

Where We Get Our Presidents.

Many Executives, From Jackson to McKinley, Came From Sturdy Race of Ulster.—Another of These Scotch Irishmen Will Go to White House if Woodrow Wilson Is Elected.

T dwellers in the South of Ireland who love him not at all, he is known as the black Northerner, while the English, who have never very unjustly over his destiny for several hundreds of years, call him the Ulsterman; but we of America, who call him the Scotch-Irishman, hold him in such great esteem that we have formed the habit of electing him, every few years, President of these United States. We began with Andrew Jackson, then came Polk, Buchanan, Johnson, Arthur and McKinley, all of Ulster stock, while Grant, Benjamin Harrison and Cleveland inherited from their mothers a strain of Scotch-Irish blood; and Woodrow Wilson, our very latest candidate for Presidential honors, is of that same hardy Presbyterian race of Ulster.

It is a far cry from the native Irish ruler, Con O'Neill, who governed with what little power the English left him—a part of County Down, in the year 1602, to Woodrow Wilson, Democratic candidate for President of the United States in 1912; but it is just as well to hark back to the convivial old chieftain and to a certain historic banquet he gave to some of his relatives, for thereby hangs the tale of the first planting of Ireland by the Scotch Lowlanders. The O'Neill was entertaining, and in the course of the banquet its principal ingredient gave out, whereupon Con sent servants into the English settlement to get a supply of wine ordered from Spain. The English soldiers refused to give up the wine until a tax should be paid upon it. Now Con had not been informed of the tax, so he commanded his servants to have at the soldiers. As a result, one soldier was killed, and the English commander, accusing Con, in the offhand way that has always distinguished British government of the Irish, of "levying war against the Queen," condemned him to be hanged and confined him in Carrickfergus Castle. Con contrived with some Scotch friends, who arranged a melodramatic escape for him and finally obtained his pardon from the English ruler for the price of two-thirds of his estate.

Beginning of Scotch Plantation.
These Scottish friends then brought over many Scotch Lowlanders, whom they "planted" on the newly acquired estates so plentifully that they spread over the most of County Down. So there came to be Scotchmen in that part of Ireland whence Woodrow Wilson's family comes, County Antrim, to the north, had already many Scotchmen, wild, warlike men, from the islands and the coast, who had given the British much trouble until about this time, when their leader threw in his lot with the English government and encouraged Scotch and Englishmen to settle and cultivate the lands. Then the two other powerful Irish chieftains of the North were compelled by the English to flee for their lives, and after that sorrowful "Flight of the Earls" their lands were confiscated to the Crown. So that the remaining counties of that northern part of Ireland, known as Ulster, were further "planted." Then came the "Great Plantation of Ulster," the work of James the First, English settlers who had been planted in Ireland hitherto had become more Irish than the Irish themselves; Scotchmen from the coast were too warlike; James would have Lowland Scots, peace-loving Protestants from "the inward parts of Scotland." It was part of the plan that the natives should vanish before them as the Indians have since vanished in America. The peaceable Scots came. Their numbers were swelled by the Covenanters, persecuted in Scotland, and by another plantation under the powerful Cromwell. So it came about that practically the whole of Northern Ireland had a population of Scotch Presbyterians.

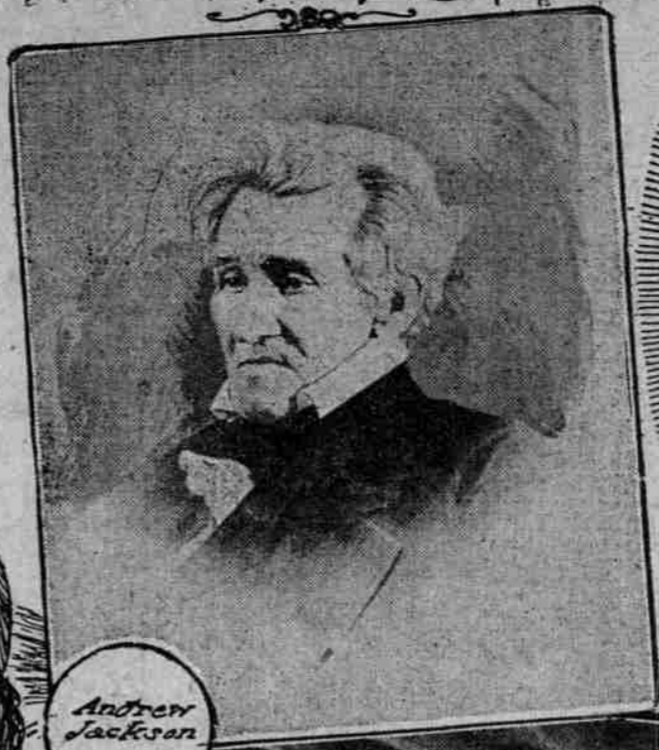
They were thrifty, industrious, serious-minded people. They prospered, they raised cattle, wove cloth, tilled the soil, planted potatoes—lately introduced from America—spread over the province and mingled but little with the native Roman Catholic Irish. It seemed that they were to possess the land.

