

History created by Florence Gildea based on information from relatives in Ireland and memories of what her father Neil Gildea told her. There are issues with some of the information presented in the history. The history is presented here in its entirety, with issues identified, data presented, and conclusions stated. Hopefully, future researchers will locate documents enabling them to determine the truth about some of the unsolved issues.

Researched and compiled by Kim Marie Fischer Peters from 1985-2015.

EXCERPT 1

GILDEA FAMILY
Great-great Grandparents - Donegal County, Ireland.
Patrick Gildea)) Parents of Neil, Eddie, Patrick, Catherine, Mary,
Mary Gildea Gildea) Margaret and Bridget.
Neil Gildea (1866)- came to America at age 12 with his sister Catherine
and brothers, Patrick and Eddie accompanied by Aunt Hannah
Gildea McQuade and other relatives to escape British perse-
cution.

ISSUE 1.1. 1866 Arrival in the United States.

Census records for Neil Gildea and his aunt Hannah McQuade later McManus, indicate they arrived in the United States between 1882 - 1885.

Census records indicate Neil was born between 1860 and 1862 and Hannah was born December 1865. If Neil was really 12 when he arrived and they arrived between 1882-1885 as census records indicate, he would have been born between 1870 and 1873 instead of 1854. If he was born in 1854, he would have been about 11 years older than his AUNT HANNAH who, in a letter from a family member in Donegal in 1966-67 stated that Aunt Hannah accompanied the young Gildeas to America.

The first occurrence of Neil Gildea in a city directory is the 1891 Jacksonville Directory. He is a barkeeper and boarding with the family of Owen Travers at 105 Hogan Street in Jacksonville. He is not found on 1885 Florida Census. Based on preponderance of information, the Gildeas listed above likely arrived in the United States in/after 1882.

EXCERPT 2

In the post-Civil War days, Americans resented immigrants. Nobody would hire Irishmen except to do menial jobs which no one else would do. There were signs in most business places which read: "Help Wanted. No Irish need apply."

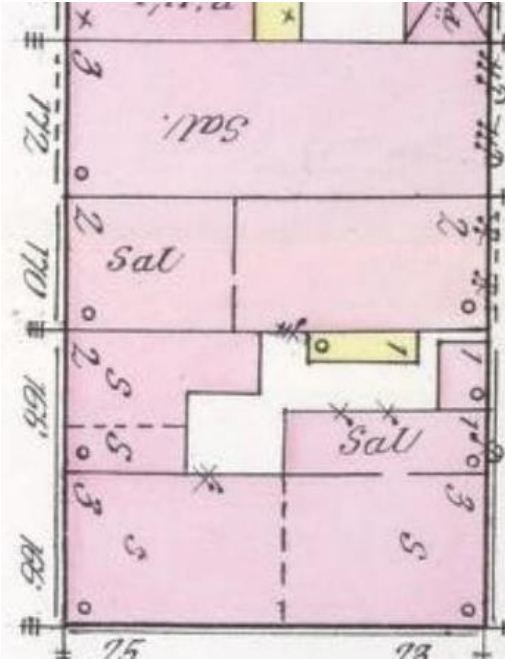
Neil, his brothers, and a group of young Irish lads became back-packing peddlers. They walked all over the United States. Eddie finally settled in Boston. Patrick ended up in Texas. Neil said he washed his sore feet in every stream in Georgia before he decided to stay in Savannah. In 1888 he owned the then famous Alhambra Music Hall and Cabaret. He acquired the Hülweiser Cafe and opened the first Bar 1 in the old De Oto Hotel. He also owned a night club in Norfolk and a Bar in Jacksonville. He later presented a small apartment complex in Philadelphia to his wife, Mary. He made the Ivey boys managers of his out-of-town businesses. He had an interest in the Casino on the river at Thunderbolt. Areal success story, you might say. All it required was a little Irish ingenuity, a lot of integrity, a sense of humor, a masterful personality, brains, and determination, plus a 5th Grade education, and, let us not forget his inherent faith in God and his own self-confidence.

