

The Bourkes of Clanwilliam. [1]

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FEW of the Anglo-Norman adventurers who accompanied Strongbow and Henry II. in the twelfth century acquired such possessions in Ireland, or attained to such honours and power, as the family of De Burgh or De Burgo ; or as the name came subsequently to be spelt, Burke or Bourke. The progenitor of this powerful family was William Fitz-Adelm de Burgh, who got immense grants of land from Henry in Leinster, Munster, and Connaught. His Lordship in Munster included the most fertile portions of the present counties of Limerick and Tipperary, called after him the Baronies of West and East Clanwilliam. He made his chief residence at Athassel, on the banks of the river Suir, in the midst of the *Golden Vale* of East Clanwilliam. He there erected a castle and laid the foundation of a Priory of Augustinian Canons about A.D. 1200.

In after years this humble religious foundation, owing to the munificence of his descendants, developed into that noble Abbey, the picturesque remains of which to this day bear testimony to the piety and bounty of the Bourkes of Clanwilliam.

Castleconnell, picturesquely situated on a rock overlooking the Shannon, about six miles north of Limerick, became the principal castle of the Bourkes in West Clanwilliam. This was the ancient seat of the *O'Canaiings*, and took their name *Caislean-ui-Chonaine*. It subsequently fell into the possession of the O'Briens of Thomond.

King John made a grant of Castleconnell, with five knights' fees, to William de Burgh, who erected a strong castle there. Walter De Burgh, about the end of the thirteenth century, considerably enlarged and strengthened this castle, which was the chief stronghold of his descendants at the end of the sixteenth century.

The Lords of Castleconnell and Brittas were descended from Edmond (*Mac-an-Iarla*) a younger son of Richard De Burgh, "The Red Earl of Ulster," whose father Walter, through his marriage with Maud, only daughter and heiress of Hugh De Lacey, had succeeded to the Earldom of Ulster and Lordship of Meath. The tragic death of Edmond Mac-an-Iarla is worth recording here, as it gives an insight into those sanguinary family feuds characteristic of Ireland in the fourteenth century. William De Burgh [2] (the Brown Earl) by his marriage with Maud, daughter of Henry Plantagenet, Earl of Lancaster, left at his death, in 1333, an only daughter, a minor. [3]

Edmond *Mac-an-Iarla* was her guardian, and assumed in his own right the Lordship of Connaught. He also aspired during his ward's minority to the Earldom of Ulster. His pretensions in due course caused a serious family feud. A powerful faction of the Bourkes, under the leadership of Edmond *Albanach* Bourke, adhered to the fortunes of the youthful heiress.

On Low Sunday, A.D. 1337, while *Mac-an-Iarla*, with some of his kinsmen and adherents, were partaking of the hospitality of the Augustinian Friars in the town of Ballinrobe, a band of armed men, headed by Edmond Albanach, forcibly entered the monastery and seized Mac-an-Iarla after a stout resistance, several gentlemen of the Bourkes being killed in the *melee*, and carried him a prisoner to Lough Mask Castle some two miles distant. The following night he was removed to Ballydonagh Castle, at the south end of Lough Mask, and, on the third

day, was carried across the lake to another stronghold of the Bourkes situated on an island since known as *Oilean-an-Iarla* (the Earl's Island).

The Archbishop of Tuam and the principal gentlemen of the Bourkes were here assembled, tradition says, to effect a reconciliation between the rival factions, and that their efforts were about being crowned with success but for the tragedy which followed.

The principal retainers of Edmond Albanach, Stauntons by name, had taken an active part in the outrage at the monastery in Ballinrobe, and as we learn from O'Flaherty in his *Iar-Connaught*, "Despairing of their own safety, if he was set at liberty, they turned him (Edmond) into a bag, and cast him out of the island into the lake, with stones tyed to the bag, for which fact they were called *Clan Ulcin* ever since Hence followed great combustions and wars in Connaught after." It is a curious fact, in corroboration of this tradition, that the Stauntons of Mayo, who were descended from an Englishman, a retainer of the Red Earl whom he had knighted on the field of battle, changed their name to Mac Evilly (*Mac-amhilih*] the "Son of the Knight."

Edmond *Mac-an-Iarla* left several sons by his wife Slainy, daughter of Turlogh O'Brien, Lord of Thomond. These sons took an active part in the "combustions and wars" which ensued on the death of their father. [4] Finally, the eldest, with the powerful assistance of his kinsmen, the O'Briens, established himself at Castleconnell, and was recognized as the chief of the Clanwilliam Bourkes.

