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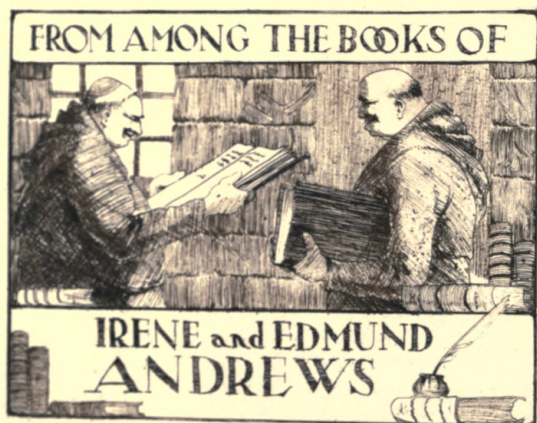


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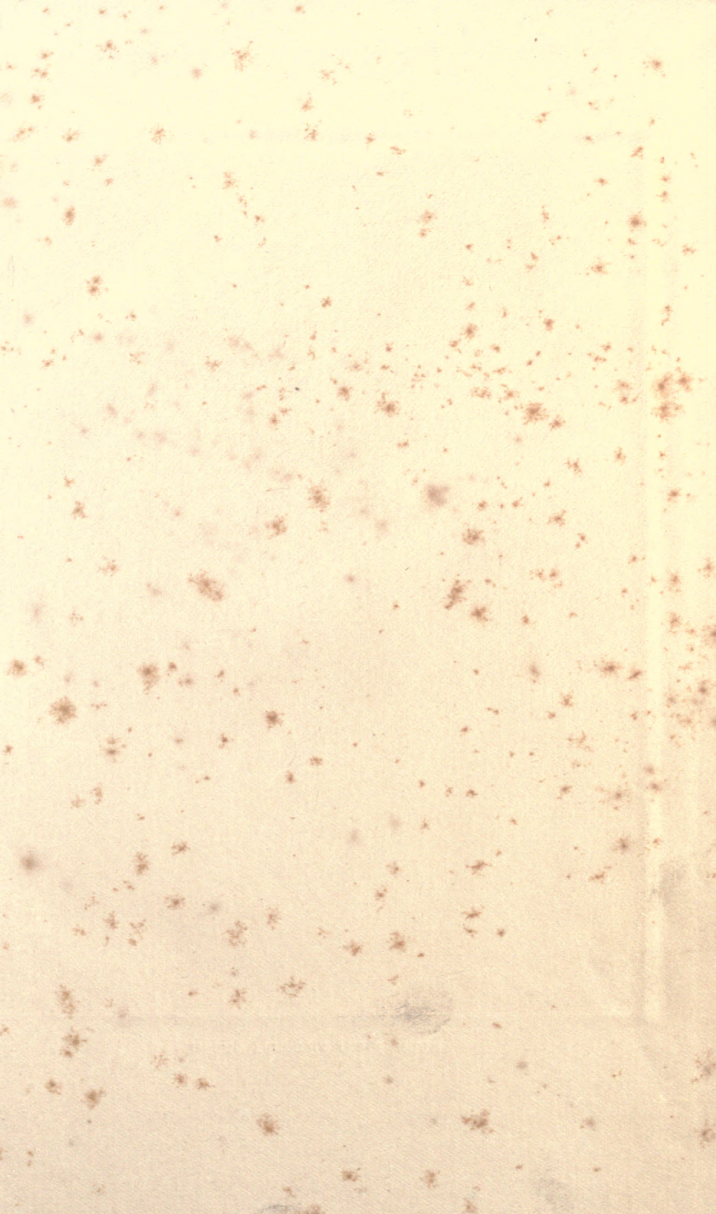


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HUGH, FIRST VISCOUNT GOUGH

# THE STORY OF AN IRISH PROPERTY

BY

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FIRST VISCOUNT GOUGH'

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## PREFATORY NOTE

THIS little book must be its own apology.  
I have no claim to speak of Ireland.

‘Yet grateful title may I plead  
For many a kindly word and deed.’

Reverence for the memory of a great and gallant soldier, sincere gratitude to those who have succeeded to his name and his house, and the recollections of many happy weeks in recent summers, have led me to bring this little tribute to a beautiful land.

I have endeavoured, in the course of my narrative, to express my obligations as I incurred them. But I must here add an expression of my debt to the Viscount and Viscountess Gough, for much help and interest.

R. S. R.

NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD,  
*August, 1908.*





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For the photographs of Lough Cutra Castle and Ardimmullivan Castle the writer is indebted to the kindness of Mr. C. P. McCarthy.





# THE STORY OF AN IRISH PROPERTY

## CHAPTER I

### I

THE place of which we are to speak has been a home of many generations. Of the men who first knew and loved the land which lies round Lough Cutra we know nothing. They have passed into the night and left no sign.

Grey recumbent tombs of the dead in desert places,  
Standing stones on the vacant wine-red moor—

these are all that remain to tell us of the 'silent vanished races', of a long succession of men and women, whose blood, perchance, may flow in living veins, but who have left 'no memorial, and are perished as though they had never been'. Under these mysterious stones may have lain the bones of men whose courage saved a people, or whose ambition was realized only at the cost of human suffering none the less real that it has been for centuries forgotten. The reward of their fame is this immemorial stone, which records nothing beyond the simple fact that men have lived and died. Antiquaries may dispute what manner of men they were, but the argument will not even attempt to go beyond the technical terms which, being interpreted, conjure up for us some dim picture of vague racial characteristics. 'Glory of warrior, glory

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of orator, glory of song' there must have been ; but they were only

Paid with a voice flying by to be lost on an endless sea.

Imagination itself can do little to bring us into touch with such peoples or to make us realize that they had like passions with ourselves. There is only one point of human contact. This land was theirs, and we can still see their mountains and streams and lakes, or hear the moaning of the wind among the trees as it moaned before the coming of the Firbolgs.

The lake and its islands are rich in beauty of water and woodland and rock. Over them rise the Slieve Echtge mountains. They are gradual and regular in outline, and rise to no great height<sup>1</sup>, but the soft evening light upon them has been the inspiration of poets. On the other side stretches a country of marsh and woodland and field and homestead. Since these early races disappeared, nature and mankind have combined to change and modify physical features themselves. We do not know if human life existed here before the everlasting hills were themselves ground down by the slow and certain processes of the Ice Age ; but long after the epochs which belong to the geologist and not to the historian, the face of nature has owned the power of change. Bogs have been formed by the rapid growth of peat-producing mosses, and they have been drained ; forests have disappeared and been replanted ; land has arisen from under the surface of the lakes. Yet the country is really the same as when the men, whose very tombs are to us a mystery, drew the breath of life, and loved and sinned and died ; and if one of them could revisit the scenes of those long lost years, he would still know it for his home. The ancient poet would again rejoice in ' delightful Echtge ', and in the lake and its islands.

<sup>1</sup> 1,000 to 1,200 feet.



There is one natural feature which gives to the district a special distinction and interest—an underground river such as most boys have navigated in the day-dreams of childhood. To geologists it is known as the river of Gort<sup>1</sup>, but it changes its name after each successive reappearance from the caverns through which it flows. It rises in Lough Cutra and its course is visible for about two miles, when it disappears into the earth, and flows underground to Pollduagh. Here and there it is for a moment open to the air, and the most remarkable and impressive of these holes is the large one known as the Devil's Punch-bowl. From Pollduagh it wanders, after the manner of ordinary rivers, for over three miles to the south-east of Kiltartan, where it again engulfs itself, reappearing several times before it reaches the lake of Coole, whence, by an underground course, it passes into the sea. Its strange course finds a parallel so far away as Yucatan. The imagination of the district has given to its reappearances such names as the Ladle and the Churn, as well as the Punch-bowl. The cavern at Pollduagh is in some ways the most interesting of these, but the wooded banks of the Punch-bowl (recovering now from a devastating storm in February, 1903) are by far the most beautiful. In the Park at Coole, it passes under what is called a natural bridge, like that at God's Bridge in Yorkshire. There is nothing in the way of an arch; the earth makes a great barrier round and under which the water forces its way. The weight of earth under which the river finds its darkened way along its whole underground course, is remarkably slight, and would have been swept away by most rivers while forming their valley: this Celtic stream has chosen the easier part and has merely pierced the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Irlande et Cavernes Anglaises*, by E. A. Martel; Kinahan's *Valleys, Fissures, Fractures and Faults*, and the Geological Survey of Ireland.

obstacles that impede it. But the ways of the rivers in this beautiful country are strange and unusual ; not far away, at Ballylee, another river of many names, meeting a steep bank, divides into two portions, which form an angle of about 180 degrees, almost a straight line, and flow in different directions to Pollaleen and Pollanoween, an unusual bifurcation which has specially interested the French geologist, M. Martel.

## II

The first inhabitants of Ireland to whom history can assign a name are the Formorians. They are supposed to have been short and dark, ignorant of the use of metals, and their stone weapons and tools fill many shelves in Irish museums. To them succeeded the Firbolgs, a race of uncertain origin, and it is with the Firbolgs, in the days of their tribulation, that tradition connects many of the names of our story. The Firbolgs had to yield to a succession of invaders, of whom the earliest were a tribe of Scandinavians, the Tuatha-da-Danaans, ethnologically connected, in all probability, with the Danes of a later day. Legends of the fighting, in which the Firbolgs were defeated by the Danaans, under their king Nuad, are still preserved, and find what corroboration is now possible from relics which tell

Of old unhappy far-off things,  
And battles long ago.

The tradition which connects the district of Lough Cutra with the Firbolgs can be traced to the work of a poet at the Court of the king who is popularly known as Brian Boru, and who, as Brian Boramha, ruled all Ireland in the end of the tenth century. 'The Migration of the Sons of Umor,' the work of the bard MacLiag, has been translated by Mr. John MacNeill,

Vice-President of the Gaelic League, to whom we are indebted for information on the subject. The poet's aim was to account for place-names, and his work has been preserved in the fourteenth century *Book of Ballymote*. The sons of Umor are, in the poem, a number of Firbolgs who took refuge from the Danaans in Pictland (afterwards to be known by the Irish name of 'Scotland'), and who returned to Ireland in the heroic times of Cu Chulainn, and became vassals of Caírbre Nia Fiar, the king of Tara. Caírbre received them owing to the intervention of Cu Chulainn and three other heroes, who became surety for them. But the tribute imposed by the king of Tara was so heavy that the sons of Umor fled from Meath to Connaught, and settled on the shores of Galway Bay and in the Aran Isles. Caírbre insisted upon their return, and threatened to take the lives of their sureties, and ultimately, Aengus, son of Umor, gave up his own son Conall, and three of his brothers, to meet their doom at the hands of the king of Tara, who spared the four heroes. This is the story told by MacLiag, and he goes on to relate how the descendants of Umor gave their names to their new possessions. Mr. MacNeill kindly permits us to quote the passage:—

Once they were settled in the East  
Round clear surfaced Tara, the tribes,  
Caírbre Nia Fiar laid heavily  
A tribute on them that they endured not:  
They departed from him with their possessions  
To Aihill and to Medh  
They journeyed westward to the shining sea.  
To Dun Aengusa in Aran  
Cime was settled on Loch Cime  
Cutru was settled on Loch Cutra  
Agar set up his house in the South  
Mil was settled on Muirbech.

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Other names which are in like manner associated with the descendants of Umor are Tulach Ladraigh (Tulira) and Carn Connaill, the burying-place of Connaill, who was slain, according to one version of the story, in a personal combat with Cuchullain.<sup>1</sup>

The country round Lough Cutra contains evidences of the struggle between the Firbolgs and the Tuatha da Danaans in the cahirs, or stone forts, which are popularly associated with the Danes. There is no fort in the district so large as the great Dun Aengus in the island of Aranmore, but the Cahir Mugachane, at Ballabane, is an excellent example of these ancient defences. It is situated in a spot which commands a wide prospect, extending from the woods of Lough Cutra to those of Coole, and the approach of a distant enemy would soon become visible to a watchman. There is probably a cave within this huge block of stout uncemented masonry, the circumference of which is about 120 yards. The defeat of the Firbolgs is the first fighting of which we have any definite knowledge, although the imagination of the writers of the MSS. on which the book of the Four Masters is based, has constructed a story of kings and battles before the birth of Christ. All these tales, and the story of the making of highroads in the second century A. D., have much the same kind of authority as the early chapters of Hector Boece's *History of Scotland*, or the myth which connects Brutus with the British Isles. They are not specially picturesque, and it is a relief to turn from them to the legends of the heroes. The great name of Finn has a double connexion with the district. Uinche's Ford, in the parish of Kilmacduagh, is supposed to preserve the name of a chieftain whom Finn had defeated in a battle at Kinvara, and who took his revenge by sacking the house of the hero.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. O'Curry's *Manners and Customs of Ancient Erin*, ii, p. 123.



This provoked a fresh attack, and at this ford Uinche was slain by Finn.<sup>1</sup> More romantic is the legend of the pursuit of the lovers Diarmuid and Graine. The lady, Graine, was the daughter of the High King of Ireland, and, on the eve of her wedding to Finn, she fled with the man she loved, Diarmuid, to Doire-da-Bhoth, the wood of the two huts. It is now the wooded valley of Chevy Chase.

We quote from Lady Gregory's *Gods and Fighting Men* the story of Finn's pursuit, as far as it relates, to the valley of Doire-da-Bhoth; the rest of the adventures of Diarmuid and Graine are much too long for purposes of quotation, and have no special connexion with our story. They will be found, admirably told, in Lady Gregory's book.

All that were in Teamhair rose up early in the morning of the morrow, and they found Diarmuid and Grania were wanting from them, and there came a scorching jealousy and a weakness on Finn. He sent out his trackers then on the plain, and bade them to follow Diarmuid and Grania. And they followed the track as far as the ford on the Sionnan, and Finn and the Fianna followed after them, but they were not able to carry the track across the ford. And Finn gave them his word that unless they would find the track again without delay, he would hang them on each side of the ford.

Then the sons of Neamhuin went up against the stream, and they found a horse on each side of it, and then they went on with the stream westward, and they found the track going along the side of the Province of Connacht, and Finn and the Fianna of Ireland followed it on. And Finn said: 'I know well where we will find Diarmuid and Grania now; it is in Doire-da-Bhoth they are.' Oisín and Osgar and Caoilte and Diorraing were listening when Finn said those words. And Oisín spoke to the others, and it is what he said: 'There is danger they might be there, and it would

<sup>1</sup> O'Curry's *Manuscript Materials*, quoted by Mgr. Fahey, p. 9.

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be right for us to give them some warning; and look now Osgar, where is Bran the hound, for Finn himself is no dearer to him than Diarmuid, and bid him go now with a warning to him.'

So Osgar told Bran, and Bran understood him well, and she went to the rear of the whole troop the way Finn would not see her, and she followed on the track of Diarmuid and Grania till she came to Doire-da-Bhoth, and she put her head into Diarmuid's bosom, and he in his sleep.

Diarmuid started up out of his sleep then, and he awoke Grania, and said to her: 'Here is Bran, Finn's hound, and she is come with a warning to tell us Finn himself is coming.' 'Let us take that warning, then,' said Grania, 'and make your escape.' 'I will not take it,' said Diarmuid, 'for if I cannot escape Finn, I would as soon he took me now as at any other time.' When Grania heard that, great fear came on her.

Bran went away from them then, and when Oisín saw her coming back, he said: 'I am in dread Bran found no chance to get to Diarmuid, and we should send him some other warning. And look where is Fearghoin,' he said, 'Caoilte's serving-man.' Now it was the way with Fearghoin, every shout he would give would be heard in the three nearest hundreds to him. So they made him give out three shouts the way Diarmuid would hear him. And Diarmuid heard him, and he said to Grania: 'I hear Caoilte's serving-man, and it is with Caoilte he is, and it is along with Finn Caoilte is, and those shouts were sent as a warning to me.' 'Take that warning,' said Grania. 'I will not take it,' said Diarmuid, 'for Finn and the Fianna will come up with us before we leave the wood.' And fear and great dread came on Grania when she heard him say that.

As for Finn, he did not leave off following the track till he came to Doire-da-Bhoth, and he sent the sons of Neamhuin to search through the wood, and they saw Diarmuid, and the woman along with him. They came back then where Finn was, and he asked them were Diarmuid and Grania in the wood? 'Diarmuid is in it,' they said, 'and there is some woman with him, but we knew Diarmuid, and we

do not know Grania.' 'May no good come to the friends of Diarmuid for his sake,' said Finn, 'and he will not quit that wood till he has given me satisfaction for everything he has done to me.'

'It is jealousy has put you astray, Finn,' said Oisín; 'you to think Diarmuid would stop here on the plain of Maen Mhagh, and no close place in it but Doire-da-Bhoth, and you following after him.' 'Saying that will do you no good,' said Finn, 'for I knew well when I heard the three shouts Caoilte's serving-man gave out, it was you sent them to Diarmuid as a warning. And another thing,' he said, 'it was you sent my own hound Bran to him. But none of those things you have done will serve you, for he will not leave Doire-da-Bhoth till he gives me satisfaction for everything he has done to me, and every disgrace he has put on me.' 'It is great foolishness for you, Finn,' said Osgar then, 'to be thinking Diarmuid would stop in the middle of this plain and you waiting here to strike the head off him.' 'Who but himself cut the wood this way,' said Finn, 'and made this close sheltered place with seven woven narrow doors to it. And O Diarmuid,' he said out then, 'which of us is the truth with, myself or Oisín?' 'You never failed from your good judgement, Finn,' said Diarmuid, 'and indeed I myself and Grania are here.' Then Finn called to his men to go around Diarmuid and Grania, and to take them.

Now it was shown at this time to Angus Og, at Brugh na Boinne, the great danger Diarmuid was in, that was his pupil at one time, and his dear foster-son. He set out then with the clear cold wind, and did not stop in any place till he came to Doire-da-Bhoth. And he went unknown to Finn or the Fianna into the place where Diarmuid and Grania were, and he spoke kind words to Diarmuid, and he said: 'What is the thing you have done, grandson of Duibhne?' 'It is' said Diarmuid, 'the daughter of the King of Ireland that has made her escape with me from her father and from Finn, and it is not by my will she came.' 'Let each of you come under a border of my cloak so,' said Angus, 'and I will bring you out of the place where you are without

knowledge of Finn or his people.' 'Bring Grania with you,' said Diarmuid, 'but I will never go with you; but if I am alive I will follow you before long. And if I do not,' he said, 'give Grania to her father, and he will do well or ill to her.'

With that Angus put Grania under the border of his cloak, and brought her out unknown to Finn or the Fianna, and there is no news told of them till they came to Ros-da-Shoileach, the Headland of the Two Sallows.

And as to Diarmuid, after Angus and Grania going from him, he stood up as straight as a pillar and put on his armour and his arms, and after that he went to a door of the seven doors he had made, and he asked who was at it. 'There is no enemy to you here,' they said, 'for there are here Oisin and Osgar and the best men of the sons of Baiscne along with us. And come out to us now, and no one will have the daring to do any harm or hurt on you.' 'I will not go out to you,' said Diarmuid, 'till I see at what door Finn himself is.' He went then to another door of the seven and asked who was at it. 'Caoilte, son of Ronan, and the rest of the sons of Ronan along with him; and come out to us now, and we will give ourselves for your sake.' 'I will not go out to you,' said Diarmuid, 'for I will not put you under Finn's anger for any well-doing to myself.' He went on to another door then and asked who was at it. 'There is Conan, son of Morna, and the rest of the sons of Morna along with him; and it is enemies to Finn we are, and you are a great deal more to us than he is, and you may come out and no one will dare lay a hand on you.' 'I will not indeed,' said Diarmuid, 'for Finn would be better pleased to see the death of every one of you than to let me escape.' He went then to another door and asked who was at it. 'A friend and a comrade of your own, Fionn, son of Cuadan, head of the Fianna of Munster, and his men along with him; and we are of the one country and the one soil, and we will give our bodies and our lives for your sake.' 'I will not go out to you,' said Diarmuid, 'for I would not like Finn to have a grudge against you for any good you did to me.' He went then to another door and asked who



was at it. 'It is Fionn, son of Glor, head of the Fianna of Ulster, and his men along with him; and come out now to us and there is no one will dare hurt or harm you.' 'I will not go out to you', said Diarmuid, 'for you are a friend to me, and your father along with you, and I would not like the unfriendliness of Finn to be put on you for my sake.' He went then to another door, and he asked who was at it. 'There is no friend of yours here,' they said, 'for there is here Aodh Beag the Little from Eamhuin, and Aodh Fada the Long from Eamhuin, and Caol Crodha the Fierce, and Goineach the Wounder, and Gothan the White-fingered, and Aoife his daughter, and Cuadan the Tracker from Eamhuin; and we are unfriendly people to you, and if you come out to us we will not spare you at all, but will make an end of you.' 'It is a bad troop is in it,' said Diarmuid; 'you of the lies and of the tracking and of the one shoe, and it is not fear of your hands is upon me, but because I am your enemy I will not go out.'

He went then to the last of the seven doors and asked who was at it. 'No friend of yours,' they said, 'but it is Finn, son of Cumhal, and four hundred paid fighting men along with him; and if you will come out to us we will make opened marrow of you.' 'I give you my word, Finn,' said Diarmuid, 'that the door you are at yourself is the first door I will pass out of.'

When Finn heard that, he warned his battalions on pain of lasting death not to let Diarmuid past them unknown. But when Diarmuid heard what he said, he rose on the staves of his spears and he went with a very high, light leap on far beyond Finn and his people, without their knowledge. He looked back at them then, and called out that he had gone past them, and he put his shield on his back and went straight on towards the west, and it was not long before he was out of sight of Finn and the Fianna. Then when he did not see any one coming after him, he turned back to where he saw Angus and Grania going out of the wood, and he followed on their track till he came to Ros-da-Shoileach.

He found Angus and Grania there in a sheltered, well-lighted cabin, and a great blazing fire kindled in it, and the

half of a wild boar on spits. Diarmuid greeted them, and the life of Grania all to went out of her with joy before him.

Diarmuid told them his news from beginning to end, and they ate their share that night, and they went to sleep till the coming of the day and of the full light on the morrow. And Angus rose up early, and he said to Diarmuid: 'I am going from you now, grandson of Duibhne; and I leave this advice with you,' he said, 'not to go into a tree with one trunk, and you flying before Finn, and not to be going into a cave of the earth that has but one door, and not to be going to an island of the sea that has but one harbour. And in whatever place you cook your share of food,' he said, 'do not eat it there; and in whatever place you eat it, do not lie down there; and in whatever place you lie down, do not rise up there on the morrow.' He said farewell to them after that, and went his way.

The valley of Chevy Chase or Doire-da-Bhoth has its own association with the legends of the district. From the Derry Brien mountains there flows into Lough Cutra, through the valley of Chevy Chase, the river of the two milch cows, still known by its name of Abain da Loilgheach (Owendalulagh). A king of the Tuatha-da-Danaan conquerors had a daughter, Echtge, who married her father's cup-bearer, and gave her name to the mountains which he held as the cup-bearer's fee. The bride brought as part of her dowry two cows which fed in the valley of Doire-da-Bhoth, and both produced many calves and much milk. A cow fed on each side of the stream, and this unequal division meant that one cow had all the fertile land, and the other only a barren hillside, and so the river gained its name.

### III

From legend we pass to the traditional history, such as is recorded in the Annals of the Four Masters. The general name of the district, Hy Fiachrach Aidhne, is

supposed to be derived from a fourth century Prince Fiachrach, the ancestor from whom the O'Shaughnessys claimed to be descended. He was one of three sons of Eochy Moyvone, king of Ireland, and brother of Niall of the Hostages, High King of Ireland, whose army he commanded. Fiachrach himself is given by tradition the position of king of Connaught. While fighting for his brother, Niall, he was treacherously slain by the people of Munster, and his two sons, Dathy and Awley, reigned successively over Connaught. Of Dathy the chroniclers record that he was victorious in a hundred and fifty battles, and they give him the honour of a remarkable death 'at the foot of the Alps'; he had violated the sanctuary of a hermit, and was struck dead by lightning. Dathy, the last of the chroniclers' list of pagan kings, had a son, Eoghan Aidhne,<sup>1</sup> so called because he had been nourished in Aidhne, by the tribes of Oig Beathra, who inhabited it. Eoghan Aidhne ruled the district of Fiachrach, and from his sons, Conall, Cormac, Senona, and Seachnasach, the O'Heynes, the O'Clerys, the O'Kilkellys, and the O'Shaughnessys claimed to be descended.

