

Family history notes – Michael and Margaret McNamara (nee Connor)

by Brian Walsh, 27 February 2024

Michael McNamara

- born abt 1801, native of Newport, County Tipperary, Ireland;
- married Margaret Connor bef abt 1823;
- convicted of abduction (probably a Whiteboy activity) at Clonmel in 1827, transported to NSW *per Eliza* with a life sentence, arrived NSW 1827;
- almost certainly assigned the George Townshend of Trevallyn, Paterson River according to the 1828 census of NSW (he is the only Michael McNamara in the census without a ship of arrival recorded, and none of others arrived on the *Eliza*);
- assigned to his wife Margaret (nee Connor) at Appin on her arrival in NSW *per Caroline* in 1833 with their children Francis (aged 10) and Margaret (aged 7);
- by January 1840 a settler at Upper Paterson with Margaret and family;
- Conditional Pardon dated 1 July 1842;
- died 11 January 1852, aged 51 years;
- buried at Mount Rivers private Catholic Cemetery, Paterson River (gravestone survives).

Margaret ("Peggy") McNamara (nee Connor)

- born abt 1797;
- married Michael McNamara bef abt 1823;
- arrived in NSW *per Caroline* in 1833 with their children Francis (aged 10) and Margaret (aged 7). They arrived as "wives and families of convicts" under a government scheme to reunite families with convicts in NSW;
- was at Appin, NSW in 1833 when her husband Michael was assigned to her;
- by January 1840 a settler at Upper Paterson with Michael and family;
- in July 1841 "Peggy MacNamara" purchased 530 acres on the Upper Paterson River from George Townshend of Trevallyn and his wife Elizabeth Botterell – NSW Old Systems Title, book W number 811. It is often incorrectly assumed that Michael purchased the land but he was still a convict at that time. Peggy and Michael evidently named their land "Mount Rivers" in memory of Mount Rivers at Newport, County Tipperary, Ireland.
- died 13 July 1879 at Mount Rivers, Paterson River, aged 82 years;
- buried at Mount Rivers private Catholic Cemetery, Paterson River (gravestone survives).

Children of Michael and Margaret McNamara

1 Francis

- born abt 1823, baptised on 18 February 1824 at Newport, County Tipperary, Ireland;
- arrived NSW in 1833 (aged 10) with his mother and sister;
- married Ellen Cecily O'Neill in 1853;
- died on 31 October 1905 at Mount Rivers, Paterson River;

2 Margaret

- born about 1827, arrived Sydney in 1833 with her mother and brother. Married Andrew Norrie in 1847, died in Ballarat on 6 October 1878, aged 49.

3. Ellen

- born about 1836, unmarried, died at Mount Rivers on 25 December 1925 "in her 90th year" [note: not to be confused with her niece of the same name];

4. Ann Winifred

- born at Leighford, Peshurst about 1838;
- married Phillip Reilly of Wybong near Denman, NSW;
- after her husband's death, moved back to Mount Rivers to keep house for her brother Francis;
- died 9 October 1918 at Mount Rivers.

5. Catherine

- born 1840 (Catholic baptism recorded Maitland NSW);
- married William O'Neill in 1865, died in 1921.

Notes and sources

Mick O'Neill's website: <https://oneillfamily.id.au/home-2/>

Convict indents, per Eliza 1827

Michael McNamara, 26 (born about 1801), RC, M, 3 children. Native place: Tipperary, farm servant, abduction (with Edward McCann), tried Clonmel 3 April 1827, life. CP 43/233 dated 1 July 1842.

Peter Mayberry's Irish convicts site says **Whiteboy**.

Margaret and two children arrived 1833, note in margin says "wives & families of convicts"

South Wales, Australia, Unassisted Immigrant Passenger Lists, 1826-1922

1833 > August > Caroline

Margaret McNamara	33	V.				Do
Francis McNamara	10	V.				
Margaret McNamara	7	V.				
Mary McNamara	40	V.				Do
James McNamara	13	V.				
Honora McNamara	11	V.				
Thomas McNamara	10	V.				
Mary McNamara	8	V.				Do

wives & families of

The ditto above simply says "Ireland"

NSW Gov Gazette 6 November 1833 page 461, Margaret McNamara, Appin, assigned her husband. The hand written 1837 convict muster per ancestry.com.au also shows Michael McNamara assigned to her (there is a one line slippage between pages which confuses the published 1837 muster).

