

Uí Cléirigh of Kilbarron, Donegal – descendants of Tadhg Cam Ó Cléirigh, ollamh to the O Donnells, d. 1492

Ultan Cleary

We give an outline pedigree of the **DONEGAL** branch of the family from the 15th Century below:

Teige Cam O Cleary, of [Kilbarron Castle](#), County Donegal, Chief of his Name, Hereditary Ollamh (Historian) to O Donnell, King of Tirconnell (Donegal), his death is recorded in the annals as follows - "A.D. 1492 O Cleary (Tadhg Cam), Ollamh to O Donnell in science, poetry and history, a man who maintained a house of universal hospitality for the mighty and the needy, died, after having subdued the world and the devil." He died in the year Christopher Columbus discovered the New World, and left issue, three sons,

1a Diarmuid O Cleary, who along with his two brothers, "built stone dwelling houses in Kilbarron . He is described in the Annals of Ulster as "one eminent in history and a good poet". He was killed in battle in 1522 a.d. at the siege of Ballyshannon Castle in the war between O Donnell, King of Tir Conaill and O'Neill, King of Tir Eoghan, along with the son of MacSweeney na dTuath, when O'Neill's army overran the castle. He may have married a daughter of Red Hugh (Aedh Ruadh) O Donnell, King of Tirconnell from 1461 to 1505 by his wife, Finola O Brien, daughter of Conor Mor na Srona (Big-nosed Conor) O Brien, King of Thomond (who died in 1496), and uncle of Turlogh O Brien, King of Thomond (who died in 1528), and grand-uncle both of Murrough O Brien, 1st Earl of Thomond and of Conor O Brien, King of Thomond and left issue, four sons,

1b Cú Choigríche (Cucgory) O Cleary I (literally 'Hound of the Border' – this unusual name was possibly originally a nickname, owing to the bearer's responsibility for guarding the Southern Borders of Tirconnell, given the strategically significant location of Kilbarron Castle), of whom more below

2b Giolla Bhrighde O Cleary, who had three sons,

1c Ferfeasa O Cleary, about whom a curious story is told. On the 4th of August, in the year 1598, a great battle took place, between the Irish and the English armies, which was called the Battle of the Yellow Ford (the Yellow Ford in question is on the river Blackwater, North of Armagh), and was the only battle in which the Irish seriously defeated the English under Sir Henry Bagenal during the Elizabethan wars, and after which the outcome of the struggle for Ireland was seriously in doubt. On the Irish side were Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, Aedh Ruadh (Red Hugh) O Donnell (Ferfeasa's second cousin once removed) I, Prince of Tyrconnell, Hugh Maguire, Lord of Fermanagh, Angus Macdonnell, Earl of Antrim and MacWilliam Bourke, Lord of Mayo, who brought 1,000 picked Connacht men. Before the battle, these Irish generals held a council of war in Tyrone's tent. O'Neill was hesitant about whether they should attack at that place, the Yellow Ford, "when a high official, Ferfeasa O Cleary, hereditary historian of Tirconaill stood up. He held a parchment in his hand, centuries old. He said, "Why does the O'Neill, descendant of many Kings, doubt? And the Maguire, high-born and generous? And Macdonnell of the Isles? Why, the captains, sons of heroes gathered here, doubt?" And he told them to listen to the words of Berchan, one of the Four Prophets of Ireland. And the men listened. To Berchan, nine centuries before, had been given a vision, far flung in time. As he walked by the Yellow Ford, he heard noises of battle and yet saw no-one. On him had come the spirit of prophecy. Whereupon he wrote down that in the far future, at that place, the men of Erin should meet and defeat their foes." The rest is history. The prophecy (which in Don Philip O'Sullivan Beare's contemporary account is not attributed to Berchan but to "the holy prophet Ultan"), decided Tyrone, and none doubted its fulfilment that day. The English Army was cut to pieces, and most were killed including the supreme commander, Sir Henry Bagenal. It is rightly remembered as the greatest victory ever won by the Irish over the English. He married and left issue, a son,

1d Maelmuire O Cleary

2c Aimirgin O Cleary, pardoned in a *fiant* of Queen Elizabeth I on the 26th February 1603.

3c Maelmuire O Cleary

3b Brother Cormac O Cleary, O.F.M. , a member of the Franciscan Order, who was, according to the Annals of Loch Cé, *"the most cultured and learned Friar Minor in his time."* He died in 1542.

4b Muirgheas O Cleary, who left issue,

1c Fr. Diarmuid O Cleary, O.F.M., Bishop of Mayo in 1574.

2c Cú Chonnacht O Cleary (Hound of Connacht).

2a Tuathal O Cleary, "The O Cleirigh....a man learned in history and poetry who kept a house of general hospitality for the indigent and the mighty" died in 1512 a.d. and was ancestor to the *"Sliocht Tuathal"* (Tuathal's people or folk). He left issue,

1b Tadhg Cam O Cleary, *"learned in chronicling and poetry, who kept a house of hospitality, died in 1565, and was buried in the Franciscan Abbey of Donegal"*, leaving issue, a daughter and heiress,

1c Sile O Cleary

2b Giolla Riabhach Mor O Cleary, of Kildowney, County Donegal, Chief of his branch of the name. He studied at the OM aolconaire school in Corlisconnell in Roscommon. He was known by the epithet of Mor, or Giolla Riabhach the Great. He was alive in 1532 when he was *"filleadh"* or poet to Cuchonnacht Maguire, Lord of Fermanagh, who died in 1537. He left issue, three sons,

1c Tuathal O Cleary, flourished circa 1565 and left a son

1d Cu Mumhan O Cleary (Hound of Munster), named after his uncle, scribe of the law of Adamnan.

2c Mathgamhain O Cleary left issue,

1d Maolmhuire O Cleary, possibly the Fr. Maolmuire O Cleary who was Parish Priest of Upper Templecrone from 1614 until 1625

3c Cu Mumhan O Cleary.

