

Funeral Entries from County Clare in the Seventeenth Century

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Amongst the collection of manuscripts at the Genealogical Office, formerly the office of Ulster King of Arms, is a series of volumes known as Funeral Entries. They are the record of Ulster's attendance at, or interest in, the obsequies of persons of some standing in Irish society during the period in which they were compiled. They run from 1588 to 1691, approximately. I know of no other source of such immediate, contemporary and presumably accurate knowledge of genealogical and heraldic particulars for the seventeenth century. It would perhaps seem unlikely that Ulster King of Arms, brought into being in 1552 by the English crown to look after the heraldic affairs of Ireland, would have had much interest in so remote, so outside The Pale an area as Clare—or, indeed, Clare in him. But Clare does enter into this fascinating series, not frequently, but, I think, significantly. There are in all twelve entries relating to the county, if we exclude a few relating to noble O'Briens who are well documented elsewhere.

To explain the nature and purpose of these Entries I quote from a document in the Office. "By virtue of an act of state or decree bearing date the fourth of August, Anno Domini 1627 . . . for the better preservation of the memory of the nobility and gentry their marriages, posterity and arms. The king of arms here is straightly charged to make a true and fair entry of certificates of the matches, issues, times of decease and of arms of all such of the nobility and gentry of this realm as shall happen to die, which certificates are by the said act of state or decree to be returned unto the office of the king of arms for the time being by the heirs and executors of such of the nobility and gentry as shall so die for which entry there is appointed certain fees to be payed to the said king of arms."

It is apparent that similar instructions must have been issued earlier because our first entry is dated 1623. All of the twelve, with the exception of one dated 1683, lie within the first half of the seventeenth century. Who were the people in Clare at that time who thought it proper—or profitable?—to comply with this direction? I quote the entries in full, in chronological order of the date of death of the person whom the entry concerns.

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V, 42

Sir Nicholas Mordant of Carrick in the County of Clare knight, deceased the . . . of August 1623. He had to wife Sarah daughter of William Stockdalle of Green Hammerton in Yorkshire by whome he had issue Nicholas.

VI, 176

Ogan O'Hogan of Beallarushin in the County of Tipperary gent 3rd sonne of Morragh O'Hogan alias O'Hogan of the same, cheefe of the name. The said Ogan tooke to wife Slany daughter of John mac Loughlin Molowny of Craiglegh in the County of Clare gent by whom he had issue 4 sonnes and 4 daughters vidz. Donogh eldest sonne, Hugh 2d sonne, Edmond 3d sonne and Ogan 4th sonne, Onora eldest daughter, Una 2d daughter, Mary 3d daughter and Moare 4th daughter all young and unmarried. The said first mentioned Ogan departed this mortal life at Beallarussin

aforesaid about the 16th of February 1633 and was interred in the Chappell of Inishkealtrigh in the County of Clare. The truth of the premisses is testified by the subscription of Dermott O'Brien Cosen to the Defunct whose hath returned this Certificat into my Office to be there recorded. Taken by me Thomas Preston Esqr. Uluester King of Armes the 6th of February 1638.

VI, 141

William Davison of Tomgreny in the County of Clare gent. deceased.

The said first mentioned William tooke to wife Mary daughter of William Newman of Iveningham in Buckinghamshire in the Kingdome of England gent by whome hee had noe issue. The said first mentioned William departed this mortall life at Tomgreny aforesaid the last of July 1633 and was interred in the Parish Church of Tomgreny aforesaid. The truth of the premisses is testified by the subscription of Richard Blgrave now husband to the Relict of the said Defunct whose hath returned this Certificat into my Office to be there recorded. Taken by me Thomas Preston Esqr Uluester King of Armes the 20th day of September 1638.

