

The Mac Giolla Phádraig Laighean

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Abstract

Until recently, the dominant Mac Giolla Phádraig narrative had the surname associated only with the Barony of Upper Ossory, with ancient origins in medieval Osraí (Kingdom of Ossory). Yet, it has now been demonstrated, mainly via sixteenth-and seventeenth century Fiants and Patent Rolls of Ireland, that there was a Clann Mac Giolla Phádraig Dál gCais present in Clár (County Clare) in the sixteenth century, having been domiciled there since the thirteenth century.

Also, by interrogation of sixteenth-and seventeenth century Fiants and Patent Rolls, it is shown here that Mac Giolla Phádraig resident in Laighean (Leinster) counties had no association with the family of Upper Ossory. Notable from the early sixteenth century are the Mac Giolla Phádraig of Cill Dara (County Kildare), who were once possessed of several discrete territories, including one that bore their name, and at least one castle, evidencing extended kinship, i.e., clanship. Yet, with the demise of the Kildare FitzGerald ca. 1537, there came an upheaval for the clann.

In the years after the rebellion of ‘Silken’ Thomas FitzGerald, Mac Giolla Phádraig are found in association with the infamous ‘Keating Kern’, due to their prior common service with the Earls of Kildare. But after the ninth Earl’s attainment, Mac Giolla Phádraig were expelled from their Cill Dara territories. Yet, those Mac Giolla Phádraig re-established themselves – and their network grew. By the 1550s, they had become well-connected with the Uí Tuathail (O’Toole), Uí Broinn (O’Byrne), Caomhánach (Kavanagh), and other notable clans of the day, of Ceatharlach (County Carlow), Cill Mhantáin (County Wicklow), and Loch Garman (County Wexford). The relationships with Laighean clans expanded throughout the rest of the sixteenth century while the association with Keatings faded. Significantly, Mac Giolla Phádraig came to hold lands at Cúirt an Phaoraigh (Powerscourt) until they were dispossessed in the early seventeenth century.

This article follows the Mac Giolla Phádraig Laighean from the sixteenth century and identifies their descendants today. Now bearing the surname Fitzpatrick, they belong to an ancient kindred group identified by the surname-specific Y-DNA haplotype R1b-Z255 ... BY2849. Today, these Fitzpatricks reside all over the globe. But true to their ‘Irish Sea’ Y-DNA modality, i.e., R-Z255, many also live all along Ireland’s east, from Aontroim (County Antrim) to Cill Mhantáin, and some families are still domiciled near their ancestor’s sixteenth and seventeenth century territories. This speaks to the diversity of Clann Mac Giolla Phádraig Laighean, their distinct kindred identities among their individual septs, and the long endurance of their surname.

Names, styles, edits, historical records, and DNA

This article is written in the English language, but the people and places discussed are Irish. To acknowledge the primacy of Gaeilge (Gaelic) and to allow readers to be able to find locations on modern maps, place names are provided in modern Gaeilge using the most common spelling; for example, An Mhainistir (Monastery), unless the place name is titular or in the genitive, for instance, the Parish of Powerscourt. A map of the key placenames mentioned in this article is provided in Appendix I.

The rendition of personal names and by-names of people referenced in this article requires consistency because there can be variability in historical records even for the same individual, with mixtures of Gaeilge and English forms used and sometimes with spellings imaginatively conjured up via phonetics. The approach here is to use the most obvious and correctly spelt form of the personal name, be it Gaeilge or an English form. Surnames are much less problematic, and preference is for a standard spelling, e.g., as determined and published by authorities such as Mac Lysaght¹.

This article is a living work, i.e., it can be edited by the author, who will retain all versions. Every effort was made to consult all available records related to the period relevant to this article, and Y-DNA data is current to the publication date. Y-DNA dating estimates are probabilistic and considered \pm three generations, i.e., \pm approximately ninety years.

Introduction

The Fiants and Patent Rolls of Ireland are an extraordinary and largely untapped source of information². Notably, those records of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries detail many scores of individuals who have Mac Giolla Phádraig at the terminus of their name, who show no association with the well-known Mac Giolla Phádraig, later Fitzpatrick, family of Upper Ossory³. By far, the majority of occurrences are Laighean, particularly in Ceatharlach, Cill Dara, Cill Mhantáin, and Loch Garman. Yet, careful scrutiny is required to determine if those recorded have Mac Giolla Phádraig as a surname or as a form of patronymic, i.e., mac Giollapádraig.

There are many examples of the latter in the Fiants and Patent Rolls that might first give the impression of being a surname, such as that found for “Morrogh McGillepatricke of Anna-

¹ MacLysaght, E. (1985). *Irish Families: Their Names, Arms and Origins*. Dublin: Irish Academic Press.

² Fitzpatrick, M (2021). Pátraic surnames in the Fiants and Patent Rolls of Ireland: Part I: a method of approach to mega-data, and a MacCaisín case study. *The Journal of the Fitzpatrick Clan Society* 2, 66-92, [doi:10.48151/fitzpatrickclansociety00621](https://doi.org/10.48151/fitzpatrickclansociety00621).

³ Under the conditions of their Surrender and Regrant, the Mac Giolla Phádraig of the Barony of Upper Ossory did “utterly forsake and refuse the name of MacGilpatricke” in 1541 and took the surname Fitzpatrick (State Papers, 1834. King Henry VIII Part III: 1538-1546. London: His Majesty’s Commission). Hence, the occurrence of the surname Mac Giolla Phádraig in the Fiants and Patent Rolls of Ireland, and other State Papers, after 1541 is often an indication that the kin in question were not of Upper Ossory. It is also notable that some Mac Giolla Phádraig of Upper Ossory, while forbidden to use the surname, chose not to use Fitzpatrick and reverted to other patronymics, such as Mac Fynen (Fitzpatrick, M, 2022. Pátraic surnames in the Fiants and Patent Rolls of Ireland, Part II: The Mac Fynen of Upper Ossory. *The Journal of the Fitzpatrick Clan Society* 3, 58-72, [doi:10.48151/fitzpatrickclansociety00922](https://doi.org/10.48151/fitzpatrickclansociety00922)).

Reyley⁴, gent, slain in rebellion”, who occurs on multiple occasions. Yet, he is also called “Morogh McGilpatrick McDermot”, and, once the records of him are considered in full, it is clear he was one of the numerous clansmen of the Uí Broinn of Cill Mhantáin and Loch Garman⁵.

However, one way to soundly uncover the use of Mac Giolla Phádraig as a surname is to interrogate its occurrence across several generations in a specific location. In such manner, this article demonstrates there was a family of Mac Giolla Phádraig domiciled at Cúirt an Phaoraigh (Powerscourt, and its surrounds) in modern-day Cill Mhantáin from the mid-sixteenth to the early seventeenth century. Although their lands were later forfeited under controversial circumstances, it is likely they remained nearby, since there are many records of more recent times of Fitzpatricks in the same general area, within just a few miles of the modern-day Powerscourt Estate.

In similar fashion, this article connects Mac Giolla Phádraig of Laighean lands during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with their modern-day descendants via an interrogation of Fiant, Patent Roll, and related records, alongside Y-DNA of Fitzpatricks of the Laighean modal Y-DNA haplotype, i.e., R1b-Z255.

The Mac Giolla Phádraig of Fear Cualann

A patent of James I refers to an inquisition of 16 March 1610 concerning what lands constituted the Manor of Powerscourt and, notably, “the exceptions taken thereto by Tirlagh McGilpatrick and other inhabitants of the Manister, returned to be parcel of the said manor”⁶. The inquisition finds more detailed coverage among the rolls of the Court of Chancery of Ireland, albeit in heavily abbreviated Latin⁷ – however, Patrick O’Toole provided a ‘literal translation’⁸, the relevant portions of which are reproduced here:

“All those, the messuages, and lands, tenements, and hereditaments in Templebecan, and le Manister⁹, aforesaid, are in the possession of Donald Ballagh¹⁰, Maurice Boye, Edmond McShane, Gerrald McShane, Terence McGilpatrick, Catahoir McGerrald, Terence Bain, Maurice Duffe, and Donald McGilpatrick, by virtue of agreement made between them and Phelim O’Toole aforesaid, the aforesaid Donald Ballagh, Maurice Boye, etc., held by virtue of agreement aforesaid, and by the accustomed annuity called ‘Phelomey’, of £6 silver currency ... as much of the terms, limits, and boundaries of the territory of Fercullen¹¹”.

⁴ Inbhear Dhaoile, Cill Mhantáin (Ennereilly, County Wicklow).

⁵ Griffith, M (1966). Irish Patent Rolls of James I. Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission.

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 208.

⁷ *Inquisitionum in Officio Rotulorum Cancellariae Hiberniae* (1826). Ireland: Chancery.

⁸ O’Toole, P (1890). History of the Clan O’Toole and other Leinster septs. Dublin: MH Gill & Son, p. 435-437.

⁹ Teampall Bhéacáin (Templebecan, or Churchtown), where once stood the Church of Saint Béacán (Wingfield, M, 1903. A description and history of Powerscourt. London: Mitchell and Aodhes). Manister is the townland of An Mhainistir (Monastery).

¹⁰ The Irish by-names are: Ballagh (freckled or pock-marked), Boye (Buí, yellow), Bain (Bán, white), Duffe (Dubh, black).

¹¹ Fear Cualann (Fercullen). Price, L (1953). Powerscourt and the territory of Fercullen. The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, 83, 117-132.

It is considered that the earliest records of the lands that came to be called Fear Cualann were church lands of the Bishop of Glendalough and that the Uí Tuathail¹² were coarbs – clear context is that in his early career Lorcán Ó Tuathail¹³, before he became Archbishop of Dublin, was Abbot of Glendalough. Following the Norman invasion, the lands of Fear Cualann were possessed by the family le Poer, from whom Cúirt an Phaoraigh derived its name; yet, the Uí Tuathail considered Fear Cualann was theirs, of old¹⁴. Hence, when Tirlagh mac Art, chief of the Uí Tuathail, submitted to Henry VIII in 1540, he argued passionately for the return of his Fear Cualann patrimony, from which the Uí Tuathail had not long been expelled by the Earls of Kildare¹⁵, that it “be divided between him and his sequele [i.e., followers] on condition of their obedience to the King’s laws”¹⁶.

At the time of Tirlagh mac Art’s submission, Henry VIII had only recently granted the Powerscourt Estate to Peter Talbot by patent of 30 October 1538, after it was attained from Richard FitzGerald¹⁷, a brother of the ninth Earl of Kildare. Yet, on 22 January 1541, the king made a decree “to grant Tirlagh O’Toole, gent; of the manor and castle of Powerscourt” and other lands in Fear Cualann, including Teampall Bhéacáin and An Mhainistir, to hold for one knight’s fee and a rent of five marks¹⁸.

