In the following story Margaret McBride (15) on the last line is writing about her ancestors. She writes about her father John Pringle (9) whose sister is Mary Jane. Mary Jane is our ancestor. She married a Dr John Thistle. I put this chart in because as you go through the stories there are numbers beside some of the names and you can see where they fit into the overall picture.

Descendants of Mary Jane Pringle:
Mary Jane Pringle (1803-1889) m. 1830 to Dr. John Thistle (c1801-1847) Aghaloo Parish, Caledon, Co. Tyrone, N. Ireland. They left Ireland in June 1841 on the ship the ‘Margaret Balfower’, settling first at Pickering, near Toronto. Dr. John died of Cholera there. The widow Mary Jane took her family to Fairview, Ontario, near Stratford.
They had 5 children:
1. John Alexander Thistle 1831-1907
2. Wm. Thistle 1832-1902
3. Thomas Thistle 1832-1835
4. Robert Thistle 1839-1912
5. Mary Jane Thistle 1843-1920 m. James Dunsmore

Dr. John Thistle had a brother Dr. Wm. Thistle (1791-1856) who married Mary Jane’s sister Phoebe Pringle (1797-1845), and came to Canada about 1830, living in Thistletown, Ontario.
# Pringle Descendants Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Born</th>
<th>Died</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexander PRINGLE (190)</td>
<td>1650</td>
<td>1719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel PRINGLE (189)</td>
<td>1691</td>
<td>1777</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alexander PRINGLE (187)</td>
<td>1728</td>
<td>1794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoebe FLEMING (188)</td>
<td>1728</td>
<td>1809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander PRINGLE (185)</td>
<td>1763</td>
<td>1818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Jane PRINGLE (184)</td>
<td>1803</td>
<td>1889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Alexander THISTLE Dr. (183)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Jane Thistle (210)</td>
<td>1842</td>
<td>1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James DUNSMORE (209)</td>
<td>1830</td>
<td>1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Thistle DUNSMORE (208)</td>
<td>1865</td>
<td>1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lydia Anges HOUCK (211)</td>
<td>1866</td>
<td>1917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harold Edmund DUNSMORE (229)</td>
<td>1892</td>
<td>1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lillian Edna DUNSMORE (17)</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>1948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert John DUNSMORE Corporal (250)</td>
<td>1897</td>
<td>1917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albert James Houck DUNSMORE Sergeant (251)</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>1918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verna Louise DUNSMORE (252)</td>
<td>1905</td>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chester Winslow DUNSMORE (253)</td>
<td>1911</td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Margaret McBride the author of the story was John and MaryAnn King’s daughter. John Pringle was the brother of Mary Jane Thistle who had married Dr John Alexander Thistle.

Lillian Edna Dunsmore our grandmother married Melville Cooper.
Pringles
Margaret McBrides’s account of the Pringle occupancy of Ballinahone till the time of her own birth. 1836

CHAPTER 1st: How the first PRINGLE arrived at Ballinahone

After a review of the native rising in Queen Elizabeth’s reign and the starvation that followed, when some of the Irish were found dead with grass and nettles in their mouths, she treats of the Flight of the Earls and the Plantation of Ulster under James 1 and continues: -)

Many Scots came to Ireland then. Among them, one of the name of Pringle did not find any spot to his liking till he 'lighted upon' a high hill on the border of County Monaghan, where it is separated from Tyrone by the River Blackwater. A good slinger could have sent a stone from the top of Ballinahone Hill across the river into County Tyrone, and yet the land rose suddenly to such a height that from where the Pringle Scot built his homestead, you could see three counties. I suppose his 'heart warned 'to this high nest because it reminded him of Scotland - and the stiff clay land of the hills (the rich holm land by the river was all scrub then) did not daunt him; it was fat and fruitful compared to his native Highlands. (note: Many Pringles resided in the Iowlands. To rwoodlee? is certainly in Lowlands.)

One more reason, perhaps, made him prefer to settle here. He did not take up home on the ruins of an old Irish homestead, whose owners had died 'with nettles in their mouths and left curses behind to their successors. When 'Ould Pringles' came to Ballinahone Hill, I have been told, it was crowned by a 'forth' - a ring of hawthorn with a fairy thorn in the middle, which the native Irish would not have disturbed for love or money lest the 'good people' should light on them or their children, The Scottish Presbyterian had no fear of fairy folk before his eyes, So he walled one side of the thorn circle and left the other half of the thorn circle for greeness {sic} and shade. (To this day the lawn in front of Ballinahone house is the old half circle.

