to be shipped to them, which they then sold on the open market.

Prior to 1994-1995 there was not much research, nor publications, regarding the Famine. However, the one-hundred-fiftieth anniversary of the Famine produced an uptick in interest in research of and writing about the Famine. Some scholars believe that the Irish may have finally come to terms with the trauma, loss and shame their ancestors experienced. Mary McAleese, the President of Ireland from 1997 to 2011 was quoted in the Atlas of the Great Irish Famine describing the devastating effects the Famine had on the population of the country, both psychologically and economically:

Writing about and representing the Great Irish Famine, the most tragic event in Irish history has not been straightforward. For many years the event was cloaked in silence, its memory for the most part buried or neglected. The deaths of over one million people and the emigration of a further million had a profound and devastating impact on Irish society.

9 Mike Davis, Late Victorian Holocausts (London: Verso, 2002). A quote from The Wealth of Nations, “famine has never arisen from any other cause but the violence of government attempting, by improper means, to remedy the inconvenience of dearth,” 31.

10 Ibid. A similar pattern of famine occurred in another of Great Britain's colonies. Millions of people died from a drought induced famine in India in the late 1880’s. Even though the Indian people were starving, the amount of wheat that was exported to England increased exponentially.

Section B. Changes in Irish Society

Soon after the Famine, women’s roles in Irish society changed drastically. The exodus of Irish peasants from the countryside -- either through starvation, disease, or the initial wave of emigration due to the Great Famine itself -- meant that there were fewer small farmers to work the land and fewer laborers to bring in the crops. This allowed for land once used for farming to be opened up for pastures to feed grazing animals such as cattle for beef production.\textsuperscript{12} And Great Britain’s increasing reliance on Irish beef to feed its growing populations in urban industrial cities meant that by the early 1870s, farmers traded the labor-intensive work of growing grains and vegetables for the more lucrative business of raising cattle.\textsuperscript{13} Since it took fewer laborers to raise cattle, opportunities for Irish peasants to work in their villages were reduced, and landowners consolidated farms that were once subdivided among their tenants.

Women living in rural Ireland after the Potato Famine had limited means to make a living. “By the last decades of the 19th century many young women had no reason to remain in the agricultural towns of Catholic Ireland. They had no realistic chances for marriage or employment.”\textsuperscript{14}

In addition, work that Irish women traditionally performed at home, like weaving, sewing, and butter churning, started to disappear due to products cheaply mass-produced in Great Britain that were marketed to Ireland without tariffs. This lack of tariffs also devastated any chance for Ireland to start its own manufacturing base during the first

\textsuperscript{12} Arnold Schrier, Ireland and the American Emigration 1850-1900 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1958), 66.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., 71.
\textsuperscript{14} Diner, Erin's Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth Century, 4.
Industrial Age, so the farmers and peasants who might flock to newly industrialized cities for factory work – as did their counterparts in Britain – had no similar chance to find alternate employment. The social class to which these women belonged was decimated, and they were no longer able to make a living selling livestock, vegetables and dairy products.

Along with these economic changes came cultural changes in rural Ireland. According to author Margaret Lynch Brennan, “Changes in land inheritance patterns and family life among the Irish peasantry accelerated emigration.” The old method of dividing farmland among many sons and daughters so that they could grow what little they could to feed their own families was replaced. Instead of keeping with the long-established tradition of constantly subdividing farmland among the family’s children, the practice would now be for only one son to inherit the family farm. Parents wanted to pass down their estate intact. There was no favoritism shown to any of the male heirs. Diner explains that, “No systematic or established pattern developed which designated that single heir. Primogeniture was not the rule, nor was the younger son the immediately designated heir. Who inherited the land became the decision of father and mother and they made that decision as late in their lives as possible.” The children who did not inherit had to work as laborers on their brother’s farm, or leave home to find work elsewhere.

Parents possessing the land in their name as long as possible also kept the chosen son from marrying sooner than what they felt was an acceptable age. Even before the

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16 Diner, Erin’s Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the 19th century, 10.
Great Famine, marrying young was not viewed as a viable option for those who had income other than farming because it was seen as something that only the poorer classes did. Townspeople, tradesmen, and farmers with more than a potato plot demonstrated greater reticence about marriage. Marrying young also meant starting a family before the couple could afford to take care of their children. Prior to the Famine, according to Diner, the poor, in particular, saw no reason not to marry spontaneously. Young men and women married who and when they wanted, and since they could always grow potatoes, a family of hungry mouths was not a burden. For those with hope of economic stability and with aspirations for a more “middle-class” kind of existence improvident marriage could spell disaster.”

Additionally, rapid changes in rural Irish society created a more patriarchal world, where a prospective groom’s family required bridal dowries. Where couples once married out of love, now marriages were viewed as nothing more than a financial transaction made by their fathers. Often, the bride and groom would not meet until their wedding day.

The marriage of a son who was to inherit the family farm would depend upon an arrangement with the prospective bride’s father for a transfer of wealth, or a dowry. Miller writes about the emphasis that fathers placed on the importance of marrying off their daughters with what they considered to be a “good marriage” - to a husband who had a land inheritance. This arrangement cemented alliances between landholding families. And the father bore the hardship that some small farmers experienced while trying to, “save or borrow to give away their daughters with dowries of £50 or

\[17\] Ibid., 6.
A daughter with a dowry was the only girl in the family allowed to marry with her father’s permission. And the dowry that would be provided by the son’s marriage would then be used as a dowry to marry off a daughter to another family’s son. These arranged marriages included an agreement that the groom’s parents would be able to stay on the family farm, where the son and daughter-in-law would provide for them in their old age. There was no agreement that either the husband’s or the wife’s siblings could stay on the farm. Non-inheriting brothers often remained unmarried, and would eventually find work on other farms where there were either no sons or the sons were too young to do farm work. Daughters without a dowry could stay in the countryside, living under the care of their brother, but there were limited opportunities for these young women to earn a living.19

If female members of the family did not have a way to earn a living or any marriage prospects, they had to either fend for themselves or choose two options: remain the ward of a brother who inherited the family farm, or emigrate -- often to America -- to find employment and, hopefully, a husband. One Irish girl wrote home, “Over in Ireland people marry for riches, but here in America we marry for love and work for riches.”20

18 Miller, Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America, 55.
19 Diner, Erin's Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth Century, 11-12.
20 Schrier, Ireland and the American Emigration 1850-1900, 26.
Section C. The Decision to Leave

The Great Famine started a massive increase in the number of Irish leaving their country to seek a better life. But even after the effects of the Famine had started to decrease by the early 1850s, changes in Irish society had forced many more to leave their home and find a better life for themselves. And while many Irish traveled to Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Britain, the majority of them arrived, during this period, in the United States. (See Table 1.1)

By the late nineteenth century, changes in Irish life had combined to make many young women superfluous in their households and communities. Rather than accept a marginal existence, they elected to seek a better life in a new world, often with the encouragement and help of a female relative who had already emigrated.

Deciding to leave was often a difficult choice. Emigrants might never see their families again. A new custom arose, the “American wake,” for those who were emigrating. At the wake, emigrants were treated as if they were dying. Since intercontinental travel was much slower than it is today, returning to their home villages was a remote possibility.

In Ireland and the American Emigration, Arnold Schrier writes that, “[T]he prospect of an emigrant ever returning was remote indeed. In such circumstances the departure for America of a young son or daughter represented to their parents no less final a loss than if he or she had been carried off by disease or accident, instead of by
TABLE 1.1: EMIGRATION FROM IRELAND 1841-1890

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME PERIOD</th>
<th>TOTAL OVERSEAS EMIGRATION FROM IRELAND (EXCLUDING GREAT BRITAIN)</th>
<th>TOTAL EMIGRANTS FROM IRELAND TO UNITED STATES</th>
<th>PERCENT OF TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1825-1830</td>
<td>129,182</td>
<td>50,040</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1831-1840</td>
<td>437,753</td>
<td>171,087</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1841-1850</td>
<td>1,298,394</td>
<td>908,292</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851-1860</td>
<td>1,216,265</td>
<td>989,880</td>
<td>81.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861-1870</td>
<td>818,582</td>
<td>690,845</td>
<td>84.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871-1880</td>
<td>542,703</td>
<td>449,549</td>
<td>82.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881-1890</td>
<td>734,475</td>
<td>626,604</td>
<td>85.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Akenson, The Irish Diaspora, A Primer.\(^{21,22}\)

sailing ship.” And he quotes Conall O’Byrne, who remarked that, “People made very little difference between going to America and going to the grave.”\(^{23}\) (See Figure 1.1)

Young women would hear about their more prosperous relatives in America through letters back home. The so-called “America letters” had news of the riches that were made by their relatives working in places like New York, Chicago, San Francisco,

\(^{21}\) Donald Harman Akenson, The Irish Diaspora: A Primer (Belfast, Ireland and Toronto, Canada: The Institute of Irish Studies at The Queen’s University and P.D. Meany Company Inc. Publishers, 1993), 54.

\(^{22}\) Akenson writes that, “we are not even close to knowing the actual dimensions of the Irish diaspora.” Reasons for this may be because before 1852, little data was collected by customs agents on the ‘outflow’ of the Irish from Ireland. Although efforts were made during the second-half of the 19th century to collect data on Irish emigration, when compared to the number of Irish-born counted in the census of the countries they now inhabit, estimates of Irish migration, “are as much as one-quarter too low.” 55.

\(^{23}\) Schrier, Ireland and the American Emigration 1850-1900, 84-85.
Figure 1.1: “Emigrants Leave Ireland”, engraving by Henry Doyle (1827–1892), from Illustrated History of Ireland from AD 400 to 1800, Mary Frances Cusack, 1868 (via Wikimedia Commons)
or the many other cities where immigrants arrived. These tales made life in rural Ireland seem dull and uninspiring.\textsuperscript{25} Irish women maintained contact with emigrant sisters, nieces and other female family members, whose letters were filled with stories of the opportunities for earning a living that were unavailable at home.\textsuperscript{26} And often these letters contained proof of their success: photographs of these new Americans dressed in finery, showing off their prosperity to their families in Ireland.

According to one periodical of the time, \textit{The Irish Homestead}, (January, 1910), “The Irish girl who has gone to America sends home photographs of herself. It is these photographs that do all the mischief with her remaining sisters… Is this fashionably attired lady the Bridget they knew?”\textsuperscript{27} But more often, the letters arrived with money, intended either to help support the family back home or to enable a family member to purchase a ticket so he or she, too, could find work in America.

With financial assistance from family members who had already emigrated to the booming cities of post-Civil War America, new Irish immigrants could be far more independent, both economically and culturally, than they were in their home country. Their descendants would later thrive in their adopted land, manipulating the very political, economic and cultural structures that were established to keep them from rising above what native-born Americans considered to be their station in life.

Popular thinking among upper-class Americans, scientists, mental health professionals, essayists, politicians and academics in nineteenth century America – as well as in other countries – was that immigrants were genetically inferior to native born

\textsuperscript{25} Diner, \textit{Erin’s Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the 19th century}, 12.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., 34.
\textsuperscript{27} Nolan, \textit{Ourselves Alone: Women’s Emigration from Ireland, 1885-1920}, 42.
Americans. One Harvard-educated biologist, Charles Davenport, whose research was funded by Andrew Carnegie, went so far as to say “that immigrants and societal misfits were genetically inferior”\textsuperscript{28} and suggested that to prevent them from passing down their inferior genes to the next generation they should be castrated.

\textsuperscript{28} Robert Whitaker \textit{Mad in America. Bad Science, Bad Medicine, and the Enduring Mistreatment of the Mentally Ill} (New York: Basic Books, a Member of the Perseus Books Group, 2010), 47.
Section D. Arriving in America

Data provided by Nell Irvin Painter in her book, The History of White People, specifies that, “The U.S census of 1850 was the first to collect statistics on immigrants. In a total population of 23,191,876, some 2,244,600 were deemed immigrants, among them, 379,093 from Great Britain, 583,774 from Germany, and a whopping 961,719 from Ireland. In the years of hardship in Western Europe, especially 1845-55, 1,343,423 came from Ireland and 1,011,066 from German-speaking lands.” 29

And Janet Nolan writes in Ourselves Alone that, “almost 700,000 young, usually unmarried women, traveling alone, composed most of the emigrants leaving Ireland between 1885 and 1920.” 30 Mary McKeon, a thirteen year old girl from County Leitrim, Ireland was one of these young women and although Mary emigrated in 1880, five years earlier, there is no reason to believe that the numbers of young, single women traveling at that time differed substantially from Nolan’s statistic. Nolan also states that, “This large sustained migration of single women is an anomaly in the history of European emigration: except for the Irish, only Swedish women emigrated independently from their families in significant numbers. But young, unmarried women were the majority among Swedish emigrants for only five years, between 1894 and 1899, whereas single women dominated Irish emigration for thirty-five years.” 31

During the first wave of Irish immigration after the Great Famine – from 1852 to 1854 -- more women between the ages of 15-24 emigrated than men of that same age.

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30 Nolan, Ourselves Alone: Women's Emigration from Ireland, 1885-1920, 2.
31 Ibid., 2.
group. This percentage shifted in the 1860s as more men between 15-24 years of age left, but the 1870s saw a slight rise of more women of this age group leaving than men. By the 1880s, using the table below as reference, it is clear that women, in that age group, numbered men exiting Ireland to search for a new country to make a better life. (See Table 1.2)

**TABLE 1.2: MALES AND FEMALES AGED 15-24 AS A PROPORTION OF THE TOTAL IRISH EMIGRATION, 1852-1890**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME PERIOD</th>
<th>FEMALES</th>
<th>MALES</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1852-1854</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861-1870</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871-1880</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>46.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881-1890</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>57.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Mary McKeon was one of these young, single Irish girls emigrating during this time period. She was able to acquire work as a domestic servant soon after she arrived in New Haven, Connecticut in 1880. By 1881, she was working for the Smythe family. Little is known about this time in Mary’s employment. Her only diary entry about the Smythe family involved her dates of employment. Mary wrote that that she worked for them from May 11, 1881 to November 23, 1882, and that she was paid $133. She may

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have gotten this job through her Aunt Lizzie, whom she lived with when she first arrived in the United States; her diary doesn’t say.

There were many ways for young Irish women to find work as domestic servants. Letters to Ireland from family members already in America told of the demand for domestic servants, and the relatively high salaries they could earn. Often new immigrants were referred for a job by their female relatives who were already working in someone’s house. Local Catholic charities ran employment agencies for women who had no family members living locally. And newspapers were filled with want ads placed by middle-class families seeking domestic servants. However, when an aspiring domestic servant would read these ads hoping to find a job, she would see first-hand the prejudice that was prevalent amongst the native-born middle- and upper-class Americans of the late 1800s.

The job of a domestic servant was mostly hard, dirty and thankless. A servant was expected to work long hours from early morning to late at night. Along with cooking, serving and cleaning for her employers, she was also expected to greet and tend to the needs of visitors to the home.

