The Genealogical Papers of John H Pierse

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Contents

INTRODUCTION Richard G. Pierse

This volume collects all the known published genealogical papers of my late uncle John Herbert Pierse (1921-2002), known within the family as Jack. All of the papers have some connection to the Pierse family, either the London branch to which he himself belonged, or the Kerry branch, with whom he first made contact in 1948.

In the Preface to his unpublished book, *The Pierse Family*,[1] Jack explains that what first got him interested in his family's history was the peculiar spelling of his surname, *Pierse*. His searches of the name in Somerset House in May 1947 led him to his earliest traceable direct ancestor: his three-times great-grandfather John Fitzmaurice Pierse, who was born in Listowel in North Kerry in 1763 and died in Greenwich in South London in 1843. The middle name *Fitzmaurice*, led him to a further clue:

> I discovered in Archdall's edition of Lodge's *Peerage of Ireland*,[2] under 'Fitzmaurice, Earl of Kerry' the reference which is the key-note of the whole of my study and of which this short history is the result. Lodge stated '… Pierse (second son of Maurice, 2nd Lord of Kerry) ancestor to the families of Ballymac-Equim, Crossnishane (*recte* Crossmacshane), and Magheogahane (*recte* Meenogahane), who changed their name to Pierse about the latter end of Q. Elizabeth's reign, and yet subsist.'

In the telephone directory, he stumbled upon two Pierses still living in Ireland, one in Dublin and the other in Listowel: Richard Robert Pierse, M.R.C.V.S., Acting Veterinary Inspector for Listowel (1911-1988). In January 1948 he wrote to R. R. Pierse in Listowel and started a long friendship with the family, who still owned a house at Meenogahane, some 24 kilometers due west of Listowel. From 'Dick' Pierse he learned much of the history of the Kerry branch of the Pierse family and it was this branch that was the main focus of his own research.

In another fortuitous discovery in November 1948, in a bookshop in Dublin, Jack stumbled upon a second-hand copy of *The Roll of the House of Lacy* by 'de Lacy-Bellingari'.[3] In this book he came across the following passage:

> Joanna de Lacy O'Brien. Oldest daughter of the Lady Joanna de Lacy and Pierce O'Brien, Esq. She married on August 27, 1795, John Fitzmaurice Pierse, Esq., of Listowel, and later of Newcastle-West and London. The Reverend Morgan O'Brien, kinsman of the bride, officiated at the ceremony in Newcastle-West. She died in 1821 in London, her husband dying there in 1844.

This discovery linked the English branch of the Pierse family to the de Lacy family of Limerick and was crucial since official records of the marriage have now been lost.

The Published Papers

The earliest of Jack's papers collected here was published in the *North Munster Antiquarian Journal* in 1964. It is a transcription of a list of freeholders and gentlemen in County Limerick in 1570 from a manuscript in the Library of Lambeth Palace in London. Presumably, Jack's interest in this list is in the presence of several members of the FitzMaurice and Lacy families.

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[1] J. H. Pierse, *The Pierse Family*, (1950), available online at http://rpierse.esy.es/pierse/book.pdf.

[2] J. Lodge, *The Peerage of Ireland* II (ed. M. Archdall, Dublin 1789): FitzMaurice, earl of Kerry, 194.

[3] De Lacy Bellingari, *The Roll of the House of Lacy*. Baltimore USA 1928.

A gap of eight years followed before Jack's next paper, published in the *Journal of the Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society* in 1972. This paper is closer to Jack's main interests, being on the origins of the Pierse family in Kerry. A key part of this paper is the appendix which is a reproduction and translation of a document in Irish, *Craobhscaoileadh Seanchais Chloinne Piarais*, first discovered in 1970. The translation of the document is by Pádraig de Brún, who was a co-author of one of Jack's later papers. Dick Pierse of Listowel is acknowledged for his contribution to local family history and legend.

The third paper included here was published the following year, 1973, also in the *Journal of the Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society*. This is about the life of the blind Kerry harpist Nicholas Dall Pierse who lived from 1561 to 1653 and was an ancestor of Dick Pierse. It includes some Irish poems about Nicholas and much arcane detail about harp construction and tuning. It is not clear where Jack acquired his impressive knowledge of Irish harps of the sixteenth century.

The fourth paper followed in 1976 in the *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*. This is a description of Abbeydorney Abbey, a ruined monastery that lies about twenty kilometres south-west of Listowel. It is based on an account by Canon Power, written in the 1920s. The link with the Pierse family is that one of the Abbots at Abbeydorney was James FitzMaurice or FitzPiers. The Abbey also houses a tombstone to Ambrose Piers. The photographs at the end of this paper were taken by John Dominic Pierse, the eldest son of Dick Pierse.

The fifth paper, published in 1984 in the *East London Record*, is the only one of Jack's published papers that concerns one of his direct ancestors: William Fitzmaurice Pierse (1803-1846) who was one of the sons of John Fitzmaurice Pierse. W. F. Pierse was Superintendent of H Division (Whitechapel) in the Metropolitan Police and was responsible for rescuing the Crown Jewels from a fire at the Tower of London that happened on October 31, 1841.

The sixth and final paper, a work jointly authored with Pádraig de Brún, was published in 1987 in the *Journal of the Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society*. It concerns Garret Pierse of Aghamore who was killed at the Battle of Liscarroll in 1642, part of the Irish Rebellion of Catholics against Protestant discrimination. It contains the Irish text and an English translation of a Lament to Garret Pierse that survives in three versions. Variant readings of the text are given below the translation.

Uncompleted Papers

As well as the papers that he published, Jack left some sketchy notes for a few other papers that he planned but never completed. These notes are all very fragmentary rendering a reconstruction of the papers impossible.

One paper, also intended to be a chapter in the book *The Pierse Family*, was on the *Reed v O'Brien* case in the London Court of Chancery. This law case concerned the estate of General Maurice de Lacy of Grodno, an Irish soldier in the Russian Service who had died in 1820 and who was the great-uncle of Johanna Pierse, the wife of John Fitzmaurice Pierse. By the time that the case came before the Court in 1843, Johanna Pierse had already died but her interests were represented by several members of the London branch of the Pierse family. This case dragged on for several years and never seems to have been properly resolved. In fact a related Chancery case, *Gill v Tierney*, commenced in 1861 and was still going in 1900. Jack spent a lot of time working on this court case but I believe that he never really felt he had got to the bottom of it so the paper was never written.

Another paper that Jack planned to write was to have been on General Richard Pierse (1718-1774), one of Ireland's *Wild Geese*, who served in the Austrian Service, under The Empress Maria

Theresa. Jack was responsible for restoring a Pedigree for this Officer, owned by his friend Dermot John Pierse (1918-1994), Ophthalmic Surgeon and a third cousin to Richard Robert Pierse.

A third paper was planned on James Fitzmaurice (otherwise known as James Fitz Richard Pierse), who was Bishop of Kerry between 1558 and 1583 during the reign of Elizabeth I, despite being a Catholic, and who is mentioned in Jack's published article on Abbeydorney Abbey.

Richard G Pierse, May 2022

1 LIST OF FREEHOLDERS AND GENTLEMEN IN CO. LIMERICK IN 1570*

The following is a transcription from the original list of freeholders and gentlemen in the county of Limerick, compiled in 1570 by Sir Humphrey Gilbert (and others) when he was Colonel of Queen Elizabeth's Forces in Munster, now preserved in the Carew Manuscript Collection (Vol. 635, ff. 73 and 74), in the Library of Lambeth Palace, London.

In the main, the document is self-explanatory since the persons mentioned are described together with their locality and grouped together under geographical divisions of the county, some of which more or less would appear to correspond with present-day baronies.

The existence of the list has been noticed before and a reference to the Carew MSS. Volume in which it is contained is given by Maurice Lenihan in his *History of Limerick* (published by Hodges, Smith, and Co., Dublin, 1836) at pages 584 and 585.

In actual fact, however, Carew MSS, Vol. 635 (comprising some 200 folios) consists principally of "Pedigrees of Ireland" although from Lenihan's extracts it would seem to be devoted entirely to Sir Humphrey Gilbert's list.

It so happens that the present writer alighted upon the list and made preliminary extracts by mistake; at the time his interest was confined to Co. Kerry and he misread "Kenry" for "Kerry," although some of the names of the freeholders listed seemed strange for that county. During the ensuing process of checking to see if the list had been noticed before, the Lenihan reference came to light although it was at once obvious how much it had been abbreviated and modified—particularly regarding the spelling of personal and place names.

Regarding the original, the manuscript is in good condition and, in transcribing, the main difficulty lies in deciphering the handwriting of the scribe. Not that it is badly written—far from it : the writing itself is fairly regular, but of the "utility" variety devoid of flourishes, and this is where confusion comes in. For example, the scribe does not differentiate between the letters *k* and *r*, both being formed in the same way. Additionally, he employs both the long and short letter *s*, using them indiscriminately without regard to any convention concerning their use. Due to the absence of flourishes, a stroke / could be read as *s*, *l*, *t*, *f*, *i* or *j* with equal claim for each letter. This ambiguity, however, may be an advantage—as far as the present writer is concerned—for he, completely ignorant of Limerick place-names and personal names, has been obliged to transcribe *exactly* as he sees it. To some extent, this is helpful for it goes a long way in eliminating that bugbear of many transcriptions of "difficult" hands, that of reading into a context from one's own knowledge of what might have been intended. This is borne out by comparison of Lenihan's extracts with the following, although it is evident that Maurice Lenihan also included in his extract material obtained from elsewhere in Carew MSS., Vol. 635.

The following transcription is set out in more or less the same fashion as the original:—

> The names of the freeholders and gentlemen in the Co : of Limericke when S^r^ Humphry Gilbert was Collonell of Her Ma^ties^ forces in Monster.
>
> Sr Willm̄ Brughe of Castellconnell
> Richard Brughe of Carrickgenlise
> Tyballt Brughe of Carrikynnell
> Thomas m^c^ Clanaghie of the guennan

* Published in *North Munster Antiquarian Journal (1964), IX, 108-112*.

Richard oge of the Lubanaghe
Donell fitz Donoghe Oheyn of Kahyrellye
Teg oheyne [? obreyne] of Hew Cahirrllye [? Cahirkilye]
Richard fitz Thomas of killonan
Jhon fitz edmond of Ballysimond
Tiballt fitz davye Of Carrigi parson
Will^{m} fitz Thomas of Ballinecarrye
Wallte^{r} fitz Jhon of killcullin
Moriataghe m^{c} Keoghe of Kloncleef
Hubbard m^{c} Melier of knokm^{c}souty
Donnell m^{c} Kenry of Drumbany

The gent : and freeholders of Owney mulkian [? mulrian]

Will^{m} Ownlrion of Anaghe
Connoghoe Ownlrian his sonne of the Craghe
Dermond Omnbrian
Ea na Tolloghe Oran brian [? Irian]
Donnell Rue Omullrian
} living 1598 sonnes to Will^{m} Omnlrian of Anaghe

Jhon O carroll Omnlrian
Donnell Omn Irian Of Ballighe
Henry m^{c}Lisaght
Willm m^{c} Donnell Onmbrian Livinge 1598

The gent: and freeholders of M^{c} Brian gonoghes Countrye

M^{c} Brian ogonaghe of Castell Towie Ogonghe Livinge 1598
Moriertoghe m^{c} Brian
Connoghe m^{c} Brian
Calloghe m^{c} Brian
} sonnes to the aforesaid M^{c} Brian gonnoghe
Moraghe kevghe m^{c} Teg m^{c} Brian of Ballitasne Liv: 1598
Moraghe oge of quem [?] ogonaghe
Brian Boy m^{c} Teg m^{c} Brien of Castell gearl

The gent: and freeholders of the quarters about Kilmallock

Jhon fitz Jhon Of Desmond of Carrickrilled
Jhon fitzmorice of Ballinarde
James Roche of Rocheston
fox aΠs Boxecaghe of Bulligidene : Liv: 1598
The Bryodeaghe of Bryodsowne [?Boyodsowne]
The Pascaghe of garrynacahera
The Scullaghe of Ballinscudaghe
Jhon Browne of the Hospitall
Thomas Browne Constable of Aney
Reyne [? Keyne] Ohagan Constable of Loghgir
Thomas Hurlye of Knocklungy
Jhon Boy Roche of Killman
M^{c} F Dunduna of Bally Witnerd [?]

The gent and freeholders of Coshemay

Wllm Leashe of the Browse and his sonn younge Willm̄
Gerallt fitzmaurice of Thomas towne
David Leashe of Alleckaghe
James fitzmorrice Leashe of the Klewhir
Will^{m} fitz phillippe of Balliany
Richard fox of Ballyveneghe

Thomas Lewes aΠs Lyeght of Drukshippe
James Lewes of Tolloghwyne
Edmond fox of Ballygrennan
Edmond Breckley of Ballicahan
Richard mᶜ Phillippe of Balline
Thomas Grivkdan [? Grirrdan] of Tullyoirney
Gilly duffe more of Corkyweyk
Mahon Mckigeage of Millicke
Wallter fitz edmond Balloghe of Ballinenal
Gerallt Mareschall of Rehen :

The gent and freeholders of Connologhe :

Eddy Lacye of Browrye
Thomas fitz Phillippe fitz Edmund of Ballywywy
James Reoghe Leashye of the garell
Owen mᶜ Edmond mᶜ Shee of the new towne
Tirloghe mᶜ Edmund oge Of Glankwyn
Willm̄ fitz Edmond oge of Ballynaroghe
Muroghe mᶜ Edmund oge
Mᶜ Gibbon of Mahonaghe
Thomas mᶜ gibbon fitz Jhon of Muhonaghe
Nicolas fitz willm of Dromin ande
gerallt fitz willm of Ballyee
David oge Kuoyne of Lismuskie
Jhon suppell of Killnmcknoghe
Peers Purcell of the Cnoghe
Rory mᶜ Shee of Ballyalinan
Edmond fitz morice oge of Mugaen
Morice fitz Edmond of Rakelly
Ulicke Avale of Amenyllen
Tirloghe oge of Calloghe
Edmond fitzgeralld of Buohull
fitz Thomas mᶜ Ricard of the Pallice
Jhon fitz edmond of gautnatibund [? gortnatubrid]
Thomas fitz Jhon of Killeedie
Thomas Mᶜ Shane Mᶜ Tiballt of Runaseek
Mᶜ Kininey Of the twok [? twor]
David oge fitz David fitzmorrice of Newcastell
Ohūñ̄ñ̄āñ of Castell Lyssin
Edmond Ocullen of Ballinsemterry
Edmond garcaghe of killfyny
Moroghe mᶜ Rory of Keelscannell
Mahon Boy of Callaghe
Jhon Lacy of Ballingarry
Willm Lacy Of Ballindroghley
David mᶜ shane Load of the great wood
Jhon mᶜ Kennet [? Rennet] of Castell towne
David mᶜ Donoghe of Clompasty
Thomas mᶜ Hughe of kidemoddye
Phillip mᶜ Tey [? Teg] of Capinneagham
Thomas Reoghe of Lassimote
Edmund mᶜ Thomas of freterstowne aΠs ferriters towne
Edmond mᶜ Morice Mogan
Morice Donnonoghe of Castell mᶜ Morice

Richard Whyte of Rarioghe [*sic*]
Edmond mᶜ Davye of glaniesin

Jhon Wuafe of Ballywillm̃
Jhon mc Collanaghy of BallyRobert
Thomas Dingbett [? Dinglett] of Ballydinglet
James Wall of Ballygream
Morice Wall of Bally geney
Gerallt guknocke of Aungoole
Morrice mc Dermond Of Argoole aΠs mcLea philipston
James Ashe of Ballinecura
Moriertoghe mc Shee of Condta Browne
Willm Tancard of Ballinnowye
Richard Ridall of Ballinrydall
Edmond Wall of Clohaeney
Gerallt Liston of Killscummen

The gent: and free holders of Kerry

The Knight of the Valley
Edmond fitz davye of Bally gill ogham
Thom fitzmorice of Bally agh nina
Morice Ike [? Ire] of the Sarrywallimore
The Egtonloghe of Bulline Countye
Edmond oge of Ballinive
geralt fitzmorice of Muane
Morrice fitz edmond of Ballmvu
Shane oge mc Shane mc Davie Of Ballykahum
Dundenaght of Ballislov [? Ballislor]
Manus oge of Castell behy
Thomas fitzmorice of Eillconnor
Thomas purcell of Cailhames towne
Davy fitz phillippe of the Correy
gerald fitz gibbon of Reynywood Court
Edmond oge of Reintoucke wth his 2: broth: Morice and gerallt
Edmond fitzwillm of Bedar
Willm fitzgerald of the pallice, Tho: his bro: and geralt fitz Tho : his unkle
Thomas fitzwillms of Aramhire and his cosens
Willm fitz John and Jhon Nobolley his brother
Edmond oge fitz Edmond fitz Davey and his brethren
morice and phillippe of BallyCnocke
Geralt fitz morice gerallt and his brother morice of gowneleslowne
Thade mc Denehye of the Roche
Morice fitzgerallt of the olld great towne
Thomas fitzmorice of the myllestowne and his bro: Willm
The Condon of Ballinsteyn and his unkle Thom oge
Thomas fitz Jhon fltzgeralld of Mokynoghe Edmond his broth:

The gent and freeholders of Pokalbrian [? Pobalbrian]

Donoghe mc Mahonoghe of Carrickgonell
Donaghe mc Donell of Dericknockan
Mahon Obrian
Tirloghe Obrian } Sonnes to Moriertoghe obrian
Connogher Mele Obrian
Donell Obrian } Sonnes to Donnoghe mc Mahonnoghe
Connogher Obrian } O brian: supra.
Teg mc gillyduffe of AΠiflnen
Connogher ne Carigi Obrian
Donell mc Bryan
Tirloghe Begg
Reymond mc gerallt

This booke was subscrybed by
Sir Humphrey Gilbert
Jasper Housey
and Willm Apsley 1570

2 THE ORIGIN OF THE PIERSE FAMILY OF CO. KERRY*

Some common surnames, themselves either popular patronymics or else derived from ancestors with distinguishing physical features, place of abode, trade or occupation (e.g. Johnson, White, Lee and Smith, respectively), make tracing and separately identifying different families of the same name a difficult matter. Variations in spelling, too, either by adoption by individual families or assignation to them by others—especially in the past before spelling became standardised—also add to the problem.

The surname of which the commonest spelling is Pierce comes into this category. The purpose of this article is to show the origin of the families of this name in north Kerry (for whom the author has constructed a definitive pedigree) and to serve as an introduction to future articles on some of the more distinguished members, such as Nicholas *Dall* Pierse of Rattoo, harper (1561-1653), James Pierse, bishop of Ardfert (1511-83), and Captain Garret Pierse of Aghamore, killed at Liscarroll in 1642.

For assistance received in compiling this article, the author would like to record his grateful thanks to Mr R. R. Pierse of Listowel and Meenogahane for local family history and legend, to Mr Pádraig de Brún for editing and translating *Craobhscaoileadh Seanchais Chloinne Piarais*, which he discovered in 1970 and which forms an appendix to this paper, to Mr K. W. Nicholls for various transcriptions and genealogical notes, and to Mr F J. Green, of Burgess Hill, Sussex, England, for philological help and guidance.

Origin of the Name

The name Pierse is one of many spelling variants (Pierce, Pearce, Pearse, Peirse, etc.)[1] derived phonetically from the Christian personal name Piers which we find included in the corpus of French names introduced into England about the middle of the eleventh century as a result of Norman influence culminating in invasion.

The Old French form *Piers* was itself derived from the *petrus*, and the Greek πέτρος, the latter being used to translate the earlier Aramaic word (hellenised) *cephas*, all words meaning a piece of rock or a stone. The Modern English form of the name is *Peter*. The relationship between the Aramaic, Greek and Modern English names is seen in the Bible (John i.42): 'And when Jesus beheld him [Simon], he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, a stone'; henceforth Simon was known as Simon called Peter. Also (Matthew xvi. 18) Jesus said 'And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church'.

The Modern French form of the name is *Pierre*, which, apart from its use as a personal name, is also the common word for stone. Comparing the old form Piers with the modern Pierre, the terminal *s* in the earlier form will be seen to be the Old French nominative singular ending; similar examples are Jacques, Gilles and Jules. As already stated, the Modern English equivalent of Piers is Peter and it is of interest to note that this form of the name is not found earlier than the fifteenth century.[2]

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* Published in *Journal of the Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society* (1972), 5, 14-32.

[1] In researching this subject, 71 different spellings of the name Pierce (with or without the prefixes 'fitz' and 'mac') have been noticed in manuscripts dating from the eleventh century to the present day.

[2] The earliest notice is of Petur of Westcote (Oseney MS of 1460); Lyford (1655) says 'Pierce used for Peter formerly' ; see E. G. Withycombe (compiler), *Oxford dictionary of English Christian names* (Oxford 1945) *s. v.* Peter.

Subsequent to the Norman conquest, the name Piers became mildly popular in England as a Christian name and later, with the prefix *fitz*, is noticed as a patronymic. To give some idea of its relative popularity, from a list of armigerous persons taken from heraldic rolls over the period 1298 to 1410,[3] it is found that of the 4,400 persons named, 900 bore the commonest Christian name John, 197 that of Richard, 130 that of Henry, and 60 that of Piers. The name appears written as *Piers*, *Pyers* and *Pieres* and rendered in Latin texts as *Petrus* as a Christian name and with *filius* ('son of' or 'fitz') as a patronymic. The use of a surname of some sort was common in England by the early part of the thirteenth century, but it was not until the first quarter of the sixteenth century that hereditary surnames became generally established.[4] By the sixteenth century, the name as a Christian name, patronymic and hereditary surname is noticed to change its form and is recorded as Pierse, Pierce, Pearce, Pyerse, etc. The practice of adding what now seem to be superfluous consonants and vowels was common at this period during the changeover from the use of Latin to English as the commonplace written language and when spelling had not yet become standardised.[5]

In England, after the sixteenth century, the Christian names Piers and Peter lost whatever popularity they formerly had—doubtless a side-effect of the Reformation—and thenceafter they became virtually extinct.[6] As a surname, however, in all its different spellings, the name is found to be fairly common—although from a survey of surnames in use in England taken in 1853, when the, population of the country was some 18½ millions, the name in any form does not appear among the first 50 most common,[7] The various spellings of the name often afford a clue as to the geographical origin of a family: Pearce and Pearse are common forms in the West Country, particularly in Cornwall; Peirce and Peirse are common in Yorkshire; Pierce is the commonest form of all and is found all over England and also—but less frequently—in Wales and Scotland.

In Ireland, the use and growth of the name is somewhat different. The Christian name Piers was introduced generally into the country by the Anglo-Normans following the invasion, of 1169-71.[8] Use of the name spread from the invading colonists to the native Irish, whence the Norman *Piers* became the Irish *Piaras*. As a Christian name, Piers or Piaras, and in patronymics fitz Piers and mac Piarais, the name became about as popular as in England. At the time of the Reformation and after, however, as opposed to the reaction in England, the name tended to become more popular in Ireland. The adoption of permanent surnames followed a similar pattern to that in England albeit somewhat retarded—especially in the country districts—and thus patronymics are found commonly still in use with no surname in records of seventeenth-century date, and even later.

As a surname in Ireland, the name Pierce in all its various forms appears to be about as much in common use as in England, In 1890 the population of Ireland was approximately 4¾ millions, and from a survey of surnames made at that time, no form of the name Pierce appears among the 100 most common names in use. Here again the spelling often provides a clue as to genealogy and district of origin: branches of the de Birmingham family of Connacht adopted the names Pierce, Mac Fheorais and, 'Peorais'; certain of the Butlers assumed that of MacPierce. English settlers, transplanters, undertakers and the like from the fifteenth century onwards introduced English versions of the name. From the survey of 1890 already referred to, in that year a total number of 38 births were recorded with some variation of the surname Pierce and of these, 22 had the actual

[3] J. Foster, *Some feudal coats of arms and pedigrees* (London 1902).

[4] That is with the introduction of compulsory parish-record keeping in 1522-3.

[5] Cf. 'shoppe', 'worlde', 'nowe', 'verie', etc.

[6] As a Christian name, Peter suddenly became popular again at the beginning of the present century, probably due to the influence of Barrie's *Peter Pan*; see Withycombe, *op. cit*.

[7] R. E. Matheson, *Special report on the surnames in Ireland (based on information extracted from the indexes of the General Register Office)* (Dublin 1909).

[8] P. Woulfe, *Sloinnte Gaedheal is Gall: Irish names and surnames* (Dublin 1923) 659.

spelling Pierce: of the 38 total, 21 were born in Leinster, 9 in Munster, 6 in Ulster and 2 in Connacht.

Now from the whole of the foregoing, it will be seen to be remarkable that of all the different ways of spelling the name one of the rarest—and paradoxically what might have been expected to be one of the commonest (i.e. original 'Piers' plus sixteenth-century 'e')—is *Pierse*. This spelling, however, is a peculiarity of the Kerry family and strangely has not been found to have been in even semi-permanent use by any family of different origin.[9]

Pierse Family of Kerry

That the Pierse family of Co. Kerry is Geraldine and descended from the FitzMaurices, lords of Kerry, is well established. The Four Masters (*lab*. 1632-6) in their Annals under year 1583 state:[10] 'He [James fitz Richard fitz John, bishop of Kerry] was of the stock of the Clann-Pierce, i.e. of the race of Raymond [le Gros], the son of William Fitzgerald … from [whom] most of the Geraldines of Clann-Maurice are descended'. The Segar[11] and Titus[12] pedigrees of FitzMaurice (compiled *c*. 1615 and in the mid-seventeenth century, respectively) give: 'Pierce [second son to Thomas FitzMaurice, 2nd lord of Kerry and Lixnaw] from whom descended the sept of Pierce viz McShane, Balymciquem and others'. Smith[13] (1756) and Lodge[14] (1789) say: 'Pierse (Peter) ancestor to the families of BallymacEquim, Crossnishane and Magheogahane, who changed their name to Pierse about the latter end of Q. Elizabeth's reign and yet subsist'. O'Hart (1881) states: 'Piers, who was the ancestor of *Fitzmaurice* of Ballymacquin, and of *Mac Shaen*, of Crossmacshaen, the last of whom was attainted in Queen Elizabeth's reign'.[15] Quite recently (1970), a continuous pedigree in Irish extending down to the beginning of the nineteenth century has come to light and is included as an appendix to the present paper.

The early Geraldine pedigrees showing the descent of the FitzMaurices from the FitzGeralds were, however, not accurate. After numerous attempts to reconcile the more obvious defects in the traditional line, J. H. Round[16] in 1902 produced a workable descent from Walter fitz Other, tenant-in-chief in the Domesday survey and castellan of Windsor (*fl*. 1086) to Maurice fitz Gerald, 1st baron of Naas (*ob*. 1176); at this point G. H. Orpen in 1914 took over to show a descent of the FitzMaurices of Kerry.[17] In this last account, Orpen showed *inter alia* that Piers, the eponymous ancestor of the Pierse family of Kerry, was the second son to Maurice fitz Thomas, generally reckoned as the 2nd lord of Kerry, who died at Molahiffe castle in 1306. Recently (1970), a fresh look at the early FitzMaurice pedigree has been taken by K. W. Nicholls,[18] who, in addition to clarifying certain aspects of the early FitzMaurice descent, also gave further references to early members of the Pierse family.

[9] The spelling *Pierse* is sometimes found in records (even of the present day) associated with other families but invariably in clerical errors. Surprisingly, no other family has been found so far using this form consistently (say for three generations) which has not ultimately derived from the Kerry family.

[10] J. O'Donovan (ed.), *Annals of the kingdom of Ireland* [Annals of the Four Masters] V (Dublin 1856) 1801.

[11] British Museum, Harley MS 1425, f. 70.

[12] British Museum, Cotton MS Titus B X, f. 394.

[13] C. Smith, *The antient and present state of the county of Kerry* (Dublin 1756).

[14] J. Lodge, *The peerage of Ireland II* (ed. M. Archdall, Dublin 1789) 186: FitzMaurice, Earl of Kerry (reference quoted).

[15] J. O'Hart, *Irish pedigrees* (Dublin 1881).

[16] 'The origin of the FitzGeralds', *The Ancestor* 1 (1902) 119-26 and 2 (1902) 91-7.

[17] 'The origin of the FitzMaurices, barons of Kerry and Lixnaw', *English Historical Review* 29 (1914) 302-15; see also article of same title in *Genealogists' Magazine 1* (1925) 9-14, 34-7, 69-70, and *Ireland under the Normans, 1169-1333 III* (Oxford 1920) 146.

[18] 'The FitzMaurices of Kerry', *Kerry Arch. and Hist. Soc. Jn*. 3 (1970) 23-42.

Thus we can show that the descent of the Pierses of north Kerry is from Piers, second son to Maurice fitz Thomas, 2nd lord of Kerry, by his first wife Elena, daughter of William fitz Elie (or Elias) Nicholas, elder brother to Piers, became 3rd lord of Kerry upon his father's death in 1307 and his life is well documented. From related events we can assess that Piers fitz Maurice was born about 1260 and from legends which have come down through two now fairly widely separated branches of the family we learn that he was 'red-haired and wild' and apparently was known as 'Piers Rowe [Ruadh]'.[19] His brothers, Nicholas, Robert and Patrick, were involved in the dower claims of Sibilla, their step-mother, in 1303-4,[20] but we find no mention of Piers. He would probably have been married at this time and doubtless settled at Ballymacaquim, five miles south-west of Lixnaw, outside such claims and for three centuries afterwards to be the principal home of the family.

We are, however, given a lively account of the Assize of Novel Disseisin of 1307, in which Nicholas and Piers fitz Maurice together with a certain John Roddel were accused of having disseised Gerald fitz Maurice of his freehold in Beale.[21] We read how their father, Maurice fitz Thomas, gave to Gerald, his son by his second wife, 'the keys of certain chests at Lysnaue [Lixnaw], in which were charters and writings' touching on the acquisition of the lands of Beale. In an attempt to defraud his half-brother, Gerald, Nicholas 'enjoined Peter [Piers] his brother to go to Viaille [Beale] and by all means to impede the seisin of Gerald'. Piers 'with what celerity he could' sped to Beale (about 25 miles due north of Molahiffe) and evidently persuaded the castellan, Stephan, not to accept any letter authorising Gerald to take up seisin; he also enforced Stephan to remain in the castle with him and ordered David, a companion of Gerald's, to leave. We are also told that one of the tenants gave Gerald his plough to enable him to work the demesne-lands for the continuance of his seisin, which when he knew, Piers 'cut the ox-yoke and other apparatus of the plough and so impeded the ploughing'. The result of the enquiry is not known, but evidently Gerald did not get Beale, for the manor and castle were still in the hands of the senior branch of the FitzMaurices a few years later.

The next reference to Piers is noticed in the Kerry Exchequer Records.[22] Under the year 1322 we find:

15 Edw. Il. Maurice FitzJohn, Sheriff. On the 5th November the Treasurer, at the instance of Thomas FitzJohn, Earl of Kildare, appointed Peter [Piers] FitzMaurice Sheriff of Kerry; and Maurice FitzJohn, the former Sheriff, was directed to deliver to him all his rolls, tallies, etc. without delay, and the Coroners were commanded to receive his oath.

It is of interest that this Thomas fitz John, 2nd earl of Kildare, was the son of John fitz Thomas, 5th baron of Offaly and later 1st earl of Kildare, who, about Christmas 1312, knighted Piers's elder brother, Nicholas, at Adare.[23]

It could be that his legendary 'wildness' did not suit Piers for the office, for the following year (1323) he was relieved of his post:

[19] From the author's own family (descended from John Fitzmaurice Pierse, b. 1763, of Listowel and Greenwich, England) and from Dr Dermot Pierse (descended from Captain Thomas Pierse, b. *c*. 1760, of Meenogahane), formerly of Wexford but now resident in England.

[20] Plea Roll of 32 Edward I (1303-4) m. 29, quoted by Orpen, *Genealogists' Magazine* 1 (1925) 36.

[21] *Cal. Justiciary Rolls, Ireland, 1305-7*, 35 Edw. I, 421-3. Note, however, that in this and similar translations from manuscripts no longer extant (see note 22), the name Peter has been used instead of Piers in translating from the original. This we have seen (note 2) to be an anachronism and is herein uniformly corrected.

[22] J. F. Ferguson, 'Notes of early records of the Court of Exchequer in Ireland', *Kerry Mag*. 2 (1855) 200; reprinted in *Kerry Arch. Mag*. 4 (1917) 124-46.

[23] R. Butler (ed.), *The Annals of Ireland by Friar John Clyn* (Dublin 1849) 11.

16 Edw. Il. Peter [Piers] FitzMaurice Sheriff. On the 20th November the Treasurer by a Commission appointed Philip Le Bret, Sheriff of Kerry, and directed the former Sheriff, Peter [Piers] FitzMaurice to deliver all rolls, etc. to him. He was commanded to distrain Gilbert Brown, John de Athy, Philip de Valle, John FitzSimon, Martin FitzGerald, Maurice FitzJohn and Peter [Piers] FitzMaurice, former Sheriffs, to render their accounts.

The Sheriff and Receiver of the King's money in Co. Kerry were summoned to account in the Exchequer; and not appearing were fined 100s., £10, and £20, on three several occasions.

For many years previously the Kerry officials had caused considerable consternation to the king's deputy in Ireland, particularly regarding the handling of taxes and the conduct of the justice courts and assizes.

It is evident that Piers fitz Maurice married and had issue, and we find references to David, Gerald, William and Maurice fitz Piers in north Kerry about this time. David would seem to have been one of the eldest sons and from the same Kerry Exchequer Roll previously quoted, under the year 1314 we find:

7 Edw. Il. David FitzPeter [fitz Piers] being attached [to the court] and not appearing, was fined 20d.

Gerald fitz Piers is described in the Lodge pedigree as being of Ballymacaquim and his daughter Elenor is shown as the second wife of John fitz Nicholas, 5th lord of Kerry. This John was formerly married to Honor, daughter to O Brien of Thomond, and died in 1348 according to Lodge[24] but after 1375 according to Nicholls.[25] It is evident that Gerald fitz Piers also had male issue, for Ballymacaquim remained the principal home of the Pierses for centuries later.

In 1346 we find that Gerald fitz Piers and William fitz Piers were appointed custodians of the peace in the cantred of Altry.[26]

Maurice fitz Piers appears to have been one of the younger sons. In 1347 we read that Master Maurice fitz Piers was provided by the king (Edward Il) for the church of Kylnattyn [Kilnaughtin in Irraghticonnor barony] in 'Moynnour' in Ardfert diocese, at that time vacant.[27] Also, on 16 July 1366 'Maurice fitz Piers de Geraldinis', canon of Ardfert (value 50 florins), was collated by the Pope to the archdeaconry of Limerick (value 40 marks) and at his own wish resigned his canonry and prebend of Cashel.[28]

In the list of persons in Co. Kerry amerced in 1411 referred to by K. W. Nicholls[29] we find mention of Brandon fitz Gerald fitz Piers fined 'for several defections' £3; Richard fitz Thomas fitz Piers forfeited £2, and John fitz Robert fitz Piers was fined £3 for 'several defections' and also incurred forfeiture of an unspecified amount; Gilbert fitz Gilbert fitz Piers forfeited £3 3s. and his brother (?) John fitz Gilbert fitz Piers was fined £3 'for several defaults' and also forfeited £6.

[24] *Op. cit.*, 188.
[25] *Art. cit.*, 34.
[26] *Calendarium rotulorum patentium et clausorum Hiberniae* i, 52.
[27] *Ibid.*, 51b. For the identification of 'Moynnour', see *Kerry Arch. and Hist. Soc. Jn*. 2 (1969) 29, 93/4; cf. note 61 below.
[28] *Cal. Papal Letters* iv, 58. Note that the term 'de Geraldinis' in this context is by no means unusual in references to members of the FitzMaurice and Pierse families in church records. The sixth lord of Kerry was referred to in a papal dispensation as 'Maurice fitz John de Geraldinis'.
[29] *Kerry Arch. and Hist. Soc. Jn*. 3 (1970) 32 n. 38. This list (National Library of Ireland Harris MS 4, ff. 173-4) refers to defectors in Kerry amerced by Thomas fitz John, 6th earl of Desmond and lord of the liberty of Kerry, and includes most of the influential men of the time in north Kerry.

While, from the comparative rareness of the name Piers in Kerry at this time, these may well have been of the Pierse branch of the FitzMaurices, it is hardly possible that they were grandsons of Piers fitz Maurice. More likely Piers fitz Maurice had a son also named Piers—perhaps even the Piers *Óg* of the pedigree given in the appendix below—and that these scions were *his* grandsons.[30]

Places and Branches

Topographical names in north Kerry evidently derived from association with Piers fitz Maurice or his descendants are Farranpierce (par. Killehenny, bar. Irraghticonnor), Ballymacpierce (par. Nohoval, bar. Trughanacmy), possibly Caherpierce (par. Ballinvoher, bar. Corcaguiny), but certainly Pierce's Island—Oileán Phiarais—off the coast near Meenogahane (par. Killury, bar.Clanmaurice). Regarding the lastnamed, it has been suggested that the Pierse families living locally are known as Ferris and that they are represented in the townland Dunferris (par. Lisselton, bar. Irraghticonnor).[31] It can be stated that there is no evidence at all to support this. To the contrary, Jeremiah King in his history of the county wrote:[32] 'Dunferris, dun na fithrech, baile in Lisselton; the fort was destroyed in 979 by the army of the O'Briens …'. This event occurred nearly two centuries before the arrival of the AngloNormans in Ireland. Elsewhere King wrote: '. . . it appears almost certain that the Ferrises derived from the de Birminghams of Connaught' .[33]

A further point of interest is that the early genealogists (unknown author of Cotton MS Titus B X, f. 394, early seventeenth century ; Smith, 1756; Lodge, 1789) stated that Piers fitz Maurice was ancestor to the Pierse families at Ballymacaquim, 'Crossnishane' and Meenogahane and of the family of MacShane. There can be no doubt that the family at Ballymacaquim was the senior branch and almost certainly the builders of the castle there. While this branch itself died out about the middle of the eighteenth century, it had already provided another branch at the adjacent townland of Aghamore, formerly the 'big field' of the Ballymacaquim manor and demesne; this latter branch has survived in the present senior family of Listowel and Meenogahane. The original family at Meenogahane died out about the middle of the seventeenth century. 'Crossnishane' (*rectius* Crossmacshane) is no longer to be found in north Kerry topography but was a townland in Listowel parish, Irraghticonnor barony, now represented by the townlands of Cloontubrid North and South and Derry.[34]

O'Hart[35] stated that the McShanes of Crossmacshane were attainted in Queen Elizabeth's reign, and indeed we do find a reference to lands including 'the four quarters of the Cross, late MakShane's lands', escheats to the Queen 'and part of it late the lands of Shane Oge Mac Shane Mac Thomas'.[36] We also read that 'Nicholas mac Shane Piers, alias Mac Shane de Clanmorres' entered into rebellion against Queen Elizabeth and was killed and attainted, but he was described as of 'Dromartin and Knockmaghe'.[37] There can, however, be no doubt that a branch of the Pierses were known as MacShane and that they held Crossmacshane, for in two privately-owned pedigrees of the family such references occur. The first manuscript is in the form of a 'seize-quartiers' drawn up for Colonel Richard Pierse of the Austrian service for the occasion of his

[30] See the appendix to this article.

