



Public Record Office
of Northern Ireland

INTRODUCTION

ENNISKILLEN PAPERS

November 2007

Enniskillen Papers (D1702, D3689 and T2074)

Table of Contents

Summary	3
Family estates.....	4
The Wiltshire estate	5
The estates in 1883	6
Family history.....	9
Sir William Cole (1575?-1653)	10
'A brave, forward and prudent gentleman'	11
Sir John Cole, 1st Bt.....	12
The Montagh estate	13
Sir Michael Cole.....	14
The Florence Court conundrum	15
Richard Castle's contribution in the 1730s?	16
The Ranelagh inheritance.....	17
Florence Court: the c.1756-c.1771 building phase	18
The 1st Earl of Enniskillen	19
The 2nd Earl of Enniskillen	21
Sir Galbraith Lowry Cole	23
Arthur Henry Cole	24
The 3rd Earl of Enniskillen	25
The 3rd Earl in politics	26
The 3rd Earl's two brothers	28
The 4th Earl of Enniskillen	29
The 5th Earl of Enniskillen and his brothers.....	30
Kenya.....	31
Florence Court, 1954-1963.....	32
The 6th Earl of Enniskillen	33
Nancy, Dowager Countess of Enniskillen	34

The Enniskillen papers.....	35
Early title deeds	36
Post-Restoration title deeds.....	37
Deeds of settlement and leases.....	38
Deeds relating to the estates of other families	39
Pre-1858 Irish wills	40
Legal case papers	41
Rentals and accounts	42
Maps, surveys and architectural material.....	43
Sketch books and photograph albums.....	44
Plate books, game books, etc.....	45
Scrapbooks and newscutting books	46
Pedigrees, formal documents, etc	47
Patents of peerage, etc.....	48
Other genealogical and formal documents	49
Family history material deriving from Nancy, Lady Enniskillen	50
Diaries and passports	51
Correspondence	52
Correspondence of the 3rd Earl of Enniskillen.....	53
The 3rd Earl and the Orange Order	54
Later correspondence.....	55
Conclusion	56

Summary

The Enniskillen papers comprise c.40 volumes, c.2.350 documents and photographs and c.200 mainly outsize maps and parchments, 1611-1997. They derive from the Cole family of Florence Court, Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh, Barons Mount Florence (from 1760), Viscounts Enniskillen (from 1776) and Earls of Enniskillen (from 1789), all in the peerage of Ireland, and Barons Grinstead (a corruption of Grimstead) in the peerage of the United Kingdom (from 1815).



Family estates

The papers relate to estates in the town of Enniskillen and elsewhere in Co. Fermanagh, at West Dean and East Grimstead, Wiltshire, and - to a much lesser extent - in Granby Row, Dublin City; in the barony of Middlethird, Co. Waterford (an estate located south of Waterford City and bounded by St George's Channel); and in Waterford City itself (a property called 'King's Meadow'). The Dublin City property was probably inconsequential. But the almost undocumented estate in Waterford was large: according to an 1802 map by William Larkin, it comprised 11,945 statute acres and probably had a rental of c.£2,000. It was sold c. 1802 to clear encumbrances on the Fermanagh estates.



The Wiltshire estate

The West Dean and East Grimstead property is, for its small size and value (it was worth £35,000-£40,000 in 1820), copiously documented, particularly in correspondence of the period 1817-1840. It was eventually inherited by the 2nd Earl of Enniskillen in 1819, subject to the shares/claims of various other co-heirs, under the will of another member of the Cole family, Sir Arthur Cole, who had been created Lord Ranelagh in 1715 and died in 1754. Lord Ranelagh's much younger second wife and widow, who had a life interest in the estate and a right to live in the mansion at West Dean, died in 1781, and the estate then passed to Lord Ranelagh's great-nephew, Henry Moore, a bachelor and a lunatic, who did not die until 1819. It did not come into the exclusive ownership of the Enniskillen family until the middle of the 19th century, if even then.

'Grimstead' in Wiltshire is spelt with an 'm', but the estate papers in the Enniskillen archive are inconsistent in this respect, and the patent creating the UK barony of Grinstead spells it with an 'n'.



The estates in 1883

In 1883 the remaining estates of the Enniskillen family comprised 29,635 acres in Co. Fermanagh (including the town property in Enniskillen) plus 569 in Wiltshire, together worth £19,290 a year.

At mid-century, the various component parts of the Fermanagh estate were as follows:

Enniskillen town estate		
Abbey Street	Fort Hill	Mullinacaw
Anne Street	Fort Lodge	Paget Street
Barrack Street	Galbraith's Row	Pipers Island
Boston	Head Street	Pudding Lane
Broad Meadows	Lake and Garden	Redoubt
The Brook	Lough Galliagh	Sallow Island
Brook View Lodge	Mackill's Office	School Lane
Castle Street	Main Street	Strand Street
Church Street	Market Stores	Tile Yard
Cole's Hill	<i>Auction Board</i>	Townhall Street
Cross Street	<i>Butter Market</i>	Townsdale
Dame Street	<i>Fair Green</i>	Water Lane
Darling Street	<i>Fair Pens</i>	Wellington Place
Drumlion	<i>Flax Market</i>	Wesley Street
East Bridge Street	<i>Market House</i>	Willoughby Place
Eden Street	<i>Mary Street</i>	Windmill Hill
Eldon Place	Midleton Street	
Barony of Clanawley estate		
Aghatirourke	Doohatty	Lamore
Aughnahoo	Drumclownish	Lankill
Beihy	Drumduff	Lea
Bohevny	Druminiskill	Leamnamoyle

Enniskillen Papers

Brookfield	Drumlaghy	Leffa
Calkhill	Drumnacabranagher	Legnabrocky
Cavanreagh	Drumoghill	Legnavea
Cerreens East	Drumsillagh	Lisblake
Clontyferagh	Edenmore	Lisdeverrick [Lisdivrick]
Clontymullan	Finland	Lisgally
Cloonatumpher	Gortaree	Lismoonly
Cloonycrum	Gortatole	Marlbank
Clyhannagh	Gorteen	Moneen
Cohan	Gortermoan	Moneyouregan
Coragh	Gortmaconnell	Mullaghbane
Cordarragh	Gortnakelly	Mullinahenshin
Corradreenan East	Gortgullenan	Newtate or Drummoan
Corradreenan West	Gubbacrock	Rossmacawinny
Corrawully	Innishee Island	Rossoy
Cottage	Killeshea	Screen
Croaghrim	Killinab [Killernam]	Stumpy's Hill
Crossmurrin	Killyblane	Tattenamona
Crumderg	Killybracken	Tromogagh
Cullintra or Marlbank	Killykeeghan	Tryan or Brookfield
Curragh	Kilnameele	Tully
Derryhowlaght	Knockageehan	Tullyhona
Montagh estate (the 'Ranelagh' part of the barony of Clanawley estate)		
Carn	Derraw	Laragh
Clondaval	Derryhenny	Mullaghharow
Clonliff	Derryleague	Portbeg
Clontymore	Drumany	Portreagh
Corracoash	Killyfurt	Stagowna
Crocknacreevy	Kinglass	

Barony of Knockninny estate		
Bochan Island	Derrymacausey	Killygreagh
Coragh	Dragh	Kilnakelly
Corraclare	Drummannagapple	Kinmeen
Corradovar	Drummully	Leggin
Corrataston	Gortoral	Mullies
Croostan	Killerainey	Trasna Island
Derrybrick	Killygrath	
Barony of Magheraboy estate		
Ashwoods	Drummee	Greystone
Ballaghmore	Drumscue [Drumskew]	Mullaghree
Clonamullog	Glencunny	Oglesfort or Drumsillagh
Crownhall	Gortadrehid	
Barony of Tirkennedy estate		
Aughaward	Derryhillagh	Lackaboy
Ballydoolagh	Derrykeeghan	Levaghy
Bertyclough or Relagh	Drumclay	Mullaghmeen
Breaghó	Drumgarrow	Mullaghmeen Meadows
Carn	Drumgay	Ratoran
Cavanleck	Gortmessan	Tonystick
Cornagrade	Knockalough	Waterberry
Cross		

Most of these estates derived from Plantation grants to the first Sir William Cole. Under circumstances which will be explained in due course, the Montagh estate was inherited in c.1711, the barony of Magheraboy estate was reduced to the number of townlands listed above in c.1780, and the barony of Knockninny estate was acquired in c.1791.



