

not as one-sided as the above figures show. As an approximation we can say that for the whole second half of the 19th century, there were eleven boys born for every ten girls. On the other hand the number of twins born is probably a little less than the average for Ireland, which is one twin birth in every seventy-nine births. In the half-century 1950-2000, nine sets of twins were born in a total of 1125 births where one would expect about fourteen sets. These were in the McShera (Fostra), Casey, Malone, McGowan, Lynch, McShera (Clegna), Gaffney, Farry and Bruen families.

Surnames

The majority of the population of Ardcarne still bears Gaelic surnames, notwithstanding the arrival of many outsiders in the last thirty years. Moreover nearly all of these surnames can be traced back in the ALC to the Middle Ages and beyond. Historians say that the present method of designating names, using a first name and a surname, originated about 1,000 years ago. Before that it is more difficult to connect a name with modern family names. The Annals begin in 1014 and four of our present surnames can be found in the ALC under that year, O'Connor, O'Brien, O'Rourke and Corcoran. But a host of others connected with this parish can be traced to that same 11th century: Boland, Callaghan, Casey, Donnellan, Dunne, Fallon, Flanagan, Garvey, Kelly, Gunning, Gormley, Henry, Lynch, McGrath, McLoughlin, Molloy, Moore, Mulrooney, Murphy, Murray, Ó Conghaile, O'Donnell, O'Dowd, O'Farrell, O'Hara, O'Neill, Quinn, Regan and Ryan.

Between 1100 and 1600 one can find many others such as: Bannon, Barry, Beirne, Boyle, Brady, Breheny (Brehony), Brogan, Caulfield, Clancy, Cleary, Coen, Conlisk, Conlon, Conway, Cooney, Costello, Coyne, Cryan, Cullen, Cunningham, Daly, Deane, Denning, Devine, Doherty (O'Doherty), Donoghue, Duffy, Duignan, Dunican, Dwyer, Earley, Egan, Fahy, Farrelly, Finn, Flynn, Foley, Ford, Gallagher, Gibbons, Giblin, Gillespie, Gilmartin (Martin), Hanly, Harte, Harvey, Healy, Horan, Irwin, Keane, King, Lane, Lavin, Lee, Lenehan, Lyons, McCabe, McCarthy (Carthy), McCormack, McCool, McDermott, McDermottroe, McDonagh, McGlynn (Glynn), McGonigle, McGovern, McGreevy, McGuinness, McHugh, McKeon, McKinney (McKenna), McManus, McMorrow, McNamara, McShera, Maher, Malone, Mannion, Meehan, Monahan, Morris, Mulhern, Mullaney, Nolan, Oates, O'Mahony (Mahon), O'Malley, O'Reilly, Reynolds, Rinn, Rogers, Shanley, Sharkey, Skeffington, Tiernan (McTiernan and McKiernan), Tonra, Travers, Tully and Ward. All of these can be traced back at least

four hundred years. The total of all the names listed above accounts for over 90 per cent of the population of the parish, and might well carry the genetic group mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. In other words their origin goes back beyond the arrival of the Celts to even earlier peoples. Some of the legends, indeed, associated with the first colonists to arrive on our shores, mention nearby places such as Moylurg and *Magh Tuireadh* at Highwood.⁴

For the years 1100 to 1600 the ALC mentions a few other names which were not originally Gaelic. Higgins (mentioned for the first time in ALC under 1315) is probably of Viking origin. In fact it is the word Viking, *Uiginn*. It is a name whose bearers, though far less plentiful than the Kellys and the Murphys, have contributed enormously to every aspect of Irish life, to science, literature, poetry and politics, right down to the present day. In the Middle Ages leading up to the end of the Gaelic era, they were a bardic family which produced a succession of celebrated poets, such as *Tadg Dall Ó h-Uiginn*. Another earlier member of the family, *Tuathail* who died in 1450, wrote two poems in praise of *Tomaltach an einigh Mac Diarmada* (King of Moylurg from 1421 to 1458).⁵

