

# THE NEW YORK FOUNDLING HOSPITAL

*An Index to Its Federal, State,  
and Local Census Records  
(1870-1925)*

CAROLEE R. INSKEEP



CLEARFIELD

**Copyright © 1995 by Carolee R. Inskeep  
All Rights Reserved.**

**Printed for  
Clearfield Company, Inc. by  
Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc.  
Baltimore, Maryland  
1995**

**Reprinted for  
Clearfield Company, Inc. by  
Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc.  
Baltimore, Maryland  
1999, 2000, 2004**

**International Standard Book Number: 0-8063-4590-X**

***Made in the United States of America***



## CONTENTS

Introduction	i
Index to the 1870 Federal Census	1
Index to the 1880 Federal Census	4
Index to the 1890 New York City Police Census	47
Index to the 1900 Federal Census	58
Index to the 1905 New York State Census	112
Index to the 1910 Federal Census	167
Index to the 1915 New York State Census	235
Index to the 1920 Federal Census	259
Index to the 1925 New York State Census	308



## INTRODUCTION

The names in this volume represent 13,000 children who lived in the New York Foundling Hospital, many of whom were sent to adoptive families in the West. They are more than statistics or lists; each name has a story to tell. The 1915 and 1920 enumerations include the name of Josephine Hefferman, who was taken to the Foundling Hospital as a baby and remained there until she was eight. In June of 1921, the Hospital placed her with an adoptive family in Wisconsin who called her Jeanette. Eventually, Josephine married and raised three daughters, but she always wanted to know who her natural parents were and whether she had siblings. She began a life-long search for information about them. Likewise, Giovanni Gerona's name appears in the 1910 enumeration. He was taken to the Foundling Hospital just a few days after his birth. At the age of two, Giovanni was sent to a childless family in North Dakota. They called him John. When he learned that he was adopted, he became bitter and angry. When Giovanni married in 1935, he turned to his new bride and told her, "For the first time in my life I have someone I can call my own and nobody can take that away." Still, questions about his biological parents dogged him.

The index begins with the 1870 Federal Enumeration of the Hospital (the first available census) and ends with the 1925 New York State Enumeration (the last available census). These census records tell us some of the story of the New York Foundling Hospital. The idea for a Roman Catholic Foundling Asylum had its inception with the Archbishop of New York, who noted that hardly a morning passed without newspapers reporting that an infant child had been found floating in the Hudson River, bur-



ied in an ash-barrel, or "flung into some lonely area." He also heard pleas for help from the Sisters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul, who often found infants abandoned at their mission houses or on the steps of their church. The Archbishop urged the Sisters to find a way to save neglected children.

In October of 1869, the Sisters of Charity founded their Asylum in a four-story brick house at 17 East Twelfth Street, New York City, under the leadership of Sister M. Irene. The Sisters hoped to shelter and protect infants who otherwise faced poverty, malnutrition, disease, child abuse, drugging, neglect, abandonment, and even infanticide. They hoped to help each child's mother, who was either poor, unwed, or a prostitute, to lead a life of virtue. They planned to offer her shelter and anonymity. They aspired to save her from disrepute, despair, and suicide. And when the child could not remain with its mother, the Sisters planned to place it in an adoptive home.

Opponents of the Asylum argued that such a facility would encourage parents to abandon their children or commit adultery. The Sisters believed that the need for an Asylum existed already and that the Asylum would prevent future crimes against children.

In fact, the need was so great that the Sisters of Charity began their child-saving work three months early. They planned to open the doors of the Foundling Asylum on January 1, 1870. But while they were making preparations, the first infant was abandoned at their door at dusk on October 11, 1869. The second arrived later that night, left upon the stoop during a torrential rainstorm. By the end of the month, the sisters sheltered 45 children. The first year in operation was not easy. Sister Irene remembered that the Asylum "commenced with two cups and saucers. The first morning we had to beg our breakfasts. We slept on straw on the floor...rolling the mattresses up during the day." Overcrowding, unsanitary conditions, and a high infant mortality rate finally forced the Sisters to relocate. During the Autumn of 1870, the Foundling Asylum moved to a rented four-story brick



building at 3 Washington Square North. The new building was a great improvement upon the old location. It fronted Washington Square, allowing plenty of sunlight, fresh air, and access to the park.