Family history

The principal sources for Cole family history are: James Edwin-Cole, *The Genealogy of the Family of Cole of the County of Devon and of those of its Branches which settled in Suffolk, Hampshire, Surrey, Lincolnshire and Ireland* (London, 1867); R.J. Hunter, 'Sir William Cole and Plantation Enniskillen, 1607-1641' in *Clogher Record*, ix, no. 3 (1978); the 4th Earl of Belmore, *Parliamentary Memoirs of Fermanagh and Tyrone from 1613 to 1885* (Dublin, 1887); the Countess of Enniskillen (later Nancy, Dowager Countess of Enniskillen), *Florence Court: My Irish Home* (Monaghan, 1972); Edward McParland, 'Florence Court, Co. Fermanagh' in *Country Life*, 7 and 14 May 1981; Kenneth W. James, *Damned Nonsense: the Geological Career of the 3rd Earl of Enniskillen* (Belfast, 1986); and successive National Trust *Guidebooks to Florence Court*, of which the current one is dated 1992, the archive copy of which has been heavily corrected by Nancy, Countess of Enniskillen, and which is soon to be superseded. There is a fair degree of disagreement among these authorities, particularly on the vexed question of the building history of Florence Court.



Sir William Cole (1575?-1653)

The first member of the Cole family to come to Ireland was William Cole, a professional soldier born in London but belonging to the Cole family of Slade in Devonshire who descended (or who, on the evidence of a magnificently emblazoned pedigree in the archive, could plausibly claim to descend) from an ancient Conquest family. Having first served in the Low Countries, he came to Ireland to try his fortune in 1601, and served under Sir George Carew, Lord President of Munster. In 1607 he was appointed Captain of the Longboats and Barges at Ballyshannon and Lough Erne. His future was, however, uncertain until the Flight of the Earls and, particularly, that of Cuchonnacht Maguire of Enniskillen. In 1609, Cole was made Constable or Governor of Enniskillen. He was knighted in 1617.

He became one of the principal promoters and implementors of the Plantation in Co. Fermanagh, receiving extensive grants of land in and around Enniskillen in 1610-1612 and acquiring more by purchase. When Enniskillen was incorporated as a parliamentary borough in 1613 he became its first Provost. At this stage, Enniskillen was seen as very much the county town of Fermanagh, and its original corporation included other influential settlers (mostly English) like Cole. But in the period 1611-1623, Cole obtained leases or grants, on increasingly advantageous terms, of the two-thirds of the island of Enniskillen which went with the castle and the one-third which was intended as an endowment of the town. The building of the town was largely a Cole initiative (there were only an estimated 180 inhabitants in c.1630). Soon, Enniskillen became what a parliamentary reformer of 1790 called 'the private property of the Earl of Enniskillen, and the [provost and] twelve burgesses, its sole electors, . . . the confidential trustees of his appointment'.



'A brave, forward and prudent gentleman'

According to Pynnar's highly critical survey in 1619 of the practical operation of the Plantation, Cole was not wholly rigorous in the observance of the terms of his grants, particularly in the matter of administering the oath of supremacy to his tenants; but he was praised in 1622 for enforcing on his tenants at Portora the prohibition against sub-letting to the Irish. Re-grants were made to him at subsequent dates re-emphasising some of his obligations, permitting some leasing to the Irish, and doubling the rents payable by him to the crown. In general, he seems to have been more scrupulous than most Plantation patentees. Later, he was described by a contemporary as 'a brave, forward and prudent gentleman'. He was elected MP for Co. Fermanagh in 1634 and again in 1639. In 1641 he had a narrow escape from a treacherous death on the outbreak of the rising. He raised a regiment and fought at its head (in spite of advancing years) in the confused wars of the 1640s, espousing the Parliamentary cause and successfully defending Enniskillen against the Maguires. He died in 1653.



Sir John Cole, 1st Bt

He had two sons, Michael and John, the elder of whom predeceased him. John, the younger son (who died c.1691), was made Custos Rotulorum for Co. Fermanagh and a baronet in 1661, being then in effect the head of the Cole family, because Sir Michael Cole, Kt, son of Sir John's elder brother, Michael, did not come of age until probably about 1663.

Sir John Cole, 1st Bt, was a figure of more than local significance, as he was one of the Commissioners appointed to implement the Acts of Settlement and Explanation (the Restoration land settlement in Ireland). He lived at 'Newland [probably Newlands, Clondalkin], Co. Dublin'. Sir John had a number of sons and daughters, many of whom died young. In 1671, one of these daughters, Elizabeth, married as his second wife, her cousin, Sir Michael Cole.



The Montagh estate

On the occasion of this marriage, Sir John Cole settled on his daughter's issue his estate at Montagh, barony of Clanawley, Co. Fermanagh (which he had purchased in 1658). This estate 'marched' or was intermingled with Sir Michael's own patrimonial estate in the barony of Clanawley. Montagh did not, as the 4th Earl of Belmore erroneously supposed, include the site of the future Florence Court; but its accession shifted the centre of gravity of Sir Michael Cole's estate southward of Enniskillen, and must have had a great bearing on the decision to build in that location. Montagh never actually belonged to Sir Michael, but came into the possession of the eldest son of the marriage, John Cole, either at his coming of age in 1711 or at his mother's death in 1733. Nevertheless, it continued to be recorded as a separate entity in the family rentals until well into the 19th century.



Sir Michael Cole

Sir Michael Cole was either absent, or fled, from Enniskillen and Ireland in 1689, and took no part in the Williamite War. He later, however, took the lead in restoring Enniskillen following its next traumatic experience, an accidental fire in 1705. A list of that date of the inhabitants and the monetary value which they set upon their losses, (not always an accurate reflection of what the losses actually were), is from the point of view of local history one of the earliest and most important survivals in the archive. Sir Michael, like his grandfather, Sir William, lived in the castle of Enniskillen (he was appointed Constable of the Castle by Charles II in 1664) until 1710, when there was yet another fire. The family then moved to Portora Castle, where they remained until about 1716, when Sir Michael's son, John Cole (1680-1726), started building Florence Court.



The Florence Court conundrum

John Cole had married in 1707, and named his house after his wife, Florence Bouchier Wrey of Tawstock and/or Trebitch, Cornwall, who shared (and whose fortune helped to finance) his interest in architecture. An anonymous manuscript history of Fermanagh, written in 1718 (the year of Florence Cole's death), mentions the 'very costly and sumptuous building' which marked the beginnings of Cole's new mansion. It was the '... small ..., left wing of a grand building ... which he did not live to execute' before he died in 1726, and it was accompanied (according to Terence Reeves-Smyth's survey of the Florence Court demesne), by grand avenues of fir and elm planted between 1716 and 1719 and 'large, square parks, all planted with ash and elm'.

This sounds a very ambitious design for a remote part of Ireland in the 1710s and 1720s. But John Cole, who was MP for Enniskillen from 1729 until his elevation to the peerage in 1760, was part of the north-western political connection of Speaker William Conolly, his neighbour (nearly) at Ballyshannon and at Newporton, Co. Fermanagh (from 1718, when Conolly bought that estate); and he would have been familiar with Conolly's famous Palladian mansion at Castletown, Co. Kildare.



Richard Castle's contribution in the 1730s?



Florence Court

Tradition, supported by the modern authority of Dr Edward McParland, has it that the German architect, Richard Castle (as his name was Anglicised), built a house for John Cole's son, successor and namesake, who was to be created Lord Mount Florence in 1760. A Florence Court demesne map of June 1768 contains an elevation of the then facade of the house, which had the Richard Castle feature of a heavily framed oculus window on its top floor. This elevation, and the present-day Florence Court, have a front doorcase reminiscent of Castle's Newbridge, Co. Dublin.

There is little or no architectural evidence surviving in the now Florence Court to support the hypothesis of Castle's involvement. But it is intrinsically probable. Castle was brought to Ireland by Sir Gustavus Hume, 3rd Bt, for whom he built Castle Hume in 1728-1729; and the Castle Hume estate is the property adjoining John Cole's estate in the barony of Magheraboy, to the north of Enniskillen. Furthermore, what was probably Castle's next Irish commission was Hazlewood, Sligo, which dates from 1731 and where his client, Owen Wynne, is known to have been associated with John Cole in the building of the Enniskillen-Sligo road (a development which, in itself, made the site of Florence Court much more desirable and convenient from the communications point of view).

The future 1st Lord Mount Florence had married before he came of age, and came of age in 1730. He could hardly have married and started to have a family without addressing the problem of the unfinished house. He later, in 1755 (as Nancy, Lady Enniskillen has pointed out in her *Florence Court*) made his first will, '... which ... laid down that his wife, Elizabeth, might "have and enjoy my mansion house of Florence Court" provided she did not re-marry after his death.' This gives strong support to the theory that there was a c.1730s house, designed by Castle or by somebody. In an important legal document of this kind, John Cole would hardly have described as a 'mansion house' what was only the small left-hand wing of an unbuilt house of c.1716-1726.