The Four Masters speak of succeeding kings of Connaught, and an early poet sings that

Four kings of the province of Connaught  
Dwelt in great Aidhne, land of saints—  
Muireheartach, one of the perfect breed,  
Laighnen, Guaire, and Colman Caomb.

Muireheartach is also known as MacEarc, a High King of Ireland, to whom the Four Masters assign a reign of twenty-four years, memorable in ecclesiastical history. He was succeeded by Colman, the father of Loigneun and Guaire Aidhne, the monarch with whom tradition connects the name of Gortinsi Guaire, the field of the island of Guaire. King Guaire is one of the most

<sup>1</sup> *Tribes and Customs of Hy Fiachrach*, p. 21.

remarkable figures in Irish tradition. There are many legends about him—not all to his credit, for one of them makes him murder a bishop, the rightful heir to the throne of Connaught. He was no great warrior; on one occasion he is recorded to have fought and run away, living to fight another day. The scene of his greatest defeat, somewhere about the year 650, was Carn Conail, in Aidhne, which is said to be the modern Ballyconnell, in the parish of Kilbecanty. His victorious enemy, Diarmot, joint-king of Ireland, appears in the story as the avenger of blood. St. Ceallagh, the bishop slain by Guaire, was a son of a former king of Connaught, who had devoted himself to a religious life. But Guaire, fearing that he might exert his great influence for himself or for his family, hired assassins to murder him. St. Ceallagh had spent the early years of his religious life in the Abbey of Clonmacnoise, and, on his way to avenge him, Diarmot prayed for victory at the shrine of St. Ciaran, and went forth to battle as the champion of the Church. After the battle of Ballyconnell, Guaire lost the greater portion of his kingdom, and had to content himself with ruling Hy Fiachrach. The story ends charmingly. Guaire and Diarmot were reconciled, and the king of Fiachrach Aidhne expiated his foul deed in prayer and penance, and in the acts of charity without which he could not live. He died honoured and revered, and was laid to rest in the Abbey of Clonmacnoise, near the bones of his erstwhile enemy, Diarmot.

Guaire had a castle at Dunguaire, near Kinvara, and a palace on the island in the river at Gort, and with this palace are associated the tales of his hospitality to warrior and to bard. The most remarkable and interesting of these is the story of the visit to Guaire of Seanchan Torpest, the chief poet of Ireland. Seanchan was accompanied by a great retinue, and by numbers of lesser poets, and even the royal patience



was exhausted by a visit extending over a year and a half. The king hit upon the device of asking Seanchan to recite the poem of 'Tain Bo', the words of which had been long forgotten by mortal man. It therefore amounted to a dismissal when Guaire spoke thus<sup>1</sup> in the palace hall at Gort:—

Bear the cup to Seanchan Torpest;  
Yield the bard his poet's meed;  
What we've heard was but a fore-taste;  
Lays more lofty now succeed.  
Though my stores be emptied well-nigh,  
Twin bright cups there yet remain;  
Win them with the raid of Cualigne;  
Chant us, bard, the famous *Tain*.

The device was successful. Seanchan departed, not irreconcilably offended, and promised to pay his host the compliment of a future visit. In *The King's Threshold*, Mr. W. B. Yeats has adopted another legend of Guaire and Seanchan, the story of an insult offered to the bard by the king, whose great lords objected to the poet's sitting at table with them, holding

... that it was the men who ruled the world,  
And not the men who sang it, who should sit  
Where there was the most honour.

Traditions of Guaire connect him not less with saints than with bards, and the quality most generally attributed to him is the boundless generosity which made him long for gold and silver to give to the poor and to the Church, and which led to his feeding the missionaries who were preaching Christianity to the pagans of Immagh. Here we must leave Guaire, though we shall meet him again in speaking of the saints of the district. As we bid him farewell, we cannot but remember that he is, like ourselves, 'such

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from Ferguson's *Lays of the Western Gael*.

stuff as dreams are made on,' and there melt into air along with him 'the cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces, the solemn temples', with which we have endowed his capital city of Gort. That he never lived, we cannot say. Stern scientific history knows him not. Yet Guaire and Seanchan possess to-day a life more real than the vast majority of those who have lived our mortal life between his time and ours. It is no small thing to be alive in the traditions of all the generations, to give to hamlet and cell associations with a dim and remote past. Guaire lives with Arthur and Lear; Seanchan finds his peer in Merlin; and the palace of Gort is as the towers of Camelot.

## CHAPTER II

### THE ISLE OF SAINTS

#### I

WE are approaching firmer ground. Names and places may still be uncertain, and legends still unable to stand the fierce light of modern criticism. But the great facts are clear and steadfast. While the gods of the pagans were still worshipped in England, before Gregory the Great had admired the boys of the Angles in the market place at Rome, long ere St. Augustine had set foot in Kent, Ireland was already a home of religion and learning. Great Christian teachers had come to the shores of Ireland before the Roman legions had finally disappeared from Britain, and while Christianity succeeded only in maintaining a lingering existence among the Romanized Celts of the country which was soon to be England, it sprang into vigorous life among the Celts of Ireland. When pagan Angle and Saxon and Jute made Christianity in England the religion of the serf, Kings were bowing before the Cross in the Isle of Saints. Dim and distant as is that ancient religious life after the lapse of fifteen centuries, yet its traditions and its memories are, for Ireland, a great inheritance, and in this heritage all Irishmen may share, for all will think of the conversion of Ireland in the spirit of the Irish poet :

What matter that at different times,  
Our fathers won this sod?  
What matter that at different shrines  
We pray unto one God?

In fortune and in fame we're bound  
 By stronger links than steel,  
 And neither can be safe nor sound,  
 But in the other's weal.

The best memorials of these early Christian teachers whose simple faith made Ireland a Christian country are the ruins of church and cell and monastery which impart a sacred significance to moor and stream, and in these the country round Lough Cutra is singularly rich. From the seven churches of Kilmacduagh, famous even among the famous monuments of Ireland, to the stones on the island in the lake, which tell of holy lives lived long ago, the district abounds in the ruins of this ancient civilization. It is natural that such a country should also cherish traditions and legends of the men, from whom 'savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion'.

## II

Of the details of the work of the first Irish missionaries we know almost nothing definite, but it is not unlikely that St. Patrick may have traversed the hills which look down upon Lough Cutra, although Aidhne has no special connexion with the patron saint of Ireland. The great saint of the district is St. Colman Mac Duagh, whom his early biographers record to have come of the race of Fiachra, and to have been a near relative of King Guaire. The story of his birth has been learned by Lady Gregory from the people round her beautiful home at Coole, and has been preserved by her in her *Book of Saints and Wonders*. It had been prophesied that his mother, Rhinagh, would bear a son greater than the sons of Colman, King of Connaught and father of Guaire, and Colman therefore determined to destroy Rhinagh before her son was born.



And they took her and tied a heavy stone about her neck and threw her into the deep part of the river, where it rises inside Coole. But by the help of God, the stone that was put about her neck did not sink but went floating upon the water, and she came to the shore and was saved from drowning. And that stone is to be seen yet, and it having the mark of the rope that was put around it. And just at that time there was a blind man had a dream in the north about a well beside a certain ash tree, and he was told in the dream he would get his sight if he bathed in the water of that well. And a lame man had a dream about the same well that he would find at Kiltartan, and that there would be healing in it for his lameness. And they set out together, the lame man carrying the man that had lost his sight, till they came to the tree they had dreamed about. But all the field was dry, and there was no sign of water unless that beside the tree there was a bunch of green rushes. And then the lame man saw there was a light shining out from among the rushes; and when they came to them they heard the cry of a child, and there by the tree was the little baby that was afterwards Saint Colman. And they took him up, and they said 'If we had water we would baptize him'. And with that they pulled up a root of the rushes, and a well sprang up and they baptized him; and that well is there to this day. And the water in springing up splashed upon them, and the lame was cured of his lameness, and the blind man got his sight.

The story of the baptism of St. Colman recalls the similar legend about St. Patrick, told so beautifully by Aubrey de Vere :

How can the babe baptized be,  
Where font is none and water none?  
Thus wept the nurse on bended knee,  
And swayed the infant in the sun.

The blind priest took the infant's hand,  
With that small hand above the ground  
He signed the Cross: at God's command  
A fountain rose with brimming bound.

In that pure wave, from Adam's sin,  
The blind priest cleansed the babe with awe:  
Then reverently he washed therein  
His old unseeing face—and saw.

The whole district is rich in memories of St. Colman. The holy well, created for his baptism, is still held in reverence at Corker, and far away in Aranmore, St. Colman's Church commemorates his early residence in that ancient home of religion and learning. In the Burren Mountains men point out the cave in which he sought 'the calm repose, the silent shade', which the English poet of the eighteenth century sang as best suited for prayer and praise. 'The Burren ranges,' says Monsignor Fahey, 'form the mountain barriers which divide Aidhne in the south-west from the rugged defiles of Corcomroe. Extremely desolate at the present day, the Burren hills had their rugged sides then clothed with dense forests, well calculated to afford that concealment for which he sought. The waving pines, the lordly oaks, the graceful ash which crowned the summits and rugged sides of Burren, have long since been cut away. Only a few of the hazel copses of its valleys remain. But there is no one familiar with its rugged solitudes and deep defiles, at the present day, that cannot realize how it was in St. Colman's time well fitted to be a hermit's chosen home.' The cave is near the ruined oratory of Colman, and some of the legends which give interest to the spot and have been collected by Lady Gregory may well be quoted here. We begin by once again borrowing from Lady Gregory:—

He was a great saint afterwards, and his name is in every place. Seven years he was living in Burren in a cleft of the mountains, no one in it but himself and a mouse. It was for company he kept the mouse, and it would awaken him when he was asleep and when the time would come for him to be minding the Hours. And it is not known in the world what did the dear man get for food through all that

time. And that place he lived in is a very holy place, being as it is between two blessed wells. No thunder falls on it, or if there is thunder it is very little, and does no injury.

And if it is long since Colman left this life and the churches he had made, it is well he minds the people yet, and there are many get their eyesight at the wells he blessed, and it is many a kindness he has done from time to time for the people of Aidhne and of Burren. There was a little lad in Kiltartan one time that a farmer used to be sending out to drive the birds off his crops; and there came a day that was very hot and he was tired, and he dared not go in or fall asleep, for he was in dread of the farmer beating him. And he prayed to Saint Colman, and the saint came and called the birds into a barn, and they all stopped there through the heat of the day till the little lad had got a rest, and never came near the grain or meddled with it at all.

There was a boy fell into the blessed well that is near the seven churches at Kilmacduagh, a little lad he was at the time, wearing a little red petticoat and a little white jacket. And when some of the people of the house went to draw water, they looked down in the well and saw him standing up in the water, and they got him out and brought him in to the fire, and he was nothing the worse. And he said it was a little grey man, that was Saint Colman, came to him in the well and put his hand under his chin, and kept his head up over the water.

There was a man going home from Kinvara one night having a bag full of oats on the horse. And it fell and he strove to lift it again but he could not, for it was weighty. Then the saint himself, Saint Colman, came and helped him with it, and put it up again for him on the horse.

There was another man living up beyond Corcomruadh, and he never missed to go to the blessed well that is above Oughtmana on the name day of the Saint. And at last it happened he was sick in his bed and he could not go. And Saint Colman came to him to the side of the bed and said: 'It is often you came to me, and now it is I myself am come to you.' It is about forty years ago that happened.

Saint Colman's well beyond Kinvara is a very good well.

To perform around it seven times you should, and to leave a button or a tassel or some such thing on the bush. The people of Coole and of Tyrone used to be going to it at the time of the wars, asking safety for their sons and their husbands and their brothers. And whoever would pray there would be freed from the war, and would come safe home again.

After some years in his lonely hermitage, the death of King Colman and the accession of Guaire are recorded to have removed any need for concealment, and Guaire invited the saint to become bishop of Aidhne. We quote here still another legend, this time from Monsignor Fahey. It is the story of St. Colman's call to his episcopal work :—

Our Saint had spent the Lent in the usual exercises of austerity. And on Easter morning, after reciting the divine office and offering the sacred mysteries, he inquired of his youthful attendant if he had procured anything special for their repast in that great and joyous feast. His attendant replied that he had only procured a little wild fowl in addition to the herbs which were their usual fasting fare, and began to repine at the severity of a life which even on so joyous a festival brought them no legitimate relaxation. He contrasted their position with that of those who had the good fortune of forming Guaire's household. The Saint, seeing with concern that his attendant's patience was nigh exhausted, commended the matter to God, and urged that the King of Heaven and Earth, whose servants they were, could easily supply a feast, and strengthen his attendant's failing confidence, if such were His Divine pleasure. And as to Guaire's royal banquet, to which reference was made, and of which his chieftains and retainers were then about to partake, it might, if it so pleased Providence, be transferred from the palace to the hermitage.

The banquet was being set on the royal tables at Durus while the Saint was yet speaking. And there can be no doubt that it was a sumptuous one, and worthy of His Majesty's characteristic love of hospitality. The old writers



recount with evident satisfaction the important additions to the feast which had been procured specially for the occasion by the king's huntsmen. Before sitting down to the feast, the king exclaimed, with unusual impressiveness, 'Oh, would it pleased Heaven that this banquet were set before some true servants of God who require it; as for us, we might easily be provided with another.' He had no sooner spoken than the dishes were removed by invisible hands. All were struck with astonishment. The king, amazed at the marvel, summons his mounted guard, that they may follow, and discover, if possible, the destination of the dishes. All his retinue follow in hot haste, and are accompanied by a motley crowd of women and children from the district through which they pass. Meantime, the dishes had reached the Burren hermitage, and were set down in the open space in which the Saint and his disciple were wont to partake of their scanty meals. On seeing them, the disciple exclaimed, 'O father, behold the reward of thy patience! Let us thankfully partake of the food sent us by our good God.' Our Saint, however, would first know with certainty whence they had come, and is informed by an angel that the feast was sent in response to his prayers, and through the benevolence of the king. Meantime, the unexpected arrival of His Majesty with his retinue and followers filled them with alarm. Their astonishment at discovering the oratory and cell was increased by seeing the banquet spread before the holy hermit and his attendant, who, with thankful hearts, and it may be assumed, with good appetites, were about to partake of the good things thus bountifully provided for them by Heaven. But our Saint, with a full confidence in the protection of Heaven, commanded that his unexpected visitors should not approach till he and his disciple should have partaken of the feast so providentially provided for them. And here another marvel occurs. Riders and pedestrians alike are unable to move. The level limestone ledges bear to the present day the footprints, as it is piously thought, of that motley gathering; Colgan, who gives the legend, must have thought so. No doubt this singular phenomenon of the footprints on the rocks must have been in the days of

Colgan, and in the still more remote times of Aengus, much more striking than it is in our time. But the ascent or approach through the mountain gorge is in our time, as in Colgan's and centuries earlier, called 'Bohir na Maes', i.e. the Road of the Dishes. Thus did it please God to manifest in a most striking manner the singular sanctity of His servant to the king and the assembled multitude. The favour which he found with God was thus manifested to the world, despite his humble efforts to hide himself, as well from the admiration as from the hostility of men. At the king's entreaties, all were again set at liberty through the Saint's prayers; and they returned to publish throughout Aidhne the sanctity of the holy solitary, and the extraordinary things which it pleased Heaven to do through the efficacy of his prayers.

### III

We must not linger over these beautiful traditions of the holiest name of the district, for the name is kept in remembrance also by the ruined buildings which are associated with the Saint. St. Colman's Oratory cannot, indeed, claim the antiquity of its patron, but it records the fact that an uninterrupted tradition has for centuries asserted that on this spot Colman prayed. Much more remarkable, though not more picturesque and impressive, are the great ruins of the Cathedral Church of Kilmacduagh. Alike in Ireland, in Scotland, and the North of England, had early Christian missionaries adopted a monastic system: in Scotland and in Northumbria because their inspiration came from Ireland, and in Ireland because such a system suited a country without any centralized government. A number of monks settled in a district: their abbot was consecrated as a bishop, and he ruled the Church in the land around his home. It was in such a simple manner that St. Colman founded his church and monastery at Kilmacduagh. The site was chosen, his biographers tell

us, by a divine indication ; the sign selected was the falling of his girdle, loosened by no human hand, as he traversed the sacred ground. Traditions tell how the generous Guaire gave land and money, and how there came, to aid St. Colman, the great Gobban Saer, builder of towers and of churches. We cannot say with any confidence that the eyes of St. Colman beheld any portion of the noble ruins which we see to-day. Some of the original stones may have survived, but the masonry—the mortar and the dressing of the stones—may be said with some certainty to belong rather to the ninth or to the tenth century than to the seventh, and the traditional date for the foundation of the church is 610 A.D., nine years after the foundation of ‘Glastonbury of the Gael’ across the Channel. It is with some regret that Irish antiquaries, like Monsignor Fahey, have found themselves compelled to abandon the belief that the seven churches of Kilmacduagh belong in veritable stone and lime to these early times ; but it is possible to release the imagination from the control of the senses, and to reflect, with scarcely diminished appreciation, that the ground on which these buildings stand has been holy ground for thirteen centuries. Even if the churches could claim a superior antiquity, the aid of imagination would be hardly less necessary to reconstruct the past, for

The vaulted roof is fallen,  
And the bat and owl repose,  
Where once the people knelt them,  
And the high *Te Deum* rose.

The date of the existing ruins is fixed by the date of the Round Tower, which is so decisive and commanding a feature upon the landscape. It is generally agreed that these towers were built for protection against the Danish invaders of the ninth and tenth centuries, and the first

historical reference to them belongs to the year 950. 'The similarity,' says Dr. Fahey, 'in the architecture of portions of the tower and of the western end of the cathedral is striking. . . . In both, we have striking specimens of cyclopean Irish work: the doorway in the western gable of the church, with its massive lintel and inclining jambs; the masonry formed by massive stones fixed without regard to coursing, and yet with joints as perfect as in a Roman wall.' These indications fix the date of the architecture, and our historical information is in keeping with them. The original buildings of St. Colman's time were probably modest enough, and we may be certain that they were destroyed in the Danish invasions, although some stones may yet—who can tell?—remain in the later erection. They were not built in time to suffer, in the middle of the sixth century, from the traditional raid of the Ua Carra brothers, long before the Danes set foot in Ireland. The churches of Kinvara are among those which are recorded to have been attacked<sup>1</sup>, and the spirited lines in which Mr. T. D. Sullivan describes the Ua Carra outrage may serve to depict the woe worked by the heathen Danes, when they, in turn, ravaged the churches of Kinvara, and among them Kilmacduagh.

We slew the priests that could not flee  
 We gathered altar, bench and door,  
 Mitres and vestments fair to see,  
 We heaped them high and hurriedly  
 We burned them on the blood-stained floor.

Unlike the Ua Carra brothers, the Danes found no place of repentance, and there is no record of their rebuilding the altars they had thrown down. Yet so large was the influx of a Danish population in these districts of Ireland, that the Christian descendants of the

<sup>1</sup> O'Curry's *Manuscript Materials*, p. 290.



pagan marauders must have been largely represented among the good people of Aidhne who completed the House of God at Kilmacduagh, in the time of Brian Boróimhe. We can guess that their first care was the erection of the Round Tower, in which priest and people might take refuge. Monsignor Fahey gives us the measurements of this remarkably perfect specimen of a Round Tower. Its height is 110 feet, its circumference about 56 feet; it leans about two feet from the perpendicular. The arched doorway is 26 feet from the ground. The greater portion of the cone had fallen long ago, and the tower was in a semi-ruinous condition when it was restored in 1878-9. The architect of the restoration, Mr. A. Scott, thus described in the *Builder* for January 3, 1879<sup>1</sup>, the accumulations found in the interior of the Round Tower:—

1. The first 2 feet was composed of partly decayed twigs, and a few of the fallen cap stones.

2. The next 4 feet were filled with stones of cap and lime rubbish, exclusively.

3. The next 3 feet, with decomposed twigs, same as top layer, mixed with small human and other bones.

4. The next 3 feet, with brown earth mixed with ashes of a reddish hue, small pebbles, small human and other bones, principally ribs of the human frame.

5. The next 9 feet 10 inches, with brown earth, principally ashes of a reddish hue mixed with a large amount of small human bones, and bones of the lower animals, oyster-shells, sods of turf, a little charcoal, and a few pieces of brass. All the bones were small, and such as could be carried by birds, and were found chiefly close to the wall all round.

6. The underneath 6 feet 2 inches was packed with small-sized stones and with very little rubbish. The packing in this case was by no means accidental, but was done by the builders to form a flooring on which to stand and scaffold, for the stones used in packing were clean, weather-worn, and

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Mgr. Fahey.

identical with those used in building the inside face wall from this point to the level of the door.

The diameter of the interior, from within 6 feet 2 inches of the foundation, is from 5 feet to 5 feet 2 inches, and is faced with large unhammered stones in the rudest form, just as if it were built against a bank. The above figures make 28 feet from door-sill to bottom of foundation course both inside and outside.

Further excavations, below the level of the foundations, have been taken to prove the existence of Christian burial on the spot at a date prior to the erection of the tower, and, if this is so, it is another indication of a later date. The ashes and human bones in the lower strata of the tower are generally explained as showing the occurrence of fires in the tower, resulting in the destruction of its inmates. It is almost certain that we may refer the Tower of Kilmacduagh to the ninth or the tenth century, when we read of many invasions of the Danes or Northmen, who devastated all Connaught in 830, and who were at Kinvara in 866. The waste places of former generations were largely restored in the days of Brian Boromhe, who lived in the end of the tenth century, and probably the existing churches and Tower of Kilmacduagh date from his time.

About forty yards from the Round Tower stands the Cathedral, the largest of the Seven Churches of Kilmacduagh. The transepts, much later in date than the rest of the building, have given it the appearance of a Greek cross, but this unusual feature was not part of the original design. The oldest portion is the western gable, and the church has been altered and enlarged at various periods. By Monsignor Fahey's kind permission, we quote his description of the architectural details :—

Subsequent restorations and extensions gave the church its present length, which is 97 feet 10 inches. It is very

probable that the earliest enlargement included a portion of the choir and the entire of the present chancel, which is 25 feet 6 inches in length, and uniform with the church in breadth. It is lighted by a window filled with simple stone tracery of the late Early English period. The splay on the inside is wide and regular; and its closely-jointed and well-chiselled stones present a surface unbroken and seemingly fresh after the lapse of centuries. A door leads from the chancel to a neat but comparatively modern sacristy on the south side.

The chancel is separated from the choir by a semicircular arch, which is supported by plain and strong pilasters 3 feet wide. The most striking feature of the chancel arch is the closely-jointed and well-cut surface which it presents. The completion of choir and chancel as it stands does not, probably, belong to a more remote period than the close of the thirteenth or the beginning of the fourteenth century.

The south transept must have been the next important addition to the cathedral. It stands nearer to the western gable than to the chancel gable. It opens on the nave by a pointed arch, which is moulded and well cut, but somewhat low. This wing has therefore much more the appearance of a side chapel than of an ordinary transept. It probably was Our Lady's Chapel. The interior is lighted by a fine window in the gable, with well-preserved flamboyant tracery; and a smaller but well-proportioned window in the eastern side-wall, of the same style. The masonry consists of neat and carefully-set courses. Its erection cannot be referred to an earlier period than the fifteenth century. Its length is 25 feet and its width 22 feet 4 inches.

A stone altar, well moulded, and showing twisted columns at the front angles, stands there in fair preservation, though it has been used recently as a tomb<sup>1</sup>, and was thus considerably injured. A nicely-cut stone bracket still occupies the angle on the right of the altar. The well-moulded doorway

<sup>1</sup> An inscription on the table refers to an O'Shaughnessy family, and gives a date 1798.

of the cathedral, situated in the southern side-wall and close to the western gable, was probably inserted at the same period, and the old western entrance closed with masonry, which remains to the present day.

The position of the north transept corresponds with that of the southern transept. There is also an arch of about the same dimensions, but much more rudely constructed; probably it was owing to the defective style of its construction that it was filled up with masonry, as it is now, leaving only a simple Gothic doorway to open on the church. This transept has therefore all the appearance of a chapel; and is, in fact, often spoken of as the 'O'Shaughnessy Chapel'. It is so called by Pococke in his *Irish Tour*, 1752. It contains, indeed, many interesting memorials of that remarkable though unfortunate family. Opposite the entrance, and against the transept gable, stands by far the most interesting monument in the church. It is sometimes called an 'altar'; it probably is an altar-tomb, as it still bears upon it, in light and very delicate relief, two shields, one at either side, with the coat of arms of the unfortunate O'Shaughnessys, baronets of Gort. The triple-towered castle, e. g., is still traceable in both; the two lions, or supporters, are also still distinctly traceable. Little else, however, is now traceable there; and, though we know that the motto of the family was 'Fortis et stabilis',<sup>1</sup> it is now illegible if it ever had been inscribed upon them.

