
This detailed study of the old Ormond territory in Tipperary is a magnificent piece of work. In the sub-title Mr. Gleeson modestly suggests that his attention was confined to the 17th century, but the scope of the book is not quite so limited. It includes, in an introductory chapter, a bird's eye view of Ormond history from its dim beginnings in pre-Christian times down to the Tudor period. It tells, too, of the part played by the Ormond chiefs in the great rebellion of the two Hughys and of the consequences which followed ultimate defeat in that campaign. And in a number of useful appendices the story of the area, in some of its aspects, is continued into the 18th century.

Speaking generally, the value of Mr. Gleeson's work is twofold. It describes, with an immense wealth of illustration, the activities of the leading men in Ormond during the 17th century. Here is a tale so rich in heroism and tragedy that it deserves on its own account to be remembered by the whole nation. It holds particular interest, of course, for the descendants of the sufferers. Secondly, since the sequence of events in Ormond was repeated in substantially the same form up and down the country, the fate of Ormond is important as a type. The more intimate, then, our knowledge of its fortunes, the clearer our grasp of all Irish history in that fatal century.

The Ormond territory was a political unit back to the beginning of the Christian era or beyond. Its ancient designation was Múscraige Tire. The Múscraige, in many divisions, represented the old ruling people of Munster, the Bearna, who in the course of time were supplanted by the great septs of the Éoganachta. These were destined to become in the South what the Uí Neill septs were in the Midlands and the North. The Múscraige seem to have expanded from Cork into the wide Munster plain. A branch of that people about the town of Tipperary was called the Muscraige Brecgain, and the existence of a cognate branch near Cashel in St. Patrick's lifetime points to the conclusion that the Múscraige, in the days of their glory, extended in an unbroken line from Bantry Bay, by Charleville, western and mid-Tipperary to Loch Derg and the present Munster-Leinster boundary at the Little Brosna river. Quite distinct from the Múscraige were the Usithne and Arada peoples, so that the marked difference between Ormond and Ara, as commented on by Mr. Gleeson in his introductory chapter, may be accepted as a matter of course. Indeed the emergence of families of Leinster origin in the Usithne and Arada districts suggests a period of acute rivalry between the men of Ormond and their neighbours on the west.

In Medieval times the Ormond lands belonged to the O'Kennedys, a powerful Dalcausian family that had spread from Clare to Tipperary before the 12th century. They were settled firmly in the saddle before the Normans came. King John, conveniently generous with other persons' property, made a “grant” of the O'Kennedy territory to his chief Boutiller or Bottler; and from that day forward, through the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries the struggle between the O'Kennedys and the Butlers is the Leitmotiv of Ormond history. After a temporary setback the O'Kennedys found their feet and gradually drove the Butlers eastward to the Thurlows line. In English law, however, the ownership of the soil remained vested in the house of Ormond, not in the outlawed dynasty of Gaelic descent.

Mr. Gleeson describes exhaustively the fortunes of the O'Kennedys from the Tyrone rebellion to the Treaty of Limerick. When the Tudor screw was applied under Henry VIII. and Elizabeth the old order began to disintegrate. After the disaster at Kinsale the O'Kennedys ceased to fight as a “nation,” an army of freemen cél officered by its own fláthi. The leading men who were not killed in the Tyrone war held their lands on English tenure from the Earl of Ormond. They were glad, indeed, to accept the new situation, for Butler protection had now become their only security against the pack of “adventurers and projectors” who howled about their lands like starving wolves greedy for prey. Preparations for the confiscation of the Ormonds were actually completed. The plans failed only because of Stafford's recall to England and his execution.
In 1641 came the national insurrection, when the O' Kennedys and their friends inevitably took the Irish side. The gallant but futile years of effort were followed by the "curse of Cromwell," the "Hell or Connacht" legislation which occupied such a prominent place in the records of human savagery. Who the chief victims in Ormond were, and what was the extent of their losses, is described by Mr. Gleeson in a masterly manner from his study of the material preserved in the Civil Survey.

