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## “SAFELY TO BANDON”

### — THE FATE OF THE PLANTERS IN CLONAKILTY IN 1641

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If Bandonbridge was the “beloved childe” of Sir Richard Boyle, later the great Earl of Cork, then his other progeny - including Clonakilty - were to a great degree the poor relations. Almost from the moment James I granted the charter to the town in 1613, Boyle grew increasingly disaffected with the town; even to-day the town’s coat of arms reflect this eventual disinterest in the town as they show a reversal of the arms of the Great Earl himself.<sup>1</sup> McCarthy-Morrogh in his excellent essay on the foundation of Bandon, (J.C.H.A.S. 1987)<sup>2</sup> shows us that the foundation of the two towns was quite different. Bandon, unlike the other town, was founded before the Earl took it “under his guidance”, yet it was Clonakilty which was much more under his control than his beloved Bandon.

Clonakilty’s charter was granted at a time of great political uncertainty. James I had no great love of parliaments and had only recently reconvened a parliament to get it to vote him more taxes and Boyle, always the opportunist, seized the moment to incorporate Cloghnikilty. McCarthy-Morrogh goes on to say ... *the timing of Boyle’s Bandon purchase might have vexed him in the years ahead, because he had not fully acquired the north town (of Bandon) before October 1612 when the type of corporations being awarded at the time was being determined. In contrast to Clonakilty, Lismore and Tallow, he was not appointed the Lord of the town in Bandon’s governing charter. In the three former towns, Boyle selected the chief officers and exercised a more pervasive control than over the independent body at Bandon*”. In Boyle’s great scheme of things, the western plantation (Cork to Clonakilty) was to centre around Bandonbridge and Enniskeane - and Clonakilty marked the outskirts of this Pale of English rule and government. Therefore, when trouble erupted and it frequently did, the English settlers had to run for dear life to Bandon or suffer defeat and death from the native Irish, and this is exactly what happened when the Irish rebelled in the Summer of 1641. However, what interests us here is the total dependence upon Bandon which was felt by the planters in the Clonakilty area, both for economic and protective purposes. Clonakilty, we must remember, did not have a permanent barracks until the 1790s when the French invasion loomed upon the Southern coast. Thus, for over one hundred and ninety years, Clonakilty had to look to Bandon for protection, which was never more needed than in the great Irish rebellion. Though the plantation colony at Clonakilty was small, for many of the colonists it still represented the whole focus of their life. For many it was to be a new start; many had invested their complete savings and left their families behind in England for good to come to a strange and - as they saw it - a barren country. Thus, the eruption of any rebellion and especially the Great Rebellion was to foretell a complete disaster to the colonists. The pain and the



WARNER'S LANE SCHOOL, c.1940. (Courtesy of Mr. Paddy Connolly)

Back, (l. to r.): James Cassels, Richd. Walsh, J.J. McCarthy, Fergus Crowley, Edwd. O'Driscoll, Seán Collins, Ml. O'Reilly, Teddy Twomey. Front: Ml. Cassels, John Boushel, Donie Connolly, Tom Ward, Denis O'Driscoll, John Joe O'Neill, Seán O'Brien, Frank Whooley, Laurence O'Leary, Vincent O'Connell.

deprivation which the rebellion wrought can be seen from the depositions which were filed afterwards claiming for losses in the uprising.

As Professor Nicholas Canny tells us in his excellent essay on the topic in "CORK: History & Society",<sup>3</sup> the depositions can tell us a great deal about the planter colony, the people themselves, and the planter psyche. However, as Canny goes on to say, these very valuable tools in the social history of Ireland have, unfortunately, been too long ignored both by the academic scholars and the general local historian.