[31] T. J. Westropp, *Royal Soc. Antiq. Ire. Jn*. 40 (1910) 112; Westropp renders Pierce's Island as 'Illaunferris', ibid. 42 (1912) 316.

[32] J. King, *County Kerry, past and present* (Dublin [1931]) 130.

[33] Original letter enclosed in a copy of his own *A history of the county of Kerry* (London *c*. 1910) in the library of the Society of Genealogists, London.

[34] Compare Down Survey map 'The barony of Iraghticonnor in the county of Kerry', 115 (1655), with Ordnance Survey six-inch sheets 151-2 (1846).

[35] *Op. cit.* See p. 17 above for quotation and reference.

[36] Grant to Charles Herbert, certified 31 May 1587 (Carew Manuscripts, Lambeth Palace, London).

[37] Inquisition of 1584 (*Kerry Arch. Mag*. 1 (1910) 273); Fiant Eliz. 31 (1594) no. 5912.

presentation to the Empress Maria Theresa in 1767:[38] this shows the subject to be descended on his mother's side from Robert Pierse of Nohoval, 'son of William Pierce otherwise Mac Shane of the House of Crossmacshane', the latter evidently having been born about 1580 and dying about 1660. The second manuscript referred to is the pedigree in Irish compiled prior to 1823 but which has not been printed before and now forms an appendix to this paper: in this we find reference to a John, son of Piers *Óg*, who was 'the heir of Crois Mhic Sheáin and Cnocán na Croise'.[39]

At all events, it is clear that the family were not holding lands at Crossmacshane when the fiants containing long lists of attainders, forfeitures and pardons were being issued during the reigns of Elizabeth and James I, for no mention of a Pierse or a McShane coupled with Crossmacshane is to be found. The only reference to the place itself seems to be a pardon to 'William mcOwen McSheehy of Crossmcsean' in 1601.[40]

Regarding the statement made by Lodge[41] (1789) that the families descended from Piers fitz Maurice and seated at Ballymacaquim, Crossmacshane and Meenogahane 'changed their name to Pierse about the latter end of Q. Elizabeth's reign, and yet subsist', while genealogically interesting it is really meaningless, since it implies previous use of another surname. We have seen that patronymics were still commonly in use in Kerry at least up to the end of the sixteenth century and this usage was certainly applicable to the Geraldine families. Where members of the Pierse family are referred to in records generally about this time (say between 1568 and 1603), their names appear either as patronymics (e.g. 'John Oge of Ballyvicikyn', 'Thomas McEdmond of Meenogahane', etc.) or with the contemporary spelling of the surname Pierse (e.g. 'Nicholas Mac Shane Pierce, alias Mac Shane de Clanmorres', 'James mcTho. Pieres of Aghymory, yeoman' etc.). Probably the sole exception to this occurs with James fitz Richard, bishop of Ardfert from 1536 to 1582, whom the Four Masters described as 'a vessel full of wisdom' and as we have seen earlier (p. 17) 'of the stock of the ClannPierce'. Now this man is generally referred to as James FitzMaurice, but as he was a religious early in life and later would have been known primarily by his title of bishop of Ardfert and no doubt sign himself 'Jacobus Episcop: Ardferten', habitual use of a surname by himself would be difficult to establish.[42] In any case, he was of illegitimate birth, as the papers at the time of his preferment make plain ('Dispensatio super defectus aetatis et nat. cum eo genito ex religioso et soluta')[43] and he himself had children who were also clearly illegitimate and who evidently used the surnames 'fitz Piers' and 'Piers'.[44]

At the time of 'the latter end of Q. Elizabeth's reign', there were, in addition to the families at Ballymacaquim, Crossmacshane and Meenogahane, also separately identifiable Pierse families at Rattoo, Ballinbranhig, Drommartin, Ballyhorgan and Ardfert, with up to ten generations separating them from their common eponymous ancestor. At this time, too, Kerry was in a state of turmoil in which near relatives—and even members of the same family—sometimes took opposite sides. Thus we find that, while James fitz Richard, bishop of Ardfert, was evidently acting as a sort of field-chaplain to Garret, earl of Desmond, his sons were siding with Edmond fitz Thomas against his father, Thomas fitz Edmond FitzMaurice, 16th lord of Kerry. We also read that

[38] This manuscript, as yet unpublished, is in the possession of Dr Dermot Pierse of Surrey, England, and was prepared by the Irish Franciscans in Prague. A good example of the credentials required by Wild Geese serving abroad, it is hoped to publish an account of this record in the future.

[39] This statement occurs in the early (and less reliable) part of the pedigree forming the appendix to this article, but a probable floruit of 1350 can be assigned to this John fitz Piers *Óg*.

[40] Fiant Eliz. 48 (1601) no. 6497.

[41] *Op. cit*. See p. 17 for quotation and reference.

[42] Born in 1511, he was abbot of O'Dorney (Ord. Cist.) before being promoted bishop of Ardfert at the age of 25 (A. Bellesheim, *Geschichte der katholischen Kirche in Irland* II (Mainz 1890) 259).

[43] C. Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica medii aevi* III (Regensburg 1913) 132.

[44] Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 1582 (v, 1787): 'James and Gerald, the sons of the Bishop of Kerry, i.e. the sons of James, son of Richard…'. See also Carew MS v. 597, f. 445.

the sons of the bishop of Ardfert were 'aiding the Queen's people' on a certain occasion and that Thomas, lord of Kerry, who 'had been hitherto obedient to the law', went off to join his sons, but he 'was not joined in this evil career by the inhabitants of Baile-mhic-an-Chaim [Ballymacaquim, i.e. Pierses] or of Baile-Ui-Chaeluighe [Ballykealy, i.e. FitzMaurices], or the Clann-Pierce'.[45] In this climate, we find ample reason for one branch of a family wanting to alienate—or separately identify— itself from another but no evidence in the Pierse family—other than that of the bishop of Kerry's branch—of its actual occurrence.

It is of interest to note that in a deed of 1551[46] under the hands of the bishop of Ardfert and John FitzGerald, the bishop himself is described as James FitzMaurice, bishop of Ardfert ('Dno Jacobo fitz Moris Episcopo Artifertensis') and a witness, Edmond fitz James (possibly the bishop's own son), simply as of the sept of Piers fitz Maurice ('de stripe Petri fitz Moris'). Other witnesses in the same deed are described as of the FitzMauricefamily ('nacone Fitz Moris'), of the Stack family ('nacone Stack') and of the sept of Richard fitz Maurice ('de stirpe Ristardi fitz Moris'). As Mr K. W. Nicholls (who supplied this reference) points out, it is interesting to note that at least the heads of the latter sept, the house of Lickbevin, were to adopt the surname of FitzGerald instead of FitzMaurice. Was hostility to Lord Kerry a deciding factor in choice of surname?

Two further references pertinent to the discussion of the relationship between the Pierse and FitzMaurice families about this time and the likelihood of a *change* of name: in 1592, agreements were drawn up between the commissioners of Munster (for the crown) on the one hand and the gentry for separate areas of north Kerry on the other. In one, for Clanmaurice barony,[47] the signatories are 'Pa. Lyksnawe' and 'John X Oge Piers [his mark]' and in another, for the gentry of north Kerry,[48] one of the signatories is 'Thomas X McEdmond [his mark]', who can be identified as Thomas macEdmond Pierse of Meenogahane. In connection with the first reference it is also of interest to note that in 1631 John fitz James Pierse of Ballymacaquim, grandson to John *Óg*, claimed the office of seneschal of Clanmaurice.[49]

Armorial Bearings

Finally, while it is unlikely that in Ireland the same rigid discipline was applied and maintained regarding the use of armorial bearings as was in England in Piers fitz Maurice's time (c. 1260—c. 1320), nevertheless a system of some sort was in force regarding the grant, recording and use of arms.[50] The arms of the senior house of the Geraldines—the Kildare FitzGeralds—were 'Argent, a saltire gules'. The arms of the cadet house of Desmond FitzGera1ds were 'Ermine, a saltire gules'—the fur field in place of the metal being a proper method of 'differencing' to indicate cadency. Now the earliest recorded arms of the FitzMaurices are: 'Sir Thomas Fitzmorice Lo of keyry and Baron of Lekesnaw—Ermine, on a saltire gules five annulets argent' (*c*. 1567),[51] 'Fitz-Maurice, Lord of Liksnaw— Ermine, a saltire sable' (c. 1630)[52] and 'FitzMaurice Baron of Kerry—Per saltire, ermine and argent, a saltire gules' (no date).[53] These all show relationship with the

[45] Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 1582 (v, 1781).

[46] British Museum, Cotton MS Titus B. Xl, f. 383.

[47] Articles for the barony and half-barony of Clanmaurice, Carew MS v. 631, f. 58.

[48] Articles for the three baronies of 'Trughnackmye, Browne Lonclone and Offerbuye' and the barony of 'Corcerynnye', Carew MS v. 631, f. 60.

[49] Public Record Office, Ireland, Inquisitions (Chancery series), Co. Kerry, no. 38 (1631): '... Quod Johs FitzJames Pierce de Ballynquin clamat offlcin' seneschal de Clanmorrish'.

[50] B. Burke, *Vicissitudes of families and other essays* (London 1861): Landmarks of genealogy, 229; Heraldry, 403.

[51] Genealogical Office, Dublin Castle, MS 51, p. 4.

[52] Genealogical Office, Dublin Castle, MS 61, p. 77.

[53] These arms, together with the two coats above, were cited by George Dames Burtchaell, Athlone Pursuivant, in a letter to G. H. Orpen (and quoted by Orpen in his article on the origin of the FitzMaurices in the *Genealogists' Magazine* 1 (1925) 35-6) as being those recorded in 'the oldest armouries in this office'. While the other two can be traced (nn. 51-2 above), this one cannot.

FitzGeralds but cadency to the Desmond family. The later arms of the FitzMaurices were 'Argent, a saltire gules, a chief ermine' (evidently from about 1630 onwards),[54] but this differencing again tells the same story.

cholas fitz Maurice, 3rd lord of Kerry and Lixnaw, was summoned as one of the fideles of Ireland by Edward Il for military service against the Scots in 1309 and again in 1314. If he wore coat-armour it is likely that he bore one Of the coats described. If his brother Piers were summoned for similar service, he would have been obliged to differ from his elder brother's arms—possibly by 'differencing' by the superimposition of a crescent on his arms, the proper cadency charge for the second son.

It is of interest, therefore, that in 1750, John Hawkins, Ulster king-of-arms, confirmed to Jane Pierse, formerly Worth, that her husband 'James Pierse, son of Richard Pierse of Ballynagarah in the County of Kerry, Esq.', bore and had the full right to bear the arms 'Argent, a saltire gules and chief ermine with a crescent for difference' as recorded in his office in Dublin Castle.[55]

Appendix: Craobhscaoileadh Seanchais Chloinne Piarais

The account of the Pierses here edited and translated appears to be the only extant genealogy of the family in Irish. It has been taken from a manuscript now owned by the Hon. Editor. This manuscript was formerly in the possession of the late Fr Timothy Courtney, P.P., and was found among his papers in Causeway presbytery in the summer of 1970. It is not known how or when it came into Fr Courtney's possession, but it was once owned by Fr Denis O'Donoghue, P.P. Ardfert 1867-1901, and was borrowed from him in 1891 by Pádraig Feiritéar, who transcribed some texts from it.[56]

The leaves (44 in all) measure 19-19.5 x 15 cms and have been stitched together; there is no cover, and the first and (especially) last pages have become blackened and illegible in places. Most of the texts have separate scribal paginations, but the three pages with which we are concerned (and which would be pages 51-3 in a continuous pagination) have not been numbered. The item immediately preceding was transcribed on 18 September 1823.

The scribe, Tadhg Ó Dannacha (Timothy Dannahy), was, according to Pádraig Feiritéar, a native of Caherciveen, where he was born in the first decade of the last century. He was by trade a silversmith (gobha geal) and it was while he was serving his apprenticeship in Cork that he transcribed this manuscript.[57] His exemplar has been lost, but the fact that our genealogy immediately follows a lament for Garret Pierse of Aghamore, killed in the battle of Liscarroll in 1642, and other considerations point to the existence of a manuscript collection of north Kerry provenance in Cork by 1823.[58]

In editing the present text I have retained the spelling of the manuscript throughout (including the extravagant use of accents) and have expanded contractions silently; italics are used for material in roman script. Word-division, capitalisation and punctuation have, however, been normalised.

[54] Genealogical Office, Dublin Castle, Funeral Entries: 'The Right Honorable Thomas Fitz-Morrice Lord of Kerry and Lixnaw deceased the 3 of June 1630…'. An earlier reference to these same arms appears in Genealogical Offce MS 58 (*c.* 1599-1605), p. 155, but here they are tricked only and hence no conclusion regarding cadency indication from metal and tincture counterchanging can be deduced.

[55] B. Burke, *The general armory* (London 1884) 802.

[56] P. de Brún, *Filiocht Sheáin Ui Bhraonáin* (Baile Atha Cliath 1972) 9 n. 1, 132-3.

[57] University College, Dublin, Ferriter MS 1, pp. 456-7. For Pádraig Feiritéar's work in preserving and transcribing Irish manuscript material, see Seán Ó Sé's article in *Kerry Arch. and Hist. Soc. Jn*. 3 (1970) 116-30.

[58] de Brún, 64-5.

I Text

Do chraobh sgaoile seaánnachus Chloinne Phiarrus ann so do réir na seann údur *Bead* agus *Beckett*.

Triubhar mac do bhí ag iarrla *Winsor*, beirt díobh sann do rugach daonn tórrthus, Piarus agus Muiris, ó na bhfuill Clann Phiarruis 7 Clann Mhuiris; mac eile do rugach donn iarrla cheadna darba ainnim Gearalt, ó na bhfuill Gearaltaig. Beirt mhac do bhí aig Gearalt, Muiris mhic Gearalt 7 Uilleam mhic Gearailt, táinnig le hlarrle Strongbó go hÉirinn a ndiag a cheile, Muiris ar dtuis 7 Uilleam na dhiag Sinn, agus mac le Muiris, Tomás mhic Muiris, sínnsior Chloinne Muiris do gaibh seilibh a dTraighIidhe. Triubhar mac do bhí ág Piarrus, Séamus, iarrla *Winsor*, agus Seághainn iarrla *Northumberland* a Sagsuibh, agus Piarrus Óg táinnig go hÉirinn le Stronngbó, aois Chriost ann tánn Sinn 1154.

Do phós ann Piarrus sinn Mári innighionn Mhile Chógann, ris a raidhtar Gogannach Mhéir na hÉilli a gcónntae Chorcidhe, agus do fuair Piarrus trí túaha a gCrabriochaibh ó Mhile Cógann, 7 fearann ann gach barrunntacht a gconntéa Ciarrufdhe úile. Do bhí ceathrar mac ag Piarrus, Seaghan, Séamus, Piarrus agus Muiris, agus triubhar inghionn, Máirre aig Mac Dhonochadha Álladh, Éibhlinn ag Muiris mac Tomáis mhic Muiris Tráighlidhe, 7 Eiléann ag Ó Conchubhair Charruig ann Phuill. A mhac Seághan eidhre Chruis Mhéic Seághann agus Cnucáinn na Cruisi ann loreacht 7 ar shliocht Mheic Seághain na Cruisi. Ó Phiarrus, do bhi / pósta ag Eiléann ighionn Uí Shúillibháinn Mhóir, sliocht Bhaile Mhic ann Chaoim 7 ó Shéamus Clann Phiarrus ann Chillínn 7 tuathha Tráighlide, 7 dimig Muiris gann sliocht. Beirt mhac do bhí ag Piarrus Bháile Mhic ann Chaoim 7 aonn innghionn amhainn do bhí pósta aig Tiaghearna Lici Sná, Seághann 7 Séamus. Ó Shéamus táinnig Clann Phiarrus Bhinnogatháinn. Seághan ann téidhre do bhí pósta ag Séibh innghionn Tíaghearna Choise Mainnghe Me Carrhaigh, ceathrar mac do bhí aige agus triubhair innghionn, Máire pósta ag Tiaghearna Leci Sna, Ónóra ag Ó Shuillibháinn, Éibhilfnn aig Stucach Mór, Seamus ó a bhfuill Clánn Piarrus Bháile ann Bhreannthig, Eadhmunn ó a bhfuill Clann Piarruis Árd Fhearta, Georóid ó a bhfuill Clann Piarruis Bháile Thaurugáinn; Seagan do bhí pósta aig Eilfonnóir innghionn Tighearna Mhic Muiris, beirt mhac do bhí aige agus beirt innghionn, Eibhilínn pósta aig Ó Connchúbhair 7 Caitilfnn ag Nicolás Dall, Michhall do phos a gcoige Conocht; Seaghan Óg pósta ag Siobháinn innghionn chSeághuinn Mhac Eiligeóid Charruig nó Fhilli, beart mhac do bhí aige 7 beirt innghionn, Máiri ag Mac Muiris, Onnóra ag Ó Suilibháinn, Pádruig ó na bhfuil [Clann Phiarais] Acha Mhóir; agus Séamuis, do bhí pósta aig Máiri innghionn Maic Eligeóid Truchanaicme, mac 7 beirt ionnghionn do bhí aige, Eiléann pósta aig ann Stocach Mór 7 Éibhilínn ag fear do Chlaoinn Mac Mathúnna Tuamhan; Seaghuinn a mhac do bhí pósta aig / innghíonn Tomáis Seódh Bhaille ann Rudolluig; cuigfhear mac do bhí ag Seaghan sinn 7 beirt innghionn, Máiri ag fear éidhre Mhuiririgáinn 7 Eiléann ag Eadhmonn Connbaoi; Mitháll pósta ag innghionn Mhíc Eiligeóid Gháilli, cuigfhear mac do bhí aiga, Seaghan, Séamus, Pádrúig, Gireóid 7 Ambrós, agus ann uair do cailiog Seaghann Sinn, ann drithair crionna a Ruamh na caiptéinn do tugach Seághan air ann Micháill ceadnna sinn 7 ní raibh sliocht acht ar bheirt dá claoinn .i. Ambrós do bhí pósta ag innghionn ann Stacuig Mhóir, beirt mhac 7 aonn .ī. do bhí aige, Ónnóra pósta ag Tomáis Ó Leáthluir, éidhre ann Phuillínn a Máanír, Pádrig pósta ag innghionn Ruistaird Hicsonn; Mitháill pósta ag innghionn Mhathumhuinn Ui Cinnéide, éidhre Bhaile Fhriteaduig 7 do cailiog a gconntae Luimnne, beirt mhac 7 aonn ionghean do bhí aige, Caitlínn, ann innghionn, pósta ag Tiobóid mhic Pádraig do cailiog sann trúp. Ambrós ann fear déaghnac do mhair díobh uile.

Tosach ann tseannachuis cheadna so ar Chloinn Phiarruis atá saoibh agus áitiobh ar sann Leabhar Maoibhinnioch 7 fóirlionnta ag Béide agus ag Leabhar Droma Sneachta ann sa Chroinnic mar ann céadna.

Sirim ar Íosa Críost gann bhéim gann ceas
ann chinnidh seo thíocht arís na réim go ceart
is seilibh na gcríoch aig Gaoidhill gann bhaoghill tar ais
is leaga ar a naoidibh síos is tráocha air fad—Amenn.

II Translation[59]

Here follows the exposition of the history of Clan-Pierse according to the ancient authorities, Bead and Beckett.

The (**1**) earl of Windsor had three sons, two of whom, (**2**) Piers and Maurice (from whom are descended Clan-Pierse and Clan-Maurice), were born at one birth. Another son born to the same earl was called Gerald, from whom are the FitzGeralds. Gerald had two sons, Maurice fitz Gerald and William fitz Gerald, who came with Earl Strongbow to Ireland after each other, Maurice first and William later, and it was a son of Maurice, Thomas fitz Maurice, the ancestor of Clan-Maurice, who possessed Tralee. Piers had three sons, (**3**) James, earl of Windsor, and John, earl of Northumberland in England, and Piers *Óg*, who came to Ireland with Strongbow, A.D. 1154.

That Piers [*Óg*] married Mary, daughter of Miles Cogan, who is called Gogan of Barnahely in Co. Cork, and Piers got three *tuatha* in Carbery from Miles Cogan and land in each barony in all of Kerry. Piers had four sons, (**4**) John, James, Piers and Maurice, and three daughters, Mary married to MacDonagh of Duhallow, Eibhlín married to Maurice fitz Thomas fitz Maurice of Tralee and Eiléan married to O Connor of Carrigafoyle, His son John was the heir of Crois Mhic Sheáin and Cnocán na Croise[60] in Iraght[iconnor] and was a descendant of MacShane of the Crosses. From Piers, who was married to Eiléan, daughter of O Sullivan *Mór*, are descended the family of Ballymacaquim, and from James are Clan-Pierse of Killeen and the neighbourhood of Tralee; Maurice died without offspring. Piers of Ballymacaquim had (**5**) two sons (and one daughter, who was married to the lord of Lixnaw), John and James. From James are descended Clan-Pierse of Meenogahane. John, the heir, who was married to Sadhbh, daughter of MacCarthy, lord of Cosh Maing, had four sons and three daughters: (**6**) Mary, married to the lord of Lixnaw, Onora married to O Sullivan, Eibhlín married to Stack *Mór*, James, from whom are descended Clan-Pierse of Ballinbranhig, Edmond, from whom are descended Clan-Pierse of Ardfert, Garret, from whom are descended Clan-Pierse of Ballyhorgan ; John, who was married to Eleanor, daughter of Lord FitzMaurice, had two sons and two daughters: (**7**) Eibhlín, married to O Connor and Caitlín married to Nioclás Dall, Michael, who married in Connacht; John *Óg*, who was married to Siobhán, daughter of John MacElligott of Carrignafeela, had two sons and two daughters: (**8**) Mary, married to FitzMaurice, Onora, married to O Sullivan, Patrick, from whom are [descended Clan-Pierse of] Aghamore; and James, who was married to Mary, daughter of MacElligott of Trughanacmy, had one son and two daughters: (**9**) Eiléan married to Stack *Mór* and Eibhlín, married to one of the MacMahons of Thomond. His son John was married to

[59] Numbers in parentheses indicate generation-levels.

[60] Crois Mhic Sheáin—Crossmacshane; for location see p. 22 above. Cnocán na Croise—no satisfactory identification can be given other than that this was probably another of the 'cross' or church lands; in 1331, Nicholas fitz Maurice, 3rd lord of Kerry, was described as sheriff of the crosses of Kerry—implying that he had jurisdiction over certain church lands.

a daughter of Thomas Joy of Ballinruddery. That John had five sons and two daughters: (**10**) Mary married to the heir of Murirrigane and Eiléan, married to Edmond Conway. Michael, who was married to a daughter of MacEIligott of Galey, had five sons, (**11**) John, James, Patrick, Garret and Ambrose, and when that John, the eldest, died a captain at Rome, the same Michael was called John and only two of his children had descendants, i.e. Ambrose, who was married to the daughter of Stack *Mór* had two sons and one daughter, (**12**) Onora married to Thomas Lawlor, the heir of Pulleen in Máinír,[61] Patrick, married to a daughter of Richard Hickson; Michael, who was married to a daughter of Mahon O Kennedy, the heir of Ballintredida,[62] and who died in Co. Limerick, had two sons and one daughter. (**13**) Caitlin, the daughter, was married to Tiobáid mac Pádraig, who was killed in the troop. Ambrose was the latest survivor of them all.

The beginning of this same account of the Clan-Pierse is set out in the Leabhar Muimhneach and completed by Bede and Leabhar Droma Sneachta in the chronicle in the same way.

[Scribal (?) verse:] I pray Jesus Christ, faultless and strong, that this family be restored to their former status, that the lands [of Ireland] revert to Irish hands and that their enemies be overcome and utterly defeated. Amen.

Pádraig de Brún

III Evaluation

Set out in chart form, the pedigree is seen to be a continuous descent of the Pierse family from the 'earl of Windsor', extending through thirteen generations. Apart from the reference to (**3**) 'Piers *Óg*, who came to Ireland with Strongbow, A.D. 1154', it contains no dates.

The last-mentioned person in the pedigree is (**11**) Ambrose Pierse, described as 'the latest survivor of them all' and from whom the later details may well have been received. The latest person named to whom dates can be assigned with reasonable certainty is this Ambrose's son, Patrick Pierse, 'who married a daughter of Richard Hickson'—probably the Richard Hickson (*fl*. 1735) who, according to M. A. Hickson,[63] was the son of Thomas Hickson of Gowlane, and who married Martha, daughter of Captain Theobald Magee, thus enabling a probable floruit of *c*. 1700-50 to be assigned to this Patrick. It can be assumed that this later part of the pedigree, generations (**10**) to (**13**)—being nearest to then living memory—is the part most likely to be accurate.

The middle part, generations (**5**) to (**9**), contains references to persons elsewhere well documented, e.g. (**6**) John fitz John (*c*. 1511-70), who married Elenor, daughter of Lord FitzMaurice, (**6**) Nicholas *Dall* (Pierse), the famous Kerry harper (1561-1653), (**7**) John *Óg* (b. *c*. 1541, d. 20 December 1611) and (**8**) James fitz John of Ballymacaquim (1571-1614), who married a MacElligott. All these entries in the pedigree are correct and indicate that this part is generally reliable.

The earliest part, generations (**1**) to (**4**), is the most suspect. Referring to the definitive (as yet unpublished) pedigree of the Pierse family, there are twenty-five generations from Walter fitz Other, castellan of Windsor (*fl*. 1087), to (**13**) Caitlin, daughter of Michael Pierse (*fl*. *c*. 1759). Equating the (**1**) 'earl of Windsor' with Walter fitz Other, the above pedigree compared with the definitive pedigree is seen to be twelve generations short. Further, we can accept (**2**) Gerald, 'from whom are descended the Geraldines' (c. 1070-1140), but must reject his 'brothers', Piers and Maurice, as being clearly out of line. In fact, generations (**2**) Piers, (**3**) James, 'earl of Windsor', and

[61] For Máinír, the old name of the parish of Kilnaughtin, see *Kerry Arch. and Hist. Soc. Jn*. 2 (1969) 29, 93/4; cf. note 27 above.

[62] In par. Nantinan, bar. Connello Lower, Co. Limerick. I owe this identification to Mr K. W. Nicholls.

[63] M. A. Hickson, *Old Kerry records* second series (London 1874) 99, 210, 311.

(**4**) John, 'heir of Crois Mhic Sheáin', covering approximately the one hundred years prior to (**5**) John, married to 'Sadhbh, daughter of MacCarthy, lord of Cosh Maing', should actually be covered by a total of eight generations spanning about 250 years. It is significant, too, that this early part of the pedigree abounds in generalities difficult to pin down, such as 'Eiléan, daughter of O Sullivan Mór', 'MacDonagh of Duhallow', 'O Connor of Carrigafoyle', etc. Without dates these might be any of a number of persons bearing these titles. Thus this part must be used with caution and regarded more as a source of legendary interest rather than of factual statements.

There seems to be as little point in commenting on such ornaments in the pedigree as (**3**) 'James, earl of Windsor', and 'John, earl of Northumberland', as there is in identifying 'the ancient authorities, Bead and Beckett'. The notion of (**2**) Clan-Pierse and Clan-Maurice being equated as a result of descent from twins is an imaginative touch, as is also the descent of the mighty Geraldine house from their younger (?) brother, Gerald!

What is of real interest, however, is that the established branches of the family who forfeited their lands following the Desmond, O Neill and 1642 rebellions are correctly shown. It would appear more likely, however, that (**6**) James, ancestor to Clan-Pierse of Ballinbranhig, Edmond, to Clan-Pierse of Ardfert, and Gerald, ancestor to Clan-Pierse of Ballyhorgan, shown as sons of (**5**) John (*c*. 1510-80), who married Sadhbh, daughter of MacCarthy, lord of Cosh Maing, were more likely the sons of James fitz Richard, bishop of Ardfert (1511-83), who otherwise do not appear in the pedigree.

John H. Pierse

3 NICHOLAS DALL PIERSE OF CO. KERRY, HARPER*

About the middle of the eighteenth century, a Kerry historian wrote:

> The great name the County of Kiery & Desmond formerly had for learning, and other branches of Education, as Harp playing, playing of Tables, &ca. as also for Hospitality, Generosity, Manhood, and the pticular actions they were engaged in, if compleatly described would make a good part of a history. …
> As to the Harp playing, said County could well bragg of having the chiefest mast[r] of that Instrument in the Kingdom in his time, Mr Nic: Pierce of Clenmaurice not only for his singular capacity of composing Lamentations funeral additions and Elevations &c[a]. but also by compleating said Instrument with more wires than ever before his time were used.

The manuscript from which these lines have been taken is entitled 'Ancient history of the kingdom of Kerry'[1] and the above excerpts have been quoted many times before but in varying degrees of accuracy and content.

The manuscript history was evidently not known to Dr Charles Smith, 'the historian of Kerry', for no reference to it appears in his work first published in 1756,[2] nor is there any mention of it by Miss Mary F. Cusack in her history of the county issued in 1871,[3] but it was noticed by Professor Eugene O'Curry in 1862[4] and also by Miss Mary A. Hickson in 1872,[5] and by others since. In 1898 the manuscript was edited in its entirety with preface and notes, the editor ascribing the authorship to Friar O'Sullivan of Muckross abbey and the date of compilation to 'a short time after the middle of the last [i.e. eighteenth] century'—say in or about the year 1752.[6]

In his reference, O'Curry clearly had not established the identity of the author, for, referring to the history he wrote: [7]

> The writer of this tract does not speak of the precise time at which Mr. Pierce flourished; but we have his time from other sources, and in language which bears out the eulogium of our anonymous author on him. It appears that Mr. Pierce was blind, since we find him called, with reverence, "Blind Nicholas", in Pierce Ferriter's poem on his harp, already referred to. But, besides this reference, we have three distinct poems, by three different authors, written exclusively in his praise. …

The poem by Pierce Ferriter (*c*. 1600—1653) to which O'Curry refers is *Mo-chean d'altrom an oirbheirt*, composed on the occasion of Ferriter's being presented with a harp by Éamann mac an Daill, son of Domhnall mac an Daill, about the year 1640, and from which O'Curry had earlier

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* Published in *Journal of the Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society* (1973), 6, 40-75.

1 Royal Irish Academy MS 24 K 43, pp. 44-5. Note, however, that this manuscript is itself a copy of an earlier one (perhaps the original), since it commences 'There is one leaf wanting, and was wanting in ye precedent, also in the beginning'. Mr Pádraig de Brún points out that there is in fact another copy, viz. RIA I v 1 (H), and that although *Cat. Ir. MSS in RIA*, 2286, states that 'it is not easy to decide' whether the latter text 'is or is not the original of that in 24 K 43', it appears almost certain that 24 K 43 derives, directly or indirectly, from I v 1.

2 C. Smith, *The antient and present state of the county of Kerry* (Dublin 1756).

3 M. F. Cusack, *A history of the kingdom of Kerry* (London 1871).

4 E. O'Curry, *On the manners and customs of the ancient Irish* III (ed. W. K. Sullivan, London 1873) 263-4.

5 M. A. Hickson, *Old Kerry records* [first series] (London 1872) 14.

6 J. Prendergast (ed.), 'Ancient history of the kingdom of Kerry by Friar O'Sullivan of Muckross abbey', *Cork Hist. and Arch. Soc. Jn*. 4 (1898) 115-31, 207-212, 255-78; 5 (1899) 18-37, 93-108, 169-80, 224-34; 6 (1900) 12-21, 96-103, 146-56. A transcript of excerpts given here will be found in 6 (1900) 13-14.

7 O'Curry, *loc. cit*.

given extracts. The poem has been published in full with explanatory notes by Fr P. S. Dinneen:[8] the following is an extract with a free translation into English by the late John F. McMahon :

18. Díol na néamhdha Nioclás Dall,
a dhíol-sa an chruit gan chonchlann,
an dall-sa dhise idir
's ise d 'annsa an oirfidigh.

18. Nicholas Dall is worthy of the heavenly [harp] as this peerless harp is worthy of him; and the blind [man] to her is as she—the supreme love of the harpist.

The three eulogistic poems to Nicholas Dall to which O'Curry refers are:

(1) *A Niocláis, nocht an gcláirsigh* by Fear Flatha Ó Gnímh, a native of Ulster, published with a translation into English by Professor Osborn Bergin in 1919,[9] and in which Nicholas Dall's ability as a harpist is described in the last quatrain:

12. Balsam cobhartha céadfadh,
liaigh don teidhm nach taisbéantar,
cosg fiabhrasa ré béal mbáis,
do mhéar niamhdha-sa, a Niocláis.

12. Balm to heal the senses, physician of the hidden sore, cure of fever at death's point—such is thy finger, O Nicholas.

(2) *Tiar táinig tús na seanma* by an unknown author who, as O'Curry observes, must have been contemporary with Ó Gnímh; this poem was originally published with an English translation by Bergin, and later by Dinneen,[10] and in one quatrain our subject is thus referred to:

9. Atá a-niugh ag Nioclás Dall,
ar cheart, ar chumas n-adhbhann,
mír curadh cheóil na Banbha,
bunadh eóil na healadhna.

9. Today Blind Nicholas, for correctness and power of melody, has the Champion's Portion of the music of Banbha, the fountain of the knowledge of art.

(3) *Cá síoth don cheól do-chuala* by Maolmhuire Mac an Bhaird, published with an English translation by Fr Cuthbert McGrath,[11] in which our subject is referred to as:

5. Nioclás Dall nach dall croidhe
do sheinm so 's ní síodhaighe;
ní foighthe fear a leanta
'san choilche mear múiseacdha.

[8] P. Ua Duinnín, *Danta Phiarais Feiritéir* 2nd ed. (Baile Átha Cliath 1934) no. iv. The spelling of quotations in Irish here and elsewhere in this article has been normalised by Mr Pádraig de Brún.

[9] Studies 8 (1919) 611-13 [= *Irish bardic poetry* (Dublin 1970) no. 25].

[10] Studies 9 (1920) 97-100 [= *Irish bardic poetry* (Dublin 1970) no. 54]; Ua Duinnín, no iv a.

[11] *Éigse* 7 (1953) 87-94.

> 5, Nioclás Dall, who is not blind of heart, plays it and no fairy. It would be impossible to find anyone to imitate him in the merry musical torrent.

Here then, we have the curious fact that, although he was the exclusive subject of eulogistic poems by three different contemporary poets from widely separated parts of the country and was also respected in verse by his fellow countyman and harpist, Pierce Ferriter, and noticed both as an accomplished musician and improver of the Irish harp by Friar O'Sullivan, we find scant or no reference at all to Nicholas Dall in the principal county histories or in the standard works on Irish harpists.

A possible reason for this may be that up to now only fragmentary details have been known of his life and that until fairly recently there has been little factual information available on the development of the Irish harp, although it might have been thought that the claim to 'compleating said Instrument with more wires than ever before his time were used' would have excited investigation.

A supplementary reason may be that it is known that there were at least six different persons of the name Nicholas Pierse, of differing closeness of relationship, living in north Kerry at the same time and careful identification is necessary before an account of any can be attempted. It is by no means certain that a Nicholas Pierse of Rattoo has always clearly been identified with Nioclás Dall, the Kerry harper. In order to assist in individual identification, brief biographical notes on each of these contemporary Nicholas Pierses are given in the form of an appendix below.

Thus it may well be that because of this uncertainty no writer so far has established the life-span of Nicholas Dall.[12] O'Curry observed that the author of the 'Ancient history of the kingdom of Kerry' did not speak of the precise time at which he flourished, and sought rather to relate his period with that of his eulogists. In connection with this it might be here noted that Bergin opens his introduction to Fear Flatha Ó Gnímh's poem with the observation that 'There is some uncertainty about the time when the author [Ó Gnímh] … lived';[13] recent research, however, would indicate a probable *floruit* of 1602—*c*. 1640 for him.[14]

All this leads to the conclusion that the existence of another manuscript relating to a Nicholas Pierse of Co. Kerry has not hitherto been noticed, since this clearly establishes the birth and death dates of the Kerry harper. The manuscript is in the British Public Record Office and is a petition to King Charles II from 'Nicholas Pierce, Gent:', dated 1664.[15] The fact that the calendaring of this manuscript is a little irregular and that Nicholas Pierse, a blind man and landowner, cannot be identified from the context with Nicholas Dall the harper may account for its not having been noticed before. A transcript in full is given below, but it may here be noted that the petitioner asked for the restitution of his lands in Co. Kerry, forfeited as a result of alleged complicity in the 1641 rebellion and for which the petitioner claimed innocency. He stated that his grandfather, Nicholas Pierse, was a blind man from his infancy, being 80 years of age at the beginning of the rebellion and dying in 1653.

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[12] S. Ó hAnnracháin in *Caint an Bhaile Dhuibh* (Baile Átha Cliath) 8 hazards '*c*. 1560—*c*. 1650' but gives no authority.

[13] O'Curry, *loc. cit.*

[14] T. Donnchadha, *Leabhar Cloinne Aodha Buidhe* (Ir. MSS Comm., 1931) xxvi-xxvii, etc.; T. F. O'Rahilly, *Celtica* 1 (1950) 330-31; É. Ó Tuathail, *Éigse* 6 (1950) 157-8; C. McGrath, *Éigse* 7 (1953) 127-8. I am indebted to Mr Pádraig de Brún for this notice and references.

[15] R. R. Mahaffey (ed.), *Cal. State Papers, Ireland, 1669-1670, with addenda 1625-1670* (London 1910) 520.

An account of Nicholas Dall can conveniently be given under three broad headings: his life-history, his fame as a harper, and an investigation into the claim that he made improvements to the Irish harp.

