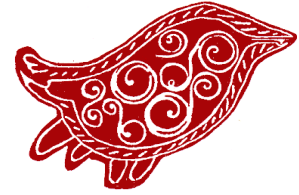


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## Rostellan Castle and its Owners.

Though Rostellan is one of the many historic places round Cork Harbour, situated at its eastern end, it has now become almost forgotten since communication by steamer ceased to Aghada, near the castle grounds.

For many centuries these grounds have been private property, occupying a little peninsula surrounded for the most part by the waters of the Harbour. Near its western shore stands the fine eighteenth century mansion known as Rostellan Castle, built upon the site of one of the old castles at one time so numerous in the County Cork. On its northern shore is still to be seen a relic of remote antiquity—a cromleach or dolmen, which usually marks the burial of some ancient and entirely forgotten Irish chieftain. This cromleach is submerged when high water occurs, indicating that the land here must have sunk since this monument was erected. From this cromleach, the late Canon Smiddy, P.P., Aghada, claims the name Rostellan to be derived—*Ross*, a headland, and *dallan*, a dolmen or cromlech.

Long before the Castle was erected, Rostellan formed a separate parish and was ravaged by the Danes in the ninth century, on their way for further prey at Cloyne. In the taxation of Pope Nicholas, 1299, Rostellan is named Roskelan, a parish in the Diocese of Cloyne.

After the Anglo-Norman Conquest of Ireland, all the lands near the East Ferry, inland to Cloyne, and seaward to Roche's Point and Poer Head, were owned principally by a junior branch of the Geraldines or Fitzgeralds. The Condons had first all Corkbeg, until they sold it to the Fitzgeralds, whilst the Roche's territory extended from Roche's Point to Poer or Powers Head, now known as Poor Head. Our local historian, Windele's, first record of Rostellan is that in 1565, Gerald Fitzjames Mac Sleyney, captain of his nation in Imokilly, sold it to John FitzEdmund Gerald; and that in 1608 King James I. granted the Castle, town and lands of Rosteilane to Sir John Fitzgerald of Cloyne, to hold it for ever. But his holding was a very brief one; for in 1645, Murrough O'Brien, Lord Inchiquin, captured it from its then occupant, a Mrs. Fitzgerald, and feasted his friends and followers with the beer and other good liquors with which the place was then plentifully supplied. Inchiquin's capture of Rostellan affords an additional proof of his utter want of principle, as his mother was one of the Fitzgeralds of Ballymaloe, between Rostellan and Cloyne, and he thus deprived his own kinsfolk of their rightful property. Inchiquin lost Rostellan for a short time when it was captured by Lord Castlehaven. But he obtained a form of grant of it in 1648, since when the Rostellan property was held by his line of descendants until so recently as 1855.

Murrough O'Brien's stormy career did not allow him to reside at Rostellan. He died September 9, 1674, at the early age of 49, and by his will was buried in St. Mary's Cathedral, Limerick, from which, as tradition relates, his remains were taken from that Cathedral and flung into the Shannon. He was first married to a daughter of Sir William St. Leger, Lord President of

Munster. Besides his eldest son and heir he left three daughters who were suitably married. He was the last Baron and first Earl of Inchiquin in the County Limerick. He was succeeded by his son, Sir William, the second Earl.

His son, William, as the third Earl, was succeeded by his son, William, the fourth Earl, who was succeeded by his nephew, Murrogh, as the fifth Earl and first Marquis of Thomond, who was succeeded by his nephew, William, the sixth Earl and second Marquis, who was succeeded by his uncle, James O'Brien, the seventh Earl of Inchiquin and third and last Marquis of Thomond, who died on the 3rd July, 1855, when the Earldom and Marquisate became extinct and with him ended the race of the execrable "Murrogh of the Burnings."

The title of Baron or Lord Inchiquin then devolved on the O'Briens of Dromoline, Co. Clare, and still exists, to which branch belonged William Smith O'Brien of '48 fame, whose daughter, the late Miss Charlotte O'Brien, was a gifted writer and inherited her father's patriotism.

Murrogh Lord Inchiquin's son and himself were one time captured by Algerian pirates, but were released through the intervention of the Cromwellian Government. The Lord Inchiquin, when Governor of the West Indies, died there.

