

## Irish Naming Pattern in the Families of the sons of Hannah Pierce Burns

Although there was variation, many Irish families both Protestant and Catholic, followed a traditional pattern in naming their children,. The first son was named for the father's father, the second son was named for the mother's father, the third son was named for the father and the fourth son was named after the father's eldest brother.

The first daughter was named after the mother's mother, the second daughter was named after the father's mother, the third daughter was named after the mother and the fourth daughter was named after the mother's eldest sister.

In some families a fifth born son was named after his father's second oldest brother or his mother's oldest brother. A fifth born daughter would be named after her mother's second oldest sister or her father's oldest sister. I have not attempted to trace this tradition with the Burns families.

First of all, I am not sure if all the children of the Burns brothers are known; some infants' birth and deaths may be missing making the patterns incomplete. The Christian name of Patrick's father is not known although it could be "George" as that was his eldest son. The names of the father and mother of Eliza Kerr and Frances Riley are not known.

**Green** highlight indicates that the Irish naming pattern appears to have been followed. Names in **gray** are appropriate to the theory but not in the right order. Several children in the William Burns family have names from the Connelly family – either siblings or cousins of Ann.

Although the exercise is largely inconclusive, due to a lack of information, the pattern does confirm the name "Hannah" as the matriarch. It appears in all families, although only twice, correctly, as the second (known) daughter.

Although we have been told that Dean was the father of the three elder brothers, this is not borne out and in two families the eldest son was named "William". William did not use his own name for his third son as one would have been expected in the traditional pattern. Dean Burns' eldest son was "William" but that was the name of the child's maternal grandfather which should have been reserved for the second son. Patrick's second son was "William"; however, the name of Frances Riley's father is not known. See footnote two concerning use of the name William.

The name "Dean" could also have been used in William's family in honour of brother Dean but as the fourth son (for a favourite brother). Given the circumstances connected to the relationship between Hannah and "Dean", John apparently chose to

ignore his patrimony and his full brothers downplayed him by using the name for younger sons.

<b><u>John Burns / Jane Harkness</u></b>		<b><u>Wm. Burns / Ann Connelly<sup>1</sup></u></b>	
		<b>Sons</b>	
1.	William Pierce	1.	John
2.	George	2.	Dean Pierce
3.	John	3.	Archibald
<b><u>John Burns / Jane Harkness</u></b>		<b><u>Wm. Burns / Ann Connelly</u></b>	
		<b>Daughters</b>	
1.	Ann	1.	Jane
2.	Ellen <sup>2</sup>	2.	Hannah
3.	Hannah	3.	Mary Ann
4.	Mary	4.	Matilda
		5.	Margaret Maria

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<sup>1</sup> Ann's parents, I believe, were James Connelly and Jane Kerr. See Christ Church register for the death at Kildare on February 28, 1840; although the writing is very faint it appears to say "Jane Kerr widow of James Conley of County Fermanagh, aged 67 years"

Ann Connelly may have had siblings Eliza Connelly (Mrs. Andrew Thompson), Archibald Connelly, Alexander Connelly, Mary Connelly (Mrs. Henry Read), Margaret Connelly (Mrs. Thomas Dixon), Rachel Connelly, (Mrs. Peter Ralston) of Kildare and possibly Francis Connelly of Rawdon and Robert Connelly of Montreal. (See: *Connellys at Rawdon*).

William Byrne witnessed the 1928 Read-Connelly marriage as did M. Connelly.

I believe that Ann's daughter Matilda Burns is named for her cousin, Matilda Connolly, a possible daughter of Alexander Connolly. It is worth noting that when Matilda Connolly married William Ralston at Rawdon on September 14, 1835 that William Burns was one of the witnesses as was Alexander Connolly. Jane Connolly (another daughter of Alexander) was married to a George Kerr. See: *The Connellys at Rawdon*.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen Rocheford was the mother of Jane Harkness and Jane's father was George.

**Dean Burns / Eliza Kerr**<sup>3</sup>

1. William
2. Robert
3. Dean
4. John
5. James Charles
6. Joseph Marshall

**Dean Burns / Eliza Kerr**

1. Margaret Maria
2. Hannah
3. Mary Ann
4. Sarah Ann

**Patrick Burns / F. Riley Kerr**<sup>4</sup>**Sons**

1. George
2. William
3. Archibald
4. James

**Patrick Burns / F. Riley Kerr****Daughters**

1. Hannah
2. Anne

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<sup>3</sup> Eliza, daughter of William Kerr, had a sister, Margaret.

<sup>4</sup> Fanny Kerr was a widow and may have had daughters (or sons) from her first marriage. It is possible that her husband James was a brother to Eliza Kerr Burns.