

GURTADERRA

Gurtaderra, the field of oak, is called Cortaderry on the Ordinance Survey map (Clare O.S. Sheet 20) and this is its official legal name, but, locally, it is always called Gurtaderra. It is thought that the foothills of the Slieve Aughty mountains were covered by an oakwood up to three or four hundred years ago, and that the area was not populated until the oakwoods were cut away. The word Derry or Derra, oak or oakwood comes into the names of many townlands in the area. There are no castles, forts, or relics of ancient habitations in the area. There is what looks like a small fort or ring barrow on Tommy Horan's place but it is probably only an enclosure for catching sheep or cattle and may not be really old. In Pender's Census of Ireland c.1659 compiled from poll tax records, there are forty nine people subject to poll tax in Coolagory, nine in Poolagowre, nineteen in Cappacannon and six in Corraquile. Gurtaderra is not mentioned but, if there were people in Cappacannaun and Corrakyle, there must have been people in Gurtaderra for, at least, three hundred and perhaps four hundred years.

Geologically, Gurtaderra consists of alluvial soil in the river meadows laid down by the river over thousands of years, drift soil deposited by the Ice Age, and a peat soil over sandstone. The drift soil runs from the meadows to the mountain and is of considerable depth in places as can be seen in the field known as Roscrea. The subsoil of the drift is known locally as "dobwee". The underlying rock is Silurian known

locally as "slig" and it comes to the surface in Tommy Horan's Culraheen, in the Lockan and other places. The stream between Tom Nugent's and Mitchell McNamara's place has cut down to the underlying rock in places. In Gurtaderra, anywhere that heather grows is referred to as mountain, and the mountain part of the townland is called Raywaila. Gurtaderra, which includes Raywaila and Derranairne has, according to the Ordinance Survey Map, an area of 1,723 acres, most of which is mountain.

The earliest written record of Gurtaderra which I have come across is the "1825 Tythe Book of the Parish of Tomgraney" which is kept in the public records office at the Four Courts in Dublin. There were thirty-two people, presumably heads of families and land holders assessed for tythes in 1825. The first census was held in 1841 and a census was held every ten years after that until 1911. In 1841, Gurtaderra had sixty houses and three hundred and twenty one people; In 1851, forty-six houses and two hundred and thirty-five people: In 1861, twenty-nine houses and one hundred and forty-five people: In 1871, twenty-seven houses and one hundred and twenty-seven people: In 1901, twenty-one houses and one hundred and forty-nine people.

Unfortunately, the census forms were destroyed up to the 1891 census and the 1901 census is the first in which the original forms with the names and ages of the people were preserved. However, the 1855 valuation of Tenements gives the names of the land holders at that time. There were twenty-three land holders in Gurtaderra in 1855, but as there were forty-six houses in the 1851 census and

twenty nine in the 1861 census, there must have been at least nine or ten landless families in 1855 whose names do not appear on the Valuation Roll.

Among names known to have been in Gurtaderra but not mentioned in the 1855 Valuation or 1901 census are Carey, Curran and Muldoon. Carey was a chairmaker and lived near Guilfoyles. His family went to America. Tommy McMahon met one of them in New York. Curran lived in Raywaila above Guilfoyles. He was probably a herdsman. Ned Curran was killed in the American Civil War. His wife, Margaret Riordan got a pension from the American Government. Muldoon lived near the "Burners" (No.11 in the 1901 Census).

The thirty-two people mentioned in the 1825 Tithe Book are:

Jack Harhan	Pat Kean	Thomas McNamara
James Hourigan	John Prendergast	James McNamara
John Harhan	Thomas Minogue	John McNamara
Martin Harhan	Pat Minogue	Pat Minogue
Michael Harhan	Mel. O'Donnell	Pat Williams
Edmund Harhan	Thomas Moloney	Thomas Melody
Michael Counihan	Michael Moloney	John Conway
John Counihan	John Power	John Callaghan
Michael Halloran	Pat Conway	Dan Canny
Michael Dooley	Darby Conway	

and in Derrinarna:- John Kilfoyle, Michael Mungovan and Denis Ryan.

The pre-famine Irish married at a very young age, usually before twenty years and the population must have been increasing rapidly in Gurtaderra as there were sixty houses and three hundred and forty-one people in the 1841 Census. The population was probably at its maximum in 1845 but then came the famine and it has been falling ever since.