Life-History

Nicholas Pierse came from a branch of the Pierse family descended from the FitzMaurices of Lixnaw, lords of Kerry, which settled in the Rattoo district.[16] He was born in or about the year 1561 and was associated with the townlands of Lisnagoneeny, 'Knockmcneeny' and Bishopscourt, which are all in Rattoo parish, Clanmaurice barony, and which, as we shall see, were his inheritance. 'Knockmcneeny' as such no longer exists in Kerry topography—although it may be represented by the present townland of Knockercreeveen[17]— but it was a parcel of land of some 118 acres sandwiched between Drommartin, at that time held by his namesake, Nicholas Pierse (known as 'Nicholas Mac Shane de Clanmaurice'), and Corrobally, then held by the head of the Pierse clan, John *Óg* of Ballymacaquim. The names of his parents are not known, but we do know that he was blind from his infancy—most likely as a result of smallpox, the terrible scourge of the times—hence his sobriquet *dall*.

Because of his blindness, it is unlikely that he took an active militant part in the almost continuous wars ravaging during his lifetime : he was in his 'teens when Garret, the Great Earl of Desmond, was making his retributive raids into Clanmaurice between the years 1575 and 1577, and it is improbable that he was greatly involved in the ensuing Desmond rebellion. Harpers, however, blind or otherwise, were not always entirely free from complicity in contentions, for owing to the esteem in which they were generally held, they were well received wherever they went and, by reason of their ability to arouse passions and their freedom to carry news, they were regarded with hostility by the enemy in times of war.

Our first reference to him occurs during the insurrection following the suppression of the Desmond rebellion, when in 1600 Nicholas Dall, harper, 'is to submit [to the president of Munster] and gave sureties to keep the peace'.[18] The sureties required were usually about two hundred pounds, but the risk of forfeiture (of what was in those days a relatively large amount of money) apparently did not have the desired effect, for the following year we find that he was put into prison.[19] That same year, however, by fiant dated 11 April 1601, he was granted the queen's pardon.[20]

On 28 January 1603, a proclamation was issued by the lord president of Munster, Sir George Carew, by which the marshal of the province was charged 'to exterminate by martial law all manner of Bards, Harpers, etc.' This was followed within ten days by Queen Elizabeth's orders to Lord Barrymore 'to hang the harpers wherever found, and destroy their instruments'.[21] In connection with this, it is interesting to recall that Queen Elizabeth herself was particularly fond

[16] See my former paper, 'The origin of the Pierse family of Co. Kerry', *Jn. Kerry Arch. and Hist. Soc.* 5 (1972) 14-32, *Chapter 2* in this collection.

[17] Knockercreeveen (Cnoc an Chraoibhín): compare Down Survey map 'The barony of Clanmorris in the county of Kerry', 116 (1655), with Ordnance Survey six-inch sheets 9 and 15 (1914). Mr Pádraig de Brún kindly pointed out these townland associations.

[18] J. King, *A history of the county of Kerry* (London *c.* 1910) 338, and *County Kerry, past and present* (Dublin [1931]) 276 (under 'Rattoo'). Note, however, that in these references King incorrectly gives 'Michl. Dall' and 'Michael Dall', respectively, for *Nicholas* Dall.

[19] King [1931], 266 (under 'Pipers').

[20] Fiant Eliz. 48 (1601) no. 6494 (to be found in the appendix to *Seventeenth rep. of Deputy Keeper of Public Records in Ireland*, Dublin 1885).

[21] W. H, Grattan Flood, *The story of the harp* (London 1905) 185.

of Irish music and kept at court an Irish harper, Cormac Mac Dermot, for her own entertainment; he was engaged in 1590 and continued in favour with King James 1.[22]

It is evident that about this time Nicholas Dall married his kinswoman, Caitlín or Catherine, daughter of John *Óg* Pierse of Ballymacaquim, head of the Pierse clan, for in a deed dated 13 January 1609, John *Óg* stated that for a consideration to be paid through himself to 'Nicholas Pyers as a dowry with my daughter Catherine', he, John *Óg*, granted to Nicholas Dall, his heirs and assignees, the town and lands of Ballynoe (par. Killury, bar. Clanmaurice) for ever.[23]

In the genealogy in Irish appended to a former paper, the marriage of Nicholas Dall to Caitlín, daughter of John [*Óg*] Pierse of Ballymacaquim is noticed, although she is shown as being the *sister* of John *Óg*.[24] Since this John *Óg* (*c*. 1541-1611) was himself the son of a John fitz John (*c*. 1511—*c*. 1570), it is conceivable that both were known as John *Óg*, and this may account for the confusion.

As a further consideration, John Lodge in his peerage of Ireland, under Fitz-Maurice, earl of Kerry, states in connection with Patrick fitz Thomas, 17th lord of Kerry (1541-1600), that his second marriage was to Elenor, daughter of Thomas FitzGerald of Ballyglighin, Co. Limerick, 'by whom he had two sons captain Gerald Fitz-Maurice, (who by Catharine, daughter of John Pierse of Ballymac-Equim, or Ballymaquin, Esq. had one son Gerald …)', his authority being the Segar pedigree.[25] This 17th lord of Kerry, it may be recalled, was the 'Pa. Lyksnawe' who together with John *Óg* Pierse of Ballymacaquim signed the agreement for Clanmaurice barony with the commissioners of Munster in 1592[26] and who finally was in rebellion against the English and died of grief at 'Downlagh' on 12 August 1600.[27]

While it is tempting to speculate that the author of the Irish genealogy was correct after all, an analysis of the all-important birth-marriage-and-death dates will show that a marriage of a Caitlín or Catherine, sister of John *Óg* Pierse (*c*. 1541—1611) is almost an impossibility, and we are thus left with the statement on Lodge's authority that Catherine, daughter of John Pierse of Ballymacaqum, married Gerald FitzMaurice, while on the authority of a signed and dated testimony (13 January 1609) by her own father, we read that a sum of money was paid to Nicholas Pierse 'as a dowry with my daughter Catherine'.[28]

It is evident that Nicholas Dall's eldest son, John, was born about this time (*c*. 1609), and although termed the eldest son, he may well have been the only child, since no reference to another son or daughter has been found.

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[22] F. O'Neill, *Irish ministrels and musicians* (Chicago 1913) 28.

[23] Public Record Office, Ireland, Inquisitions (Chancery series), Co. Kerry, p. 34 (1609): 'Sciant p'ntes et futuri qd ego Johes Oge Pyers de Ballymclquin in Com' Kerry gener' in consideratione quadraginta […] quatuor ignoi quatuor egnaru et gradarii solvendau p me Nicholas Pyers pro doto cu filia mea Catharina Johais dedi concessi et hoc p'enti chart' mea Confirmaoi pd Nicho Pyers villas villat hamlett terr tenement pd […][…] Balnio …'.

[24] See ***Jn. Kerry Arch. and Hist. Soc.*** 5 (1972) 28-30.

[25] J. Lodge, *The peerage of Ireland* II (ed. M. Archdall, Dublin 1789): FitzMaurice, earl of Kerry, 194.

[26] See ***Jn. Kerry Arch. and Hist. Soc.*** 5 (1972) 25.

[27] S. O'Grady (ed.), *Pacata Hibernia* I (London 1896) 103, and Lodge, 193, 'Downlagh' appears to be 'Downlough Des' in J. Speed's *The theatre of the empire of Great Britain* (London 1611) 140, corresponding with the present Three Castle Head, bar. West Carbery, Co. Cork.

[28] On the evidence of his grandson (n. 40), Nicholas Dall was born *c*. 1561 and died in 1653. To have had a grandson who was in his minority in 1641, he must have married before 1601-9, when he was in his forties. John *Óg* died on 20 December 1611 and his eldest son and heir, James McShane Pierse, was born in 1571 and died on 20 March 1614. John *Óg* must therefore have been married before 1571, giving a conjectural birth-date of *c*. 1540. A daughter, Caitlín, born to John *Óg* and his wife Siobhán McElligott around the year 1568 would thus fit the known facts and provide Nicholas Dall with a wife between the ages of 33 and 41 and a son (probably the only child), John (Nicholas *Óg*'s father), born *c*. 1601-9. A shift taking the dates back one generation (say up to 30 years) would create absurdities.

John *Óg* Pierse, father-in-law to Nicholas Dall, died on 20 December 1611. In 1618, an inquisition was made into the lands that he had held and there it was stated that in his lifetime he leased to 'Nicholas Pierst alias Daell' the lands of Ballykealy (par. Kilmoyly) and Corrobally (par. Rattoo).[29]

Our next reference occurs in 1631, when in a document dated 3 May of that year a petition was drawn up and forwarded to Rome requesting that the then vacant see of Ardfert be filled by the appointment thereto of Fr Dominic (Daniel) O'Daly. Among the names of the petitioners, which include an archbishop, two bishops and certain of the 'nobility and gentry' of Co. Kerry,[30] we find the name 'Nicholaus Daule de Lisnecongyny' next to that of his nephew 'Geraldus Diersy [*rectius* 'Piersy'] de Aghemore', [31] while previously had appeared the name 'Johannes Jacobi de Ballymiccyme', who would have been his grand-nephew, John fitz James Pierse, at that time heir to Ballymacaquim, the castle home of the senior branch of the Pierse clan.[32]

On 12 March 1637, for a fine of 14 shillings, a grant was made (in virtue of the Commission for the Remedy of Defective Leases) to 'Nic^{S} Daul Piers, Gent.' of the towns and lands of 'KnockmcKinvine and Lisngonny. One carucate'.[33]

As we shall see, Nicholas Dall's son and heir, John, by this time had married, raised a son (also named Nicholas), while he himself had died (*c*. 1631), and this probably is the reason for the name John fitz (or mac) Nicholas Pierse not appearing in the records at any time as being the holder of Nicholas Dall's lands of 'Knockmcneeny' and Lisnagoneeny.

When the 1641 rebellion broke out, Nicholas Dall was 80 years of age, and although we find references in the records of this time to his brother-in-law, James fitz John Pierse of Ballymacaquim, his nephew, Captain Garret Pierse of Aghamore, and his fellow harper, Captain Pierce Ferriter of Ferriter's castle, Ballysybil, we find no mention of any of the Pierses living around Rattoo.[34] Of Nicholas Dall's own family, his son John fitz Nicholas was already dead, and his grandson Nicholas *Óg*, on his own evidence, was 'in his minoritie'.[35] Further, in the records relating to the Cromwellian confiscations which followed the suppression of the rebellion we find no mention of any of the Pierse families of 'Knockmcneeny', Lisnagoneeny, Bishopscourt or Ballynoe as having obtained transplanters' certificates in 1653-4.[36]

In 1653, Nicholas Dall Pierse died at the age of 92, leaving his grandson Nicholas *Óg* as his heir and the inheritor of his lands.

From the records relating to the Cromwellian era, compiled over the years 1654-77, we notice the following. In the Civil Survey of 1654-6, we find 'Nicholas Piers Irish Papist' as proprietor of 'Cnockm^{C}kneeny 75 acres' and 'Lissnegoneeoney 20 acres', both in Rattoo parish. On 'Knockmcneeny' we learn that there was 'an old thatched house with 2 chimneys' valued at six pounds, while at Lisnagoneeny there was 'a small corne mill now in repaire on the Premises' also

[29] Public Record Office, Ireland, Inquisitions (Chancery series), Co. Kerry, no. 12 of 1618—John Oge Pierse.

[30] B. Jennings (ed.), *Wadding papers 1614-39* (Ir. MSS Comm., 1953) 517-18; the list of petitioners is also printed in *Kerry Arch. Mag*. 4 (1918) 266. 31.

[31] This Gerald Pierse of Aghamore was the Captain Garret (mac Patrick) Pierse who was killed at Liscarroll in 1642 and for whom an elegy in Irish is extant; see ***Jn. Kerry Arch. and Hist. Soc.***5 (1972) 14 and 27.

[32] See n. 28.

[33] Public Record Office, Ireland, Lodge MS Record of the Rolls, vol. 5, p. 438.

[34] See M. A. Hickson, *Ireland in the seventeenth century or the massacres of 1641-2* Il (London 1884), especially depositions of Love (pp. 103-6), Vines (107-10), Blennerhassett (112-14), Dethick (114-18), Spratt (119-20), Abraham, White and Roberts (joint, 121-4), Vauclier (125-7).

[35] See n. 40 below.

[36] M. A. Hickson, *Selections from old Kerry records* second series (London 1874) 31-6, Certificates of persons ordered to transplant from Kerry A.D. 1653; J. O'Hart, *Irish landed gentry* Il (Dublin 1887) appendix, 350-51, Transplanters' Certificates, County Kerry.

valued at six pounds.[37] In the 'List of Papist proprietor's names in the county of Kerry' prepared on 27 January 1656, and based on the Civil Survey, we notice the name 'Nicholas Peirce' mentioned twice, and under the title 'Baronie of Iraghticonnor' the name 'Nicholas Dall Peirse'.[38]

Referring to the Books of Survey and Distribution compiled in 1677, we find under 'Rathvoe Parish' the name 'Nicholas Peirce' as being proprietor of 'Knocknackeeveene' of 118 acres, which were granted to Lord Colooney, and also 'Lissingoneeyey' of 80 acres and 'Bishopscourt' of 109 acres, both of which were also granted to Lord Colooney.[39]

In 1664, Nicholas *Óg* Pierse petitioned King Charles II for the restitution of his estate, confiscated during the Cromwellian era as follows:[40]

> To the Kings Most Excellent Ma^tie^
> The humble petition of Nicholas Pierce, Gent.
> Sheweth,
>
> That yo^r^ pe^rs^ Grandfather Nicholas Pierce a blind man from his infancie being 80 yeares of age in ye beginning of ye Rebellion of Ireland died in Ano 1653 Seized of Certaine lande as of his inheritance in ye Countie of Kerry, and John Pierce: eldest sonn to the said Nicholas dyed somme tenne years before the said Rebellion and the petitioner Nicholas oge Pierce Grandchild unto ye said Nicholas and Eldest sonn to the said John Pierce was in his minoritie when the Rebellion beganne and after the death of his said Grandfather in Anno 1653, became possessed of the saide lande whereof his said Grandfather dyed seized and John Pierce Eldest sonn to the said Nicholas dyed tenn yeares before the said Rebellion and your Petit^er^ Nicholas oge Pierce grandchild unto the said Nicholas, Eldest sonn to the said John Pierce was in his Minoritie when the Rebellion begann and after the death of his said grandfather in Ano 1653 became possessed [ ] of the said lande whereof his Grandfather dyed seized.
> That yo Pe^r^ never accepted of one foote of land in the province of Connaught for the said Estate whereof he was dispossessed in Ano 1655 that he could not through the shortness of time obtain a hearing in the Court of Claimes in Ireland he having Enterred his claym as an Innocent. May it therefor please your E. Ma^ne^ that he be graciouslie pleased to give order that ye Pet ^or^ be served of the restitutions of his said Estate by provision of the bill now under consideration. And he will ever pray. . . .

The penultimate sentence refers, of course, to the Court of Claims set up during February 1663 for the purpose of examining the claims of 'Innocents' asserting that they had taken no part whatsoever in the 1641 rebellion. While it is evident that the lands of Rattoo were not restored, it is difficult to see what parts a blind man of 80 years of age and an under-age boy could play in a rebellion.

Nicholas Dall, Harper

In ancient times, we are told, harpers, as *oirfidigh*, or professional performers on musical instruments, were regarded as belonging to one of four principal orders of an 'aristocracy of intellect ranking next to royalty'.[41] Also, that the art of the musicians was closely associated with that of the poets—another of the mentioned four principal orders—and that the music played by

[37] M. J. Byrne, *Kerry Arch. Mag*. 1 (1911) 357-68; R. C. Simington (ed.), The Civil Survey, *A.D. 1654-1656* IV (Ir. MSS Comm., 1938) 495-503.

[38] Lists in references quoted in n. 36 above: Hickson, 36-7; O'Hart, 290-92.

[39] Public Record Office, Ireland, Books of Survey and Distribution.

[40] Public Record Office, London, State Papers, Ireland, Charles II, 1664, f. 52, facie (endorsed 'Ibid. 52').

[41] O'Neill, *op. cit.*, 18.

the Irish harpers must have been to a large extent determined by the lines of the poems which they accompanied.[42]

There can be no doubt that the art of the harper was a difficult skill to learn. Starting tuition before the age of ten was regarded as essential for one hoping for any degree of success in mastering the exacting techniques.[43] Gerald de Barry (Giraldus Cambrensis), deacon of St David's in Wales, who was in Ireland between the years 1183 and 1185, made the following oft-quoted observation of the Irish harpers of his time, whom he described as having 'incomparable skill':[44]

> It is remarkable that, with such rapid fingerwork, the musical rhythm is maintained and that, by unfailingly disciplined art, the integrity of the tune is fully preserved throughout the ornate rhythms and the profusely intricate polyphony—and with such smooth rapidity, such 'unequal equality', such 'discordant concord'. Whether the strings strike together a fourth or a fifth, [the players] nevertheless always start from B flat and return to the same, so that everything is rounded off in a pleasant general sonority. They introduce and leave rhythmic motifs so subtly, they play the tinkling sounds on the thinner strings above the sustained sound of the thicker strings so freely, they take such a secret delight and caress [the strings] so sensuously, that the greatest part of their art seems to lie in veiling it, as if 'That which is concealed is bettered—art revealed is art shamed'.

It need hardly be stated that the skill of the harpers and their love for their instruments dates from the very earliest time in Irish recorded history and has been passed down through succeeding centuries, for the esteem in which they were held and reverenced is abundant in the poetry of all ages. As an example, we may quote from the pen of the unknown poet who is thought to have flourished about the year 1500 or later and who proclaimed:[45]

10. An tan adchiú an chláirseach cheardach,
donnsgáileach mhór, mhínleargach,
fa ghroidfheirg rithmhir mo mheóir
do bhrosdaigh mh'intinn d'aimhdheóin

11. Gur sinneadh linn crithre corphort
d'fhír-rinn mo mheór bhfrithirghrod
go tirim, tiuighdhéantach, trom
sileach, cruitmhéarach, comhthrom.

10. When I see the graceful harp, brown-shadowed, great, smooth-curved, under the rushing swift frenzy of my lingers, my heart is stirred.

11. So that I have played sparkling melodies with the tips of my eager fingers, with notes clean, closely linked, grave, nimble, hard-fingered, even.

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[42] S. Ó Baoill, 'Irish traditional music', *Causeway* (Belfast) 1971, 118-19.

[43] R. Hayward, *The story of the Irish harp* ([Belfast ?] 1954) 5.

[44] Giraldus Cambrensis, *Topographia Hibernica*. An early printed version of the original Latin text is to be found in later editions of W. Camden's *Britannia* (e.g. *Anglica, Hibernica, Normannia, Cambrica, a veteribus Scripta*, Frankfurt 1602, 739) and not in the first edition (London 1586). The best printed Latin text is undoubtedly that in the Rolls Series: Chronicles and Memorials of Gt. Britain and Ireland, V: *Geraldi Cambrensis opera* (ed. J. F. Dimock, London 1867), *Topographia Hibernica*, 153-5. Probably the best modern English translation is the one given above from J. Rimmer, *The Irish harp* (Cork 1969) 29.

[45] *Deithfridh am dháil a leobhráin*, edited by Bergin, Studies 12 (1923) 597-600 [= *Irish bardic poetry* (Dublin 1970) no. 46]; previously published by O'Curry (iii, 318). O'Curry dates the poem to about 1500, but Bergin thinks it later than that.

In later editions of his *magnum opus*, William Camden (1551-1623) included a section entitled 'The manners of the Irishry, both of old and of later times' contributed probably by William Good, an English Jesuit who lived at Limerick in the 1560s. Fr Good wrote: 'Delighted they [the Irish] are above measure in musicke, but especially in the harpe which they warble upon with their nimble fingers most melodiously'.[46]

Because of the times into which he was born and his early blindness, it is not so surprising that Nicholas should have taken up the harp. In those days, far from being the lot of the poor unfortunate itinerant, harp-playing was regarded as a highly skilled art and, irrespective of station, accomplished players were well received and honoured wherever they went. The poet Pierce Ferriter, of Ferriter's castle, Ballysybil, on the Dingle peninsula, was a similar land-owning, cultured harper. The term 'gentleman harper' came to be applied to such players in later times, but this description was to be associated more with the 'squireens' or society-conscious 'undertakers' than the natural gentlemen of the old order, who needed no apology for practising their ancient and greatly-admired art.

Living in Rattoo, and within a mile of the ancient round tower standing conspicuously in the surrounding plainland by the river Brick, it is quite likely that while yet a boy, Nicholas Dall may have met Conor O Brien, earl of Thomond, who in 1570, 'in consequence of the dissentions of his own people and the pressure of the English power' fled from his native Clare into Clanmaurice.[47] This Conor O Brien was the owner of a 'straying harp', in reference to which an unknown poet in the same year wrote:[48]

A chruit cheolchar bheannchorr bhreac,
tarrais-se seal—gá dtám dó—
do gabhthaoi riot laoidhe suadh,
ar a dtug ua Duach eich 's ór.

Thou musical, fine-pointed, speckled harp! Thou hast seen a time—did we of it wish to tell—when to thee were sung the poems of sages, for which *Ua Duach* [O'Brien] paid steeds and gold.

It is likely that Nicholas Dall reached the height of his musical career at about the conjunction of the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I—say 1601 to 1611—when he would have been in his forties. It was during the early part of this decade that royal pardons were being granted to the harpers almost immediately prior to Sir George Carew's suppression of the musicians and the destruction of their instruments. Viewed from the aspect of Irish musical development, this period was crucial. During these years an English captain, Barnaby Rich, was in Ireland and recording his impressions of the country wrote: 'Then they have Harpers, and those are so reverenced among the Irish, that in the time of Rebellion, they will forbeare to hurt either their persons, or their goods . . .'.[49] This attitude may well have accounted for the fact that Nicholas Dall survived after imprisonment in 1601 and following Queen Elizabeth's injunction to Lord Barrymore in 1603 to hang the harpers wherever found.

It would appear that the three surviving eulogistic poems referred to above were written about this time onward—say from the closing years of the sixteenth century to the middle of the seventeenth century. In these poems, allowing for the eulogium typical of their kind, we do obtain some idea of Nicholas Dall's ability as a harper besides a certain amount of personal detail, but

[46] W. Camden, *Britannia*, trans. into English by P. Holland (London 1610) 144. For Fr Good cf. p. 198 below.
[47] Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 1570 (v, 1641).
[48] O'Curry iii, 287; P. Walsh, *Gleanings from Irish manuscripts* 2nd ed. (Dublin 1933) 111-13; I owe the second of these references to Mr Pádraig de Brún.
[49] B. Rich, *A new description of Ireland* (London 1610) 37.

perhaps more important, we gather some information on the instrument itself, some aspects of which—especially regarding tuning and playing— and very little understood today.

From Fear Flatha Ó Gnímh's *A Niocláis, nocht an gcláirsigh*:

1. A Niocláis, nocht an gcláirsigh!
léig imtheacht don fhuaráin-sin;
seinn ilcheóla naoidhe a-nos,
faoidhe ó n-imtheógha m'fhiabhras.

1. Nicholas, uncover the harp! Set free that cooling fountain. Play now many a novel strain, sounds that will dispel my fever.

From the unknown poet's *Tiar táinig tis na seanma*:

10. Cumadóir na gcleas ndoilbhthe,
gadaighe na geamhoidhche,
musgladh brón baoithchridhe ban,
glór nach saoilfidhe a sfothbhrugh.

10. Framer of mystic feats, thief of the winter night, a stirring of sorrows in the wayward hearts of women, a voice one would not think to hear in fairyland.

While from Maolmhuire Mac an Bhaird's *Cá sioth don cheól do chuala* we may quote:

6. Croidhe lionmhar nach lean gnás:
fa chách do-chuaidh ó Nioclás;
géag ó sgaoil dlúithfhréamh dhosach
a lúithmhéar caoin, cumasach.

6. A generous heart that has not confined itself to custom. All Nioclás's wealth has been distributed among others. His gentle vital proficient finger is a tree from which extends a ramification of thick offshoots.

The following two quatrains from the same poem are of especial interest in their reference to Caitilín when it is remembered that Nicholas Dall's wife was named Caitlín also, although if this should be a reference to his wife, the connection with 'of the race of Conall' is not understood, since Nicholas's wife was a Pierse and her mother was a MacElligott:[50]

13. Seinm Niocláis na gcor gciníl
—más fior, do-chluin Caitilín—
is faoidh bhinn a beóil tana
dá rinn cheóil a gcomhragha.

14. Téighim d'urra ar a dreich nduinn
fá beith ar bhuidhin Chonaill
fa a n-iarrfa go dtí asdoigh,
mo bhriathra dhi achd go ndearbhthair.

13. The music of Nioclás of the racy notes—it is said that Caitilín can hear them—and the sweet sound of her fine mouth are two pinnacles of music in harmony.

[50] J. H. Pierse, 'The Origin of the Pierse family of Co. Kerry', *Jn. Kerry Arch. and Hist. Soc.* 5 (1972) 30.

> 14. I resort to her blushing face for support, as she is of the race of Conall; so that what I shall ask for may be granted— provided my words be brought home to her.

Referring back to the quotation at the commencement of this paper, it will be recalled that Nicholas Dall was also praised 'for his singular capacity of composing Lamentations funeral additions and Elevations &c[a].' In Lewis's *Topographical dictionary of Ireland*, published in 1837, it is stated in reference to Co. Kerry that: 'The practice of "keening" at funerals, which in many parts [of Ireland] is falling into disuse, is here retained in full force'.[51] O'Curry (1794-1862), who was born in Dunaha, Co. Clare, wrote:[52]

> … there cannot be much doubt but the Irish funeral cry, as it is called, of our times is a remnant (though perhaps only a degenerate, uncultivated remnant) of the ancient *Aidbsi* or *Cepóc* of the Gaedhil. Even so late as the seventeenth century, Mr. Nicholas Pierce, the great harper of the county of Kerry, composed, or rather revived, some remarkable funeral lamentations, which came down to my own time, and I dare say are still chaunted in regular parts of bass and treble, by the voices of men and women, in concert, at funerals in the South of Ireland.

Harp Improvements

Any attempt to evaluate the statement that Nicholas Dall 'completed' the Irish harp with more strings than ever before his time were used must surely necessitate comparison of instruments in use before and after his time, correlated with an understanding of Irish music and an appreciation of the changes occurring in European music generally about this time.

Taking a circumspect, we find that there are now only ten complete instruments or fragments of pre-1700 Irish harps extant.[53] Nevertheless, enough specimens have survived to enable us to trace the development from the earliest that we are here concerned with, the small fourteenth-century Trinity College Dublin harp, about 36 inches in overall height and weighing about 12 pounds (unstrung), through to the large eighteenth-century Art O'Neill harp, about 56 inches in overall height and a much heavier instrument altogether. In *Pl*. 2 to 5 four representative instruments of the period under discussion are depicted, all approximately to the same scale.

The characteristic features of the Irish harp may be summarised as: massive soundbox (or belly) cut provided on both side faces with metal cheek-plates and accommodating the tuning pins; heavy gauge hard brass strings secured on the inside of the soundbox by being individually twisted round wooden toggles; and inverted horseshoe-shaped plates ('the shoes of the strings') fixed to the face of the soundbox and upon which the strings bore.[54] Irish harps of this type—*cláirscach*—were played held on the left shoulder, the right hand fingering the long bass strings and the left hand the nearer and shorter treble strings. Viewed from the player, the strings were arranged on the left-hand side of the harmonic curve, and the strings themselves were plucked with long finger-nails, and this, together with the combination of brass strings and massive soundbox, gave the instrument a distinctive bell-like deep resonant sound.[55]

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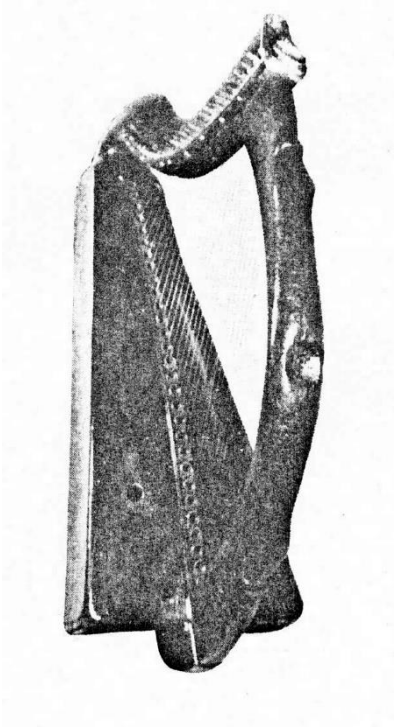
[51] S. Lewis, *A topographical dictionary of Ireland* II (London 1837) 47.
[52] O'Curry iii, 374.
[53] See list in Rimmer (1969), 75-8.
[54] J. Rimmer, 'The morphology of the Irish harp', *Galpin Soc. Jn*. 17 (1964) 39. 55.
[55] *Ibid*., 41.

Pl. 1: FitzGerald of Cloyne ('Dalway') harp fragments, 1621.
45 tuning pins in primary row, 7 tuning pins in secondary row
[Photo: By courtesy of the National Museum of Ireland, Dublin.]



Pl. 2: *Trinity College Dublin harp.*
14th century

SMALL LOW-HEADED

Vertical Height:	36 in (91 cm) approx.
No. of strings	29 holes in neck
	30 holes in soundbox
Longest string:	27 in (70 cm) approx.

[*Photo: British Museum, London, reproduced by courtesy of the Board of Trinity College, Dublin*.]

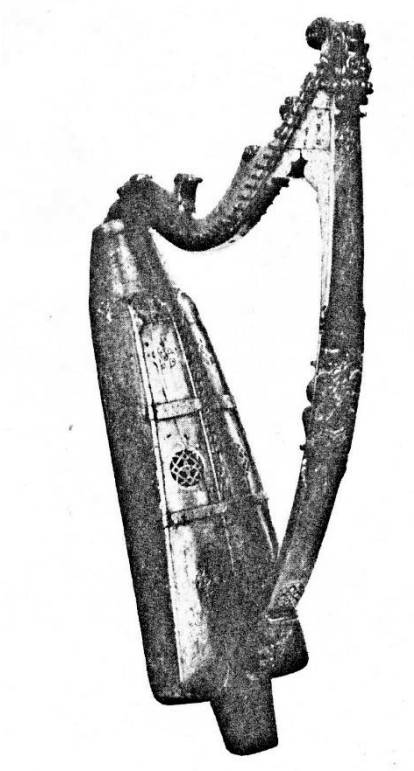
Pl. 3: *Otway harp*
Early 17th century

LARGE LOW-HEADED

Vertical height:	43 in (109 cm) approx.
No. of strings:	34 holes in neck
	35 holes in soundbox
Longest string:	30 in (76 cm) approx.

[Photo: J. H. Pierse, reproduced by courtesy of Capt. R. J. O. Otway-Ruthven, R.N. (Ret.).]

Harps illustrated in *Pl.* 2, 3, 4 and 5 are shown approximately to the same scale for purposes of comparison.



Pl. 4: Kildare (Fitzgerald) *harp*
Mid 17th century

LARGE LOW-HEADED

Vertical height:	56 in (142 cm) approx.
No. of strings:	36 holes in neck
	36 holes in soundbox
Longest string:	41 in (105 cm) approx.

[Photo: By courtesy of the National Museum of Ireland, Dublin.]

Pl. 3: Art O'Neill *harp*
18th century

LARGE HIGH-HEADED

Vertical height:	56 in (142 cm) approx.
No. of strings:	36 holes in neck
	39 holes in soundbox
Longest string:	46 in (117 cm) approx.

[Photo: By courtesy of the Ulster Museum, Belfast.]

In addition to the surviving instruments themselves, evidence of the way in which the harp developed is derived from contemporary records, and this total knowledge enables Irish harps to be classified into three groups: small low-headed, large low-headed and large high-headed.

Pl. 6: FitzGerald of Cloyne ('Dalway') harp, 1621.

LARGE LOW-HEADED

Vertical height (conjectural):	48 in (122 cm) approx.
Number of strings:	45 in primary row
	7 in secondary row
Longest string (conjectural):	41 in (94 cm) approx.

[*Conjectural reconstruction based with permission upon a photograph by the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.*]

The early small low-headed instruments (*Pl. 2*) were light and readily portable and may have been played held by the harper or supported upon a stool; surviving specimens show that they had about 30 strings. By the sixteenth century, the instrument had evolved into the large low-headed type which was much heavier and clearly was played resting upon the peg foot incorporated in its base (*Pl*. 3 and 4); it was evidently provided with more strings—34 to 36—while a further innovation noticed is the progressively increased depth of the soundbox from the base to its upper end, probably intended to provide more resonance for the middle and upper registers. The most recent instrument with which we are here concerned is the early eighteenth-century high-headed harp with longer bass strings, of which the total number of strings provided had increased to between 35 and 39 (*Pl*. 5).

As an example of detail derived from contemporary records, we may quote the Florentine lutenist and composer, Vincenzo Galilei (1520-91), who, writing in the latter part of the sixteenth century, stated:[56]

> The Harps in use by that people [the Irish] are somewhat larger than our [Italian] ordinary ones and generally have strings of brass with a few of steel in the top register, as in the manner of the Clavichord ['Gravicimbalo']. The musicians who play them keep their fingernails of both hands long, carefully shaping them like the quills which strike the strings of the Spinet.

An actual specimen of an Irish harp of this time (late sixteenth century) exists only in the Ballinderry fragments, comprising harmonic curve cheek-plates together with a number of tuning pins still in place, the harmonic curve-to-forepillar joint brace, and the harmonic curve front-end finial—all that remains of what clearly was once a large low-headed harp provided with 36 strings.[57]

A record of somewhat later date comes from the Lutheran musical scholar and composer, Michael Praetorius (1571-1621), who, about the years 1615-18, wrote.[58] 'Irish Harp: Harpa Irlandica, details of structure and shape to be found illustrated in Col. XVIII [referring to *Theatrum instrumentum*—a companion volume[59]], has rather large thick brass strings, 43 in number, and has a fine massive resonance'. Immediately below this description, Praetorius gives a string tuning for the Irish harp which is here reproduced in facsimile (*Fig.* 1).

Figure 1: Praetorius's tuning for the Irish harp, 1619.

The illustration of the instrument that Praetorius gives is clearly recognisable as an Irish harp of that time, correctly showing the T-section forepillar, the cheek-plated harmonic curve actually shown with 43 tuning pins and strings, a pierced-work harmonic curve-to-forepillar brace, and it also accurately depicts the progressively deepening of the soundbox towards its upper end. Commenting on the tuning that Praetorius gives (*Fig.* 1), Miss Joan Rimmer regards it as a partly-chromatic tuning for these forty-three strings, but she finds that it 'not only contains printing errors but is technically and practically absurd', although she does say that it evidently indicates

[56] V. Galilei, *Dialogo della musica antica e della moderna* (Florence 1581) 143.

[57] The Ballinderry fragments are preserved in the National Museum of Ireland, Dublin. They are described and illustrated in R. B. Armstrong, *Musical instruments* I: The Irish and the Highland harps (Edinburgh 1904) *Pl*. facing p. 62, 63-4; and J. Rimmer, *The Irish harp* (Cork 1969) 43-5, 75.

[58] M. Praetorius, *Syntagma musicum* Il (Wolfenbüttel 1619) 56.

[59] Idem, *Syntagmatis musici* (Wolfenbüttel 1620): Theatrum instrumentorum, *Pl*. xviii 2.

that possibly 'there were some Irish harps at about this time which were partly chromatically tuned'.[60] Praetorius's tuning has been translated into modern staff notation[61] and is also shown herein in Helmholtz's notation (*Fig.* 2).

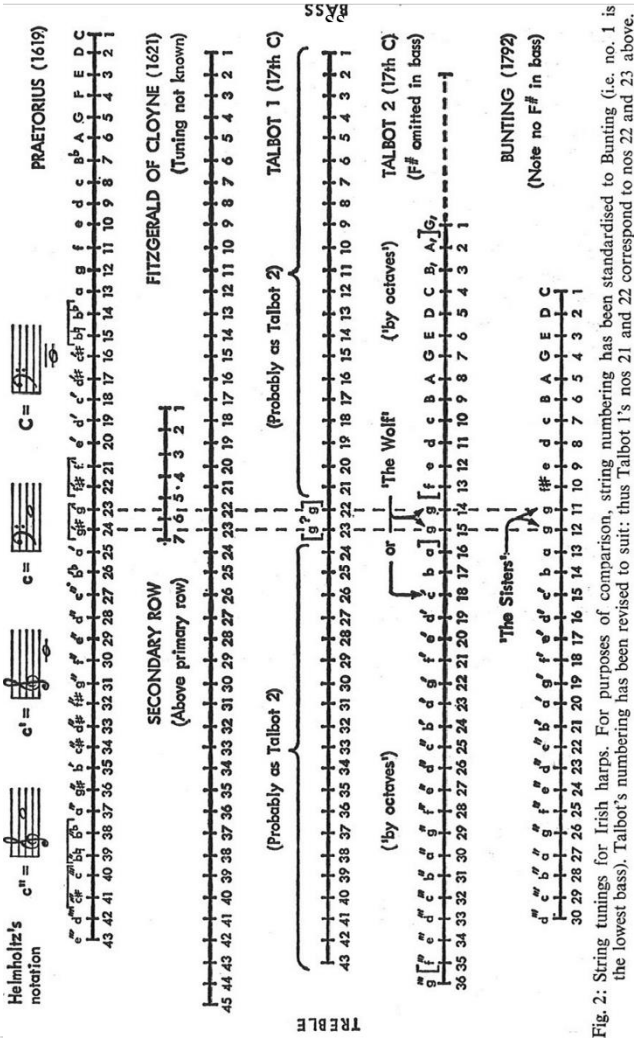


Fig. 2: String tunings for Irish harps. For purposes of comparison, string numbering has been standardised to Bunting (i.e. no. 1 is the lowest bass). Talbot's numbering has been revised to suit: thus Talbot 1's nos 21 and 22 correspond to nos 22 and 23 above.

Figure 1: String tunings for Irish harps. For purposes of comparison, string numbering has been standardised to Bunting (i.e. no. 1 is the lowest bass). Talbot's numbering has been revised to suit: thus Talbot 1's nos. 21 and 22 correspond to nos. 22 and 23 above.

In 1662, Dr John Lynch (*c*. 1599—*c*. 1674) published his refutation of the allegations by Giraldus Cambrensis concerning the manners and customs of the Irish, and he included a description of a harp of his own time. The description accords generally with the details given briefly here and more fully in Miss Rimmer's works but also states (curiously): 'At both sides of the strings [unfortunately he does not give the number] there are large holes in the trunk [soundbox] of the harp, to receive and emit air, and also to allow the pegs, to which the strings are fastened, to be changed'.[62] A further interesting observation that he makes is:

[60] Rimmer (1969), 47-8.

[61] See Armstrong (1904), 37, in which he acknowledges indebtedness to Professor Niecks for his translation, and W. H. Grattan Flood, *The story of the harp* (Dublin 1905) 87, who gives a similar notation to that of Armstrong. Note, however, that while they are otherwise generally in agreement in their interpretations of Praetorius's tuning (*Fig.* 1), discrepancies occur between Armstrong and Grattan Flood respectively for strings (*Fig.* 2) 26, B flat and B natural; and 38, A flat and B flat.