Of the twenty-six deponents which came forward from the parish of Kilgarriffe,<sup>4</sup> almost all were from the town of Clonakilty which shows a sizeable English population there. Though the depositions show that the planters were widely spread throughout West and South Cork, they maintained frequent and close contacts with each other and with the home counties. For example, in Professor Canny's article, one Thomas Doggin (Duggan?) of Castlehaven revealed in his list of Protestant debtors: Thos. Numan (Baltimore), Henry Evers (Clonakilty), John Racklife (Castlehaven), Daniel Pool (Ballymodan) and Thos. Caple (Innishannon). By and large, the planters that Sir Richard Boyle brought from Somerset were all of the lower middle classes or skilled artisans. These were the type of people who could best make "a go of" a new start in Ireland. For many with ambition, the plantations in Ireland could turn the son of an artisan into a gentleman overnight - something which would take generations to do in England. One such case was Humfry Hunt of Clonakilty who went from being a malster to being a gentleman. Hunt was one of the shrewd planters who took the serious risk of having both Catholic and Protestant debtors as can be seen from his deposition and, with the exception of his Irish debtors, his business was spread across the plantations throughout West Cork. One of the few depositions which gives us concrete evidence as to the terror which the rebels brought to the planters is given in the deposition of one John Paddison (Kilgarriffe) who claimed that his brothers William and Robert and his sister Eleanor were stripped naked by one Teige O'Hea, a "householder" in the parish. Paddison had quite a substantial farm as he claimed for a loss of £46.10s. in corn which was housed; a further £18 for corn still in the ground and livestock to the value of £45.14s. The lists of the depositors, however, in themselves reveal little for the average historian but some of the entries bear special mention. One of the 26 entries, only one gentleman had the title of Esquire which obviously portrayed his heightened standing within the community; this gentleman was Walter Birde.

Bennett,<sup>5</sup> the historian of Bandon, tells us that Birde was one of the fortunate ones who escaped, carrying with him the charter and muniments of the town. Birde's position as Recorder of the town was followed in the following century by his grandson, Sir Richard Cox, later to become Lord Chancellor of Ireland. Indeed, Cox first began his career in the town under his uncle, John Birde, who was an attorney within the town. Cox was also educated at Clonakilty in the Grammar School there under Capt. David Barry.

Another depositor was James Dyer the vicar of the town who died in 1642. In the

depositions, he is styled "Clerke", late of Kilgarriffe, and lost chattels, etc. to the amount of £377 besides the loss of his prebend worth £60. Dyer, we are told, was a native of Exeter and was ordained there by the Bishop in 1607. Another of the depositors was one Ann Baker,<sup>6</sup> presumably some relation of John Baker who was the churchwarden at Kilgarriffe. Probably one of the finest memorials to the planter colony in Clonakilty is the little cup still in use in the parish (Kilgarriff) church in the town which dates from 1636 and records that Humphrey Jobson and John Baker were the churchwardens. One of the worst excesses of the rebellion is recorded on the 10th of February 1642 when forty-five inhabitants of the town were disarmed, robbed and stripped and left in the home of John Baker, by one Cornelius O'Crowley. Mr. Linscombe the Sovereign was less fortunate, however, having refused to leave his town with the rest of the population who were fleeing to Bandon; he chose to stay and for his bravery was rewarded by being hanged at his own door. Those remaining English settlers were confined to the Market House. Wm. Hull (son of the famous pirate Will Hull) who was later to become the Vicar of Clonakilty and a member of the town's Corporation records how his father, who had only recently built a new house for his family (1640) in Clonakilty, had to quit it and flee to Bandon. William himself who was living at his father's old house at Leamcon had, with his own family, to flee the area from the O'Mahonys who had previously owned the land. When they arrived in Clonakilty around Christmas (1642) they found that it was bitterly cold and had to struggle to protect themselves from the weather and the attacks of the Barrys, O'Crowleys, O'Mahonys and McCarthys.

The following February, Will wrote to Sir Richard Boyle<sup>7</sup> ... *Our fortifications at Clonakilty, so hindered by extreme weather that no one could work which made us quit the town.* The Rising continued throughout the summer of 1642 and the countryside along with the town was destroyed; the whole town of Clonakilty being destroyed at this time. Relief didn't follow until Ford Forbes landed at Kinsale and having marched to Bandon and being joined there by three Bandon companies they marched westwards to Clonakilty where they arrived on the 18th of October. They then continued to march onward to free Rathbarry and left two Scotch companies in the town. But soon after they had left the town the two companies were attacked and were cut to pieces. However, Capt. Robert Grove, who commanded the Bandon Company, retreated to an old "Danish fort" to the west of the town and maintained that until the rest of the Company came to his relief. Together, with the joint strength they fell upon the Irish, and marching through the town, they forced the Irish onto the Island of Inchydoney and upwards of 600 of the Irish were drowned. (Smith 1750).<sup>8</sup>

The English returned to Clonakilty in time enough to relieve a great number of men, women and children who were imprisoned in the market house in order to be burned by the Irish as a bonfire for joy of the early victory which they promised themselves over the rest of Lord Forbes' party.

