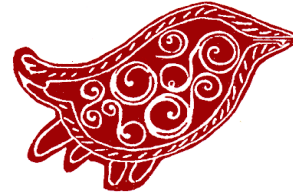


**Journal of the Cork Historical and
Archaeological Society**

www.corkhist.ie



Title: Old Cork Celebrities

Author: Tivy, Henry L.

Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society, 1892, Vol. 1, No 2,
page(s) 26-29

Published by the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society

Digital file created: June 7, 2013

Your use of the JCHAS digital archive indicates that you accept the Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.corkhist.ie/info/tandc.pdf>

The Cork Historical and Archaeological Society (IE-148166, incorporated 1989) was founded in 1891, for the collection, preservation and diffusion of all available information regarding the past of the City and County of Cork, and South of Ireland generally. This archive of all content of JCHAS (from 1892 up to ten years preceding current publication) continues the original aims of the founders in 1891. For more information visit www.corkhist.ie.

These coins of James are the only examples in the entire British series upon which the month of the year of issue is stamped. The box contained eleven sixpences—namely, four of January, 1689; four doubtful; two of August, 1689, and one of November. Of shillings there are seven—viz., two of 1689, and one of 1690, doubtful; two of August, 1689; one of December, and one of June, 1690. Of half-crowns there are two of the first issue, one of which is February, with the year defaced, the other 1689, in which the month is obliterated; and three of the latter or smaller type—viz., two of May, and one of June, 1690.

The box with these coins was dug up by a labourer employed in the excavation at New Tipperary. Possibly this box was deposited for safety beneath some thorn tree, or in some marked spot, and was never recovered, perhaps never sought for again until accidentally unearthed by the spade. This money of James, made from the old brass guns, broken bells, old copper, brass and pewter, worth from

3d. to 4d. the lb., but ordered to pass current for from £5 to £10 sterling the pound weight, left a bad impression upon the shopkeepers and farmers of Ireland, who, during his reign, had to accept it, and give in exchange their merchandise and grain. No wonder, then, that in Youghal, before 1690 had passed away, "a proclamation,^(a) crying "down all the base money made by King "James, was published by beat of drum."

Collectors aim at acquiring complete and consecutive sets of this gun-money, commencing January, 1689, and ending October, 1690.

In a discussion that ensued, it was suggested by Mr. Doran that the box was the outer case which was originally used for holding a silver pyx; the sacred heart and doves being emblematic symbols of the Sacrament.

There is a bell or mitre-shaped object immediately over and between the doves which is too indistinct to determine or to hazard a conjecture upon.

(a) *Vide* Proc. Re. Soc. Antiquaries Ireland, No. 1, 1890.

Old Cork Celebrities.

BY HENRY L. TIVY, M.R.S.A., (COUNCIL MEMBER.)



ALTHOUGH the title given to the following notes is "Old Cork Celebrities," it should not be understood that it professes to give anything like an exhaustive history, or even mention, of the many local celebrities associated with Cork history. The main intention of what follows is to give a lead, or offer a suggestion, to other writers who may be able to contribute to this journal biographical notices of the many personages who in various grades of life have been associated with Cork. In several instances, what follows is simply a reproduction of articles found buried in the files of a newspaper, viz. :—"Cork at the Close of the Seventeenth Century," is a pleasing description of Cork, in 1690, extracted from Mr. John George McCarthy's clever "History of Cork," and "The Skiddy Family and Skiddy's Castle" is from the pen of the late Dr. Caulfield. The other notes are derived either from fragmentary records, or from the oral

evidence of gentlemen still resident in the city.

CORK CELEBRITIES MENTIONED BY SMITH AND WINDELE.

Of the celebrities of ancient Cork, Smith makes mention of the following in chronological order, generally making each the subject of a short notice :—

Tundal, or Tungal, a native of Cork in 1159, who, having been entranced for three days, recovered, to give what was thought a valuable report of his visions; Patrick Ragged, 1414, a Cork Bishop; Donald O'Fihily, 1505, an author of Irish annals; Thomas O. Hiernan, 1573, a Dean of Cork; William Thirry, D.D., no date, titular Bishop of Cork; Lodowick Barry, a dramatic writer; Florence McCarthy, an author; William Coppinger, 1526, an author; Philip O'Sullivan, 1621, a writer of invective against Archbishop Ussher; Garret Barry, 1643, a writer on military subjects; Francis Matthews, 1644, a Franciscan friar;



GOY & CO LITH. CUTK.

