

# Patrick Tracy Of Kilcarbery Played Leading Part In

## American Revolutionary History

Remarkable Story of Penniless Wexford Boy Whose Descendants Include Famous Soldiers, Statesmen, Judges, Captains of Industry

WITH the installation in Dublin of Mr. John Cudahy, the new American minister to the Saorstat, this is an appropriate week to reprint from the Boston, Mass. "Sunday Post" the remarkable story of Patrick Tracy, who left Kilcarbery, Enniscorthy, over two hundred years ago and founded a family in New England, members of which have figured prominently in the history of America.

The article, which is by Westby North, and appeared quite recently (August 1, 1937) in the Boston paper, does not bring the story of the Tracy family down to the present day. Presumably there are descendants of Patrick Tracy in many parts of the States, but there is nobody of the name now in Kilcarbery. The nearest man of the name that THE ECHO could trace is Mr. John Tracey, of Cathedral St., Enniscorthy, well-known insurance agent, whose father, Matthew Tracey, was born at Ballinapierce, half a mile from Kilcarbery, so it is probable that this family is related to Patrick Tracey. Kilcarbery (St. Cairbre's Church) is, of course, a very ancient name, known before Ballinapierce, and long ago it probably included the district now called Ballinapierce. Matthew Tracey, who was a baker in Cathedral St., died in 1912 at the age of 75. His brother, Michael, went to America about fifty years ago, and from there it is believed that he went to Australia, and was killed in a mine accident. There is a place at Kilcarbery still called "Tracy's land."

Mr. John Tracey had never heard of Patrick, the emigrant of 1730, but further light may be thrown on the subject by readers of THE ECHO. There may be still in Co. Wexford relatives of this family which has surely served a niche for itself in the history of old New England and the United States.

By the way, the Tracy family is mentioned in the story of a strange burial custom at St. John's (The Corrig), Enniscorthy. It is taken from Griffiths' "Chronicles of County Wexford" (1877), and is worth giving here before we get to the Boston story:

### FROM "GRIFFITHS' CHRONICLES"

SINGULAR BURIAL CUSTOM NEAR ENNISCORTHY.

In the grave-yard of the old Priory Church of St. John, near Enniscorthy was observed, until about 1825, a singular burial custom, rarely, if ever elsewhere. Three families in comfortable circumstances, named Tracey, Doyle and Daly, with others their connections buried their dead here without coffins. The body being brought in a well made coffin to the edge of the grave, the friends assembled around, and the body—the face for a few moments being uncovered in order to take their last look at the lamented departed—was laid in the grave, previously prepared with great care. The grave was made more than six feet deep and long to suit the purpose—and at each end a course of stone-work, without mortar, was raised over two feet high. Much care was given to providing a tough green sod, cut about seven feet long and two wide

own future. His patriotism, his steady rise to fame and wealth and his fine service, sterling character and rare personality, placed him among the handful of great men whose counsel guided statesmen and shaped the destiny of the young republic.

Patrick Tracy was Irish. Those four words compress a vast array of reason for the attitude of some historians of fame, in failing to record the mighty part played by genuine Irish in advancing civilization as we know it. English writers in large degree wrote their British Isles' history from one angle only—their own. A variety of motives were ascribed as causes of English interest in Ireland, from benevolent wish to extend the political blessings of London to Dublin to a one-sided ostensible desire to rescue Erin from the Clutches of Rome.

Actually, the Big Fingers of England, whose methods continue and flourish even in our own fair land, wanted to control outright the vast fertile areas, the available water-powers, the enormously rich metal and mineral tracts, and also to possess a fortress for defence. And the millions of Irish youth were desired as soldiery.

Irish Question Bitterly Acute Equally determined were the Big Fingers in Ireland, where in most instances were men inspired so,ely by love of country and a sense of duty to their own kind. From it all grew the bitterness and strife of generations; sedulous indeed were the activities of zealots, and although mutual lies were palpable, the rank and file long were disturbed and misled. In the youth-time of Patrick Tracy, Ireland was slightly less populous than England; only a century ago, Ireland had close to nine millions of inhabitants, or much more than double the present, while England had a scant fifteen millions.