On a plinth, which must have stood somewhat higher than the transept floor, rests a simple cut-stone projection, which supports a table which measures 3 feet 2 inches in width, but projects only a few feet from the line of gable. On this table rest square bases about twelve inches high, on which rest pillars with moulded bases and Corinthian capitals. The pillars, including bases and capitals, measure 4 feet 1 inch, and support an entablature carefully moulded, and measuring 1 foot 5 inches in depth. The back of the altar is done in carefully-chiselled stone, showing on either side, and close to the capitals of the pillars, the raised shields; and in

<sup>1</sup> *Customs of Hy-Fiachrach.*



the centre, and between the shields, a large space is deeply and carefully incised into the masonry. It might have been used as a place in which relic-cases could have been safely exhibited.

Instead of the usual tympanum which one might have expected would surmount a structure savouring so much of the Renaissance, it has a Crucifixion rudely sculptured in relief. The slab on which it is cut is placed under a simple cornice, and between arabesque figures set within square pinnacles, which rest on the extremities of the entablature. Over the projecting cornice of the Crucifixion, similar pinnacles on a narrower space form the crowning finials of the structure.

Though this monument bears no inscription, there is a mural slab adjoining it on the Epistle side, bearing an inscription in small raised letters, now scarcely legible, which probably refers to it:—

Fecerunt me Ughonus  
filius Hugonis O  
Shagnasi de Cluonyn  
et uxor ejus Norina Grifa temp  
ore Di Rogeri Shagnasi militis  
sue nationis Capitane  
sub Carolo rege an o reg 16 8º Cris  
Anno Domini 1645.

The Roger O'Shaughnessy referred to was the Sir Roger, chief of the sept, who resided in Feddane Castle in 1647. O'Donovan gives the date of his death as 1650. Of Hugo O'Shaughnessy of Clonyn, and his wife Norina Grifa, we know nothing further. But we think that the adjoining altar-tomb must be the monument which they claim the credit of having erected.

There is a much larger slab, with an inscription of the same period, inserted in the wall on the other side of the altar. Its original place in the church is, however, unknown. It was found detached from the building at the time of the recent restoration, and placed in its present position

with a view to its preservation. The inscription is as follows :—

Ad majorem Dei gloriam et  
M'Duagh . hujus celeberrime  
Hoc monumentum condi fecerunt  
Rogerius O'Shaughnessy et Joanes  
Reagh filii Cornelii Rogeri Shac diebus  
quorum animabus propiet  
c s tempore Reverendi admodum  
a m Vicari generalissimi  
domini, domn domini Rogeri equitis auriti  
sue natio  
Ecce quam bonum et quam unum.  
PLS. 132.

Owing to the illegible character of the letters, and the somewhat rude latinity, an accurate rendering in English is not easy. The following may prove sufficiently accurate, though it only purports to be a free rendering :—

Roger O'Shaughnessy and John (the Swarthy), sons of Cornelius erected this monument, to the greater glory of God and Mac Duagh, the celebrated patron of this church, in the lifetime of Sir Roger Shaughnessy, baronet, and in the time of the Very Reverend a m Vicar-General. May God be merciful to their souls.

'Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.'—Ps. cxxxii.

A fracture in the slab makes any efforts hopeless that may be made to discover the name of the Vicar-General referred to. The name of Cornelius O'Shaughnessy, whose sons are referred to, is not given by O'Donovan in his pedigree. The repetition of 'dominus', as expressive of the rank of O'Shaughnessy, is not without precedent in the adulatory latinity of the seventeenth century.

Another slab, found during the recent restorations in the choir of the cathedral, is now placed in the side-wall, and not far from those which we have been examining. Though somewhat injured, the following inscription on it is fairly legible :—

In honore Sanctissimi Colomani  
 alias Cathedralis Ecclesiae Duacensis  
 Patroni Donaldus Shaughnessy Cornelius Shaughnessy  
 Presbyter  
 et Vicarius perpetuus de Rossane  
 pro ipsis et ipsorum et hered  
 omnipotens Deus. Amen et hoc conditum  
 Patris fratris Oliveri de Burgo ex ordine iis  
 Apostolici Duacensis, in vita illustrissimi  
 Dermittii Shaughnessy de Gortinsigory  
 Nis Capitany Anno Domini 1646  
 Jucundum habitare fratres  
 Memento Mori.

A free rendering of the foregoing may run as follows:—  
 In honour of the most holy Colman, patron of the Cathedral  
 Church of Kilmacduagh, also of the father of Brother Oliver  
 de Burgo, of the Order of Preachers, Vicar-Apostolic of  
 Kilmacduagh, Donald Shaughnessy and Cornelius Shaugh-  
 nessy, priest and rector of Rossane, had this monument  
 built for them and their heirs. May the omnipotent God  
 be merciful to them—Amen. In the lifetime of the most  
 illustrious Dermot O'Shaughnessy of Gortinsiguair, captain,  
 A.D. 1646. How pleasant it is for brethren, &c. Remember  
 death.

The gable of this transept shows on the exterior a small  
 Tudor window, now closed in masonry; but the interior is  
 lighted by a window in each of the side-walls of exactly the  
 same character. That on the eastern side-wall, though low,  
 had a cut stone mullion, now missing.

Immediately under this window are placed two sculptured  
 slabs. On one of these a bishop, with ancient mitre and  
 crozier is quaintly carved. The following Latin inscription,  
 in slightly raised letters, runs around it: 'Sanctus Colomanus  
 Patronus totius Diocesis Duacensis;' i.e. St. Colman, patron  
 of the entire diocese of Kilmacduagh. On the other side,  
 and beside it, is the other slab. It represents the Crucifixion,  
 with the figures of the Blessed Virgin and St. John in the  
 same simple and primitive fashion. This also has an

inscription in raised letters, which can be deciphered with some little difficulty:—

Dominus Noster. Sancta Maria. I.N.R.I.  
Miserere nostri Domine miserere nostri. Fiat  
misericordia tua domine super nos.

i.e. Our Lord. Holy Mary. I.N.R.I. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us. Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us.<sup>1</sup> It is certain that those rudely sculptured slabs are very ancient. They most probably belonged to the old cathedral, but were removed on the occasion of some restoration or improvement, and reverently inserted in the positions they now occupy, merely for the purpose of preserving them.

The remaining buildings are the ruins of the monastery. Destroyed by the Danes, it was again destroyed in the last year of the twelfth century, during the wars between different members of the family of O'Connor and their Norman allies. A great battle raged near Kilmacduagh in the year 1200, and the Annals of Lough Ci record how the contending forces pillaged and destroyed, and spared neither church nor priest. The monastery was restored in the middle of the thirteenth century, and the existing buildings are the ruins of this restoration. For a description of them, we again avail ourselves of the kindness of Mgr. Fahey:—

As the present cathedral occupies the site of the original erected by St. Colman, so too the adjoining monastery occupies the site of that which St. Colman founded. As the local chiefs, the O'Heynes, became its lay patrons or Herenachs, it became familiarly known as Heyne's abbey; and it still retains that designation amongst the Irish-speaking people of the district.

Even in the seventh century the monastic system continued to be a distinctive feature of the Irish church; and in

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xxxiii. 22.



many cases, as at Kilmacduagh, the abbot was at once the superior of the monastery, and the bishop of the territory or diocese. It is true that the founders of monastic life in Ireland in those early ages adopted different rules. Columba, and Brendan, and Ailbe, and Carthach, and the others, had each his own rule; yet the diversity seemed to consist only in minute detail, and all were marked with rigour and severity. We are not in a position to state with authority which of those rules St. Colman may have selected for his monks at Kilmacduagh. But I think it not unlikely that he may have selected that of his friend St. Columba, universally accepted in the north of Ireland at that period.

Heyne's Abbey is, in some respects, the most interesting of the existing monuments at Kilmacduagh. Though it shows unmistakable evidence of restoration at different periods, we find there some cyclopean work, and some of the finest specimens of Irish work of the mediaeval period. But it would be rash to say that we can point to any portion of the still remaining abbey which could be referred to the time of St. Colman. The existing remains consist of the monastery chapel on the north side, and a considerable portion of the domestic part of the monastery connected with the chancel of the chapel at a right angle, and extending southward.

The chapel is far the most interesting portion of the monastery. It consists of a nave and chancel. Brash correctly considers 'most part of the nave a reconstruction'. This is evident from its pointed doorway in the north side-wall, and from the inferior character of the north side-wall itself. It is also obvious that when the present north side-wall was built, the width of the nave was considerably lessened. Much of the older side-wall, which had declined from the perpendicular, is still to be seen on the outside. It is a splendid specimen of mediaeval cemented cyclopean work. On the southern side of the chapel there is another door which communicated with the monastery.

The entire interest of the chapel centres in its chancel. The chancel arch with its exquisite columns elicited the admiration of Dr. Pococke; and Archdall writes: 'The

pillars and arches, from the entrance to the altar part, and those of the east window, are finished in an elegant style.' Unfortunately the chancel-arch has disappeared; but the piers and engaged columns of the arch remain in a state of perfect preservation, and are amongst the most perfect and striking in the country. They rest on simply wrought bases, and are surmounted by capitals enriched by intricate and varied scallop-work of Romanesque character, marvellous in the minute perfection of its finish. The work is all the more effective as the material is a brighter-coloured limestone than that of the rest of the building. The double-light window of the central gable is of the same attractive material; and its ornamental details are of quite the same character as those of the chancel-piers and pillars. The windows are narrow and semicircular-headed, very widely and regularly splayed on the inside, so that the central dividing pier becomes reduced to a delicate column, with rich capital, supporting the arched mouldings which rest on it from either side. On either side there are two corresponding shafts similarly treated, supporting the delicately-wrought torus-mouldings which form the chief features of the double arch. From the sills, the splay is continued on the same scale, except that the torus-mouldings are changed into hollows or fluted mouldings. On the outside of the gable these lancets are recessed and richly moulded, and measure 8 feet high and only  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches at sill, and still less at spring of arch. The window in several of its features has its counterpart at Clonfert and Clonmacnoise, but surpasses both in the perfection of its finish and the elaborate character of its work.

The outer angle of the chancel-gable has its quoins so carved as to form graceful attached shafts resting on carved bases, and surmounted by well-wrought Romanesque capitals. Such external quoins may also be seen in some of our mediaeval churches, as at Clonfert and Teampul-na-hue. Brash tells us that it is also found at Monainchu. It would appear that this beautiful feature is entirely peculiar to our Irish Romanesque.

Mr. Brash attributes this work to Maurice Ileyn, who was Bishop of Kilmacduagh in the latter half of the thirteenth

century. One would naturally assume that the work should belong to the same period as the similar works at Clonfert and other places.

Ware would ascribe the beautiful work at Clonfert to Bishop John, an Italian, about A.D. 1266. This, no doubt, corresponds with the episcopate of Bishop Ileyan; but O'Donovan considers that the work belongs to the eleventh century. There can be no doubt that it belongs to the period of the most perfect development of Irish Romanesque.

A doorway opening off the chancel, on the south side, leads into the sacristy, a vaulted apartment lighted from the east by a small lancet-window. Off this is another vaulted apartment, but dimly lighted, said to have been the treasury of the monastic establishment.

There is a large room adjoining this, and in the same line, which may have been used as a refectory or chapter-room. It is lighted by two lancet-windows. The vaulting is perfect; but the entrance door has been recently built up in solid masonry. Portions of an upper story remain over this, and the other apartments referred to, which may probably have been used by the community as a dormitory.

Archdall refers to a chapel situated at the south side of this wing of the monastery. Of this chapel there seems to be little or no trace in our day, if it be not the detached structure a little on the western side, with a rude doorway of a cyclopean character in the western gable.

Teampuil Muire, 'Our Lady's Church,' stands a short distance east of the cathedral, and is nowadays cut off from the cemetery by the public highway. Its western gable, now much injured, abuts on the wall of the highway. The church is a simple oblong, measuring 41 feet 7 inches in length, and 19 feet in width. It is lighted by a narrow lancet-window in the eastern gable, and another in the southern side-wall. Both are widely splayed on the inside. The entrance is near the west gable, and in the southern side-wall. It is circular-headed like the windows, and shows well-cut joints. The structure is probably mediaeval, but has certainly no claims on the venerable antiquity of the buildings already referred to.

The Teampuil Beg Mic Duagh was situated on the south-western side of the cathedral, and is now cut off from the cemetery by the modern enclosure. Its site is marked by O'Donovan in a map of the cemetery preserved in his letters in the library of the Royal Irish Academy. The general outlines of its foundations are the only traces of this structure which we can now discover.

The 'Leaba Mic Duagh', as the little mortuary chapel was called in which St. Colman was buried, was situated about twenty yards, and in the same line, from the cathedral. Some large stones which enclose the outline of a grave are, in our day, the only remains of the site of this interesting chapel; but it is still known and honoured as the place in which St. Colman's remains were laid to rest. It was in existence in 1752; and we have a clear reference to it from the pen of Bishop Pococke, who visited Kilmacduagh at that time. He writes: 'To the west in the churchyard is a small cell, where they say the Patron Saint was buried, and that the body was afterwards carried to Aughrim' . . .

The only other building amongst the extant monuments at Kilmacduagh is the large square building north of the cathedral. It is a strong castellated residence. It consists of two large apartments on the ground-level, lighted only by narrow loopholes. One of those apartments was vaulted; the other had its floor supported by joists; the upper apartments were well lighted by some double-light windows. It is generally regarded as the ancient residence of the bishop. This was Dr. Pococke's opinion, though he adds that it was also called the seminary by some. Most likely it served both purposes, as in the Middle Ages the bishop's house was also the school in which aspirants to the ecclesiastical state were prepared for their sacred duties. On the upper floor there is an oriel, looking north-east, from which it is said the bishop blessed the pilgrims who came there to visit the shrine of the holy founder. On the south-west angle of this building, the foundations of a small square projection were exposed on the occasion of its restoration some time ago. It may have been a small tower to accommodate a guard. Though there are no certain data to which one might appeal for the pur-



pose of fixing the date of the erection of this building, yet the character of the masonry may help to guide us. The outline of the structure, as well as the character of its masonry, recalls at once the existing remains of the Earl of Ulster's Castle at Ardrahan, built probably in the middle of the thirteenth century. It would not, therefore, be unreasonable to assume that both may belong to the same period.

The monastery came to grief, like other monasteries, in the last half of the sixteenth century, but services were conducted in the Cathedral Church at various times in the course of the seventeenth century. Until quite recent years, the Deans of the Diocese of Kilmacduagh in the Church of Ireland have been inducted in the ancient Cathedral. The last occasion was in 1874, when Archdeacon Daly inducted Dean Butson there.

#### IV.

We have spoken much of St. Colman and the great church of Kilmacduagh, but we must not forget that the district possesses other saints. The legend of the Ua Carre contains a reference to a St. Cuman of Kinvara, who may be either St. Colman Ua Fiachrach, a contemporary and kinsman of St. Colman Mac Duagh, or St. Caimin of Muis Cealtra, half-brother of King Guaire. But neither St. Colman Ua Fiachrach nor St. Caimin spent his life at Kinvara, and we pass to St. Sairnait or St. Sourney, a maiden of royal descent, to whom is dedicated St. Sourney's Church at Dromacoo, in the parish of Ballindereen, near the stone cell in which she is believed to have lived. It is now half ruinous, and the holy well which bears her name is dry. St. Colgan of Kilcolgan (brother of St. Foila, who gives her name to the Church of Kilfoila) was also of royal race. A disciple of St. Columba, he had followed his

master to the wilds of Iona from the beloved island of Aranmore :—

O Aran, sun of all the West,  
My heart is thine ; as sweet to close  
Our dying eyes in thee, as rest  
Where Peter and where Paul repose.

We read of St. Colgan in the biography of his great master, but he was not destined to be one of the band of holy men who are honoured as they who brought the Evangel to Scotland. St. Columba sent him back to Ireland to convert his (St. Colgan's) own mother, and in this task he succeeded. He built a monastery at Kilcolgan and lived there the rest of his holy life. The site of his church and monastery is uncertain, but Monsignor Fahey identifies it with a site in the grounds of Tyrone (Tir Owen). It had been long used, in recent times, for the worship of the Church of Ireland, but is now almost ruinous.

'Great Aidhne,' land of Saints, contains not a few places connected with their memories. St. Colman did not end his life as Bishop of Kilmacduagh, but retreated to the Burren woods, and lived in solitude at Oughtmama in the valley of Corcomroe, where he built a church and a cell. A monastery seems to have arisen, as at Kilmacduagh, but the only ruins which now remain are those of the churches. St. Colman was, however, buried at Kilmacduagh, and in his grave the bones of the Most Rev. Dr. French were laid in 1852. It was long a place of pilgrimage, and it possessed the right of affording sanctuary to the distressed. 'Pilgrimages,' says Monsignor Fahey, 'to the church and holy well at Kilmacduagh continue to our own day, but fortunately unaccompanied by the abuses which have in many instances rendered such practices objectionable'. This well is now almost, if not entirely, dry, but there are other holy wells which bears the saint's name. Four

Tubber MacDuaghs are within easy distance of the Cathedral—one about a mile to the south, on the borders of county Clare ; another at Corker in Kiltartan, where the saint is supposed to have been born ; a third about half-way between Kilmacduagh and Kinvara ; and the fourth near the ruins which are traditionally said to be those of King Guaire's Kinvara residence. More interesting for our immediate purpose are two in the parish of Kilbecanty, one in the village of Rakerin, and the other on the eastern shore of Lough Cutra, where a cross with the date 1745 marks its situation.

## CHAPTER III

### THE O'SHAUGHNESSYS

#### I

ON the isle of saints fell the curse of a cruel warfare. The Annals of the Four Masters preserve to us scanty records like those of the early pages of the Anglo-Saxon chronicle—records which tell of civil war and of the terrible ravages of the Danes. To both we have already made incidental reference, and so slight is our information that no reference can be other than incidental. The Four Masters mention, in the year 780, a great battle at Carn Conail, in Kilbecanty, already associated with the waning glory of King Guaire. It was a fight between the men of Connaught and the men of the tribes of Hy-Fiachrach; but how and wherefore Irishmen shed the blood of Irishmen, we know not. It was probably only one of a series of conflicts, but the others have vanished from human knowledge. When the curtain is again raised, there are new combatants on the stage. As early as 816, the Danes are believed to have marched by Kilmacduagh to Lough Corrib, and in the great invasion under Turgesius, in 835, all Connaught suffered. We can only too easily picture the scene, for the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle describes for us the similar deeds of the Danes in England—the carnage, the burning, the plundering, and the manslaying, which recur with a regularity that is sickening as well as monotonous in the annals of the ninth and tenth centuries. The heathen invaders spared neither church nor churchyard, neither



shrine nor altar, and the cathedral shared the fate of the homestead. It was, as we have seen, during this period that the people of Ireland, in their distress and anguish, built them the great Round Towers in which they took refuge. The invasions continued: in 866 the Danes landed at Kilcolgan and plundered Aidhne, probably destroying Kilmacduagh, and penetrating to Beagh, near Gort, where now stand the ruins of an ancient church. Under the year 920 the Four Masters relate that Maelmacduagh, chieftain of Aidhne, was slain by the foreigners. There can be no doubt who the 'foreigners' were, and the murder of Maelmacduagh was but the prelude to a fresh tale of bloodshed. In 928 the Danes are again recorded to have reached Lough Corrib, doubtless 'doing their old wont' of rapine and slaughter. Ten years later they were defeated in the land of Aidhne by the Ceanraigh, who inhabited what is now Ardahan, and Monsignor Fahey identifies the scene of their defeat with the townland of Raheen in the parish of Ardahan. It is possible that their victor was Flann Ua Cleirigh, chieftain of Aidhne, whom the Four Masters describe as 'royal heir to all Connaught'. It is impossible to estimate the effect of the Danish invasions. The heathen marauders doubtless destroyed much of the ancient civilization, and the art and the literature of early times perished, together with the men who loved them. Numbers of the Danes settled in Ireland, embraced Christianity, and their blood soon mingled with that of their foes. The end of their ravages did not bring peace to troubled Aidhne, for we find again the record of internal conflict, as when, in 964, Comhaltan, son of the murdered Maelmacduagh, defeated the King of Connaught. Comhaltan's son was also a great warrior, and, although we know little or nothing of the district in the end of the tenth century, we cannot think of it as possessing the happiness of the country which has no history. We

must not leave this dark and miserable period without mentioning its one bright feature—the work of the poet Flann Mac Lonan, whose death is recorded in the year 892, and who sang of ‘delightful lofty Echtge’.

In the great battle of Clontarf (1014), in which Brian Boroimhe fought and won and fell, the inhabitants of Hy-Fiachrach played their part in delivering Ireland from the Danish marauders. The Four Masters, who describe the ‘fierce, vengeful, and furious battle, the like of which was not to be found in that time,’ tell how there fell, along with the most famous of the monarchs of Ireland, ‘Tadg O’Kelly, lord of the Ui Maine, and Maelronaidh, chieftain of Fiachrach Aidhne.’ The O’Heynes and the O’Kellys were now the great families of the district, but from the date of the battle of Clontarf their power began to wane; and tradition records that so terrible was the loss of the people of Connaught in the great victory that ‘very few of the O’Kellys or O’Heynes survived it’. The effect of Clontarf upon eleventh-century Ireland must have been similar to the effect of Flodden upon sixteenth-century Scotland, and laments for ‘the Flowers of the Forest’ must have mingled with the *Te Deums* which gave thanks for the victory and the deliverance. The Danish invasions brought, after much suffering, peace and unity to England, but the people of Ireland were less fortunate. The great united effort under Brian Boroimhe was succeeded by years of internecine warfare between the royal houses of Munster and Connaught; and county Clare and county Galway were once more, and for generations, the theatre of civil war. Once again, we know little of the story of the conflict: ‘dead the warriors, dead their glory, dead the cause for which they died.’ We hear, in 1067, of a battle at Turlogh Art, between Moyseola and Kilcornan, where fell the Chief of Connaught, and of pitiless ravaging in the course of the marching. We hear, in 1116 and 1117, of attacks

upon Roveheagh (in the parish of Clarinbridge), and of burnings and slaughter on the mountains of Echtge and Burren. Sometimes an O'Heyne falls in the course of an invasion of the enemy's country, as when, in 1117, the Annals of Ulster record the death of the 'king of O'Fiachrach'; and, again, the men of Munster lay waste the land of Fiachrach. It is but a catalogue of incidents: the bare dry bones of history, into which not even the most daring imagination could breathe the breath of life. One fact of some interest remains to us from the ecclesiastical records of the period. When the Council of Kells, in 1152, reformed the Church in Ireland, suppressing abuses, and introducing a better organization, the diocese of Kilmacduagh remained undisturbed. The Papal Legate and the Bishops who met in Synod at Kells probably recognized that the diocese possessed some natural unity which it would be unwise to disturb. And whatever natural bond of union existed was confirmed and strengthened by their decision.

## II

The Anglo-Norman invasion, of which we shall speak in a later chapter, affected Connaught less than other portions of Ireland. The first appearance of the English is attributed to the year 1177, and, as usual, they came as the allies of Irishmen against other Irishmen. The Four Masters record a great battle at Kilmacduagh in 1199, where Norman fought against Norman and Irishman against Irishman. William de Burgh is the great Norman name most closely associated with the occasion. Having helped Cathal Carragh to defeat his rival Clovedearg (the ally of the De Lacys and the De Courcys), William de Burgh returned in 1204 to carve out for himself possessions in Connaught, and to take advantage of the dissensions of the family of O'Connor, to which belonged the rivals Cathal Carragh

and Cathal Clovedearg (Cathal of the Red Hand). But though he succeeded in wasting the land and destroying the churches of Hy-Fiachrach, he soon found himself compelled to face the last enemy in the shape of a wasting disease. His death did not bring peace to the troubled land, for it at once fell a prey to the invasions of the O'Briens, who, in 1207, ravaged the district in which lie Gortinsiguair, Kinvara, and Ardrahan. Then followed quarrels between the O'Connors and the O'Heynes, quarrels which took a fresh turn when the land was again threatened by the O'Briens, this time in alliance with the Anglo-Normans. Some of the O'Connors aided the lord of Aidhne, and others joined the invading force, which, in 1225, marched to Ardrahan. The Four Masters, whose records (along with those of the *Customs of Hy-Fiachrach* and the *Annals of Clonmacnoise*) are the chief authorities for this whole period, tell how the O'Heynes, with the help of the O'Dowds and the O'Flahertys, gained a great victory at Ardrahan, and scattered the foe to the east and to the west. The English commander, William Grace, was slain in the Echtge Mountains.

