

WALDRON FAMILY HISTORY

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1 Origin of the Name Waldron

The surname Waldron occurs in many parts of the world, but this paper concentrates mainly on the history of the name in Ireland, where the modern name Waldron is used by several unrelated families with independent origins:

1. It is an anglicized surname for the descendants of Baildrín or Baldraithe MacCoisteala, who was of Norman descent and lived in the Barony of Costello in the east of County Mayo around the year 1300 (see below). Baildrín has been translated ‘little Walter’. The Norman prefix *de* and the Gaelic prefix *Mac* have both been used by this family, reflecting the hibernicization of the Norman MacCoistealas and their descendants after they settled in Mayo. The more usual forms of this family’s name in the Irish language nowadays are De Bhaldraithe and MacBhaildrín (MacLysaght 1985) (Molloy n.d.) (Comer and Ó Muraile 1986).
2. It is an anglicized form of *MacBhalronta*, an Irish patronymic assumed by the Wellesley family, who became established in County Meath in 1174 (MacLysaght 1985).

The IGI [New York pages ?? and Ireland pages 28919–28923] (*International Genealogical Index (IGI)* 1988) for Ireland lists the following as alternative names for this family: Walsey, Weasley, Welby, Wellesley, Willesby, Willoughby, Wilsey and Wolseley.

3. It was the surname of a 1609 immigrant from England, which was in turn derived from the Old-English forename *Waleron* or *Waleran*. *Waleran* was itself derived from the Old German *Walahrām* or *Waleram*, a name compounded from the words *wald* meaning power and *eran* meaning raven.

That name originated in Germany before the Norman conquest of England in 1066 and was one of many old German names brought to England with the army of William the Conqueror. The forename was borne, in particular, by Waleran Venator, friend and companion of William the Conqueror, from whom he received vast estates in Hampshire, Wiltshire and Dorsetshire. The name Waldron itself is chiefly confined to the southern portions of England. The original family settlement appears to have been in Sussex where there is a place named Waldron, but other branches of the family are known from the counties of Berkshire, Wiltshire, Worcestershire, *&c* (Patterson 1927) (MacLysaght 1985, Waldron-McCarthy 1950).

The name is sometimes also spelled Wallerond, Walrond, Walron, Waldrone, Waldrum, Walldrum, Waldren, Walderne, Walderon, Waldrynde, Waldram or Waltrin. Of these variants, by far the most prominent seems to have been Walrond. The ancestry of Sir William George Hood Walrond (b.1905), 3rd Baronet and 2nd Lord Waleran of Uffculme, Devonshire has been traced back to Richard Walrond of Exeter who lived in the reign of King Henry III of England (about 1200). Sir William's great-grandfather had been created 1st Baronet on February 24, 1876. An earlier ancestor, Humphrey Walrond (1600?-1670?), achieved fame as deputy-governor of Barbados.¹

There are a number of Waldron coats of arms, one of which features three black bull's heads. The family motto is either *fortis et velox* (brave and swift) or *spectemur agendo*.

2 Waldron Immigrants to Ireland

For two of the three origins of the Waldron name mentioned above, the original immigrant ancestor to Ireland is known.

In 1172, Hugh de Lacy allotted the Barony of Navan (which includes the Hill of Tara) in County Meath to Jocelyn de Angulo, a Norman mercenary who was fighting in Wales when the King of Leinster arrived looking for soldiers to help him in his wars in Ireland. Jocelyn was to become ancestor of the first of the Waldron families discussed here (Molloy n.d.).

In 1195, Jocelyn's sons William and Gilbert were accused of rebellion by the English king, and fled to Connaught, where they became mercenaries for the Gaelic O'Connor kings, and were rewarded with lands, formerly occupied by the O'Garas, which now comprise the Barony of Costello (and include the Marian shrine at Knock). William and Gilbert were pardoned by King John of England in 1207 and their tenure in Mayo was assured (Molloy n.d., Comer and Ó Muraile 1986).

The surname of the descendants of Jocelyn evolved quickly as they became hibernicized, through fitzGocelin, fitzGausselin, MacGoisdelbh, MacCoisteala and MacCostello to the modern English Costello, occasionally spelt Costelloe.

¹See Burke's *Commonage* (?).

Philip MacCoisteala, Sherriff of Connaught in 1277, was father of the aforementioned Baildrín, and also of Siurtán Dubh, who became ancestor of the Jordan family, and of Pilib, who became ancestor of the Philbin family. The Costellos, Waldrons, Jordans and Philbins were the principal families of East Mayo for generations, with the Waldrons having their seat at Doo Castle (Molloy n.d., Comer and Ó Muraile 1986).

