



Smolenyak's discovery that one of Obama's forebears came from Co Offaly led to his visit to Ireland in 2011 – but Kaine, right, could end up visiting all of Ireland

Gabrielle Monaghan

TIM KAINE, the candidate most likely to become US vice-president, has an ancestor who left north Cork as a child during the famine, according to research by the American genealogist who traced Barack Obama's roots to Offaly.

Kaine, who was nominated last month as Hillary Clinton's running mate in her election campaign, has been embraced as a distant relative by locals in Kilkenny and Longford.

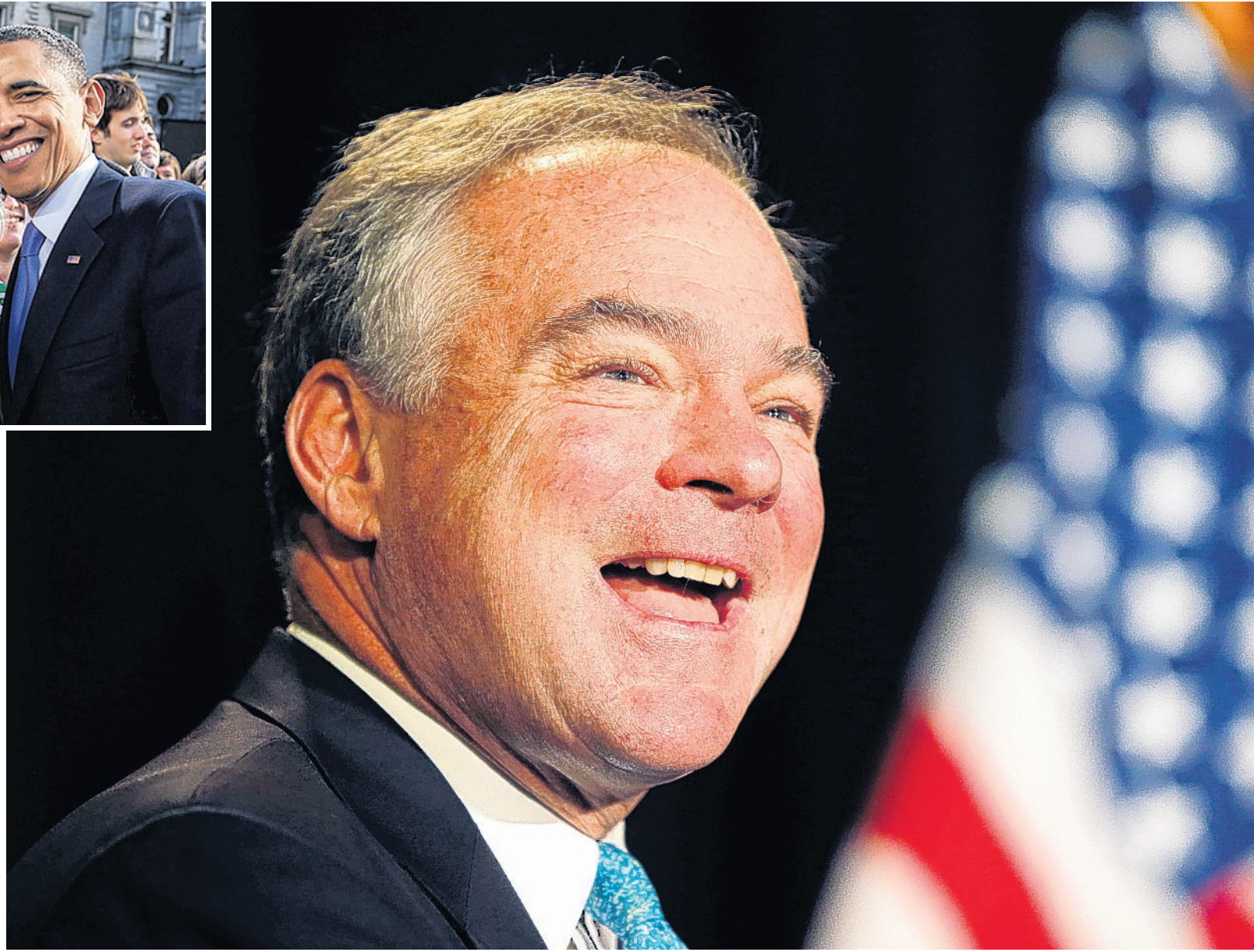
After the Virginia senator was named on the Democratic Party ticket, genealogy websites attempting to trace his lineage claimed Kaine also had ancestors who emigrated from Donegal and Waterford.

But the latter claims are unsubstantiated, said Megan Smolenyak, whose discovery that Obama's forebear Falmouth Kearney came from Moneygall led to the president's visit to Ireland in 2011.

Smolenyak is also credited with discovering that Joe Biden, the current vice-president, has links to both Louth and Mayo, which he visited in June, and with tracing Michelle Obama's family history.