[62] J. Lynch (pseud. Gratianus Lucius), *Cambrensis eversus* ([London?] 1662) 36-7 (original Latin text); translation and notes by M. Kelly (Dublin 1848) 317-21 (Latin and English texts).

> The more expert and accomplished performers (who generally bend over the neck of the harp, but occasionally hold it erect), strike the brass strings with the tips of their fingers, not with their nails, contrary to the custom, as some maintain, which not long since was common in Ireland. That custom is now, if not obsolete, at least adopted by ruder performers only, in their anxiety to elicit thereby louder notes from the strings, and make the whole house ring with their melody.[63]

This may be compared with the notice of the poet writing possibly a century and a half earlier (see p. 51 above), who enthused how he 'played sparkling melodies with the tips of my eager fingers'.

Further contemporary information on the Irish harp comes from the writings of James Talbot, Regius at the Belfast Harp Festival to encourage interest in the then dying art of harp-playing, and Edward Bunting (1773-1843), a local organist, was engaged to record the tunes played.[64] One of the players who attended was Denis Hempson, who was born in Derry in 1695, and he played with long fingernails in the style of the old harpers. Of the harpers who actually attended the festival, those whose authority was chiefly relied on were Denis Hempson (blind), aged 97; Arthur O'Neill (blind) of Tyrone, aged 58; Hugh Higgins (blind) of Mayo, aged 75; Charles Fanning of Cavan, aged 56; and Daniel Black (blind) also of Derry, aged 75. Apparently Hempson alone literally played the harp with long crooked nails: 'In playing, he caught the string between the flesh and the nail; not like the other harpers of his day, who pulled it by the fleshy part of the finger alone'[65]. Bunting says:

> He [Hempson] had an admirable method of playing *Staccato* and *Legato*, in which he could run through rapid divisions in an astonishing style. His fingers lay over the strings in such a manner, that when he struck them with one finger, the other was instantly ready to stop the vibration, so that the Staccato passages were heard in full perfection. When asked the reason of his playing certain parts of the tune or lesson in that style, his reply was, "That is the way I learned it," or "I cannot play it in any other."

Bunting further observed that: 'Although educated by different masters, (through the medium of the Irish language alone,) and in different parts of the country, they [the harpers named above] exhibited a perfect agreement in all their statements, referring to the old traditions of the art as their only authority, and professing themselves quite at a loss to explain their method of playing by any other terms'.[66]

From these players, Bunting recorded the method of tuning the harp by which two strings called 'caomhluighe' [*sic*]—'lying together' or 'the sisters', numbered 11 and 12 in a harp of 30 strings ('the usual number of strings found on all the harps at the Belfast meeting, in 1792')—number 1 being the lowest bass—were tuned in unison to tenor G (corresponding to Talbot's 'wolf') and the other strings tuned accordingly encompassing four octaves.[67] The tuning that Bunting gives is also shown in *Fig.* 2; from this, it will be noticed that there is no F string in the bass; Bunting says:

> The Irish harp had no string for F sharp, between E and G in the bass, probably because it had no concord in their scale for that tone, either major or minor; but this E in the bass, called "Teadlecthae," or *fallen* string, in the natural key termed "Leath Glass," being altered to F natural, a semitone higher when the melody required it, and the sharp F's, through the

[63] *Ibid*.
[64] C. M. Fox, *Annals of the Irish harpers* (London 1911) 10, 97-105.
[65] E. Bunting, *The ancient music of Ireland* (Dublin 1840) 73.
[66] *Ibid*., 20.
[67] *Ibid*., 21, 23.

> instrument being previously lowered a semitone, the key was then called "Teadleaguidhe," the *falling* string, or high bass key.[68]

From the foregoing circumspect, then, we have *some* idea of the form, construction, materials employed, size, and to a certain extent, the musical characteristics and compass of the ancient Irish harps and their development from the fourteenth century to the last of the old-style instruments with their eventual disappearance by the end of the eighteenth century. From the observations of Praetorius, Talbot and Bunting we know something of the way in which they were tuned (or alleged to have been tuned) and therefore we can obtain *some* idea—even if only mere hints—of their musical qualities and the way in which they were played.

From the writings of contemporary observers from Giraldus (1185) to Bunting (1840) we find support for the eulogists throughout recorded history extolling the quality of the Irish harp and praising its more distinguished players. Now regarding the peculiar quality of the sound produced by the Irish harp, we learn from recent experiments with an ancient instrument partially strung that it was '… a large resonant sound … with the suggestion of both bells and guitar'.[69] This echoes the findings of Francis Bacon (1561-1628), who wrote regarding sounds in general and musical instruments in particular:[70] 'An Irish Harpe hath … the Concave or Blly, not along the Strings … but across the strings; And no instrument hath the sound so Melting, and so Prolongued, as the Irish Harpe'. Referring to this latter remark, Miss Rimmer comments:

> … and in this effect of prolongation of very sweet sound, both the unique charm and the eventual decline and disappearance of the instrument surely lie. Put in oversimple terms, with music in the old fixed modes there are hardly any note contradictions possible within a single piece. The system of major and minor keys with identical note relationships and a large number of chromatic possibilities evolved fully during the seventeenth century; with music in this system, tunes may change key and in order to do so must use note modifications (chromatic notes), besides inevitably implying beneath themselves a sub-structure of moving harmony, which modal tunes do not necessarily do. An instrument with long resonance is ideally suited to music in the one system, less so to music in the other, and totally unsuited to music which goes beyond a certain point of chromatic complexity, even if the strings can be tuned to cope with it literally. (In this connection it must be remembered that the great growth of music for keyboard instruments, with their sound-stopping mechanisms, coincided with the high development of the major-minor system.)[71]

The Sisters

Before leaving this broad view of Irish harps in general and before narrowing our attention to harps actually in use in Nicholas Dall's time, we must take a closer look at the two strings which Bunting calls *caomhluighe* (known as the 'sisters' to the harpers themselves; Bunting's 'translation' is 'lying together', apparently suggested by an imagined connection with the word *luighe*), whose purpose has never really been satisfactorily explained. Bunting tells us that they were tuned in unison to tenor G and 'nearly divided the instrument into bass and treble'. Miss Rimmer disagrees with the second part of this remark.[72] Talbot mentions them also, calling them 'the wolf', and states that they were tuned in unison and occurred about the middle of the range, corresponding to 'C (if not g)'.

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[68] *Ibid*., 23.

[69] Rimmer, 'The morphology of the Irish harp' (1964), 41, and 'Harps in the Baroque era', *Proc. Royal Musical Assoc*. (London) 1964, 59.

[70] F. Bacon, *Sylva sylvarum or a naturall historie* (London 1627) 46 (item 146) and 62 (item 223).

[71] Rimmer (1969), 47.

[72] Rimmer, 'James Talbot's manuscript, VI—Harps' (1963), 71.

Examples of the term *cobhlaighe* seem to be rather scarce in Irish literature, but those noticed show that the nominative singular was *cobhlach*, a form which, whatever its etymological explanation, can have no connection with the meaning Bunting gives it. An early example occurs in one of the glosses to Dallán Forgaill's lament for St Columcille (*ob*. 596) found in manuscripts of the twelfth century and later. The gloss in question is concerned with a phrase involving the associated harp-word *céis*:

> 'Tis a harp without a *céis*, 'tis a church without an abbot. "'tis a harp without a *céis*", i.e. without a *coe* for holding the strings, and "a church without its keen father is every place and every stead after Columba. Or *céis* is the name for a small harp which accompanies a large harp in concerted music. Or it is a name for the small pin which fastens the brazen string of the harp. Or it is a name for the bass strings *[dona coblaigib*]. Or a name for the heavy chord. Or the *céis* in the harp is what retains in it the *leithrind* with its strings .[73]

The word *cobhlach* refers to one of three voices (presumably baritone), apparently singing in harmony, in a poem found in the earlier version (eighth or ninth century) of the legend of the sons of Uisneach (the oldest copy being in the twelfth-century Book of Leinster).[74] An interesting late example is from a tale found in a manuscript of 1712. Referring to a harper tuning his instrument, it has him putting 'its tune and *orgain* and *cobhlachs* in unison (according to each other)'.[75]

O'Curry, in dealing with the gloss to the Columcille poem cited above, concluded from one of its suggestions that 'the large harp contained the heavy or bass strings, whilst the small harp contained the thin or treble strings, and that it was together they were played'. Regarding the word *leithrind* ('half harmony') he says that it 'was not originally intended for either the large or the small harp, but for a constituent part of a single harp—namely, that part which held either the bass or the treble strings, divided by the cobhluighe, or "sisters" '.[76]

Thus it may well be that the *cobhlaighe* represent the result of the conjunction of the small harp with the large harp. An anecdote in the Leabhar Breac says of the legendary harper, Cliach, that he always played upon two harps at the same time.[77] The early small harps (*cruits*) were provided with few strings—from three to eight: combining the two sets of strings, treble and bass, in the one frame (forming an instrument of the type represented by the Trinity College Dublin harp, *Pl*. 2), the 'sisters' may then have constituted the highest bass and the lowest treble of the two previously separate instruments.

However, irrespective of explanation for their origin, 'the sisters' may well have had a practical use. Being tuned to the same note, they may have provided mutual tuning reference—particularly in ages when there was no such thing as standard pitch—and might also have served (especially a blind player) as a location among a large number of strings, when the strings themselves were not coloured as they are today for this very purpose. One would not expect to find reference to the *cobhlaighe* in the smaller cruits of from three to eight strings; they appear to be associated more with the larger *cláirseach* of thirty and more strings.

Harps of Nicholas Dall's Time

[73] W. Stokes (ed.), 'The Bodleian Amra Choluimb Chille', *Revue Celtique* 20 (1899) 165-7; see further B. Ó Cuiv, *Éigse* 11 (1966) 294. I wish to thank Pádraig de Brún for some assistance with this section.

[74] V. Hull (ed.), *Longes mac n-Uislenn, the exile of the sons of Uisliu* (New York and London 1949) 49 etc.

[75] N. J. A. Williams (ed.), 'Eachtra Ghluagaigh na Creige agus na Cruite 's an Tiompáin', *Éigse* 14 (1972) 324. Dr Williams dates the text to 'somewhere between c. 1520 and the date of the manuscript 1712' (*ibid*., 319).

[76] O'Curry iii, 248-56.

[77] Idem, *Lectures on the manuscript materials of ancient Irish history* (Dublin 1861) 427.

Narrowing our interest to harps actually in use in Nicholas Dall's time, we find that the only complete instruments or fragments extant are the Ballinderry with 36 strings, the Otway with 34 strings (*Pl*. 3),[78] the O ffogarty with 36 strings,[79] and the FitzGerald of Cloyne (commonly known as 'the Dalway' from its association with the family of this name).[80] The particularly interesting feature of the FitzGerald of Cloyne harp—of which only the harmonic curve and forepillar remain (see *Pl*. l)—is that it was obviously a large low-headed harp and the fragments which have come down to us are elaborately carved with zoomorphic designs and interlaced patterns; they also bear incised inscriptions in Irish and Latin which positively date the construction of the harp to the year 1621. The inscriptions state that it was made for John fitz Edmond FitzGerald of Cloyne (Co. Cork) and also name the owner's household staff besides giving the names of its makers: '… Donnchadh Fitz Teige was his Carpenter,—it was he that made me. Giollapatrick MacCridan was my musician and harmonist; and if I could have found better, him should I have, and Dermot M'Cridan along with him, two highly accomplished men, whom I had to nurse me …'.[81] The harmonic curve is pierced for 45 tuning pins, but it also carries a secondary row of seven tuning pins, located above the primary row, and positioned about the middle of the curve (see *Pl*. l). Most of the tuning pins remain in their holes.

While the existence of this harp has been known for many years, no really convincing hypothesis for the purpose of the additional row of strings has been made.[82] The customary explanation is that they were tuned in unison with the adjacent strings in the primary row thereby 're-inforcing this section of the range'. The number of strings in the primary row, forty-five, is larger than that found in any other surviving instrument of its type and age, and no other Irish harp of any age or reference has been noticed with a secondary row of strings of this type. With reference to *Pl*. 1 and *Fig.* 2, and identifying the tuning pin holes in the primary row commencing with the longest bass string (upper end on *Pl*. 1) designated no. 1, the additional strings in the secondary row are seen to lie adjacent to strings 17 to 24, and therefore located about the middle of the compass.

It is abundantly clear that this harp was not an experimental or modified instrument, for the location for the secondary row of strings must have been taken into account at the time of initial design and is carved in relief and not added as an afterthought. Further, the strings of both primary and secondary rows were intended to lie on the *same* side of the harmonic curve (that is the normal left-hand side viewed from the player) and not on either side as has been stated.[83]

Two different conjectural restorations of the FitzGerald of Cloyne harp have been attempted, both incorporating copies of the original surviving fragments. One, a plaster cast, is in the National Museum of Ireland, Dublin, and was made by Armstrong about the year 1900;[84] the other (probably also associated with Armstrong) employs electrotype copies of the harmonic curve and forepillar and is in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. The latter reconstruction, evidently shown in the Special Exhibition at South Kensington in 1872 and acquired by the Museum in the

[78] In the private possession of Captain R. J. O. Otway-Ruthven, R.N. (Ret.), of Guildford, Surry, England. For description and illustrations see Armstrong, 73-9, and Rimmer (1969), 50, 77.

[79] In the ownership of Captain Ryan of Castle ffogerty, near Thurles, Co. Tipperary. For description and illustration see Armstrong, 79-81, and Rimmer (1969), 51, 77.

[80] Now in the National Museum of Ireland, Dublin, but for many years in the private ownership of the Dalway family of Ballahill, near Carrickfergus, Co. Antrim.

[81] 'The Fitzgerald or "Dalway harp" ', *Cork Hist. and Arch. Soc. Jn*. 50 (1945) 40-41. Mr Pádraig de Brún kindly supplied this reference.

[82] For detailed description, illustrations and conjectural restoration, see Armstrong, 65-70, and Rimmer (1969). 75-6.

[83] Hayward, 14. Although a harp-player himself, Hayward must have overlooked the fact that harp tuning pins/holes are tapered to provide 'bite' and therefore are not reversible. In *Pl*. 1, the heads of all tuning pins are clearly shown, all on the same side.

[84] See illustrations in Armstrong, 56-7, and Hayward, 14.

following year,[85] viewed in the light of recent research, exhibits certain morphological defects or improbable features in the conjectural shape and construction of the wooden soundbox provided to complete the instrument. These defects are: the soundbox does not take into account the progressive deepening towards the upper end—a characteristic development of about this time;[86] it has a flat instead of a subtly-curved surface on its outward face; compared with other instruments of its size, it appears too narrow at the base; and it is provided with improbable string anchorage-buttons on the string-band instead of the usual toggle securing-arrangements on the underside of the belly. An attempt to illustrate a more probable appearance of this instrument is depicted in a retouched photograph, based upon a photograph of the Victoria and Albert Museum restoration for juxtaposition of harmonic curve and forepillar, but with a different soundbox without these defects and appears as *Pl*. 6.

What is of especial interest here, however, is that this particular harp can positively be dated to the year 1621, when Nicholas Dall was about 60 years of age and therefore about or past his inventive prime. Also, that the man for whom the instrument was made can positively be identified as Sir John fitz Edmond FitzGerald of Cloyne who, in 1611, married Ellen, daughter of David fitz James Barry, Viscount Buttevant (Lord Barrymore), the arms of FitzGerald (argent, a saltire gules) impaling Barry (argent, three bars gemelles, gules) being incised in the forepillar of the harp.[87] Now this Viscount Buttevant, or Lord Barrymore, was made General of the Provincials in 1601 when Sir George Carew was president of Munster, and was the self-same man who was ordered by Queen Elizabeth to hang the harpers and destroy their instruments.

A further revealing fact is that Nicholas Dall Pierse (1561-1653) and Sir John fitz Edmond FitzGerald (1593-1640),[88] the person for whom the harp was made (also noted as the compiler of a 'remarkable will', and himself the grandson of his namesake, described as 'one of the most distinguished men of his time and a Kerry landowner'), were related through their common FitzMaurice relatives and would almost certainly have known one another personally.[89]

Summary

What then are we to make of all this? Was Nicholas Dall's ingenuity in adding more strings to the Irish harp a mere patching-up of an instrument which inherently was not adaptable to the new system of scales which was spreading from the Continent during his lifetime? Was it an attempt to prolong the life of an instrument which, because of its essential deep and prolonged resonance—in direct opposition to one requiring sound-stopping mechanisms—was out-moded and doomed to become extinct by the end of the century? To answer these questions we must take stock of what was happening in Irish musical development about this time.

Taking a retrospect, we find that Nicholas Dall by no means enjoys the distinction of being the only recorded improver of the Irish harp. In the Annals of Loch Cé under date 1225 we read that

[85] *Grove's Dictionary of music and musicians* Il (ed. H. C. Colles, London 1927) 540.

[86] Rimmer (1963), 71, and (1967), 42.

[87] J. Lodge, *The peerage of Ireland* I (ed. M. Archdall, Dublin 1789): Barry, earl of Barrymore, 294. Also O'Curry, *Manners and customs* iii, 293.

[88] The birth-year of Sir John fitz Edmond FitzGerald is deduced from the statement in Hickson's *Old Kerry records* second series (London 1874) 243, where, quoting from an inquisition taken at Tralee, 13 April 1613, it is stated that 'John FitzEdmond Gerald is grandson and heir to deceased (Sir John fitz Edmond Fitzgerald, *ob*. 1612) and that he was 18 years of age and 7 months in 1612 and was married at the taking of this Inquisition'.

[89] The family relationship (apart from any possible closer blood-relationship from Nicholas Dall himself) is that Nicholas Dall's wife, Caitlín, was the granddaughter of Elenor Pierse, *née* FitzMaurice, daughter of Lord Kerry (see Irish genealogy in J. H. Pierse, 'The Origin of the Pierse family of Co. Kerry', ***Jn. Kerry Arch. and Hist. Soc.*** 5 (1972) 30), making her father, John *Óg*, a cousin to Patrick fitz Thomas, 17th Lord Kerry, whose grandson and namesake, 19th Lord Kerry, married Honora FitzGeraId, second daughter to Sir Edmond, son of Sir John fitz Edmond FitzGeraId of Cloyne. See Lodge I, Fitz-Gerald, duke of Leinster, 72.

'*Aedh* (or Hugh), the son of *Donnslebhe O'Sochlachann*, Vicar of *Cunga*, a professor of singing and harp-tuning … invented a tuning (or arrangment) for himself that had not been done before him …'.[90] A century later we find mention by Friar John Clyn in his Annals under date 1329 of Cam ('squint-eyed') O'Cayrwill, a famous performer on the tympan and cythar ('famosus ille timpanista et cytharista'), who, 'although he could not be called the first inventor of stringed musical instruments, he was the master and director of his contemporaries, and superior to all his predecessors'. [91] These two references, however, refer to the much smaller harp-like instruments, forerunners to the small low-headed type (*Pl*. 2).

Coming more to Nicholas Dall's time, we read of the harper, Richard Cruise, described by Richard Stanihurst (1547-1618) as 'a contemporary of our own': 'by a certain method of tuning and modulating, he preserves an exquisite concord which has a spell-like effect upon his audience'.[92] About the same time, we learn from Dr John Lynch (*c*. 1599—*c*. 1674), who writes 'in my own days', of the Jesuit Fr Robert Nugent, who made considerable improvements to the harp by inventions of his own. In the main, Fr Nugent's contribution seems to have been the boxing-in of the open spaces between the soundbox and the harmonic curve (and forepillar), leaving a lattice-work covered soundhole on the right-hand side ('as it is in the clavichords'), and duplicating the strings to increase 'the melodious power' of the harp.[93]

The evolution of the Irish harp was obviously closely related to the character and structure of Irish music—a subject well outside the scope of this present article but dealt with in the works of Bunting[94], Hardiman[95], Petrie[96], Grattan Flood[97], and others. We may, however, note from Mr Seán Ó Baoill that 'Irish music is based (a) on the rhythm and accentuation of Irish Poetry and (b) on the scales within the compass of our national instrument—the harp'. He comments: 'The Irish Harp, a simple diatonic instrument, once tuned, was fixed and unalterable in pitch, and therefore only a modal system of scales was possible on it'.[98] Elsewhere:

> The scales or 'modes' of Irish music are six in number. Each extends from its ground tone to its octave, and includes all fully qualified notes but leaves out those due to casual alteration or modulation. Their character is determined simply by the way the tones and semitones are disposed in them. Now, since retuning was the only way by which a player could change a mode on a small instrument, it seems obvious that a change of mode automatically involved a change of pitch… .[99]

He continues by demonstrating that these six Irish modes could be regarded as two sets of three, involving a minimum change of pitch, and that evidence is available from the structure of many Irish traditional songs to show that Irish musicians made use of an eight-note scale.[100]

As we have seen, the compass of the harps in use during the seventeenth century was about four or five octaves: what then were the harp improvers trying to achieve? The early improvers, Aedd mac Donnslebhe O'Sochlachann and Cam O'Cayrwill, were obviously extending the compass of the early tympan and cythar of their time by adding more strings and increasing the volume of sound produced. By the fourteenth century, the harp had evolved into the handsome, subtly-

[90] O'Curry, *Manners and customs* iii, 264.
[91] R. Butler (ed.), *The annals of Ireland* by Friar John Clyn (Dublin 1849) 20.
[92] R. Stanihurst, *De rebus in Hibernia gestis* (Antwerp 1584) 39.
[93] Lynch*, op. cit*., 37.
[94] Bunting, *op. cit*., 13-29.
[95] J. Hardiman, *Irish minstrelsy or the bardic remains of Ireland* (London 1831) *passim*.
[96] G. Petrie, *The Petrie collection of the ancient music of Ireland* (Dublin 1855) *passim*.
[97] W. H. Grattan Flood, *A history of Irish music* (Dublin 1905) *passim*.
[98] S. Ó Baoill, 'Words and music', *Forum* (Belfast) 1962, 33-4.
[99] Idem, 'Irish traditional music', *Causeway—the arts in Ulster* (Belfast) 1971, 171.
[100] *Ibid*.

shaped and highly decorated *cláirseach* with about thirty strings, as represented by the Trinity College Dublin harp (*Pl*. 2). Between that time and the mid-sixteenth century the instrument had changed little except that, while retaining approximately the same compass, it had become larger, as is evident from the Ballinderry fragments and Galilei's description.

The next period, say the century between 1550 and 1650 (which curiously enough roughly corresponds with Nicholas Dall's lifespan), is crucial, for in that period we begin to notice the effect of the spread of the minor-major scale-system from the Continent. Leaping, for a moment, into the future, we notice no significant changes in the harp during the period between the mid-seventeenth and mid-eighteenth centuries, except an increase in the length of the bass strings (resulting in the large high-headed harp, *Pl*. 5) and a small increase—about half an octave—in the total number of strings.

What then happened during the century between 1550 and 1650? It is during this period that Nicholas Dall added his extra strings, the FitzGerald of Cloyne harp was built, and Richard Cruise's andFr Nugent's improvements were noticed. We read also that 'it is reasonable to suppose that the experimental and exploratory feeling about instruments which was abroad in Western Europe in the second half of the sixteenth century existed in Ireland too'.[101] Is it likely that by adding extra strings an attempt was made to make the Irish harp chromatic? Let us see.

To a certain extent, the design parameters of a harp are established by combined physical and musical considerations, i.e. the number of strings is limited by the length of a man's reach associated with the amplitude of vibration of the progressively lengthening strings (tempered by 'pluckability') in conjunction with the tuning scale, which, for modally-tuned Irish harps, would be diatonically with eight notes to the octave. For all practical purposes, the length of the shortest string (i.e. the highest treble) would be about two-and-a-half inches, corresponding to note a´´´ (in Helmholtz's notation) and, recalling that the ranges of the harp and the human voice were closely related, the compass of a large low-headed harp of Nicholas Dall's time would be roughly five octaves, that is about 36 strings from a´´´ to A, (see *Fig.* 2).

Any increase in the number of strings of a diatonically-tuned harp would therefore be an addition in the *bass* range, and this development is as we have already seen exemplified in the transitional Kildare harp (*Pl*. 4) and culminated in the Art O'Neill instrument (*Pl*. 5), a true large high-headed harp with 36 strings, the longest of these being forty-one inches. A chromatically-tuned harp with the same compass as a harp of Nicholas Dall's time, say the Otway (*Pl*. 3) with 34 strings, would require about 67 strings, and no evidence of a single-row instrument of this size and character has been noticed. Praetorius's harp with 43 strings, Talbot's two with 40 to 43 ('36 at least'), and the FitzGerald of Cloyne with 45 in the primary row come nearest: Praetorius's tuning (*Figs*. 1 and 2) is shown to be partly chromatic, but is inconsistent. (In passing, it may be noted that the hook-like gadgets by means of which the length of harp-strings could be shortened to produce the sharpened tone were not introduced in Europe until the end of the seventeenth century.)

Mr Seán Ó Baoill shows that, by doubling certain strings and the provision of a tuning hammer to raise or lower one of each of the pairs of strings a semitone, change from one mode to another could be effected without re-tuning the entire harp.[102] He also suggests that this may well have been a use for the *cobhlaighe* or 'the sisters', where by sharpening or flattening one of the Gs, the player could escape from the imprisonment of the modes. He also points out that just such a doubling of strings is shown in Praetorius's tuning (see figs 1 and 2): cf. b flat and b natural (strings 14 and 15), f´ and f´ sharp (21 and 22), g´ and g´ sharp (23 and 24), b´´ flat and b´´natural

[101] Rimmer (1964), 41-2.
[102] Ó Baoill (1962), 35.

(38 and 39) and c′′′ natural and c′′′ sharp (40 and 41). However absurd Praetorius's tuning is otherwise, it does at least provide contemporary evidence of such note-modification in Nicholas Dall's time.

We also read that 'It is clear that their sweet, long resonances did not belong with the European musical world of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries into which the Irish harpers were rudely pitched'.[103] But then we have the Belfast Festival harpers in the closing years of the eighteenth century and the vain attempts to save the instrument (and its players) from extinction. It is difficult to reconcile all this with the admiration for the Irish harp with the same bewitching qualities that have captivated audiences from Giraldus down through the ages, not only in Ireland, but also in England and on the Continent as well.

Perhaps the truth of the matter is best expressed by Mr Seán Ó Baoill, who writes:[104]

> Just at the time when music in Europe was feeling its way out of the modes Irish music was outlawed because of the part taken by harpers, pipers and poets in the last upsurge of Gaelic Ireland against the English. The defeat of the Irish at the Battle of Kinsale in 1601 was a catastrophe for a national aristocratic order of society which, until that time, had encouraged music by an intricate system of patronage… .
>
> The musicians, however, continued to make their music in the only way known to them, that is, in the modes which sounded 'quaint', 'barbaric' and 'very ancient' to the cultivated ears of the eighteenth century English lords. For Europe, meanwhile, had moved far away from the modes. Polyphony … gave way in the seventeenth century to new forms of expression.

Fitzgerald of Cloyne Harp Strings

For what purpose can we adduce the seven additional strings in the secondary row of the FitzGerald of Cloyne harp? As we have seen, the 'traditional' explanation is that they were tuned in unison to the strings in the primary row to which they lay adjacent, 'thereby re-inforcing this section of the range'. While this is of course possible, it is hardly likely for the following reason. Talbot and Bunting have shown us that the Irish harp was tuned from the two strings in unison called 'the wolf' or 'the sisters', and there seems no reason to suppose that the FitzGerald of Cloyne harp was tuned differently. If the FitzGerald of Cloyne harp *stringing* is correlated with the few *tuning* plans known (see *Fig.* 2), it will be seen that 'the sisters' would most probably have been strings 22 and 23. We have seen that the secondary-row strings lay adjacent to strings 17 to 24: this would result in four strings all being tuned to the same note—and probably G.

In attempting to establish a purpose for these seven strings in the secondary row, it must be realised that they actually lay on the player's left-hand side and were therefore played by the left or treble-string hand—in fact it would have been impossible to play them with the right (or bass-string) hand (see *Pl*. 6). The possibilities are therefore reduced, and it is more likely that the purpose of these strings was to facilitate playing techniques, e.g. that of re-iteration (of the same note), counterpoint, freedom of the right hand to execute uninterrupted runs and glides leaving the left hand free for the secondary-row strings, and so on. It is also quite possible that these additional strings extended the facility for 'tinkling sounds on the thinner strings above the sustained sound of the thicker strings so freely' (essential characteristics of Irish harp-playing), reported with such delight by Giraldus and which depended upon a full-bodied resonance

[103] Rimmer (1964), 46.
[104] Ó Baoill (1971). 120-21.

obtained from brass strings in association with a massive soundbox for its subtlety of 'discordant concord'.

Thus it may well be that in the FitzGerald of Cloyne harp we see evidence of Nicholas Dall's 'compleating said Instrument with more wires than ever before his time were used'. There can be no doubt that Nicholas Dall was an exceedingly accomplished harper and we may be sure that he played in the strict disciplined manner of the old traditional school—the eulogium in the poems would seem to bear this out. It is likely then that any improvement of his instrument would be along traditional lines. The harps in use in his day had reached the optimum number of strings: in the modal system how could he 'compleat' other than by adding a secondary row? How the additional strings in the FitzGerald of Cloyne harp were actually tuned, of course we are never likely to know, but it would appear that either Mr Seán Ó Baoill's theory of duplicating strings, thereby enabling semitones to be introduced facilitating change from one mode to another without re-tuning the instrument, or the playing technique facilities outlined above, are more likely theories than that they were used merely to reinforce that section of the range.

For assistance, encouragement and advice received while researching this account of the life of Nicholas Dall Pierse, the author would like to record his grateful thanks to the late Mr John F. McMahon, the late Dr Richard Hayward, Mrs F. Ll. Harrison (Joan Rimmer) and Mr Seán Ó Baoill. He would also like to thank Mr Liam de Brún for bringing to his notice the publication of *Cá sloth don cheól do-chuala* (see n. 11), Mr Wilfred Smith, harp-maker, of London, for practical harp stringing, tuning and playing information, Captain R. J. O. Otway-Ruthven, R.N. (Ret.), of Guildford, Surrey, for permission to photograph the Otway harp in his possession and to reproduce the print included here (*Pl*. 3), and Mr A. Palmer, of Crawley, Sussex, England, for his skilful photographic retouching to produce the conjectural reconstruction of the FitzGerald of Cloyne harp, which appears as *Pl*. 6.

He would also like to acknowledge permission kindly granted by the following authors and publishers to quote from their copyright material (full publication details given in related footnotes shown in parentheses). Miss Joan Rimmer and the Galpin Society for 'James Talbot's manuscript VI—Harps' (n. 64) and 'The morphology of the Irish harp' (n. 70); and same author and the Committee for Cultural Relations, Department of Foreign Affairs, for *The Irish harp* (nn. 44 and 53). Fr Cuthbert McGrath and the National University of Ireland for 'Two skilful musicians' (n. 11). Mr Seán Ó Baoill and Queen's University, Belfast, for 'Words and music' (n. 99); and same author and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland for 'Irish traditional music' (n. 100).

Appendix

The following persons, all named Nicholas Pierse, were living in north Kerry at about the same period, say between 1550 and 1650, and were probably well known to one another. Brief biographical notes on each are given for individual identification purposes.

1. Nicholas Dall of Rattoo (1561-1653), harper, subject of the present paper. The name of his father is not known, but note that he is known only as 'Nioclás Dall', 'Nicholas Dall Pierse', or just 'Nicholas Pierse', i.e. he is never identified by a patronymic. Evidently he inherited the family lands of Lisnagoneeny etc. in Rattoo parish. Note also that in the Chancery Inquisition of his father-in-law, John *Óg* Pierse, Ballymacaquim, dated 1618 (see n. 29), reference is made to a 'Nicho Mc Shane Pers' who was clearly distinguished from 'Nicholao Pierst alias Daell' (see 6 below).
2. Nicholas *Óg*, of Lisnagoneeny, etc. (*c*. 1626—*c*. 1680), son of John Pierse and grandson to Nicholas Dall (1). He is always referred to as 'Nicholas *Óg*' or 'Nicholas Pierse' and never as 'Nicholas mac Shane', 'Nicholas fitz John', etc. His father died in 1631 and he is not to be confused with (4).
3. Nicholas mac Shane Pierse of Drommartin (*c*. 1540-80) held lands of Drommartin and Knockmagh, also in Rattoo parish, and was neighbour to Nicholas Dall (1). Also known as 'Nicholas Mac Shane de Clanmaurice', he was in rebellion against Queen Elizabeth and was killed.[105] By fiant dated 16

[105] Inquisition Exchequer, Eliz: Kerry, no. 2; printed in *Kerry Arch. Mag*. 1 (1910) 213-26, 263-79.

December 1594 he was attainted[106] and his lands confiscated and granted among others to Edmond Barret.[107] It may well be that this Nicholas had a son named John, for in a Chancery Inquisition of 1641, it is stated that 'John Fitz Nicholas of Dromartine' died on 14 February 1639 and that Edmond is his son and heir.[108]

4. Nicholas Pierse, 'son of John Pierce of Tralee, co. Kerry, Gent.', referred to in his father's will, dated 27 May 1661.[109] Clearly this Nicholas Pierse cannot be identified with (2), since Nicholas *Óg*'s father died in 1631.

5. Nicholas Pierse or Piers of 'Toreagh' (? Toanreagh, Ballyheige par., Clanmaurice bar.), who on 12 February 1635 leased from Arthur and Anthony Stoughton of Dublin '… all the village and fields of Killycullykilly (? Kilcooly, Kilmoyly par.) 3 acres and Powriske (? Ploresk, Kilmoyly par.) 7 acres'.[110] Anthony Stoughton, clerk of Dublin castle, was granted Rattoo abbey in 1586 out of the confiscations following the Desmond rebellion. While this Nicholas Pierse may be identified with (4), he should not be confused with Nicholas *Óg* (2), who would have been only nine years old at this time.

6. Nicholas Mac Shane Pierse, referred to in notes to Nicholas Dall (1). The text given is broken: '… John Oge Pers in tempore vite sue in mortgag' posuit trigint' acr' terr' de Kilconlye cuidam John FitzJames de Ballykealy p sept libris qui jurat' dicunt assignat' eadem premiss' D^{r}mundo Bourk a quo […] fuerunt per Nicho M^{c} Shane Pers vigore et authoritate a feoffatoribus predict' Johnis Fitz James …'. This Nicholas Mac Shane may have been a son to John *Óg* and a brother to James Mc Shane, son and heir of John *Óg* who died on 20 March 1614.

[106] Fiant Eliz. 31, nos 5912, 1549 (to be found in *Sixteenth rep. of Deputy Keeper of Public Records in Ireland*, Dublin 1884).

[107] Patent and Close Rolls, Eliz. 1597, membrane 2/49.

[108] Public Record Office, Ireland, Inquisitions (Chancery series), Co. Kerry, no. 94 of 1641.

[109] Public Record Office, Ireland, Betham's genealogical abstracts—Phillips MSS P. 1583-1699 and Index of Preg. Grants.

[110] J. King, *History of Kerry* (Liverpool 1910) 338.

Abbeydorney—Mainistir Ó dTórna—town in Odorney parish, Clanmaurice barony, Co. Kerry, and diocese of Ardfert, takes its name from the small Cistercian monastery located in the townland of Knockaunmore, half-a-mile due north of the town's centre cross-roads and standing at the end of a quarter-mile long gravel causeway running in a north-easterly direction off the Abbeydorney-Ballyduff road (O.S. 6-inch sheet 21 for Co. Kerry, 17.4 cm. from the northern margin and 43.3 cm. from the eastern margin; Nat, Grid Ref, Q852.235—see *Fig.* 1).

The surrounding countryside is flat and low-lying—elevated scarcely fifty feet above sea level—although two miles or so to the south-east lie the foothills of the Stack's Mountains, gently rising to a height of a thousand feet or so. The almost shapeless densely ivy overgrown ruins of the abbey can easily be seen from the approach road but, on closer inspection, the remains are a disappointment in the lack of visible building layout and architectural detail.[1]

Abbeydorney, or Odorney, is the only Cistercian monastery in Kerry and is of early foundation (19 April or 29 June, 1154), being the second daughter-house to Nenagh (Manister, Monasternenagh or Maigue) in Co. Limerick (founded 1148), itself the third filiation of Mellifont in Co, Louth, the first Cistercian house in Ireland, founded in 1142.[2] The nearest neighbouring houses of the order to Abbeydorney are all in Co. Limerick, namely Feale (Abbeyfeale), adopted in 1209 as the fifth filiation of Nenagh, and about seventeen miles distant due east on the Kerry/Limerick border, Nenagh, itself, about thirty miles further on in the same general direction, and Woney (Owney, Wotheny or Abington), founded in 1206 as a colony of Furness in Lancashire, England, and standing about twelve miles north-east of Nenagh.[3]

In order better to follow the account of Abbeydorney monastery which forms the subject of this paper, it may perhaps be appropriate to preface with a preliminary note on the Cistercian order itself and the principle features of their houses.

The Cistercian order was founded in 1098 at Citeaux, Burgundy, in France as a reform of the Benedictine family. St Bernard (1090-1153), an early member of the community there, was sent in 1115 to found Clairvaux, the third daughter-house to Citeaux, where he became the first abbot and remained in this office until his death. In 1140, (St) Malachy O'Morgair, Bishop of Down, while on a visit to Rome with a small party of pilgrims, turned aside to visit Clairvaux on both the outward and the homeward journeys. On the return visit, he begged St. Bernard to allow four of his travelling companions—including Christian O'Connarchy, future Bishop of Lismore and Papal Legate—to

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* First published in North Munster Antiquarian Journal, XV111 (1976), 14-30.

[1] The nondescript appearance of the ruins Of Abbeydorney were commented on during the latter half of the eighteenth century by Mervyn Archdall who wrote: 'This abbey is now a shapeless ruin; nothing but old low walls are to be seen, which resemble those or an ancient church without a steeple'. M. Archdall, *Monasticon Hibernicum*, London 1786, p. 305. In 1856, J, O'Donovan observed that: 'The ruins of the church Of this abbey are still in a tolerable preservation, but the other buildings are nearly all destroyed', *Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters*, J, O'Donovan (ed.), Dublin 1856, Vol. VI, p. 1699, note d.

[2] Leopold Janauschek, *Originum Cisterciensius*, Vienna 1877, Tom. I p. 137. Abbeydorney is listed as No. 349 in world order of foundation.

