

## EAST BREIFNE O'CLERYS

### O'REILLY WARRIORS - COUNTY CAVAN CLARKE ANCESTORS

By Patrick Clark

For more than three centuries, until Gaelic rule ended in 1603, East Breifne lordship O'Clerys, ancestors of County Cavan Clarkes, marched, rode and fought as warriors.

They served as kerne, foot soldiers, as well as horsemen, mounted lancers, in the famous O'Reilly cavalry. They raided and resisted rival Ulster and Connacht clans – O'Neills, McMahons, O'Connors, O'Farrells, Maguires and O'Rourkes. They plundered bordering Pale estates. They defended the principality against frequent English incursions. Elizabethan historians termed these combatants 'sword-men'.

O'Clery forefathers had been Connacht kings. Their aristocratic Tir Chonaill (Donegal) relatives, lords of Cill Bharrainn, (Kilbarron), were hereditary historians to the O Domhnaill (O'Donnell). Cavan O'Clerys were distinguished for literary acquisitions.<sup>1</sup>

Sir John Davies, Attorney General for Ireland, studied Gaelic society. He examined its communal inheritance and succession customs – gavelkind and tanistry to the English – while striving to replace them. He made official visits to County Cavan. He observed the O'Reilly lordship firsthand, though as an outsider. He wrote that a lordship chief or captain controlled land in which he placed his principal officers. These officers included judges, marshal, steward, physician, chronicler/historian, poet and others. Certain families inherited these offices and the possessions accompanying them. The chief allocated other land that he controlled among his client septs and chose each sept chief (ceannfine) and tanist (designated successor).<sup>2</sup>

The chief's family comprised this warrior society's nobility. Its elites consisted of hereditary learned – including poet, historian, judge and physician – along with hired mercenaries and other professionals – wealthy farmers and merchants, warriors and master craftsmen. All of these held land. The elites generally paid rent and taxes (tributes) to the chief for land and cattle use, protection and defense; others provided services to the chief and lived tax free. Laborers, cattle herders, soil tillers and servants, by far the lordship's largest group of inhabitants, some unfree and all landless, made up its base.<sup>3</sup> The historian or chronicler kept an official record of social rankings. Davies wrote that every inhabitant knew the 'dignity of one sept above another, and what families or persons were chief of every sept, and who were next'. Genealogy was paramount because seniority determined the amount of additional land a sept chief awarded his land holders during periodic redistributions.<sup>4</sup>

The lordship, known also as Breifne O'Reilly and O'Reilly's Country, emerged in a tribal society as a 10th century Connacht sub-kingdom. It endured in a feudal aristocracy for six hundred years as a separate principality ruled by O'Reilly dynasts.<sup>5</sup> It extended about 35 miles from Inish-Chaoim (Kingscourt) on its east border with County Meath to the river Graine (Woodford) on its west border with County Leitrim, O'Rourke's Country.<sup>6</sup>

Besides O'Clerys, other O'Reilly subjects included: Fitzsimons, Fitzpatricks, McBradys, McCabes, McDonnells, McEnroes, McGaffneys, McGargans, McGilligans, McGoverns, McGowans, McHughes, McIlduffs, McJordans, McKiernans, McNulty's, McTullys, O'Brogans, O'Conaghtys, O'Connells, O'Coyle's, O'Currys, O'Dalys, O'Dolans, O'Donohues, O'Droms, O'Farrells, O'Fays, O'Lynches, O'Muleadys, O'Mulligans, O'Murrays and O'Sheridans.<sup>7</sup> Clans were not homogeneous.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Connellan, *The Annals of Ireland*, p. 78.

<sup>2</sup> Davies, *Laws of Ireland*, 1609, published by Hiram Morgan.

<sup>3</sup> Hayes-McCoy, 'Gaelic Society in Ireland in the Sixteenth Century', p.50.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp 53-4.

<sup>5</sup> O'Connell, 'Historical Notices of Mullagh and District', p. 114.

<sup>6</sup> Markey and Clarke, *Knockbride: A History*, p. 21.

<sup>7</sup> MacDermott, *Topographical and Historical Map of Ancient Ireland*; MacLysaght, *Surnames of Ireland*, map, pp 310-11; Keating, *History of Ireland*, pp 731-33; O'Donovan, 'The O'Reillys at Home and Abroad', p.40.

