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February 2013
The first step in this assessment was to answer the specific questions posed in your correspondence to us. These are set out as follows:

1). There were no obituary notices of relevance, it was not the common practice for ordinary rural dwelling people.

2). I have found no evidence to link the Crofton families I have located to the land owning Crofton family of Croftonpark, Ballina.

3). The Tithe Applotment Books did not list who the landlord was in a particular townland. However, the Ordnance Survey Letters of 1838 list Richard A O'Donnell as the landlord of Derrygarve. He still owned the townland in 1856, of which further analysis is provided below. Richard O'Donnell resided at Newport House. A brief history of the O'Donnell estates is found on www.landedestates.ie, courtesy of the Moore Institute of the National University of Ireland, Galway:

“Some of the O'Donnells of Ulster settled in county Mayo in the 17th century, initially in the Ballycroy area. From there they branched out into Achill and by the 1760s were in the Newport area. They are believed to have been heavily involved in the smuggling trade and by 1781 were prosperous enough to purchase the estate belonging to the old Abbey of Cong on the Mayo/Galway border. In 1785 they bought the lease of the Manor of Burrishoole from the Medlycotts, which established them as the main landowners in the barony of Burrishoole, county Mayo. Patrick Knight writing in 1836 stated that they also owned 30,000 acres in the barony of Erris. By 1850 the O'Donels were in severe financial difficulties. Much of the Achill part of their estate was bought by the Trustees for the Achill Mission in the early 1850s and the Cong estate was sold to Joseph Lambert and Manus Prendergast, trustees to Alexander C. Lambert. The sale of the different lots of the O'Donel estate is summarized in Appendix 2 of Peter Mullowney's thesis. In 1876 Sir Richard A. O'Donel of Newport and his son George still held over 7,500 acres in county Mayo. In 1911 Melicent Agnes Thomas O'Donel sold the remainder of the O'Donel estate to the Congested Districts' Board at the suit of the Scottish Amicable Life Assurance Society to whom it had been mortgaged.”

4). Newport workhouse opened in 1852. The main source of records in terms of a workhouse would be civil death records where the individual is listed as having died in the workhouse. As will be explained below, no relevant record exists for this research in that category.

5). There are two issues pertaining to graveyard research in the case of this report:

a) As you have mentioned, it was not common for ordinary people to have headstones with inscriptions in the 19th century. Usually these headstones were simply marker stones.

b) Among the Crofton records I have located, Annagh is the relevant graveyard. There are two Crofton graves in this cemetery.

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Results of Research:

Introduction

The Timothy Crofton whom you identified on the tithes applotment books has no apparent links to other Croftons in any of our records. He is listed as Crofton & Co. This meant that on his own, he did not have enough land to qualify for the tithe. The custom in such a scenario was that the landlord had to pay his share for him. Many landlords, having estates with hundreds of tenants with holdings too small for the tithe, would circumvent having to pay their tenant’s tithes by grouping them together until the aggregate amounted to a tithe payment. The head tenant was responsible for collecting the tithe.

There is a possibility given the effect of the famine on land occupancy in Ireland, that Timothy’s holding was moved or ceased to be in his name when he died. This possibility is brought about by comparing the land occupancy in Derrygarve between the Tithe Applotment Book list of 1832 and that of Griffith’s Valuation of 1856.

In 1832, Timothy Crofton was one of 13 tenants, which is the smallest number possible in that townland, since many others may not have qualified for the tithe. By 1856, there are only two tenants sharing the 265 acres of the townland between them, leased from Sir Rd.O’Donnell, Bt. One of these men, Roger Loughney, had the herd’s house, and this townland had the appearance of one which was cleared of tenants around the famine, and used by the landlord for more intensive agricultural use. There is some evidence that Sir Richard O’Donnell evicted many of his tenants and was engaged in clearing some lands for his own use. This might be supported by the fact of his financial difficulties around this time.

There is a Martin Crofton listed on the tithe applotment book for Cloondamph (Cloondaff), in the parish of Addergoole, just east of Derrygarve. He was listed as head of a group (& co) and paid £21 in tithes, which was clearly the amount imposed on a group, as it was a very large sum.
Findings:

The Crofton records as listed in this report represent all available records from the area. The only births, baptisms, marriages or deaths of Croftons on our records for the Newport civil district or the Burrishoole Roman Catholic parish concern the Croftons in Glenhest. Thus the only reference we have to a Crofton in Derrygarve is in the Tithe Applotment Book.

Conversely, a search of all births, baptisms, marriages and death records for any person in Derrygarve townland, allowing for variant spellings of the placename, did not reveal any record of a Crofton.

All of the results are focused on the townlands of Cloondaff, Ballytiege and Bracklagh, in the parish of Addergoole. Since records for Addergoole parish began in 1840, and many of these individuals were either married or having issue in the early-mid 1840s, it is the case that the records which we would seek in order to prove they were all of a single family or ancestor would pre date record keeping. Therefore while we cannot prove factually that the 5 branches of Croftons in these three townlands as listed below were part of the one wider family unit, it is more than probable that they were, given how rare the Crofton name is in the area and how tightly these family were clustered in these three townlands.

The only other significant cluster of Croftons is the one you alluded to in the Ballina/Crossmolina area, and some of these people were connected with the estate at Crofton Park, near Ballina. I am satisfied that these are completely separate families. Once this information is accepted, we now have a situation where the Crofton families you observed on the 1901 and 1911 Census of Ireland are the descendants of the various Croftons from this Cloondaff/Ballytiege/Bracklagh area of Addergoole parish.

