

Kerry History

The Sword and the Plough

Perhaps the start of it all.



Lough Leane

by

Terence Kearey (Ciardha)

Taking an interest

Delving back into the past - looking for others with the same name, can open a Pandora's Box – it's a fairly common past-time and can lead to exciting finds. For my brother, his muscular dystrophy demanded a wheel chair and desk, these his basic tools which started his detective work. Having an enquiring, tidy mind, he began building a family tree. Over time, as the tree grew and blossomed, his letters revealed a Thomas Keary born 1791, in Ireland, to parents James and Mary Keary. Thomas was baptised in St. Paul's Church, Dublin, a Church of Ireland, not a Catholic Church, on the 4th December 1791. Helping to fill in his Census Form in 1851 Thomas had added an (e) to his surname and was living in 20, North Row, Brompton, North London. His profession was given as a gold and silver melter (as written). He filled in a census form of 1851 by that time he was aged sixty, married to Ester Pepler of Great Stanmore, with three children, all living at home.

This was the time of The Great Exhibition and a time when building railways across the countryside was not only a massive task but drained labour from the land giving employment to thousands by opening up new industries and building new towns. This is all very interesting but not what I began my searches for, I wanted to know about how Thomas lived, whether he went to school, what was life at home like, something about his parents and grandparents, the place where he lived and the local community.

There are many peoples living abroad whose relations had done exactly the same, they too had started a family tree finding all the same problems he had done, of language, lack of information, unreadable forms: be they church, state, local

authority or house holder. Whereas they may have been keen to seek their relatives, those living in Ireland have no such urges - not understanding that names or spellings had to be changed purposely, for those individuals who took the plunge, to have to become assimilated in their chosen country and find a living. They may also have expected to understand either Irish or English, not understanding that there are, or were, three dialects of Gaelic making tracing places and individuals an added trial on top of impossible spellings of those places. Little did he know it would stir-up within him a longing for the past to find a family history by hook, or by crook? In my turn, I too picked up the baton, to do exactly the same - to find my Irish beginnings. After engaging investigators, Ireland's Heralds, in their library home, reading numerous books, and a visit to Ireland, seeking to find Thomas' family connections, but failed.

Now I look for how and where the Irish name evolved how it was used, formed, and spelt. To do this I have had to start at the very beginning when Ireland was formed, populated, developed and how closely related it was to its neighbour. I;ve chosen The Ice Age - when it began to sufficiently melt for wandering stone-age peoples to take it upon themselves to make their way 'over yonder,' to a land they could see - to its shoreline, to what is called today, the County of Cork, and wider still, to Munster. A people who were related to numerous others across Europe all in similar groupings eventually to be given the common name of 'Celtic peoples'. These people would have to make their way inland up through numerous coves and inlets around the southern coast choosing eventually to settle on top of the cliffs facing the sea to give protection. You may well ask what protection – to protect from whom. There were homosapiens and later hunter-gatherers the infiltrations of Celtic people began around the fifth century.

Right, so here we are then, no home as yet but there's the sea, with plenty of fish, a rugged land, nobody about but plenty of potential. This band of people, looking for security, were starting to build a home. They were led by a man who was forceful, when he spoke he sounded knowledgeable and sure of himself, giving leadership seemed natural. His first advice was to build a mud and stone wall circulating around all the places where the body of people were sleeping, eating and rearing children, which was on the top of the cliffs. This then was to be their home not just for one but for all who were in the body, of family and friends, who had started out in the beginning, they were now all being guided by this man, who had been accepted as leader - their chosen one, the king. They felt secure. So it all began...



Letters Patent

Whereas petition hath been made unto me by Terence Arthur . . .
Kearey of Petworth, West Sussex, England, born at North Harrow, . . .
Middlesex, the son of Albert Edward Kearey of North Harrow, Middlesex,
the grandson of Alfred Kearey of Salem Gardens in the same county, the
great grandson of Thomas Kearey of Sutton Street, Kensington in the .
same county, the great great grandson of Thomas Kearey of North Row,
Kensington in the same county, who was born in Ireland, setting forth
that he is desirous that certain Armorial Ensigns may be duly . . .
marshalled and assigned by lawful authority unto him such as . . .
without injury or prejudice to any other he may forever bear and . . .
advance and praying that I would grant and assign unto him and . . .
his descendants such Armorial Ensigns as aforesaid and that the . . .
Armorial Ensigns so granted and assigned may be duly ratified and .
recorded in the Office of the Chief Herald of Ireland to the end . . .
that the Officers of Arms there and all others upon occasion may . . .
take full notice and have knowledge thereof.

Now I, the said Chief Herald of Ireland, having taken this matter into
consideration am pleased to comply with the said petition and by . . .
virtue of the power vested in me in that behalf do by these Presents . . .
grant and assign unto the said Terence Arthur Kearey the Arms . . .
following, that is to say: Per fess rayonné Sable and Or on a chief . . .
Argent four crosses couped of the first and on a wreath of the colours
the Crest: A demi-panther incensed rampant guardant Argent semée
of torteaux, hurts and pommies alternately, flames issuant from the . . .
mouth and ears holding in each paw a blacksmith's hammer Proper on
a helmet mantled Gules doubled Argent the whole depicted in the . . .
margin hereof with the Motto: Truth Be Told.

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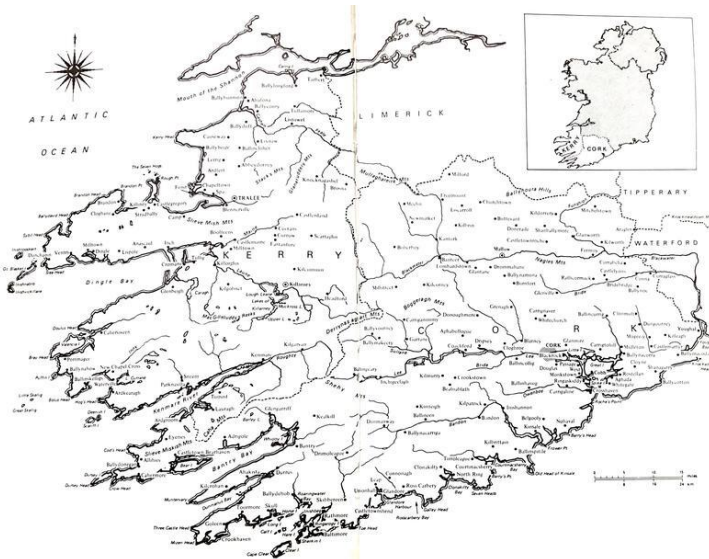
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Acknowledgements

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Produced by Sean Jennett

INTRODUCTION

When Christ was born the Celts had no written language, developing their written word in the eighth century. Today there are three main dialects of Irish: Ulster, Connacht and Munster, affecting standard spoken pronunciation.

There are twenty six letters in the English alphabet sixteen in the Irish, adding j, k, q, v, w and x, z in some loan words. The basic vowels a, e, i, o, u are represented but their sound lengths are different.

Prior to the written word individuals had but one name chosen from their appearance, family habit, birth-date, or local surroundings. Their surname only became a necessity to pay the rent, tithe, or become recognised as a member of a larger community – a clan.

Tracing a family name that has changed from Primitive Irish, in

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the 5th to 10th century to Middle Irish in the 12th whilst Ireland being subjected to take-overs, and invasions, by: Vikings 800, Normans 1169-1300, Anglo-Irish, 1300-1400, Henry VIII King of Ireland 1541 and the ending of Gaelic lordships in 1603. Finally the English Parliament. The following century the tithe payment, to the established church, came on top of a rise in the birth-rate which pushed up rents; permission for Catholics to take out a mortgage on land, also had its effects. In the midst of it all - to bless us, Mary and James Keary of Dublin had a son in 1791 which named Thomas. It was this family which gave the English side of the family a start, continuing today. It is acknowledged that surnames in Ireland were used as early as the 900s. However, the number of people understanding such events were few and far between only those at the top table conversed using surnames. The Irish alphabet, reading and writing, were first exercised in Hedge Schools 1641 and Bardic Schools in 1750, National Schools began teaching in 1831 for Primary Education and 1892 for compulsory education for all. Irish was introduced into Ireland by iron-age Celts in the 6th century.

The family name of Ciardha is medieval Irish and according to history and literature they settled in south-western Ireland after making their way north then up south-western Ireland's coastline, to Kerry, over time, spreading out throughout north Munster creating family groups to live in a number of caisels (enclosures of stone). Kerry or Keary (Irish: Ciarrai, or in the original language, Ciarraighe) means 'people of Ciar' which was the name of a Gaelic tribe and leader who lived within the county. Son of Fergus Mae Róich, king ('toisech') of Ulster, Ciar was leader of the 'tuath' (caisel or enclosure). Concobur Hua Muiredaigh, ri Ciarraige, king of Kerry 1033. Cendfaeladh lethri Ciarraighe king of Kerry killed by Muredach. (Kerry's other king in 1055). Kerry had a number of kings of clans, showing how

complicated seeking the facts can be. (Any use of the letter K rather than an Irish C (for a noun) is an adaption, used to conform to language, race, or ancient order).

So, we have our group of people – a collection of families – maybe related, a tribe, described as dark skinned – ‘Ciar’ in Gaelic, with a leader – chief, king. They have a home which they have built in a circle - a caisel of stone. They were of the land, a farming people. This tribe, people from southern Europe, had made their way across Western France and Eastern Spain to south western Ireland, today’s Counties Cork and Kerry (Ivernia), to the most western part, in 4350 BCE. Today known as the Dingle, Ivrea and Beira, peninsulas. Kerry is in the south-western Region of Munster bordered by County Limerick to the north-east and County Cork in the south and south-east. The whole area has many archaeological sites with an abundance of ancient monuments, all used and worshiped by the early people who populated Kerry.

Kerry is the kingdom of Ciar who was the son of Fergus mac Róich king of Ulster. County Kerry, in the province of Munster, was established in 1300, although has an earlier history, building its county town Tralee. Kerry known for its mountain ranges, possessing Ireland’s highest, its second and third highest mountain, its highest lake and oldest recorded sacred settlements. These natural elements known about in the 1st century AD have been referred to as ‘The Kingdom’ when the O’Connor chieftain ‘Ciar’ ruled the territory between the Shannon estuary and the Maine River in the south. In previous ages known as Ciar na Cliath or ‘The Plain of Swords’ later Ciar Raigh (Céire) which translates as ‘Ciar’s Kingdom’ or ‘Ciar’s people’ later Anglicized. At that time engaged in prehistoric life styles and living arrangements. Kerry (Contae Chiarral) existed

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at about the same-time. The definition of Ciar is of a dark colour maybe brown or grey but heraldically it is black. That phonetically it serves today as the name Cera or Kear leads us to the name of Ceary or Keary.

The Barony of Caibhre in County Kildare, North Leinster, north of Kerry, where kings and dynasties of Mide and Brega existed under the Southern Uí Néill [not to be confused with O'Neill] were among the leading dynasties in the "middle kingdom" of Midhe from the 5th century up to the arrival of the Normans in the 12th century. Their main territories included the ancient areas about Mide and the plain of Brega, which included the modern counties of Meath and Westmeath, as well as portions of counties Longford, Offaly, Louth, Dublin and Kildare. Prior to the arrival of the sons of Niall of the Nine Hostages in the 5th century, the areas of Mide and Brega were ruled under dynasties which included the Laigin, as the area has been speculated to be previously a part of the kingdom of ancient Leinster. Of the sons and grandsons of Niall of the Nine Hostages who conquered territory in this area, there included Lóegaire, ancestor of Cenel Lógaire; Conall Cremthann, ancestor of Clan Cholmáin (Mide) and Sil Áeda Sláine (Brega); Cairbre, ancestor of Cenel Cairpri Laigen and Cairpri Gabra; Fiachu, ancestor of Cinel Fiachach and dynast of Fir Cell; and Maine, dynast of Tethba.

The first Irish surname is recorded as being O'Clery or O' Cleirigh which is about as near as one can get to O'Ciardha, about 920 AD. By the end of the eleventh century the main families who recorded, interest in their family tree, had acquired many of the surnames we know today all of which were started by Niall Mac Aoidh who died in 917 AD.

It is recorded that in The Kingdom of Midhe {Meath} of the five

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Irish provinces Meath was the smallest comprising the present day counties of Meath and Westmeath. After the Norman invasion it became part of Leinster. Kilkeary Parish lies close to Nenagh further west in north Tipperary. Midhe included the ancient capital – Tara. The main tribe and family of this area by the 1000s were the Mac Laughlin of the Cann Cholmain tribe, another leading family were the Chiardha clan along with others. When reading Irish history it becomes apparent that tribes, clans, families, septs etc., moved about, because they were forced to by others, who were jealous, grabbing more land and stealing cattle. It is a human trait that drives people to take back, or, get their own back - teach a lesson too. This becomes a habit which is passed on.

A great deal is made of the Keary Clan occupying Carbury (Carbery) (Rosscarbery) near Drumbeg Stone Circle, West Cork of the Barony of Caibhre, County Kerry The Middle Kingdom, in this context refers to the ancient Irish territories referred to as Mide and Brega, which very roughly equated to the areas about modern counties of Meath and Westmeath. The plain, north of the river Liffey, has been referred to anciently as Brega, or Breagh, which held one of the great ritual and royal sites in ancient Ireland, that of Tara. Early sources suggest that a king who held the title Temro" (king of Tara) was often held in greater respect above the other kings and lords on the island. It has been said that Ollam Fodla first gave historic fame to Tara by founding the Feis (or Triennial Parliament) there, seven or eight centuries before Christ. Prior to the arrival of the sons of Niall of the Nine Hostages in the 5th and 6th centuries, this area of Ireland was probably inhabited by the tribes of the Ui Failge, Ui Enechglaiss and Dal Messin Corb.

The Kearey (Ciardha or Chiardha) Ancient history

The Annals of Tigernach, written by Tigernach Hua Braein, abbot of Clonmacnoise, d1088. The first fragment found of his writings were dated 374-419. Their social-history appeared slowly originating from the Christian-Roman world. Constantine accepted Christianity 313 AD and by 391 AD it was illegal to worship other Gods. In the fourth century the Book of Kells was started

J. P. Mallory gives: "Ireland (Scotia), also known as Hibernia, is an island next to Britannia, narrower in its expanse of land but more fertile in its site. It extends from southwest to north. It's near parts stretch towards Iberia (Hiberia) and the Cantabrian Ocean (i.e. the Bay of Biscay), whence it is called Hibernia but eventually called Scotia, because it has been colonised by the Scoti."

The book 'The Ancient and Present State of the County and City of Cork by Charles Smith, M.D. tells us that in 125 AD a memorable battle was fought at Ard – Neimheidh, i.e., the 'Great Island,' between Niadh Nuaget and Aengus, monarch of Ireland who recovered the crown of Munster from the latter. Keating, p.227.

The oldest names for the island and its people date from the seventh century, the name of Ireland is Scandinavian and today's official name is Eire, the alphabet omits some English letters, , one being the letter K. The first time the name Ciardha (Keary) is mentioned in The Annals of Tigernach, which was also the Annals of Ireland, is 992 B.C., page 348, gives: Mael-Ruanaig, grandson of Ciarda, king of Cairbre, as being killed by the men of Teffa (Loughrea). Cairbre – (Coirpre Irish, Carbury English) Ciardha king of Tara, given as a 3rd century king and baron of Carbury.

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The title and subject of this work concerns the Kearey 'clan,' a Gaelic word which means 'family'- sharing a common surname originated in Ireland in the 17th century about the time of Cromwell. In ancient times the origins of a clan were based on one chief. Clan can also mean a tribe, meaning family, stock, and offspring, taken from Latin planta.

It is recorded that the original clan Ciardha later disappeared from written history. In reality, being scattered and unled after many battles. It is however likely that clan members in troubled times, holding onto family traditions, were sensibly keeping a low profile living in less populated parts, of south western Ireland out of harm's way. What is strange is that those that bear the Gaelic name and history have not over the centuries published its history leaving future family members without the truth.

When much of Ireland was taken over by the Anglo-Normans clan members change the spelling of their surname from Gaelic Ciardha to Irish/English Ceary, or English, Keary. That did not change the pronunciation of the name but helped family members become integrated, achieve neighbourliness, perhaps a home, a job, and the ability to feed the children. Thankfully the original name survives.

Universal surnames did not come into use until the 12th century, at a time when the English language established itself," according to Mallory.

Fortunately Medieval Ireland by Michael Richter is a valuable source of information regarding dynasties which eclipsed the previous tribal kingship groups of the clan, (*derbfine, tarfine, indfine*) – fixing the community. Previously the clan, or sub-clan lived within a mound-surrounded settlement. The society acted and performed in the most basic fashion of life, their homes, lifestyle and community structure, no different than any other

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groups of peoples throughout the world. It is the influx of other people's advanced behaviour which generates change.

After Christianity had been recognised and adopted the settlement included a church. There were neither towns nor village in ancient Ireland, watermills were introduced into Ireland in seventh century. Family surnames names became more common from the eleventh century, this determined the political and cultural landscape of Ireland leading into the Middle-Ages.

In the third century, Adare, a village situated on the banks of the river Maigue, nine miles from Limerick and about the same from Cork, runs into the estuary of the Shannon. This part of Ireland was inhabited by the Hy-Fiáhgeinte who were a large and powerful tribe, sub-divided into several septs. The district was the home of the Hy-Cairbre, one of those clans led by their king happily living in the fertile valley of the Maigue. This was one of the clan Ciardha. There were other lesser clans.

In 855 the Norwegians invaders made their first appearance in Limerick to the north and later to Cathal where one of the chiefs married the daughter of Amlaf now king of the Norwegians of Munster. Donovan, the son from this marriage, lived at Bruree, close to Adare. He was killed by Brian Boroimhe who later was driven out of the country after the battle of Clontarf in 1014. The Hy-Cairbre, after the death of Donovan, gradually lost their importance, final disposed by the Anglo-Normans in 1572. The clan were driven into Kerry, where the name O'Ciardha (Keary) survives, some say in history only. Taking up one of the 'cantreds' on which the rural deaneries were founded. These cantreds were the early feudal partitions of the English lords and each had their own castle: Limerick, Kilmallock, Adare,

Ballingarry, Ardagh, and Rathkeale.

The course of Irish history changed again as the ruling classes asserted themselves forcing out the original population by a system of tithes, rents and taxes. This continued by design, greed and ignorance throughout the following centuries; the monied classes and landed gentry disregarded the working peasantry, who too had a right to life and expectation. Strife and sorrow became the result, caused by ignorance and selfishness. A lack of farsightedness reigned which gave nobody any permanent satisfaction.

In 1166 Mac Murrough ousted by Rory O'Connor, who was now the high-king, sought support from Henry 11 which ultimately led to Ireland becoming divided into Anglo-Norman and Irish areas. It took over fifty years to establish a near English administration. Towards the end of the twelfth century into the thirteenth it appeared that the Irish and English would be able to get along. The period shows ancient Irish society had not given up its cultural identity but remained quite different. This difference has never changed, the clan has always been more important.

The behaviour of the ruling classes has always been transitory – unable to devise a social system that is fair to all and lasting. It seems that some individuals have to assert themselves and in the case of Ireland in the Dark-Ages killing, theft, slavery, and rape persisted the object being to brag, frighten, amass power, and steal land.

As previously explained the surnames Keary, Kearey, and its variant, Cearry, are the Anglicisation's of the ancient Irish family name *Ó Ciardha* or *O'Ciardha*. A onetime kingship, acknowledged clan, known in Leinster, with a Gaelic name still in use today. This is not to pass-over, devalue or dismiss other derivations of the name for there are many of equal or higher

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standing. Past generations of the greater family have not only changed the spelling of their name but their country; all to escape servitude, bondage and suppression, caused by stronger clans, bad general-ship, the influx of settlers and just plain theft. Whilst writing I have stumbled over the: O'Connor, O'Kelly, O'Kerry (Irish Ciarrai or Ciarraighe) O'Kenny, and O'Cleirigh families, and others, connected with the people of Ciar an ancestor of O'Connor the people called Ciarraighe who ruled five territories taking the name Kerry (Carey) the leading family descended from Heremon. Cork got its name from Ciar a short time before the birth of Christ referring to a large territory in Munster called 'Ciar's kingdom'. O'Connor king of Kerry descended from Ciar their great ancestor Conciar or Conior. The Carews (Carey) were marquises of Cork. O'Ciardha or O'Carey, chiefs of Cairbre O'Ciardha, now the barony of 'Carbery' in the County of Kildare. The clan O'Carey were also in Mayo and Sligo, Hy-Maine and the principality of the O'Kelly's.

Irish Pedigrees by John O'Hart

Keary, pages: 202, 232, 282, 314.

Carey, pages: 202, 232, 282, 341.

The aim of my studies has been to find out my family's history and it's not getting any easier. The object, to discover what part of Ireland I can most likely call home, and how past members of the family lived, played, and died. Along the way, perhaps, discover what part the family played in Irish history which was and is very strong, whilst seeking out Heraldic Practices.

To help me I have personally sought Grant of Arms 08. 03. 2021, as the method, to make my quest official and complete, thankfully the application granted - including emblazon and registration; naturally a sum being necessary when lodging all such far reaching applications. This has been done by including

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a great deal of research finally engaging Timeline Research Institute of Dublin.

Acceptance by Ireland's Livery rested upon whether Thomas Kearey 1791-1860 was Irish and first sons through the ages: Thomas Kearey 1820-1867 born London; Thomas Kearey born London 1842-1900; Thomas Kearey born London 1881-1882, were part of the greater family, able to be firmly linked by certificate and census.

