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The Origins of Co. Cork Kingstons

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PREFACE

In confining our attention to the origins of Co. Cork Kingstons we may seem to be imposing undue restrictions, both geographical and temporal, on the scope of this enquiry, but in fact the restrictions are more apparent than real. Geographically the name Kingston can now be found in several counties in Ireland, but most Irish and Irish-emigrant Kingstons have their roots in Co. Cork, as clearly indicated by the fact that in Griffith's Valuation of Ireland in 1853 90% of Kingston householders lived in that county, and in turn 90% of these lived in the south-west division of the county, mainly in the baronies of East and West Carbery. The localization in the title is therefore understandable; nevertheless there are occasional references to non-Cork Kingstons, the most interesting occurrence of the name being that of a Co. Longford family who anglicized the Scots-Gaelic McCloughry to Kingstone and then dropped the final 'e'. By contrast Co. Cork Kingstons are of English origin, the name coming from 'King's Tun', the king's manor, and hence the toponymic 'de Kyngeston', (of the king's manor), eventually becoming Kingston.

To offset the other limitation in the title, the concentration on Kingston origins and

consequent exclusion of recent family charts, it is intended at a future date to deposit copies of these in the Genealogical Office, Dublin, the Cork Archives Institute and the Public Records Office, Belfast, where they will be available for research purposes. Their inclusion here, however, would not only make the article far too long but would prove invidious, as most of the charts relate to a particular parish and many to a particular family. The collecting and collating of Kingston family trees is still continuing, and further genealogical information is always welcome.

Finally I must express my gratitude to many who have tolerated persistent questioning about former generations and have variously co-operated in research, and in particular my father, Rev. Paul Kingston, O.B.E., of Drimoleague, and a distant cousin, Robert Griffiths of Reading, England, whose parallel investigation into Kingston origins and constructive criticism of my interpretation of historical sources has been most helpful. The fault is mine entirely, however, if the following pages involve any misreading of the past.

UNTENABLE TRADITIONS

Published or privately printed articles and pamphlets on the Kingstons of Co. Cork are

unfortunately few in number and often misleading in content. Whilst responsible writers such as McLysaght simply report, but thus tend to perpetuate, commonly accepted but in fact untenable traditions, others have been decidedly irresponsible in making ancestral claims and exaggerating the number of Kingston families in the county — see, for example, the pamphlet *The Royal Descent of Kingston* 'Being the Story of the Noblemen and Gentlemen of the Kingston Family in England and Ireland' (this pretentious title resting on the irrelevant fact that in 1778 an English M.P., John Kingston, married a lady claiming descent from Edward I), or the absurd article 'You Whose Grandmothers are Strangers — Listen' in the *Daily Sketch* of 8 January 1934, with its fantastic assertion that 'In the village he comes from' (meaning Drimoleague, although the person interviewed actually came from Caheragh) 'and in the villages around there are only Kingstons'. To be precise the proportion of Kingston householders in the parish of Drimoleague in 1853 was 1/16, and by 1934 it was certainly no greater. Clearly, therefore, any serious review of Co. Cork Kingston origins has to be corrective as well as constructive, and we begin by giving reasons for rejecting the two main traditions concerning the arrival of Kingstons in the county. Some isolated traditions, such as a reputed landing of three unknown Kingstons at Myross in Cromwell's time, are virtually untestable and not worth considering.

Bantry Bay

At the end of the six-page pamphlet *The Royal Descent of Kingston* there is a brief paragraph headed 'The Kingston Family in Ireland before 1690', which reads:

According to Burke's Visitation of the Seats and Arms of the Noblemen and Gentlemen of Great Britain — The family of KINGSTON, originally DE KINGSTON, migrated from England to Ireland during the great Civil War of Charles the First's time.

They landed at Bantry Bay and soon established themselves in West Cork.

Checking the reference one finds that there is no mention whatever of Bantry Bay. The entry deals solely with the Kingstons who settled in Queen's County, now Laois, and who had no known connections with their namesakes in Co. Cork. The claim that the alleged Bantry Bay landing rests on the authority of Sir John Bernard Burke is thus totally false.

A more widespread belief is that the Bantry Bay story was authenticated by an article published in *The Southern Star*, Skibbereen, in the 1930s by its then editor, James M. Burke, who frequently wrote on West Cork families. As summarized by one firm advocate of this tradition, although he admitted that he had not personally seen the article but was reporting what he had been told about it:

The Kingstons came from Somerset in small boats into Bantry Bay as fugitives running from the Puritan persecution in England in the 1640s. . . . The refugees had the reputation of being good farmers and were received amicably by the native Irish in the Bantry district, and were given some land in the neighbourhood.

And in 'neighbourhood' he included the adjoining parish of Drimoleague.

A prolonged search through old copies of the paper failed, however, to disclose any such article. What it disclosed, rather, was that Burke reproduced the January 1934 *Daily Sketch* article mentioned above in the next issue of *The Southern Star* under the title 'From Darkest Ireland', adding in a footnote that it was 'rather exaggerated' (the understatement of the year!) but had a 'great deal of truth'. He disclaimed any knowledge of the Battle of the Boyne incident cited in the article, and continued:

We have read, however, that the Kingstons are descended from one of the O'Sullivan's Bere, who

was rent receiver or agent for the Earl of Kingston, and was, in consequence, called Sullivan (Kingston). His descendants adopted the nickname. We don't vouch the accuracy of this . . .

This curious theory doesn't merit serious attention, although in fact there was a Thomas Kingston Sullivan who was agent for Edward Edwards in 1876. The point to be underlined is that Burke patently had not at this stage investigated Kingston genealogy, nor did this brief encounter with the name prompt him to do so, as there was no subsequent article on the family between this date and the issue of 12 September 1936 which announced his death. It would seem that the fact that Burke commented on Kingston origins on this one occasion gave rise to the mistaken impression that he had written a full article on the family, and perhaps the Bantry Bay location of O'Sullivan Bere may partly explain the presumed landing place of the Kingstons, the whole story further developing with time. This is clearly evident in one typewritten account of unknown origin (but with the same false reference to Sir Bernard Burke) which describes a 'vast migration' of Kingstons to Ireland under pressure of Oliver Cromwell between 1625 and 1649, comparing the situation to the departure of the Mayflower for America in 1620. In more epic style it asserts that

History was written in blood and tears the day the Kingstons left their homes and lands, marched to the coast and boarded sailing vessels bound for Ireland. They landed at Bantry Bay . . . and soon established themselves in that corner of South West Ireland.

Apart from the anachronism that the Cromwellian period cannot be stretched back to 1625, twenty years before the Battle of Naseby, and even if it could Cromwell would not have forced the emigration of Englishmen allegedly akin to the Pilgrim Fathers, any suggestion that a considerable number of West

Country Kingstons arrived in Drimoleague via Bantry Bay at that time is in direct conflict with the facts that it wasn't until 1652 that O'Donovan was dispossessed of his land in the locality, and that seven years later, according to the 1659 Census, there were still only twelve English in the whole parish, the corresponding number for Bantry parish being sixty-seven. Of course it is just possible that many of these sixty-seven were Kingstons who subsequently moved to Drimoleague, explaining how the name became respectively rare and numerous in the adjoining parishes, but that is hardly likely. The impression conveyed by Bishop Dive Downes' report of his visit to 'Dromaleague' in 1700 is that even at that date the number of settlers in the parish was relatively small.¹ Thus regrettably, insofar as refugee origins would be preferable to plantation origins, the Bantry Bay theory, whilst not actually disproved, must be regarded as very improbable, and definitely untrue of any 'vast migration'. Indeed the similarity between some accounts of the Bantry Bay tradition and Bennett's description of the arrival of immigrants from Somerset in the Bandon region around 1620 arouses a strong suspicion that the latter has deeply influenced the former, if not provided most of its content — see his *History of Bandon*, chapter iv.

The Boyne

Judging by the extent to which it is quoted and uncritically accepted, the tradition that Co. Cork Kingstons came to Ireland with William of Orange and settled on land received as a reward for services at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690 could almost be called the classical theory of Co. Cork Kingston origins. In published form it dates from September 1893 when an article entitled 'The Kingston Family in West Cork' appeared in the Parish Magazine of the United Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross. In 1929 the article was slightly extended by Mrs. Catherine Shannon and

published as a separate pamphlet with the same title.² Incidentally there are several minor discrepancies between the 1893 and 1929 versions, most of them stylistic improvements or minor corrections, e.g., Kilnagross for Kilnacross, but also one interesting mistake in which the 'several sons' of Capt. James Kingston in 1893 had become 'seven sons' by 1929.

Our primary interest, however, is not in the 1929 additions, or even in the introduction to the 1893 article (describing the prevalence of the name Kingston in West Cork parishes and how those with the same forenames are commonly distinguished from each other by adding the name of a parent and even a grandparent, e.g. 'Richard Mary Sam', a custom still in use but by no means peculiar to Kingstons) but in the main section 'which the Rev. J. Somerville Reeves, D.D. (who was Rector of Caheragh from 1863 to 1890) has written down from the lips of Mr. Paul Kingston before his death'. This section twice mentions 1872 as the current date and states that Mr. Kingston died 'several years ago', suggesting an unfortunate gap between the story being related and recorded in writing. This may account for some misreported place names, for instance the unfamiliar townland name Ballycatteen is recorded as the more familiar town name Ballycotton, an error the narrator would not have made, having lived in nearby Kilnagross parish before moving to Caheragh. For purposes of comparison later it is necessary to reproduce most of this section, further references to which will be noted as 'Reeves 1872':

Colonel James Kingston, the first of the family that visited Ireland, came from the West of England, in 1690, with William III. He was Colonel of Horse. He was accompanied by his two sons James and Paul, who were Captains of Foot.

