721 Seventeenth Avenue,

a love story
This started as the story of a humble little apartment building that has stood quietly as the city built up around it. It's not a landmark, or an emblem of some notable architect or style, or the site of some major event in history. But it has been a home to countless residents - including myself - for over one hundred years, and to me that makes it special.
The land on which 721 17th Avenue stands is part of the Edes & Knight’s addition, the first plat for the Central Area of Seattle. The plat was filed with the city in 1875 by N. B. Knight and George & Rhoda Edes, covering the area between 10th and 20th Avenues on the west and east and Union and Cherry on the north and south. Block 24 of the addition, in which 721 17th Ave. occupies lots 19 and 20, was replatted in 1890.
The current apartment building at 721 17th Avenue (briefly 721-23 17th Ave.) was constructed in 1907 and named the Walcott Apartments. The building is a wood frame with a brick exterior, three stories (plus basement) and included 32 apartments, "modern in all particulars."
Walcott Apartments
Which Change Owners

The Walcott Apartments, at 721-25 Seventeenth Avenue, were sold last Friday by Evelyn Sullivan to Fred G. Cutler for $45,000. The building, which contains twenty-one apartments and cost $44,000, has just been finished and is only partly occupied. The new owner will change the name of the building to "Cutler Court."

In Summer time, you can wash them unwillingly Pay Fine.

A. Z. Erickson, proprietor of the Jersey Dairy, who recently completed a

unwillingly Pay Fine.

It willingness Pay Fine.

Two years after construction, owner Evelyn Sullivan sold the building to Fred G. Cutler, who renamed it Cutler Court. It changed hands again in 1911 when sold to A. D. Helms of Ashland, Oregon. However, it remained Cutler Court until approximately 1915, when it was renamed the Quincy Apartments. It would remain the Quincy for many years until 1950.

DANCE AT Dreamland
TO-NIGHT
ADMISSION FREE
APARTMENTS SOLD TO OREGON PEOPLE

First Important Realty Deal of New Year: Sale of Cutler Court on Seventeenth Avenue to Ashland Couple.

$55,000 Selling Price; Investment Good One

The first important realty deal of the year was closed yesterday afternoon in the office of John Davis & Co. In the transfer of Cutler Court Apartments, at 717 Seventeenth Avenue, Fred D. Cutler to A. D. Helms, Helms and wife, of Ashland, for $55,000.

This property, which is legally described as lots 29 and 30, replat of block 14, Edes & Knights Addition, is improved with a handsome three-story apartment building completed about two years ago, and was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Helms as a permanent investment.

Mr. Helms is one of the pioneer and prominent fruit growers of Ashland, whose apples have attracted attention in the New York and other markets. In purchasing Seattle apartment houses in Seattle, ranging in value from $65,000 to $125,000, as an investment of profits, he is following the example of a number of other Eastern Washington and Oregon fruit growers who recently have purchased apartment houses in Seattle, ranging in price from

CITIZENS' NATIONAL DECLARES DIVIDEND

The board of directors of the Citizens’ National Bank, at its regular meeting yesterday afternoon, declared a dividend.

That is why, perhaps, Michael and Margaret Cleary stood out. Recorded as residents in the 1940 Census, their time at 721 17th can be traced back through the city directory to approximately 1935 - and forward all the way to 1965.

FISH ON SPECIAL SALE AT WESTLAKE SATURDAY

Although salmon are out of season and halibut not cheap, the Westlake Market will feature salmon and halibut. Salmon, 10c lb.; halibut, three pounds for 25c. Special prices are quoted at Westlake Market for Saturday—salmon, 10c lb.; halibut, three pounds for 25c; large shrimp, 25c lb.; flounder, 85c lb.; six lbs. for 25c; perch, three lbs. for 25c; black catfish, one lb. for 15c.

Apartments seem to have the tendency for frequent turnover of residents as they move on to other apartments in other cities, houses, bigger places to accommodate growing families. Of the 17 families/units noted in the 1910 Census - the first census to record 721 17th’s residents - only a handful remained by 1913.
Margaret Cleary was born Margaret Shaughnessy sometime between 1880 and 1886 in Tuam, County Galway, Ireland. In 1903, she emigrated to the United States, arriving in Boston. She became a naturalized citizen in 1904.
After her arrival in Seattle, Washington, Margaret began training as a nurse. She graduated with eleven other women in the first class of professional nurses from Providence Hospital's School of Nursing.
The presence of the Sisters of Providence in Seattle trace back to their work at a poor house in Georgetown in 1877. The first Providence Hospital was founded in the former Moss residence at 5th Avenue and Madison. In 1883, a more suitably sized hospital building was constructed on the same block. It was here that the School of Nursing began. Margaret appears as a resident of that address, along with many other young women under the heading "Madison Street - Providence Hospital" in the 1910 Census.
In 1909, construction began on a new hospital at the top of Renton/Cherry Hill. This building was completed in 1911 and remains as part of the Swedish Cherry Hill complex.
I hereby make formal application for Registration in the Official Register of the Washington State Board of Examiners of Nurses and submit the following in evidence of my qualifications for such registration:

1. My full name is Margaret Thonguyen
2. Date of birth: April 23, 1898
3. Permanent address: 515 82nd Avenue, Seattle, Washington

World War I broke out in 1914 with the United States joining in 1917. Just as the war seemed to be close to its end, the world was struck by the Spanish influenza pandemic. When it arrived in Seattle in October 1918, it killed approximately 1600 people. Worldwide it killed over 20 million in two years.

