



INTRODUCTION

TIPPING PAPERS

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Tipping Papers (D4160)

Table of Contents

Summary	2
The physical state and history of the archive	3
Family background	4
An ancestor massacred by Cromwell	5
A divided inheritance	6
Francis Tipping of Bellurgan	7
Title Deeds, leases, case papers, etc, relating to Co. Louth	8

Summary

The Tipping papers cover the period, 1666-1942 and document the personal, political and financial affairs of the Tipping family of Bellurgan Park, Ballymascanlan, Co. Louth, and their estates in Cos Louth, Armagh, Down and Westmeath. They comprise c.8500 documents and volumes, with an overspill of 37 outsize maps and plans (which for the moment remain at Bellurgan Park). Although there are numerous account books, rentals, etc, these are of a size which can be accommodated in a PRONI box. The following parts of the archive, D4160/A, D4160/C, parts of D4160/E, and D4160/F/1 (those which most immediately relate to the Six Counties of Northern Ireland), have also been microfilmed by PRONI (MIC555).



The physical state and history of the archive

The physical state of the originals requires comment. When sorting and listing began in December 1983, it was obvious that two large trunk-fuls had been scooped off a floor where animals (probably domestic pets as well as rodents) had roamed for a long time. But although very tattered and crumpled, these papers proved, on unravelling, to be for the most part legible, in spite of some loss of text. Other papers had been considerably affected by damp, and some parchment deeds and leases had congealed together and were opened with difficulty if at all. But, granted the quantity of the material, and the fact that at least some of the damaged items were of a repetitive character and therefore were not an absolute loss, the survival rate was remarkable. The original plan in December 1983 was that the papers were to be located in the drawing room, which was to be aired during the winter by lighting a fire once a week. This, however, proved not to be practicable, due to problems with the chimney, and there was visible deterioration in the condition of the paper in the intervening years between 1983 and the deposit of the archive in PRONI in March 1997.

The papers, or a few of them, were reported on by the late Sir John Ainsworth, probably in the 1950s (National Library Reports on Private Collections, No. 380), and Sir John's work in ordering and enveloping some of the late 18th and early 19th-century correspondence and other papers has proved of value. Another source of help is an abridged transcript of one volume of the c.1885 'Recollections' of Edward Tipping II made by the late T.G.F. Paterson, Curator of the Armagh County Museum and present in that institution. There are some doubts as to how this relates to a diary in Tipping's own hand and to other, more modern transcripts made by the late Beresford Swan of Ravensdale, near Bellurgan, which were present among the papers in December 1983 (though they have since, and it is to be hoped only temporarily, gone missing). These doubts will presumably be resolved when closer inspection is possible.



Family background

For some unaccountable reason, the Tipping family has no entry in any Landed Gentry; so the short account of family history provided at the start of Edward Tipping II's c.1885 'Recollections' (in the abridged Paterson version), together with Paterson's pedigree of the Tipping family, constructed from 'Burke's Pedigrees' (PRONI, T559), are of particular value and are here reproduced:

'... The first record I know of is a grant by King Charles II of ... 1666 to Thomas Tipping of certain lands in Westmeath and Down... . There is a gap then until 1723, when Thomas Tipping, called of Castletown, bought Bellurgan, Ballyboymore and Ballyboybeg, containing 893 acres Irish, from the trustees of the Hon. Capel Moore, son of the Earl of Drogheda, for £2,700; and in 1728 he bought for £500 the interest of one John Morrish, who held it on lease for 31 years from 1709 at £120 per annum, thus making the whole amount paid for Bellurgan £3,200. He also bought the Cooley estate about the same time from the Stannus family

Thomas of Castletown had two sons, Thomas (of Beaulieu) and Edward, born 1737?, and eight daughters: Sarah; Sophia (married to a Mr Palmer); Mary; Catherine (married to Rev. Rowley Hall); Mabella; Charity; Letitia; and Elizabeth. He was twice married He had an only sister, married to Mr Walter Cope of the County of Armagh. He died in 1741 and by will left his property in trust to 'Ephraim Dawson of Dawson's Court', Portarlinton, Queen's County, ancestor of Lord Portarlinton, whose wife or mother was a Miss Tipping, and Faithful Fortescue, 'his grandson', for his son Thomas, with remainder to his son Edward, and to Walter Cope's son, and £1500 to each of his six unmarried daughters.



