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# **INTRODUCTION**

# **LEINSTER PAPERS**

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# Leinster Papers (D3078)

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## Summary



*1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Leinster*

PRONI's holdings of Leinster Papers comprise 28 volumes and c.1800 documents deriving from the Fitzgerald family of Maynooth Castle and Carton, Co. Kildare, Earls of Kildare and Dukes of Leinster, 1250-1949, and relating to the province of Leinster in general and to Co. Kildare in particular, with some material concerning the family's Co. Down estate which at one time embraced the whole barony of Lecale. Up to the early 19th century, the papers relate almost exclusively to the family's estates in Ireland and to the municipal affairs of the boroughs of Harristown and Athy, Co. Kildare. Thereafter, the bulk of the papers consist of personal, political and business correspondence, 1809-1874, of the 3rd Duke of Leinster, leader of the Irish Whigs.

(Also available on microfilm under MIC541.)



## **Background: Family History**

A convenient source of background information about the Leinster family and archive is the 'Authorities' section of Donough Bryan's *Gerald Fitzgerald, the Great [8th] Earl of Kildare (1456-1513)*, published in Dublin in 1933 and describing the situation prior to the dispersal of many of the contents of Carton, Maynooth, the Leinster family's seat, in the late 1940s:

'The natural starting point for any study on an Earl of Kildare is *The Earls of Kildare*. This gives an account of the House of Kildare from 1057 to the end of the eighteenth century. It was written by the Marquess of Kildare (Charles William, [4th] Duke of Leinster); printed for private circulation in 1857; and published in 1858. An *Addenda* to it, largely consisting of transcripts of original letters, was published in 1862, and a *Second Addenda* in 1872. Although this triple work is of great assistance it contains many inaccuracies, for instance the dating of letters, and therefore its statements have to be carefully checked. ... The Great Earl's "Red Book" of 1503 and the ... "Rental" of 1518 ... [arc (1933)] at Carton and ... at the British Museum among the Harleian collection [respectively]. The Rental deals with an aspect of the Kildare power which ... is most important. Two accounts of the Rental have been published. The first is by H.F. Hore. This may be found in the *Journal of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society*, 1858-1859, pp. 266-280, and 301-310 (except for the last two pages this is merely introductory); 1862-1863, pp. 110-137; 1864-1865, pp. 501-518 and 525-546. So far as it goes this is the most fully annotated account of the Rental, but it is not complete, for Hore died before he had finished it. Accordingly it says nothing of the gifts of horses and of armour. In the *Ninth Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, Part ii*, 1884, pp. 263-293, an account of the whole of the Rental will be found in the report by Gilbert on the MSS of the Duke of Leinster. Gilbert deals not only with the Rental but with the Red Book and with other unpublished MSS at Carton. His report is not exhaustive. ...



## The fragmented Leinster archive

None of these original letters or volumes is present among the Leinster Papers in PRONI, although the 'Red Book' and 'Rental' are represented by non-contemporary copies (D3078/1/2 and D3078/2/2/1). The former was published by the Irish Manuscripts Commission in 1964, under the editorship of Dr G. MacNiocaill, but on the basis of a somewhat unsatisfactory photostat copy in the National Library of Ireland (MS 5769). In 1984 the original became available to scholars, having been purchased from the 8th Duke of Leinster by the Library of Trinity College, Dublin.

Apart from TCD and PRONI, the Irish repository holding a major (probably *the* major) part of the Leinster archive is the National Library in Dublin (MSS 606-631, 13,022, 19,905-19,923, 22,500-22,531 and much else besides). The correspondence of Emily, Duchess of Leinster (wife of the 1st Duke) was published in Brian Fitzgerald (ed.), *The Correspondence of Emily, Duchess of Leinster, 1731-1814* (3 vols, Dublin [Irish Manuscripts Commission], 1949-1957). A typescript of all the material destined for an unpublished vol. iv will be found at NLI MS, 13022 above. The same author's *Emily, Duchess of Leinster, 1731-1814 ...* (London, 1949) and *The Geraldines: an Experiment in Irish Government* (London, 1951) are further useful secondary sources on the history of the Leinster family, and having been published subsequently to Donough Bryan's *Great Earl* are not included among his 'Authorities'.



