

Our Frisian and Irish Heritage

The Strasmas and The Drinans



Ireland

Friesland



Jan Strasma
August 2026

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Jan Strasma

Incorporating the family memories of:

Ethyl Strasma Scott

Eula Clifton Strasma

Charlotte DeSelm Strasma

Gretchen Margaret Strasma Rauschenberg

Jane Strasma Randall

Norman Strasma

August 2026

Acknowledgements

This family history draws on the recollections of Eula Clifton Strasma and Charlotte DeSelm Strasma, the daughters-in-law of Henry and Maggie Strasma.

Ethyl Strasma Scott gave us the daughter's eye view of the family's struggles in her autobiography.

Cousin Gretchen Strasma Rauschenberg gathered the family story in a book of imagined letters from Maggie Strasma to her sister. She focused, too, on the Drinan and Lane families with three trips to Ireland for research and visits to remaining relatives. Gretchen's recollections, along with those of Jane Strasma Randall and Norman Strasma, brought life to the family story as Henry and Maggie's grandchildren.

Two Stroosma cousins, one in the US and the other in the Netherlands, brought the Strasma's Frisian ancestry to light. Jon Stroosma, now living in Long Beach, and Jan Stroosma and his wife Baukje in the Netherlands, made the connection with Libbe Stroosma who had traced the family back to the 1600s. Jan and Baukje hosted my wife Jane and me in two visits to Friesland and joined us for a visit to Illinois and Yellowstone in 2007

Internet resources have grown over the past 30 years with ancestry.com providing extensive search and document capabilities. The Dutch website wiswaswie.nl has searchable records of the Stroosma and Koets families and irishgenealogy.ie has consolidated the civil and parish records for Irish families.

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Introduction

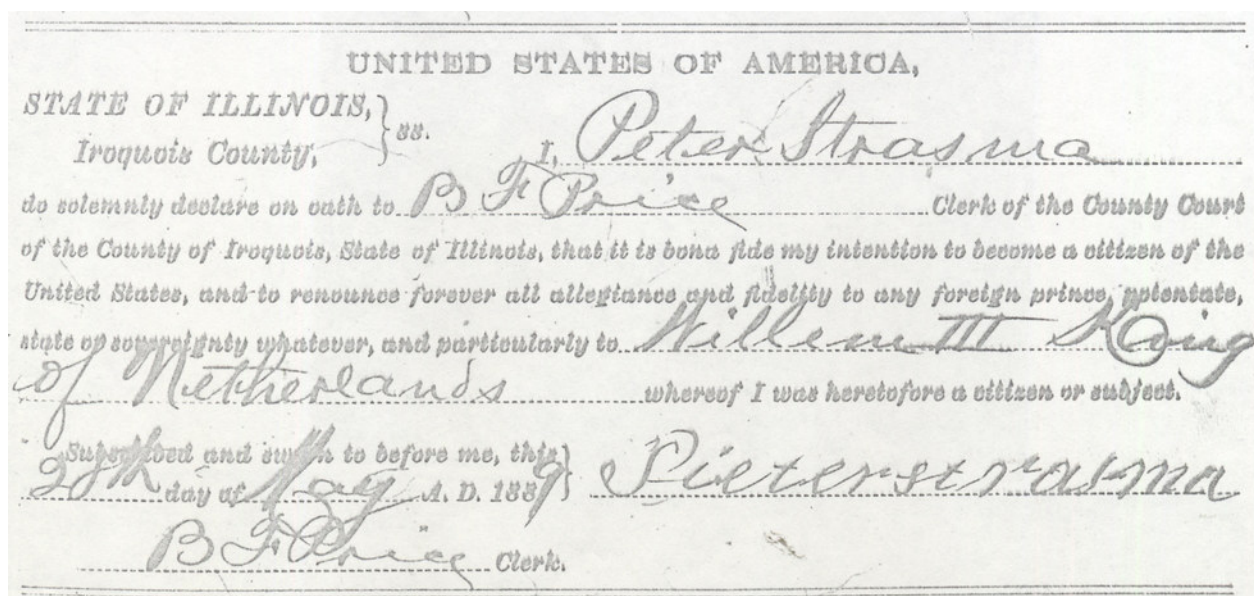
My first effort at tracing my family's Dutch roots came in 1965 when I traveled in Europe before joining a student seminar in Yugoslavia. All I knew at that time was that my Strasma ancestors came from a village in Friesland called St. Ann and that the spelling of the family name had been changed. In the capital of Friesland, Leeuwarden, I found a family called Strooisma. They invited me into their home and with the help of a daughter who spoke English determined that we might be related but uncertain as to how. I took a picture of the family but learned no further details of our relationship.



The Strooisma family in Leeuwarden - The little girl in the middle is Marleen Strooisma who identified the photo in 2026, 61 years after my 1965 visit.

In the mid-1990s I discovered the microfilm records of the Mormon Family History Center, and began tracing the family, finding both Frisian and US records for my great-grandparents, Pieter Stroosma and Aafke Koets.

There are no family photographs known of Pieter and Aafke, and it was an unexpected moment to find Peter's naturalization application with his bold signature: Pieter Strasma.



About that time, the wonders of the internet became available and I did a name search for the Stroosma family and found addresses for Jon Stroosma in Long Beach, California, and Peter Stroosma in Mount Vernon, Washington.

Meanwhile, cousin Gretchen Strasma Rauschenberg began genealogical research the old fashioned way - looking for records in government offices and libraries and talking to living relatives. She and her husband Roy made at least three trips to Ireland to explore the history of the Drinan and Lane families.

She also located our grandmother's cousin, Abina Foley, a Catholic nun, still living in Michigan.

Daughter Laura's middle name is Drinan and the internet brought an inquiry from Ron Drinan of Bloomington, seeking information about his family. He learned that his Drinans and our Drinans were connected through our fourth great grandparents back in Ireland.

I wrote the Stroosmas in California and Washington - and Peter responded that he was a relatively recent immigrant and unlikely to be

related but Jon provided the key to our Dutch family tree. Jon had emigrated to America with his parents in 1957.

Jon (whose birth name was Jan) confirmed that we were related and directed me to his 88-year-old uncle, Libbe Stroosma, in Friesland who had traced the family back into the late 1600s.

(In genealogy speak, Jon is my fourth cousin, one time removed. We are both descended from Pieter Beerends Stroosma who was born in Friesland in 1763. Pieter was married four times and Jon was descended from his first marriage while my family line descends from his second marriage.)

In 1996 I wrote Libbe who replied with a detailed family tree back to 1670 - and further correspondence was begun with his daughter-in-law, Baukje Stroosma, wife of Jan Tette Stroosma.

(About the same time, Ray Strasma, son of my granduncle, Edward Strasma, and therefore a first cousin, one time removed, moved to Europe for his work and found a source for genealogical research. His findings matched those of Libbe.)

We continued our contact with Jan and Baukje through letters, then e-mail and texts, and in 2001 my wife Jane and I visited them in Friesland, the first of two visits, and in 2007 Jan and Baukje traveled to the US for a visit which included a family reunion with the Strasma family. Jan died in 2013 and Baukje died in 2024. We continue to be in touch with their children, Libbe, Hans, and Lysbeth.

Jan and Baukje
Stroosma

Norman and
Jan Strasma

Strasma Family
Reunion
Maple Park IL
May 2007

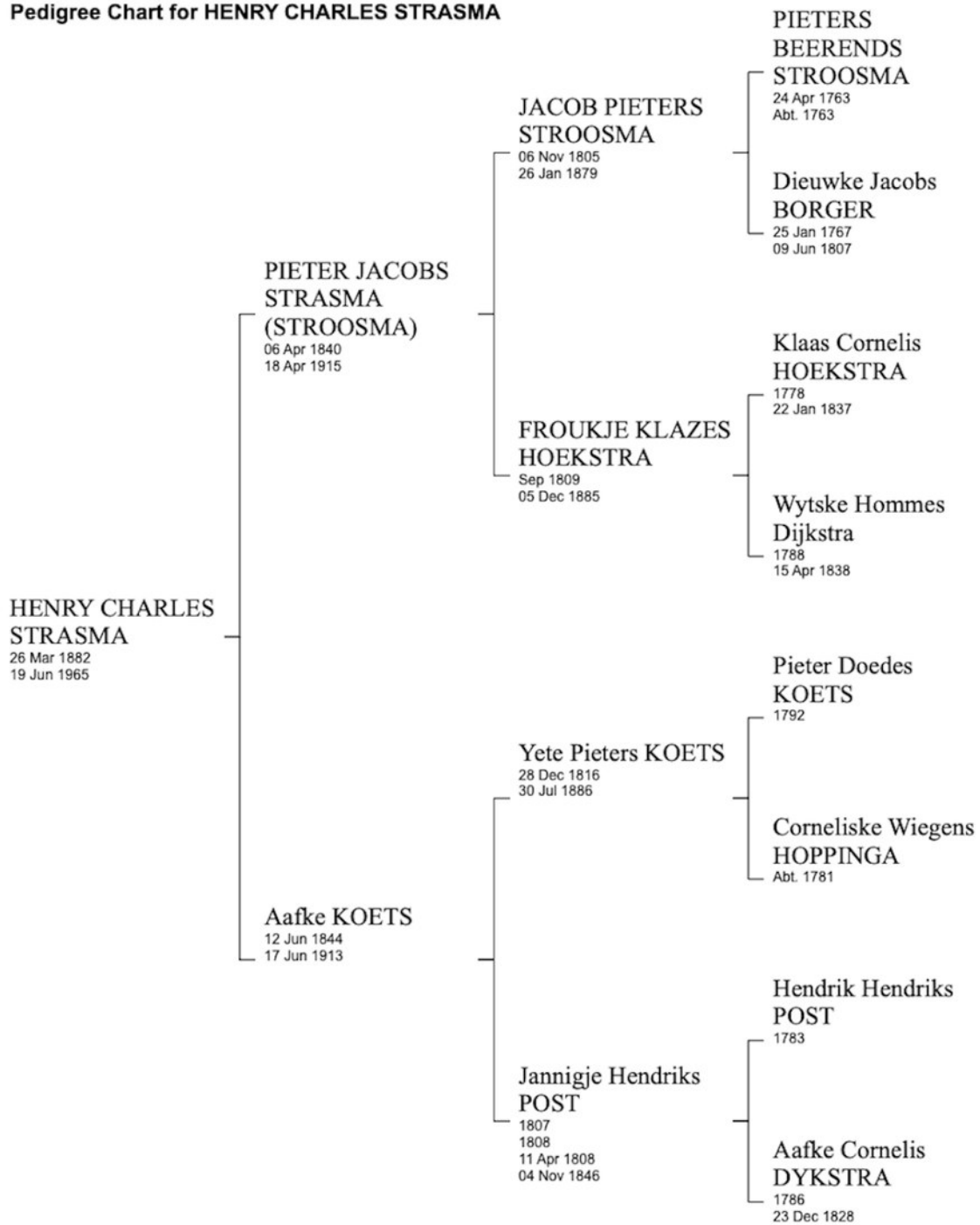


Libbe Stroosma's Handwritten Family Chart

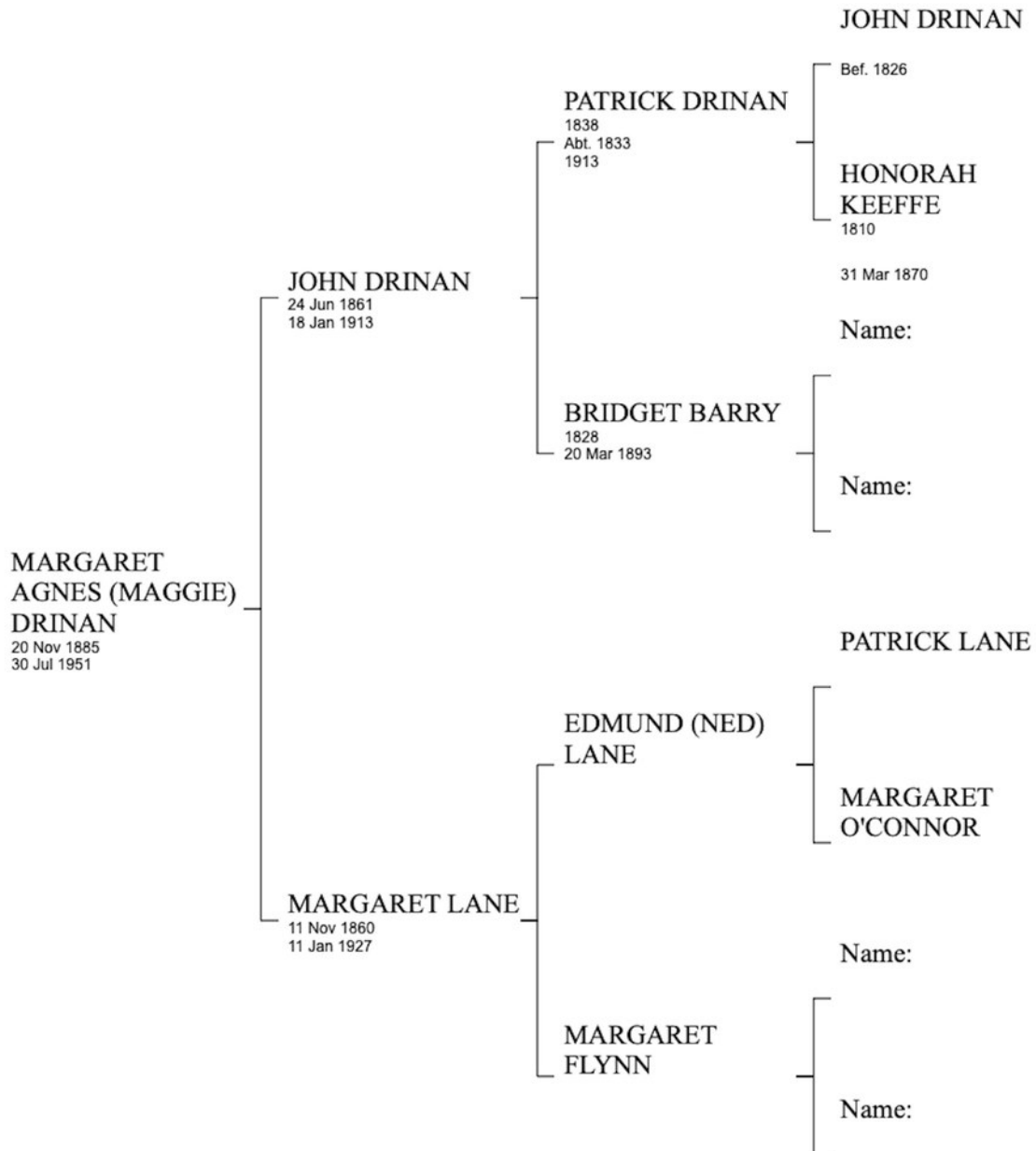
<u>Jesaja's Altes Loe van de familie naam</u>	
<u>I. Jan S.A. (10)</u>	X
geb. 160/75 S.A.P. geb.	overl.
overl.	overl.
kinderen: II a. Dirk Jan Stro geb. - - 1690/93	
II b. Marten Jan Stro geb. - - 1697	
II c. Pies Jan Stro geb. - - 1694	
★	
<u>II c. Pies Jan Stro</u>	X <u>Trijnke Beerends</u>
geb. - - 1694 S.A.P. geb.	geb. 2 - 6 - 1720
overl.	overl.
kinderen: III a. Janneke Pietera Sh. geb. 15 - 11 - 1722	
III b. Beerends Pietera Sh. geb. 19 - 8 - 1725	
★ III c. Gerrit Pietera Sh. geb. 15 - 10 - 1730	
<u>III b. Beerends Piers Sholosma</u>	X <u>Rinske Jan</u>
geb. 19 - 8 - 1725 S.A.P. geb.	geb. 20 - 9 - 1750
overl. 6 - 11 - 1812 S.A.P. overl.	overl.
kinderen: IV a. Trijnke Beerends Sh. geb. 15 - 9 - 1751	
IV b. Maaijke Beerends Sh. geb. 4 - 4 - 1756	
IV c. Pies Beerends Sh. geb. 14 - 1 - 1759	
overl.	
<u>Beerends Piers Sholosma</u>	X <u>Trijnke Pietera</u>
geb. 19 - 8 - 1725 geb.	geb. 2 - 1 - 1763
overl. 6 - 11 - 1812 overl.	overl.
★ kinderen: IV d. Pieter Beerends Sh. geb. 24 - 4 - 1763	
IV e. Gerrit Beerends Sh. geb. 27 - 10 - 1765	
IV f. Gerrit Beerends Sh. geb. 21 - 9 - 1766	
S.T.P. overl.	
<u>IV a. Trijnke Beerends Stroosma</u>	X
geb. 15 - 9 - 1751 geb.	geb.
overl.	overl.
kinderen:	
<u>IV b. Maaijke Beerends Stroosma</u>	X
geb. 4 - 4 - 1756 geb.	geb.
overl.	overl.
kinderen:	
<u>IV d. Pieter Beerends Stroosma</u>	X <u>Grietje Johannes Kuitenselid</u>
geb. 24 - 4 - 1763 S.T.P. geb.	geb. 2 - 1 - 1781
overl. 7 - 2 - 1824 S.A.P. overl.	overl.
kinderen: V a. Johannes Pietera Sh. geb. 1 - 11 - 1785	
V b. Beerends Pietera Sh. geb. 22 - 3 - 1789	
V c. Trijnke Pietera Sh. geb. 21 - 7 - 1784	
V d. Janneke Pietera Sh. geb. 5 - 10 - 1794	
Zie Stroosma's	
<u>IV d. Pieter Beerends Stroosma</u>	X <u>Meunke Jacobs Borger</u>
geb. 24 - 4 - 1763 S.T.P. geb. 25 - 1 - 1767 S.T.P.	geb. 25 - 1 - 1767 S.T.P.
overl. 7 - 2 - 1824 S.A.P. overl. 9 - 6 - 1802 S.T.P.	overl. 9 - 6 - 1802 S.T.P.
kinderen: V e. Fokke Pietera Sh. geb. 20 - 1 - 1802	
V f. Pih Pietera Sh. geb. 28 - 3 - 1803	
V g. Jacobs Pietera Sh. geb. 6 - 11 - 1805	
V h. Meunke Pietera Sh. geb. 5 - 6 - 1807	
overl. 20 - 5 - 1817	
overl. 2 - 12 - 1877	
overl. 26 - 1 - 1879	
overl. 15 - 11 - 1832	

first
name
ms

Pedigree Chart for HENRY CHARLES STRASMA



Pedigree Chart for MARGARET AGNES (MAGGIE) DRINAN



Het Bildt - Homeland of the Stroosmas and Koets

Het Bildt in Friesland was originally a stretch of tidal marsh and sea that was reclaimed in the early 1500s, turning flooded land into planned polders with straight dikes, roads, and drainage channels. The area later developed its own villages, dialect, and regional identity.

