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# **INTRODUCTION**

# **BATH AND BROWNLOW ESTATE PAPERS**

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# Bath and Brownlow Estate Papers (D4141, D1928 and D1928)

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## Summary

The Bath estate comprised roughly the eastern half of the barony of Farney, Co. Monaghan, almost the whole of which had been granted by Queen Elizabeth to Walter Deverux, 1st Earl of Essex, in 1575. In 1646, with the death of his grandson, the third Earl of Essex, the estate fell into co-heiress-ship between the Thynne family, Viscounts Weymouth and subsequently Marquesses of Bath, and the Shirley family (whose papers are separately noticed and bear the PRONI reference D3531). The Brownlow family came into possession, by 1690, of a large perpetuity-leasehold part of the estate.



## The Bath estate



Thomas Thynne,  
1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Weymouth

In his *Longleat: the Story of an English Country House* (London, 1978), David Burnett records (somewhat improbably, but on the evidence of the Bath estate archive): '... In 1694 a Polish baron had written to Thomas [Thynne, 1st Viscount Weymouth] asking if he could lease 4,000 acres and the Irish estate town of Carrickmacross in order to settle 200 Protestant families from Silesia. Thomas consented, but the agreement was cancelled when the baron announced his intention to demolish the town and rebuild it in the Polish style. ...

[Lord Weymouth] sent his Irish agent instructions for building the Viscount Weymouth Grammar School, Carrickmacross. "I intend the school house shall be slated and made a convenient house, which will draw scholars and benefit the town; therefore the timber must be oak." But Thomas was an absentee landlord, and ten years elapsed before he discovered that his agent has embezzled the building fund and repaired an existing building. The school was eventually built, and its syllabus, ... included "Oratory, Virtue, Surveying [and] Antiquities" ... . The stern language of ... [its] ninth statute [enjoined]: "The master shall make diligent enquiry after such as shall break, cut or deface or anywise abuse the desks, forms, walls or windows of this school, and shall always inflict open punishment on all such offenders". ... [See the description of the Shirley Papers on this web-site for further information about the Weymouth school; also the Armagh Diocesan Registry Papers, DIO4/8/11.]

In 1865, Alexander [Thynne, 3rd Marquess of Bath] decided to pay a brief visit to Carrickmacross ... . The visit had already been cancelled twice. The potato famine of the ... 1840s and the mass emigration that followed had not been forgotten ... and hostility towards absentee landlords further aggravated the situation. Before leaving Longleat, Alexander received a letter from his Irish agent warning him of the hazards that lay ahead: "Do what we may, and come what time you will, mud must and will be stirred up by the visit. It is very important to have as little of it as we can, otherwise there might be worse than mud thrown". Ten years earlier, the Thynnes' apparent indifference to the welfare of the tenantry had led to several cases of arson, in which buildings were burnt and machinery damaged. Alexander's agent advised him to be prepared for petitions, deputations and an endless recital of local grievances.

A supper for the farm labourers and a "hot beef and potato" meal for 200 paupers were arranged to coincide with his arrival. Carrickmacross was decorated with flags and bunting, and Alexander's coach escorted into town by a band. Soon after his arrival, he gave a dinner for 250 tenants, at which champagne and "four removes of the most recherché character" were served. In an after-dinner speech, he requested that a similar meal be given to the inmates of the workhouse, and offered to pay the trans-Atlantic passage of all those who worked on the estate and wished to emigrate to America. But the account of the dinner published in the local paper suggests that his agent stole much of the limelight. In an ebullient and lengthy speech, he listed the improvements initiated by "our Noble Benefactor", amongst which were "glass

windows that opened". ... It seems ... [that Lord Bath's] visit was a success. He stayed in Carrickmacross for a week, returning to Longleat with four pairs of fossilized elk antlers found in the local bog, and which still hang in the Great Hall. ...'



## **Bath estate papers at Longleat/in NLI**

The papers of the Bath estates are held at the seat of the Marquess of Bath at Longleat, Wiltshire. In 1964, the Bath Irish material was microfilmed by, and is now available in, the National Library of Ireland (NLI microfilm ref POS 5894).

In 1996, PRONI commissioned from Mr Sean Murphy, an historical consultant based in Greystones, Co. Wicklow, a report on the NLI microfilm as follows:

'Selected items of Irish interest in the Papers of the Marquess of Bath, at Longleat Estate Office, were microfilmed in 1964 for Dr Richard J. Hayes of the National Library of Ireland, apparently by a private agency. The material copied was in a box labelled 'B Irish', and in boxes numbered XXXI, XXXII, XXXIIIA XXXIIIB and XXXIV. The containers were filmed in reverse order, and a summary listing now follows. There were occasionally problems of legibility, particularly in the case of earlier items.

