

The Bryan-Bellews of Jenkinstown and Bawnmore

By MRS. C. MURPHY

THERE are several opinions as to the origin of the Bryan family. Some hold that the family is of English descent, being descended from a family who lived near Seal, in Kent. There is a family tomb at Seal Church which has a magnificent Brass of the Bryan family, and commemorates Sir William Bryan who died in the year 1395, and a glass plate engraved with a representation of this was amongst the Bryan papers at Jenkinstown. The name Bryan is spelled the same and they bore the same arms. In support of this, Sir Francis Bryan, a prominent Courtier of Henry VIII (many times referred to by Francis Hackett in his book "Henry VIII") Lord Marshall and Chief Justice of Ireland, 1540. He married the widow of James IX, Earl of Ormonde (she afterwards married Lord Desmond).

Sir Francis Bryan "boasted a misty descent from Sir Guy de Brinne of Hazelbury Bryan in Dorset." Sir Guy died in 1390.

"In 1463 one reads (in the Bryan Papers) of Thomas Bryan, Seargeant at Law, afterwards raised to the Bench, made Chief Justice of common pleas 1471 and K.C.B. 1475. His daughter Mary married Sir Henry Guldeford, Comptroller to King Henry VIII, and he was probably an immediate ancestor of Sir Francis Bryan. During the life time of Sir Francis Bryan, Ludovic or Lewis Bryan was Seargeant (a Lawyer of the highest rank) to the X Earl of Ormonde."

There is a theory that Ludovic Bryan came to Ireland with Sir Francis and was a relative of his.

Ludovic received a grant of lands, Whiteswalls alias

Bawnmore, and Damagh, from Thomas X Earl of Ormonde.

Then there is the theory held by Canon Carrigan (Historian) that the name Bryan is of Irish origin and was originally Byrne, or O'Bryne. This theory is supported by several others, including Col. Dan Bryan of the Dunbell family, who contends that the Byrnes or Bryans, like the Sheas and Archdekins and others of Irish descent became ruling families in Kilkenny with their Norman neighbours, because of their services to the Earls of Ormonde.

It appears that there is more evidence in support of the Bryans being of Anglo-Norman descent.

Ludovic Bryan left six sons.

I. James, his heir, whose wardship was granted in 1568 to Henry Davells, gent. James died about 1574.

II. Barnaby, heir to his brother James.

III. John, who succeeded to Bawnmore.

IV. Gerald Fitz-Lewis Bryan. 1590.

V. Charles Fitz-Lewis Bryan, of "Whiteswood." 1597.

VI. Lewis Bryan Fitz-Lewis of Castlereogh.

John Bryan of Kilkenny, generally known as John Fitz-Lewis, was a Trustee, with others, to receive grants of land to the use of the Earl of Ormonde in 1604.

He left a daughter who married Gerald Fennell, M.D., a prominent member of the Confederated Catholics, 1642-1649, and two sons:—

I. James, his heir, who succeeded to Bawnmore.

II. Lewis of Kilkenny, living circa 1621, married Douglas, daughter of Henry Shee. They had two daughters and a son, John

With John begins the Jenkinstown descent. John was rated with ten shillings hearth-money for Jenkinstown in 1664. According to Bourke's "Landed Gentry 1886," he was younger brother of James Bryan of Bawnmore, and son of John Bryan son of Lewis who died in 1568. In that case he would have been uncle of John Bryan of Bawnmore, whom he calls his cousin in his will (proved 1671),

“to be interred in the monument of my ancesters at Kilkenny, in our Blessed Ladie’s Church there,” while he refers to John St. Leger and Luke Archer as his nephews. He married Anne, daughter and heir of Henry Stanes of Jenkinstown, whose wife was Anne Evellyn, of Godstown, Surrey.

Henry Stanes died at Jenkinstown in 1638 and was buried in St. Canice’s Cathedral. He was a Protestant, and in his will he disinherited his only child whose mother was a Catholic, “in case she continued with the Mass.” His wife, Anne, who was aunt of Sir John Evellyn, the diarist, is commemorated in the inscription on a fine silver chalice in St. Mary’s Cathedral, Kilkenny : “Pray for the soul of Anne Evellyn alias Stanes.” Anne Stanes, their daughter and heir, kept both the Faith and family property, notwithstanding the disinheriting clause in her father’s will.