The names of the land-holders on the 1855 Valuation are:- Timothy Maloney, John Guilfoyle, Michael Moloney, Martin Crotty, Michael Minogue, Patrick Conway, Thomas Conway, John Doyle, Michael McNamara, Michael McMahon, Patrick Fennessy, John Guilfoyle, Thomas Mugavan, John McMahon, Patrick Dwyer, Michael Maloney, Thomas Maloney, Michael Harhin, Martin Harhin, and John Harhin.

The Hourigans, Counihans, Hallorans, Dooleys, Keans, Prendergasts, O'Donnells, Powers, Williams, Melodys and Callaghans have disappeared and there are only three families of Harhins and one McNamara. New names are:- Guilfoyle, Mugavan, Fennessy, McMahon, Doyle, Dwyer and Crotty.

The names of the Heads of Households in the 1901 Census are: Patt Jones (aged 60), Martin Nugent (50), Patt Mungavin (age not given), Bridget Haron, widow (55), Bridget Haron, widow (50), John Noonan (65), John Horan (54), John Conway (52), Thomas McGrath (65), Matt Horan (67), Ellen McMahon, widow (70), Thomas Moloney (50), James Horan (50), Thomas Guilfoyle (44), Thomas Campbell (60), Patt McMahon (53), Ned Malone (48), Matt Moroney (35), Thomas Mungavin (50), Michael McMahon (60), Batt Riordan (64). Comparing the 1901 Census with the 1855 Valuation, we find that the Moloneys, Minogues, Doyles, McNamaras and Fennessys are gone. New names are:- Jones, Nugent, Noonan, McGrath, Campbell, Malone, Moroney, Riordan.

The present November 1978 householders are:- Tom Nugent, Joe Mungavin, Thomas Haron, Jojo Horan, Margaret Horan, Lizzie Noonan, Lil Noonan, William McGrath, Jack Riordan,

Peter Leonard, Tim Malone, Ben Geoghegan, Jacko Jones, and Patrick Clancy. There are no McMahons, Moloneys, Conways or Campbells. Paddy McMahon, a grandson of Paid McMahon, No.16 in the 1901 Census has land there but does not live there. New names are:- Leonard, Geoghegan, and Clancy. Haron is the only pre-famine name still in Curtaderra.

The Tythe Book of 1825 did not put an individual tithe on each person. Apparently, the Townsland was surveyed and divided into twelve divisions on the surveyors book. This book, unfortunately, has not been preserved. A tithe was then put on the land holders of the division. The first division consisted of the River Meadows and contains all the names with the exception of Dan Canny. The landholders of the second, third and fourth divisions are Darby Conway, John Conway, Patt Minogue, Tom Melody, Tom McNamara, James McNamara and Patt Conway. The second division lies on the left hand side of the road leading to Gort. The third division lies on the right hand side of the road leading to Gort. The fourth division lies along the river dividing Cappacannaun from Curtaderra and between the river and the tilled hill at the left of the road to Gort.

The landholders in the fifth division, which lies between the second division and Harhans farm are:- Michael Counihan, John Counihan, John Prendergast, Michael Halloran, Michael Dooly, Patt Kean, John Power, Thomas and Michael Moloney and Edmond Harhan. The landholders in the sixth division are Martin Harhan, Michael Harhan and Jack Harhan Junior. The seventh division, lying on both sides

of the road and on to the river of Gortavrulla is held by Jack Harhan Snr., Patt Harhan, James Hourigan, Snr., and James Hourigan, Junior. The eighth division lying between the sixth division and old Jack Harhan's house is held by John Harhan and partners. The ninth division lying between the road leading to Curraghkyle and the road leading to Gort and the Curragh river is held by:- John Prendergast, Michael O'Donnell, Patrick Minogue, Thomas Minogue and Dan Canny. The tenth division lying at the right hand side of the road leading to Curragh between the road and the mountain is held by Dan Canny. The eleventh division, lying near the Cooleen river and known by the name of Scrubby Hill is held by Jack Harhan, Jnr., Michael Harhan, and Martin Harhan. This entry seems to be in different handwriting. The twelfth division is held by James Hourigan. The Mountain of Gurtaderra is held in common by all the tenants.

Many of those names are now completely forgotten. Most of those who disappeared went to America. Matt McMahon of Gurtavrulla (the honest man) told me over fifty years ago that two families of Harhans who were emigrating to America during the famine years were lost at sea. I heard Jim Sheedy of Gurtavrulla say their land was idle for ten years as no one considered it worth the rent demanded by the landlord. Eventually, it was taken by Thomas and Michael Moloney who came from Kilclaren. As the Surveyor's book has not survived, it is not possible to place the divisions with any great certainty. However, it would appear that Conways and McNamaras with a family of Minogues and Melodys occupied the area from where Bill

McGrath now lives to the Cappacannaun River and Harons from where Tommy Haron now lives to the Gurtavrulla river.

