

**HISTORY OF THE O'FERRALL SHAEN
FAMILIES OF IRELAND, ENGLAND AND
THE UNITED STATES
1500 - 2002**

**By
Robert Sean Riley**

last of whom FRANCIS LEECH SHEANE emigrated to Connecticut, U.S.A., in February, 1904 (See page 31). They lived, principally, in Clonfert, County Galway; Roscrea, County Tipperary; and Mountmellick, Queen's (now Leix/Laios) County. There is a tradition in that family of some unspecified link with Aghory in County Armagh. The family appear to have originally spelled their surname as "SHANE" [and perhaps it was SHAEN] which is borne out by a Property Deed dated 19 June 1769 between ALEXANDER SHANE and Samuel Coates, both of the Parish of Clonfert, County Galway. The surname on the Two Memorial Slabs at the Clonfert Church of Ireland Cathedral is spelled throughout as SHEANE. The inscription on the older slab reads as follows:

Here lieth the remains of ALEXD'R SHEANE who dep'd this life
Dec. 26, 1768, aged 98 years.
JNO. SHEANE dep'd this life March 2, 1782 aged 56 years.
FRAN'S SHEANE dep'd this life Oct. 21st 1788 aged 64 years.
JAS. SHEANE dep'd this life August 9, 1796 aged 69 years.
SAM'L SHEANE dept'd this life March 13th 1806 aged 79 years.

Apparently conflicting with the story of a link with County Armagh, and the Ulster O'Neill SHANES, is the fact that a SEAL, belonging to the late Willoughby George Sheane [of Phoenix, Arizona, U.S.A.], a direct descendent of the aforementioned ALEXANDER SHANE/SHEANE, bears the Coat of Arms of the Westmeath SHAENS/SHANES. This same Seal had been date-checked by the late Willoughby G. Sheane as having been made in the 17th Century. Also, interestingly, a traditional story is passed in both the Mountmellick and Wicklow Sheane families of a connection with Lady Jane Grey, who is known as *the nine days' queen* and who succeeded King Edward [VI], The Boy King. She was the great-granddaughter of King Henry VII of England and the daughter of Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk. Upon accession to the English throne in 1553, Bloody Queen Mary, the Spanish Catholic daughter of King Henry VIII, had Lady Jane and her husband, Lord Guilford Dudley, the son of the Duke of Northumberland, beheaded for high treason on 12 February 1554. Further, the fact that the two large, flat Sheane Tombstones which are mentioned above and which lie in the Clonfert Cathedral Churchyard lie next to those of the SEYMOUR family (who were related to Jane Seymour, wife of King Henry VIII) adds to this curiosity.

Apart from the SHANES and SHEANS in Ulster, the only known bearers who spell their name as S-H-E-A-N-E in Ulster are the descendents of THOMAS SHEANE, brother of the grandfather of Donald R. Sheane, WILLIAM HENRY SHEANE, an Officer of H. M. Customs, who served initially in Newry, County Down. His sons, Stanley and Eric, and a daughter, Gwynneth, were Dental Surgeons in Belfast. As of late 1993, only Stanley was still living. Another of Donald's grand uncles, JOHN SHEANE, while with the

firm of Dennings of Chard, Somerset, was responsible for supervising the laying of the Tram Rail Lines in Belfast City.

OVERSEAS, the surname *S-H-E-A-N-E* is represented by the following:

CANADA. All SHEANES are of the WICKLOW and CARLOW Branches.

U.S.A. Bearers of the surname are of both WICKLOW and CARLOW SHEANES and some are of the MOUNTMELICK SHEANES.

THE U.K. There are both WICKLOW and CARLOW SHEANES, and perhaps yet a separate line of Irish descent, of which their county origin is not yet proven. Unlike most, if not all Sheanes, they pronounce the name as "SHEENE." However, like most other Sheanes, they are nonconformist in religious persuasion. [One should note that the WICKLOW SHEANES have a Protestant (Methodist) tradition quite similar to the Westmeath Shaens; this fact is also important.]

Also, one point of interest is that the Scottish (Mac) SHANDS (from Ulster MacSHANE), and SHANNON, share the same Family Crest as SHEEHAN, i.e., a Dove Bearing an Olive Branch in Its Beak.

And, another point of interest is that the most common occupations of all branches of SHEANES are Engineers, Farmers, Medical Professionals, Government Service and Service Industry Positions.

