



BLACK SHEEP GENEALOGY

TELLING YOUR FAMILY'S STORY

IDENTIFYING THE FATHER OF THOMAS COUGHLIN, OF CHICAGO

Thomas Coughlin's violent death made the front pages of Chicago newspapers in 1930. But other than his Irish birth, reporters wrote little about him or his family. No American sources, including his marriage and death records, directly connect Coughlin to his father, although a short, published death notice mentions three brothers.

Thomas

Thomas Coughlin sailed to the United States in 1883, settling in Chicago, Illinois, and joining the city's already substantial Irish community.¹ On Christmas Day 1889 he married Elizabeth McDonald, herself the daughter of Irish immigrants.² By 1900 the couple lived, with their son, at 283 Blue Island Avenue, in an ethnically diverse neighborhood just west of downtown.³ Coughlin spent the next three decades living and working within that same square mile or two of city.⁴ On the night of 8–9 March 1930, he

1. 1900 U.S. census, Cook County, Ill., population schedule, Chicago, 8th ward, Enumeration District (ED) 199, sheet 7B, dwelling 69, family 138, Thomas Coughlin household [indexed Caughlin]; digital image, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : viewed 30 Oct. 2021); citing NARA microfilm publication T623, roll 252.

2. Cook County, Ill., Marriage License, unnumbered and arranged chronologically, Thomas Coughlin and Lizzie McDonald, 25 Dec. 1889; County Clerk, Chicago, Ill.; digital image, "Illinois, Cook County Marriages, 1871–1968," *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org> : viewed 2 Nov. 2021), microfilm 1030187. For McDonald's parents, see 1900 U.S. census, Cook County, Ill., population schedule, Chicago, 8th ward, Enumeration District (ED) 199, sheet 7B, dwelling 69, family 138, Thomas Coughlin household.

3. 1900 U.S. census, Cook County, Ill., population schedule, Chicago, 8th ward, Enumeration District (ED) 199, sheet 7B, dwelling 69, family 138, Thomas Coughlin household.

4. In 1910, Coughlin lived at 1835 Yeaton St. See 1910 U.S. census, Cook County, Ill., population schedule, Chicago, 11th ward, Enumeration District (ED) 544, sheet 20A, dwelling 37, family 383, Thos. J.

was working as a watchman at a warehouse on West Harrison Street when two armed men burst through the door looking for a particular record. As they fled, one of the men turned and shot Coughlin three times. The watchman died several hours later.⁵

While the newspapers largely ignored the victim, instead focusing on a City Hall angle to the murder, a short death notice appeared in *The Chicago Daily News*. It identified Coughlin as the “brother of Edward and the late James and John Coughlin.”⁶

Brothers James and John

Coughlin was not so common a surname in Chicago that it is difficult to identify Thomas’s probable brothers. In 1900, a James Coughlin lived at 1379 Congress Street, not far from Thomas.⁷ He had arrived in 1883, the same year as Thomas, and a passenger list for the SS *England*, which anchored in New York City on 17 July 1883, includes a Thomas

Coughlin household; digital image, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : viewed 30 Oct. 2021); citing NARA microfilm publication T624, roll 251. In 1920, he lived at 2142 Roosevelt Rd. (called W. 12th St. until 1919). See 1920 U.S. census, Cook County, Ill., population schedule, Chicago, 11th ward, Enumeration District (ED) 641, sheet 11A, dwelling 113, family 216, Thomas Soughron [Coughlin] household; digital image, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : viewed 30 Oct. 2021); citing NARA microfilm publication T625, roll 319. At the time of his death, he worked at 1309 W. Harrison St. and lived at 2133 Grenshaw St. See “Slaying Linked to Pay Roll Quiz,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Chicago, Ill., 10 March 1930, page 1, col. 3. Also, “Death Notices,” *The Chicago Daily News*, Chicago, Ill., 10 March 1930, page 36, col. 6. To find these locations on a map, see *The Rand McNally New Standard Map of Chicago* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1910); digital images, Chicago 1900–1914, University of Chicago Digital Preservation Collection, *The University of Chicago Library Catalog* (<http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/cat/bib/1595363> : viewed 31 Oct. 2021), north half.

5. Chicago Department of Police, Homicide Bureau, file no. 2279, Thomas Coughlin, Irish watchman, 10 March 1930, 27 loose pages; Chicago Police Department, Chicago, Ill.; obtained as a PDF through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request by the author, 2021. Also, “Illinois Deaths and Stillbirths, 1916–1947,” database, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org> : viewed 2 Nov. 2021), entry for Thomas Coughlin, 9 March 1930.