With the O' Kennedys there suffered the old Muscave family of the O'Hogans (important in mediaeval times particularly in the ecclesiastical sphere); the O' Carrolls, who had overflowed from Eile; the O' Ryans, who had overflowed from Uaithne (Owney); and the O' Brians, who had overflowed from Arada (Ara); the well-known brehon family of the Mac Egans, and the learned family of the O' Clerys; the medical family of the O' Mearas, who had acquired an incredible amount of property by their marriage-alliance with Elizabeth's notorious archbishop, Miler Magrath; the Graces, Mac Morrises (Morrisseys) and Cantwells of Norman descent; the O' Hanlys, who had come down the Shannon from Roscommon and settled here and there in Ormond in the days of O' Connors greatness; the Guinanes, the O' Gleesons, the O' Birragras (Berkerys and Barragrys) and a host of others. All these were cast into outer darkness. Their lands, their castles, their mills and orchards, their movables—whenever they had in this world—were taken from them, never to be returned. When Charles II. came from exile to the throne, there were hopes that a better day had dawned, but for such optimism there was no justification. Then came the overthrow of James II. by the bitter Orange faction, and the final death-knell of the old Gaelic order was sounded.

Of the Cromwellian soldiers who became the new owners of the confiscated lands, the most fortunate were the Prettys and Saddlers. The former received thousands of acres in Upper Ormond. Abbots, Coles, Dawsons, Hunts, Andrews, Camys, Stopfords, Wades, Byres are among the names that figure in a Cromwellian list of beneficiaries given by Mr. Gleeson in an Appendix.

How the Cromwellians and the landlords of later times abused their powers to oppress and largely to exterminate what remained or the Ormond populace is outside the author's scope, but it needs no written record, for by the Ormond fireside it is still a living memory that centuries will not efface.

Mr. Gleeson concludes his remarkably fine and exhaustive study on a note of eloquence. Tudors, Cromwellians, Stuarts are gone; a silent stone bears witness to the breaking of Limerick's treaty. But once again (modestly, of course, and feebly still after such scaring fires of tribulation) the O' Kennedys, their kin and friends of the ancient race are settled on their ancestral acres. That the gifted representative of one of these distinguished families should be the author of so masterly a work shows the extent to which they have come into their own.

J. R.

THE MASSACRE AT SMERWICK. By Professor Alfred O'Rahilly. Cork University Press. Wrapper, 1/-.

In 1579 James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald, the noblest of the Geraldines, landed at Smerwick in West Kerry with a small company of Italians and Spaniards and waited for the general rising of the Anglo-Irish. In 1580 a mixed force of Italians, Spaniards and Irish landed at the same place and joined the others in occupying a fort at Dunannoir. They numbered in all from six to eight hundred, and had arms for 4,000 and provisions for six months. Fitzmaurice was questing for support in Munster but the general rising did not take place.

In November, 1580, the English under the Deputy, Earl Grey, attacked the fort. Colonel (?) Sebastiano di San Giuseppe, an Italian, was in command. There was a slight show of resistance, a party took place, and despite the protests of the chaplain and of the rank and file, there was a surrender and general disarming. A massacre followed—a cold blooded massacre of men, women, and unborn children—ordered, supervised, and witnessed by Earl Grey, Sir Walter Raleigh, Edmund Spenser the poet, and the ex-pirate, Captain Ned Denny.

The barbarity of the massacre is commonly glossed over, and a charge of perfidy against Grey is lightly dismissed. Grey's official communiqué that there was an uncon-
ditional surrender is antecedently improbable and is contradicted by a considerable body of official and contemporary evidence from Catholic and Irish sources. San Giuseppe's conduct strongly suggests cowardice and treason.