3b Mathgamhain O Cleary, flourished circa 1532 leaving issue,

1c Diarmuid O Cleary, who married Rose O Donnell (who married secondly, Neil Connellach O Neill, Prince of Ulster, and had by her Turlogh Luineach O Neill, *"The O Neill"*, who was created **Earl of Clanconnell** in 1578), daughter of Manus O Donnell, Prince of Tírconnell, and had issue,

1d Maolmuire O Cleary, Treasurer of the Household of his half-brother, Turlogh Luineach O Neill, Earl of Clanconnell. He was killed in the battle of Drum Lyon in 1583 between O Neill and O Donnell by O'Donnell's people, including his kinsmen the O Clearys. It was said that *"ONEill would have given three times the ordinary quantity of every sort of property for his ransom if he could have been ransomed, but he was mortally wounded."* Is he perhaps pictured among those below submitting with Turlogh Luineach?

4b William O Cleary, had issue, four sons,

1c Donnchadh O Cleary, probably the same as the *"Dionisio Clery"* listed as an officer in the Spanish Army in the Netherlands in 1608 and was awarded a special grant of one crown monthly in addition to existing pay for services rendered at the siege of Rheinberg. In that year he was in the Spanish Netherlands on pay of 1 crown per month from the King of Spain. In 1617 he sponsored Dermot O Mallun, called Dermicio by the Spanish, for the honour of knighthood. Either he or a namesake Denis Clery was granted 10 crowns monthly by the King of Spain to

serve as Chaplain to the regiment of Colonel Patrick Fitzgerald in 1640, so perhaps he found God while in exile, perhaps after the death of his wife. Another grantee in 1640 was Sergeant Cornelius de Cleri, who was granted six crowns monthly as his company (which he commanded) had been disbanded. We cannot link him to this pedigree, but he may have been of the Donegal branch. Donnchadh (or Donogh) married Onora Dunleavy and had issue, four sons,

1d William O Cleary, who was in the Spanish Netherlands in 1643, having served in the army of the exiled Stuart King Charles II in France (Charles' father, Charles I was beheaded by Cromwell). In that year he was granted a passport by the Spanish authorities to enable him to return to Ireland from Ghent.

2d Conary O Cleary, one of the "Four Masters". After sharing in the loss of estates with other members of his family, he went to reside as a tenant on the property of Sir E. Blennerhasset (related to the Blennerhassetts of Blennerville, Co. Kerry) at Castle Caldwell, seven miles east of Ballyshannon, on the shores of Lough Erne. He died in 1666 and is buried in the Cistercian Monastery of Assaroe, where his tombstone was still visible in 1895.

3d Maolmuire O Cleary, born at Kilbarron Castle in 1588 or 1589. He was aged 22 when entering the University of Salamanca in Spain in November 1610, where he studied *litterae humaniores*. He joined the Franciscan Order in 1616 and was ordained a priest in Brussels in 1619, taking the religious name of Bernardin. He was Guardian of the Monastery of Donegal when the Annals of the Four Masters (The Annals of Ireland) were completed in 1636, when he signed the preface, "*Fr. Bernardinus Clery, Guardianus Dungalensis*." Is it possible that he is the same as the Pere (Father) Bernardin Clery of Ireland who is granted a certificate of the consul of France at Leghorn in 1707? Perhaps it was a relative of his.

4d Tadhg an tSleibhe O Cleary, or Tim of the Mountain. He was the youngest of the family, born after 1589 at the Castle of Kilbarron. He studied at the school of the MacEgans in Munster and became a Franciscan Brother before March 1623, taking the religious name of Michael, when he entered St Anthony's College in the University of Louvain, in what was then the Spanish Netherlands. He was sent back to Ireland in 1626 where he joined his brother's Monastery of Donegal. He was chief and leader of the "*Four Masters*", the Annalists who compiled the History of Ireland from earliest times to 1636. He returned to Louvain in 1637. He visited Dublin in 1627, when he stayed at the Franciscan Abbey in Cook Street for one week. During his stay he used the library of the Protestant Primate, Archbishop James Ussher, who was a good friend of the guardian of the Abbey, and is an indication of the cordiality of relations between the faiths at that time. He died and was buried at Louvain in 1643.

2c Conaire O Cleary

3c Domhnall O Cleary

4c Conchubhar (Conor) O Cleary, pardoned by King James I in 1609.

5c Miriam Ni Chlery? Miriam's position in the genealogy is uncertain (the Gaelic genealogists almost never mentioned females), but the generation, family status and the later close connection between Hugh Ward and Br. Michael O Cleary point to a close relationship. A Miriam Ni Chlery was married to Eoghan Ruadh Mac William Mac an Bhaird (Red Owen Ward, son of William Ward), Chief of his name and one of the hereditary Bards of Tirconaill. Eoghan Ruadh was pardoned by the Crown in 1603 and was commissioned to enquire into the boundaries between O Donnell, O Doherty and O Conor Sligo in 1609. He fled to the Continent (possibly with the Flight of the Earls) and was recorded being in Rome by 1608, where he witnessed at first hand the desolation of Nuala O Donnell, sister of Rory O Donnell, Earl of Tirconaill. He moved to Louvain with her in 1611 but was back in Rome by 1625 where he was known as "*Dominus Eugenius Vard*" or Lord Eoghan Ward. On his departure from Ireland he left

his two sons with his brother Gofraith, who was also left in charge of Eoghan Ruadh's property at Ballymacward in Kilbarron, and who later sent them from there to Salamanca University. They had issue,

1d Fr. Hugh Ward, admitted to Salamanca University in 1612. He was born in Tirhugh (Kilbarron) about 1593 and was fostered with Geoffrey Mac An Bhaird, who was Chief of the family of Mac An Bhaird, who were bards to the O'Donnell family. Fr. Luke Wadding persuaded him to join the Franciscans which he duly did. He lectured at the Sorbonne in Paris for a time before moving to Louvain, becoming Professor of Divinity at the Irish College, St. Anthony's College, of which he eventually became Guardian (Rector). He was instrumental in ordering his colleague (and cousin?) Michael O'Cleary to begin collecting material for a history of Ireland, which was to be his greatest contribution to Irish culture. He compiled material for a book on the lives of Irish Saints which was not published until after his death by his colleague, Fr. John Colgan. He died in 1635 and was buried in Louvain.

