The McElhinney Tree of Life
To Mother

In honor of our mother, Maureen McElhinney, whose love, loyalty to family, selfless devotion and legendary stories made us want to know more. For our own children and theirs, may you know the depth and strength of character in your roots so that you grow without limits.

-Kathleen
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Family Tree
Ancestry of
Maureen P. McElhinney

Maureen P. McElhinney
Born 1931

Marion Theresa Kelley
1904 ~ 1991

Andrew James McElhinney
1888 ~ 1956

John McElhinney
1853 ~ 1937

Ellen Reynolds
1858 ~ 1925

Andrew McElhinney
Ann Breslin
About 1818 ~ 1892

William Reynolds
Ann or Nancy Diver

James Lewis Kelley
1867 ~ 1906

Anna Cecelia Mangin
1870 ~ 1951

Michael A. Kelley
1832 ~ 1911

Jane Ann Kellaher
About 1834. Died 1870-74

Thomas Mangin
Born about 1835

Catharine Pardee
1832 ~ 1894

Pardee

Nora
The McElhinney Family
The story of the McElhinney and Kelley ancestors begins in County Donegal in Ireland, where the earliest known family members endured the devastating potato famine of 1845-1851 and bore children in the decade that followed. Difficult conditions eventually led them to seek better opportunities in America. Once they reached the East Coast of the United States, they either liked what they saw or had no further resources to continue their trek westward. They began putting down roots in New York City, where many members of the family have remained for multiple generations.

The first immigrants in the family took whatever work they could find, often as manual laborers. Others in the family would soon seek out education that allowed them to pursue careers in law and medicine. As they settled into the quickly evolving culture of New York City, they likely felt the familiar comforts of home reflected in the traditions of many of their fellow Irish immigrant neighbors.

Though numerous other elements of their lives and travels are yet to be uncovered, several new names, dates, locations, and stories have come together to add to the family's history. And as you will read, more mysteries have popped up, begging to be resolved.
The McElhinney Family Line

Andrew McElhinney and Ann Breslin

Ann Breslin was born about 1818 in Ireland, although it is not yet clear when her husband, Andrew McElhinney, was born. They married and had at least four children in Ireland, and it’s possible that a fifth named Patrick was born in 1856.

The latest information indicates the family may have lived in the parish of Conwal in the County of Donegal in 1858. County Donegal is in northwestern Ireland, bordering the Atlantic Ocean, and is known for its castles, rugged coastline, and mountains. It was also home to many farmers, like much of the rest of Ireland; approximately two-thirds of the residents were involved in agriculture.

An undated list of property owners and renters shows a man listed as “Andrew M’Ilhenny” lived in Whitehill Townland in Conwal Civil Parish, occupying property 4A in the townland. John Chambers leased the land to him, but he was not the outright owner of the property. He was simply the next individual in the leasing chain from Andrew up to the owner, who was not listed in this case. Andrew’s land amounted to a little over 17 acres and was categorized as a small farm. He co-occupied the adjoining Property 4 with James Breslan, as well. Since the surname of Andrew’s wife, Ann, was Breslin, it seems likely that the man called James Breslan was her relative.

The McElhinney children were all born in the decade after the Irish Potato Famine, which started in 1845—a time period that must have been exceedingly difficult for a tenant farmer like Andrew. A disease known as blight ravaged the potato crop, causing sickness and mass starvation on the island. Potatoes were a staple of the Irish diet, so millions of people were impacted as the potato plants turned black and died.

The famine eventually took the lives of one in four Irish residents and forced more than a million men, women, and children to flee the Emerald Isle. Ireland’s population dropped by roughly 25 percent because of the desperate conditions caused by the famine.
Our children swoon before us, but we cannot give them bread.”

—Irish poet Jane Wilde, during the Irish Potato Famine

Many of the poorest Irish families left for Canada in those years, because the crossing to Canada’s eastern provinces cost less than the voyage to America. Many of these travelers eventually continued their trip to the United States when they could gather the funds.

However, thousands of others flocked directly to American shores in search of jobs and the dream of owning land after suffering through high rents in Ireland as tenant farmers. Since most never made it out of the Northeastern cities where they landed, Irish immigrants became a main source of labor in booming factories, as well as on the construction of the first transcontinental railroad in the United States.