Around 1586, for reasons which are none too clear, Sir Theobald Dillon arrived in the Barony of Costello and received 'of free gift a great portion of' Seán MacCoisteala's land. Thereafter, the Waldrons and their relatives appear to have settled into the role of tenants of the Dillons, until the passage of the Land Acts of the late nineteenth century (Comer and Ó Muraile 1986).

The second Waldron family, a branch of the Wellesleys, was introduced to Ireland in 1174, but the details are not well-documented, to the best of the present author's knowledge.

The third Waldron family can trace their direct ancestry to Henry Waldron of the Parish of St Sepulchre without Newgate in London, who was born about 1450. His great-great-grandson, Sir Richard Waldron, Knt., of Charley Hall in Charnwood Forest, Leicestershire settled in 1609 at Dromellan Castle (or Farnham) in the Barony of Loghtee in County Cavan where King James I of England allotted him an extensive estate of about 2,000 acres. Sir Richard's great-grandson Henry Waldron sold Farnham in 1697 and settled at Cartron, Kilkukin, near Carrick-on-Shannon, County Leitrim. Henry's great-great-grandson Charles Waldron sold Cartron in 1831 and settled at Illawarra, N.S.W., Australia. In the Irish branch of this family, the surname has also become Waldron-Hamilton (Waldron-McCarthy 1950).

According to <http://www.proni.gov.uk/records/private/brownlow.htm>, the manor of Richmount in County Armagh, originally known as Aghavellan, was granted by James I to John Heron in 1610. He sold it to John Waldron who received a re-grant for it from Charles I in 1629. John Waldron's grandson, Francis Stonard Waldron, conveyed the lands to Thomas Coke, Robert Burditt and Rowland Cotton in 1705. It is not clear whether this John Waldron was Irish or was another early immigrant bearing the surname.

The descendants of Baildrín MacCoisteala are mainly Roman Catholics and those of Sir Richard Waldron mainly Anglicans, although after so many generations there are bound to be exceptions.

3 Modern Waldron Families

Not many living bearers of the Waldron name or descendants of Waldrons are lucky enough to be able to trace their Irish ancestry all the way back to Baildrín MacCoisteala or Sir Richard Waldron. One exception in recent times was the Rev. Oswald Bruce Waldron-McCarthy (c.1915-1978) whose mother was the great-granddaughter of the afore-mentioned Charles Waldron of Cartron who went to Australia. He bequeathed his extensive records to the Society of Australian Genealogists, of which he was once (1967) President. The Society has

files titled Waldron of Cartron and Illawarra, Waldron of Charley Hall, Waldron of Leicestershire, Waldron of Oadby, Waldron of Tenbury, Waldron of Kinver, Staffordshire and Waldron of Bovey (Patterson 1927, Waldron-McCarthy 1950). See also (*Burke's Genealogical And Heraldic History Of The Landed Gentry Of Ireland* 1912, p.733).

Two descendants of Sir Richard Waldron married apparently unrelated bearers of the same surname: Vaughan Waldron of Ashfort House married Barbara Waldron (1775-1797), the only child of Thomas Waldron of Rocksavage, County Roscommon and Elizabeth Baldwin; while Thomas Waldron of Lismoyle House married in 1804 Eliza Waldron, daughter of William Waldron of Ferragh, County Mayo and Ballina, County Sligo (Waldron-McCarthy 1950).

Less lucky descendants of Irish Waldrons have generally been unable to trace their ancestry much before 1800. Current researchers are descended from Thomas Waldron (d.1902) of Knockvicar, Boyle, County Roscommon; John Waldron (b.c.1800) of Carne, Aghamore, County Mayo; John Waldron of Cahir, Aghamore, County Mayo; Tim Waldron of Tuam, County Galway; John Waldron, probably of Glensk, County Galway, near the Galway-Roscommon border, and Mary Waldron (b.c.1819) of County Wicklow.

Thomas Waldron of Knockvicar joined the Irish Constabulary in 1847 and eventually rose to the rank of Head Constable in what became the Royal Irish Constabulary later in his career. No record of his birth can be located. The Tithe Applotment Books and Griffith's Valuation between them include only one Waldron in the entire Barony of Boyle: Francis Waldron of Quarry-lane in the town of Boyle. However, no connection has yet been established between him and Thomas Waldron of Knockvicar, who married Catherine Parker and is ancestor of the current author and also of the noted lexicographer, An tOllamh Tomás de Bhaldraithe. Further details of Thomas Waldron of Knockvicar's life and family are available on request.

