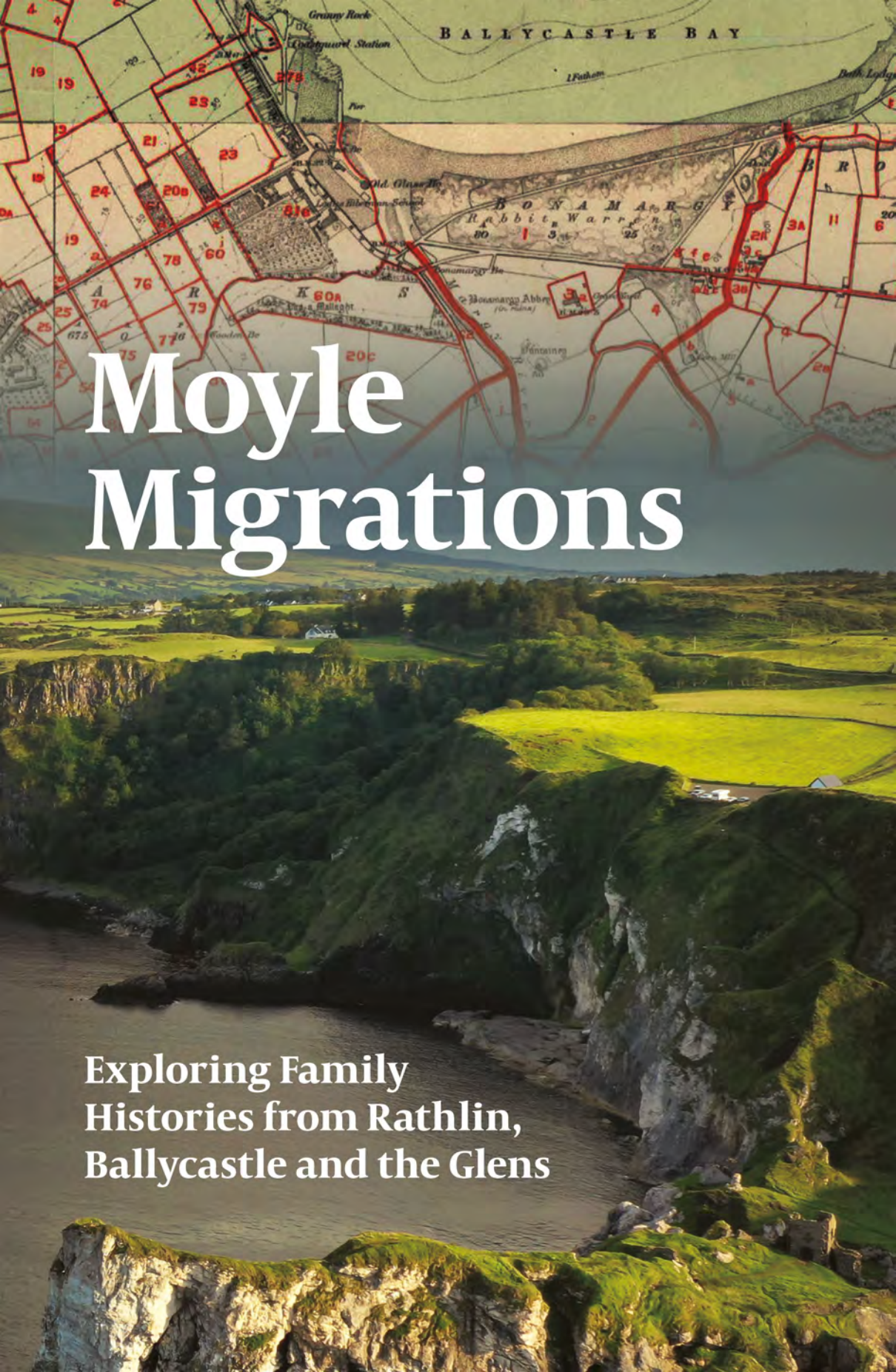


Moyle Migrations

Exploring Family Histories from Rathlin, Ballycastle and the Glens

Who do you think you are? Migration and Identity in Rathlin, Ballycastle and the Glens

"In terms of culture and identity, how do I normally see myself? I see myself part of the culture of the Glens of Antrim, that strong tradition of Gaelic culture. But I always was aware that, particularly Ballycastle, it is a very mixed area and we would have always been aware growing up about other traditions."

This booklet came about at the end of a multi-year programme (2019-2021) called *Who Do You Think You Are? Migration and Identity in Rathlin, Ballycastle and the Glens*. The programme was supported by Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council and The Executive Office as part of the District Councils Good Relations Programme and was delivered through the council's Museum Services. Additional financial support was received by the Heart of the Glens Partnership. *Who Do You Think You Are?* set out to explore and celebrate identity, culture and community through oral histories and DNA testing to establish genetic ancestry estimates, supported by genealogical and historical investigations.

Over the course of the programme, we worked with 64 participants and three partner community organisations across the focus area: Carey Historical Society, Glens of Antrim Historical Society, and Rathlin Development and Community Association.

60 participants undertook DNA testing to explore estimates of their genetic ancestry and recorded 400 minutes of oral histories which discussed their knowledge of their own family histories and how it impacted on their sense of identity. Quotes from some of those participants are used throughout this introduction.

Throughout the programme, specialist talks and training were provided by Prof. Dan Bradley (Trinity College Dublin), Martin McDowell (North of Ireland Family History Society), William Roulston (Ulster Historical Society), the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland, and Council's Museum Services. Many of those talks, and other resources, are available digitally through the Northern Ireland Community Archive (www.niarchive.org).

This booklet marks the final stage of *Who Do You Think You Are?* Participants prepared case studies based on family histories uncovered during their own journeys of discovery. Their contributions illuminate the multitude of personal experiences which have created the communities of Rathlin, Ballycastle, and the Glens, as well as celebrating the region's international links formed through immigration and emigration.

Summary DNA results

The DNA testing carried out early in the programme (results summarised March 2020) opened a window into the genetic ancestry of the participants. The estimates provided by DNA testing were based on genetic markers of populations and do not necessarily correlate to identity or ethnicity.

"Well, I'm totally Irish and a little Scottish. Slightly disappointed, I thought there might have been a bit more European blood, but needless to mention, no, none."

"I see myself as Irish and I suppose, Scots-Irish because my mother was born in Scotland and I have a lot of Scottish relatives because they were all reared there ... I have Scottish relatives up in the Highlands and whatever, and I went to university in Scotland. I would see myself as Scots-Irish, I think, and Northern Irish."

Of all the estimates that were revealed, Irish/Scottish ancestry was the most common – millennia of population movement between the two regions have left a genetic signature that is difficult to untangle.

All participants – even those not born or raised on the island of Ireland – showed DNA markers for Irish/Scottish ancestry ranging from 29-100%. Seventeen of our 45 respondents returned results of 100% Irish/Scottish, something which is, anecdotally, very rare.

The second most common ancestry estimate was for England, Wales and north western Europe with ranges of 0% to 66%. Seven participants had trace evidence of Scandinavian ancestry, two had distant ancestors from Germanic Europe, while one participant had trace ancestry from France.

"Well, I have found out that as expected, I'm mostly Irish/Scottish, 97% according to the results. As I've said, I'm really delighted to have 3% of European Germanic ... Well, that was a surprise very much because I had never heard of any connections with Europe."

Taking our participants as a representative sample of the population of Rathlin, Ballycastle and the Glens of Antrim, we find an unusually high level of genetic homogeneity with an average genetic ancestry breakdown as follows:

- Ireland and Scotland 91.24%
- England, Wales and NW Europe 8.35%
- Norway 1.8%
- Germanic Europe 0.12%
- Sweden 0.6%
- France 0.4%

"I feel I'm always a native of this island and of this area and the family always has been Irish. I don't feel particularly strongly nationalistic, but Irish."

However, within Ireland and Scotland, there were a large variety of genetic communities represented, with familial links identified from Ulster generally, and specifically from each of the counties of Ulster, as well as regions in Leinster, Connacht and Munster, western Scotland, the Hebrides, Orkney, Shetland; and northern England.

"... I'm Irish, or I come from the north of Ireland. When I lived in Scotland, I always said it was Northern Ireland I came from rather than Ireland because people then maybe thought it was Dublin or something like that. So, Northern Ireland."

Outside of Ireland and Scotland, close genetic communities were identified in northern, eastern and southern England, and among the European settlers in Canada and New Zealand.

All participants found family connections with people they knew, but did not realise they were related to, or had suspected family relationships confirmed. All participants found many distant cousins around the world, principally in Canada, the United States, Australia and New Zealand – a legacy for the Irish diaspora.

"I think it [talking about identity] has got better, definitely people are more prepared to speak out and people can accept you for who you are, or not as they like. I still think for a lot of Irish and Northern Irish people, there's probably a sensitivity around it, and I don't know, it might take generations for that to go away."

"I have gone through living through the troubles. So, at the time, if you'd asked me that in the 1970s, I wouldn't have told you because it wasn't safe to tell. I think that it has taken from the 1970s to now for people to start to realise that it's okay to be proud of your culture. It's okay to say that you're learning Irish, it's okay to say that you did Irish dancing when you were a child."

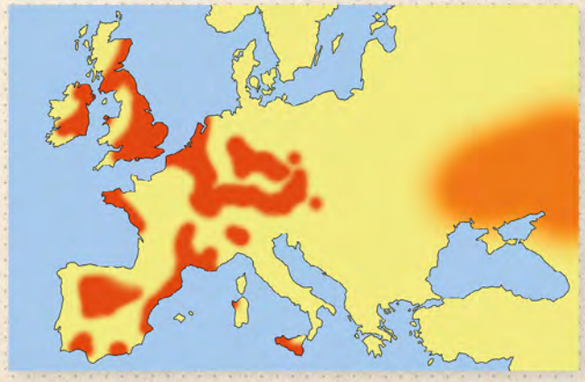
Who do you think you are? Migration and Identity in Rathlin, Ballycastle and the Glens

Rathlin's Bronze Age Burials: Unlocking the past through Genetics

The primary Bronze Age cist burial from Church Bay (known as 'Ugg' to many of the islanders).
Courtesy of the Centre for Archaeological Fieldwork.

