

The Genealogist.

THE BARONS OF THE NAAS.

In revising the text of *The Complete Peerage*, under "Ulster," I observed that, as in other works, no use had been made of the valuable charter evidence contained in "The Gormanston Register." A brief calendar of the contents of this most interesting volume was made by the late Sir J. T. Gilbert for the Royal Commission on Historical MSS., and printed in the Appendix to their Fourth Report (pp. 573—583). It is there explained that Lord Gormanston's ancestor

Sir Christopher Preston acquired the Barony of the Naas by his wife Elizabeth, daughter and heir of Lord (*sic*) William de Loundres. From these connexions, the title deeds of Sir Christopher Preston extended back to the period of the first Anglo-Norman settlement in Ireland, as the Barons of Naas and Athboy descended from Maurice Fitz Gerald's son, William, who married the sister of Richard Fitz Gislebert, styled "Strongbow." Through various ramifications, the Prestons were part inheritors also to the families of De Lasci, etc., etc.

Maurice Fitz Gerald, patriarch of the mighty house of that name, received from the Earl of Pembroke (Richard Fitz Gilbert), to bind him to his interest, the great barony of the Naas in Ophaley (containing according to Lynch, some 25,000 acres) in fee. Of this fact we have quadruple evidence. There is:—

(1) This statement by Giraldus:—

"primævo Mauricii filio Guillelmo comes Alinam filiam suam dedit uxorem. Ipsi quoque Mauricio, a Kambria in Hiberniam iterum ascito, medium Ophelani cantedum quem et antea regio dono possederat, cum Wikingelonensi castro in feodum donavit."¹

(2) The version of the same transaction in the curious Anglo-Norman poem:—

Le Nas donat le bon cuntur
Al fiz Geroud od tut le onur.
Co est la terre de Ofelan
Ki fud al traitur Mackelan.
Si li donat Winkinlo
Entre Bree e Arklo.²

(3) The actual charter of enfeoffment entered in the Gormanston Register (fo. 190 a):—

¹ *Expugnatio Hiberniæ* (Rolls), p. 214.

² Ed. Orpen, ll. 3088, et seq.

Carta comitis Ricardi Stranbow filii comitis Gisleberti facta Maricio Gerodd de Wykengel in Naas.¹

One cannot too strongly express regret that a charter of this importance and very early date (*circ.* 1174) was not printed *in extenso* when the report was made. A similar complaint, unfortunately, may in other instances be made against the reports of the Commission.

(4) The charter of confirmation by John, Lord of Ireland, to Maurice's son William, of which Lynch prints (from the Remembrancer's Roll of 20 Ed. IV at Dublin) a translation,² and which he assigns to 1185. It is there mentioned that the Barony of Naas was held of the Lord of Meath by the service of five knights. As for Wicklow, which was granted at the same time to Maurice, Giraldus tells us that (his *bête noire*) William Fitz Audelin made his sons give it up.

Whatever may have been pretended in the past, the words of Giraldus³ are absolutely decisive as to the *eldest* son of Maurice being William who succeeded in the Naas. He married, on the same authority, a daughter⁴ of Earl Richard, but (it is supposed) a natural daughter, as the Earl had only married the heiress of Leinster a few years before. But the interesting point is that William's successor David was the son, not of Alina, but of another wife. This is proved by a charter in the Gormanston Register headed "Convenciones dotis Mathilde de Ponte Arche matris David filii Willelmi, 11 Hen. III" (fo. 191 b). It is further proved by entries in the "Calendar of Documents relating to Ireland"⁵ that she had previously married Philip de Breouse, and that she survived both her husbands, of whom the second had died before 1 Sept. 1227. We can now attempt a pedigree of the barons.

Maurice Fitz Gerald, Baron of the Naas, enfeoffed
circ. 1174, "Dapifer" of St. David's.

(1) Alina "daughter" of Richard, Earl of Pembroke, mar. *circ.* 1174. = William Fitz Maurice, Baron of the Naas, eldest son, "Dapifer" of St. David's, dead ante Sept. 1227. (2) Matilda⁶ de Pont de l'Arche, widow of Philip de Braose, living Sept. 1227.