The king instructed Anthony St Leger, Lord Deputy of Ireland “to call Talbot before him and in ‘gentle sort’ to get from him a surrender of those lands and give them to O’Toole”¹⁹. Yet, a twist came. Talbot indeed made his surrender of Fear Cualann, but Tirlagh mac Art did not take possession because soon after he was killed in a conflict with the Uí Tuathail tanist Tirlagh mac Seán and his Imael²⁰ sept, who had been aggrieved by earlier encroachments by the Fear Cualann branch and then deeply disaffected following the terms of their chief’s surrender, which saw Imael also granted to Tirlagh mac Art and the western kin²¹.

Hence, a decree was made “touching the lands which we gave to Tirlagh O’Toole, albeit he had not his letters patents out of the same, yet we be pleased that his heirs, doing their duties as appertain, and as the conditions where to the said Tirlagh was bound do require, shall have the same lands, in like sort and form as they were granted to him accordingly”²².

¹² The descendants of Tuathal mac Ugaire, King of Leinster (Jaski, B. (1995). *The traditional rule of succession in early Ireland*, [thesis], Trinity College (Dublin, Ireland). Department of History, 1995, pp. 326, pp. 275.

¹³ Ó Tuathail, Lorcán (O’Toole, Laurence). <https://www.dib.ie/biography/ua-tuathail-lorcan-otoole-laurence-a8757>, accessed 10 February 2025.

¹⁴ Wingfield, M (1903).

¹⁵ Gearalt FitzGerald, eighth Earl of Kildare, suppressed the Uí Tuathail of Fear Cualann and built the Castle of Powerscourt at a cost of ‘four or five thousand marks’ in the late fifteenth century (Price, 1953).

¹⁶ Morrin, J (1861). *Calendar of the Parent and Close Rolls of Chancery in Ireland of the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth: Volume I*. Dublin: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office. The young Gearalt FitzGerald, son of the ninth Earl of Kildare, is said to have promised the Uí Tuathail, ca. 1538, Powerscourt if he could ‘obtain his purpose’ (State Papers, 1834).

¹⁷ Ireland Public Record Office (1875). *The Seventh Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland*. Dublin: Her Majesty’s Printing Office, Fiant 97, p.38.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Fiant 548, p. 87.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Fiant 283, p. 59.

²⁰ This refers to their patrimony of Gleann Uí Mháil (Glen of Imael), Cill Mhantáin.

²¹ O’Byrne, E (2001). *War, Politics and the Irish of Leinster, 1156-1606*, [thesis], Trinity College (Dublin, Ireland). Department of Medieval History, pp. 434.

²² State Papers (1834).

Tirlagh mac Art's eldest son, Tirlagh Óg, was killed by Tirlagh mac Seán ca. 1543, and the next heir was Bryan mac Tirlagh Uí Tuathail, upon whom all the lands granted to his father were conferred; yet, Bryan, wary of needing wide clann support, was "shrewd enough to accommodate his younger brother", Féilim (Phelim) mac Tirlagh, with whom he shared Cúirt an Phaoraigh (Powerscourt) and various other Fear Cualann lands. Bryan mac Tirlagh died in 1549²³, and Féilim mac Tirlagh Uí Tuathail then appointed himself sole lord of Fear Cualann.

Based on the inquisition of 1610, Mac Giolla Phádraig cannot have held any Fear Cualann lands before 1549 since their agreement to do so was made with Féilim mac Tirlagh. And that agreement came no later than 1567, since Fiant 994 of Elizabeth I, dated 4 February 1567, is a pardon to "Féilim O'Toole of Powerscourt, gent" along with "servants of the said Féilim", including Donnchadh Mac Giolla Phádraig of An Mhainistir, freeholder²⁴. Among the many other 'servants' are those with obvious surnames, such Richard and Nicholas Archbold, gents of Cill Moling (Kilmalin, in the Parish of Powerscourt).

Hence, the association of individuals with names suffixed Mac Giolla Phádraig at An Mhainistir, but none of Fear Cualann recorded with Giollapádraig as a given name across at least forty-three years, indicates surname use. Fiant 1161 of 6 October 1567²⁵ can be understood in the same manner, being a pardon to Diarmuid (Dermot) mac Tirlagh Ó Tuathail and his retinue, which included Archbolds, O'Nolans, and Mórdha Moyll²⁶ Mac Giolla Phádraig, although no place names are provided.

Having identified townlands of Mac Giolla Phádraig kin among the 'sequele' of the Uí Tuathail of Fear Cualann from the mid-sixteenth to the early seventeenth century, it is next desirable to understand why they came to be present there, and there is little need to speculate. Fiant 1818 of Elizabeth I, dated 22 Jun 1571, is a pardon to 'Fearghal (Farrell) Ó Tuathail of Powerscourt, gent' and his followers, who were all kerns²⁷ of the same place – and among them was Tirlagh Mac Giolla Phádraig²⁸. The subject of the 1571 pardon will come later, but first it is necessary to discuss Laighean kern of the sixteenth century, specifically the notorious 'Keating kern'.

Gearalt FitzGerald, ninth Earl of Kildare, and the Keating kern

After the death of Gearalt Mór (Gerald the Great) FitzGerald, the eighth Earl of Kildare, in 1513, the Kildare succession went to his eldest son, also Gearalt FitzGerald. The ninth Earl

²³ Dictionary of Irish Biography: Bryan O'Toole, <https://www.dib.ie/biography/otoole-brian-a7085>, accessed 2 February 2025.

²⁴ Ireland Public Record Office (1880). The Twelfth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland. Dublin: Her Majesty's Printing Office, p. 149-150.

²⁵ Ireland Public Record Office (1880), p. 172.

²⁶ The Irish by-name, Maol (bald).

²⁷ From ca, 1000-1500 AD, "the single most important development in warfare in Ireland was the increasing reliance on mercenaries ... kerns [from the Irish ceithearnach, meaning 'fighting man'] were ordinary able-bodied freeman (i.e., free farmers, lesser tenants, or younger sons of noblemen) turned warrior ... usually part-time soldiers, mainly used as light infantry ... within the Irish kern, there were two sub-groups: (1) the peasant clansman, fighting for a single lord, and (2) the wandering mercenary, employed on an as-needed basis" (Blumberg, A, 2013. Medieval Irish Warriors. Medieval Warfare, 3, 51-54).

²⁸ Ireland Public Record Office (1880), p.47-48.

additionally succeeded his father as Lord Deputy of Ireland. These were tumultuous times, and it was not long before Kildare set about in his father's footsteps, quelling the Irish in the Pale and beyond. Soon, he had defeated the Ó Mórdha (O'More) in Laois, slain fourteen Ó Raghallaigh (O'Reilly) chieftains of Bréifne and destroyed the Castle of Cavan, invaded Gleann Uí Mháil (Imael), killing the tanist Seán Ó Tuathail, whose head was afterwards spiked on London bridge, taken Leap Castle from the Éile Ó Cearbhaill (Ely-O'Carroll), and, going north into Ulaidh (Ulster), had stormed the Castle of Dundrum taking the wife and son of Féilim Mag Aonghusa (Magennis) hostage, before, in 1517, breaking down the Uí Néill (Ó Neill) Castle of Dungannon. Afterwards, in 1518, "all Ireland was peaceful"⁸.

But not for long; in 1519, Kildare's rivalry with Piers Butler, the eighth Earl of Ormond, spiraled into a bitter feud, with both parties entering into alliances with Gaelic chieftains in order to aid the advancement of their personal political ambitions. Both Kildare and Ormond maintained large private armies of mercenaries, among whom were horsemen, gallowglass²⁹, and kern. Kildare maintained one hundred and sixty kern³⁰, who fell under the command of William Keating and were known as the 'Keating kern'³¹.

William Keating descended from the old baronial Keating family of Loch Garman, who were much more than their 'relationship' with the Kildares. By 1460 they had become "the principal force in the administration of Wexford and Carlow", and they were also "long associated with the Knights Hospitallers ... a military body and, unlike other religious orders, expected to bear arms and lead men into battle ... they maintained significant strongholds and private armies". As well as being Captain of the Keating kern, William was the last Commander of the Preceptory of Kilcloggan (Knights Hospitaller)³².

Well-known for double-dealing, it was not unusual for kern to change their alliances, and such were the Keating kern – masters of survival via their flowing with the political tide³². The Earl of Kildare's feuding with Ormond eventually wore thin the patience of Henry VIII. Kildare's arrest in February 1534 led to the rebellion of his son, Thomas FitzGerald, then Lord Offaly, which failed dismally as his allies yielded before the forces of the Crown, suffering a demoralising blow with the fall of Maynooth Castle in March 1535, after which William Keating, who had supported the rebellion, was captured. Yet, Keating was released on giving hostages and surety that he would drive Thomas FitzGerald out of Cill Dara, having "allured from him most of the Keating kern, which was his [i.e., FitzGerald's] chief strength" because of their numbers and knowledge of the country³³. Once Keating's kern came into the service of the Crown, Thomas FitzGerald was "forced to retire into Offaly"³⁴, where he surrendered soon afterward – he and five of his uncles were executed in London in February

²⁹ Gallowglass (Irish, gallóglaiigh, meaning 'foreign warriors') who were "selected for their size, strength, and courage ... acting as heavy infantry-men recruited in the middle of thirteenth century from the West Highlands and islands of Scotland. Gallowglass were nearly always portrayed as Scotsmen by the Irish and English. In reality, they were, by the late medieval period, Irishmen, in it for money and the thrill" (Blumberg, A, 2013).

³⁰ FitzGerald, C (1858). *The Earls of Kildare and their ancestors*. Dublin: Hodges, Smith & Co.

³¹ Cannan, F (2011). *Hags of Hell: Late Medieval Irish Kern*. *History Ireland*, 19, 14-17.

³² Donovan, B (2024). *Old English Alienation from the Tudor State: a Case Study on the Royal Liberty of Wexford*, [thesis], Trinity College (Dublin, Ireland), pp. 312.

³³ Brewer, J and Bullen, W (1867). *Calendar of the Carew Manuscripts 1515-1574*. London: Longmans, Green, Reader, & Dyer.

³⁴ FitzGerald, C (1858).

1537 “and all the Geraldines of Leinster were exiled and banished. The Earldom of Kildare was vested in the King; and every one of the family who was apprehended, whether lay or ecclesiastical, was tortured and put to death”³⁵.

The pardon of William Keating, “gent, captain of the kern”, for his involvement in the Kildare rebellion and other transgressions³⁶ are recorded in Fiant 290 of Henry VIII dated 22 April 1542³⁷, and he was also handsomely rewarded. Fiant 364 of Henry VIII, dated 15 June 1543, records a twenty-one-year lease granted to William Keating of Díseart Diarmada (Castledermot), gent or kern, of the site of St John the Baptist of Castledermot, and the lands of Díseart Diarmada, An Ghráinseach Fhuar (Grangeford), Baile Hiú (Hughstown), Baile Choilín (Colin), Cill Chá (Kilkea), and Bré (Bray)³⁸. Those lands had previously been either in the possession of the Earl of Kildare or held by William Eustace, at lease³⁹.

