



The Wrights and the Dohertys

My Family Story

Jack Doherty

7. The Wrights and the Dohertys - My Family Story



The Plantation of Ulster

In 1609, King James I of England proclaimed the Plantation of Ulster. This act of colonisation included the counties of Tyrone (Tír Eoghain) and Fermanagh and was enforced by the Lord Deputy of Ireland, Sir Arthur Chichester. He saw it as *'an honest and laudable act, void of iniquity and cruelty'*. The confiscated land of Ulster was granted as a loyalty reward to chosen landlords from England and Scotland who were also often granted extra Royal peerage titles. These politically and financially connected landlords arrived at their new properties with Protestant farming families, many from lowland Scotland. These settlers became the farmers and builders of new townships and estates across Ulster.



King James I



England and Scotland



Sir Arthur Chichester

Following the Flight of the Earls and Sir Cahir O'Dogherty's final stand in 1608, the indigenous Ulster families were leaderless and scattered from their homelands. They were at the mercy of the new landlords. To survive they paid the landlords rents to live in tiny cottages and subsist on their small fields.

By the 1880s, three landlord families, the Hamiltons, the Irvines, and the Archdales were significant landlords in the rural townlands of the counties of Tyrone and Fermanagh. This is where my story of the Wright, Ralston, Doherty, and McGinnis families unfolds.



The Three Landlord Families

Hamilton Family

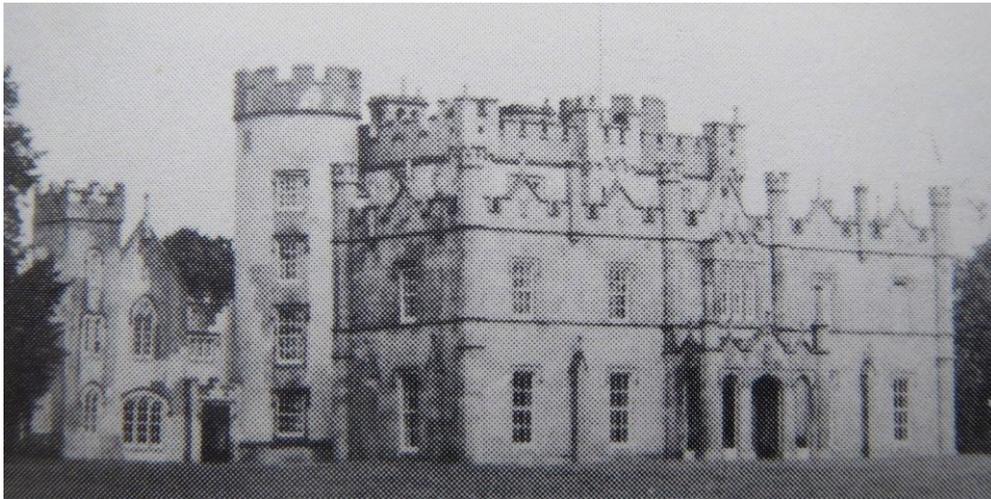
The Hamilton family originated from Renfrewshire near Glasgow, Scotland. Sir James Hamilton was granted thousands of confiscated acres of land around Strabane, Co Tyrone. He also received a new title, the Earl of Abercorn. In 1612 his family established the Estate of Baronscourt near Newton Stewart, Co Tyrone. By the 1800s, the Hamiltons had built their Baronscourt mansion and were prominent in politics and finance. Successive Earls and Dukes of Abercorn have held important civic positions including the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.



Baronscourt, Co Tyrone

Irvine Family

The Irvine family and the Lowther family were Border Scots who were granted confiscated land in Co Fermanagh. The town of Lowthertown eventually became Irvinestown and most of the confiscated land became the property of the Irvines. The Irvines built their Castle Irvine (Necarne) and by the mid-1880s Sir William D'Arcy Irvine was in residence. The Irvines were involved in the military and local politics and were often the High Sheriffs in Co Fermanagh.



Castle Irvine (Necarne) Co Fermanagh

Archdale Family

Sir John Archdale from Staffordshire in England was given confiscated land in Co Tyrone and Co Fermanagh. He built the first Archdale Castle near the shores of Loch Erne in 1615. In 1778 a second Castle Archdale was built on a new site overlooking Loch Erne. By 1839 this castle had become the home of Sir Mervyn Edward Archdale. A short distance inland, a further Archdale mansion, Riversdale House, became the residence of Sir William Humphry Mervyn Archdale. These brothers came from a wealthy, military family and many were politicians. The Archdale family had provided an unbroken succession of MPs for both the Irish and United Kingdom Parliaments for over 150 years. They also often held the position of Grand Master of the Orange Order.



Archdale Castle 1615



Castle Archdale 1778

The properties of these three Landlord families had to be strongly fortified. Occasional uprisings by disenfranchised Irish rebels often resulted in deaths, and the destruction of some of these Castles. The animosity increased over the centuries between the indigenous people and their colonisers. It has often been expressed through the established rift between Protestant colonisers and indigenous Irish Catholics.

The Two Protestant Scottish Families

Wright Family

The Wright family are originally from Kilmanock, Ayresshire, Scotland. On the 14th June 1800, Robert Wright was born in Tarbolton, Ayresshire. In his early adult life Robert left home to become a businessman during the expansion of the cotton and yarn industries. He set up a business in Rothesay on the Isle of Bute. On 22nd August 1825 he married a Tarbolton woman Helen Thom in Rothesay and their first child, William, was born in 1827. Robert and Helen became the parents of ten children and developed a successful coal merchant and grocery business from a shop front on Montague Street in Rothesay. In 1851 Robert moved his family to a new home he built called 'Braeside' near Loch Ascog, Kingarth. It was about four miles from Rothesay. The Wright siblings and Braeside play a significant role in this ongoing story.



Rothesay, Isle of Bute 1880s



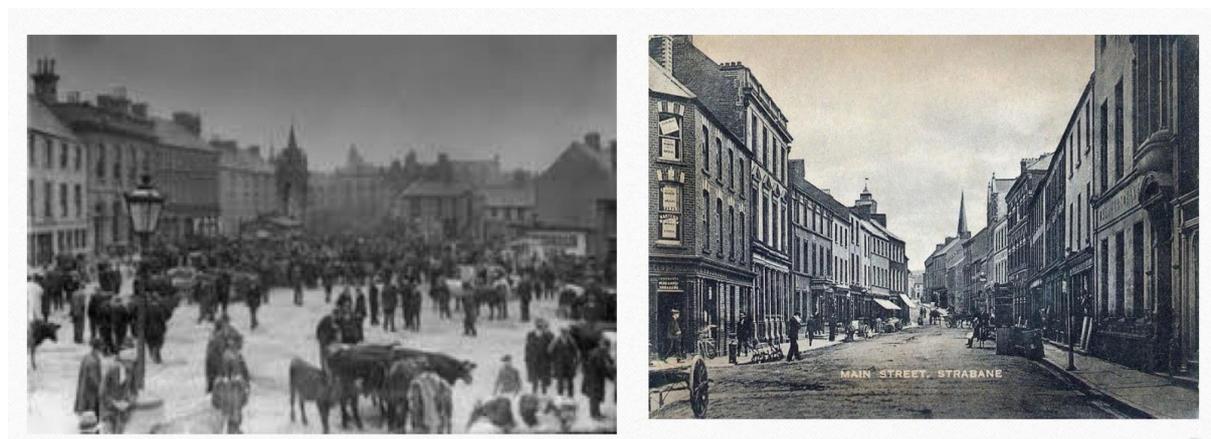
Braeside, Loch Ascog

Ralston Family

The Ralston family also came from Renfrewshire near Glasgow and were granted confiscated land to farm near Strabane, Co Tyrone, Ireland. In the early 1800s, the family of William and Jean Ralston were living in Glasgow City. William was a yarn merchant in Tollcross. In 1815, Jean gave birth to a baby girl named Jeannie Millar Ralston. Millar was possibly Jean's surname before her marriage. The Ralston family are mentioned as landowners in the 1828 Tithe Book of Strabane. On 30th April 1850, the 35-year-old Jeannie Ralston married the 23-year-old William Wright in Rothesay. Mr and Mrs William Wright then left the Isle of Bute to live in Strabane. In 1851 a daughter Jane Ralston Miller Wright was born and then baptised in the old Church of Ireland in Strabane. A son, William Ralston Wright was born on 31st March 1853. William senior followed in his father's career and by 1853 had established a business in Main Street, Strabane. The business, William Wright and Company, sold groceries, coal, timber, drug supplies and later 'Genuine Peruvian Guano' as an agricultural fertilizer. He was also an agent for the Life Association of Scotland Assurance Company. The business was listed in the 1876 Strabane Business Directory.