Indeed, the McElhinney family settled on the East Coast after their journey to America in about 1871. Andrew died sometime before 1880; that year, Ann and three of her adult children lived in Jersey City, New Jersey. Her sons John and Patrick both worked as laborers, and her daughter Mary lived at home, too.

Life was not easy for these newly arrived families. Competition for jobs among immigrants, housing shortages, and the unstable nature of industrial work contributed to high rates of homelessness and poverty on the East Coast in those years. Tax-supported poorhouses—also known as almshouses or “poor farms”—provided the only option for some families, and most New England towns had at least one. Reports of meager food and conditions were not uncommon.
Despite the loss of the family patriarch, the McElhinney family made it through these trying times together. In 1883, Ann lived just across the Hudson River from Manhattan, at 125 Steuben Street in Jersey City. Her home adjoined other McElhinney households, including those of John, Neil, and Patrick McElhinney, who were listed at the same address or another that was very close—129 Steuben Street. Neil was likely her son Cornelius.

One stark difference from the McElhinneys’ native land was the weather on the East Coast, particularly in the winter. One example was the blizzard that caught Easterners by surprise on 11 March 1888. It began as a rainy spring day, but soon the temperatures plummeted, three to five feet of snow fell, and gale-force winds up to 80 miles per hour created 20- to 30-foot snowdrifts from New Jersey to Vermont, isolating nearly every city. Telegraph, telephone, and electrical lines went down, stranded passenger trains littered railroad tracks, and people remained trapped in their homes or businesses without access to food or heat. More than 400 people died. In the wake of this “Great White Hurricane,” Boston and New York City officials resolved to bury their cables and wires and run trains underground to prevent future disasters.

Ann died in Jersey City on 16 October 1892.
John McElhinney and Ellen Reynolds

John McElhinney was born to Andrew and Ann McElhinney on 18 April 1853 near Rathmullen in County Donegal, Ireland. No documents have been found to detail his baptism, but this is likely due to the fact that a number of Catholic parishes in County Donegal do not have baptismal registers that begin early enough to include his birth year.

John immigrated to the United States with his family in 1871, when he was 18 years old, and became a naturalized citizen in 1876. Like many other immigrants, he found work as a laborer. In 1880, he lived with his mother and two of his siblings (Mary and Patrick) in Jersey City, New Jersey.

Ellen Reynolds was also born in Rathmullen, County Donegal, Ireland, in April 1858. Her parents were William Reynolds and Ann (or Nancy) Diver. Like John, Ellen was a teenager when she immigrated to the United States in the mid-1870s.

John and Ellen married in about 1886. They had at least four children who survived, although Ellen indicated later that she had given birth to 10 children in all. John was working as a janitor at the time his son Andrew was born in 1888.
John lived in Brooklyn, Kings County, New York, in 1900. That year’s census does not list an occupation for John, but his son John Junior was an office boy for a gas company. The McElhinneys would have had many Irish immigrant neighbors, since so many Irish residents had moved to New York City by that time. As early as 1860, the city had 200,000 Irish residents who made up almost 25 percent of the total population. The men quickly filled the most menial jobs in New York’s booming factories, dockyards, and slaughterhouses, while women took on work as domestic servants to the city’s rising middle class.

Some of these neighborhoods quickly gained notoriety for crime, including Manhattan, The Bronx, and Brooklyn. Sprawling tenements, poor sanitation, and disease defined the daily grind. Brothels, pubs, and gambling houses were common. But these areas were also home to honest immigrants striving to make the best of their humble situations. As the decades progressed, generations of people with Irish ancestry rose steadily through the ranks of society, becoming civic workers and politicians.

