

O'Shaughnessy & The Dispossessed

The
History and Antiquities
of the
Diocese of Kilmacduagh
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Sir Roger O'Shaughnessy and the Galway jurors—His son, Sir Dermot, a member of the Confederate Council.

With the opening of the seventeenth century, many important and eventful changes set in, which materially affected the nation's future and the destinies of her people. It was under their influences that many old and historic names sank into obscurity, and in the diocese of Kilmacduagh we find that the O'Heynes, Kilkellys, and many leading branches of the De Burgos practically disappear from the pages of its history. These changes were in part the result of crushing penal enactments, and of the frequently recurring wars by which the country was devastated. Yet, despite those influences, others of the old tribe families struggled on, retaining with their religion at least a portion of their estates and influence. This is especially true of the chief of Kinel Aedh, whose support of the Confederate movement, and of the Catholic interests under James II., terminated in the loss of his property by confiscation. As early in the seventeenth century as 1635, we find Roger O'Shaughnessy honourably associated with the Galway jurors who offered effective opposition to Wentworth's daring scheme of confiscation in the West

The falsehood and injustice of the Stuarts was already filling the land with dismay. But amongst the many oppressive measures with which that ill-starred house oppressed their Irish subjects, there was hardly one more unjust and tyrannical than Wentworth's measure of confiscation, usually known as the "Commission of Inquiry into Defective Titles." Though this measure of plunder had been legalised towards the close of the reign of James I., it was not till 1635 that the "Commission was let loose on this devoted province." [1]

The title of each land proprietor was to be questioned by the executive, and regarded as defective, unless they were supported by deeds *preserved* and duly *registered* in the Record Office, Dublin. But though the sum of £3000 had been paid in the late reign by the proprietary of the province for the legal registration of their title-deeds, the registration was neglected, and the necessary entries were never made. Of this Wentworth was well aware. But it suited him, as his nefarious purpose was to confiscate to the crown the principal portions of the province, and to transfer the confiscated estates to English Protestant planters; in a word, to effect in the West what had been already effected in the North. This measure, which was so unjust, so arbitrary, so unconstitutional, was declared by Wentworth to be a powerful means of "civilising the people and of planting religion." In order to give his action some semblance of legality, the claims of the crown were to be submitted to the consideration of a jury. But the jury was to be carefully selected, and the judges were bribed. And when coercion was necessary, he did not shrink from having recourse to it in its most revolting form. Verdicts were accordingly found without difficulty at Boyle, Sligo, and Ballinrobe. Leitrim yielded to the claims of the crown without even a trial.

The Deputy next proceeded to Galway county. Though Lord Clanricarde, the largest proprietor, and a Catholic, was the person liable to suffer most, he retired to England. Not deem-

ing it wise to oppose the Deputy openly and in person, he recommended his nephew to oppose the project as strongly as prudence would permit.

But the Galway jurors were not prepared to copy the example set them by the other counties of the province. They obstinately refused to find for His Majesty. Wentworth, enraged at their independence, had both jurors and sheriff arrested, and sent as prisoners to Dublin. He then “bethought himself of a course to vindicate His Majesty’s honour and justice, not only against the jurors, but also against the sheriff for returning so packed a jury.” “And therefore,” he adds, “we fined the sheriff £1000 to His Majesty ; the jurors £4000 each, to be imprisoned until the fine should be paid, and until they should acknowledge their offence in Court on bended knees.” [2] Meantime the sheriff died in prison, and the jurors were subjected to excruciating torture. Some were “pilloried with loss of ears, and bored through the tongue, and sometimes marked on the forehead with an iron.”

As a last resource, they appealed to His Majesty for a mitigation, if not a total commutation of their sentence. It was a delicate undertaking to lay their grievances before the King without Wentworth’s knowledge, if possible. The agents to whom this delicate mission was entrusted were Sir Roger O’Shaughnessy of Gort, Martin, and Darcy. Their mission was not merely a delicate one, but it was one fraught with considerable danger, as Charles was already solemnly pledged to his Irish Minister to receive no appeals from his judgments.

