

Hello Montana,

Two Irish Catholic families who were influential in founding Stilwell, Kansas in **1886** were the John Larkin family and **Michael O'Keefe** family. The name of John Larkin appeared on the original plat for the town of Stilwell, filed in 1886. Another signature on that legal document was Michael O'Keefe who was born in **County Kilkenny, Ireland** on **November 1, 1832**. Micheal came to the U.S. in 1846 and to Kansas in the late 1860's. He married Anastasia Norman, also from Ireland in 1869. Montana, the youngest of Michael and Anastasia's eight children was your great great grandfather, Lawrence O'Keefe. Lawrence was raised in the big homestead home at 210th & Nall. As a young man, Lawrence married his Irish sweetheart Mae Doherty. Between the O'Keefe and Doherty families they became the largest land owners in Johnson County at that time, each family owning more than a four mile square for their homestead properties alone.

Montana, facts you may not know follows:

Stilwell once had a bank. Your great grandfather Lawrence O'Keefe was part owner of the Bank Of Stilwell.

Your great grandmother's father Philip was a big cattle farmer and often drove herds from the pastures into Kansas City on foot. He and his family wee very instrumental in making Kansas City a center for trade and led KC to becoming as great meat packing center.

I hope this answers your question. Let me know if I can answer any other questions you might have. Your family history is awesome.

Aunt Carol