



Cullen

Annie

1895 - 1913



Children of Dominick Cullen & Mary Lyons



Annie Cullen was born on the 12th August, 1895 at Carrick, Ballinlough and was listed in the 1901 Census of Ireland as "Nannie" Cullen.

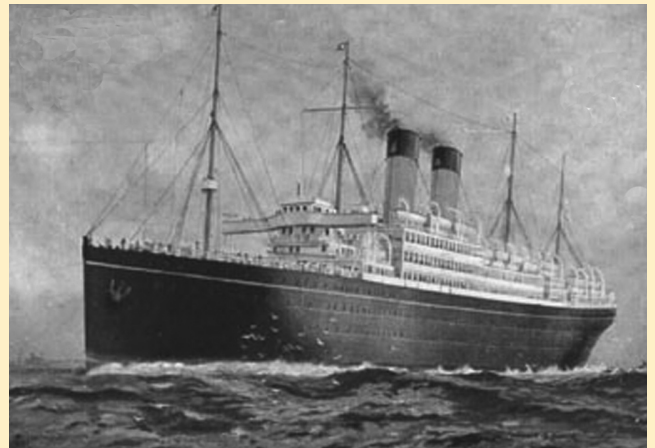
At just 17 years of age, she emigrated to America and sailed from Queenstown, the famous Cork harbour, on the immigrant passenger ship S.S. Baltic on the 1st of May 1913.

The last 35 days of her life

For those immigrants, like Annie, who travelled that day, St Colman's Cathedral was the last thing they saw as they left the harbour.

St Colman's dominates the Cobh hillside with its huge bell tower, now topped by a spire. Bells would ring until the ship exited the harbour and in turn, the ship would have sounded its horns. This was a continuing symbol of good luck wishes for the passage.

The S.S. Baltic as it looked in 1913



For those she left behind, it must have been quite a moving experience, to witness the ship gradually moving away until it eventually faded into the horizon. Ironically Queenstown was the final port of call for the ill-fated liner, Titanic, just one year earlier on her maiden voyage to the same destination.

The S.S. Baltic was a very large ship, built by Harland & Wolff, Belfast, Ireland in 1903. She was part of the famous White Star Line, and at the time, was the largest ship in the world, however a year later she was surpassed in size.



She was capable of carrying 393 cabin-class, 339 tourist-class and 1150 third-class passengers. Annie Cullen was one of those passengers who was in third class, known also as steerage accommodation.

Form 500 II
Department of Commerce and Labor
IMMIGRATION SERVICE

SALOON, CABIN, AND STEERAGE ALIENS MUST BE COMPLETELY MANIFESTED.

LIST OR MANIFEST OF ALIEN PASSENGERS FOR THE UNITED STATES

Required by the regulations of the Secretary of Commerce and Labor of the United States, under Act of Congress approved February 20, 1907, to be delivered

S. S. Baltic sailing from Queenstown 1st May, 1913

THIS SHEET IS FOR STEERAGE PASSENGERS.

List W

STATES IMMIGRATION OFFICER AT PORT OF ARRIVAL.

to the United States Immigration Officer by the Commanding Officer of any vessel having such passengers on board upon arrival at a port in the United States.

Arriving at Port of New York, 10 May, 1913

The S.S. Baltic's manifest (pictured above), with departure and arrival dates.

Although Annie's preferred final destination was Boston, Massachusetts, the S.S. Baltic would first take her to Ellis Island. This was, in 1913, the port of debarkation for immigrants to the States, arriving in New York. Ellis Island is an island in New York's bay, a few miles south of Manhattan. By having newcomers funnel through there, isolation could be imposed on those legally or medically in question regarding immigration. It could also help newcomers, like Annie Cullen, to plan their next steps.