The Office of the Chief Herald, held by Ms. Colette O'Flaherty, is housed in the National Library of Ireland's, Department of Manuscripts and Special Collections. This office ensures that pronouncements are given proper standing and recognition. The total sum payable divided, the first part allows proof of Irish connection to be made and for design work to begin - to represent the family in the whole process, overseen by Herald, Mr. Donal Burke, the second part - the balance, paid before Letters Patent written and the final arms painted - by the Herald Painter - this final payment made July 2022.

Researching my DNA was an important first step: the deoxyribonucleic is an acid and polymer composed of two polynucleotide chains, the coil forming a double helix. The polymer carries genetic instructions for the: development, functioning, growth, and reproduction of our organisms including many viruses, carrying one of the four major types of macromolecules essential for life.

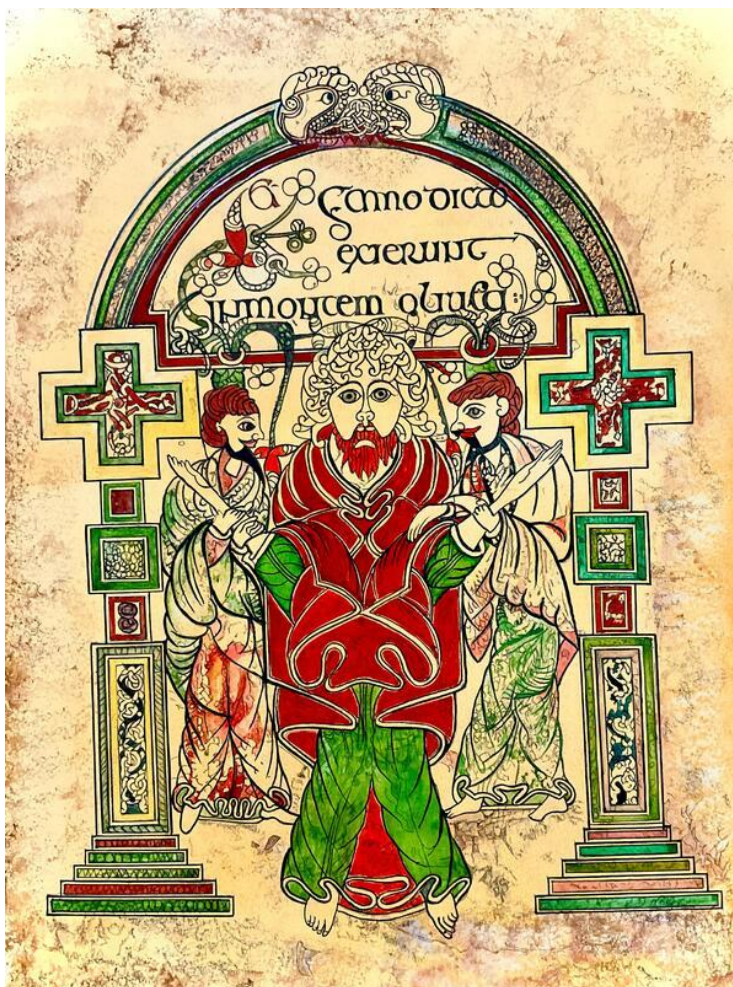
The object was to find the race of people who first settled in Ireland. They would be communicating, using their language of Celtic/Gaelic. *The presence of Early Mesolithic sites at Lough Boora in Co. Offaly and also along the Blackwater in Co. Cork indicates that Ireland could have been colonized not just from the north-east but also from the south. The Origins of the Irish by J. P. Mallory p49. The language probably during the Neolithic*

Indo-European of c. 3000 BC originated among the earliest farming communities in southwestern Europe. P299.

My maternal DNA H5a and paternal Haplogroup H-P96 showed my ancestors to be one of the earliest Stone Age People – later, early farmers in the Neolithic period in Western Eurasia, in this case Ireland, to make the first sortie into Ireland, introducing a good start to my quest. It would seem to be clear that there were at least three migration streams the latest being Ukraine constituting 80% of the Irish population with R1b male DNA.

By the turn of the 10th century AD the Gaelic speaking Irish, Scots, Manx, West Country and other lesser island's formed a common northern Celtic speaking group – a Y-chromosomal Haplogroup R – M269, Haplogroup which shares a common ancestor with a single nucleotide polymorphism mutation.

In the future the hunt for connection, seeking the construction of a family tree, will be based on the science of genetic discoveries. Individuals may seek those connections to build their family's history. The Mesolithic People came later followed by the Bronze Age introducing the Celts in 500 BC. Later one such group inhabited Kildare, believed descended from Chathair Mór, son of Feidlimid Fiorurghlas, High King of Ireland who reigned for three years - later killed by Conn Cetchathach. The introduction of Christianity to Ireland eventually brought about fewer minor wars, limited: slavery, theft, homelessness and rape, cementing family and clan bonding. To ensure a definitive recorded date I have given Christianity introduced into Ireland, in the Fourth year of the reign of Laoghaire, King of all Ireland.



Watercolour Painting taken from The Book of Kells Page 49.

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To give a further link to the past and to Ciardha's presence I have chosen the writings of The Book of Kells which was linked to the Isle of Iona and Kells in Co. Meath. Whilst pillage and rampage was going on between clans Christianity was never far away. The book was written on calfskin vellum tensioned on a frame. The gospel associated since the middle Ages to Colum Cille, abbot of Iona born in Donegal into the ruling family of Ui Neill in 521, a great-great-grandson of Niall of the Nine Hostages, the founder of the dynasty. The Annals of Tigernach written earlier gives many references to the fact of Ciardha being known during Adomnan's time whilst compiling a book on the subject of Holy Places and events of the time.

Tomas Cardinal Fiaich, in 'The Beginnings of Christianity', chapter 4, page 41, gives, 'Irish Christians sufficiently numerous by 432 to justify the appointment of a bishop by Rome.' Ciarán mac Ainmirech of Clonmacnoise one of Ireland's monastic founders in the sixth century belonged to the Cenél Connaill, from which abbot Colum Cille originated.

It is recorded that the origins of the family name 'Ciardha' are believed to be the wish of the Irish Saint 'Ciar' in about 620 AD, when Fiachra son of Ciaran died, its Gaelic origin as black or sable, perhaps derived from black hair or dark complexion rather than the Scottish Pict's description of a people who painted themselves. The written name Ciardha was used by scribes in 650 A.D. Chéire, St. Ciar was the foundress of Cell Chéire (Kilkeary). Ciar's father was named Dub Rea, (there are a number of translations) leader of Cairpre, an ancient warrior clan living near Granard. Erainn a tribal group which includes the Múscraige Tire in the Barony of Ormond Thire (on the shores of Lough Derg) and Arada Tire – Barony of Owney and Arra, County Tipperary. The Ciarraige Luachrs gave their name to County Kerry. Conghalach Ha Ciardha lord of Cairbre.

The family becoming part of the Cenél nÉogain ruled by

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Muirchertach mac Muirelaig son of Éochaid mac Domnaill, king of Cenél nEogain a large group of families descended from Eoghan, brother of St. Columba, elder son of Niall Noigíallach of the Nine Hostages, (nine clans owing allegiance to the fifth-century monarch who founded The Northern Ui Néill dynasty). The Irish had five Gaelic kingdoms in the fifth to eleventh centuries: Ulster, Leinster, Munster, Connaught and Meath each with a High King. In that time Cairpre Gabra was not a powerful tuath but were '*descendants of Coirpre*' the eldest son of Niall occupying land in the middle of Ireland which bordered with Meath ruled by the Southern Ui Neill centred on Granard, today's Longford, an area at that time bearing the first Christian centres in Ireland.

By the twelfth century they were beaten by Connhaicne tribes and absorbed into the larger Annaly kingdom given shelter by O'Farrell's fortress, the O'Ciardha (Keary), descendants of Niall becoming established as lords of Carbury about the same time as the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland. Margaret Dobbs 'The Territory and People of Tethba' 1941 7th Series, Vol 11, No.3.

The following shows clearly that king Ciardha of Carbury was a tribal chief of a group of clans or families which included Cerry, Celly, Cenny, Ceary, Ciarie, Ciarrai, Cary, and others, all related to Coirpre, eldest son of Niall, based around Carbury, before and during the first century, well before the castle built.

During this period in history: Aethelred II 'The Unready' King of the English 978-1013 reigned. Edmond Ironside King of the English 1016. Henry 1 King of France 1031-1060. 1031 The Ommiad Caliphate of Spain dissolved. In 1034 Malcolm of the Scots dies. Canute King of England 1016-1035. King Harold Harefoot dies 1040, a period which includes, according to 'The Annals', king O'Ciardha.

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The Annals of Tigernach.

(Also, Annals of Ireland, 807 B.C. to A.D. 1178).

by

The Abbot of Clonmacnoise.

The work was transcribed in 1870-1885 and named *Revue Celtique* by Professeur H. D'Arbois de Jubainville au College de France, printed in Paris 1895, edited by Whitley Stokes 1830-1909. Consists of a number of written works. I give three instances, to give proof and method.

1. Page 290. *MaelRuanaid Ua Ciardha, ri Cairpri, do marbad do Gallaib Atha cliath isin bliadain sin .i. do mac Turnin 7 do mac Aedha Hui Ferghail 7 Cellach Ua Findallan ri Delbna moire leo beous tria mebail .*

(See T 1165-10) (<< In this year MaelRuanaid Ua Ciardha, king of Cairbre, was treacherously killed by the Foreigners of Dublin, namely, by the son of Turnin and by the son of Aed Hua Fergail, and also Cellach Hua Findallan, king of Delbna MOR >>).

2. Page 295. *(Flann mac Donnchadhs Ua MaelSechlainn do marbad O' Chairpri (l.e.) (<<Flann, son of Donnchad Hua MaelSechlainn, was killed by Cairbre Hua Ciarda >>)*

3. Page 414. *The men of Teffa, and the Muintir Geradain, and the Cairbri Hui Ciada went on a raid into Offaly, and reached the glebe of Cell eich (leg. Cell Achaid?), where a defeat was inflicted upon them, and Hua Ciarda and the son of Mac Findbairr, chief of the Muintir Geradain, and a great multitude, were slain.*

(See T 1176-16) (Flann son of Donnchadh O'Maelseachnaill was killed by Cairbre O'Ciardha.

The previous has been taken from 'The Annals of Tigernach,' written in 993 AD. Translated by Gearoid Mac Niocaill, Electronic edition compiled by Emer Purcell, Donnechadh O' Corrain.

Ciardha/Kearey

Publication CELT Corpu of Electronic Texts, University of Cork, Ireland. There were three parts covering mostly 489-1178 AD surviving from the 14th century MS Rawlinson B488. The point here being that they mention O'Ciardha (Keary), king of Cairpre. Carbery lies at the very southwestern point of Ireland, not so very far from the city of Cork – the second largest city in Ireland. Districts of McCarthy of More, of Muskerry, and of Reagh surround the city hemming in Carbery to its coastline.

For 'T' read, The Annals of Tigernach. And the page number.

T 993-2. Mael Ruanaig-ua Ciardha, ri Cairpri do marbadh la Firu Teftha.

T 993–2. Maelruanaidha O'Ciardha, king of Cairbre, was killed by the men of Teffa.

T 1000.5 Aodh O'Ciardha was blinded by his brother namely Ualgarg, grandson Ciardha.

T 1020-9. Cu Luachra Conchobhair, king of Ciarraighe Luachra, died.

T 10024-10. Maelruanidh O'Ciardha, king of Carbery, died.

T 1029 -2 A great loss of life on Lnis Laine in Cairbre Mor were forty persons of nobles of Cairbre were burned alive including Aodh O' Ruaire king of Cairbre and the superior of Druncliff.

T 1046-5. Fearghai O' Ciardha, king of Cairbre was killed by the men of Teffa.

T 1067-5. O'Conchobhair of Kerry, king of Carraighe. Luachra killed in Connacht.

T 1138.2. Mathghamhain O' Conchobhair, king of Ciarrsighe and of Corca Dhuibhna, tanist of the king of Munster, rested.

T 1138-5. Dealbhna Mor, wherein was slain Domhnall O' Ciardha, king of Carbury.

T 1145-9. The defeat of Dun Dubain by Murchadh O'

MacIseachlainn and by Cairbre O'Ciardha on the men of Breifna, where 300 men fell, including Searrach O' Connachtaigh and Cathal O'Cathluain and O'Cumrain.

T 1150-1. The Giolla Claor O'Ciardha, king of Cairpre, fell by the Ui Faelain.

T 1155-5. The Giolla Got O'Ciardha, king of Cairpre, was killed by Donnchadh O'Maelseachlainn.

T 1165-10. A great war between the Meathmen and the men of Brefne, and Sitriue was killed by the Ui Ciardha and by Cairbre.

T1174-10 Mael Ruanaidh O'Ciardha king of Cairpre, was killed by the Foreigners of Dublin in that year, i.e. by the son of Turnir and by the son of Aodh O'Fearghail and also Ceallach O'Fiondallar, king of Delbna Mor.

T 1176-4 Two score of the English were killed by the son of Giolla Padraig O'Ciardha.

T 1176-13. Domnall Mac Giolla Padraig, king of Cairbre O' Ciardha was treacherously killed by O'MacIseachlainn.

T 1176-16 Flann son of Donnchadh O'Maelseachnaill was killed by Cairbre O'Ciardha.

Unfortunately The Annals of Tigernach in 993 AD has not been quoted in Wikipedia to mention The Giolla Got O'Ciardha, king of Cairpre, was killed by Donnchadh O'Maelseachlainn. Later, Donnchadh's son was killed by Cairbre O'Ciardha, maintaining history between, 993 – 1176.

If you can give light and colour to the previous snippets of early Irish history you will get a good idea what the bulk of the males were doing. Why were they engaged thus what was it they wanted and what were the females doing. Is this behaviour any different today, has the human race changed, improved and developed?

The old Irish root 'ciar' or céir is 'dark', perhaps black or sable.

Tigernach mac Cairpri (d549) an early Irish patron saint of Clones (Co Monaghan) in the Province of Ulster.

In 1090, the Annals (gospels) reported the Book of Kells returned from Donegal, in the kingdom of Midhe ancient territories of Mide 'the midland part', and Brega ruled by king Finnechta Fledach. The king (or 'toisech' Irish for tribal chief) ruled over a people (Irish *túath*) *responsible for the well-being of the tuath. The law tract Crith Gablach (early eight century) says 'ri' (cognate with Latin rex a regendo dicitur) because he rules (ridgedly). Ireland had over a hundred kingdoms which means that the tuath was relatively small.*

This was a territory in the north of the present county of Longford, comprising the mountainous district now called Sliabh Chairbre, otherwise the Carn Mountains. Lanigan in his *Ecclesiastical History of Ireland*, vol. ii. p. 100, is puzzled to distinguish the territories of Carbury in Meath from each other; and Duald Mac Firbis falls into an error in placing Cairbre Ua g-Ciardha in Conmhaicne Maighe Rein, i.e. Mac Rannall's country, in the county of Leitrim. See his Genealogical work (Marquis of Drogheda's copy, p. 217). But the exact situation of Cairbre-Gabhra and Cairbre-O'g-Ciardha can be easily determined from the topographical poems of O'Dugan and O'Heerin, in which O'Ciardha is placed in Leinster, south of the Eiscir Riada, and O'Ronan, Chief of Cairbre Gabhra, in the ancient Meath. See *Genealogies, Tribes, and Customs of Hy-Fiachrach*, p. 276, note g, and p. 475.

The fact is that Cairbre-O'g-Ciardha is the present barony of Carbury in the county of Kildare, and Cairbre-Gabhra is the present barony of Granard in the county of Longford, where the sons of Cairbre, the son of Niall, were seated in St. Patrick's

time, to whom they granted a beautiful place called Granard. See O'Flaherty's *Ogygia*, part iii. c. 85. The following entry in the Annals of Connaught, at the year 1420, will show that the castle of Granard was in the territory of Cairbre Gabhra: 'Caislen Granaird i Cairpre Gabrai do gabháil for h-Uilliam Hua Fergail do Gallaib. Gaill do tréccadh an caisleín iar sein, & Uilliam dá brisead ar oman Gall.' 'The castle of Granard, in Cairpre Gabrai, was taken from William O'Farrell by the English. The English afterwards abandoned the castle, and William demolished it from fear of the English.' The mountainous parts of this barony still retain the name Cairbre, and the vivid traditions in the country respecting the curse pronounced by St. Patrick on the territory, where he was treated with indignity by the incredulous Cairbre, the monarch's brother, show clearly that the district about Granard was originally called Cairbre. This is further corroborated by the account of the Attacottic tribes in Ireland in the second century, preserved in the *Book of Lecan*, and transcribed by Duald Mac Firbis into his genealogical work, in which it is stated that a tribe called Tuath-Glasraighe had been seated in Cairbre and in the adjoining districts around Lough Sheelin, until they were dispossessed by Tuathal Teachtmhar. It has already been stated that the mountainous portion of the barony of Granard still retain the name of the territory, and that the highest elevations of the district are called the Carn mountains; and it may be worthwhile to add here that, according to the Dinnsenchus, the carns from which this name has been derived were called Carn-Fubuidhe and Carn-Maine, which are described as on the summits of Sliabh Chairbre. After the O'Farrells had extended their power over the whole of North Teffia, they divided the territory of Cairbre-Gabhra into two parts, of which the northern or mountainous portion was called Sliabh Chairbre, and the southern or more level

portion Clann-Seeain or race of Shane, or John, from the sept of the O'Farrells who possessed it. For a list of the townlands comprised in the district of Sliabh Chairbre, or, as anglicised, Slewcarberie, see Inquisition taken at Ardagh on the 4th day of April, in the tenth year of the reign of James I. *From The Irish Charters in the Book of Corpus of Kells.*

The tuath was divided into: nobility, freemen, scholars, lesser freeman, and serfs. Neither towns nor villages existed before the ninth century, people lived together in a caisel, an enclosure of stone. Medieval Ireland by Michael Richter.

Clan Ui Chiardha Barony of Caibhre in County Kildare, North Leinster is the present barony of Carbury.Co. Kildare.. Kings and Dynasties of Mide and Brega.The Southern Uí Néill [not to be confused with O'Neill] were among the leading dynasties in the "middle kingdom" of Midhe from the 5th century up to the arrival of the Normans in the 12th century. Their main territories included the ancient areas about Mide and the plain of Brega, which included the modern counties of Meath and Westmeath, as well as portions of counties Longford, Offaly, Louth, Dublin and Kildare. Prior to the arrival of the sons of Niall of the Nine Hostages in the 5th century, the areas of Mide and Brega were ruled under dynasties which included the Laigin, as the area has been speculated to be previously a part of the kingdom of ancient Leinster. Of the sons and grandsons of Niall of the Nine Hostages who conquered territory in this area, there included Lóegaire, ancestor of Cenel Lógaire; Conall Cremthann, ancestor of Clan Cholmáin (Mide) and Sil Áeda Sláine (Brega); Cairbre, ancestor of Cenel Cairpri Laigen and Cairpri Gabra; Fiachu, ancestor of Cinel Fiachach and dynast of Fir Cell; and Maine, the dynast of Tethba.Onomasticon Goedelicum describes the boundary of Brega as: *"its bounds seem Belach*

dúin (alias Castlekieran in the barony of Kells Upper) and the sea; the Boyne and Cassán (at Annagassan, southeast of Castlebellingham)."

It must be remembered that the settlement social structure, those inside, were extremely primitive, crude and uncouth looking for spiritual salvation in a whole variety of made-up acts and beliefs. The only quality the people looked upto was brutality, crudity and coarseness that offered some sort of security to weaker souls.

In descent from Cairbre (MOR) meaning first or senior son of Niall of the Nine Hostages a branch of Cenel Cairpre included Ua Chiardha (O'Keary, O'Carey) of Ui Cairpri Laigen in Carbury, County Kildare. With a location of county, Barony or Townland 'Crioich Cairpre Droma Cliad of northern county Sligo and north-east county Letrim in the Barony of Carbury in north Sligo. Cineal (kingship) uibh Neill a' Tuaisceart. There is some indication the Ui Neill kingdom in the area of County Kildare did not exist before the 12th century, of Ua Cairpre being driven from north-east Longford and Offaly (i.e. Cairpre Gabra) due to pressure from Ua Ruaire of Breifne and the Conmairecne expansion in the region.

'The annals cite for Cairpre Laigin (Ua Chiardha between 954-2 – 1176-16). Ualgarg Ua Ciardha king of Cairpre killed Cetnach son of Flann king of Luige.'

There is no doubt that the O'Ciardha were a paramount family in early Ireland; a kingship which slowly became reduced by supporting the losing side, to be finally crushed by King Henry and later Cromwellian forces. Reading between the lines 'The Annals' give a sordid record of ancient Irish clan life – basically, killing each other, stealing each another's cattle, taking revenge, all to advance ownership, popularity and power.

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As John Grenham records: 'The history of Ireland is a great drama of war, invasion, plantation, immigration, emigration, conflict, and solidarity.' This rather sums up Ireland and the Kearey family. Still, this is not unusual.



Carbury Castle. The ancient land of Mide (Offaly) ruled by dynasties including the O'Ciardha ri Cairpri, king of Carbury - in the first millennium inhabiting - pagan burial-places which remain there today. Barry Raftery 1944-2010. Elizabeth O'Brien, Mapping Death.

My application for Grant of Arms, to the Chief Herald of Ireland has tested my Irishness, both ancient and modern, and my patience. During the research, I have gained greater knowledge of Ireland's ancient history, sought out whom my ancestors might have been but not found out where Thomas came from before taking ship to England.