Work as a domestic servant was also extremely labor intensive. Most native-born American women, from all socioeconomic backgrounds, considered it work well below their standing. Young native-born American women preferred working in factories compared to working as a domestic servant. And a middle-class mistress was certainly not going to clean her own home, so if she could find a way to afford a domestic, they hired one. Historian Faye Dudden claims that, “in 1850, up to as many as one-third of

American households may have employed the live-in servants whose presence in a home served as a marker of a family’s social status.”

So the majority of middle-class Americans reluctantly hired young Irish immigrant women, who in turn gladly accepted menial jobs as domestic servants.

During the 1800s, Irish was synonymous with Catholic. Religious prejudice against Catholics existed for many years before the post-Famine flood of Irish immigration to the United States began in 1848. Irish Catholic immigrants were confronted with a particularly hostile reception from native-born, white Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASPs). Because of this religious prejudice, families seeking domestic servants preferred native-born American girls – ideally, those of the Protestant faith. However, Protestant girls would rather work in a factory than clean someone else’s home. Newspaper advertisements of the time looking for domestic servants often specified either that only a Protestant girl was wanted, or that “No Irish need apply.” (See Figure 1.2)

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Figure 1.2: Want ads from The New York Times, November 10, 1855, showing employers’ preferences for American Protestant help over Irish Catholics.

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American popular culture of the time lampooned Irish domestic servants as clumsy, illiterate, dirty, violent, ignorant and ill-mannered. They stood in contrast to the ideal of 19th century middle-class American womanhood, which was referred to as “the cult of domesticity” or “the cult of true womanhood.”  

(See Figure 1.3)

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Figure 1.3: Uncredited artist’s comparison between Florence Nightingale (as an example of pure English womanhood) and a stereotypical Irish woman, “Bridget McBruiser.” (Source, “Alien Menace” by Michael O’Malley, Associate Professor of History and Art History, George Mason University - http://chnm.gmu.edu/exploring/19thcentury/alienmenace/pop_inhuman.html)

After the Civil War, the United States saw a rapid economic growth, led by, as Margaret Lynch-Brennan writes in The Irish Bridget, “the interplay of urbanization,

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industrialization, and democratic capitalism that led to the rise of the American middle class.”

With this rise came an emphasis on cleanliness, orderliness, and an overall gain in affluence among those who gained from this prosperity. This allowed middle-class women to free themselves from the drudgery of housework by hiring servants to take over their chores. Lynch-Brennan also says that, “Hiring servants provided mistresses with free time for such pursuits as writing letters, reading, and taking morning naps. It also provided women with the leisure to make formal social calls.”

Middle-class women now also had the means to join with social movements such as women’s suffrage and the temperance movement. And since most middle-class households at this time considered drinking and the saloon the major cause of “moral decay” in society, this also brought them in conflict with their Irish domestic servants for whom drinking was socially acceptable.

Unlike the American men of this time who often worked outside of the home, women were encouraged to stay at home and run the household. But this first generation of middle-class Americans originally had no references on which to model their own lifestyles. Many of them had never been raised around servants, so at first they had no idea how to treat them.

Author Lynch-Brennan explains that, “In the world of middle-class urban American women, refinement was emphasized, good taste was associated with Christian morality, and the parlor, books and piano were seen as indications of a

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36 Ibid., 66.
37 Ibid., 67.
38 Lynch-Brennan writes that proper manners were seen as a “code of conduct for the middle class” in the 19th century America. Many new middle class mistresses referred to etiquette books to learn proper social behavior to distance themselves and their families from the lower, poorer classes. Irish Catholics were included in that latter group. Articles written in magazines such as Harper’s Bazar, Scribner’s Monthly or Arthur’s Home Magazine offered a medium for middle class mistresses to share their distress with other mistresses on the challenges of training and keeping a good Bridget. 65.
family’s respectability.” 39 Proper manners, usually defined by the behavior of Western European gentry, became the standard middle-class Americans wanted to emulate.

Andrew Urban writes in his article, “Irish Domestic Servants, ‘Biddy’ and the Rebellion in the American Home,” that “American magazines and journals regularly referenced and even published accounts on the British (or more typically, English) system of domestic service, arguing that Britain’s rigid class system and the ability of British families to hire servants from their own country allowed the profession to operate more smoothly there.” 40 New American mistresses referred to these magazines and journals for advice on how to properly train and manage servants. Urban goes on to explain why American mistresses looked to the British for guidance: “The birthplace of sophisticated class-consciousness and colonial rule, England provided a natural source of comparison. American authors argued that, because English masters and servants possessed a clear sense of social class, British employers had decreased friction in the home.” 41

This situation was in stark contrast to the lives of young Irish girls who grew up in rural areas and whose experiences were very different from those of native-born American girls. Most young girls from Ireland had no skills in cooking or cleaning for American households. Many hailed from cottages with dirt floors and existed on a diet of buttermilk, oatmeal, and potatoes. They did not know how to cook a variety of different foods. The new American mistresses had to spend considerable time training their new

39 Ibid., 62.
41 Ibid., 276.
staff. For many mistresses, this only caused more resentment towards their Irish servant and fed into popular opinion that the Irish were stupid and childlike. Urban also writes in his article in “Gender and History” that American mistresses, in addition to learning how to train and manage servants by reading these magazines and journals describing how British households were run, American mistresses learned that rewarding servants for good work and being empathetic to these new immigrants usually produced better results and happier employees:

Employers still possessed the ability to impart to their Irish servants civilized habits and behaviour, as long as they were willing to dedicate themselves to the arduous work that this entailed. For example, instead of lamenting the fact that Bridget did not know how to scrub floors properly, employers needed to realize that this was quite literally a foreign skill, ‘since her floor at home was the hard earth’. Instead of bemoaning Bridget’s deplorable culinary skills, mistresses had an obligation to teach Bridget how to use different food products, since she was ‘accustomed to such simple diet as oatmeal and buttermilk’. In addition, in the United States, where many middle-class families could only afford a single ‘maid of all work’ to perform domestic labour, it was unfair to expect a ‘poor peasant girl just landed from a sea-voyage’ to immediately perfect the many skills required of her. 42

Perhaps Mary McKeon’s mistresses subscribed to these magazines and journals, as she seemed to be treated well by her employers.

Of course, not all articles that appeared in these magazines were pro-Bridget. I am sure there were plenty of middle class households where the mistress of the house and her Irish servant clashed. These differences in culture were the source of the “Bridget” stereotype – an Irish Catholic woman who terrorized her employers with her behavior. (See Figure 1.4) Usually portrayed as ape-like and brutish, Bridget (also called “Biddy”) was at best considered amusing in her ways of misunderstanding what her employers 42

Ibid., 263-264.
wanted her to do, and at worst a frightening threat not just to the household, but to America itself.

Robert Whitaker explains this threat well in his book *Mad in America*. “The first great wave of immigration, in the mid-1800’s, had brought more than 5 million Irish and Germans to this country. The ruling class – white Anglo-Saxon Protestants – saw that the United States was undergoing a great transformation, one that threatened
their dominance. The country was becoming less Protestant, less English and less white.”

Fear and prejudice towards immigrants, (particularly Catholics, which was what most of these new Irish and German arrivals were) goes back well before immigrants began arriving en masse in the mid-nineteenth century. Nativists -- white, Protestant individuals born in America that liked to trace their ancestry back to the arrival of the Mayflower -- would form the “Know-Nothing” Party, a political organization that started in the early 1840s that would denounce those groups of immigrants who were not considered “real” American. Clashes between Nativists and Catholics would sometimes result in riots, such as one in Philadelphia on May 6-8, 1844. The “Know Nothings” would wield power in local, as well as some state elections, well into the 1850s. They would even nominate former President Millard Fillmore as their presidential candidate in 1856.

To understand how much Catholic immigrants were hated by nativists one must understand the amount of negative propaganda that was available to the public regarding immigrants. Author Irvin Painter writes that, “Between 1830 and 1860, [anti-Catholic hatred inspired] some 270 books, 25 newspapers, 13 magazines, and a slew of ephemeral publications” and continued to publish articles about immigrants being dirty, stupid, lazy, violent, drunken louts who were going to infect Protestant America with their Catholicism and put America at risk of being ruled by the Pope.

43 Robert Whitaker, Mad in America. Bad Science, Bad Medicine, and the Enduring Mistreatment of the Mentally Ill, 45.
44 Irvin Painter, The History of White People.
Following the Civil War, these German and Irish Catholics – many of whom fought in that war – would rise to power. Many of the Irish became involved in politics in cities, while Germans would often become farmers and businessmen. But nativism would continue throughout the nineteenth century, built on anti-immigrant fear.

The ruling class also accused immigrants of “outbreeding” true Americans. Whitaker adds that, “Francis Amasa Walker concluded in 1891, they had more children, on average, than the native born” and that, “no group seemed to be less fecund than upper-class WASPS.”[^45] Popular thought at the time amongst the WASPs was that all one had to do was look to the slums and tenements to see that, “the Irish and their ilk kept on reproducing until their tiny walk-up apartments were filled with eight and nine children.”[^46] A typical WASP family of the time had only two or three children. WASPs believed that they were forced to shoulder the cost for social programs, public schools, almshouses, and insane asylums that were filling up with non-American immigrant misfits.

[^45]: Ibid., 45.
[^46]: Ibid., 46.
Section E. Immigrant Women as Domestic Servants

To Irish immigrant women, domestic service work was preferable to other kinds of employment. Work as a live-in domestic servant included room and board, and usually some type of house uniform. Families who employed domestics often lived in the wealthier, more pleasant parts of cities in the Northeastern United States. “Domestic service was an important wage occupation for women, in general, in the United States throughout the period 1840 through 1930, and in the 1850’s, in the urban East, Irish-born women constituted the largest single group among servants.”47 Living in with your employer often meant enjoying a cleaner and safer environment than servants would otherwise have access to. Immigrants who did not live with their employers were forced to live in tenements that often were overcrowded, lacked indoor plumbing and bred disease.

Overall, 54 per cent of the women employed in America in 1900 who were Irish natives were domestic servants, and an additional 6.5 percent worked as laundresses.48 Janet Nolan expands on that research and found that 7.5 percent of Irish women worked in the needle trades, 7.4 percent in the textile trade, 1.2 in clerical and sales positions and 1.5 percent worked as teachers.49 Domestic service paid comparatively better than factory work or home employment and women could find a job almost immediately after they landed in America. “In New York in the 1850s servant women could expect from

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48 Ibid., xvii.
49 Nolan, *Ourselves Alone*, 78.
$4 to $7 per month.”\textsuperscript{50} This salary was much higher than that of textile workers or saleswomen. Because they didn’t have to spend a considerable part of their income on housing or food, live-in domestics were able to use part of their income to support their local Catholic church, and also send money back home to their relatives – either to supplement the earnings of the family farm where they no longer had a place, or to provide a way for siblings or other relatives to make their way to America and find the economic and social mobility unattainable in post-famine Ireland.

Despite the way that young Irish women servants were stigmatized in their adopted country, they were part of a mutually beneficial partnership: middle-class American families needed to maintain social appearances by employing live-in servants, and Irish immigrant women were all too happy to fill this need.

\textsuperscript{50} Diner, \textit{Erin's Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth Century}, 90.
Chapter 2. The Diary of Mary McKeon

Section A. Background

Mary McKeon was like many of the young women who left their native country of Ireland to find a better life for themselves. Mary was born in the village of Tooman, in the town of Keshcarrigan, County Leitrim, Ireland in 1867. (See Figure 2.1) At the age of thirteen, she left Ireland to live and work in New Haven, Connecticut as a domestic servant.\(^{51}\)

I know this because Mary kept a diary of her time as a servant, which was donated to the Knights of Columbus Headquarters in New Haven, Connecticut by her granddaughter, Mrs. Harry W. O’Neill of Hamden, Connecticut. I learned of the diary through my contacts at the Connecticut Irish American Historical Society, also in New Haven, to whom I am eternally grateful for the information they shared with me, as well as the time they spent with me when I visited the Historical Society in October of 2014. How the diary was donated to the Knights of Columbus is an interesting story in itself.

Through Susan Bronson, an archivist librarian at the Knights of Columbus Headquarters in New Haven, I learned of a newspaper article that ran in the February 6, 1978 issue of the New Haven Register. The author, Bill Ryan, was writing about another

\(^{51}\) I had hoped to include more information on Mary’s early life in Ireland; however, that proved difficult as, “the original census returns for 1861 and 1871 were destroyed shortly after the censuses were taken. Those for 1881 and 1891 were pulped during the First World War, possibly due to a paper shortage. The returns for 1821, 1831, 1841 and 1851 were, apart from a few survivals, notably for a few counties for 1821 and 1831, destroyed in 1922 in the fire at the Public Record Office at the beginning of the Irish Civil War.” Source: The National Archives of Ireland (November 2015). <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/help/history.html>. 
Figure 2.1: Map of modern Ireland showing birthplace of Mary McKeon. (Source: Apple Maps)

article that appeared in the same newspaper about Dr. Christopher Kauffman. Dr. Kauffman was researching information and writing a book on the beginnings of the Knights of Columbus. A call he put out in the *New Haven Register* resulted in a contact from Mary’s granddaughter, Mrs. Harry W. O’Neill of Hamden, Connecticut. Mrs.
O’Neill wrote to Kauffman and told him that, “...a diary of her grandmother had been passed along to her, she said, and might give some insight into life in New Haven during the period when the Knights of Columbus was starting. Her grandmother had come to this country in 1883 and attended St. Mary’s Church, where the Rev. Michael J. McGivney had started the Knights of Columbus, and worked as a domestic.” Her diary gives us an insight into what life was like for a young single girl from Ireland working in the United States.

Mary was the eldest of seven children, and the only sibling to leave Tooman in 1881 to join her Aunt Lizzie and Uncle Andrew in Hamden, Connecticut. It is possible that they sent her the passage fare to come to the United States; however, I cannot be sure, as Mary does not provide any details in her diary regarding how she afforded the passage to America. Financial assistance from relatives already living and working in America was one of the many ways that the Irish could afford to immigrate. Mary most likely lived with her aunt and uncle until she could find work. This was not unusual. Like many immigrant groups before and since, those from Ireland would be welcomed in the ethnic enclaves established by their predecessors in most northern cities, typically in the vicinity of a Catholic Church with an Irish priest.

After arriving in Connecticut, Mary attended St. Mary’s Church at 5 Hillhouse Avenue in New Haven. The church served the city’s original Catholic congregation. The assistant pastor at the time was Rev. M.J. McGivney, the founder of the Knights of Columbus, a Catholic fraternal benefit society. The parishioners’ first church burned

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52 Mrs. Harry W. O’Neill, quoted by Bill Ryan, “…And America Became Home”, *New Haven Register*, (February 1978), see Appendix D.
down in 1834. The new church, which is still in existence today, was dedicated in 1874 as the birthplace of the Knights of Columbus. The Connecticut State Legislature officially chartered the fraternal benefit society on March 29, 1882.