Barrett (1260), Burke (1200), Browne (Bruen ?) (1564), Nugent (1385), Power (1190), Purcell, Roche (1250), Walsh and White (1250) are Norman. To these we might add Gray and Whitney. Elsewhere we mention that Sweeney (1265), Doyle (1299) and McCabe (1358) may have come from Scotland as gallowglasses. Crawford is Scottish too. David Gillespie thinks his family came from near Ayr in Scotland. But as it is an Irish name and that part of Scotland was colonised by Irish from Ulster more than a thousand years ago, the name may have emigrated and come back again. It is mentioned in ALC in 1171. The Derbys came from Co. Down. The following names, common in the parish and all of Gaelic origin, do not seem to be mentioned in the annals: Armstrong, Cox, Crowley, Curley, Curran, Donnelly, Durkin, Farry, Feery, Flannery, Gaffney, Gannon, Gilboy, Gildea, Gilligan, Griffin, Guihen (Wynne), Kerrigan, Killelea, Lane, Langan, Leydon, Leyland, McCaffrey, McCorry, McGowan, McPartlan, McQuaid, McVeigh, Moraghan, Neary, Noone, Queenan, Rushe, Scanlon, Shannon, Sheehan, Shivan, Stenson, Tansey, Tivnan and Tobin. Perhaps the reason is that they were peaceloving clans. Most of the names in the long lists above are mentioned only because they took part in some battle, and usually got killed. The Guihens and the Gaffneys did, however, make up some leeway in the fighting business later, by taking part in faction fights in the beginning of the 19th century.

A very old Irish name which has only appeared in the parish in the last two hundred years, is O'Hara. Like O'Gara it is very much a Sligo name. Much research has been carried out on this family by Damian Dodd of Ballyrush, and by Patrick Lavin, another relative.⁶ It is likely that all present-day O'Hara's in the parish are descended from an original couple, Laurence O'Hara and Mary McDonagh, who came here about 1820 from somewhere in Co. Sligo, probably the Riverstown parish. By the 1840's they were well established in Knockadaff, Clegna, Moigh, Cloongreaghan and Donald's Hill. As I write this on the 1st January 2000, our oldest parishioner and a mine of information about the parish long ago, is Larry O'Hara of Clegna.



Chris Henry with Larry O'Hara on the occasion of his 100th birthday.

Another name of distinction which originated elsewhere but is now well represented in the parish, is Duignan (*Ó Duibhgeannáin*). They were a learned family of poets, ollaves and scribes who began as chroniclers to the *Ó Fearghail* (O'Farrell) and *Mac Raghnaill* (Reynolds) clans of Westmeath, Longford and South Leitrim, the districts of Teffia, Annaly and Conmaicne. They are thought to have migrated to Connacht at the end of the twelfth century, when the Normans captured Teathbha. A branch of the family moved to Kilronan and became

scribes to the McDermott, McDermottroe and McDonagh families. The obituaries of some of them are given in the ALC: Matha Glas (1432), "a professor of history and keeper of a house of hospitality"; Dubhthach (1495), "a most eminent historian and poet"; another Dubhthach (1511), "the sage of Érin in history and a man of great wealth"; and a third Dubhthach (1542), "a handsome and highly-skilled *ollamb* in history and keeper of a guesthouse". This reputation for learning continued to attach itself to the name even in modern times. For example, a member of the family who lived in Cloongreaghan a generation or two ago was known as Professor Duignan.

An O'Duignan is credited with building the church in Kilronan in 1339. The Book of Ballymote was written by an O'Duignan. One of the Four Masters was an O'Duignan. The material for the Annals of Loch Cé was collected by them under the patronage and editorship of Brian McDermot of *Carraig Locha Cé*, and the copy of these annals in Trinity College was transcribed by them in the years 1588-1590. One of these scribes, Philip O'Duignan, lived at Clooneybrien and a lease of land in Clooneybrien, made to his son Dudley (*Dubhdáileithe*) O'Duignan by Brian's son, *Brian Óg*, is dated 1624.⁷ The amount leased was three-and-a-half cartrons, about 400 acres. As well as paying Brian £3-£4 per annum, Dudley had to add "20 quarts of butter, a barrel of ale, a fat mutton and 10 days work". He also had to grind his corn at Brian's mill (which was probably at Knockvicar bridge) and bring his cattle to Brian's market, which was probably at the lakeshore in the Forest Park. On the other hand Dudley had free passage for his cattle to the river at Clooneybrien (Oakport Lake) and could cut turf on the bog of Portnadarragh (Oakport).

The fact that we are not very far from the district between Elphin and Jamestown - *Tír-Briuin-na-Sinna* - where the tribe of the *Ó Birn* lived with their headquarters at Daingean-Uí-Birn, means that we have never been without some Beirnes. Ninety four were born between 1843 and 1900. They are not as plentiful now. These are all spelled B-e-i-r-n-e. The only genuine B-y-r-n-e is Gerry on the N4 in Farranagalliagh, who comes from Edenderry.