Wentworth, however, became aware of their departure, and of the purpose of their mission. Regarding it as an act of contempt against his authority, he immediately wrote to London, requesting that the “priestly agents” should be arrested and sent back to Dublin, to be dealt with as he and his “Commissioners should think proper.” They were accordingly arrested, though a day had been actually fixed by King Charles for giving them an audience. Martin succeeded in being permitted to remain in London ; but Darcy and O’Shaughnessy were sent back to Dublin to present themselves before the enraged Deputy. Wentworth resolved that the agents as well as the jurors should be fined. He had them cast into prison also, and detained there until, through the interposition of Lord Clanricarde, [3] they were liberated, and their fines reduced.

Though Wentworth was soon recalled to answer for his tyranny, the bitter recollection of his oppression operated strongly in inducing the Western province to take part in the great national Confederation, which has invested the old city of Kilkenny with so deep and enduring an interest. And amongst the Confederates, who for a period held their sessions within its walls, and extorted concessions of the first importance from King and Parliament, we find the name of Dermot O’Shaughnessy.

Dermot O’Shaughnessy was heir and representative of Sir Roger, who was then advanced in years, and probably enfeebled after his recent imprisonment. And though we shall see that he was able to offer the hospitality of his castle at Gort to the Confederate Bishops who sought to meet the Nuncio at Galway, yet we do not find him taking any further active part in the public movements of the period,—indeed, he must have felt that he was well represented by his son.

On that memorable Sunday evening, 17th October 1645, when the venerable Archbishop O’Queely was surprised and slain by Coote, we find that W. O’Shaughnessy, a kinsman, and Richard Burke, who held the rank of majors in the arch-bishop’s forces, were made prisoners, together with Lieutenant O’Heyne. Indeed, so high did Sir Dermot O’Shaughnessy stand in the estimation of the Confederate Council, [4] that we find his name mentioned by that body amongst those selected to act as the Privy Councillors of the kingdom.

Dr. Kirwan's tribute to the character of Sir Roger O'Shaughnessy—He supports the Confederates as Lieutenant-Colonel — His son raises a troop of fifty men—Galway betrayed—Dominick Bodkin, Nicholas French, and Richard Kirwan rewarded for their "good services"—The Castle of Gort besieged by Ludlow—He shoots forty inmates and burns the castle—O'Shaughnessy's property confiscated—Redmond Burke of Kilcornan and Edmond Meyler Burke of Moyode deprived of their lands—The Taylors get possession of the castle and lands of Castle MacGrath—Lady Clanricarde, restored to Kilcolgan Castle by Charles, is again expelled—The castle given to Captain Morgan—Clanricarde and O'Shaughnessy restored—How Dnnkellin and Kiltartan were transplanted—Sir Roger O'Shaughnessy's will—Exile of Rev. J. Fahy, O.P., and Rev. William de Burgo, O.P.—Their character and career.

Clanricarde's position after the Cromwellians became masters of Galway may help to illustrate the extent to which the old chieftains and proprietors were affected by the defeat of the Royalists. And we shall see hereafter that treason to the King had a large share in that surrender.

The Lord Deputy's residence at Tirellan, near Galway, was taken possession of by Sir Charles Coote. Henry Cromwell took possession of Clanricarde's castle at Portumna, with 6000 acres of his estates there. In 1658, Richard Cromwell was proclaimed Lord Deputy of Galway, [5] and all Papists were soon banished from the town ; " for that noe Irish were permitted to live in the city, or within three miles thereof." [6]