Mary eventually went to work for the Smythe family from May 11, 1881 to November 23, 1882, and then worked for the Killam family on Money Island from January 1883 to March 5, 1883. She left the island and went to work for the Osborn family at 232 York Street, New Haven in early April 1883. I am unsure when she left their employment, as she does not indicate that in her diary. (See Figures 2.2 and 2.3)

Mary’s diary details her day-to-day work responsibilities and her time spent with other young domestics, both in the home and at other residences, as well as her social outings at Saint Mary’s Church and dances, festivals, weddings, baptisms, concerts. There are also many diary entries that discuss Mary’s friends and family members coming to visit her at her employer’s home and Mary visiting friends that worked as domestic servants at their places of employment. These activities served to alleviate the intense homesickness Mary experienced for her family in Ireland. Some of her homesickness was relieved when her four brothers eventually immigrated to the United States. Neither of her sisters nor her parents left Ireland. This was not uncommon, as many parents did not leave Ireland to join their children in America. The social outings that Mary attended also provided an opportunity to meet eligible bachelors. Several of Mary’s diary entries describe potential suitors and the heartsickness that comes along with young women searching for, and dreaming of, meeting a man suitable for marriage.
Figure 2.2: Map detail of New Haven Connecticut, 1874. Star shows 232 York Street. (Source: Plan of the Town of New Haven, Peterson Collection. MAGIC Historical Map Collection - Connecticut Towns, University of Connecticut - http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/historical_maps_connecticut_towns.html)

Figure 2.3: Present day satellite map of New Haven, Connecticut, showing location of 232 York Street. (Source: Apple Maps) 

53 The Osborns’ house is no longer at that address. It was torn down in the early part of the 20th century to make way for the Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity house. Presently, it is the Rose Alumni House at Yale University. Source: Julier, Jennifer. Assistant Director for Yale College Classes, Rose Alumni Hall, Yale Alumni Association. Phone interview. February 24, 2016.
Mary’s diary was unpublished, and as a result, I worked from a transcription of the original that was completed in June 2013 by Winifred Maloney, a student in the Irish Studies Program at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, Connecticut. (See Appendix A.) The original diary is housed at the Knights of Columbus Headquarters in New Haven and it is not available for public viewing. According to notes from Ms. Maloney, sections of the original diary were written in pencil and the words are faded and difficult to read. Most entries are short and repetitive, and Mary skipped entire months of writing in her diary. Nevertheless, this diary is an important first-person account of an Irish domestic’s words, thoughts, and experiences.

The diary is simply named “The American Diary.” This title can have many meanings for Mary -- a record of her life experiences in America, mere geography, or even something more -- a recent immigrant, she must have felt a need to be loyal to her new country while also thinking of those back in her home country as well.

I used the diary transcription as my main primary source, and compared its information with information provided in an interview with Mary’s granddaughter, Mrs. Harry W. O’Neill of Hamden, Connecticut conducted by Bill Ryan of the New Haven Register, which was published in February of 1978. But after closer examination of the diary, and after referencing Census records, searching historic New Haven City Directories and newspapers, and using the address Mary’s granddaughter provided during the interview, there appears to be errors with dates in the newspaper article. These may be due to Mrs. O’Neill’s failing memory, or to family stories being misinterpreted as they were passed down through the generations.
There are inconsistencies in the diary. Mary’s entries are incomplete and confusing, often using abbreviations and initials for people’s names possibly to avoid sharing too much information about the people she was writing to, or with whom she was spending time, should the diary fall into someone else’s hands. She also uses abbreviations when writing about her employers -- most likely as a type of shorthand to save time. For example, on February 14, 1883, Mary wrote, “I came down stairs at 830 just as Mrs K got through with breakfast I eat mine and H got down to his at 11:30.” and on February 18, 1883 and February 20, 1883 she writes, “I sent a letter to Frank G., and one to Dan D. Charlie Smith took them ashore. Mr and Mrs K and Horace are clamming.” and “I've been makeing [sic] mean aprons and wrote 2 letters one to Mary J and one to Jim McG.” Mary is usually careful to only include the subject’s first name and last name initial, or the first initial of the person’s first name and their last name spelled out. For example, “I got a letter from D, and one from John” and “one from Dan D.”

Although I have not had the pleasure of seeing the actual diary, I can imagine the script must be difficult to decipher, and it would be easy to confuse numbers and letters. Additionally, Mary often wrote at night in low light, usually after a long day’s work and was probably tired. She wrote on February 14, 1883. “This Afternoon I have been drawing (some) letters and flowers to embroider. I have just finished (an M) and the letter K on my (sic) My eyes trouble me and I'm writing at 11 o clock.”

Initially, Mary’s descendants believed she came to America in 1883 to join her aunt and uncle, who were already living in Hamden, Connecticut to work as a domestic servant for a family named Smythe. After several more close readings of the diary, I
discovered that she had actually arrived in Connecticut in early May, 1880, at the approximate age of thirteen: Mary’s diary entry dated April 30, 1883 is, “It’s a lovely day and I’m just thinking of home and this day 3 years I was nearly landed in America.” This discovery changed my understanding of when Mary arrived in America, who she worked for and her employment dates, and that she was younger than I initially thought when she immigrated to America. She was, in fact, a child of thirteen.

According to Mary’s diary, she worked as a domestic servant for the Smythe family from May 1881 to November 1882. She wrote, under a date heading of January/February 1886, that she “Commenced to Work in Smythes on the 11th of May 1881 - 133 Dollars from May till Nov the 23 1882. I left in December.” For the seventeen months Mary worked for the Smythe family she earned $7.82 per month, or $1.95 per week. (Approximately $46.00 per week in 2016 dollars.)\(^{54}\) Mary then went to work for the Killam family, who were prominent New Haven coach makers, in their winter home on Money Island from January 1883 to March 5, 1883. The Smythes and the Killams may have been neighbors and that might explain how Mary found new employment with the Killam family. Mary wrote in her February 24, 1883 diary entry that, “I got down stairs at 830. I ironed and went over ashore after the mail. I landed as Smyths [sic] Dock. I got 2 letters for me. One from Pearlie and 1 from P. McMahon. I came back had dinner and sewed some this evening. Now I finished a letter to Dan.” She left the island on March 6th to work for the Osborn family in New Haven beginning April 2, 1883. Unfortunately, I do not know how long she worked for the Osborn family as that information is not in her diary. Although from the start of her diary she writes about her

daily activities such as her housework, sewing, and letter writing, we learn most about her social activities and the friends she visits during her time with the Osborns. At the Osborns’ home she was living near downtown New Haven and not on an island, and had more opportunities to visit others and participate in activities.

Although Mary provided a great deal of personal information in her diary while she was working with the Osborn family, she did not provide a great deal of information about the family. I only had the street address of the house where she worked. Historical city directories of the time did not list residences by street number. Therefore, it was not possible to simply type “232 York Street” into a search box on a computer, as one does today, and find the homeowner’s name. Nor did Federal Census records provide an easy answer. Searching for a surname of Osborn with a home address of 232 York Street proved unfruitful. After further research I discovered that the owners of 232 York Street were John and Charlotte (Lottie) Osborn. John Osborn is listed as a retired carriage manufacturer in the 1880 United States Federal Census.

Additional information in the census record includes that he and Charlotte had five children and two servants in 1880. Their children’s names were Robert, John, Frederick, Virginia and, Selden. These names are mentioned frequently in Mary’s diary, and confirm that Mary did work for the family during the time she kept her diary. On April 3, 1883, Mary writes in her diary, “Mrs. Alsbom Virginia & John is going to a Ball.” And On April 6, 1883, “Ed Largent & Willie Skinner called to see Virginia this Eve.” Mary also writes in her diary on April 12, 1883 that, “Mrs Osborn was sick this morning and didn’t come to breakfast.” On April 14, 1883 she writes, “In the Afternoon Mrs Osborn & Virginia went out” and on May 1, 1883 that, “Mrs Osborn & Virginia
went out riding.” There are also several references in Mary’s diary that include the Osborns’ sons’ names. On April 20, 1883 Mary writes, “Rob is home & Virginia is gone to New York.” Virginia returned home on April, 24, 1883. Another of the Osborns’ sons, Selden, is mentioned in a diary entry from June 1, 1883. Mary writes, “John & Selden are going sailing with Virginia.”

The census record also states that the Osborns had two servants, one named Clare and the other named Emma Brown, a black woman from North Carolina. Since these two names are not mentioned in the diary, it appears that Mary went to work for the Osborns after the 1880 census was conducted.
Section B. Mary at Work

Many of Mary’s diary entries describe her household chores. And it appeared that Mary had many more household responsibilities in the Osborns’ home in New Haven than in the Killams’ home on Money Island. On the Island during January, February and the first week in March, she notes several times in her diary that she was able to sleep in to 7:00 A.M., 8:30 A.M. or even close to 10:00 A.M. During the month of January, she spent time clamming with Mr. and Mrs. Killam, traveling via rowboat to the mainland with Horace (perhaps the Killams’ son or another servant – her diary doesn’t explain) to pick up the mail, and even being allowed to travel to New Haven to see a girlfriend. Mary’s diary entry on January 30th alludes to the fact that she may have been going to a job interview in New Haven. She writes, “I left Mount Carmel today to go see about a place in New haven [sic] that Keatie McWeeney wrote to me about.” Mary may have interviewed with the Osborn family on that day.

One of the frequent subjects Mary wrote about in her diary during the time she is on Money Island is how unhappy she was. For instance, on Friday, January 26, 1883, she wrote, “I sewed all the afternoon and evening on my white skirt & black silk waist Horace and Mrs K came on the 5 train & brought me a letter from [her brother] John. It made me feel real bad. I’ve been sick and now I’m worse. I cried all this evening.” She would often describe her loneliness and isolation while on Money Island, which seemed to affect her health. This would also make her feel homesick -- something she would often write about while with the Killams, but rarely when working for the Osborns. One typical quote in her diary, from Sunday, January 28, 1883, reads, “And now I have a real sick head ache and I'm home sick. All Evening and talking of my own home in Erin.”
That time of year -- a cold winter spent on an island located miles east of her friends and family in New Haven -- must have been very difficult for a young woman like Mary. Sometimes her diary entries sound overly dramatic, such as her entry from Monday, February 5, 1883: “I'm home-sick and discontented on this island. I wish I was (smudge, unreadable) or never have been born.” And at times, even when she feels physically well she is not happy. She ends her diary entry from Saturday, February 3, 1883 with “…I'm feeling good but still I'm home sick and thinking of how miserable I am here.”

Writing in her diary in the evenings, just before she went to bed, seemed to add to her feelings of sadness and isolation. She writes on Wednesday, February 7, 1883, “…its [sic] 12 and I am going to bed in my sad little chamber as I'm lonely.” But her isolation was about to end when she wrote about leaving the Killams on Money Island. She doesn’t write about any specific reasons as to why she is leaving, and although she has complained about her time there, she writes of her sadness on her leaving the Killams, since they did treat her well. She wrote on March 5, 1883: “I'm writing to [sic] the last time to Dan from Money I. I'm going to leave tomorrow forever. I feel bad to have to and this is my last Diary on the Island.”

Mary makes no more entries into her diary until mid to late March 1883. On April 2, 1883 she starts to work for the Osborns in New Haven.

At the Osborns, Mary usually woke up at 6 A.M each day and worked in the house all day long. She noted in her diary entries that she had to sweep, iron, do the laundry, wash woodwork, fetch water from the barn, run errands, and clean silver. When her employers entertained guests, there was extra work for the servants. Yet she still is not as sad as she was on the island. This may also be due to it being summer, and since
Mary is no longer stranded on the island during winter, she can meet with her friends. And although Mary is busier at the Osborns, she is no longer a “maid of all work” -- a phrase that means she was the only servant in the household and required to do all of the cleaning, washing and cooking; in addition to tending to all of the family member’s needs.
Section C. Mary at Play

Mary wrote often in her diary about going out and visiting friends and having friends come to visit her at her employer’s home. During the first three months of the diary when Mary was on Money Island, she did not have many opportunities to attend social events. However, she did have time to visit with friends. During those months she mentions spending time with a dozen different friends or acquaintances: Dan D., Nettleton, Frank, Keatie McWeeney, Mary Pat Mahon, Mary Woods, Ed Cranwell, Will Rage, Henry Hall, George, Joe Raynes and Charlie Smith.

Mary had many interests both inside and outside of work. While she stayed with her employers, she often wrote in her diary about her sewing and embroidery. She wrote that in the evening hours she would work on her “tidy” (a smock that maids and servants would wear over their clothes while they worked), stitching a “Harp and Shamrock” on it on January 13, 1883; and a forget-me-not on Sunday, January 21, 1883. She monogrammed handkerchiefs for someone named Maggie on Thursday, February 8 and Friday, February 9, 1883. Mary’s diary is vague regarding whether her sewing was just for herself or as part of her duties. For example on February 11, 1883, she writes, “I have been sewing and crocheting today and Mrs. K is reading us a story this evening. Its 12 when I said good night. My eyes trouble me.”

On many occasions she would write letters home to family back in Ireland. Occasionally she would include money that she earned -- the “American letters” that would help her stay in touch with her family, as well as to keep her family solvent. On Monday, January 22, 1883, she writes, “Wrote a leter [sic] to John John and sent him 5 D[ollars], I wrote some poetry and I'm much better today of my sickness.”
Once Mary took the job with the Osborns in New Haven, she found it easier to get out of the house and visit with friends, as well as shop. She would write about things she purchased, as on Saturday, March 31, 1883: “I went down town this afternoon and bought me some gloves 55 cent and this Diary in the New York St[.]” She would also write about attending church on Sundays, visiting friends, and attending local events. One of her entries tells of a concert she attended at New Haven Green on Sunday, June 3, 1883:

Keatie Gray & I went astray this evening. We were on the green hearing the salvation army & followed them to Union St. We had a lovely time only we went astray coming home. We went past the Depot to Silver St. & White (sic) but got home before 10 after. I left Keatie at George St. Hannah Donahoe came.

Her diary also shows her interest in poetry. Mary would write anywhere from one line to a passage, usually with love as the subject. One of her earliest entries was a partial quote from Alfred, Lord Tennyson’s poem *In Memoriam A.H.H.*, “Better to have loved and lost” and on April 6, 1883, she writes, “I’m writing some peices [sic] of Byrons this Evening.”

On September 15, 1883, Mary entered the first line of *Stop, Stop Pretty Water* by Eliza Lee Follen:

Stop, stop, pretty Water,
Said Mary one Day
To a frolicsome book
That was running Away

We know that Mary was a practicing Roman Catholic. The newspaper article that appeared in the New Haven *Register* interview with her granddaughter, Mrs. Harry W.