The land that became Het Bildt was once part of the Middelsee, a sea inlet that separated western and eastern Friesland. Around 1505, large-scale dike building reclaimed the area from the sea, with workers coming mainly from Holland, Zeeland, Brabant, and Friesland.

Het Bildt was laid out very deliberately, with long straight dikes and a grid-like pattern of canals, roads, and farms. Three main settlements emerged along the main road, and their names later evolved into Sint Jacobiparochie, Sint Annaparochie, and Vrouwenparochie.

Because the reclaimed land was settled by newcomers from different Dutch regions, Het Bildt developed a mixed local culture and the Bildts dialect.



The Stroosmas and the Koets, ancestors of the Strasmas, lived in Het Bildt, a section of Friesland bordering the North Sea.



Location of Friesland in the Netherlands



Vintage map of Het Bildt, above, showing the three villages - Sint Jacobieparochie, Sint Annaparochie, and Vrouwenparochie.

Below is a typical Frisian farmhouse with the family's living quarters attached to the larger barn for livestock and farm storage.



The Frisians: How the Stroosmas Became Strasmas

The earliest identified family ancestor is a man named Jan Stro, who was born about 1670 in Sint Annaparochie, Het Bildt, Friesland. He is the first ancestor named in Libbe Stroosma's genealogical research and no spouse is identified. Three sons are listed including Dirk Jans Stro born about 1693; Pier Jans Stro, born in 1674; and Marten Jans Stro, born 1697.

The first confirmed family record is a marriage record for his son, Pier Jans, and his wife, Trijntje Beernts, with no surname listed for either. The marriage ("Trouwen") records for the Reformed Church in Sint Annaparochie list their marriage on 2 June 1720. Pier and Trijntje are the 5th great grandparents to the Strasma cousins of Kankakee.

The following year the church records show the Baptism ("Doopt") of a son, Jan, on 16 March 1721. The father's name now includes a surname: Pier Jans Stroo. Baptisms for three more children are recorded: Gerrit on 11 February 1728; Gerrit (suggesting that the first Gerrit had died) on 15 October 1730; and daughter Trijntje baptized on 24 May 1733. The record for Trijntje is the first to list the mother's name: Trinjtje Beernts.

The Libbe Stroosma genealogy records an additional son not included in the available records: Berent Pieters Stro, born 19 August 1725 and a daughter Jannigje Pieters born 15 November 1722.

Berent Piers (Pieters) Stro was married twice, first to Rinske Jans on 20 September 1750 and then to Trijntje Pieters. The children of both marriages were born in the nearby village of Sint Jacobiparochie. Berent and Trijntje had three children Pieter Berents Stro, born 24 April 1763 and two sons named Gerrit, born in 1765 and 1766.

Their son, Pieter Berents, became the first family member to bear the family surname Stroosma — Pieter Beerends Stroosma.

According to the Wikipedia article on Dutch names, family names or surnames were not required until 1811 when Napoleon occupied the Netherlands. Beginning with the French administration, detailed civil records of births, marriages, and deaths were maintained and are now

available online at <https://www.wiewaswie.nl/en> - the site is in English though the records themselves are in Dutch.

Pieter Beerends Stroosma was married four times (each after the death of a previous wife), and our family stems from his second marriage. (Jan Stroosma who visited us with his wife Baukje is descended from Pieter's first marriage.)

Pieter's second marriage was to Dieuwke Jacobs Borger, who was born 25 Jan 1767 in Sint Annaparochie. They had four children, two daughters and two sons. The younger son, Jacob Pieters Stroosma, is our ancestor, and he was born 6 Nov 1805. His mother, Dieuwke, died 9 Jun 1807, about a month after the birth of her fourth child..

Jacob married Froukje Klazes Hoekstra on 23 Aug 1832. He was 26; she was 23. The marriage records show Jacob was a farmhand (a "boerknecht") and Froukje was a maidservant (a "deinstmeid"). Both had been born in Sint Annaparochie and were living there when married.

They had eight children, three sons and five daughters. Our ancestor, Pieter Stroosma, was the fourth child, born 6 Apr 1840 in Sint Annaparochie.

Pieter married Aafke Koets in Sint Annaparochie on 15 May 1868. Pieter is identified as a 28-year-old workman, and Aafke was 23 when they were married.

Aafke had been born 12 June 1844 to Yte Pieters Koets and his wife Jannigje Hendriks Post. Their second child - named Aafke - was born in 1841 and died 10 weeks later. A son, Pieter, was born in 1842. Their next daughter - our ancestor born in 1844 - was given the name of their daughter who had died - Aafke.

Aafke's mother died in 1846 just 6 days after giving birth to yet another daughter. The baby died six days later. Father Yete married two more wives and had four more children.

By the 1880s, the future looked bleak for Pieter and Aafke Stroosma.

The farming economy in north Friesland was failing as it tried to compete with imports from the productive farmlands in America. Jobs



In het jaar Een duizend acht honderd negenendertig, den achttsten
der maand April des voor middags tea tien uren,
is voor ons gentheer Jaars. Anne. Marius. Albert
van Andringa de Kempenaar Gritman Antthenaar
van den Burgerlyken Stand der Grenten, teet. Bitter
Provincie Friesland, escompaare.

Jacob Pieters Stroosma, end drie en Dertig jaren
weethman, wonende te Sint. Anna parochie, welke ons heeft
verklaard dat op den Zesden dege maane, des namiddags te
drie uren, ten tyden woonhuys aldaar is geboren een
kind van het mannelijke geslacht, met hem Meliorant en
Zyne echtgenoot Froukje Klazes Hoekstra, zonden be-
drup aldaer weenechttegen een welk kind hy verklaard heeft
den vermaan van Pieter te willen geven

Van welke aangifte en verklaring wy deze acte heb-
ben opgemaakt, integenwoordighid van Anne Jans
Pest, end vyfen veertig jaren kleemaken, en van Dick
Starmens Hoekstra, end des entwintig jaren weethman,
beide wonende te Sint. Anna parochie

In hebben de vaden en getuigen deze Acte van
geboorte nagedane voorlezing, nevens ons en
aertekend.

J. P. Stroosma
A. J. Pest
D. H. Hoekstra

Van Andringa de Kempenaar

The official Friesland record for the birth of Pieter Jacobs Stroosma on 18 April 1839 to father Jacob Pieters Stroosma and mother Froukje Klazes Hoekstra.

N^o 1.
 In het jaar Een duizend acht honderd *achten* zestig, den *zifden*
 dag der maand *Maart* zijn in het huis der gemeente, ten overstaan van
 ons ondergeteekende *Johannes Wiltjes Pius*
 Ambtenaar van den burgerlijken stand der gemeente *het Bildt*, verschenen :
Pieter Stroosma,
 oud *achtentwintig* jaren, geboren te *Sint Anna parochie* van beroep
werkman, wonende te *aldaar*, *meenderja-*
rige zoon van Jacob Pieters Stroosma
werkman, van Franzijske Kilaris
Stoekstra, zonder bevoeg, celitelieder,
aldaar.
en
Aafke Koets, oud *drieëntwintig*
 jaren, geboren te *Sint Anna parochie*
 zonder bevoeg, wonende *aldaar*, *meer-*
derjarige dochter van Yets Pieters
Koets, werkman, wonende mede
aldaar, en van Jannigje Hendriks
Post, overleeden.

The record for the marriage in Sint Annaparochie of Pieter
 Stroosma, a 28-year-old "werkman" (laborer" and Aafke Koets,
 23 years old.

were scarce for agricultural laborers like Pieter. His father, Jacob Stroosma, had died in 1879. Pieter - a “werkman” or laborer - was 41 years old and had his wife Aafke and three young sons to support when they made the decision to emigrate to America.

Aafke brother, Pieter Koets and his wife Tryntje and two sons, Yete and Sjoerd, also emigrated about the same time.

The Stroosmas had three sons: Yete was the oldest at 11; Jacob was 4; and Pieter was a year old. A daughter, Froukje, had died four years earlier at the age of 3.

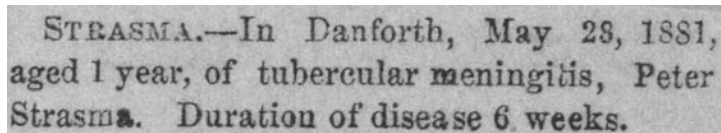
(The children's names followed Dutch tradition in which the sons is named for the grandfathers, although the order was reversed. Usually, the first son is named for the paternal grandfather but Yete, the oldest, took the maternal grandfather's name (Yete Koets) while the second was named for the paternal grandfather (Jacob Stroosma). The third son's name, Pieter, is from his father and paternal great-grandfather. The daughter who died, Froukje, was named for her maternal grandmother. Son Henry, the first child to be born in the US, was perhaps named for Aafke's half-brother, Henry Post.)

The time the Stroosma and Koets families left for America was the start of three decades of emigration from Friesland, mostly to America, which saw almost 4000 Frisians leaving the Het Bildt where the Stroosmas lived. (The 1880 population of Het Bildt was about 9500.)

Frisian records show that Pieter and Aafke Stroosma and their three sons, Yte, Jacob, and Pieter, emigrated to the US on 21 March 1881.

Their ship's passenger list shows Pieter and Aafke Stroosma arriving 16 April 1881 in New York with three sons, Yte, 11; Jacob, 4; and Pieter, 1. They traveled in steerage on the steamship W. A. Scholten from Rotterdam, a voyage of 26 days.

The name change from Stroosma to Strasma took place between



STRASMA.—In Danforth, May 28, 1881, aged 1 year, of tubercular meningitis, Peter Strasma. Duration of disease 6 weeks.

First record of the Strasma name - Watseka Republican, 15 June 1881.

Why the Stroosmas chose Danforth

Aafke's half-brother, Hendricks Post, had emigrated to the United States in 1854, found a wife who was native to Ireland, and was farming in a community called Danforth in Illinois. Danforth was home to many immigrants, predominantly from Germanic areas, but a few Dutch families as well.

Since immigrants often located in areas where there were already family members, I checked the 1880 census for Danforth for clues.

(Aafke Stroosma's brother, Pieter Koets, and his family emigrated in October 1880, too late for that year's census, but they, too, settled in Danforth.)

There were no Stroosmas or Koets, in the census for Danforth but one name stood out - Henry Post. Aafke Koets's mother was Jannigje Hendriks Post. Could Henry be related to Aafke? Sure enough, Frisian records showed that that Hendrik Spatke Post was born 3 January 1831 in Het Bildt. His mother was Jannigje Hendricks Post but there was no father listed and Hendrik had his mother's surname; apparently he was illegitimate.

Jannigje married Yete Pieters Koets on 20 September 1838 when her son Hendrik was 7 years old. Jannigje was 30 and Yete was 21. The first child of their marriage, a daughter Corneliske, was born 13 February 1839, some 4 months after their marriage, indicating that Jannigje was pregnant at the time of the marriage.

The Koets had four more children, including our Aafke who was born 12 June 1844 and her older brother Pieter.

(Hendrik Post would therefore be their half brother.)

Stroosmas on the
passenger list for
the W.A. Scholten
steamship, arriving
16 April 1881

Pieter Stroosma	40	all	father
Aafke	27	5	mother
John	11	2	child
Janet	4	20	"
Pieter	10	2	"



The Stroosmas emigrated on the steamship W. A. Scholten which was built in Glasgow, Scotland, for the Holland-America Line. It was launched on 6 February 1874 and carried passengers, mail, and freight between Rotterdam and New York. It accommodated 50 first class passengers and 600 third class (steerage) passengers. The ship sank in 1887 after a collision in the English Channel.

the family's passage -- Stroosma on the passenger list -- to their first days in Danforth. Family tradition suggests the change was made by immigration officials who misspelled the name and were not corrected by the arriving family. The first record of the Strasma name is in son Peter's death notice in Danforth six weeks after their arrival in New York.

Unfortunately, both the Strasma and Koets families arrived too late for the 1880 census in the U.S. and all 1890 census records were lost in a fire, leaving us with no records before 1900. The 1900 census records show both the Strasmas and Aafke's brother Peter Koets living as neighbors in Danforth. The census shows both families arrived in the US in 1882, but other references show the Koets family arriving in 1880 and the Stroosma family is conclusively listed in the 1881 passenger arrivals.

In the 1900 census Peter Koets is listed as a farmer and Peter Strasma is a day laborer. Peter Strasma's wife is listed as Eva. (Though her birth name was Aafke, records in the US also listed her as Effie and her grave stone is "Afka.")

Two sons are at home: Henry Strasma, 19, is an express agent, and Eddy Strasma, 15, works in a butcher shop. The oldest son, Jacob, who would have been about 24, is listed in the census for East St. Louis, Illinois, where he lives in a boarding house and works as a laborer in a rolling mill. The census record spells his name 'Strausma.' (The 1910 census shows Jacob married for 10 years to Dora and living in Gilman. He died in 1912.)

Living with the Strasma family in the 1900 Danforth census is John Schroeder, a 18-year-old boarder, who is a laborer in a hardware store. John was born in Danforth, the son of German immigrants both of whom had died in the late 1890s. John later moved to Kentucky where he died after being struck by a trolley car in 1917.

There is some variance among official records, immigration records, and family tradition concerning the children of Pieter and Aafke.

Eula Strasma recalls that Pieter and Aafke did not marry until a child was on the way, causing "consternation in Holland." However, the Friesland birth records show that the oldest child, a son named Yte, was born 12 Nov 1869, about a year and a half after their marriage. There is no earlier birth record for Pieter or Aafke.

Frisian records show their next child to be a daughter, Froukje, who was born in 1873 and died less than three years later.

A second son, Jacob, was born 3 Dec 1876, about 3 months after Froukje's death.

A third son, Pieter, was born 22 Nov 1879.

The recollections of Ethyl Strasma Scott and Eula Strasma include two sons besides Jacob born in the Netherlands -- Edward and -- perhaps -- Peter, and they remain somewhat of a mystery.

In a letter to Jane Strasma Randall, Ethyl wrote:

I do know there was another Ed (Grandpa's -- i.e. Henry's -- older brother, but he lived to adulthood, and then was in a terrible accident

where he lost a leg while trying to cross a train track, between two cars, and either died then or soon after, as they then had another Ed (Grandpa's younger brother) after they arrived in America.

Could this have been the oldest son, Yte? Yte apparently becomes Edward in English, as we see in the Peter Koets family.

Peter Koets and wife Trentje had a son Yte, whose birth is shown in Frisian records on 5 Oct 1871. US census records list his name as Edward Koets, born that year in Holland, who lived in Danforth -- and his death information lists his birth name as Yete. Peter and Trentje had another son, Sjoerd, born in 1876, who became Jerry Koets, who is the only child remaining at home with Peter and Trentje by the 1900 census.

The emphatic message of the accidental death of Yete/Edward gives the recollection credence. No records have been found for Yete Stroosma - who arrived with his parents in 1881 - death or otherwise.

(It was common Dutch practice to give a child the same name as a sibling who had died earlier. With the youngest Strasma son being named Edward, this may be evidence that Yte/Edward died between 1882 when Henry was born (and not named Edward) and Edward's birth two years later.

Eula recalled hearing that Peter and Aafke lost a baby during the voyage from Rotterdam to New York. We know, however, that young Pieter arrived with his family, but that he died six weeks later in Danforth with his obituary giving us the first record of the Strasma name and the anglicizing of Pieter to Peter.

Once in the United States, Peter and Eva/Effie had two more sons, Henry, born 22 March 1882, and Edward, born in 1884.

Eula recalls: Peter Strasma worked on a section gang for Illinois Central at \$1 a day. Later he had a farm 3 1/2 miles SW (of Danforth) as a tenant farmer.

Effie died of a stroke at the age of 69 in 1913. (Her gravestone records her name as Afka.) Peter died two years later at the age of 75. Both were buried in the Danforth Cemetery.

Henry Post, Afka Strasma's Half Brother

Afka Strasma's half brother, Henry Post, was living in Danforth, Illinois, when Pieter, Afka, and their three sons emigrated in 1881. They likely went directly to Danforth upon arrival in New York with their son, Pieter, dying just six weeks after their arrival.

An index of Dutch immigrants shows that Hendrik Spotke Post arrived in the US in 1854 at the age of 23.

(The obituary of his daughter, Mary, states that she was born to Henry and Catherine Post in Chicago on 27 April 1856. When she was 3 years old, the Posts moved to Henry in Marshall County, Illinois.)

The 1860 federal census shows Henry living with his wife Catherine and two children in Henry Township, Marshall County, Illinois. The family is in the same household as John Kroodsmas, who is from Wandsverd in Friesland, about 6 miles from Sint Annaparochie, Henry's home town. Both Henry and John were born in 1831 and both came to the US in 1854. (Henry's emigration date is from an index of arriving passengers, and John's date is from the 1910 census — there is no indication they traveled together.)

(Mary's obituary states that the family moved in 1866 to a farm one mile east of Danforth.)

By the 1870 census, Henry and his fellow Frisian, John Kroodsmas, had gone their separate ways. Henry was in Danforth, and John moved to Wisconsin where he married Sophia in 1871. John and his family later returned to Illinois, living in Ashley, Washington County.

The census records for Henry raise questions about his marriages to wives with three different names listed in succeeding decades. The 1860 census shows his wife to be Catherine and their two children, Mary and Henry. (Mary's obituary identifies her mother as Catherine, as well.) Wife Catherine had been born in Illinois, according to the census, but son Henry's later census information reports she was born in Germany. However, Civil War Draft Registration for Marshall County, Illinois, three years later in July 1863 lists Henry Post, 33, as an unmarried laborer who

had been born in Holland.

The 1870 federal census finds Henry in Danforth, Iroquois County, Illinois, with his wife Bridget, born in Ireland, and their two children, Mary and Henry.

In 1880 he was still in Danforth but his wife is listed as Amelia, also born in Ireland. (Researchers at the Iroquois County Genealogical Society believe Amelia and Bridget are the same person - her 1901 obituary gives her name as Bridget.) Henry is listed as a retired farmer, and his son Henry, now 22, remains at home.

Daughter Mary had married John Rieken in Danforth in 1878. (Her obituary states that she and John began farming on Henry's farm and later purchased the farm, southwest of Ashkum, where she remained until her death 28 August 1942.)

The ages of the two children are inconsistent in the censuses — however, Mary was born in 1856 and Henry was born in 1858, both in Henry, Marshall County, Illinois. Mary's obituary indicates that she had a sister as well as a brother, but no further information has been found.

Henry remained in Danforth until his death in 1889. A one line death notice in the Iroquois County Times records his death, attributed to dropsy, on 12 April 1889 in Danforth. He is the only Post buried in Danforth Cemetery (where the Strasmas are buried). (His gravestone records his birth date as 3 January 1831, further evidence that this is the Hendrik Post who is Aafke's half brother.)

Bridget Post died 6 April 1901 while visiting relatives in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, according to a short news item in the Danforth Herald.

