BUNRATTY, CO. CLARE.

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PART I.

WHO BUILT THE CASTLE?

The townlands of Bunratty, East and West, some five miles below Limerick, lie in the angle formed between the right bank of the Shannon and the river O'Garney, one of its northern tributaries. The first term of the name, bun, means the end of anything, and in place-names the word is usually applied to lowlands near the end (bun) or estuary of a river. For example, Buncrana, in Donegal; Bunmargy, in Antrim; Bunmahan, in Co. Waterford. O'Donovan says (Field Books, vol. ii.) that the name means "mouth of the river Raite," and that "Bun Raite was originally the name of the Baile-betagh, an ancient townland lying on both sides of the river Ráte, at its mouth, where it flows into the Luimneach or estuary of the Sinainn." If this be so, the district formerly included, besides the present townlands of the name, the townland of Moyhill, east of the O'Garney river, and probably all the extensive lowlands adjoining as well.

The name Raite seems to have been given to the tidal portion of the O'Garney river only, which winds for perhaps four miles through the corcass lands, taking a very meandering and erratic course. O'Reilly's dictionary gives a word, ráite, meaning "ways, passages, roads." In olden times, before banks were made to confine the river, boats must have found it a difficult task to keep stream, particularly at high tide, and it became of great importance to strike correctly the "ways" and "passages," so as not to strand on the shallows. Hence, I suggest, the name Bun ráite means "Estuary of the Passages."

The district of Tradree (Tradraigh), 1 of which these townlands

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1 The ancient inhabitants of this district, the Tradraigh, were a branch of the Eoghanacht stock, who, with their kinsmen, the Ui Cormaic, crossed the Shannon from Co. Limerick and settled in Thomond. An early tradition makes them the descendants of a Druid, Trad, son of Tassach, and Aelife, daughter of...
form a part, seems from the very earliest times known to history to have excited the cupidity of the invader; and no wonder, for it possessed many advantages. It was easy of access by water, and in case of a reverse was as easily abandoned. It is, moreover, a fruitful and pleasant land of rich, well-watered pasturage, a land "overflowing with milk and honey," and one well worth fighting for. Such an enticing spot did not escape the notice of the piratical Norsemen, who swarmed up every creek and river in Ireland in search of booty. They arrived in Limerick in the year 834, and plundered Corcovaskin, Tradree, and Uí Conaill gabhra on the opposite side of the Shannon. Tradree was evidently looked upon by these invaders as the key to that delightful hinterland called Thomond, and hence we find a little later on that "the foreigners (Danes) of North Munster assembled around Tradraighe, and they raised a fortifying bank all round Tradraighe; and they proposed to render all Tradraighe one garrison, and from it to conquer the whole of North Munster and Uí Conaill, and make them subject to them." The spot certainly offered every temptation to an invading force bent on conquest, but the brave Brian, son of Ceinnedigh, gave the barbarians no peace, and cleared them out completely "from Echtighe to Tradraighe."

In the 13th century the Anglo-Normans, similarly attracted by

Lughaid Delbaeth, a son of Cos, ancestor of the Dalgaicis. (Vide O'C.'s M. and C., vol. ii., p. 220.) Both they and the Uí-Cormaic (now represented by the O'Hehirs) probably settled in Thomond at the time of the great Dalgaicis movement westwards, when, about the end of the 4th century, under Lughaid mean, eastern Clare was made "swordland." In the reign of Feidhlimid, son of Crimthan, King of Cashel (ob. 846, Ann. ult.; 18th Aug. 845, A. F. M.), the Tradraighe and the Uí Cormaic were sorely pressed by the Corco Raitsinn, their neighbours on the west, and one of the former delivered a poem before Feidhlimid, accompanied with his harp, demanding protection. (M. & C., vol. iii., p. 262.) Some time after the Norse invasion, Dalgaicis tribes seem to have displaced the Tradraighe. The chief family among these were the Uí Neill buidhe, of Cinn Délbaeth (a synonym of Tradraighe), who were of the Uí mBloid, being descended from Aengus, eldest son of Carthann jinn, son of Blad. The Tradraighe were probably exterminated during the Danish occupation of the district, and the Uí Neill buidhe reduced to servitude by the De Clares. The Uí Neill, however, were not exterminated, for the name O'Neill is still a common one in Lower Bunratty.

The deanery of Tradree represents the original territory, and consists of ten parishes, viz.:— Bunratty, Cloonagh, Drumline, Feenagh, Kilconry, Kilmeery, Kilnasoolagh, Tomfinlough, Killoe, and Inishdadrum, a small island in the Fergus estuary.

2 Todd's "Wars of the G. with the G."

3 Ibid.
the richness, beauty, and strategical advantages of this smiling land, selected Tradree as the fittest spot in Thomond to settle in and fortify, making it a base for further conquest. They also, as we shall see, in their turn were expelled.

In the south-eastern extremity of this delectable district stands the castle of Bunratty. It is placed about 60 feet from the right bank of the O'Garney river, on the eastern edge of a gently sloping hill of several acres in extent. In prehistoric times this hill, I have no doubt, was an island completely surrounded by water, and, like the other islands near by in the Shannon, is formed of boulder-clay. When the first castle of Bunratty was erected in the middle of the 13th century the hill must have been to all intents and purposes an island, except for a neck or causeway connecting it on the north with the mainland, and even to-day, if a breach occurred in the reclamation banks, all the land to the west, south, and east, would be under water at high tide. These almost impassable surroundings, with the deep river on the east, made Bunratty in ancient times an ideal spot in which to erect a fortress, secure from attack and easy of defence.

Along the western and southern edges of the hill, closely following the line of junction of the boulder-clay with the marshland, and east as far as the river, these natural defences were supplemented by a water-ditch, which can still be recognised, though doubtless formerly much wider and deeper. It can be traced on the north side also until it meets the river higher up, thus completely surrounding the hill. On the western side, immediately inside the trench, and following its course for some 1,000 feet, with traces of its continuation to the east for another 400 feet, are the remains of an earthwork of gigantic dimensions, consisting of a deep and wide fosse, embanked on both sides. It may possibly have formerly gone completely round the hill from river to river, for in course of time great changes have taken place in the configuration of the land; but it is much more probable that this work was done because of some special vulnerability of the defence on that side. This great earthwork took many hands a long time to make, so I rather think it was not excavated during the hurried siege of 1646. It must, therefore be assigned—if not the work of the De Clares—to some time in the 14th century, when, as we shall see, the castle was in
the hands of the King of England, and great exertions were made by the English to retain possession of Tradree.

Outside the trench line, north of the castle, the ground rises rather quickly to a good height, forming a hill through whose precipitate summit project masses of limestone rock. From the top of this hill there is on all sides—north, south, east, and west—one of the most magnificent and extensive views of the kind to be seen in all Ireland. From the mountains over Broadford and Killaloe on the east, to the wide reaches of the lordly Shannon, and from "cold Echighe" on the confines of Connaught to the mountains of Co. Limerick, the eye may freely range over the most delightful and diversified scenery. Its beauty, in fact, is such that viewed for the first time and on a clear day, it startles the beholder, and I feel that no words of mine can do the glorious panorama justice.

Previous to 1804, when the present substantial bridge across the river O'Garney was built, the highway from Limerick to Ennis crossed this river higher up at Six-Mile-Bridge. After that date the mail coach passed over the new bridge south-east of the castle, winding round it on the west, where a stop was made to change horses, for here Bianconi had one of his stables, the ruins of which still exist. It will always remain the chief thoroughfare for motorists, horse traffic, and pedestrians journeying between Limerick and Ennis, for it is the shortest route.

The huge and imposing mass of the castle, with its lofty and frowning southern arch—an unusual feature in Clare—must deeply impress the least emotional traveller who passes that way; but he will inquire in vain for any reliable history of the building. It is really amazing how fast tradition is fading in this so-called educational age, and it saddens the heart to think how little is known

4 The following inscription is on a stone inserted in the parapet of the bridge:

"BUNRATTY BRIDGE.
Built by
Thos. Studdert, Esqr.,
At his own expense,
and finished A.D. 1804.
John Smyth, Archt. John Crowe, Mason."

5 In his will (Nov. 28, 1617) Donough, 4th Earl of Thomond, orders:—"My son Henry shall finish the stone bridge by me built over the water at Sixmilebridge, and to repair and make upp my thombe at Lymerick," etc.
by the present generation about our ancient monuments. If, in this case, one asks the man-on-the-road, "Who built the Castle of Bunratty?" he will probably be told (1) that it was erected by one De Clare; (2) that the County Clare was named after him, and (3) that he was an ancestor of the Studdert family. Yet not one of these statements is historically true. The present castle was not built by either of the De Clares, as I hope to be able to show; it is quite certain that the county received its name from Clár mór, now Clarecastle, and not from any family, English or Irish; and the Studderts, who have owned the castle and lands for near 200 years, have never claimed descent from the De Clares.\(^6\)

It will be unnecessary here to give a detailed architectural description of the castle, for a paper on that particular subject is to follow, by Mr. T. J. Westropp, who is far more competent than I can hope to be for such technical work. A short general description of its main architectural features, however, is, I think, required for the clear understanding of this paper.

The present castle of Bunratty consists essentially of four massive corner towers of great strength, each of six stories and of most intricate design, connected by huge walls, in the substance of which run the stairs. In the centre, enclosed by these walls, are three large rooms, a lower vaulted store-room or perhaps kitchen, over which are two halls or reception rooms, one over the other and of equal size. The castle is not orientated correctly according to cardinal points, what we shall call for convenience sake the southern face looking really south-south-west. A very high and imposing arch joins the corner towers of the southern front, under which, I believe, was the entrance door to the store room, but now gone. Immediately over the arch is a handsome square window of six equal lights, giving a certain lightness to the heavy masonry, the effect produced being good. The small room lighted by this window, which must have been the pleasantest in the castle—a regular **grianán**—cannot at present be entered, as the floor, a wooden one supported by oaken beams, is gone. In it is a nice

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\(^6\) One of the family, uncle of the present owner, was called "Thomas de Clare Studdert," because he was born in the castle, and to distinguish him from his father and grandfather, both also named Thomas, and all three living at the same time.
BUNRATTY CASTLE.
View from North-west.
stone chimney piece in fair preservation, a glimpse of which may be got from more than one point. On the opposite or northern side of the castle is a similar arch, but the space underneath is built up flush with modern masonry. On the east side, facing the river, a terrace of probably early 17th century workmanship had been erected, connecting the two corner towers. From this terrace one now enters the lower hall by a small modern door. A similar terrace is to be seen on the western side, on which a late 18th century house has been built, now and for many years past in use as a police barrack.

On the whole the building externally is remarkably plain, but its great size and solidity produce an imposing effect not easily forgotten. I wish here particularly to dwell on one point, which we shall find useful to remember later on, viz., there is no architectural feature which differentiates one part of the castle from another as regards style or time of erection. The four towers are essentially similar, and belong to the same period, the whole building being an obviously consistent piece of work, carried out on a well-studied pre-arranged plan to its full completion. There are, of course, as one would naturally expect in a building so long in continuous occupation, many minor details and alterations to be observed, principally in the interior, belonging to very different times. The ceilings of several of the small rooms in the corner towers are decorated with fine stucco work, which, I regret to say, is fast falling into decay. That of one of the rooms in the south-east tower, a chapel or oratory, is particularly well preserved, and something should be done at once to save it from further decay. The remains of a highly-ornamented stucco frieze and elaborate wall decoration can still be observed in the upper central hall, and there is similar work on the soffit of its southern window. All this fine ornament probably belongs to the time of Donogh, 4th Earl of Thomond (ob. 1624), called by some of his admirers the “Great Earl.” I was at first inclined to attribute the stucco-work to some Continental artist imported for the purpose. A certain amateurishness and want of classicality in the workmanship, however, and an unexpected irregularity in the lines, can be observed, which makes me now think it is native (or perhaps English) work, done, it may be, by the same hand that
executed the stucco representation of the Crucifixion on the south choir-wall of the Friary Church of Quin, now unfortunately almost obliterated.

The once magnificent upper hall has been for many years roofless and exposed to all weathers. Several modern roofs have succeeded the original—there were at least four, perhaps six—the marks of which can still be traced on the walls. The last but one was put on by Mr. Thomas Studdert (grandfather of the present owner), for whom the modern house of Bunratty was built in 1804. This roof was of very peculiar construction. Unlike the original high-pitched ridge-roof, it was quite the reverse, V-shaped, and composed of two lean-to roofs resting on low piers running north and south along the centre of the floor of the upper hall, which by their junction formed a gutter that discharged the rain-water through the large southern window. A similar roof was put by him on the room called the “Ladies’ Drawingroom.” These roofs falling into decay, his son, the late Captain Richard Studdert, R.N., about 40 years ago, removed the rubbish from the upper hall—by some called the “Banqueting Hall”—put over it an arched timber roof covered with tarred felt, and concreted the floor, leaving a shallow open channel in the centre corresponding to the gutter of the preceding roof, the rain-water now being disposed of through a hole in the wall immediately under the same south window. After Captain Studdert’s death his widow, the present Mrs. Studdert, cleared away the remains of the roof over the “Ladies’ Drawingroom,” and put a concrete floor in it and on the eastern terrace. She also made the top of one of the towers fit to walk on. The last or timber roof was blown down in a storm occurring on the 1st October some year

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2 In his “Notes on Kerry,” etc. (Roy. Ir. Acad., p. 711), Mr. John Windle gives some very inaccurate information, evidently traditional, about Bunratty. He mentions one thing, however, which has all the appearance of truth, viz., that early in the 17th century the Earl of Thomond—presumably Donough, the 4th Earl—covered the castle with a lead roof, the metal being obtained from his lead mine at Roscrea. The Earl certainly had a large store of lead, for in his will, made Nov. 28, 1617 (proved Dec. 21, 1624), he bequeathes:—"All the glasse and leade in my house at Bunratty, being not set upp in the wyndowes there, towards the glazing of the Cathedral Church of Limerick, only as much glasse as will glaze the wyndowes of the church of Bunratty newly edified by me," etc.
in the eighties. Ever since, the upper great hall has been open to the weather. Under such adverse conditions, it is no wonder that the decorations of this fine room should have suffered severely.

About 100 yards north of the castle, and further from the river, is a rectangular mound, measuring north and south 70 feet by 38 feet east and west. Its height on west side is 10 feet, on the east about 12 feet. The top is quite flat and partly overgrown with trees and shrubs. Quite close to this mound, which is obviously artificial, the remains of a fosse 3 feet deep, with an outer defaced earthwork, can still be seen. The latter can be further traced to the south, and encloses an area of about 250 feet square, including the mound. If any earthworks formerly existed on the north side—as I have no doubt there once did—they have completely disappeared, owing to the space being encroached on by a kitchen garden. We have here, in fact, a typical specimen of a true early Norman mote with its bailey; and what makes it of unusual interest is that it is the only certain specimen of the kind known to exist in Clare. It is, without any reasonable manner of doubt, the identical mote on which the Anglo-Norman, Robert de Muscogros, erected his castle of "Tradery," or Bunratty, in 1251, and fortified the following year with a palisade of stout oaks from the forest of Cratloe, as the contemporary records relate.

With the exception of Kinvara and Clonroad—of either of which places for many years not a stone has been left upon a stone—Bunratty, historically speaking, is the most interesting spot in Thomond, as its castle is certainly to-day the most important secular building. The present castle and its predecessors—for there were three such—are intimately connected with the chief historical events therein occurring from the 13th to the 17th century, and fortunately we have many references to them in the records, both English and Irish. During the 41 years or more of the De Clare occupation of Tradree, and for a further 37 years, during which the English still held a pecarious possession of the district, Bunratty was a storm-centre around which surged a fierce tide of unrelenting war, a veritable maelstrom of strife, to close only with the complete expulsion of the invaders. It is certainly strange that

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8 I received these interesting details from Mrs. Studdert herself, for which I here beg to thank her. Mr. Westropp found the last roof nearly gone in 1885.
a place of such great historical interest and importance should not have attracted more attention, and that no account at all worthy of the spot has hitherto seen the light. The Englishman, Dinely, visited Bunratty in 1680, and left us a rude but most valuable pen-and-ink sketch of the castle as it then was, 34 years or so after the Confederate siege. There is a fair wood-cut of the building in the Dublin Penny Journal of 7th December, 1833, and another equally good one in the Irish Penny Magazine of February 20th, 1841; both, however, accompanied with very meagre and inaccurate details of its history.

To do full justice to such an important subject, and in order to get a clear view of things, I think the best course to adopt, before drawing any conclusions, is to lay before the reader in strict chronological order all available historical references that bear on Bunratty and its owners.

1248, January 11. Robert de Muscogros gets a grant in fee-farm from King Henry III. of England of the cantred of Tradery in Thomond, at a yearly rent of £30. (Chart. 32 Hen III.)

In 1251, O'Brien of Thomond, i.e., Conor ruadh, having offered the English King £500 for a grant in fee-farm of his own territory, Henry declares he cannot do so until he sees a transcript of King John's Charter.

1251, May 2. The King remits to De Muscogros two years' rent to enable him to fortify his castles of "Tradery" and "Ocormok" (Ui cormaic, now barony of Islands), that is to say, Bunratty and Clarecastle. (Rot. claus. 35 Hen. III.)

1252, February 18. Robert de Muscogros gets a confirmation of his grant of Tradery; and on June 21 of same year, the King grants him permission to take 200 good oaks from the forest of Cratloe to further fortify the aforesaid Castles of Bunratty and Clare. (Rot. claus., February and June, 36 Henry III., and Charter Rolls m. 20.)

1253, Feb. 13. Robert de Muscogros is granted license to hold a fair in his vill of Bunratty, to be held once a year during five days, viz., on the vigil, day, morrow, and two succeeding days of the Feast of Saint Bartholomew the Apostle (August 24), and a market weekly on Thursdays. He also
gets permission to hold another fair in a vill in his land of “Clarin” on the Vigil and Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Sept. 8), and the morrow, and a weekly market on Saturdays. (Chart R. 37 Hen. III., m. 12).

Robert de Muscegros died in 1253-4, and in February following the King took the fealty of his son and heir, John, and restored to him all the lands held in capite. John was in turn succeeded by his son, Robert, who on March 2, 1276, surrendered into the King’s hand the castle of Bonred, Tradery, and Ocolmoc, etc. (Fines 38 Hen. III., Orig. 4 Edw. I.)

1268. Conor ruadh (alias na Stualaine) is slain at a place called Stualaine (unidentified), in Muckinish near Ballyvaughan, on the Tuesday before Whitsunday, by Dermot, son of Murtagh O’Brien, and Brian ruadh, his second son, is inaugurated King of Thomond in his place; for Conor’s eldest son died in 1259, and his children were too young for the kingship. (A.F.M. and A. Clon.)

1270. Brian ruadh, then undisputed King of Thomond, for certain good reasons of his own, turns against the English and takes by assault De Muscegros’ Castle of Clár atha de charadh, i.e., Clare Castle, alias Clár mór, alias “Ocolmok,” alias “Clarin” (?). (A. F. M.)

This castle must have been wholly demolished by Brian in 1270, for we do not hear again of a fortress in that place during the many years of war which followed, not until 1558, when a later castle of the same name, and probably built on the same spot, was taken from Donall O’Brien of Dough (ob. 1579), last King of Thomond de jure gædelico, by Thomas fitz Walter, the Lord Justice, and given by the latter to Conor O’Brien, 3rd Earl of Thomond, Donall’s step-nephew, together with the other “supreme strongholds” of Thomond, viz., Clonroad and Bunratty. (A.F.M.)

1274. Sir Thomas de Clare gets license to proceed to Ireland from Edward I., and he lands in this country on the Feast of the Finding of the Holy Cross, i.e., May 3 (Pembridge, Grace, Cox, Facsimiles Nat. MSS., Ir.), and was made Chancellor soon after.
Sir Thomas de Clare, Knight, was younger son of Richard, Earl of Gloucester and Hertford, Lord of Clare in Suffolk, etc. (ob. 1262), and Maud, daughter of John de Lacy, Earl of Lincoln. He was Governor of London in 1273, and married Juliana, daughter of Maurice fitz Maurice, 4th Baron Offaly. De Clare had some Gaelic blood in his veins, for his grandmother, Isabel Marshall, was the grand-daughter of Strongbow and his wife, Eva, daughter of Diarmaid mac Murchadha.

1276. January 26, at Winchester. The King grants and confirms to Thomas de Clare the whole of the land of Thomond to be held in tail, with wardships, reliefs, escheats, and liberties, by the service of 10 knights' fees, saving to the King, his royalty and crociæ, the four pleas of the Crown, and the fees of English Knights. (Rot. Chart. 4, Edw. I., m. 4.)

March 3. The King notifies to Geoffrey de Gyenville, Justice of Ireland, that Robert de Muscegros had surrendered into the King's hand the castle of Bonret (Bunratty), with the cantred of Tradery, and the theodem of 'Oicormok,' and that the King has granted them in tail to Thomas de Clare to hold in capite. Mandate for seisin accordingly. (Rot. Pat. 4 Edw. I., m. 30.)

1277. Brian ruadh, King of Thomond since 1268, is deposed from his kingdom by his nephew, Turlough mór, who had now come to man's estate. Brian goes to Cork, where he meets Sir Thomas de Clare, and agrees to acknowledge him as owner of all lands between Athsolum (now wrongly Ardsollus) and the liberties of Limerick. Returning to that city, the exiled king and De Clare, with the English of Munster, and the Irish of Ui Cuanach and Ui mBloid, cross the Shannon and invade Thomond. Besides enabling him

9 i.e., his episcopal and abbatial investitures.
to give a clear possession of Tradree to his ally, De Clare, thus fulfilling his side of the agreement, the occasion offered one more chance to Brian to recover his kingdom; so he attacks Clonroad and takes that fortress by surprise, his nephew, Turlough, and his men being then absent in Corcovaskin. The latter and his supporters, however, soon recover themselves, and meeting the invaders in battle at Maghgressain (a place still unidentified), defeats them with great slaughter. They fly precipitately to Bunnarty, where the great defensive qualities of the ground enable them to maintain themselves, having full and free communication with Limerick.

De Clare now knowing well the inadequacy of a wooden tower as a protection against the warriors of Thomond, loses no time, and builds this same year at Bunnarty "a castle of dressed stone, girt with thick outer walls, containing a roofed impregnable donjon, and having capacious lime-whited appurtenances." He expelled the ancient inhabitants and planted Tradree with "plebeian English" and "kerne of the Gael"—"so many as by bribes and purchase he was able to retain." (Cathreim Toir-dealbhaigh.)

John, son of Rory Mac Craith, further states that Sir Thomas de Clare fenced in Bunnarty with a rampart and a ditch, extending "from the stream to the sea." By these words he simply meant that this defensive work started at a point on the river O'Garney north-east of the castle, and having surrounded it, again joined the wide estuary (bun) of said river, then covering the broad corcass lands, and practically one with the "sea," i.e., the Shannon. This remark also applies to the alleged Danish rampart, for the idea that either invader fenced in all Tradree cannot be maintained for a moment. Such a colossal work would certainly have left some traces of its existence, but not a vestige of it has been found, though carefully looked for.

This year also (1277), at the instigation, it is said, of his wife, Juliana, whose brother, Patrick fitz Maurice, was slain at Maghgressain, Thomas de Clare treacherously seized his guest and ally, the deposed Brian ruadh, and "after they had poured their blood
into the same vessel, and after they had formed Christ-friendship (Cairdeas-Criost, i.e., gossipred\(^{16}\)), and after they had exchanged mutual vows by the relics, bells, and croziers of Munster," caused him to be drawn asunder between strong steeds until death released him. (Ann. Loch Ce., A.F.M.)