Margaret was working as a nurse at the Columbus Sanitorium when Michael Cleary was admitted with the flu. Cleary had traveled from his home in Montana to help care for his brother’s ill family and contracted the disease himself.
Michael Cleary emigrated from Ireland in 1900 and worked in a saloon in Butte, Montana. His brother M. J. Cleary was an officer with the Seattle Police Department. Born sometime around 1876, Michael was, serendipitously, also from Tuam, County Galway, Ireland.
The State of Montana,
County of Silver Bow,

Marriage Certificate

I hereby certify, that I believe that the facts stated in the foregoing license are true and that upon due inquiry there appears to be an legal impediment to the marriage of said Michael Cleary and Margaret Shaughnessy, that said parties were joined in marriage by me on the day of September 8, 1919, in the said County and State, in the presence of the undersigned witnesses, and that said Michael Cleary and Margaret Shaughnessy solemnly declared in my presence, and in the presence of the said named witnesses, that they took each other as husband and wife.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 8th day of Sept., A. D. 1919.

Officiating

Witneses.

Filed for record A. D. 1919

Clerk

Deputy Clerk.

The story goes that Margaret nursed Michael back to health and the two fell in love. Shortly thereafter, Margaret relocated to a hospital in Butte, and the couple were married in September 1919. They honeymooned in the city in which they met.

Influenza Brings Butte Man Wife; Honeymoon Here

A victim of the influenza and of Cupid, M. F. Cleary, a Butte businessman, is spending his honeymoon in Seattle with his bride, who was Miss Margaret Shaughnessy, a well known nurse, for some years connected with the staff of Providence Hospital. The bridgroom is a brother of Patroilman M. F. Cleary of the Seattle Police Department.

During the outbreak of the influenza in the fall of 1918, Mr. Cleary came to Seattle on account of the illness of Patrolman Cleary's wife.

While assisting in the illness of his brother's family Mr. Cleary contracted the disease himself, and went to Columbus Sanitarium, where he met his future bride, then on duty there.

The romance which had its beginning in the hospital continued, and when the man from Butte went home he obtained a promise from Miss Shaughnnessy that she would go to the Montana mining capital and join the nursing staff of the St. James Hospital. At close range Cupid closed the romance, and now the couple are spending the honeymoon here.

The lot, which was sold for $200 and constructed 1000 and equipped with coin rack, was used for results.

Times want ads for results.
Margaret worked as a nurse at several hospitals and private homes for over 40 years. Michael’s activities are mostly unknown. They had no children. But they lived in that apartment through the 1930s...

Approximately fifteen years later, Margaret and Michael returned to Seattle. They moved into Apartment G of 721 17th Avenue, just across the street from Providence Hospital.
### THE 1940s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J. E. Smith</td>
<td>Spouse</td>
<td>123 Main St.</td>
<td>987-1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Johnson</td>
<td>Son</td>
<td>456 Oak Ave.</td>
<td>567-8901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary White</td>
<td>Daughter</td>
<td>789 Maple Rd.</td>
<td>123-4567</td>
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### THE 1950s

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<tr>
<td>John Doe</td>
<td>Father</td>
<td>111 Pine Dr.</td>
<td>222-3456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane Smith</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>333 Cedar Ln.</td>
<td>444-5678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily Johnson</td>
<td>Sister</td>
<td>555 Elm St.</td>
<td>666-7890</td>
</tr>
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### SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS

For persons enumerated as Lines 15 and 20.

- Who is the head of the household?
- What is the relationship of each person to the head of the household?
- What is the marital status of each person?
- What is the occupation of each person?
- What is the date of birth for each person?

**Example:**

- Ethel E. Johnson, 45, married, school teacher, born 1935.
Mrs. Margaret Shaughnessy Cleary rested her snow-white head on a snow-white pillow in her room in Providence Hospital and made a few observations.

As a member of the first graduating class of the Providence Hospital School of Nursing in 1910 and now a patient, Mrs. Cleary spoke with authority, mixed with admitted bias.

"We worked harder and I think we were better looking," she said with a touch of Irish brogue and a hint of a twinkle in her blue eyes.

"They look after me very well here. But we gave our patients more personal care.

"Things have changed a lot, though, and the nurses don't have the time to spend with the patients. We worked longer hours and extra hours and thought nothing of it— it's quite different now."

Mrs. Cleary will be 83 next month. She came from Ireland when she was 19 and began her nursing training in 1907 in the old hospital at Fifth Avenue and Madison Street.