VI, 228

Constance O'Davoren of Cahirmacneaghty in the County of Clare gent second sonne of Gillerneafe O'Davoren . . . sonne of Gillerneafe O'Davoren . . . sonne of Hugh Davoren . . . sonne of Manus O'Davoren, sonne of . . . The said first mentioned Constance took to wife Mary daughter of John Bourk of Rosscaume in the County of Gallway gent, by whome hee had issue Hugh O'Davoren eldest sonne married to Evelin daughter of John O'Markaghane of . . . Constance oge O'Davoren 2d sonne, Gillerneave O'Davoren, 3d sonne, John O'Davoren 4th sonne, Oliverus O'Davoren 5th sonne, Daniell O'Davoren 6th Mortagh O'Davoren, 7th Boetius O'Davoren 8th and Andreas O'Davoren 9th sonne, Shily eldest daughter and Katherin the youngest daughter all as yett unmarried. The said Constance departed this mortall life at . . . the 25th of January 1634 and was interred in . . . The truth of the premisses is testified by the subscription of . . .

VI, 202

John mac Donogh mac Namara of Danganbrach in the County of Clare gent. deceased the twenty sixt of September Anno domini 1634 at Danganbrach aforesaid, and was interred in the Abbay of Quin in the said County the sixt day followinge. Hee was the eldest sonne of Donogh mac Namarra of Cappagh in the said County gent. and of Margaret his wife daughter of O'Brien of Carrigogonill. The defunct John mac Namara married Honora daughter of Boetius Clanchy of . . . by whome hee had issue Margaret his eldest daughter whose is married to Thomas Arthure of the City of Limerick Esquire by whome shee hath issue John, Arthure and . . . This defunct made the said Margaret wife of Thomas Arthure aforesaid his sole heir by feoffment, And the said Thomas Arthure his Administrator, Whose Agent Mr. Owen O'Molony gent doth testifie the trueth of this Certificat, being taken by me Thomas Preston Esquire Uluester King of Armes to be recorded in my Office this fifth of February 1634.

VI, 208

Teige mac Namara of Cahirkenanan in the County of Clare gent sonne and heire of Fynen mac Teige mac Nemara of Gortfin in the said County gent. tooke to his first wife Honora daughter of David Glesane of Cahirleane in the said County gent. by whome hee had issue six sonnes and three daughters vidz. John sonne and heire married to More daughter of Mortagh mac Mahon of Shean in the . . . Mahon second sonne, Michael third sonne, Andrew fourth sonne, James fifth and Donell sixt sonne as yett unmarried Katherin the eldest daughter married to Daniell mac Namara of Crathalaghehyle in the said County gent. Margaret the second daughter married to James mac Consody of the said County gent. Honora the third daughter as yet unmarried. The said Teige tooke to his second wife, Ellice daughter of Edmond Nelane or . . . in the said County gent. by whome hee had noe issue. The said Teige departed this mortall life at Cahirkenanan aforesaid the . . . of October 1634 and was interred in the parish Church of Killmihill in the . . . The trueth of the premisses is testified by the subscription of the said John mac Namara sonne and heire of the said Teige, Whose hath returned this Certificat to be recorded in the Office of Uluester King of Armes. Taken this thirteenth of Aprill 1637.

VI, 276

Peter Warre of Ingeyeragh in the County of Clare gent eldest sonne of Peter Warre of Dorsetshire in the Kingdome of England, tooke to wife Ellinor daughter of Edward Deyly of Wollershampton in Staffordshire in the said Kingdome by whome he had issue three sonnes and five

daughters vidz. Peter eldest sonne and heire, George and Thomas as yett unmarried Anne the eldest daughter married to William Custello of Lisscoffin in the said County of Clare gent, Dorothy the second daughter married to Thomas Brome of Clowin gent, Barbara the third, Honora the fourth, and Mary the fifth as yett unmarried, The said first mentioned Peter departed this mortal life at Ballycar in the said County of Clare the 25th of January 1635 and was interred in the Parish Church of Killmalire in the said County. The trueth of the premisses is testified by the subscription of the said Peter Warre eldest sonne of the said Defunct, whoe hath returned this Certificat to be recorded in the Office of Uluester King of Armes, Taken this 28th of August 1637.

VI, 135

William Starky of Drommolan Esqr. sonn and heire of Wm. Starky of Ofleston in Derbyshire departed this mortall life at Drommolan aforesaid and was interred in the Parish Church of Killansoule in the County of Clare, he tooke to wife Ann daughter to Tobias Puliston of Barforde in Essex by whome he had issue one son and foure daughters vitz Robert Sidney Ann Elizabeth and Mary the truth of the premisses is testified by the subscripcion of Robert Starky Esqr. who hath retourned this Certificate to be Recorded in the office of Uluester King of Armes.

