

My search for information on **Martha Anne Tennyson** and where she originated from.

My search for Martha started in earnest around 2007. Gayle, my youngest sister had done some research on the McConnell side of Mum's family, and I had accompanied Gayle to Northam in early 2000 to visit Mum's last surviving uncle (Bob, Martha's youngest son) who we found was in hospital so the visit was very short. No one appeared to know anything concrete about Martha Anne TENNYSON, (Mum's grandmother) or where exactly she had originated from. All we knew was that she was Irish and had married William Alexander McConnell.

I contacted the Western Australian records office and asked for a copy of my Grandmother Helena's birth certificate (Martha and William's, who I thought was their first born child). I also asked for Martha and William's marriage certificate and Martha's death certificate. I thought these 3 certificates might have on them information as to Martha's origins.

Martha's death certificate (# 1769) said she died on the 5th July, 1958 at the Home of Peace, Subiaco from left ventricular failure (hours) Hypertension & Arteriole sclerosis (years) at the age of 84 years. She was born in Crumlin, Antrim, Ireland. Her father was recorded as Joseph Tennyson (farmer) and her mother Margaret Grimes. Martha was buried in the Presbyterian, EA section, plot # 0094 of the Karrakatta Cemetery in the same plot as William was buried in 1921.

Martha and William's children living were;	Helena I.	54 years
	William J. A.	52 years
	James S.	48 years
	Eileen L.	47 years
	Martha J.	44 years
	Robert S.J.	39 years

According to her death certificate she had lived in Western Australia for 62 years.

Martha and William's marriage certificate (# 1166/1901) records that Martha was 24 years of age (a spinster, occupation; a laundress) and William was 31 years of age (a bachelor, occupation; a labourer) when they married on the 16th March 1901 in the Presbyterian Church by the Rev. A.H. Moore in Perth. Witnesses to their marriage were Lydia C. Hickey and E.J. Hickey. Martha's father was recorded as Joseph Tennyson, farmer and her mother as Margaret Grimes.

Helena's birth certificate (# 5073/1903) on the 6th September 1903 states that Martha's birth place was county Tyrone, Ireland and Martha's age as 28 years. William's occupation was now registered as a Nurseryman and he and Martha's address was recorded as Smith's Mill.

During an enquiry to Tom Reynolds at the State Records Office of W.A., I learned of a book, "In Time for Lunch" (a copy of a Journal by Douglas Edward Darbyshire). Douglas Darbyshire was the surgeon aboard the ss 'Cornwall' which arrived in Fremantle W.A. on 17th June 1898. On board were 46 assisted domestic servant girls from Britain, Ireland and Scotland. I learned that Martha was one of them. I promptly made an online search to locate a copy of the book which I sent for. Meanwhile I searched the immigrant records for Martha on Ancestry.com and found a copy of the passengers who boarded the 'Cornwall' on the 29th April 1898 and leaving Graves End in London,

England on the night of 2nd May 1898. Martha was aged 23 years on the outward passenger list, Irish, and her address was 11 St. Bridgids Road, Drumcondra, Dublin, Ireland. Martha along with most of the other girls had been nominated by the Honourable Mrs Joyce. The master of the 'Cornwall' was Captain T. Young. Mary Pitman Monk was the Matron-in-charge of the immigrant girls, she was to make sure they arrived safely in Fremantle and look after their interests while on board and make sure they kept out of trouble.

Now I had conflicting places that Martha was born, Crumlin, Antrim or Tyrone. The birth place for Martha on her death certificate would have been informed by her children, who had never been to Ireland and may have been misinformed or confused with stories of where their father William had come from, while Martha's birth place on Helena's birth certificate was informed by Martha herself. I tended to think Tyrone was where I should start looking.

Martha's date of birth when worked out from their marriage, Helena's birth and Martha's death certificates was between 1874 (if her death age was correct) and 1877 (if Martha's age was correct on her marriage certificate). If Martha's age was correct on the outward passenger list and on her daughter Helena's birth certificate she was possibly born about 1875.

