

McCauley Clans

McAuley, MacAulay, etc. are among the 100 most common surnames in Ireland, if we include the many variations of the name: **McCauley, MacAulay, McCawley, McGauley, McCowley, McColley, Macauley, Cawley, Magawley, McCooley, Gawley, MacCauley, MacCaulay, McCauley, McCaulay**, etc.

James McCauley married P. Fowler. They had a son, my Great Grandfather, Patrick Francis McCauley, who married Annie Elizabeth Boyle in Bridgeton District, Glasgow on 5 Nov 1874. My Grandmother is one of 13 siblings. I believe I am from one of the McCauley clans (see below), but am lost now.

The following extract was from the ClanAwley Web site which can be found at <http://www.clanawley.com/>

The original Gaelic form of MacAulay was MacAmlaibh (Son of Olaf) or MacAmhalghaidh (Son of the Spear Warrior?). There were at least two Irish McAuley clans from which these surnames are derived:

- (1) in southern Fermanagh the descendants of Awley Maguire formed a sept of the Maguire clan,
- (2) in County Westmeath an important branch of the Southern O'Neill clan took the surname MacAwley.
- (3) **Scottish settlers**, most of whom settled in Ulster, especially County Antrim, are believed to account for the majority of **McAuleys** in Ireland.

In addition, there is evidence of possible McCauley septs in Donegal, Sligo, and elsewhere. These septs were not well documented because of the chaotic history of Ireland during the late Middle Ages, but modern research is shedding light into these MacAuley ancestors.

(McAuliffe, O'Cally, McCully and McCollough are different surnames which may have occasionally been anglicized as McCauley.)

Since there were at least five McCauley clans (two Irish and three Scottish), and since most of their descendants have dispersed from the ancestral territories, it is extremely difficult for many MacAulays to pinpoint their ancestral clan. Fortunately, DNA analysis technology can now help identify long-forgotten relationships, and the MacAulay Clan Society is coordinating a MacAulay DNA Study that will help MacAuleys find out which McCauley clan they are descended from.

Scottish MacAuleys in Ulster

The majority of the MacAuleys in Ireland appear to be descended from Scottish settlers, rather than the two indigenous clans mentioned below. The bulk of these settled in Ulster, especially counties Antrim and Donegal.

The largest concentration of MacAuleys in the world is probably in County Antrim and in the Belfast environs of County Down. Nearly all of these are of Scottish origin although a few are known to be Fermanagh MacAuleys. Although the MacAuleys of Ardincapple are

known to be associated with Antrim, DNA tests have shown that the Ulster McAuleys are descended from at least five Scottish ancestral families.

McAuleys began arriving in the Glens of Antrim in the 1500s, long before the Plantation of Ulster in 1607, with many of them in the service of the McDonnells. After 1607 large numbers of Scots were encouraged to settle in Ulster to populate the region with loyal citizens. The Antrim McAuley population is divided fairly evenly between Protestants and Catholics, but it is likely that they have common Scottish ancestry, with the Catholics probably descended from MacAulays who settled before the Reformation.

Many of the Antrim McAuleys appear to have a direct connection to the Scottish MacAulays of Ardincaple, including some of the most senior branches of the clan. This remarkable quote is from a book published in 1723 by William Buchanan of Auchmor, *Brief Enquiry into the Genealogy and present state of ancient Scottish surnames*: “The next of that name to the family of Ardincaple is the representative of Major Robert MacAulay, a gentleman of good estate in Glenarm, in the County of Antrim, in Ireland, in which county a great many of the surname reside.”

County Donegal also has a large number of McAuleys. Even though Donegal is adjacent to Fermanagh, most of the McAuleys of Donegal are probably unrelated to the Fermanagh clan. Between 1300 and 1600 the Irish clans of Ulster and Western Ireland hired thousands of Scottish mercenaries (known as gallowglass), many of whom settled in Ireland. MacAulay was a gallowglass name, so perhaps some of the Donegal McCauleys are descended from these warriors. In addition, one of the Undertakers of the Plantation of Ulster was Alexander MacAwley “alias Stewart”, who created a fortified settlement in Donegal in the 1610s.

Most of the Scotch-Irish McCauleys of America are descended from these Scottish settlers in Ulster, who left Ireland in waves of organized emigration (often organized by Presbyterian ministers) that began about 1715 and continued until the 1780s. Their experience as settlers and fighters in Ireland made them ideal pioneers on the American frontier, where they were able to obtain the land ownership and religious freedom that often eluded them in Ulster. After 1815 emigration to America resumed with even greater force, but later immigrants were more likely to head for urban areas or mining towns.

Distribution of McAuleys in Ireland (1901)

According to the 1901 Census of Ireland, there were 4,571 persons named McAuley, McCauley, McGauley, or one of the variant spellings. In addition, there were 1,266 persons in Ireland named Cawley or Cauley. But MacAuleys are not spread evenly throughout the island-- only six of the 32 counties had more than 100 McAuleys, accounting for over 90 percent of the total. The six McCauley-rich counties are Antrim, Cavan, Donegal, Dublin, Down, and Fermanagh.

The McAuleys of Dublin are believed to have come from other places in Ireland. The McCauleys in the other five McAuley-rich counties are probably the descendants of people who have lived in those counties for centuries. The McAuleys of Antrim and Down are probably mostly descended from Scotch-Irish (Ulster-Scot) settlers. The McCauleys of Fermanagh and Cavan mostly descend from the MacAuley sept of the Maguire clan. (The MacAulay DNA Study has confirmed this.) The large number of

Donegal McCauleys are believed to be descended from one or more poorly-documented septs that existed in the late medieval period.