6. For the City Hall angle, see “Slaying Linked to Pay Roll Quiz,” 10 March 1930, page 1, col. 3. For death notice, see “Death Notices,” 10 March 1930, page 36, col. 6.

7. 1900 U.S. census, Cook County, Ill., population schedule, Chicago, 12th ward, Enumeration District (ED) 349, sheet 16B, dwelling 184, family 335, James Conglan [Coughlan] household; digital image, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : viewed 31 Oct. 2021); citing NARA microfilm publication T623, roll 259.

and James Coughlan, ages twenty and eighteen, traveling together from Ireland.⁸ Their expected ages for the 1900 census would have been about thirty-seven and thirty-five; they were enumerated as thirty-five and thirty-three.⁹ On 5 or 6 March 1904, several days after he slipped and fell on an icy sidewalk, this same James Coughlin died from internal injuries.¹⁰ An obituary appeared in *The Chicago Citizen*, the official newspaper of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, and noted that James had been born in Garrydoolis, a townland in eastern County Limerick near the border with County Tipperary.¹¹

8. *Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, 1820–1897*, microfilm publication M237 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1962), roll 468, chronological order by date of arrival; 17 July 1883, SS *England*, unpaginated, lines 395–96, entries for Thos. Coughlan and James Coughlan; digital image, “New York Passenger Lists, 1820–1891,” *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org> : viewed 1 Nov. 2021).

9. 1900 U.S. census, Cook County, Ill., population schedule, Chicago, 8th ward, Enumeration District (ED) 199, sheet 7B, dwelling 69, family 138, Thomas Coughlin household. Also, 1900 U.S. census, Cook County, Ill., population schedule, Chicago, 12th ward, Enumeration District (ED) 349, sheet 16B, dwelling 184, family 335, James Conglan [Coughlan] household.

10. “Man Dies from Fall on Ice,” *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, Chicago, Ill., 7 March 1904, page 7, col. 4. See also “Deaths,” *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, Chicago, Ill., 7 March 1904, page 11, col. 1. The news story dates James’s death as 6 March in the hospital, while the death notice suggests it was 5 March at home. A death for James Coughlin does not appear in “Illinois, Cook County Deaths, 1871–1998,” database, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org> : viewed 2 Nov. 2021). The author searched Coughlan, Conglan, and Cauklin. Still, it’s clear that these stories refer to the same James from the 1900 census. Both give his address as 30 Gilpin Pl. The death notice indicates he was survived by his wife, Maggie; the 1900 census also names Maggie Coughlin as his wife. See 1900 U.S. census, Cook County, Illinois, population schedule, Chicago, 12th ward, Enumeration District (ED) 349, sheet 16B, dwelling 184, family 335, James Conglan [Coughlan] household. See also Cook County, Ill., Marriage License, unnumbered and arranged chronologically, James Coughlin and Margaret Ryan, 25 April 1899; County Clerk, Chicago, Ill.; digital image, “Illinois, Cook County Marriages, 1871–1968,” *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org> : viewed 2 November 2021), microfilm 1030296.

11. “Chicago Irish Families, 1875–1925,” database expanded from an unpublished manuscript by Tom Cook, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : viewed 30 Oct. 2021), entry for James Coughlin, 12 March 1904. Without knowing the obituary’s informant, it is difficult to assess its credibility. It does, however, contain errors, either from sloppiness in the original or in the transcription. It renders Garrydoolis as “Garryboolis,” which appears to be a misspelling or typographical error rather than a distinct place name. See Irish OpenStreetMap community, *Irish Townlands* (<https://www.townlands.ie> : viewed 1 Nov. 2021), empty search for Garryboolis. The obituary gives 12 March 1904, rather than 5 or 6 March, as his death date and gives his address as 36, rather, than 30, Gilpin Pl.

