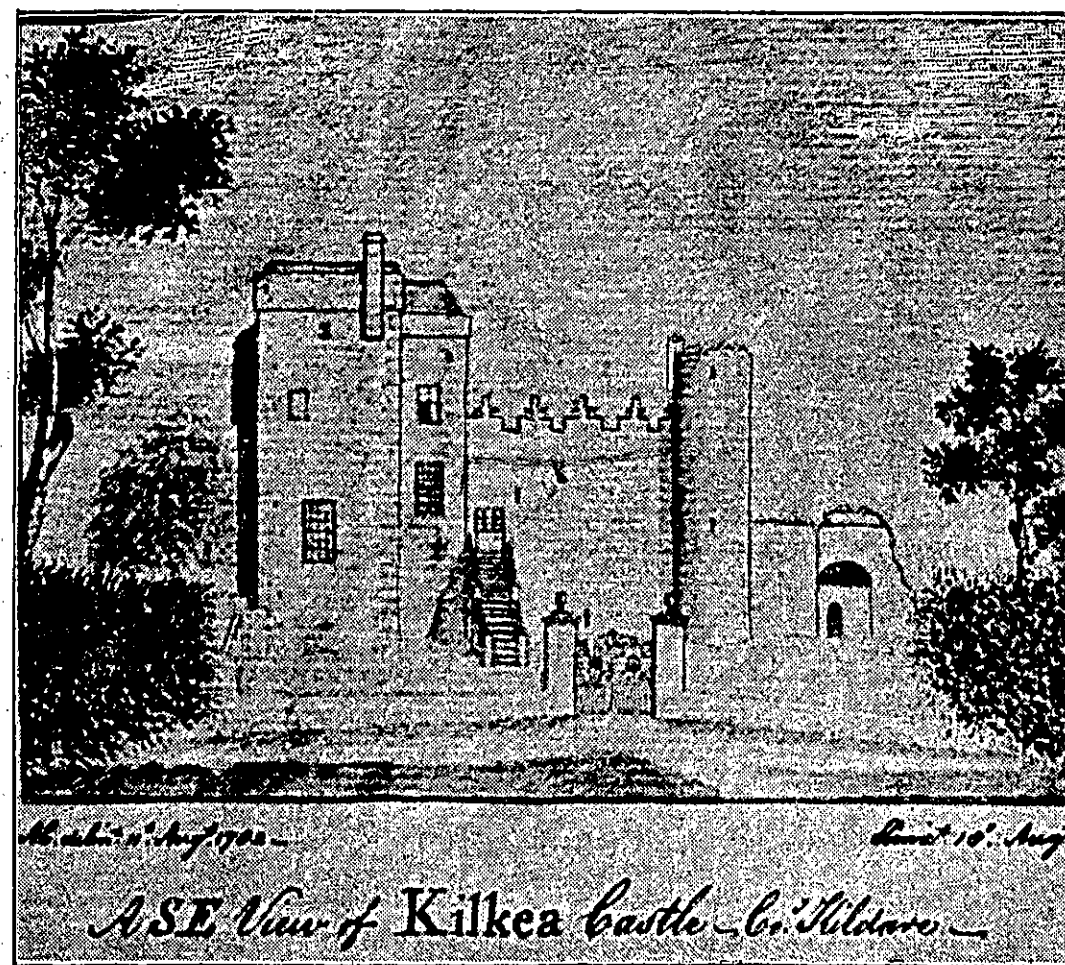


KILKEA CASTLE FROM THE N.E.
(From an Oil Painting by Ashford, 1784, now at Carton.)



(From a Sketch drawn by Austin Cooper in 1782.)

KILKEA CASTLE.¹

By LORD WALTER FITZGERALD.

[Read at the September Meeting of 1894, by the Rev. C. GANLY, Rector of Castledermot].

THIS castle is situated at the foot of the rath-capped Hill of Mullachreelan, on the bank of the river Greese, and five miles from Athy in the Castledermot direction; its situation is peculiar as it was built just between a pagan tumulus (or burial moat) and the Christian burial-ground, the former being a few perches away to the north-west, and the latter somewhat closer on the south-east side of the castle.

The ancient district in which the castle stands was, in the 12th century, known as Omurethi, and belonged to the O'Toole sept, to which the famous St. Lawrence O'Toole² belonged; this territory has already been described on p. 161, vol. i., of this JOURNAL.

¹ In 1869 the fourth Duke of Leinster had privately printed a small work by him called "Residences and Castles of the Duke of Leinster"; one section of this book is devoted to the history of Kilkea Castle, and has been reproduced here in a much fuller form.

² His death took place on the 14th of November, 1180, at the monastery of Eu, in Normandy.

Kilkea Castle is so called from the churchyard lying beside it, and from it the barony takes its name. In old histories and documents the spelling of the name varies greatly, the following being the most usual forms:—Kilca, Kylka, and Kilkaa, &c., all of which are a corruption of the Irish name "Cill Caoide," meaning St. Caoide's (or Kay's) Church.

This saint is venerated on the 12th of December; he has been identified by the late Father Shearman,¹ formerly parish priest of Moone, with a St. Mokatoc, or Katan, who is said to have been buried at the famous "Ughamed" burial-ground of Killeen-Cormac, near Colbinstown, in this county. Though the names Kay and Mokatoc or Katan appear at first sight to have no connection with one another, yet the transformation is easily explained. In the early Christian times it was a common practice by way of endearment to use certain prefixes and affixes to a saint's name, such as -awn or -an, *i.e.* little; -oge or -oc, *i.e.* young; Mo-, *i.e.* my. Thus "Kay" became "Katan" or "Katoc," and so to Mokatoc. Another instance of this kind of transformation in a saint's name is that of St. Mogue, also known as St. Aidan, the patron saint of Co. Wexford; his original name was Aedh (pronounced Ay), this became "endeared" to "Ai-dan," and "Mo-ay-oge" or Mogue. St. Kay was the son of Matan, son of Braccan, son of Caelbuidh, who was for fifteen years king of Ulster, and for one year, A.D. 357, king of Ireland. He was one of the seven disciples whom St. Patrick left with St. Fiach at Sleaty, which is situated on the Barrow, in the Queen's County, about seven miles to the south of Kilkea. The chief scene of St. Kay's mission was at Inishbeg in the Wexford Haven, but he was in all probability the founder as well as patron of the original church of Donadea, in the barony of Ikeathy, in the north of the county Kildare, the old form of the name of which was "Domhnach Caoide," also meaning St. Kay's Church; his death took place soon after the close of the 5th century.

After the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland in 1169, this southern end of the Co. Kildare was granted by Strongbow to Walter de Riddlesford, Baron of Bray, Co. Wicklow, as is mentioned in a contemporary French poem on the Conquest of Ireland, wherein it is stated that—

Twenty fiefs in Omurethy,
The noble earl (*i.e.* Strongbow) in the same way
Gave to the warrior
Walter de Riddlesford.²

¹ *Vide* "Loca Patriciana," p. 223, and the "Martyrology of Donegal."

² *Vide* Orpen's translation of an old French poem among the Carew MSS.

De Riddlesford and his followers now evicted the owners of the soil, *i.e.* the sept O'Toole, who retired into the mountains of Wicklow, and in course of time dispossessed the O'Teige sept of their territory in and round the Glen of Imaile, which they appropriated to themselves.

For the above-mentioned Walter de Riddlesford a castle was built at Kilkea, in 1180, by Hugh de Laay, then chief governor of Ireland. De Riddlesford died about 1244, leaving two daughters, Emelina and Ela. The former married for her second husband Stephen de Longespée, and had an only daughter also named Emelina, heiress through her mother of the Omurethi district; her husband was Maurice Fitz Gerald, third Baron of Offaly, and thus the manors of Kilkea and Castledermot came into, and still remain, the possession of the Geraldines. Emelina, Baroness of Offaly, died in 1291.

Emelina had a niece, Christiana de Marisco, like herself a grand-daughter of Walter de Riddlesford, who had married Ebulo de Geneve by the King's command. This Lady Christiana had inherited lands in Kerry, called "Surrys," which she sold to Maurice Fitz Gerald, Emelina's husband, for 1000 marks in exchange for the moiety of Tristeldermot, Garnenagh, and Kilkea, to hold to her for life, with reversion in fee to Sir Maurice, Emelina his wife, and their heirs. These moieties, together with her possessions in the vale of Dublin, in the Co. Wexford, and in Connaught, Lady Christiana granted in fee to King Edward I. and Alienor, the Queen Consort, in consideration of an annuity to be granted to her out of the King's lands in England, in the year 1280. In the following year the Justiciary of Ireland, Robert de Ufford, received the King's order to take an inquisition relative to these lands, when, as regards the moieties of the manors of Kilkea, Garnenagh, and Tristeldermot, the jurors said that¹:—

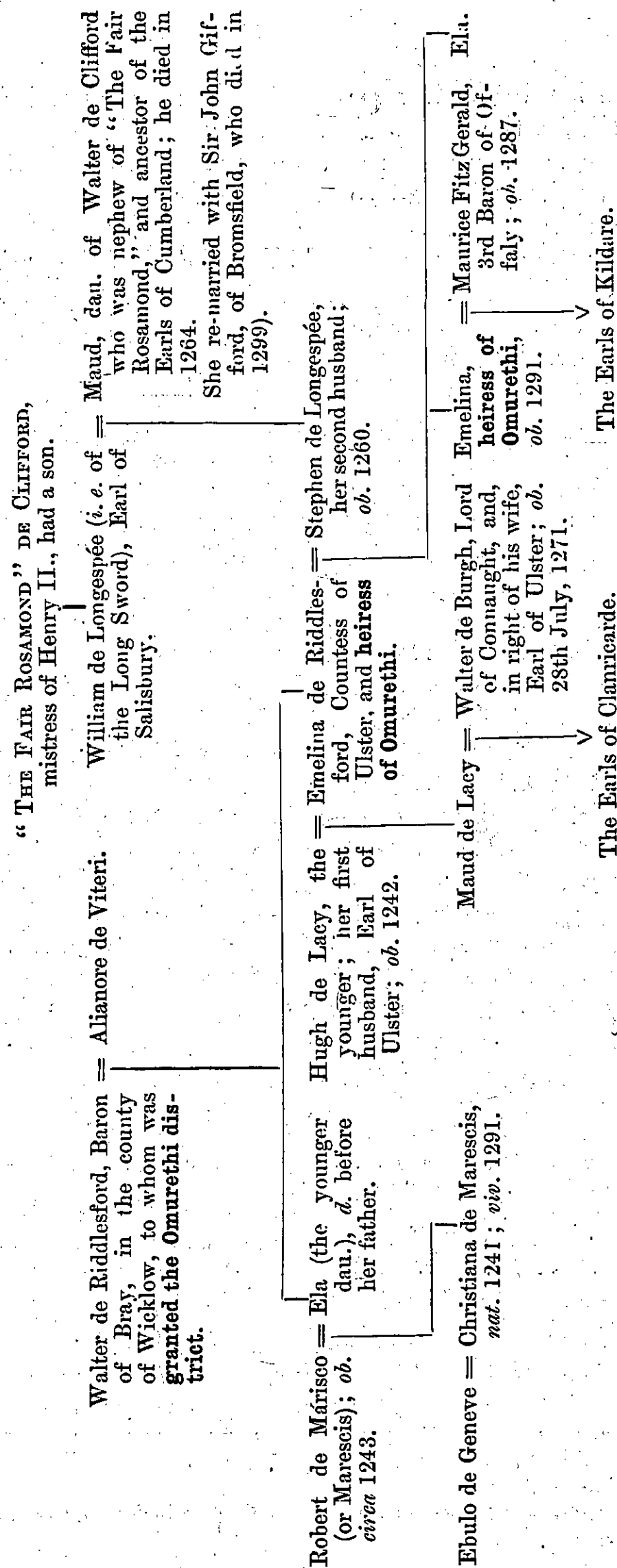
There are in demesne . . . and pasture, worth £18 a-year; value of each acre 12*d.* . . . Moor, worth 17*s.* a-year. The herbage and pasture in the wood there . . . is worth 3*s.* a-year. There are thereof rents of assize £7 9*s.* 8*d.* . . . of Tristeldermot, and 26*s.* 9½*d.* in a moiety of burgage of Kilkea . . . 7*s.* a-year. Pleas and profits of courts and of the hundred in the said moiety are worth 20*s.* a-year.—Total, £36 5*s.* 5*d.*

The above lands are held of the heirs of the Earl Marshall, namely Sir Roger de Mortimer, by the service of four knights' fees when the king's service is proclaimed, which often happens in Ireland; and owe two suits at the County Court of Kildare extended at 4 marks a-year.

in Lambeth Palace, which he has styled "the Song of Dermot and the Earl." Oxford, 1892.