Despite the initial difficulties, the Sisters cared for 2,560 infants in their first two years of operation, and soon the charity outgrew its accommodations. On November 1, 1873, the Foundling Asylum moved to a large, Upper East Side complex at 175 East 68th Street, filling the block bounded by Third and Lexington Avenues, and Sixty-eighth and Sixty-ninth Streets. Construction of this facility began in 1872 and continued for at least ten years. A May 1878 New York Times article describes the Asylum as consisting of a centrally located "administrative building, 99 by 60 feet, and five stories high, with a basement. In the basement are the kitchen, dining-rooms, and offices, and the cradles for the reception of infants, which, being under the archway of the high double stoop leading to the main story, are easily accessible from the street. The main story contains the chief offices, reception rooms and parlors for visitors, the community room, and an apartment for the resident physician. In the second story are the apartments for the Sisters, and the sewing and linen rooms. The third, fourth, and fifth stories contain dormitories, with an infirmary on the upper floor. The ward building, three stories high, is adjoining. It is in these elegant buildings of stone and red and white brick, that the foundlings are cared for." St. Ann's Maternity Hospital was added in 1880 and the Children's Hospital was added in 1882. The entire complex was fully wired for electricity by 1921. Just three blocks from Central Park, the Asylum featured a day nursery, kindergarten, chapel, and rooftop gardens.

The children also enjoyed a country branch at Sputen Duyvil, New York, a few miles north of the New York City border. During the 1893 National Conference of Charities and Correction, the Asylum reported that "the country branch is designed for delicate and convalescent children, and has accommodations



for two hundred and fifty inmates." A second country branch was donated by the industrialist Charles M. Schwab in the summer of 1909. Located on the beach in Richmond Park, Long Island, this facility became known as the "Eurana Schwab Home" and as "St. Joseph's-by-the-Sea." During the summer months, about 500 children stayed there. The Sisters ordered construction of a school and chapel by 1925, and hoped that the construction of additional dormitories would allow them to send children to the shore year round.

The Foundling Asylum changed its name to the New York Foundling Hospital during the early 1890s. It remained at the East 68th Street location until 1958, after which the buildings were demolished and replaced by high-rise apartment buildings. The New York Foundling Hospital has since moved three times: to 1175 Third Avenue, 590 Avenue of the Americas, and, most recently, to 18 West 18th Street.

According to its biennial reports, the Foundling Asylum received and cared for children in much the same way between 1869 and 1925. When a mother brought her child to the Asylum, she placed the baby in a cradle in the reception area. She gave the child's name, birthdate, and any other identifying information she wished to impart. On admission, the child was given a number, bathed, and clothed in a new outfit before being transferred to the reception room in the hospital building. The infant was then measured, weighed, and had its temperature taken. A medical examination of the head, chest, abdomen, bones, skin and blood followed. The child was immunized against diphtheria. Finally, the infant's condition was rated on a scale from one to ten: "one" meaning "very poor," and "ten" meaning "very good."

Sickly children, who could not be nursed, were spoon or bottle-fed a milk formula and remained in the Asylum. Children received in good condition were sent to be wet-nursed by women in the greater New York and New Jersey area. Representatives of the Foundling Asylum regularly inspected the living and physi-



cal condition of each child. Once a month, the wet nurse was required to bring her ward in for a physical examination. If the child was found to be in good condition, the wet nurse was paid a small sum for her trouble. Mothers coming into the institution from St. Ann's Maternity Hospital with their infants were immediately sent to the Asylum's nursery after a bath and change of clothing. These mothers remained in the Asylum at the Foundling's expense in exchange for nursing their own baby and one other infant. Mothers living in the institution to nurse babies are sometimes referred to in the census records as "Nurses," "Patients," and "Inmates."