The plasterwork in the library of the present-day Florence Court, probably in the entrance hall, in the 'tea room' at the front of the house and in all the first-floor rooms on the left-hand side of it, is redolent of the 1730s. The staircase at the front left-hand corner of the house, now the back stairs, could perfectly well have been the main stairs in a 1730s house. In short, there probably was a second Florence Court, built in the 1730s and most likely consisting of a simple rectangle, with no decorative plasterwork in many of the rooms. When it was built, the small left-hand wing of the first house was presumably demolished.



The Ranelagh inheritance

The building of the third Florence Court, which is supposed (but why?) to have started about 1756, is likely to have been a slow and piecemeal affair. No builders' records have survived, the documentary evidence is somewhat contradictory, and there has been an unwarranted assumption that the family 'came into money' in the mid-1750s.

The 1992 National Trust *Guidebook* states that in 1754, at the death of Sir Arthur Cole, Lord Ranelagh, only surviving son of Sir John Cole, 1st Bt, his great-nephew, John Cole, the future Lord Mount Florence, came into an income of £2,220 a year, which doubled his rental and provided him with the means to begin building soon afterwards. The stated extent of the inheritance seems much exaggerated (if John Cole had had an income of £4,400 in 1754, he would have been among the richest men in Ireland), and it is not clear where the figure comes from. Probably the source is one of the updated editions of Thomas Prior's *List of the Absentees of Ireland*, first published in 1729, which gives figures which are usually inflated.

In the present instance, however, the figure is even more misleading because it is based on the assumption that all Lord Ranelagh's estates went to John Cole. This was not so. Lord Ranelagh had other great-nephews and nieces, including Sir Arthur Brooke, Bt, of Colebrooke, Co. Fermanagh, whose ancestor would hardly have called his house 'Colebrooke' if he had not received a significant endowment when he married Lord Ranelagh's sister. Sir Arthur himself inherited (probably in 1754) Lord Ranelagh's estates in Cos. Tipperary and Clare. The Co. Dublin and Dublin City property seems to have been divided between Sir Arthur and the already mentioned Henry Moore, another great-nephew (hence the proximity of Cole's Lane, Moore Street, etc, in the vicinity of the General Post Office). Even the West Dean and East Grimstead estate, Wiltshire (as has already been noted), was not inherited by the Florence Court Coles until 1819, and even then was subject to various co-heirships.

Lord Ranelagh was the origin of the Coles' mysterious 12,000-acre estate in Waterford. But as it does not feature in Cole deeds of settlement until the 1790s, it – like the East Grimstead estate – may have been subject to a life interest to Lady Ranelagh which did not expire until 1781, ten years after Florence Court was completed. At the very least it would have been subject to its share of her jointure. Old men with younger wives and no other close relations, are likely to make sure that their widows are well provided for. In other words, Florence Court may have been built on Ranelagh 'tick' (and paid for later out of the proceeds from the sale of the Waterford estate), but there is most unlikely to have been any great influx of cash in 1754. In fact, the main windfalls of cash at this time came from the sale of the seats for the borough of Enniskillen: one was sold in 1761, and both at the general elections of 1768, 1776 and 1783. The prices are unrecorded, but must have been between £1,500 and £2,000 per seat.



Florence Court: the c.1756-c.1771 building phase

It was probably Lord Mount Florence's son, William Willoughby Cole (1736-1803), the future 1st Earl of Enniskillen, who provided the impetus for the renewed building activity at Florence Court. He had been sent on a Grand Tour of the Continent by his father in 1756-1758 Mrs Delany, meeting him on his return in August 1758, described him as '... Mr Cole (£5,000 a year and just come from abroad), a pretty, well-behaved young man'. (The £5,000 a year is even less believable than the £4,400.) Having seen at first hand the Palladian villas which had inspired his grandfather and father from a distance, may have been dissatisfied with what had so far been achieved at Florence Court. This third, and last, building phase probably began with the rococo plasterwork in the drawing room and, especially, the dining room - in other words with the unfinished rooms within the existing layout, internal and external, of the 1730s house.

Work was still in progress at the time of the 1st Lord Mount Florence's death in 1767 (which itself does not suggest a great influx of cash in 1754), as a codicil to his last will - also present in the archive - refers to the unbuilt 'Colonnades at Florence Court'. In fact, the major and most daring part of the work was probably still to do. The already-mentioned Florence Court demesne map of June 1768 shows that at that stage no wings had been built. The 2nd Lord Mount Florence added the links and pavilions which complete the balance of the central block and (since they are not present in the June 1768 facade) also added the over-busy stone dressings to the rubble and rendered facade, in a vain attempt to harmonise it with the sophisticated cut-stone of the links and pavilions. He had a practical as well as aesthetic reason for adding residential pavilions: as the father of a growing family following his marriage in 1763, he needed to regain in the pavilions the accommodation which was being sacrificed to the grand staircase. This last, which is the most important architectural feature of the house, was created by breaking the rectangle to the rear of the house and throwing out a full-height, canted bay; it was probably done during the final building phase. The famous 'Venetian Room' over the front door can more certainly be dated to 1768-1771, because the doors on either side of the landing leading to it have incorrect rustication on their doorcases which exactly matches that on the ground-floor, post-June 1786 window surrounds.

Since the Knight of Glin first made the suggestion, there has been concurrence that the 2nd Lord Mount Florence's architect in 1768-1771 was Davis Ducart, a Lombard or Piedmontese engineer-cum-architect, who built houses in the south Castletown Cox, Co. Kilkenny, and Kilshannig, Co. Cork for example - with affinities to Florence Court. The links and pavilions are up to his level of accomplishment, but the facade is conceivably an afterthought by another, less accomplished hand? At approximately the same time, the demesne was laid out by one 'W. King', who later worked at Castle Coole, too. His 'now you see it: now you don't' main drive up to the house remains substantially unaltered to the present day.



The 1st Earl of Enniskillen

The 2nd Lord Mount Florence had been MP for Enniskillen, 1761-1767. Following his succession to the barony of Mount Florence in the latter year, his promotion in the peerage was rapid. In 1776 he was created Viscount Enniskillen; and in 1789 he was advanced to the Earldom of Enniskillen. These promotions were undoubtedly due to his political support of the government of the time, and to his influence as patron of the two-member constituency of Enniskillen and in the county constituency of Fermanagh. He and was once described - with absurd hyperbole – as 'the **only** true friend of the English government [in Ireland]'.

He also had a reputation for 'great spirit and intrepidity', and was quite capable of asserting his independence. At the famous Dungannon Convention of mid-February 1782 he headed the list, as the only peer who was a signatory, of the representatives of the 143 Volunteer Corps from Ulster who subscribed heady resolutions in favour of an autonomous Irish parliament. In the following year, his younger brother, the Hon. Arthur Cole Hamilton of Skea, Co. Fermanagh, who was also prominent in the Volunteer movement, was elected for the county on a decidedly Volunteer ticket. On matters which he deemed a threat to the Protestant Constitution in Church and State, Lord Enniskillen was also prepared to oppose the government, for example when the Lord Lieutenant, Lord Fitzwilliam, was on the point of introducing a Catholic Emancipation Bill early in 1795. In September 1793, he had marched his regiment, the Fermanagh Militia, through Lisburn, Co. Antrim, with their fifes playing 'The Protestant Boys'. In common with most supporters of the Protestant Ascendancy and in line with Co. Fermanagh sentiment in general, he and all his family connections opposed the Union between Great Britain and Ireland in 1799 and 1800.

His last years were clouded by an excess of zeal in the aftermath of the 1798 Rebellion, in which he served as Colonel of the Fermanagh Militia: he presided over a court martial which acquitted one Hugh Whollaghan (or Woolaghan), a private in the Mount Kennedy Yeomanry, Co. Wicklow, of what appears to have been a murder in cold blood, and the sentence of the court martial was overturned by the Lord Lieutenant himself, and Lord Enniskillen heavily censured. However, well before his death in 1803, indeed by February 1800, he was back in favour at Dublin Castle. His last years were also clouded by financial difficulties, to which the last building phase at Florence Court must have materially contributed. In 1802, according to Dublin Castle, he was 'much distressed'. But this distress must have been greatly relieved by the sale of the Ranelagh estate in Co. Waterford, and also by the sale of the remaining post-Union seat for Enniskillen, at £5,000 per return, at the general elections of 1802, 1806 and 1807.

