

not as one-sided as the above figures show. As an approximation we can say that for the whole second half of the 19th century, there were eleven boys born for every ten girls. On the other hand the number of twins born is probably a little less than the average for Ireland, which is one twin birth in every seventy-nine births. In the half-century 1950-2000, nine sets of twins were born in a total of 1125 births where one would expect about fourteen sets. These were in the McShera (Fostra), Casey, Malone, McGowan, Lynch, McShera (Clegna), Gaffney, Farry and Bruen families.

Surnames

The majority of the population of Ardcarne still bears Gaelic surnames, notwithstanding the arrival of many outsiders in the last thirty years. Moreover nearly all of these surnames can be traced back in the ALC to the Middle Ages and beyond. Historians say that the present method of designating names, using a first name and a surname, originated about 1,000 years ago. Before that it is more difficult to connect a name with modern family names. The Annals begin in 1014 and four of our present surnames can be found in the ALC under that year, O'Connor, O'Brien, O'Rourke and Corcoran. But a host of others connected with this parish can be traced to that same 11th century: Boland, Callaghan, Casey, Donnellan, Dunne, Fallon, Flanagan, Garvey, Kelly, Gunning, Gormley, Henry, Lynch, McGrath, McLoughlin, Molloy, Moore, Mulrooney, Murphy, Murray, Ó Conghaile, O'Donnell, O'Dowd, O'Farrell, O'Hara, O'Neill, Quinn, Regan and Ryan.

Between 1100 and 1600 one can find many others such as: Bannon, Barry, Beirne, Boyle, Brady, Breheny (Brehony), Brogan, Caulfield, Clancy, Cleary, Coen, Conlisk, Conlon, Conway, Cooney, Costello, Coyne, Cryan, Cullen, Cunningham, Daly, Deane, Denning, Devine, Doherty (O'Doherty), Donoghue, Duffy, Duignan, Dunican, Dwyer, Earley, Egan, Fahy, Farrelly, Finn, Flynn, Foley, Ford, Gallagher, Gibbons, Giblin, Gillespie, Gilmartin (Martin), Hanly, Harte, Harvey, Healy, Horan, Irwin, Keane, King, Lane, Lavin, Lee, Lenehan, Lyons, McCabe, McCarthy (Carthy), McCormack, McCool, McDermott, McDermottroe, McDonagh, McGlynn (Glynn), McGonigle, McGovern, McGreevy, McGuinness, McHugh, McKeon, McKinney (McKenna), McManus, McMorrow, McNamara, McShera, Maher, Malone, Mannion, Meehan, Monahan, Morris, Mulhern, Mullaney, Nolan, Oates, O'Mahony (Mahon), O'Malley, O'Reilly, Reynolds, Rinn, Rogers, Shanley, Sharkey, Skeffington, Tiernan (McTiernan and McKiernan), Tonra, Travers, Tully and Ward. All of these can be traced back at least

four hundred years. The total of all the names listed above accounts for over 90 per cent of the population of the parish, and might well carry the genetic group mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. In other words their origin goes back beyond the arrival of the Celts to even earlier peoples. Some of the legends, indeed, associated with the first colonists to arrive on our shores, mention nearby places such as Moylurg and *Magh Tuireadh* at Highwood.⁴

For the years 1100 to 1600 the ALC mentions a few other names which were not originally Gaelic. Higgins (mentioned for the first time in ALC under 1315) is probably of Viking origin. In fact it is the word Viking, *Uiginn*. It is a name whose bearers, though far less plentiful than the Kellys and the Murphys, have contributed enormously to every aspect of Irish life, to science, literature, poetry and politics, right down to the present day. In the Middle Ages leading up to the end of the Gaelic era, they were a bardic family which produced a succession of celebrated poets, such as *Tadhg Dall Ó h-Uiginn*. Another earlier member of the family, *Tuathail* who died in 1450, wrote two poems in praise of *Tomaltach an einigh Mac Diarmada* (King of Moylurg from 1421 to 1458).⁵

Barrett (1260), Burke (1200), Browne (Bruen ?) (1564), Nugent (1385), Power (1190), Purcell, Roche (1250), Walsh and White (1250) are Norman. To these we might add Gray and Whitney. Elsewhere we mention that Sweeney (1265), Doyle (1299) and McCabe (1358) may have come from Scotland as gallowglasses. Crawford is Scottish too. David Gillespie thinks his family came from near Ayr in Scotland. But as it is an Irish name and that part of Scotland was colonised by Irish from Ulster more than a thousand years ago, the name may have emigrated and come back again. It is mentioned in ALC in 1171. The Derbys came from Co. Down. The following names, common in the parish and all of Gaelic origin, do not seem to be mentioned in the annals: Armstrong, Cox, Crowley, Curley, Curran, Donnelly, Durkin, Farry, Feery, Flannery, Gaffney, Gannon, Gilboy, Gildea, Gilligan, Griffin, Guihen (Wynne), Kerrigan, Killelea, Lane, Langan, Leydon, Leyland, McCaffrey, McCorry, McGowan, McPartlan, McQuaid, McVeigh, Moraghan, Neary, Noone, Queenan, Rushe, Scanlon, Shannon, Sheehan, Shivan, Stenson, Tansey, Tivnan and Tobin. Perhaps the reason is that they were peaceloving clans. Most of the names in the long lists above are mentioned only because they took part in some battle, and usually got killed. The Guihens and the Gaffneys did, however, make up some leeway in the fighting business later, by taking part in faction fights in the beginning of the 19th century.