¹ *Vide* pp. 369 and 379 of Sweetman's "Calendar of Documents," Ireland (1252-1284).

HEIRESESSES OF THE OMURETHI DISTRICT.



KILKEA CASTLE.

7

Three years later another inquisition was taken to ascertain the King's rents and tenements which belonged to Lady Christiana; the entry, as far as this district is concerned, is as follows¹ :—

Tristeldermot, Kylka, and Gavenanc (Garnenagh?). From the burgages of Tristeldermot, £4 12s. 4d.; stallage there 1 mark. The burgh of Kylka 27s. 9½d. and 2 geese; autumnal service there, 7s.; 2 fishing pools, 3s.; foreign service of the barony, £7 9s. 8d. There are there in demesne 360 acres of arable land let to divers tenants, to wit, each acre for 16d.—Total, £24.

Pannage of the park, 3s.; herbage and pasture of the park, 40s., by extent; 16 acres of moor and pasture 16s.; 20 acres of meadows, 40s.

From William of Spain for the tenement held by William de Sully in Kylka, namely 32 acres of arable land and 2½ acres of moor, 49s. 10d., which was not entered in the extent. Mem. of a moor lying between Wyteston and the Grange of the Hospital of St. John of Tristeldermot, which Philip Coilan took, rendering yearly 40s. from Michaelmas.—Total, £46 2s. 7½d.

In the year 1291 the King commanded William de Vesey, Justiciary of Ireland, to cause to be delivered to Lady Christiana the manor of Kilka and a moiety of the vill of Tristeldermot leased by her for life to Alienor, formerly Queen Consort, and since deceased.²

A few years later Kilkea appears to have changed hands again, as in 1317 it was in the possession of the Wogan family. This we learn from a Patent Roll dated the 11th year of Edward II.'s reign, wherein it is stated that:—Rex concessit Johanni Wogan omnes Terras in Kylka, Tristeldermot, Berton, Meon, Carbry, Alwyne (Allen?), Combre and Ockethy (Ikeathy), habendum sibi et heredibus una cum feodis militum, advocacionibus ecclesiarum, etc., per servicia antiqua, etc. Apud Westminster, 4^o Novembris.³

The next entry, from the same source, under the date the 24th of August, 1390, records a permission from the King, for a fine, to Sir David Wogan to enfeof the above-named manors to "Walter Toulter, vicar of Balyrothery, Richard Bonevill, vicar of Slane, John Tanner, vicar of Kylka, William Taillour, vicar of Perestown-Laundey, and David Walshe, priest," for himself and his heirs for ever.⁴ Sir David Wogan died somewhere about the year 1417, as in that year his widow Anastacia was assigned her dowry; that portion connected with Kilkea

¹ Vide p. 561 of Sweetman's "Calendar of Documents," Ireland (1252-1284).

² Ibid., p. 407.

³ Vide p. 24, "Rotulorum Cancellariæ Hiberniæ Calendarium."

⁴ Ibid., p. 143.

is here translated from the Latin as given on p. 222 of the "Rot. Canc. Hib. Calendarium;" it deals first with Rathcoffy and its neighbourhood, and then refers to Kilkea Castle as follows:—

"Also in the Manor-house of Kylka one room called the Knight's Chamber, the larder (le botery), with two small rooms in the White Tower; a third part of the cellar there on the west side; the new Orchard there; a third part of the slated barn on the north side there; the kitchen (coquina), chapel, prison, the kiln (kyll), the bakery (bakhous) with a bakery (pistrina) there; and the gates (zatys) of Kylka in common there; also the Priest's room there; the Cow-house with a small room near the long stable there; the third part of one empty messuage lately called the long stable on the south side of that messuage there," etc.

The last entry that will be referred to from the same source as the above, is on p. 256, where it is stated that for a fine of 33s. 4d. the King pardons Thomas Power, vicar of Kilkea, Richard Avell, priest, and John Ashe, priest, for having, without the royal licence, acquired for themselves and their heirs two parts of the manors of Kilka, Tristeldermot, Berton, Moon, etc., from Sir Thomas, son and heir of Sir David Wogan, knt.,¹ the above manors being held from the King in Capite; this was in the year 1434. At what period they evacuated Kilkea I am unable to say.

In July, 1356, Sir Thomas de Rokeby, Lord Justice of Ireland, died in this castle;² of him Holinshed writes that he was "a Knight sincere and upright of conscience, who being controlled for suffering himself to be served in treene (i.e. wooden) cups, answered: 'Those homelic cups and dishes paie trulie for that they contene, I had rather drinke out of treene cups & paie gold & silver, than drinke out of gold & make wooden paiement.'"

In 1414 the O'Mores and O'Dempseys made an inroad into the Pale, devastating the country with fire and sword, until Thomas Cranly, Archbishop of Dublin, who had lately been elected to the office of Lord Deputy, assumed in person the command of the troops and marched against them. Being informed, however, that the Irish were at Kilkea, the prelate remained at Castledermot, while his troops advanced against the enemy. Holinshed's account of the conflict is as follows:—"The Englishmen fought with the Irish neere to Kilka, & slue an hundred of the enemies, whilst the Archbishop, being Lord

¹ See an account of the Wogan family by Rev. Denis Murphy, s.j., in the *Journal of the R.S.A.I.* for 1891.

² *Vide* p. 211 of Gilbert's "Viceroys," and Cox's "Hibernia Anglicana," published 1689.

Justice, went in procession with his cleargie in Tristeldermot, praieing for the good speed of his men & other of the countrie that were gone foorth to fight with the adversaries." The field just to the south of the castle may have been the scene of this battle, as many human bones have been turned up by the plough there.

In 1421 the Irish under O'Dempsey and O'Dunne again invaded the Pale, but were defeated at Kilkea by John Fitz Gerald, 6th Earl of Kildare, nicknamed "Shaun Cam," or Hump-backed John.

In 1426 the castle, which had probably been sacked by the Irish, was restored and enlarged by this Earl. Its situation made it a place of great importance, as it was built in the Marches, that is, the ground intervening between the territories of the native Irish, and the Pale or English land, and so exposed, no doubt, to repeated attacks which are not mentioned in our Annals.

In August, 1513, Gerald (Garrett More) Fitz Gerald, 8th Earl of Kildare, and Lord Deputy of Ireland, started on a hostile expedition against Leamyvannan (i.e. O'Bannan Leap), a castle belonging to the O'Carrolls, near Roscrea, in the King's County, and now known as Leap Castle; but as he was watering his horse in the Greese near this castle he was fired at and wounded by one of the O'Mores of Leix, though he was attended by the Mayor of Dublin and a large force. In consequence of his wound he moved slowly by Athy to Kildare, where, after lingering for a few days, he died on the 3rd of September. His body was carried to Dublin, and buried on the 16th of October, before the high altar in his own chapel at Christ Church; where his arms within the garter, and those of his wife, with the arms of many of his predecessors and successors, were placed, until they were defaced by William Moreton, Bishop of Kildare, and Dean of Christ Church, when he repaired the church between 1677 and 1705. The site of St. Mary's Chapel is now occupied by buildings connected with the Cathedral.¹

In 1532, among other accusations brought against Gerald (Garrett Oge) Fitz Gerald, 9th Earl of Kildare, by Piers Butler, Earl of Ossory, was one to the effect that his friend Sir Roland Fitz Gerald, Baron of Burnt Church,² in the county Kilkenny, when proceeding to the King's Parliament in Dublin, was set upon and made prisoner of by the Earl of Kildare's

¹ *Vide* p. 68 of "The Earls of Kildare."

² Anciently called Kiltrany.

fosterbrother named Cahir M'Enecrosse Mac Murrrough, close to the gates of Castledermot. Cahir then rode to the Earl and consulted with him, after which "the Baron was conveyed further into the heart of the county of Kildare to a castle called Beerdys Castle, and irons were brought out of the Earl's own manor of Kylkaa to make fast the Baron, where he was kept a long season, notwithstanding sundry requests and injunctions of the Deputy to the said Earl; and finally the Baron lost his horse, his money, and his apparel without restitution, which is a good encouraging to malefactors to commit spoils, having the advantage thereof without punishment."¹

In a "Query" on p. 148 of the JOURNAL, information was asked as to the whereabouts of "Beerd his Castle," mentioned above. I have since identified it with Bert, which lies on the left bank of the Barrow, three miles above Athy, for the following reasons:—

(1) It does lie further into the heart of the county Kildare from Castledermot.

(2) A castle formerly stood at Bert, which was captured in 1642 by a detachment of Sir Charles Coote's force, and eight rebels found in it were hanged. *Vide Cox's "Hibernia Anglicana."*

(3) Beafforte, *alias* Beardth, *alias* Bearte, is mentioned in the county Kildare Chancery Inquisitions as passing during the sixteenth century into the hands of Humphrey Macworth, who was slain in Ireland about 1582, and who had purchased it from Thomas Wolfe; these lands being held from the Earl of Kildare.