The McElhinneys would reside in New York City for at least the next three generations, witnessing the many changes that affected the city in that time. Thousands of immigrants were put to work helping to create the New York subway around the turn of the century. At a cost of $40,000 (the equivalent of about $1.1 billion today) the enormous project was completed in five years, and the first Manhattan subway line officially opened during a ceremony at the City Hall station on 27 October 1904. A five-cent ticket allowed passengers to travel any distance along the subway, even though it could take as long as three hours to go from one end of a line to the other. Eventually, New Yorkers embraced the convenience and efficiency of the subway, helping it develop into one of the busiest and most extensive transit systems in the world. Today, the city has more than 450 stations.
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>County</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Town</strong></td>
<td>Borough of Brooklyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Male</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Place of birth of mother</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>English</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Home</strong></td>
<td>Rent</td>
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1900 census record for John McElhinney.
John and Ellen lived at 36 West 129th Street in New York City in 1910. This was just a few blocks east of the Hudson River and several blocks from both Columbia University and The City College of New York. John worked as a watchman at an office building. Ellen was not yet a naturalized citizen then, although she had lived in the U.S. since 1873. Both of their sons had set out on their career paths by that time and were working as stenographers in a law office. Both of John and Ellen’s daughters would become public school teachers, and Anna was already teaching that year.

In 1920, John worked as a watchman at a bank and lived in the Manhattan Assembly District 21. Three of his adult children lived with him and Ellen in an apartment at 626-628 West 139th Street in New York. Nellie was a teacher and both John Junior and Andrew were lawyers.

Just two months before Ellen’s death, her son John married Margaret Brady on 19 May 1925 in Manhattan. Ellen died of lobar pneumonia on 8 July 1925 in Manhattan, although she had also been battling chronic heart trouble. She was 67 years old. The family lived in the apartment on West 139th Street at the time of her death.

Manhattan was booming at that time. New Yorkers crowded into Broadway theaters to watch popular plays. Comedies and operettas headlined electrified marquees, which distinguished the theater district from the rest of the city and earned it the nickname the “Great White Way.” Vaudeville, amusement parks, and the recently minted silver screen ensured that New Yorkers spent their hard-earned dollars on shows and attractions. By 1927, “Showboat,” credited as the world’s first musical, began production.
John continued to live in Manhattan after he retired in October 1927. In 1930, his adult daughter Nellie lived with him and worked as a teacher at a public school.

While John suffered from arteriosclerosis in his later years, it was a cerebral hemorrhage, or stroke, that caused his death on 24 April 1937 in Queens, New York—just six days after his 84th birthday. His funeral Mass was held at the Roman Catholic Church of the Ascension on 55th Avenue in Elmhurst, New York, and he was buried in the Calvary Cemetery.

Andrew James McElhinney and Marion Theresa Kelley

Andrew James McElhinney, the third child of John and Ellen McElhinney, was born on 2 September 1888 at 54 Exchange Place. He was baptized at the Church of St. Peter in Manhattan when he was one week old, on 9 September 1888.

Andrew received his early education in the public schools of New York City. He graduated from Morris High School in the Bronx—the first high school in that borough—and earned an A.B. degree from the City College of New York in 1909 and later an L.L.D. from Fordham Law School. These were challenging years for Andrew as he worked all day and attended law school in the evenings.

Andrew worked as a stenographer at a law office in 1910, when he was 21 years old. He moved to a home at 540 North 143rd Street by 1917, by which time he was an attorney for the firm Henry Barker and McKee at 34 Nassau Street in New York City.

Andrew registered for the World War I draft on 5 June 1917. He was appointed an ensign on 25 July 1917, and from then until
8 February 1918, he was on duty at the New York Navy Yard, in connection with an armed guard. He went to the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, from February until May 1918.

By October 1918, when he was 30, Andrew was an ensign on the USS North Dakota, which largely served as a training vessel for crewmen. Andrew was preparing to ship out to Great Britain, France, and Italy as part of the Reserve Force while he was stationed on this ship. He was six feet tall, about 150 pounds, and had blue eyes and brown hair.

From 5 October 1918 until 27 November 1918, he was on duty with the Destroyer Force in Brest, France. While he was stationed there, he held the post of Judge Advocate, likely due to his pre-war legal experience. He was in France when the Armistice of 11 November 1918 was signed in Compiègne, France, ending the fighting on the Western Front. This marked a victory for the Allies and a complete defeat for Germany, although not formally a surrender.

Andrew wrote a letter to resign from his position as a Navy officer on 28 March 1919. On 1 July 1919, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant. A few months after his promotion, on 3 November 1919, Andrew was discharged from the Navy Reserves and paid $515.42 for his service.
NAVY DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON

September 16, 1919

To: Lieutenant (junior grade)...
Andrew J. McElhinney, U.S.N.
Washington, D.C.

