The Butlers of County Clare

by

SIR HENRY BLACKALL, Q.C., LL.D.

Theobald FitzWalter, the first Butler of Ireland, had grants of the baronies of Upper and Lower Ormonde in the present county of Tipperary as far back at the twelfth century; but it is not until the middle of the seventeenth that the Butlers appear among the landowners of the neighbouring county of Clare and south Galway.

Pedigrees of various branches of the family seated in those counties are to be found in Burke’s Landed Gentry, but they do not in any instance carry their ancestry beyond the Restoration. In O’Hart’s Irish Landed Gentry when Cromwell came to Ireland there is indeed a pedigree of the Butlers of Boytonrath, Co. Tipperary, from Tudor times to the Cromwellian period; but the author apparently did not know that these Butlers were then transplanted into Clare, and were the progenitors of several of the later families of the name in that county. And yet at the time he wrote, there was in existence a pedigree by the well-known historian Prendergast, which showed that the Butlers of Ballyline, Co. Clare, were descended from the Boytonrath family. The circumstances in which this pedigree came to be compiled are not without interest and may be recalled.

On the death of Richard Butler, 2nd Earl of Glengall and 13th Lord Cahir in 1858, the earldom of 1816 unquestionably expired; but it was believed in some quarters that the Butlers of Ballyline were heirs to the more ancient barony of Cahir (created 1583), and Col. Augustine Butler, the head of that family, deputed Prendergast to examine his muniments with a view to claiming the title. The historian’s researches had a disappointing outcome for Col. Butler, for they established beyond doubt his descent from the Barons of Dunboyne. His hopes of a coronet were therefore dashed, and he seems to have lost interest in the subject, and did not bring Prendergast’s discovery to the notice of Burke. Fortunately however the papers relating to it were preserved at Ballyline, although their existence was unknown outside the family circle; and they proved


1. The chiefs of the house of Butler bore the title “the Butler of Ireland” simpliciter (cf. the Earls Marischal in Scotland) until Edmond, the 6th Butler, was given the name and honour of Earl of Carrick in 1313. His s. James was cr. Earl of Ormonde in 1328.

of considerable value when Mr. Theobald Blake Butler commenced his researches into the ancestry of the Clare Butlers many years later. I am greatly indebted to Mr. Butler for freely placing at my disposal the fruits of those very extensive researches. The writer collaborated with him in the years preceding the First World War, but after that lived abroad, and Mr. Butler carried on the work alone. Thanks to his exertions, the contents of a large number of documents of historical and genealogical interest destroyed in the tragic holocaust of the Public Record Office in 1922, have been preserved for posterity.\(^3\) I am also very grateful to the present Lord Dunboyne for information about his line, and to the Hon. Mrs. Butler-Henderson for the use of the Castle Crine papers.

The Butler domains in Clare and south Galway might be divided topographically into two; for the Castle Crine estates lay mainly in south east Clare and those of the Butlers of Doon, Bunnahow, Walterstown, Ballyline and Cregg in north-east Clare and south Galway. That division would not however coincide with the genealogical; for the ancestor of the Butlers of Cregg was a younger son of the 2nd Earl of Ormonde, while the other families mentioned descend from the Butlers of Grallagh and Boytonrath, Co. Tipperary, whose ancestor was a younger son of the 10th Baron of Dunboyne (ob. 1533/4). That nobleman has, until recently, been described in the Peerages as the ninth Baron; but Mr. Blake Butler in The Barony of Dunboyne\(^4\) has shown that the line of succession previously accepted was incorrect in certain respects, and that the ci-devant ninth Baron was in reality the tenth. This enumeration has been adopted by Burke and Debrett and will be followed here.

There is, however, another matter relating to the Dunboyne barony about which opinions differ. The earlier holders of that title are not infrequently referred to as "feudal" or "titular" Barons of Dunboyne, and the question is whether before the creation of the barony by Letters Patent in 1541, the Barons of Dunboyne were peers of the realm or titular barons, of which there were a number in Ireland in former times. These latter titles were conferred by the earls of Ormonde and Desmond in exercise of their rights as Counts Palatine. Among the families upon whom the Ormonde earls conferred them were Purcell, Baron of Loughmoe, and Hussey, Baron of Galtrim. The holders of these titles enjoyed the style of Baron but were not Lords of Parliament. This is a material distinction, for in order to establish the existence of a barony by writ of summons,\(^5\) it must be proved that the claimant's ancestor was summoned to Parliament by individual writ, and that either he himself or one of his direct descendants took his seat in the Upper House.

Into which category then do the earlier barons of Dunboyne fall? The barony came to the Butlers through the marriage in 1320 of Synolda, Lady of Dunboyne\(^6\) with Sir Thomas Butler, uncle of the 1st Earl of Ormonde. He had a writ of summons to Parliament as a peer under the style of "Lord of Dunboyne" and took his seat in 1324. Several of his successors were likewise summoned. Betham and other authorities are of the opinion that these facts constituted a barony by writ, but Mr. Blake

---

3. These have since been acquired by Rev. W. Clare, F.I.G.R.S., who published wills and administrations ante 1800 in Butler Testamentary Records, and has loaned his Chanc. Bills to the I.G.R.S. Library.
5. Abbreviated to "barony by writ" or "barony by summons."
Butler thinks otherwise, and has argued (inter alia) that the manner in which some of these barons were styled is inconsistent with their being peers e.g. the 6th Baron is described in the Statute Rolls of Edward IV as “James le Botiller esquire, lately Lord and Baron of Dunboyne.” Mr. Butler infers from this and other instances cited by him, that a hereditary peerage could not have existed before 1541. Too much importance should not however, be attached to a lack of precision in mediaeval styles of address. In the earliest writs of summons in England (temp. Edward I) the recipients were not distinguished from commoners by any style or title. The only prefix at that time was dominus (lord) which was regularly used by simple knights, and writs of summons were issued to the lower order of peers as knight (chevalier) only. As late as 1387, John, Lord de Beauchamp and Baron of Kydderminster, the first holder of a peerage by patent, was summoned to Parliament by the style of “John Beauchamp of Kydderminster.”(7) Owing to the creation of 1541, the status of the earlier barony of Dunboyne has never had to be considered by the Committee for Privileges of the House of Lords, and the advent of a republic in Ireland rules out the possibility of any future decision on the point. It will suffice to say here that in this memoir a dual prefix will be used where the peer in question holds both the earlier and later baronies e.g. 11/1 Lord Dunboyne for the first baron by patent.

Another point relating to nomenclature may here be mentioned. There were five James Butlers in succession in the Boytonrath-Doon line,(8) and five William Butlers of Bunnahow. Conveyancers distinguished these by referring to them in dynastic style, e.g. William Butler I. Their example will be followed where it would make for clarity.

GRALLAGH, BOYTORNATH AND DOON.

As already mentioned, most of the Clare Butlers descend from the Boytonrath family. The ancestor of this branch of the house of Butler was Piers (als Peter) Butler of Grallagh, Co. Tipperary (1520-78) second son of James, 10th Lord Dunboyne.(9) His immediate forebears on the distaff side included two outstanding figures in the history of their time, for his mother was a daughter of Pierce Roe Butler, 8th Earl of Ormonde, who married Lady Margaret FitzGerald, daughter of Garrett, the Great (8th) Earl of Kildare. Piers himself was a fiery warrior as is conneted by his Irish nickname “Piers na mBhulin” i.e. Wild Peter or—in the picturesque phrase of the Four Masters—“Piers of the Madness.”(10) His first taste of active service was in 1544 when he took part in Henry VIII’s expedition to France. The English army on that occasion included a contingent of Irish kerne provided by the Earl of Ormonde,(11) who writing to the King on 6 May in that year said “I have appointed a young gentleman called Piers Butler, being also a nephew to me and seconde brother to the Baron of Dunboyne, to have the rule and conduct of one hundredth of my men.”(12)

8. There were actually six generations of James Butlers, but as the last d.v.p., unmar, the succession did not go through him, but through his bro. Henry, who succeeded their father, Cornet Butler. This James was B.A. (T.C.D.) and a barrister. He died 2 Sept., 1791.
10. Four Masters, Vol. V, under year 1579. See also n. 160.
11. James, 9th Earl of Ormonde.
12. See Appendix I.
On reaching France the Ormonde kerne were posted to the Duke of Norfolk's force that invested Montreuil in July 1544. As the besiegers found provisions very hard to come by, the Irish were sent out on foraging expeditions, where the behaviour of Wild Peter's wild kerne did not, I fear, make a very good impression on the French, for we read in Hollinshead's Chronicle that they ravaged the country so ruthlessly that a deputation from the local inhabitants waited on the English King on his arrival at Boulogne and begged him to withdraw his Irish levies, asking him "whether he had brought beasts or men." Before returning to England in December 1544, Henry held a parade at which he "knighted certain persons of worth." It would seem from Lord Herbert of Cherbury's account of the campaign that the captains of Ormonde's companies, of which Piers Butler was one, were among those so honoured. But the passage is somewhat ambiguous, and no document of later date has come to light in which Piers is described as a knight.