2d Fearghal Mac An Bhaird, O.F.M., born in Lettermacward about 1596 and admitted to Salamanca University in 1615 and also entered the Franciscan Order (taking the religious name Marianus). He was murdered while on his way back to Ireland in 1642, when he was beguiled onboard an English ship by a Captain Forbus, made a prisoner and hanged in the Shannon from the mast of his prison boat and thus became a martyr to the Catholic cause.

3a Giolla Riabhach O'Cleary, chief of his "Sliocht" or branch of his family, whose death is recorded in the annals in the year 1527, *"O Cleirigh, Giolla Riabhach, son of Tadhg Cam, a scientific adept in history, poetry and literature, and a man of consideration, wealth, prosperity and great power, died on the 30th September."* He left issue

1b Domhnall O'Cleary

2b Muiris O'Cleary, who was *"learned in history and literature, and a man of esteem and influence"* and died in 1573, and was interred in the Church of St. Cailin.

1c Eolus O'Cleary, who had issue,

1d Tuathal O'Cleary

2c Cucoigcriche O'Cleary

1d Muiris O'Cleary

3b Maolmuire O'Cleary, who had issue,

1c Tadhg O'Cleary, who left,

1d Domhnall O'Cleary, perhaps the Daniel O'Clery hanged at Manorhamilton (Co Leitrim, south of Ballyshannon) for his part in the 1641 rebellion. He left issue,

1e Maolmhuire O'Cleary, probably died ca 1660.

The eldest son of Diarmaid O'Cleary of **Kilbarron Castle** by the daughter of Aedh Ruadh O'Donnell was **Cú Choigríche (Cucogry = 'Border Hound') O'Cleary I**, of Kilbarron Castle, Chief of his Name, Ollamh to O'Donnell, mentioned in the Annals under the date 1546. Cú Choigríche (literally Hound of the Border – this unusual name was possibly originally a nickname, owing to the bearer's responsibility for guarding the Southern Borders of Tirconnell, given the strategically significant location of Kilbarron Castle) O'Cleary, Lord of Kilbarron, Chief of his Clan, Ollamh to O'Donnell, is mentioned in the Annals under the date 1546. It was in this year that Domhnall O'Donnell, son of Aedh Dubh (Black Hugh) O'Donnell, King of Tir Conaill (1505-1537), and brother of Magnus O'Donnell, King of Tir Conaill (1537-1555) was treacherously murdered on an island on Lough Erne by Eoghan Mac Eamainn O'Gallagher, Lord of Ballakill, and his wife, Onora Ni Gallagher, while the said Domhnall

was under the protection of his foster-father and uncle, Cú Choigríche O Cleary at Kilbarron Castle. Fosterage was one of the ways in those times of cementing alliances between families. Cú Choigríche was banished for life, for this treacherous deed and he went to Thomond, where he was granted an estate by his 2nd cousin (once removed), Murrough O'Brien, Earl of Thomond (who was Cucogry's mother's second cousin (see left)). Cú Choigríche was a noted poet, and continued to compose for the King of Tir Conaill from afar, possibly in the hope of reinstatement. One of his poems is prefaced with the words, "*Cucogry, son of Diarmuid, son of Tadhg Cam O Cleary, composed this poem for O'Donnell, Magnus, after Cucogry had come to Thomond on account of the slaying of Domhnall, son of O'Donnell, that is Aedh Dubh, in violation of his pledges and of his protection, and of the protection of Mac an Bhaird, that is Geoffrey, son of Eoghan, by O'Gallagher, Eoghan and his wife, Onora, daughter of Tuathal Balbh O'Gallagher, in Inis Saimher [ed- Ballyshannon Castle], on April 20th, 1546.*" The estate he was granted by the Earl of Thomond was in Lettermoylan in the Barony of Inchiquin (presumably adjacent to the learned MacBrody Clan lands there, and he was also granted a castle near Bunratty Castle, which later became known as Castle Cleary and is shown on John Speed's (1555-1629) map of Ireland of 1610, as and on subsequent maps for about 100 years. According to Hon. Donough O'Brien son of the 14th Lord Inchiquin, who wrote the "*History of the O'Briens*", the O'Clearys were hereditary antiquaries to the O'Briens and this arrangement undoubtedly dates from this period. As hereditary antiquaries, they would have been supported by grants of castles and lands much in the same way as the family had been in Donegal. He wrote a book containing the History of Ireland from 1281-1537 which was used in the compilation of the Annals of the Four Masters in 1636 by his great-grandson Cucogry, who died in 1664. He left issue,

1a Maccon O Cleary, Chief of his Clan, of Kilbarron Castle, who died in 1595, "*ollav to O'Donnell in History, an erudite and ingenious man, professed in history and poetry; a fluent orator, with the gift of elocution, address and eloquence; a pious, devout, religious and charitable man; died at Lettermoylan in Thomond.*" according to the annals. According to G.A. Hayes McCoy, he was present at the inauguration of Turlogh Luineach O'Neill, Earl of Clanconnell as "*The O'Neill*", and he composed a significant piece for the occasion. Having begun by saying that "*Ireland's possession lies with the race of Niall*", he continued by addressing the Earl "*If to knit together the Northern Half (of Ireland) thou be desirous, I would insinuate to thee to make a hosting so that there shall not on some other day be a hosting made upon thyself; as thee should not wouldst thou but accept my instigation of thee.*" He also stated that O'Donnell ought to join with O'Neill and the support of the Scots might be had for the united action of the four provinces. He was father of five sons,