*Duchess of Leinster in  
later life*



## The papers

The title deeds, leases, etc, c.1250-1949, in the PRONI Leinster archive include: three volumes of 17th century transcripts of pedigrees and deeds of the Fitzgerald family, Earls of Kildare, late 14th century to 1633; schedules and calendars of deeds and other documents with related historical notes and compilations, 1787-c.1930; title deeds, leases, legal papers etc, relating to the estates in Co. Kildare and elsewhere, including the Dominican friary of Athy and various manors and towns in Co. Kildare, lands in Co. Westmeath, 1391-1771, in Co. Meath, 13th century to 1701, in Cos Roscommon and Leitrim acquired through the 2nd Duke of Leinster's marriage (in 1775) to the daughter and co-heiress of Lord St George, 1613-1782, in Co. Wexford, 1359-1607, in Dublin city, 1568-1834, in Co. Tipperary, 1504-1509 and 1530, in Co. Cork, in particular the advowson of St Mary's, Shandon, 1381-1383, 1579, 1674, 1750 and 1785, in Co. Limerick, 1381-1676, in Co. Louth, including Drogheda, 1508-1637, in Co. Longford, 1526, in King's County, 1556-1611, in Queen's County, 1558-1572, in Strangford, Ardglass, Ballyedock etc, Co. Down, 1514, 1612-1662 and 1715, and the manors of Kilruddery, Co. Wicklow, 1506, and Caversham, Oxfordshire, 1682-1711; inquisitions and accounts relating to property in Cos Waterford and Kildare, 1671-1675; and a copy of the will and probate of Mary Clotworthy, wife of James Clotworthy, Moneymore, Co. Londonderry, and mother-in-law of Robert Fitzgerald, 1682. There is also a lease of lands in the Crumlin area, Co. Antrim, the property of Sir Hercules Langford, 1623.



## **Rentals, accounts, maps, etc**

Rentals, accounts, maps, plans and surveys include: fragment from a rent roll of property in Cos Cork and Limerick, early 15th century; mid-19th century copy of a rental and memorandum book of Gerald, 9th Earl of Kildare, which includes details of the 'protection rents' paid him by the neighbouring Gaelic clans, lists of presents made to various persons of horses and armour, a catalogue of his library and a list of his plate etc, 1518, together with correspondence and other papers of the 4th Duke of Leinster as Earl of Kildare, 1856-1870, about this rental, the original of which is among the Harleian MSS in the British Library; rentals of the manors of Adare and Croom etc, Co. Limerick, 1598 and late 16th century, of the Dowager Lady St George's property in Dublin, 1785, and of Lord Edward Fitzgerald's estate of Kilrush, Co. Kildare, 1788; 'a rent roll of that part of the manor of Maynooth that is not in the Countess of Kildare's jointure', c.1700; lease books/rent books relating to the various manors in Co. Kildare, 1661-c.1678, and accounts of debts owing between Robert Fitzgerald and his nephew, the Earl of Kildare, affecting property in Athy and in Strangford and Ardglass, Co. Down, 1686; written surveys of property in the barony of Coshoma, which includes the manors of Adare, Croom, Athlacca etc, Co. Limerick, 1559, and of the manors or lordships of Athy, Kildare, Kilkea, Maynooth etc, and of all or other parts of the Earl of Kildare's estates in Co. Kildare, 1654-1697; maps of parts of the lordship of Rathangan, Co. Kildare, 1769-1858, which include James Spencer's demesne, by Charles Vaughan, 1769; Bonaghmore and Woodlands, by Peter Connolly, 1810, and Sheean, by Thomas Deneen, 1858; accounts etc, relating to land improvement and drainage on the Leinster estate in Co. Kildare, 1871-1879; papers relating to the sale of most of the estate, 1903-1907; household account book, 1884-1893, recording expenses at the family's Irish seat, Carton, Co. Kildare, and at their London town house in Carlton House Terrace; photographs of plans and elevations for alterations to Kilkea Castle, c.1850s-c.1870s; and household and farm inventories for Kilkea, etc, 1809, 1859 and 1872-c.1925.



## Correspondence

The earliest correspondence (and associated papers) derive from the 14th Earl of Kildare, and relate mainly to lands and garrisons in Co. Kildare, 1599-1601. An important letter-book containing copies of letters to the 16th Earl of Kildare, mainly from agents or members of his family, about the estate and financial affairs of the barony of Lecale, Co. Down, with some references to Co. Kildare as well, 1629-1637, has been transcribed for PRONI by Professor Aidan Clarke of TCD.