Son Henry Post died 8 March 1928 by suicide. His obituary indicates he was born 11 April 1858 in McHenry, Illinois (perhaps Henry?). Oddly, the 1900 census records that he was born in the Netherlands and emigrated to the US in 1863 while the 1910 and 1920 censuses record his birth correctly as Illinois.]

Peter Strasma's suicide attempt

The news story has a dramatic headline: OLD MAN CUTS HIS THROAT and the lengthy news story, perhaps in the Gilman Star, gives the gruesome details of Peter Strasma's suicide attempt when he cut his throat with a razor.

"Despondency over ill health" was given as the motivation. The newspaper reported: "For months the old man had been confined to his bed most of the time because of rheumatism." A Danforth doctor was summoned to treat Peter's injury.

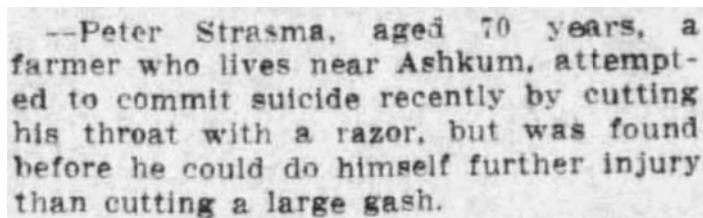
The copy of the new story, from the archives of the Iroquois County Genealogical Society, is undated but he is listed as living with Edward and that Henry and Jake lived south of Gilman. Another news brief on the suicide incident, in the Bloomington Pantagraph, was dated 24 March 1911.

The news story provides an interesting detail about his smoking habit:

"Mr. Strasma had been an ardent smoker most of his life but had refrained from the use of tobacco during his illness. He kept a pipe and a large package of tobacco on a shelf near his bed and frequently looked at them longingly.

"When it come spring and the days get warm and there is plenty of sunshine, I can smoke," he would say. "I am not going to smoke till spring."

"He would take the tobacco pouch in his hand, together with the pipe and handle them tenderly and put them back on the shelf."



--Peter Strasma, aged 70 years, a farmer who lives near Ashkum, attempted to commit suicide recently by cutting his throat with a razor, but was found before he could do himself further injury than cutting a large gash.

A more restrained report in the Bloomington, Illinois, Weekly Pantagraph 24 March 1911

Other Stroosma Families in America

There is a family in Tippecanoe County, Indiana, that is related to the Illinois Strasmas and emigrated about the same time. Through the years they have used several variations of the original Stroosma name.

The 1900 census records John Strasma, 47, and his wife, Kate, who immigrated to the U.S. in 1882. In the 1910 census the family name is Strausma; by the 1920 census, the name is recorded as Stroosma; and in the 1930 census the name is Strawsma.

This appears to be the spelling the family has settled on -- Strawsma -- as later records reflect that spelling. Through reviewing Frisian birth and marriage records, I have determined that John Strawsma was born Jan Pieters Stroosma on 3 Mar 1853 in Sint Annaparochie.

We share a common ancestor in Pieter Beerents Stroosma, although his family line stems from the first marriage and our family line is from the second. John Strawsma's wife Kate was born Trijnte Rooda on 28 Dec 1851 in the neighboring village of Vrouwenparochie. She and John were married 17 May 1877 and had at least 2 children born in Friesland. The Strawsmas settled in Tippecanoe County, Indiana. John died in 1937, and Kate died in 1936.

In 1996, in the early days of the internet, a search found two additional Stroosma families:

Jon Stroosma and his mother were living in Long Beach California and it was he who directed me to his uncle in Friesland, Libbe Stroosma, who subsequently shared his genealogical research. Jon is a cousin to Jan Stroosma with whom we have had a continuing relationship.

He related that the Stroosma family dealt in horses and also delivered goods and mail between the principal towns in Friesland. The family owned some land and his unmarried great-aunt ran the family. When she died the land was left to the church. Her claim to fame was teaching Sunday School for over 50 years without missing a Sunday.

The other Stroosma family was Peter and his wife Ria, living in Mount Vernon, Washington. They had emigrated to the US in 1964. Peter related that he grew up in a suburb of Haarlem in the Netherlands although his family originated in Sint Annaparochie. It seems possible, even likely, that he, too, is descended from Pieter Beerends Stroosma. At that time, Peter operated a bed and breakfast in Washington; two of his sons were skippers of commercial fishing boats in Alaska.

Henry Strasma's Irish Wife

Henry Strasma married Margaret Agnes Drinan on 26 October 1904 in Gilman, Illinois. Like Henry, Margaret, was born in the United States of immigrant parents. She was born in Xenia, Ohio, the daughter of John Drinan and Margaret Lane, both of whom were from County Cork in Ireland.

County Cork, shown in red, is in the south of Ireland. Cork City was formerly known as Queenstown and was Ireland's principal port.



Our Irish ancestry originates in County Cork in the southeast of Ireland where the Drinan and Lane families lived. Our great grandparents, John Drinan and Margaret Lane were born there and emigrated to the United States in the late 1800s. The Drinan and Lane families lived in the same church parish — Glenville-Watergrasshill — it seems likely that John and Margaret knew each other before coming to America. (Margaret was about 8 months older than John.)

Gretchen Strasma Rauschenberg and husband Roy visited the Glenville area — about 12 miles from Cork — in 1997 and searched for the “Kiley” which family memory said was where the Drinans and Lanes had lived. The church in Killeagh, a village of 500 east of Cork, had no record of any Drinans, and the residents called the place “KEEL-uh.” But with the aid of an 80-some-year-old farmer, they found another Killeagh, a town land or township near Glenville. Killeagh town land, which is pronounced KI-lee in Gaelic, now has just two houses. Its marginal pasturelands where the Drinans lived in the 19th century are now being

reforested.

The online baptismal index of the Watergrasshill and Glenville Roman Catholic Parish give the first documentation of our Drinan forebears -- the baptisms of four children of John Drinan and Honorah Keeffe were listed: Arthur born 5 Apr 1837; Catherine born 19 Jun 1839; Timothy born 10 Apr 1842; and John born 17 Jul 1844. (Patrick Drinan, the father of our John Drinan, is not listed in the parish's baptismal records for the children of John and Honorah, but family tree listings include him in the family.) Patrick was born in 1838, according to US census records and his gravestone.

Patrick Drinan married Bridget Barry in Annakissy (Annakisha) Parish, County Cork, on 13 April 1858, (The Annakissy Parish is not far from Glenville, and it is highly likely that this marriage record is our Patrick and Bridget.) The Watergrasshill and Glenville Roman Catholic Parish records, now available online, show they had four children. John, the oldest and our direct ancestor, was born 30 June 1861. Owen was born 9 August 1863; Honorah (or Nora) was born 25 February 1867; and Thomas was born 7 May 1871.

These birth dates vary from what we have from other sources. John's birth, for example, is listed as 24 June 1862 in the Cook County, Illinois, death records. The parish index dates are identical for birth and baptism and are likely baptism dates and not birth dates.

Among the online documents available for Patrick are his annual dog licenses, usually for one dog identified as a "sheep dog" from 1875 through 1889. He apparently had more than one dog because in 1883 he was cited for having an unlicensed dog - even though he had a dog license that year - and the following year he licensed two male sheep dogs. He then returned to his one dog a year licensing.

Patrick and his brother Owen also made the court records as witnesses in an assault case in 1859 in which three defendants were sentenced to a month in the county gaol at hard labor.

The other line of our forebears is the family of Edmond 'Ned' Lane and Margaret Flynn. Our direct ancestor, Margaret, who was to marry

John Drinan, was born 11 November 1860, according to the parish records. Her siblings were Bridget, born 19 December 1857; Patrick, born 14 March 1864; and Abigail, born 2 May 1870. Edward's baptism on 10 October 1873 is listed as "Ned," in the Watergrasshill records (Father Ned Lane and Mother Margaret Flynn) Another son, Daniel, listed in the birth/baptism records for Ballyhooly, a village about 8 miles from Glenville. Strangely, there is also a baptism record for Edward on 15 November 1873 in Ballyhooly as well. (It seems unlikely that there would be two different Edwards born to different Edmond/Ned Lane and Margaret Flynn in villages 8 miles apart so this will likely remain a mystery.)

Like the Drinans, there is some variation in the birth dates and the parish records likely are baptism dates rather than birth dates.

Bridget's gravestone records her birthdate as 18 Dec 1860 and death on 12 Nov 1935. The 1900 Federal Census indicates her birth as December 1859.

Margaret's first cousin, Abina Foley (a 92-year-old nun named Sister Angelora in Monroe, Michigan) told Gretchen Rauschenberg in 1997 that Margaret Lane and her older sister Bridget went directly to Xenia, Ohio, from Ireland when they were about 16 and 17 years old (indicating immigration in the mid-1870s). Their Aunt Kate (perhaps a Flynn) ran a saloon there and wrote to their family to say there were lots of opportunities for work.

Xenia had a growing Irish population. In 1851 Father Thomas Blake, a native of Ireland, was assigned to St. Michael's Catholic Church there and he promptly renamed the church St. Brigid's in honor of the Irish saint. Father Blake remained there for 34 years and performed the marriages of both Margaret and Bridget Lane.

The 1900 federal census shows Bridget emigrating in 1882 while the 1910 census indicates 1880. (Margaret would have been 21 or 19 at the time of emigration and Bridget was 3 years older.)

The 1900 and 1910 federal census records both show that John Drinan emigrated to the United States in 1882. None of the passenger lists currently available for arrivals in the US includes Bridget and

Margaret or John.

John made his way to Ohio — perhaps because Margaret was there. He later moved to Illinois where a great uncle, Michael, two of his uncles, Owen and Timothy, and an aunt, Catherine Cotter, lived.

John's great-uncle, Michael, was apparently the first Drinan to leave Glenville to travel to the U.S. A published biography of Iroquois County settlers records that he was the youngest of 11 children of Eugene Drinan and Catherine Hagerty and the only one to emigrate to the US. He arrived in New York on 19 May 1853, and two years later married Catherine Donahue, who was from Watergrasshill, in LaSalle County, Illinois. The biography indicates the family moved to Iroquois County in 1867.

Our family line descends from one of Michael's siblings - John Drinan who married Honora Keffe and remained in Ireland. Honora was born in 1810 and died in 1870, No further information has been found about John or Honora.

At least four of the children of John and Honora emigrated to America, including Patrick Drinan from our family line. The other

The State of Ohio, Greene County, ss.
I, John Drinan do make solemn oath that I am twenty-one years of age, and have no wife living; that Margaret Lane is not nearer kin to me than second cousin; that she is eighteen years of age, and has no husband living; that she is a resident of said County, and that, so far as I am informed or believe, there is no legal objection existing to our Marriage.
John Drinan
Sworn to and subscribed before me, this 16 day of January 1883.
J. H. Hooper Probate Judge.
By J. C. Nishet

The State of Ohio, Greene County, ss.
To any Person Authorized to Solemnize Marriages in said County:
You are hereby authorized to solemnize the **MARRIAGE CONTRACT** between Mr. John Drinan and Miss Margaret Lane
IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand, and affixed the seal of the PROBATE COURT of said County, this 16th day of January 1883.
J. H. Hooper Probate Judge.
By L. M. Hooper Deputy.

The State of Ohio, Greene County, ss.
This is to Certify, That by authority of a License, under the Seal of the Probate Court of the above County, Mr. John Drinan and Miss Margaret Lane were by me, on the 30th day of January 1883 legally united as Husband and Wife.
Thomas Blake Mc

Marriage record
for John Drinan
and Margaret
Lane

30 January 1883
Xenia, Ohio

siblings who emigrated included:

- * Timothy came to the US in 1865.
- * Catherine Drinan and her husband Timothy Cotter emigrated in 1866 or 1867.
- * Owen, and his wife Honora emigrated in the late 1860s, lived in Livingston County, Illinois, and later settled in Grundy County.

John and Margaret were married 30 January 1883 in Xenia, Ohio. Their oldest daughter, Theresa, was born in 1884, and daughter Margaret was born 20 November 1885. Both were born in Xenia. Margaret's sister Bridget married John Cotter in 1883 in Xenia.

John's father, Patrick, came to the United States in either 1888 or 1890, according to later census records; presumably his wife, Bridget, also emigrated at that time. (Since Patrick had a dog license in 1889 in Ireland, the 1890 date is most likely.) Bridget was buried in St. Mary's Cemetery, Gilman, Illinois; her gravestone shows her birth in 1828 and death in 1893. Patrick was naturalized as a US citizen in 1896.

The 1900 census shows Patrick, a farmer, living in Gilman with his two granddaughters, Theresa and Margaret, along with his daughter, Norah. (Norah — or Honorah as shown in her baptismal record — also came to the U.S. in 1890, according to the census.)

The only other record of Norah found is her brief obituary in the Iroquois County Times Democrat, April 10, 1903:

Miss Nora Drinan, who lived with her aged father west of Gilman, died Sunday of consumption. Her funeral was held from the Catholic church Tuesday. The deceased was 30 years of age.

No burial information has been found - she is not listed in St. Mary's Cemetery in Gilman where her mother, Bridget; father, Patrick; and brother, John, are buried. A number of other Drinan relatives are buried there as well.

John shows up in the 1900 census in Buckley, Illinois, where he was working for the Illinois Central Railroad as a laborer and living in a rail car dormitory on a side track along with 15 other railroad laborers.

The 1910 census shows John, 46, living in Gilman with Frances

Drinan, 46, listed as his wife, and his father, Patrick, 76. Patrick's emigration date is shown as 1888.

(Family memories identify Frances as a "common law wife" since John's wife, Margaret, was still living in the Columbus, Ohio, institution.)

Marriage records, however, show that John married Frances Burnett on 30 November 1904 in Douglas County, Illinois.

Frances is listed as John Drinan's wife in the 1910 census, which shows they had been married for 5 years, and notes that this was John's second marriage (the marital status box is marked M2). Frances, 46, was born in Canada and came to the US in 1865.

(The 1900 census shows John as single when he is living with a railroad crew on a side track in Buckley, Illinois.)

A 1908 Ford County history reports the marriage 5 years earlier of John's daughter Theresa to Henry Steadman — and notes that Theresa's mother was deceased at that time. Of course, Margaret Lane Drinan was alive then and did not die until 1927.

John died 13 January 1913 in Chicago. He was buried in Gilman.

The Clifton Advocate published his death notice on 7 February 1913:

John Drinan, a well known citizen of Gilman, died in a hospital in Chicago as a result of getting his foot frozen several weeks ago while doing his work as section foreman. A slight operation was followed by an infection which resulted in death.

John's obituary, published in the Gilman Star on 23 January 1913, includes his marriage to Frances and gives his wife's full name, suggesting that she was perhaps a widow or divorced:

On December 1, 1904, Mr. Drinan was united in marriage with Mrs. Francis Burnett, who is left a widow by his death.

I have found no further record of Frances Drinan or Francis Burnett other than the 1910 census and John's obituary information.

John's wife, Margaret, had been institutionalized in Ohio prior to 1900. Census records show her as a patient at the Dayton State Hospital in Montgomery County, Ohio, in 1900 and the 1920 census which shows

her as an inmate at the Columbia, Ohio, State Hospital, identified as “insane.” She died in 1927 and was buried in the Lane family plot at St. Joseph’s cemetery in Lockbourne, Franklin County, Ohio.

Daughter Margaret (Maggie) married Henry Strasma in 1904 in Gilman.

Her sister, Theresa, married Henry Stedman in 1903, and they had one daughter, Lorna Doone Helen Stedman, born in 1905. In 1910 they were living in Piper City, Illinois.

Theresa and Henry were divorced, and on 26 Oct 1912, Theresa married Edwin McClain (also spelled McLain) in Minnehaha SD. They lived in Davenport, Iowa, and later moved to Battle Creek, Michigan. They had one son, Harvey, born in 1915, and Lorna continued to live with them.

Lorna was married twice, first to Arthur Knight and then to Joseph Payne, remaining in Battle Creek. She had no children. The

Drinan Immigration Timeline

Generation 1

- * Michael Drinan (uncle to our Patrick) - immigration 1853 - Living in LaHogue, Iroquois County

Generation 2

- * Katherine Drinan Cotter - (sister to our Patrick) immigration 1860 per published bio
- * Timothy Drinan - (brother to our Patrick) immigration 1865
- * Owen Drinan (brother to our Patrick) - immigration 1868 - lived in Grundy County
- * Patrick Drinan (our Patrick) - 1888/1890, likely 1890

Generation 3

- * John Drinan (our John) - immigration 1882
- * Patrick Drinan (brother to our John) - immigration 1889/1892 - living in Tolono, Illinois
- * Norah Drinan (sister to our John) - immigration 1890

1949 city directory showed her living alone and employed as an assistant chief telephone operator for the telephone company. She died in 1951.

Michigan Divorce Records show two divorces for Edwin and Theresa. They were first divorced on 14 May 1945 and then remarried 12 days later. They then were divorced a second time on 18 March 1946.

Theresa died in 1951 (the same year as her sister Margaret and her daughter Lorna). Edwin died in 1965.

Edwin, Theresa, and Lorna were all buried in Memorial Park Cemetery, Battle Creek MI. Each of them have a flush style grave stone of identical design with a central McClain grave stone.

Harvey enlisted in the Army in 1943, and is shown to be divorced and living in Wayne County, Michigan. Later, city Directories from the 1950s show him married to Myrtle and living in Battle Creek. He died 8 Dec 1984 in Sheridan, Michigan.

Family of Ned Lane and Margaret Foley

(Great Grandparents of Strasma cousins)

Bridget 1857-1935

- emigrated 1880 or 1882 according to later census although Cousin Abina Foley said the two sisters, Bridget and Margaret, emigrated together as teenagers, making their emigration in the mid-1870s
- buried St. Joseph Cem, Lockbourne OH

Margaret 1860-1927

- buried St. Joseph Cemetery, Lockbourne OH

Patrick 1864-1938

- emigrated 1880-1883
- buried St. Joseph Cem, Lockbourne OH

Daniel 1866-1902

- unknown emigration date
- reinterred St. Joseph Cem, Lockbourne OH 1925

Abina 1870-1940

- remained in Ireland m Owen [also known as Eugene] Foley

Edward 1873-1954

- emigrated 1898
- buried St. Joseph Cem, Lockbourne OH

Sister Angelora Foley, born Abina Elizabeth Foley, was our Margaret Lane's first cousin. She was born in 1905 and died in 1998. Her obituary in the Monroe, Michigan, Evening News listed her parents as Eugene Foley and Abina Lane. However, family information from Gretchen Strasma Rauschenberg identifies her father as Owen Lane.

(The names Owen and Eugene are frequently interchanged in Irish documents and genealogies. The Irish name for both is Eoghan, which is pronounced OH-in. Eoghan is translated in to English as both Owen and Eugene. John Drinan had a brother whose name is listed as both Owen and Eugene).