In September 1551 Piers Butler took part in an expedition of the Lord Deputy against James McDonnell "the Scott," and in 1563 he was appointed a Commissioner for the Peace for Tipperary during the Lord Deputy's absence in the North, with power "to treat with enemies and rebels." Piers married a Geraldine, but this did not deter him from taking the part of the Butlers in their feuds with their traditional rivals. On 7 September 1565 he and his sons carried off six hundred kine belonging to John McGrath, a Geraldine supporter; and on 4 May 1566 we find the Earl of Desmond complaining to the Lord Deputy of the depredations committed by Piers Butler on O'Brien Ui Cuanach during his absence in the Pale.

Piers na mBhuile was possessed of a great estate, for his father settled on him Grallagh and other lands together with the manors of Drangan, Craghane, and Magowey, comprising in all over 16,000 acres. His elder brother Edmond viewed with resentment so excessive an appanage for a younger son, and after his succession to the title, made strenuous efforts to regain what he regarded as his rightful inheritance. This led to family feuds and protracted litigation. By a decree in Chancery dated 23 November 1562 in the suit of "Sir Edmond Butler Kn., Baron of Dunboyne v Peter Butler of Grallagh, his younger brother" it was ordered that the plaintiff should recover against the defendant, Grallagh, Drangan and

15. See Appendix III [4].
16. Honora FitzGerald, dau. of James, 10th Earl of Desmond, by Elinor, dau. of Robert Walsh of Casteel Hoel, Co. Kilkenny. Carew MSS 625/6-7 and 625/163. Four Masters, year 1577. She was Piers Butler's 2nd wife. He mar. 1st Elinor Grace, dau. of Sir Oliver Grace, lord of Carney in Lower Ormond (M.P. for Co. Tipp, 1559) by Mary, dau. of Sir John FitzGerald, 3rd Lord Decies. She d.s.p. Lodge's Peerage of Ire. (Archdall ed. 1784) Vol. VI, p. 221. Lodge confines Piers with his gr. uncle Peter, who was slain by Thomas Tobin of the Compey in 1502. A MS pedigree in T.C.D. Libr. (p. 18, p. 180) also mentions the Grace marriage, but shows Piers as second son of his own brother.
17. See Appendix III [1].
18. John Maclean, The Life of Sir Peter Carew Kn., p. XCVI.
other lands. Piers seems to have flouted the decree, for a Remembrance issued on 24 February 1566, whereby Peter Butler was bound over in the sum of £3,000 to deliver up to Lord Dunboyne by the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel, the lands mentioned. But even this did not avail the unhappy Dunboyne, for Piers had a powerful supporter in his uncle Ormonde, and by decree under the Queen's Letter of 8 September 1566 it was ordered that inasmuch as Peter Butler had failed to defend the suit in Chancery of 1562 at the advice of the Earl of Ormonde, "who claimed sovereignty over the lands," the suit should be again tried at common law, and Peter Butler should enjoy undisturbed possession until such time as the Baron of Dunboyne obtained judgment thereunder. With such influential backing, Piers was able to retain possession of the greater part of his estate up to the time of his death, which occurred in 1578. In recording that event the Four Masters describe him as "one of the most powerful chiefs of the English in Munster."  

On Piers Butler's death, his son James (born 1543) succeeded to Grallagh, Drangan and other lands of his father, and he too held them throughout his life. In 1569 James Butler was implicated in the revolt known as "the Butlers' war." The unwonted disaffection of the Butlers on this occasion was due to the proceedings of Sir Peter Carew, a fillibustering genealogist from Devon, who claimed to be heir to the vast patrimony of the long defunct Carews of Ireland, including an estate of Sir Edmond Butler, brother of the Earl of Ormonde. His preposterous claim was admitted by the Lord Deputy Sidney—no friend of the Butlers—and Sir Edmond, finding protests of no avail, took up arms and was joined by his Butler kindred, including James Butler of Grallagh. Although the Butlers' quarrel was with Carew, their resort to arms was a defiance of Elizabeth's government in Ireland and took place at a critical juncture, for it synchronized with the outbreak of the formidable FitzMaurice rebellion in Munster and while Turloch Luineach O'Neill was on the war-path in the North.

On Ormonde's return to Ireland in August 1569 the Butlers at once joined him, vowing they had never meant to revolt against the Queen and bitterly complaining of Sidney's treatment. But Elizabeth was not appeased, and an Act of Attainder in 1570 included Ormonde's brothers and James Butler of Grallagh as well as FitzMaurice, O'Neill and other rebels, and castigated them all in no uncertain terms as "vile and ingrate traytours." Black Tom's persuasive pleading however caused the Queen to relent towards her erring kin when her wrath subsided. On 2 January 1571 James Butler of Grallagh was granted a general pardon for his part in the Geraldine rebellion up to that date and fined £6 13s. 4d. or one

22. Curtis, History of Ireland, p. 130, Falls, Elizabeth's Irish Wars, p. 103. J. H. Round states that Carew's claim was based on a fictitious pedigree: Ency. Britt. 11th Ed, Vol. 10, p. 441 art. on "Fitzgerald."
23. Thomas, 10th Earl, known as "Black Tom of Ormonde." He stood high in favour with Elizabeth, whose grandmother was a dau. of 7th Earl of Ormonde. Rumour had it that the Virgin Queen was the mother of Black Tom's natural son, Piers Butler, father of 1st Viscount Galmoy. The descendants of the 9th Earl of Ormonde by W. F. Butler, Journal R.S.A.I., Vol. LIX, Pt. I, p. 41.
24. See Appendix II.
hawk;\(^{25}\) and in 1573 Sir Edmond Butler and his two brothers were pardoned and restored to their estates, although the attainer of their blood was not reversed. In the second Geraldine rebellion James Butler of Grallagh supported the Crown, and was one of the commanders of the Ormonde forces at the battle of Knockgraffon in 1582 when the Butlers suffered defeat at the hands of the Geraldines.\(^{26}\) James Butler married twice: viz. Honora O'Dwyer\(^{27}\) and Elinor Purcell.\(^{28}\) He died cir 1589.

Edmond Butler of Boytonrath, his eldest son, succeeded. He purchased that manor from James, 12/2 Lord Dunboyne on 10 September 1590, and conveyed Grallagh to the latter on 5 October 1592. These transactions put an end to the long standing quarrel over the family estates, and in the Tyrone rebellion Edmond Butler served under his cousin Dunboyne, who had joined Ormonde’s forces. He was present with Essex’s army at the siege of Cahir in May, 1599.\(^{29}\) Edmond Butler’s name appears in a list of “free-holders in the cantred of Middlethirsd in the Cross of Tipperary,” dated 18 November 1600, and again in 1626. He also figures in a list of “The Chief Gentlemen in each County in Ireland in the year 1625.”\(^{30}\)

On the coming of age of his eldest son James on 14 July 1626, Edmond entailed his estates on himself for life with remainder to his eldest son, James, further remainder to said James’ eldest son, Edmond.\(^{31}\) In 1627 Charles I, promised as one of “the Graces” that land titles for sixty years back were to be valid against all claims of the Crown, and by Inquisitions at Clonmel on 18 April 1631 and 14 August 1637 it was found that Edmond Butler was seized of the estate of Boytonrath by good and sufficient title, and it was confirmed to him and his heirs for ever. Edmond Butler married in 1604 Dorothy, daughter of Cian O’Carroll of Ballybrack, chief of the great Gaelic house of Ely O’Carroll.\(^{32}\) He died 1st August, 1637.