Many leading Royalists fled, as did Clanricarde, to share the fortunes of their royal master abroad. O'Shaughnessy, for a period at least, stood high in Clanricarde's favour, but afterwards co-operated bravely with the Confederates at Kilkenny, and with the Royalists who rallied to the defence of the capital of the West. How high he stood in general esteem, may be best inferred from the following quotation from Lynch. [7] Referring to the visit paid by the saintly Dr. Kirwan to the castle at Gort, he tells us that Sir Roger O'Shaughnessy presented the prelate on the occasion with a large sum of money, which he declined to accept, however. He also forbade his chaplain to accept the baronet's generous gift. " Nor did he accept the munificence of a similar character exhibited to him by Roger O'Shaughnessy, a most noble knight, and second to no one in the whole Province of Connaught for hospitality and liberality,—second, I say, to no one save the Marquis of Clanricard. This Roger O'Shaughnessy was most lavish of hospitality and gifts,—so much so, that that well-known epigraph, ' Let this door be ever open, and never closed to an honest man,' might be aptly inscribed on his gate. He was well worthy of his great progenitor, Guaire, King of Connaught, who was so famed for hospitality, that when we would describe great liberality, we are wont to say, ' Such a man is more munificent than Guaire.' "

The Bishop of Killala's reason for declining the gifts offered to him was, that he pitied him in common with other nobles " whose fortunes and reverses had sustained considerable diminution, and he knew right well they could not afford to indulge in the customs of other times."

From the letter referred to in a preceding page, addressed from Fiddane Castle to his daughter, Mrs. Donovan of Castle Donovan, it is evident that Sir Roger anticipated the dangers that were then imminent. Addressing his " verie lovinge daughter" on the subject of her troubles, he writes : " As for your troubles, you must be patient as well as others ; and for my part I taste enough of that fruit. God mend it amongst us all, and send us a more happye tyme." But the more " happye tyme" was slow to come.

In combating those troubles in the early part of the Confederate movement, we find the Marquis of Clanricarde bearing high testimony to his character and worth.

“ I could not let so much worth,” he writes, “ pass from me without giving your lordship notice that in his person (Sir R O’Shaughnessy), his son and his followers, he hath constantly, and with much constant affection, been present and assisting to me in all my proceedings and endeavours for His Majesty’s service.” He held a captain’s commission in the royal troops. [8] His brother William was likewise a captain in Clanricarde’s levy ; and his character and loyalty obtained from the Corporation of Galway, in 1648, a vote that “ Lieutenant-Colonel William O’Shaughnessy, in consideration of his alliance in blood to the whole town, and for the consideration and affection that he and his whole family do bear to it, and his posterity, shall be hereafter free of their guild.” In 1650, Sir Roger died, transmitting to his son the same strong attachment to the cause of King and country.

We find that his son and representative, Sir Dermot O’Shaughnessy, had raised a troop of fifty men in Clanricarde’s regiment He married the lady Joan, daughter of Lord Barrymore, and had two sons, Roger and Cormac.

The siege of Galway lasted “ forty weeks,” when it surrendered to the Cromwellian troops on the 12th of April 1652. [9] And whatever may be said by Hardiman and others of the heroism of its defence, it is undeniable that the surrender was owing in a great measure to the treason of some of its citizens.

“ That there were traitors within the walls,” writes Hardiman in *Iar Connaught*, [10] appears from a State letter.” The “ State letter” referred to was addressed to the “ Commissioners for adjusting the claymes of the Irish at Athlone,” and is as follows : —

“ Dublin Castle, 10th May 1656.

“ Gent.

“ The Council having of late received testimony of singular good services performed by Mr. Dominick Bodkin, Mr. Nicholas Oge French, and Richard Kirwan, inhabitants of the town of Galway, for and in behalfe of the English interest during the late rebellion, not a little conducinge, as we are informed, to the advantage of the State, though ’tis probable they had by such ample testifying of their affections to the English, prejudiced their private interests, and contracted a malice from those of their own nacion, among whom they are now to live, which may prove dangerous to them,” etc.

The editor adds, “ These men were accordingly recompensed for their *singular good services*.”

The Gort Castle was situated on the highway between Galway and Limerick. It could not, therefore, easily escape the Cromwellian leaders, who knew its owner’s high character.