Besides Colonel Kingston, King William had two other colonels, namely Stawell and Honor: with these he fought the famous battle of the Boyne, in

which Colonel Kingston saved King William's life by giving him his horse when his own refused to take the water. After the battle was over and peace was restored King William gave his Colonels and Captains land for their service both at the battles of Boyne and Aughrim: about which time, a little after the battle of Aughrim, one of Colonel Kingston's sons, Paul, died of fever in the camp at Dundalk, so that all the lands of the three Kingstons, that is, of the father and two sons, came to Captain James Kingston. Captain James Kingston had several sons and four daughters. The person who tells this only remembers the names of three of them. One lived in Ballycotton House, another, George, lived in Barleyfield, another, Sam, lived at Skave. He married first a Miss Cooke and then a Miss Blood.

Jerry Kingston was the youngest, and the narrator's great-grandfather . . . [He] settled in a farm in the Parish of Kilnacross, which he rented from one of the Stawells, who was a great friend of his, on account of the two families coming over at the same time. This was in the year 1715, the year of the great snow. His son Paul and grandson, Sam, lived and died there, and there he himself was born.

Oral traditions concerning the Boyne, recalled with varying mixtures of pride, amusement and embarrassment, inevitably tend to fill in some of the missing details — for example, that the grant of land stretched from Bantry to Togher, north of Dunmanway, a distance of about fifteen miles, or, most baffling of all, that a Kingston family of a former generation cemented the actual deeds with King William's signature into the wall of their home. Such reports, we hasten to add, are mentioned as mere hearsay and not as established facts.

One's initial reaction to the above simplistic account of the battle of the Boyne (as if King William had only three colonels as his most senior officers!) is to discard it as pure fantasy, especially as no list of Williamite officers so far discovered includes a Colonel Kingston or captains of that name, nor is there any documentary evidence of Kingstons subsequently being given 'land for their service' in Co. Cork or

elsewhere. In fact the Williamite soldiers, unlike their Cromwellian predecessors, were not paid with grants of land, the million acres of confiscated land available for disposal after various claims had been met being sold by public auction between 1701 and 1703.³ Yet despite these objections it is highly probable that there is a core of historical truth in the story, as we shall argue later, but as an account of Co. Cork Kingston *origins* it must be firmly rejected for the simple reason that the half-remembered and misnamed Colonel James Kingston and his descendants can unmistakably be identified with a family already in Co. Cork for at least thirty years by 1690. It may well be the case that this family, although not sufficiently prominent to be listed as treasonable persons in the Act of Attainder of 1689, nevertheless fled the country, as did thousands of others, when King James II landed in Kinsale, only twelve miles from their home, in March of that year, and later returned from England with the Williamite forces; if so, the Boyne could be held to explain their re-arrival in Ireland, but not their first arrival as stated in 'Reeves 1872', and widely believed ever since.

THE EARLIEST CO. CORK KINGSTONS

Turning to the positive evidence of Co. Cork Kingston origins we may note by way of preface that the first known instance of the name in the county was the appointment by the king of John Kingstoun as chaplain of the church of the Holy Trinity, Cork, on 17 February, 1381.⁴ Kingstoun is undoubtedly a variant of Kingston, but whilst this appointment has considerable historical interest it is doubtful if it has any genealogical significance, for not only would a 1381 cleric have been celibate but it is very likely that his name and royal appointment mean that he was an Englishman and not a member of a local family. On the other hand the fact that in one account his predecessor is described as 'a native

of England' may imply that Kingstoun was believed to be a native of Ireland, or at least not known to be otherwise, in which case the existence of various de Kingston or de Kyngston clerics in the Dublin diocese in the fourteenth century, most notably Adam de Kingston, Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral in 1349, may be relevant.⁵ There is no instance, however, of the Kingstoun spelling of the name.

The Munster Plantation

We are wholly indebted to George Bennett's *History of Bandon* (Cork, 1869) for evidence of Kingston involvement in the Munster Plantation, which was approved by Elizabeth I in June 1586, following the suppression of the revolt by the Earl of Desmond and others. Over 200,000 acres of land were confiscated and granted to settlers, and for present purposes the most important 'undertaker' was Phane Beecher of London, who in 1588 received 14,000 acres of land on both sides of the Bandon river on condition that he erect homes for ninety-one English families. In contrast to other undertakers Beecher excelled in attracting colonists to the area, 'shipload after shipload' landing in Kinsale and making their way along the wooded banks of the Bandon river. Bennett then lists 170 surnames, including Kingston, as 'amongst those who settled here about this time — either being directly brought over by Beecher himself, or who procured lands from him and established little colonies of their own, or who came over to the infant settlement for purposes of trade and commerce' (p. 9).

It must be presumed that Bennett had definite grounds for the inclusion of each of these names, although we are puzzled as to what sources he could have used for the period prior to 1613, the first year of the Council Book of Bandon Corporation. That book was clearly available when he was writing his *History* but tragically has since been lost, an

appeal for information concerning the 1613-1764 Council Book in the pages of this *Journal* in 1937 eliciting no response. Fortunately, as regards Kingston, Bennett indirectly cites one early seventeenth century instance of the name in Bandon when illustrating the judicial system which had developed in the town at that time. Taking the year 1619 as his example he names those who paid 'fines and penalties' of 20d into the 'poor man's box', and they include the entry 'Richard Kingston v Edward Porter' (p. 46).

Coincidentally it was also in 1619 that Richard Boyle, Earl of Cork, purchased the Beecher estate in Bandon, having earlier secured other estates in the area, and set out to induce numerous new tenants to come to the town and surrounding countryside.⁶ Bennett gives a further list of 264 surnames, repeating some from the former list, of those who settled around 1620, the date given in the margin, but Kingston is not in this second list, consisting largely of Puritans who 'principally came from Taunton and Kingston in Somersetshire' (p. 63). Again the list is introduced with the words 'Amongst those who settled . . .' so that negative conclusions cannot be drawn from the absence of a particular name. Unhappily the origin of the earlier immigrants, more germane to this enquiry, is not stated, but there is still a slight presumption in favour of Somerset, for Elizabeth in her anxiety to secure the colonization of Munster had sent her Attorney General to Somerset to persuade the gentry to send their younger sons to Ireland as undertakers, and in turn they would draw tenants from their own localities. However she also sent letters all over England to achieve her aim.

With the exception of two vague references to a Henry Kingston in reports from Capt. John Hodder of Cork to Sir Philip Persevall in London in 1644 and 1646⁷ we have found no further evidence of Co. Cork Kingstons until the 'Census about 1659'. Only one Kingston

family is mentioned in the Census, and they were of Cromwellian origin (see below), but that doesn't necessarily imply that there were no other Co. Cork Kingstons, for only the 'Tituladoes' or principal persons in the various towns and townlands are actually named in the Census, and these were a small fraction of the total (for example, in the Barony of East Carbery 83 'Tituladoes' amongst 422 English and 4999 Irish, and in Bandon 43 amongst 542 English and 304 Irish). All that can be inferred, therefore, is that if some Munster Plantation Kingstons or their descendants were still in Co. Cork about 1659 they were not socially prominent.

The Cromwellian Settlement

After the Cromwellian conquests in Ireland a radical policy was adopted of transplanting the native Irish to Connaught and planting the vacated lands with 'Adventurers' (those who had advanced money to finance the military campaign) and soldiers, who were to receive grants of land as payment for their services. The Act of Satisfaction which authorized this division of Ireland into two parts was passed in September 1653, but the implementation of the Act took some years. The procedure for allocating land to the various claimants was by lot. The details of the scheme, its difficulties and only partial success need not be outlined here, but some aspects will be noted where appropriate. After the restoration of the monarchy an Act of Settlement was passed in 1662 confirming the grants of land already made but allowing for appeals by some who had been dispossessed of their property. A further Act of Explanation was passed in 1665 requiring Cromwellians to surrender one third of their land to satisfy these claims.⁸

Kingstons were involved in the Cromwellian settlement both as Adventurers and soldiers, but only one soldier-family settled in Co. Cork (for details of non-Cork Kingstons see note 9). The entry in the *Books of Survey and Distribution* indicates that the 215 plantation acres

(equivalent to 371 acres today) forfeited from Teige O’Crowley in ‘East Skeagh’, i.e. East Skeaf, a townland in Kilmaloda parish and about two and a half miles north of the village of Timoleague, were allocated as follows:

	Ac.	Rd.	Pr.	Rent		
				£	s.	d.
Richard Dashwood	59	3	0	18	2	
James Brayly	30	0	0	9	1¼	
James Draper & Sam Kingston	117	3	19	1	15	9¾
	7	3	26	2	5	

Richard Dashwood and James Brayly (*John Brayly* or *Braly* in parallel records) received much larger grants of land elsewhere, and neither of them in fact lived in Skeaf, but Draper and Kingston received only the one allotment. Why they received a joint grant is not known. The earliest evidence of their actual residence in Skeaf is the entry in the ‘Census about 1659’ which reads:

‘James Draper Joseph his sonn

Samuel Kinstone John Kinstone his sonn’¹⁰ Seamus Pender’s comment on the original manuscript of the census that the writing is clear and legible ‘with the exception of the County Cork volume . . . written in a very careless manner indeed’¹¹ may account for the peculiar spelling of Kingston.