James Butler (b.1605) his eldest son who succeeded, is shown in the Civil Survey of Tipperary for 1641 as living at Boytonrath with his sons Edmond and James. When the rebellion broke out that year, the Lords

---

27. Honora O’Dwyer was dau. of Philip O’Dwyer of Kilnamanagh, who was son of Owney O’Dwyer by More, his wife, dau. of Philip O’Dwyer of Kilnamanagh. Philip O’Dwyer (Honora’s father) mar. 1st Giles, widow of Richard Cantwell of Moycarkey, Co. Tipp., and dau. and heirress of Conor O’Dwyer, Chief of his nation, by Giles, dau. of Maurice Fitzgibbon, The White Knight. His 2nd wife was Onora, dau. of John Butler of Ardmyle, Co. Tipp. Honora Butler nee O’Dwyer mar. 2nd Morough MacTeige McBrien of Ballytarsna, Co. Limerick (Orm.D. Vol. 5, p. 236). O’Dwyer, chief of his name, was created titular baron of Kilnamanagh by the 1st Earl of Ormonde temp. Edw. III. Five of the O’Dwyer chiefs married Butlers: The O’Dwyers of Kilnamanagh by Sir Michael O’Dwyer.
28. Elinor Purcell brought the lands of Ballylomerse, Co. Tipp., as dower. She was probably dau. of Capt. Edmond Purcell, Ormonde’s Horse, ob. 4 Nov. 1549, bro. of Thomas Purcell, Baron of Loughmoe; but this is not fully established.
32. See Appendix VI (3). Dorothy O’Carroll’s mother was dau. of Cormac O’Melaghlin of Rowe, Co. Westmeath, chief of his name. Teige O’Carroll was cr. Baron of Ely 1532.
of the Pale were at first reluctant to join the insurgents, with whom indeed they had little in common except the Catholic faith. The O'Neill, Mac-Mahon and Maguire chieftains had been virtually independent until the Plantation of Ulster in the previous reign, and they chafed under English rule. But the Old English aristocracy, proud of their origin, were traditionally loyal to the Crown. This was true, above all, of the house of Butler, whose chiefs had held for centuries the leadership of the English interest in Ireland, and bore the lofty sobriquet of “cousins of the Crown.”

But the violently anti-Catholic policy of the Puritan Long Parliament and the machinations of their agent in Ireland, the unprincipled and rapacious Parsons, whose slogan was “the more rebels, the more confiscations,” left the Old English no alternative but to take up arms in self-defence; and after meetings with the Irish leaders at the hill of Crofty and Tara, they decided to join forces. The formation of the Catholic Confederacy followed, and in it the Butlers played a notable part. Ormonde himself indeed remained faithful to the faithless Charles, holding that the cause of the King must come first. But Richard Butler, Lord Mountgarret, was placed in command of the Confederacy forces, with Pierce Butler, Lord Ikerrin, and Richard Butler of Kilcash (Ormonde’s brother) as Lieut-Generals “till His Majesty’s pleasure was signified to them.” In December 1641 Kilkenny was captured by Mountgarret, Waterford by his son Edmond Butler, Cionmol and Carrick by Richard Butler of Kilcash: and in January, 1642, Theobald Butler, titular Baron of Ardmayle, took Fethard. In the previous October James, 14/4 Lord Dunboyne, who was feudal overlord of the barony of Middle第三, had come to Tipperary to raise levies for the Confederacy. Among those who joined him was James Butler, who owed “suit and service” for his manor of Boytonrath. In December 1641 James was commissioned as captain in Dunboyne’s 7th Company of Foot, for which he enlisted two hundred men from the Boytonrath estate. With them he fought at the battles of Ballysonan and Liscarroll in 1642, and took part in the siege of Golden Castle in that year and of Limerick in 1643. James Butler took the Confederacy oath on 24 October 1642, whereby he swore to bear true allegiance to King Charles and “to obey and ratify all the orders and decrees made by the Supreme Council of the Confederate Catholics of the Realm concerning the public cause.

It has been remarked by D’Alton that the influence and conduct of the great Ormonde prevented the attainder of many of his name in 1642 and that only four Butlers appear on that Roll of Outlawries. James Butler of Boytonrath was however one of the unfortunate exceptions (Lord Dunboyne was another) and he was outlawed and attainted in the county

33. This sobriquet dated from the marriage of Jas. 1st Earl of Ormonde to Eleanor de Bohun, dau. of Humphrey, Earl of Hereford, by Princess Elizabeth, dau. of Edward I. Curtis, Medieval Hist. of Ire., p. 252.

34. The Barons of Dunboyne held the barony of Middle third direct from the King. Minutes in Council with the King’s command, 25 Sept. 1546, S.P. (D.S.) Ire. Henry VIII. Vol. III, Pt. LII. Notwithstanding this, the Ormonde Earls continued to claim rights over the barony of Middle third, which in the year 1600 contained 126 plowlands and was liable for 600 footmen and 8 horsemen. The Butlers of Boytonrath held 21 plowlands in the barony.

35. List of companies of Foot raised in the Barony of Middle third in Co. Tipp. in Doc. 1641. Carte MSS. 64/452.


37. King James’s Army List, art. on Lord Galmoy.
of Tipperary on 9 November 1642. When "Ormonde's Peace" was made in 1646, James Butler joined the Ormondist party, and in March 1649 he was with Dunboyne when the latter's stately home in Tipperary, Kiltinan Castle, was taken by Cromwell, who in a letter to Bradshaw, described it as "a very large and strong castle of the lord of Dunboyne." On the fall of Kiltinan, Dunboyne and the other Butlers submitted, and we hear nothing further of James Butler of Boytonrath until 30 June 1652, when a warrant for his arrest on a charge of high treason and murder was issued out of the Cromwellian High Court of Justice. In Hilary term 1653 he was tried at Clonmel before Mr. Justice Cooke and a jury wholly composed of Englishmen. The murder charge arose out of the death of a poor old woman who had been callously thrown into the river Suir by the Irish soldiers after the surrender of Golden Castle to the Confederates in 1641. James Butler's company was admittedly among the besiegers, but he himself was in Cork when the castle fell. He could not therefore be lawfully convicted of murder, for the Commissioners' Instructions of 15 April 1653 (constituting the Court) provided that a prisoner "is not esteemed guilty of murder except he had actually a hand in any particular murder or did command the same, or except he was present and had command when a particular murder was committed by persons under his command." But James Butler had the ill fortune to be tried before a judge whose mentality may be gauged by an outburst of his during the same Assizes when, we are told, he "cried out aloud from the Bench that all Irishmen living on October 20th 1641 or born since in Ireland to that same day, were all traitors." James Butler's trial before so partial a judge and a packed jury had the result that might be expected, and he was convicted both of high treason and murder and sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered. This savage sentence was carried out on 10 May 1653 outside the Court House at Clonmel.

His conviction entailed forfeiture of both life and estate, but as he was a life tenant under the family settlement made in 1626, the ownership of Boytonrath devolved upon his eldest son Edmond, and as he was a youth at the outbreak of the rebellion, he came within the category of those comparatively "Innocent Papists" who were to be transplanted into Connaught and Clare, there to receive lands equivalent to one-third or two-thirds of their former estate. On 23 February 1654 Edmond Butler accordingly obtained a Transplanter's Certificate setting out that eleven persons of his family would accompany him across the Shannon, and that he would take "6 acres of summer corn, 9 cows, 4 yearlings, 24 garrons, 60 sheep and 4 swine." This was in due course followed by a Decree dated 22 June 1656 whereby "Edmond Butler of Boytonrath" was

38. An offer made by Charles I to repeal religious disabilities and penalties and confirm all land titles from 1628. It was accepted by most of the Old English, but rejected by the Nuncio's party.