I decided to have an independent 8 hour search done by Robert Williams. I emailed him copies of all the relevant certificates and information I knew and then I waited. Eventually I received in the mail a complete record of all places and records he had searched. He found no record of a Joseph Tennyson marrying a Margaret Grimes, first trying the county of Tyrone and then all of Ireland. He also didn't find any trace of Martha Tennyson. He did however note one entry dated the 9th May 1875 in Tyrone for an unnamed child of a Margaret Tennyson in Volume 62, Page 626 but he couldn't find an entry in the main register, so he applied to GRONI paying their £10 fee for the certificate. They replied to say the entry could not be found. I was at a loss of what to do now.

I left this part of my search and decided to explore other areas of my search concentrating on Martha's life in Western Australia. I found the Trove website a valuable source of information and by typing in variations of spellings of Martha and William's names I uncovered their early married life. During and after the War years I didn't find as many articles.

I visited Gayle one day and told her of what I had uncovered. She gave me some papers that had been kindly given to her by Helen Davies, a cousin of my Mum and daughter of Mum's aunty, Jean Plumridge (nee McConnell). I took them home and while looking them over felt I could do worse than make contact with Helen, I didn't know her or where she lived. I asked Mum when I next saw her but Mum wasn't sure where she was living, somewhere in Tasmania. So I rang Gayle and asked her if she had any contact details for Helen. Only an email address from about 10 years back. I thought it doubtful that Helen would still be contactable but tried anyway.

2010 - A few weeks passed and then one day I noticed an email that I found to be from Helen. She seemed happy to share information with me as she asked could she ring me when it was convenient. We organised a day (Sunday) and a time and I waited eagerly with a little trepidation. We talked for about an hour and she said she would copy information she had received from Uncle Bob and a couple of photographs of Martha & William, whom I had never seen. I waited and waited and then one Wednesday I noticed a large envelope, it was from Helen. I couldn't wait to open it and hurried home to do so. What would I find inside? Helen had done a search of Strabane workhouse for Margaret Grimes looking for the birth of Martha. She found entries but none that were for Martha. At the time I didn't read the information she sent properly or I was too excited about the photographs of Martha and William that I didn't take it in. On re-reading her notes on searches for Martha she had come to the conclusion that an entry for a Martha Anne Tennyson born 9th May 1875 in the Dungannon Workhouse may in fact need further research. This is the same conclusion I have come to after a lot of searching through newspaper articles in the British Newspaper Archives. I re-checked Ancestry.com and this time found the same birth date had Martha Anne Tennyson

on it so I sent for a copy of the birth. A few weeks passed and I was informed that nothing could be found. I protested and said the entry was on ancestry and the information has come from somewhere. Eventually I had a reply by email to say that an entry had been found and they were mailing it. I couldn't wait to see the information on it.

I found a Thomas Tackaberry, Chief Residential Officer, of the Dungannon Workhouse was the informant. I decided to become a member of www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk and eagerly looked up everything I could find on the Dungannon Workhouse and Thomas Tackaberry. I noticed a couple of articles regarding a Margaret Tennyson / Tennyson and a female child but the name of the child was not mentioned.

Early 2016

I looked through all the papers that Helen had given me. There it was; a copy of a Confirmation certificate, how could I have been so stupid not to have realized the importance of a copy of a Certificate of Confirmation that had come from the inside cover of Martha's Bible. The certificate was dated 1891 and Martha's Confirmation had taken place in Tullyniskan Church. I immediately checked on the map where Tullyniskan was and found it to be close to Dungannon, Tyrone. This information gave me assurance that the birth of Martha Anne Tennyson in the Dungannon Workhouse was very likely to be our Martha.

In September I had an enquiry from a Raymond Quirke (another ancestry member wishing to know if I had any information on a Graeme Grimes). I replied by email to say I did not, and that I found information hard to come by regarding information I was trying to source. He gave me an internet site <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/> to try which he had found very informative. I looked on the site and entered information I knew about Martha, I couldn't find anything. I then thought I would search for Ellen Mary Baxter's birth in Belterbet and see if anything came up. After some tweaking of dates and parents names I eventually found her birth record. I then went back to Martha and entered MARTHA (no surname) and dates from 1874 to 1876. I searched through all the likely names and dates that appeared. I found Martha's birth entered under the surname JENNESSON. It was the same entry that I had been sent when enquiring about Martha's birth copy.