<sup>8</sup> MacNeill, *Phases of Irish History*, p. 353; Hayes-McCoy, 'Gaelic Society...in the Sixteenth Century', p. 49.

O'Clerys – pronounced O'Clayry or O'Clayrigg<sup>9</sup> – were not native to the territory. Their patriarch, Thomas O'Clery, migrated there near the end of the 13th century when Anglo-Norman invaders forced the O'Clerys to leave Kilmacduagh, their ancient south Galway patrimony near present day Gort.<sup>10</sup> His descendants settled in uplands of what became Clankee and Tullygarvey baronies.<sup>11</sup> The Irish referred to this rugged area as Sliabh Guaire, Gorey's Mountain.

By the 16th century, O'Clerys in Clankee had risen among the barony's principal families and become extensive landowners.<sup>12</sup> Clankee encompassed about 100 square miles of woods, drumlins, lakes and bogs. It extended south to north from Relaghbeg in Moybolgue to part of Drumgoon beyond Lough Sillan and the river Annalee and east to west from Kingscourt to Tonyduff. Its inhabitants would have included McGargans, O'Clerys, O'Reillys and O'Coyle.<sup>13</sup> To strengthen their bond, these septs would have intermarried and fostered their children. The districts where O'Clerys propagated became the parishes of Bailieborough, Drumgoon, Enniskillen, Killann (Shercock), Knockbride and Moybolgue. In these parishes Griffith's Survey, conducted in the 1850s, recorded more than 500 Clarke and Reilly families, most of them in Bailieborough, Knockbride and Killann.

\*\*\*

Irish annalists overlooked East Breifne O'Clerys because they were not aristocrats. However, English records documented their presence. Elizabeth I, and her successor, her cousin, James I, named O'Clerys in pardons. Settlers attacked in the 1641 rising identified O'Clerys in depositions. The 1664 Hearth Money Roll cited O'Clerys as householders. The 1796 Flax Growers List, 1821 Census, 1825 Tithe Applotment List, 1825 Freeholder Registry and Griffith's Valuation inscribed them as well but as Clarkes.

In 1584, Elizabeth, to weaken the O'Reillys, abolished their lordship. Her viceroy, Lord Deputy Sir John Perrot, partitioned it among its chief Gaelic lords.<sup>14</sup> Sean Ruadh (Sir John) O'Reilly, who had been chief but with English support, received the largest share – Loughtee and Tullygarvey baronies. Philip, his younger brother, an implacable English foe, lord of Sliabh Guaire, got Clankee. Their uncle, Emonn, the tanist, got Castlerahan. A second uncle shared Clanmahon with sons of a third deceased uncle. Perrot also transformed the Brenny, the English nickname for East Breifne, into a sheriff-administered shire, joined it to Ulster province and named it County Cavan.

Elizabeth's Fiants for Pardon are the earliest lists recording the names of the principal people living in various districts.<sup>15</sup> A pardon excused rebellion, high treason and serious felony crimes. A pardon enabled its recipient to obtain freedom and retain property. A pardon gave a measure of protection against confiscation, arrest and imprisonment, especially by local sheriffs and martial law commissioners.<sup>16</sup> Most fiants for pardon required the recipient's appearance at a native county sessions or before the Provincial Council to post good conduct surety.<sup>17</sup>

In 1586, Elizabeth, during the 28th year of her long reign, pardoned three O'Clery horsemen and 10 O'Clery kerne, most of them of Clankee. Chiefs recruited richer land owners as horsemen, obliging poorer ones to serve as kerne.<sup>18</sup>

The horsemen were: Cormuck oge M'Manus M'I Cleary, Philip M'Manus M'I Cleary and Cahill M'Manus M'I Cleary, all Tullecasslen. The kerne were: Patr. oge M'Kecleare, of Norgher (Urcher), Patr. Mackeclear, of Pottell (Pottle), Hugh m'Shianlia Mackecleare, of Correlorgine, Gilleysy m'Cormock M'Clery drowne, of Naspooucke (Drumanespick), Donell m'Molaghlín M'Clery and Brien m'Donnell M'Clery, of Tonelegie, Tylaghe M'Hewe m'Molaghlín M'Clery, of Lisballaker, Gillepatrick m'Gilleduff M'Clery, of Lysenalsk, Owen more M'I Cleary, of Skee (Skegh), Bryan m'Tirloo leay M'I

---

<sup>9</sup> Cleary, Clan O Cleirigh DNA Project@FamilyTreeDNA.com.