Old Church of Ireland, Strabane



Strabane 1880s

The Two Indigenous Catholic Irish Families

Official records and documents relating to Irish Catholic families from around the 1880s can be difficult to find. They seldomly held public positions and records of their births, deaths and marriages were frequently lost, often to fire, or never recorded.

McGinnis Family

The McGinnis Clan originally held their clan seat in old County St Mirren now known as County Down, in the Province of Ulster. Mary McGinnis possibly from Monaghan Town, Co Monaghan was born about 1828 in Ireland. At present we have little information about Mary. Some of her siblings may have been sponsors at the christenings of the Doherty children.



McGinnis Coat of Arms



Monaghan Coat of Arms

Doherty Family

The Doherty Clan was dispersed after the 1608 uprising by Sir Cahir O'Dogherty. Around the 1880s James Doherty's family were living in Co Fermanagh. As yet, we have no documented records of his parents or grandparents. James Doherty was born in Enniskillen about 1817, probably in a rural townland. James married Mary McGinnis on 19th September 1848 in Enniskillen, County Fermanagh. The wedding was possibly in St Molaise's Church, Whitehill, their parish church. They are my great grandparents.



Fermanagh Coat of Arms



St Molaise Church Whitehill

James and Mary's wedding day occurred during the Great Famine of Ireland. County Fermanagh was one of the most affected counties in the north of Ireland. Over 30% of the population were lost to starvation, disease, and emigration. The indigenous Irish made up most of these appalling figures. At the time, potatoes were the most productive subsistence crop grown by the Irish on their small rented fields. The famine, caused by a blight destroying potato crops, left many Irish farming families without a food supply. The fact that James and Mary survived and went on to have a large family of twelve children seems miraculous. Ten of these children lived to adulthood. The differences between the Wright and Ralston marriage and the Doherty and McGinnis marriage would have highlighted the differences between the well off and the poor, especially in Ireland in the 1850s.



Fermanagh Famine Mass Grave Memorial, Irvinestown

James Doherty lived and worked on his small fields in the townland of Shanmullagh, paying rent to the Archdales in Riversdale House just up the road. Some of the neighbours in this document were also god parents or sponsors at the baptisms of the Doherty children.

				Total of Rateable Property, . . .	131 1 16	124 5 0	166 15 0	291 0 0
				EXEMPTIONS:				
				Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, . . .	—	—	7 0 0	7 0 0
				Total, including Exemptions,	131 1 16	124 5 0	173 15 0	298 0 0
SHANMULLAGH. (Ord. S. 16.)								
		In fee, . . .	Gate-lodge, office, & land, . . .	91 2 20	73 0 0	2 0 0	75 0 0	
		Edward Archdall, . . .	House and land, . . .	9 0 10	7 15 0	1 0 0	8 15 0	
		Thomas Robinson, . . .	House, office, and land, . . .	5 1 10	4 5 0	1 0 0	5 5 0	
		John Irwin, . . .	House, office, and land, . . .	0 2 0	0 10 0	1 0 0	—	
		John Kennedy, . . .	House and land, . . .	2 3 0	2 10 0	—	5 5 0	
		Same, . . .	House and land, . . .	1 1 10	1 5 0	—	—	
		Same, . . .	House, office, & land, . . .	1 1 0	1 5 0	1 0 0	3 15 0	
		William Armstrong, . . .	House, office, & land, . . .	1 2 0	1 10 0	—	—	
		Same, . . .	House, office, and land, . . .	5 2 35	4 10 0	1 5 0	5 15 0	
		Samuel Henderson, . . .	House and land, . . .	0 2 35	0 15 0	0 15 0	8 0 0	
		James Boyle and Hugh Brennan, . . .	House and land, . . .	9 3 10	6 10 0	—	4 10 0	
		Same, . . .	House and land, . . .	5 0 10	3 15 0	0 15 0	2 5 0	
		Bernard M-Hugh, . . .	House and land, . . .	2 2 20	1 15 0	0 10 0	14 15 0	
		John Hamilton, . . .	House, offices, and land, . . .	16 3 20	13 10 0	1 15 0	12 0 0	
		John Armstrong, . . .	House, offices, and land, . . .	13 3 30	0 5 0	0 5 0	0 10 0	
		James Armstrong, . . .	House and garden, . . .	0 0 30	0 5 0	0 10 0	6 0 0	
		John Ledley, . . .	House, office, and land, . . .	6 3 15	5 10 0	1 0 0	9 10 0	
		Francis Johnston, . . .	House, office, & land, . . .	8 2 0	6 10 0	—	—	
		James Doherty, . . .	House, office, & land, . . .	1 3 30	2 0 0	—	—	
		Infant School house and garden, . . .	(See Exemptions.)	4 0 10	2 0 0	0 15 0	3 15 0	
		Edward Archdall, . . .	House, office, and land, . . .	0 2 0	0 10 0	1 0 0	1 10 0	
		Ellen Scallan, . . .	House and garden, . . .	2 0 30	3 0 0	—	3 0 0	
		John Croghan, . . .	Land, . . .	0 3 15	0 15 0	—	0 15 0	
		William R-Downell, . . .	Land, . . .	5 0 18	4 0 0	—	4 0 0	
		William A. Halliday, . . .	Land, . . .	—	—	—	—	
		Joseph Spratt, . . .	Land, . . .	—	—	—	—	

Shanmullagh Rent Payments to Landlord Archdale by James Doherty

James also worked on the Archdale estates as a gardener. The two Archdale brothers had their newly built mansions, and both were renowned for their garden designs. James would have developed a working relationship with the Archdale brothers or their land managers, as he was their tenant as well as their seasonal worker.



Riversdale House



Archdale Gardens (Beatrice Parsons artist)



Castle Archdale Garden. (Raymond Scott)

James and Mary's life centred on farming their rented land, raising a family in a tiny rented cottage and being devout Catholic parishioners. Parish history says that Sunday Mass never started until the Doherty family, led by James and Mary, processed up the aisle, and settled themselves in the solid timber front row pew. It is said that James built the pew.



James and Mary's Cottage, Tullyavv



Sarah and Jack Doherty - St Molaise

St Molaise’s church, a few miles up the road from the Doherty cottage, was a reasonable walk, especially in the Fermanagh rain. James and Mary’s first child, Mary Anne, was born in October 1848. Doherty babies were then born approximately every 18 months until their last child Bernard on the 19th September 1864. Bernard is my Grandfather, and was the only child born on their newly leased property at Tullyavy. Tullyavy, over the hill from Shanmullagh, was a small farm with a thatched cottage warmed by a turf fire. A convenient small turf bog on the eastern boundary would have meant additional rent.



Shanmullagh – over the hill to Tullyavy



Tullyavy Field



Looking towards the Tullyavy bog



Grandad Doherty’s Greasy Pippin apples

The Meetings of the Families

Sometime during the 1870’s, William and Jeannie Wright and their family moved from Strabane to live on an Irvine Estate property called Drumcaw. The farm was an attractive, fertile, undulating property sloping down to the eastern shores of Lower Loch Erne. The farmhouse was a solid two storied home with the downstairs kitchen and dining room warmed by a turf fired cooker. A cowshed with a milking area was attached to the house, and there were several outbuildings. One of the outbuildings was a double storied stable and barn housing three horses. At one end of the barn was a saddler or groomer’s room with a small fireplace. On the grassed hill above the house was the preserved site of a rath where an ancient Irish family clan once lived. These rath sites were officially referred to as ring forts but within local townlands they were often known as the homes of the fairy folk.



Drumcaw Farmhouse



Stable and Barn



Drumcaw Farm overlooking Loch Erne



Rath site at Drumcaw – home of the fairies

A mile or so down the road was the Priory Church of Killadeas. This parish Church of Ireland was built on a pre-Christian medieval site. The holy site was linked to the 6th century monastic period of Ireland. The Priory Church was built near the foreshore of Loch Erne. Across the Loch on Devenish Island is the ruined monastery of St Molaise. He and his followers were part of the monasteries built by and associated with St Colmcille. This Priory Church in Killadeas became the parish church of the Wright family.



Priory Church of Killadeas



St Molaise's Monastery, Devenish Island

Jeannie's health may have been the reason the Wrights left Strabane and settled into an agricultural life at Drumcaw. Documentation in 1876 shows that William's business was still

running in Strabane some 30 miles away. Therefore, trips between Irvinestown and Strabane may have been regular and a recently built railway would have enhanced this local travel.

The Wright children, Jane and William Ralston, arrived at Drumcaw as young educated adults from English schools. Family lore suggests Jane attended a finishing school for young women on the Continent. Their mum Jeannie arrived with an ailment, possibly tuberculosis. Later, a sanatorium was built on a neighbouring property for tuberculosis patients because the climate on the shores of Loch Erne was favourable for consumptive sufferers. As the Wrights settled into their new life, they required skilled local workers to tend the cattle, care for the gardens, groom the horses and provide a nurse maid or companion to care for Mrs Jeannie Wright. The Doherty family, living a couple of miles up the road, were able to meet all these employment needs.