Subject: Temporary appointment.

Enclosures: Blank form of acceptance and oath of office.

1. Having been nominated to, and confirmed by the Senate, you are, by
direct order of the President of the United States, in accordance with the pre-
visions of the Act of May 30, 1917, as amended, hereby temporarily appointed
in the U.S. Navy, from the 1st day of July, 1917.

2. Enclosed hereon is a blank form of acceptance and oath of
office which you will execute and return to this Department (Bureau of
Navigation) immediately.

Secretary of the Navy

Copy to:
The Auditor for the Navy Dept.
The lowest number of
same date shall be kept.

U.S. Navy letters for Andrew James McElhinney, 1919.
Andrew returned to his work as a lawyer by 1920, and a later document said he specifically worked as an admiralty attorney for the firm Bigham, Englar, Jones & Houston, where he became a partner and worked for the rest of his career. Perhaps it was his Navy career that prompted Andrew’s interest in admiralty law, which focused on maritime questions and offenses as well as the relationships between private entities that operate vessels on the oceans. This specialty area dealt with matters including marine commerce, marine navigation, shipping, sailors, and the transportation of passengers and goods by sea.

Andrew married Marion Theresa Kelley on 5 January 1928 at the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes in Manhattan. Marion was the daughter of James Lewis Kelley and Anna Cecelia Mangin, and was born on 29 January 1904. Her family lived at 557 West 150th Street in Pelham, New York. Marion was baptized at St. Catherine of Genoa Catholic Church in New York City on 7 February 1904. (More on Marion’s ancestors appears later in the story.)

Andrew and Marion had three children—two sons and a daughter.

In 1936, Andrew and Marion lived at 250 Eastland Avenue in Pelham, Westchester County, New York, and Andrew worked as a lawyer. Pelham is a New York City suburb located approximately 14 miles northeast of midtown Manhattan, and directly north of The Bronx.

Andrew was an active member of the Society of the Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick in New York, an organization whose members “celebrate their brotherly heritage of Ireland and are committed to providing charitable assistance to the needy and less fortunate.” The society was formed in the late 1700s after the end of the

**The Children of Andrew James McElhinney and Marion Theresa Kelley**

- **Andrew James**
  - 30 October 1928–
- **Maureen Patricia**
  - 17 May 1931–
- **Joseph James**
  - 22 February 1933–
Revolutionary War to help the large number of impoverished and displaced Irishmen who had arrived in New York. They gave them money for food and rent and provided families with other necessities like blankets. This assistance was welcome since, at the time, there was no organized welfare system in New York. Instead, each ethnic group took care of its own. Today the society gives money to charities including schools, hospitals, and services for the homeless.

On 27 June 1956, when Andrew was 67, he died of a coronary thrombosis, or blood clot that traveled to his heart. He had suffered from arteriosclerosis and heart disease for some time. His funeral Mass was held at St. Catherine’s Catholic Church in North Pelham, New York, and he was buried in Holy Mountain Cemetery in Tuckahoe, New York.

Marion lived for many more years after her husband’s death. She died on 15 April 1991 in Pelham at the age of 87.
The Children of Andrew and Marion McElhinney in Later Years

Andrew James McElhinney and Mary Frances Theresa St. John

Andrew James was born in Kings County, New York, on 30 October 1928. He married Mary Frances Theresa St. John, who was born on 12 December 1936.

Andrew and Mary Frances had seven children, although two sons died as infants.

Maureen Patricia McElhinney and Thomas Leo O’Hara Junior

Maureen Patricia McElhinney was born in New York City on 17 May 1931, the second child of Andrew and Marion McElhinney.

Maureen attended the College of St. Elizabeth in Convent Station, New Jersey. This school was associated with the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, founded by Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton.

Maureen married Thomas Leo O’Hara Junior, who was born on 17 June 1929 in The Bronx. He was one of four children born to Canadian-born Thomas Leo O’Hara Senior and his wife, Mabel Ann Sheridan, who was born in Chicago, Illinois. Thomas Junior attended Holy Cross College, and by the time he married Maureen he worked for the Connecticut General Life Insurance Company in Philadelphia.