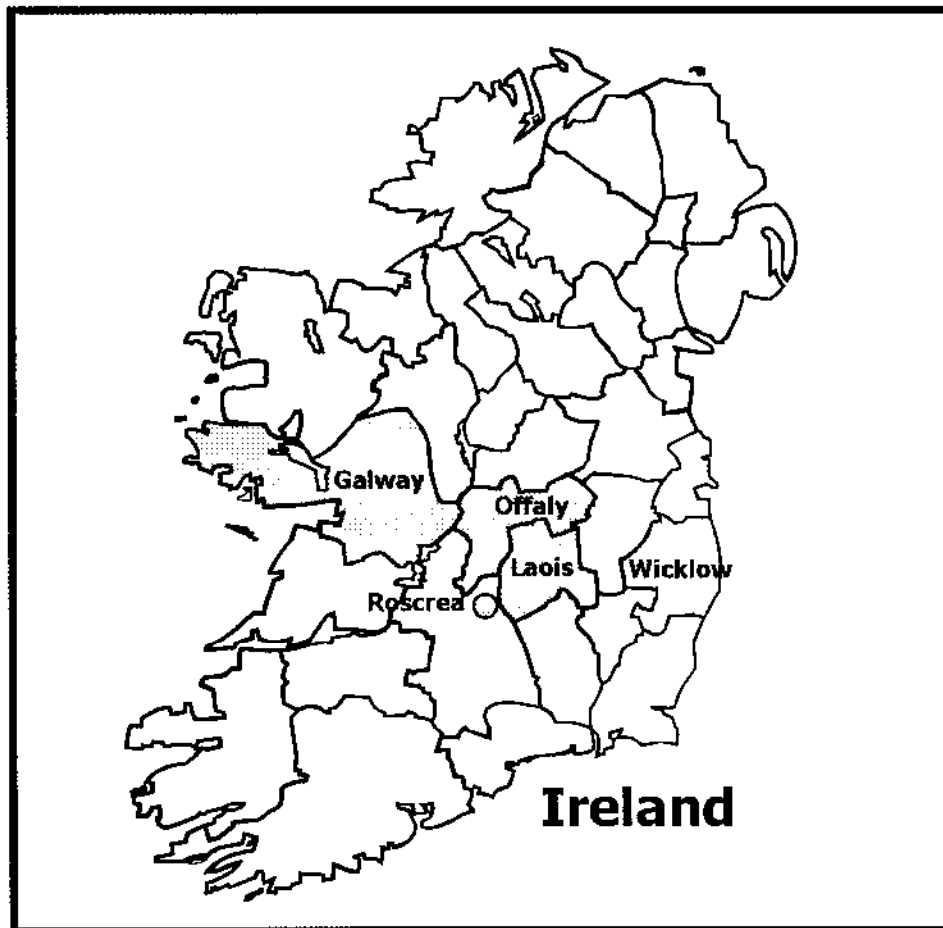
The direct line of paternal descent of Donald R. Sheane is as follows:

DONALD RICHARD SHEANE (born 1949), son of WILLIAM REGINALD (1916-1990), son of WILLIAM HENRY (1886-1962), son of RICHARD (1841-1925), son of RICHARD (1803-1891), son of JAMES (1757-1829), son of ANDREW and JOAN SHEEAN.

Finally, may I say that until the stage is reached where I may say with more confidence which line of ancestral origin pertains to those who bear the surname SHEANE, I prefer to leave the matter an open question, and perhaps the readers of this [Sheane Miscellanea], based on the various theories outlined, may add the means towards a final conclusion.

Donald R. Sheane, 23rd February 1993
 "Windermere," Blainroe,
 Wicklow, Co. Wicklow, Ireland.

In his statement at the bottom of the opposite page, Donald Richard Sheane of Wicklow suggests to the readers that they come forward with ideas concerning the different possibilities which he has provided in this chapter and which may identify and link him unquestionably with his ancestors prior to Andrew Sheane, his earliest known ancestor. However, before any such ideas may be offered by the readers of this book, the writer will take the liberty to present his own thoughts on this matter. Donald has brought out two facts which cannot be ignored in his discussion of the possibilities outlined above. In the writer's mind, these facts appear certainly to confirm at least the origins of the "Mountmellick" Sheanes, and they may well be also the obvious solution regarding the ancestors of the "Wicklow" Sheanes. The first fact is that there are "Sheanes" buried in the Church of Ireland Cathedral Churchyard at Clonfert, and Donald Sheane has provided us--the writer and the readers--those inscriptions which



MAP 8 -- HOME COUNTIES OF THE MOUNTMELICK
AND THE WICKLOW SHEANES

are inscribed on their memorial gravestones. And, the second undeniable fact is that these Sheanes were Protestant. By religious persuasion, they followed the beliefs of the Church of Ireland (or Methodism) throughout their lifetimes.