This atrocious murder seems to have produced a sense of horror and disgust over all Ireland. It is referred to in the well-known letter of the Irish chiefs to Pope John XXII. (1318), which supplies further particulars of the crime, viz., that the unfortunate ex-king "was without warning dragged from the banquet, drawn at the tails of horses; his head also being cut off, his body was gibbeted by the feet on a tall post."

From the context, it is evident that this foul deed was perpetrated within the precincts of De Clare's own Castle of Burrenatty. We have to come down to Elizabethan times in Ireland to find anything so utterly treacherous. *Inter multa*, I may mention the seizing in 1574 of Sir Brian, son of Feilimidh O'Neill, and his wife, by Walter Devereux Earl of Essex, and the slaughter by him of 200 of Brian's own people, "men, women, youths, and maidens," before O'Neill's own face, after he had feasted the Lord Justice and his chief followers "three nights and days together pleasantly and cheerfully." (A.F.M.)

1278. Battle of Quin. In this battle Sir Thomas de Clare is defeated by Donough O'Brien and the other sons of the murdered Brian ruadh. De Clare himself escapes with difficulty from the stricken field to Burrenatty, and the church of St. Finghen, in which some of his followers had taken refuge, is burned over their heads. The fight seems to have been a peculiarly fierce one, and great numbers of De Clare's men were slaughtered in the battle. (A.F.M., etc.)

1280. The great-towered castle of Quin, on whose ruins the church and convent were subsequently built, is commenced this

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\(^{16}\) Gossipred—*God-sib-red*, i.e., God-kindred-ship, the spiritual affinity existing between a god-parent and a god-child, supposed to extend even to the god-child's parents. It is probable that Thomas de Clare had not yet married in 1277, as his elder son, Gilbert, was not born till four years later, at Limerick, and was baptized at St. Mary's Cathedral, Feb. 3, 1281. It was, therefore, De Clare who stood sponsor for one of Brian's children, not *vice versa*.\footnote{Text continues...}
year by Sir Thomas de Clare, and finished at the end of ten months. (B.M. Add. MS. 4799, Bodleian Ann. Inisl.)

This year, also, Turlough mór, King of Thomond, and his brother Donall, with their forces, make a night attack on Bunratty, when many horse and foot soldiers were slain, and hem in the garrison so closely for a length of time that they are unable to bury their dead, in consequence of which an epidemic rages in the town. (Cath. Toir.)

De Clare's lands were harried several times by the Irish. Mac Craith states that Cumedha mór Mac Conmara (ob. 1306) "was he that a second time laid Tradree bare. De Clare offered to renounce it, and oar-pling Bunratty itself Cumedha invaded. Yea, at this bout the open-spaced Bunratty, when it was gutted, fed the flame, and by the Wolfdog's pertinacity (i.e., Cumedha's) not once but twice were many of the lime-white towers burned" (ibid).

This destruction refers to the offices, outworks and minor defensive towers only, appurtenances of the castle. The great donjon or main tower of Bunratty was never successully taken during the lifetime of Sir Thomas de Clare, or that of his son, Richard.

1284. Sir Thomas de Clare is in England, September 22, this year, where he appears as a witness for Cecilia de Muscetros. (C.S.P.I., vol. iii., No. 212.)

In or about this year, also, King Turlough builds a castle at Clonroad, in or near the fort of Donough cairbreach, another in the "Wood Island" in Lake of Inchiquin, and four other "white castles of stone" in certain places unidentified. (Cath. Toir.) The remains of only one of these now exist, viz., that in Inchiquin Island. (Vide paper on "Inchiquin," "Jour. R.S.A.I., 1901.)

1285. After standing the brunt of battle for five years, Sir Thomas de Clare's strong fortress of Quin is successfully stormed by "black-browed" Cumedha mór Mac Conmara. "Its ditch was crossed, earthworks carried, great gate battered in and hewn down, its strong walls were breached, its English stammerers captured; the place was cleared out of war-like stores, and in the actual great castle a huge pile of stuff was given to the flames, that ran riot
till the whole became a black-vaulted hideous cavern." (Cath. Toir.)

Quin was still waste on August 29, 1287. (Inquis. on Thomas de Clare.)

The taking by assault of this apparently (at the time) impregnable fortress was indeed a gallant feat of arms, and by its fall the power and prestige of De Clare were permanently damaged.

King Turlough and Cumedha lay siege to Bunratty this year. They regularly invest the castle, and in order to prevent succour coming from Limerick a boom is fixed across the river Ogarney. De Clare's fortress this time would probably have met the fate of his other castle of Quin, and fallen a prey to these seasoned warriors, had not Richard de Burgo, the Red Earl of Ulster, patched up a temporary peace, and induced the besiegers to withdraw their forces. (Cath. Toir.)

1287, August 29. King Turlough defeats Sir Thomas de Clare in a battle fought somewhere in Tradrec, in which De Clare himself, Gerald fitz Maurice, Richard Taafe, Richard Deciter (d'Exeter), and Nicholas Teeling are slain (P.M. Inq. on Thos. de Clare, C.S.P.1., 1301, vol. iv., 816.)

De Clare was buried in the church of the Franciscans in Limerick (Ann. Inisf. Ann. Clyne), his second son, Richard, afterwards destined to take his father's place at Bunratty, being then an infant in arms, and probably brought up in England, where he seems to have lived until soon after his elder brother's death in 1308.

The Inquisition, post-mortem, on Sir Thomas de Clare, regarding the extent of the Manor of Bunratty, and taken there on September 18, 1287, is a very interesting document, as it supplies us with many details, and gives us also a good idea of its internal economy. The following is a full summary of it:—

**THE MANOR.**

80 acres of arable land in demesne in Mouriachyn (perhaps Ballymurtagh, in Clonlohan).

80 acres in Tulech glas (Tullyglas, Clonlohan).

80 acres in Lackbaly Ybregy (not yet identified).

60 acres in Ardchil (Ardkyle, the home of the Mulcorneys, in Feenagh).

16 acres in the three islands (perhaps Quay Island and other small islands at the mouth of River O'Garney).

All valued at 3d. per acre.
10 acres of meadow at 10d.
120 acres of pasture, uncultivated. 
20 acres of meadow. 

**Total, 156s. 2d.**

**Free Tenants.**

1. The heirs of *Gerald fitz Maurice* hold 1 vill in *Rathlathyn* (Rathlaheen, Tomfinlough), and yearly render therefor 4 marks, with suit of court from month to month.

2. *Richard de Affoun*, land in *Cathynachyne* (Caherkin, Tomfinlough) nil, same suit as above.


4. *William Odusthyr*, land in *Yarnrid* 11 (Ua Ailnmire, an ancient district of uncertain boundary between Bunratty and Limerick), yearly 40s., with suit as above.

5. *Gilbert Pippart*, 1 vill in *Carrigdair* (Carrigerry, Kilconry), 80/-, with suit as above.

6. Heirs of *Peter de Kyngshal*, 1 vill in BallyMcNavin (Ballymacnevin, Kilmalleery), 13s. 4d., with suit as above.

7. *Walter Russel*, of Carres, 1/2 vill in *Urlyn* (Ulan, beg and more, Kilmalleery), 66s. 8d., with suit as above.

8. *Walter Flemynge*, 1 vill in *Clevenach* (Cleena, Kilmalleery), 56s. 8d., with suit as above.

9. *Hugh Piran*, 1 vill in *Monardgawer* (not yet identified), one ... with suit at Easter and Michaelmas.

10. *Wm. St. Albin*, 1 vill in *Angys and Balygurthirn* (Ing and Ballygirren, both in Kilnasoolagh and contiguous) ... , with two suits as above.

11. *John de Hivys*, 1 vill and 1/2 of a vill in *Carturith* (Ballycar, Tomfinlough), and renders therefor 1 pair of gilt spurs and 1 pair of white gloves at Michaelmas, with suit of court from month to month.

12. *Patrick de Layudperun*, 1/2 a vill in *Rathmolan* (Rathfohan, Kilnasoolagh), by service of 2 parts of a knight's fee, or 6s. 8d., when royal service is proclaimed; and 1 vill and 1/4 in *Lisduff and Carrigodran* (Lisduff and Carrigoran, both in Kilnasoolagh), with suit as above.

13. *Nicholas de Inteberg*, one moity of a vill in *Ballysalach* (Ballysallagh, Kilnasoolagh), 4 marks yearly, with suit as above.

14. *Henry White*, one quarter there (i.e., in Ballysallagh), 26s. 8d., with suit as above.

15. *Robert Russel*, 1 quarter there (ibid.), 20s. 8d., with suit as above.

16. *Richard Fany*, 2/3 villas and 1 quarter of land in *Ballynevin* (Ballynevane, Kilnaghten) and Ballyngil (not yet identified), and renders 8 marks yearly, with suit as above.

17. *Maurice de Rochford*, 1 vill in *Kennadounvil* (not identified), with suit as above.

18. *Geoffrey Tumberlach*, 2 villas in *Rathecrovan* (Racorecran, Kilraghtis), by 1 Knight's service, or 40s. when royal service runs, and suit at Easter and Michaelmas.

19. *Roger Mancor*, 3 quarters of land in *Ballyconwill* (Ballyconwell, Kilnasoolagh), by service of 3/4 a Knight's fee, or 20s. on royal service, with suit as above.

20. *Henry Fufe*, 1 vill in *Clonlochan* (Clonlohegan, in parish of same), with suit as above; and 1 vill in *La Cragag* (Ballymacragga, Kilnasoolagh), 40s., with suit as above.

11 September 6, 1199, King John grants to Thomas fitz Maurice 3 Knights' fees in Co. Limerick, and 5 in "Huamerith" in Thomond, "super aquam de Sinan." (Chart. Roll 1 John.) Vide Cal. Doc., Ir., vol i., No. 93.
The Burgesses of the vill of Bunratty hold 226 burgages, and render therefor £13 6s. 3d. yearly, with suit of the Hundred.

Severn fitz Ralph and Adam Maneberck hold certain pools, rendering 5s. therefor.

Tirdalwayth O’Brien (i.e., Turlough, King of Thomond) holds 7 cantreds of land and 16 ville in Thomond, and renders yearly therefor 182 marks, 4s. 4d., with suit as above.12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total rents of free tenants</td>
<td>£42 4 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total service</td>
<td>2 16 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total rent of O’Brien</td>
<td>121 11 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The revenue of the water-mill is worth 2/- a year.
The fishery of the pool               20/- 
The warren                           3/4
The Customs of the Shambles         3/-
Perquisites of Pairs                 
\[ \frac{1}{3} \text{ a mark a year when the land is at peace.} \]
Perquisites of County                3/- 
Perquisites of Hundred               
\[ 2/- \text{ a year.} \]

Total                             43 8

**LANDS LYING WASTE.**

2 vills in Moylathowardan (perhaps Lahardan, Inchicronan).13
1 vill in Ballymouthan (Mooghaus, Tomfinlough).
3 vills and one-half quarter in le Kappagh (probably Cappagh, Kilfinaghta, but possibly the other Cappagh in Kilraghtis).
Ballyhussyn (Ballysheen, Kilfinaghta), and Ballymacassyn (probably Ballymulcashel, Kilfinaghta).
6 vills in Conych (Quin, in parish of same).

Sum Total, £171 4s. 6d., besides service.

The advowson of the Church of Bunratty, with 10 adjacent chapels belonging thereto, is in the gift of the Lord of Bunratty, and is worth £10 to the parson and vicar.

It should be here observed that the lands held by the Free Tenants, as many as can be identified, were all in the district of Tradrec, with the exception of Ballynevian in Kilfinaghta, about 5 miles north of Bunratty, and—if correctly identified—Racorocraun in Kilraghtis, 6 miles or so north-west of Quin. It is also to be noted that of the twelve vills and two townlands lying waste in 1287, at least the six vills of Quin, in the district of Uí gCaisin, and

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12 I don’t think Turlough ever paid one penny of this rent, and never paid suit. The paying of rent—or for the matter of that, tribute of any kind—was not in the family, nor did he really owe De Clare or the King of England a solitary farthing. In the Pipe Roll of 6 Edw. II., Turlough is still put down, long after his death, as owing £394 for having the King’s peace, for which he delivered four hostages to Silvester le Ercedene. In a weak moment he paid £1 to Richard le Poer, the Sheriff, but still owes £393. The hostages probably escaped from custody soon after he paid Le Poer the mark and a half.

13 I have serious doubts of this identification, but it is the best that suggests itself to me. It lies 8½ miles as the crow flies N.N.W. of Quin.
the townland of Ballysheen, in Ui gCearnaigh, were well outside the boundary of Tradree proper.

It is evident from the Inquisition that Bunratty in 1287 was a flourishing town of over two hundred burgesses, holding 226 burgages, with a larger population probably than Ennis had two centuries later. The Anglo-Norman manorial system well suited the time, and was admirably adapted to promote the prosperity of a small town of the kind. All rights of property sprang from the Lord of the Manor, who in many things was all-powerful within his own demesne, but had every motive to act the part of a benevolent tyrant. He, on the other hand, held everything direct from the King. It all looked delightfully simple, and, no doubt, was well calculated to bind the community together, but it had one glaring defect—the Norman law of property and inheritance, which ever created more law, and never seemed to end. It so hampered, impeded and irritated one at every turn, that many of the great Anglo-Irish nobles soon abandoned it for the freer and more democratic Gaelic system.

After the death of Sir Thomas de Clare, his estate in Thomond was in the King's hands during the minority of his elder son, Gilbert, 1287-1301, hence we find the following moneys expended by the English Government in this and other subsequent years on the repairs and defence of Bunratty:

1289. £11 10s. 8d. allowed for making 25¼ perches (about 140 yards) of a fosse round the castle of Bunratty, with a palisade, and also for a fosse for the mill and the enlargement of the pool.

£5 3s. 9d. is allowed for "covering the big tower" and the chamber near the river, for buying new locks for the gate, and raising a wooden tower beyond the gate, and repairing houses within the castle [ramparts]. (Pipe Roll, 17 Edw. I., No. 20.)

1293. Turlough O'Brien [King of Thomond] owes £100 for delivery of his son, Donough [afterwards King of Thomond, slain 1311], as a hostage in the Castle of Bunratty. The securities are: Richard de Burgo, Earl of Ulster and Connaught, and Mac Conmara, i.e., Cumedha mór.
are expended on other repairs of Bunratty. (Pipe Roll, 21 Edw. I.)

Bunratty is besieged while in the hands of the King of England.

£117 17s. 7½d. are allowed for expenses in raising the siege of the Castle of Bunratty from February 11, anno Regis XXVI., to the Thursday after the Feast of St. Mathias next ensuing, i.e., Thursday after February 24, 1298.14 (Pipe Roll, 26-27 Edw. I.)

The above large sum of money is allowed to John le Marshall, Clerk of the Exchequer, who had drawn up an account of expenses incurred by the infantry and cavalry accompanying John de Wogan, the Justiciar, to raise the siege of Bunratty, invested by Turlough O’Brien, and to put down the rebellion of the “Irish felons.” (Chanc. Roll, 27 Edw. I.)

£11 2s. od. allowed for wages of the Constable and 48 men, the garrison of the Castle of Bunratty, to defend it against the Irish, who beset the said castle from January 22 to March 3, viz., for 40 days.

£27 to Walter de la Haye, escheator, for going to relieve said castle with 32 horse and followers, who remained therein from February 5 to March 3, viz., 27 days.

£6 9s. 6d. allowed for 36 sailors going with three ships to Bunratty to rescue the castle, from Wednesday before the feast of St. David (March 1) to Tuesday before the feast of St. Gregory (March 12), viz., 14 days.15

£8 4s. od. allowed to the Escheator for repairing one ship, and £7 10s. for himself and Eustace le Poer, 40 horse and a posse of foot going to Bonrati to raise the siege. Also £24 8s. for wages of 66 men, varlets, and horse boys, and also a chaplain, remaining in said castle after the raising of the siege, to guard it from March 4 to April 26.

14 The Feast of St. Mathias fell that year on a Monday. The Thursday following, therefore, was the 27th of February, 1298.

15 The feast of St. David in 1299 fell on Sunday, and that of St. Gregory on Thursday.
To Walter le Kew for custody of the castle from April 26 to June 1, 21 marks. On June 1 the custody of Bunratty is given to the Earl of Ulster, his pay being ½ mark per diem.  

£7 os. 10d. allowed to the Escheator for repairs of the castle, a certain stone chamber and other houses; 8/- allowed to certain sailors who with 5 boats carried wheat, oats, beans, and iron from Limerick to Bunratty for said castle; and 5/- for 10 armed men with boats for two days. £96 paid to Richard Earl of Ulster for custody of said castle for 47 weeks, in part payment of 260 marks. (Pipe Roll, 27 Edw. I., No. 26.)

1301, July 6. A mandate is issued by King Edward I. ordering John Wogan, Justiciar, and Thomas Cantok, Chancellor of Ireland, to take proof of the age of Gilbert, son and heir of Thomas de Clare, deceased. The writ was delivered at le Naas on May 10, 1302, and proof taken by inquisition at Cashel on September 22 following. The jurors found that Thomas de Clare died on August 29, 1287; that his son and heir, Gilbert, was born at Limerick, and baptised by the Bishop of that diocese on February 3, 1281, and that he was 21 years of age on morrow of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary (February 2) last past, i.e., the same day on which he was baptized. (Inq. 164, 29 Edw. I.)

1306. King Turlough mór dies on April 10 of this year, and his victorious lieutenant and chief support, Cumedha mór Mac Conmara, follows him to the grave on the 15th of August following. They are buried side by side in the choir of the friary church of Ennis. (A.F.M., Cath. Toir., Ann Nenacht.)

1307. Richard, younger son of Thomas de Clare, is found by Inquisition to be heir to his brother Gilbert, and was then 22 years old. (Inquisition, 1307.)

16 A mark was never an English coin; it only represented "money of account," and, from about the 12th century on, equalled 13s. 4d. of money of the time.

17 Gerald le Mareschall, 1272-1301 (Ware).
1308. Richard de Clare is at Stockton, England, on the Thursday before the feast of SS. Simon and Jude, i.e., October 28 (Cal. Rot. Claus. Ang.). His elder brother, Gilbert, died this year without issue male, and Richard became his heir, being then in or about 24 years old. By writ dated October 26, 1309, Richard de Clare was summoned to Parliament as a Baron.

1309, June 9. Richard de Clare gets grant of protection for going to Ireland (Cal. of Pat. R.) He probably crossed without delay, making Bunratty his headquarters, for the following year (1310) the King issues an order commanding him and King Donough to make peace. (Rot. Pat. 4 Edw. II., 84.)

The lands of Gilbert de Clare were still in the King’s hands on September 15, 1309, for on that date he ordered the Escheator of Ireland to assign a reasonable dower to Isabel, Gilbert’s widow. Richard de Clare must have had seisin some time between this date and Michaelmas term, 1310, when he was sued by Isabel for the detention of her third part of Bunratty. (Plea Roll.)

1311, May 20. Sir William de Burgo, with the men of Connacht, and many of the “foreigners” of Meath, attack De Clare, who was posted on the great hill north of the castle to oppose them. A desperate encounter ensues, in which, according to the Irish accounts, De Clare was defeated; but De Burgo, following some of the fugitives, got separated from the main body of his troops, when he and thirteen nobles and twelve of his men were taken prisoners, and, of course, lodged in Bunratty. Sir William’s standard-bearer, Sir John Cruach (Cruise or Croke?) and many others were slain by Dermod (son of Donough, son of Brian ruadh), now on the side of De Clare, in their retreat into Connacht, through Quin and Luchat. (Ann. Clon., A.F.M., Bodleian Ann. Inisf., Ann. Loch Ce, etc.)

18 The Luchat of the “Book of Rights,” the “Bealach na Luchaide” of Geoffrey Keating, meaning the “Pass of the light;” a ford crossing the Caherinnny river near Tubber. It is now called Loughad, and sometimes corrupted by the local “learned” into Lockwood! The continuation of this entry given by the Four Masters is misplaced and misleading.
Just before this battle Richard de Clare had raided Uí Fearmaic. (Inchiquin barony) and Uí Donghaile (O'Grady's country) with an army of English and Irish, and burned the vill of Tullyodea. (Ann. Inisf., Bod.)

1313. De Clare hangs at Bunnatty three of the four hostages he received a short time before from the Mac Namara, viz., the eldest son of Maccon and the two sons of Lochlainn. The fourth, Mahone, son of Cumedha móir, is spared at the prayers of the clergy, on paying the sum of 90 marks. (Cath. Toir.)

The castle was a safe hold for De Clare's prisoners, and a sure refuge of strength for his Irish backers. He was, however, fast laying up for himself a store of hate which one day, and that not far distant, was to be his ruin.

1314. Richard de Clare journeys to England this year. (Ann. Inisf., Bod.)

1315. He is again returned to Ireland, and receives 100 marks in payment of his services against the "rebels" of Leinster. (Excheq. Remem., 1315, No. 543.)

1316. He this year gets a "pardon" because of the expenses incurred by him in assisting in the war against the Scots in Ireland. (Cal. Pat. R., 9 Edw. II.)

He and Richard de Birmingham make a great slaughter of the Irish in Connacht. (Grace.)

1317. Lord Richard de Clare goes to attend Parliament in "Dublin's walled and ditch-protected city." (Cath. Toir.) King Murtough, son of Turlough móir, also attends this Parliament. (Grace). During their absence the important battle of Corcomroe is fought, in which Dermot O'Brien (brother of King Murtough) and Maccon Mac Conmara, give a crushing defeat to Donough (son of Donall, son of Brian ruadh), who had allied himself closely with De Clare, in which there was great slaughter. (Cath. Toir.) This defeat prepared the way for Richard de Clare's downfall in the following year.

1318. An unsuccessful attempt at a peaceful settlement between De Clare and King Murtough is made early in May of this year. By pre-arrangement the Thomond chiefs meet him,
Mahone O'Brien and the other nobles, in the City of Limerick, under the securities of Sir Edmond Butler, Sir Maurice fitz Thomas, and Sir William óg de Burgo, for they feared to trust De Clare. The latter, unfortunately for himself, refuses all terms of peace, and a struggle to the bitter end becomes inevitable. He returns that night to Bunratty by boat; the Irish chiefs pass over the Cratloe hills to Tulla—their hearts full of mutual hate.

1318, May 8. De Clare, Mahone O'Brien, and Brian bán O'Brien (grandson of Brian ruadh), with their forces, march to Quin, where they rest for the night. De Clare sleeps in the Church of St. Finbhen (probably built by his father, Sir Thomas), the ruins of which still exist west of the stream.

May 9. They continue their march westwards towards Dysert O'Dea, where they hope to commit great depredations and secure a large prey; cross the Fergus at the ford of Coradh Nell, and moving on to Ruan, again encamp.

The Battle of Dysert O'Dea, 1318.

May 10. Feast of St. Epimachus and Gordianus (Grace).

"5 Idus Mai ... die Jovis in manu" (Clyn). 26

"As morning broke he [De Clare] wondered at the stillness of the country round about, just as if everyone had been at peace with him." So says John, son of Rory, Mac Craith, with thinly-veiled sarcasm; but it is needless to say that the learned historian of the war knew well the reason of that peace, and so did De Clare. It was because the inhabitants were already aware of his arrival in their midst, and of his intention "to kill their women and their silly [little] boys," to waste the land in all directions, and sweep away their cattle and effects to his own strong den at Bunratty. They consequently withdrew themselves and their belongings with all haste from his withering presence, and sent the hateful news of

26 "Niall's Weir," now the bridge of Aughtrim, near Drumconora.