The use of DNA to study ancient populations has developed considerably in recent years. Excavations in 2006 behind McCuaig's Bar, Church Bay on Rathlin Island, exposed three Bronze Age burials, two in stone-lined cists and the third in a simple pit. The occupants of the graves – dating to the Early Bronze Age, around 2,026-1,534 BC – may already have been important members of their communities, but their genetic makeup is set to have a big impact on how we look at the Irish people as a whole.

The three Bronze Age men had their DNA sequenced as part of a wider study published in 2016. All three shared most of their ancestry with the earlier Stone Age populations in Ireland. However, around 32% of their genes were derived from the Yamnaya people, newcomers originating north and east of the Black Sea.



Map showing the principal areas where Early Bronze Age beakers are found (in red), and the homeland of migrating Yamnaya metal workers north of the Black Sea (in orange).

The arrival of eastern European ancestry is also seen across many other western European Bronze Age populations.

It coincided with the introduction of metal working, the appearance of so-called 'Beaker' style pottery, and the spread of Indo-European language groups. It is likely these newcomers brought an ancestral version of the Irish language to Ireland.

The genetic makeup of the three Rathlin men suggested a light hair shade and brown eyes, although at least one of them may have been blue-eyed.

This Early Bronze Age (2,300-1,950 BC) 'food vessel', found in Liscolman Co. Antrim in 2003, is a fine example of 'Beaker' style decoration.
©Ballycastle Museum.

All three Rathlin men carried a DNA marker known as R1b-M269, a trait carried on the Y-chromosome and therefore passed down from father to son. R1b was not carried by the Stone Age Irish but it came to dominate in the Bronze Age. Approximately 84% of modern Irish males still carry the same marker. Scientists have suggested that the dominance of R1b represents the replacement of Neolithic (Stone Age) men by the incoming metal workers who took native women as partners.

Want to know more?

To find out more, look out for Lara Cassidy et al., "Neolithic and Bronze Age migration to Ireland and establishment of the insular Atlantic genome," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* (2016).

Three Men called John

Geraldine Anslow

My cousin, Anne McAllister nee McIlroy, remembers Granda was driving an electric van for Boyd's Bakery in the 1960s: a clean energy 'EV' decades before the rest of us!
©Family collection.

I can see him now, sitting on a hard chair in the kitchen, turning a plug of tobacco in his hand before commencing to rub off flakes to fill his pipe. He is a quiet man, affable, gently smiling, relaxed. My grandmother is not: she is brisk, busy and tangibly displeased. I retreat to the empty front parlour. There is no fire in the grate on this summer day, but there is a faint smell of turf smoke still – not a speck of dust of course – and the tall case clock tocks sonorously.

I am trying to learn more about the life of my grandfather, John Jennings. I have one picture of him, a faded print of him standing by his Boyd's bakery bread van. We think it is taken outside his house on North Street, Ballycastle, where they kept a guest house. In this picture you don't see the pale grey-blue eyes that looked exactly like my mother's when she glanced sidelong; sometimes my brother's look just the same and I am startled by the memories.

So much of his life and story are already lost and forgotten. I am starting my quest too late, when so many of the bearers of story are gone. I am searching for roots, connection and belonging as my own life hurtles into the past and I find myself telling stories.

His gravestone here in Ballycastle's St Patrick and St Brigid's Cemetery tells us he died on 5th January 1978. There is no such certainty about his birth, given as 'around 1898 or 1899'. I really want to know the date. Perhaps I will find a baptismal record.

His existence becomes official in the Census of 1901. He is listed as living a 2 New Market Street, the part of the current Market Street that extends beyond the foot of the Chapel Brae. The designation of 'illiterate' shocks me until I realise he is one or two years old.

His father is another John Jennings, a cooper by trade who also holds office as 'Clerk of the Markets' for Ballycastle. The house on New Market Street probably came with the market role. 2 New Market Street would have been adjacent to the stone arch at the entrance to the market yard, convenient for overseeing all goods and livestock entering the premises The original buildings are gone, but the arch remains as the entry to a new housing development.

Gate to the Ballycastle Market Yard, 1858.
©Geraldine Anslow.

Grandfather has an older brother James. His mother is Margaret and his paternal grandmother (Ellen Jennings, nee McAuley, who married yet another John Jennings, my great great grandfather) lives with them. I imagine the young family thriving, 'Clerk of the Markets' sounds solid and respectable. However, tragedy was about to strike.

Soon after, his father, my great grandfather, died. I wonder if Granda remembered his father or, like so many children who lose a parent when they are young, did he have that faintly guilty sadness that he could not quite picture him. Did he question what were true memories and what were things he had been told?

By the Census of 1911, my grandfather has moved; not far physically, but I imagine some distance socially and emotionally. His mother had remarried and the family now lived at 51 Castle Street, not marked on maps as a single house – probably it was a collection of dwelling units of various sizes, accessed by an entry or lane off the street. His new stepfather, Daniel Casselly, was a farmworker. Another brother had appeared, born in the year his father died, perhaps posthumously. He is Patrick Joseph.

Again, the census precedes a tragedy. Granda's older brother James was to lose his life five years later in the fields of France. He was part of the first line of the British Expeditionary Force in France as a soldier in the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. His friend, Thomas Madden, explained how he died in a letter sent to his mother (who has now moved to Mill Street in the town). It is expressed with frank if understated affection and a simple sincerity that is very moving. I picture my great grandmother showing this letter to Granda and him holding it his hands and appreciating the kindness of Thomas McMadden. His mother Margaret also received condolences from the King, Queen and Lord Kitchener. Private James Jennings 24176 is also remembered on Ballycastle's War Memorial.

Dear Mrs. Casselly

Just a few lines to tell you that I was very sorry to hear about James. I never heard a thing about him to he was dead and buried. I was talking to one of the stretcher bearers that carried him down and he was saying he was quite sensible and never lost his head and he had the priest with him before he died. It was all about the head he got hit, that is the reason he went so quick, God rest him.

Anyhow I had some narrow escapes myself, you never know the minute out here. If I had hardly knew the (sic) were anything wrong with him I would tried and have seen him but I was away in a different company at the time and miles away.

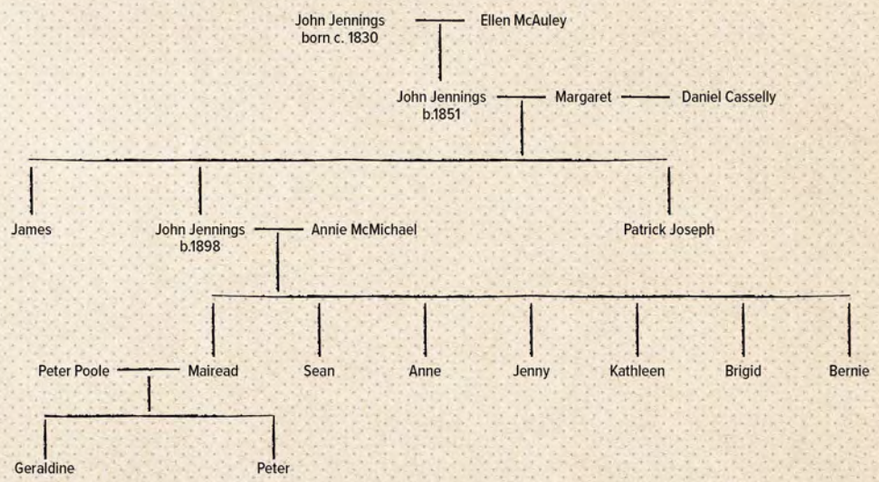
All I can say Mrs, Casselly is I am heart down sorry for you in your trouble and I hope God will give you the strength to come through it all.

Goodbye from his old chum

Thomas McMadden

Transcription of Thomas McMadden's letter following the death of Private James Jennings in March 1916.

The loss of his brother was a sorrow he must have carried all his life; the generation that lived through both World Wars were so stoic and strong, mine had little understanding what they had endured.



On a happier note, on 21st August 1921 he married Annie McMichael, daughter of an agricultural labourer and flax scutcher from Drumdallagh, Loughgiel, at the Roman Catholic Church in Magherahoney. The witnesses were Annie's sister Maggie and a friend, John McBride.

My mother's birth certificate records that, in 1922, Granda was a 'car driver' but we are not sure if this means a driver for the popular jaunting cars that took trippers out to Fair Head, Murlough and other beauty spots, or one of a couple of motor vehicles for hire that existed in Ballycastle at the time but were not designated 'taxis'.

Every family of cousins (Granda was to have seven children) has heard the tale of Granda's children being despatched to sleep in the byre in the thirties and forties, so Granny could 'keep' billeted soldiers. Decades later they were still feeling slighted! At this time, Granda, his wife Annie Maria (nee McMichael) and their growing family were living in the end house of a long row in the erstwhile Mill Street. There was a dairy there, Stewarts Dairy, so that would have provided the fabled byres.

Mill Street, Ballycastle.
Courtesy Tommy McDonald and Impact Printing.

Granda kept his horse, one of the last to pull a company cart in Ballycastle. Marcus Jamieson enjoyed feeding it treats at their house when he was a neighbour to my grandparents on North Street. This is the horse which family legend would report kicked Granda and caused serious damage of an unspecified kind, although he would live on for more than a decade.

