

there was no way to lawfully discharge their trust until the time of the smith's grandson.

As mentioned above, the state sponsored persecution of Catholics spread to include Presbyterians, and in the years 1704, 1711, and 1732 a series of measures, targeting Scottish Presbyterians and known as the Test Acts, were carried through British Parliament. These acts together dictated that any person who held a position of public trust, profit or a political office, should be removed if it could be proven that they attended any "non-conformist" place of worship. It further stated that they should be continually deprived of any such employment until they could prove that they had abstained for an entire year. The "informant" who leveled the accusation was paid 40 pounds forfeited from the estate of the accused. (A yearly salary for a workman at this time was about 15 pounds.)

The Scotch-Irish Lowry- MacLarens might have continued their tenancy for all this, had a further series of both natural and man-made calamities not befallen them. In about 1725, the 31 year leases of the Plantationers began to expire. The plantations were vastly more desirable at the expiration of the leases than they had been at the commencement, and so, in gratitude for all their innovation and hard work, the Scotch-Irish had their rents doubled and tripled. Many of the landlords simply put the leases up for auction....to the English. Massive evictions followed. Between 1714 and 1719, a series of droughts devastated farm production and crippled the flax industry. Wide spread blight struck the sheep of the area, and the English Parliament enacted a series of staggering tariffs concerning exports and imports for Ireland.

It was in the midst of these conditions, in Donnegan in 1728, that three MacLaren-Lowrys, Charles, James and Lazarus, took

their families aboard the "White Sails" and set out for America. The majority of American MacLarens who pronounce their name as some variant of Lowry, are probably descended from these three. They arrived first in Pennsylvania, and then spread to Virginia, the Carolinas, Ohio, Maryland, Tennessee, Kentucky and can now be found all over the United States and Canada. They fought Indians along the Allegheny trail, served in the French & Indian War, on both sides of the American Civil War, and in every subsequent conflict involving America. These Lowrys served not just as soldiers, but as statesmen, pioneers, judges, clergy, and almost every other imaginable occupation.

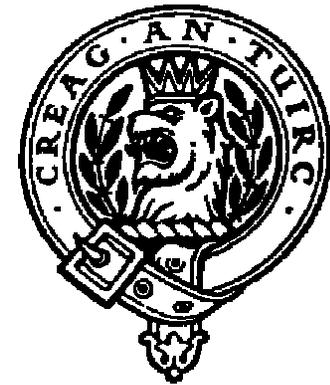
I am proud to call myself a Lowry and a MacLaren.

You can join by visiting the Clan MacLaren tent at a Highland Games or visiting our web site at: www.ClanMacLarenNA.org

Published by:

**Clan MacLaren Society
of North America, Ltd.**

www.ClanMacLarenNA.org



**No matter how you spell it,
you're still a Labhrainni
The Lowrys ...**

One of the several honorable surnames associated with Clan MacLaren is that of Lowry. Whether you spell it Lowry, Laurie, Livery, Laughner, or some other way, it still declares the bearer to be a native born son or daughter of the Labhrainni, or Clan Laurin.

The prime origins of the Lowry name would appear to stem from the basic trends which most Indo-European languages share: ellipsis and foreshortening. The lack of a Mac or Mc beginning of the name should be of no real concern to any of us. It, along with the less common forms of M', V', W', Na', and B' simply denote "Child of", or simply "of".

If you informally re-attach a Mac to an existing Lowry variant, it becomes much easier to get a feel for the change that took place. The difference between the sound of MacLaren and MacLowry is simply a matter of the final "n". The tendency towards ellipsis, or the dropping of a final sound in a word, is a constant in the evolution of any language.

As late as 1900, my branch of the family was still having (violent) arguments about how the name was to be spelled and pronounced. Not until relatively recently did the wide-spread maintenance of written records cause the spelling of names to become standardized.