Thomas and Maureen had seven children together. The eldest, Kathleen, was born in Portland, Maine, and the second child, Thomas Leo, was born in New Rochelle, New York. The other children were born in Massachusetts.

Maureen lived in Weston, Massachusetts in 1985.

John Brendan married Wendy Miller and they have two daughters: Avery Elisabeth, born 2 December 2002; and Cuyler Ann, born 1 March 2006.

Mary Clare married Cameron Elkerton and they have two sons: James Harris, born 28 November 2002; and Brendan St. John, born 4 December 2005.

Andrew James III married Susan Polingo and they have one son, Neal James, who was born 21 August 2001.

Maura Elizabeth married Dana Coates and they have three children: William James, born 26 July 1994; Caitlin Patricia, born 20 February 1996; and Kelley Anna, born 6 July 2000. Maura and Dana later divorced.

Thomas died in Boston, Massachusetts, on 29 September 2012 at the age of 83.
The Children of Thomas and Maureen in Later Years

**Kathleen Patricia** is an emergency room physician living in Nyack, New York.

**Thomas Leo III** is a heart surgeon practicing in New York.

**Kevin Andrew** married Elizabeth Ann Davis and they had four children: Brighid Maureen, who was born on 5 October 1987 and died on 21 January 1989; Sean Thomas, who was born on 8 November 1988; Padraig Gould, who was born on 5 January 1990; and Mairead Billye, who was born on 1 May 1991.

**Brian Patrick** married Cynthia Ackert Ridings and they have three children: Catharine Louise, who was born on 18 June 1983; David Andrew, who was born on 28 June 1984; and Elizabeth Marion, who was born on 17 February 1988. Brian died in Blue Bell, Pennsylvania, on 16 February 2010, when he was 51 years old.

Catharine married Daniel Natterman and they have two children: John Patrick, who was born on 23 July 2013, and Eloise Rose, who was born on 17 September 2015. David married Morgan Shelly Allen and they have three children: Nora Allen on 29 January 2012, and twin boys, Eamon Patrick and Malcolm Edward, on 29 April 2015. Elizabeth married Paul Edward Bralower.

**Patricia Marie** married Joseph William Clark and they have two sons: Daniel Joseph, born on 3 August 1987, and Stephen Andrew, born on 8 July 1991. After Patricia and Joseph divorced, she married Barry Jo Rice.

**Sheila Marion** lives in New York and is an attorney.

**Erin Maureen** died when she was 5 years old in Boston, Massachusetts, on 5 August 1973.

**Joseph James McElhinney** and **Adrienne Mann**

Joseph James McElhinney was born on 22 February 1933 in New York City. He married Adrienne Mann and they have four children: Kenneth, who was born on 5 December 1958; Rebecca Eileen, who was born on 31 December 1959; Marianne, who was born 18 December 1961; and George, born on 31 March 1965. Marianne married David Philip Cunningham.
THE KELLEY FAMILY
Michael A. Kelley and Jane Ann Kellaher

Michael A. Kelley, Maureen McElhinney’s great-grandfather, was born in Ireland on 17 November 1832 to Robert Kelley and Mary Tiernan. Michael immigrated to the United States in 1850. He was working as a bartender in 1867, when his son James Lewis was born.

By 1870 he had changed jobs and was working as a night watchman. He and Jane were raising their three young children at 335 East 12th Street between 1st and 2nd Avenues.

The Children of Michael A. Kelley and Jane Ann Kellaher

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<td>John M.</td>
<td>born about 1864</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Lewis</td>
<td>25 August 1867–11 June 1906</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joseph</td>
<td>April 1876–18 June 1957</td>
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<tr>
<td>Florence</td>
<td>born about 1878</td>
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Jane died sometime between 1870 and 1874. Michael remarried in about 1874 to a woman named Elizabeth F. She was born in Ireland on 31 March 1844, and was therefore 12 years or so younger than Michael. She had immigrated in about 1851, when she was about 7.

