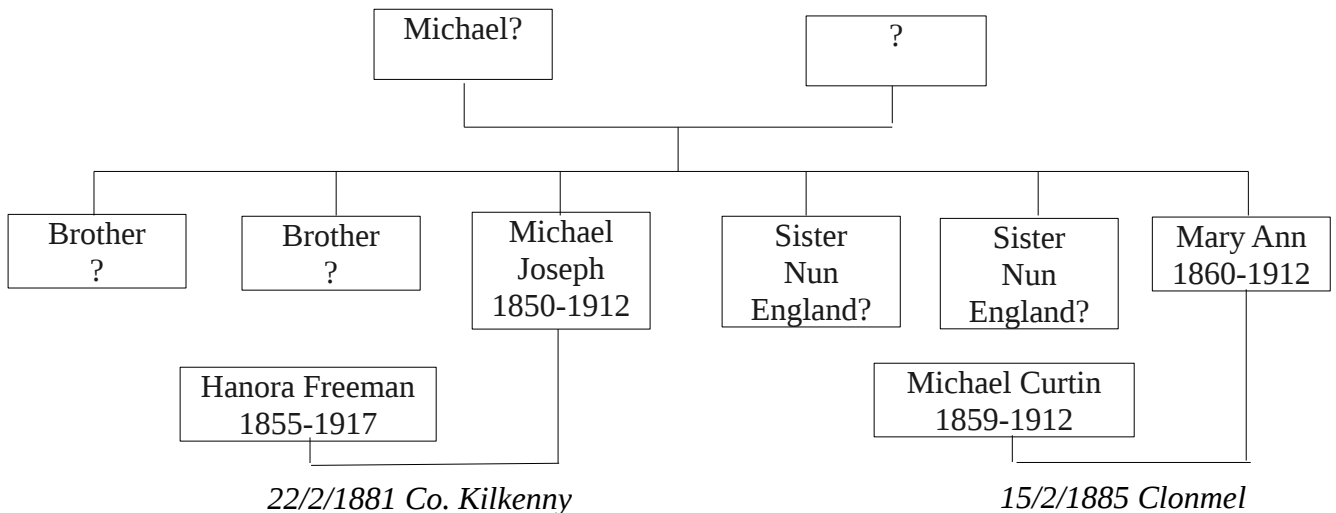


# Guerin Roots

(Co. Tipperary, Co. Waterford and Co. Kilkenny)

The family tree below was the earliest known information when PJG and PG drew up the family tree in the late 60s. PJG thought his father, Michael Joseph, had two older brothers and three younger sisters. We are sure the youngest sister existed as she married Michael Curtin in 1885 and we know their family history after this but we shall come back to them later. He thought there were two sisters who were both nuns and possibly in England and that his Grandfather was Michael and that he married around 1848.



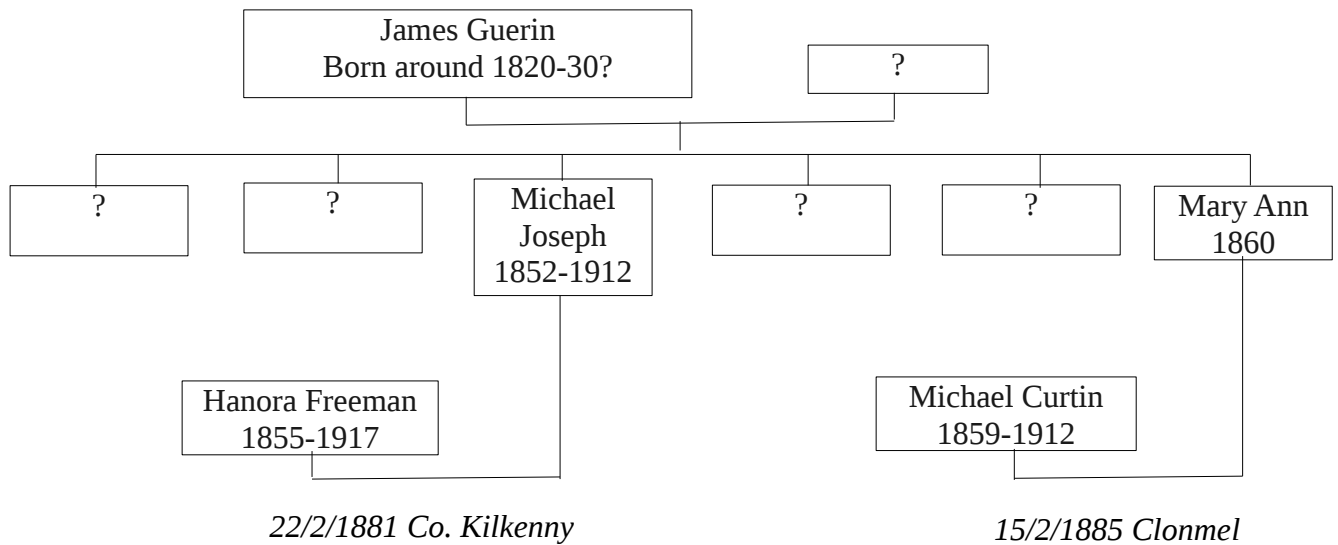
We know that Michael Joseph was married in 1881 in Co. Kilkenny just north of Waterford city in the Parish Church of Sleibhrue. We also know that Mary Ann married Michael Curtin in St. Peter and St. Paul, Clonmel (Co. Tipperary) in 1885. The father is recorded in both marriage records as James Guerin so Michael is not correct in the tree above.