John and Anne Bryan, of Jenkinstown, had two sons and two daughters — Mary, who married Walter Lawless of Talbot’s Inch, High Sheriff of Co. Kilkenny, in 1689; and Frances.

Their son, James, a student at Lincoln’s Inn, appointed an Alderman of Kilkenny by James II’s Charter of 1687, M.P. for that city, 1689, married Rose, younger daughter of Edward Rothe (one of the four Commissioners who negotiated the surrender of Kilkenny to Cromwell in 1650). Edward’s brother, John Rothe, resided in France during the Cromwellian occupation, and was employed by Queen Henrietta-Maria as a messenger to carry papers of “special trust” to the Duke of Ormonde. After the Restoration he returned to his property in Kilkenny. Edward was a grand-nephew of Bishop David Rothe. Rose Rothe was sister of Lieut-Gen. Michael Rothe, K.C., Col. of Rothe’s Regiment in the Irish Brigade in the French service. James Bryne’s will was proved in 1714.

James Bryan and his wife, Rose, left two sons :

Peter, of Jenkinstown, and Henry; also a daughter,

Catherine, who died in Kilkenny in 1770.

John Bryan of Jenkinstown and his cousin, John Bryan of Bawnmore, figured prominently in the activities of the Confederation of Kilkenny in 1642-1649. John of Jenkinstown became a Captain of the Confederates in 1642, and his property was consequently confiscated by Cromwell in 1652, after the death of Charles I. While John of Bawnmore was appointed a Commissioner for levying taxes, etc. Both managed to make peace with the Cromwellians and escaped transplantation. They later petitioned the Duke of Ormonde, on the restoration of Charles II, to have them fully restored to their estates, and when recommending their petition the Duke described them as "much persecuted by both the late usurpers and the Nuncio's Party at the Confederation." As if they had got the worst of both sides.

To go back to the Bryans of Bawnmore. James Fitz-John, who died 1629. By inquisition taken at Kilkenny 1630, he was found to have been seized of Bawnmore, Rathoagh, Rathbane and Philipstown, held of the King by Knight service, and a moiety of Bawnricken. He married Eleanor, daughter of Pierce Butler of Callan, Co. Kilkenny, and had five sons and four daughters.

I. John, his heir. II. Edmund.

III. Patrick, a barrister, one of the most distinguished and prominent of the Bryans. He was first a member of the Leinster, and later of the Supreme Council of the Confederation when it was controlled by Ormonde, whose lawyer he was. When the Duke of Ormonde was in France he was in charge of the Duke's most important correspondence, and he is said on one occasion to have written to the Duke, "If Henry IV thought Paris worth a Mass — you should consider Ireland also worth a Mass."

After the Restoration he was in London leading the case for the restoration of many prominent Irishmen to their property, and when he died suddenly apparently in 1663 many of their cases had to be adjourned. He is referred

to in the State Papers of the period as the noted and celebrated Lawyer. He married a daughter of James Dryland, of Kilberaghan, Co. Kilkenny.

John Bryan of Bawnmore (brother of the above mentioned James) was also a Captain in the Confederate Army. In 1641 the Castle of Castlecomer was besieged by Walter Butler of Paulstown, at the head of the O'Brennans and "many gentlemen of the old Anglo-Norman blood of Kilkenny." The garrison of the Castle sustained a siege of eighteen weeks. It finally surrendered to Capt. Bryan of Bawnmore, Capt. Edward Brennan and Capt. Purcell. On this occasion the O'Brennans protected Sir Christopher Wandesforde's wife and children, having conducted them safely to the English garrison at Ballinakill.