Roman Catholic records for the parish of Addergoole commenced in 1840 for marriages and baptisms. Even for parishes with record keeping during the 1840s, the famine period at the end of that decade often led to some sporadic recording. What is significant here is that it was the trend in early marriage registers not to record the marrying couples parent’s names, only those of the couple and their witnesses. Thus I have located several couples of the Crofton name who married around the time of the introduction of parish records in Addergoole, but of whom we have no evidence of parents. Furthermore, only upon the introduction of civil death records in 1864 did any form of death record emerge, disqualifying us from finding these peoples parents via their death records.

The five couples located, the spouses of Bridget, Tim, John, Martin and Thomas Crofton, were all either being married or having issue in the Cloondaff/Ballytiege area in the 1840s, giving them dates of birth which should co-incide with the early 1820s. As you noted in outlining the existing evidence, there is some cross-over in family names which is significant also. Crofton is not a common name in Co.Mayo, and is unique in Addergoole parish. Despite this, we have uncovered instances where Timothy, who married in the 1840s, had two sons, Timothy and Walter.

Therefore, based on the above, I cannot find evidence in the records which clearly and simply links the Timothy Crofton as listed in the marriage records in Canada to
the Crofton evidence we have here. There are two factors involved, firstly, the fact that a generation passed between the Tithe Applotment Books and the commencement of record keeping, and secondly, the fact that the Timothy Crofton in Derrygarve on the Tithe Applotment Books may not have been the same Timothy Crofton listed in the Canadian records.

It should be stated that someone from Derrygarve or from the Cloondaff/Ballytiege/Bracklagh area could state ‘Newport’ as their place of origin on Canadian forms, since it was the local town in both instances anyway. This increases the likelihood that your client’s ancestors in Canada were related and were contemporaries of the people listed in this report, who were marrying and having issue in the 1840s.

The evidence deduced by comparing the Tithe Applotment Books against Griffith’s Valuation lends weight to the theory that Derrygarve may have been occupied by Croftons in the 1830s, but was not in the 1850s and later decades.

One interesting outcome has been that I have located the marriage of a Martin Crofton in 1846 (which would fit with a date of birth of c.1821) who married Honria Mulherin (as opposed to McLoughlin). This couple had one child on our records, a Martin, born in 1847. However, I do not think this is the family which went to Canada in 1850-55 and settled in Hamilton as per the Canadian Census. This is because I have a marriage record from 1874 of Martin, son of Martin Crofton in the same townland (Ballytiege). This Martin had issue and is listed on the Census in Ireland, with his widowed mother Honoria in residence with him, in 1901.

**Recommendations & Options:**

The aim of this assessment was to identify what records were present which may be of relevance to your client, and to attempt to clarify some of the issues surrounding research on a local level (as per the specific questions answered at the beginning of this document). The next step is to offer recommendations and cost options for taking this research further.

Your client may wish to obtain a family history report from us containing all of the relevant records pertaining to these Crofton families. This involves a substantial amount of information covering the 5 branches of the family in the Cloondaff, Ballytiege/Bracklagh area.

This report would come in book format and would plot the history of these families from the late 1830s through to the 1920s. It will include evidence, where relevant, of emigration.
It would contain the following records:

1. The marriage of Bridget Crofton to Thomas Sweeny.
2. The baptism of their only issue.
3. The marriage of Martin Crofton to Bridget Mulhern.
4. The baptism of their only issue, Martin.
5. The marriage of this Martin to Mary Boggan.
6-16 The birth/baptism records of their ten (10) issue.
17-19 The death records of three of (3) these children.
20. An approximate date of marriage for Timothy Crofton and Winifred Garvey.
21-22. The baptism records of their two (2) issue.
23. An approximate date of marriage for John Crofton and Bridget Chambers.
24. The baptism record of their son, Edward.
25. An approximate date of marriage for Thomas Crofton and Mary Colleran.
26. Burial records for Thomas and his family.
27. A civil death record for Thomas, recording his occupation.
28-37. The birth/baptism records of the ten (10) issue of Thomas and Mary.
38. The marriage record of Stephen, the eldest son.
49. Emigration records for the family after Stephen’s death, including locating them in the United States.
50. An approximate date of marriage for Thomas’ daughter Catherine.
51. The death record of Catherine’s husband.
52 – 55. The birth/baptism records of the four (4) issue of this couple and their location on the 1911 Census of Ireland.
56. Marriage evidence for Maria Crofton, another of Thomas’ children.
57. The marriage of Patrick Crofton, son of Thomas, to Catherine Marley.
58-59. The birth/baptism of their two (2) issue.

The report can also include the following extracts which support the records:

1. Copies of The Tithe Apportionment Books (as relevant to the families and the townlands they inhabited).
2. Copies of Griffiths Valuation, (as relevant to the families and the townlands they inhabited and including a location map).
3. The relevant graveyard information.
4. Any relevant emigration evidence for these Crofton families in the later 19th and early 20th century.
5. The relevant pages from the Irish Census.
6. Some more recent material on the history of the primary school in Cloondaff, and of the occasion in 1961 when one of the people mentioned in the report, Tommie Crofton, assisted the then Irish prime-minister (Taoiseach), Mr. Seán Lemass during a fishing trip on Beltra Lake, including two photographs of the occasion.

If you wish to obtain such a report, it can be produced in a bound book format for a total cost of €200 (CAN $260) inclusive of postage.

Alternatively, if you simply wish to obtain the records themselves for your own editing/compilation purposes, these will cost €120 (CAN $160).