

# **THE SKIDDIE (ALIAS SKYDMORE) FAMILY OF COUNTY CORK, IRELAND, RAVENSTONE, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, AND LONDON.**

**by Warren Skidmore**

The Skiddy or Skiddie family is supposed to have gone out as traders to Cork by 1364. They became prominent there and produced a long succession of mayors in the city from 1364 to 1598. The first of these was a William Skiddy, who had an annuity near the city in 1364.<sup>1</sup> The relationship between the Skiddies of Cork and the Skydmores of Ravenstone and London can be deduced from the change of name (often combined with *alias*) which the members of the family used after Andrew Skiddie came over to London from Cork in the middle of the 16th century. The presumption is that there had been an earlier migration in the opposite direction in the 14th centuries to Ireland. The family then dropped Skydmore for the nickname Skiddie under the influence of Irish custom in these matters.

It is interesting that the College of Arms (rightly or wrongly) in London recorded the arms of Sir Clement Scudamore, the elder, at his death in 1616 with the familiar Skydmore stirrups “leathered and buckled” in his funeral certificate. They are tricked out with the difference of a mullet, a heraldic device signifying a third son (or a third house) of a family. A few years later in 1623 the Ulster herald Daniel Molineaux allowed the same arms *Gu. a chevron argent between three stirraps* or at the funeral of Elizabeth, the wife of Roger Skyddie.<sup>2</sup>

The descent of Sir Clement begins with his grandfather Andrew Skiddie, who was born at Cork. He came over to Cambridge University and was admitted as a pensioner to Magdalen College at Easter, 1548. He did not take a degree, but went on to the Inner Temple in London where he was admitted (as Andrew *Skyddy*) on 11th August 1551. The education that he had there presumably would have led to a call to the bar as a barrister.<sup>3</sup> He is next found, called the “factor” for Gerald fitz James (1533-1583), who was the son and then heir apparent of the 13th earl of Desmond.<sup>4</sup> Gerald

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<sup>1</sup>Samuel Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* (1837), 134. The annuity was charged in 1364 to a castle at Killeagh in the county, said to have built by the Carews.

<sup>2</sup>The office of the Ulster Herald in Ireland was created in 1552 totally independent of the College of Arms in London. About 100 years later (in 1722) the then Ulster Herald allowed to George Skiddie, the great-grandson of George Skyddie (the second son of Alexander Skyddie of Castle Skyddie) the arms: “Gs. a chevron ar[gent] between three stirrups with buckles and straps all or.” He also registered his crest “out of a ducal coronet ppr [proper] a bear’s sable armed gu.” as well as a Latin motto “Non inferiors secuius.”

<sup>3</sup>The parentage and residence of Andrew Skyddy is left unstated here, but a Robert *Hemlynge* (Hamlyn) was his pledge.

<sup>4</sup>Desmond had married in 1550 Joan Fitzgerald, the widowed countess of James Butler, the 9th

succeeded his father as the 14th earl of Desmond in 1558.<sup>5</sup> How Andrew Skiddie came by the patronage of Lord Gerald is unknown, but it may have been due to the Desmond family's large presence in Ireland.

On 18 October 1552 Richard *Skydmore* of Ravenstone in Buckinghamshire gave a receipt to William Sclatter (servant and bailiff to Sir Robert Throckmorton) for £36 pounds for part of a half year's rent due to the Desmonds for the manor of Ravenstone. On 24 October 1553 Richard's father (as Andrew *Skiddye*) made a complete payment of £50 from Sir Robert Throckmorton for the rent of Ravenstone, a sum made up by monies which Andrew had received from his son Richard *Skidmor* of Ravenstone, and Thomas Pigot of Loughton, Bucks. Sir Robert Throckmorton (1513-1581) left a family (subsequently baronets) at Coughton Court in Warwickshire. He is now chiefly remembered for his obdurate recusancy in what had been an otherwise a good Catholic family.

