

# **Dover Family**

**By Dixie Greenwood**

My husband Larry's grandmother, Agnes (Murphy) Greenwood, was a story teller. She and her husband John had married in Pennsylvania in 1890, and in the early 1900's, settled on the Greenwood homestead in Nebraska after buying it from the estate of John's father. With twelve toddlers at her feet, Agnes' stories became their entertainment.

Of the many stories Agnes told one tugged at my heart. She told that she had a sister "Polly" who was five years older than her. As children, they had lived in the home of their grandparents, Patrick and Margaret (McAvoy) Falloon in Birtley, Durham County, England.

In 1875, six years after the birth of Polly, her mother Ellen Mary McAvoy (daughter of Margaret McAvoy Falloon) married Michael Murphy and in 1886, Michael sailed to the U.S.A. and found work in the steel mills of Pennsylvania. Ellen Mary and three of the children arrived shortly after, leaving Polly behind with the grandparents. Agnes told that the intentions of the Murphys were to send for Polly but that it had never happened. She said that she and Polly had corresponded for a while after the family immigrated but then the letters stopped coming. Agnes died November 23, 1948, never knowing what had become of her older sister Polly.

Our family wanted and needed to know about "Polly" and thus began my search which lasted over three years. Despite many disappointments and roadblocks in my quest, I found answers and following is the story of Polly, her husband Joseph Dover, and their family. You will discover, just as I did, that "Polly's" true name was Mary Theresa McAvoy. Her mother was Ellen Mary McAvoy, born to Margaret and John McAvoy, on October 1, 1852, in County Tyrone, Ireland. Margaret remarried in Ireland after John's death to Patrick Falloon. Ellen Mary McAvoy was raised by Patrick Falloon, but did not take his surname.

## **MARY "POLLY" FALLOON**

On February 21, 1869, 16-year-old Ellen Mary McAvoy gave birth to a baby daughter whom she named Mary in Birtley, County Durham, England. On Mary's Registration of Birth, she is listed as Mary McAvoy, no father is listed. The day after her birth, on February 22, 1869, Mary was baptized at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church in Birtley by John Swalle, M.A.. Her godparents were Patrick Falloon and Bridget Lennon. No father is named.

On the 1871 census for Birtley, a Mary McAvoy is listed as living in the home of Patrick and Margaret Falloon. The information shows two year-old Mary McAvoy first as a grandchild, then it is crossed through; and she is shown as a step-daughter.

On the 1881 census for Patrick and Margaret Falloon of Birtley, Mary is shown as their daughter and is listed as being Mary Falloon, age 12. Also shown living in the

home of Patrick and Margaret Falloon on the censuses are two other children of Ellen Mary. Agnes Murphy, age six, is listed as a granddaughter; and P. J. Murphy, age two, is listed as a grandson. Ellen Mary had married Michael Murphy on August 10, 1875.

Adoptions were not initiated legally in England until 1904; but the Falloons had taken the responsibility of Mary, and she was raised as their daughter. In the home, Mary was called "Polly." Research shows that many young girls named Mary went by the nickname "Polly." With an Ellen Mary and a Mary Ann already in the family, it would have made sense to peg Mary with the nickname of "Polly".

Mary "Polly" became a teacher in the Birtley Schools, teaching in the same school that she and her siblings had attended. On July 28, 1898, 28-year-old Mary "Polly" Falloon married Joseph Dover at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, Birtley. Joseph was 35, and a coal miner at the Ashington Colliery in Northumberland. Joseph's birthdate is September 14, 1862.

On January 25, 1900, Mary "Polly" and Joseph became the parents of a daughter whom they named Margaret Isobella. On February 4, 1900, Margaret Isobella was baptized at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church in Birtley. Her godparents were James McAvoy and Margaret Falloon. On March 31, 1901, Mary "Polly" and Joseph became the parents of a son, Joseph, Jr. At that time, they were living on Station Road, Hirst, a district of Ashington. Joseph was listed as a coal miner at the Ashington Colliery. Joseph was baptized at St. Aiden's Roman Catholic Church on April 14, 1901. His godparents were Jacobus (James) McEvoy and Elisabeth Thompson.

Another son, James McAvoy Dover was born to Mary "Polly" and Joseph, on August 8, 1902. They were still living in Hirst and Joseph continued to work in the coal mines. James was baptized at St. Aiden's Roman Catholic Church on August 17, 1902. His godparents were Jacobus (James) McEvoy and Alitia (Alice) Carthy.

After finding Joseph, and Mary on the census of 1901, additional Registration Books for births, marriages and deaths were checked to see if further information could be found about Mary "Polly" and Joseph. Nothing was found, and my conclusion was that they just were not in England any longer.

Then, on July 12, 2004, a discovery was made. On the Social Security index for the USA, a James M. Dover in West Virginia was found; and his birth date was exactly the same as James, son of Joseph and Mary "Polly." That started a search here in the states to see if he was Mary and Joseph's son. To make a long story short, I had found the family living in the United States. Joseph, Mary's husband, had immigrated to the states in 1903 and joined his parents and other siblings living in Thurmond, Fayette County, West Virginia.

"Polly" came to the USA a year later in 1904, joining her husband and in-laws, and settled in Fayetteville, Fayette County, West Virginia, where her husband Joseph Dover was working in the coal mines. "Polly" and Joseph moved around to several different little towns in Raleigh and Fayette Counties in West Virginia over the years. They had a total of five children, three born in England and two more born in the USA.