Most families in the parish have not yet attempted a history of their clan. Those that have done this work, with varying degrees of thoroughness, include the O'Haras and Duignans mentioned above, the McDermots, the McGreevys, the Mattimoecs, the Shivnans and a few others. Burke's Landed Gentry and other works like that have detailed genealogies of the top families that once owned our parish, Kings, Phibbs, Mulloys, Cootes, and so on.

Old names in the parish that may have an English origin are: East, Simon and Smith, although the latter may be a translation of the Irish name, *Mac Gabhann*. The other bearers of English names have arrived among us only in the last thirty years.

The vast majority of the surnames in the parish are, as elsewhere in Ireland, English corruptions of Irish names. Very few now use the true Irish version of their names. What are the most common names? To make comparisons easier I have taken a count of the baptisms from 1843 to 1900 as indexed by the Co. Roscommon Heritage Centre. These were years before separate registers were started in Crossna and Drumboylan.



"We needed a dog badly", said Joe Martin, and my brother saw this ad. in the paper with a dog for sale. Over he went to Connemara to meet this man, and the man brought out the

dog and showed him what he could do, bringing in the cows, herding the sheep, looking after the children, bringing a pound of butter from the shop and so on. The brother was delighted and bought the dog and brought him home. But when he tried to get him to do all the things he saw done, devil a budge out of him. He rang up the man that sold him to complain. "There's nothing wrong with that dog", the man said, "but you have to talk to him in Irish!"



The fact that this was once McDermott territory would lead one to expect that this surname would still prevail in the last century, and it is indeed well represented, but it is pushed into second place by the Regans. The number given below for the McDermotts is actually inflated by the inclusion of the McDermottros as well, as these two names are often confused even to this day, and it would be difficult to separate them in the



Pupils of Laphoill School in 1929.

Back Row: (L-R): May Dunne (Powellshill), Lizzy McGuinness (Derreenannagh), Mary Lynch (Moigh), Maggie Kerrigan (Derdraw), May (Baby) Regan, Annie Dunne (Cleaheen).
 Second Row: Louie Cahill (Derdraw), Michael Regan (Loughill), Mary Regan (Drumsillagh), Michael Joe Regan (Drumsillagh), Nan Regan (Kilmacarril), Charlie McGuinness (Derreenannagh), Eileen Regan (Drumsillagh), Austin Lynch (Kilmacarril), Nan Flynn (Cleaheen), Sonny Regan (Loughill), Bridgie Kerrigan (Derdraw), Dermot Cox (Foxhill), Nelly Cox (Foxhill), James Regan (Loughill), Eithne McDermott (Cleaheen), Bridie Tymon (Arigna) Teacher.
 Third Row: Bridie Regan (Drumsillagh), Sadie Regan (Loughill), Eileen Rogers (Derdraw), Mary Moran (Derdraw), Nan Tansey (Drumsillagh), Alice Cox (Foxhill), John Regan (Drumsillagh).
 Front Row: Paddy Tansey (Drumsillagh), John Cox (Foxhill), John Regan (Loughill), Michael Dunne (Powellshill).
 Notice that 37.5% of the pupils are Regans.

list taken from the register. However, even with the McDermottros taken out, the McDermotts would still be in second place.

The frequency of the surnames, with the actual numbers baptised between 1843 and 1900 is as follows: Regan 299, McDermott(roe) 261, Moran 200, McLoughlin 200, Martin 194, Farrell 186, Malone 168, Gaffney 167, Conlon 152, Moraghan 141, Carty 139, McKeon 137, Lynch 136, McGreevy 124 and Duignan 122. Other plentiful names were Flanagan, Higgins, Kelly and Beirne. All of these names are still to be found in the parish but with severely reduced numbers and not in the same order of frequency.

Other more unusual names to be found are Bushell, Caldbeck, Cunlisk, Daire, Golden, Heslin, Holland, Mattimoe, Oates, Shivnan, Slein, Tansey and Taughren. John Holland, born in Ballyformoyle, has seen some evidence that his name is derived from some Huguenots (Dutch rather than French) who emigrated to Ireland. The Shivnans are said to have come with the French army to Killala.⁸ The names Bushell and Prior are said by some sources to be of Huguenot origin and by others to be Pallotine.⁹ As well as these we have three surnames (or four if we include Mattimoe) that are not found in *Sloinnte Gael is Gall* by Woulfe, and may have their origin

In all the above we are speaking of names which have been here for two hundred years at least. In the last thirty years there have appeared a whole host of new surnames which may sound strange to those who were reared with Regans and Morans: British names, German names and the odd Dutch, Italian and Turkish name as well. Those who had no difficulty with the Irish versions of Lynch and Malone when school roll-books or lists of football-teams required it, have to admit defeat when confronted by Andretti, Dueck, Heijs, Akokan, Sachs-Eldridge, Kaszuk and Trostawiecki.