In the sixteenth century his descendants took an active part in the great Desmond wars, which eventuated in the confiscation of the princely territory of the Earl of Desmond in the counties of Limerick, Cork, and Kerry. Sir William Bourke of Castleconnell, who was married to Catherine, daughter of the 15th or "Great" Earl of Desmond, suffered heavily by the part he took in the war of 1569-75.

On the occasion of Sir Henry Sidney's, the Lord Deputy's, visit to Limerick, in 1575, Sir William and his kinsmen came in and made their submission, and were "restored to the Queen's favour, and confirmed in their estates."

On the landing of the Spaniards in Smerwick Bay, A.D. 1579, James Fitzmaurice, Piers de Lacy, and the other confederate chiefs, made every effort to seduce the Bourkes from their allegiance and to induce them once more to cast in their lot with the Desmonds. Sir William and his kinsmen, however, remained staunch to their promises, and steadfastly declined all overtures.

Fitzmaurice thereupon turned for assistance to his relatives in Connaught, and in attempting to force his way through the Bourke country, encountered his kinsmen in a wood close to the present Barrington's bridge. There are many versions of this sanguinary fight, but the following is the most graphic :—

"James Fitzmaurice having designed to go into Connaught to procure sufficient aid, and coming into the Bourke country, ordered his men to take the first horses they met for his use, which they did out of a plough belonging to Sir William Bourke. The ploughman thereupon set up a hue and cry, which Sir William and his sons hearing of, with some kerns, followed the track, and at last overtook his cousin Fitzmaurice in a wood, who seeing Sir William's eldest son, addressed himself to him saying : Cousin Theobald, the taking of garrons between you and me shall be no breach : if you knew the cause we have now in hand you would assist us ; and then related to him the assistance he had from the Pope and the King of Spain.

“ To which Theobald Bourke replied, that he and his father and brethren had too much meddled that way already, and had cause to curse the day when they first opposed the Queen’s authority ; and that having sworn fidelity they were resolved never more to break it, which answer not being at all agreeable to Fitzmaurice, he refused to part with the garrons he had taken ; and thereupon happened an encounter, wherein Theobald and his younger brother Richard were killed, and on the other side James Fitzmaurice and most of his followers had the same fortune.” [5]

The Bourkes cut off Fitzmaurice’s head, placing it over the gate at Castleconnell ; they sent his quarters to the Lord President, who set them over the gates of Kilmallock, which was the principal town of the Desmonds in the county of Limerick. Theobald Bourke, who lost his life in this encounter, was a notable personage, not alone as heir to the Lordship of Castleconnell, but as one who had made a name for himself in that war-like age as a warrior and leader of men. We are told that “ he was a valiant young warrior, a worthy heir to the chieftainship of the Bourkes, for his valour and military skill, and his knowledge of the English language and laws.”

This encounter resulted in bringing the loyal conduct of the Bourkes prominently before Elizabeth. [6] The Queen wrote Sir William Bourke a letter of condolence on the loss of his sons, and, as a mark of her favour, created him a peer, by letters patent, dated May 16th, 1580, with the title of Lord Baron Bourke, of Castleconnell, and conferred on him a life annuity of two hundred marks. Theobald Bourke, Sir William’s eldest son, was married to Lady Mary, daughter of Donagh Ramhar O’Brien, Earl of Thomond, and left at his death four sons. The eldest, John, succeeded his grandfather as second Lord Castleconnell, in 1584. He appears to have held aloof from all the intrigues and fighting so rife in Ireland at that period. While in London, in 1592, however, he got into an altercation with a Captain Arnold Cosby, an English adventurer who had profited by the Desmond confiscations. A duel was the result. Both parties, with their seconds, met on horseback, according to the Irish custom, on Hounslow Heath. Cosby proposed that the quarrel should be settled on foot, which was agreed to. Lord Castleconnell, having dismounted, was in the act of taking off his spurs when he was attacked by Cosby, who ran him through the body before the seconds had time to interfere. Cosby was arrested and tried for the treacherous act. He was found guilty of murder, on the evidence of those who were present, and was hanged on the spot where Lord Castleconnell fell. In the Annals of Limerick this event is thus commemorated :—

“ A.D. 1592, John Bourke, Lord Castleconnell, was basely slain
By Captain Arnold Cosby—for they twain
Resolved to fight ; but Cosby stops—demurs,
Prays Castleconnell to take off his spurs :
And as he stoop’d, yielding to his request,
Cosby most basely stabb’d him in the breast ;
Gave twenty-one, all dreadful wounds base act,
And Cosby only hang’d for the horrid fact.”