John Waldron of Carne, John Waldron of Cahir and Tim Waldron of Tuam all were connected to the Gunnigan family — respectively the father-in-law of Mary Gunnigan; husband of her sister Bidy; and son of their aunt, also Bidy Gunnigan.

John Waldron of Carne, whose son married Mary Gunnigan, himself married Margaret Lyons and is ancestor of June Waldron-Barker of Hilthorne House, 12 Westbeck, Ruskington, Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG34 9GU, England and also of Robert B. Lyons whose wife, Roseann Lyons of 5420 Summerwood Lane, Yorba Linda, CA 92686, U.S.A., has transcribed all references to Waldrons in the Aghamore parish records.

Tim Waldron of Tuam was grandfather of Dermot Waldron, B.L., of the Irish diplomatic service.

John Waldron of Glensk married Rose Griffin and is ancestor of Alison Hughes of 19 Leyden St, East Brunswick, Victoria, Australia 3057.

Finally, Mary Waldron of Wicklow married John McMahon of County Tyrone and went to Australia. They are ancestors of Audrey Turner of 9 Briddon Road, Pennant Hills, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia 2120.

Valentine (Val) Waldron of Cave, Ballyhaunis, County Mayo is said by Mr.

de Burca (publisher of Knox) to be an authority on Waldron history, but no information on his ancestry is presently available.

Other prominent or notorious Irish Waldrons who may not have any living descendants include:

1. Laurence Waldron (1811-1875) of Helen Park, County Tipperary who was a member of the United Kingdom parliament (*Burke's Genealogical And Heraldic History Of The Landed Gentry Of Ireland* 1912, p.734). The Dublin stockbroking firm of National City Brokers Dillon & Waldron is associated with his son, Laurence Ambrose (*Burke's Genealogical And Heraldic History Of The Peerage Baronetage And Knightage* 1963, p.2534 of some edition).

and

2. Henry Waldron, a convict transported from Ireland to Australia, who changed his name to George Barrington (Costello 1987).

4 Waldron Place-names

The village of Waldron in Sussex, England mentioned above is one of several places in all parts of the world to share the name Waldron. It lies within the civil parish of Heathfield and Waldron, in the Wealden District of East Sussex.

Waldron Island, Washington is one of the many beautiful San Juan Islands located in the Straits of Georgia, in the Northwestern-most part of the continental United States. It has an area of 4.59 square miles and is located about 1.5 miles from the northwest shore of Orcas Island and separated from it by the deep waters of President Channel. Waldron post office and boat-landing are located on the shore of Cowlitz Bay on the south shore of the island, which has been described as having 'beauty and meaning which defy description and which can be experienced but not told.'(McLellan 1927)

In 1841, an expedition headed by Lieutenant Charles Wilkes arrived to make the first survey of the Puget Sound and Georgia Straits regions. Wilkes named most of the points of interest which were not already so honoured, including Waldron Island in the north central part of San Juan County. The honour 'was probably intended for Thomas W. Waldron, Captain's Clerk of the brig *Porpoise* of the expedition. However, it is possible that two men were honoured in the one name as R. R. Waldron was Purser of the *Vincennes*, another vessel of the expedition.' (Meany 1923)

Jurisdiction over an area including Waldron Island was for some time the subject of a dispute between the USA and Canada. The boundary between the two countries was set in 1846 to run along the 49th parallel to 'the middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver's Island; and thence southerly through the middle of said channel, and of Fuca's straits to the Pacific Ocean.' The San Juan Islands are sprinkled all over the middle of this channel, so that the United States claimed that the main channel ran to the west of the islands and Britain/Canada claimed that it ran to the east. The dispute was

finally arbitrated in 1872 by Emperor William I of Germany in favour of the United States.

Also in the United States, there are towns named Waldron in Shelby County, Indiana (pop. 800); Hillsdale County, Michigan (pop. 570)²; Scott County, Arkansas (pop. 2642); Platte County, Missouri; Wheeler County, Oregon; and in Harper County, Kansas, close to its border with Alfalfa County, Oklahoma. Only for the two first-named have I been able to determine the origin of the name (Populations taken from *Road Atlas: United States, Canada, Mexico* (1989); other towns are listed at www.mapquest.com.) Aroma Park in Kankakee County, Illinois was formerly known as Waldron.