The name of De Burgh demands more than the casual mention just made. William De Burgh, who must be distinguished from William Fitzaldhelm, with whom he is often confused, received a large grant of lands in Connaught from King John. Beyond ravaging the country, he never made good his claims to these lands, and when he died, in 1204, he had been dispossessed of them by the King. His personal career is thus only an incident in the history of Connaught, but his son, Richard de Burgh, received back the lands from Henry III, and became the ancestor of the House of Clanrickarde. Thus was introduced into Ireland a name which was to be famous in the history of the province of Connaught. Its importance for our immediate purpose is not so great, but it may be con-



venient to note here the part played by the family in the district. Richard de Burgh made a great effort to obtain control of the lands which had been granted to him, and he followed his father's policy of intervening in the quarrels of the O'Connors. He established the Norman power in various parts of Connaught, and in the course of these wars the district was again more than once ravaged. The story is very complicated, and Irish chieftain after Irish chieftain allied himself with de Burgh. Finally, even the O'Heyne castle at Ardrahan was captured, and the O'Clerys were expelled from Kilmacduagh. Richard de Burgh died in 1243 and was succeeded by his son, Walter, often called Earl of Ulster, who, sometimes by maintaining friendly relations with the O'Connors and sometimes by force of arms, largely increased the power of his House. His son Redmond Burke was the ancestor of the Mac Redmond Burkes, who held large possessions in Ballycahalan, Kilbecanty, Ballyconnell, and Ballylisbrayne. The ruins of their castle may still be seen at Ballyconnell, and were visible until seventy years ago at Ballyturin, on the edge of a small lake within a stone's throw of Lough Cutra.

### III

To follow further the fortunes of this great House would carry us too far from our topic. We have now reached the period when the special district with which we are dealing became associated with the O'Shaughnessys, an ancient family who rose to greatness in this district after the fall of the O'Heynes and the O'Clerys, an event which was the result of the quarrels and invasions to which we have just referred. We must not be supposed to mean either that the O'Heynes were completely destroyed or that the O'Shaughnessys were

in any sense newcomers. A branch of the O'Heyne family flourished in Roscommon, and their castle at Dungorey [Dun-Guaire] still keeps guard over St. Colman's well at Kinvara. The traditional ancestry in the family of O'Shaughnessy takes us back to the beginnings of our story. It is thus given by Mr. Blake Forster in the Appendix to his *Irish Chieftains, or a Struggle for the Crown* :—

Fourteen of the race of Hy-Fiachrach were Kings of Connaught. Heremon, Monarch of Ireland, was ancestor of Achy, Monarch of Ireland in A.D. 358, who married Mogfinna, daughter of Fidach, and sixth in descent from Olill Olom, King of Munster, by whom he had four sons :—

- I. Brian, from whom the Hybriunians in Connaught.
- II. Fiachrach, ancestor of the Hyfrachrians, in Connaught.
- III. Fergus.
- IV. Olill.

King Achy married, secondly, Carinna, the Saxon, and had issue—

Niall, the Great King of Ireland, in A.D. 379, called Niall of the nine hostages.

Fiachrach, second son of King Achy, by his first wife, was King of Connaught and father of

Dathy, who succeeded his uncle Niall as King of Ireland. This Monarch carried his victorious armies through Britain and France, and helped to cause the fall of the Roman Empire. He was killed by lightning at the foot of the Alps, and his body was brought to Ireland by his troops, and interred in the county of Roscommon, at Relig-na-Rioh, or the burying-place of the Kings of Ireland; and a large red pillar was placed over his grave, which remains to this day. He was killed in A.D. 428, and was the last Pagan King of Ireland. His real name was Feredach, but he was called Dathy, in consequence of his quickness in putting on his armour; and is said by many ancient poetical Irish writers to have been so skilful in handling his arms and defending himself, that, if attacked by a hundred persons at once, all discharging their

weapons at him, he could ward off every blow by his dexterity. He married Felia,<sup>1</sup> daughter of Achy, and had issue—

Achy Breac, who was father of

Eoghan Aidhne, so named from being Chief of the territory of Aidhne, called 'the land of saints'. He was reared and educated in this territory by the Oga Bathra tribe, who afterwards elected him their Chieftain. He had issue—

I. Canall.

II. Cormac.

III. Sedna.

IV. Senach Ceanngamhna.

Conall, the eldest son, was father of

Giobhnenn, Chief of Hy-Fiachrach Aidhne. This warlike chieftain, in A.D. 531, fought the battle of Claonloch, in Cineal Aodh, in which he slew the valiant Maine, son of Cerbhal. He was father of

Cobhthach, who had issue—

I. Aodh.

II. Colman.

III. Canall, who was father of Ainmire, father of Duach, who married Rignach, the daughter of Cormac, of the race of Achy Breac, and was father of the celebrated St. Colman, commonly called MacDuach, to distinguish him from others bearing the same Christian-name, patron of Cineal Aodh, and first bishop of Cill MhicDuach, the church of the son of Duach, now Kilmacduach, in the county Galway.

Colman, the second son of Cobhthach, was father of

Guaire Aidhne, the Hospitable. He was King of Connaught, and from him the town of Gort was called Insi Guara, or the Island of Guara, it being his royal residence. He was father of

Artgoile, who had issue—

I. Aodh.

II. Artgoile, father of

Fergal Aidhne, King of Connaught, who died in 694, who was father of

<sup>1</sup> Olill Molt, Monarch of Ireland, was son of King Dathi, by his wife Ethnea, daughter of Courach Cas; and Fiachrach Elgad was his son by Rusina, daughter of Artich Uctlethan.

Torpa, father of  
 Cathmagh, father of  
 Comuscach, father of  
 Ceadadhach, father of  
 Cleuireach, father of  
 Eidhin *a quo* O'Hynes.

Aodh, the eldest son, was father of  
 Morrough, father of  
 Broinleath Dearg, father of  
 Tobhuigh Brenain, father of  
 Gabhran, father of  
 Eaghno, father of  
 Nochba, father of  
 Scothmaine, father of  
 Moltuile, father of  
 Cais.

Maolciarain.

Ferguli.

Conmidhe.

Donough.

Sheaghnessy, from whom the name O'Shaughnessy is derived.

Guil Buidhe O'Shaughnessy, killed at the battle of Ardee in 1159.

Randall O'Shaughnessy.

Giolla na naomh Crom O'Shaughnessy, Chief of the western half of Cineal Aodh, who died in 1224.

Ruidric.

Giolla na naomh.

William.

Owen, or Eoghan or Achy.

John Buighe.<sup>1</sup>

William, who was succeeded by his son

Sir Dermot O'Shaughnessy,<sup>2</sup> who married More Ny

<sup>1</sup> This chieftain is called in the *Annals of the Four Masters* John Buighe, but is mentioned in many Irish genealogies as Owen Buighe. This, however, makes no difference, as Owen is the old Irish for John.

<sup>2</sup> Hardiman, in his *History of Galway*, p. 216, note *h*, speaking



Bryan, called Na Pheeach or the gaudy, daughter of Bryan O'Brien, son of Teige, son of Torlough, son of Bryan, 'of the battle of Nenagh.' The *Annals of the Four Masters* state that this lady was distinguished for her personal beauty and benevolence. She died in 1569. Dermot O'Shaughnessy having accompanied O'Brien, King of Thomond, and Ulick na Cane, of Clan-Rickard, to the Court of Henry VIII, they surrendered their territories, and the Lord Deputy states, that they had no sterling money, as none could be had in the kingdom; but that he lent them some in harp groats; and he says, in a letter addressed to King Henry, speaking of O'Brien, 'That ther repaireth with O'Brien one O'Shaughness, a goodly gentleman dwelling between Thomond and Connaught,' and adds, 'We know no suite he hathe but only to see you and take his lands, and be your subject.' Henry VIII wrote afterwards to the Council in Ireland, stating that he had created 'O'Shaghness' a knight, and directing them to make out a patent for 'O'Shaftness', and others, of their lands,<sup>1</sup> such as they have now in their possession; and in a note it is stated that O'Shaughnessy was to have a 'Bishoprick', or some other spiritual dignity, for his kinsman Malachy Donohoo, and the Bishoprick of Kilmacduagh for his son William Shaftness. On the 3rd of December, 1543, Sir Dermot received his patent from Henry VIII, which recited, that although he and his predecessors, Kings of England, were the true possessors of the lands therein named, yet, that Sir Dermot and his ancestors possessed them unjustly against the Crown until lately: being truly sensible thereof, he relinquished the same, and accordingly granted to Sir Dermot, Chief of his of this Sir Dermot, says: 'Sir Dermot, the *seventh* in descent from Seachnasy.' This is altogether incorrect, as it may be seen by the above pedigree, which is the authenticated one, that he was the *tenth* in descent from Sheaghnaasy.

<sup>1</sup> It appears by the Patent Roll, 33-35 Henry VIII, that the King wrote to the Lord Deputy and Privy Council of Ireland on July 9, 1533, stating: 'We have made the Lord of Upper Ossory, McNemarowe, O'Shaftness, Denys Grady, and — Wise, Knyghtes, and will, that by virtue and warraunt thereof, youe shall make out unto McNemarowe, O'Shaftness, and Denys Grady several patentees of all such lands as they now have.'

name, and his heirs male *in capite*, by the service of a knight's fee, all the estate which he had in the manors, lordships, lands, &c., of Gort-Inchegorie, and several other lands, with a proviso, however, of forfeiture, in case of any confederacy or disturbance against the Crown. Sir Dermot had issue—

I. Sir Roger.

II. William, referred to above.

III. Dermot, surnamed Reavagh, who contended for the Chieftaincy of Cineal Aodh, of whom presently.

IV. Joan, married, about the year 1560, Edmond Bermingham, 15th Lord Athenry, and Premier Baron of Ireland, by whom she had issue.

Sir Roger O'Shaughnessy, called in the *Annals of the Four Masters* Giolla Duv, married the Lady Honora O'Brien, daughter of Morrough, the first Earl of Thomond. This lady was Abbess of the Abbey of Killowen, near Ennis. Sir Roger O'Shaughnessy died in 1569, and his death is thus recorded in the *Annals of the Four Masters*:—‘O'Shaughnessy, i. e. Giolla Duv, the son of Dermot, son of William, son of John Buighe, the supporting mound of all the English and Irish who came to his place, died; he was, though not learned in the Latin or English, the most esteemed and admired man by the English of his time.’ He left issue—

I. John, said in the *Annals of the Four Masters* to have succeeded his father, but was deposed by his uncle Dermot Reveagh.

II. William, who married the sister of William Oge Burke of Cloghroak Castle, Esq., but died without issue.

III. Fargananim, who died unmarried.

IV. Dermot, ultimately Chief of Cineal Aodh.

V. Joan.

VI. Margaret.

The genealogy carries the story beyond the point we have at present reached. The O'Shaughnessys had long held lands at Kinelea, where they fought with their kinsmen, the O'Cahills, and their name frequently occurs in the annals of the thirteenth century. The most notable member of the house was Bishop O'Shaugh-

nessy, who held the see of Kilmacduagh, and died in 1223. The special interest which attaches to him centres round the tradition that he possessed the crosier of St. Colman himself, a holy relic, the profanation of which led to bloodshed in the year of the Bishop's death. The crosier and girdle of St. Colman continued to be sacred heirlooms in the O'Shaughnessy family. From them the crosier passed into the hands of the Butlers (cf. p. 109), and, says Monsignor Fahey, 'even then it was frequently used as a means of influencing the possessors of goods fraudulently obtained to yield up their illicit property to the owners. The writer has had the good fortune of knowing a very old man [John Keane of Gort], who remembers his father to have obtained the crosier from the Cregg family for a like purpose.' The crosier became part of the Petrie collection, and is now in the museum of the National Academy. Monsignor Fahey describes it as differing little from the Irish crosiers of the period. 'The same delicate filigree ornamentation, the same beautiful enamels, are there still, though many of the jewels are lost with which the interlacing bands were artistically studded. Little more, however, than the head of the crosier remains.'

The fourteenth century represents a gap in our knowledge of the history of the O'Shaughnessys, but there can be no doubt that they were extending their influence and their possessions. Their chief seat was on the island at Gort, but they probably had houses elsewhere, though the existing castles of Fidane and Ardimullivan were as yet unbuilt. It is not until the sixteenth century that we are able to find any definite record of their possessions.<sup>1</sup> On the death of the last Earl of Ulster and Lord of Connaught, in 1533, his possessions escheated to the Crown. For ten years

<sup>1</sup> For details about these possessions we are indebted to the researches of Mr. Thomas Mathews.

the landowners who held of him possessed no legal authority, and in 1543 Henry VIII formally regranted the lands, which had been during the interval technically 'possessed against the Crown'. The Irish chieftains made a journey to Henry's Court to surrender their lands, and receive them back, and one of these visitors was Dermot O'Shaughnessy, 'a goodly gentleman,' whom the king knighted, and to whom he issued the following patent:—

'Grant under King's letter 9th July XXXV Henry VIII to Dermot O'Sheaghyn Knight, Captain of his nation, upon his Submission of the Manors and Lands of Gortenchegory, Dromneyll, Dellyncallan, Ballyhide, Monynan, Ardgossan, Ballyegyn, Kepparell, Clonehagh, Tolonegan, Lycknegaish Crege, Karryngs, Tyrrelaghe, Rathvilledowne, Ardmylovan, a third part of Droneskenan, a third part of Rathe, half of Flyngistown, Ballyhue, Cowle and Behe, previously held by him and his ancestors. To hold in tail male by the service of one knights fee. Enrolled Pat. Rolls 3rd Decr. xxxv. Henry VIII.'

Sir Dermot held his lands in peace until his death, which occurred before 1559, except for an occasional attack by a scion of the House of Clanricarde, about whose depredations he wrote to the Lord Deputy and the Council in 1543 and again in 1549. His beautiful wife, the Lady More O'Brien, survived him about ten years, 'a woman distinguished for her beauty and her munificence.' Their eldest son, Sir Roger O'Shaughnessy, succeeded his father and lived on friendly terms with the Government. On July 12, 1559, he entertained the Lord Deputy so magnificently at Gort 'that divers wondered at it, for such a dinner, or the like of it, was not seen in any Irishman's house before'. He aided the Government in the suppression of rebellions in 1558, and throughout the risings in the west, under Queen Elizabeth, the O'Shaughnessys seem to have been loyal to the Crown. In 1567 any further



claim of the Clanricarde family was barred by Sir Roger's becoming a tenant in chief of the Crown.

The history of the O'Shaughnessys at this period is stained by two tragedies. In August, 1558, 'Roger O'Shaghnesse of Gortinchegorie in Kinalte [Kinalea], gent, Captain of his nation in Clanricard' was pardoned for the slaughter of his own brother William, for whom Sir Dermot had asked Henry VIII for a bishopric in 1544. The circumstances are unknown to us, and William's death may have been an accident. But no such explanation is applicable to the second tragedy, which followed the death of Sir Roger, an event which occurred about 1569. He had married the Lady Honora O'Brien, daughter of the first Earl of Thomond. This lady was a nun and the validity of the marriage was therefore called in question. The succession of Sir Roger's eldest son, John, was accordingly disputed by his uncle, Dermot O'Shaughnessy, who had recently rendered himself notorious by arresting, in Kinelea, the Roman Catholic Primate of Armagh, Dr. Creagh, and handing him over to the Government of Queen Elizabeth. The Primate had escaped from the Tower, and Dermot O'Shaughnessy had been accused of treachery in betraying him; but it is only fair to say that he merely carried out faithfully the orders of the Government, in whose service he was. Elizabeth was much pleased by the arrest of the Primate, and informed his captor that 'we will not forget the same towards you in any reasonable cause to be brought before us.' The letter was written in 1567, and three years later the occasion seemed to Dermot to have arisen. He arrived in Ireland in 1570 with a letter from Queen Elizabeth.

'BY THE QUEEN,

'ELIZABETH R.

'Right trusty and well beloved we grete you well. Wher one Derby O'Shagnes, Lord of Kynally in that o<sup>r</sup> Realme of

Ireland, hath by the meanes of his Lord and Master o<sup>r</sup> Coosen the Erle of Leicester humbly required us not onely to geue him leaue to returne into his country but also to recomend his petition unto yow for some order to be taken with him upon the death of his brother named Roger O'Shaghnes as being next heire unto him we being duely inforemed of his honest demeaner here and of his earnest desire to Serve us, have been content to accompt him to o<sup>r</sup> service and too require yow to have favorable consideracion of his sute and as you shall fynd it mete to place and settle him in the foresaid Contry so the rather to encurrage him to persever in his fidelitie to shewe him as muche favor as may accord with the good government of the same contry.

‘Given under our Signet at o<sup>r</sup> Manor of Otlands  
the xxiiird of June 1570 in the xiith yere  
of our Reigne.

‘To O<sup>r</sup> right trusty and wellbeloved S<sup>r</sup> Henry  
Sidney, Knight of O<sup>r</sup> Order of the Garter  
and Deputy of our Realme of Ireland.’

The Deputy decided in favour of Dermot O'Shaughnessy, who therefore succeeded to his nephew's property, but he was soon expelled from the castle at Gort through a quarrel with the O'Briens (one of whom he had slain) and with the family of De Burgo. He retained possession of Ardimullivan, and it was there that the tragedy occurred. He and his nephew, William, met at the southern approach to Ardimullivan; the younger man was slain, and the elder died of his wounds within half an hour. This William O'Shaughnessy was the younger brother of John, but was born after the arrival of a dispensation from Rome for the marriage of his parents, and therefore claimed to be the lawful successor of his father. After this fatal combat, John O'Shaughnessy again claimed the family possessions, but found a formidable rival in his youngest brother, Dermot, who finally made good his claim. But the struggle involved the family in difficulties for many years, and Dermot's

son had to take legal proceedings to recover parts of his lands from claimants to whom they had been granted by John, on condition of supporting him against his brother. It was at this time that the Deputy, Sir John Perrott, to the wisdom of whose Connaught policy Mr. Lecky pays a strong tribute, introduced the English system of land tenure into Ireland. It was cordially accepted by Dermot O'Shaughnessy, who began to give out his land by feudal tenure. One of these conveyances is preserved in the *Calendar of Patent Rolls*:—

'Conveyance whereby Dermot O'Sheaghnessa otherwise Dermoyd O'Shaghnessa of Gortynsygory (Gortinchgory) in co. Galway, in consideration of the sum of 100*l.* granted and conveyed to Nehemia Folame, of Ardry in co. Galway, all his lands, customs, commons and tenements in the Grange of Newtown alias Ballynowe; a moiety of the town of Rathunla, otherwise Leabally-sleaghta; Sheamclery, O'Shaghnessa, Ayrdenglaisen, a moiety of Ballysyd, alias Ballyhida, and Knockyllrine in the County of Galway. To hold for ever of the Chief Lord of the fee, by the Service thereout due and of right accustomed.—Appointment of Conlan Kennanan of Tweame and Boetius Helan, of Ardry, Attorneys to put Folame in possession of his lands.—March 11th 1584.

'Signed:—

'DERMOT O'SHEAGHNISA.'

The close of the reign of Elizabeth saw a rebellion in Connaught, in which one of the O'Brien castles, Cluain-dubhain, near Kilmacduagh, was besieged by Sir Richard Bingham, who reduced it to surrender, and dealt with the garrison in accordance with the cruel custom of the times. In the O'Donnell rebellion the district also suffered, for the Ulster rebels marched into Connaught, sacked Athenry in 1597, and were only restrained from marching to Gort by the amount of booty they had already acquired. About a year later they returned

in league with one of the Clanricarde family who had been dispossessed by his relatives, and in 1599 a large section of the rebel army conducted a pitiless campaign in the Burren and Echtge mountains. In 1600 they returned once more to Hy Fiachrach Aidhne, marching by the shores of Lough Cutra on their way to the Shannon. It would be wandering too far from our subject to enter into the ramifications of this rebellion and its connexion with the Geraldine league. It is incidentally connected with Gort, for it was at Gort that Dermot O'Connor took sanctuary while being pursued by the Burkes, who immediately set fire to the church in which he took refuge. O'Connor was captured and beheaded, and the Deputy disgraced and dismissed Theobald Burke, who was responsible for the incident. Monsignor Fahey is of opinion that this church stood on the site to the north of Gort, known as the Grove, and human remains were found there in a pit or cave, some fifty years ago. Some months later (in 1601) Redmond Burke, who, with John O'Shaughnessy, was on the side of the rebels, again invaded the district. John O'Shaughnessy was slain, but his friend ravaged and plundered all the land round Ardimullivan and Fidane, and encamped for some time near Lough Cutra. For all this misery it would be absurd to blame the Government. The great Irish families were divided and their feuds were bitter and unending. The incident of John O'Shaughnessy's invasion of the territory of his clan is characteristic of the period.

Sir Dermot O'Shaughnessy died in 1606, leaving to his son, Sir Roger, a territory of about 12,600 Irish acres. Sir Roger was probably the builder of Fidane Castle, where he seems to have resided as well as at Gort and Ardimullivan. His beautiful daughter Julia, who married one of the Donovans of Castle Donovan, has thus been celebrated by an Irish bard of the period—we quote from Monsignor Fahey :—



'The palm for beauty of her sedate aspect, O'Shaughnessy's daughter has obtained ;  
 Meekness without narrowness of heart, humility, generosity, firmness.  
 A fruitful palm-tree of the race of Dathy, the kind-hearted daughter of Rory,  
 Who inherits the attributes of the sires she sprang from in longing to indulge the flame of hospitality.  
 The undying character of the kings before her she has not suffered to pass away,  
 But has reflected on the name of Guaire that lasting lustre she had derived from him.'

Sir Roger suffered in the troubles of the middle of the seventeenth century, and there is extant an interesting letter of sympathy to his daughter Mrs. Donovan, who was similarly disturbed :—

*'For my verie loueing Daughter Mrs. Gyles Donouane,  
 at Castledonouane theise.*

'DAUGHTER,

'I have received yours of the eighteenth of Ffebruarie last and as for your troubles you must be patient as well as others and for my parte I taste enough of that fruit ; God mend it amongst all, and send us a more happie tyme. As for the partie lately commanded to the cuntree of Kiery who may be expected to return that way, they are conducted by my Nephew (your Coussen) Lieut. Collonell William Bourke, to whom I have written by the bearer in your behalfe. I am most Confident he will not suffer any wrong to be don into your Dependents, Tenants, or yourself. And if in case you should expect the whole Armeey, you may certifie me soe much with speed and I shall take that Course that shal be befittinge. In the meane tyme beseeching God to bless and keepe you and yours,

'I am,

'Youre assured loveing ffather,

'R. O'SHAGHNISSEY.

'Fedan, 14 Martii, 1647.'

But the worst did not come until after the death of Sir Roger, which took place in 1650. A portrait of him is preserved at Kilkenny Castle, and is reproduced in the present book by the kind permission of the Marquis of Ormonde. Sir Roger's son, Sir Dermot O'Shaughnessy, had already taken part in Irish politics, and had attended the 'Confederation of the Irish Catholics' at Kilkenny in 1642. On the proclamation of the Commonwealth, Sir Dermot O'Shaughnessy refused to acknowledge the new Government, and his castle of Gort was destroyed in the course of Cromwell's suppression of the Irish rebellion. We quote the account of the incident from the memoirs of the general who commanded—Edmund Ludlow. In June, 1651, Ludlow was on his way from Galway to Limerick.

