

Families and Territories

John O'Donovan

1862

*The topographical poems
of
John O'Dubhagain
and
Giolla na naomh O'Huidhrin*

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O let us traverse beauteous Ierne

The first printed notice of these poems, so far as the Editor has been able to ascertain, is the abstract given by Dr. John Lynch, in cap. iii., of his *Cambrensis Eversus*, published in 1662, where the author, in the following passage, ascribes the entire to O'Dubhagain alone, and makes no mention whatever of O'Huidhrin : Rev. M. Kelly thus translates : —

“ Nor can we obtain the nomenclature of the tribes who inhabited Ireland before the English had carried their arms thither, from any better source than that remarkable poem by John O'Dubhagain, in which he has inserted the families of better note which Ireland anciently comprised within its ambit. The beginning of that poem, which is written in Irish, is ‘ *Triallam timcheall na Fodhia,*’ &c., which words convey this meaning :

‘ O, companions, let us traverse the territories of beauteous Ierne.’ ”

Dr. Lynch's abstract of the poems was annotated by the Editor of the present volume, in the edition of *Cambrensis Eversus* edited by Rev. M. Kelly for the Celtic Society, in 1848-52.

Nearly opposite the quotation, “ *Triallam timcheall na Fodhia,*” Dr. Lynch has, in the margin of p. 25, “ In ejus libro, 221,” from which it appears that he took his abstract of the poem from O'Dubhagain's book. The O'Clerys ascribe the authorship of the first poem to O'Dubhagain, and of the second to O'Huidhrin ; and it is very clear, from the first two quatrains of the second poem ascribed to O'Huidhrin, that O'Dubhagain had left his work unfinished, but not through ignorance, and that O'Huidhrin undertook to complete a task which this learned man had not lived to accomplish.

At the conclusion of his abstract of these poems, the author of “*Cambrensis Eversus*” (Kelly's Ed., vol. i., p. 278) observes :

“ I am conscious that the merit of the original excellent poem cannot be appreciated from the hurried abstract which I have given of this remarkable fragment ; just as all beauty and order departs from a stone structure when the union of its component parts has been dissolved. Nevertheless, I did not wish to omit an opportunity of giving from so valuable a monument an account of the families who inhabited the various territories of Ireland before the incursion of the English. Most of the families which the poem mentions, were not only in existence at the commencement of the late war, but some of them were even then occupying portions of their old territories, and others enjoyed most extensive estates.”

In his chapter on these poems, Dr. Lynch has strangely confused tribes and families, evidently from translations made for him from the originals, of which it would appear there were then extant different copies interpolated in various places by unskilful hands from other topographical tracts.

Edward O'Reilly, in his “*Catalogue of Irish Writers,*” pp. 99, 100, gives the following account of this poem, and its author, under A.D. 1872 :—

“ John O’Dugan, chief poet of O’Kelly, of Ibh Maine, died this year. He was author of ‘ A Topographical and Historical Poem,’ of eight hundred and eighty verses, beginning ‘ Let us go around Fodhla (Ireland).’ This poem gives the names of the principal tribes and districts in Meath, Ulster, and Conaght, and the chiefs who presided over them, at the time Henry II., King of England, was invited to this country by Dermot Mac Morogh, King of Leinster.

“ From the first line of this poem, and from the few ranns that this author has left us, on the districts of the province of Leinster, it would seem that it was his intention to have given a complete account of all the districts and chief tribes in Ireland; and it would be a cause of much regret, that he left unfinished so interesting a work, if it had not afterwards been taken up and completed by his contemporary, Giolla-na-naomh-O’Huidhrin, who died, an old man, in the year 1420.

“ The work of O’Huidhrin has been sometimes joined to O’Dugan’s poem, so as to appear but one entire piece of one thousand six hundred and sixty verses, and the merit of the whole is given to the latter, though he really wrote but thirty-eight ranns, or one hundred and fifty-two verses on Meath ; three hundred and fifty-four verses on Ulster, three hundred and twenty-eight verses on Conaght ; and fifty-six verses on Leinster, making in all eight hundred and eighty verses. For the account of the ancient families of Leath-Mogha (Leinster and Munster) we are indebted to O’Huidhrin,

“ Copies of this poem are numerous, but few of them are perfect. The copy used by the author of *Cambrensis Eversus* must have been incomplete, or he has not translated it fully. A complete copy in the hand-writing of Cucoigriche O’Clery, one of the *Four Masters*, is in the collection of the Assistant Secretary,” *i.e.*, of O’Reilly himself.

This copy is now in the Library of the Royal Irish Academy.
Again, under the year 1420, p. cxix., O’Reilly writes :

“ Giolla-na-Naomh O’Huidhrin, a learned historian, died this year, according to the Annals of the Four Masters. He was author of a Topographical Poem, intended as a supplement to John O’Dugan’s Triallam timcheall na Fodhla. We have seen, under the year 1372, that John O’Dugan had given an account of the chief tribes and territories of Leath Cuinn (Meath, Ulster, and Conaght) at the time of the Anglo-Norman invasion. O’Huidhrin’s work gives an account of the principal families of Leath Mogha (Leinster and Munster), and the districts occupied by them at the same period. The poem consists of seven hundred and eighty verses, beginning Tuille feasa ar Erinn óig’: ‘ An addition of knowledge on sacred Erin.’

“ A very valuable copy of this poem, in the handwriting of Cucoigriche O’Clery, is in the collection of Manuscripts belonging to the Assistant-Secretary to this [the Ibero Celtic] Society.”

Various extracts from these Topographical Poems of O’Dubhagain and O’Huidhrin have been already given by Doctor Lynch, in his *Cambrensis Eversus*, and by the Editor in the notes to his edition of the Annals of the Four Masters, and in various other works edited by him for the Irish Archæological and Celtic Societies ; but the entire original text, or a complete translation, has never been published, and the present edition is the only perfect one that has yet appeared. All the discoveries and identifications of ancient territories and tribes made by investigators up to the present day will be found embodied in the notes.

These poems are written in the metre called by the Irish *Dan direach*, which O’Molloy pronounces the most difficult under the sun. Each quatrain should consist of four-lines, each line generally of seven syllables ; every line must exhibit alliteration, and the lines should end so as to form a kind of rhyme with each other successively or alternately. Every quatrain should also exhibit union and head.

The style of the poems is necessarily very stiff, in some instances defective, and in others redundant. The adjectives, sometimes lavishly used, are neither descriptive of the families nor their territories, except in very rare instances, but merely introduced for the sake of filling up the metre, and to complete the peculiarly mechanical structure of the verse. This will be evident from a comparison of the two copies used, which exhibit very different epithets. These epithets have been closely translated,

which gives the English version, in many instances, a rude appearance, but this could not have been avoided without abandoning the attempt to give a literal translation.

The orthography is in general that of the seventeenth century, the age in which the O'Clerys lived ; sometimes, however, they have introduced very ancient forms of spelling, and they mostly use the aspirations and eclipses common in their own times, as ff, pp, tt. They adhere, however, to no regular rule, but write sometimes the ancient, sometimes modern orthography in the most capricious manner.

Of the Ancient Names of Tribes and Territories in Ireland.