In the 1st Earl of Enniskillen's time – and not unconnected with his financial difficulties – one major subtraction from, and one major addition to, the Cole estate in Co. Fermanagh took place. The subtraction was almost entirely from the barony of Magheraboy estate. In 1780, the 1st Earl's already-mentioned younger brother, the Hon. Arthur Cole of Skea, married Letitia, daughter and heiress of the late Claudius Hamilton of Beltrim, Co. Tyrone. In view of his wife's great inheritance, he double-barrelled his name to Cole Hamilton, and for the same reason he was probably

provided for with extra generosity by the 1st Earl; with the result that some urban property in Enniskillen and c.45 townlands north of Enniskillen in the barony of Magheraboy (and a few in Clanawley) were made over to Arthur Cole Hamilton as an appendage. This whole property was sold soon after his death in 1810, by which time it had a rental of £1,252 a year.

If Arthur Cole Hamilton had been provided for in cash instead of in kind, there would probably have been no money to pay for the major addition to the Cole estate which was made in this period. As it was, the purchase seems to have been part-financed by £11,500 borrowed on mortgage. The addition was part of the former estate of the Balfour family of Castle Balfour. It was located in the barony of Knockninny, not very far from Florence Court, and constituted the 'barony of Knockninny' estate already itemised. The papers show that it was originally part of 'the manor of Legan' re-granted by Charles I to James, Lord Balfour in 1629. This must have been the last in a complicated series of grants to Balfour, his father and brother, starting in 1610. Some 20 townlands in Legan were acquired as a result of different transactions well documented in the archive, but mainly of a large purchase made by the 1st Earl of Enniskillen in 1791.



The 2nd Earl of Enniskillen

The 1st Earl was succeeded by his eldest son, John Willoughby, the 2nd Earl, who had also been active on the government side in and before the 1798 rebellion. He served under his father, whom he succeeded as Colonel, in the Fermanagh Militia, and he raised the Clanawley Yeomanry out of the tenantry of the family estate. Alluding to Lord Cole's high opinion of his own military prowess, the witty 2nd Earl of Shannon remarked: '... Cole talks like the great Bonaparte of Fermanagh'. Earlier, Lord Shannon had described a meeting of officers of yeomanry corps, at which '... Cole made a great figure in the debate, not only by the strength of his lungs, but the frequency of his orations. ...'

Lord Cole was MP for Co. Fermanagh, 1790-1803, in first the Irish Parliament and then the Parliament of the United Kingdom. He opposed the Union in 1799-1800, but in a manner which a leading government supporter described as '... manly, good humoured, ... [in a] professedly loyal style of opposition, and sincere, I am sure, on his side...'. His reconciliation with the post-Union government was as rapid as his father's. Writing to Dublin Castle in October 1802 to solicit some provision for his uncle, Arthur Cole Hamilton, in lieu of the office from which Cole Hamilton had been dismissed 'on the Union question', Lord Cole observed, somewhat arrogantly: '... I thought all **Union** jobs were now over, and that they [the government] would fulfil their promises to a family who had always supported them from pure motives and were staunch to the King's government when others now taken notice of were the contrary ...'. Although the seats for Enniskillen were sold between 1802 and 1812, Lord Cole/the 2nd Earl made sure that he obtained credit for selling them to government supporters, and he could also claim credit for the support given by his brother, Colonel, later General, the Hon. Galbraith Lowry Cole, as MP for Co. Fermanagh. The 2nd Earl was in consequence created Baron Grinstead in the peerage of the U.K. in 1815. He was Governor (from 1831 Lieutenant) of Co. Fermanagh from his succession in 1803 to his death in 1840.

He possessed to the full the Cole characteristic of 'intrepidity'. In 1829, he confronted an immense gathering of between 500 and 2,000 men, many of them Ribbonmen and armed, who had assembled in the mountains between Florence Court and Swanlinbar. He '... besought them to disperse and return peaceably to their respective homes; he told them he had been a good landlord, that he never turned out a man from his estate on account of his religious belief, and that they knew he was a friend of the poor. The people assembled were quite pleased with his Lordship's address, and said they would do as he desired: ... all they requested of him was to prevent the Orange procession through the county on that day ...'. Lord Enniskillen agreed to these terms ...'. Even by such a hostile commentator as Daniel O'Connell, he was described as 'that rare good thing in Ireland, a resident nobleman, spending his income amongst his own tenantry'.

He married a sister of the 1st Marquess of Anglesey (of Battle of Waterloo fame), and her death, comparatively young, in 1817 seems to have affected him deeply. Later in that year it was observed that '... Lord Enniskillen's domestic misfortune, ... by causing a temporary distaste to public affairs, [has] left the county destitute of its

usual example and in want of salutary influence. ...' His own brother noted in 1834, at the time of a Co. Fermanagh by-election when Lord Enniskillen had been completely confused as to what engagements he had entered into, '... The truth is, E.'s memory is much injured and ... he is nervous and altered. ...' He died in 1840.



Sir Galbraith Lowry Cole

His brother, General the Hon. Sir Galbraith Lowry Cole, is perhaps the most famous of the Coles. He distinguished himself as Colonel of the 27th or Inniskilling Regiment of Foot and as a general in the Peninsular War (making the decisive movement which won the Battle of Albuera in 1810), and was Governor of such varied spots as Gravesend, Tilbury, Mauritius and The Cape of Good Hope. He was M.P. for the family borough of Enniskillen, 1797-1800, and for Co. Fermanagh, 1803-1823.



Sir Galbraith Lowry Cole

Nancy, Lady Enniskillen, writes in her *Florence Court*: '... Sir Lowry's military and civil career had been spent far away from Ireland. Ten years before he was to die [i.e. in 1832, in a letter which has not so far come to light in the archive] he wrote from Cape Town to his older brother, the 2nd Earl, that he wished to come home. "... I am tired of being a Governor and shall be too happy to descend to the humbler walks of life. All I wish at present is to give my children a good education and principles before I die." He died at 71 in 1842, and was commemorated in Enniskillen by ... [a ten-foot high statue by the Irish sculptor, Terence Farrell] ... standing with his sword proudly on top of the high column on the summit of Fort Hill. The pillar, which contains a stairway, was raised by public subscription. ...'

Among the mementoes of him at Florence Court is a painting by the Venetian artist, Domenico Pellegrini, dated 1809, which was purchased by the National Trust with the proceeds arising from a lecture series called 'Behind the Facade' which PRONI staff gave, in conjunction with the Belfast Members' Centre of the Trust, in 1980-1981. Unfortunately, this is PRONI's main association with Cole, as he is little represented in the archive, apart from legal documents (such as the settlement made on his marriage in 1815 to Lady Frances Harris, daughter of one of Britain's leading late 18th-century diplomats, the 1st Earl of Malmesbury), and some correspondence of the 1840s and 1850s about the Cole Monument and other commemorations of him.



Arthur Henry Cole

Another, less well commemorated, brother, the Hon. Arthur Henry Cole (1780-1844), fourth son of the 1st Earl of Enniskillen, entered the East India Company's civil service in 1801 and rose to be Resident at Mysore. '... By his prudence, wisdom and fearlessness, contributed very essentially to the restoration of order and the prevention of sanguinary extremities ...' during the mutiny of the British officers of the Madras army in 1809. During his long term of office at Mysore, he acquired a ring worn by Tipoo at the storming of Seringapatem in 1799, and found on his body after the battle. Nancy, Lady Enniskillen, presented this to the British Museum. Arthur Henry Cole is represented in the archive during his earlier days in the Indian civil service, 1801-1814. Later, 1828-1844, he was M.P. for Enniskillen.



The 3rd Earl of Enniskillen

The 3rd Earl of Enniskillen (1807-1886), MP for Co. Fermanagh, 1831-1840, and Colonel of the Fermanagh Militia, 1834-1875, was a 'nobleman of high culture', and a distinguished amateur scientist who travelled throughout the Continent pursuing his geological interests.

These he acquired at Oxford, where he fell under the spell of Dean William Buckland, the University's first Professor of Geology. The 3rd Earl's bent was practical, not academic. He wrote next-to-nothing on geology, but concentrated on creating an important fossil collection at Florence Court. There, he altered and made fireproof the south pavilion in 1835 to house his collection, of which he published a catalogue in 1837. The collection, of almost 10,000 specimens, attracted leading geologists to Florence Court from all over Europe, but was sold to the British Museum (for the huge sum of £3,500) in 1883 possibly because he had gone blind in c.1870 and could no longer enjoy it. The south pavilion then became a billiard room.

He was given doctorates of law by the Universities of Dublin, Durham and Oxford, and was a Fellow of the Royal Society, a Fellow of the Geographical Society, a member of the Royal Irish Academy, Vice-President of the Geological Society of Dublin (1839-1864) and first President of its successor, the Royal Geological Society of Ireland (1865).

He was responsible for many improvements to the Florence Court estate and pleasure grounds, including the establishment of the tilery and pottery (1845) and of the sawmill (1847). He chose as the sculptor of his bust at Florence Court the Dublin-based but Fermanagh-born Joseph Watkins, who received similar commissions from a number of Fermanagh magnates of the period.

