February 10, 1855

Dear Diary,

This winter has been tough. Although we Irish live better than some of the other cultures here in British North America, we also have our struggles, especially with discrimination. My husband works as a fisherman, but has been denied much better paying jobs due to our religious differences with the British. Because we are Roman Catholic no English-owned business owner will hire my husband.

We have both worked hard, but are barely surviving the winter. Our family survives off of a diet that is mostly made up of salted fish and potatoes, reminding me of the famine that we left behind in Ireland\*. The small home we live in seems to always appear cold, even though a wood fire is always burning in the hearth. My youngest daughter Aileen \* has started to cough and I worry about her health.

I must go for now.

Caitlin

March 1, 1855

Dear Diary,

Unfortunately we have lost Aileen to the whooping cough. I worked as hard as I could and even sent for a doctor in the nearest town, but he was unable to save her. I even spent some of our meager money on tonics from a local salesman. This would be the third child that James and I have lost in our 12 years of marriage.

We are lucky to have 3 healthy children that live— 10-year-old Aiden, 8-year-old Tierney, and 4-year-old Keegan. Our community is too small to have a school run by the church, but our children still learn to read and write as my husband and I are both educated people. We do not have many books, but have enough to keep us busy in the cold evenings.

Caitlin

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**BNA Diary Research Sheet**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Additional Information/ Research | Source |
| Irish Names | http://www.babynamesofireland.com/ |
| Irish Potato Famine | http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/introduction.htm |