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The
National Genealogical Society

presents . . .

Faces of America

On the Cover:

**MARY AGNES (AHERN) BRADLEY, CA. 1882
(1859–1937)**

Mary Agnes, the eldest of six children born to Irish immigrants James Ahern and Jane Graham, was born in Millstone, Somerset County, New Jersey, in 1859. At age seven Mary and her brother Henry sailed from New York to Aspinwall, Panama, aboard the *Ocean Queen*. They crossed the Isthmus of Panama by train and completed the journey to San Francisco aboard the steamship *Sacramento*, where they joined their parents who had traveled west earlier. Their father claimed Mary and Henry “came west as baggage.”

James and Jane raised their family on a dairy farm near Petaluma, Sonoma County, California. Upon Jane’s untimely 1873 death in childbirth with son John, Mary stepped up to care for her younger siblings, learning mothering skills she would use for decades to come.

On 23 November 1881 Mary married Patrick Thomas “Tom” Bradley, a Pennsylvania native who worked as a farmhand for the Ahern’s nearest neighbors, Isaac and Mary Ingram. Mary and Tom raised seven children, losing one daughter at seven months.

In about 1890 they moved to Tiburon, Marin County, California, at the terminus of the Northwestern Pacific Railroad on the edge of San Francisco Bay. Tom was a painter and a car oiler for the railroad. Known as “Mother Bradley” to friends and neighbors, Mary helped with civic and church activities and in the school next to the family’s home.

Their Catholic faith was a vital part of Mary and Tom. Sunday mornings after Mass often found the priest with family and friends from St. Hilary’s Church gathered at Mary’s home to enjoy breakfast, which included Mary’s legendary biscuits.

Celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary in 1931 Mary said, “I think we have been quite as happy as most married people. We have had our ups and downs, but no rain, no flowers, so we have had our share of blessings.”

Credits: Documentation of Mary’s life is in the files of Mary Kircher Roddy, CG; 6035 27th Avenue NE; Seattle, WA 98115; mroddyn3@msn.com. The photograph was inherited from Mary (Ahern) Bradley’s grandson, Thomas Kircher.

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John C. Ahern a.k.a. John Lockren of Sonoma and Alameda Counties, California: Who Were His Parents?

By Mary Kircher Roddy, CG

John died with two surnames—Ahern and Lockren. Similar names, ages, and relationships in two families were the keys to identifying his parents.

The identity of John C. Ahern a.k.a. John Lockren is confusing. An obituary says he was the son of James Ahern and Ann Lockren.¹ He is enumerated in each of James's and Ann's 1880 separate households.² Understanding the relationship between James and Ann and their families clarifies John's identity.

No birth or death certificate exists that names John's parents. Multiple records reveal parallels among alleged siblings' names, ages, and family relationships—and ultimately help identify John's parents.

HENRY W. AHERN V. SOUTHERN PACIFIC COMPANY

John Ahern died 18 June 1896 of injuries from a railroad accident near Hayward, California.³ One account calls him both John Ahern and John M. Lockren.⁴ A lawsuit hints at his and his parents' identities.

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1. "Died—Lockren," *Oakland Enquirer* (Oakland, Calif.), 19 June 1896, page 5, col. 4.
2. 1880 U.S. census, Sonoma Co., Calif., population schedule, Vallejo Township, enumeration district (ED) 121, p. 2, dwelling 13, family 14, James Ahern household; microfilm publication T9, roll 84; National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, D.C. Ibid., Alameda Co., Calif., pop. sch., Oakland, ED 6, p. 29, dwell. 289, fam. 298, Ann Lochlin household; NARA microfilm T9, roll 61.
3. "Killed by a Train," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 20 June 1896, page 10, col. 6. Hayward is in Alameda County.
4. "Death Was Accidental," *Oakland Times* (Oakland, Calif.), 20 June 1896, page 1, col. 5–6.

On 10 February 1897 Henry W. Ahern, the “father and sole heir-at-law of John Ahern,” filed a “Complaint for damages for personal injuries” against Southern Pacific Company for negligence in the 19 [sic] June 1896 death of John Ahern.⁵ Henry’s deposition taken 10 October 1898 provides information about John’s family members.

