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INTRODUCTION

REDHALL PAPERS

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Redhall Papers (D3580)

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Summary

The Redhall Papers (from Redhall, Ballycarry, Co. Antrim) consist of 21 volumes of a diary kept by Henry McClintock, Collector of the Revenue at Dundalk, over the period 1805-1843 (with a continuation by his widow up to 1848); and bundles of loose letters and papers of members of the Torrens family, 1812-1885.



Torrens Papers

To deal first with the Torrens papers: these come to be at Redhall through the two marriages of Rev. William Chichester (created Lord O'Neill of Shane's Castle in 1868). His first marriage, in 1839, was to Henrietta Torrens, daughter of Robert Torrens, a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in Ireland; and his second marriage, in 1858, was to [a first cousin?] of his late first wife, Elizabeth-Grace Torrens, daughter of the Ven. John Torrens, Archdeacon of Dublin. Lord O'Neill's eldest son (by his first wife) succeeded as 2nd Baron O'Neill in 1883, and in 1920 the 2nd Lord O'Neill's second daughter, Rose-Anne-Mary, married Vice-Admiral John William Leopold McClintock of Redhall. Partly because of the fire at Shane's Castle in 1922, and partly because the Hon. Mrs McClintock was residuary legatee of her aunt, the Hon. Anne O'Neill, the Torrens papers found their way to Redhall.

They consist of some letters and papers of Judge Torrens, and particularly of his wife, Anne, 1812-c.1830; and letters and papers of Elizabeth-Grace Torrens, second wife of the 1st Lord O'Neill, and of her brothers, Robert Torrens, a retired Bengal Civil Servant and MP for Carrickfergus, 1859-1868, and John Samuel Torrens, formerly Judge of the Sudder Court, Calcutta (d.1860). The letters and papers mainly concern personal, financial and domestic matters, but include some references to public affairs, particularly in relation to the administration of India.



Henry McClintock's Diaries

Henry McClintock, the diarist, was the youngest son of John McClintock of Drumcar, Co. Louth (d.1799), and is the great-grandfather of the Mr McClintock who now lives at Redhall. His diary is of interest mainly because of the meticulous record it gives of the life-style of a fairly humble member of the Ascendancy during the first half of the 19th century. The diary is particularly informative about Dundalk and Co. Louth, where McClintock lived and worked for most of his life. He carefully records the names of everyone whom he met, and usually gives details of their relationship to each other and to others mentioned elsewhere in his diary. Each day he gives information about meteorological conditions, and on the frequent occasions when illness strikes his wife, one of his twelve children or himself, he details the medical treatments which were applied. During the 1820s and early 1830s, when his brother-in-law, Matthew Fortescue of Stephenstown, Dundalk, and his elder brother, John McClintock Junior of Drumcar, were active as (unsuccessful) candidates in Co. Louth elections, the diary is full of political as well as social, meteorological and medical, comment.

The contents of the first volume, covering the period 1805-11, have been described in some detail by Rev. Precentor W. H. Love in 'Georgian Society in Louth', Journal of the Co. Louth Archaeological and Historical Society, Vol. XVII, No. 3 (1971), pp. 184-186. This article, which begins with a description of the near-contemporary diary kept by McClintock's sister, Marianne Fortescue of Stephenstown, Co. Louth, continues:

'... It was during this period at the opening of the nineteenth century that Marianne's brother, Henry, begins his diary on the 19 October 1805, the day he joined the 3rd Prince of Wales's Regiment of Dragoon Guards as a cornet, having been gazetted in April, and on the 19 July finds himself stationed in Limerick in lodgings near the barracks. On the 25th he sets out with a servant and a pair of horses for Dundalk, a journey that takes four days; he finds his mother settled in the house she has just bought at Seatown Place. This is probably the house known as Kincora, now two houses, in which Henry's son, Admiral Francis Leopold, was born. ... Henry indulged in some coursing at Clermont Park, an old Fortescue residence near Stephenstown, and returned to sup at the Oyster Club in Dundalk Market-house; he was later that month admitted a member of the Oyster Club. ... On the 13 March he "rode out" with Henry Maxwell to the latter's farm at Kilcurly, and later went on to Philipstown, returning home to Seatown Place feeling unwell and went to bed early. "Philipstown" was the residence (the Rectory of Baronstown) of the Rev.