40. The Act shut out any claim through a benetent predecessor in title, but the issue of a tenant for life were held to claim not from their father but from the original donor. W. F. Butler, Confiscation in Irish History, p. 185.

41. Transept, Certif. No. 287 of documents relative to the Commonwealth Ire. Orders A/5. 5 folio 70-71 P.R.O.
awarded 300 acres west of the Shannon, and in 1657 a Certificate of Transplantation was issued setting out the lands allotted to him in Co. Clare in lieu of his forfeited lands in Tipperary. Edmond did not, however, settle on his new estate, but remained at Boytonrath until his death in 1663, although his lands there were ordered by the Cromwellian government to be handed over to Adventurers.

After the Restoration, he made an attempt to have this order set aside. Under the King’s Declaration of 30 November 1660 Catholics who were minors in 1641, were promised restitution of their forfeited estates, and as Edmond Butler was one of that class, he filed a petition as an Innocent before the Court of Claims. His petition was allowed by the Court, which by a Decree dated 5 August 1663 found him to be Innocent and ordered that 577 acres of his Boytonrath estate be confirmed to him for life. The Court of Claims, which was composed of five fair minded Englishmen, proved too favourable to Catholic claimants for the liking of the Protestant interest, and owing to their influence at Court and in Parliament the Court of Claims was finally closed in 1667, thus shutting out over three thousand of the old proprietors from having their claims even heard. Edmond Butler, as we have seen, was more fortunate in this respect, but as the Court had granted him a life interest only, the property would have been lost to the family on his death but for the intervention of the Duke of Ormonde, who had Boytonrath included in a grant made to himself under the Act of Settlement and Explanation on 14 November 1666, and proceeded to make a free-farm grant of the lands to James Butler a few months later. A large proportion of the grants to Ormonde were of forfeited lands of which he was overlord, and which under the law of treason would have escheated to the Crown had not the King granted the reversion to him. Carte tells us that it was the Duke’s practice in such cases to make free-farm grants on easy terms to the former owners. The grant to James Butler was an instance of this. It is alleged that Ormonde was more disposed to act generously if the dispossessed owner was a Butler. If such were indeed the case—and blood is thicker than water—it must be admitted that James was fortunately placed, for not only was he one of the favoured race of Butler himself, but his wife was closely related to the great Duke. That Ormonde was not unmindful of these family ties is indicated by the inclusion of the name “James Butler, Boytonrath” in a List of persons suitable for selection as Nominees under the King’s Declaration of 1660. That list was prepared for Ormonde’s use at the Restoration. James Butler was not, it is

42. Abstracts of Decrees of Ct. of Claims for Trial of Innocents No. 637. 6 Aug. 1663. P.R.O.


44. See Appendix VII 4/6 for particulars of these grants.


true, among the 36 Nominees who were eventually selected by Charles to receive back their principal seats and 2,000 acres adjoining, "if lawfully entitled to so much on Oct. 22, 1641." But as he recovered possession of his ancestral estate under a fee-farm grant, which was in due course renewed, he could count himself more fortunate than the great majority of the ancient proprietors; for Prendergast has estimated that owing to the constant taking away of lands by the government for one cause or another, not one-twentieth of the old freeholders had in the end any land assigned to them.

But although he thus recovered Boytonrath, James Butler did not take-up residence there, for he had transplanted himself and the remainder of the family into Clare in 1657 and settled at Shranagoolen in the Barony of Bunratty, for which he obtained a lease from Sir George Hamilton on 28 May, 1659. He is shown in the Subsidy Roll of 1661 as tenant of those lands and also of Ballyvargin, Lisdoonvarna, Ballyknock, Knockanmanna and Cuppaganana; and on 12 June 1666 the Earl of Inchquin conveyed to him Ballyline, Moymoylame and other lands. In 1668 he paid Hearth Money for his estates in Tipperary and in 1671 his son Theobald (later Sir Toby) filed a claim on his behalf for the Grant and Final Settlement of the lands set out to his brother Edmond in 1654. The claim was allowed and James Butler had three grants of the lands under the Act of Settlement and Explanation. On 21 Feb. 1684 he had a lease for 21 years from the Earl of Thomond, of the lands of Doonemulvihill (als. Doon) on which stood a castle which became the seat of the elder line of his descendants. James Butler died 19 October 1686.

James Butler of Doon who succeeded, was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, to which he was admitted 24 October 1662. When he came of age his father made over to him his Tipperary estate and James Oge (as he was called) settled at Grangebeg in that county. He obtained renewals of the fee-farm grant of Boytonrath from the Duke of Ormonde in 1674 and 1681, and obtained a Decree with Final Settlement of his father's Clare estate on 19 August 1688. When James II landed in Ireland the following year in his attempt to regain the Crown, most of the Old English loyalist aristocracy flocked to his standard. Among them was James Butler, who was elected as M.P. for Co. Tipperary and sat in the historic Parliament of 1689. One of the first measures enacted by that body repealed the Acts of Settlement and Explanation and restored all lands granted thereunder, to the representatives of those who were owners.

48. Ballyline MSS. The name is variously spelt Shranagoolen, Sranagalloon, Shraghnagallon, etc.
49. Ballyline MSS. See Appendix VII [7].
50. Hearth money Records, Co. Tippl., Par. of Boytonrath, 1668, P.R.O.
52. Exch. Bill Jas. Butler v. Roger Grady, 26 Jan., 1726, P.R.O.
54. 22/23 Jan. 1674 and 22/23 Jan. 1681. But on 22/23 Jan. 1702 Boytonrath was leased by the 2nd Duke of Ormonde to Andrew Roe.
in 1641. On the passing of this Act, James Butler relinquished the grants of lands in Clare which had been made to his father and himself, and was decreed to be re-instated in the ancestral estate of Boyntonrath; but owing to his subsequent attainder, he did not in the event obtain possession.

In addition to his legislative functions James Butler served as an officer in the Jacobite army. He was commissioned as Cornet in Purcell's Horse on 14 May 1689, and fought with his regiment at the Siege of Enniskillen and the Battles of the Boyne and Aughrim. After the latter the regiment was divided into two parts, and James was appointed captain in the part commanded by Lord Dunboyne. He was present at the last Siege of Limerick in 1691 (58) where he had as a comrade his brother, Sir Toby, who was one of the negotiators of the Articles of Surrender on the Irish side. On the signing of the Treaty of Limerick the great majority of the Jacobite officers elected to sail for France in company with Sarsfield, but James Butler was among those who preferred to remain in Ireland. He had been attainted in 1690 and his estates forfeited (57) but upon his joining the Peace Party, as it was called, his life was spared. His estates were not however restored, so he became tenant of several properties which he had formerly held in fee. Fortunately for him, Sir Toby came within the benefit of the Treaty so was able to buy in or obtain grants of his brother’s forfeited lands (58). By this means the Doon and Bunnahow branches retained possession of their lands notwithstanding the Penal laws. The estates of those who went abroad, on the other hand, were destined to enrich still further the new English Ascendancy and reduce Catholic Ireland to the shades. (59) James Butler migrated to Clare after the Williamite Settlement and thenceforth lived at Doon. He died 11 October 1726 (60) leaving three sons (a) James, his heir, (b) Theobald, and (c) Peter of Bunnahow (infra).

James Butler of Doon, the eldest son, was sent to France in 1695 with one of the "Flights of the Wild Geese" for his education. While still in his 'teens he joined the Irish Brigade as an officer of the famous Clare's Dragoons, in which he fought at Ramillies and Malplaquet. (61) He returned to Ireland after the Peace of Utrecht, James Butler's name does not appear in the Convert Rolls, but as he was appointed Justice of the

---


Peace for Co. Clare in 1742 it seems probable that he made some profession of conforming. He married Mary O'Shaughnessy\(^{(62)}\) and died in 1746.