- Henry was John Ahern’s brother, not his father. Their father was James Ahern who lived in Sonoma, California.
- John Ahern was survived by two brothers and three sisters. Another brother had died long ago.
- Since his mother’s death John had lived with an aunt, a Mrs. Lockran.
- John was two days old when his aunt took him.
- He never lived with his father but would visit him “a couple of times a year, sometimes once a year . . . [for] about a week or so.”
- Until John was about ten, he lived with Mrs. Lockran in Sonoma, and later in Oakland, California.
- In business matters and in Oakland John was known only as J. C. Lockran.
- John always signed his name “Lockran.”⁶

Why Henry Ahern, rather than John’s father, James Ahern, was the plaintiff, is unclear. More than seven months elapsed between the accident in June 1896 and the suit filed in February 1897.⁷ On 10 May 1900 Southern Pacific Company filed to dismiss on two counts, including “want of legal capacity in plaintiff to bring or maintain said action . . . [because the] plaintiff bore the relationship of brother, and not of father, to John Ahern.”⁸ By the time the notice to dismiss was filed James and Henry Ahern had died.⁹ Children mentioned in James Ahern’s 1899 obituary include “a son, J. C. Ahern who died about two years ago.”¹⁰

John is buried with the Ahern family at Calvary Cemetery in Petaluma, Sonoma

5. Alameda Co., Calif., Superior Court of the State of California, document 13585, Ahern v. Southern Pacific Co., 12 February 1897; Old Civil Reel 339; Oakland. Newspaper accounts indicate John died on 18 June 1896, while the Superior Court document says he died on 19 June 1896. The death date in the lawsuit is likely an error.

6. Ibid., Deposition of Henry W. Ahern, 10 October 1898. Laughlin, Laughren, Lochlin, Locklin, Lockran, and Loughran are variants of the surname Lockren.

7. “John Lochren’s Horrible Fate,” *Oakland Times*, 19 June 1896, page 1, col. 6. Alameda Co., Superior Court of the State of California, document 13585, Ahern v. Southern Pacific Co., 12 February 1897.

8. Alameda Co., Superior Court of the State of California, document 13585, Ahern v. Southern Pacific Co, Notice to dismiss, 23 April 1900.

9. “Died. Ahern,” *Petaluma Daily Argus* (Petaluma, Calif.), 14 January 1899, page 1, col. 3. “Death of Henry Ahern,” *Petaluma Daily Courier* (Petaluma, Calif.), 15 February 1900, page 3, col. 5.

10. “A Pioneer’s Death,” *Petaluma Daily Courier*, 14 January 1899, page 2, col. 4.

County, California. Other family members in the plot include parents James and Jane Ahern and their children Henry and Sarah, as well as Agnes Jane, daughter of James B. Ahern.¹¹

NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS NAME FAMILY MEMBERS

Notice of John's death appears in newspapers in at least four places: San Francisco; Oakland, the city where John lived; and Petaluma and Sonoma, the two Sonoma County towns where the Ahern family lived. Though the informants are unknown, obituaries and other accounts of his death mention family members, some by name, and some by relationship.

The *Oakland Enquirer* death notice of 19 June 1896 identifies Ann Lockren as John's mother.¹² The *Enquirer's* 20 July 1896 report on the coroner's inquest states his surname as "Ahren [Ahern]."¹³ A *San Francisco Chronicle* article the day after the inquest calls him Ahern, noting he was "known for years as John Lockren."¹⁴ Sonoma and Petaluma newspapers identify him as John Ahern and his father as James or J. Ahern.¹⁵

The *Oakland Enquirer*, *Oakland Times*, and *Oakland Tribune*, published in the town where John lived with the Lockrens, call him John Lockren.¹⁶ Similarly, in Sonoma County, where the Ahern family lived, the *Index-Tribune* and *Petaluma Courier* call him John Ahern.¹⁷

The 22 June death notice in the *Oakland Tribune* indicates he was a native of Sonoma.¹⁸ The *Oakland Enquirer's* 19 June notice provides the most comprehensive list of John's relatives.¹⁹

Table 1 displays a chronological list comparing the family members named in newspaper articles.

11. Sally [—?—], Calvary Cemetery; 304 Magnolia Avenue; Petaluma, Calif. 94952; 707-762-8462; telephone interview by the author, 5 June 2018; author's files. Sally, an employee of Calvary Cemetery, referred to cemetery maps and registers when she provided information regarding burials. John was buried in section 1, row 2, plot 135. *Find A Grave* (<https://www.findagrave.com>), memorial 70605251, digital image, 29 January 2013, by Colletta, gravestone for John C. Ahern (Calvary Catholic Cemetery, Petaluma, Sonoma Co., Calif.).

12. "Died—Lockren," *Oakland Enquirer*, 19 June 1896, page 5, col. 4.

13. "Accidental Death," *Oakland Enquirer*, 20 June 1896, page 5, col. 6.

14. "Killed by a Train," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 20 June 1896, page 10, col. 6.