26 The feast of St. Epimachus and Gordianus, May 10, in the year 1318, fell on dies Mercurii, i.e., Wednesday. In Clyne, the battle was fought on Thursday, May 11.
his coming to King Murrough and Maccon Mac Conmara, who were then in East Clare. They had also sent messengers to Feilimidh O’Connor, Chief of Corcomroe, and to O’Hehir, to come to their assistance.

On that peaceful morning, though near six hundred summers have come and gone, the country looked much the same as it does today during the “merry month,” except that natural woods were then more abundant. The trees at the time were in their first virgin leafage, the honey-suckle and hawthorn were bursting into flower, and the air was heavy-laden with the sweet scents of May. All nature looked her best and seemed at peace, and on every sheltered bank, then as now, were strown the fairest gifts of early summer. The dew still lay on the half-opened golden blossoms of the lesser-celendine, and on every side were

violets dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno’s eyes
Or Cytherea’s breath; pale primroses
That die unmarried ere they can behold
Bright Phoebus in his strength.

But the grim and vengeful De Clare and his tough backers, Mahone O’Brien of Inchiquin (sl. 1320) and the aspiring Brian bán (sl. 1350), recked little of the landscape’s quiet beauty as they reconnoitred the country from the hill over Ruan, and looked westwards towards the homes of their intended victims. Nought cared they for God’s fair “lilies of the field”; their thoughts ran altogether in another groove—in one of battle and of spoil.

The roads in those days, with few exceptions, took practically the course of the present highways, and it is easy for anyone having an intimate knowledge of the district to understand De Clare’s strategy; and trace his movements on the occasion, from the description given by Mac Craith, who is our sole reliable authority, and knew the country perfectly.

De Clare formed his plan of battle thus:—Starting from his encampment at Ruan, he divided his forces into three divisions. His left he sent through Cimbal Cualachta, that is to say, the district around Ballygriffy, and on by Magowna; his right wing he directed north by Tullyodea, whence it was to curve to the west by Cooga and Cragmoher, and thence, by the ancient road still existing, to Rath. His centre, which De Clare commanded in person, he led
"due west" by the direct road, through Ballymacrogan, Kilkee and Drumcanavan, "straight as might be," to his objective, Dysert O'Dea, "where at that time O'Dea's residence was, to sack it," and where all three roads, and also that over Scool hill from Corcomroe, meet. The disposition of his forces might be likened to an ancient penannular brooch, the circular part thereof representing the wings—far spread out and extended so as to gather in all the booty possible—while he himself and his mail-clad men formed, as it were, the central pin—straight, sharp and irresistible. All were to concentrate on Dysert, and meet there with their preys, with which they intended to return victorious to Bunratty. But fate decided otherwise, for they never met until it was too late, and few returned.

Before the other divisions had time to come up, De Clare with his advance guard of mail-clad knights and men-at-arms, who were well in front of his central division, arrived at Dysert by the ancient road, which until lately passed north of the church, between it and the castle, just when Conor O'Dea and his kerne were driving the last herd of cattle westwards across the stream for safety to the mountains. Richard de Clare, like his father, had the reputation of being a cruel, crafty, and treacherous man, but, nursed as he was in war from his earliest years, it is only just to say that his courage and prowess as a soldier were undoubted. Indeed his impetuous bravery on this occasion was his undoing. He and his men "in furious temper" at once charged on O'Dea and his handful; but the latter had a small reserve in ambush not far from the brook, who at once came to his assistance. The greater part of these turn on the main body of De Clare's division, now fast approaching, in order to hold the ford against them and prevent their crossing; while the rest joined O'Dea in his encounter at the ford with De Clare and his body guard. But he, weighted with heavy

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21 The exact situation of O'Dea's residence is not known. It was either a caher or a lios, and was, perhaps, on or near the site of the more modern castle.

22 This road is now the avenue leading from the east to Mollancen House. Of course the castle did not exist in 1318.

23 This stream still flows through the marsh into Ballycullinan Lake, though its course was slightly altered by the late Mr. Francis H. Syngle, of Dysert, when he built the lodge. Over it the road still passes, corresponding to the ancient ford across the stream, which pass could not well have been anywhere else but between the marsh and the lake, where the ground is firm.
armour and in such narrow space, "before the overwhelming strength of his reserves could succour him, the O'Deas killed both himself and every man that he had with him. Howbeit, those Gael, so many of them as lived, were forced to refuge in a neighbouring wood, and there their assailants make of themselves a battle-hedge to surround them."

Though De Clare and his bodyguard were now disposed of, O'Dea and his small force were in a very parlous position, surrounded as they were by a numerous body of the enemy, when, in the nick of time, "over the hill of Scool, out of the West, here comes red-sworded Feilimidh O'Conor" and his merry men from Corcomroe, who without any delay join the remnant in the wood, and so once more the tide of battle flows in favour of the Irish. But the wings of De Clare's army, which had been sweeping bare the rich lands round Rath and Moygowna, now come up in great numbers, "abandoning their prey's and enormous plunder," and press the Irish so hard that they "form themselves into a fast impenetrable phalanx that their enemies should not break through them," and hold their ground fighting obstinately hand to hand.

At this stage of the battle Mac Craith asserts that a son of Richard de Clare, who, after he saw his father slain, had quite lost his wits, "rushing at all and sundry," was killed by Feidhlimidh O'Conor, who "wounds and re-wounds and triple-wounds the Englishman, and in all his gentlemen's despite, converted him on the spot into a disfigured corpse."

The battle was even now undecided, and the chances looked very bad for the Irish, when Lochlainn O'Hehir and a few of his followers come upon the scene and bring welcome help to their friends so sorely pressed. But hold!—Who are those warriors coming out of the East, with banners gaily flying, and now moving fast towards the battle-centre? Are they friends or are they foes? The answer is not left long in doubt, for the sore-beset Gael soon recognise the standards of King Murtough leading on his troops and Maccon Mac Conmara at the head of Clann Cuilein.

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24 Feilimidh lived 47 years after his exploits at Dysert. Under the year 1365 the F.M. record his death:—"Feidhlimidh an eiligh (i.e., the Hospitable), son of Domnall ua Conchobhair, Lord of Corcomodruadh, a man of unceasing hospitality and prowess, died."
These had that morning made a forced march from East Clare, yet weary, footsore, and dust-begrimed though they be, they fall with fury on the English rear, and quickly decide the fortunes of the day. De Clare’s forces at last finally give way, and the battle becomes a rout, each man thinking only of his own safety. All who were able to do so, both the English and their Irish auxiliaries, among whom were Mahone O’Brien and Brian bán, flee with all speed as best they could towards Bunratty. “So dour the hand to hand work was, that nor noble nor commander of them left the ground but the far greater part fell where they stood.”

The battle of Dysert O’Dea is now lost and won. It certainly “was a famous victory,” and had far-reaching results, for it gave the fair land of Thomond as an inheritance to the descendants of King Turlough mór and his allies for near 350 years, until an adverse fate—that mysterious and unseen force against which no son of Adam may successfully contend—by the ruthless hand of Cromwell, dispossessed them.

Lord Richard de Clare, with four of his knights, viz., Sir Henry de Capella, Sir Thomas de Naas, Sir James de Caunton, and Sir John de Caunton, one Adam Apelgard and 80 men, lay dead upon the field according to Pembridge; but this historian probably only enumerates the English slain, the Irishmen killed on both sides being to him of no account. This author also says that De Clare’s body was cut into fragments by the victors through hatred of him. This statement, I think, is highly improbable, for his remains—and probably those of the other nobles slain, as well as those of his supposed son—were brought to Limerick, and there interred in the Friary of St. Francis.25 This could not possibly have been done without the consent of the victorious Irish, and proves that there was no lack of humanity on their part, much as they hated him.

Mac Craith is the sole authority for the statement that a son of Richard de Clare was killed in this battle by the hand of Feidlimidh O’Conor, but whose Christian name he does not give. He is not corroborated in this by a single reference in the English records, which nowhere allude directly or indirectly to such a son. Richard de Clare was 22 years old in the first year of Edward II., i.e.,

25 Laud MS. 526.
1307-8, and was therefore only 33 or thereabouts when he fell at Dysert O’Dea.\textsuperscript{26} For this reason alone it is very improbable that he could have a son of fighting age in 1318. We must take it as proved, therefore, that no real son of De Clare fell on this occasion; but Mac Craith’s words, on the other hand, are so clear and circumstantial, that there must be some truth in them, and it is probable some man was slain by O’Conor whom the Irish believed to be a son of De Clare. It is quite possible this supposed son was only a stepson, a child of his wife, Lady Joanna by a previous husband, or perhaps a foster-son. Richard de Clare’s consort was, it seems, of inferior station, for, as far as I know, neither her patronymic nor that of any of her relatives is ever mentioned or alluded to in the records. It may well be, too, that the Adam Apelgard spoken of by Pembroke as among the slain was the person called his son in error by Mac Craith. At any rate he was a man of some importance, since he alone is named by the English annalists among the many untitled English slain. De Clare’s only surviving issue male, as will appear later on, was Thomas de Clare, who died unmarried and a minor a little before April 10, 1321.

When the first stragglers from the battle arrived at Bunratty, and brought to Lady de Clare the sad news of her husband’s death and the crushing disaster to his arms, she and her household packed up the “choicest of the town’s wealth and valuable effects,” and taking them on board her galleys, then riding at anchor in the river, set fire to the castle and town “at all points,” and sailed away to Limerick or some other convenient port. When the victors arrived on the heels of the fugitives, they found Bunratty “deserted, empty, wrapped in fire,” from which time to this, says Mac Grath, “never a one of their breed (i.e., of De Clares) has come back to look after it.\textsuperscript{27}

After his death the lands of Richard de Clare were committed

\textsuperscript{26} Inquisition, 1307.

\textsuperscript{27} The above description of the battle of Dysert O’Dea, except where other authorities are cited, is founded on the important work of John, son of Rory Mac Craith. It is a strange and curious fact that there is no mention whatever in any of our great books of Irish Annals, as far as I know, of the important battles of Corcomroe (1317) and Dysert O’Dea (1318). It would look as if their compilers had never seen a copy of the Cathairiam Tordhealhnaigh, a thing which is hard to imagine.
to the care of Maurice de Rochford and Maurice fitz Thomas, as guardians of the heir. (Rot. Pat. 19 Edw. II., 8.)

In spite of their crushing defeat, the Irish enemies of King Murrough did not remain long idle in seeking revenge, for in the autumn of this same year (1318) Brian bán and Mahone of Inchi-quin—who after the battle of Dysert had to fly from Thomond—assisted by Maurice fitz Thomas and Dermot Mac Carthy, made a hosting against O’Brien, but were defeated by him.28

The following post mortem inquisition into the property of Thomas, only son and heir of Richard Lord de Clare, and last male representative of this once powerful Anglo-Norman family, gives us such an accurate and interesting picture of the castle of Bunratty a little more than three years after the battle of Dysert, and shows so vividly the ruin to which both castle and lands were reduced by the war, that it would be a pity to epitomise it, so I give it verbatim and entire:

1321, May 26. Inquisitio p.m. Thome de Clare filii Ricardi:
14 Edw. II., No. 37.

Inquisition taken at Bonrat in the presence of John de Dufford, escheator of Ireland, on Tuesday, the feast of St. Augustine, apostle of the English, in the 14th year of the reign of King Edward, son of King Edward, by Brief of our lord the King of England, to enquire:

How much land Thomas, son and heir of Richard de Clare, deceased, seised in his domain as of fee on the day of his death, held in capite from our Lord the King in Thomond, and how much from others, and by what service, etc. And how much from all sources these lands were worth per annum: and who his nearest heir may be and his age: by the undersigned jurors, to wit:

Richard de Connacia          Richard Lonwys          John Mancleker
Geoffrey de Inteberge       Willm. Lonwys          William le Clark
John Ingram                 Robert Mancleker      Wm. Wyse
John de Anglia              John fitz Roger       Thomas Brehanok

who being sworn say on their oaths—

That the said Thomas held all Thomond in Liberty from the King in capite by military service. And they say that

28 Ann. Inisf., Bod.
therein is a Liberty and County: and that all pleas are impleaded therein save the four Pleas as in the other Liberties of Ireland.

And they say that there is a fortress in which is a large tower, the walls whereof are sufficiently good, but not built up [to the top] nor roofed: near the tower is a good stone chamber with a cellar filled up with stones, and there is another chamber adjoining the same, a sort of 'open space' (platea) entirely covered over with planks (bordis); a stone kitchen, in which are a cistern and an oven, is joined to the chamber and the tower. The remaining houses below the precinct of the castle are dilapidated and in ruins and cannot be reckoned as dwellings.

They say also that the emoluments of the Liberty and County are nothing nowadays on account of the war.

The castle mill is inefficient and of no use save to the inhabitants of the castle.

The lands of the lordship are waste and out of cultivation for the past three years; neither are there any free tenants or others dwelling in Thomond save only the Irishmen who dominate therein, with the exception of a few dwellers in the town, who are beginning to rebuild in the same town which was burned and destroyed on the day when Lord Richard de Clare was slain, after whose death neither Englishman nor Irishman paid any rent or did any service.

They say also that the fish-weirs and rabbit warrens are worth yearly XXs. And that the fortress cannot be guarded for less than 100 marks yearly.

Having been asked how much profit Lord Richard de Clare derived yearly in time of peace in Thomond from all sources—they say that in the lands restored to cultivation, in cattle, pleas, perquisites, services, and other profits, he received upwards of 40 marks yearly, which sum he expended and more on the management of the aforesaid lands. And they say that no one can hold possession of anything in the said land without a new conquest.
And they say that the fortress of Conyhi [Quin] was overthrown during the lifetime of the aforesaid heir,²⁹ nor can it be again rebuilt without a large sum of money.

The churches of Bonrat and Conyhi [Quin] with their chapels are at present of no value, but in the time of peace were taxed at XII. (ten pounds) yearly, and the Lord held the presentations thereto.

It does not appear to the aforesaid Jurors that Isabel, who was the wife of Gilbert de Clare, and Joan, the wife of Richard de Clare, have any claim to dower therein from the military fees or services of the free tenants.

And the aforesaid Jurors say that Margaret, wife of Bartholomew de Badlesmere,³⁰ and Matilda, wife of Robert de Welle, sisters of Lord Richard de Clare, the father of the aforesaid Thomas, are the next heirs of Thomas and of full age.

1322, April 20. King Edward II. orders John Dufford, Escheator of Ireland, to deliver to Robert de Welle and Matilda, his wife, aunt and co-heir of Thomas, son of Richard de Clare, the advowsons of the Churches of Bunratty and Quin, with their chapels, worth in time of peace £10 yearly. (Rot. Claus., 15 Edw II.)

The King also assigns to Robert de Welle and Matilda, his wife; the castles and lands of Bunratty and Quin, the County, Liberty and Regality of Thomond, with its appurtenances; deducting, however, the dowers of Isabel, wife of Gilbert de Clare (elder brother of Richard), and of Joan, wife of Richard de Clare, the late lord of same, etc. He further assigns to the said Robert [de Welle] and Matilda all lands, etc., which said Isabel and Joan and Emeline de Longespée,³¹ who was the wife of Maurice fitz Maurice, held in dower or otherwise for life, etc. (Rot Orig., 15 Edw. II., 14.)

²⁹ That is to say, Lord Richard de Clare, mentioned in preceding paragraph, who must have been born in 1285, the very year in which the fortress of Quin was overthrown, as he was 22 in the first year of Edw I. (1307-8).
³⁰ Bartholomew, first Baron de Badlesmere, was executed for treason, 1322.
³¹ Emeline de Longespée, daughter and co-heiress of Sir Stephen de Longespée, and grandmother of Richard de Clare.
1326, December 9. The King to Herbert de Sutton, Escheator of Ireland, declares he has granted by Letters Patent, during his pleasure, to James de Bellafago, the custody of the castle of Bunratty and the lands held by Robert de Welle and Matilda, his wife, in the County Limerick, on payment of £40. Mandate that the said castle with its contents and victuals and the aforesaid lands to be freely given him by one deed of indenture. (Rot. Claus., 20 Edw. II.)

1327, July 12. The new King, Edward III., writes to Thomas fitz John, Earl of Kildare, Justiciar, that Richard de Clare held Bunratty and the lands of Thomond in fee tail, and dying without [surviving] heir, these revert to the King. He therefore orders the Justiciar to retain the said castle and lands in the King’s hands, notwithstanding any orders to the contrary from his father [Edward II.] to deliver them to the heirs of Richard de Clare. (Rot. Claus., 1 Edw. III., 19; Rot. Orig. 30.)

This was in accordance with a special clause in the original charter granted to Sir Thomas de Clare in 1276, by virtue of which his lands in Thomond were to revert to the Crown in case of failure of male heirs.

1332, July 20 (Grace). “In the month of July, the castle of Bunratty is taken, and thrown to the ground (ad terram prosternitur) by the Irish of Thomond.” (Bodleian MS., Laud 523.)

“The Castle of Bunratty, which in the judgment of many was looked on as impregnable (inexpugnabile), is destroyed (destruitur) by O’Brien [Murtough, son of Turlough mór, K.T.] and Mac Conmara” [Maccon, son of Lochlainn]. (Ann. of J. Clyn.)

Henry de Marleburgh, writing in 1406, says under this year (1332):—“The Castle of Bunratty was laid waste (vastatum fuit) by the Irish of Thomond.” (Bodleian MS., Laud 614.) It is clear from the foregoing that Bunratty was completely demolished on this occasion.
1334. "A great hosting by all the Conachtmens, both foreigners and Gael, into Munster to Mac Conmara, from whom hostages were exacted, and over whom sway was obtained by them." (Ann. L. Ce.)

1342. Notwithstanding this defeat, the Irish of Thomond soon recovered, for it is this year reported to the King that "Bunratty [and other castles], which ought to be in your hand, are now in the hands of the Irish enemies." (16 Edw. III.)

1343, June 5. Murtough O'Brien, Lord of Thomond, dies, and is buried with the friars of the Monastery of Clonroad, i.e., Ennis. (Ann. Nenacht, MS. F. i. 16, T.C.D.) "Dermod O'Brien [his brother] assumes the lordship, but he was banished from his chieftainship by Brian bán O'Brien, and the chieftains of Thomond then submitted to Brien." (A.F.M.)

Brian bán was the last descendant of Brian ruadh to reign as King over Thomond.

1350. "Brian [bán], the son of Donall, son of Brian ruadh, was treacherously slain by the sons of Lorcan Mac Keogh," and Dermod, son of Torlough mór, once more becomes Lord of Thomond. (A.F.M.)

1353. In this year "the Justiciar, Sir Thomas de Rokeby, with English troops, caused both Thomond and Munster, with their rulers, to wit, Mac Conmara and Mac Diarmaid [Mac Carthy] to submit to him, and he rebuilt the castle of Bunratty." (Cotton MSS., Vesp. B. 11, fol. 126, and Domit xviii., fol. 856.)

Soon after the rebuilding of the castle by De Rokeby, and its having been re-garrisoned by English troops, two men of the Clann Cuilein, Mac Conmara, whose names are not mentioned, were accused of blasphemy and tried for the offence at Bunratty. The exact form of the alleged offence is not known, but they were convicted and condemned to the stake by order of Roger, Bishop of Waterford, a Franciscan, who acted on the occasion in contravention of all canonical law, having no jurisdiction whatever in the diocese of Killaloe. Full of anger at such a
monstrous breach of the law, and perhaps horrified at its cruelty, Roger's Metropolitan, Ralf O'Cellaigh, Archbishop of Cashel, entered Waterford with an armed troop, wounded Roger and many of his men, and carried off much spoil. (Cotton MSS., Vesp. B. xi., 127 b, and Domit. xviii., 886, B.M.)

As such an event is unique in Irish ecclesiastical history, I suspect there was some other motive for executing these two unfortunate men, which is now unknown to us, and that the charge of blasphemy might have been but a pretext. However this may be, it is an incident worth recording in the blood-stained history of Bunratty.

1354, April 8. Mac Conmara—probably Lochlainn (ob. 1366), son of Maccon mór and "the daughter of O'Dwyer"—releases his prisoners, viz., Gerald, son of the Earl of Desmond, and the son of Richard Lercedeken, who were taken prisoners by him and detained as hostages, and whom he hands over to the Justiciar [Sir Thomas de Rokeby], "by reason of the recent peace." (Rot. Claus. 29 Edw. III., at Clonmel.)

1355, September 4. The King of England orders the release on bail of Thomas fitz John fitz Maurice, "who, for the loss of the castle of Bunratty, was taken and detained prisoner in Limerick, but cannot be indicted." (Rot. Claus., 30 Edw. III., 148.)


1369. "Mahone Maonmhaighe O'Brien, Lord of Thomond, the best and most illustrious of the Irish, died in his own fortress [Clonroad Castle?], after the victory of penance. Brian Catha an Aonaigh, his eldest son, took the lordship of Thomond after Mahone." (A.F.M.)

A great defeat is given this year to the English of Munster at Manaistir an Aonaigh, near Croom, by Brian, Lord of Thomond, and his Lieutenant, John Mac Conmara,
i.e., Séan an gabhaltais, son of Maccon mónr and "the daughter of O'Kelly," when Gerald fitz Maurice, Earl of Desmond, and John fitz Nicholas and Sir Thomas fitz John, are taken prisoners, "and the remainder cut off with indescribable slaughter." (A.F.M., Grace.)

Grace supplies the day of the month, July 10, on which this important battle was fought, but gives the year (1370) wrongly. The City of Limerick was also taken on this occasion, the citizens capitulating to O'Brien; and Sioda cáim Mac Conmara, son of Maccon mónr and "the daughter of O'Dwyer," was made warden of the city. "But the English who were in the town acted treacherously towards him and killed him." (A.F.M.)

A treaty of peace was perfected on December 15 of this year, six months after the battle of Manaisir an aonaigh and the capture of Limerick, between William de Winde-sore, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, on the part of King Edward III., and the above John Mac Conmara, "Captain of his Nation," by which, besides many other provisions, Mac Conmara agrees to "keep the peace of God and the Church" towards the bishops of Killaloe and Limerick and their clerks, etc., "especially Master Thomas O'Grade"; to restore "all goods, books, ornaments, chalices, and other articles taken from the churches and towns of the diocese of Limerick, and especially from the Monastery of the Friars Preachers of the City of Limerick"; not to interfere with the lands of the County or Castle of Limerick, nor with the weirs, or prevent the fishermen disposing of their fish; to permit the citizens to cut timber in the woods of Thomond for the repair of the City. He also promises that neither he nor his will cross the Shannon without special permit of the King, etc, etc. In pledge of which he gives his sons Melaghlin and Cumedha to the King as hostages, and promises to pay 1,000 fat and good cows, as a fine, before the Wedensday next before the feast of St. Thomas the Apostle, i.e., December 21. (44 Edw III., at Adare.)
We are now in a fair position to draw certain legitimate conclusions as to when, and by whom, the three first castles of Bunratty were founded. The fourth, or present castle, belongs to a somewhat different category, so we shall defer its consideration for the present.