An earlier Mac Giolla Phádraig – Uí Tuathail alliance

Doubtless then, that in 1542 English hopes for peace in Laighean territories would have lifted after several years of bitter conflict, and what better way for that to be realised than via gaining highly experienced local military leadership and the submission of local Irish chieftains, such as Tirlagh mac Art Ó Tuathail. Before that, the Uí Tuathail were constantly taking advantage of the ever-weakening position of the ninth Earl of Kildare, such as by reclaiming their lands in Fear Cualann⁴⁰ or cutting off the flow of the Earl’s income from Imael⁴¹.

But the Uí Tuathail campaigns also reached deep into the Earl’s own territory where, in 1535, it was recorded that out of the eight baronies of Kildare, “six of them were, in effect, all burnt [with] few or no people inhabiting there”⁴². While the destructions of Cill Dara were not, by far, the sole work of the Uí Tuathail, those uninhabited lands bordering Uí Tuathail territory surely were. Among the forfeited lands of the ninth Earl of Kildare, was Rathorcaill⁴³, now known as Deerpark in the Parish of Blessington, Cill Mhantáin, which was once counted as part of Cill Dara.

³⁵ O’Donovan J, (1856). *The Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters, Volume V*. Dublin: Hodges, Smith, & Co.

³⁶ He is named among several accused of “a long list of robberies and assaults” (Gairdner, J, 1891. *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 12, Part 2, June-December 1537*. London: HMSO).

³⁷ Ireland Public Record Office (1875), p. 60.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p.67.

³⁹ White, N (1943). *Extent of Irish Monastic Possessions, 1540-1541*. Dublin: The Stationary Office; Mac Niocaill, G (1992). *Crown Surveys of Lands 1540-1541, with the Kildare Rental begun in 1518*. Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission. The Eustaces of Cill Dara were often deeply divided over political and religious differences. Many of the family took the side of the FitzGerald in the 1534 rebellion, notably Dame Janet Eustace, who was the foster mother and an aunt of ‘Silken’ Thomas FitzGerald. Murphy, D (1892). *The Eustaces of County Kildare*. *Journal of the County Kildare Archaeological Society*, 1, 115-130.

⁴⁰ In 1535, the Uí Tuathail took Powerscourt Castle from Kildare. *State Papers (1834)*.

⁴¹ Gearalt FitzGerald (ninth Earl of Kildare) levied fees of ‘O’Toole, his country’ called Imael and Glean Cap (Glencap). Mac Niocaill, G (1992).

⁴² *State Papers (1834)*, p.263.

⁴³ Mac Niocaill, G, (1992), p. 145. The family of Meic Torcaill was once associated with the ráth (fort). Stout, G (1989). *The Archaeology of County Wicklow*. *Archaeology Ireland*, 3, 126-131.

At the time of its survey by the Crown in November 1541, the prior tenancy of Rathorcaill stands out. The towns and lands nearby, being around Baile Coimín (Blessington)⁴⁴, that were surveyed at the same time by local ‘honest and lawful men’, were ‘Mounfeyne, Boyston, Knockamyn, and Butlers Court’⁴⁵, and they were described as ‘empty and unoccupied because no one wanted to hire the said lands for the fact that they are adjacent to the borders of the land of the Irish called O’Tooles’⁴⁶. Yet, Rathorcaill, ‘two messuages and fifty-eight acres arable land and twelve acres pasture that Patrick O’H[a]y and O[we]n McKylpartryck” were leased and returned 58s per year’⁴⁷.

It is significant that Eoghan (Owen) Mac Giolla Phádraig obviously had few concerns about living on the Imael doorstep of the Uí Tuathail, even though he may have been a lessee of the Kildares. Although Eoghan had been ejected from Rathorcaill by May 1541, when it was recorded as leased to Walter Trott, Vicar of Rathmore⁴⁸, but it is likely he found a new home among the Uí Tuathail. A Patent of Edward VI dated 12 February 1548 records the pardon of Feagh mac Seán of the Imael Uí Tuathail and several of his kin, along with one named Eoghan Mac Giolla Phádraig and those of other surnames⁴⁹. Other Mac Giolla Phádraig were domiciled near the border with Uí Tuathail country in the 1540s and earlier; hence, their presence, to which there was a militia flavour, was not a one-off. The March 1548 pardons of John Barre⁵⁰ and his kin of Cill Dara, include Fearganainm (exotically transcribed Ferdinand) Mac Giolla Phádraig, a horseman of Ballymore⁵¹, which lies less than three miles southwest of Rathorcaill.

Fearganainm’s pardon came among a swathe of similar relating to the Midlands Rebellion of 1547-1548, which originated in south Leinster, having deeper roots in contentions between Lord Deputy Anthony St Leger and James Butler, the Ninth Earl of Ormond. St Leger feared Ormond’s power would lead to another Kildare-like ascendancy and he also recognised the growing tension within powerful septs of the Uí Tuathail and and Uí Broinn. As discussed, the surrender and regrant that favoured clann chieftain Tirlagh mac Art Uí Tuathail, excluded the Uí Tuathail of Imael. In similar fashion, while the Gabhal Raghnaill⁵² sept of the Uí Broinn was joined with the broad 1542 agreements made with their clann in 1542, “much of their territory was not, and was prey to encroachment”⁵³.

⁴⁴ Once known as Comenston.

⁴⁵ Now known as Blessington Demesne (Díméin Bhalie Coimín), Baltyboys (Bailte Bhuí), Butterhill (Cnoc an Ime), and Oldcourt (An tSeanchúirt).

⁴⁶ “... vacue et inoccupate quia nemo dictas terras conducere voluit pro eo quod adiacent confinibus terre Hibernicorum vocatorm O Thoyles.” Mac Niocaill, G, (1992), p.146.

⁴⁷ Mac Niocaill, G, (1992), p.146.

⁴⁸ Ireland Public Record Office (1875). Fiant 184, p.50.

⁴⁹ Morrin, J (1861), p.173. Diarmuid McDonnell is also recorded, and many Laighean McDonnell kern are recorded in the same era. The McDonnell find frequent reference in the Fiants and Patents as militia, some being among the Keating kern. They are found in Leinster in the fifteenth century in the service of the Earls of Kildare, having arrived after the break-up of the McDonnell lordship in Scotland (O’Byrne, E, 2001).

⁵⁰ Ireland Public Record Office (1876). The Eighth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland. Dublin: Her Majesty’s Printing Office, Fiant 243, p.51.

⁵¹ Baile Mór, now distinguished in English, being called Ballymore Eustace.

⁵² The descendants of Raghnaill mac Donnchadh Ó Broinn. O Byrne, E (2001).

⁵³ Bryson, A (2013). Sir Anthony St Leger and the outbreak of the Midland Rebellion, 1547-8. Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy: Archaeology, Culture, History, Literature, 13C, 251-277.

Consequently, “the Gabhal Raghnaill and O'Tooles of Imael became alienated as a result of their exclusion[s] ... and their relations with their kin groups and the Crown deteriorated sharply in 1546” when Sir William Brabazon, acting while St Leger was in London, organised a hosting in south Leinster and fortified Leighlinbridge Priory. Further, Ormond’s death by poisoning in 1546 led to a power vacuum in Cill Chainnigh (County Kilkenny) and Tiobraid Árann (County Tipperary) – and striking at the leaderless Butlers, when the time was right, was too hard for the Gabhal Raghnaill Uí Broinn and Imael Uí Tuathail to resist. When Henry VIII died in January 1547 advantage was taken of “the change in government and infancy of Edward VI”, and in April that year the Uí Broinn and Imael Uí Tuathail rebelled, joining with William, Maurice, and Henry FitzGerald, disaffected grandsons of Gearalt, the eighth Earl of Kildare⁵⁴.

The Midlands Rebellion spread to Uíbh Fháilí (County Offaly) and grew legs there, but it was quickly quelled in the south of Leinster, whence came the pardons typical of the day. Perhaps it should not surprise that among those pardoned were various Keating horsemen – they were Bhuaile Bheag (Boley Little)⁵⁵, a townland that finds mention among William Keating’s possessions. Fiant 24 of Edward VI, dated 7 April 1547, records Keating was granted, while “Captain of the kern ... the manor of Three Castles alias Fontslan, County Kildare, [and] lands in Three Castles, Boley Little, Fontslan, and Rathsillagh in County Kildare, to hold for life at a rent of £4”⁵⁶ – whence comes a Mac Giolla Phádraig connection.

The aforementioned lands were among the great extent of possessions of the ninth Earl of Kildare, and his kin and before their forfeiture, Baile an Fhóntaigh (Fontstown), Ráth Saileach (Rathsillagh), and Bhuaile Bheag (Boley Little) were possessed by Sir James FitzGerald, Kildare’s uncle⁵⁷. When Three Castles (i.e., Baile an Fhóntaigh), Ráth Saileach, and Bhuaile Bheag were surveyed in 1541, after Sir James’ forfeiture, the latter, which lies approximately ten miles southwest of Baile Mór (Ballymore), was found previously occupied by Muiris (Maurice) Mac Giolla Phádraig and others of his family⁵⁸. Hence, there comes an intriguing locational connection between William Keating and his kin and Mac Giolla Phádraig, as well as there being possible common associates⁵⁹. Therefore, it is apparent there were probably Mac Giolla Phádraig among the Keating kern, or at least active on the same campaigns.

Mac Giolla Phádraig and the Keating kern

There were other pardons granted to several named Mac Giolla Phádraig of south Leinster who participated in the Midlands Rebellion, which add to the understanding of where the wider kin lived and who they were associated with. Again, caution is required while wading through Fiants and Patents of this era since it is not always clear whether a surname or a

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Ireland Public Record Office (1876). Fiant 308, p.59.

⁵⁶ Ireland Public Record Office (1876). Fiant 24, p.29.

⁵⁷ Gairdner, J, and Brodie, R (1898). Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 16, 1540-1541. London: Her Majesty’s Stationary Office.

⁵⁸ Mac Niocaill, G (1992), p. 206-207.

⁵⁹ As well as the Patrick O’Hay who shared the lease of Rathtorcaill with Owen Mac Giolla Phádraig, a person of the same name is recorded in 1537 in the company of William Keating and accused of numerous outrages in Loch Garman; see footnote ³⁶.

patronymic was recorded. Yet, several connections between Keatings and Mac Giolla Phádraig kern are evidenced.