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55 Most likely, Mary meant that she and her friends were going to listen to the Salvation Army Band perform in New Haven Green. This was located just a few blocks away from the Osborns’ home. (See Figure 2.2) And judging by context, “we went astray” meant that they took a longer route home.
O’Neill in February 1978 discusses Mary attending St. Mary’s Church in New Haven where the Rev. Michael J. McGivney had started the Knights of Columbus, a Catholic organization, in the late 19th century at St. Mary’s Church.\textsuperscript{56}

Mary’s first diary entry that mentions any type of church service is not until March 31, 1883; after she left employment with the Killam family on Money Island and moved to New Haven to work for the Osborn family. She attended confession at St. John’s Church -- most likely located in New Haven. Mary may not have been able to attend church while living on the island because it was difficult to row ashore during the freezing winter months. She writes on February 3, 1883 and February 4, 1883 that the “sound is all froze up so no one can go ashore” and “Its [sic] all solid ice on the sound.” It was also dangerous to walk across the frozen sound as detailed in her February 6, 1883 entry, “Horace went over ashore to the Creek and back on ice. Mr K went too and fell in twice,” and on February 12, 1883 Mary wrote, “Mrs K wants Horace to go ashore after the mail, but he won’t go. Kiser fell in to [sic] the water was near drowned.” When the temperature rose, some of the ice thawed so it was impossible to walk across the ice and impossible to row a small boat through the ice jams.

Mary concludes her diary with, “an account of letters and names of persons I sent them to from April the 3th [sic] 1882 til July” A list of twenty-nine names follows this

\textsuperscript{56} The Knights of Columbus began in 1881 by Father Michael J. McGivney, assistant pastor of St. Mary’s Church in New Haven, Connecticut (the Catholic parish that Mary McKeon was a member of at this time). Its initial founding was to provide a fraternal organization for Catholic men to join as an alternative to other groups who were seen as antithetical to the church’s teachings, as well as provide financial relief for parish members who had lost a family member. Choosing to identify with Christopher Columbus (then considered the discoverer of America) was considered to show their patriotism and dispel any fears among nativist, anti-Catholic Americans who correlated their religion with immigrants, and considered them to be un-American. As of 2016, the Knights of Columbus includes over 15,000 councils and 1.9 million members. Source: \url{http://www.kofc.org/en/todays-knights/history/index.html}
entry and includes some postage amounts and the number of letters written to each person follows his or her name. Mary wrote a remarkable eighty-nine letters between the months of April and July 1882; twenty-one of those letters were to her father (Papa) in Ireland. She lists postage amounts next to the letters written to her father and it appears that it cost five or ten cents to mail a letter to Ireland from the United States in 1882. 57

57 According to a website that provides historical United States first-class postage rates, the cost to mail a letter (most likely a domestic mailing) was three cents. Wm. Robert Johnston Archive (February 15, 2015), http://www.johnstonsarchive.net/other/postage.html.
Section D. Mary in Love

As Mary’s diary shows, she was still very much a young woman of 16, still trying to find her way in her new home while navigating her feelings towards the suitors she would meet throughout 1883.

Mary’s first mention of the man who would become her husband, Dan Driscoll, is in a diary entry dated January 13, 1883, “I got down stairs 7:30 got Breakfast. Mrs. K Mr. H and I went over to High St and to get some wood to burn. Horace went over ashore and got 2 letters for me, one from John and the other from Dan D.” Mary writes in that same diary entry that, “at 930 I took (pains) around my heart. And has to go to bed.” Mary is not clear in her diary whether if this is a metaphor for her loneliness and her heartbreak over Dan, or if she is truly ill with chest pain.

Her diary notes that she spent one evening out at a place called the Depot (she may mean Union Station, which was the New York, New Haven and Hartford railroad passenger station, on Chapel Street) with Dan Driscoll and Willie Robus, on March 4, 1883. Unfortunately for Mary, the evening did not end well. She had a spat with Dan at the end of the evening, apparently about another girl named Katie M. Mary ends her diary entry that night with, “I wish I could die tonight.”

Mary vacillates between being completely smitten with Dan D. and completely heartbroken over him. In her diary entry dated June 12, 1883 Mary writes, “Tonight, D,D, came up and I promised to be true. I feel real happy now in my own room drinking a pitcher of tea and eating some cake as Maggie is asleep. I have it all to my self [sic] but wishes I had some body [sic] else here. It is now 15 minutes of 11 and I have to retire for
the night to dream of my own dear D. Now I know I’ll love Dan forever and he may go back on me, then I shall die. Aren’t I silly”

Mary also had other men who wanted her attention, even though she always thought of Dan. In her next entry dated June 14, 1883 she writes, “I’m very unhappy tonight as I’ve been thinking of this time a year ago. Dan was to see me[.] [N]ow he has another girl and doesn’t care for me any more [sic] but I like him best of all I’m wishing I could cease to think of him. Tommie Hadden was here and brought me a boquet [sic] of roses. He left at 11. Tommie has given me a ring now. I hope one year from now that I’ll be happier than I am tonight.”

The diary entry from Tuesday, August 7, 1883 also shows a more playful side of Mary: “I'm waiting all day & flirting with Samual McCarthy & the paper of R\ Josie (sic) & I were on the (Mermaid) all evening playing cards. I had a lovely time.” Then the diary transcript adds: [written over entry: Bradly was over this afternoon].

As a young woman of 16, Mary may have enjoyed the attention she received from the young men of New Haven, but throughout her diary she always goes back to thinking about her Dan D.
Conclusion

Mary McKeon’s diary shows that she was the exception that disproves the rule. Unlike other young women who worked as domestic servants for middle class American families, she appeared to be treated much better than her contemporaries. At the Killams’ house on Money Island, she sometimes would not come downstairs until late morning, would go clamming with the family, spend time reading and writing poetry, sewing and doing embroidery work and would go ashore with other servants to pick up mail. There are several entries that mention Mrs. Killam (or Mrs. K. or mother as Mary sometimes refers to her) cooking breakfast, reading to her and teaching her how to sew and embroider. (Mary often refers to her employers, Mr. and Mrs. Killam and Mr. and Mrs. Osborn as “father” and “mother.” Arguably this could have been because of her young age or because her employers encouraged it and wanted to make her feel like part of the family.)

Both the Killam and Osborn families seem to have treated her with more respect than other young Irish domestics may have received at that time, including her in some activities such as reading to the household members in the evening. And if Mary felt that her employers mistreated her, her diary does not reveal this. The only angry words she writes are saved for Mary, her fellow kitchen servant in the Osborns’ house; her boyfriends, particularly Dan Driscoll (Dan D); and others who upset her and who Mary felt were worth writing about in her diary. In Mary’s diary entry dated April 18, 1883, she writes that, “Mary [the other servant] is mad at the cats and at me too. She threw the little kitty at me and killed it.” On April 19, 1883, she writes that, “I feel good today & I am cleaning (silver) sweeping & mad at Mary.”
Mary also enjoyed living with her employers in an affluent section of New Haven, Connecticut and although she still had to perform chores such as help make breakfast, sew, and clean, assist the family in entertaining guests and visitors, she had time to attend church, have visitors come to where she worked and lived, visit family and friends in their homes, and meet with a steady boyfriend. She made enough income as a domestic servant that she was able to send money to her brother and father back home in Ireland and could afford to buy cloth to make her own clothes. She could spend her evenings reading, writing in her diary, and writing letters. Mary was able to provide for herself, and live a much more comfortable life than she would have been able to experience in late nineteenth century Ireland.

Mary did eventually marry Daniel Driscoll (the Dan D that she first mentioned in her January 13, 1883 diary entry and wrote about often throughout the diary), an American-born man of Irish parents who was born and lived in Branford, Connecticut in 1889, when she was twenty-two. She gave birth to five sons and four daughters. One of her daughters, Mrs. Jane Atwater, was quoted in the *New Haven Register* newspaper article. (See Appendix D.)

United States Federal Census records from the 20th century would show that Mary and her family stayed in Connecticut. (See Appendix B.) The 1920 Census showed that Mary had become a naturalized U.S. citizen. Although her native tongue was Irish (according to what she indicated on the Census form), she could read and write English. Only eight of her nine children are recorded in the Census record; perhaps one died before 1920, or may not have even been born yet. The children’s ages varied from Dan Jr., age 29, to Cornelius, age 15. Mary and her family lived on Maple Street in Branford,
Connecticut. Mary’s husband Dan worked as a brass molder in a foundry, and Mary was a housewife. All of Dan and Mary’s children were single and living at home when the 1920 Census was recorded. They worked outside the home, except the youngest child, Cornelius, who was a high school student. None worked in the domestic service industry. I was able to find information on their children’s employment status and, for a few of the children, their education level completed, on Ancestry.com.

According to the 1920 Census, Daniel Jr. was twenty-nine years old and worked as a locomotive engineer. He had an eighth-grade education. Joseph, age twenty-eight, was a clerk in an ammunition shop. Catherine, age twenty-six, was a teacher in the public school system. Nora, age twenty-two, was a clerk at a wire company. Edward, at age twenty-one, worked as a shipping clerk at Sur Foundry. Jane was seventeen years old and worked as a stenographer in an ammunition shop. She had an eleventh-grade education. Cornelius, age fifteen and a student, is the youngest Driscoll listed on the 1920 Census report. I was unable to find any employment information on their son Frank. He was twenty-four years old.

By the time of the 1940 U.S. Census, Mary’s husband Dan had passed away (death records show that he died on November 2, 1930.) The family now owned their own home, worth $4,000.00, on Driscoll Road in Branford, Connecticut. (There is still a Driscoll Road in Branford.) Three of her children, Nora, Daniel Jr. and Edward, still lived with her. The 1940 Census also reveals that Mary (now 73 years old) and her family had a live-in housekeeper, a 58-year-old white woman named Trays Edele. (It may appear that her first and last names are reversed, but all other names that were written for the Driscoll household in the 1940 Census are all first name/last name. See
Appendix B.) Mary might have felt that even though she had her adult sons and daughters living with her, with all of them working outside the home and her getting up in age, there was a benefit to having a domestic servant living in the household. Daniel Jr., age forty-six and single still worked as a locomotive engineer and lived at home. He did not pursue higher education. Joseph was forty-five years old, married and had one son. He worked as a Postmaster, and was a high school graduate. I was unable to determine where he and his family lived in 1940. Nora, age thirty-eight and single, worked as a bookkeeper and lived at home. She completed two years of college. Edward (or “Doward” as it appears in the 1940 Census) is thirty-nine years old, still worked as a shipping clerk and lived at home. He had an eighth grade education. Jane married an Attwater, and gave birth to two children. She and her family lived in their own home on Driscoll Road. Her brother Cornelius lived with her when the 1940 Census was recorded, as did one of her brothers-in-law. I could not locate any information on her employment status so I assume she was a housewife. (Jane is Mary’s daughter quoted in the New Haven Register article.) Cornelius was thirty-five years old and was divorced, with one daughter. He was living with his sister Jane when the census was taken. He worked as a lawyer and completed four years of college. Unfortunately I could not find any employment nor current residence information on Catherine, sometimes referred to as “Katy” from the 1940 Census. And the only information I could find on Frank was a military census certificate dated 1917.

Mary passed away on December 10, 1940. The young woman of sixteen who wrote often in her diary about her homesickness would grow to love her adopted country. According to Mary’s daughter Jane Atwater in the New Haven Register interview, “She
went back to Ireland three times to visit but always came back. This was her home and
she didn’t want anyone to forget it. Before she left, she would tell us, ‘If anything
happens to me there, you make sure they bring me home to be buried.’”

Like so many of her fellow Irish, Mary would leave her family behind to make a
life for herself, free of the social changes that had spread over Ireland after the Great
Famine. She would find work as a domestic servant, live with middle-class families, and
enjoy a freedom that she might never have experienced if she had stayed behind in a
country where she had limited opportunities to work where she wanted and marry whom
she wanted.
Appendix A: *The American Diary, The Diary of Mary McKeon*

This is a transcript of a diary kept by Mary McKeon, a sixteen year old woman who worked as a domestic servant in New Haven Connecticut. She wrote it while she worked for the Killam family in early 1883, and then for the Osborn family starting in April of 1883. Titled *The American Diary*, Mary used it to keep a record of her day-to-day activities, as well as save addresses of people she met, and calculate how much she spent on postage for letters back home to family and friends in Ireland.

Mary’s diary was unpublished, and I had to work from a transcription of the original that was completed in June 2013 by Winifred Maloney, a student in the Irish Studies Program at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, Connecticut. The original diary is housed at the Knights of Columbus Headquarters in New Haven and is inaccessible to the public. According to notes from Ms. Maloney, sections of the original diary were written in pencil and the words are faded and difficult to read. Most entries are short and repetitive, and Mary skipped entire months of writing in her diary. Nevertheless, this diary is an important first-person account of an Irish domestic’s words, thoughts, and experiences.

I used the diary transcription as my main primary source, and compared its information from an interview that was conducted with Mary’s granddaughter, Mrs. Harry W. O’Neill of Hamden, Connecticut, that appeared in the *New Haven Register* newspaper in February of 1978. I decided to keep the misspellings and grammatical errors in the transcription intact, since that was how it was provided to me.
June 3, 2013

Mary McKeon - January 1883 heading

January, 1883 heading January 1886

January, 1883 heading Tues. 2.
Scribbles

January, 1883 heading
Thurs. 4.
Better to have loved and lost

(sic)

January, 1883 heading
Sat 13
January the 30/86
I got down stairs 7:30 got Breakfast Mrs K Mr. H and I went over to High St and to get some wood to burn. Horace went over ashore and got 2 letters for me, one from John and the other from Dan D. I've finished my Harp and Shamrock on the (tidy) this Eve, commenced an (edgling) and at 930 I took (pains) around my heart And has to go to bed its (sic)

January, 1883 heading
Sun. 14
Sun the 31/86
I came down stairs at 8:30 - had breakfast -done up my work. Mr & Mrs K went clamming. I got on my new dress and the (sic) Tug is just come in they all are out on Deer (Capt) & Ed the (deacon) all of them are (waveing) to Horace & I. (Capt) was over at 5. PM. H is over there now its just 9 and they (sic) haven't come here yet Horace has come. I'm all (sic) up.

January, 1883 heading
Mon. 15-Feb the 1186
I got down stairs at 730- the (sic) is still in the (Harbor) and Mrs K & I are praying it may be rough on the Sound so that they can't go out But at 11 am the (Tug) (Willie) came with another tow to them and all left at 12. They were all out waveing to H. Mr K Mrs & I felt real lonesome to see them go. Capt Brown said good bye and I'm a little gone on him

(Entire page ripped out)

January, 1883 heading
(crossed out Sat,wrote Wed. over it)
I feel real unhappy all day. Nettle ton and Frank were here all this fore noon & — And afternoon I was glad to see them. Poor Frank is arrested and my heart (ekes) to
think of him. I'm just—after finishing another letter to Dan D, I've been doing some Embroidery. This evening I was makeing a forget me not Now I'm sick and going to bed. Good night

January, 1883 heading
Sun. 21 (wrote in 24)
(crossed out Septuagesima Sunday, wrote Thursday)
Mrs K didn't go in to N.H. today so that I can't post that letter to D, till tomorrow.
I've finished the forget me not I was (doing) on my tidy, and (sic) (sic). This evening I went out (sic) a little while. This afternoon I feel some better today though (sic) Horace sick enough. Mary K

Janury 1883 heading
Mon. 22
Weather snowing
Sunday the 24
I got down to the dining room at 9. The fires are al made. Mrs K is cooking breakfast Its so cold and ice the windows so that we can't see through. We had breakfast at 10. Then I done some drawing from Mrs K's book to embroider on my tidy. Wrote a leter to John John and sent him 5 D, I wrote some poetry and I'm much better today of my sickness. Going to bed.