Richard Bourke succeeded his brother as third Lord. His life was a short but a merry one, as far as fighting went. Although he could not be seduced from his allegiance to Elizabeth, and held aloof from the Desmond rising of 1598, we find him one day skirmishing with the retainers of the “ Sugan Earl” ; another day, slaying in a cavalry charge no less a personage than the Lord President of Munster ; again, settling an agrarian dispute with his relatives the O’Briens of Thomond, by force of arms. Sir Thomas Norris, the Lord President, took up his quarters in the town of Kilmallock, in the Spring of 1598. It was his custom to ride out daily, with a strong escort of horse, to scour the adjoining hostile country of the Desmonds. In one

of these raids, in the direction of Killeely, close to the Bourke country, he came across a strong body of horse, under the command of Thomas Bourke, brother of Lord Castleconnell, who were likewise on a reconnoitering expedition. Bourke, observing what appeared to him as a hostile party approaching, could not resist the temptation for a fight—explanations might come afterwards. He and his men charged home, shouting their war-cry, *Gareach-aboo*. The Lord President, nothing loth, met them in full career, when a bloody fight ensued, which resulted in the death of Sir Thomas Norris and the defeat of his escort. It is to be presumed that the Bourkes apologized for their mistake, as no reprisals were made by Sir George Carew, who succeeded as Lord President.

In the autumn of the same year Lord Castleconnell had an encounter with the O'Briens, on the Limerick side of O'Brien's Bridge.

On the death of Murrogh, fourth Baron of Inchiquin, who was drowned in Lough Erne, a dispute arose between his widow, Lady Margaret, daughter of Lord Chancellor Cusack, and Lord Castleconnell, about a townland called Portcrossi, now Portcrussa, lying along the Shannon and adjoining Castleconnell. Lady Margaret, with her sons and retainers, crossed the Shannon, with the intention of cutting and bringing home the harvest then ripe on these lands. Lord Castleconnell thereupon assembled the Bourkes, and attacked the harvesters before they had accomplished their purpose. A fierce fight ensued, many gentlemen were slain on each side, among others Ulick Bourke, uncle of Lord Castleconnell. The O'Briens, however, were driven across the Shannon, *minus* the harvest, which the Bourkes secured in peace as the fruits of their prowess.

Early in the following year Lord Mountjoy came over to Ireland as Lord Deputy, in conjunction with Carew he carried fire and sword into the Desmond country, and took effectual steps for breaking up the league. He put a price of £1000 on the heads of Tyrone and the *Sugan Earl*.

Dermot O'Conor, who had taken an active part with Tyrone, had been sent to aid the Munster confederacy. He was closely related to the Desmonds, having married Lady Margaret, daughter of Gerald, the sixteenth Earl, who was so foully murdered in 1584, and whose immense estates, some 800,000 acres, were then confiscated. O'Conor, having collected some 1400 bonoghs in Connanght, with a strong body of horse, reached safely Owey (Abington), the Pass into Clanwilliam. Lord Castleconnell, with his brother Thomas, mustered the Bourkes, and opposed his passage. "With the assistance of his neighbours, the O'Ryans, they kept up a running fight with O'Conor, who had succeeded in forcing the Pass at Owey for eight miles, until they reached the confines of the Clangibbon country. At the bridge of Bunbristy O'Conor made a stand, having received assistance from the garrison of Lough Gur Castle, which was a stronghold of the Desmonds. A fierce engagement followed. Finally, Lord Castleconnell and his brother were slain in an attempt to force the passage of the bridge, whereupon the Bourkes retired, allowing O'Conor to form a junction with the Desmonds. Thus died in harness the third and fourth Lords of Castleconnell, "though young in years." We are told "they were manly in renown and noble deeds."