His first wife, Jane Casamajor, was of Spanish descent (a sumptuous 1863 pedigree of her family is preserved in the archive). They married in 1844 and she bore him seven children. Following her early death in 1855 he married in 1865 (to the expressed approval of a large number of writers of letters in the archive) the Hon. Emma Brodrick, eldest daughter of the 6th Viscount Midleton. She was, perhaps unjustly, regarded as a formidable lady, and died in 1896.



The 3rd Earl in politics

The 3rd Earl was Grand Master of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland from its reorganisation in 1845, and then Imperial Grand Master of the Orange Institution through the British Empire from 1866 until his death. He was first holder of the office of Imperial Grand Master.

According to a newspaper obituary of him, dated 13 November 1886, and preserved in the archive, this '... position involved responsibilities of which he was fully sensible, and the moderation of tone and the self-restraint and the general propriety of conduct which have characterised the society in trying circumstances, bore testimony to the excellence of its discipline and to ... [his] wise and judicious counsel He was personally not obnoxious to his political opponents, but rather conciliated their good opinion by his courteous demeanour and practical benevolence [In spite of this], some thirty or forty years ago [1854] a diabolical attempt was made to wreck a train in which he was travelling [near Trillick, on the Fermanagh-Tyrone border] ...' and inflicted on him a severe leg injury. This latter assassination attempt is graphically described in Nancy, Lady Enniskillen's *Florence Court*, pp. 23-27.

Like a number of borough patrons whose family influence long ante-dated Irish Municipal Reform in 1839, he found himself engaged in litigation, which lasted from 1841 to 1863 and is well-documented in the archive, with the newly established Enniskillen Town Commissioners. In terms of parliamentary elections for the borough, however, the family continued to exercise a decisive influence until Enniskillen's separate existence as a constituency was ended by the Redistribution Act of 1884. In the early 1830s, their influence in the borough had been threatened by their cousins, the Lowry-Corrays, Earls of Belmore, who were annoyed at Lord Corry's supersession as MP for Co. Fermanagh in 1831, had the advantage that their seat, Castle Coole, was very much closer to Enniskillen than Florence Court, and had the further advantage that the Great Reform Act looked as if it was going to 'open the borough'. Nothing in the end came of this challenge. Later, there was further local opposition to the Coles, perhaps due to the unpopularity in some quarters of their MP for Enniskillen, 1851-1859, James Whiteside, a Conservative Law Officer and later Lord Chief Justice of Ireland. The attempt to undermine the 3rd Earl of Enniskillen's influence in the borough was abetted and perhaps encouraged by the Coles' partners in the representation of Co. Fermanagh, the Archdales of Castle Archdale and Riversdale, and led to a quarrel between Lord Enniskillen and them in 1852, which was referred to the Conservative Prime Minister, Lord Derby, and possibly smoothed over by him. For whatever reason, an Archdale and a Cole were elected for Co. Fermanagh at the general election later in 1852, and a Cole succeeded Whiteside in the representation of Enniskillen in 1859.

In the county partnership between the Coles and the Archdales, the latter were the senior partners and represented Fermanagh uninterruptedly from 1731. Cole representation was interrupted, usually because the eldest son, the Lord Cole of the day, was not of age, between 1823 and 1831 (when Lord Corry was returned), between 1840 and 1854 (when Sir Arthur B. Brooke, 2nd Bt, of Colebroke was returned) and between 1880 and 1886 (when the 3rd Earl of Enniskillen's son-in-law,

Lord Crichton, was returned). Nor, it must be admitted, was the younger son of the Cole family who represented the county between 1854 and 1880 a very dynamic parliamentarian!



The 3rd Earl's two brothers

This bachelor second brother of the 3rd Earl, Colonel the Hon. Henry Arthur Cole (1809-1890), had been MP for Enniskillen, 1844-1855, before being returned for Co. Fermanagh. As the National Trust's 1992 *Guidebook* puts it, '... having served for a time in the 7th Hussars, [he] returned to Florence Court to end his days. Finding himself at odds with the rest of the family, he moved out of the central block and into the north pavilion, where, with the exception of his manservant, he lived in isolation, only joining the family for silent meals in the dining room.'

A more useful member of the family was the third brother, John (1813-1882), also a bachelor, who was MP for Enniskillen, 1859-1868. On the evidence of the archive, he advised the 3rd Earl on business matters and 'minded' Florence Court during the latter's absence on some lengthy tour in 1850.



The 4th Earl of Enniskillen

The 4th Earl of Enniskillen (1845-1924) was, as Lord Cole, MP for Enniskillen, 1880-1885. As Nancy, Lady Enniskillen points out, he was the ninth generation and seventeenth member of the Cole family who, between 1661 and 1885, represented either Enniskillen or Co. Fermanagh in either the Irish or UK Parliaments. He was also a Knight of St Patrick, in this respect following in the footsteps of his grandfather, the 2nd Earl.

In 1869 he married Charlotte Marion, daughter of Douglas Baird of Closeburn, Thornhill, Dumfriesshire. She was a considerable heiress, the Baird family fortune having been based originally on Lanarkshire coal. She was a cultured, beautiful and stylish woman as well as an heiress, and in addition to redecorating the interiors of Florence Court, she devoted much energy to beautifying and improving the gardens, and, in particular, to preserving the late 18th or 19th century layout of the walled garden (a combination of flowers and vegetables, the former screening the latter) into the 1930s. Thanks to her, family finances were placed on a sounder footing, and her husband was enabled to indulge his passion for hunting (mainly with the Tarpoley Hunt in Cheshire) and, less laudably, for gambling. Many years before his death, Lady Enniskillen parted from him, living first in Florence and then in Bath. She died in 1937.

The 4th Earl, apart from his five years as MP for Enniskillen, is not supposed to have been specially distinguished (although this is belied by a scrapbook of newspaper obituaries of him following his death in 1924). In his *Titled Corruption: the Sordid Origins of some Irish Peerages* (London, 1894) – a title which bespeaks the bias of the author, the Nationalist MP, J.G. Swift McNeill – the 4th Earl is accused of having 'obtained an unenviable notoriety in the Mordaunt divorce case ...'. This was a rather sad society scandal of 1870, in which the then Lord Cole had been cited as one of the co-respondents in a divorce suit by an irrational and vengeful husband, who also dragged in the Prince of Wales for good measure. Kenneth James describes the 4th Earl as 'a tall, handsome and modest individual, always pleasant in company, and a ... popular figure in ... scientific circles'.



The 5th Earl of Enniskillen and his brothers

John Henry Michael Cole, 5th Earl of Enniskillen (1877-1963), then Lord Cole, and his two younger brothers, Galbraith Lowry Cole (1881-1929) and Reginald Berkeley Cole (1882-1925), all served in the Boer War – a remarkable family feat, fully documented in the archive by their letters home to their parents, 1901-1902 (mostly written in pencil to keep the censor happy). Their sister, Florence, had married the 3rd Lord Delamere, in 1899. His family seat was Vale Royal, Cheshire, a house which their father had rented when hunting with the Tarpoley. Lord Delamere has been aptly described by Nancy, Lady Enniskillen as 'the pioneer of European settlement in Kenya'. Accordingly, both Galbraith and Berkeley Cole decided to settle there after the Boer War was over. In Kenya, Galbraith Cole later met his wife, Eleanor, later Lady Eleanor, Balfour, a niece of Arthur James, 1st Earl of Balfour, sometime Prime Minister and, earlier in his career, Chief Secretary for Ireland.



Kenya

In the words of Nancy, Lady Enniskillen '... Galbraith Cole and his bride made their home on Kekopey. Their ranch adjoined the Delamares' Soysambu in the Rift Valley, sharing the flamingo Lake of Elmenteita. Overlooking this lake, Galbraith Cole [who had been crippled with arthritis for some years] was buried in 1929. ...' His younger brother, Berkeley, had predeceased him in 1925, and Galbraith Cole had inherited his estate, which lay nearer to the slopes of Mount Kenya itself.

At the time of Galbraith Cole's death, his elder son, David Lowry Cole, later 6th Earl of Enniskillen (1918-1989), was only eleven. Educated in England (Durnford, Eton and Cambridge), he spent much time at Florence Court under the aegis of his uncle, the 5th Earl. In 1940, he married Sonia Syers, the 5th Earl's step-daughter. Following his service with the Irish Guards in the Second World War (during part of which time he was A.D.C to Field-Marshal Alexander), 1939-1946, he returned to Kenya to assume his responsibilities for the vast, 60,000-acre ranches on Kekopey and at Solio (where he lived) and the diatomite mine on Kekopey.