Since the baronies of East and West Carbery were amongst those designated for the use of the army, and since there is no reference to an inheritance or purchase of debentures, the grant in East Skeaf must clearly imply that he was receiving payment for military service during or possibly before the Cromwellian campaign, but unfortunately the records themselves tell us nothing about his army career or where he was recruited. Being, however, the earliest known ancestor of many, if not most, Co. Cork Kingstons, curiosity compels us to find out all we can about his life and background.

SAMUEL KINGSTON OF SKEAF

The extreme difficulty of trying to account for Samuel Kingston’s army career solely in terms of his Cromwellian military service inevitably raises more speculative questions about his military service in later life, and in particular his participation in the battle of the Boyne, thus forcing us to reconsider the ‘Reeves 1872’ tradition.

His Pre-1659 Army Background

In numerous instances one can get a clear impression of a Cromwellian soldier’s army background from the locality in which he was planted and the names of his immediate neighbours as it was general policy to allocate particular counties or baronies to specific regiments and to plant whole companies together, but the trouble is that by the time the baronies of Carbery were planted this policy seems to have been relaxed,¹² and hence we cannot settle the question of Kingston’s army background by a few simple inferences. Nor does the location of his grant determine whether he belonged to the main Cromwellian army or to the Munster army.¹³ The arguments supporting these alternatives may, however, be briefly noted.

The first possibility, if not the probability (and in the judgment of my co-researcher, Robert Griffiths, the strong probability, based on his continuing analysis of the fragmentary evidence concerning the backgrounds of other soldier-settlers in Carbery), is that Samuel Kingston came to Ireland with Cromwell’s army in August 1649 or amongst additional forces in 1650. This would be a certainty if we could give full weight to a tradition recently reported by the descendants of a Paul Kingston who emigrated to Canada from ‘the Bantry Bay area’ in 1826 that ‘his ancestors were English and it is said that they came to Ireland with Cromwell’s invasion forces’ (this being the clearest instance to date of a living Cromwellian tradition regarding Co. Cork

Kingston origins), and if we could be sure that his ancestors were the Skeaf Kingstons, as hinted by the names Samuel, Paul and perhaps James being common to both families. Hopefully further research will resolve the whole issue; meanwhile we must concede that if Samuel Kingston did come to Ireland in 1649/50 we cannot as yet identify the regiment to which he belonged or the home area from which he joined the army.

The other possibility is that he had served in the Munster army before 1649, either being locally recruited or else arriving in Co. Cork in 1647 when Parliament ordered Colonel Townsend's regiment to be transported to Ireland from the West of England to reinforce the Munster army under Lord Inchiquin.¹⁴ Links with the Munster army are suggested by the fact that the two non-resident grantees in East Skeaf, namely Brayly and Dashwood, definitely did serve in the Munster garrisons. Bennett describes Capt. John Brayly's part in an abortive attempt to overthrow the Royalist garrison in Bandon in favour of Cromwell on 16 November 1649, and Prendergast names Ensign Richard Dashwood as involved in the rendition of the Youghal garrison.¹⁵ The reputed existence of a deed showing that Brayly's grant in Skeaf was of land 'retrenched' or given up by Draper and Kingston in 1669 weakens this argument, however, putting Kingston and Brayly in different categories.

The conjecture that Samuel Kingston may have belonged to Colonel Townsend's regiment is prompted by an intriguing reference to him in Richard and Dorothea Townshend's biography of Colonel Townsend (spelled without the 'h') entitled *An Officer of the Long Parliament and his Descendants*, 1892, pp. 130-31. Faced with the problem of reconciling the established family tradition that Townsend's wife was Hildegardis Hyde with the existence of deeds signed by Townsend and 'Mary his wife' the writers quote three possible solutions, the third being the opinion of that

'excellent genealogist, the late Dr. Denis O'Callaghan Fisher', who maintained that Colonel Townsend clearly married twice, one bride being Hildegardis Hyde and the other 'a lady named Mary, whose surname had possibly been Kingston, as one of Colonel Townesend's younger sons was named Kingston'. Seeking to identify this Kingston relation the biographers note that

A Family named Kingston was settled near Bandon. Colonel Samuel Kingston, of Skeaf in East Carbery, died 1703, leaving a son James, who was admitted freeman of Clonakilty, 1710, John Townesend being sovereign; and in 1708 Bryan Townesend granted Garrendruig for 980 years to James Kingston on such very favourable terms as to make it probable that it was some sort of family affair.

The plausibility of this surmise that Mary Townsend had been Mary Kingston, a sister or other near relative of Samuel of Skeaf, is evident from the fact that Skeaf actually borders Kilbrittain parish in which Colonel Townsend lived at certain periods, although his primary residence was at Castletownshend, thus explaining how the couple could have met, probably around 1660-61.¹⁶ The more pertinent consideration is that the absence of Samuel Kingston's eldest son from the list of 'Tituladoes' in the 1659 Census suggests that the whole family still hadn't moved to their new home at Skeaf by that date, and a Townsend-Kingston wedding shortly afterwards would thus be more understandable if it reflected not just the geographical proximity of the two families but their previous acquaintance through common military service.

Unfortunately the supposition that Kingston belonged to Townsend's regiment still wouldn't pinpoint the area where he was recruited, as there is considerable uncertainty as to where Townsend himself originated — indeed his family may well have been in Ireland before the Cromwellian period — but the fact that the regiment had served in the

West of England before being sent to Ireland, together with the fact that the name Kingston is frequently found in Somerset and Gloucestershire, would surely favour these localities.

Colonel or Common Soldier?

The anomalous situation in this respect is that the description 'Colonel Samuel Kingston' in the extract just quoted from Townsend's biography seems totally at variance with the relatively modest size of his grant, his youth (at most he would have been in his upper twenties when he came to Ireland, as will be calculated presently) and particularly the absence of any rank prefix before his name in the records of land grants, suggesting that he wasn't an officer at all when disbanded from the army. Admittedly rank prefixes are sometimes omitted in these records, and we find recipients of more than one grant variously designated with and without such prefixes, nevertheless had Kingston actually been a Cromwellian colonel, and not just a more junior officer or even a common soldier, the records would hardly be silent about his status, and we therefore seem driven to the conclusion that either he wasn't a colonel, or if he was, then he must have attained that rank at a later date.

That he really was a colonel is evident from the words 'Father Col. Sam Kingston late deced.' in the Thrift abstract of the 1729 will of his son James, the only puzzle being the silence of the abstract of his own will of 1703 regarding his rank. There is no record of the wills of his other sons. It is quite possible that the reference to Col. Kingston in the Townsend biography was simply based on an inspection of these wills, the originals being still available at that time although later destroyed in the Four Courts fire of 1922, and should therefore be seen as confirming the Thrift abstract rather than being an independent witness. Paradoxically it is the account in 'Reeves 1872', despite our harsh criticisms of

it, which provides genuinely independent evidence that there was a Colonel Kingston, even though it misnames him as Colonel James and misreports other details, for here we have a tradition which is manifestly not based on documentary research but has been handed down verbally from one generation to the next. Accepting then that Samuel Kingston was a colonel when he died in 1703 but almost certainly not a Cromwellian colonel how and when did he gain such promotion?

One answer could be that he became a colonel in the local militia, but this is highly improbable, for even on the main occasion when companies of militia were formed for the defence of their own areas, namely in 1666 when the French were hourly expected to land in Bantry or Kinsale, 'the rank of Colonel was not conferred on any of the gentry', according to the Townsend biography (p. 111). It can, of course, be taken for granted that as an ex-soldier living only twelve miles from Kinsale and six from Bandon Samuel Kingston would have been actively involved in militia service, and probably as an officer, but not with regimental command. Nor is he likely to have been appointed to such a command in the interval between 1666 and the next major crisis in 1689, when King James II landed at Kinsale, for it seems inconceivable that a colonel of militia would escape being listed as a proscribed person in the Act of Attainder of that year.¹⁷ We should add that there are no extant lists of seventeenth century militia officers, and that Bennett's two chapters on the West Cork Militia in his *History of Bandon* give scant attention to the years 1651-1689. But if he was neither a Cromwellian nor a militia colonel then the only other path to such promotion would be through service at the Boyne, as firmly although misleadingly asserted in 'Reeves 1872'.

Back to the Boyne

Before examining any positive grounds for this tradition we must face the obvious objection

that Samuel Kingston would have been too old to take part in that battle, so we must try to estimate his likely age by 1690. Since he lived a further thirteen years after the Boyne it is reasonable to assume that he was probably as young as known circumstances would allow at that date, and of these circumstances the most pertinent is that his second son (judging by the order of sons in the abstract of his will) was listed with his father amongst the 'Tituladoes' in the 1659 Census, presumably implying that he was no longer a child. This may depend, however, on the disputed nature of the 1659 Census. If it was merely the basis for a Poll tax, and all over fifteen had to pay double Poll tax in 1660, then John Kingston was at least fifteen in 1659, but if, as Pender argues persuasively, it was really a census, albeit incomplete and with various peculiarities, then he may have been younger. Assuming he was fifteen and therefore born in 1644, this being consistent with the John Kingston-Joan Dobson marriage of 1666, then we may plausibly speculate that his father had married about three years earlier, say at the age of twenty-one (but possibly eighteen!), and if so he could have been seventy, although he was probably less, by 1690. One's immediate reaction to the suggestion that a man of such seniority could have taken part in physical warfare is understandably to treat it with contempt, but in fact it is quite feasible, especially for a senior officer, the most telling instance of this being King William's Commander-in-chief, the Duke of Schomberg, born in December, 1615, and thus in his seventy-fifth year in July 1690 when he was killed at the Boyne, in the fighting near Oldbridge. The possibility of 'Samuel Kinstone' of 1659 becoming Colonel Kingston of 1690 cannot therefore be simply dismissed as an anachronism; on the contrary we seem to be at a complete loss, if we discount the tradition about Kingstons at the Boyne, to explain how he attained his rank.