<sup>10</sup> O'Donovan, *The Genealogy, Tribes, and Customs of Hy-Fiachrach*, pp 89, 394.

<sup>11</sup> Connellan, p. 78.

<sup>12</sup> O'Connell, 'Moybolge'.

<sup>13</sup> Mac Dermott, map.

<sup>14</sup> Brady, 'The end of the O'Reilly lordship', p.180.

<sup>15</sup> O'Connell, 'The Parish of Lurgan and the Town of Virginia'.

<sup>16</sup> Hiram Morgan, personal communication, 20 July 2013.

<sup>17</sup> *The Irish Fiants of the Tudor Sovereigns*, Nicholls, p. ix.

<sup>18</sup> Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland in the Middle Ages*, p. 97.

Cleary, of Droumaghacar.<sup>19</sup> The pardon also named eight additional O'Clerys, seven husbandmen and a clerk. English clerks, unfamiliar with Irish orthography, carelessly recorded Irish names using various renderings, in some instances within the same document.

In 1593, Elizabeth pardoned Philip O'Reilly, after he had served seven years preventive detention in Dublin Castle. His pardon identified 60 of his principal followers along with their place of residence.<sup>20</sup> Five of them were O'Clerys. The pardon listed Cormack Oge O'Clery, of Aghillone, eighth, after O'Reilly himself, O'Reilly's brother, Owen, and sister, Evlin, and five other O'Reilly family members. Cormack Oge O'Clery's placement so close to his chief in the document indicated that he held an important position among O'Reilly's household retainers, possibly hereditary historian.<sup>21</sup> O'Reilly even employed a tanner, Thomas Gallsurrey, also pardoned. The additional O'Clerys were: Moriortagh m'Tirlagh, Tirrelagh m'Gillysboy, and Conogher of Keillvacknorrane and Brian M'Donnell of Leare.

This pardon contained 19 different surnames. These included: Brady, Fitzsimon, McCabe, McDermott, McEchey, McGowan, McKeigh, McNicholas, O'Briody, O'Daly, O'Flynn, O'Melody and O'Sheridan. Anglo-Norman Fitzsimons came to Ireland in the 14th century. O'Dalys were hereditary poets. McCabes, professional soldiers, hailed from Monaghan and originated from the Hebrides; O'Reillys used them to rebuff McMahon raids.

In 1596, the O'Reillys joined Hugh O'Neill's rebellion against Elizabeth. O'Neill, earl of Tyrone, was their overlord. While fighting in this conflict, the Nine Years War, the O'Reillys also fought a civil war over their chiefship.<sup>22</sup> Eoghan, a surviving younger brother of Sir John and Philip, the last O'Reilly chief to rule by Brehon law, surrendered to the English in 1602. Gaelic control ended in 1603 when O'Neill submitted to Mountjoy at Louth's Mellifont Abbey.

In 1603, the first year of his reign, James I pardoned numerous O'Reillys, including Philip McShane McCale O'Reilly of Ralaghan, Clankee. The pardon named scores of O'Reillys in addition to 53 O'Clerys.<sup>23</sup> All had been in rebellion. The 53 O'Clerys included 13 O'Clerys of Monaghanosh (Bailieborough parish), Clankee. They were: Owenmore McClerie, Patrick Clerie, Philip Clerie, Cale Clerie, Cormockie oge Clerie, Manus Clerie, Brian Clerie, Edmond Clerie, Connor Clerie, Tirlagh Clerie, Patrick Clerie, Edmond Clerie and Edmond McTeig boy McClerie. Whether clerks twice in error recorded Patrick Clerie and Edmond Clerie, or, if there were actually two each of them, is unclear.

In 1609, James confiscated Ulster to advance his plan to colonize the province with English and Scottish settlers. Sir John Davies supervised a Cavan town grand jury proceeding that sanctioned the king's arrogation of the county. Crown administrators subsequently awarded small land grants to several O'Reillys, a couple of Bradys and a McTully, all native Irish the English perceived as loyal. However, these administrators dispossessed and reduced to tenants-at-will most Gaelic landowning families.<sup>24</sup> This cohort would have included O'Clerys.