Still later (on 16 November 1559) there is a letter to Sir Robert found in the Throckmorton papers from Coughton Court from Andrew *Skiddye* who advised Sir Robert that he was shortly going back to Ireland and asking him to pay his rent for Ravenstone "to Stephen *Skidmor* at the *Sterr in Cheape*"<sup>6</sup> in London. This was done, and on 8 May 1560 (and again on 4 November 1561) Stephen *Skydmor*, "vintner of London" gave discharges (receipts) to Sir Robert Throckmorton for two half years of rent paid to Desmond for Ravenstone.<sup>7</sup>

Andrew Skyddie presumably died (without probate) home at Cork. There is no record that Andrew Skiddie ever used the name Skydmore himself, although there is a letter in the *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland* where he is referred to just once as Andrew *Skidmour*. It would appear that his sons at London began using the *alias* without their father's active support. It seems likely from an examination of the evidence, that the Skiddies were guilty of the current crime of "identity theft" and were not *genetically* Skydmores (later Scudamores) at all. They still were, however, worthy men in both London and Cork who outperformed some of the family they chose to emulate.

Andrew Skiddie married and left issue apparently in both London and Cork. The order of their birth is uncertain:

1. William, perhaps the eldest. He was admitted to the Inner Temple on 25 February 1583 as William *Skyddye*, gentleman, called of Cork, Ireland, and also of Clifford's Inn, London. His father's name is not recorded, but William *Roche forte* (also of Clifford's Inn) and Andrew Barrett of Cork were the two pledges at his admittance. He seems to have married and to have left at least two young sons whose welfare was taken on by their uncles.
  1. CLEMENT (SIR), of London, of whom further.
  2. Henry (perhaps), born about 1559, a citizen and vintner of London. He was apprenticed to John Skidmore of the Vintners' Company in 1572, probably his uncle, and was admitted as a freeman of London on 7 September 1582. He

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earl of Ossory and Ormond. It seems likely that the Skydmores were later involved in the troubles that arose between the stepbrothers fathered by her two husbands.

<sup>5</sup>He was known here in 1551, and during his father's lifetime, as Lord *Garrat* [Gerald].

<sup>6</sup>The Star was a "fair inn for travellers" in the Cheapside (then greatest thoroughfare in the old city of London).

<sup>7</sup>The Throckmorton papers are now in the custody of the Warwickshire County Record Office.

was also remembered in the will of Stephen Skidmore who left him £5 in plate.

2. STEPHEN, was born at Cork but died in London, of whom further.
3. Thomas Skiddie (Sir), said to have been a merchant of Cork in the 16th century. He had issue (perhaps with others),
  1. Edward Skiddie *alias* Skidmore. He was living in 1584 when he and his father are remembered in Stephen Skidmore's will.
4. Richard, living 1552 at Ravenstone.
5. John Skidmore, a citizen and vintner of Ironmongers Lane in the parish of St. Martin Pomery, London. He was apprenticed to his brother Stephen on 5 March 1555/6 and was admitted a freeman of London in 1563. He had married (in or before 1565) a wife Katherine but left no surviving children. He died in 1589 leaving his estate to Andrew Castleton, a parson of St. Martin's, Ironmongers Lane, and James Bates, a citizen and barber surgeon of London, by a deed of gift dated 10 April 1588.<sup>8</sup> He had issue (all baptized as *Skyemores* at All Hallows, Honey Lane, London),
  1. Stephen, baptized 9 December 1565. He was buried on 24 March 1569/70.
  2. John, baptized 11 September 1567 "at home and died at once."
  3. John, buried an infant on 3 August 1570.
    1. Ellen, baptized 19 November 1568.
    2. Anne, baptized 24 November 1576. The administration on the estate of Anne Skydmore, *puella*, was given to her father John Skydmore of Ironmongers Lane on 1 August 1587 noting that "she was one of those named in the will of Stephen Skydmore, formerly of St. Stephen's, Coleman Street." She was clearly the last survivor of the children of John Skidmore.
1. Anne. She married and had an unnamed daughter was married to Simon Moroughe. They were both named as beneficiaries in the will of Stephen Skidmore.
2. A daughter who married \_\_\_\_\_ Moone. Her son John Moone is also remembered in Stephen Skidmore's will. He was apprenticed to Clement Skidmore (no doubt his uncle) on 21 January 1577/8.