On 6 April 1548 came pardons to Melaghlin Ó Tuathail of Dún Ing (Downings), horseman, Cathaoir O'Hay of Domhnach Mór (Donaghmore), and Diarmuid Boye Mac Giolla Phádraig of Briotás (Brittas), kerns, Donell Ó Cuileáin (O'Cullen) and Diarmuid Mac Giolla Phádraig of Dún Ing, and Andrew Keating of Baile an Talbóidigh (Talbotstown)⁶⁰. And on 16 April 1548, were pardons to “Donald McGilpatricke, Arthur McGilpatricke, and William McGilpatricke, kerns” of no stated location, as well as Patrick Keating, a horseman of Dublin⁶¹.

While there had been clear intent to further reward William Keating and his sons with land grants, and to see a continuation of the Keating kern⁶², understandably, there also came reservations in some quarters regarding their variable loyalties, which are no better exemplified than through William's heir, Richard Keating, the next captain of the Keating kern³². William Keating had long enjoyed the support from Anthony St Leger, but he was recalled from the office of Lord Deputy in 1548, his successor being Sir Edward Bellingham, who was less willing to trust the Keatings, as was the Bellingham's appointee to the influential position of Surveyor General of Ireland, Sir Walter Cowley. Bellingham and Cowley advocated a large-scale extension of the garrison system across Laighean territories, with the appointment of [English] captains to govern, and less reliance on local chiefs and Irish kern³².

Cowley surely rattled Richard Keating's cage soon after his appointment by his resistance to the former's request to be granted Ferns and Enniscorthy Castles, as well as Paróiste Eoin (St John's), Baile Hac (Ballyhack) and Cill Chlogáin (Kilcloggan), all in Cill Mhantáin, the latter being referred to by Dr Brian Donovan as “an almost hereditary Keating possession”³². But when Bellingham fell ill in 1549, St Leger was reappointed Lord Deputy, and Cowley soon gave up Cill Chlogáin “to prevent Keating's importance and constant clamour at the Council Board”, and Baile Hac followed suit⁶³.

By October 1551, St Leger's efforts on behalf of Keating appeared to have borne fruit when the Privy Council of Ireland recommended he be granted his requests in full⁶⁴, but by then, in May 1551, St Leger had again been recalled, succeeded by Sir James Croft³², and the Council of Ireland's response came back loud and clear on 6 November 1551. They would not “grant him a lease of the Castle of Ferns and Enniscorthy”, and his lands of Baile Hac and Cill Chlogáin were to be “granted in reversion to Walter Cowley”. By further explanation, the Council stated that the Castles of Ferns and Enniscorthy were not granted since Keating was

⁶⁰ All in the Barony of Upper Talbotstown, Baile an Talbóidigh, lying in or near Gleann Uí Mháil (Glen of Imael).

⁶¹ Ireland Public Record Office (1876), Fiant 72, p.55.

⁶² The Patent of Henry VIII of November 1546 records a letter from the King to the Lord Deputy of Ireland, Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and their Council “enquiring what lands to the value of £10 a-year, can be given to William Keating, Captain of the King's kern, and after his decease to such one of his sons as shall be found fit to fill the same office”. Confirmation of the Patent came in April 1547. Morrin, J (1861), p.126, 149.

⁶³ Hamilton, H (1860). Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth; 1509-1573. London: Longman, Green, Longman, & Roberts, p.18; Hore, P (1911). History of the Town and County of Wexford. London: Elliot Stock.

⁶⁴ Dasent, J (1890). Acts of the Privy Council of England Volume II, 1542-1547. London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office.

not fit to bring those “most ancient strongholds” to the “civility and obedience that is required”⁶⁵.

The Council’s decision drew a frustrated response from Richard Keating. Just a few days earlier, he had received the pardon of Edward VI, along with three of his Keating kin and his retinue of thirty kern of Ceatharlach (County Carlow), among whom were Eamon (Edmund) Mac Giolla Phádraig and Conchobhar (Connor) Mac Giolla Phádraig⁶⁶ – unequivocal evidence, then, that Mac Giolla Phádraig kern served with the Keating kern. Shortly after, Keating renewed his plea asking for a consideration of his “long and faithful services in sundry places”, rejecting the allegation of unfitness since he was “content to serve the king daily with twelve horsemen” – but he was denied again⁶⁷.

Yet, Keating continued in the King’s service. His allowance of thirty kern and their formal commission to Ceatharlach is recorded in State Papers of April 1552: “That William Keating and his sons shall appoint themselves to the number of thirty good and able kern furnished to attend the service of the King's Majesty continually, especially in the territory appointed to Ceatharlach and Leighlin, and be at the commandment of the Constable or Captain”. Yet, the intent to control the activity of the kern was also served: “nor the said Constable nor Captain shall burden any part of the said territories with any other kern but only those”⁶⁸.

There are other pardons of 1550-1552 to those named Mac Giolla Phádraig in Laighean, some of whom are kern – although none mention Keatings, their associates and locations are important. One example is from 19 August 1550 to Seán mac Réamoinn (Redmund) O’Broinn of Colraneth and several of his kin, including his son Aodh (Hugh), Aodh’s wife, Sabina, a daughter of Art mac Art Ó Tuathail, as well as Tirlagh Mac Giolla Phádraig, Seán Owra⁶⁹ Mac Giolla Phádraig, and Dermot Boye Mac Giolla Phádraig, all gents, and several McDonnell⁷⁰. Tirlagh Mac Giolla Phádraig is likely the same person who was later associated with Féilim mac Tirlagh Ó Tuathail, a nephew of the aforementioned Art mac Art. But what the records surely demonstrate is that by the mid-sixteenth century, Mac Giolla Phádraig were in the orbit of members of Clann Uí Broinn.

Richard Keating, doubtless furious at the denial of his land requests, slid into a deeper cycle of acts against the Crown followed by more pardons. In May 1562 State Papers record, “burning committed on Thomas Court, the lands of Anthony Colclough in Wexford. Some malefactors were executed. Richard Keating, the chief doer in this mischief, has departed to his master, the Earl of Kildare, hoping by his means to obtain a pardon. No pardon to be granted him”, and in the following June, “Richard Keating and the rebels of Wexford dispersed”. Yet, still, the Crown could not do with him and his kern, since in August 1564 there came an “appointment of all the kern of the Queen's retinue, viz., Sir Henry Radcliffe's

⁶⁵ Hamilton (1860), p.118.

⁶⁶ Ireland Public Record Office (1876), Fiant 894, p.120, dated 2 November 1551.

⁶⁷ Hore P (1911), p.35.

⁶⁸ Brewer, J and Bullen, W (1867), p.233.

⁶⁹ There is no letter w in Irish and it usually replaces bh, mh, or dh Hence, ‘Owra’ is perhaps a transliteration of Ómra, meaning ‘amber-coloured’ or Odharach, meaning ‘dun coloured’.

⁷⁰ Ireland Public Record Office (1876), Fiants 537-538, p.83.

forty, Jacques Wingfield's forty, Francis Cosbie's one hundred, Owen McHugh's forty, and Richard Keating's forty, to pursue the rebels of the Connors and Mores"⁷¹.

For his service in the Midlands Richard Keating was granted lands in Laois, "by the service of the twentieth part of a Knight's fee ... [and] ... maintaining three English horsemen"⁷². His long-sought-after reward of lands in Cill Dara came in 1566 with a "lease, under commission ... to Richard Keating, gent, of the site of the hospital of St John by Tristeldermot, County Kildare, the demesne lands, the lands of Grangeford, Collenston, Tomenston, Culrake, Hueston, and in Kylka, County Kildare, and in Braye, County Dublin. To hold for twenty-one years, at a rent of £7 6s. To maintain one English horseman; not to alien without license, and not to levy coyn"⁷³. Yet, there came an unhappy ending with the forfeiture of the Patent by Richard Keating on 18 November 1576 "at Dublin Castle before the Barons of the Exchequer ... the rent has not been paid for ten years and the patent is therefore void"⁷⁴.

The number of Fiant and Patent Roll records of Mac Giolla Phádraig of southern Cill Dara decrease sharply after 1560 while, in contrast, they become numerous in Ceatharlach, Cill Mhantáin, and Loch Garman, where they were very few beforehand. Mac Giolla Phádraig ties with the Keating kern probably marked a diminishing will to be in the pay of the Crown and, perhaps, a great desire to associate with Irish clans. After the mid-sixteenth century, there are no records of Mac Giolla Phádraig with Keating kern. In contrast, Fiants and Patents evidence a marked increase in associations with the Uí Tuathail and other Laighean clans. Hence, there were Mac Giolla Phádraig who, after being displaced from their lands in Cill Dara, found welcome among the Uí Tuathail, Uí Broinn, Caomhánach, and others.

Further relations between Mac Giolla Phádraig and Laighean clans

There are scores of records in Patents and Fiants of those named Mac Giolla Phádraig in Counties Carlow, Wexford, and Wicklow between the middle of the sixteenth and the early seventeenth century and mostly relate to events of the 1570s and 1580s. It is certain that there are occurrences of the name as patronymics, but it is also possible to identify many examples of Mac Giolla Phádraig as a surname, which was unrecorded in the said counties before the sixteenth century.

The pardons granted in the 1570s and 1580s to the now Laighean-domiciled Mac Giolla Phádraig are but a drop in the bucket compared with those granted to members of the leading Laighean clans – for good reasons. A detailed analysis of the conflict and political complexities in Leinster in this era is found in *War, Politics and the Irish of Leinster, 1156-1606* by Dr Emmett O'Byrne²¹, while a more concise account is found in Patrick O'Toole's

⁷¹ Hamilton (1860), pp.194, 196, 242.

⁷² Ireland Public Records Office (1879). The Eleventh Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland. Dublin: Her Majesty's Printing Office. Fiant 534 of 30 March 1563, p.92.

⁷³ Ireland Public Records Office (1879), Fiant 879 of 8 January 1566, p.128. Most of these lands had previously been held by Richard's father, William Keating, who was probably then deceased, with the addition of Cúil Ráca (Coolrake); refer Footnote 38. Note Bré (Bray) is recorded as in 'County Dublin', which raises the possibility it could refer to a place of the same name on the border of modern day Baile Átha Cliath (County Dublin) and Cill Mhantáin (County Wicklow).

⁷⁴ Griffin, M (1991). Calendar of Inquisitions Formerly in the Office of the Chief Remembrancer of the Exchequer. Dublin: The Irish Manuscripts Commission.

*History of the Clan O'Toole and other Leinster septs*⁸. Both works greatly aid the understanding of the lives and times of Laighean Mac Giolla Phádraig, who are recorded in the Fiants and Patents. The key events of the 1570s and 1580s were the renewed efforts to bring Laighean clans under firm Crown rule, such as evidenced in 1573 by a recommendation of Lord Deputy John Perot to Elizabeth I, to induce a general reformation among the Uí Tuathail and Uí Broinn, and, in 1576, the surveying of their territories ahead their shiring to form Cill Mhantáin (County Wicklow) – the intent being an ‘Anglicisation of the septs’. Also, by 1573, the Uí Broinn of Glean Molúra (Glenmalure) had allied with Ruairí Óg Ó Mórdha in his struggle against the plantation of his lands in Uíbh Fháilí (County Offaly).