Passenger records show that Miss Abina Foley, age 19, traveled to Boston on the ship President Adams, arriving 7 October 1923, and traveling to Detroit. She was accompanied by Edward Foley, age 20, most likely her older brother, listed in the census as Neddy. US Naturalization Records show that Abina Elizabeth Foley became a naturalized citizen 10 November 1931 in Detroit. Her birth date in the naturalization records is 22 July 1904.

Margaret's sister, Bridget, died in 1935. The 1930 federal census lists her as a widow. However, her husband, John Cotter, did not die until 1951 - at least that's the date on his grave stone. He does not appear to be listed anywhere in either the 1930 or 1940 census.

I have found little information on their brother, Daniel Lane, other than his reinterment in the same cemetery as the other Lanes in 1925. (He died in 1902 but does not appear in any census records that I have found.)

Gretchen's 1997 Report of Journey to Ireland

We got back from our trip last night. Although I have little to add to the Drinan family fund of knowledge, there are some interesting items. I just cannot yet connect them to our family except by circumstantial evidence. However, the Lane family of our great-grandmother Margaret Lane Drinan has a clearer family history, almost an open book!

The first full day in Ireland was frustrating, but things soon changed. We'd planned to find a B&B in Glenville, but found it too small and too far from main roads to have one. (Actually, once we left the main road, we'd gotten lost trying to FIND Glenville! No road signs at crossroads on narrow hedge-row lined roads. It was foggy, and we began to think of Brigadoon!) After we found Glenville (but no B&B), we went back to Watergrass Hill nearby, where other Drinans and Lanes had come from. The one B&B there was excellent.

Monday morning we visited the Watergrass Hill/Glenville priest, who had only 15 minutes to spare us. We were itching to get our hands on the Glenville Parish records he pulled out of the safe, but the priest did not allow that. He took a copy of such data as I had and promised to look up pertinent births, marriages, and deaths. The books are handwritten, with faded ink, and difficult to read. I am looking forward to his letter in a month or so, but don't expect much. He found no records of any Drinans during the time we were in his study, as he leafed through the records. Lots of Lanes. We left a generous donation in hopes of spurring on his research.

Later that morning we returned to Glenville, where we asked at the post office if there was anyone still around who might be descended from Owen Foley and Abina Lane Foley. The man scratched his head, and suggested that "the Foleys over a Inchinanaugh might know.": He gave us directions to their rural home, which we tried our best to follow. When we finally arrived at what we guessed was the place, two friendly dogs greeted us, but no one was home. We weren't sure we were at Foley's anyway.

We found our way to the cemetery which served the Watergrass Hill Parish and the Glenville Parish. The old part was unkempt, and I waded through long grass trying to read indecipherable markers. No luck. Later Dan Lane told me that our Lanes are buried in a different cemetery, and I saw a photo of the family marker. It says simple, "In Loving Memory of the Lane Family." No names, no dates. No family

information.

I found a Michael Foley at Inchinanagh in the phone book, and after dinner I called. No one home. Later I phoned again, and Mikey Foley invited us to come right over. We were about 10 miles away, so off we went. It was indeed the farm we had found by day using the postmaster's directions. Mikey was Owen and Abina's grandson, living in the house where his grandfather had been born. They had had other American visitors (Cotters, from Columbus OH) interested in the Lane family several years ago.

Mike and his wife were vague on their Lane family history, so they sent us the next day to his second cousin, Margaret "Peggy" Lane Cahill in nearby Rathcormac, an 81-year-old widow, whose memory is very sharp about names and relationships (but not dates). From her, we learned the names one generation further back. Edmund/Edward Lane, known as "Ned" around Glenville, was the oldest son of Patrick Lane of Glenville and his wife Margaret O'Conner from Rathcormac. Mrs. Cahill's father was brother to Abbey (Abina)'s father, who was our great great-grandfather. Her daughter and a grand-nephew Noel Lane were there as well that evening. A good Irish Catholic, she blessed us with holy water as we left.

Because my mom had asked Henry where his wife's kin came from, he replied "Kiley, in County Cork," we've been trying to find such a location. We went over to the town of Killeagh, along the coast road east of Cork. It is growing rapidly and looks prosperous. There the priest was very open with the records, which were well indexed, and recently printed out in alphabetic order. In a few moments, we could see that there had never been a Drinan baptized or married there. "The locals pronounce the name of this town KEEL-uh, which does not sound at all like "Kiley."

The next day we met with the local unofficial Glenville historian, John Healy, a retired prosperous dairy farmer in his 80s. He mulled over our Drinans, and gave us the usual response that there are Drinans over the Nagel Mountains in the Blackwater Valley. He thought long about the "Kiley" which we had as John Drinan's birthplace. Finally, after we chatted about the Lanes for a good while, he took us into his house where his hunch-backed octogenarian wife was making soda bread (Irish Brown Bread). He offered to dig out his 1 mile to 6 inch detailed old ordinance survey maps of the area, to show us where the Lanes had their land a hundred years ago, and to show us Killeagh. Surprise! Just

northwest of Glenville, and just about three miles from the Lanes' land in the Bride River valley is a town land (a civil unit like a township) named Killeagh In Irish [i.e. Erse or Gaelic], this would be pronounced "KI-lee." J

John Healy sent us to the County Records Library in Cork and told us what documents to look for. There we found an old Tithe applotment list of landowners in the 1820s — and one John Drinan had owned over 200 acres of marginal pastureland in the town land next to Killeagh in the Ardnageehe Civil Parish. In the 1852 Griffith's Valuation, a list of heads of families and where they lived, in the Ardnageehe Civil Parish we found an Owen Drinan in Killeagh near Glenville, and a Timothy Drinan in a nearby townland. Unfortunately, Irish records are very incomplete. They didn't record births until 1864 (our John Drinan was born in 1862). The Applotment List and Griffith's Valuation are useful, but give no information beyond the names and land locations. We have no way at the moment of connecting these Drinans to our Drinans; however, surely there were Drinans in the region at the time. They all seem to have left. None of the Lane cousins we met know anything about our Drinans.

It's fun to guess! I can hypothesize that the John Drinan who owned marginal land near Glenville in 1825 had several children. Among them might have been Patrick Drinan, father of our John Drinan. Also a son, Owen Drinan. Also a son Timothy. Also a son Michael. I am making these wild and not-so-wild guesses because in St. Mary's cemetery in Gilman there are three distinct Drinan families, and I don't yet know if or how they are related. Also, our John's sister was named Nora, and the next day another Nora Drinan's name showed up among the Lanes.

Back to the Lanes. After talking to John Healy, we visited Brida (Bridget) Lane L'Riordan — a trim and energetic young homemaker. She took us to meet her father, Daniel Lane, who is Margaret Cahill's youngest brother, and we heard more about his line of the Lanes. Brida also took us to see Killeagh Townland, which today has only two family homes. Much of that marginal pastureland has been taken over by the forestry commission and is now a growing forest. Glenville itself is rapidly turning from sleepy rural town to growing ex-urban bedroom community for Cook, only about 25 minutes away. Brida's husband works in Cork although they are both from Glenville families. A developer has put in a new street and has twelve nice lots for sale.

Our final evening there we were invited back to Mikey Foley's home. He works in Glenville in an agricultural supply store, and owns 16 acres, milks 6 cows and fattens calves. This land has been in the Foley

family well over 100 years, and is where our great-great aunt Abina Lane came to live when she married Owen Foley, a blacksmith. We got there in time to watch Mikey bridge the cows down the road from pasture. While his wife Joan cleaned the barn lot and tended to the milking machines, he fed the six new calves, and did other barn chores. (Monday night they had been in the barn when we first phoned.)

Mikey's sister and his niece who live near Cork came up to Glenville for the evening, and they were really interested in Lane family history. We exchanged family information. The whole family in Ireland had been completely unaware of the existence of our Margaret Lane. They had some written records to show us — but only names. No dates. Not many locations. It was very confusing because so many cousins had the same names! All though Margaret Lanes. And Patricks, and Daniels, and Michaels, and Bridgets, and Neds, and so on. Most of these Lanes emigrated to America between 1840 and 1890. We know about the ones in Columbus; there is a Foley family group near Detroit, and another family in Pennsylvania. Abbey (Abina) Lane Foley had eleven children, most of whom emigrated to Detroit. The oldest two girls had wanted to take the Titanic but Abbey sagely said, "Take the old boat; it knows the way." We heard that story from Abbey's granddaughter, Abina (Nettie) Lane Buckley, about my age. I have some addresses, and will be writing to the current generation....

Abbey Lane Foley was well known for her fine voice, her concertina playing, and her skill in step dancing. Pat (Patrick) Lane — our grandma's favorite Uncle Pat of Columbus — was the heart-throb of the girls in the parish, and there was "many a broken heart when he emigrated." In fact, several of our hosts mentioned the deep loss the Irish diaspora was to their community. One of Abbey's daughters, Sister Angelora, is a nun, still alive in Detroit. She is our grandma's first cousin! I have her address.

If I had realized what a long line of Margarets I had in my heritage, I might never have switched to Gretchen! Last week our Irish cousins had great difficulty saying "Gretch" so they all just called me Margaret anyway. I also now think that Margaret Lane Drinan would have named her baby Margaret, not Maggie. Roy and I hope to go over to Xenia, Ohio, soon to do more family research. There is no civil record of our grandmother's birth, but perhaps we will be able to find a parish record there.

The last evening, another Drinan connection came up. According

to Mikey's sister, their other (non-Lane) grandmother was one Nora Drinan, who married Michael Martin! There were definitely Drinans in the Glenville area at the time our John Drinan was getting married to Margaret Lane in Xenia, Ohio. (By the way, I looked unsuccessfully for any record of John's sister Nora Drinan who had been born in 1874 in Ireland. There should have been a civil record, but there is not one in the Killeagh/Glenville area, and I don't know where else to look.)

2017 Followup from Gretchen:

Have I ever told you I met Sister Angelora (Adina) Foley? Roy and I had gone to Ireland in search of family history during the summer of 1997. Her relatives in County Cork gave me her address, imagining I lived only an hour or so from her convent in Michigan. I wrote, and she invited me to "drop in whenever I was nearby." My sister Jane and I made a visit soon after, which was delightful. Sister Angelora was in the Rest Home for retired nuns at the Mother House of her order. She was in her 90's, with lively voice and eyes. She sang songs to us from her childhood. She was in school during "the troubles" (about 1920) when the British army was fighting the Irish in County Cork. Her father was a leader of the Irish force, and would tuck messages for other rebels into her braids. The school she walked to was on the other side of the battleground, and she was very proud of getting messages back and forth to her father's mates on the other side of the active battleground..... I took pictures, which Jane currently has, of her in her bed as she talked to us. She passed away a few months later.

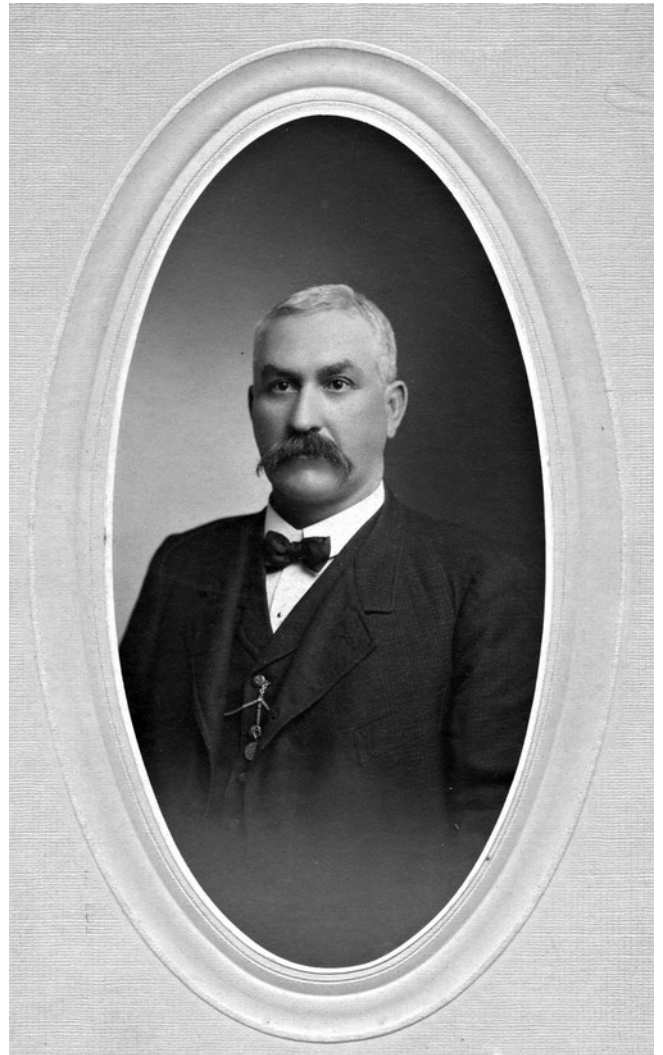
When Jane, Ron, and I were in Ireland last summer, we spent a day in County Cork, and re-connected with only one of the cousins I had met before. Another was still alive but in a nursing home, with memory loss, so we were advised not to try to visit him. His niece who had been a young mother when Roy & I met was now the mother of two grown children both working abroad. (One in Sweden). The family farm had been sold, and modernized. No one was home there when we drove past, but the new owners were not relatives of ours.



Above: Margaret Lane Drinan

Right: John Drinan

Below: John's brother Patrick Drinan
and wife Mary



Patrick Drinan, father
of John and Patrick



Maggie and Henry doing farm chores



The Drinan sisters, Maggie and Theresa

Left: Maggie on left

Below left: Maggie on right

Below right: Maggie on left





Roy, left; cousin Lorna;
Edward, right

Roy, left;
Edward, right;
cousin
Lorna, center;
cousin Harvey
McLain, left
front; Ethyl,
right front





Roy, left, and Edward, right



Roy, left, and Edward, right, and Ethyl, front



Above: Edward, left; Roy;
Ethyl, in wagon



Left: Edward, left, and
Roy, in costume



Above: Piper City Boy Scout Band: Edward, front row, 3rd from left with cornet; Roy, middle row, 2nd trombone player from left

Below: Edward Strasma (second from right with French horn) at University High School 1920





Edward won a scholarship to attend University High School in Norman - he is the smallest in the front row of the freshman class above.



Left is Edward, suitcase in hand, leaving for University High School.

He attended the school for just one year. The photo below shows him at the left of the front row of the sophomore class the next year at Piper City High School.





Maggie Strasma with Edward, departing for University High School (Edward, left; Maggie, center; Roy, right; Ethyl in front; unidentified cat)



Maggie and
Henry



Maggie Strasma

Maggie Strasma,
1951, shortly before
her stroke and
death



The Strasma Brothers



Jacob (Jake), seated right; Henry, standing left; and Edward,
seated left
(Photo from early 1890s)

Jacob “Jake” Strasma

Jacob Strasma was the oldest living child in the Strasma family in Danforth., Illinois, and the only surviving child who was born in Friesland.

Besides the passenger list for the family's immigration in 1881, there are no records for Jake in the US prior to the 1900 census. The 1900 census, dated 2 June 1900, shows him living in East St. Louis, Illinois, where he lives with 14 other boarders in a boarding house run by Clara Hibbs. He works as a laborer in a rolling mill, a factor producing iron and steel products.

He married Dora Sieling on 12 August 1900 at the St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church in Crescent City, Illinois, not far east of the homes of both the bride and the groom - Jake's family home in Danforth and Dora in rural Douglas County. Dora was the daughter of Fred Sieling, a farmer, and his wife Dora , both German immigrants. Witnesses to the marriage were Jake's brother Henry and Dora's younger sister, Lizzie.

Ten years later, the 1910 census lists Jacob and Dora living on Thomas Street in Gilman, Illinois. Jacob is a laborer in a tile factory. Jacob - or Jake - and Dora had four daughters: Irene Born in 1902; Laura born in 1904; Effie born in 1908; and Helen born in 1910.

Jacob died 12 August 1912 in Gilman.

The Weekly Pantograph, Bloomington, Illinois, 6 September 1912, carried this explicit report of his death.

Jacob Strasma of Gilman was found dead recently near the round house in that city. His mouth and throat were seared as if by some kind of acid. Mr. Strasma had been addicted to an immoderate use of liquor.

Dora Strasma appears in the 1920 census, a widow, living in Gilman with her four daughters. She is listed as “washing at home” for her occupation.

Irene, the Strasma's oldest daughter, was born 25 January 1902. She married Timothy Thomas Reilly on 5 January 1924. They had one daughter, Lenora Jeanne, born 14 February 1928 in Gilman.. Timothy worked for the Central Illinois Public Service Company in Chatsworth and later in Springfield. By 1950 Irene and Timothy moved to Kankakee where, in 1950, he was a salesman in the Swannell Hardware store.

Timothy died in 1962 and Irene died 15 September 1999 at the age of 97.

Their next daughter, Laura Ann, was born 17 March 1904. She married Meredith Ward. The 1934 City Directory for Springfield lists the couple with Meredith as a meter repairman for the City Water, Light, and Power department. In the 1940 census for Springfield, Illinois, they had one daughter, JoAnn, born 19 September 1938. A second daughter, Ginger Lee, was born 29 December 1946. The 1950 census finds them still living in Springfield where Meredith is now a power operator for the Electric Light Company. Meredith died 23 September 1962 at the age of 61. Laura died at the age of 68, 25 September 1982. Both daughters died in 2018.

Their third daughter, Effie Catharine, was born 28 August 1907. She married Henry E. Sthay on 26 October 1929 in Kankakee, Illinois. Effie and Henry had three sons: Lawrence, born 1 January 1931; Robert, born 7 August 1933; and Clarence, born 29 November 1944. Henry died 26 January 1972 in Kankakee; Effie died 25 February 1990 at the age of 82.

Helen Marie, the youngest daughter, was born 30 September 1910. Helen did not marry and does not appear in the 1930 and 1940 censuses. In the 1930s she moved to Kankakee where she is listed as a clerk for Smith's Mercantile Co. in the 1937 city directory. She worked for several years as a waitress at Spangler's Ice Cream shop and then went to work at Swannell's Hardware store where she became a department manager until the late 1950s. She died in 1977.

The "extra" Strasma daughter

The 1920 census for Gilman, listing Dora Strasma as a widow with four daughters is dated 7 January 1920. Later that year she gave birth to a daughter, Bernice, on 16 August 1920. She may have married Arthur John Kersley - apparently father of Bernice - that year although no marriage record has been found. That same 1920 census lists Arthur as divorced, living with three daughters and his 36-year-old brother.

(Arthur Kersley appeared in the 1910 census for Gilman with his wife Bessie and three daughters, Gladys, Grace, and Geraldine.)

The 1930 census identifies Jacob Strasma's widow as Dora Kersely, married, age 53 with a 9 year old daughter Bernice. Her apparent husband, Arthur Kersely, however, is listed separately and alone as a married 54 year old farmer. (His three daughters from his first marriage were married in the 1920s and living separately with their husbands by the time of the 1930 census.).

