Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society

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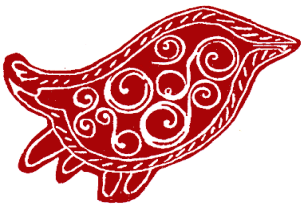

Title: An antiquary's note book 10

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Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society, 1988, Vol. 93, No 252, page(s) 60-65

Published by the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society

Digital file created: February 20, 2017

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An Antiquary's Note Book 10

By C.J.F. MacCARTHY

AN AUSTRALIAN-BORN PRESIDENT, JAMES GROVE WHITE (1852-1938)

Fifty years ago, after an eventful life in many fields of endeavour, a notable president of this Society passed away. Now that our centenary is near, the history of our Society should become of interest to all members. A paraphrase on a dictum of Macaulay could well be: 'A Society, whose members take no pride in the achievements of members in remote times, will never achieve anything to be remembered by their remote successors!'

A precis of his biography would read: Name: James Grove White. Born: Australia. Activities: In late nineteenth century fought in the British-Zulu war and commanded a formation at Mafeking. Service rank on retirement: Colonel. Married: Twice, his first wife († 1926) could claim kinship, however shadowy, with the family of the White Knight claimants. Non-career interests: Conducted a major survey of the field antiquities of large areas of north Cork; president Cork Historical and Archaeological Society, 1915-1938.

Major Hans T. Fell White was serving with his British Army formation in Australia, 'The Fighting Fortieth', now the Lancashire Regiment, when his eldest son, James, was born in Melbourne in 1852. Colonel James Grove White and his eldest son, Pierce, both served with their regiment — the Middlesex (Duke of Cambridge's Own) — during the Boer War. On the outbreak of the 1914-1918 war, the Colonel again 'took his sword down from the wall'.

He took an active interest in local affairs and became His Majesty's Deputy-Lieutenant and

High Sheriff (1910) for Co. Waterford; he was a JP and a member of Cork Co. Council, 1925-1928. In farming he was a much respected person and reputed to be 'the first to grow beet in north Cork'. Grove White founded and became an active member of Doneraile golf club and a patron of many local activities.

Many of the Colonel's later years were spent in Cyprus. On several of his visits to his Doneraile home, this writer and other members of the Society met him. We were impressed with his friendly charm and utter devotion to everything pertaining to local history and to this Society, of which he was a founder-member. I can recall the Colonel's attendance

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at a general meeting held in July 1934; this I think was his final contact with our members. Among those recorded as being present at the meeting was one 'J.P. O'Riordan' — later to be better known as 'Seán P.' — Professor Seán P. Ó Riordáin, one of the truly great figures in our Society and in Irish archaeology of this century.

Grove White's work in the fields of antiquities, history and genealogy is evidenced by his published works. The major portion of his papers (including unpublished material) is held by the PROI, Dublin[1]; there is also some material in the Genealogical Office, Dublin. The Cork Archives Institute holds Grove White family and estate papers, 1789-1870, also his published four-volume text: *Historical and Topographical Notes of Buttevant, etc.* This great work, bearing the author's autograph and dedication, was presented by the Colonel's youngest son, Lieut.-Col. Terence Grove White. It was originally published in this *Journal* over the years 1905-1926.

Around the time that the Colonel passed away, so also did many other members of his era, some of whom were our founding fathers, all of whom helped to maintain the Society's existence during the difficult decade to 1935. Many new members joined at that time and more than made up for the losses suffered; some of these are happily still with us to-day.

GEORGE BARRINGTON IN NEW SOUTH WALES

George Barrington was born in 1755 in Maynooth of a well-circumstanced family. He was a well-spoken young man and joined a company of players who wandered from place to place. To keep his colleagues in food, he eventually found he could be a successful 'dip'. Leaving the players, he and another well-bred rogue, John Price, preyed on racegoers all over south Munster in the early 1770s, amassing £1,000. Barrington spent the

winter in Cork living on his ill-gotten gains and enjoying the good food and contemporary amusements.

Eventually he wandered north and thence to England. Here he continued with his criminal career until he was taken, tried and convicted at the Old Bailey in the year 1790. He was sentenced to be transported to New South Wales, and before he left on his journey he published *The Genuine Life and Trial of George Barrington,* 48pp., printed by Robert Barker, London, 1790.