In 1619, Captain Nicholas Pynnar surveyed Ulster. Pynnar recorded in Clankee two O'Clerys separately leasing land from Scottish planters, according to George Hill. Coll McOwen more McClerie paid rent to Sir John Hamilton for land in Glasdrumman, Knockbride. Owen More McShane McCleerie paid rent to William Bailie for land in Terenemucklagh and Pottle, Tonregie (Bailieborough). Pynnar recorded 10 O'Reillys with Clankee leases. The Plantation scheme required Irish tenants, restricted to holdings from 12 to 24 acres and yearly leases, to pay much higher rent.

\*\*\*

In 1641 the Irish rebelled again. Colonel Philip McHugh McShane O'Reilly, of Ballynacargy, the local leader of the rebellion in County Cavan, announced the rising in Belturbet, then the largest

---

<sup>19</sup> *The Irish Fiants of the Tudor Sovereigns*, pp 740-41.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 206.

<sup>21</sup> Morgan.

<sup>22</sup> Brady, p. 188.

<sup>23</sup> *Irish Patent Rolls of James I*, P. R. 1, Pt. 3, p. 31.

<sup>24</sup> Duffy, 'The Evolution of Estate Properties in South Ulster 1600-1900', p. 95.

English settlement.<sup>25</sup> The Colonel, a grandson of chieftain Sean Ruadh (Sir John) O'Reilly and a Spanish army veteran, was an elected member of the Irish Parliament in Dublin.

Settlers who fled to safety in Dublin testified to government commissioners. More than 500 County Cavan survivors made sworn statements. Their depositions revealed a close O'Clery-O'Reilly relationship. Nineteen named O'Clerys as perpetrators or accomplices in multiple violent attacks.<sup>26</sup> Fourteen said that they were assaulted or victimized in Clankee and Tullygarvey.

Deponents positively identified seven Killann O'Clerys – by forename and surname. These O'Clerys, deponents testified, were part of a group, led by Shane O'Reilly, of Ralaghan, and Conor O'Clery, who allegedly abducted and killed four men in nearby Larah. Deponents alleged that Hugh Riveagh O'Clery, of Castlerahan, who assertedly held command authority, had, along with high-ranking O'Reillys, ordered the Larah killings and directed O'Clerys and others to commit them.

Jane Barlie Cuthbertson, of Larah, an eyewitness, deposed that the assailants included: Conor Roe O'Clery, of Tullygarvey, Mahon Duff O'Clery, and his two sons (identified by another deponent as Neil and Philip O'Clery), brothers Patrick and Shane O'Clery, Donnell McShane O'Clery and his brothers, Cahill Bane and Patrick. Jenett Kearns, Brian Sherin and William Beatagh, all of Bailieborough, deposed hearsay that the assailants included: Conor O'Clery, Mahon Duff O'Clery, his sons, Neil and Philip O'Clery, and Col Bane O'Clery and his sons, Brian Cam and Teige – all seven of Killann.

Most victims knew their attackers.<sup>27</sup> Some victims lived in the same parish as their assailants and said that they had loaned them money. Farmer James Stewart, of Killalis, Knockbride, a money lender, identified his neighbors, Patrick, Coll and Donnell O'Clery, as alleged debtors. These O'Clerys might have been sons or grandsons of Coll McOwen more McClery who Captain Pynnar had encountered two decades before in Glasdrumman.

The depositions outlined separate communities co-existing in a new social order.

The plantation had enriched Protestant English and Scottish settlers. It enabled them to surpass the descendants of native lords and gentry who considered them upstarts. The rebels stripped the newcomers and forced them to flee for their lives. William Bailie, of Bailieborough parish, a leading Scottish planter, was said to have lost nearly 1,000 pounds sterling. Alexander Cormine, the Protestant vicar of Killann and Knockbride parishes, claimed to have lost 770 pounds sterling. John Stevinson, the Killann and Knockbride clerk, claimed to have lost 119 pounds sterling, including loans he made to both Irish and English borrowers.

The plantation had reduced the Catholic Irish natives. It forced aristocrats and gentry off estates to small holdings elsewhere. It impoverished the laboring class. The insurgents declared that they were recovering what had been theirs. Deponent Stewart of Knockbride stated that O'Reillys stole his house, farm and cattle, telling him his property was 'their own inheritance'.

