

Dear Crays,

I know it's been a while since I have updated you, but I've spent most of my spare time (about 10-15 hours a week) the last couple of months searching for results.

However the past couple of weeks it really paid off! I'm not going to cover all the details, but I'll try to explain as clearly as possible what I've found.

Since I seemed to have hit a ceiling with John Craigh and Mary Fitzgerald of Brady's Bend, (you remember I found 4 of their kids' baptism records from 1863-1870 and found all of them in the 1880 Census- beyond that absolutely nothing) I decided to "go sideways" and maybe find a brother or sister. This is what I found:

Peter Cray (my great-great grandfather) the youngest of six sons, was born in County Cork in 1791. In 1817 he married Bridget Brown, who was born in County Cork in 1794.

They had 10 children, probably all in County Cork. At least 4 of the children showed up here. James Cray came in 1852 and married Margaret Meehan, the daughter of Patrick Meehan and Ellen (Noonan) Meehan (who were married about 1820 in Fenah Parish of County Limerick). They're not blood relatives of ours, but I just thought I'd throw that info in to show how cool I am for diggin' up all this stuff. Anyway, James was John's brother, so everything above about Pete and Bridget is true for us too.

James and Margaret moved to Pittsburgh for a while, but then back to Brady, and then to the village of Dunbar (Uniontown, Fayette County). They had 6 kids - Peter (died young); Patrick M. (a bookkeeper in Collier Township); James R. (I'll discuss him later); Bridget; Ellen (married Francis P. Doonan in Sept., 1887); and Hanna (died of pneumonia in 1910 at the home of her cousin, Peter Cray of Bellevue). The baptism records in Brady show that all of their names were spelled "Crea". Later, it was reported in an article about James R. that the name was previously spelled "Creagh" in Ireland. After 1860, all records show "Cray" in this family.

Back to James R.. This was Pop's first cousin. He started off as a harness maker and ended up being extremely wealthy. He became a lawyer in the oldest firm in the state. He was president of the following:

Fayette County Bar Association

Union Connellsville Coke Company

Puritan Coke Company

Second National Bank

Uniontown Country Club

Laurel Country Club

Henry Clay Frick Coke Company (this is big time - remember Andrew Carnegie and Henry Clay Frick?)

and

Chairman- Democratic County Committee

Director of several railroads, Waynesburg Bank and a whole bunch of other stuff.

When he died in 1937 they closed the Courthouse and his picture and obituary covered half the front page of the Uniontown Daly News the next day.

These cousins of Pop had kids and grandkids. I've talked to some.

Hopefully, I'll eventually get them all into our family tree. That's as far back as I intend to go right now on the Crays. I'll go farther in a couple of months when I start researching on the other side of "the pond."

Back to John and Bridget's family. I've tracked down just about all of their descendants. They had 7 kids- 2 girls and 5 boys, and I know just about everything about all of them.

1) Catherine (7/5/1863-1/20/1930) the oldest - she never married - no children

2) Michael (12/20/1864-7/14/1935) never married - no children

3) Peter (3/5/1866- 12/3/1937) married Mary Brady - one child, John Peter Cray - Notre Dame graduate - drank himself to death by age 40 - married Mary Louise Toomey and left one 5 year old daughter, Ann Estelle- Ann married Ralph Tito of the Rolling Rock Brewery Family - one of my favorite breweries. She died about 10 years ago, but I talked a couple of times to her husband Ralph, who is about 80 years old. They did have children and I am looking forward to making contact with them. Anyway Peter was the wealthy undertaker from Bellevue. He built the bank and the hospital in Bellevue. The funeral home is still there and has been Miller's Funeral Home since the 1950's. Peter was a big philanthropist in Bellevue. I don't know where all his money went. Ralph said Ann Estelle didn't get it. Maybe he gave it all to the church. If so, at least one Cray got into heaven.

4) Mary (1868-?) married Thomas Mahoney - who died right after having their Four children - they had two boys who died soon after birth and two daughters whom Pop,s sister Mary raised by herself - daughter Mary married Carl Liedke and Margaret (Peg) married Pat Oehmler. They both had nice big families. I talked to Shirlee Liedke Tom's wife and we'll be hearing more from the Liedkes and Oehmlers.

5) John (2/25/1870-5/7/1942) never married - no children

6) Thomas (2/17/1872-4/13/1954) thank God the most prolific of the Crays!
Let's all drink to Pop!

7) James (3/3/1874-3/10/1938) maybe married young - marriage ended quickly - No known children - lived with Catherine, Michael, John, and later Mary in the same house for the rest of their lives

That's about it for the entire Cray family. I want to enter all of the information into a program that will enable us to make big genealogy charts with the entire family on them.

Here's where I need help. I need all of my cousins to collect and send me the following information (let's say in the next month) about all of your kids and grandkids and yours and their spouses:

birth: date and place

marriage: date and place

death: date and place or if living the present place of residence

spouses' full maiden names along with above info

I'll be working on the O'Brien and Fitzgerald families. Please keep me posted on whether you're receiving and able to open my e-mails.

So-long for now,
Bob