In the brochure under notice the evidence from Irish, English, Italian, Spanish and Vatican sources has for the first time been collated, examined, and sifted by Professor O'Rahilly, U.C.C. There are some gaps, admittedly, but the weight of testimony and probability is very strongly in favour of a verdict of bribery and treason against San Giuseppe, and of Cromwellian cruelty against Grey and his captains. They were all related, and success meant wealth.

Many a respectable volume of two hundred pages contains less history than this careful tabulation of sources and analysis of evidence. With the exception, perhaps, of Belloe's French Revolution (1st edition), I have never got better value in historical writing for a shilling than these thirty-four pages. It is excellently produced, splendidly documented, and indispensable for a study of the Desmond Wars and the Penal Days in Kerry.

Our sincere thanks are due to the editor of the Cork Archæological Journal, Dr. Sean Ó Riordain, who has made this essay available as an offprint and the first of a projected series of Historical Essays.

D. A. R.
Our Society commences the tenth year since its revival with a membership of
160. The numbers have risen steadily notwithstanding the increase in the annual sub-
scription from 5/- to 10/-, which became necessary with the reappearance of the Journal.
We take this opportunity to appeal to members to be punctual in forwarding their
subscriptions to the Treasurer. In the next issue, which will complete the first volume
of the revived Journal, we propose to print a list of members. Some copies of the
earlier numbers of this Journal are still on hands and may be purchased by our members
at half price. We trust that our readers will support the efforts of the Committee to
increase our numbers considerably before the membership list appears. Our business
year will coincide henceforth with the calendar year, and the Annual Meeting will be
held early in the new year.

LECTURES AND STUDY CIRCLE.

The Inspector of National Monuments lectured to the Society on December 9th,
1937, taking for his subject: “Irish Castles in the 13th Century.” In the subsequent
discussion it transpired that very few members had visited King John’s Castle, and the
suggestion was made that the Society might arrange visits to the Castle, the Walls, and
other ancient remains in the city.

On February 4th, Rev. M. Moloney spoke on “Arts and Crafts in Medieval
Limerick,” showing slides from recent photographs of the city’s chief heirlooms of
medieval craft—the Misericord wood carvings in St. Mary’s Cathedral, and the O’Dea
Mitre and Crozier now preserved at St. John’s Presbytery.

During the early months of 1938 at the meetings of the Study Circle, the city
antiquities were studied and arrangements made for tours of inspection in the spring
afternoons.

EXCURSIONS.

In March, April and May, the Society arranged very successful tours to the chief
objects of antiquarian interest in the English and Irish Towns. These received enthusi-
astic support from the public and were appreciated by the clergy, army and scout officers
and various public officials who joined in the visits.

At St. Mary’s Cathedral, perhaps the chief interest was excited by the remark-
able wood carvings in the choir. On the same afternoon a visit was paid to the ruined
medieval house near Creagh Lane. The issue of the Civil Survey for Limerick has made
it possible to identify this striking building as a Fanning residence. Our members will be
glad to learn that, thanks to the public spirit of a well-known citizen, the site has been
purchased and the house presented to the State for preservation as a National Monument.

Through the courtesy of the Sisters of Mercy, we were able to inspect what remains
of the former Dominican Friary whose ruins are now reverently cared within the Convent
grounds. The other religious houses of Old Limerick have left no trace, but the sites of
all three were pointed out along the course of the city wall. The Nunnery of Peter’s Cell
stood just south of the Dominican House, while the Franciscan Friary and the Priory of
Canons Regular stood close to the Wall near Ball’s Bridge. Mr. Lahiff, the custodian,
showed the party through the Castle, explaining its features to a very appreciative
audience.

The tours ended with a visit to the Citadel and Irishtown walls. A fine stretch of
the east Wall survives near the scene of the Breach. In the Town Planning Report
to the Corporation it was suggested that in the cleared area adjoining this wall a park
should be laid out to abut on this imposing line of ramparts.

In the latter part of June, we had a joint excursion with the Cork Society to
Buttevant (Augustinian Abbey and Franciscan Friary), Kilmallock (Collegiate Church
and Dominican Friary), and Lough Gur.