I never think of this old Pringle ancestor of mine without blessing him because he scorned to make his gain of what had been another's loss, and feared the curse of the poor.

A man said to me once, "I never knew a Pringle to do a poor man an ill turn." May God in his great mercy grant to all of the name a portion of the Pringle spirit in this.

I think the first Pringle had learnt “do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with his God”, for in the rising of 1641 when so many of the settlers were cruelly murdered, his representative was left in peace. Even the fairies put up with his Scottish ignorance, and only played off a little joke now and then "to show there was 'no ill feeling". For example, the children had made a seat of sods round the fairy thorn and were in the habit of
taking out their noggins to sup their porridge there on summer evenings. The little girls were astonished to find their spoon so often missing, but one night they heard an elfin laugh in the thorn above them, and fairy hands dropped the spoons down on their heads: so old Mullin told me.

There was a Presbyterian Church at Glennan, a place about two miles from Ballinahone, and to this Church, I suppose he and his wife (a wife he must have had, since his descendants are at Ballinahone till this day) walked or rode - drive they could not, as there were no roads then for wheeled vehicles. (Later note: I am wrong in this. The church was not there so early as the first Pringle.)

(Added note in handwriting: Glennan (sic) and Minterburn were both founded around 1650–60 but according to records of the General Synod it was Minterburn that the Pringles of 1713 attended.)

Probably he "asked" his children their catechism on Sunday evenings (as his descendant, my father, used to do) and most likely the Pringle children thought the shorter Catechism too long, as my father’s children did. (Shorter Catechism not approved till 1649, 8 years after the rising of 1641. handwritten note.)

So the old Family Tree was planted in Ballinahone (Irish "the town by the river") and like the stones in the river Jordan, it is there to this day. Also by the Plantation of Ulster, Mother Nature introduced a new blend (the Scotch Irish) into her shop, a mixture destined to be "widely and favourably known" to quote the Trade circulars.

CHAPTER 2: 'The Pringle who loved a good horse

Once when the estate of which Ballinahone was a part was in possession of the .Anketell family, the landlord was told how the Pringle then in occupation bred a fine strain of horses. One in particular, which had turned. out a real tip-topper, the landlord had seen his tenant ride: so he turned up at Ballinahone and asked to see the master of the house.

The favourite was trotted out and much money offered in vain. At last the landlord said, "See here, Pringle. I'll give you a lease of your farm for ever, at five shillings an acre, if you let me have that horse, I'd enjoy it well to ride him to hounds". Said the Pringle who loved a good horse, "Mr. Anketell, I can enjoy a ride on a good horse as well as you can" and the bargain fell through. But whether this stout Pringle was at that time a bachelor, (he too just have had a wife let us hope at a later date) or what his wife said when she heard of his folly, I know not, for history is silent; which is more, I fancy, than could be said of (the then) Mrs. Pringle of Ballinahone.
CHAPTER 3: The Noggin of meal that wasted not (An Irish version of the widow of Sarepta)

I am sorry that we know so little of the Pringle women who for 200 years came as brides to the old home. Here is a little story which shows that one of these at least was a gentle woman, if not a lady in the conventional sense of the word.

"It was a dear Summer" Mullin said, "Oh, not the dear Summer some of the ould people minds, but long and dreigh afore that may be afore the wars of Ireland! The male was out of all buyin', and for fear the sarvent would waste it, the mistress on the Hill made the supper herself every night. Well, she was liftin’ a gowpen out of the male box one evenin' when she hears a tap-tap on the flure behin' her, and there stans a wee ould women with a staff in her han' and a noggin in the other. "Would you kindly lien'. me the loan of a noggin of male?- says she. An' the mistress takes the noggin, and pangs an' hapes it. "You're heartily welome to it! she says, handin' it back to her, "an I hope your family' s not large, for the noggin' s but small". Then she turned to stir the porridge on the fire, and when she looked back the wee women was gone. But 'Lo an' Behold the next night she hears the tap-tap on the flure again; an' there stans the wee woman with the noggin of male panged an' haped full. "Will ye put it by itself- says she, handin' the noggin to the mistress, "an make the supper out of it every night till the new male comes from the mill?" So to humour her the mistress emptied it in a cappin (wooden dish) by itself. An’ every night she made the supper out of it till the new male came from the mill - for them that's good to the Wee People is- never at a loss by it."

