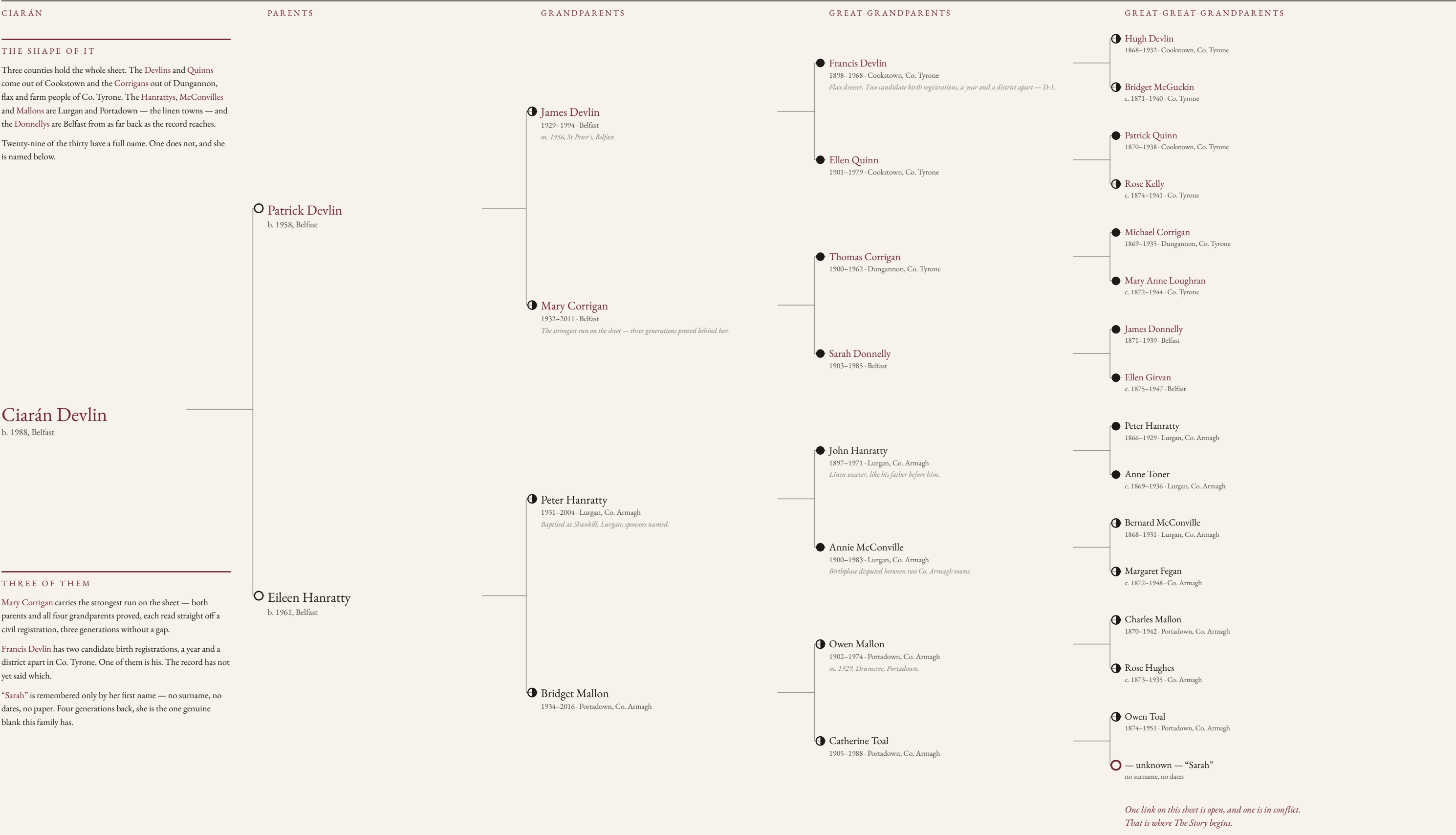


# Four Generations Back

The ancestry of Ciarán Devlin, born Belfast, 1988 — thirty-one people across five generations, from Cookstown and Dungannon to Lurgan, Portadown and Belfast. Every link graded against the record.



## The tree as it stands



Thirty direct ancestors, four generations back, and the frame holds: twenty-nine of the thirty have a full name, and only one slot is a genuine blank. Three counties are in play — the **Devlins** and **Quinns** out of Cookstown and the **Corrigans** out of Dungannon in Co. Tyrone, the **Hanrattys**, **McConvilles** and **Mallons** out of Lurgan and Portadown in Co. Armagh, and the **Donnellys** in Belfast itself.

The strongest run on the whole sheet is Ciarán's grandmother **Mary Corrigan's** own ancestry: both her parents and all four of her grandparents are proved, each one read straight off a civil birth or marriage registration held at source — three generations without a gap. Ciarán's other grandfather, **Peter Hanratty**, stands nearly as solidly: both his parents are proved off a single parish baptism register, read directly rather than taken from an index.