The following year, the Uí Broinn revolted under Fiach mac Aodh, the leader of the Laighean, and the subsequent struggle, much related to the bitter animosity between Thomas Masterson, Seneschal of Wexford, and he, left much of Loch Garman in ruins⁷⁵. But by 1578, Fiach mac Aodh Ó Broinn and the Uí Tuathail of Fear Cualann were ‘conforming’. Indeed, Féilim Ó Tuathail, their chief, had even taken on an official position with the Crown. An undated Fiant of approximately the same year records a pardon to “Féilim O’Toole, of Powerscourt, gent, Sheriff of the County Dublin”, along with Tirlagh Mac Giolla Phádraig and Donnchadh Mac Giolla Phádraig, and others, gallowglass⁷⁶; clearly, Mac Giolla Phádraig were now among Féilim’s most experienced and trusted militia.

Yet, Fiach mac Aodh’s conflict erupted again in 1580, in support of the second Desmond rebellion and in response to Masterson slaying “fifty captured Art Boye Caomhánachs” who were Fiach’s kin by marriage⁷⁷. The retaliation of Fiach mac Aodh Ó Broinn, along with James Eustace, the third Viscount Baltinglass⁷⁸, and others such as the Art boye Caomhánachs, is most famously remembered for the heavy defeat of Crown forces under Lord Deputy Arthur Grey at Glean Molúra in 1580. Although, after the surrender of Tirlagh mac Art Ó Tuathail in 1542, the Uí Tuathail were never again the leading force in Laighean campaigns, they were “allies and confederates” of the Uí Broinn and Caomhánach. There were also intermarriages, notably Féilim mac Tirlagh married the sister of Fiach mac Aodh Ó Broinn, while Fiach mac Aodh married Róise Ó Tuathail of Cúirt an Phaoraigh – therefore, unsurprisingly, Uí Tuathail supported the Uí Broinn-Baltinglass campaign⁷⁹.

After the surrenders of the Laighean clans throughout 1581 and 1582, there came numerous pardons, and there are many Mac Giolla Phádraig who received such among the Uí Tuathail, Uí Broinn, Caomhánach, and even English, such as Thomas Masterson. The conflict had bitter internecine components. Hence, Mac Giolla Phádraig, among them kern, gunners, and horsemen, are found recorded among opposing factions⁸⁰. Among the numerous and oft difficult to assign records of Mac Giolla Phádraig, it is productive to follow

⁷⁵ <https://www.dib.ie/biography/obyrne-fiach-macAodh-a6530>, accessed 10 February 2025.

⁷⁶ Ireland Public Record Office (1881). The Thirteenth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland. Dublin: Her Majesty’s Printing Office, Fiant 3498, p.107.

⁷⁷ Descendants of Art Buidhe Caomhánach, King of Leinster 1511-1517. Domhall Spainneach Caomhánach, later the last King of Leinster (1590-1632), was leader of the sept at the time of the massacre. <https://www.dib.ie/biography/macmurrugh-Caomhánach-domhnall-a5067>, accessed 16 February 2025.

⁷⁸ <https://www.dib.ie/biography/eustace-james-a2956>, accessed 14 February 2025.

⁷⁹ <https://www.dib.ie/biography/otoole-feilim-a7087>, accessed 14 February 2025.

⁸⁰ Ireland Public Record Office (1881), Fiants 3734, 3904, 3995, 3998, 4015, 4036, (pp.141, 164, 178, 179, 181, 187).

Fiants and Patents that record individuals with distinct names or in the same location because this provides confidence the records are probably for the same person.

For example, a Fearganainm Ruadh ('the red') Mac Giolla Phádraig is found pardoned in 1570, when he is recorded as a horseman of Cnoc Scoir (Knocksquire), being among those militia followers of Cathaoir Ruadh McDonnell of Ráithín Liath (Raheenliegh), in Miséal (Myshall) parish, in the surrounds of the Blackstairs Mountains⁸¹. Fearganainm was, perhaps, the same as the previously mentioned person recorded as a horseman of Ballymore Eustace⁵⁰. The more precisely named Fearganainm Ruadh Mac Giolla Phádraig was also pardoned in 1566, along with Tadhg Ruadh Mac Giolla Phádraig, Síomón Ruadh Mac Giolla Phádraig, and Gearalt Mac Giolla Phádraig – they were among the followers of Gearalt mac Cathaoir Caomhánach of Gharbhchoill (Garryhill) in the Barony of Idrone⁸² – and a 1576 Fiant names Fearganainm Ruadh Mac Giolla Phádraig and Eamon Dubh Mac Giolla Phádraig among seventy-four Kavanaghs " associates⁸³.

A 1582 Fiant records Fearganainm Ruadh Mac Giolla Phádraig, a farmer, along with Donnchadh Mac Giolla Phádraig, Tadhg Mac Giolla Phádraig and Seán Mac Giolla Phádraig, yeomen, all of Ráithín Darach (Raheendarragh), which borders Ráithín Liath, along with 'Katherine ny Gillpatrick', a gentlewoman of Tigh Moling (Saint Mullin's), who were pardoned among a lost list headed by Mórdha mac Brian Caomhánach of Cnoicín (Knockeen)⁸⁴. Finally, a further pardon of Fearganainm Ruadh Mac Giolla Phádraig, gent of Cheapach (Cappagh), is recorded in a 1584 fiant of Elizabeth I, along with Conlaodh Mac Giolla Phádraig of Garretart; the pardons are headed by Cathaoir mac Dallogh Ó Broinn, gent, of Gráig na Spideog (Graiguenaspiddoge)⁸⁵.

Fearganainm Ruadh's records lead to others in and around the Blackstairs Mountains, such as Tadhg Mac Giolla Phádraig, a husbandman of Miséal⁸⁶ who was pardoned in 1586, and there are several other similar records of Mac Giolla Phádraig that tumble out of the Fiants and Patents, most often along with leading members of Clann Caomhánach. These records demonstrate that by the late sixteenth century, Mac Giolla Phádraig had come not only to forge bonds and occupy lands among the Uí Tuathail in Imael and Fear Cualann, they had done similarly in Ceatharlach and Loch Garman among the Caomhánach. In Fiants and Patents, those associated with the Caomhánach are occasionally suffixed with 'Omorry', or

⁸¹ Ireland Public Record Office (1880), Fiant 1746, p.38.

⁸² Ireland Public Record Office (1879), Fiant 857, p.124; Hore, H (1858). The Clan Kavanagh, Temp. Henry VIII. The Journal of the Kilkenny and South-East of Ireland Archaeological Society, New Series, 2, 73-92.

⁸³ Ireland Public Record Office (1880), Fiant 2858, p.183.

⁸⁴ Ireland Public Record Office (1881), Fiant 4036, p.187. All places are in Ceatharlach.

⁸⁵ Ireland Public Record Office (1883). The Fifteenth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland. Dublin: Her Majesty's Printing Office, Fiant 4558, p. 67, of 20 December 1584. All places are in Ceatharlach. It is notable that the following Fiant (4558), of the same data, is a record of pardons to the Ó Mórdha of Uíbh Fáilí and their followers, which evidences that assistance was provided by Ó Broinn and his Mac Giolla Phádraig followers, who were probably kern.

⁸⁶ Ireland Public Record Office (1884). The Sixteenth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland. Dublin: Her Majesty's Printing Office, Fiant 4938, p.17.

similar, and this is a locational reference to ‘the Moroos’ (i.e., Murrough’s) Country⁸⁷, which encompassed swathes of modern-day Ceatharlach and Loch Garman.

For example, in a 1576 case brought before the Pleas Court of Loch Garman, the jury heard that Arthur mac Donnchadh, alias Arthur of the Moroos, a horseman, and several kerns, including Donnchadh Ruadh Mac Giolla Phádraig of the Moroos, went “with force and arms to ‘Orowoke’ in the Moroos, to the house of Esse ballagh Tirlaghe, kern, and assaulted him with their knives and clubs, giving him a mortal wound on the head, killing him instantly”⁸⁸. On one occasion, the published Fiants, which are copies of the now destroyed originals, make reference to the same Donnchadh Ruadh Mac Giolla Phádraig with the surname suffix Omorry, and his kin are named the same way⁸⁹.

It can be readily demonstrated via records of more recent times, such as the Griffith’s Valuation and the Ireland Censuses of 1901 and 1911, that many Fitzpatricks still lived near the aforementioned locations. Hence, many of those Laighean Mac Giolla Phádraig of the sixteenth and seventeenth century Fiants and Patents were almost certainly using a surname, and this provides opportunities to explore later Fitzpatrick occurrences in the same locations throughout Ceatharlach, Cill Mhantáin, and Loch Garman. An example is provided in Figure 1, which shows Fitzpatricks with leases of Baile Réisc (Ballyreask) in the Barony of Talbotstown, Cill Mhantáin, ca. 1810. And Appendix II provides the tragic tale of a Fitzpatrick of Loch Garman, who, perhaps, was following in the footsteps of his Mac Giolla Phádraig kern ancestors. But while many Mac Giolla Phádraig appear to have been able to retain their relationship with the same lands where their ancestors were domiciled from the sixteenth century, those of An Mhainistir in Fear Cualann were not.

The ejection of Mac Giolla Phádraig from An Mhainistir

Returning to the 1610 inquisition concerning the lands of Powerscourt, there is a detailed account in Patrick O’Toole’s *History of the Clan O’Toole and other Leinster septs*⁸. Féilim Ó Tuathail’s involvement with the Ó Broinn-Baltinglass rebellion was to have terrible consequences for the Fear Cualann sept. Although the Crown did not consider Féilim a leading figure in the hostilities, he and eighty followers were arrested in 1581 – Féilim’s chief crimes stated were being ‘married to the sister of Fiach mac Aodh O’Byrne’ and ‘victualling the rebels’⁸. The arrests infuriated Féilim’s brother, Bryan, who threatened to ‘spoil the country, even to Dublin’s gates’⁹⁰. Féilim and his followers were released with Bryan exchanging places with them in Dublin Castle in pledge for Féilim’s future good behaviour. Yet, Féilim refused to back down, and Brian was duly hanged⁹¹. Still, Féilim would not submit but following the killing of his son, Gearalt, and ten followers, he sought peace – a fiant of March 1582 records his pardon along with almost one hundred followers, among them Margaret, daughter of Tirlagh Mac Giolla Phádraig⁸⁹.

⁸⁷ The territory of the Mac Murchadha Caomhánach, see: Heffernan, D (2017). Robert Cowley’s ‘A Discourse of the Cause of the Evil State of Ireland and of the Remedies Thereof’, ca. 1526. *Analecta Hibernica*, 48, 3-30

⁸⁸ Hore, P (1911), p.388.