STEPHEN SKIDMORE *alias* SKIDDIE, a citizen and vintner of London, was born at Cork in the early part of the 16th century. He and his brother Thomas are named as merchants in Cork as young men. Stephen Skidmore came with his father to London where he was apprenticed to David Gytton, a vintner. He was admitted a freeman of London on 19 February 1550/1 and prospered almost immediately importing quantities of wine from the Continent.<sup>9</sup> He lived in the parish of St. Stephen's, Coleman Street (where his house and garden were later referred to as The Woolsack). He held this with other land and properties near Ludgate (once belonging to the dissolved Priory of Blackfriars), and also in St. Martin Vintry, and Finsbury.

Mr. Skidmore died without issue and was buried as he requested at St. Stephen's church in

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<sup>8</sup>Exhibited 18 February 1590/1.

<sup>9</sup>A memo survives showing the delivery to him on 13 November 1587 of 43 1/2 tuns (casks) of Gascony wine and 4 tuns of vinegar.

Coleman Street on 11 December 1585. His will is dated 20 March 1584/5 and is exceptionally long.<sup>10</sup> He left his wife Hellen “a moiety [half] of his goods and chattels according to the laudable custom of the City of London.” Among the several legacies and bequests to his relatives and friends are those made to his brother John and his wife Katherine, their daughter Anne, and to his sister Anne Skidmore and her daughter the wife of Simon Muroughe. Also remembered was Nicholas Skiddie, Henry Skidmore, Master Andrew Skiddie, Edward Skiddie *alias* Skidmore (his brother Sir Thomas Skiddie’s son), apparently all back at Cork. He also made bequests to his wife’s cousin [niece] Alice Sadler, and to his sister-in-law Margaret Sadler. He also directed that after his wife’s death his house at St. Stephen’s was to be sold, and that his garden, two stalls and a shed in Finsbury were to go to his “cousin” [nephew] Clement Skidmore.

After the death of his wife the Master, Wardens, Freeman, and Commonalty of the *Mistry* of Vintners were to have the reversion of his lands and tenements “situate within the precinct of the late dissolved Priory of the Black Friars near Ludgate.”<sup>11</sup> After her death they were to find out of the rent and profit of his land £24 yearly for an almshouse be paid to the Mayor “for the time being” of Cork (where he was born) with the consent of the mayor’s “brethren,” the aldermen of Cork. His gift was to benefit “ten of the honestest, poorest person of the said City of Cook, men or women, aged 50 years at least.” Skiddy’s Almshouse in the parish of St. Anne Shandon, Cork, still survives there in good repair and continues as a monument to his beneficence.<sup>12</sup>

He also made a very large charitable gift to seventeen [named] poor parishes in London, to the poor, to hospitals in London and Southwark, to the prisoners in Newgate, and to the alms people of the Vintners as well as a trust for the benefit of the poor all from the income from the lands from the dissolved Priory of Blackfriars.

He left 12 crowns for twelve sermons to be preached on Sunday in St. Stephen’s church. The churchwardens of St. Stephen’s were also to have 52 shillings “the same to be distributed in bread every Sunday to the poorest people in the parish.”

He appointed his wife Hellen executrix, and Master Thomas Agar and his cousin Clement Skidmore (both vintners) as overseers. Following the death of Stephen Skidmore the representation of the family in London passed to his nephew Sir Clement Skidmore (Scudamore).

His wife Hellen survived him, dying in 1606. She was the daughter of \_\_\_\_\_ Sadler, and sister of Roger Sadler (died 1578), a baker of Stratford-on-Avon, Warwickshire. The Sadlers were close neighbors of the Shakespeares, and Hamlett Sadler (probably her nephew) was a great friend of the dramatist. She was also buried at St. Stephen’s. In her will dated 28 February 1605/6 (proved 4 September 1606 at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury) she made a good many charitable bequests to

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<sup>10</sup>It was proved on the Monday next before the Feast of St. Mathias, Apostle, 28 Elizabeth I (24 February 1585/6) at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury.

<sup>11</sup>It appears from the later records of the Vintner’s company that these tenements were in Shoemaker’s Row in the parish of St. Anne, Blackfriars, and this income subsequently financed his charitable bequests.

