

1st Viscount. The law officers acknowledged the claim and recommended that the attainder of 1692 be reversed. Garret died in the following year and the matter was not further pursued.

Sources — Lodge's Peerages Bourke's Extinct Peerages History and Antiquities of Kilkenny — Healy; Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin — Comerford; British Battles on Land and Sea — Grant; Irish Brigades in the Service of France— Callaghan; Dictionary of National Biography; Irish Swordsmen in France — Hayes.

## The Sullivans -- A Notable 19th Century Kilkenny Family

BY PETER SMITHWICK, K.M., SOLICITOR

The tradition of Kilkenny is that Sullivan's Brewery was founded in 1702. I have been unable to trace the Sullivans with certainty beyond William Sullivan, who died in 1818, and who was then at least 70 years of age, but I feel sure he was the grandson of Daniel Sullivan, a Protestant, who in the early eighteenth century bought property in trust for Piers Bryan of Jenkinstown, who was, of course a Catholic, and thus debarred from buying land.

In the Civil Survey of 1656, James Bryan, Piers Bryan's father, is recorded as the owner of a malthouse on the west side of High Street, standing backward in James's Street. I believe that this is the property which later became Sullivan's Brewery.

The mechanics of buying property in trust for Catholics were most involved. For example, in 1727, Daniel Sullivan bought some house property from the Earl of Arran, and 20 years later one Richard Swords brought proceedings in the Court of Exchequer as a Protestant informer to be declared the owner of this property. Piers Bryan was one of the defendants.

Richard Swords got a decree declaring him the owner and he transferred the rights under this decree to Edward Herbert.

In 1784 when the rigour of the Penal Laws had abated the Right Honourable Sophia Herbert, Edward Herbert's widow, transferred the property back to Piers Bryan's son, James, declaring in the deed by which she did so that the proceedings in the Court of Exchequer and subsequent transactions were all arranged in order to protect Piers Bryan against any real Protestant informer.

There were of course earlier Sullivans in Kilkenny. The *Liber Primus* records that in 1497 John Sullivan, was received as a fellow burgess, and also refers to William and Lawrence Sullivan, in the early 16th century. However no Sullivans appear in the Civil Survey or the 1661 Census so it would be rash to suppose that these 15th century Sullivans were ancestors. There is no family tradition to this effect. Our pedigree must therefore begin with William Sullivan who died in 1818.

#### *FREEMAN OF CITY*

He was a man of some considerable substance, and was clearly not a self-made man. He was admitted as a freeman of the city in 1812 and was thus one of the earliest Catholic Freemen. He took a leading part in the agitation for Catholic Emancipation from the early years of the 19th century, and his name often appears as a signatory to the requisitions for public meetings. These were known as "aggregate" meetings and were often held in the Black Abbey.

He was a founder of the Kilkenny Savings Bank in 1818, and he was also a Brewer, in partnership with a Mr. Loughnan, having bought James's Street Brewery from the Archdekin family in 1810. He died in March, 1818, as a result of a fall, and this is what the *Kilkenny Moderator* has to say of him:—"Died yesterday at his house in Coal Market, William Sullivan Esq., whose passage through life was without deviation from the path of integrity and honour. This justly respected and venerable citizen, whilst superintending some alterations being made in his premises met with a dangerous fall on Monday, March 9th from the effects of which, however he was apparently so far restored by Tuesday night as to give the most lively hopes of his recovery; but these hopes, alas! were soon disappointed.

### *ALARMING SYMPTOMS*

The accident had caused a concussion of the brain which yesterday morning produced alarming symptoms and notwithstanding the utmost medical skill and the soothing attentions of his family and friends he was removed from this transitory scene about noon on Wednesday to the inexpressible grief of his large family and to the deep, though unavailing regret of his numerous acquaintances, neighbours and friends."

The Catholic Curate of Castlecomer wrote a very quaintly phrased letter of sympathy to his son in which he recorded that he announced the deceased's death in the following words "You are also requested to pray for the repose of the soul of Mr. William Sullivan of Kilkenny, in whom the poor have certainly lost a friend, and the pious and well disposed an ornament and an example".

William Sullivan was married to a Miss Margaret Renehan of whom we know nothing much. By her he had three sons. The eldest Richard, who lived from 1797 to 1855, was a man of considerable local influence. He lived in Castle Bamford, a house now in ruins, and in Coal Market, or Parliament Street, in the house which was later the Civic Guard Station and is now owned by Mr. Shiels; though in 1846 he advertised Castle Bamford for letting. He was elected as a freeman of the city in 1819 and about 1828 or so he was elected a Common Councilman.