CHAPTER 4: The Five Ballinahone Bachelors

They say that my father’s grandfather, Alexander Pringle (1) (1728 - 94) was one of five brothers who were called by the above name. Boyland remembered to have heard of the time when five saddle horses left the Hill on a Sunday morning: am I seem to see the proud mother of the five brave boys looking after them. One, the oldest I presume, remained at Ballinahone one settled at Tyladen (2) and was the founder of the Tyladen and (now extinct) Glasslough branch of the family: and one, my father said, married a lady of property in County Cavan (3) where there are Pringles to this day. My father also remember some of his sisters starting an a pillion, behind a servant, to go on a visit to those Pringles in County Cavan. The other two of the five, I suppose, went into the world to push their fortune", and by fortune were pushed out of the ken of their Irish friends. Some grand uncle of my father's there was, who was killed at Bunkers Hill (4), but of what name or by what side of the house I do not know.

This Alex Pringle, my father's grandfather, who remained at Ballinahone married a widow, Mrs. Phoebe Fleming (Mr Wiler's warning had not then been spoken) a Lady with three children whose first husband had left a property for each of his children. My
father showed me a place, as we drove to Glasslough station one day, which had belonged to this Mrs. Fleming, and told me how in his time the people in cleaning out a well had found a silver spoon with her initials on it. Her children by the first marriage were the forebears of Matthew Fleming of the Broad Road and of Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Mitchell whose maiden names had been Fleming.

I think there were but two children of the second marriage: my father's father and a sister who married a man by the name of Crozier. One of her sons, John Crozier, settled in St. John's, New Brunswick, and corresponded with my father till his death. These Crozier boys had spent their youth at Ballinahone and father told me how, when he went to see John Crozier (5) in America, in reply to my father's praises of the grand scenery of the New World, John Crozier only sighed and said "Och, there's no place on earth like the banks of the old Blackwater".

CHAPTER 5: The Pringle who died too soon. (1763 - 1817)

Alexander Pringle (6), son of Alexander Pringle and Phoebe Fleming was in some respects the most prosperous of the name; he was an only son and by his marriage to Margaret Marshal he had become possessed of the Bolton's Walls property as well as Ballinahone. (1791)

It was arranged at his marriage that he should live at Bolton's Walls, so Ballinahone was converted partly into a stock farm: Mrs. Crozier, his sister, with her boys had the dwelling house, and the office houses were made into dwelling houses for tenants, who along with the house had each a field or two, for grazing and potato ground.

* (Note added: 3 children. 2 sisters, Olivia (Mrs. Crozier) and Margaret.

(Ibid: The "Bolton's Walls property" consisted of a farm in Tammagblame? townland, and another farm in Killinaul? townland where Bolton's Walls was sited.)

The fields at Ballinahone, in my father's time were still called after the old tenants - Kelly's field, Carr's Hill, Grimes Hill, Mullin's Walls, Sheery's Hill and Hughes' Field, etc. A few of the fields which the owner had still kept in his hands were called by the old names, Rushy Hill, Barn Park etc.

Note: In his will of 1814 he left the eldest son Tammagblame? Farm, Killinaul to the youngest and Ballinahone to be divided between John and James.