The defence of Galway required O’Shaughnessy’s presence in 1651, with his most experienced men. On his departure, however, he left his castle in charge of some tenants and a few soldiers under command of an Englishman named Foliot. Ludlow in that year appeared before the castle. The little garrison refused to capitulate, and bravely awaited the assault.

The castle, as is well known, occupied the site of the present military barracks at Gort. The officers’ quarters on the island occupy the site of the castle, while the mansion stood where the men’s quarters now stand. On the eastern side it was protected by the river, the current of which is sometimes deep and strong there. On the other sides it was surrounded by a fortification about 12 feet high, with a trench on the outside. The Parliamentarians, who, it would seem, had no artillery on the occasion, rushed for the fortifications, and with their scaling-ladders easily gained the castle courtyard. Under a well-directed fire they drove the inmates from the lower apartments of the castle, and succeeded in forcing an entrance through a window, which stood close to the ground. Foliot rushed sword in hand to meet the

enemy. But, while bravely struggling with his adversary, he was overpowered by numbers and slain. Meantime the victors set fire to everything inflammable in the castle, so that the unfortunate inmates, many of them women and children, were obliged to sue for mercy. It is said there were eighty in all, together with women and children. Ludlow admits that, "being pressed by his officers that some of the principal of them might be punished with death for their obstinacy, he consented to their demands."

In Mr. Gilbert's valuable publications regarding the Cromwellian period, we find in vol vi. p. 239, a shorter narrative of the siege of Gort Castle, which may be quoted here : —

"The Lieutenant-General taking leave of the Lord President, he was in his turn affronted by those in the Castle of Gortinsi, belonging to Sir Roger Shaghmus, trusting to the strength of the place. Our horse and dragoons, notwithstanding their not having anything but their armes convenient for a storm, yet fired the place. After long and great dispute, about forty of the rebels were slain in the storm, and after forty were shot, the castle was burnt, but the house preserved."

This narrative differs in nothing important from the preceding and more lengthened account, taken from the Appendix of Mr. Blake Foster's *Struggle for the Crown*. The lord of Gortinsiguair was soon after obliged to fly from the country and share his master's fortunes abroad, while his property was declared confiscated to the Covenanters.

Local tradition has it that the wreck of the fine old De Burgo castle at Ballinamantane was also the work of Ludlow's troops, and probably at the same time that Gort Castle was seized. The picturesque ruins of the shattered battlements and ruined keep of this fine old De Burgo fortress may still be seen casting its shadow upon the waters of the Gort river, where it sinks to pursue its underground course to Coole. It belonged to Captain William Mac Redmond Burke, whose fidelity to the royal cause seems to have been equally ruinous to his family, as to his kinsmen the Mac Redmonds of Kilbecanty and the Mac Huberts of Iser Kelly.

We also find that "Redmond Burke of Kilcornan, in the county of Galway," was specially mentioned amongst those who, in Cromwell's Act for "settling Ireland," were "excepted from pardon for life and estate." [11] We can have no doubt that the fidelity of the family of Kilcornan to the Confederate cause was the cause of this specially severe enactment.

Nor were the few proprietors who were permitted to retain nominal possession of their estates much more fortunate.

Mr. Prendergast, in his *Cromwellian Settlement*, [12] tells us of the case of Edmond Meyler Burke of Moyode, in the county of Galway, which shows clearly the character of the tenure by which property was held at the time. This gentleman, who was owner of "Moyode and other lands in the county of Galway, within four miles of Loughrea, gave way to Philip Fitzgerald, a transplanter from Munster, and became tenant to him for a part of his inheritance." The recklessness with which properties exchanged hands at this period, speaks strongly of a sense of insecurity of tenure ; and sometimes also, perhaps, of a sense of the injustice of the title by which they were acquired. We read of a "considerable property which was purchased for a silver tobacco-stopper and broadsword." [13] In another instance, a Cromwellian trooper accepted for the lands conferred on him for his services to the Lord Protector, "five Jacobuses (£5) and a white horse."

