

Chapter 2: Emigration & Texas, Maryland

Baltimore City,
Maryland, USA
c1856

Baltimore
Harbor

Chesapeake Bay

Map of the city and county of Baltimore, Maryland. From actual surveys by Robert Taylor. Lith by Hunckel & Son. Map. Baltimore; 1857. Map Collections, 3 May 2005, American Memory, Library of Congress. 21 April 2010 <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3843b.1a000284>.

Texas, Baltimore County, Maryland

It's not exactly clear how our ancestors knew about **Texas, Baltimore County, Maryland**, but we have records to show us that John and Catherine Coffay, with their children (including William Manion), lived there after they arrived in Maryland. The death certificate of **Brigid Coffay** (John and Catherine's daughter), has her birthplace recorded as Texas, Baltimore County, Maryland, in the year 1854, so we know the family was living there at that time.

Texas, Maryland was a settlement of mostly Irish immigrant laborers, many from **County Roscommon**. It was located about ten miles north of Baltimore City along the Northern Central Railroad line, south of Cockeysville and north of Timonium. The Texas area had over thirteen limestone quarries which required a large workforce of laborers. These quarries provided stone for many buildings, including the Washington Monument in Washington D.C., Baltimore's Basilica and for St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City.

William Manion's Step-Father, John Coffay, Emigrates

By 1850, Catherine and **John Coffay** made the decision to emigrate to Texas, Maryland, from Ireland. Somehow they found out about the available jobs in Texas, possibly from relatives who had gone before them. The Roman Catholic cemetery in Texas, Maryland contains the graves of several Coffays and Hanleys from County Roscommon, and a Mannion family from County Mayo, so it's probable that it was a Coffay or Hanley who led the way.

John Coffay emigrated first, leaving Catherine and her children behind, probably until he could earn money and set up a home for them. In 1850, **John Coffay sailed on the ship, *Scotia*, leaving from Liverpool, England and arriving in Baltimore, Maryland, America, on April 13, 1850.** John Coffay then traveled from Baltimore City to Texas, Maryland, about ten miles to the north, in Baltimore County, where he probably worked as a laborer in one of the quarries.

Meanwhile, while John Coffay was in America, Catherine gave birth to another son, **John Coffay, Jr.**, who was baptized in Roscommon Parish, County Roscommon, Ireland, in 1851.

William Manion Emigrates With His Mother & Half-Siblings

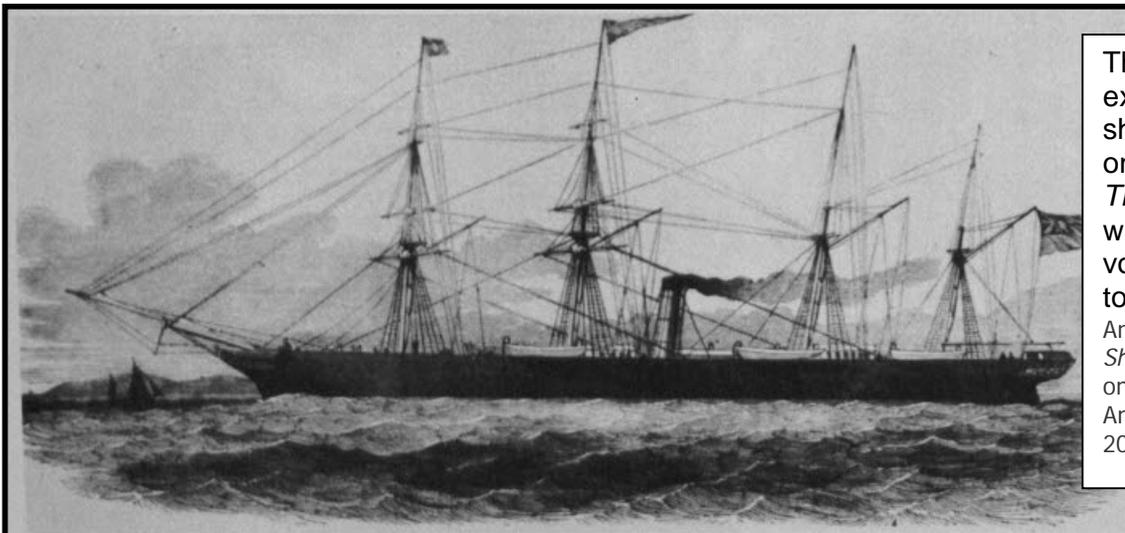
Almost three years after John Coffay's emigration, Catherine and her children were able to make the journey to join him in Texas, Maryland. Catherine's oldest son, **John Mannion**, wasn't with the family for the emigration. At the time, John Mannion was over eighteen and may have established his own ties in Ireland through marriage or employment, or he may have emigrated on his own to another location in Ireland or abroad. It's also possible that he died in Roscommon as a child.

