

THE MacDONOUGH FAMILY

Motto: *Virtutis Gloria Merces*
Glory is the Reward of Valour

The MacDONOUGH clan originated in County Sligo, Northern Ireland, their line dating back to Federach "the Just," King of Ireland about 75 A.D.

They descended from the MacDermot clan, being direct descendants of Donnchadh (or Donagh) MacDermot of Moylurg who died in 1232; thus they were given the name Mac (son of) Donough. (Mac was later shortened to Mc).

By the 13th century they had split off from the MacDermots and formed their own clan. The MacDonoughs became the Lords of Tirerrill and Corran in south-eastern County Sligo and built a number of castles there.

By 1584 there were five ruling Chieftains of County Sligo. Two of them were Hugh MacDonough, chief of Corran and Ferdorcha MacDonough, chief of Tirerrill who held the Castle of Kanturk in County Cork.

The heads of the five families continued to be recorded as Chieftains in the province of Connacht until the last pages of Gaelic history were written in the 17th century.

A warlike clan, The MacDonoughs fought against the O'Rourkes, O'Donnells, O'Conors and the MacDermots of Moylurg, and most of all amongst themselves. The Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland tell of "the characteristic courage of the MacDonoughs", reflected in the motto on their coat of arms:

"Virtutis gloria merces" ("Glory is the Reward of Valor").

A noteworthy example of this courage was displayed by Breoghan (Brian) MacDonough in the mid 1600's, as reported by a member of the O'Rourke Clan:

"When fighting against the Cromwellians, having been wounded in several places, he fought furiously, moving about on his knees, after the lower limbs were broken with the pikes, until he was finally despatched with cold steel".

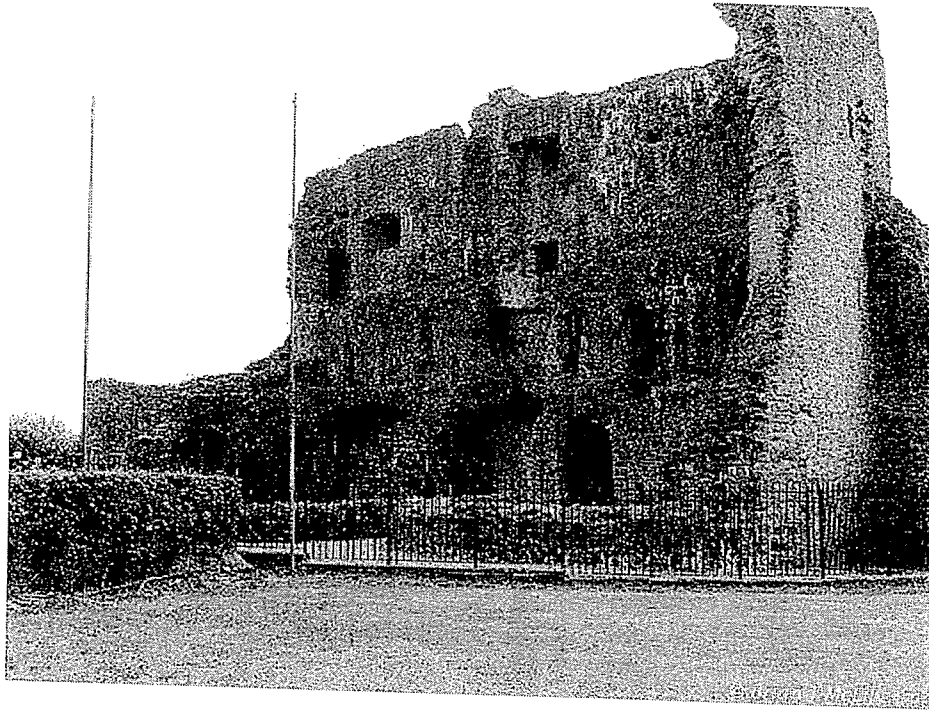
The MacDonough clan, in its latter days, was more preoccupied with battling starvation than foreign enemies.

Perhaps concerned for his future wealth was one MacDonough member who is reported as having sold to the O'Donnells in 1522 one of the most precious manuscripts in Irish history, written in 1390

THE BOOK OF BALLYMOTE

for "140 milch [milking] cows" and in 1598 sold their Ballymote castle at auction to the O'Donnells for 300 pounds and a few more milch cows.

Perhaps the mortgage payments were getting too much to handle?



Ballymote Castle – County Sligo, Ulster – Northern Ireland

The castle was built around the year 1300 by the second Earl of Ulster to protect his possessions in County Sligo. The walls are about ten feet thick and flanked with six noble towers.

