

O'Flynn Family of Daviess County, Ky.

By Jerry Long, Owensboro, Ky, 1986

15 April 1986

Ruth Martin Wilson
386 Mesa Dr.
Camrarrillo, CA 93010

Dear Mrs. Wilson:

I did not find any record of the naturalization of Timothy O'Flynn (born c1795) in Daviess County. The first three Daviess County court order books are missing, the first order book is book "D" (1837-1846) and in it no O'Flynn's appear. Timothy O'Flynn was born in Ireland about 1795 and he came to Daviess County, Ky., in 1832 or 1833. He married 10 July 1833, Frances Clary, in Daviess County. He appears in the 1833 Daviess tax list, and does not appear in the 1831 or earlier tax lists of Daviess County (the 1832 tax list is missing). He probably did not come to Daviess County straight from Ireland, he may have resided somewhere else in the States before coming. He may have even come with his parents as a child and if so he would not have filed naturalization papers.

Your ancestor, Timothy O'Flynn, appears to have had a brother, Eugene O'Flynn, who came to Daviess County several years before Timothy. Eugene O'Flynn first appears in the Daviess tax lists in 1827, in that same year he bought 248 acres in Daviess County (Deed book B, page 248). Eugene appears only in the 1827 and 1828 Daviess tax lists, in 1828 Eugene O'Flynn died leaving a widow, Ann, and three infant children, Timothy, James, and Mary Ann. In the following year, 1829, Eugene's widow, Ann, died in Daviess County, and Elisha Durbin was appointed guardian of her three children. In the settlement of the estate of Eugene and Ann O'Flynn their 248 acre farm was ordered to be sold, on 11 April 1831 the three infant heirs by a commissioner sold the land to Timothy O'Flynn (your great-great grandfather); deed was recorded commissioner's deed book A-B, page 52.

Eugene and Ann O'Flynn were married about 1822, before coming to Daviess County. Their oldest child, Timothy was born in 1822, and their youngest, Mary Ann was born in Daviess County, her baptism appears in the records of St. Lawrence Catholic Church, she was born 9 July 1827 and baptized on 28 July 1827, Mary Ann and Timothy O'Flynn, children of Eugene and Ann, are buried in the Catholic Cemetery at St. Vincent's in Union County, Ky., about 40 miles west of Owensboro. Their monuments there read: "Mary Ann O'Flynn died April 1832 age 4 years 9 months" and "Timothy O'Flynn died 22 April 1835 age 12 years 5 months".

The four oldest children of Timothy O'Flynn and Frances Clary appear in the baptismal records of St. Lawrence Church. St. Lawrence located at Knottsville in Daviess County is the oldest Catholic church in the county, founded in 1825. The births and baptismal dates were: Eugene O'Flynn born 5 April, 1834, baptized 18 May 1834, godmother Eliza Clary. Mary Ann O'Flynn born 12 May 1836, baptized 3 July 1836, godmother Mary Coomes. "Male O'Flynn (not named in record, but would be Richard) born 25 March 1838, baptized 1 April 1838, godmother Rachel Coomes. Elizabeth O'Flynn born 16 April 1841, baptized 18 July 1841, godmother Rose Ann Mattingly. All four were baptized by Rev. John C. Wathen. The Catholics in Owensboro at this time did not have a church and were cared for by Rev. Wathen of St. Lawrence who said Mass once a month in Owensboro. Thus even though the O'Flynnns were living in Owensboro (according to the History of Daviess County, Kentucky (1883, p748) moved to Owensboro in March 1834 and the Daviess tax records show Timothy O'Flynn as owning lots in Owensboro from 1837) the baptisms were recorded at St. Lawrence.

The four youngest children of Timothy and Frances (Julia, John, Michael, and Timothy) do not appear in the St. Lawrence records. By the mid 1840's Owensboro would have had a permanent, priest and their baptisms would probably have been recorded in the church records of St. Stephens in Owensboro. The deaths and funerals of Timothy O'Flynn (1851) and Frances Clary O'Flynn (after 1880) probably also appear in the St. Stephens church records. The records of St. Lawrence have been published in book form but those of St. Stephens have not and would those only be available by inquiring at the Church.

In the 1810, 1820 and 1830 indexes for the census of Kentucky no O'Flynnns appear. Listings of all O'Flynnns appearing in the Daviess County censuses of 1840, 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880 (no existant census for 1890), 1900 and 1910 are enclosed.

The History of Daviess County, Kentucky (1883, p412) records that T. (Timothy) O'Flynn died October 4, 1851. His son, Eugene O'Flynn (born 1834) died May 2, 1920 near Utica in Daviess County and was buried at the Oak Grove Baptist Church Cemetery, now called the Utica Cemetery. This church was formed in 1854 and Eugene's wife, Parthenia Martin O'Flynn, according to the History of Daviess County, Kentucky was one of its first members (page 715).