On the reduction of Ireland by Cromwell, John Bryan's estate in Co. Kilkenny, comprising 3,736 acres, was sequestered and he himself ordered to transplant to Connaught, but he returned at the Restoration and was in residence at Bawnmore in 1664. He died in 1674, and left by his will "to be buried in the Chancel of the Church of Eirk, which was built by my ancestors." He married first in 1634 Jane, daughter of Sir Thomas Loftus of Killyan, Co. Meath, by Ellen daughter of Robert Hartpole of Shrule, Queen's County. They had four sons and two daughters.

I. James, his heir.

II. Thomas of Ardragoole, Queen's Co. and Maynebeg, Co. Kilkenny. His will proved in 1700, stated that he was to be buried in the Church of Eirk. He married Elizabeth Archdeacon and had four sons, Edmond, Richard, John and James, and two daughters. Ellen married Pierce, Second Viscount Ikerrin, ancestor of the Earl of Carrick. His second daughter was Catherine.

John Bryan married secondly, in 1660, Ursula, daughter of Walter Walsh of Castle Howel, M.P. for Co. Kilkenny, 1639, by Lady Magdalan Sheffield, grand-daughter of

Edmund 3rd Lord Sheffield and 1st Earl of Mulgrave, K.C., and by her had three sons and two daughters.

I. Walter, attainted 1691.

II. Lewis.

III. Francis.

I. Elizabeth, married (1st) Oliver Grace of Shanganagh, M.P. for Ballinakill in 1689, Chief Remembrencer of the Exchequer (ancestor of Sir Percy Raymond Grace Bart.). She married (2nd) Edmund 6th Viscount Mountgarret.

II. Mary died 1682.

Ursula, widow of John Bryan, married secondly in 1676, Edmund Blanchville of Blanchvillestown, Co. Kilkenny, and by him had three daughters.

I. Margaret.

II. Anne, who married Walter Keally, M.D. and M.P. for Gowran, 1689, they had a daughter, Mariana.

III. Grace.

James Bryan of Bawnmore died 1696, having married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Popham of Devonshire, by whom he had five sons and four daughters. He was succeeded by his son, James Bryan, of Bawnmore, High Sheriff of Co. Kilkenny, in 1732; who died in 1740, when the representation of the family devolved upon his kinsman, Pierce Bryan of Jenkinstown, son of James Bryan and Rose Rothe.

Pierce married Jane, daughter of Lieut-Col. George Aylmer, of Lyons, Co. Kildare, by Mary, daughter of the Right Hon. Sir Valentine Brown Bart., 1st Viscount Kenmare, and had four sons and three daughters. His son, James, his heir, was of an eccentric disposition. He kept wild animals in the Park at Jenkinstown; he died unmarried in 1805, and was succeeded by his nephew, George Bryan, better known as Major Bryan.

In 1689, the Bryans, like all the other old Kilkenny families, supported the Jacobite cause as they had done at the time of the Confederation. The Duke of Ormonde's

Secretary, Col. Baxter, a Protestant, complains in a letter to the Duke of their activities: "My Lord's servants here are most of them in arms. Mr. James Bryan of Jankinstown hath by commission raised a troop of Horse. Mr. Valentine Smyth's eldest son who acts in the office now (Mr. Smyth was the Duke's agent) his father is the Cornet of the Regiment. Mr. James Shea, one of his Grace's collectors, is Quarter-Master, and his brother Patrick, who is a clerk and absent now; Mr. Smyth is in arms, and Michael Langton who supplies that place which I had lost in Kilkenny Castle, is likewise a trooper under the said Bryan, and it is very likely that his Grace's servants and collectors do the same in other places."

The Bryans, with many other Kilkennymen, figured prominently in the Jacobite war. James Bryan was attainted in 1691, with the following list of other Bryans: James Bryan, Alderman of Kilkenny City; Francis Bryan of Blanchvillestown; Walter Bryan, Bawnmore; Michael Bryan, Kells, Co. Kilkenny; Laurence Bryan of Ballagh, Erril, and John Bryan-Fitz-John, Brownstown. These men and their families could or should have been protected by the Treaty of Limerick. Subsequently, an informer tried to have Jenkinstown taken from the Bryans, but their old friend and benefactor, Lord Ormonde, saved their estates for them by claiming that they were his.

