

**THE PAROCHIAL REGISTERS OF
SAINT GERMAIN-EN-LAYE, VOL.
1, 1689-1701: JACOBITE
EXTRACTS OF BIRTHS,
MARRIAGES AND DEATHS**

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The parochial registers of Saint Germain-en-Laye, Vol. 1, 1689-1701: Jacobite extracts of births, marriages and deaths by C. E. Lart

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JACOBITE EXTRACTS

FROM THE PAROCHIAL REGISTERS

OF ST. GERMAIN-EN-LAYE

THE PAROCHIAL REGISTERS
OF SAINT GERMAIN-EN-LAYE

OF BIRTHS MARRIAGES
AND DEATHS

with Notes and Appendices

EDITED BY
C. E. LART

VOLUME ONE

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INTRODUCTION

A lost cause has this privilege—its memory never dies. On the far horizon the great liners fare to their appointed ports, but in Time's quiet backwater lies the bark which never reached its desired haven. About its rotting timbers the water lilies grow: the storms and victories of Life pass it by. The red sun goes down in the gates of the West, transfiguring the cloud palaces into realities: the very faults and frailties of those who embarked their all in the Cause are transformed by its glamour into virtues. It has passed into the domain of legend and by its good deeds only is it remembered.

The scent of the heather still clings to the Registers of St.Germains: historic names flash from page to page, like a slant of sunshine across the glen. The yellow pages are the harvest of years that are dead, and tell of joys and high hopes, of sorrows and despairs,—their rustling is like the rain storm from the Atlantic beating on last year's dead leaves. Here is a page half filled with names which sound like a gust of wild music heard in the pauses of the wind: and there between two pencilled lines a child's laboured writing " Louise Marie "—*Serenissime Princesse*. Her brother too, the last hope of his race, signs from childhood to manhood: from year to year we see them grow in stature, until he comes no more: she comes until the tolling bell calls her away in earliest youth. Here signs Tyrconnell: Sarsfield Lucan there: The King and Queen, a crowd of gallants and Court beauties, the Highland chief, the soldier: and lesser folk in scratch wigs and well-worn common garb: the Dublin attorney: the barber, the groom, the starveling fiddler, the dominie: they come and go, and then return no more. No more for them the long sweep of the bog: the blue lift of the hills: the sun through the mist on Ben Alder: the whistle of the wind in the thin grass on Mimnoch, and the cry of the whaup under the broad silent heaven.

On the 6th January 1689, Queen Mary of Modena heard Mass in the Cathedral at Beauvais where she had stayed the previous night on her way to Paris. She came down the steps from the south door and entered her travelling carriage to start for the Palace of St.Germains, which the French king had given to James II. of England for their residence.

Even as the carriage was leaving the market place a courier arrived with the news that the King had landed safely in France, and was even then on his way to Paris, where he would meet her.¹

So they passed on their way, the Queen with the Duchess of Powis, the little Prince with his nurse. The berline swayed upon its leathern springs, rocking the child to sleep: not yet for him the charge at Malplaquet, the folly of Glenshiel, the long fatalities at Avignon and at Rome. Behind them, in many a shieling on Ben Mhor and in the glens of Arisaig, there lay other babes, warm in their mother's arms, who would die for this one at Sheriffmuir and Preston Pans: whose sons would die for his son upon Culloden's fatal moor. The child lay sleeping, a smile upon his tiny face: the Queen was smiling too, as she leaned back in her corner, with hope and thankfulness once more shining in her eyes.

Outside the dreary plains grew yet more dreary as the short day drew in, and the North Wind sang the mournful lament of the House of Stuart—"Ha till ma tulidh"—'we return no more.'

The sojourn of the Stuart Court at St.Germain-en-Laye, from January 1689 until the death of Queen Mary of Modena in 1719, has been fully treated of, so far as relates to the political and social history of the Court. The residue of Stuart papers at Versailles in the archives of the Department add little to published history, and consist chiefly of accounts, notes and memoranda, a few wills, and procès-verbal dealing with minor matters. The parochial registers, however, add considerably to the history of the colony, containing as they do the records of the Jacobite families during their sojourn there.