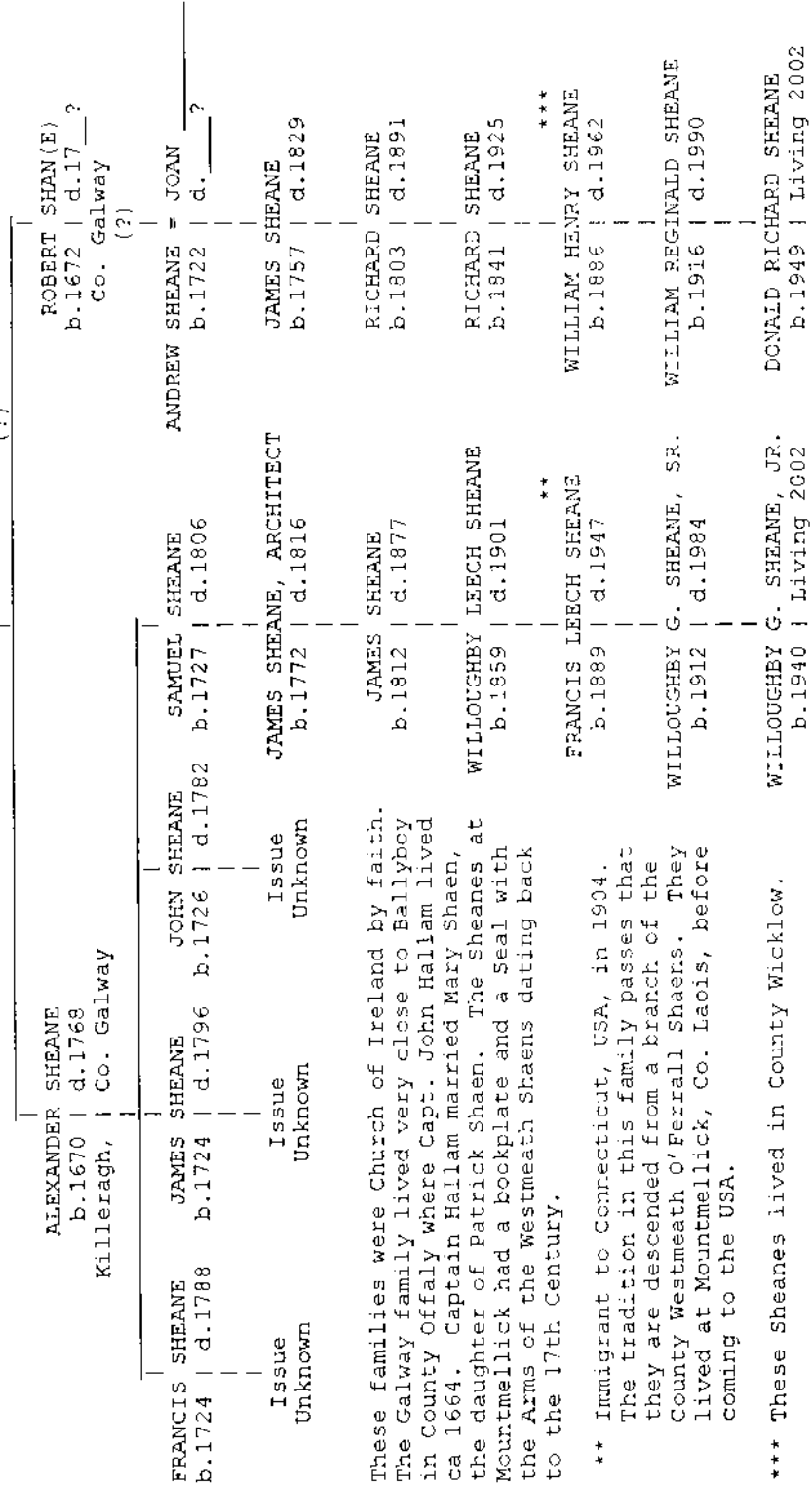
Also, one should consider the religious environment in Ireland following the Reformation, which began with Martin Luther in 1517 in Wittenberg, Germany. The reformed religion did not reach England until 1538 when King Henry VIII began to oppose the dominance of the Pope in Rome on secular matters. It was later solidified during the reigns of two of his issue, Edward VI, The Boy King, and Queen Elizabeth I. Therefore, those native Irish, who converted to the Protestant faith, did so because they submitted to English rule, intermarried with English families, and gained thereby a political and financial advantage. Thus, the SHAENS of County Westmeath fit perfectly into this pattern. They have had a long-standing Protestant tradition, and, for the most part throughout the world, they remain Protestant to the present day. The writer believes this latter fact is the key to Donald R. Sheane's quest for his ancestors and believes the other suppositions put forth are more coincidence than fact. After all, the surviving native Irish Protestant families are a minority in the "See" of Roman Catholicism throughout the Republic of Ireland today. This fact is so obvious that it is often overlooked.

Once again, the writer brings to the reader's attention the the Pre-1708 Deed, an extract of which appears on page A-80, Appendix A. By this document, William Leaster, the Dean of Clonmacnoise and his Chapter, granted and confirmed unto Nicholas Shaen [II] on 3 May 1605 Two Quarters and a Half of Land in the Town of Kellymollronie and One Quarter of Land in Kilkenny. Thus, Nicholas Shaen [II], and possibly one of his descendents, such as John Shaen [III], who may have been a son, leased land from the Bishop of Clonfert, and herein lies the connection of the Westmeath SHAENS to Clonfert. From whom else could the Alexander Sheane (b 1670, d. 1768) of Clonfert or the Robert Shan (Sheane) (b. 1672) of County Galway have been descended? The Pre-1708 Deed implies that some 17th Century Shaens may have moved into County Galway, that they had a Seal with the Arms of the Westmeath Shaens, and that they later resided very close to Ballyboy in County Offaly where Captain John Hallam and his wife Mary (Shaen) Hallam lived. Thus, the writer believes the "Mountmellick" Sheanes were no doubt originally Westmeath SHAENS (See Figure 7, opposite page).

The reader is reminded that Roger Ferrall neglected to mention several known O'Ferrall Shaens of the 17th Century in his renown genealogical work, "*Linea Antiqua*," which he prepared in 1710 and which is now held by the Genealogical Office in Dublin. Also, Sir William Betham, perhaps unknowingly, failed to mention

FIGURE 7 -- POSSIBLE DESCENDENTS OF COUNTY WESTMEATH O'FERRALL SHAENS

There is a funeral entry for a Shaen who died in Feb. 1657 (Lodge MSS). Also, a John McShean is listed as a Titulado at Killinmore, County Westmeath (1659 Census). Descendents of Alexander Sheane moved to Counties Offaly, Tipperary, and Laois.



their names in his amendment to the "*Linea Antiqua*" in 1810. The names of the omitted Shaens are **Richard [I]**, the son of Sir Francis Shaen [I]; **Nicholas [II]**, who apparently was another son of Edward Shaen [I] and brother to John [II], the cousin to whom Sir Francis Shaen left his estate; **Edward [II] and John [III]**, who were evidently the sons of Nicholas [II] and were cousins of Patrick Shaen, who was High Sheriff of County Down and who is mentioned in the "*Linea Antiqua*"; and **Francis [III]**, who resided at Cherryvalley, County Antrim, who lies in the SHAEN Crypt in St. Aidans Churchyard (Church of Ireland) at Glenavy, and who was evidently the son of Edward Shaen [II], Merchant and resident of Arbrenan and Ballymore, County Westmeath. These given names are not just some figment of the writer's imagination. The names of these individuals have been documented in the Public Records of Ireland, Calendars of State Papers, Army Lists, Betham Abstracts of Old Irish Wills, and various Papers and Manuscripts of Record. These individuals were 17th Century County Westmeath and County Antrim SHAENS and have been discussed at length by the writer in Chapter 4.