*Emily, Duchess of Leinster*

The letters and papers of or about the 20th Earl of Kildare, later 1st Marquess of Kildare and 1st Duke of Leinster, and of his wife, Emily, 1752-1772, include: a 19th century printed copy of a poem about his part in the Money Bill dispute of 1753; notes by the Duke of his debts and annual outgoings, 1766 and 1772; notes by him on the line to be pursued by his parliamentary following on the question of additional Commissionerships of Excise, 1772; and letters to his wife from their eldest son, Lord Ophaley, from school, the Grand Tour, etc, 1757-1760s. As has been seen, almost all the correspondence of this period is in National Library of Ireland and was published or prepared for publication by the late Brinn Fitzgerald.



## The 2nd Duke of Leinster

The letters and papers of the 2nd Duke of Leinster, 1780-1803, include: letters from the Duke, 1782-1783 and 1788, to Lord Temple, later 1st Marquess of Buckingham, who was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 1782-1783 and 1787-1789, some of them dealing with the relations of the Duke and his parliamentary following with the Temple administration, 1782-1783, and with the Duke's pretensions to the Garter and to one of the Vice-Treasurerships for Ireland; miscellaneous letters and papers, 1791-1797, including a letter from his step-father, William Ogilvie, to John Halliday about the marriage settlement of Lord Henry Fitzgerald, the Duke's brother, 1791; a list of Co. Kildare freeholders' registrations, 1796-1796; letters to the 2nd Duke, 1802-1803, which are mainly about estate, financial and Co. Kildare affairs, from correspondents who include his agent, Henry Hamilton, Colonel Sir Edward Littlehales, Under-Secretary at Dublin Castle, who writes about barracks, Thomas Tickell and others who write about the Co. Kildare shrievalty and other local affairs, and Lords Henry and Robert Fitzgerald, the Duke's brothers, who write about family rows and finances, Lord Robert's role in Co. Kildare politics, and the Catholic Question; letters from Lord Charles Fitzgerald, later Lord Lecale, brother of the 2nd Duke, to his Dublin attorney, Thomas Kemmis, 1780, 1798 and 1803, mainly about financial affairs, but including a reference to the shrievalty of Co. Down, 1798, together with a non-contemporary copy of Lord Charles Fitzgerald's acquittal by a naval court martial in 1780; and letters and papers, 1781-1913, relating to Lord and Lady Edward Fitzgerald, the Duke's brother and sister-in-law, which include a letter from Lady Louisa Lennox, sister-in-law of the dowager Duchess of Leinster, to William Ogilvie, 1798, about the arrest of Lord Edward, and the diary of J. Armstrong Garnett, Lord Edward's attendant in Newgate gaol at the time of his death, together with evidence sworn by Garnett and others for use in the subsequent inquest, both dated 1798.



*2<sup>nd</sup> Duke of Leinster*



*Lord Edward Fitzgerald*



## The 3rd Duke of Leinster

The letters and papers of the 3rd Duke of Leinster (1809-1874) contain copies of many of his replies and have been preserved in their chronological (for the most part year-by-year) arrangement. The 3rd Duke (Augustus-Frederick Fitzgerald) was born in 1791 and succeeded to the dukedom on the death of his father in 1804. In 1818 he married the youngest daughter of the 3rd Earl of Harrington, by whom he had three sons and one daughter.

His correspondence to c.1845 covers a wide range of topics which include: his education and his Grand Tour in 1811-1812 (of which there is a journal / diary); patronage; estate and financial business; the proposal that he should succeed his uncle, Lord Robert Fitzgerald, as Custos Rotulorum of Co. Kildare, 1813 (he succeeded him in 1819 and was appointed Lieutenant of Co. Kildare in 1831); the state of the county in 1817 and 1822; the county infirmary; a police establishment for the barony of Ikeathy and Oughterany, Co. Kildare, under the Peace Preservation Act, 1821, and the police establishment in the county, and its duties, 1823; Joseph Hume's bill for Irish tithe reform; the admission of Catholics to the Dublin Guild of Merchants, 1822; Leinster's attack on the Kildare Place Society for alleged proselytising, 1823; the petition of the Protestant noblemen and gentlemen of Ireland in favour of Emancipation, and the Catholic Question in general; a school for Kildare town, 1828; an abortive Co. Kildare meeting to deplore the recall of Lord Anglesey, 1829; Lord Rossmore's proposed reform of the Scottish and Irish representative peerage systems, 1829; distress in Prosperous, Co. Kildare, 1830; the anti-Repeal meeting convened by the Duke, 1830; the formation of Lord Grey's administration, 1830; the Political Union of Ireland; the Co. Kildare elections of 1832, 1835 and 1837; 'the Leinster declaration'; tithe agitation; the Co. Kildare magistracy; resistance to the influence of O'Connell; outrages in Tipperary and elsewhere, 1833 and 1836; the demand for poor laws for Ireland, 1836-1839; a protest organised by Leinster among the Whig peers connected with Ireland against a requisition by Tory peers for a meeting to consider means of protecting the Protestants of Ireland, 1837; the Co. Longford election of 1837; the sale of Bishopscourt, Co. Kildare, by the Ponsonby family, 1838; the need for a second assize town for Co. Kildare, 1839; a proposed reform of the Dublin Society, 1841; the Dublin city election of 1841; the increase of the Maynooth grant, Leinster's appointment as a Visitor, 1845, and the state of the college in 1846; the endowment of professorships of theology in the new colleges; the Tenant Compensation Bill of 1845; and Peel's Irish policy.