The Corporation was then a Tory stronghold which excluded my own ancestors from membership, so Mr. Sullivan's election was surprising. However, though he was a Repealer he was a man of moderate views and he seems to have been regarded as very fair-minded by all parties. In 1832 he proposed William Francis Finn for Parliament and in doing so he stated that he was in favour of Corporate Reform.

### *REPEALER CANDIDATE*

When his name was suggested as a Repealer candidate for the city in 1833 some of the O'Connellites objected that he was a member of the Corporation but nonetheless his nomination was put in and he was returned unopposed for the city. Two years later he had a dispute with O'Connell in Parliament and as a result his beer was boycotted in the county. However

they composed their differences and later O'Connell had occasion to be grateful for Sullivan's assistance.

Sullivan was clearly not very keen on his parliamentary duties and Colonel Pierce Butler, one of the members for the county, frequently had to arrange pairings and then write cancelling the pairings so arranged because he had not bothered to reply to the letters arranging them. And in the middle of the session Lord John Russell had to write particularly requesting his presence for a debate on the Municipal Corporations Bill, in which of course Richard Sullivan had a particular interest.

When in 1835 he was again returned unopposed Richard Sullivan was merely keeping warm a seat for O'Connell lest he should be unseated in Dublin. As it happened the deliberations of the parliamentary committee considering the question went on until May, 1836, and O'Connell said the matter was deliberately prolonged by the Tories to provoke him.

In the end he was unseated, and at a particularly crucial time so he wrote to Richard Sullivan; "My dear friend I am unseated that is I will be on Monday. On Tuesday you will return me. Tell the boys of Kilkenny that it is my firm intention as long as I remain in Parliament to solicit, and I hope retain, their suffrages, and theirs alone". Needless to say he did not adhere to his firm intention, and was elected to the next parliament for Dublin. He never represented the same constituency in two successive parliaments.

In 1837 Alderman Sullivan, who was by this time a Borough Magistrate, was elected Mayor. Uncharacteristically for the Sullivans, one would have thought, he disregarded the convention of giving a banquet on his election. No sooner had he been elected than he had to deal with a widespread agitation against the Corporation as then constituted. The Corporation (which did not govern Irishtown) then consisted of 18 Alderman and 36 Common Councilmen, who co-opted all new members, elected freemen (who had the parliamentary vote) and elected all the officers such as Mayor, Sheriffs, Coroners and Recorders.

These offices were quite lucrative. Complaints against this exclusive system were not new. In 1772 there appeared advertisements in Finn's Leinster Journal reading "Was not the estate of the Corporation of the City of Kilkenny granted by H.M. predecessors by H.M. to the Mayor and Citizens of the said

city and not to the Mayor, Aldermen, and Councilmen of the same? Ought not the surplus to be divided amongst the landlords, i.e. the poor tradesmen, inhabitants and citizens?"

This dispute had exploded again. The Liberal or Repealer faction, for in this dispute I think the terms were synonymous, complained that the Great Charter of 1609 vested the powers of government in the Mayor and Citizens at large. Certainly at no point in that Charter are Common Councilmen mentioned. By various bye-laws the first of which was passed in 1657 and the last in 1753 the powers of the Corporation became vested in the Mayor, Aldermen and Common Councilmen. This originally came about by the citizens at large being represented by their trade guilds of which there were four, the Masters of which sat with the Common Councilmen.

#### *FELL INTO DISUSE*

The guilds fell into disuse before 1750, and with them lapsed the citizens' rights. The Liberals now claimed that if the Freemen at large could enact bye-laws delegating their powers to the two Councils they could also repeal the bye-laws. Such a meeting of the citizens at large would require the Mayor's presence so they asked the Mayor to summon this meeting. After a month there was no reply and the Liberals sent a reminder.

Alderman Sullivan replied "I have in common with all the respectable individuals who signed the requisition an interest in effecting all necessary reforms in our Corporation, but in doing so you will agree with me that I am to exercise the functions of my office impartially and indifferently and with a view to the peace and prosperity of all the inhabitants". He therefore sought the opinion of Mr. David Pigott, Q.C., as to whether he should summon the meeting.

The Liberals were a little irritated at this delay, but the "Moderator" decided to treat "our worthy chief magistrate" to some words of advice. They began with a quotation from Horace which they freely translated. "Can you appease envy by a sacrifice of honour", and they imputed to the liberal citizens a desire merely to oust the Tories in order to seize the Corporate offices for themselves.

The editorial continued. "We therefore entertain a hope

that our worthy chief magistrate will act with the firmness becoming an honest man. We feel sure that in his own person the present Mayor of Kilkenny will never afford an illustration of the Roman maxim "keep no faith with heretics".

