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HUGH CULLEN

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HUGH CULLEN

Hugh Cullen immigrated from County Leitram, Ireland to Savannah in 1819. He was a grocer by trade, but he also became active in politics around 1840. In 1843, he was Savannah's Superintendant of Streets and Lanes. He lived on lot number 4, Warren Ward. He and his wife, Mary, had six children, two of which lived to adulthood. He died in 1861 and was buried in the Cullen's vault in the Catholic Cemetery.
CONTENTS

1. Hugh Cullen's family tree 1.

   end notes


6. Deed for lot number 1, Green Ward 14.

7. Mary Cullen 16.
   end notes

8. Mary Cullen's will, file number 337 18.

9. William Cullen's family tree 27.

     end notes


12. Deed for lot number 2, Green Ward 33.

13. Deed for lot number 2, Green Ward 35.

     End notes

15. Mary Ann Cullen 39.
     end notes


17. Mary Ann Cullen, Admin. Lot number 3, Warren Ward 44.

18. Hugh Cullen II 47.
     end notes


20. Ellen M. Cullen McDonough family tree 52.

21. Ellen Marie Cullen McDonough 53.
     end notes

23. Sale of lot number 3, Warren Ward

24. Agnes Cullen Daly
   end notes

25. Family tree of Allen Cullen

26. Allen Cullen
   end notes

27. Catherine Cullen
   end notes

28. William Cullen
   end notes

29. Guardianship papers. File number 268

30. John H. Cullen
   end notes

31. Mary Ann Cullen
   end notes

32. Catherine Ann Cullen
   end notes

33. Guardianship papers, file number 371

34. Bibliography
Hugh Cullen 1786-3/18/1861

Mary Wheatam 1792-3/31/1867

William 1811-8/8/1859

John 1823-11/15/1845

John 1823-4/38/1822

Jane 1822-4/23/1808

Charlie 1827-11/16/1842

Mary 9/24/1830 10/20/1839
Hugh Cullen and his family left their home in County Leitram, Ireland\(^1\) in 1816.\(^2\) They were only a few of the large number of starving Irish men and women to leave their homes in search of a better life in America. Like many immigrants, the Cullens arrived first in New York.\(^3\) Three years later, they arrived in Savannah.\(^4\) On December 4, 1819, right after the family settled here, Hugh became an American citizen. He was thirty years old.

At the time of their immigration, Hugh's family was quite small; only his wife, Mary, and his young son, William, made the voyage with him. Around 1820, Mary gave birth to a second son, Allen.\(^6\) In 1822, a daughter was born, Jane, but she died two months later on March 28, 1822, ten days after she was baptised at the Church of Saint John the Baptist.\(^7\) The church was located on Drayton Street and Perry at that time. The family was probably living on Congress Street at that time because that's where it's listed she died in the Vital Records at the Health Department.\(^8\) The next year another son was born. He was baptised John on November 20, 1823.\(^9\) In 1827, Charles was born\(^11\) and in 1830, Mary was born.\(^12\) These are all of the Cullen children I could find, but since Mary seemed to have no trouble giving birth to children, it is possible that more were born and died before the family made its to America.
In the 1830 census, there is an H. Cullen listed as living in Franklin Ward. These dependants were listed:

1- male under five years
1- male of five and under ten years
1- male of twenty and under forty years.

1- female of ten and under fifteen
1- female of forty and under fifty

I don't know if this was Hugh's family; all the ages of the children correspond, but there was one more child in the Cullen family, Allen, who would have been between five and ten years old. Perhaps the Census taker could have made a mistake and listed only one child between five and under ten instead of two. I don't know who the girl could have been, maybe she was boarding with the family or maybe she was another Cullen child. I searched all the Cathedral records but could not find anything that might tell me who she was. Many times in the process of my research, I found an H. Cullen listed in the same source Hugh Cullen was listed in. I believe them to be the same person.

On October 20, 1839, nine year old Mary Cullen died of worms. The family must have been living on Bay Street at that time, since that's where it's listed in the Vital Records at the Health Department that she died. That same year, on December 7, William married Ann Delworth Allen married a girl named Catherine around 1840. I'm really guessing at that date because the marriage was not listed in Marriages and Deaths at the Georgia Historical Society, Chatham County Marriages at the Chatham County Courthouse, Court of Ordinary, or in any of the books.
at the Cathedral. I believe they married around 1840 because their first child was born in 1841.

It must have been in the years between 1840 and 1850 that Hugh became interested in politics. In September of 1840 he was elected to the standing committee of the Central Democratic Republican Association to elect Martin Van Buren to the Presidency. This same group formed the Irish Democratic Republican Association of Chatham County. In October, Hugh was elected to be one of the two Marshals of the IDRA. In September of 1841, he was listed in The Georgian, a Savannah newspaper, as being on the Nominating Committee to represent Chatham County, and in 1843, he was elected to the office of Superintendent of Streets and Lanes.

