

## **MARY VERONICA FARRELL**

(Mrs. John O'Loughlin)

Kearny County, Kansas

*(Written by a Volunteer Assistant for the American Guide. Name not provided.)*

*\*With additional information on John O'Loughlin*



JOHN & MARY VERONICA (FARRELL) O'LOUGHLIN

*Newspaper Photographs*

Mary V. Farrell was born in Xenia, Greene County, Ohio, on 14 May 1860. Her parents were Dennis and Bridget Farrell, who had migrated from Ireland to America in the years 1842 and 1844. She was the oldest of six children.

She came to Brookville, Saline County, Kansas, in November of 1871, living there for only a short time, until a fire destroyed her home. She then moved to Ellsworth County, Kansas. She attended the public school in Wilson, Kansas, and Parochial School in Junction City, Geary County, Kansas, from 1872 to 1873.

She was married on 5 Feb 1882 to John O'Loughlin of Lakin, Kansas, and arrived here on 8 Feb 1882.

Lakin, as she first saw it, was built on the road facing the railroad track. O'Loughlin's general store was the largest building on that road. It was a two-story frame building that is used today by their son for a grocery store. That road today has been named Main Street. Earlier, there was the 'section house' where the school was taught in an upstairs room. Next was Thibbet's Grocery, then the printing office, and beyond that was Bracket's Grocery. Next to the grocery store, there was a small building that was used as a saloon. The depot was east of where the Collin's home stands today, and the Pearl home was northeast of the O'Loughlin's store building. Just east of their store was a boarding house.

To this little town of not more than thirty people came Mary O'Loughlin as a bride, and there are many old settlers today who speak of her as a very beautiful girl. To honor the bride of the oldest and most respected citizen of Kearny County, Lakin's women gave them a reception at Mr. and Mrs. Boylan's home, which was the largest house in town. The evening was spent dancing and getting acquainted, and Mrs. O'Loughlin marveled at the number who had gathered there to welcome her. Many cowboys had come in from the ranches, and everyone had a good time.

Mrs. O'Loughlin had heard so much about the cowboys, principally about their wild shooting and drinking, but she learned to know them as real men who were honorable and educated. Yet, there were more seeking adventure in the west. Above everything, they respected women. Indeed, they sometimes drank too much when they came to town, and their uncouth appearance did not always show the passing stranger the true men beneath. Dressed in gala attire, they wore high heel boots with large clanking spurs. Chaps of various hues, shirts that bloused freely with no hint of suspenders, topped off with a sizeable colored handkerchief knotted loosely around their necks and a large-brimmed Stetson hat on their heads. Some showed the influence of their Spanish neighbors and wore long, brightly-colored sashes tied around their middle.

Mrs. O'Loughlin says there were no Indians or buffalo here at the time she arrived. The only Indians she saw in Kansas were in February of 1872 when she visited the home of an uncle who lived nearby, on what used to be called Rock Springs Creek west of Brookville, Kansas, in Saline County. About 300 families of Indians passed by on their way to a southern camp on the Smoky Hill River.

They marched in single file, the squaws walking with their papoose strapped to their back, leading horses hitched to the teepee poles dragging all their earthly possessions, while the Indian men rode their horses. It was a long procession and very impressive to the children who were behind locked doors. They were courageous as they occasionally peeked out from behind the doors.

In the fall of 1882 or the spring of 1883, the new depot was built, and Lakin was moved to its present location. O'Loughlin's store was moved in October of 1883. It took one week to move it with a horse-drawn windlass (*a device for hoisting or hauling objects*) and cost \$65.00 to put it on its present foundation. Mr. O'Loughlin worked as proprietor and clerk in his store, and Mrs. O'Loughlin kept up the home that was five rooms over the store during that period.

To pass the time away and break the monotony of everyday living, the Lakin women organized a club where Mrs. O'Loughlin was one of the leaders. In their club work, the women studied embroidery and painting, which was taught by two different women who lived on claims and made regular trips to surrounding towns. Everyone was friendly, neighborly, and always ready to lend a helping hand.