James Butler of Doon and Millbrooke (b.1730) his eldest son succeeded. He was commissioned as Cornet in the 14th (Campbell's) Dragoons in 1759 and in 1763 married Theresa O'Hogan, daughter and co-heiress of Murtagh O'Hogan of Cross.\(^{(63)}\) He was generally known as "Cornet Butler" although he actually attained higher rank. When, in the reign of George II, the O'Shaughnessies attempted to recover their ancient patrimony from the Prendergasts on the ground that the attainer of William and Mary affected only Roger O'Shaughnessy and his son William, they received considerable financial aid from their relative Cornet Butler. He was the moving spirit behind Joseph O'Shaughnessy\(^{(64)}\) when, chafing at the law's delays, he took forcible possession of his ancestral castle of Gort and drove out the garrison. This exploit unfortunately played into the hands of the Prendergasts, and the O'Shaughnessies eventually lost their suit. The Cornet was not however a mere knight-errant, for he amassed a considerable fortune through his farming pursuits. There was a large export of wool from Ireland to France in the 18th century and the limestone lands of the Butler estates were peculiarly well suited for sheep raising, in which the Cornet extensively engaged. It is related of him that when asked on one occasion how many sheep he had, he replied that he did not know the number of his shepherds, let alone his sheep! Be this as it may, he held land in no less than 36 townlands in Clare and Galway.

But "after a gatherer comes a scatterer," and Henry Butler of Millbrooke who succeeded in 1797, was one of these. Like his father, he was an officer in the 14th Light Dragoons and, in the words of a family chronicler, gave wings to every shilling and acre he could dispose of. There were however other reasons for the decline of the family fortunes at this time. The embargo placed by the British Government on the export of wool to the Continent in retaliation for Napoleon's Berlin Decrees, brought disaster on many of the great graziers in Ireland, and the Butlers were unable to recover large sums lent to neighbouring landowners. Henry Butler, who married Ann Blake, died in 1814.\(^{(65)}\)

---

62. Mar. Settmtt. 27 Oct. 1729. Mary O'Shaughnessy was dau. and co-heiress of Joseph O'Shaughnessy of Ardminavan Castle, Co. Galway, nephew of Roger O'Shaughnessy of Gort, ob. 1690. His ancestor, "Sir Dermot O'Sheghynn, Knt, captain of his nation," had a grant from Henry VIII, which was later interpreted as making him owner of the whole territory of his clan, although in most cases, e.g., O'Brien of Thomond, the chief was granted only the demesne lands attached to his office, the rest being divided among those entitled under Brehon law. See W. F. Butler, The Policy of Surrender and Regrant.

63. She was fourth dau. of Murtagh O'Hogan (ob. 1743) of Cross and Carahan, Co. Clare, the other daus. being Eleanor (eld.), Catherine and Margaret. Eleanor mar. 1757 Terence O'Brien (ancestor of the Sullivanacken family), to whom she brought Cross aix. Elmvale. Catherine mar. Donat MacMahon of Ballyglass (nephew of Stanislaus MacMahon of Clenagh) and Margaret mar. John Ryan of Ballyvista, Co. Tipp.

64. Joseph O'Shaughnessy (d.s.p. 1783) was nephew of Joseph in note 62. An account of his coup-de-main will be found in Blake-Forster's Irish Cattlemen. It is also mentioned in Canon Fahy's Diocese of Kilmacduagh.

When then James Blake Butler succeeded his father he found himself heir to an encumbered estate. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, of which he was a graduate. James was a friend and supporter of O'Gorman Mahon and was involved in a series of duels arising out of the Clare election of 1831 in which that redoubtable fire-eater was defeated by Maurice O'Connell, son of the Liberator. After the poll was declared, O'Connell sent a challenge to William Mahon, O'Gorman Mahon's brother, for some remarks he had made during the election, and Mahon referred him to James Blake Butler as his second. As O'Connell had been bound over to keep the peace in Ennis it was decided to have the duel fought at Kildysart, but when Butler arrived there with his principal, they found the attitude of the crowd so threatening that Butler declared he would not agree to have it fought there. This decision gave rise to a dispute between Butler and O'Connell's second, who thereupon sent "a hostile message" to Butler. The latter promptly accepted the challenge and named as his second O'Gorman Mahon. The upshot of the affair was that Butler and Mahon notified their opponents that they would meet them at Scattery Island, but as the O'Connell party did not appear the duel did not take place.

The hostility of the Kildysart mob seems to have been due to a cry that was raised against Butler for his activity as a magistrate in dealing with agrarian outrages committed by the Terry Alts, a secret society who took the name of a harmless shoemaker of Corofin, but sought to attain their ends by methods reminiscent of the Whiteboys. In November 1829 a meeting of magistrates was held at Ennis at which James Blake Butler and others subscribed towards the raising of 100 men to police the baronies of Burren and Tulla, and on 22 March 1831 a Proclamation was issued by the Lord Lieutenant declaring Co. Clare and the Barony of Kiltartan, Co. Galway, to be in a state of disturbance. In 1830 James Blake Butler had been fired at by a Terry Alt, and in 1832 his workmen were beaten and a herdsman's house levelled to the ground. These outrages of the Terry Alts continued unabated throughout the spring and summer of 1831, until a virulent outbreak of cholera damped the ardour of the agitators, and caused them to subside. James Blake Butler, who died in 1849, was the last member of his branch to reside in Co. Clare. He was succeeded in the representation of the family by his sixth son, Theobald FitzWalter Butler (the others having d.s.p.) who settled in Lancashire, of which county he was a Deputy Lieutenant. He was father of Mr. Theobald Blake Butler, F.I.G.R.S. (supra) who is the heir male of the Butlers of Boytonrath and those of the Co. Clare Butlers who derive therefrom.

BUNNAHOW.

We now revert to Peter Butler, younger son of James of Doon and nephew of Sir Toby. Peter, to whom his father made over Bunnahow and other lands, was guardian of Cornet Butler during his minority and carefully husbanded his nephew's estate. He was equally skilful in the management of his own patrimony, which he largely increased. Under the Penal laws Catholics could not legally hold a greater interest in

land than a 31 years lease at two-thirds of the full annual value, and the first “Protestant Discoverer” who could show that freehold land was held in trust for a Papist or let to one at an under-value, was entitled to a decree of the lands in his own favour. As Peter Butler remained a Catholic throughout his life, he was much plagued by that vile tribe who made several attempts to deprive him of his property, though happily without success.({69})

As his eldest son Peter, a Cornet in the 1st Regiment of Horse, predeceased him, the Bunanhow estate was inherited by the second son William, known as “Billy the Farmer.”({70}) That the nickname was apt is indicated by the Census Returns for Clare, 1821, where the enumerator remarks “Mr. Butler holds many farms in different parts of this County and Co. Galway, the greater part of which he stocks. I should suppose at least about 5,000 acres, but it is impossible for me to give an accurate account of them.”({71}) This estimate was exclusive of the tenanted land. William Butler lived in the style of an opulent country gentleman, keeping his own pack of hounds,({72}) and when the Penal Code was relaxed he was one of the first of his faith to be a grand juror for Co. Clare. He was a personal friend of the Liberator, and was for many years Chairman of the Clare Catholics in the movement for Emancipation, a movement, be it said, that had the support of many of the Protestant gentry of the county.({73}) William I’s two elder sons predeceased him, and in the ordinary course the third son Walter (infra) would have inherited the estate. But under the terms of William’s will Bunanhow House and the larger part of the property was left to his youngest son William.

William Butler II of Bunanhow (known as “Liam Oge”) who thus succeeded in 1823, also took part in the Emancipation movement and as late as 1827 we find him moving a resolution calling for “complete, unequivocal and unqualified Emancipation.”({74}) But at the eventful Clare election of the following year all the Butlers, including William, supported Vesey Fitzgerald against O’Connell. This does not, however, imply a recantation of principle, for Vesey Fitzgerald was himself a supporter of the Catholic claims, and there were other reasons which caused the Butlers to regard his candidature with more favour than his opponent’s. In those days, and indeed for long after, it was generally accepted that a County Member should not only be a large landowner, but that his property should lie within the county he represented in Parliament.({75}) Fitzgerald possessed both of these qualifications, but the Liberator did not. Further, the FitzGeralds were neighbours of the Butlers, and the families were intermarried.