The Mayor was advised by the Counsel that he should call the required meeting. At these the freemen repealed the bye-laws. The Tories did not attend though they could have out-voted the liberals.

On Charter Day, June 25th, 1838 (the year Daniel O'Connell was expelled from the Grand Masonic Lodge of Ireland for similar activities) the Freemen forced their way into the Council Chamber in the Tholsel where the Aldermen and Corporation were electing a Mayor and Sheriffs. Alderman Sullivan persuaded the Freemen to be calm as he then retired with the Alderman to another chamber where they elected Thomas Pack as Mayor.

#### *ELECTION RATIFIED*

Then the Mayor returned and the Freemen elected him as Mayor for the ensuing year, with Edmund Smithwick and Thomas Hart, junior, as High Sheriffs. Both sides of the dispute appealed to the Privy Council to ratify their nominees, and the Council which included Sir Patrick Bellew later 1st Lord Bellew, rejected the Freemen's choice and ratified the election of Dr. Pack.

Eventually before the matter could go before the Queen's Bench a settlement was negotiated whereby the freemen would be allowed to elect all members of the Common Council in the future beginning with the nine vacancies. This compromise did not meet with the approval of the "Kilkenny Journal" who described the three liberals who were then elected (a Mr. Maher Edmond Smithwick and Michael Sullivan) as "a liberal, a neutral and a nondescript".

The other six elected were, to the disappointment of the Liberals, all Tories — and these were the only Tories nominated. They included John P. McCreery who was an ancestor of Mrs. Scott-Dove and of Mr. C. E. McCreery. Soon afterwards the Municipal Corporations Act came into effect and swept the old system away. In 1847 the new Corporation elected



Richard Sullivan as High Sheriff of the City, the first Catholic to hold that office for almost two centuries.

### *SOUP KITCHEN IN BREWERY*

In his private life Richard Sullivan was of course a Brewer. He also owned tanneries, flour mills and various warehouses. He was a substantial landowner, and I think the 1,200 acres which his son Francis owned were inherited from him. His brother Michael owned 4,800 acres. Richard Sullivan was a very charitable man and Carlyle in his "Irish Journey" notes that during the Famine in 1849 he set up a soup kitchen in his brewery.

He also sheltered there tenants of the Browne-Claytons of Browne's Hill when they were evicted for voting against their landlord's choice in an election in County Carlow. He contributed to all the local charities such as the quaintly named "Association for the Suppression of Mendicity" which makes poverty seem like a vice.

All the other enterprises with which provincial Ireland abounded — the starting of railways, canals to connect us to the sea, the building of Cathedrals and Churches, and the controlling of turn-pike roads merited his attention. He was naturally a frequent signatory to congratulatory addresses — to the Lord Lieutenant congratulating him on being Lord Lieutenant, to the Marquess of Ormonde felicitating him on his coming of age, or to an outgoing Mayor on discharging the functions of that important office with an excellence so unique that his respectable fellow citizens felt compelled to accord him honourable recognition in the advertisement columns of the "Moderator".

A fair example of this sort of address is provided by the following, which is dated 1821. "To the Worshipful the Mayor: It being presumed that the Earl of Ormonde is now on the way to the Castle of his ancestors, we, the undersigned request you will be pleased forthwith to call a meeting of the Inhabitants of Kilkenny to consider and determine upon the measures of public rejoicing most appropriate to so interesting an occasion".

Richard Sullivan's first wife was Miss Catherine Hackett, daughter of James Hackett of Cork, who was I think a distiller — I may be wrong — and who was an ancestor of Miss Florence

Hackett. By her he had two sons, William who died as a young man in 1849 and Richard, of whom I shall say more presently.

### *INVOLVED IN POLITICS*

Richard's brothers were also involved in politics. Michael, who lived at Lacken Hall was M.P. from 1847 to 1865. His wife, Miss Margaret Sabina Cormac, of the family of brewers and barristers was said by Burtchaell to be a great great granddaughter of Morgan Kavanagh, of Borris by his wife, Mary Morres of Castle-Morres. However the Mac Morrrough Kavanagh pedigree in Burke's Landed Gentry of Ireland, states that there was no male issue of this marriage. Richard's youngest brother James was Mayor in 1870. He never married, and as Michael had no children the next generation of Sullivan's are all Richard's children.

The eldest son, Richard, fearing for his health in this climate, emigrated to the then almost infant colony of New Zealand. He changed his name to O'Sullivan. Having run a school there for a time he became Clerk to the Provincial Legislature of Auckland, and later Secretary of the New Zealand Board of Education. In this position, and later as Inspector of Schools, he was the architect of the Common School system in Auckland, replacing the denominational system which had failed.