Finally, a further research effort has been made to uncover and investigate any additional Pre-1708 and early 18th Century Deeds bearing the name of SHAEN, SHEAN, SHEANE, or SHANE in Counties Galway, Queens (Laois), Westmeath, and Tipperary. Other than the known Pre-1708 Deed between William Leaster, Dean of Clonmacnoise and Nicholas Shaen [II] dated 1 May 1605 (Lodge MSS 42/5, p. 412), no Deeds involving the Shaens or Sheanes have been found. Moreover, the writer's researcher, Seán Ó Néill, made a search again for those SHAENS, SHEANEs, or SHANEs whose names appear in the 1659 Census of Ireland and the Hearthmoney Rolls of these counties to determine whether a connection can be made to the Westmeath Shaens. Unfortunately, no conclusive documentary links have been found. Following that search, Microfilms of the Church of Ireland Registers were checked for Roscrea (MFCI 3) and Mountmellick/Rosenalis (MFCI 69) at the National Archives of Ireland, and a number of entries for the Sheane family were extracted. Additionally, a certified copy of the Will of James Sheane dated 15 June 1877 was obtained, and a transcribed copy appears on the following two pages. With data taken from these records, a Sheane family genealogy passed down over the years in the hands of the writer, and other bits of information obtained in correspondence with the late Willoughby George Sheane, Sr., in the early 1980s, the writer has been able to construct a set of six genealogical charts for the Sheane family of Mountmellick, Roscrea, and the United States from the mid-eighteenth century to more recent times. The constructed set of genealogical charts follow in proper sequence after the copy of Will of James Sheane, Malster, of Mountmellick. These charts represent the best efforts of the writer and his researcher in Ireland to establish the genealogy of the Sheane family of Mountmellick and Roscrea.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE OF IRELAND
CERTIFIED COPY OF
A RECORD IN THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE OF IRELAND, ENTITLED--

Will of James Sheane, 1877, Principal Reg'y, Court of Probate

This is the last will and testament of me, James Sheane of Mountmellick in the Queens County, Esquire, Justice of the Peace, carrying on business there as a malster. I give and devise to my Elder son James Cole Sheane for life with remainder to his issue as he may appoint my lands of Cappancloghy bought by me last year in the Landed Estates Court and he will take them under this will unless I execute a Settlement of said lands on him charging them with a jointure for his intended wife Miss West. In case of my said elder son's death without issue, then after his decease I devise said lands to my younger son Willoughby Leech Sheane, his heirs and assigns for ever.

To my said elder son James Cole Sheane, his heirs, Executors, administrators and assigns, I also give, devise and bequeath my Estate and Interest in the house and premises known as the Brewery or Steam Mill holding in the town of Mountmellick with the lands attached to same. I also give and devise to him Thirty pounds a year, part of the head rent of same, which I bought from the Kenny family, and to my second son Willoughby Leech Sheane, after his mothers death, I give, devise and bequeath the premises known as the Manor Mill holding, including the Manor House and Mill and the land attached and appurtenant to same, and also the Furniture therein and my horses and carriages. He is, however, to hold the said lands and premises for life only with remainder to his issue as he may appoint, and in default of issue, I give and bequeath same to my said Elder son for his life with remainder to his issue as he may appoint, and in default of issue, to my unmarried daughters Bessie and Alice as Co-heiresses, and I leave to him all the Interest I hold in the Irishtown Malt houses, including a rent of Twenty-two pounds per annum payable from same and which I purchased from Messrs Goodbody & Gatchell and Thirty pounds per annum rent of the Canal Stores which I bought from William Behan. I direct and devise and my will is that the business heretofore conducted and carried on by me at Mountmellick and irishtown as a Malster shall be carried on by my said two sons as partners for their joint benefit and advantage and that the net profit of same shall be equally divided between them after payment of all rents of the premises, taxes and business expenses, and that the benefit of such business shall go to the survivor of them on his paying or securing to the Representatives of the partner first departing this life, one moiety of the nett assets of the firm, including Stock in Trade value of Machinery and debts, after discharge of all debts and liabilities.

I leave and bequeath to my son-in-law the Reverend Edmund Lee the sum of one thousand seven hundred pounds, in which I am indebted to him, and my son-in-law Captain John Tully the sum of Two thousand pounds, in which I am also in his debt, and to my daughters Bessie and Alice I leave Two thousand pounds a piece to be paid in the first instance by my sons out of the profits of my Malting business with Interest at five percent per annum. To my dear wife Elizabeth I leave two hundred pounds a year payable from date of my decease charged on my business and an additional Two hundred a year charged on my lands of Shraleigh or Johns Grove, and also for her life the Manor Mill holding (house and Mill) and lands and the Furniture and Chattels therein, and my horses and carriages, and upon her decease, any balances of the Two thousand a piece bequeathed to my unmarried daughters is to be charged upon and paid from the said lands of Shraleigh.

I give, devise and bequeath my lands of Caineloon, Springfield and Ockanaroe to my second son Willoughby Leech Sheane for his life with remainder to his issue as he may appoint, and in default of issue, to his Elder Brother James Cole Sheane for life with remainder to his issue as he may appoint, and in default of issue, to my said daughters Bessie and Alice equally as Co-heiresses, and to their heirs and assigns, and my said lands of Shraleigh, subject to said annuity for my wife and the charges for my said daughters, I give and devise to my said son Willoughby Leech Sheane and his heirs and assigns for ever. If either of my said daughters Bessie and Alice marry during their Mother's life without her consent, she is to lose and forfeit all benefits under this my will. I appoint my said two sons my residuary legatees.