69. See Appendix VIII. [2], [3].
70. Cornet Peter Butler d. ante 1778. In a settlement of the Bunanhow estate of 4 Apr. 1778, William is described as “only son and heir apparent of the said Peter Butler,” i.e., Peter senr. (Regtd. 3 Feb 1779, Book 314, p 424). The settlement was made on the occasion of William’s marriage to Belinda Butler of Cregg, but as she was a Protestant, it was apparently deemed prudent not to disclose this. See n. 177.
71. See Appendix XIV.
72. An account of a “fine deer-chase with the hounds of William Butler of Bunanhow” is given in the Clare Journal, March 2, 1815.
73. See Appendix XI [1].
75. See Bagehot, English Constitution (1867) for an interesting disquisition on this convention.
William II, like his cousin James Blake Butler, was the target of attack by the Terry Alts, who committed several outrages on his property. In March 1831 a large party of them attacked Bunnamow House. William Butler and his eldest son were absent at the Assizes at the time, but his second son Robert, a lad of eighteen, returned the fire with effect (his mother re-loading the guns for him)\(^{76}\) and drove off the attackers. Robert’s spirited conduct had a gratifying sequel, for the Lord Lieutenant (the Marquis of Anglesey) who was staying with the FitzGeralds of Carriorton at the time, forthwith presented Robert Butler with a commission in the 41st Regiment of Foot “for the gallant defence of his father’s house when recently attacked.”\(^{77}\) It was on this visit of Lord Anglesey to Carriorton that the Terry Alts, by way of welcoming His Majesty’s representative, dug a grave in front of the house.\(^{78}\)

Robert’s elder brother, William Butler III of Bunnamow, was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, but left without taking a degree, owing to an exploit which cut short his academic career. A fellow-student laid him a wager that he would not kiss the Archbishop of Dublin’s daughter (Miss Whately) on her way out of the College Chapel after morning Service on the following Sunday. William took on the bet and won it, but the College authorities were not amused and the delinquent was rusticated.\(^{79}\) Some years later he married Ellen Lambert of Castle Ellen, Co. Galway.\(^{80}\) Her younger sister, Isabella, was mother of Lord (better known as Sir Edward) Carson, leader of the Ulster Party in its opposition to Home Rule. William Butler III had two sons and two daughters. Lambert, the younger son, married the daughter of a wealthy mineowner in Australia.\(^{81}\) Their daughter Mary was an ardent Gaelic Leaguer, and in her political outlook departed from the traditional loyalty of the Butlers to the Crown. Pious Orangemen will be shocked to learn that a cousin of “King” Carson should have christened Sinn Fein, but such was the case, for it was Mary Butler who suggested to Arthur Griffith that he should call his new movement by that name.\(^{82}\)

William Butler IV of Bunnamow, the eldest son, served as High Sheriff at the age of twenty-five but died two years later. He married Margaret

---


77. Limerick Chronicle, 2 April, 1831.


79. Anna Butler, his daughter, and Anna Stapleton, a cousin, are my authorities for this episode.

80. The Lamberts are one of the comparatively few Cromwellian settlers among the Galway gentry. They descend from the Lamberts of Calton, Yorks., one of whom was Gen. John Lambert, the celebrated Commonwealth leader. Ellen Lambert’s mother was a dau. of Thos. Seymour of Ballymore Castle, Co. Galway. The late Archdeacon St. John D. Seymour, the antiquary, was a member of this family. Ballymore is said to be the oldest inhabited castle in Galway. It was besieged by Ginkel in June, 1690 (Macaulay Hist. of Engr., chapter XVII).

81. Mary Anne Ryan. Her sister Margaret mar. Walter G. Strickland, Director of the National Gallery of Ireland, author of A Dictionary of Irish Artists. Mr. Strickland was a cousin-german of the 1st Lord Strickland of Sizergh.

82. Her sister, Mère Columba (Belinda) Butler, is my informant. See also a letter of Arthur Griffith in L. MacManus. Memories of the Irish Literary Revival and the Anglo-Irish War. Mary Butler’s novel The Ring of Day is largely autobiographical.
MacNamara, who had an interesting strain of Butler blood through her mother, Margaret Galwey, a descendant of Richard Butler of Kilcash, the Confederate leader (supra).

When William Butler II died in 1871 at the patriarchal age of 87, he was succeeded by his great-grandson William Butler V of Bunnahow, who died unmarried in 1891 act 27. Of his brothers and sisters only one (Isabella) married. She was mother of the present writer, who represents the Bunnahow branch in the female line.

WALTERSTOWN.

The founder of this branch was Walter Butler eldest surviving son of William I of Bunnahow, who left him about three thousand acres. He married his cousin Theresa Blake of Frenchfort (her mother was a daughter of Cornet Butler). His eldest son Michael succeeded, but as he died unmarried the property passed to the latter's brother Nicholas. On his death the Walterstown estate went to his eldest son Col. Walter Blake Butler who assumed the name and arms of Creagh on his marriage with Clara, daughter and co-heiress ofCornellius Creagh of Dangan, Co. Clare.

Nicholas Butler's youngest brother Anthony had a remarkable career. After eighteen years in the Royal Irish Fusiliers, in the course of which he saw service in the Indian Mutiny and the China War of 1860, Capt. Butler astonished his relatives by resigning from the Army in 1866 in order to become a Jesuit. Twelve years later he was consecrated a Bishop and appointed Vicar-Apostolic of British Guiana, where he died in 1901 after a successful episcopate of twenty-five years. The Soldier-Bishop was buried with full military honours in Brickdam Cathedral, Georgetown.

KILCOMMON AND BALLYLINE.

The most notable figure among the Butlers of Co. Clare was Sir Theobald Butler, patriot, lawyer and wit. Sir Toby (as he is usually called) was second son of James Butler of Boytonrath and Shranagollen. He was entered as a student of the Inner Temple on 9 September 1671 and admitted
to King's Inn, Dublin, in Michaelmas Term 1678. He quickly made his mark at the Bar and was appointed Solicitor-General by James II on his arrival in Ireland in 1689. In the Parliament of that year Sir Toby sat for the borough of Ennis, and later was made a Commissioner of the Revenue. He was the draftsman on the Irish side of the ill-fated Treaty of Limerick, to which he was one of the signatories. When the first Popery Bill was introduced in 1703 in violation of that Treaty, Sir Theobald Butler on behalf of his co-religionists exposed its iniquity in a closely reasoned and moving speech at the Bar of the Irish House of Commons. But his audience were in the first flush of Protestant Ascendancy and his arguments fell on deaf ears. Shortly before the passing of the Act, Sir Toby conveyed his estates to a Protestant friend, who honourably held them in trust for him. This and the opportune conversion of his eldest son James in 1714, enabled him to retain his patrimony and the greater part of the large estates he acquired from his professional gains, notwithstanding that he remained a Catholic until his death. Sir Toby was a jovial soul and noted wit, and numbered Dean Swift among his friends. He married Margaret Roche, daughter of Dominick Roche, created Lord Tarbert and Viscount Cahiravahilla by James II. Sir Toby died in Dublin in 1721. His portrait in his robes of office formerly hung in the hall at Ballyline House, and his bust still surmounts his monument in St. James' Churchyard, Dublin.

James Butler of Castlekeale, Co. Clare, his son and heir, married a daughter of the 7th Lord Cahir, while Sir Toby's daughter, Frances, was wife of the 8th Baron. After Sir Toby's death his widow resided with her daughter Lady Cahir, and died at Rehill Castle near Clogheen in 1735. Her grandson James Butler migrated from Clare to Tipperary on succeeding his brother Theobald (who died unmarried) and took up his residence at Kilcommon adjoining Cahir Castle, and he continued to live there until his death. By his will (proved 12 May 1780) he appointed his intimate friend Lord Chief Justice Patterson as executor, and directed that he be buried in the Parish Church of Cahir with his second wife and that a monument be erected to his memory.
James Butler's eldest son Theobald who succeeded to both the Clare and Tipperary estates, resided in the latter county until his death in 1810. But when his son Augustine (Austin) came of age, he decided to make his home in Clare. As the lease of Millbrooke, of which he was head landlord, had previously been determined, he made this the family seat. Augustine Butler was Colonel of the Clare Militia and a Deputy Lieutenant for the county. He was a keen sportsman and was the last winner of the Clare Gold Cup, which mysteriously disappeared from Ballyline House after his death. A full length portrait of Col. Butler hung in the County Club at Ennis until its dissolution a few years ago. Augustine Butler married Kate Stacpoole, by whom he had an only son Theobald, who succeeded him. On the latter's death in 1838 without male issue, the estates were inherited by his two daughters as co-heiresses.