It is now universally admitted, that the ancient names of tribes in Ireland were not derived from the territories which they inhabited, but from certain of their distinguished ancestors. In nine cases out of ten, names of territories and of the tribes inhabiting them are identical. The tribe names were formed from those of their ancestors, by prefixing the following words : —

1. *Cinel*, kindred, race, descendants; as Cinel Eoghain, the race of Eoghan—genus Eugenii. Cinel Conaill, the race of Conall ; and this prefix is still retained in the baronies of Kinelarty, Kinel-meaky, Kinelea.
2. *Clann*, children, race, descendants; as Clann Colmain, the race of Colman, the tribe name of the O'Melaghlin, of Meath.
3. *Corc*, *Corca*, race, progeny ; as Corca Bhaiscinn, the race of Baiscinn, in the county of Clare ; Corca-Duibhne, the race of Duibhne, in the county of Kerry.
4. *Dal*, tribe, progeny; as Dal-Riada, Dal-Araidhe, Dal-Mesincorb, Dal Cais, &c.
5. *Macu*. This prefix appears in very ancient Manuscripts in the sense of filiorum, as Dubthach Macu Lugair, “ Dubthach of the sons of Lugar.”
6. *Muintir*, family, people ; as Muintir Maoilmordha, the tribe name of the O'Reillys, of East Brefney ; Muintir Murchadha, the tribe name of the O'Flahertys, of West Connaught.
7. *Siol*, seed, progeny; as Siol-Muireadhaigh, the tribe name of the O'Conors and their correlatives, in the present county of Roscommon ; Siol-Amnchadha, the tribe name of the O'Maddens, of Hy-Many ; Siol-Maoelruanaidh, the tribe name of the Mac Dermots, of Moylurg.
8. *Tealach*, family ; as Tealach Eachdhach, the tribe name of the Magaurans, in the county Cavan ; Tealach Dunchadha, the tribe name of the Mac Kernans, in the same county.
9. *Sliocht*, progeny ; as Sliocht Aedha Slaine, the progeny of Aedh Slaine, in Meath ; Sliocht Aineslis, the progeny of Stanislaus, the tribe name of a sept of the O'Donovans, in the parish of Kilmeen, in the county of Cork.
10. *Ua*, grandson, descendant ; plural *Ui* ; dative or abl. *Uibh*. This word which is evidently cognate with the Greek $\iota\omicron\varsigma$, *filius*, appears in the names of Irish tribes more frequently than any of the preceding terms, as Ui-Neill, the descendants of Niall, the tribe name of the families descended from Niall of the Nine Hostages, monarch of Ireland in the beginning of the fifth century ; Ui-Briuin, *i.e.* the descendants of Brian, the tribe name of the descendants of Brian, the eldest brother of the same monarch.

Some have supposed that the word *Ui*, in such names signifies land or territory ; but that this is an error, is very clear from the ancient writers. Adamnan, Abbot of Hy, in the seventh century, in his *Vita Columbæ*, published by this Society in 1856, invariably renders *ua*, *ui*, *uibh*, by *nepos*, *nepotes*, *nepotibus*, his habit being to substitute Latin equivalents for Irish proper names as often as practicable. Thus in lib. ii., c. xvi., he renders Ua Briuin, *nepos Briuni* ; in lib. iii., c. v., he translates Ua Ainmirech, *nepos Ainmirech*, retaining the Irish genitive of the name Ainmire; in lib. iii., c. xvii., Ua Liathain, *nepos Liathain* ; in lib. i., c. xlix., Ui-Neill, *nepotes Neilli*, *i.e.*, the descendants of Niall; and in lib. i., c. xxii., Ui Tuirtre, *nepotes Tuirtre*. The same interpretation of this word, *ua*, *ui*, *uibh*, is sup-

ported by the authority of the annalist Tighernach, and by that of the compiler of the Annals of Ulster, and various writers of the lives of Irish Saints : it is therefore unnecessary to adduce more examples in this place ; but it may be observed, that Colgan, Lynch, O'Flaherty, and all those who treated of Irish history in the Latin language have understood the word exclusively in this sense. However, although *Ui* does not originally signify land or territory, the tribe name beginning with this word is often used to signify the territory inhabited by the tribe, in the same way as the names of tribes on Ptolemy's map of Ireland, and in Cæsar's Commentaries on the Gallic War. Accordingly, while the editor has, in his edition of the Annals of the Four Masters, classed all words beginning with *Ua* or *O* under the Index Nominum, he has assigned those in *Ui* to the Index Locorum.

Besides the words above enumerated, which being prefixed to the names of progenitors formed tribe names, there are others to be occasionally met with after which the names of territories are placed, as *aes*, people, *fir*, men, *aicme*, tribe, *pobul*, people ; as *Aes-Greine*, a people, situated in the north-east of the present county of Limerick ; *Aes-tri-maighe*, *i.e.*, the people of the three plains in the same county ; *Fir Maighe Feine*, now Fermoy ; *Fir-Rois*, the men of Ross, the name of a people in the present county of Monaghan ; *Fir-Arda*, a tribe seated in, and giving name to the barony of Ferrard, in the present county of Louth ; *Pobal Droma*, in the present county of Tipperary.

Many other Irish names of tribes are formed by the addition of terminations, such as *raighe*, *aighe*, *ne*, *acht*, to the cognomens of their ancestors, as *Caenraighe*, *Muscraighe*, *Darraighe*, *Calraighe*, *Ciarraighe*, *Tradraighe*, *Parraighe*, *Osraighe*, *Orbhraighe*, *Greagraighe*, *Ernaidhe*, *Mairtine*, *Conmaicne*, *Olnegmacht*, *Connacht*, *Cianacht*, *Eoghanacht*, &c. These are the usual forms of the tribe-names among the descendants of the *Aithech Tuatha*, or Attacotic families, enumerated in the Books of Lecan and Leinster, as existing in Ireland in the first century ; and it is not improbable that the tribe-names given on Ptolemy's map of Ireland are partly fanciful translations, and partly modifications of them.

The earliest dissertation, on the subject of surnames, which we know of, is that given by Plutarch in his Life of Caius Marcius Coriolanus, but the names referred to by him bear more resemblance to sobriquets than to hereditary surnames.

It is stated by Ware, Keating, and Dr. John Lynch, that family names or hereditary surnames first became fixed in Ireland in the reign of Brian Borumha, A.D. 1002-1014. This assertion has been repeated by all the subsequent Irish writers, but none of them have attempted to question or prove it. The most ancient authority on this subject is found in a fragment of a Manuscript in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin (H. 2. 15.), supposed to be a part of Mac Liag's Life of Brian Borumha, which states : —

“ It was Brian that endowed seven monasteries, both [in] furniture and cattle and land ; and thirty-two cloitheachs [or round towers] ; and it was by him the marriage ceremony was confirmed ; and it was during his time surnames were first given, and territories were [allotted] to the surnames, and the boundaries of every lordship and cantred were fixed.”

That this statement is more rhetorical than correct will appear from the following alphabetical list, showing the periods at which the progenitors of various important native families flourished or died, according to the Irish Annals. The dates have been added for the most part from the Annals of Ulster, or of the Four Masters.

Fox [*Sinach*] of Teffia, slain 1084.
MacCarthy of Desmond, slain 1043.
MacEgan of Ui-Maine, flourished 940.
MacEochy, or Keogh, of Ui-Maine, 1290.
MacGillpatrick of Ossory, slain 995,
MacMurrough of Leinster, died 1070.
MacNamara of Thomond, flourished 1074.
O'Boyle of Tirconnell, flourished 900.
O'Brien of Thomond, died 1014.
O'Byrne of Leinster, died 1050.
O'Cahill of Ui-Fiachrach, flourished 900.

