Some Limerick Documents from Spain

(These papers of Limerick interest are taken with the co-operation and from the collection of Professor P. MacBride, University College, Dublin, of items of Irish interest contained in Spanish and Italian archives and family collections and are presented by Miss Jennifer Barry, M.A., one of Professor MacBride's assistants.—Ed.)

In 1770, when Nicholas Woulfe was a candidate for the knighthood of Santiago of Spain, he submitted his genealogy and several supporting documents and affidavits for the approval of the council of knights. As these documents are still extant in Spain and might interest southern historians I here give a translation of one and a transcript and translation of two others. They are: (a) The genealogy of Nicholas Woulfe which gives information of the Woulfes of Limerick and the Aylward of Waterford back to Elizabethan times; (b) the baptismal and confirmation certificate of Bartholomew Woulfe who was baptised by Father Molony in 1686 in St. Mary's Parish, Limerick, and confirmed in the same parish by Dr. Slevin, Bishop of Cork and Cloyne, eleven years later; (c) a certificate for Nicholas Woulfe signed by the Archbishop of Cashel and the bishops of Cork and Waterford.

In my translations I maintain the original spelling of proper and place names:

(a) Genealogy of Don Nicholas Woulfe, Captain of Grenadeers:

Parents: Don Bartholome Woulfe, native of the city of Limerick, and Doña Ana Aylward, native of the city of Waterford.

Paternal Grandparents: Don Jacobo Woulfe, native of the said city of Limerick, and Doña Anastasia Loftus, native of the same city.

Maternal Grandparents: Don Juan Aylward, native of the city of Waterford and Doña Sebastiana Corcoran, native of the same city.

Paternal Greatgrandparents: Don Bartholome Woulfe, native of the city of Limerick and Doña Maria Long, native of the same city; and Don Juan Loftus, native of the city of Limerick and Doña Ana Long, native of the same city.

Maternal Greatgrandparents: Don Pedro Aylward, native of the city of Waterford and Doña Ana Aylward, native of the same city; and Don Pedro Corcoran, native of the city of Waterford and Doña Juana Barret, native of the same city.

(b) Baptismal and confirmation certificate of Bartholomew Woulfe:

Omnibus Christi fidelibus ad quos praesentes literas pervenerint salutem in Domino, Nos Matheus Molony sacrae theologiae Doctor Protonotarius Apostolicus nec non Vicarius Generalis Dioecesis Lymericensis in Regno Hiberniae, sede vacante Episcopali Dioecesis praedicti jam vacante per obitum bonae Memoriae Rendi admodum patris Joannis Molony(1) Dei et Apostolicæ sedis grauita, nuper dictae sedis Episcopi, qui obit in exilio Parys in Regno Franciæ, Notam facimus et attestamur plenamente et indubitatam fidem facimus, quod nono die mensis Octobris qui fuit in anno Domini millesimo sexto centesimo octogesimo sexto, Magistrum Bartholomeum Woulfe, filium Magistri Jacobi Woulfe et Anastasiae Loftus ejus uxoris baptizatum fuisse a me, in parochia Beatæ Mariae Virginis Lymericensis; Philipo Stackpole de eadem Civitate mercatore et Hellena Loftus
(3) patrinis juxta ritum Sanctae Romanae Matris Ecclesiae, ex piis, honestis et
catholicis parentibus ortum et procreatum, nulla haereses labes pollutis aut
infectis, Quod que ut audivimus idem Bartholomeus Woulfe modo commoratur
in urbe sie oppido vocato Gades, vulgo vocato Gadia in florentissimo Hispaniarum
Regno. Uteriusque attestator ac plenam et indubititam fidem facimus, quod
praefatus Bartholomeus Woulfe in mea praesentia fuit confirmatus in dicta
parochia Beatae Mariae Virginis Limerici praejecti per Rendum in Christo Patrem
et Dominum Ioannem Slevyne(4) Sacrae Theologiae Doctorem facultatis Parisiensis
non Equum Episcopum Corcagiensem et Clonensem septimo die mensis Iulii, in anno
Domini Millesimo Sexcentessimo nonagessimo Septimo. Qui quidem Rendum
Domini Ioannes Slevyne postea obit in exilio a Patria expulsus in Civitate
Lisbonae in Regno Portugal ... In quorum omnium et singulorum fidem et
Testimonium praesentibus subscripsimus sigillumque nostrum apposimus in loco
Refugii nostri urgence persecutione, undecima die mensis Juhlii Anno Domini
millesimo Septingentessimo decimo otavo.