'I marched,' he says, 'with my horse towards Limerick and came to Gourtenshegore, a castle belonging to Sir Dermot O'Shortness, who was then gone to Galway, but had left his tenants with some souldiers, and one Foliot an Englishman to command them, in the castle.<sup>1</sup> At my coming before it I summoned them to submit, offering them, that in case they would dismiss their souldiers, and promise to live quietly in the obedience of the Parliament, I would leave no garrison in the place, nor suffer any prejudice to be done to them. They pretending they had already submitted to Sir Charles Coote, refused to deliver the castle to any other. Tho I took this to be only a pretence, yet to leave them without excuse and to prevent all exceptions I sent to Sir Charles Coote to desire him to let me know how the matter stood, and to direct them to deliver the place to me. Having received an answer to my letter from Sir Charles Coote, I sent it to them, telling them, that now I expected their obedience; but instead of that they sent me a defiance, and sounded their bagpipes in contempt of us; to which they were chiefly encouraged by one of the country, whom I had sent to bring in to me some iron bars, sledges, and pickaxes, and who under colour of

<sup>1</sup> Compare *Aphorismical Discovery*, iii. 239; *Mercurius Politicus*, p. 931. [Text and this note are from Professor Firth's edition.]



THE O'SHAUGHNESSY





going to fetch them, ran away to the enemy, and acquainted them with our want of artillery and instruments to force them. I gave orders to take up all the horses from grass, to bridle and saddle them, and to tie them to the tents of their respective troops, commanding two troops to mount the guard, and to send out scouts to discover if any enemy were near. The rest of the men I drew into several parties, and assigned them their particular attacks: every souldier carried a fagot before him, as well to defend himself, as to fill up the enemy's trenches, or to fire the gates, as there should be occasion. On one side of the wall there was an earth-work about eleven foot high, with a trench of equal breadth without. The wall of the court was about twelve foot high, well flanked. On the other side the place was secured by a river. Upon our first approach the enemy shot very thick upon us, and killed two of our men, which so enraged the rest, that they ran up to the works, and helping one another, to the top of them, beat off the enemy, following them so close, that by means of some ladders which those within had made use of, they got into the court, and put to the sword most of those they found there, the enemy not daring to open the gate to receive their friends. Those of ours who had entered the court, having no instruments to force the house, made use of a wooden bar which they found, and with which they wrested out the iron bars of a strong stone window about six foot from the ground, and forced the enemy by their shot out of that room, where being entred, they put to the sword those that were there. Lieutenant Foliot finding his case desperate, resolved to sell his life at as dear a rate as he could, and charged our men, who were nine or ten in number, with a tuck in one hand, and a stiletto in the other, defending himself so well with the one, and pressing them so hard with the other, that they all gave ground; but he closing with one of them whom he had wounded, and probably might have killed, gave an opportunity to another to run him through the body, by which wound he fell, and the house was quickly cleared of the rest. Most of the principal of the enemies being got into the castle, our men fired a great number of fagots at the gates, which burned so furiously, that the flame took hold of the floors and other

timber within through the iron grate, which being perceived by those in the castle, they hung out a white flag, begging earnestly for mercy, and that we would take away the fire. I commanded my men to leave shooting, and acquainted the besieged, that if they expected any favour from us, they must throw down their arms, which they presently did : whereupon I ordered the fire to be taken away, and gave a souldier twenty shillings to fetch out two barrels of powder that was near the fire, which continued to burn so fiercely that we could not put it out, but were obliged to throw up skains of match into the chambers, by which those in the castle descended to us, being about fourscore in number, besides many women and children. We secured the men till the next morning, when I called a council of war ; and being pressed by the officers, that some of the principal of them might be punished with death for their obstinacy, I consented to their demand, provided it might not extend to such as had been drawn in by the malice of others. Those who were tenants to Sir Dermot O'Shortness, and countrymen, I dismissed to their habitations, upon promise to behave themselves peaceably, and to engage against us no more : the rest of them we carried away with us.

According to local tradition, the old Burke Castle at Ballinamantane was destroyed at the same time ; its ruins add a picturesque feature to the scenery of the underground river.

Sir Dermot seems to have died in 1655, and, if O'Hart is correct, it was not he, but his son, also Sir Dermot, who was restored to the family possessions by Acts of 14, 15, and 17 Car. II for the settlement of Ireland. He died in 1673, without having taken all the necessary legal steps to secure his property, and his son Roger, in 1678, received a confirmation of his possession of Gortinchigorie and 2,000 acres adjoining it, at an annual quit-rent of £20 4s. 11½d. He, or his father, had been able to recover other portions of their property, and at the same time he had a confirmation of 2,645 acres of other land in the barony of Kiltartan, at a quit-rent

of £26 14s. 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ d., 'which included,' says the fourth Viscount Gort, in a MS. to which we shall make frequent reference, 'one shilling yearly for the beautiful lake of Lough Cooter and the islands that adorn it.' We quote the terms of the confirmation from the *Report on the Public Records of Ireland*:—

To Roger O'Shaughnessy, Esq., son and heir to Sir Dermot, Knt., who was son to Sir Robert (Roger), Knt., the chief seat of Gortinshegory with the appurtenances and 2,000 acres adjoining thereto, namely, Gortinshegory, three qrs. 211 acres; the quarter of the townland of Gortinshegory called Killmacondra, 75 acres parish and barony Kiltartan, co. Galway. Ballylenane, 1 qr. 85 acres; Ballyhewe, near Gort, 293 acres; Ballynoe alias Flingstowne, half a townland 226 acres; Ballysida, town, 199 acres, Parish Kilmacdough same Barony; Carrocule (quarter of the town of Clounehane) 51 acres; Barnard, one quarter of Tulloghmegan, 58 acres; Ardvallaghduffe, alias Ardvillegoghe, 2 qrs. 122 acres; Carroulissey and Syegh near Ballyhugh, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  qrs. 138 acres; Ballymonyaneane, town-land next Ballyhugh, 270 acres; Dromlea, town-land 4 miles from Gort, 252 acres. In Carubeseda, qr. 20 acres parish of Beagh, same Barony and County. Total, 2,000 acres plantation (3,239 acres, 2 roods, 27 perches Stat.). Rent, £20 4s. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

In another grant same date he received 4,284 acres, namely:—

Ballymofoyle, 4 $\frac{1}{2}$  qrs. 209 acres, rent £2 2s. 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.; Carrowmartine, one qr. 36 acres, rent 7s. 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.; Tyraghane alias Tyralaghe, 2 qrs. 188 acres, rent £1 18s. 0 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.; Ardmoylevane, 4 qrs. 336 acres, rent £3 7s. 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.; Dromsaesknane, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  qrs. 147 acres, £1 9s. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.; Carryny alias Carring, 1 qr. 113 acres, £1 2s. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.; Cregghan alias Clonehaha, 1 qr. 70 acres, rent 14s. 2d.; Tullanagan, 1 qr. 68 acres, 13s. 9d.; Cregg, 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  qrs. 251 acres, £2 10s. 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.; Behagh alias Behee, 4 qrs. 205 acres, £2 1s. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. In Capparilla one qr. in the four quarters, 173 acres, £1 15s. 0d. In Rathvillydoon and

Gortoohar  $\frac{1}{2}$  qr., 39 acres, 7s. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. Three-quarters of the town-land of Derrincalling, 246 acres, £2 9s. 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. In Glanbrack and Carrownacrossye, 2 qrs. 91 acres, rent 18s. 5d.; Killoghty, 2 qrs., 1 carton, 131 acres, £1 6s. 8d.; Cappaghmore, 3 cart. 64 acres, rent 12s. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. In Gortecarnane and Kilofane, 2 qr. 200 acres, £2 os. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. In Rathvillydoone and Gortvoher, 16 acres; in Cloonyne, 38 acres. In Sessee, 24 acres, barony of Kiltartan, co. Galway. Total, 2,645 acres plantation, or 4,284 acres 1 rood 32 perches Stat. Total rent, £26 14s. 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. Dated 20 December 29 Chas. II, Inrolled 2 May 1678.

When the Revolution occurred, Roger O'Shaughnessy remained faithful to the House of Stuart, and as a Captain in Lord Clare's Yellow Dragoons he marched to meet William of Orange at the Boyne. Ill health prevented his taking any actual share in the fighting, and he died at his home at Gortinchigorie on July 11, 1690. At the end of William's campaign in Ireland, he was attainted, and though he himself was now beyond the reach of friend or foe, his possessions were liable to be seized as those of a rebel against the new Government. An inquisition was held on his lands, on September 5, 1696, in the town of Galway, and they were adjudged forfeit. William granted them first to Gustavus, first Baron Hamilton, and then, presenting him with a more valuable property, he gave the O'Shaughnessy estate of Gortinchigorie to Thomas Prendergast. The grant was complicated by the marriage contract of the deceased owner, Roger O'Shaughnessy, with Helena O'Brien, daughter of the Viscount Clare. The castle and island of Fidane and twelve quarters of land had been conveyed to trustees for Roger and Helena O'Shaughnessy, with remainder to their heirs male, and the property was further secured as a jointure for the wife. In accordance with this settlement, although Ardimullivan Castle was at once surrendered by the O'Shaughnessys, the castle of Fidane



was retained by Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, even after her second marriage with Captain Hugh O'Kelly, and she died there in 1729, almost the last inhabitant of Fidane. Her rights were also secured, as we shall see, by a bargain between the new owner, Sir Thomas Prendergast, and her son-in-law Theobald Butler, of Ballygegan, the husband of her only daughter, Helena.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE FAMILY OF GORT

THE family which now became associated with the town of Gort and the estate of Lough Cutra was one of the most ancient in Ireland. The name of Prendergast carries us back to the early days of Norman rule in England. One branch of it settled in Northumberland and Berwickshire, and the record of its deeds of chivalry may be found in the pages of the Scottish chronicler, Fordoun. In the warfare of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries it is generally found on the side of the Scots, and the family possessions in Northumberland were forfeited as a penalty for Prendergast loyalty to the Houses of Bruce and Stewart. Another branch held possessions in Pembrokeshire, where the parish of Prendergast still preserves the name, and it is probable that the family gave the name to, and did not derive it from, the locality. The family tradition is that a Philip de Prendergast accompanied Gerald de Windsor into Wales and received a grant of lands there, and one could point to numerous other instances of a place-name derived from the family which possessed the land. The fourth Viscount Gort, in his genealogical researches, failed to trace any connexion between the Northern and the Pembrokeshire Prendergasts, and this fact increases the presumption that 'Prendergast' is not, in origin, a Pembrokeshire place-name. The first Prendergast of the Pembrokeshire family who is known to history was Maurice de Prendergast, one of the precursors of Richard de Clare, second Earl of Pembroke (Strongbow), in the invasion of Ireland in the reign of Henry II.

The occasion of their expedition was an appeal for help from Diarmid mac Murchadha, prince of the Hui Cinn-sellaigh, who occupied a tract of country extending from the river Barrow to the Wexford and Wicklow seaboard. Diarmid had a quarrel with Tighernan O'Ruaire of Breifne, whose possessions included the modern counties of Leitrim and Cavan. Diarmid had been strong enough to obtain for himself the position of King of Leinster, but in 1166 Tighernan, with the help of Ruadhri of Connaught, High King of Ireland, defeated him and banished him from Ireland. Henry II of England refused to give him aid, but allowed his subjects to fight under his banner. The allies of Diarmid were chiefly drawn from South Wales. Pembroke did not at first join his standard, declining to move without Henry's special licence, even though Diarmid promised him his daughter in marriage and—what, by Irish law, was not his to give—the succession to the throne of Leinster. But Robert Fitz Stephen and Maurice Fitz Gerald landed at Bannow in May, 1169, and brought with them Maurice de Prendergast, 'a lustie and hardie man,' in Holinshed's phrase. They had been promised the towns of the Ostmen or Norsemen who had settled in County Wexford. Their first triumph was the capture of the town of Wexford, and thence they spread over the whole of Leinster, dividing the spoils as they went along. Maurice de Prendergast is credited by the author of the *Song of Dermot* with an important share in an early battle, in which McDonchid, the Prince of Ossraige or Ossory (Co. Kilkenny), was defeated by Diarmid with the help of the English, and he was the leader of an expedition against the same prince, whom he defeated at Aghadur (Freshford). Almost immediately Prendergast had a quarrel with Diarmid. He had probably been absent when the division of spoils in Wexford took place, and he considered his reward insufficient; and the poet of

the 'Song' tells us that Diarmid prevented his men from leaving the country to visit Pembrokeshire and their own kindred. The result of the quarrel was that Maurice de Prendergast took service with McDonchid of Ossraighe, and he is henceforth known as 'Maurice de Ossory.' He carried out his intention of visiting Wales, and returned in 1170 with Strongbow, who had definitely obtained the permission of Henry II. The freebooting expedition in aid of Diarmid now developed into a political conquest, in which Maurice de Prendergast took a distinguished part, and in the course of which he was able to give protection to his old friend the Prince of Ossraighe. Maurice was given a grant of the lands of Fernegeldan, on the Slaney in Wexford, but they were soon exchanged for possessions in Munster. Maurice de Prendergast died in 1205, having become a Knight of St. John of Jerusalem and Master of the Hospital of Kilmainham. To the Society of St. John of Jerusalem he gave his Pembrokeshire property, and so severed the connexion of the Prendergast family with Wales.

Of Maurice de Prendergast's children, the most distinguished was a younger son, Gerald, known in accordance with Celtic usage as Gerald Fitz Maurice or Mac-Morris, who accompanied Richard de Burgh in his expeditions in Connaught, and received a large territory in the plain of Mayo (including Ballagh, Corbally, Cross-boyne, and Kilcoleman) which came to be known as Clanmorris, and still bears that designation. Gerald's chief seat was the Castle of the Bries, of which some ruins still exist. Like not a few of the Norman conquerors of Ireland, Gerald's descendants, the Mac-Morris, identified themselves with the Irish Celts, and, living beyond the English pale, owed no allegiance to any sovereign of England until Queen Elizabeth. In September, 1585, Sir John Perrot, the Lord Deputy of Ireland, made an agreement with the chiefs of Con-



naught by which, among others, Richard MacMorris of the Breere, 'otherwise surnamed Fitz Gerald or Prendergast,' agreed to hold his lands of the Queen. The estates of the senior branch of the Prendergasts in this part of Ireland passed, by heiresses, to the Moores and then to the Lynches; and a junior branch is still represented in Connaught by the noble family of Oranmore and Browne, through the marriage of Dominick Browne to Mary MacMorris or Prendergast about 1563.

The direct male line of the original Maurice de Prendergast descended through his eldest son, Philip, who married an heiress of the De Quincey family and added to his patrimony a considerable amount of De Quincey property in the neighbourhood of Enniscorthy, including Hy-Kinsellagh and Duffren, between Ferns and the Wicklow hills. The estates of the main line passed, like the possessions of Philip's younger brother Gerald, through heiresses, into the Cogan and Rochford families in the thirteenth century. Many cadet branches were scattered over Ireland, and the most important of these were undoubtedly the lords of Newcastle, whose possessions lay between Clonmel and Buttevant and on the borders of Limerick. These Prendergasts of Newcastle—descended from a younger son of Philip Prendergast and Maude de Quincey—played a very distinguished part in Irish history until the seventeenth century, when they suffered in the forfeitures under Cromwell. They were, however, fortunate enough to recover a considerable proportion of their lands, partly by re-grants and partly by purchases. The last lord of Newcastle before the Cromwellian forfeitures had a younger son, Thomas, who married Ellen Condon, a member of a famous Irish family, and lived till 1725 at Croane, of which he had a beneficial lease. His son Thomas re-founded the fortunes of the family, and his descendants, of the noble family of Gort, represent in

the female line the lords of Newcastle, the direct male line becoming extinct in the eighteenth century.

Young Thomas Prendergast, born probably about the date of the Restoration, was given a commission in the army by King James II, in accordance with the Declaration of Indulgence. At the Revolution his Roman Catholicism involved the revocation of his commission, and he joined the army of King James in Ireland. In this way he became intimate with a large number of fellow Jacobites, including a Captain Porter, and this acquaintanceship was to prove the turning-point in his life. After the defeat of King James's forces he seems to have obtained a pardon, for we find him in the beginning of 1696 staying peaceably in Hampshire as the guest of a well-known Jacobite family, the Byerleys. In the month of February he and his host were hastily summoned to London by Captain Porter, who revealed to them the details of the famous Assassination Plot, familiar to readers of Macaulay's *History*. Thomas Prendergast had good reason to hate William of Orange, for not only had the Revolution spoiled his own career, but it had also involved the ruin of the main line of his family, which again lost its possessions for loyalty to the House of Stuart. But warfare is one thing and murder another, and Prendergast gave the Earl of Portland information about the intended plot, without, however, betraying his friends. Later on, when the conspirators themselves began to betray each other, Prendergast felt himself free to reveal their whole counsels, and his conduct has received the approval of most historians. William rewarded him by restoring him to his rank in the army and attached him to his own person, and Prendergast was able to secure for his father and kinsmen permission to retain such of their lands as had not been already granted away. On his marriage with Penelope Cadogan, daughter of Henry Cadogan, of Liscarlan,

co. Meath, he left the Roman Communion and accepted from William III—what he had previously declined—a grant of lands in Ireland. On the 23rd of April, 1697, William granted by letter (confirmed by a patent in the following June, 'in consideration of the good and acceptable services performed unto us by our trusty and well-beloved Thomas Prendergast, Esquire') the estates of Gortinchegorie in the county of Galway; and to this were added, says the fourth Viscount Gort, 'the lands of Tullemaine, Milltown, Lisgariff, Ronane, Fethard and its castle Rochestown, the spittal lands of Ardfinan (whose forfeited owner was perhaps his father, old Thomas Prendergast), with such other lands not yet disposed of as had been forfeited by any of his name.' In 1699 he was made a baronet. He had probably accompanied William in the closing scenes of the War of the Grand Alliance, and in his subsequent visits to Holland, but on William's death in 1701 he came to live in Ireland, and in 1703 was returned to the Irish Parliament for Monaghan, a county with which Lady Prendergast's family was connected.

The years spent in Ireland were occupied in negotiations for the settlement of his property. He had no trouble with the Gort estate, but some of the old family property granted to him or his father as not yet disposed of, and some other lands given him by William III, fell under the provisions of the Trustee Act, were resumed, and in 1703 were sold. He became the purchaser of some of them, and he was able to purchase other portions of the ancestral property in Tipperary, including a large part of the Lordship of Newcastle. The record of these negotiations yields incidentally some information as to the value of a section of the Lough Cutra property. In October, 1697, Sir Thomas Prendergast demised to a trustee for Theobald Butler, Esquire, 200 acres of Gortecarnane, 'now,' says Viscount Gort, 'a picturesque copse noted for its woodcock

shooting and where I have seen wild fallow deer give to the sportsman a nobler target.' The rent was fixed at £226, during the lifetime of Ellen, widow of Roger O'Shaughnessy, and £400 for the remainder of a term of twenty-one years after her death. All timber and saplings were reserved, so that the bulk of the land must have been good agricultural soil. The Commissioners on whose report the Trustee Act was based spoke of this ground as having been sold for £2,500, though worth more than £12,000; if this statement is correct, Sir Thomas may have commuted the rent agreed upon in 1697.

In the War of the Spanish Succession, Sir Thomas Prendergast took a considerable part, commanding the 22nd regiment of foot, known, from its colonel's name, as 'Prendergast's'. It was specially distinguished in the battle of Oudenarde (July 11, 1708), and at Malplaquet, where its colonel, just made a brigadier-general, was killed. A peculiar interest attaches to his death. As was customary in these campaigns, Colonel Prendergast obtained leave to return home during the winters, and in September, 1708, he was residing in London. On the night of the 10th-11th September he had a remarkable dream, which impelled him to make the following entry in his pocket-book:—

'Being in bed with my wife last night, in this my house in the City of London, I dreamt that James Cranmell, a native of Clonmell in Ireland, and who died in my service three years ago, appeared in my livery, and told me to prepare for death, for that I would die this day year.

'Though having no superstition on the subject, I note this as a curious memorandum, if such an event should happen me.

'THOS. PRENDERGAST.

'September 11, 1708.'

On September 11, 1709, General Prendergast fell



fighting bravely in the thick of the fight<sup>1</sup> at Malplaquet.

The fourth Viscount Gort, to whom this portion of our narrative owes any interest that it may possess, records another tradition which connects the battle of Malplaquet with Lough Cutra. It is said that Colonel Rupert Foster, one of the Clooneene family, who (like probably some of the Newcastle Prendergasts) was fighting, in the Jacobite interest, on the French side, saved the life of William O'Shaughnessy, also a colonel in the French service, and son of Roger O'Shaughnessy, the former owner of Gortinchigorie. The two are believed to have been united by their affection for Hester O'Shaughnessy, sister of Roger. At a ball given in the castle of Fidane, Foster had a quarrel with another suitor, and left the dance to fight a duel at Tobberindoney (now called Tubber). The news reached Hester, who died suddenly of fright. Her lover was, in fact, unhurt and had only wounded his rival. 'Her sorrowing spirit,' says Lord Gort, 'is said still to flit at times over the small lake at Fidane.'

Sir Thomas Prendergast left in tail male the bulk of his property to his son Thomas, then a child of seven, with a remainder to his brother, Jeffrey. It is interesting to note that, besides providing for his widow, daughters, and sisters, he left £14 a year to his father 'Old Thomas', who, at his death in 1725, was believed to be one hundred and eleven years of age: he was certainly a very old man. Penelope, Lady Prendergast, had an annuity of £200 charged upon the Galway estates, in the management of which she took great interest. A lawsuit of 1738, quoted from the Equity Exchequer records by Viscount Gort, gives us some further information about the Lough Cutra property. Lady Prendergast had leased Knockmow, Tyrloghan,

<sup>1</sup> The story of this dream and its realization is told, somewhat inaccurately, in Boswell's *Life of Johnson*.

Carrowgariffe, the islands in Lough Cutra, and some other lands, to her agent and another tenant in 1718. The rent was 5s. 6d. per acre of good land; waste was free, and the islands were counted as waste. The interesting points are that, in 1738, the tenant pleaded that the rent was too high, and that it had been publicly fixed on this scale in order to break down a local combination. The rent was not reduced, but he was allowed £92 18s. 7d. as compensation for money spent in draining and fencing the wood at Pullough, and in planting three hundred apple, pear, and cherry trees in the islands of Lough Cutra. Some of the apple-trees still survive. The property had been left heavily burdened by the late baronet's desire to recover family estates elsewhere, and in 1714-15 an Act was passed 'to enable Sir Thomas Prendergast, baronet, an infant, to sell part of his estate lying in the county of Waterford for the payment of his father's debts and for other purposes therein mentioned'. Under this Act, Kilronan was sold; portions of the Tipperary property had already been sold by authority of a Queen's letter in 1710; and the second Sir Thomas Prendergast, when he came of age in 1723, succeeded to the Galway property, worth in the estimation of the dispossessed O'Shaughnessys, £3,000 a year. The List of Absentees of Ireland in 1729, which describes Sir Thomas Prendergast as one of those who 'live generally abroad, and visit Ireland now and then for a month or two', represents him as spending abroad £2,000 a year. He was, however, elected member for Clonmel in 1733, and, in the same year was returned for Chichester to the Parliament of Great Britain. He married in 1740 the only daughter of Sir Griffith Williams, Baronet, of Marle and Pantaglas in Wales, who in 1745 succeeded to the property of her mother, the heiress of the Vaughans of Pantaglas; but as Sir Thomas Prendergast died childless in 1760, the Welsh estates passed out of the family. He had

been Postmaster-General of Ireland and had played a considerable part in Irish politics, and was the victim of some of Dean Swift's lampoons. He was a Whig, and strongly opposed the Tithe Agistment, dear to Swift's heart. There are references to him in Hervey's *Memoirs* and in the letters of the Duke of Bedford, which relate his opposition to a bill for the compulsory registration of Roman Catholic priests, and his desire to put an end to absenteeism, jobbery, and corrupt pensions in Ireland. Bedford, in spite of some disagreements, intended to raise Prendergast to the peerage, but just at this moment his fatal illness occurred. His possession of the Gort estates had been endangered by a suit brought against him in the interests of the O'Shaughnessys. 'On the site of their old castle,' says Lord Gort, 'he had founded the neat, modern town of Gort. And besides making roads, building bridges, and erecting mills, he had commenced the formation of a beautiful seat at Rindifin, where the Gort river, leaving Lough Cooter, runs under and over ground in a most fantastic and picturesque fashion—a seat of which some remains of plantations and gardens still point out the situation; but which, when nearly completed, was burnt to the ground: whether intentionally or by accident, accounts do not agree.'