Richard Parsons, minister of the vicarage of Drung and Larah, identified Captain Hugh McMulmore O'Reilly, of Killyvaghan, Drumgoon as a key rebel commander. John Stevinson, who asserted he had been an eyewitness, said Captain O'Reilly led the attack and capture of Bailieborough Castle, settler William Bailie's fortified residence. Captain O'Reilly and his wife, Jean Betagh O'Reilly, allegedly received large amounts of stolen property, including most of William Bailie's livestock, grain, hay and household goods. Captain O'Reilly reportedly shared his plunder. He assertedly gave the house of Alexander Cormine, the Protestant vicar of Killann and Knockbride parishes, to Killann's Roman Catholic parish priest, Cormac Roe O'Clery. Father O'Clery, who allegedly safeguarded stolen property for Captain O'Reilly, actively supported the rebels. John Perkins, a Denn parish farmer, said the priest affirmed the outcry that Protestant settlers were traitors.

The insurrection evolved into a protracted war. In 1653, Colonel O'Reilly, the last Irish Northern Army commander still fighting, ended his guerrilla warfare. He surrendered, agreed to terms at Cloughoughter and expatriated with his brigade to Spanish Flanders.

---

<sup>25</sup> Hamilton, *The Irish Rebellion of 1641*, p. 148.

<sup>26</sup> 1641 Depositions, County Cavan I & II.

<sup>27</sup> Gillespie, 'Destabilizing Ulster, 1641-42', p. 110.

English authorities prosecuted landed rebels for high treason and murder and executed an estimated 50 leaders.<sup>28</sup> However, the English did not prosecute any of the O'Reillys or Killann O'Clerys. The Attainders of 1641 named no O'Clery, according to John D'Alton. Under the Acts of 1652-3, which defined Irish guilt, no O'Clery was charged.

\*\*\*

Marriage and fosterage united O'Clerys and O'Reillys.

Mac Con Meirgeach O'Clery, one of five sons of O'Donnell hereditary historian Mac Con O'Clery, married a daughter of O'Reilly chieftain Hugh Connelach O'Reilly. Whether this O'Reilly princess was Evlin O'Reilly, the sister of Philip O'Reilly included in his pardon, was not recorded. This marriage made Philip O'Reilly and Mac Con Meirgeach O'Clery brothers-in-law. In 1590 Captain Thomas Woodhouse arrested O'Clery for possessing a seditious poem. The English imprisoned O'Clery in Dublin Castle. O'Clery's fellow prisoners included Philip O'Reilly, and young Aodh Ruadh O Domhnaill (Red Hugh O'Donnell), a Tir Chonaill prince, who was to become, after his 1592 escape, the O'Donnell and Hugh O'Neill's principal ally.

Mac Con Meirgeach O'Clery may have been ancestor of numerous Cavan O'Clerys.<sup>29</sup> His father, who died in 1595, wrote a praise poem about Philip O'Reilly while O'Reilly was confined in Dublin Castle. Philip O'Reilly's wife, Rose, a Maguire princess, commissioned the poem to glorify her husband and publicize his plight. The poem exalted Philip as 'a king designed for Breifne' provided that he was 'released from the fetters of the English'.<sup>30</sup>

Settler Jane Barlie Cuthbertson, of Larah, stated in her deposition that the O'Clerys were 'ould fosteres' of Captain Hugh McMulmore O'Reilly. She said Captain O'Reilly commanded the O'Clerys who attacked her family during the rising's tumultuous initial months.

Fosterage was a politically important practice. A fostered child (such as a chief's son) could count on the adherence of his foster-family throughout life and the foster parents would also reap the benefits of support and protection.<sup>31</sup> It was customary for children to be reared by foster-parents of a station somewhat similar to that of their natural parents.<sup>32</sup>

\*\*\*

East Breifne O'Clerys shared the literary tradition of their Donegal relatives, the O Domhnaill court historians.

Edward O'Reilly, a scholar and lexicographer of County Cavan ancestry, listed two Clankee O'Clerys among eleven O'Clerys in his 1820 chronology of Irish poets and prose writers.