[3] H. G. Leask, 'Irish Cistercian Monasteries: A Pedigree and Distribution Map', *J. Roy. Soc. Antiq. Ireland*, 78 (1948), 63-64.

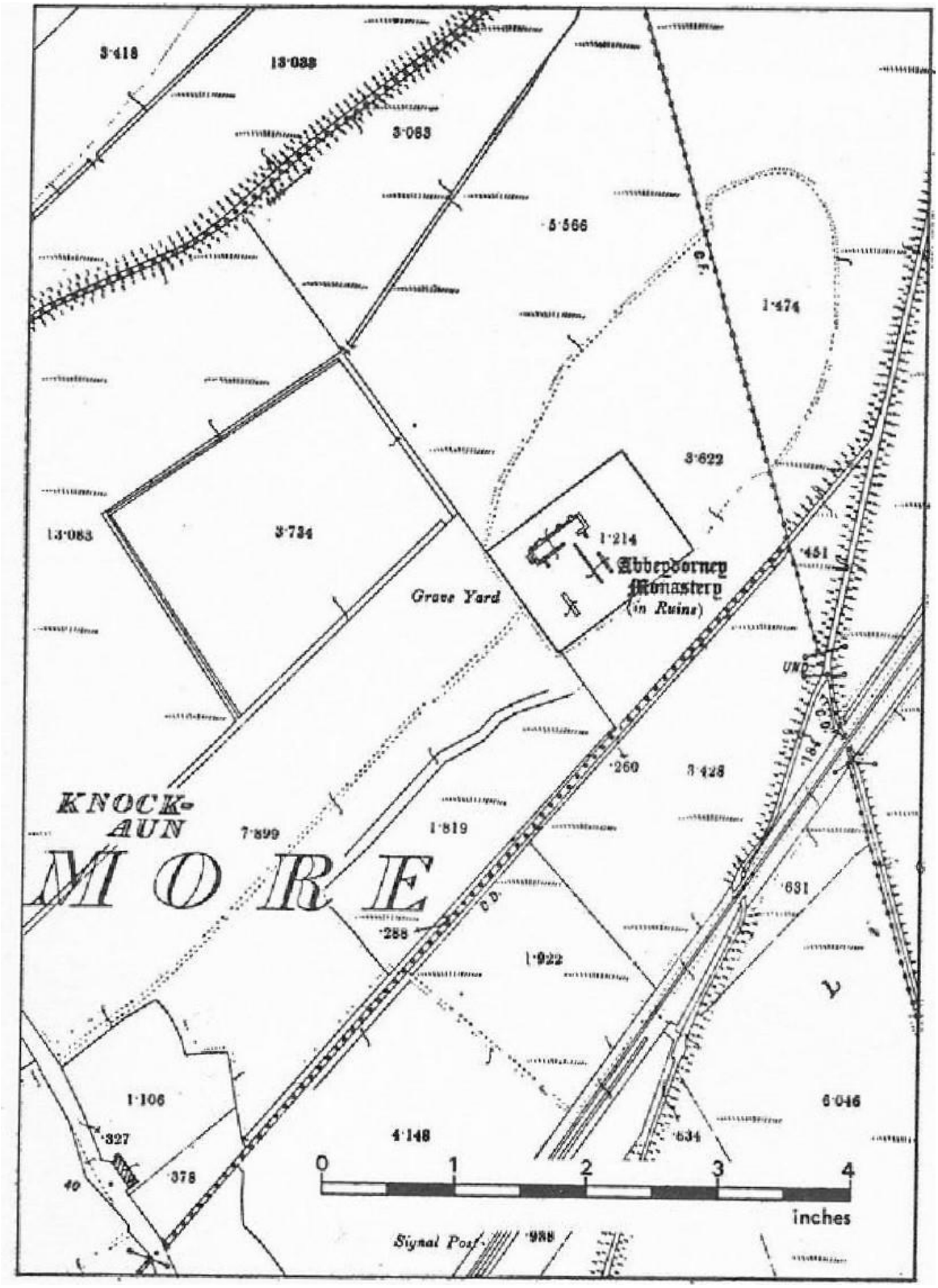

Figure 2. Map showing the site of Abbeydorney Monastery, Co. Kerry (reproduced from the Ordnance Survey map of 1898).

remain at Clairvaux with a view to their gaining experience in order to found a future Cistercian house in Ireland.[4]

As already mentioned, two years later Mellifont—Honey Fountain—was founded and Christian O'Connarchy became its first abbot. It is to the honour of Kerry that, in 1180, towards the end of a full and holy life, Christian O'Connarchy came to Abbeydorney to spend his remaining years as a simple monk.

In view of its distinction, then, it is surprising to find that no account of the site, buildings or occupants of Abbeydorney seems to have been published, From its immediately apparent diminutive size, it is clear that Abbeydorney must have differed in a number of respects from Other Cistercian monasteries built about this time, but, nevertheless, being of an early foundation—almost within the lifespan of St. Bernard himself—it is expected that it will be found to conform with many of the stringent requirements of the order.

In so far as choice of site is concerned, Abbeydorney in its low-lying, damp and bleak location fits in well with the Cistercian tradition, It also conforms with the almost invariable custom of the order in being located on the *left* bank of running water (the observer looking in the direction of the stream flow), fresh water being required for drinking and cooking but necessary also for washing, driving the millwheel, and finally washing away the sewage in its flow.[5]

It is well known that the Cistercians were strict in their requirements as to conformity with their 'standard' layout for their monasteries and ground plans, therefore, are relatively easy to recover, The usual arrangement at this time (mid-twelfth century) was the hollow square plan with the abbey church, generally but not always cruciform in plan, plain and undecorated, in an approximately east-west orientation and with no central or other tower. Built onto the south wall of the church and accessible from a single doorway at the eastern end of the wall, was the cloister surrounding a central square open space or garth, with ranges of buildings on the other three sides. The eastern range accommodated the chapter-house (usually adjacent—or separated only by the sacristy—to the church) and perhaps a parlour and with the monks' *dorter* or dormitory above; the *frater* or refectory and kitchen range lay to the south; and the range accommodating the conversi or lay brothers (where applicable) lay to the west. Other conventual buildings were arranged to suit local requirements and as site conditions permitted.

From the beginning, the Cistercian rule was administered from mother-house to filiations by annual visits from the abbots, while every year about September, abbots were expected to convene to Citeaux where the general chapter was held. General chapters were held every year from 1116 and the deliberations made were recorded: recently, these authoritative and informative records have been published.[6]

With this as a general background and introduction, it will be of interest that, in the 1920s, Dom Maurus O'Phelan, at that time Abbot of Mount Melleray in Cappoquin, Co. Waterford (a modern Cistercian abbey founded in 1832) requested the late Very Rev. Patrick Canon Power, Professor of Archaeology at University College, Cork, to write an account of Abbeydorney. The present writer, staying at Mount Melleray in August, 1948, was shown Canon Power's manuscript by the

[4] A, Hamilton Thompson, A. W. Clapham and H. G. Leask, 'The Cistercian Order in Ireland', *J. Roy. Archeol. Inst. Gt. Britain and Ireland*, 88 (1931), 1-36. Note that Irish Cistercian houses were known by a multiplicity of names (viz. Cistercian (in Latin), locality (in Irish and English), name Of river on which founded, etc.); thus in this paper, in order to avoid confusion, I have generally adopted throughout the first preference of name chosen by the authors of this paper.

[5] Aibhe S. Ó Loididh, *Mellifont Abbey*, Wexford 1938, p. 21 footnote.

[6] D, Josephus-Mia Canivez (ed.), *Statuta Capitulorum Generalittm Ordinis Cisterciencis ab Anno 1116 ad Annum 1787* (Louvain), Tom. I (1116-1220) 1933, Tom. II (1221-1261) 1934, Tom. III (1262-1400) 1935, Tom. IV (1401-1456) 1936, Tom. V (1457-1490) 1937, Tom. VI (1491-1542) 1938, Tom. VII (1546-1786), Tom. (Indices) 1941.

late Father Ailbhe S. Ó Loididh and was permitted to make a copy of it: the manuscript had certainly not been published up to then, and is believed to be put in print now for the first time.[7]

The manuscript is presented below in almost exactly the form in which Canon Power wrote it—including slight irregularities which are dealt with later or as footnotes—the only alteration worth mentioning being in regularizing the name to Abbeydorney in place of 'Abbey dorney' as originally written.

Abbeydorney

Names and Situation

This abbey derived its name from the unimportant tribe of O'Torna, or the O'Dorneys, in whose territory it lay and through whose munificence doubtless it was originally founded. Other names by which we find the house called are—Odorney and Mainister O'Torna. The Cistercian name is Kyrie Eleison, *appropos* of which we find a General Chapter (1209) decreeing that any abbeys called by that name, or *de Spiritu Sancto*, should change it for some other. Notwithstanding the order, however— possibly because it was revoked or dispensed from—Abbeydorney continued to be known almost exclusively as Kyrie Eleison.

Situation of the abbey is unusual for a Cistercian house—at the extreme end of a gravel ridge which juts out into black bog, in the barony of Clanmaurice, Co. Kerry. Our abbey is practically surrounded by the turf bog on three sides and in ancient times the bog level was much higher than today. In the intervening centuries the peat has been cut away and a considerable tract of former bog is now under pasture and tillage. As there are no trees the situation is very exposed. Immediately to south of the abbey enclosure flows a small and sluggish stream which has had its channel altered in recent times; further north this stream becomes the Brick river, a tributary of the Feale. At Abbeydorney the volume of water is hardly sufficient to drive a mill and, owing to lack of fall, the stream would be difficult to dam.

Remains

The abbey remains are disappointing in their extent as well as in their condition of preservation. Much injury has been done them through a local fashion in grave monuments. Unsightly vaults in vilest style occupy and disfigure much of the internal area and in construction of these ugly things, quantities of ancient building stones have been used. Moreover, walls have been pulled down here and there to furnish materials for the vault builder.

Only the monastic church, with some foundations of the cloister buildings survive and destruction even of these is in active progress. The walls of the church are of great thickness—three feet, or thereabout—and the building material is local limestone with some slight admixture of sandstone. Previous use in another and more ancient building is strongly suggested by some squared red-sandstone blocks inserted in the exterior of the west gable.

[7] Since this article was written, a reference has come to light which suggests that Canon Power's description of Abbeydorney, may, in fact, be a portion of a much larger MS. account of the Cistercian houses in Ireland. The reference is an article entitled 'Seven documents from the Old abbey of Mellifont', by the Rev. Fr. Columcille, O.Cist., *J. Louth Archaeol. Soc*., 13 (1953). 35-67, in which on page 40, the author refers to the 'V. Rev. Canon Power, in his *MS. History of the Irish Cistercians*, deposited in Mount Melleray Abbey' and to 'Fr. Ailbe J. Luddy in his brochure on Mellifont'. The late Fr. Ailbhe did not mention to the present writer at the time (1948) that the account of Abbeydorney was in fact a section of a larger work, but, as this now appears possible, this would account for the otherwise cryptic remark referring to Christian O' Connarchy being 'already alluded to' but in fact missing from the Abbeydorney account.

Plan and scale of the church are unusual for a Cistercian house; the building is only about eighty-one feet in internal length by about twenty-four feet wide and it has neither aisles nor transepts.[8] There is no chancel-arch nor any indication there was ever such a thing; it is possible that there was an arch of wood but if there was it has left no trace. Nor, apparently, was there ever a central, or other, tower.

Everything suggests that the abbey was of very small size—almost certainly the smallest of all the houses which survived to the sixteenth century.[9]

Abbeydorney is altogether an extraordinary church for a Cistercian abbey. It strongly suggests a secular or an old Irish church taken over and transformed by the original Cistercian community. The north side wall, which stands about twenty-two feet high, is practically entire but densely covered with ivy. Beyond trace of a built-up ope near its west end it has no window or other architectural feature from which dates, etc. might be inferred. Four or five yards from the east ends the usual place for the founder's tomb, is an elaborate ogee-headed grave monument in limestone. This can hardly be the monument to the founder; more likely it is a Fitzmaurice tomb to replace the original founder's in the fourteenth century. On the outside the north sidewall is strengthened by six ornamental buttresses, each six feet wide, which run up the whole way to the roof. As these do not bond in the wall they are evidently later additions to counteract a dangerous settlement or outward thrust, At the choir end are two plain gargoyles which project about two and a half feet. The east gable is also nearly perfect and stands some thirty feet in height approximately. It contains a fairly perfect window in decorated Gothic. Total height of this window is about fifteen feet and its width about three feet eight inches. In its lower part the window is three light—each of the lights being about eight inches in width, The south wall is very ruinous. Near the altar it has traces of three built-up windows—one of them wide and the others narrow. Slightly to west of these are what appear to be bases of the reveals to a sedile arcade. The sedile was very small—about four feet wide—and provided room only for the celebrant, the inferior ministers occupying stools or chairs. Incorporating, or incorporated in, the west gable is a square lower—evidently not part of the original plan. Both position and character of the tower are peculiar; the structure projects on the inside about a foot and a half. Through the basement of the tower was the rather dark and narrow main entrance to the church. Over the door was a chamber about ten feet square lighted by a single fourteenth-century window.

It is just possible to determine that the cloisters were small—about fourteen yards square—in scale with the church. No portion of the arcading stands but carved stones from it are shamefully scattered in scores through the cemetery where they are incorporated in the unlovely vaults.

The east wall of the square stands fifteen or sixteen feet high but, owing to the way in which raised vaults are built up against it, it is impossible to trace door openings, etc. The apartments (chapter-room, etc.) on this side were about fifteen feet in width; the chapter-room, by the way, did not project to the east, but stands in line with its neighbour compartments to north and south. The only further remains of the domestic buildings are a somewhat shapeless mass of masonry near the south-west angle of the square; this last indicates that the total width of the south range must have been about seven yards. Beyond the carved stones alluded to, the surrounding and much-used cemetery does not contain any monument of special note. Richard Hitchcock in *Kilkenny Archaeological Journal*, Vol. II, p. 131, quotes the following inscription from a tombstone here:[10]

[8] The actual internal dimensions of the abbey church are 94 feet long by 22 feet 10 inches wide at the western end and 23 feet 10 wide at the eastern end. The walls are in fact nearer 4 feet thick (see *Fig.* 2).

[9] Abbeydorney is certainly the smallest of the known Cistercian houses; see note 16.

[10] See note 60.

'Ambrosius Piers, Vic. Gen. Dioces. Ardfert.
Hunc tumulum sibi fiere fecit, Anno 1587.'

An aged Irish-speaking native of the place pointed out the alleged site—three hundred yards or so to the south-east of the abbey—of an earlier graveyard and, presumably, church. This is known as Oileán na n-gé or the townland of Móinteáin na n-gé. The spot is low-lying and wet and altogether an unlikely site for either a church or graveyard.

A search for it failed to reveal the mill site or tradition thereof. It may have been at a spot a quarter of a mile to the south-east of the ruin, where a small mill survived till recently.

Leading from the abbey precincts in a southerly direction is a curious double bank of artificial character about six feet in height by ten feet wide. Rather the feature may be described as two parallel banks, each of the dimensions just quoted, with the stream already alluded to flowing languidly between; evidently the banks have been formed in course of long ages of the shovelled-up sandy silt from the stream bed.

History

The early history of Abbeydorney is very obscure. The foundation was certainly a daughter of Nenay, but by whose bounty it was established there is little to show, Authorities commonly attribute it to the Fitzmaurices, Lords of Kerry, but the attribution must be incorrect, for at the date of the foundation no Fitzmaurice owned a foot of territory in Kerry. More probably Odorney's very name correctly assigns its foundation, *scil*: — to the O Torna, otherwise the O'Dorneys, chieftains of that territory. Very likely, however, the abbey was restored and partly rebuilt, and had new endowments made to it by a Fitzmaurice in the fourteenth century and hence the unsustainable attribution of the first foundation to the latter.

Our records to illustrate the subsequent story of Abbeydorney are little more satisfactory and enlightening than the authorities which bear on its foundation. Little more than a century from the establishment of house, its abbot, being accused of some defection, was deposed by the General Chapter (1274), He was, however, able to prove his innocence the following year whereupon the Chapter ordered his restoration to office committing to the abbots of Mellifont and Dublin the duty of seeing that the restoration was duly effected and the false accusers punished. When the present abbey of Nenay (or Maigue) fell into disgrace for a short time towards the close of the twelfth century, Kyrie Eleison was removed from its jurisdiction or affiliation and committed to Mellifont. The Holy See gave implicit testimony to the spirit and discipline of Abbeydorney when in 1288 its abbot, Nicholas, was promoted to the see of Ardfert.

The connection of St Christian O'Conarchy with Odorney has already been alluded to.[11] Christian, head of the band of monks sent by St Bernard from Clairvaux, became first abbot of Mellifont, whence he was transferred by his former fellow-novice, Pope Eugenius III, to the bishopric of Lismore. Pope Eugenius also created him papal legate, Bishop, or Legate Apostolic, Christian remained a Cistercian at heart and, as soon as a fitting time for doing so offered, he resigned his see and returned again to the cloister. For some reason unknown to us, he chose Abbeydorney, possibly for its remoteness and poverty, as the place of his retirement. Here he died and was buried in 1186 but nothing now survives—not even tradition—to mark his grave.

[11] See note 7.

Christian, though he is not mentioned in the Irish calendars, is regarded as a Saint by Colgan who notices him under March 18th, and who promised to give us his Life. Colgan, however, did not publish the Life; probably he failed to find a copy and, now, no Life is known to exist.

We lack record of the Suppression as affecting our abbey. It is likely enough that, situated as it was in the recesses of Kerry, Abbeydorney escaped dissolution for a time through the connivance or assistance of the Desmonds. Its abbot does not appear ever to have been a spiritual peer or to have been summoned to Parliament notwithstanding the statement to the contrary of the unusually accurate Lewis (*Topographical Dictionary*). As, to some extent, sustaining the theory of non-suppression there is a curious story in the Four Masters, under date 1577, to the effect that, in course of a faction fight, which the Annals euphemistically call 'a war'—between some Desmonds and Mac-Maurices, the young abbot of Odorney, who joined the Desmond side, was shot in the doorway of Lixnaw Castle. Five years from the young abbot's death—in course of another similar 'war'—a gentleman of the Clan-Sheehy was killed in the doorway of the abbey 'by the sons of the Bishop of Kerry' (A.F.M.).

vide: *Kilkenny Archaeological Journal*, Vol. III, pp. 131, etc.

Smith, 'History of Kerry'.

While Canon Power's notice above can only be regarded as a sketch (the definitive account of Abbeydorney, its buildings, history, list of abbot's names, etc., has yet to be written), nevertheless it does provide us with a very good account of what he saw in the 1920s and what, to a certain extent, may still be seen today, This account, however, must not be left without a number of references which amplify or correct Canon Power's observations.

In the first place, regarding the building fabric itself, nothing much requires to be added except that further deterioration has evidently occurred since Canon Power wrote his description. The accompanying sketch-plan (*Fig.* 2) and photographs (Plates II-V) amplify the written account and show the approximate locations and present state of the conventual buildings. The south wall of the church, described by Canon Power as being 'very ruinous', was evidently approximately 50 feet long extending from the western end when the Ordnance Survey was made in 1898;[12] now about only 24 feet of it is left standing, Likewise, the six external buttresses added at a later date to support the north wall (and which, as Canon Power observed, were not bonded into the wall itself), are being eroded by stones being removed from the footings to the extent that soon the buttresses will fail to perform the function for which they were provided.

One remarkable feature, however, only lightly touched upon by Canon Power, is that of the west tower, which he refers to as being peculiar in regard to both its position and character and suggests that it was evidently not part of the original plan.

To appreciate this, it is necessary to compare Abbeydorney with other monasteries of the order. In all, there were 39 Cistercian houses in Ireland including the minor cells of Feale (Abbeyfeale), Co. Limerick, Clare Island, Co. Mayo, and Stroyny (Abbeystroney), Co, Cork, originally founded by other orders but later adopted.[13] Of this total number, 24 houses were derived from Mellifont.[14] In all, 29 ruins of Cistercian abbeys are still standing in Ireland[15] and ground plans of at least 15

[12] Ordnance Survey, 25 inch, 1st edition (1898), sheets 8 and 9.

[13] Leask, *op. cit*., p, 63.

[14] Leask, *op. cit*., pedigree facing p. 63.

[15] D. D. C. Pochin Mould, *The Monasteries Of Ireland* London 1976, p, 56.

(up to now not including Abbeydorney) have been recovered.[16] Comparing representative abbeys, the internal length and breadth (including aisles where applicable) of their churches are as follows: Mellifont (mother house), 195 feet by 55 feet; Duiske (Graiguenamanagh), Co, Kilkenny (founded 1204 and the largest), 204 feet by 63 feet; Nenagh (the nearest originally built Cistercian house to Abbeydorney), 175 feet by 60 feet; and Corcomroe in North Clare (founded in 1195 and one of the smallest), 132 feet by 24 feet. All of the 15 sites surveyed conform to the normal Cistercian plan except for two with aisleless naves, *viz*. Shrule, Co. Longford (founded 1150), 146 feet by 25 feet,[17] and Grey, Co. Down (founded 1193), 123 feet by 25 feet. Abbeydorney, the smallest of all known Cistercian sites, as stated, measures 94 feet by 24 feet. Kilcooly, Co. Tipperary (founded 1184), the next smallest as yet surveyed, most closely compares with Abbeydorney, its church measuring 120 feet by 23 feet (originally with an aisled nave), and its cloisters about 24 yards square.

Originally, no Cistercian monasteries had towers; an early edict forbad their erection. During the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, however, during a period of active building and reconstruction in Ireland, bell towers came to be incorporated in some churches—usually at the crossing (intersection of the nave, chancel and transepts) or sometimes (but much more unusually) at the west end. Of the 15 abbey plans referred to above, during the fifteenth century, 11 had towers built at the crossing, one (Corcomroe) had a small belfry built above a choir/nave screen-wall, and Shrule (not surveyed) had a bell-cote above the west arch.

The late Dr, H. G. Leask dealt with the subject of church towers in his comprehensive study of Irish churches and monasteries, although he did not have much to say on Abbeydorney at all. We find no reference to the place in the first two volumes of his work covering the period of building from Romanesque up to 1400, but in the third and final volume covering the last phases of Medieval Gothic he makes a brief reference. This appears in an appendix covering abbeys of 'lesser importance' and here the author opines that 'no part (of Abbeydorney) appears to be earlier than the fifteenth century', although he does remark that the buildings have not been closely studied owing to their obscuration by the many burials there: 'a few fragments of cloister arcade pillars, of dumb-bell plan, remain'.[18]

In fact, the tower at Abbeydorney appears to be unique among Cistercian houses. It measures 15 feet on the outside of the church, where it accommodates a central late medieval Gothic doorway, and 13 feet on the insides with a central entrance passageway three feet ten inches wide, and is 12 feet long, protruding one-and-a-half feet from the inside of the west wall. The northern portion of the tower incorporates a semi-oval stairway leading up to the first floor eight feet above ground level and lighted by the decorated Gothic window mentioned by Canon Power. Above this, a second flight of steps leads to the second floor, now fallen, 17 feet above ground level, From this second floor, a covered passageway, approximately six feet high by two feet wide, built into the thickness of the tower and the west walls leads to a "lookout" position at the north wall. (The corresponding portion of the south side of the tower has fallen and it is now impossible to tell if a similar arrangement obtained there.) The construction and features of the tower suggest that its use may have been for other than regular purposes, and it may well have been built by the FitzMaurices during the period of the Desmond retribution raids into Kerry during the fifteenth or early sixteenth centuries.

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[16] In 'The Cistercian Order in Ireland' (note 4), accounts are given of 37 abbeys (including Nenagh (Manister), Co. Limerick) and ground plans of 15 sites.

[17] I am indebted to Mr, Jude Flynn, Hon. Secretary of the Longford Historical Society, for this information.

[18] H. G. Leask, *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*. Vol. I—The First Phases and the Romanesque (Dundalk 1955); Vol. II—Gothic Architecture to A.D. 1400 (Dundalk 1959); Vol. IlI— Medieval Gothic—The Last Phases (Dundalk 1960), pp. 46, 158, 177.

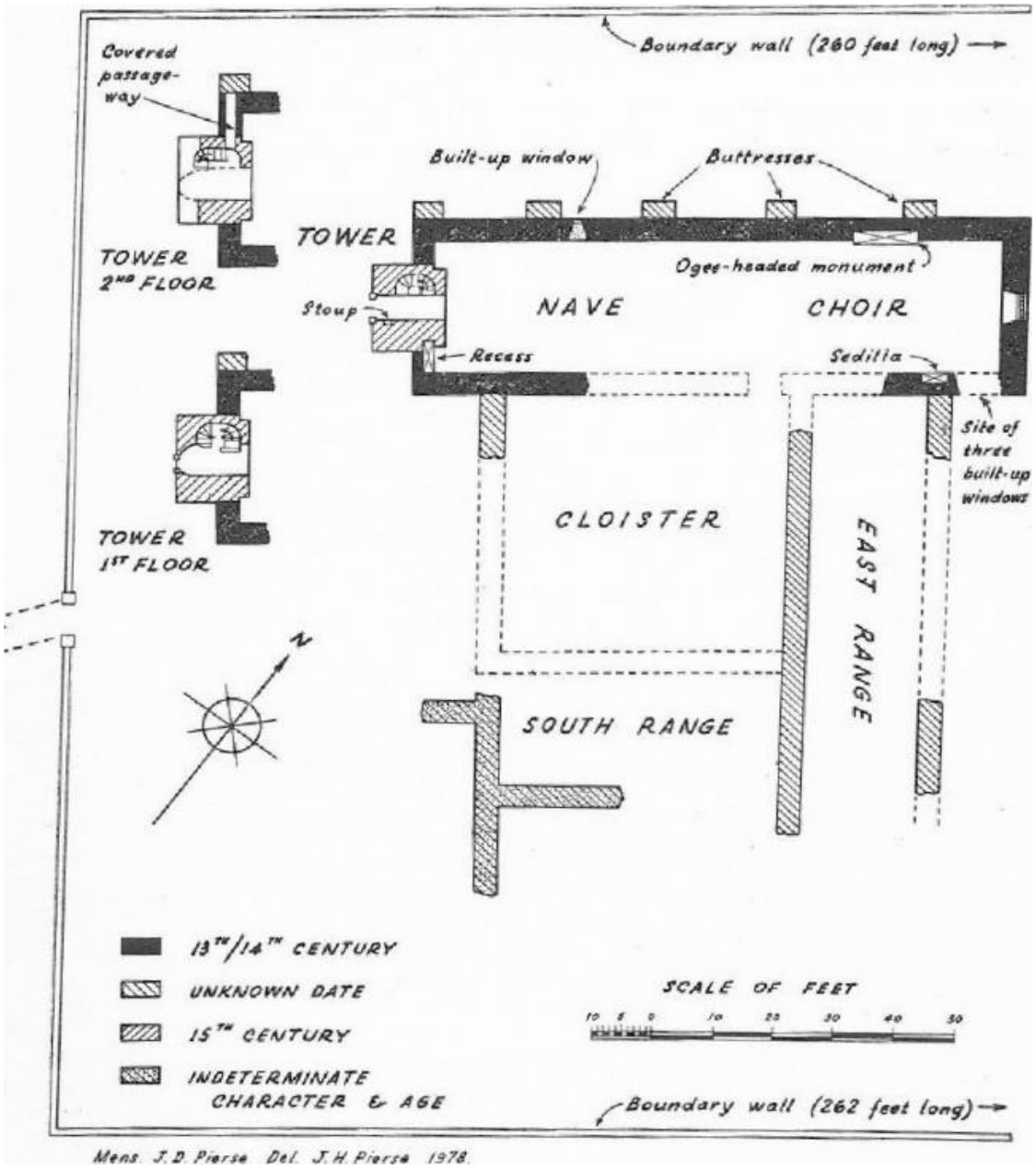

Figure 2. Sketch-plan of Abbeydornay, Monastery, Co. Kerry.

Canon Power also omitted to mention the curious recess (? tomb niche) built into the inside southern portion of the west wall. The recess, now much broken, evidently took the form of a raised paved table, a foot-and-a-half above ground level and three feet four inches high: in plan, it measures approximately two feet wide by five feet long, the squared off northern end being accommodated in the tower structure, Being devoid of any ornament, no means is provided for establishing its age or purpose.

Concerning the history of the community, perhaps it may first be mentioned that Cistercian houses were customarily dedicated to Our Lady and thus Abbeydorney sometimes appears in records described as 'the house of the Blessed Virgin Mary de Kyrie Eleison', etc. In 1302, in the Ecclesiastical Taxation of the Diocese of Ardfert, 'the church of the monks' in the Deanery of 'Othorna and Offannan' was valued at 13s. for tithes, while the revenue of 'the house of Kireil of

the Order of Cistercians' was valued at 63s., 'their spirituals are taxed among the churches of which they are rectors'.[19]

Canon Power remarks on the identity Of the original benefacting founder of Abbeydorney and rightly refutes the attribution to the FitzMaurices, Barons of Lixnaw and Lords of Kerry, This error may have originated or been initially recorded by Alenand in 1690 who wrote 'Les Fitz-Moris Mylords Barons de Kery & de Lixnaw, fonderent une Abbaye de Bernadins à Odorney, & des Cordeliers à Ardart dans le Conté de Kery' and elsewhere, '… elle (Odorney) fut fondée en 1154, par les Clanmoris ou Fitzmoris, anciens Barons de Lixnaw'.[20] These observations were copied by Stevens in his translation of this work into English in 1722.[21] Harris in his edition of Ware quoted the claim, citing Alemand as the authority, but disputed it.[22] Later writers—except notably Smith[23]—followed suit in perpetuating the statement but adding a doubt as to its authenticity.

There can be no doubt, however, that the FitzMaurices had a powerful influence over Abbeydorney from the time of their settlement in Kerry during the first quarter of the thirteenth century, and unquestionably supplied the Cistercian order with members from their own family as the following entries make plain.

In 1304, while Maurice fitz Thomas, 2nd Lord, lay on his deathbed at Molahiffe castle, he sent the 'Abbot of Kyryeleyson' to his son and heir Nicholas on a mission in connexion with lands he intended to leave to another of his sons named Gerald.[24] This un-named abbot of Odorney may well have been a successor to yet another of Maurice's sons, Thomas, whom we are told was a Bernardine Monk, Abbot of Odorney, otherwise St, Mary de Kierie Eleeson, and also of Fermoy'.[25]

Nicholas, above, who succeeded as 3rd Lord, had a son 'Gerald (by some named Thomas) a monk, and Abbot of Loughsewdy in Westmeath, of the Cistertian order', living circa 1312.[26] A century later, another Gerald, son of Patrick, 7th Lord, was abbot Of Odorney while his brother, Nicholas, in 1420, was bishop of Ardfert.[27]

About this time, too, in 1410, the abbots of Raithtuoygh (Rattoo) and Otorna (Odorney) were directed to collate Maurice Fitzmoris to the deanery of Ardfert,[28] while on the 15th April, 1422 a mandate was issued to the abbots of St, Mary's O'Dorney and St. Mary's Rathuoygh to assign to John Fitzmoris the rectory of Kyllury (Killury).[29]

In 1578, Patrick FitzMaurice, son of Thomas, 16th Lord, asked for 'the fee farm of the abbeys of Rathoe (Rattoo) and Kierielezon (Odorney) also for a pension'.[30]

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[19] Ecclesiastical Taxation Of the Diocese Of Ardfert, A.D. 1302, 2 Roll Irish Exchequer, 533-9, Roll E.M. 3 and 3 dorso, Details for Odorney are reprinted in J. King, *County Kerry Past and Present*, Dublin 1931, p. 259.

[20] L. A, Alemand, *Histoire Monastique d'Irlande*, Paris 1690, p, 374.

[21] J. Stevens, *Monasticon Hibernicum*, London 1722, *passim*.

[22] W, Harris (ed.), J. Ware, *The History and Antiquities of Ireland*, Dublin 1764, Vol. I, p. 274.

[23] C. Smith, *The Ancient and Present State of the County of Kerry*, Dublin 1756, p, 218.

[24] Plea Roll of 32 Edward I (1303-4) m. 29, quoted by G. H. Orpen in 'The Origin of the Fitzmaurices, Barons of Kerry and Lixnaw', *Genealogists' Magazine*, 1 (1925), 36.

[25] M, Archdall (ed.), J. Lodge, *The Peerage of Ireland*, Dublin 1789, Vol. II. 'FitzMaurice, Earl of Kerry', p. 186.

[26] *Ibid*. p. 177.

[27] *Ibid*., p. 188.

[28] Cal. Entries in the papal Registers relating to Gt. Britain and Ireland (London 1904), Papal Letters, vol, VI (A.D. 1404-1415), p. 164.

[29] *Ibid*., (London 1906), Papal Letters, Vol. VII (A.D. 1417-1431), p. 227.

[30] J. King, *History of Kerry*, London 1910, p. 337.

As to the question of abbots of Odorney being spiritual peers and being summoned to parliament, Canon Power cites Lewis[31] as his authority although he questions the accuracy of the assertion. But Lewis was not the first to make this statement and, paralleling this claim with that regarding the founding benefactor, in this instance it was not Alemand (1690) who raised the hare, although the view was evidently generally held in the latter part of the seventeenth century. In his description of Kerry in 1687, Sir Richard Cox stated: 'The Abbot hereof (Odorney) was a Lord of parlm^{t} tho he is omitted by S^{r} James Ware in his Catalogue of them', and later, '… soe that there were no less than 4 lords in this small barony (Clanmaurice) viz the Lord of Kerry, The Bishop of Ardfert and the Abbotts of Odorney and Rathoy'.[32] About the same time as this, or a little later, the contributor of 'Geographical Collections for Kerry' in Samuel Molyneux's *Natural History of Ireland* stated that 'It (Odorney) was a convent of the Cistertion order and the lord abbot thereof had vote in parliament'.[33] Smith (1756) expressly stated: "… its (Odorney's) abbots were lords of parliament, of whom there were many persons of eminence…',[34] and Archdall following in 1786 stated simply: 'The abbot of this house was a Lord of parliament' citing Ware as his authority.[35] The statements of these historians seem to have been copied (with or without 'authority') by later writers, *e.g*. Lewis (1837),[36] Janauschek (1877),[37] King (1931),[38] Gwynn and Hadcock (1970).[39]

In a previous volume of this Journal,[40] Dom Hubert J. de Varebeke, O.S.B., examined in general the question of abbots sitting in Parliament and, while he found that Cistercians were largely represented, no specific mention is made of Abbeydorney. Among the Cistercian abbots actually recorded as having sat as peers in Parliament in Ireland for a period prior to 1375, however, the only mention for the Kerry-Limerick area is that of the Abbot of Wotheny or Woney (Awney, or Abington) in Co. Limerick.

Looking at the matter again, it would appear that, while Alemand certainly did not make the claim, some of the writers quoted may have been influenced by him in a statement he made regarding abbots in general being spiritual peers. Regarding the Cistercians in particular, he stated that they alone 'had more abbots who were Lords Spiritual, and as such sat in Parliament, than all the other Orders together; for of fifteen abbots who had this Prerogative throughout the Kingdom, thirteen were of the Cistercian Order'. Of these thirteen whom he lists, the first mentioned is Mellifont, with 'Magy or Nenay' (Nenagh) ninth, and 'Woney or Wotheny' (Awney, or Abington)—the only other Cistercian house in Limerick, as eleventh, but no mention is made of Odorney.[41] As already stated, the total number of Cistercian houses in Ireland was thirty-nine.

From what we have seen, it appears possible that writers, noting the influence that the FitzMaurices, themselves temporal peers sitting in Parliament and also many themselves members of Cistercian communities, had over Abbeydorney, took for granted that the abbots of the monastery were themselves spiritual peers, All that is required, of course, to settle the

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31 S. Lewis, *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, London 1837, Vol. I, p. 2.

32 P. de Brún (ed.), 'Sir Richard Cox's Description Of Kerry, 1687', *J, Kerry Archaeol. Hist. Soc*., 5 (1972), 40.

33 W. O'Sullivan (ed.), 'William Molyneux's Geographical Collections for Kerry', *J. Kerry Archaeol. Hist. Soc*., 4 (1971), 40.

34 Smith, *op. cit*., p. 218.

35 M. Archdall, *Monasticon Hibernicum*, London 1786. p. 305.

36 Lewis, *op. cit*., p. 2.

37 Janauschek, *op. cit*., p, 137.

38 J. King, *County Kerry Past and Present*, Dublin 1931, p. 259.

39 A. Gwynn and R. Neville Hadcock, *Mediaeval Religious Houses of Ireland*, London 1970, p. 123.

40 Dom Hubert J. de Verebeke, 'Abbots in Anglo-Norman Parliaments', *N. Munster Antiq. J*., 15 (1972), 17-21.

41 Alemand, *op. cit*., p, 163, (=Stevens, *op. cit*., p. 167.)

question once and for all, is for the citation of any one abbot of Odorney in any list of peers attending any one sitting of Parliament.

With regard to the Dissolution, it would appear that Abbeydorney was, in fact, suppressed by Henry VIII since, in 1537, along with several other abbeys, it was granted to Edmond FitzMaurice, 11th Lord of Kerry, Baron of Odorney, and 'Viscount of Kilmaule' (Kilmoyley).[42]

In 1541, we read of an 'Order of the Lord Deputy and council for a commission to the earl of Desmond [James fitzJohn FitzGerald, 15th earl], Mr Thomas Agarde, Eneas O'Hernan, late master of Any [? Awney or Woney], and Edmund Sexten, to take inventories of, dissolve, and put in safe custody, all religious houses in the counties of Limerick Cork, Kerry and Desmond'.[43]

Thirty-five years later, a lease was granted to 'Gerald, earl of Dessmonde; of the site of the abbey of Odorney, alias our Lady abbey of Kyrieleison, co, Kerry, the lands of Clonecan [? Cloghane], Royrke [?], Dromyconnygemyne [Drumcunnig], Aykre [? Acres], and Ballyusine [Ballysheen], Boherroe, Lackymore [Lacka More], Lackybege [Lacka Beg], and Clonenymetaughe [Cloonametagh], and Ballybromane [Ballybroman], co. Kerry, the rectory of Odornye, extending to the foregoing lands, except Ballybromane, the rectory of Molahyffe [Molahiffe], the same co. To hold for 21 years; rent £8 13s. …'[44] In 1581, however, the same lands and 'the site of the abbey of Odorney alias our Lady of Kirieleizon, co. Kerry' were assigned under lease by the commissioners of Munster to 'John Zowche, or Souche, esq.'[45] and again in 1588-9 to 'John Champen, gent' but with the addition of the abbey of 'Rathetoye' (Rattoo).[46] In 1597, under grant to 'the provost and fellows of the college of the Holy Trinity by Dublin', among other lands in Kerry we find 'Menecrie 1/6 carucate, parcel of the lands of the abbey of Odorney, alias Kirialeison, in said co. (Kerry) (16d)'.[47]

In 1603 we find a further account of 'the late abbey of Odorney, called Our Lady's Abbaye de Kerielizon' which is more informative:[48] we are told that the property contained 1 church, 2 churchyards, 2 acres arable, 1 water-mill, and 170 acres in the parish. The abbey lands included 60 acres in 'Cloghean, Royrke, Dromycounygenyn, Moneacrie [Montanagay], and Ballyusane [Ballysheen], 80 acres in Lackimore, Lackibegg, and Cloneymeateagh, and 30 acres in Ballybroaine', all in Odorney parish.

