Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society

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Title: Some McCarthys of Blarney and Ballea (concluded)

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Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society, 1955, Vol. 60, No. 192, page(s) 75-79

Published by the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society

Digital file created: February 20, 2016

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Some McCarthys of Blarney and Ballea

(Concluded)

By JOHN T. COLLINS

Throughout the reign of James II there was one potential focus of disaffection in Co. Cork namely the town of Bandon-bridge. It was the fortified centre of a series of English plantations begun in the reign of Elizabeth and extended throughout the reign of James I.

During the reign of Charles I its garrison, though professedly loyal, had raided through Carbery with fire and sword, little caring that those whose lands they plundered, professed the same loyalty. It was one of the first towns in Munster to declare in favour of Cromwell and its inhabitants had a strong Puritan leaven.

The charter which had been granted to the town by James I was withdrawn by the earl of Tyrconnell in the name of James II and a new charter granted. Teige McCarthy of Aglish was named as provost and amongst the free burgesses were Charles McCarthy of Ballea, Cornelius and Daniel Conner of Bandon, merchants.[1]

Bandon was held against the wishes of the inhabitants by a loyal garrison under Captain Daniel O'Neill until in February 1689 when they heard that William of Orange had been proclaimed king at Westminster. On a certain Monday, called afterwards 'Black Monday,' they made a surprise coup and expelled Captain O'Neill and his forces. Whereupon Major-General Justin McCarthy and his nephew the earl of Clancarty at the head of the regiments of O'Brien, Dillon and Owen McCarthy marched out from Cork to reinstate the garrison and exact satisfaction. The inhabitants made no resistance: ten of the ringleaders were handed over and ordered for execution. However, Justin McCarthy relented and spared their lives on condition that the town paid a fine of £1,500 and re-imbursed the former garrison for the losses they had sustained.[2]

James II landed at Kinsale on 12 March 1689. Next day he held his court at Charles Fort and came to Cork where he lodged at the town house of the earl of Clancarty.[3]

The reformed corporation of Bandon selected Charles McCarthy of Ballea and Daniel McCarthy Reagh to represent the town in the parliament of 1689. This parliament annulled the Act of Settlement.

[1] Bennett's *History of Bandon* and other printed sources. The lands of Teige of Aglish lay to the south-east of the present Roovesbridge where an imposing viaduct has been erected under the Lee hydro-electric scheme. The Conners were ancestors of Arthur and Roger O'Connor, the United Irishmen, Fergus, the Chartist leader, the Conners of Manch, etc.

[2] Justin McCarthy was later created earl of Mountcashel and Baron of Castle Inch The castle from which he took the latter title will be submerged when the dam at Inniscarra is in working order under the Lee scheme. The lands along this picturesque valley belonged to him.

[3] There is a tradition that he came by the old Kinsale road which is intersected by the modern Kinsale road at O'Halloran's publichouse, thence by Pouladuff road and Tory Top lane to the South Gate.

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The earl of Clancarty accompanied King James to Dublin and though still under age, sat in the House of Lords. He led a regiment at the siege of Derry and on one occasion is reputed to have nearly got through the gate knownas the 'Butcher's Gate.' He defended Elizabeth Fort in Cork and was taken prisoner there when the city capitulated in 1690.

At the meeting of the new corporation held a few days later it was resolved that the 29th day of September being the day when the armies of their Majestys William and Mary entered this city be for ever kept as an anniversary, also that Alan Broderick, the recorder, draw up a list of grievances committed on the city by McElligot, Barrett, Clancarty and others so as to bring them to condign punishment.[4] The earl of Clancarty was transported to England and detained as a state prisoner in the Tower of London. In October, 1694, he escaped from the Tower, leaving his bed made up as though he had occupied it, and his periwig block doing duty, where his head should have reposed. He made his way to France where King James gave him the command left vacant by the death of Patrick Sarsfield at Landen.

It may be remembered that the earl while a student at Oxford had been married to a young lady and immediately departed for Ireland. He had never seen her since and in 1697 determined to pay her a visit. A news letter from Whitehall dated January 4 1698 relates the sequel :

> The earl of Clancarty came privately from France where he served since his escape out of the Tower and came last Saturday at night under a false name to Lord Sunderland's house. My lord and my lady were gone to the country and he asking to speak with Lady Clancarty's woman, was by her carried to the young lady's chamber—as in all probability was concerted between them. But the porter, knowing the earl, sent to Lord Spenser, the earl's brother-in-law and his lordship giving notice to the Secretary of State, a messenger was sent to the house with a guard who found the earl in bed with his young lady. He brought the Earl to Whitehall where he was kept that night and the next day was committed to Newgate prison as he had been previously outlawed for treason and attainted. This was the first time his lordship bedded his lady, they being married very young, and he afterwards during the late rebellion in Ireland married and owned another wife who has since died.[5]