Often, Mrs. O'Loughlin walked several miles to "set up" and care for the sick and to prepare the dead for burial. She was always helping the needy, and many who live here today still go to her for help. After her husband's death, she returned notes that people of meager means had given him in exchange for necessities and told them the debt was canceled. Her standard in the community was high. Her generosity, her honesty, and her determination to be progressive had their effect on her community. Since Mr. O'Loughlin's death, she has devoted part of her time to rebuilding and improving her properties, and the store has been refinished and stuccoed with a restaurant and bakery added to it.

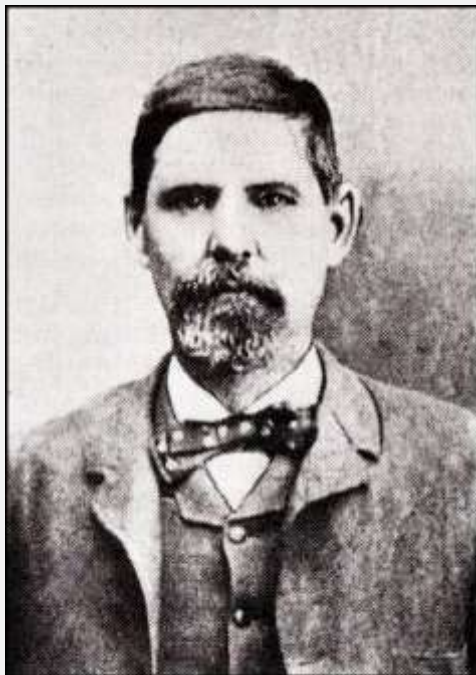
Mrs. O'Loughlin is a member of the Catholic Church, and she is one of the active members in building the church in 1904. She has always taken the lead in church work and continues to be involved today. Over the years, most of her time was spent in her home in Lakin, taking care of her seven children, cooking for hired men, and taking her part as a leader in her community.

Today she lives on a well-improved farm adjoining Lakin, where she has lived since the fall of 1887. Her unselfishness and devotion to her family and friends will leave its impression on Kearny County through the years that are yet to come.

#### Additional Information

JOHN O'LOUGHLIN

*(Husband of Mary Veronica (Farrell) O'Loughlin)*



JOHN O'LOUGHLIN

**JOHN O'LOUGHLIN**, son of Peter O'Loughlin (*died in about 1846, in Ireland.*) and Margaret Considine (*1816-1878*), was born 24 Jun 1842 in County Clare, Ireland.

John O'Loughlin married **MARY VERONICA FARRELL**, daughter of Dennis Farrell (*1838-1911*) and Bridget Gogerty (*1831-1921*), on 5 Feb 1882 in Russell County, Kansas. Mr. O'Loughlin died on 9 Dec 1915, and Mrs. O'Loughlin passed away on 30 Oct 1936. Both died in Lakin, Kansas and buried at the Lakin Cemetery.

Seven children were born to their marriage:

**MARGARET B. O'LOUGHLIN** was born on 27 Sep 1883 in Kearny County, Kansas. She married Bertchard Clarence Hurst in about 1918. Bertchard was born on 12 Mar 1887 and passed away on 5 Mar 1927. Margaret died on 3 Nov 1977. Both were buried at the Lakin Cemetery. Bertchard and Margaret had two children: Elizabeth "Betty" Hurst Williams (*1919-2012*) and Frederick Hurst (*1924-1980*).

**WILLIAM DENNIS O'LOUGHLIN**, born 23 Feb 1885 in Lakin, Kearny County, Kansas. He was married to Grace Ida Blake on 27 Aug 1918 in Kansas City, Missouri. Grace was born 13 Sep 1889 in Ulysses, Kansas, and worked as a schoolteacher. William died on 30 Jun 1958. Grace passed away on 12 Aug 1983 in Alma, Wabaunsee County, Kansas. Both were buried at the Lakin Cemetery. Three children were born to their marriage; Dorothy Ruth O'Loughin Sells, Mary Margaret O'Loughin Walters, and William Dennis O'Loughin, Jr.