Though identified in 1930 as Dora Kersley she apparently returned to her name as Dora Strasma. The 1935 Gilman School yearbook depicts daughter Bernice as "Bernice Strasma."

Arthur makes the news two years later with a news item in the Paxton Record, 17 November 1932:

SINGLE BLESSEDNESS LASTS BUT A FEW DAYS

Watseka, Ill. Nov. 16 - Three days after she secured a divorce from one man, Mable Melton, 29, was married to another. Saturday she was given a divorce from John Norvell of Gilman on a charge of cruelty. On Tuesday she was married to Arthur Kersley, 55, of Gilman

The next census, in 1940, finds Arthur Kersley as a lodger, with "single" as his marital status, living in Peoria, Illinois, with no employment listed. He died in Peoria in 1948. His obituary in the Bloomington Pantagraph, published 1 June 1948, reports that he had married Mrs. Jennie Clanahan of Peoria two years earlier. The couple is listed in the 1948 Peoria City Directory and two years later Jennie is listed as the widow of Arthur. She died in 1983.

Dora's daughter, Bernice, married George A. Cook and they had two daughters, Georgia and Dixie. Bernice - identified as Bernice Strasma - later married Herbert Lease on 5 May 1962 in Kentland, Indiana. Herbert and Bernice had one daughter, Joy Lynn Lease, born in 1959, three years before their marriage. Joy Lynn died in 1990.

Bernice died in 26 March 2000 at the age of 79 in Watseka. Her obituary lists her as the daughter of Dora Sieling (her mother's maiden name, not Strasma) with her husband Herbert as a survivor.

Henry Charles Strasma 1882-1965

Henry Charles Strasma was born 26 March 1882 in Danforth, Illinois, the first child born in the United States to Peter Strasma (Pieter Stroosma) and Aafke Koets. His parents had emigrated from Friesland in the Netherlands, arriving in New York on 16 April 1881.

He married Margaret Agnes Drinan, daughter of Irish immigrants, on 26 October 1904 in Gilman, Illinois.

The Strasmas had four children: Edward John, born 29 July 1905; Jacob LeRoy, born 30 September 1907; Florence Berneice, born 23 July 1911; and Ethyl Marie, born 15 July 1913. Florence Berneice lived less than a month, dying on 16 August 1911.

Edward married Eula Margaret Clifton on 12 July 1930 in Kankakee, Illinois. They had two sons, Norman Edward, born 10 August 1932, and Richard Jan, born on 6 May 1944.

Edward died 6 June 1984, and Eula died 10 July 1999.

Roy, as he was known, married Charlotte DeSelm on 27 June 1931 in Kankakee. (It is speculated that he was called Roy or LeRoy rather than Jacob because of the alcoholism of Henry's brother, Jacob.)

They had six children: John Drinan, born 29 March 1932; Gretchen Margaret, born 29 September 1933; Cynthia Mary, born 15 December 1935; Elizabeth Ellen, born 18 October 1941; Jane Priscilla, born 20 December 1942; and James Frederick, born 31 December 1948.

Roy died 23 October 1963; Charlotte died 11 November 1998.

Ethyl married J. Henry (Jay) Kettner on 7 May 1937. Dr. Kettner was an osteopathic physician. They had two sons, James Henry Kettner born in December 1940 and Richard Lee Kettner, born 5 January 1946 in Milwaukee. Ethyl and Jay were divorced after 1950.

Ethyl subsequently married George J. Scott, a widower, who brought two children into their blended family. His daughter, Patricia Ada Scott, was born in 1941 and his son, George, was born in 1943. Patricia died in 2017.

Ethyl's husband, George, died in 2005 at the age of 95. Ethyl died in 2009, also at the age of 95.



Left:
Henry and Maggie's
Wedding Portrait

October 1904

Below:
The Strasma siblings in
the early 1960s: Edward,
left; Ethyl, center; Roy,
right



Edward Charles Strasma 1884-1944

Edward Charles Strasma, the youngest son of Peter and Aafke Strasma, was born on 13 September 1884 in Danforth, Illinois. The 1900 census for Danforth shows the 15-year-old Edward working in a butcher shop. At age 25, the 1910 census shows him farming with his father Peter and living with his parents. He married Kathryn Reilly on 12 January 1914 in Gilman, Illinois.

(The Strasmas were protestants in the Dutch Reformed Church; Edward became a Catholic when he married Kathryn Reilly whose heritage was Irish Catholic. Edward's older brother, Henry, also married a wife of Irish Catholic heritage who subsequently became a protestant. Thus the Gilman family of Edward and Kathryn were largely Catholic while the Kankakee family of Henry and Margaret were Methodist.)

In December of the following year, 1915, Edward and his brother Henry purchased the retail hardware business of Besier and Risser in Piper City. Henry moved to Piper City while Edward initially remained on his farm near Gilman but later moved to Piper City. They added groceries to the store and continued in the partnership until January of 1920 when Henry bought out his brother. Henry later sold the business in September 1920.

By the 1930 federal census Edward, his wife Kathryn, and four children were living in Gilman and Edward is identified as a "hatcherman." By the 1940 census the family had expanded with the birth of Raymond (with an 11 year gap between Raymond and his older siblings). Edward was proprietor of a commercial feed business with his sons, Edward John and Laverne listed in the census as a proprietors as well.

Edward died 7 May 1944 in Chicago where he was being treated for a head injury two weeks earlier while laying a sidewalk two weeks earlier at him home in Gilman. He was 59. (See accompanying news article from the Fairbury Blade.)

Beginning in the 1940s Edward Strasma's family also operated Strasma's Motel and adjacent restaurant, Strasma's Kitchen, in Gilman. Edward's widow, Kate, is shown in the 1950s federal census for Gilman as manager of the motel. Son Edward was also involved in the motel and restaurant business, though the 1950 census lists his employment as the feed business.



Above:
Edward John
Strasma; infant son
Edward James;
grandmother
Kathryn Reilly
Strasma; and great-
grandparents
Edward and Ellen
Reilly

Right:
Edward Charles
Strasma and wife
Kathryn Reilly



Edward and Kathryn Strasma Family

Edward Charles Strasma and Kathryn M. Reilly were married 12 January 1914 in Gilman, Illinois. They had four sons and one daughter: Edward John, born in 1916; Laverne Timothy, born in 1920; Kathryn Ellen, born in 1922; Eugene Jason, born in 1924; and Raymond Thomas, born in 1935.

The 1940 census for lists Edward as proprietor of a commercial feed business with 20-year-old son, LaVerne, working in the business

The 1950 census for Gilman shows Kathryn managing a motel. Son Raymond, 14, is the only son remaining at home. Wife Kathryn died 19 December 1972 in Danville, Illinois.

Edward John Strasma

Edward John married Bertha Kreeb on 7 November 1936. They had two children, Edward James born 30 August 1937 in Watseka and Janice born in 1946 in Watson, Illinois. Edward's World War II draft registration lists whims self employed with Ed Strasma and Sons in Gilman. In the 1950 census for Gilman, Edward is listed in the feed business. Edward died 17 July 1989. His wife, Bertha died 4 March 2002.

Laverne Timothy Strasma

Laverne was born 24 January 1920 in Piper City, Illinois. He married Marian V Foster on 1 March 1938 in Reynolds, Indiana. At the time of his marriage, Laverne was working with his father, Edward, in his mill and feed business in Gilman. Laverne and Marian had six children: Dale born in 1938; Crystal born in 1940; Timothy, born in 1945; Anne, born in 1964; Monica, born in 1968 and Scott, born inn 1971.

Laverne served in the U. S. Army during World War II and the Korean conflict. The 1950 federal census shows the family, now with sons Dale and Tim, were living in Chicago where Laverne was a truck driver for a furniture storage company. He died 29 October 1971, at the age of 51. Marian died 8 November 2008 at age 91.

Kathryn Ellen Strasma

Kathryn Ellen "Kay," Edward and Kathryn's only daughter, was

born 15 April 1922 in Gilman. She married Arthur Franklin Kuipers in Gilman on 16 May 1945 after his service with the U. S. Army during World War II. Arthur was born in Iowa and moved with his family to Danforth, Illinois, where his father was a laborer for the state highway department. The couple moved to a farm in Danforth where their daughter, Linda, was born in 1947. They later moved to Lenox, Iowa, in 1966 and continued to farm until Arthur's retirement. The Kuipers had three children, Linda, Sandra, and Richard. Arthur died in 1986, and Kathryn Ellen "Kay," died in 1990.

Eugene Jason Strasma

Eugene Jason "Jay" Strasma was born 26 November 1924. He served in U. S. Army during World War II. He is listed in the 1949 Kankakee city directory as a department manager for Wards. He married Mary Elinor Robbins on 6 September 1952 in Urbana, Illinois. Their son, Thomas Eugene, was born in 1957 and died in 1965. A daughter, Deborah Ann, died in infancy in 1965. Another daughter, possibly a twin, was born 16 July 1965. She married Sean McBride and they had one daughter, Meagan, born in 1986. Jay owned Jay's Welding Service in Rossville and was superintendent of the Hubbard County Club golf course in Rossville. He died 24 May 1990 in Rossville, Illinois. Elinor died 14 October 2019 at the age of 98

Raymond Thomas Strasma

Raymond Thomas Strasma, the youngest son of Edward and Kathryn, was born 22 December 1935. He served in the U. S. Army during the Korean conflict. He married Mary Ella Lee on 3 November 1956 in Gilman, Illinois. They had two sons, Steven, and Greg. Raymond was Vice President of Special Projects for Archer Daniels Midland Company for over 20 years. His work took him and his family to several locations around the county and included an assignment in Europe in the 1990s where he pursued the genealogy of the Strasma family. In retirement Ray settled in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. Mary Lee Strasma died in 2008. Raymond subsequently married Jean Woods. Raymond died 24 March 2015 in Edinburg, TX.

Strasma Motel - Gilman, Illinois



Above:
Matchbook
Advertisement



Left:
Motel Entrance
and Aerial View

Edward Charles Strasma's death

Fairbury Blade
19 May 1944

INJURIES 2 WEEKS PREVIOUS CAUSE DEATH OF GILMAN MAN

Edward Strasma, a Gilman business man, died in a Chicago hospital of injuries received over two weeks previous. He was formerly in business in Piper City with a brother, Henry Strasma, the latter being a former Fairbury resident.

The Gilman Star in speaking of Mr. Strasma's death, says in part: Edward Strasma, 59, a prominent and widely known resident of this city, where he had been engaged in the poultry and feed grinding business for many years, died at 9:40 o'clock last Sunday night in Loretto hospital, Chicago, where he had been a patient for week.

Death was caused by cerebral hemorrhage which developed as the result of a head injury sustained Friday, April 21. Between 4 and 5 o'clock that afternoon as Mr. Strasma was engaged in laying a sidewalk of broken concrete slabs in the back yard of his home on South Crescent street, and as he was in the act of removing the last slab from a two-wheel push cart he was using to haul the pieces from a nearby pile to the walk he was constructing, the heavy chunk of concrete slipped out of his hand as lifted it and fell onto the truck.

This caused the handle to fly up with great force, striking him on the left side of the head near the temple. Although Mr. Strasma was stunned by the hard blow for a few minutes, he not rendered unconscious.

He went to the house and told his wife about the accident, but did not believe the injury was of a serious nature. He worked at his feed store as usual during the following Saturday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday; however on Monday he noticed that the fingers of his right hand were stiff and useless.

He consulted a local physician about the condition of his hand but did not inform the doctor about the head injury sustained several days previous and it was thought that the stiffness of the fingers was caused by the straining of the muscles in lifting the slabs of concrete.

On Tuesday, April 27, he went to Chicago for a few days' rest at the home of his sister-in-law and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Brosnahan. At about 9:30 o'clock in the forenoon the following Sunday while lying on a couch, he went into convulsions.

Mrs. Brosnahan immediately summoned a physician, and Mr. Strasma was rushed to the Loretto hospital, where specialists at once began a series of tests to determine the cause for his serious condition. As Mr. Strasma remained in a coma, and did not respond to treatment, it was determined by physicians that a brain operation was the only chance of saving his life.

This operation was performed on Thursday night of last week, but it failed to bring the desired results. It was found that he was suffering from softening of the brain. An autopsy performed Monday revealed that the bruise the head on had caused a blood clot, bringing about a general paralysis of the right side.

Henry and Maggie Strasma



Formal portrait of Henry and Maggie Strasma, likely from the 1940s. Maggie had prematurely white hair from her late 20s.

Recollections of Henry and Maggie Strasma by Charlotte Strasma (wife of son Roy Strasma) (Written before 1954)

Henry Strasma was born at Danforth, Illinois, March 26, 1882. His father worked "on the section" (meaning that he was a laborer on the Illinois Central right-of-way). Henry finished his schooling before eighth grade, and began working for the freight office for seven dollars a month. He delivered freight to business houses in a large hand cart, picking up materials they wanted to ship out. His hours were flexible, but around Thanksgiving, when turkeys were shipped into Chicago, he sometimes started work at three a.m., as he remembers it. He would have time off during the day except when trains arrived, but was on the job if needed until 6:30 p.m. When he was about 18, his father gave up his railroad job and rented a farm with a nice house and barn. Henry gave up his freight job and began milking cows and doing farm work, with his father which he liked much better.

He met Maggie Drinan at a dance; she had come with another young couple, but he asked to take her home in his buggy, and this began their acquaintance. They were married when he was about 22 and she 19, and rented their own farm. (He gave the date as October 26, 1904.) Married at 11 am they went home and picked corn in the afternoon. This farm had a large comfortable house, although the upstairs bedroom were not heated, and they liked their landlord. But in about four years after the wedding, Henry began to have very bad attacks or rheumatism. He took the "med baths" at Hot Springs, Arkansas, but these did not seem to help much, and finally they gave up their lease and moved to town (Piper City), where Henry ran a hardware store for a while, and Maggie kept roomers. At one time they ran the hotel in Piper City, with the children helping with the work.

When Henry became ill, and always after that, Maggie worked in any way she could to augment the family income. She worked as a practical nurse and took in boarders. She ran a small town hotel. She helped the boys, Ed and Roy, pop corn to sell at basketball games and encourage them to get newspaper and magazine routes. By the time Roy was twelve (and this must have been true of Ed, too) he had his own bank account, and he remembers, at one time, that his father and mother went to Hot Springs for weeks, leaving a cousin to keep house for the children,

and that he supplied the money for the groceries. He bought all his own clothes after he was twelve. Ed won a competitive scholarship to go to Normal to the college high school, which he did. Roy in a few years won the same competition, but think that going away would make things harder for his mother, he did not accept the scholarship. By this time she probably depended on him for advice, emotional support, and some help with finances.

When Roy was ready for his senior year in high school, the family decided to move to a larger place. They wavered between Danville and Kankakee, but were able to get a conveyance to move their furniture reasonably to Kankakee at the time they wanted to go, which decided their destination. They rented a large house close to town, when Maggie could keep rooms, Henry got a job managing a chair grocery store, and the family joined the Methodist Church.

Later Ed and Roy helped their folks get started in a grocery store of their own, a "Royal Blue Store." Both of them worked in it, and Maggie was a great asset as a clerk. Later, Roy and Ed invested in a general store in Clifton where their mother and father worked for them in the hardware and dry goods sections. When this business was sold, they rented a small neighborhood store on Elm Avenue in Kankakee, which they operated until Maggie's death and Henry's retirement.



The apartment building on Rosewood Avenue in Kankakee where Henry and Maggie moved in the 1940s - now rundown, it was a crisp, well-maintained dark red brick building when they lived there.



Family photo at Edward and Eula Strasma's Home
Christmas 1943

Back row from left: Jay Kettner, Eula and Edward Strasma, Betsy with Roy Strasma

Middle row from left: Ethyl Kettner, Maggie and Henry Strasma, Jane with Charlotte Strasma

Front row from left: Norman, Cynthia, Jim Kettner, Margaret, John

Ethyl Strasma's Recollections of her Childhood (Excerpt from her autobiography)

The year 1913 must have been pretty traumatic for my parents in Fairbury, Illinois. My Grandmother Strasma died; my brother, Eddie, broke his leg on a teeter-totter; my father started experiencing severe arthritis pain (then called rheumatism); and in the midst of all this, on July 15, I was born.

Somehow my birth record must have slipped through the cracks, though, because when later in life I tried to secure my birth record, there was no record on file. A further search showed no baptismal record either, and for legal purposes my brother, Ed (this adult version of Edward) had to submit written proof that he remembers my birth, since he was eight years old when I was born, and his memory was legally acceptable.

I really never heard much about my mother's very early life, except that she and her sister, Theresa, lived with their father, believing that their mother was longer living. A short time later they went to live with their grandfather in Danforth while their father worked for the Illinois Central Railroad. Actually their mother was not dead, but had some sort of a breakdown and was living in a sanitarium or some type of institution in Ohio, unable to care for herself, physically or mentally.



Ethyl Strasma
Scott and George
Scott

I was about three years old when my mother learned that her mother was actually alive. She learned of this through some contact with her Uncle Pat or Uncle Ed Lane, both of whom lived in Ohio. With this knowledge she wanted to visit her mother. I don't recall traveling there, but I know my mother took me with her, and I vaguely remember meeting my grandmother. She was in a very confused state and I don't think she comprehended who my mother was. She thought I was someone called Bridget. [Maggie's sister was named Bridget and lived in Columbus, Ohio.] Just seeing her, though, was therapeutic for my mother.

I don't know who or where my parents met, but it must have been in or near Danforth, Illinois, and they lived with my dad's parents for a while. When they married my mother turned from Catholicism to Protestantism and joined my father in embracing the doctrine of the Dutch Reformed Church.

When my mother spoke of the early years of her life she always told how close she and her sister, Theresa, were. They must have been very poor, as she said they each had only one dress, wear it until it was laundered at the end of the week. She attended school only until the sixth grade, but she must have been a very bright student. She read well and was able to express herself very intelligently, both orally and in writing.

My parents had a daughter named Florence Bernice about two years before I was born, but she died when only about a month old. They seldom talked about her, but I think the cause of her death was spinal meningitis, though I'm not at all sure. Losing her must have been very sad and perhaps resulted in their being overly protective of me (especially my Mother) even as I grew older. I remember saying to my Mother "Having lost one girl and having two boys I'll bet you were glad I was a girl."

To this she replied, "At that time everything was in such a state of confusion I don't really know what I thought." Though her response was a little disappointing, it told me how difficult things must have been at that time. She never spoke of Florence's death, but I recall that one time I was looking through a dresser drawer for something and came across a part of Florence's coffin, which my Mother was saving out of love for Florence. When I asked what it was, she was apparently remembered of her early death and it was upsetting to her. I recall that my Dad told me not to ever ask her about it again.

Before I was born, while in Fairbury, Illinois, my father got a job as a clerk at a local general store. It looked as if life was brightening for my Mother, until my father developed what was called rheumatism in those days, and being on his feet became too painful for him. He told how he used to go into the bathroom at the store just to get off his feet for a bit to ease the pain.