William O'Shaughnessy, who had fought at Malplaquet, died in 1744. His younger brother, Charles, who died in 1721, had been allowed to hold Beagh and some other lands, as he possessed a mortgage over them. They were, however, included in William's grant to Sir Thomas Prendergast, and on the death of Charles O'Shaughnessy, the guardians of the second baronet paid the mortgage and demanded the property and the net profits since the death of Sir Thomas in 1709. Their contention was upheld in the law courts in 1736, and the sum payable to the second baronet was fixed at £681 7s. 9d. But Joseph O'Shaughnessy, the eldest

son of Charles, encouraged, doubtless, by other dispossessed owners, determined to claim the whole property, on the plea that it was entailed and that the forfeiture was therefore invalid. The Whig Government of 1742 passed an Act (15 George II, cap. 15), confirming the grants made by William III to Sir Thomas Prendergast, and incidentally cutting the entail made by Sir Thomas's will, a step rendered desirable by the childlessness of the second baronet, who now became absolute owner. This Act did not put an end to the litigation. A decision was given in favour of Sir Thomas Prendergast in the Court of Common Pleas, and was confirmed by the House of Lords. Legal proceedings, however, did not cease, and the House of Commons passed a resolution in support of Sir Thomas Prendergast.<sup>1</sup> Finally, Roebuck O'Shaughnessy, the representative of the family, accepted a sum of money from Sir Thomas Prendergast about 1753, and gave up, in return, all claim to the old O'Shaughnessy property of Gortinchigorie. The new owners could thus feel themselves the possessors of their property without reference to the forfeitures under William III, nor had the representatives of the old owners any further ground of complaint. But unfortunately, a new complication arose out of the operation of the Penal Laws. A Roman Catholic father was forbidden to make such a bargain, or to give away any rights of his son, if that son was a member of the Church of Ireland. Roebuck O'Shaughnessy died in 1754, and his son, Joseph, joined the Church of Ireland. In 1770 he revived the lawsuit and accused his own brother William of conspiracy with the Prendergasts. Eventually the case was again appealed to the Lords and again decided in favour of the Prendergasts, who possessed both a legal and a moral claim.

The lawsuit, the bargain with Roebuck O'Shaugh-

<sup>1</sup> It was repeated in 1755.



nessy, and other expenses had drained the resources of the second baronet, and he sold all his remaining estates in Tipperary. He died at his house in Merrion Square, Dublin, on September 23, 1760, while a patent was actually in process of preparation to grant him the Viscounty of Clonmel which 'was in ancient times deemed to belong to his ancestors'.<sup>1</sup> By his will dated July, 1756, he availed himself of his power to alter the designation of his property,<sup>2</sup> so far as to leave it to the son of a daughter of the first baronet, instead of to a descendant of his uncle Jeffrey, as was intended by the tail male of the original will. The first baronet had three daughters who lived to be married. The eldest, Juliana Countess of Meath (wife of the sixth Earl), died without issue. The second, Elizabeth, married, first, Sir John Dixon Hamon of Woodhouse in the County of Cork, and on his death, Charles Smyth, son of Thomas Smyth, Bishop of Limerick from 1695 to 1725. The third daughter, Anne, married Captain Samuel Hobson. Lady Hamon had no children by her first husband; by her second she left three sons and two daughters. Sir Thomas Prendergast entailed the estates upon John, the youngest son of this family, with remainder to his father, Charles Smyth, and further remainder to Thomas Hobson, son of the testator's sister Anne. A condition of inheritance was the assumption of the name of Prendergast.

The Smyths were descendants of the MacGowans of Antrim and Down, but appear to have been English in origin. In the beginning of the seventeenth century we find a branch of this family settled at Dundrum, co. Down; they were connected with a number of distinguished families, and, about 1612, Mary, sister of William Smyth of Dundrum, married Archbishop Henry Ussher, one of the founders of the University of Dublin.

<sup>1</sup> Viscount Gort's MS.

<sup>2</sup> By an earlier will he had left it to his wife.

Thomas Smyth, son of William Smyth of Dundrum, and probably a nephew of Mrs. Ussher, was elected to a scholarship in Trinity College, Dublin, in 1673, became a Fellow in 1677, and possessed, both before and after the Revolution, considerable ecclesiastical preferment in Ireland. He married, about 1689 or 1690, a daughter of Ulysses Burgh, Dean of Emly. In 1692 his father-in-law was made Bishop of Ardagh, and Smyth succeeded him as Dean of Emly. In 1695 he was appointed Bishop of Limerick, through the influence of Archbishop Tenison, with whom he had fled to England during the crisis of the Revolution. He was an able and careful administrator of his diocese, but his Tory sympathies made him to some extent suspected by the Cromwellian Protestants of Limerick. In 1714 the Duke of Ormonde appointed him Vice-Chancellor of the University of Dublin. With the fall of Ormonde and the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty, the Bishop's political influence came to an end, and in 1721 he resigned the office of Vice-Chancellor, feeling that circumstances now prevented him from being of much use to the University. Unlike most politicians of the time, in Church and State alike, he never 'sold the truth to serve the hour', but remained loyal to his convictions and to his friends, and he was not afraid to interfere at times on behalf of persecuted Roman Catholics. The Bishop died on May 4, 1725.

His second son, Charles Smyth, was born about 1697, and studied, like many others of his family, at Trinity College, Dublin. In 1724 he was called to the Bar as a member of the Middle Temple. On November 21, 1728, he married Elizabeth, widow of Sir John Hamon, and daughter of General Sir Thomas Prendergast, first baronet, who had been left a considerable fortune by her first husband. He represented the City of Limerick in the Irish Parliament from 1731 to 1776, and took an active part in local affairs, in which his

family continued to possess almost autocratic powers until the Corporation Reform Act of 1841 came into operation. The rivals of the Smyth family in local matters were the Perys, and nominees of one faction or the other long represented the City of Limerick in the Parliament of Ireland and afterwards in that of Great Britain. On the death of his eldest brother, the Dean of Ardfert, in 1731, he succeeded to the family estates of Cahirnarry and Cahiravalla, but he lived chiefly in Dublin (Kildare Street) or in Limerick. He died in August, 1784, leaving three sons and two daughters. Our story is connected with two of his children—the youngest son, John, and the eldest daughter, Julia, who married, in 1759, her cousin, Thomas Vereker of Roxborough, co. Limerick. John Smyth began life as a soldier, and in 1760 was gazetted cornet in the 5th Royal Irish Regiment of Dragoons. Under the will of his uncle, Sir Thomas Prendergast, second baronet, he succeeded to the estate of Gort, and changed his name first to John Prendergast, and afterwards, in 1785, to John Prendergast-Smyth. He retired from the army and devoted himself to the management of his property and to local politics in Limerick. ‘On the Gort estates,’ says the fourth Viscount Gort, ‘he made many improvements, especially in roads and in planting, as well around Lough Cutra as in the neighbourhood of the curious and picturesque Punchbowl River. When visiting his property there, he resided in the large house near to the bridge at Gort, about which were then some handsome pleasure grounds at each side of the river, some of the trees ornamenting them still surviving. In those early days, the present mailcoach road to Ennis and Limerick did not exist. All traffic passed by the ancient road, through the parish of Kilmacduagh, which contains the ruins of the former cathedral, with the fine old tower adjoining, marked by the cannonballs of Ludlow’s army. . . . It passed by the ruins of

Fidane Castle, the residence of the last of the O'Shaughnessys, and left the Prendergast estate as it reached Tobber-in-doney on its way to Crusheen. So that the house occupied by John Prendergast at Gort was quite away from the public highway, which did not (as is now the case) separate it from the old gardens and plantation of Rindifin or the new ones about Lough Cutra.'

In Grattan's Parliament, Mr. Prendergast sat for Carlow and acted with the Grattan party; in 1782 he became Colonel of the Limerick Independents, 'one of the first Volunteer corps that was liberal enough to admit Roman Catholics into the ranks.' In 1785 he succeeded his brother Thomas in the family estates and thenceforth bore the name of Prendergast-Smyth. He succeeded his brother also in the representation of the City of Limerick, and in 1790 was able to obtain as his colleague his nephew, Charles Vereker, second son of his sister Julia. On Pitt's re-organization of the Irish Militia in 1793, John Prendergast-Smyth became first colonel of the City of Limerick Militia regiment, and was succeeded in 1797 by his nephew, Charles Vereker, whose services in the rebellion of 1798 we shall describe later. In the Union negotiations which followed the rebellion, Mr. Prendergast-Smyth supported Grattan, and offered a strenuous opposition to Pitt's proposals. When the Union was carried, he accepted the situation and loyally supported the Government. In 1810 he became a peer of Ireland as Baron Kiltartan, of Gort, in the County of Galway, and, in 1816, Viscount Gort of the City of Limerick. He was unmarried, and in the patent of each title a remainder was given to his nephew, the Right Honourable Charles Vereker. He died on May 23, 1817, and was succeeded, under the will of the second baronet, in most of his estates by the second Viscount Gort,<sup>1</sup> who was also heir general to the family of Smyth of Dundrum.

<sup>1</sup> His elder brother, Henry Vereker, had died without issue.



The family of Vereker, which thus came to represent the families of Prendergast and Smyth, was descended 'from John Verreyker, a gentleman of Dutch Brabant,<sup>1</sup> who came over to the Fen country, in the east of England, and had exhausted and reclaimed some lands there when the Civil War broke out.' As a royalist, he lost his lands in the Great Rebellion, and, with some other foreign settlers who had suffered in like manner, he formed a troop of horse, of which he was lieutenant. He served in Ireland and became quartermaster of the Royal army there, a post of the highest importance at that date. After Cromwell's victories in Ireland, John Vereker again suffered as a royalist, but on the Restoration of Charles II he was included among the soldiers who received compensation in the form of grants of houses and town parks in all Borough towns in Ireland; under this Act he gained some ground in Cork, and at his death, in 1675, he left a considerable amount of property. His son Henry, who inherited his estates of Grange, Ballincurragh, and Scarteen Shidane in County Cork, married Mary, daughter of another proprietor in County Cork, John Connell of Barrys Court and Bally Edmund. The lady's family were Tories, and Henry Vereker followed the fortunes of King James at the Revolution, and was killed in the course of the fighting in 1690. His widow married, in 1692, William Chartres of Kilmichael, a strong Williamite, who seems to have succeeded in protecting the property of his wife's first husband. Henry Vereker left two sons, Connell, of whom we shall speak presently, and Henry, whose daughter Joan married, in 1738, John Frend of Boskell in County Limerick; their grandson, Benjamin Frend, married a sister of the first Viscount Gough. Connell Vereker, who succeeded to his father's property,

<sup>1</sup> This account of the origin of the family is given by the fourth Viscount Gort with some hesitation, but there does not seem to be any reason for distrusting the tradition.

married Mary, daughter of Amos Godsell, of Moorstown, County Limerick. He purchased from a company for making sword blades, who added to their proper functions a speculation in Irish land, the property of Lackenagandell (or Roxborough) and Tinnekelly in County Limerick, and built the existing house of Roxborough. The property remained in the family till after the great Irish famine, and part of it was afterwards recovered by the third Viscount Gort. Connell Vereker died in 1733, and was succeeded by his son Henry, who married Anne, daughter and heiress of Sir Nicholas Osborne, fifth Baronet, of the Knockmoane and Ballintaylor family, and granddaughter of Thomas Smyth, bishop of Limerick. Their son, Thomas Vereker, was the husband of Juliana or Julia Smyth, eldest daughter of his great-uncle, Charles Smyth, and, in spite of receiving a good fortune with her, he lived so extravagantly that he was forced to sell the old family property near Cork. This sacrifice was insufficient, and, in 1790, he and his eldest son, Henry, agreed to disentail the estate, the son becoming responsible for the debts and receiving the property at once. In 1792 he was killed in a duel with a neighbour, and his father, Thomas Vereker, again took possession of the estates, and on his death, in 1801, Charles Vereker, his second son, became owner of Roxborough.

Charles Vereker, afterwards the second Viscount Gort, was born in 1768, and at the age of thirteen entered the Royal Navy, serving as a midshipman in H.M.S. *Alexander*, under Captain Lord Longford. He was present at the relief of Gibraltar in 1782, when the *Alexander* behaved with great credit. After the peace of 1783 he entered the army, and was gazetted to the 1st Royal Regiment of Foot, then on the Irish Establishment. In 1789 he married Jane, daughter of Ralph Westropp of Attyflin, and widow of William Stainer of Carnelly, near Ennis, and on his marriage he left the

army. His wife died in 1798, leaving him with one son, afterwards the third Viscount Gort, and three daughters. The year of Mrs. Vereker's death was that of the Irish Rebellion, in which Colonel Vereker played a distinguished part as colonel of the Limerick City Regiment. We have seen that, on the formation of the regiment in 1793, the first Viscount Gort became colonel. His nephew Charles Vereker was then gazetted major, George Gough of Woodsdown captain, and his son Hugh, afterwards Field-Marshal Viscount Gough, began his great career as an ensign of thirteen. The lieutenant-colonel was the Honourable Edmund H. Pery, who almost immediately resigned, and Charles Vereker succeeded him; Captain Gough was made major three months later (October, 1793) and his son Hugh lieutenant. But the future conqueror of the Punjab was soon transferred to a line regiment, and at the outbreak of the rebellion was engaged elsewhere. When Charles Vereker became colonel in 1797 (an office in which he was succeeded by his son the third Viscount, and he by his son the fourth Viscount Gort), Major Gough became lieutenant-colonel, and acted in that capacity during the rebellion.

Colonel Vereker's most important service was rendered in connexion with the siege of Sligo, in the course of the abortive French attempt upon Ireland, made after the suppression of the rebels. In August 1798 a French adventurer, by name Humbert, landed at Killala with about a thousand soldiers, trained and disciplined in the Revolutionary wars. It is to the lasting credit of these invaders that they showed to the Irish Loyalists the most courteous consideration; and, weary and ill-fed as they were, they fought bravely against overwhelming numbers. They had expected to be joined by a united Irish peasantry, but they found no enthusiasm for their cause, and were joined by very few recruits. At Castlebar, on August 26,

Humbert easily defeated General Lake, whose army, composed of Irish militia, made no effort to stand against the charge of the French. The near approach of Cornwallis with the Royal army rendered Castlebar unsafe for the invader, and on September 4 General Humbert commenced a swift march towards Sligo, with the double intention of awaiting reinforcements from France and of gaining Irish recruits in a new district. The garrison at Sligo consisted of militia troops under Colonel Vereker, whom Colonel Gough had succeeded in the command of the Limerick regiment, which formed part of the Sligo garrison. Vereker seems to have been under the impression that only an advance guard of the French was approaching the town, and, putting himself at the head of 300 men of his old regiment, he marched out to meet them on the morning of September 5. He had also with him thirty light dragoons and two curricule guns. They met Humbert at Colooney, five miles from Sligo, and maintained a gallant resistance, although the French were many times their number. Finally, they were compelled to abandon their two guns; but Humbert had found their resistance so formidable that, like Vereker, he decided that the enemy must be an advance guard, and he gave up his intention of marching on Sligo (which really lay at his mercy). From Colooney he made his way to Cloone to combine with the rebels at Granard, but he was unable to take all his artillery with him. At Ballinamuck he found himself surrounded by the armies of Lake and Cornwallis, and, after some resistance, surrendered. The brevity of the six weeks' campaign in Connaught was largely due to Vereker's defence of Sligo, for if the French had reached the mountains the resistance would certainly have been prolonged.

For his services in 1798 Colonel Vereker was offered a peerage, but owing to the strained relations between



his uncle and the Government at the moment, he declined the honour, which would have involved his supporting the Union. Colonel Vereker had represented the city of Limerick since 1794, and, like his uncle, was a follower of Grattan. He won the orator's praise for a speech which showed 'unsophisticated feeling and the natural honesty of good sense'. After the Union he was returned for Limerick to the first Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland. In 1803, Addington, in a militia debate, made a personal reference to Colonel Vereker's exploit at Colooney, and in the same year he was granted the unusual distinction (for a commoner) of bearing supporters to the family arms—'a lion collared chained and murally crowned, supporting the Royal colours, with the inscription, 5 September, 1798, and a Grenadier of the Limerick City Militia supporting the Regimental colours; and, as a motto, the word "Coloony".' From 1807 to 1810 Colonel Vereker was a Lord of the Treasury for Ireland.

'At this time, it was arranged,' says the fourth Viscount Gort, 'that the first Irish peerage which could be granted by the Crown under the Act of Union should be conferred on John Prendergast Smyth with remainder to Charles Vereker, and the former thereupon gave up to his future heir that portion of the Prendergast estates that lay around the lovely Lough Cooter, which in earlier days he had improved by planting, intending to erect a house in the Italian style, on a spot called, in consequence, Situation Hill. Colonel Vereker wisely decided that a building Gothic in character would be more in accord with the surrounding scenery, and that it should stand on the opposite side of the lough, so as to look over its soft surface on the rugged mountains that here separate Connaught from Munster. To carry out this idea, he had the aid of that able architect, Mr. Nash, and the castle and seat of Lough Cooter, admired by all who see them, bear testimony to their skill and taste. Lord Kingston's grand castle of Mitchelstown, and that of Lord Inchiquin at

Dromoland, were also designed by Nash; but East Cowes Castle, which he erected with especial care for his own residence in the Isle of Wight, and around whose ivy-clad walls many family memories now twine, resembles Lough Cooter much more than it does either of the other Irish castles I have named, and it was visited by Charles Vereker before his final plans were made.'

Other honours fell to Colonel Vereker before his succession to the peerage. He was made a Privy Councillor in Ireland and Governor and Charter-Justice of the city of Limerick, and he was the last to hold the ancient feudal office of Governor and Constable of the Castle of Limerick. In 1810 he married, secondly, Elizabeth, daughter of John Palliser, Esquire, of Comeragh in the county of Waterford, of the family of Bury, Earls of Charleville. In 1817 he succeeded the first Viscount Gort in title and estates, except those in and near Limerick, which were bequeathed to his brother John Vereker. The story of the severance between the Gort family and the estate of Lough Cutra may best be told in the words of the fourth Viscount, whose learned and instructive MS., compiled with no less skill than care, we now quote for the last time:—

'It was expected that the second Viscount Gort would also have inherited a large sum in ready money: instead of which it proved that the extravagant bachelor left upwards of £60,000 debt. And he had himself incurred heavy liabilities, partly in the erection of his beautiful castle, partly in contested elections, and other expenses connected with his position as a prominent political personage in Ireland, and the heir of a peer believed to be extremely rich. His debt had grown up during the suspension of specie payments owing to the wars with France, and so, like prices and rentals in those days of paper money, was unduly inflated. The entirely unexpected position of his uncle's affairs threw Lord Gort at once into serious difficulty, and when Peel caused the resumption of payment in gold in 1819, and Irish rents,

especially in poor lands like the barony of Kiltarton, rapidly fell by at least 40 per cent., that difficulty became greater than he was able to conquer. He made a manly effort to do so. He vested his estates in trusts for the payment of incumbrances. But though all those in Cork, those in Limerick that were not in settlement, and a large portion of those near Gort were sold, a considerable charge still remained on the property.'

The second Viscount died on November 11, 1842, and was succeeded by his son John, third Viscount Gort. His efforts to restore the fortunes of the estates were frustrated by the great famine of 1847 and by the Encumbered Estates Act of 1849. The state of misery and poverty into which Ireland was plunged by the potato famine rendered hopeless any immediate attempt to get rid of the incumbrances of the estate, and any chance of ultimate success for the existing owner was removed by the forced sales under the new Act. It was hoped that this Act would result in the purchase of Irish estates by men of wealth, who would devote their capital to the improvement of their properties, and so a remedy would be found for all the troubles of Ireland. The hope was not fulfilled, for so many estates were suddenly placed on the market that the normal operation of economic law asserted itself; here and there the speculator came on the scene, and the Act failed to produce the beneficent effects which had been anticipated from it.

The estates to which the third Viscount Gort succeeded in 1842 were valued at £150,000, and were distinguished, in accordance with testamentary dispositions, as 'settled' and 'unsettled'. A considerable proportion of the unsettled estates in Cork, Limerick, and Galway alike, including some land in close proximity to Lough Cutra, had been sold by the second Viscount. The remainder, including the castle and demesne, were exposed for sale in 1851 by order of the Encumbered

Estates Court.<sup>1</sup> It happened that the first Viscount Gough, who had just returned from the victorious campaigns in India which had added the Punjab to the dominions of the British Crown, desired to purchase an Irish property. The castle and grounds at Lough Cutra had attracted his admiration before his departure for India, and he decided to purchase the demesne and the portions of the estate now offered for sale. Lord Gort, however, still entertained hopes of being able to arrange to buy it in for himself, and at his request Lord Gough instructed his agents not to bid. These hopes were falsified; the estate was broken up into small properties and the castle and demesne were purchased by the Religious Order of Loretto, Dublin. After a short interval the settled estates were, in accordance with the provisions of the Act, likewise exposed for sale. The principal purchaser was Mr. Vicesimus Knox, of Stratford Place, who had long held a heavy mortgage on the property; but various portions passed into other hands. The family of Sir Thomas Prendergast thus severed their connexion with the estate of Gort-inch-gorie, which they had held for more than a century and a half. The district owes them much, for they had done much to develop its resources, and they had made a gallant effort to face a long series of misfortunes. Within a very few years after the loss of their Irish property, fate again smiled upon the family of Gort, for it turned out that they had merely exchanged Irish for English possessions, an exchange which many (doubtless erroneously) would rank among the blessings of human life. Ten years after the sale of Lough Cutra, the third Viscount Gort became by marriage the possessor of East Cowes Castle, in imitation of which his Irish house had been built, and it remains the seat of the family.

<sup>1</sup> Some of the details here given are taken from the pamphlet or sale catalogue published on this occasion.



It is impossible to trace the history of the property during the brief interval when Mr. Vicesimus Knox held the land and the castle existed as a convent school. The Order to which it belonged desired to concentrate their energies at their House near Dublin, which had been injured by a fire, and then Viscount Gough was informed that the owners would be glad to find a purchaser. In 1854 he called upon the Superior, Mrs. Ball, at Lough Cutra, and found her extremely desirous to sell. Lord Gough placed the final decision in the hands of his daughter-in-law, afterwards the second Viscountess Gough, and she, finding that it was his wish to effect a purchase, pronounced the final word, and negotiations were at once entered upon for the purchase, not only of the Castle and demesne, but also of as much of the estate as could be conveniently recovered.

## CHAPTER V

### THE FAMILY OF GOUGH

#### I

THE family of Gough, which has been so closely associated with the district since 1854, is ultimately of Celtic blood, for the name is originally Welsh, but the branch of the family to which the first Viscount Gough belonged had long been settled in Wiltshire.

About the middle of the reign of James I, three brothers, Robert, Francis, and Hugh Gough, made their way from England to Ireland. They were the sons of Hugh Gough, Rector of All Cannings, Wiltshire, and grandsons of John Gough of Stratford, in the same county. All three were graduates of the University of Oxford, and all alike were in holy orders. Their father was also a member of that University; he appears as a clerk of Magdalen College in 1560, and he was Rector of Little Cheverell, and Vicar of Bishop's Cannings, before being presented to All Cannings in 1593. He married a lady of Devonshire birth, Jane Clifford of Clifford Hall, and in due course five of their sons were matriculated in the University. The brothers, as was not unusual in those days, went up to Oxford in couples; the two eldest, Robert and William, entered Balliol College in 1603, aged nineteen and seventeen respectively; ten years later, another pair, Francis, aged eighteen, and Edward, aged seventeen, became members of St. Edmund Hall; and finally, they were followed by Hugh, who matriculated from New College in 1617. The family included at least two

other children, for Hugh is described as the seventh son; but of the others nothing is known. Of the two sons who remained in England, the elder, William, left the University without taking a degree, and became steward to the Earl of Warwick; the younger, Edward, became successively Rector of Great Cheverell, in Wiltshire, and of Over Moigne, in Dorset, besides holding, from 1629, the dignity of a canon of Salisbury. The founder of the family fortunes in Ireland was the eldest brother, Robert Gough, who became, in 1615, precentor of Limerick Cathedral, and in 1628 Archdeacon of Ardfert. Francis, the most distinguished of the five, left St. Edmund Hall, before taking his B.A. degree, in order to become a clerk of New College, but he had returned to the Hall before proceeding to his Master's degree in 1618. In the same year he followed his brother to Ireland, and was made Chancellor of Limerick Cathedral. In 1626 he was appointed to the see of Limerick, which he held till 1634, when he died, leaving a family of eight children. The seventh son, Hugh, the bearer of the family name, also found what Anthony á Wood describes as 'a just opportunity of going into Ireland', and in 1626 he succeeded his brother as Chancellor of Limerick, in which cathedral he likewise held a prebend.<sup>1</sup> This Wiltshire family of Goughs, who sided with Church and King in the Civil Wars, must be distinguished from another branch which produced a distinguished Puritan divine and a Cromwellian officer, who was one of the regicides.