Rainer Girmann, Cooladye, and Hilde Heijs, Gloria, are two of our resident foreigners



Gerry Bambrick, Derrygirraun (white shirt) has one of the less common parish surnames.

in Britain. They are Appleby, Bambrick, and Moffatt. There is a town in southern Scotland called Moffatt, and one the other side of the border in Cumbria called Appleby. Edward McLysaght in "A Guide to Irish Surnames" (1964) says the origin of the name Bambrick is uncertain, but is possibly derived from a place-name in Scotland called Bambreich. He further states that it is associated with Co. Laois since about 1600. The origins of the name Mattimoe and its variations (Milmoie, etc.) seem to puzzle those researchers who have tried to investigate it, military historian Colonel Cyril Mattimoe and American Jesuit, Edward Mattimoe.¹⁰ Does the name come from Britain or is it Irish?

Perhaps this is the place to give a breakdown of the number of houses in the parish and the provenance of their occupants. There is nothing rigid about this classification. Two groups which may need explanation are the holiday homes and the resident foreigners. The holiday homes are ones occupied only for a fortnight or so in the year. In the 1970s and 1980s, the buyers were mainly German and British. In the five years just past, Irish people, Dubliners for example, are investing too. Often some of these houses were bought in an intoxication of desire for country living, which desire wore off very soon, and a few such houses can now be classed almost as abandoned.

I define a resident foreigner as someone who has no blood or marriage connection with any family in the parish, and comes from more than about twenty miles away. It's an arbitrary definition. Again Germans and British predominate. Some of these have been here so long (thirty years in some cases) that they no longer deserve the name 'blow-in'.

Native Resident	355 houses
Foreign Resident	107 --
Holiday Homes	76 --
Houses Vacant	24 --
Total of Habitable Houses	562

accommodated). More were likely to attend the school than could find accommodation, the report says. On the day of the inspection there were 66 boys and 54 girls present, the average being 60 boys and 40 girls. (This fitting of one hundred and twenty children into a little more than three hundred square feet is an example of packaging at its best). An increase was expected if the school were to be taken "into connexion", as the population was very dense. The hours were ten to four in the summer and ten to three in the winter. As regards consultation the superintendent says the local Protestant clergyman is opposed to the National System, and there was no other consultation as "there are very few resident gentry here".

The Board, on receiving this report, approved of a grant for 75 books for the boys' room and for 50 books for the girls. Each of the teachers was to receive £8 per annum starting on the 1st July 1841.

Cootehall

The inspector was informed of this application on the 22nd September 1849. The patron is named as P. Geraghty, who was Fr. Hester's curate. The school had been established in July 1848. I am of the opinion that this school, located roughly where the post-office is now, was built on the ruins of the police barracks which was

burnt twelve years before.

There was no National School within three miles, the report says. There was, however, another school a mile away. It is described as a school for the poor, but we have no further information about it. Perhaps it is the school that is mentioned below as being situated in Moigh. The Cootehall school is described as of stone, thatched and in good repair. It was erected "by funds from a farmer". The teacher paid the rent. The room measured 24ft by 13ft by 8ft. The teacher was John McGauran, aged 35. He had no training, but produced several respectable testimonials. His literary acquirements were pretty fair. He was of good character and his method of conducting school was tolerable. There were no funds except the school fee which was a penny or twopence a week. The population of the parish is given as two thousand, the greater part poor. "There is a great population round the school; they would be much benefited by a National School".

On the 19th October 1849, the day the inspector, W. Robinson, arrived, the attendance was 27 boys and 23 girls, the average for the preceding months being a total of 40. An increase was expected, that is, up to a total of 90 (50 boys and 40 girls).

The inspector did not call on the Protestant clergyman, knowing him to be opposed to National



Some boys who attended Cootehall School in 1910.

Front Row (L-R): Michael Kennedy, Frank Farry, Michael McHugh, Darby Dunne, Larry O'Hara, P.J. Morahan, T.J. Treacy.
 Second Row: Tom Morahan, John McHugh, John McGoldrick, Paddy O'Hara, James Glynn, Val Greer, Tom Greer, Tom Morahan.
 Back Row: Edmund Farry, Joe Farry, James Farry, John Reilly, John Kelly, Willie Cox, Christy Greer and James Dunne.
 Master Glynn is on the left. It was probably the year he began teaching here.
 All are now deceased, but one of them, Larry O'Hara, survived till April 2001.