Barrington was duly transported in a convict ship to the penal colony, but he must have been determined that he would not pass out of public notice. He was successful with his next book, *A Voyage to New South Wales,* bearing the imprint: Cork, Printed by George Cherry, Circulating Library, St. Patrick's Street, 1801.[2]

There is little doubt that the public in these islands had at least a shrewd idea of the harsh treatment endured by the convicts. One of

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those who helped to enlighten the public was 'The Prince of Pickpockets, who left his country for his country's good'. Barrington graphically describes the brutalities inflicted on the convicts during the 200-odd days' voyage to the penal colony.

The value of this book lies in the almost scientific manner and restrained way in which the author clearly describes every detail of the working of the convict establishment. He names convicts sentenced to death for a variety of reasons, some still regarded as grave offences, others now regarded as misdemeanours. He tells who got the lash: 200, 500, 700 strokes, and for what offences. We are given details of a 1794 man-hunt after Irish convicts and he describes their capture:

> The wounded man died next day in hospital, and his companions after a severe flogging were sent to their respective gangs to labour with an iron on each leg.

Convicts who had completed their sentences and were staying in Australia could expect wages substantially in excess of those paid at home: tradesmen, per day five shillings (£0.25); labourers, per day three shillings. If wages were high, so was the price of imported English goods — profits of 100% to 200% could be realized. Tea was ten shillings a pound, American rum eighteen shillings a gallon.

In his book Barrington states that he rose to the post of Principal Superintendent of Convicts; that may have been so in 1801. When he died in 1804 he was stated to have been a Head Constable.

THE PRISON HULK *SURPRISE* IN CORK HARBOUR

'My husband John Burke is a convict on board the depot hulk Surprise, in the port of Cork, under sentence of seven years transportation'. So stated Catherine Burke of Castlebar, in a petition written from Cobh, 9 August 1836. She and her children asked that they be permitted to accompany the convict to the penal colony in New South Wales. Mrs Burke also referred to herself and her children 'being living for a considerable time on the bounty of the people of Cove'. In 1836 Cobh had been used as a departure port for transportees for 45 years and would continue so for another 16 years. The prison hulk was used from 1823 to 1838 (or thereabouts) to hold male convicts awaiting the transports for New South Wales. In 1835 some 1,500 prisoners from the *Surprise* faced an unpleasant 125-day sea-journey.

James Coleman of Cobh, writing in this *Journal,* 1893, referred to the hulk 'which several persons still living can remember'. 'Father Prout' mentions the hulk *Surprise* which was 'well-stocked with convicts' and moored off Carrigaloe, Great Island. I will leave the mooring-place for others to determine: 'near the town of Cobh', 'in the bay between Monkstown and Ringaskiddy' have both been mentioned to me. 'Father Prout' wrote:

> Of ships there's one fixt
> For lodging Convicts,
> A floating 'stone Jug'
> Of amazing bulk.
>
> The hake and the salmon,
> Playing at backgammon
> Swim for diversion
> All round the hulk.

An official report,[3] covering the years 1832-34, gives details concerning the hulk *Surprise*. The Inspector, Samuel Hollingsworth, resided at Cobh; the medical men are named, also two chaplains. The latter were Revd A.G.H. Hollingsworth, Monkstown, and Revd Thomas England, Passage West. Was this Inspector the 'Mr S. Hollingsworth', the largest contributor in 1831 to the building fund for the church of St John the Evangelist, Monkstown, of which the Revd Hollingsworth was the first vicar? Fr England, 1791-1847, was