1177618	✓	Deignan	✗	Bridie	17	4	1/8	Servant	Ballinlough	Bathie Michael Deignan Clomeric Ballinlough
1199629	✓	Sheridan	✗	Mary	20	✓	1/8	"	"	M. E. Sheridan Cashel Ballinlough
11996310	✓	Cullen	✗	Annie	17	✓	1/8	Farmer	"	Bathie Dominick Cullen Carrick Ballinlough
312024111	✓	Neary	✗	Thomas	24	✓	1/8	Lab	Castletinkell	Bathie Jim Neary Castletinkell Ballinlough
11024212	✓	Gill	✗	Bridget	19	✓	1/8	Servant	Prendpark	Bathie Mrs Gill Prendpark Ballinlough
311996513	✓	Winstan	✗	Margie	20	4	1/8	"	Ballinlough	Bathie Alfred Winstan Carrick Ballinlough
11996614	✓	L. Lynn	✗	Delea	17	4	1/8	"	"	Bathie Thomas L. Lynn Castletinkell Ballinlough

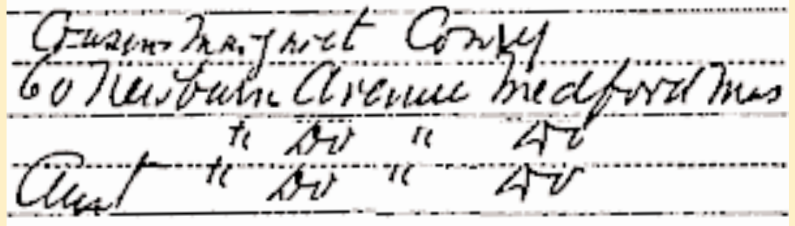
Annie and fellow Ballinlough immigrants listed on the ship's manifest (above).

But before that, there would be 10 long days aboard the ship, and for some, the excitement of reaching their new land would have made the journey seem even longer. Many of those travelling would previously have considered it a big treat to travel to Dublin or perhaps even neighbouring counties in Ireland. Now they were facing the longest journey of their lives and the rough waters and very average conditions in steerage accommodation would be nothing like the comforts they had at home.

Annie Cullen was listed as 17 years of age with fair hair, blue eyes and 5' 6" tall. Many lied about their age in those days to gain passage, but Annie's age is correct. Her

father was listed as Dominick Cullen, Carrick, Ballinlough and it is also noted that she was going to stay with a family member in America, listing her aunt as Margaret Conry, of 60 Newbern Avenue, Medford, Mass.

(See right)



Mary Sheridan, also of Ballinlough, was written directly above Annie on the ship's manifest and was also noted as going to the same address in Medford - but in her case, Margaret Conry was listed as Mary's cousin. (See above)

Margaret Conry was Annie's mother's sister - Margaret (nee Lyons) Conroy, who was four years younger than her eldest sister, but I have not yet been able to work out the exact relationship between Margaret and Mary Sheridan.

Life aboard the SS Baltic

Ten days would have been a long time in the crowded ship, but there is no doubt the Irish girls would have been great travelling companions for each other, especially the five girls from Ballinlough.

The S.S. Baltic's Third Class Dining Salon in 1913 (pictured right)

Mary Sheridan was 20 years of age, and although three years older than Annie, that would have made no difference on this journey. Her father was listed as Martin Sheridan of Cashel, Ballinlough.



Bridie Deignan was another on the list and she was the same age as Annie. Perhaps these two 17-year-olds had been at school together? Bridie's father was listed as Michael Deignan of Clooncrim, Ballinlough. Clooncrim was located next to the townland of Carrick and her family might have been very close neighbours of Annie's mother, Mary Lyons, who lived in Clooncrim before she was married.



S.S. Baltic Third Class Lounge in 1913 (pictured left).

While there would have been a lot of concern about a young 17-year-old daughter embarking on such a dangerous journey, Dominick Cullen and his wife,

Mary, might have taken some comfort in knowing that she was travelling in the company of neighbours, whom they were good friends with, and also that there were five girls in total, who would surely look out for each other.

It would be very unlikely either of the girls would have had their parent's full consent if they did not have such close travelling companions to accompany them.

There was another 17 year old girl onboard, called Delia Flynn, whose father was Thomas Flynn of Currisloustia, near Ballinlough and again perhaps she and Bridie and Annie attended school together in Carrick.