Thomas O'Clery, of Killann, a parish priest, was known as a poet. Father O'Clery wrote at least two poems in Irish, and could also have written a 1703 lament on the death of Philip Oge O'Reilly, of Clankee. Philip Oge O'Reilly, elected to Irish Parliament to represent Cavan in 1689, was outlawed for treason when William of Orange defeated the Irish the following year at the Boyne. Philip Oge, a son of Captain Hugh McMulmore O'Reilly and Jean Betagh O'Reilly, probably escaped to France. Brian O'Clery, c. 1730, of Moybolgue, wrote at least two poems in Irish that survived.

\*\*\*

The English continued to inscribe East Breifne O'Clery descendants in official records.

The 1664 Hearth Money Roll listed householders in several parishes grouped by townland. A householder had to pay two shillings annually for every hearth. The laboring class avoided the tax by occupying rude dwellings without an interior fireplace. Though Clankee records are not extant, Castlerahan, which borders Clankee's south part, recorded O'Clery gentry paying the tax. These taxpaying O'Clerys included Patrick Clery, of Mullagh, Hugh Clery, Coconaght Clery, Connor Clery

---

<sup>28</sup> Elliott, *The Catholics of Ulster*, p. 108.

<sup>29</sup> Cleary.

<sup>30</sup> Carney, (ed), *Poems on the O'Reillys*.

<sup>31</sup> Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland in the Middle Ages*, p. 90.

<sup>32</sup> MacLysaght, *Irish Life in the Seventeenth Century*, p. 81.

and Philip Clery, of Carnelency, and Hugh Clery, Brian Clery, Cale Clery and Philip Clery, of Aghaneclefine.

The Irish, during the second half of the 17th century, began to English their surnames.<sup>33</sup> Aspiration for socio-economic advancement propelled this change.<sup>34</sup> Clankee O'Clerys adopted the surname Clarke. The 1796 Flax Growers List documented this transformation. It listed Connor Clarke and Michael Clarke, of Killann, each operator of a single spinning wheel. Flax spinning earnings augmented a family's farm work income.

The 1821 Census served as a source for Philip McDermott's Topographical and Historical Map of Ancient Ireland. The map was published in Owen Connellan's 1846 translation of the 'Annals of Ireland'. The Explanation of the Map stated: 'The Census of 1821...gives the names of the families in every parish in Ireland...for where an old tribe name is very numerous at the present day, it may be inferred that they have been located there for centuries'. The map recorded, along with O'Reilly, these Milesian surnames in Clankee: McGargan, O'Clery and O'Coyle. (These census records perished in 1922 during civil war).

The 1825 Tithe Applotment Book listed 14 Clarke land holders, including two forenamed Patrick, in Ralaghan, Shercock (Killann), Clankee. The 1825 Clankee Freeholder list included Ralaghan freeholders Patrick Clarke and Francis Clarke. Landlord Henry Singleton let fields to both of them. Patrick Clarke tenured his fields for the lives of Francis, Owen and Andrew Clarke. A landlord would pay his tenants' freeholder fee to buy their votes and enhance his political power. A 40-shilling freeholder, such as Patrick or Francis Clarke, poor and utterly dependent on his fields for survival, would vote his landlord's preference election day. Balloting was open not secret, so dissent would have been costly – possible eventual lease renewal denial and immediate rent arrears payment.<sup>35</sup>

The 1856 Griffith's Valuation recorded a Reilly and three Clarke lease holders in Ralaghan on a Dhuish Mountain hilltop, site of an ancient earthen ring-fort. The Ordnance Survey map (1835/36) identified this site as Ralaghanfort. These near neighbors might have been occupiers of an ancestor's home place. Landlord Henry Singleton leased 30 acres to James Reilly. Was James Reilly a descendant of Shane O'Reilly of the 1641 rising deposition and Philip McShane McCale O'Reilly of the 1603 James I pardon, both of Ralaghan? Possibly. Adjacent to James Reilly's lease hold, Singleton leased contiguous fields totaling 32 acres to Michael, Sarah and Francis Clarke. Were these Clarkes descendants of the Killann O'Clerys identified in the 1641 depositions? Again, possibly, because no local traditions about these potential links survive. The Clarkes sheltered in a cluster of dwellings along a rocky lane. In one of these small cottages, my grandfather, Patrick Clarke, son of Andrew, possibly son of Patrick, was born and raised. His mother, Bridget, was a Lynch. His family's first language was Irish.