In 1535, during the Rebellion of the "Silken Thomas," tenth Earl of Kildare, the Earl of Ossory invaded Kildare, but "then McMorro, O'Moore, O'Connor, and O'Byrne in September with the greatest parte of the gentilmen of the Countie of Kildare were reteyned and set at Catherlaghe, Castelldermot, Athye, Kilkaa, and thereabouts, with victailles during three wikkes, to resist the Erle of Ossorie from envading the county of Kildare. Soo that during that same tyme the traitor (*i.e.* the Silken Thomas) beseidged Dublin." The Earl of Ossory however for "three days contynually burnyd, spoyled, & destroyed that cuntrey, so that thereby the traicturs were put from abode in that Marches, lacking both housing and victaille there Whereuppon the Capytaynes and I, the said Erle, directid sundry letters to the Deputie to mete us in the countie of Kildare at Kylkaa, bringing with him ordynance accordingly, where the Deputie (Sir William Skeffington) appoynted without fail to mete, bringing with him the armie at which day and place the said Erle with the armie lately arrived at Waterforde

¹ *Vide* the "State Papers of Henry VIII." (Ireland), vol. ii., p. 157.

failed not to be, and there did abide a three days contynually for the deputie; where he nor any of the armye came not, nor any letter nor worde was had from him but only that Sir James Fitz Gerald¹ told that he herd say he was seke."²

On the 21st of March, 1536, Sir Francis Harbart wrote from Dublin, to the Chief Secretary, Thomas Cromwell:—

"My Lord Deputtey haythe spoken this last wyke with O'More & with M'Morro, at a house of the Kynges, namyt Kyika, and I was one that was with his Lordsep (Lord Leonard Grey) ther, and I could not parsew by them but that they be dessyrous to have pes. Also ther came and met my Lord, at the same house, my Lord Tressurer (Lord Butler) and my Lord his father, and they teylt my Lord Deputtey and the Counsaylle that O'Bren entendis to move ware agaynce my Lord of Osre and his contre."³

Lord Leonard Grey then went to Kilkenny, and, on his return towards Dublin, "soujourned at Leghlyn (*i.e.* Leighlin in the county Carlow) from where he sente Stephen ap Harry to Kilkaa, to prepare his footemen, ordenaunce, and victuall, and with all celeritie to repair to the Castell of Fernes."⁴

On the 1st of May, 1536, the Act of Attainder against the tenth Earl of Kildare was passed, which declared all his estates forfeited to the Crown; and it was not until the year 1552, that the Castle and estate were restored by Edward the VI. to Gerald, Silken Thomas's half-brother, who became the eleventh Earl of Kildare.

In 1537, Lord (James) Butler, eldest son of the Earl of Ossory, wrote as follows to the Lord Privy seal:—"And whereas upon the exile of the traditore Thomas Fitz Gerald, I tooke the charge of defence and garding of Cetharlaghe (Carlow) and Kilkaa, standing on the Marches next to the McMorroes, Moores, and others of the Irishrie, wherein I had some charges as the Kinges Counsail knoweth"⁵—asking for some compensation. On the 4th of October he was allowed his expenses in guarding the Castles, and was appointed Constable of the Castles of Carlow and Kilkea. At this same time the Deputy, Lord Leonard Grey, wrote also to Cromwell, the Lord Privy Seal, warning him that though Lord Ossory and his son had done good service to the King, yet an eye should be kept on them so as to prevent their becoming too powerful; "the like whereof in other noble men here, in tymes past, had so elevated their myndes that they had forgotten their duties of allegiaunce," and he suggested that "they shall delyver to the Kinges Officers His Grace's Manors of Carlagh, Kylca, and Casteldermont, for

¹ An uncle of the Silken Thomas.

² "State Papers of Henry VIII.," vol. ii., p. 251.

³ *Ib.*, p. 307.

⁴ *Ib.*, p. 346.

⁵ *Ib.*, p. 476.

if they have those possessions they will have the rule and obedience of those quarters, and not the King."

About this time mention is made in the documents of the period of a Walter Peppard of Kylca, who appears to have been granted the place previous to 1545. He is described as one of the gentlemen ushers of the King's chamber; his wife was Elizabeth Stukely, by whom he had several children, the eldest son being Anthony. His possessions, which he held on lease, were St. Mary's Abbey beside Dublin, "the two Dallards townes and the rectory of Tymolingbegge in the countie of Kildare," the farms of Slieve Margy, Ballyroan, and Kilmokide (Ballyadams) in the Queen's County, and the Priory of Glasscarrick, in the County Wexford. During Queen Mary's reign Walter Peppard leased from the crown the "ore and lead mines at Clonmines, Ross, and other pits" in the county Wexford. In 1562 John Eustace and Patrick Sarsfield went security for him that he would offer to her Majesty the pre-emption of the gold at two shillings per ounce, and of the silver at fourpence per ounce, lower than the market prices. The lease of these mines, which was for 21 years, appears to have expired about 1563. In 1565, Walter Peppard died.¹

On the 26th of February, 1545, the Lord Deputy, Sir Anthony St. Leger, wrote to the Lord Chancellor of England (Wrothesley) that the Earl of Ossory had offered to give up to the King his Castles on the borders of the Kavanagh's country in exchange for land in England, but "his Lordship is now fulli resolved that he will not depart with the principalles of them, unless he may have landes here; yea and such landes as it were not mete for the King's Majestie to depart with in no case; for he desireth a lordshipp callid Kilkey, which is the properest house and the goodliest lordshipp the King hath in all this realme. And when he moved the same in the Counsaill here, it seemed by their speech that they would have been glad that he should have had it, till I said openly that I would assone condiscende my hande be cutt of, as to give counsaill His Majestie should depart with that Lordshipp."²

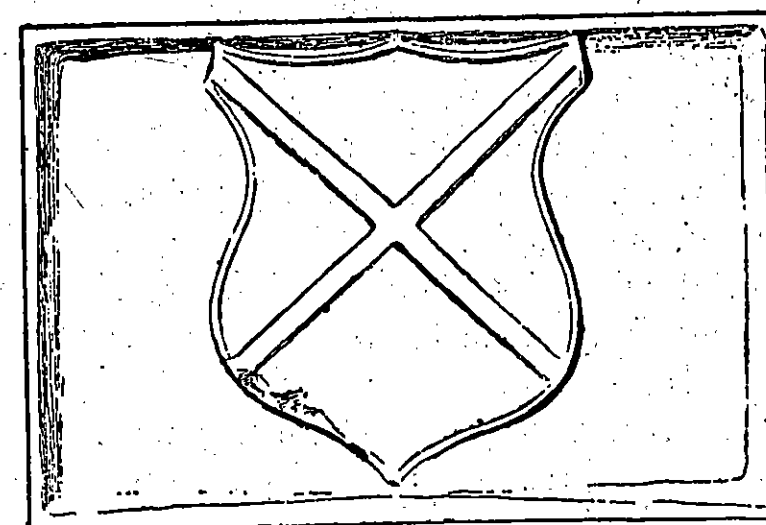
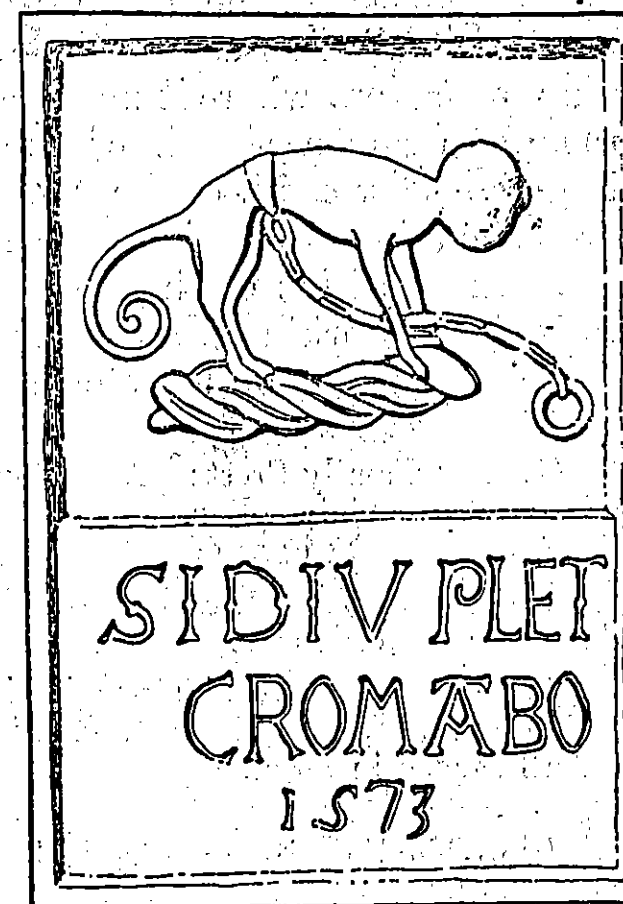
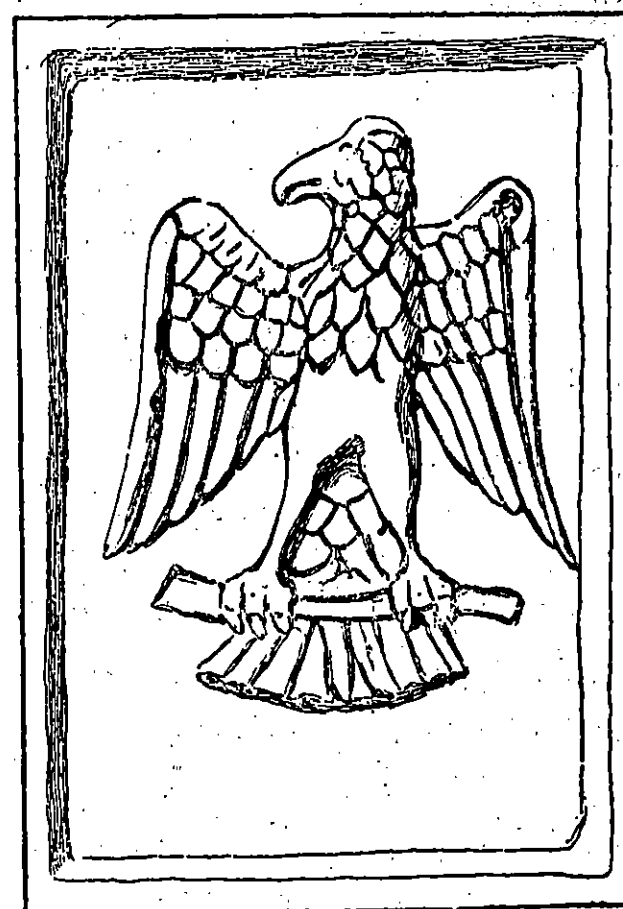
Shaun O'Neill, chief of his nation, shortly before his death in 1567, visited the Earl of Kildare secretly at Kilkea. At this time the Earl was suspected of being implicated with him and the Earl of Desmond in a conspiracy against Queen Elizabeth.

In the month of June, 1572, the Earls of Kildare and Ormond, with their respective forces, were acting against Rory

¹ For the above, *vide* Morrin's "Calendar of Patent and Close Rolls," Ireland, and Hamilton's "Calendar of State Papers," Ireland.

² "State Papers of Henry VIII.," Ireland, vol. iii., p. 308.

Oge O'More, chief of Leix, then proving troublesome; shortly afterwards they were ordered to treat with him, and to do so, "we sent our protection for him, but he refused to come over the Berrowe; till my Lord of Kildare went to meet him there, with whom he came to Kylca," when he submitted himself.



Scale of Inches

THE CARVED STONES IN THE CHIMNEY-PIECE OF THE "PUCKAWN" ROOM.

About the year 1573 the eleventh Earl repaired the castle, and placed in the dining-hall a limestone chimney-piece of which three sculptured stones remain. This chimney-piece was removed in 1797 by the then tenant of the castle, Thomas Reynolds, who replaced it by a handsome Italian one in white

and yellow marble; at the same time on either side of it he inserted into the wall the two side-stones of the ancient chimney-piece, while the middle stone was built into one of the piers of the gate now standing at the Maganey entrance lodge. The Italian chimney-piece had, in the middle of it, a large goat's head, from which the dining-room became known as "the Puckaw room." It was eventually removed in the year 1850, and sent to Carton, where it now stands at the far end of the dining-room. From a sketch of the ancient chimney-piece, which is given in vol. iii. of the "Anthologia Hibernica" Magazine, published in 1794, the fourth Duke of Leinster got a clue as to the position of the three sculptured stones, and had them reset in a Cork-marble chimney-piece in their original site. The sculpturings on the stones are:—

(1.) The Family Crest:—A monkey, statant, proper, environed about the middle with a plain collar, and chained, or. Below the monkey, in three lines, is incised SI DIV PLET, CROM ABO, 1573.