1b Lughaidh (Louis) O Cleary, of Kilbarron Castle, author of the biography of the famous Aedh Ruadh (Red Hugh) O'Donnell, King of Tir Conaill (1586-1602). Lughaidh was obviously an eyewitness at most if not all of the events of major historical importance involving Red Hugh O'Donnell in his war with Queen Elizabeth, which culminated in the Battle of Kinsale, which the Irish lost. He headed the Northern contingent at the famous "*Contention of the Bards*", a North versus South bardic contest in 1616. In 1609 he was appointed by Sir Arthur Chichester, Lord Deputy of Ireland as one of the "*good and lawful men*" to sit on a jury of inquisition ("***Some Poets had prudently taken steps to ensure that their titles to land and their possessions were legal in the new dispensation. Poets were able to make use of their legal, genealogical and historical knowledge to help or hinder Crown officials in their settlement***", according to *Ulster 1641-Aspects of the Rising*) at Lifford, Co Donegal to enquire into the King's title to the forfeited lands in the area, lands which had been forfeited in the Plantation of Ulster. The inquisition was held on the 12th of September in 1609 and during the inquisition it was stated that, "*The parish of Kilbarron contains five quarters in all whereof one quarter is Herenach land possessed by the sept of the Cleries as Herenachs, paying thereout yearlie to the lord busshopp of Raphoe thirteen shillings, four-pence Irish per annum, six meathers of butter, and thirty-four meathers of meale; and that there is one quarter named Kildoned in the tenure of the said sept of the Cleries, free from any tithes to the busshopp.*" Herenachs (Erenachs) were Stewards of Church land. Furthermore it was said, "*that there are in the parish three quarters of Collumb kille's land, every quarter containing six balliboes (one balliboe was equal to approx 80 Irish Acres, so his estate was approx 1,500 acres), in the tenure of Lewe O Cleerie, to whom the said lands were sithence mortgaged for fortie pounds by the late Earl of Tirconnell, and that the said Lewe hath paid thereout yearly unto his Majestie (King Charles I), sithence the late Earl's departure, four pounds, two muttuns, and a pair of gloves, but nothing to the busshopp.*" The Lord Bishop of Raphoe at the time was Niall O'Boyle who died in 1611 at his Manor of Killybegs. In return for his co-operation with the inquisition, he was treated relatively leniently by the government, and given a share in a small estate of 960 acres in North Donegal at Kilmacrenan. He was described as "of Ballymacroarty" in the inquisition of 1613. His large former estate of Kilbarron was

given to Henry Ffoliot, Lord Folliot, (who was created Baron Ballyshannon) the Bishop of Raphoe and Trinity College. John O Donovan's correspondence in the 1830s suggests that he had a son,

1c Lughagh O Cleary, who migrated to Mayo with his cousin Cucogry III (see below) and left issue (possibly ancestor of Louis Cleary of Cleary's Bar, Ballycroy, Mayo who died in 1955, and of his uncles, Dr. Martin and Dr. John Clerly.)

2b Giolla Brighde O Cleary, listed in an Elizabethan pardon of 1603.

3b **Cucogry O Cleary II**, who wrote a poem for Rory O Donnell on his being created Earl of Tyrconnell in 1603.

4b Maccon Meirgeach O Cleary, a poet, captured in 1590 by a Captain Wodehouse (a relation perhaps of the family of another writer P.G. Wodehouse?). Maccon was tried before the Lord Chancellor for possessing a rhyme *"That O Conor Don should be a swift hungry greyhound and drive all Englishmen ove rthe salt sea."* He was imprisoned with the son of O Reilly, Prince of Breffny in Dublin Castle where he remained until at least 1596, as is evident from this extract from a letter from Lord Slane to Thomas Jones, Bishop of Meath on the 3rd of June 1596. *"Philip O Reilly not to be suffered to get his son, the only jewel he maketh account of, and his brother-in-law, one of the Cleries, out of prison."* Maccon married a daughter of Sir Hugh Connellach O Reilly (Connellach indicating the fact that he had been fostered in Tir Conaill, perhaps with the O Clearys at Kilbarron Castle), Prince of Breffny (see Burke's Landed Gentry, sub O Reilly), by which marriage Maccon was related by marriage to the great Pale families of Plunkett (Lord Dunsany and Killeen), Fleming (Lord Slane), St. Lawrence (Howth) etc. It is not known whether he left issue, or indeed whether he got out of prison alive. **He may have been the ancestor of the sizeable Cleary family in Cavan** (settled on O Reilly land?), one of whom, Connor Cleary is mentioned in the 1641 depositions: - *"And further saith that one John Bayly Adam his brother James Bayly Robert Cuthbertson John Nichell John Bayly the yonger Patrick Jackson John Walker were about february 1641 murdered by the Rebels at the Laire in the County of Cavan vizt by the souldjers Comanded by Shane ô Rely late of Ralaghan in the same County their Captaine, and by Connor Cleary of the parrish of Kilcon in the County of Cavan"*

5b Dubhgeann O Cleary, who was slain in Thomond in 1600 according to the annals: *"On the next day (while campaigning against the Earl of Thomond in Thomond), O Donnell ordered his people to send all their spoils and cattle home under the care of their servants, the unarmed and the wounded among them. Among the wounded of the Chiefs were Teige Og O Boyle and Dubhgeann Mac Maccon O Cleary, who were wounded by another party of O Donnell's men as they were attacking Clare. These two died on the road home, but their bodies were conveyed to Donegall and interred there."*

2a Cosnamhach O Cleary, of Castle Cleary in Thomond, and of [Kilbarron Castle](#) in Donegal, whose death in 1584 was recorded in the annals as follows: *"Cosnamhach, son of Cucogry, son of Diarmuid, son of Tadhg Cam O Cleary, a respectable and affluent man who at one time had kept house of hospitality in Thomond, and at another time in Tirconaill, died at Fuarchosach in Tirconnail in the Lent of this year, and was buried under the assylum of God and Saint Bernard in the Monastery of Assaroe."* He had issue, two sons,

