

THE HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE OF CASTLETOWN-WALLER IN 1642.

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The lengthy and minute statement made by the famous Sir Hardress Waller relative to the losses he sustained and the damage done to his house and property in the Rebellion of 1641, is bound up in the MS. volume of County Limerick Depositions now in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin. It gives a full list, with the value placed opposite each item, of the farm produce, furniture, stock, and stores of provision, which were either damaged, or else plundered by the besiegers. The late Rev. J. Dowd, in his interesting *Round About the County of Limerick*, has devoted a chapter to this document, to which the reader of this article may turn with pleasure and profit. He has, however, only given a comparatively small number of the different items of household furniture that were to be found in the Castle at the time of the siege; we have thought it worth while to copy them all out exactly as they are in the original document, partly because we believe them to be of extreme local interest, and partly because they afford us a valuable contemporary picture of the furnishing of an Irish gentleman's home in the first half of the 17th century. The list speaks for itself, and needs but few words by way of introduction. When we read it over, and draw a mental comparison between then and now, we are struck by the apparent absence of all those smaller ornaments such as pictures, vases, mirrors, curios, etc., with which we endeavour to fill our houses with more or less good taste. On the other hand, when visiting some ruined castle, we, perchance, have speculated as to the state of extreme discomfort in which its long-dead inhabitants would seem to have lived. These speculations cannot always have been correct. A large living-room hung round with tapestry to hide the bareness of the walls, as well as to keep out the incessant draughts, its floor covered with a rich carpet, well furnished with cushioned chairs sufficiently

comfortable (and possibly with a couple of large beds, too), and with a roaring fire of logs and turf in the enormous open fire-place, is a picture that would appeal to most of us, more especially as we could while away the tediousness of the long winter evenings by dipping into the contents of the great chest of books. Would that Sir Hardress had catalogued them for us ! Possibly they consisted of rare folios, or priceless first editions, some of them, perhaps, bearing on their title-pages the dedicatory autographs of some of the Immortals. The beds, bolsters, and stock of household linen, are quite modern in tone. It is curious that no articles of silver are mentioned. The instruments for brewing home-made beer are worthy of note, though we imagine the present-day housewife would strongly object to use the same vessel for holding soiled clothes to-day and beer to-morrow. Great store seems to have been set by the clock, which had to be purchased in England, and which, no doubt, was fearfully and wonderfully made, and treated with befitting awe and reverence. The weapons enumerated were, of course, quite inadequate for the siege, but they were, no doubt, merely those that were permanently kept in the castle for the purpose of sport, and would also be sufficient to scare away when necessary robbers or other objectionable characters. In conclusion, the entire document is of the greatest interest, and perhaps on some future occasion we may be permitted to publish *in extenso* in the journal the lists of cattle and farm produce which were the property of the doughty Knight.

	£	s	d
One truncke of wearing cloathes, val. ...	100	0	0
Howsehold lynen and sheetes, pillowe-beere (1) table cloathes, napkins, and towells to the value of ...	5	0	0
Hangings for a larg dyning roome, and two chambers of tapistrie, and divers other hangings and curtaynes for windows ; valued at ...	100	0	0
Eleven Downe and feather beds, six flocke beds, wth boulsters, pillowes, blancketts, ruggs and caddoes (2) to the sayed beds, valued at ...	80	0	0
Canapies and vallins (3) for two beds of cloath of tissue, valued at ...	15	0	0

(1) Pillow-case.

Chaucer's pardoner had

"A pilwe-beer

Which that, he seyde, was our lady veyl."

(2) Rough woollen coverings (Murray).

(3) Vallances. (1) A kind of damask used for furniture coverings. (2) A short curtain, either around the frame of a bed, or the head of the canopy.

	£	s	d
Curtaynes and vallians for six beds of cloath, and stuffe, val. at	15	0	0
One couch, one great chayre, and two stooles, of cloath of tissue, val. at	6	0	0
One couch, one great chayre, and two stooles of damaske, val. at	4	0	0
One doozen of Turkie worke chayres valued at ..	26	0	0
One doozen of Turkie worke cuschions, valued at ...	3	0	0
Half a doozen of very rich cuschions, valued at ...	6	0	0
Half a doozen cushions of sattin, richly ymbroydered, val. at	8	0	0
Curtaynes, vallins, counterpane, carpett, cupboard cloath, couch, chayers, and 2 stooles, contayning 20 yards of broadecloth, trimd with silke lace and frindge, val. at	16	0	0
Six stooles of greene broadecloth, very richly ymbroydered, wth a large carpett, and cupboard cloath, ymbroydered as aforesaid, val. at ...	16	0	0
Three large cloath carpetts, and one doozen of chayrs of the same cloath, and 3 cupboard cloathes of the same, contayneing 16 yards of broadecloth, val. at	5	10	0
One large couch, with bed and boulsters of rich taffata (4) or such like stuffe, val.	5	0	0
Two very rich Turkey carpetts, val. at	10	0	0
Two doozen of pewter dishes, and one payre of greate pewter flagons ; one doozen pewter dishes of a smaller size, and 2 pewter flagons more of a lesser size, val.	7	0	0
Candlestickes, Chamberpotts, stills (5) and such like thinges of pewter and brasse, val. at	5	0	0
Fower copper vessells for brewing, washing, and such like uses, val. at	26	0	0
Fower great brasse pans, and some small brasse kettles, val. at	8	0	0
Fower yron potts, valued at	2	0	0
Two payre of great rackes, yron grates for five chymneys wth tonges and fire shovells to each of them, val.	8	0	0

(4) Fine silk. Chaucer's doctor of physic had his clothes
"Lyned with taffata and with sendal."

(5) Apparatus for distilling.

	£	s	d
An yron grate and doore for a brewing furnace ...	1	0	0
A greate yron jacke (being hard to bee gott in this kingdome) cost ...	3	0	0
A clocke (brought out of England), cost ...	6	0	0
In white earthenware of all sorts, as bottles, basons, ewers, candlestickes, cups, chamberpotts, and the like, val. at ...	10	0	0
A barrel and a box (lately brought out of England) of Venice glasse, val. at ...	5	0	0
A doozen doozen (6) of earthen bottles of all sorts for the cellar, val. at ...	3	12	0
One greate chest of bookes, val. at ...	60	0	0
A rich ymbroydered sumptercloath (7) val. at ...	5	0	0
Cowperware (8) of all sorts, for the cellar, dayry, wash-house, brewhouse, and malthouse, val. at ...	12	0	0
Tables, cupboards, fformes, stooles, bedsteads, chests, binns, trunckes, presses, and such like things, belonging to the severall roomes of the howses, val. at ...	100	0	0
One payre of great bossed andyrans of brasse and 2 payre of yron bost wth brasse, val. at ...	10	0	0
Three payre of playne yron andyrans, and half a doozen spitts, and 4 greate dripping pans, val. at ...	3	0	0
Three skreens for cleaning corne (lately brought out of England) cost ...	3	0	0
Halfe a hundredwaight of cotton wooll, and half a hundredwaight of lynnene yarne, val. at ...	5	10	0
Fower cases of bottles, many gallypotts, glasse bottles, and such like necessary furniture for a clossett, val. at ...	5	0	0
20 Musquetts, fowling pieces and callivers (9) with a Harquebush (10) ...	20	0	0

Hand: Waller:

- (6) *i.e.* a gross.
 (7) A horse-cloth spread over the saddle.
 (8) *i.e.* Cooper's ware, such as tubs, barrels, etc.
 (9) A light, portable firearm, fired without a "rest" (Murray).
 (10) An early type of portable gun, varying in size from a small cannon to a musket (Murray).