BOTHERED DAN AND FOXY NORRY.

BY PHELIX PICCIONE.

From the Original Painting in possession of Edwin F. Hunt, Esq.

This content downloaded from www.corkhist.ie

JOURNAL HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
All use subject to CHAS Terms and Conditions

Digital content (c) CHAS 2013

Conogher O'Mahony, an author on treasonable subjects; Edward Worth, a Bishop, 1643; John Ponce, a Franciscan friar and author, 1653; John Sinick, 1675, an ecclesiastical writer; Richard Parr, 1643, also an ecclesiastical writer; Sir Richard Cox, a distinguished lawyer, who became Lord Chief Justice in the reign of Queen Anne; Richard Nagle, 1686, Speaker of King James' parliament; John Hovel, 1698, an Alderman, and writer on the Irish wool manufacture; Ezechell Burrige, 1697, who wrote in defence of the revolution; Rowland Davis, 1694, a Dean of Cork, and controversialist; Nicholas Brady, 1726, a distinguished scholar and divine; Peter Brown, D.D., Bishop of Cork; James Delacourt, Maurice O'Connell, M.D., George Rye, and Edward Barry, all literary men; Admiral Penn; Captain Jumper, who surprised the Spanish garrison of Gibraltar; Sir George Bynge; Viscount Torrington, a navalman; William Clarke, of Newmarket, a man of extraordinary physical malformation, to whom Smith accords a lengthened notice. He also mentions Robert Long, the famous Bandon deaf-mute; and the following county Cork centenarians:—John Richardson, aged 112; Richard White, alive and well at the time (1750), aged 103; Captain Donovan, dead, aged 100; Daniel Keaghly, living, aged 103; and Zachariah Fives, buried in St. Finbarry's in 1748, aged 112; Fineen Crowley, still able to work with spade and shovel at the age of 97; Mr. John Goodman, remarkable from the fact that his mother was buried while in a trance, and afterwards walked to her home, the subject of the notice being born some time subsequently. Also the following centenarians: Mary Barry, 106, then surviving; Philip Blake, died 115; Richard Morgan, Clerk of the Crown in the reign of King James, buried at Buttevant in 1748, aged 107; William Smith, who died at Buttevant about 1732, aged 117, and was able to hunt a pack of hounds until within a short period of his decease. The last celebrity mentioned by Smith is Dr. Lyne, noted for living for many years in a house without glazed windows.

The Cork historian of a century later, John Windele, makes mention of Rev. James Delacourt, who died 1781; James Cavanagh Murphy, author, who died 1814; Richard Milliken, the poet, and Miss Milliken, his sister; also of Jeremiah Joseph Callanan, John Augustine Shea, P. J. Meagher, Joseph

O'Leary, Thomas Sheehan, Rev. Thomas England, and Thomas Woods, M.D., all men of letters; Messrs. Fitzgerald, Edwards, and Tuckey, of *Cork Remembrancer* fame; John O'Driscoll, a Judge; William Thompson, Rev. Horatio Townsend, Albert H. Callanan, M.D., and North Ludlow Beamish, are mentioned for their connection with literature; Shefidan Knowles is claimed as a Corkman, and a passing allusion is made to Richard Sainthill, Abraham Abel, James Roche, and the Rev. Dr. Collins; also to Crofton Croker, Rev. Francis Mahony, Barry, the painter; John Butts, a scene painter; Nathaniel Grogan, the painter, and John Corbet, the miniature painter. Samuel Forde, the artist, and his elder brother, William Forde, the musician, are accorded notice by Windele; and he winds up his biographies by a brief allusion to the brilliant Daniel Maclise, and the talented Cork sculptor, John Hogan.

CORK AT THE CLOSE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

The following graphic description of Cork is extracted from Mr. John George McCarthy's "History of Cork." The map alluded to is reproduced in this number.