ISSUE 2.1. "In 1888 he owned the then famous Alhambra Music Hall..."

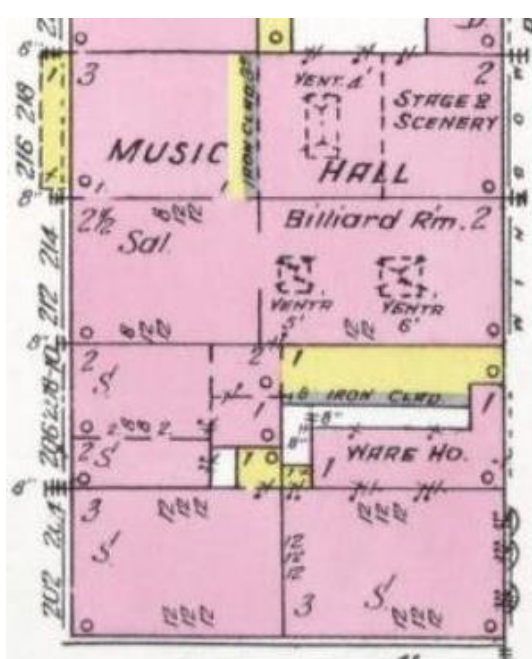
This brief entry in the 1891 *Webb's Jacksonville Directory* marks the first time I have found Neil in a directory: "Gildea Neil, barkeeper, b 105 Hogan". He first appears in Savannah in the 1893 directory indicating he may have moved to Savannah after the birth (Dec. 15, 1892) and baptism (Jan. 15, 1893) of his son Edward in Jacksonville.

In addition, the 1888 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for 172 Broughton between the Jefferson and Barnard shows a simple saloon. Compare that to the 1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for 216-218 Broughton (street numbers changed 1896), and you can clearly see that the 1888 saloon has been totally remodeled and now is identified as a "Music Hall" showing the stage and scenery storage. It also appears to show that the saloon and billiard room next door at 212-214 (formerly 170) Broughton has two openings to the lobby to the Music hall.

1888 Sanborn Fire Insurance map
Broughton between Jefferson and Barnard.



1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance map
Broughton between Jefferson and Barnard.



Based on city directories, liquor licenses, and Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps it seems clear that the Alhambra Music Hall did not exist in 1888 and Neil did not reside in Savannah until around 1893. It seems unlikely that he would be the owner of the Alhambra Music Hall in Savannah and work for two years as a barkeeper in Owen Travers' bar in Jacksonville from 1891 to 1892.

EXCERPT 3

One day while Neil was visiting his business in Jacksonville, he saw a "scoundrel" scooting a young lady on the street. Neil knocked said scoundrel through a plate glass window, retrieved the beautiful lady's basket of fruit, then escorted her safely to her destination. His Irish luck prevailed. He married Mary Ivey, age 18. He was 35. Her father, Ben Ivey, had committed suicide years before. Papa moved the widow, Elizabeth Ivey and her family to Savannah

ISSUE 3.1. "Neil was visiting his business in Jacksonville." Neil is listed in the 1891 and 1892 Jacksonville city directories as a "barkeeper." There is no business name or address and he is not listed under saloon owners.

ISSUE 3.2. "He married Mary Ivey, age 18." Mary Ivey was 17 when she married Neil on February 29, 1892.

ISSUE 3.3. "Her father, Ben Ivey..." Marriage records, census records and Civil War records prove that Mary Ivey's father was Milton M. Ivey. The Duval County Florida marriage index indicates that M M Ivey and Eliza J M Upton secured a marriage license 6 September 1873 and were married by W S Burgess JP 7 September 1873. Mary Ivey's grandfather was Ben Upton. It seems the names were merged.