Dated this Fifteenth day of June in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy-seven.

Signed by Testator in our presence	}	James Sheane
present together and we sign as	}	
witnesses in his presence and in	}	
presence of each other	}	

Henry Oldham, Sol'r.
W^m S. O Connor, his Clerk

I certify that the foregoing is a true and authentic copy made pursuant to the Statute 30 & 31 Vic, cap 70.

Herbert Wood
Assist. Deputy Keeper
17th September 1914

THE SHEANES OF KILLERAGH, COUNTY GALWAY; MOUNTMELICK, COUNTY LAOIS;
AND ROSCREA, COUNTY TIPPERARY

CHART 1

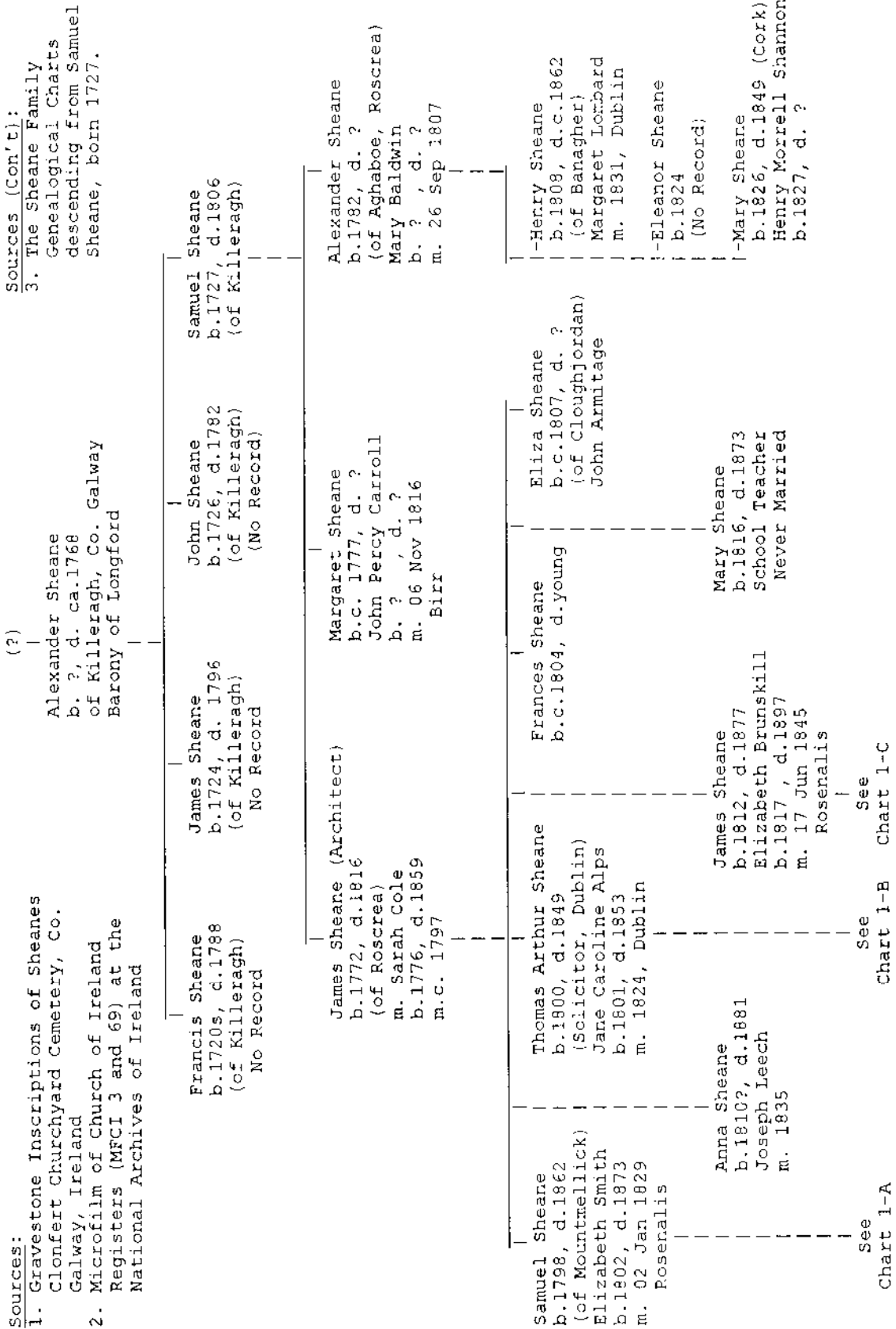
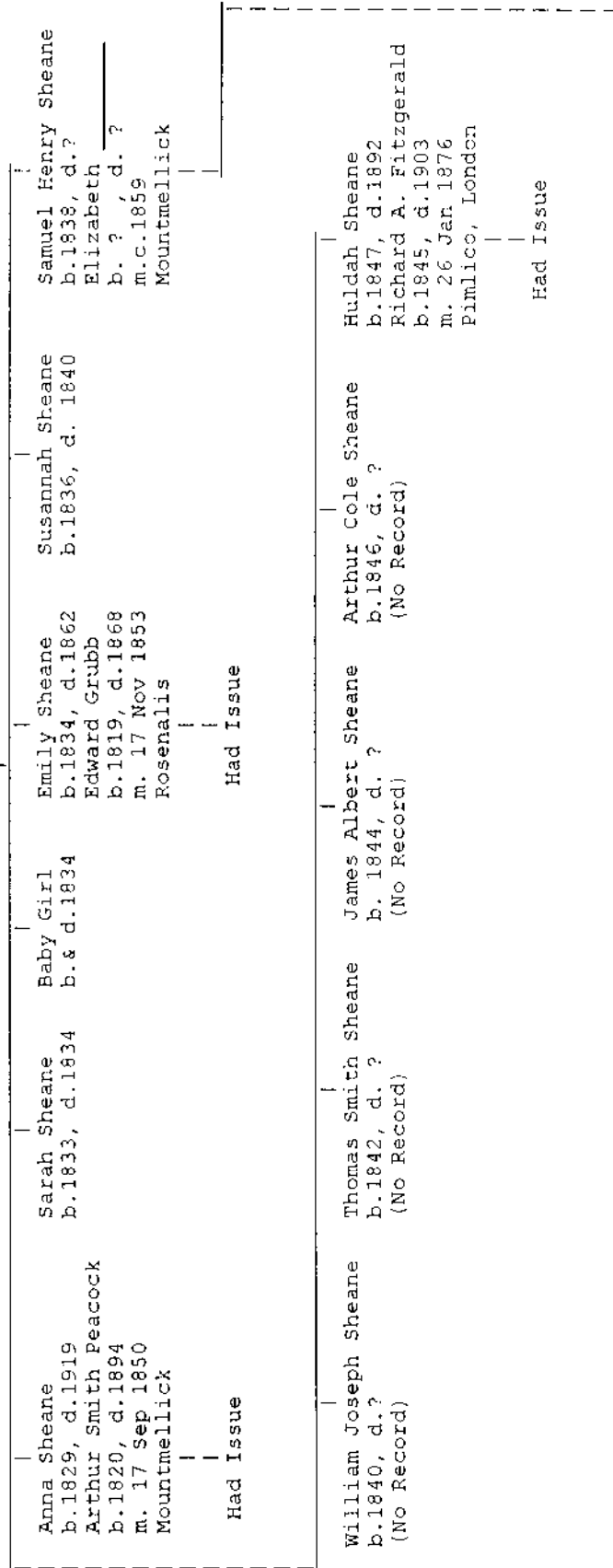