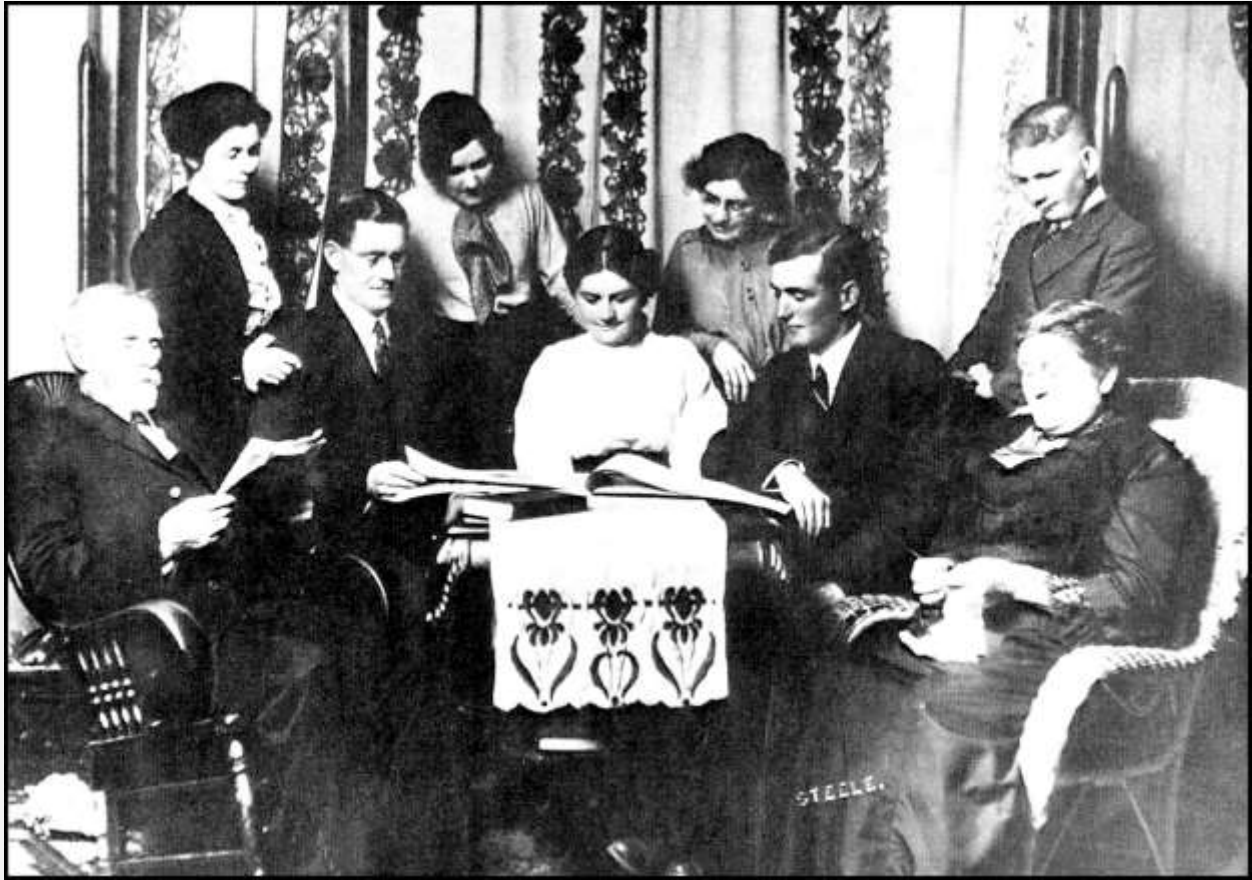
**MARY CATHERINE "MAME" O'LOUGHLIN** was born on 3 Jul 1886. She married Frank Fleetwood Thomas. He was born on 5 Jan 1891 in Yuma County, Colorado, and died 21 Jul 1953 in Lakin, Kansas. Mary Catherine passed away on 28 Apr 1990. Both were buried at the Lakin, Cemetery. Their children were Frank F. Thomas, Jr. (*1917-2014*), James E. Thomas (*1919-1985*), Mary Catherine Thomas Phillips (*1922-2014*), and Marcella Claire Thomas McVey (*1924-2009*).

**JOHN CHARLES O'LOUGHLIN** was born on 18 Jul 1888 in Lakin, Kansas. On 13 Sep 1922, in Wilson, Ellsworth County, Kansas, John O'Loughlin married Josephine Schwarz, daughter of Michael and Mary Schwarz. Between 1930 and 1940, John and Josephine lived in Garden City, Finney County, Kansas. He died 23 Feb 1948 in Halstead, Harvey County, Kansas and Josephine passed away on 17 Mar 1975 in Lawrence, Harvey County, Kansas. Two daughters were born in their marriage: Patricia J. O'Loughlin Schamle (*1923-2017*) and Josephine M. O'Loughlin Robison (*1925-2016*).