Catherine (Hanley/Mannion) Coffay and her children (including **William Manion**) sailed from Liverpool, England on April 15, 1853, aboard the ship, *Jane Henderson*, arriving in Baltimore on June 11, 1853.

The ship's passenger list had them recorded as:

Catherine Coffay (40), **William (Manion) Coffay** (13), **Mary Coffay** (14), **Patrick Coffay** (11)
Catherine Coffay (4), **John Coffay** (2). The child, Martin Coffay was not on the list. He probably died.

It must have been out of convenience for Catherine to give William Manion's name as William Coffay, rather than explain the circumstances of his father's death. William must have been small for his age, because Catherine was able pass him off as age 13, when he was actually 16. Males over thirteen had to pay a higher fare,

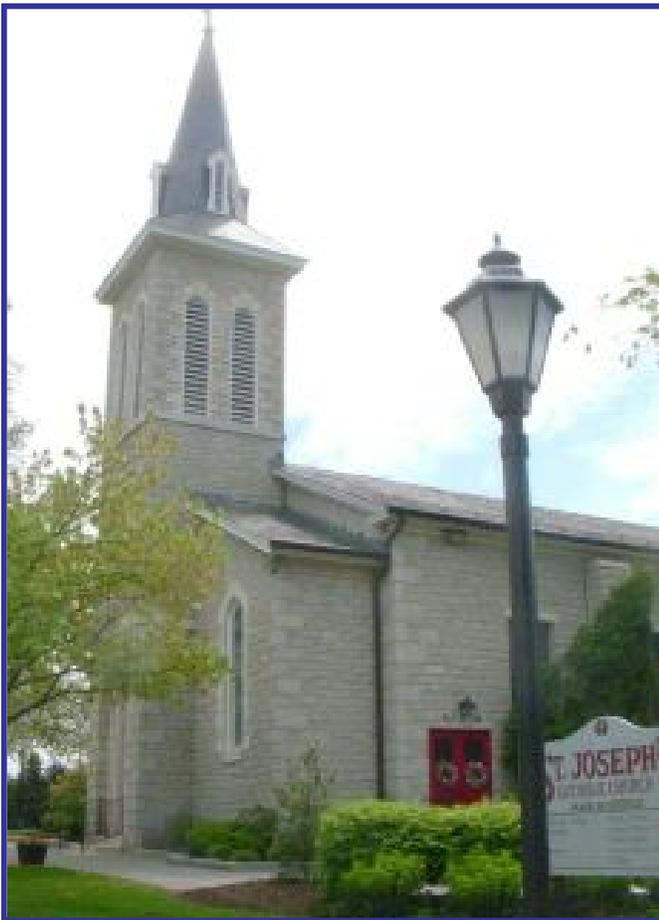


This picture is an example of the kind of ship the family sailed on. The picture shows *The City of Manchester* which made its maiden voyage from Liverpool to Philadelphia in 1851. Ancestry.com. *Passenger Ships and Images* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2007.

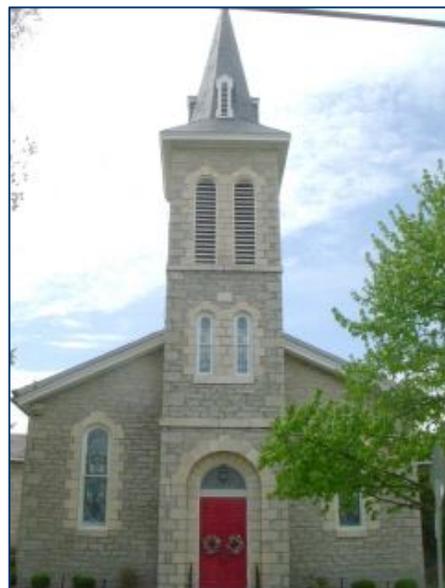
William Manion & the Coffays in Texas, Maryland

Sometime in April, after the long voyage to Baltimore, Maryland, from Roscommon, Ireland, John Coffay was reunited with Catherine, his children and stepson, William Manion. He met his son, **John Coffay Jr.**, now 2 ½ years old, for the first time.

While in Texas, Catherine gave birth to two more children; **Bridget Coffay**, in December 1854, and **Michael Coffay**, born 1859. While living in Texas, Maryland, **John Coffay was naturalized as a United States citizen on October 15, 1859.** With this step, John Coffay's family became automatic citizens, except for William Manion, who was John's step-son, and therefore not eligible for citizenship through John Coffay. William Manion was able, though, to work as a stonecutter in the quarries. The Coffays and William Manion remained in Texas until about 1860 when they moved closer to Baltimore City into another community of Irish immigrant quarry workers.



St. Joseph's parish in Texas, Maryland, was established in the early 1850s to accommodate the community of Irish immigrant laborers who worked in the area's quarries.