More positively we may note that although no Colonel Kingston has been found in lists of Boyne officers, none of these lists claiming to be complete, a Major Kingston is mentioned in a 'Memorandum by Count de Solms of the officers most fit for advancement in the English regiments in Ireland',¹⁸ undated but within the period May 1690-Oct. 1691, and of course the next advancement for a Major would be to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. Significantly the list was 'Endorsed by the King'. If this memorandum was written before July 1690 then it could refer to Samuel of Skeaf, assuming that he had fled to England along with numerous other Co. Cork settlers following or prior to the landing of King James II at Kinsale, and then returned to Ireland with the Williamite army in 1690,¹⁹ or more likely with the Duke of Schomberg the previous August, as this would fit in with the 'Reeves 1872' tradition that he lost one of his sons at the camp at Dundalk. The rapid promotion of suitable and experienced soldiers in time of war is commonplace, and interestingly it was at this time that Colonel Townsend's son Bryan became a Colonel of Militia, and apparently was also at the Boyne.²⁰ A link between the Count de Solms (or Count of Solms-Braunfels) and troops from the Bandon neighbourhood is also affirmed in a peculiar statement in Bennett's *History of Bandon*. Having explained that those who marched directly from Bandon to the Boyne and some of those who arrived there indirectly via England joined forces at Loughbrickland he adds that the 'Bandonians were attached to the auxiliaries from Londonderry; with whom they followed Soame's Blues into the water, and by whose side they remained fighting throughout the day.' (p. 292). 'Soame's Blues' is undoubtedly meant to refer to Count de Solms' three battalions of the Dutch Blue Guards.

Needless to say it is the tradition preserved in 'Reeves 1872' which is equally if not primarily the basis for the belief that Samuel

Kingston was at the Boyne. But to what extent is Reeves' account, as related to him by Paul Kingston over one hundred and eighty years after the main event concerned really reliable? Traditions, after all, not only tend to get embellished with time, with a blurring of factual details, but sometimes have no historical foundations whatever, arising merely from some misunderstanding or even wishful thinking about the past. We must therefore approach this record critically if not sceptically.

absence; his grant of land was for military service — but as a Cromwellian, not a Williamite soldier; he was survived by his son James — but also by two other sons; he may have lost a son Paul who 'died of fever in the camp at Dundalk' — but that camp, in which some two thousand Williamite soldiers perished, was during the winter before the battle of the Boyne, not 'a little after the battle of Aughrim'; he had grandsons named Samuel, George and Jeremiah, and another in



King William crossing the Boyne

The Reliability of 'Reeves 1872'

Checking 'Reeves 1872' in the light of facts which have already emerged or will emerge in the next section we find that it is a mixture of true and misremembered or misunderstood oral traditions about real people and real events. Thus there was a Colonel Kingston — but his first name was Samuel, not James; he probably did come to Ireland with William III — but if so was only returning after a short

'Ballycotton' (i.e. Ballycatteen) House — but the parentage of Samuel and Jeremiah and the location of George are misreported; he had amongst fellow-settlers in the area a Lieut.-Colonel John Honor, and the Stawells were also a prominent family in the locality in the seventeenth century — but no evidence has been found connecting either name with the Boyne.

Turning to the alleged incident in which

'Colonel Kingston saved King William's life by giving him his horse when his own refused to take the water' this is at least consistent with most histories of the battle, it being generally accepted that William had problems with his horse crossing the river, but detailed accounts vary enormously. For present purposes the most significant account could be a recent study by Peter Beresford Ellis, *The Boyne Water* (London, 1976) p. 104.

William had trouble in crossing. His horse became bogged down and he had to dismount and have the animal dragged out of the mud. Tradition has it that an Enniskillener named Mackinlay performed this service although the Enniskillen regiment were nowhere near this area.

The implied doubts about Mackinlay (after whom an Orange Lodge has been named in Enniskillen) could be seen as leaving the way open for the rival tradition about Colonel Kingston, not that it's the only rival demanding consideration,²¹ but quite frankly there must be grave doubts about the Kingston tradition also, apart from the fact that Ellis is evidently mistaken about the whereabouts of the Enniskillen regiment.²² Had the event really taken place it would surely have formed part of the Boyne folklore circulating in Bandon when Bennett wrote his history of the town and surrounding areas (1st ed. 1862), yet he writes concerning the Bandonians' part in the battle:

'At this distance of time we are unable to mention any special acts of valour performed by them, as tradition briefly relates that they fought like men' (2nd ed. p. 292)

The King's gift of his watch to Colonel Beecher in gratitude for his services is mentioned in a footnote, but the legend about Colonel Kingston gets no mention, being either unknown or else not considered worth recording. So a large question mark must be placed against Colonel Kingston's alleged heroism, the claim to have actually 'saved King William's life' looking suspiciously like a

blatant glorification of the service reputedly rendered.

Thus both the family and wider historical contexts of the story related by Paul Kingston to Dr. Reeves can to a considerable degree be vindicated, yet both have been seriously distorted by time, the understandable if not inevitable fate of oral traditions in a rural community, but on the whole the impression remains that the basic contention about Colonel Kingston having fought at the Boyne is likely to be correct, and not just a misguided interpretation of hints from the past, still less a mere eighteenth or early nineteenth century fabrication to boost family prestige, as it might perversely have seemed to do at the time. Others may disagree, however, or allow only an open verdict.

THE SKEAF KINGSTON FAMILY—TREE AND SOME UNCONNECTED BRANCHES

By its very title a review of Co. Cork Kingston origins precludes any attempt to provide a comprehensive genealogical survey of the family down to the present day, but some account must be given of earlier generations insofar as these can be traced. We must also consider whether various isolated references to Kingstons in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries relate to the Skeaf Kingstons or point to independent branches. Finally we comment briefly on the later history of the family and on the possibility of Samuel Kingston being the common ancestor of most Co. Cork Kingstons. The more specific issue of the Drimoleague Kingstons will be treated in a later section.

Samuel Kingston's Descendants

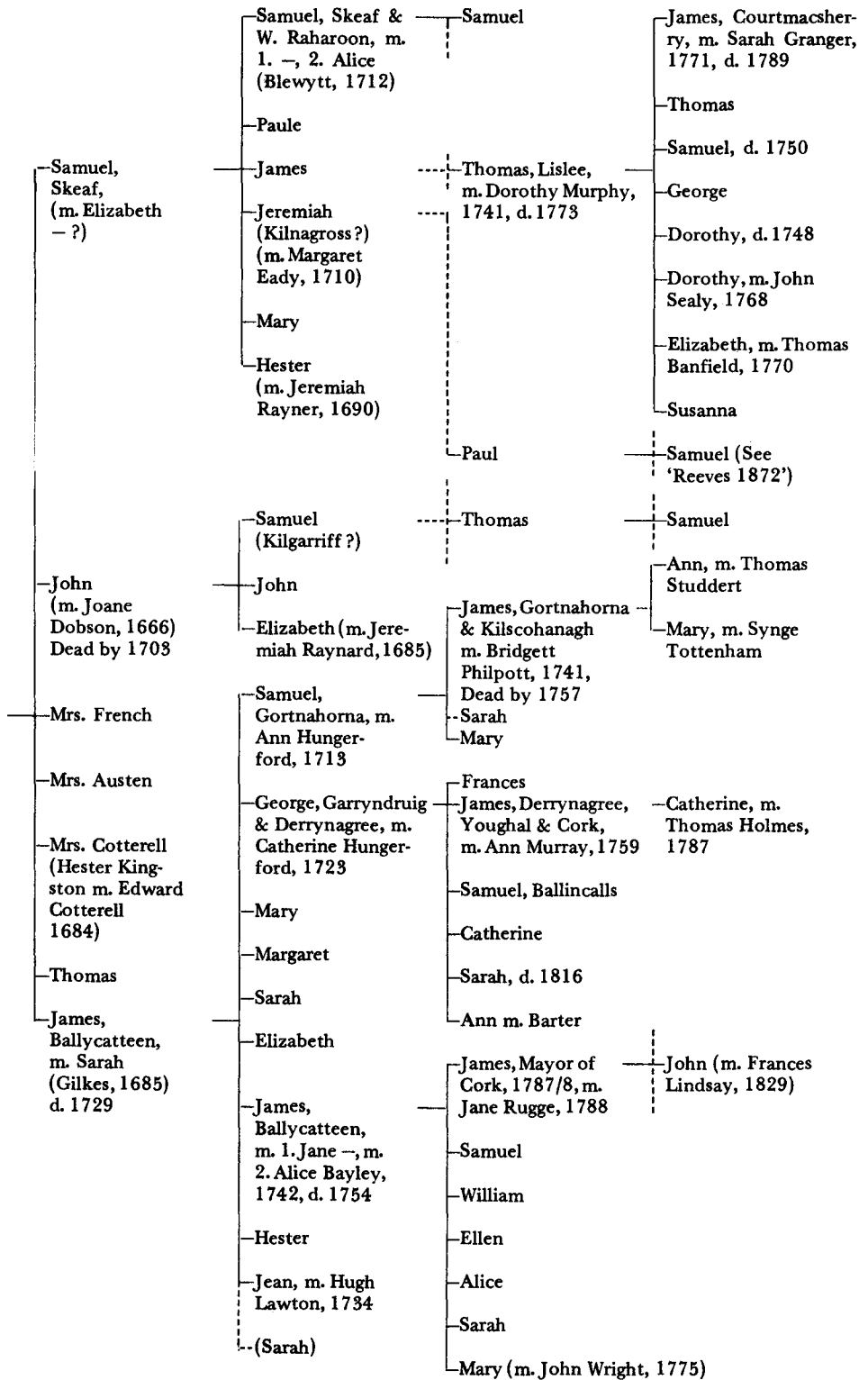
The sources of information behind the accompanying chart, with comments on some of them, are given in note 23. These documents fully substantiate all the main items on the chart, but we have also included a number of suggestions based on the plausible identification of individuals in the *Index of Marriage*