**JENNIE ROSE O'LOUGHLIN** was born on 4 Nov 1892 and died 26 Jul 1982. Burial was at the Lakin Cemetery. Jennie never married and was a Lakin, Kansas schoolteacher.

**HELEN G. O'LOUGHLIN** was born on 21 Aug 1897. She did not marry. Helen taught school in the Kearny County, Kansas area for seven years, and 36 years at the Pana, Christian County, Illinois, high school. She retired to her home in Lakin, where she passed away on 19 Jul 1977. Burial was at the Lakin Cemetery.

THOMAS JOSEPH O'LOUGHLIN was born 12 Apr 1900 and died 16 Aug 1939. Burial was at the Lakin Cemetery. He did not marry!



### THE JOHN O'LOUGHLIN FAMILY

Lakin, Kansas

Newspaper photograph

1915

*From left to right: John O'Loughlin, Margaret B., William Dennis, Jennie Rose, Helen G., Mary C. Mame, John Charles, Thomas Joseph, and Mary V. (Mrs. John O'Loughlin)*

Newspaper Article

JOHN O'LOUGHLIN

*Garden City (Kansas) Telegram – Saturday, 15 Apr 1967*

### JOHN O'LOUGHLIN BECAME FIRST SETTLER IN KEARNY COUNTY

*By Barbara Oringderff (With the help of John O'Loughlin's daughters; Miss Jennie R. O'Loughlin, Miss Helen O'Loughlin, and Mrs. Margaret O'Loughlin Hurst.)*

Today, when we look at all the towns, highways, grain elevators, and other marks of civilization in Southwest Kansas, it is almost impossible to imagine that less than a hundred years ago, there was nothing here except miles and miles of barren, windswept prairie.

In 1873, Dodge City, a town just barely two years old, was the last outpost on the edge of this vast prairie into which only a few brave men dared to venture, John O'Loughlin was one of the first of these men. In March of 1873, O'Loughlin loaded up his wagon in Dodge and headed west. Alone, this young man traveled over miles and miles of unbroken sod with only the sight of an occasional buffalo or antelope herd to break the monotony of his trip.

The wagon bumped along over the Santa Fe Trail through what is now Ford County, Gray County, Finney County, and finally came to what is now Kearny County. On this trip, he saw no human habitation except the small settlement at Pierceville, which had grown up around Barton Brothers Ranch headquarters established there a year or so before.

In Kearny County, on a site close to the new railroad O'Loughlin, unloaded the small stock from his wagon and started a store in a dugout. When he did this, he could not have known that he had just become the first settler in Kearny County, founded the town of Lakin, and started a store that would for many years be the only trading post between Dodge City and Granada. Colorado.

O'Loughlin was already accustomed to the hardships of pioneer life when he decided to settle in an area west of Dodge City. He was an Irish Immigrant who left Iowa to come west when he was just seventeen. He had first come to Kansas in 1861 when he went to work as a government teamster at Fort Leavenworth. As a teamster, he made the huge sum of \$25.00 a month.

The black-haired young Irishman was a hard worker, and he was soon promoted to wagon master – on this job, he made about \$40 a month. Then, for eight years, he worked with government troops throughout the southwest. He was with Hitchcock in 1866, when he came up the Pawnee to make peace with the Indians (Custer was the lieutenant colonel of the command), and was with Sheridan in the winter of 1868-1869, when he marched from Fort Hays, 300 miles south, and located Fort Sill.

Finally, in 1869, O'Loughlin decided it was time he went into business for himself, and he built a trading post on the military road between Fort Hays and Fort Dodge in what is now Hodgeman County. (He is also recognized as having been the first permanent white settler in Hodgeman County.) He built a toll bridge across the Pawnee, at this point had his trading post, and did a booming business with government troops, buffalo hunters, cowboys, and even with the Indians who often led their warriors along the white man's trail.