ISSUE 3.4. "Papa moved the widow, Elizabeth Ivey and her family to Savannah." Eliza Upton Ivey Travers was not a widow when she moved to Savannah in 1896. Eliza's husband Milton M. Ivey committed suicide on January 14, 1884 and she married her second husband Owen Travers on January 19, 1886. They moved to Savannah in 1896 but returned to Jacksonville from 1902-1903 as owners of the Inn Hotel.

It is possible that Neil moved Owen and Eliza back after 1903, but she was certainly not a widow and her grown sons and daughter remained in Savannah when they returned to Jacksonville.

EXCERPT 4

Great-great Grandmother Elizabeth Jane Upton Ivey came from Davisboro, GA
Great-great Grandfather (W) Ben Ivey was a native of Baldwin, Florida.
They had 1 daughter, Mary and 4 sons, Asa C., Thomas Whit, W. Ben, and
James Ivey.

ISSUE 4.1. "Elizabeth Jane Upton Ivey came from Davisboro."

Bernie Cleary states that Eliza was born in Davisboro which is in Washington County just across the Ogeechee River from Jefferson County where the Upton family resided. The family of Ben Upton, his wife Adaran M and their three year old daughter Eliza J M are on the 1860 Census residing in Starkville, Lee County: Benjamin Oiptan [sic], age 27, overseer RR, b. Georgia; Adaran M, age 25, b. Georgia; Eliza J M, age 3, b. Georgia.

It is possible that Ben and Adaran moved to Starkville after Eliza was born or perhaps Adaran returned home for the birth. A history of Lee County states: "Starkville was known as a 'wide-open town' where every man carried a gun and didn't hesitate to use it... with the exception to Cripple Creek, Colorado, it lead in the number of homicides in proportion to its size at the time..." Lee County Historical Society, *Lee County, Georgia, A History* (Atlanta, Georgia: W. H. Wolfe Associates, 1983, p. 100).

ISSUE 4.2. "Ben Ivey was a native of Baldwin, Florida."

As stated in **Issue 3.3**, Mary Ivey's father and Eliza Jane Upton's husband was Milton M Ivey and he was not a native of Baldwin, Florida.

The 1850 Census of Camden County, Georgia shows Milton 6 white male, b. GA. I have not found Milton on the 1860 Census but the 1870 Census of Centerville, Charlton County, Georgia includes Milton Ivey, age 25, farmhand, b. GA, age 21, and the 1880 Census of Duval County shows Milton M Ivery [Ivey] age 36, works on railroad, born Georgia.

ISSUE 4.3. "They had 1 daughter Mary and 4 sons..."

According to the 1880 Census they had two daughters and four sons: May [Mary] age 6, born Florida; James M age 4, born Florida; William B one year old, born Florida; Ida [Ada?] E age 7/12 born Nov in Florida. She must have died before 1885 as she is not listed in the 1885 Florida State census.

EXCERPT 5

Step-great-great Grandfather - Owen Travers of Donegal, Ireland
Elizabeth Jane Ivey married Owen Travers. They had 2 daughters, Annie
Travers Cleary and Eliza Jane Travers Schauss.

Great-great Aunt Annie Cleary had three sons, George Jr, William and
Bernard Cleary. William, age 58, died in Savannah on 19 February 1985.

Great-great Aunt Liza Schauss had one son, Charles and one grandson,
Charles Thomas Schauss, who lives on Wilmington Island.

Great-great uncle Asa C. Ivey married Annie Ryan. 1 daughter, Gladys, Brunson
living on Wilmington Island

" " " Thomas W. Ivey married Annie Connors, 1 daughter, Gladys,
deceased in Norfolk.

" " " W. Ben and James Ivey did not marry. Died young. Buried
in Savannah.

EXCERPT 6

GILDEA FAMILY - SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Neil and Mary Ivey Gildea had 5 sons and 5 daughters.