Even in the early part of the seventeenth century, we have record of a curious case of the sale of property possessing a local interest In 1612 a deed of sale was effected by Donogh O'Daly of Finievara. By this deed he transferred "certain premises in Finievara, with royalties over and under ground," as his proportion of the estate of Finievara held by the O'Daly

family from the Earl of Thomond, to Anthony, a Galway merchant, for *six pounds* of pure crown stamped money of England.” Those Galway merchants soon after became the owners of a considerable portion of the lands of Kilmacduagh and of the County Galway. During the Cromwellian period there was but little to control the rapacity of the dominant party.

We take from the pages of Mr. Cronnoly the following interesting instance of local transfer of property at the period : “ Another branch of the Mac Graths had some possessions in the vicinity of Kinvara, in the district of Hy Fiachrach Aidhne, County Galway. Of this branch the church of Kinvara was the burial-place, and until late years this sacred edifice, the foundation of St. Coman, of whom mention is made in the ancient tale known as the ‘ Imramh.’ or expedition of the sons of Ua Carra, was exclusively the place of interment of the Mac Graths and O’Heynes. The possessions of the Hy Fiachrian Mac Graths lay around Ballymagrath, near Ardrahan. But the proprietors thereof having taken an active part in the disturbances of 1641-49, the lands of Ballymagrath and Kiltiernan were granted by Cromwell to the family of Taylour or Taylor.” [14]

The castle still remains, annexed to the comparatively modern residence which is now known as “ Castle Taylor.” The castle and property remained in possession of the family to our time. Albinia Hester, daughter and heiress of Sir John Taylor, married in 1825 Francis Manly Shaw, who took the name of Taylor in compliance with the will of his father-in-law. His son is present owner of the family estates.

The family is noticed by Dr. Pococke in his *Tour in Ireland*, 1752. Referring to his journey from Galway to Gort, he says : “ On my way to this place ... I had a view of the house of Mr. Walter Taylor, whom I had seen in Galway. He is above four-score years old, and told me he had seen about 460 descended from his father, and several great-grandchildren. He rode lately from Dublin to Turloghmore in one day, which cannot be less than 60 English measured miles. As his passion has been to encourage a good breed of horses, so at this time he is a constant attender of all diversions in this country relating to the improvement of that noble animal.”

This Walter Taylor held under lease from the Bishop of Clonfert three quarters of land, or 360 acres, around Kilmacduagh. This appears from a certain deed dated February 1780, which is still preserved in the Deeds Office, Dublin. The Kilmacduagh Church lands have, however, become Taylor property since then. And as Walter Taylor was eighty years old, or more, in 1752, the purchase was not made by him. But as it is certain that his son, John Taylor, was owner in fee of those lands, it may be assumed that he was the purchaser.

But even when the Restoration came, it brought but little redress to Catholic proprietors. As Mr. Prendergast forcibly puts it : “ At the Restoration the Protestants were restored at once.” Catholics might have also hoped for some recognition of their loyalty. They too might have justly expected to be restored to the properties of which they were plundered for their fidelity to the crown. Yet the recognition of those claims which His Majesty was pleased to show, was contained in a declaration to the effect that “ while the Protestants should be allowed to retain all they gained, the Catholics would be restored to all they had lost.” [15] This oracular pronouncement might bring some comfort to any Catholic who did not know the extent to which Catholic estates had passed to Protestant owners during the recent confiscations.

As an instance of such restorations as did take place under royal favour, I may refer to the restoration of the Marchioness of Clanricarde “ to the castle and bawn of Kilcolgan, her only jointure house in Ireland.” [16] She was widow of the late Lord Deputy, the fifth Earl of Clanricarde, and daughter of William, Earl of Northampton.