Cattle at Drumcaw



Drumcaw Drive – planted by James Doherty

James Doherty, at about 50 years of age, started work at Drumcaw as a gardener and farmer. He was responsible for the home gardens including tree planting, and his knowledge and skills with animals would have been helpful tending the cattle, including the house cow. The mature trees James planted still welcome visitors to Drumcaw.

Family lore has it that Jeannie Wright ‘took to her bed’ early on and that Katherine Doherty, in her early twenties, became Jeannie’s nursemaid and companion. Katherine Jane Doherty, the fourth Doherty child was born on the 18th April 1854 at Ballycassidy, just down the road from Shanmullagh. Katherine would have attended junior school possibly at the Shanmullagh schoolhouse next to the Doherty field. Edward, the ninth Doherty child, joined his father and sister living and working at Drumcaw. His job was to help care for the stock especially the horses and he probably lived in the groom’s room which was part of the lower barn. Edward, born at Shanmullagh on the 17th March 1861, was seven years younger than Katherine and would have been about 15 years old when he arrived for his new job. He too would have had some primary schooling.



Shanmullagh School



Ballycassidy Post Office

While James, Katherine, and Edward Doherty worked at Drumcaw, Bernard Doherty gained employment as a shop assistant in Maguire's large draper shop on Main Street, Irvinestown. This was another live-in position. Bernard, the eleventh child, was born at Tullyavy on the 19th September 1864. As I've mentioned he is my grandfather.



Main Street Irvinestown c 1900



Maguires Drapery c 1890

Irvinestown, Co Fermanagh - 1870s

Irvinestown had a regular Wednesday market day. On the eighth day of every month, a fair day was held, and local farm stock were bought and sold, including cattle from Drumcaw. The market and fair days were an exciting hustle and bustle for locals to attend. Some of the attendees would have been the local politicians and magistrates including Sir William D'Arcy Irvine and the two Archdale brothers. According to family folk lore, Mary, mother of all the Doherty children, walked a good number of miles twice a week from her home at Tullyavy to Edward at Drumcaw and to Bernard at Maguires in Irvinestown. Mary, a true Irish mammy, would pick up and drop off laundry to her boys. I'm sure she would have coincided these long walks with the market days.

William Wright with his business in Strabane and his farm in Drumcaw, needed the support of his young adult children, Jane and William Ralston, to help run his enterprises. William was a keen racehorse owner and two of his thoroughbreds were stalled in the Drumcaw barn. Jane was a talented horse rider. The third horse in the barn was a large Clydesdale agricultural stallion. He would have been a valuable addition to the workforce at Drumcaw and may have been hired for work throughout the district. William and his son also bought and sold cattle as far afield as Scotland. There appears to have been trips to and from Scotland connecting with the Wrights at Braeside on the Isle of Bute.



The scene depicts a prosperous farming lifestyle, a successful business, and the pursuit of the rewards of horse racing. What it doesn't show is the tension between the haves and the have nots, the animosity between some landlords and their tenants, and the prejudice between Catholics and Protestants. While both faiths were very devout, they were locked in centuries of bigotry. Added to this tension was the fact that the Wrights were 'blow ins' from Strabane, and therefore outsiders to these townlands of Devenish.

The events that unfolded at Drumcaw in the late 1870s caused the Wright and Doherty families to incur the wrath of their Fermanagh community. William Ralston Wright and Katherine Jane Doherty had fallen in love and decided to marry. An upper-class Protestant gentleman farmer marrying a peasant Irish Catholic servant girl was against all of Ulster's values. It was an incomprehensible sin against one's faith, one's church and God Himself. This marriage union would have been seen by some locals as an act of treason. I doubt if many of Fermanagh's citizens at the time would have had the insight or compassion to see this marriage for what it was, an act of love.

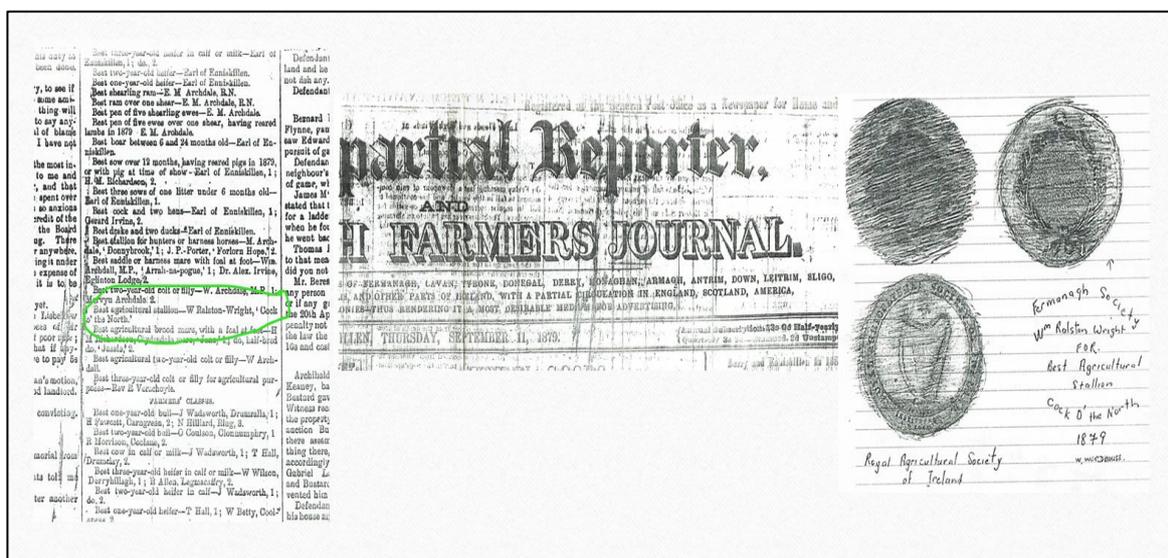
William Ralston and Katherine felt the 'heat of the situation' and fled Drumcaw to find refuge at Braeside on the Isle of Bute. They married on route in the City of Derry on the 10th June 1879. Sadly, Katherine may never have returned to her home in Co Fermanagh. Above the Drumcaw kitchen is a wooden beam thought to have been salvaged from a 16th century Spanish Armada shipwreck. This beam has listened to and heard a thousand kitchen conversations.

It knows what was said by the Wright parents to Katherine, their new daughter-in-law, and to William, their son, during this dramatic event. If only that beam could speak.



Kitchen Beam, Drumcaw

Sometime in early September 1879, William Ralston returned to Drumcaw to enter their agricultural stallion in the Fermanagh Agricultural Society held in Enniskillen. The stallion was paraded in the Gentleman's Class. The main opposition were the Archdales and the Earl of Enniskillen, another Fermanagh landlord. On September 11th 1879, an Ulster newspaper *The Impartial Reporter* reported the winners of various sections of the show. William Ralston Wright's stallion won Fermanagh's Best Agricultural Stallion section and was presented the Royal Agricultural Society of Ireland medal with the title 'Cock of the North' engraved on it. William Ralston then returned to Braeside to be with Katherine and his uncles and aunts.





'Cock of the North' Medal

Emigration Conversations At Braeside Cottage

A significant conversation at Braeside during the late 1870s was emigration. The 'New World' was enticing Scottish and Irish families to sail away and begin a new life, often on the other side of the world. William Ralston's Aunt Elizabeth, married to Thomas Todd, emigrated in 1865 to Invercargill, New Zealand. Surely letters from Aunt Lizzie living in New Zealand would have been displayed on the dresser in the lounge at Braeside. Uncle John Wright with his wife Mary, and Aunt Margaret married to Robert Urquhart, were planning to follow their sister Elizabeth to New Zealand. They were planning to go to Dunedin, a southern New Zealand city not too far from Invercargill. William Ralston and Katherine must have been drawn into these emigration conversations with their relatives.



View from lounge at Braeside



New World, Aotearoa (New Zealand)

New Zealand Late 1870s

Dunedin was the only city in New Zealand to be founded by the Lay Society of the Free Church of Scotland. The name Dunedin is a gaelic word for Edinburgh. This fast-growing city in the early 1880s was very wealthy due to the successful gold rush in the South Island of New Zealand. This 'golden' opportunity and the Scottish connections would have contributed to the emigration discussions and decisions at Braeside.



Port Chalmers, Dunedin



Coastline, Dunedin

In the late 1870s, a Dunedin public works development was the restoration and protection of the shores of the city's large Otago Harbour. The City fathers were building a seawall from hand hewed local quarry blocks. The workers on this project were indigenous prisoners of the New Zealand Government, the Crown. Many of the prisoners were never tried for their supposed crime of Māori insurgency and some it is said were gaoled in caves. They were taken into custody, for daring to try and prevent the Government confiscation of their communally owned indigenous land. Many lived in the newly built pacifist village of Parihaka, in Taranaki on the West Coast of the North Island of New Zealand.