Where it thins is the band nearest home. All four grandparent-to-parent links are marked *likely* rather than *proved* — not because anything is in doubt, but because the tree records the parents' own marriages without a certificate yet confirming each child's birth in turn. That is the single most common gap in a tree of this size, and it is the cheapest kind to close.

Three things are flagged rather than settled: a genuine unknown four generations back on the Toal side — a great-great-grandmother remembered only as “**Sarah**” — and two named conflicts: two candidate birth registrations for **Francis Devlin**, a year and a registration district apart, and a disputed birthplace for **Annie McConville** between two Co. Armagh towns. Neither is unusual this far back. All three are on page five, which is where this report earns its keep.

*Every count on this page matches the marks on the chart, one for one. If a number here ever disagrees with the sheet, the sheet is wrong and I owe you a reprint.*

## Ciarán to his great-grandparents

Fourteen links: Ciarán to his parents, his parents to his grandparents, and his grandparents to his great-grandparents. Each one says what was actually checked — not what is believed.

| LINK                               | MARK        | WHAT WAS CHECKED                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| GENERATION 1 · PARENTS             |             |                                                                                                                                                        |
| Patrick Devlin (b. 1958) → Ciarán  | FAMILY SAYS | Living memory. No birth registration for Ciarán himself yet sits in the file — the ordinary starting gap, closed the day one is sent in.               |
| Eileen Hanratty (b. 1961) → Ciarán | FAMILY SAYS | Same as above.                                                                                                                                         |
| GENERATION 2 · GRANDPARENTS        |             |                                                                                                                                                        |
| James Devlin → Patrick Devlin      | LIKELY      | James's own 1956 marriage is a parish record for St Peter's, Belfast; his son's birth isn't separately sourced in the file.                            |
| Mary Corrigan → Patrick Devlin     | LIKELY      | Same marriage record; same gap on the son's own birth.                                                                                                 |
| Peter Hanratty → Eileen Hanratty   | LIKELY      | Parents in the tree, daughter's birth recorded — no certificate yet cited for her specifically.                                                        |
| Bridget Mallon → Eileen Hanratty   | LIKELY      | Same.                                                                                                                                                  |
| GENERATION 3 · GREAT-GRANDPARENTS  |             |                                                                                                                                                        |
| Francis Devlin → James Devlin      | PROVED      | James's 1929 civil birth registration read at source, Belfast district: father Francis Devlin, flax dresser, mother Ellen Devlin formerly Quinn.       |
| Ellen Quinn → James Devlin         | PROVED      | Same registration.                                                                                                                                     |
| Thomas Corrigan → Mary Corrigan    | PROVED      | Mary's 1932 civil birth registration read at source, parents named in full.                                                                            |
| Sarah Donnelly → Mary Corrigan     | PROVED      | Same registration.                                                                                                                                     |
| John Hanratty → Peter Hanratty     | PROVED      | Parish baptism register read directly, Shankill, Lurgan: Peter born 1931, father John Hanratty, linen weaver, mother Annie McConville, sponsors named. |
| Annie McConville → Peter Hanratty  | PROVED      | Same baptism register.                                                                                                                                 |
| Owen Mallon → Bridget Mallon       | LIKELY      | Parents' 1929 marriage documented at Drumcree, Portadown; Bridget's own birth not separately certified.                                                |
| Catherine Toal → Bridget Mallon    | LIKELY      | Same marriage record; same gap on the daughter's own birth.                                                                                            |

## The sixteen great-great-grandparents

Where the paper trail is oldest, and where it runs out first. Sixteen links, one for each name in the far column of the chart.