Information about their five children:

1 - Margaret Isobella Dover was born in England on January 25, 1900. Margaret Isobella married William Wallace Graham in Beckley, WV and had two children. The

children were Mary Elizabeth and Wallace Dover Graham. Margaret Isobella died on February 7, 1985, in Virginia Beach, Virginia, and is buried there.

2 - Joseph (Joe) Dover was born in England on March 31, 1901. Joseph went by Joe, Jr., and he married Clara Claypool in West Virginia. They had one son Ralph Dover. Ralph is living in Bunker Hill, West Virginia. Joe was killed in a gas explosion at the Stotesbury, Raleigh County, West Virginia Coal Mines on December 27, 1929. He is buried in Beckley, Raleigh County.

3 - James McAvoy Dover was born in England on August 8, 1902. James married Elizabeth Shelton in West Virginia, and they had one son, James McAvoy Dover, Jr. The son died of a brain tumor in the 1950s when he was about 15 years old. After the son died, James and Elizabeth divorced. James was an insurance agent for Metropolitan Life in Rainelle, WV. He died July 16, 1992, in Rainelle, West Virginia. He is buried in Rupert, Greenbrier County, West Virginia.

4 - Unknown name, born in the U.S.A. This child died.

5 - Mary Josephine Dover was born in the U.S.A. in 1907. She married Carl Terry in West Virginia. After his death, she remarried to Louis E. Parker, and they moved to Columbus, Ohio. Mary Josephine never had any children. She died in Columbus, Ohio in the 1970's.

### **MARY "POLLY" MC AVOY/FALLOON**

raised by Patrick and Margaret FALLOON

Polly died on October 10, 1943, at age 74, in Crab Orchard, Raleigh County, West Virginia. She is buried in Scarbro, Fayette County, West Virginia. Her obituary states she was the daughter of Patrick and Margaret Falloo. No mention is made that they were her grandparents.

Her husband, Joseph Dover, died on January 19, 1943, in Beckley, West Virginia, and is buried there.

Joseph and "Polly" had five children, four grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, and 15 great-great-grandchildren. One of their grandchildren is still living and all six of their great grandchildren are still living. One lives in Virginia, one lives in North Carolina, one lives in Colorado, and three live in Michigan.

### **OBITUARY - MARY THERESA (FALLOON) DOVER**

Date of Death: October 10, 1943

Services: Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church

Date of Burial: October 12, 1943

Place of Burial: Church Cemetery, Scarbro, WV

Beckley Post Herald, Beckley, West Virginia

Monday Morning, October 11, 1943

### CRAB ORCHARD WOMAN TAKEN

Illness Fatal to Mrs. Joseph Dover; Rites Not complete

Mrs. Joseph Dover, 74, died at the home of her daughter Mrs. Margaret Graham of Sunrise Avenue, at Crab Orchard yesterday morning at 10:00 o'clock after an illness of two years. She had been seriously ill for the past six weeks. Her death was attributed to a paralytic stroke and pneumonia.

She was born in Newcastle, England, February 21, 1869, the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Faloon. She came to the United States in 1904 and had lived in Fayette and Raleigh counties for the past 30 years. She was a member of the Roman Catholic church at Scarbro.

She is survived by her husband, Joseph Dover of Crab Orchard; two daughters, Mrs. Margaret Graham of Crab Orchard, Mrs. Lou E. Parker of Columbus, Ohio; and one son James M. Dover of Rainelle.

The body will remain at a local funeral home awaiting the arrival of relatives before funeral arrangements are completed.

Beckley Post Herald, Beckley, West Virginia

Tuesday Morning, October 12, 1943

### DEATHS

DOVER, Mrs. Joseph, age 74 years, died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Margaret Graham of Sunrise Avenue, Sunday, October 10th at 10:00 a.m. Funeral services will be conducted Tuesday, October 12th at the Catholic Church in Scarbro at 10:00 a.m. with the Rev. Father Francis officiating. Burial will follow in the church cemetery at Scarbro. Arrangements by Calfee Funeral Home

### OBITUARY - JOSEPH DOVER

DATE OF DEATH: January 19 1945

SERVICES: St. Francis dePaul Roman Catholic Church, Beckley, WV

DATE OF BURIAL: January 21, 1945

PLACE OF BURIAL: Mt. Calvary Section - Sunset Cemetery, Beckley, WV

Beckley Post Herald, Beckley, WV

### JOSEPH DOVER SUCCUMBS HERE

Joseph Dover, 82, of Crab Orchard, died 12:05 p.m. yesterday in a local hospital following an illness of several months.

Born Sept. 14, 1862 in Beddington, England, a son of the late Joseph and Isabella Lewis Dover.

Mr. Dover came to the United States in 1903 and had been engaged in mining in Fayette and Raleigh counties. He was last employed 12 years ago at Stotesbury.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Mary Thressa Fallon Dover, 15 months ago.

Survivors include children: Mrs. Lou (Mary Josephine) Parker of Columbus, Ohio, James M. Dover of Rainelle, Margaret Graham of Crab Orchard; four grandchildren, James Dover Jr. of Rainelle, Ralph Dover of Hollywood, Mrs. Howard Wolfe of Beckley and Wallace Dover with the US Navy; two brothers, William Dover of New River and Edward Lewis Dover of Oak Hill; and a sister, Elizabeth Wearmouth of Welch.