Otago Harbour Seawall



Cave Gaol, Otago Harbour

I doubt if these prisoners were included in emigration discussions around the Wright's kitchen tables in either Scotland or Ireland. They were however definitively on the agenda of

the New Zealand Government. They were another indigenous people struggling to stop an illegal colonisation act by the Crown. This was the 'Plantation of Taranaki'.

Back at Braeside

In Glasgow on 21st June 1880, Katherine Wright gave birth to her daughter Jeannie Moira Wright, named after her grandmother Jeannie Wright, whom Katherine had earlier cared for back at Drumcaw. The family is identified in the April 1881 Scottish Census.



Grandmother Jeannie Wright

Church Renewals In 1870/1880s In Ulster

During the late 1870s and early 1880s some of the churches of Ulster were being renewed with new buildings, renovations, or alterations. Three churches connected to the Wright and Doherty families were involved in these renewal processes. Given the power and opposing positions represented by the different churches, it was important for them to show their domination through their church architecture.

The new Church of Ireland church in Strabane took many years to build. The laying of the foundations was accompanied by the fanfare of a Vice Regal visit and the new church was consecrated on the 30 October 1879. The Ralstons and Wrights would surely have received an invitation to this 'ticket only' event.



Christ Church, Church of Ireland, Strabane

At about the same time at a less prestigious celebration, the parishioners, including the Doherty family of St Molaise's Catholic Church, Whitehill were blessing some renovations. Two cast iron crosses were to be a highlight, they were to adorn the gable ends of the replaced roof. Unfortunately, both crosses mysteriously disappeared before the big day of celebration. The renewal blessing proceeded but without the decorative adornments.



St Molaise Church, Whitehill

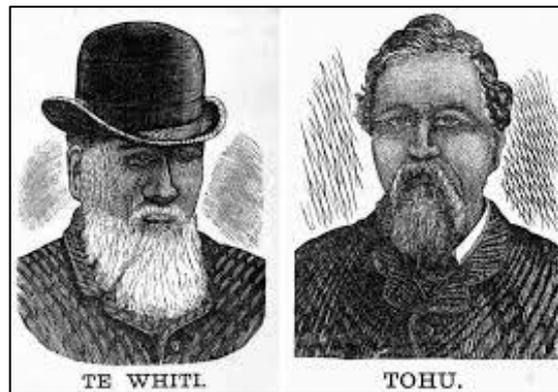
The Priory Church of Killadeas, the Wright's local Church of Ireland, commissioned by the Irvine family in 1864 was having a new tower constructed. The consecration of this addition was held on the afternoon of 22nd November 1881. The Wrights, like all the local Church of Ireland parishioners, would have been at this ceremony.



Priory Church, Killadeas

Parihaka, Aotearoa, New Zealand 5th November 1881

Across the world, a few days before the Killadeas ceremony, 1600 armed constabulary marched into the peaceful village of Parihaka. They represented the New Zealand Government of the day and were supported with cannon power. The pacifist leaders of Parihaka, Te Whiti-o-Rongomai and Tohu Kākahi, were arrested and taken into custody. No shots were fired.



The Village of Parihaka

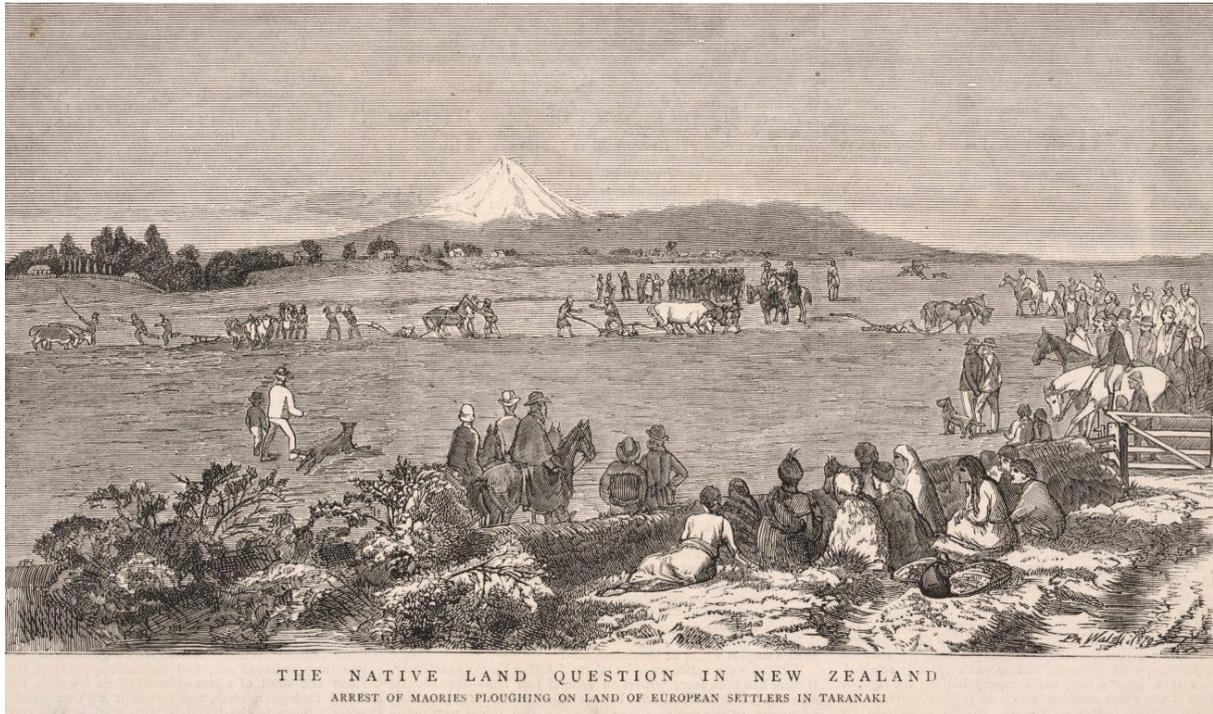


The Women and Children of Parihaka

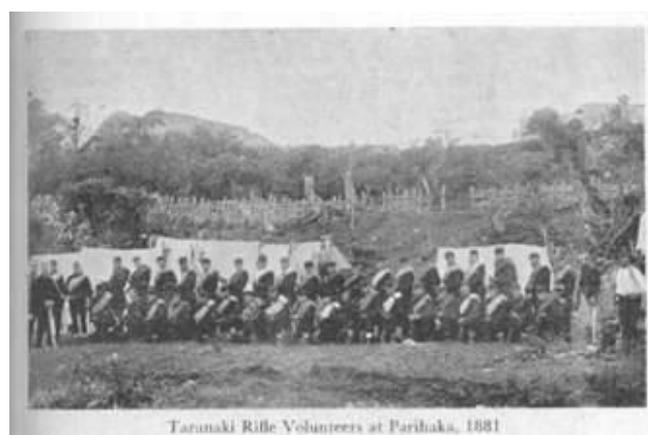


Armed Constabulary Invading Parihaka

Following earlier land wars, Parihaka village had been built as a peaceful movement opposing land confiscation. Many of these non-violent resisters to the Crown had earlier been arrested and gaoled in Dunedin. Their crime, though never tried, was the removal of Government survey pegs and the ploughing of the confiscated land. These actions hindered the Government process for procuring further land for the settlement of the new European immigrants. The immigrants were mainly Scottish and Irish and the proceeds from the land sales were a significant funding source for the Crown.



As the army of troops marched into Parihaka they were greeted by the village women and children who were dancing, singing, and offering freshly cooked hot bread. A bizarre scene of military-might being confronted, and possibly humiliated, by village hospitality. The eventual cost to the people at Parihaka was unfortunately permanent. Much of the village was destroyed, many women were raped, and the villagers were dispersed to their home territories around New Zealand. A section of confiscated land near the town of Rahotu, about a mile from Parihaka, was retained by the Government. This was used as a military base to house some of the armed constabulary during and after this day of shame. This military property straddled the Waitaha Stream.



Priory Church, Killadeas, 22nd November 1881

On the evening of 21st November 1881, a wild and early winter storm blew in across Loch Erne. As if the weather was a foreboding sign, all of Fermanagh's residents were inside their castles, farmhouses, and thatched cottages. The animals were well sheltered because early winter storms in November were not uncommon. Edward Doherty would have ensured his three equine charges were secure in their barn at Drumcaw.



By the following morning, the storm had abated. Rain continued to fall as the excited parishioners of the Priory Church rugged themselves up to arrive at the church before 11am for the consecration of the new church tower. A large crowd of finely dressed laity joined a sizable group of robed clergy. The Lord Bishop of Derry led the clergy into the nave chanting Psalm 24, *'The Earth is the Lords'*. After the readings and further singing the Bishop's eloquent sermon was on the *'Transfiguration of Christ'*. The Bishop congratulated the choir on their rendition of *'Thine O Lord is the Greatness'* saying he had never heard it sung better in any parish church. The Communion Office proceeded and the final procession from the church concluded the ceremony at 2:30pm – four hours of adoration and exhortation enhanced by choral excellence. An uplifted crowd left the church, many staying on to enjoy the company.