During the period of Mau Mau terrorism, he served as a Provincial Commandant in the Kenya Police Reserve, 1950-1955, and was awarded the MBE in 1954. In the same year, his first marriage was dissolved, and in 1955 he married Nancy, Lady Enniskillen. Six years later, in 1961, he was elected to the Legislative Council of Kenya for the North Kenya constituency in the last election prior to independence. In conjunction with Jomo Kenyatta and the last Colonial Governor, Malcolm MacDonald, David Lowry Cole, who by this stage had become a figure of great political importance in Kenya, was deeply involved in drafting the new Kenyan constitution. The death of his uncle, the 5th Earl, and his succession as 6th Earl, in 1963, took place soon after the transfer of the Kenyan constitutional conference from Nairobi to London.



Florence Court, 1954-1963

The 5th Earl had been pre-deceased by his only son, Michael, Lord Cole (1921-1956), who died unmarried. Shortly before this, in 1954, Lord Cole, who was the legal owner of the property, had in conjunction with his father given Florence Court and the fourteen acres immediately surrounding it to the National Trust. In 1955, a very serious fire broke out, which would have had far worse consequences but for the presence of mind of the 5th Earl's wife. However, it still devastated the drawing room, the staircase hall and the Venetian Room, which have since been very largely, though not entirely, restored by the National Trust. Lord and Lady Enniskillen continued to live in the house, but as Nancy, Lady Enniskillen puts it, '... with [a] reduced number of rooms and of staff - also new discomforts and inconveniences. ...' Lord Cole died in 1956, leaving the rest of his Co. Fermanagh estate to David Lowry Cole.



The 6th Earl of Enniskillen

From his succession to the title in 1963 until 1973, the 6th Earl and his second wife, Nancy, Lady Enniskillen, lived at Florence Court. During this period, the 6th Earl considerably developed the estate. Between 1963 and 1969 he served as a member of Fermanagh County Council, being Chairman of its General Purposes and Finance Committee. From 1971 to 1973, despite a weak heart, he was on active duty as a captain in the 4th (Fermanagh) Battalion of the Ulster Defence Regiment, whose new headquarters in Enniskillen he opened in March 1973.

In 1973, following disagreements with the National Trust which, happily, were laid to rest in 1997, Lord and Lady Enniskillen left Florence Court and Northern Ireland. They took most of the contents of the house with them, although there was an auction in 1973, at which the late Duke of Westminster purchased a number of important Cole family portraits. (His widow, Viola, Duchess of Westminster, presented these to the National Trust in 1980.) Though no longer living in Northern Ireland, Lord Enniskillen continued to serve as a D.L. for Co Fermanagh, and never failed to attend the House of Lords when Northern Ireland issues were under discussion, particularly issues relating to the police. In 1974, he transferred nearly all his Florence Court land to the Department of Agriculture to enable it to create a forest park.



Nancy, Dowager Countess of Enniskillen

The 6th Earl died in 1989. He was succeeded by Andrew Cole, his only son (by his first marriage). The 7th Earl, following family tradition, lives in Kenya, where he is married with three daughters. The heir presumptive to the earldom is therefore the 6th Earl's younger brother, the Hon. Arthur Gerald Cole, who lives in Edinburgh. The 6th Earl's widow, Nancy, Lady Enniskillen, also lived, until her death in February 1998, in Scotland. She was the daughter of the late Dr John A. MacLennan of Bridgeport, Connecticut, and was of Anglo-Irish ancestry on her mother's side. Prior to her marriage to the 6th Earl in 1955, she was a Washington and United Nations correspondent of *The New York Times*, and then U.S. assistant attaché and Vice-Consul in Cairo, Nairobi and Tokyo.



The Enniskillen papers

For a smallish archive, by PRONI standards, the Enniskillen papers are not particularly easy to use. This is partly because, as has already been mentioned, they were received in three unequal instalments, in 1963, 1995 and 1997 respectively. By the time the 1995 and 1997 addenda were received, the arrangement and referencing system of the 1963 instalment had already been considerably used and cited. It was therefore judged inappropriate to do more than tinker minimally with the original deposit. Because correspondence dominated the 1997 deposit, and had featured virtually not all in 1963 and 1995, there was no problem about creating a correspondence section at the end. However, some of the other addenda sit more awkwardly. In any case, when the sorting and listing of the original deposit was carried out many years ago, too blind a faith was placed in the existing Estate Office system which, clearly, had in many cases been so mucked about over time as to be misleading rather than helpful. So, the 1995 and 1997 material (particularly deeds and leases) had to be engrafted on to a structure which was not intrinsically sound. The description of the archive which follows, and the reference numbers cited in the foot-notes, will it is hoped enable researchers to overcome these minor difficulties. The important point is that the archive is listed in very considerable detail, which means that the problems of layout are not insurmountable.



Early title deeds

The earliest document is a grant from James I to Capt. William Cole of the manor of Cornagrade, in the half-baronies of Coole and Tirkennedy and barony of Clanawley, Co. Fermanagh, 1611. There are two non-contemporary attested copies (one of them dated 1858) of James I's charter of incorporation of the borough of Enniskillen, 1613. Dating from later in the same year, 1613, is a copy of a grant from James I to William Cole of lands including Dromclea and part of the island of Enniskillen, in the half-baronies of Coole and Tirkennedy.

After a gap in time, there follows a terrier of the estate of William Cole, now Sir William Cole, 19 July 1637, spelling out the feudal tenure and Plantation conditions under which he held the manors of Cornagrade and of Dromskea and Portora (the last two of which he had purchased in 1612 and which are in the barony of Magheraboy, Co. Fermanagh) and the c.500 townlands which they comprised. Letters patent of Charles I dated 18 July 1639, re-granting the island of Enniskillen and the manors of Dromskea and Portora to Sir William Cole, survive in the form of non-contemporary extracts and a non-contemporary translation.



Post-Restoration title deeds

Other deeds which survive in non-original form are an abstract of Sir William's grandson, Sir Michael Cole's, title to his patrimonial estate of c.30 townlands in the barony of Clanawley, c.1665, and a copy confirmation of 3 July 1667 from Charles II to Sir William's second son, Sir John Cole, 1st Bt, of 2,614 acres in the same barony (the Montagh estate). This estate, as has been seen, was settled in 1671 on the issue of Sir Michael's second marriage to his cousin, Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Cole. Unlike the rest of the Ranelagh inheritance, Montagh was free of the complications of co-heirship, came into the possession of the senior branch of the Cole family early (probably in 1711) and had the enormous advantage of being geographically contiguous to their existing estate in the barony of Clanawley.

The other post-Restoration title deeds mainly relate to purchases of individual or small numbers of townlands or re-acquisitions of leasehold properties in the town of Enniskillen. The only significant purchase documented is the Balfour estate in the barony of Knockninny in c.1791, and even here the deed of conveyance to the 1st Earl of Enniskillen is not present.



Deeds of settlement and leases

There are deeds of settlement (marriage and otherwise), mortgages, assignments of mortgages, deed polls, etc, relating to these estates from 1671 (the date of the settlement on the marriage of Sir Michael and his cousin, Elizabeth Cole), and leases from 1725. There is also a lease book covering the period 1613-1879, which begins with a schedule of the charters, deeds and papers of the then (3rd) Earl of Enniskillen, and includes notes on leases of the Enniskillen town, Clanawley (including Montagh), Knockninny, Magheraboy and Tirkennedy estates.

One lease of particular note relates to a parcel of land on the south side of Darling Street, Enniskillen, which was granted in perpetuity to a private individual in 1754 and assigned in 1767 as the site of the Co. Fermanagh Infirmary. There are also a number of leases of the castle and barracks of Enniskillen, the earliest of them dated 1746, and a lease of 1825 of a site off Barrack Street to James Creddan of Enniskillen, 'architect'. Two deeds of 1764 and 1776 constitute and endow the parish and church of Killesher, near Florence Court.



Deeds relating to the estates of other families

Some of the deeds of settlement in the archive relate to the estates of other families into which the Coles married, for example the Earl of Erne's estate in the parish of Clonleigh, barony of Raphoe, Co. Donegal, settled on the marriage of his son, Viscount Crichton, and Lady Florence M. Cole, in 1870, and the estate of James H. Smith Barry of White Hall, Chester, in the barony of Ferrard, Co. Louth, settled on his marriage to Lady Charlotte A. Cole, in 1874.

There is one bundle of deeds of settlement, conveyance, etc, of 1785-1786 relating to the estates of the Eney family of Bawnboy, Ballyconnell, Co. Cavan, mainly in that county but including at least one townland in Co. Fermanagh, Gortoral, which was purchased at this time by the 1st Viscount Enniskillen. Deeds of 1788 and 1791 relate to the Fermanagh estate (Calkill, Carricknegoure, Leeffa, etc) of the Crozier family of Dunbar House (near Enniskillen, on the road from Enniskillen to Belleek).