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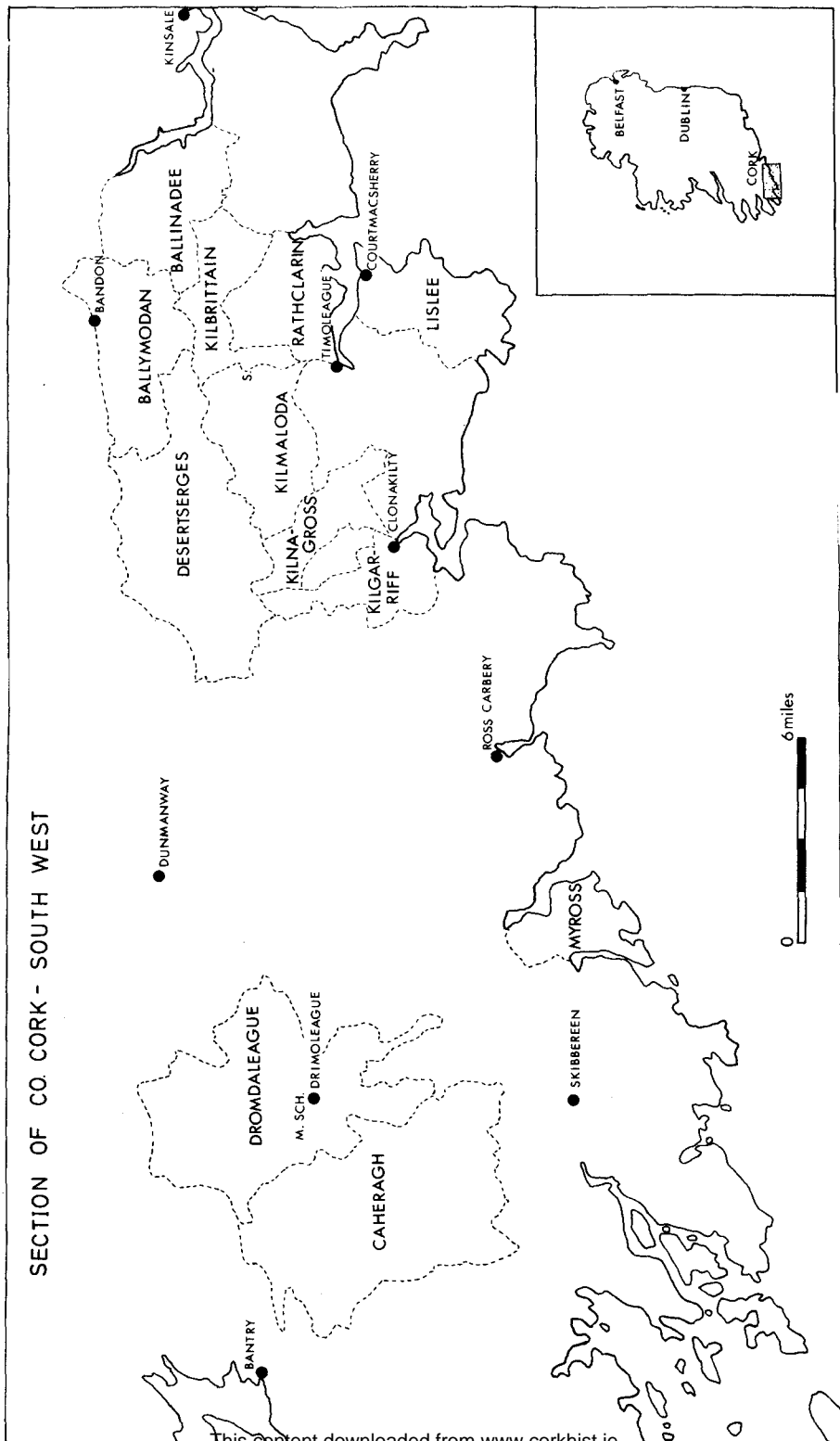
**SAMUEL,
SKEAF,
d. 1703**



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Licence Bonds, some isolated deeds and other sources. Such probable but unproved entries or parts of entries are placed in brackets, plus a question mark if the probability is not judged a really strong one, and, correspondingly, probable relationships are indicated by a broken line. This may appear to be an over-cautious procedure but it ensures greater accuracy.

To avoid misinterpreting the chart it should be observed that older wills normally name sons first and then daughters, so that the order of seniority is only for each sex and not for the family as a whole, yet the notable exception to this is the will of Samuel in 1703. The chart doesn't include non-Kingston descendants, our present interest being only in those deriving their surname from Samuel of Skeaf. It should also be noted that whilst the list of Samuel's *Kingston* grandchildren is to our knowledge complete, this only applies to his great-grandchildren through his son James,²⁴ and in the next generation to the families of Thomas of Lisle, James of Kilscohanagh and James of Derrynagree and Cork. In all other instances those named may have had numerous siblings — or none.

Most of the towns and parishes named on the chart or referred to on other pages are shown on the accompanying map, but the scale is too small to include townlands. In most instances the location of these townlands should be clear from the contexts in which they are mentioned, and indeed their exact position is frequently specified; nevertheless, for reference purposes, the following index may be helpful: Skeaf is at the 'S' in Kilmaloda; Ballycatteen, Gortnahorna and Garryndruig are in Rathclarin; Raharoon is in Ballinadee and Cashel Beg in Desertserges; Baurnahulla, Clashduff, Clodagh, Derrynagree, Gurteeniher, Kilscohanagh, Knockeenbwee (Knockbue) and Moyny (Meenies) are all in Dromdaleague.

Finally we leave to the reader the task of comparing and contrasting the chart with the details in 'Reeves 1872', already quoted, ex-

cept to explain that Gortnahorna is the Irish form of Barleyfield, and to suggest that Miss Blewytt is identifiable with Miss Blood.

OTHER AND POSSIBLY UNRELATED CO. CORK KINGSTONS

Samuel Kingston is thus established as the earliest known ancestor of a considerable number of Co. Cork Kingstons, but the size of that number could well depend on whether contemporary and slightly later references to apparently unconnected Kingstons really represent independent Kingston families or happen to be hidden offshoots, as it were, of the Skeaf family tree. We must therefore examine all these references, beginning with five from the seventeenth century, taking them in chronological order.

A 'Paule' Kingston will

According to an index to Irish wills²⁵ a 'Paule' Kingston of Cashelbeg, a townland about three miles NW of Skeaf, in the parish of Desertserges, died in 1683. Neither the will itself nor any abstract of it survives, and we can only speculate that if a James Kingston of Desertserges who died in 1749²⁶ was his descendant then the absence of any reference to these Desertserges Kingstons in the will of Samuel of Skeaf in 1703 must surely imply that they were not members of his family. It is equally possible, however, that James of 1749 was not descended from Paule of 1683, in which case Paule could have been an unmarried or else childless son of Samuel of Skeaf, a family connection being perhaps indicated by the fact that Samuel's eldest son called his second boy 'Paule'. On the other hand 'Reeves 1872' claims that Paul was the name of Colonel Kingston's son who is said to have died at Dundalk in 1690. Yet another explanation consistent with the various pointers is that Paule was a brother of Samuel, with or without his own family. Plainly the whole issue is too wide open for any positive verdict and we must simply be content to allow that Paule of

Cashelbeg may represent a different line of Kingstons.

*Two Jeremiah Kingston administration bonds*²⁷

The fact that both men had the same name and lived in the same parish suggests that they were father and son, who died in 1685 and 1692, administrations being settled by ecclesiastical courts mainly when persons died intestate, and not necessarily implying that the deceased had children. Again the name Jeremiah occurs amongst Samuel Kingston's grandchildren, and this, together with their residence in Samuel's own parish of Kilmaloda, prompts a strong suspicion that here we may have a branch of his own family which died out in 1692, and hence the silence concerning them in his will of 1703.

Two Samuel Kingston marriage licence bonds

These marriages to Sarah Morley in 1698 and Jane Gillks in 1699 should probably be seen as identifying the brides of Samuel Kingston's grandsons at Skeaf/W. Raharoon (first marriage) and 'Kilgariff?', but having no clue as to which bride went to which home they are not included on the chart, even as suggestions with a question mark (some actual suggestions being virtual certainties).

Restricting our survey of eighteenth century references to the years 1700-1720, as several unknown great-grandchildren of Samuel of Skeaf could be involved in marriages etc. from about that date, we have in fact only three further entries to inspect.

A Mary Kingston marriage licence bond, 1710, and Martha Kingston administration bond, 1720

Once more the only reason for excluding the former from the chart is that we have no way of deciding which of two grand-daughters of Samuel Kingston became Mrs. Paul Myler. That one of these ladies did marry a 'Mr. Maylor' is confirmed in 'Reeves 1872' (section

omitted in above extract) but it is hopelessly confused regarding her identity, regarding the bride as both the daughter of James and sister of Jeremiah instead of being either one or the other. Martha Kingston was a widow of St. Finbar's parish, Cork, but as she could, for all we know, have been the wife of 'Paule', of either Jeremiah or of a Kingston on or off the chart whose marriage or second marriage is unrecorded in the *Index of Marriage Licence Bonds* we can draw no conclusions whatever from this reference.