The Minogues were blacksmiths and lived in what is now Buglers place near the little bridge a couple of hundred yards east of McGraths. They, the Minogues, moved to what is still called Minogues place near Tobairnagoth and later to Gurtavrulla. They sold their Gurtaderra land to Bill McGrath about eighty years ago. Between the Conways and Harhans farm lived Michael and John Counihan, John Prendergast, Michael Halloran, Michael Dooly, Patt Kean and John Power, who must have had very little land. The Hourigans lived where Joe Mungavin lives now. Martin Rogers (Teadles) mother was Bid Hourigan. Joe Mungavin's field above the Roscrea is known as O'Donnell's Hill. The Prendergasts lived near where the big crabtree is in Noonan's haggard. The Moloneys lived in "Maura's place" now Joe Mungavins.

New names on the Valuation of 1855 are:- Guilfoyle, Mugavan, Fennessy, McMahon, Doyle, Dwyer and Crotty. Dwyer and Crotty never lived in Gurtaderra. Dwyer lived in Gurtavrulla in what is now Bill O'Donnells place. He sold his Gurtaderra land to Martin Nugent about ninety years ago. Crotty lived in Poulgower. He gave his Gurtaderra land to his nephew, Jack Bugler, about fifty years ago. Bugler sold the part of it north of the road to the Forestry during World War II. The Guilfoyles and Mugavans had a tradition that they came from Turkenagh. There was a John Kilfoyle and a Michael Mongovan in Darrinarna on the 1825 Tithe Book. There were four or five Kilfoyles in Cappacannaun in the same book. The

name is spelt Kilfoyle in the tithe book and Guilfoyle in the Valuation of 1855. Mongovan in the tithe book is given as Mugavan in the Valuation Book. Harhan in the tithe book is Harhin in the 1855 Valuation. In the 1901 Census, the two Bridget Harons (widows) gave their names as Haron. The other families spelt it Horan. The Fennesseys lived where Johnny Horan No.7 on the 1901 Census lived. They sold their land to the Horans over a hundred years ago. Paddy Horan (Red Paddy), son of Johnny Horan left it to his nephew, Callaghan, who sold it to Bill McGrath about twenty years ago. The Doyles sold their land to Patt McMahon (Paid the Grey) about ninety years ago. Patt Jones No.1 on the 1901 Census, gave Co. Galway as his place of birth. Martin Nugent, No. 2. on the 1901 Census came from Caher about a hundred years ago. In partnership with the Crottys, one of whom, Pat, was married to a sister of his, he bought Sparlings place about eighty years ago. He, later, bought out the Crottys. Sparlings place was originally farmed by Lord Norbury, who evicted a large number of tenants in Clonusker and Cappacannaun during the famine years. It was, later, farmed by a Scotsman named Allison and then by the Sparlings, a Palatine family. Its purchase by a Catholic tenant farmer was quite an achievement, even as late as the end of the last century. During Allison's time a number of workmen who were demolishing an old "cowl" (cabhal), the ruins of an old house which had belonged to a Kilfoyle man, whose nickname was the "Fear Cloher", came across a number of

gold sovereigns which had been hidden in the walls. Allison had them all lined up and searched, and took the sovereigns from them with the exception of a few that Patt Jones managed to swallow. He was nicknamed "Plugger Jones" afterwards.

Martin Nugent, has at present 1978, over a hundred living decendants scattered over Ireland, Britain, United States of America, Canada, Australia and Rhodesia.

Michael McNamara of Cloonusker bought Michael (Mokey) Haron's place, No.5 in the 1901 Census, about thirty years ago. He bought part of Jojo Haron's place, formerly John Harons (Nevilles) place, No.13 on the 1901 Census, a few years ago. Tommy Haron bought the remainder.

Tommy Haron also bought a part of Conway's place, No. 8 in the 1901 Census, a few years ago.

Johnny Bugler of Moynoe still farms his father's land in Cortaderra.

Joe Mungavin bought Batty McMahon's place, No.21 in the 1901 Census, about thirty years ago.