O'Callaghan of Desmond, flourished 1092.
 O'Canannan of Tirconnell, flourished 950.
 O'Clery of South Ui-Fiachrach, flourished 850.
 O'Conor of Connaught, died 974.
 O'Conor of Corcomruadh, died 1002.
 O'Conor of Offaly, died 977.
 O'Dea of Thomond, flourished 1014.
 O'Doherty of Tirconnell, flourished 901.
 O'Donnell of Corco-Bhaiscin, slain 1014.
 O'Donnell of Ui-Maine, flourished 960.
 O'Donnell of Tirconnell, flourished 950.
 O'Douoshue of Desmond, flourished 1030.
 O'Donovan, slain 976.
 O'Dowda of Tireragh, flourished 876.
 O'Dugan of Fermoy, flourished 1050.
 O'Faelain of Decies, flourished 970.
 O'Flaherty of Iar Connaught, flourished 970.
 O'Gallagher of Tirconnell, flourished 950.
 O'Heyne of Ui-Fiachrach, flourished 950.
 O'Keeffe of Desmond, flourished 950.
 O'Kelly of Ui-Maine, flourished 874.
 O'Kevan of Ui-Fiachrach, flourished 876.
 O'Loughlin of Burren, died 983.
 O'Madden of Ui-Maine, flourished 1009.
 O'Mahony of Desmond, slain 1014.
 O'Melaghlin of Meath, died 1022.
 O'MoUoy of Fera Ceall, slain 1019.
 O'Muldory of Tirconnell, flourished 870.
 O'Neill of Ulster, slain 919.
 O'Quin of Thomond, flourished 970.
 O'Ruarc of Breifny, died 893.
 O'Scanlan of Ui-Fiachrach, flourished 946.
 O'Shaughnessy of Ui-Fiachrach, flourished 1100.
 O'Sullivan of Desmond, flourished 950.
 O'Tuathail or O'Toole of Leinster, died 950.

From this list it is evident, that in the formation of surnames at this period, the several families adopted the names of their fathers with the prefix Mac, or of their grandfathers, or more remote ancestors, with the prefix O'. The O'Neills of Ulster took their surname from Niall Glundubh, Monarch of Ireland, killed by the Danes in the year 919 ; the O'Briens of Thomond, took theirs from Brian Borumha, Monarch of Ireland, slain at the battle of Clontarf in the year 1014 ; and it will be seen, that the ancestors of the most distinguished Irish families, whose names have been preserved in the surnames of their descendants, flourished from the year 900 to 950, or 1000. A few exceptions will, however, be found, as in the family of O'Dowda of Tireragh, whose progenitor, Dubhda, flourished about the year 876 ; in that of O'Kelly of Ui-Maine, whose ancestor, Ceallach, flourished as early as the year 871 ; and in that of O'Ruarc, of Breifny, whose progenitor, Ruarc, flourished from about the year 820 till 893.

There are, also, instances to be met with of surnames, established in the tenth century, having been changed to others which were taken from progenitors who flourished at a considerably later period, as O'Mulrony, of Moylurg, who assumed the surname of Mac Dermott, from Dermott, chief of Moylurg, who died in the year 1159 ; [1] and O'h-Eochy, of Ulidia, who changed the family name to Mac Donlevy.

There are also instances of minor branches of great tribes, having changed the original prefix O' to Mac, or Mac O', or I, when, having acquired new territories for themselves, they became independent or separate families, as O'Brien to Mac I-Brien and Mac Brien, in the instances of Mac I-Brien Ara, Mac Brien Coonagh, and Mac Brien Aharlagh, all offshoots from the great O'Brien family of Thomond ; and O'Neill to Mac I-Neill Buidhe, in the instance of a branch of the Tyrone family, who

settled in the fourteenth century in the counties of Down and Antrim. These surnames having been rejected in modern times, the original surnames of O'Brien and O'Neill have been restored.

A branch of the O'Kellys, of Ui Maine, in Connaught, took the name of Mac Eochy, now Keogh, from an ancestor, Eochy O'Kelly, who flourished about the year 1290 ; a branch of the O'Conors, of Connaught, took the name of Mac Manus, from Maghnus (son of Turlogh O'Conor, King of Ireland), who died in the year 1181 ; and a branch of the Maguires, of Fermanagh, also, took the surname of Mac Manus, from Maghnus, the son of Don Maguire, chief of Fermanagh, who died in 1302. A branch of the O'Kanes, of Ulster, took the name of Mac Bloscaidh (now Mac Closkey), from Bloscaidh O'Kane, who flourished in the thirteenth century. Branches of the O'Dohertys, of Inishowen, took the surnames of Mac Devitt and Mac Connell Og at a comparatively late period.

It is, therefore, clear, that Irish family names, or hereditary surnames, are formed from the genitive case singular of the names of ancestors who flourished in the tenth, or beginning of the eleventh century, or at least from the year 850 till 1290, by prefixing *O'* or *Mac*, as O'Neill, Mac Carty, Mac Murrough. The prefix *O'*, otherwise written *Ua*, literally signifies *nepos*, or grandson, in which sense it is still used in the province of Ulster ; and in a more enlarged sense, any male descendant, like the Latin *nepos* ; *Mac* literally signifies *son*, like the Anglo-Norman prefix *Fitz* ; and in a more extended sense any male descendant. The word *O'* or *Ua*, as has been already observed, is translated *nepos*, and *Mac*, *filius*, by Adamnan and various other writers; and the latter word is evidently cognate with the Welsh *Map*, or *Ap*, and equivalent to the Anglo-Norman *Fitz*, which is a corruption of the Latin *filius*.

Giraldus Cambrensis, in his *Hibernia Expugnata* (lib. i., c. vi.), latinizes the name of the King of Leinster, Dermot Mac Murchadh, *Dermitius Murchardides*, from which it is evident, that he regarded the prefix *Mac* as equivalent to the Greek patronymic termination $\mu\upsilon\theta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$. The only difference, therefore, to be observed between *O'* and *Mac* in surnames is, that the family who took the prefix *Mac*, called themselves after their father, and those who took the prefix *O'*, formed their surname from the name of their grandfather, or a more remote ancestor.

Ni, a contraction of *inghen*, a daughter, was used in the surnames of women, instead of the *Mac*, *Ua*, or *O'* ; thus, a female of the O'Brien family was called Ni-Brien ; of the O'Donovans, Ni-Donovan ; but this is now obsolete among the English speaking portion of the Irish population, although most rigidly adhered to by those who speak the Irish language.

It is not, perhaps, an improbable conjecture, that at the period when surnames first became hereditary, some families went back several generations to select an illustrious ancestor from whom to take a surname. A very extraordinary instance of this mode of forming Irish surnames occurred in our own time in the province of Connaught, where John Geoghegan (or more correctly MacEochagain, *Anglicè* Mageoghegan), Esq., of Bunowen Castle, in the west of the county of Galway, applied to George IV. for licence to reject the surname which his ancestors had borne for about 800 years, from their progenitor, Eochagan, son of Cosgrach, chief of Cinel-Fiacha, in Westmeath, in the tenth century, and to take a new name from his more remote and more illustrious ancestor, Niall of the Nine Hostages, monarch of Ireland in the fourth century. His Majesty granted this licence, and the sons and grandsons of this John Geoghegan now bear the name of O'Neill. The other branches of the family of Mageoghegan, however, still retain the surname which was established in the tenth century, as the distinguishing appellative of the chief family of the race of Fiacha, a younger son of the monarch Niall of the Nine Hostages.