### **XXXIV**

'The Case of the Forfeited Estates in Ireland', c.1702, and some similar material of same date. Extracts from correspondence c.1699, Alderman Croft of Cork, Lord Weymouth, etc.

Report of Court for Forfeited Estates c.1700. Specimen of continuation of tenancy in Co. Meath 1700 (3 tenants listed). Memoranda, etc. c.1624-51 relating to Robert (Devereux), Earl of Essex and others. Indentures c.1618-37 relating to Robert, Earl of Essex and others.

### **XXXIIIB**

Tenants' petitions c.1702 to Lord Weymouth, Longleat, from Trim, Co. Meath. Indenture or grant of Gerald Fitzgerald, Earl of Kildare, 1570. Copy grant or patent of Elizabeth to Walter, Earl of Essex (Latin). Printed copy of 1662 Act of Settlement, 125 pages, with MS notes. Correspondence and memoranda c.1599-1633. A diary c.1691. Copy of New Rules 1672 of Lord Lieutenant Essex (Arthur Capel). Printed proposal, n.d. for printing Bible in Irish. Copy of 'A Letter to a Friend in Dublin 1687'.

### **XXXIIIA**

Accounts and other documents 1620s. Claim of Archbishop of Armagh against Earl of Essex c.1615.

### **XXXII**

Power of attorney 1674. Abstract of Lord Weymouth's estate, n.d. Rent roll of Lord Weymouth's estate, Co. Monaghan (Barony of Farney), 1732. Schedule of leases of Lord Weymouth's Irish estate c.1735. Indenture c.1727. Rentals of Lord Weymouth's, later Marquess of Bath's estate, Co. Monaghan, 1756, 1776, 1778-1810 (some years missing; 260 entries in 1810, total rent £12,962, terms of leases included). Valuation of Bath estate, Co. Monaghan, 1809. List of houses in Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan, 1809.

**XXXI**

Agents' accounts with Lord Weymouth, later Marquess of Bath, 1777-1808. Power of attorney 1802 to Mrs Harriet Steele, widow of agent Norman Steele, to collect rents for Marquess of Bath. Documents concerning crantage, weights, tolls, etc, correspondence and miscellaneous notes and accounts 1800s. Indentures 1787, 1788 and 1809.



**Box B, Irish**

Lists of leases, etc, Bath estate. Statement of disbursements 1889. Rental of Bath estate, Co. Monaghan, 1889, and sale accounts c.1888-90. Correspondence c.1780s-1830s. Report to Earl Fortescue concerning indigent portion of population on Co. Limerick estates, 1847, by J. Kennedy. Copy and original papers relating to Carrickmacross School 1711-, and a *Journal of the Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* article on the School by Michael Quane, 1956, on a privately printed (anti-Tenant Right) pamphlet, '*Tenant Right*' and '*Good Will*' within the Barony of Farney, Co. Monaghan (London, 1874), with an interesting historical account of Devereux/Essex connection, obviously written from estate papers (by Benjamin Bloomfield Trench perhaps?). Typed schedule of documents. Other miscellaneous material, including some correspondence 1730s-40s.

The reel concludes with a note apologising for the unavoidably poor quality of film of some documents.'



## **Papers (mainly 1868-1875) of the Bath estate agent, Benjamin Bloomfield Trench (D4141)**

In the absence of a major Bath estate archive in PRONI, it is fortunate that PRONI holds the papers of one Bath agent, B.B. Trench, which are by way of something of an apologia pro vita sua, or at least his version of his record as an agent, for a prospective employer. Trench's papers as Bath agent comprise 4 volumes and c.400 letters and papers, 1756, 1865 and 1868-1875.