<sup>12</sup>The intention of the bequest was to divide it among the needy equally, and an almshouse existed on the present site by 1602. In 1702 it housed 16 men and women, but it was rebuilt by the Cork Corporation (at a cost of £1150) in 1718-9 and eventually housed over 70 persons. The neo-classical building was almost destroyed in 1967, but was saved by a successful campaign by the local citizenry. It now has self-contained apartments for the elderly.

the poor. As for her many relatives she first named “her cousin” Hamlett Sadler and his daughter Margaret. Her “cousin” Sir Clement Scudamore (who may have had the care of his aged aunt) was to have a silver gilt salt with its cover, while his wife was devised a silver gilt bowl. Sir Clement’s two sons were also remembered with “an old angel each.”

SIR CLEMENT SCUDAMORE, KT., a citizen and vintner of London, was probably born by 1550. He was apprenticed to Stephen Skidmore, presumably his uncle, and was admitted as a freeman of London on 23 January 1569/70. He and his uncle Stephen were both taxed as *Skydmores* in 1582.<sup>13</sup> He married on 9 August 1591 at St. Katherine Coleman, Cecily (who was buried at St. Mary Aldermanbury on 6 August 1614), the daughter of Sir Henry Billingsley (1535-1606), a haberdasher, alderman, and eventually lord mayor of London.

Clement was Sheriff of London 1603-6 and Alderman of Vintry Ward from 1604 until his death. He was knighted at Greenwich 14 April 1605 by King James (who was on his way to London) and was admitted to Gray’s Inn as Clement Scudamore, *Knight*, on 14 March 1608/9.

He had purchased on 30 September 1602 the manor of The Grove and a messuage and land in Watford, Hertfordshire from Francis Heydon (which was sold in 1632 by his eldest son to Sir William Ashton). The Grove, which adjoins Cassiobury in Watford, was the same estate which was sold almost a hundred years earlier at Trinity term 1509 by Reginald Pegge (and his wife Ann), Philip Skydmore (of Burnham), and Thomas Parker who together granted it to Richard Bodon.<sup>14</sup>

Sir Clement also held the manor of Durhams (now Dyrham Park) in the parish of South Mimms, (then in Middlesex, now in Hertfordshire), and the mansion called Chalkhills in Kingsbury, Middlesex. He had as well several other properties in London including a messuage and tenement in the parish of St. Mary Aldermanbury (previously a chantry known as *Beauchamps Chauntrie*), a messuage and outbuildings in Sething Lane in the parish of All Saints, Barking, and a capital messuage called The Mermaid, with attached properties, in St. Michael’s parish, Huggin Lane..

Before his death in 1616 Sir Clement fulfilled his uncle’s gift to Skiddy’s Almshouses in Cork and this is marked by a plaque found there in the parish church of St. Ann Shandon,:

This part of the Almhouse belongs to the Foundation of Mr. Clement Skiddy alias Scudamore who about the year of our Lord God MDCXX settled a perpetual annuity of twenty-four pounds paid by the vintners company of the city of London for the benefit of twelve aged widows of the city. The end of the commandments is charity. 1st Tim. 1st.<sup>15</sup>

He died of the plague on 11 August 1616 and was buried at St. Mary Aldermanbury. His will was dated the previous day and left £300 to his father’s and mother’s kindred who were (perhaps in

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<sup>13</sup>*Two Tudor Subsidy Assessment Rolls for the City of London, 1541 & 1582*, edited by R. G. Lang. London Record Society, XXIX (1993), 261, 300. Stephen was taxed in Coleman Street Ward, while Clement lived in Farringdon Ward Within.

<sup>14</sup>At this time the lands included a messuage and watermill at The Grove and Lesveden in Watford. The ancient interest of Philip Skydmore of Burnham seems to have been coincidental.