Neil Gildea - Feb. 28, 1854 - May 5, 1934, age 80
Mary Ivey Gildea - Sept. 13, 1873 - June 1, 1921, age 48
Edward Cornelius - Dec. 15, 1893 - Feb. 15, 1953 - age 60
Mary Elizabeth - Feb. 18, 1895 - Mar. 31, 1982 - age 87
Catherine Margaret - Sept. 25, 1897 - Feb. 7, 1980 - age 83
Florence Gildea - Dec. 18, 1902 - Aug. 31, 1910 - age 8
Joseph Anthony - July 26, 1900 - Jan. 17, 1945 - age 45
Francis Joseph - Feb. 28, 1905 - Nov. 10, 1969 - age 64
Benjamin Joseph - Nov. 30, 1907 - June 12, 1935 - age 28
James Francis - Aug. 13, 1910 - Aug. 13, 1971 - age 61
Florence Eleanor - Apr. 11, 1913
Elizabeth Jane - Apr. 5, 1915
(Sr. Mary Daria RSN)

Issue 6.1 Neil Gildea's date of birth is disputed. His tombstone says Feb. 29, 1854; his death certificate says Dec. 24, 1853; census records indicate 1860 or 1862 or 1863. A passenger list from 1904 indicates 1860. He stated he came to America at the age of 12 in 1866 in this narrative, however, census records indicate his Aunt Hannah and his siblings who traveled with him, arrived around 1882-1885. If he was 12 when he arrived in 1882, for example, his year of birth would be 1870.

Issue 6.2 Edward Cornelius year of birth - Dec. 15, 1893 is in error.

Edward C. Gilday was Baptized at the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Jacksonville, Florida Jan. 15, 1893. The record shows that he was born Dec. 15, 1892. The 1900 Census of Chatham County, Georgia indicates that he was born in Dec 1892. It seems clear he was born in 1892 not 1893.

His date of death is also in question. The above family history states he died on Feb. 15, 1953 but his tombstone states he died Feb. 14, 1953. His obituary published in the Savannah Morning News on Feb. 17, 1953 states he died on Saturday. The 1953 calendar indicates the Saturday preceding Feb. 17, 1953 was Feb. 14, 1953.

Issue 6.3 Francis Joseph Gildea.

Catholic Diocese of Savannah Baptism record shows: Child's name: Francis Milton Gildea. Parents: Neil Gildea and Marie [Mary or May] Ivey. Church: Cathedral. Date: 3/26/1905. Sponsors: Alexander McQuaid and Bridget Gildea. Clergyman: R. F. Kennedy DOB 2/28/1905. He was obviously initially named after his maternal grandfather, Milton Ivey, however, Milton committed suicide in January 1884, so perhaps they changed his name due to this.

EXCERPT 7

Edward Gildea married Augusta Maier of Brooklyn. They had 1 son. Eddie Jr. married Marilyn Roland of Brooklyn. Eddie died in 1982 in Holiday, Florida. Their 3 children and grandchildren live in Largo and Tampa, Florida.

Catherine Gildea (Grandma Kate) married John G. Fischer in 1919. They had 1 daughter and 3 sons: Henrietta F. Russell, John Henry, Neil Joseph and Francis Joseph. Adopted sons, William Slocum and Charles Fischer.

Other relatives - County Donegal, Ireland.

Great Aunt Margaret Gildea Slevin - had 2 daughters, Alice and Bridget
Cousin Alice Slevin DuLevy - had 1 daughter, Mollie
Cousin Molly Dunlevy had 2 sons and 8 daughters. They owned a Linen Shop in Donegal City. (Molly gave us the family history.)
Cousin Bridget Slevin married John Mullin.
Cousins named Roper might still be living in Donegal.

Scotland - Aunt Alice Barron- 1 son, Patti was a school principal and writer
4 daughters- all teachers and their families
are all teachers or doctors in Scotland.

Cousin Patti Barron - 1 son, a medical student.
1 daughter, a doctor in Glasgow
1 daughter, a veterinary surgeon in Canada
2 daughters, doctors married doctors in
Boston.