CHART 1-A

THE SHEANES OF MOUNTMELLIK, COUNTY LAOIS

Samuel Sheane
 b.1798, d.1862
 Elizabeth Smith
 b.1802, 1873
 m. 02 Jan 1829
 Rosenalis



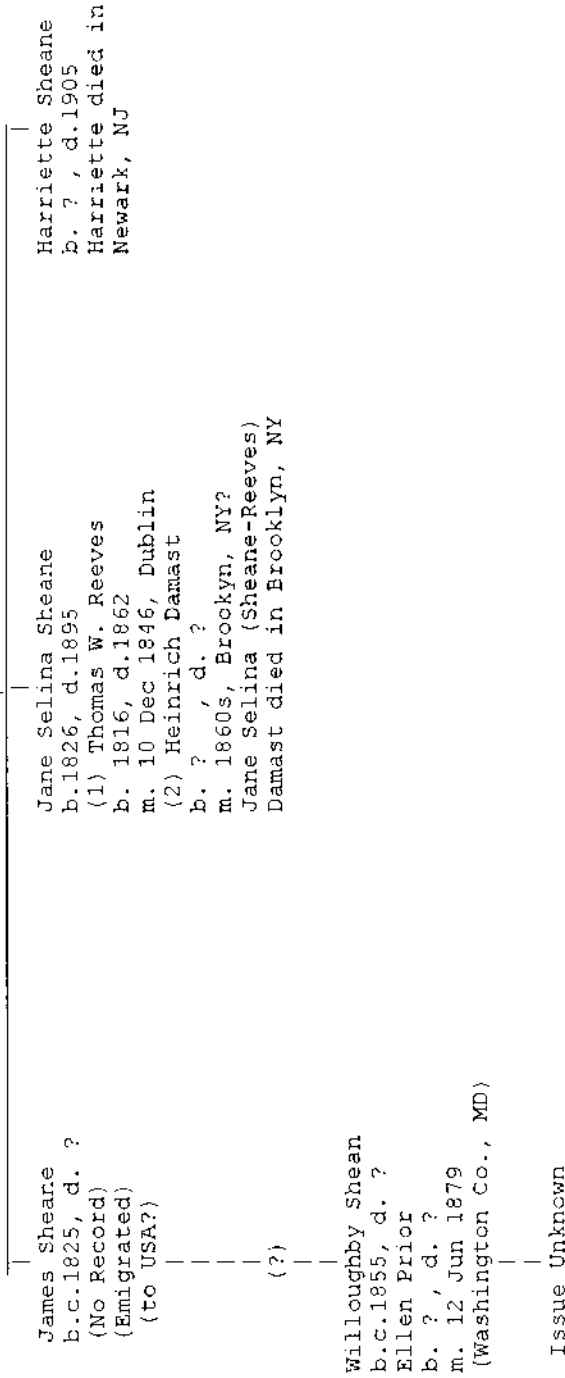
|-Emily Sheane
 bp. 28 Jul 1860

Sources:
 1. MFCI 3 and 69, National Archives of Ireland (NAI).
 2. Sheane Family Genealogical Charts descending from Samuel Sheane, born 1727.