Three years later, in 1872, the railroad was extended from Fort Hays to the infant town of Dodge City, and since it did not pass near his trading post on the Pawnee, O'Loughlin decided to sell out and move further west.

He spent a few months in Dodge City and then set out across the prairie toward his new home in what is now Lakin.

In 1873, he had more customers in his dugout store in Lakin than would seem possible for such an uninhabited place. Of course, the railroad workers were his most frequent customers but, he

also sold supplies to buffalo hunters, families in covered wagons just passing through, and the few ranchers in the area.

To be exact, there were only two ranches west of Dodge in 1873 and they were the Barton Brothers Ranch located in Pierceville and the Hardesty Brothers Ranch at Pleasant Encampment on the Colorado line.

O'Loughlin was quick to recognize the area as a perfect cattle country, and he soon began to build up a herd of his own. How does a man go about building up a cattle herd in an area where there are virtually no cattle? Well, O'Loughlin did it by trading his supplies for livestock. Actually, very little money changed hands in those days anyway. By the time people traveling west in covered wagons reached his dugout store in Lakin, they were usually happy to trade footsore cows and horses for much-needed supplies.

It took several years, but in 1879, John O'Loughlin had enough cattle that he decided to start his own ranch at Wagon Bed Springs, in what is now Grant County. Thus, he became one of the first ranchers in Southwest Kansas.

*Jennie Rose O'Loughlin wrote about her father...* John O'Loughlin saw early on the advantage of the allied business of farming and ranching. His extensive holdings included farms and ranches in Southern Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas; the best known was a Pig Pen Ranch of Northern Grant County.

Since Mr. O'Loughlin's death, the business has been managed by his sons. Fifty-three years after its establishment, it marks the trail, not only to the founders' foresightedness and integrity, but also to all those who believed in Lakin.

### Newspaper Obituary JOHN O'LOUGHLIN

The following obituary for John O'Loughlin was in two different newspapers: *The Lakin (Kansas) Advocate, Friday, 17 Dec 1915* and *The Catholic Advance, Saturday, 25 Dec 1915*.

Written by J. H. Waterman

#### DEATH OF JOHN O'LOUGHLIN, THE FATHER OF LAKIN

John O'Loughlin dropped dead at his home in this city Thursday, 9 Dec 1915, at 4:30 p.m., from heart failure. He was in a corral at the time, looking at some stock. His son Thomas saw him fall, and when his wife, son, and the hired man reached him, he was dead. Ten minutes before, he was conversing with his wife at the house, apparently in his accustomed health. He walked around the barn and entered the corral, and without warning, fell dead. Two doctors were summoned and in a few minutes were there, but their service was of no avail. His funeral was

held on Sunday at 3:30 p.m., from the Catholic Church, Father Sittenauer officiating, and interment in the Lakin Cemetery. Probably the largest mass of people in the history of the county gathered at the home to pay their last respects and take the last look at our oldest settler.

The pallbearers were his sons, William D., John C., and Thomas J.; his nephews John Pearl and Frank Webber and a cousin, John Considine. The honorary pallbearers being: A. R. Beaty, A. B. Boylan, D. H. Browne, William Russell, J. H. Waterman, and M. A. Weber.

John O'Loughlin was born in County Clare, Ireland, 24 Jun 1842, and came to this country with his parents when a little child, they settling at Dubuque, Iowa. On 5 Feb 1882, Mr. O'Loughlin was married to Mary V. Farrell, of Wilson, Kansas, to whom seven children, Maggie, William, John, Mamie, Jennie Rose, Helen, and Thomas, were born. These, with his brother, Thomas O'Loughlin, of Texas, his sisters Margaret Pearl, of this city, and Mary Canavan, of Dubuque, Iowa, are left to mourn his loss.

In 1859 John came to Leavenworth and became a freighter across the Santa Fe Trail. During the war, he was employed by the government as department quartermaster between the Missouri River and their western frontier forts; at the close of the war, he was with Phil Sheridan's command in his Indian campaigns over the southwest, finally settling down about seventy-five miles north of Dodge City on the Smoky River where he opened a frontier store and built a toll bridge across this river. When the Santa Fe railroad was built, he sold out and went to Dodge and then to Lakin, settling here in February 1873. For a while, his was the only store between Dodge City to the east and Granada, Colorado, to the west, a distance of 125 miles. From Kit Carson to Buffalo Bill, all of the old plainsmen knew Uncle John as he was familiarly called.