Boston - Cousin Mary Gildea Walsh - daughter was a teacher
Cousin Margaret Gildea Gallagher - daughter married a lawyer

Milwaukee - Great-great aunt Hannah Gildea McCune- 1 daughter was a nun
1 daughter married industrialist
1 daughter was doctor's assist
ant.
Hannah's second husband was a
prison warden.

Canada - Cousins named Cassidy

Macon, Ga. - a Patrick Gildea is buried with the Cassidy family in Macon.
Sister M, Edward Cassidy says we're related.

EXCERPT 8

Gildea - Fischer - Russell

Military Service

John George Fischer - U.S. Army and National Guard. Veteran of
Phillipine Insurrection, Moro Uprising,
Mexican Border War and World War I, served in
France with General Pershing.

Edward C. Gildea Sr.- US Navy veteran World War I, 4 years service
in European Theater.

Joseph A. Gildea - US Navy veteran World War I, 3 years service
in European Theater.

James F. Gildea - US Army 3 years, American Theater, World War II

Florence Gildea - Army Nurse Corps, European Theater, World War II.

Joseph E. Russell Sr.- US Army, European Theater, World War II.

Retta F. Russell - Army Nurse Corps, American Theater, World War II.

John H. Fischer - US Navy, Pacific Theater, World War II

Neil J. Fischer - US Navy, Pacific Theater, World War II

Francis J. Fischer - US Navy, American Theater, Korean War.

Dan E. Gildea - US Navy, Viet Nam, Viet Nam War.

Patrick A. Russell - US ARMY, killed in Viet Nam 1969.

Edward C. Gildea Jr. - US Navy, American Theater, USS Yorktown.

Neil G. Russell - US Army, American Theater, Army Nat'l Guard

Chris M. Russell - US Army, American Theater, Army Nat'l Guard

Joseph E. Russell Jr.- Army Nat'l Guard, 20 years

Charles E. Fischer, - Army Nat'l Guard, 12 years.

Charles T. Schauss - US Army, Viet Nam, 3 tours of duty

Janet Schauss - Army Nurse Corps, 3 tours of duty

ISSUE 8.1. I can only confirm the dates of service for John Fischer, as his records were part of those destroyed by water as a result of a fire in the 1970s.

U.S. Army, April 7, 1911 - Dec. 25, 1912.

U.S. Army, Register of Enlistments shows the following: John G. Fischer, Birth year: abt 1889; Birth place: Savannah, Georgia, United States; Enlistment date: 7 April 1911; Enlistment age: 21 6/12, worked as a clerk, 5' 5 1/2" inches tall,

light brown hair, fair complexion and blue eyes. Remarks: Dishonorable discharge, Dec 25, 1912 at Presidio, S. F. Cal. [San Francisco, California] G.C.M.O. [General Court Martial Order] 862, Western Div., Dec 12/12 At., ____ . Of.

Transcript of Court Marshal indicates John had a problem with alcohol. In a drunken state, he took a pair of uniform pants from the bunk next to his, was arrested for larceny, and General Court Martial followed. He was sentenced to six months hard labor for his crime, despite testimony from other soldiers who stated he was drunk.

Georgia National Guard, April 25, 1916 – Jan. 17, 1919.

Fischer, John G, Army serial number 1,357,075, white. Residence: 1701 1/2 Whitaker St, Savannah, Georgia.

Enlisted in NG [National Guard] Savannah Ga, Apr 24/16. Born in Savannah Ga 27 years. Organizations: Co H 1 Inf Ga NG [Company H, 1st Infantry Georgia National Guard] to Aug 5/17; Btry [Battery] D 118 FA to Disch. Grades: Corp Mch 8/17; Bglr [bugler] Nov 21/17. Served overseas: Oct 21/18 to Dec 20/18. Hon. disch. Jan 17/19 on demobilization.