

History

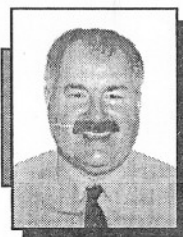
Carrolls were upstanding members of the community

Part Three

In 1874, the great-great-grandparents of Donna Ramsey of Colorado, Joe and Margaret Carroll, and their eight children, left the coalfields of Pennsylvania to seek a new life in the cotton mills of eastern Connecticut. The Carroll family became upstanding members of Willimantic's Irish-American community during the late 19th and earlier 20th centuries.

When Margaret Carroll died in 1897, Jeremiah O'Sullivan and John Hickey, two of Willimantic's leading Irish-Americans, appraised her property. O'Sullivan was the city's leading builder, who had built many of the fine Victorian homes on the hill district. Hickey was the proprietor of J. Hickey & Co., the city's leading drugstore.

As is often the case with economic migration, the Carroll family stayed barely two generations in the city. Last week, we looked at the lives of the



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Carrolls' eldest three children. Today we continue with the remaining five.

The Carrolls' fourth child, James, was born in 1858 in Philadelphia. He married Elizabeth A. Lee, "Lizzie Lee," in Willimantic, on July 21, 1896, and earned a living as an "oil dealer" from a house located on the North Windham Road. James and Elizabeth's only child, James Arthur Carroll, was born in Willimantic in 1897. Elizabeth died on Dec. 4, 1916, in Willimantic at the age of 55. She was born in Ireland in 1861. James Arthur Carroll tragically died at age 21 during the national flu epidemic on Oct. 5, 1918, at 41 Prospect St.

He was single. His father died one week later on Oct. 12, 1918, age 60.

The fifth child, Sarah Jane, was born 1859 at Carbondale, Pa. She was the longest surviving of the eight children, dying at 41 Prospect St. on July 22, 1943, age 84. She never married. Her obituary noted: "Miss Sarah Jane Carroll, 82, a resident here for the past 75 years and widely known and highly respected, died last night at her home, 41 Prospect Street after a brief illness."

Sarah's sister Eliza was the sixth child. She was born later in 1859 at Scranton, Pa. Eliza also remained unmarried and died at age 80 in the Prospect Street house on April 8, 1939.

The seventh Carroll offspring, Julia, provided the productive line of the family. She was born in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., in 1863. In 1891, she married James Bulger, a laborer residing in Jackson Place. Their daughter Gladys was born in Willimantic on March 25, 1893. In 1894,

James' railroad job relocated the family to New London. James and Julia had a daughter, Mildred, in New London in 1897, but shortly afterwards the couple separated and Julia and her daughters came back to Willimantic to live in the family home on Prospect Street. Julia and her daughters, Gladys and Mildred Bulger, all worked in the American Thread mills. Julia contracted tuberculosis and died at age 60 at 41 Prospect St. in 1923. Gladys married a man of French Canadian descent and lived in Willimantic. Mildred married and relocated to New Bedford, Mass.

Little is known of the life of Joe and Margaret's eighth and final child, Mary. She was born at Carbondale, Pa., during the Civil War. She was a millworker and died unmarried at the Carrolls' Spruce Street property at age 36.

Next Week: The Willimantic lives of the Morin family.



Julia Carroll's daughter, Gladys Bulger Morin, seen here in 1959, was born in Willimantic in 1893 and had 12 children. She was Donna Ramsey's grandmother.

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