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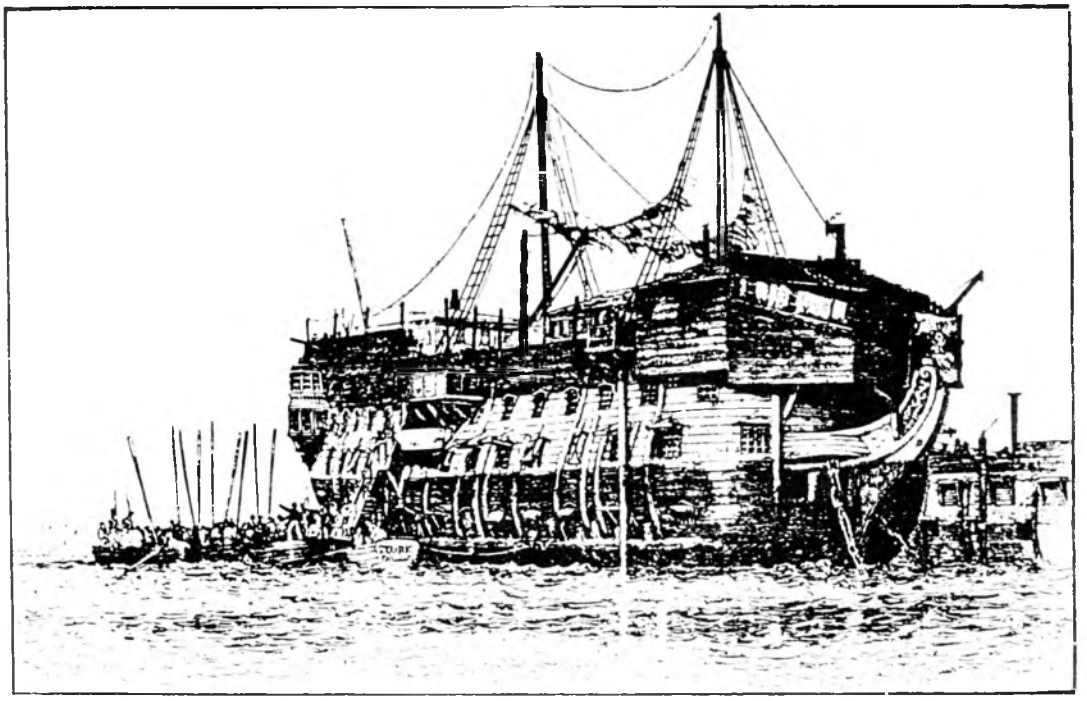

A PRISON HULK
Early in the last century there were prison hulks in the harbours of Cork and Dublin for convicts awaiting the Australian-bound transports.

described by Ullathorpe (1831) as 'the man who has done more than any other on this side of the world for convicts embarked for Australia'. During his 24 years as parish priest he became well-known as a biographer, and antiquary; Colman O Mahony in *The Maritime Gateway to Cork* (1986) recalls Fr England as a helper during the cholera epidemic, 1832, as an O'Connellite Repealer and as a staunch worker during the Famine.

During the period 1823-34, 5,968 convicts were lodged in the *Surprise*; of these nine out of ten went to New South Wales. The sources cited below give many statistical tables on transportees and other matters concerning those lodged in the hulk. It is clear from the 'crime figures' that rape was less than ½% of the crimes and that over half the transportees were sent away for 7 years. The ages of the convicts varied from the ten to fourteen age group to a handful of men over 70 years old transported for life. The daily meal allowances, covered breakfast and dinner: Sundays to Thursdays, 3⅛ pence; for the other two days, Friday and Saturday, this was reduced to 2½ pence.

Also detailed are the allowances made for the convicts' 'going away' outfits, the prescribed cost being: Males, 19s 2½d (£0.96) and Females (who would have come direct to the convict transport from the 'Penitential House in Cork city') 17s 1½d (£0.86). Though prison ships or hulks had passsed out of use by 1838, convict ships continued to leave Cork harbour, the last ship to do so being the *Rodney*. She sailed on 24 November 1852, bound for Hobart, Tasmania, known to all at one time as Van Diemen's Land.

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THE GOOLDS — BARONETS OF OLD COURT

One hundred and twenty-five years ago a young seaman abandoned his ship at Port Adelaide and travelled on to the northern areas of South Australia where he worked on the land. Later he became involved in railway and other construction works before finally settling in a small town, Gladstone, in the Flinders Range north of Adelaide.

The seaman was James Stephen Goold (25) grandson of Sir George Goold, Bt., of Old Court near Rochestown, now a city suburb. In 1893 James S. Goold succeeded as the fourth baronet and founded a new Goold dynasty in Australia.

The names (or initials) of earlier Goolds appear in the late medieval and other rolls of the mayoralty of Cork on some thirty occasions; they also appear among the fiants of Elizabeth I, and in sixteenth-century wills and burial notices. They are carved on mantelpieces, wall-tablets, tombstones and on at least one centuries-old chalice. The name of Anastasia Goold and her building of Monkstown castle for a song in 1636 is part of local folklore.

In 1571 Adam Goold in his will bequeathed to Christ Church the sum of five marks 'so that the olde Faith may be set up'. Christ Church would, however, continue as a place of Protestant worship until it passed to secular uses in 1979. Few Goolds appeared to have departed from 'the olde Faith'. During the last century three persons of that name held significant positions in the Catholic church: James, first archbishop of Melbourne; Angelina, superioress Presentation convent, Youghal, and Charlotte (grand-daughter of an earl) who was abbess, Roehampton convent, Wandsworth. The families of both James and Charlotte were Cork residents; Angelina, an heiress of great wealth, was born in Lisbon to a senior line of old Cork Goolds 'long eminent merchants in Lisbon, Oporto and the island of Madeira'.