Her estates and castle at Kilcolgan had been in the possession of Patrick French of Monivea. But, as we are informed by Mr. Prendergast, “ Patrick French was forced from his

ancestral castle at Monivea, in the county of Galway, to an assignment on part of the Clanricarde estate, in order to make way for Lord Trimleston, banished from his manor near Trim. ... In 1660, Patrick French lost his lands on the Clanricarde estate by the Marchioness's restoration ; yet he could not regain Monivea; for, though Lord Trimleston got a decree to be reinstated in his castle at Trimleston, the adventurer in possession could not be compelled to resign it till he was given a reprise of lands as good as he had got ; and Patrick French and his wife and daughters wandered about houseless, until Lord Trimleston died at Monivea on the 17th September 1667."

When the Marchioness of Clanricarde was restored to the castle and estates at Kilcolgan, she might naturally expect such protection in possession as the Lords Justices of Ireland could give ; yet we find that after a short tenure she was dispossessed by force. " Five soldiers, under command of Captain Brice of the garrison of Galway, on the night of the 7th August 1662, got over the wall of the bawn, and burst into a house Where two of the servants slept, in charge of the castle for the Marchioness, and drove them out, and carried away the doors, and broke the angles, making it uninhabitable, and forcibly detained it, in contempt of the order in Council." Such an instance, historically authenticated as this is, is sufficient to show the effect of the Cromwellian triumph in the district. And when, a few years after, Captain Morgan became the owner of the castle and lands, it may well be assumed that the transfer was effected on exceedingly favourable terms.

" But there were thirty-four of the Irish nobility and gentry whom King Charles, on his restoration, regarded as worthy of his particular favour. He therefore directed that they should, without the trouble of further proof, be restored to their former estates, according to the rules and directions given in the case of such as had faithfully served under His Majesty's ensigns abroad." [17] On this list the name of the Marquis of Clanricarde had the first place, while we find that of Sir Dermot O'Shaughnessy occupy the twenty-sixth place. He was therefore immediately reinstated to the possession of his castle at Gort, but only to two thousand acres of his ancestral property. We also find on the list the name Captain William Mac Redmond Bourke. It can therefore be fairly inferred that the Cromwellian settlement in the diocese of Kilmacduagh was in character with its terrible history through the country generally.

Though many of the O'Heyne family still occupied positions of some prominence in 1641, most of their territory had even then passed to other hands.

Mr. Prendergast throws some additional light on the extent to which the depopulated district was affected by the " settlement" projected by the Cromwellians. As far as the official arrangement for the settlement was concerned, the half baronies of Leitrim and Loughrea were set aside for the inhabitants of Waterford and Limerick. The reader will remember that the diocese of Kilmacduagh includes a portion of the Loughrea barony.

" The inhabitants of the counties of Cork and Wexford were to be transplanted into the baronies of Dunkellyn and Kiltartan." [18] And though Burren belongs to Kilfenora, it will not be out of keeping with our narrative to add that they were the people of Kerry who were to be transplanted thither.

The descendants of many of the transplanted Irish in Kiltartan and Dunkellyn may, we think, be still identified by their family names. The following, which we have no difficulty in recognising as Cork tribe names, are very numerous : [19] O'Mahony, Murphy, O'Leary, Collins, Coppinger, Duggan, Coleman, Mac Carthy, O'Regan, Roche, Halloran, O'Shea, O'Herin (Duhallow), O'Hely (Muskerry), Mac Sweeny (Muskerry), Carew (West Carbery). The following Wexford tribe names are also frequently met with in both baronies : Doyle, Garry, Prendergast, Walsh, Cavanagh, Larkin, Nolan. It should, however, be remembered that " care was taken" by the Government, " that the several septs, clans, or families of one

name removing should be as far as possible dispersed into several places.” [20] Like other garrison towns, [21] so in the case of Gort one hundred acres around the town were “ still reserved” by the Government.