What was Cork like at this time? Fortunately we can tell with some exactness. There is a very interesting map of it in the *Pacata Hibernia*. You see how accurate is Spenser's description of Cork as "an island fayre," enclosed by the "spreading Lee," with his "devided flood"; also Camden's contemporary account of Cork as "of the forme of "an egge, with the river flowinge round about it, "and runninge between, not passable through, "but by bridges lying out at length, as it were, "in one direct broad street." That one direct broad street corresponds with our North and South Main Streets. It was then called the Royal Street, sometimes the High Street, and sometimes the Queen's Majesty's Street. At either end of it you observe the north and south gates, with their forts and drawbridges. Crossing it at right angles is Castle Street, through which flowed (as beneath it flows still) a branch of the river—"the river flowinge betweene", as Camden observed. At the intersection of Castle Street and the Main Street, where the Young Men's Society Hall now stands, you observe the "Golden Castle" of the Roches. There the Exchange was afterwards built, and for more than a century the trade

of Cork was transacted. At the other end of Castle Street, where Daunt's Square now is, you will observe "Ye Water Gate" and the King's and Queen's Castle. To these castles the street owes its name and the city its arms. Ships used to be brought into Castle Street to be unloaded, as at Amsterdam. The custom house was there to receive them. The Royal or Main Street was also intersected then, as it is now, by narrow lanes. These lanes were the fashionable residences of Cork. In them wealthy merchants had their mansions. You see Skiddy's Castle in one, and Therry's in another. Spenser, as we noted, lived in one about this very time. Prince Rupert, Cromwell, James II. were afterwards entertained in them. You observe Christ Church and St. Peter's where Christ Church and St. Peter's are still. The former was a castellated church of the Knights Templars; the latter was known as "Our Ladye Chapelle." But the most significant object on the map, as it was the chief object of civic care and expenditure, is the great city wall encircling the whole, with the river for a foss, and sixteen towers for a coronal. The eastern walls corresponded with the western side of our present Grand Parade; portions of them were lately to be seen near Tobin Street. The marsh spreading eastward is the site of the present South Mall, Patrick Street, and the conterminous streets. It looks on the map decidedly like what Lord Macaulay described it—"a desolate marsh, in which a sportsman who pursued the waterfowl sunk deep in the mire at every step." The western wall corresponded with the eastern side of the present Duncan Street. The river ran here, as depicted in the map, until the close of the last century. To the west were other marshes, on which now stand Nile Street, Henry Street, the Mardyke, etc. This district was called by our fathers, and is still known as, emphatically, "The Marsh." In the south-west angle of the map you see the remains of St. Fin Barre's Church, with the significant title "Ye Cathedral Church of Old Cork." Not far distant from it, to the east, at the place we now call Crosse's Green, was the Dominican abbey of St. Mary's of the Isle, built on St. Dominick's Island by the Barrys nearly four centuries before the time we are considering. When the Lord Deputy came to Cork it was there he lodged. Thence went forth prelates to rule dioceses far and

near—at Cashel of the Kings, in O'Neill's country up north, over in France in fair Toulouse. Near this was "the Fort of Cork," lately built to overawe the citizens, of which I will have more to tell by-and-by. Farther east, in the southern suburb, stood the Augustine Abbey, the "Red Abbey" of which I spoke just now, whose tower still stands in Cumberland Street. It is still called "the Abbey." Still farther east, where now runs George's Quay—then called the Red Abbey Marsh—were the church and abbey of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. In the north-west suburb, on the North Mall, where North Abbey Square now stands, was the North Abbey. It was, as you see, actually within arrow-shot of the city walls and North Gate Fort. In Elizabeth's time it also was suppressed. Its rich possessions had been granted to the Skiddys. But there, also, the friars somehow kept their ground. Farther on, to the east, where St. Mary's Church now stands, was Shandon Castle. It was perched on the verge of a precipice overhanging the river. The adjacent lane is still sometimes known as Shandon Castle Lane. Nearly at its foot, just where the Kiln river meets the Lee, was the hamlet of Dunganvan. Close by, where Daly's distillery now stands, was, at the time of which I speak, the Benedictine Convent of St. John. The place is still called John Street.

THE SKIDDY FAMILY AND SKIDDY'S CASTLE.

A name prominently associated with the history of Cork for more than five hundred years is that of Skiddy. In a Cork paper of November 11th, 1882, the following notice appears, of Skiddy's Castle and the Skiddy family, evidently from the prolific pen of the late Dr. Caulfield:—

The site of Skiddy's Castle is well known; it occupied the ground on which the house at the left-hand side as you go down Skiddy's Castle Lane from the North Main Street now stands. According to Smith (Vol. I., p. 368), "it was built in 1445 by John Skiddy, who was that year bailiff of the city, and afterwards mayor. His descendants live in France, where they have acquired a good estate. This castle is rented from the Crown from the Earl of Burlington, and is used as a "magazine for gunpowder" (Vol. I., p. 375 edition Dublin, 1750). This family was amongst the most ancient of the citizens.