Waldron, Indiana, was not always so named. It grew up along the railroad through Indiana constructed in 1854, and in 1856 received the name Stroupsville. The local Post Office, however, was called Conn's Creek. This situation persisted until January 31, 1876, on which date the United States Post Office changed the name to Waldron. The townsfolk are said to have held a meeting to select one name for their little community. They were not able to agree until one man, in disgust, left the meeting and took a walk through a ploughed field. There he found a scythe bearing the inscription, 'The Waldron Scythe Company.' He returned to the meeting and suggested the name 'Waldron' as a compromise. The townspeople agreed and petitioned the Indiana State Legislature to change the name accordingly ³

http://www.waldronmi.com/HENRY_WALDRON.htm says that Waldron, Michigan was named after Henry Waldron (1819-1880), a long-time member of the House of Representatives.

<http://www.rootsweb.com/moplatte/history.htm> says: "On November 7, 1872, the Platte County Court divided the county into 13 townships: Camden Point; Fail; Pettis; Lee; Magee; May; New Market; Parkville; Waldron; Ridgely; Salem; Miller and Weston."

Waldron's Bridge which crosses the River Dodder at Rathfarnham, Dublin, Ireland took its name from the nearby calico dyeing and bleaching plant of Waldron Bros.

Australia has a Waldron Road at Chester Hill, NSW; Waldron Place, Cambridge Park, NSW; Waldron Street, Sans Souci, NSW and Waldron Street, Garokan, NSW.

There is also a Waldron Street near Flushing Meadows in Queens, New York and a Waldron Park Drive in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. The Waldron Mercy Academy is in the same county. These names are, however, of mostly unclear origin.

²See <http://history.waldronmi.com/>

³John Garrett of Milan, Indiana got this explanation in 1988 from Earl Peek (born about 1898) whom he describes as Waldron's oldest citizen and recognized historian. Earl Peek in turn got the story in 1913 when the daughter of the man who was then the most knowledgeable citizen of Waldron related it in a school composition. He thinks the Waldron Scythe Company was based someplace in Pennsylvania. By coincidence, in 1880, a John Waldron moved to Muncy, PA, where he purchased the manufacturing business of his father-in-law, the late Lewis B. Sprout, and continued the manufacture of hay forks, elevators and other hay machinery. See http://www.searchforancestors.com/bios/pennsylvania/history_of_lycoming_county/waldron_john.html.

APPENDIX:

Waldrons of Note from Outside Ireland

Many Waldrons from outside Ireland have also achieved a measure of fame or notoriety or done research into the family history. Some of them are mentioned briefly here.

1. Elisha Dunbar Waldron, born in Elgin, Illinois on January 27, 1848 could trace his ancestry to Foulke Waldron, most of whose nine children emigrated from Coventry, Warwickshire, England to Boston, Massachusetts between 1650 and 1680. Foulke in turn was the great-grandson of an Edward Waldron (*Biography of Elisha Dunbar Waldron* n.d.).
2. Ebenzer Waldron and Mary Bennis, whose daughter Rebecca Jane was born in Southborough, Massachusetts on January 12, 1871, are the ancestors of Mrs. Paul J. Fraser formerly of 144 Hampton Green, Colby Village, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia B2V 1L5, Canada (current address unknown).
3. George Waldron (1690-1730?), topographer and poet, was son of Francis Waldron of London, who was descended from an ancient family in Essex.
4. Francis Godolphin Waldron (1744-1818) was a British writer and actor.
5. L. Waldron of 7 Wongaburra St., Jindalee, Queensland, Australia 4074 (phone: 07 376 1170) planned to publish a Waldron Family History in 1987.
6. The Waldrons of 8 Rongotai Place, Whangerei, New Zealand are descended from Edward Francis Waldron and Jane Poynter whose son was born in Worster in 1870 and migrated to New Zealand.
7. John Waldron (b.13 Mar 1578/9), whose family had been established for several generations at Alcester in Warwickshire, England, settled in Holland. His son, Resolved Waldron (10 May 1610–17 May 1670) was an early settler in New York. His descendants were baptized into the Reformed Dutch Church in New York as early as 1659, while Will Libers in Surrogates Office, NYC, vol. 7, p. 226 record John Waldron married Cornelia Hardenbrook on October 27, 1704 (*International Genealogical Index (IGI)* 1988, *New York Marriages Previous to 1784* 1968). Resolved Waldron was probably the ‘Baron Waldron’ who received a grant of a large tract of land on both sides of the Harlem River in New York. A suit was brought in about 1903 by his descendants in 26 States of the Union in the name of Col. Samuel Waldron who lived on the disputed lands to recover \$20,000,000 or possession of the lands.
8. Sixty-five people named Waldron were listed in the 1989 Sydney, NSW, Phone Directory, 1 person named Waldren, 1 Waldram and 1 Waldron-Brown.

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