15. "Death on the Rail," *Index-Tribune* (Sonoma, Calif.), 20 June 1896, page 3, col. 2. "Died—Ahern," *Petaluma Courier* (Petaluma, Calif.), 24 June 1896, page 2, col. 5. "Accidental Death," *Petaluma Courier*, 24 June 1896, page 3, col. 5.

16. "Died—Lockren," *Oakland Enquirer*, 19 June 1896, page 5, col. 4. "John Lochren's Horrible Fate," *Oakland Times*, 19 June 1896, page 1, col. 6. "Died—Lockren," *Oakland Tribune* (Oakland, Calif.), 22 June 1896, page 6, col. 3.

17. "Death on the Rail," *Index-Tribune*, 20 June 1896, page 3, col. 2. "Died—Ahern," *Petaluma Courier*, 24 June 1896, page 2, col. 5. "Accidental Death," *Petaluma Courier*, 24 June 1896, page 3, col. 5.

18. "Died—Lockren," *Oakland Tribune*, 22 June 1896, page 6, col. 3.

19. "Died—Lockren," *Oakland Enquirer*, 19 June 1896, page 5, col. 4.

Table 1
**Correlation of Family Members
 Based on Newspaper Articles, June 1896**

NEWSPAPER	DATE	NAME	FAMILY MEMBERS
<i>Oakland Times</i>	19 June	John M. Lochran/ Mr. Lochren	Lived with mother
<i>Oakland Enquirer</i>	19 June	John C. Lockren	Parents—Ann Lockren, James Ahern; Siblings—Charles and Mary Lockren; Henry, James, and Sarah Ahern; Mrs. Belle Green; and Mary Bradley
<i>Oakland Times</i>	20 June	John Ahern a.k.a. John M. Lockren	
<i>Oakland Enquirer</i>	20 June	John Lockren	Correct name John Ahren [<i>sic</i>], having taken stepfather's name
<i>Index-Tribune</i>	20 June	Johnny Ahern	Father—Jas. Ahern Sister—Mrs. L. H. Green (née Belle Ahern)
<i>San Francisco Chronicle</i>	20 June	John Ahern a.k.a. John Lockren	His widowed mother remarried, and he took his stepfather's name
<i>Oakland Tribune</i>	22 June	John C. Lockren	
<i>Petaluma Courier</i>	24 June	John C. Ahern	Father—J. Ahern Brother—James Ahern
<i>Petaluma Courier</i>	24 June	John C. Ahern	Father—J. Ahern Lived with his aunt and other relatives in Oakland

Sources: See text.

TWO CENSUSES COMPARED

The Ahern and Lockren families lived in Sonoma County in 1870. James Hern, forty-five, headed the household in Vallejo Township with his apparent wife Mary J., thirty. Both were born in Ireland. Two children were born in New Jersey—Mary, twelve, and Henry, ten. Two were born in California—James, three, and Anna, one. Charles Lacking, age fifteen and born in Ireland, lived with them.²⁰

20. 1870 U.S. census, Sonoma Co., Calif., pop. sch., Vallejo Twp., p. 13, dwell. 77, fam. 75, James Hern household; NARA microfilm M593, roll 91.

In 1870 Ann Locklin, an Irish-born servant, lived in James Kennedy's home.²¹ California-born Mary Laughlin resided in Douglas Church's household.²²

The 1880 Ahern home in Vallejo Township was headed by forty-nine-year-old James Ahern, a farmer born in Ireland. His children were New Jersey-born Mary A., twenty, and son Michiel, eighteen; and California-born James B., thirteen; Sarah A., eleven; Jane I., eight; and John C., six.²³

In 1880 fifty-five-year-old, Irish-born Ann Lochlin, a housekeeper, headed a household in Oakland that included English-born son Charles, a twenty-five-year-old farmer; and daughter Mary, twenty; with John, six, born in California.²⁴ Charles may have been Charles Lacking in the 1870 Ahern home.

Table 2 compares the Ahern family in Sonoma County in 1870 with the family in 1880. Mary J. is missing in the 1880 census.

1870 NAME, AGE, BIRTHPLACE ^a	1880 NAME, AGE, BIRTHPLACE ^b
James Hern, 45, Ireland	James Ahern, 49, Ireland
Mary J. Hern, 30, Ireland	
Mary Hern, 12, New Jersey	Mary A. Ahern, 20, New Jersey
Henry Hern, 10, New Jersey	Michiel Ahern, 18, New Jersey
James Hern, 3, California	James B. Ahern, 13, California
Anna Hern, 1, California	Sarah A. Ahern, 11, California
	Jane I. Ahern, 8, California
	John C. Ahern, 6, California
Charles Lacking, 15, Ireland	
<i>Sources:</i>	
a. 1870 U.S. census, Sonoma Co., Calif., population schedule, Vallejo Township, p. 13, dwelling 77, family 75, James Hern household; NARA microfilm publication M593, roll 91; National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, D.C.	
b. 1880 U.S. census, Sonoma Co., Calif., pop. sch., Vallejo Twp., enumeration district 121, p. 2, dwell. 13, fam. 14, James Ahern household; NARA microfilm T9, roll 84.	