Matilda de Lacy, dau. of Hugh, Earl of Ulster, heiress of Carlingford and Margallion. = David Fitz William, Baron of the Naas, living 1256-7. Maurice Fitz William. Had Karnkyteland and Kyldromau from his father, living 1234. William Fitz William.

Matilda, heiress of the Naas and Carlingford. = John Butler ("pincerna"). William, living at a date between 1256 and 1280.

¹ An obvious error for "et Naas."

² Lynch's *Legal Institutions*, etc., p. 158. It is also entered in the Gormanston Register (fo. 190 b).

³ See above. *The Complete Peerage* (iii, 358), in error, makes Gerald "probably" the eldest son.

⁴ Not a "sister" as stated by Sir J. T. Gilbert above.

⁵ Vol. i, nos. 962, 1,551, 2,045.

⁶ Once called Eve.

Before proceeding further, we must deal with David's wife Matilda, daughter of the Earl of Ulster. The charters relating to her in the Gormanston Register are headed thus:—

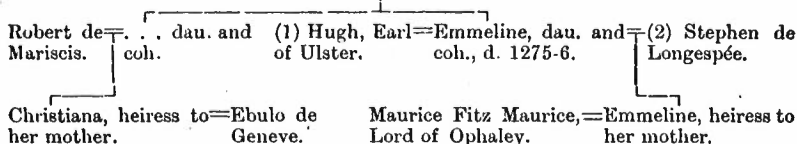
Carta Hugonis de Lascy facta Matilde in matrimonio cum David barone de Naas de Carlingford, Margaling, &c. (fo. 191 a).

Carta Matilde de Lascy filie Hugonis comitis Ultonie facta Matilde le Boteler filie sue domine de Karlingford (fo. 193 a).

Litera Matilde de Lascy facta tenentibus suis de Karlingford de attornatione facta Matilde le Boteler filie sue 8 Ed. I (fo. 193 b).

Here again it is tantalising to be given headings of these charters, of which the first, at least, ought to have been printed in full. The actual descent, however, is clear. Now, in the life of the Earl of Ulster in the "Dictionary of National Biography," Mr. Kingsford, its writer, makes no mention of any daughter Matilda, though he names other children. According to him, "Hugh married Emmeline (sometimes called Leceline), daughter of Walter de Ridelesford." This confusion of names having excited my suspicions, I went into the matter thoroughly, and discovered that the heirship of Walter was this:—

Walter de Ridelesford, Lord of Bray and of
Tristeldermot, living 1226.



The younger Emmeline being heiress to her mother,¹ it is obvious that the Earl of Ulster's daughter must have been the child of some other mother.

The clue we have to keep in sight is afforded by "Margaling," which formed part of that daughter's marriage-portion. This estate was what is now the Barony of Margallion, lying round the town of Nobber, in the north of Meath. Its native name was Machaire Gaileang, and it had been granted to Gilbert de Nangle (*de Angulo*) one of the *conquistadores*.

A Gilibert de Nangle en fin
Donat tut Makerigalin.²

According to the Dublin copy of the Annals of Inisfallen, Gilbert forfeited his lands in 1196, when they were seized by the King's Justiciar, Hamon de Valognes.³ Here the Gormanston Register comes to our assistance with a charter thus described:—

"Writ of Earl John, Lord of Ireland, to Hamon de Valognes, Justiciary of Ireland, notifying grant to Walter de Lacy of the land which Gilbert de Angulo held beyond the lake of Therbrun. Apud Vernolias (*sic*) xxij die —" (fo. 5 b).

¹ Document of 24 July 1276 ["Calendar" ii, 1249].

² Anglo-Norman poem, ll. 3142-3 (in Mr. Orpen's edition with its valuable notes).

³ Mr. Orpen's note.

We trace the land further by these two charters :—

“Carta Walteri de Lascy facta fratri suo Hugoni de Lascy de Rathtowcht, Mackergalling, etc., sicut Gilbertus de Angulo tenuit.”