January 1883 heading
Tues 23
Tuesday 23
I'm so sick all day its seems as if I should die. I got up this morning at 8:30 and is going to bed at 8. I've been sewing on my dress this evening an I'm so cold and sick with cramps. I had to take (ginger) and some flat (iron) hot to bed with me. I have been thinking of Dan all day. Now I'm thinking of Jim McGowan.

January, 1883 heading
Fri. 26 Weather, temperate 1886
I got up this morning at 7 AM and got Breakfast the first time in 3 months, as K was going to go on the 9 o clock train. She didn't go till noon & I went with her. I sewed all the afternoon and evening on my white skirt & black silk waist Horace and Mrs K came on the 5 train & brought me a letter from John. It made me feel real bad. I've been sick and now I'm worse. I cried all this evening. I got me a Calico dress and some other things. Posted the letter to Dan.

January, 1883 heading
Sat 27
Monday the 25,1886
I got down stairs at 9 this morning because (sic) was ready. Horace got up at 10 and went ashore. I got a letter from D, and I feel much better. All day till 8 this evening I had a real sick spell. Mrs (Kill...) was helping me sew on my dress. I'm now going to bed at 12 pm. I don't feel good.
January, 1883 heading
Sun. 28
Tuesday the 6 186
The Night Hawk is Hooting. I got up at 8 this morning came down as the fire was made. Nettleton & (sic) were over here today about Frank. I washed & scrubbed. This evening Jim Walker called. We had a real pleasant time in the sitting room. Horace, Mrs K & Mr (Kill...), Jim and I. He helped me take in the clothes. After he went I wrote to Dan Driscoll. Went to bed at 12 pm.

January, 1883 heading
Mon. 29
Wednesday the 27/86
I got down stairs at 8 this morning. Wallace was over and I ironed clothes all day. In the eve I sewed my dress and apron. Then I read (aloud) til 2. Horace & I stayed up reading. I don't feel good tonight as I have a fearful headache.

January, 1883 heading
Tues. 30
I left Mount Carmel today to go see about a place in New haven that Keatie McWeeney wrote to me about. Yesterday I went- Mary Reynolds' first- & from there to Mr (sic) I didn't settle about going to it Then I went to see Keatie McWeeney on Dwight St I stayed there till night then we went up to Mary (sic) Pat Mahon was there.

January, 1883 heading Wed. 31
Thursday January the 28 186
I didn't get out of bet till 10 minutes of 10 this morning. All were through eating breakfast but Horace. I had mine at 11 AM. In the afternoon I went out clamming. Mrs and Mr. K went too. We got some. I finished my dress and apron tonight and done some mending. I had a real queer dream about Dan last night I thought he told me he was going to die this time (sic) and he kissed me I thought in my dream and said my father would take good care of me for his sake. Then Maggie (C.) & Mag Welch and Mrs Curran appeared on the scene. I thought I was to her house and I dressed in white. I feel worried some today on account of this dream. And now I have a real sick head ache and I'm home sick. All Evening and talking of my own home in Erin.

Mary McKeon- February 1883 heading

February 1883 heading
Fri. 2
If s 8 o clock this morning when I got down to the Club room. Mrs. K wasn't up then I got Bre' and took a bath this forenoon. Afternoon I done some drawing and also Embroidary on my Tidy and some on a motto. I feel real good all day but this evening I seem to have caught more cold. Last night I had a nice dream about Horace and my brother John. If s just 11 PM now.
February 1883 heading
Sat. 3.
Wed February 186
I got down stairs 9 AM. Mrs K had just got up. Its blowing hard all morning and last night. Its so cold in my room and the Sound is all froze up so that no one can go ashore. I got a letter from Frederick McG. The baby is sick. I'm making me an underwaist and night dress. I'm feeling good but still I'm home sick and thinking of how miserable I am here.

February 1883 heading
Sun. 4.
Thursday
I came down stairs at 9. Dressed me in by the stove the sitting room its awful cold out. It seems as though one should freeze. Its all solid ice on the sound. I've been sewing this evening I went up stairs at 11 pm. Mrs (K...) wanted me to sleep by the stove in the (sic) room. I wouldn't do it and took a bag of hot water up stairs.

February 1883 heading
Mon. 5.
Friday
I got out of bed at 9:30. We(233,347),(465,573) had breakfast at 10. Its very cold and the sound is freezing up. I done some sewing and read the paper. I'm home-sick and discontented on this (sic) island. I wish I was (smudge, unreadable) or never have been born. I have been dreaming often and my Uncle Tim and Aunt this last 3 nights.

February 1883 heading
Tues. 6
Saturday 186
I came down at 830 this morning. I had breakfast at 10. Mrs and Mr K walked over to Hugh Island on the ice. Horace went over ashore to the Creek and back on ice. Mr K went too and fell in twice. Horace has been outside of all the Island on the ice they teased me to go but I wouldn't. I finished my under clothes tonight and got to bed at 11.

February 1883 heading
Wed. 7
Sunday
I got down stairs at 9. It ain't so cold today and its thawing some and we can't walk ashore. We let Horace sleep til 1 o clock then we had dinner after we got a little wild (sic) (sic) I wrote a letter to Pearlie. Mrs K has been reading to us all the Evening and not its 12 and I am going to bed in my sad little chamber as I'm lonely.

February 1883 heading
Thurs. 8
Monday
I got down to the dining room at 8. We had breakfast at 9.1 washed & embroidered
the letter M on Maggie's handkerchief. Mrs K read us a story to Horace, Mr K and I
up the Club rom. We all went to bed at 11 pm. Horace has been teasing his mother
and I all the Evening. I feel well but I'm sad just now thinking of how hard my life is
here.

February 1883 heading Fri. 9 Tuesday
I got down stairs 7:30. We had breakfast at 8:30. Then we all walked around the Island.
It's a lonely day and the ice hasn't thawed out any yet We can't get over ashore. I was
wishing to get a letter from Dan. I feel so sad and lonely when I think of all the good
times I ever had where I'm walking today I have been down on (Loners) Point, sitting
there all alone and wishing I could only see the (Southern) Cross laying off here in the
Harbour now. And I've been thinking of the Sunday we all picked feathers off the ducks
down on those rocks. Now its 11 and I'm going to bed. I've embroidered the other M
tonight. H picked out the stitches. For me I'm just a lonely as (ever) (bottom of page is
ripped)

February 1883 heading
Sun. 11
Wednesday 10
I got down stairs at 830. We are froze in still and no one can get ashore. I can't see
any one only just ourselves. I'm longing to once get off this Island and to get a letter
from some one I love. I have been sewing and crocheting today and Mrs. K is
reading us a story this evening. Its 12 when I said good night. My eyes trouble me.

February 1883 heading
Mon. 12
Thursday the 11
I got up at 9. Thank God all the ice is most gone away and I feel much happier. It's
raining all day. Mrs K wants Horace to go ashore after the mail, but he won't go.
Kiser fell in to the water was near drowned. I have written 4 letters and I (bottom of
page is ripped)

February 1883 heading (186 written next to it)
Tues. 13
Friday the 12
I came down stairs at 8. We had breakfast I sent 4 letters ashore with Horace to mail. 1 to
Keatie Rugers, 1 to Brother John, 1 Maggie Welch and 3 hand kerchiefs and a letter to
Agnes. I got 2 letters from the (Office). 1 from Dan and one from Mary Woods. I feel
happier and will go to bed now as its 12 o clock. Mrs (Kill...) has been reading the secret
revealed all the Evening and now I'm tired.

February 1883 heading
Wed. 14
Saturday
I came down stairs at 830 just as Mrs K got through with breakfast I eat mine and H got down to his at 11:30 This Afternoon I have been drawing (some) letters and flowers to embroider. I have just finished (an M) and the letter K on my (sic) My eyes trouble me and I'm writing at 11 o clock.

February 1883 heading
Thurs. 15
Sunday 13
Sent a letter to P. McMahon
I got downstairs at 630. Mrs K called me and I got ready and Horace took me over to the Creek. I got a letter from Frank (Gauchet) walked to Branford, went to Mary Woods and called to her (sic) and had a good time. I walked back here at night, left B' at 6 PM I got to the Creek at 7. Ed Cranwell and Will (Rage) took me home to the Island. I feel a little tired now. Its nice moon (sic)

February 1883 heading
Friday 16
Monday
It's a lonely day and I came down stairs at 830. My Brother came to see me and I feel so happy all this day. In the afternoon I rowed him and I ashore to take the 6:10 train. He teased me to go home with him. After he went, I met George Walker. He got me some candy. Ed Cranwell came down to the dock with me. Horace was waiting at (ripped bottom of page). Its so rough. Horace and I went near getting lost. We had to go outside (sic) Island and lost an oar. We got all wet as the waves came into the boat.
Tuesday I got down stairs at 830 and feel home sick after my Brother. I want to go home but can't It's a lonely day, and this evening I was embroidering on a handkerchief. Charlie Smith was over oystering. I dug some clams.

February 1883 heading
Sun 18
Wednesd
I got down stairs at 930. Eat my breakfast and got Horace at 12. The folks are all out, clamming. I'm sewing and ironing. I sent a letter to Frank G., and one to Dan D. Charlie Smith took them ashore. Mr and Mrs K and Horace are clamming. I'm all alone in the house and wish I was home again.

February 1883 heading
Mon 19
Thursday
I'm having breakfast at 10 this morning, H had his at 12. I've been out clamming and got tired then I went out to see Charlie. He's oystering at the steamboat dock. Mr. and Mrs K are clamming. Horace is ashore. He got a letter for me from Mary Woods. Branford to go up there right away. I don't feel good and I went to bed at 8. I was working the (sic) (sic) on my tidy.
February 1883 heading
Tues. 20
Friday the 17
I rowed ashore today myself. Landed at (ill), got the mail and came home. I saw Henry Hall and George (ill). I've been makeing mean aprons and wrote 2 letters one to Mary J and one to Jim McG. I have cramps and don't feel good.

February 1883 heading
Wed. 21
Saturday
I got down stairs at 830. Its cold and rough on the water. I was all ready to go ashore after the mail but H wouldn't let me. He went and got 2 letters for me, 1 from Dan and 1 from Aunt Liz. I feel home sick and want to go up to Mt. Carmel, but I can't get my money from K, there was 2 duckers here from (sic). I've been working the sunflower on my tidy.

February 1883 heading
Thurs. 22
Sunday I got up at 9. After breakfast I went over to Stony Creek. (Got) to go after Rage that keeps the Post-Off, Will waited on me. I saw Ed Cranwell at Joe Raynes'. When I came back here it was snowing and very rough. I was glad (ripped bottom of page)

February 1883 heading
Fri.23
Monday the 22
I got down stairs at 8. Mrs K called me. I washed this forenoon. Charlie Smith was over a while. Horace went over ashore and got me a letter from Frank G. Mrs. K has been reading the story for us entitled Brought back to Life. I wrote a letter to Dan.

February 1883 heading Sat 24
Tuesday
I got down stairs at 830.1 ironed and went over ashore after the mail. I landed at Smyths (sic) Dock. I got 2 letters for me. One from Pearlie and 1 from P. McMahon. I came back had dinner and sewed some this evening. Now I (sic) finished a letter to Dan [ripped bottom of page)

February 1883 heading
Tues. 27
[wrote "Monday" and nothing else]

Mary McKeon- March 1883 heading
March 1883 heading
Thur. 1
(varie) d
singular
medium
majority

I am going to have my seat changed.

March 1883 heading
Sun. 4
Thursday
I came to New Haven from Mt Carmel on the 1 o'clock. I've been mopeing around all day. I saw Willie (Robus) and Dan DriscoU. I spent the evening in the Depot with both of them. I felt real happy till I was parting Dan. We had a spat and I'm sad as (ripped bottom of page)

[Something about a person named Katie M] I wish I could die tonight

March 1883 heading
Mon. 5
Friday
Money Island
I came down after my (sic). H took me over. Mrs Killam is in Hartford, (sic) I went to Mt Carmel. Horace and Mr K and I are all alone in the club room and I just wrote a letter to Dan. I feel so unhappy after last night I wish I was dead now. I'm writing to the last time to Dan from Money I. I'm going to leave tomorrow forever. I feel bad to have to and this is my last Diary on the Island.

March 1883 heading
Tues. 13
Bring to me
(nor)
Spelling: nou
KatyD.
She made a (commansion)
She was aware of it
Plentiful
She mad a comparision
Do you see it wholly She is grateful to him. She will (inherit) it She laughed heartily.

March 1883 heading
Sat 17 [Spelling) Katy D. Nov. 25

March and April 1883 heading
Sat. 31
Weather Snowing
I went down town this afternoon and bought me some gloves 55 cent and this Diary in the New York St I was up to Mary (Amac) (McWeeny). She was down town so I then went to St Johns Church to confession. I seen Nellie Mahon. Mary Misic is making biscuit and I'm eating them. But she's mad at me. I posted a letter to Uncle Andrew this afternoon. I seen Mary Paterson in Malleys. Was talking to Mrs Leddy on the stage.

Mary McKeon- April 1883 headings
March" and April 1883 heading
Sun. 1
Snow on the ground
I went to half past 10 church this morning. I fooled Charley Peterson before I went
We had breakfast at 8 o clock. Seen P McM on the next seat to me. Seen Pat Lyons
outside Church. Seen P.McM at the corner of Oak St again. Mary McLaughlin called
in the afternoon. Her & I went to Goff St I went to Mary A. McWeeney. In the
Evening I went to Mary Reynolds. Keatie Mc... (sic bottom of page)

April 1883 heading
Mon. 2
Weather nice and pleasant
This is Monday. Mary is washing and I'm in the kitchen today. I got a letter from
Mount Carmel containing two others for me. 1 from Mary Shanly 1 from Father &
one from Aunt L. I cried when I read Father's letter. I felt real lonely on account of
he saying he felt so miserable. Maggie Shanly has a new Garnet Silk dress. I'm mad
when I haven't one too.
Mary McKeon

April 1883 heading Tues. 3
Weather pleasant
I came downstairs this morning at 10 minutes past 6. Had breakfast at 7. Mary is ironing
today. I'm downstairs and I feel real lonely thinking of home. I went to Olmsteads Drug
Store on Broadway to buy Salts, (sic sentence) & oranges for Mary. I took (sic) Now I
felt real sick this afternoon. This evening Mrs. Alsbom Virginia & John is going to a
Ball. We had 1 (sic, ripped bottom of page) 6 this morning, [written over the entry in ink]
Johnny Mahon called this Evening

April 1883 heading
Wed. 4
Weather pleasant
I'm working upstairs today and feels good: In the afternoon Lizzie (G...) and Mary
Mooney called & stayed till 6 o. I went to Mary McLaughlin's this Evening. She had
company then I went to Mrs Booley's. Mary Reynolds came & so did (Mike)
Duignan. Stayed til 10 o clock. I bought an album this AM at & I'm sorry too.
Another day past and gone.
Mary McKeon.
April 1883 heading Thurs. 5 Weather pleasant
I expected Kelly the AM to come today, but he didn't Mary McLaughlin called this Evening with the D. H. I went to George St with her at 10 o'clock. Mary is makeing her dress and I'm writing poetry out of J (sic) book. I went upstairs at 15 minutes past 10. Had to go to bed in the dark.