Nursing infants between the ages of three and six months received a supplement of barley milk twice a day. Babies between the ages of six and twelve months received bread and milk twice a day, in addition to nursing. Bread, cereal, beef juice and whole milk were given to those between the ages of one and two. Those over the age of two were introduced to three meals a day. A typical menu included bread, oatmeal, and milk for breakfast; meat, potatoes, bread, a cooked vegetable, and milk for lunch; and for dinner, the children were served bread, milk and fruit. The older children took their meals in a large dining room, seated at long tables covered in oil-cloth, dining from tin cups and plates. Children who grew up in the Asylum also remember using good china and linen tablecloths on special occasions.

At the age of two, children who were nursed on the outside were placed back into the institution. In the 1881 Report of the Foundling Asylum, the Sisters reported that: "As the little ones advance in years, and approach and enter upon the age of reason, the Sisters impress upon their young minds the principles and necessity of truth, virtue, and obedience. The utmost pains are taken to accustom them to habits of order, neatness, and industry; while nothing is left undone to make the surroundings of their young lives cheerful and bright." Children who remained at the Asylum long enough also attended kindergarten and elementary classes. For recreation, the children went to Central



Park or entertained themselves at playground equipment located on the roof-top gardens. Generous patrons supplied the children with books, toys, ice cream, candy, and movies along with the necessities of food, clothing, and medical supplies. In 1923, donors included Kirkman's Soap Company (moving pictures), Bloomingdale Brothers (57 children's dresses), the Pupils of Hunter College (Christmas tree and toys), Junior Emergency Relief Society (1,000 gauze compresses), and Cushman & Company (two large trays of crullers and doughnuts every week of the year).

The Foundling Asylum's income came from several different sources. In 1923 the Asylum received \$518,860.82 and supported 4,700 children (about \$110.40 per child that year). Sixty-eight percent of this money came from the City of New York. The remaining thirty-two percent came from Westchester County, Nassau County, various Catholic charities, bequests, donations, investments, and fund-raising events. The primary expenditures that year went to provisions, salaries, and wet-nursing, while the remainder was generally spent on supplies. The Asylum spent over \$22,000 on "Children's Traveling Expenses," the cost of sending children to families in the West. While the sources of funding and expenditure remained virtually the same between 1869 and 1925, the City of New York provided a greater proportion of the Asylum's funding in earlier years. In 1870, the City appropriated \$100,000 for the Asylum on the condition that it be met with matching grants, but by 1880 the City no longer required the matching grants and supplied the Foundling with ninety-six percent of its income.

The question of what to do with the children once they had passed through infancy came up as the first foundlings reached the age of eight. New York City officials worried that the Asylum would require additional funds, while the institution itself was increasingly burdened with its growing number of residents. Following the example of the Children's Aid Society, the Foundling Asylum placed its children in permanent homes in the West



and South. In the mid-1870s, the Foundling Asylum placed between two and three hundred abandoned children with families in the Maryland area. The Foundling's Silver Jubilee Report claims that by 1894, the Asylum had protected 25,697 infants and had placed ten thousand in adoptive homes (about 39%).

A look at the Foundling's 1881 Report suggests what happened to the children who never went to adoptive homes. In 1881, the Foundling Asylum supported 2,488 children. While only fourteen percent of them were placed with foster families, twenty-two percent had died, five percent were returned to their parents, and fifty-nine percent remained with the Sisters. Although the percentages change with the years, subsequent reports show that the fate of the children remained essentially the same.

For the children who were adopted by families in the West, answers to questions about the parents who left them at the Foundling Asylum are difficult to find. This quest has not only driven children like Josephine Hefferman and Giovanni Gerona, but also their descendants. Josephine began a search for her family that lasted sixty years. Not until three weeks before her death in 1994, did she learn that she was the daughter of Irish immigrants, and that she had at least three brothers. After her death, Josephine's daughters found the immigration records of their grandmother, as well as the name of the town where she came from. They planned to visit Ireland. Giovanni learned that his surname was actually "Gauna" and that his mother had him baptized at St. Anthony's Church before sending him to the Foundling Asylum. After his death in 1993, Giovanni's daughter continued the search. She has learned that the woman who sponsored her father's baptism was probably the mid-wife who delivered him. She has also learned that the name "Gauna" is endemic to Northern Italy.