Michael and Elizabeth had two children, although Elizabeth consistently reported on the 1900 and 1910 censuses that she had only had one child.
Michael worked as a clerk in New York in 1880, as did his 16-year-old son, John. The family had moved to 55 East 136th Street in The Bronx, between Lincoln Avenue and Alexander Avenue. The census from that year clearly shows their daughter Florence as their youngest child, born in about 1878. However, Florence does not appear with the family on later census records, and may have died sometime between 1880 and 1900.

By 1900 Michael had retired, and had submitted his papers for naturalization after 50 years of residence in the United States. He and Elizabeth lived at 526 125th Street in The Bronx, just a few blocks east of the Hudson River.

Michael had reached the age of 78 by 1910. He lived in The Bronx with Elizabeth and his daughter Mary Jane and her two sons. Mary Jane’s husband had died, but her sons, Leonard J. and T. Elmer Stamford, lived with their mother and their grandparents. Leonard was 18 years old and worked as an architect, and Mary Jane was a bookkeeper in an office. Mary Jane had had three other children who had died by that time.

Michael worked in real estate in New York in his later years. He was living at 282 West 136th Street, not far from The City College of New York, just before he died due to heart trouble on 6 July 1911. He was buried in Calvary Cemetery.

After her husband's death, Elizabeth lived with her son Joseph and his family in The Bronx in June 1915, when she was 71 years old. Joseph worked as a Bronx credit man, and he and his wife, Marie, had three children: Raymond, Marie, and Joseph Junior.

If a possible death certificate for Elizabeth is correct, she suffered from diabetes in her later years. After battling gangrene and a cerebral embolism, or stroke, she died on 26 December 1915 in the Bronx. She was 74. She was buried in St. Raymond’s Cemetery.
James Lewis Kelley and Anna Cecelia Mangin

James Lewis Kelley was born on 25 August 1867 in his family home at 324 East 12th Street in Manhattan. He attended school in 1880, when he was 12 years old.

James and his brother Joseph lived at home with their parents, Michael and Elizabeth, in 1900. James was a plumber, and Joseph worked as a clerk. James was 34 years old before he married.

His wife, Anna Cecelia Mangin, was born on 23 May 1870 in New York. (More on her ancestors appears later in the story.) James and Anna married in about 1901 at St. Catherine of Genoa Catholic Church in New York. A newspaper article about their wedding reports that Anna was escorted by her brother, Thomas Mangin, and the maid of honor was Mary Mangin. The groomsman was James’s brother Joseph. The wedding reception was held at the home of the bride’s family, and James and Anna went on a honeymoon trip to the South.
They had three children, and James worked as a plumber. The family lived in a flat at 557 West 150th Street in New York.

James became sick with acute lobar pneumonia and pneumococcal meningitis when he was 38 years old, and died at home on 11 June 1906. He was buried in The Bronx. Anna was left with three children under the age of 4 to raise on her own.

After her husband died, Anna and her children moved into her father’s home on Hamilton Place. Anna’s brother Thomas also lived there in 1910 and worked as a paint salesman. Anna’s father, Thomas Senior, was retired by that time.

After her father’s death, Anna continued to live in the same home with her children and her brother Thomas in 1920. Gerard was 17 years old and worked as a signal clerk at a telegraph office that year.

Anna died on 27 September 1951 at the age of 81.

Anna Cecelia Mangin

1920 census for the Thomas Mangin family living in New York City.
Anna Cecelia’s Parents, Thomas Mangin and Catharine Pardee

Thomas Mangin was born about 1835. When he was 9 years old in 1844, he left his native Ireland to immigrate to the United States.

Thomas married Catharine Pardee, who was born in 1832. They had five children together.

Catharine died in 1894, at the age of 62.

When Thomas was 75, he lived in New York in 1910. Two of his adult children lived with him. Thomas Junior was a paint salesman, and Anna (called Annie C. on the census) and her three young children lived there, too.

Anna Cecelia (Ancestor)
23 May 1870–27 September 1951

Thomas H.
born about 1870

Mary C.
birth date unknown–about 1950

Joseph J.
birth and death dates unknown

John
birth date unknown–19 April 1918
Joseph J. Mangin, son of Thomas Mangin and Catharine Pardee.

John Mangin, son of Thomas Mangin and Catharine Pardee.