The Irish question was lively even before the time of Elizabeth and the Stuarts; it was agonising in its acuteness during Cromwell's time, and never approached composure on a large scale. Even the recent election indicates continuing cleavages. Boston was closer to London, from its founding to the close of the Revolution, than many realise; and after the Republic was established, English policy at once turned to a fostering of intimacy with the dominant element here—and some incline to believe the policy persists.

Struggle to Keep Boston Anglicised We know that our New England writers of fame were as much at home in London, as at Boston; literary lions from the so-called Mother Country were social lions here. This was summarised by a comment thirty years ago by a famous man who said that "Boston still is loyal to King George III."

It should be kept in mind that Boston, too, had its Irish question almost from settlement! The settlers here, in 1692, were English, beyond dispute; they had as basis, the trading incentive; they aimed to keep it; they set up, through their church, a control over

Kidder family. Frederick Kidder, Esq., possessed the papers in 1850, and he treasured the documents for personal reasons.

These first Irish were stalwarts, the wretchedly poor peasantry, such as had not been butchered along with the soldiery trying to defend them, were deemed harmless. Cromwell planned benevolent pacification, after the show of overpowering might, and the exiles, the slaves, sent to Boston, were the pick of the people; healthy and strong, a possible menace at home, but considered harmless in Boston.

### Patrick Becomes Man of Note

Thus to Boston kin, came Patrick Tracy, in 1720, less than 19 years old, and later came his nephew, Nicholas Tracy, the distinguished, famous wealthy and exalted "Captain Nicholas Tracy, Gentleman," who also left many descendants of fame and honour.

Patrick journeyed to Newburyport and decided to become a mariner. He made many voyages to the West Indies, quickly became proficient in navigation, showed rare talent, became master, owner, and then engaged on his own account, as importer and exporter. His fortunes waxed, as did his standing in Essex county. When 31, he married Hannah Carter, of Hampton. Their two children died in infancy and the mother died in 1746, after four years of married life.

Patrick Tracy married again in 1749; Hanna Gookin, daughter of the Rev. Nathaniel Gookin, became his bride, great-granddaughter of the Rev. John Cotton, and connected with the Quincy family, she passed away in 1766, barely 33, leaving three little children, tenderly reared by their father. They were Nathaniel, born 1751; John, born 1753, and Hannah, born in 1755.

### Famous Descendants

It was this daughter, less than a year old when her mother died, apple of Patrick Tracy's eye, who married Colonel Jonathan Jackson, of Boston, when barely 17. Belle of Essex, a great heiress, a Tracy in every pore and proud of it, she proved a worthy daughter, and of their eight children, seven lived and flourished. These are the direct descendants of Patrick Tracy, through daughter, Hannah Tracy Jackson:

1—The first child, Robert, died when barely seven years of age.

2—Henry, Captain Henry. Married Hannah Swett. Among descendants were Dr. John B. Swett Jackson, Dr. Henry Jackson and Robert Tracy Jackson.

3—Charles, Hon. Charles of the State Supreme Court, and a leading lawyer; twice married, first to Amelia Lee, and, secondly, to Fanny Cabot. Among the descendants of Patrick Tracy's favourite grandson were General Charles Jackson Paine, Hon. Robert Treat Paine, John Torrey Morse and Judge Oliver Wendell Holmes.

### Retain Patrick as Family Name

4—Hannah Tracy Jackson, who married Hon. John Lowell, on Oct. 31, 1798. Her children and descendants include Hon. John Lowell, Jr., founder of the Lowell Institute; Judge John Lowell, and Judge Francis Cabot Lowell.

5—James, who, on Oct. 3, 1801, married Elizabeth Cabot, niece of United States Senator George Cabot; after 15 years she died, and Dr. James, grandson of Patrick Tracy, married her sister three years later. Among the descendants were Dr.

preparations for warfare and for home protection, and many of the privateers flew his flag. The royal governor and the army and navy heads at Boston were incensed at the "Irishman Tracy" and directed efforts against him, some, traitorous, in his own town. But he was unafraid; aging, he retained the fire of youth and he kept the faith.