**THE FIRST CASTLE.**

To the Anglo-Norman, Robert de Musclegros, the credit is undoubtedly due of erecting the first castles at Bunratty and Clare Castle, in or about A.D. 1251. Before his time, in 1207, the English of Meath and Leinster, with their forces, vainly tried to build a castle at Béal Boromha, now called "Brian Boru's Fort," a short distance to the east of Killaloe; but they "did neither castle nor other thing worthy of memory, but lost some men and horses in their journey, and soe returned to their houses back again." 32

In 1216, Geoffrey de Maresco, the Justiciar, succeeded in erecting a castle at Killaloe, the ancient Ceann Coradh, where he also built a house for one Robert Travers, 33 an English bishop, whom he forced on the diocese against the will of both clergy and laity. 34 This was the first castle built in Thomond;

32 Ann Clon.
33 In the Mandate of Honorius III., dated May 9, 1226, to the Archbishop of Cashel, the Pope orders the removal from the diocese of Killaloe of the above Robert Travers, who by "lay influence"—i.e., by the power of Geoffrey Marsh—was thrust on the diocese and consecrated bishop, contrary to law and custom.
34 A.F.M. Geoffrey de Maresco (niglo Marsh) was an extraordinary scoundrel and adventurer. He was the nephew of John Comyn, 1st Anglo-Norman Archbishop of Dublin, and was thrice Justiciar of Ireland, viz., in 1215-1221, 1226-1228, and 1230-1232. In spite of his near relationship to the Archbishop, he plundered the dioceses of Cashel and Limerick. In 1208 he defeated in battle the King's Viceroy, Hugh de Lacy. To crown his iniquities he made away with the revenues, and at last, being suspected of a plot to murder King Henry III., he fled to Scotland and thence to Paris, where he died miserably in 1245.

Geoffrey's treachery to his friend, the proud and chivalrous Richard le Marchal, was disgraceful. The latter, 2nd son of William le Marchal, was Lord of Ossevry, Earl of Pembroke and of Ogle in Normandy, and grandson, through his mother, Isabel de Clare, of the famous Strongbow. In 1234 he was out in rebellion against Henry III., and came over to Ireland to defend his patrimony in Leinster. He was met early in the month of April at the Curragh of Kildare by the Justiciar, Maurice Fitzgerald, Hugo de Lacy, Earl of Ulster, and Walter de Lacy of Meath, with their forces. Here, on the 12th April (Grace), he was deserted shamefully by his false ally, De Maresco, who marched away from the field with 80 of his men, leaving Richard to his fate, who was taken prisoner, and died of his wounds "after a few days" (ibid). Dowling says he died on April 4, which is presumably a mistake.
those erected by De Muscogros at Bunratty and Clare Castle were the next in point of time. It is practically certain that the one at Clare Castle was a *bretesse* or wooden tower, with a bailey, surrounded by a fosse and palisade, and probably with the consent of Conor ruadh, then King of Thomond. It fell an easy prey in 1270 to Conor’s son, Brian ruadh, who must have completely demolished it, for we never hear of it again during the long wars that followed. There is no reason to suppose that it was anything better than the other castle built by De Muscogros at Bunratty, which more immediately concerns us, and which was certainly a *bretesse*. The mote on which it stood, previously alluded to, is still plainly visible north of the present castle, and consists simply of a flat-topped mound of earth, quite unable to support the weight of a ponderous castle of stone. There is no trace of any stone revetment to be seen, but it is probable the sides of this mote were originally supported by strong wooden posts, which even in Sir Thomas de Clare’s time (1277-1287) must have been half rotten. Neither De Muscogros nor his Castle of Bunratty is ever referred to by Mac Craith or the other Irish or English annalists; we only know of them through the State papers.

**The Second Castle.**

Sir Thomas de Clare, the first of his name who settled in Thomond, built the second castle of Bunratty in 1277, the very year in which he came to terms with Brian ruadh, recently deposed from the kingship. It consisted of a single stone tower of great strength, run up, we may suppose, as quickly as might be, with some stone-built offices attached, all enclosed by a strong surrounding wall, probably strengthened by one or two small towers, and

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Geoffrey’s second son, Guillaume, was equally bad. He killed a priest (Clement), sent from Ireland to denounce him, in the very presence of King Henry III. He even hired an assassin to murder the King, but escaping for a time the just penalty of his crimes, he managed to maintain a band of outlaws in the Island of Lundy, in the Bristol Channel. Ultimately he was captured with 16 of his band, and was drawn at horses’ tails, hanged and quartered at London. (Matthew Paris, Gilbert’s Viceroys, p. 99, and Dict. Nat. Biography). So Thomas de Clare was by no means the inventor of this barbarous drawing at horses’ tails. It was apparently a well-established Anglo-Norman custom which he had brought with him to Ireland, with some variations of his own to suit the occasion.
further fortified by a deep ditch and palisade, but above all by the surrounding marshes. It stood near the river, on or near the site of the present castle; and De Muscgros’ pretesse, if standing at the time, was presumably used as a refuge for the workmen employed in its erection. According to Mac Craith, De Clare’s stronghold was “a roofed impregnable donjon, having capacious lime-whited appurtenances,” and “was girt with thick outer walls.” This description tallies well with that given in the post-mortem inquisition into the estate of Thomas, son of Richard de Clare, on May 26, 1321, for the castle is therein described as “a fortress in which is a large tower,” then unroofed, whose walls were sound enough, but the top deficient, owing, we must suppose, to the conflagration on the fatal 10th of May, 1318. Near this great tower was a stone house with a cellar, another stone chamber filled with rubbish, and a sort of ‘open space’ (platea) adjoining covered over with planks. There was also a stone kitchen containing a cistern and an oven, connecting these rooms with the tower. Some other houses outside the great enclosing wall were in ruins and quite uninhabitable. There were also a small mill, fish weirs, and rabbit-warrens near at hand. The lands were waste for three years, no rents were paid, and there were “no free tenants or others dwelling in Thomond save only the Irishmen who dominate therein.”

It was, no doubt, a very formidable fortress, but, as the foregoing descriptions of it show, it differed totally in plan from De Clare’s other castle at Quin, and also from the present castle of Bunratty, both of which have four massive corner towers as a main characteristic.

Owing to the great natural defences which it possessed, De Clare’s castle successfully withstood many attempts on its capture by the Irish. In 1280 a night attack was made on it by Turlough mór, King of Thomond, and his brother Donall. It was regularly besieged in 1285 by Turlough and Cumedha MacConmara, and would probably have fallen on that occasion were it not that the besiegers withdrew at the request of the Red Earl of Ulster. The English evidently feared its capture and the consequent loss of Tradree about that time, when it was in the King’s own hands, for in 1289 a fosse 140 yards in length, with a palisade, was made to strengthen the defences; the mill was similarly protected by an-
other fosse, and the pool enlarged. The "big tower" was [newly] roofed, a small wooden tower, or blockhouse, was put up outside the gate to guard it, and other repairs were done to complete the already strong defences. Plainly an attack was at this time imminent, and perhaps actually occurred, of which we have no account.

The next serious attempt on the castle, of which we have record, was made in 1298. From February 11 till the 27th of the same month in this year £117 17s. 7¼d., a very large sum in money of those days, was spent in its relief by John de Wogan with both infantry and cavalry, when the castle was besieged by Turlough mór and his adherents. Bunratty was again beset by the Irish in 1299 from January 22 to March 3, and £170 18s. 6d. expended in raising the siege, under the direction of Walter de la Haye, the Escheator, and in the repairing, victualling, and custody of the castle. Walter le Kew was governor from April 26 to June 1, when custody of Bunratty was handed over to the Earl of Ulster at the pay of ½ mark per diem. It is of interest to note that early spring was the favourite time selected for these attacks; perhaps because severe frost made the approaches more passable. It is also to be observed that a certain friendliness existed between the Irish of Thomond and the Red Earl, and for this reason, perhaps, he was selected as governor.

From 1299 up to the death of Richard de Clare—that is for 19 years—no further serious attempt that we know of was made by the Irish chiefs to capture Bunratty. Although, as we have seen, the castle was left in a state of great dilapidation by the burning of May, 1318, the vill in ruins, and rent of the lands irrecoverable, the heirs of De Clare never gave up their supposed rights of ownership, nor did the Irish, it seems, make any attempt to rebuild and occupy it. Consequently we find the English King in 1322 ordering the Escheator, John Dufford, to deliver up to Robert de Welle and to his wife, Matilda, aunt and co-heiress of Thomas de Clare, junior, the castle and lands of Bunratty and Quin (both at the time in ruins) with the advowsons of their chapels, the county liberty and regality of Thomond, deducting the dowers of Isabel, wife of Gilbert de Clare, the former lord thereof, and Joan, wife of Richard de Clare, late lord of same.

The English King now (December 9, 1326) having assumed sole ownership, handed over the custody of the castle, "with its
contents and victuals," to one James de Bellafago, on payment of a fine of £40. The following year (1327) he orders the Justiciar, Thomas Earl of Kildare, to hold the castle for him, since it had reverted to the Crown, owing to the default of an heir male to Richard de Clare. About this time, while in the hands of Edward III., Bunratty must have been fully repaired, and all the necessary defences and outworks restored and probably strengthened. In spite of all this, on July 20, 1332, the castle was taken by King Murtough and his chief lieutenant, Mac Conmara, probably Maccon, son of Lochlainn, son of Cumeadhá mór.

At last, after many a well-laid siege and fierce assault, Sir Thomas de Clare’s famous fortress fell. It stood the brunt of battle bravely for fifty-two years of almost ceaseless strife, and was a place, according to all contemporary accounts, of extraordinary strength, quite beyond the power of man to conquer. All historians, however, agree that it was utterly demolished on this occasion, and one annalist describes it as having been actually "thrown to the ground." There is not a trace of De Clare’s great fortress now to be seen; all has disappeared.

**The Third Castle.**

For twenty-one years after its destruction De Clare’s castle lay in ruins—a handy quarry for every church and castle builder to exploit. No further reference to it can be found in either the English State papers or Irish annals until 1353. In that year we are informed by some unknown annalist writing at the time, or soon after the event (Cotton MS), that Sir Thomas de Rokeby, who had been sent to Ireland as Justiciar in 1350, "with English troops, caused both Thomond and Munster with their rulers, to wit, Mac Conmara [probably Lochlainn, son of Maccon, ob. 1366] and Mac Diarmaid [Mac Carthy] to submit to him, and rebuilt the castle of Bunratty." The fact recorded in 1353 of the execution by fire at Bunratty of two men of the Clann-Cuilein for blasphemy, also proves that the English were at this date back again in Tradree, which they could not possibly hold without a fortress of some kind. No Castle of Bunratty meant no settlement in Tradree. The following year, April 8, 1354, a peace of some sort was patched up between MacConmara and the English, at which time he released Gerald, son of the Earl of Desmond, and the son of Richard Ler-
cedeken, whom he had taken prisoners and detained as hostages, handing them over to De Rokeby, "by reason of the recent peace."

In the autumn of the following year, 1355, we find the English King (Edward III.) ordering the release on bail of Thomas fitz John fitz Maurice—probably a kinsman of Richard de Clare—who had been held a prisoner in Limerick, charged with the loss of the castle of Bunratty, of which he was presumably the governor. Whether Fitz Maurice lost the castle before the said "peace," early in 1354, or on a subsequent attack by Mac Conmara or O'Brien in 1355, I can find no evidence to show. In any case it is certain that De Rokeby's castle was hardly built before it was taken by the Irish, probably by the forces of King Murtough—who, though now advanced in years, had still some of the old fire within him—assisted by the Clan-Cuilein, or by the latter alone.

From this date on until 1570, when Bunratty was held for Queen Elizabeth by the Earl of Ormond—a period of about 215 years—the castle was continuously in Irish hands, for its speedy fall seems to have disheartened the invaders, and all hope of retaining Tradree as an English colony vanished.

It is very strange how little is known of the internal affairs of Thomond from the death of De Clare in 1318 until the submission of Murrough, son of Turlough donn, to Henry VIII. in 1542. During most of that time the English were fully occupied with their own troubles, the profitless French wars and the Wars of the Roses. The people of Thomond were left happily alone, and a comparative peace prevailed, during which, we must suppose, the county of Clare progressed in wealth, learning, and the arts, based as these were on a natural evolution, free from too much outside influence. There was little trouble at home, and nothing of importance to chronicle except the deaths of chiefs and bishops, and an occasional warlike expedition into external parts. "Happy the land that hath no history." All went fairly well until the introduction from outside of the Feudal law of inheritance in the 16th century—then pandemonium was let loose, and the records of unhappy Thomond again become full to o'erflowing.

We shall now turn to a different kind of evidence to prove the existence of this, the third of the castles called Bunratty.—In the great upper central room, inserted in the east wall about four feet
above the floor, is a carved block, which for certain reasons has given rise to a good deal of difference of opinion. It is a wedge-shaped stone, apparently the key of some ope—probably of a fireplace—which about 40 years ago was thrown down by some mischievous person from the top of the castle and was cracked across by the fall. The late Captain Richard Studdert then had it built into the east wall to preserve it. I sincerely wish there were more of his kind in Clare.

The stone is 22 inches long and 13 inches high; the depth at present is not ascertainable owing to its being sunk in the wall. In the centre of the exposed surface is a square panel surmounted by a sort of roof-shaped canopy. More than half the lower part of this panel is divided into four smaller round-headed panels, continuous and of equal height, a correct idea of which can best be formed from the accompanying cut. Immediately over these is a thing always dear to the heart of an archaeologist—that is to say a date, in this instance 1397. The triangular head is filled in with

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35 This information was obtained from Major R. G. Maunsell, who distinctly remembered the incident.

36 The inscription looked to me at first to be 1557, but after closer inspection, and taking into account the opinion of some who saw it when in better condition than it is at present, I now think the third figure is a 9. Luckily, for the sake of our inquiry, it makes little difference which it is.
ornamentation of little artistic merit, outside which on each side is a trefoil. The top right-hand corner is damaged; the one on the left, however, is in fair condition, and consists of a nondescript ornament, perhaps intended for some sort of fruit. A fissure runs obliquely through the stone, but fortunately does not touch the date figures.

But is this dateinscription a real contemporaneous document—a "still small voice" from the past—and can we rely on what it says? If so, it is of some value, for it helps to fill in a blank in the story of Bunratty. In the opinion of some—in whose judgment I place great reliance—the stone is not contemporary with its date, but of much later workmanship. According to this view, the inscription was cut to commemorate some important event which happened in 1397, perhaps a hundred years after that date, and was not intended to record the actual time of the erection of the arch, of which we suppose it was the key. In the few examples with which I am acquainted of castle chimney-pieces having dates, this theory does not hold good, for such inscriptions seem invariably to tell the actual date of the chimney-piece itself, and never that of the foundation of the castle or any other important event. This is only what one should expect. It seems to me, moreover, that the date of native work like this cannot be fixed with any certainty by the ordinary canons of architectural chronology. It is quite impossible, I fancy, to lay down hard and fast rules in dating work of the kind, probably done by some local artist totally untrammelled by convention and the prevailing fashions of the day. I may, of course, be wrong, but I can see no reason for doubting the contemporaneous nature of this interesting inscription, and can only regard it as pretty certain evidence of the continued existence of Sir Thomas de Rokeby's castle in 1397, and its occupation and probable rehabilitation at a time when the Irish were undoubtedly undisputed masters of all Tradree.

**The Fourth or Present Castle.**

Nothing further is known of De Rokeby's castle of Bunratty, and we are entirely ignorant as to the exact time and by what agency it ceased to exist. All that is practically certain is that, like its predecessors, it came to an end, and that the present, or fourth castle, was built about a century later. Mr. Thomas J.
BUNRATTY CASTLE.
View from South-east.
Westropp, who is certainly the best judge living of the ancient architecture of Clare, is quite positive that no part of the existing building can with certainty be assigned to an earlier date than 1440. This judgment is borne out in a remarkable way by those curious lists of castle-builders of Thomond which have happily come down to us. There are three of these lists in the British Museum, at least two in the Royal Irish Academy, and other copies perhaps in Trinity College. Unfortunately most of these manuscripts are exceedingly corrupt copies of copies, the work of scribes who, through carelessness or want of the requisite local knowledge, misread the time-worn originals which they transcribed, and are of no authority except otherwise confirmed. Two of the British Museum lists assign the foundation of Bunratty to Maccon, son of Sióda Mac Conmara, chief of Clann-Cuilein, who died in 1428. Maccon was son of the founder of the Friary church of Quin, and is described by the Four Masters as "a charitable and truly hospitable man, who had suppressed robbery and theft, and established peace and tranquility in his territory." The third list attributes Bunratty to "Donall, son of Donall O'Brien." This last is a flagrant corruption, the statement of a person who knew nothing about Clare history, for, since De Clare's time, no man of that name and patronymic can be found among the leading men of the O'Briens who might have built such a magnificent pile as Bunratty.

One of the castle-builder lists in the Royal Irish Academy, a copy by Chevalier Thomas O'Gorman from some old and authentic document, is of quite a different character to all the other lists I have seen. It is, I think, a most valuable document, worthy of confidence by reason of its inherent consistency and the accurate knowledge possessed by the original author—whoever he was—of the complex genealogies of the many branches of the Macnamara clan. This valuable copy by O'Gorman confirms two of the faulty British Museum lists in so far as they attribute the building of Bunratty to the aforesaid Maccon, son of Sióda Mac Conmara, and gives us the further detail that its erection was completed by Maccon's son, Séan Finn, who succeeded his father as chief, and died in 1467. Séan's grandfather, Sióda cám, we are further told in this

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37 MS. 24 D 10, R.I.A.
38 A.F.M.
list, built the "body," that is the nave of the friary church of Quin, and the castles of Rosroc and Leacarrow; while Seán himself built the "chapel" (meaning the south transept) and the castle of Knapog, and with his son, Cumara (sl. 1486), the castle of Drum-line. The value of this particular list of castle founders cannot be over-estimated, if for no other reason than as a reliable means of dating our castles, for test it as you will—by the accepted annals, the pedigrees, and expert architectural opinion—it all hangs consistently together, and is, I think, to be relied on.

Of course, if it were possible to set aside the architectural evidence, we might reasonably accept the date, 1397, on the above-described stone as probably indicating both the year in which the inscription was cut and that in which Maccon, son of Sióda, commenced to build a new castle at Bunratty, or else repaired the one built by de Rokeby; for though not yet "Chief of his Nation," Maccon was in that year living and of full age. His son Seán, however, was then entirely too young to have taken any part in the work, yet the time of his reign as chief, 1444-1467, agrees fairly well with the castle’s architectural style.

If an O’Brien had built Bunratty, his name would certainly be handed down in all the lists of Castle-founders, and it is most improbable that any native writer would deliberately deprive him of the honour.

During the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries, the Macnamaras, next to O’Brien, play the leading role in Thomond—in fact, do most of the work—and in 1354 and 1359 we find their chiefs making independent treaties with the representative in Ireland of the English King.39

Reading some of the State Papers of that particular time, it would seem that the English considered the Macnamaras to be the chief military power to be dealt with in Thomond. The men, it may be safely asserted, who had built a few years earlier the noble monastery of Quin for the order of St. Francis, with its tower and beautiful cloisters, and were at this period both rich and powerful, were, of course, quite capable of erecting even as fine a castle as Bunratty.

Assuming, then, as fairly certain, that the present castle was

39 Vide extracts from State Papers for those years, supra.
built or rebuilt by Maccon, son of Sióda, Mac Conmara, and completed by his son, Séan finn, a problem of quite a different character, and by no means easy of solution, presents itself, viz., How and when did the ownership of the castle pass from the Macnamaras into O'Brien hands, for it is an undoubted historical fact that for a certain number of years before the submission of Murrough, 1st Earl of Thomond, to Henry VIII. (1542), Bunratty was one of the chief strongholds of O'Brien. As far as actual written authority goes, apart from the lists of castle-builders, there is none available, as far as I know, to show exactly by what means and in what year the transfer took place. Mr. Thos. J. Westropp is decidedly of opinion that the windows of the upper hall belong to the period 1480-1520. It is probable that this late work represents a re-edification and new occupation circa 1500, and may give us a clue to the actual time when the castle changed hands from Macnamara to O'Brien. Bunratty, however, is not the only example of the kind where a similar change of ownership occurred.

In April, 1570, the Earl of Ormond, Thomas Butler (son of James, son of Pierce ruadh), acting for Elizabeth, put wards in Clonroad, Clare Castle, and Bunratty, manors of Conor, 3rd Earl of Thomond, his own first cousin. Conor, to give him his due, had some spirit still left in him, and showed serious symptoms of revolt, because Sir Edward Fitton, first President of Connacht, came to Ennis in the February of that year to hold Assizes—the first of the kind ever held in Clare—thus usurping one of the ancient privileges of O'Brien. The Earl, who had retired in anger to his castle of Clare, about two miles away, completely ignored the presence of Fitton and made no appearance at the court, which was held in one of the rooms of the Monastery of Ennis. On the third day of the Assizes, the President, unable to stand the slight any longer, sent a party of his guards and a squadron of cavalry to summon the Earl to attend his court. When the party arrived "at the gate of the town," together with Donall O’Brien of Dough, step-uncle of Conor, the latter, furious at the insult to force him to be present at court in the capacity of a subordinate, caused his guards to make prisoners of Donall and all of Fitton’s men who happened to be "withinside the chain of
the gate, and killed some of those outside. The President departed next day to Gort insi Guaire (Gort), harassed all the way by the Earl's men, but "guided through the narrow passes and the wild intricate ways" by Teig of Bealagowan, first Sheriff of Clare, and Donough of Leimanegal, both sons of Murrough, 1st Earl of Thomond. Conor's rage soon cooled, and, realising the serious consequences of his acts, he fled to Kerry, and thence took ship to France. By June 4 the above castles were guarded to the Queen's use by Ormond. Next year, however (1571), Conor managed to make terms, surrendered his territory and lordship to the Crown, and on June 31, 1574, his estates and castles, etc., were again restored to him, after paying court to Elizabeth.

From the list of castle-holders of Thomond, made for Ormond in 1570 by some one who knew the county well, we learn that Conor held Danganbrack, which, according to O'Gorman's list, was built by John, son of Teig, son of Loughlin Macnamara. The Earl's mother, Ellen Butler, resided at Lissofin, the property of her son, which was built by Rory, son of Mahone, son of John Macnamara. In the same list we find the High Sheriff, Turlough (4th son of Donough, 2nd Earl of Thomond), afterwards (1581) hanged at Galway, was owner of the following castles, viz.:—Fomerla, built by Rory, son of John, son of Mahone; Ballymullen, by Donall, son of Hugh, son of Donough; and Drumline, by John, son of Maccon, son of Sióda (one of the alleged builders of Bunratty) and his son Cumara—all Macnamaras. In 1641, Barnaby, 6th Earl of Thomond, still held Fomerla, Drumline and Lissofin, and also Cratloemore, built by John, son of Donall; Ballycar, by Conor, son of Hugh, son of Loughlin; and Cappagh (Kilfinaghta), by Cumea, son of John—all three Macnamaras. At the same time, Sir Daniel O'Brien, of Carrigaholt, was the owner of Rosroe, built by Sioda Cám (ob. 1406), the chief builder of the Friary of Quin.

By letters patent, dated January 19, 1622, Donough, 4th Earl of Thomond, who was to all intents and purposes an Englishman, got for his services against his own countrymen, a great number of castles and lands, apparently the lawful property of others, among which Macnamara, Donall (ob. 1643), then head of his clan, claimed the following:—Cratloemore, Ballycar and Danganbrack, already
mentioned; also Ballycarroll, Ballyconcecly and Drumoland, of which Macnamaras were probably the original founders, not one of which places he recovered, except perhaps Danganbrack, part of which townland belonged to his descendant, Donough Finn, in 1641.  

Bunratty, of course, was not claimed.