Dermot O'Conor was a mere mercenary, willing to sell his sword or his country to the highest bidder. His wife seems to have been endowed with the spirit of intrigue. Before the year was out she entered into negotiations with Carew, with the object of earning the reward of £1000 offered by him for the capture of the "Sugan Earl." After several unsuccessful attempts O'Conor succeeded by stratagem in securing the person of the Earl, whom he sent with a strong escort to Castlelisheen, near Dromcollagher, where the Lady Margaret had established herself. She at once communicated the news to Carew, who immediately set out

from Kilmallock, but the Earl was rescued before the Lord President arrived. Dermot O'Connor, when his treacherous conduct was found out, fled for safety with his bonoghs to Ballyalinan Castle (near Rathkeale). Here he was besieged by the confederates ; but fearing that the castle would be taken before Carew could come to his assistance, he surrendered, and made his peace with the Desmonds. However, he soon after applied for, and got, a safe-conduct into Connaught from the Lord President for himself and his bonoghs. Fearing to venture far into the Bourke country, O'Connor kept along the Shannon, passed by Limerick during the night, and attempted the passage of the Shannon at a ford above the city (Athlunkard). Theobald Bourke, who had assumed the chieftainship of the Bourkes, on the death of his brothers at Bunbristy, having had notice that O'Connor was attempting to steal a march on him, collected his retainers, and with the assistance of his friends in the city, attacked the bonoghs as they were crossing into Thomond. O'Connor, however, successfully crossed the river, with the loss of 100 men and a large part of the prey which the Connaughtmen were laden with. The Limerick Corporation had to mourn the loss of one of their members in this encounter, a gallant alderman named Roche.

Dermot O'Connor, in the October of 1600, entered into an agreement with Carew to join him against the Confederates. He got a safe-conduct from Carew, and an escort of 100 foot from Lord Clanricarde to see him safely through the O'Shaughnessy country (Gort) and Thomond. He was, however, overtaken on the confines of the Inchiquin territory by Theobald *na longa* Bourke. After a fierce fight, O'Connor and the survivors of his escort retired into a ruined church, and there defended themselves bravely. Bourke set fire to the buildings, and Dermot O'Connor, with forty of his men, were slain. Theobald *na longa* sent Dermot's head as a present to Castleconnell, and wrote to Lord Clanricarde demanding protection as he had merely slain O'Connor to revenge the deaths of his cousins at Bunbristy. This Theobald *na longa* (of the ships) was a son of Sir Richard Fitzdavid Bourke, *M'William Oughter*, and the celebrated Grace O'Malley, "*Granuaile*" He was created Viscount Bourke, of Mayo, in 1627. These Bourkes evidently respected the old saw :

“ A bed death, a priest's death,
A straw death, a cow death
Such death likes not me.”

Within the space of twenty-one years six of the sons and grandsons of Sir William Bourke, Lord Castleconnell, died, sword in hand, with their faces to the foe. Within the same period, five of the direct descendants of James, 15th Earl of Desmond, father-in-law of Lord Castleconnell, died fighting for the Desmond cause and the broad lands of their fathers. The last spark of the Desmond conflagration, which had consumed, for half a century, the fairest portion of Munster, was not extinguished until the premature death, in the Tower of London in 1608, of the *Sugan Earl*, whose base betrayal for a reward of £1000, by his kinsman, the “ White Knight,” is a sad and disgraceful episode of Irish history.

The most notable member of the Bourkes, during the first years of the 17th century, was Sir John Bourke, of Brittas, the “ Captain of Clan-William,” a man of great influence and power. Through his mother he was nearly related to the O'Ryans, Chiefs of Owney, and the “ White Knight” He was step-brother of the celebrated Confederate leader, Piers deLacy, of Ballygrennan Castle, Bruff. [7] After his tragic death, in 1607 his castle of Brittas, and estates were granted to his cousin Theobald Bourke. This Theobald was uncle and guardian of the youthful Lord Castleconnell, and claimed to be chief of the Bourkes. He assumed the title of Lord Castleconnell during the minority of his nephew, and actually sat as a Peer in the Parliament of 1613.

Edmund, son of Thomas, 4th Lord Castleconnell, was educated in England at the instance of Sir Thomas Brown, of Hospital, whose daughter Thomasin he subsequently married. On his coming of age in 1617, his legitimacy—questioned by Theobald—was established. Theobald Bourke, having conformed, was created Lord Bourke Baron Brittas by Letters Patent, dated 28th January 1618 ; but still refusing to surrender the castle and lands of Castleconnell to his nephew, he was arrested by order of the Lord Deputy and imprisoned in Dublin Castle in the spring of 1619. Before the winter set in, however, he appeared more amenable. He sent the following petition to the Lord Deputy, dated

“ Dublin Castle, *December*, 1619.