Thousands of others are trying to answer similar questions. It is hoped that this volume will help them and their families.



Index to the  
Federal Enumeration of the Inhabitants of

# The New York Foundling Hospital

175 East 68th Street  
New York, New York

April 15, 1910

Ward No. 19  
Supervisor's District No. 1  
Election District No. 1068  
Pages 1A - 28A

Beatrice Wolffsohn, Enumerator



Guide to Column Headings  
in the  
1910 Federal Enumeration Index

<b>Name</b>	Name of each person whose usual place of abode was in the institution on April 15, 1910. The census includes the name of every person living on April 15, 1910. Children born since April 15, 1910 were omitted. The surname is listed first, then the given name and middle initial.
<b>R-G</b>	Race and gender. White is designated by the letter "W", black by the letter "B", Mulatto by the letters "Mu" and Japanese by the letter "J". Males are designated by the letter "M" and females are designated by the letter "F".
<b>*</b>	Notes that the enumerator may have reported the name or gender incorrectly.
<b>A</b>	Age at last birthday. Designated in years, unless otherwise noted with an "m" for "months". Generally, children who were less than three years old were described in terms of months or in terms of years and months.
<b>Relation</b>	Relationship of each person to the institution.

*Continued...*



**Note**

All persons were listed as "Single". The birth-place of each child was listed as "New York", and the Nativity of his mother and father was sometimes given. Refer to the original census for this information. Also, refer to the original census for the Nativity of each adult occupant and her parents, the Language she spoke, and her Occupation.

The enumerator occasionally ran a line through an Inmate's name and left the rest of the entry blank. In such cases, the name has been underlined in this index.



Fortunata, Jennie	WF	1, 9m	Inmate
Foss, Tony	WM	2, 3m	Inmate
Foster, Marion	WF	11m	Inmate
Fouth, Stephen	WM	1m	Inmate
Fox, Adelbert	WF	1, 5m	Inmate
Fox, Arthur	WM	4m	Inmate
Fox, Catherine	WF	3	Inmate
<u>Fox, Mary</u>	-	-	Inmate
Fox, Mary	WF	1, 3m	Inmate
Frama, Mary	WF	7m	Inmate
Francis, Ellen	WF	10m	Inmate
Franklin, Felix	WM	11m	Inmate
Franklin, Mary	WF	2m	Inmate
Franks, Frank	WM	1	Inmate
Fraser, Anthony	WM	1	Inmate
Fredericks, Rudolph	WM	1, 1m	Inmate
Frederico, Nunziato	WM	2, 11m	Inmate
Frederico, Samuel	WM	7m	Inmate
Freedman, Henry	WM	5	Inmate
Freeman, Alveria	WF	2, 2m	Inmate
Freneyour, Henrietta	WF	10m	Inmate
Frich, Annie	WF	1, 5m	Inmate
Friedman, Freda	WF	10m	Inmate
Friedman, Lily	WF	2m	Inmate
Friedman, Rebecca	WF	19	Servant
Friel, Mary E.	WF	1	Inmate
Friel, Mary	WF	27	Servant
Friesbee, Harold	WM	3m	Inmate
Frisella, Ermete	WM	1, 5m	Inmate
Frisk, James	WM	4	Inmate
Fritch, John	WM	1, 6m	Inmate
Frosperino, Josephine	WF	1, 2m	Inmate
Frutter, Maurice	WM	2, 7m	Inmate
Fugginallo, Francisco	WM	5m	Inmate
Fuller, James	WM	1m	Inmate
Funn, William	BM	1, 8m	Inmate
Furst, Mary	WF	1, 8m	Inmate
Futchie, Catherine	WF	1	Inmate
Gabe, Josephine	WF	2	Inmate
Gaeghanan, Rose	WF	1, 2m	Inmate
Gaiel, Peter	WM	1, 3m	Inmate
Gale, William	WM	2, 9m	Inmate