Inside the Priory Church of Killadeas

The Barn, Drumcaw

While the parishioners of the Church of Ireland were attending the consecration of the new tower on their church, someone took this opportunity to set fire to the barn at Drumcaw.



The fire would have been seen for miles as it burnt out both levels of the barn, including the roof. When the destructive arson fire burned out, only the plastered stone walls remained. Fortunately, there was no loss of human life. However, the charred ashes of three horses lay on the barn floor. The 'Cock of the North' was dead.



Charred lintels in the rebuilt barn at Drumcaw

By the end of the day, these two events would have been the talking point in the surrounding district. The fire was an act of retaliation as no Protestant boy could marry a Catholic girl without consequences. Accusations about who lit the fire would have been rife. The grieving residents of Drumcaw must have felt like social and religious outcasts. Local stories later referred to hearing the neighing ghosts of the burning horses.

Leaving Drumcaw

Before the barn fire, neighbours had reported seeing Jane Wright and the 'good looking well built' Edward Doherty, horse riding across Drumcaw. They had seemed to be very friendly. After the barn fire, Drumcaw was an unsafe place for a Doherty or a Wright to be seen working and continuing normal farm activities, let alone falling in love and creating another forbidden love story. However, a second love story of a Doherty and a Wright was unfolding. Edward Doherty married Jane Ralston Wright in Fermanagh on 1st March 1882, almost three years after their siblings had married.

Some family lore suggests that Jane and Edward's reason for getting married was one of convenience. Whether true or not, given the circumstances who could blame them? They may have had their marriage blessed in St Molaise's Catholic Church, Whitehill.



Inside St Molaise Church, Whitehill

Although discouraged, some compassionate Catholic priests in the district secretly married couples of differing religions. It was rumoured that a priest living in St Molaise's parish at the time was open to such secret sacraments of marriage. This second love story and marriage would have sealed the fate for the Wrights and Dohertys. They could no longer stay living at Drumcaw. It is thought that Jane stole and then sold her father's cattle to raise money for her and Edward to leave. We have little record of where William and Jeannie Wright or James and Mary Doherty were living at this traumatic time. What we do know is the Wrights will never see their two children again, and the Dohertys will never see three of their children again.

When Jane and Edward left Drumcaw to link up with William Ralston and Katherine they offered the young 17-year-old Bernard Doherty, my grandfather, the chance to join them. This was an opportunity for them to emigrate and sail away to join the Wright family in New Zealand. It was both an escape and an adventure to the other side of the world.

Bound for New Zealand

On the 16th January 1882, just before Jane and Edward's marriage, baby Daisy Wright was born in Kelson, Glasgow. She was a new sister for Jeannie Jane and a new daughter for William Ralston and Katherine. The Wright family with Jane and Edward Doherty and Bernard Doherty then planned their trip to New Zealand. Family lore always believed they travelled together to New Zealand. However, research of shipping berths has proved differently.

William Ralston was almost 30 years old, Katherine 28, Jeannie 2 years 5 months and Daisy a baby, when they boarded the steam ship SS Garonne in November 1882 bound for Dunedin via Melbourne, Australia. Excitement, trepidation, and sadness must have been felt by that little family as the ship pulled out from the docks. SS Garonne was a square rigged, iron screwed steam ship. The journey to Melbourne took six weeks. The 400 passengers on board were mainly emigrating families with their children. Melbourne in the 1880s was the second largest city in the British Empire next to London, and the richest city in the world. Like Dunedin, Melbourne was built on gold fever.



SS Garonne

An almost 22-year-old Edward Doherty, and a 32-year-old Jane Wright were listed as passengers on the SS Liguria arriving in Port Phillip Bay, Melbourne in late February 1883. The SS Liguria, an Orient and Pacific ship was similar to the SS Garonne. She carried the same number of passengers, took about the same time in passage and sailed via the Horn of Africa. The challenges of ocean travel in the 1880s included cramped conditions, basic sanitary services, rough southern oceans, shipwrecks, and strict quarantine due to diseases, especially the contagious smallpox.



SS Liguria

Although we have no record of Bernard Doherty's journey to Melbourne, we do know that his mother Mary and the family waved him goodbye as he walked from Tullyavy for the last time. It is said, '*as he walked away, he hitched a shovel over his shoulder and never looked back*'. There is an over whelming sadness associated with the farewell tears of Irish mummies as they waved goodbye to so many of their children, never to see them again.



Emigrant family leaving Ireland – Derry Sculpture

It appears the Wright and Doherty travellers were reunited in Melbourne by late February 1883. With quarantine and the excitement of the Melbourne rendezvous over, the seven travellers boarded a ship bound for Dunedin, New Zealand. We presume they were heading to be close to the Wright uncles and aunts already living there. Records of Tasman Sea crossings in the 1880s are difficult to access or unavailable so we don't have any documentation regarding this leg of the journey. However, we do know that they arrived safely in Wellington Harbour, New Zealand by early March 1883.



Wellington Harbour

Interestingly, on a similar journey from Ireland to the new world, a passenger, possibly with the aid of alcohol, revealed the whereabouts of the missing iron crosses from St Molaise's Catholic Church. They were stolen and thrown into a nearby turf bog. This information was then passed back to the parish and the crosses were retrieved and are now displayed on concrete plinths in front of the Church.



One of the two stolen crosses at St Molaise Church

Taranaki – Land For Sale

Berthed at downtown Wellington wharf, our immigrants experience their new country, Aotearoa, New Zealand, 'The Land of the Long White Cloud'. Wellington in 1883 was a busy small capital city on a large harbour, with international and coastal vessels arriving and departing daily.



William Ralston went for a stroll along the wharf and into the city. He came across a sign, *Land for Sale in Taranaki*. Family lore says he bought this Taranaki block of land ‘sight unseen’, then returned to the others and informed them of his purchase. Possibly with little debate or option, they disembarked their ship. Dunedin and Invercargill were no longer their destination, and the anticipated reunion with the Wright relatives was no longer happening. Instead, they headed north to Taranaki.



Aotearoa (New Zealand)



Mt Taranaki

Taranaki is the western coastal district of Aotearoa - New Zealand’s North Island. The fertility and rainfall for pastoral farming is provided by the perfect cone shaped volcano Taranaki. This mountain, named Mt Egmont by Captain Cook, dominates the province.

William Ralston Wright purchased 187 acres of land on Tipoka Road, Rahotu on 18 October 1883. This block of land was government property used to house troops during the Parihaka raid in 1881.



Troops in camp near Rahotu

With Parihaka now being a smaller village and its leaders incarcerated in the South Island, the government no longer required the army base and needed funding from further land sales. The boundaries of the property ran along the Main Coast Road in Rahotu then down a track, now known as Tipoka Road, to connect with the shore of the Tasman Sea. The Waitaha stream flowed across the property supplying a fresh water source. This fertile volcanic land cleared earlier of its rain forest was now covered in scrub and secondary growth. It was ready for the hard work of its new owner.

Taranaki Bound

On an early March morning in 1883, the new owners of the Rahotu block of land in Taranaki were waiting to board their coastal transport. A New Zealand coastal trader, the SS Stella or her sister ship the SS Hauraki, was ready for the 200-mile journey from Wellington to New Plymouth. On her way north, the ship called into Port Opunake on the 6th March 1883 to disembark the Irish passengers bound for the small rural farming town of Rahotu.



SS Stella

As the families waited to board the vessel in Wellington, William Ralston, and Katherine's two little girls, Jeannie and Daisy, must have sensed their parent's excitement and apprehension. Katherine was now pregnant with their third child. Helping the Wright family to board the vessel was Edward (Ned) Doherty and his wife Jane Dougherty. Jane, like her sister in law Katherine, was pregnant expecting her first child. As the young uncle, Bernard Doherty, lifted the luggage and passed his nieces from the wharf to the deck of the vessel, he too must have felt excited for his future - a young pakeha (European) settler about to help establish a family farm in Rahotu in his new country.



Main Street Rahotu 1880s

Unbeknown to our Ulster travellers, the two detained prisoners from Parihaka, Te Whiti o Rongomai and Tahu Kākahi, were arriving into Port Opunake at almost the same time. The New Zealand government had decided they had served their exile in the South Island and could be returned to their decimated pacifist village of Parihaka. More than two years had passed since the invasion and the armed constabulary had built their barracks within the village bringing 'law and order' to Parihaka and to the district. These peaceful chiefs and their followers would no longer pose a difficulty to the continued Crown confiscations and developments in the region. This 'law and order' would create an untested and delicate peace.

