



Public Record Office
of Northern Ireland

INTRODUCTION

KING-HARMAN PAPERS

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King-Harman Papers (D4168)

Table of Contents

Summary	2
The Papers	3
Family Background	4
About the List.....	5

Summary

The King-Harman papers comprise 440 documents and 15 volumes, 1702, 1727, 1741-1959 and 1996-1997, relating to the King, Harman and King-Harman families of King House and Rockingham, Boyle, Co. Roscommon, Mitchelstown Castle, Co. Cork, and (in the case of the Harman family) Newcastle, Ballymahon, Co. Longford, and to estates and parliamentary elections in those counties, and in Co. Sligo, and to family and personal affairs and litigation.



The Papers



*Caroline King,
Countess of Kingston*

The 18th-century material includes: political correspondence of Sir Edward King, 1st Earl of Kingston, mainly about his promotion in the peerage, 1764-1768; family correspondence between and among the 1st Earl of Kingston and his son, Robert, Lord Kingsborough, and the latter's wife, Caroline, 1770-1774; legal case papers, correspondence, accounts, etc, relating to the succession to and administration of the Harman estate at Newcastle, Co. Longford; the will of one Richard Butler, servant of Mrs Frances Harman in her house in St Stephen's Green, Dublin, 1764; a photograph of a modern fair copy of details of the fruit trees planted at Newcastle, 1787; and a large household account book for Newcastle, 1798-1800. The 19th century material includes: letters to

Robert King, 1st Viscount Lorton, about his candidature for the Irish representative peerage, 1822, and other letters and papers of his relating to politics, his financial affairs and the controversies surrounding his record as a landlord in Cos. Roscommon and Sligo, 1799, 1817, and 1823-1854; the wills of Lord Lorton, 1839, and of his wife, Frances, 1841; personal letters to the Hon. L.H. King-Harman, second son of Lord and Lady Lorton, particularly when on his foreign travels, 1831-1840; and a quantity of correspondence, legal papers, account books and accounts, etc, 1842-1954, relating in considerable detail to the administration of the King-Harman estates of Newcastle and, to a much lesser extent, Rockingham, and to the (second) disentanglement of the latter in c.1885.

Another considerable quantity of 19th-century MS and printed case papers, correspondence, etc, 1846-1872, all relates to the litigation between and among the Kings and King-Harmans, the re-settlement of the Mitchelstown estate and the (first) re-settlement of the Rockingham estate which took place in this period and all of which were more-or-less interrelated and were inspired by the illegitimacy of Henry Ernest Newcomen King, second 'son' of Robert King, 2nd Viscount Lorton and 6th Earl of Kingston (though almost certainly the son of Robert King's wife, Anne, by the Vicomte Satgé St Jean).

A more restful and relaxing 20th-century document is a photocopy of the recollections of life in Mitchelstown Castle in the period 1904-1910, of Edward Downes Webber, second husband of Anna, Countess of Kingston, widow of the 5th Earl. Under the terms of the 5th Earl's will Anna Kingston had complete control over the heavily encumbered Mitchelstown estate, which she left to Webber at her death in 1909.



Family Background

Colonel A.L. King-Harman has published a short family history entitled *The Kings of King House* (Bedford, 1996). One principal source for this was the much longer family history, *The Kings, Earls of Kingston* (Cambridge, 1959), printed privately for family circulation by his late father, Capt. R.D. King-Harman, RN, DSO, DSC. Both books are in the archive. These are essential sources for the complexities of King, Harman and King-Harman family history, which cannot be summarised within anything resembling reasonable bounds.



About the List

While the catalogue list of the King-Harman papers is the work and sole responsibility of PRONI, it has been greatly enhanced by background knowledge gleaned from *The Kings of King House* and from excerpts from documents quoted by Colonel King-Harman in that book. In addition, a couple of years previously (February 1993) the papers were roughly listed by Derek Lovejoy Touchstone Ltd of Bristol, whose firm had been commissioned to do so in order to establish what material there might be of relevance to the King House, Boyle, then in the process of restoration. This was a document-by-document listing, and was not preceded by an archival arrangement of the material concerned. Nevertheless, it has proved helpful on many points of detail and has been extensively drawn upon.