On the 19 November Henry had some unpleasantness with his brother officers as a result of which he sold out of the regiment, and paid a visit to Bath where he meets his sister Marianne On the 13 April, having joined another regiment and being posted to Waterford, ... "I got into barracks, went to the play in the evening. There was a very nice girl there, a Miss Fleury, with Mrs Trench, wife of the Bishop of Waterford." The latter was Power Le Poer Trench, second son of the first Earl of Clancarty whose sixth son was the Hon. Charles Le Poer Trench, Rector of Dunleer and Drumcar, 1823-1840. ...

On the 24 July, 1808, he receives a letter from his mother signifying her wish that he send in his resignation and quit the army altogether, and in September he left Dublin by the Newry coach and arrived in Dundalk about 5 p.m. having taken ten hours on the journey. He dines with Dundalk Corporation where there was a large party of fifty or sixty amongst whom was Lord Roden. ...

The autumn [of 1809] finds him in Dublin buying a gig which he drove with his horse "drawing it well to Blackrock." That evening he went to Crowe Street Theatre where he heard Mr Braham singing "The Haunted Town". Braham was then a rising Jewish Tenor with a beautiful voice. He lived from 1774-1856 and had, by his wife, Frances Bolton, a very remarkable daughter, Frances, Lady Waldegrave, who married four times, her last husband being Chichester Fortescue, Lord Carlingford. ...



Marriage and early married life

Henry McClintock's great day came on the 14 December of that year, 1809, when he was in Waterford to be married in the Cathedral there at 7.45 in the morning to Elizabeth (Bessy) Fleury who was then not quite nineteen years of age. It is an indication of the custom of the times that little fuss was made of the wedding, there being no relatives of the bridegroom present. Not long afterwards the bride and groom came to live with his mother at Seatown Place, and there follows a round of balls, suppers, hunting, and shooting with the Brabazons of Dromiskin, the Filgates at Lisrenny, as well as at Louth Hall, Rosy Park, Greenmount, Rokeby Hall; he mentions also the Tippings at Bellurgan, the Bellews at Barmeath, Wolfe Macneale at Mountpleasant, and shows some archaeological interest by a visit to Roche Castle. He frequently rode out to Ravensdale with his wife to see his friend, Lord Clermont, and admits on more than one occasion he "drank too much wine."

He has a taste, albeit simple, for amusement, as had also his sister. In 1811 he saw in Dundalk "tight rope dancing and tumbling performed on a stage opposite Mr Forde's house near the jail;" the "performers' object was to promote a lottery with prizes of Gowns, Shawls, Coats, Cheeses and pieces of Bacon." In the same year he went out to Darver Castle which was to be set with sixty acres of ground, the owner, Mr Ball, being away. On the 1 April he records: "I saw two men hanged here (Dundalk) for robbery near Drogheda, called Conlan and McAntaggart," and in the same month he had his little daughter Louise inoculated with the "cow-pock" by Dr Concannon. ...

In September he made a journey by canal boat from Dublin to "Maryborough" and thence by chaise to Carlow and on to Waterford, where he received a letter from Lord Jocelyn stating that he was to be appointed Port Surveyor of Customs, Dundalk, in succession to Park Macneale who had just died. The salary was £350 per annum. He frequently found it necessary to travel by night coach to Dublin in succeeding weeks, arriving in the city of six o'clock in the morning. The purpose of these journeys was to receive instructions at the Custom House in gauging and valuations. About the same time his brother William, living at Stonehouse, was commissioned as Coast Surveyor from Drogheda to Carlingford at a salary of £100 per annum.'