Heraldry is not restricted to just the Western World. Its introduction began with the need to recognise who was friend

or foe, when tempers frayed - in the heat of battle. Shields and helmet crests carried and worn in the thirteenth century when the practice of embroidering armorial ensigns on the surcoat worn over a 'coat of mail,' introduced the term 'coat of arms.' Letters Patent grant the Ensigns and Arms to the family. The Norman pointed shield (Escutcheon) contains the figure, or design – painted in colour (Tincture) that form the 'coat of arms', in this instance the shield, divided (parting the shield's field), horizontally (per fess) as *radiant*, seen as flames in yellow, covering the bottom half of the shield (*Or*). This suggests flames from a furnace melting ore or heating metal – a family skill. The flames background Black, (*Truth*) defines in Gaelic, the use with 'Ciar,' connecting the family's Gaelic name. In heraldic terms, Black, written as Sable. These two colours, 'Sable and Or,' are '*the family livery colours*'. Above the flames, are four crosses remembering the four brothers killed in WW1 and their Christian upbringing, their top half position on the shield suggests the family were living north of the River Thames. On top of the shield a helmet with closed visor, appropriate for esquires – gentlemen-at-arms. On either side of the helmet *mantling's*, scrollwork or flowering drapery, originally there to protect the helmet. Arranged, on top of the helmet, a slightly curved wreath, a chaplet of the two coloured livery silks wound round each other. Above the wreath the Crest, a demi-panther incensed rampant guardant, (flames emanating from besides its mouth and ears) facing the viewer. A panther also represents a beautiful woman and mother who is tender and loving to her children and will defend them, even with her own life. The animal displayed with roundels of red meaning (fortitude), blue (loyalty), green (hope) holding in each front paw a blacksmith's hammer once again making a link to past family skills. These are all armorial bearings: crest, helmet, shield, and overall design, suggested by the Herald taking regard to the life of the person I

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claim Irish descent from and the following generations; the scroll is the Herald Painter's design, and the motto, suggested by myself. Over time, the Ciarraige Tribe of the Eoganacht People moved south and west towards Co. Cork and Kerry having travelled through the ages from Co. Sligo and Letrim. This movement of people shows how transient life was when pressure applied by powerful neighbours caused fear and terror. The Ciarraige Tribes or 'black people' populated much of north-western County Roscommon believed to be the lords of Airtech – present day barony of Frenchpark. Their seat Baslic near Castlerea. Early peoples of Desmond included the Ciarraige Luachra. Domnall was the son of Muirchertach mac Neill and grandson of Niall Glundub. A member of the Cenel nEogain northern Ui Neill.

Now you have been introduced to the past family O'Ciardha who ruled this area of today's Carbury County Cork we should begin our story covering Ireland's history of south-west Ireland.

Chapter 1.

Irish surname search
Keary, Kerry, Carey,

Ciardha/Kearey



Ross Castle 15th century tower house surrendered to Oliver Cromwell's roundheads. Ancestral home of the chiefs of Clan O'Donoghue. The final resident garrison led by Lient-General Sir Henry Johnson 1801-1835.

The O'Kearys, or, in Irish, Ó Ciardha, in later times, used the anglicized form Carey or Keary, belonged to the southern Ui Neill and were lords of Carbury (Co. Kildare) until dispersed by the invasion of the Anglo-Normans. Carey, however, has also been used as the anglicized form of several other Gaelic patronymics. Besides the now almost extinct surname MacFhiachra formerly both of Tyrone and Galway, Carey is found as a synonym of Kerin i.e. O Ceinin in Mayo and O Ciarain in Co. Cork. It is also used as the English form of MacGiolla Ceire which is sometimes further corrupted to Carr in Co. Galway. Carr, however, when not of English origin, more often represents O Carra (Co. Galway) and Mac Giolla Chathair (Co. Donegal). The name Carey, arising from these different origins - is now numerous and widespread: it is

found more in the Munster counties of Cork, Kerry and Tipperary than anywhere else.

The three brothers John Carey (1756-1826), classical scholar and inventor of the shipwreck rocket, William Carey (1759-1839), and Matthew Carey (1760-1839), were all three authors of note. Thomas Kearey 1791-1860, gold and silver smelter, as the three above, were all born in Dublin, as was James Carey (1845-1883), the "Invincible" who informed on his comrades after the Phoenix park murders and was subsequently shot in reprisal.

My infatuation, finding out about my name, my origins, and place in Irish society, has carried me a long way; to a number of books, websites, and the use of a good deal of paper, ink, and time – all which have given, a good deal of information, heaps of speculation and buckets full of doubtful facts. This is not good when you are trying to write a factual book about yourself, and how you came to be. Therefore, I will have to bear up, and do the best I can, with the help of some equally dedicated authors such as J. P. Mallory who gives a period of between the ninth and eighth millennium before Ireland could become colonised... as the ice fields melted... and temperatures rose.

The creation of our world - its surface: ridges, crusts, plates, its collisions, grinding and grating - to form a mantle: with movements, fusions and mergers – all cooling sufficiently for water vapour, expelled by volcanic activity, to fall as rain began the habitable world. Later, these landmasses, formed into continents: with: ice-sheets, glacial movements, and warmer periods, as postglacial corridors, opening up, just before 4000 BC, known by historians as the Neolithic period. Wondering nomads, hunter-gatherers moving up from southern Europe

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travelled through Brittany using land bridges to make their way into a new world beyond.

One has to start somewhere so I have chosen the land in the south-west corner of Ireland. Here these wanderers waded northwards from one patch of dry land through a swampy clump, skirting some rocks, to find a way forward perhaps to one of the today's Counties: Kerry, Cork, Limerick, Galway, Tipperary, and Waterford, all having access, to either: the Atlantic, English Channel, or both, by numerous bays and inlets.

It is important to remember that if you have Irish family connections, and are not monied: poverty, starvation, homelessness, battling through life, and emigration, play a major part in your family's psyche that never recedes... I pick up my pen again, to write another page of Kearey history imagining the scene before me.

My maternal H5a and paternal Haplogroup H-P96, is given as one of the first hunter-gatherer groups of settlers from Gaul, who gradually moved into the heart of Ireland. This weathered and tanned wandering tribe, with related families, were northern Celts of the Caucasian race – which included ancient and modern Europeans. Those who made their way to Ireland were part of the northern half of the race. This family, and other family groups, moved to where food and water found; they organized communities, which gave the group permanence. They had eventually grown tired of roaming, especially when they could see there was sufficient food available to them, deciding to stay, to build permanent dwellings - pole houses with animal skins, thatch and turf. Forming family groups; clothed in animal skins, used stone, antler horn, wood, flint and shells as implements, stored grain, seed and nuts.

As soon as any person around the world sets up home, they call that place their own becoming prepared to fight over it! Toolmakers of the Neolithic period were a people who began the Bronze Age, which in turn became the Iron Age as other smelting ores discovered and developed. Hammering iron hardens the metal, reheating allows shaping – that manipulation allowed special farming tools, weapons, and implements to be designed and re-designed as challenges demanded. The Iron Age, dated between c750 and AD 43, occurred about the same time as the Romans landed in Britain.

All groups of people seek leaders, to give them confidence, reliability and safety. Leadership is usually won by the most powerful; generally outspoken, confident, opinionated, and strong-minded who give hope to the many for a better future... leading to the occupation of better farming land, more cattle and a greater access to food. However, this improvement creates jealous unhappy neighbours who see the difference and want success for themselves. Future battles, thefts and homelessness create bad memories causing interfamily wars. There was, and always will be, a body of people who wish to assert themselves, show-off, and be leaders, those who seek status and position who pander to those in charge, to improve their position. The leader, king, lord or chief – demonstrates his competence by improving the status of the group achieving more growth, whether it be land, produce, buildings, cattle or slaves. This basic human instinct travelled up out of Africa and southern Europe becoming part of normal life in Ireland. To give security the leader had to be obeyed, be adaptable and wise holding those led in his hand ready to pass on to the next generation. Throughout history, leadership falters, fails and becomes corrupted. Even a system of elections is no guarantee

of continuance, needing a limited time in office before re-election becomes necessary, to show competence, reliability, to demonstrate greater social advancement.

The river Suir, which runs into an attractive valley, forms, with the Knockmealdown Mountains, the southern border with Waterford. Celtic people from Gaul pushed into the land, taking over Neolithic, Bronze and Iron Age cultures during the second half of the millennium BC. They built up and established many small kingdoms called 'Tuatha'. This race of people – from the kingdom of Galatia, originating from the Upper Danube, Italy, and Spain - formed the northern branch, they ruled from their future capital, Dublin. Their land extended over all Ireland and Wales, western and southwestern Britain up England's western coast and its islands, onwards into Scotland.

The bulk of the inhabitants were farmers and stockholders working small rectangular fields, operating a cross ploughing technique. They built dry-stone boundary walls and drainage ditches lived in timber roundhouses or pole-houses, and stored surplus grain in pits. Ireland's people lived in a land of mountain and forest, bog and grassland never far away from well-stocked lake and grazed pasture. The people calculated their wealth by the size of their herd and the amount of land under cultivation. As with all human communities, other living things, natural climatic events, and the universe, all gave imagined and actual causes to fear, leading to belief and reliance in gods that needed subservience and payment. The human species needs hope, relying upon gods and spirits - to provide that support.

The Celtic race relied upon the bards – the High king's soothsayers, who foretold the tribe's destiny through poem or story – they were the purveyors of myth and legend, who passed on aspects of community, which drew the people together. They

were members of the aristocracy and did not sit with the musicians, entertainers, and mercenaries who sat near the door, but alongside the raised dais – close to the lords table. These bardic singers and storytellers extolled tales of heroes and gallant deeds; they were honoured and feted. It was a form of entertainment, which included the broadcast of news, everyday events, and tales of the past. As an important side issue, they introduced hope and confidence. Bards educated listeners in the facility and use of language that brought people together - instilling common cause and continuity; it gave the people a sense of belonging that lasted for generations. The religion – a cult built upon nature and ruled by druids, priests and prophets, were later called ‘Brehons’; they maintained influence by occultism, and a knowledge of seasonal changes - of things affected by the calendar, sun, wind, and rain. Any matters the Brehons could not explain they put-down to something poorly performed, sought badly or untimely.

The Romans never invaded Ireland although they did stop the encroachment of Celtic people in Britain gradually the Roman influence inflicted a pressure that forced them back - a socio-political and economic force rather than a physical one. The Romans, assessing rightly that the Celts offered no real threat - continued their march northwards... leaving their expansion into metal bearing, western areas, until later. The army that made up the Roman force was Germanic... an altogether stronger, fitter, and more advanced people than the Celtic farmers and stockbreeders. They were a tried and tested body of people from a number of tribes, hardened by their transient life - fighting, building roads and bridges, organizing logistics... the Celts were no match for military formations and tactics.

Ptolemy listed, in the second century AD, the names of Irish

people in the P Celtic form, which was the language of Britain and Gaul. This group of people recorded by him were the Cruithni linked to the Ciarraige ('Ciar') tribe of Conbnacht and north Kerry... in the land of the Mumu later called Munster, and in particular the northern half of Counties Limerick, Tipperary, and Offaly. These three counties bordered to their north by the River Shannon that bears two Lochs, Derg, and Ree. Inland, south of the river, the gentle rising land sweeps up to a range of mountains: Mullaghareirk, Galtee, Slieveardagh Hills, and Slieve Bloom, then down into the central plain of Carbury.

The early Christian church had as one of the Twelve Apostles of Ireland Saint Ciaran Saighir [the Elder]. He was the first bishop of Ossary - one of the four who preceded Saint Patrick. He founded Seir-Kieran, County Offaly. Ciaran, with a C or K, is an Irish personal name meaning 'Little Dark One' thought to be related to Ciar, who was son of Fergus, King of Ulster. The name 'Ciar' is synonymous with Ciardha as being one of Ciar's People of the Ciarraige tribe. I will refer to this Irish word repeatedly during my search for connections. The advent of Christianity not only promoted peace, settlement of quarrels and hope but also transferred power. It was this power that became weakened - could not give guidance nor assertiveness when firmness demanded. Abbeys, Monasteries, Nunneries and Pories are in the main closed communities.

The Atlantic sweeps into the mouth of the Shannon until it reaches Limerick, under two bridges past the Salmon Weir onwards to the entrance of Lough Derg at Killaloe. South of the estuary of the river Shannon, its river and lochs lived a tribe recorded as the Medon Mairtine. Over time, weakened by war and by encroaching raiders and neighbours - the thrusting Eoghanachta... a southern tribe expanding northwards. These people flourished, and as all tribal grouping, made up of

extended families, some closely related others not so, but all contributing to the main group.

The ruling suzerain – High king, held this land bearing a cashel: a term used to describe a stepped walled settlement, referred to as a stronghold. All leaders relied on a hierarchical system based on obligations owed – obligations to pay for protection, farm the land, take part in social gatherings, contribute to clan activities and share benefits. These obligations, once accepted never withdrawn in life or death, and continued through the succeeding generations. The leader, Muiredach 325-355, maintained his position by strength of arms proved in battle. His position was no sinecure. Extended families were large, particularly the chief's, there was always those envying his position perhaps disputing his leadership, so he always had to be on guard!

Muiredach's son Eochaid 356-365, married Mongfind of Munster. From this union, future kings of Connacht reigned. His second wife Cairrenn was daughter of a Saxon king and an ancestor of the Uí Néill, prince of the Connachta. She was also mother to Niall NoínGiallach of the Nine Hostages 379-405, so called because nine tributary tribes owed him homage, was High king of Erin, Ard ri, (The Gaelic form of High king, referred to as, 'king of Tara.. Niall eventually becoming one of the supreme rulers of all Ireland founded this dynasty.

The marriage of Eochaid and Cairene brought together an alliance between the Saxons, Irish, and Picts... a royal line called Uí Néill (descendants of Niall). This continued for almost a thousand years, broken by Brian Boru, king of Cashel, who, although reigning as king - and others afterwards, never ousted the name and fact of Uí Néill - who represented true national identity. When Niall died, Connacht and the kingship of Ireland passed to his nephew. His sons, Eoghan, Connell, and Enda, took

over smaller parts of the kingdom in northern and central-southern Ireland. It was Eoghan of Aileach, who now ruled as High king of Munster and from his eldest son was born Fiacha. It was in this fashion that the Eoghanacht line was born.

*Ailill the king is vanished
Vanished Croghan's fort:
Kings to Clonmacnoise now
Come to play their court.*

Aileach ruled from a great stone castle built on a 600-foot hill at one time the stronghold of Bronze Age kings. A treaty was drawn-up between all the clans, to divide Ireland into two parts – the dividing line passed between Dublin and Galway, partway, following the river Shannon. The king of the southern part is the High king of Cashel situated in a fertile plain. His seat, as King of Munster, was perched on a rock holding a stone fort built in the 400s. St Patrick 432-459, preached there converting Aengus, the then King. In 1101, it passed into the hands of the church that bestowed it later to Murtough O'Brien.

Osraighe or Ossory covered the present county of Kilkenny and the southern portion of Leix - populated by the Ciarraige tribe. Ciar refers to a nondescript colour it could be black, grey, brown, or tan. This could describe the people's clothes, hair, or skin. It is also a family name... becoming part of Ciar's People. They became vassal people owing allegiance to the Eoghanachta who were the successors of the holy Cathach tribal lands, including all those affiliated clans with similar names and family connections. The clan was under royal protection of Ui Neill, descended from the Connachta, when Ciar Culdub killed.

The hierarchy of kings was adapted to the older structure of

Ciardha/Kearey

provinces - Ulster, Munster, Connacht, and Leinster, within these there were two kings vying for supremacy. They were competing for the revenues and title - provincial kings claiming over lordship over lesser kings, one of which was the forebears of the O'Ciardha. Often these kings had to fight to enforce their claim, although each admitted the supremacy of the High King of Ireland.

It is, from a heraldic point of view, 'Grant of Arms' makes reference to the generally accepted origin of the name Kearey or Ceary to the Irish word 'Ciar' (dark or sable), combining this with heraldic devices that tell a story of the Kearey family starting with Thomas 1791-1860), who was born in Ireland. It is important to relate that whenever family trees are involved proof by certification: birth, death, marriage, and census is essential. In that way the Kearey, family arms and motto 'Truth be told' can be included in the wider context of the name. However, that does not dismiss, disregard nor belittle the existence of many other Ciardha/Keary/Ceary families throughout Irish history nor does it dismiss previous generations going further back still to the first millennium.

It is almost impossible either to work out the dominance of a particular tribe over another or to form a linearity of leading clans, especially if you try to put a date to each. It has to be pure conjecture for there are no compatible pieces of evidence to back them up. All one can do is assess the likelihood that this was so, 'at the time of!' Britain's fifth century history revolves around the return of the Roman Army to Italy and the disintegration of almost five-hundred years of Roman influence. The roads remained, the buildings suffered from lack of maintenance but the language and social mores remained, to be adapted. Irishmen were to some degree unaffected by the

turbulence, which followed the Romans retreat back to Rome. Christianity spread from the monasteries of Gaul reaching Ireland at about the same time. It was then that there were great changes to the Irish Celtic language, church scribes began to record the life and times, to record opinions and facts.

By about 540, the monks had begun to take over some of the power of the Brehons. Bishop Finian of the Ulaid of Dal Fiatach died of the plague 12th December 549 according to the Annals of Ulster, after the foundation of Cluain-Eraird in 520 'Clonard in Meath'. By then, both St. Ciaran of Seir-Kieran, St. Ciaran of Clonmacnoise, and Columba of Tir-da-glasi, were in their twenties. St Ciaran of Clonmacnoise from Connaught was the founder of an Abbey near Loch Ree, and Columba, the greatest of the later generation monks, who founded over twenty religious houses, looked to him as their chief and ruler. St Ciaran was another of The Twelve Apostles of Erin. He died on the 9th September 546 at the age of 32, buried in his little church attached to the Abbey. Queen Devorgilla helped found the monastery on land gifted by Diatmid Mac Cerbhaill. Previously Queen Devorgilla had been given as tribute to the Fomorians (a term used to describe seaborne raiders, probably Viking) but rescued by CuChulainn who offered her to Lugaid of Munster, High King of Ireland in about 500... he refused to accept her. Clonmacnoise was such an important centre for learning and religious teaching - having its individual stone cells, its chapel, and graveyard, enclosed behind a circular stonewalled stronghold. (Cashel). These descriptions, are handed down to us from stanza, scriptures, hymns, and the "Annals of Ulster." The rural society at this time was not one based upon towns or villages but ring-forts, lake dwellings, and later, monastery-settlements. The people within lived in much cruder constructions with little or no stonework but simple pole

houses... often with an open roof, built on an earthen mound with ring ditches, and offset entrances. Ireland's history is about many small kingships that were always battling with each other – stealing each other's cattle. The advent of religious conversion did suppress these petty differences for the preachers understood that they only upset the inhabitants, caused dissention, and disturbed the flow of conversions during the period 530 – 540 – during the time of Tuatha - ending in the second order. Finnian, 'the best of saints' - to the greatest Columba, both king and bishop. The great age of Ireland lasted three hundred years.

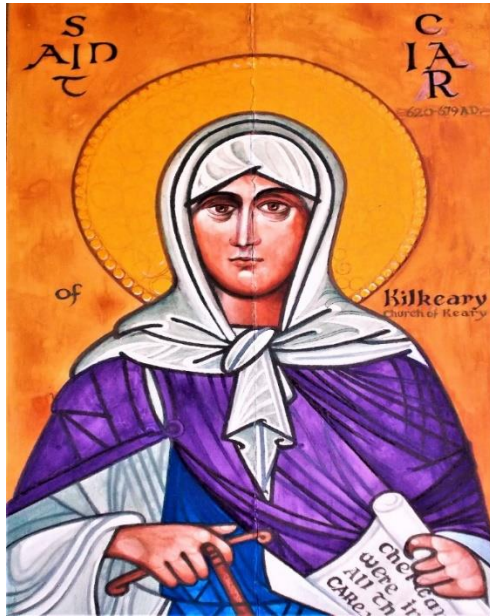
Most rulers had a very strong link with the church – a clan chief could also be a priest, as could a lord – one position did not have greater importance. It would not be cynical to suggest that clan chiefs saw this as an easy way to achieve salvation, and the church, as a means of converting the chief's subjects. These positions of power could all be headed up by the same person, or by a member of the same family, it became very convenient. It is not surprising to find that some families held these offices for generations.

Irish Christianity had a great influence on Britain and records cannot be interpreted without some recourse into pagan Ireland, and its traditions. Irish history, through the language of the bards, is much older and far more developed than England's - it's neighbour to the east... although later history needs reference to early accounts by the Romans – particularly Ptolemy, and later Christian writings by priests and leaders like St. Cianan. We have to be grateful for the visiting monks who stayed, and had the necessary foresight to record what they saw and heard. It is only by this that way we can form and date some events.

A generation later a daughter was born to king Duibhrea, she, by her later good works, became canonised in about 645, about the time of Cogitosus - the biographer of Brigit. Ireland became the centre for monastic life. Finnian and Ciaran had coeducational foundations. Widows, and there were many due to wars, unprotected single women, and girls, were lodged as equals in monastic schools. The unstable society created many displaced unattached females who needed shelter and sustenance. Irish monasteries promoted arable farming and the instruction of good farming practices - for many relied upon their ordered existence, to provide food and safe lodging.