“Confirmacio Johannis domini Hibernie facta Hugoni de Lascy de terris sibi datis per Willelmum¹ fratrem suum, 10 Ric. I” (fo. 188 b).

Hugh, thus obtaining “Margallion,” gave it in “maritagio,” as we have seen, to his daughter.

The matter, however, is further complicated by documents of May and June 1226, which enumerate Hugh de Lacy's possessions, and specify “Rathour and Le Nober, which he had in marriage with Leceline, his wife, of the fee of Nicholas de Verdun.”² For we have just seen Ratoath (“Rathour,” “Rathtowcht”) and Margallion (which included Nobber) given to Hugh, by his brother Walter. The tantalising omission, in the printed report, of the text of the charters in the Register prevents my settling this matter ; but as it contains, in close proximity to the above documents, “Indentura de maritagio Joseline filie Thome Verdoun et Hugonis Lascy” (fo. 189 b), and as Thomas de Verdon died in Ireland in 1199,³ I am tempted to suggest that this “Ioselina” de Verdon was identical with Leceline, wife of Hugh de Lacy, and was distinct from Emmeline de Riddlesford, who was subsequently his wife and widow. This suspicion becomes almost certainty when we discover that Thomas de Verdon's father Bertram (d. 1192) was the son of *Lesceline* de Clinton,⁴ who would thus have brought into the family this unusual name.⁵ If one had access to the text of the Register, it might enable one to discover whether, and how, Thomas de Verdon obtained possession of Ratoath and Nobber. A further problem is created by the fact that the Register of St. Thomas (Dublin) shews us Hugh de Lacy in possession of Dundalk, the Verdons' barony.

Emmeline, Hugh's widow, survived him many years. She was certainly living 18 May 1275 and dead 20 Feb. 1275/6. It seems probable that she died about the beginning of the latter year. She had been allowed her dower out of all Hugh's lands except the “comitatus” of Ulster, which was retained in the king's hands.⁶

The old belief that the Earldom of Ulster passed with Matilda, a daughter of Hugh, to Walter de Burgh, its next holder, is still found in Burke's *Peerage*, but was disposed of by Mr. Archer in his life of the latter, although he makes the unlucky slip of saying that “contemporary documents show that Walter de Laci's (*sic*) wife—the mother of Richard, his son, and successor in the Earldom of Ulster—was Avelina or Amelina,” etc.⁷ By “Laci's” he means Burgh's. And even

¹ So printed, but should obviously be “Walterum.”

² *Calendar of Documents relating to Ireland*, vol. i, nos. 1371, 1373, 1374, 1386. The Gormanston Register contains a charter granted by Hugh to his burgesses of Nobber. Cf. *Genealogist*, N.S., xiii, 241.

³ *Mon. Ang.*, v, 661.

⁴ Dugdale's *Baronage*, i, 471, 472.

⁵ According to Dugdale, however, Thomas' heir was his brother Nicholas, of whose “fee,” it was seen above, were Ratoath and Nobber.

⁶ Document of 16 May 1244 (*Calendar I*, 2663).

⁷ *Dictionary of National Biography*, vii, 329.

the suggestion that Walter de Burgh was a son of William "Fitz Aldelm," should not have been found in his article. I have fully disposed in *Feudal England* (p. 517-8) of this venerable error, which is part of the monstrous origin invented by genealogists for De Burgh. The lineal descent from Charlemagne, in the male line, will be found in Lodge's *Peerage of Ireland*,¹ and is one of the most audacious concoctions in the whole range of genealogy. I desire to call attention to the fact that on June 9 last there was sold at Sotheby's among the Phillipps' MSS. (lot 678):—

"Pedigree of the Antient and noble family of Burke, Bourke, De Burgh or de Burgho, Marquesses of Clanrickarde, etc., showing their descent from Charlemagne to the present time, compiled from the Records of Ireland, etc., by Sir William Betham, Ulster King of Arms."