The fifth girl was 20 year old Maggie Winston, whose father was Alfred Winston of Carrick, Ballinlough. So it is very likely these five girls in particular would have shared many songs and stories on the long journey across the Atlantic.

The spelling of surnames and townlands on the ship's list is inaccurate in many cases, as would be expected, but nevertheless it is easy to make out most names. Annie Cullen is listed as having \$25 in her possession at that time. Strangely, she also listed as a farmer, while the



other four girls are all listed as servants. The trip took 10 days and the S.S. Baltic arrived at Ellis Island on the 10th of May.

Ellis Island (pictured left) – The sight that would have greeted the excited immigrants on board the S.S. Baltic as she neared her final destination.

The Inspection Process

When Annie and her friends docked at Ellis Island they had numbered tags pinned to their clothes which indicated the ship's list page and line number on which their names appeared. These numbers were later used by Immigration Inspectors to cross-reference immigrants about their right to land.

The entrance to the main building, pictured in 1913

The new arrivals formed a line, which stretched from the Ellis Island dockside into the Baggage Room of the main building, winding its way up to the second floor where the immigrants were met by a team of doctors and inspectors who would decide



their health. They were required to undergo the legal and medical examinations required for admission to enter the United States.

Three abreast, the immigrants would have made their way up the steep flight of stairs and into the Great Hall, or Registry Room. Although many did not know it, the inspection process had already begun. Scanning the moving line for signs of illness,

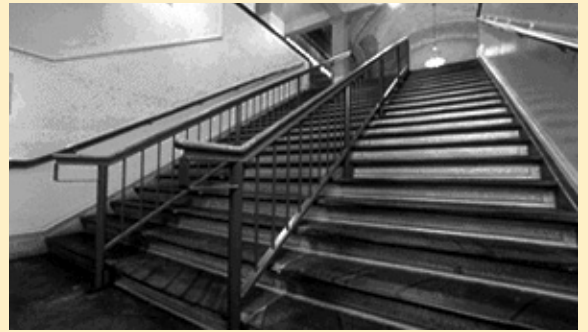
Public Health Service doctors looked to see if anyone wheezed, coughed, shuffled, or limped as they climbed the steep ascent. *The Great Hall in 1913 (pictured left).*



A United States Public Health physician observed them in what came to be known as the "six-second exam". He was looking for tell-

tale signs of a list of diseases which were grounds for deportation or short-term detention at the island's contagious disease hospital.

The Stairs as it was in 1913 (pictured right)

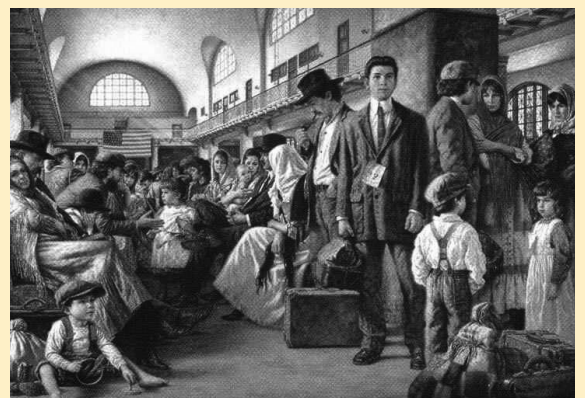


Next, the newcomers lined up in front of the "eye man," who used a button-hook implement to turn eye-lids up, as he looked for trachoma and other eye diseases, Trachoma, a highly contagious ailment, was, and still remains, grounds for refusal of entry. *The Eye Examination (pictured below).*



Most of the immigrants passed through the line easily, but the physicians placed chalk marks on others, a sign that they should report to the medical examination rooms for further scrutiny. An E for eye problems, a H for heart, L for lameness, SC for scalp, X for mental disease, and so on. Those with incurable or disabling ailments, however, were excluded and returned to their port of departure at the expense of the steamship line on which they arrived.