Pre-1858 Irish wills

The pre-1858 wills mainly derive from members of the Cole family and comprise: will and probate of Sir William Cole of Enniskillen, 1653; will of John Cole of Florence Court, 1755 (of some importance to the interpretation of the complicated building history of Florence Court); copy of the will of Thomas Vincent of Enniskillen, 1763; will and codicil of John Cole, Lord Mount Florence, 1767 (of great importance to the interpretation of the complicated building history of Florence Court); will, copy will and probate of William Willoughby, Viscount Enniskillen, 1788-1789 and 1805 (he was created 1st Earl of Enniskillen in 1789 and died in 1803); will, codicil and testamentary papers of his wife, Anne (a sister of his Enniskillen neighbour, the 1st Earl of Belmore), 1788-1793; will and codicil of William Beatty of Florence Court, 1816; letters of administration to the estate of Thomas Gerrard of Gibbstown, Co. Meath, 1827; will and probate of John Willoughby, 2nd Earl of Enniskillen, 1840; and probate (1844) of General the Hon. Sir Galbraith Lowry Cole (d.1842).



Legal case papers

There are a number of legal case papers. One of them, dated 9 July 1814, is not strictly relevant and relates to the cause célèbre of the Dowager Lady Cathcart v Colonel Hugh Maguire the case involving the abduction and incarceration of an heiress which was one of the inspirations of considerable portions of Maria Edgeworth's *Castle Rackrent* and Thackeray's *Barry Lyndon*.

However, the most significant case papers relate to the long running series of lawsuits, 1841-1863, between the 3rd Earl of Enniskillen and the Town Commissioners of Enniskillen over the tolls, customs, fairs and markets of Enniskillen, and over parts of his estate in the town and at Kilnaloo, Co. Fermanagh. There is also a good deal of supporting correspondence, 1847-1854, about these lawsuits in the correspondence section of the archive.



Rentals and accounts

Co. Fermanagh estate rentals begin with a thinly spread volume running from c.1810-c.1876. From 1865 to 1947 there is a continuous series which becomes annual or biannual from 1897. The Enniskillen town estate is included in these rentals, but there are also five volumes of separate rentals for that estate, 1898-1942. One isolated rental relates to the Co. Fermanagh estate of Edward Barton of Clonelly, 1870-1876.

In addition, there are many account books, accounts and Irish Land Commission sale papers relating to Lord Enniskillen's Co. Fermanagh estates in the last third of the 19th and first third of the 20th centuries. Some particulars of East Grimstead estate rents are provided (for Estate Duty purposes following the death of the 3rd Earl) for the period 1886-1887.



Maps, surveys and architectural material

The earliest map or survey is one of the Florence Court demesne by Farrell Mullavill, June 1768 (the one which shows the then facade of the house, as yet **without** wings). Next comes a large demesne survey by Daniel McKim, 1814 (with a charming cartouche showing the front elevation of the house, now of course complete with wings). Photostat copies of these 2 surveys, together with enlargements of the parts of them showing the house, will be found at T2094. A 'Thorough [sic] drainage' book of maps of the Florence Court estate has a lithographed title page dated 1855, showing a sidelong view of the facade of the house, and contains mid-19th century copies of mainly earlier surveys, one of them a scaled-down version of Farrell Mullavill's of 1768, and later insertions, for working agricultural purposes, by the 6th Earl of Enniskillen up to 1973.

A large volume of bound-in individual surveys (some of them missing or never inserted), 1815-1874, documents the entire Fermanagh estate, the surveyors being Daniel McKim, Thomas Elliott and Joseph Weaver, in rough chronological order. There is also a large (4' x 2') coloured map of the town of Enniskillen, 1823, with a reference section listing the names of householders, and another map of the town and townparks by Thomas Elliott, 1826. A series of c.120 maps and tracings give details of holdings, etc, on all the estates, c.1867-1898, by Joseph Weaver. The rest of the estate maps (and indeed some of Weaver's) are mainly derived from the Ordnance Survey, from 1857 onwards.



Sketch books and photograph albums

Sketch books and photograph albums, 1835-1963, are a numerous and significant category of record. There are three sketch books of Florence Court and the (mainly caricatured) activities of its inhabitants, 1835, 1875 and 1878-1879, the first by the Hon. John Cole, the second and third by Lady Jane Evelyn Cole. They were, respectively, the brother and the daughter of the 3rd Earl of Enniskillen.

Photograph albums, which number 11, begin in 1860, with one which contains photographs of groups of officers, individual military portraits, etc, presumably deriving from Lord Cole (later 4th Earl of Enniskillen), who was an officer in the Rifle Brigade, 1865-1868. Another album contains photographs of groups of visitors to Florence Court and other houses, and of the exteriors of the houses themselves (in England and Scotland as well as Ireland). There is an album of approximately this date (c.1870) containing individual portrait photographs of Cole family and friends, all fully identified in a most efficient key at the front of the book.

Later photograph albums/photographs include portraits of the three Cole brothers in uniform at the time of the Boer War: John Henry Michael, Lord Cole, was a lieutenant in the 7th Hussars, 1899-1902, and his younger brothers, Galbraith and Berkeley, were lieutenants in the 10th Hussars and 9th Lancers respectively. One album of c.1930 includes earlier photographs which document Florence Court exteriors, and one interior (the divided entrance hall), 1892-1895. Another album runs from the boyhood and school holidays of the future 6th Earl at Florence Court, c.1925-1935, through his (first) marriage to Sonia Syers, his service with the Irish Guards in the Second World War, and back to Kenya in the late 1940s. The subsequent photographic material relating to Kenya includes disturbing shots of Mau Mau mutilation of cattle, c.1950, and photographs of the Lancaster House independence negotiations of 1962-1963.

Some other photographs illustrate the journalistic career of Nancy, Lady Enniskillen, c.1950, as a Washington correspondent of *The New York Times*, specialising for a time in United Nations affairs, and her subsequent life in Kenya with her husband, the 6th Earl, 1955-1963 and at Florence Court, 1963-1973.



Plate books, game books, etc

There are also a number of Florence Court plate books, game books, etc, of the late 19th-early 20th centuries, one two-volume hunting diary, 1881-1887, kept by Lord Cole, who was a member, and as 4th Earl of Enniskillen, Master (1895-1901), of the Tarpoley Hunt, Cheshire. One surviving, 18th-century cellar book records (surprisingly) sales rather than purchases of claret and port, 1785-1786.



Scrapbooks and newscutting books

Scrapbooks and news cutting books are not entirely distinct from the sketch books containing John and Lady Jane Evelyn Cole's caricatures. The earliest covers, approximately, the period 1803-1825, and includes MS 'receipts', some of them for 'diseased livers', 'hydrophobia', 'ringworms' and 'scorbutic eruptions'! Another scrapbook/news cutting book covers approximately the period 1862-1899, and it is this one which contains some of caricatures by Lady Florence Cole (1778-1862), a daughter of the 1st Earl of Enniskillen; she was noted for her cut-out work and her sketches of Co. Fermanagh scenery.

There is a scrapbook containing newspaper cuttings about court, personal and social events, 1910-1911. Another volume contains newspaper obituaries of the 4th Earl of Enniskillen, 1924.



Pedigrees, formal documents, etc

Pedigrees, formal documents and genealogical material are a major strongpoint of the archive. The earliest pedigree, dated 1635, is described by the 4th Earl of Belmore as demonstrating '... that Sir William Cole was the twelfth in lineal male descent from William Cole of Huntersleigh in the county of Devon, who was living A.D. 1243. ...' It is beautifully coloured and gilded and is adorned with representations of English monarchs, etc. There are other, similar parchments, of smaller size, of approximately this date.



Patents of peerage, etc

The earliest of these is the patent of 23 January 1661 creating Sir John Cole a baronet, and adorned with a coloured portrait of Charles II. The patent of 8 September 1760 creating the barony of Mount Florence is a dull, black-and-white affair. The patent of 20 July 1776 creating the viscountcy of Enniskillen is gorgeously coloured and gilded, and contains an unusual portrait of a youthful George III. The patent creating the earldom of Enniskillen is not present, although there is a preliminary King's Letter authorising the passing of the patent, 18 August 1789. The patent of 11 August 1815 creating the U.K. barony of Grinstead is coloured and gilded but, as usual, is less sumptuous than Irish patents of peerage of the last third of the 18th century, which also outshone British patents of the same period.



Other genealogical and formal documents

There is a magnificent MS 'Genealogy of the family of Casamajor [to whom the recently (1855) deceased first wife of the 3rd Earl of Enniskillen belonged], showing their descent from the Kings of Castile and Leon, and deduced from the year 1250 to the present time', 1863. Originally Counts of Mayorga in Spain, the Casamajors had latterly been chiefly distinguished as servants of the British East India Company.