These castles and lands might have passed from Macnamaras to O'Briens in various ways by process of law:—By purchase, exchange, unredeemed mortgage, failure of male heir, or as a marriage portion, in case, as sometimes happened, the father of the bride was owner of several residences. There were many alliances between members of these two leading families. Raghnailt (ob. 1486), daughter of Séan Finn Mac Conmara, one of the alleged builders of Bunratty, was the wife of Turlough Ó Donn, King of Thomond, 1490-1528; but it is most improbable that a chief of Clann Cuilein would willingly alienate such an important fortress as a dot for his daughter, even though she should wed a prospective King of Thomond. There is one other process of law—or rather abnegation of all law—not unknown to the O'Briens, viz., lamh laidir, "the strong hand," which may account for the change of ownership, and this, I suggest, is the most probable cause of the transfer. The whole transaction, however, is involved in historical mist.

On the return from England to Clare of Murrough, 1st Earl of Thomond, and his nephew, Donough, Lord Ibrickan, who was to succeed him as 2nd Earl, dissensions fomented by the Earl of Desmond arose between the younger brothers of the latter, Donall and Turlough, and the newly-created peers. An agreement was finally come to between the two earls on March 11, 1550, at Limerick, and hostages were given on both sides. The 5th paragraph of this truce provides—"As to the controversy between Donell and Tirrelagh and their brethren concerning the division of the land betwixt them as brothers, according to the custom of the country, for the which Bunratye, in possession of Tirrelagh, is now in contention, it is ordered that the division shall be made betwixt them as the Lord of Ibreacan, Boetius Clancy, Donall og Clanchy, Aedh Clanchy,  

41 Vide Frost's Hist. of Clare, p. 29, etc. Dromoland, however, was owned in 1570 by Donough (son of Murrough, 1st Earl of Thomond), who was hanged by the English at Limerick on September 29, 1582. (A.F.M.)
Doctor O Neelane, Sir Donagh O’Grady, O’Griffa, and Conell óg O’Dea shall decide. And in case the said arbitrators cannot agree, then the Lord of Ibrecan shall be sole umpire, for that he is the elder brother.”

Bunratty was certainly not part of the estate of Murrough, 1st Earl of Thomond, for it is not among the lands devised in his will, signed at Ballyconeeley, and witnessed by the bishops of Killaloe and Kilfenora, on June 6, 1551, although it must be said that we have only a very imperfect copy of that document.

Some months before Donough, 2nd Earl of Thomond, had obtained a new grant in tail of his earldom from Edward VI. (Nov. 7, 1552), the Lord Deputy, to smoothen the way, tried to patch up a peace between the new earl and his powerful half-brother, Donall of Dough, as he probably foresaw the coming storm. By a deed, dated May 9, 1552, the brothers agreed to observe mutual friendship towards each other, the Earl to grant such portion of the 17 quarters of land then in possession of Donall, entirely free from all claims, as was equivalent to the net annual rent of one-half of the barony of Ibrecan, which the Earl had obtained for himself and his heirs male by grant from Henry VIII. And if the said 17 quarters should not suffice for the full value of said moiety, then Donall shall be satisfied for the remainder elsewhere among the Earl’s lands. He (Donall) is to hold the said lands in tail male by service of 1-20th part of a Knight’s fee, and shall enjoy the office of Steward of Boirenn and Tradry, and all emoluments of the same during his life.

I cannot say exactly what were the functions, advantages, and emoluments of the Stewardship of Burren and Tradree, but one may legitimately deduce from the facts disclosed in the three preceding paragraphs, that Bunratty was not part of the inheritance of Murrough, 1st Earl of Thomond, even before he received that title, but belonged to the heirs of his elder brother, Conor, King of Thomond (ob. 1539). It is further highly probable that the castle and lands were part of the estate of the said Conor, under Brehon Law, and perhaps of his father, Turlough donn.

42 This was Máighstir Símuí O Niiallais, of Ballyallia, a “physician.” He was educated at Oxford, where he probably took his degree (Wood and Holinshed). “A man who kept an open house of hospitality.” Ob. 1599 (A.F.M.).
43 Carew MS., 603, 57.
44 Carew MS., 603, 25.
From the days of Donough Cairbreach, King of Thomond, 1202-42, until the middle of the 16th century, the Kings of Thomond and their successors the earls of that name, with three or four exceptions, resided at Clonroad, which was the official centre of government of the county. Teig of Coad, it is true, lived "in his own house" at Inchiquin, and certainly died there in 1466 (A.F.M.). Conor na sróna, his brother (ob. 1496), held his court, it is said, at Shallee. Murrough, 1st Earl of Desmond, made his will at Ballyconee in 1551, "compos mentis et sanguine," and probably died in that castle, though it is likely he spent a good deal of his time at his other castles of Inchiquin and Leimanagh. Clonroad was undoubtedly the chief residence of Donough, the 2nd Earl (ob. 1553), and of Conor, the 3rd Earl (ob. 1580). It is rather doubtful if Donough, the 4th Earl, or his son, Henry, the 5th Earl, made Clonroad their head quarters. I rather think the castle then was becoming old and uncomfortable, and that for this reason they removed their court to the more spacious Bunratty, which still presents evidence in its stucco-work of being newly done up in or about that time. Barnaby, the 6th Earl of Thomond, about whom I hope later on to have a good deal to say, made Bunratty altogether his home, and lived there until 1646, in which year he fled to England, being the last of his line who resided in the castle.

Having carefully studied the question regarding the alleged builders of the present, or fourth, castle of Bunratty, certain conclusions present themselves which to me seem irresistible, if one weighs the evidence aright. After the defeat and death of Richard de Clare in 1318, the English retained but a precarious and uncertain hold on Tradree. The Macnamaras and their immediate offshoots gradually but surely spread over the district, until, towards the end of the 14th century, they became masters of all Upper and Lower Bunratty baronies, with the exception, perhaps, of certain mensal lands reserved for O'Brien, of which Bunratty, it seems, did not yet form a part. On the capture of De Rokeby's castle by the Irish in 1355, the power of the English crown in Tradree, as well as in all Thomond, was utterly destroyed, and for nearly two hundred years no serious attempt was made to restore it. It is very remarkable that in the treaty of peace perfected in 1369 between John Macnamara (Séan an gabhailtuis, "Head Chieftain of Clannculéin," ob.
1373, A.F.M.) and De Windesore, although the former is said to have promised not to interfere with the lands of the county or castle of Limerick, and to restore all booty taken during the late war from the diocese of same, he nowhere agrees, and probably was not asked, to restore a single square foot of Tradree or of any other part of the newly-acquired territory in eastern Thomond. The castle of Bunratty is not mentioned at all, although it is highly probable the Macnamaras held it ever since it was taken from Fitzmaurice in 1355.

No description of De Rokeby’s castle has come down to us; we know absolutely nothing as to its plan or architectural features from the records, not even whether the building was ever fully completed or not. In 1397, the date on the inscribed stone, it was, I think, the only castle then existing between Clonroad and Limerick, relying on the castle-builders’ list, except, perhaps, Ballymarkahan, attributed by one list to the above John “of the conquest” (Seán an gabhaltuis), Lecaroe, and Rosroe, both these erected by Sio da cam (ob. 1406), the chief founder of the monastery of Quin. How De Rokeby’s castle came to an end—whether by accidental conflagration or hostile attack—will, it is probable, never be known. The present castle of Bunratty, erected in the 15th century, is, however, so entirely different in plan from every other castle built by the Irish in Thomond, that I think it most probable—I might say almost certain—that it was erected by the Macnamaras on the still standing foundations of De Rokeby’s fortress, just as a few years earlier they very cleverly utilised the ruins of De Clare’s castle of Quin in the building of the Monastery and Church.

PART II.

BUNRATTY DURING THE GREAT REBELLION.

A valuable and in some respects a very amusing account of the first days of the Insurrection in Clare is obtained from the MS. known as the “Siege of Ballyallia Castle,” written by Maurice, 3rd son of Maurice Cuffe (ob. 1638) of Ennis, merchant, one of its defenders.45

45 Irish Narratives, 1641 and 1690, edited by Crofton Croker, Camden Society, 1841. In an estate map of the town of Ennis, belonging to the Earl of Thomond, and dated 1703, the house of “Morrish Cuffe” is shown as standing west of Ennis Monastery, between it and the river.
DONOUGH, FOURTH (OR GREAT) EARL OF THOMOND
(OB. 1624).

From the original Oil Painting at Dromoland.
Although the Rebellion had broken out in the North of Ireland some days before Saturday, October 23rd, 1641, as is evidenced by the proclamation of that date issued by the Lords Justices, Parsons and Borlase, nothing was heard of the movement in Clare until November 1st. On that day, while Robert Coppinger, Esq.—who appears to have been an agent or manager to Barnaby, Earl of Thomond—was attending the fair of Clare Castle, the dreadful news was brought to him from Limerick that the Insurrection was elsewhere in full swing. Things, however, remained perfectly quiet for some time in Thomond, and there were no symptoms of disorder until towards the end of November a report was brought to the Earl, then Governor of the County, that Murtough, son of Donall O’Brien,46 of Annagh, had crossed the Shannon from Tipperary into Clare, was driving away the cattle of the English settlers resident in the east of the county, and was even so devoid of scruple as to “strip” the Protestant Bishop of Killaloe,47 who in consequence had to fly for protection to the Castle of Limerick, where he remained until the surrender of that fortress to the Confederates on June 23, 1642.

The Earl of Thomond, acting as Governor of the County, then issued orders for a meeting of the Irish and English gentry and freeholders, to be held at Ennis on November 24, for the purpose of raising a force for the preservation of order and to prevent the invasion of Thomond by the rebels. He delegated the power of exercising martial law to the following gentlemen:—Dermod, son of Teig O’Brien of Dromore, near Ruan; Conor O’Brien of Ballymacooda (ob. 1670) 2nd son of Sir Donall O’Brien of Carrigaholt, both his first cousins; his kinsman, Donall O’Brien of Dough, near Liscannor, son of Sir Turlough; and John Burke, Esq. He further appointed the aforesaid Dermod and Conor O’Brien, Donough (son of Donough) Macnamara of Cratloe, 48 John and Donough, sons of Teig Macnamara, of Moyriesk, and some other gentlemen of position, to be captains of his forces, making the aforesaid Donough Macnamara of Moyriesk his captain lieutenant.

46 M., son of D., son of Turlough Carrach?
47 Lewis Jones (1633-46), a Welshman. He died in Dublin, November 2, 1646, aged 104 years, and was buried in St. Werburgh’s. (Ware.)
48 His elder brother, Colonel John Macnamara, of Cratloe-Moyle (ob. 1701), Macnamara Finn, appears to have been abroad during the Rebellion.
Having raised the several companies, the Earl proceeded with his force to Castlebank and Killaloe, in order to prevent any further raids into Thomond. He sent Captain Dermot O’Brien with some men into Dughara to try and persuade Murtough O’Brien “chiefe of the rebels there,” to come and explain his conduct, and to restore the cattle he had reaved. Murtough, of course, promptly refused either to go to the Earl or make restitution, so his lordship sent a party across the Shannon who seized some cattle, which they brought back with them to Clare. The Earl having now vindicated his authority, returned to Bunratty.

He was not long at home before he received information from one John Burke that Turlough O’Brien of Tullaghmore had raised a company of troops on his own account out of Thomond and Galway, and had robbed divers Englishmen of their cattle. On hearing this story the Earl sent some horse and foot to bring in Turlough and his friends to answer the charge. When these arrived at Tullaghmore, although the English bore out Burke’s accusation against him, Turlough persuaded them to the contrary and denied it all, saying it was all malice on Burke’s part to “cast that espersion on him.” He desired to be excused at present visiting his lordship “in regarde of some urgent accation, and that within a short time hee would waiget upon his lordship and give his lordship further satisfaction, and make it apecere that Burck was the man that robbed the English.” On the return of the Earl’s party, Cuffe says they found some “Irishmen of the common sorte” stealing Englishmen’s cows, and brought the culprits before the Earl at Bunratty, who gave judgment that they should all be hanged. But some of the “Irish Comandars and gentry” persuaded him to let them out on bail until the next Assizes, except two of them who, being strangers and unable to procure bails, were hanged. From that day out until January, 1642, Cuffe says, no one was punished for despoiling

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49 Turlough O’Brien, of Tullaghmore, parish of Killaspuglonane, was the son of Donough (son of Mahone, of Cloondvaun, now Rockvale, parish of Kilkeedy, sl. March 22, 1586. A. IV. M.), and Aine, youngest daughter of Teig O’Brien of Bealagowan (now Smithstown), parish of Kilshanny, 2nd son of Murrough, 1st Earl of Thomond. Turlough’s father, Donough, called in Pascata Hibernia (vol. ii., p. 425) “Donoghhe Mac Maghon Mac Enaspicke” (Mac an Easpug), went to Spain June 7, 1602 (ibid), where he died, March 20, 1611. This Donough and Cuchonnacht Maguire were the men who brought a boat to Lough Swilly in 1607 and helped the Earls O’Neill and O’Donnell and many other nobles of Ulster, to escape to the Continent. (A. IV. M.)
the English, for the Commanders and gentry took care that none suffered, but were let out on bail to appear at the next Assizes.

Oliver Delahoyd of Tyredagh and his brother John of Fomerla, "both Esquires," having gathered "companies of the rebells," were accused by the English of driving away the cattle of John Twisden, Thomas Randell, and other Englishmen off the lands of Ballyvanna, parish of Inchiconan. The Earl sent a party of four to bring them before him. John Delahoyd was found to be very sick and unable to attend—which looks as if he was charged in the wrong—and died soon after, but Oliver was duly brought up before the Earl. He stoutly denied any participation in the alleged cattle spoils, "cleering himself by many false othes," and was much grieved that he should be suspected of any such crime, "vowing that hee would bee as redy and as faithful in doeing his Majesty and his lordship any servis to his intermost abilitey as any man in the county; and further to delud his lordship the said Delahoyd wept," which so impressed the Earl that he not only discharged him, "but lickwaies gave hem powre to execut Martiell law upon any that hee should find offending." Cuffe, whose statements are sometimes to be taken with a grain of salt, declares that when Oliver returned home he quickly betook himself to his former courses, and drove away any cattle he found belonging to the English settlers.

It became necessary now to raise funds for the upkeep of the several companies, so the Earl ordered a cess to be levied on each ploughland for their maintenance, which was duly collected and paid to Robert Coppinger, Esq., and the men were billeted on the "howske keepars." A second levy of 12d. per ploughland was soon after raised "to make pickes and othar armes."

Notwithstanding all this, when the forces ordered by the Earl were raised, it was found that most of them had no arms; so about December 10th their officers went to Bunratty and pointed out to him the obvious fact that without arms they could not possibly defend the country, while at the same time the Englishmen had more arms than they could use. On hearing which, the Earl gave them warrants "to inqire what armes the English had that lived not in castels," and to seize them for the use of their men. Armed with a warrant of this description, Captain Dermod O'Brien
and his constables went on December 27th to Ballyallia Castle, then held by Mrs. Elizabeth Cuffe and her son, Maurice, of Ennis, and by him fortified—who with his mother and brothers had put a ward in it, thereby incurring considerable expense—and demanded all the arms therein “for his Majesty’s serves.” The Cuffes point blank refused to comply with this perfectly legal demand, and furthermore would not allow Captain O’Brien to put a foot inside the castle.

About January 9th, 1642, the Earl of Thomond “sent precepts through the county” to hold a Quarter Sessions at Ennis. At the Court he made an earnest appeal to the “gentry and comely” to remain loyal to his Majesty the King, urging and persuading them to “deserve and continue the good opinion which the State had of them; that although all the other counties in Ireland had been foremerly attainted by treason, yet Thomond was never yet generally known to rebell; desiring them for the good of themselves and there posterity to continew there loyalty; and further, to binde them thereunto, he caused them all at the same time to take the oth of alleageanc to his Majesty, at which time to show the sorrow that he conceived for the rebellion which was began, of which he was further inforemed at that time, which cased his lordship to wepe before them at the bench.”

The Earl, having dried his tears, remained four days in Ennis holding the Sessions, and then returned to Bunratty.

The soldiers now, who had been specially raised for their protection, according to Cuffe’s narrative, began to “opres and abuses the English that remained in there dwellings;” but the greater number of these had already on the previous Christmas Day retired to their castles, and no doubt were well armed and provisioned. When complaints were made to the officers of the conduct of the rank and file, they told the Earl that the English were forsaking their houses, wherein the soldiers were billeted, and storing all their goods in the said castles, never, however, acquainting his lordship with the true reasons for their so doing. Whether this statement of Cuffe be true or false, it would never do to leave the soldiers without houses for billeting, so the Earl ordered his officers “to make staie” of the goods of any English who should attempt
to forsake their dwellings, "which comand being obtained, thae
then made use of to the full."

About the middle of January, Donough, son of Teig Mac-
namara, of Moyriesk, with an escort of twenty horse, went to the
North of Ireland to confer with Sir Phelim O'Neil, one of the chief
leaders of the Rebellion, to procure some "battering pieces" and
other "ingenia of war," as without cannon they could not hope in
any reasonable time to take the castles held by the English settlers,
and which the latter now refused to give up. The envoys to the
North apparently failed in their mission and returned home minus
the guns. The incident, I think, proves that the loyalty to the
King of Donough Macnamara and some others of the Clare gentry,
ever perhaps very strong, was already fast oozing away.

On or about January 16th, Conor, son of Donough O'Brien, of
Leimanegh, who "was appointed formerly to raise a troop of horse
for the Lord Inshequin, and he to supply the place for defence of
the country," now joined in the Rebellion; and Cuffe says that he,
accompanied with other gentlemen and some horse and foot,
drove away the cattle of Mr. Burton and Mr. Hickman and of other
Englishmen, "the hole country being now out in general."

On January 28th, the Cuffes received a letter from their land-
lord, Sir Valentine Blaek, dated the 24th of same month, advising
them to surrender Ballyallia, if they found they were not strong
enough to hold it, and to betake themselves to some place of greater
security. Sir Valentine also wrote to Captain Dermod O'Brien,
entreatning him to take possession of the castle and to "keepe it for
his use." The Cuffes, however, refused point blank to give up the
place, and coolly asked Sir Valentine to send them "some pouthear
for the better defence thereof, which he never did."

Captain Dermod O'Brien and his cousin, Captain Turlough
O'Brien of Tullagmore—"which was the first noted rebell in
Thomond," he having, according to Cuffe, raised an army of near
a thousand men out of Connaught and Thomond to take Ballyallia—
decided to capture the castle by force. Captain Dermod, therefore,
on February 4th, sent the Cuffes an ultimatum, written at the house
of Loughlin McNerney, of Trinaderry,59 who lived less than a mile
away, demanding instant delivery of the castle, on the part of Sir

59 Vide Frost's History of Clare, p. 353.
Valentine Blake, adding that if refused he would "by the assistance of the Earle of Thomond and others," take both castle and lands. The answer he received was that Maurice Cuffe, merchant, had taken the castle and lands of Ballyallia for 31 years from May, 1640, and would keep same for the King's Majesty's use until the expiration of the lease, and that they "trusted that the Earle of Thomond would be far from assisting, or any other, in disturbing us thereof; that we believed rather that his lordship would defend us from any that should disturb the peasabell enjoying of it, and that noe loyall subject would offer to besiege or trubel us; but if any of his Majesty's enemies should assault or besiege us, that wee would, by God's helpe, defend the same to the last man of us."

On receipt of this answer, Captain Dermod gave orders to Captain Turlough and his men to at once invest the castle and take it by force.

There is no evidence to show that the Earl of Thomond took any steps to protect the besieged, or countenanced them in any way. It would have been very inconsistent on his part had he done so, for they were acting in flagrant opposition to his orders, who was the lawful representative of the King in Thomond, and, according to the 1641 list of landholders, the real owner of Ballyallia, Sir Valentine Blake apparently holding under him.

It is not necessary here to give full particulars of the siege. The investment of the castle, however, went merrily on, with varying success and some amusing incidents, until March 12th, when the besiegers temporarily gave it up and withdrew, owing to the lack of a piece of ordnance. Next day, March 13th, the castle of Inchicronan was attacked by Gilladuff O'Shaughnessy, the O'Gradys, and O' Roughans, assisted by some Connaught men returning home from the siege of Ballyallia. Inchicronan was then held by one Anthony Heathcote, who, seeing he was in a tight corner, sent a letter for help to the Earl of Thomond, "promising his lordship a rich of wheat, if his lordship would be pleased to relieve him." Heathcote evidently knew the soft side of Barnaby, for the Earl thereupon "tuck his one (own) trope [of horse] and about 50 English men in arms," together with Captain Dermod O'Brien and John Macnamara of Moyriesk and their companies,
BARNABY (BRIAN) SIXTH EARL OF THOMOND
(Ob. 1657).

From the original Oil Painting at Dromoland.
and marched to Inchiconan for the relief of Heathcot. Before Barnaby arrived at the castle, word of his coming, of course, reached the besiegers, who, unable to cope with such a force, made off with themselves; but the Earl "finding two or three rogges (rogues) remaining in the bushes his lordship killed them;" perhaps to show his power, perhaps because of disappointment at not getting the promised rich of wheat, for the insurgents had already burned it.

Cuffe’s manuscript only covers events that occurred up to June 15, 1642; but before the month was out the Irish renewed the siege of Ballyallia, and after a plucky defence, the castle surrendered on the 17th of the following September to Lieut.-Colonel Christopher O’Brien, younger brother (and better man) of Murrough, 6th Baron of Inchiquin. 51 Inchiconan appears to have surrendered to Captain Dermod O’Brien soon after the Earl’s visit, and Castlebank, one of his castles near Limerick, also capitulated to Dermod on June 27th.

We obtain many side-light’s on the state of the country during the Rebellion from the depositions of the dispossessed English (1642-1653), preserved in Trinity College, Dublin. The deponents, as a rule, immensely exaggerate the amount of their losses, and make the most of the injuries received by them during the troubles, imputing motives to the insurgents which should be received with great caution. These depositions, however, are by no means worthless, in so far as they give some interesting genealogical details, and show up the vacillating conduct—so consistent in its inconsistency—of Barnaby, 6th Earl of Thomond, I here give extracts from some of them:—

Gregory Hickman, late of Barntick, after enumerating his losses and wrongs at the hands of various gentlemen of the county, and the crimes committed by them, deposes:—In the month of November, 1642, he got directions from Murrough, Baron of Inchiquin, to bring up the Shannon from Kinsale, on the ship Drágon, a lot of tobacco [which Murrough had seized from the merchants of Cork] for the purpose of sale, the proceeds to go for the upkeep of the Baron’s army. Being unsuccessful in selling the “weed,” he put

51 Vide Lodge (1754), vol. i., p. 268, and Frost’s Hist. of Clare, p. 352.
some of it for safe keeping in Bunratty Castle, and deposited the rest in the castle of Clonderalaw, then owned by Sir Teig Mac Mahon, who had, it appears, the reputation of being pro-English. The castle was attacked by Teig ruadh, 4th son of Sir Donall O’Brien of Carrigaholt, and others. After a two days’ siege, Hickman was forced to surrender, and, meeting with many adventures and delays, at last succeeded in again reaching Bunratty, where, he declares, “he saw divers tarry with the Earl, and they ate and drank without disturbance in the town, who were in open rebellion.”

John Ward, late of Tromroe, whose father, Peter, held Tromroe Castle as tenant of the Earl of Thomond—in refusing to surrender which to Richard Fitzpatrick, Seneschal and Receiver to the Earl for the Barony of Ibrickan and others, the said Peter, his wife and son George, in April, 1642, had lost their lives—when he repaired to Bunratty to make complaint of his wrongs to his lordship, states:—“That the Earl about Christmas last [1641] had conference with John McTeige McNemara, a captain, complaining unto him that his countrymen did mightily slight him by debarring him of his rents, and openly said, ‘Verily by God, were it not for me the Lord Farboyse had spoiled and destroyed all the country, and I am nothing the better for it, nor nearer to receive my rents.’ His lordship at Bunratty divers times entertained with meat, drink, and lodging the most notorious rebels in all that countie, and all that come are freely welcome.”