Pierce Bryan's second son of Jenkinstown, George, born 1720, married Catherine Xaveria, only child of Henry Byrne, of Oporto, by Catherine, daughter of James Eustace, of Yoemanstown, Co. Kildare. They had four sons:

Eustace, who died unmarried, and George, who succeeded his eccentric uncle, James. George was born at Devonshire Square, London, in 1770. Though born in England, he avowed before a public assembly in 1811 that his father, "a mear Irishman, to be sure," never let slip an opportunity of impressing purely Irish principles upon his mind. The Penal Laws sent him abroad for education. At the age of 14 he went to Liege and from there to

Strasburg, accompanied by his uncle, Aylmer Bryan, a Brig-Gen. in the French Service.

In the spring of 1792 he was in Paris and witnessed the beginning of the Revolution and saw the French King, Louis XVI, executed. Subsequently, he with a number of other high born, adventurous young men, commenced rescuing French aristocrats and conveying them out of France in the manner of "The Scarlet Pimpernel." While in Nancy he became friendly with the family of the Count de Rutant and formed a matrimonial alliance with one of his daughters, Agustine. Marie Louise de Rutant, a younger sister of Augustine's having been already executed while in Paris on a visit. George Bryan, having become "suspect," was arrested at Nancy by the Revolutionaries and he was imprisoned there for sixteen months. On being released, he smuggled Agustine out of France in his family travelling coach, a large plum coloured coach lined with white satin and bearing the Bryan coat of arms on the doors, in which he brought her home to Jenkinstown, having married her in London. This coach remained for many years in Jenkinstown and is still in existence in Dublin.

Nine months after his father's death he bought a commission in the Guards Regiment where he held the rank of Captain. In 1803 he got a hint that a "great personage" would not have a Catholic hold a Commission in the Guards. He accordingly retired, and in 1805 succeeded his uncle in Jenkinstown.

He found Ireland in a very depressed state and he resolved to help the Irish in every possible way. He became one of the Catholic Committee who addressed the Crown for the removal of the Duke of Richmond and his Chief Secretary, Wellesley Pole, some of who were prosecuted for doing so, but they were ably defended by Daniel O'Connell. Such men of the old Irish families came forward at this time to champion the down-trodden people, and by their efforts gained Catholic Emancipation.

Major Bryan gave a Fete at Jenkinstown about this time and Thomas Moore, who was a guest there, wrote "The Last Rose of Summer" and "Tho' Dark Are Our Sorrows," while at Jenkinstown.

Major George Bryan was J.P. D.L., High Sheriff of Co. Kilkenny 1830, M.P. for the county 1837-43.

He made an unsuccessful claim to the Barony of Slane, derived through his great-grandmother, the Hon. Alice Fleming, daughter of Lord Randal Slane, second wife of Sir George Byrne Bart. of Timogue and mother of Henry Byrne of Oporto, Portugle, whose only child, Catherine Xaveria, married George Bryan, and he was at considerable loss financially by the Law Suits.

Major George Bryan died in 1843, leaving one son, George, his heir, and a daughter, who married in 1817 Col. Sir John Milley Doyle, K.C.B., M.P. for Carlow.

George Bryan of Jenkinstown, born 1796, died 1848. High Sheriff of Co. Kilkenny, 1846. He married in 1820 Margaret daughter of William Talbot of Castle Talbot, Co. Wexford, and had a son and daughter.

George Leopold Bryan of Jenkinstown married in 1849 Lady Elizabeth Georgina, daughter of Francis Nathanil 2nd Marquess of Cunningham, K.P., and by her had daughter, Mary, who died unmarried, 1872.