⁸⁹ Ireland Public Record Office (1881), Fiant 3844, p.155.

⁹⁰ O’Toole, P (1890), p. 311.

⁹¹ Hamilton, H (1867). *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland, Elizabeth, 1574-85*. London: Longman, Green, Reader, & Dyer, p. lxxxiii.

Figure 1: A map of the lands of Baile Réisc, let to Bryan Fitzpatrick by Reverend Samuel Syngé Hutchison, ca. 1810 – adjacent is the holding of Michael Fitzpatrick.

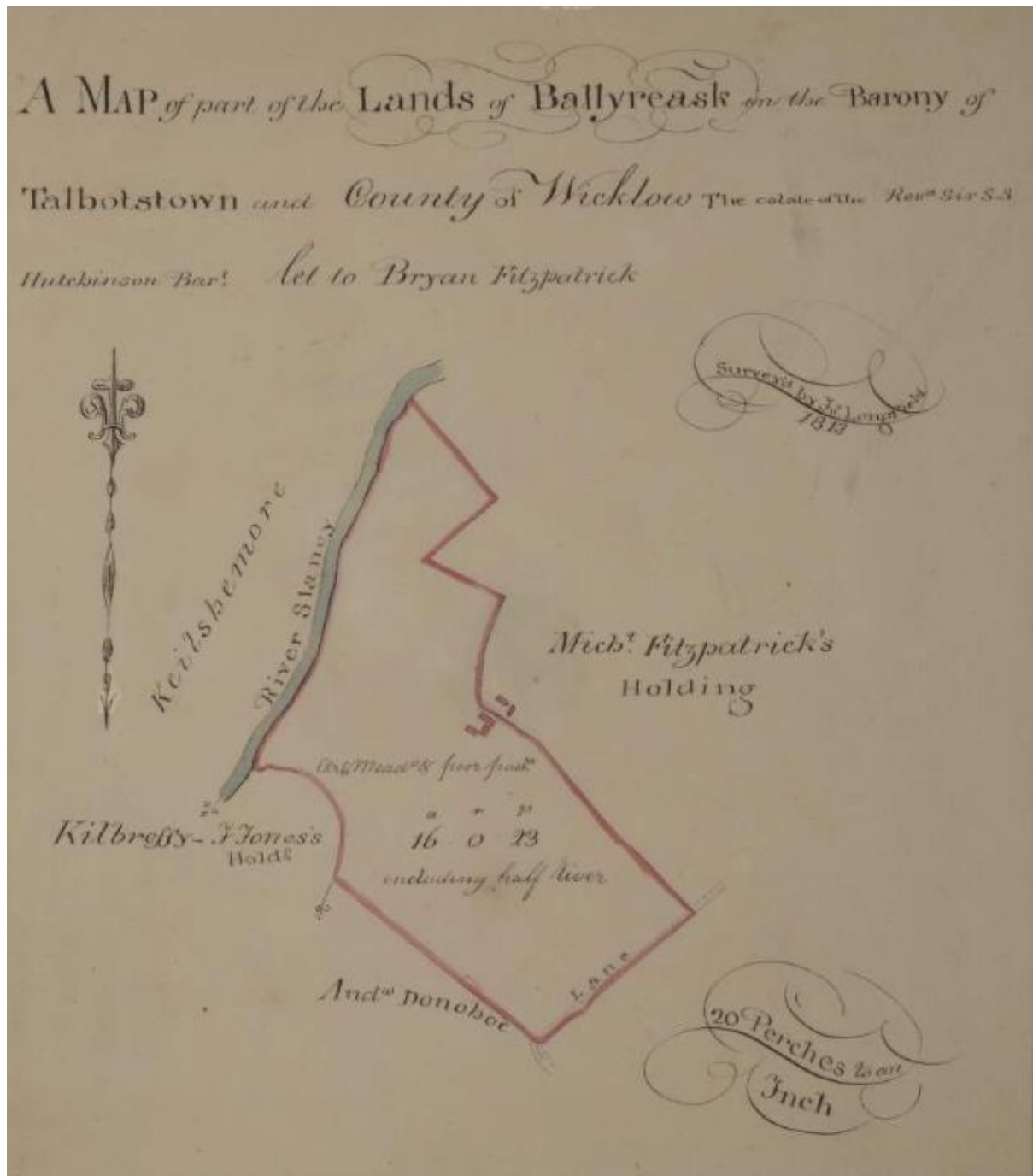


Image courtesy of the National Library of Ireland:

<https://catalogue.nli.ie/Record/vtls000301056>, accessed 17 January 2025.

A record of 1803 shows the lands were previously leased by John Fitzpatrick from Sir Francis Hutchison, Samuel's uncle.

Despite the pardon of 1582 and another in 1599⁹², Féilim Ó Tuathail's activities during the Uí Broinn-Baltinglass rebellion were not forgotten by the Crown. Although Ó Tuathail was not implicated in the Nine Years' War, he was long despised by Sir Richard Wingfield, who, in 1600, was made Marshall of the Crown's army in Ireland. A chance encounter in May 1603 led to Wingfield killing the agéd Ó Tuathail⁹³. Less than six months later, "the late estate of Brian and Féilim O'Toole of Powerscourt, deceased" was granted to Wingfield having "devolved to the Crown, as well by escheat as by forfeiture by them"⁹⁴. The lands granted to Wingfield included those held by Mac Giolla Phádraig and the 1610 Inquisition ruled against their appeal – a writ was issued to "secure Sir Richard Wingfield, Knight, in the quiet possession of Manister"⁹⁵.

Perhaps working against the Mac Giolla Phádraig appeal was their participation in the Nine Year's War. A patent of James I dated 30 June 1603 records pardons for Tirlagh Ó Tuathail of Cúirt an Phaoraigh and his followers, who included Tirlagh Mac Giolla Phádraig, farmer, and Eamon Dubh Mac Giolla Phádraig, both of Manister⁹⁶, those being for "like crimes and misdemeanours" part of a general pardon issued first to "Henry O'Neill of the Fewes, County Down" – and Dr John Erck, who was a member of the board of the Irish Records Commission, gave the interpretation that the use of Mac Giolla Phádraig was as a surname⁹⁷. It is also noteworthy that, under the same general decree, pardons were granted to Mac Giolla Phádraig of Loch Garman, the name also referred to as a surname "designating the clans that inhabited the respective counties"⁹⁸. Hence, it is likely Mac Giolla Phádraig clansmen of Cill Mhantáin and Loch Garman took part in the Nine Year's War.

Although they were ejected from their lands in Powerscourt parish, it is likely Mac Giolla Phádraig kin remained in the general locale – perhaps, like the Uí Tuathail of Imael and Fear Cualann, they were "reduced to the position of humble farmers" in the land they once owned⁹⁹. Yet there is the intriguing likelihood some of the clann settled elsewhere.

Mac Giolla Phádraig Laighean Y-DNA

There are many men on the Fitzpatrick Y-DNA project¹⁰⁰ who possess the Single Nucleotide Polymorphism (SNP) R1b-Z255 ... BY2849, the common ancestor of which is estimated to have been born ca. 1150 AD¹⁰¹. R-BY2849 is characterised by high surname specificity (i.e., there are no known examples of intrusion by other surnames, other than a single and

⁹² Ireland Public Record Office (1885). The Seventeenth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland. Dublin: Her Majesty's Printing Office, Fiant 6338, p.114. Among Féilim Ó Tuathail's followers was Eamon Mac Giolla Phádraig.

⁹³ <https://www.dib.ie/biography/wingfield-sir-richard-a9091>, accessed 17 February 2025.

⁹⁴ Griffith, M (1966), p.17.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.208.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.30.

⁹⁷ Erck, J (1846). A Repertory of the Inrolments of the Patent Rolls of Chancery, in Ireland; Commencing with the Reign of James I. Dublin: James McGlashan, pp.31, 73.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.97, 110.

⁹⁹ O'Toole, P (1890), p.550.

¹⁰⁰ <https://www.familytreedna.com/groups/fitzpatrick/about>, accessed 17 February 2025.

¹⁰¹ <https://discover.familytreedna.com/y-dna/R-BY2849/story>, accessed 17 February 2025.

explicable example of a surname switch or SNS) – and there are no other surname branches immediately prior to R-BY2849 until ca. 350 AD¹⁰².

Those who possess R1b-Z255 ... BY2849, mostly trace their nineteenth-century Irish origins to Dún (County Down), but Ceatharlach, Cill Dara, Cill Mhantáin, and Lú¹⁰³ (County Louth) lineages are also represented. This makes the members the most geographically dispersed Fitzpatrick kin within Éire on the Y-DNA project, and particularly notable is the curious connection between Laighean and Ulaidh (Ulster) Fitzpatricks. R1b-Z255 has long been identified the ‘Leinster’ or ‘Irish Sea’ modal¹⁰⁴ and among men of that haplotype are numerous descendants of the prominent aforementioned Laighean clans, i.e., the Caomhánachs, Uí Broinn, and Uí Tuathail¹⁰⁵. It is not unreasonable, therefore, to posit the numerous Fitzpatricks of Dún¹⁰⁶, all of whom tested to date being R1b-Z255 ... BY2849, had their earlier origins in Laighean territories.

There are no records of Mac Giolla Phádraig of Dún until the 1659 ‘Census’, which records a principal family of that surname in the Barony of Upper Iveagh¹⁰⁷. However, a record among the Patents of James I provides an earlier Ulaidh connection. One of those recorded pardoned in 1607, among the Uí Néill of Éadan Dúcharraige, Aontroim¹⁰⁸, is Naos Owra Mac Giolla Phádraig¹⁰⁹, curiosities being both his uncommon given-name and by-name. Naos (transcribed as Neese or Niece, a pet-name of Aonghus) occurs occasionally in sixteenth and seventeenth Fiants and Patents but almost exclusively in Ulaidh, and especially in Dún. This raises the possibility Naos was either born in Ulaidh or had mother from there. Naos finds later use among Fitzpatricks of Dún, interchangeably with the name Eneas (Figure 2).

The by-name Owra¹¹⁰ also occurs occasionally in sixteenth and seventeenth Fiants and Patents but almost exclusively among Laighean clans. For example, notable are Donnchadh Owra Mac Giolla Phádraig, Tieghe Owra Mac Giolla Phadraig, Tieghe Ruadh Mac Giolla, Phadraig, gunner, and Donnchadh Mac Giolla Phádraig, a horseboy, who appear among a long list of those pardoned with Thomas Masterson, Seneschal of Wexford in 1582¹¹¹. This raises the possibility Naos descended from, or was kindred of, sixteenth-century Mac Giolla Phádraig Laighean kern who were later associated with clans of Ulaidh. Such a narrative grows since there are two later records of a Naos Mac Giolla Phádraig in Ulaidh: first in the

¹⁰² <https://discover.familytreedna.com/y-dna/R-BY2851/story>, accessed 17 February 2025.