Trouble Befalls Scotsmen.
Trouble, however, fell thick and fast as halibut upon the newly-settled

Scotsmen. The fortune of Ireland has gone up and down, from bad to worse, from worse to bad (never rising to good), like mercury in a thermometer, according to the whims of the rulers of the British Isles. The native Irish have had always the worst of it, but the transplanted Lowlanders, separated from their old home, surrounded by men of a different religion who knew them as usurpers, had troubles enough of their own to make of them practically a new race. They found themselves then, and are to this day, between the devil and the deep sea. The English, having placed them there, turned a deaf ear to their complaints. You have only to read the daily papers now to realize that the deaf ear is still turned toward them, an ear too deaf to hear even with the aid of a speaking trumpet. The English passed laws forbidding them to export cattle from their vast grazing lands; English commercial jealousy utterly crushed the thriving manufacture of woolen materials; there were ruinous land wars, rents were raised, tenants evicted, and the Presbyterians were persecuted by misguided bishops of the Irish Episcopal Church who caused their ministers to be imprisoned and exiled. Rebellions followed and devastating famines.

Migration to America.
Thoroughly disheartened the people, hitherto loyal subjects, saw that they would never obtain in Ireland the liberty they and their fathers had fought and worked for. The eighteenth century saw shipload after shipload of Ulster folk sail away to America to try their fortunes in a new land. Between 1731 and 1768 one-third of the Protestant population of Ireland emigrated, and from 1771 to 1773 16,000 weavers left. So it happens that we owe our Presidents of Ulster blood, as we do our National Independence, to British misrule. Today in Belfast they will tell you: "It was Ulster men who won your Revolution for you; make no mistake about that." However that may be, it is certain that a strong sense of wrong flamed in the breasts of the Ulster emigrants and their descendants. At the time of the Revolution there were 500 Scotch-Irish settlements whose members stood almost to a man against British oppression. And here we come to our first Ulster President. It is high time for a successful man to emerge from that virile race.

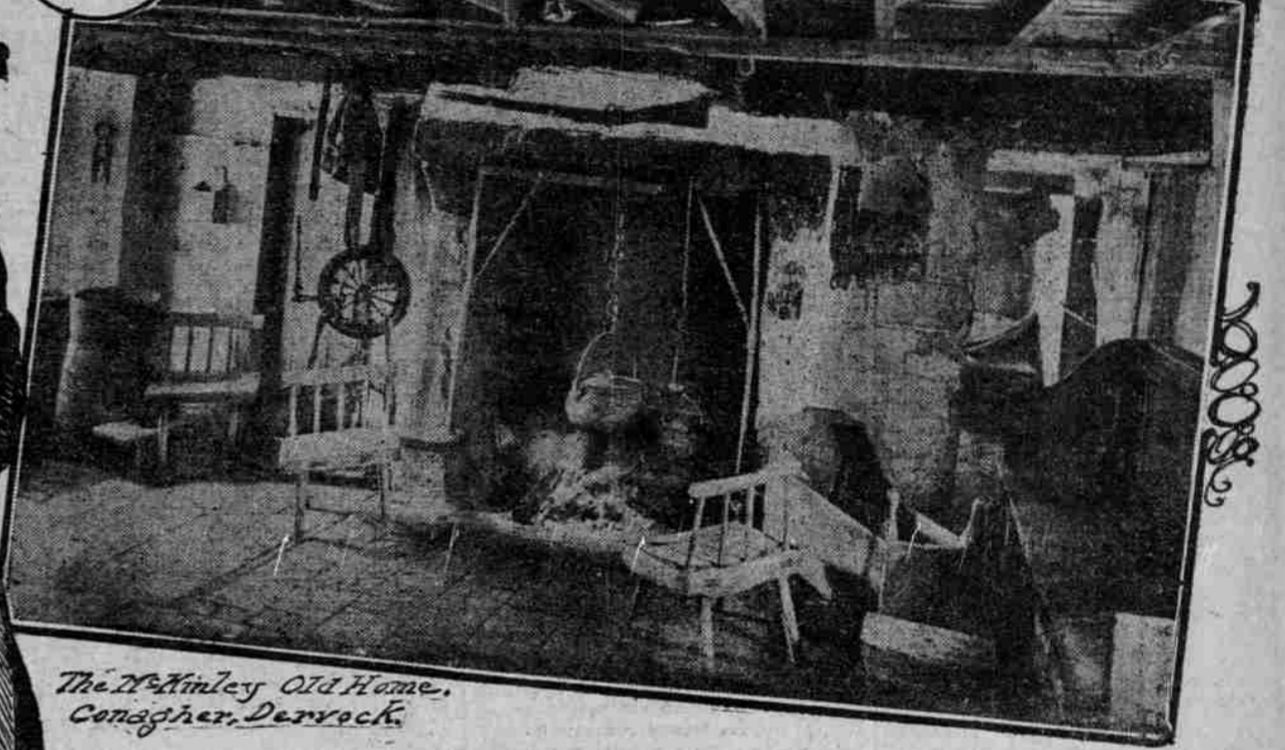
Andrew Jackson's father and mother came from Ulster, sailing from their home in Carrickfergus in 1765. Carrickfergus is one of the most ancient towns in the North of Ireland. Its historic castle, built by an early Norman adventurer, was long a stronghold of the English and the scene of several sieges. Jackson's father was a poor Protestant tenant evicted during the land war of 1760; his mother is said to have been a weaver, and the two of them must have witnessed some of the many hangings that took place in the Gallows' Green of the town. Soon after they settled in America the future President was born, and we hear of him first at the battle of Hanging Rock, where as a mere lad he was fired to heroic fighting. When, in 1815, he won the battle of New Orleans "every blow of his arm had double force." Opposed to him were Wellington's seasoned troops, fresh from victories in Europe; their leader was Pakenham, a man from Jackson's parents' own home county of Antrim, a member of