The more humdrum material in this section runs from 1756 to 1964 and includes military commissions, Orange and Freemasons' certificates, copies of birth and marriage certificates of members of the Cole family, 1815-1855, letters from the omnipresent Sir John Bernard Burke and from the 4th Earl of Belmore, a scholarly concordance by the Rev. Dr William Reeves of the Irish and English names of the townlands comprising Lord Enniskillen's Fermanagh estate (1869), and a copy of what Nancy, Lady Enniskillen calls '... a long and flowery inscription to be put on the tombstone of ... the [2nd Earl's] "faithful servant", the huntsman, Peter Leonard ..., buried at nearby Bellanaleck, overlooking Lough Erne, in 1789'.



Family history material deriving from Nancy, Lady Enniskillen

Apart from the pedigrees and patents up to 1815, the most interesting family history material derives from Nancy, Lady Enniskillen herself, including a copy of her *Florence Court*, published in 1972. In connection with her husband's domicile for tax purposes, she compiled material bearing on his life and career post-1973 and on recent family history, and in 1997 she wrote a lengthy and useful critique of the 1992 *Florence Court Guidebook*. All these, and some similar family history papers, have been added to the archive, and have been drawn upon in the writing of this introduction.



Diaries and passports

Diaries and passports have been grouped together in the one section, because the diaries mainly relate to foreign travel, and passports of the pre-1860 period provide a place-by-place itinerary of the passport-holder.

The diaries include the original and a typescript copy of the Grand Tour journal kept by Lord Cole, later 2nd Earl of Enniskillen, 1791-1792. As Nancy, Lady Enniskillen writes in her *Florence Court*: '... For his Grand Tour, ... instead of the camera of the modern tourist, he brought his own artist to accompany him. The artist was a Mr Kaiserman. Kaiserman produced many pleasant sepia tinted ink and watercolour sketches of the various scenes that charmed them upon their way. ... Kaiserman and his lordly patron of 23 had a passion for the rustic beauty of the European countryside and the weathered ruins there of classical architecture. Where they saw almost a whole Roman amphitheatre their enthusiasm knew no bounds. It is small wonder that the future 2nd Earl ..., on his return from his impressionable Grand Tour ..., [built] the most romantic of all dallying places ..., a tiny, chalet-type cottage set in a woodland bower about 10 minutes' walk from the house ..., [and known as] the Cane Cottage'

Later diaries include a Second World War diary, 1940, and 2 Kenyan Reserve Police notebooks, c.1950, of David Lowry Cole, later 6th Earl of Enniskillen.



Correspondence

The correspondence section of the archive runs from the 1790s to the 1990s.

Apart from subject matter already described, it includes political, 1798 Rebellion and Fermanagh Militia papers of the 1st Earl of Enniskillen and his son, Lord Cole, subsequently 2nd Earl, 1797-1803. Among these are: a circular letter from Colonel J.E. Urquhart, this copy addressed to 'Lord Viscount Cole and the other officers commanding yeomanry corps in and near Enniskillen', about searches for arms, 25 May 1797; a couple of MS copies of letters and spoofs relating to the Rebellion, 1798; the Hon. Arthur Henry Cole's commission as the first lieutenant in the Clanawley Yeoman Infantry commanded by Lord Cole, 2 August 1798, signed by Lords Cornwallis and Castlereagh; 2 letters of early September 1798 about the march of the French from Castlebar to Collooney; a letter covering a propagandist piece, 26 October 1798, to Lord Enniskillen about the Hugh Whollaghan trial; and 2 returns of 'ammunition wanting' and 'camp equipage belonging to the Fermanagh Militia', both signed by Lords Enniskillen and Cole, 25 and 29 February 1799.

The later letters to Lord Cole, now 2nd Earl of Enniskillen, May-August 1803, are from the 3rd Earl of Hardwicke, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and other Dublin Castle officials, including one from Lord Castlereagh (President of the Board of Control for India), and concern patronage matters, principally Lord Enniskillen's succession to the colonelcy of the Co. Fermanagh Militia following the death of his father, but with some reference to the ensuing by-election for Co. Fermanagh and Lord Castlereagh's wish to advance Arthur Henry Cole in the Indian civil service.

There are also a couple of later political papers of the 2nd Earl, 1834-1835, about Ribbonism and William IV's high opinion of him.



Correspondence of the 3rd Earl of Enniskillen

The 3rd Earl's correspondence is almost completely devoid of anything relating to fossil fish and geology.

It contains much of interest in relation to Co. Fermanagh elections, 1840-1841 and 1851-1854, and to Enniskillen elections, 1851-1854 and 1880-1881. The activities of the peers and gentry of Co. Fermanagh on local and law-and-order issues are also interestingly documented. There is an original bundle of letters and accounts of the 3rd Earl, 1841 and 1846, in connection with the raising of subscriptions from Co. Fermanagh magnates for information in connection with 'The Molly Maguire's business', which involved bringing to justice the murderer of someone called Cowan. Another original bundle of 1846 contains letters, petitions, subscription lists, etc, all in connection with the opposition, led by the 3rd Earl, to '... Mr Brown's bill to drain Lough Erne ... [on the ground] of its interference with the vested rights of the ... landed proprietors of Fermanagh ...'. These latter raised a considerable subscription (£100 each from Lords Enniskillen, Ely and Erne) to petition parliament against this bill, which was called the Ballyshannon Dock and Harbour Bill. An original bundle of 1870 relates to an attempt made on the life of Henry Mervyn D'Arcy Irvine at Irvinestown, Co. Fermanagh.



The 3rd Earl and the Orange Order

The attempt on the 3rd Earl's own life in 1854, and other Orange Order-related papers, loom large. They include an original bundle docketed 'England: Orange business', which consists of correspondence, 1850-1851, about fears that the Lord Lieutenant, the 4th Earl of Clarendon, is seeking an excuse to declare the Orange Order in Ireland illegal, and about the necessity to get up a publicity campaign in England to make its true objects better understood. There is also an address of sympathy to the 3rd Earl on the attempt to kill him and other Orangemen by de-railing his train near Trillick, together with a detailed 'Plan of the Trillick outrage, 15 September [1854]'. Another address, of 1858, comes from the Grand Lodge of Canada East, in anticipation of a visit to Canada by the 3rd Earl.

A 'private' letter from the Prime Minister, the 15th Earl of Derby, of 12 November 1867 expresses the '... hope you were not dissatisfied with my official answer to the Orange address. I know that the substance of it was in accordance with your own personal feelings. I was very glad to see that at the great Protestant gathering, there was nothing which could be laid hold of as objectionable.' There is some correspondence of 1875 about the suspension from the Order of one Joseph Crozier of Kinglass, near Enniskillen (on the Montagh estate of the Earls of Enniskillan). An original bundle of February 1883 is docketed: 'Committee of correspondence [of the] G[rand] L[odge] of Ireland relative to Major [Edward James] Saunderson's scheme for rifle corps, with queries and [the] opinion of counsel; also Major Saunderson's reply'.

Other significant correspondents of the 3rd Earl are the 3rd Earl Grey (Colonial Secretary), Sir Robert Peel, 2nd Bt (Prime Minister) and the 1st Duke of Abercorn (Lord Lieutenant of Ireland).



Later correspondence

Of the correspondence of the 4th and 5th Earls, reference has already been made to what relates to the Boer War, 1901-1902. There are also significant letters home from the First World War, c.1914-1918, written to his parents by Lord Cole, later 5th Earl, a major in the North Irish Horse. There are a few very moving letters relating to the deaths in Kenya of Berkeley and Galbraith Cole in 1925 and 1929 respectively.

From 1925 to 1945, David Lowry-Cole, later 6th Earl of Enniskillen, wrote regularly to his parents (after his father's death in 1929 to his mother only), and these letters describe life in Kenya, school and university in England, visits to Florence Court and his service with the Irish Guards in the Second World War. His later correspondence, with associated newspapers cuttings and other papers, 1958-1979 (and especially 1962-1963), relates mainly to Kenyan politics, land issues and independence.



Conclusion

In 1933, Lady Jane Cole wrote to her great-nephew, the 5th Earl of Enniskillen: '... We know very little of the past generations of our family, for no-one has ever kept records ...'; and the National Trust's 1992 *Guidebook* comments that 'Most of the family papers have been lost over the years ...'. Both statements are substantially correct, though somewhat exaggerated. But, though the Enniskillen papers do not bear comparison with some of PRONI's very large 'big house' archives, it is remarkable – granted the seriousness of the 1955 fire, a bonfire of archive material which the 5th Earl is known to have made in 1960 and the deficiencies in archive-keeping of previous generations - that so much has survived.

