

SHARED FAMILY HISTORY

There were once five siblings, Leo Jr., Kenneth, Jean, Kitty, and Bob. They were each born in Richmond, Virginia with Catholic parents and grand-parents. Their parents were Genevieve Emms Nott (1896-1978) and Leo James Kelleher (1898-1956), married in 1920 at Saint Peter's Catholic Church in Richmond. In 1940 the family moved to Greensboro NC where Leo bought a scrap metal business, Southern Converting, and was very successful, installing his family in the beautiful home at 401 West Bessemer Avenue. Genevieve raised her five children with an interesting mixture of involvement and inattention, and outlived her husband by 22 years.

Genevieve's parents were Edith Marie Emms (1871-1950) and Frank Hancock Nott (1865-1939). Edith was born in Norwich, Norfolk, England and came to this country with her parents and siblings when she was 12. She raised ten children and was active in charitable and political activities, serving as a director of the League of Women Voters in Richmond. Frank became a very successful "junk dealer" / scrap metal merchant. His obituary notes that he was among the first employers in Richmond to introduce the profit-sharing system at his plant.

Edith's parents (Genevieve's grandparents) were Sarah Ann Hoare (1847-1898) and Walter Augustus Meadows Emms (1839-1885). Sarah was born in London and was working as a domestic servant at age 14. Her father, James Hoare, was a butler in the household of a cleric at the University of Durham in northern England. Walter was born in Norwich and when he married Sarah he was a "linen draper" with a shop in Norwich. They married at St. Clement's Church of England in Norwich in 1870. Walter is listed in the London papers as having several bankruptcies, and he, Sarah, and their four children came to this country in 1883. It seems that Sarah and Walter parted ways very soon after arriving, and Sarah was proprietor of a millinery shop on Broad Street in Richmond for many years. Though she and Walter and presumably Edith were of the Anglican faith, Sarah and her children converted to Catholicism after arriving in Richmond. The Emms can be traced back to the 1600s in Norwich.

Frank's parents (Genevieve's grandparents) were Lucy Hardaman Bradley (1835-1910) and William Sarsfield Nott (1831-1893). Lucy was born in Harrison District, Charles City county (southeast of Richmond), and William was born in Richmond. Lucy's father was a plantation owner with many slaves, and William and his family, though city dwellers, were slave-owners also. Neither family was Catholic, so perhaps their son Frank converted when he married Edith. Lucy's people were in Virginia for many generations (Genevieve would mention her FFV lineage, "First Families of Virginia") with wealthy lifestyles always based on slavery. They came originally from England. William's father Robert Nott was born in County Kerry, Ireland, and his mother's parents, the Hethertons, came to Richmond from Edinburgh, Scotland.

Leo's parents were Mary Teresa "Mamie" McDonnell (1860-1931) and Lawrence John Kelleher (1864-1936). Mary was born in Kilkee, County Clare, Ireland and came to this country as a young child. She raised five children, teaching them to value education and hard work, and her daughter-in-law Genevieve remembered her as always very kind. Leo's father Lawrence was born in Baltimore soon after his parents arrived in this country from Ireland. As a boy Lawrence worked as a coal breaker while his father worked as a laborer in the mines of Saint Clair, Schuylkill, Pennsylvania. He and Mary married at Saint Peter's Catholic Church in Richmond in 1889, and he was an employee at the City Gas Works, among other jobs.

Mary's parents (Leo's grandparents) were Bridget Ellen Houlihan (1831-1885) and Michael McDonnell (1820-1891). Bridget and Michael were both born in Kilkee, Clare, Ireland and came to this country sometime before 1862. Michael is listed as a laborer and later a farmer, first in Albany, Bradford, Pennsylvania, and then buying land and farming in Chesterfield county, south of Richmond.

Lawrence's parents (Leo's grandparents) were Ann O'Connor (1835-1907) and Daniel Kelleher (1835-1911). Daniel came from Millstreet, Cork, Ireland and came to this country sometime in the 1860s. Ann's tombstone (Mt. Calvary in Richmond) says she was born in County Kerry so they must have met in this country. After many years of punishing work in the mines of Schuylkill county, Daniel moved his family to Richmond where at one time they used a large front room as a grocery store. Daniel is also listed as a night-watchman at the railroad yard. This branch of our family suffered the most grinding poverty, and we can only be thankful that they were strong enough to survive, securing our place in the comfortable lives that would have amazed them.