1b **Diarmuid O Cleary**, who was alive in 1603, when he was pardoned by Sir Arthur Chichester acting for Queen Elizabeth. He is almost certainly the person who married a daughter of Donnchadh Ballach O Cuileannan, whose seat was at Mullinashee, near Ballyshannon, and sister of the famous Bishop of Raphoe, Dr. John Cullinan (1585-1653) who suffered a lot of persecution as a Catholic. He was a very prominent supporter of Cardinal Rinuccini at the Confederation of Kilkenny during the Cromwellian wars. His brother, the Cistercian Abbot of Boyle, Glaisne O'Cullinan (1558-1584), was martyred for the faith. The O Cullenan family descended from a Munster family who numbered Cormace Mac Cullenan, 10th Century Bishop and King of Cashel among their number. The children of Donnchadh Ballach were fostered by the O Donnells. Donnchadh's wife was Inion Dhubh Ni Dhuibhir (dark daughter of O Dwyer) Diarmuid would likely have taken part in the wars of his overlord, Red Hugh O Donnell, may have been the O Cleary who, as an agent of O Donnell, *"visited the Earl of Argyle, and MacDonald of Dunyveg"* in Scotland to obtain military aid against Queen Elizabeth. Diarmuid O Cleary was pardoned for his rebellion in 1603 and moved to the Barony of Boyleagh and Bannagh in Donegal, probably after 1607. He left issue,

1c **Cú Choigríche O Cleary III**, one of the 'Four Masters' (see the separate note on Cucogry)

Cú Choigríche O Cleary, of BallyCleary, Co Donegal, "*head of the Tirconnell sept of the O Clearys*" according to the introductory remarks to the Annals of the Four Masters by Kenneth Nicholls, who must have been of full age in 1632, when, in an Inquisition held on the 25th of May that year at Lifford, it was stated that he held the half quarter of the lands of Coobeg and Doughill, (the modern Killybegs and Doochill ("DubhChoill"), near (a few hundred yards from) Ardara in the Barony of Boyleagh and Bannagh, in the County of Donegal, from Hollantide 1631 until May 1632, for which he paid eight pounds sterling per annum to William Farrell, Esq. assignee to John Murray, Earl of Annandale, undertaker of 10,000 acres in the Barony of Boyleagh and Bannagh under the Plantation of Ulster. Like his ancestors, he was a professional historian, and together with his third cousins Brother Michael O Cleary and Conary O Cleary, was one of the "*Quatuor Magistri*", or "*Four Masters*", a phrase coined by Fr. Colgan, a contemporary of Cucogry's, in 1645. Together they compiled the most comprehensive history of Ireland ever written to that date, from earliest times until 1605, which became known as the Annals of the Four Masters. The Annals were finished in 1636 under the patronage of Fergal O Gara, M.P. for Sligo, at Bundrowes in Donegal. Another patron at this time was Brian Ruadh Maguire, 1st Baron Enniskillen. **In 1654 Rory O Donnell, son of Colonel Manus O Donnell, who had been killed at Benburb in 1646, transplanted from Lifford to Mayo with a large group of Ulster kith and kin, including the O Clearys as part of the Cromwellian transplantation. Their descendants are still known as "The Ultaigh" or the Ulster-people.** With Cucogry O Cleary were his brother, Cairbre, his wife, at least two sons, (probably his daughter also) along with many other families such as the MacSweeneys and the O Boyles. They settled on a remote corner of the Ormond Estate in North West Mayo (Burrishoole) probably partly because the O Donnells and their followers had been in the faction of the Duke of Ormond during the wars. The O Clearys first resided at Kilalla, before moving to Burrishoole, on the Ormond estate which Rory O Donnell seems to have settled on, and then moved West to Ballycroy, in West Mayo, where there are still places named in Irish after Cucogry and his brother, i.e. "Ard Cairbre" and "Tobar Cucogry". He brought with him his most prized possessions, namely his books. After some time, Cucogry migrated back East to Burrishoole, where he settled in the valley of Glenhest, at the foot of Nephin Beg, overlooking Lough Beltra at a place called Gort na hEilte (today Gortnaheltia). Rory O Donnell owned or leased the land around Glenhest, which Cucogry settled on, and the O Donnells still owned it in 1796 when they settled a large number of Catholic families there who were fleeing from Ulster. There Cucogry wrote prolifically, one of his last poems being written in 1662: "*Cucogry O Cleary, son of Diarmuid, composed this, lamenting the deaths of the children of Aodh, son of Magnus ODonnell, and particularly Mary, who was the last of that family to die.*" This Mary O Donnell was last married to David Burke. In addition he transcribed the "Life of Aodh Ruadh O Donnell", and the Book of the Invasions of Ireland, and the O Clery Book of Genealogies. It was probably in order to consult this book that the other celebrated Gaelic Antiquary of the Seventeenth century, Dubhaltach Mac Fírbisigh (1600-1671) of Castle Lacken, Tirawley, Co Mayo, made the then dangerous and arduous journey, "*probably by way of David and Dorothy O Dowd's estate at Bunnyconnelan, across the south-western side of Lough Conn, and down through Glen Nephin to Glenhest*" – from *The Celebrated Antiquary* by Nollaig O Muraile. This was a journey of over twenty miles, perhaps made easier by the use of a horse, but fraught with danger. "*where a man in 1672 could not travayle that roadd without danger of being killd or robbed by woodkerne or outlaws, of late years called Tories...*". Cucogry married a Miss MacSweeney, who was a close relation (perhaps 1st cousin once removed) of Dr. Bartholomew Murry (1695-1767), of Co. Clare, Doctor-Regent of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Paris and founder (in 1761) of a number of Bourses (scholarships) in the Irish College in Paris (College des Lombards), including three Bourses of 500 livres (pounds) each for the education of his relations (his grandparent's names were Murry, Lafferty, O Cahan and O Doherty in that order – O Murry's were a clan of South County Derry along with the O Cahans according to Lewis's topographical dictionary). Here follows the exact text of the donation: ***"Three burses for students of families transplanted from Ulster to Co Mayo and borders of Sligo and Roscommon with preference for Murrys, O Dohertys, notably maternal relatives of the donor, and descendants of Gerard Og O Doherty, Touragee, near Bellahawnas, O Clery race, notably descendants of Cucogry O Cleary, of Tyrawley, near Kilalla, whose wife,***

MacSweeney was related to the donor, Dunlevys, particularly relatives of Andre Dunlevy, former prefect, who live on the Mayo-Sligo borders near Bellahy, O Shiels, or poorest families transplanted to these counties. Cucogchriche died around 1664 (his partially legible will (transcription & translation from the Irish below) is dated 1664 at Gortnaheltia, Mayo) and he is said to have been buried in Burrishoole Abbey, near the altar.