21. *Ibid.*, Sonoma, p. 25, dwell./fam. 184, James Kennedy household.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 31, dwell. 235, fam. 233, Douglas Church household. Mary was supposedly born in California. James, the one-year-old son of Douglas Church, was born in England. It is likely the enumerator switched Mary's birthplace with James's.

23. 1880 U.S. census, Sonoma Co., Calif., pop. sch., Vallejo Twp., ED 121, p. 2, dwell. 13, fam. 14, James Ahern household.

24. *Ibid.*, Alameda Co., Calif., pop. sch., Oakland, Ward 2, ED 6, p. 29, dwell. 289, fam. 298, Ann Lochlin household; NARA microfilm T9, roll 61.

Table 3 compares the Lockren family in Sonoma County in 1870 with the family in Alameda County in 1880.

1870 NAME, AGE, BIRTHPLACE ^a	1880 NAME, AGE, BIRTHPLACE ^b
Ann Locklin, 39, Ireland, in James Kennedy's home	Ann Lochlin, 55, Ireland
Mary Laughlin, 14, California, in Douglas Church's home	Charles Lochlin, 25, England
	Mary Lochlin, 20, England
	John Lochlin, 6, California

Sources:

a. For Ann, 1870 U.S. census, Sonoma Co., Calif., population schedule, Sonoma, p. 25, dwelling/family 184, James Kennedy household; NARA microfilm publication M593, roll 91, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington D.C. For Mary, *ibid.*, p. 31, dwell. 235, fam. 233, Douglas Church household; the enumeration confuses the birthplace, parents' birthplaces, and school attendance for Mary Laughlin.

b. 1880 U.S. census, Alameda Co., Calif., pop. sch., Oakland, enumeration district 6, p. 29, dwell. 289, fam. 298, Ann Lochlin household; NARA microfilm T9, roll 61.

John's duplicate enumerations in 1880 use different surnames. John C. Ahern, six and born in California, is enumerated 1 June 1880 in James Ahern's household. California-born John Lochlin, age six, is enumerated 9 June 1880 in Ann Lochlin's household. Both identify him as the son of the head of household, implying he was the brother of the other children in those households. Ann Lockren and James Ahern, both considering John their son, indicated he lived with them. Possibly John rotated between the two homes. He may have relocated from the Ahern home to the Lockren residence between 1 June and 9 June. Or, possibly John was on one of his one-week-long visits to his father between 1 June and 9 June 1880.

CHURCH AND VITAL RECORDS

James and Mary Jane (Graham) Ahern

The 1870 census in Sonoma County says James and Mary J. were born in Ireland. The 1880 enumeration reports James's birth in Ireland. His January 1899 obituary says he was a native of County Cork, Ireland, aged sixty-seven years and two months, suggesting birth in October 1831.²⁵

25. "A Pioneer's Death," *Petaluma Daily Courier*, 14 January 1899, page 2, col. 4.

[Mary] Jane Ahern's October 1873 death record shows she was a native of Ireland, aged thirty-eight years and nine months, suggesting birth in January 1835. She died from "Child Birth."²⁶ Unsourced family lore suggests Jane's parents were Henry Graham and Sarah Keenan.²⁷

James Ahern was baptized in Aghabullogue Parish, County Cork, Ireland, on 30 October 1830, son of John and Mary (Toumy) Ahern.²⁸ The baptismal date is a year earlier than the birth date reported in his obituary. He died on 13 January 1899 in Petaluma.²⁹

Mary Jane Graham, daughter of Henry and Sara (Keenan) Grimes [Graham], was baptized in Kildress Parish, County Tyrone, Ireland, on 22 February 1835.³⁰ Jane Ahern died on 9 October 1873 in Sonoma County.³¹

James and Jane are identified as parents in all their children's baptismal and death records, except for John Ahern's 1861 death record, which says parents are unknown.

1. Mary Agnes Ahern—born in Millstone, Somerset County, New Jersey; baptized 10 July 1859 in New Brunswick, Middlesex County, New Jersey; died 22 September 1937, Tiburon, Marin County, California; married Patrick Thomas Bradley 23 November 1881.³²

26. *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/film/004666596>), digital film 004666596, image 143, Sonoma Co., Calif., Death records, 1873–1919, Register of Deaths, 1873–1890, unpaginated, entry 205, Jane Aheran, 9 October 1873.