He also wrote a Manual for the use of teachers.

Richard Sullivan married secondly Miss Frances Byrne, who after his death ran his business and then became a Benedictine Nun, as Dame Mary Joseph, at Rossano near Florence.

The eldest son of Richard Sullivan, M.P.'s second marriage was John who was born in 1833 the year his father was first elected to parliament. Like so many of the family he became a Benedictine monk and was professed at Subiaco in Italy. After trying his hand at being Master of Novices there he decided to come back to these islands.

### *ENTERED A CONVENT*

His mother had entered a Benedictine Convent, having earlier run the Sullivan Brewery after her husband's death, and Dom Adalbert, as John was known in religion, brought her and one of his sisters, who was also in this Convent near Florence, back to England. There he founded a convent of Bened-



ictine Dames at Ramsgate and this convent is still in existence.

His next venture was a monastery and agricultural college at Leopardstown. I understand that there still is a tower at the racecourse which he built in 1875. Anyway two years later this enterprise went bankrupt, so he retired to England as Visitor or Provincial. After three years of that he set sail for New Zealand and was superior of a community there and also had charge of a parish at Auckland. After a few years of that he set off on a grand tour which took him to America and thence back to England where he lived at Buckfast Abbey.

He became chaplain at the convent at Newtown Abbot where several of his nieces and great-nieces were nuns, and as if he hadn't enough of the holy women in the convent he devoted his declining years to biographies of obscure female saints. He died in 1930, aged 98, so he was born in a year when Metternich was still one of Europe's leading statesman and died when Hitler was just about to assume power in Germany. One of Dom Adalbert's cousins who was a monk in his Leopardstown foundation, had been a soldier in the American Civil War before becoming a monk.

The next son of Richard, the member of Parliament, was Francis of Castle Bamford. He did not, so far as I know, engage in brewing. He was married to Miss Margaret Mulhallen of Baurnafea, and after he died in 1880 his widow and children went to live at Orchardton. One son, Richard, went to live in Canada where he worked as a confectioner, and died unmarried in 1956. The other son Edward died unmarried in London in 1950. The only daughter married a Canadian and her mother accompanied her to Canada with her worldly wealth in gold coins which she put in a purse and hung around her neck. Her daughter died giving birth to a child which also died. Then her husband died soon after, and so did Mrs. Sullivan.

#### *LIVED IN GREAT STATE*

The next of the sons of Richard Sullivan, M.P. was James Sullivan, of Lacken Hall, which he inherited from his uncle Michael. He lived there in great state, and he also kept a farm at Palmerstown, on the Bonnettstown Road, and a large stud farm at the Curragh.

He revived the old Kilkenny Races at Danesfort. These races had been very successful in the 1830's but in the next decade they died out. An account of James Sullivan's patronage of these races is given in the Journal of Arthur MacMahon, preserved in St. Kieran's College. MacMahon was a Vintner who lived in the old Sheaf Inn. He says that in 1874 Sullivan secured a lease of the racecourse. The stand was then in ruins and the old course was barely visible, but at a cost of about £1,000 it was put in order, and racing began there in October, 1847. Each year one meeting was held in October but sometimes two other meetings were held. The racecourse flourished until 1884.

Mr. Sullivan married in 1869 Miss Elizabeth O'Connell, daughter of John O'Connell, M.P. and grand-daughter of the Liberator. Of their children many Kilkenny people will remember Mr. James Sullivan, who now lives in Dublin, Mrs. Burden of Bellevue, and Miss Adelaide Sullivan who died a year or two ago.

#### *BREWERY WOUND UP*

After James Sullivan's death his brewery was run by a succession of managers, but without much success. In 1917 it was wound up and the brewery premises in James's Street were sold to E. Smithwick and Sons Limited. Among the assets was a brewery in Carrick-on-Suir which had belonged to a Mr. Richard Feehan. This brewery had folded up some years before because of the defalcations of a clerk, and Mr. Feehan had sold it to Sullivan's Brewery in exchange for some shares in that concern. He himself became Managing Director.

Disgruntled at being in two failures he appealed to the Sinn Fein Courts against Smithwicks and asked the court to order these grabbers to restore his Carrick brewery to him. He relied heavily on his mother being a sister of John Mandeville the Fenian Martyr. Needless to remark the Sinn Fein Court in Carrick dismissed his claim.

The last male descendant of this family is Mr. James O'Connell-Sullivan, who lives in Sandymount. There are of course many Sullivans in New Zealand and New Caledonia. In the female line the family is represented by Mrs. Anne Smithwick of Birchfield.