When I arrived in the sixties, they were living in the Bay View Road with Granny's finest and largest guest house, opposite Doherty's Amusements, and conveniently close to our adored boat slip with its scattering of gaily coloured small wooden boats and drying nets. Their house was a splendid enormous villa, the ultimate hide and seek house, complete with labyrinthine attics with racks of old furs, quite the Narnia gateway; much like this quest, a portal to another time and place where you find something of yourself.

Geraldine Anslow is a Londoner with roots in Ballycastle and environs. She now lives and works on Rathlin after travelling and working across the world.

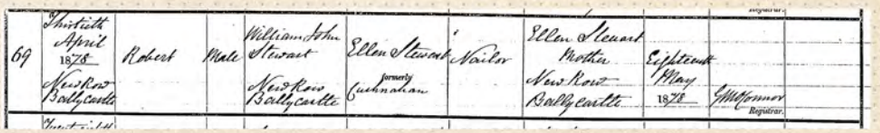
Bob Stewart

Orla Duncan

Bob Stewart is one of my ancestors. I've heard and researched so much about him, I feel as if I've met and known him. He was my granny's uncle, the only person she wrote to for help and support when her mum and brothers died within a few years of each other. Bob lived in America so he couldn't come back home, but offered what support he could. All I knew when I started my research was how good he'd been to my granny and that he had a thriving shoe shop in America, 'probably' in Penslyvania!

I searched the 1901 census and found a Robert Stewart who was a boot and shoe maker living in Wilson's Row, Ballycastle. It took over a year, with a lot of digging, a DNA test and good luck to finally unearth the family links. Here is Bob's story, the remarkable tale of a Ballycastle boy who did alright for himself in the United States of America.

Bob's parents, John William Stewart and Ellen Cushnahan, were married in Mossisde Presbyterian Church. John and Ellen already had two children, William and Eleanoretta, when Bob was born on 30 April 1878 at New Row in Ballycastle. He was baptised in St Patrick's and St Bridget's church in Ballycastle on 19 May.



Register of the birth of Robert Stewart in Ballycastle.
Image courtesy of Irish Genealogy.ie.

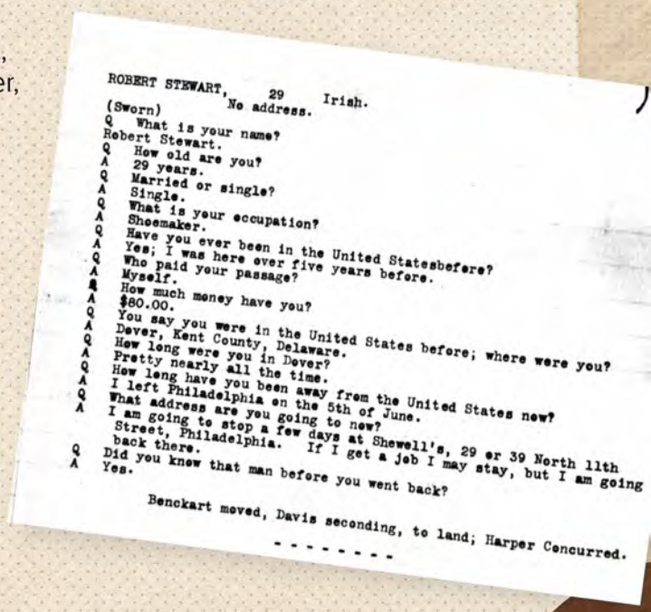
Robert Stewart's name on line 16 of the alien passenger manifest of the SS *Merion* when it docked in Philadelphia in March 1905.
U.S. arriving passenger and crew lists 1800-1962 provided in association with National Archives records administration.

By 1901, the 19 year old Robert was living in his family home at 3 Wilson's Row (also known as New Row, behind 35 Castle Street) with his parents and four younger brothers: Arthur (18), Mark (16), James (14) and Patrick Joseph (11). In the 1901 census, Robert's sister, my great granny Retta, is newly wed and living at 4 Carramoney, Drumtullagh, Ballintoy. His eldest brother William, isn't in the census. He had been a tailor in Castle Street but had died of tuberculosis in August 1900 leaving behind his young wife Margaret and their three children, all under the age of 5; their youngest baby, Joseph, was just over 2 weeks old.

While Robert worked as a boot and shoe maker, his immediate family all had other professions. It seems likely he learned his trade from his mother's family who are said to have been carpenters or shoe makers. There is an entry for a Robert Stewart in the 1898-1905 Ballycastle valuation books and he possibly ran a shoe business in the town for a few years before heading to America; this would have given him his fare and maybe some savings to set him up in his new life.

On 8 March, 1905 Robert Stewart left Ballycastle for America. He arrived in Philadelphia PA on the SS Merion over two weeks later, on 23 March. I've been wondering about what made Bob leave his life in this beautiful town. He had a trade and a shop. He had family. Was it the horror of his brother's death and the threat of the fatal tuberculosis which forced him to leave his home? Did he intend to go for a few years and return, or was it a decision to make a new life there and remain ? Maybe he went so he could send money home to his parents or family? I wonder did he not have a girlfriend? Had she died from tuberculosis or did he have to leave her behind too?

Bob's dad, William John Stewart, died of haemoplegia shortly after, on 14th October 1907. Bob must have returned to Ireland after this because there are records of him returning to America on 10 September 1909 on the ship, Friesland. The American census of 1910 has Robert Stewart boarding with the Clark family in 307 North New Street, Delaware.



ROBERT STEWART, 29 Irish.
(Sworn) No address.
Q What is your name?
Robert Stewart.
Q How old are you?
A 29 years.
Q Married or single?
A Single.
Q What is your occupation?
A Shoemaker.
Q Have you ever been in the United Statesbefore?
A Yes; I was here over five years before.
Q Who paid your passage?
A Myself.
Q How much money have you?
A $80.00.
Q You say you were in the United States before; where were you?
A Dover, Kent County, Delaware.
Q How long were you in Dover?
A Pretty nearly all the time.
Q How long have you been away from the United States now?
A I left Philadelphia on the 5th of June.
Q What address are you going to now?
A I am going to stop a few days at Shewell's, 29 or 39 North 11th Street, Philadelphia. If I get a job I may stay, but I am going back there.
Q Did you know that man before you went back?
A Yes.

Benckart moved, Davis seconding, to land; Harper Concurred.

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A transcript of Bob's immigration interview on his return to the USA in 1909.
U.S. Immigration Records Special Boards of Enquiry Roll 18 Volume 53 (17/09/1909-01/11/1909).

An advertisement for Bob's business in Dover DE, Ettenger's Shoes.
The Morning News, Wilmington Delaware, 14 May 1949.

He must have been working and earning money as he opened up a bank account with the Rosenbaum Bank in July the same year. On 17 February 1913, Bob became a naturalised American Citizen. The naturalisation certificate describes him as 5ft 8" and 125lbs (8.9stone) so he's a very slim man, with fair skin, dark brown hair and brown eyes (which is quite a surprise for me as we all have blue eyes!).

By 1920, Bob was renting his own premises, Ettengers, at 207 Loockerman Street, Delaware – the main shopping street in Delaware which is still very popular today.

Reading like an incredible romance story, Bob married his childhood sweetheart from Ballycastle, Elizabeth O'Connor in Delaware in November 1927. Sadly, their happiness ended after just nine short years when Elizabeth died on 27 June 1936. Bob buried his childhood sweetheart at Holy Cross Church where they were married just less than a decade before.

On 25 January 1960, Bob was admitted to the State Welfare Home for the chronically ill. He passed away from chronic myocarditis at 5.20pm on 17th August. Bob had always been close to his older sister Retta (my great granny).

After Retta's death, my granny still kept in contact. When Bob realised he was dying, he asked my granny to be his inheritor, but she refused, asking him to give it to "someone who was good to him in America – Paul Stewart." Robert died before he could settle this, and his solicitors sought out the rest of Robert's relatives.

How did Bob manage to leave beautiful Ballycastle with its fresh breezes, regal Knocklayde mountain, its Margy river running down to the long beaches and shoreline? It must've been such a change to go to this hotter climate, to new places with no Ballycastle beach to walk on, no sea of Moyle washing up the shingle to help clear your mind.

It turns out Bob lived a five-minute walk from St Jone's River and Silver Lake, a 30 minute drive from Pickering Beach's long sandy shores with that unmistakable swish of tiny pebbles washing over each other, just like Ballycastle Strand. Nearby are the white cliffs of Dover (DE). They remind me of the white cliffs past the Rathlin ferry terminal, on round towards McIldowney's pier in Ballycastle. Nat Burton, the lyricist behind Vera Lynn's *White Cliffs of Dover*, was American and the bluebirds referenced in the song flying over the cliffs are native to the USA rather than England. Perhaps they were watched by Great uncle Bob!

MET IN IRELAND, MARRIED IN DOVER

DOVER, Nov. 6—In the Holy Cross Church yesterday, a quiet wedding took place when Miss Elizabeth Ann O'Connor became the bride of Robert R. Stewart. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Joseph L. Lee, D. D. Miss Mary Agnes Behan was bridesmaid and the best man was Edward J. Finnegan. A wedding breakfast was served. Mr. and Mrs. Stewart will reside at 127 Division street. When the bride and groom were children they attended the parochial school of St. Patrick and St. Bridget at Ballycastle, County Antrim, Ireland.

After leaving school the youthful lovers separated and the groom came to Delaware. The girl went to London and four years ago she returned home. While there she found a letter from her boy lover.

She then went to Canada, but under the immigration law could not come to the United States. Stewart attended the national convention of the Ancient Order of Hibernians held in Buffalo last July.