VII, 152

Andrew White of Killmurry in the County of Clare gent sonne and heire of Henry White of the same gent, tooke to wife Jennett daughter of Robt White of Limerick Alderman by whom hee had issue fower sonnes and six daughters vitz. Richard Dominick, Thomas, and Stephen, Katherin, Ellinor, Margaret

The said Andrew departed this mortall life at Killmurry aforesaid the last of February 1636 and was interred in the Parish Church of Killmurry aforesaid. The truth of the premisses is testified by the subscription of Stephen White of Limerick sonne of Robert White of Limerick Alderman, whoe hath returned this Certificat to be recorded in the Office of Uluester King of Armes. Taken this 13th of May 1637.

VIII, 341

Daniell O'Neylane of Turlagh in the County of Clare gent, eldest sonne of William Neylane of the same, 2d sonne borne (but by the death of his elder brother eldest sonne) of the late right Reverend Father in God Daniell Neylane consecrated Bishopp of Kildare Anno Domini 1583. The first mentioned Daniell tooke to wife Mary daughter of Terlagh mac Mahon of Clonedrallagh in the said County by whome he had issue 4 sonns vidz. William eldest sonne, Daniel 2d sonne, Michaell 3d sonne, John 4th sonne borne since the death of his Father vidz the . . . of . . . 1639. The said first mentioned Daniell departed this mortal life at Ballynasloe in the County of Roscoman the second day of March 1639 and was interred in . . . The truth of the premisses is testified by the subscription of the said Mary Relict of the said Defunct whoe hath returned this Certificat into my office to be there recorded. Taken by me Thomas Preston Esqr. Ulester King of Armes the 26th of June 1639.

IX, 275

Sir Rowland Delahoyde of Fomerly in the County of Clare Knight, 2d sonne by birth (but by the death of Gerald his eldest brother without issue) now eldest sonne and heire of Oliver Delahoyde of Portlester 2d sonne of Sir Walter Delahoyde of Moyclare in the County of Meath Knight, eldest sonne and heire of Sir James Delahoyd of Moclare aforesaid Knight, eldest sonne and heire of Sir Walter Delahoyd of the same Knight. The said Sir Rowland tooke to wife Una daughter of Connor Clancy of Inshy in the said County gent by whome he left issue 7 sonns and 2 daughters vidz: Oliver Delahoyd Esqr. eldest sonne and heire married to Una daughter of John O'Connor Kery of Carrigephoile in the County of Kery Esq. by whome as yett he hath noe issue, John Delahoyd Esqr. 2d sonne somtyme Sheriff of the County of Clare aforesaid married to Margaret daughter of Richard Wingfield of Robertstowne in the County of Limerick Esqr. by whome hee hath issue, Edward Delahoyd 3rd sonne, Alexander Delahoyd 4th sonne, Gerrott Delahoyd 5th sonne, Francis Delahoyd 6th sonne, married to Honora daughter of Robert Grace of Courtstowne in the County of Kilkenny Esqr., and James Delahoyd 7th sonne married to Fennola daughter of Teige Mac Nemarra of Monogienagh in the said County of Clare gent by whome he hath issue, Margaret eldest daughter married to Teige Reagh Mac Nemarra of Garrowrogh in the said County of Clare Esqr., and Katherin 2d daughter married to Thomas Bourk of Tullegrie in the County of Gallway Esqr. The said Sir Rowland departed this mortall life at Fomerly aforesaid the 8th of March 1640; and was interred in the Abbay of Quin the 8th of Aprill 1641. The truth of the premisses

is testified by the subscription of the said Oliver eldest sonne and heire of the said Defunct, whoe hath returned this Certificat into my Office to be there recorded. Taken by me Thomas Preston Esqr. Uluester King of Armes this 7th of July 1641.

X, 82

Christian Crafton alias Lee of Cloandreala departed this mortall life the 18th day of July 1683 being the wife of Thomas Crafton of the County of Cleare gent. and was interred in the parish Church of Cloandreala aforesaid leaving 2 Daughters. I Thomas Crafton aforesaid returned this Certificatt in the office of Ulster King of Arms to be there recorded this 15th day of August, 83.