Andrew Jackson



Woodrow Wilson



The McKinley Old Home, Conagher, Derryck.



William McKinley, Photograph taken when President.



Conagher, The Old Home of President McKinley's Family, Derryck, Co. Antrim.

the landlord class which had driven them "by means of force and fraud and foul dealing"—so runs the account—to seek a livelihood in America. Small wonder that Jackson, most patriotic of American citizens, swore at the coming of the British troops: "By the Eternal! they must have no rest on our soil!"

Several Presidents Scotch-Irish.
Polk was descended from Robert Pollock, who came to America from the County of Londonderry in 1690. It is an interesting date, for only a year before that time the great siege of Londonderry took place. The Protestants held the city for William of Orange against the Catholic Irish for James II. One hundred and five days the siege lasted, and those within the walls died by the hundreds of disease and famine, eating at the last scraps of hides, raw grain, and the very rats in the cellars. Yet they did not surrender. Today you may see in the cathedral yard the graves of those who died. "They shall hunger no more," the inscription reads.

Buchanan's father came from the County of Donegal in 1733. Andrew Johnson was the grandson of an Andrew Johnson who left Ulster about 1750. Benjamin Harrison's mother was the daughter of a McDowell, who came from Ulster in 1718. Grant's great-grandfather was born in the north of Ireland in 1738 and emigrated to America. Cleveland's grandfather was a North of Ireland man, presumably of Scotch descent. Gavin MacArthur, Arthur's grandfather, was a Presbyterian minister at Ballymena in County Antrim. No doubt he saw the battle which took place there in 1798 between the yeomanry and the United Irishmen, as the rebels of that day were called.

A McKinley Hanged as Rebel.
McKinley was of Ulster stock. The McKinley home still stands, a staunch little farm house there in the north, in County Antrim near the town of Ballymoney. It is perhaps the only ancestral home still preserved abroad of any President except Washington, and a Washington's ancestral home is a stately English manor-house, very different from the humble Irish farmhouse. The farm lies in the midst of the lovely Irish country—the loveliest inhabited country in all the world—on the road from Ballymoney to Derryck between the Garry bow and the Bush River. How far away these names sound from Canton, Ohio, or the White House in Washington. The house was burned once, in 1788, for the McKinley who lived there then was suspected of aiding the United Irishmen. Suspicions and convictions were one and the same thing in those days in Ireland, and the respectable Presbyterian farmer was hanged in Coleraine. His wife buried the body in the family burial ground, and over it placed a monument reading:

"Here lyeth the remains of Francis McKinley, who departed this life in Coleraine the 7th of July, 1798, aged 42 years."

William McKinley was descended from an uncle of this unfortunate man. The McKinley who left the place in 1838 and it is known now as Conagher's farm.

And so we came again to the possible President Woodrow Wilson, whose Scotch-Irish Presbyterian minister father came of a family in County Down.

Today in Belfast, the chief city of Ulster, you will find the biggest manufacture of whisky, of rope, of linen, and of tobacco, and the biggest ship yards in the world, all built up by the uprising industry of the Scotch-Irish. You will find a profound respect for solid learning and a most amazing number of churches, so many that the city fairly bristles with spires.

But I think it is only in America that the Ulsterman has really come to his own. Here Romanism and home rule and English unfairness are mere words of empty meaning; here he can be something other than prosperous manufacturer or minister of the gospel—according to John Knox; here his sternness is softened; with civil and religious liberty in a country that he can call his own, all that is best in him comes to the fore, and that best is so good that we never tire of honoring him with the highest position in the land.

ANNIE LAURA MILLER.