From 1689 to 1702 the registers shew an increasing number of entries, which keeps constant until 1708 when the Chevalier de St.George left St.Germains for Dunkirk and the campaign in Flanders, notwithstanding the fact that many had removed to Paris, where they appear to have mostly resided in the parish of St.Sulpice.

The colony became the headquarters of the Jacobites, and many families of the officers of the Irish Brigade settled there; and although very many Jacobite families resided in other towns in France, the majority are to be found at St.Germains. The Court itself attracted a large number of immigrants of all sorts and conditions of life: dancing masters, houndresses, barbers, wigmakers, gardeners, lackeys, and hangers-on,—besides the troops of the King's bodyguard,—all of whom lived in a state of miserable poverty.

Louis XIV had required a contingent of Irish troops from James, in return for those which he had sent to Ireland in 1690: viz. the Fimarçon regiment, 1000, mercenaries 2000: and 3000 from other regiments: in

¹ Archives Communales de Beauvais B1. 94. (1684-1700) Deliberations de la Commune.

all, four regiments under four colonels. On April 7th 1690 there embarked at Kinsale 5000 Irish troops in three regiments, who landed at Brest on 23rd April. These formed the nucleus of what afterwards became the Irish Brigade of 18,000 men.

The three regiments of Clare, Dillon and Mount-Cashell formed Mount-Cashell's Brigade. Soon after landing it was sent to Savoy, where it served under St. Ruth, afterwards commanding in Ireland, who was killed at Aughrim. The brigade was employed in crushing the Protestant revolt in Piedmont and Dauphiny, and afterwards in the Cevenol war of Protestant emancipation. 1702-1705. Its exploits in this campaign are not alluded to by O'Callaghan and O'Connor: but it earned a reputation for brutality and cruelty which contrasts unfavourably with its bravery and exploits in the Low Countries. To this day in the Cevennes "Irlandois" is a name of contempt and execration. The Duc de Berwick used to relate with emotion how one of the Huguenot regiments in British service, composed principally of refugees from Languedoc, under Lord Galway, Marquis de Ruvigny, during the Spanish campaign of 1713 found itself opposed to an Irish regiment. Both sides reserved their fire and engaged with the bayonet, fighting with such fury that only 300 survived out of 2000.

Mount Cashell's brigade was afterwards reinforced by Bolton's and Fielding's regiments.

After the treaty of Limerick in 1691, the remainder of the Irish troops of King James crossed over to France. King James left St. Germain for Vannes with the Duc de Berwick, and met the first contingent under Colonel Dominick Sheldon, and after forming them into regiments, returned on 11 January 1692. He again left and met the third contingent under Lucan at Brest.

It was not the first time that Brittany had been peacefully invaded by the Irish. In Elizabeth's reign many refugees from Ireland had sought shelter there. Early in the XVII century a large number landed on the Brittany coasts, and being without means of subsistence soon became a source of trouble and danger to the inhabitants.¹ In 1603 the procureur-general reported them as living by begging², and the local magistrates were ordered to report on their numbers and state.³ The immigration increased from year to year, aggravated by the fact that shipmasters transported them at a crown a head. A state of terror was kept up in the low lying districts near the sea, where they compelled the peasants to feed and lodge them, even evicting the lawful owners from their

¹ Archives du Parlement de Bretagne. Minutes de la Grand Chambre.

² Archives du Parlement. Registres secrets, 30 Août, 1603.

³ Archives de Fille-et-Vilaine, c. 2647, 12 Nov. 1607.

houses. A petition was accordingly presented to Parliament; an Edict was published forbidding anyone to import any Irish, and the ports were closed to them: those already in the country were driven to Roscoff and compelled to re-embark.