Ma : Molony V.G.(6)

Quod attestor manu et sigillo rogatus Dionisius O Hickie (quondam regnante
Jacobo Segundo Rege Catholico) Registrarius Diocesis Limericensis Notariusque
publicus ac ... eilo(6) Limericensis.

Praesentibus:
Piers Moroney Thomas Stackpole Piers Arthur Bar Stritch Mich Stritch
Da: Creagh Jacobus Power.

(Translation: To all the faithful of Christ whom this letter may reach, greetings
in the Lord. We Matthew Molony, Doctor in Sacred Theology, Apostolic
Protonotary and Vicar General of the diocese of Limerick in the Kingdom of
Ireland, the Episcopal see of the aforesaid diocese being vacant through the
decease of the very Rev. Father John Molony of good memory, not long ago
bishop of the said See through the grace of God and the Apostolic
See, who died in exile in Paris in the Kingdom of France, we make
known and certify and give complete and undoubted faith as to how on
the ninth day of the month of October in the year of Our Lord
one thousand six hundred and eighty six, Master Bartholomew Woulfe son
of Master James Woulfe and Anastasia Loftus his wife was baptised by me
according to the rite of the Holy Roman Mother Church, in the parish of the
Blessed Virgin Mary of Limerick; Philip Stackpole, merchant of the same city
and Helena Loftus(1) being the godparents, (Bartholomew was) born and
begotten of pious, honourable and Catholic parents, unpolluted and unainted by
any stain of heresy. And as we have heard, the said Bartholomew Woulfe is at
present in the unfortified city called Gades, commonly called Cadiz in the flourishing
Kingdom of the Spains. And furthermore we certify and give complete and
undoubted faith that the aforementioned Bartholomew Woulfe was confirmed in
my presence in the said parish of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the aforesaid
Limerick by the Reverend in Christ, Father and Lord John Slevyne, doctor of
Sacred Theology of the faculty of Paris and Bishop of Cork and Cloyne, on the
seventh day of the month of July in the year of Our Lord one thousand six
hundred and ninety seven. The said Rev. Lord John Slevyne afterwards died in
exile having been driven out of his country to the city of Lisbon in the Kingdom
of Portugal.

To all and each of these facts we sign our faith and testimony and append
our seal in this Place of our Refuge, for the reason that the persecution is bearing
hard upon us, on the eleventh day of the month of June in the year of Our Lord
one thousand seven hundred and eighteen.

Ma : Molony V.G.
The which I Dionisius O Hickie being requested to do so, certify by my hand and seal, Registrar of the diocese of Limerick (during the reign of James II, the Catholic king), public notary and scribe of Limerick.

Signatures of those present:
Piers Moroney  Thomas Staepole  Piers Arthur  Bar Stritch  Mich Stritch
Da : Creagh  Jacobus Power.

(c) A certificate signed by the Archbishop of Cashel and the bishops of Cork and Waterford:

Cum justum sit ac rationi consonum veritati testimonium perhibere Inscripti utpote requisiti, sequentem genealogiam veram esse ac genuinem declarant, nimirum praenobilis Dominus Nicolaus Woulf in Copii Catholicae Suae Majestatis de facto insirviens, filius est legitimus et naturalis praenobilis Domini Bartholomei Woulf et Dominae Annae Aylward, parentum vere Catholicorum, nuncum uilla labe heresos inceptorum, qui quidem Bartholomeus filius fuit naturalis et legitimus Domini Jacobi et praenobilis Dominae Anastaciae Loftus ex principioribus familii hujus Regni Hiberniae. Jacobus filius fuit legitimus et naturalis Domini Bartholomei et Dominae Mariae Long filiae praenobilis Domini Petri Supremi Domini Variarum Denominationum in Comitatu Limerici in hoc Regno, superfluum foret aliquid insuper inserere cum praefatius Dominus Nicolaus authenticam genealogiam formatam anno 1729 ejusdem tenoris apud se retineat.