Griffith's survey recorded a total of 258 Clarke and 252 Reilly families in six Clankee parishes. In Bailieborough, there were 63 Clarkes/31 Reillys; Drumgoon, 27/50; Enniskeen, 33/78; Killann (Shercock), 46/35; Knockbride, 52/47 and Moybolgue 37/11. Some of them might have descended from Philip O'Reilly's warriors, and, perhaps, his historian.

###

## Bibliography

Brady, Ciaran, 'The end of the O'Reilly lordship, 1584-1610', *Regions and Rulers in Ireland, 1100-1650*, Four Courts Press, Dublin, 2004

Carney, James, editor, *Poems on the O'Reillys*, Section IV, Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies, Dublin, 1950

Clarke, Aidan, 'The 1641 Depositions', *Treasures of the Library*, Trinity College, Dublin, ed. Fox, Published by the Royal Irish Academy, 1986

Connellan, Owen, *The Annals of Ireland*, Bryan Geraghty, Publisher, Dublin 1845

---

<sup>33</sup> Harrison, *Surnames of the United Kingdom: A Concise Etymological Dictionary*, p. x.

<sup>34</sup> O'Donovan, 'Origin and Meaning of Irish Family Names', pp 396-97.

<sup>35</sup> Cunningham, 'The 1826 General Election in Co. Cavan', pp 12-14.

D'Alton, John, *King James's Irish Army List (1689)*, Dublin, 1855

Davies, Sir John, *Lawes of Ireland*, published by Hiram Morgan, Cork, 2005

Elliott, Marianne, *The Catholics of Ulster*, Basic Books, Perseum Books Group, New York, 2001

Fahey, Jerome, *Diocese of Kilmacduagh*, M.H. Gill & Son, Dublin, 1893

Gillespie, Raymond, 'Destabilizing Ulster, 1641-42',

Hamilton, Lord Ernest, *The Irish Rebellion of 1641*, E.P. Dutton & Co., New York, 1920

Harrison, Henry, *Surnames of the United Kingdom: A Concise Etymological Dictionary*, The Morland Press, Ltd, London, 1918

Hayes-McCoy, G.A., 'Gaelic Society in Ireland in the Sixteenth Century', *Historical Studies*, IV, Bowes & Bowes, London, 1963

Hickson, Mary, *Ireland in the Seventeenth Century or The Irish Massacres of 1641-2*, 2 vols., Longmans, Green, and Co., London, 1884

Hill, George, Rev., *Plantation in Ulster*, M'Caw, Stevenson & Orr, Belfast, 1877

*Irish Patent Rolls of James I*, Alexander Thom, Dublin, 1861, Google Books

Mac Cuarta, Brian, ed., *Ulster 1641, Aspects of the Rising*, Rev. Ed., Institute of Irish Studies, The Queen's University of Belfast, 1999

MacLysaght, Edward, *Irish Life in the Seventeenth Century*, Irish Academic Press, Dublin, 1979

MacLysaght, Edward, *The Surnames of Ireland*, Sixth Edition, Irish Academic Press Ltd, Dublin, 1991

MacNeill, Eoin, *Phases of Irish History*, M.H. Gill & Son, Ltd., 1920

Markey, Eugene and Clarke, John, *Knockbride: A History*, R & S Printers, Knockbride, 1995

Nicholls, K.W., *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland in the Middle Ages*, Lilliput Press, Dublin 2003

O'Donovan, John, *The Genealogy, Tribes, and Customs of Hy-Fiachrach*, Dublin, 1844; *The Irish Penny Journal*, Vol. I, No. 50, Dublin, June 12, 1841

O'Reilly, J.J., *The History of Breifne O'Reilly*, The Long Riders' Guild Press, 2001

Pawlisch, Hans S., *Sir John Davies and the Conquest of Ireland*, Cambridge University Press, 1985

Rapple, Rory, *Martial Power and Elizabethan Political Culture*, Cambridge University Press, 2009

1641 Depositions, Website, Trinity College Library Dublin

The Breifne Antiquarian Society's Journal, Vols. I & II, Cavan, 1921-24

*The Irish Fiants of the Tudor Sovereigns*, Burke, Dublin, 1994