William Kingston, Freeman of Clonakilty, 1707

In Dorothea Townshend's 'Notes on the Council Book of Clonakilty' Part V, published in this *Journal* in 1895, she speculates that William Kingston, no address given, who was sworn freeman of Clonakilty on 25 February 1707, was 'probably a son of Colonel Samuel Kingston of Skeaf'. This is extremely unlikely as there is no mention of a William in his will of 1703, and unless his great-grandchild of that name was called after a Kingston relative, possibly a brother of Samuel, then we have here a separate branch of Co. Cork Kingstons.

Thus the documentary evidence seems to point to at most a few, and conceivably only one, early Kingston family, and in further corroboration of this we find that early deeds (from 1711) covering Kingston land transactions in the county are practically all concerned with Samuel Kingston's known descendants.

LATER CO. CORK KINGSTONS

The subsequent history of the Skeaf family is less certain. Admittedly some lines on the chart could be further extended, but for a great many Co. Cork Kingstons there is almost a century of silence between these early Kingstons and later family trees based on memory, traditions, church registers, land records, etc., with no assurance whatever that their ancestral line actually goes back to Skeaf. One partial explanation of this unwelcome

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predicament is that the fortunes of the more prominent branches of the family — those most likely to leave wills, deeds and other sources of genealogical information — seem to have faded, a cause of their decline being perhaps indicated on the chart in the comparatively early deaths of three James Kingstons, and as regards the name rather than the family the fact that some couples had no sons. As further confirmation of this decline we find that there are only three Co. Cork Kingstons in the 1876 *Census of Land Owners in Ireland*, the vast majority being tenant farmers sharing the insecurity and hardships of their times.

Apart, however, from the inherent probability that the Skeaf Kingstons continued to increase in Co. Cork roughly in proportion to the general population trends of the period, there is an interesting signpost to their expansion in the local barony of East Carbery, East Division. A quick glance at the chart will confirm that the family rigidly adhered to the tradition of naming the eldest son after his paternal grandfather, and that younger sons also received family names, with the result that the thirty-one male Kingstons on the chart share only eight names between them. What is even more remarkable, however, is that the thirty-four Kingston householders in the barony of East Carbery, East Division, in Griffith's Valuation of 1853 were still limited to these eight names, the most popular being James and Jeremiah. This does not positively prove their Skeaf ancestry, for the possibility of other Kingston families with similar names cannot be wholly excluded, but it must make it highly probable.

Turning to the larger family of one hundred and thirty Kingston households in the south west division of Co. Cork in Griffith's Valuation it seems by contrast highly improbable that all of these have Skeaf origins. Even in the context of the phenomenal growth of Ireland's population prior to the Famine it is still hard to credit that one household could proliferate

to one hundred and thirty households in less than two hundred years (from the 1659 Census to the 1853 Valuation), especially when we find that in some lines of descent the name died out. We must therefore face the real possibility that amongst Samuel Kingston's contemporaries there could have been poorer Kingston families who because of the absence or later destruction of church registers (the only records in earlier times of rich and poor alike) have left no documentary traces of their existence, and if so later Kingstons with no positive or plausible links with Skeaf could well have more obscure plantation origins. Of more particular interest, however, is the question whether the largest concentration of Co. Cork Kingstons, in the parish of Drimoleague, is a branch of the Skeaf family tree or has sprouted from a different root.

FROM TIMOLEAGUE TO DRIMOLEAGUE

The not uncommon assumption that nearly all Irish Kingstons come ultimately from Drimoleague is even reflected in some published references to the family. In a brief seventy-word entry on Kingston in *The Surnames of Ireland*,²⁸ 1969, Edward McLysaght writes of

an English family established in the Drimoleague area of west Cork in the seventeenth century and numerous there, so much so indeed that it was reported in 1885 that every one of the sixty pupils in the National School at Meenies was a Kingston

The alleged situation at Meenies school was publicized in the 1893 article 'The Kingston Family in West Cork', although it doesn't specify the exact date as 1885, just 'a few years ago'. What actually happened, according to my grandfather, was that non-Kingstons were persuaded to absent themselves one day, and Kingston numbers were inflated by the return of several former pupils, this prank being forgotten as the myth was created of the exclusively Kingston attendance at this seat of learning. The school is now closed and in fact a ruin. As for the reputed establishment of the



Meenies National School 1943
(As the writer remembers it, 9 out of 18
were Kingstons)

family in Drimoleague in the seventeenth century it is precisely because we found this to be implausible when considering the Bantry Bay theory of origins that it is now imperative to investigate possible links with Kingstons truly dating from the seventeenth century — at Skeaf, near Timoleague, almost thirty miles away by road.

Before embarking on this enquiry it should be stressed that we cannot assume that all Drimoleague Kingstons must have exactly the same origins; in fact there are indications to the contrary. Those who live in the townland of Gurteeniher preserve the tradition of having come from Rosscarbery, and in substantiation of this relate that until some date in the latter part of the last century when they were given permission to use Varian graves in the old cemetery at Drimoleague a Gurteeniher Kingston funeral involved taking the coffin by horse and cart all the way back to Rosscarbery,



a rough journey of almost eighteen miles. This also applied to a few other Kingstons in the parish. In the neighbouring townland of Meenies, however, there was no such tradition or burial custom. Of course it is possible that Rosscarbery may only have been an intermediate stage in Kingston migrations, and that originally the 'Mary' Kingstons of Meenies and the 'Sally' Kingstons of Gurteeniher, as main branches of the family in these townlands were formerly known, both came from Skeaf — or from somewhere else!

Proven Contacts and Their Probable Implication

Evidence that Skeaf Kingstons had definite connections with Drimoleague from near the beginning of the eighteenth century is derived almost entirely from research in the Registry of Deeds in Dublin,²⁹ but unfortunately these findings do not by themselves solve the problem before us. To appreciate the situation fully and be able to assess its significance we must briefly summarize these early contacts with the parish.

Samuel Kingston's youngest son, James (senior) of Ballycatteen, apparently owned land in Baurnahulla, Drimoleague, as Anthony Butler of Drimoleague directed his heir in a 1718 deed to pay James Kingston £100 'by mortgage or rent charge on the lands of Ballyhalowick als. Bearnahulla', and also pay his son Samuel £40. That he had other land interests in Drimoleague is evident from gifts to his sons.

James' eldest son, Samuel of Gortnahorna, married Ann Hungerford in 1713, and as part of the marriage settlement the groom's father made over to them 'ye plowland of Killskoghanagh in ye parish of Dromaleague', but various later deeds show that they continued to live at Gortnahorna, near Skeaf. Their only son James, however, evidently moved to Kilscohanagh before his premature death in or before 1757, as deeds from that date concern his widow and daughters and



Signature of James Kingston (son of Samuel) on deed of 1723

refer to him as 'late of Kilskoghanagh', but having no sons his brief residence in Drimoleague is no help to our enquiry.

James' second son, George of Garryndruig, married Catherine Hungerford in 1723, and again the marriage settlement involved the transfer of land in Drimoleague, the two ploughlands of Derrynagree, from father to son and daughter-in-law. Moreover deeds from 1747 indicate that twenty-four years later George and his 'eldest son and Heir apparent' James (but the only son mentioned in deeds) had come to live there. By 1757 James had moved to Youghal and let or sold most of the land in Derrynagree, reserving only a half-ploughland for his father. Anyway he had no male offspring, so that as far as deeds are concerned we still cannot account for Drimoleague Kingstons.

James' third son, James (junior) of Ballycatteen, owned or inherited land in Clashduff, Drimoleague, oddly described as 'Clashduffe alias Ballyhalwick' in some deeds, but there is no intimation that he or his descendants ever resided in the parish.

In brief we have positive evidence of strong links between Skeaf and Drimoleague from at least 1713, but we have no proof as yet that later Drimoleague Kingstons are descended from this particular family. It is arguable, however, that the probable implication of

these links forged by the more prosperous representatives of the Skeaf Kingstons is that several less prosperous relatives followed in their footsteps, as tenant farmers whose movements are totally unrecorded and whose names appear in no legal transactions of the type which has enabled us to write the history outlined in the last few paragraphs. The gaps in the top half of the Skeaf Kingston chart leave plenty of room for such unknown descendants of Samuel Kingston, and the general migratory pattern of following where more enterprising members have led is well attested.

There may, however, be a more specific link between the Drimoleague and Skeaf Kingstons. In the Kingston section of her family tree, as given to Miss Jane Kingston at Kinsale in 1964, Mrs. Constance Pole Bayer of Miami, Florida, U.S.A., a descendant of George of Garryndruig and Derrynagree, names six members of his family, including a second son 'Samuel of Ballincalls'. Regrettably we have been unable to trace the origin of this list, presumably an unpublished will, as the sons are named first although in fact Frances (1724) was older than James (1725), these two being baptized in their mother's home parish of Rosscarbery. Nor can we definitely locate 'Ballincalls', which is not in any index of townlands, but it is possibly a variant of Ballincolla in Myross parish. Despite these difficulties we feel reasonably confident about the accuracy of the list, being impressed by the general although not total reliability of Mrs. Pole Bayer's research into her Kingston roots.³⁰ Our immediate interest is to point out that if George of Garryndruig and Derrynagree did have a younger son named Samuel who like his elder brother James left Drimoleague in early manhood, there is also evidence that he later returned.