### Interesting Will

The highly interesting "Old Newbury" and the history of Newburyport, now quite rarely found, detail the magnificent services of Patrick Tracy, John J. Currier, the historian, says. "In commercial as well as in mercantile affairs, Captain Tracy was eminently successful and maintained to the close of a long life the character of an honourable and upright man."

His will is an interesting document. It is No. 27,971, Essex County Probate. At his death his estate included four mansion houses and 212 ounces of silver plate. His mourning rings are sacred heirlooms, now possessed by Patrick Tracy Jackson, who also has a handsome portrait of Patrick Tracy, and another is in the family of Mrs. Frederick C. Shattuck, a descendant.

The Russell Leigh Jackson memoir of Patrick Tracy is inspiring.

So, too, is the thrilling story of Nicholas Tracy, his nephew, and his close associate, comrade, and who, too, rose to wealth and fame—and sided in founding the Republic. There were 110 vessels in the Tracy fleet, worth close to 3,000,000 dollars. There were 24 Tracy privateers with 340 guns and 2,800 men. Tracy ships captured 120 British vessels; Tracy funds flowed freely in loans to the government, and Tracy donated food and clothing literally poured into the navy.

### Reverenced by Descendants

However some historians inclined to treat Patrick Tracy, he was and is, revered by his descendants. Witness these two letters:

(From W. Raymond Lee to Henry Lee, Jr.)

"Roxbury, Oct. 2, 1866—Dear Colonel:

"An old gentleman of Newburyport, intensely interested in the history of that famous town, has asked me for the names, rank, etc., of the descendants of Patrick Tracy, who served in a military capacity during the War of the Rebellion. I have made up the following list. Is it full and correct?"

### GREAT-GRANDSONS

"Lee, W. R., colonel 20th Massachusetts Infantry, and brevet brigadier-general on the staff of His Excellency Governor Andrew.

"Lee, Henry Jr., lieutenant-colonel and aide de camp on the staff of Governor Andrew.

"Lee, Francis L., colonel 44th Massachusetts Infantry.

### GREAT GREAT-GRANDSONS

"Holmes Oliver Wendell Jr., lieutenant-colonel 20th Massachusetts Infantry.

"Paine, C. J., major-general volunteers.

"Paine, W. C., captain corps of engineers, United States Army.

"Paine, Sumner, second lieutenant, 20th Massachusetts Infantry.

"Russell, Cabot J., captain 54th Massachusetts Infantry.

"Lowell, C. R., colonel Second Massachusetts Cavalry and brigadier-general Volunteers.

"Lowell, J. J., first lieutenant, 20th Massachusetts Infantry.

"Storrow, C. S., Jr., captain, 44th Massachusetts Infantry.

"Storrow, Samuel, first lieutenant, 2nd Massachusetts Infantry.

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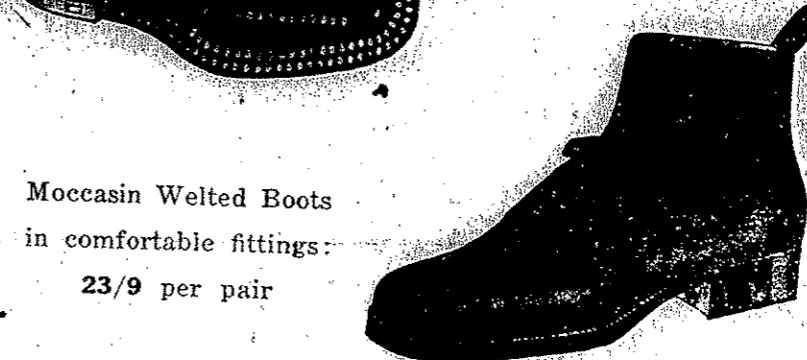
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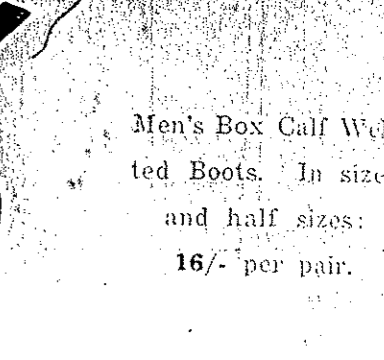
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