

In September 1953, my aunt, Gladys Whalen Stoddard (1893-1973), wrote about her paternal grandfather, Thomas Whalen. Gladys was my father's sister and the eldest child of Thomas's only son, Charles C. Whalen and his wife Leta Mary Clarke Whalen. A photocopy of Gladys's four-page document is included at the end of the transcription as are photos of Gladys, Thomas, and others mentioned in the document.

As a rule, transcriptions of historical documents remain strictly faithful to the original and I believe other family members may have already transcribed and privately published this material.

The following transcription, however, is not strictly faithful to Gladys's original. Firstly, the "original" in my possession is actually a photocopy in which some of right side text is missing. I have compensated for the missing text as I think it probably would have read. Additionally, I believe the frequency of typographical and punctuation errors make the "original" very difficult to read. So below is a heavily edited version of Aunt Gladys's original document. Footnotes are included to help today's readers better identify the people she wrote about.

Loretta Whalen Stamps, August 2021

September 1, 1953

Aunt Sadie Sprague¹ was here a week ago Sunday. She thought Grandpa Whalen² was from Dublin, Ireland. However, I am sure Papa³ used to tell us Grandpa Whalen was from Queen's County.⁴ She thought Grandpa landed in New York, but I think Papa told us it was Boston. She thought five brothers came from Ireland. But Papa used to tell us three came.

Papa said they got separated after they landed and they never saw or heard of one of them again. Could his name have been Henry? Anyway, Thomas and Mike⁵ stayed together and started inland. Mike got as far as Little Falls, New York and said that was where he was going to stay, but Thomas went farther to Adams.

Thomas's children and Mike's children always kept in touch with each other and Ella Cogovan, Mike's daughter, used to come here in the summer. I remember her. Aunt Sadie used to go to Little Falls to visit. There was another sister and after she was married I think her name was Arnold. She had a daughter that came here when she was a young lady. I think the Arnold cousin sent me a present when I graduated from high school. It was a mesh purse of silver.

Grandmother (Sarah Whalen) would have been 16 years old in November following her marriage to Thomas in August. Thomas was 28 years old. Their first child, Mary Ellen⁶ (Aunt Ell Stratton) was born after they had been married a year. Emma Jane⁷ (Aunt Emm Whalen) was born a couple of years later.

It was not until after Emma was born that any of Sarah's people came to see her. They were the Green⁸ family of Adams Center and they were aristocrats, but, she

¹ Sarah Whalen Sprague (1877-1961), Thomas and Sarah Greene Whalen's youngest child and wife of Mark Sprague (1874-1952)

² Grandpa Whalen here refers to Thomas Whalen

³ Papa is Gladys's father Charles C. Whalen

⁴ Queen's County, Ireland is now County Laois (also spelled Leix), Ireland.

⁵ "Mike" Whalen's actual name was William. We have documented his family in Little Falls, New York. e

⁶ Thomas and Sarah's daughter Mary Ellen, her husband was Job Nelson Stratton.

⁷ Emma Jean Whalen here, her name is also sometimes seen as Emogene, and usually Em.

⁸ The family used the spelling of Greene (with an "e").

said, they no doubt made up their minds that Sarah had got a good man. He had moved to a farm with Sarah. Aunt Sadie said, “Sarah was a young woman, you might say just a girl, she had a lot to overcome.” She meant being neglected by her folks. Then Sarah’s sister married James Heath⁹ and the Heaths were the aristocratic type.

Aunt Sadie said Thomas was a tender-hearted man. He couldn’t kill a chicken. He would hold the chicken on his arm and pet it and stroke its head and say, “Poor little biddy, poor little biddy and Sarah would take the chicken and kill it.

He would never punish the children. He would not shake them or slap them or scold them. Sarah had to take any measure like that herself. Once Ellen was a little girl and she got mad and said she was going to run away. She packed her a bundle of clothes and started away and she sat on the fence. Thomas said, “The poor little girl. You should go and get her.” Sarah said, “No, I’m not going to get her.” Thomas went and talked to her and brought her back.

Thomas had a heavy head of curly hair when his children were young. For some reason he was advised to have his hair shaved, then the hair would continue to be thick. He had it shaved and it never grew back.