Jam vere Domina Anna Aylward mater praefati Domini Nicolai Woulf, filia fuit legitima et naturalis praenobilis Domini Joannis Aylward et Dominae Sebastianae Corcoran parentum vere Catholicorum Hibernorum qui quidem Joannes filius fuit legitimus et naturalis praenobilis Domini Petri Aylward et Dominae Annae Aylward incolonum vere nobilium Civitatis Waterfordiensis in Regno Hiberniae, in quorum omnium fidem ac testimonium hisce manu propria Subscriptimus Sigillo nostro muniri in loco nostri refugii in Hibernia jussimus.

Thurlesiae 15 novembris 1769.

(Signed) Jacobus Archep. Casseliensis
Ex mandato Domini mei
Thadeus O Ryan Secr.

Carrigae 17 novembris 1769.

(Signed) Petrus Waterfordiensis et Lismorensis Epp
Ex mandato Illustrissimi Domini mei
Joannis Lean Secretarius

Corcagie 20 novembris 1769.

(Signed) Joannes Episcopus Corgagiensis
Ex mandato Illustrissimi Domini mei
Joannes o Brien

Translation: As it is right and in conformity with reason to bring forward testimony to the truth, the Undersigned as they were requested, declare the following genealogy to be true and authentic. In truth, the noble Gentleman Nicolaus Woulf, at present in the service of his Catholic Majesty, is a legitimate and natural son of the noble Gentleman Bartholomew Woulf and the lady Anna Aylward, truly Catholic parents never tainted by any stain of heresy, the said Bartholomew being the natural and legitimate son of the Gentleman James and the noble lady Anastacia Loftus of the principal families of this kingdom of Ireland, James being the legitimate and natural son of the Gentleman Bartholomew
and the lady Maria Long, daughter of the noble Gentleman Peter, supreme lord of various titles in the County of Limerick in this Kingdom. It would be superfluous to add anything else over and above this since the aforementioned Gentleman Nicholas possesses a genuine genealogy having the same contents, drawn up in the year 1729.

And verily, the lady Anna Aylward, mother of the aforementioned Gentleman Nicolas Wouff, was a legitimate and natural daughter of the noble Gentleman Joannes Aylward and the lady Sebastiana Corcoran, truly Irish Catholic parents, the said Joannes being a legitimate and natural son of the noble Gentleman Petrus Aylward and the lady Anna Aylward truly noble inhabitants of the City of Waterford in the Kingdom of Ireland; in faith and testimony of all these facts we signed with these our own hand and ordered our seal to be joined in the place of our refuge in Ireland.

Thurles 15 novembris 1769.
(Signed)
Ex mandato Domini mei
Thadeus O Ryan Seer.
Carrigae 17 novembris 1769.
(Signed)
Ex mandato Illustriissimi Domini mei
Joannis Lean Secretarius
Corkage 20 novembris 1769.
(Signed)
Joannes Episcopus Corkagiensis
Ex mandato III Domini mei
Joannes o Brien.)

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(1) Archive Historico Nacional, Madrid: Pruebas de Santiago, exped. 9927.
(2) John O’Molony was made bishop of Limerick in 1689; he had been bishop of Killaloe and retained that See in his administration, on his appointment to Limerick. At the age of 85, he died in Paris on the 3rd of September, 1702, and was buried in the church of the Irish College. v. W.M. Brady; The Episcopal Succession, Vol. II. pp. 47-50.
(3) To the original latin document, is attached a certified Spanish translation which gives the additional information that the godparents were husband and wife.
(4) In 1693, John Baptist Swayne had been fourteen years lector in the College of Propaganda and in 1702 he was appointed Bishop of Cork and Cloyne. In 1703 persecution forced him to seek refuge in Lisbon where he died in 1712. v. W.M. Brady: op. cit. Vol. II. pp. 92-94.
(5) The See of Limrick was administered by Vicars from 1702 to 1729.

(6) The names are illegible, but the Spanish translation supplies “escribano.”
(7) See note 3.
(8) See note 6.
(9) James Butler was consecrated in May 1750. He was coadjutor to Archbishop Christopher Butler until the latter’s death in 1757. James Butler was 82 when he died on May 17, 1774. v. W.M. Brady: op. cit. Vol. II. p. 39.
(10) Peter Creagh was bishop of Waterford and Lismore from 1750 to his death in 1774. v. W.M. Brady: op. cit. Vol. II. pp. 74-76.
(11) John Butler was bishop of Cork from 1765 until he resigned in 1786. v. W.M. Brady: op. cit., Vol. II. pp. 85-90.