Chapter 2. Saint Ciar

Ciardha/Kearey



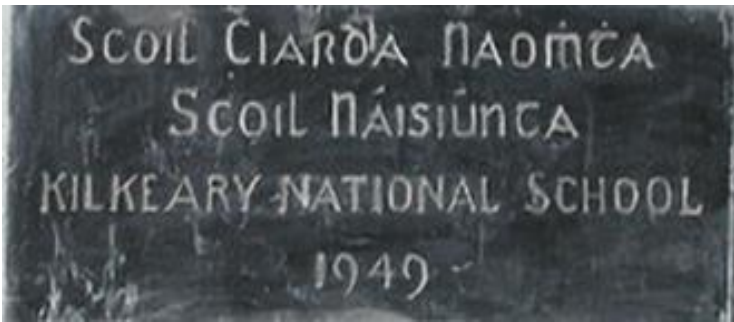
Saint Ciar 620-679

Ciar, St. Virgin, daughter of Duibhrea, died 679. Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland 'The Four Masters' translated by John O'Donovan, compiled by Emma Ryan. Adomnán of Iona, Life of St. Columba. The common Irish place names headed by Kil- (from Latin cella 'cell') point to a monastic origin.

Ciardha/Kearey



Saint Ciarda School c1949

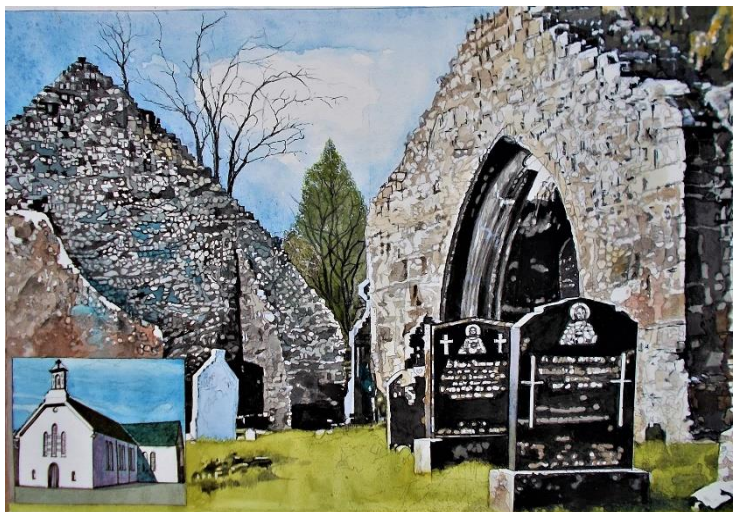


Kilkeary School Plaque

Ciardha/Kearey



Kilkeary Church Cemetery



The inserted picture gives what Kilkeary Church looked like originally.

Ciardha/Kearey

The Archaeological Inventory of North Tipperary, 8-9-1995, gives 1864 Kilkeary. OS21:14:6 (416, 13) 'Kilkeary Church (in Ruins)' OD 300-400 19172, 17572, gives Church and graveyard. Situated on a south-facing slope in pasture. Described in the Civil Survey 1654-6 (Simington 1934, vol. 2, 263) as being ruined 'the walls onely standinge'. A ruinous church (dimensions, 9m N-S; 29.3. E-W), roughly centrally placed within a graveyard, aligned E-W and outlined by wall-footings (max. Height 1.1m) and collapsed limestone rubble. The present length is misleading a low stonewalled burial plot appears to have been added to the west end. The original length is closer to 20m based on a description in the Ordinance Survey letters (O'Flanagan 1930, vol, 1, 199). An obelisk inserted in the east end of the church. Visible tombstones in the graveyard of William Carroll referred to in the OS letters dates to 1706. There are no prepared cut stones; original work repaired in places. 21:74

Kilkeary Church is listed in the Record of Monuments and Places of North Tipperary with the number TN021-074001-<https://bit.ly/2ZX0Wdb>. Historical and Technical information by Archaeologist Caimin O'Brien, National Monuments Service, Nenagh. Received 0-7-8/01/2020. This above link will take you to the NMS online description of the church with bibliographic references and photographs, all available for download. The poor condition of Cill Ciardha (Church of Keary) makes it impossible to be certain about the date of the present surviving building but it is most likely to date from the 12th/13th century. The mention of cyclopean masonry is interesting, could suggest a date around 1000-1100 AD but the presence of large stones rarely indicates an early date for the church. The present building built as the first parochial church of the parish of Kilkeary, on the site of the 7th century nunnery founded by Saint Ciar. The poor condition and meagre remains of the church

Ciardha/Kearey

building makes it difficult to be certain about dating this structure. One can only put down the condition of the ruined church to theft and rotting roof beams. The church and graveyard now in the care of Tipperary County Council and there is a local graveyard committee called the Kilkeary Burial Ground Committee which looks after the site on behalf of the local parishioners.

National Monuments Service (NMS) Received 07/01/2020. The precise location of the nunnery has never been identified the most likely scenario is the present stone church has been built on the site of the nunnery although there is no archaeological evidence to support this. It is possible that the nunnery will have been located at another site within the townland of Kilkeary. The 7th century nunnery originally built of timber surrounded by an earth and timber enclosure. The construction of stone churches did not commence in Ireland until a few centuries later. No archaeological excavation carried out near the church. Received 08/01/2020 from the NMS.



Kilkeary Parish c1600: Irelands National Monuments Service received 17.01.2020.

In 1901, surnames in Ireland became altered to simplify the translation of the Irish form into English, for example. The (y) ending in English replacing aigh, aidh and dha. Keary surnames are numerous in Co. Tipperary, Dublin and Westmeath. The addition of an e to the y (ey), as in Kearey, just emphasis the ee sound – a way to assume greater Englishness adopted by immigrants hoping to find work and to afford greater assimilation. Latin was incorporated into Gaelic in about the 6th century. By the twelfth century, the language evolved into modern Irish. By the following centuries, freedom of speech increased, English began to be incorporated improving word power and communication.

Saint Ciarán of Clonmacnoise, who belonged to the first generation of saintly monastic founders, died in 549 AD, over seventy years before Saint Ciar's birth. Columba, Abbot of Iona, died twenty-three years before and Abbot Adomnán died twenty-five years after her birth. These recorded facts give us a time-span, St Ciar was born over three generations after the arrival of Christianity in Ireland and revered by her example, her teaching her saintliness and personal traits afforded her with enough strength to go on and promote her religion and beliefs on a wider scale.

St Ciar was a native of this district, her father Duibhrea, descended from 'the line of Connors', Kings of Ireland. To her father's name was sometimes added 'insula', an island – this refers to an island now called King's Island, surrounded by a branch of the Shannon called Abbey River. Loch Derg's southern side is in the Province of Ormond - where St Ciar was born. Her

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great sanctity and many miracles attracted numbers of holy women to share her monastic life

The name of this district was written by 'The Scholar of Aegus', as Cill Cheire, the church of St. Ciar, Kilkeary (Church of Keary); it is situated in the ancient Muscraidhe Thire, the Upper and Lower Ormond. In Aegus written, 'Ciar Ingen Duibhrea', (referring to St. Ciardha), daughter of king Duibhrea, who was the local clan chief.

The O'Ciardha, one of the family groups that made up the Muscraidhe Tribe which populated central and south/west Ireland east of the River Shannon. The aristocratic family Ui Raibne thought to own Cell Céire (Kilkeary). St. Ciar, who was also of the family, founded the church and nunnery.

What is important to this story is that it introduces my Irish name and it is to St Ciar that I have to thank - my name is an abbreviated form of Máel MacGíoha Ciar – '*as one of her devotees or followers*'. The family name Ciardha/Keary established from the naming of the saint, in about 650 AD - making a close connection between the church and the secular head, king Duibhrea or Duina, reflected in the early writings.

John Colgan, Ireland's national hagiographist (Writer of saints' lives & legends) Bibliography: Colgan, Triadis Thaumaturgae (Dublin 1996). Sharpe, 'Medieval Irish Saints' Lives:

An Introduction to Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae (Oxford 1991). c. plummer, ed., Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae (Dublin 1997), gives: "That at the request of St Brendan, patron of Clonfert, this holy virgin, St Ciar, by her prayers, extinguished a pestiferous fire which had broken out in the region of Muscraidhe Thire." Saint

Ciardha/Kearey

Ciar, an Abbess, founded her nunnery in Tipperary, north Munster, the area now known as Kilkeary, north Tipperary. It would appear that St. Ciar, by her name, family associations, and will, provided the use of her name to create Ciardha.

St Ciar's nunnery grew to house thirteen postulants in about 645 AD. This settlement, in Upper Ormond, appears to have been the only one established during the early Christian era in that area - later defined as 'in the diocese of the bishop of Killaloe' With this number of nuns, there would be a back-up number of helpers, friends, relatives, workers, crofters and supporters. There must have been a considerable population in and around the nunnery - a monastic community so described by Dr Richard Sharpe in the *Life of Columba*.

According to Omnium Sanctorum Hiberniae - a book dedicated to the saints of Ireland, we commemorate Saint Ciar as patron of the parish, which bears her name - Kilkeary, County Tipperary (today's crossroads, graveyard and school). John, Canon O'Hanion (1821-1905), gives us an insight into this holy woman and monastic foundress. The Parish of Kilkeary is in the Barony of Iffa and Offer East, in the Diocese of Lismore and County Tipperary. Dr Richard Sharpe gives a most readable account of the life of a saint in his book Adomnán of Iona Life of St Columba.

Life in a religious settlement is described in the *Life of St Columba* giving us an idea of the building and surrounding land, the nuns sitting round the fire, reading religious scripts, a guest house where visitors could stay and a store house needing to be restocked. The use of a cemetery, graves marked with a stone and the erection of a cross. All these early buildings and their uses can be easily imagined very little different to life in any community of the time or place. BBC Time Team programmes

ably draw a picture of the period. St Ciar's nunnery perhaps supported by king Duibhrea would have been a centre of the community.

Monks arriving from other European countries had a knowledge and understanding of Christian teaching and Latin. They were there to persuade the Irish leaders of a more superior way of life. To do this they glorified God explaining that salvation earned would give the converted everlasting life. Their task was successful giving themselves time and place to settle down and to build a base. It was a natural progression for the monks to copy the bible and religious tracts to regularise the curriculum and to help their mission forward. It is from these early writings that our story takes shape.

The religious order began to take over some of the power of the Brehons. Finnian died in the plague about ten years after the foundation of Clonard. By then both Ciaran and Columba of Terryglass were in their twenties. Saint Ciaran of Clonmacnoise from Connaught was the founder of the Abbey near Lough Ree and Columba, the greatest of the later generation of monks, founded Iona. St Ciaran was another of The Twelve Apostles of Ireland. He died on the 9th September 546 AD, at the age of 32 - buried in his little church attached to the Abbey.

St. Ciar (d. 681), foundress and first abbess of Cell Chéire, and saint in the Irish tradition, was closely associated with north Munster, especially the territories of Múscraige Tíre (on the shores of Lough Derg) and Arada Tíre (barony of Owney and Arra, Co. Tipperary). Ciar's father is named as Dub Rea, the genealogies maintaining that, in common with [Gobnait](#) (qv) of Ballyvourney, she belonged to Síl Conaire – in other words to the Érainn, the tribal group that included the Múscraige. A note in

the Martyrology of [Óengus](#) (qv) (*fl.* c.830) locates Ciar in Mag nEscad, apparently a plain in Múscraige Tíre. An alternative pedigree supplied for Ciar *Ascad*, however, makes her a daughter of Colla (or Conla) son of Dícuill, implying an association with the Araid. It is likely that the same individual is intended, the variant pedigree being a product of local cult fragmentation.

St. Ciar features in the Life of [Brendan](#) (qv) (d. 578) of Clonfert, in an episode (§93) that certainly seems anachronistic, unless it is interpreted as prophetic. Brendan is represented as urging the people of Múscraige Tíre to trust in the prayers of their local saint Ciar that an eruption of infernal fire might be quelled. More credible historically is the alleged contact between Ciar and [Fintan](#) (qv) of Taghmon (Co. Wexford), who lived till 637. The latter's Life (§12) names Ciar as the leader of a group of five virgins who visited the saintly abbot when he lived in the kingdom of Éle (north Co. Tipperary). He sent them on to the *Slige Midluachra* (the road from Tara to Ulster), where they were to join St Telle. This may hint at the diffusion of a cult of Ciar into the north-Leinster and east-midland region. Ciar *Ascad* was perhaps associated with Cell *Ascad* (Kyle Ascoot, parish of Kilpipe, Co. Wicklow), while a certain Ciar and her sister Midan are associated with the unallocated Ros Iarnglais in northern Leinster. Likewise of interest is the former placename Kyltekeare (Cell Tech Chéire) (Kilkeary), in the townland of Kilgobbin, Co. Dublin. Ciar died in 681; she is commemorated in the martyrologies at 5 January and again at 16 October, the latter entry appearing to be a duplication.

Sources

Ann. Tig.; *Mart. Oeng.*; *Mart. Tall.*; *Mart. Don.*; *Bk Leinster*, vi, 1578, 1580; Plummer, *Vitae SS Hib.*, i, 145; ii, 230; Ó Riain,

Corpus geneal. SS Hib. (1985), 62, 113; C. Harrington, *Women in a Celtic church: Ireland 450–1150* (2002), 119, 139, 225.

The rural society of this time was not one based upon towns or villages but ring-forts, lake dwellings and later, monastery-settlements. The people populated smaller communities of much cruder construction with little or no stonework but simple pole houses often with an open roof, built on an earthen mound with ring ditches and offset entrances.

Life for the Ciardha family based upon the group or sect following the accepted position of the chief or head. The senior or chief would have won his position by strength of arms alone. His position was not automatically passed down to his son, but offered to the strongest in arms. Young men won their spurs position in the group's hierarchy by the number of cattle stolen or greatest fear wrought upon their neighbour. Common security awarded by promised payment guaranteed by bond. Therefore, you look after me, I will look after you, and we will share any prize/spoils together. It was a rough tough world with no quarter given.

Ireland changed dramatically when Mac Erca (Muirchertach mac Muiredaig, died c. 534, as High King of Ireland). Up to the twelfth century, the monastic bodies were all under the Rule of Columba 544 AD. St Ciarán, one of a number of Benedictine monks who were the first saint-founders. Between Mac Erca's death and the arrival of Patrick Christianity became the established power base governed by Bishops. It was during Mac Erca's time there were mass conversions covering all Irish society. Several of those Bishops stood up to the power of the lords and probably the greatest of these was St Ciarán, the 'smith's (carriage-wright) son', from Enda's Aran who founded

Clonmacnoise, Co. Offaly, in 545 AD. He was one of the principals of the synods of Meg Léne at the time of ‘Diarmait the Good’, one of the great kings of Ireland. Columba commented wryly at the time of Ciarán death:

“Blessed is God who called Ciaran from this world in his youth. If he had lived to an old age, he would have aroused many men’s hostility”.

Most rulers had a very strong link with the church – a clan chief could also be a priest, as could a lord – one position did not have greater importance than any other did. It would not be cynical to suggest that clan chiefs saw this as an easy way to achieve salvation, maintain order and hold onto their position; the church saw the close connection as a means of converting the chief’s subjects. If a member of the same family could hold these positions, then it all became very convenient and worthwhile. It is not surprising to find that some families held these offices for generations. What was important to the common people was that the coming of Christianity quietened down the acts of vandalism, theft, and petty wars giving stability and greater unity. What that also did eventually was to give the church equal if not then later greater power which lasts till today. In England it was that power: the land, buildings, gold, obedience, sanctity, gift of everlasting life forced Henry VIII, to literary smash, allow him to do as he pleased.

St Ciar’s church elaborately decorated, especially around the altar; the walls painted to depict the apostles and the single roof span covered with split stone slates. For the period, this represented a building of influence and authority, a dwelling that catered for a number of nuns, visiting pilgrims and the needy, particularly women. The land close to the church

Ciardha/Kearey

adopted as a burial ground for the local clan, which is there plainly for all to see.

Kilkeary today is a parish, in the barony of Iffer and Offer East in the Diocese of Lismore and County of Tipperary - a Province of Munster, 4 miles south-east from Nenagh, on the road to Cashel; it comprises 2524 statute acres; the land is generally good and mostly under tillage. Greenanstown House is the seat of Count D'Alton. The parish is a rectory, forming part of the union of Ballynacclough and corps of the deanery of Killaloe. The ruined nunnery and today's graveyard and school sit close upon the crossroads, a microcosm of its past life.

Family, sept Cenel nEogain, king Muirchertach mac Muirelaig descended from Eoghan eldest son of Niall included Ua Ciardha. King Duibhrea or Duina, a minor king who lived in his castle on Holy Island, North Tipperary. His daughter b620, canonized by Rome became St. Ciar, Abbess of Kilkeary nunnery, she recognised and wished her name to be that of the clan, adopted the family name. The family O'Ciardha (Keary) formed previously about the time St Ciaran of Clonmacnoise died in 549 when Saint Columba was a young man. Mael MacGioha Ciar, a follower of St. Ciar were Lords of Carbury. Maelruanaidha O'Ciardha, king of Cairbre d993 AD. Abbot Adomnan of Iona, belonged to the Ui Neill his successor Conamail died in 704. O'Ciardha of Cairbre were poets of Clan Niall.

The young men of the family in ancient times were putting themselves in danger by stealing cattle to the extent that there would be fights, injury and death this would leave young women without security. The society had a surplus of young women who gladly found succour at St Ciar's nunnery. These women nursed

Ciardha/Kearey

the sick fed the poor from food bred and grown by themselves and tended the elderly.

The O'Ciardha clan was one of the family groups who made up the Múscraighe Thire who populated central and south/west Ireland – south east of the river Shannon. The aristocratic family Uí Raibne reputedly owned Kilkeary close to Nenagh. St Ciar who was also of the family founded the church. Cousins held the churches of Dromineer, Toomevara, and Kilaughnane. These religious houses all situated close to the rich pastures that line the east shore of the river.

Written evidence of the time is unavailable and even later the scribes who did write of the times had no common language. We rely upon those Latin writers for Irish history although far removed from the local people and their habits. Therefore, please excuse me for I am little better, my translation is faulty, I attribute things badly, the gap of two millennium casts long shadows and there are few clues to go on. One last explanation before I start... in the year AD 664/5 a Great Plague swept through Ireland wiping out many monastic populations. The centuries between the sixteenth and nineteenth were equally destructive to both the population and clergy during which the supporters of Henry and Cromwell later took their toll.

Other aristocratic branches of the family held smaller foundations whilst some of the family settled at the great monastery of Birr. The Uí Daigre, yet another branch, held the church of Latteragh and claimed that Odrán, its founder, was one of them. Uí Léinéne was a family of Uí Daigre, and as late as 1074, the annals record the death of Gilla Brénnainn Ua Léknine, Superior of Letracha Odráin. The Ciardha clan not only lived and ruled a large tract of central Ireland, were leaders of the church and provided armed men to support the High King of the period.

Ciardha/Kearey

Terryglass, Co. Tipperary was also an important religious building on the east side of Lough Derg fed by the river Shannon. The monastery founded by St Columba of Terryglass. The Shannon and its lakes were circled by a number of communities all using their dugout canoes (coite or cimba) to plunder their neighbour's stock.



GPS: 53. 36157,- 6.96905: Carbury Castle between c1600 – 1700. The site is pre-Christian and holds a number of burial sites or barrows. The territory of Cairbre Ui Ciaidha was associated with the Lords of Carbury. Niall of the Nine Hostages was antecedent of the clan Ciardha, after the Anglo-Normans the land granted to the Norman Meiler Fitzhenry, later the Lords Bermingham built the castle. The ancient Irish clans lived in dispersed settlement sites throughout their clan territories. The Cairbre O’Ciardha clan territory was located in the barony of Carbury in County Kildare, which is where their settlement sites would have been located. Received 10/01/2020.

Ciardha/Kearey

O'Ciardha or O'Carey, chiefs of Cairbre O'Ciardha (Keary) in the barony of Carbery in Co. Kildare, Seán Mór O'Dubhagáin (Duggan) (died 1372) wrote: "O'Ciardha are Cairbre of poets of the tribe Niall of Nine-Hostages." Poets were seen to be not only as learned men but soothsayers and saviours.

The Religious Census of 1766, for Co. Tipperary has a number of entries for Thomas Keary, Daniel Keary, John Keary and Edmond Keary, one of these could well be the father of Thomas Kearey 1791-1860 my great, great grandfather.

Rome provided Ireland with territorial bishops, each generally given a diocese close to a royal residence. As more and more nunneries and monasteries became established their incumbents became bishops, abbesses – and to some, great abbots. Most kings sought bishops for their own kingdoms, which gave them added power and influence. Sometimes their requests given at other times they were not, perhaps allocated a monk under a bishop. The bishop, who was a monk, remained under the abbot, who was highly esteemed.

The southern church favoured conformity with Rome the nunneries and monasteries governed by many different groups – some as independent establishments. Unity was urgently needed which took the form of a metropolitan episcopate. The first candidate put in place in 650 AD, in the southern see of Kildare, in northern Leinster. Ultimately, both north and south united under Armagh whose bishop became Ireland's senior bishopric. Founded by Saint Patrick Armagh remained the most important of all his monasteries. The Irish word for Abbot is comarba – meaning heir. Therefore, his is the heir of the founder. In many instances, the heir was also of the same

dynastic family – the same kindred - the link between the founder and the patron.

A nunnery had much the same architectural layout as a monastery. The heart of the complex was still the attached cloister ran around an open space encompassing most of the important buildings - such as the church, the refectory for communal meals, kitchens, accommodation and study areas. There might also be accommodation for pilgrims who had travelled to see the holy relics the nuns had acquired and looked after (which could be anything from a slipper of the Virgin Mary to a skeletal finger of a saint). Many nunneries had a cemetery for staff and another for lay people (men and women) who paid for the privilege of internment there after a service in the chapel.