The second late brother mentioned in Thomas Coughlin's death notice was John. In 1910, a John Coughlin lived at 853 Monticello Avenue, north of Thomas and James. A decade younger than the other two, he immigrated to Chicago in 1889 and in 1902 married the Irish-born Kate Flanagan.¹² Then, on 20 December 1912, John Coughlin died. The city record of his death does not indicate a place of birth; it does, however, note, with information provided by his wife, that he was the son of Patrick Coughlin and Mary Dwyer.¹³

Both of these men had died by the time Thomas Coughlin's death notice appeared. Both were Irish immigrants to Chicago. Both lived in the same part of the city as Thomas and both were of an age that the three of them could have shared parents. By themselves, these facts are hardly definitive. It takes one additional brother to fully demonstrate these men's relationship and, by doing so, the identity of their father.

Brother Edward

The sole living brother in Thomas Coughlan's death notice was Edward. In 1920, an Edward Coughlin lived at 2020 West Harrison Street, not far from Thomas. He had come to Chicago from Ireland in 1908 and in 1913 married Mary Leamy, also an Irish immigrant.¹⁴ He may have been alive when Thomas was murdered, but just a month later,

12. 1910 U.S. census, Cook County, Ill., population schedule, Chicago, 35th ward, Enumeration District (ED) 1509, sheet 1B, dwelling 9, family 12, John Coughlin household; digital image, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : viewed 31 Oct. 2021); citing NARA microfilm publication T624, roll 282. Also, Cook County, Ill., Marriage License, unnumbered and arranged chronologically, John Coughlin and Kate Flanagan, 4 June 1902; County Clerk, Chicago, Ill.; digital image, "Illinois, Cook County Marriages, 1871–1968," *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org> : viewed 2 Nov. 2021), microfilm 1030338.

13. Chicago, Ill., Death Certificate, John J. Coughlin, 20 Dec. 1912; digital image, "Chicago Death Certificates, 1878–1915," *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org> : viewed 2 Nov. 2021), microfilm 1287666. The original document shows Kate Flanagan as the informant for this information.

14. 1920 U.S. census, Cook County, Ill., population schedule, Chicago, Enumeration District (ED) 1039, sheet 4B, dwelling 59, family 99, Edward Coughlin household; digital image, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : viewed 30 Oct. 2021); citing NARA microfilm publication T625, roll 329. Also, Cook County, Ill., Marriage License, unnumbered and arranged chronologically, Edmund Coughlin and

when the 1930 census was enumerated, Mary had moved in with her brother and was identified as a widow.¹⁵

Edward's immigrant experience largely mirrored that of the other three men, except that he sailed much later, and on his way to Chicago, rather than landing in New York, he traveled via Montreal and Port Huron, Michigan. The alien manifest and arrival card generated by U.S. immigration officials as he entered the country from Canada are critical in connecting the Coughlins. For one, they indicate that Edward's final destination was his brother Thomas Coughlin's home at 283 Blue Island Avenue, Chicago, the address at which Thomas lived in 1900. For another, they list Edward's last permanent address in Ireland. In the manifest, it is Gallardowns, Pallas Green, while on the arrival card it is Girrydoolae.¹⁶ No place called Gallardowns exists; in fact, both of these placenames likely are corruptions of Garrydoolis, which at the time was located in the Catholic parish of

Mary Leamy, 28 Dec. 1913; County Clerk, Chicago, Ill.; digital image, "Illinois, Cook County Marriages, 1871–1968," *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org> : viewed 2 Nov. 2021), microfilm 1030558.

15. 1930 census, Cook County, Ill., population schedule, Chicago, 29th ward, Enumeration District (ED) 16-985, sheet 2A, dwelling 15, family 33, Mary Coughlin household; digital image, *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : viewed 31 Oct. 2021); citing NARA microfilm publication T626, roll 460. A death for Edward Coughlin does not appear in "Illinois, Cook County Deaths, 1871–1998," database, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org> : viewed 2 Nov. 2021). The author searched Coghlan, Conglan, and Cauklin. Neither Edward nor a widowed Mary is found in *Polk's Chicago (Illinois) City Directory* (Chicago: R.L. Polk & Co.), 1928; digital images, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org>); citing FHL film 1320731.

16. *Manifests of Passengers Arriving at St. Albans, VT, District through Canadian Pacific and Atlantic Ports, 1895–1954*, microfilm publication M1464 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.), roll 81, chronological by month of arrival; Sept. 1907, sheet 1, line 19, entry for Edmund Coughlin; digital image, "U.S., Border Crossings from Canada to U.S., 1895–1960," *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : viewed 30 Oct. 2021). Also, *Manifests of Alien Arrivals at Port Huron, Michigan, February 1902–December 1954*, microfilm publication A3441 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.), roll 26, alphabetical by passenger name, Edmund Coughlin, card no. 524, 20 Sept. 1907; digital image, "Michigan, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists, 1903–1965," *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com> : viewed 30 Oct. 2021).