Hunter Valley Directory 1841: McNamara, Michael – settler, Upper Paterson (Jan 1840)

McNamara, Mrs Michael, Margaret (Connor) – Upper Paterson Jan 1840)

	Registration Number	Father's Given Name(s)	Mother's Given Name(s)	District
MCNAMARA CATHERINE	742/1840 V1840742 121A	MICHAEL <i>Cath Majt</i>	MARGARET	LK

Registration Number	Groom's Family Name	Groom's Given Name(s)	Bride's Family Name(s)	Bride's Given Name(s)
354/1847 V1847354 78	NORRIE	ANDREW	MCNAMARA	MARGARET
948/1847 V1847948 95	NORRIE	ANDREW	MCNAMARA	MARGARET

NORRIE.—On the 6th October, at Railway Crescent, Ballarat, Margaret, relict of the late Andrew Norrie; aged forty-nine years. 8854

Surname: Norrie

First Name: Andrew

Ship: -

Date: 1853 6 July

Place: High Street West Maitland

Source: MM

Details: Relinquishing business and disposing of stock in trade by public auction. Drapery, Haberdashery, Hosiery etc

MARRIAGES.
On the 5th instant, at the residence of the bride's mother, by the Very Rev. Dean Lynch, Phillip Reilly, late of Kagian, Firey Creek, Victoria, to Ann Winfred, third daughter of the late Mr. M'Namara, of Mount Rivers, Upper Paterson. 8994 14th Oct

DEATHS.
SHERMAN.—At her residence, Rose-street, West Maitland, on July 11, 1879, Martha, the beloved wife of Thomas Sherman; aged 69 years. 5329
M'NAMARA.—On the 18th of July, at Mount Rivers, Upper Paterson, Margaret, relict of the late Michael M'Namara; aged 62 years. 5279

DEATH.
McNAMARA.—Died at his residence, Mount Rivers, Upper Paterson, Oct. 31, 1905, Francis McNamara, aged 80 years. R.I.P.
McNAMARA.—Died Oct. 21st, at his residence, "Mount Rivers," Upper Paterson, Francis McNamara, native of Newport, Ireland, aged 80 years. R.I.P. 0785

The death occurred on Wednesday, 9th instant, at **Mount Rivers**, Upper **Paterson**, of Mrs. Reilly, whose remains were interred in the private cemetery, the Rev. Father Kiernan officiating at the graveside. Mrs. Reilly was born at **Leighford Penshurst** at which place she remained three years. Her father then purchased **Mount Rivers** where she resided until her marriage took place with the late Mr. P. Reilly, of **Wybong**, near **Denman**. She was the first child to be christened in the **Summer Hill Church** by the Rev. Dean Lynch, and the last to be married by him before leaving the district. Being of a genial nature she was beloved by all for her charitable and benevolent disposition, and many a traveller went away from **Mount Rivers** with his wallet well filled. After the death of her husband she again came to **Mount Rivers** to keep house for her brother, the late Mr. Francis MacNamara. Mrs. Reilly is survived by two sisters, Miss MacNamara, 82 years of age, and Mrs. Catherine O'Neill, 79. She also had a sister, Mrs. Andrew Norrie, who died in **Victoria**.



(photo by Linda Hodges)



(photo by Linda Hodges)

MOUNT RIVERS CATHOLIC CEMETERY.

This small cemetery is located on the eastern side of the Paterson River at Mt. Rivers. We could only locate five headstones & one footstone. There are no records of unmarked graves. The late Mr C. J. Watson stated that there about twenty burials there.

In early days the road from Gresford to Lostock crossed the Paterson River at Coulston and then wound along the western side of the river. On reaching Mount Rivers, due to cliffs, it was necessary to cross the river twice by fords to avoid these cliffs. Between these two fords on the eastern side of the river a school and post office were opened and as it was a strong Catholic area the cemetery was opened. In later years due to the regular flooding of the Paterson River causing danger to pupils travelling to school, the school was moved to the western side of the river. Since those times a road was constructed through the "cliffs" area and so the fords are avoided.

The land containing the cemetery belonged to Michael McNamara. He gave the land for the cemetery. Today the property belongs to Mr A.R. Rose and our special thanks go to him for taking my wife & I to the cemetery. There was quite deep water at the ford which required the use of a four wheeled drive. He helped us clean up the headstones and decipher them.

The old road still crosses the river ford, now by concrete causeway, but little remains once it reaches his residence.

N.B. This cemetery is on private property and permission to enter must be obtained from Mr. Rose. It is necessary to be guided to the spot.

IHS
Sacred
To the Memory of
MARGARET
Relict of late **MICHAEL McNAMARA**
Who died 13th July 1879
Aged 82 years.

Gloria In Excelsis Deo
Sacred to the Memory Of
MICHAEL McNAMARA
Native of Newport, Ireland
Who Departed This Life
The 11th of January 1852
Aged 51 years.
Requiescat in Pace.
This stone is erected by his beloved
Son Francis McNamara.

In
Loving Memory
Of
Our Dear Mother
ELLEN McNAMARA
Died 19th May 1896
Aged 66 years.
R.I.P

Sacred
To the Memory Of
MARY
The beloved Wife of
WILLIAM WHITE
Died 6th March 1873
Aged 34 years.
The souls obtained a sweet release
And fled above the skies.
May her mortal frame rest in Peace,
Till Jesus bids it rise.
Dear children pray for me.

Footstone:- M. W. 1873

In
Loving Memory
Of
KATIE O'NEILL
Died 8th Dec. 1909
Aged 30 years.
May her soul rest in Peace.
BROWNE **MAITLAND.**