In April, Smolenyak made waves when she argued that some genealogists attached Hillary Clinton's Welsh grandmother to the wrong parents.

The genealogist was urged by her social media followers to turn her attention to Kaine's Irish ancestry and found errors



Hopeful Kaine's Irish roots cover the map

in online assessments of his family tree. She said: "Anyone who's remotely famous will have their genealogy done, but a lot of people make mistakes so I started from scratch with Kaine. I hadn't intended to do so, because he seemed acquainted with his Irish roots, but I didn't want a situation where he got elected and then

visited the wrong place in Ireland. But, as with Hillary Clinton, there are errors to be found in the assorted online trees for Tim Kaine."

Smolenyak debunked online speculation that Richard Hannon, Kaine's maternal great-grandfather, arrived in America from Stranorlar in Donegal. After exam-

ining Hannon's obituary and baptismal records she found he was born in Carriganaligh, near Castletownroche in Co Cork.

He arrived in New York on November 28, 1851, at the age of 11, on a ship called the Florida.

Hannon died in Kansas, where Kaine grew up, in 1910. Smolenyak deems the discovery "appropriate" because Kaine

regularly spends holidays in Co Cork, albeit in the seaside village of Courtmacsherry.

In 2006 Kaine and his family visited Killashee in Co Longford to see the remains of the cottage that belonged to his great-grandfather, PJ Farrell.

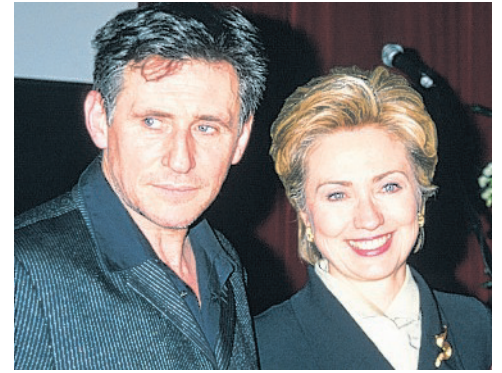
In March, in a speech at a dinner in Washington DC after receiving an award from the American Ireland Fund, Kaine said all four of his grandparents were born to Irish immigrants.

Smolenyak said that was not quite true. "He seems to be under the impression that all of

his grandparents were born to Irish immigrants, but that's only on his father's side. On his mother's side, it was his great-grandparents who were born to immigrants," she said.

She found Kaine's paternal great-grandmother, Mary Catherine Fleming, was born in Mullinakil, Co Kilkenny.

Smolenyak said Kaine "has roots in Kilkenny, Longford, Dublin, Cork and Galway — he's almost got the map of Ireland covered. If he wins and he visits Ireland, he could be in for a very long tour."



Byrne used to host fundraisers for Hillary Clinton but this year is backing the Greens' Jill Stein

Byrne goes to the green room

Catherine Sanz

SHE'S LEADING Donald Trump in the polls, but Hillary Clinton has lost the backing of one high-profile supporter.

Gabriel Byrne, the Dublin-born actor who starred in Hollywood movies Miller's Crossing and The Usual Suspects as well as the hit TV series In Treatment, is donating money to the campaign of Green Party candidate Jill Stein.

Byrne hosted fundraisers for Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton but earlier this year he and his wife Hannah King donated \$500 (€450) to Bernie Sanders' political campaign committee. Neither had donated directly to an American presidential candidate before 2016.

In an interview with the Financial Times, Byrne revealed he had dropped support for Clinton. "I completely disagree with her foreign policy," he said. He also mentioned that he believes Sanders is "coming from a place of truth".

In order to donate to a candidate or political action committee (PAC), the donor must be an American citizen or valid green card holder. The ban on donations from foreign nationals was first enacted in 1966, under the Foreign Agents Registration Act, as a means of limiting foreign intervention in US elections.

Dublin solicitor Linda O'Shea Farren and her husband Brian, who is a US citizen, have been strong supporters of Hillary Clinton. They held fundraisers on behalf of Clinton at their home in Raglan Road, Ballsbridge, in 2007 and in

2014. Money raised at these events is channelled through the Irish Americans for Hillary Clinton organisation. This group ensures that Americans are partnered up with the Irish citizens who wish to donate. That way the individual donations do not exceed the \$2,700 limit set by the Federal Election Commission.

In 2008, Brian Farren made a \$2,300 contribution to the Hillary Clinton for President campaign fund. The couple have not planned any fundraisers before the November election. O'Shea Farren said she will continue to lend her support to Clinton by raising awareness in Ireland as she believes "it is time for a woman in the White House."

She had no comment to make on Jill Stein's campaign.

A former Harvard professor of medicine, Stein practised as a doctor in Boston for over 20 years. She was the presidential candidate for the Green Party in 2012, but received only 0.36% of the vote. She ran two failed campaigns to be governor of Massachusetts on the Green Party ticket, in 2002 and in 2010.