## Lord Justice during the famine

During the period 1846-1849 (for which there are c.180 letters, all calendared in detail by PRONI), the 3rd Duke occupied a prime, indeed unique, position in Irish political and social life. He was the leader of the Irish Whigs and he served as a Lord Justice for part of our period. He also held several subsidiary positions such as the presidency of the Royal Agricultural Improvement Society of Ireland. Leinster was also involved in the Dublin Relief Committee, the Calcutta Trust and the Navigation Committee to name but a few. The ultimate significance of the correspondence derives from the unique intermediate position which Leinster occupied with, as it were, a foot in both the English and the Irish camps. The British government, particularly after Lord John Russell and the Whigs took office in July 1846, constantly approached Leinster for information and opinions on various aspects of Irish affairs. Leinster was related to Russell, which helps to explain the presence of several important letters which the Prime Minister wrote to Leinster direct instead of communicating indirectly via the Lord Lieutenant. Inevitably, his Irish compatriots regarded Leinster as a man of much importance and, as the correspondence illustrates, made frequent endeavours to draw him into their various schemes and campaigns.

The correspondence ranges over such issues as: the policy of reinstating magistrates dismissed by previous administrations; the proposal that the Royal Agricultural Improvement Society of Ireland should concentrate on finding employment for the labouring classes in the cultivation of land, and the general question of the Society's role in famine relief, 1846; famine relief in general, 1846-1847; the possibility of a reconstituting the Duke's Dublin Relief Committee, 1846; the proposal that a union should be formed amongst influential Irishmen of both parties to counteract British prejudice against Irish landlords, 1846; the Calcutta Trust; the state of Rathangan in 1847; the Co. Kildare election of 1847 (including an annotated poll book); the state of Dublin during the Young Ireland uprising, and the Lord Lieutenant's determination not to deal leniently with priests implicated in it; the Celbridge Board of Guardians, 1848; the necessity for proclaiming the whole of Leinster, 1848; the address of the Catholic hierarchy against state endowment, 1848; Repeal, including copies of an anti-Repeal declaration, 1848; Leinster's refusal of the Garter, 1848; the suspension of *Habeas Corpus*; the property qualification for militia colonels; and the Queen's visit to Ireland, and to Carton in particular.



## **Post-1849 correspondence**

The 3rd Duke's post-1849 correspondence includes discussion of: a bill for the better regulation of medical charities, 1850; a loan for the Dublin-Mullingar turnpike road, 1850; the exclusion of Church of Ireland clergy from appointments to bishoprics in the colonial empire, 1850; the 'Papal aggression'; a proposal to convert one of the Irish ports into a place of embarkation for America, 1850; the Co. Kildare elections of 1854, 1859 and 1874; Lord Kildare's appointment as a Commissioner of Intermediate Education; the embodiment of the Kildare Militia as a rifle corps, and other matters connected with the regiment, 1855-1856; subscriptions from Co. Kildare to the Patriotic Fund; steam communication between Ireland and England, 1855; the application of the Towns Improvement Act to Athy, 1856; the organisation of opposition to the proposal in the Irish Reform Bill that Irish peers should be made eligible to sit for Irish constituencies; Lord Otho Fitzgerald's wish to stand for Co. Kildare next election and Leinster's disapproval of it, 1864-1865; the proclamation of Sough Kildare under the Peace Preservation Act, 1866; the precedence to be accorded to Roman Catholic bishops, 1867; Fenian activity in Kildare in 1867; the Prince of Wales's visit to Ireland, and to Carton in particular, 1868; and the organisation of the Church of Ireland after disestablishment, and the setting up of the Representative Church Body.