“ ... That he had now endured seven months’ imprisonment, and would now resign all claim to the title of Castleconnell and the Castle and Manor thereof, and also all lands belonging to the late Sir William, Richard, and Thomas Bourke.”

Having given security to the amount of £3000 not to interfere further with his nephew, and resigning all claim to his title and estates, he was released. Lord Brittas was married to Lady Margaret Bourke, daughter of Richard, second Earl of Clanricarde.

The following twenty years seem to have been uneventful in the Bourke family. When Sir Thomas Wentworth afterwards better known as Black Tom, Earl of Strafford came as Lord Deputy in 1632, a spirit of toleration had succeeded the religious persecutions of the early part of the century. Most of the gentry who had then conformed returned to the religion of their fathers, and brought up their children unmolested in the old faith. When the Civil War broke out in 1641-2, both Lord Castleconnell and Brittas cast in their lots with the Confederate Catholics. William, sixth Lord Castleconnell, who sat among the Peers in the General Assembly in Kilkenny, 1642, raised a regiment of horse which took no inglorious part in the seven years’ war which followed. His cousin, William Bourke, second son of Lord Brittas, was Lieutenant-Colonel in this regiment. He was taken prisoner by the Cromwellians in an engagement near Cork in 1653, and was executed next day, leaving an only son, who succeeded as third Lord Brittas. Theobald Lord Brittas and Lord Castleconnell were attainted and their estates confiscated. The following is a copy of the transplinters’ certificate given to Lord Brittas :

“ We, the said Commissioners do hereby certify, that Theobald Bourke, Lord Baron of Brittas, in the county of Limerick hath, upon the 19th day of November, 1653, in pursuance of a declaration of the Commissioners of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of England for the affairs of Ireland, bearing date the 14th day of October, 1653, delivered unto us, in writing, the names of himself and such other persons as are to remove with him, with the quantities and qualities of their stocks and tillage ; the contents whereof are as followeth, viz :— The said Theobald, Lord Baron of Brittas, adged seventy-five years, red-gray hair, slender face. The Lady Margaret, his wife, adged sixty years, gray hair, slender face. Margaret and Mary, daughters to Sir John Bourke (2nd Lord Brittas), under the age of twelve years. Thomas Bourke, his servant, adged twenty years, slender face, yellow hair. Daniel O’Bruoder, adged forty years, gray hair, slender face, and lame of one leg. Robert Lenane, adged sixty years, gray hair, full face. Shryilly Maley, adged eighteen years. Shryilly na Bruoder, adged forty years, gray hair, middle stature. Catherine Grady, maid servant, adged thirty years, full face, middle stature, black hair. Any ny Mahony, adged thirty-six years, gray hair, full face, middle stature. His substance—three cows, one gelding, two garrans, and six hogs, for which he payeth contribution. The substance whereof we believe to be true.”

Margaret, Lady Dowager of Castleconnell, is described in her certificate, dated 19th of December, 1653, as “ adged seventy years, middle stature, flaxen hair . . . Her substance, twenty cows, twenty sheep, ten mares and garrans, and two riding nags : four sows, six acres of winter corn, out of which she pays contribution.” Twenty-seven servants and retainers are also named and described who are to move with her. This Lady Castleconnell was widow of Donough O’Brien of Carrigogunnell, and had from him as jointure lands, three ploughlands in Clare, 720 acres, Cratloe (2), and Portdrine ; also portion of the lands of Corbally (Tervoe), all of which were confiscated. The following are the names of some of the Clanwilliam Bourkes who were transplanted and lost their estates at this time :—

1. William, Lord Castleconnell, and his wife, Lady Ellen (daughter of Maurice Roche, Viscount Fermoy).
2. Sir John Bourke and his wife, Lady Margaret (daughter of Thomas Fitzmaurice, Lord Kerry).
3. Sir David Bourke, of Kilpeacon, his wife and four sons, Oliver, Edmond, Patrick, and David.
4. Theobald Bourke of Ballynagarde.
5. Richard Bourke of Caherconlish.
6. Walter Bourke of Luddenbeg.
7. Edmond Bourke of Ballysimon.
8. John Bourke and his brother, of Kissyquirke and Lismolane.
9. John Bourke of Ludden Castle.
10. Richard Bourke of Kilcoolen.
11. Edmond Bourke of Carrigmartin.
12. Richard Bourke of Ballyvarra.
13. William Bourke of Killonan.
14. Thomas Bourke of Ballylusky.
15. Thomas Bourke of Cahernany.