<sup>15</sup>Brian de Breffney and Rosemary ffolliot, *The Houses of Ireland* (New York, Thames and Hudson, 1975), 89. The article includes a fine photograph of the almshouse by George Mott.

haste) unfortunately not named.<sup>16</sup> He had issue,

1. CLEMENT (SIR), of London and Hertfordshire, of whom further.
2. John, of High Holborn, Middlesex, and later of Chalkhills in Kingsbury, Middlesex. He was baptized at St. Mary Aldermanbury 29 May 1595, and admitted a student to the Middle Temple on 15 August 1612. He married (settlement dated 19 January 1616/7) at St. Mary's, Harrow-on-the-Hill, on 10 February 1616/7, Elizabeth, the daughter of John Page, the younger, of Wembley, Middlesex, and a granddaughter of John Page, the elder. She brought to her husband under the terms of the settlement the manor of Edgware and Boys, Middlesex, with the rectory and parsonage of Edgware (sold in 1637 to Thomas, Lord Coventry). She survived him and married 2ndly Edmund Smyth (a doctor of physic) on 19 June 1649 at St. Benet, Paul's Wharf. In addition to Chalkhills he had property in the parish of St. Michael's, Huggin Lane, and lands in Sething Lane, Barking, all of which came to him from his father. He died without issue and was buried at St. Mary Aldermanbury on 2 February 1647/8.
3. Anthony (probably), buried 12 November 1616 at St. Mary Aldermanbury.

The elder son,

SIR CLEMENT SCUDAMORE, KT., of London as well as Middlesex and Hertfordshire, was baptized at St. Margaret Moses, Friday Street, on 14 June 1593. He was admitted to the Middle Temple on 15 August 1612, and as a freeman of London on 7 November 1615. A citizen and vintner of London, he was appointed Sheriff of Hertfordshire on 22 November 1623 and was knighted (while sheriff) on 19 July 1624.

He inherited from his father the manor of Durhams in South Mimms (held from the earl of Salisbury) and also land at Ridge and Shenley (near South Mimms) and at Enfield, Middlesex.

He married by a settlement dated 7 July 1614, Barbara (who survived him and was buried at St. Mary Aldermanbury on 17 January 1664/5), the daughter of Richard and Frances (Mudge) Page of Uxendon, Harrow-on-the-Hill, Middlesex. Dame Barbara was mentally unstable and she and her husband were lived apart, at least for intervals, beginning as early as 1628. He is undoubtedly the Clement Skidmore (with a "consort" Olive) who were the "supposed" parents of a daughter Mary who was christened on 6 November 1631 at St. Botolph without Bishopsgate.

On 20 March 1639/40 Barbara was finally declared insane by an inquest held at the Guildhall, London, and her estate was entrusted to her brother-in-law John Scudamore. An account of her finances for the year previous to Michaelmas 1641 mentions that £55 had been already spent for the schooling, boarding and apparel of her two sons, and another £100 went "for bynding one of hir sonnes as apprentice" at Michaelmas.

Her will was dated 3 June 1664 (and proved 18 January 1664/5 at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury). It provided legacies for her three sons, Clement, William and Thomas, and made bequests to her two daughters-in-law (the wives of her two elder sons), as well as to her brothers, married sisters, and her sister-in-law Elizabeth Smyth. Her brother John Page, of Uxendon, Esq., was appointed her executor. It would appear that Dame Barbara's mind was sound when she made her will since it went unchallenged in the courts.

Sir Clement died on 25 June 1633 and was buried at St. Mary Aldermanbury the following

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<sup>16</sup>*Prerogative Court of Canterbury*, register "76 Cope."

day. The administration on his estate was granted on 21 January 1640/1 at Prerogative Court of Canterbury). He had issue,

1. CLEMENT, his heir, of whom further.
2. John, baptized at St. Giles, South Mimms, 20 March 1621/2. He died in infancy and was buried there on 30 August 1624.
3. William, baptized at St. Giles 13 September 1625. He was apprenticed (as a son of Sir Clement Scudamore, deceased) on 25 July 1646 to Geoffrey Thomas, a merchant taylor of Paternoster Row, for eight years. He married Mary \_\_\_\_\_. He is said to have had issue two children, not traced.
4. Thomas, baptized at St. Giles on 22 July 1627. He is said to have buried in 1713 at St. Botolph without Bishopsgate, London.<sup>17</sup>
5. Simon, baptized at St. Giles 14 October 1628. He is not named in his mother's will (where his brother Thomas is called the youngest son) and had probably died young.<sup>18</sup>
  1. Elizabeth, baptized at St. Giles 9 April 1621.
  2. (perhaps) Ann, who was buried at St. Giles on 1 November 1629.