In the earliest surviving record of Drimoleague parish, the C. of I. Church Vestry Book dating from 1782 (which incidentally reveals that Kingstons were firmly established in the parish by that date³¹), we discover an 1805

reference to Samuel Kingston of Derrynagree, and more significantly that 'Samuel Kingston, Gent' of Derrynagree was Church Warden from 1809-15, a surprisingly long tenure of an office normally held for just a year, and presumably betraying an undue deference to his social standing as a 'Gent', a distinction rarely found in Drimoleague but frequently amongst the Skeaf Kingstons. The further discovery in the church registers that a Samuel Kingston of Derrynagree was buried on 24 April, 1835, aged 100, must unquestionably identify him as 'Samuel of Ballincalls', younger son but possibly youngest child of parents married in 1723. His return to Derrynagree also seems confirmed by deeds of 1777 and 1784 between James Kingston of Cork (and ex-Youghal, we assume) and various persons concerning the letting of 'the ploughland of N. Ballincalls'. All this, of course, is irrelevant to Drimoleague Kingston origins unless Samuel was married and had a family, and we have no direct evidence of that. The only ground for believing that he probably did have male descent is the 1830 baptism of James, child of Henry and Ellen Kingston of Derrynagree, who could have been his great-grandchild, and if so the further possibility must be allowed that the surviving church registers (from 1801) may also contain the baptisms of many non-Derrynagree descendants of Samuel, although we cannot now recognize them as such.

Insofar as purely circumstantial evidence is permissible we may add that an analysis of the forenames of the thirty-three Kingston householders in Drimoleague parish in Griffith's Valuation of 1853 (almost the same number as in the whole of the barony of East Carbery East Division) shows that twenty-one of the twenty-six men, for seven of the householders were women, had 'Skeaf names', i.e. the eight forenames on the Skeaf chart, Samuel and Paul being the most frequent, but in contrast to East Carbery there was no James or Jeremiah. The earlier 1826-27 Tithe Applot-

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ment Books are less suitable for this type of comparison as they don't give a comprehensive list of all the householders in each parish, and at times they can be really frustrating for the genealogist, as when the only entry for the eastern quarter of Moyny (Meenies) is 'Samuel Kingston and Partners', with no indication of the number or the names of the partners, nor were these the only partners in the parish. Nevertheless we may observe that twenty-six of the twenty-eight Kingston forenames belong to the Skeaf category. Fully conceding the limited impact of all surveys of this sort, for they are confined to heads of households, and family names have maternal as well as paternal origins, the proportion of Skeaf forenames is still noteworthy and at least in harmony with the view that many Drimoleague Kingstons are probably of Cromwellian descent, via Skeaf.

In passing we may note that if there is any substance in an indirect reference to Drimoleague Kingston origins in a 1930 article by Daniel Nyhan entitled 'Historic Drimoleague'³² this also may be explicable in terms of a movement from around Skeaf:

Sir Richard Cox, Lord Chancellor of Ireland, who lived in Dunmanway, planted both sides of the road westward. The number of Protestant families in Gurteeniher, Knockbue and Meelawn is very high. The name Kingston abounds, there being many Catholics of that name also.

This may not specifically state but it certainly implies that many Drimoleague Kingstons were introduced to the area by Sir Richard Cox (1650-1733), who received permission in 1693 to make an English settlement and build a town at Dunmanway. Presumably any planting of the road westwards towards Drimoleague (two of the townlands mentioned being roughly half way in that direction but Gurteeniher is directly north of the village) would have taken place after his new town was established, but a partial investigation of Cox land interests has disclosed few holdings in Drimoleague and no connection with the later

Kingston-dominated townlands of Meenies, Gurteeniher and Clodagh. The surprise was to discover deeds of 1672 and 1685 showing that Cox had taken a lease of Richard Dashwood's land in East Skeaf, suggesting some familiarity with that area, and consequently if he did induce some Kingstons to come to the Drimoleague locality, perhaps thirty to forty years later, they may not have had too far to travel.

A Drimoleague Tradition of Descent from Captain James Kingston

Finally, as a sort of postscript illustrating the necessity of approaching family traditions with both sensitivity and scepticism, we consider the quite specific claim by Samuel Kingston of Meenies,³³ 1861-1945, that he was 'of the ninth generation from Capt. James', a belief which was firmly if uncritically accepted, and whose total implausibility only becomes obvious when it is translated with the aid of the Skeaf chart (of whose contents Samuel would have been completely unaware) and church registers into the assertion that his father, Paul, born in 1824, was of the eighth generation from James (senior) of Ballycatteen, or of the seventh generation from one of his sons, in effect the second or third, giving an average of less than seventeen years per generation. Thus clearly the tradition as it stands is untenable, but it is not this so much as the fact that we cannot readily account for it that may make it important.

Admittedly the reference to 'Capt. James' indicates that it is at least partly derived from 'Reeves 1872', as published in the 1929 pamphlet *The Kingston Family in West Cork* or the earlier 1893 article with the same title, but it is certainly not a direct inference from either of these publications, as the 1929 pamphlet ended by representing Samuel's contemporaries in the neighbouring townland of Bawnboy (parish of Caheragh) as being the *sixth* generation from Capt. James, and correspondingly the 1893 article ended with his father's contemporaries as the fifth generation.

No ninth generation theory could emerge from these documents. There appear, in fact, to be only two likely or credible explanations of this ancestral claim. The first is that Samuel, or perhaps his father, had only been verbally informed, or rather misinformed, about the number of generations in the article or pamphlet, and had then concluded on the basis of some known, but now merely reputed, relationship to the Bawnboy Kingstons that he was of the same 'generation from Capt. James'. It is difficult to credit, however, that Samuel with his reported keen interest in genealogy would have been content to learn at second hand about Colonel Kingston and his descendants, or that he had never seen the printed accounts of the story with their instant refutation of any ninth generation claim supposedly resting on them.

Hence the alternative explanation in terms of an independent if somewhat exaggerated family tradition must be recognized as a distinct possibility, and even the degree of exaggeration may be far less than we are assuming. This would be the case if the original tradition was the more general one of direct descent from Colonel Kingston, this later becoming distorted into a claim of descent from Capt. James once 'Reeves 1872' spread the false notion that James was the only surviving son of Colonel Kingston after the Boyne. If this happened it would mean that the ancestral line could as easily go back to Colonel Kingston through James' elder and in fact much older brothers Samuel and John (after all, even the narrator of 'Reeves 1872' was descended from Samuel and not James as he believed), raising even a ninth generation claim, or eighth generation to 1824 as above, to an average of about twenty-two years, still implausible but not impossible. Thus the Meenies tradition may not be as far-fetched as at first appears, but neither is it strong enough to bear the weight of any positive ancestral claims.

The cumulative force of the earlier argu-

ments in this section, with or without the Meenies tradition, raises a strong presumption that the home of the Kingstons, as some have labelled Drimoleague, was historically their second home in Ireland, the first home for many, if not most, being in the townlands near Timoleague.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

¹ See the *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society* xv (1909) pp.84-85; also xiv, p. 70.

² The printer, Mr. D. Trimble of *The Guardian*, Armagh, presented a copy of the pamphlet to the National Library in Dublin, and in the library index and in several bibliographies of Irish genealogical sources he is mistakenly named as the author of the pamphlet; indeed sometimes the pamphlet is listed twice under both Shannon and Trimble.

³ Admittedly there is a James Kingston entry amongst the Co. Cork purchasers of land in 1702, according to the lists in John O'Hart, *The Irish and Anglo-Irish Landed Gentry When Cromwell Came to Ireland*, Dublin, 1884, p. 519, but an inspection of *The Book of Postings and Sales of Forfeited and Other Estates and Interests in Ireland*, Dublin, 1703, shows that this is a misreading of the name James Hingston, the two surnames not infrequently being confused.

To avoid further confusion it may be added that the name Lord Kingston or Earl of Kingston appears regularly in the records of land transactions of this and later periods, but this prominent landlord family of Mitchelstown Castle, Co. Cork, had no relationship whatever with those surnamed Kingston, their surname being King. The Kingston title dates from 1660 when John King of Boyle, Co. Roscommon, was created Baron Kingston. Mitchelstown Castle was destroyed in 1922 but the oddly named Kingston College, consisting of homes for those in need, is still in use nearby.

⁴ See Wm. Maziere Brady, *Clerical and Parochial Records of Cork, Cloyne and Ross*, London, 1864, vol. i, p. 104; also Henry Cotton, *Fasti Ecclesiae Hibernicae*, Dublin, 1847-60, vol. i, p. 216.

⁵ Surprisingly these Kingston appointments are all found in the first half of the fourteenth century, with no record of the name in the following centuries:

1306 Nicholas de Kyngston, Canon of St. Patrick's Cathedral.

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1322 Death of John de Kingston, Incumbent of Dunganstown or Inishbohin.

1325 John de Kyngeston, Prebendary of Aderk. Presumably identifiable with John de Kyngeston, a Canon, appointed a Guardian of the Spiritualities of the archdeaconry of Glendaloch in 1328.

1349 Adam de Kingston, Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral. It is surmised that he was appointed as the local nominee in 1346 but replaced by the Pope's nominee in 1349, when he moved to Castleknock parish. In the list of Deans displayed in the cathedral the only date given for him is 1349.

See Henry Cotton, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 92 & 193; H.J. Lawlor, *The Fasti of St. Patrick's, Dublin*, Dundalk, 1930, pp. 16, 40, 93, 95 & 120.

6 Some lists of tenants in the Boyle estates are included in *The Lismore Papers*, e.g. MS. 6139 re Bandon etc., but we haven't found any Kingstons in these lists.