He further deposes—that some of the garrison of the Castle of Limerick, soon after its surrender to the Confederates on June 23, 1642, went to Bunratty and offered their services to the Earl, but these were refused acceptance. He also accuses Barnaby of allowing the rebels to transport by water from Limerick to Clare Castle a brass cannon, whereby the latter castle and Ballyallia were taken; all the Earl had to do to intercept this piece was to make use of a Dutch ship then lying convenient for the purpose in the Shannon.52 All the satisfaction Ward got from his visit to Bunratty was a cell in the castle prison and the threat of a box on

52 "The rebels, by the surrender of the Castle of Limerick, had acquired some pieces of cannon—one of which carried a ball of two and thirty pounds—and with these they had reduced all the castles in that county." (Hist. of the Rebellion by Ferd. Warner, LL.D., vol. i., p. 219-20.)
the ear. One day in Ward's own presence he heard the Earl, addressing Captain Dermod O'Brien, utter this threat:—"By the Lord of Heaven, Cousin Dermod, if I be not paid my rents, I will retake the castle of Clare, in despite of all your forces. I shall bring Forbes' ships to the place."

In another deposition, Andrew Chaplin, Clerk, of Ballymaley, parish of Templemaley, 83 sworn May 12, 1643, says:—That he met Captain Dermod O'Brien one day at Sixmilebridge, and asked him by what authority the rebels despoiled the Protestants (then synonymous with the English). Dermod there and then produced the written authority of the Earl of Thomond authorising him and others to take possession of the goods of the Protestants, in order, as they pretended, to preserve them from destruction! Verily, the brain reels in any attempt to define who were rebels and who were not at this particular time in Clare. The Rev. Mr. Chaplin further states that some time after the first siege of Ballyallia (February 4 to March 12, 1642) he visited Bunratty, where he was informed that about May 15 the Earl sent written commands to Winter Bridge- man and Maurice Cuffe—as he was certainly entitled to do—not to commit any depredations on the country people, because the principal gentlemen of Clare were then absent, assisting at the siege of the Castle of Limerick! "The Earl of Thomond," he declares, "doth countenance and protect the rebels and adheres unto them, notwithstanding the dayly lamentable murthers, strappings, and other depredations committed upon the English in those parts, well known to his lordship." He also asserts—"That one John McNemara of Moyreske, known to be in open and actual rebellion, and appointed by the rebels to be Treasurer for their army, who levied great sums of money for their late expedition to Rosse against the Marquis of Ormond, viz., thirty shillings a plowland, is now a retainer of the said Earl, often entertained in his lordship's house, and divers times entrusted about his lordship's affairs to this deponent's own knowledge."

John Smith, late of Lattoun (Latoon), parish of Kilnasoolagh, yeoman, declares he was robbed of £1,354 13s. 8d. by the Earl of Thomond himself and others, and that he "saw Donogh McNemara with other rebels at Bunratty Castle."

83 Frost's Hist., p. 365.
One Urias Reade, of Knockanean, parish of Doora, stone-mason, in detailing his woes, declares that Captain Dermod O'Brien came one day to his house and carried off his guns, pikes, and even pitchforks, alleging, which seems true enough, that he took these articles by authority of a warrant from the Earl of Thomond, and said—note the familiarity of high and low in those days—"By my soul, Urias, I would not do it had I not been commanded by his lordship." 54

Edward Mainwaring, of Killanena, having deposed to his losses and wrongs at the hands of the "rebels," says that at the beginning of the Rebellion the Earl of Thomond appointed some of his own relatives, viz., Dermod O'Brien of Dromore, Conor O'Brien of Ballymacooda, Donough Mac Nemara of Cratloe, and Teig, son of Donall reagh Mac Nemara, of Tyredagh, to be captains of his troops, authorising them to raise a cess of seven shillings off each plowland on English and Irish alike. That in the course of time these appeared to ignore the authority of the Earl, and deprived the English of eighteen castles. That when the troubles began about 400 Englishmen and Dutchmen offered to take up arms for their own defence, but the Earl would not allow them to do so.

According to Maurice Cuffe, in his account of the first siege of Ballyallia, the following castles in Thomond were then in the hands of Englishmen, or others in the English interest, whose names he gives:—

1. Bunratty (same parish), held by the Earl of Thomond.

54 Amongst the wonders of that bewildering book—Canon Dwyer's *Diocese of Killaloe*, so choke full of mis-statements, mis-quotations, mis-prints, and misplaced humour—which might easily have been a most valuable work, but is really a trap for the unwary—a copy of a letter of Barnaby, Earl of Thomond, is given (p. 326), obviously genuine, and which the author says had never before been published. This document certainly confirms the statements of the Rev. Andrew Chaplin and Urias Reade, that the arms of the English settlers were taken from them by the express command of the Earl himself. It is addressed to his "cousen" (Captain Dermod of Dromore, Daniel O'Brien of Dough, or one of the Carrigaholt family), whom he authorises to raise a company of 50 men "in the completest and best manner," and in the last paragraph says:—

"And you are likewise authorised to seize upon and take into your hands freely, both for better furnishing of yr men, all such guns, muskets, and or weapons as you shall find in the country, not necessarily used for the defence and safety of the inhabitants otherwise. And for so doing this shall be yr warrant.

"Bunratty, 17th May, 1643."  "Yr very loving kindsman, "THOMOND."
2. Rosmanagher (Feenagh), held by Christian Coule.
3. Cappagh (KIlfinaghta), held by Francis Morton.
4. Drumline (same), held by Edward Fenar.
5. Ballycar (Tomfinlough), held by George Colpoise, Esq.
6. Ballymulcascal ("part of it," Kilfinaghta), held by Thomas Benes.
7. Dromoland (Kilnasoolagh), held by Robert Starkey, Esq.
8. Ballynacragga (Kilnasoolagh), held by Richard Keton.
9. Castle Keal⁵⁵ (Killeely?), held by James Marten.
10. Ing (Kilmaleery), held by Peter Ware.
11. Cloghanaboye⁵⁶ (Kilconry ?), held by Mr. Rawson's tenants.
12. Clare Castle (Clare Abbey), held by Captain Hugh Norton.
13. Ballyalla (Templemaley), held by Maurice Cuffe.
15. Crovraghan (Killadysert), held by Mr. Thos. Burton and Mr. Mounsall.
16. Doonagurroge (Killimer), held by Anthony Usher.
17. Moy [o Bracain] (Kilfarboy), held by George Norton.
18. Inchovea (Kiltoraght), held by Simson and others.
19. Newtown (Drumcreehy), held by Donough O'Brien, Esq., "then Protestant."
20. Carrowduff (Rath), held by Francis Dawes.
21. Ballyportry (Kilnaboy), held by John Brickdall.
22. Ballyharraghan (Ruan), held by Mr. Hasley.
23. Inchicronan (same), held by Anthony Heathcot.
24. Clooney (same), held by Thomas Bourne.
25. Lissofin (Tulla), held by William Costello.
26. Garruragh (Tulla), held by John Carter.
27. Scariff (Tomgraney), held by Richard Blagrave.
28. Caherhurly (Kilnoe), held by Mathew Hickes.
29. Tomgraney (same), held by Luke Brady.
30. Castlebank (St. Patrick's), held by Mr. Washington.
31. Tromra (Kilmurry Ibrickan), held by Peter Ward.

Of the foregoing, those in italics, nineteen castles in all, belonged to the Earl of Thomond, according to the 1641 list, to

⁵⁵ I think this must have been Cratlookeel, but am not at all sure.
⁵⁶ Probably Ballynaclogha, now Stone Hall, parish of Kilconry; possibly Clonboy, in O'Brien's Bridge.
which may be added his castles of Cratloemore (Killeely), Ballyconeeley (Kilnasoolagh), and Doonimulvihill (Inchicronan). It is really astonishing to find such a great number of Englishmen settled in the county, occupying so many of the principal seats, and, of course, displacing a goodly number of the native gentry.

In 1642, Lord Forbes, a Scotchman, was sent over by the English Parliament, without the concurrence of the King or the authority of the Irish Government, with 1,200 men on board his fleet, “to scour the coast of Ireland, in a privateering kind of way.” He arrived with his forces in the harbour of Kinsale, and without taking any notice of Lord Inchiquin, who was in command of the province, began to commit all possible depredations on the people, making no distinction between royalist, rebel or parliamentarian, and sparing none who differed in the slightest from his own particular form of belief. He was certainly a narrow-minded and fanatical puritan of the most bigoted type, as we should expect, for he had for his chaplain, “guide, philosopher and friend,” the notorious Hugh Peters.

Early in the month of August, Forbes, with his ships, paid a visit to Galway Bay, on the invitation of Captain Willoughby, then in command of the Fort of Galway. Willoughby had for some time been acting like a lunatic, laying waste the villages and spoiling the country, firing his artillery into the town for a whole day at a time without rhyme or reason, although the inhabitants of the city were perfectly tranquil, and causing Lord Clanricarde, Governor of the County, great uneasiness, who was then using all his efforts to preserve the peace. Forbes even out-did Willoughby in senseless outrage. He landed his men on the west side of the town taking possession of one of the churches, planted two cannon to awe the citizens, and burned all the hamlets that escaped the mad fury of Willoughby. He finished off his exploits by defacing the church, and even dug up the graves and burned the coffins and bones of the dead, departing at last on the earnest entreaties of Lord Clanricarde and the Governor of the Province of Connacht.

58 Hanged at Charing Cross, October 17, 1660, as an accomplice in the death of Charles I.
59 Son of Sir Francis Willoughby, Governor of Dublin Castle.
In a letter written by Clancirarde to the Lords Justices, dated August 10 1642, his lordship thus complains of Forbes’ insane and cruel conduct:

"I have recently received advertisement from Captain Willoughby that the Lord Forbes, with 17 sail of ships and 2,000 landmen, are come within the bay of Galway, which, I assure your lordships, doth much disquiet and disturb my thoughts in many respects, apprehending that they come without any particular commission or direction of this government, or any relation or respect to me, having been sent to Captain Willoughby, or rather sent for by him, without any address as yet unto myself. By the relations out of Munster, they did not make any distinction in their proceedings, but spoiled upon all alike, and in particular did besiege and assault Sir Roger Shagnessy [of Gort], his lady and children, when he was here. It is now reported that they have landed on the Thomond side, and do burn and spoil Mr. Daniel and Turlough O’Brien, the only two that remained in firm obedience there, and preserved and relieved the English to the best of their power, and provided and sent their long boats to me for the relief of the fort [of Galway] when it was besieged." 62

After Forbes left the Bay of Galway he appears to have brought his fleet up the Shannon. At any rate, his ships were seen anchored at Glyn in November, 1642, by Gregory Hickman of Barntick, as stated in his deposition, some of which has already been given. He was engaged in the same business as the Baron of Inchiquin, viz., harrying the people and endeavouring to raise the wind by the sale of tobacco. The two men, in fact, were competitors in trade, and it is no wonder they could not agree. Forbes now made a great stroke of business. He seized on Bunratty and appointed one

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61 I think the "Daniel" O’Brien referred to by Lord Clancirarde must have been Donall O’Brien of Dough (born 1579), son of Sir Turlough. He was M.P. for Clare in the 1639 Parliament, and later became Paymaster-General of the Confederate Catholics. It seems he had not yet thrown in his lot with the insurgents up to the time of Forbes’ visit to Galway Bay, August, 1642. The "Turlough" O’Brien mentioned was, I believe, a son or grandson of Donough O’Brien of Newtown (Baile nua) near Ballyvaughan. Whoever they were, they lived on the coast of Clare, and it may really have been Forbes and his reavers who burned Donough alive (Frost, p. 46), although both he and his son Conor were "esteemed great puritans." (Siege of Ballyalty, p. 11.)


63 Protestant Depositions, T.C.D.
Major Adams governor of the castle. The Earl of Thomond, who was resident there at the time, made no defence, although he could have put up a good fight, for Forbes found therein “about three score horse fit for service,” 64 and the place, no doubt, was otherwise well provisioned and equipped with men and arms. The regicide, Ludlow, tells us that “the enemy [i.e., the Confederates] frequently resorting to a place called Six-Miles-Bridg, about two or three miles from thence, the English pressed the Earl to assist them to fall upon the Irish, who, unwilling to oppose the English interest, and no less to make the Rebels his enemies, endeavoured to excuse himself; yet upon second thoughts, resolved to comply, if some care might be taken to spare his kindred; whereupon some of the English officers proposing to him that his relations should distinguish themselves by some mark, and he concluding to be in order to secure them to the English interest, chose rather to withdraw himself into England, and to leave his House to the soldiery, where (tho' he pretended he had no money to lend them to supply their wants) they found two thousand Pounds buried in the Walls, which they made use of for the payment of the Forces.” 65

In plain English, these adventurers stole the Earl’s money, for which, though a crime, we cannot say we feel particularly sorry.

I do not know how long the Earl remained in England, nor the exact date of his return to Bunratty. However, in or about November, 1645, Barnaby again delivered up the castle without firing a shot, this time to the Baron of Inchiquin, then the King’s enemy. It was a real godsend to Murrough, who with his troops was living from hand to mouth on the plunder of the unfortunate people of Munster, for within the castle he found large military stores and sufficient horses in good condition to remount his cavalry. 66 The Earl was indeed a most accommodating sort of man, always taking the line of least resistance, and he probably feared the vengeance of his kinsman had he resisted. A rather lame attempt has been made to find an excuse for his poltroonery on this occasion by the statement—which no doubt is a fact—that the Earl “had received intelli-

64 Ludlow’s Memoirs (1721), vol. i., p. 21.
65 Ibid.
gence from his Countess, who was then resident in England, that the King's affairs were in a desperate condition, and that it would be the part of prudence to give no cause of offence to the prevailing party." Prudence no doubt is a jewel of great price, but it can never be a valid excuse for treason, either to king or country.

Looking back now to the beginning of the troubles in Thomond, one cannot resist the conclusion that, in the early stage of the Rebellion at least, the so-called "rebels" were the only persons who could with truth be called loyal; for they alone obeyed the commands of the properly constituted authority, the Earl of Thomond, who, as Governor of the County, was the lawful representative of the King. Those who flouted his authority undoubtedly broke the law and were the true rebels.

For certain reasons, which we can only surmise, either Barnaby, or the two Earls that preceded him, had introduced a great number of English Protestants into Thomond, who were, when the Rebellion broke out, in occupation under him of over twenty important castles, and at least twelve other castles in the county were held by Englishmen, or men attached to the English interest, the great majority of whom were mere adventurers of humble origin. All the native gentry of every rank, with the exception of the Earl and his family, Donough O'Brien of Newtown (younger son of Sir Turlough of Dough), and his son Conor, were Catholics to a man. They were willing enough to live under a Stuart King, provided they got simple justice, but they had very good reasons for distrusting Charles. They could not forget the recent nefarious plot hatched by Strafford, with the approval of the King, to plunder the landowners of Connacht. Black Tom now could do no further mischief, having paid for his misdeeds on the scaffold, May 12, 1641; but they must have known all about his further project, also sanctioned by Charles, in 1639, to seize by a wretched quibble of the law one-fourth of the estates of the Clare landholders, with the intention of planting them with aliens, and so raise money for the

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57 Mary, youngest daughter of Sir George Fermor, and widow of James, Lord Senquhar.
59 Even Murrough, the Baron of Inchquin, seems to have been secretly a Papist. At least he died one, and left money for Masses in his Will to the Friars of Ennis.
use of the King. Henry, 5th Earl of Thomond, and his unscrupulous but clever kinsman, Murrough, Baron of Inchiquin, were con


tivers in this plot, their own lands, of course, to be exempt; but it is only just to say that there is no evidence whatever to prove that Barnaby, the 6th Earl, was in any way privy to it.\(^7\) I rather fancy that the loyalty of few men would stand the test of wholesale robbery of that description. On the other hand, the Clare gentry and their followers had nothing to expect from the party of the Parliament but persecution for conscience sake, total confiscation of their lands, and utter ruin. Of the two evils they naturally chose the lesser, so for a while they stood for the King. As time wore on, however, and the King’s cause grew more and more hopeless, they at last remembered they had a country of their own which had the first claim on them, and espoused the Confederate cause with enthusiasm. In forming a judgment on their conduct justice demands that we should try and put ourselves in their place.

The first move of the companies raised by the Earl was to commandeer all the arms they possibly could from the Englishmen—who appear to have had a large supply—as they had little or none of their own. The great number of castles, ancient seats of their ancestors, in the hands of strangers, was particularly galling to the leaders, so they demanded their surrender, and where this was refused they besieged and took them. All this, no doubt, created bad blood on both sides, and ended eventually in the almost total expulsion of the English from the county. To accomplish this the cattle of the strangers were driven away, which, of course, forced the owners eventually to leave also. All these things were done, if we are to believe the Protestant depositions, with the tacit consent, if not the approval, of the Earl of Thomond, whose chief concern during the whole time seems to have been the getting in of his rents. As for the driving of the Englishmen’s cattle, it was probably looked on as a legitimate act of war, and the profits thereof as but a scant compensation for the many wrongs done them in the past by the English Government. As was to be expected during such an upheaval, great hardships were inflicted on innocent individuals, which is much to be regretted, and a few lives were lost on both sides, but,

\(^7\) *Vide* Hist. Mem. of the O’Briens, p. 266.
at any rate, there was no "massacre" of Protestants in Thomond during the Insurrection."

Donough, son of Conor, 4th Earl of Thomond, was brought up from early youth in the Protestant faith, and was educated in England. He spent many years in great favour at the Courts of Elizabeth and James I., and returned to his native land to all intents an Englishman, with, of course, a sovereign contempt for everything his ancestors held venerable and dear. He had the good fortune to escape the family troubles that beset his father and grandfather, and, though a Protestant, met with no opposition whatever on account of his religion, from either his relatives or the rest of the people of Thomond, to his claim as the recognised head of his family. Possessing undoubted military talent, Donough was appointed President of Munster, May 6, 1605. He commanded a force of 1,000 foot and 100 horse on the English side at the fatal battle of Kinsale (1601), and materially helped to inflict that mortal blow and crowning disaster on his country. For this and other similar services to the English Government, he was called the "Great Earl," was loaded with honours, and rewarded with extensive additions to his estates. He died September 5, 1624.

Henry, the 5th Earl, was also the recipient of many honours from the English. There is little more to be said about him, except that his complicity with Strafford and the King in the plot to defraud the Clare landholders, including many of his own relations, as stated above, cannot be denied, and will for ever remain an indelible blot on his name. He died without male heir in 1639.

71 This is not the place to discuss the general question of the alleged massacres during the Rebellion. I would ask, however, the person who wishes to study it and to be fair to remember two things—(1) Massacres were no new things in Ireland. Several took place during the reign of Elizabeth. (2) The first massacre during the Rebellion of 1641, we are told by Clarendon, who cannot be accused of favouring the Catholics, occurred at Island Magee in the beginning of November. It was perpetrated by English and Scotch forces stationed at Carrigfergus, who "murdered in one night all the inhabitants of Island [McGee to the number of 3,000, men, women and children, all innocent persons, in a time when none of the Catholics of that country were in arms or rebellion. Note this was the first massacre committed in Ireland on either side." (Clarendon: Hist. Rev. of the Affairs of Ireland, p. 320.) They did their work so well that, according to the late Dr. Joyce—who apparently did not know the cause—not one of the tribe of Magee (Mac Aodha), the ancient inhabitants of the district, now live in Island Magee, or Inis Seimhne, the Isamnion akron of Ptolemy.
Now, with regard to that extraordinary man, Barnaby, the 6th Earl of Thomond, the best that can be said for him is that the times he lived in were out of joint and did not suit him. One is tempted to ask—Qu'ailait-il faire dans cette galère? Had he lived in the 19th century instead of the 17th, it is probable he would have gone down to his grave with the reputation of being on the whole a kindly and good-natured man, a great upholder of Church and State, rather shifty and unreliable, and given perhaps too much to the hoarding of money. The jade Fortune, however, had placed him in a milieu well calculated to try men's souls—quasi per ignem—and when the great bout came he was found wanting.

Barnaby and his elder brother, Henry, Baron of Ibrickan, who preceded him as 5th Earl of Thomond, both matriculated at Brasenose College, Oxford, on February 20, 1605, their respective ages then being 14 and 16 years. Barnaby is entered as "Brien O'Brien Comitis filius," and he is always called "Brian" in Irish genealogies of the family. His real name, therefore, was Brian, and it really passes the wit of man to understand how he could have been so poor-spirited as to discard the most illustrious name in all his line for the colourless one of Barnaby. But, to his dishonour, this he certainly did, and from it we at once get the true measure of the man.

Viewing his vacillating conduct during the long struggle between the King and the Puritan party, it seems to me that the Earl surpassed in moral gymnastics that immortal trimmer the Vicar of Bray himself. The Rev. Simon Alleyn, no doubt, changed his religion some three or four times during his life, having been twice a Catholic and twice a Protestant—as he had a perfect right to do, being one of "God's Englishmen" and a loyal subject—yet still managed to retain his snug vicarage in Berkshire. All the same, he only professed these faiths in strictly consecutive order. Barnaby went one better, for he was Royalist, Rebel, and Roundhead, all at one and the same time, and in the end contrived to end his days in the odour of loyalty to the King, in full possession of his honours and estates. He really performed a marvellous feat, considering the times that were in it, and I have often wondered—and wonder still—how he ever managed to do it so successfully.

72 Alumni Oxonienses.
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THE SIEGE OF 1646.

Fortunately we possess two very good contemporary accounts, and from opposite sides, of the important siege of Bunratty in 1646: one from the pen of Richard Bellings, Secretary to the Supreme Confederate Council,73 the other obtained from the Diary of Rear-Admiral William Penn, father of the founder of Philadelphia, who took an important part in the defence of the castle.74 Many interesting references to the siege are also contained in the writings of the Nuncio, John Baptist Rinuccini, Prince and Archbishop of Fermo, who was present in the Confederate camp during part of the operations.75

Bellings was the eldest son of Sir Henry Bellings of Leinster. He married the daughter of Viscount Mountgarret, and died in 1677, leaving a son, Richard,76 who became secretary to Catherine, Queen of Charles II. Bellings' account of the siege seems very fair, and, like a gentleman, he generously gives credit for any good qualities of the enemy whenever he deserves it. Penn, on the other hand, though a good fighter, shows up as a sour and merciless partisan, full of contempt and deadly hate of the Irish people. He uses no better name than "rogues" for the peasantry, whom he appears to think it was quite lawful, in the modern German fashion, to rob, and even kill, on all occasions that suited. His Diary, however, is of great value, for, besides a history of the siege from his point of view, it gives us accurate dates, and we intend in the main to follow it, giving a summary of those parts that interest us, and adding facts and comments from other sources as we proceed.