There is some dubiety<sup>2</sup> as to whether the family of

<sup>1</sup> Our information about these brothers is derived from Foster's *Alumni Oxonienses*, Clark's *Register of the University of Oxford*, and Wood's *Athenae Oxonienses*.

<sup>2</sup> The difficulty arises from a question regarding the date of the death of Hugh Gough, the Bishop's younger brother, who, as we have said, succeeded him as Chancellor of Limerick in 1626. A Hugh Gough, Chancellor of Limerick, made his will

Gough of Woodsdown, co. Limerick, to which the subject of this memoir belonged, take their descent from Francis Gough, Bishop of Limerick, or from his brother Hugh; a persistent family tradition, which can be traced back to the middle of the eighteenth century, asserts that George Gough of Woodsdown, who was born in 1751, was seventh in descent from the Bishop. The Goughs had, in the interval, remained faithful to Ireland, and had intermarried with families who, like

in 1682, and died in 1684. From this Hugh Gough the first Viscount was unquestionably descended, and, if he was the Chancellor of 1626, then the family traces its origin not to the Bishop but to his brother. But it seems probable that the testator of 1682 and the Chancellor of 1626 are in fact different persons, for, according to Cotton's *Fasti* (1) in 1662 Hugh Gough, Chancellor of Limerick, petitioned to be excused part of his duties on the ground of 'great age and infirmity', and (2) in 1670 his office was vacated. It is not likely that such an office was vacated except by death, and the fact that the testator of 1682 leaves his wife sole executrix seems to suggest that he was a younger man than the Chancellor, who was very old in 1662. The family tradition is that Hugh Gough, the Bishop's brother, died in 1670 at the age of seventy-one (a very old age for those days), and that the Hugh Gough who died in 1684 was his nephew and successor, a son of the Bishop. This tradition is supported by a statement made by the Ulster King of Arms in 1816 to the effect that neither of the Bishop's brothers, Robert and Hugh, left any issue. If we accept the view here stated, the descent of the family is as follows:—

	Francis Gough, Bishop of Limerick.
Hugh Gough, Rector of Rathkeale, and Chancellor of Limerick Cathedral, <i>d.</i> 1684.	
	George Gough, Rector of Rathkeale.
	Hugh Gough, of Kilfinning.
	Hugh Gough, of Garrane.
	George Gough, of Woodsdown.
George Gough, of Woodsdown, father of F.-M. Viscount Gough.	



themselves, were of English birth, but resident in Ireland—the Millers of Ballicasey, co. Clare, and the Wallers of Castle Waller, co. Tipperary. George Gough of Woodsdown (1751–1836) married, in January, 1775, Letitia Bunbury, the daughter of Thomas Bunbury of Lisnevagh and Moyle, co. Carlow, and their descendants added new and greater glories to the traditional distinction which the name of Gough had acquired in the seventeenth century.

George Gough himself had won military laurels in the memorable 'ninety-eight'. He first appears, nine years before his marriage, as Cornet 'to that Troop, whereof the Earl of Ancrum is Captain, in the fourth Regiment of Horse'.<sup>1</sup> He was, in this respect, following an example set by his father (who had been appointed, in 1756, Cornet, and, in 1762, Captain in a troop of Militia Dragoons). How long he remained under Ancrum is not clear; he makes his next appearance on the stage of history at the outbreak of the troubles in Ireland in 1793. In April of that year he was made Deputy-Governor of the city of Limerick.<sup>2</sup>

A month later the Deputy-Governor was made Captain in an infantry Regiment of Militia; shortly afterwards he was promoted to a Majority, and, in 1797, he became Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel of the Limerick Regiment. He held this office at the date of the rebellion of 1798, and in July of that year commanded in a small action, of which a record in his own handwriting has been preserved. A force of about 4000 rebels had gathered in King's County and were laying waste the country in the neighbourhood of

<sup>1</sup> The Commission is dated August 30, 1768, and is signed by George III and Lord Shelburne.

<sup>2</sup> The family had been continuously resident near Limerick; e. g. the freedom of Limerick was conferred in 1726 on Hugh Gough of Garrane, the grandfather of the George Gough of whom we are speaking.

Edenderry. Colonel Gough, with 400 of his own Limerick regiment, thirty dragoons, and thirty-five yeomen (cavalry), met them at Johnstown, and completely defeated them, capturing their leaders. His small force lost two men killed and nine wounded. His own horse was hit through the neck, and a shot went through both the cocks of his hat. His conduct received the enthusiastic approbation of one of his commanding officers, and it may be said that his success freed King's County from the insurgents.

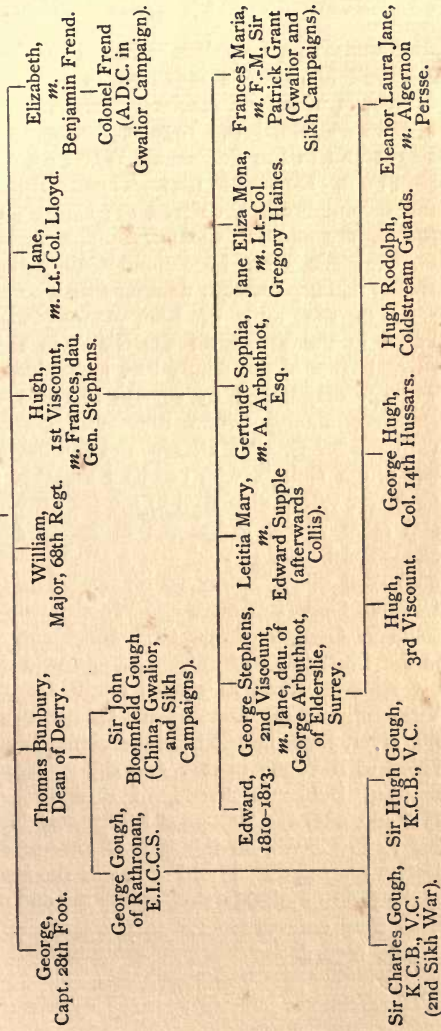
'This,' he says, 'was the second time I saved Edenderry from being burned, as, but that day month before, I got an express sent over to Phillips Town, where I was quartered and commanded the Garrison, that a large Rebel Army had taken possession of Lord Harberton's House, and was Encamped on his Demesne. I immediately Ordered out my division of the Limerick, marched out, and before Daylight, Arrived at Lord Harbertons, shot and destroyed all their advanced Guard, drove them out of the House, and from their camp, killed 14 of them, and took all their Stores, which I next day carted into Edenderry, and shared to all my little party, nineteen Stockings a piece. This victory [i.e. the success at Johnstown in July] saved Edenderry a second time being burned. I march'd back next day, with the blessing of all the inhabitants, who will as long [as] they live remember Col. Gough and his gallant Garryaon Boys—a braver or more loyal, or a more devoted set of fellows to their officers never carried Firelocks.'

We have already seen the part taken by Colonel Gough's regiment in the action at Colooney, where he was wounded. He received a medal for his services, and when the Limerick regiment was disbanded after the Peace of Amiens in 1801, it was on the lawn at Woodsdown that the city welcomed back the warriors who had maintained its honour.

The family of Colonel George Gough consisted of

# GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE FAMILY OF GOUGH.

GEORGE GOUGH, of Woodstown, co. Limerick (1751-1836), Lt.-Col. City of Limerick Militia,  
*m.* Letitia, dau. of Thomas Bunbury, of Lisnevagh.



four sons and two daughters. The eldest, George, followed his father's footsteps in the Limerick City Militia, in which he received a majority in 1797. He afterwards joined the regular forces and served in Egypt and in the Peninsular War as a captain in the 28th Foot. He died in 1841. Thomas Bunbury Gough, the second brother, entered the Church, and attained the dignity of Dean of Derry. The name of his son, General Sir John Bloomfield Gough, is familiar in Indian military history; another son, Thomas Bunbury, rose to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, and was killed in the attack on the Redan in 1855; and the martial fame of the family has, in modern times, been worthily maintained by several of the Dean's grandchildren, among whom the most conspicuous are General Sir Charles Gough and his brother, General Sir Hugh Gough, who received together the Victoria Cross for valour displayed in the Indian Mutiny; while still more recent campaigns in South Africa and in Somaliland have proved that a later generation is not neglectful of its family traditions. The third son of Colonel George Gough of Woodsdown was Major William Gough, of the 68th Regiment, who served in the Peninsula and in Canada, and who was drowned off Kinsale Head in 1822. Hugh Gough, the first Viscount, was the fourth son. Of the two daughters, the elder, Jane, married Lieut.-Colonel Lloyd, who was killed at Bayonne in 1813, and the younger, Elizabeth, married Benjamin Frend, of Boskell, co. Limerick. Her son, afterwards Colonel Frend, was, like his cousin Sir J. B. Gough, on the staff of his uncle during his Indian campaigns. Mrs. Frend was the favourite sister of the future Field-Marshal, and to the end of their long lives they entertained for each other the most affectionate regard.



## II

Hugh, first Viscount Gough, through whom the family became connected with Lough Cutra, was born at Woodsdown on November 3, 1779. His earliest appointment was in his father's militia corps, whence he passed, almost immediately, to the Hon. Robert Ward's corps, in which he was gazetted ensign on August 7, 1794. Two months later he was promoted to a lieutenancy in the 119th Foot, a regiment raised under Colonel Rochford, and he was adjutant of this regiment at the age of fifteen. On June 3, 1795, he was gazetted, by transfer from the 119th Foot, to the 2nd Battalion of the 78th Highlanders or Ross-shire Buffs (now known as the second Seaforth Highlanders). In this regiment he took part in the campaign in South Africa in 1795, and in December of the same year he obtained a transfer to the regiment, which is most generally associated with his name—the famous 87th Foot, or Prince of Wales's Irish Regiment. He joined his new regiment in the West Indies, and was present at the capture of Surinam. In June, 1803, he was promoted to a captaincy, and made superintending officer of the Army of Defence for the counties of Oxford and Bucks. In October, 1804, he was appointed Brigade-Major to the troops serving at Guernsey, where his regiment was stationed. He took an active part in recruiting and training the 2nd Battalion, which was raised in Ireland in 1805-6, and in October, 1806, he returned with the new battalion to Plymouth. Here, in July, 1807, Major Gough married Miss Frances Maria Stephens, whose father, General Edward Stephens, R.A., was in garrison at Plymouth, and, about seventeen months later (December, 1808), he sailed, in command of his regiment, for the Peninsula. In the course of the war in the Peninsula, the 87th and its colonel won

a reputation which made them the most popular regiment of the day, alike in England and in Ireland. The 87th took a distinguished part in the campaign of Talavera; it helped to gain the battle of Barrosa, and, in fact, contributed the most serious blow to the enemy on that memorable day, routing the 8th Regiment and capturing its eagle. General Graham, who commanded at Barrosa, wrote to the absent colonel of the regiment, Sir John Doyle:—

‘Your regiment has covered itself with glory. Recommend it and its commander [Lt.-Col. Gough] to their illustrious patron, the Prince Regent; too much cannot be done for it.’ At Tarifa, the 87th kept the breach in the course of the most exciting and romantic of the sieges in the Peninsular war, and it was the valour of the ‘Garry-Owen boys’ that saved the town. In the later years of the war, the 87th had less opportunity for independent action, but they served with distinction at Vittoria, capturing the bâton of Marshal Jourdain, and at the Nivelle, where Colonel Gough was wounded in the thigh, and where ‘the old corps behaved as usual . . . Nothing could withstand the Prince’s Own. Old Colville cried out, “Royal 87th, glorious 87th”; and well he might.’

His wound prevented Colonel Gough from serving in the last months of the Peninsular War or at Waterloo. In 1817 the 2nd Battalion of the 87th was disbanded, and in 1819 Sir Hugh Gough (he had been knighted in 1815) was gazetted full colonel of the 22nd or Cheshire Regiment. In 1821 the regiment was sent to Ireland to deal with the Whiteboys, and Sir Hugh Gough carried out this difficult task with discretion and with success. His command of the 22nd came to an end in 1826, and for eleven years he remained without employment. In 1830 he was gazetted major-general, and in 1831 he was made a K.C.B., but these honours brought no more substantial recognition of his claims. During these years he resided at Rathronan,

near Clonmel, the lease of which he purchased in 1826.

In 1837 Sir Hugh Gough was offered the command of the Mysore Division of the Madras army, with his head quarters at Bangalore, and in October he landed at Madras. Three years later he was appointed to command the Chinese Expeditionary Force in what is inaccurately described as the Opium War. In the course of the war the Commander-in-Chief displayed not only the military skill which brought the campaign to a successful conclusion at the expenditure of a very small loss of life, but the statesmanlike ability which was to mark all his correspondence with the Government of India. He held very strongly that the swiftest method of ending the first China war consisted in the adoption of a policy of conciliation, and not of severity, towards the Chinese people. He was opposed by Her Majesty's Plenipotentiary, who imagined it was possible to exert pressure upon the Government through the sufferings of the population. It was the Commander-in-Chief alone who realized how completely those who held such a view misunderstood the situation in China, and events proved that he was right. Similarly, on the military side, it was Sir Hugh Gough who first realized that the proper course for the British was to advance up the Yang-tse-kiang. He never ceased to urge this policy upon the Government until he received the sanction of Lord Ellenborough, in spite of the adverse opinion of the Duke of Wellington. It was the movement up the Yang-tse-kiang, in 1842, which led to the Treaty of Nanking, and put an end to the war.

For his services in China, Sir Hugh Gough was made a baronet and given the Grand Cross of the Bath, and he was appointed to the command at Madras. A few months later, and before Sir Hugh's return to India, Lord Tweeddale, a soldier, was made Governor of Madras, and it was decided that it would be for

the public interest to unite the civil and the military commands. In a noble letter, afterwards read to the House of Commons by Sir Robert Peel, Sir Hugh Gough waived his claim upon the office. On his arrival at Calcutta he was offered the post of Commander-in-Chief in India, and he at once entered upon the duties of the office.

During his tenure of the command in India, Sir Hugh Gough conducted three important campaigns, personally commanded in six great battles, and succeeded in subjecting to British rule the Mahrattas of Gwalior and the Sikhs of the Punjab. His military policy has often been misrepresented and misunderstood, and it is only within very recent years that anything like justice has been done to his reputation as a wise as well as a brave soldier. Of these controversies we have spoken elsewhere, and this is not the place to discuss them. It is sufficient to say that, in 1843, Sir Hugh Gough won the battle of Maharajpore; in 1845-6, the battles of Moodkee, Ferozeshah, and Sobraon; and, in 1849, the battles of Chillianwalla and Gujerat. The guiding rule of his military policy was to prevent the prolongation of a campaign into the hot weather, and in every instance he achieved his object. The Maharajpore campaign lasted a few days, the first Sikh War about nine weeks, and the conquest of the Punjab occupied less than four months; and if the casualties at Ferozeshah and at Chillianwalla were heavy, it is not less certain that numberless lives were saved by confining operations to the winter months, and the conquest of the Mahrattas and the Sikhs was completed with comparatively little loss of life. Long and careful preparation, followed by swift movements in the field, was the general characteristic of his campaigns. Like most commanders-in-chief in India, he was hampered by the political considerations which influence governors-general. Both Lord



Hardinge and Lord Dalhousie had reason to regret that they did not sooner adopt his views, and if his repeated appeals to remove the magazine from so dangerous a place as Delhi had been attended to, the task of the British forces during the Mutiny would have been much easier.

The favourite charge against Lord Gough's generalship is of recklessness. The source of this impression may be traced partly to the heroic personal courage of the Commander-in-Chief, and partly to his invariable rule that, once an action had been commenced, there must be no suggestion of withdrawal. The saying commonly attributed to him, and always quoted in his Irish brogue, 'I never was bate, and I never will be bate,' represents an unvarying principle of action. It was always wise, he held, to persevere, at whatever immediate cost, rather than to afford the enemy the satisfaction of even a temporary withdrawal. He never entered upon an action without thoroughly appreciating the risk he had undertaken, and he never doubted that his resources were sufficient to accomplish his end. His own lofty courage, and his refusal to admit even the possibility of disaster or defeat, inspired the army to great deeds. His magnetic personality and his enthusiasm were worth, it has been said, the addition of another division to his troops, and he succeeded in communicating to the men his own appreciation of the joy of battle. The passionate welcomes which he received on the evening of Chillianwalla and on the morning of Gujerat left an indelible impression upon all who witnessed them.

There are numerous pieces of evidence of this magnetic power. 'With such a leader as Sir Hugh,' wrote Colonel Mountain, from China, 'I should have no hesitation in marching anywhere through the country with a small force of infantry, so long as we could be provisioned.' In congratulating Lord Gough's son

upon his father's peerage, Sir Harry Smith said: 'I only obeyed his orders. He stripped himself of troops to place them under my command. He never 'funked' when evil rumours got abroad. For *him* I won the battle of Aliwal.' The surviving officers who were attached to the chief's person bear emphatic witness to this, but the feeling was common to all ranks, European and native. There is an interesting letter from a sergeant of the Bengal Artillery, who had been reading, eighteen months after the battle of Gujerat, some newspaper attacks on Lord Gough. 'There was,' he says, 'no danger, no matter how great, nor any undertaking, however desperate it might be, but they (the troops) would have attempted it under him; indeed, when he was present, they looked upon success as certain.' When Sir Patrick Grant was in India, at the time of the Mutiny, he wrote home to his father-in-law an account of an incident which occurred to an officer who took part in the siege of Delhi:—'He was always assailed (by the Goorkhas) with the same question: "When is the Lord Sahib coming?" and he always used to answer, "He is coming very soon now." But one day it occurred to him to ask, "What Lord Sahib do you mean?" when there was an instantaneous shout in reply, "Lord Gough Sahib to be sure—if he comes he will win victory immediately, and no one but him can take that place. Why is he not sent for?"'

Supported by such a confidence as this, a man may dare and do much that might otherwise be justly described as reckless, and when Lord Gough estimated the forces at his command, and the task before him, this was an element he could not ignore. 'I believe,' he said, 'that my confidence in my army saved India.'

For his great and illustrious services in India, in which, in the words of the Duke of Wellington, the commander-in-chief 'himself afforded the brightest example of the highest qualities of the British soldier',

Sir Hugh Gough was created a baron in 1846 and a viscount in 1849, and it was after his return from these strenuous years that the veteran sought a country home. It cannot have surprised his friends or his family that he should resist the temptations of a beautiful English country seat and insist upon finding his home in Ireland. His beloved Ireland had never been unmindful of her great son. On his return from the Peninsula, the Corporation of Dublin had conferred on Colonel Gough the freedom of the city, and presented him with a sword of honour, and his native city of Limerick had admitted him among her freemen. In more recent years the Irish representatives in the House of Commons had defended the honour and the reputation of the Irish general who was, for the time, misjudged and misunderstood, and had added a laurel wreath to the brow of the victor of Gujerat. On his return from India he was presented with the freedom of Clonmel and Londonderry; and the cities of Dublin and Limerick, which could not repeat an honour paid forty years before, met him with addresses of welcome. It was, therefore, natural that steps should be taken, immediately on his death, to perpetuate his memory in the capital of his native land. At a public meeting, convened by the Lord Mayor of Dublin on May 21, 1869, it was agreed to erect a memorial. Mr. J. H. Foley was entrusted with the task of preparing an equestrian statue; he, unfortunately, died before the work was completed, and it was not till February, 1880, that the statue was placed in position, in the main road of the Phoenix Park, where it cannot fail to arrest the eye of the traveller from Dublin. Lord Gough is represented<sup>1</sup> on horseback, wearing

<sup>1</sup> The inscription on the pedestal runs: 'In Honour of Field-Marshal Viscount Gough, K.P., G.C.B., K.G., an Illustrious Irishman, whose achievements in the Peninsular War, in China and India, have added to the lustre of the military glory of the country

his uniform as colonel of the Blues, and holding in his right hand the baton of a field-marshal. The bronze from which the statue was cast consisted of fifteen tons of gun-metal from cannon captured by Lord Gough in China and in India, and given, for this purpose, by the Government. The statue was unveiled by the seventh Duke of Marlborough, then Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. The thirty-first anniversary of Gujerat (February 21, 1880) was selected for the purpose, and eulogies to the memory of Lord Gough were paid by the Lord-Lieutenant and by General Sir John Michel, commanding the forces in Ireland. The closing words of Sir John Michel's speech should be placed on record here:—

Honoured I have been (he said) by the temporary deposit in my hands of this memorial of glory. I now surrender it to the safeguard of Ireland's sons. Keep it, Irishmen, as an everlasting memento of your glory. Treasure it as a sacred deposit. Glory in it as the statue of one who was an honour to your country, one whose whole life, whether civil or military, was one continued career of kindness, honour, honesty of purpose, nobility of heart, combined with the purest loyalty, and the most enthusiastic patriotism. He was loved and honoured by his countrymen. He was *par excellence* our Irish chevalier, *sans peur et sans reproche*, and, to wind up all, he was heart and soul an Irishman.

From the career of the great Irish soldier, we pass to the property which he acquired as one of the rewards of his life-work.

### III

The estate which now passed into the possession of the Viscount Gough consisted of the castle and which he faithfully served for 75 years, this Statue, cast from cannon taken by Troops under his command, and granted by Parliament for the purpose, was erected by his Friends and Admirers.'



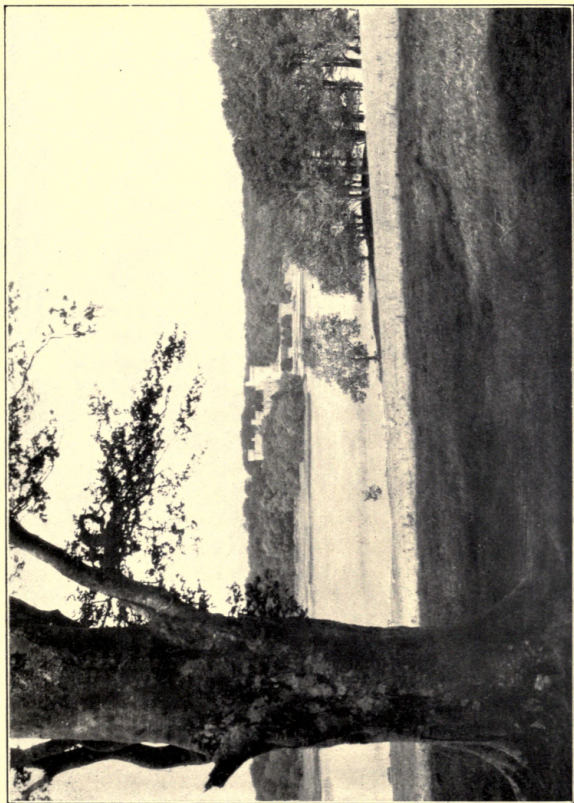
grounds of Lough Cutra, some townlands of Gort, including Glenbrack, Kinincha, and Lavally; the parks and properties of Rindifin and Russaun; a more recent demesne known as Prospect; and the following townlands:—

Cloonahaha <sup>1</sup>	Caherbrian
Clohnakeava	Cregboy
Kilbeacanty	Laughil
Beagh	Derrycallan (North and South, and Derrycallan Common)
Carrowgariff	Tiraloughan
Laughtyshaughnessy	Pollagh
Tullybrattan	Killafeen
Bunnasrah	Killeen
Ballyboy	
Cregmahon	

These estates do not form an ideal geographical unity, but if the circumstances of the purchase be taken into account, the geographical distribution may be, on the whole, regarded as fortunate. The castle of Lough Cutra lies near the centre of the property. The surface of the Lough is about eight square miles in extent, and constitutes a separate townland by itself—the townland of the lake of Lough Cutra. The castle had been erected on a site which was entirely wild. The situation had been chosen with great care, and a mound on the east side of the lake still bears the name of Situation Hill to commemorate the fact that it was for some time a rival site for a residence in the Italian style. The spot actually chosen is near the south-western corner of the lake, and the house, running parallel to the water, commands a magnificent view across the lake to the mountains beyond. Mr. Nash had designed the terrace, which is one of the most striking features of the house, and the Gort family had paid great attention to the

<sup>1</sup> For meaning of place-names see Appendix.

planting of trees, achieving most successful results, and had made the deer park and two long approaches known as the Gort and Limerick avenues. But when Viscount Gough entered into possession much still remained to be done, and some of the previous work had already been undone by the sale of timber while the community of Loretto were in possession. The first viscount turned a morass into the American garden on the south-west of the castle, and enlarged the house, rendering it more suitable for the accommodation of the family and servants, by extensive additions on the south-west, including the clock tower. When the building operations were complete, the Field-Marshal and Lady Gough, in the year 1858, decided that they were too old to undertake the task of arranging the establishment. On their return from India they had at first intended to occupy their old house at Rathronan, but, in 1851, they settled down at St. Helen's, Booterstown, and their son, Captain the Hon. George Gough, afterwards the second viscount, removed from Corrimony, which he had rented for a year (after retiring from the Grenadier Guards), and lived at Rathronan. In May, 1859, he removed to Lough Cutra, which the Field-Marshal handed over to him. For the remainder of his life the first viscount resided at St. Helen's, but he paid visits to Lough Cutra, and one of the bedrooms is known as 'Lord Gough's room'. It is, however, to his son, whom it will be convenient to describe as the second viscount (though he did not succeed till 1869), that Lough Cutra Castle, and the estate as a whole, owes most. Under his care the furnishing and decorating were carried out by Mr. Crace, a distinguished artist of the period, to whom are due the decorations of the new House of Lords at Westminster. The second viscount was a most learned botanist, and took great interest in other scientific studies, many of which he was able to turn to account in the adornment



LOUGH CUTRA CASTLE





of Lough Cutra and in the management of his estates. On this last subject we shall speak later: meanwhile we are concerned with the treatment of the grounds. The slopes and walk between the terrace and the lake, and the sunk garden on the north-east side of the castle, were constructed in spite of many difficulties arising from the nature of the ground. A great storm destroyed the large trees on the nearest island, known as Apple Island, and the happy idea occurred to the second viscountess of laying it out as a garden. While this operation was in progress many relics of former occupation were found. A large number of gun-metal coins, belonging to the Irish visit of James II, indicated that the island had been used as a place of refuge and concealment in the wars which followed the Revolution of 1689. The ruins of a church or cell pointed to the early days of Irish Christianity; and a number of stone implements survive as traces of prehistoric civilization and pre-Christian days. The other islands have been left undisturbed, as we have already described them in an earlier chapter. The house and grounds remain much as they were finally planned by the second viscount, except for an important addition made in 1900 by the third viscount, who succeeded in 1895. After the sale of St. Helen's he added the large wing containing the Museum, in which are collected the treasures which commemorate the Field-Marshal's services to his country in the Peninsula, in China, and in India. The Tudor roses carved on the chimney-piece of the Museum are reproductions of the beautiful carvings in the uppermost room of Ardimullivan Castle.