The reference to the water-mill is interesting and so also is that to the *two* churchyards. From the Ordnance Survey taken in 1841-42 and revised in 1909,[49] the monastery is shown to be located between two streams, flowing generally in a north-easterly direction, and converging some half-a-mile to the NNE as tributaries of the river Brick. In the map included as a frontispiece to Smith's *History of Kerry* (1756),[50] Odorney is marked as a 'ruined church', approached by a left fork off the Ardfert-Lixnaw road (between Tubrid and Rathkenny and bearing north), and on the *left* (or

[42] Archdall (ed.), Lodge, *op. cit*., p. 189.

[43] Fiant Hen, VIII, No. 251 (16), 1541 *Seventh Report of the Dep. Keeper of Public Records in Ireland*, Dublin 1875, p. 56.

[44] Fiant Hen, VIII, No. 2819 (2525), 1576 *Twelfth Report of the Dep. Keeper of Public Records in Ireland*, Dublin 1880, p. 177.

[45] Fiant Hen. VIII, No. 3758 (3133), 1581, *Thirteenth Report of the Dep. Keeper of Public Records in Ireland*, Dublin 1881, p. 145.

[46] Fiant Hen, VIII No. 5306 (4297), 1588-9, *Sixteenth Report of the Dep. Keeper of Public Records in Ireland*, Dublin 1884, p, 93.

[47] Fiant Hen. VIII, No. 6123 (4965), 1597, *Seventeenth Report of the Dep. Keeper of Public Records in Ireland,* Dublin 1885, p. 65.

[48] See account in King, *op. cit*. (1931), p. 259.

[49] Ordnance Surveys one inch, 1841-2 revised 1909, Sheet 162.

[50] Smith, *op. cit*., frontispiece.

western) bank of the river Brick, Since on this map no stream is shown to the north of the abbey, then evidently this sole stream to the south was at that time the original bed of the river Brick or one of its tributaries. On Speed's map of 1610,[51] the abbey is marked as 'Mc. Eyreyson's located immediately to the south-west of the confluence of three streams running approximately NNE, E and SE, the combined flow curving northwards and which, although not named, is clearly intended to be the river Brick emptying into the sea between 'C, Manian' (Ballybunion) to the north and 'Cadone' (?) to the south. Thus in Smith's map, Abbeydorney is shown still to be on the *left* (or north) bank of the stream although the geographic representation is very crude.

Referring to the larger scale survey of 1898,[52] the walled area of the monastery precincts (1.214 acres) is seen to stand in the present-day townland of Knockaunmore and close to the boundary with the adjacent townland of Boherroe. To the south-east lies the townland of Montanagay, doubtless the Móinteáin na n-gé of Canon Power's local aged informant as to the site of an earlier graveyard and church.

Regarding some of the personages referred to by Canon Power in connection with Abbeydorney, he does not mention that the bishop of Kerry whose sons slew one of the Clan-Sheehy was, in fact, James FitzMaurice, later to be known by the surname FitzPiers or Piers, a former abbot of Odorney, [53] James was born about the year 1511, the illegitimate son of Richard fitzJohn FitzMaurice, a religious himself (and possibly even a Cistercian in Abbeydorney), who was born about the year 1470, many of the FitzMaurice family—as we have seen—having entered the community there. At the age of 25, James FitzMaurice was abbot of Odorney prior to his promotion in May, 1536 to the see of Ardfert.[54] The bishop evidently had a number of children by a concubine, of whom two sons were themselves slain by the Sheehys in revenge, although it would appear that the names of these were not James and Gerald, as reported by the Four Masters,[55] but more likely their brothers Maurice and Richard.[56]

The final comment is in regard to the reference to the tombstone of Ambrose Piers. Ambrose was another ecclesiastic member of the Pierse family of North Kerry. He was born circa 1608, became a priest, was Doctor of Theology at the University of Bordeaux and onetime Professor of Philosophy at Boulogne, and was later promoted Vicar-General of Ardfert by William Burgat, Archbishop of Cashel.[57] He was 'a native of the diocese, [and] a person respected and skilful in administration, of singular zeal for the propagation of the Catholic Faith, and esteemed by both clergy and people', according to John Brenan, Archbishop of Cashel, in 1678.[58] Ambrose was proposed by his clergy to be their bishop, but the appointment was not made, probably due to his age, 70, at the time. On the 4th January, 1681, Ambrose Piers or Pierse was reported to be a 'popish priest now resident in County Kerry (who) doth exercise popish jurisdiction' and was required to be apprehended (letter to John Blennerhasset in TraIee).[59] As the inscription on his tombstone in the chancel of Abbeydorney indicates, he died six years later, circa 1687. Regarding

[51] J. Speed, *The Theatre of the Empire of Gt. Britain*, London 1611, p. 140.

[52] See note 12.

[53] W. Maziere Brady, *The Episcopal Succession in England, Scotland and Ireland, A.D. 1400-1875*. Rome 1876, vol. II, pp. 53-4.

[54] C. Eubel, *Hierarchia Catholica Medii Aevi*, Regensburg 1913, Vol. III, p.132.

[55] Annals of the Four Masters, s.a. 1582 (v. 1787) and Carew MS. Vol. 597, f. 445.

[56] It would appear that the bishop had at least four sons; see Appeal to the Lord Justice in 1580 of Edmond FitzMaurice (son to Thomas, 16th Lord of Kerry and Lixnaw), James oge FitzPiers, Edmond fitz James FitzPiers, Richard fitz James FitzPiers, Garret Fitz James 'of the same' (i.e. FitzPiers) and James fitz Thomas, in Carew MSS., Vol. 597, f. 445 (Cal. Carew MSS., Vol. II, p,306) and subsequent pardons in Eliz. Fiants No. 3752 (1581) and No. 4716 (1585).

[57] J. Lynch, *De Praesulibus Hiberniae*, Dublin 1944, Vol. II, p, 194.

[58] L. Howard, 'The Penal Laws in North Kerry, 1677-1687', *N. Munster Antiq. J.*, 14 (1971), pp. 49-52.

[59] *Ibid*., p. 51.

the date of his death, Canon Power correctly quoted his 'authority', but Richard Hitchcock or, more precisely, *his* informant, the Rev. A. B. Rowan, D.D., of Belmont, Tralee made the original error. Hitchcock quoting from a letter sent to him from the Rev. Rowan states:[60] 'I send you an inscription from Abbey-dorney church *more ancient than any you have been given* [my italics, J.H.P.]: —AMBROSIUS PIERS. VIC. GEN DIOCES. ARDFERT. HUNC TUMULUM SIBI FIERI FECIT, ANNO 1587.' Seen in its original context, it is clear that the mistake was one of simply misreading 1587 for 1687 since the other inscriptions referred to by the Rev. Rowan are to dates later than this.

In conclusion, I would like to pay tribute to the late Patrick Canon Power, D.Litt., M.R.I.A., (b. 1862, d. 1951), historian and archaeologist, but for whose painstaking industry and scholarship we should be still lacking an account of Abbeydorney, and to his friend and fellow historian, the late Fr. Ailbhe S. Ó Loididh, Ord. Cist., 'the great expert on St, Bernard in these islands', who kindly drew my attention to Canon Power's manuscript at Mount Melleray in 1948. I would also like to record my thanks to the Most Reverend Dom Edward Ducey, Ord. Cist., present Abbot of Mount Melleray, for kindly giving permission to publish Canon Power's MS., to Br. Hugh, Librarian of Mount Melleray, for biographical notes on Fr. Ailbhe Ó Loididh, and to Professor M. J. O'Kelly; M.A., D.Litt., F.S.A., M.R.I.A., present Professor of Archaeology at U.C. Cork, who kindly sent me biographical notes on Canon Power. Finally, my sincere thanks to Mr. John D. Pierse, of Listowel, Co. Kerry, who has gone to considerable trouble to obtain the detailed dimensions necessary to produce the site plan (*Fig.* 2) and who also kindly took the photographs used in illustrating this paper.

Addendum

During the time that this article has been with the printers, two further references have come to hand.

The first is to a work long regarded as source material on the Cistercians if for no other reason than that of its age and size: *Annales Cisterciensis*, by Angel Manrique, published in four volumes between 1642-59 at Lyons. Odorney has two mentions, *viz*. Vol. II, p. 265, where it is stated: 'Anno M.C. LIV. III Kalendas Iulii, fundata est Abbatia de Kyrie eleyson', and Vol. III, p. 165, stating: 'Eodem anno (Christi, nimirum, M.C. LX XXVI.) Christianus, Lesmoriensis Episcopus, … post peractam obedientiam, in Monasterio de Kyrie, eleison, feliciter migravit ad Christum.' In addition, there is also much detail already given above, but it is noted that there is no attribution of the foundation to the FitzMaurices from which it can be surmised that the controversial statements on this and other points originated sometime between 1642 and 1690.

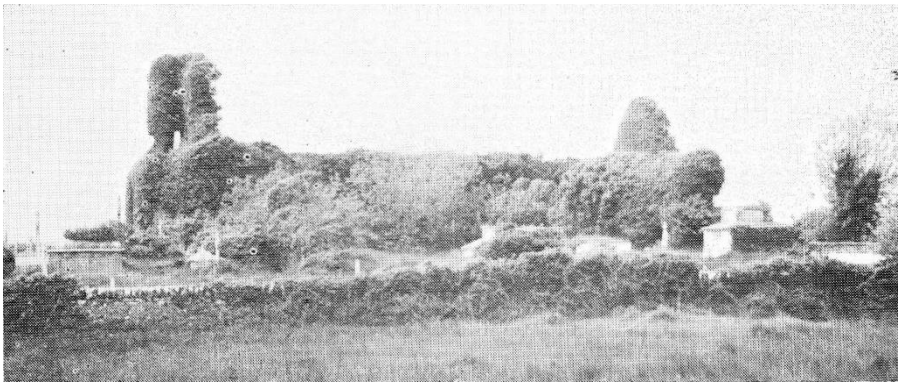
The second reference is to the Ordnance Survey Letters written about 1830-46, now in the Royal Irish Academy; copies are in the *Name Books* in the National Library, from which the following extracts have been made. The letter on 'The Parish of Abbeydorney' (pp. 20-1), subscribed 'Antiquities examined by me, John O'Donovan. Tralee, July 22nd 1841', notes details similar to those given by Canon Power, but also informs us that the limestone slab bearing the inscription to Ambrose Piers then lay in the chancel *opposite* the ogee-headed tomb in the north wall. Also that 'there was a doorway on [*sic*] the South wall at the distance of about thirty-five feet from the East gable, but it is now … reduced to a shapeless breach. It led into the cloister', which confirms as fact the conjectural location shown in *Fig.* 2. The final point is that ''bout sixty-nine feet of the East wall of the cloister remains extending southwards at right angles to the South wall of the church, but its features are destroyed. There is also yet remaining the West gable of a house which extended East and West at the distance of about sixty-nine feet to the South of the church, but the

[60] R. Hitchcock, 'Gleanings from Country Church-Yards', *J. Roy. Soc. Antiq. Ireland*, 6 (1861), 131. Note that another copy of this inscription and with the correct date (i.e. 1687) is given by Archdall in *Monasticon Hibernicum*; see note 1.

dimensions of this building cannot now be ascertained'; this latter feature appears to identify with the mass of masonry shown as of 'Indeterminate character and age' on *Fig.* 2. (I wish to thank Nóra Ní Shúilleabháin, Dublin, for this second reference.)

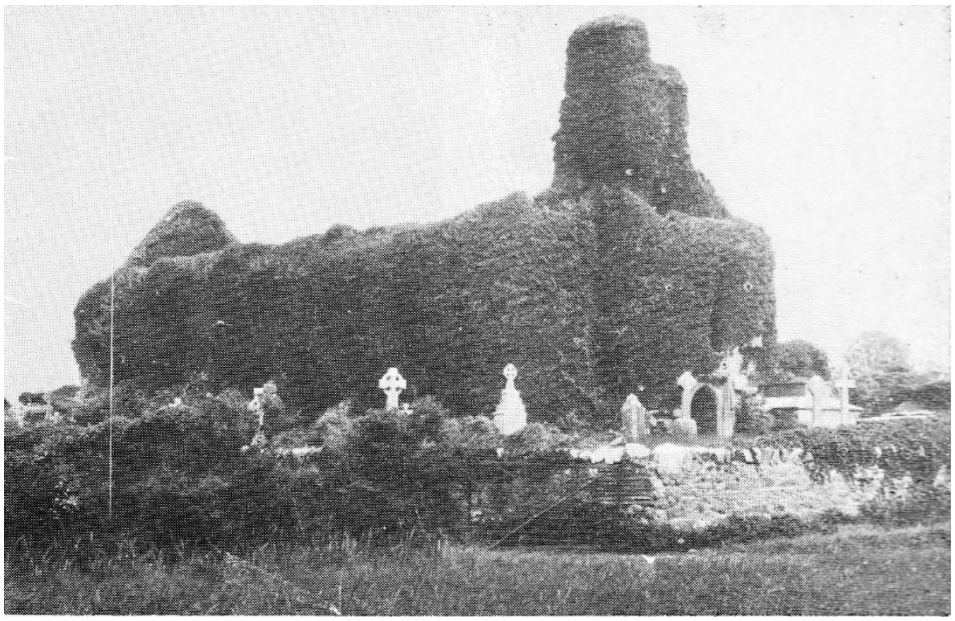
1. View from South

2. View from north-west

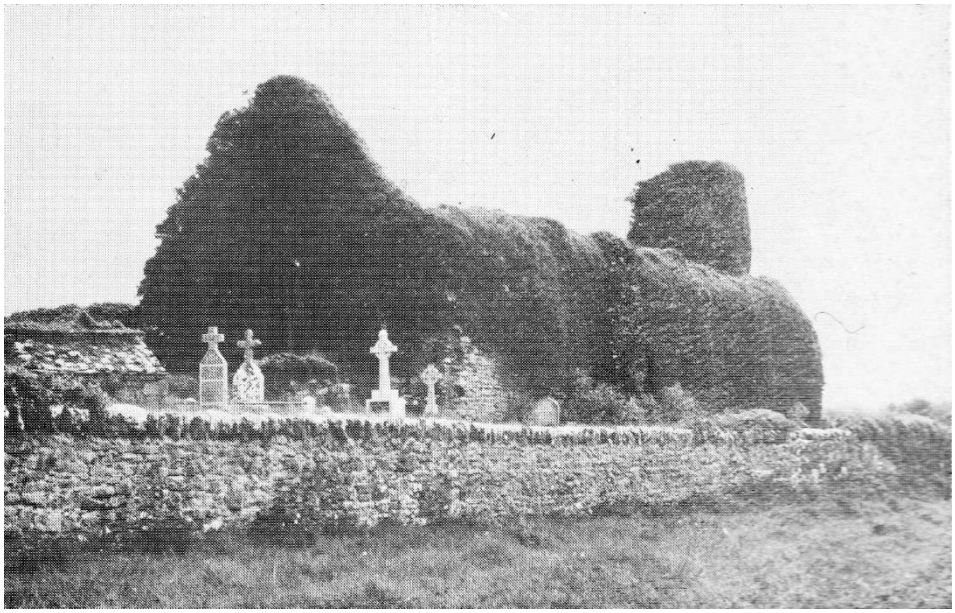


3. View from south-east

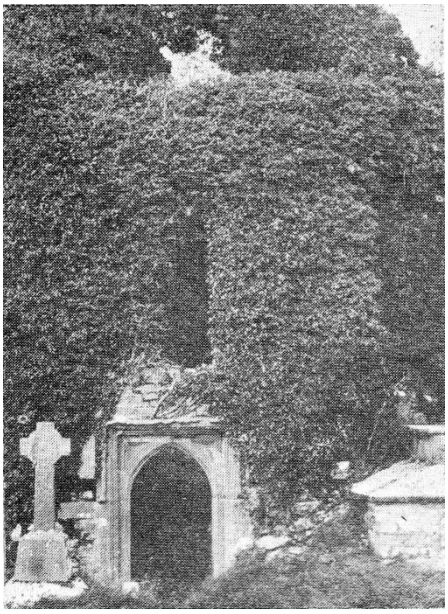
[photos: J. D. Pierse]



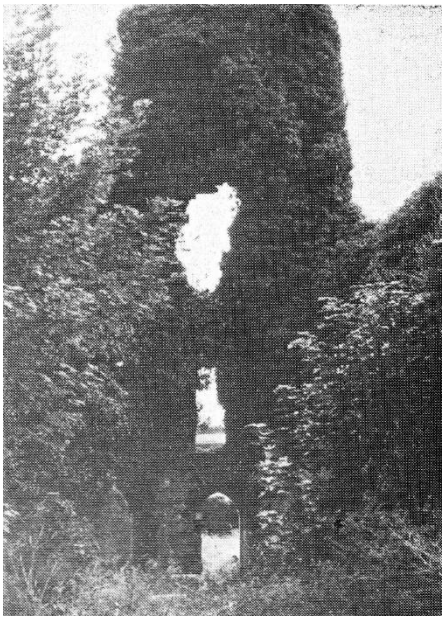
4. View from West



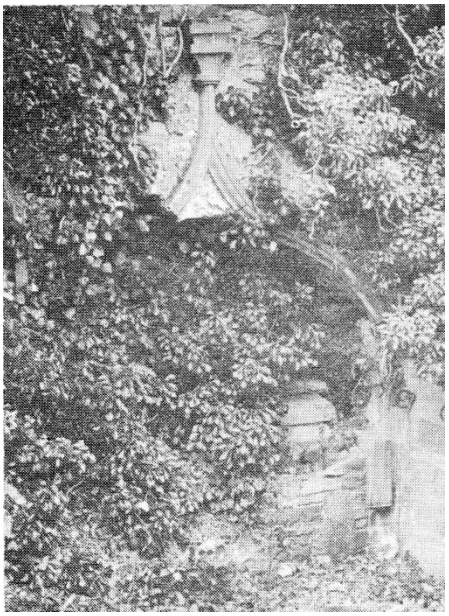
5. View from north



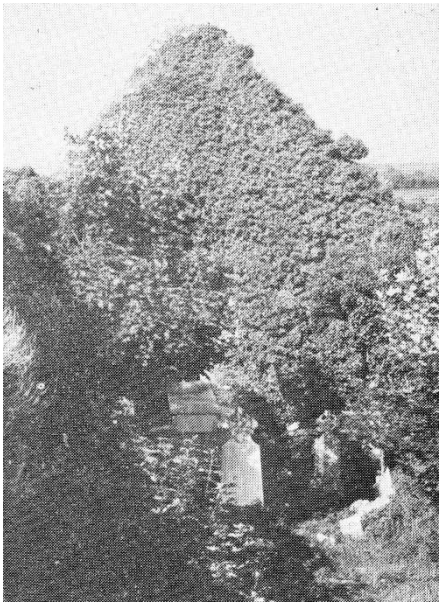
6. West wall and doorway viewed from outside



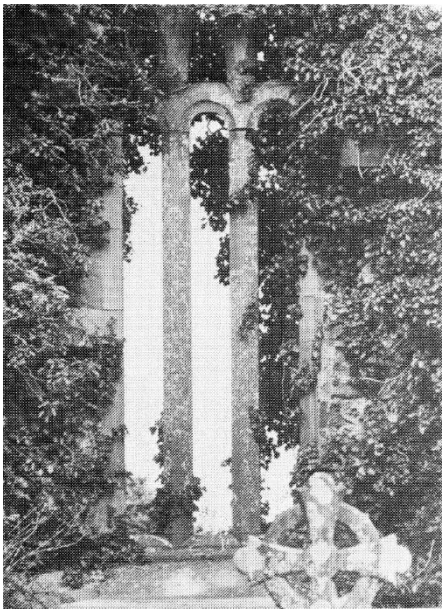
7. West wall and tower viewed from inside



8. Ogee-headed wall tomb in eastern end of north wall viewed from inside

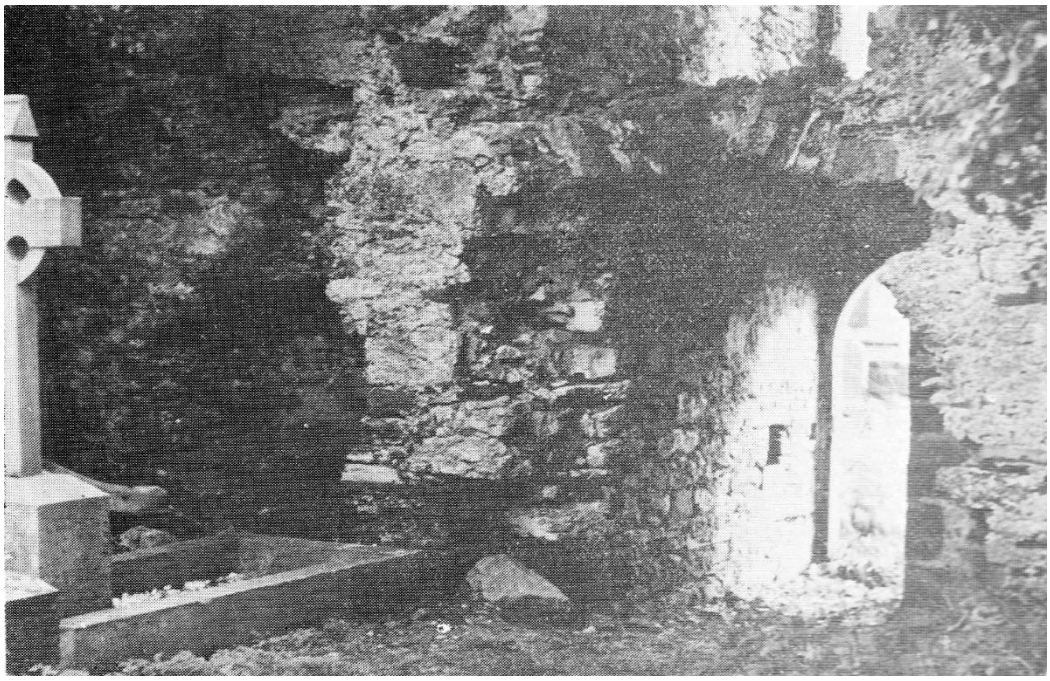


9. East wall viewed from inside



10. East window viewed from inside

11. Window in tower upper chamber viewed from inside



12. West wall and doorway viewed from inside; note wall recess on left-hand side

5 RESCUE OF THE CROWN JEWELS IN 1841: THE TRUE FACTS*

In 1841 the Tower of London was on fire. The outbreak occurred about 10 o'clock on the night of Saturday, 30 October, and is thought to have started in the Bowyer Tower — probably as a result of an overheated flue. The flames quickly spread to the roof of the adjacent Grand Storehouse (or Great Armoury), which was soon ablaze from end to end, and then set fire to the Martin Tower at the north-east angle of the Inner Ward, which incorporated the Jewel House containing the Crown Jewels.

By about 11.00 p.m. the entire roof of the Grand Storehouse has begun to fall in and by this time thousands of spectators had assembled at the Tower to watch with mesmeric fascination the blazing inferno. All the time the fire was raging the alarm bell of the garrison was kept ringing continuously and this added to the general state of alarm. A contemporary but somewhat exaggerated account of the event published within hours of the outbreak reported,[1]

> So intense was the heat sent forth that the multitude could scarcely remain even outside the moat, and many sunk from exhaustion and pressure; the crackling of the yielding timbers was distinctly audible even on the Surrey side of the River Thames. It was a majestic sight, and many around us observed, 'I shall not forget this fire even on my death-bed!'

As the fire raged and spread, concern mounted for the safety of the Crown Jewels. The Keeper of the Jewel House, Edmund Lenthal Swifte, Barrister-at-Law, did what he could by having fire hoses played on to the Jewel House walls, but he finally decided that the regalia would have to be removed for safety. The Jewel Room itself was on the lower floor of the Martin Tower and the entrance door was approached by a flight of steps; the Keeper and his family lived in rather cramped conditions in the chambers above. The actual Jewel Room was at the end of a short passage and was a stone groined and vaulted chamber, one end of which was completely cut off by a waist-high wall surmounted by an iron grille rising to the roof. The vertical bars of the grille were about a hand's breadth apart and were reinforced with robust horizontal rails: a small hinged and locked grating in the left-hand corner provided access to the inside of the 'cage' when necessary for arranging or cleaning purposes.

In the subsequent rescue attempts, much delay was caused through security regulations; Mr. Swifte himself had the key to the Jewel House door, but the Lord Chamberlain, Earl Delawarr, who held the keys to the access grating and the display cases, was not available. Eventually, crowbars had to be found and these were used to prise apart and break the bars of the grille. An individual described in subsequent printed accounts of the affair and described variously as 'a sturdy warder', 'a Sergeant (in the army)', 'a brave policeman named Pierce ('Pearce', 'Pearce, 'Pearse', 'Peirce', etc.)' of 'the City (or Metropolitan) Police' effected the rescue of the Regalia by climbing through a narrow gap in the protective grille and handing out the various items. Most accounts agree that, with the extreme heat, danger from suffocation or crushing in the event of the roof falling in, the rescuer was a brave man, and that some recognition — and possibly an award — in appreciation of his valour should have been made. In the event nothing of the sort was done but it is hoped that in this article something will be done to set the record straight.

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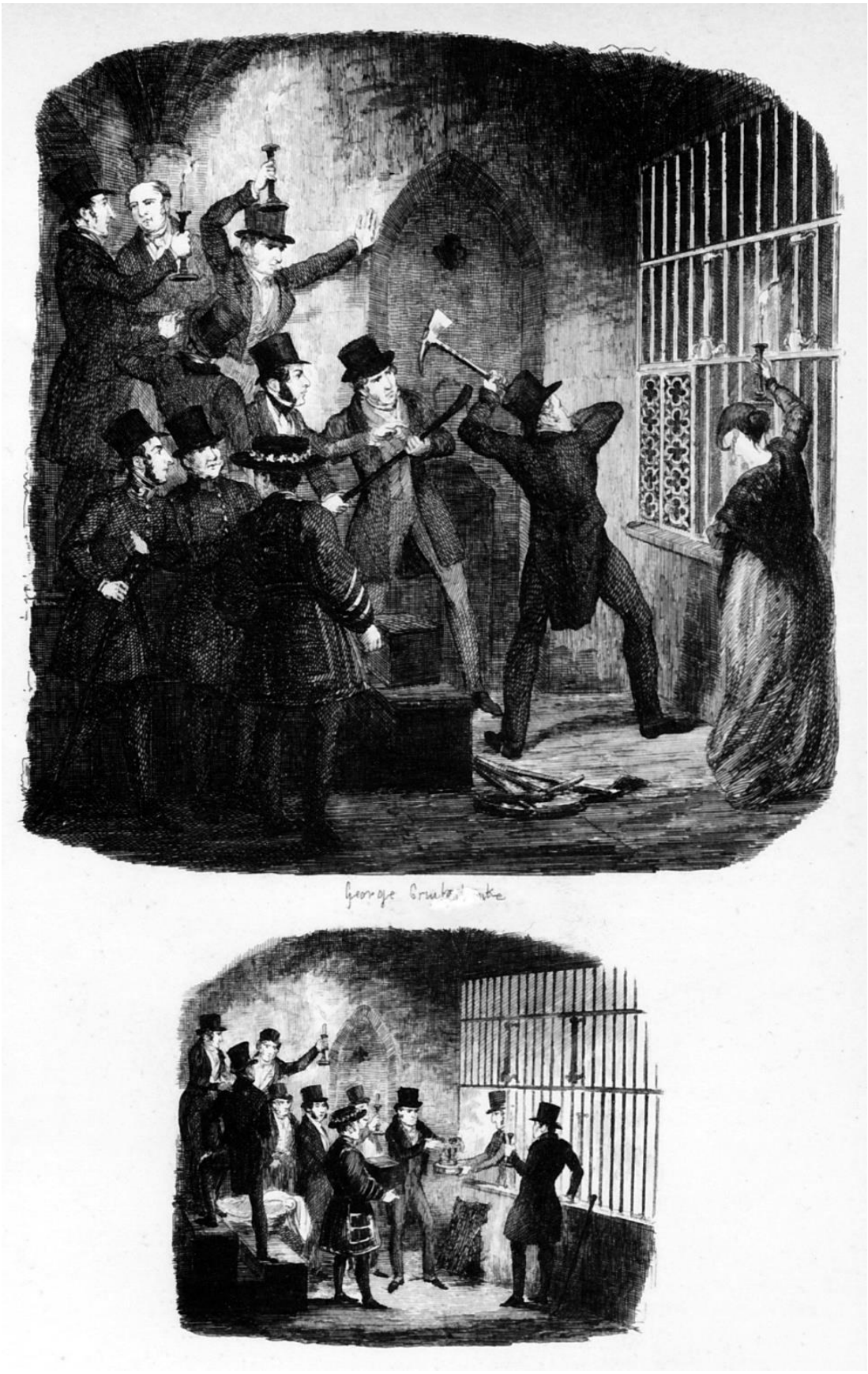
* Published in *East London Record (1984)*, 7, 21-33.

[1] *Latest Particulars of the Awful Fire and Total Destruction of the Tower of London ... 1841*, pub. J. T. Wood, Cripplegate, London, 1841, p. 4. A copy of this pamphlet is in the Tower Hamlets Local History Library and I am indebted to Mr. D. T. Elliot, Chief Librarian (1979) for drawing my attention to it.



Rescue of the Crown Jewels in 1841 (etching by George Cruikshank)

The person who actually carried out the rescue operation was in fact William Fitzmaurice Pierse, Superintendent of H Division (Whitechapel) of the Metropolitan Police, whose official report of the incident to the Police Commissioners ran as follows:[2]

H Division
November 9th 1841

To the Commissioners
Gentlemen

Having received information at 10 o'clock P.M. that the Tower was on Fire I proceeded at once with a large Body of Police towards that Fortress: on reaching Tower Hill at ½ past 11 o'clock I perceived that the Fire had gained a considerable ascendancy and was rapidly increasing. On obtaining an Entrance through the Gates I proceeded at once towards the small Armoury which I found on fire both on the right and left of the principal Entrance and the flames rapidly descending from the Roof to that of the First and Ground floors. I gave directions to the Inspectors and Constables under my charge to render every possible assistance in checking the fire and saving property and I feel it but an act of justice to the Inspectors and Constables to say that their exertions exceeded anything I have ever witnessed.

At about ½, past 11 o'clock I saw Superintendent McClean of the P Division who was assisting in removing Arms, etc., and perceiving the flames were rapidly approaching the Jewel House I expressed my deep anxiety to him for the safety of the valuable property deposited therein. Mr. Swift who had charge of the Crown Jewels came up an instant afterwards on his way to the Jewel House (and) I suggested to him that the Jewels ought to be at once) removed as the Building where they were deposited was in danger. Mr. Swift replied that he was thinking of removing them and requested us to accompany him to the Jewel House which we did. A Mr. Pulford of the Croydon Railway was also there and on reaching the Jewel House the outer door was opened by Mr. Swift that on entering I perceived that the Jewels could not be got at there being a strong iron Grating between us and those valuable articles. Mr. Swift here gave directions to the Wardens to force the Grating in which we assisted and after much difficulty an aperture was made sufficient to admit one person and I by the desire of Mr. Swift forced myself through as it was very narrow. Mr. McClean and Mr. Swift were then standing on the outside of the aperture and the first-named Gentleman held a Candle through the Bars to light me and received with Mr. Swift the Regalia as I handed it to them. The first that attracted my attention was the new Crown in a Glass Case and having removed the latter (I) handed the Crown to Mr. Swift. I then removed the Case off a second Crown and handed it to the same person and all the other valuable Articles consisting of Crowns, Royal Spurs, Sceptres, Bracelets, Swords, Salt Cellars, and Service of Communion Plate which I passed through without difficulty but on reaching the last Article a Silver Font I found the Aperture not large enough and in consequence Mr. McClean, Mr. Pulford and a Warder of the Tower by united efforts with a large Crowbar broke away another Bar of the Grating. While this was being done there were repeated Cries for us to leave the Jewel Room as the Fire was at our heels. Superintendent McClean then said 'Pierse—Don't stir until you have got the Font'. I resolved not to move till I had secured it and it was carried out by the Warder assisted by Mr. McClean and Mr. Pulford.

As we emerged from the dark passage the heat was so great as to shrink my Hat and burn the tail of Mr. McClean's Coat besides suffering on the Face from the intense heat. Mr. McClean then asked Mr. Swift if he knew the faces of the Men who removed the Jewellery to the Governor's House and he replied that they were the Warders. I then said (that) it is all right.

I immediately afterwards accompanied Mr. Swift to the Governor's House and there saw the whole of the Jewels and various articles which I had previously handed out of the Jewel Room perfectly safe.

[2] BL Add Mss. 40587 f 269-70.

W. F. Pierse
Supt.

Superintendent Pierse's report shows that while most published accounts of the incident state that all items were rescued except the large silver font, this piece was in fact saved and is recorded as later having been used for the baptism of the Prince of Wales. Known as the 'Royal Baptismal Font of Charles II', this piece was 3 ft. 6 in. high by 1 ft. 6 in. in diameter: another large item was the Wine Fountain measuring over 2 ft. 6 in. in height by 2 ft. 4 in. in diameter.

Another on-the-spot account of the incident was by the well-known artist George Cruikshank who, while not actually present at the time, visited the Tower the morning after the fire and was able to obtain first-hand accounts of the rescue, which he illustrated in two etchings considered to be among his finest work.[3] Cruikshank would most likely have known some of the occupants of the chamber at the time and so we can assume that his representation of the incident is reasonably accurate. His accompanying description stated:

> There stood the keeper himself, his wife at his side, partaking the peril; and the warders, whom he had summoned to the rescue. We cannot, however, portray the stifling heat and smoke; the clamour of the soldiers outside the closed portal, which the fires of the Armoury were striving to reach; nor the roar of the still-excluded flames, the clang of the pumps, the hissing of the water-pipes, the gathering feet and voices of the multitude. These are beyond the pencil.

An attempt has been made to identify the persons shown in Cruikshank's sketches by M. R. Holmes in his published account *The Crown Jewels*, but in the present author's view, inaccurately. Referring to Cruikshank's etchings he states:[4]

> Two top-hatted policemen and a Yeoman Warder stand in the foreground, the spectators' benches are crowded with men in ordinary dress, two of them holding candles to light the work of the fire officials, one of whom is attacking the grille with a fireman's axe while the other stands by with a crowbar, under the direction of a senior personage with black whiskers (probably Pierse) who appears to be giving orders while chewing a cigar or a toothpick with Palmerstonian calm. To attack the lock would be useless; they are obviously concentrating on the hinges, and the smaller engraving shows that a little later the whole section has been removed and is leaning against the wall beside the crowbar, looking extremely battered about the edges. It was Superintendent Pierse himself who climbed through the opening and handed out the Regalia. In this second engraving he has got in, and is passing one of the crowns to a colleague, while the Yeoman Warder stands ready to take charge of it, carrying the leather crown-box or *futteral* in which it is kept when in store. A large piece of plate, possibly the silver-gilt fountain, has been already extracted, and is on the bench beyond him, but it was the christening font that gave trouble. Try as he would, Superintendent Pierse could not get it through the gap, and the crowbar had to come into play, and force the bars further apart, before it could be extracted.

Looking at Cruikshank's sketches, it is clear that the only female figure in the upper view must be Mrs. Swifte, and the ten male figures consist of men all wearing top-hats but who may be distinguished as men in uniform (frock coats, buttoned-up collars, yeoman warder dress, etc. — three in all), and men in 'civilian' dress (swallow-tailed coats, cravats, etc. — seven in all), Pierse is obviously the sole figure in the lower illustration behind the grille, and in the upper sketch is probably the man on the extreme left foreground holding the large crowbar. He was 37 years of age at the time, and this corresponds. The person next to him in the upper sketch could well be Superintendent McClean of P Division who, in the lower view, could be the figure on the extreme right. Mr. Swifte, Keeper of the Jewel House, was 65 years old at the time, and in the upper illustration is probably the man wielding the axe (with his back

[3] L. Blanchard (ed.), *George Cruikshank's Omnibus*. London 1842, pp. 233-7. Illustration reproduced by permission of the British Library.

[4] J. Charlton (ed.), *The Tower of London: its Buildings and Institutions*. M. R. Holmes, Chap. 5 -- The Crown Jewels. Department of the Environment. H.M.S.O. 1978, pp. 65-6. The extract quoted here is with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

to the viewer, wearing a swallow-tailed coat, with grey hair and without 'mutton-chop' whiskers), while in the lower sketch is the man receiving the crown from Superintendent Pierse. (A portrait of Mr. Swifte painted about the turn of the century shows him as a young man in his twenties and is therefore of no great help here. He evidently had a strong face, dark hair, and a cleft chin.[5]

The figure described by M. R. Holmes as 'a senior personage with black whiskers ... (and) ... chewing a cigar or toothpick with Palmerstonian calm' cannot possibly be Pierse since this same figure is clearly seen in the lower sketch (fifth from the left) — but in neither illustration appears to have anything at all in his mouth (nor has anyone else for that matter) — while Pierse is clearly seen behind the grille and in the act of passing out a crown.

Cruikshank's account of the incident accompanying his sketches neither refers nor alludes to Pierse by name, office or action, but nevertheless, apart from the flowery, flamboyant style typical of the period, his probably remains the best account. His description of the remains of the Grand Storehouse a few hours later still makes remarkably vivid reading: 'Above was the "sky" of a November morn; and below, covering the immense sweep of the floor, heaps of fused metal, of dimensions scarcely to be credited, with bayonet-points bristling up everywhere, close-set and countless, like long blades of grass.'[6]

As to be expected, accounts were given in the press.[7] On Monday, 1st November, 1841, under the heading 'The Tower of London — Awful Conflagration', The Times gave some account but the part taken by Pierse (spelled 'Pearce') was played down. Mr. Swifte wrote to the editor the same day stating that 'The first and hasty reports … could hardly be other than inaccurate' and explained that it was solely under his direction that the Crown Jewels were saved. He was close to retirement age at the time, reportedly 'ailing and cantankerous', and no doubt heavily conscious of his responsibility as Keeper. He duly made his official report, which was presented to Queen Victoria, and reference to this was made the next day:[8]

> The report in question proceeded to show that, notwithstanding the great heat which pervaded the Jewel-room at the time, Superintendent Pearce [sic], of the H Division, having broken the iron bars in front of the regalia, succeeded in handing the new Imperial Crown and other portions of the Regalia to Mr. Swifte, the Keeper of the Regalia, by whom they were placed in the custody of several warders.