1d Diarmuid O Cleary, probably the eldest son, who was probably born about 1640 and would have died about 1700. He inherited his father's books and left issue, a son

1e Cairbre O Cleary, married about the year 1692 a Miss Maguire of Arney Bridge, Fermanagh. He removed with his children to the parish of Drung, Co. Cavan (did he migrate there at the invitation of his cousins in Cavan in light of their common descent from Cucogry O Cleary??) and would have died circa 1730 leaving issue,

1f Cosnamhach or Cosney O Cleary, born at Gortnaheltia in 1693, moved to Knockbinish in County Leitrim and thence to Drung in County Cavan, with his father. He married Mabel, daughter of Donnell Ultagh (Dunleavy) and left (with four daughters), a son,

1g Patrick O Cleary, born 1738, who in 1759 married Anne, daughter of Bernard O Gowan, or Smith of Lara, Co. Cavan, and by her had six sons and six daughters. He died in 1816 aged 78 years and was buried in Drung Churchyard. His eldest son,

4d Flan O Cleary, possible son of Cucogry, who reputedly left a son

1e Tedy (Thady?) O Cleary, who had,

1f Michael O Cleary, (perhaps the *Michael O Cleary of Glenhest, grandson or great-grandson to Cucogry had a quarrell with a neighbour and beat him so badly that he feared the injured man might die. So he fled, by night, across the mountains to Ballycroy. A son of his, Michael, married and had a son, Andy "Dall" O Cleary, or Blind Andy Cleary, who was a well-known fiddler and story-teller of Ballycroy and was reputed to have the gift of prophecy. Andy Dall (5th generation from Cucogry) gave his six sons the old O Cleary names, among them Flan, Tadhg and Michael. Andy was still alive in 1882.*) who had,

1g Michael O Cleary who had

1h Martin O Cleary, reported by the Antiquary John O Donovan in 1842 to be the head of the Erris / Ballycroy family (thanks to Jim Collins, descendant of the Sligo branch of the O Cleary family for this information). Was he the Martin Cleary of Tallagh, who was also a trader of goods between Newport and Ballycroy. Martin Clery, who moved from Knockmoyleen in 1858 after buying land from the Cafferkeys of Fahy? and who who bought the licence for Cleary's bar (as it is now called) from his friend Mr Smithwick, Manager of the Bellingham Estate, and a Puritan? That Martin was grandfather of Louis Cleary of Cleary's Bar and Grocery Ballycroy, who died in 1955 and whose uncles John and Martin were both doctors in the area. The Ballycroy and Glenhest Clearys are probably the senior branch of the Clan now in existence.

2g Andy Dall O Cleary, possibly son of the above Michael. He was alive in 1882 and left issue. He maybe the same as the Andrew Cleary who married Bridget O Hara and had a son John whose

descendants are numbered among "Descendants of Anthony O Dogherty"

1h Flann Cleary

1i Judy Flann? (Julia Agnes O Cleary) - there's a Julia A Clarke in the 1901 / 11 census for Islandeady, Mayo who may be this person

2h Tadhg Cleary

3h Michael Cleary

4f Possibly (if our identification of Andrew Cleary of Drumsleed, Co Mayo, born ca 1800 with Andy Dall O Cleary above is correct) John Cleary who married Sabina (Celia) Dogherty b 1839 Knockmoyleen, Mayo. He was born 1832 in Drumsleed, County Mayo, IRE, and died January 11, 1898 in Elroy, Juneau Co. Wisconsin, USA. They left issue,

1g Mary Cleary b. 1859 Drumsleed, Mayo, Ire d. 1885 married John Mack

2g Michael Cleary b. 1862 Drumsleed, Mayo, Ire d. 4 April 1925 married Bridget Corrigan

3g John Cleary b. 4 Nov 1864 Andover, NY, USA d. 13 June 1931 Elroy, WI, USA married Annie Corrigan

4g Patrick Cleary b. 1866 Andover, NY, USA d. 1881

5g Andrew Charles Cleary b. 7 May 1869 Brooklyn, NY, USA d. 28 Aug 1941 Superior, WI, USA married Theresa Kahl

6g James Cleary b. 1871 d. 1945

7g Peter Aloysious Cleary b. 1874 d. 1940 married Matilda Bornine

8g Anorah (Annie) Cleary b. 1877 d. 1886

9g Celia Cleary b. 1878 d. 10 Nov. 1953

10g Lewis Martin Cleary b. 1879 Andover, New York, d. 1950

11g Katherine Cleary b. Elroy, WI, d. 1 Jan 1940 married Arthur A. Kemp

12g Bridget Cleary b. 1881 Elroy, Wisconsin, d. 1883

2c Cairbre O Cleary migrated to Mayo with his brother Cucogry and left descendants.

3c Fr Philip O Cleary, probably fits here. He was admitted to the Irish College in Rome under the recommendation of the Earl of Tyrconnell in 1636, and was agent for the Bishop of Raphoe (his uncle) in Rome from 1636 until 1639. He died a martyr's death for the faith in 1646 in

Cromwellian Ireland and his name is before the Congregation for Causes of Saints for Beatification