The church did not suppress Gaelic (Irish) but retained part of it within Latin. The monastic libraries kept these works and preserved them. This liberal attitude reflected in the church's writings but in the religious services. Clerics used Irish in their studies and teaching, consulting a written grammar of the Irish tongue. Whether they knew what the outcome would be is not clear but it made secular and clerical writing universally greater than English.

The monasteries and nunneries housed the teachers of Latin. Their ringed stonewalls, built on a rampart mound, and gave security and isolation from the unsettled land around. These cashels were every bit as defensive as the lord's castle, a place where the whole community could shelter. This was no haphazard arrangement but a place declaring wealth and power.

Books the monks copied initially written in continental Europe. Trade flourished between countries nearest Ireland. This was not just normal trade between Britain, France, Spain and Ireland but religious sustenance as well. All religious houses had a scribe who attended to the matters of the day. In other times copied out books of learning, circulated to create a library elsewhere. A Psalter, known as the Cathach attributed to St Colum Cille, written at about the time St Ciar was performing her good works. The Irish missionaries travelled on the continent baptising Germans and Austrians building up the faithful as they went. They went on pilgrimages 'seeking salvation and solitude' evangelising pagan people preparing a way for later monks to build upon.

It was not always the case that an Abbot was a bishop who governed a diocese or administered a tribe's territory there was no such organization these things were interchangeable. This company of Christian women who formed the foundation of St Ciar's community in Upper Ormond in 645 AD, named after her, attending 'Cill Cheire (*Church of Keary*).' It was here that she ruled with considerable skill, increasing the postulants - giving the foundation credence and sanctity.

St Ciar's veneration was no trifling matter. To be officially recognised and canonized means she was accepted by Rome and worthy of obedience. This allowed St Ciar to expect her followers, in matters of the church and women, obeyed. Being a daughter of the king added to her power and prestige. This link between king and church made it easier to assume and hold onto power. This close association between the ruling body, either local or national, and the priesthood is a feature of early religious foundations. It was in both their interests to have this

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close connection keeping power centralized and necessary, but also greatly assisting religious foundation.

When the nunnery at Kilkeary was well established and capable of self-regulation she left, accompanied by five nuns, to start a new foundation in North Offaly, King's County, where she obtained a site for another nunnery from St. Fintan. It was in a place now known as Tehelly, in the parish of Durrow, formed in about the year 655 AD. This was close to Clonmacnoise and St Ciaran's Church. The original foundation continued to flourish and minister to the local people.

Following the tidal river north, from the mouth of the River Shannon, you come to a Lough called Derg – the settlement of Killaloe occupies the land at the mouth to the Lough. The great river continues through the lough northwards, to Clonmacnoise, a wealthy, sixth-century fort-like monastery built of stone before entering Lough Ree... then onwards... upto Carrick on the Shannon. (The spelling is lough for Irish and Loch for Scottish.) Lough n loch m3; Lough Derg Loch Dearg or Deirgeirt; Lough Erne Loch'Eirne; Lough Neagh Loch nEathach: Belfast Lough Loch Lao.

It did not matter where St Ciar travelled her title to property and obedience went along with her. She and the bishop, who was son of the king of Munster, jointly ruled the church. An early law tract refers to the bishop of Cork and Emly as uasal-epscop, giving them a status equal to the king of Munster - who was overlord of the southern half of Ireland.

Later, St Ciar (Canonized Pre-Congregation) returned to Kilkeary where she was reputed to have died of natural causes.

Little is known of the subsequent history of the nunnery or of her burial place. *Her death is recorded in the Annals of the Four Masters January 5th 679. Rewritten by John O'Donovan, LL.D., M.R.I.A. Barrister at Law, Second Edition 1856. The following stanza is from Leahhar Breac, the Book of the MacEgans – Irish Pedigrees (Learned Brehons and historians) by John O'Hart, 1892 (fifth Edition) It seems quite remarkable that someone like Saint Ciar, who has recorded history, can be so utterly lost in historic scriptures that even the name is miss-spelled.*

*'The call of Semeoin, the sage,
To Christ of purist...
A new, transitory, gentle nun was
Ciar, the daughter of Duibhrea.'*

It was in the middle and latter part of the first millennium that proper written records kept. 'The Irish Annals.' Their genesis, evolution and history, by D.P.McCarthy, senior lecturer in the department of computer science and a fellow of Trinity College, Dublin. Book of Kells, illuminated manuscripts, (This book was to be kept on the altar of churches and monasteries in ancient times) written and illuminated c.800 CE. Rewritten by Joshua J. Mark, and 'The lives of the Saints' written in 1577, first published 1579, by Skarga are three sources of early recorded history - written by scribes in Latin - the result of intended missionary zeal by Christian bishops and their scribes.

Gildas developed Latin literature in a style and order fit for publication. His paragraphs, sentences and words were impressions build upon the spoken word – placed together by sound and syllable. The language was from Europe but based upon English. As Ireland was the first large country to become Christian outside the Roman Empire, scholars had to write the

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Irish language, in Latin characters. They were compelled to write with an alphabet. Ogam notches became outdated in the seventh century Latin preserved the first written records. This is when the K used especially by mapmakers. Thereafter Latin began to be changed - English, Welsh and Irish adapted and added to – developed into Irish modern literature.

Ciardha is the Gaelic spelling of the family name or clan - used by scribes in about 650 AD. Later writers increasingly used Cary, Carey or Keary as a more identifiable written form. The written Irish-language mainly derived from Latin and assumed closer integration to the accepted form of spelling and pronunciation in the sixth century - probably when the K used in written texts. In its softer anglicised form of Cary or Carey, it is natural not to make the difference so hard.

What era or part of the country 'K' rather than 'C' used, is unclear perhaps the use of K (as in kick, in the Gaelic Q form) happened when the Gaelic Cill (church) was replaced by the Latinized Kil - for place-names on maps – hence, Kilkeary and Kilkenny. Most place names are in that form. The method of spelling might indicate who commissioned the work, when, and for what purpose.

The history about the right language and spelling of a family name explains what happened in Ireland that caused such disturbance and distress. The clan chiefs, Anglo-Irish aristocracy, their upstarts, the invaders, clerics and politicians may deserve censure, for the chaos that marks the islands history, but the people certainly do not. The derivations of a name throughout the centuries give proof to the matter. In this instance, from Ciar to O'Ciardha, Cheire to Carie, Carey, Keary and Kearey.

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This unity under Gaelic kings, represented by Ui Neill, continued for nearly two-hundred years, until the Normans invited to save the then ruling body. From this moment, Gaelic Ireland began to lose its identity and power base. This call, to an outside body, was to have far-reaching effects – ultimately and not reversible. This was the downfall of Ireland it allowed the Normans to assume not just power by invitation but ‘of a right’. Richard FitzGilbert de Clare, Strongbow, promised payment for saving the Irish throne for O’Neill. Strongbow claimed in full, giving estates to followers and those who had supported him. By 1300, the Normans controlled most of Ireland.

The O’Ciardha (Cary or Keary) clan were a senior branch of the Cenel Cairpri, descended from Cairpre populated the central southwestern areas of Ireland, an ancient Gaeilge warrior kingdom speaking Gaeltacht. The chiefs of clan O’Ciardha closely related to the supreme ruler of southern Ireland they were minor kings, ruling that part of southern Ireland located just below Lough Derg in today’s northern Tipperary.

*‘O’Cary rules over Carbery of bards,
He is of the tribe of Niall of the nine Hostages,
There are none but themselves there,
Of the clans of Niall over Leinster.*

The main clan lands were Slievefelim or the Silvermine Mountains and Hills in the kingdom of Munster, not far from Ossory and Kilkeary... They were a senior group controlling a vast area related to Ui Neill. Another branch lived further east, inhabiting Carbury, Co Kildare. This extended family grouping - Cairbre Ua gCiardha, were also a prosperous family with many cattle.

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The ancient site of St Ciardha's monastic house built in a valley between Nenagh and Toomyvara, and the two mountains Slievekimalta and Devilsbit. To the north, lies The Central Lowlands: an area of farms, market towns, peat bogs, glens, and lakes. Before intensive cultivation, the land heavily forested. With the growth of many settlements the nearest navigable river influenced their development; in this case it was the river Shannon and in particular Loch Derg, five miles north of Nenagh; it's southern banks bordered Lower Ormond and Arra and Ownney. The family territory roughly conforms to the centre of the country - an area of hill and lowland. It was boggy-free downland, rich in minerals and well drained and hedged. This central part of the land, split between cousins - into east and west groups. Unfortunately, both groups suffered from several competing branches, which weakened the power base. The eastern cousin's centre was at Cashel, and the other, the northern group, the Lower Shannon; it was to this area that the king had over lordship – suzerain, of the Ostmen of Waterford and Limerick, including their two important cities. This large area conforms roughly to today's Co Tipperary.

The central/southern Uí Néills, (*Ui means' children of'*, a term of gentility - denotes those of the ruling family). This is a much older form than Ó or more strictly 'Ua'. O' means grandchild linking to a previous generation. It was to this branch of the Ó' Néill's that the Ó' Ciardha clan became indelibly linked. The Keary clan were a 'sept' (sept, n. Clan, esp. in Ireland. (F of septevar). 'Of Sect' describes minor Gaelic/Irish ruling families or clans, or divided clan (clan, n. Scottish Highlanders with common ancestor, esp. while under patriarchal control (f. Gael. Clan f. L Planta) groups. In early times individuals were only known by one name. As the population grew another name was added - this gave individuals a family name. To then advance this system an O' was added to make an even greater linkage to a

group or clan. As clans were displaced by interclan wars splits occurred in the clan. Still keeping their name and traditions families began to form in differing parts of the country. The stronger and more warlike the chief the greater the pressure on his neighbour. After the first millennium AD the language formed into the written word for the first time. This noted social happenings and to whom – history was in the making. Irish dialects began to be developed especially around main clan structures in particular counties.

This allegiance between the O'Neill's and the O'Ciardha continued until the latter lost all their clan lands over a period of six hundred years, ending at the same time as the restoration of Charles II - after Cromwell's death. (Planta, n. English settler, on forfeited lands in 17th c., person settled in plantation).

Edward Maclysaght's, More Irish Families, 1982, p50, agrees that the majority of those called Carey (or Keary) belong to the O'Ciardha a senior branch of the Cenel Cairpri. It can be seen that whether C or K used it refers to the same people.

In all research into genealogical connections into the O'Ciardha, certain names are always cropping up; in particular, O'Meara, O'Kennedy and O'Carrolls. Toomevara parish contains the districts of Agnameadle, Ballymackey, Kilkeary, Templedowney, and Ballygibbon. It has three ancient ecclesiastical ruins one of which was an ancient foundation for women established by St. Ciardha. There are also several ruined castles, some habitable, others not, being just ruins. The name of this district was written by 'The Scholar of Aegus', as Cill Cheire, the church of St. Kera, Cera, or Ciar (Kilkeary - Church of Keary) situated in the ancient Muscraidhe Thire, the Upper and Lower Ormond. In Aegus written: 'Ciar Ingen Duibhrea' meaning: St. Ciardha, daughter of

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king Duibhrea. The cemetery used by the Ciarraighe - Luachra tribe, in Upper Ormond, not far from Roscrea, and Kings Co.

The ancient church of Kilkeary was built about 625AD, 57 feet long, and just over 19 feet wide. It is now in ruins having all its features destroyed except for a few massive stones – one of several tons. Built in a semi-cyclopean style of Lange limestone rocks in the seventh and eighth centuries. In the graveyard is a monument to Major General Sir William Parker Carrol of Ballygrenade, a descendant of the O' Carroll's of Ely. In 1702, an earlier member of the family buried here. General Carrol was from Lissenhall, on the far side of Nenagh Town and had a very distinguished career in the Spanish Army fighting under the Duke of Wellington during the Napoleonic Wars. He was highly thought of in England, married an illegitimate daughter of George III. William was also a Politician who petitioned for the separation of the Northern and Southern Grand Juries in the county, in the 1830s. The fact that the Carrols used the Kilkeary graveyard – the site of the nunnery, was in keeping with Gaelic tradition. The Carrols, Kennedys' and Meara were all inhabitants, south of the River Shannon. When the O'Ciardha were being harassed, then evicted, some transferred allegiance to the security of these families - who welcomed them as brothers in arms.

The nearest large town to Kilkeary is Nenagh, seven miles west; an important centre for its Anglo-Norman association and Franciscan Friary, which Kennedy founded in 1240, and Cromwell destroyed, in 1650. It was one of the new walled towns designed in 1171... the citizens fearing incursions from warring factions lent a hand with the building... the town council passed a law whereby every person – including: shop owners, priests and women. Every person was allotted a day in the week

that each had to help in building the town walls. Toomyvara, a pleasant small market town, lies four miles east, lying astride an important crossroads.

The Vikings, 795AD – Scandinavians called Norsemen were more likely to come from Norway rather than Denmark, and Holland, pillaged and plundered coastline and river settlements around Ireland and Britain... building fortresses at Dublin, Waterford, Wexford, Cork and Limerick - the main towns of Ireland. These guardians of main river inlets, sometimes titled kings, were tribal chiefs or earls... in no way could they be described as rulers of large tracks of the countryside. They lived in stone houses with a surrounding wall punctured by fortified gates. Circling this stronghold were a number of ditches and mounds with offset entrances. Finding Ireland particularly accommodating the Norsemen chose the best land and settled... marrying into the population, known as Ostmen. They felt at home... in this pagan land... a land of tales, songs, myths and legend - it was much like their own former homeland.

Since medieval times 'baile' means home/town 'fearann' land/territory and 'aka' town-land these pre-dates the Norman invasion they describe in Gaelic the smallest territorial unit. Some townlands, such as Kilkeary 'Church of Keary', reflects the name of a person or family. In this instance it is Saint Ciar. The first maps on a national scale, to define the Irish townland, began with Cromwell in the 1650s. The boundaries of a townland usually follow natural features, hills or rivers.

The National Service Records shows the Ancient Parish on its map held by the Monument Service gives the full boundary outline and also lists adjoining townlands. The first Survey of Ireland 1658 links with to Down Survey maps, townland landowners. Population census will reveal old townland spelling variations, and other variations of historical names such as Tithe Applotments 1821-51, and Valuation Field Books 1824-56.

Chapter 3. The Vikings.

Through the ages, this settlement, on the river mouth, was important. Later called Limerick, and came to play a vital role in the development of the country... a place well known for its salmon fishing and its access, up the river, into the heart of the country. In Loch Derg, longboats were often at anchor, close to the shore... some drawn up on the beach others hauled up onto logs - under repair. These are the property of Viking raiders, who are frequent visitors – their coming and going accepted by the inhabitants. A number of the Vikings strike up relationships with the inhabitants, marry, and have children... They remain working the land and fishing. This convenient fraternization ensured a safe harbour, a place where boats restocked whilst taking on water. Like many immigrants to a new land, they took an active part in its development becoming more committed to its survival than the original inhabitants, which the incoming Normans found to their cost...!

In the 830s, the Viking raids became even more extensive defeating the Uí Néill in battle and plundering widely... the clergy were at this point part of the nobility and church property protected by law. Monks could not act as security nor make bequests without his abbot's consent for the abbot was the administrative head of the church. The Norse raids lasted until the 870s... died out, and erupted again. Ten years later 'the great Norse tyrant' Barith was killed... not before destroying Cianan of Duleek's oratory. The kingdom of Uí Failge comprised the baronies of Offaly in County Kildare and part of the diocese of Kildare... their kings related to the ruling Laigin dynasty. However, the southern Uí Néill maintained precedence in

Munster until the reign of Feidlimid mac Crimthainn in AD886. In the latter part of the first millennium, the Uí Néill was probably the most important family grouping – dominating both the northern and southern parts of Ireland. They were descended from Niall Noígíallach who themselves were from Conn. The Vikings at the battle of Dublin 919AD killed Niall Glundub, ancestor and over-king of the Uí Néill. During the battle, five other kings, and many other nobles killed. Glondub related to Niall, the last of the kings of Tara, the legendary seat of the high-kingship - ejected by Brian Boru, when he rose to power. In 920, the Norse settlement enlarged, at the mouth of the Shannon, which became the city of Limerick. It was the start to a flourishing trading place, the beginning of the salmon industry and the re-stocking of many Viking boats. In 937, the Limerick Vikings clashed with those of Dublin on Lough Ree and were defeated. The Shannon was of major importance in military campaigns in all of Ireland's history. The association with the Norse never diminished – eventually they become integrated into the Irish community. The city was criss-crossed by wooden streets, houses and workshops. Mathgamain sacked the city in 964 after previously capturing Cashel from the Eoganachta. All those he found fit to fight killed, the others enslaved. His brother Brian later killed him.

The monastic movement established great ecclesiastical centres and one of these was at Kildare, in the early ninth century, where Uí Néill appointed provincial governor by the monasteries and king of Leinster. He lived there with his brother the abbot and his sister the abbess. The heartland of Leinster was the Vale of the Liffey, and the valleys of the Barrow and the Slaney. At Domnach Sechnaill generations of the same family reined as abbots; this fact gives light how leadership of the church passed onto succeeding generations.

The Irish chieftain's allegiances fluctuated, depending on what

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thought to their advantage. In this, the Ciardha clan was no different. Frequently mentioned in the Annals of the Four Masters from 952 onwards to the death of Ua Ciardha tighearna Coirpre (O'Keary lord of Carbury). Again in 993 when Mael Ruanaig O'Ciardha, the then king of Carbury, was killed by the Teftha. This killing went on... the tribes were continually seeking a way to gain territory. Even in 1128, we finally read of the slaying of H. Ciardha ri Cairpri - another king of Carbury.

The kingship of the Cenel Eoghain weakened - dropped out of succession. By 976, Brian Boraime (Boru) asserted control over the whole of Munster. It was during this time that Amlaib Cuaran's (AD945-80) daughter and grandson were baptised and given Irish Christian names - Mael Muore and Gilla Ciarain. Later, during the Battle of Clontarf, 1014, Brian heralded the claim to the throne of all Ireland including the land held by the Ostmen. Support however by other Irish leaders was not forthcoming. A number of clans leaders populating north Leinster and Munster, one being Maelsheachlainn O' Ciardha, bribed just before the battle to desert with his men, fought with the Norsemen - to remove Brian's power in Limerick. This united gathering failed and Brian won a great victory, although never lived long enough to reap the rewards killed in his tent pitched on the field of battle.

Boru's reign shattered the old order, his death allowed Máel Sechnaill II to be high king of Ireland until his demise in 1022. The Ostmen, given leave to stay and develop their towns, which gradually became main centres of importance. All those clans linked to the O'Neill's, including the O'Ciardha, lost political power - new relationships were formed - some gained advancement others declined. The O'Ciardha clan started to split up - part moved to the kingdom of Man, others to the Isles and a further group retreated to western Munster - today's Co Cork and Kerry, whilst others fled to the hills or joined other

clans. The main nucleus of older members continued to maintain their old ways close to the ancestral home.

Enjoying large areas of land, or what it produced, did not burden the Irish lord or 'leader. It mattered not to him that another might quote amounts he was more concerned about 'status' according to whom he knew, who served him and who needed his power and position. This was a major failing in the Irish leadership system accepting the rank others accorded him, showing greater deference, that 'the other was the greater lord'. When he died all that deference died with him and there was turmoil, until the whole lot settled down again...more than likely, to show a different order! The king was not a judge... he was there to lead his people into war and to be a chair at the various meetings. However, it was rare that the eldest male descendant or nominated leader not accepted... he had to be strong enough to demand obedience, having proved his worth with deeds. The pagan Brehons, previously known as the Druids, were the lawyers and governed the social system. They were not the poets or filid although holding the same high office.

Kincora was a stone-built fortress guarding Lough Derg and was at one time Brian Boru's capital, although Cashel still represented the ancient seat of the Munster kings. Brian first established himself as king of Munster in place of the traditional Eoganacht king of Cashel in 1002. Mael Sechnaill, king of Tara, who had been ruling since 980, acknowledged his supremacy. Two years before, High king, Murchertach, presented Kincora to the Church - becoming the seat for the new archbishopric of Munster. Gilla Espaic, or Gilbert; made bishop of Limerick about 1106, and appointed papal legate. This action made an alliance between the High king and southern reformers to the traditional head of the Irish Church. The O'Brian's' moved to their new capital in Limerick ruling the Ostmen - their vassals. It was at Limerick, called by the Norse name, 'the Lax Weir', that salmon

fishing was highly valued becoming a chief industry - many Viking ships rode at anchored in the Shannon lakes. Ostmen, meaning 'Eastmen', the name given to Christianized semi-Irish settlers in Ireland after 1014, were an established entity before the invasion of England by the Normans.

The waves of the sea and salmon depicted on the bottom-third of the family Coat of Arms suggests that the sea that feeds the River Shannon and Lough Derg played an important part in the life of the family - sufficient to be recorded on the O'Ciardha shield...

Murchertach divided Ireland up into twenty-four sees in 1111. This action replaced the old monastic order. Eight years later Turloch sought High kingship after Murchertach's death. The O'Brian's and the kingdom of Cashel never assumed great power again. Turloch had his fleet based on Loch Derg and his fortress at Dunleogha, which held Connacht and the bridges over the Shannon. Turloch had twenty-three sons all had land at the expense of others taken on as vassals or else thrown out. The aristocracy was so avarice, so numerous, that there was no other outlet for them but war. Munster, divided between three of his sons: Murchertach's, Diarmait, and Tad who died within a month. Tribe extinction by war, expulsion, or ill health, frequently was the case. About thirty years later, with the advent of the Cistercian Order, peace restored.