William Skiddy was mayor in 1365. The castle is mentioned in all the reports of the fortifications and magazines belonging to the Crown in the Province of Munster since the time of James I. The following particulars relating to the owner of this castle may be of interest, being taken from original documents:—"Cork, 1564, July 27—Gerot, 'Earl of Desmond, wrote to Cecil, 'John Parker is just dead. Andrew Skiddy recommended to be Master of the Rolls in his 'stead.'" 1575—There is a lengthy document about this, endorsed, "My title to the messuadges be northe William Skiddy's mansion house, and to the two messuadges be northe the castle, called Skiddy castle." This record also contains some genealogical particulars of interest. Nor ought we to forget Stephen Skiddmor *alias* Skiddie, vintner, of London, the munificent founder of Skiddy's Charity, in this city. He was one of the merchant princes of London in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. He must have been a man possessed of a large fortune, for his numerous bequests to almost every charity in London (as appears from his will) prove. He executed his will 20th March, 1584, and orders his body to be buried in the parish church of St. Stephen's, in Collman Street, whereof he was a parishioner, and wills that "the master wardens, freemen of the vintners, and their successors, do paie yearly for ever, after the decease of his wife, of the rents and profits of his land the sum of £24 of lawful English money, at the common hall of the said company, within the city of London, to the mayor for the time being of Cork, in Ireland, wherein he was borne, etc., to be bestowed by the said mayor of Cork, with the consent of his brethren, the aldermen of said city, upon ten of the poorest and honestest persons of said city of Cork, men or women, aged fifty years, at least, etc." This castle, after playing a conspicuous part in the civil history of this city for many years, was by order of the Lord Lieutenant dismantled, and the powder removed from the magazine March 5, 1770, shortly after which it was taken down.* The late Mr. John Humphrie, the eminent naturalist, remembered the demolition of this castle, which he used to narrate to his friends.

* Dr. Caulfield was evidently unaware that a portion of Skiddy's Castle is yet (1892) standing, the guard-room being now used as a flour store. H. L. T.

It had an arched top, and he saw a workman for two or three days raised in a cage of wickerwork, over the keystone, which he worked at, and eventually loosened to such a degree, that the entire arch fell in when he was lowered. At this time there was a curious chair at the top of the castle called "Skiddy's chair," which was then destroyed. A short time before the castle was removed an eccentric young man named Jemmy Hudson, whose father kept an apothecary's shop on the opposite side of the street, found a rat in a cage trap one morning, and having covered the poor animal with turpentine, etc., he set the rat on fire and let him go out of the trap. The rat ran towards the magazine, one of the soldiers on guard made a prod at it with his bayonet, but it escaped through the grating into the magazine, and fortunately burned out before it got down, otherwise this entire quarter of the city would have been reduced to a heap of ruins. Shortly afterwards, on returning home from hunting, Hudson was thrown from his horse on the Glanmire Road, where his lifeless body was found next morning; the horse found its way home. William Skiddye, whose will was proved in Cork April 5th, 1578, bequeaths (*inter alia*) to Christ Church, "a big girdle, or corset of silver gilt, to be divided between the chancel and the body of the church; also three beds or plots of land he had in a garden in Shandon, to be sold to the most advantage, and to be equally divided between the chancel and the body of Christ Church." He orders his brother, Rodger Skiddie, Warden of Youghal, executor to this his last will. The ancient sepulchral memorial of the Skiddy family may now be seen against the north wall of the cemetery back of Christ Church, Cork. On a sandstone slab are the armorial bearings of the family, viz., a chevron between three stirrups, beneath is an inscription with the date, as well as memory serves, 1602. This stone was formerly in the church. But every memorial was displaced and many destroyed in the so-called restorations of 1829. 1583—September 10—"Ormond to Burghley. The objections devised against him in Skiddy's Castle at Cork, with the assistance of John FitzEdmonds. Ormond's inclination to mercy after so much bloodshed and great execution." 1538—Nov. 17—"Andrew Skiddye was Recorder of Cork."

(To be Continued.)