The penalty of transplantation, sternly enforced against all the Irish septs, was rendered by circumstances dreadful in the last degree. Scourged all through the few preceding years almost simultaneously by war, famine, and pestilence, the country was little better than a desolate waste. So hard were the wretched natives pressed, that they were known not only to have eaten horse-flesh eagerly, but to have fed even on human flesh. Even the agents who should have helped to place the transplanted in possession of their assignments, delayed doing so until their co-operation was purchased by large bribes. But in the many cases in which the unfortunate transplanted were unable to offer a bribe, they were obliged to give those agents part of their lands as remuneration. After robbing the transplanted in this way of a portion of their lands, they frequently purchased the remainder of their allotments “ at two and sixpence per acre, and, at the utmost, five shillings.” [22] Those who profited chiefly by those nefarious transactions were the Cootes, the Kings, the Binghamms, the Coles, the St Georges, the Ormsbys, the Lloyds, and the Gores. The Conn-aught proprietors were of course plundered to make room for their plundered fellow-countrymen of the other provinces who were transplanted ; while the transplanted, plundered of all they possessed at home, were, on their arrival in Connaught, again plundered by the Government officials of money, and often even of their assignments of land.

But though O’Shaughnessy was restored, he did not long survive his good fortune. He died in the year 1673. His will, which is dated the 29th January 1671, [23] is a curious document. Its provisions throw some light on the customs and tone of the period, and may therefore be referred to here. It will be seen that they also reflect in a striking manner the truly Catholic and religious spirit of the testator.

Its first provision is a direction that his remains be laid with those of his ancestors in the family vault of the cathedral church of “ Kill M’Duagh.” The ancestral tomb, with the family arms still well preserved, in the O’Shaughnessy chapel there, has been already described in those pages. The next provision of the will is for the immediate celebration of Masses for his soul’s repose :

“ I doe order that my son and heir shall cause fyve hundred and fewer skore Masses to be said or celebrated for my soule immediately after my death.”

While bequeathing to his younger son some stock, with a certain mortgage, he betrays a little of the pride of the old chieftain in bequeathing “ all his plate and household stuff to his eldest son and heir,” charging both to live “ in brotherly affection amongst themselves, without animosity or contention.”

To his youngest son he also bequeathed “ his stuffe coat with gold buttons and his rapier.” A piece of grey frieze is bequeathed to Edmond O’Heyne ; while a piece of grey broad-cloth is bequeathed to Father J. Molony, on condition that he celebrate some Masses for his repose.

An additional singular provision of this will is the bequest of a gold diamond ring to James Devenisse for himself, on condition that he say “ one hundred rosaries for his soule.”

With these there were additional legacies “ left for his soule for some of the clergy.” There are twelve priests named for those specific legacies. The Dominicans in Galway, the Augustines in Galway, and the convent of “ Inish,” were similarly favoured.

In November 1655, Coote issued a proclamation at Galway regarding priests and “ fryars.” By this proclamation he required “ that the priests or fryars now imprisoned within the town that are above the age of forty years be forthwith banished into France, Portugal, and other

neighbouring kingdoms in amity with this Commonwealth ; and that the rest of the priests that are under the age of forty years be forthwith shipped away for Barbadoes or other the American plantations." Should any of the exiles presume to return, they exposed themselves to capital punishment.

This proclamation cannot be regarded as at all exceptional as regards Galway. Its provisions were being rigorously enforced against the priests and religious of the country. Everywhere the churches and religious houses were plundered and wrecked, and the priests obliged to choose between exile, imprisonment, or death. Amongst the exiled fathers were Rev. J. O'Fahy and Kev. William de Burgo, who deserve to receive a passing notice here.

William de Burgo was a member of the family of the ancient Mac Hubert Burkes of Iser Kelly, in the diocese of Kilmacduagh.

