



Public Record Office
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INTRODUCTION

WYNNE PAPERS

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Wynne Papers (D429)

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Summary

The Wynne papers, a small and mainly regimental archive, 1689-1767 and 1783, derive from an Irish family of that name related to the Wynnes of Hazelwood, Co. Sligo, and Lurganboy, Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim. The family appears to have had many connections with the regiments which were formed from the Enniskillen contingents at the beginning of 1690. The papers relate mainly to military administration. There are (surprisingly) no references to actual fighting, except abroad.



Enniskillen origins

The earliest document in the archive is a copy of an association entered into by the subscribing inhabitants of Enniskillen, about 150 in number, under Gustavus Hamilton, whom they accepted as their commander and governor of the town (13 February 1688/1689). The mounted regiments which were formed from the Enniskilleners were one of horse, under the command of William Wolseley, and two of dragoons, under the command respectively of Sir Albert Conyngham and James Wynne. The horse regiment was soon broken up and one of the papers (letter of 17 February 1689/1690) directs that troopers in it who refuse to be 'broke [ie drafted] into' Sir Albert Conyngham's dragoons are to be punished by the confiscation of their horses.



Wynne's Dragoons



*Frederick,
Duke of Schomberg*

The greater part of the papers relate to Wynne's Dragoons. They seem to have been initially a most undisciplined lot, as an autograph letter of 7 March 1689/1690 from Marshal Schomberg (the Williamite general in Ireland), written from Lisburn, orders the arrest of Capt. Hugh Galbraith on account of disorders committed by members of his troop. A further letter from Schomberg of 27 March 1690 orders the arrest of two members of Galbraith's troop for entering the house of John Crosier near Enniskillen and killing the owner. On 23 October 1690 disorders by the Enniskillen troops gave rise to specific censure. However, this phase seems to have passed, for a letter of 3 May 1692 says that Wynne's Dragoons 'bore a good character with all'.

Wynne's Dragoons, being required both as scouts and to check any local outbreak were continually on the move. In February 1690 Colonel Wynne was given the freedom of Londonderry City. In June 1690, his regiment received orders to march to Belturbet, and on 16 June received an order signed by William III himself to move to join the rest of the army between Armagh and Tanderagee. After the Boyne it appears to have been stationed around Mullingar. On 18 December 1690 an order was issued for it to go to Enniskillen, and in January 1690 it appears to have been quartered along the left bank of the Foyle between Inishown and Raphoe. A letter of 3 May 1692 shows that there had been continual bickering with the locals, high and low, over quartering, on the ground that the settled allowance was too small. In May 1691 the corps was again at Belturbet, but soon marched south, for it appears at Athlone in June 1691. Here the cavalry were apparently set to work at the trenches like infantry, to their considerable disgust. By October 1691 the country had apparently been exhausted by continual requisitions, for an officer writing from Breckagh says 'there is not a bit of grass for four miles, the country being ruined by O'Donnell's men'.



William III



Foreign service

In 1694 the regiment was in France, having lost half a troop at sea, apparently when crossing from Ireland. Here one of the Wynnes (probably Owen), serving as major in his brother's regiment, was taken prison and subsequently released. About June 1695 Colonel James Wynne was wounded and died within the following two months, being succeeded by Owen Wynne. In January 1696 the regiment was at Bruges, probably in winter quarters.

From this point the papers become accounts rather than anything else, but include the interesting information that, for example, in July 1697 officers were receiving their pay in lottery tickets on the Malt Fund; these tickets were exchangeable for cash but only at a heavy discount.



In peacetime

Among the later papers is an undated recommendation for Commissioners of Array in Cos Sligo and Leitrim, probably in 1715. Another undated paper of post-6 August 1732 gives a list of the officers of Wynne's Dragoons with the dates of their commissions. In 1735, there is another list of the officers of Wynne's Dragoons. In c.1737 there is a draft or copy of a petition from (Lt-Colonel) Owen Wynne soliciting to succeed General Wynne, deceased, as Governor of Londonderry.

There are two groups of interesting documents relating to barracks: estimates of c.1730 by Thomas Burgh, Engineer and Surveyor-General for Ireland, for building a barrack at Lurganboy, Co. Leitrim, and memorials, estimates and a plan of c.1756-1761 submitted by Lt-Colonel Owen Wynne to the Lord Lieutenant, the Duke of Bedford, for repairs to the barrack in Sligo.

Later documents (of a non-military nature) include a commission of Andrew Wynne as sheriff of Co. Sligo, 1721, an Exchequer writ of summons directed to Owen Wynne, 1755, and an exemplification of a recovery of the estate of the Rt Hon. Owen Wynne (of Hazelwood, Co. Sligo) in the town and manor of Sligo, 1783.