While talking to two state officers Stewart was called on the telephone and the girl at the other end of the wire was his school love of over thirty years ago. They met later at the Ford Hotel and they spent much time together in Buffalo and at Niagara Falls

The girl arrived in Dover last Sunday and Cupid sealed the love of old with the result that they were married in Holy Cross Church yesterday morning.

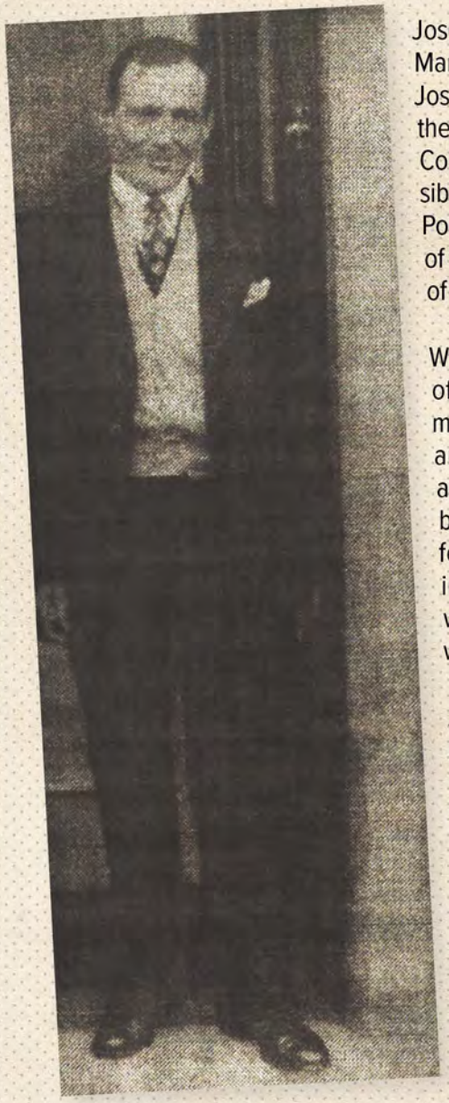
The story of Bob Stewart and Elizabeth O'Connor.
The Morning News, Wilmington Delaware, 7 November 1927.

Orla Duncan has always been fascinated by local history. She is a primary school teacher who spent a large part of her childhood in Ballycastle where her parents still live.

Robert and Elizabeth's grave, Holy Cross Church, Dover, DE.
Courtesy of Len Dornberger, Cemetery Administrator of Holy Cross Church, Dover, DE.

Joseph Farren: A Valiant Effort

Brigene McNeilly



The only photo Brigene has of her grandfather, Joseph Farren.
Courtesy of Judy Carmichael, Private Family Collection.

Joseph Farren (my grandfather) was born 22 March 1867, the second of seven children for Joseph and Annie Farren (nee O'Connell), in the townland of Ballymacilvennon, between Coleraine and Portrush. Joseph, and his siblings, spent their formative years attending Portrush Primary School, and were members of the congregation of Ballywillan Church of Ireland.

When Joseph left school he found a variety of work. He spent time as a Roadman, maintaining and repairing the roads around the Coleraine / Portrush area, and also worked for local farmers. He lived a bachelor's life until he met Jane Lyttle and fell in love. Jane and Joseph were married in Coleraine on 19 November 1889, and went on to have eight children, four of whom survived childhood.

Joseph had a love of spending his free time fishing, and living on the coast in Portrush, he made the most of the many local areas ideal for this pastime.

On 18 August 1904, Joseph had spent some time fishing off Ramore Head. Being summer, and the day of Portrush Regatta, the town was buzzing with locals, and visitors alike. Just as Joseph was packing up his fishing gear to go home, he noticed a disturbance nearby. On closer inspection, Joseph noticed that a young boy who had been with his friends, had been washed off the rocks into the sea by a monstrous wave.

The currents at Ramore Head are very strong, and there was a high sea running. Joseph could see that the boy was in trouble, so wasted no time in attempting to reach the boy with his fishing rod. The boy was able to grab it three times, but then forced by the receding waves to relinquish his grasp.

Seeing that this was futile, Joseph divested himself of his boots, and part of his clothing, and sending the boy's friends for help, descended the slippery side of the rocks. Grasping a cleft in the rock with one hand, he reached out and grabbed the drowning lad with the other. The weight of the boy, and the force of the waves dragged both back into the boiling sea. For fifteen or twenty minutes Joseph fought, keeping the boy afloat, but was unable to reach the shore. At last Joseph was forced to relinquish his hold on the lad, as he was in a state of exhaustion. Just as Joseph was about to sink, another brave man at the scene jumped into the water and assisted him to shore. Unfortunately, the boy was unable to be saved.

The plaque erected in memory of Jack Roberts in St. Margaret's Church, Ilkley, Yorkshire. It was purchased with subscriptions from Jack Robert's fellow pupils at Ghyll Royd School, Ilkley.
Courtesy of David King, Saltaire History Group, Yorkshire.

Royal Humane Society
INSTITUTED 1774.
SUPPORTED BY VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS
PATRON
His Majesty the King
PRESIDENT
His Royal Highness. the Prince of Wales K.G, K.T. &c.
At a Meeting of the Committee of the Royal Humane Society held at their OFFICE, 4. TRAFALGAR SQUARE, on the 17th day of October 1904
Present Colonel Horace Montagu, Treasurer in the Chair
It was Resolved Unanimously
That the BRONZE MEDAL of the Society be presented to
Joseph Farren
for having assisted to save life from drowning
F.A.C. Claughton
Secretary
Case No 3148
Duplicate
H. Montague
Chairman

Duplicate of the certificate presented to Joseph Farren by the Royal Humane Society in 1904.
Courtesy Royal Humane Society.

Joseph Farren: A Valiant Effort

Royal Humane Society Bronze Medal.
Courtesy Royal Humane Society.

The young man was Jack Roberts of Saltaire, Yorkshire, who had been staying in the Northern Counties Hotel with his parents. At a later date the teachers and pupils of his school erected a plaque in memory of Jack.

For his heroic effort Joseph was awarded The Royal Humane Society Bronze Medal. This was presented to him at a meeting of Portrush Urban District Council by Sir Francis Macnaghten.

On presentation of the award Joseph replied… "I desire to thank your Worships for the great honour you have conferred on me in presenting this medal and certificate. I did not expect to receive such recognition. My own aim and object was to save the life of Master Roberts, and I only regret that I did not do so. I again thank you all for your kindness" (*Coleraine Chronicle, 26 November 1904*).

In 1925 Joseph's wife Jane died. By then, their children had grown and were making their own way in life, so once again Joseph was living a solitary life in the area of Urbalreagh, between Portrush and Bushmills. Around 1929 Joseph, then in his early sixties, met Annie Curran, a twenty-five-year-old girl who had moved from her home in Donegal to work in the hotels of Portrush. They formed a relationship, and due to the age gap caused a great local scandal. In 1931 Joseph and Annie had a child (my mother) named Anne Josephine.

Unfortunately, when the baby was just a few months old Annie appears to have left her with Joseph and disappeared. As yet we have no information as to why this happened, or whether Annie returned to Donegal, or went elsewhere.

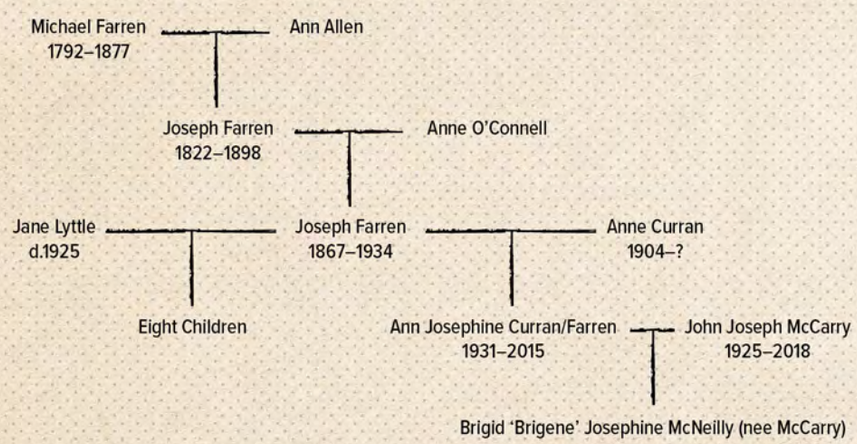
Joseph continued to care for the baby, and at this time was working for a local farmer who had a dairy. Joseph delivered milk and butter daily to the local area of Portrush and took the baby with him in the milk cart. The beginning of his round took him to Croc-na-mac Street, and the baby was left with James and Alice Baird, a local couple, while Joseph completed his work. He would then pick the baby up on his way home.

It was originally thought that this was just a random, kind family, but research has now shown that Alice Baird's brother was married to Joseph's daughter.

Unfortunately, Joseph became ill and died in the Route Hospital in Ballymoney on 17 November 1934 leaving three-year-old Anne Josephine an orphan. She was taken in by the Baird's and raised alongside their own children.

Most of Joseph's children by his wife Jane moved to Scotland, and from there some emigrated to America. My Mother married and came to live in Ballycastle. Her warm hearted and sociable personality, coupled with years of work in local schools, and hostelries, meant she became one of the best known and most loved members of the local community. She lived her entire life not knowing any of her family, and so, in her memory I began searching in order to allow her to take her rightful place within her family tree. After many fits and starts I have discovered many relations at home and abroad, but the search continues as there is much more to discover.

Brigene Mc Neilly was born and raised in Ballycastle. She trained and spent her working life as a nurse and now does charity work. Brigene has a love of history, especially local, and is the chairperson of the Friends of Ballycastle Museum.



The Anderson Search

Peter and Brian Molloy

Our mother, Margaret Molloy, nee McLean.
©Peter Molloy.