Referring to his lineage, the author of *Hibernia Dominicana* speaks of him as " Clarus familia." [24] But, distinguished as he was by parentage, he was still more distinguished as a member of the Dominican Order, for which he prepared himself in early life. Having made his studies in Spain, he returned to Ireland. The ancient convent at Athenry stood close to his native diocese, and here he constantly edified his brethren by the fervour and austerity of his life. He wore sackcloth, and habitually used the discipline. In 1650 he was driven forth from his beloved convent, and obliged to seek refuge in a foreign country. He went to France, and spent the remainder of his life in a convent of his order at Yienne, where he died A.D. 1665. The Acts of a Provincial Council of his Order, held at " Castellæ," bear testimony to his remarkable sanctity.

Father John O'Fahy was another distinguished member of the Dominican Order at Athenry, and a man who, in that evil period, proved himself a brave and holy confessor of his faith. As it is extremely probable that he was by parentage or kindred of the sept by whom the Kiltomas districts of Kilmacduagh were then held as owners in fee, he may be fittingly referred to here.

He made his early studies in Italy, and with marked success. On his return to Ireland, he was appointed professor of philosophy at Athenry. Soon afterwards he was entrusted with the important duties of prefect of studies and professor of theology there, and won for himself general approval by the manner in which he discharged the duties of those important positions.

He was also an eloquent preacher, and on Sundays and holidays multitudes flocked from the surrounding districts to hear his fervid and powerful addresses. The fame of his sanctity was as widely known as his eloquence and learning, for his life was not only a life of labour, but also a life of severe mortification. He loved to wear the poorest habit, and usually travelled on foot wherever his duties called him.

In estimating the importance of the position of professor and prefect of studies discharged at Athenry by O'Fahy, it should be remembered that it had been a short time previously constituted a University College by a General Chapter of the Dominican Order held at Rome, A.D. 1644. The other convents of the order sharing the same privileges were at Dublin, Limerick, Cashel, and Culrahane.

Father O'Fahy did not shrink from taking part in the controversies of that, troubled period. He proved himself to be a consistent advocate of the Nuncio's views, as he was a supporter of his wise policy. Yet he never forfeited the esteem and respect of any section of his countrymen.

The storm of Cromwellian persecution raged fiercely against the Dominicans of Athenry. In 1651, Vincent Gerald Dillon was imprisoned for his faith, and, after protracted sufferings, he gained the crown of martyrdom.

In 1652, John O’Cullen, a man eminent for eloquence and exemplary piety, was also beheaded for the faith. Such were glorious examples to encourage and sustain. When at length it became necessary for the subject of this notice to make his choice, he, like De Burgo, went into exile. He returned to Italy, and at Viterbo he spent the remaining years of his life. He died there, A.D. 1665.

As regards the episcopal succession, it only remains to be noticed that from the death of Hugh de Burgo in 1663, the see of Kilmacduagh was governed by Vicars for some years.

- [1] D’Arcy Magee.
- [2] Hardiman’s *Galway*, p. 105.
- [3] Hardiman’s *Galway*, p. 105.
- [4] Gilbert’s *Hist. Confed.* vol. v. p. 311.
- [5] Hardiman, *Galway*, p. 139.
- [6] *Cromwellian Settlement*, p. 153.
- [7] *Vita Kirovani*.
- [8] *King James Army List*, p. 328.
- [9] Hardiman’s *Galway*, p. 133.
- [10] P. 42., and Appendix, p. 244.
- [11] Dalton’s *King James’s Army List*, p. 513.
- [12] P. 163.
- [13] Croker’s *Notes to Macariæ Excid*, p. 126.
- [14] *History of the Dalcas*, p. 394.
- [15] *Cromwellian Settlement*, p. 16.
- [16] Prendergasts *Ireland from 1660 to 1690*.
- [17] *Battle of the Faith in Ireland*, p. 435.
- [18] *Cromwellian Settlement*, p. 160.
- [19] Connellan’s *Four Masters*.
- [20] *Cromwellian Settlement*, p. 148.
- [21] *Ibid*.
- [22] *Ibid*. p. 167.
- [23] *Hy Fiachrach*, p. 382.
- [24] *Hib. Dom.* pp. 275, 575.

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