From some rather interesting particulars as to the later Lords of Rostellan we learn that William, the fourth Earl of Inchiquin, wishing to build a new residence at Rostellan (the present Castle probably) near the site of the former graveyard, ordered the graves to be levelled and the grave stones thrown into the sea. For this order he was cursed by an old woman, who prophesied that no son of the family should succeed his father there. This Earl had four sons and four daughters. He lost his wife in 1757, and before her death, his four sons and three of his daughters died. The title and estates then passed to his nephew, Murrogh, who married the surviving daughter of his first cousin, and by her had but one daughter. He married secondly, a niece of the celebrated painter, Sir Joshua Reynolds. Murrogh's death was caused by being thrown from his horse in Grosvenor Square, London. He was created Marquis of Thomond in 1800 and was succeeded by his nephew, William, the second Marquis. He married a Miss Trotter, by whom he had four daughters but no son. On his death in 1846, he was succeeded by his brother, Admiral Lord James O'Brien, who, though three times married, left no children, and on his death in 1855, the Earldom of Inchiquin and Marquisate of Thomond, as already stated, became extinct.

When the Rostellan property was subsequently sold, it was purchased by a Doctor Wise, a Scotsman, who was said to have amassed a fortune in India. On his death he was succeeded by his nephew, who sold the property to the late Sir John Pope Hennessy, a brilliant Corkman, who had been Colonial Governor in the West Indies and then Hong Kong and the Mauritius. After his death, his widow continued to reside at Rostellan and married a Mr. Thackwell, son of General Thackwell, who resided near Aghada.

The last resident at Rostellan was Mr. C. J. Engledew, one time M.P., whose death took place at Glanmire in 1934. The O'Brien Coat of Arms formerly, if not still, stood prominently at the entrance to the present

Rostellan Castle. Some other legends relative to the place are given in Gibson's *History of Cork*.

The remains of such Castles as Ballymaloo, Shanagarry, Ightermuchty, Castle Richard, Ballintotir, Garryvoe, Coppingerstown, Ballycrenan, Imokilly and Corkbeg, all within twenty miles of Rostellan, recall the all but forgotten history of their former owners.

J. C. Q.

## Necrology.

JAMES M. BURKE, B.A., B.L., T.D.

We deeply regret the death of a distinguished contributor to the Journal, the late Mr. James M. Burke, B.A., B.L., T.D., who died on September 10th, 1936. He was eighth son of Mr. Patrick Burke, Skibbereen, and was born there in 1873. Following his preliminary education in that town, Mr. Burke entered Queen's College, Cork, and after a brilliant collegiate course, graduated as B.A., R.U.I. He subsequently read for the Irish Bar, to which he was admitted in 1900, having won the Brooke Scholarship, the Blue Riband of Irish Bar students, and joined the Munster Circuit of which he was a most distinguished member. He took a deep interest in public life and was for many years chairman of Skibbereen Urban and District Councils, Chairman of Cork Mental Hospital Committee, Member of Cork County Council, and one of the Governing Body University College, Cork.

In 1933 he was elected to Dáil Eireann, having headed the poll in his native constituency of West Cork.

As Editor of the *Cork Sun*, and subsequently of the *Southern Star*, he contributed many valuable articles dealing with the history of the Carberies and the eminent Irish families who formerly ruled over West Cork—the O'Driscolls, O'Mahonys, O'Donovans, McCarthys, etc. These articles were mainly based on original research work carried out in the Record Office and other centres in Dublin. To our Journal he contributed many valuable articles on the parish histories of West Cork and its numerous Castles and Abbeys.

His demise occurred after a short illness, and within a fortnight of that of his brother, Dr. Michael Burke, M.B., Skibbereen, whose death we also regret to record. He was a Member of this Society for many years and a beloved personality in his native district. We desire to extend the sincere sympathy of the Society to Mrs. J. M. Burke, Rev. J. Burke, P.P., Barryroe, Mr. W. J. Burke, U.D.C., Skibbereen, Misses Mary Margaret and Theresa Burke (brothers and sisters), and other relatives.

J. P. HAYES.

Mr. J. P. Hayes, whose death took place recently at Ballincranig, Ballygarvan, was a contributor of several valuable papers on local antiquities, published in the first series of our Journal, 1893-4.

His extensive knowledge of the De Courcey and Carberry districts reveals