April 1883 heading
Fri.6
Weather pleasant
I got down stairs this morning at 5 minutes to 6. I had the fire made when Mary came down and I feel very tired today. I had to sweep my dining room and clean the upstairs silver. Mrs (Ives) and Mary is here for (supper). Ed Largent & Willie Skinner called to see Virginia this Eve. I'm writing some peices of Byrons this Evening & Mary is makeing her dress. She went to bed before me this night Good bye.

April 1883 heading
Sat 7
Weather raining all day
I feel real good all day and we have company still. I cleaned silver this fore-noon. The table was brought home this noon by Charley and James McNamara. After dinner I washed dished. Mary baked. The coffee boy came. So did Kelly. About the (sic) I was up stairs and didn't see him. Mary & I went down Chapel St. I was in (sic) & got corsets 65/22. I seen Walter (Halley), EUie Bohman, Maggie Lyons, Mary (Muldoon), Maggie McCarter, Tom Rellis.

April 1883 heading
Sun. 8
Weather sunshine
I came downstairs at 10 min past 7. Had breakfast at 8. I went to halfpast 10 Church St Johns. I was 15 min late. I was speaking to Ellie Bohan, Keatie McN, & Annie Dorsey & Annie McGuire was home with me. I seen P.McM at (sic) St. The 3 (sic) was to dinner. After dinner I went to Mary McLaughlin's and stayed till 5 o clock. Then Mary Reynolds & I went to the Jerman Church on George St I then went to Park then the Corner of York and Grove to see Keat Bohan. At night I went to Cousin Tommie's on Star St I went astray out on Ashmond St but got all right

April 1883 heading
Mon.9
Weather sunshine
This is Monday and I feel so tired & sleepy that I don't know what to do. After coming from Star St I left my cousins at halfpast 5 & got home at 5 minutes of 6. Breakfast at 7. Charly Peterson & John had a fight and Charley left this forenoon. There is men comeing for the situation all day. I'm tired waiting at the door. Mary Mooney & Mrs Ward called to see about a place on High St But Mary is going with Mrs Ives to Savin Rock tomorrow noon.
April 1883 heading Tues. 10
Weather sunshine
I came down st at half past 6 this mo. We had the Ives to breakfast & dinner & Mary Mooney. She came at 11 o clock and went to Savin Rock at 2 to live with Mrs Ives. The (Album) man came this fore-noon & I settled with him. I gave him 4 (sic) He said he was going to come with his picture. The little fellows played on the Harp & fiddle this morning. There is no Coach Men comeing here all day. Get! Out! GIT! John 0', Charly is gone & Mary is makeing rickrack. I'm laughing at the wooden dish. Mary McKeon

April 1883 heading Wed. 11
Weather raining
I came down stairs at half past 5 before Mary. We weren't speaking to other as usual. This is my sweeping day on the 2nd floor. I ironed my own things and napkins. In the afternoon Mary McLaughlin called. In the evening I stayed till 9. Mary Misic broke the Gas top tonight John 0' & her had a spat over it She went out & I got a man to fix it. (sic) We had plenty of (sic) (Mother) is sick tonight & I'm (sad).

April 1883 heading Thurs. 12
Weather raining today
I stayed up last night till halfpast 11 writing (Lady) (Byrons) farewell. I didn't wake up this morning till the 7 o clock whistle woke me up & John called me. I got down in a hurry. Then we had breakfast at halfpast 7. Mrs Osborn was sick this morning and didn't come to breakfast Father came home this noon & is sick. I had to go twice to the drugstore for (yeast) & milk. I wore Mary's hat I swept my own room. Father & the (sic) family.

April 1883 heading Fri. 13
Weather sunshine
I came down stairs at 6 o clock this morning. I swept the walk & brought water from the barn before breakfast We had it at halfpast 6. I then cleaned my silver down stairs in the afternoon and upstairs in the forenoon. Cousin Bridget McC called at 3 and stayed till near 6. In the evening I was makeing rickrack & lieing on the floor. The fellow with the light moustache came to see Virginia. I'm writing upstairs. Good Bye.

April 1883 heading Sat 14
Weather sunshine
I got down stairs at 6 this morn. I had breakfast at 7 after that I done my chamber work & washed finger marks, swept my dining room, blackened my stove & got Annie at 1. In the Afternoon Mrs Osborn & Virginia went out So did I & Mary waited
on the door. I went to Church St Johns. I was with (Dorter). I meet Keatie McGovern was home with her & called on Ellie Farrel. We had a very pleasant time. I then went to Malleys. Seen Maggie McCartin & Mary Callagher & (Hannah), [written over entry: Mrs. (Morgan) called]

April 1883 heading
Sun. 15
Weather pleasant
I came down this morning at 6. Mary didn't come & Mrs Osborn and I got breakfast. She made the (sic) and I done the rest of the work. I went to church at 10. I wore Mary's hat I seen P.M Girls I was talking to Keatie McWeeney & the Dorsey girls. I receieved Holy Com. I went to B. Murreys. I seen Mary Reynolds. We then went to Elm St I met B. Duignan & B. (sic). We went to Micheal McGovern's. Mrs. Bouley & Keatie McWeeney's.

Mary McKeon

April 1883 heading Tues. 17
I got up at 6 this morning. Mary is finishing her wash. Henry put up the line. The cross eyed fellow with (sic) Father went to Middletown. Maggie Kelly called this forenoon, (sic) was going to be (sic) she's sick. Mary is sick & I'm sick. We seen a Free Mason Funeral on Elm St When mother & Virginia was out Henry William talked of love this morning. Mary McKeon (sic)

April 1883 heading Wed. 18
Weather pleasant
I woke up at 530. Called Mary up, came down to fold my clothes, swept my walk, wrote some before breakfast I'm down all day to help Mary iron. The family are down town. The cross eyed fellow came. Mary is mad at the cats and at me too. She threw the little kitty at me & (killed it). The funeral will be tomorrow. She threw my kid shoe at the old cat I laughed plenty, she eat in the kitchen & I'm in the dining room. The Band is playing on the Green. Its 8:40.

April 1883 heading Thurs. 19 Weather pleasant
Mary or I isn't speaking to other yet I swept this forenoon & cleaned silver and washed mirrors in the after'. The little white man with large nostrils is (hostler) yet Lizzie (sic) called this after' & stayed till 6. B. Duignan came this evening & at 8 o clock we went to
Mrs Cummin's on Goff St Then we met B. (fellow) at Broadway where the band played. I met A.L. Currier. Got home 10 minutes of 10.

April 1883 heading
Fri.20
Weather sunshine
I feel good today & I am cleaning (silver) sweeping & mad at Mary. Rob is home & Virginia is gone to New york. Mary's mother came. They're both gone out, Johny Mahon called, spoke of the play. Stayed till half past 9. I was makeing rick rack. I stayed up reading till 11 o clock in my own room.

April 1883 heading
Sat 21
Weather sunshine
I came down stairs at 15 min past 6. I cleaned silver on the 3rd floor & washed, paint this forenoon, washed the window in front too. The chicken is dieing. Father and mother were administering to it. Mrs Newball is giveing (sic) to the man raked the garden if he earns it I was speaking to him. Mary & I are getting to be on good terms again. Its 11 o clock.

April 1883 heading Sun. 22
Weather pleasant
I came down at 7. Went to half past o clock Church to the Sacred Heart I met Lizzie Quinn. We came down to Chapel St I went to Elm St in this afternoon to B. Duignan's. We had ice cream & oranges. B. Gannon & I. Mary & the colored girl. In the evening I went to Mary Reynolds'. Francis Bohan was there. I got home at 9:40. We had a good time. It rained very hard all the evening.

April 1883 heading Mon. 23
This is Mary's wash day again. I'm downstairs today. But its raining & we can't hang out the clothes. So that we have a good time. Mary got up at 30 min past (sic). I came down at 6. The crosseyed fellow came. Mrs. Obsborn was downstairs. Henry was in too. I was to the market this afternoon for eggs. Mary McLaughlin came this evening. The fellow at the gate said he came home with me last night [written over entry: The woman didn't know she was married]

April 1883 heading Tues. 24 Weather cloudy
I called Mary this morning & went to bed again till 6. Then I came down stairs, & wore my wine colour dress. I swept the walk in front & back, was talking to the fellow I don't know. I seen Nellie Kelly pass. Aunt Lizzie & (Anna) Marie came as we were eating our dinner. I felt real glad, they stayed a long time. Mrs. (sic) has a baby. Virginia is gone to come home. I had to wait on the door 4 times tonight. I'm going to bed at 10:30. Its raining.
April 1883 heading
Wed. 25
I got down stairs at half past 5. Mary is sick & I'm going to help her iron today. The
crosseyed fellow came & the fox. Henry sat about 2 hours today again telling of the
Southern war. They went out this afternoon & the piano was brought home. I had to
wait on the door about 5 (or 50) times today. I was talking to my street (mash) this
morning. I got paid & was going down town. But my teeth eke'd.

April 1883 heading
Thurs. 26
Weather pleasant
I came down stairs at half past 5 this morning, folded the clothes & swept on the first
floor. B. Duignan called this afternoon. I gave her 2 $. I went out this evening & met
Mary O Hara on York St We went to Mary Reynolds' & then to Mary McLaughlin's. But
didn't find here home. We then went to hear the Band play Malleys. Then we called on
Maggie Judge. We came past Pecks Opera. Mary was late to go home, so she came with
me. We got home 10 min past 10 pm. [written over entry: Johnny Mahon called when I
was gone]

April 1883 heading
Fri. 27
Weather it rained some (sic)
Its real pleasant today & I'm sweeping in the forenoon, cleaned the up stairs silver in
the afternoon. Mrs. Morgan came this evening to see Mary. Mary O Hara called on
me. She made some nice presents, namely work basket hair (sic) & hair brush & a
bottle of stuff to kill (corns). She stayed till 9:30. Mary Misic and her mother are out
I'm all alone now makeing rick rack.
Mary McKeon Tooman

April 1883 heading
Sat 28
Weather raining in the afternoon
I came down to the kitchen at half past 6 this morning. Breakfasted at 7. I seen the
fellow I don't know. I cleaned my dining room silver this morning & washed paint
In the afternoon Mary and I went to Mary McLaughlin's & stayed a while. Then we
went to the German Church, went down town. I met (sic) McGuire on Chapel St Her
& I went to do some shopping. Mary Misic went home, we were in the new store. I
bought some toys. Got home at 6.

April 1883 heading
Sun. 29
Weather raining & snowing
I came down stairs at 7, breakfasted at 8. Mary & I went to half past 10 o clock
church to St Mary's. It rained all the morn but was pleasant in the afternoon. I went
to B. Duignan's. Her and B. Gannon and I went to (sic) St, from there to (sic) We
were in my cousins'. I got to B. Duignan at 5 o clock. I was down stairs with B.
Gannon. In the evening they came to my house. B. fellow too. [written over entry: B. Gannon and I went to Mary Reynolds', (sic) Johny was there (sic) Keatie (sic)]

April and May 1883 heading
Mon. 30
Weather sunshine
I came down stairs 30 minutes of 6 this morning. Mary called me at 5, she had the fire made when I got up. I swept the walk and seen the red man with white whiskers pass. The colored fellow came in downstairs. Perkins is here & Henry Reed's gone till Saturday. Mary washed today, I hung out some of the clothes. Mother went out to ride. It's a lovely day and I'm just thinking of home and this day 3 years I was nearly landed in America.

May 1883 headings

April and May 1883 heading
Tues. 1
Weather is pleasant
I came down stairs this morning at 6. Had breakfast at 7. I'm helping Mary iron today & Mrs Obsborn & Virginia is gone out riding. There is a man digging in the garden. This afternoon I was to the drug store, received a letter from Johny Mahon. Mary & I had good fun with Perkins. Aunt Keat is here to tea. We had poached eggs & cold lamb. I feel real mean. I didn't get my dishes done till 9 o clock. Mary

May 1883 heading
Wed. 2
Weather pleasant
Its nearly 2 weeks since I wrote my Diary and forget all I done those days. [sic] over the Blooming (sic)
(sic) the downing sun
first (pups) on the mink
of (me) love and think
that I (sic) for by and (sic)

May 1883 heading
Thur.3
Weather sunshine
I seen Nellie Kelly today & she came to see me this evening. I went to John 80010/5 this evening. I wore my wine coloured dress and my hair down on my shoulder. I was in Mrs McWeene/s till 10 & then I went in to the dance. I had a lovely time, thought I felt real lonesome too. Mary R (ill sentence) Anne Bohan Maggie Lyons & Mary Muldoon & the 2 Keatie McNeeney were there too. [written over the entry: Mary Reynolds and I stayed all night I didn't dance any (sic) was tight We went home at 6 o clock]
May 1883 heading
Fri. 4
Weather sunshine
I got home from Mary Ann McWeene's at 10 min past 6. Mary Reynolds & I went down to Oak'St, then she left me at York St. I didn't sleep any last night & I'm nearly dead. Mary went out this afternoon & the crosseyed fellow came with flowers & I was (pluking) on the tubs. There all out, the bell run 4 times & I'm tired to death. I slept some & Mary got supper for me. Mary McKeon

May 1883 heading
Sat. 5
Weather its pleasant
We had breakfast at 7 & then I done my chamber work & washed 2 windows in Father's room. Mother has on her (bossing) cape & out with Perkins. I washed paint & swept my room & Mary. I had all the afternoon to myself. Mary's out in the afternoon & evening. I wanted to go to Star Street, but couldn't go as Mother was out. I feel greatly disappointed.

Mary McKeon

May 1883 heading
Sun. 6
Weather pleasant
I came down stairs at 7 & then I done my chamber work & washed 2 windows in Father's room. Mother has on her (bossing) cape & out with Perkins. I washed paint & swept my room & Mary. I had all the afternoon to myself. Mary's out in the afternoon & evening. I wanted to go to Star Street, but couldn't go as Mother was out. I feel greatly disappointed.