A Move to Piper City

We lived in Fairbury a very short time before moving to Piper City, Illinois, a little town of about 800 people located -- south of Chicago. In Piper City we lived in a white house just a block from the town's main street and my father and his brother, Ed, opened a small grocery/hardware store. Apparently this provided a very limited income, as I recall the lack of money was always a problem and after a relatively short time my uncle decided to give it up and move to Gilman, Illinois.

My Dad then kept only the grocery store, but its survival was grim, particularly as his rheumatism worsened. Finally he sold out to a local long-time resident. His next attempt at making a living was as a manager of a very small local hotel (the only one in town) but it was not a very lucrative source of income and cast a heavy burden, physically, on both my parents. Their duties include complete maintenance, doing laundry daily, not only for the family but also for the rented rooms whenever they were occupied. Despite the fact that there were always rooms available for rental to tourists, there was very limited space reserved for our family.

Apparently, the hotel job was not a satisfactory solution for my parents as they stayed in it a relatively short time. I recall that we eventually moved back into the white house (later referred to as the Johnson house, I think) we had previously lived in when it became available. However, since our re-entry into the house was delayed, in the meantime we lived in a very small apartment above one of the stores on the main street. Again, space was very limited and I think our entire family lived in two rooms.

I remember, too, that my Mother worked for a while as a clerk in a dry goods store, and I can remember spending time there too, making friends with the owner's daughter. Even though my Mother seemed to enjoy being out and meeting the public, and they apparently were getting by on a very limited income, she was not happy with this life style when

my Dad was inclined to just accept whatever happened without worrying about tomorrow. This attitude of contentment was very difficult for my Mother to accept.

Piper City was a town made up mostly of retired farmers or long-time wealthy families, and these wealthy families seemed to be the important people. We were definitely poor, economically, and by today's standards would have immediately been eligible for welfare benefits. My Mother, though, was a very enterprising proud woman and would not want to accept welfare benefits even if they were offered.

I don't really know what our source of income was, unless it was from the sale of the grocery store.. However, I do recall that we ate very sparingly - most meals consisting of fried eggs and fried potatoes. My Mother got a job working in a local shoe store since my Dad's rheumatism was very debilitating and he was unable to find a job he could handle physically. He, then, usually prepared the very simple meals when my Mother was out working. Sometimes boiled ham must have been sometimes included in the menu as I remember being sent to the grocery store for 25 cents worth of boned ham, and it was enough for the entire family.

While we were living in Piper City my Dad became much more concerned about religion. Church attendance had always been very regular, but I think it was after a meeting my folks attended in Columbus, Ohio, that his concern about religious matters became more intense. I think it was at that meeting that my dad pledged \$100 for some worthy cause, without my Mother's support of it. She felt, and probably rightly so, that we just could not afford a contribution like that, however worthy the cause. I remember it was the basis for many, many arguments for years to come. Naturally those fundamental beliefs were passed on to me, and I lived in constant fear that I might do something wrong that would be considered a sin and displeasing to God. For instance, I remember that I was working on a little piece of embroidery work, just for pleasure, and was about to do some work on it on a Sunday. Then I became concerned that it might be sinful to do this work on the Sabbath Day, and asked my Dad if he thought it would be all right. I think he said it would be all right, but even so I doubt that I worked on it. Of course, in the early days of Methodism, this was pretty much the doctrine of the church, with emphasis on making sure you did not commit a sin, rather than on God's love, as it is taught and understood today.

My Dad's physical limitations were a constant source of bickering

between my parents. Sometimes this was the result of something like my Dad wanting to use a cane when my Mother felt he should try to get along without one and develop a more positive attitude. Sometimes an argument would result from my Dad's constant use of aspirin for pain (sometimes as many as 20 a day) and my Mother's feeling that we was overdoing it and relying too much on medication.

I remember my brothers both doing what they could to help out in some way - such as selling popcorn prepared and bagged at home by my parents on the main street and at the local high school during athletics events.

I also remember a gunny sack type of swing in our yard, fastened to a large catalpa tree, and this was a source of real fun. My cousin, Edward, who now lived in Gilman, used to come and visit, and the first place we headed for was out to play on this swing. We played on it for hours, swinging back and forth, jumping on each other's lap, with precision timing.

One winter when my Dad's physical condition was really bad my folks took a six week trip to Hot Springs, Arkansas, hoping that the sulfur spirits would give him some relief. I'm sure they must have been pretty desperate for some relief for him, as they had to rent an apartment there and certainly had no extra money on hand. They took me with them and rented a room in a place where children were accepted only if they could be sure they would not be a problem. As a result, this really intensified my feeling that I must always be a good little girl at all times.

Then came a turning point - the possibility of a job opportunity as township assessor. When this came up my folks felt this might be a job my Dad could handle, as it would not demand much physical exertion.

Mother Declares an Ultimatum

My mother declared an ultimatum - if he did not secure the position as assessor we were going to move, either to Danville, Illinois, or Kankakee, Illinois where she would open a rooming house. He did not get the job and shortly thereafter we moved to Kankakee where Kankakee won out and they rented a very large two-story house with the potential to be made into a rooming house. Four upstairs bedrooms, with a community bathroom, were rented out to traveling salesmen going through town for \$2 per night. The downstairs had a parlor, dining room, kitchen and two small bedrooms. One bedroom was rented out to

a young couple, who shared the kitchen and bath with our family. My brother Roy had the former parlor, converted into a bedroom, my parents had the remaining bedroom and I slept on a cot in their room. My Dad did as much maintenance work as he could, and was very capable in handling this if it didn't involve too much physical exertion.

A New Beginning

When we moved to Kankakee we first lived in a house owned by a family named Muncie. We made so many moves that time periods became known as where we lived and in what house at a particular time. Consequently this first Kankakee home (rooming house) became known as the Muncie house.

As I recall my brother Ed was away on his first (and only) teaching job in a farming community near Buckley, Illinois. In those days advance education was not necessary for a country teaching position, though he was the only teacher in this schoolhouse and taught all the grades. He roomed with a family my parents knew. I can't recall how he got around, even when he occasionally came home for a weekend because he certainly didn't have a car. Perhaps his room was close enough to the school that he would walk. In his teaching position he was saddled with many other chores besides teaching such as arriving at the schoolhouse early, starting the stove, which provided heat and any other maintenance chores needed.

If it happened that the room to the front of our Muncie house living quarters was not rented out, Roy slept there and Ed shared this room with Roy on weekends when he returned home. Our whole family shared a downstairs bath with a couple who rented the balance of the downstairs space. My Dad did as much as he could of the maintenance work, and my Mother, along with being the landlady, did part-time work in the kitchen of a YMCA nearby. One thing that stands out in my memory while living there is the way the weather changes determined part of my dress code. When spring came it was acknowledged by my being given permission to stop wearing long underwear, which meant that I could now wear three quarter length hose like many of my classmates. This is not a trivial memory - it was really important to me.

Big Brothers Can Be Great

The first year in the Muncie house was grim. I still vividly remember the first Christmas when I doubt there was any exchange of gifts. However, because I still believed in Santa, and because my brothers knew I would be so terribly disappointed if Santa didn't remember me, they came up with enough money to go to the dime store and buy a few gifts for me (from Santa of course) I only learned of this - their generosity - later in life.

We didn't have a Christmas tree, but I'm quite sure had had one in Piper City. We never went though the custom of hanging up our stockings. I do remember that we used to put out plates on the kitchen table and there we found our gifts on Christmas morning.

I've tried to remember where my brother Roy could have earned any money, as he was in high school, but I think it was from early morning delivery of milk. He used to load containers of milk on his wagon and walk to the various customers, leaving the milk on their doorsteps. I remember that sometimes I would get up early and trudge along with him, just for the companionship with him. I don't know how much money he earned, but I do recall that at that time milk was selling for 3 cents a quart and sold in glass bottles.

Eventually my Dad secured a job as manager of a National Tea Store. His background in the grocery business seemed to be impressive. However, since it involved a lot of walking and standing my Mother became an unpaid helper in the store and together they were a good time and even though the salary was not large, it was regular and made the future look a little brighter.

This continued for some time and we became relatively stable financially, though my Mother continue to do part-time work outside the home as time permitted. She worked in the YMCA kitchen near our home, worked part-time in a shoe store, assisted doctors as a mid-wife, sold insurance, and became very active in the local Methodist church, even as a Sunday School teacher for several years.

After a couple of fairly successful years the house across the street from us, on Court Street, (the St. John House) became available and offered the same 'room for rent' opportunities as the Muncie house. It then became the St. John House in our identification history. We had a bit more living space and, in fact, occupied the entire downstairs and a bedroom upstairs for Ed and Roy to share.

My brother, Ed, had terminated his teaching career and was now working in Kankakee as an employee of the local Credit Bureau. In those days credit ratings on prospective retail customers were available to local Credit Bureau members, such as retail stores and other business places, by telephone inquiry calls to the Bureau. These credit ratings were determined by information provided by other retailers in terminology which by today's standards would not be permitted.

In this St. John house I still had no room of my own and slept downstairs in the dining room, adjacent to my parent's bedroom. The rooms were separated by curtains or sliding doors. I know what we had electricity downstairs and possibly upstairs too. I remember my Dad lighting gas fixtures upstairs at least for some time. After a couple of years, if a room upstairs happened to be unrented for a few nights I was permitted to claim it as my room, but only with the understanding that if it was rented I would give it up again.

The \$2 per night, if rented, was vital to the family income. In retrospect, I know that this perhaps contributed to my feeling of insecurity, which manifested itself in many ways, even later in life. I still recall the feeling I got when I saw the "Room for Rent" sign on our front door. My friends all had more average living homes.

Looking back, though, I realize what an enterprising, courageous woman my Mother was and how her diversified ways of making a living provided me with many things I would never have had otherwise - such as a wrist watch at 8th grade graduation, the opportunity to belong to the Girl Scouts, to have a uniform of my own, attend a Girl Scout summer camp for a couple of weeks, to take piano lessons which cost 50 cents per lesson.

My Dad, though he did not pursue these things for me, was always willing to go along with my Mother's plans if they did not violate his firm convictions of right and wrong.

We lived in the St. John house until somewhere around 1925 when I was just about 12 and ready to start high school. When my parents learned of another house, owned by a maiden lady, Ethel Elliot. They thought it would provide adequate rental income and was, they felt, more attractive.

"My Own Room At Last"

At last I had a room of my own, with the agreement that if Miss

Elliot returned to Kankakee, even for a short time, I would give up the room to her. It had a beautiful four- poster bed in this reserved room, and which no one but Miss Elliot had ever slept in. She made a special point of wanting me to have the privilege of being the only person beside herself to sleep in it. It was very flattering.

In this Elliot house, Mother continued to rent out rooms, but not to transients. There were two or three rentable rooms, and they were occupied by very desirable, long-term renters. I was thrilled that I did not have to see that "room for rent" sign going up and down and I could claim a part of the house as my room.

The first major disappointment I can remember was that in my sophomore year I contracted scarlet fever. Out of the whole school, only the girl sitting across from me in assembly hall and I developed it. I don't know which of us gave it to the other one. In those days the health officer came and put up a sign on the house as soon as the diagnosis was made to alert any - one that there was no admission as someone with a contagious disease was inside. Any clothes I was wearing prior to the diagnosis had to be destroyed, and, of course, I could not leave the premises. At the end of about four weeks the health officer came to inspect the patient, particularly to see if there was any residual scaling on the hands. I remember putting Vaseline on my hands to camouflage any possible remaining scales. To my tremendous relief, I passed his scrutiny and was released from bondage. During the entire period of quarantine my Mother and I were forced to confine ourselves to a couple of downstairs rooms and my father and brothers could come and go normally, but were not permitted in the living quarters occupied by my Mother and I. They slept in rooms upstairs.

However, even though I had passed the health officer's examination my Mother wasn't about to take any chances, so, though I could mingle with the family, for several days I had to wear rubber gloves if touching things the rest of the family might use, like any newspapers, etc. I think things went along pretty smoothly after the scarlet fever. I recall some very pleasant evenings when my Dad would sit in the living room with the rest of the family, a big bowl of apples in his lap. He then would peel the apples and parcel them out to us.

Sometimes he would pull out a harmonica (mouth organ as it was called) and start playing the few songs he knew. He had no musical training and really not any musical ability, but it sounded good to me. His renditions were few, however, his favorite being a song familiar to him,

"Turkey in the Straw."

About this time I got a job working on Saturdays at the local dime store, from 9 AM to 9 PM, with an hour off for lunch and an hour off for supper, for the total sum of about \$ 1.56 a day. My parents would have let me work at the National Tea (where my Dad was manager for a while) and I could have earned \$2.00, but I thought it would be more exciting to be where some of my classmates might happen to drop in.

In those days girls were still considered the ones to perform any domestic chores. I can still recall ironing sometimes as many as a dozen shirts at a time. The chore that really made me cringe, though, was scrubbing the upstairs bathroom floor, cleaning the tub, etc., which was used by not only my family, but all the roomers (mostly men). In this house most of the rooms were rented to long-time renters, and I knew them, but they were not family and this chore was very disturbing to me.

My relationship with my brothers was warm and loving, but I really did not think of them as siblings -they were more like a second set, of parents to me. It just never occurred to me to argue with them, as I respected their judgment in virtually everything. Apparently, my parents welcomed their contributions to family decisions, too, which is very understandable, since from early on they had helped tremendously in finding solutions to our money problems.

To show how much I felt their knowledge was the ultimate answer to everything, especially Roy, since Ed was gone much of the time, I had to write some kind of paper for school, and turned to Roy for help. One of his suggestions was that I use the expression "carnivorous amphibians" in what I was writing. This meant nothing to me, but I proudly inserted it into my paper, and while I remember the expression and the dining room table at which we were sitting, to this day I really don't know what it means.

For what reason I don't know, but after a few years my folks decided to buy a house, just for our family, and my Mother was going to give up having roomers. She and my Dad were going to have what was known as a Royal Blue Store, a privately owned business under the federal organization by the name of Royal Blue Stores. It was a small place, just big enough, apparently that the felt they could handle it comfortably.

Probably no one was happier than I since it was right across the street from a close girlfriend of mine, Doris Durrell, and at last I would

have a room of my own. I'm not sure of the date, but I think I recall that Roy was about to get married, and that, would mean I was the only one still living at home, so my own room seemed pretty certain. I know that the purchase price was \$5,000, which was about average at the time for a small bungalow type place. This was known as the Elm Avenue house.

However, we stayed there only a few months when my folks had a chance to sell it and decided to buy another place a few blocks away, which became the Lincoln Avenue house. Now I was really happy. It was in a very nice neighborhood, close to school, my folks seemed to have a fairly stable income, and now I could have my own room permanently (or so I thought).

It was in this house that I learned to drive a car, under Roy's careful supervision. As if it was yesterday, I still remember the first time I was given permission to take the car alone and drive around the block. Then, to my complete surprise, my Mother wanted to go back into the rooming business because the old St. John house was again available for rental, and they were going to sell the Lincoln Avenue bungalow and move back. I had always been pretty docile, even when family decisions weren't to my liking, though I was seldom included in decision-making, but this time I can recall really all but screaming my objections.

Now again I would have to see that "Room for Rent" sign, which I so detested, and I would have to give up my newly acquired, cherished room of my own. But, again my reactions were not taken seriously, and my folks I'm sure felt with increased income they would be able to make me happy. When we moved back I did have a room of my own most of the time, but I had to give it up occasionally for a short time when we were pressed for space to rent and it was needed for rental purposes. I know that one back room was kept upstairs for Roy, and perhaps Ed if he was not married by then.

After Roy was married to Charlotte DeSelm that back room became mine permanently and I was relatively happy. I had now graduated from high school, and would have liked more than anything at the time to be preparing to go on to college. I qualified and was offered several scholarships, but I just dismissed them as something I could not even consider. Looking back I wonder why I didn't try to figure out some way to go to college, perhaps working my way through, but my folks certainly didn't have enough money to get me started, and besides they felt that my high school education was adequate. They were proud that I had completed my academic pursuits successfully.

Perhaps I should have been more realistic in my thinking, but all through high school I took a college preparatory course, knowing that was my ultimate goal, even against all odds. I wanted to go away to become a registered nurse, and perhaps could have pursued this goal had I chosen to be trained at St. Mary's local hospital. However, I think I felt this was an opportunity to go away someplace, since so many of my classmates were going away for higher education.

A friend from church, Doris Chittum, and I both made applications to begin training at Wesley Memorial Hospital in Chicago and I think we were going to be roommates. However, I was only 16 at the time I graduated from high school and I got a letter of rejection from the hospital because they said I had to be 18 years old. They said I should resubmit my application when I was 18. This was a terrible disappointment, though I'm sure it was because I couldn't become a nurse - rather that it was going to be the closest thing I could think of to compare with going away to college.

Now came the question, what will I do. By now my brother, Ed, was manager of the Credit Bureau, which I described earlier, and he offered to make a place for me in his office. I had no office skills at the time, such as typing or shorthand, but I could handle the telephone inquiries. It was made very clear to me, though that, my brother was the boss, and that I must not behave as if he was my brother. In fact, I was told he must be referred to as "Mr. Strasma" in the office.



Ethyl
Strasma
Scott
and
Henry
Strasma
1960s

Another Perspective: Gretchen Strasma Rauschenberg

GRANDMA STRASMA

Grandma Strasma worked hard all her life. She was very intelligent, and always busy at something. She was plump and wore firmly boned corsets, so that sitting next to her felt like sitting beside a barrel. I doubt if any of us children ever sat on her lap. I certainly don't remember doing so.

In my earliest childhood, she kept a rooming house. Then she was on her feet all day at the Royal Blue store, and even later at the store in Clifton. In her home if she was sitting it was in a rocking chair, but her lap was full of crocheting. She did beautiful needlework, and her crocheted pillowcases were worthy of museum collections. Her hair was snowy white, pinned tightly at the back and curling softly around her face and ears. She had lively dark eyes and could subdue a misbehaving child in church with the intensity of her glare. Her own childhood was not something she enjoyed talking about.

She was born in Xenia, Ohio. She and her sister Therese were brought to Illinois by their father, and she always thought her mother had died. Apparently her mother was mentally ill, and in an institution back in Xenia. It was mostly her grandfather, Pat Drinan, who took care of the girls while their father worked on the railroad. I think she and her sister both left school after 8th grade, and went to work as hired girls.

She was about 18, I think, when she and Grandpa married. Grandpa was Dutch Reformed and Grandma was Irish Catholic; when they moved Piper city, they decided to choose a new church together, and became a Methodist family. They brought their children up in the Methodist Church and were loyal in attendance all their lives.