These were the days of spinning and weaving, and Mullin minded twelve spinning wheels going on the Hill at once. Then the husbands, brothers and sweethearts all gathered in the evenings and that was dancing and singing - one cannot help thinking that "the fomer times were better than these". They also had a still (one year at least) built in a double wall between what was the barn and a stable in father's time. One day an exciseman and his men came still-hunting to the Hill land, but did not succeed in
finding the still, till the Hill folks had tine to raise the country on them. At last the excise
people were barricaded in the barn and a cry was raised to set fire to the thatch, and
burn the house over their heads, whiskey and all. But Mullin’s mother got down on her
knees on the doorstep, and begged them “for the love of God to burn no wimen’ s
children there”, and the men were let off sate, and escorted by the "boys" out of the
townland. - I’m inclined to think it was a case of "oh sentry shut your eye" with the
excise officer for the rest of his days, as far as the "boys" on the Hill were concerned.
I think. Alex Pringle and Margaret Marshal must have been married somewhere about
1796. (Nov. 15th, 1791), for my father, John Pringle, who was the third child, was born
in 1801. (John was 5th .child including a James, number 1, who died in infancy, born
3rd August 1799.)
A happy marriage their seems to have been. The wife a melancholy religious women,
who was a Methodist, though still attending the ordinances of her own church (as was
the way of the first Methodists) was a fond mother and a great pleader in prayer for her
children. The husband, a good-natured, humane-hearted man, much loved by the old
tenants at Ballinahone. They had eight children, Anne Alex, Phoebe, John, Mary Jane,
James, Margaret and Robert.
The oldest son was to inherit the farm - My father was intended for a doctor, and had
learned a little Latin and Greek with a view to college, when after twenty smooth years
the break came and all the purposes of these happy people were cut off. One day in
taking out his horse from a stable in Armagh, Alex Pringle got a kick of a horse which
laid him aside for sometime and left him weak so when the "fever" (which was a regular
summer visitor there) came round, and he took it, he did not last long: and his eldest
daughter Anne (7) died also. (Buried the same day.)
“I'm wae” for the poor praying wife, left with her young family, and no good husband
between her and the world - but God saw the day then that I see now, when she and all
her children 'would be gathered together with Him where "they go no more out." Then
followed calamitous times. The cattle were stolen off the stock farm. Some debtors
defrauded her, and. what she most likely mourned most, none of her children as yet
seemed to care for the things of God.
These were the old Corn Law days, when Irish farmers lived like squires; and two or
three parties a week were nothing out of the way. Cards and dancing for the ladies, and
flirtations (no lady then thought it beneath her to dance or flirt with a half tipsy
gentleman) were the amusements of the evening, and the poor Methodist mother used
to spend the night praying for her children while they were dancing. But so far as I
know, all were Christians before they died, and some of them very notable ones (Uncle
Alex,8) (for example) and I think it is not God's way to let a Mother's prayers die
fruitless: anymore than to let the seed corn rot in the ground.
I do not know how many years this poor wife survived her husband. (add 6 1/2 years died Feb. 1824) I think her faith failed and that her mind was clouded before the end. But I remember my father showing me a letter of advice which she gave him when he was leaving for America and the fine writing, and good English and shows the good sense of it showed that she was a woman of superior mind and education.

(Dear John, I have a few directions to give you concerning your future conduct. You have a mind capable of improvement. Let religion rule all your actions. Never lie down without - recommending yourself to the care and protection of your Heavenly Father, who has promised to be a father to the fatherless. Beg his aid and assistance in every exigency. Keep no society with swearers nor drunkards nor hypocrites, when you find them so, for all such are an abomination to the Lord. Avoid gambling of every description. You may join in any amusements that are innocent when you have leisure, except on the Sabbath which I request you will keep as a Christian should. Make no engagements but what you can with propriety keep. Nor break any when made. Nor send an apology if you can possibly avoid it.

As to the business you go about, I trust God will assist you, as it is a laudable undertaking. Apply to the most respectable of the Thompson’s to know who possesses the land and how you are to proceed in the business.

My utmost wish is to leave you together in a land of liberty and in society with respectable people. Do not speak ironically. Be like your mother. Speak the dictates of your heart and take the advice of them that are wiser than yourself. When engaged in business perform it with alacrity and never defer until tomorrow what you can perform today.

You will write to me soon as convenient how you like the place, and if encouraged, I shall be ready to set out in Spring with God’s assistance. And may the blessed spirit of truth direct you in every laudable undertaking and make you happy in time and eternity will always be the prayer of

Your affectionate mother, Margaret Pringle.

The year before my father’s death, when he was 72, he talked very often of his mother and sisters, and once when I said (they were but- names to me) "And dada, do you remember them?" "To be sure I do." My father told me a little story of his boyhood, which I have often thought of, it reminded me of God’s dealings with His children.

"Little John Pringle had been disobedient and" rude to his mother and when she asked him to beg her pardon had stoutly refused. Thereupon his mother locked him in her room and told him he would not get out till he did. Three times his mother came to see if he had come to a better mind (poor mother and poor child!) but the fourth time, finding him still obdurate, she threw open the door wide – The Lord mend you, for I can do no
more with you" she said: And his mother's sorrow did that her anger could not, for he ran after her and begged her pardon."

