

Analysis of McCausland Genealogical Histories
as contained in
Burke's Landed Gentry of Ireland

There are various editions of Burke's Landed Gentry of Ireland which include genealogies of McCauslands and related families. Not all of these genealogies are consistent. In some cases later genealogies include further information to bring the genealogies "up-to-date". In other cases they include older histories which were apparently not known to the previous researchers. Still, in other cases, information is changed - not always correctly!

It should be noted that many professional genealogists do not consider the Burke's information to be very reliable, for various reasons. First, these genealogies are sponsored by descendants who wish to go on record as descended from prominent families. In an effort to show this, they sometimes took liberties with the truth. Secondly, Burke's contains few source references, so it is virtually impossible to verify all that is published as the truth. Thirdly, the persons providing the information are not generally professional genealogists, so innocent incorrect inferences or connections may be made.

Given the possible unreliable nature of Burke's, the genealogies do provide a good starting point for research as a means for verification of the truth and filling in the blanks. So far as the McCauslands are concerned, Burke's relates nearly exclusively to the Limavady, Co. Derry branch descended from Col. Robert McCausland. As the information was provided by direct descendants, the more recent information (ca. 1800, onwards) is probably fairly reliable. Nevertheless, I have found errors relating to information provided for Lt. Gen John Kennedy McCausland and have noted them. It is quite possible that other errors also exist, particularly for branches not closely related to those providing the information to Burke's.

It is unfortunate that other McCausland genealogies present information taken from Burke's as fact without attributing the source or providing a caution. When this is done through a series of genealogies, suppositions finally are presented as hard facts. I must admit that I have used the Burke's genealogies as a primary basis for my own research and published gedcom, but would hope that eventually all "facts" presented could be further established through other sources.

To this time, I have collected the McCausland and related genealogies from the 1899, 1958, and 1979 editions of Burke's. 'Someday' I will restructure these to make them clearer to read by incorporating the principal line into the proper places (rather than using the Burke's "of whom presently" form), making reference numbers more consistent, and reformatting to make the whole easier to follow. None of the genealogical data has been changed, even when it is known to be incorrect. When it is incorrect, I have added a note explaining why. I have also added a "<" after the name of individuals having no descendants.