¹⁰³ The Fitzpatricks with Lú origins, and those who live their today, are not from near the border with Dún, but at the southern border with Baile Átha Cliath (County Dublin), notably in the Barony of Ferrard.

¹⁰⁴ McEvoy, B and Bradley, D (2006). Y-chromosomes and the extent of patrilineal ancestry in Irish surnames. *Journal of Human Genetics* 753, 119: 212–219. This does not preclude that fact there are other Y-DNA haplotypes that are also Laighean. In fact, there are Fitzpatrick kindred lines who also have Laighean ancestry, most notably those of the broad Y-DNA haplotypes J-M172, and R-U106.

¹⁰⁵ Before the arrival of the Normans, the Uí Tuathail and Uí Broinn, who are Uí Dunlainge, also possessed territory in what became known as Cill Dara, but they were driven out. Byrne, F (1973). *Irish Kings and High-Kings*, Dublin: Four Courts Press.

¹⁰⁶ The 1901 Census of Ireland records 743 Fitzpatricks of Dún and a further 285 of Aontroim (mostly Béal Feirste, i.e., Belfast).

¹⁰⁷ Pender, S (1939). *A Census of Ireland circa 1659*. Dublin: The Stationary Office, p.77.

¹⁰⁸ Edenduffcarrick, County Antrim – now called Shane’s Castle.

¹⁰⁹ Griffith, M (1966), p.110.

¹¹⁰ There is no letter w in Irish. Hence, ‘Owra’ is perhaps a transliteration of Ómra, meaning ‘amber-coloured’.

¹¹¹ Ireland Public Record Office (1881) Fiant 4015, p.181.

1663 Hearth Tax Roll for Baile an Ghabhann¹¹², in the Parish of Kilkeel, Dún, and, second, in the 1688 Rent Roll for the Lordship of Mourne (Dún) taken after Naos' death, which states "Ballygowan, formerly let to Naos Mac Giolla Phádraig, the smith, and now let to his son Owen, and the rest"¹¹³. That Naos was a smith is not inconsistent with a background among kern since among the kern were often skilled metalworkers and kern always "equipped themselves with the latest arms and armour"³¹.

Figure 2: An indenture of agreement between Niece (aka Eneas) Fitzpatrick and Robert Barr concerning lands in Ballymoney Parish, dated 9 June 1810

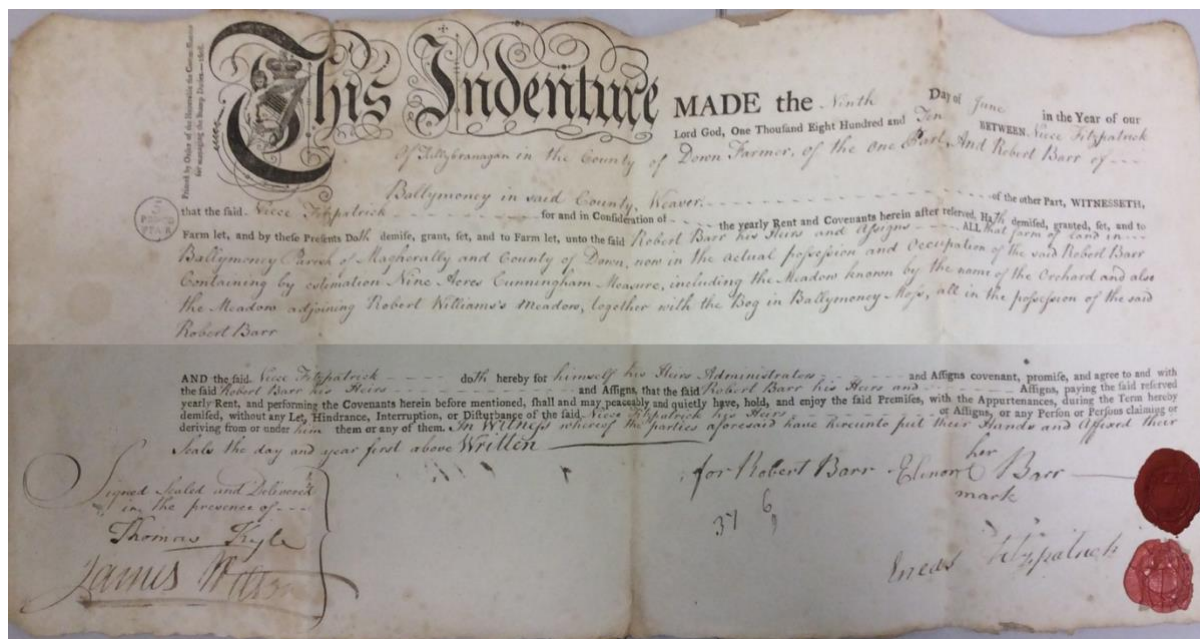


Image courtesy of the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland.

The Y-DNA of Dún Fitzpatricks is complex, there being at least four discrete lines under R1b-Z255 ... BY2849 that do not share a common ancestor until before ca. 1400 AD, which means that when several different kin lineages settled in Dún, all probably during the seventeenth century, it was part of a large-scale immigration of a Mac Giolla Phádraig clan. Despite the seemingly convoluted route by which Mac Giolla Phádraig made their way to Dún, there is a genetic clue that points to the earlier origins of the Kilkeel Parish line, who are likely the descendants of Naos Owra Mac Giolla Phádraig, that being their closest kin based on Y-DNA are not other Dún Fitzpatricks, but those who trace their origins to near Mainistir Eimhín (Monasterevin), Cill Dara¹¹⁴.

¹¹² Public Record Office for Northern Ireland. Subsidy Roll, County Down Extracts, 1663, T1046/1. There is also a Hearth Money record for Seán Mac Giolla Phádraig of Carraig Chrupáin, Ard Mhacha (Carrickcroppan, County Armagh), which is ten miles east of Baile an Ghabhann (County Louth Archaeological Society, 1931. Hearth Money Rolls – Barony of Orior, 1664. Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society, 7, p. 419-431).

¹¹³ Public Record Office for Northern Ireland. Rent Roll of Nicholas Bagenal's Estate, Including the Lordship of Mourne, Co. Down, Newry Town and the Lordship of Newry, Co. Armagh and the Lands of Cooly, Omeath, and Carlingford, Co. Louth, 1688, D619/7/1/1.

¹¹⁴ In analogous fashion, there is also a Dún line of An Pointe (Warrenpoint) that is closer to a Ceatherlach (County Carlow) line, and another Dún line of An tIur (Newry) that is closer to a Lú (County Louth) line.

Early Sixteenth Century Mac Giolla Phádraig of Cill Dara

The surname Mac Giolla Phádraig is embedded in the soil of Cill Dara, since there is a 1567 record of a townland once called Grange Mac Giolla Phádraig, now Cill Phádraig (Kilpatrick), that was within the lands of the Abbey of Saint Evin (i.e., Mainistir Eimhín, Monasterevin)¹¹⁵. Both the Abbey and the surrounding lands were once part of the Uí Diomasaigh (O'Dempsey) Country known as Clan Mailere¹¹⁶ but by the 1520s, they had come to be possessed by the Earls of Kildare, although they were often wasted¹¹⁷.

For a placename to be identified with a kindred group or clann probably requires a multi-generational relationship; hence, Grange Mac Giolla Phádraig likely came to be known by that name in the fifteenth century or earlier. The original monastery of Saint Evin was destroyed by Vikings but later rebuilt by Diarmuid Ó Diomasaigh, King of Offaly ca. 1178. Hence, it is also likely that the Mac Giolla Phádraig association with the lands around Mainistir Eimhín came about via a relationship with the Uí Diomasaigh.

In addition to Grange Mac Giolla Phádraig, there are other records that demonstrate Mac Giolla Phádraig held notable lands and possessions in Cill Dara before the rebellion of 'Silken' Thomas FitzGerald. In 1540, Lord Deputy Sir Anthony St. Leger received a royal commission, part of which was a survey of Irish monastic property that, by the dissolution, had come to Henry VIII, and there are two references to Mac Giolla Phádraig in the survey.

First is a record of Cill Dara, being for Diarmuid Mac Giolla Phádraig who was in possession of the Baile Artúir, which included a castle and lands¹¹⁸. Baile Artúir is near Rathtorcaill, where Eoghan Mac Giolla Phádraig was domiciled before 1541. A record of 1326, transcribed by Archbishop John Alen, notes a decrease in rent of a carucate in Baile Artúir, which was "among the Irish, and no one dared to distrain there"¹¹⁹. It is likely that 'the Irish' were the Uí Diomasaigh since, in that era, they had invaded Cill Dara¹²⁰.

A second entry records Seán Mac Giolla Phádraig leased one messuage and four acres of arable land in Ráithín¹²¹, Ceatharlach, which was within the extent of the Abbey of Baltinglass. It is also recorded that there was no income from the lands of Bealach Conglais (Baltinglass) "from the time of the dissolution, 18 May 1537, until Michaelmas in the same year, by reason of rebellion and war of Tirlagh O'Toole his sept and adherents, and the sept and adherents of Mac Murrough"¹²².

¹¹⁵ Ireland Public Records Office (1879), of 28 September 1567, Fiant 1131. p.169.

¹¹⁶ A sept of the Uí Diomasaigh, stemming from their ancestor, Maolughra (Maliere). (Mathews, T, 1903. An Account of the O'Dempseys Chiefs of Clan Maliere. Dublin: Hodges, Figgis, & Co., Ltd).

¹¹⁷ Mac Niocaill, G (1994), p.151: 'they lie waste and unoccupied because they lie on the border of the country of the Irish called Dempsey'. Grange Mac Giolla Phádraig is recorded in the possession of the Uí Diomasaigh again in 1624 (Griffith, M, 1966, p.474).

¹¹⁸ Arthurstown in the Parish of Tallanstown. The castle is now destroyed. The arable lands accounted four messuages and one hundred acres. (White, N, 1943, p.40).

¹¹⁹ McNeill, C (1950). Calendar of Archbishop Alen's Register, ca. 1172-1534. Dublin: Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland.

¹²⁰ FitzGerald, C (1858), p.31.

¹²¹ Raheen, which is now in Cill Mhantáon, is less than one mile from the Cill Dara border.

¹²² White, N (1943), pp.128, 131.

Yet the earliest record of a Mac Giolla Phádraig of Cill Dara uncovered during this research belongs to Fiach Mac Giolla Phádraig, to whom, in 1523, the ninth of Earl of Kildare gifted a sorrel for the price of twenty-six kern¹²³. There is a further mention, that same year, when Edmund Eustace of Baile Áth I (Athy) received an “haberion that Fiach Mac Giolla Phádraig had”¹²⁴.