All passengers disembarking at Port Opunake in the early 1880s were lowered from their vessels into smaller wooden surf boats. They were then rowed through the surf eventually landing on the black, volcanic iron sand of Opunake Beach. Te Whiti and Tohu were welcomed on this beach by a fairly large crowd of both settlers and Māori followers, although their return was not widely publicised to ensure there was no assembly of an unruly crowd. The leaders were quickly escorted to a stagecoach and whisked away to Parihaka. My Ulster relatives may have witnessed this home coming for they too caught a stagecoach and travelled the same surveyed road to their new hometown Rahotu.



Arriving on Opunake Beach



Parihaka Welcomes their Returning Prisoners

As they travelled through their new district they would have been overawed by the sight of the mountain volcano, Taranaki, and a little unsure of how they would cultivate and farm the earth made up of so many small stony lahar hills. This volcanic lahar flow is a unique physical feature covering western Taranaki land between the mountain and the sea.



Stony lahar hills, Taranaki

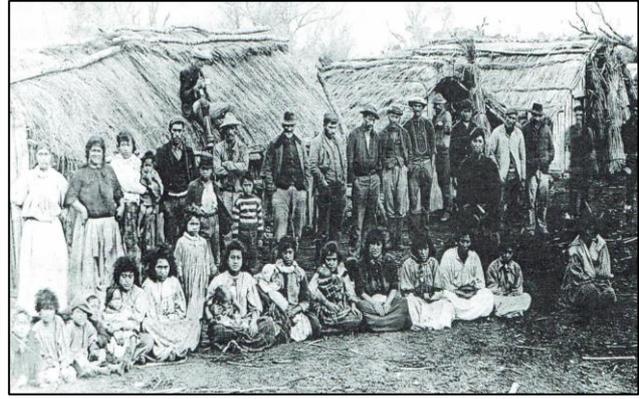
Rahotu - their new town

Rahotu was fast becoming a rural service town for the pioneer settlers as they broke in their land and purchased surplus army barracks for reusable farm buildings. The Wrights and

Dohertys set up residence in their first Rahotu farmhouse on Tipoka Road, quickly settling into the daily physical routine of scrub cutting and ploughing land. Initially they established a successful flax business. Flax, a natural growing New Zealand fibre, was a valuable commodity in rope making and an early farmed crop. As their farm was situated close to the town their neighbours included shop keepers, settler farmers and, across the road, the indigenous Māori community of Waitaha Pa.



Rahotu Shop



Home at Waitaha Pa (Puke Ariki 2009 – 268)

On February 10th 1884, before the first anniversary of their arrival, a fire destroyed their wooden home burning it to the ground. It is thought a spark from soap making was responsible. This set back must have been reminiscent of their Drumcaw fire two and a half years earlier. Fortunately, William Ralston, with his background in the insurance business, had insured this first house.

They quickly purchased two army barracks and moved them to a new site above a bend on the Waitaha River closer to the Main Road. The army barracks remain in the main structure of the large farmhouse today. Over time this family home has carried the names, 'St Katherines', 'The White House' or as it is known by the family today 'The Waitaha'.



The Waitaha River and Homestead on the left and the Flax Factory on the right. One of the many homesteads that were built by the settlers in the area. Built in 1883. No power lines!

The Wright Family – William Ralston and Katherine

William and Katherine raised eight children at Waitaha - Jeannie, Daisy, William, Polly, Olive, Blanche, Ronnie, and Hilda. The farm progressed from a flax factory to a dairy farm. William Ralston introduced the first Friesian dairy cows to the Taranaki district and started his own dairy factory.



Friesian cow in Taranaki

William Ralston bought further land in rugged North Taranaki. He later sold some of his land to go prospecting for gold in the South Island.



Katherine Wright (nee Doherty)



William Ralston Wright – about 1939

Sadly, on the 17th March 1898, Katherine died. She was 44 years old and had developed complications after a miscarriage. William James, her 12-year-old son, was sent on horseback to Okato about 15 miles north, to locate the doctor. By the time the doctor arrived Katherine had died.

William Ralston remarried an Elizabeth Tait a few years later. Elizabeth had no children of her own but was a second mum to the eight Wright children. She became very involved with the Plunket Society of Rahotu, an organisation caring for the welfare of mothers and babies.

During the 1st World War of 1914 – 1918 William James Wright, son of William Ralston and Katherine, sailed on a troop ship to Europe as an ANZAC (Australian and New Zealand Army Corp) soldier. After the war he took the opportunity to visit the Doherty family still living in Co Fermanagh at Mossfield. This visit would have been very emotional for everyone as his parents back in New Zealand missed their Irish families and were often homesick.



Mossfield, an aunty's family cottage.

When William visited, it is said that the Irish cousins all held their breath as the evening rosary was recited. Would this Kiwi soldier with his Protestant father and Catholic mother be familiar with the rosary? To their relief he dropped to his knees and recited the Catholic prayers. The Wright and Doherty children in New Zealand were bought up Catholics, although a Strabane Church of Ireland prayer book belonging to a 'Miss Wright, 1861, Pew 37' was found in the restoration of the Anglican Church of Rahotu.



William James Wright – the Kiwi ANZAC soldier

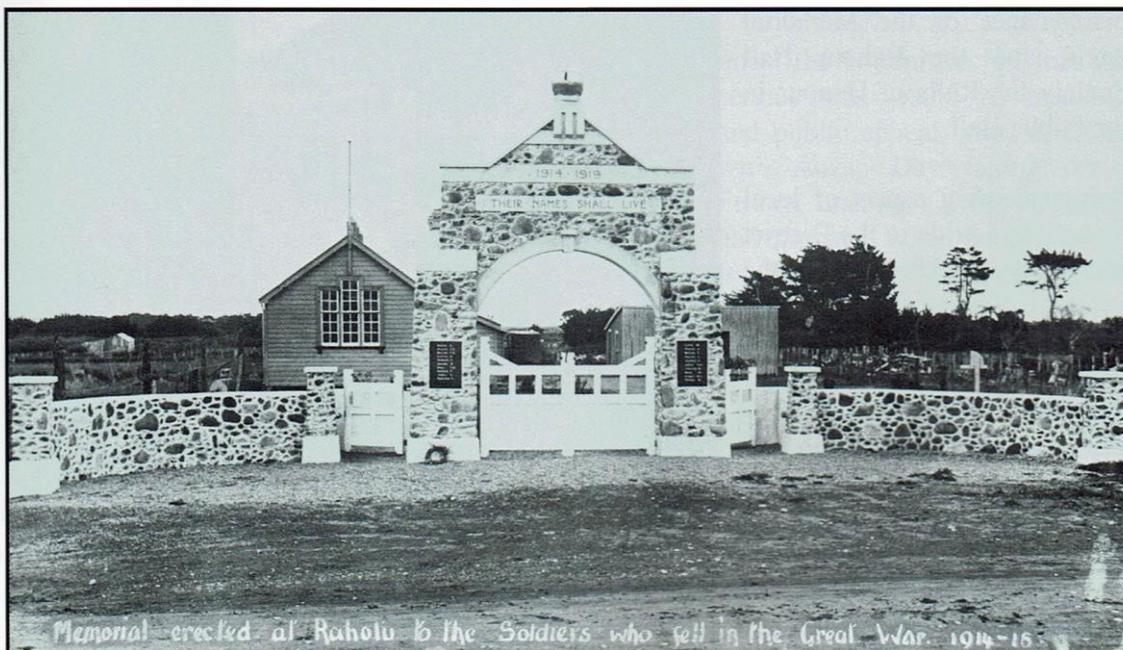
Before the war, William had stayed in Wellington with his Uncle Bernard Doherty. He had left the Rahotu farm and worked in a large city department store where he gained an

appreciation for modern ceramics. This interest led him to visit the new Belleek Pottery in Co Fermanagh while in Ireland. He purchased a delicate white porcelain vase decorated with small sprigs of green shamrocks, a pattern now famous with Belleek Pottery. This treasure is still with the Wright family.



Belleek Vase brought home by William

New Zealand was profoundly changed by the deaths of so many of her sons in the 1st World War. Many of the small towns built memorials to commemorate their lost sons, 'Lest We Forget'. One such memorial was the Rahotu gateway built of local stone, said to be fitting to represent the local lives lost.



Memorial erected at Rahotu to the Soldiers who fell in the Great War 1914 - 1918

The Crown that adorns the top of the memorial, was donated by William Ralston Wright and was an addition to the architect's original design.



The Crown donated by William Ralston Wright at Rahoitu Memorial

William Ralston Wright died of a heart attack at the age of 88 on the 26th August 1941. It is said that his funeral was honoured by the presence of a large number of local indigenous Māori residents. This was a considerable salute to his character and his local connections. He was buried, as he had requested, next to his first love Katherine. Later, Elizabeth, his second wife, was buried further up the hill in the same Rahoitu cemetery.