Notice was also made of the difficulty in making their final escape, for the flames from the Armoury (Grand Storehouse) completely crossed the courtyard.

Brief accounts of the incident may also be found in Lenihan's *History of Limerick*[9] and in de Lacy Bellingari's *Roll of the House of Lacy*.[10]

All writers seem to agree that it is to be regretted that no official recognition of Superintendent Pierse's bravery was ever made. In the words of Major General Sir George Younghusband, himself one-time Keeper of the Jewel House (1921):[11] 'It would be gratifying to be able to record that the hero of this adventure received some notable recognition of the service he had rendered. Truth, however, impels the confession that the deed was at the time eclipsed by the great tragedy of the burning down of the ancient Armoury, a building several centuries old with many historic associations. Later, when this conspicuous service came to light, the ardour of recompense had grown cold.' Likewise, John E. N. Hearsey, writing some forty years later (1960) stated that when the fire had burned itself out the next morning, the cloth on which the Crown Jewels had lain was found to be completely charred. He also

[5] Portrait of Edmund Lenthal Swifte by John Opie (1761-1807) in the Tate Gallery, cat. ref. No. 4066.
[6] Cruikshank, *supra*, p. 234 note.
[7] *The Times*, 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 November, 1841.
[8] *The Times*, 3 November, 1841.
[9] M. Lenihan, *Limerick; its History and Antiquities*. Dublin 1866, p. 751.
[10] De Lacy Bellingari (pseud. Ed. Harnett), *The Roll of the House of Lacy*. Baltimore USA 1928.
[11] George Younghusband, Major General, Sir, *The Jewel House*, London, 1921, p. 22.

remarked that it seemed not a little curious that Pierse, who had organized the rescue and had literally served the Crown most faithfully, himself received no official reward or recognition.[12]

It seems pointless here to correct the many individual errors made in the numerous accounts of the fire at the Tower (in any case space wouldn't permit), but since Mr. M. R. Holmes's account is in a Government publication, perhaps it should be pointed out that he makes a mistake in stating that the Tower of London was within the City of London jurisdiction and thus the responsibility of the City Police.[13] The Tower of London was at this time (and still is) outside the City boundaries and quite properly came within the jurisdiction of H Division Metropolitan Police. However, the City Police did attend the fire, a strong body acting under the orders of Inspector Bradley, while the Metropolitan Police was represented by about 200 to 300 men under the orders of Superintendents Pierse and May and Inspectors McClean and Wallar.[14]

It may be of interest to supplement this account with some biographical information and a sequel. William Fitzmaurice Pierse himself was an Irishman, born in 1804 at Newcastle West, Co. Limerick, the second child to John Fitzmaurice Pierse of Listowel, Co. Kerry and his wife Johannah, née O'Brien of Newcastle West.[15] The family emigrated to England about 1821 and originally settled in the Finsbury area, then part of Middlesex. Evidently the Duke of Wellington (himself an Irishman) was the young man's patron,[16] and Pierse entered Sir Robert Peel's newly formed Police Force at an early age. (It is of interest that the Duke of Wellington became Constable of the Tower of London in 1826 and Pierse must have joined the Metropolitan Police when it was formed in 1829.) The early records of the Police Force are fragmentary but entries in the registers show that he was promoted to Sergeant on the 29 September, 1829 (Warrant No. 1887), to Inspector on 28 April, 1830, and to Superintendent about 1836.[17]

Early records for H Division are sparse but fortunately the records of adjacent Wapping (Thames) Division, formed in 1798, have survived and provide some information.[18] From the Occurrences Book for 1839 it is reported that on 2 November Superintendents Pierse of H Division and Evans of the River Police surveyed the London Docks in order to ascertain what additional force would be necessary to make the Division more efficient. A later entry (24 March, 1840) relates to a police constable charged with using improper language and action left for Pierse to deal with: 'Supt. Pierse says he merely wishes him reprimanded and cautioned'. On Friday 3 April, 1840, Superintendents Pierse and Evans were 'to attend Scotland Yard tomorrow relative to the London Dock Police by order of Mr. Mayne'. (Mr. — later Sir Richard — Mayne together with Charles Rowan, were the original Commissioners appointed by Sir Robert Peel, and are regarded as the 'real architects of the Metropolitan Police'.)[19] Later entries (6 August, 1841) refer to Superintendents Pierse and Evans making enquiries 'about the steamer that took "Louis Napoleon Buonaparte" from this Country', and to a report ordered by Mr. Mayne regarding a Thames Division boat, the board of survey to be composed of Superintendents Russell, Pierse and Steel of R, H and F Divisions, respectively.[20]

On the 6 September, 1831, William F. Pierse married Elizabeth Dede, then of Spital Square, at St. Botolph Without, Bishopsgate Church, the witnesses being relatives of the bride.[21] From local parish records it appears that the Dede family were of Huguenot descent and silk manufacturers in Spital

[12] John E. N. Hearsey, *The Tower*. London, 1960, p. 226.
[13] M. R. Holmes, *supra*, p. 65.
[14] *The Times*, 1 November, 1841.
[15] BL Add Mss 38019, Tab. 597c (94).
[16] Lenihan, *supra*. p. 751.

[17] PRO (Kew), HO 65/26. His name and rank also appear in Pigot's (Court) and PO (Official Section) Directories between 1833 and 1847.

[18] I am indebted to P.C. (199) D. Lines of the Thames Division Metropolitan Police for drawing my attention to these entries in the Station's Occurrences Book in the first place, and to the Division's Superintendent M. E. Allen for kindly granting permission to quote them in this article.

[19] David Ascoli. *The Queen's Peace* (The Origins and Development of the Metropolitan Police 1829-1979) London 1979, p. 2.

[20] Thames Division Metropolitan Police Occurrence Book, *supra*.

[21] Parish Register, Marriages, St. Botolph Without, Bishopsgate. James (probably the bride's father) and Mary Ann Dede were witnesses to the marriage. The Baptism Registers for the same church include many other references to members of the Dede family.

Square.[22] The young couple set up home in No. 1 Princes (now Princelet) Street, later removing across the road to No. 17 which they occupied with a servant girl named Mary Peacock.[23] They had eight children in all, the first six being baptized in nearby Christ Church, viz: Maurice de Lacy (b. 1832), Elizabeth (b. 1833), Amelia (b. 1836), Florence Johannah (b. 1838), Marian O'Brien (b. 1839), Kathleen (b. 1841), William Fitzmaurice (b. 1843—d. 1847) and Alice Emma (b. posthumously, 1846).

The area covered by H Division was centred around the Tower Hamlets district and included Spitalfields, Whitechapel and Bethnal Green. One Police Station (or 'Office') was in Lambeth Street and later records refer to one in Church Street.[24] As already noted, early Police records are somewhat fragmentary, but from later accounts it would appear that life in the force was both active and strenuous. Compared with other Divisions (there were initially only six Inner Divisions but by May 1830 these had been extended to seventeen),[25] H Division was a particularly onerous one at this time of extreme poverty, unemployment, and the rise of Chartism (at that time regarded as a menace), etc. and the crime rate was higher than elsewhere in the Metropolis.[26] It has been stated that, during the 1800s, assaults on the police in H Division were more frequent than any other in the Metropolitan Police, although, curiously, H Division had less beggars than any other Inner Division.[27]

After his exertions at the Tower in the autumn of 1841, Pierse's health steadily declined and, on the 1st February, 1846, after six months of inflammation of the brain followed by three days of apoplexy, he died at the early age of 42. His brother-in-law Charles de Lacy Nash, a solicitor, married to his sister Mary, was present at the death: he was buried in nearby Christ Church graveyard.

[22] The name originally had a grave accent and was spelt Dède. Entries in the church registers of Saint Jean Spitalfields (1687-1827) refer to members of the Dede family from Abraham (1697) to Catherine and Pierre (1796); see publications of the Huguenot Society of London. Vol. 39 (1938). The name James Dede (probably that of the bride's father) appears in Robson's (Commercial), Kent's (London), P.O. (Crickett & Woods) and Pigot's (London, Provincial and Metropolitan) directories from 1822 to 1828 as a silk manufacturer at 17 Spital Square. From 1836, James Dede appears described as a stationer and account book maker at 58 Bishopsgate Street Without, and an entry Jane Dede, School, 12 Wood Street, Spitalfields, appears in Pigot's Directory for 1836. Wood Street, now Wilkes Street, was at the corner of Princes Street (where the Pierses were later to set up home) and contained a Protestant school.

[23] Census returns 1841.

[24] PRO, *supra*.

[25] Ascoli, p. 181.

[26] Henry Mayhew. *London Labour and the London Poor*. London 1851. Vol. 4, *passim*.

[27] J. Ashley. *A Short History of H Division, Metropolitan Police*, Liverpool 1979, p. 13. I am grateful to Colm Kerrigan for supplying this reference.

The Jewel House in 1841 from Knight's, London

His young widow (she was then aged only 31), with a family of eight children to bring up of ages ranging from 14 years to only six months, found herself in a desperate plight. This was not unnoticed by their kindly neighbours and the following public appeal was issued — no doubt under the sponsorship of the Rev. William Stone, Rector of Christ Church, Spitalfields who knew Superintendent Pierse and his family well.[28]

LONDON, FEBRUARY 1846.

> SOME Friends of the late Mr. WILLIAM FITZMAURICE PIERSE, the much-respected Superintendent of the H Division Metropolitan Police, finding on investigation that he has left his Widow and Eight young Children unprovided for, have resolved to solicit his private Friends, the Inhabitants of the District, and any benevolent individuals, to assist her in giving her Children the maintenance and education, of Mr. Pierse had been engaged in the Metropolitan Police fifteen years; but, according to the regulations of the Force, his Widow and Children did not become entitled to any provision or Pension whatever. In consideration, then, of his public duties, and in consideration, too, that the seeds of disease which prematurely terminated his existence were sown in discharging those duties, his Friends feel that they may be permitted to solicit your assistance. Without referring in detail to his uniform endeavours to discharge them efficiently, they feel justified in recalling to recollection, that in the year 1840 much alarm existed throughout the Metropolis, and particularly in the Eastern Districts, owing to the formidable demonstrations of the Chartists, and their intention to have recourse to physical force and the destruction

[28] BL Add Mss 40587, f268 f & v.

of public property in those Districts. As their principal places of rendezvous were in Spitalfields and Bethnal Green, within Mr. Pierse's District, he was incessantly engaged in opposing them, and after many nights and days of unceasing anxiety and toil, was the individual who, by his personal intrepidity, — being the first to enter a building in which were assembled 1500 secretly-armed Chartists, and assisting in capturing twenty of the Leaders, — gave the deathblow to Chartism in that part of the Metropolis.

They desire also to recall to recollection Mr. Pierse's extraordinary exertions at the memorable Fire at the Tower of London, on which occasion he was the principal means, at imminent personal risk, of preserving to the country, the Crown, and other Regalia of England, from the flames with which they were surrounded.

The promptitude with which he attended to all complaints of the Inhabitants of his District, his anxiety and readiness, at all times, and on all occasions, to protect their persons and property, and his unwearied exertions to promote quietness and good-feeling in his District, will, his Friends earnestly hope, be duly appreciated, and be felt as additional inducements to all who can estimate character and worth in his position, to assist in promoting the object in view, that of providing his Widow with the means of commencing a business, in which she may be enabled, by industry and perseverance, to maintain and educate his interesting and helpless family.

The following Gentlemen have kindly undertaken to promote this object, and to receive Donations from all who may be benevolently disposed to unite with them:-

REV. WILLIAM STONE, Rector of Christchurch, Spitalfields.
MESSRS. TRUMAN, HANBURY, BUXTON, & CO., Spitalfields.
THOMAS MIDWINTER, Esq., Churchwarden of the Parish of Christchurch, Spitalfields.
THOMAS BRUSHFIELD, Esq., Treasurer of the Parish of Christchurch, Spitalfields.
REV. W. WELDON CHAMPNEYS, Rector of St. Mary, Whitechapel.

> This Rev. Gentleman has kindly appended to his name the following recommendation:- "Having on very many occasions experienced the kind readiness of the late Mr. PIERSE to assist me, and being able to bear my personal testimony to his efficient services, I earnestly recommend the case of his Widow to the notice of the benevolent, and shall thankfully receive any subscriptions."

THOMAS LULHAM, Esq., Churchwarden of the Parish of St. Mary, Whitechapel.
THOMAS MIERS, Esq., do. do. do.
G. S. WALLIS, Esq., Vice-Chairman of the Board of Guardians of the Whitechapel Union.
CHARLES MEARS, Esq., Bell Foundry, Whitechapel.
JAMES SPENCELEY, Esq., Trustee of the Parish of St. Mary, Whitechapel.
J. F. KIRBY, Esq., Trustee of the Parish of St. Mary, Whitechapel.
JOS. PATTRICK, Esq., do. do. do.
G. T. CROFT, Esq., do. do. do.
REV. W. QUEKETT, Incumbent of Christ Church, St. George in the East.
WM. STUTFIELD, Esq., Treasurer to the Board of Guardians, St. George's East.
W. L. HOWELL, Esq., Vestry Clerk, St. George's East.
THOMAS STONE, Esq., Clerk to the Board of Guardians, St. George's East.
THOMAS LIQUORISH, Esq., Churchwarden of the Parish of St. George's East.
JOHN JAMES BOND, Esq., do. do. do.
PETER RAYNER, Esq., Chairman of the Board of Guardians, St. George's East.
B. F. SKELTON, Esq., Trustee and Guardian of do. do.
E. J. BATH, Esq., do. do. do.
REV. JOHN GARWOOD, Incumbent of St. Mary, Spital Square.
WM. BRANDON, Esq., Churchwarden of do. do.
THOMAS MASON, Esq., Vestry Clerk of do. do.
JOSEPH FRENCH, Esq., 18 Norton Folgate.

In addition to the above Gentlemen, Messrs. HANBURY, TAYLOR, & LOYD, Bankers, 60, Lombard Street, have kindly consented to receive any Donations forwarded to them; and Communications addressed to Mr. RICHARD SWIFT (Secretary to the Fund), 87, Hatton Garden, will be immediately attended to.

The following year the widow and children removed from Princes Street to No. 105 Bishopsgate Street Without and here, in May, 1847, the second son of the marriage and his father's namesake William Fitzmaurice Pierse died aged 3 years 9 months.

In the meantime. Charles de Lacy Nash, brother-in-law, wrote to Sir Robert Peel on the 17th March, 1846, explaining the plight of the family and drawing attention to the fact that there appeared to be no pension for police officers in this situation and mentioned that doubtless the anxieties and pressures in his work had contributed to his premature death. He wrote again on the 20th March reiterating the circumstances and appealed for assistance. This last letter was answered by Mr. (later Sir) William H. Stephenson (Private Secretary to Sir Robert Peel from 1841-7), indicating that a pension of £100 per annum had been awarded to the widow and her family — which would have been about half-pay for a Superintendent. Evidently the normal allowance for police officers to go towards funeral and mourning expenses was £100 — and this had already been paid. A final letter from Charles de Lacy Nash revealed that he had been advised that at just about the time that Superintendent Pierse had died, the Commissioners were in fact arranging a long leave of absence to him and were providing for him to have a pension![29] Whether the anxiety, sorrow and humiliation of recent events had proved too much for Mrs. Pierse we cannot tell, but the family disappeared from the area soon afterwards and no subsequent records of them in the district can now be found. Among other relatives, William had a younger brother George Pierse, who was born in either Listowel or Newcastle West in 1816, and worked as a Watchman in the London Docks: he died a bachelor at No. 5 Clark Street, Mile End Old Town in November, 1851, his sister Mary (wife of Charles Nash) being present at the death. It may be of interest, however, to record that in or about 1870, two great-aunts of the present writer (descended from John Patrick Pierse of Greenwich, another younger brother to Superintendent Pierse), were visited separately by an elderly lady (apparently a lace worker) with her son and daughter who had come over from the Continent (France or Belgium) as relatives. From the descriptions given to the present writer, they fitted Mrs. Elizabeth Pierse, who would have then been about 73, and her son Maurice, then aged about 54, and one of the younger daughters. It is possible that, after the sadness and humiliation of recent events, the family had emigrated sometime between 1847 and 1851, but returned some twenty or so years later to visit their old home and make contact with relatives.

Further Reading

In the compilation of this article, many reference works were consulted. The following (in date of publication order) are additional to those cited in the text, and may be read to supplement the otherwise abbreviated account given here.

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H. J. Taylor and H. M. Colvin (Gen. ed.). *A History of the King's Works*. Vol. 6 (1782-1851). H.M.S.O. London, 1973, pp. 490-1.
D. Wilson. *The Tower (1078-1978)*. Merlin Books) Ltd. (Braunton), 1983. £1.75.

[29] BL Add Mss 40587, f. 271-5v.

John H Pierse and Pádraig de Brún

The battle of Liscarroll in 1642 was decisive. Several descriptions of the action exist (see below), seen mainly from the 'English' point of view. Few contemporary accounts have come down to us giving the 'Irish' viewpoint, but the following extract gives a pithy summary of the event:

> Así in bliadhuin sin … tarla coimheasgor idir Gaoidhiolaibh 7 Goíll leath ar leath a Lios Cearbuill, áit ar briseadh do Chlannuibh Gaoidhiol 7 ar marbadh Oilifér og Sdíbinn 7 Uatear mc Riocaird mc Uilliam o Cill Lonáin 7 Domnall O Bríain i mc Domnaill mc Toirrdhealbhaigh charraigh 7 ro morán oile nach airmhightéar annso. Do gabadh ann fós Coirinel Builtear .i. mc Tighearna Uí Coirín. Do cailleadh ann fós gunna mór ro ainmiomhuil rénar baineadh caisleain conntaé Luimnigh dona Gallaibh do bhí ro láidir ionnta 7 nach roibhe seasamh ag caislean ar bith ris más fíor. Do cailleadh ann fós morán darmáil maith oile 7 deadáil, deadach 7 do lón 7 deachuibh… .[1]
>
> ['That is the year … in which a battle took place between Gaeil and Gaill at Lios Cearbhaill, where Clanna Gael were defeated and Oiliféar Óg Sdíbhinn and Uaitéar mac Riocaird mhic Uilliam of Cill Lonáin and Domhnall Ó Briain mac Domhnaill mhic Thoirdhealbhaigh Charraigh and very many others not mentioned here were killed. Colonel Butler, son of the Lord of Uí Choirín, was captured there. Also lost there was the celebrated great gun with which the castles of Co. Limerick were taken from very strong enemy forces and which reputedly no castle could withstand. Much other excellent armament and goods and apparel and victuals and horses were also lost there …'.]

One of those 'many others not mentioned' who were killed there is the subject of the poem presented here. Not much detail has come down regarding the 'Irish' combatants involved: clearly a representative force of Kerrymen took part, but in general their names and rôles in the action have not been recorded. This makes this surviving account all the more valuable in redressing the imbalance in available contemporary reportage and helping us to understand what actually did take place.

Biographical Notes

Garret Pierse, the subject of this poem, was the son—probably the only son—of Patrick Pierse of Aghamore (par. Killahan, bar. Clanmaurice), Co. Kerry, by his wife Joan. In a privately-owned Latin genealogical manuscript on vellum prepared by the Irish Franciscans at Prague for Col. Richard Pierse (1718-74) of the Austrian service on the occasion of his presentation to the Empress Maria-Theresa in 1767, Joan (or Johanna) Hussey is stated to have been 'the daughter of Nicholas Hussey, Baron of Galtrim, and of Juliana MacCarthy, daughter of the Earl of Muskerry. This Nicholas was the descendant of the Baron of Galtrim [and also of] the Earl of Minooth'.[2]

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* Published in *Journal of the Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society*, 20, (1987) 5-27.

[1] Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Fairfax 29, f. 173 v, part of colophon dated 10 March 1642[/3]. We are obliged to Professor Brian Ó Cuív for this item. (Manuscript briefly described in F. J. Byrne, *A thousand years of Irish script* (Oxford 1979) § 20.)

[2] '… Filia Dmi Nicolai Hussy Baronis de Galtrym et Juliana Mac Carty Comitis de Muskerry. Qui Nicholas Hussy [ortusl fuit ex Barone de Galtrym […] Comitis Minuth' ('Seize-quartiers' of Col. Richard Pierse, in possession of Dr Dermot Pierse of Surrey).

The Aghamore branch of the Pierses, themselves scions of the FitzMaurices, barons of Kerry and Lixnaw, were closely related to the senior family seated at Ballymacaquim castle (adjacent townland), the demesne of which in earlier times included the townland of Aghamore.[3] The senior representative of the family at this time was John mac James Pierse of Ballymacaquim (*c*. 1600 - pre 1682), Garret's first cousin, their fathers being the eldest and second sons respectively of John Óg Pierse (1541-1611). Garret's father, Patrick mac Shane Óg ('Padrigine') Pierse, was born about 1572 and while a young man 'joined James the pretended earl of Desmond against King James I at Knockod [Knockroe?], Co. Limerick, on 14 October 1598', and was killed fighting the English at Kilmallock the following 18 December. He was attainted of high treason and his estates were escheated to the Crown.[4]

Garret himself was born probably about the time of his father's death and thus would have been in his early forties when the 1641 rebellion broke out. Nothing much of his life is known. His name appears occasionally in legal documents, principally as being the son and heir of his attainted father; one such record tantalisingly ends 'Finally they [the jurors] state that Gerald [Garret] M^{c}Patrick [Pierse] … of Aghamore and now aged either […]',[5] the next two, and last, lines being completely missing. His name appears in the 1631 petition concerning Fr Dominic O Daly among the nobility, citizens and townsmen of the diocese of Ardfert as 'Geraldus Diersy de Aghmore' (or as 'Gerald Deasy, of Aghmore'— according to transcription), sandwiched between his kinsman Nicholas Dall (Pierse), the harper, and Walter Hussey, son of Edmond Hussey, M.A., possibly a kinsman to his wife.[6]

He is referred to in the depositions associated with the 1641 rebellion, in which he clearly took an active part, being specifically named as: 'Garret MacPatrick, *alias* Pierse, near Ballinfroyne [Ballymacaquim] in the same county, gent', one of the besiegers of Tralee castle from 14 February 1641 (Love); 'Garret Pierse of Aghamore, gent.' (Blennerhassett); 'Captain Garret MacPatrick FitzGerald of Aghamore, in the barony of Clanmaurice, gent., slain at Liscarrol' (Dethick); and 'Garret MacPatrick of Aghamore, gent.' (Vauclier).[7] For remarks regarding his possible burial place, see under Lisgarret fort, below.

The names of his widow and son appear in the lists of forfeiting papist proprietors and those to be transplanted into Connacht as 'Patrick Pearce of Aughmore', 'Patrick Pyers of Aghamore', 'Patrick Peirs of Aghamore Irish Papist', 'Joane Hussey, alias Pearsey of Aghamore', 'Pattrick Peirse, Aghamore' and 'Pat. Pieirce & Joane Hussey als peirce her Joynture'. Their lands comprised Aghamore (154 acres), Ballincrossig (211 acres) and a part share in lands about Rattoo, all of which went to Trinity College, Dublin, or to Lord Colooney.[8] In the 1659 census for Clare county and in the barony of Ibrickane and borough of Enish in the parish of Killumry [Kilmurry] we find the townland of Ballymackea, the 'titulado' being 'Patrick Pierce, gent'. Other north Kerry names,

[3] J. H. Pierse, 'The origin of the Pierse family of Co. Kerry', in ***Jn. Kerry Arch. and Hist. Soc.***, 5 (1972) 14-32.

[4] Public Record Office, Dublin, Inquisitions James I, no. 15 of 1619.

[5] Ibid.

[6] B. Jennings (ed.), *Wadding papers 1614-38* (Ir. MSS Comm. 1953) 517-18; earlier printings in W. M. Brady, *The episéopal succession in England Scotland and Ireland A.D. 1400 to 1875* II (Rome 1876) 55-7; *Cork Hist. and Arch. soc. Jn*. 5 (1899) 18-20 n. 23; *Kerry Arch. Mag*. 4 (1918) 266.

[7] M. Hickson, *Ireland in the seventeenth century or the Irish massacres of 1641-2 …*11 (London 1884) 104, 112, 117, 126.

[8] Post-1641 records relating to Kerry: TRANSPLANTERS' CERTIFICATES (1653): M. A. Hickson, *Selections from old Kerry records* 2nd series (London etc. 1874) 31-6; J. O'Hart, *The Irish and Anglo-Irish landed gentry when Cromwell came to Ireland …* (Dublin 1884) 350-51; CIVIL SURVEY (1654-6): R. C. Simington, *The Civil Survey, A.D. 1654-6* IV (Ir. MSS Comm. 1938) 495-503; M. J. Byrne, *Kerry Arch. Mag*. 1 (1911) 357-68, and *Cork Hist. and Arch. Soc. Jn*. 17 (1911) 20-22; P. de Brún, no. 12 (1979) 9-18 above; LIST OF PAPIST PROPRIETORS IN 1656: Hickson, 36-7; O'Hart, 286-93; BOOKS OF SURVEY AND DISTRIBUTION (1677): Public Record Office, Dublin; Hickson, 38-44.

such as Stack, FitzMaurice and Joy, are to be found in the barony of Moyferta, immediately to the north.[9]

It seems that if in fact Joan Pierse and her son Patrick were transplanted, like many other north Kerry persons, they returned to Clanmaurice soon afterwards. Whilst the name of Joan Hussey or Pierse is no longer found in the records, several notices, some signed 'Patrick Pierse of Aughamore', appear in the records of Trinity College from 1667 until 1682, when they cease.[10]

The 1641 Rebellion

Much has already been written on the rebellion which broke out in the north on 23 October 1641, principally under the leadership of Sir Felim O Neill, and it is not proposed here to go over the same ground again. Comprehensive histories give an overall account of the wars,[11] printed depositions provide detailed accounts of the atrocities committed on both sides,[12] and county histories supply details of actions and persons within their boundaries.[13] But what seems to be lacking in order to understand the events described in the poem and the persons and families mentioned is a brief sketch, drawing on these sources but highlighting details touched on by the poet and illuminating areas where he takes background knowledge by his audience for granted. This the following narrative is intended to provide.

After the initial outbreak, the rebellion spread rapidly south, until by December the whole country was involved. The inhabitants aligned themselves according to their sympathies, which roughly—and perhaps over-simply—can be identified as 'Irish' ('natives', Catholics and royalists) and 'English' ('foreigners', Protestants and parliamentarians). The president of Munster, Sir William St Leger, arrayed the province, appointing his son-in-law Lord Inchiquin (Murrough mac Dermot O Brien— 'Murrough of the burnings', 1st Earl) as commander-in-chief of the 'English' forces—the parliamentarians. During January 1641/2, the 'Irish' in the province came under the general leadership of Lord Muskerry (Donough mac Cormac *Óg* MacCarthy, 10th Lord Muskerry and Baron of Blarney) and formed their men into regular troops and companies, the command being given to Lord Mountgarret (Richard Butler, 3rd Viscount).

In Kerry, Patrick fitz Thomas FitzMaurice, 19th Baron of Kerry and Lixnaw, was appointed in charge of the county by St Leger, and Pierce Ferriter was given command and provided with arms and provisions. Ferriter soon joined the rebels, taking his men and arms with him, and Lord Kerry, foreseeing an untenable situation for himself, abandoned his charge and fled to England. His half-brothers, Colonels Edmund and Gerald FitzMaurice, also joined the rebels under the local leadership of Florence MacFineen MacCarthy of Ardtully, known as Captain Súgán, who was appointed governor of Kerry in the rebel cause and whose younger brother, Felim MacFineen MacCarthy of Kenmare, was elected high sheriff of the county. Other leaders of old Kerry families became captains, raising and leading their own groups of insurgents.

From early February 1641/2, the two ('great' and 'small') castles of Tralee were besieged—the rebels according to deponent Love included Captain Garret Pierse of Aghamore—followed by Castlemaine and other strongholds. On 19 February, Captain Súgán and his brother Donough (or

[9] S. Pender (ed.), *A census of Ireland, circa 1659* … (Ir. MSS Comm. 1939) 188, 184.

[10] TCD MUN/P/23/514-613.

[11] P. J. Corish, 'The rising of 1641 and the catholic confederacy, 1641-5', A new history of Ireland 111 (ed. T. W. Moody, F. X. Martin, F. J. Byrne, Oxford 1976) 289-316.

[12] Hickson (note 7), especially pp. 95 (dep. Southwell), 26-7 (Browne), 103-6 (Love), 107-110 (Vines), 112-14 (Blennerhassett), 114-18 (Dethick), 119-20 (Spratt), 125-7 (Vauclier), 127-131 (Kelly), 131-4 (Frith).

[13] For Kerry, C. Smith, *The antient and present state of the county of Kerry* (Dublin 1756) 300-314; for Limerick, M. Lenihan, *Limerick; its history and antiquities* (Dublin 1866) 143-55; for Cork, C. Smith, *The ancient and present state of the county and city of Cork* (Dublin 1750) I, 324-6; II, 131-9.

Daniel) quitted the siege, and with their followers joined the large army of their kinsman Lord Muskerry, which was then in Carbery but proceeding east to lay siege to Cork. Here, at Rochfordstown, the insurgents under Lord Muskerry and General Garret Barry were outwitted by Inchiquin, and Captain Súgán, 'who had fought very valiantly and received seven or eight shot in the body', was killed on 13 April 1642. (His brother, 'major Mac Fineen', along with several other Kerrymen, was three years later taken prisoner at Knocknaclashy, Co. Cork.) Meanwhile, the siege of Tralee continued under the command of Captain Ferriter, later to be joined by Captains James Browne and Donogh MacGillicuddy.

The main confederate army retreated to Limerick, where in June the city was taken along with stores, artillery and ammunition. On 2 July, St Leger died and was succeeded by Inchiquin as lord president of Munster, who immediately stepped up the action. In Limerick county, the insurgents were joined by Patrick Purcell of Ballycarrig and Oliver Stephenson of Dunmoylan. They used their heavy artillery to reduce several Limerick castles which had not yet surrendered, Askeaton being one of the last to fall. The contingent from north Kerry may have joined up with the main confederate army in the attack on Askeaton in July (with the surrender of the castle on the following 14 August), although few Kerrymen are among those listed as having taken part in the siege.[14]

On 20 August, General Barry moved southwards with 500 horse, 6,000 foot and the captured artillery to attack Liscarroll castle. They marched from the area of Feenagh with their three-ton 'battering-piece' mounted in a hollowed-out tree-trunk, drawn by twenty-five yoke of oxen over bogland where wheels could not pass, through Kilbolane and Knockardbane to an elevated site to the east of the castle known as Stephen's Rock.[15] They arrived here on Tuesday, 30 August, and 'planted their cannon on a rocky hill to the south-east of the castle and within musket-shot [say 200 to 400 yards] of it'. Sergeant Thomas Raymond and thirty men who were defending the castle 'surrendered in the afternoon of Friday, 2nd September, though he [Raymond] was promised relief the next morning'.

Inchiquin, knowing that with the onset of winter and diminishing provisions further prolongation of the rebellion would be disastrous, set out the same day to fight, rendezvousing that night at Buttevant, four miles distant from Liscarroll. His army amounted to 600 horse, 2,400 foot and six pieces of field ordnance. Thus the two armies prepared for the battle which took place the following day.

Liscarroll

Liscarroll ringfort, thirteenth-century castle, village, ancient church and burial ground lie in this order southwards of the river Awbeg, which winds its way more or less west-eastwards at this point, eight miles or so from the Cork-Limerick border. The village itself lies in a shallow bowl surrounded by low-lying hills (400 feet) on the east and west, with higher rising ground (600 feet) flanking a central shallow valley to the south which slopes gently downwards and northwards to the marshy ground between the castle and the river. Geologically, the immediate area about the village is limestone surrounded on the north, south and west by coal measures (Yoredale and millstone grit). The low-lying and marshy ground to the north of the castle and beyond is interlaced with small streams arising from numerous springs draining into the river.

[14] J. T. Gilbert (ed.), *History of the Irish Confederation and the war in Ireland* … II (Dublin 1882) 52-3.

[15] Stephen's Rock is a comparatively modern cognomen and is taken from 'Big Stephen' Wigmore, who owned land there; it has nothing to do with Oliver Stephenson, or Stephen, as he is sometimes referred to in the records (information from Mr Denis O'Connell of Liscarroll).

To the south lie rocky outcrops and north-south running fissures and faults in the limestone beds, some forming deep holes and caverns.

The geological features clearly determined the communication routes, and at the time of the rebellion a system of trackways or rough roads would have existed much as we find today (*Fig.* 1). A roughly east-west road lay immediately to the south of the castle, as shown (although crudely) by Smith (1750),[16] doubtless curving round the rocky eruption known today as The Rock. The road pattern depicted by Vallancey (1784)[17] is much the same as that drawn by Taylor and Skinner (1777)[18] and Bath (1811),[19] all showing the triangular junction immediately to the west of the castle.[20] Rocky disturbances on the summits of certain of the surrounding hillocks may indicate sites of strategically-placed defensive works constructed by the confederates immediately prior to the battle.

Liscarroll castle has been described as 'the strongest fortress in the province', 'the most important erection of the thirteenth century as yet noted in County Cork and the third largest of the period in Ireland'.[21] It was originally held (and probably built) by the de Barry family, but at the time of the rebellion belonged to Sir Philip Percival. Shortly before the insurrection, Percival had surrounded the whole castle by 'a strong covered wall, well flanked and pallisadoed according to the modern style of fortification'.[22] He had also erected a ravelin (crescent-shaped protective wall) before the great gate, and on the north side of the castle had 'cast up a very strong intrenchment, in the nature of a crown work, which took up a large extent of ground, and preserved the castle and provisions of the garrison …'.[23] The actual battle of Liscarroll did not largely involve the castle, the decisive action actually taking place in a meadow immediately to the west, but the possession and occupation obviously played an important supportive rôle to the confederates.

The Battle

Like the entire rebellion itself, several accounts of the battle of Liscarroll have been published or are available in manuscript, ranging from eye-witness accounts and reports in the form of letters sent within a few days of its actual occurrence, to more modern studies, which, as might be expected, agree in some places and disagree in others.

Probably the best contemporary account from the 'English' point of view is that by a writer identified as 'a worthy gentleman who was present at the action',[24] which may be compared with a short tract printed by 'L. N.' for William Ley (1642) which incorporates a letter dated 9 September 1642 from Thomas Johnson to his friend in London.[25] Smith (1750)[26] gives an account

[16] Map, frontispiece to vol. I.

[17] C. Vallancey, 'Military survey of north Co. Cork', 1784-5 (British Library, King's Topographical Coll. 51 31-2, 6 Tab. 39; other copies in National Library of Ireland and Trinity College, Dublin).

[18] *Taylor and Skinner's maps of the roads of Ireland*, surveyed 1777 (London and Dublin 1778).

[19] N. Bath, *The county of Cork, surveyed by order of the Grand Jury of the county* (Cork, 20 Feb. 1811).

[20] Earlier, nearer contemporary, maps (Down Survey [1654-7] (vol. I no. 98, bar. Orrery and Kilmore) and Egmont Papers estate maps [1702] (British Library Add. MSS 47043 (f. 6) and 47049) are useless here in that (a) only unforfeited (i.e. Percival) lands are shown and (b) roads are omitted.

[21] See H. G. Leask, 'Liscarroll castle', *Cork Hist. and Arch. Soc. Jn*. 42 (1937) 92-5.

[22] Smith, *Cork* (note 13) II, 135.

[23] *ibid.*

[24] J. Buckley, 'The battle of Liscarroll, 1642', *Cork Hist. and Arch. Soc. Jn*. 4 (1898) 83-100, p. 93.

[25] *ibid*., 97-8 n. 12.

[26] See note 13.

which had been said variously to be largely based on the writings of Carte,[27] Borlase[28] and Bellings,[29] but whose description of the deployment of the forces so closely follows that by the 'worthy gentleman who was present at the action' as to suggest a direct copy from this account or from Carte, who himself appears to have drawn from the same source.

From the 'Irish' side, the description of the battle contained in the 'Aphorismical discovery of treasonable faction' touches little on the actual battle itself but supplies valuable contemporary detail—in particular the curious affair leading to the eventual death of Oliver Stephenson during the battle, 'whereby the Irish of Monster not onely the day but theire courage lost for ever after, this gentleman beinge theire onely champion'.[30]

The detailed study by James Buckley published in 1898[31] incorporates all this material and must form the present 'standard' account of the battle, although another important report which he does not include because of prior publication is an extract from 'A most exact relation of the great victory obtained by the poor protestants … against the rebells', being a letter sent by Tristam Whetcombe, mayor of Kinsale, to his brother in London, dated 16/29 September 1642, which contains important information not available elsewhere. This with other matter was added as historical notes by Copinger to his edition of Smith published in 1893.[32] For more modern accounts, however, we may turn to Barry O'Brien's *Munster at war* (1971) and *Portraits in leadership* (1982),[33] which, besides providing a succinct overall account of these tumultuous times in the province, give a strategic study of the battle as well as an incisive observation of Inchiquin as leader of the parliamentary army.

The brief account of the battle which follows is not intended just to repeat what has already been published, but to correlate and amplify where necessary, in order to provide a context for the lament and a supportive description to accompany the conjectural sketch-map of the battle area (*Fig.* 1).

The Irish, having taken the castle the previous afternoon, immediately set about deploying their forces to the best advantage. A cannon—probably the enormous three-ton 'battering piece'—was mounted on a rocky hill to the south-east and within musket shot (say about 300 yards) of the castle. Other ordnance pieces were mounted in 'the most opportune places' in defence works that they had erected. The castle itself was held by about 200 men, and teams were appointed to man the ordnance batteries. Their main army was arranged on the rising ground to the west.

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[27] T. Carte, *History of the life of James, first Duke of Ormond* I (London 1736) 343-4.

[28] E. Borlase [attrib.], *The history of the execrable Irish rebellion [from] 1641… to the Act of Settlement 1662* 1 (London 1680), particularly 83, 85-6, 88-9. 29.

[29] R. Bellings, *History of the Irish confederation and the war in Ireland, 1641-9* I (ed. J. T. Gilbert, Dublin 1882) 91-4.

[30] J. T. Gilbert (ed.), *A contemporary history of affairs in Ireland from A.D. 1641 to 1652 …* II (Dublin 1879) 36-9.