27. Author's files.

28. "Catholic Parish Registers at the NLI," *National Library of Ireland* (<https://registers.nli.ie/registers/vtls000632516#page/60/mode/1up>), Aghabullogue Parish, County Cork, Ireland, Diocese of Cloyne and Ross, Baptisms, 4 July 1830 to November 1830, p. 60, James Ahern, 30 October 1830; microfilm 05007/03; National Library of Ireland (NLI), Dublin.

29. "Died. Ahern," *Petaluma Daily Argus*, 14 January 1899, page 1, col. 3.

30. "Catholic Parish Registers at the NLI," *National Library of Ireland* (<https://registers.nli.ie/registers/vtls000632596#page/3/mode/1up>), Kildress Parish, County Tyrone, Ireland, Archdiocese of Armagh, Baptisms, February 1835 to March 1835, p. 3, Janetum Grimes, 22 February 1835; NLI microfilm 05586/01.

31. *FamilySearch*, digital film 004666596, image 143, Sonoma Co., Register of Deaths, 1873–1890, entry 205, Jane Aheran, 9 October 1873.

32. Native Daughters of the Golden West, San Francisco, Calif.; Roster of California Pioneers, vol. 1, p. 62, membership certificate for Mary Ahern Bradley. Mary gave her birthplace as Millstone, New Jersey. St. Peter the Apostle Church, New Brunswick, N.J., certified transcript of baptismal record, Mary Ahern, baptized 10 July 1859; author's files. This is a hand-written, fill-in-the-blank baptismal certificate from the church secretary. Mary was the child of James and Jane Ahern. Marin Co., Calif., death certificate no. 2154-29, Mary A. Bradley (1937); Recorder-County Clerk's Office, San Rafael. St. Vincent de Paul Church, Petaluma, Sonoma Co., Calif., Marriages, unknown vol., unknown page, entry no. 219, Bradley-Ahern, 23 November 1881; author's files.

2. John Ahern—baptized 7 April 1861 in New Brunswick; died 28 April 1861, Millstone.³³
3. Henry Michael Ahern—baptized 1 June 1862 in New Brunswick; died February 1900, San Francisco.³⁴
4. James Bernard Ahern—born about 1867; died 6 November 1945, San Rafael, Marin County.³⁵
5. Sarah Anne Ahern—baptized 22 May 1869 in Petaluma.³⁶
6. Jane Isabel Ahern—baptized 20 October 1871 in Petaluma; died 1 November 1931, Sonoma; married Louis H. Green, 28 December 1892.³⁷

Jane Isabel chose John and his sister, Sarah, as the godparents of her daughter, Miriam.³⁸ The *Oakland Inquirer* identifies Jane Isabel as Belle Green; Mary Agnes was Mary Bradley.

The above given names are consistent with those in newspapers. Names and birth years from church and vital records compare favorably with the ages recorded in the 1870 and 1880 censuses. The exception is John C. Ahern, born about 1873–74, for whom no known vital record exists.³⁹

Michael and Ann (Graham) Loughran [Lockren]

Anna Grimes [Graham], daughter of Henry and Sara (Keenan) Grimes [Graham], was baptized in Kildress Parish, County Tyrone, on 14 June 1837.⁴⁰ Anna has the same parents as Mary Jane Graham, James Ahern's wife. She was undoubtedly Aunt Lockren who cared for John Ahern after his mother died in 1873.

33. St. Peter the Apostle Church, certified transcript of baptismal record, John Ahern, baptized 7 April, 1861; author's files. John was the child of James and Jane Ahern. *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/film/004210089>), digital film 004210089, image 335, New Jersey index to records of births, marriages, and deaths, 1848–1900, Deaths, vol. V–W, 1848–1867, p. 298, entry 129 in 1861, John Ahern, 28 April 1861; State of New Jersey Department of Education, Bureau of Archives and History, Trenton. John was born in Millstone, New Jersey.

34. St. Peter the Apostle Church, certified transcript of baptismal record, Michael H. Ahern, 1 June 1862; author's files. "Deaths—Ahern," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 16 February 1900, page 10, col. 4.