Mary McKeon

May 1883 heading
Mon. 7
Its real pleasant today & we're going to wash. Mrs Obsborn the Baby & Mary West is here to dinner & supper. We had a good time today & had nothing to eat for dinner. I'm hungry & Mary is starved too. Mrs Osborn came to supper. They are going to stay till Saturday. The Nurse girl & I talked of Derry Den in Scotland all night.

May 1883 heading
Tues. 8
Weather pleasant
Mrs. Nad Osborn, the baby, and Mary West are here from Olive St. Our Mrs Osborn and Mary had a fuss this morning about the dishes & ironing. Mary was going to leave, but didn't I didn't write this til Sunday the 20th.

May 1883 heading
Wed. 9
Weather sunshine
I feel real good today and Mary West and I have a good time. She's washing down
stairs. She came down to the kitchen in the evening after 9, & Keatie McGovern came in for a while. So did Maggie Judge. I didn't get my dished washed till (sic) 9 o'clock.

May 1883 heading
Thur. 10
Weather fair all day
Almira came to clean up stairs today. Her and Mary West, Mary Mursic & Mary McKeon, that's myself, had dinner together. Mrs Osborn & Husband went to the (sic) tonight & I took my sewing up to the spare chamber where Mary was. We didn't go to bed till near 12 o clock & we talked till (sic). Mary was telling of Derry den & St (Jones) & the (sic) eyes hanging.

May 1883 heading
Fri. 11
Weather raining
I didn't get up till 6:30 and Mary came down after me. I was over to Keatie McGovers & so was Lizzie Hanly & B. (Bohan). Johnny Bohan & (Murphy) and Lizzie's fellow. I didn't stay long.

May 1883 heading
Sat. 12
Weather is pleasant
I feel real lonesome today as Mary West is going. The Baby and all are going to (sic) on Olive St They went this noon. Virginia went with them. Virginia had company to tea, & we had lobster salad & great (sic). This evening I went to my cousins' on Star St. Tommie was in bed & the rest were out. I didn't go till 2 o.

May 1883 heading
Sun. 13
Weather is pleasant
I stayed in Tommie McGuire's all night & he called me this morning at 6 but I didn't get till near 7. He was going to early Church. I got home at 7:30. There wasn't anyone up yet so I went in the dining room window & rung the bell. I was at St. Johns Church in the afternoon. I was to Keatie's her and I went to Congress Avenue with (sic) Hanly. We met Tom (Kelligher) Was to Mrs Booty's & All Currier's (sic)

May 1883 heading
Mon. 14
Weather pleasant
Almira came to clean today & I have the teeth eke all morning. I feel real mean all day. MaryMcKeon

Tooman Cash
B. Duignan called with CD
May 1883 heading
Tues. 15
Weather is pleasant
Mary is ironing all day and I done my napkins & handkerchiefs and swept some up.

May 1883 heading
Wed. 16
Weather pleasant
Mrs. (Lane) is housecleaning today & Keatie McGovern called this evening. She was going to Commerce St. (sic) The Green Horns came Wednesday. [They're] going to have a dance Saturday in Dan Flynn's 300 Devonport Avenue. I'm not going. Mary McKeon

May 1883 heading
Thur. 17
Weather is pleasant
Mrs. Lane came to house clean today & (Johyles) is putting down the stair carpet. Mary & I went up to Chapel St to see the 4 [ill] parade, but it went down Elm St. I met Frank (sic) Mrs. Morgan & the children came & Mary West to the circus. I went in the evening. I was with Keatie McGovern & Murphy. I seen John Mahon & Keatie Cox, Mary Anne (sic) [written over entry: Tom Kelligher called and Alice (sic)]

May 1883 heading
Fri. 18
Weather sunshine
I slept with Keatie McGovern last night & got up at 5:30. I feel real tired & sleepy. When I came home Mary wasn't up but Mrs. Osborn was. There wasn't anything said. I cleaned silver & swept. In the forenoon Maggie Judge called and posted a letter to Father. Tom Kelligher called this evening & stayed till near 10. I feel real tired all day & long to get to bed.

May 1883 heading
Sat. 19
Weather sunshine
I came down stairs at 6 & swept my walk before breakfast Keatie was haveing hers. I washed paint & cleaned silver. This forenoon, Mrs Osborn and all of them went out. In the afternoon, Maggie Kelly called. I brushed window blinds after she went. Uncle Andrew came in the evening at 7:30 & stayed till half past 8. He had a letter from Uncle Tim.

May 1883 heading
Sun. 20
Weather is pleasant
I came down stairs half past 6. I went to last Mass in St Mary's Church. I was home with Maggie & seen Charly Flynn. In the afternoon I went to B. Duignán's and was in her house when I came from Church too. I got 2 (flowers) from her. I went to
Vespers to St Mary's. We had a meeting down stairs. All the children of Mary B D & B. Gannon. Mary & B. Du's fellow were to my house in the evening, [written over the entry: B. Gannon Mary & I were to Mrs. Boole’s]

May 1883 heading
Mon. 21
Weather rainy
Mary feels sick today and has to wash. The crosseyed fellow came & put me in the tub. Johyles Perkins got his notice to leave Saturday. There was awful thunder and lightning. We had a good time today & Virginia is sick with (neuraligic) Mary McKeon

May 1883 heading
Tues. 22
Weather cloudy
It rained most all day & Mary is (sic) & sick. Virginia had the Doctor. I'm doing the down stairs today. I went to St. Mary's Church. In the evening we had a meeting after Vespers in the Vestry. I brought my vale & Manual. We had a lovely time. Maggie got hers too. Then we went to (sic) but the stores were closed. We met Dick on the corner of Church & Chapel. Going to (sic)

May 1883 heading
Wed. 23
Weather its fair.
I didn't get down stairs till 6:30. I had to fold my clothes & sweep my walk, set my table & bring water before 7. I met the old fellow on the walk. He passed 3 times. I was mad & wouldn't look at him. I went down to (sic) & got the Draft for 4. B. Duignan was with me. I met Mary McWeeney. I called to Keatie McGovern and got (sic)

May 1883 heading
Thur. 24
Weather is fair
I went down stairs at 5:30 and made the fire for Mary. She came down at a quarter past 6. I was sweeping my walk when the fellow past twice. I didn't look at him for I was vexed at him. I was makeing my vale this afternoon. In the evening, Annie Crow, Keatie McWeeney, & Lizzie called. I went over to Monson with them and Keatie McWeeney came back to my house. Keatie McGovern is gone to Prospect St.

May 1883 heading
Fri. 25
Weather is fair
I went down stairs at 6:30 this morning. I made the fire before Mary came down. I was sweeping my walk at half past 6 when the same fellow past twice. I didn't look nor speak to him. I went inside the back gate to shun him. I was to St Mary's Church this evening.
We were all on drill & had lots of fun at it. I was speaking to Maggie Judge & Ellie (sic) & Maggie Quinn.

May 1883 heading
Sat. 26
Weather is fair
Jessie Daniels came this forenoon & Johyles Perkins went this evening. We had plenty of fun today. Mother was all around out doors & Perkins in the house. I had to wait on Jessie in the kitchen. He gave me his card. Mary & I had a (scold) & she went home. I went to bed at 10:30. I slept real good all night. MaryMcKeon

May 1883 heading
Sun. 27
Weather its raining
I woke up before 5 this morning & I got downstairs at 5:30. There didn't anyone get up till 8 o clock. I called Mary 10 minutes of 8 & I made the fire. I got to Church in good time. I forgot to pay for my seat. I seen Maggie J, I went in the afternoon at half past 3 all the children of Mary were there & we all walked through the aisles. We had a lovely time.

Sunday continued
When we got through in the Church, Maggie & I the (Cramer) girl and a few more went to Father McGivney's for our Wreaths, & I met B. (Doran) there & didn't know her but she knew me. I was home with her & I met Keatie McG on Elm St with the two Reynolds girls. I called to B. Duignan & Mary Reynolds' Keatie Gray & her brother came home with me. I was received into the children of Mary this evening at 8 o clock.

Sunday's diary continued
I felt real happy. There was near a hundred received the Badge & medal. I lost my breast pin down stairs & the Society of the Holy (sic) received pink Badges. Most all the girls wore white. I wore my green dress & a white boquet with my wreath & vale. I called to Mary Reynolds & Keatie Gray & her brother came home with me.

May 1883 heading
Wed. 30 (crossed out)
Weather is fair
Monday 28
Almira is cleaning today & Aunt Lizzie called at 2 PM. Mary was washing today. Tuesday I went to church at 7:30. I met (sic) McWeeney & her & I went to Maggie Judge's. Dick Brown was here & went to Troy that night. Bridget was (sic), [written over entry: a fellow followed me to my own gate, (sic)]

May 1883 heading
Thur. 31 (crossed out)
Weather is fair
Wednesday
This is Decoration Day. The paraded on Elm & Chapel St I was both places looking at them. I seen Tommie McGuire Jr & Keatie Carrol.
Thursday fair
I'm house cleaning in my own room today. Mary McWeeney called at 5 PM. This is my last day of May. I didn't go to Church this evening.

June and July 1883 headings
June 1883 heading
Fri. 1
Weather is fair & sunshine
I came down stairs at 15 min of 6 this morning. Rob is home on his vacation. I swept today & cleaned silver down stairs. We had cream on strawberries for supper. John & Selden are going sailing with Virginia. I'm writing this Saturday morning downstairs while Mary is getting breakfast. Mary McKeon

June 1883 heading
Sat 2
Weather sunshine
I feel real good this morning and swept in my drawing room & clean'd silver. Bridget McGuire called this afternoon & stayed till 5:30. To supper we had (Jimmings) (sic) and Hattie Phelps. We had strawberries & cream coconut (sic) chocolate & biscuit, lobster salad & coffee for supper. We had a lovely time, for once.

June 1883 heading
Sun. 3
Weather is cloudy
I woke up at 6 this morning & called Mary. She go up & I went to bed again till 7.1 wasto St John's Church & seen P. McMahon & Mary Anne Bohan Or), Johny Bohan & Ketie Mc a Vey in the afternoon I went to Mrs. Reynolds' to see B. Doran. I called to Mry McLaughlin's, she was out. I was to Mrs. 60010/5 & (Terry) Reynolds. John Bown's Micheal McGovers & Mrs. Reynolds again. B. was in. We had a nice time with B.upstairs & Mrs. Reynolds gave us P.B. Keatie Gray & I went astray this evening. We were on the green hearing the salvation army & followed them to Union St. We had a lovely time only we went astray coming home. We went past the Depot to Silver St. & White (sic) but got home before 10 after. I left Keatie at George St. Hannah Donahoe came.

June 1883 heading
Tues. 5
Weather its raining
I was to Olmsteads for a 25 cent bottle of Jamacia ginger. I called to Mr. Pierpoints to see Abbie Sullivan & her sister (sic) I went to the Engine house on Park & Elm Sts to see the horses come out at 9 o clock. They came to my house then.

Last Monday
Abbie Sullivan called, so did B. Duignan. Abbie spent the evening with me. Mary is out Good night

June 1883 heading
Wed. 6
Weather it rained some
I swept this morning & Mrs. Nad Osborn the Baby & Mary West came to spend the day. Rob is home on vacation. I had to work real hard this forenoon & had 10 to wait on for dinner. We had 6 courses; the last was strawberries & ice cream. Mary West & I had a good time. I was to Keatie Gray's & Mary Reynolds', Micheal McGovern & Mary McLaughlin's in the evening. She was with me, I got her picture & Katy Gray's picture cards.

June 1883 heading
Thur. 7
Weather is pleasant
I was to Mary Reynolds' & Mary McLaughlin was with me this evening. Mary was alone, we went to Micheal McGovern's to see Hannah D, but she wasn't in. Then we called on Katy Gray, she gone and her picture & cards. We had a real nice time. I was to Mary McLaughlin's when I was coming home & she gave me her picture. I got home at 10 PM. Good bye.

June 1883 heading
Tues. 12
Weather pleasant
May the 12* 185
Tonight, D,D, came up and I promised to be true. I feel real happy now in my own room drinking a pitcher of tea and eating some cake as Maggie is asleep. I have it all to my self but wishes I had some body else here. It is now 15 minutes of 11 and I have to retire for the night to dream of my own dear D. Now I know I'll love Dan forever and he may go back on me, then I shall die. Mary Aren't I silly

June 1883 heading
Thur. 14
Maythel2*186
I'm very unhappy tonight as I've been thinking of this time a year ago. Dan was to see me now he has another girl and doesn't care for me any more but I like him best of all I'm wishing I could cease to think of him. Tommie Hadden was here and brought me a bouquet of roses. He left at 11 and Mr. Laden & Mr. Kelly went at half past 11. If's just 12 PM now and Mary is sleeping while I'm writing this. Tommie has given me a ring now. I hope one year from now that I'll be happier than I am tonight.

June 1883 heading [crossed out, 1891]
Received of John McKeon
$10 = 0
7 = 0
5 = 0
2 = 0

August and September 1883 headings

August 1883 heading
Mon. 6
Weather is pleasant
I feel good this morning thank God, & got through with all my work this forenoon so that I helped Lizzie wait at noon & night. Josie went home and Bradly took her over in August 1883 heading
Tues. 7
Weather is real hot
I am real tire this morning. Lizzie & I got up at 6 o clock & Annie Keatie and the other two Bridgets got down after us. Josie is gone to Southington & Jim went to New haven. I'm waiting all day & flirting with Samual McCarthy & the paper of R\ Josie (sic) & I were on the (Mermaid) all evening playing cards. I had a lovely time. [written over entry: Bradly was over this afternoon]

August 1883 heading
Wed. 8
Alfred Herrman Better to have loved
August 1883 heading Wed. 22 Katy Driscoll

September 1883 heading
Fri. 7

Dec. 25 1901 Ch
Doll 74 0
Piano 19
Pictures

September 1883 heading
Sat. 15
Katy Driscoll
Stop, stop, pretty Water,
Said Mary one Day
To a frolicsome book
That was running Away
24=0
23=0
Baby born 15 minutes of 12
Sunday 21 Receive of T
H Lahey $15=0

June 1883 heading
Thur. 21
Andrew McKeon $10=0
Maggie Rielly 5 0
Annie Ring 20 0
Mrs. Farrel 4 0
Mrs. Maloney 13 64

52

June 1883 heading (crossed out, 1891)
Received of P Cullens
$3=0
3=0
5=0

July 1883 heading
Mon. 30
Weather is pleasant
Annie Kensey & I was down stairs together. We had a good time but I felt a kind of lonesome all morning.