As President Thomas Jefferson was once quoted as remarking, "I cannot imagine any truly educated man in this enlightened age who would be unable to spell his own name less than three ways." I can only assume by this remark that he would have deemed the MacLarens as a profoundly educated lot. Current variations of our name include: MacLaren, MacLauren, MacLarin, MacLoren, McLaren, McLarin, MacLaurie, McLaurie, MacLure, MacLorry, McLearen, McLeary, Leary, Lorry, Laurie, Lawry, Lawrie, Lowry, Lowery, Lowrey, Loughry, MacLawrence, McLawrence, Lawrence. The truncation of the name to Lowry, or the phonic equivalent, from it MacLaurin form, first appears to have become a constant in my own line sometime in the mid 1600's. It should be noted that some variant of Laurie, Lawreen, and Lawry pronunciations had been in use amongst the Labbrhananni centuries earlier. There may be ground for speculation that among the factors which hastened this modification were the various religious persecutions, Ulster Plantationing, and several repressive acts passed by the English Parliament during this period.

On March 28, 1609, an act was passed inviting Scots and English Protestants to undertake plantations for the crown in the north of Ireland. To my own line, as well as to many other recently impoverished MacLarens, this must have seemed like a Godsend. The fortunes of Clan Laren, which had been on the decline for centuries, must have appeared to

have been turning, until the fine print became known. The Plantationers were not only required to remain Protestant, but were not permitted to be from Scotland's western regions or from the Isles. Though not precisely Western Islanders, the descendancy from Lord Lorn and the Celtic Earls of Strathern (note the galley on MacLaren Arms) could have easily caused a taint to the applicant.

The desire to obscure real or imagined association with ineligible applicants, and thereby maximize the chances for obtaining lands, may have resulted in dropping of the prefix. It is certain, however, that following the period of civil wars and the Rebellion, many of the Celtic traditions which were not banned outright in the acts of repression, were de-emphasized for protective coloration. Many of our rascally MacGregor cousins became Greirs, Gregers and Greigs. MacKinnons became Kinnons, Kennys, Cannons and McKennas. MacNish became McNice, Mensees and Munsies. And no few MacLaurens became Lauries and Lowrys.

Notwithstanding, the fact that the majority of the MacLarens were Presbyterians by the 18th Century, we found ourselves, largely, in support of the Stewart Kings. This factor, as the succeeding years would prove, hastened the decline of our fortunes. Though technically landless and chiefless after the Act of Armorial Confiscation in 1672, the MacLarens had yet to hit bottom. It was during these dark years that many MacLarens tried their hands at Plantationing Ulster.

By 1685, a large concentration of "Lowry" MacLarens could be found in Donnegal, in the North of Ireland. These hard working Highlanders, some two hundred years later to become known as the Scotch-Irish would, with their fellow Scots, constitute the backbone of the industrious New Irish of the north.

The English Parliament, who had been passing a series of increasingly repressive laws against our Irish Catholic cousins, found themselves by 1705 surpassing even their own standards of viciousness. Our Catholic Irish cousins were by this time forbidden by law to practice Catholicism, receive an education, enter a profession, hold public office, engage in a trade or commerce, live in a corporate town or five miles thereof, own a horse worth more than 5 pounds, purchase land, lease land, mortgage land, vote, hold arms, hold life insurance, rent land worth more than 30 shillings, make an annual profit of more than 30% of his rent, or even send his child abroad to Catholic education or guardianship. Catholic priests were hunted by bloodhounds and were liable for immediate execution.

There exists tradition concerning our clansmen's disgust with this treatment of their Catholic cousins by a Saxon parliament. Over a half a million Irish Catholics starved, were murdered, or simply "disappeared" during these years, sowing the seeds for turmoil which would last for centuries.

Several examples of Scots sheltering Catholics from the worst of the persecutions have been historically cited. One such story relates how one of our own clansmen, an honest, simple, blacksmith, held several thousand acres of land in secret trust for his Catholic neighbors. The story tells how his grandson returned the land to as many of the rightful heirs as could be found as soon as the law permitted it. The remarkable part of this story is that not only was this trust held on the strength of a handshake alone, nor even that it stood through three generations of oppression, but rather that when the persecution of the Catholics inevitably spread to encompass the Presbyterians, the blacksmith and his sons forewent their opportunity to emigrate because