In spite of these measures another troop of 200 emigrants landed in 1622 near Losneven, and began to commit acts of pillage and violence. The procureur-general immediately took strong measures, and compelled them to leave the country within twenty-four hours, under pain of hanging.¹

In 1678 an Irish religious house was founded at Nantes, a port where trade with Ireland had always flourished, and was confirmed by Letters patent in 1765.

In 1698 Louis was obliged to curtail his military expenditure, and reduced the numbers of the Brigade. The disbanding of so many officers and men caused great misery, since they had no means of subsistence apart from their profession. The road between Paris and St. Germain was beset by robbers, and the town itself became almost uninhabitable, murders and crimes of violence being of daily occurrence. Among the papers at Versailles is a procès relating to the murder of a valet of Lord Galway, by two Irishmen, Muruhan and Welsh, whose names appear several times in the Registers. One Francis O'Neil and four other Irish soldiers were broken on the wheel in one day.

The condition of the poorer sort who were dependent on the Court, itself in needy circumstances, was miserable in the extreme, and the records are full of burials "par charité." The death rate among the children is specially noticeable.

The Quakers—"Trembleurs"—always constant in their loyalty to James II, followed him to France, and many of them appear in the Registers, but the lot of the Protestant Jacobites after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 was no better than that of the Roman Catholics in Ireland: it was in fact far worse, for they were in the midst of the most bitter persecution ever experienced by any religion in any age. During the first five years of the sojourn at St. Germain they seem to have enjoyed a measure of toleration within the precincts of the Vieux Chateau, but their very existence became an anomaly, and all who could returned to England.

"The ages to come will hardly believe that in England there should be found one single Protestant Jacobite at this time of day, and the reformed Nations abroad are at a loss what to make of that unaccountable species of men." James himself was not disposed to wreak on his Protestant subjects in France a revenge for the ill-treatment of the Irish

¹ Archives du Parlement de Bretagne. Minutes de la Grand Chambre.

Romanists by the English Government, but he had no power to claim protection for them against the laws, and the greatest pressure was brought to bear to force them to abjure. The Edict which revoked that of 1598 made existence impossible for them, since they were debarred from any trade by which they could live: they were forbidden to practice in any profession; the sick could not be visited by a doctor, nor could midwives attend women in confinement. All those who were able to leave France did so, but many of them had been outlawed, their estates confiscated, and were compelled to remain by sheer poverty. Neither rank nor wealth availed them, though there was little of the latter, for they had given their all to the Cause. Richard Ashton, Clerk of the Closet to Queen Mary of Modena, who had attended a meeting of Protestant Jacobites in 1690 and had been executed for his share in Lord Preston's plot, had left a widow who, after her husband's death, went to St. Germain in the hope of being received as a Woman of the Bedchamber. A few days after her arrival she was informed that no Protestant would be recommended. Being without any means of livelihood she fell into want and died from starvation, and her body was refused burial according to the savage laws in force even against the subjects of King James.

Lord Dunfermline himself, whose estates had been forfeited for his loyalty to the Stuart Cause, was buried secretly at night in the fields by his friends to avoid the last indignity of being drawn through the streets on a hurdle, and thrown on the town midden.

The wonder is that abjurations were so few, when life itself was to be purchased by abjuring, but many preferred to suffer the last extremity, although Dr. Gordon, a Scots Bishop, abjured in order to save himself from starving. It is probable that these things did not come to the ears of the King and Queen, hedged about with precautions by those of their own religion; the King himself spending his time in religious exercises, and the Queen ill disposed towards Protestants; while behind all was the malevolence of the French King and French clergy, bent on rooting out the last trace of Protestantism within their borders, and who held the little Court with its King and Queen, in the hollow of their hands.

If James had had any feeling of affection for his Protestant followers, who had given their all for a Catholic King, or any knowledge of their sufferings, these were obliterated by the irritation caused by the advice of the more far-seeing among his advisers, both Romanist and Protestant, —who saw that pressure was being brought by the French King and the more bigoted in the Jacobite Council to dismiss his Protestant followers both from the Council and the Court,—to put the whole conduct of his