My brother Brian and I joined this group with two objectives. Firstly to discover more about a neglected branch of our family history and, secondly, to prove or disprove a family legend. Since first coming to serious family history research 37 years ago, I have noted that family legend often contains at least a kernel of truth. For example, our mother Margaret, nee McLean, born 1918, often said that her mother had told her in childhood that the McLeans had been kicked out of the Highlands 300 years before for sheep stealing! I didn't seek to prove the sheep-stealing bit, but was able to prove to my own satisfaction, and hers, that the McLean family's roots in the Townland of Drumadoon, Parish of Culfeightrin, did indeed go back over 300 years, and were mentioned in the Hearth Money Rolls of 1666.

Our grandmother, Rose McLean, nee Anderson.
©Peter Molloy.

The new family legend we wanted to tackle here was also recounted by our grandmother Rose McLean, nee Anderson, but forgotten about by myself for many years until a chance encounter in my local pub/restaurant about 5 years ago. We were discussing local news/gossip/history etc., when a lady on the fringe of the group said "Did you not know we are cousins?". Many thanks for that introduction Mary McNeill, my third cousin, which was the beginning of a friendship and exchange of family histories which also contained the same legend, recounted by our grandmother: two Anderson brothers from Rathlin Island married two McNeill sisters from Carey (Culfeightrin). Our great grandfather, Michael Anderson, is one of the supposed brothers.

Our current research began where I had started in 1984, looking through the relevant old parish registers.

Reading them, I was struck by the total absence of Irish Christian names in the Baptismal Registers in parishes which, throughout the 19th century would have been bi-lingual. It seems to have been an almost cast-iron rule that only the English or classical form of a Christian name was registered, the only exception to this being Brigid. I don't accept the excuse that only saint's names could be used as the pagan Greek name Dionysus was accepted and recorded! Rather, it appears to have been part of a wider social and political trends at the time to discourage the use of Irish.

Our great grandfather, Michael Anderson.
©Peter Molloy.

The two supposed Anderson brothers from Rathlin were Michael and John. The earliest mention of any Anderson I could find in the Culfeightrin Parish records is a Michael Anderson Sponsor/Godparent to Ann Stewart, child of James and Catherine Stewart on 30th April 1861. He appears again on 12th February 1862, Godparent to Alex, born of Alexander Miller and Mary McLoughlin. A search of Griffith's Valuation, Co. Antrim 1861, reveals no Anderson Household in the Parish of Culfeightrin so, if this is our Michael, he is living as part of another household.

Unfortunately, there are no Census records to validate this. But information gleaned from his headstone in St.Patrick's RC Church, Culfeightrin, would suggest he was living with his Aunt Catherine (nee Anderson) McKeague and husband John in the small townland of Acravilla. There are still McKeague's living there today. So it looks entirely possible that he came over from Rathlin to live and work with extended family in the immediate post "famine" period.

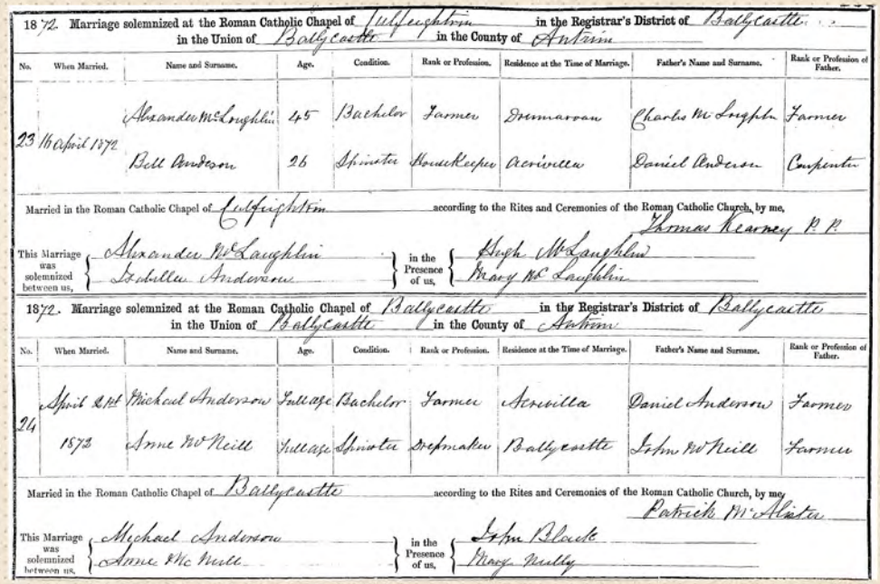
Headstone of Michael Anderson, St.Patrick's Church, Culfeightrin.
©Peter Molloy.

As I write this I am suddenly struck by the thought that his supposed birth year is circa 1845 just before the famine, is there a hint of famine related family tragedy here? Also, that four of our great-grandparents were born before that horrible event and we are only three generations removed from it ourselves, is a very sobering and contemplative thought!

A study of the Culfeightrin church records allowed us to draft a family grouping of Michael with siblings John, Mary, and Isabella/Bell, with an Aunt Catherine. In the absence of any Rathlin Island Parish Records, I put out an appeal on the Rathlin Island Genealogy Research Facebook Page asking if our family grouping was familiar to anyone, and received a very prompt reply from Michael Cecil, Ferry Captain and Chairman of Rathlin Development and Community Association, whom I know well having worked with him in other guises. I thought we had hit the jackpot.

However, closer examination of the dates of birth and places of death in his research cast doubts. Having said that, I have learnt from experience that just because something is published elsewhere it is not a guarantee of the accuracy of the information, especially in the field of genealogy! The striking similarity of family names in both groups is too hard to discount totally.

Marriage registers for Bell (Isabella) Anderson and Michael Anderson, only five days apart in April 1872.
Courtesy Irishgenealogy.ie.



1872. Marriage solemnized at the Roman Catholic Chapel of Culfeightrin in the Registrar's District of Ballycastle in the Union of Ballycastle in the County of Antrim

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
23	16 April 1872	Alexander McLaughlin	45	Bachelor	Farmer	Drumaroan	Charles McLaughlin	Farmer
		Bell Anderson	26	Spinster	Housekeeper	Acrivillen	Daniel Anderson	Carpenter

Married in the Roman Catholic Chapel of Culfeightrin according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church, by me, Thomas Kearney P.P.

This Marriage was solemnized between us, Alexander McLaughlin, Isabella Anderson — in the Presence of us, Hugh McLaughlin, Mary McLaughlin

1872. Marriage solemnized at the Roman Catholic Chapel of Ballycastle in the Registrar's District of Ballycastle in the Union of Ballycastle in the County of Antrim

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
24	April 24th 1872	Michael Anderson	Full age	Bachelor	Farmer	Acrivilla	Daniel Anderson	Farmer
		Anne McNeill	Full age	Spinster	Dressmaker	Ballycastle	John McNeill	Farmer

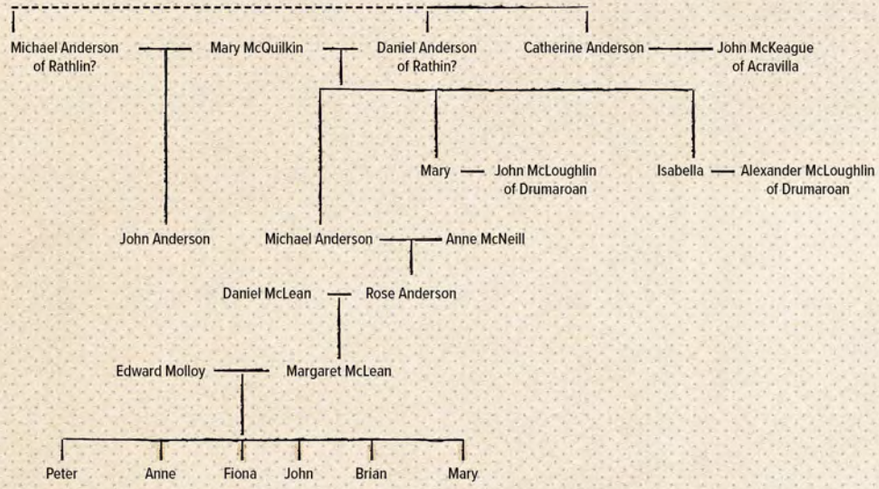
Married in the Roman Catholic Chapel of Ballycastle according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church, by me, Patrick McAlister

This Marriage was solemnized between us, Michael Anderson, Anne McNeill — in the Presence of us, John Black, Mary Nelly

But then Brian dropped another bombshell. He had been checking the Civil Registration of Births Deaths and Marriages, found the Marriages of all four supposed siblings and John gave his father's Christian name as Michael, while the other three siblings list their father as Daniel! Daniel Anderson is listed as a carpenter on his daughters' marriage registers, while Michael gave his father's occupation as a farmer – the different occupations are listed on marriages only five days apart. What was really confusing was that the Anderson girls, Isabella and Mary, had married McLoughlin brothers, John and Alexander, sons of Charles McLoughlin of Drumaroan townland. Maybe that was where the family legend came from, the Anderson sisters married into Culfeightrin, and not the brothers at all!

So, in conclusion what have we achieved? Actually, not so much; almost no verified information to add to the family tree and still no conclusive family link to Rathlin Island, which is disappointing, but we haven't given up. And I think we have established the basis of the family legend is an error in the sexes. Like all genealogy it is still a work in progress and having recently had my DNA tested (Peter), I am hopeful new information will come to light.

STOP PRESS! As we go to print DNA testing has shown a 3rd to 5th cousin link to a Rathlin resident from a long-established island family. This means that we share at the most recent a great great grandparent and, lo and behold, the name Anderson is one of them! Now we need to get together and compare notes, "the road goes ever on"!



Brothers Peter and Brian are natives of Ballycastle, born of a local 'townie' father and 'country' mother. Although both have travelled extensively and lived away, they are retired back in Ballycastle, members of the Friends of Ballycastle Museum, and active in family genealogy and local history.