CHART 1-B

THE SHEANES OF ROSCREA, COUNTY TIPPERARY,
AND DUBLIN, IRELAND, AND THE UNITED STATES

Thomas Arthur Sheane
b.1800, d.1849
Jane Caroline Alps
b.1801, d.1853
m. 1824, Dublin



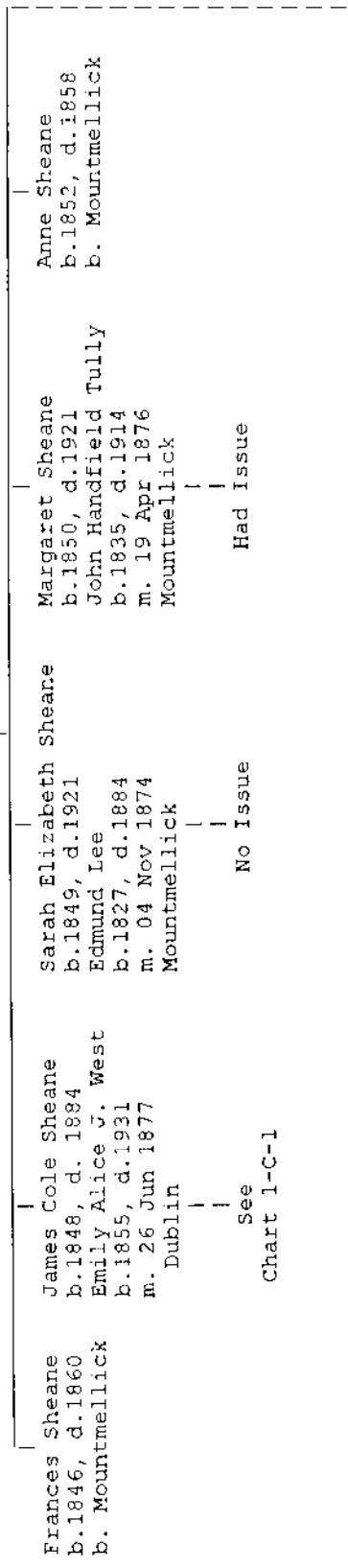
Note: Thomas Arthur Sheane was a son of James Sheane, the Architect, of Roscrea, Co. Tipperary. By profession, he was a Solicitor (Attorney) and lived in Dublin. He died at age 49. Following the death of their mother, Jane Caroline (Alps) Sheane in 1853, their children--James, Jane and husband Thomas W. Reeves, and Harriette--emigrated to the USA and settled in Brooklyn, New York, and Newark, New Jersey. Possibly, the Willoughby Shean who married Ellen Prior on 12 June 1879 in Washington County, Maryland, was the son of James Sheane above.

- Sources:
1. MFCI 3 and 69, National Archives of Ireland (NAI).
 2. Sheane Family Genealogical Charts descending from Samuel Sheane, born 1727.

CHART 1-C

THE SHEANES OF MOUNTMELICK, COUNTY LAOIS

James Sheane
 b.1812, d.1877
 Elizabeth Brunskill
 b.1817, d.1897
 m. 17 Jun 1845
 Rosenalis