The uncertain and shifty conduct of the Earl of Thomond naturally enough gave great concern to the Confederate leaders, some of whom were his own blood relations. He had now sat on the fence for several years, and on two occasions without a struggle had delivered his castle of Bunratty into the hands of their most

73 Bellings' War of Ireland (Desid. Curios Hibern.)
74 Memorials of the Professional Life and Times of Sir William Penn, Knt., by Granville Penn, 1833. Penn took a prominent part in the Restoration, for which he was Knighted, became M.P. for Weymouth, and died in 1670.
75 Nunciatura in Irlanda, Florence, 1844.
76 He married Frances, heiress of Sir John Arundel, whose surname was assumed by his son.
deadly enemies. They never knew the moment when he might not do so again, and thereby inflict on them and on the cause they had at heart irreparable injury. They made many attempts to coax him to join the Confederacy, but although he was "hand-and-glove" with some of the leaders, entertaining them freely at Bunratty, they never could persuade the wily Earl openly to join their party. The King's friends also tried to gain him over to their side, and even threatened to proclaim him a traitor, but likewise without success. This is quite apparent from a plain and straightforward letter, dated March 24, 1646, addressed to Barnaby by his nephew-in-law, the Earl of Glamorgan, General-in-Chief of the King's forces, just twelve days, as we shall see, after the Earl had for the third time given up Bunratty to the forces of the Parliament, wherein Glamorgan begs his uncle-in-law to preserve his honour and reputation, and thereby prevent much further mischiefs that threaten, as the forces now with him will soon repent their obstinacy. Otherwise he will, in his Majesty's name, declare him a traitor, though it will grieve his heart to do so.

This letter arrived too late to be of any use, for the Parliamentary forces had already a tight hold of Bunratty; but it is very doubtful, even had it been received in time, that it would have any effect on the Earl.

Bunratty in 1646 was a place of great military importance, for its possession by the enemy would seriously hamper, if not totally prevent, the free passage of ships to and from Limerick, then held by the Confederates, and destroy all hope of succour by sea. In their uncertainty as to the Earl's intentions, the Supreme Council, according to Bellings, some time before the third surrender of the castle to the Parliament forces, gave a commission to Sir Donall O'Brien of Carrigaholt, Barnaby's uncle, and Donall O'Brien of Dough, his near kinsman, to seize on Bunratty and on the person of the Earl, "verily persuaded that besides the advantage that should arise to the public thereby, this would be a great benefit to the Earl himself, for it was resolved in Council that if he could be thus

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77 Edward Somerset, Earl of Glamorgan, afterwards Marquis of Worcester, had for his second wife Margaret (ob. 1681), second daughter of Henry, 5th Earl of Thomond, the elder brother of Barnaby."

78 Raw. MS., B. 507.
compelled to join in their association, without touching on his religion, he should be in the condition of their Confederates; or if, without adhering to the enemy, he did continue neuter, a competent part of his estate should be set forth for his livelihood." This design, however, fell through, and was never even attempted, "either by reason of the Earl's wariness and the constant guard kept in the castle, with backwardness of those employed." I presume those told off to execute the coup found the task too risky, and otherwise not to their taste as members of the clan, who still retained some of the old sense of loyalty to their legitimate chief, though he was now much discredited in their eyes.

Bunratty at that time must have been a truly magnificent seat. Large sums were spent by the Earls in beautifying and furnishing the castle, and in improving the surrounding park, which seems to have extended as far as Rosmanagher on the east. The out-offices, as became such a mansion, were very extensive, and contained stabling to stall three-score horse. Rinuccini was entirely captivated by the place, and says in a letter to his brother, "I have no hesitation in asserting that Bunratty is the most beautiful spot I have ever seen. In Italy there is nothing like the palace and grounds of Lord Thomond, nothing like its ponds and park, with its three thousand head of deer." Great praise this, and from a man of culture and mature judgment, who had travelled through many European lands.\footnote{79 Quoted in Frost's Hist. of Clare, p. 374. Clonroad, on the other hand, was rapidly falling into decay. This is evident from the following:—Henry, 7th Earl of Thomond, made a lease for 21 years, commencing May 1st, 1658, of "Clonroand, one quarter, with the Mill, Fishinge, faires, and Customes," to Mr. John Gore. The tenant was bound "to repair the great old house adjoyninge to the said Castle, to cover it with slate or shingle," etc., "to furnish and maintain a Protestant horsemans," etc., at £50 per annum. In 1712, Brigadier Gore obtained a fee-farm grant from the "Commissioners" of the "Castle and lands of Clonrond." Thus, after about 500 years, Clonroad, with all its memories, passed into the hands of strangers.

The last Earl of Thomond had a town house in Ennis, situated somewhere on the west side of Church Street (now Abbey Street), and Henry the 7th Earl had a residence also in the City of Limerick. This latter was leased to John Cooper for 21 years, on September 29th, 1667. The "Commissioners" on August 14, 1707, gave a fee farm grant of "my Lord's House and Garden in Limerick" to Alderman Robert Twigg; and as late as January 20, 1854, one Michael Wall got a lease of this house. (Rent Book of Earl of Thomond). Where did this town residence stand?

When Dineley made his sketch of Clonroad in 1680, both the castle and the "great oulde house" were standing, but in the Earl's estate-map of Ennis, 1703, there is no trace of either of these buildings.
The Parliamentary fleet, under Vice-Admiral Batten, were off the coast of Kerry early in March, 1646. On the 4th of that month a certain number of the ships, under Rear-Admiral Penn, left Dingle for Ventry, having removed the guns from the castle of Dingle, and defaced all they could of the works, besides burning the villages and houses. Penn left Ventry on March 10, having a large force on board, and sailing up the Shannon, anchored near Glyn Castle. Next day he, on board the Peter frigate, accompanied by Captains Browne, Swymner, Liston, Farmer, and Hall, together with the "hoy," ⁸⁰ weighed anchor and arrived close to Bunratty, between six and seven o'clock. The whole scheme was evidently prepared beforehand, for the same evening Penn sent a trumpeter on shore with a letter from his Admiral and Lieut.-Colonel McAdam, who seems to have had command of the troops, to the Earl of Thomond, "who received it kindly, embracing our motion, and promising to join with us, but not being well himself, would send a gentleman to treat on his behalf." Next day, March 12, Penn landed his forces, "being about 700 men, upon an island close to Bunratty, where the gentleman of my Lord's, Captain Huntley by name, came unto us, inviting us to my Lord to confer with his honour, which we did." They there and then commenced to pump Barnaby, how he "stood affected to the Parliament, whether he would join in assembling rebels and obstruct transportation of forces raised by Lord Herbert," &c. Penn states—"We found his lordship willing in what he could to comply with us, only he feared we were not a party considerable [enough] to undergo so great a work." Notwithstanding this pessimistic remark, his lordship making no further objection, that very night "the soldiers marched over and quartered in Bunratty." Penn then sent the Admiral's barge for Vice-Admiral Batten, requesting him to come to Bunratty and interview the Earl. On Batten's arrival, he found Barnaby "very reasonable, only cautious upon the first grounds."

On March 22, which was Sunday, a note arrived to Penn from Lieut.-Colonel McAdam, requesting that all the aged men, women and children should be allowed out of the castle, in order, it seems, to save provisions in case the place was attacked, and that carpenters be sent him to make a platform, presumably for the em- ⁸⁰ A small tender for the convenience of the larger ships.
placement of cannon. Next day, Captain Hall was directed to ride his ship a mile up river "to watch shipping and fire-boats from Limerick," then held by the Confederates. On April 1, Lieut.-Colonel McAdam, now securely lodged with his troops within the castle, had intended to beat up the Confederate quarters, "to see what strength their main body did consist of," but about 5 o'clock that same morning a body of Irish troops from Six-mile-bridge, consisting, according to Penn, of 120 horse and 300 foot, "came to fire Bunratty, with a commission to slay man, woman and child." They fired seven houses and killed some of the English, but Captain Vouchier counter-attacked with 25 horse, and charging the enemy shot Captain McGrath, a commander of Confederate horse, who, still alive, was taken prisoner, together with his brother, who had come to his rescue, and some others. Eighty of the Irish were slain and one hundred stand of arms taken, "not one man of ours being hurt," which, if Penn is telling the truth, seems very wonderful. In the afternoon a party consisting of 600 foot and 50 horse, with two "drakes," was sent to attack Six-mile-bridge, then held by the Confederates, who, according to Penn, consisted of horse and foot, 1,400 strong, protected with "scarfes and counter scarfes." These the English beat out of their works and pursued for two miles. Owing to woods and rivers only thirty were killed and five taken prisoners; but the town, in which they captured 250 barrels of oatmeal, much required by the garrison, was given to the flames.

On the 2nd of April, Captain McGrath died of his wounds, and next day was "honorably buried with three vollies of small shot." On the 5th a "trumpet" arrived from General Purcell, one of the Confederate officers, with linen and money for the prisoners who had recently been taken.

On the 9th Penn went on shore to assist Lieut.-Colonel McAdam in raising defensive works, pulling down walls, and removing thatched houses out of the way. He also gave orders "for the making of a platform for a great gun in the pigeon house." 81 On the 10th a breast-work was made "thwart the causeway at the corner of the garden wall." This, I think, must have been put up somewhere north-west of the castle, where the old avenue, now the

81 A small part of this pigeon house, I believe, still exists. It is also shown in Dineley's rough sketch, 1680.
“hill road,” crosses the marshy ground. From the 10th to 16th of April was generally employed in raids for cattle to Feenish Island, Crovraghan, and Inishloe, which latter place Penn intended as a common receptacle for cattle taken for the use of his men. On the 16th, news arrived that the “rebels” had carried off the sheep from Inishloe, the way to the islands on the Shannon being sometimes dry in places at low water. This “disenabled” the English a good deal. Penn went to the island of Crovraghan on the 17th, and sent the “hoy” to destroy the rebels’ boats. A sally was made about 8 o’clock, which brought in 200 cows, 250 sheep and 80 garrons. Six “rogues” were also killed on that day, and Ballintlay Castle (parish of Kilfinenan), owned by John Mac Namara, was summoned to surrender; but the troops having no “engines” with them to take the place, and the owner professing friendship for the Earl of Thomond, they drew off. On April 20 a battering piece was brought by Captain Hall to strengthen the defences of the castle. On the 21st Penn says he had heard that a party of the garrison had succeeded in killing 20 “rogues,” and took 60 cows and 100 sheep. It was decided on the 25th to send Captain Liston to Cork to ask Lord Broghill for supplies. A “trumpet” also arrived from Lieut.-General Purcell with letters, requesting that John McGrath, taken prisoner on April 1st—brother of the Captain McGrath, who had recently died a prisoner in Bunratty—might be allowed to leave the castle on parole until May 12th, which request was granted. On the 30th Penn went down the river as far as Scattery for the purpose of interviewing two ships sailing under Lord Holland’s colours.

On Sunday, May 3, “while we were at sermon,” Captain Liston brought some men, women and children from Bunratty for transport to Kinsale and Cork. On the 5th one of the barges had a narrow escape of being captured by the “rogues.” The Confederates now were reported to be approaching Bunratty from the Six-mile-bridge direction, and to have come as near as Cappagh Castle. Next day the news arrived that the “rebels” had summoned this castle to surrender. Penn joins Captain Smith at Beagh

82 John, son of Donall, second son of Sioda Manntach, Macnamara, of Ballintlay. The descendants of this John’s brother, Teig, now reside in Kilmaley Parish.
Castle. On the 7th half the men on board the ships were ordered
on shore every day to work at a new fort that was being constructed.
The "hoy" came down to Beagh Roads on the 8th at 10 o'clock,
and with the same tide the Earl's "goods" also arrived. A frigate
came from Captain Williams, then at the "Blascoes" (Blaskets),
and brought the news of the fall of Chester and Barnstaple.

The Earl of Thomond, having now sent on his luggage before
him, arrived at Beagh from Bunratty on Captain Grigg's ship at
eight o'clock on the morning of May 9th, bound for Cork, and
thence, of course, to England. I have no doubt the garrison were
very glad to get rid of him, although for good reasons of their own
they plied him with a certain amount of flattery. At 2 p.m. on the
day of his arrival he went to dine with Penn on board his ship, and
received a salute in his honour of five guns. He then made a re-
quest to have a minister to preach before him, and his wish being
complied with, he and Penn sat down to dinner after the sermon.
At 10 o'clock in the morning, on the 11th May, Barnaby left on
Grigg's ship, conveyed as far as Glyn by Penn, never again, as far
as I know, to return to Bunratty.

Ever since the Earl admitted the Parliament forces inside his
gates, until his departure from Bunratty for England, a period of
two months, he was, of course, all the time hobnobbing with
McAdam and Penn, and probably having a good time of it, while
expeditions composed of the foreign garrison were spoiling the
country and killing the people whom in duty and honour he was
bound to protect. 83 He knew well that Penn and his force were the
King's enemies, and it is hard to believe that this was the same man
who, in January, 1642, at the Ennis Sessions, caused those present
to take an oath of allegiance to his Majesty, and who actually shed
tears on the bench at the mere possibility of the gentlemen and
people of Thomond becoming disloyal to the King. What he

83 Bellings says:—"The garrison of Bunratty being grown so insolent after
a defeat given to a party of the Confederates, and driving some of the trained
bands from their posts at Six-mile-bridge, that they began to burn and prey
the country."

This sack of the village of Six-mile-bridge, in which, according to Penn,
the town was burned and 30 "rogues" killed and 5 taken prisoners, occurred
on April 1st, at a time when McAdam and his men were being entertained
by the Earl in his castle of Bunratty. Of course he could not then turn them
out, but why did he let them in?
thought of the Clare gentry is best learned from his letter to Lord Clanricard, dated 30th January, 1643, in which the Earl congratulates Clanricard on having many faithful friends and followers, "but must bemoan himself, being generally deserted by such as should show the like respect to him, having erected a new frame of government, and confederated themselves with the province of Munster. That he had tried all ways to bring them to obedience, but could not prevail; that they had profaned his Majesty's sacred name, avouching their actions to be warranted by him. That he had represented the same to his Majesty, and expected a return to disprove that rumour, but that such was the incredulity of our countrymen that he conceived if the King were himself in person here to declare his detestation of their courses, they would not believe it." 84

In his will (July 1st, 1657)—a rather sanctimonious document—the Earl accuses his "nearest relations" of having been guilty of "unexpected and unnatural Actings" during the Rebellion, by which "his estate was withheld from him to his loss of near 100,000l." 85 To give the Clare gentry their due, they thought the best way to help the King was to fight his enemies and their own. The Earl of Thomond, on the other hand, entertained these enemies, and delivered up to them on three different occasions, without firing a shot, his strong and well-munitioned castle of Bunratty.

Meanwhile the garrison was engaged day and night in improving the defences of the place, and a new "fort" was constructed at some distance from the castle on the south, to protect a dam which held up the water in the ditch when the tide was at ebb. Neither were the Confederates idle. It appears the Supreme Council had intended to send an Irish army, consisting of 4,000 men, from Leinster and Munster, and 2,000 from the other provinces, to England to aid the King against his rebellious subjects in that country. The project failed owing to the lack of money to procure sufficient transport, the want of an auxiliary force of horse, and also Bellings tells us, because of the admission into Bunratty by the Earl of Thomond of a force of "800 foot and 3 score horse, most of them

84 Clanricard Memoirs, quoted in Dwyer's Killaloe, p. 251.
85 Lodge (1754), vol i., p. 261, footnote.
reformed officers." Some of the Munster forces, then lying at Cashel, were sent to Clare, "to restrain the inroads which the garrison of Bunratty daily made into the country, until such time as a greater force should be sent to besiege them." Later on 3,000 foot drawn from Leinster were ordered to Thomond, "where they were to incorporate with such as could be gathered of the forces of Munster, under the command of Major-General Stephenson, there to encamp until fit preparations could be made for the siege of Bunratty."

These forces were encamped at Quin, and were in a very discontented state, both officers and men, for they had received no pay since they had come to Clare, and most of them were without the winter clothing promised them. Bellings says "the country levies were exceedingly low," and no money was in the hands of the "receivers of the public revenue." Something therefore had to be done, and that quickly, to remedy matters, so the Council decided to appoint Lord Muskerry to the chief command, who, on account of his high character, noble descent, great popularity, and the personal love the soldiers bore him, would, they considered, be able to hasten in the levies, and persuade the soldiers to be patient. Bellings does not stint himself in praising Lord Muskerry for his unselfishness, modesty, and patriotism, and says "his greatest study was, during the whole course of the war, how to exclude himself from the places of chief command in the Munster Army which were sought to be conferred upon him."

From both Bellings' and Penn's description, it is evident, I think, that all the high ground on which the castle stands was included in the ambit of the defensive works, for cavalry were largely made effective use of by the garrison during the siege. Bellings states that the ground to the west was protected by a "broad deep trench, which nature had made to be the receptacle of the waters which issued from the springs in the neighbouring banks and the waterish grounds that surround it." This is still a fairly good description.

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86 Donough-Mac Carthy, Lord Muskerry, was the son of Cormac, Lord Muskerry, and Margaret, daughter of Donough, 4th Earl of Thomond, by his first wife, Ellen, daughter of Maurice, Viscount Fermoy. Donough, Lord Muskerry, was therefore a step-nephew of Barnaby, Earl of Thomond. He was created Earl of Clancarthy by Charles II., and died in London, 1665.
The space north of the castle, then occupied by a garden, "was well fortified with earthworks, and a mound raised whereon they [the English] planted 4 pieces of cannon." At some distance from the platform stood a little castle, and behind that the church on a rising ground, all within a deep trench well flanked, into which they [the garrison] intended to have drawn water from the river which we have said ran to the east of the castle." It will be seen later on that the "little castle" mentioned by Bellings is identical with the building called "Jefford's house" by Penn, in which the brave McAdam, commander of the garrison, received his fatal wound.

The chief officers under Lord Muskerry were—Lieutenant-General Purcell, Major-General Stephenson, and Colonel Purcell, who commanded the horse, "all of them," according to Bellings, "bred in the wars of Germany." The Irish troops under their command were simply raw levies, raised in Munster and Leinster. They were posted on the high hill north of the castle, and soon forced back the defenders, who "from behind the quick-set hedges made some resistance," and thus "became masters of all the ground without that broad deep trench which we have described to have been on the west side of the castle, and sat-down at such distance as the brow of the bank [hill] sheltered the camp from being annoyed out of the castle or from the mound." Bellings also says that the hill-top was so stony that there was not sufficient earth to make trenches, "until they were got to the ground which lay even with the garden." He praises the courage of the besieged, and the "desperate attempts they made by coming up sometimes to the lower baskets" and pulling up whole ranks of them." When the besiegers had reached the level ground they suffered much from cavalry attacks by the garrison, "by reason the horse had in that place more room to second their foot." The Confederates now planted a "piece of ordnance" in their lower works, which practically stopped these sallies of the cavalry.

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87 This "mound" must not be mistaken for De Muscegrós' mote. The latter is a good-sized earthwork, and has its longer axis directed north and south, instead of east and west, as it should be if it were the remains of an emplacement for four small cannon directed north towards the hill. The mote is, moreover, surrounded by a fosse, and the characteristic Norman bailey is distinctly traceable.

88 These, of course, were filled with earth.
The siege for a considerable time made little progress, for the way was open to the English by river to the sea, and Penn and his ships supplied the garrison with meat. Forage for the horses was obtained from the "large piece of pasture ground which lay between the castle and the river of Shannon, and save some out-guards they kept at a dam which was made upon the pool on the west side to keep up the waters at an ebb, they were engaged on no other duty than the defence of that quarter, so as there was much time spent, and the progress was slow against a strong garrison relieved by sea, and no way in danger to be wearied with watching or labour while they had so much ground free."

We shall now leave Bellings and again pick up the thread of the story from Penn's diary.

May 12th. The "rebels" attack Cappagh Castle, near Sixmile-bridge, "where was a ward of ours" consisting of two files of Musqueteers under Sergeant Morgan, assisted by the inmates. Some "great guns" were brought against it, which, having battered in a breach in the walls, the garrison surrendered on quarter. The Confederates then marched to Rosmanagher, commanded lately by one Hunt, who with his wife and family had quitted it "2 days back," and were then at Bunratty. Sergeant Morgan arranged the surrender of this castle, and it was delivered up without a shot. "We believe the soldiers [a file] were hanged, as justly they deserve."—14th. The "rebels" burned divers houses, and the garrison counter-attacked and fired some of the Irish cabins. Penn appointed Captain Browne, in the absence of Captain Dacre, to the command in chief of the "fort."—16th. Parley between the garrison and the "rogues" for the exchange of prisoners.—17th. Colours asked for use of the fort. Soldiers received the Sacrament.—18th. Penn went on shore to Bunratty at 2 a.m. to see what progress was made in putting up the fort. About 8 o'clock the "rebels" sent "trumpet" to treat again for exchange of prisoners. At 10 o'clock their horse appeared on the hill in bravado. Lieutenant Grimes salied forth, and having out-flanked them, drove them back on the main body, which Penn asserts was to the number of six or seven thousand men. On being attacked the four files under Grimes retreat, having only lost one man, the enemy losing six or seven. The Confederates now brought a falcon and demiculverin' to play on
the walls, but did no hurt. The besieged reply with their guns, and
dismounted one of the Confederate pieces, but could not take it. The
fort was now well manned, provisions running short, however.—18th.
Salt beef, costing £7, arrived from Captain Ferriter’s Island. 86 —
19th. A drum arrived from the “rebels” demanding the surrender
of Bunratty.—21st. The “Blessing” of London arrived. A council
of war held.—22nd. The Confederates were very busy on this day
filling their “baskets” within carbine shot of the works. While
Penn with his boy 90 were in the outward works, two shots were
fired from the Confederate cannon, but did no harm. A hot skirmish
lasting two hours did some mischief to the defenders, being played
hard on by the Confederate guns. It is intended to attack these
guns and take them if possible. Many great shot were sent by the
“rebels” against the house held by Captain Jefford, but no one was
hurt.—24th (Sunday). The garrison made a sally in some force,
and found that the Irish had drawn some large guns up the hill.
They beat them, however, out of their works, and killed a prin-
cipal commander, but had to fall back owing to a charge of cavalry
from the Irish quarters on the hill. One of the garrison was “shot
through, not without hope.”—25th. The English received pro-
visions, consisting of 10 hogsheads of beef (1,511 4lb. pieces), 3
hogshead of pork (568 2lb. pieces).—29th. Penn determines to send
remaining women and children to Cork or Kinsale by Liston’s and
Smith’s ships. A sally and skirmish; great guns firing by both
sides. The garrison lost three men and three or four horses on this
occasion, and discovered that “the rogues had one demiculverin,
which till now we knew not of.”—30th. Continual alarms.—31st.
Rest of the women and children, about 100, were sent off in Liston’s
ship. Penn apprehends there will soon be a shortage of meat for the
garrison, and sent the “hoy” to Ferriter’s Island. The Lieutenant
Governor desires that Penn would take 1,000 lbs. of lead for bullets.