In 1317 the castle was lost to the O'Connors but was taken from them in the course of local struggles by the MacDiarmada in 1347. By 1381 it had passed to the **McDonoughs**.

In 1577 it fell into English hands for a few months, and then more permanently in 1584, when it was taken by the Governor of Connaught.

In 1598 the English surrendered it to the **McDonoughs** who sold it shortly afterwards to "Red" Hugh O'Donnell for 400 pounds and 300 milch [milking] cows.

The O' Donnells surrendered it to the English in 1602. By 1690 it was unoccupied, in disrepair, the moat had been filled in and the castle fell into ruins.

*** The Irish Office of Public Works are continuing to carry out work on the castle.*

In the late 1500s, Hugh O'Neill and Red Hugh McDonnell started to build and train an army in Ulster to defeat the English who continued to ravage their lands and claim them for their own.

Fearful of losing their own positions, many chieftains refused to join them but individual members of many clans, including the MacDonoughs, did and in 1601 the army moved south to fight the English at Kinsale.

The battle was a fiasco and was over in less than an hour, the Irish losing 1,200 soldiers and the English only 20.

Two years later in 1603, humiliated by the defeat, the great Gaelic chieftains left Ireland, never to return.

Most were tried for treason under English Law and executed.

Around 1653 Oliver Cromwell confiscated land in County Sligo for his troops in lieu of wages and large tracts of the best land in the County were divided amongst the disbanded Cromwellian officers and soldiers.

Within a few years the old Sligo families, the O'Connors, O'Harts, O'Dowds, O'Garas, McDonaghs and some of the O'Haras were dispossessed, their lands taken by the British settlers.

In the ensuing years the MacDonoughs spread north-east to the County of Fermanagh which had been a Maguire stronghold since the 15th century.

If they were subdued by Cromwell in the 1640s, the clan was even more vulnerable to the ravages of the Great Potato Famine which reached its height around 1847.

Sligo County and its neighbour, Fermanagh County was rooted in the soil and the farm economy was the mainstay of everyday life.

Farmers who were considered to be the most affluent lived on land between 15 to 30 acres where they kept some cattle, grew cereals - wheat, oats, barley - and the ever-present potato.

When the potato crop failed in 1847 and no other alternative crops were available, the farming underclass starved.

Thousands of Irishmen sailed or steamed out of the port of Sligo in "coffin ships" to destinations like America and Australia for those who could afford it or to Glasgow or other English-speaking ports for those who could not.

Their goal was to escape starvation and make a new life. Sadly, over 30% of them died of disease or the elements during the voyage.

Bernard McDonough, our ancestor, was one of them.

Passengers on the ship Anne Milne - Arrived 17 Jan 1842

Families				continued			
Ship number	Name	Age	Occupation	Religion	Place of birth	By whom brought	Remarks
1	James King	45	Daughter	Roman Catholic	Wales	Brought from	63 659
	Margaret	15	Daughter	D			10
	Anna	8	Daughter	D			10
	Eliza	4	Daughter	D			10
	John	2	Daughter	D			5
2	John King	50	Spencer	Methodist	Wales	Brought from	19
	Eliza	25	Spencer	D			19
	John King	5	Daughter	D			5 13
3	James Williams	29	Spencer	Anglican	Wales	Brought from	19
	Mary	24	Spencer	D			19
4	James Williams	25	Spencer	Presbyterian	Wales	Brought from	19
	John	20	Spencer	D			19
	William	15	Spencer	D			19
	John	10	Spencer	D			19
	John	5	Spencer	D			19
	John	1	Spencer	D			19
5	John Williams	25	Spencer	Anglican	Wales	Brought from	19
	John	20	Spencer	D			19
	John	15	Spencer	D			19
	John	10	Spencer	D			19
	John	5	Spencer	D			19
	John	1	Spencer	D			19
6	John Williams	25	Spencer	Anglican	Wales	Brought from	19
	John	20	Spencer	D			19
	John	15	Spencer	D			19
	John	10	Spencer	D			19
	John	5	Spencer	D			19
	John	1	Spencer	D			19

James & Co. Agents

January 17th 1842

BERNARD McDONOUGH 1804-1842

My Great-Great Grandfather

Bernard (Barney) is the earliest proven ancestor of our McDonough family. He was born in 1804 in County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland and lived at Wherry (aka Killagally), in the parish of Meath where he was a tenant farmer.

In 1830, when he was 26 years old, Bernard married Mable Morrison in Fermanagh.