A warrant was immediately issued for the earl's committal to Newgate and the keeper of that prison was warned that great care was to be taken for his safe keeping, he having previously escaped from the Tower. But the precautions were somewhat relented as other warrants issued later gave permission for the countess of Clancarty to be present with her husband at all reasonable hours. His mother also got permission to visit him. In a letter of 18 January it is stated that King William said last Sunday that he was never so teased about anything so much as the petitions and requests on behalf of 'that little spark Lord Clancarty.' He gave him the sum of £300 to pay for his present necessities.[6] It is likely that the king was inclined in the earl's favour but there were reasons of state why his attainder

[4] Caulfield Transcripts, U.C.C. 'For Ever' is a long time but the era then inaugurated lasted for 150 years.

[5] *Calendar State Papers.* Domestic Series William III (p. 10).

[6] Ibid., pp. 36 and 179.

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and outlawry could not be reversed. His estates extended from the city of Cork to the Kerry border and if he were allowed to regain possession the political and religious structures which followed the Elizabethan and Cromwellian confiscations there and which were about to be strengthened by a third would stand in grave danger.

As an outlaw returning to England he had put his head in jeopardy, but his land and not himself was wanted, so a royal pardon was granted reciting how he had been outlawed for treason, returned from France notwithstanding his outlawry whereby he had become liable to execution. The pardon was granted only on condition that he transported himself beyond the seas and did not return during the term of his natural life.

His vast possessions were sold at the Chichester House sales of forfeited land in 1703. No Catholic was allowed to bid at these sales and the favoured purchasers were only asked to pay one-fifth part of the purchase money in cash. The fee simple and inheritance of the land were sold subject to certain leases which were in being and had not expired and all such leaseholders had to make good their claims.[7]

Charles McCarthy of Ballea now made good his claim to the lease which had caused such litigation in the previous century. He must have obtained the benefit of the favourable clauses in the Treaty of Limerick though he had been one of James II's chief officers in Co. Cork.[8] The lands comprised Gortdonoghmore, Killeenvarue, Cloghroe or Knockikereal, Cloghphilip, Coolflugh, Dromnebullogy, Ballymarteen, Coolecullig, Killicorney, Glanleagh, Knockirushelig (Russell Hill) Rahine and Kile, Knockapprehane, Ballycourneenig, Gurraneamuddagh, both Knockaneroes and Carrigeennebleask, all in Muskerry. The lease had been granted in 1677 by Helen dowager of Clancarty to Charles as the representative and next of kin to Charles oge, son of Cormac oge, son of Sir Cormac McTeige. The lease was for 99 years subject to a rent of £135 per annum. But the fee simple and inheritance of these lands was sold (subject to this lease) to James Askill of Dublin for £2,500 and Askill acted on behalf of a Cork merchant, William Worth.

A design to establish James III on the throne of England was reported this year by a spy and Colonel Charles McCarthy of Ballea is stated to have been one of those implicated.[9] Charles died in 1704 and the inscription of his tomb on the south side of where the high altar had been in Kilcrea

[7] The Lists of Claims entered at Chichester House before September 1700 and the Books of Postings and Sales of Forfeited Estates in Ireland (copies thereof) up to June 23 1703 are in the Library, U.C.C.

[8] Patent for King James II to Charles McCarthy of Ballea nominating him Marshall in and throughout Co. Cork by advice of Richard, Duke of Tyrconnell and nominating him to take information concerning all treasons, rebellions, murders, house-burnings, etc. . . . to examine witnesses and pronounce such judgment of death and execution according to martial law as the Articles of War and nature of the offence doth require. Given at Limerick 10 February 1690. (Caulfield Transcripts of Carrignavar Papers, U.C.C. He states that the Great Seal of Ireland was still dependent from the commission).

[9] *Calendar State Papers, Domestic.* Anne, 1703–2.

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Friary was noted by Dr Caulfield in 1868. 'Here lyes the Body of Colonell Charles McCartye of Ballea who died the 02 of May 1704.'[10]

Charles, eldest son to Charles of Ballea, inherited his father's lease and lived at Cloghroe. He seems to have been unmarried and made his will in 1720, constituting his brother Denis his heir. It is as well to publish it *in extenso*:

> In the name of God. Amen. I Charles McCarthy of Cloghroe, being weak in body but of perfect sense and memory, thank be to God, do make and ordain this my last will and testament. I commit my soul to Almighty God, my Saviour and Redeemer, by whose passion and merit I expect eternal salvation. My body I leave to be decently buried at the discretion of my executors, my lands, plate, jewels and all real and personal estate I bequeath to my dearly well beloved brother Denis McCarthy subject to the payment of these several legacies :—
>
> To my sister Margaret McCarthy £300 to be paid on her wedding day, and the legal interest in that sum to such time. To my loving sister Ellen Anketell £200. To my well beloved brother Alexander McCarthy £200. To my sister Mary (wife of) McCarthy Mor £50. To my sisters Catherine and Nellie McCarthy £200 each. To my uncle Teige McCarthy of Aglish £30. To my aunt Ellen Fitz Morris £8 a year during life. To my friend Mary Donovan also Thomolty £20. To my servant Darby Croneene £20. To his brother Teige Croneene £10. To Patrick Donovan £130 in consideration of the services he has done me. To Mary, wife of William Barry, Cork, £20 for the care she has given during my sickness. To Margaret Shipwith and Mary her daughter, £10 between them. To Father Florence McCarthy and Father Charles McCarthy £5 each and £10 to Timothy Kyste (Kyfe ?) To Piercy Donovan, Daniel McCarthy, Patrick Donovan and John Webb £5 each to buy mourning. The said John Webb at the expiration of his lease of Cloghphilip from me shall have the land for eight years longer at the present rent. The lands of Gortdonoghmore to be held by Daniel McCarthy, John Webb and Owen McCarthy from last May at rent of £130. I ordain that 300 Masses be said for my soul, and that my executors shall deposit certain money with Father Donogh McCarthy to be by him distributed. To Owen McCarthy £5 to buy mourning. I appoint my brother Denis my heir and sole executor.
>
> Signed Charles McCarthy. Witnesses, Paul Halluran, James Webb, Thos. Madden. Date, December 4, 1720.[11]

In the *Cork Newsletter*, 1723, appeared an advertisement for the letting of the lands of Cloghroe belonging to Denis McCarthy. They were situated about four miles westward of Cork, contained 706 acres good arable and fallow land fit for sheep, tillage or dairy, with excellent convenience for firing and water, were well sheltered and fenced with quick set and furze ditches. The dwelling house contained several rooms well wainscotted with a large stable, coach house, barn, brew-house, etc. There were several acres of orchards, a garden well enclosed, a tucking mill, all pleasantly situated.

[10] I do not think that Ballea castle was restored to the McCarthys after the Cromwellian usurpation. The Hodders seem to have continued in occupation. A medieval portcullis secured by chains through the wall still guards its portals. During the 18th century its owners caused a striking representation of the White Horse of Hanover to be painted on the face of a smooth precipice overlooking the Ownabue. It was renewed from time to time but has now become very faint.

[11] This will is taken from a transcript by John Windele in a volume entitled 'Manuscript Pedigrees. Chiefly related to Munster Families.' It was at one time in the possession of the late Charles Guilfoyle Doran, sometime President of the Supreme Council I.R.B. and is now in the Library, U.C.C. It would seem that the testator's father, Charles of Ballea, was married to a sister of Teige McCarthy of Aglish. Father Donogh McCarthy was Bishop of Cork. The testator's sister Mary was wife of McCarthy Mor, descended from Florence McCarthy Reagh and his wife Ellen, daughter of the last earl of Clancare of Elizabethan period.

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William Worth the Cork merchant who had purchased the fee of the Cloghroe estate sold same in 1715 to James Calwell and the latter in 1727 agreed to sell it to the lease-holder Denis McCarthy for £4,000. Portion of this sum was found through a marriage settlement executed on February 23, 1728 between Denis McCarthy of Cloghroe in the first part, Sir Richard Meade and the Hon. Lady Elizabeth Meade, widow and surviving executrix of the late Sir John Meade of the second part. Richard Ponsonby and William Galway of the third part, and Mary, daughter of Dame Elizabeth Meade of the fourth part, provided a settlement of £2,500 on the marriage of Denis McCarthy and Mary Meade. Another provision required Denis to convey the lands of Cloghroe, etc., in fee to Sir Richard Meade and Lady Elizabeth, subject to a 99 years lease to Ponsonby and Galway as trustees to ensure payment of debts, a fortune of £300 a year if Mary should become a widow, and a sum of £2,500 for the younger children who may be born of the marriage. Ponsonby and Galway had power to sell portion of the lands should necessity arise, and in 1730 sold Coolcollig to Christopher Swift. The debts were not paid when Denis died intestate in 1739. He was interred in the family tomb at Kilcrea, and the following inscription added to that which commemorated his father, Charles McCarthy of Ballea :

Here lyeth the body of Dennis McCarthy, Esq.
Who departed this life 02 April, 1739. Aged 45 ;
Let honour, value, merrite, justice, mourn
Cloghroe's McCarty, lifeless in this urn,
Let all distressed draw near and make their moan ;
Their patron lies, confined beneath this stone.

The story of the later McCarthys of Cloghroe may be told in another article.

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