2b Sean O Cleary, pardoned with his brother in the Elizabethan Fiant of 1603, so obviously of full age then. He married Honora Mac an Bhaire (Ward) and composed one poem during "*iomarbhá na file*", or the "*contention of the bards*", the contest between the poets of the North and South of Ireland each side claiming supremacy as well as the ancestry of King James I for their own side. His poem began "Attend all ye learned of Ireland...." The O Clearys represented the North of Ireland, while Tadhg Mac Daire, the hereditary ollamh to O'Brien represented the Southern half. Sean was imprisoned for three years and had his estates and properties seized by the government in the plantation of Ulster. Seán was a juror with his first cousin Lughaidh in 1607 and 1613 and was granted land with Lughaidh in 1615. He was living in Rossnowlagh, which means "heavenly cove", (Kilbarron Castle) in 1613. In 1610 he was a grantee of a share in 960 acres in Kilmacrenan in North Donegal. This new land included Dromenagh (modern Drumenan) and Killomastie (modern Killymasny) which is to the west of Letterkenny, and the grant was stated in the Patent Rolls "To hold for ever, as of the Castle of Dublin, in common soccage." He only stayed there from 1615 to 1619 however, and it was probably this year that he was imprisoned, as Pynnar's Survey shows Captain Paul Gore in his place and the lands were regranted to Captain Paul Gore's son, Sir Ralph Gore, in 1629. The Gores were confirmed in their title in 1640, and the Clearys are not heard of again in this area. As an aside, this Captain Paul Gore was made a Baronet in 1621 and had four sons (as well as being ancestor to the American Vice-President, Al Gore), the eldest, Sir Ralph Gore, being ancestor of the present (14th) Baronet, Sir Nigel Gore, Bt. of Magherabeg, Donegal. The second son Sir Arthur was ancestor to the present Earl of Arran, while the fourth son, Sir Francis Gore was ancestor of the Gore-Booth Baronets of Lissadell Co. Sligo. The 9th Baronet's grand-aunt was, interestingly, Constance Georgina Gore-Booth, who married Count Markievicz, and became involved in the 1916 Easter Rising as "Countess Markievicz", for which she was sentenced to death (but eventually released). Sean O Cleary left issue,

1c Dr. Tadhg O Cleary, O.F.M. (Order of Friars Minor, i.e. Franciscans - it ought to be noted that ***"The Gaelic and Old English elites were closely linked with the different religious orders, the Gaelic favouring the Franciscans, while the Jesuits tended to come from Old English backgrounds."*** Old English families in this context would include Butler, FitzGerald, Archer, Cusack etc., i.e. those families of English origin mainly from the Pale region around Dublin, and other areas of English influence, who had settled in Ireland prior to the Reformation, and who were thus Catholics.) Tadhg studied at Salamanca University in Spain (founded in 1592 by the Jesuits), where he was in 1619. According to the Spanish records, he was "*born of nobly related parents who suffered three years imprisonment and sequestration of their estates and property for adherence to the faith.*" A member of the Franciscan Order, he became a Doctor of Theology at Salamanca and also taught at the University of Louvain. Later he returned to Ireland where he was commissioned by the Bishop of Meath to administer the Diocese of Down and Connor from 1628 until 1630. He was then appointed by the Bishop of Raphoe (in Donegal) to administer that Diocese for three years. He was elected as procurator for the Bishops of Ulster at Rome. On his way to Rome he was detained in Spanish Flanders by his cousin, Hugh O'Donnell, Earl of Tyrconnell, who arranged for his appointment as Head Chaplain to the Spanish Forces in the Low Countries, many of whom were Irish. He subsequently became Vicar-General of Catalonia in Spain. In 1643 he returned to Ireland to promote the Catholic cause during the Cromwellian War and was Vicar-General of Raphoe in Donegal, which he continued to administer after the death of the Bishop of Raphoe in 1661. He was Protonotary Apostolic and Prior of St Patrick's Purgatory (The Earl of Antrim had had built a religious house there in the 1620s). Dr Tadhg wrote a defence of the Primate Edmund O'Reilly against the slanders of Peter Walsh, O.S.F. on New Year's Eve 1660.

2c Don James O Cleary, O.F.M., James was a Franciscan like his brother, and was at the Irish College in Salamanca University in 1626, when as Don Diego Clery he was accompanied by the Rector of the Royal College of the Company of Jesuits, and deemed worthy of being received by the seminary. He was examined in 1628 and "approved".

3a Muiris Ballach (Freckled Maurice) O Cleary, who was executed with two other poets by the Earl of Thomond, Conor O'Brien, in 1572, an act which caused a great stir among the learned classes in Ireland, as is seen in this preface to a poem in the National Library: *"Uilliam Og Mac an Bhaird, composed this poem for his lord, Aodh, son of Magnus O'Donnell (i.e. Red Hugh O'Donnell), one half of it being a panegyric of O'Donnell, and the other a castigation of the Earl of Thomond, Conor O'Brien, for his execution of the celebrated literati Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaird, Muiris Ballach, son of Cucogry, son of Diarmuid O Cleary, and the son of O Moirnin, poet of the MacCarthys. There were not many poets in Conn's Half of Ireland (Northern Ireland) who did not compose a satire for the Earl because of that deed. The age of Christ was then 1572."* **He may be the ancestor of the County Clare branch of the O Cleary family.**

4a Dubhtach O Cleary, who left issue,

1b Tadhg Cam O Cleary, who we may possibly identify as the *"Don Tadeo Clery"* who is listed as a soldier of the Spanish Netherlands who was granted a special grant of an income of two Spanish Crowns per month from the King of Spain in compensation for the loss of estate he endured for his religion. He was in King Charles II's service during the exile of that King of England in France, during the Cromwellian interregnum, prior to the restoration.

2b Flann O Cleary, who is possibly the *"Don Florencio Clery"* who received a similar grant of two Crowns monthly on New Year's Day, 1621 in virtue of a letter from King Philip III of Spain to Archduke Albert, the King's deputy in the Spanish Netherlands. The letter from the King stated *"his ancestors having served in the Catholic cause."* The nephew of the Earl of Tyrone was at this time in receipt of 6 crowns per month from the Spanish Crown. Flann returned to Ireland after the wars and was prominent as a taxpayer, living in Parkhill (then known as Kilcarbery) in the parish of Kilbarron in 1661 and 1665. He seems to have fostered Francis Brassey, son of Francis Brassey Senior (a Cheshire planter who had been granted the Cleary Castle of Kilbarron) around 1630. He died in 1665 and was buried in Assaroe Abbey, where his great headstone, the earliest visible in the graveyard is still to be seen. He left issue, a son,