They had 3 sons all born in Fermanagh:-

- Edward - born 13 Jun, 1834
- Owen - born 15 Aug, 1836
- James - born 4 Oct, 1840

Bernard was one of the fortunate who had the means to get to the "Promised Land" and brought his family to Australia on the passenger ship Annie Milne which departed from Plymouth and arrived at Port Jackson on 17 February, 1842. He had been bountied to work for Robert Horne & Co., Sydney.

The passenger list of the Annie Milne shows that Bernard died on board during the voyage. His wife Mable then aged 36, was left to start a new life in Australia with three young sons aged 8, 5 and James, 2.

Later that year (1842) when the widowed Mabel was living in Sydney, she formed a relationship with Francis McQuilty (b Wexford Ireland, 1801).

Francis was a convict who was transported with a seven-year sentence for theft and gained his Certificate of Freedom in 1829. In 1839 he married Sarah Foley but they separated a year later when Sarah left him to take up with a George Walker.

Both being Catholic, Francis and Sarah never divorced but by 1844 when Francis and Mabel and Mabel's three sons moved to Ballina the McDonough boys were using the name "McQuilty" and consequently appear in various records as both McDonough and McQuilty.

Mable and Francis also had two sons together, Francis Thomas born 1803 and William Angus born 1848.

By 1845 licenses had been granted for pastoral runs in the Richmond valley and Scottish immigrants William and Jane Wilson had taken a 23,00 acre 'run' and named it "Lismore" after a small island in Loch Linnhe in the Scottish Highlands.

Three years later Irving Clark took out a lease on 19,000 acres and named the property "Blakebrooke" (the 'e' was later dropped). It was here that the McQuilty family settled.

By the 1850s grazing and timber were supporting a growing economy and the timber clearing opened up the land.

The McDonough boys grew up and stayed in Blakebrook under the name 'McQuilty'. Francis McQuilty and his step-sons Edward and Owen worked as cedar cutters and James was employed as a labourer (ref: 1872 Postal directory).

The children of Bernard McDONOUGH and Mable MORRISON

- Edward married Sarah Exton at Rosehill, near Lismore in 1853 when he was 19 years old and Sarah was 18. The Exton family had arrived from England in 1844 as assisted immigrants. James Exton was employed by a James Keniworth in Lismore for wages of 15 pounds per year plus 2 rations.
Edward and Sarah had one child, William born in 1857. According to records, Edward purchased 100 acres of land around Nimbin between the 4th May 1882 and 10th January 1884. On 19 June 1886, the land was ceased by the Sheriff and auctioned.
His wife, Sarah died at Blakebrook on 18 December, 1891, aged 56 and Edward died at Murwillumbah on 27 July, 1919, aged 85.
- Owen married Margaret Lycet in 1868 at Lismore when he was 32 years old and lived at Sevenoaks, near Blakebrook. They had eight children: Edward, Owen, Daniel, Margaret, William, Eugene, Francis (Frank) and Patrick. According to a Coroner's Inquest dated 16 July, 1918 their son Francis accidentally shot himself when he was 18 years old.
Owen died at Lismore in 1915, aged 79.
- James married Lucy Exton on 21 October, 1868. Lucy was the 'baby' of the Exton family and the youngest sister of Sarah Exton who had married James' brother Edward in 1853.
James was 28 years old when he married and Lucy who was born on 22 July, 1851 at Rosehill, near Lismore, was just 17.

The McDonough boys' step-father Francis McQuilty (the only father they ever really knew) died in 1875 at Blakebrook and their mother, Mabel (Mary) died in 1879 at Boorie Creek, just near Blakebrook.

JAMES McDONOUGH 1840 - 1889

My Great Grandfather

James and Lucy had 8 children, all born in Blakebrook, near Lismore:

- *William - born 1869 (cert 17620)*
- *James - born 1871 (cert 16996)*
- *Mary - born 10 May, 1873 (cert 17974)*
- *Susanna - born 8 Oct, 1875 (cert 19042)*
- *Harriet - born 1878*
- *Catherine - born 1881 (cert 26154)*
- *Elizabeth (Betsy) - born 1883 (cert 29635)*
- *Ann - born 1885 (cert 32002)*

When James died at Blakebrook on 4 September, 1889 aged 48 his 38-year old wife Lucy was left to raise seven children between the ages of 18 and 4.

His death was notified in The Northern Star newspaper, Lismore but there is no mention of the cause.

How did Lucy manage to raise her children? She did not re-marry, as was the norm for a widow of that era so how did she survive?