His eldest son,

CLEMENT SCUDAMORE, of Middle Temple, London, was born on 23 October 1616. He was admitted to Trinity College, Oxford, on 10 September 1634, aged 18 (from Durhams, Middlesex), and was student in 1637 at the Middle Temple in London. In 1648 he was involved in litigation with his mother Dame Barbara and John Page about the estate at Durhams, where an agreement had been made in 1629 (following the breakdown of his parents' marriage) for a payment made for the benefit of his brother Thomas.

It is presently not known who Clement married, but it took place before his mother's death in 1664. The date of his death (clearly without the benefit of probate) is unknown and he probably left no surviving issue.

## NOTES.

A Thomas Skidmore, not identified, is mentioned in 1633 in the register of St. Giles, South Mimms.

This is not a history of the Skiddie family in Ireland, but a few obscure references should be noted for descendants of that family who may be interested. There are two charters at the British Library that pertain to the Skiddies in Ireland. On 8 May 1594 William Roche of Cork, Alderman, granted a messuage and tenement for the use of William Roche and Margaret Skyddie, his wife, to William Skiddie son of Clement, and to Philip Roche son of Patrick, (Add. Ch. 8755). Another, on 24 October 1595, from William Roche, of Cork, Alderman, is a letter concerning various lands in Cork, granted

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<sup>17</sup>It seems likely that this date refers to another Thomas Scudamore, perhaps his son, who had five children (Deborah, Jane, Edward, Elizabeth and Sarah) by a wife Alice who were baptized at St. Botolph's between 1666-74.

<sup>18</sup>He was living, however, on 7 November 1633 when he and his three older brothers were mentioned in the inquest *post mortem* of their father.

to John Skiddie of Cork, son of George, and William Skiddie, son of Clement, merchant. (Add. Ch. 8756).

It is said that the Skiddies formed a sept in County Cork and elected a chief in the Irish fashion. From 1360 they were chiefly associated with the city of Cork “where they provided a great many mayors up to 1646 when Catholics ceased to hold that office.”

The Skyddy mayors of the city of Cork were, beginning in 1364, William; 1365, William; 1404, John; 1438, John; 1439, John; 1446, Richard; 1450, Richard; 1454, William; 1457, Richard; 1458, William; 1461, Richard; 1465, John; 1466, Richard; 1470, Richard; 1474, William; 1478, Richard; 1479, William; 1480, William; 1484, William; 1487, William; 1506, William; 1507, John; 1515, Richard; 1517, John; 1518, Nicholas; 1526, John; 1528, John; 1543, William; 1557; 1589, John; 1598, John (last).<sup>19</sup>

Skiddys Castle is said to have been built in 1445 by John Skiddy who was the a bailiff and mayor of Cork. It descended to Sir George Skiddy of Waterford and Cork. A reputed great-grandson was another Sir George, the last representative of the family at Cork, who acquired a good estate in France.<sup>20</sup> A shop at 103 North Main Street in Cork occupies a part of the site of the castle, which is better described as an urban tower house. The marshy soil near the present-day Adelaide and North Main Streets did not provide a stable foundation for a tower house. Aided by a grant from the National Committee for Archaeology of the Royal Irish Academy it was found that an oak raft held in place by timber stakes provided a floating foundation for the castle. The excavation shows that the area of the castle was 44 meters square with walls 2.2 meters thick by 1.4 meters high. Sometime after 1601 it became the property of the crown, and it was used as a gunpowder magazine for much of the 17th and 18th centuries. A part of the building was still standing in 1896, and a decorated mantelpiece from the castle is set into the wall of 13 North Main Street.

Robert Skiddy was born at Dublin, and admitted sizar (aged 21) at St. John’s, Cambridge on 3 July 1750. He was a son of Francis Skiddy, an attorney in Ireland, and was awarded his B.A. in 1754. His early education was at the Sedbergh School in Yorkshire, and according to the school register he emigrated to America where he was living in 1761.

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<sup>19</sup>M. F. Cusack, *A history of the city and county of Cork* (Dublin and Cork, 1875).

<sup>20</sup>Michael C. O’Laughlin, *The Families of County Cork, Ireland* (Kansas City, Missouri, 1996) 140.