35. Marin Co., death certificate no. 2101-112, James Bernard Ahern (1945).

36. St. Vincent de Paul Church, Baptisms, unknown vol., unknown page, Sarah A. Ahern, 22 May 1869; author's files. This is a photocopy provided by the parish secretary in 2005.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 128, J. I. Ahern, 20 October 1871. Sonoma Co., Calif. death certificate no. 31-062796, Jane I. Green (1931), Clerk-Recorder's Office, Santa Rosa. Sonoma Co., Marriage licenses, vol. M, p. 155, Green-Ahern; Clerk-Recorder's Office.

38. St. Francis Solano Catholic Church, Sonoma, Calif., Baptisms, unknown vol., Miriam Genovevam Green, 19 April 1896; author's files. The parish secretary provided the photocopy in 2005.

39. "Certification of No Record," Alameda Co., Office of Recorder, search for death record for John Ahern between 1 June 1894 and 30 June 1898; author's files.

40. "Catholic Parish Registers at the NLI," *National Library of Ireland* (<https://registers.nli.ie/registers/vtls000632596#page/21/mode/1up>), Kildress Parish, Archdiocese of Armagh, Baptisms, June 1837 to July 1838, p. 21, Anna Grimes, 14 June 1837; microfilm 05586/01, NLI. Annam was the daughter of Henrici Grimes and Sara Keenan. Records for Jane Graham Ahern, Anna Graham Lockren, and their children occasionally show the surname Grimes, a variant form of Graham. "The Grimes Clan," *IrishGathering* (https://www.irishgathering.ie/clan_info.asp?clanID=1524).

Michael Loughran, son of Charles and Mary Loughran of Kildress Parish, and Ann Graham married in County Durham, England, in 1854. Michael and Ann resided in Leadgate, County Durham.⁴¹ Michael's parent's residence was the same place where Anna Graham had been baptized in 1837. Michael died 1 November 1856, aged twenty-nine.⁴² Ann, a thirty-five-year-old widow, and her children, Charles, six, and Mary A., four, were still in County Durham five years after Michael's death.⁴³

On 9 December 1868 Ann, Charles, and Mary Loughran arrived in New York on the S.S. *Nebraska*.⁴⁴ In May 1869 the transcontinental railroad was completed, making the trip from New York to California relatively easy. Anna Lockren died 5 May 1902 in Oakland, Alameda County.⁴⁵

Michael and Ann had two children:

1. Charles August Loughran—born 27 January 1855 in County Durham, England; died 11 January 1911 in Oakland.⁴⁶
2. Mary Ann Loughran—born 24 January 1857 in County Durham, baptized 22 February 1857 in Brooms, County Durham.⁴⁷

In 1870 Charles Lacking, born in Ireland, lived with the Aherns in Sonoma County. He was certainly Charles Loughran [Lockren], born in England of Irish parents. Possibly the informant was unaware of Charles's birthplace.

Mary Laughlin, who lived in Douglas Church's home in 1870, was supposedly born about 1856 in California. She was likely Mary Ann Loughran [Lockren], born in County Durham in 1857. The census likely contains enumeration errors.

41. *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/film/008093236>), digital film 008093236, image 136, Durham, County Durham, U.K., Our Blessed Lady and St. Joseph Roman Catholic Church, Brooms, Durhamshire, 1828–1983, Marriages, 1842–1914, folio 19, Loughran-Graham, 30 January 1854; Durham County Council, Durham.

42. *Ibid.*, image 309, Deaths 1828–1926, p. 6, Michael Loughran, died 1 November 1856, buried 3 November 1856.

43. 1861 England census, County Durham, Birtley, pop. sch., Chester Le Street Reg. Dist., Harraton Sub-dist, ED 5, fol. 61, p. 8, sch. 34, Ann Lorken household; RG9/3762, The National Archives, Kew, Surrey, England.

44. "New York, Passenger and Crew Lists (including Castle Garden and Ellis Island), 1820–1957," *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/nypl/>) > Roll > M237, 1820-1897 > Roll 304 > image 382, Passenger List, S.S. *Nebraska*, list 1264, Ann, Mary and Charles Loughran, arriving 9 December 1868; NARA microfilm M237, roll 304.

45. Health Department of the City of Oakland, Calif., death certificate, file no. 78621, registered no. 149, Anna Lockren (1902); Oakland Public Library, Oakland.

46. Birth certificate for Charles Loughran, March quarter 1855, entry 152, 27 January 1855, Durham Registration District, Lanchester Sub-district; reference 10a/190, General Register Office (GRO), Southport, Merseyside, U.K; the certificate shows no middle name. Calif. State Board of Health, death certificate (duplicate), registered no. 65, Charles Augustus Lockren (1911), Oakland.