Trench (1846-1926) was a versatile man of business (successively railway and quarries manager, land agent, stockbroker and company chairman), and since he was a younger son of a younger son of a younger son, he needed to be so because he had to make his own way in the world. In this respect, he resembled his much more celebrated cousin, William Steuart Trench, author of *Realities of Irish Life by W Steuart Trench, Land Agent in Ireland to [the] Marquess of Lansdowne, Marquess of Bath and Lord Digby, with illustrations by his Son, J Townsend Trench* (London, 1868), of which B.B. Trench's copy is inscribed 'from his affectionate friend and cousin, the author, 11 December 1868'. Both were members of the branch of the Trench family of which Lord Ashtown was the head, but the 'Ashtown' entry in Burke's *Peerage and Baronetage* is so long and bewilderingly complicated that their precise relationship is not easy to establish. In their correspondence, W. Steuart Trench writes to 'My dear Ben' and B.B. Trench to 'My dear Mr Trench', which suggests that their cousinage was somewhat remote, as well as reflecting the generation gap between them.



## Apologia pro vita sua

Shortly after he left the employment of the 4th Marquess of Bath in 1875, B.B. Trench, in the course of applying for another job, gave a useful résumé of his activities up to that date:

'I was educated at Eton. I then went to Maudsley & Fields and served my time there (3 years) as a mechanical engineer. I then went out to America, where I travelled for 2 or 3 months. I then [1868] returned to this country [Ireland] and went to my cousin, the late Mr W Steuart Trench, the author of the *Realities of Irish Life*, and served my time, about 2 years, in his land agency office at Carrickmacross. ... I was then [1872] offered by Lord Bath the agency of his Irish estate in the Co. Monaghan ... vacant by the death of W. Steuart Trench. ... at a salary of £800 a year, with free house, garden, etc (so good an offer that of course I could not decline it). ... I was for 2 years agent for Lord Bath, when, I believe, over-zeal on my part for his Lordship's interests led him to the conclusion that it was not desirable I should longer continue to represent him, owing to his not having sufficient confidence in my judgement; and this opinion, being confirmed by the advice of his friends, led to my dismissal. But at the same rime, Lord Bath is pleased to . . . " express my high sense of your personal character and my conviction of the zeal with which you have devoted yourself to the interests of the estate ...", while I am able to demonstrate by facts and figures that the material interest of his property were never more successfully looked after.'



John Thynne,  
4<sup>th</sup> Marquess of Bath

It was probably because Trench was preparing himself 'to demonstrate by facts and figures' how successful his management of the Bath estate had been that he removed from the estate office, known as 'Essex Castle', Carrickmacross, what must have been from the point of view of the subsequent management of the estate an inconveniently large amount of documentation.

This includes a stray lease of 1756, an important 'Comparative statement [of 1865] showing the several rentals of the Bath estate in the several years since William Steuart Trench Esq. was appointed the agent, viz. in 1851 [actually they go back to 1845]', and fairly extensive correspondence between Trench, on the one hand, and W Steuart Trench, Lord Bath and others on the other, 1868-1875. Perhaps the most important part of the archive is a bound 'Report, accounts, etc, 1 December 1872-28 February 1875', presented by B.B. Trench to Lord Bath under the headings 'Tithe rent charges', 'Farney Tenants' Defence Association', 'Finance', 'Annacroft Farm', 'Compensation on Surrender', 'Schedule of Exceptional Items', 'Law' and 'State of the Country'; together with a draft in B.B. Trench's handwriting of the same report, an undated and much rougher draft in his handwriting of another report, and a copy, with emendations, of his last report, 19 March 1875, made following Lord Bath's decision to dismiss him.



## **The Brownlow papers (D1928 and D4176)**

The main estate archive, 1610-1960, of the Brownlow family, Lords Lurgan (D1928) comprising c.500 volumes and c.5,000 documents, relates largely to the manors of Brownlowderry and Richmount in the Lurgan area of Co. Armagh, and only to a much lesser extent to the estate in the barony of Farney, Co. Monaghan. The smallish Co. Monaghan property was probably purchased in the late 17th century.

The papers of the Brownlow family documenting the estate in the barony of Farney are hard to quantify. They amount to c.500 documents and volumes, c.1750-1926. The Brownlow estate in Monaghan constituted a small and detached proportion of the overall family estates. *The Landowners of Ireland*, 1876 by U.H. Hussey de Burgh, lists William Brownlow, D.L. Co. Monaghan, Knapton House, Abbeyleix and 29 Merrion Square, Dublin as the owner of an estate in Co. Monaghan with an acreage of 2,959 and a valuation of £4,304.

There are only occasional references in D1928 to the Monaghan estate in the 18th century. The papers include: leasebooks and schedules of title deeds and leases, 1610, and rentals, rent rolls and rent day books from 1714, with some details of the Co. Monaghan estate to 1794. T2718 (now D1928/A/B/2) in particular contains other relevant information taken from the estate and household account book of William Brownlow, 1752-1754, including details of rents received from all estates, including Monaghan.