Another rather funner story was about a great search which his mother had for the bowl belonging to her best china - long she hunted for it but in vain, till a bright thought struck her, and she went up to the room where the servant girl slept. - There sure enough, hidden under the bed was her china bowl; with tansy steeped in buttermilk, which the girl had heard was good for the complexion. Mrs. Pringle flew downstairs, and reproaching the maid, ran to the back door to throw away the nasty stuff but in her just wrath she threw away china bowl and all, to her great mortification, and doubtless to the secret joy of the maid.

There is a story Mullin told, (I wish I could tell it as she did) about how, Alex Pringle, when he was getting over the accident which came before the fever, 'was at Ballinahone and when he had seen to the stock, and talked to the old people, he went up to the orchard, and stood on the ditch; between the orchard and Bleary (the hill that overlooks Ballinahone) and looked long at the old house where he had spent his boyhood and the hills, and the river: till Mullin's mother, who was one of the Old Irish, said to her "A last look it is, he'll never stand on Ballinahone Hill more". So it befell, for he took the fever soon after and died.

Mullin told me another story, of how he came riding out to Ballinahone from Glasslough fair, one dear Summer, and sitting on his horse at her mother's door he says, "Och Molly the powder (meal) is very dear these times". When she replied "Terrible dear, Sir" he pointed to her little son Owney. "Reach me up that gasson, and we'll find something for him to do beyant" - and he set Owney before him on the saddle, and took him home with him to Bolton's Walls. So that the poor mother might have one mouth less to fill.

I never heard that he was a religious man. I suppose he left his wife to pray for both: but the man who took the little lad before him on the saddle, that the poor mother might have one mouth less to fill, was not far from the Kingdom of Heaven, I think .......

Every now and again they had a "dear Summer" then; and the pinch of hunger was hard on the poor - while all the big prairies of America were lying ready for the plough - and Ireland burdened with her eight millions of people.

**Chapter 6 John Pringle of Ballinahone (My father) (9)**

Looking back now, I wonder how much better informed, and more liberal minded my father was then the rest of the farmers about, and I think it was that he had been sent to America by his widowed mother to look after a legacy which an uncle there had left her. She never got a penny of it, the lawyers and executors had absorbed it amongst them; but he did not come straight back to Ireland. He travelled about, taught school went up
to Canada to see his cousins, the Croziers - saw Niagara, and got the travelled man’s larger vision and tolerance. (I never heard him say a hard word about a human being, though I have heard him damn a man to his face who had done a "sooty action"). Also I think, for good or evil, he got the travelled man’s way of looking at what are called the vices of the world. I am not sure that it is the very right way, but it is better than the Pharisees way at any rate. Ballinahone farm had been left to him and he came back to Ireland fully intending to sell it and settle in America: but while he was keeping bachelor house and having a good time of it among his friends pro tern, he chanced to meet a very merry young fellow (more merry than wise) called long Sam King; and Sam gave John Pringle an invitation to ride up some Sunday to his place, Ashgrove, and spend the day with him there. Accordingly my father rode up to Ashgrove one Sunday but as no one announced an intended visit by telegram or postcard in those days, he found that long Sam had gone to spend the day at a place called Mullagh-a-Teague where his grandfather and cousins (sex not specified) were; and long Sam’s mother urged him to ride on and spend the day there too. The old gentleman was quite hopitably glad to see him; the cousins were at church, but would soon be home and lo and behold when they did arrive one of them was a girl of (10) eighteen, a lovely girl in a white muslin dress - and my father fell in love then and there. It helped to break his fall to remember that the old man was rich, and this his favourite granddaughter, so he sounded long Sam on their way back to Ashgrove and heard that the old man was planning a match for her with "young Alick Maclean", a "boy" of forty, who had a whole townland for ever!

Clearly there was no time to be lost, so my poor father rode back soon, and my mother, hating "young Alick" like poison, did not find it hard to love John Pringle who was only twenty eight and a man of blood and brains! The marriage took place in three months from that first meeting. But the old man gave no money, only the one hundred and fifty pounds left her in her father's will; and as that went to payoff the fortune of one of my father’s sisters, which had been left as a charge on Ballinahone, the young people were poor enough. They were married in Killiman Church and came on to Warrenpoint for a weeks honeymoon. "Long Sam" and my mother’s sister, Sarah (11) King, coming also, which seems a funny arrangement. Sarah King married John Pringle’s brother James (11) five years later and they emigrated to America.