An ancestor massacred by Cromwell

He was accordingly succeeded by Thomas (of Beaulieu), so called because he married Sophia, daughter and [co-]heiress of Thomas Aston, the owner of Beaulieu. It was built by Sir Henry Tichborne, who was Governor of Drogheda in the time of Charles I, and passed to his son-in-law, Sir Thomas Aston, who was Governor when Cromwell massacred him and all his garrison. Sophia Aston was probably his granddaughter. The Astons and Tippings are old Cheshire families and both have seats there now.



A divided inheritance

Thomas Tipping (of Beaulieu) had no son but three daughters. Two married Montgomerys and the other married Lord Blayney. He [Thomas Tipping] died 1 March 1776 and was succeeded, as to Beaulieu, and by Montgomery who had married his eldest daughter, Sophia Mabella. During his lifetime (1773) he had assigned his interest in Bellurgan, etc, to her for a nominal consideration. It seems a curious transaction, and as if he wanted to turn the succession from his brother to his own daughter, but it was beyond his power under his father's will. Yet Edward Tipping bought her interest for £2,000. ... He (Edward) married Catherine Hall and had three sons Francis, Thomas and Edward, and two daughters Rebecca and Letitia, and died in 1784 [sic 1785] and his wife in 1796.



Francis Tipping of Bellurgan

He was succeeded by Francis. Thomas went into the army and to India where he died. ... Edward was also in the army and married his cousin the Hon. Mary Blayney, and died comparatively young, and was buried at York Minster, where there is a handsome tablet to his memory. He left an only daughter Catherine, who married the Rev. Richard Hamilton. Rebecca married Capt. Wilde He was a Dublin man and owned a good deal of property there in Dawson Street and Aungier Street and also Ardenode in the County Kildare. ... He seems to have run through all his property and went out to the West Indies with his regiment and died at sea. His wife seems to have been very delicate and subject to asthma. When a widow, she rented Faughart [House, Dundalk], then belonging to the McNeills, and ... left it, I think, for Bath, where she died. They had four daughters: Catherine, married Ben Geale; Anne; Frances Elizabeth, my mother; and Edwina, married John Pratt.

I have heard that Francis Tipping found the estate a good deal in debt when he succeeded to it, and that he paid all off[f] and did not marry till he had done so. It is certain that he was looked upon as a confirmed old bachelor when he married Christiana, daughter of Mr Forde, who had some position in Dundalk [Collector of the Revenue]. ... They had four sons: Edward, born 1800; William, who died young; Francis and James (twins); and one daughter, Catherine Elizabeth. The boys were sent to Armagh School, where they do not seemed to have learnt very much.

His nieces, the Miss Wildes, when young were put to nurse with a Mrs Bowe, wife of the steward here [Bellurgan Park]... . It was the custom in those days to put out children thus while their parents went off to amuse themselves. ... My mother, when old enough, went to live in Dublin with her grand-aunt, Mrs Bailie, who had been a Miss Hall and widow of Mr Bailie of the County Down. She ... [was] then a going-out young lady. She was considered a beauty and very lively, probably a great flirt; so she had a great success and many offers. She was, however, very much in love with her cousin, Edward, and perhaps a little determined to be mistress of this place; for she refused them all and in due time (1824) married him. ... They went to travel abroad, so I was born on 25 April 1826 at Florence ...'.



Title Deeds, leases, case papers, etc, relating to Co. Louth

Apart from some copy patents, the earliest document in the archive is dated 1683. Then follow a series of about a dozen documents of 1707 onwards concerning the Tippings' title to the Bellurgan estate, which they acquired from the Hon. Capel Moore in 1723. Subsequent documents bearing on title comprise: Co. Louth title deeds, leases and Landed Estates Court sale papers to 1893; marriage and family settlements, together with case papers, deeds of appointment and annuity, etc, arising from them, c. 1750-1897; and case papers deriving from an interminable lawsuit over the 'Tipping minors', c. 1815-1840. In addition, there is a quantity of Tipping accounts, receipts and correspondence, 1743-1819, mainly c. 1790-1819. In addition to this mainly Louth-related material, there are title deeds, leases, accounts and correspondence, 1666-1864, concerning the Tipping estate in Co. Armagh and the nearby Co. Armagh estate and the Co. Down estate of Francis Hall of Strangford, Co. Down; Catherine, daughter and co-heiress of Francis Hall, married Edward Tipping of Bellurgan (d.1785), and was the means of bringing this property and part of Hall's Fewes estate into Tipping possession. Other late 18th and early 19th-century papers and correspondence relate to the affairs of Mrs Charles Wilde of Ardenode, Co. Kildare, sister of Francis Tipping of Bellurgan Park (d.1819).

