

About the authors

Eugene J Hall, (1909-1980) auctioneer, land surveyor, farmer and local historian, was born, lived and died among what Patrick Kavanagh called 'the bewitched hills and forts of Donaghmoynne' in the County of Monaghan. It was there, between the mountain of Slieve Gallion to the north and the prosperous town of Dundalk to the east that Eugene Hall was born and raised. He took a keen interest in the Lough English Agricultural Co-operative Society and was later to become its chairman for some years. He was involved in the local Civil Defence, instrumental in founding Muintir na Tíre in the locality and was secretary of the local Ploughing Association, which is still very strong in County Monaghan.



For almost 50 years, he organised and led a group of South Monaghan farmers and businessmen on a weekend retreat run by the Jesuits in Dublin. The 'Donaghmoynne' group booked out the house. In 1990, Eugene Hall founded and edited a local magazine which was primarily for emigrants but which later enjoyed wide circulation locally, and contained news, articles of historical interest which otherwise may not have survived. The magazine was in existence for almost 21 years.

Dr Eamonn G Hall is a notary, an examiner in constitutional law to the Law School of the Law Society of Ireland, Director of Education of the Faculty of Notaries Public in Ireland ('the Faculty') and Director of the Institute of Notarial Studies (the Institute). A graduate of University College Dublin, National University of Ireland, Galway, Trinity College Dublin and Maynooth University with the degrees of BA, LLB and PhD, he qualified as a solicitor in 1974. A former Chief Solicitor of Eir, a former president of the Medico-Legal Society of Ireland, past chairman of the Irish Society for European Law and a member of its council, a past chairman of the Incorporated Council of Law Reporting for Ireland and a current member of its council, he served for three years as a member of the Irish Government's first Information Society Commission. He has also served several terms as chairman of the Gazette Committee of the Law Society of Ireland.



Dr Hall was elected a Fellow of the Society for Advanced Legal Studies at the University of London and was the recipient of the award for Law, Public Service and Government from the National University of Ireland, Galway, in 2004. He has written several books and articles in national and international journals.



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The Story of an 'Extended' Monaghan Family since the 1700s



Eugene J Hall & Eamonn G Hall

The Story of an 'Extended' Monaghan Family since the 1700s

This book tells the story of a County Monaghan family (the Halls). It is not a story of poverty; fortune was kind to the extended family. Yet, nor is it a story of riches. Nor is it a story of members of the family achieving national fame. No one in the extended Hall-related family, for example, became a military hero on the national or local stages. Undoubtedly, some were heroes. The book is a story of times lived over centuries seen through the prism or lens of one person's recollections of his own and 'extended' family – based in Monaghan – an Ulster hinterland.

Two themes, history and family, are intertwined in this small book. History is the story (or more correctly stories) composed of innumerable life stories and events. Mere family may never made a great man or woman – as each man and woman is his own or her heir (heirss) – but the legacy of a warm and encouraging family cannot be underestimated.

Sir Shane Leslie, (Irish born diplomat, writer, first cousin of Sir Winston Churchill, staunch Monaghan man, and described as an ardent Irish nationalist), wrote in the preface to *The History of Monaghan* (1921) by Denis Carolan Rushe that 'history is a cemetery and it must be approached with reverence and pity'. Judgment, the writer noted must sometimes be of an imperfect kind. This book represents a gentle description of 'history', a peaceful 'cemetery', an imperfect history; and yet such gentility, peace and unintentional imperfections have their place.

Hall is a rare name in Connacht, well known in Munster, common in Leinster and very common in Ulster, especially in counties Antrim and Armagh. 'Hall' is one of the twenty most numerous names in England and is common in Scotland and is stated to have been derived from one associated with 'the hall'. The surname became familiar in Munster after the Plantation. Many of the Halls of the South Borders in Scotland sought refuge and a new life in Ulster after the break-up of their power base in the early decades of the 1600s.

The Hall families (the subject of this book) were farmers (principally) – although they had other interests that gave them economic freedom such as teaching and land-surveying. The families here in this book were principally rural based. The local parish was the universe. The stories here in this book are linked with land, the parish, the county, religion and, probably, (although not often stated publicly) self-preservation in times of great strife and turmoil.

The physical location of the Halls of County Monaghan and the extended families may be in the opinion of one writer one of the humblest of the twenty-six counties of the Irish Republic, the county of the little hills, drumlin county. But the writer adds... the landscape of Monaghan... possesses ample pastoral peace and beauty for those who look with the eyes of affection upon this attractive landscape ever welcoming to the visitor.