It was also between 1840 and 1850 that Hugh and Mary became grandparents for the first time. William and Ann's first child, Mary Ann was born in 1840. In 1841, Allen and Catherine's first child, William, was born. But the Cullen's happiness was mixed with sadness when on November 16, 1842, fifteen year old Charles died of a fever. The family was living at lot number 1 Green Ward on East Broad street at the time. The next year, 1843, brought the birth of Hugh's namesake, William's son Hugh II. In 1844, Allen's son, John H., was born. In 1845, Hugh and Mary lost another son; John died January 15 of consumption. He was twenty one. That left only William and Allen as surviving Cullen children.
Hugh seemed to deal quite often in real estate. Between 1840 and 1850, the Cullen's lived in Green Ward on property Hugh had acquired from Rose Jallineau, "a free woman of color". In 1845, he sold lot number 2, Green Ward to William, and in 1848, he sold lot number 3, Warren Ward to him. In May of 1849, he bought lot number 4, Warren Ward from Luke Christy for 1600.00. It was on this property that he either built or rebuilt the house on the index card I was given. It was built around 1854.

In the Index of the 1850 Census of Georgia, Hugh's family was listed in this manner:

Hugh - 67
Mary - 57
William - 39
Ann - 30
Mary Ann - 10
Hugh II - 7

Those boarding in the house with them were:

Sloan, David - 22 a clerk from Scotland
Nagle, Joseph - 44 a laborer from Ireland
Bridget - 40
Anne - 12
Patrick - 4

William and his family were listed in the 1849 Savannah City Directory as living in a boarding house at 49 Bay Street. They must have moved in with Hugh in that same year. The 1850 Savannah City Directory listed the Cullen's as living at 2 Habersham Street. Hugh's grocery was on the wharf on Lincoln Street.

In 1850, Hugh became a grandfather again. Allen's daughter, Mary Ann, was born in that year. On August 5, 1853, Ellen Marie, William's daughter was born. In
1856, Allen's daughter, Catherine Ann was born. There must have been some problem within the family during this time, because Allen had to apply for legal guardianship of his son, William in 1856. Hugh was listed as guardian before that time. In 1857, Agnes was born. She was William's youngest.

In 1861, Hugh died of old age. He was seventy five. He was attended by the family doctor and friend, Dr. James Read. His death certificate says he was eighty four, but I believe it is incorrect. If he was thirty in 1819, and sixty seven in 1850, he would have had to have been seventy five in 1861. He died at home and was buried in the Catholic Cemetery in the family vault, section D, lot 27. His name is over the door.

2. The Georgian. August 10, 1843. Savannah Public Library, Main Branch

3. Immigration (Naturalization) Records. G.H.S.

4. Ibid

5. Ibid.


7. Marriages, Deaths and Baptisms of the Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist. Vol. II At the Cathedral or at the Chancery


10. Marriages, Deaths and Baptisms of the Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist. Vol II. At the Cathedral and the Chancery.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

13. Index to the 1830 Census of Georgia. G.H.S.


17. Ibid. Oct. 4, 1840. p.2. col.4

18. Ibid. Sept. 11, 1841 p.2. col.4

20. Deduced from age in 1850
   Index to the 1850 Census of Georgia. Rhea Cummings Otto. 1975. Georgia Historical Society
21. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Deduced from age in 1850
   Index to the 1850 Census of Georgia. Rhea Cummings Otto. 1975. G.H.S
25. Ibid.
27. Deed Book 2V 100. Superior Court, Chatham County Courthouse.
28. Ibid. 3C 226
29. Ibid. 3F 263
30. Ibid. 3I 31
32. Index to the 1850 Census of Georgia. Rhea Cummings Otto. 1975. G.H.S.
33. Savannah City Directory 1849. Savannah Public Library, Main Branch
34. Ibid. 1850
35. Deduced from age and year of death
   Vital Records 1872. Chatham County Health Department
36. Baptisms of the Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist. At the Cathedral.
37. Ibid. 1856
39. Deed Book 30 210. Superior Court, Chatham County Courthouse.
40. Baptisms of the Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist. At the Cathedral.
41. **Vital Records** 1861. Chatham County Health Department.

The marks show locations of wooden buildings.

Vincent map 1853
Bay Street

Sanborn map 1884
Bay Street Lane

lot number Warren Ward
7 Habersham Street
Lot Number 4 Warren Ward
The House is located in the Southeast Corner of the lot

The Northern part of Lot Number 4 Warren Ward.