N.B. The pedigrees in this volume are beautifully drawn up. At the end Sir W. Betham has added his seal of office certifying the pedigree as correct and registered in the Ulster Office.²

No fewer than *twelve* generations are here, I found, deliberately prefixed to the genuine Burgh pedigree. They are (1) Charlemagne, (2) Charles, Duke of Ingelheim, (3) "Rowland," (4) "Croise" or Godfrey [de Bouillon], (5) Baldwin, (6) Baldwin II, (7) John, Earl of Comyn, etc., (8) Harlowen, (9) Robert, Count of Mortain, (10) William, (11) Aldelm, (12) William Fitz Aldelm. One need only say that No. 4 was actually contemporary with No. 9, while Nos. 8, 9, and 10 had absolutely nothing to do, either with No. 7 or with Nos. 11 and 12. It is not, therefore, a question of a mere missing link, but of a gross and deliberate concoction with nothing even to suggest it.

I append the official certificate as a genealogical curiosity:—

To all and singular whom it may concern I Sir William Betham, Knight, Ulster King of Arms and Principal Herald of all Ireland, do by these presents certify publish and declare that the foregoing Pedigree of the antient noble and illustrious family of BURGO, DE BURGO, BOURKE, BURKE, and BURGH is compiled from Family Deeds, Wills, Public Records, and numerous original documents of unquestionable authority, and that the whole thereof is registered in the Archives of Ulster's Office of Arms and now extracted therefrom and carefully collated therewith. In Witness whereof I hereunto subscribe my name and title and affix my seal of office this sixth day of October in the First year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Fourth by the Grace of God etc., and in the year one thousand eight hundred and twenty.³

Even for the egregious Betham this was a strong measure. It ought to be compared with his audacious certificate that the equally baseless concoction which forms the Montmorency pedigree was "established on evidence of the most unquestionable authority, chiefly from the most ancient public records."⁴ It is a disgrace to the genealogy of the nineteenth century that an officer of Arms should have given an official status to these fictions.

The Barony of the Naas descended to De Loundres as follows:—

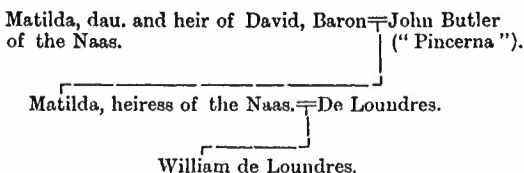
¹ Ed. Archdall (1789), i, 117—119.

² *Catalogue*, p. 91.

³ An official *fac-simile* of the impression of Ulster's seal is appended.

⁴ See *Feudal England*, p. 526.

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The evidence for this descent is found in these further deeds from the Gormanston Register :—

Carta David baronis de Naas de maritagio Joannis Pincerne cum Matilde filia sua (fo. 192 a).

Carta Matilde Butler facta Willelmo de London, filio et heredi Matilde filie sue, de Karlingford, etc., Dublin, 11 April, 32 Ed. I (fo. 193 b).

I shall not, however, pursue the pedigree beyond the Fitz Gerald barons. That which has been hitherto accepted is almost inconceivably erroneous :—

“William Fitzmaurice, Lord of Naas, whose dau. and h. Emma, m. David de Londres, in her right Lord of Naas, from which family it descended in moieties (through coheirs) to Preston and Barnewall.”¹

It has been assumed that the Fitz Gerald barons became extinct in the male line. In any case, the existence of David's two younger brothers is abundantly established by the deeds entered in the Gormanston Register.² The existence of David's son William is proved by a deed relating to the *dapiferatus* of St. David's, printed on p. 584 of Sir J. Gilbert's Report. But there is no evidence as to who was his mother.

These notes on one of the ancient Anglo-Hibernian families represented by Lord Gormanston, have been put together under pressure of time, and could not be perfected without the text of the documents entered in the Register. Now that attention has been called to their interest, it may be hoped that they will be printed, and further light thus thrown on an interesting, but obscure chapter in Irish history.

J. H. ROUND.

¹ The accepted version, as repeated in *Complete Peerage* (vol. i, p. xvii), which, however, is not directly concerned with mere feudal baronies.

² Maurice received from his father (fo. 211 a) the castle of “Karakitel,” near Limerick, with five knights' fees, which had been granted to the latter by King John 6 Sept. 1199 (fo. 210 a, and *Rotuli Chartarum* i, p. 19).