The census returns record where people were born, or rather where they say they were born. Michael Joseph gives Co. Waterford in both the 1911 and 1901 census. He gives his age as 49 and 59 years in the two census returns so a birth date of 1852 is most likely.

Mary Ann gives Co. Tipperary in the 1911 census but in the 1901 census she gives Co. Waterford like her big brother. However the 1911 return shows an alteration to the word "Tipperary". Whoever was filling it in clearly started to write something else. Did Mary Anne's husband, Michael Curtin, fill in the 1911 census without checking where she was born? They married in Co. Tipperary so perhaps he thought of her as coming from there. She give 41 and 51 as her age in the census returns, pointing to her being born in 1860.

The two sisters who were supposedly nuns and lived in England would appear on the 19<sup>th</sup> century English census returns and I found non. It is possible they were in England between two census dates and so appear on neither. There was a Freeman nun in Waterford city in the 1901 census, perhaps PJG was recalling the wrong side of the family.

So the earliest records we know for certain give us the following family tree:



We need to explore the possible birth places for these Guerin.

We have either Co. Tipperary or Co. Waterford given in the census returns. The Tipperary parish records for Baptisms are available on-line and so I interrogated these and found no suitable baptisms in Co. Tipperary. So I then moved on to Co. Waterford.

Examination of the Co. Waterford records is not possible on-line so this was undertaken by the Co. Waterford Genealogical Service (CWGS) who turned up no suitable birth for either Michael or Mary. They did find a Michael and a Mary both born to a James Guerin in the village of Ballyduff but the dates did not match and this Michael Guerin was also alive in the 1911 census and living near Clonmel, Co. Tipperary with his brother. Also this James Guerin died in 1882, three years before the Clonmel marriage. So this Co. Waterford possibility seems not to be correct.

James Guerin's occupation is given as 'Farmer' in the 1881 Waterford marriage and 'Caretaker' in the 1885 Clonmel marriage. While both marriage records state James Guerin was living at the time, I understand that this might not necessarily be true. The 1901 census records no James Guerin in the whole country that could possibly be our James Guerin. So this rather leads to the probability that he died between 1885 and 1901. I examined the Mormon records, the Irish Family History Federation and the Waterford County death records.

These are the possible James Guerin deaths I found:

- |    |           |                         |  |
|----|-----------|-------------------------|--|
| 1. | 1803-1883 | Lismore, Co. Waterford  | Not correct one (See page 6)             |
| 2. | 1805-1871 | Clogheen, Co. Tipperary | Too early?                               |
| 3. | 1819-1887 | Clonmel, Co. Tipperary  | The most likely ? Died workhouse Clonmel |
| 4. | 1834-1884 | Tipperary               | Born too late for marriage ~1850         |

We need more evidence. Another check is to see how many James Guerins were around in 1850.

To achieve this we need to turn to another useful tool for genealogical research that of Land records.

## Land Records

All governments need to collect taxes in various forms and in the 19thC the British government sought to collect Tithes and Taxes so surveys were conducted of who lived where and who their landlords were.

### Tithe Applotments 1823-38

The Composition Act of 1823 specified that tithes due to the Established Church, the Church of Ireland, which had hitherto been payable in kind, should now be paid in money. As a result, it was necessary to carry out a valuation of the entire country, civil parish by civil parish, to determine how much would be payable by each landholder. This was done over the ensuing 15 years, up to the abolition of tithes in 1838. The Tithe records are available on-line on the Ancestry.co.uk website.