Turloch More O'Connor, 1119 – 1156, was High king. He was the son of Rory O'Connor, king of Connacht in 1106. Ireland contained a hundred kinglets arranged into five bigger groupings roughly into today's provinces. The High King also ruled one of the provinces - held the power base of these other provinces. In Ireland, three grades of kings, at the bottom, the king of the smallest kingdom called a Tuath, next in order an over king Ruairi and finally king over kings 'ri' redirect. By the middle of the twelfth century, these titles changed to one of

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lordship. Lower down the social scale came noblemen linked to the lord - normally by a feudal bond – owed an allegiance. At the bottom of the scale came the commoners some freemen others not. Where a clan inhabited a border between counties or shared land with the diocese, which is the case of the O’Ciardha - Killaloe, the likelihood of that clan remaining strong, is slight. Wars and disputes undermined ancient rights especially when the warrior chiefs were away fighting... weaknesses were soon exposed.

Bridge links Killaloe with Ballina, into north Co Tipperary... along the Nenagh road stands the round tower of Derry Castle in Loch Derg, depending on the tide. In the Loch, Friars Island - which contains the ancient church of St Lua, the first bishop of the See of Killaloe?

THE MACLOCHLAINN KINGS OF CINEL EOGHAIN

Murchertach [High King] A time when the Ciardha Clan was at its height.

Connor	Niall	Melachlin	Murchertach
1166 – 70	1170 – 76	1176 – 85	1188 – 96
Connor Beg			Donal
1201			1230 – 81

It is clear that the O’Ciardha clan chiefs were ‘vassals’ under the protection of another – in this case it was the O’Neill’s. They in turn had vassals... and so on. If one or another lost power there was an readjustment... if one clan was split-up through interclan wars they lost status – in some cases the clan became extinct – their land and rights forfeited. For clans to survive their chiefs had to demonstrate their strength, usually in battle... it was necessary to have allegiances to ensure security. The O’Ciardha was part of the Eoghanacht as were the O’Sullivans,

O'Donoghue, O'Mahony and possibly the O'Carthys... as well as others. It is impossible to say which the more senior or who favoured most.

The Irish clan system worked through the rent of land – the chief owed his position to an overlord to whom he paid either cash, cattle, service or all three for the land, he was expected to supply men to fight the lord's battles and to give support and succour – safe haven, in times of defeat... all to contribute towards 'payback'. Every family in the clan did similarly only towards the clan chief. In its simplest form it worked well but when more complicated broke down, especially when there was nothing to repay or barter with for the sum owing.

This hieratical grouping of families with a corporate entity gave a political and legal involvement recognised by those around them. A single person or group could represent the clan as long as they had political influence or property. Over a period, the clan rulers multiplied by birth and marriage, by so doing displaced those lower down the social scale. Even though you were of the leader's family this did not guarantee your position. The clan system revolved around 'a common people' based within an identifiable area of land, say, a valley, accepted that a particular man's claim to noble rank and apparel was derived over many centuries. When the dynastic clans covered the population of this area and its founder accepted as their common ancestor – the chief was born. To marry outside the valley – the community was a rarity. The clan law in Ireland is a customary law, which is slightly different to Scotland and Wales. The obviously more powerful Normans, whom Sechnaill showed devotion to, particularly towards Henry I, dominated the ruling bodies in Ireland. It was in 1163 that Giolla Ciaran O'Draighnan died at the Abbey of Fore a year before Abbot Moel Coenighin O'Gorman. Six years before Strongbow married Aoife after the subjugation of the native Irish by the Normans in 1169.

Domnall Mac Lochlainn, king of the Uí Néill, had total power of southern Ireland until he fell from office. [Ui Neills' of Meath and Ailech ruled for over 500 years] Domnall lost his power after appealing to Henry II for help. The English invasion sanctioned and authorized by Pope Adrian 1155 led by Henry's Cambro-Norman barons under the call to invade and help Domnall reclaim his land. Henry allowed Dermot to recruit sympathisers among the Norman Barons of Wales. Between 1169 and 1171 the Cambro-Normans, under the earl of Pembroke, Richard FitzGilbert de Clare, the earl of Strigoil, 'Strongbow', not only seized all of Leinster and Dublin but also invaded neighbouring provinces too defeating Rory O'Connor, high king of Ireland. This sizing of land, given under the guise that it was being a payback for help received. Henry II demanded and received fealty and tribute from all the surrounding kings. There followed a further diminution of the clans, O'Ciardha again elected not to show fealty, although a liegeman of Ui Neill.

From about 1170 onwards, the English began to colonize Ireland. This was to the ultimate detriment of the old order of Gaelic kings; they were never to rule their own provinces again. It was from this point that clan O'Ciardha began to diminish once more – their lands and titles stolen - being distributed to English sympathisers. In 1171 O'Connor and O'Carroll with others were defeated in battle by Strongbow, established the Normans as supreme. In 1175 Kerry, Limerick, Clare and Tipperary, the kingdom of Limerick (land of the O'Brian's), was signed away by Henry II and given to Philip de Braose. Munster became more French than any other place outside France.

In 1183-5 Gerald of Wales, described Ireland as being a land of bogs, wood and lakes in his commentary *Topographic Hiberniae*. This was about the only factual thing he wrote about the Irish and was true for most of the north and central plain, at least for the next five hundred years – until land clearing and cultivation

took place. What Gerald did predict correctly was that 'Ireland would not be conquered', he noticed, that the native's fighting skills improved with time - put up a greater organised resistance as new fighting skills were learned and old strongholds strengthened... This certainly attributed to the old order. In 1189, Conor O'Connor, son of Rory was the last native king of Ireland, turned out of Connacht and slain. His son Cathal Carrach, motto The Red Hand of Ireland, claimed the kingship, as did Rory's brother Cathal Crovderg. De Courcy eventually recognised him as king of Connacht. When Ruaidri Ua Conchobair died in 1198, buried in Clonmacnoise, Gaelic Irish power ended. Limerick fortified by the building of King John's Castle set on the shores of the Shannon, to quell O'Brian's kingdom of Thomond. Thirteen years later in 1202 Crovderg, brother of Ard ri, 'of the Red Hand' (O'Ciardha clan motto is the same), was inaugurated king by ancient ceremony at Carn Fraoich. The English considered him the greatest of all the Irish kings.

Kylkeary considered an unwallled urban settlement. It had many streets and numerous inhabitants - Irish as well as immigrant English. It traded in wool and hides and supported itself with vegetable products. The church and nunnery provided a visiting place for travellers passing through. It covered an area of many hundreds of acres with Nenagh, its closest Manor Town - now owned by Butler, had 'incorporation' conferred upon it - a privileged position. The charter granted that any tenement held for a year and a day 'was owned', and if by an Irishman, to be declared 'free as an Englishman'. There was of course an acceptance that one did not openly declare and display too many old Gaelic customs.

Towns like Nenagh began to be built-up with a gated retaining

wall. Forests were felled and new methods of agriculture developed. Masons and stonecutters enticed to construct the walls and houses, helped by the inhabitants who mixed the mortar and carried the stone. The citizens help was not always voluntary even though it was for their safety. Laws passed forcing the population to assist in the work. No one was left out of the labour force all had to give a hand. If a man could not work because of illness or work, having to be done, in his own business his wife had to take his place. Nenagh felt secure and the town prospered. Churches were extended and re-built; education was ordained as being necessary. English laws followed, and a degree of prosperity felt.

The English language began to be the common means of expression. Art and science imported together with the administration of finance and justice. Anglo-Irish dynasties gradually assumed the ruling hand - enclaves creating a frontier, which undermined the old feudal nobility. Many of these Anglo-Irish families still occupy seized lands to this day. What was a continuing feature in this subjugated and colonised land was that the colonists never thought of themselves as being natives but as Englishmen. The Irish annals describe how King John tried to ensure good relations with the natives but fell out with the northern king Aed us Neill and the Connacht king Cathal Crobderg Ua Conchobair. Both paid homage but neither trusted King John.

Chapter 4.

Clan land.

Between 1219 and 1232, Richard de Burgh's nephew Hubert was temporarily in charge of England...this gave Richard considerable influence in Limerick and Tipperary that gave him such a good base to conquer and subdue Connacht..., which he proceeded to do. All this occurred close to the clan land of the O'Ciardha who had cast his lot in with O'Connor. The Munster chronicle reports for 1248 that 'many of the kings' sons of Ireland were slain that year. There was a great deal of killing and raiding, endless campaigns, fire-raising, cattle raids and pillage...the place was in turmoil.

The Lordship of Leinster, partitioned between the five daughters of William Marshal, husband of Strongbow's daughter Isabel, resulted in Kilkenny given its liberty, from the crown. This was at the end of the thirteenth century. Another change just prior to this was the rise of William, baron of Naas – a tenant of the lords of Leinster. The lordship of Ireland granted to Edward 1 in 1254 and continued by his son who died in 1327. John Fitz Thomas of Offaly, earl of Kildare passed on the earldom to his son Thomas. In 1258, the sons of the king of Thomond, and associated nobility including the O'Ciardha met and conferred supreme authority to Brian O'Neill... unfortunately killed, at the abortive Battle of Downpatrick in 1260.

One of Strongbow's knights Hugh de Lacy, one of the largest

landholders in Hertfordshire were granted the province of Meath, part of Longford and Offaly for the service of fifty knights. He in turn distributed lordships – entire baronies and sub-divisions of manors, to his followers - who proceeded to erect fortified enclosures to protect new immigrants. Not all this went down well with the inhabitants! In Limerick and Tipperary, a sheriff installed to collect revenues, impart judicial opinions and command military powers. This pressure further pushed the O’Ciardha clan into the hills and inaccessible places. The result of the sub-division of land and the installation of overseers created an outpost for the barons to protect Leinster and Dublin from incursion and provide a jumping off place to subdue outer regions of southern and western Ireland.

In 1297, Tipperary County was required to send an elected representative to attend the Dublin parliament – towns within the county two years later and of both by 1300. This act had the effect of displacing the old order - the Gaelic Irish - the Gaelic nobility. The Normans took over imposing themselves marrying into the Irish leadership, developing the towns and cities for their own.

Enormous progress made to integrate all the population in the new community. Forests were cleared to form cultivated land, new methods of agriculture introduced to produce more food. Trades and commercial enterprises contained within the newly built walled towns - like Nenagh. It was a period of prosperity, which allowed monastic houses to flourish. This progress later reversed...

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Fore Abbey, Collinstown, Westmeath, the largest Gothic Benedictine Monastery in Ireland which held 300 monks, dates back to AD 630 inside the anchorites hermitage cell of c1500. The river Boyne rises off this hill to the south, which offers a good view over the great central plain. Within sight - the ruins of a least four castles, all built by the De Berminghams.

A few years later a Gaelic reconquest swept away many of the Anglo-Irish ruling bodies - their manorial systems and associated village settlements. The old forms of address, writing, and reference returned to and life reverted - to before English rule. This the pattern, the old order tried to reassert itself became crushed... these times introduced the start of the galloglasses who were the 'bondsmen' - mercenaries of the future. They came originally from north-west Scotland - afterwards used by the Irish - acknowledging their usefulness. Their recruitment, of any number, could be from a single clan, or a number of clans - especially disposed clan leaders without land, home or roots.

The lord had to be able to keep them and their families, provide food and a dwelling. This was a very expensive undertaking so few taken on. Using huge axes like the Normans and protected by chain mail they acted very much like samurai who, experienced in war, gave protection and allegiance unto death. They joined forces with O'Connor who sought help from King Haakon of Norway to oust the Normans from Ireland and become King. The plea came to nothing for King Haakon died before a landing made. Another attempt made by inviting Edward Bruce of Scotland in 1316 but this too failed after causing mayhem for three years – after being killed at the battle of Faughart. The great plague struck the country in the winter of 1348 – it was the Black Death - which had already laid waste the population of Europe. Friar Clyn describes the result as depopulating Kilkenny to the extent that 'there is hardly a house where there is only one dead' – it believed the end of the world had arrived! Whether this believed or not, nothing was the same afterwards. Any disputed land or a family death, which made inheritance impossible... the land, went back into the holdings of the lord of the manor.

In 1354, Lord Ormond granted land to O'Meara near Toomevara. Four years later another parcel of land granted to O'Kennedy only this time the land sited in the manor of Nenagh. It appears these two clans been granted all of Lower, and part of Upper Ormond. The O'Carroll's, Murrough of Uriel, chiefs of Ely, other prominent families connected to the O'Ciardha clan. These two clan families, the O'Carrolls and O'Kennedys, occupied land, which bordered and overlapped ancient O'Ciardha territory. In legal parlance when a clan is without land, their legal claim to clanship is revoked.

The 'Statutes of Kilkenny' passed by the Irish Parliament in 1366, prohibited colonists from intermarrying with the native Irish or learning their language. This change unsettled the population

and created in its wake absentee property owners who did not want to return to 'a land of unrest'. By 1364, there were considerable financial problems caused by these absconders. Thirty years later King Richard II created the first of a succession of Irish kings of arms. He wanted to control all those areas that the native Irish had reasserted their office in - their way of life. Heralds needed to marshal the arms of the various knights, give military advice, and regularise the battles. This was the start of a continual battle. The Gaelic Irish, Anglo Irish and Normans began to unite to form a united front against England. The Irish question began to reassert itself...

In the towns and villages of Ormond, which included Kilkeary, the Anglo-Normans had to negotiate and deal with local cultivators or freemen and the serfs called betaghs. This was similar to the English manorial system only not so efficient. In Ireland, the people bought and sold with the land. Everything, their labour, animals and produce taxed. Eventually, they tried to oust them to take over their property for they did not understand them nor want to integrate with them. They had tried to emancipate them but they would not pay the fee. However, they still wanted their labour, which they needed. This created a lot of bad feeling and resentment. Niall MOR O'Neill king of Tir Eoghain was optimistic that he would be promoted, the English crown's representative over all Ireland – to bring about stability. It was not to be. After a considerable number of expeditions, battles, and disputes, Niall Garbh O'Donnell died in 1439.

By 1430, the original Irish lords only occupied the less fertile parts of the country. Those that did were no match for the Anglo-Irish who operated intensive farming methods. They were doomed if they continued to try to maintain the old ways of living. They were not slow in adopting a more conciliatory tone, gradually assumed alliances both by marriage and sharing

common goals. They began to drop the right to govern like lords. The White Earl of Ormond related to both Mac Murchada of Leinster and Ua Neill of Ulster; held Tipperary and the majority of Kilkenny. Ireland was a land divided between the Anglo-English lords, as the Butler earls of Ormond, and the Gaelic highly divided world of ancient custom, language and local chief. The affect this had on the English crown was great for it occupied the attention of Richard II to the extent that Henry of Lancaster landed in England and seized the throne. Richard's sally into Ireland in 1399 failed to unite the land under one king. There was not another landing in Ireland by an English king during the middle-ages – the 'War of the Roses' had taken all the energy and finances - making England weak. In the mid-1400s, the County of Meath, central Ireland, split into two, English and Irish.

'The Pale' was a fortified earthen rampart built in the fifteenth century to enclose the royal administration lands of Louth, half Meath and Kildare including Dublin – became known as the Pale from palatinate – territory of feudal or sovereign lord. Thomas Fitz Maurice 1456–78 was one of three surviving Anglo-Irish magnates. Previously, the earl of Kildare had been the most powerful. However, the earls continued to assert their right to maintain their own land even when faced by intervention by Edward IV and Henry VII. The Gaelic Irish chiefs began to assert themselves for they were now experienced in better ways for making war – they had benefited from previous struggles. This was not the time to build but to claim back lost land. During these troubled times the chiefs were all in ferment. This was the Ireland of old – there were uprisings in the air and 'all a tremble'. Repairing the keep, replacing the fences, and repointing the walls were for stay-at-homes... fighting was far more interesting. This inattention - ruination by neglect, was to happen to castles, churches, and monasteries. Local people able to carry the heavy

loads away stripped them of their lead, stone and wood. The demolition and destruction mainly affected estates and properties of vacant absentee owners.

The Irish lords and military leaders still relied upon the 'long, two-handed sword' as their chief weapon of war – for close fighting. To discourage enemy horses ten-foot spears anchored into the ground, the lancers resorted to short swords for infighting whilst arrows kept their riders at bay. Chain mail, helmets, and heavy coats, protected their bodies, although still wearing sandals without stockings. How different this was to the mass of peasants who made up the army. Many were barefooted; none wore a headdress, wilding: axes, swords, and clubs, plain and unfinished. Their strength came from knowledge of the country, which they could exist on, and the practiced hardships they could bear.

It is important to understand that it was not always the case that an elder son or any son at all, inherited the chief's position. Naturally the chief, before he died, tried to ensure his son did take over his position and to that end he trained his son in such a way that this would happen. That was not always the case. Quite often, when a clan chief died the elders asked for a vote - who they wanted to lead them - achieved by a show of hands. Normally it went to the strongest - the champion, one who could not be challenged. On the other hand, the old chief's lands divided according to the antiquity of the person – to the clan elders, not necessarily to his family and his sons. In 1534, Thomas, Lord Offaly, the son of the ninth earl of Kildare and leader of the Anglo-Irish, declared, 'to be the king's enemy.' He was after the governorship of Ireland. That stirred-up the pot of rebellion... again put down in no short measure by Skiffington - Henry VIII's representative.

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Ireland had been a 'lordship' of the Norman English crown now Hugh O'Neill 1540–1616, became second Earl of Tyrone in 1585 leading an uprising with Spanish help, which was defeated in 1601. After this set back Ui Neill, rather than submit to English influence, chose exile, as did O'Donnell and ninety of his followers. Amongst those to leave were O'Ciardha henchmen

who chose the Netherlands. Dermot O'Ciardha of Offaly stayed to create an opposition movement and to oversee the scattered clan families. The establishment in 1570, of presidencies in Munster and Connacht, saw a push by the English to take a grip of the land north of the River Shannon. It had been a hard task to subdue the lords of Munster, who excommunicated Elizabeth. The lands of O'Carroll and O'Kennedy to the east of Lough Derg above Cashel – encompassing ancient O'Ciardha land, were not within the English marches until years later when The Connacht and Munster Councils of 1569-71 decreed so. There was rebellion in 1579, which ended in the defeat of Tyrone, who surrendered four years later. Ireland was now a conquered land. Queen Elizabeth had succeeded where others had failed.

The suppression of the monasteries during the reformation and the civil disturbances after, led to the destruction of many church treasures. The churches of Keary and Fethard in Co. Tipperary, and Askeaton in Co. Limerick were ravaged... important statues and other treasures were destroyed, although some rare wooden statues and bronze processional cross from Ballylongford, Co. Limerick and embroidered cope from Waterford survived.

Another vast emigration to continental Europe followed. The English administration did everything in their power to Anglicize the customs of the few remaining native Irish. The few Gaelic adherents that survived the Tudor and Stuart Plantations eventually ruined by the anti-Catholic legislation enacted by the Dublin Parliament after the victory of William III. These laws stopped estates being handed down to the eldest son instead they had to divide them between all the children which resulted, over-time, to estates being whittled down to that of just small freeholders. The chiefs were unable to maintain patronage within their clans, which eroded the social systems - developed

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over many years. From that time, the clan system gradually wilted away even though the local peasantry continued to support the old ways. The process known as plantation began in the Tudor period, but mainly by James I, in Ulster and Munster, and led to the settlement of 40,000 Scottish and English immigrants by 1641. There was much more to come...both plantation and unrest!

In the Down Survey of 1646, the O'Kennedy, the O'Mera and the McGrath families, owned the land of Toomevara parish and Kilkeary. Many of the O'Ciardha clan integrated into the O'Kennedys' for protection, assuming their name and customs. The ancient ecclesiastical foundation for women established by St Ciardha was still a recognisable site, although by then a ruin. The suppression of the monasteries finished off what plantation had done before.

Migration from Britain into Ireland continued apace throughout the pre-Protestant years mainly to areas, mainly eastern, which were fertile – had access to natural resources and the sea. This influx greatly improved social and material benefit from the skilled workers and farmers passing through. This movement had the additional effect of enlarging the knowledge and horizons of those who were involved. This caused a split in the society – both religious and social. The clans were always at odds with each other - trying to gain more power and space. It was an age-old way of life, which not only sapped the strength of family groupings but also did nothing to advance society. Many families were being pushed out by the aggressive and vibrant newcomers – those given plantation lands. Many moved into Tipperary from neighbouring Leinster gradually easing out the inhabitants...

Colonel Owen Roe O'Neill, a nephew of the great Hugh O'Neill, spent his entire career in the Spanish army of the Netherlands – he was not the only one. At this time, there was an almost

greater alliance between the Irish nobility and the Spanish, particularly in the Netherlands, than towards the English and Anglo-Irish. Certainly, this existed with 'the old order'. Colonel O'Neill and Colonel Thomas Preston attempted to expel the Scottish Covenanters, who unbeknown to him at the time, had connections with Cromwell's army...Needlesstosay, they failed. The population of Ireland in the 1650s now divided into those who were actively disloyal – the original native Irish; the old English subjects who were now through intermarriage and assimilation Gaelic and Catholic and the newer loyal English who were Protestant landowners and titleholders who included the latest Scots settlers in Ulster. The Act of August 1652 declared that all the Irish and Anglo-Irish, who could not prove "Constant Good Affections", to the Cromwellian cause should lose one-third of their estates, the remaining two-thirds made over as 'new areas for transportation'. The settlements changed the character of Ireland forever and with that the landowning aristocracy as well.