At the far end of the Registry Hall, the legal inspectors stood behind tall desks, assisted by interpreters fluent in major languages and any number of obscure dialects. Although the interrogation that immigrants were to face lasted only a matter of minutes, it took an average of five hours to pass through the inspection process at Ellis Island. Two thousand or more aliens, of all ages, could be crammed into this great room at one time.



Once examined, immigrants waited for their friends or family, hoping that they would not be separated. Needless to say, Annie Cullen and her friends were re-united.

First Name:	Annie
Last Name:	Cullen
Ethnicity:	British Irish
Last Place of Residence:	Ballinlough, Ireland
Date of Arrival:	May 10, 1913
Age at Arrival:	17
Gender:	F
Marital Status:	S
Ship of Travel:	S.S. Baltic
Port of Departure	Queenstown
Manifest Line Number:	0010

Annie Cullen's Passenger Record (pictured above).

Once processed, the girls headed for the pier and would have taken a ferry to Manhattan and from there, most likely a subway up-town to a major train station. It would have been here Annie would have seen the last of some of her friends.

A New Beginning - A Tragic Ending

Bridie Deignan had reached her final destination at this point and would have been met by her New York relatives. Delia Flynn would also go in a separate direction and said her good-byes to the others and boarded a train for Philadelphia.


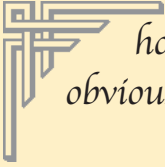
Waiting for the Ferry (right)



Annie, Mary Sheridan and Maggie Winston would then have taken a train to Boston, a distance of 231 miles from New York, a journey of five or six hours in those days. Once there, they would again be forced to part company as Maggie's relatives lived in the town of Lynn, just north of Boston. Annie and Mary would have taken a train to Medford Station, a short walk from their new home in a new country.

Annie's mother, Mary (nee Lyons), was the eldest of six children and Annie's aunt, Margaret Conry, whom both girls went to stay with, was the fourth child in that family, four years younger than her sister Mary. She had emigrated to Boston before the turn of the century.

The 1910 US Census lists Martin F. Conry and his wife Margaret, living at 567 Saratoga Street, East Boston with three young children. The 1920 US Census



however lists the same family at 60 Newbern Avenue, Medford, so they had obviously moved there some time between 1910 and Annie's arrival in 1913.

Margaret was listed in the Census as being Irish born with Irish parents and her husband, Martin was Massachusetts born, also with Irish parents. In 1910 they were listed as having three children and in 1920 they had four, the youngest, a girl named Josephine, aged eight at the time. This further confirms that Annie's niece was, according to the newspaper articles at the time, just two years old in 1913. Margaret Conry's age in 1920 is given as 48 years, which also coincides with her date of birth and indeed proves that she was the sister of Mary Lyons and subsequently Annie Cullen's aunt.

In the same newspaper report, Annie is said to have made several friends in her short time in Boston and had spent a lot of her time visiting. One such friend lived in Ball Square, Somerville - perhaps another girl she met on the ship.


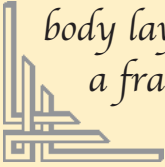
It was Annie's habit to take her little cousin, Josephine, out with her when she went on her visits and on June 4th 1913 she and Josephine were returning home from Ball Square. Josephine, at two years of age, was unable to walk long distances, but liked to toddle along after Annie. Whenever she tired, or Annie wished to hurry, she would have to carry the child.

It had been just over two hours since they left home, and after their visit, started on their return journey. Annie had to cross the railway track at North Somerville Station to get to where her aunt lived just 200 yards beyond.

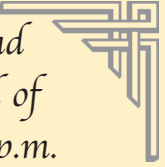
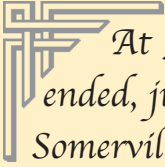
It was a quiet time of day with very few people at the train station and little Josephine was in her arms as she waited on the platform for an in-bound freight train to pass. Once out of sight, she proceeded to cross the tracks, but the train's smoke still lay under a nearby bridge and had obscured another on-coming train on the other track.