The cemetery behind **St. Joseph's Church** contains some clues as to whom or what brought our ancestors to Texas, Maryland.



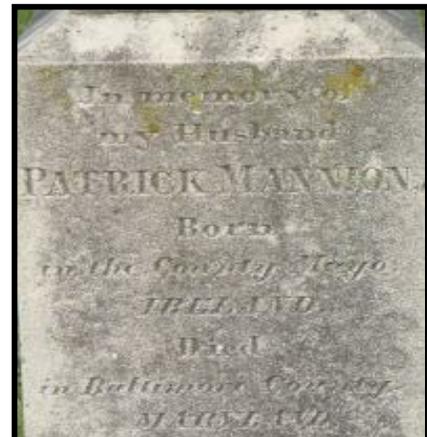
Left, is a headstone for James and Margaret Hanly. Both died in 1891, and the stone says they were natives of Kilbride, County Roscommon, Ireland. The same Margaret Hanly's death notice in the Baltimore Sun (below) says she was a native of Kiltieven Parish, Roscommon. She may have been a relative of Catherine Hanley or John Coffay.

at London Park at three o'clock.
HANLY.—On March 16, 1891, of pneumonia, **MARGARET**, in the 76th year of her age, beloved wife of the late James Hanly, a native of the county Roscommon, parish of Kiltieven, Ireland.
 Relatives and friends of the family are respectfully invited to attend her funeral from her late residence, Texas, Baltimore county, this (Wednesday) morning.

COFFEY.—On August 5 **MARY**, in her 13th year, beloved daughter of Katherine and the late William Coffey, native of the county Roscommon, Ireland.

Funeral from her late residence, No. 503 East Madison street, today, (Monday,) at twelve o'clock, thence to St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Texas, Baltimore county.

The Baltimore Sun death notice, above, is for Mary Coffey, buried at St. Joseph's in Texas, MD. Her father, William Coffey, was from Kilglass, Roscommon, which is not far from Roscommon Town. He may have been a relative of John Coffay.



The family of Patrick Mannion is buried at St. Joseph's. They were from County Mayo and may or may not have a connection to our Mannion/Manion ancestors.

Today, there is only one street in Texas, Maryland; Church Lane. It consists of St. Joseph's Church and a few buildings which house businesses.



There is still a quarry in Texas, Md. located at the end of Church Lane, which stops at a dead end.



This older photo of Texas, MD (right), shows the quarry workers' dwellings along the tracks which transported the stone. The photo looks to be dated around the 1930s and by that time the stone houses looked as if they had been around since the earliest days of the community.



The **University of Maryland** is currently conducting an archeological study of the Irish immigrant community of Texas, MD. Their website has information about it:

http://www.heritage.umd.edu/CHRWeb/Texas_MD/Texas_Overview.htm

The **Baltimore Sun** featured an article about the University of MD project in Texas, MD. Here is a transcript of the article from the Sun's website.

Traces Of Irish Emigrants Dug Up In Md.'s Texas

Artifacts May Be From Quarry Workers In 1800s Who Had Planned To Go West

July 13, 2009 | By Mary Gail Hare | Mary Gail Hare, mary.gail.hare@baltsun.com

The discovery of a discolored and worn-thin penny rarely generates enthusiasm, unless the discoverer is digging into history and the coin provides insight into the life of another era.

Brianne Reynolds, an anthropology student at the University of Maryland, College Park, found the 1891 penny while sifting through what remains of an Irish-American enclave in Baltimore County just north of Timonium.

"It's greenish so it stuck out in the red clay," Reynolds said. "It's definitely in the right period. It's larger and has the face of a Native American."

And since it was found among very old discarded bottles, it may have been spent a century ago at the local tavern.

"You never know what might have dropped out of people's pockets," said Stephen A. Brighton, assistant professor in the university's department of anthropology, who is directing the dig. "There were no recycling bins or garbage pits for household waste then. We could find things that date to the earliest inhabitants."

At the end of Church Lane, just off York Road in Cockeysville, Brighton is leading about a dozen archaeology students in what historians believe is the first survey of an Irish immigrant village in the United States.

The students have unearthed numerous bottles, coins, buttons and shards of pottery that help tell the story of the Irish quarry workers and their families, who settled the area and named it Texas, after the original destination that they never reached.

"About half that original town of Texas is a giant quarry today," Brighton said. "But imagine the road is not here and only a train traveled up and down with mail and other goods for the stone duplexes that were the homes of the Irish quarry workers."

The field school, which is funded by the university, was two years in the planning before Brighton chose Texas as the place most likely to yield information about the Irish Diaspora.

"The idea is to find objects people owned and used so we can piece together life stories and create larger stories of the daily life in Texas," Brighton said.

"Many studies have focused on the prominent families, but this is the first to look into the Irish working community."

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