You run on so Fast
I wish you would stay

December 1883 headings

Tues. 25 (crossed out)
1882
Mrs John Booley No 13
Palmer St New Haven

Mr Pat McKeon No
18 Oak St NH

Mr. John Bohan No 300
Devon (sic)
& Mr Francis Bohan
New Haven

December 1883 heading
Wed. 26 memoranda
Mrs William Henebry
19 Railroad Hill
Waterbury Conn
William Burne Canal St
East Waterbury Conn
Never had a better time than I had Sunday night the 10 with JL in BH

St Patricks Church & Church of the Immaculate Conception I was there East Bank St
Sept the 10/82
December 1883 heading
Thurs. 27
John Sullivan 19 Railroad Hill
Waterbury Conn
I was to Oxford the week before Ansonia Derby Birmingham Huntington
Howstone River & Dam
South Ford Station to the New Depot
Crossed the Naugatuck River Bridge
Brooklyn St & Bank St
1882 Waterbury

December 1883 heading (crossed out, Memoranda)
Fri. 258
Will Brandt-U.S.C.S. (Scha)

"Break, break, break
at the foot of thy crags
0,sea!
But the tender grace of a
Day that is dead
Will never come back to me."

"And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill
But 0 for the touch of vanished Hand
And the sound of a voice that is still.

Mary McKeon January the 14 186

Pearlie E. Rogers
Box 128 Mistie Bridge
(Conn)

Memoranda January 14 186
Thomas H Russell MD
137 Elm St New Haven Conn
Miss Mary Lane  
437 Orchard St New Haven Conn  
Miss Delia & Mary Dorsey  
199 Wallace St New Haven Conn  

Miss Louisa Lundquist  
DeKalt Cir  
Brooklyn NY Care Mrs Ostergreen  

Frank H Gauchet  
Leetes Island  
Conn  

Memoranda January the 17 of 1886  

Mary Jane Woods  
Box 225  
Brandford  

Winfield F Bradley  
Stoney Creek Conn  

Philip Sculley Care of  
J.M. (Favill) No 1  
State St N.Y. City  

Capt, James McGowan  
Mystic Bridge  
Box 142  

Capt Robert Spencer  
(Schr) Annie G Basset  
Guilford Conn  
& All, Spencer  

(sic) Bridgeport  
(Cammie) McCarthy  
(Sts) Johns River  
Florida  
Care of Captain  
Emmory Steamer  
Mermaid  

Robert McLean  
Amaugh bradiean  
Co Leitrim
Ireland

Charly Early
(Amaughostiney)

Pat McMahon
18 Oak St New Haven

Patrick McGovern
Johny Hyle
Mount Carmel Conn

Georgie
Johny Carrol
DickG
Dick (sic)

Mary McKeon
Wrote this the
Last night of December
1883 at 12 PM

It's the last I'll write this year
Perhaps the last for-ever

January the 30 1886
Conversation is stimulating and reproductive, the first ingredient in conversation is truth, the next good sense, the third good Humour, and the fourth Wit.

Accordion- a small keyed wind instrument whose tones are generated by the play of wind on metallic reeds.

I was in N. Haven March 1882. St Patrick's Day
Had a good time at Pecks Opera with Pat Mahon & Keatie McWeeney Mag Judge & Maria Donahue
The 18th had 3 teeth pulled. I took ether though I suffered dreadful with there. Mag Judge was with me. It was Dentist Hall on Meadow St that pulled them.

(Catememia) February 1886
Feb the 19
May the 19th 1882
May- 31
June-21
July-20
August 12
Sept 4
Oct 3  
Oct 27  
Nov 23 1882  
And every M after that till this time its now January 30, 1886

(sic sentence)

Commenced to  
Work in (sic)  
Smythes on the 11th of May 1881  
133 Dollars from May till Nov the 23 1882  
I left in December  
An account of letters and names of persons I sent them to from April the 3th 1882 til July

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of person</th>
<th>Postage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aunt Katie</td>
<td>10 cents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Shanly</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary McLaughlin</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary _______</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane Anne Cull</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Shanly</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.S.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papa May the 19th</td>
<td>5 cents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary McLaughlin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. (Parey)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Carey</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papa May 27th</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Carey</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Albert Currie</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papa</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Shanly</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bessie Bohan W Haven</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aunt Katie</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Shanly</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Carey</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Shanly-1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle (Andrew)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(bottom of page ripped)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continued postage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Reynolds</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Shanly</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katie McWeeney</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aunt Katie</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Carey</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
P.F. McGuire 3
Mary Shanly 3
Papa 5
Aunt Katie 5
(bottom of page ripped)

(last page and back cover)
Mary McKeon Tooman
Cashcarrigan
Co Leitrim
Ireland
(Connacht) in the West
Mary McKeon Tooman
Cashcarrigan
Co Leitrim Ireland
# Appendix B: Census and Death Records of Mary McKeon Driscoll and Family

### 1920 United States Federal Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Birth Year</th>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>Home in 1920</th>
<th>Street</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Immigration Year</th>
<th>Relation to Head of House</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Spouse’s Name</th>
<th>Father’s Birthplace</th>
<th>Mother’s Birthplace</th>
<th>Native Tongue</th>
<th>Able to Speak English</th>
<th>Naturalization Status</th>
<th>Able to read</th>
<th>Able to Write</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary E Driscoll</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>abt 1867</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Branford, New Haven, Connecticut</td>
<td>maple street</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1881</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Daniel S Driscoll</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Naturalized</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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**Household Members:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daniel S Driscoll</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary E Driscoll</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel S Driscoll</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph H Driscoll</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catherine Driscoll</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank Driscoll</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nora Driscoll</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward Driscoll</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane Driscoll</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornelius Driscoll</td>
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</table>

**Source Citation:** Year: 1920; Census Place: Branford, New Haven, Connecticut; Roll: T626-188; Page: 544; Enumeration District: 4977; Image: 989

**Source Information:**


Note: Enumeration Districts 819-829 are on roll 323 (Chicago City).

**Description:**

This database is an index to individuals enumerated in the 1920 United States Federal Census, the Fourteenth Census of the United States. It includes all states and territories, as well as Military and Naval Forces, the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, and the Panama Canal Zone. The census provides many details about individuals and families including: name, gender, age, birthplace, year of immigration, mother tongue, and parents' birthplaces. In addition, the names of those listed on the population schedule are linked to actual images of the 1920 Federal Census.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Mary Driscoll</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Birth Year</td>
<td>abt 1867</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>White</td>
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<tr>
<td>Birthplace</td>
<td>Irish Free State</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>Widowed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relation to Head of House</td>
<td>Head</td>
</tr>
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<td>Home in 1940:</td>
<td>Branford, New Haven, Connecticut</td>
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<tr>
<td>Street</td>
<td>Driscoll Road</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farm</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inferred Residence in 1935:</td>
<td>Branford, New Haven, Connecticut</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residence in 1935:</td>
<td>Same House</td>
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<td>Naturalized</td>
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<td>Sheet Number</td>
<td>7B</td>
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<td>Number of Household in Order of Visitation</td>
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<td>House Owned or Rented</td>
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<td>Value of Home or Monthly Rental if Rented</td>
<td>4000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attended School or College</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Highest Grade Completed</td>
<td>Elementary school, 8th grade</td>
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<td>Weeks Worked in 1939:</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Other Sources</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Household Members:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Driscoll</td>
<td>73</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daniel Driscoll</td>
<td>46</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nora Driscoll</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doward Driscoll</td>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hana Driscoll</td>
<td>45</td>
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<td>Tryasa Edele</td>
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Source Citation: Year: 1940; Census Place: Branford, New Haven, Connecticut; Roll: T627_544; Page: 7B; Enumeration District: 5-25


Description: The 1940 United States Federal Census is the largest census released to date and the most recent census available for public access. The census gives us a glimpse into the lives of Americans in 1940, with details about a household's occupants that include birthplaces, occupations, education, citizenship, and income.

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Death Record for Daniel Driscoll (Mary’s Husband)
Death Record of Mary (McKeon) Driscoll. Source: Connecticut State Library Death Record Index.
Appendix C: Research on John Joel Osborn, 1818-1887

John J. Osborn was the owner of the house at 232 York Street in New Haven, Connecticut where Mary McKeon lived and was employed as a domestic servant beginning April 2, 1883. I am unsure when Mary left employment with the Osborns. She does not include that information in her diary. Most of Mary’s diary entries were made during her time there. Although Mary never mentions the address in her diary, she does mention that she works for the Osborns, and through searching records of that period I was able to find the location of their home.

According to these records, John Osborn was a retired carriage manufacturer, married to Charlotte and had five children: Robert G., John J., Frederick A., Virginia, and Selden G. He died at home on June 25, 1887 from unspecified injuries he received on June 10, 1887.

The following information is what I used to find out where the Osborn family lived, and where Mary worked:

1. 1880 U.S. Census Record for 232 York Street, New Haven, Connecticut; showing that the Osborn family lives at this location.
2. Search results from Ancestry.com, with data from the 1880 U.S. Census records.
4. The obituary for John J. Osborn from the New Haven *Evening Register* from June 25, 1887.
Figure C.1. 1880 U.S. Census, listing John J. Osborn and family at 232 York Street, New Haven, Connecticut. Source: Ancestry.com.
Figure C.2. Record of John J. Osborn in the 1880 U.S. Census. Source: Ancestry.com

Figure C.4. Obituary of John J. Osborn. New Haven Evening Record, June 25, 1887.
Appendix D: New Haven Register Article on The American Diary, 1978

This is the transcript of an article from the February 1978 New Haven Register. It was an article by columnist Bill Ryan about the history of Mary McKeon’s diary, along with quotes from Mary’s daughter Mrs. Jane Atwater, and her granddaughter, Mrs. Harry W. O’Neill.

…And America Became Home

With Bill Ryan

Her name was Mary McKeon and when she came to New Haven from Ireland, at age 16, she was frightened, already homesick, but strong-willed and proud.

She might work in other people's houses, but she demanded respect from them. She didn't cross an ocean, huddled in with hundreds of other Irish immigrants but very much alone because no other member of her family was with her, for a lesser life than she had known at home. Coming to America was a way up.

A recent column here on Dr. Christopher Kauffman, who is researching and then writings book on the Knights of Columbus — started in New Haven in 1882 — brought some response from Mrs. Harry W. O'Neill of Hamden.

A diary of her grandmother had been passed along to her, she said, and might give some insight into life in New Haven during the period when the Knights of Columbus was starting. Her grandmother had come to this country in 1883, went to St. Mary's Church where the Rev. Michael J. McGivney had started the Knights of Columbus, and worked as a domestic for a New Haven family at 232 York St.
The diary does give that, an insight.

It is a record of the rather mundane upstairs-downstairs life of a young Irish girl, associating almost exclusively with other young Irish girls working in New Haven homes at the time, attending Mass each Sunday, knitting and embroidering which were approved activities for young women of the time, occasionally having some fun, and almost always being homesick for the land, and her family, she left behind.

Her name was Mary McKeon. She was born in 1867, in the village of Tooman of the town of Cashcarrigan, County Leitrim.

In 1883, she was the eldest of seven children and that year, at 16, she got on a ship bound for the United States, to a place called Hamden, Connecticut because her? Uncle Andrew and Aunt Lizzie were already there and would provide her with a home until she could obtain employment.

She bought a diary when she got here, a miniature notebook, but used it initially for names and addresses? of other Irish domestic girls she met — Mary McWeeney on Grove Street, Maggie Lyons on Dwight Street, Mary Mooney at Savin Rock — and also the family she had left behind. "I have 4 darling brothers and 2 sisters," she wrote. "Good bye all."

On the inside first page of the little book is a handwritten poem—that showed the that [sic] Mary McKeon was fiercely Irish. "Place the thistle on my breast And a shamrock in my hair These are the only emblems I ever again will wear," she wrote.
The diary is like most diaries, made up of little personal things and day-to-day events and was started when she had obtained a "position" with a New Haven family that evidently went in the winter to Money Island in Branford. She wasn't exactly crazy about the island. "I'm homesick and discontented on this old island," she wrote early-on. "I wish I was home or never had been born."

In town it was better. It was a rather dull life — "I got downstairs this morning at 5 minutes to 6. I had the fire made when Mary came down and I had to sweep my dining room and clean the upstairs silver" — but she could get out to Malley's store, see friends at church, even go out at night, although she was always home at 9:30, which she dutifully noted.

Among the Irish domestics, all was not tranquility. There were spats and jealousies. One day's entry: "I came downstairs at half-past 5 before Mary, we weren't speaking to each other as usual. This is my sweeping day on the second floor. I ironed my own things and napkins in the afternoon. Mary McLaughlin called in the evening and stayed till 9. Mary broke the gas tap tonight. John O'L and her had a spat over it. She went out and got a man to fix it up."

There were good times, though, and the domestic help ate well. "Virginia had company to tea," she noted one day, "and we had lobster salad and great varieties."

But always there was the homesickness. "I feel some better today but I'm homesick enough," was an entry one day.

It was alleviated to some extent when one of her brothers, followed eventually by the other three, came to the United States. And Mary McKeon also met an Irishman from
Branford but one whose father had been born in this country. Her diary is replete with mentions of a romance that was off-again and on-again, but which led to marriage in 1889 when she was 22 and never again worked outside the home because it wasn't the custom. When you had a husband, he supported you.

They had nine children, five sons and four daughters. Only two are alive today, both daughters.

One is Mrs. Jane Atwater. She lives in Branford still and was talking the other day about her mother.

"She was a strong-willed woman," she said. "She went back to Ireland three times to visit but always came back. This was her home and she didn't want anyone to forget it. Before she left, she would tell us, 'If anything happens to me there, you make sure they bring me home to be buried.'"

It wasn't necessary. She died here, and was buried here, in 1940. The little Irish girl of 16 in 1883, when she first saw this country, was thoroughly Americanized by then.
... And America Became Home

Her name was Mary McKeon and when she came to New Haven from Ireland, at age 16, she was frightened, already homesick, but strongly-willed and proud.

She might work in other people's houses, but she demanded respect from them. She didn't cross an ocean, huddled in with hundreds of other Irish emigrants but very much alone because no other member of her family was with her, for a lesser life than she had known at home. Coming to America was a way up.

A recent column here on Dr. Christopher Kaufman, who is researching and writing a book on the Knights of Columbus — started in New Haven in 1882 — brought some response from Mr. Harry W. O'Neill of Hamden.

A diary of her grandmother had been passed along to her, she said, and might give some insight into life in New Haven during the period when the Knights of Columbus was starting. Her grandmother had come to this country in 1863, went to St. Mary's Church where the Rev. Michael J. McGivney had started the Knights of Columbus, and worked as a domestic for a New Haven family at 232 York St.

The diary does give that, an insight.

It is a record of the rather mundane upstairs-downstairs life of a young Irish girl, associating almost exclusively with other young Irish girls working in New Haven homes at the time, attending Mass each Sunday, knitting and embroidery which were approved activities for young women of the time, occasionally having some fun, and almost always being homesick for the land, and her family, she left behind.

Her name was Mary McKeon. She was born in 1867, in the village of Tooman of the town of Cashcarrigan, County Leitrim.

In 1883, she was the eldest of seven children and that year, at 16, she got a ship bond for the United States, to a place called Hamden, Connecticut because her uncle Andrew and Aunt Lizzie were already there and would provide her with a home until she could obtain employment.

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