(2.) The second stone bears a shield with the family coat of arms—Argent, a saltere gules.

(3.) And on the third stone is the crest of his wife's family—Upon a ragged staff, or, a Cornish chough, wings expanded, proper. The sculptures are all carved in relief.

The Earl's wife was Mabel, second daughter of Sir Anthony Brown, K.G., and Master of the Horse to Edward VI., by Alice, daughter of Sir John Gage, K.G., and sister to Viscount Montacute. This Earl was known as "the Wizard Earl," in connection with whom there is a legend, which will be referred to at the end of this Paper.

At this period Holinshed mentions Kilkea among the chief towns of Leinster, the others being Kilcullen, Castle Marten, Thristeldermot, Athie, &c.

In 1575, during the month of May, the Earl of Kildare was apprehended by the Lord Deputy on suspicion of being implicated in treasonable acts; one of the evidences was John Walsh, chamber-servant and messenger to the Earl, who stated that in May of the previous year Myler Hussey, steward to the Earl, having had conference in a little park or close, at Kilkea, with two rebels named Donough and Melaghlin O'Kelly, sent deponent to fetch them into the castle, "and to make them supp, which he did in the seller." After supper he left them with Hussey, who took them to the Earl, with whom they had a long conference. Also that Edmund Boy (*i.e.* the yellow) Seix, who in the previous July had stolen from Garrett Sutton 24 garrans (horses), was kept for two days and two nights hid

in "Myler Hussey's chamber and in the wardrobe at Kilkey by the said Myler," and that he (deponent) used to carry meat from the Earl's table to the said Edmund as long as he was there concealed.

In a ms. book in the library of the castle relating to the reminiscences of Garrett Byrne of Fallybeg (near Ballyadams, in the Queen's County), who died in the 64th year of his age, in June, 1780, is given a tradition (though false) of the murder of Fergus O'Kelly, of Luggacurren, by the Earl of Kildare's orders at Kilkea. The account commences with the following statement:—"A traditional though certain account of passages that happened in or about Logacurren and the rest of O'Kelly's ground in that neighbourhood, which took place about the year of our Lord 1580, and the 22nd of Queen Elizabeth's reign; which were assured by boddered (*i.e.* deaf) Catharine M'James, who served seven years' apprenticeship in O'Kelly's house to old Edmund Cowen, and by him to me; more of them by people who remembered it themselves, and I remember myself what happened from the year 1720 to this year, 1780. (Signed) Garrett Byrne."

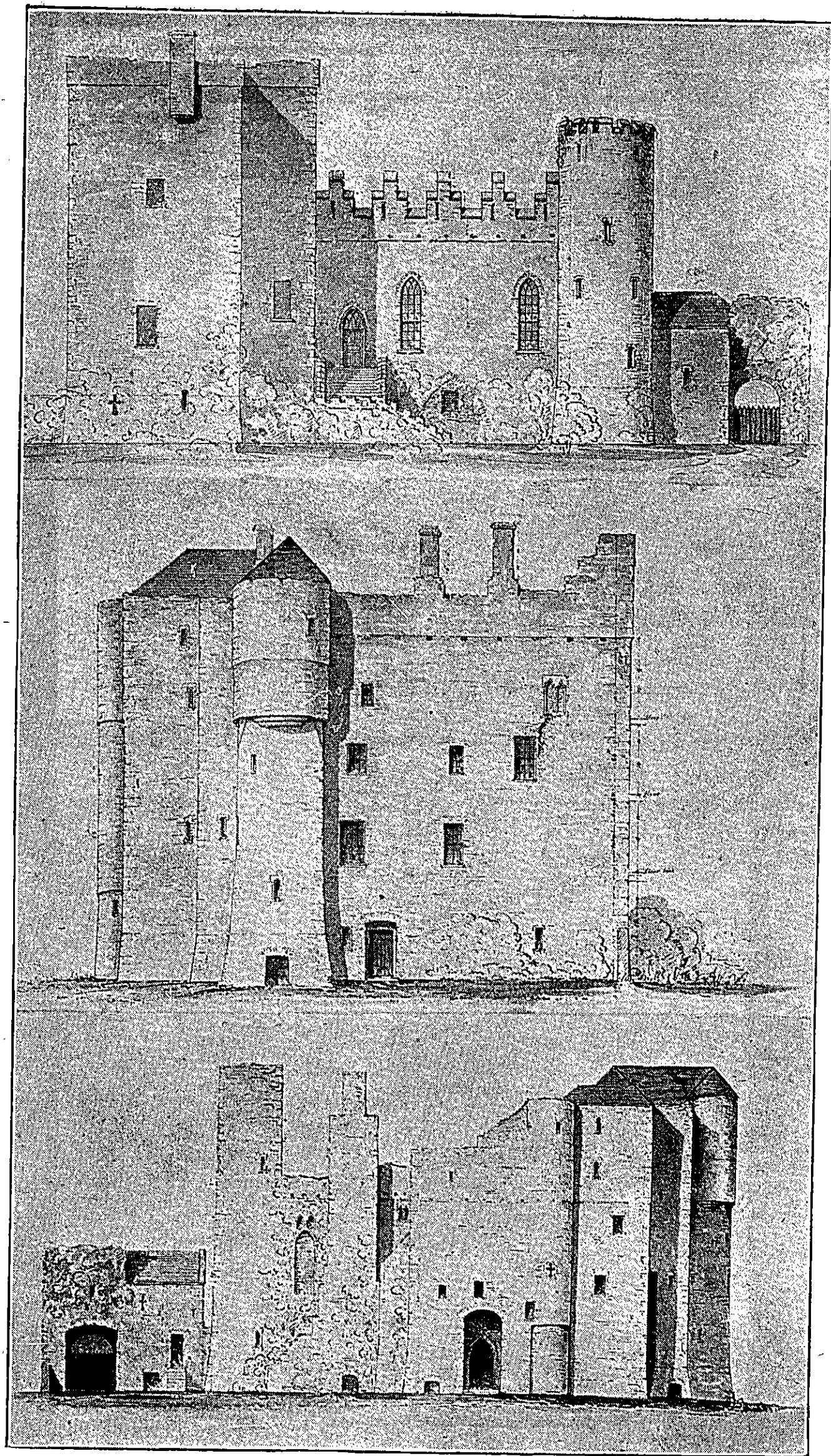
The account which follows is a long one, but the pith of it is to this effect:—"About the year 1580, Fergus O'Kelly of Luggacurren married a daughter of O'Byrne of Glenmalure, in the Co. Wicklow, but she refused to go home with him till he had a stone-walled house for her to live in; so he at once set his tenantry to work to build one at Knockaconna, which was finished in seven days, and was known as 'the Week-house,' but now goes by the name of Shanclogh, or the Old Stone-house. At the following Michaelmas-day O'Kelly's steward, M'Glode, after being out all day, was annoyed to find that no goose had been kept for his dinner, and on making a complaint to his master got still less satisfaction from him, so he swore to be revenged for this slight. At the vigil of Christmas, M'Glode proceeded to the Earl of Kildare at Kilkea, saying that his master had sent him with an invitation to spend Christmas with him. The Earl accepted it, and proceeded with his retinue to 'the Week-house,' where he remained till Candlemas, being most hospitably entertained all the time. The Earl was to have left on Twelfth Day, but O'Kelly, who had discovered M'Glode's treachery, said that as he had accepted his steward's invitation he must now remain on his own. Before leaving, the Earl insisted on O'Kelly's promising to be his guest at Kilkea; and, when he arrived shortly after, he was taken to the highest turret of the castle to be shown the extent of the view from the battlements; but he never descended alive, as his head was then and there removed from his

shoulders and sent as a present to Queen Elizabeth, who in return granted the Earl all O'Kelly's lands as a reward for the deed."

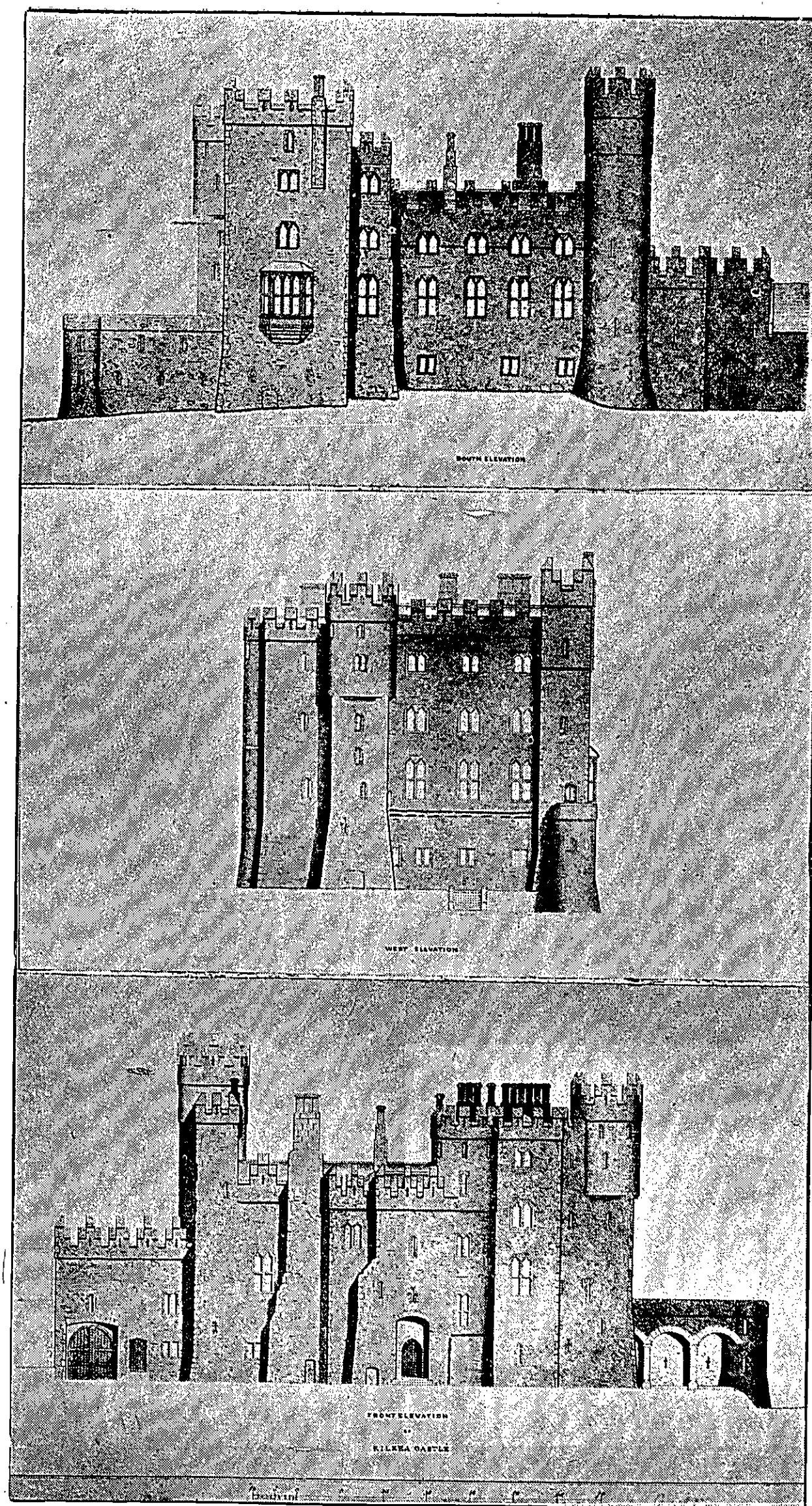
Such is the tradition, but it is entirely false as far as Kilkea and the Earl of Kildare are concerned; for the real murderer of O'Kelly was Gerald Fitz Gerald of Morett Castle, in the Queen's County, who was slain and his castle burned by the O'Mores in revenge for O'Kelly's murder. This Gerald was an illegitimate son of Gerald, the eleventh Earl of Kildare, and was ancestor of the Fitz Gerald's of Morett and Timoge; to him the Earl demised the lands of Timoge, Ballyteskin, Morett, Shanganaghmore, and others in the Queen's County, for a term of 101 years, commencing 20th of February, 1584. These lands were granted to the Earl by Queen Elizabeth previous to the year 1565, as is proved by a Queen's County Chancery Inquisition; and as "there is no smoke without a fire," so the tradition given above (though inaccurate as to persons and place) contains a fair amount of truth.