From Belfast to Baltimore

Mary O Driscoll

John Molloy's father, John Matthew Molloy, was a butcher from North Street, Belfast.
Courtesy Joseph Molloy (John M. Molloy's grandson).

Photograph taken c.1890 by Robert French showing net making at Baltimore Fishery School, Cork.
Lawrence Collection, courtesy National Libraries Ireland L_ROY_02595.

On 14 January 1889, Belfast was excited as the RMS *Oceanic* was launched from Harland and Wolf Shipyard; in Europe, on 31 March, the Eiffel Tower was opened; on Monday 8 April, in a little house at St Peters Hill, Belfast, John Molloy was born – the fifth child of John Mathew Molloy (a butcher) and Ellen McAnally. John's older brother died as an infant so he became the only brother to three sisters: Catherine (7), Elizabeth (5) and Maria (3). Ellen and an infant daughter died in childbirth in 1897 leaving John with four children between 8 and 15. It would appear that the three younger children were put into care in industrial homes. John was sent from Belfast to Baltimore – as far away as is possible to be from Belfast and still be in Ireland.

Baltimore in West Cork had, at that time, the largest fishing fleet in Ireland. Thanks to the foresight of an enterprising Catholic priest, Fr Davis, it too had a very progressive Fisheries School. Fr Davis also succeeded in extending the train line to Baltimore so the fishing fleet could export their catch from the quay and deliver it to London's Billingsgate Market via train and ferry – all within 24 hours! John Molloy travelled from Belfast to Baltimore on the train and was then enrolled in the Fisheries School. He was a "pupil" there by the time of the census on 31 March 1901, aged 12.

During John's time, Baltimore Fisheries – or Piscatorial – School does not appear to have been as difficult and unfriendly as it became in later years. The boys learned "fishing, curing of fish, and related skills such as net making and boat building". In 1911 the school had a manager, three school masters and a bandmaster!

Baltimore Fishery Industrial School band – the child whose face is immediately to the right of the drum may be John Molloy.
Courtesy Bushes Bar, Baltimore, Co. Cork.

The music and fishing skills John learned in Baltimore were carried with him all his life.

By 1911, John was living in Cape Clear working as a farm labourer in Sweeneys of Glen. He married Julia Anne Regan of Cape Clear in Rath, and they then moved to Cork city where he lived and worked on a farm in Rathpeacon. Kathleen, their oldest daughter, was born in November 1911. Their second daughter, Mary, followed in May 1913; by then they were living at 67 Commons Road, Cork.

On 3 November 1913, John sailed on the RMS *Cedric* to New York from Queenstown. He had $17. Interestingly, the next of kin listed on his papers was his mother-in in-law, not his wife! Kate Regan of 44 Commons Road, Cork – who we know as Cáit Thaidhg – was listed as the contact. Was his 18-year-old wife Julia not old enough to be his legal next of kin? His contact in America was Nellie Hayes, a cousin. Our family story is that he went to fish with his brother-in-law, John Regan – rich Uncle Johnny -– who fished out of Charlestown MA.

I have failed to find records of his return journey to Ireland – it is said he worked his passage back because he was concerned about his wife and young family in Ireland after the outbreak of World War One. It is presumed he was home by November or December 1914 because their next child, John, was born on 29 August 1915. By now they were living at 44 Commons Road and John was working as a Carman – a delivery driver – at Gouldings of Cork.

Their next two children were born at No 44 – Daniel in 1917 and Michael in 1919. Sadly Daniel died at exactly one year old of convulsions. By 6 June 1920, when Jeremiah was born, the family had relocated to Sherkin Island where John was working as a farm labourer with the Desmond family.

John, Julia and their five children moved to the West Cork mainland area of Turk Head, near Baltimore, to continue working for the same family; their daughter Sheila was born there in 1923. During that period there was a lot

John Molloy in his postal uniform in the mid-late 1930s.
Courtesy Joseph Molloy (John's son).

of unrest in all of Ireland after the civil war. Julia's cousins from Cape Clear were known IRA supporter and activists. One of them visited the family unexpectedly, but unknown to John and his family, this cousin was on the run.

During the visit, the RIC arrived to search the house and farm. The cousin hid in a haystack and wasn't found by the police. But John was very angry that he had put the lives of innocent relations at risk. John had lived in Belfast before troubles around Partition, but was witnessing it in the wilds of West Cork in the early 1920s.

By 1924 John and his family had moved on again and were now living in Kilbrinogue near Schull where John held a job as a postman. My father, Timothy Kieran, was born there in November 1924. They then moved to South Terrace, Schull and had three more children – Joseph (1927), Monica (1929) and Patrick (1931).

FATAL FALL INTO HOLD

SCHULL SEAMAN'S DEATH AT LONDON DOCKS

The news of the tragic death of Mr. Jerome Molloy, of South Terrace, Schull, in London, was received in his native town on Friday morning of last week, with feelings of very deep sorrow.

Aged twenty years, he was third son of Mr. John Molloy, local postman, and Mrs. Molloy.

Deceased and his brothers Michael and John, were able seamen on the s.s. Beacon Grange, which had returned to London from the River Plate with a general cargo.

It appears, that while he was at work on the boat, which was berthed at Victoria docks, he slipped on ice that had remained on the hatches, and fell into the hold.

He was removed to the Albert Dock Hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries.

Deceased was a very popular figure in his native town, and had been an esteemed and valued member of the local branch of the C.Y.M.S. before going to sea. An expert swimmer, he took part in many swimming competitions at the local regatta, at which he won a handsome Cup.

Sincere sympathy has been extended to his parents, and the other members of the family.

His ship-mates and many Irish friends were present at the funeral which took place in London on Wednesday.

The chief mourners were: John and Michael Molloy (brothers); Mrs. M. Whooley and Mrs. K. O'Mahony (sisters).

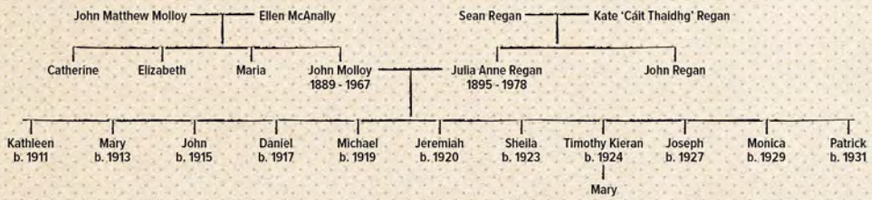
In March 1940, Jerome slipped into the hold of the ship on which he worked and was killed. John and Julia tried to get to London but only got as far as Skibbereen; travel was difficult because of the war.
Southern Star, 23 March 1940.

By the 1930s, John's three sons John, Michael and Jeremiah – known as Jerome – were at sea in the Merchant Navy. Kathleen and Mary had both married and were living in Wales.

In September 1939, in the early days of the Second World War, a ship called the SS Hazelside was torpedoed off the Fastnet and the survivors were brought to Schull by a local fishing boat. My grandfather and the local police sergeant were photographed with the survivors – Jack in his postman's uniform!
Courtesy Danny John's Pub, Schull, Co. Cork.

My father, Timothy Kieran, was the only son to remain in Schull. In the 1960s he began a seasonal ferry service between Cape Clear Island and Schull, reconnecting with his mother's origins. By strange coincidence I found myself, in 2008, making the journey back north, to Ballycastle, to operate the ferry service to Rathlin – 110 years after John took the train to Baltimore – and in doing so I have found my Belfast Molloy relations!

John died in September 1967 – the year I started boarding school – and is buried in Schull, in a picturesque cemetery that has Cape Clear and the Baltimore Beacon in its vista. So for the little refugee boy from Belfast who was sent so far from home, he will be forever looking at the place that welcomed him and where he enjoyed a long and happy life.



Mary Molloy O Driscoll, born in Schull, has lived most of her life on Ireland's most southerly island of Cape Clear, Co Cork. Since 2008 she divides her time between Cape Clear and Rathlin Island, Co Antrim. Her regular commute between the two locations, is the true length of Ireland – from the Fastnet Lighthouse to the West Light on Rathlin!

The Benevolent Blacks

Donnell O'Loan and Josh Hutchings

Legg House, built by Duncan Black c.1817 on Cushendall Strand below the slopes of Lurigethan.
©Sam Henry collection, Coleraine Museum.

Black is still a common surname today in the Glens of Antrim, though one particular branch of Blacks, native to the townlands of Legg and Moneyvart near Cushendall, left traces of their lives both in the Glens and right across the world, from the colonies of South Africa to the United States. Despite their yearning for opportunities elsewhere, these Blacks retained a fondness for their homeland of the Glens, where they showed great benevolence and charity during the nineteenth century.

One of the earliest traceable patriarchs of the Black family was Duncan Black of Cloghcor, Glenariff, who was laid to rest in 1790 beneath a stone slab in Old Layd Graveyard. In the early nineteenth century, two brothers – sons of Duncan Black – were financially able to build outstanding homes with spectacular views of the Glens. Michael Black built Moneyvart House and his brother, Duncan, built Legge House on the Cushendall shoreline, later the clubhouse for Cushendall Golf Club.

Moneyvart House,Cushendall, built by Michael Black, circa 1817.
Courtesy of the University of St Andrews Libraries and Museums, ID: JV-R-5530.

In those days of landlords and tenants, many people's lives were short and hard, working the land for little pay and life was very different to what we know today. However, gradual improvements were introduced in medical and social care for the worst off of the population.