I searched over a few weeks when I found the time for any Tennyson, Tenison, Tennyson, and any other spellings that sounded or looked similar to Tennyson. I searched from 1865 to 1885. Eventually I came across another two births to a Margaret Ten.....son all in the Dungannon Workhouse and none of them mentioned a father. The word **formerly** was crossed through on 2 of the entries, which made me believe that Tennyson was Margaret's maiden name (or she had made it up).

I decided to re-look in www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk I searched all manner of names and articles to do with the Dungannon Workhouse, the name Tackaberry / Thackaberry, Tennyson / Tenison / Tennyson. I came across some new articles I hadn't previously seen. One dated early in 1891 at Dungannon Petty Sessions related to an incident which happened in the workhouse and there and behold was the name of Martha Tennyson a 16 year old girl called as a witness *in an article on page 3 of the Tyrone Courier, dated Saturday the 16th May 1891*. The name was right, the age was right, and the place was very close to being right, this could not be coincidental. On reading through the Petty Sessions transcript I found Martha mentioned her sister having witnessed a happening. Later in the transcript, reference was made to a 10 year old girl. Was this Martha's sister? Perhaps I had missed this birth in my search.

I re-looked at every birth for Dungannon in the years 1880 to 1885. Then I found a Mary Fennison (sic) born to a Margaret Tennison in 1882 also in the Dungannon Workhouse. The word **formerly** was crossed through on this entry also.

So I have come to the conclusion that Martha Anne Tennyson was born on the 9th May 1875 in the Dungannon Workhouse. Martha was baptized on the 25th May also in the Dungannon Workhouse.

I have searched for marriages for a Joseph Tennyson and Margaret Grimes and have found none in the area that have given me any hope. I've tried many variations of Joseph & Margaret's names and a wider area and still no luck. My conclusion at this stage is that Margaret Tennyson was an unmarried mother living mostly on the streets or wherever she could find someone to take her in. I have found numerous mentions of a Margaret Tennison/Tennyson who was quite frequently in the Dungannon Court of Petty Sessions for drunkenness, larceny, assault and causing a nuisance etc. over the period that her daughters were born and after and quite often related to the workhouse or her daughters.

These are the birth entries found in <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/> of Martha and her very possible sisters:-

Group Registration ID **7891695** SR District/Reg Area **Dungannon**

Page 65 / 02251718 / 613 Registration # 328 - **Margaret** Jane **TENNISON** born 8th October 1868 (should be **1868** not **69**) workhouse Dungannon to Margaret Tennison registered 2nd January 1869. Margaret Jane died in 1869.

Group Registration ID **11187395** SR District/Reg Area **Dungannon**

Page 88 / 02196843 / 660 Registration # 439 – **Eliza** Jane **TENNYSON** born 16th January 1872 workhouse Dungannon to Margaret Tennyson registered 16th February 1872.

Group Registration ID **9049131** SR District/Reg Area **Dungannon**

Page 89 / 02139028 / 626 Registration # 446 – **Martha** Anne **JENNESSON?** (Tennyson) born 9th May 1875 workhouse Dungannon to Margaret Tennyson registered 25th May 1875.

Group Registration ID **8904875** SR District/Reg Area **Dungannon**

Second Page; Page's 76, 77, 78 / 02022739 / 556 Registration # 384 – **Mary** **FENNISON?** (Tennison) born 27th April 1882 workhouse Dungannon to Margaret Tennison registered 12th May 1882.

**Margaret Tennyson, Martha's mother, from Newspaper articles of the 1880's and 1890's says that Margaret was on occasion sentenced to 1 month or 6 months in Omagh (Armagh) Gaol. I came across a death on the 26th July in 1901 of a Margaret Tennyson who died (aged 53 years, a spinster, a servant) of pneumonia in Omagh District Assylum. I need to find out if this is our Margaret!!