1c Connor O Cleary, alive in 1692, who erected his father's gravestone in 1665, and must have been a comparatively well off young man then, was appointed one of the **Commissioners for Supplies for Co. Donegal (Tax Collector)** by King James II. The tombstone reads *"THIS TOMB WAS (ERECTED/BY) CON(NO)R FOR HIS (F)A(THER) /FLAN O CLERY, WHOSE (BODY) LYES UNDERNEATH./ (DE)CEASED THE 31(st) OF 8BER, (ANNO) DOM. 1665."* **He is probably ancestor to some of the present day Cleary family of County Donegal**, and possible ancestor of Flann O Clery of Drumaquin, who was alive in 1880, who was grandfather of Miss M. Cleary of Main Street, Bundoran, who may be the Mary J. Cleary buried there on June 9th, 1934, whose sons Thomas and John and husband James are also buried there. He may have been ancestor of the Bernard Cleary buried in the same graveyard on August 28th, 1869, aged 78, Margaret Cleary who died on April 2nd, 1937 (mother of Catherine Campbell), and is buried there, as well as Thomas Cleary, who died on November 17th, 1949, aged 55. Perhaps also ancestor of Hon. Philip Cleary, City of Montreal, Dominion of Canada, Member of the Legislative Council of the colony of Newfoundland who was granted a coat of arms by the Ulster King of Arms in 1940. He is also possibly an ancestor of Fergus Cleary, Project Member, whose family hails from Creevy, County Donegal.

1d Conor O Cleary, mentioned in Francis Brassey's will

Conor was foster brother to Francis Brassey Junior and became his land agent. A relatively wealthy man, he erected an impressive tombstone at the grave of his father on his father's death in 1665. He witnessed his foster brother's will in 1678 along with Francis Palmer (of Lacken, Mayo, elder brother of Roger Palmer of Palmerstown, Mayo?), Francis Brassey's brother in law (Roger had married Francis's sister Anna). Conor fled to stay with his Cleary relatives near Castlebar during the Williamite wars and on his return was a defendant in a court case between 1696 and 1702 involving William Connolly, Thomas Poe and Trinity College Dublin. He appears to have come to a financial arrangement with William Connolly regarding his land and died around 1720.

2c Daniel O Cleary "Dan O Cleary, mentioned in Francis Brassey's will

3c Allen O Cleary, mentioned in Francis Brassey's will

4c Miles O Cleary, mentioned in Francis Brassey's will

5c Anna nee Cleary, mentioned in Francis Brassey's will, possibly the Anna Bressie who married Francis Palmer of Lacken Castle, Mayo?

6c Catherine "Catty" O Cleary mentioned in Francis Brassey's will

7c Margaret Oge O Cleary, mentioned in Francis Brassey's will as his Foster Sister

3b Conor O Cleary

5a Tadhg O Cleary, who as "*Don Thaddeus Cleary*" was recorded as being in the service of Regiment of Captain Arthuro O'Neill 1608, prob at the siege of Rheinberg with his brother i.e. the Regiment of Tyrone in the Spanish service, receiving special payment of two crowns monthly, "*report having been made as to the birth and good parts of the aforementioned Thaddeus and the persecution and loss of estate which he suffered for the catholic cause.*"

6a Cormac O Cleary, who was awarded a special grant of one crown monthly from Archduke Albert in addition to existing pay in return for services rendered at the siege of Rheinberg in 1608, one year after the Flight of the Earls. It is likely that Cormac accompanied the Earls on their journey to Europe in 1607. What Cormac's particular services to the Archduke were on that day we can only guess, but they may have included espionage. Cormac and Donogh (see above) were in Captain Preston's Company, in Colonel Henry O'Neill's regiment. It is possible that either he or some of the other O Clearys serving on the continent were ancestors of some of the Clary / Clery families of Europe and the Clearys who emigrated to North and South Carolina and Maryland from the 1680s onwards.

7a Miss O Cleary, who married Thomas William Atkinson of Creevy and Cavan Garden, Donegal (son of Captain Charles Atkinson, who was son of Sir Thomas Atkinson of Yorkshire), named as one of the Free Burgesses in the charter granted by James I dated 23 March 1613 creating the borough of Ballyshannon as a county borough – and effective until the union in 1800 'of Creevy, near Ballyshannon, owned large estates in Kilbarron, co. Donegal' the estates he was granted in 1613 consisted of the townlands of Creevy, Tullyhurk, The Cloghan, Ardpaten, Ardgillow, Cavangarden and Laheen had issue,

1b Thomas Atkinson b.1624 d.1702: attainted by the parliament of James II 'for favouring the cause of King William III' and had to leave Creevy – which was burned by supporters of James II (among them presumably some of Miss O Clearys aggrieved O Cleary relatives) who had issue

1c Thomas Atkinson of [Cavangarden](#), Donegal 1665 d. March 1738: attainted James II who left issue

1d John Atkinson. of Cavangarden, Donegal b. 1682 d. 1748 m. 1710 Rebecca d/o William Wray of Ards and Anna Sampson left issue

1e Thomas Atkinson. of Cavangarden, Donegal b. 1713 d. 1783 m. 1752 Letitia d/o George Knox of Rathmullen and Moneymore and Marian d/o William Wray of Ards and left issue

1f John Atkinson of Cavangarden, Donegal b. 1754 d. 1832/3: 1800 High Sheriff of Co. Donegal m. 1776 Elizabeth b. 1749 d. 1807 d/o Andrew Hamilton of Ballydonnel Co. Donegal and Catherine d/o Humphrey Wray of Ards and had issue,

1g Thomas John Atkinson of Cavangarden, Donegal b. 1781 d. 1881: 1817 High Sheriff for Co. Donegal m. 1808 Elizabeth d.

1860 d/o Lt Joseph White 17th Lancers of the household of George III and of Newcomen and left issue

1h John Atkinson of Cavangarden, Donegal b. 1816 d. 1879: barrister at law m. 1842 Ellen b. 1823 d. 1900 d/o Robert Deane McCredy barrister at law of Carnew Co Down

1i Thomas John Atkinson b. 1845 d. 1921: Deputy Lieutenant 1893 High Sheriff m. 1880 Elizabeth b. 1856 d. 1938 d/o Arthur Magee Day and Charlotte d/o Michael Dunne of Knocknabrag Queens Co. and had

1j Thomas John Day Atkinson b. 1882 d.1949: Deputy Lieutenant m. 1918 Cicely Helen Burrington b. 16 August 1898 d. 10 November 1981: d/o Cdr H.B. Hawkshaw