## **Significant correspondents of the 3rd Duke**

The 3rd Duke's correspondents over the whole period 1809-1874 include: the Duke of Wellington and Lord Aberdeen, Prime Ministers; Sir James Graham and Sir George Grey, Home Secretaries; W.E. Gladstone and Sir Charles Wood, Chancellors of the Exchequer; Gathorne Hardy, Secretary at War; the Duke of Richmond and Lords Abercorn, Anglesey, Clarendon, Ebrington, Heytesbury, St Germans, Wellesley and Wodehouse, Lords Lieutenant; Lords Manners and Plunket, Lord Chancellors; Henry Goulburn, Charles Grant, E.J. Littlehales, Lords Mayo, Morpeth, Naas and St Germans, Robert Peel, E.G. Stanley and Sir John Young, Chief Secretaries; Sir William Gosset, William Gregory, Colonel Thomas Larcom and Thomas Redington, Under-Secretaries; Primate Beresford, the Archbishop of Dublin, the Bishops of Derry, and Kildare, and Dr Doyle, Roman Catholic Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin; the Dukes of Bedford, Devonshire, Sussex and Sutherland; Lords Anglesey, Bessborough, Brougham, Caledon, Clancarty, Clanricarde, Clanwilliam, Cloncurry, Donegall, Donoughmore, Downshire, Dufferin, Enniskillen, Fingall, Fortescue (Steward of the Household), Harrington, Hastings, Holland (Leinster's second cousin), Kildare, Lansdowne, Londonderry, Melbourne, Monteagle, Mulgrave, Palmerston, Roden, Rossmore, General Seaton (Commander-in-Chief in Ireland), and Lords Sligo, Southwell, Stanley, Tavistock and Wellesley; Lord John Russell; Richard S. Bourke; Robert Bourke (later Lord Mayo); Corry Connellan, private secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, Lord Clarendon; Colonel Thomas Fitzgerald; Lord Otho Fitzgerald; Lord Robert Fitzgerald; George A. Hamilton; Henry Hamilton, the Duke's agent; James Hans Hamilton; Richard More O'Ferrall and Edward Ruthven, MPs for Co. Kildare; John Augustus O'Neill, a Repeal candidate in the 1847 Kildare election; William Cogan, a candidate in both the general election and the by-election for Co. Kildare of 1852; D. O'Connor Henchy, a Liberal candidate in the 1852 Kildare general election; Sir William Hort; Joseph Hume, the Radical English MP; Sir Robert Kane; Hon. Edward Lawless; G.F. Mulvany, Director of the National Gallery of Ireland; Colonel the Hon. C.B. Phipps, Keeper of the Queen's Privy Purse; H.B. Pilkington, County Inspector of Constabulary; Hon. Frederick Ponsonby; Hon. W.O. Stanley; Dean Thomas Trench; Rev. Frederick Trench; and Rev. Augustus West.



## **The 4th Duke of Leinster**

The private papers of the 4th Duke of Leinster and his wife, Caroline, include letters to the 4th Duke, 1866-1885, mainly as Lord Kildare, and letters to his wife, 1880-1886, from her sons in the King's Royal Rifle Corps, Lord Frederick and Lord Walter Fitzgerald, the former writing from the Sudan and mentioning General Gordon and the latter from Peshawar. The papers of Lady Hermione Duncombe, afterwards wife of the 5th Duke, 1879-1896, include letters from the 1st Marquess of Dufferin and Ava, and from Helen Baring about a biography of her father, Sir James Graham, the celebrated 'Peelite' politician.



## **Miscellaneous papers**

Municipal and parliamentary papers include: minute books of the corporations of Harristown, Co. Kildare, 1714-1490, and of Athy, Co. Kildare, 1738-1778; 19th century translations and copies of the charters of Athy, 1515 and 1611, and Kildare, 1515 and 1688; case papers relating to a disputed election for Athy, 1727, and a riot there in 1736; and the indenture of John Digby's return as MP for Kildare borough, 1732.

Formal documents, 1755-1919, include: patents and commissions of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th Dukes, and of Lord George Fitzgerald, the sixth son of the 4th Duke, together with a farewell address from 300 inhabitants of Jamaica to Lord George Fitzgerald, private secretary to the Governor, 1897.

In addition there are: scrapbooks containing newspaper cuttings, broadsheets, play bills, squibs etc, which relate mainly to national and local politics and society, 1784-1884; a diary for 1893 kept by Lord George Fitzgerald while in Jamaica as the Governor's secretary; and a volume of newspaper cuttings, 1891-1894, relating to the Co. Kildare Archaeological Society, of which Lord Walter Fitzgerald was Honorary Secretary.