Of the other properties which we have named, two possess a special interest—the estates of Rindifin and Russaun. We have already seen that Sir Thomas Prendergast, the second baronet, created a beautiful park at Rindifin, and built a house which he intended

to be the family seat. The house was unfortunately destroyed by fire, and was never rebuilt for the occupation of the family, but a smaller house was erected and the place was ultimately let for many years. This house has also been pulled down, but a large cottage was built on the site about 1896, and the grounds remain to beautify the vicinity of Gort. Russaun is of somewhat uncertain date, and its definite history does not go beyond the nineteenth century, in the early part of which the demesne was created. The house was long occupied by Captain Thomas Lahiff, who had served in the 36th regiment of Foot and in the 17th Lancers, and with Sir Ralph Abercromby in Egypt, and who devoted half his lifetime to the improvement and embellishment of the place. There is a tradition that a member of the O'Shaughnessy family resided at Russaun, and that his property was purchased, in the beginning of the eighteenth century,<sup>1</sup> by Mr. Oliver Martynn, of Tulira. Captain Thomas Lahiff's interest in Russaun passed by inheritance to Mrs. John Lloyd Bagot, of Ballymoe and Ballyturin, who held Russaun till 1885. Ballyturin is a property at the north-east end of the lake. It never belonged to the O'Shaughnessys, but was one of the possessions of the MacRedmond Burkes, who built a small castle on it. After the revolution it passed into the hands of the family of Kirwan, an ancient Galway tribe, and thence, by marriage, to that of Bagot, of Ballymoe. One of the Kirwan family, Richard Kirwan (1733-1812), was a distinguished chemist; his name still lives in the history of chemistry, and he has the credit of introducing into Ireland the study of the science of mineralogy.

Some historical interest attaches to other properties mentioned in our list—to Beagh, with its ancient ruined

<sup>1</sup> Mgr. Fahey, pp. 431-2.





ARDIMULLIVAN CASTLE



church on the riverside, and to Laughtyshaughnessy, where there existed a number of O'Shaughnessy families who had quarrelled with their chief and lived under the protection of the Forsters of Clooneen. The parish of Beagh is also associated with a famous character in Irish history, Sir 'Toby' Butler, who helped to negotiate the Treaty of Limerick, and who long lived in local tradition<sup>1</sup> as

A thirsty old soul  
As ere cracked a bottle or fathom'd a bowl.

Sir Theobald (Toby) Butler married Helena, daughter of Sir Roger O'Shaughnessy, and was, as we have seen, responsible for the destruction of the timber at Gortacarnaun in the early part of the eighteenth century. He purchased the woods for £2,500 and sold the trees at sixpence each. The real value is supposed to have been about £12,000, according to the report already quoted.

Gortacarnaun, which still includes a beautiful wood, was not obtained by the first Viscount Gough, but was recovered, at a later period, by the second viscount, as were also the properties of Ardimullivan and Clooneen. A special interest naturally attaches to the castle of Ardimullivan. It was one of the O'Shaughnessy residences; the date of its erection is unknown, but it was probably built in the sixteenth century, and has received later additions. It never was a large or very important structure, and only the keep now remains, the outer walls and fortifications having mostly disappeared. The part played by Ardimullivan in Irish history is a very slight one. We have already spoken of the tragedy with which it is associated, but it may be interesting to recall it here. The castle was claimed by Dermot O'Shaughnessy, known as Dermot Reagh, or

<sup>1</sup> *Dublin Penny Journal*, vol. i, pp. 142-3.

the Swarthy, and by his nephew, John O'Shaughnessy. Popular sympathy was entirely with John, because Dermot the Swarthy was supposed to have had a share in giving up Archbishop Creagh of Armagh, who had (about 1570) escaped from the Tower of London, where he was a prisoner. In 1579 uncle and nephew met, with hostile forces, near the south gate of Ardimullivan. In a personal encounter John O'Shaughnessy was killed, but he had given Dermot a mortal wound, and both breathed their last within the space of half an hour. There is no record of any habitation in Ardimullivan after the fall of the O'Shaughnessys, and it fell into a deplorable condition, whence it was rescued by the third Viscount Gough, who, in 1900, repaired it and put it in good order. Ardimullivan has a sister castle at Fidane or Fiddaun, six miles distant, which is, by the permission of the owner, Mr. de Blaquiere, under the charge of the Commissioners of Public Works for Ireland, who repaired it thoroughly in 1903. Fiddaun, it will be remembered, was the residence of the widow of Roger O'Shaughnessy, who, by a second marriage, became Helena O'Kelly, and who died at Fiddaun in 1729. For a considerable period after her death, and certainly as late as 1761, Fiddaun remained in the possession of an O'Kelly. Fiddaun is in some ways more interesting than Ardimullivan; the courtyard is exceptionally large, while that at Ardimullivan is unusually small, and the fortifications are comparatively well preserved. Both castles are ordinary fortified houses of the sixteenth century, of the type so common in Ireland, and similar to the Border keeps which abound in the south of Scotland.

The estate of Clooneen, or Clonyn, was for some time generally known as Ashfield, but the older name has now been restored. It belonged to the portion of the O'Shaughnessy property which was not recovered

by the chief after the Restoration of Charles II, and it passed into the possession of the Blake-Forsters, a family which rose to distinction in the middle of the seventeenth century, and, as we have seen, came to possess rights over Laughtyshaughnessy. Captain Francis Forster, known as Frincheus More au fion, or Great Francis of the Wine, served in England during the Great Rebellion, and he received a patent from Charles II, after the Restoration, confirming his possession of various purchases of land in Ireland, including Clooneen, which, in 1676, was erected into a manor. The Blake-Forster family supported the Stuart cause at the Revolution, and the grandson of Francis Forster, known as Francis More na Clive, or Great Francis of the Sword, fought for King James at Limerick. In spite of this, he was permitted to succeed his brother in the ownership of Clooneen in 1703. Clooneen remained a residence of the family until recent times, although they also held Rathorpe, and, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, built a house at Fiddaun. Clooneen ultimately passed into the hands of the family of French, of Monivea, from whom it was purchased in 1875 by the second Viscount Gough. The castle which once stood in the demesne was destroyed, and its site converted into a flower-bed in the eighteenth century, and its place was taken by a house to which no special interest attaches. One of the ancient forts, of which there are several instances in the district, is situated at Lisconla, in the grounds. It is described by Captain Blake-Forster as 'a vast enclosure of earthworks, surrounded by a deep ditch, having in the centre a small circular opening leading to a large cave, and canopied by holly and hazel'; but the cave is now almost completely stopped up.

## IV.

The most important figure in the recent history of the Lough Cutra property is unquestionably that of George, second Viscount Gough, who made the castle his home, and to whose wise care and generous management the property, and the district, are indebted for their present prosperity. The first viscount was a soldier, whose love for Ireland led him to purchase Irish land, and to invest his fortune in Irish securities; his son was a country gentleman, whose interest was divided between the management of his Irish property and the study of natural science, in several branches of which (especially botany and palaeontology) he was a distinguished authority. His income was not large in proportion to the demands upon it, and the remarkable results which he achieved in the improvement of the Lough Cutra property are a tribute, not merely to a generous use of wealth, but even more to an able and devoted administration. The management of the estate was his life-work: he put his whole fortune into the property, and it was the first charge upon his time. The actual payments for labour upon the estate during his lifetime amount to a very large sum, and we have seen how, with the help of Lady Gough, he expended both care and money upon the castle and its surroundings, and his powers of invention and construction have made the place one of the most beautiful spots in a beautiful land.

Nor is it only the castle and grounds of Lough Cutra that perpetuate his memory. Like the squire of 'Locksley Hall' he strove

to help his homelier brother men,  
Served the poor, and built the cottage, raised the school,  
and drained the fen.



Those who are most familiar with Irish nineteenth-century history will best understand what the condition of the property must have been when he took up residence in the castle, and family letters, still extant, describe the poverty of the district and indicate the resolution with which he set to work to restore the population to comfort. In pursuance of the system which at that date was deemed most beneficial to an Irish country district, he provided, at any personal inconvenience, regular employment, and useful employment, to all who needed it, thus freeing the poorer people from dependence and casual charity. By a system of deep drainage for some miles from Tullybrattan (through Laughtyshaughnessy, Bunnasrah, and Cregmahon), he led the superabundant water from the farmers' fields into a swallow hole which he discovered at the village of Shanaglish; and many an acre has been thereby reclaimed from waste, ensuring prosperity even in wet seasons. The home farm, formerly Lord Gort's park, was gradually reclaimed and scientifically cultivated so as to serve as a model and encouragement to the farmers. The wind-swept region gradually, but steadily, changed its aspect, many scores of acres of forests and belts of trees being added to those already planted by the Gort family as a step to the re-afforestation of Ireland. A frugal husbandry and incessant application effected improvements which seemed to denote a far larger purse than he ever owned, and numerous carefully built cottages, which he delighted in constructing, provided comfort for their inmates. From the schools, which he built in 1866, at the earnest request of a deputation of small farmers, increasingly eager for education in proportion as he raised their independence, some 800 boys and 700 girls have gone forth, a large number of whom have risen to responsible posts in the service of the King. The teachers (Mr. and Mrs. Clandillon and

Miss Little) having enjoyed the now exceptional advantage of training in the great college of Tyrone House, threw themselves into their duties with ardour and devotion, and have had the happiness to find their labours appreciated and successful. About 200 pupils are now on the school roll; the numbers are increasing, and the average attendance is excellent. The school-rooms were doubled in 1889, and are about to receive further extension.

The circumstances in which the estate passed into the Gough family enhance the distinction of this record of the work of the second viscount. The misfortunes of its owners and of its tenants in the end of the second quarter of the nineteenth century had, in spite of brave and gallant efforts, left many unfortunate legacies, and to these was added the further misfortune that it passed into the hands of the first Viscount Gough after many delays and injured by a sad dismemberment. The reunion of the various portions and the recovery of such historic entities as Clooneen, Russane, Rindifin, and Prospect were accomplished only at great cost and after much trouble. The secret of his success was close personal supervision, and, in fact, until 1890, he himself conducted the management of the home farm and the estate. His wider interests—his love of science, his interest in railway development, and the part he took in public affairs in Dublin as well as in Galway—prevented this devotion to Lough Cutra from narrowing his sympathies or unduly limiting the application of his talents. But it was for Lough Cutra that he lived.

It would not be proper to speak here of the living or of the problems that remain for settlement. The hope of those who love Ireland must always lie in the creation of a feeling of unity among all Irishmen. There are no strangers in Ireland, for all who live there become Irish. Two centuries have passed since the last occasion on which any new settlement was

made, and the new settlers, even then, only did what Celt and Dane and Norman had done before them. There are those who think that the distinction between Celt and Saxon is itself a myth. Mr. John MacNeill, Vice-President of the Gaelic League, speaking in Dublin on March 9, 1908, urged strongly that 'the notions that the English are an Anglo-Saxon people, and that the Irish, the Highlanders, and the Welsh are Celtic peoples are popular delusions of modern growth', and and he went so far as to say: 'There are scarcely in all Europe any nations more nearly identical in racial origin and composition than these four—the Irish, the Scottish, the English, and the Welsh.' This is not the time to discuss this interesting question, but it cannot be out of place here to insist upon the fact that the whole question of the distinction is so uncertain and so remote that its sole importance is for the historian and the antiquary. In the living Ireland of to-day it ought to have no existence; and no appeals to doubtful racial origin ought to command respect or attention if they are employed in antagonism to the feeling that can alone give happiness to Ireland:—

Come, let the Orange Lily be  
Thy badge, my patriot brother,  
The Everlasting Green for me  
And we for one another.

We have finished our little story. We have pictured on the shores of Lough Cutra the dim figures of the heroes of old, and the holy figures of the saints whom all Ireland holds in reverence. In later days, we have seen it frequented by three distinguished soldiers—the O'Shaughnessy, Sir Thomas Prendergast, and Field-Marshal the Viscount Gough. Each of these names must ever be kept in remembrance in the land which was their home. The O'Shaughnessys passed away

in the great Stuart quarrel, losing, like the Keiths of Aberdeenshire, and the Drummonds of Perthshire, and many another Scottish and English gentleman, their possessions for their loyalty to the White Rose. It was no uncommon fate, in any of the three kingdoms, and Irish, English, and Scottish exiles met and mourned in foreign lands. The quarrel was no quarrel between England and Ireland; but a great dispute which ran through all the lands which owned allegiance to the Crown of Ireland, England, and Scotland. Sad as was the fate of all such exiles, there is, at least, something for which to be thankful, now that the dispute itself and the sufferings of the defeated party have receded two hundred years into the distance. The memory and the inheritance of the O'Shaughnessys have been preserved; the memory is still fresh, and the inheritance is still one and undivided. Two of their castles, Fiddaun and Ardimullivan, have been restored by reverent hands, and are piously preserved from ruin. No subsequent proprietor has ever lived in them, and they have no traditions except those of the O'Shaughnessys. Their faithful dependants were left undisturbed by their successors, and their descendants remain to this day. Not evictions, but introductions, have been the preponderating, or indeed the exclusive feature of the management of Lough Cutra, and the school population has so greatly increased during the last forty years that, as we have seen, a new school has had to be built and twice enlarged. The Prendergasts, in the days of their prosperity, proved themselves worthy of the heritage which had come to them by the accidents of political turmoil, and in the days of their adversity, when famine walked by noonday, their devotion was none the less genuine that it proved to be unsuccessful. Both the Gort family and the Gough family have, during the last century and a half, devoted their whole care, and all their resources, to increasing the welfare



of the O'Shaughnessy estates. Prendergast and Gough properties elsewhere in Ireland have been sold in order to save or to develop Lough Cutra, and no sacrifice of time or money has been grudged in its interest. In such ways are the wrongs of history righted, and its rough places made smooth, and so are the records of a troubled past converted into living forces which make for peace and goodwill.

## APPENDIX I

## PLACE-NAMES

FOR information regarding the following names we are indebted to Mr. J. H. Lloyd.

Gortecarnaun, the field of the heap or carn.

Glenbrack, speckled glen or valley.

Kininch, the head of the island or holm.

Lavally, half town or half townland.

Rindifin, the point of the little cauldron.

Cloonnahaha, the lawn of the kiln.

Cloghnacava, the stone of the long moss or grass.

Kilbecanty, St. Begnat's Church.

Russaun, underwood.

Beagh, birch-land.

Carrowgarriff, rough quarter.

Laughtyshaughnessy, O'Shaughnessy's Monument.

Tullybrattan, the hillock of the Britons.

Bunnasrah, the bottom of the straths or holms.

Ballyboy, yellow town (or townland).

Cregmahon, O'Mahan's rock or crag.

Caherbrian, Brian's cathair or circular stone fort.

Cregboy, yellow crag or rock.

Ardimullivan, Maoldubhan's hills or heights.

The anglicized forms are of some interest :

Ardameelavan, by Surveyor's Sketch Map.

Ardnamilivane, Rev. Michl. O'Shaughnessy, P.P.

Ardamilevane, Mr. John Bell, Barony Constable.

Ardameelavan, Engraved County Map.

Ardemullevane, Printed Townland List.

Ardimeelivan, Hon. F. P. Vereker's Rent Ledger.

Ardemilevan, Lord Gort's Agent, Mr. Slator.

Laughil, elmwood.

Derrycallan, the oakwood of the callows (river meadows?).

Tiraloughan, the land of the pool or small lough.

Killafeen, St. Affin's Church.

Killeen, small church.

Fiddane, a small brook.

## APPENDIX II

## THE TRIBES OF GALWAY

SOME names familiar in the district are included among the 'tribes of Galway', the title given to the settlers, the most important of whom bore the names of Athy, Blake, Bodkin, Brown, Deane, D'Arcy, French, Joyce, Kirwan, Lynch, Martin, Morris, Skerrett. Though originally settled within the city walls, they soon spread into the county, and an old poem, quoted in the *Tuam Herald* in January, 1907, records their names with those of others among the famous huntsmen, known as the Galway Blazers, who hunted in the county round Lough Cutra. We quote the verses:—

You County Galway sportsmen, Hibernians' noble kin,  
The muses now begin to ornament your fame ;  
Ten thousand echoes rise to crown your native skies,  
The gods themselves supply the tenor of my theme.

The rosy-fingered morn salutes the sounding horn,  
Rouse from the shades of sleep—lurk not in disguise.  
Let Morpheus not delight you, better sports invite you ;  
Pleasures shall requite you—rise, you Blazers, rise !

Hark ! the morning breeze salutes the slumbering trees,  
The ant and humming bees their labour doth begin ;  
The lark aloft doth wing and cheerfully doth sing  
To praise our potent King while sluggards sleep in sin.

Your downy pillows leave and mount like active brave,  
Whose prancing steeds can leave the fleeting winds behind ;  
Pass through the flowery fields, o'er solid fragrance yield ;  
Haste to Ballyturin and Elysium, there you'll find

All the gods reside where lakes the woods divide  
With covers well supplied to shelter all the game ;  
Silenus on his ass pushed about the sparkling glass,  
No landscape can surpass Young Kirwan's demesne.

Hark ! hark ! the cries increase, each horn sounds a bass  
 Away to chivy chase, poor Reynard is in view.  
 All around the sunny lakes Lough Coutre now he takes,  
 But they without mistake his footsteps do pursue.

Vereker's grounds, the Punchbowl, they surround ;  
 Poor Reynard dreads the hound and doubles his career.  
 The land he does forsake and swings across the lake,  
 But to his great mistake the Blazers still keep near.

But when he reached the shore ten thousand shouts and more  
 With acclamation bore the tale of his downfall,  
 On Ballyturin hill he freely made his will  
 With cunning art and skill to compliment them all.

Those Blazers we can trace from the great Milesian race  
 Whose birth without disgrace our poet can extol :  
 Blakes and Burkes—you know Young Kirwan also—  
 Great Persse of Roxborough where Peers do often call ;

There are Yelvertons and Bradys, Dillons, Darcys, Dalys,  
 Butlers, Lamberts, Millers and Donnellans, likewise  
 Nugents, Kellys, Frenches, Rathburns, and  
 Hamiltons and Lynches—all where Reynard died.

Our County Galway joy is Persse of Castleboy,  
 Who ornaments the cry on each St. Stephen's day,  
 Whose foxhounds never fail to snuff the morning gale,  
 But truly they trail and that without delay.

His steeds beyond compare were never in the rear,  
 Both ship and spur could spare, while Reynard is in view.  
 So here's to all our friends, and the Blazers next we'll sing  
 While time is on the wing our pleasure we'll pursue.



## APPENDIX III

## THE DISTRICT AT THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA

THE following details from Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* (1837) are worth placing on record here :—

**Gort.** A market town in parishes of Kiltartan, Beagh and Kilmacduagh, 17 m. I. from Galway, 98 m. I. from Dublin, with 3,627 inhabitants in 563 houses, i. e. neat stone buildings. Has large flour mill built in 1806, enlarged in 1836, property of J. Mangan, can make 7,000 barrels of flour per annum. Court house erected 1815. Bridewell built in 1814, too small, to be rebuilt. Barracks have long existed; £7,000 lately expended on houses for officers and stores. Hold 8 officers, 88 men, 116 horses. Church (Parish Church of Kilmaeduaigh) built in 1740 with wooden steeple, site given by Prendergast. Present church built in 1810 (because church at Kilmacduagh was ruinous) by a loan of £1,400 from Board of First Fruits, repaired by a loan from that Board in 1828 (£600). Board gave £300 and lent £500 in 1812 towards erection of Deanery House (4½ acres). Roman Catholic Chapel built in 1825, cost £1,300, has a painting of the Holy Trinity given by Lord Gort. L. C. Castle original building from designs by Nash. Lake has 7 Islands. River (Gurtnamackin) runs under ground at the 'Ladle', reappears at Punchbowl, then at Blackwater, then at 'Beggarmen's Hole', then at 'Churn', 10 feet in diameter, lastly reappears from under an arch, comes out at Kinvara.

**Beagh or St. Anne's** has 5,343 inhabitants. Parish has 12,331 statute acres besides bog. Seats are Cregg House (F. Butler, Esq.); Ballgaagan (W. Butler, Esq.); Ashfield (D. Mc Nevin, Esq.); Castle Lodge (C. Lopdell, Esq.); River View (Mrs. Lopdell); Tallymount (J. Butler, Esq.); Prospect (Mrs. Nolan); Rhyndifin (E. Blaquiere, Esq.); Rose Park (— Hugo, Esq.); Rose Hill (A. Keeley, Esq.).

Large Fairs on July 12 and Sept. 20 at village of Tobberindony. Tithes £218 1s. 6d. Irish Chapel about to be erected on site given by D. Mc Nevin, Esq. 6 Hedge Schools in Parish (340 children). Fidane Castle in good preservation. Castletown ditto.

**Kiltartan Parish.** At Ballylee is a quarry of fine black marble. Seats—Coole (R. Gregory, Esq.); Ballymuntane (E. Lombard Hunt, Esq.); Raheen (J. O'Hara); Ballylee Castle (P. Carrig, Esq.).

**Kilmacduagh.** 3,770 Inhabitants. Monastery built by St. Colman about 620, endowed by Guair, King of Connaught. Bishop Nedrect died 814. Bishop Maurice (died 1283) erected monastery for Augustinian canons (granted to Earl of Clanrickard). In 1607 Diocese united with Clonfert. Some remains of monastery built on site of Abbey founded by St. Colman exist to N.W. of the Cathedral on a neck of land between 2 loughs. These remains consist of the Church, to the south of which is the Sacristy, and adjoining it an arched room; to the south of these the Chapel and Refectory. To the N., 2 feet from the church, is an old wall (part of place for penance), and near it a holy well.

In a lake in Parish called Lough Deehan an oaken house was discovered in 1784.

**Kilbeacanty or Kilvecanty Parish.** 4,544 Inhabitants. Seats—Russan, residence of Captain Lahiff; Lysbrian (J. Burke, Esq.); Ballyturin (Mina Howard, Esq.); Cloon (unoccupied). Chapel built 1837. National School built 1836 on estate of J. O'Hara, Esq.









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