### Griffith's Valuation

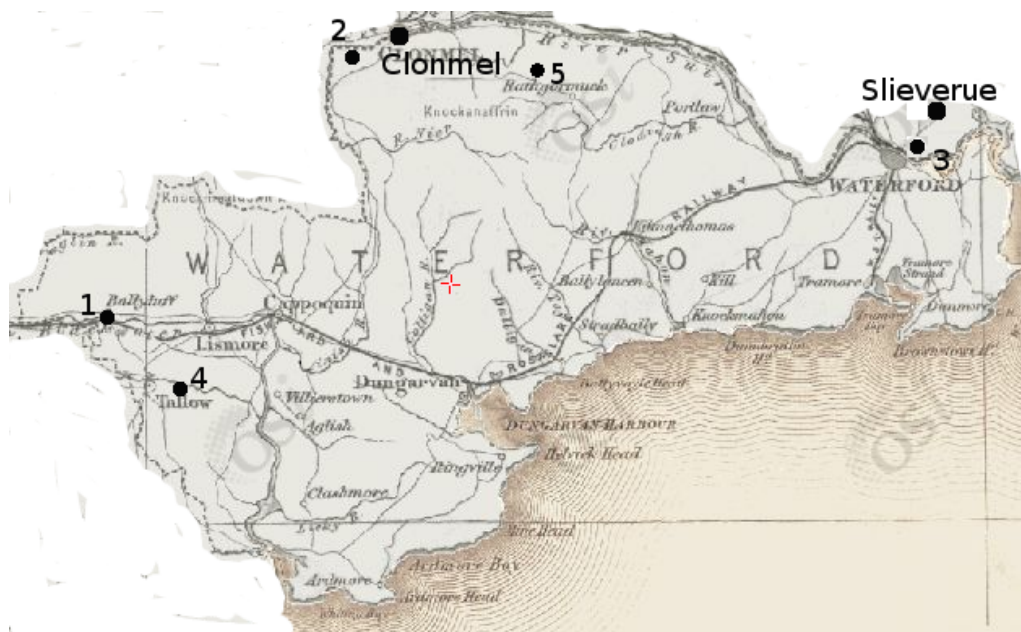
Another document we can refer to try and achieve an idea of where James Guerin might have lived is called "Griffith's Valuation". Known as "The Primary Valuation" it was the first full-scale valuation of property in Ireland. It was overseen by Richard Griffith and published between 1847 and 1864. It is one of the most important surviving 19th century genealogical sources. The "Go Ireland" website has the entire document available to search.

I therefore searched for every Guerin recorded in the valuation.

In Co. Tipperary Griffith records no suitable Guerin records at all reinforcing my belief that the Co. Tipperary option is not possible.

There are several Co. Waterford records as follows.

1. James, Ellen, Michael Gueron Ballyduff, village of
2. James, John, Patrick Kearns Kilnamack East.
3. John Gearan Church Rd., Abbeylands, Kilculliheen.
4. Daniel Geran Janeville, Kilwatermoy.
5. John, Michael Guerney Seskian



Let us consider each of these possibilities in turn.

The first is the father of 5 children including a Michael (1864) and a Mary (1861) and is the family the Waterford Genealogical Service found. However as I stated before, this Michael is alive in the 1911 census and living in Scrothea West in Clonmel, Co. Tipperary with his older brother James. Scrothea is just to the south of Clonmel. These Gearons give ages that match those found in Ballyduff by the Waterford Genealogical Service (WGS). Also there is a death record for James Guerin in Ballyduff dated 1883 so he would not have been alive for the Curtin/Guerin marriage in 1885. So I think we can discount the Ballyduff Guerins. The 1901 and 1911 census returns show no Guerins living in Ballyduff so this family of Guerins appear to have been there for a relatively short period of time.

Second are the Gearns in Kilnamack East. This is a possibility and is geographically in a great location for a later connection with Clonmel. It is right on the Tipperary / Waterford border just a couple of miles south west of Clonmel and seems now to be in Co. Tipperary but was in Co. Waterford in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and even the 1901 and 1911 census. Unfortunately the searches by WGS found no suitable Michael born to this James. But this could still be the correct James Guerin but that the records just don't exist. There are several Gearon families living in this area in the 1901 and 1911. I could not get these families to fit into the known Guerin family tree. The Tithe defaulters records from 1831 show one Patrick Guran living here at that time. Patrick too is listed in the Tithe Applotment records. If it turns out that this is the correct Guerins then James Guerin's father seems to be Patrick Guran.

Thirdly is the John Gearan of Abbeylands, Kilculliheen. The civil parish of Kilculliheen is on the north bank of the river Suir at Waterford City and includes Ferrybank and part of Sallypark where Michael Joseph and Hanora Freeman lived when they married in 1881. It was served by the Roman Catholic parish of Slieverue where the Freeman/Guerin marriage took place. Originally it was part of Co. Kilkenny but from the reign of Charles 1<sup>st</sup> it passed to Waterford City, and then in 1898 split so that some reverted to Kilkenny and some, like Ferrybank remained part of Waterford City. This John Gearan seems to have been married in the Slieverue church in 1840. John's daughters, Johanna and Margaret are married in the 1860's. There are no records of others to fit our family tree but it is intriguing that these Guerins lived so close to where one branch of our family lived.