A copy of an obituary of Eugene O'Flynn that appeared in the Owensboro newspaper is enclosed. Checked for and found no obit for Parthenia O'Flynn, died 21 March 1898. Copies of the obituaries of your following ancestors – Finley O'Flynn (1857-1931), Emma Lloyd O'Flynn (1870-1946), John W. Lloyd (1842-1896), Mary E. Birkhead Lloyd (1851-1951), Pleasant Martin (1830-1912), and Melissa Bozarth Martin (1843-1919) are enclosed. Found no obits in Owensboro newspaper for Edward Martin (1881-1931) or Zora I. O'Flynn Martin (1891-1941). Also enclosed are pages from the book Autobiography of Mike Moore, The Jolly Irishman in which reference is made to Ferdinand O'Flynn, a brother of your grandfather, Finley O'Flynn.

Mike Moore was a resident of the Utica neighborhood of Daviess County who wrote a small book of his memories and which was published in 1908.

Your grandparents, Finley O'Flynn and Emma Lloyd, were married 28 July 1889 in Daviess County at her father, John W. Lloyd's home. Your parents, Edward Martin and Zora I. O'Flynn (1914-1920), and Burch Bennett and Zora I. O'Flynn (1910-1913) did not marry in Daviess County. I checked to see if they might have went across the river to Rockport (Spencer County, Indiana) to marry, and neither marriage was recorded there. They could have went in any of the four directions. Also checked Daviess County marriages for the names Sampey O'Flynn, Emma Bell O'Flynn or Emma Bell Bennett, and they did not appear.

Sampey O'Flynn appears in the 1910 Daviess County census, he was age 4 and was listed as one of the three children of Finley and Emma O'Flynn. The state of Kentucky did not start keeping birth records until 1911, thus there would be no officially recorded birth certificate for him.

In the Kentucky Register of Births for the years 1911 to 1920 I checked all O'Flynn, Bennett, and Martin births for children born to Zora Irene O'Flynn (this index gives the name of the child, date of birth, county of birth, and mother's maiden name). The only birth before 1920 was that of Emma Bell, born 15 May 1913 in Daviess County, her birth was recorded both under the name of O'Flynn and Bennett. Under O'Flynn the listing appeared as "Emma Bell O'Flynn" and under Bennett was listed as "infant of Berch Bennett", both listings gave the same date of birth and Zora O'Flynn as the mother. No birth was recorded for Ruby Eunice O'Flynn or Bennett, born 15 May 1914. The fact it was not recorded along with the two having the same date of 15 May, makes it appear likely that this is the same child as Emma Bell.

This is all I have to report for now. Would you like me to continue further, I believe I could fill in quite a lot more on the O'Flynn's. There are several sources available here that could be investigated that might reveal more on the family, such as published ship passenger lists could be checked for O'Flynn. Indexes for 1820 and 1830 censuses for several other states are available here and they could be checked to try to find where Timothy O'Flynn was residing at that time. At the St. Stephen's Catholic Church in Owensboro an inquiry could be made about their records to see if they are available and if any O'Flynn births and/or deaths were recorded. The Catholic Cemetery in Owensboro could be checked to see if Timothy O'Flynn or any of his family have monuments there. More could be added about the children of Timothy and Eugene O'Flynn by checking the marriages, cemetery listings, death records, etc. for Daviess County. To learn what happened to Sampey O'Flynn and Emma Bell O'Flynn (or Bennett) the death records could be checked, since you have no knowledge of them possibly they died in childhood; also there are several O'Flynn's still living in the Utica area and in Owensboro, and older members of these families could be asked if they knew anything about Sampey or Emma Bell. If you would rather not have me to continue at the present I would like to thank you for contacting me and wish you luck in your search.

Yours truly,
Jerry Long

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History of Daviess County, Kentucky (Chicago: Inter-State Publishing Co., 1883, page 748):

EUGENE O'FLYNN was born in Owensboro, Ky., April 15, 1834. His father, Timothy O'Flynn, was a native of Ireland and came to America, settling in Owensboro, in March, 1834. He was by trade a wagon-maker, but his health failing, in 1847 he moved to Murray Precinct and purchased a farm, where he died in 1851. He was married in 1833 to Frances Clary, daughter of John Clary, one of the earliest settlers of Owensboro. They had a family of six children – Eugene, Richard, John, Michael, Mary Ann (now Mrs. Mulhall), and Elizabeth (now Mrs. Murphy). John and Michael are deceased. Eugene was married Feb. 14, 1854, to Parthenia, daughter of Mansfield Martin. He remained at home two years after his marriage, and then purchased his present farm of 109 acres, near Lewis Station. Politically he was reared a Democrat and voted with that party till 1868; but since then has confined himself to no party. In August, 1874, he was elected Magistrate of Murray Precinct, and re-elected to his third term in August, 1882. Mr. and Mrs. O'Flynn have four sons – Ferdinand, Findley, Claud and Thomas M. (From)