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In November 2018 I was perusing the Western Australian State Records Office records online and came across a record for Martha. I was told the record contained referrals from previous employers of Martha and were required for her application to immigrate as an assisted passenger to Western Australia. I sent for a copy of the papers as they may tell me something more of Martha. I also noticed a record for W.A. McConnell & John Paul Rumble's application for a conditional purchase block in 1897 at Jandakot and also some papers of the Surgeon, Dr. Darbyshire who accompanied the girls when they migrated on board the 's.s. Cornwall'. I sent for these also.

Martha's employers were a R. Hammond of Farlough Cottage, Newmills which is in the Parish of Tullyniskin, Tyrone and about 2 to 3 miles from Dungannon. Martha was employed by Ruth for 6 years from 1891. The other employer was an L. Lowe who lived at 19 St. Brigids Road, Drumcondra in Dublin who employed Martha for about 7 months. I followed these two leads and found that the R. Hammond was Ruth Hammond. I searched in <https://www.irishgenealogy.ie/> and came across a marriage dated **15th November 1877 for a Ruth Burgess who married a James Hammond (constable in the R.I.C.) at Newmills** (her address being Beechgrove, Tullyniskin). Her father's name was John Burgess. I could not find a birth entry for her. I then searched for any other Burgess marriages around the same time frame and same area. I came across an Elizabeth Burgess (she had signed her name as Lizzie) who married a John Lowe on the 18th November 1891 also at Newmills and another girl Mary Burgess who married David Lambert (a constable in the Dublin Metropolitan Police) on 10th August 1900 at Trinity church, Tullaniskin. Their fathers were also John Burgess. I checked the census records for Ireland 1901 and 1911 and found a 1901 for Ruth and James Hammond still at Farlough Cottage, Newmills. James (aged 69 years and born in county Monaghan was a farmer, Ruth was 40 years old and born in county Tyrone. Ruth and John had 2 sons Matthew James, 21 years old (born in county Down) & William John, 18 years old (born in Tyrone). I later came across a death for a third son, Richard (a traveller, aged 21 years) in Dublin in 1899, who was residing at 10 St Brigids road at the time of his death. I searched for any marriages or deaths for Hammonds in the Tullyniskin, Newmills, Dungannon area and found that James Hammond died in 1902 (he had obtained the position of Sergeant in the Royal Irish Constabulary) and Ruth in 1906. I then researched the **1911 census and found Matthew and William Hammond (sons of Ruth and James Hammond) were residing at Farlough cottage**. William, a farmer was married to Margaret aged 27 (they had been married 7 years) and he had a son **Cecil James Hammond aged 6 and a daughter Ruth Elizabeth Hammond aged 3**. Matthew's occupation was a Creamery Manager. I also have found copies of James and Ruth's wills on ancestry.com which are on the PRONI website.

Scrolling through the census records for 1911 for a John & Elizabeth Lowe I found a John (born in county Down, aged 51 years, superintendent of Dublin Metropolitan Police) married to a Lizzie Lowe (born in county Tyrone, also 51 years) they had had 3 children but only 2 children Herbert John (aged 18 years, a veterinary student) and Annie Isabel aged 10 (who was born on the 1st March 1901 at 10 St Brigids road, Drumcondra) born in Dublin had survived. John was a police constable at the time of their marriage in the constabulary in Dublin. I decided to check for any information on the British Newspaper Articles website and found that John had reached the position of Superintendent of the Dublin Metropolitan Police. He retired in 1815 and died in Ballynahinch, county Down in 1936. Lizzie survived him another 4 years, also dying in Ballynahinch in county Down.

I concluded that Ruth Hammond and Lizzie Lowe were sisters and were of the Presbyterian faith. Their father was John Burgess (and mother, I think, a Mary Edwards). They also had a sister Mary (definitely), and possibly 2 brothers, John and Richard.

Martha's priest in the church she attended in Dublin, Edward J. Crozier also referred her. Edward left his well paid job in Dublin and was a bush priest in Queensland in the early 1900's where he met his wife. He went back to Ireland in 1918? Also a Jessie Strachan who was living at 11 St. Brigids road with Martha had known her for 8 months.