At this stage, Annie and the little girl, were in the centre of the second line of track with the black locomotive bearing down upon them. Annie screamed as she saw it and in a split second, threw the little girl onto the wooden platform facing her.

Little Josephine rolled over and cried on the platform holding a sore left leg, but the mangled body of Annie lay some 50 feet beyond. Annie was struck by the huge engine and knocked 30 feet ahead. Her body landed on the track, and although the engineer was putting all the emergency brakes down hard, it was still 30 feet more before the huge engine came to a full stop.



The train caught the body of the girl again and had dragged it the intervening distance. The body lay against a telegraph pole by the side of the tracks. Annie Cullen had sustained a fracture of the scull and left leg and died in a few minutes.



At 3.09 p.m. on the 4th June 1913, Annie Cullen's short visit to America had ended, just 10 weeks short of her 18th birthday. Medical Examiner, Dr. Durnell of Somerville, viewed the body and she was removed by an undertaker around 3.45 p.m.

The same day, a Bill was introduced in the United States Senate, proposing to restrict immigration. That bill might have excluded this eighteen year old girl from this country.

A newspaper editorial, the next day, wrote: "How many of our ninety million people could surpass her in nobility? She stood on a railroad track in front of an oncoming express train. She had time only to choose between herself and the little child. She chose the child and threw it to safety on the station platform. If that girl could have lived, would this country not have been richer for her presence?"

No general test, whether of literacy or of the possession of worldly goods, can ascertain the desirability of an immigrant. If they have character and health and the capacity to be assimilated by our people without deterioration, they are desirable immigrants. They bring to us an ample surplus of capital when they bring us character, good health, energy and ambition.



Whether Annie Cullen could read or write is not reported. But no books could ever give her the character and noble unselfishness which made her forget herself and yet permitted her to retain her self-possession and self-control while she saved the child.

No one knows what Annie Cullen might have done for this country if it had been given her to live.

Girls like Annie Cullen have been the mothers of great men. In the approaching emancipation of women, perhaps this girl might have been a Joan of Arc to the people of this country in some social or political crisis of the years to come".

(See full account of newspaper articles on next two pages).

Annie Cullen's funeral service was held on Saturday, the 7th June 1913 at St. Clement's Church, South Medford and she was buried at St. Paul's Cemetery, Arlington, which was part of the Catholic Cemetery Association of Boston.



The Boston Post

THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 1913

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ONE CENT

GIRL GIVES UP HER LIFE FOR BABY

Annie Cullen, 18 years old, crossing tracks at Somerville as express roared down, tosses child to safety and dies beneath engine.

Had been in this country for but two weeks

Came from Ireland to seek fortune here

Threw baby to one side just in time

AN ANNIE CULLEN, 18 years of age, who came to this country from Ireland two weeks ago, was killed by an express train at the North Somerville Station yesterday afternoon, after she had thrown to safety her baby cousin, whom she held in her arms when she saw her peril.

An instant later the baby rolled crying on the station platform and the mangled form of the brave girl lay 50 feet beyond.

Sees train too late

A freight train had just passed the North Somerville Station. On the Somerville side, Annie Cullen was waiting to get to the home of her aunt, 200 yards beyond the intervening tracks.

As soon as the long freight had passed, inward bound and on the side which the girl stood, she started to cross the tracks. She had reached the centre of the second track and R. F. Sutton, the Station Telegrapher, said to Station Agent King: "My God, man look at the girl on the track".

A bridge abuts the station and the moving freight had obscured the out-bound track. The train's smoke still lay under the bridge and must have hidden the on-coming engine. When in the very middle of the out-bound track, the train, an express, was directly upon her.

A few feet only lay between the great black locomotive and the girl, but in the instant she hurled the child from her. Almost in the same breath she was struck.

The accident occurred at 3.09 in the afternoon. The train which struck the girl was an express from Boston to Lowell. Miss Cullen was returning home from a visit to friends in Ball Square, Somerville.