DOONBEG.

This branch of the family, which was settled in West Clare, descended from John Butler who accompanied his brother James Butler II of Boytonrath into Co. Clare. He held the lands of Clooneen als. Ballynocy and Momoylane, for which he is charged in the Subsidy Rolls of 1659 and 1666. John Butler was a legatee under the will of Sir Dermot O'Shaughnessy of Gort (29 Jan. 1671). He had two sons, William and Pierce. The former had a fee-farm grant from the Earl of Thomond in 1712 of the lands of Annagh and Fintrimore at £22. Pierce, who spent his early life in France, was subsequently man of business to William Butler of Rossroe, who describes him in his will as 'my kinsman Pierce Butler.' There are frequent references to Pierce in the Castle Crine papers. He later lived at Quilty where he inherited some property through his wife Mary O'Dwyer, known as "Maire Glé Geal" (clever, bright Mary) whom he married in 1714. Their grandson James Butler of Doonbeg married Catherine Hogan, sister of Edmond Hogan of Doonbeg, High Sheriff in 1759. Of their issue, James d.s.p. and Susan married John Blackall of Killard, Co. Clare. She died in 1829.

CASTLE CRINE.

The founder of this branch of the Butlers in Clare was William of Rossroe, High Sheriff in 1703 and 1712. In contemporary documents he is described as cousin-german to Sir Toby Butler, but whether their relationship was paternal or maternal is a question upon which different views have been expressed. The Castle Crine family tradition is thus stated by Henry Butler in a letter written in 1841 to his sister Mrs. Staveley: "His (i.e. William of Rossroe's) father was Thomas Roe

99. Theobald Butler mar. 1794 Elizabeth, dau. of Augustine FitzGerald of Tureen, Co. Clare. John Lloyd in his Short Tour in Co. Clare (1780) has some verses about Tureen, where he was employed as a tutor. Augustine was s. of Charles of Castlekeale and g. s. of John FitzGerald of Carriguran. See also nn. 116, 179, 208.


101. Kate, dau. of Andrew Stacpoole of Ballyalla, Co. Clare, by Diana, dau. of Daniel Finucane of Stamer Park. Her bro. Andrew Stacpoole, was High Sheriff, Co. Clare, 1859.

102. She was a dau. of Conor O'Dwyer of Quilty, whose father Edmond was transplanted from Co. Tipp. and had a grant of lands in Clare under the Act of Settlement and Explan. dated 27 Nov. 1679.

Butler, descended, as I have heard, from Sir Richard Butler, youngest son of Pierce Butler, Earl of Ossory and Ormonde who married Lady Margaret FitzGerald, daughter of the 8th Earl of Kildare."

Sir Richard Butler above mentioned was the 1st Viscount Mountgarret (cr. 1550). The late Miss Henrietta Butler of Castle Crine told the present writer that Thomas Butler of Castle Crine (William of Rossroe's son) sold in 1743 certain lands which he had inherited under the will of his grandfather Thomas dated 1671. Miss Butler regarded this as supporting the family tradition, but even if Thomas, the devisee, were the same person as Thomas of Castle Crine, this would not carry the matter any further unless the testator gave some clue to his own antecedents. Unfortunately I did not take the opportunity of perusing the will at the time, and a recent inspection of the Castle Crine MSS did not reveal its whereabouts. I am unable therefore to say whether the will threw any light on the question of identity. There are, however, certain circumstances which, it is submitted, render it improbable that Thomas of Castle Crine was grandson of the testator of 1671. In the first place Henry Butler, elder brother of Thomas of Castle Crine, did not take his degree at Oxford until cir. 1715; and Thomas himself did not marry until 1722. These dates, taken in conjunction, make it unlikely that Thomas was born as early as 1671. Moreover, an examination of recorded Butler wills discloses that the only one of the year 1671 is that of Thomas Butler of Derryclooney, Co. Tipperary, dated 1 April 1671 and proved at Cashel 10 July 1671. The Butler of Derryclooney had property in Co. Clare, some of which was mortgaged to William Butler of Rossroe and eventually passed into the ownership of his family. This would account for the inclusion of a Derryclooney will among the Castle Crine muniments, and its discovery among them by some genealogically minded member of the family of a later generation might have led him to conclude that it was a will of one of his own ancestors. A further ground for rejecting the Castle Crine tradition is that if the relationship between William Butler of Rossroe and Sir Toby was maternal, William's mother would have been a daughter of James Butler of Boytonrath (executed 1653). But so far as is known, he had only two daughters viz Elizabeth (or Ellice) who married Redmond Magrath of Thurlsebegg at Cashel on 17 October 1654, and Mary who died unmarried on 10 January 1684.

Neither Mr. Blake Butler nor the writer has been able to discover any independent evidence in support of a Mountgarret ancestry for the Butlers of Castle Crine; but as family tradition should not be lightly disregarded, a careful study was made of the descendants of the 1st Lord Mountgarret (who married four times and had seven sons) from which it appeared that the only possible descent from that house for a Thomas Butler dying cir. 1671, would be from the 1st Viscount's fifth son, James Butler of Kenlis. Kells, Co. Kilkenny, and on this premise a tentative pedigree was compiled. The writer lent a note book containing that pedigree to a friend,

104. I was unable to trace this letter in a recent inspection of Cas. Crine papers, but I possess a copy given to me by the late Miss Henrietta Butler.

105. Cas. Crine MSS. Lease 1 Nov. 1715, Piers Butler "trustee for Henrny Butler of Christ Church College in Oxford Batchelor of Arts" to Teige O'Brien of Knockadurra, Co. Clare.

106. Redmond als Edmond Magrath obtained a dispensation from transplantation and an order made to have 600 acres of his estate restored to him, 11 March 1657/8. His son Redmond Magrath of Lecarrow, Capt. in Lord Clare's Dragoons, was attainted 1691, and forfeited his estate 1695.
who being unaware of its hypothetical basis, incorporated it in a pedigree of the Castle Crine family which he later sent to the Genealogical Office, Dublin. I mention this lest it might be thought at some future date that this pedigree affords independent corroboration of the Castle Crine tradition, which it does not.

Let us now consider the points in favour of the alternative view that the relationship of William of Rossroe and Sir Toby was on the paternal side. In the first place, William and Sir Toby were indisputably cousins-german; and where two first cousins have the same surname the presumption, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, is that their fathers were brothers. In the present case this presumption is strengthened by the fact that William's father was Thomas Butler, and that Sir Toby Butler had a paternal uncle of the same name. The recent discovery by Mr. Blake Butler of a pedigree by Lodge (107) reinforces this still further. According to this pedigree Thomas Butler, uncle of Sir Toby, married a daughter of Sir Philip Perceval, ancestor of the Earls of Egmont. Perceval, who is described in Burke's Peerage as a "very distinguished statesman" and by some Irish writers in less flattering terms, was appointed in 1642 to the lucrative post of Commissary General to the Army in Ireland, and acquired an estate of over 100,000 acres in Munster "by judicious use of his opportunities as Commissioner for land titles and of his interest at court." (108) Among other offices held by this pluralist was that of King's Feodary in Tipperary, the Palatine rights of which had been unjustly taken from the 11th Earl of Ormonde by James I. Now there is a family tradition that William Butler of Rossroe was a Judge Palatine of Co. Tipperary. This tradition is borne out by a letter to William Butler dated 31 January 1716 in which the writer asks for information "on behalf of a very worthy, honest gentleman Captain Lewis Jones, who has an estate in your County of Tipperary. The records of your Palatinate I am informed are in your custody and power." (109) In those days public offices were usually procured through family interest, so William Butler's judgeship fits in very well with his being a relative of the influential Percivals. While then in the absence of the will of 1671 it cannot be said that the ancestry of the Castle Crine family has been conclusively proved, all the available evidence, both positive and negative, goes to show that the relationship of William of Rossroe and Sir Toby Butler was on their fathers' side. It appears therefore to the present writer that the Butlers of Castle Crine are of the same stock paternally as the Doon, Bunnahow and Ballyline families and derive their descent from the Barons of Dunboyne, not from the Viscounts Mountgarret.