From the similarity and practical import attached to the words *O'* and *Mac* in surnames, it might be expected that they should be generally considered as conferring each the same respectability on the bearer ; yet this is far from being the case, for it is popularly believed in every part of Ireland, that the prefix *O'* was a kind of title among the Irish ; that *Mac* was a mark of no distinction whatever ; and that any common Irishman may bear the prefix *Mac*, while one must have some claims to royalty, nobility, or gentility of birth, before he can presume to prefix *O'* to his name. This is universally the feeling in the province of Connaught, where the gentry of Milesian descent style themselves O'Conor, O'Flaherty, O'Malley, O'Dowda, O'Hara, O'Gara, &c., and the peasantry, their collateral relatives, are styled Connor, Flaherty, Malley, Dowd, Hara, Gara, &c. All this, however, is a popular error, for the prefix *O'* is in nowise more respectable than *Mac*, nor is either the one or the other an index to any respectability whatever, inasmuch as every family of Firbolgic, Milesian, and even Danish origin, in

Ireland, is entitled to bear either O' or Mac as the first part of its surname. This popular error is of comparatively modern growth. It has been generally known that O'Neill was King of Ulster, O'Conor king of Connaught, O'Brien king of Munster, and hence it is assumed that the prefix O' must be a mark of great distinction. But some of the humblest characters in Irish history have borne the prefix O', and some of the noblest that of Mac, as Mac Murrough, king of Leinster, Mac Carthy, king of Desmond, Mac Mahon, king of Oriel, and Magenis, chief of Iveagh, in Ulster. The Patent Rolls of the reign of James I. show that the O' was prefixed to the surnames of the obscurest and humblest families of the native Irish as well as to those of the highest ; and that the O' is much more common than the Mac in Irish surnames of that period.

It is, therefore, certain that the prefixes O' and Mac [2] are of equal import, both meaning male descendant, and that neither indicates any kind of respectability, unless where the pedigree is proved, and the history of the family distinguished.

As examples, the names of O'Donovan and Mac Carthy may be adduced. The former, previous to the Revolution of 1688, had the O' always prefixed as an indication of descent from Donovan, chief of the plains of Ui Fidhgeinte, in the now county of Limerick, who was slain by the monarch Brian Borumha, in the year 977 ; but the Mac prefixed in the latter name is a mark of better descent, namely, from Carthach, great-grandson of Ceallachan Cashel, king of Munster, whose descendants held royal sway in Desmond before the English invasion, and who, after the fall of the Geraldines, enjoyed the highest rank in the same territory under the English Government till the Revolution of 1688.

This popular error seems to derive some countenance from the fact that the ancient Irish, for some reason which we cannot now understand, never prefixed the O' in any surname derived from art, trade, or science (O'Gowan, from *gobhan*, " a smith," perhaps, only excepted), the prefix *Mac* having been always used in such instances ; for we never meet with, as derivatives from *saor*, " a carpenter," or *bard*, " a poet," or *filidh*, " a poet," the forms O' an tSaoir, O' an Bhaire, O' an Fhilidh, but Mac an tSaoir, Mac an Fhilidh, Mac an Bhaire ; and surnames thus formed never ranked as high as those which were formed from the names of kings or chieftains.

It may be also remarked, that the O' was never prefixed to names beginning with the word *gilla*, youth, gilly, or servant, the cause of which is also obscure.

Another very strange error prevails in the North of Ireland respecting these prefixes O' and Mac: that every surname in the province of Ulster of which Mac forms the first syllable is of Highland Scotch origin, while those beginning with O' are of Irish origin, for example, that O'Neill and O'Kane are Irish, while Mac Loughlin and Mac Closkey are of Scotch descent. This error owes its origin to the fact, that the Scotch families never prefix the O' in their names, while the Irish use the O' far more frequently than the Mac ; it happens, however, that in the two instances adduced, the family of Mac Loughlin is the senior branch of that of O'Neill, and that Mac Closkey is a well-known offshoot of that of O'Kane. The preponderance of the O' prefix in the surnames of Irish families over the Mac appears from the Genealogical Irish books, and from the Patent Rolls of James I., in which there are at least two surnames beginning with O' for one beginning with Mac. The same fact also appears from the Index to the Annals of the Four Masters. At the present day, however, the very reverse will be found to be the fact—nearly all the O's are rejected and the Macs retained.

An idea likewise popular among the Irish of every class is, that only five Irish families are entitled to have the O' prefixed in their surnames, while it is universally admitted, that any Irish family from Mac Carthy and Mac Murrough down to Mac Gucken and Mac Phaudeen, has full title to the prefix Mac. This notion may have arisen from the fact, that for some centuries after the English settlement, but five families of mere Irish blood were admitted to the privilege of English law. These were O'Brien, O'Neill, O'Conor, O'Melaghlin, and Mac Murrough.

Another extraordinary error prevailed among the Irish gentry of Milesian blood, viz., that the chief of the family was alone entitled to have the O' prefixed in his surname ; but there is not a single passage in the authentic Irish Annals, in the Anglo-Irish records, or in the Genealogical Irish Books, which even suggests that such a custom ever existed among the ancient Irish at any period of their history; for every member of the family had the O' prefixed in his name as well as the chief himself. But a distinction was made between the chief and the members of his sept in the following manner :

— In all official documents the chief used the surname only, *Misi O'Neill*, “ I am O'Neill ;” “*Misi O'Domhnaill*, I am O'Donnell ;” like the King of Spain's signature, “ *Yo El Rey.*” In conversation, also, the surname only was used, but the definite article was frequently prefixed, as *the O'Neill*, *the O'Conor*, *the O'Brien*; while in annals, and other historical documents, in which it was necessary to distinguish a particular chief from his predecessors or ancestors, the chief of a family was designated by giving him the family name first, and the Christian or baptismal name after it in a parenthesis. But the subordinate members of the chiefs family and sept had their Christian names always prefixed, as at the present day, and the O' always retained as Brian O'Neill, Con O'Donnell, Turlogh O'Brien.

Of Ancient Irish Agnomina.

Besides the surnames, or hereditary family names, which the Irish people assumed from the names of their ancestors, by prefixing O or Mac, it appears from the Irish Annals, Genealogical Books, &c., that most, if not all their chieftains, had attached to their Christian names, and sometimes to their surnames, certain agnomina by which they were distinguished from one another. These agnomina, or as they may, in many instances, be called sobriquets, were in several cases given them from some acquirement, personal peculiarity, disposition or quality of mind, or from their places of fosterage, and very frequently from the places where they died or were killed. Of the greater number of these agnomina the pedigree of the royal Irish family of O'Neill furnishes examples, as Niall *Ruadh*, *i. e.*, Niall the Red, who flourished about the year 1225, and was so called from his having had red hair; *Aedh Toinleasc* [podice-segnis] who died in 1230, so called by antiphrasis, from his restless activity; Niall *Mor*, Niall the Great, or the Large-bodied, who died in 1397 ; Conn *Bacach*, Con the Lame, created Earl of Tyrone in 1542. Of the same family were Henry *Aimhreidh*, Henry the Contentious ; Shane *an-diomais*, John of the pride or ambition; *Aedh Balbh*, Aedh the Stammering ; *Aedh Ballach*, Aedh the Speckled ; *Aedh Buidhe*, Aedh the Yellow ; *Aedh Reamhar*, Aedh the Fat ; *Aedh Gaimhleach*, Aedh of the Fetters.

Of the agnomina derived from the places at which, and the families by whom they were fostered, the same tribe of O'Neill affords several instances, as Turlough *Luineach*, so called from his having been fostered by O'Luinigh, chief of Muintir Luinigh in Tyrone; Niall *Conallach*, so styled from his having been fostered in Tir Connell ; Shane *Donnellagh*, another name of Shane-*an-diomais*, already mentioned, who was so called from his having been fostered by O'Donnelly ; Felim *Doibhleanach*, from his foster-father, O'Devlin, chief of *Muintir Doibhlean*, near Lough Neagh, on the borders of the now counties of Londonderry and Tyrone. Various agnomina given to Irish chieftains from the place or territory in which they were fostered, are also frequently to be met with in the pedigrees of families, as in that of O'Brien of Thomond, Donogh *Cairbreach*, who was so called from his having been fostered in the territory of Cairbre Aebhdha, in the present county of Limerick. In the family of Mac Murrough of Leinster, Donnell *Cavanagh* was so named from having been fostered by the comharba, or ecclesiastical successor of St. Cavan, at Kilcavan, near Gorey, in Odea, in the present county of Wexford. The agnomen of this Donnell has been adopted for many centuries as a surname by his descendants, a practice very unusual among Irish families. In the family of Mac Donnell of Scotland, which is of Irish descent, John *Cahanach* was so called from his having been fostered by O'Cahan, or O'Kane, in the present county of Londonderry.

The genealogical histories of other Irish families record various instances of agnomina having been applied by posterity to chieftains from the place of their death: as, in the family of O'Kelly, Tadhg, chief of Ui-Maine, is called *Catha Bhriain*, of the Battle of Brien, from his having been slain in the battle of Clontarf, fought by Brian Borumha against the Northmen, in the year 1014. This battle is also called the “ Battle of Brian” in the Danish Sagas, and the ancestors of Danish families who fought in it are similarly designated by Danish genealogists. In the family of O'Neill, Brian *Catha Duin*, “ of the Battle of Down,” was so called by posterity from his having been slain in a battle fought at Downpatrick, in the year 1260. In the family of O'Brien, Conor *na Siudaine* was so called in after times, from his having been killed at the wood of Siudain, in the year 1267 ; and in the family of Mac Carthy, the noted Finghin *Reanna Roin* was so surnamed from his having been slain by the English at the castle of Rinn Roin (Ringrone), in the year 1261,

On this subject of agnomina and sobriquets among the Irish, Sir Henry Piers speaks as follows, in the year 1682, in his Chorographical Description of the County of Westmeath, which was written in

the form of a letter to Anthony Dopping, Bishop of Meath, and published about a century afterwards in the first volume of Vallancey's *Collectanea* :—

“ Every Irish surname or family name hath either O or Mac prefixed, concerning which I have found some make this observation, but I dare not undertake that it shall hold universally true, that such as have O prefixed were of old superior lords or princes, as O'Neal, O'Donnell, O'Melaghlin, &c., and such as have Mac were only great men, viz., lords, thanes, as Mac Gennis, Mac Loghlin, Mac Doncho, &c. But however this observation [may] hold, it is certain they take much liberty, and seem to do it with delight, in giving of nicknames ; if a man have any imperfection or evil habit, he shall be sure to hear of it in the nickname. Thus, if he be blind, lame, squint-eyed, grey-eyed, be a stammerer in speech, left-handed, to be sure he shall have one of these added to his name; so also from his colour of hair, as black, red, yellow, brown, &c. ; and from his age, as young, old ; or from what he addicts himself to, or much delights in, as in draining, building, fencing, and the like ; so that no man whatever can escape a nickname who lives among them, or converseth with them ; and sometimes so libidinous are they in this kind of raillery, they will give nicknames *per antiphrasim*, or contrariety of speech. Thus a man of excellent parts, and beloved of all men, shall be called *grana*, that is, naughty or fit to be complained of ; if a man have a beautiful countenance, or lovely eyes, they will call him *Cuiegh*, that is, squint-eyed ; if a great house-keeper, he shall be called *Ackerisagh*, that is, greedy.”—(*Collectanea*, Vol. I., p. 113.)

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when the Irish families had increased, and their territories were divided into two or more parts among rivals of the same family, each of the contending chieftains adopted some addition to the family surname, for the sake of distinction. Thus, among the O'Conors of Connacht we find O'Conor *Don*, *i.e.*, O'Conor the Brown-haired, and O'Conor *Ruadh*, *i.e.*, Red-haired. The distinction in this case was first made in the year 1384, when Turlogh Don and Turlogh Ruadh, who had been for some time emulating each other for the chieftainship of Sil-Murray, agreed to have it divided equally between them ; on which occasion it was arranged that the former should be called O'Conor *Don*, and the latter O'Conor *Ruadh*.—Annals Four Mast., A.D., 1384, p. 702. It is now erroneously supposed by some that the epithet *Don* added to the name of the chief of this sept is of Spanish origin.

In Connaught we also find the Mac Dermots, of Moylurg, divided into three distinct families, the head of whom was styled *the* Mac Dermot, and the other two, who were tributary to him, called Mac Dermot *Ruadh*, the Red, and Mac Dermot *Gall*, or the Anglicised. In Thomond the Mac Namaras split into two distinct families, distinguished by the names of Mac Namara *Finn*, the Fair-haired, and Mac Namara *Reagh*, or the Swarthy.

In Desmond, the family of Mac Carthy separated into three great branches, known by the names of Mac Carthy *Mor*, the Great ; Mac Carthy *Reagh*, the Swarthy; and Mac Carthy *Muscraigheach*, of Muskeiry ; and there were various minor branches of the same family, known as Mac Carthy *Glas*, the Green ; Mac Carthy *Cluasach*, of the long ears ; Mac Carthy *Duna*, Mac Carthy *Muckalagh*, and various others. The O'Sullivans likewise divided into several septs, as O'Sullivan *Mor*, the Great ; O'Sullivan *Beare*, of Bear ; and Mac Finghin, and Mac Laurence. The O'Donovans, into O'Donovan *Mor*, the Great ; O'Donovan of Clann Loughlin, Mac Eneslis O'Donovan, now O'Donovan Rossa. The O'Kennedys of Ormond, into O'Kennedy *Finn*, the Fair ; O'Kennedy *Don*, the Brown ; and O'Kennedy *Ruadh*, the Red. The O'Ferralls of Annaly, into O'Ferral *Ban*, the White; and O'Ferral *Buidhe*, the Yellow. Mac Murrough, of Leinster, into Mac Davy Mor, Kavanaghs, and Kinsellaghs. The O'Byrnes, of Wicklow, into O'Byrnes and Ranelaghs. The Mac Gillpatrick's, of Ossoiy, into Fitz Patrick's, and O'Donoghues, now Dunphys. The O'Doghertys, of Inishowen, into O'Doghertys, Mac Devitts, and Mac Connelloges.

Of the Irish Names anciently assumed by the English in Ireland.

The foregoing notices are sufficient to indicate the nature of the surnames and agnomina in use among the Scotie or Milesian Irish families. A few observations may now be made on the effect which the Anglo-Norman invasion, and the introduction of English laws, language, and names, have had in changing or modifying them ; and on the other hand, the influence which the Irish may have had in changing or modifying the English surnames.

After the murder of the Great Earl of Ulster, William de Burgo, the third Earl of that name, in 1333, and the consequent lessening of the English power in Ireland, many, if not all the distinguished Anglo-Norman families seated in Connaught and Munster became Hibernicised—*Hibernis ipsis Hiberniores*—spoke the Irish language, and assumed surnames like those of the Irish, by prefixing Mac to the Christian names of their ancestors, but not O' in any instance : for which latter fact no reason has been assigned. Thus the De Burgos, in Connaught, assumed the name of Mac William, from their great ancestor, William Fitz-Adelm De Burgo, and became divided into two great branches, called Mac William *Uachtar* and Mac William *Iochtair*, [4] i.e., Mac William Upper, and Mac William Lower, the former seated in the county of Galway, and the latter in the county of Mayo, and from these sprang many offsets, who took various surnames from their respective ancestors, as the Mac Davids of Glinsk, the Mac Philbins of Dun-Mugdord, in the county of Mayo, the Mac Shoneens, now Jennings, and the Mac Gibbons, now Gibbons ; Mac Walters and Mac Raymonds.

The Burkes of Gallstown and Balmontin, in the barony of Igrine, county Kilkenny, who descended from the Red Earl of Ulster, took the name of *Gall*, or foreigner, i.e., Englishman ; and a member of this family who passed into the Austrian service, and became a Count of the German Empire, and Chamberlain to Ferdinand II., and Ferdinand III., assumed the name of Gall Von Bourcke. [5]

The Berminghams of Dunmore and Athenry in Connaught, and of Carbury in Leinster, took the surname of *Mac Feoris*, from an ancestor, Pierce, in Irish *Feoris*, son of Meyler Bermingham, who was one of the principal heads of that family in Ireland. The chief of the family of Staunton took the surname of *Mac Aveely*, or son of Milo, from an ancestor Milo Staunton. [6] The chief of the Barretts of Tirawley in Connaught, took the surname of Mac Wattin, and minor branches of the same family called themselves Mac Andrew, Mac Tomin, and Mac Robert ; the former was seated in the Bacs territory, situated between Lough Con and the River Moy, and the others at Dundonnell in Erris. An Anglo-Norman or Welsh family, settled in the Route, in the county Antrim, took the name of Mac Quillan. [7] The Barretts of Munster took the surname of Mac Paddin, from Paidin, or little Patrick, one of their ancestors. The D'Exeters of Gallen, in Connacht, took the surname of Mac Jordan, from Jordan De Exeter, the founder of that family. Campion observed that the Jordans were very wild Irish in 1571. The Nangles of the same neighbourhood took the surname of Mac Costello, from an ancestor Osdolbh, which seems to indicate a Scandinavian origin. The Prendergasts of Mayo took the name of Mac Maurice. Of the Kildare and Desmond branches of the FitzGerald's were two Mac Thomas's, one in Leinster, and the other, more usually styled *Mac Thomaisin*, at Kilmacthomas, in the Decies in Munster. A minor branch of the Leinster Geraldines, who were barons of Burnchurch, in the present county of Kilkenny, assumed the surname of Mac Baron, and their descendants, who have since risen to importance in the county of Waterford, now bear the name of Barron, without the prefix Mac. The descendants of Gilbert FitzGerald, a younger son of John FitzGerald, ancestor of the houses of Kildare and Desmond, assumed the appellation of Mac Gibbon, now Fitzgibbon, [8] while the FitzGerald's of Ballymartyr, seneschals of Imokilly, the descendants of James, Earl of Desmond, A.D. 1420, took the surname of Mac Edmond. The De Courceys took the surname of Mac Patrick, from an ancestor, Patrick De Courcy, who flourished about the year 1236. The Hodnetts [9] of the Strand, a Shropshire family, who became seated at Courtmacshery, near Timoleague, in the county of Cork, took the surname of Mac Shenry. [10] The family of Archdeacon of Ercke, in the north of the county of Kilkenny, took the name of Mac Odo, now Cody ; while the descendants of FitzStephen, in the county of Cork, called themselves Mac Sleimhne, or Mac Sliny. The De la Freignes of the county of Kilkenny called themselves Mac Rickie, and the Barrys of Cork, Mac Adam. The Fitzsimons of Westmeath were named Mac Ruddery ; the Wesley's, Mac Falrene ; and the Stapletons, Mac an Ghaill, now Gaul. In the province of Ulster the English family of Bissett, seated in the Glins, in the county of Antrim, assumed the Irish surname of Mac Eoin, Makeon, from an ancestor, Hoan or John Bissett.

Sir George Carew, Governor of Munster towards the close of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, asserts that the Mac Damores and Mac Vaddocks of the county of Wexford were of English descent ; [11] but according to the Book of Leinster, a very important fragment of a vellum Manuscript preserved in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin (H. 2, 18), these two families are descended from Murchadh *na n-Gaedhal*, or Murrough of the Irish, the brother of Diarmaid *na n-Gall* (Dermot of the English), that is, Diarmaid Mac Murchadha, or Mac Murrough, king of Leinster, the first who brought the Anglo-Normans to Ireland. The names of Mac Damore and Mac Vaddock are at present unknown in the county of Wexford, the former being disguised under the anglicised form of Davis, and the latter under that of Maddock.

Sir Henry Piers of Tristernagh, in the county of Westmeath, who wrote about a century later than Spenser, complained as follows of the custom among the families of English descent, of changing their surnames : —

“ In the next place I rank the degeneracy of many English families as a great hindrance of the reducing this people to civility, occasioned not only by fostering, that is, having their children nursed and bred during their tender years by the Irish, but much more by marriages with them, by means whereof our English, in too many great families, became in a few generations, one both in manners and interest with the Irish, in so much as many of them have not doubted to assume Irish names and appellations ; instances hereof are but too many even this very day: thus a Birmingham is called by them Mac Yores, Fitz-Simmons Mac Ruddery, Weysly Mac Falrene, &c., and from men thus metamorphosed, what could be expected.”— Vallancey’s *Collectanea*, Vol. I., p. 105.

Of the Assumption of English Names by the Native Irish.

The Irish families who lived within the English Pale and its vicinity gradually conformed to the English customs and assumed English surnames ; a practice which was deemed to be of such political importance that it was thought worthy the interference of the Parliament of the English Pale. Accordingly it was enacted by the Statute of 5 Edward IV. (1465), that every Irishman dwelling within the Pale, then comprising the counties of Dublin, Meath, Louth, and Kildare, should take an English surname. This Act, which curiously illustrates the history of Irish family names, was as follows (*Rot. Parl.*, c. 16): —

“ An Act, that the Irish men dwelling in the counties of Dublin, Myeth, Uriell, and Kildare, shall go apparelled like English men, and weare their beardes after the English maner, swear allegiance, and take English surname.”

“ At the request of the Commons it is ordeyned and established by authority of the said Parliament, that every Irishman that dwells betwixt or amongst Englishmen in the county of Dublin, Myeth, Uriell, and Kildare, shall goe like to one Englishman in apparel, and shaving of his beard above the mouth, and shall be within one yeare sworne the liege man of the king in the hands of the lieutenant or deputy, or such as he will assigne to receive this oath, for the multitude that is to be sworne, and shall take to him an English surname of one towne, as Sutton, Chester, Trym, Skryne, Corke, Kinsale: or colour, as white, blacke, browne: or art or science, as smith or carpenter; or office, as cooke, butler; and that he and his issue shall use this name under payne of forfeiting of his goods yearly till the premises be done, to be levied two times by the yeare to the king’s warres, according to the discretion of the lieutenant of the king or his deputy.”—5 Edward IV., c. 3. (*Statutes at Large, Ireland, Vol. I., p. 29.*)

“ In obedience to this law,” says Harris (Works of Sir James Ware, vol. ii., p. 58), “ the Shanachs took the name of Foxes ; the Mac-an-gabhans, of Smiths ; Geals, of Whites ; the Brannachs, of Walshes ; and many others ; the said words being only literal translations from the Irish into the English language.”

Harris, however, was very much mistaken in supposing that the Branachs (*Brethnaigh, i.e.,* Britones), of the English Pale in Ireland, are an Irish family, or that any ancient Irish family had borne that name, before the Anglo-Norman and Welsh families settled in Ireland towards the end of the twelfth century ; he was also wrong in assuming that the Irish word for *Geal*, white, was by itself ever used as the name of any family in Ireland. In the other two instances he is correct; for the head of the O’Caharnys of Teffia, who was usually styled the Shinnagh (*An Sionach*), Anglicised his name into Fox, and the Mac-an-Gowans and O’Gowans translated their names into Smith.

The importance attached by this Act to the bearing of an English surname soon induced many of the less distinguished Irish families of the English Pale and its vicinity to translate or disguise their Irish names, so as to make them appear English ; thus *Mac an t-saoir*, Mac Intire, was altered to Carpenter ; *Mac Speallain*, Mac Spallane, to Spenser ; *MacCon-cogry*, Mac Cogry, to L’Estrange, &c. ; but the more eminent families of the Pale and its vicinity, as Mac Murrough, O’Brennan, O’Toole, O’Byrne, O’Murchoe, Mac Gillpatrick, Mac Damore, O’Nolan, O’More, O’Dunn, O’Ryan, O’Dempsey, O’Conor Faly, O’Kelly, and others, retained their original Irish names unaltered. It is

certain, however, that the translation and assimilation of Irish surnames to English was carried to a great extent in the vicinity of Dublin and throughout Leinster; hence it may at this day be safely concluded that many families bearing English surnames throughout what was formerly the English Pale, are undoubtedly of Milesian, or of Danish origin.

It appears, however, that the Statute referred to had not the intended effect to any great extent ; for about a century after it had passed, we find Spenser recommending a revival of it, inasmuch as the Irish had then become as Irish as ever. His observations on this point are highly interesting, as throwing light on the history of Irish surnames towards the close of the sixteenth century. They are as follows : —

“ Moreover, for the better breaking of these heads and septs, which (I tould you) was one of the greatest strengthes of the Irish, methinkes it should be very well to renewe that ould Statute which was made in the reigne of Edward the Fourth in Ireland, by which it was commanded, that whereas all men used to be called by the name of their septs, according to the severall nations, and had no surnames at all, that from henceforth each one should take upon himself a severall surname, either of his trade and faculty, or of some quality of his body or minde, or of the place where he dwelt, so as every one should be distinguished from the other, or from the most part, whereby they shall not onely not depend upon the head of their sept, as now they do, but also in time learne quite to forget his Irish nation. And herewithall would I also wish all the O’s and Mac’s, which the heads of septs have taken to their names, to bee utterly forbidden and extinguished. For that the same being an ordinance (as some say), first made by O’Brien [meaning Brian Borumha] for the strengthening of the Irish, the abrogating thereof will as much enfeeble them.”—*View of the State of Ireland*, A.D 1596, p. 108 (Dublin, 1633.)

In the month of September, 1585, sessions were held at Dunnamona, in the county of Mayo, presided over by Sir Richard Bingham, Chief Commissioner and Governor of the Province of Connaught, together with Sir Nicholas White, Master of the Rolls, “ ffor the perffectinge of the last composition made within the said Provynce.” Sir Henry Docwra [12] states that the “ plott of this composition was devised by Sir Richard, of purpose to take awaye the greatnes of the Irishe lordes, with their names, Macks, and Oes, that the infferiour subjecte might be ffreed ffrom their Irishe customes, cuttings, and unreasonable exactions, and (by knoweing what was theire owne), be drawne to depend ever after uppon the state, and not on those Irishe lordes, or gentlemen ; which alsoe might not onelye much avayle her Majestic in terme of any stirres or revolts, by draweing the common people ffrom ffollowing the greate chieffe lordes, but also bringe a more certayner yearlie rent or revenewe into her Highnes coffers then fformerlye was accustomed.”

About the same period various natives, who were employed as clerks, interpreters, and spies to the State, successfully changed and concealed their Irish names. Of these the most deserving of notice were John Mac Laighid, Lye, or Leigh [13] William O’Duinne, or Doyne ; Sir Patrick Fox ; Sir Thomas Shaen ;[14] and Patrick Mac Crossan, or Crosbie.

In a tract in the State Paper Office, dated 3rd July, 1600, it is stated that Patrick Crosbie, or Crossan, was a mere Irishman by birth, and that his father had been rhymer or bard to the O’Moores. The aged Earl of Ormonde, in a letter written on 2nd December, 1601, to Sir Robert Cecil, on the bad conduct of the subordinate Government officials of the day, observes that Crosby’s real surname was Mac-y-Crossane, and that his ancestors had been chief rhymer to the O’Moores and O’Connors.

Towards the close of the seventeenth century, Sir Henry Piers, of Tristernagh, in his account of the county of Westmeath, made the following observations on the less distinguished Irish families then beginning to take English surnames : —

“ These, I suppose, may be reckoned among the causes of the slow progress this nation hath made towards civility and accommodation to our English laws and customs ; yet these notwithstanding, this people, especially in this and the adjoining counties, are in our days become more polite and civil than in former ages, and some very forward to accommodate themselves to the English modes, particularly in their habit, language, and surnames, which by all manner of ways they strive to make English or English-like ; this I speak of the inferior rank of them. Thus you have Mac Gowne surname himself Smith ; Mac Killy, Cock ; Mac Spollane, Spencer; Mac Kegry, Lestrangle, &c., herein

making small amends for our degenerate English before spoken of.”
—*Vallancey's Collectanea*, i., 108.

Many others, even of the most distinguished Irish family names, were similarly Anglicised, as O'Connor to Conyers, O'Brien to Brine, O'Reilly to Ridley, O'Donnell to Daniel, O'Sullivan to Silvan and Silvers, O'Murchoe to Morpie, Mac Carthy to Carter, &c.