Returning From Visit

Since her arrival in this country she had been living with her aunt, Mrs Martin Conry, of 60 Newbern Avenue, South Medford. In the two weeks of her time in this country she had made several friends. It was her habit to take her little cousin, Josephine, out with her when she went on her visits.

Yesterday afternoon she carried the child with her. The little girl, but 2 years of age, is just able to walk. For a time she toddled along, but when Annie wished to hurry she would have to carry the child.

She had left the Conry house at 1 o'clock in the afternoon. She reached the home of her friends, and after a short visit, started on her return journey.

From Broadway, Somerville the walk down to North Somerville Station is down a somewhat steep path. The station is one of the old-fashioned kind built of wood and stands directly north of the bridge spanning Broadway.

Years ago it was known as the Willow Bridge Station.

The bridge, from the unshielded platform is only a distance of some 18 feet. There is seldom much traffic at the station during the day so it happened there were no persons there to warn the girl, a stranger, of the peril which lay in crossing the station tracks without first seeing what was coming.

The peril is doubled by the presence of the bridge which shade the approaching trains, especially after a train has just passed and the smoke from it hangs beneath the structure of the bridge.

Thus it was yesterday, and into this trap the unsuspecting girl walked to her death.

Dragged to her death

Annie Cullen was struck and knocked 30 feet by the engine. Her body landed on the track, and although the engineer was putting all the emergency brakes down hard, it was still 30 feet more before the huge engine came to a full stop.

It had caught the body of the girl again and had dragged it the intervening distance. The body lay against a telegraph pole by the side of the tracks.

The engineer, conductor and many passengers, alarmed by the sudden halting of the express left the train. They grouped forward where the body lay, they had heard the story of the girl, but before they got to her she had died.

The Boston Daily Globe

BOSTON, THURSDAY MORNING, JUNE 5, 1913

VOL. LXXXIII - No. 156

DOOMED GIRL SAVES CHILD

HURLS IT ACROSS PATH OF RUSHING TRAIN

Miss Annie Cullen Killed At North Somerville

Two-Year-Old Josephine Conway Slightly Injured

▲MEDFORD, June 4 – Miss Annie Cullen, aged 18 years, was struck and almost instantly killed by the outward-bound express on the Southern Division of the Boston & Maine at 3.09 o'clock this afternoon while crossing over the tracks at the North Somerville Station.

▲Little Josephine Conway, aged 2 years, youngest child of Mr and Mrs Martin F. Conroy of 60 Newbern Avenue, South Medford, with whom Miss Cullen was staying, was thrown by the Cullen woman from her arms when she saw the express train bearing down upon her.

▲The child landed safely on the wooden platform on the east side of the track, sustaining a slight wrench of the left leg. Miss Cullen was out with the child for a walk and was on her way to the residence of her aunt on Newbern Avenue.

▲She waited while an in-bound freight train went past the station at North Somerville and stepped on the tracks behind the freight carriages from the West Platform on the Somerville side.



▲Apparently she did not hear or see the approaching express. When the engine was almost past the station the woman saw it, and with a cry, threw the child from her arms across the path of the flyer to the opposite platform.

▲The engine struck Miss Cullen and tossed her a considerable distance. She sustained a fracture of the skull and left leg and died in a few minutes.

▲The little girl was picked up by

women living nearby while the Station Agent ran to the spot where the body of Miss Cullen landed.

▲Medical Examiner, Dr. Durnell of Somerville, viewed the body and it was removed by an undertaker around 3.45 o'clock.

▲This particular crossing is regarded as very dangerous. Several fatal accidents have happened there in the past few years.

▲A movement was started some time ago by the Medford and Somerville City Governments to have a subway built beneath the tracks of the railroad at this point on Boston Avenue, so that the tracks and station are partly in the cities of Medford and Somerville.

▲Miss Cullen was a native of County Roscommon, Ireland and came to this country about four weeks ago to her aunt's residence at 60 Newbern Avenue.

She has a father and mother, several sisters and brothers in Ireland.

▲The funeral services will probably be held on Saturday morning at St. Clement's Church, South Medford.