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The entries have been given in chronological order but it will be noted that this order does not coincide with the sequence of entries in the volumes. A 1634 February death is on page 202 of Volume VI but a January death in the same year is on page 208. A certificate recorded in 1638 is on page 141 of the same volume but Ogan O'Hogan, the subject of the entry, is stated to have died "about the 16th of February 1633". William Davison whose certificate is also recorded in 1638, also died in 1633. It would appear that certificates were in fact given by hand into the Office of Arms when the witnesses came to Dublin or found a dependable means of sending them. Smaller divergencies from chronological sequence in entry may readily be explained but it is interesting that it was thought important to record a Funeral Entry for a man who had died four or five years earlier. A difficulty of course remains: why should William Davison's entry be found in Volume VI, in the appropriate place in a bound volume containing entries relating to 1634/35, as for that matter O'Hogan's entry for 1638? I think it is better to take the evidence broadly for the time being, as a sort of mini-census of prominent families in Clare in the first half of the seventeenth century.

Who were these families? It is not unreasonable to expect an incidence of MacNamaras, MacMahons, Davorens, Clanchys, O'Briens, acting in accordance with requirements of a new world which were different in form but not entirely different in purpose from the age-old Gaelic desire to remember and record parentage, marriage, death. There are also of course the incomers—Warre, Mordaunt, Starky and others—who might indeed be expected to perceive more readily the advantages of recording genealogical particulars with an officer appointed by the Crown. The office of Ulster King of Arms had been established in 1552; Thomas Preston, who features in most of the entries I have quoted, was the fifth to hold the office. There had been adequate time for the nature and scope of its function to become known.

These are the comments of a genealogist, and a genealogist should perhaps stop at that point. But in a broader context one cannot but wonder whether the dating and grouping of these Clare Funeral Entries may not have another significance. The very great majority of them are concentrated round the period from 1634 to 1641. On the 12th January 1632 Thomas Wentworth was appointed Lord Deputy of Ireland, and came into Dublin on the 23rd July 1633. In 1635 he saw to it that a certain "grace"—an assurance to the landowners of Connaught that their right to their estates was beyond question—was not passed by parliament. Land and its inheritance must surely have been a subject for deep and anxious discussion in Clare in the first half of the seventeenth century. The policy and ability of the Lord Deputy would have been well known. Would conformance with any edict of any government

official which concerned matters of descent and inheritance have been thought advisable?

But history is not only social and political. These Entries also offer something to the local historian and topographer. Some of the place-names mentioned present no difficulty; Quin, Tomgreny, Kilmihill, Kilmurray are immediately familiar. Others demand a little study before they can be identified. *Crathalaghehyle* is surely the townland of Cratloekeel in the civil parish of Killeely. Both *Clonedrallagh* and *Cloandrealta* may be read as Clonderalaw. The seemingly barbarous *Ingeyeragh* is no doubt part of the townland of Ing in the parish of Kilnasoolagh; since there is Ing East and Ing West we may take this to be an approximation in sound to either *Eang Oirthearach* or *Eang Iartharach*. The strange *Fomerly* of the Delahoydes is obviously Fomerla in the parish of Tulla. But I can find no *Gortfin* or no *Lisscoffin* in Clare.

Notwithstanding the injunction that armorial bearings should be recorded in these entries only two of the group we have examined give any heraldic information. Sir Nicholas Mordant is assigned *sable a chevron between three mullets of six points argent*, impaling the arms of Stockdale of Green Hammerton since he was married to Sarah of that family. Sir Rowland Delahoyde is assigned *barry of six on a bend a crescent for difference*; no tinctures are given. The Mordant (Mordaunt) arms indicate quite clearly the origin of Sir Nicholas, being a variation of the chevron and stars borne by the distinguished family of Mordaunt of Bedfordshire, Earls of Peterborough, etc. Those recorded for Sir Rowland are the accepted arms for Delahyde of County Meath, *barry of six argent and gules a bend sable*. The crescent, for difference, is the cadency mark of the second son. Armorial record is, in fact, rare in the volumes in which these entries are chiefly found.

The series of Funeral Entries has in my opinion a unique genealogical and historical interest, of which this Thomond group is put forward in evidence.