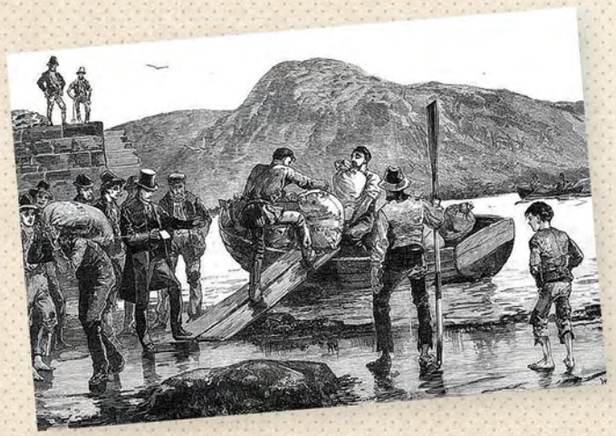
Cushendall Medical Dispensary was set up on Mill Street in 1827 from where a doctor was employed to attend to the medical needs of the local poor. A decade later, when Poor Law Unions were set up, Cushendall was part of the Ballycastle Poor Law Union administered by the Board of Guardians who ran the Ballycastle Workhouse. Providing basic food and shelter in exchange for manual labour, workhouses were an early government attempt to provide for the destitute but were far from universally loved.

Moneyvart and Legg Townlands from the Griffith Valuation Map (1861-1862).
©askaboutireland.ie.

In the mid-1800s Denis Black of Legg House and his brother Charles Black of Moneyvart House were the heirs of the Black family properties. They were highly respected landowners in the community, who saw it as their responsibility to play their part in caring for those who were worse off. For twenty years Charles served as the member for Cushendall on the Board of Guardians while Denis became Secretary of the Dispensary Committee.

In December 1859 Charles Black left Cushendall for Co Galway taking on the lease of the island of Inishbofin, Co. Galway. He could not have been unaware of the fact that the islanders remained impoverished as a result of the famine a decade previously. Over several years Charles spent much of his own money, making improvements on Inishbofin and providing food to the islanders, only choosing to leave once a new owner had bought the island.

He appears to have drained his own financial resources to such an extent that, in 1864, he was forced to sell his valuable family farm in Moneyvart through the Landed Estates Court.



Provisions being landed on Inishbofin in the nineteenth century.
Illustrated London News, 1886.

IN THE LANDED ESTATES COURT, IRELAND.

COUNTY OF ANTRIM.

In the Matter of the Estate of CHARLES BLACK, Esq., - *Owner and Petitioner.*

RENTAL

AND PARTICULARS OF SALE

OF PART OF THE

LANDS OF MONEYVERT,

OTHERWISE MONIEVERT.

SITUATE IN THE

BARONY OF LOWER GLENARM, AND COUNTY OF ANTRIM,

Containing 35a. 2r. 8p. Statute Measure,

WITH THE DWELLING-HOUSE, OUT-OFFICES, AND PREMISES, ERECTED AND BUILT THEREON,

Held for the residue of the term of 200 years, from May 1862, and Indemnified against payment of all Rent by Deed of 3rd July, 1731.

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,

BY ORDER OF THE HONOURABLE JUDGE LONGFIELD,

AT THE SALEROOMS OF JOHN H. GOWAN, AUCTIONEER, GEORGE'S LANE, BELFAST,

On FRIDAY, the 19th day of AUGUST, 1864,

AT THE HOUR OF ONE O'CLOCK IN THE AFTERNOON.

For Rentals and further particulars apply at the Office of the Landed Estates Court, Sug's Quay, Dublin; or to JEREMIAH PERRY, Solicitor, having Carriage of the Sale, 12 Bachelor's Walk, Dublin, or CHARLES BLACK, Esq., the Owner, Moneyvart, Cushendall, Co. Antrim.

Charles Black's Moneyvart property advertised for sale by the Landed Estates Court of Ireland.
Belfast Morning News 22nd June 1864, courtesy Irish Newspaper Archive.

After his difficult years in Inishbofin, Charles Black spent some time in Portglenone, his wife Margaret's home village, before he made the difficult decision to follow so many Irishmen before him and cross the Atlantic. He settled in Chicago with his family, where he and his family became naturalised US citizens. The 1880 US census shows Charles spent his working life as a contractor "paving the streets" of the booming city until his retirement. His death record in 1890 described him as a civil engineer; he had made a success of his new life despite his previous misfortunes on Inishbofin.

Back in Cushendall, Charles Black's brother, Denis, continued to farm in the townlands of Moneyvart and Legge, and improve the infrastructure of the area as a civil engineer. Notably, he was the designer of the new pier at Red Bay and supervised its construction in 1849. In addition, he contributed to the community by taking the role of Secretary of the Committee of Management of Cushendall Dispensary District.

Following the death of Denis Black in 1876, his widow Mary and their extended family sold their Moneyvart property, Seaview, and left the family home at Legg House to make a new life in the colony of Natal. This must have been a monumental decision to make as many members of the extended Black family, along with their McGonigal and Hutchings relations, travelled thousands of miles to the African colony.

Construction Drawing of Red Bay Pier by Denis Black.
Courtesy PRONI COM/9/56.

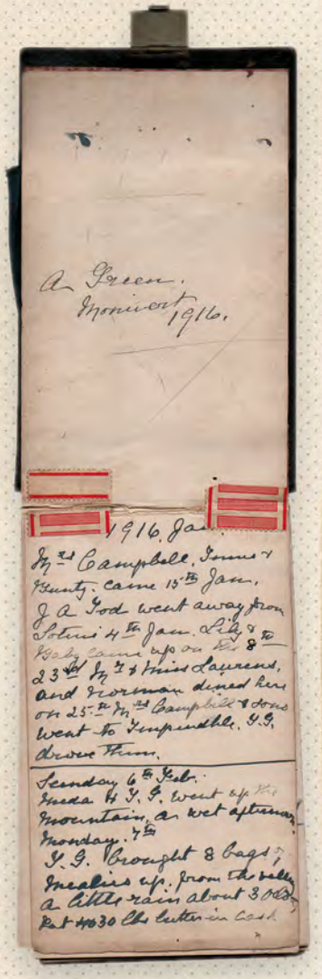
The first to emigrate was Denis Black's young son, Charles, who had followed after his father and uncle to become a civil engineer. The rest of the family joined Charles at the new frontier of the British Empire in waves, in a place where very few of their fellow countrymen had settled. Fortunately, the Blacks had first-hand information from their cousin, Colonel John McDonnell of Glenariff, who spent many years in the African Colonies with the Cape Mounted Rifles. Opportunities abounded in Natal, and following the sale of Seaview Farm, the Blacks could afford to set up farms many times the size of those in Ireland.

Despite roaming to the furthest reaches of the Empire, memories of the Black's beloved home in the Glens were deeply entrenched and preserved. Their African farms were named Glenariff and Moneyvart while Nicholas Black built a home and named it Glenmona. As a beautiful and moving homage to the Glens, one of Denis Black's daughters, Alice Green, pressed, between the pages of her diary, an assortment of delicate flowers and herbs picked from the Legg House garden on the shore of County Antrim.

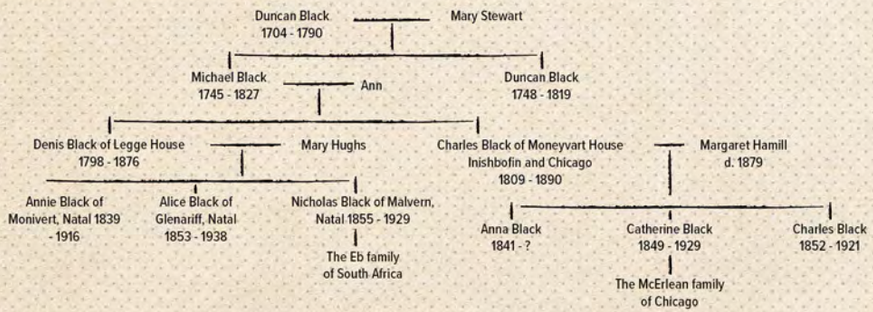
The story of the lives of the Blacks of Moneyvart is one of benevolence and contribution to their community: a story to be admired and remembered.

Donnell O'Loan is a long-time member of Glens of Antrim Historical Society and has an interest in researching family stories based in the Glens. This research began when he was given letters written from South Africa by a descendant of the family.

Josh Hutchings is a writer and researcher from the Cotswolds who developed a keen interest in Ireland and her history after discovering that a relative, Arundel Arthur Hutchings (1846-1930), married into the Black family of Cushendall in 1882.



The first page of Alice Green's 1916 diary, written at Monivert farm, Natal.
Courtesy of the Eb family archive, descendants of the Black family of Cushendall.



A Family Divided, a Family United: The Boyds of Danson and Ballycastle

Roger Perritt

Two branches of the Boyd clan of Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, had settled in Ireland by the late seventeenth century; their lines would later join through marriage.

In Ballycastle, Rev. William Boyd married Rose McNeil; the union brought with it stewardship of the Ballycastle estate which would be developed into a thriving industrial centre in the hands of their son, Colonel Hugh Boyd (1690-1765).

Over in Portnacross, Co Donegal, Alexander Boyd had married Elizabeth Henderson, a French Huguenot. Their son Augustus (1680-1765) didn't share the prospects of his Ballycastle cousin so in 1700, aged just 20, he set out to work for his maternal uncle, Andrew Thauvet, on his estate 4,000 miles away in St Kitts in the Caribbean.

Survey of St Kitts by Andrew Norwood undertaken 1702-1707.
Courtesy New York Public Library, NYPL catalog ID b13909432.

Augustus did not find immediate success in this hostile environment of earthquakes, hurricanes and pirates, but after 10 years he had managed to save enough money to rent a small estate of his own. By 1730 he had married Lucy Peters, the daughter of a prominent Huguenot estate owner and become one of the islands main landowners with two large properties and over 400 slaves working the islands sugar cane.