The graduating class of 1910 had their ceremonies at Holy Names Academy. Mrs. Cleary was a nurse 40 years.

She was married in 1919 to Michael F. Cleary. He died last year. She now lives with a niece, Mrs. Mary Rafferty, at 721 17th Av.

After being in the hospital for a minor illness, Mrs. Cleary went home the other day.

"As good as hospitals are, "she said. "I'd rather be nursing than nursed."

Providence Hospital now is the main teaching unit of Seattle University.

MRS. MICHAEL CLEARY, 1910 GRADUATE, AND DARLENE TUSCHER, 1960 GRAD

MARGARET SHAUGHNESSY IN 1910

First time in nurse's cap

Holy Names Academy. Mrs. Cleary was a nurse 40 years.

She was married in 1919 to Michael F. Cleary. He died last year. She now lives with a niece, Mrs. Mary Rafferty, at 721 17th Av.

After being in the hospital for a minor illness, Mrs. Cleary went home the other day.

"As good as hospitals are, "she said. "I'd rather be nursing than nursed."

Providence Hospital now is the main teaching unit of Seattle University.

...and into the 1960s.
Michael died in 1963. His mass was held at the Immaculate Conception Church two blocks away (the oldest standing Catholic church in Seattle, built in 1904) and he was buried at Calvary Cemetery (the first and oldest Catholic cemetery in Seattle, founded in 1899). Margaret followed two years later in 1965 and was buried beside him.

For somewhat near 40 years, this Irish-American couple lived in the rooms up and over one unit from the apartment I now inhabit. Several times a week for the past few years, as I make a shortcut to the bus stop on Jefferson Street, I have walked past a reproduction of the Immaculate Conception Church, sitting on the corner of 21st Avenue and Madison Street, the first Catholic church in Seattle, built in 1904. I often look ahead at the steel and glass structure in front of the church, and I am reminded of Michael Cleary, born in County Galway, Ireland, died Tuesday in a hospital. He was a restaurant owner in Butte, Montana, until 30 years ago, when he retired and moved here. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus in Butte.

Surviving are his wife, Margaret, and a brother, Martin Cleary, Seattle.

Ozzie Woodcock, 43, 410 Fourth Av. N., Charlotte G. Arriola, 39, 410 Fourth Av. N.
Marion L. Horne, 33, 4524 35th Av. S., Norma L. Jefferson, 39, 5379 Rainier Av. S.
David D. Ewert, 24, Edmonds.
Jean A. Olinger, 22, 2090 N. E. 56th St.
John E. Flynn, 33, Everett.
Alice Keely, 58, 4032 Terrace Dr. N.E.

Olive girl.
O. James Tibbett, 204 50th Av. S., boy.

MAYNARD HOSPITAL
Peter Buchan, 120 N. E. 100th St. boy
Kenneth L. Campbell, 12100 S. E. 94th St., Renton, boy.

SEATTLE GENERAL HOSPITAL
Arnold R. Hill, 328 17th Av. S., girl.

MAYNARD HOSPITAL
Peter Buchan, 120 N. E. 100th St. boy
Kenneth L. Campbell, 12100 S. E. 94th St., Renton, boy.

PROVIDENCE HOSPITAL
Edward F. Eldridge, 8406 S. 9th Av. S., boy.

cause gasoline tank rupturing in accident; no loss.
5:14 p. m.—12301 33rd Av. N. E. Brush fire caused by children playing with matches; no loss.
5:28 p. m.—333 Seventh Av. Rubbish fire caused by children playing with matches; no loss.
8:04 p. m.—603 21st Av. S. Garage fire caused by children playing with matches; $600 loss.
It seemed important to follow the story to the end. So my husband and I drove north to Calvary with a section number and a simple map of the cemetery. We paced back and forth each row, heads down and half-bent, searching and scanning the names.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>CLEARY, MICHAEL F</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>CLEARY, MARGARET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burial Date</td>
<td>08/10/1963</td>
<td>Burial Date</td>
<td>06/16/1965</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cemetery</td>
<td>Calvary Cemetery</td>
<td>Cemetery</td>
<td>Calvary Cemetery</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Lot</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Site</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We found them near the end of a row in the shade of a tree, one headstone with two names, the immaculate heart between them.
This story is the falling-down-the-rabbit-hole result of writing a guide to researching buildings in King County for the University of Washington Libraries Special Collections. I used my address to test a number of web tools and became enamored with tracing the histories of my 109-year-old apartment building's previous tenants. After following a few broken threads from the census and city directories, I stumbled upon the Clearys.

Thank you to Lisa Oberg, Head of Public Services and History of Science & Medicine Curator for giving me the original assignment, and for your assistance over the two years I've worked on this narrative! Thank you also to Phil Stairs at the Puget Sound Regional Archives and Peter Schmid at Providence Archives.

To get started with your own house research, visit the definitive, incredibly thorough resource at the Seattle Public Library: http://cdm16118.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/pi6118coll9