Pallasgreen and Templebredin. The village of Pallasgreen, County Limerick, lies a few miles to the north.¹⁷

Additional evidence supports the idea that these documents refer to Garrydoolis. They both indicate that Edmond, as he was called prior to his immigration, had been living there with his sister, Mrs. Kate Dwyer. According to the 1901 Irish census, Edmond Coughlin was indeed residing in the Garrydoolis home of Kate Dwyer, her husband Cornelius, and their six children.¹⁸ In 1883, Kate Coughlin, then eighteen, married Cornelius Dwyer of Garrydoolis. On the marriage record Kate's father is identified as Patt Coughlin.¹⁹

Garrydoolis is almost certainly the same place mentioned in James Coughlin's obituary, and Patt Coughlin almost certainly the same man referenced on John Coughlin's birth certificate, which also mentions his mother, Mary Dwyer.

The Coughlins of Garrydoolis

In the 1860s and 1870s, there were four Coughlin couples bearing children in Pallasgreen and Templebredin Parish, County Limerick, but only one in Garrydoolis: Patrick Coughlin and Mary (Dwyer) Coughlin.²⁰ They had eleven children in fourteen years. Among them were the following:

17. Irish OpenStreetMap community, *Irish Townlands* (<https://www.townlands.ie> : viewed 1 Nov. 2021), empty search for Gallardowns. For a map of Catholic parishes in Ireland, see "Catholic Parish Registers at the NLI," *National Library of Ireland* (<https://www.registers.nli.ie> : viewed 1 Nov. 2021).

18. 1901 Census of Ireland, County Limerick, District Electoral Division (DED) Templebredon, Garrydoolis, unpaginated, household no. 12, Cornelius Dwyer; digital image, National Archives of Ireland, *Census of Ireland 1901/1911* (<https://www.census.nationalarchives.ie> : viewed 30 Oct. 2021); original manuscript not cited.

19. Grean District, County Limerick, Ireland, marriage records, 1883, Templebredin no. 20, Cornelius Dwyer and Kate Coughlan, 5 Feb. 1883; General Register Office, Ireland; digital image, "The Civil Records of Births, Marriages, and Deaths," *Irish Genealogy* (<https://www.irishgenealogy.ie> : viewed 30 Oct. 2021).

20. Search of Irish baptismal/birth records for Coughlan in County Limerick, 1860–80, Irish Family History Foundation, database, *RootsIreland* (<https://www.rootsireland.ie> : viewed 1 Nov. 2021); citing National Library of Ireland and General Register Office, Dublin.

- Thomas, baptized 7 December 1863;²¹
- Catherine, baptized 21 May 1866;²²
- James, baptized 12 February 1868;²³
- John, baptized 19 March 1872;²⁴ and
- Edmond, baptized 3 December 1874.²⁵

These names and dates match as expected with Thomas, James, John, and Edward Coughlin, of Chicago, and their sister Kate Dwyer. [See Table 1 next page]

Conclusion

Only one available American source, a short newspaper death notice that appeared a day after his murder, connects Thomas Coughlin of Chicago to any family members aside from his wife and son. But a close examination of the three brothers mentioned in that notice establishes a trail of indirect evidence that leads to the conclusion that Thomas's father was Patrick Coughlin, of Garrydoolis, County Limerick.

21. Pallasgreen and Templebredin Parish (Counties Tipperary and Limerick), Diocese of Cashel and Emly, "Baptisms 20 Oct. 1861 to 26 Dec. 1880 and Marriages 26 Oct. 1861 to 25 Feb. 1881," p. 14, baptism of Thomas Coughlan, 7 Dec. 1863; digital image, National Library of Ireland, "Catholic Parish Records at the NLI," *National Library of Ireland* (<https://registers.nli.ie> : viewed 30 Oct. 2021); citing NLI microfilm 02498/04.

22. Pallasgreen and Templebredin Parish (Counties Tipperary and Limerick), Diocese of Cashel and Emly, "Baptisms 20 Oct. 1861 to 26 Dec. 1880 and Marriages 26 Oct. 1861 to 25 Feb. 1881," p. 25, baptism of Catherine Coughlan, 21 May 1866, NLI 02498/04.