See
 Chart 1-C-1

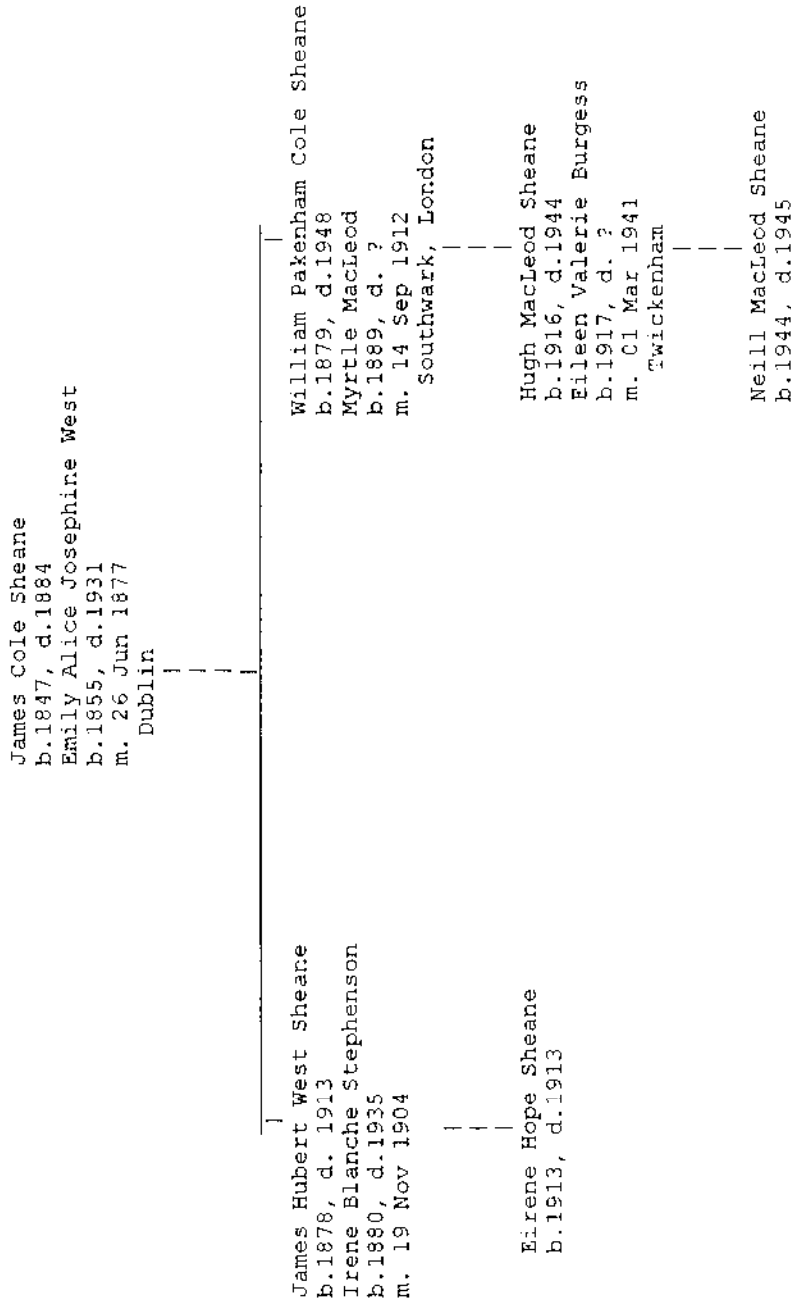
Had Issue
 See
 Chart 1-C-3

Note: There is no Chart 1-C-2

- Sources:
1. MFCI 3 and 69, National Archives of Ireland (NAI).
 2. Sheane Family Genealogical Charts descending from Samuel Sheane, born 1727.
 3. Will of James Sheane, Malster, dated 15 June 1877 (See Page 305).

THE SHEANES OF MOUNTMELICK, COUNTY LAOIS

CHART I-C-1

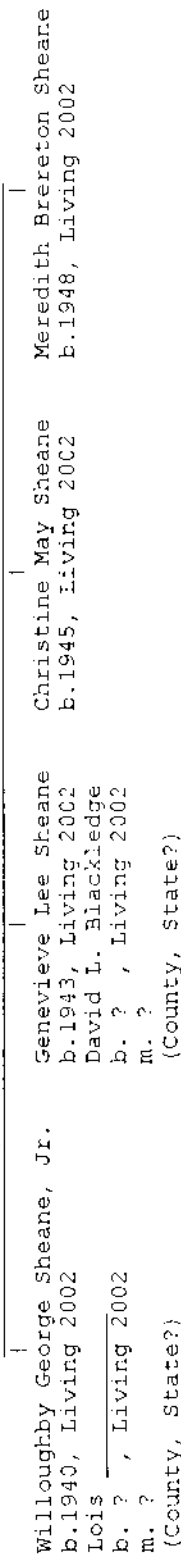
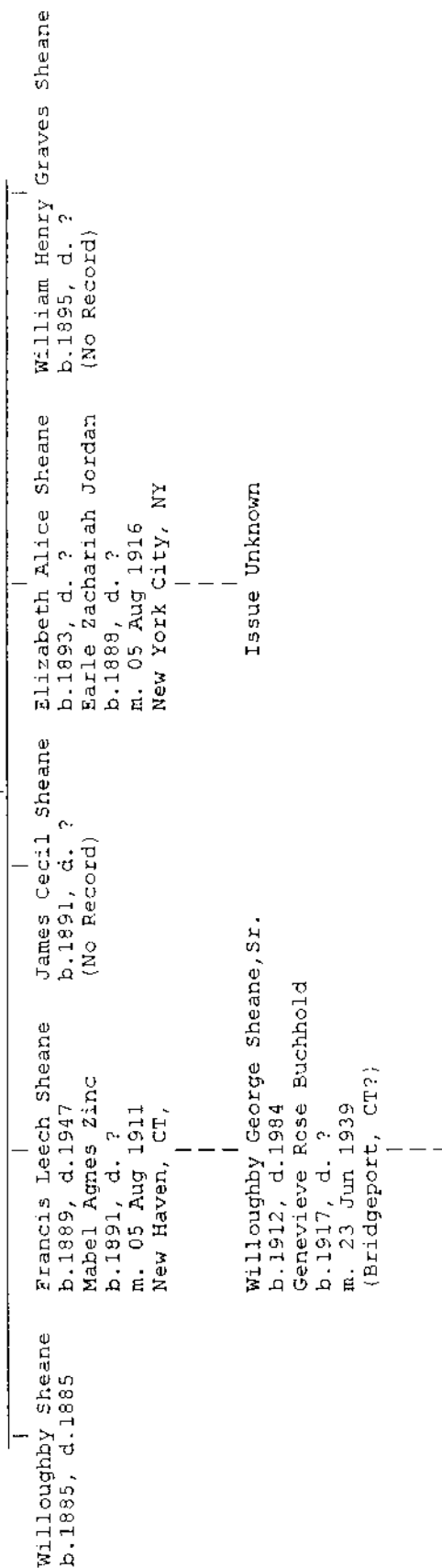


- Notes:
1. James Hubert died and is buried in Fort Rosebury, Rhodesia. He served as a Native Commissioner in Northern Rhodesia. Following his death, his wife Irene married secondly Wallace Bruce Donald on 26 January 1914 in Elizabethville, Belgian Congo. Wallace was a Bank Manager.
 2. Hugh MacLeod Sheane was a Solicitor by profession. He was killed in action in Holland in World War II whilst serving as a Lieutenant with the Royal Ulster Rifles. His widow Eileen married secondly James Rowland Hamerton on 26 March 1949. They had issue Philip Hamerton, born 13 February 1950, and divorced on 26 July 1956.

- Sources:
1. MFCI 3 and 69, National Archives of Ireland (NAI).
 2. Sheane Family Genealogical Charts descending from Samuel Sheane, born 1727.

THE SHEANES OF MOUNTMELICK, COUNTY LAOIS,
AND THE UNITED STATES

Willoughby Leech Sheane
b.1859, d.1901
Elizabeth Julia Brereton
b. ? , d.1905 (CT, USA)
m. 14 Nov 1883
Cloneyburke



Sources:
1. MFCI 3 and 69, National Archives of Ireland (NAI).
2. Sheane Family Genealogical Charts descending from Samuel Sheane, born 1727.
3. Will of James Sheane, Malster, dated 15 June 1877 (See Page 305).
4. Notes on Sheane Family from the late Willoughby G. Sheane, Sr.