***The Graves of Daisy Wright, William Ralston Wright,
Katherine Wright (nee Doherty) and Sr Marie Gabriel Wright***

Later in 2001, William and Katherine's granddaughter, Sister Marie Gabriel Wright, a religious nun, was buried as she wished between her grandparent's graves. She loved them both, as well as her step grandmother Elizabeth. Sister Marie Gabriel was a careful note taker and keeper of our family story. In the 1980s she visited the Gormley family who now live at Drumcaw. Old Mr Gormley, with the greatest respect for this story, gave Sister Marie Gabriel his undivided attention. His son, Stewart Gormley, had never seen his father distracted from his farming tasks as much as he was the day of Sister Marie Gabriel's visit. They spoke for hours.

The sixth generation of the Wright family now live on the farm, play in the old homestead, and attend the Rahotu primary school. The Waitaha is currently a Bed and Breakfast stay over managed by the owner Moyra Grey, a direct descendant of William Ralston and Katherine.



The Waitaha 2009

Many members of the Wright family became involved in the wider Taranaki community and held positions in local politics, road boards, District Councils, regional businesses, sports organisations, and community groups. A number of the Wright daughters became strong advocates for the Suffragette movement in New Zealand. The Wright descendants are now synonymous with the Taranaki district and the musical talents of some family members have been appreciated at many family gatherings.

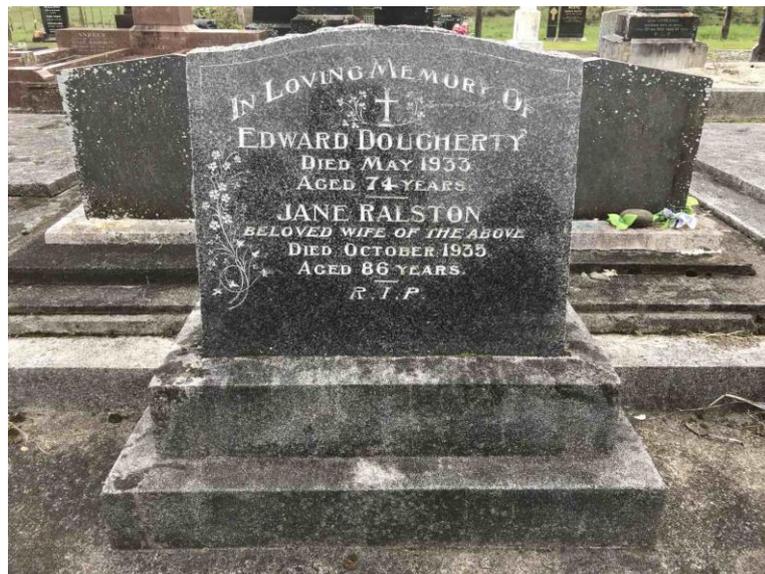
The Doherty (Dougherty) Family – Edward (Ned) and Jane

Edward Doherty was always known as Ned. The local stories often mention him as a bit of a character and a practical joker. He and his family worked on and owned various farms around the Taranaki region. In their early Taranaki days, they were often domiciled at The Waitaha homestead working with the Wrights.

Jane Dougherty, Ned's wife, a former student of a European finishing school became a teacher and representative on Taranaki's Education Board. She was the first woman to hold such a position in New Zealand. She is quoted as saying, *'What the New Zealand education system needs is a less formal classical education and a more practical applied education to match the needs of its citizens'*.

Jane always spelled her married surname Dougherty. Some say this is the Scottish way, although many of her direct descendants stayed with their father's spelling as Doherty. This difference in spelling is a feature on their gravestone in the Okato cemetery. Ned died before Jane and she has spelt Ned's surname the Scottish way on his headstone.

Ned and Jane had three children, Leonora, Frederick, and Kathleen. They are all registered as born in New Plymouth. Nora and Kath, as I knew them, married two Carey brothers from Okato and began a Carey family legacy in Taranaki. Ned died in Okato on 19th May 1933 age 74. Jane also died in Okato on 12th October 1935 age 86.



Edward Dougherty and Jane Ralston Dougherty (nee Wright)

I grew up in New Plymouth and one of Fred's boys, Bernard Doherty, known as Barney, spent a lot of time with my Mum and Dad, Josie and Kevin Doherty. Cousin Barney taught me how to fish and enjoy the rivers of coastal Taranaki and for this I will always be grateful.

Uncle Bernard (Barney) Doherty – My Grandfather

Bernard (Barney) Doherty left the farm in Rahotu to begin his own New Zealand journey. Little information is known of his early working life in his new country. He met Elizabeth (Lizzie) Whelan and they married at St Mary of the Angels, a Catholic church in Wellington city on 26th January 1886.



St Mary of the Angels, Wellington 1886



Bernard and Elizabeth Doherty

Elizabeth's Irish stepfather, Kieran Vaney, was stationed as a British army soldier in the south Taranaki town of Patea. They may have met in this town as it is mentioned in family lore that Bernard started a business in Patea. Bernard and Elizabeth Doherty and their large family of 12 children lived for many years in Webb Street, central Wellington.

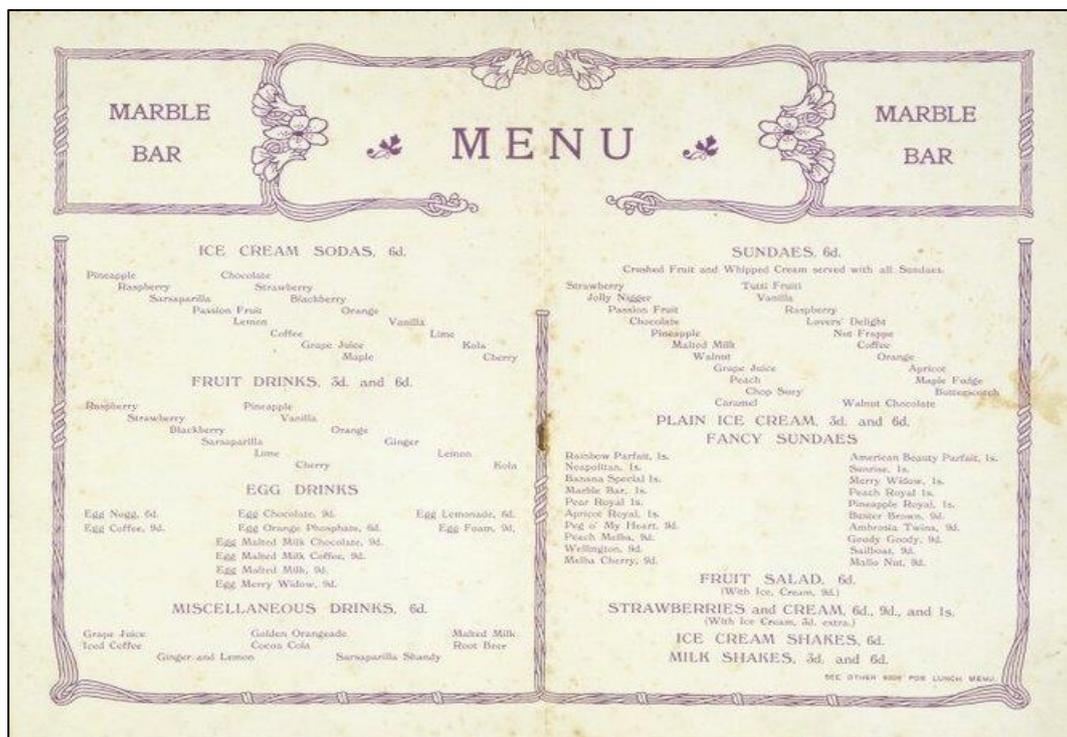


Bernard and Elizabeth Doherty and their 12 children
Back row: Clement, Kevin, Bernard, May, Leo, Margaret
Sitting: Honora, Sarah, John, Elizabeth, Bernard, Patricia, Marie, Kathleen

Bernard's business was mainly in furnishing, although in 1916 he was managing director of the Marble Bar. The Marble Bar on Perrett's Corner was a well-known central city confectionery and the first outlet in Wellington to serve ice cream.



Perret's Corner, Wellington City



Marble Bar Opening Menu 1916

Bernard was a foundation member of the Wellington Catholic Education Board, a past President of the Hibernian Society and an esteemed and respected member of St Mary's Cathedral Board of Trustees. His obituary reported he had '*rendered this Board a long and faithful service where his business experience was most valuable*'.

Some of the Vaney family lived at the Webb St home. This home was a centre of hospitality for many, including regular Sunday card nights for the local Catholic Irishmen. Bernard (Barney) Doherty died on 15th July 1938 aged 73. His wife Elizabeth (Lizzie) Doherty died 15th February 1940 aged 72. They are buried together in the old Karori Cemetery in Wellington. Patricia their youngest child is buried beside them. They had 31 grandchildren and my twin sister Josie, and I are their youngest grandchildren.