7 See *MSS. of Earl of Egmont*, vol. i, Part i, pp. 248 & 315.

8 The primary available documentation on these land transactions is found in the *Books of Survey and Distribution*, large manuscript volumes covering the period from Cromwell to the end of that century (the Annesley copy being consulted), and also in the Appendix to the Fifteenth Report 'Containing Abstracts of, and References to, the Principal Records and Public Documents connected with the Acts of Settlement and Explanation' in *Irish Record Commission Reports*, 1811-1825, vol. iii, London, 1825.

9 There were two Kingston Adventurers, Felix, a stationer of London (and probably identifiable with Felix, one of the King's printers in Ireland in 1628), who advanced £100 but died in 1653 before he could settle in Ireland, and John, possibly his son, who is omitted in some lists of Adventurers. In the lots they drew land in Co. Meath.

The only Kingston soldier, apart from Samuel of Skeaf, was Ensign Humphry Kingston, a 'Forty-nine Officer' (i.e. he had served in Ireland before 5 June 1649) who received house property in Dublin. This entry is doubtful, however, as we find an Ensign Humphry Kinaston in one army list. There is also a very vague reference to Kingston, with no forename or other details, in one index of soldiers etc., which remains inexplicable.

According to the pedigree of the Kingstons of Co. Laois and England in the offices of the Society of Genealogists, London, the first member of that

family in Ireland was a Capt. John Kingston, a Cromwellian soldier granted land in Queen's Co. We can find no documentary record of such a grant, and the fact that the family tree jumps from Capt. John Kingston to his grandsons shows some vagueness about their origins in Ireland.

10 Seamus Pender, ed., *A Census of Ireland circa 1659*, Dublin, 1939, p. 214.

11 *Ibid.*, Preface.

12 Although Carbery is mentioned in the Act of Satisfaction of Sept. 1653 as one of the additional baronies to be used if necessary for the 'satisfaction' of the forces then about to be disbanded it is evident from an order issued on 10 May 1655 that both East and West Carbery were 'as yet undisposed of to the said disbanded soldiery' almost two years later (see R. Dunlop, ed., *Ireland Under the Commonwealth*, Manchester, 1913, pp. 507-8). The next major disbanding took place in August of that year, but if Prendergast, who oddly refers to it as 'the first and largest of the three great disbandings of the army', gives the complete list of the baronies involved then the absence of Carbery must mean that it wasn't planted until the July or Nov. disbandings of 1656. (See J.P. Prendergast, *The Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland*, 3rd ed., Dublin, 1922, pp. 216-20 & 226). By that time the distribution of available land had been handed over to the officers, who appointed trustees to act on their behalf, but unfortunately no record of how they allocated areas to the various sections of the army survives (see Dunlop, *op. cit.*, pp. clvi ff.). Records of individual grants are of course known from later enrolments.

13 As Co. Cork was not amongst the counties somewhat reluctantly assigned for the satisfaction of the Munster garrisons, and as these soldiers were reported to be still waiting for their allocation of land at the time of the Restoration in 1660, it would seem that a grant in Carbery during or before 1659 could not be for service in Munster. There is ample evidence, however, that some members of these garrisons did receive land in Co. Cork, and moreover, received it before the Restoration. Colonel Widnam of Youghal, for instance, got land in Fermoy, and is stated to have 'kept it after the Restoration' (Prendergast, *op. cit.*, pp. 193-4). More significantly Colonel Townsend, Capt. Brayly and Richard Dashwood got land in Carbery, and all of them are listed as residents in West Cork in the 1659 Census (Brayly spelled Braily).

14 At an earlier stage in the Civil War between King Charles I and the Parliamentarians Lord Inchiquin had revolted from the side of the King to

Parliament, but in 1648 he reverted to the King, and hence the Munster garrisons were actually opposed to Cromwell when he landed in Dublin the following year. Those, however, who played an active part in the surrender of these garrisons to Cromwell in November 1649 and who continued to serve under him, thus proving their 'constant good affection', were pardoned for their action in 1648, and like the rest of the army were to receive land for their arrears of pay.

15 See Bennett, *op. cit.*, p. 473 and Prendergast, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

16 We are assuming that Townsend's fifth son Kingston was probably the first son of his second marriage. His date and place of birth are unknown, but the next son was born at Kilbrittain Castle in 1664. A 1666 deed signed by Mary is mentioned in Townsend's biography. Family tradition names Hildegardis Hyde as the mother of Townsend's second son Bryan, reputedly born at Kinsale in 1648, but no details are available concerning other births until 1664, nor is it known when the first Mrs. Townsend died.

17 The only Kingston named under the Act was a 'Gent' of Knocktopher, a barony in Co. Kilkenny. Not even his forename is given, just 'Kingston'.

18 See *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the Reign of William and Mary, May 1690-Oct. 1691*, London, 1893, p. 213.

19 Bennett, *op. cit.*, p. 292, names four persons, three of them colonels, amongst the West Cork exiles who returned to Ireland with William III, but they do not include a Col. Kingston. The list is only a sample, however, and hence his silence about the name is not really significant.

20 See Brady, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-15.

21 Lieut. Toby Mulloy is also credited with giving his horse to the King when William's charger was allegedly shot — see Mulloy pedigree in Burke's *Commoners*, iv, pp. 146-50.

22 See J.G. Simms, *Jacobite Ireland 1685-91*, London, 1969, p. 150: 'William . . . himself crossed there with Inniskilling, Dutch and Danish cavalry. His horse was bogged down . . .'

23 (1) Thrift abstracts of the wills of Samuel Kingston, Skeaf, d.1703, his son James, Ballycatteen, d.1729; Thomas Kingston, Lislee, d.1773, his son James, Courtmacsherry, d.1789. All in the P.R.O. Dublin.

(2) Fisher abstract of the will of James Kingston,

junior, Ballycatteen, d.1754. Genealogical Office, Dublin. (Some of these wills also in Burke's Pedigree Charts).

(3) Kingston deeds in Registry of Deeds, Dublin, and some in possession of Mr. S.E. Kingston of Dublin.

(4) Index of Marriage Licence Bonds, Diocese of Cork and Ross, 1623-1750, in P.R.O. Dublin, and also as published by H.W. Gillman, Cork, 1896-7. Also Index of Cloyne Diocese. Incidentally, not all the Skeaf Kingston marriages, e.g. of son Samuel or of unnamed daughters to Austen and French, are in the Index.

(5) Kingston section of family-tree of Mrs. Constance Pole Bayer of Miami, Florida.

(6) 1893 article and 1929 pamphlet on 'The Kingston Family in West Cork'.

(7) Rosscarbery Parish Registers, from 1713.

Of these the abstract of Samuel's will of 1703 is the most informative, giving the names of (presumably) all his surviving grandchildren, and indirectly the name of his dead son John, but not giving the forenames of his three married daughters. The three youngest children of his son James are omitted, probably not yet born in 1703, and these are added to the chart from the abstract of James' will. This, in fact, omits Mary, places James third and Sarah last, suggesting that by 1729 Mary was dead and also Sarah, a further daughter having been born and given the name of her dead sister. Unhappily all but two members of the family of George of Garryndruig and Derrynagree have to be taken at second-hand from Mrs. Pole Bayer, but nearly all other details are based on primary sources. Precedence is given to Thrift abstracts in resolving minor clashes of evidence with 'The Kingston Family in West Cork' article.

24 The assumption that Samuel of Gortnahorna had only one son is based on the description of his daughter Mary as his 'only surviving issue' in a 1768 deed, her brother James having died about ten years earlier, but strictly speaking this description does not preclude the possibility of other dead brothers, some of whom could even have been survived by their offspring, though this is not likely.

25 See W.P.W. Phillimore, ed., *Indexes to Irish Wills*, London, 1910, vol. ii, p. 64.

26 *Index of Administration Bonds, 1630-1857*, Diocese of Cork.

27 *Ibid.*

28 See also the half-page article on Kingston in his *More Irish Families*, Galway & Dublin, 1960, which

mentions Bandon as another area where Kingstons can be found 'in strength', and expresses doubts about the all-Kingston roll at Meenies school.

29 There is an index to Kingston (unfortunately including numerous Lord Kingston, i.e. King family) deeds in the Registry of Deeds, the vast majority of the Kingston-surname deeds dealing with the Skeaf family. It is sufficient here to note the numbers of just a few of the more important deeds substantiating the outline given of Skeaf-Drimoleague contacts: 11235, 92912, 96799, 75075, 126272, 177162 and 213840.

30 One serious though understandable error was the assumption that her ancestor James of Derrynagree, Youghal and Cork was Mayor of Cork in 1787, confusing him with his first cousin of the same name. This error is repeated in her privately published book *And in the New World*, 1968, p. 82.

31 Those attending the earliest recorded Church Vestry meeting on Easter Tuesday 2 April, 1782

(which 'resolved unanimously that the sum of eighty pounds be raised . . . towards the building a new Church at Dromdaleague') included Paul Kingston, Church Warden, and also Thomas and William Kingston, that is, three Kingstons amongst the eight to ten laymen present (the total being uncertain as the end of the page is worn). No townlands are specified, the earliest locatable Kingstons in these minutes being Paul of Gurtteeniher, 1786, Samuel of 'Moynics', 1789, and Paul of Clodagh, 1795, each being Church Warden at the time.

32 *JCHAS* xxxv (1930) p. 100.

33 Known locally as 'Sam Paul Mary', but he himself was adamant that he was really 'Sam Paul Sam Paul Sam', and this pedigree can be verified except for the final Sam, that too being perfectly credible as he had presumably been told that the grandfather he never met — a victim of the famine — was called 'Sam Paul Sam'.



Drimoleague — burial place of many Kingstons

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