Originally from a Jewish background, Stein has been criticised by American Jews for her remarks on Israel.

The Green Party in the US existed in relative obscurity until Ralph Nader's performance in the 2000 general election, when he received 2.74% of the vote.

Stein is expected to surpass this figure if she can secure even a small portion of the 40% support that Sanders won from Democrats before he dropped out of the race.

Youth homeless drive falls short as shops opt out

A NEW charity formed to tackle youth homelessness raised less than 15% of its target due to the low level of participation by retail outlets, writes Catherine Sanz.

One for Ireland was founded with the hope of securing €1 from 1m people on April 29, 2016 by asking customers to donate at nationwide retailers. Despite commitments from large brands like Spar, Londis and Mace, involvement was at the discretion of shop owners.

The charity raised €141,500 and said last week that the funds will now be distributed to nominated homeless charities. It claims the delay in distributing was due to the fact that small donations continued to trickle in.

Of the 1,400 stores who said they would take part, just 322 did so on the day. Customers could opt to pay in cash or by card and the money was transferred via PayPal to the One for Ireland bank account. Donors could also contribute on the day by text or online.

Max Doyle, founder of One



Doyle, left, golfer Shane Lowry, centre, and McLoughlin

for Ireland, said the shortfall was unexpected. "It caught us by surprise, but we are still delighted to have raised the money that we did.

"This was an idea that was started a year ago, and we are proud to have created a campaign where young people can raise funds for youth issues," he said.

In May, the charity announced that it had raised €184,000 "with 80% of

retailers still to transfer funds". According to Doyle, this figure was based on "corporate commitments and large individual donations that fell through".

BWG, the parent company of Spar, Mace, and Londis, would not comment on the participation of its individual stores.

David Henry, the charity's head of business development, said the failure to reach the

€1m goal was far from a disappointment. "We were an unknown brand, and we had major retail outlets take a chance on us. Next year we will be able to build on this, and get closer to the target."

The €1m goal was based on a trial run in December 2015 when the charity raised €5,000 from donations made in four Fresh supermarket stores in Dublin. The hope next year is to involve more supermarkets due to their higher levels of foot traffic.

The Irish Youth Foundation, with Niall McLoughlin, acted as a support group for the charity. It set up a bank account where the funds could be sent from PayPal. It also raised €32,000 on behalf of One for Ireland at the Rock Against Homelessness concert in April.

The One for Ireland staff consisted mainly of recent Trinity graduates who said they worked on a voluntary basis. They included Tom Lenihan, son of late finance minister Brian Lenihan.

Block on 78 sham marriages

THE government investigated 103 suspected sham marriages in the past year under new legislation that gives the superintendent registrar power to block a marriage application and notify immigration authorities, writes Catherine Sanz.

In 78 cases, the marriage was not allowed to proceed following investigation.

In details obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, there are "many more cases where the full investigation has not been completed". The process involves multiple stages of

verification, including interviews and presentation of additional documentation. Couples may also choose to withdraw their marriage application after an investigation begins.

It is unclear whether the 25 couples whose marriages were allowed are subject to follow-up checks. The Department of Social Protection (DSP) said: "The scheme to prevent marriages of convenience is operated by the HSE."

The Civil Registration (Amendment) Act 2014, in effect since August 2015, makes a so-called marriage of

convenience an impediment to marriage. The act allows a registrar the right to form an opinion based on information presented by the two parties, and to share that information with the Department of Justice. Factors that registrars consider include whether the parties speak the same language, how long they have been together, and how familiar they are with each other's personal details.

The act encourages co-operation between that ministry and the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB) as well as the DSP.

The GNIB launched Operation Vantage in November 2015 to investigate criminal networks that may be providing false marriage certificates or recruiting EU nationals as spouses. Operation Vantage works in partnership with Europol and Eurojust, as well as with the Garda Human Trafficking Investigation and Coordination Unit.

In addition to the 103 cases, the DSP said some additional investigations were not concluded. Some ceremonies were subject to objections by the GNIB or else the couple failed to turn up for interview.

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Make-A-Wish Ireland, as our lead charity, will receive 40% of all money raised. Temple Street, Irish Autism Action and Jack & Jill will each receive 20%. Thank you to our valued suppliers Dulux, PPG, Contech (Tec 7), McLoughlin's, Excel Industries, IQ Group, Rothco, Principle, Roroal and Mindshare for both the cash support and free services they have provided to bring this campaign to life. Woodie's are also investing in the promotion of this campaign to the value of €25,000 along with a month of dedicated colleague support & time and coordination. This means, that every cent donated by you will go directly to the four charities. Fundraising in stores 25/7 - 20/8/16. Cycle challenge 22-26/8/16.