County Westmeath had only 54 McAuleys in 1901, so it appears that most of the descendants of the medieval MacAmhalghaidh clan had dispersed. The best-known descendants of this clan, Mother Catherine McAuley and the Counts Magawley-Cerati, are evidence of this dispersal.

Many, but not all, of the 1,266 Cawleys of Ireland are believed to be descended from McCauleys who dropped the "Mac" prefix. Some of these Cawleys were in the five McAuley-rich counties, but the largest concentrations are in Sligo and Mayo, and probably descend from poorly-documented septs.

The Fermanagh MacAuleys

The barony of Clanawley in southern Fermanagh is the ancient homeland of this McAuley sept, which is descended from Awley Maguire (d. 1306) who was a younger son of Donn Carrach Maguire (d. 1302) the first Maguire 'king' of Fermanagh. It was during the lifetime of Awley and his sons that the Maguires spread from their stronghold in northeastern Fermanagh and crossed Loch Erne. Awley's obituary cites him as "Chief of Muintir Pheodacain", a district which was later renamed 'Clanawley' as his descendants proliferated.

The Clan Awley reached the peak of its influence in the fifteenth century with the chieftainship of Brian mac Awley oge Maguire (d.1466), whose sons were the first to use the surname MacAwley instead of Maguire. After Brian's death the ClanAwley splintered into several smaller septs (McHugh, McMahan, McArt, etc.) and only the senior branch retained the McAuley surname. Nevertheless, the clan flourished in South Fermanagh as evidenced from this entry in the *Annals of the Four Masters* for 1508: "Philip oge MacAwley, son of Philip Reagh son of Brian, son of Awley son of Philip son of Awley son of Donn Carrach Maguire, died. He was head of his own tribe, and kept a house of hospitality."

The territory possessed by the McAuleys was a swathe of land in South Fermanagh extending roughly from the present town of Arney south to Swanlinbar. Three different invasion routes into Fermanagh passed through this territory, and the Irish Annals mention several battles against invaders that took place in Clanawley. In 1502 Eamon MacAwley son of Phillip Reagh (see pedigree) was slain defending his territory against a force of O'Reilleys. In 1538 another raid by O'Reilleys burned the 'town of Clanawley'. In 1594 an English force marching to Enniskillen Castle was defeated by a Maguire-led army at a ford near the Arney bridge that was renamed "Ford of Biscuits" after the provisions that were left by the fleeing English army.

The MacAuleys were virtually dispossessed by the plantation of Ulster in 1607. Although Felim McAwly (apparently the chief) was allowed a lease for 50 acres, it appears that the bulk of the clan remained in its traditional stronghold between Arney and the rugged country along the Fermanagh-Cavan border. During the vicious wars of the 1640s, Reamon oge MacAuley was an early leader in the Fermanagh uprising. The last McCauley chief in Fermanagh was Arthur McAwley, who took a prominent role in support of James II in 1688, and apparently died during the war. Arthur's oldest son,

Thomas oge McAwley, was outlawed by name by the British Parliament in 1691 as an "Irish Jacobite".

The Westmeath MacAwleys

The MacAwleys of Westmeath ruled Calry, a territory in County Westmeath which British records of the 1500s referred to as McGawley's Country. The core of this territory is the parish of BallyLoughlowe. They were a branch of the Southern O'Neills, with a pedigree that reaches back to Niall of the Nine Hostages (d. 405 A.D.), who was High King of Ireland and a contemporary of Saint Patrick. The eponymous ancestor was named "Amhalghaid" an ancient but difficult-to-pronounce Irish personal name. In English this was sometimes spelled 'McAwaley', but more commonly it is 'McGauley' or 'McAuley'.

The chiefs of this clan were known in Irish as Lords of Calry. The first reference to these McAuley chiefs in the Annals of Four Masters appears in 1045 : "Amhalghaidh, son of Flann, chief of Calraighe, died of an unknown disease...". The surname MacAmhalghada first appears in 1103 in an account of "The battle of Ath-Calgain ... in which Cinaedh, son of MacAmhalghada, lord of Calraighe-an-Chalaidh, died". Between 1103 and 1527 the MacAuleys are mentioned occasionally in the Irish records, always as chiefs of Calry. Elizabethan records refer to this territory as "McGawley's Country". According to O'Donovan's research this territory included at least four castles. In 1600 during the Elizabethan wars, the army of Hugh O'Neill of Tyrone was hosted by William MacAwley at his castle at Ballyloughloe.

The McGauleys of Westmeath were not entirely dispossessed by the Elizabethan conquest, but most became landless during the turmoil of the 1600s. Many of them went into exile, of whom the most remarkable was Philip Henry Magawley (1675-1756) who fought for James II and became a Jacobite exile to the continent in 1693. Joining the Austrian Army, he rose to the rank of general, and in 1734 was made a Count of the Holy Roman Empire. Although Philip Henry Magawley had no male survivors, he was allowed to pass the title to his nephew Francis and this line continues to the present. Francis's grandson married into the influential Cerati family, creating the line known as the Counts Magawly Cerati di Calry, which served the Austrian Empire in important military and administrative positions. In the 1840s this Austrian title received the "assent" of the British monarchy, so that the Counts Magawli Cerati were able to live in Ireland as gentry. The Counts apparently became Italian citizens after the breakup of the Austrian Empire in 1918, although some female-line descendants are Irish. Another branch of the Counts Magawley became German citizens about 1900, where they were distinguished in military and intellectual pursuits.

The best-known member of this clan was Mother Catherine McAuley (1779-1841) daughter of James McGauley (1722?-1783). Born in Dublin, she was orphaned at an early age. Devoting her life to religious service, she founded the Sisters of Mercy. She was pictured on the Irish five-punt note until 2002 when the Euro became the currency of Ireland.