The Guerins of Janeville (No 4 above) are still there in the 1901 and 11 census. Their family tree in no way matches that of our family.

No. 5 too seems unlikely and there are no Guerins in the census returns living in this area. Also the name Guerny seems too far from 'Guerin' to be possible.

There is one real flaw with Griffith as I see it. Griffith records only the head of household, i.e. the landholder and so it is nigh on impossible for me to be certain that there are not missing parts to this jigsaw that lie in the Co. Waterford Births and marriage records. Until such time as these are available on-line or someone is able to go to Dublin (or Dungarvan) I cannot make any more headway on the genealogy.

Another interesting discovery I made was of another Guerin marriage in Clonmel. Again the father was James Gearon. This was of one John Hogan and Bridget Gearon on 11<sup>th</sup> April 1888. He was a soldier and she the daughter of a Labourer. This does not fit with the death of one James Guerin in Clonmel the previous year in the workhouse so points to there being two James Gearons in Clonmel at this time. But why would the Curtins and Guerins be so close and the Hogans never get a mention? This family moved to England, Ripon and had 6 children. Some born in Ireland and some in Yorkshire. They lived in Ripon right through to the 1911 census. I don't think we are related.

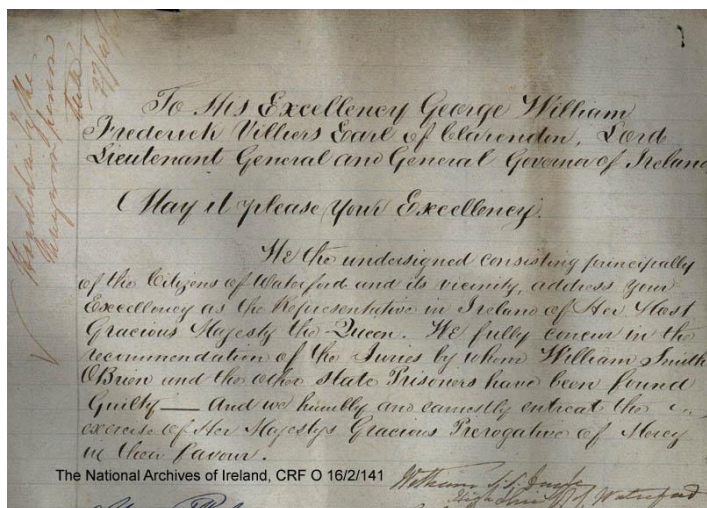
## William Smith O'Brien Petition

The other evidence I found were entries in the petition to save William O'Brien from the gallows. In 1848 William Smith O'Brien was arrested in Ireland, on the grounds that he had travelled to Paris earlier that year in support of the leaders of the new French Republic. He was tried, but released when the jury failed to agree on a verdict. On 26th July 1848 the Irish Confederation Club was proclaimed illegal and warrants were issued for the arrest of the leaders of the Young Irelanders. On 29th July William Smith O'Brien led an abortive rising in Ballingarry, Co. Tipperary, otherwise known as 'the battle of Widow McCormack's cabbage patch'. He was arrested on 6th August 1848 and in a special sitting of the district court at Clonmel, Co. Tipperary, found guilty and sentenced to death.

The sentence caused great consternation among all segments of the Irish community. Between the finish of the trial in October 1848 and May 1849 various petitions in favour of clemency for William Smith O'Brien were collected around Ireland. Petitioners signed in support of Smith-O'Brien for many different reasons, some of them political, some religious and humanitarian. On 5th June 1849 Smith O'Brien's death sentence was commuted to transportation for life.

There is an entry for James Gearn in Waterford on 27/10/1848. Also fone or a James Gearin in the same petition. There is no more detail on their address so they might be the Ballyduff James Gueron or the James Gearns near Clonmel. There was a Clonmel petition and I would have thought the Gearns of Kilnamack West would have signed this one rather than travelling the length of the county to sign in Waterford City.

The title page of the document in which these two James Guerins are registered talks of being a list "principally of the citizens of Waterford and its vicinity." If this means just the immediate hinterland of Waterford City then there might be more James Guerins around in the late 1840's. As I said before the lack of on-line records of Births and marriages for Co. Waterford is most unfortunate. So let us now move on to examine the history of the family of Michael Joseph Guerin.



Title page of Petition