



MACAULAYS OF NORTHERN IRELAND

Source: <https://www.scotweb.co.uk/info/macaulay>

During the early 17th century, Clan MacAulay was involved in the Plantation of Ulster, as King James I began colonising regions of Ireland with English and Scottish settlers. Several MacAulays were transplanted from Scotland to Ulster during this era. The Duke of Lennox was the chief undertaker in the precinct of Portlough (eastern County Donegal) and his resident agent was Sir Aulay MacAulay. In the same precinct, Alexander MacAulay of Durling (also known as “Alexander M’Awley, alias Stewart”) was allotted 1,000 acres (4.0 km²), called Ballyneagh. By 1617, the MacAulay-controlled Ballyneagh consisted of a stone house, a bawn of lime and stone, two freeholders, nine lessees, and was able to produce thirty men with arms. Alexander MacAulay, alias Stewart later succeeded Sir Aulay MacAulay of Ardencaple as chief of Clan MacAulay, and sold his lands in Ireland.



Today many of the McAuleys (and other various spellings of the name) living in **Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland** are descendants of Clan MacAulay of Ardencaple, though there are several different clans or septs of native Irish MacAuleys who are unrelated to one another and also have no link with Scotland at all.

The McAuleys of **County Offaly & County Westmeath** derive their name from Amhlagaidh (Old Irish), who lived in the 13th century. They are of native Irish descent, with an ancient descent from Niall of the Nine Hostages. Their lands were in western County Westmeath and northern County Offaly; the heartland of the sept was near Ballyloughnoe, County Westmeath, known in Elizabethan times as “MacGawleys Country.”

The McAuleys in **Ulster** get their name from Amhlaoiabh, a Gaelic personal name derived from the Old Norse names Áleifr and Óláfr. These McAuleys trace a descent from Amhlaoiabh, son of the first Maguire King of Fermanagh, Donn Carrach Maguire. The Mac Amhlaoiabhs are said to have conquered southern Fermanagh for the Maguires and have left their name on the area in Clanawley.

The MacAuleys of the Glens are thought to be of Scottish descent. Located in **the Glens of Antrim**, the MacAuleys were allies of the MacDonnells in the 16th century. The MacDonnells held parts of Clannaboy while the MacAuleys, MacGills, and MacAllisters occupied the northeast coast of Antrim. On the plain of Bun-na-mairgie, near Ballycastle, the MacDonnells (lead by Sorley Boy MacDonnell) fought the MacQuillans. Before the battle, the MacQuillans appealed to the O’Neills of Lower Claneboy and to the MacAuleys and MacPhoils of the middle Glens of Antrim for assistance against the MacDonnells. The two small clans (the MacAuleys



Layde Cemetery , Ballymena, County Antrim, Northern Ireland

and MacPhoils) were two days late to the battle; when they arrived, they were only spectators to a battle which was near its climax. Sorley Boy MacDonnell then rode out to the chief of the MacAuleys and persuaded him to join his ranks, as did the MacPhoils. Their combined force then drove the MacQuillans to the banks of the river Aura, where they were finally defeated and the chief of the MacQuillans slain in what is known as the Battle of Aura. Festivities lasted for several days after the battle and a cairn, called “Coslin Sorley Boy”, was raised on the mountain Trostan.

A branch of the MacAulays of Ardencaple settled in **County Antrim**, with the leading member of the family owning the Glenarm estate for some time until it passed to the MacDougalls in 1758.