Census and Death records show that Lucy's family, the Extons, all remained in the Lismore District and there were a lot of them so perhaps she got some financial help from them.

Possibly though, James could have left her in reasonable financial shape because she and the kids seem to have moved to Murwillumbah not long after James' death.

She had lost her eldest son William when he was just 13 but James Jnr. would have been working at the time their father died and her eldest daughter Mary was probably working too but even so, that still left five kids between the ages of 14 and 4 to feed and clothe.

Regardless, she made it through and lived long enough to see her children make their own way. She died in Murwillumbah in 1904 aged 53.

The children of James McDONOUGH and Lucy EXTON

William, their first-born son died in Lismore in 1882, aged 13. It is not known how he died.

James Jnr. had a farm at Albion Park for many years and died in Murwillumbah in 1929, aged 58. There is no record of him marrying. He is buried in the Banner St. Cemetery at Murwillumbah.

Mary married William Lawrence at Murwillumbah in 1891 when she was 18 years old. She and William had eleven children. Mary died in Murwillumbah on 5 April, 1942 aged 68. Her husband William died in Murwillumbah in 1951 aged 82.

Susanna married Robert Campbell at Murwillumbah in 1891 when she was 16 years old. She and Robert had eight children. She died in Millaa Millaa, Queensland on 15 March 1943 aged 67 and is buried in the Atherton Cemetery.

Harriet married John McKenzie at Murwillumbah in 1898. She was 20 years old. There is only one record of a child, Lucy Elizabeth born in 1908.

Catherine married Patrick Burke at Murwillumbah in 1899. She was 18 years old. They had four children, all born in Murwillumbah.

Elizabeth married William Charles Helmoed in 1902 at Murwillumbah.

There is no record of a marriage or death for Ann.

Bits of Trivia:

The Northern Star newspaper dated 2 January, 1886 advertises a Juvenile Concert to be held at the Albert Theatre, Lismore with performances by pupils of St. Carthage's School.

Master James McDonough will recite "His First Voyage"

Miss Mary McDonough will sing "Jack Is Every Inch a Sailor"

The proceeds are in aid of the Presbytery funds so a large attendance is expected.

ELIZABETH McDONOUGH 1883 - 1962

My Grandmother

Elizabeth (Betsey) was born on 26 February, 1883. Her father James died in 1889 when she was just 8 years old and in 1904 when she was just 23, her mother died also.

As a child, Elizabeth would most likely have gone to St. Carthage's Catholic School in Lismore which opened in 1886 under the leadership of Mother Carthage Price, a Presentation sister from Ireland.

In 1902 Elizabeth, aged 19 married William Charles Helmoed at Murwillumbah. William was born on 1st May, 1870 at Eldorado, Victoria, the son of John Henry Helmoed and Ellen Honora Buckley.

At 32 years old, William (Bill) was 11 years her senior. It is not known how she met him but we do know that Bill had moved from Brisbane to the Tweed Valley around 1889 and was working at the Condong Sugar Mill.

The McDonough family had moved from Blakebrook to Murwillumbah around this time too so I suspect they did meet in Murwillumbah.

In any case when he ceased working at the sugar mill, Bill got a job as a skipper on the river dredges between Murwillumbah and Tweed Heads, which is how he came to be living in Murwillumbah.

We know that Bill and Elizabeth lived on the riverbank of South Murwillumbah and that all of their children were born there. Bill drove the river boats for over 15 years until the family moved to Tweed Heads around 1930.

Bill and Elizabeth had 8 children:

- William James - born 1903 and died 1912
- Alma Lucy Ellen - born 13 Dec 1906 and died 1 Jan 1964
- George Charles - born 21 Jun 1908 and died 1 Jun 1967
- Rita May Brendon - born 13 Aug 1912 and died 12 Jun 1985
- Jessie Elizabeth - born 16 Jun 1914 and died 8 Jun 1987
- Irene Dorothy - born 22 Apr 1916 and died Nov 1998
- Reginald Clive - born 14 May 1920 and died 19 Dec 2001
- Joyce Veronica - born 15 May 1926 and died August 2011

When Bill died of a heart attack in 1945 Elizabeth remained in the Boyd Street house with her daughter, Joyce Veronica who was working as a shop assistant. When Joyce left the family home around 1949, Elizabeth moved to Murwillumbah and lived with her daughter Jessie and Jessie's husband, Bob (my parents).

She died a peaceful death in our family home on 9th June, 1962 aged 79. She is buried in the Bray Park Catholic Cemetery at Murwillumbah.

For more information on the children of William and Elizabeth, refer to *The Helmoed Family History*).