

## STANDISH O'GRADY

Lieut.-Colonel Standish O'Grady soldier and parliamentarian (born in 1792), was the eldest son of Chief Baron O'Grady, first Viscount Guillamore. When still young he joined the Seventh Hussars and distinguished himself in the Wellington campaign that resulted in the final victory over Napoleon.

His regiment was left to cover the British march from Genappe to Quatre Bras and this they did successfully. O'Grady, who was in command, advanced at the head of his troops as soon as the French appeared and presented so bold a front that they retired. Later, however, his troops suffered severe losses in an encounter with the French lancers. He was further successful at the final action at Waterloo, and in a letter to his father, a copy which is in the Limerick City Museum, he writes:—"We charged twelve or fourteen times, and once cut off a squadron of cuirassiers, every man of whom we killed on the spot, except the two officers and Marshal de Logis, whom I sent to the rear." In spite of O'Grady's and his regiment's bravery in these actions, it seems that some stigma of cowardice attached to them and it was not until thirty years later that he was rewarded with the full rank of Colonel and appointed Aide-de-Camp to the Queen.

O'Grady was Member of Parliament for the County of Limerick from 1820 until 1835, when he was ousted by the extremist, William Smith O'Brien. His family had the doubtful reputation of being the best electioneers in Ireland, and their campaign in the election of 1819 certainly merited the claim. A pamphlet called *Quinbus Flestrin, or the Man Mountain*, was published in the O'Grady interest on this occasion, and in it, their opponents, the Monsells, the Massys, Dunraven and Kingston are subjected to scurrilous attacks. There are several ballads in the tract, and in one of them Lord Monsell is taunted by his ancestor's conduct in the rebellion of 1798—a taunt afterwards repeated in a similarly scurrilous satire by the Bard of Thomond:

Then Lord Tirvce claims notice—a well-trained wily hack,  
With mind as crooked and perverse, as his own crooked back,  
Whose hollow death-like visage shows a mind oppressed with guilt,  
    Stained with the flood  
    Of O'Regan's blood,  
    By him unjustly spilt.

Although O'Grady was so successful in the O'Connell interests he was a mixed blessing to a party priding itself on its fight for right. In 1828, he married Gertrude Paget, a niece of the Marquis of Anglesea, then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and had a numerous family. He succeeded to the estates and title as 2nd Viscount Guillamore on the death of his father in 1840, but he did not enjoy them long. He himself died in 1848, and was succeeded by Standish, his eldest son.