47. Birth certificate for Mary Ann Lockeran, March quarter 1857, entry 178 in 1857, 24 January 1857, Durham Reg. Dist., Lanchester Sub-dist.; reference 10a/223, GRO. *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/film/007561103>), digital film 007561103, image 170, Durham, Our Blessed Lady and St. Joseph Roman Catholic Church, Brooms, Baptisms, 1856–1861, p. 43, Marianna Loughran, 22 February 1857; Durham County Council.

Charles's obituary refers to him as "brother of the late John Lockren."⁴⁸ City directories and voter registrations suggest Charles and John Lockren were close.

CITY DIRECTORIES AND VOTER REGISTRATIONS

John Lockren emerged in 1894–1896 Oakland city directories at the same address as Charles, Mary, and Ann Lockren.⁴⁹ He is not present in the 1897 or later Oakland directories.⁵⁰

J. F. Ahern, a carpenter, is in the 1894 Oakland directory. Cornelius Ahern, employee of Mountain View Cemetery, is in the 1894–1896 directories. No John or John C. Ahern appears in any of those directories.⁵¹

The 1894 California voter register shows Charles Lockren, age thirty-eight and born in England, and John Cornelius Lockren, age twenty-one and born in California, working for the railroad and residing together at 1558 7th Street in Oakland.⁵² In 1896 Charles and John Cornelius Lockren again shared a common address, 1457½ 7th Street.⁵³

The 1898 voter register shows John Cornelius Lockren and Charles Lockren at the same address in Oakland and with the same registration dates as shown on the 1896 register.⁵⁴ While the register is for a year after John's death, every name on the page where John appears shows an 1896 registration date, the year John Cornelius Lockren registered. A supplemental register for 1898 shows cancellations of registration for men who transferred to other districts or whose registrations were otherwise cancelled. John's name is not among the cancellations for the First Ward in Precinct 7.⁵⁵ If the clerk was unaware of John's death, he would not have

48. "Deaths—Lockren," *Oakland Tribune*, 12 January 1911, page 13, col. 1.

49. F. M. Husted, comp., *Oakland, Alameda, Berkeley Directory* (San Francisco: F. M. Husted, 1894), 279. *Ibid.* (1895), 276; and (1896), 279.

50. *Ibid.* (1897), 307.

51. *Ibid.* (1894), 83; (1895), 83; and (1896), 71.

52. *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/film/005028129>), digital film 005028129, image 39, Alameda Co., Calif., Great Register 1894, City of Oakland, First Ward, Precinct no. 5, John Cornelius Lockren, 1894; California State Library (CSL), Sacramento.

53. *Ibid.* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/film/005028130>), digital film 005028130, image 36, Alameda, Co., Great Register 1896, City of Oakland, First Ward, Precinct no. 7, John Cornelius Lockren; CSL.

54. *Ibid.* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/film/005028131>), digital film 005028131, image 30, Alameda, Co., Great Register 1898, City of Oakland, First Ward, Precinct no. 7, John Cornelius Lockren; CSL.

55. "California, Voter Registers, 1866–1898," *Ancestry* (<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/cagreatregisters/>) > Alameda > 1898 Supplement > image 505, Alameda Co., Calif., Great Registers, Cancellations, First Ward, Precinct no. 7, 1898. The California Political Code, Section 1106, enacted in 1872 and amended in 1880, required registrations of electors be cancelled by the clerk "when he knows of the death or removal of the person registered . . . or when it appears by the returns made . . . that the respective party did not vote during the next preceding two years at any general or special election." James Henry Deering, *The Political Code of the State of California, as Enacted in 1872, and Amended Up To and Including 1905, With Statutory History and Citation Digest Up To and Including Volume 147 of California Reports* (San Francisco: Bancroft-Whitney Co., 1906), 212–3.

immediately removed his name from the register.

Voter registration records in Oakland in 1894 and 1896 show a John Francis Ahern, but no John Ahern or John C. Ahern.⁵⁶ No voter registration records in Sonoma County at that time show John Ahern or John Lockren.⁵⁷

Neither John Lockren nor John Ahern is in the 1890 reconstructed census for Sonoma County. However, James and James Bernard Ahern are there.⁵⁸

THE CORNELIUS CONNECTION

John Cornelius Lockren registered to vote in Oakland on 2 October 1894.⁵⁹ A Petaluma baptismal record connects John Cornelius Lockren to the Ahern family.

“Joannem Cornelus,” born 9 October 1873, was baptized by the Reverend Jacobus Cleary on 15 November 1873. His parents were Jacobo [James] Cornelus and Jane Gray. Godparents Carolum [Charles] Laughren and Maria Anne Laughren undoubtedly were Aunt Ann Lockren’s son and daughter.⁶⁰ The name “Ahern” appears nowhere in the record. John’s mother’s surname “Gray” may have been a misunderstanding of Jane Ahern’s maiden name, Graham.