| LINK                                  | MARK   | WHAT WAS CHECKED                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Hugh Devlin → Francis Devlin          | LIKELY | Two candidate registrations exist for Francis's own birth, a year and a registration district apart in Co. Tyrone — question D-1, page 5.    |
| Bridget McGuckin → Francis Devlin     | LIKELY | Same open question.                                                                                                                          |
| Patrick Quinn → Ellen Quinn           | PROVED | Ellen's own 1901 civil birth registration read directly, Cookstown district, parents named in full.                                          |
| Rose Kelly → Ellen Quinn              | LIKELY | Named as mother on the same registration, but her own maiden identity rests on one index entry not yet read at source.                       |
| Michael Corrigan → Thomas Corrigan    | PROVED | Thomas's own 1900 civil birth registration read at source, Dungannon district, consistent with his parents' 1897 marriage.                   |
| Mary Anne Loughran → Thomas Corrigan  | PROVED | Same registration; the 1897 marriage read as well, her maiden name on the entry.                                                             |
| James Donnelly → Sarah Donnelly       | PROVED | Sarah's 1903 civil birth registration read at source, Belfast district.                                                                      |
| Ellen Girvan → Sarah Donnelly         | PROVED | Same registration; her 1898 marriage to James also read.                                                                                     |
| Peter Hanratty (1866) → John Hanratty | PROVED | John's 1897 baptism at Shankill, Lurgan, read directly; the father's occupation given as linen weaver.                                       |
| Anne Toner → John Hanratty            | PROVED | Same baptism register.                                                                                                                       |
| Bernard McConville → Annie McConville | LIKELY | Annie's birthplace is disputed between two Co. Armagh towns, and her birth entry is indexed in both districts' years — question D-2, page 5. |
| Margaret Fegan → Annie McConville     | LIKELY | Same question.                                                                                                                               |
| Charles Mallon → Owen Mallon          | LIKELY | Owen's birth indexed, Portadown district, 1902; not yet read at source.                                                                      |
| Rose Hughes → Owen Mallon             | LIKELY | Named on the same index entry.                                                                                                               |
| Owen Toal → Catherine Toal            | LIKELY | Catherine's 1905 birth indexed, Portadown district, her father named; not yet read at source.                                                |
| — unknown — “Sarah” → Catherine Toal  | OPEN   | Remembered only by her first name. No marriage entry yet found for Owen Toal that would give her surname — page 5.                           |

## Three honest gaps, and exactly what each would take

This page is the difference between this report and a downloaded tree. Anyone can hand you thirty names. The value is in knowing which of them stand on paper, which stand on memory — and precisely where the paper that settles the rest is sitting.

### QUESTION D-1 · A CONFLICT

#### Which Francis Devlin is yours?

Two civil birth registrations exist that could be your great-grandfather: one in the Cookstown district in 1897, one in the Dungannon district in 1898. Same name, plausible parents on both. Everything above Francis — Hugh Devlin, Bridget McGuckin, and their whole line — hangs on which entry is his, which is why both links above him are marked *likely* and not *proved*.

**What settles it:** both entries read at source, side by side — the mother's maiden name and the father's occupation will separate them. One archive session. The wrong answer is to pick the one that fits the story; that is how downloaded trees go wrong quietly.

### QUESTION D-2 · A DISPUTE

#### Where was Annie McConville born?

The family says Lurgan. The index points at Portadown. Her birth entry appears in both districts' years, and the two parishes keep separate registers — so until one entry is read at source, her parents Bernard and Margaret stand as *likely* on the strength of an index alone.

**What settles it:** her own marriage entry, which gives her age and residence, cross-read against the two candidate registrations. An afternoon.

### THE BLANK · GENUINELY OPEN

#### “Sarah,” with no surname

Owen Toal's wife — Ciarán's great-great-grandmother — is remembered only by her first name. No dates, no townland, no paper. She is the one oxblood mark on the chart.

**What settles it:** her daughter Catherine's 1905 birth registration, Portadown district, is indexed but has never been read at source. That entry names the mother's maiden name as a matter of course. **Her surname is sitting on a register in Portadown; nobody has turned the page yet.**

## Three doors, already located

- Read the two Francis Devlins at source. Settles D-1, and turns four *likely* marks on the Devlin side into *proved* or into a better question.
- Read Catherine Toal's 1905 registration. One entry, and “Sarah” gets her name back after a century. The single cheapest big answer on this sheet.
- Certify the four home links. The *likely* band nearest Ciarán closes with ordinary certificates — routine, quick, and it makes the whole frame solid from the ground up.

None of this is homework you must buy. The sheet stands as it is, graded honestly, and it is yours. But if you want the line followed — Sarah named, the Devlin conflict closed, and one side of this family written out as prose with the records quoted inside it — that is **The Story**: one surname line, traced and written, twenty to twenty-four printed pages. £250, and this report’s research walks straight into it.

## How to read the marks

|             |                                                                                                  |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PROVED      | A document says so — named in the source line, read at source, not taken from an index.          |
| LIKELY      | The record points one way but does not close it — an index not yet read, an age implying a year. |
| FAMILY SAYS | Remembered, or already in the tree, and not yet written down anywhere that can be checked.       |
| OPEN        | No evidence either way. Said plainly, marked in oxblood, never dressed up.                       |

THE HOUSE RULE

Every claim in this document carries its grade and its source. Where a record could not be found, it says so. Where two records disagree, both are named. Nothing is invented to bridge a gap — a gap, named, is worth more to your family than a guess dressed as a fact.

Compiled from civil birth, marriage and death registers, Catholic parish registers, and the 1901 and 1911 censuses of Ireland. A year given alone is documented to the year only; c. marks an estimate. SPECIMEN — every name, date, record and finding in this document is invented for illustration, following the approved sample family.