In 1609 the Lord Chancellor of Ireland wrote from Dublin to King James the First, complaining of Christopher St. Lawrence, the 22nd Baron of Howth's, ungovernable temper and outrageous conduct towards him. He apologises, to commence with, for his style of Latin composition, which he had disused for a space of nearly forty years. One instance he gives of the Baron's treatment of him is as follows:—One Walter Weldon, of the Manor of Woodstock, near Athy, a tenant of Sir Robert Digby's, presented him with a petition at Tallaght, complaining that two of the Earl of Kildare's retainers, Wogan Caddell and one Farrell, had in a forcible manner taken away some part of his corn at Woodstock, and that Caddell had assaulted his wife as she was helping her husband to rescue his corn. Whereupon the Chancellor addressed to the Earl, at his manor of "Kilkay," by a messenger of sufficiently honourable condition, a letter requiring him to restrain and correct his servants. When the messenger presented himself at Kilkea, where the Baron of Howth was at the time, access was denied to him; and when he, having intimation of the Earl's coming forth, awaited him upon the way and respectfully tendered the letter, Lord Howth rode violently up, seized and made away with the letter written in the King's name, while the messenger was warned by the leader of the Baron's men to take himself away before worse befell him.

The wife of Gerald, the 14th Earl of Kildare, was Elizabeth Nugent, daughter of Christopher, 9th Lord Delvin, whom he married by dispensation of the Pope, as she was a Roman Catholic. On his death, in 1612, she, having no jointure, petitioned the King to grant her assistance, and she was assigned



THREE VIEWS OF KILKEA CASTLE,
Just before its restoration in 1849.



THREE VIEWS OF KILKEA CASTLE,
Immediately after the restoration.

during the minority of George, the 16th Earl, known as "the Fairy Earl" (his cousin Gerald, the 15th Earl, son of the Countess, having died when nine years of age in 1620), the manors of Kilkea and Graney. This Countess is the one referred to in the following extract taken from a ms. Latin history of the Jesuits, now in the library of Clongowes College:—"In the reign of Charles I., 1634, the good and ever to be honoured Countess of Kildare gave the Castle of Kilkea and all its furniture to Father Robert Nugent, Superior of the Jesuits of Kilkea. Father Nugent was a near relative of the Earl of Inchiquin of the noble house of Thomond. In the year 1646 Father Nugent entertained for twenty days, sumptuously and magnificently, the celebrated Rinuccini, the Pope's Nuncio, and several companies of soldiers on their way to besiege Dublin. The Nuncio wanting pecuniary means, Father Nugent lent him four thousand pieces of gold, which the Nuncio never repaid, and consequently the Jesuit mission was much neglected as they had not sufficient means to support it. Father Nugent lived to the age of 70; he wrote the history of his own order and times; but through fear of the Puritans, he buried the mss."

The Jesuits retained possession of the Castle till 1646. The Countess was concerned in the Rebellion of 1641, and was, the year after, outlawed for high treason. Her death took place in 1664. Archbishop Paul Cullen wrote in 1859 that he had met with an old ms. in Rome, in which it is stated that on the 16th of December, 1664, two strings of pearls—one containing 106 and the other 110 pearls—were presented to the church of Loretto by Elizabeth Nugent, Countess of Kildare. They were brought to Italy by Richard Archdekin, the author of a famous treatise on theology, and sent by him to Loretto, where they were presented by Robert Buckley, the English Penitentiary in that town.

The civil war broke out in 1641, between the Irish and the Catholic Anglo-Norman families on one side, and the Puritans on the other; later on it became a three-sided contest between the native Irish, the Catholic Royalists, and the Puritans. Though this castle itself does not seem to have taken much part in the struggle, yet the neighbourhood all round it was the scene of conflicts and suffered greatly from the miseries attendant on civil war.

In a letter dated the 16th June, 1643, occurs the following passage:—

"Last Saturday, Sir Michael Ernely returned to Dublin with that army which was sent forth under his command. Some few castles they tooke, but got little pillage or corne; the best was at Balle-Brittas, the Lord of Clanmalerye's house (Lewis O'Dempsey) in the Dempseys Country, Ballesanon

(i.e. Ballyshannon, near Calverstown), Castledermot, and Kilkey, the old Countisse of Kildare's Castle, being the three places that most annoyed our convoys and garrisons of Athy, &c., they were not to engage the army upon till they were better stored with powder, and Ballisanon by special wordes they were inhibited to meddle with. But when they were upon their way homeward, having not two days bread left, the souldiers surbated (footsore) and tyred out with long lyeing out upon the ground in the open aire, then they had a newe commission sent them to goe where they pleased. That Commission was signed on Thursday, but matters were soe ordered that it came not to Sir Michael's hands till he was within a day's march of Dublin, on his returne.¹

In 1646 "My Lord Nuncio, Scarampo, and Supreame Councell came to Kilka in the countie of Kildare, who next morninge adjourned to Athy to salute his proper Generall (Owen Roe O'Neill), who was very busy in buildinge ovens and fornaces there, and conferred on certaine affaires conducible to the comon good."²

In October of this year, the Marquis of Ormond, the Lord Lieutenant, corresponded with the two generals of the Catholic army, Owen Roe O'Neill and Thomas Preston, brother of the fifth Viscount Gormanston, who were then with the Nuncio at "Kilka."³

In 1649, Sir Robert Talbot and Sir John Dungan are mentioned as custodians "of Kilkae, a manor house of the Earl of Kildare, in the same countie, an invincible place which was soone after yelded to the enemy"; they were so appointed by the Marquis of Ormond.⁴

In a diary kept by an officer of the Parliamentary forces in 1650, he says:—

Saturday, July 20th, I left Dublin with a convoy of horse and foote, and quartered neare Kill, about two miles from the Naas.

Sunday, July 21st, we came to Kilka, sidelong of Castledermott: we were waylayd by Sir Walter Dungan, Scurlock, and others, who were neare Bolton Hill, drawne up in 5 divisions of horse. But it pleased God to give us the better of the engagement; we killed one Captain Shartall, and others, and tooke some prisoners, pursuing the rest some miles.

Monday, 22nd, we came to the army before Catherlagh (Carlow), where Sir Hardresse Waller, Major-Generall of the Foote, commanded, &c.⁵

The castles of Kilkea, Castledermot, and Athy, in 1650, were retaken from the Catholics under Lord Dillon, by Colonel Hewson. The Earl of Kildare, George—"the Fairy Earl"—now resided at Kilkea and in Dublin till his death in 1655. His

¹ Vide p. 64 of the Preface to Gilbert's "History of the Confederation."

² Vide p. 130, vol. i., of Gilbert's "History of Affairs in Ireland."

³ Vide Cox's "Hib. Angl.," vol. ii., p. 171.

⁴ Gilbert's "History of Affairs in Ireland, 1641-1652," ii. 65.

⁵ *Ib.*, iii., 218.

son Wentworth (so christened after the Earl of Strafford), the 17th Earl, also made this castle his principal residence, not being able, in consequence of losses suffered during the late rebellion, to restore Maynooth Castle, which had been seized and pillaged by the Catholics in 1642, and finally dismantled by General Preston in 1646. On the death of the 17th Earl in 1664, his widow, Elizabeth, 2nd daughter of John Holles, 2nd Earl of Clare, resided in the castle till her death in 1666. From this period the castle does not seem to have been lived in by any members of the family for close on 200 years.

In 1668, the castle with 1200 acres was let for ten years to William Lord Brabazon, son of the 2nd Earl of Meath, at a rent of £160 for the first two years, £180 for the next four years, and £200 for the last four years. The original lease is now preserved in the volume of mss. at Carton.

About the year 1680, John Browne, Esq., eldest son of Robert Browne (who went over to Ireland in the Parliamentary army attached to Colonel Henry Prittie's regiment during the civil war in 1650, and settled soon after at Carlow), married Mary, daughter of Robert Jennings,¹ Esq., of Kilkea Castle,

¹ In the churchyard of Castledermot, leaning against the enclosing wall on the north side, is a massive limestone slab which was some years ago removed from the interior of the building; judging by the inscription on it, which was lightly incised and is now almost illegible, it was erected to the memory of this Robert Jennings; the wording on it is as follows:—

HERE LIETH THE
BODY OF ROBERT JEN
INGS WHO DECEASED
THIS LIFE IAN 17
ANNO DOM 1679

He, too, may be the one referred to in this extract from a volume called "A List of the Claims as they are Entered with the Trustees at Chichester House," published in 1701, Dublin:—

Claimant.	The Estate or interest claimed.	By what deed or writing.	On what lands.	Late Proprietor.
Florence George, widow, Executrix of Robert Jennings, her late husband.	Residue of 31 years, commencing the 1st of May, 1670.	By lease dated the 28th of March, 1671, to Sir Hugh Middleton, Bart., who, by deed dated 25th November, 1672, assigned to Robert Jennings, the claimant's husband and testator.	Ballyhubbert, Ballyvass, etc. (near Kilkea).	Private Estate.

of the family of Jennings of Selden, in Yorkshire. He was ancestor of the Browne-Clayton family, of Browne's Hill, near Carlow.¹

In 1683, a lease of the castle, town, mill, and 900 acres was granted to William, George, and John Brown for their lives, at a rent of £135.

In 1706, Robert Dixon, who then held the castle, surrendered his lease, and Henry Dixon took it at £60 4s. 0d. rent for three years.

In 1741, a lease of the castle and 350 acres of land was granted to Henry Dixon, Esq., who died in 1747. His son Henry then became tenant of the castle, and after leading a wild and dissipated life, he died unmarried in 1797. The Dixon family, according to the Castledermot parish register, now kept in the Record Office, Four Courts, Dublin, were all buried in the Kilkea churchyard, though only a single headstone, lying flat, in the east end of the chancel, dated 1712, marks the grave of one member of this family.

In 1797, the notorious '98 informer, as in after years he proved to be, Thomas Reynolds, obtained a lease of the castle and lands through the interest of Lord Edward FitzGerald, when the castle appears to have been partially repaired and furnished. Reynolds having joined the United Irishmen in the beginning of '98 was elected delegate to the county meeting and treasurer for the barony of Kilkea and Moone; soon afterwards, on the resignation of Lord Edward, he was appointed colonel of the regiment of that barony in the rebel army. He then cut down several young trees at Kilkea and employed carpenters to make pike-handles out of them, and smiths to form pike-heads, in order to induce the peasants to believe in his sincerity, while he organized meetings at night for drilling the people in secluded fields close by.