If there had been wedding presents then, as now, they would have come in well, for the home my mother came to was very bare. One of my father’s sister’s had come over to “redd up” for the home coming and had put hangings on the four post bedstead, and other like adornments, but the tenants had let the place go to wreck. There was not a hedge or tree left, that they had not burnt for firewood, with a fine Irish thrift and honesty. They could have hardly had to rough it more if my father had gone as a settler to the backwoods. But my mother had the gift of making her menfolk comfortable, a
good cook and “provider” if there ever was one, and she was always planning little improvements of one sort or another. Also she had a regular science of talking my father round to her way of things. She had soon what would be called a "fowl-farm" now, and though she used the young fowl for the table, she sold eggs enough to make a little revenue for her very own, so that she could back up her plans by offering to pay for part at least of any improvements which she had planned. My father for his part had his work cut out for him in the wrestle with the cold clay land of the Hill; and the fine holm land by the river was liable to be flooded in harvest, and the crops lost.

Five or six acres of impossible North lying land he planted with firs (a fir plantation which was in the height of its young beauty when I was a girl and a constant delight to me)

By degrees he got the river banked, and the fields for the most part fenced - In the end we had the land also thoroughly drained, but that was later on. He was a very early riser, used to go round and call the labouring men before six a.m. which was the time for the work day to begin. He made his breakfast of porridge and cream - cream and a silver spoon in the bowl; and he never had tea in the morning. I used to watch for my father and take my porridge beside his, for he measured me a big spoonful of his cream into my skim milk; (horrid little parasite and today - yes - but I liked his company even better than the cream).

The first born to John Pringle and his wife Mary Anne Pringle (nee King) was a boy (Robert) (12) who first saw the light on day May 1830. A beautiful child (so at least the old doctor and the young mother said), but a limb of mischief, who liked to hurt every living thing that came into his power and thought it a grand joke to throw a little puppy into a hot fire - I remember seeing the burnt remains of a beautiful dress of my mother’s which her first born son had thrown on the fire, because he was not being taken out to spend the day. He played the tyrant over his brothers and sisters, and brought the science of making home miserable to a fine pitch of perfection. Till he was twenty, when he decided he could bear the tyranny of home no more, and left for America.

(A two page dissertation on the first born in the Jewish law follows, linked with Robert's badness: of which Aunt Phoebe’s foot note is Aunt Margaret had a warped mind on this"

The rest of my Mother’s children were above the average, manageable and obedient, as children go. I remember my father saying once that his first son got more beating than all the rest put together, and again that if the rest had been like the first his heart would have been broken.

The second child Mary (13) was born on March 3rd 1832. A brown sonsy baby who grew to be a beautiful girl and a comfort and help at home. She was sent to a boarding school in Armagh when she was fifteen, and brought a lot of new ideas back to the old home. We had been living the plain unlovely life of the Ulster farmers household; she
got many fine touches added - quite a pretty border of flowers made inside the round hedge in front of the house; and edged father on to bring us books from Mrs. White's library in Armagh. We had Scotts novels one winter, one reading while the others worked, and the habit of reading aloud we kept up all our young days in Ballinahone.

The third child, Alexander, (14) born in August 1834 was a delicate baby, who did not walk till the day in April 1836 when the next baby was born. He was a spindly, white faced child, but a very good tempered and obedient one, quite a contrast to the first born - very truthful with a strong sense of duty. I do not think that was particularly bright at his books, but no one ever heard of him playing truant and indeed I cannot remember one cruel or mischievous action of his. He was of a very mechanical turn, fond of making little mills and laying out his pocket money in tools. With the help and advice of his sister Mary, he made many little tasty bits of work; a rustic porch for the door and a house for his Mother's bees.

(Here ends Margaret McBride's (15) account of Ballinahone. As she herself was the next child to be born (April 1836) the paragraph that should follow would have been autobiographical. Perhaps she felt that this would come better from the pen of another. Perhaps she did write more, and it has been lost. How we would value her record of her younger brothers and sister, Henry and Matilda and James and John. We could well spare a few of her poems for a page or two on the closing years of her father and mother, spent at Maymount. At least we are grateful for the characters that came to life in the pages of her history, and for ancestors whom we have come to know as people rather than mere names in a family tree.)

Annotations - Wh. Parke, 1979

Old Ballinahone
about 1890
Demolished 1909