(It is my own hazy belief that Thomas had trouble at times with eczema. When I was very small, I was afflicted with eczema, and Sarah told my mother how to cure it. I had to take bottles of Hood’s Sassafras, and for soap use Cuticura soap. And I think the tendency toward eczema came from Thomas.)

Aunt Sadie said Thomas died of a broken heart. He had a nervous breakdown; it was not insanity. The government wanted to buy his farm next to Madison Barracks.¹⁰ He had to sell it. Mr. Lepper¹¹ told me when I was very young, “It killed your grandfather Whalen when he had to sell his farm. He was one of the hardest working men and he was a good man.”

⁹ Lencha Lovilla Greene (1844-1915) and her husband James Heath.

¹⁰ United States Army post Madison Barracks, in Sackets Harbor, New York. The Whalen and Lepper farms were taken up in an 1891 expansion of the post.

¹¹ A neighbor of Thomas Whalen

Aunt Sadie said Thomas and Sarah would go away with the horse and buggy looking for a farm to buy. Toward the south they would go, and toward the north, and everything was too far away, or he didn't like it. He would come home and cry. He loved his farm. He got so he couldn't eat. He talked about the signing of the papers. He hurt. Sarah was so good to him, Sadie said, and rubbed his arms and head, and tried to get him to eat. Sarah got an extension of time and they stayed there.

Aunt Sadie said Thomas had two houses. He had the house he lived in. It is the house now owned by Jake Long¹². The other one he rented to Ellen and Job Stratton. That house is now owned by Charley Root. Those houses were moved [off the expanded military reservation] after Grandfather Thomas died.

Grandfather Thomas had cream and milk and eggs and crops. All winter he received no rent from the little house. He sent eggs and milk and food to the little house. They didn't have it and he would not let them want for food. He was too kind-hearted. (The way Ellen was provided for was referred to for years by the other sisters in the family.)

The cellar of Thomas was full at wintertime with potatoes apples, and vegetables. I have heard my father say, "Pa always got ready for winter."

Thomas, Sadie said, was noted for being honest. He always had money. Uncle Job told me, "Your grandfather Whalen always had money in his pocket." Aunt Sadie said once there was a condition that Thomas was not responsible for, it was about a cow, and a man said Thomas should pay for the cow that was lost or injured or whatever was the matter. The man wanted \$6. After a time, the man paid Thomas back the \$6 because he learned he'd taken it from the wrong man.

Aunt Sadie told about going to the cemetery when she was little and playing with other children there. They climbed on monuments. While she was climbing on one monument, the top of another monument broke off and fell over. Although she did

¹² A resident of Sackets Harbor in 1953.

not do it, the other children said she was to blame because, they said, her father would pay for it. Thomas paid for the damage. After a while the one who took the \$8 returned it to Thomas. He found out that Sadie had been unjustly accused.

Even my mother¹³ says at the present time that Thomas was a good man, an honest man, and a hardworking man. However, the Irish were a curiosity in the days that Thomas came over, especially odd to the Clarks/Maxons.¹⁴ and the Greens who were relatives of Pa.

I have heard Papa tell, and Aunt Sadie told it again, how Thomas was working for a farmer. I have heard Sarah Whalen tell this also. Thomas spread butter on his bread at dinner time and he spread it thick. The farmer asked Thomas, "Is that the way they put on butter in Ireland?" "No," said Thomas, "I'll show you how they put butter on in Ireland." He turned the slice of bread over and coated the other side thickly with butter. "That's the way they put butter on in Ireland," he said.

Aunt Sadie said the three brothers (or she seems to think there were four but I am sure there were three) left sisters and brothers in Ireland. She often considered writing to Ireland to learn about them.

There was an enlarged picture of Thomas which Sarah always had for years in her home on the wall of the house where Addie and Carol Scanlon live. She also had an enlarged picture of Katie¹⁵, and one of Sadie, and I am sure there was an enlarged picture of Sarah.

Thomas Whalen did not follow the Catholic worship. Aunt Sadie said he was a Catholic in his youth, but he did not remain a Catholic. He fell out with the Catholic church she says before he left Ireland. Whether he was ever a Catholic cannot be said by me. He never went to church.