From the late sixteenth century onwards various families of Goolds became established outside of the city area, notably in a line drawn from Mallow to Milford.

SIR GEORGE L. GOOLD (present and seventh baronet of Old Court, county Cork)

Michelle Julie, daughter of Sir George L. Goold, the present and seventh baronet, resided with her husband John O'Dwyer at Cloonmore within that area for some years until 1982. Mr and Mrs O'Dwyer and their children now live in Australia where also resides the present baronet, with his wife and family of four daughters and one son.

About two centuries ago George Goold, whose mother was a Hennessey of Ballymacmoy (with Nagle and O Phelan antecedents), acquired the lands of Old Court near Cork city in addition to other properties; in time the Goold suburban properties included Rochestown, Maryborough, Frankfield and Curraghconway. There were lands near Mallow and in the counties of Limerick and Tipperary. George's son, Francis, was created a baronet 'of Old Court, co. Cork'; on his death Francis'

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nephew, George, succeeded as the second baronet. George married Lady Charlotte Browne, daughter of the Earl of Kenmare, who brought to the Goolds the blood-line of the O Sullivan Mór of Dunkerron.

The sixth baronet worked as an engineer for the giant Broken Hill Associated Smelters; his father, a son of James Stephen, favoured a rural life, the rod and the gun. The present and seventh baronet, who has helped to prepare this note, now resides in retirement near Adelaide; he also followed his father's profession.

Caulfield (in 1861) wrote: 'of the numerous family of Goold no branch escaped the seventeenth century land forfeitures'. Then followed the Penal period, a difficult time for all adherents of the 'olde Faith' to survive: the Goolds were survivors.

A family history society to collect information for a history of the Cork Goolds (Goulds, Goulle, Gold, Gowles and other forms) is long overdue. For centuries their armorial bearings have borne the goldfinch, sometimes as a crest, sometimes three or more displayed on the shield; what is the story of the Goold goldfinch?

Not all Goolds were on the side of the angels; in that they are no different to other families. James, in 1575, had no hesitation in receiving the property of the Benedictines, Rosscarbery, but in 1621 John, a Fransciscan father, repaired the damaged buildings of Kilcrea friary. In 1909, Vere Thomas St Leger Goold died a convict in the penal colony on Devil's island; his grandmother, Lady Charlotte Goold, had been noted for her piety and religious devotion.[4]

NOTES

1 M 2601-2660 (Parish Registers and other material).

2 This text contains xii + 185. Barrington's other writings include: *The History of New South Wales*, London, 1802 and 1810, pp. 506; *An Account of a Voyage to New South Wales,* pub. Jones, London, 1803, pp. 50 + 472; it contains a number of illustrations, some in colour. Texts by other authors: *The Prince of Pickpockets,* by R.S. Lambert, London, 1930 and 1947; *Piccaroon,* by E. Dudley, London, 1952 and 1980.

3 Sources: *British Parliamentary Papers, H.C. 1835,* vol. xlv, 525, and *Crime and Punishment, Prisons (Reports from the Lords)*, vol. iv, 1835; the latter *BPP* give details of the regimen and conditions on prison hulks. *Convict System in Ireland and England*, a collection in NLI Dublin, shelf ref.P 476; *Transportation Ireland-Australia, 1798-1848,* ed. B. Mac Giolla Choille, 1983; *Haulbowline,* etc., by N. Brunicardi, 1982, pp. 42-44.

4 Letters Patent creating baronetcy — copy in the College of Heralds. Grant of confirmation of arms to Sir Francis Goold in 1801 — copy in Genealogical Office, Dublin. The Goold properties, including Old Court with its 'princely mansion', were sold in the courts in 1851 — for extensive details of the estate (in counties Cork, Limerick and Tipperary) see L E C R in PROI, Dublin — ref. Vol. 12 (Cork), item 16. For the Hennessys, Nagles and O Sullivan Mór, see Diarmuid Ó Murchadha, *Family Names of County Cork,* 1985. The 'princely mansion' at Old Court was probably built by Sir Francis Goold; a pamphlet containing his address on Catholic affairs was published in 1813 by John Connor. Barbara Goold (1783-1858) the last of the George's Quay family, founded the Cork Convent of Mercy.

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