A life of Reynolds was published by his son Thomas, in 1838, in which he attempts to vindicate his father's character; the following incidents in connection with the castle are extracted from it:—

His father Thomas Reynolds, he says, was born on the 12th of March, 1771, in Dublin; he was descended from Connor Reynolds, of Rhynn Castle in the Co. Roscommon; his mother was a daughter of Thomas FitzGerald of Kilmeed, near Fontstown; his wife was a Miss Harriet Witherington, whom he

¹ Vide Burke's "Landed Gentry."

married in 1794, at which time he had (to continue in the biographer's words)—

"a promise of the lease of Kilkea Castle and lands from the Duke of Leinster. It had been let on lease with about 350 acres of land to a family named Dixon for three lives, one only of which now existed, an old bed-ridden man, whose death was daily expected. William, Duke of Leinster, owed a considerable sum of money to my great-grandfather FitzGerald, and on his application the Duke promised my father the reversion of Kilkea for three lives, renewable for ever, at an easy rent. It was the finest land in the whole county, and delightfully situated, having the River Greese bounding it on one side, a fine turnpike road on the other, and the park-like Demesne of Belan, the seat of the Earl of Aldborough, adjoining. The avenue up to Belan House belonged to Kilkea, and was rented at a yearly take from the holder of Kilkea. There was also a strip of land of 70 acres running along the far side of the turnpike road, which served for cottage lands, so that all within the Demesne of Kilkea remained undisturbed.

"This residence was all the more desirable for my father, as it lay in the very centre of various places belonging to his family; his maternal grandfather at Kilmeed; his uncle at Geraldine near Athy; his cousins Thomas Dunne at Leinster Lodge, and Patrick Dunne at a newly purchased farm adjoining Leinster Lodge (now called Dollardstown); and his uncle Walter FitzGerald at Gurteen. Mr. Dixon died in the beginning of the year 1797.

"My father directly repaired to Rathangan, the residence of Mr. Spencer, the Duke's Agent, when he put in his claim. The Barony of Kilkea and Moone consisted of 1500 Irish acres, exclusive of the gardens, orchards and land occupied by the castle and its appurtenances. That part called Moone was held on lease by a family of the name of Yeates, and contained about 850 acres, including the old deerpark, adjoining to which was the ancient habitation of the Earl's huntsman, the Kennel, and other sporting establishments; these buildings formed the residence of Mr. Yeates's family. Kilkea was leased for three lives renewable for ever, which constituted a freehold in Ireland. My father's agreement was to pay £1000 as a fine to the Duke; and to pay Mr. Shannon, the Duke's builder, for new roofing, flooring, and ceiling the castle, and for making such other improvements as would put it into substantial repair; upon this outlay and upon the fine he was to be allowed 10 per cent. of the rent, which was fixed at a guinea (£1 2s. 6d. Irish) per acre, and on 350 acres amounted to £398 2s. 6d. Mr. Shannon's bill amounted to £2500 and some odd pounds; 10 per cent. on it and on the £1000 fine, amounted to £350, net rent remaining £48 2s. 6d. Several ornamental repairs and decorations were made, which could not be charged to the Duke, amounting to about £300. The Manor Mill, with two or three acres of mill-pond, adjoined this property and was then held by one Green, a miller, on a lease of seven years; this was to be delivered up to my father at the end of the lease, at the rent Green paid, if he chose to accept. He also had an unlimited right of cutting turf on the great bog of Monavoolagh, which lay not far from Kilkea.

"The repairs of Kilkea being completed in December, 1797, my father removed all his furniture by the canal which goes from Dublin to Athy, and having completely furnished the castle and stocked the lands, he moved with his family into it. . . . Towards the end of February, 1798, the country, which up to that period had been orderly, became the scene of riot, robbery, and assassination, by night and day; nor were the United Irishmen the only actors in these disgraceful scenes; the King's troops were too often guilty of

the most shameful abuses. Martial Law was proclaimed, the thumbscrew, the pitch-cap, flogging, picketing, and a hundred other tortures were resorted to, but without beneficial results. . . . On the 16th of April, my father was occupied in walling up a closet, which was made in the thickness of the wall of his common sitting-room, and which had evidently been originally intended as a secure place for depositing valuables. The entire room was newly papered, in order the better to conceal the closet, in which he had deposited his family plate to the value of about £1000, together with 3500 guineas in gold, and other valuables. In this occupation he was aided by his cousin Thomas Dunne of Leinster Lodge, who alone was privy to the concealment. . . .

"Towards the end of April it was reported that Lord Edward was concealed at Kilkea, that my father was a chief leader among the United Irishmen, and that the castle was being made a depot for arms and ammunition, that the fortifications were being repaired, and that it was to be the head-quarters of the Rebels in Kildare when the expected insurrection should take place; a clock, too, which he had placed in one of the towers was magnified into an enormous bell, on which the alarm was to be sounded to call the country to arms. Under these impressions Colonel Campbell, who commanded the Athy district under Sir Ralph Abercrombie, whose headquarters were at Kildare, sent a troop of the 9th Dragoons and a company of the Cork Militia, the whole amounting to 200 men and 80 horses, exclusive of servants and followers, to live at Kilkea at free quarters.

"On the 20th of April, my father, being about to depart for Dublin, invited his relatives and friends to a farewell dinner, when about 11 o'clock Captain Erskine of the 9th Dragoons, accompanied by Cornet Witherington of the same regiment, and Captain Neal, of the Cork Militia, as well as three dragoons, with pistols and drawn swords, entered the great hall, where my father met them and demanded their business. Erskine said he had come to take possession of the castle and to place him under arrest. My father asked to see his authority. He pointed to the officers who accompanied him, and said if that was not sufficient, he might look on the road at the rest of his troop, then advancing followed by a strong body of infantry. The remainder of his forces soon after arrived at Kilkea, completely surrounding the castle; and having placed two dragoons to guard my father, Captain Erskine with the other officers and eight or ten men proceeded to the vaults which were of great extent, as was frequently the case in these ancient feudal castles, containing not only cellars of all kinds, but stabling for forty horses, many of which were constructed in the great kitchen and its appurtenances. The soldiers never condescended to ask for the key of any door, all were forced open; they remained in these vaults till past three o'clock, astonished that they could not find anything improper. They preserved the wine and malt liquor, but they beat in the heads of some casks of spirits, and let the liquor run about the floor, which they said was done to prevent the men from getting drunk during their stay. The cook had fled, but they pursued and brought her back, forcing her to continue preparing the dinner which my father had ordered for his friends and of which they took possession. Captain Erskine placed himself at the head of the table, and insolently offered my father a seat at the side, as if he was a mere guest. My father then retired to his bed-room, which was first minutely examined, and a sentinel placed outside the door. After dinner a general search began all through the castle to discover Lord Edward, and the supposed great depot of arms and ammunition. My father assured Erskine on his honour that Lord Edward was not in the castle, that he did not know where he was, nor were there any arms except his fowling piece, one case of duelling and one

case of large pocket pistols which he used as holster pistols in his capacity of yeoman, and about two pounds of powder, the whole of which were in the breakfast parlour. Notwithstanding these assurances, they tore up the flooring from three complete stories of the castle, the whole of which had recently been laid down at great expense. They tore down the old oak wainscoting, not a vestige of which was left standing.

They next broke the walls in various places, and tore off the paper and canvas of such as were not wainscotted. They broke up the stairs, and in a few hours they rendered the interior of the castle a mere ruin, preserving only my father's bed-room; which, however, underwent a very severe investigation, having the walls, cupboards, ceiling, and floor pierced in many places. They also preserved their own sitting-room, which they found necessary for their personal comfort; yet in that room was the only concealment that had been made in the castle, being the closet which my father had walled up, and which if found did not contain anything but money, some papers, and the old family plate. After the Rebellion, my father's cousin, Thomas Dunne, who had aided him in closing it, opened it, and transmitted the valuables it contained to him in Dublin. Captain Erskine, without ceremony, took possession of everything in and about the castle. There were twelve beds for visitors, exclusive of those used by the family, some of whom were now absent; these the officers and non-commissioned officers occupied, while straw was laid down for the men. Forty horses were placed in the vaults, the others were stabled in the out-houses. The contents of the haggard, granary, and barn, as well as the sheep, pigs, cattle, and poultry, were all seized for the use of these marauders; even the milch cows and labouring oxen were killed for their food, which was distributed in the most profuse and wasteful manner.

"Michael Byrne, my father's steward, proved his delivery of cattle, sheep, and threshed corn, to the value of £630 str., independent of corn in the straw; and also independent of hay, pigs, poultry, flour, dried and salted provisions, liquors, groceries, and wine, none of which articles were at all included in the receipts taken by Byrne. The wine was every morning and evening brought in buckets to the lawn in front of the castle, and a pint was there measured out to every soldier, attendant, and follower of this party. Beer was drunk *ad libitum*. The families, friends, and acquaintances of the officers and men came daily from Athy to see the castle as a party of pleasure, when everyone was feasted at my father's expense. If they did not find all they wished for at the castle, they sent out foraging parties through all the neighbourhood, seizing all they pleased. As there was not a sufficiency of oats for their horses, they mixed it with wheat, which was threshed, and when no more threshed grain remained, they placed the wheat in the sheaf before their horses, by which means full as much grain was lost in the litter as was eaten. They dug up all the frames in the garden, they hacked and carved dates and names on the mahogany dining-tables, broke up all the furniture, and from mere wantonness, smashed every pier of glass in the castle; they cut out the strings, split the sounding-boards of the pianofortes; a pedal harp, which was then a rare instrument, and which cost one hundred guineas, was a particular object of their wrath, as the harp was the symbol of Ireland, and the harp without the crown was the impression on Napper Tandy's United Volunteer buttons; this as well as some other musical instruments totally disappeared. They cut the oil paintings out of their frames and used them as targets to fire at, or cut them to pieces with their sabres; some of these paintings were of great value, having been a present from Sir Joshua Reynolds to my grandfather, who, proud of this gift, had been at some expense in procuring a

few others by good masters, to make up a little collection, the whole of which was destroyed.

"They broke down the sluices of the River Greese, which ran through the place, and so let the water inundate about 70 acres of meadow land, ruining it for that season, and by thus letting off the water they emptied the great pond which supplied the Manor Mill, to the great distress of all the neighbourhood. The pretence for this act was to lower the bed of the river and empty the mill-pond that they might see if pikes or other weapons were concealed there. The Steward, Michael Byrne, was flogged and tortured to make him point out the supposed depot of arms. Lieutenant Love, who had relieved Cornet Witherington, of the 9th Dragoons, son of the Quarter-Master of the same regiment, being a tall man, tied his silk sash round Byrne's neck and hung him over his shoulders, while another officer flogged him until he became insensible; similar acts acquired for Love the name of "the Walking Gallows." The troops quitted Kilkea on the 29th, but it was shortly afterwards again occupied by troops, and converted into a regular garrison. It was attacked by the Insurgents during the Rebellion, but they could not make any impression on it. The soldiers' wives, a few of the neighbouring petty gentry, and farmers' families, claimed protection, and were allowed to remove into the castle with their families, and reside there during the troubles.¹ The castle was occupied by about 400 persons during two months.