His father on his return from America about 70 years ago bought the Cloher from Charlie O'Donnell of Gurtavrulla who had bought it from the Duggans. His grandfather Paddy - No.3 in the 1901 Census - bought Maura's place (Moloneys) some years earlier.

Johnny Noonan - No.6 in the 1901 Census - and Tom Moloney - No.12 in the 1901 Census - both came from Caher. Tom Moloney was a carpenter. Johnny Noonan was married twice. His first wife was Doyle. The DoYLES owned both Paid McMahon's place and Noonans.

Paid McMahon - No.16 in the 1901 Census - and Michael McMahon - No.21 in the 1901 Census - were brothers and came from Gurtavrulla. Biddy Haron - No.4 in the 1901 Census - was a sister of theirs as was Ann Horan of Gurtavrulla. Joss and Matt McMahon of Gurtavrulla were brothers.

Thomas McGrath - No.9 in the 1901 Census - came from Rossinure.

Thomas Campbell - No.15 in the 1901 Census - came from Kildavin.

Matt Moroney - No.17 in the 1901 Census - came from Gurtavrulla. He was a brother of Johnny Moroney of Gurtavrulla.

Batt Riordan - No.20 in the 1901 Census - came from Gurtavrulla with the McMahons.

Ned Malone - No.18 in the 1901 Census - came from Kilnoe

The Clan Dal Cas

The Clan Dal Cas which occupied East Clare and North-West Tipperary was for many centuries one of the most powerful clans in the country. The Diocese of Killaloe covers roughly the old Dal Cassian territory. The O'Briens, who were the chief people, originated in the neighbourhood of Killaloe. During the ninth and tenth centuries, they extended their rule over Thomond and Munster and challenged the Hy Neill for the High Kingship. They were probably at the height of their power at the time of the Battle of Clontarf in 1014, but the death of Brian, his son Murragh and grandson Turlough, finished any hopes they may have had of establishing a permanent High Kingship, but they ruled in Clare for many centuries afterwards. The Clan Cuilleen of whom the McNamaras were the chief people, were a branch of the Dal Cas. Clan Cuilleen territory covered roughly the present baronies of Upper and Lower Tulla.

Among other Dalcassian names are:- Moloney, Moroney, McInerney, O'Grady, McClanchy or Clancy, O'Dea, Meehan, Liddy, Quinn, Kehir, Howard, McMahon, O'Meara, Sheehan, Boland, Fogarty, Ryan, Gleeson, Durack, Hartigan, Slattery, O'Gorman, Sheedy, Conway, O'Halloran, O'Griffy, O'Loneragan, O'Muldoon, Ahern, O'Gunning, O'Coffey, O'Shanahan, O'Hogan, Mannion, O'Curry, O'Hassett, O'Galvin, O'Reddan, Sexton, Cuneen, O'Hickey, O'Haley, MacBrody or Brody, Harhan or Harin, Minogue, Carmody, Mulqueen, Crowe, O'Clohessy, O'Kelliher, Malone, Mungavin, and McGrath.

The Fogartys, Ryans, Gleesons, O'mearas and Hogans lived in Tipperary. Kennedy is also a Clare name. In a war with the McNamaras in the 14th Century they were defeated and driven across the Shannon to Tipperary.

Seventy per cent of the Gurtaderra names in the 1825 Tythe Book are Dalcassian, Seventy-eight per cent of the Gurtaderra names in the 1855 Valuation are Dalcassian, Seventy-six per cent of the Heads of Households in the 1901 Census have Dalcassian names and at present, 1978, seventy per cent of Gurtaderra people have Dalcassian names. In arriving at the above figures, I have taken Mungavin and Haran to be Dalcassian names. Mungavin is certainly a Clare name but I am not certain if it is Dalcassian. Haron or Harhan is probably a Dalcassian name but I am not certain. Noonan and Riordan are North Cork names. There is, according to Mr. McLysaght, a rather rare Clare name - Neenan - "(in Irish O'Neoldheanain), and some of them called themselves Noonan in English. There was a sept of O'Riordans also in Offaly, near where the McGuilfoyles originated. Guilfoyle is an Offaly name. Jones is a Welsh name. Nugent is a Norman name. An Edmond and William Nugent had lands at Carlanstown in Co. Meath which were confiscated by Cromwell. They were given land in the Burren - a rather bad swap. The Leonards and other Slievenore families have a tradition that they were driven out of Monaghan during a pogrom early in the last century. It is, however, a North Mayo name, originally. Geoghegan is a Westmeath name. Clancy, Moroney, Malone and McGrath are Dalcassian Names..