There are many pre-1858 wills, probates and letters of administration of members of the Tipping and other families in the archive, as follows: Charles Strong of Bengal, 1733 (whose presence among the Tipping papers is mysterious); Thomas Tipping of Castletown (Bellew, on the far side of Dundalk from Bellurgan), Co. Louth, 1740; John Gyles of Dundalk, 1745; Edward Tipping (later of Bellurgan, second son of Thomas Tipping), 1757; Francis Hall of Strangford, Co. Down (father-in-law of Edward Tipping), 1761; Edward Tipping, now of Bellurgan (copies of the probated version of a second and operative will), 1780; Mrs Catherine Tipping (née Hall, his widow), 1794 (3 non-contemporary copies, together with lawyer's comments on the interpretation of the will by Thomas Johnston of Dundalk, 1796); Ross Gyles of Castletown Cooley, Co. Louth, 1795; Mrs Rebecca Hall (widow of Francis Hall), 1796; Capt. Charles Wilde of Dublin (son-in-law of the late Edward Tipping), 1796; the Hon. Mrs Mary Tipping (née Blayney, widow of the second son of the late Edward Tipping), 1803; Mrs Rebecca Wilde, widow of Capt. Charles Wilde, 1804; Mrs Anne Bailie, (widow of James Bailie of Inishargy, Co. Down, MP, and sister of the late Mrs Rebecca Hall), 1810; Letitia Ann Kearney (née Tipping) of Dublin (daughter of the late Edward and Catherine Tipping), 1816; Francis Tipping of Bellurgan (eldest son and successor of the late Edward Tipping), 1808 (two drafts) and 1817; Thomas Kearney of Marylebone Lane, Dublin (husband of Letitia Ann Kearney)], 1816; Mrs Letitia Ann Kearney, 1825 (this is letters of administration granted to her effects, as an intestate, so either the previous will of 1816 was revoked and not replaced, or it was not discovered); Thomas Tipping (younger brother of the late Francis Tipping), 1826; Edward Curteis of Beech Hill, Co. Down, 1840; Edward Tipping I of Bellurgan Park (eldest son and successor of the late Francis Tipping), 1845, together with a draft will executed by him at Leamington in 1832; and Mrs Christiana Tipping (née Forde, widow of the late Francis Tipping) of Arnos Vale, Rostrevor, Co. Down, 1855.

With the exception of the foregoing and of some letters and papers of the period of Edward Tipping I (d. 1845), the bulk of the archive consists of letters and papers of Edward Tipping II, 1826-1896, who inherited Bellurgan Park and the Tipping estate during the Famine and when only just of age. In consequence of the inherited debts on the property, the Famine and, subsequently, the Land League in 1880-1881, Edward Tipping II was in financial difficulties for the whole of his life, which the sale of a significant part of the estate through the Encumbered Estates Court in 1855 did not relieve. His papers are of interest as showing (perhaps in an extreme instance) the plight of the landlord class in the second-half of the 19th century.

They are also of interest in their own right because he was an activist and pamphleteer on various issues - the Land Acts (not surprisingly), Disestablishment and the post-Disestablishment organisation of the Church of Ireland, 1869-1882, and reform and retrenchment in the Irish prison system, 1872-1879. His local - as opposed to national - offices, appointments, etc, included: J.P. for Co. Louth, 1849-1896; lieutenant in the Louth Militia, 1855-1856; director of the Dundalk and Greenore Railway Company, 1862-1870; member of the Carlingford Lough Commission, 1864-c.1877; and County Inspector of Prisons, 1866-c.1876. These activities are all fully documented in the archive, particularly Tipping's role as a county inspector of prisons. In 1872-1879 he seems to have been the organiser of the campaign which the county inspectors fought on an all-Ireland basis against the reduction of their offices and emoluments.