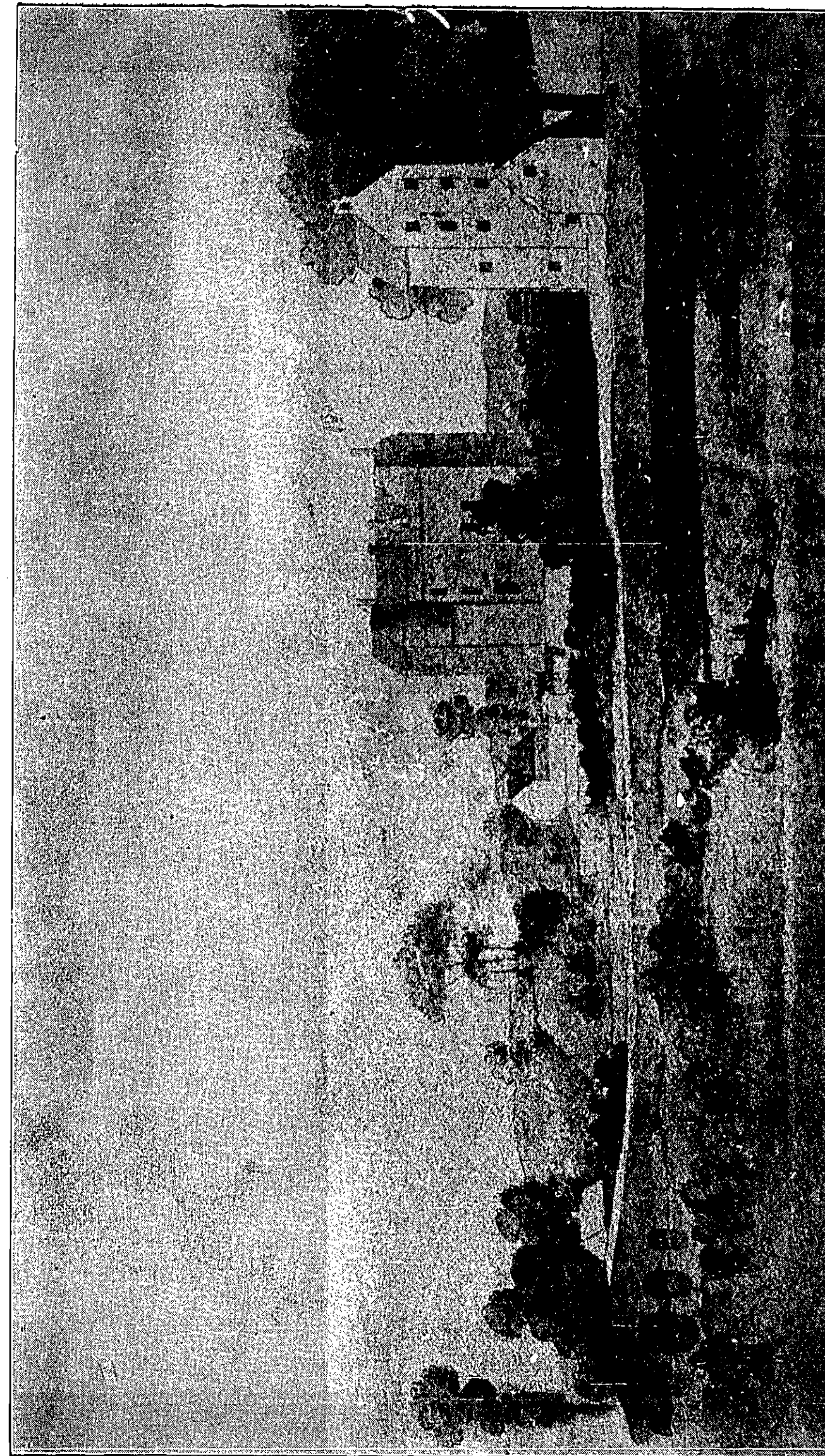
"After the troubles had entirely ceased, an agent was sent from Dublin to collect whatever remained on the lands and in the castle, and to sell the whole by auction. The Earl of Aldborough was then at his seat at Belan, which adjoined Kilkea; he attended the sale in the hope of purchasing some of the paintings, but none remained; as a magistrate he certified the fact of the sale, &c., and after all the expenses were paid my father received for the residue of the entire property the sum of £27, Irish currency; though in a return of his losses sent in to the Secretary of State, under an act for indemnifying suffering Loyalists, the sum amounted to £12,760, which even then would not have been sufficient to replace all that had been destroyed."

Thomas Reynolds's death took place in Paris, in August, 1836; he was buried in the vaults of Wilton Church, in Yorkshire; the only good word that can be said of Reynolds is that he had no hand in the betrayal of Lord Edward. Chapter xx. of FitzPatrick's "Secret Service under Pitt," conclusively proves that Thomas Reynolds richly deserved the detestable reputation of an "Informer."

Captain Erskine of the 9th Dragoons, mentioned above, was later on killed at the battle of Old Kilcullen, near the Curragh. As he lay half stunned on the ground, an old woman who was searching the dead came across him, and recognising him, in revenge for some former act of cruelty, put an end to him by repeated thrusts of his own sword.

¹ The late Very Rev. Archdeacon Lawrence Dunne, who succeeded Father Lennon as Parish Priest of Castledermot, was born in the castle at this period; he died on the 15th of November, 1883, after having been its Parish Priest for 54 years. He was buried in the Catholic church at Castledermot.

[To face page 24.]



KILKEA CASTLE AND THE MANOR MILL.

(From an unfinished Water-colour Sketch, now in the possession of Mr. Thomas Greene, of Millbrook, Co. Kildare: painted about 1830.)

During the Rebellion the castle was attacked, but without success, by the Insurgents. When tranquillity was restored it remained for some time uninhabited, until Reynolds surrendered the castle and lands to the Duke of Leinster, from whom Mr. Daniel Caulfield obtained a lease of them in 1799. The castle was afterwards inhabited by his son, Mr. Peter Caulfield.

In 1817, Mary Shackleton, the authoress of the "Lead-beater Papers," in vol. i., p. 355, of that work, thus describes the condition of the castle as it then was:—

"About six miles from Ballitore stands the Castle of Kilkea, belonging to the FitzGerald family. It is a noble pile and in good preservation. If the windows and chimney-piece¹ in the principal room were not so modern, and the massy balustrades² of the great stairs had been left in the original colour of oak, and not disguised with white paint, it would have an effect more appropriate to the dignity of the building. There are a great number of rooms; in the large one before-mentioned are two tablets, one bears the figure of an eagle, another a baboon, with this inscription, Si Div plet, Crom-a-bo, 1573. The ancient kitchen, with its seven ovens, is in the lower part of the building, from which the ascent to the chief rooms is by stairs of solid oak. The entrance to this part is by a great door, studded with huge iron nails, and here are dark and dreary apartments, the whole recalling the idea of the feudal times."

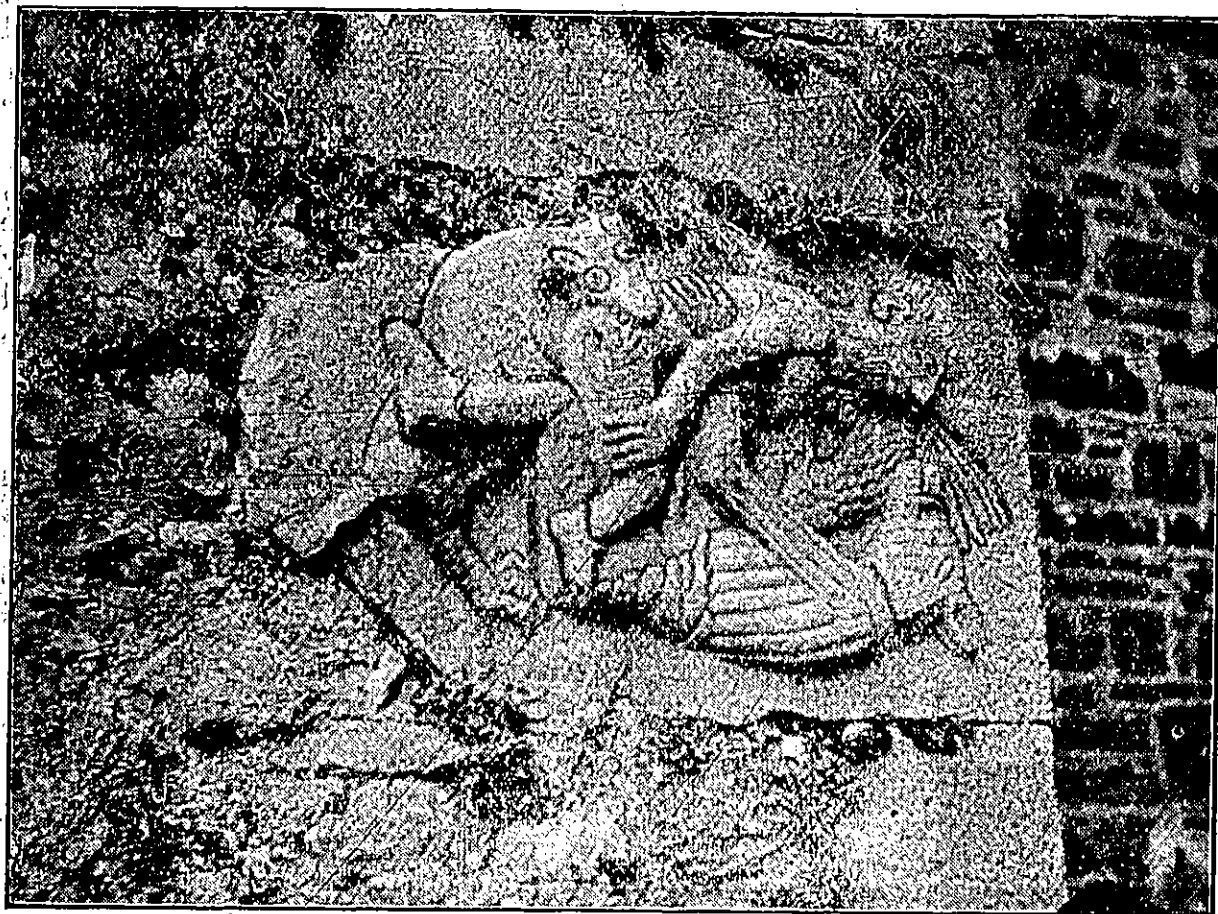
In 1849 the Duke obtained possession of the castle from Mr. Peter Caulfield, and commenced its restoration; but about twenty years before (*i.e.*, about 1829), improvements had been gradually carried out, the public roads were altered, the Manor Mill—known as the Black Mill—was taken down, and oak woods were planted in what became the demesne. The castle was at this time in a half ruinous state, there was no trace of its former bawn, except the gateway into it, which still stands, nor of the circumventing fosse; and the out-houses were thatched and had mud walls. The battlements on the castle were all thrown down except one row on the low portion at the south-east side; Mr. Caulfield is said to have increased the ruinous state of the castle by pulling down portions in search of hidden treasure. As a matter of fact, during the restoration of the Castle nothing of interest was discovered hidden away, except a dozen antique-shaped glass bottles containing a treacle-like liquid, which were found in a built-up recess in the partition wall between "the Puckawn room" and the present drawing-room (then the hall): the bottles had long necks and large round bodies; the workmen at first were shy about tasting

¹ *i.e.* of the Puckawn Room, which is now at Carton.

² Also at Carton.

the liquor, but after one had taken "a sup" with no ill effects there was soon great competition for the remainder.

A modern flight of steps on the south-east side of the castle, which led externally up to the drawing-room window, then a doorway into the then hall, were at once removed as out of keeping with an old castle; they were probably erected by the Dixon family, as they appear in Grose's engraving of the castle, in 1792, and not in a small hand sketch on Rogue's map of Kilkea, drawn in 1760. The tall lancet-shaped windows were probably the work of Reynolds, as they do not appear in Grose's engraving of 1792, though shown in the sketches of 1849.