There are the names of forty-nine Bourkes in the Book of Transplanters’ Certificates from the county Limerick. By order of Parliament dated March 22nd, 1653, the estates of Lord Brittas, in the barony of Clanwilliam, county Limerick, were granted to Sir Charles Coote in lieu of his claim for £1200.

On the accession of Charles II. the attainder was reversed in the cases of Lord Castleconnell and Lord Brittas, and their estates were restored in part under the Act of Settlement.

In 1662 the Dowager Lady Brittas was decreed entitled, as claimant for life, to 3261 acres, 2 roods, and 16 perches, of lands in the counties of Limerick, Kildare, and Dublin.

Lord Castleconnell, who had joined the King's standard beyond the seas, returned at the Restoration, and was named in the King's Declaration among those who had faithfully served under the King's Ensigns. [8]

In his Petition he says he served "Your Royal Majesty five or six years in the Netherlands, trailing a pike in the Duke of York's Regiment. He understood no miserie, but now he has run in debt for food and raiment, and is at the end of his credit, in imminent hasard of imprisonment for his debts, and unable further to subsist, if your Majestic relieve him not." The Duke of Ormond, his relative, succeeded in getting him a temporary pension from the king of £1000 a year, which, however, was not regularly paid. He writes to the Duke of Ormond, complaining, "My Lord, as to my father, who pretended the honour of a near relative to your Grace and the Duchess's family, and by the means of your ancestor, Thomas, Earl of Ormond, was bred in his home. I doe take the presumption to open my miserable condition to your Grace, and doe expect no less favour from you. I am confident your Grace knows how faithfully I served His Majestie and your Grace at home and abroad, and am during my life resolved to dispose of myself as your Grace shall think fitte.

"Therefore, I humbly beg your Grace's pardon that I plainly open my unfortunate grievance ; for, on my word, my Lord, I was forced, as Captain Henessy can inform your Grace, to pawn the very clothes I had for to bring me out of Dublin, and ever since had a mind to wait on your Grace, I am not able to appear for want of clothes, my wife and children being ready to forsake house and home, and all the little stocke I had being taken for rent. Sir Valentine Brown and Sir Edward Fitzharris being engaged for what monies brought me to Ireland, are like to suffer for me. I beg of your Grace to send Sir George Lane or Secretary Page to Sir Daniel Bellingham to cause him to see me satisfied my arrears, and your Grace will ever oblige him that is

"Your Grace's

"Most obedient faithful Servant,
"CASTLECONNELL.

"CASTLEDROHID, [9] *April 3, 1667.*"

This pension was reduced to £100 a-year, and was badly paid, as it was in arrear at Michaelmas, 1680. Lord Brittas likewise received a pension of £100 a-year.

William, eighth Lord Castleconnell was Lord Lieutenant of the County and City of Limerick. He sat in the Parliament of 1687-9, eighth in precedence among the Barons. He was second Lieutenant-Colonel in Colonel Hugh Sutherland's Regiment of Horse, and fought at Aughrim. He retired to France with James, and there died unmarried, when the title devolved on John, fourth Lord Brittas, whose father, Theobald, was married to Honora, daughter of the Earl of Inchiquin (*Morrogh-an-Toitean*).

Theobald, Lord Brittas, who also sat in the Parliament of 1687-9, as tenth Baron in the roll of precedence, raised a regiment of horse, and served up to the end of the war, when he also retired to France, his estates and those of Lord Castleconnell having been confiscated.

During the siege of Limerick, September, 1691, Brigadier-General Levison surprised the cavalry camp of the Irish between Sixmile-Bridge and Newmarket, and took many prisoners, including the Dowager Lady Castleconnell. Lord Brittas, with his troop, made good their escape into Limerick.

John, fourth Lord Brittas and ninth Lord Castleconnell, served in the Irish Brigade. He married Catherine, daughter of Colonel Gordon O'Neill, and left two sons, John, fifth Lord Brittas, a captain in the French army, who died unmarried, and Thomas, a General in the Sardinian army. According to Ferrar's History of Limerick, General Bourke was living in France in 1787. We are told that "he was a disinterested friend to his countrymen abroad. The king once said to him, "Bourke, you have solicited many favours for your Irish friends, but never asked one for yourself." His son was a captain in the Regiment of Rothe, and was a Knight of St. Louis. He died unmarried about 1796, when the direct line of the Bourkes of Clanwilliam became extinct.