Bernard and Elizabeth Doherty

Back Home in Co Fermanagh

Ulster, including Co Fermanagh from 1883 to 1920 often experienced civil unrest. Despite this, the Doherty family continued their rural life based at Tullyavy. When William Wright arrived as the first New Zealand family visitor, Ireland was about to begin a civil war. The outcome of this civil war and the century that followed, brings us to 2020 and the current 'Island of Ireland'. This includes the current and future challenges of Brexit, the Covid-19 pandemic, the Northern Ireland Assembly, and the unprecedented Republic of Ireland coalition government of Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael, and the Greens.

I first visited Ireland in March 1993 and since then have searched for Irish connections to my family story. A summary of this research covering all the people and the families who have featured in the story but remained in Ireland, is written below.

The Landlord's Families and their Castles

Baronscourt Castle and the surrounding estate near Strabane, Co Tyrone, is still the seat of the Earl of Abercorn. This position is currently held by James Hamilton the 5th Earl of Abercorn. James is also a Knight of the Garter. Today, 'elegant cottages' on the working farm estate are available for hiring as stay over accommodation.



Cottage accommodation today at Baronscourt

Irvine (Necarne) Castle was home to the Irvine family until 1922. Since then it has been a shooting lodge, and during World War 2 it housed and hospitalised American pilots before being used as an equestrian centre.

It is currently boarded up and owned by the Fermanagh District Council. It is leased to the Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture. A loch side Irvine Manor House is now privately owned and run as the Manor House Country Hotel on the shores of Loch Erne.



Irvine (Necarne) Castle



Irvine Manor House

The Manor House of Archdale Castle is no longer owned by the Archdale family. It was used by the Royal Air Force during World War 2 as a flying boat base and housed a number of allied pilots including Canadians and New Zealanders. After being derelict it was demolished

in 1970. It is now a Country Park owned and managed by the Northern Ireland government. The old courtyard has been refurbished as a visitor centre and war museum. The Northern Ireland Forest Service afforested the grounds and demolished Riversdale House and the two gate lodges in 1960. It is said that some of the Archdale family emigrated to the South Island of New Zealand.



Derelict Manor House of Archdale Castle



Visitor Centre – War Museum

The Wright Family

There is little information related to the senior Wright's departure from Drumcaw. As yet we have been unable to connect with their Ralston (Strabane) family history. It appears the business in Strabane was possibly declared bankrupt in 1864. No one involved in this story's research has visited 'Braeside' on the Isle of Bute. We have some information related to further Irish horse showing achievements attributed to a William Wright, including an English prize being won in 1892. We have also located an English gravestone, possibly the grave of Jeannie Wright. The New Zealand Wright family's connection to their South Island relations is, after six generations, probably faint. It is said that the Todd family from Invercargill, New Zealand were the parents or grandparents of Sir Garfield Todd, Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. Another colonisation story!

The Doherty Family

The children of James and Mary Doherty either left for America, Australia, New Zealand or remained living in Co Fermanagh. James with his two sons Hugh and James and a granddaughter, Minnie Gilligan, filled in their details on the Census of Ireland 1901. However, ten years later, only Hugh and James filled in the Census of 1911.

NAME AND RELATION	AGE	SEX	RELIGION	EDUCATION	INDUSTRY, OCCUPATION, SERVICE, OR TRADE	REMARKS
James Wright, Head	49	M	Roman Catholic	None	None	
Mary Wright, Wife	41	F	Roman Catholic	None	None	
Hugh Wright, Son	18	M	Roman Catholic	None	None	
James Wright, Son	15	M	Roman Catholic	None	None	

NAME AND RELATION	AGE	SEX	RELIGION	EDUCATION	INDUSTRY, OCCUPATION, SERVICE, OR TRADE	REMARKS
Hugh Wright, Head	28	M	Roman Catholic	None	None	
James Wright, Son	18	M	Roman Catholic	None	None	

James Doherty Senior must have died between 1901 and 1911, and Mary Doherty before the 1901 census. Around this time local funerals would process down Dead Man's Lane before crossing Loch Erne and burying the deceased on Devenish Island. However, these burials were stopped after a storm caused a vessel to overturn with many of the mourners drowning.



Devenish Island from Dead Man's Lane



Old headstones on Devenish Island

If James and Mary are not buried on Devenish, they are buried in the family plot at the cemetery in the convent grounds at Enniskillen.



Some descendants of the original Doherty children still live in Irvinestown and the surrounding district. Since the late 1980s, several visits have occurred between the New Zealand and Irish families. A wonderful family reunion was held at Days Bay, Wellington, on Saturday 9 January, 1999.

This shared family legacy began with letter writing between cousins. As one of the last surviving grandchildren I have now captured this family story by compiling some of the letters and other stories I have heard. I present it as a gift for future generations to enjoy, and I hope they continue adding to this story. If you are a descendant of this Doherty-Wright legacy, I invite you to now add your own individual family history.

The Priory Church of Killadeas

In late 2018, Stewart Gormley of Drumcaw, along with Joanne, Sarah and I met with the parish committee of the Priory Church just before they published their booklet '*A History of The Priory Church of Killadeas*'. This very positive meeting included a tour of the church and cemetery. We were able to provide the committee with historical material to include in their publication. The decorated church had been prepared for the feast of Thanksgiving. Following on from our meeting, the final chapter of the booklet acknowledges the local history including the burning of the barn at Drumcaw.



Drumcaw

Drumcaw sold in 1890 and the Gormley family have lived and farmed at Drumcaw for several generations since the Wright's departure. They have known the history of the farm related to the Wright/Doherty saga and have also been keen for the story to be written. Through this story Stewart and Mary Gormley and their children have become friends to a number of Wright and Doherty descendants.



Recently I met their daughter off a ferry on Wellington harbour. I became emotional realising here was a young woman from Drumcaw, arriving on Wellington harbour just as two other young women from Drumcaw had done 137 years earlier.

Two interesting and unexpected stories from my research

In family research there are often untold stories that when discovered can shock, surprise or delight.

On Monday 25 September 1893, Katherine, Jane, Edward, and Bernard were all mentioned in an assault charge. William Ralston was charged with assaulting a young boy called Bertie Brown at Waitaha. Bertie was possibly the son of a Miss Brown who had accompanied them on the journey to New Zealand. Payment of maintenance by Jane was mentioned by the presiding judges and Bernard is mentioned in court as possibly being the father of the child. This information was found in a newspaper search and was never mentioned by the family story tellers. Ref: Taranaki Herald, 26 September 1893, Volume XLII, Issue 9812

David Wright, a grandson of William Ralston, and son of William James Wright wrote this story about his mother Stella Wright, nee Hickey. Stella was head teacher at Opunake and coached rugby, an unusual role for a female in those days. Two of her star players were local Māori students and one became a Māori All Black. When Stella was 12, her father John Hickey, a member of the Armed Constabulary, took her to Parihaka to meet Te Whiti. John told Stella, *'Not in my time, and perhaps not in your time, but history will record Te Whiti as a great man.'*

Thanks

- James and Mary Doherty and William and Jeannie Wright
- All the letter writers – Aotearoa (New Zealand) and Irish Cousins
- Sr Marie Gabrielle Wright
- Fr Barney Doherty and Sr Mary Una Doherty
- Sr Mary Kevin Doherty and Sr Mary Cecily Doherty
- Bruce, Liam, and David Wright
- Ian Stevenson
- Val Eliason
- Liz Larsen (Wright) family researcher
- Moyra Grey
- Noeline Carey
- Leo du Flou
- Frank and Eileen Horisk
- Teresa and Eddie Mulligan and Linus and Philomena Cassidy
- Stewart and Mary Gormley
- All the descendants of James and Mary Doherty and William and Jeannie Wright
- Pip Desmond and Pat Martin
- Andrew Black
- Jessica Doherty Sanders



Coastal Rāhōtu and Mt Taranaki

A tribute to the people of Northern Ireland and Aotearoa (New Zealand)

Colonisation has brought a legacy of division to both countries, some lasting for centuries. Fortunately, since the 1970s in Aotearoa (New Zealand) and the 1990s in Northern Ireland, the respective governments have been active in the pursuit of some form of reconciliation.

In Aotearoa (New Zealand) the 1840 Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi) with its recent settlements, and in Ireland, the 1998 Good Friday Agreement (Belfast Agreement) with its devolved power sharing are now recognised in legislation in both countries.

Recently, the New Zealand Government, working with the people of Parihaka are funding and building a museum to acknowledge the history of Parihaka.

This acknowledgement and addressing of past injustice in Aotearoa (New Zealand) and in Northern Ireland now have to be lived in the hearts and minds of the people. We can only all be at peace if we acknowledge our past histories and then learn to live and work together for our futures.

***He aha te mea nui o te ao
He tangata, he tangata, he tangata***

What is the most important thing in the world?

It is the people, it is the people, it is the people.