Possibly James Ahern was not present at his son’s baptism. When asked the name of the child, godparents Charles and Ann Lockren perhaps responded with John’s given and middle name. Cleary became pastor of St. Vincent de Paul Church in the summer of 1873, performing his first baptism there on 17 August 1873.⁶¹ Given his short tenure in the parish, Cleary may not have known the family well and assumed Cornelius was John’s surname.

56. *FamilySearch*, digital film 005028129, image 142, Alameda Co., Great Registers 1894, City of Oakland, Third Ward, Precinct no. 7, John Francis Ahern; CSL. *Ibid.*, digital film 005028130, image 169, Alameda Co., Great Register 1896, City of Oakland, Fifth Ward, Precinct no. 2, John Francis Ahern; CSL.

57. *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1935764>), California Voter Registers, 1866–1898. Searched 1894–1898.

58. Eugenia Ohlman, *1890 Census Sonoma County, California: Reconstructed* (Santa Rosa, Calif.: Sonoma County Genealogical Society, 1995), 2, 158.

59. *FamilySearch*, digital film 005028129, image 39, Alameda Co., Great Register 1894, City of Oakland, First Ward, Precinct no. 5, John Cornelius Lockren; CSL.

60. St. Vincent de Paul Church, Baptisms, unknown page, Joannem Cornelus, born 9 October 1873, baptized 15 November 1873; author’s files. This a photocopy provided by the parish secretary in 2017. “Joannem Cornelus” is John Cornelius. The priest wrote the parish registers in Latin.

61. Brenda Zepeda, St. Vincent de Paul Church, Petaluma, Sonoma Co., email to the author, 25 October 2017; author’s files. The email is part of a string of correspondence between the author and the office assistant for St. Vincent de Paul Parish regarding John’s baptism and the Reverend Cleary’s start date as the pastor.

DID JOHN LEGALLY CHANGE HIS NAME?

No known records in Alameda or Sonoma counties show a legal name change for John.⁶² In the 1890s a person, without court proceeding, could simply begin using a different name.⁶³ California law seals any formal adoption procedure, which would have resulted in a legal name change. It is unsealed only if the court grants a petition showing a compelling reason.⁶⁴ Perhaps the Ahern and Lockren families did not feel it necessary to make John's placement with his Aunt Ann legal.

CONCLUSIONS

Henry Ahern's deposition fuses John's two surnames into one. John Ahern was the son of James Ahern and brother of Henry Ahern. John lived in Oakland with his aunt, Mrs. [Ann] Lockran, and he went by J. C. Lockran. Although John lost his mother shortly after he was born, he grew to manhood under the care of two families—the Aherns and the Lockrens—both claiming him as their own.

In 1873 James Ahern suddenly had to decide how to keep his motherless family together. The five older Ahern children already lived as a family unit, and perhaps James did not want to split the family after Jane's untimely death. Aunt Ann Lockren, with two children in their mid-teens, might have appeared an ideal candidate to care for a newborn.

Ann raised her nephew, seemingly as her son. John would have looked on her as a mother. To associates in Oakland they looked like a family—the Lockren family—and John shared in that identity as he embarked on his brief career with the railroad.

John's father, James, and his Ahern siblings seem to have still considered him their son and brother. Regardless of where John called home, the Aherns undoubtedly viewed him as one of them—an Ahern.

Use of multiple names confuses a person's identity. Duplicate census enumerations may suggest, erroneously, the existence of two people. Looking beyond easily available census records and newspaper articles to find court records or other documents may show that a single person is using different names. No known birth or death certificate directly names John's parents. Correlated information from other records identify John as James and Jane (Graham) Ahern's son.

62. Alameda Co., Civil Index Books, Plaintiffs, 1880–1894, vol. 1, A–E, names starting with Ah, and vol. 3, L–P, names starting with Lo; County Clerk's Office. *Ibid.*, Plaintiffs, 1895–1906, vol. 9, A–E, names starting with Ah, and vol. 11, L–P, names starting with Lo. Steve Lovejoy, Sebastapol, Calif., email to author, 25 June 2018; “Re: Ahern in Sonoma County Court Records”; author's files.

63. Noel C. Stevenson, *Genealogical Evidence*, rev. ed. (Laguna Hills, Calif.: Aegean Park Press, 1989), 22.

64. “How to Obtain Adoption Records From the Superior Court,” *California Department of Social Services* (<http://www.cdss.ca.gov/Adoption-Services/Adoptee-Information/Adoption-Records>).