23. Pallasgreen and Templebredin Parish (Counties Tipperary and Limerick), Diocese of Cashel and Emly, "Baptisms 20 Oct. 1861 to 26 Dec. 1880 and Marriages 26 Oct. 1861 to 25 Feb. 1881," p. 33, baptism of James Coughlan, 12 Feb. 1868, NLI 02498/04.

24. Pallasgreen and Templebredin Parish (Counties Tipperary and Limerick), Diocese of Cashel and Emly, "Baptisms 20 Oct. 1861 to 26 Dec. 1880 and Marriages 26 Oct. 1861 to 25 Feb. 1881," p. 53, baptism of John Coughlan, 19 March 1872, NLI 02498/04.

25. Pallasgreen and Templebredin Parish (Counties Tipperary and Limerick), Diocese of Cashel and Emly, "Baptisms 20 Oct. 1861 to 26 Dec. 1880 and Marriages 26 Oct. 1861 to 25 Feb. 1881," p. 65, baptism of Edmd. Coughlan, 3 Dec. 1874, NLI 02498/04.

Table 1: The Coughlin Siblings

Name	Estimated Birth Year	Actual Birth Year	Died	Evidence of Relation
Thomas ²⁶	1863–65	1863	1930	Brother to James, John, and Edward; brother to Edward, sister of Kate, from Garrydoolis
Kate ²⁷	1865–67	1866	[n/a]	Lived in Garrydoolis with brother Edmond; daughter of Patt Coughlin
James ²⁸	1865–67	1868	1904	Died before 1930; from Garrydoolis
John ²⁹	1874–75	1872	1912	Died before 1930; son of Pat Coughlin and Mary Dwyer
Edward ³⁰	1874–75	1874	1930?	Brother to Thomas and to Kate, of Garrydoolis

26. *Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, 1820–1897*, NARA M237, roll 468, 17 July 1883, SS *England*, lines 395–96, for Thos. Coghlan and James Coghlan. Also, Pallasgreen and Templebredin Parish (Counties Tipperary and Limerick, Diocese of Cashel and Emly, baptism of Thomas Coughlan, 7 Dec. 1863, NLI 02498/04. Also, “Illinois Deaths and Stillbirths, 1916–1947,” entry for Thomas Coughlin, 9 March 1930.

27. 1901 Census of Ireland, County Limerick, District Electoral Division (DED) Templebredon, Garrydoolis, unpaginated, household no. 12, Cornelius Dwyer. Also, Pallasgreen and Templebredin Parish (Counties Tipperary and Limerick, Diocese of Cashel and Emly, baptism of Catherine Coughlan, 21 May 1866, NLI 02498/04.

28. *Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, 1820–1897*, NARA M237, roll 468, 17 July 1883, SS *England*, lines 395–96, for Thos. Coghlan and James Coghlan. Also, Pallasgreen and Templebredin Parish (Counties Tipperary and Limerick, Diocese of Cashel and Emly, baptism of James Coughlan, 12 Feb. 1868, NLI 02498/04. Also, “Man Dies from Fall on Ice,” 7 March 1904, page 7, col. 4.

29. 1910 U.S. census, Cook County, Ill., population schedule, Chicago, 35th ward, Enumeration District (ED) 1509, sheet 1B, dwelling 9, family 12, John Coughlin household. Also, Pallasgreen and Templebredin Parish (Counties Tipperary and Limerick, Diocese of Cashel and Emly, baptism of John Coughlan, 19 March 1872, NLI 02498/04. Also, “Deaths,” *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, Chicago, Ill., 21 Dec. 1912, page 16, col. 3.

30. 1901 Census of Ireland, County Limerick, District Electoral Division (DED) Templebredon, Garrydoolis, unpaginated, household no. 12, Cornelius Dwyer. Also, Pallasgreen and Templebredin Parish (Counties Tipperary and Limerick), Diocese of Cashel and Emly, baptism of Edmd. Coughlan, 3 Dec. 1874, NLI 02498/04. Also, *Manifests of Passengers Arriving at St. Albans, VT, District through Canadian Pacific and Atlantic Ports, 1895–1954*, NARA M1464, roll 81, Sept. 1907, sheet 1, line 19, for Edmund Coughlin. Also, 1930 census, Cook County, Ill., population schedule, Chicago, 29th ward, Enumeration District (ED) 16-985, sheet 2A, dwelling 15, family 33, Mary Coughlin household.