By the time I was in second grade, Grandpa and Grandma had closed the rooming house and moved to an apartment on Rosewood Avenue. They got up early there, and ate Rice Krispies for breakfast. Then Grandpa went to open the Royal Blue store at 6 A.M., and Grandma did a little housework. She never cooked at home, once she no longer kept roomers. Lunch was fixed on a hotplate in the back room of the store, and supper was eaten at Robinson's Cafeteria on Court Street. They never had food (only milk) in their refrigerator, and never had cookies in the house for visiting grandchildren. At the store, we were usually allowed to choose one or two cookies from the bulk bins of cookies on display there.

By about 8:20 A.M. daily, my dad arrived to visit with his mother. I think they mostly talked about his business interests as well as about the Royal Blue Store -- each giving the other much good advice. Dad took her downtown to the Royal Blue and parked behind the store; his office was a couple blocks away. Once when I was about 14 years old, I asked Mom if she was ever jealous of all the time Dad spent with his mother. I've never forgotten her answer: "Men who honor, respect, love, and care about their own mothers make wonderful husbands." [or words to that effect]

Grandma and her friend Mrs. Osterle ran the "Junior Department" at Sunday School when I was that age (4th to 6th grade). They kept about 80 boys and girls in strict order! Grandma stood by the door and handed out blue songbooks as we entered. From her post, she had eye contact with the whole large room, and she made any errant whisperer feel stared down. Girls sat on one side of the aisle and boys on the other.

Mrs. Collier, who must have been at least 70 years old, played lively gospel songs on the piano --I learned all the verses of "Count your Blessings," "Stand Up, stand Up for Jesus," "Love Lifted me," and many other old-time hymns. Grandma chose which boys got to pass the collection baskets. Those three white-haired women made each of us feel that church was a wonderful place where you showed respect to God by behaving well, and they made sure we were all well-behaved while in their care. After 30 minutes of opening exercises, we divided into smaller classes taught by younger people, where we didn't always behave as well. When we older cousins (John, Norman, then Margaret) attended junior high school, located near the courthouse, it was too far to walk home for lunch. Instead of carrying lunch in a brown bag or lunchbox as our classmates did, we used our hour to go to the Royal Blue, two blocks from the school. Grandma cooked something for us on the hotplate in the back room, and we chatted with her about school, about family, about anything that entered our heads.

I discovered that she was a wonderful person! She had always been too busy, and perhaps too timid, when we were around her as younger children. Now that we were adult size, and good workers, she really showed us how much she enjoyed having us there. She listened to all our ideas, told us about her recently diagnosed diabetes, and fixed interesting lunches. My favorite was a salad made of lettuce, bananas, and whipped cream tossed together. Norm and I sat at an old desk in the back room to eat. She never sat down, but ate as she walked around working. After lunch, we worked under Grandpa's direction for about

half an hour, until it was time to return to school. We put cans on shelves, marked prices, weighed potatoes, swept, washed the plate glass windows at the front of the store, and occasionally waited on customers.

This was what we now call a "Ma and Pa" grocery store, and our work there made us feel very much part of the family. Once, when I was in eighth grade and the only grandchild enjoying lunches in the back room, I came limping in. My foot had been stepped on in gym class and was sore and badly swollen. Grandma took a good look, diagnosed a possible broken bone, and made me much more comfortable by capably winding an elastic bandage around it. That was the first time I realized what a skilled nurse she could have been. She was right about the bone; later Dad took me to have it X-rayed, and a tiny bone above the 3rd toe was cracked. The doctor told me the best remedy was to continue wearing the elastic bandage for about 3 weeks. Grandma was right.

By my eighth grade year, the store was losing customers to the brand new supermarket (an A&P) two blocks away. At the end of the year, the Royal Blue closed forever. Dad and Uncle Ed knew that their parents had no pension, and very little savings. Social security was not available to the self-employed at that time, so the Strasma Brothers hired their parents.

They bought a run-down general store in Clifton, Illinois, twenty miles away to the south. Grandpa was put in charge of the hardware section; Grandma had dry goods, and a local man continued as grocery manager. On Saturdays, Norm and I worked there. We usually rode down with Grandpa and Grandma at 6 A.M. Dad came down in mid-afternoon, and he and I went home when the store closed at 9 P.M. (Other days the store closed at 6 P.M.) Norm worked mostly in groceries; I usually worked in dry goods, but sometimes in hardware which included the toy department. Grandma was a strict boss, and I received no preferential treatment because I was her granddaughter! With the other employees, I stocked and priced merchandise, dusted counters, displayed yard goods, and swept the floor. Grandma showed me how to display a tie over my hand so that it looked properly tied as I presented it to a customer. She showed me that I could measure muslin by stretching it from my nose to the end of my hand. If I turned my head slightly to the right, it was exactly 36 inches. She taught me to measure roughly by handspans--mine is exactly 9 inches from thumbnail to top of little finger, and it is just an inch from the knuckle to the tip of my thumb. Her approach to life was full of such practical knowledge. She taught me a lot about how to

display and sell dry goods. By mid-afternoon, she often had a bad headache, and she took a lot of aspirin, but as far as I know she didn't go to a doctor. Not feeling well, she had a terrible temper, and I tried to keep on her good side! She and Grandpa drove back to Kankakee at 6 P.M., after a 12 hour day, leaving Dad and the other employees in charge until the store closed at 9 P.M.

Around 1954 I think it was, the Clifton store had been built into a thriving business, and Strasma Brothers had a chance to sell it for a good profit. The commuting and the long workdays were really too much for Grandpa and Grandma, so when the store sold, Strasma Brothers rented a small neighborhood grocery on Elm street for their parents to run just long enough to complete the minimum quarters to be eligible for Social Security. In late April or early May 1955 Grandma had a stroke.

I had been at DePauw for Scholarship Weekend for high school seniors. Mom and Dad met my train, with Grandpa in the car, and we went immediately to the hospital for visiting hours. In bed was a cranky, childish, unhappy woman who looked like Grandma but the valiant and resilient spirit was gone forever.

After two weeks In the hospital, with her weeping and begging to be taken home, she was moved back to the apartment on Rosewood, where she died In early July.

An Important Announcement

As successors to A. L. Morel & Sons and to Beardslee, Sanderson & Co. we want to outline some of our plans for their continuance and enlargement.

Our aim is to develop a one stop shopping center where you can fill all of your needs in one spot. Our slogan will be 'EVERY-THING FOR THE FARM AND HOME' New lines will be added and existing lines expanded to carry out this program.

The entire store will be modernized and brought up to date. Our buying connections will enable us to secure additional merchandise which is still scarce, and our low cost of operation will enable us to sell at lowest prices.

Most of all we want to make this a "Friendly Store." Come in--we are always glad to see you.

STRASMA'S FARM AND HOME STORES

Henry C. Strasma, General Manager

DEPARTMENTS

IGA SUPER MARKET Every Day Low Prices DRY GOODS & NOTIONS Standard Merchandise GENERAL AND FARM HARDWARE

Advertisement in the Clifton Advocate newspaper, announcing the opening of the Strasma's Farm and Home Stores

GRANDPA STRASMA

In fairy stories, hunchbacks were sometimes the villains, and when I looked at my grandfather's back, I knew the fairy stories were wrong. He might be hunchbacked, but he was my grandpa. He had our love and respect even if he did shout at us sometimes in an ogre-like way. We children learned to stand by the side of his chair, never in front. He was always in a great deal of pain from rheumatism, and if we accidentally brushed against his leg or foot, he winced and yelled at us. Otherwise, he was usually soft-spoken, clear-eyed, and interested in whatever we wanted to chatter about. He and Grandma bickered all the time. I think it was a form of communication started during hard times, and now habitual even though times were better. It bothered Dad a lot when his parents quarreled.

I think that is why we children were not permitted to squabble when Dad was around. It always made me uneasy when Grandpa and Grandma got to shouting at each other--mostly they just bickered good-naturally. When I studied Inter-personal Communication, I learned that bickering shows that you are listening to your partner, noticing and caring about what he or she says. It is much healthier than a relationship of apathy. Arguing can be a way of indirectly showing love.

This seems to be true for Grandpa and Grandma Strasma.

Sometimes when we were visiting we could watch Grandpa take an apple or an orange and peel it with his knife. The rind came off in a thin ribbon like spiral, all in one piece. Paring fruit was an art form for him! He taught most of his grandchildren to play chess -- at least the basic moves. I always won until my 10th birthday. After that, Grandpa considered me to be an adult, and I never defeated him again.

Each evening before bedtime, he and Grandma Strasma played a game, and he kept track of who won. Usually she beat him at least 3 times out of 4. After she died, he told me that he should have realized she was getting sick when she started losing more chess games to him.

At the Royal Blue Store he worked long hours. His window displays looked professional, and he painted prices in big figures on the windows with a flowing artistic hand. I always wished I could write as beautifully as he did. He would add up a customer's order in his head as he bagged it; if the customer wanted it written, he wrote on the bag, drew the line under the items, and wrote the sum with no need to re-add. He could write down columns of numbers four digits wide, adding as he went, and

give the correct sum immediately (so could my Dad).

Grandpa would show off to Norm and me, on noons when the store wasn't busy, by having us call out numbers--up to 20 or more--four digits wide, and he would tell us the sum without even writing anything down. We wrote down the numbers as we called them out, or punched them into the adding machine, and he was always right. When Grandma or one of us kids waited on customers, we needed the adding machine. The cash register was exactly that -- we punched in the total only, and the drawer opened so that we could make change. But the register didn't add anything up -- we used a hand-operated adding machine for that. As a boy, Grandpa had delivered milk door to door for his father. He had stopped attending school after a few years.

One second grade experience he told me about was being forced to cut a willow switch to be used on his best friend. Grandpa weakened the switch by cutting tiny slits which he hoped would be invisible, but the teacher saw them. So Grandpa and his friend were both flailed, with new switches cut by the schoolmaster. He worked for his father, he met trains and hauled baggage from the station to the homes of the passengers, and did odd jobs.

The day he and Grandma got married, Grandpa once told me, they changed their clothes and went out and picked corn. Compared to Grandma, though, I thought that he was fairly easy going. Shortly after marriage, he became crippled with rheumatism, and was often unable to work. He did what he could, and some years were better than others.

By my childhood, he was able to manage a small chain grocery store. He had been at a larger one, the National Tea Store at Court and Schuyler Avenue, which had gone out of business. In the store at Clifton, he managed the hardware department well enough, but Uncle Ed and my dad made the business decisions and hired good help for him. With his hunchback and painful rheumatism, he was not a very good driver. He couldn't turn his head. Grandma did all the looking for him, and told him when it was safe to go. I don't think she ever got a driver's license. He drove down Highway 45 at twenty miles an hour, which he considered fast enough for anyone. Norm and I, riding to Clifton with him when we were teen-agers, used to hold our breaths in the back seat of the Nash as cars approached from the rear at 50 or 60 miles an hour. They would brake suddenly, or swerve around us if the road was clear. Fortunately there was not much traffic at 6 A.M.

After Grandma died, he lived alone. He kept the small grocery on

Elm Street by himself another year, and then retired for good. He moved to a smaller apartment on North Greenwood and Court street, and then to an even smaller one on South Harrison. He fixed himself Rice Krispies for breakfast. Dad picked him up at noon and took him home for a good lunch fixed by Mother, and then took him back to the apartment. In the late afternoon, Aunt Eula took or sent supper to him there. He spent most of his days watching life out the window and listening to WM BI, the Moody Bible Institute radio station.

He attended the Golden Age Club at the Methodist Church -- about 50 women and 2 men. They baked cookies and pampered the men, which he enjoyed. He chuckled while describing to me what it felt like to have a roomful of women courting him. In 1958 or 1959, he became ill. He thought it was an ulcer, but it was cancer of the stomach. He had surgery at Northwestern Hospital, which was successful. Five years later, there was still no recurrence.

He enjoyed his great-grandchildren. The rheumatism was less painful, and he often held the small ones on his lap while they played with a colorful toy my parents kept especially for lap-sitting moments.



Henry Strasma with his first great-granddaughter, Anne Elizabeth Strasma, daughter of John and Judy Strasma, 1960

After our dad died in 1963, Grandpa kept coming for lunch.

By that time, he was not driving, and Mom or Aunt Eula or one of the grandchildren would ferry him back and forth. I think it was in July 1965, when Aunt Eula and Jan arrived at his apartment with a hot supper and found him semi-conscious on the floor. He had suffered a stroke.

They had the ambulance take him to Riverside, Kankakee's new hospital. He was still very strong, and had to be strapped in bed because he wanted to get out, but was unable to stand up because of the stroke. Roy and I visited him there, and as we helped him from the bed to a chair so the nurse could change his sheets, we were amazed at the strength he still had in his arms and shoulders. The legs were useless. Within another week, he had another stroke, and died. He was buried beside Grandma and their infant daughter Florence Bernice, in the cemetery in Gilman, Illinois.



Edward,
standing,
Henry, and
Ethyl

Another Perspective: Norman Strasma

Grandpa and Grandma Strasma, my father's parents, were very friendly and excellent examples for me.

They operated a Royal Blue grocery store in the 300 block of East Court Street in the main Kankakee business center, where I helped on the various cookie displays where customers could select the quantity of their favorites. I also helped organize the ration book records for sugar and some other restricted supplies during the World War II time. At their home in the 200 block of South Rosewood Avenue, I learned how to play chess with my grandfather. He had been a player for many years and really enjoyed the game.

Later, when I was in high school, I would drive their Nash automobile to the Strasma Family store featuring groceries, dry goods and hardware, where they were the managers. My father and uncle had purchased the store business in Clifton, 15 miles south of Kankakee, where I worked on Saturdays. They let me drive them in their Nash automobile, as long I did not exceed their personal speed limit of 35 miles per hour.



Vintage photo of building housing the Strasma Farm and Home Store

Another Perspective: Jane Strasma Randall

My memories of my grandparents are more faint, but their presence taught important lessons in life. It didn't hurt me a bit to be responsible for transporting Grandpa Strasma to visit his homebound friends, to a store for "brown" eggs, to play chess with him, and to drive him to Gilman to see the graves of his wife and daughter Berneice, visit cousins Helen and Raymond, and stop in Rantoul for ice cream cones.

Grandpa Strasma credited his wife for raising family in a the church home. Although Grandma was raised Catholic, she hitched up the horse and buggy every Sunday to go to the Methodist Church. Grandpa Strasma was always congenial, although saddled with a terribly painful arthritis, which made him walk bent almost in half. He NEVER EVER complained, except in a teasing manner. ("Charlotte, how is it that you managed to teach three daughters to cook, but not the fourth?" - Jane was the fourth daughter)

I stood in awe of Mom for her success as a daughter-in-law. Dad visited his own Mother every morning, leaving the house early in order to do so. Grandma Strasma was the midwife for John, Gretchen and Cindy. I always found Grandma Strasma (Maggie Drinan) a severe sort of person, unlike kindly Grandpa Strasma. At age 9 I didn't understand that the weight of keeping food on the table had fallen to Maggie because of Grandpa's disability. She was a resourceful woman who didn't have a lot of time for laughter or much to laugh about! All I saw was the stern Sunday School superintendent who made us sit upright in neat rows and keep our shiny patent leather shoes from tapping too loudly on the floor during opening prayers.

Later I asked Mom how she could stand having Dad go off early to see his Mother and didn't she think this was being awfully tied to his Mother's apron strings? She answered that she thought that a man who treated his Mother with such great consideration would always be good to his wife. She was right.

A silver dollar - Henry Strasma's traditional Christmas gift to his grandchildren



Another Perspective: Jan Strasma

I have no memories of Grandma Strasma, who died in July 1951 when I was 7 years old. I had lost my other grandmother, Emma Clifton, just a few months earlier.

While Grandpa Strasma was still operating the little family grocery on Elm Street in the 1950s, I remember spending the night with him in his apartment on Greenwood Avenue just north of Court Street. His breakfast was always a bowl of cereal (my recollection is that it was cornflakes but other cousins recall it was Rice Krispies. He added a spoonful of wheat germ from a jar he kept in his refrigerator.

At Christmas, Grandpa Strasma always gave the grandchildren a silver dollar and, remarkably, I held on to a few of the coins that I have now passed on to his great-grandchildren.

Later, when he was living in an apartment on Harrison Avenue, I remember he now had a record player which he would load up with a stack of religious music records. He also had a round leather hassock that resided in front of his favorite arm chair and it was that hassock that served as a table for occasional games of chess.

And I remember sitting at the dining table with my parents in the early 1950s for Sunday dinner with Grandpa Strasma. The subject turned to politics - Senator Joseph McCarthy was very much in the news with his crusade against alleged Communist sympathizers in public life. Grandpa Strasma voiced his opinion that we'd be better off if we had more leaders like Senator McCarthy. My Dad could not contain himself. "What do you mean? Don't you know that Senator McCarthy had even attacked your Methodist bishop as a Communist." That, somehow, squelched the conversation.

Grandpa Strasma was still driving in the 1950s despite severe rheumatism that prevented him from turning his head to check for traffic. He liked to drive into downtown Kankakee - Court Street at the time had diagonal parking and Grandpa would just park, facing inward, and watch the world pass by. Finally, though, after he had a minor fender bender in the church parking lot, my Dad and his brother Roy told him that the insurance company would no longer cover him and that he would have to give up driving. His car, a grey Studebaker, was still around, though, and it was his car that I learned to drive with a manual transmission at age 16. I practiced mastering the stick shift and clutch in the driveways at the Lowe Seed Company plant in Aroma Park.

Local News of the Henry Strasmas 1913-1923

Weekly newspapers of the early 1900s published dense columns of local news about the lives of community residents, sometimes borrowing from neighboring newspaper as well.

The Fairbury Blade and The Piper City Journal chronicled The Henry and Maggie Strasma family's years in those two communities until the family moved to Kankakee in 1923.



20 June 1913 Fairbury Blade

H. Strasma, who lately accepted a position in Walton Bros. Co.'s hardware department, come here from Gilman, last Thursday closed a deal whereby he becomes owner of the M. Nicholas Property on East Ash Street, now occupied by Mr. And Mrs. Pauley. He gets possession of the property on July 1.

18 August 1913 Fairbury Blade

BIRTHS

To Mr. And Mrs. Henry Strasma, Tuesday, July 18, a girl.

26 September 1913 Fairbury Blade

Eddie Strasma, the eight-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Strasma, and a pupil of the north side school, suffered a broken leg Wednesday while at play. He was playing teeter totter with another boy and as the end of the board he was on went up, the boy on the other end slipped off. When young Strasma came down his leg was under the board and all of his weight on top of it. The leg was broken below the knee. A physician was called and adjusted the bone and the little fellow is getting along all right.

7 November 1913 Fairbury Blade

Henry Strasma, who was in the employ of Walton Bros. Co., has resigned and is moving back to Gilman and will re-enter the employ of Mr. Roeder.

12 December 1913 Fairbury Blade

A letter from H C. Strasma, who formerly worked in Walton Bros. Co. hardware department, states that he has been laid up for some time with weakening of the arches of his feet. He consulted a specialist in Chicago, and under the doctor's advisement he feet were placed in casts. Mr. Strasma and family moved to Gilman about a month ago. His friends here will be sorry to hear of his affliction.