During his forty-five years of residence here, he has been a prominent personage in the development of this town, county, and the southwest. His sincerity of purpose was never doubted in any transaction of business or private enterprise. He was a man of strong convictions, candid and outspoken in expressing them, but was reluctant in forcing his opinions on others. For several years he has lived a retired life on his farm adjoining the town and left all business interests in the hands of his sons.

He was delighted to have his old friends and neighbors drop by, and it was a treat to spend an afternoon hearing him tell of the events and happenings in the early days. He loved children and had a way peculiar to himself in winning their confidence, and his life on the frontier begot in him the pioneer hospitality which dominated his home. He was wedded to his family and his business. Thus he could never be induced to run for or accept a public office.

It is impossible to estimate what our community owes him in his various characters of husband, father, brother, neighbor, and friend. May the sons and daughters he has reared live to perpetuate his name and emulate his virtues. He retained his mental faculties with a remarkable clearness up to the end, and his life and character will be a lasting monument.



John O'Loughlin has gone to his reward, but the knowledge of having known him will be as lasting in our memory as monumental brass. Together with innumerable friends, the ADVOCATE extends to the wife, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters their heartfelt sympathy in this, their hour of sorrow.

#### HIS STERLING WORTH

The sterling worth in which John O'Loughlin, who departed this life Thursday, is best told by a few of his many friends, as follows:

I never had a better friend. – *J. M. Whinery.*

Upright, honorable man in every respect. – *A. G. Campbell.*

The early homesteaders had no better friend. – *James Mullany.*

He was the friend of all. He will be sadly missed. – *E. O. McDowell.*

I have known him for thirty years and never had a better friend. – *John Miller, Sr.*

Words cannot convey the esteem in which I held John O'Loughlin. – *Dr. G. C. W. Richards.*

After an unbroken friendship of thirty-five years, I place him with the best men I ever knew. – *William Russell.*

I always held him in the highest esteem. Honesty and uprightness in business was his chief aim. – *M. A. Mosher.*

I have known him for thirty years and found him a man of honor and always a friend of the deserving. – *E. S. Snow.*

Lakin and Kearny County deplore the loss of an honest, upright man and a friend of the needy – *M. J. Collins.*

I have held him in the highest esteem and deeply deplore his loss. He was honest and true in every respect. – *Alvin Beaty.*

I have lost a true friend. I valued his friendship very highly. – *J. M. Judd.*

Honorable, big-hearted, and generous to all, especially kind to the unheld by all who knew him. – *D. H. Browne.*

I have done business with him for years and found him square and honest. He will be greatly missed by our community in general. – *W. B. Wheeler.*

After an acquaintance of thirty-six years, it is with regret that we sustain the loss of John O'Loughlin, whom I held in the highest esteem. – *F. L. Pierce.*

That he was the father of this county is beyond objection, and he was a man who was able to stay by his generosity. He will be sadly missed. – *George G. Garretson.*

I have lived as a close neighbor from 1873 up to the present time and never knew him to refuse anyone a reasonable request, either financially or otherwise. – *A. B. Boylan.*

I have known the deceased since 1885. Before I reached Lakin, I had already heard of him as "Honest John O'Loughlin," and my thirty-year acquaintance has verified this. – *T. N. Thorpe.*

Mr. O'Loughlin was a man of strong convictions, always stood for the right as he saw it. His character and strong convictions made him an esteemed client. – *E. R. Thorpe.*

The family of John O'Loughlin has my heartfelt sympathy in the loss of a kind husband and loving father, and Kearny County has lost one of her best citizens, for whom we all mourn. – *W. B. Logan.*

I have known him for thirty years and always found him generous and more than ready to assist any person or public enterprise and a true Christian if there ever was one. – *Frank P. McAlister.*

For more than thirty-five years, I have enjoyed a course of uninterrupted friendship with John O'Loughlin. In the early days, we were rival merchants but always friends. Many widows and orphans and needy men received his help in time of need that the world will never know about, for he let not his left hand know what his right was doing. Those who knew him best loved him most. His will be a cherished memory. – *J. H. Waterman.*