June 4th. Many shots were fired on that day, some even reached

86 One of the Biaqueats.
90 Was this boy the Admiral’s son, William, founder of Philadelphia, born
in London, October 14, 1644? If so, he must have been a mere infant, only 18
months old. It is, however, not generally known that Penn’s wife, Margaret,
mother of his son William, was the daughter of John Jasper, a Dutchman, and
was born somewhere in Bunratty barony. I think it must have been one of this
family from whom Jasper’s Bridge and Jasper’s Pound, situated between Clare
Castle and Quin, were named.
the castle, but no damage was done thereby. The "rebels" now brought two guns, placing them so as to enfilade the river, which Penn says will seriously interfere with their communication with the castle. Early that morning they lost about 80 mares and colts which the besieged grazed on the corcasses.—June 7th. Took prisoners a captain, lieutenant, and one common soldier (lieutenant died soon after), and killed 20 of the besiegers.—8th. Penn fears the "rebels" will block the passage by water to Bunratty, which would be very serious. It was suggested to place a vessel at the "pass" to hinder the "rebels" coming into the corcass. Some men sent to dig a trench to secure said corcass were set upon by the Irish.—10th. The "hoy" was sent to Scattery for cattle with little result.—12th. The "hoy" brought a quantity of wood, which was running scarce, to Bunratty.—14th (Sunday). Letter received from Lord Broghill. Garrison running short of meat. On this day, much to the surprise of Penn, a great volley of small shot, at least 1,000 musquets, was fired by the "rebels," who lit beacons at Captain Hunt's Castle of Cappagh, and on the hill above Limerick. All their army, horse and foot, were drawn up in "battalia." Penn could not learn the cause of the display, but it probably marked a visit from the Nuncio, or some other personage of importance, to the Confederate camp.—19th. Another sally of the garrison, who got into the "rebels" works and spoilt the "baskets."—21st (Sunday). The "baskets" of the Confederates carried off and divers of them killed. None of the English hurt.—24th. Captain Browne reports a sally on the 23rd. There was some execution on the "rogues," but 30 of the garrison were killed or wounded. The ships are ready armed to surprise the boats of the "rebels," and so prevent them from "assaying to carry any barks coming up the river."—27th. No enemy ships, however, were surprised. Francis Hawkesworth, an Englishman once employed by my Lord of Thomond, escaped from the custody of the "rebels," and being under the protection of Sir Teig MacMahon (one well affected towards the English), and willing to return to England, came on board. A letter was this day received from Lieut.-Colonel McAdam, asking Penn to move his other ships up to Bunratty immediately, "as we tendered the safety of the garrison."
—28th. Penn attended a sermon at the fort, and sent on shore 64 men with four "granadoes" and one "fizgig"91 out of the Charles frigate. Urgent necessity of securing the fort and the island, as the Confederate troops had now made near approach to the works. It would appear from this and other statements in Penn's diary that some of his men had been, during most of the siege, landed on an island near the mouth of the O'Garney river, and that guns from the ships had also been placed there.—30th. Wind blowing hard from the west, and the weather being very foul, no boat could be moved.

We shall now return to Bellings, and hear what he has to say as to the progress of the siege. Things, it seems, had not been going on very well for some time in the Confederate camp. In spite of the moneys sent by the Supreme Council and £600 brought by the Nuncio, the wants of the army became very pressing, and it was apparent something should be done at any cost to hasten the fall of the castle, "before their necessities compelled the men to disperse," as under the circumstances a protracted investment was impossible to be maintained. It was therefore decided to plant two pieces of cannon, "newly sent them from Limerick," to batter the house called by Bellings "the little Castle," which, he says, "stood near upon the edge of the outworks which the besieged had raised for the defence of the place, the Irish being from thence much annoyed in their trenches, and their approaches retarded thereby. The battery was continued for two days against the side of the [little] castle, which, being thin, the bullets only pierced it without shaking the fabric; and so undauntedly did those entrusted with the guard of it maintain it, that still as the cannon enlarged the breach, they at every shot poured forth a volley by the hole the bullets had made, until towards the evening of the second day [Wednesday, July 1st] Captain McAdam, who commanded in Bunratty, coming to view the place and to give order for drawing off his men in case he found it untenable, received a shot in his knee from a field piece that was planted among the gabions in some of the higher stages of the fences made upon the side of the hill, to accommodate the enemy on his sally, not with any design to play upon the castle, where it could be of little use; but the cannonier, taking the upper

91 A kind of firework made of damp powder, which, when ignited, makes a fizzing noise. Probably to be used as a signal.
window of the castle for a mark to try his skill, made that shot which by accident was fatal to McAdam, who then was in the room to which the window gave light, and being carried thence, died that night."

Lord Muskerry evidently was not pleased at the way the siege was progressing. He called his officers together, and informed them "that unless some attempt was made to distract the besieged from being wholly intent upon that quarter where they made their approaches, necessity would force them to rise with dishonour. The clamours of the soldiers being already very great, and the end they aimed at being in all appearance so far remote, wherefore he gave order for an attempt to be made that night upon those guards the enemy kept at the dam." If the attempt proved successful, and the place were suitably held, Bunratty could then be attacked from the south-west side, which stood up to that time free, and all relief cut off from the Parliament ships in the river. The assault was quite successfully carried out, the guards being taken by surprise made no resistance and fled to the castle. The Confederate soldiers, however, "held the place not 4 hours, when those left to maintain it, seeing some lighted matches move as they thought from the castle, which stood ¼ an English mile off towards them, and imagining they heard the noise of horses, deserted the place, carrying with them over the dam, which afforded passage but for one man abreast, some booty the English had left behind them; and the sergeant appointed to command the party was among the first that fled, encouraged, it seems, by the too great indulgence in such case, and the faint execution of martial discipline at all times used in the army of the Confederates. But the Lord Muskerry caused 10 of the soldiers, with the sergeant, to be the next day put in the hands of the Provost Marshal, and to be executed, which act of justice, although not of the customary remissness observed in matters of that kind, it was repined at even by some of the officers, yet it was easily discovered in other attempts how much good example, in the consequence of it, did to the whole army."

Penn makes several references to a place called the "fort," which he considered of great military importance. In like manner, Bellings constantly alludes to the "dam," which, according to him, was situated half a mile south of the castle, and was, I have no
doubt, a device for keeping the trench which protected the corcass south-west of the castle from becoming empty when the tide was at ebb. Penn’s “fort” was apparently some sort of work intended to guard this dam, and was the key to the defences of Bunratty on the south.

We shall now resume once more the account of the siege from Admiral Penn’s diary.

July 1st. Penn went on shore to Bunratty to hold a council of war. The Confederates fired on “Jefford’s house,” and attempted to gain it. Lieut.-Colonel McAdam, who happened to be at dinner, “hearing them shoot so thick and ply their guns so hard, rose from the table, went to the house to see what breaches were made and to encourage the men, where, being entered, a shot was made, by which the Lt.-Col. John McAdam was most unhappily slain, to the great lamentation of all. Upon which, I being there by, hearing a muttering among the common soldiers about some money that McAdam had found in the castle, out of which they desired some part of their pay, set guard on his chamber that night.” This, of course, was money hidden somewhere in the castle by the Earl of Thomond—who seems to have a propensity for secret hoarding—to save it from his friends, the Parliament garrison. Penn did all he could to settle matters, and allay the differences of the men, who, it appears, were very discontented because their officers claimed all the swag for themselves. He also saw to it that no “Welshman” or other member of the garrison should desert and inform the enemy of McAdam’s death, and Lord Broghill was to be informed of the perilous condition of the defenders.—2nd. In the early morning Penn found the “officers in McAdam’s chamber, with 18 bags of money and some plate before them,” which they were “resolute” in dividing amongst themselves.” He in vain endeavoured to persuade them to reserve some for the soldiers, but they would not be persuaded.—3rd. Captain Clark and frigate was sent to Cork or Kinsale to Lord Broghill. The “rebels” guns play on “Jeffard’s house.” Another Welshman deserted, and informed the Irish of Lieut.-Colonel McAdam’s death. They call

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92 Some, at least, of this plate was very probably the church plate of Quin Monastery, entrusted to Donough, 4th Earl of Thomond, by the Friars, as told by Father Mooney in 1619.
out to the English, "Get a better commander," on which Penn remarks, "I would also such rogues might be hanged for example sake." It is thought the "rebels" would attack the corcass that night.—6th. The defenders are forced to evacuate "Jefford's House," and the Confederates occupy it. A counter-attack, however, beat them out of it again.—7th. Provisions running short.—8th. Transport arranged for, to remove wounded soldiers and remaining women and children from Bunratty. Captain Coachman arrived with a prey of 40 steers and milch cows and 30 sheep, which were sent into Bunratty for the support of the garrison. The Confederates were now so close to the castle that the defenders expect to be strongly attacked. The besiegers ply very hard against the house of one Keeme, which was within the precincts of the building which Captain Jeffard maintained so long. One killed and two wounded. "A Frenchman, a trooper of ours, ran away to the rogues, with his horse, pistol, and carbine. The enemy got a gun this day into the corkasse, which flanks all our works, and will thereby do us much damage." It is evident from Penn's remarks that the garrison was now very hard pressed.—10th. Rest of cattle killed and salted for use of the defenders of the castle. The Confederates on this day got a secure footing in the corcass, and beat off two of the Parliament ships, shooting one through the hull and the other through the sails.—11th. "I believe the Frenchman which ran away yesterday did us no small discourtesy, for by break of day this morning they began very hotly to assault us, forcing between our out and our home guards, which our men quitting, and that unworthily, made a confused retreat to the island," i.e., the island—probably Quay Island—which, it seems, Penn fortified and used as a sort of base. He caused these men to be ferried over to the "eastwardmost corkasse" for the purpose of "making good" the same. If I understand him aright, he means the corcass on the east side of the river O'Garney, which is part of the townland of Moyhill, and close to Quay Island. The Major now in command of the castle sent Captain Turner with a message to Penn, "that he was altogether out of hope to maintain the garrison any longer." The soldiers were wasted with excessive duty, discouraged by the loss of the corcass, and overpowered by the besiegers. He asked Penn to send some boats to take away the
guns and "my Lord Thomond's lumber" from Bunratty, which they were resolved to quit by swimming their horses across the river O'Garney, and so make their escape to the "eastwardmost" corcass, and thence get on board the ships, "all of which," Penn characteristically says, "was foreign to my affection." The Admiral, like a brave man, did all he could to encourage the garrison to hold out, but owing to the pusillanimity of the Commander and the discouragement of the men, he, too, had lost all hope of maintaining the struggle any longer. Captain Turner had not returned to Bunratty scarcely two hours when the Confederates got complete mastery of the corcass, and by this move all aid for Bunratty was cut off by land and sea, the castle being now completely surrounded. Penn put up breastworks on the island, fearing an attack in that direction, and remained there until the rising tide cut it off from the mainland. Things were ominously quiet at the castle, the cause of which (it was supposed) was that hostilities had ceased and terms of surrender were being arranged by the garrison. Captain Dechire and Lieutenant Gibbon with a Captain of the "rebels" came on board Penn's ship, the Peter frigate, at 7 o'clock, to consult the Admiral as to terms. The English officers said the garrison was reduced to 300 men, and could not resist any longer. The terms acceptable to Penn were: "Quarter, with a convoy to march to Cork by land, to quit the garrison with bag and baggage, their artillery and horse, drums beating, colours flying, and musquet bullet in their mouths, with the rest that were hurt to be transported by shipping to Cork or Kinsale." Even these terms were distasteful to the English Admiral, who had hoped for "comfortable news from my Lord of Broghill." We shall see later on, however, that much worse terms were accepted. During a parley about one Captain Fitzgerald—who seems to have been a prisoner in Penn's hands—the Admiral declares that about 6 o'clock the "perfidious rogues" fired at his ships and killed one of his men. The squadron on this account had to move off beyond range to avoid further attention from two guns that the "rebels" had put in some commanding position, probably in the corcass. Penn then dismantled the works on the Island, killed the horses, and took the guns on board his ships.—12th (Sunday). He anchored in Beagh Road. The
Confederates, for some reason, prevented the garrison and 30 or 40 seamen from leaving Bunratty, so the Admiral caused Captain Fitzgerald to write a letter to Lord Muskerry on the matter, sending the missive by two women he had taken.—13th. In reply to a signal on shore, Penn sent a boat thither under a flag of truce, and says he was fired at but received no hurt. Then a Captain of the Confederates and an English Lieutenant and Ensign interchangeably signed terms on behalf of Lord Muskerry on the one part, and the Major in command of the garrison and his officers, on the other. The conditions were, in Penn’s opinion, so mean as to be quite beneath the honour of a soldier. He at once released Captain Fitzgerald, and sent boats on shore to bring off the garrison and the seamen who had re-enforced them, among whom was Captain Farmer, who was wounded. Having sent a copy of the Articles of Surrender to Lord Broghill, and put all the soldiers and other inhabitants, men, women and children, on board his ships, Penn weighed anchor for Kinsale. The castle was immediately taken possession of by the Confederate troops, “which,” he says, “did not a little grieve me, after all the care and pains which I had taken night and day.”—16th. The fleet left Beagh Road on this day, and sailed down the river as far as Scattery, where they anchored. There Penn landed all the soldiers, and later distributed them and the other passengers according to the space available on each ship, putting all the sick and wounded on board one—a very wise arrangement.—17th. The quantity of beer on board being small, and the supply of water on Scattery insufficient, the ships moved on to Carrigaholt Bay, and anchored near Sir Donnall O’Brien’s Castle, which they had to threaten to attack before they were allowed to take in a full supply of water. At this time Penn tried to find out from the officers who really was to blame for the fall of Bunratty. All he could learn from them was that it was due to the loss of the corcass, and that in any case the castle must have surrendered in four days more for lack of provisions. After the ships left Carrigaholt they met in the river Captain Clarke, in the Charles frigate, with the news that Lord Broghill was sending supplies to Bunratty and 50 men. Of course it was now too late. Having bought a score of beeves and cows, with fowls and other things from Sir Donnall O’Brien or his repre-
sentative, Penn moved back again to Scattery for more water, and emptied all the wells on the island. He there washed and cleaned up his ships, and put the soldiers, women and children on shore, there "to pick, wash and refresh themselves." They at last weighed anchor, and coasting by the Blaskets, Skelligs, and Dursey Island, arrived at Kinsale on Sunday, July 26th.

Considering that they wrote from different political camps, there is a remarkable agreement as to how the castle fell in both Bellings' and Penn's accounts. According to the former, when Lord Muskerry heard from a deserter of McAdam's death, and how much the spirits of the garrison were depressed "at the loss of so valiant a person, and how little unanimous they were in the choice of one to succeed him," he determined to press the assault on the castle with all vigour. "He first caused two small pieces to be drawn to the sea 93 shore, near the dam, to beat off a ship that rid at anchor there, with intent to play on the back of those which again should attempt to recover that part; but the guns being planted by the break of day, and shot off as soon as aim could be taken, she shipped her cable and put to sea. And now all this being prepared for the assault, the Irish fell in at the same time upon all their works that faced upon the hill, and entering by the breaches made in the castle and by the dry ditch adjoining to it, which they filled with faggots, they possessed themselves of some of their inner works, so sunk in the earth as they could not come to charge them with their horse; but those who attempted to take it in a half moon that lay on the east point of the garden were repulsed with loss; yet the besieged seeing fresh men drawn up to renew the assault there, and the number of those increasing who had taken that post where the horse could not annoy them, and that others had possessed themselves of the dam and were passing [emptying] the water, they were content to capitulate for their lives only, and the officers their swords, leaving the place, cannon, horses, ammunition, and provisions to the Confederates, and embarking their sick and wounded men, returned by sea to Cork." 94

93 It is very curious to find Bellings, like the author of Cathrém Toirdéalaibheach, calling the estuary of the O'Garney river the "sea."
After the fall of Bunratty, according to Bellings, who from his official position knew all that was happening in Munster, the Irish forces engaged in the siege were quartered on the county for some time longer. This, he says, was done "not so much to rest themselves, as because they had no means of getting them away to meet Lord Inchiquin and the army drawn out of Cork."

On September 8th, 1651, the Puritan General, Ireton, visited Bunratty, and finding it a suitable place for a depot and magazine, garrisoned it with a company of foot and a troop of horse; under the command of Captain Preston; no opposition, it seems, having been offered by whomever guarded it for the Earl of Thomond.95 At the request of Ireton, Lieutenant-General Ludlow resided at the castle for two days, in order to rest and recuperate when recovering from a "dangerous cold," contracted during his military operations in Clare.96

PART III.
THE MODERN HISTORY OF BUNRATTY.

The subsequent history of the castle is quite uneventful, and makes but a short chapter.

When the Earl of Thomond arrived in England from Bunratty in the summer of 1646, he lost no time in sending in a claim for compensation to the English Parliament. In his Petition he sets forth "his own innated abhorrning the rebellion of the Irish, even from the very first rise of it, and this, in all times since, he hath manifested to the world, etc.; nor hath he continued at Bunratty out of any other end than by his personal abode there to preserve it from the Irish, and keep it ready for the Protestant English and Parliament." What a noble representative of the great Brian, conqueror of the Danes and Monarch of Ireland!

He further begs that his son and heir, Lord Brien—he evidently feared to offend the ears of Parliament by using the Gaelic "O"—may have a regiment and a troop of horse, with assured pay, assigned to him, and with authority to command in chief in

95 Frost's Hist. of Clare, p. 380.
96 Ludlow's Memoirs (1721), vol. i., p. 382.
that county as his father’s deputy. He then 

begs the Committee 
of the House to reimburse him for all expenses and losses incurred 

by him during the late troubles, and annexes a schedule of his 

“sufferings by the Rebellion,” which he values at £42,173 135. 4d. 

This modest sum—equivalent to more than a quarter of a million 

pounds sterling to-day—includes sundry items, varying from 

£35,000 “lost or taken by the Irish rebels,” down to £2 for a 

barrel of sherry, and candles at 33s. 4d. per cwt., “besides arms, 

ammunition, and many other items not yet mentioned,” and not 

included in the above total.

The Earl lays great stress on the losses he sustained by the 

“rebels,” which must have consisted mainly in the withholding 

of some of his rents, the result probably of their actually having no 

money to pay them in a time so disturbed. For very good reasons 

Barnaby carefully avoids alluding to his chief despoilers, viz., 

those pets of the Parliament, Forbes, Inchquin, and the officers 

of the Puritan garrison of Bunratty, who stole his money and 

plate, made their own of his horses and arms, and in every other 

possible way spoiled his substance.

He sets forth his “humble desires” in a second petition, to 

which is annexed a further “brief and modest estimate,” bringing 

the sum total up to £45,412. The wonder is that the Earl did not 

include a further sum for “moral compensation,” and another 

small sum—a very small sum—for loss of character, as undoubtedly 

his reputation was irretrievably damaged in the eyes of his own 

relations and countrymen!

On October 29th, 1646, the Parliament Committee decided that 

Barnaby’s petition be reported when Sir Arthur Loftus shall have 

brought in his testimonial as to its correctness. The certificate of 

Loftus (who was Colonel of an English regiment lately quartered 

dated November 2nd, 1646, only testifies that “Lord Thomond had expended £2,400 in paying three months’ pay to 

every officer and reformado 97 in the regiment, and affording them 

subsistence for four months.” 98

So the great sum of £45,000, which the Earl claimed, was 

reduced on examination to about one-nineteenth! It should be

97 In a general sense, an officer without command. 
98 Bodleian. Raw. MS., B 597.
here noted, as aggravating matters, that at this period the King, to whom Barnaby so often had advertised his great loyalty, was in deadly grips with the Parliament. Avarice indeed appears to have been the Earl’s predominant weakness, and here we have, perhaps, a clue to his character, and the probable explanation of his sitting on the fence for five years, while his country was being harried and exploited by the emissaries of the Parliament to which he now appealed for redress.

A year before the siege of Bunratty, on May 3rd, 1645, Barnaby was created, by Patent under the Privy Seal, Marquis ofBilling in the County of Northampton, by his friend the King; but owing to the unsettled state of public affairs, his other friend, the Parliament, being in the ascendant, Patent under the Great Seal was never passed. The Earl died in England in 1657, and was buried in the church of Great Billing. In his will (July 1st, 1657) he desires, should he die in England, to be laid at rest in that place; but if his death occurred in Ireland, he expresses the wish to be buried in the Church of St. Mary, Limerick, with his father, Donough, and his brother Henry. Lodge calls him “a nobleman of strict loyalty, religion, and honour.” As a matter of fact, no description of his character could be more inaccurate. An easy-going, harmless man, perhaps, in quiet times, but, as I have previously stated, a political trimmer of the first water, who sat on three rickety stools at the same time—King, Confederation, and Parliament—with unparalleled success.

On March 25th, 1656, the year before his death, Barnaby leased “Bunratty, one Quarter” to John Cooper, “to be surrendered on a year’s warning, if my Lord or his Sonne comes to settle there.” Evidently the Earl had still some affection for the old spot, and perhaps wished to die there—as often comes to people and even to some of the lower animals when nearing death—but neither my Lord nor his son Henry, the 7th Earl, nor any other of his race ever again occupied Bunratty.

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99 Lodge, 1754.
100 This, I think, must be John Cooper of Meelick, sometimes called “Cornet Cooper,” the 3rd husband of Mary (alias Máire ruadh), daughter of Sir Turlough ruadh Mac Mahon, of Clonderalaw (vide Frost’s Hist. of Clare, p. 394). Daniel O’Neillan (ob. March 2, 1639), son of William O’Neillan, of Turlough, parish of Oughtmama, was her first husband; Conor, son of Donough O’Brien of Leimanegh, her second.
A lease of "Bunratty Castle" for 99 years was granted by Henry, the 8th and last Earl of Thomond (ob. April 20th, 1741), to one Robert Amory, on October 4th, 1709; and on May 12th, 1712, the "Commissioners"—acting under an Act of Parliament specially passed to enable the Earl to give leases for ever—contracted with Thomas Amory, Esq., for a fee-farm grant of same.¹⁰¹ By a deed dated September 26th of this year, for a consideration of £225, and a rent of £120 per annum, a lease for ever to Thomas Amory was perfected of the "Castle, farm and lands of Bunratty," about 472 acres, "with free ingress, egress, and regress for coach or cart thro' the Park of Bunratty to the town commonly called Sixmilebridge, viz., in the common coachway formerly made use of thro' the said Park;" reserving to the Earl "all minerals, waifises, strays, deodants, felons' and fugitives' goods, treasure-trove, all advowsons and presentations of churches, vicarages, and senechalships, and profits of Courte Leet and Courte Baron, with free liberty to hunt and hawke, fish and fowl, upon the Premises, and all other Royalties whatever."¹⁰²

There is always something very sad in the severance of an ancient family from the ancestral home, but now the last link was broken—except for the financial tie of a head rent—and the famous castle and noble park, so full of historical associations, passed away for ever from the families so intimately connected with its long and wonderful story.

Thirteen years later, on November 26th, 1725, Thomas Amory of Bunratty, Esq., agreed to sell his interest in the fee-farm grant of 1712 to Thomas Studdert, then of Kilkishen, for a sum of £1,600, and a further sum as a mortgage. The deed was perfected at Bunratty on December 4th, 1725, the witnesses to same being John Amory, of Galway, Alderman; Henry Studdert, of Arleman, Co. Limerick, gent.; and John Dondon, of Bunratty, gent.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Extracted from Rent Book of Earl of Thomond.
¹⁰³ Ibid. In a Marriage Settlement between John Bury and Jane Moland, 1746 (Book 211, p. 387, Reg. Deeds Off., Dub.), mention is made of a deed, between Thomas Studdert, "late of Ariomount, in the Co. of Limerick, but now of the City of Limerick, Esq.," setting part of Bunratty, on January 12th, 1730, to John Bury, of the City of Cork, Esq., brother and devisee of Richard Bury, formerly of Shannongrove, Co. Limerick.
The castle and lands of Bunratty have remained ever since in the senior line of the Studdert family, the present owner being Thomas Studdert, High Sheriff of Clare (1915), who has, I am glad to say, generously offered to hand over the ownership and preservation of the castle to the Irish Board of Works.

All that now remains is to thank those who so kindly helped me to put these notes together. My thanks in the first place are offered to Lord Inchiquin for allowing the publication of the interesting portraits of the 4th and 6th Earls of Thomond; to Mr. R. W. Twigge, F.S.A., and Mr. Thos. J. Westropp, M.R.I.A., for very great and material help; to Mrs. Studdert, of Bunratty House, and Dr. Edward Frost, of Newmarket-on-Fergus. I also wish to express my indebtedness to my friend and fellow-worker in the North Munster Archæological Society, the late Dr. George Fogerty, R.N., whose sad death has been a great loss to archæology in North Munster.