II. Augusta Margaret Gwendaline, who married in 1853 Edward Joseph 2nd Lord Bellew, and had, with other children, a son :

The Hon. George Leopold Bryan of Jenkinstown, Yomanstown, Co. Kildare, and Grangegeeth, Co. Meath, who assumed the name Bryan in lieu of Bellew on succeeding to his uncle. He was born 1857 and was Capt. 10th Hussars, J.P., D.L., Co. Kilkenny. He was succeeded by his brother, the Hon. Richard Bryan-Bellew (4th son of Edward Joseph, 2nd Baron Bellew) of Mount Firoda, Castlecomer, and 45 Victoria Rd., Kensington, London, W.8. Born 1858, married firstly, Ada Kate, daughter of

Henry Parry Gilbey, of Stanstead, Essex, and by her (who died 1893 had issue :

I. Edward Henry 5th Baron Bellew, M.B.E. (1919), Capt., R.A.F., served in 1914-1918 war, born 1889, married 1912, Barbara Helen Mary, only daughter of Sir Henry Farnham Bourke, K.C.V.O., C.B., Garter King of Arms.

II. Bryan Bertram, M.C., Lieut., South Irish Horse, served in Great War 1915-16; born 1890, married 1918, Jeannie Ellen Agnes, only daughter of James O. Jemeson, and has issue

James Bryan, born 1920, married and has issue.

I. Gwendaline Ada, married 1916, Hugh Iloyd Thomas, C.V.O., 1st Secretary Diplomatic Service, eldest son of William Lloyd Thomas of Tredillion Park, Abergavenny.

II. Ada Kate, married firstly 1917, Charles Barry Domville of Loughlinstown, Co. Dublin; and secondly the Hon. Herbert Charles Alexander.

Mr. Richard Eustace Bellew married secondly in 1895, Gwendoline Marie Josephine, daughter of William Reginald Joseph Fitz Herbert Herbert-Huddleston of Clythe, and by her had issue.

III. Richard Courtenay, 2nd Lieut., Irish Guards, born 1898, died 1917, in action.

IV. George Rothe, Portcullis Pursuivant of Arms, 1922-26, Somerset Horse, from 1926; born 1899.

V. Patrick Herbert, born 1905.

So named since 1540, the original name being Carclach or Maighin. There are records of Tithes payable by William de Ruhull Senr. to St. John's Abbey, Kilkenny. At the suppression of the Monasteries the property was handed by King Henry VIII to the Corporation of Kilkenny, for which they have since been paid a regular head rent.

In 1452 Jenkinstown and neighbouring townlands were granted by Patric Fitz Fulco de la Frene, to Edmond Mac Richard Butler, grandfather of Pierce Rua 8th Earl of Ormonde, the head of whose house still receives the head rent therefrom.

Henry Stanes had much correspondence with Lady Elizabeth Preston who married the 1st Duke of Ormonde when he was Viscount Thurles. Henry Stanes may have been her secretary. She later built "the great house at Dunmore," Co. Kilkenny, which land adjoins Jenkinstown. It is likely that she and the Duke granted the lands of Jenkinstown to Henry Stanes, who was a Protestant and probably an Englishman. The Duke and Duchess of Ormonde were both Protestants, though coming from old Catholic families, but the fact that they were both reared in England may account for it. Jenkinstown House was built in the 19th century, a little to the West of an older residence which was nearer to the river Dinan. An inscription in Roman capitals could be read on the old Dinan Bridge near the east entrance, known as the Tower Gate, at Jenkinstown Demesne with the date 1647. The new bridge was built about a mile further south.

On the death of George Lord Bellew the family agreed that one residence in Ireland was enough, so they retained Barmeth Castle, Co. Louth, and disposed of Jenkinstown to the Irish Land Commission, who divided the lands in 1946. Jenkinstown House has been demolished with the exception of the family Chapel which was part of the house, and which is still used regularly for Catholic worship by the people of the locality.

ARMS—Gu. three lions passant or

CREST—Two lions, gambes gu supporting between them a sword erect
arg. pommel and hilt or

MOTTO—Fortis et fidelis.

The Jenkinstown Bridges

By TOM HOYNE

THREE bridges span the river Dinan in the neighbourhood of Jenkinstown, a notable concentration of engineering works in a small area.

The "old" Dinan bridge is that commonly known as the "Tower Bridge," taking its name from the nearby but now demolished Tower Lodge entrance to Jenkinstown demesne. But the bridge is much older than the tower. It is shown on the Down Survey map, circa 1653, when it