

Great Grandparents - Downes

I thought it might be of interest, when I write my occasional letter to you, that I report on some branch of the family - Let me start out with a writeup re your great-great grandparents Downes - my father's parents - Nicholas (I almost was given that name) was born in Ireland. His wife Mary (Stapleton) was born around Ganaragus in Fond-du-Lac. Nicholas is mentioned at some length in a book called "Pioneer & Rise of Onondaga County". In fact, in the program of the St. Patrick's Day dinner, he is quoted. One of you (Mary I think) has the family tree which I compiled & therein is a lengthy writeup about Nicholas. Among other accomplishments he owned salt producing equipment - a big business in Syracuse in the 19th century; also, he was a teacher & somewhere I have seen a grammar text he wrote. In his own* memoirs he writes about a trip to Chicago & how he nearly brought the property which today embraces the loop. - He had two main business enterprises: (1) he sold stoves (2) he manufactured & sold water filters - as much needed and used item in the late 19th century. - Re. Mary I know little. She lost a leg in her later life & was confined to a wheel chair. One story handed down is that Nicholas always had his own bottles & so did Mary. He always kept his on an upper shelf & she kept hers on the floor. - a mutually fine arrangement since his chronically sore back prevented stooping and her wooden leg prevented "high reaching". - Somewhere in their married life they adopted the infant who turned out to be my father. Some say there is a definite facial resemblance between Nicholas & his adopted son Edward Stapleton Downes. - Me, I don't know nothing about that.

- Both are buried in St. Agnes cemetery in Syracuse. - Next time, my little ones, I will tell you about

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enate great-grandparental relationships.

cf. Nicholas Downes file kept by the
Onondaga Historical Society.