Finally, it is worth noting that occurrences of the surname Fitzpatrick in the 1659 ‘Census’ are uncommon outside of Cill Chainnigh (Kilkenny) and Laois. However, there is a record of “Terence Fitzpatrick, gent” of Maoin (Moone) in the Barony of Kilkea and Moone, Cill Dara, along with Edward Davis, esquire, five English, and one hundred and four Irish¹²⁵. No further record of Terence can be found, neither of him nor via connection to any of his ancestors or descendants.

Summary

There is a plausible narrative of an extended kinship group who bore the surname Mac Giolla Phádraig, who were domiciled in Cill Dara during the sixteenth century. It is likely these Mac Giolla Phádraig had possessed lands in Cill Dara before that since there is a record of 1567 for a townland once called Grange Mac Giolla Phádraig, which was within the lands of the Abbey of Saint Evin.

Cill Dara Mac Giolla Phádraig are recorded in several Fiants and Patents throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as well as the Rental records of the Earl of Kildare, and Crown Survey records ca. 1541. From as early as 1523, Mac Giolla Phádraig can be identified as militia in the service of the Earl of Kildare, both individually and among the Keating kern. With the rebellion of ‘Silken’ Thomas FitzGerald and the forfeiture of their Cill Dara lands, it is likely these Mac Giolla Phádraig kern and their extended kin found refuge among Laighean clans, firstly becoming associated with the Uí Tuathail of Imael and then with the Uí Tuathail of Fear Cualann.

From the mid-sixteenth century come numerous Fiants and Patents recording Mac Giolla Phádraig, often as kern or other militia, in locations of modern-day Ceatharlach, Cill Mhantáin, and Loch Garman – most often they were moving in the same circles as or followers of the Uí Tuathail, Uí Broinn or Caomhánach. Yet, the only records showing possession of lands by Mac Giolla Phádraig kern are for those who held An Mhainistir in the Parish of Powerscourt, via an agreement with Féilim Ó Tuathail of Fear Cualann, from the mid-sixteenth century until 1610, when the lands were forfeited to Sir Richard Wingfield, first Viscount Powerscourt.

Laighean Mac Giolla Phádraig, whose descendants, now called Fitzpatrick, are still found living near where they were recorded domiciled in the sixteenth century, very likely had kin who relocated to Ulaidh, probably as a consequence of the Nine Years’ War (1593-1603).

¹²³ Mac Niocaill, G (1994), p. 336.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 337: haberion, i.e., haubergeon, a small mail shirt, often with short sleeves. This most probably indicates that Fiach Mac Giolla Phádraig died in 1523, with the item of armor passing to another of Kildare’s horsemen.

¹²⁵ Pender, S (1939), p. 404.

Today there are numerous Fitzpatricks who together belong to an ancient kindred group identified by the surname-specific Y-haplotype R-Z255 ... BY2849. True to their Laighean Y-DNA modality, they reside all along the east of Éire, from Aontroim to Cill Mhantáin, and perhaps they will also come to be found in Loch Garman. This speaks to the endurance of Mac Giolla Phádraig Laighean and their ancient clann name, which was still being used in the nineteenth century¹²⁶.

Acknowledgements

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¹²⁶ Mac Giolla Phádraig and Fitzpatrick were used concurrently in Dún until the nineteenth century, refer Appendix III.

Appendix I: Map of the key Laighean placenames mentioned in this article



Edited from [OpenStreetMap contributors](#) ©. Tiles courtesy of [Andy Allan](#). [Website and API terms](#).

Appendix II: Rencontre between the Killoughrum Yeomanry, and Corcoran and Fitzpatrick



Image courtesy of the National Library of Ireland:

<https://catalogue.nli.ie/Record/vtls000040132>, accessed 14 February 2025.

James Corcoran of Ballindaggin and the Babes in the Woods, by Michael Fortune

Here's a story that comes into my mind every so often. Especially of late as I was walking in Killoughrum Woods last week and look out on it every day. It's the story of a party of men, led by a group of men from Ballindaggin who evaded capture and hid in nearby Killoughrum Woods from June 1798 until their capture and death in February 1804.

I've been piecing together bits and pieces over the years and with the help of Colum Ó Ruairc from the 1798 Casualty Database and we have built up the best picture yet. The story seems to start in June 1798 during the retreat back into Wexford from Carlow at Scullogh Gap after the failed Battle of Kilcumney. A group of men from the wider Ballindaggin area acted as a rear-guard at the Gap to keep the Yeos and army at bay. These men would have known the area well so you can only assume that is why they chose this task.

One of these men was James Corcoran who we are told lived in a house belonging to Mrs. Nolan of Ballindaggin. Corcoran was an excellent marksman by all accounts and another local man called Coady who lived in a little house where the old school once was in Ballindaggin, now beside the hall. There was another Ballindaggin man called John Fitzpatrick (known as The Hessian) in the group too while Fr. Luke Cullen listed other

members of the party including Jacob, West, Billy Riley, Hamilton and Menchin. There are still Menchins (Minchins) just over the border in South Carlow so probably related.

History and folklore tells us that the men hid in Killoughrum Woods, which was an extensive native oak forest between Scullogh Gap and Enniscorthy - an area the men would have known fairly well. The woods have reduced in size since 1798 but we are told they evaded capture by living in the woods and in safe houses around it. James Corcoran was seen as the ringleader and in a newspaper article (Saunders Newsletter) from December 1798 there was a proclamation by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland offering a reward of 500 pounds to anyone who "shall apprehend" him as he was wanted for "repeated acts of High Treason, and with furthering the Rebellion that lately broke out in Ireland." The scale of money involved tells you how much they wanted Corcoran and the use of the words 'repeated acts' and 'furthering the Rebellion' tells you he was a right thorn in their side.

For years they tried to flush them out of the woods and Fr. Cullen claims that in October 1800 Hamilton, O'Reilly and Menchin were taken, not sure if killed or not, while it took another 4 years to get Corcoran and the rest. Father Cullen's accounts are probably the closest we will ever get to the story and he claims, it that on the 11th of February 1804, a Rev. M. Eastwood, a Magistrate and Rector in Kilanne had a party of Yeomen at his house for defence. They got a lead that Corcoran, Fitzpatrick and Brennan were in a safe-house not far away and he gathered a group of 12 yeomen of the Killoughrum Corps, commanded by Captain James of Ballycrystal.

Apparently Corcoran, Fitzpatrick and Brennan were lying in bed in a cabin and were woken up by a woman who saw the Yeomen coming. The men rushed towards the woods but were fired upon. Corcoran was wounded while Fitzpatrick was shot in the knee and arm. Brennan was also wounded but escaped. Not willing to surrender, Corcoran and Fitzpatrick charged, armed with two muskets, two blunderbusses and pistols. Outnumbered, Corcoran was mortally wounded while the wounded Fitzpatrick went into a nearby barn and hid. The Yeomen took the easy option with this and torched it with him inside. On the 13 February an inquest was held in Wexford on the body of James Corcoran which established that he "died by wounds he received from a detachment of Ross Rangers and Killoughrum Yeomen". I have no idea whatever happened to Brennan and no idea where James Corcoran or John Fitzpatrick were buried. All I know, is I think of the men when I look out at Killoughrum Woods and anytime I go up to pick up my three daughters from school, I park my car a few feet away from the spot where Coady's home once stood. There's also a house over in Caim that was built in the 1890s using granite from a font/trough that was used by the men to drink from when living in the woods.

There's a song in my head about these men and it'll come out someday.

7 November 2020

Appendix III: 1803 Stock Census of Drumee, Maghera Parish, County Down – showing two versions, one Fitzpatrick and the other a transliteration of Mac Giolla Phádraig

| Names of Inhabitants. | LIVE STOCK. | | | | | | | HORSES. | C A R R I A G E S. | | Average Amount of DEAD STOCK. | | | | | FLOUR and MEAL. |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------|---------------|------------------|-------|---------|--------|---------|--------------------|-------|-------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|------------|--------------|-----------------|
| | Oxen. | Cows. | Young Cattle. | Sheep and Goats. | Pigs. | Riding. | Draft. | | Carts. | Cars. | Bushels Wheat. | Bushels Oats. | Bushels Barley. | Loads Hay. | Loads Straw. | |
| John Green | 4 | 5 | 6 | 2 | | 3 | | 2 | 10 | 100 | 52 | 24 | 21 | 40 | 2 | |
| Edward Glen | 2 | | | 1 | | | | | | 14 | | | | 2 | 4 | |
| Dennis Haughean | | | | 3 | | | | | | 36 | | | | 3 | 6 | |
| Hugh Donely | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | | 1 | | 1 | | 24 | | 2 | 4 | 2 | | |
| Widow Jones | 1 | 1 | | 2 | | | | | | 24 | | 2 | 4 | 0 | | |
| Bernard Donely | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | | | | | | 60 | | 1 | 4 | 10 | | |
| Edward Donely | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | | | | | | 12 | | | 3 | 10 | | |
| John Jurnilly | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | | | | | | 12 | | | 3 | 3 | | |
| Widow Jurnilly | 1 | | | | | | | | | 10 | | | 2 | 10 | | |
| Lawrence Cowan | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | 30 | | 1 | 4 | 10 | | |
| Arthur Burns | | | | 1 | | | | | | 15 | | | | 2 | 6 | |
| Daniel Small | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | 20 | | | 2 | 6 | | |
| Elinor Burns | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | | | 20 | | | 4 | 4 | | |
| Hugh Small | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | | | 2 | | | 4 | 12 | | |
| John Small | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 6 | | |
| Joseph Fisher | 2 | | | 1 | | 2 | | 1 | | 24 | | 2 | 4 | 12 | | |
| Daniel Fitzpatrick | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | 24 | | | 4 | 4 | | |
| Lawrence Fitzpatrick | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | 24 | | | 4 | 6 | | |

A list of the moveable stock in Drumee

| | Corn | hens | cars | pigs | sheep | goats |
|-------------------------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| John Green | 9 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | |
| Widow Donly | 3 | | | 1 | | |
| Brian Donly | 2 | | | 1 | | |
| Hugh Donly | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | |
| Widow Glenn | 2 | | | 1 | | 3 |
| Dennis Hahion | | | | | | |
| Widow Jones | 2 | | | | 2 | |
| James Jewelair | 1 | | | | 2 | 1 |
| Felix Coan | 1 | | | | 1 | |
| Jack Jurnilly | 2 | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Lawrence Coan | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| Arthur Burns | | | | | 1 | |
| Kelley Burns | 1 | | | 1 | | |
| Jack small | 1 | | | | 1 | |
| Daniel small | 2 | | | | 1 | |
| Daniel Mc Fitzpatrick | 2 | | | | 2 | |
| Lawrence Mc Fitzpatrick | 2 | | | | | 2 |

Image courtesy of the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland.