

The Forrest Family of Limavady and the Roe valley, c. 1655-1918

This account is a reflection and summation of over twelve years of research into our family origins. I have always had a keen interest in family history and folklore but it was not until 1997 that I began a systematic search of the records.

ORAL HISTORY SURVIVING WITHIN THE FAMILY

A certain amount of oral history had survived for our family and this would prove to be both the catalyst and the primer for my research. Much of the tradition was passed down in the family through my great grand-uncle James Forrest [1877-1955] of Kennaught Street and subsequently through his grand-nephew, the late Francie Forrest [1941-2007] of Benbradagh Avenue, Limavady. James Forrest was a postman in Limavady, had a keen mind, was self-taught and fluent in Irish and German and had an avid interest in family history but unfortunately no documented account appears to have survived.

The scraps of family details that have survived amount to only a few shards of information rather than a complete pot but much of it appeared to have the ring of authenticity and proved most useful in making sense of the documentary evidence that was uncovered. With regard to the more immediate past concerning my grandfather Robert [Bobby] Forrest [1899-1979], I was told the following:

- That Paddy Connor took Bobby Forrest to the Great War.
- That my grandfather was raised by two Forrest aunts but upon his return from the Great War both had passed away from the effects of the Spanish flu.

In 2005, a photograph, which had been missing for many years, was discovered of my Grandad Bobby in the uniform of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers with his friend Paddy Connor. During the early years of my research I was delighted when Francie Forrest [my second cousin] produced a photograph of the oldest ancestor known to tradition, 'old George Forrest' [born 1839], whom it was believed had been an Episcopalian even though our immediate family was Catholic.

Bobby Forrest and Paddy Connor, c. 1918



SERVICE RECORD OF ROBERT FORREST

- Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers no. 28965
[1st Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers]
- Royal Irish Fusiliers no. 31459
[1st Battalion Royal Irish Fusiliers]
- Royal Munster Fusiliers no. 18483
[2nd Battalion Royal Munster Fusiliers]

Note: in the picture one can clearly see a 'war-stripe' on the left sleeve of my Grandfather's uniform. Wounds stripes were introduced in July 1916 and one was issued on each occasion a soldier appeared on the Casualty Lists as 'wounded'.

Going back further in time, the tradition within the family was that all of the Forrests in the Limavady area were descended from one common ancestor who had settled close to Limavady. At the time of the Great Famine it was believed that our direct ancestors had resided in the townland of Edenmore in the parish of Balteagh. The late Francie Forrest knew the location of the Forrest house in Edenmore, but it had long since been demolished. Francie also recalled the story that during the Famine in the Roe valley one ancestor walked from Edenmore to Maghera to get potatoes. On arriving home, he was so excited that he jumped upon entering through the door and hit his head on a roof beam. Clearly, the oral history evidence indicated that the family origins lay not in Limavady but in the parish of Balteagh to the south-east of the town.

Our family at one point had married into the Jackson family of Limavady who were proprietors of an Ironmongers' business in the town and who were said to have supplied the iron railings that adorn the front of St. Columb's Cathedral in Derry city.

Two old great-aunts, both of whom died in the famine decade, had been proprietors of a haberdashery shop in Limavady. The exact location of the shop was known to tradition - at the end of Main Street towards the

intersection of Linenhall Street where Caskie's opticians is now located. There was a piece of physical evidence to add to this oral tradition - their headstone in St. Canice's Catholic graveyard on the Roe Mill Road.

Only two Forrest headstones were erected in the Roe valley during the nineteenth century; one in St. Canice's Catholic graveyard dated to the 1840s and the other memorial dated to 1850s in Tamlaght Old Burying ground near Ballykelly. I was familiar with St. Canice's graveyard on the Roe Mill Road having often visited there with my Dad, [Bobby senior] and memories of this lovely old graveyard has naturally created many happy associations.

Unfortunately, the headstone was overgrown, damaged and sunk into the ground so that it was only possible to trace the information on Catherine Forrest, the elder sister [spelt with a single 'r']. When I started the family research in 1997 my goal was to link these two ladies to our direct line. The existence of the headstone in a Catholic graveyard presented me with an immediate challenge, as a thorough search of the 1831 census revealed only eleven Forrest households in the Roe valley, [eight Presbyterian and three Episcopalian]. The absence of Catherine or Mary as a head of household suggests that they may have been residing with another family. Fortunately, two transcripts of the damaged headstone were extant:

Forest: Catherine 2 June 1843 (64), her sister, Mary 21 May 1849 (64) [PRONI: D/3672/1].

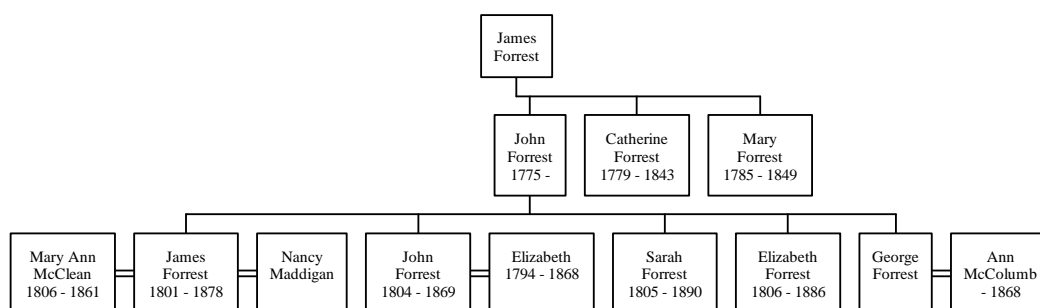
Forrest: IHS: Here lieth the body of Catherine Forrest who departed this life 12 June 1843 in the 64th year of her age.... Mary Forrest who departed this life 15 May 1849 aged 61 years [Irish Family Links: Volume 2 number 5: September 1985].

The transcriptions differ slightly but they are most useful as they give us approximate dates for Catherine Forrest [c.1779-1843] and Mary Forrest [c.1785-1849]. The task of connecting these ladies to our family tree in a definite way would prove to be difficult given the notorious state of the surviving Irish records. I hoped to trace our direct line back as far as the records would allow and then try to connect these ladies to a known and proven ancestral line.

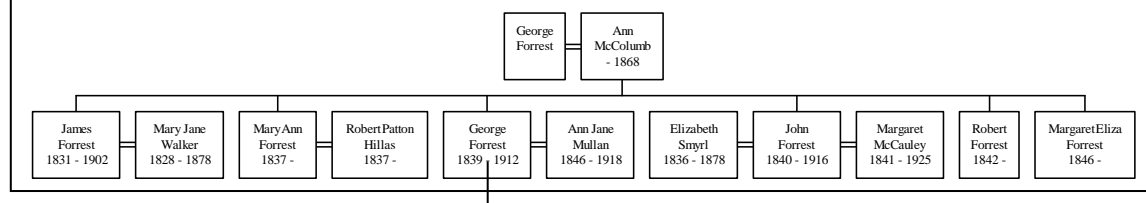
SEARCHING THE RECORDS

When I began searching for my grandfather, Robert Forrest, I found him in the 1901 census [aged 2] residing with his grandparents George Forrest [aged 60] and Ann Jane Forrest [aged 51] in Roe Mill Street [now Road], Limavady. This began a process that was to take me back to the families of this George Forrest Jun. of Limavady [born 1839]; his father, George Forrest Sen. who lived in the parish of Balteagh [born c.1807]; his father, John Forrest who also lived in the parish of Balteagh [born c.1775] and to a James Forrest [born c.1750] who is possibly the patriarch of the Balteagh Forrest line. The remainder of this paper will tell both the story of the family and provide examples of the range of sources that I have used in piecing together this story.

Descendants of James Forrest



Descendants of George Forrest Senior

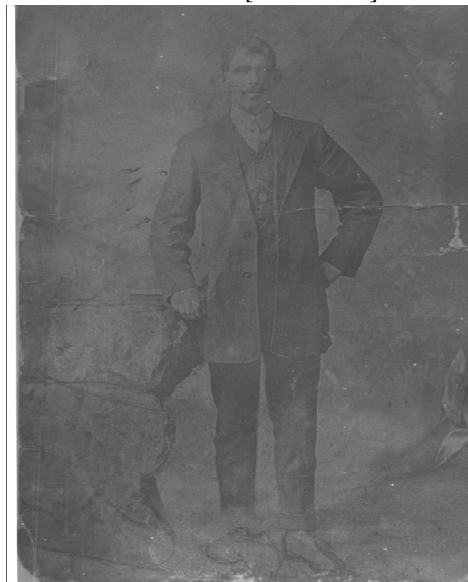


George Forrest Jun. who was listed in the 1901 Census.

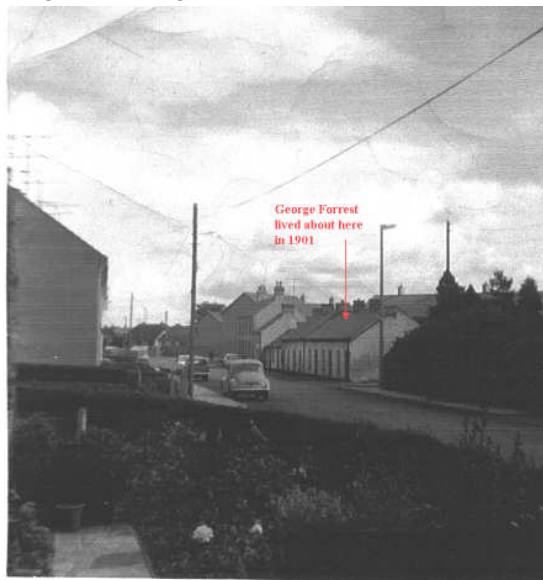
THE FAMILY OF GEORGE FORREST JUN.

The story begins with my great-great grandfather George Forrest whose photograph is shown below. He was listed in the 1901 Census living in a house that had a slated roof, one front window and had three rooms with eight occupants [on land belonging to B. H. Lane]. The photograph, below, dating from the early 1960s, shows the row of houses in Roe Mill Road where George Forrest was living in 1901. My grandfather would also come to reside here in the 1930s and my father Bobby Forrest was born there in 1940. Below you find details of his family and the various records used in the research.

GEORGE FORREST [1839-1912]



ROE MILL ROAD



CENSUS RECORDS

1901 Census Returns [Limavady DED] [PRONI: MIC/354/5/16]. Below are the details of House No. 15 in the Census in Roe Mill Road Street. Note that the number refers to the order of the house in the census, not the street number.

Name	Relation	Religion	Education	Age	Sex	Occupation	Marriage	Born
Forrest, George	Head	Episcopalian	Read only	60	M	Labourer	Married	Co Derry
Forrest, Ann Jane	Wife	Roman Catholic	Cannot read	51	F		Married	Co Antrim
Forrest, James	Son	Roman Catholic	Read & write	23	M	Postman	Not married	Co Derry
Forrest, Lizzie	Daughter	Roman Catholic	Read & write	21	F	Linen weaver	Not married	Co Derry
Forrest, Robert	Son	Roman Catholic	Read & write	18	M	Postman	Not married	Co Derry
Forrest, Eivleen	Daughter	Roman Catholic	Read & write	15	F	Servant maid	Not married	Co Derry
Forrest, Edward	Son	Roman Catholic	Read & write	13	M	Scholar	Not married	Co Derry
Forrest, Robert	Grandson	Roman Catholic	Cannot read	02	M		Not married	Co Derry

The census returns indicated that George Forrest was born about 1840 in county Derry and his wife Ann Jane c. 1850 in county Antrim [although the 1911 census gave County Derry] and that this was a mixed marriage as George was Episcopalian and his wife Catholic.

The census details also highlight the varying occupations of the householders. George Forrest was a labourer, although probably semi-retired by this stage. There were two postmen in the household, one servant maid and a linen weaver. Limavady Spinning and Weaving Company, established in 1865, used steam-power to make both fine damasks and coarser linens. It changed ownership several times but provided valuable employment for the local inhabitants until its closure in 1933. The weaving factory was located to the south of Ballyclose Street and next the railway line occupying the site of the present Alexander Road housing estate.

CIVIL REGISTRATION RECORDS

Marriage of George Forrest and Ann Jane Mullan.

Ours was a relatively uncommon name, so I was able to trace every Forrest birth, marriage and death from the beginning of civil registration [effectively 1864 for all births, marriages and deaths; 1845 for Protestant marriages]

A search of civil registration of marriages produced only one return for a George Forrest in County Derry before 1900. In 1866 George Forrest, a labourer married Ann Jane Mullan, a domestic servant, both of Irish Green, Limavady in Drumachose parish church. An O.A.P claim made by Ann Jane Forrest on 26 Oct 1916 provided useful information on her origins. She was in fact a McMullan born in Ballindreen, in the parish of Ballyrashane - the claim gave useful detail extracted from the registers of Ballyrashane Church of Ireland [subsequently destroyed in 1922], *'Ann Jane [11 weeks old] n.d. of Michael McMullan and Sarah Elliot, baptised 8 Nov 1846, by Rector Thomas Cupples'* [T/550/29 and NAI FGS:55/2]. Although christened in Ballyrashane parish church, at some point Ann Jane Mullan became a Catholic and her family was also removed to Limavady where she was a domestic servant residing in Irish Green Street at the time of her marriage to George Forrest in 1866. The marriage although recorded in Drumachose parish church was a mixed marriage. All of the children were raised in the faith of their mother.

Children of George and Ann Forrest

George and Ann Jane Forrest had issue, ten children all born after the date of compulsory civil registration and all except the first were born in Pound Lane [later known as Protestant Street].

Name	Civil registration of births/deaths:	Spouse
Jane	12.07.1867 – 28.06.1869	Born Ballyclose, [died young]
John	24.11.1869 – 16.02.1953	Sara Jane Connor [dau of John Connor and Lucinda Rankin]
Jane [Jenny]	24.09.1871 – 15.02.1915	James McGuigan [son of John McGuigan and Mary McGuigan of Moneyneeny, Draperstown]
George	08.01.1874 – 13.07.1895	Bachelor
Margaret	09.03.1876 – 11.03.1949	James Magee of Roe Mill Rd [born county Antrim]
James	22.12.1877 – 20.03.1955	Sarah Jane O'Neill [dau of John O'Neill and Ellen McFeeley]
Elizabeth	29.01.1880 – 23.06.1930	James Magee of Ardgarnan [son of John Magee]
Robert	07.11.1882 – 25.05.1946	Mary McMahon [dau of Patrick McMahon and Annie McLaughlin]
Evelyn	13.04.1885 – 18.08.1918	Spinster
Edward	12.06.1887 – 27.11.1918	Anna O'Brien [dau. of William O'Brien and Margaret Lindsay]

OCCUPATIONAL RECORDS

Four of George Forrest's sons became postmen in Limavady – George [died in 1895 aged 21], John, James and Robert, the latter moving to reside in Magilligan. Establishment books for the postal service for county Derry were deposited in PRONI [GPO/5], and we find that James Forrest was a Telegram messenger in Limavady from 1891-1894 and subsequently a rural auxiliary to Cloverhill, Bolea and then Carrick-on-Roe but upon receiving his civil service certificate 13 May 1904 was promoted to rural postman to the Largy from 1905. He got a weekly allowance for cycle cleaning [GPO/5/7 p.160]. John Forrest was a rural auxiliary based in Limavady and he served Glack, Ballyleghery, and subsequently Bolea from 1902 [GPO/5/7 p.20]. Robert Forrest was firstly a Telegram messenger in Limavady 1897, a rural auxiliary to Cloverhill 1898-1902 but after passing civil service exam on 14 September 1902 was appointed rural postman at the Bellerena sub-office [GPO/5/8, p. 115]. He was given a weekly allowance for the upkeep of a horse [GPO/5/7 p. 152].

LOCAL NEWSPAPERS

Local newspapers are a useful source for local and family history. We find a death entry for George Forrest in the Northern Constitution of 12 October 1912:

Forrest: At his residence Protestant Street, Limavady, on the 5th inst, George Forrest aged 72 years

In the St Mary's Catholic register, Limavady we find the burial details, which record his death on 6 October 1912: 'George Forrest of Pound Lane, father of James Forrest, postman, of Pound Lane, last rites Fr. McGlade, burial Roe Mill [St. Canice's] graveyard'. George Forrest was received into the Church upon reception of the sacrament of the Last Rites.

Three of George Forrest's sons enlisted during the First World War: Edward Forrest 3rd Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers [no 3289], Robert Forrest, 8th Battalion London Regiment/Post Office Rifles [no. 372955] and John Forrest 30th Battalion London Regiment [no 801048]. In total eleven Forrest men from the Limavady area enlisted [all related], a remarkably high figure for such a small clan with one fatality recorded. James Forrest of the Largy [grand-nephew of George Forrest] died of wounds, France and Flanders on August 18 1917. He was a private in the 9th Battalion of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers [no 28121]. The Northern Constitution reported his death on 1 Sept 1918 [p. 2].

Roeside Echoes: Our soldiers:

Mr and Mrs James Forrest, Largy have received official confirmation that their youngest son Pte. James Forrest of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers was wounded in France on the 17th inst and died the following day. He enlisted December 1915. His brother Lance Corporal William Forrest of the Highland Light Infantry is reported wounded and in hospital.

Robert Forrest of the London Regiment was awarded the Military Medal for outstanding bravery. 'He won it for rescuing an officer under enemy fire' [Helen Forrest Cullen, daughter 9 September 2009]. The original letter [transcribed below] and military medal are still in the family [information and photograph courtesy of his grandson Robert Forrest].



**Headquarters Fourth Army.
14th Dec 1918**

**To, No 372955 Rifleman R Forrest
London Regiment**

**I congratulate you on the gallantry and devotion to duty
for which you have been awarded;**

The Military Medal

Rawlinson

Gen. Commanding Fourth Army

Robert Forrest of Magilligan, 1882-1946

1918 would prove to be a painful and difficult year for the family. Four family members died within a four-month period as a consequence of the Spanish flu outbreak that ravaged Europe towards the end of the Great War. Evelyn Forrest [my grandfather's aunt] died 18 August 1918 [aged 33] and she was followed on 8 September by her niece Ann Jane Forrest [aged 15], her mother Ann Jane Forrest on 28 September, [aged 74] and finally by her brother Edward Forrest on 27 November 1918, aged 31 [all were buried in St. Canice's graveyard but no headstone was erected]. A search of the local column 'Roeside echoes' in the Northern Constitution newspaper provided additional useful information on the family at this time [30 November 1918].

Another early death: [Roeside Echoes, 30 November 1918]

At the age of 31, and after a period of declining strength Mr Edward Forrest, Limavady, passed away on Sunday evening. Deceased like several of his brothers responded to the call of King and Country, but owing to the state of his health he was discharged with honourable credentials. His brother Robert was awarded the M.M recently. The funeral on Tuesday afternoon to Termon-Canice burying ground Roe Mill, was representative. The remains were enclosed in a heavily brass-mounted coffin. Rev. J.J McGlade officiated.

We find reported in the same column of the Roeside echoes [30 November 1918] an article on the influenza epidemic that had swept through Limavady 'to the extent of about 700 cases' but it was stated that the pandemic was now pretty well abated in the urban area but was making its way into the countryside greatly hampering and affecting farm work. The local schools, which had been closed were recently re-opened and the attendance was described as 'pretty good'. The Constitution reported that the death rate for the past six weeks had been 'without precedence' but added that this was not all due to the influenza, as many old and infirm people in the town and neighbourhood passed away and only about one dozen deaths were due to the epidemic. By the end of March 1919, the influenza epidemic was the direct cause of 15,867 deaths in Ireland ¹. From the vital death records I was also able to work out that the two ladies who brought up my grandfather were, in fact, his aunt Evelyn and grandmother Ann Jane Forrest and when he returned from the war both had died so he was effectively alone.

TRACING ANCESTORS IN THE PARISH OF BALTEAGH

The oral history indicated that our direct ancestors had resided in the townland of Edenmore in Balteagh parish at the time of the Famine. Researching ancestors in the parish of Balteagh is far from easy, as no church registers are extant for any denomination in the period before civil registration. It was, therefore necessary to utilise a wide range of sources in order to build up a picture of the family in the period before civil registration. All of the extant church records for the Roe valley and indeed the wider north Derry area were examined. The fruits of this research amounted to some sixty-three Forrest baptisms pre-civil registration [1864], found in eleven different church registers, all for the north of the county, the earliest dating to 1807 in Christchurch, Limavady. Only thirteen Forrest marriage entries were uncovered in the period before civil registration [1845] found in only six different registers; the earliest dated to 1706 in Ballykelly Presbyterian Church. I also made a systematic search of the civil birth, marriage and death registers for the parish of Balteagh in order to construct a family tree.

FAMILY OF GEORGE FORREST SEN. OF BALTEAGH PARISH

George Forrest's marriage certificate of 1866 revealed that he was the son of George Forrest Sen. However, George Forrest, senior, proved to be somewhat of an elusive character and I could find little trace of him in the local records, as he was born, married and died before the onset of civil registration. He was described variously as a bleacher or labourer on the marriage certificates of his children but he was not listed in the Griffith's Valuation of 1858 and I had difficulty working out where our family resided in 1858. In the absence of formal census returns a very useful 'census substitute' was the Old Age Pension claim forms and from these I was able to glean vital records that I could not have found anywhere else. In short, everything I know about George Forrest Sen. came from either the marriage certificates or Old Age Pension Claims of his children.

CIVIL MARRIAGE RECORDS

Civil marriage certificates identified three of George Forrest Sen.'s children - **James, Mary Ann, and John.**

James Forrest born c.1831 married Mary Jane Walker [daughter of John] in 1853 and had issue Thomas c. 1858, James c. 1859 (married Elizabeth Patton, 1877) and Sarah Ann (married James Martin, 1879)

Mary Ann Forrest born c. 1835 married the ploughman Robert Patton Hillas [son of John] in 1856 and had issue Susan 1858, Ann 1860, Margaret Jane 1863, Annie 1865, Mary Georgina 1867, Elizabeth 1870, Jane Martin 1872 (married James G Hill 1894 Manhattan, New York) and Robert James 1875 [the Hillas family appear to have emigrated some time before 1894].

John Forrest born c.1840 married **firstly** Elizabeth Smirl [daughter of William and Rose Smirl] in 1857 and had issue Mary 1858 (married Thomas Moore, 1879), William 1860 (married firstly Matilda Mackey 1882 and secondly Matilda Guy, 1901), Sarah² 1862 (married Francis Mulgrew, 1888), Annie 1864, John 1866 (died 1867), John 1868 (married Rebecca Browne 1892) Eliza Jane 1870, James 1873 (married Elizabeth Logan 1901, Scotland) and Martha 1878:

¹ 'Mortality from influenza in Ireland' by Sir William J Thompson M.D, Registrar General in 'Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland Journal, 1919, ps. 1-14.

² The Largy Ploughman Poet and the Roe Valley poet:

Sarah Forrest, who married Francis Mulgrew in 1888 had a son James Mulgrew who married Teresa Connor, a sister of Sam Connor, the 'Largy Ploughman poet'. Joseph Mulgrew [1920-1985], known as the 'Roe valley poet' was a son of James and Teresa Mulgrew, and therefore a nephew of the Largy ploughman poet [see 'The Vale of the Roe; Poems of Samuel Connor, 'Largy Ploughman poet' and his nephew Joseph Mulgrew, 'Roe Valley poet', by Conly George, 1990, Limavady].

John Forrest married **secondly** Margaret Rentoul formerly McCauley [daughter of George McCauley and Sally Sharkey] in 1880 and had issue Margaret 1881, George 1883 (married firstly Ellen Miller, 1920 and secondly Minnie Boyd, nee McIntyre, 1923), Henry 1885 and Leslie 1887 (married Euphemia C. Taylor, 1933).

OLD AGE PENSION RECORDS

Old Age Pensions were first introduced into Ireland in 1909 to provide relief for those aged seventy years or older but those eligible for the pension who were born before the onset of civil registration had to provide proof of age to qualify. Claimants could ask for a search of the early census returns, which were held in the Public Record Office in Dublin at that time [usually the 1841 and 1851 returns] using the appropriate claim form. Although the original census returns were destroyed in 1922, many of the pension claim forms have survived and are a useful substitute [T/550]. A less well known but valuable source is the **'Extract from Parish register'** claim forms for members of the [former] Established Church, that allowed members of the Church of Ireland [or those christened in a parish church], to ask for a search of the relevant parish registers that were held in the P.R.O at that time. Under the Public Records Act 1867, an amendment of 1875 and the Parochial Records Act 1876, Church of Ireland parish registers of marriages prior to 1845 and of baptisms and burials prior to 1871 were declared to be public records. The great majority of the parish registers were destroyed in 1922 but the 'parish extract' claim forms seem to have survived intact and have been microfilmed by the National Archives of Ireland and are a useful substitute for the burnt archives [NAI: MFGS 55/1-6].

In November 1913, a Margaret Forrest made a pension claim stating that her parents were George Forest [sic] and Ann Forest, **nee McColumb** and asked for a search of the 1841/51 censuses for both Terrydremond and Edenmore in the parish of Balteagh [T/550/25]. An added note also suggested searching Irish Green Street, Limavady in the 1851 returns but the search proved negative. On 8 January 1917, Margaret Eliza Forrest now residing in the Waterside, Londonderry, asked for a search of the Balteagh parish registers held in the P.R.O in Dublin stating on her claim form that she was born in 1846. The parish registers of Balteagh [2-45B], Carrick [2-177] and Bovevagh [2-74B] were all searched but no baptismal entry was forthcoming for Margaret. However, additional family information was extracted from the Balteagh register and transcribed at the bottom of the claim form [MFGS 55/2] revealing that George and Ann Forrest had issue George Forest [sic] in 1839 in Ballyquin and Robert Forrest in 1842 in Terrydremond, Balteagh. Below is a copy of the claim form for Margaret E Forrest.

Extract from parish register claim form for Margaret Eliza Forrest [NAI MFGS 55/2]

MFGS 55/2

Application No. *6/17 286*

Date of receipt, *8.1.1917*

EXTRACT FROM PARISH REGISTER
(FOR MEMBERS OF FORMER ESTABLISHED CHURCH ONLY.)

Full Name of Applicant, *Margaret Eliza Forrest*

Address, *Res. J. Jennings,
Waterside, Londonderry*

Full Names of Father and Mother of Applicant,
George and Anne Forrest

Parish or Church in which Applicant was baptized, *Balteagh*

Year of Baptism or Birth, *1846* *2-45¹³*

Register searched by *A. J. W.* *2-117*

Certificate copied by *Bovevagh* *2-74¹⁸*

Certified by

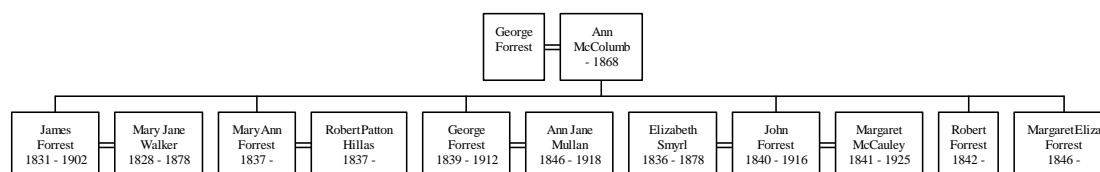
Despatched to Applicant's Address,
1839 George Forest of Ballyquin *1842 Robert Forrest of Terrydremond*

*Found not found in
Bovevagh & Carrick*

*M. Carrick
Balteagh
Bovevagh
Carrick
Waterside*

Here was documentary proof that my great, great grandfather George Forrest, junior was christened [and I assume born] in 1839, the year of the 'Big Wind' and the O.A.P form also revealed the names of two additional siblings, **ROBERT** [1842] and **MARGARET ELIZA** [1846]. All were children of George Forrest and his wife Ann nee McColumb. The returns also indicate that before moving into Limavady our family had variously resided in the townlands of Ballyquin, Terrydremond and Edenmore. That the family moved between townlands in Balteagh parish suggests that George Forrest, senior was a casual farm labourer. Using the vital and O.A.P records I was able to construct a fairly complete family tree showing that George and Ann Forrest had at least six children [4 males/2 females].

Descendants of George Forrest



The line of descent is watertight having been proved in the documentary records, although the birth dates are approximate based as they are on death or census records.

The oral tradition and the O.A.P claim form both gave indication that our family had resided in Edenmore at the time of the Famine. Remember the old family story about the Forrest relation who walked to Maghera for potatoes during the Great Starvation? Evidence suggests that it may have been my great, great, great grandfather George Forrest, senior. The following evidence will help us to narrow down the dates when he made his putative journey:

- In a letter dated 17th February 1846, J.P Beresford of Learmount confirmed statements by the Reverend W. Hughes and George Fitzmaurice as to the loss of at least half of the potato crop in the parish of Aghanloo and describing the situation in the neighbouring parish of Balteagh as equally bad [NAI: RLFC2/Z3184 LD 4pp].
- *'Large markets of sound potatoes are in Kilrea, Maghera and Magherafelt'* [T2890/15: A. Moore, Newtown Limavady, to Capt. Kennedy, 13 March 1846].

The evidence presented suggests that the blight had set into the potato crop in the Roe Valley in February 1846 leading to the eventual destruction of the crop and a severe shortage of potatoes in the region. A month later, there was a ready supply of sound potatoes at the market in Maghera. The oral tradition united with the historical record suggests that our George Forrest made the eventful journey to Maghera, probably in the spring of 1846. The impact of the potato failure in the Roe valley should not be underestimated. There was a meeting in Limavady at the close of 1846 in order to start a soup or broth kitchen to be supported by voluntary contributions [Hunter letters]. A letter dated 17 May 1847 tells of the food failure, of fever and dysentery in the Limavady area, an extra fever hospital being set up in Ballyclose. The worst was over by September 1850, the quality of potatoes at that time being described as excellent.

George Forrest senior appears to have died some time after the Famine and before 1857, as it is his wife/widow Ann Forrest who was listed in the Griffith's Valuation [1857/58] in Rathbrady Beg, Limavady. The valuation shows that in January 1857, Ann Forrest was residing in a house belonging to Robert Boyd in Rathbrady Beg, Limavady numbered 48h [PRONI: VAL/2/B/5/22A, p. 88]. By January 1858 she had moved to a house [8b] formerly occupied by Hugh Connor, near Barley Park [PRONI: AL/2/B/5/22A, p. 99]. These two locations are shown on the map on the next page.

It would appear that Ann Forrest and her young family had moved into Limavady, probably, just after the famine, as her son James Forrest was confirmed in Christchurch parish church in 1849. We cannot be sure if her husband was alive or dead at time of the family's move.

The decline of the rural linen industry and bleach greens, and the attraction of work prospects in Limavady for her growing family must have prompted the move to the town, which was developing with the times. Mrs Hunter wrote in a letter dated 10 September 1852, that *'our little village is about to be lit up with gas very soon'* and of rail communications arriving in October 1852; one could travel from Carrycure to Newtown for 9 pence, *'a great convenience to a person that had no convenience of their own'*. At some point in the early 1860s the family moved to reside in Irish Green Street and Ann Forrest died there in 1868.

Map showing the locations of houses [48h] and [8b] in Limavady where the family of Ann Forrest lived c.1857/58



PRONI: OS/6/5/9/1

FAMILY OF JOHN FORREST OF BALTEAGH PARISH

Finding the father and siblings of George Forrest Sen. was a much more difficult task. I began by identifying the Forrest households listed in the Griffith's Printed Valuation of 1858 for the parish of Balteagh and trying to match them to various bits of information I had on the births, deaths and marriages of a number of Forrest families that I thought might be connected to our family.

GRIFFITH'S VALUATION OF TENEMENTS, 1857/1858

Ten Forrest households are recorded in the Roe valley at the time of Griffith's valuation and five of these could be directly connected to our Balteagh Forrest line.

[1] **Ann Forrest** of Rathbrady Beg, Limavady, the widow of George Forrest Sen. already mentioned above.

[2] **James Forest** [sic] was resident in Carrick East at the time of the 1858 Griffith's Valuation. I am now certain that this James was a son of George Forrest Sen. and Ann McColumb. He had married Mary Jane Walker of Carrick East in 1853.

[3]. **John Forest** [sic] listed in Terrydremond North, was, most probably, a brother of George Forrest Sen. He worked at the flax-scutching and corn mill operated by John Boyd in Terrydremond and he was residing in a cottage on Boyd's farm in 1858. John Forrest had married Elizabeth [unknown maiden name], and she died in Terrydremond on 22 January 1868 aged 74. John Forrest, labourer and widower died exactly one year later on 22 January 1869, aged 65. John and Elizabeth Forrest of Terrydremond appear to have had one daughter namely Elizabeth [born c.1829] who married James [Jimmy] McCurry in 1856 who became well-known in the Roe valley area as 'the Blind Fiddler from Myroe.' Leslie Forrest [born c.1821], who married Jane Thompson of Terrydremond [daughter of John] in 1845 may have been the only son of John and Elizabeth Forrest of Terrydremond.

[4]. **Elizabeth Forest** [sic] was also listed in Griffith's Valuation in Terrydremond North and died there on 16 December 1886 aged 80 giving her a birth date of c. 1806. Again, I would suggest she was the sister of John Forrest of Terrydremond and George Forrest, Sen. The death certificate recorded that she was a servant and spinster and the informant was given as grandson William Baird of Terrydremond [he may have been the son of John Baird and Mary Ann Thompson, the sister-in-law of Leslie Forrest above]. It seems that in the nineteenth century the extended family members [including in-laws] were viewed as close relations, thus explaining this anomaly.

[5]. **James Forest** [sic] listed in Edenmore, Balteagh appears to have been another brother of George Forrest Sen. He was married twice, firstly c. 1825 to Mary Ann McClean of Ballymore. The family resided at first in Ballymore and later the Largy, Tamlaght Finlagan, so I was able to locate the baptisms of their children in Ballykelly Church of Ireland (MIC/1/38).³

By 1846 the family had moved to the Largy, however, by the time of Griffith's valuation 1857/8, James senior moved across the Roe at one point to reside in the old family homestead in Edenmore, probably after his brother George's family had moved to Limavady.

Although the early registers for Balteagh Church of Ireland were destroyed, a vaccination register is extant amongst the parish archives and is a very useful volume covering the period from June 1852 to October 1875. In June 1859, Isabella Forrest, aged 17 of Edenmore was vaccinated. The names of the parents were not given, but I knew this to be the daughter of James Forrest and Mary Ann McClean christened 4 April 1841 in Ballykelly Church of Ireland, **thus giving positive identification to the James Forrest of Edenmore in the Griffith's Valuation.**

James Forrest's wife, Mary Ann McClean, died before 1861, as that year James was re-married to Nancy Maddigan [formerly McDaid], a widow from Terrydoo. The marriage record in Balteagh Church of Ireland revealed that **his father was John Forest** [sic], a labourer.

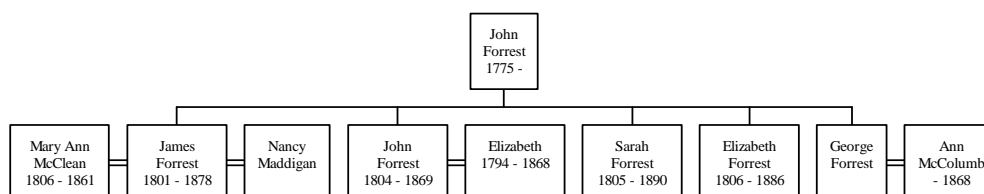
I am fairly certain that James Forrest was the brother of George Forrest Sen. **so this would make their father John Forrest my four times great-grandfather.** James Forrest left Edenmore around 1874. The Griffith's revisions show that his house was tumbled in that year [PRONI: VAL/12B/31/13B p. 6] and he died in Ardmore on 13 April 1878, aged 76 [giving him a birth date of c.1801]; the informant was Susanna McCaula [sic], of Ardmore.

I also discovered a sister of James Forrest through a civil death record which stated: **Sarah Forrest**, a spinster and servant died in Ballyleighery, Balteagh on 1 April 1890, aged 85 [giving her a birth date of c. 1805], the informant was grand-daughter Elizabeth Forrest.

Sarah Forrest appears to have been residing with John Forrest, [who was most likely a nephew] and his second wife, Margaret Rentoul formerly McCauley. The informant was his daughter from his first marriage, Eliza [Jane] Forrest born 16 July 1870 and thus a grand-niece of Sarah Forrest [although given as a grand-daughter on the death certificate].

The records, therefore, suggest that some of the children of **John Forrest** [born c. 1775] were **JAMES, JOHN, SARAH, ELIZABETH** and **GEORGE**. All of these children trace positively to the parish of Balteagh. Using the collated family information the early putative tree is outlined below. The dates of birth we must take as approximate, as they are based on recorded age at death given by the informant. I estimate George Forrest's birth to be c.1807 as he appears to have married c. 1829.

Descendants of John Forrest



³ Mary Ann 1826 (married Robert Young), John 1828 (married Esther McCunn), James 1830 [died young], Joseph 1834, Catherine 1835 (married Robert Miller) Isabella 1841 (married firstly Robert Young and secondly Henry Hine), Leslie 1843 (married Margaret Mullan, 1879) and James 1846 (married Elizabeth Charlesworth) - most of the family emigrated to Millville, New Jersey, although Leslie Forrest ended up in Glasgow and had a large family.

THE 1831 CENSUS

The 1831 Census Returns confirm that our direct family line resided in the townland of Terrydremond North, Balteagh. These returns, only available for County Derry, are not a “proper” census. However, they do list the names of each head of household in a townland and provide a statistical breakdown of the numbers and sex of persons present in the house on the census night, as well as the religious affiliation of family members and servants. In 1831 there were only eighteen Forrest households in the whole of county Derry with about one hundred persons present. The returns for Limavady and the Roe Valley revealed that there were only eleven Forrest households with about 60 individuals present.

1831 Census, Balteagh parish [MIC/5A/6]

Townland	Head	Male	Female	Religion
Terrydremond N.	Nancy Forrest	1	1	1 Established Church 1 Presbyterian
Terrydremond N.	John Forrest	2	4	6 Established Church

I was able to locate my great, great, great grandmother, Nancy [Ann] Forrest [nee McColumb] in the 1831 census in the townland of Terrydremond North, parish of Balteagh, barony of Kennaght [MIC/5A] as the head of household with one other person present. Ann McColumb Forrest appears to have been a Presbyterian and her husband George an Episcopalian. The surname McColumb/McCollom is not common to Limavady but there families of this surname recorded in Faughanvale and Desertoghill parishes in the early nineteenth century. It is possible that Ann McColumb came to Balteagh parish as a live-in servant to a local family.

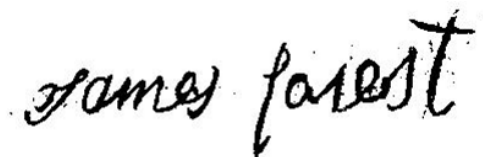
Also resident in Terrydremond in 1831 was a John Forrest, [whom I take to be either the father or brother of George Forrest, senior], with six persons present. What distinguishes our direct line in the 1831 census was their affiliation to the Episcopalian faith. Unfortunately two early registers for Balteagh Church of Ireland were destroyed in Dublin in 1922 [and these included baptisms from 1808, marriages from 1818 and burials from 1833], thus making the task of tracing the family in the parish much more difficult.

TITHE APLOTMENT, 1829

The marriage certificate of James Forrest [c.1801-78] dated 1861 gave his father as John Forrest, labourer. Being a labourer we would not expect to find him in the Tithe Applotment Book of Balteagh dated 1829. Of interest though was a James Forrest listed in Carrick East, Balteagh with a small-holding of 6a, 2r, 29p [3 acres arable] with a tithe valuation of 12s, 5d [FIN/5A/52, p.21]. Carrick East is contiguous with Terrydremond townland.

THE REGISTRY OF DEEDS

A search of the Registry of Deeds for the parish of Balteagh uncovered two recorded deeds in 1811 [633:261:433978] and 1814 [681:71:468619] for James Forrest of Carrick [East]. The indentured deed of 1811 reveals that the original lease for a farm of 21 acres in Carrick bearing date 21 February 1782 [**for the life of William Moody**], was demised to James Forrest for the sum of £360 sterling and a yearly rent of £15, 4, 2. In 1814 he offset part of the farm to a Robert Forrest, farmer of Carrick [no relationship given but possibly a son]. By the time of the 1831 census, there was no recorded Forrest household in the townland of Carrick, Balteagh [had James Forrest died?], however both John and Nancy Forrest were recorded as heads of household in the neighbouring townland of Terrydremond.



Above, is the signature of James Forest from a registered deed of 1811: note the spelling with a single ‘r’ a common occurrence in the older records before civil registration.

FLAX PREMIUM LISTS, 1796

The earliest recorded Forrest name in the parish of Balteagh was a James Forrest listed in the Flax returns of 1796, claiming two spinning wheels. Could this be the same James Forrest as the James Forest in the 1811 and 1814 deeds? If they were one and the same person, could this James Forrest be the patriarch of the Balteagh Forrest line?

It is entirely possible that the 1796 James Forrest was the same James Forrest who was in Carrick East from 1811. The names in the flax returns do seem to have been clustered according to townland and we have familiar Terrydremmond names listed together including the Reverend Alexander Stewart [Minister of First Limavady], James and Thomas Hogstin, Samuel Thompson, James Torence, Samuel Wilson, John George, Henry Murrel and John Steen. Interestingly, James Forrest's name appears next to that of the Reverend Alexander Stewart who resided in Terrydremmond. Although recorded in the tithes valuation of 1826 James Forrest is not listed in the 1831 census in Carrick East which could indicate that he may have had died sometime prior to this [perhaps giving him a life span of say c. 1750-1830?].

I am tentatively suggesting that James Forrest may have been the patriarch of the Balteagh Forrest line using a two-fold nominal analysis. Firstly, location; James Forrest was resident in Carrick, which is contiguous to Terrydremmond-Edenmore where our direct ancestors are known to have resided in the 1830s and 1840s. There were only eleven Forrest families listed in the 1831 census so we are talking about a small clan of homogeneous families. Secondly, there is a naming pattern; George Forrest [senior] named his first son James, perhaps for his paternal grandfather. If this hypothesis is correct then there is a possibility that James Forrest was the father of John Forrest, labourer and grandfather of our George Forrest, senior. However, this is merely a hypothesis, which may be proved or disproved if additional evidence is uncovered.

What we need to explain, however, is how our direct line had become landless by the time of the 1831 census and we find them employed working in the local linen industry or as casual labourers.

The population of the Roe valley area had grown rapidly in the latter part of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th century with consequent pressure on land. As a result of 'impartible inheritance', eldest sons usually received the family farm and remaining sons were encouraged to take up a trade or forced to migrate to find employment. Even before the Great Famine of 1845 people were leaving the land in great numbers. Continuing high farm rents and falling agricultural prices put pressure on farmers – rent arrears mounted alarmingly in the 1820s and 1830s resulting in many evictions. The average farm size in County Derry in the 1830s was only eight acres. This was mainly due to subdivision of farms within families and also sub-letting, which was a firmly established practice in Irish farming.

In 1811 James Forrest's farm in Carrick East was 21 acres but by 1826 this had been reduced to only 6 acres, and the registered deed of 1814 suggests part of the farm had been offset to Robert Forrest in 1814 who could have been an elder son. Clearly, 6 acres would only be sufficient to support one family. Other possible siblings, George and John Forrest were resident in Terrydremmond in 1831 where the linen industry had been well-established and providing an alternative source of employment.

There were two flax mills in operation in Terrydremmond in the early 1830s – **one on the property of William Moody, Esq, a witness to the marriage of Leslie Forrest in Balteagh Church of Ireland in 1845 and perhaps 'the life' in the deed of 1782 demised to James Forrest in Carrick in 1811** and the other was in the old engine house of a former bleach-mill and the mill-man was William McCauley [O.S. Memoirs, Balteagh p. 41].

Given this hypothesis therefore, it is a possibility that James Forrest of Carrick East was the common ancestor of the Balteagh Forrest line and this could take us back one further generation. This, however, would prove to be the limit of my research with regard to our ancestral line in Balteagh, and taking the family back even further would prove to be difficult due to the fractured nature of the surviving records. There was, however, still one outstanding link that required further investigation – that of Catherine and Mary Forrest buried at the Roe Mill graveyard.

CATHERINE AND MARY FORREST, HABERDASHERS

A search of the known directories of the period [Pigot's of 1824 and Slaters of 1846], the Registry of Deeds, 1831 census and early valuation records for Limavady, [1831-1834: VAL/1/D/5/4] all returned a negative result. However, I did manage to track down and locate an old directory dated 1839 for the town [Limavady library]. The so-called 'New Directory of 1839' is a most useful volume and here I found nine Haberdashers listed, six located on Main Street including one occupied by a Ketureh Forrest [page 77]. The discovery in the New Directory confirmed the oral tradition with regard to the address of the Forrest shop it was disappointing not to find Catherine or Mary listed. What relationship then, if any, was Keturah Forrest to the two Forrest ladies?

Keturah was an unusual Christian name even in the early nineteenth century; taken from the Bible it is a Hebrew name meaning 'incense'. Was it possible that Keturah Forrest was a sister-in-law⁴ to Catherine and Mary Forrest and that the Haberdashery was a shared family business? The Forrest shop was not listed in Slater's Directory of 1846 indicating perhaps that the business had ceased to exist by this date and this fits in with what we already

⁴ It is also possible that Catherine and Mary Forrest were the first cousins of the husband of Keturah Forrest.

know, as Catherine Forrest had died in 1843, and it is possible that the family gave up the Haberdashery business around that time. The existence of the headstone in the Roe Mill graveyard itself indicates that the two Forrest ladies had economic independence.

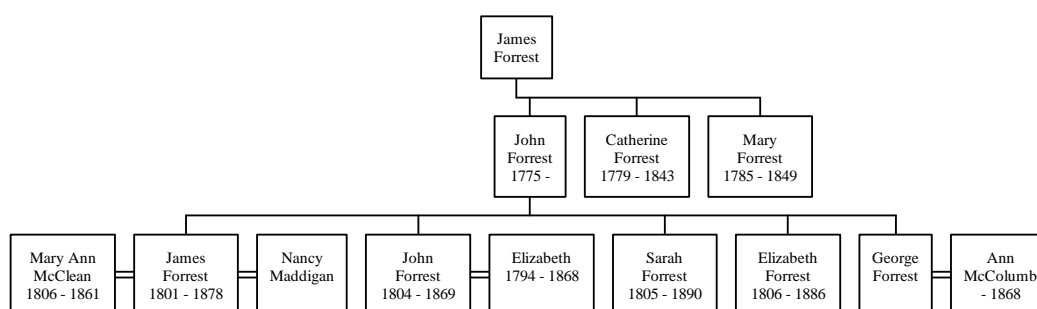
Linking Catherine and Mary Forrest into the family tree

Let us return for the moment to John Forrest, my putative four times great-grandfather, and I estimate that he was born c.1775 [his eldest son James having married around 1825]. John Forrest would, therefore, be a contemporary of the two sisters, Catherine [c.1779] and Mary [c.1785], buried at the Roe Mill. The family lore indicated that these 'great aunts' were both sisters and spinsters, and I spent many hours trying to fit them into our family line but the religious dichotomy was hard to explain, as Catherine and Mary Forrest were Catholic and John Forrest was Episcopalian. In the end the solution to the problem was as simple as it was dramatic as explained by local historian Francis X McCorry. It was possible that John, Catherine and Mary Forrest were siblings if they were the children of a mixed marriage. In this case, the male offspring would have been raised in the faith of the father [Episcopalian] and the female offspring in the religion of the mother [in this case Catholic]. Apparently, this was a common occurrence in mixed marriages of the time under a benevolent convention known as the Palantine Pact [Francis X. McCorry: Parish registers; Historical Treasures in Manuscript, Lurgan, 2004, p.17]. Such marriages were looked on with disfavour by the Catholic Church but they were admitted to be canonically valid. Based on the oral history it is a strong possibility that John Forrest was the brother of Catherine and Mary Forrest of Limavady. John Forrest was my fourth great-grandfather and this would make Catherine and Mary Forrest my four times great-grandaunts.

If we take my earlier hypothesis that James Forrest was the patriarch of the Balteagh Forrest line then he could have been the father of John, Catherine and Mary. This would indicate that James Forrest's spouse had been a Catholic and I would date this mixed marriage to the later part of the eighteenth century, say around 1770 or so. Inter-marriage between Protestants and Catholics has always taken place, of course, in spite of the ferocious penalties prescribed under the penal laws but in some cases the parents, by agreement, applied the 'Palantine Pact'. Had James Forrest married into a family from Balteagh and moved into the parish thus we find him listed in the flax returns of 1796? I searched diligently in the records, poured over old deeds, church records, gravestone inscriptions, valuation records, wills, estate records in an attempt to discover some family connection that would take me back to the mid-eighteenth century but to no avail. **I had to content myself that I had reached the limit of my research with regard to actual named individuals in my tree.** I was fairly certain that John Forrest was my four times great grandfather and that *possibly* his father was James Forrest of Carrick townland, in the parish of Balteagh.

The early family tree is outlined below – I begin with our putative antecedent James Forrest and would suggest that the line of descent should be considered **speculative** based as it is on oral history and scraps of documentary evidence.

Descendants of James Forrest



Our direct line of descent is traced from George Forrest senior who married Ann McColumb; their son George Forrest married Ann Jane Mullan in 1866 and they had issue, ten children [and forty-six grandchildren], the majority of whom attended Roe Mill National School [SCH/1343/3/1]. Almost all of the Forrest families in Limavady area today are descended from the line of George Forrest senior⁵.

⁵ One other Forrest line is known to be extant today in the Roe valley descending from a William Forrest [c. 1800-1867] of Myroe who married Eleanor Kane [and had issue: William junior, Margaret Jane, Hugh, John and James]. William Forrest junior married Catherine Arbuckle in 1854 and had issue William Forrest who married Matilda Blackburn in 1897, and they had issue William who married Mary Frances Kennedy in 1930.

THE SEARCH FOR THE ULTIMATE FAMILY PATRIARCH

I was now certain that our ancestors were residing in the parish of Balteagh at the time of the 1831 Census and that, quite possibly, the James Forrest who was listed in the Flax Returns of 1796, could have been the patriarch of the Balteagh Forrest line. As, I mentioned, earlier, family lore suggests that we all descend from one common ancestor whom I had assumed migrated to the Roe valley in Plantation times. Although I did not expect to find any evidence that would directly link our family to these earlier Forrests, I decided to look at the seventeenth and eighteenth-century records.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY RECORDS

Many useful sources have survived for the seventeenth century and give a fascinating insight into life in the early plantation period. The London Companies' involvement in the plantation scheme not only ensured that the new county would bear the name of England's capital city but also generated an enormous body of records [useful today for both the genealogist and local historian alike]. Twelve major companies undertook [or rather were coerced] into financing the plantation scheme but a myriad of other lesser companies were also involved. Plantation records produced by the London companies proved to be very useful together with a number of other eclectic sources such as muster rolls, subsidy rolls, hearth rolls, surveys, estate rentals/leases, depositions **so it possible to map family names in the seventeenth century.**

When looking for the Forrest surname in seventeenth century records you are likely to come across the surnames Forrest and Forrester. By the early seventeenth century Forrest and Forrester were two distinct surnames and although I encountered both in the seventeenth century records for the valley of the Roe they were most definitely distinct and separate families. Forrest can be both an English and Scottish surname but the majority of Ulster Forrest families trace their origin to Scotland [‘The Surnames of Scotland’, George F. Black, New York, 1946 pp. 272-273].

A thorough search of the records uncovered three persons by the surname of Forrest who settled in the new county in the seventeenth century, all in the north of the county. The three had settled on company lands namely the Merchant-Tailors, Clothworkers and the Fishmongers' estates.

Forrest on the Merchant-Tailors' estate [Macosquin manor]

The earliest Forrest reference in county Derry can be found in a seventeenth century lease for Macosquin manor, c.1639-41 [T/724/1], part of the Merchant-Tailors' estate. Humphrey Forrest and Thomas Darlington co-leased a fifty-seven acre farm with a house that was enclosed within an outer wall and a 'curtilage' [courtyard]. Thomas Darlington was a Burgess of Coleraine in 1623 [D572/21/101 p. 59], and he may have resided on the property but evidence suggests that Humphrey Forrest may have been an absentee landlord as he was mustered in Antrim on the 4th May 1642 under the command of Sir John Clothworthy, the earl of Antrim [Muster roll for county Down and part of Antrim, 1642, Linenhall Library, Belfast]. In the aftermath of the rebellion Colonel Clotworthy helped to relieve Coleraine with a troop of horse [T.H Mullin; ‘Coleraine in bye-gone centuries’ Belfast, 1976, p 89].

It is highly likely that Humphrey Forrest was a tenant on Clotworthy's Antrim estate. We can only speculate that as a joint lessee of the Macosquin property that he never took up occupancy in county Derry. A search of the IGI for a Humphrey Forrest indicates that the name was prevalent in one area only that is Halesowen, Worcester, England where the Christian name Humphry predominated in the family line, from the 16th century. Humffrey Forrest (b. 1593) who married Elizabeth Webb on the 22nd January 1618, in Halesowen may well have been our man who moved to Ulster. In the aftermath of the rebellion the manor was re-created in the 1650s to attract new tenants and colonists as many of the English tenants had returned home.⁶

Forrest on the Clothworkers' estate [Dunboe]

The establishment of a strong Scottish colony in the north of the county [particularly in the baronies of Keenaught and Coleraine] in the early seventeenth century was a result of a planned settlement under the auspices of Sir Robert McClelland of Bombie, Kirkcudbrightshire, Scotland who became the common landlord of both the

⁶ No Forrest was listed in the hearth roll for Macosquin but in 1677 Walter Forrest was the curate in Camus-Juxta-Bann alias Macosquin [J.B Leslie, ‘Clergy of Derry and Raphoe’ Belfast 1999, pp 128-130]. The Anglican Church was an all Ireland institution so Walter Forrest could have had his origins anywhere in Ireland, perhaps where the Forrest name was more prevalent at this time in either Dublin or Cork. In 1685 his name appears amongst the forty-five clergy of the Diocese of Armagh who signed an address to King James II on the 5th of March 1684/85 [Leslie Armagh Clergy]. Forrest became the Rector of Macosquin 25 March 1686 and the 1693 religious survey of ‘the state of Derry Diocese’, lists one Gualterus fforest as the minister of a small congregation in Macosquin of only eighty members [T/1075/5]. Mention was made of the English colony at Macosquin being in decay. Walter Forrest is listed in an early register of voters in County Derry, in 1697 [T/3161/1/4]. Walter Forrest died in 1716 presumably in Macosquin but no will appears to have been probated. He had been the Rector of the parish for thirty years.

Haberdashers' estate [1616] centred on Artikelly/Ballycastle in Aghanloo parish and the Clothworkers' estate [1618] centred on Killowen/Articlave in Dunboe parish. Thus, his estate, which stretched from Coleraine right down into the heart of the Roe valley at Limavady, became a bridgehead for Scottish entry into the north of the county. The relative closeness to Scotland may have encouraged further migration. Families became established in the north of the county encouraging colonial spread.

Lord John Kirkcudbright, nephew of Sir Robert, re-let most of the estate in the aftermath of the 1641 rebellion. There was a massive influx of Scottish settlers into Ulster in the 1650s, attracted by the cheap rents, and something like a second plantation took place that was vital to the maintenance of the project. On the 20th August 1655, James Forrest and his spouse Catherine Shearer made indenture with the third Lord Kirkcudbright [Sir John McClelland of Borgue] to lease three townlands in Dunboe parish namely Liffock, Carneety and Artidillon. The lease was for 11 years [that is to 1666] at an annual rent of £24 sterling. Both James Forrest and his wife Catherine Shearer were illiterate as they each made their mark [T/640/15].⁷

That Shearer is mentioned in the records always by her maiden name may be an indication that she had economic independence. Many Scottish women decided to keep their maiden name after marriage with the idea of making sure of the continuing protection of the stronger clan. The Forrest farm of over 200 acres was considerable by seventeenth century standards and suggests that both Forrest and Shearer were from better off families in Scotland having had the resources to lease three contiguous townlands. In 1660, there were ten poll tax payers in 'Luffeg' townland including eight Scots/English and two Irish. Those over the age of sixteen were liable for poll tax and the evidence suggests that the Forrest couple were resident in Liffock in 1660 with a number of other Scottish settlers who may have been their sub-tenants.

An examination of the records of the McClelland/Maxwell family [T640/95] gives indication that the 'Forrest estate' had been sub-let.

Rent receipts signed by John Conyngham on 16th January 1663 gives the following information:

16th January 1663, *'I John Conyngham obliges me self be oweing to Sir Robert Maxwell for Katherine Shearer her Alsaints rent being 35 shillings and 9d sterling for the half town of Luffog'.*

'Mor for Andrew Forgey (Forgey) for the two parts of Ardidillan and his part of Liffock, £2, 16 shillings'

'Mor for Robert Hyndman for the third part of Ardidillan the soume of 23 shillings 10d sterling'.

The evidence suggests that the Forrest couple demised part of their estate to sub-tenants: two parts of Artidillon to Andrew Forgey and one part to Robert Hyndman; half of Liffock was retained by the Forrest couple and Andrew Forgey was in possession of one part. There were no rent receipts for the townland of Carneety but a David Murray was listed as resident there in the 1662 subsidy roll.

In the 1662 subsidy roll James Forrest was listed in Liffock with personal possessions valued at £6.0.0 paying a subsidy of £3, 4 shillings making him one of the wealthiest inhabitants in the parish [D/4146/A/14]. In the Tenison Groves' hearth roll for Dunboe parish [T307/A] he is listed as James Forrast but in another transcript [made by Max Given] as Jas Forest [D4164/A/23]. At this point it is worth noting in that in the Given hearth transcript that James Forest [Liffock], David Murrey [Carneety] and Andrew Forgey [Artidillon] are listed together, number 9, 10 and 11 on the list respectively reflecting the fact that the townlands were contiguous [D4164/A/23].

The Clothworkers' estate and manor was recreated on 30 May 1663, and McClelland's lease was demised to Capt William Jackson of Coleraine on 18 June 1663, and the advowson of Dunboe was transferred to Jackson on 17 June 1664; Jackson obtained a new lease of 51 years to run from 1 May 1669 to 1720 for a fine of £1000 and an annual rent of £100 [James S Curl, 'Londonderry Plantation' Sussex, 1986, p.381]. There ensued a long-running dispute between the McClelland/Maxwell and Jackson families and details of a chancery bill dated 13 May 1664 between the families was transcribed by Tenison Groves and included a list of 34 tenants on the Clothworkers' estate [the majority with Scottish surnames] and manor under John, Lord Baron Kirkcudbright, which included the name of James Forrest [T808/11342]. Many tenants lost out in the recreation of the estate and most likely the Forrest couple lost out on the new leases for we find that in 1665 that James Forrest was a master-mariner of the Coleraine ship the 'Necessity' sailing out of the port of Coleraine.

⁷ There is evidence of a previous lease of these townlands. T724/1: rental of the manor of Killowen, 1839. Thomas Heslett, yeoman of Dunboe and Rory O'Lannan, yeoman of Coleraine leased the townlands of Artidillon, Carneety and Liffock containing 'duos centum et octo acras' [208 acres] on 29/7/1839 for 21 years at £34 sterling per annum. The re-release of the Clothworkers' estate in 1655 was a consequence of the disruption caused by the rebellion from 1641 and the rent was substantially reduced to attract new settlers to the estate.

George Macartney [sic], merchant of Belfast writing to Richard Huishe on 14 September 1665, *'says he has sent 3 tons of salmon on the 'Necessity' of Coleraine, James Forest, master. As the other ton of salmon was bad he sends butter, brown paper and "clift boards" and asks Huishe to sell them'* [Business Letters of George McCartney, Merchant c.1660-1667, MIC19/1]. We have no way of knowing if James Forrest and his wife Catherine Shearer remained in Dunboe and the fact that no Forrest was listed in the 1740 householders' returns for the parish may indicate that they had moved on or perhaps had no issue, yet the surname does re-emerge in the area towards the end of the eighteenth century.

No Forrest is listed in either the 1740 Protestant householders' survey or the 1796 flax lists for the parish of Dunboe, however, in 1783 we find mention of a Joseph Forrest in the records of the Bishop of Bristol's estate at Downhill [Hervey Bruce papers]. Joseph Forrest and Nocher O'Docherty agreed to cut *'200 of turf for the use of Downhill castle'* [D2798/2/25]. This is perhaps the same Joseph Forrest who resided in the Waterside area of Coleraine [Killowen] in 1812. A surviving applotment for the Waterside listing 184 residents has Rachel Forest [171] paying 8d and Joseph Forest [172] paying 2sh⁸.

Forrest on the Fishmongers' estate [manor of Walworth, Ballykelly]

A detailed examination of the early Plantation records suggested that our Forrest patriarch had not come to the Roe valley in the early plantation [that is before the 1641 rising], which is significant as there were small English colonies in both Ballykelly and Newtownlimavady in the early seventeenth century. The English colony was decimated after the rebellion of 1641 many colonists left for England never to return. A significant influx of Scottish settlers came into the Roe valley during the period of the Protectorate and this wave of economic migrants was vital to the maintenance of the plantation. A close examination of the hearth rolls in PRONI for 1663 [T307A] led me to conclude that a John Forratt located in Drummond, Tamlaght Finlagan was most likely a Forrest [although Forret is also a known and distinct surname that originated in Fifeshire, c.f. Black's surnames of Scotland, p. 274]. A second transcript of the hearth returns for the parish confirmed John Forrest in Drummond [Derry Standard May 1908]. A Thomas Forrest was a resident of Drummond in 1740 [Householders' survey] so there was continuity in location and family name. Although John Forrest settled on the Fishmongers' estate I have seen nothing whatever, in the records to connect the family with English origins. The family appears in every way to have been of Scottish origin.

Forrest in the Subsidy Rolls [1662]

During the course of my research, I discovered a subsidy roll for the parish of Tamlaght Finlagan dated 1662 [T716/15]. Subsidy was a direct tax imposed on property or land [threshold value of £1] and possessions/goods [threshold £3] and the rolls list the nobility, clergy and laity that paid grant-aid to the King. As a result they are much less comprehensive than the hearth tax rolls since they list only the wealthier classes but they remain valuable, nonetheless. Jo(hn) Forrest was listed in Tawneymullan paying a tax of £1, 12 shillings on goods valued at £3 sterling. Evidence suggests that John Forrest had resided in Tawnymullan upon his arrival in the Roe valley until 1662 and then in the following year moved to Drummond. Both townlands were part of the Fishmongers' estate. That John Forrest was listed in the subsidy roll indicates that he was reasonably well off.

Were John and James Forrest related?

John Forrest of Drummond, Ballykelly and James Forrest of Liffock, Dunboe appear in the north of county Derry simultaneously and given that the name is relatively rare then their close proximity could be significant. Both are listed in the respective subsidy and hearth money rolls for their parishes. They were of similar economic status, of Scottish origin and resided only twelve miles apart [Articlave is a mere ten miles from Limavady via the Sconce Road and Windyhill Road along the B201]. The weight of evidence suggests consanguinity and it was also common for family groups to migrate from Scotland to Ireland.

John Forrest of Drummond was a neighbour to John Shearer⁹ of Drumraighland in the hearth returns. A John Sherra [sic] was in Dunboe parish in 1686 [T1075/8]. It is possible that a small family of Forrests and Shearers came to north Derry as a collective group. Brown states of the plantation that, *'from surviving records and from similar traditions elsewhere it would appear that much of the actual carrying-out of settlements by Scots in the*

⁸ Note: There were two related Forrest families residing in Articlave, Dunboe in the 1831 census headed respectively by John Forrest junior and senior [are these families descended from James Forrest of Dunboe, 1663 or are a branch of the family originally from the Roe valley?].

⁹ There is evidence that this surname became Sherrard in the later written records. In all the local records from the 17th and 18th centuries Shearer is the form commonly used. Variations include Sherrar, Sherra, Sherrer, Sherer, Sheerar, Sherer, Sheror, Sherrid, Sheirer, Shirer all in our small area of the Roe valley. See Familia volume 2 number 3, 1987, pps 97-98, 100, 'Some Ulster-Scots and their origins in Scotland' by John A Oliver.

north during the seventeenth century was a co-operative effort by members of family groups' [J. Brown, 'Plantation to Partition', ed. Peter Roebuck, Belfast, 1981].

Did John Forrest settle first in Dunboe and then attracted by cheaper rents move further inland to the Fishmongers' estate? Poaching tenants from adjacent estates appears to have been a common practice in the period, especially in the immediate aftermath of the rebellion when tenants were in short supply; *'Some of the British tenants were beginning to be a little better acquainted with the country, discovered that they could obtain cheaper land on portions of other companies. The practise of one landlord drawing tenants from another was probably a common hazard. To inveigle the inhabitants of a neighbours lands to cross a boundary proved an irresistible temptation when the alternative was to persuade settlers to cross the Irish sea and possibly even to pay their passage'* [M. Percival Maxwell, 'The Scottish Migration to Ulster in the reign of James I', Belfast, 1990, p178].

There were very close ties between Dunboe parish and the Roe valley. An examination of the hearth money rolls [1663] for the parishes that made up McClelland's estate reveal that there were many families of the same surname, more than likely related, living on both McClelland's Haberdashers' and Clothworkers' lands. These strong family bonds and kinship ties that were established and forged in the early plantation period continued into the early eighteenth century in the contiguous parishes that made up McClelland's Londonderry estate. Deep rooted familial bonds endured well into the Georgian period and kinship and economic ties were maintained. Proven examples of kinship ties between Dunboe and the Roe valley include Morrel of Balteagh and Dunboe, Oliver of Dunboe and Limavady¹⁰, and Hillhouse of Dunboe and Aghanloo¹¹.

There may have been specific reasons why John Forrest came to settle on the Fishmongers' estate and this required a detailed examination of the Fishmongers' archive in London in order to identify the major leaseholders on the estate in the post-rebellion period [my thanks to Raya McGeorge, Archivist/Librarian for the Fishmongers' company in London for her help in this regard].

LONDON COMPANY RECORDS [THE FISHMONGERS]

The Fishmongers' company had offset their estate to the highest bidder in the early plantation period. John Forrest came to be in the area while the Fishmongers' estate was still vested with the heirs of James Higgins & Christopher Freeman; albeit they were in the process of defaulting due to arrears of rents. John Forrest was listed in the 1662 subsidy rolls in Tamneymullan/Nedd and his landlord was Elizabeth Holland, the following year he was in Drummond and landlord was Nicholas Lane. I spent some time researching the background of both Elizabeth Holland and Nicholas Lane including an examination of the Fishmonger company minutes from the period 1647-1664 [Transcribed Company Minutes entitled 'Records of the worshipful company of Fishmongers, Volume IV, 1647-1664, in Fishmongers' Hall, London]

Freeman/Holland/Forrester

Christopher Freeman junior had inherited two-thirds of the manor of Walworth from his father. After the rebellion he took refuge in Derry city but died and was buried 18 May 1642. His wife Elizabeth survived him and had married [Captain] William Holland¹² sometime before 1648 as in the Fishmongers' minutes there is mention of, *'a lease made thereof by this Company to Christopher Freeman, deceased, one William Holland, gentleman, having married the Relict of Christopher, sonne of the said Christopher this Companies Lessee, deceased'*, [Pp 117-118 in transcribed version; Court of Assistants 17 April 1648 p.69].

Captain William Holland died sometime before 1656 as Elizabeth Holland married Cornet Clement Forester of Ballykelly on 22 October 1656 in Templemore parish church in Derry.¹³ As Clement Forester was a Cornet there

¹⁰ See article in Familia volume 2 number 3, pps 96-109 [1987], 'Some Ulster-Scots and their origin in Scotland', by Dr John Andrew Oliver.

¹¹ See my article on this CD of the Hillhouse family of Aghanloo/Dunboe and Irvine.

¹² Captain William Holland's only son Richard Holland drowned in the Faughan River. One consequence of this tragedy was that Captain Holland's only daughter, Elizabeth (she married John Ash in 1668) inherited the Holland properties, which became the Ashbrook estate [TH Mullin, Coleraine in by-gone centuries, ibid, p.111].

¹³ 'The banns between Cornet Clement Forester and mistress Elizabeth Holland, of Ballykelly, in the parish of Tamlaght Finlagan, were thrice published before the congregation of the aforesaid parish by John Williams, Registrar of that parish, as by the said registers certificate now in the custody of John Hanford Esq., (Mayor of L'Derry), appears'. The marriage of Cornet Clement Forester and mistress Elizabeth Holland was solemnized before John Hanford, Mayor of L'Derry, (Mr Thomas Cole, John Leverett and others being present), at Londonderry this 22nd of October, 1656'.

could have been a military connection with Captain William Holland. A search of the IGI database revealed that Clement Forrester was a Londoner and the son of a William Forrester, '*Clement Forester christened 1st October 1621 in Saint Katharine by the Tower, London, England son of William Forester.*'

Although Clement Forrester was a commissioned officer he was not a wealthy man but his wife had inherited the Fishmongers' lease. In the Civil Survey of 1654 she was listed as a major landlord with c.760 acres. She was described as an English Protestant. The minutes of December 20 1658 records '*To this court came Colonel Lawrence Bromfield, who has lately returned from Ireland, and brought a survey of this Company's lands, which was now openly read. He further informed the Court that two third parts of the manor of Walworth, leased to Christopher Freeman, deceased, which is now in the possession of one Mr. Forrester, who married the widow of the said Christopher Freeman, who is "but of a mean condicon" and as he conceives not able to pay the arrears of rent, and intends, as he hears, to yield up possessions of the lands in May next. If the Company intends to take any course for recovering what may be "gotten" from them for the arrears, he thinks the same should be done speedily, and he offered to write to one Mr Brasier, a gentleman near thereto, who would deal effectually for this Company therein....* [pp 997-9 of the transcription Court of Assistants 20 December 1658 (pp 709, 800) page 710 to 799 omitted in pagination].

Clement Forester died in 1658 and his estate declared intestate on 19th of June; the creditor for his estate was William Jackson, probably of the Coleraine Jacksons, [T490/1A-H], but news of his death may not have reached London by December 1658. It was Eliza Forrester, [alias Holland formerly Freeman] who was named in the Acts of Settlement granted under Charles II c. 1661-1664 [O'Harte, 'Irish landed Gentry', Dublin, 1887 p. 458]. A William Forrester was a resident of Ballykelly in the 1663 hearth rolls [Samuel Martin 'Historical Gleanings from County Derry, p. 14]. This was possibly a brother of Clement Forester or perhaps his father.

Clement Forester had links with Coleraine as his creditor was William Jackson who would take over the McClelland/Maxwell lease on the Clothworkers' company providing one possible connection between the Clothworkers' and Fishmongers' estates. But perhaps the key player in this respect was Paul Brasier.

Paul Brasier

In 1658 Paul Brasier was mentioned in the minutes as a receiver of the rents for the Fishmongers' estate. This is probably the Paul Brasier who was High Collector of subsidies and who in 1665 was confirmed in possession of certain lands forfeited in the 1641 rebellion. Brasier emerged as a prominent figure in the restoration period as he managed to secure 5,355 acres, all of which he acquired by the purchase of debentures from Cromwellian soldiers. Brasier made a rapid rise up the social and economic ladder. Paul Brasier married Sarah, daughter of Tristram Beresford, [and on her husband's death she remarried Edward Carey]. Brasier's father-in-law Tristram Beresford managed to almost triple the size of his estate in the restoration period [to 14,526 acres] and he also got a knighthood. It was the Beresfords who would wrestle control of the Fishmongers' estate from the Freeman/Higgins descendants.

The Brasier family was prominent in Coleraine in the seventeenth century and Paul Brasier was undoubtedly connected to the Coleraine family [he may have been a son of Paul Brasier, the Mayor of Coleraine, 1638] but in the 1659 census was listed as a gentleman 'tituladoe' resident in Muff [Eglinton], Faughanvale parish together with John Kilner, Esq. In the 1663 hearth returns Brasier was listed as a resident of Monnaboy, Faughanvale. As receiver of the rents for the Fishmongers he would certainly have some influence on the placing of new tenants from the Coleraine estates. Brasier was appointed as a receiver to collect rent from those in arrears in 1659. A note of 28 Feb 1658/9 states '*that Mr Brasier do receive this company's rent due the 1st November last from the said Nicholas Lane*'. On 25 Sept 1660 Paul Brasier was described as the 'Company's agent' ¹⁴ so he was a man of considerable influence. It is entirely possible that Brasier enticed better tenants from the Coleraine area to settle on the Fishmongers' estate. In 1663 John Forrest would be in Drummond under Nicholas Lane.

Nicholas Lane

The Civil Survey of 1654 shows Nicholas Lane, a resident of Ballykelly in 1663 [with two hearths] as the landlord of Drummond townland. Lane was a significant leaseholder on the Fishmongers' estate and his estate included the townlands of Ballykeen and Drummond, plus half of Ballykelly [Civil Survey of 1654]. In 1658 Nicholas Lane was in possession of one third of the manor of Walworth as he had married Jane the widow of James Higgons [junior] and was involved with James Askew who had married one of the daughters of James Higgons. The minutes of 5 June 1660 suggested a problem on the estate with various parties disturbing tenants on the manor:

¹⁴ Brasier was deceased by 1681 when his son Kilner Brasier, a minor, was involved in a dispute with Donogh O'Mullan over the townland of Cloghan, Balteagh [T808/11353].

‘neither Mr. Henry Finch, named in [Lane’s] letter nor his wife, nor Mr. Askew nor any other person whatsoever, have any authority from this Company to intermeddle with any of their lands or to disturb any of their tenants’ [p. 1114 of the transcription Court of Assistants Held at the Garden House in Lime Street 5 June 1660 p.876]. Lane would have little trouble enticing John Forrest to move to Drummond as the land was of superior quality and fertility and closer to the village of Ballykelly.

Paul Brasier also had dealings with Nicholas Lane. The Fishmonger minutes dated 27 May 1662 stated that *‘a letter be written to Mr Nicholas Lane in Ireland to acknowledge him to be this company’s tenant for the lands in his occupation (leased to James Higgons deceased) --- he first paying Mr Brasier the rent reserved to this company by the lease’*. Soon, however, the Beresfords would get control of the Fishmongers’ estate. The minutes of 1 February 1663/4 stated that *‘Mr Brasier shall be desired to publish openly in the church of the Manor of Walworth the time for letting the leases, as soon as may be, so that all whom it may concern may have notice thereof’*. There ensued a bidding auction for the manor of Walworth. The Fishmongers decided to lease the estate to Randal Beresford Esq, afterwards baronet, for a fine of £1125, and for the term of 41 years at £200 yearly rent from 1st May 1665 [T808/11309].

We have no way of knowing if John Forrest settled first in Dunboe or came directly to the Roe valley from Scotland but there were individuals like Forrester, Brasier and Lane who had influence with the Londoners’ plantations and could have enticed tenants to make the switch between estates. Family tradition was strong that we descend from one common progenitor who had settled close to Limavady and **I was certain that John Forrest of Drummond was the family patriarch**. The descendants of John Forrest of Drummond would appear in the standard ‘census substitutes’ for the eighteenth century.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY RECORDS [The Roe Valley]

Forrest families would become established in three contiguous parishes in the 18th century, namely **Tamlaght Finlagan, Bovevagh and Balteagh**. The 1740 Protestant Householders’ survey recorded Thomas Forrest in Drummond, Tamlaght Finlagan and John Forrest in Carrick, Bovevagh, [west of the river Roe]. The 1766 religious returns notes John and James Forrest in Carrick [Bovevagh] and William Forrest in Drumadreen/Mulkeeragh in Bovevagh. The 1796 Flax returns lists Thomas and William Forrest in Bovevagh and James Forrest in Balteagh. The records suggest that the main stem of the family remained in Drummond until the mid-18th century but would later move in a south-easterly direction and only a few miles to the highlands of Dromore-Magheramore not far from Ballykelly. An early branch of the family was also established in the parish of Bovevagh represented by a John Forrest in Carrick in 1740, [the primogenitor of the Bovevagh Forrest line?].

FORREST LOCATION MAP IN THE ROE VALLEY [pre-Famine]



Here I intend to outline the development of the Tamlaght Finlagan and the Bovevagh families, two Forrest streams, in anticipation of being able to make a positive link to our Balteagh line.

FORREST IN TAMLAGHT FINLAGAN [BALLYKELLY] PARISH

An early register of baptisms [1699-1710] and marriages [1600-1740] is extant for Ballykelly Presbyterian Church and I consulted the original in the Presbyterian Historical Society, Belfast. Four Forrest marriages were recorded [but no baptisms] so the family had survived the vicissitudes of the Williamite Wars.

Marriage proclamations, Ballykelly Presbyterian Church, 1699-1740 (Presbyterian Historical Society).

Tho: Forest & Barbara Snodgrass both gave in there names to be proclaimed in order to marriage Feb'ry 21 1706/7 & were married March 25 1707.

Wm Forest in Ballykelly & Agnes Beverland in M'Caskie [Macosquin] are allowed proclamation June 25 1714.

Matthew Forrest in Ballykelly & Margret Smith in M'Caskie [Macosquin] are allowed proclaimtion Jenr 21 1720/21

Tho: Forrest & Margaret Anderson both in Ballykelly are allowed proclamation Feby 17th 1721/22

Four Forrest marriages were proclaimed in the period between 1706 and 1722, which may again indicate one common line of descent. All were members of the Ballykelly congregation and I suggest that they were all third generation, possibly all grandchildren of the original settler John Forrest.

A few observations on the Forrest marriages in the Ballykelly registers:

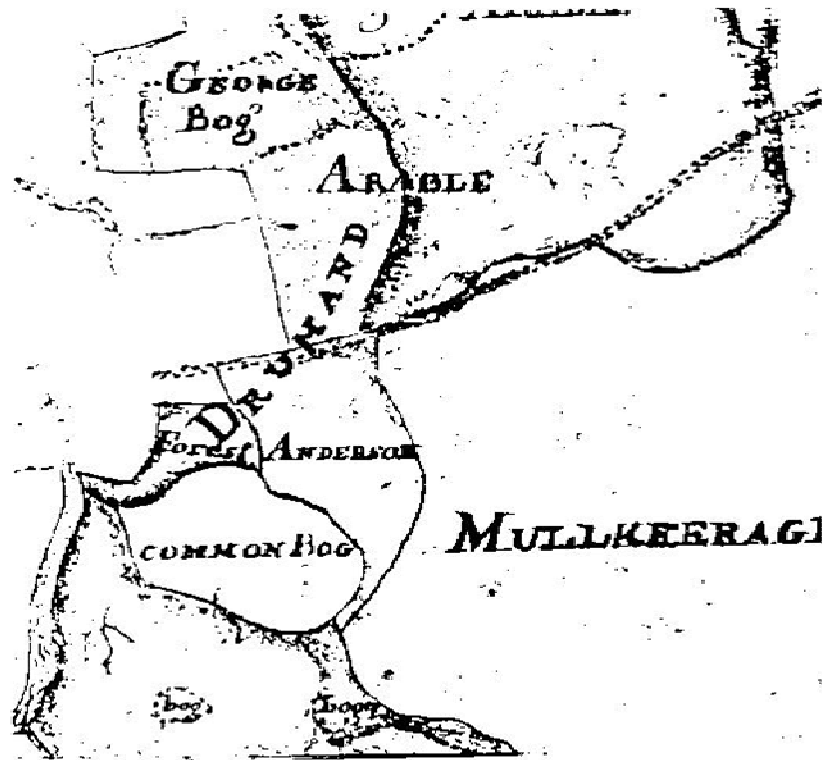
Matthew was not a name carried in any Forrest line in the Roe valley so it possible he was an emigrant or that he may have been a Forrester. However, the Christian names John, William and Thomas were all common to the various Forrest descendants in the Roe valley. In the 1901 census for the Roe valley ten Forrest households were noted; five heads of household were recorded as John, two as William and one as Thomas.

Only one Forrest household was listed in the 1740 returns for Tamlaght Finlagan parish [despite four Forrest marriages recorded in the Ballykelly register] an indicator that the householders' survey is defective in some way, as it clearly underestimates the population [it may well be a list of hearth returns]. It is also possible that some of these early Forrest families migrated to the New World, as there was a known migration in 1718 from the valley of the Roe [and from the Connolly estate in particular: T/2825/C/11/1]. Two of the early marriages were to spouses from the parish of Macosquin, reflecting the social networking of the settler community even into the early 18th century [and perhaps indicating an earlier connection to the Coleraine area?].

What is clear from the available evidence is that there was a small nucleus of independent Forrest households in the Roe valley by end of the eighteenth century most likely all descended from one common ancestor and therefore related.

Research on the Drummond family was greatly aided by the discovery of a map showing details of the Fishmongers' estate in 1732 [D/519/1], entitled '*A Correct Map of the Manor of Walworth in the County of L'Derry, Survey'd for the Rt. Hon. L'd Viscount Tyrone by Wm Starrat, A.D. MDCCXXXII*'. My attention was immediately drawn to the townland of Tamnymullan, which I discovered was formerly part of Nedd townland. The map also revealed that the southern portion of Drummond townland [south of the main Derry to Limavady road] had been subdivided into two farms, and the names of the occupying families appear neatly inscribed - Forest and Anderson. The Forrest farm was to be found at the southern end of Drummond, north of Ballykeen and the common bog, and east of the Anderson farm.

The 1732 map, on the next page, is very significant because it indicates that the original stem family had been resident in Drummond continuously from 1663-1732. Additionally, the 1740 Protestant householders' survey shows that the occupant of the Drummond farm was a Thomas Forrest more than likely a grandson of the original settler John Forrest.



1740 Householders' Returns for Drummond (Presbyterian Historical Soc).

2947	William George
2948	David George
2949	Thomas Anderson
2950	William Wilson
2951	Thomas Forrest

FORREST AND ANDERSON FAMILIES OF DRUMMOND AND CULMORE

Thomas Forrest of Drummond married Margaret Anderson in Ballykelly Presbyterian Church on 17th February 1721/2. Ballykelly Presbyterian baptismal register [1699-1710] identifies a James Anderson of the Ballykelly congregation having issue: Margaret [27 July 1701], James [January 1703] and Joseph [25 February 1705]. I suggest that Margaret Anderson born 1701 was probably the spouse of Thomas Forrest and it is likely that Thomas Anderson, who occupied the Drummond farm in 1740 was a brother.

A focused and detailed search of the records pertaining to Drummond had partial success. I uncovered an early list of tenants on the manor of Walworth dated 15 February 1687 and it was surprising that no Forrest was registered amongst the forty-five named tenants, however, a John Anderson and a William Anderson were included but no address was included¹⁵. This perhaps indicates that Thomas Forrest may have come into possession of part of the Anderson farm in Drummond as part of the marriage settlement [1720/21].

NEW LEASE OF FISHMONGERS ESTATE

The Earl of Tyrone [a Beresford] came into possession of a lease for the manor of Walworth from the Fishmongers' company on 24 June 1747 for 61 years (no lives mentioned), in consideration of the surrender of the previous lease of 1704 to General Frederick Hamilton deceased, a fine of £6000 and an annual rent of £400 [MIC9B/11]. In 1747, the estate was re-created and new leases given out by the new landlord. With regard to Drummond there was a significant change in tenancy in this period with regard to the lower part of the townland. On the 24 October 1748 the Rt. Hon Marcus Earl of Tyrone leased the whole of Lower Drummond [sic] to the

¹⁵ [T808/1130] Chancery Bill 13 June 1701 Sir Tristram Beresford of Ballygally [Ballygawley] Co Tyrone by son of Sir Randal Beresford bt, & his wife Nichollas Sophia a daughter of Hugh Lord Glenawly & sister & co-heir of Wm Lord Glenawly V[ersus] Col Frederick Hamilton and his wife Jane Hamilton alias Beresford sister of the Plaintiff Sir Tristram.

Incorporated Society in Dublin for promoting English Protestant Schools in Ireland¹⁶. The Protestant Schools' society became landlords for Lower Drummond containing 64 acres English plantation measure and an additional four acres of land adjoining in possession of William Patten.

It seems that the Forrest and Anderson families lost out in the re-arrangement of the Fishmonger's estate under the Earl of Tyrone¹⁷. They may of course have re-located to another part of the Fishmongers' estate but most likely they moved to the nearby Conolly estate [later Ogilby], as Forrest families came to reside in the townlands of Dromore, Magheramore and Culmore Upper. The Forrest families that resided in these contiguous townlands would retain a close association with the Anderson family of Culmore Upper [and I suspect that they were related to the Andersons of Drummond]. The Andersons were in Culmore at an early date. An early rent roll for the Manor of Limavady 1725 has a recorded transaction, '*July 10th received from Culmore Up[er] tenants for inserting a life in place of David Anderson deceased, payment of £3.17,06*' [T2825/C/11/8]. There were Forrests and Andersons in Culmore in the 1831 census; and a cluster of Forrest families also in neighbouring Dromore and Magheramore.

The 1766 religious census for Tamlaght Finlagan is a statistical return only with no names listed. However, I did discover that a John Forrest was an elder of Ballykelly Presbyterian church in 1771 [Derry Standard, May 1908] and it is possible that he was a son of Thomas Forrest and Margaret Anderson and I would place his date of birth c.1730.

By the turn of the century it seems that descendants of the Drummond family had settled a few miles south-east to the highlands at Magheramore and Dromore. A Sara Forrest of 'the Highlands' was a young communicant Ballykelly Presbyterian Church in 1816, which suggests a birth date of c. 1798-1800, so the family may have been established in the Highlands [Dromore/Magheramore] at the turn of the century. David Forrest [c.1765-1838] resided in the townland of Magheramore and his brother John Forrest in Dromore. It is possible that they were the sons of John Forrest the elder of 1771 and grandsons of Thomas Forrest and his wife Margaret Anderson of Drummond. That David Forrest named his only son Thomas may indicate this. There remained strong ties of kinship with the Anderson family well into the nineteenth century. It seems that the Andersons of Drummond and Culmore were related and both had strong ties with the Forrest family of the neighbouring townlands of Dromore and Magheramore.

FORREST OF MAGHERAMORE AND DROMORE [HIGHLANDS]

The families of Dromore and Magheramore became landowners and as a result they were relatively easy to trace - I have copious references to this family in my notebooks. I believe that this family were of direct lineal descent from Thomas Forrest and his wife Margaret Anderson of Drummond, Ballykelly, the main stem family were freeholders, made wills and belonged to the Presbyterian congregation of Ballykelly. Both Magheramore and Dromore were part of the Ogilby estate with its manor at Pellipar.

The key figure in this line was a David Forrest of Magheramore, Ballykelly, [c.1765-1838], whose will was probated in the Prerogative Court in 1838. During the 1820s we find him buying up land in both Dromore and Magheramore. He became a substantial farmer and I have uncovered evidence that he was also a tithe-proctor - a number of receipts from 1822 and 1823 show him receiving tithes payments for the Reverend John Harvey from the Templemoyle farm of David McClorg [T/1227/56/D]. There is also a possibility that he was agent on the estate of Robert Ogilby, as he counter-signed a number of leases concerning the manor of Pellipar, and he was described as 'Mr Forest, farmer and agent' in a parliamentary enquiry into the poorer classes in Ireland, concerning the parish of Drumachose in 1835 [BPP: Selection of Parochial examinations relative to the Destitute Classes in Ireland, 1835]. In 1831 David Forrest was the head of household in Magheramore with 4males/1 female present [and 2 female servants], all were Presbyterian.

An examination of a number of registered deeds shows David Forrest of Magheramore buying up land in both Dromore and Magheramore [principally from Morrisons, Hunters and Wilsons].

- 1818 - 22 acres in Maghrymore [726, 526, 496061]
- 1825 [January] - 22 acres and half of a flax mill in Dromore [800,71,540006]
- 1825 [April] - 22 acres Dromore [800, 72, 540007]

¹⁶ Registry of Deeds; volume 131 p.416, memorial number 89654; Earl of Tyrone to Protestant Schools Society.

¹⁷ It was noted (MS 5571, Guildhall Library, London; Fishmongers Court Minute Books vol. 12, p. 3 & 85) that prior to 1820 Protestant tenants held their holdings under sub-leases given by the Earl of Tyrone from 1747 to 1754. These were held under the same terms of the Earl so they expired in 1820. Hence, many of the existing tenants were direct descendants of the 1747-54 leasees [a John Campbell, was a tenant of the Fishmongers in Lower Drummond in the 1820s].

- 1826 – 13, 3r, 29p Maghrymore [813, 230, 547965]
- 1826 – 22 acres in Maghrymore mortgaged from William Hunter junior of Maghrymore [813, 300, 548035].

The deeds throw up some interesting details, names of tenants on neighbouring farms and even names of individual fields but little by way of concrete family information. The two deeds of 1825 were witnessed and signed by David Anderson of Culmore. Also David Forrest's son, Thomas, would marry Sarah Hunter, [possibly a daughter of William Hunter, jnr of Magheramore]. By 1833, David Forrest was listed as one of the most prominent and progressive farmers belonging to the Kenaught branch of Northwest Agricultural Society [O.S. Memoirs of Ireland, Parishes of Co. Londonderry, 1833-5, Roe valley Central volume 9, Institute of Irish Studies: Q.U.B, 1991, p. 104].

David Forrest of Maghrymore, Co. Derry farmer made his will 15 May 1837 and died on 27 April 1838, the will proved in the Prerogative Court on 27 November 1838. The effects of his estate were left in trust to John Forrest of Dromore [his brother¹⁸] and Thomas Forrest¹⁹ of Magheramore, the inventory of the will amounting to £350-3-10. The testator left legacies of £50 to daughter Sarah and £30 to daughter Letitia [NAI: 1WR/1838/F/546]. The value of David Forrest's estate was modest amounting to £369 sterling but evidence suggests that David Forrest had offset much of his property before his death. The Dromore lands [purchased by David Forrest] appear to have come into the possession of James Forrest [c.1800-1856], who was probably his nephew and the Magheramore farm was taken over by his son Thomas Forrest [c. 1811-1889].

The Magheramore family

David Forrest of Magheramore had at least three daughters and one son. A daughter, Marianne Forrest married firstly, John Ballentine, a publican from Limavady, listed as an innkeeper in the 1839 New Directory in Catherine Street, Limavady. Ballentine appears to have died before 1846, as he is not listed in Slater's Directory for that year and his wife Marianne re-married in 1847 to John Hyndman of Ballymore. Another daughter, Letitia Forrest married John McClenaghan and had issue John McClenaghan, baptized on 5 June 1830, in Bovevagh Presbyterian Church [MIC1P/229]. Extant emigrant letters for the McClurg, Pollock and Forrest families can be found in the PRONI archives and give a wonderful insight into family and social history in the early nineteenth century [T/1227]. We find that John and Letitia [Forrest] McClenaghan subsequently emigrated, as in a letter dated 16 November 1832, Ann Forrest writes, '*you may let Mr. David Forrest know that his daughter, Mrs McClenaghan desires me to mention her to her father. They are gone back to Oxford, that is about fifty miles from this city, and I did not hear from them since*', [T/1227/26]. The third daughter Sarah Forrest appears to have been unmarried and was listed as a communicant in 1859 in Ballykelly Presbyterian Church.

Thomas Forrest [c. 1811-1889] appears to have been the only son of David Forrest of Magheramore. He married Sarah Hunter and had issue two daughters [MIC/1P/208: Ballykelly Presbyterian registers]; firstly Keturah Forrest who was baptised 25 February 1837; she married John Long [son of Robert Long and Margaret Young of Magheramore] in 1856 in Carluke, Lanarkshire, Scotland but died prematurely in 1861. The second daughter, Sarah Forrest, who was baptised 15 March 1839, married the Reverend George Trimble Rea of Ballydonnelly, Rasharkin [son of John Rea and Ann Trimble] in Elmwood Presbyterian Church, Belfast in 1866. Of course what is of interest here is the occurrence of the Christian name Keturah, which ties this family most definitely with the Haberdashers shop in Limavady in 1839. **I suspect then that the named proprietor of the shop in 1839, Keturah Forrest was probably the mother of Thomas Forrest, and therefore, the wife of David Forrest of Magheramore who died 1838.**

We find Thomas Forrest listed as the owner of 45 acres in Magheramore in 1876 [Landowners of Ireland]. By this time his daughter Sarah Forrest [who had married the Reverend George T Rea in 1866], had left for the missions in Surat, India with her husband on behalf of the Presbyterian Assembly. Sarah Forrest Rea was by all accounts a bright and intelligent lady who was converted during the great revival of 1859 and was the author of 'A Broken Journey', a history of the life of Mrs Beatty, a missionary to India ²⁰ [published 1894]. Their son was the

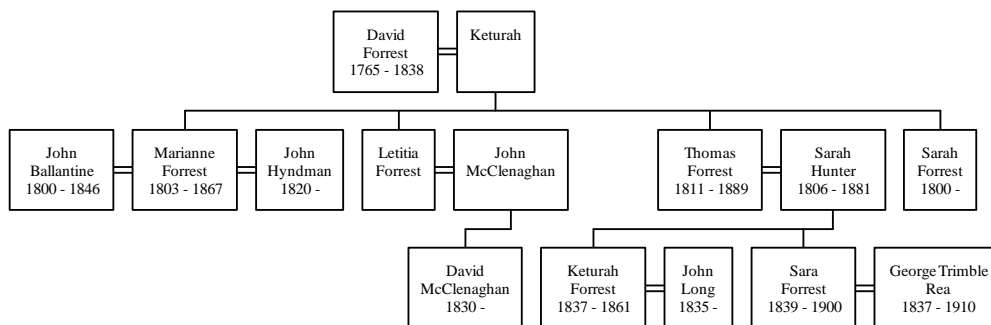
¹⁸ I suspect that John Forrest of Dromore was the father of James Forrest [1799-1856] listed in Dromore in both the tithes [1826] and census [1831].

¹⁹ It is possible that this was David Forrest's son born 1811, however, there was another Thomas in Magheramore at this time. A Thomas Forrest [sic] was listed as stipend collector for Ballykelly Presbyterian Church c.1823 [PHS: Ballykelly Presbyterian registers, book 2], and a Thomas Forrest was listed in the tithes of 1826 for Magheramore with a farm of 9a, 2r, 0p landlord Ogilby, paying tithe of £1,15, ½ [FIN 5A253/A]. Thomas Forrest was also listed in Magheramore in the 1831 census. David Forrest was also listed in the tithe book for Magheramore with a farm of 20a, 0r, 3p, paying tithe of £1,15, ½ landlord [penciled] as Thomas Forrest. This may indicate that Thomas Forrest was the brother or even the father of David Forrest.

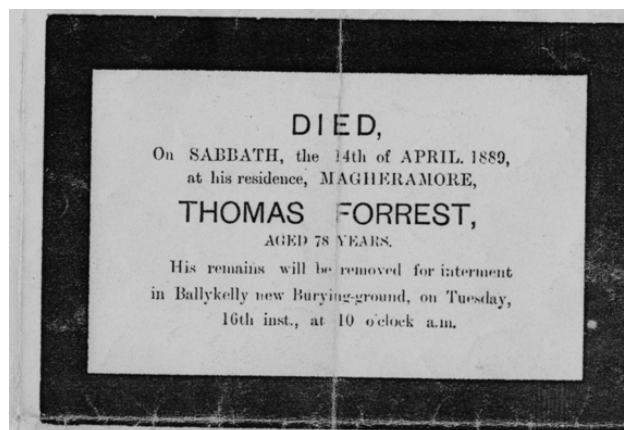
²⁰ Obituary of Rev George W.D Rea, BA in 'The Witness' newspaper, Friday 25 March, 1921, p.5.

Reverend George Wallace Dixon Rea, Minister in First Coleraine, 1909-1921. Below I include the Magheramore family tree descended from David Forrest [Note: I suspect that Keturah Forrest of the Haberdashery was the wife of David Forrest and so include her in this tree].

Descendants of David Forrest



The funeral card of Thomas Forrest [courtesy of Thomas Simpson of the Moys] marks the end of the Forrest line in Magheramore – ‘*Died on the Sabbath, the 14th April 1889, at his residence, Magheramore, Thomas Forrest, aged 78 years. His remains will be removed for internment in Ballykelly new burying ground, on Tuesday, 16th inst, at 10 o'clock a.m.*’. Jacob Henry Horner subsequently purchased the Forrest farm at Magheramore [VAL 12B/31/24C p.62]



The Dromore family

James Forrest [c.1799-1856] of Dromore, most likely a nephew of David Forrest of Magheramore married c. 1827, Margaret Sherrard ²¹ and they had issue nine children: Sarah Jane 1828, David 1830, Mary Anne 1832, William 1835, James 1839, Margaret 1841, Samuel 1843, Elizabeth 1846 and John 1848. In 1831 James Forrest was head of household in Dromore with 4males/2 females [and 2 female servants], with seven occupants registered as Presbyterian and one as Catholic.

James Forrest was a farmer but also acted as a rates collector for Limavady Poor Law Union [P.L.U] from 1843 and his surety was a James Anderson from Culmore [BG/18/A/1 p.175]. We find James Forrest's death noted in the Limavady P.L.U minutes on 26 May 1856 [BG/18/A/5 p. 112]. His son David Forrest took over the collection of the rates until his premature death in 1860 [BG/18/A/6 p. 95]; Samuel Forrest who had been helping his brother took up the job only to resign in 1864 [BG/18/A/7 p. 215] and he subsequently emigrated to Australia to join his brothers William and John Forrest. Samuel Forrest married 7 December 1867, Isabella, daughter of Mr Richard Wright of Ipswich [Brisbane Courier: 19 December 1867]. He was a book-keeper in the employ of Messrs Clarke, Hodgson and Co in Ipswich.

Both William and John Forrest succeeded in business and politics in Queensland and merit mention in the Australian Dictionary of Biography, [Volume 8, Melbourne University press, 1981, pp. 551-552]. They were initially pastoralists but would go on to be successful businessmen in Brisbane and became chairman of various companies. William Forrest, who had emigrated aboard the Ravenscraig in 1853 was appointed a life member of the Legislative Council of Queensland in 1883 and a significant obituary appeared in the Brisbane Courier upon

²¹ Possibly a daughter of James Sherrard of the Largy. There is a recorded baptism [P.H.S: Ballykelly Presbyterian register, book two], 'James Sherrard, Largy, a daughter born 2 September, baptized 1 October 1808, Margaret'.

his death in 1903 [24 April 1903, p. 4]. His brother, John Forrest of Brisbane married in 1881 Edith Irene Hanford, a grand-niece of Hamilton Hume and had issue Philip McIwraith Forrest [1883-1964], and William Tyler Forrest [Obituary: Brisbane Courier, 30 September 1911, p. 12]. Despite their Presbyterian up-bringing both William and John Forrest were given an Anglican burial and were laid to rest in the Church of England section of Toowong cemetery.

Their sister, Miss Margaret Forrest, who initially trained to be a doctor at Edinburgh College, was commissioned by the Presbyterian Church as a medical missionary to the Zenana Mission at Surat in India in 1876 and opened up a dispensary, which was soon seeing 10,000 women annually [Laurence Kirkpatrick, 'Presbyterians in Ireland' p. 85]. Known locally as 'Missy Doctor', Margaret Forrest became the best known and perhaps best beloved European in the city [Ten Years of Zenana Mission Work by M.C.B, 1894, Belfast, p. 14]. Margaret Forrest died sometime between 1894 and 1897.²² The family in the USA have Margaret Forrest's bible presented to her by her friends at home, '*Miss Forrest on the eve of her departure to India, dated 2 November 1876, Belfast, Zenana Mission*'.²³

James Forrest, the last remaining son in Ireland continued to farm the land and was a grain merchant [Derry Almanac and Directory, 1876-77]. He was employed as rates collector²⁴ for Limavady PLU in 1864 in place of his brother Samuel [BG/18/A/7 p.220] however, James Forrest got into financial difficulties due to irregularities with his collections [BG/18/A/9 p.175] but was helped out by his surety and brother in law Robert Kilpatrick [son of Robert Kilpatrick and Jane Dysart of Carlaragh] who had married his sister Mary Ann Forrest in 1860. The Kilpatrick family subsequently emigrated to Gloucester, Virginia, USA [where they can be found in the 1880 census as Kirkpatrick] and were joined by their unmarried sister-in-law, Elizabeth Forrest. Another sister, Jane Forrest who had married John McKinney of Glendermott was residing in Kilfennan in 1887 [D/865/7]. Margaret Forrest, the mother of the Dromore family died in 1879 but her will was not probated until 1884 and subsequently the Dromore farm was sold by public auction at the Town Hall in Limavady at 12.00p.m on 19th October 1885 [NAI: LEC/149/52]. James Forrest, the last of the family in Ireland was acting as a 'general agent' operating out of Shipquay Street, Derry in the early 1880s [D865/7] emigrated sometime after 1887, at first to Canada, took a stroke and then joined his relations in America and died in a nursing home in Devon, Pennsylvania [Shirley Fayan family notes].



James Forrest Jun. [Dromore]

The Griffith's revision book lists Henry Tyler on the Forrest farm in Dromore c.1888 [VAL 12B/31/24C, p.66].²⁵

²² Will of William Forrest of Queensland dated 22 March 1894 'to pay my sister Margaret Forrest, the annual sum of £100 sterling during her life'. A codicil was inserted into the above will on 17 February 1897 'revoke the trust – contained for the payment – to my sister Margaret of the annual sum of £100 during her life'.

²³ Shirley Fayan of Laurel, New Jersey is the great, great grand-daughter of James Forrest [1799-1856] of Dromore through the Kilpatrick line and provided the photograph of James Forrest, junior.

²⁴ BG18/A/7 p. 220 minutes dated 19/9/1864, 'proposed by Henry Tyler, Esq that James Forrest be appointed Rate Collector in the place of Mr Samuel Forrest'. James Forrest was ordered to close his collection on 6 April 1868 [BG18/A/9 p. 174] and David Dunne was appointed as his replacement on 1 August 1868 [ibid p. 174].

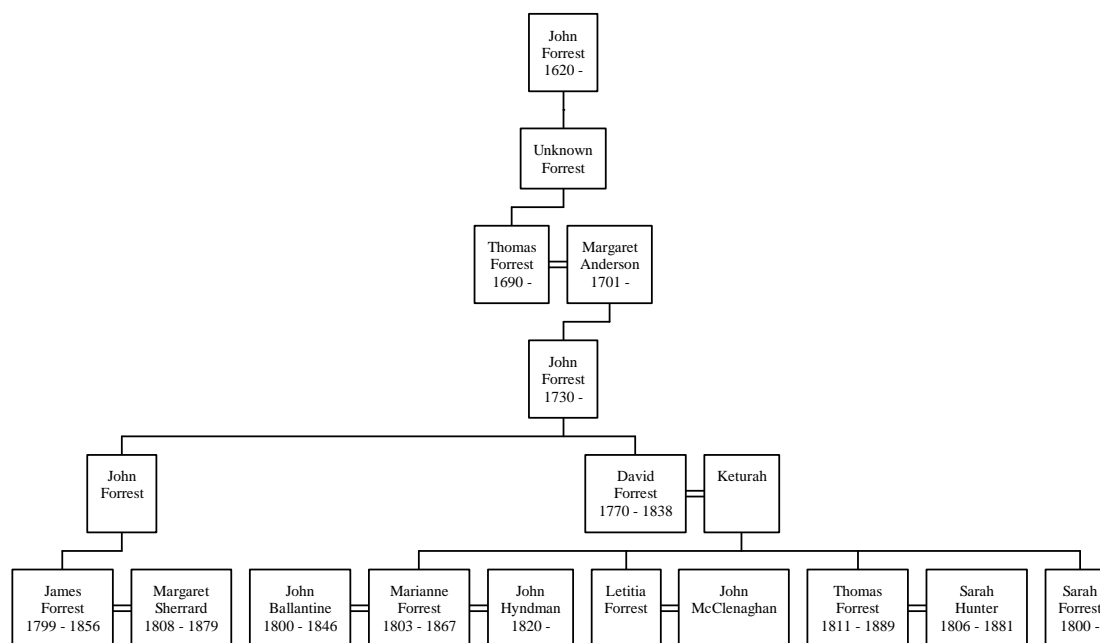
²⁵ John Forrest [1848-1911] in Australia named his son William Tyler Forrest so there may have been a family connection [perhaps John Forrest's maternal grandmother was a Tyler?].

The Dromore family headstone can be found in Tamlaght Old Burying Ground; it is a horizontal stone neatly inscribed and can be found near the southern wall of the old derelict church. As most of the family emigrated there is reference to only three family members on the tombstone:

‘Here lie the remains of James Forrest of Dromore who departed this life 18 May 1856, Aged 56 years, Also of his son David Forrest who departed this life 5 March 1860 aged 28 years, Also Margaret, relict of James Forrest died 9 April 1879, Aged 68 years’.

I have decided to include an outline descendant tree for the Tamlaght Finlagan [Ballykelly] branch of the tree [going back to John Forrest of the hearth rolls, 1663]. **This is highly speculative and should be regarded as a hypothetical template only but it is a useful means of trying to make connections between the generations and a framework of reference towards further research:**

Descendants of John Forrest



Note: It is possible that there are additional generations that may have been missed and it is possible that Thomas Forrest of Drummond was a great grandson of the original patriarch rather than a grandson. I cannot prove that John Forrest the elder of Ballykelly Presbyterian in 1771 was the father of David and John Forrest, however, given location, status and dates it is possible. I also realise that it is speculation to place this John Forrest as the son of Thomas and Margaret Anderson Forrest. As already mentioned I postulate this scenario as the best possible hypothesis or template from which to pursue further research to validate the hypothesis or undermine it. However the line of descent from David Forrest [c.1770-1838] of Magheramore and John Forrest of Dromore has been proven in the documentary records.

FORREST IN BOVEVAGH PARISH

By 1740 we find a second branch of the family established in the townland of Carrick in the parish of Bovevagh [and they appear to have been tenants or labourers so there was less documentary trace]. Bovevagh parish is well served by several useful genealogical records – the 1740 householders’ survey, 1766 religious returns, 1796 flax lists, 1826 tithes, 1831 census and 1857/8 Griffiths valuation. The earliest of the name recorded in Carrick was the John Forrest that we find in the 1740 householder returns, perhaps, a younger son who broke away from Drummond to find employment? In the 1766 religious survey we find three Forrest households in the parish of Bovevagh, all recorded as Protestants of the Church of Scotland i.e. Presbyterians. In 1766, James and a John Forest were resident in the townland of Carrick, west of the Roe and William Forrest in Drumadreen/Mulkeeragh, east of the Roe.

What we note is the gradual internal migration of families towards the river Roe with the expansion of the linen industry along the river and subsequent employment opportunities. As the population grew rapidly there was constant pressure on the land, and younger sons were forced to migrate to land that was being reclaimed, as in the

case of the Carrick and the Largy with the clearance of scrubby woodland. Also, along the Roe valley the linen economy was expanding with prominent local families involved, such as Alexander, Moody, McCausland, Ogilby and Smith. The Smiths of Tamlaght and Limavady were responsible for developing bleaching in Carrick Lower from the lead mill that started at Carrick rocks. In 1782 there were three bleach greens situated in this lead mill lead from Carrick rocks at Lower Carrick, upper Terrydremond and lower Terrydremond. The 1796 flax lists reflect the importance of linen to the local economy and here we find a William Forrest [Templemoyle] and Thomas Forrest [perhaps Carrick West] receiving two wheels in Bovevagh parish and James Forrest in Balteagh parish [Terrydremond or Carrick East].

Templemoyle, Bovevagh and McClurg relations

Joseph McClarrog [sic], listed in Templemoyle in 1740, had a son David McClurg who married Ann Pollock [daughter of David Pollock and Hesther George]. David McClurg was involved in an anti-tithe disturbance in 1795, which led to the death of Bryan McCloskey of Leeke. It later became known as a 'United Irish' case [and also 'McClurg's pratie digging'] but may not have been such at the time of the 1795 events and trial. The arson took place on the night of June 18-19 1795 in Leeke townland, probably on the braes. The case went to trial and the defendants were: David McClurg, Daniel Quigg, James Irwin, J. Douglas, Thomas Powell and William Forrest. The Rev John Harvey [Bovevagh] and Widow McCloskey were the plaintiffs. At the Derry summer assizes Quigg and Irwin were sentenced to be whipped through Dungiven; Douglas, Powell and Forrest paid securities; McClurg was remanded to prison for a year and ultimately was sent to the Court of the King's Bench in Dublin as a writ of habeas corpus in April 1796 [Londonderry Journal Tuesday 15 September, 1795 Issue 1674]. McClurg was re-committed to the Marshalsea court [debtor's jail] in August 1796 [Londonderry Journal Tuesday 16 August, 1796 Issue 17210] so it was his wife Anne McClurg who was listed in the Flax returns in Bovevagh parish in 1796. The documentary trial peters out after 1796 but it is known that David McClurg returned to Templemoyle [he died in 1836].

William Forrest leased part of Templemoyle from A.F Barnard on 3 December 1794 [T/1227/AB] and was listed in the flax returns for Bovevagh parish in 1796. Upon his death it seems that the farm passed to David McClurg, and consisted of some 21 acres at the braes beside the river Roe. A William Forrest was listed in Drumadean/Mulkeeragh in the 1766 religious returns but it is not clear if this was the same man who leased a farm in Templemoyle in 1794. William Forrest, of Templemoyle [born c.1780], possibly a son of William of the 1794 lease, married late in life to Ann McClurg [daughter of David McClurg and Ann Pollock] in 1829 and they emigrated to Philadelphia in July 1831²⁶. Evidence suggests that James Forrest of Terrydoo Walker, Balteagh [Tithes] was most likely descended from the Templemoyle line.²⁷

Carrick, Bovevagh

The last of the Carrick, Bovevagh line was John Forrest, recorded in the tithe book in 1827 [FIN/5A/61], with a farm of 11a, 3r, 8p paying a tithe of £1, 8d. In 1831 his family consisted of two males and two females, all Presbyterian but the family appear to have emigrated as the O.S memoirs for Bovevagh records in 1833, a John Forrest from Carrick, a Presbyterian aged 45 emigrating to New York [T/671/44] and no family was recorded there in Griffith's valuation.

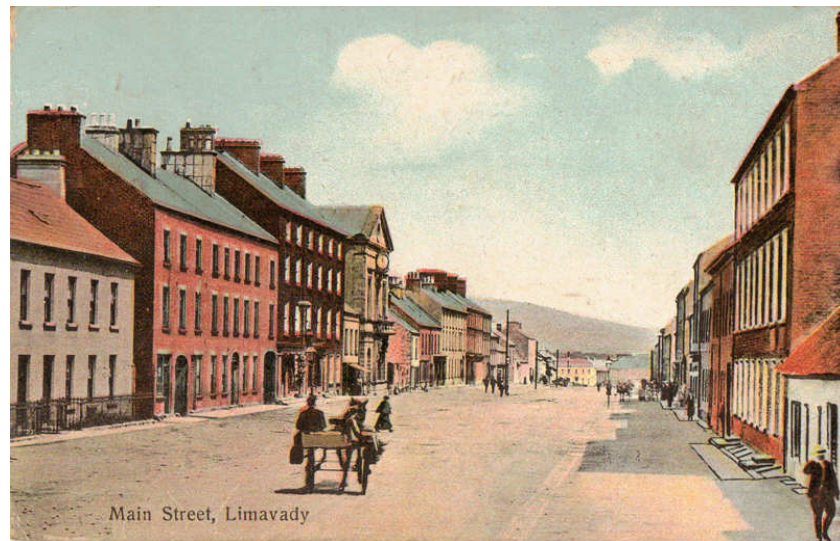
Forrest families were recorded continuously in Carrick, Bovevagh in the 1740 householders' survey [John Forrest], 1776 religious returns [John and James Forest] and the 1831 census [John Forrest]. Carrick, Bovevagh lies directly across the river Roe from Carrick East, in the parish of Balteagh where we have evidence of James Forrest residing from 1811 [registered deed] to 1826 [tithes]. In 1831, two households headed by our antecedents John and Nancy Forrest were recorded in the neighbouring townland of Terrydremond North. Given location and naming patterns it could be suggested that our Balteagh Forrest line were more than likely an off-shoot of the

²⁶ TEMPLEMOYLE LETTERS [T/1227]: Ann's brother David McClurg and his wife Margaret [Watson] moved into Limavady to set up a Haberdashery shop in Market Street in the late 1830s. The Forrest letters also reveal a connection to an Alexander Forrest whom we find in the 1831 census in Dungiven [for additional details on Alexander Forrest see my article in issue two of 'The Winding Roe' magazine, 2003, pages 26-28]. Thomas Forrest, a Presbyterian from Templemoyle, emigrated in 1833, aged twenty-five to Quebec, Canada [T/671/44] and married Margaret Quinn. Robert Forrest, a weaver by trade, of Bovevagh married Margaret Newton in 1833 [PRONI T/2711/2/3 1st Derry Presbyterian Church register] and was listed in Templemoyle in the Griffith's valuation but fell upon hard times and died in Limavady workhouse in 1869 aged 60, thus ending the Templemoyle line.

²⁷ James Forrest married Jane [unknown maiden name] in 1814 [OAP return]. They had issue [all birth dates approximate] John 1818 [had a daughter Nancy born 1851 married Wilson Douglas in 1872], Martha 1824, Ann 1826 [married Samuel Blair], Jane 1828 [married William Thompson], William 1829, Mary Ann 1830 [married Major Morrow 1855], Margaret Jane 1831 [married Robert Blair 1848], Esther 1833 [married John Quigg 1862], Robert 1834, Eliza 1835 [married John McAleese 1878]. The male Terrydoo line is extinct as the sons all remained unmarried a common occurrence amongst Presbyterian men in late nineteenth century. In the 1831 James Ferrett [sic] was listed as head of household with 5 males and 7 females present [all Presbyterian].

family in Carrick, Bovevagh. Thus, it would be possible to trace an unbroken line back to the John Forrest of Carrick of the 1740 householders' survey²⁸.

Other evidence, however, suggests a possible link between our Forrest line and that of the Dromore-Magheramore family given the family tradition concerning the Haberdashery shop²⁹ in Main Street, Limavady [and they were the only families to erect headstones in the nineteenth century].



What distinguishes our direct line in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, however, was the mixed marriage that resulted in a Catholic distaff line a spear Episcopalian line. Of the eleven Forrest households in 1831 only three were Episcopalian, two in Terrydremond and one in Culmore Upper, Tamlaght Finlagan headed by a Martha Forrest [with three females present]. Culmore is not only contiguous to Dromore-Magheramore, but we know that Andersons of Culmore were acting as witnesses to deeds of David Forrest of Magheramore in the 1820s and as surety for James Forrest of Dromore in relation to the collection of rates for Limavady P.L.U in 1843. It is entirely possible that the Terrydremond Forrest family and the Culmore family were related given religious affiliation but it is impossible to be certain.

The origin then of our Balteagh Forrest line remains debatable but we are tantalizingly close to the truth. We would have been greatly assisted if both the 1821 and 1841 censuses had survived, the former being one of the earliest complete censuses in Europe. The reality of course is that I was always going to find evidence linking our Balteagh line to both the Bovevagh and Tamlaght Finlagan families because there were degrees of consanguinity between these families.

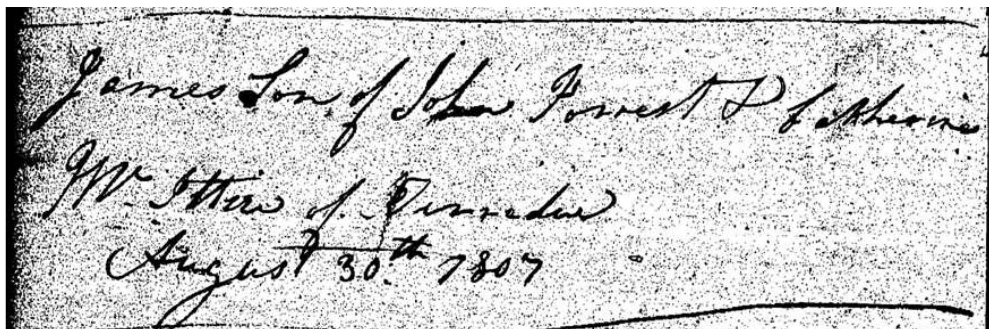
Some of the family tradition remained unproven due to a lack of documentary evidence. It was not possible to confirm a Jackson-Forrest marriage, which obviously occurred before civil registration, nor was I able to identify the family link despite extensive research of Jackson families of the Roe valley³⁰. The local records continued to suggest that the family tradition had substance. James Jackson was listed as an Ironmonger in Main Street, Limavady in 1846 confirming the oral tradition [Slater's Directory], and a Thomas Jackson was a witness to the marriage of my great, great grandfather George Forrest in 1866. Mrs Jackson acted as a sponsor in the baptism of Mary McGuigan [daughter of James McGuigan and Jane Forrest] recorded in St. Mary's Catholic Church on 6 March 1901. Mary McGuigan was my grandfather's half-sister and she died 4th May 2001 in Clifton House nursing home in Belfast, aged 100 years.

²⁸ If the Terrydremond [1831] Forrest family descends from the Carrick, Bovevagh branch then I suspect that either the John or James Forrest recorded in the 1766 religious returns was the direct antecedent of the family.

²⁹ Keturah Forrest listed as the proprietor of the Haberdashers' shop in 1839 may well have been the wife of David Forrest [c.1770-1838] of Magheramore. Our family tradition, of course, links Catherine and Mary Forrest with this shop and if the oral history is true then there must have been some direct relationship with the Magheramore Forrest family. It is possible that Catherine and Mary Forrest were first cousins of David Forrest of Magheramore, [meaning that their fathers were brothers].

³⁰ The Jackson marriage occurred before civil registration [1845]. Perhaps a sister of George Forrest senior may have married into the Jackson family of Limavady. It is possible, but less likely, that John Forrest [born c.1775] married a Jackson. Kinship ties between our direct line and the Jacksons were noted in the records as late as 1901.

Sometimes the documentary evidence remained obscure and difficult to interpret, for example in the registers of Christchurch, Limavady was recorded the christenings of the children of John and Catherine Forrest namely James 1807 [MIC 583/35 p.44], Eliza 1819 and Mary Ann 1823. James Forrest's christening is the earliest recorded in the Roe valley dated August 30th 1807: both the maiden name of the mother and the address are difficult to decipher and remain unknown.



I am still unable to determine if these registered christenings relate directly to my family line given that they are recorded in a Church of Ireland located only several miles from the parish of Balteagh. The details are obscure due to the fact that in only one instance is the address legible, that is for the 1823 baptism namely Limavady; and the first christening gives the maiden name of the mother, which I have been unable to decipher [although it is a Mc surname].

CONCLUSION

The importance of oral tradition in genealogy is generally underestimated. The smallest snippet of lore can bring family history to life when united with the historical record. Family folklore and the existence of the old Forrest headstone in St. Canice's graveyard on the Roe Mill Road acted as a catalyst for my own research into our family history. Indeed, my primary motivation was to try to verify the oral history associated with the two Forrest ladies and somehow connect them in a direct way to our family tree. In attempting to do so, the search widened as I found myself inexorably led to discovering deeper roots in the valley of the Roe and the story would eventually cover over 350 years of family history. The research was greatly helped by the fact that the family was deeply rooted in the area within the parameters of the Limavady-Ballykelly-Dungiven axis. The main stem of our Forrest family was traced right back, with a pretty high degree of assurance to the mid 17th century.

I am now satisfied that we are all one blood family descended from a common ancestor John Forrest of Drummond, Ballykelly and any other conclusion would be much less likely.

Bobby Forrest, junior [October 2009]

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