View of the Town and Harbour of Basse Terre in the Island of St. Kitts (1808-1811).
Courtesy New York Public Library, NYPL catalog ID b15034052

The village of Boyds on the south coast of St. Kitts is a legacy of the Boyd presence on the island.

When Augustus was not allowed to inherit the estate of his uncle, and his application for a seat on the governing Assembly of St. Kitts was rejected, he put his estates in the hands of managers and set sail for London with Lucy and their teenage son, John.

Augustus Boyd's immense wealth bought him prominence among London's commercial elite and a house in fashionable Lewisham south of the River Thames. John attended Christ Church College, Oxford before embarking on the Grand Tour of Europe. On his return, he set about creating what was reputed to be the finest art collection in England.

1672 map showing St Kitts (marked St Christofal) in the Caribbean.
Courtesy New York Public Library, NYPL catalog ID b13908778.

Augustus and John set up in partnership supplying goods with services to colonial planters and the British military in the West Indies and American colonies before joining four other merchants to form the African Company of Merchants in 1752. The African Company controlled the slave trading monopoly between Africa and the Americas as well as land and defences in Ghana. The trade made use of a fort on Bance Island, Sierra Leone, owned by partner Oswald, that acted as a hub in the transportation of slaves.

As John took on more of the business, he acquired an area of parkland in Bexley called Danson Hill, landscaped by the famous Capability Brown, just a short horse ride away from the African Company of Merchant's headquarters at Erith on the Thames.

Danson House, Bexley, Kent, built by John Boyd between 1763 and 1768.
©Silver Tiger https://tigergrowl.wordpress.com.

Bence or Bance Island, Sierra Leone, provided a hub for the transportation of slaves.
From Jakob van der Schley's Histoire Générale des Voyages, ou nouvelle collection de toutes les relations de voyages par mer et par terre (1748).

The Piranesi Vase bought by Sir John Boyd on one of his Grand Tours. Now in the British Museum.
©Trustees of the British Museum.

Meanwhile back in Ballycastle, Hugh Boyd, just ten years Augustus' junior, had also made a success of his life. Inheriting the stewardship of Ballycastle from his mother in 1711, he set about transforming the two hamlets, tenant farms, coal mines and salt works into an industrial centre. He studied business and mining, imported skilled labour, and built a railway before persuading the government to invest in a deep-water dock for Ballycastle harbour.

Both Augustus and Hugh died in 1765. For Ballycastle this was the end of an era; without Hugh's dynamic leadership, the industries began to fail and whilst the Boyds were still a presence in the town, their influence was more marginal.

For John in London, however, inheriting his father's share of their business ventures only increased his status he went on to become the vice-chairman of the East India Company. His first wife, Mary Bumpstead, having died leaving four children, John remarried to Catherine Chapone and moved into the Palladian mansion of Danson House.

Increased British military activity, first against the French during the Seven Years War, and then in the American War of Independence, resulted in lucrative contacts to provide military provisions. In 1775 John was made Sir John, 1st Baronet Boyd of Danson for services to the army. He immediately embarked on further Grand Tours in Europe during which he bought the Piranesi Vase (now in the British Museum).

However, things were not to last. Within a short time the French took over St. Kitts, a devastating hurricane destroyed the estates and two of John's sons died. He retreated to Danson House and became a recluse. Cash poor but land rich, he was rescued from bankruptcy by an ex-employee Paul Benfield, but things were never the same.

Part of an eight page record of slaves owned by Sir John Boyd in 1817.
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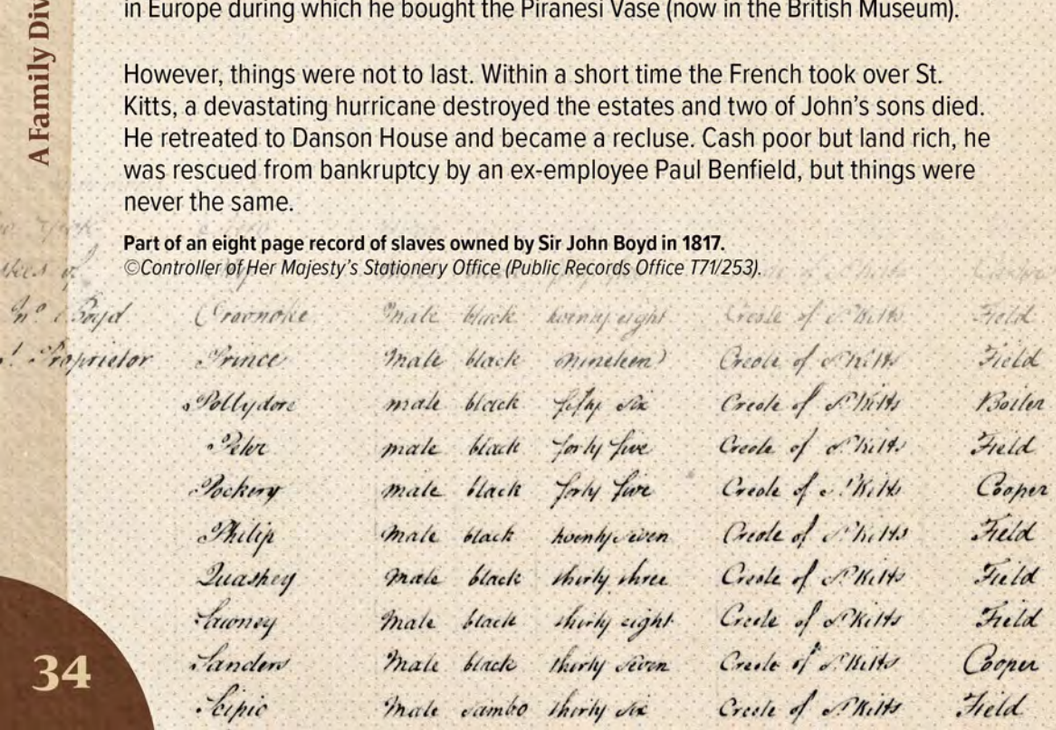


No. Boyd	Crowmoke	Male	black	twenty eight	Creole of St Kitts	Field
Proprietor	Prince	Male	black	Nineteen	Creole of St Kitts	Field
	Pollydore	male	black	Fifty six	Creole of St Kitts	Boiler
	Peter	male	black	Forty five	Creole of St Kitts	Field
	Pockery	male	black	Forty five	Creole of St Kitts	Cooper
	Philip	male	black	twenty seven	Creole of St Kitts	Field
	Quashey	male	black	thirty three	Creole of St Kitts	Field
	Quoney	male	black	thirty eight	Creole of St Kitts	Field
	Sanders	male	black	thirty seven	Creole of St Kitts	Cooper
	Scipio	male	sambo	thirty six	Creole of St Kitts	Field

Sir John died in 1800 and his son John (the 2nd Baronet Boyd of Danson) inherited not only the estates and title but also the financial problems. He quickly sold off the art collection and by 1807 the Danson House estate as well. The same year the Abolition of Slavery Act was passed prohibiting slave trading within the British Empire, however, ownership of slaves in the colonies was still permitted. As the Boyd entry in Original Return of Slaves for St Kitts showed only a very few of the four hundred plus slaves on his estates had been brought to the island.

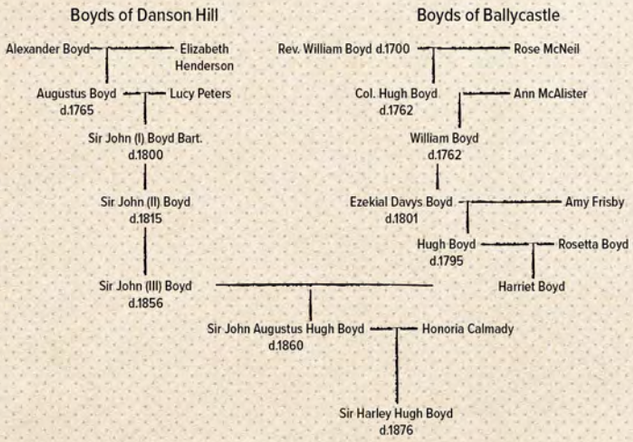
The 2nd Baronet Boyd died in 1815 and his son John became the third Baronet Boyd. His marriage to Harriet Boyd of Ballycastle, the great great granddaughter of Colonel Hugh Boyd, united the two Boyd families in 1818. They had three children: John Augustus Hugh, Frederick and Henrietta.

In 1822 an advertisement appeared in the *Times* newspaper for the sale of three Boyd estates; the Fountains and Palmetto Point on St Kitts and the Plaisance on Grenada. The details included the extent of land, buildings and over 700 slaves: *"... negroes or other slaves and the live and dead stock, plantation utensils &c."*

If these sales went ahead it may mean the Boyds withdrew at least part of their holdings from the slave trade before the passing of the 1833 Act outlawing slave ownership in the colonies, and so not being entitled to the vast amount of money paid in compensation by the British Government amounting in total to some £20 million that took until 2015 to repay.

The 3rd Baronet died in 1856, an ambassador to France. His son Sir John Augustus, a naval officer, married Honoria Calmady, a popular Boyd in Ballycastle, and their son Sir Harley Hugh Boyd, the fifth Baronet, was expected to revive their fortunes in Ballycastle before his mysterious death at sea off St Helena in 1876, aged just 22.

Roger Perritt is a retired special needs teacher and a founding member of the Friends of Ballycastle Museum. His research into the Boyd family started with a chance reading about Sir Harley Hugh Boyd's coming of age in 1875.



Researched and written by members of the community, *Moyle Migrations* uses personal histories and family case studies to explore the lives of the people of Rathlin, Ballycastle and the Glens, from ancient origins to more recent arrivals.

Who do you think you are? Migration and Identity in Rathlin, Ballycastle and the Glens 2

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Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council

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