¹³ Leta Clarke Whalen

¹⁴ Clarks [Clarkes] were Leta Clarke Whalen's paternal relatives; the Maxons [Maxsons] were her maternal relatives.

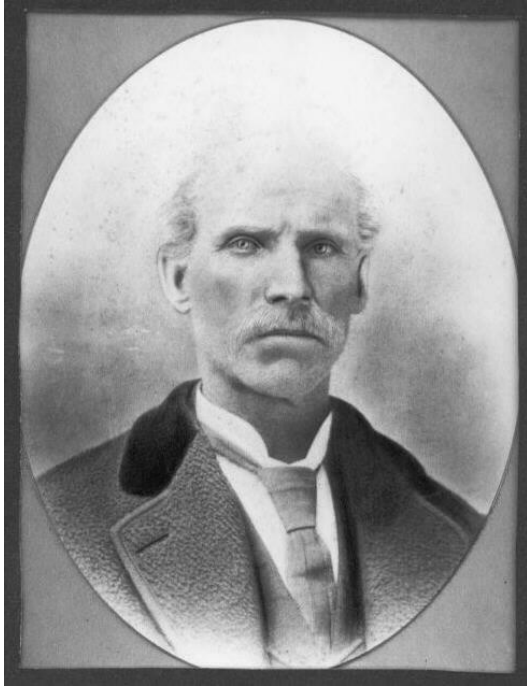
¹⁵ Thomas and Sarah's daughter Katie (1868-1886)



Gladys Whalen Stoddard (1893-1973), about 1955



Sadie Whalen Sprague (1877-1961)



Thomas Whalen (about 1826-1891)



Sarah Drusilla Greene Whalen (1838-1915)



Mary Ellen Whalen Stratton (1859-1925) and Job Nelson Stratton (1856-1940), about 1895.



Emma Jean (Emogene) Whalen (1859-1929)



Katie Whalen (1868-1886)

A Photocopy of Gladys Whalen Stoddard's Original Four-page, Typewritten Document

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Grandmother (Sarah) Whalen would have been 16 years old in November following her marriage to Thomas in August. Thomas was 28 years old. Their first child Mary Ellen (Aunt Ell Stratton) was born after they had been married a year, Emma Jane (Aunt Emm Whalen) was born a couple of years later. It was not until after Emma was born that any of Sarah's people came to see her. They were the Green family of Adams Center and Green Settlement. They did not approve of her marriage as Aunt Sadie said they were aristocrats but she said they no doubt made up their minds that Sarah had got a good man. he had moved to a farm with Sarah. Aunt Sadie said A young woman you might say just a girl she had a lot to overcome she meant being neglected by her folks. Then Sarah's sister married James Heath and the Heaths were aristocratic type.

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The cellar of Thomas was full at winter time, potatoes apples and such. I have heard my father say Pa always got ready for winter.

Uncle Job told me that your grandfather Whalen always had money in his pocket. Aunt Sadie said once there was a condition that Thomas was not responsible for, it was about a cow and a man said Thomas should pay for the cow that was lost or injured or whatever was the matter. The man wanted six dollars for it and Thomas although not responsible paid the six dollars, and after a time the man paid Thomas back the six dollars because he learned he was taken from the wrong man.

So Aunt Sadie told about going to the cemetery and playing with other children there. They climbed on monuments. Sadie was little and she climbed and not while she was climbing and she didn't do it but the top of the monument broke off or fell over. The other children said she was to blame because they said her father would pay for it. Thomas paid for the damage it was 8 dollars, for the cow was 8 and the monument 6. After a while the one who took the 8 dollars returned it to Thomas he found out that Sadie had been unjustly accused.

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Thomas Whalen ^{did not follow} ^{worship} ~~was~~ / ~~not~~ / a Catholic. Aunt Sadie said he was a Catholic in his youth but he did not remain a Catholic. he fell out with the Catholic church she says. before he left Ireland. Whether he ever was a Catholic cannot be said by me. There are Irish who are Protestant, such as the Reynolds people who came from Ireland, also Grandmother Hustons (Chas Stoddard's grandmother) who came from Ireland. He never went to Cr