This change of Irish into English names continued to increase after the Revolution of 1688, when the natives who remained in Ireland were completely subjected. About this period, numbers of the oppressed native Irish reduced their names as much as possible to the level of English pronunciation; rejecting in almost every instance the O' and Mac, and making various other changes in their names, so as to give them an English appearance. These changes did not fail to elicit the censure of native rhymers; a specimen of whose satires on this subject is extant in the following epigram, [15] written by the Rev. Christopher Mac Conway (Mac Con-mhuidhe), in the last century, on a gentleman of Tyrone altering his old name of Phelim O'Neill to Felix Neele:—

Translated as follows by the late James Clarence Mangan:

“ All things has Felix changed : he changed his name ;
Yea, in himself, he is no more the same ;
Scorning to spend his days where he was reared,
To drag out life among the vulgar herd,
Or trudge his way through bogs in bracks [16] and brogues,
He changed his creed, and joined the Saxon rogues
By whom his sires were robbed. He laid aside
The arms they bore for centuries with pride—
The ship, the salmon, and the famed Red Hand, [17]
And blushed when called O'Neill in his own land !
Poor paltry skulker from thy noble race,
Infelix Felix, weep for thy disgrace !”

[1] *The year*—1159 Memoirs of C. O'Connor, page 305.

[2] The prefixes O' and Mac.—It has been alleged that the names which begin with Mac are, generally speaking, much more modern than those which commence with O', and for the most part belong to branches, which struck off long after the O' had been established in the name. It must be confessed, however, that the descendants of the Irish in the Highlands of Scotland never adapted the O', for which no reason has been adduced. It appears from the Census of Ireland for 1851, that the O's are nearly all dropped, except among the gentry, while the Macs have increased, particularly in Ulster, owing no doubt to Scottish colonization and influence. Many families of Highland descent have Anglicised their names, as Mac-Donald to Donaldson, MacAedha to Hughson or Hewson, MacEan to Johnson, &c. Even some of the descendants of the historical family of O'Brollaghan, who emigrated from Ulster to the Highlands, have changed their name to Brodie. This change was evidently made to disguise their Irish origin. In Ireland the name of O'Brollaghan is always Anglicised Bradley, and, as might be expected, it is popularly believed that Bradley is an English translation of O'Brollaghan.

[3] *The Battle of Down*—See the Miscellany of the Celtic Society, 1849, pp. vii., 145-183.

[4] *Mac William Iochtair*.—It is worthy of remark here, that Sir Henry Doewra, in his Narration of the Services of Sir Richard Bingham in the province of Connaught, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth (printed in the Miscellany of the Celtic Society), does not appear to have known that the Lower Mac William Bourkes, of whom the Earl of Mayo is the present chief, were of Anglo-Norman descent; and that the compiler of the Book of Howth thought that Mac William of Clanrickard, the ancestor of the Marquis of Clanrickarde, was a mere Irishman, not of English or British descent. The truth is, the Bourkes of Connaught had become so Irish, that the nobility of the English Pale in Ireland affected to regard them as of mere Irish descent.

[5] *Gall Von Bourcke*.—In a Manuscript in Trinity College, Dublin, (F. 1. 21) it is erroneously stated that this family was also called *Sassenagh*—See the Journal of the Kilkenny and South-East of Ireland Archæological Society, vol. iii, (new series), p. 97.

[6] *Milo Staunton*.—There is a remarkable petition in the Irish Correspondence in the State Paper

Office, from the Stauntons of Connaught, addressed to the Privy Council ; it sets forth that the petitioners were descended from an English race, “ who anciently possessed the barony of Keara in the county of Mayo.” They alleged, as the main cause of their having revolted from their original loyalty, “ that some of her Majesty’s officers had been too much delighted with the pleasantness and profit of the said barony, and therefore had sought many of their lives indirectly and unjustly.” They proceed to say that in default of a good leader of their own tribe, they have chosen Thomas Staunton, of Wolverton, county of Warwick, as their chieftain.

- [7] Mac Quillan.—The Mac Quillans of the Route, in the county of Antrim, are said to have been originally Welsh, quasi Mac or Ap Llewellen ; but the names of Fitz-Howlyn, Mac Ugelin, more probably came from *Hugolin*. The ancient book called *Solus Populi*, said to have been written as early as Henry the Sixth’s time, mentions Fitz-Owlin of Tuskard. A document about the date 1515, which is nearly a transcript of “*Solus Populi*” and printed in the first volume of the Irish State Papers, enumerates among the great English rebels of Ulster, Fitzhowlyn of Tuskard.—See Reeves’s *Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down and Connor*, p. 72.

The Dublin Council Book of Henry VIII.’s time has an entry under the year 1541, “ The submission of Maguillen, who dosireth to be reputed an Englishman, as his ancestors weare.” This submission is printed in the State Papers. The Lord Deputy observes in the letter forwarding it, “ Maguyllan is an Inglishman.” It is signed by Roderic Mac Cuyllen “ sue nationis principalis et capitaneus de Rowte.” The name of one of the hostages for its performance is Jenico mac Gerald Mac Cuyllen, both of which Christian names were those in use by the English race. The following notice occurs in the Earl of Sussex’s Journey through Ireland in 1556 : “ In the monastery of Coolrahan is buried the ancestor of Mac Guillin on the left hand of the altar, and on the tomb lyeth the picture of a knight armed.”

To these notices might be added a letter of Shane O’Neill to Queen Elizabeth, in which he mentions Maguillen as “ a mere Englishman.”

- [8] *Fitzgibbon*.—Smith’s *History of Cork*, book i., chap. 1.
- [9] *The Hodnetts*.—Spenser has the following notice of this family :—“ Arundell of the Strand, in the county of Corke, who was anciently a greate lord, and was able to spend ,£3,500 by the yeare, as appeareth by the records, has now become the Lord Barry’s man, and doth to him all those services, which are due unto her Majesty.”—*View of the State of Ireland*. Dublin Edition, p. 234.
- [10] *Mac Sherry*.—Smith’s *History of Cork*, book ii., chap. 3.
- [11] *English descent*.—Carew MS. at Lambeth Palace, No. 635.
- [12] *Sir Henry Docwra*.—Miscellany of the Celtic Society, 1849, pp. 190, 191.
- [13] *Leigh*.—See an interesting account of him published by Herbert F. Hore, Esq., in the Proceedings of the Kilkenny and South of Ireland Archæological Society, vol. ii. (new series), pp. 17-22.
- [14] *Sir Thomas Shaen*.—He was unquestionably a member of the Clan Shane, a sept of the O’Ferralls, and his pedigree is given by Roger O’Ferrall, in his *Linea Antiqua*, preserved in the Office of the Ulster King-at-Arms, Dublin Castle.
- [15] *Epigram*.—Preserved by John M’Closkoy, of Tigarvil, in the county of Londondeny, in his unpublished Statistical Account of the parishes of Desertmartin, Kilcronaghan, and Ballynascreen.
- [16] *Bracks and Brogues*.—For notices of the braccæ, or trousers, and brogues of the ancient Irish, see Wilde’s “ Catalogue of the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy,” page 329.
- [17] *The ship, the salmon, and the famed red hand*.—The cognizance on the O’Neill shield.

The topographical poems of John O’Dubhagain and Giolla na naomh O’Huidhrin (1862)
Author : O’Donovan, John, 1809-1861, ed ; Ó Huidhrin, Gilla na naomh, d. 1420 ; Ó Dubhagáin, Seán Mór, d. 1372

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