[31] Note 24.

[32] C. Smith, *The ancient and present state of the county and city of Cork* (ed. R. Day and W. A. Copinger, Cork 1893).

[33] B. O'Brien, *Munster at war* (Cork 1971) 129-36; *Portraits in leadership* Il ([Fermoy] 1982) 63-7.

The English, who had encamped at Buttevant for the night, were out and about two hours before dawn (i.e. at around 4.15 a.m.) and formed up and marched to Liscarroll, about four miles away. An advance party ('forlorn hope') of 30 horse encountered a troop of Irish scouts, who immediately turned and retreated back to their main force. At dawn, the English were within a half-mile of the castle and saw for the first time the entire Irish army laid out before them in 'perfect good order'. Preliminary artillery fire and skirmishes followed, both sides alternately

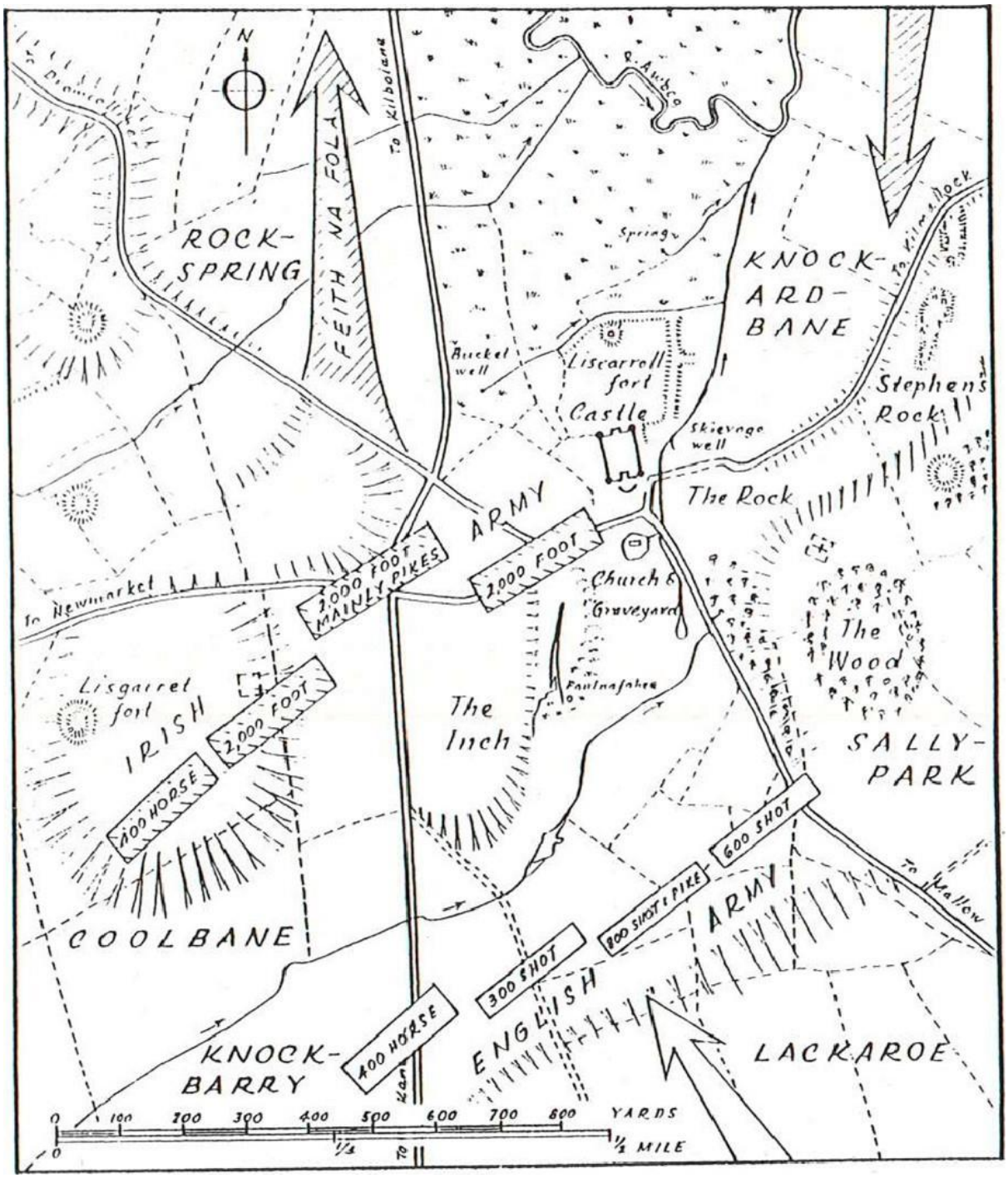

Figure 1: Sketch-map of the battle of Liscarroll, 1642
The above is a composite based on O. S. maps 6 inches (1841) and 25 inches (1896) to the mile, with road lines amended to conform with Taylor and Skinner (1777), Vallancey (1796) and Bath (1811). Field boundaries are semi-conjectural and woodland was much more extensive than as shown here.

advancing and retreating, until a company of 60 English musketeers forced the Irish back to their original position near the castle.

Both sides now prepared for battle, resolving that 'that place should decide all doubts betwixt them'. The Irish divided their foot into three bodies, each of about 2,000 men: 'the right wing was placed upon the top of a little rising ground near a fortification they had made … their left wing stood neare the castle within halfe musquet shot [say 150 yards] of another worke wherein their artillery was planted as a guard to it; betwixt these two a little behind them stood their maine body, consisting most of pikes; … the horse advanced all in one body and made a stand near their right wing upon the brow of the hill'. The English similarly divided their forces: 'our battell which was composed of pikes and musquets, being about eight hundred, stood upon a little hill where our artillery [six field pieces] was planted almost opposite to their greatest body; our right wing wherein were 600 all musqueteers, stood over against their left wing, and just opposite to their right wing [we had] three hundred musquets on the left hand of these [were] our horse to encounter theirs; thus were the two armies ranged in battalia, betweene which was a plaine flat valley interposed about twenty scoare [400 yards] in breadth'.

We are told that the battle was fought 'in a plaine field to the west of the castle', that it began 'an hour after the sunne was risen' (i.e. at about 7.30 a.m.), and that 'it continued for full seven houres', thus probably tailing off around three o'clock in the afternoon. A conjectural deployment of the opposing armies, based on the descriptions given above, is shown in *Fig.* 1; in this setting, however, with sunrise about 6.15 a.m. and sunset at around 7.45 p.m., an eye-witness's observation of the Irish that 'the sunne was for them too …' cannot be seen to have been all that much of an advantage.

The ensuing action on that fateful day may be followed in broad outline or in close detail from the references quoted, but in sum it can be said that the Irish fought valiantly ('they were brave and gallant men', quoting an English observer) under poor leadership, and were defeated; the English, although numerically inferior, had the advantage of professional officers and were fired with the knowledge that defeat would have meant the overthrow of the entire province—and eventually the whole country—to the confederates. In the final rout, which occurred about mid-afternoon, the disorganised Irish army fled northwards, hugging the western reaches of the densely marshy ground north of the castle, along a route known locally as Féith na Fola ('Vein of blood'), through wood and bog for a mile or so until they escaped in Sir William Power's bog near Kilbolane, where it was impossible to follow them. Any wounded or stragglers were straightway put to the sword.

Casualty figures vary according to the enthusiasm and political bias of the reporter and range from (English reports): Irish, 600 to 700 killed and 'not known' to 'over 1,000' wounded; and English, 6 to 12 killed and 20 to 30 wounded, 'most of them horse'. In view of the large numbers involved and of the fact that artillery was employed on both sides, these figures appear ridiculously low and disproportionate, and certainly do not accord with the poet's assertion that hundreds of his enemies lay stretched out in death around Garret Pierse (line 30) or that he himself killed twelve after losing his leg (lines 59-60). No doubt there were exaggerations on all sides.

Lisgarret Fort

The reference to the fall of eighteen 'Gearóidí' of Garret Pierse's company in line 17 of the poem is a valuable one, as is the further detail in line 122 of their dying together on a hill. Garrett Pierse was a captain in the confederate army and it is possible that he was in the cavalry section (he was armed with a sword—line 40; cf. lines 31, 36, 50 etc.), as distinguished from the pikemen and musketeers, and thus may have been stationed on the right wing on the brow of a hill (see *Fig.* 1).

In Lewis's *Topographical dictionary* (1837) it is stated that Liscarroll was then a village of 120 houses, mainly thatched, and that 'at Coolbane … is a large rath, now neatly planted, where it is said 17 of the relatives of Garret Fitzgerald, of the house of Desmond, killed in the siege of the castle, were interred'.[34] Nearly a century earlier, Smith in his *History of Cork*, writing under the general heading of Kinsale and the sub-heading Garrets Town, wrote: 'The sea-shore south of the house … is called Garretstown strand, which with the adjacent lands, were so named from the family of *Cores*, many of whom were successively named *Garret*, who were before the rebellion of 1641, proprietors of this place. When I was in *Liscarol* in the barony of Orrery, where the celebrated battle was fought, *An*. 1642, the country people shewed me a *Danish* fort, called *Lis-Garret*, which was defended by 18 of these *Cores*, who were slain and buried there'.[35]

The name Garrettstown is indeed known to derive from the recurrence of the Christian name Garret among its owners, the Anglo-Norman family of Core,[36] but it is shown by an inquisition of 30 October 1621 into the lands of John Core alias Garrett of Garretstown to have been in the possession of the Kearney family from at least 1619.[37] The identification of the eighteen who fell at Liscarroll as Cores would appear to be Smith's own deduction.

The Pierse manuscript of 1767 says of Garret Pierse that he 'was slain by the rebels against Charles I in defence of the King against [Oliver] Cromwell and for the cause of freedom and the Catholic faith; he made supreme efforts as leader of his people, he assisted the cause of justice to the utmost of his powers, and in the year 1642, was slain in battle at the place called Lisgarret i.e. the camp of the Geraldines, today […] to those the name of Gerard […] who […] there'. It is curious that the name Liscarroll is not mentioned in the document, and were it not for the qualification 'id est campus Gerardor[um]', 'Lisgarret' might have been considered a slip of the pen.

It is clear from the above that a number of warriors, probably eighteen and probably all related or of the same family, were killed in battle here in 1642 and later interred within the fort enclosure, and it seems a fair inference that they were Geraldines.

The name Lisgarret is well known locally but does not seem to occur in any map of the area. The fort is the largest of three north-south aligned ringforts half-a-mile west of the castle and three hundred yards apart. It is circular, approximately 60 yards in diameter, with a well-defined ditch and bank, and is at present planted with fir trees (Scots pine). The trees were planted at the periphery of the ring and evidently originally numbered about two dozen; some have fallen and there are now gaps, leaving only eighteen (one for each of the fallen warriors?).

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[34] S. Lewis, *A topographical dictionary of Ireland* Il (London 1837) 281.

[35] Smith 1750, I, 243; 1893 (ed. R. Day and W. A. Copinger), I, 215.

[36] Rev. T. J. Walsh, *Cork Hist. and Arch. Soc. Jn*. 66 (1961) 55.

[37] J. T. Collins, *ibid*. 65 (1960) 80. Cf. also the assignment of lands purchased by Donnough m^{c}Diermod [Mac]Carthy [Reagh] from Edmond Core alias [G]arrett in 1620 to James Kearney on 1 Nov. 1627 (E. MacLysaght, *Analecta Hibernica* 15 (1944) 146).

The Text

The poem is found in three manuscripts written in Cork in the 1820s:

A. Transcribed by Tadhg Ó Dannacha (Timothy Dannahy), the present text ending with a colophon dated September 1823.[38]
B. Transcribed by Seán Ó Dreada, 1824.[39]
C. Transcribed by Tadhg Ó Conaill, 1827.[40]

The scribe of A was, according to Pádraig Feiritéar in 1895,[41] a native of Caherciveen and a silversmith (*gobha geal*) by trade, serving his apprenticeship in Cork at the time he transcribed this manuscript, which curiously contains a number of items of north Kerry provenance.[42]

The text immediately preceding our poem in MS B is in the hand of the scribe of C, and copies B and C of the lament are very close to each other. A few of C's readings (cf. lines 37, 56, 68, 90, 98, 125) suggest, nevertheless, that it may not be a direct copy of B, but rather that it is from the same exemplar.

A's text is independent of B and C and of their supposed exemplar, and despite its erratic spelling and its misplacing of lines 93-6 between lines 90 and 91, preserves the better readings in many places (beginning with the correct date of the battle in the heading).

Lines 15, 17, 43, 54, 79, 102, 110, 111, are metrically imperfect.

The spelling is here normalised, noteworthy manuscript readings and substantive variants being given in the apparatus. Punctuation and capitalisation are editorial.

[38] Manuscript now in possession of P. de Brún; for a brief description see no. 5 (1972) 27-9 above, where the Pierse genealogy which follows our poem has been edited.

[39] Jesuit Archives, 35 Lr Leeson St, Dublin: Ir. MS 8 (described in P. Ó Fiannachta, *Clár lámhscríbhinní Gaeilge*: *leabharlanna na cléire agus mionchnuasaigh* II (Baile Átha Cliath 1980) 84-93), pp. 295-300. We are obliged to an tAth. Diarmaid Ó Laoghaire, S. J., for a transcript of the text.

[40] Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California: MS HM 4543 (description and 'incomplete index' by M. Dillon, *Éigse* 1/4 (1939 [19401) 285-304), pp. 667-8.

[41] University College, Dublin: Ferriter MS 1, pp. 456-7; pp. 108-110 Of this manuscript contain a transcript of A's text of our poem, made in 1891. Feiritéar's information on the scribe came from the latter's nephew, then living in Tralee.

[42] Cf. P. de Brún, *Filíocht Sheáin Uí Bhraonáin* (Baile Átha Cliath 1972) 64-5.

Marbhna Ghearóid mhic Phádraig Piaras, do marbhadh
i mbualadh Lios Cearbhaill, an trímhadh lá September 1642

Táinig anoir 'na rith na scéala
do chuir guais ar uaislibh 's ar éigsibh,
do chuir díbirt ar mhíltibh 's ar chéadtaibh,
do chuir buaireamh gan fuascailt ar Éirinn,
d'fhág na tíortha tinn tais tréithlag,
buartha, nimhneach, scíosmhar, déarach,
brúite, brónach, breóite, baolach,
cráite, cnaoite, claoite, céasta,
gan chomhaid ag saoithibh ná laoithe á ndéanamh,
gan cheólta caoine croí dá n-éisteacht,
gan spórt ag naoi ná ag daoinibh aosta
do ló ná d'oíche ach caoi 'gus tréanas,
do chuir méid meanmna ar Ghallaibh an Bhéarla,
do bhí go heaglach atursach traochta,
mar ba lámh ó Rí na gréine
do chuir bun os cionn ar thionscail Féidhlim.
Titim ocht nGearóidí déag in aoineacht
deireadh mustair bhí id chuideachtain thréinse,
do chuir brat bróin go deó ar Ghaelaibh
is d'fhág fá dhiachair iarthar Éireann.

Lament for Garret son of Patrick Pierse, who was killed in the battle of Liscarroll, 3 September 1642

[1] Swiftly from the east came tidings which dismayed the noble and the learned, which banished hundreds and thousands, which plunged Ireland into unrelieved anxiety,

[5] which left the countryside hurt and weakened, troubled, embittered, weary, tearful, crushed, sorrowful, sickened, exposed, tormented, wasted, beaten, tortured,

[9] no poets composing verses or lays, no pleasant hearty music listened to, no play for young or old, by day or night, but lamentation and fasting,

[13] which roused the spirits of the English-speaking foreigners, who had been fearful, weary and downcast, as if it was the hand of the Almighty that had overturned what [Sir] Felim had set in train.

[17] The fall of eighteen Garrets [?] together, last of the muster of your strong company, has placed a shroud of grief over the Irish for ever and left the west of Ireland in sorrow.

Marabhne Ghiroid mhic Pádruig A Mhic Phádruic B Mac Pádraig C Phiaruis BC
Leasa C Cearabhuill A an tochtmha lá B an tocht mhadh lá donn seachtmi C
1 ruith A roith B 3 do *om*. AB chéadaibh BC 4 ganadh A
5 teinn BC tréathlag A
9 choid A chuid BC dá MSS 10 ceólta caoinne craoi A
11 naoidhin na C ionná B 12 ioná B acht caoibhi A
13 meannamna A meanma C 14 heagulach A fhadtuirseach BC
16 bunnuscuinn ar thúnnsgull séilim A thionnsgain C
17 Tuitim BC ngireodi … anaonnfheacht A ngearóideadha … éinfheacht
BC 18 deiribh mústir bhi an chuduchtuinn A deire BC do bhí C

Dá dtugadh Saoi 'gus ard-Rf na gréine
Scóp ar bheith beó go meódhan lae dhuit,
a laoi [mo] chroi, do maoifí do laochas
’s do bhí na baill gan chaill ag Gaelaibh,
do bheidís Goill go slim a’ sléachtain
’s do bheidís cinn go tinn a’ béicigh,
do cuirfaí fuil ’na srothaibh tréana
’s do cuirfaí cuirp go tiubh chum cré leat.
Ba mhór an scannra dod namhaid do shaothar,
na céadta treascartha marbh gach taobh díot,
gan fáil seasaimh ag pearsa led bhéimibh,
dá mbrú, dá leagadh, ’s dá ngearradh ’na stéigeach.
An uair buaileadh an dá shlua faoi chéile
chum suatha ball is ceann do réabadh,
i dtosach tóra is dóibh ba bhaolach,
le faobhar t’arm dá ngearradh as a chéile.
Do ghlac eagla an t-arm go léir romhat,
gan fáil seasaimh ag pearsa dá thréine,
fuil ’na sruth a’ rith ar gach taobh díot
is fuinneamh do chlaimh dá gcloí led bhéimibh.
A laoi ghil, dob é an sceimhle do laochas,
mo dhíthchreach mar do síneadh tu féin leis—
cuirimse finné ar na céadtaibh
ag dul síos cia an taoiseach ba thréine,

[21] If the Wise and High King of Heaven had permitted you to live until mid-day, beloved one, your valour would resound and the Gaeil would not have given way,

[25] the Gaill would be abjectly submitting, heads would be shrieking in agony, you would have caused blood to run in torrents and would have consigned countless bodies to the earth.

[29] Your actions struck terror into the enemy, hundreds laid low in death all about you, none able to withstand your blows, crushed, felled, cut to pieces.

[33] When the two hosts engaged in clashing limbs and smashing heads, fearful was it to be in their vanguard, being cut asunder by the sharpness of your weapons.

[37] The whole host took fright before you, not even the stoutest being able to resist, blood running in a stream all around you, and the forceful blows of your sword laying them low.

[41] My dear one, your valour was astounding, alas that you should have fallen by it—I call hundreds for witness as to who was the staunchest leader,

21 saoi ’gus *om*. A is BC 22 meonnlao A 23 alaoi ann chraoi A laogh an BC
24 an ball A gan mhoill C 26 ceinn go teinn BC beicíg A béicic B béicig C
27/8 cuirfuidhe A cuirfidhe B cuirfídhe C 28 tuibh A tiugh BC
30 troasgurtha maramh A 32 stéagioch A stéigiodh B stéigibh C
33 ‘Nuair B buailiog A faoi a MSS ceiladh A 34 suaisga A raobu A raobadh C
36 tarum A tairm t’airm C na stéigioch A 37 reómhat AC 38 faibhuil A
39 sruith MSS 40 lead A re’d C 41 alaodhghill A 42 mar sinniog A
43 cuirim finnea ar na céatibh A finnéadh B finneídh C

45 ciarbh é an tosach gan obadh gan staonadh,
is cia bhí i mbrollach na troda 'na léadar—
do bhí an tsaoi ghlan nár mafodh an retréat air,
is choíche nár smaoin ar a dhéanamh.
49 Dob é an sceimhle dáirfribh do laochas
's do naimhde dá sineadh léd bhéimibh
's an scafach do bhí ar Ghallaibh agat fhraochnimh,
dá stróiceadh le fórsa do ghéaga.
53 D'fhúigfá an barún adhchumhach tréithlag,
millte droch-chlúmhach ar mearú céille,
le feabhas a reatha ó acfainn do ghéagse,
'na mbeadh an bhean ar easpa a céile.
57 Ba thrua sin a dtuargaint go tréan ort,
'ad bhualadh 's gan fuascailt i ngaor dhuit
's gur leagais dáiréag in éag gan téarnamh
tar éis do choise do scothadh le p'léar díot.
61 A fhlaith an mhadhma do dhíoladh éigse,
a chinn urrad na cuideachtan tréine,
a mhíl burra 's a churadh na hÉireann,
sin Clann Mhuiris gan chumas ó d'éagais.

[45] who was the commander who neither flinched nor hung back, and who was in the forefront of the fight as leader — it was the bright champion never known to retreat, or even thinking of it.

[49] Your valour was indeed awesome, as you laid low your enemies with your blows, and the mutilation [?] which your fury caused the Gaill, being torn by the force of your limbs.

[53] You would have left barons saddened and dispirited, destroyed and senseless through headlong flight from the power of your arms, and wives bereft of husbands.

[57] Pitiful their sustained pummelling of you, being beaten with no help at hand, as you had consigned a dozen to irrevocable death after your leg was shot off.

[61] Warrior prince who rewarded poets, chief of the vigorous company, fierce warrior and hero of Ireland, Clan-Maurice is powerless since you died.

45 cia air bhé BC 46 an troda mur C 47 maoibh A mhaoidhimh B maoidheamh C
48 caoi thi A smuain BC 50 léad A le'd BC
51 sgafac A aig ad traochnimh A ag ad tfhraochnimh B ag ad t'fhraéchnimh C
52 strócidh A ghéagaibh BC 53 Dfúigfeá B Dfúigféadh C adchúmhach A fhadchúmhach B fhadchumhach C 55 ratha A ghéaga C
56 mbeig A mbeith B mbiadh C easpadh chéille A 57 soin C
59 dáfheardeag A dá fhear dhéag BC 60 dhíot C
61 mhaíma do dhíoghallach A dhíolach BC
62 uirúd na cuiduchtainn A oruid B urradh C 63 amhíll burrou A a Mhál burradh C
64 cumus A cumas C

A leóghain ba chróga 's dob éachtach
a' seóladh gach tórach le faor nirt,
a bhuinneáin ba roibhreátha déanamh,
mo dhíomá do lionnán gan chéile.
Ní mhaím do shúil, cér chumtha t'éadan,
's ní mhaím do chúl, cér lonnrach péarlach,
ní mhaím gach acfainn ba chalma id ghéagaibh,
's ní mhaím id mhairbhne fairsing do ghaolta.
Gaol Carrthach is fearr do bhí in Éirinn,
gaol Gearaltach ba cheannasach le tréine,
gaol Búrcach ba chlúmhail i gcéimibh
's gaol Piarsach fuair riail nirt tar aoinne.
Gaol Mhic Mhuiris dob ursa re tíorthaibh,
's na dtrí ruidire ba chumasach i ngníomhartha;
bráthair iarla Áine is Tráigh Lí thu
's an Charrthaigh do fágadh i ndíoltaibh,
's an Charrthaigh ón mBlarnain, mo dhíth, thu,
's an Charrthaigh do fágadh sa taoide;
gaol fhir Dhútha' Ealla na bhfearachon nimhe thu,
tsleachta Sheáin na sárfhear ngroí thu,

[65] Lion brave and fierce, launching each attack with cutting strength, scion of splendid physique, my grief that your loved one is without a husband.

[69] I boast not of your eyes, though shapely your forehead, nor of your locks, though bright and pearly, nor of the stalwart power of your limbs, nor do I boast in elegy of your widespread kindred.

[73] Kinsman of MacCarthys, the best in Ireland, kinsman of Fitzgeralds, masterful in their strength, kinsman of Burkes, of illustrious dignity, and kinsman of Pierses, who prevailed beyond all.

[77] Kinsman of FitzMaurice, mainstay of the countryside, and of the three knights, of powerful deeds; kinsman of the earl of Áine and Tralee and of the MacCarthy who was left in retribution [?],

[81] of MacCarthy of Blarney, alas, and the MacCarthy left in the tide; kinsman of the chief of Duhallow of the fierce warriors [and of] the sept of Seán of the splendid men,

65 leógain BC 67 abhuíhnainn ba reóbhréahadh A bhuingeáin BC budh ró bhreágha dhéanamh B badh ré bhreÁgh C 68 leanán B
69-72 maoimh A mhaoidhim BC 69 shúll A 70 chúmhal A
71 acmhuin B acfinn C callama A calma C ghéaga B 72 mharbhinne A fairsinge C
76 aonne A aonduine B éinne C 77 urrisa A
78 trí ridire budh chumasach gníomharthaibh BC 79 Traligh A Thráighligh B
80 isa Charrthig do fágach andíoghaltibh A 'sa Chárthaic B Chárrthaig C do fágbhadh andíoghaltaibh BC
81/2 Cárrthach C 81 *'s om.* MSS Charrthuig A Charthaic B
82 isa Charrthuig do fagach A 'sa Charthaic do fágbhadh B is an Chárrthach do fágbhadh san C 83 fir Dhúthalla (etc.) MSS nímh A 84 seaguinn A

sleachta Eochaidh dob ollamh i ngníomh ghoil,
is gaol gan mearathal Stacach is Sítheach;
gaol Brianach ba chliarmhar le fíochnimh
is iarla uaibhrigh Mhaighe Nuada na saoithe,
an bharabhain ón nGalathruim aoibhinn
's na bhfear mbreá ó Dhriseán Ó gCaoimh thu,
iarla Thuamhan fuair bua gach pointe
is fhir na Lice nárbh fhuiris do chloíochtain.
Sa chúige thíos nuair scaoil na scéala,
do bhádar saoithe ar dith a gcéille,
ba theinn re Sir Feidhlim t'éagsa
's níor chúis tsuain d'Eóghan Ruadh Ó Néill tu.
A chroí gan chealg 's a chara na héigse,
do shíleas gur dhíon dom mar scéith thu
ag dul síos chum do naimhde do thraochadh,
beannacht na dtíortha 'gus guí na cléire.
Táim i ndeacair, cá mairid do thréithe
ó thit Oilibhéar croí na féile,
seabhac na ruag do rug bua gach éachta,
's ó thit Fínghin fíorghroí 'gus Féidhlim.

[85] of the race of Eochaidh, ever ready in valour, and undoubtedly kinsman of Stacks and Sheehys; kinsman of O Briens of the warlike bands, and of the proud earl of Maynooth of the sages,

[89] of the baron from pleasant Galtrim, and of the fine men from Drishane of the O'Keeffes, of the earl of Thomond, victorious in every contest, and of the lord of Lick, not easily subdued.

[93] When the news spread northwards, sages were demented, your death was sorely felt by Sir Felim and was no comfort to Eóghan Ruadh Ó Néill.

[97] Heart without guile and friend of poets, I had thought you my protector like a shield as you went to subdue your enemies, the blessing of the people and the prayers of the clergy.

[101] I know not where your virtues live since Oliver fell, the heart of generosity, hawk of the charge, peerless champion, and since stout Fínghin and Féidhlim fell.

85 Eochuig A ghuil A 86 mearbhthal C Faoidhteach BC 87 fíoch neimh B
88 uaibhrig mhaoidhnuada A uaibhric Mhaigh-nuada B uaibhricc Mhágh = nuada C
89 bharabhuinn A bharúin BC ngealathruim B ngealthruim C eibhinn A
90 nuogcaoimh A óg chloidhimh B do claoidheadh tu C
91 Tuamhann A Thuathmhúmhain B Thúadhmhúmhain C
92 fir na Licidh nár bhfuiris do chlaochtuinn A Leice BC
nár bhuras do chlaoidheadh B ná'r bhurrusa chlaóidheachan C
93 fa chuige A san chóige C shíos MSS an uaír C
95 theidhinn A thein B fir Fheidhlim etc. MSS 96 do eogan A thu B
97 achraoi gan chealag A 98 dum A dam BC mar *om*. AB tu C
99 dol B chom do naoimhdi A 100 is MSSgaoidhe A
101 áim C andeachir cai A cia BC 102 thuit MSS oilbhéar craoi A
102 thuit BC 's *om*. BC is … fíor ghraoi is A

105 A chara ghil, níor dhearmad na scéala
dá aithris i mbailte puirt na hÉireann
an eagla bhí ar Ghallaibh 'at fhéachaint,
id sheasamh is gan tapa ach it aonchois.
109 Do bhris don tslua gach cuaird nuair éagais,
do thit an crann do chaill a ghéaga,
do cailleadh Riobard ceannard tréitheach
is deaghmhac Domhnaill chórach, Éamann.
113 Do thit Gofra i dtosach an lae ghil,
fear leabhair nár chrannda 's nárbh aosta,
do thit Pilib ann, Riocard is Éamann,
do thit Murcha, Ristird is Éadbhard.
117 Mórcháis bháis, is cráite an scéal sin,
na trí Seáin do fágadh d'aondul—
Seán Brún, Seán súlghlas an péarla
is Seán an oinigh mac Muiris mhic Shéamais.
121 Mo lá leóin, mo mhórchreach éachtach,
titim na nGearóidi feóite ar aonchnoc,
is chloinne Ghráinne atá gan aonmhac
is Taidhg dob ursa le curadh dá thréine.

[105] My dear friend, unerring were the reports related in the strongholds of Ireland of the fear that gripped the Gaill on seeing you standing though having the use of only one leg.

[109] The host collapsed all around when you died, the tree fell and lost its branches; there fell Robert, proud and talented, and just Domhnall's good son Eamann.

[113] Geoffrey fell at the day's beginning, a supple man, neither feeble nor old; there also fell Philip, Rickard and Éamann, Murcha, Richard and Edward.

[117] Great cause of death, a tale of anguish, the three Seáns left [there] together, Seán Brún, noble bright-eyed Seán and the honourable Seán son of Maurice son of James.

[121] My day of sorrow, my terrible grief, the fall of the Garrets [?], withering on the same hillside, and of the clan of Gráinne [?], now without a son, and of Tadhg, a prop against the stoutest champion.

105 ghill A gheil B dhil C dhearamud A 106 poirt B 107 do bhí C ad tseachuint A ad tféachuin B ad tféachain C 108 acht ad BC t'aonchois C
110 thuit MSS 111 cailliog A cionnárd B 112 Dhómhnaill B córach MSS
113 thuit MSS góthura A Gofradh BC láoighill A gheil B 115/16 thuit MSS 115 rucurd A 116 murucha A Risteard BC Éadbhárd C 117 báis BC sgall A soin C
118 seágann do fágach A 119 sumhaIghlas A súil ghlas B súil = ghlas C
120 innig A oinic B oinig C mac Mhuiris mhic Séamuis MSS
122 tuitim BC ngireódi A nGearóideadha BC feóite *om*. A 123 chlainne BC Ghráine B 124 Taidhig A Thadhg B Tadhg C

125 A Chlann Phiarais, is diachrach bhur scéalsa—
nó an ciach díbhse gliaire na mbéimeann
faoi fhiachaibh dá stialladh 'na stéigeach? —
's is cliarbhriste an t-iartharso it éagmais.
129 Ó tá dearbh gan aiseag ar t'éagsa
's go lá an bhreatha ná glacfair an daonnacht,
guím na heaspail 's na haingil le chéile
mar dhíon dot anam go Flaitheas an Aonmhic.

Amen.

[125] O Clan-Pierse, sorrowful is your plight—or does it sadden you that the strong-smiting warrior should be torn to pieces by ravens? — and multitudes in this outlying district are broken without you.

[129] Since your death is confirmed and irrevocable and since you will not [again] take human shape until the day of judgement, I pray that the apostles and the angels will see you safely to Heaven.

125 sgéala C 126 gliadharuidhe B gliadhaireadha C
128 atéaghmuis A ad téagmuis B ad t'éagmuis C
129 dearamh A aisioc BC 130 bhreahadh A bhratha C 130 glacfur A glacfar BC
131 na haingeil 'sna habstoill B na haingil is na hapstail re C
132 dod tanam A do'd tanam B dod t'anam … éinmhic C amenn A *om* BC

Notes

[Some of the genealogical allusions in lines 73-92 are obscure to us, and we have had little success in identifying the persons mentioned in lines 104-124.]

16. *Féidhlim*. Sir Felim O Neill; cf. line 95.

17. *Titim ocht nGearóidí déag in aoineacht*. See above, under Lisgarret fort. This line lacks internal rhyme, but the reading '*nGearóidí*' here and in line 122 is supported by the manuscripts, and also by the metre in the latter case.

64. *Clann Mhuiris*, may equally well refer to the barony of Clanmaurice or to the FitzMaurices, barons of Kerry and Lixnaw.

68. *mo dhiomá do lionnán gan chéile*. Garret Pierse was married and had at least one child (see biographical notes above).

73. *gaol Carrthach*. Garret Pierse's wife, Joan (or Johanna) Hussey, was a daughter of Julia MacCarthy of Muskerry.

74. *gaol Gearaltach*. Himself a Geraldine, he could be called a kinsman of the vast Geraldine clan, and marriages with this widespread family were common in Kerry.

75. *gaol Búrcach*. In the Pierse manuscript of 1767 (note 2) four intermarriages with members of the B(o)urke families descended from the family of 'the house of Gallinane' and of the earls of Clanrickard are recorded.

77. *gaol Mhic Mhuiris*. The Pierses were of course a cadet branch of the FitzMaurices, lords of Kerry, and in any case Garret's great-great-grandmother was Elenor, daughter of Lord FitzMaurice, who married John Óg Pierse of Ballymacaquim (cf. no. 5 (1972) 30 above).

78. *'s na dtrí ruidire*. The White Knight, the Knight of Kerry and the Knight of Glin, all cadet branches of the FitzGeralds, earls of Desmond; the last White Knight died aged 14 in 1611.

79. *iarla Áine is Tráigh Lí*. The FitzGeralds, earls of Desmond; cf. the reference to the earl of Desmond as '*iarla Áine*' in a poem of c. 1588 (J. Carney, *Poems on the Butlers* (Dublin 1945) line 1785).

81. *'s an Charrthaigh ón mBlarnain*. Donogh (mac Cormaic Óig) MacCarthy, 18th Lord of Muskerry, Baron Of Blarney and 1st Earl of Clancarthy, confederate chieftain and commander of the Munster forces in the wars of 1641-52. At the rout of the Irish at Liscarroll, it is recorded that 'the Lord of Muscrie took his leave with a plain compliment, that he had done what he could, and did hope another time to have better success. It is imagined he had received a shot …' (Whetcombe: note 32).

83. *gaol fhir Dhútha' Ealla*. The MacDonough MacCarthies, lords of Duhallow, whose manor of Kanturk was in possession of Sir Philip Percival in 1641. Dermod MacCarthy 'of Keantuirke' was a signatory to the confederate propositions of 1643 (J. T. Gilbert (ed.), *History of the Irish Confederation and the war in Ireland* … II (Dublin 1882) 216) and is probably the Mac Donough, Lord of Duhallow, said to have been slain at the battle of Knocknaclashy in 1652 (W. F. Butler, *Gleanings from Irish history* (London etc. 1925) 100). Donough MacCarthy 'of Canturk', being in rebellion, was outlawed at Cork in 1643 (Gilbert Ill (1885) 340).

85. *sleachta Eochaidh*. Perhaps the O Sullivans, said to be descended from Eochaidh mac Maoil Ughra *al. Súilleabháin* (cf. T. Ó Donnchadha (ed.), *An Leabhar Muimhneach* (Ir. MSS Comm. [1940]) 147-8).

86-7. The Pierses of Aghamore and Ballymacaquim were certainly intermarried with the Stack, Sheehy and O Brien families. (The reading *Faoidhteach* of MSS B and C for *Sítheach* may be disregarded: no White connection has been traced.)

88. *iarla uaibhrigh Mhaighe Nuada na saoithe*. Cf. the reference to the earl of 'Minooth' quoted at the beginning of this paper. The FitzGeralds, earls of Kildare, were represented at this period by George FitzGeraId, 16th Earl, who took neither side and was not involved in the rebellion.

89. *ón nGalathruim*. Garret Pierse's mother, Joan (or Johanna) Hussey, was a descendant of the Husseys, barons Of Galtrim (Co. Meath), according to the document quoted at the outset of this paper. Edmund Hussey of Rath was steward and overseer to Sir Valentine Browne in 1641 (Hickson (note 7), 103), and Walter Hussey of Ballybeggan was a leader in the confederate interest (M. A. Hickson, *Old Kerry records* [1st series] (London 1872) 76).

90. *ó Dhriseán Ó gCaoimh*. This would appear to be the form of the name implied in MS A. Drishane castle, however, always seems to have been a MacCarthy stronghold.

92. *fhir na Lice*. Lick (Lic Bé Bhionn) castle, in Faha, par. Kilconly, bar. Iraghticonnor, was held by a branch of the FitzMaurices who called themselves FitzGerald (K. W. Nicholls in no. 3 (1970) 34 above). 'Jacobus Johanis [James fitz John] de Licka' and 'Johannes Jacobi [John fitz James] de Lelix' appear as signatories to the O Daly petition of 1631 (note 6), and Captain Garret mac Shane [*al*. Fitz John] of Licke, Irish Papist, held Farren Edmond and Dyrryrahue (par. Rattoo and Killury) in 1654/6 (Simington (note 8) IV, 501-2; no. 12 (1979) 12 above).

96. *Eóghan Ruadh Ó Néill*, arrived in Ireland in July 1642 and took over command from Sir Felim.

102. *Oilibhéar*. Oliver Stephenson, of Dunmoylan, Co. Limerick, variously described as 'colonel', 'captain of a troop of horse' etc. in contemporary documents. It was his relationship to Inchiquin and his being an honourable man that brought about his downfall and death at Liscarroll, related with rancour by the author of the 'Aphorismical discovery': because of a promise to his mother not to kill Inchiquin (her nephew) in battle if they met, Stephenson laid himself open and was shot at close range whilst on the point of taking Inchiquin prisoner (Buckley (note 24), 96-7 n. 11; see also T. Pierce, 'The Stephensons: sixty years of Limerick history', *North Munster studies* (ed. E. Rynne, Limerick 1967) 276-8).

104. *Fínghin … Féidhlim*. Probably MacCarthys, among whom these were favourite names.

119. *Seán Brún*. Cf. 'Johannes Browne, alias Browne de Krybrownighe' [Críoch Bhrúnach; in Killury parish], in the 1631 petition (note 6). Doonbrowne alias Clashmealcon (etc.) [par.

Killury] was granted on 9 March 16 Charles I [1641] (National Library of Ireland MS 11049) to John Browne, gent., an 'Irish Papist' who is described as 'deceased' in the Civil Survey (Simington (note 8) IV, 500).

122. *titim na nGearóidí*. See note to line 17, above.