In Ireland's Natural History, published in 1652 and jointly dedicated to Cromwell and Fleetwood, debated the possibility that Protestants from Europe induced to settle the island. Cromwell's concern was that there might be either an uprising in Ireland or incursions from abroad - by Catholics. In this, history proved him right. There needed to be a new start in colonising Ireland by settlement – with reliable people - educated Protestants.

September 1653 saw a new Act of Plantation. This time grants given to English towns - to entice skilled tradesmen to immigrate. Adventurers were apportioned estates and the Army paid for in gifts of land. Whole areas made over in this way to the English. Two thirds of all Ireland were distributed and within those areas was all of Leinster, Kilkenny, Kildare, Kerry and Carlow; Kilkeary was not included coming within the County of

Tipperary (*see County Map of Kilkenny*). Other than a small strip made over to the English, Clare and Connaught were left to the Irish. Whereas this action may have been sensible as a way to control the population and prevent an uprising, it was undoubtedly immoral and caused great resentment. A quarter of Wicklow, Wexford, Kildare, Kilkenny, and Carlow were very English and had been for generations - since Henry. Everybody else being forcibly removed - from towns and villages, compatriots, and children included. Some people could stay but they had to declare themselves Protestants. People with prefixes O, M, or Mac, banned, and their land forfeited. However, these Gaelic prefixes: allowed in Irish areas. In this manner great estates were built up by the English moneyed classes who were in the main the ruling Protestant aristocrats and gentry. Many of these English lesser aristocrats continued to provide personnel for English armed services. Forty percent of all United Kingdom armed services, especially the army, had men with Irish connections fighting for them.

In Upper and Lower Ormond, and throughout much of Ireland, some of the old established Catholic, landowning families, the O'Ciardha amongst them, took refuge in the hills and other outlying places to escape domination and subjugation to the Protestant forces. This broke up many of the clan families after losing their land. Eventually their legal rights forgotten - thereby forfeited - by lack of use, neglect, and absence. The descendants of the old order took their dead to ancestral graveyards in Ballinaclogh and Kilkenny – perpetuating the age-old rights and customs!

Chapter 5.

Thomas, head of the family.

It would appear from all documented sources that the name Thomas always retained for the first-born son of the head of the family. Thomas O'Ciardha of Offaly, Fore, was believed a branch of the Cahill family, of Connaught; derived from Cathal, number 102 of the Cahill of Connaught pedigree. He was also known as Thomas Baintreadhachd (Thomas the Widower) being the ancestor of Keary of Fore, from Co. Meath.

In Hart's Irish Pedigrees of 1887, pp499, Keary or Carey of Fore, Co Westmeath, were descended from Dermot O'Ciardha of Offaly. During the 1650s, he reverted to the Keary form of spelling, because another member of the family, using the C, had become a Protestant. Today's Herald questions Hart's interpretation.

Thomas O'Ciardha was killed by Cromwell's Parliamentary troops, in 1654, at the burning of Saint Fechin's Abbey. The monastery was an important monastic centre founded in AD630 later to become a small-fortified town defended by two gates, a canal, a mound and a ditch. The monastery withstood several burnings and raids eventually becoming an Anglo-Norman Priory under the rule of the order of St Augustine. The last Prior, William Nugent, surrendered the house and possessions to Henry VIII. The town of Fore allied to the English - being close to the English 'Pale'.

It was during the sacking of the Abbey that Thomas's' three sons: Thomas the Elder, who married Mary O'Brian of Naas, niece of

Hugh O'Byrne, Patrick, and James, escaped - found refuge with Hugh O'Byrne of Dublin, one of the Confederate Catholics. In the early 1600s, the O'Byrne family, owned vast estates round Clare, Naas in Kildare, and Wicklow. Thomas died in Spain, nine years later. Patrick entered Spanish service in the military, and Hugh married Margaret O'Brian, daughter of Dermot O'Brian of Naas. Their son John O'Brian married Mary, daughter of Owen M'Kewen of Clontarf and Swords. Their second child was a daughter born in 1749, who married in 1780, Hugh O'Moore of Longford, Castlepollard, in the County of Westmeath. The whole family were Catholics - held Gaelic allegiances to language and habit.

In 1653-65 Leinster was one of four equal land provinces of Ireland made-up by areas such as Kilkenny, assigned by the English parliament as security for soldiers and adventurers, Carlow and Kildare, kept as a government reservation, and Queens County kept aside as an area included in the plantations of the Catholic James I. The throne of England was, after James II, occupied by Mary and William of Orange – hence Irish Protestants becoming 'Orangemen'. This reign effectively destroyed the Catholic landowning classes. The outcome of the Cromwellian plantation period found some Irish catholic citizens selling-up, others quite demented by worry, some running away, and others executed. The transportations completed finally in July 1655. There were many arrests for failing to transplant; in fact so many that the goals were full... hangings made space available, until an excuse was made to let some go. Those picked on and freed were landowners not the landless. A few years later some of the new owners sold up, to others who increased their grants by purchase to become the new 'gentlemen landowners'. It was generally a clearance of the old landowners and even in the Restoration; things were never the same again - the old ways in Kilkeary disregarded. Some old freeholders went to Irish

counties whilst others went aboard, mainly to Spain and Holland - away from English influence... changing their names and making a fresh start. By this time, the clan was almost non-existent.

In the Civil Survey of 1654-1656, the Parish of Kilkeary, spelt Kylkeary, showed even at that late stage spellings were still not regularised, it also suggests that the parish was considerably larger containing several townships and parcels of land. The parish began at the ford of Bellasuillsane, at the river of Geagh, bounded with the parish of Kynaneafe followed the river southward to Poellacholla, which adjoins Tampledony, Ballymacky, Grenanstowne and Lisbony. The parish described in the survey as having good arable meadows and pastures, several springs and a number of plough-lands. The Hearth Money Rolls indicate that several members of the family living in Co. Tipperary started to use the English form of Ceary to retain their estates. They were better off under the Restoration settlement, for they received back three-fifths of their land. That was before the 1691 Jacobite War... by the end they had even less. Those of the family who retained their Gaelic native Irish name lived outside Clonmel's walls.

Many of the old gentry, including the O'Ciardha and the O'Kennedys, evicted - from their estates. In exchange they had been given 'fractions' - huts to live in, where they had to stay without possessions. One of the clans, the O'Kennedys of Ormond, had their 'fraction' confiscated in the Williamite wars - because forty-eight of the clan families wished to maintain their Gaelic inheritance... this did not go down well with the Anglo-Irish who expected them to conform. Other families, related to the old gentry, hid under another name for fear of losing what little they had managed to retain.

The O'Ciardha and O'Kennedys were not the only clans to live by deception. It is clear that few of the old families realigned back

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to their former allegiances. They had not been happy under the previous relationships and wanted to make a change. Some of the elderly stayed at home and worked for their new masters, tilling their own land... others, wishing to leave allotted land in Connaught. In Ormond, the more adventurous gentry took refuge in the inaccessible valleys of Glenculloo between the Slieve Felim hills, from where their descendants still carried their dead... to the churchyard at Kilkeary.

In 1659, Kilkeary, in the barony of Upper Ormond, held 769 households with a population of about four thousand persons. Kilkeary was a direct grantee land made over to a new sitting owner James Dalton. Some years later, during the Restoration period, some of the transferred settlement land retrieved by the old landowners. These landowners included the O'Meara, O'Connor's and, Charles and Antony O'Carroll. Catholics held twenty percent of land in Kilkeary, Toomevara and Nenagh. This percentage reduced during the 1700s. In Petty's Census of 1659, the O'Ciardha made up the largest percentage living in the Baronies of Scrine, Co Meath, and Ballybritt, south Offaly. The McCareys of Moycashel Barony, Westmeath were also in abundance. Ireland was a mainly Catholic population ruled and given their laws by an Anglo-Irish hierarchy. The country's link to Rome gave it its cultural base, which made it allied to the Continent through the Irish Colleges in France, the Italian military academies, and those businesses engaged in overseas trade. To the English the Irish appeared a threat even though Ireland was a poorer cousin.

The Irish population in 1690 was now nearly two million and growing. Limerick was a prosperous seaport and used as bastion against British influence... it was the last to hold out. The Jacobite used the town and its river to retreat to... Limerick's city walls held... but only just! William confiscated all the land belonging to those Catholics who later escaped to France. The

result of the defeat was The Treaty of Limerick in 1691 – it was the third great defeat. Thomas and Bridget Carey of Legbourne in 1692 saw the defeat of the Catholic cause. A number of families allowed to live there, retaining their property - considered docile enough - accepting English law; however, all Catholics were subject to Penal Laws.

At that time, there were a number of landholding and public office Acts that restricted the rights of Catholics - prevented them assuming state office and property. If an individual wished to 'get on' - 'improve his lot', he had to go where there was money to be made, skills passed on and property to be bought. That goal accomplished by appearing to adopt the Protestant religion, using a name translated into English, or adopting a more recognisable English name. This was the start of the clan's Gaelic connection given up and the more English 'C' or 'K' used - to form and spell Carey or Keary, by adopting these changes, a move could be made to either live in a settlement area or to find a new life abroad.

In the diocese of Killaloe, which included Kilkeary, there were only a few beneficed clergymen and even less actually resided in the area. There were about three Catholic priests to one clergyman. Churches were not maintained properly - allowing rotting roofs and broken walls to let in the damp and rain. This state - the paucity of the clergymen, also affected other church property, including glebe houses and land. Idleness was also recorded when it came to tithe collecting and ministering to their parishioners.

There was an exodus from the countryside - for there were few opportunities for the ambitious and capable. The landowners patronised the tenant farmers who at one-time had been self-supporting - now relied upon handouts and loans because of the potato blight. The problems were so acute that stealing crops a daily event, to survive and prevent children starving. Not long

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before, generations of families had lived together in harmony... they populated land not belonging to them - knowing they would not be evicted. Now the English Parliament was taking their land away... Economic fluctuations prompted by taxation, upset the normal domestic industry, particularly the cost of seed, potatoes and livestock. These extra costs created unrest. Rebellion was in the air, and tensions increased in rural areas, releasing sectarian antipathies. There was a general collapse of Protestant morale. When looking towards the Catholic majority, they could see they were outnumbered. There were several threats both real and imaginary of invasion, rebellion, and insurrection, coming from France and Spain.



Tenant farmers, working from small farms in the diocese of Killaloe, mainly produced vegetables and corn, larger farms grazed cattle. Previously leases could have been set for forty years. Farmers had made their own repairs and improvements, draining the land and rotating their crops. The landowners made sure their land fully occupied - so that the land did not lie to waste, and become overgrown. Now when a farm became vacant, the new lease ran according to periods of prosperity or want – in times of plenty they were short term. The result being

that tenants were not taking a long-term view of their future: by planning ahead, keeping back some of their produce - to use as next years seed, have a planned rotation of crops, or devise ways to improve the drainage - by digging ditches and drains. In the mid, 1750s, the poor majority in Ireland lived in utmost poverty. Their accommodation was squalid, and their diets made up of potato, turnips and a little wheat, and milk and on rare occasions beef. The population was increasing at an enormous rate... It was only the narrow coastal plain, which provided a market economy - where they managed to sell some of its produce.

The poorer folk, living further inland up in the hills, depended on a subsistence economy. High rents were increasingly becoming unpaid - which generated debts - the result of which meant evictions. The property owners forced the poor to pay an ever-increasing amount for rent; the interest rates on owed money continued to rise. The whole system discouraged improvements in property and proper farm management, particularly towards land drainage, fertilization, rotation of crops, animal husbandry using fallow land – as a cushion for poor harvests. It was a self-generating national disaster, which seemed to be unstoppable – and as it turned out, was!

About this time Daniel O'Cary, adopted the Protestant religion and, wishing to anglicise his name still further - in order to make a distinction between the families, asked for a meeting with the then head of the family, to declare an oath whereby he would reassume the spelling of Keary - removing the prefix O and the use of C. Many of the Irish began to look beyond their local areas for employment. The more adventurous found that America and the Caribbean offered them more. America became an important land for Irish immigrant labour. The life appealed too many - for its religious nonconformity and political

independence. The American war of Independence started in 1775 and was an inspiration to many of the Irish poor to get back at the English.

Chapter 6.

The family meeting

James Keary married Mary in about 1760. In the late 1770s, there was a widespread agricultural crisis. This was not the first time that this problem, with the national food crop, had occurred - poor harvests, low cattle prices, high cost of wheat, potatoes and milk. All this, experienced before. The massive problem for Ireland was that the population relied upon a staple crop of potatoes – where the English relied upon bread as the staple diet the Irish relied upon potatoes. Corn was relatively simple to import and had a better shelf life. Potatoes needed careful handling from a suitable source and weight for weight was wasteful – it was also a difficult commodity to ship.

The enclosure movement caused further resentment, rents increased yet again and there was a decline in wages - inflation was rife. A number of militant movements raised popular passions - to influence the landowners and government - to reduce rents... all to no avail. Taxation, tithes, rents and church dues were a continual grievance. Commercial cotton spinning and weaving introduced into Ireland in 1777. Three years later modern machines and expertise – brought over from England, established an enterprise, which gave employment to many unemployed folk in towns and villages... This was the start to the great Irish linen industry.

O'Halloran, an Irish historian, writing in 1778 gave O'Meara as a Lord Chief of an ancient house, descended from the O'Brien

clan. Many of the O'Ciardha clan joined in his service - with the Irish Brigade. A number of the clan then started to use the anglicised form of O'Carey, or O'Cary more often at the turn of the eighteenth century. Margaret Keary's second son Thomas Padrick married Julia, daughter of Roderick Murphy of Castledermot in Kildare, who had four sons the eldest being named Thomas - as was the custom. He was the first of this family to stop using the prefix 'O' and to begin using the name of Keary. He married Mary, daughter of John Keogh of Castlepollard - an agricultural town in Westmeath, in 1815; John died in Dublin in 1836, interred in the churchyard of Artane.

The latest steam engines imported from England to provide power for many of the mills... no longer did the manufacturers have to rely upon water to drive their wheels. These engines required coal and allied services that in themselves created new business ventures..., which prospered, initiating further capital expenditure. Heavy industries like mining, iron and steel producers, pottery manufactures, tanning, glass ware and coach building all needed raw materials... delivered by road, canal, river and ports... These large building projects needed capital investment. Investors saw the opportunity to make a profit – they could see the outcome of an abundance of cheap labour and the profitability created by those first cotton mills.

This was the time rural populations in village and town showed a remarkable turn inwards – towards uniting - engaging in shared interests. These rural folk were in the main Catholics and spoke Gaelic, keenly aware that the city workers were 'a set apart' from their life in the village. Sporting events, fairs, markets, wakes, funerals, cockfights, hunting and field events abounded. These gatherings united people and stimulated political thought. Gradually the unrest grew until eventually nightly political meetings arranged. In Tipperary, Neath and Limerick under the pretext of hurling and playing football,

crowds gathered, bands played, shouts were heard and fights broke out...these events confirmed Catholic strength and highlighted resident disaffection. Protestants feared the worst barricaded their houses on fair days and remained indoors. United Irishmen and Orangemen took to using these outings to start airing grievances, which always led to fights.

Thomas, son of Christopher Carey, and brother of William, Mathew and James...owned a newspaper in Dublin. He was sympathetic to the cause of united free Ireland printing stories about absentee property owners and the terrible conditions rural folk were living in. These articles produced attacks from The Establishment who accused him of printing seditious stories. Thomas, tried at the Kings Bench, acquitted. The ruling body continued to hound him and force his printing business to close down. The whole family were involved in the printing trade as either reporters or tradesmen. Mathew Carey 1785-1824, internationally known as a publisher. Born in Dublin 1760 indentured, to serve his apprenticeship as a letterpress printer, having to make up the sticks of type to be clamped into the forme. Later, befriended by Benjamin Franklin, immigrated to America where he married Miss Flavahan, devoting all his energies to the publication of the Douay Version of the Bible, founding the first American Sunday School Society and becoming one of America's greatest publishers.

Dublin, by the turn of the century was the second biggest city in the British Isles. The most industrious and wealthy areas of Ireland were those closest to the English mainland; and in the middle of that coastline was Dublin, the seat of power - the legal centre and administrative capital. Its population contained the greatest number of professionals, guildsmen, artisans, journeymen and apprentices. This power gives a reason why Dublin was the centre of such unrest and revolution. The final straw was the drought of 1781. To provide freight and individual

transportation a marvellous engineering scheme put into place - the construction of a great canal and series of locks to join Dublin to the River Shannon. This feat opened up the interior and controlled water distribution to the central plains eliminating the fear of future droughts. Ireland was now an independent country but sharing a common monarch... in reality, many ties were there to check true self-government, which was never workable.

In 1790, the Act of Union saw London replace Dublin as the centre of political power for the Irish. Thomas Kearey was born in 1791. *That same year United Irishmen formed and Dublin barrister Theobald Wolfe Tone 1763-1798 published 'Argument on Behalf of the Catholics of Ireland – which bought about the emancipation for Ireland's Catholics. The Story of Ireland by Neil Hegarty.*

By 1797, The United Irishmen were a powerful force in Leinster and plans made to have a general uprising. Oaths taken and promises made to ensure a committed gathering, which included trades people, shopkeepers, and many of the middle class. The Orange Order objected and mass atrocities perpetuated. Kilkeary Parish, was reported, by Ireland's Ordnance Survey, as lying to the north of Co Tipperary between Nenagh, CloghJordan, and Templemore... bounded to the east by Clonlisk in Kings. St. Ciardha's Church (Cill Cheire – Church of Keary) lay near the centre of the Barony of Upper Ormond, situated one and a half miles southeast of Toomevara. Kilkeary was one of the fourteen parishes in the barony.

In 1818, although there were a number of the family who used the Keary spelling this was the first time that 'ey' was used in Ireland, it is to Patrick and Mary [nee Lonergan] we find recording this fact. Unfortunately, it did not last long; they removed the 'e' five years later. With the passing of a few more

years Carey [with or without the 'e'], Carew and Keary, seem to be an almost interchangeable choice by family members recorded in the Powerstown RC register. By the 1850s, Griffith's Primary Valuation gives 68 Kear[e]y households in all of Ireland... Powerstown lies in the civil parish of Kilgrant in the barony of Iffa and Offa East, between Clonmel, and the village of Kilsheelan. It is difficult, from this distance, to comprehend the importance the spelling makes to the use of one's name. However, records prove that it does... prompted no doubt by strong reasons at the time. Even today, some family members feel free to use the Gaelic form whilst others use the anglicized version.

The amount of farmland in Ireland was now unable to feed the expanding population. This fact occurred in almost all regions not just in the rich more industrial sectors with the greatest labour force. The problems stemmed from the way land controlled, by rents and tithes. Tenure was restricted so that farmers budgeted and planned for short-term gain. This did not bode well for economic rotation of crops; the construction of land drainage ditches; the removal of stone from the fields or the latest views on animal husbandry; the use of better soil management to increase fertility was much talked about. The landowners, property owners, and the absentee property agents employed agents to collect the rents transferred to England... making its way to English boroughs and the aristocracy. It was a case of negligence, ignorance, and lack of care - on the part of local and national governments, in both England and Ireland. The potatoes blight finished off what the poor economy had started.

Many Irishmen and women in the middle of the nineteenth century people lived close to where they were born - and never left their village. Records disprove that view. Even without those facts, reality dictates that that would be impossible. This was the age of large families. A large percentage of young people not

long out of school would have to travel far to find, and be trained, for work. Local recourses could not sustain such large numbers and houses were in short supply.

By 1851, the year of The Great Exhibition, over fifty per-cent of the population was living more than a couple of miles from their birthplace. The advent of the bicycle made travelling to work easier and the coming of the railways added to the distance travelled. It was the growth of towns and cities, which drew the migrant workforce. It was not just the need to earn money or to find housing, it was also exciting for the young, and the job options more varied.

The O'Ciardha family had lost much in the confiscations over the generations, keeping the less productive high lands as insurance – somewhere they could retreat to when times were hard. Irish politicians blamed the depressed state of the economy on England's restrictions of Irish Trade. The poverty of the rural economy they blamed on those who maintained the pasturage instead of promoting the growing of seed crops and potatoes. Gladstone's Liberal Party with Irish support 1886 brought Home Rule bill before the Commons. Parnell died of heart failure at Brighton on 6th October 1891.

'O'Hart's Irish Pedigrees of 1887, pp499, gives the 'Keary' family as (MacCeachraigh) of Galway as distinct from Carey. (Mac, Mc and M means the same as O – son of) Keating's history gives the family as being numerous in Mayo and Sligo and recites: 'there are other anglicized forms of the Gaelic name: the extinct Mac Fhiachra or Mac Fhearadhaigh, formally both of Tyrone and Galway, the synonym of Kerin (O'Ceirin or O'Ciarain) in Mayo and Cork. The English form of Mac Giolla Céire (Giolla means boy) further corrupted in Carr – (O'Carra and Mac Giolla Chathair) in Galway and Donegal' and Mac Chathair in Co. Donegal. O'Ciardha, Keary and Carey are more likely to be found

Ciardha/Kearey

in Munster particularly: Kerry (Ciarrai) and Clare (AN CLĀR.



It would seem that it was mainly immigrants to America, England and its Empire, at the turn of the eighteenth century, who used Kear[e]y... this more Anglicized form. Those worldwide who use the Carey form are however, more numerous. Dublin was a setting off point for the immigrants, mostly to land at Liverpool. From there, a regular coach service to London, and other chief cities, took the migrant to where there was work. If London bound then it was to Westminster, and, as likely as not, 'The Rookeries' (*Little Ireland*) where cheap lodging to be found – perhaps with relatives.