## The division of the Brownlow estates

In 1794, the Rt Hon. William Brownlow of Lurgan died, leaving the Farney estate with a then rental of £1,200 a year, to his second son, Charles. From 1794 therefore it ceases to be documented in the main estate archive, but in the papers of the Brownlow family of Ballywhite, Portaferry, the direct descendants of Charles Brownlow (D4176). It also becomes much better documented.

The papers include material on how the Monaghan estate at Coolderry, parish of Magheraclone, barony of Farney, came into the family. This originated in 1618 when the Essex estate granted the ballybetagh of Balledomenor in perpetuity, to John Hads(z)or of Co. Louth, as the 'Manor of Moymuck'. This in turn became known as Hadsor's Fee Farm, a district of 19 townlands in upper Magheraclone parish, constituting 2,900 acres.

A letter of 2 September 1892 from Richard S. Reeves, S.S. & E. Reeves & Sons, 51 Merrion Square East, Dublin, to Colonel [W.V.] Brownlow, Boughton Hall, Chester, gives the history:

'I have had a search made in the Registry [of Deeds] from its opening, 1708, but have not found anything to show how the Monaghan estate came into your family. There are plenty of dealings [?with] estates by the family from that date. William Brownlow of Brownlowderry made his will dated 18 January 1732, registered 11 September 1737, by which he leaves his estates, including Monaghan estate, to his eldest son, William, afterwards the Rt Hon. William Brownlow. The latter made his will dated 19 April 1791 and it is under this will your branch of the family takes the estate. ...

I am sorry to say we have not been able to find the grants either from Lord Bath or Mr Shirley under which the estate is held, but in my opinion your title to the estate is perfectly good and one which you could sell under ... All you really require are copies of the fee farm grants under which you pay the rents to Lord Bath and Mr Shirley. These grants may have been made before the Registry Act.'

The papers also include a bundle of title deeds and deeds of settlement, 1754-1835, affecting the Brownlow estate in Monaghan or making provision for the younger children of the Rt Hon. William Brownlow. One of these, dated 31 December 1801, describes the components of the estate as:

'All that and those the town and lands of the five tates of Tullyallon, Derry, Carricknegodue, Traghoe, five tates of Makerran, three tates of Carrickashedoge, Mullaghore, Tormiske, two tates Mullaghterry, Milough, tate of Mahernictogh, Liscarman, four tates Drumberry, Killnaligg, Fanaseshe, Corcreagh, Kiltaske and Mullaghterber, situate, lying and being in the barony of Farney and county of Monaghan.'



## **Brownlow estate and other Browlow papers from 1850**

Other papers of this branch of the Brownlow family include: an envelope, 1881-1908, containing c.10 commissions and related documents, all concerning the military career of General W.V. Brownlow, second son of the marriage in 1835 of William and Charlotte Brownlow: a valuation, 1881 and N.D., of the silver, silver plate, china, etc. of William Brownlow (d.1881), and list of china and silver in the Brownlow townhouse in Merrion Square, Dublin; rentals, 1907-1908 and 1911-1917, of the Monaghan estate of General W.V. Brownlow (which he had inherited on his father's death in 1881, because his elder brother had been killed in action in the previous year). The gross rental in 1908 was £1,797. The townlands in that year are given as Derry and Carricknagoon, Carrickashedog, Drumboory, Feahoe, Killark, 'Halftate & C'shedog', Liscarnon, Mullyorr, Moylough, Mullalaverty, Mahernacloy, Tomiska, Tullyallen, Mullalustra, Leons Beg and Mokieran.

There is also an envelope of letters, newspaper cuttings and other papers of General W.V. Brownlow, 1915, about the 'Feahoe disturbances', an outbreak of violence on the Monaghan estate which the local priest, Father A.J. Maguire, claimed had 'come ... into existence, not as the result of the initiative on the part of any organisation in the district, but ... [from] the widespread - I might say universal - feeling of indignation of the people at Mr Babington's getting possession of the farms of tenants who through misfortune were unable to continue farming'. Finally, a bundle of miscellaneous estate and business correspondence, 1915-1925, of General W.V. Brownlow, includes a letter of 1925 concerning the future financing of the united parish of Magheraclone and Ardagh, Co. Monaghan.



## **The Shirley estate**

Much fuller PRONI documentation of the Essex/Bath/Shirley estate will be found under [Shirley](#).