NOTES.— "Brittas Castle is picturesquely situated on the left bank of the Mulcaire river, about nine miles S.E. of Limerick. Though now a crumbling ruin, it was once a castle of considerable extent and strength. It consisted of a massive keep and enclosed courtyard, with flanking towers at the angles. The surrounding country is undulating, and exceedingly fertile. To the N.E. extends the picturesque range of *Slieve Phelim* ; to the south the lofty peaks of the distant *Galtees* are in view. . . . Majestic oak and beech woods extended towards the mountains. The modern or residential portion of the castle overlooked, to the south, a broad lake, formed by the junction of small tributary streams with the Mulcaire." *Bourke of Brittas*.

This castle was blown up by Ginkle in 1691.

During the siege of Limerick, Castleconnell was garrisoned by 250 men. On the morning of the 27th August, 1691, the Prince of Darmstadt with his regiment, assisted by the regiments of Colonels Tiffin and St. John, and 700 horse, attacked this castle. The garrison held out until the afternoon of the 29th, when they surrendered. The castle was then blown up ; the explosion, we are told, was heard distinctly in Limerick, eight miles distant.

- [1] Authorities consulted "Annals of the Four Masters" ; "Hib. Pacata" ; "Hib. Dominicana" ; "Inquisitions and State Papers" in Record Office, Dublin; "Iar Connaught"; Carte's "Ormond"; "Description of Ireland, 1598"; "Cromwellian Settlement" ; Ware's "Ireland" ; "History of Limerick" - "Diary of Siege of Limerick" (London, 1692) ; "Extinct Peerage" ; &c.
- [2] William, 3rd Earl of Ulster, was assassinated at Carrickfergus by his uncle, Richard de Mandeville.
- [3] Elizabeth de Burgh was married to Lionel, Duke of Clarence, second son of Edward III.
- [4] Sir William de Burgo assumed the Celtic title of *Mac William Uachtar* (Lord of Galway) ; his brother, Sir Edmond, that of *Mac William Iochtair* (Lord of Mayo)—thus divided the Lordship of Connaught between them, throwing off the English yoke at the same time.
- [5] The "Annals of the Four Masters" give the following account of this fight : "James Fitzmorris went through the middle of Clanwilliam and proceeded to plunder the country as they went along. The country began to assemble to oppose them ; and first of all the sons of William Bourke, son of Edmond, namely Theobald and Ulick : and Theobald

despatched messengers to *Tuath-æsa-Greine* summoning *Mac-I-Brien Ara* to come and banish the traitor from the country. *Mac-I-Brien* sent a body of gallow-glasses and soldiers to Theobald. These then went in pursuit of these heroic bands, and overtook James, who had halted in a dense and solitary wood to await their approach. A battle was fought between both forces, in which James was shot with a ill in the hollow of his chest, which caused his death. Notwithstanding this, however, he defeated his lordly pursuers. In this conflict a lamentable death took place, namely, that of Theobald Bourke, a young warrior, who was a worthy heir to an earldom for his valour and military skill, and his knowledge of the English language

[6] “ *March* 15, 1592. Queen Elizabeth granted Cosby’s lands to Lord Bourke of Castleconnell, after the death of his brother, *Burghley*, to the Lord Deputy.”

“ *March* 22. Petition of Richard, Lord Castleconnell to the Queen, whereupon Her Majesty pitying commended his request to be referred to the Lord Treasurer to the end that some speedy means might be taken for his relief.”

“ *June* 20. Grant of an annuity of £200 for life to Lord Castleconnell.” *State Papers*.

[7] See “ Sir John Bourke of Brittas,” by James G. Barry (Messrs. Gill, Publishers, Dublin, 1888).

[8] 14 & 15 Chas. II., ch. ii. sec. 26, Irish.

[9] Castletown, Co. Kildare, residence of Dungan, Earl of Limerick.

The visit of the Association to Limerick in July naturally called forth several Papers, dealing with the Antiquities of the neighbourhood, which were read by some of the writers mentioned above, and also by Mr. Lenihan, Rev. J. Dowd, Rev. J. Crowe, and Rev. T. Lee.

It is satisfactory to find that some of the Papers gave rise to interesting discussions, and the writers when criticised, have occasionally joined issue with their critics, with what success the readers of the Journal can judge.
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