Ciardha/Kearey

My, great, great grandfather, Thomas Kearey 1791-1860 arrived at the Liverpool dockside in 1816, with his bag of tools over his shoulder - ready to start a new life... He was born in Dublin city (COI) Ireland, Archdiocese of Dublin, Baptisms, Nov. 1791, to Dec. 1791, baptised in St. Paul's, Parish Church, Dublin, later that same year, to parents, James and Mary Keary, recorded DU-CI-BA-172933, Filename d-273-1-4-112. *His 1841 and 1851 census forms, and 20th March 1860 death certificate, registers Thomas as a baggage worker, and gold and silver, smelter and refiner.* Three years later, in 17th October 1819, Thomas married Ester Pepler of Great Stanmore by Banns (Married by Banns is a legal requirement, it's an announcement of a couples intention to marry in church made on at least three Sundays in the three months preceding the wedding) in Saint Anne's Church, Soho, Westminster, the service conducted by the Curate Edward Bowman.

This was the age of The Great Reform Act of 1830, modernising the parliamentary system of England. Seven years later Queen Victoria came to the throne. A further seven years later, Ireland suffered The Great Hunger, a famine that starved to death a million people.

Thomas and Ester were eventually to live in 20, North Row, Bromley. However, where did Thomas live, those years prior to meeting Ester - after his marriage, and before having children, is a mystery to be solved. It is now upto Timeline Genealogy Ireland to research starting by delving into Charles James Jackson's English Goldsmiths London 1921, 2nd Ed. Checking the Roll of Dublin Goldsmiths, with dates of admission and parentage (NLI GO665).

When he marched down the gangplank, excited by the challenges that lay ahead, he sought passage to London by coach; relying on his skills as a worker in metal to find work –

perhaps start a business... for Dublin's silversmiths and goldsmiths were recognised as highly skilled artisans. These skills, working with precious metals, carried over to working with tin and lead – metals more closely allied to the home – servicing water-tanks, pipes, buckets, cauldrons washing and cooking pots and all other metal containers. Not only was he skilful shaping metal but also had knowledge of joinery and the manufacture of carts.

Thomas married Ester Pepler (born Collins) in 1819, her father Edward Pepler, born 1767 in Great Stanmore, Middlesex, died in 1843. Thomas and Ester started a family one year later, in 1820, giving birth to a son named Thomas. His siblings William, Mary, Hester, Charlotte, Elizabeth and Emma made up the rest of the family.

My great, great grandfather Thomas 1821-1867 – St. Giles, Middlesex described himself as a whitesmith, which today maybe better described as a tinsmith... and as a smelter - an extractor of metal from an ore. The O'Ciardha clan originally occupied the hills and lowlands on the east side of Lough Derg. The ore washed down from those hills would have been a combination of any number of metals. It would not be surprising to find local people adept at smelting that ore and either coating hammered out sheets of metal with tin, or combining tin and copper to make bronze or smelting lead and tin to make pewter. The smelter of one ore would be knowledgeable enough to work with any number of base or precious metals. Tin wares, were produced in London in the early 1600s, producers became incorporated by 1670.

The skills of a whitesmith were more concerned with cutting, shaping and hammering-out sheet metal, making joints and seams... using a mixture of lead and tin to make solder - to give a watertight joint. He may have worked in silver making

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jewellery. However, when working in London it was highly unlikely that Thomas would have been working with this expensive metal. He would have been devoting all his energies working with lead and tin in a household environment, making and repairing pipes and cooking pans, pots and utensils for a working population. He married Hannah Raybould in 1841 who was born in 1822, in Fulham, her father a whitesmith. Thomas and Hannah had nine children, the first son was also given the name of Thomas.

My great grandfather Thomas Henry Kearey 1842-1900 was a highly trained blacksmith mainly engaged in manufacturing carriage wheel-rims married Mary Ann Chuter. His brother Alfred, my grandfather, 1854-1917, 'a house painter' and decorator' married Martha Sutton in 1878' having eleven children - first son named Thomas Henry 1861-1882, his brother Albert, 1889-1971, my father, Albert Edward Kearey.



Dublin in the 1800s

Chapter 6

Southern Irish History

It is important again to stress that confirmation about name, place and time is impossible to confirm. Not only does the language change but the spelling within that language. Family groups within a tribe split into clans, and clans into septs. Kings described as lords, and lords as kings. However, that should not present a problem. It is not a question of trying to change history or give credence but present a picture where the Ciardha fit into

early Christian Irish County life for it is noticeable how lacking the name is throughout Irish history and historical writings.

History of the Ely O'Carroll Printed by Boethius Press. Additional Material: Robert Books Limited, 1982, in Toomevara Parish: The Last Lords of Ormond, 'The Curse of Cromwell', by Dermot F. Gleeson. Revised New Edition by Donal A. Murphy. Published by, Relay. The Ordinance Survey Name Books, which describes parish boundaries, the origin of place names, and the monuments of historical value - reference Kilkeary. The Civil Survey of 1654 -1656, Vol. II... carried out at the time of the Cromwellian confiscations. Kept close by, throughout all my studies of ancient Ireland, have been: The Course of Irish History by Moody & Martin (4th Edition); A History of Ireland by Mike Cronin; The Great Hunger by Cecil Woodham-Smith and The Age of Arthur by John Morris, The Book of Kells by Bernard Meehan; I am grateful for their research and dedication. I am particularly thankful for the help of Tipperary Library and Library of Ireland.

History of the Ely O'Carroll. Printed by Boethius Press. Additional Material: Robert Books Limited, 1982, in TOOMEVARA PARISH.

Kilkeary situated in Upper Ormond, four miles from Nenagh contains 2,524 statute acres, and in 1837 662 inhabitants. The name recorded by Aengus as Cill Cheri, and written, "Ciar Ingen Duibhrea, Saint Ciar, the daughter of Duibhrea, the church of Saint Kera or Cera, and situated in the ancient Muscraidhe Thire – the two Ormonds.

The Last Lords of Ormond, 'The Curse of Cromwell', by Dermot F. Gleeson. New Edition with revisions by Donal A. Murphy. Published by Relay.

When their land fractions, allotted after 1657, then lost again in the Williamite wars, to the 'Discoverers'. In Ormond some of the foremost of the Old Irish gentry took refuge in the remote and almost inaccessible valley of Glenculloo between Slieve Felim hills, from which their descendants to this day carry their dead to their ancestral graveyards in Ballinaclogh and Kilkeary. There are seven further references to Kilkeary in this publication.

The Ordinance Survey Name Books, which describes parish boundaries, the origin of place names and the monuments of historical value found in them referring to Kilkeary.

The Civil Survey of 1654-1656, Vol. II: carried out at the time of the Cromwellian confiscations, Kilkeary mentioned thus:

The Parish of Kylkeary, 1640. The Meares and Bounds of the sayd Parish at large sett forth with the severall Townships and parcells of land therein conteyned. And the Tythes of ye sd Parish of 120 Acres made up from 80 Arable, 10 meddow and 20 pasture. It also contains 10 Acres of bog. The Proprietors names given as Daniell mc Henry Kenedy of Lisheen and John Fyhola of Ballynamona.

During a personal visit to the area – Toomevara Parish have Kilkeary as part of their area of control, the state school and graveyard in 2009. Nenagh Co. Tipperary Council Highways are responsible for the upkeep of the graveyard and environs. Greenanstown House is the seat of Count D'Alton.

The meaning of Kil or Cill before the place-name as in Kilkeary given in Collins Irish dictionary as *nf2 church, graveyard, cemetery* using the example of cill agus tuath, Church and State. There is no K in the Gaeilge language which directs us to the Latinized Cheire or Ciar pronunciation and their spelling as

Cear, Keary, or in places Kearey (*Therefore Church of Keary is the correct English translation for Kilkeary*) Once again resorting to Collins Gaelge dictionary 'Ciar' (*gsm céir, gst, compar céire*) *adj (hair) dark: (complexion) dark, swarthy, Gk lerne*. OCelt. Human population movement (*Native*) of Ireland from the Spanish Peninsular.

A king of Ulster named Ciar. After banished from the court of Cruochan, sought refuge in west Munster. There he gained the territory of the first branch of the Carraige Tribe he called Luachre in County Kerry. *Taken from: Irish Kings and High Kings p160, 236, and 247. By France John Byrne, third Edition, Dublin 2001.*

Carbery, or the Barony of Carbery, was once the largest barony in Ireland, and essentially a small, semi-independent kingdom on the southwestern coast of [Munster](#), in what is now [County Cork](#), from its founding in the 1230s by [Donal Gott MacCarthy](#) to its gradual decline in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. His descendants, the [MacCarthy Reagh](#) dynasty, were its ruling family. The kingdom officially ended in 1606 when [Donal of the Pipes, 17th Prince of Carbery](#) chose to [surrender his territories to the Crown of England](#),^[1] but his descendants maintained their position in Carbery until the [Cromwellian confiscations](#), following their participation in the [Irish Rebellion of 1641](#) after which some emigrated to the [Chesapeake Colonies](#).

Its modern descendants in name are the baronies of [Carbery West](#) and [Carbery East](#), but Carbery once included territories from several of the surrounding baronies as well. To the north/northwest it shared a long and shifting border with the [Kingdom of Desmond](#) ruled by the rival [MacCarthy Mor dynasty](#),

and to the east/northeast an also shifting border with the vast [Earldom of Desmond](#).

However, despite its small size in comparison to its neighbours, Carbery was one of the very wealthiest principalities in Ireland. This wealth came not, for the most part, from its predominantly rocky lands, but from its numerous excellent harbours, and greatest proximity to [France](#) and [Spain](#). Some of the eastern portion of the principality was however quite fertile. The MacCarthys Reagh were reported to have the greatest income of all the Gaelic princes in Ireland. Only the Earls of Desmond, who were intermittently able to force the MacCarthys to pay them tribute in order to avoid continual harassment,^[2] were wealthier.

In 1621, an [Earldom of Carbery](#) was created for [John Vaughan, 1st Earl of Carbery](#), and this became extinct in 1713 with the death of [John Vaughan, 3rd Earl of Carbery](#). Two years later, the barony was granted to the [Anglo-Irish](#) politician [George Evans](#), whose descendants still hold the title of [Baron Carbery](#).

Seeds of the later Carbery kingdom began to develop in the 13th century. At 1200, the Uí Chairbre were primarily composed of and ruled by the Uí Donnobhains (now O'Donovans), occupying areas in their historical territory near Adare, Croom and Bruree. In both 1200 and 1205, MacCarthaigs are recorded as being in conflict with the Uí Chairbre.

At that time the Carbery region was still ruled by the powerful [Éóganacht Raithlind](#) in the form of the [O'Mahonys](#), and to a lesser but still notable extent by the even more ancient [Corcu Loígde](#) in the form of the O'Driscolls. By 1232, [Donal Gott MacCarthy](#) and his sons had effected a decisive conquest and

effected a major change in their territory. During the remainder of the 13th century, infighting and splintering within the MacCarthaigs led to the establishment of several MacCarthy septs, with territories in Duhallow, Coshmaine, Muscrery and what would become the larger clan lands of MacCarthy Mor and MacCarthy Reagh. By 1283, one of the MacCarthy splinter groups (and which would ultimately become the sept of MacCarthy Reagh) was noted as being part of the Uí Chairbre, when Domnall, son of Domnall Cairprech MacCarthaig, and others of the Uí Chairbri made a treacherous plot against Domnall Mac Carthaig, king of Desmond. The plot failed, and the Uí Chairbre fled, ultimately resettling in Carbery. The many movements of the clans during the 13th century resulted in the relocation of many of the septs in the area, including those of the O'Mahonys, O'Driscolls. The [O'Learys](#) of ancient Rosscarbery, close kin to the O'Driscolls, retired northwards to Muskerry sometime around the year 1300.

The source of the naming of the Carberry area has been debated by many scholars, with John O'Donovan arguing it came from the migration of the O'Donovans of Uí Chairbre (and who ignored the MacCarthaig element within the Uí Chairbre), and others, including [Canon John O'Mahony](#) in his work *History of the O'Mahony Septs*,^[3] arguing that the name derived from much earlier (circa 300 AD) rulers, and from whom descended the O'Driscolls and the O'Mahonys and which occupied the region from the 5th or 6th century AD onwards, in Late Antiquity. Beginning with the expansion of the MacCarthaig territory in a north east direction in 1259 as certain MacCarthaig septs recaptured a significant amount of land from the Normans, demolished a multitude of their castles, occupying others, and built a considerable string of their own fortresses,

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the territory of Carbery was expanded to as much as 500 square miles (1,300 km²) by 1500.

The Annals of Tigernach. The Fourth Fragment, A.D. 973-A.D. 1088. RAWL. B. 488, Fo. 15a 1.(AU. 947. 130v. 973. AI. 956. CS. 972. FM. 972). Questioning ownership of land during dates mentioned and the king of MaelRuanaig hua Ciardha, ri Cairpri, do marbadh la firu Teftha (<<Mael-Ruanaig, grandson fo Ciardha, king of Cairbre, was killed by the men of Teffa >>). (AU, 1080. FM. 1080). The men of Teffa, and the Munter Geraddin, and the Cairbri Hui Ciada went on a raid into Offaly.... Proof: Ciardha in that period of land and status. Regarding the above: Canon John O'Mahony History of the O'Mahony Septs.Ciar, St. Virgin, daughter of Duibhrea, died 679. Annals of the kingdom of Ireland 'The Four Masters translated by John O'Donovan, compiled by Emma Ryan. Adomnan of Iona, Life of St. Columba. John Colgan. St. Ciar also provided the use of her name to create Ciardha.

Investigations into family history has revealed that Kearey, or rather Keary or Ceary, translates, by the use of Gælic/Irish, from Ó Ciardha; closely related to the Cahill family of Connaught.

From the late ninth century, surnames, were not passed down in Ireland, were patronymic – based on the father's name and added after the first name, therefore Thomas Ó Ceary – Thomas the son of Ceary. Later, in the 12th century, when the Normans ruled and lived in Ireland they soon learned the language and this use of names. The English government passed a law that required all Englishmen in Ireland to have an English name and to speak English. Today the names beginning with O' stemming from Ó means 'the grandson of, or descendant of.

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Around the year 1387 the O'Clery were traditional poets. When writing Gaelic or Irish the Ó has the sign or prefix above the Ó, when writing English the prefix is after, O' thus...

From early times the first-born son in the family was called Thomas. Thomas O'Ciardha, brother of Desmond O'Ciardha of Offaley, called Thomas *Baintreabhachd* (or Thomas "the Widower"), was the ancestor of "Keary," of Fore, county Meath. This Thomas lived on the Hill commanding a view of the famous Abbey, founded at Fore by St. Fechin; and was killed at the burning of the Abbey by the Cromwellians, A.D.1654.

Commencing with the said Thomas, the following is the pedigree of this family: 1. Thomas had three sons, Thomas, Patrick, and James, three whom sought refuge, and found it, with Hugh O'Byrne, of Dublin - one of the Confederate Catholics; Patrick and James, died unmarried. The eldest son, Thomas married Mary O'Byrne, niece of the above-named Hugh, and had three sons: Thomas, Patrick, and Hugh. Both Patrick and Hugh went to Spain where Hugh, d1700, married Margaret daughter of Dermot O'Brien of Naas having five children: Dermot, Thomas, Patrick, John, and Mary. Patrick entered Spanish service. John married in 1745, Mary daughter of Owen M'Kewen of Clontarf and Swords, and had one son, Thomas b1747, and a daughter Ellen, b1749, who married in 1780, Hugh O'Moore of the O'Moores of Longford. Thomas married Julia, daughter of Roderick Murphy of Castledermot in 1815, having four children: Thomas, John, Patrick, and Michael.

Daniel O'Ciardha (or O'Cary), a nephew of Thomas and Julia, having conformed to the Protestant religion, called together the remnant of his family; and, in order to distinguish themselves from the said Daniel, they solemnly pledged to assume

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thereafter the name of Keary, and to abandon the prefix and the 'Carey' form of spelling the name.

Thomas married Mary daughter of John Keogh of Castlepollard in 1815; he was the first to omit the prefix O' from the family name then *O'Cary*, and assumed the name, Keary. This Thomas died in Dublin in 1836 buried in the churchyard of Artane, where his tomb lies. Thomas and Mary had five children Patrick, John, Michael (d Liverpool 1870), Bridget, and Mary. Patrick married Anne, youngest daughter of James Butler of Fairview, Ballybough, Dublin, and died in 1884. They had ten children: Thomas, Frances, Michael, James, John, Peter, Joseph, Matthew, Patrick, and Mary-Anne.

Patrick J. Keary (Cahill): son of Patrick (ninth son of Patrick and Anne) of Colville Terrace, Ballybough Road, and of Wellington Quay, Dublin, married Elizabeth only daughter of Patrick Cahill in 1875. They had four children William-Laurence Cahill Keary, b1877, John-Frances, b1887, Mary-E., and Christina.

History of the Ely O'Carroll. Printed by Boethius Press. Additional Material: Robert Books Limited, 1982, in TOOMEVARA PARISH: The Last Lords of Ormond, 'The Curse of Cromwell', by Dermot F. Gleeson. New Edition with revisions by Donal A. Murphy. Published by Relay.

The Ordinance Survey Name Books, which describes parish boundaries, the origin of place names and the monuments of historical value, found in them are references to Kilkeary.

Dioceses of Killaloe and Kilfenora. Page 37, No. 3, Kilkeary, Reet, Entire. Titled April 7th 1808, being one fourth of The Deanery.

Typographical Dictionary of Ireland by Samuel Lewis. Volume 2. Published by S. Lewis and Co. Aldersgate Street, London.

Kilkeary is a Parish in the Barony of Upper Ormond, County of Tipperary and Province of Munster, 4 miles (south-east) from Nenagh on the road to Cashel containing 662 inhabitants, it

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comprises 2,524 statute acres: the land is generally good and mostly under tillage. Greenanstown House is the seat of Count D'Alton, the parish is in the diocese of Killaloe and is a rectory forming part of the union of Ballynaclough and corps of the Deanery of Killaloe: the tithes amount to £120 about 70 children are educated in a private school. (Recorded in 1837, page 75, Vol 2.)

The parish system in Ireland began in 700 and AD 1300. By the 12th century a system based on the local community – the tuath – perhaps tuath-church system, a mixture of rectories and vicarages incorporating both secular and ecclesiastical concerns established.

The Civil Survey of 1654-1656, Vol. II: carried out at the time of the Cromwellian confiscations.

Early Irish Saints by John J. O' Riordáin CSsR.

Wikipedia: Cathal Crobhdearg Ua Conchobair.

Kilkenny Archaeological Society 1855. The Life and Times of Cathal.

Annals of the Four Masters: M1205.10. Teige, the son of Cathal Crobderg Family Tree.

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Adomnán of Iona Life of St Columba *Translated by* Richard Sharpe. Penguin Classic 1995.

Acknowledgements

Kept close by, throughout all my studies of ancient Ireland, The Origins of the Irish by J. P. Mallory. The Course of Irish

A Guide to Tracing your Dublin Ancestors by James G. Ryan. Flyleaf Press 1988.

History by Moody & Martin (fourth Edition); A History of Ireland by Mike Cronin; John, Canon O'Hanlon (1821-1905); The Great Hunger by Cecil Woodham-Smith; The Age of Arthur by John Morris; and Omnium Sanctorum Hibernia, (2012-2015): Saint Cera (Ciar) of Kilkeary.

Notes on the History of Adare by Lt-Com Valentine Wyndham Quin R.N.

I am grateful for their research and dedication. I am particularly thankful for the help of Tipperary Library who have always been most generous and to Michael Keary and his abundant studies. I have read the autobiography of Peig, written at the time of my birth to get a feel for the Gaelic/Irish speaker's life, in outposts of Ireland's southwestern countryside where the Ciariaidhe, particularly the O'Ciardha, made-for, to escape clan and foreign warfare.

It would be remiss not to mention John O'Hart, Irish Pedigrees or 'The origin and stem of the Irish nation', fifth Edition, in two Volumes. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co. 1976. Print. (ISBN 0-8063-0737-4) first printed in Dublin 1880.

Alpha Editions 2019, or, The 'Four Masters' principally collected by the monk St. Francis, Michael O'Clery, during the period 1616-1682, and the work of Sir J. Bernard Burke, C.B., LL.D., Ulster King of Arms.

Willie Nolan (Gen. Ed.) Frances John Byrne, Richard Hayes, Willaig O' Muraile, Daltach Mac Fhirbhisighs Genalogies.

It would appear that "Ciar" was the ancestor of the people named 'Ciariaidhe' after whom the O'Conor ('Kerry') sept were the leading family of the Irian race - taking the name of one their great chiefs in the eleventh century - from both Con and Ciar, their great ancestor formed the name of Conor (Conior) page 228 County Kerry. 'The Stem' Part II, 'The House of Ir', pages 86

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and 92. The House of Heremon, page 202, gives Carey (Keary) as a leading family. The Four Masters mentioned O'Carey, chiefs of Cairbre 'Carbery' page 282. The index converts the 'C' into 'K' covering both Keary, Ceary, Kerry Kieran, pages 896 and 897. Working with Herald Donal Burke to form the clan was most rewarding researching the history and choosing the armorial ensigns the culmination of the task... his guidance suggesting 'Ciar' to be not only essential but key.

The task to look back in time, prior to Thomas 1791-1860, and perhaps his parent's James and Mary, given to Timeline Genealogy Ireland.

Ciardha/Kearey



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Clan Logo 'Truth be Told'