Sir Richard Cox, that great son of Bandon, writing in his history of Ireland (1689) goes on to say ... *On July 1 Colonel Myn beat the Irish at the north side of Timoleague*

River (Arigadeen) and took the castles of Timoleague, Aghamilly (Ahamilla), Ross Carbery and Rathbarry but after the cessation he went with his regiment to England and was killed near Harpuny Fields in Gloucestershire.<sup>9</sup>

I hope by this short account of the part played by the citizens of Bandon in granting refuge to the fleeing citizens of Clonakilty in the great rebellion of 1641 to increase an awareness of the great debt both towns owe to those brave families from Somerset who chose to settle on the banks of the Bandon and the banks of the Feale almost four hundred years ago.

#### APPENDICES:

- (1) For a more detailed account of what befell Lord Forbes' army at Clonakilty in 1642, the 1893 Reprint of Smith's "History" is quite detailed, P. 81, Vol. 2 and at greater length in the Editor's notes pp. 152-3 in the same volume.
- (2) The J.C.H.A.S. has also throughout the years printed various different accounts including a reprint of the Journal of Arthur Freke at the time of the siege of Rathbarry and a letter from Rev. Urban Vigours to Rev. Henry Jones (J.C.H.A.S. 1896).

#### FOOTNOTES & BIBLIOGRAPHY

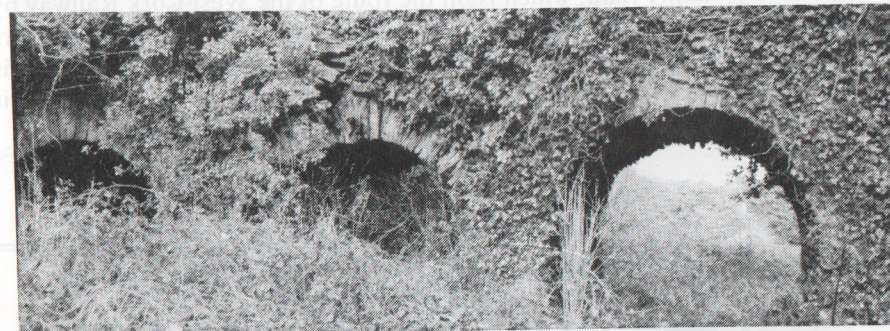
1. "Historical Walk of Clonakilty" - Tomás Tuipéar & Cumann Seanchais Cloich na Coilte. Clonakilty 1988.
2. "The Foundation of Bandon, Co. Cork". Dr. Michael McCarthy-Morrogh. Journal of the Cork Historical & Archaeological Society, 1987.
3. "Cork-History and Society". Geography Publication 1993. Patrick O'Flanagan & Cornelius G. Buttimer. (Ed.s)
4. Ms. depositions at Trinity College Dublin. Mss. 822.10 - 825.267.
5. "The History of Bandon and the Principal Towns in the West Riding", 1869, Bandon, George Bennett.
6. "Depositions". Ms. T.C.D. F.2.15.
7. "Sir Wm. Hull in Seventeenth Century Bandon", by Pamela Bradley, Bandon Historical Journal, No. . Quotes from the Lismore Papers at Chatsworth House, Vol. 22 141.
8. "The present and ancient state of the county of Corke". 1750. (Cork).
9. "History of Ireland", Sir Richard Cox, 1689, Bristol, Vol. 11; P113.



## POWER FROM THE LITTLE RIVER

by Paddy Connolly T.C.

The "Little River", as it was called by the first settlers in Bandon was later named the Bridewell from that establishment which was built on its southern bank between the present steps to St. Patrick's Church and P.J. O'Neill's public house c. 350 years ago. Of its streams and tributaries the three which flow down from Cashel Commons, Danganmore, and Knocknagallagh are regarded as forming the river where they meet at Knocknagarrane. It was here that George Allman decided to build his cotton mill in 1805. A weir was constructed and a pond formed south of the road to Milton House. A culvert under the road carried the water to a mill race cut through the field to the back of the mill. An aquaduct constructed on three arches carried it over the yard to discharge over a 40 ft. wheel rated at 60 Hp. Power was provided to drive 10,000 spindles and ancillary machinery. (See article in B.H. Journal No. 2 by L. Ó Donnachadha). The tail race from the front of the mill, cut through solid rock, carried the water back to the river opposite the entrance to Stone's of Roundhill, where a weir directed it through a culvert under the Timoleague road to another head race inside the eastern fence. This mill race followed the contour of the hill on through the grove of trees where its remains may still be seen.



Above: Arches supporting aquaduct at Overton. Below left: Axle of Mill Wheel, Overton. Right: Axle of Water Wheel at Overton showing outlet to the race.