16 January 1914 Fairbury Blade

Mr. And Mrs. H. C. Strasma of Gilman were here Thursday calling on old friends. Mr. Strasma formerly worked in the hardware department of Walton Bros. Co. Since leaving here Mr. Strasma has been unable to do a day's work and for two weeks was in a hospital in Chicago, being laid up by the arches in his feet giving way. He is better at present.

5 March 1915 Fairbury Blade

FOR SALE

An 8-room house with furnace, bath and electric lights, all in good repair, located three blocks from Main Street, Fairbury, in northeast part of City — H. C. Strasma, Gilman, Ill.

23 April 1915 Fairbury Blade

Thursday night was a busy night in Gilman for robbers who did work in all parts of the city. In the first ward the residence of Henry Strasma was entered and Mrs. Strasma's gold watch and some change was taken. On Tuesday morning as Mrs. Strasma was walking down the street south of her home, she saw something beside the walk glistening in the sun. She stooped to see what it was and found the it was her lost watch, standing on edge in a clump of weeds. It had evidently been dropped by someone as the case was dented where it had hit the edge of the cement walk. Evidently the robber had lost his booty while leaving the Strasma home. - Gilman Star. Mr. and Mrs. Strasma formerly resided in Fairbury, Mr. Strasma being employed in the hardware department of Walton Bros. Co.

23 September 1915 Piper City Journal

Another important business deal took place in Piper City this week, the Strasma brothers, Henry and Edward of Gilman, buying the Besier and Risser hardware stock. The invoicing is now under way and they expect to finish up today and the new proprietors will take charge. Mr. Henry Strasma, who is an experienced man in this line of business, will move here at once and take active supervision of the business. He has rented the A. S. Reed property in. The north part of town and with his wife and three children will move to it soon. His brother will for the present remain on the farm near Gilman.

24 December 2015 Fairbury Blade

Henry Strasma, the new hardware man, with his family moved over from Gilman the first of the week and are occupying the A. S. Reed property on north Green street. - Piper City Journal. Mr. Strasma



*Her hair's a mass of golden lights,
Her eyes as dark as any night?
Her step is light, her smile is bright,
As lightly she goes tripping,
And when the darkness falls at night,
Her charms lose none of their delight,
For by the light of National Light
That girl is simply ripping.*

NATIONAL LIGHT OIL

An abundance of bright, clear light is always assured when "NATIONAL LIGHT" is used in the lamps.
No charred wicks, sooty chimneys or bad odor

Used in Incubators it is insurance against death to the little chicks. No fumes to clog egg shell pores and smother the unhatched chick. No fumes to kill chicks in the brooder. Uniform heat prevents eggs from becoming baked and from becoming chilled in incubation.

For oil heaters and the kitchen oil stove it is the ideal smokeless fuel.

—

This store is at your service with the best of everything.

Strasma Bros.
Groceries and Hardware

and family resided in Fairbury before going to Gilman. Mr. Strasma working for Walton Bros. Co. in the hardware department. He and his brother have recently purchased a hardware store in Piper City.

16 January 1919 Piper City Journal

For sale - A baby crib and mattress, good as new — Strasma Bros.
Mrs Henry Strasma and her daughter Ethel were in Gilman Friday.

10 May 1919 Piper City Journal

YOUTHFUL AND PATRIOTIC POET

Of course Piper City with other towns can host many youth patriots, but not all of them can break into verse to express their patriotic sentiments. The following stanzas on the Victory Loan are from the pen of Master Leroy Strasma, the 11 year of son of Mr. And Mrs. Henry Strasma of this

Announcement

Having bought the interest of Edward Strasma, I am sole owner of the Strasma Department Store, and will continue the business on the same general lines as before, serving you to the best of our ability and guaranteeing square dealing and courteous treatment for all.

We want you to feel at all times that you are welcome in this store, and you will find this a desirable place to meet your friends and acquaintances. Whatever favors you feel able to give us will be greatly appreciated and both will be benefitted.

H. C. STRASMA
Groceries and Hardware
Piper City, - Illinois

The partnership between brothers Henry and Edward Strasma lasted just over four years - the Piper City Journal carried this announcement on 8 January 1920 that Henry had bought out the interests of his brother.

Edward moved back to Gilman and established a hatchery business.

city. And not only is Leroy a poet and patriot, but he is a hustler as well, as can be attested by the numerous customers whom he supplies daily with evening papers. The poem follows:

The Victory Loan is in full swing
It isn't an ordinary thing.
Let's make this loan the pride of the nation.
Make it the Allies' and our salvation.

The debt of our nation isn't paid.
But the American people are not afraid.
Let's put the Victory Loan right through.
As American patriots always do.

19 June 1919 Paxton Record

AWARDED LINDLEY SCHOLARSHIPS

The following Lindley scholarships have been awarded in Ford County as a result of the recent examinations. The scholarship entitles the winner to free tuition to any Normal university in the state:
Edward Strasma, Piper City

28 August 1919 Piper City Journal

Henry Strasma has been in Peoria the past week taking mud baths treatment for a severe case of rheumatism. Mrs. Strasma, who has been with him part of the time, reports an improvement of his condition and this fact will be good news to his many friends.

8 January 1920 Piper City Journal

Another business change took place in Piper City on New Year's Day. Henry Strasma buying the interest his brother Ed in the Strasma department store and thereby becoming the sole proprietor. Ed Strasma will, we understand, return to Gilman and the farm. He has sold his residence property in this city to D. M. Lyons, who will move to town as soon as the place is vacated by Mr. Strasma.

10 June 1920 Piper City Journal

Eddie Strasma and Howard Kewley, who won scholarships in Brenton and Pella townships respectively and have been attending the state normal school at Normal are home for the summer vacation.

24 June 1920 Piper City Journal

Clean your rugs with Globe Cleaners - Strasma's Department Store
I receive subscriptions for all Curtis publications - LeRoy Strasma
We give trading stamps on every cash purchase - Ask for them - Strasma's Store
Purina Calf Chowder is the ideal feed for young calves. For sale at Strasma's Store exclusively.

20 July 1920 Piper City Journal

Through an oversight last week we failed to mention a birthday party given by little Miss Ethel Strasma on the 15th inst. and which was a delightfully enjoyable occasion for about thirty-six little friends who were her guest in the village park from two-thirty until five o'clock in the afternoon. There were games and nice refreshments and there wasn't an idle moment in the whole time. Miss Ethel was also the recipient of many very handsome presents.

22 September 1920 Piper City Journal

Another business deal was made in Piper City last week whereby George Cook became proprietor of the Strasma grocery store, taking possession at once. Mr. Cook is a competent young business man and being also popular with the public there is no doubt of his getting a fair share of the patronage. The store is to be moved soon into the room now occupied by "The Home Store" which, we understand is to be closed out and discontinued.

7 October 1920 Piper City Journal

Please Pay Strasma
Now that I have sold my business in Piper City I want to get all accounts

settled as quickly as possible. If you are one of those to whom credit has been extended please return the favor by coming in at an early date and effecting a settlement either by cash or note. — H.C. Strasma

31 December 1920 Fairbury Blade

Mr. And Mrs. Henry Strasma and daughter, Ethyl of Piper City, who'd been for several weeks at Hot Springs, Ark., arrived home last week. Mr. Strasma, for whose benefit the trip was made, returns in an improved condition.

13 January 1921 Paxton Record

FOR SALE - One Ford ton truck complete, 1918 model, in first class condition. H. C. Strasma, Piper City, Ill.

19 May 2021 Piper City Journal

Anther business change was the purchase of the Commercial Hotel by Henry Strasma, who took possession the first of the week. The entire building is to be thoroughly gone over and put in fine condition and it is Mr. Strasma's purpose to make of the Commercial one of the best hotels along the T.P.&W. The former proprietor, Mr. Hubbard, left with his



Piper City
Hotel

family this morning for their old home in Newton, in the south part of the state, but have not as yet decided where they will locate permanently.

2 June 1921 Piper City Journal

In the recent final examinations held by County Superintendent H M. Rudolph Leroy Strasma of Piper City won the Normal scholarship for Brenton township and Alvis Wilson the scholarship for Pella township.

7 November 1921 Piper City Journal 1

Miss Laura Strasma of Gilman spent the week end with her uncle Henry Strasma and family at the Commercial Hotel.

8 December 1921 Piper City Journal

OLD FELLOWS

The following will govern Piper City Lodge No. 471: Noble Grand, H. C. Strasma

22 December 1921 Paxton Record

Henry Strasma went to Kankakee last week where he underwent a thorough x-ray examination for his feet. The examination revealed a diseased condition of a number of the bones of his feet and at the present time he is making arrangements to enter a Chicago hospital where he will undergo surgical and medical treatment. His many friends hope that he may pass through the ordeal with the best of success and that he may return home before many weeks well on the road to complete recovery.

23 February 1922 Piper City Journal

H.C. Strasma authorizes the Journal to say that he is a candidate for the office of Assessor of Brenton township, subject to the will of the Republican convention. Mr. Strasma is a citizen who is well posed as to values on all kinds of property and should be the choice of the people for the place will no doubt fill it efficiently and satisfactorily

2 March 1922 Piper City Journal

FOR ASSESSOR

The Journal is authorized to announce H.C. Strasma as a candidate for the office of Assessor of Brenton township, subject to the decision of the Republican township convention.

9 March 1922 Piper City Journal

Republican Caucus

Notice is hereby given that there will be a caucus of the Republicans of Brenton township in the opera house, Piper City, Ill., at 2 o'clock Saturday afternoon, March 18, 1922, for the purpose of nominating candidates for township offices. The officers to be chosen are township clerk, assessor, highway commissioner, constable for unexpired three year term, and a school trustee. -- Daniel Kewley, Chm.

7 April 1922 Piper City Journal

The township election Tuesday was a tame affair and only 175 votes were cast. The Republican ticket had no opposition and the new officers are: Town clerk, W. O. Keefe; assessor, E. H. Houk; commission of highways; John Meikle; constable K. B. Hawthorne; school trustee, E.E. Wilson. Only 135 voters expressed their preference on the oil question - 121 for and 14 against the proposition to levy a tax for three years for road oiling purposes.

4 May 1922 Piper City Journal

The Strasma Magazine Agency

Subscriptions received for all papers, magazines and periodicals
Call or phone your order to the Commercial Hotel

18 May 1922 Piper City Journal

Another business change took place in Piper City yesterday, Mrs. R. W. Martin purchasing the Commercial hotel from Mrs. H. C. Strasma, possession being given at once. The Strasmas will move to rooms over the G. D. Cook store until they get possession of their own South Green

street property now occupied by J. J. Lundy.

29 June 1922 Gibson City Courier

J. J. Lundy has moved to the flat over the Watson & Lundy hardware store and H. C. Strasma and family are now occupying their own property on South Green street, vacated by Mr. Lundy.

24 August 1922 Piper City Journal

Henry Strasma and family left last Thursday on an automobile trip to Davenport, Iowa, where they visited Mrs. Strasma's sister, Mrs. E. C. McClain, returning home Tuesday evening.

12 October 1922 Piper City Journal

H. C. Strasma returned the latter part of last week from Chicago where he recently underwent an operation for his foot trouble. He is reported getting along very nicely.

26 October 1922 Piper City Journal

Mr. And Mrs. H. C. Strasma left Tuesday for West Baden, Ind., where Mr. Strasma hopes to receive benefit from the springs for his rheumatic trouble. The length of his stay will, of course, be governed by circumstances, but Mrs. Strasma is expected to return home Friday.

9 November 1922 Piper City Journal

H. C. Strasma returned Saturday evening from the Indiana medicinal springs, his stay there being cut short on account of he being unable to stand the treatment.

23 November 1923 Paxton Record

Henry Strasma departed on Monday for St. Luke's hospital, Chicago, where he will undergo a thorough physical examination for a number of days. It is not known just what course of treatment will be necessary to restore him to health but Dr. Porter hopes to be able to remedy his

condition.

1 December 1922 Fairbury Blade

H. C. Strasma, whose condition for some time as been very serious, left on Monday for Chicago, where he is again a hospital patient. That he may receive speedy and permanent benefit is the wish of his his of friends at home. - Piper City Journal

29 March 1923 Gibson City Courier

Many Took Examinations for Teachers' Certificates (From the Paxton Record.)

The teachers' examinations were held at the court house in Paxton on Friday and Saturday and many students over the county took the tests. These examinations are held three times a year by the state examining board. The questions are given by this board and the papers are graded by it. The papers have been sent to Springfield and the grades will be known in about a month.

This was a county certificate examination but the certificates may be used in other counties if endorsed. The greater number of persons took the examinations for the elementary grades, some for the high school and a few for the supervisory examinations. The next examination will be held in July.

Those who wrote were as follows:

Piper City - Edward Strasma, Mae E. Dowling, Inza L. Hasse, Julia E Reising

11 May 1923 Fairbury Blade

H. C. Strasma of Gilman has accepted a position in Walton Bros. Co. hardware department.

7 June 1923 Piper City Journal

Among those from Piper City who expect to go to Normal Saturday to attend the summer school at the state normal university are Edward Strasma, Misses Dora Hevener, Insa Haase, Harriet Funk, Julia Reising, Vera Bishop.

21 September 1923 Fairbury Blade

LOOKING BACK OVER THE YEARS

Ten Years Ago (The Blade, Friday, Sept. 26, 1913)

Eddie Strasma, the eight-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Strasma and a pupil of the north side school, suffered a broken leg on Wednesday while at play.

4 October 1923 Piper City Journal

Mrs. H. C. Strasma visited the school of her son Edward, near Delrey, Friday, and in the evening Edward accompanied her home to spend Saturday and Sunday.

2 November 1923 Fairbury Blade

Henry Strasma, who has been in the employ of Walton Bros. Co. has resigned and is moving back to Gilman

8 November 1923 The Paxton Record

Mr. And Mrs. H. C. Strasma were guests at the home of Mr. And Mrs. Ed Strasma and family. On Monday they left for their new home in Kankakee. — Gilman Star

11 November 1923 Piper City Journal

Piper City lost some good people Tuesday when the H. C. Strasma family moved to Kankakee. The Strasmas have been Piper City residents several years and have made a host of friends here, where they have been active in business, lodge, and church circles. Floyd Black and family will occupy the Strasma property on South Green Street.

15 November 1923

Junior Class News

Our secretary-treasurer, Leroy Strasma, has left us to go to a larger city, Kankakee,. Because he left we had to elect a new secretary-treasurer and

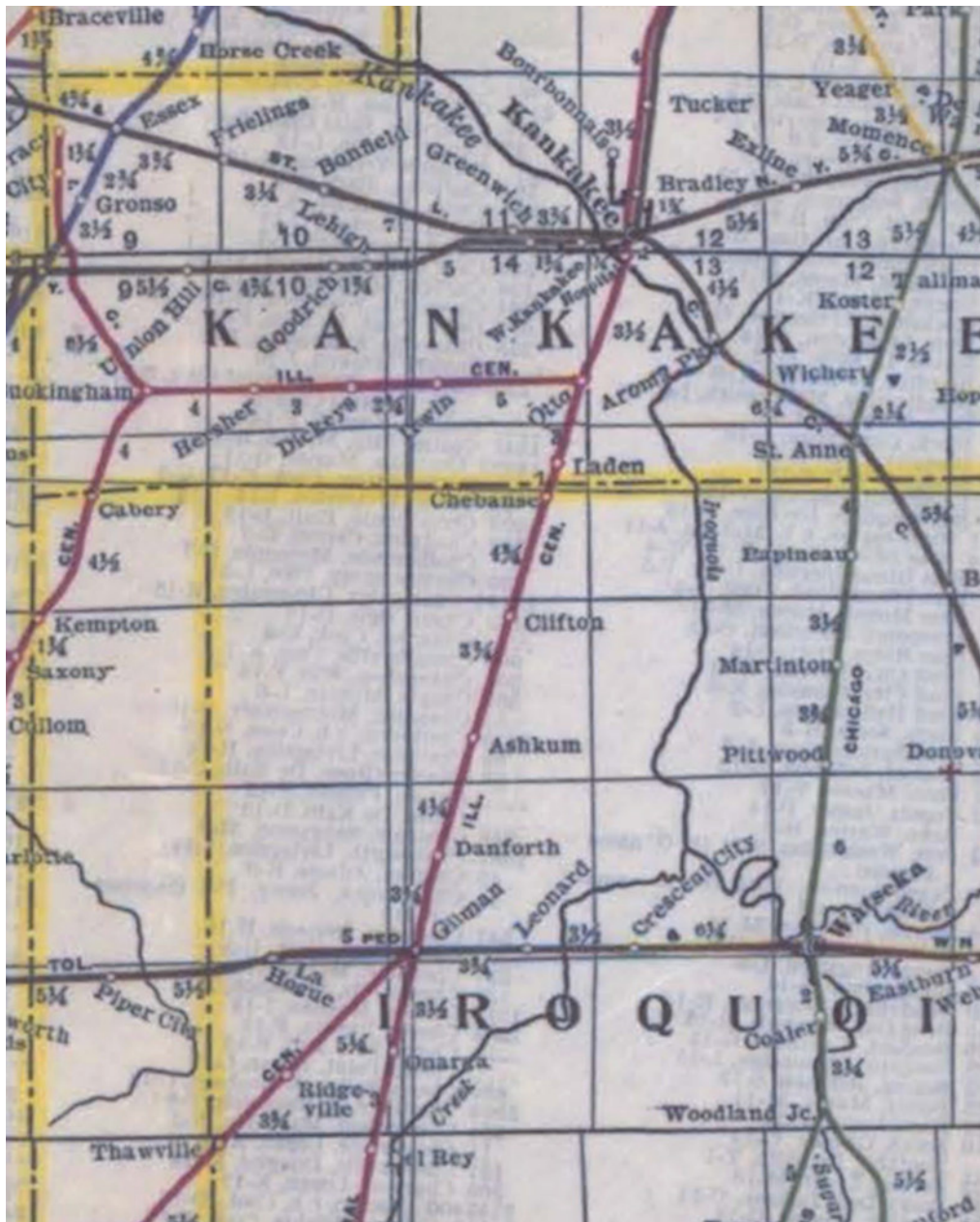
Dorothy Duran is the new official.

21 February 1924

LeRoy Strasma, former Piper City boy, son of Mr. And Mrs. H.C. Strasma won a \$10 prize last week offered by the American Legion of Kankakee for the best essay by a high school student in that city on "Why the United States Should Pay a Soldiers' bonus," There were several hundred contestants for the prize, and the award speaks well for Roy's ability as a writer. His essay, which was a strong argument in favor of the bonus, and also was replete with figures and data was published in full in the Kankakee daily papers.

16 August 1928 Piper City Journal

The H. C. Strasma family has changed their Kankakee address from 559 E. Court to 139 S. Greenwood Ave.



1928 Illinois Railroad Map showing Illinois Central's North-South Route and Toledo, Peoria, and Western's East West Route