So much for William of Rossroe's ancestry. As for himself, he was bred to the law as an Attorney of the Common Pleas, and appears to have been possessed of considerable means, which he invested in mortgages and landed property in Co. Clare and Limerick City, of which he was Mayor in 1712. In some instances transactions which originated in a mortgage culminated in his purchasing the right of redemption and buying out the

107. ADD, MSS, 23696.
108. Ency. Brit. Vol. 9, p. 18. He gradually got into his possession the lands of the Barrys, Lombards, Powers, Magners, MacCarthys and O'Dwyers. Egmont MSS. Vol. I. He was also Registrar of the Court of Wards from which his profits in 1640 were £7,000. When the Court was abolished in 1662 the Perceval family received £5,000 compensation. Smith, Present and Past State of Co. & City of Cork (1750).
109. Cas. Crine MSS.
former owner. Among his purchases were parts of the forfeited estates of
the 3rd Viscount Clare which he acquired from the Burton, Westby,
McDonnell syndicate.\footnote{110} Although, or perhaps because he was a lawyer,
William Butler was averse to litigation, but on occasion was unable to
avoid it, as witness his dealings with William and Patrick Lysaght, of
which mention is made in Dr. E. MacLysaght’s \textit{Study of a Transplanted
Family in the 17th Century}. A detailed account of these transactions is
given in a rental of the Castle Crine estate compiled in 1720, from which
it appears that William Butler made several payments to the Lysaghts
in respect of the same land, thus bearing out Dr. MacLysaght’s surmise
that his ancestors must have been remarkably plausible. These trans-
actions took place between 1698-1709, but that was not the end; for as
late as 24 February 1729 we find a Notice in \textit{Puc’s Occurrences} in which
Patrick Lysaght (William’s son) claimed the very same lands from the
Butlers. The Lysaghts were good stayers.

The rental of 1720 is an interesting and informative record. It sets-
out the title to every one of the 73 denominations of land comprising the
Castle Crine estate, and the duties paid by the tenants throw light on the
prices of agricultural produce at the time. Thus a lease of 24 Aug. 1701
imposes a duty of 17/6 payable at Michaelmas, and provides that “the
lessee is at his election to have said 17/6 paid in cash or in lieu thereof
one fat hogg, one fat mutton, and one fat couple of capons.” The actual
rental of the estate in 1720 was over £1,000; but the true setting value was
computed to be £1,400-1,500, which, having regard to money values then
ruling, was a very handsome rent roll.

William Butler of Rosscrae married\footnote{111} a sister of Admiral Sir Robert
Holmes, a colourful personage in the days of Charles II, who merits a
passing reference. He entered the Royal Navy under Prince Rupert, but
after the execution of Charles I followed the fortunes of James, Duke of
York, and became a soldier under the Great Turenne. Returning to England
at the Restoration, Holmes rejoined the Navy in which he subsequently
held high commands. Knighted in 1666, he sat in the House of Commons as
M.P. for Winchester, and at the time of his death was Governor of the
Isle of Wight. Sir Robert Holmes is buried in Yarmouth Parish Church
in that island beneath a singular monument. The figure surmounting it
was originally sculptured as a statue of Louis XIV; but the vessel in which
it was carried was captured within Admiral Holmes’ jurisdiction, and he
decided to have it adapted for his own sepulchre. He therefore removed
from the classically costumed figure the head of “le Grand Monarque,”
and had it replaced by a bust of himself.\footnote{112}

William Butler, who died in 1720, was succeeded in Rosscrae by his
eldest son Henry. He married in 1729 Margaret Monck,\footnote{113} sister of
Henry Stanley Monck “of St. Stephen’s Green, near the city of Dublin.”

\footnote{110} They purchased this vast estate for only £2,500 from Keppel, Earl of Albemarle,
to whom William III had granted it. For the history of this transaction see J.N.M.A.S.

\footnote{111} It would seem that William Butler married twice, his other wife being a Miss
Lysaght and ors.}

\footnote{112} \textit{Dict. Nat. Biog.}, \textit{Cornhill Magazine} June 1903, \textit{Two Gentlemen Commanders},
See also \textit{Pepys’ Diary} and \textit{Burnett’s History of his own Times}.

\footnote{113} Margaret Monck (mar. sett. 3 March 1729) was dau. of George Monck by Hon.
Mary Molyneux, dau. of 1st Viscount Molyneux. Geo. Monck’s yr. bro. Charles was
gr. father of the 1st Viscount Monck.
Surveyor-General of the Customs. The only issue of this marriage, Henry Butler, was a minor at his father’s death, so he was made a ward in Chancery, John Lysaght (afterwards the 1st Lord Lisle)\(^{114}\) and James Sexton, Attorney-at-law, being appointed guardians. Henry Butler, who was a fellow-officer and intimate friend of Cornet Butler of Millbrooke,\(^{115}\) greatly impaired his paternal estate by extravagance. But apart from this prodigal Light Dragoon, the descendants of William of Rossroe seem to have inherited his business instincts. These attributes are reflected in the Castle Crine archives, which are almost wholly concerned with estate management, in which they took an active interest to the mutual benefit of their tenants and themselves. Being all of them members of the dominant Church they did not suffer under the disabilities of the Penal laws. Neither did they support lost causes, or waste their substance on Parliamentary contests. As a result, the story of the Castle Crine branch during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is one of uninterrupted stability, but—perhaps for that reason—it does not afford much material for the family chronicler, and may be briefly narrated.

Henry the Dragoon died unmarried in 1791, when his depleted estate devolved upon his nephew William Butler of Castle Crine, whose father Thomas\(^{116}\) was second son of William of Rossroe, from whom he inherited considerable property including Castle Crine. William Butler of Castle Crine\(^{117}\) had two sons, the younger of whom—Eyre Edward—was a cotton planter in "Rio Demaray" where according to family tradition he married a Dutch lady from those parts. His elder brother James of Castle Crine died in 1820\(^{118}\) and was succeeded by his son Henry\(^{119}\) who was a Deputy Lieutenant for Co. Clare, as was also the latter’s son and heir James.\(^{120}\) On the death of the last mentioned in 1857 the estates devolved upon his three daughters as co-heiresses, of whom only one married viz Sophia Mary, wife of the 5th Lord Clarina. Lady Clarina had no male issue, and on the marriage of her eldest daughter the Hon. Sophia (Zoe) Butler Massey to the Hon. Eric Henderson\(^{121}\) the Castle Crine estates were settled upon her, subject to the life interests of her mother and aunts. On the death in 1939 of Miss Anna Butler the last survivor, Mrs. Butler-Henderson (who with her husband assumed the name of Butler in addition to that of Henderson) succeeded to Castle Crine. Her daughter, Mrs. Wordsworth resided there until 1951, when the place was sold. The latter’s husband, Col. J. G. Wordsworth, is a direct descendant of the poet.

---

114. John Lysaght M.P. cr. Lord Lisle 1758, was related to the Butlers through his mother Grace Holmes, dau. of Col Thos. Holmes of Kilmacloch.

115. See Appendix IX.[6].


118. James Butler mar. 1782 Mary Iveres, dau. of Robert Iveres of Mount Iveres, Co. Clare, by Mary Parsons of Craigbeg, Co. Limerick.


121. The Hon. Eric Brand Henderson of Faccombe Manor, Hants, yr. s. of 1st Lord Paringdon.