THE "EVIL EYE STONE."

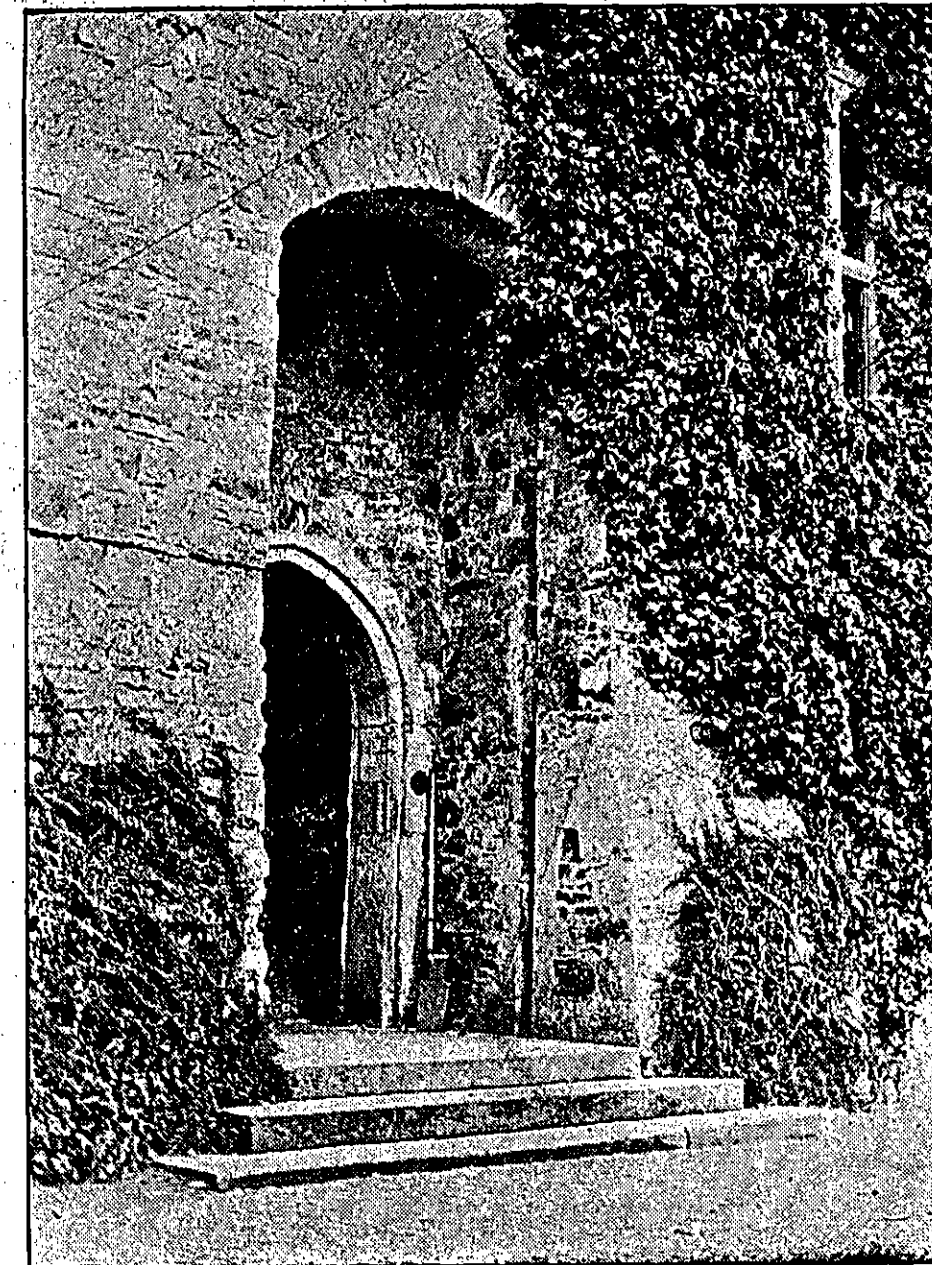
(Beside the Gateway into the Bawn of the Castle.)

Though externally very little alteration was made in the appearance of the castle during its restoration, beyond adding a story to its height all round, yet, internally it underwent a great change; windows were added or enlarged, the rooms in each story were all brought to the one level, and the ground floor which had been used as stables for horses and cows was made inhabitable.

Three features of especial interest to be noted are:—

1. THE EVIL EYE STONE, which is built 17 feet above the

ground into the quoin of the "Guard-room," close to the entrance gate into the bawn. The idea of the "Evil Eye" is that a person unknown to himself may possess it, so that by admiring or looking at a human being, beast, or crop, &c., he would unintentionally cause it to sicken or be blighted by its evil influence; to prevent that, at the present day, the peasants



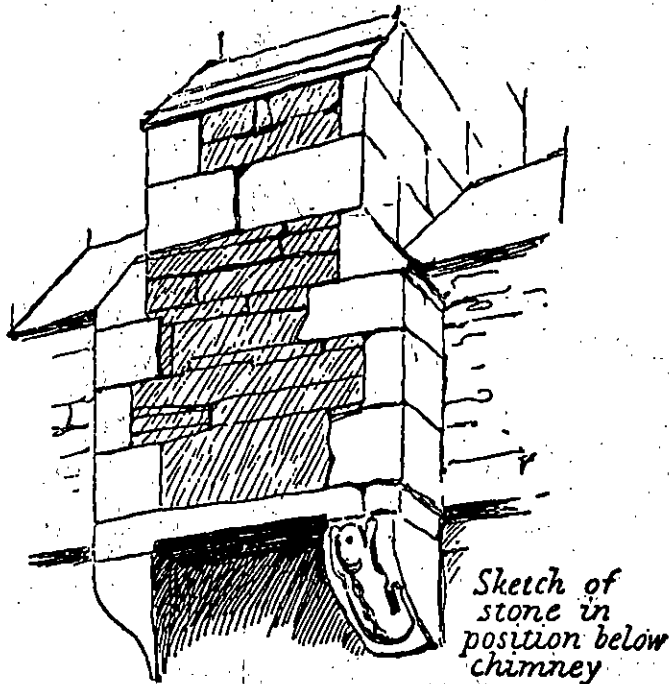
THE HALL-DOOR.

(Showing the Portcullis Grooves, and Square Holes for Beams.)

will add "God bless it" or "God bless you" when taking any special notice of anything; while in the old times grotesquely cut carvings were built into castles near the entrance in order to attract the "Evil Eye," and so prevent its evil influence from affecting the dwellers in them. Some forms of these curious relics of the past, originating from Pagan sources, are known as "Sheelah-na-gigs," and are generally found built

into the walls of ancient churches; a list of many of them is to be found at pages 78 to 81 of the 1894 volume of the Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland.

2. THE HALL-DOOR, which was the main entrance into the castle. This entrance consists of a high outer arch, and an inner pointed arched doorway. Formerly a portcullis hung in the outer arch; the grooves it slid down in can still be seen,



as well as two square holes outside of them again that contained beams of timber which, as an extra precaution for safety, could be drawn out across the entrance and inserted in like holes on the opposite side, now, unfortunately, built up; an appliance inside the castle prevented their being shoved back from the outside. At the time of the restoration old oak beams were in these long holes, but were made away with. The portcullis was also hanging, but it too, through negligence, was taken away and sold for old iron. From a description of it given by old Michael O'Shaughnessy, who was employed as one of the masons during the restoration, and who saw it in position, it was a framework of iron to which were fastened stout oaken planks, and the whole was worked on pulleys from a small high arched chamber above the door. Whether this was an ancient port-



THE CARVED BRACKET TO THE CHIMNEY OF THE HAUNTED WING.

cullis, or one put together owing to the troubles of '98, is now impossible to say. The stone vaulted ceiling of the hall was removed at the restoration, in order to add to its height.

3. THE HAUNTED ROOM, which is situated in the upper portion of the wing projecting from the round flagstaff tower. It is now much altered from what it used to be. Formerly it consisted of a chamber, to which was attached a circular turret-room; this latter now forms a part of the circular stone staircase running from the ground floor up to the level of the roof of the haunted wing in the flagstaff tower. The haunted chamber opened into a narrow, rough stone, winding staircase, built in the thickness of the wall, which led from the old roof level and continued up to the roof of the haunted wing. The little fireplace to this room has a projecting chimney in the south-west wall; one of the stone brackets it rises from on the outside consists of a monkey clinging to the stone, having a collar round the neck to which is attached a chain running down its back.

Here it is said Gerald, the 11th Earl of Kildare, practised the "Black Art," which earned for him the name of "the Wizard Earl." His portrait, in armour, hangs in the drawing-room at Carton, and over his head is written in Irish characters "Crum-a-buadh" (Crom-a-boo), the family war cry. His death took place in the year 1585. In connection with him is related the following legend, which has been put into verse, in the old ballad style, by one of our Society's members, Mr. Thomas Greene of Millbrook:—

THE WIZARD EARL,

A LEGEND OF KILKEA CASTLE.

If gentle life and high degree
And beauty could avail
To shield from ill, it were not mine
To tell so sad a tale.

If knightly valour, noble birth,
Misfortune could repel,
Or wisdom save, it were not mine
So sad a tale to tell.

Ten mighty Earls from sire to son
Of Gerald's noble name
Maintained their own, or fought for
more,
Or merely fought for fame.

But he the next contended hard,
With fierce resolve and stern,
To wrest from Powers below their
power
And all their wisdom learn.

Till so for ways of witchery,
And arts of darkness famed
In all the land, that he at last
"The Wizard Earl" was named.

And oft and oft was he besought
By his lady good and true,
To show her all his power, and be
Transformed within her view.

But ever he forewarned her
That if her gentle heart
Gave any sign of fear, he must
From her for ever part;

Till overpressed by loving words
He set her trials three,
That if she gave no sign of fear
He would transformed be.

At first the river Greese, that near
Where Kilkea Castle stood
Ran gently by, now quickly rose
In wild and sweeping flood,

And whirled around the Castle wall
And through the doorway flowed;
But soon again it fell away,
For she no terror showed.

And then, when out the waters went,
A fish-like creature wound
Its body through, in serpent form,
And wriggled on the ground,

And 'twined about the lady's feet,
But soon to disappear
It slunk away, for bravely still
She showed not any fear.

But third and last, a shadowy form
Moved silent through the room,
The form of one long years ago
Low laid within the tomb;

And now it flitted further off,
And now it flitted near,
But still the lady, gazing, gave
Not any sign of fear.

Then he who never bent to man,
Or failed in deadly strife,
By soft entreaty was o'ercome,
And yielded to his wife.

Though great in arms, and greatly
skilled
In each intricate art,
The Earl was lost, not knowing well
To try a woman's heart;

For, changed into a small black bird
And on her shoulder lit,
The lady scarce had raised her hand
To stroke and cherish it

When, crouching from beneath a chest
Upsprang a cruel cat,
The evil one, with ill design
To seize it where it sat.

Then she who feared not for herself,
Outstretched her lifted arm
In terror lest her well-beloved
Should suffer any harm.

But Powers Dark no pity know,
For, when her swoon was o'er,
The Earl and all his knights were gone,
She saw them nevermore.

Enchanted now, 'tis said they sleep,
Until the spell is past,
Full-armoured by their steeds, within
The Rath of Mullaghmast,

And every seven years, to where
The Curragh's plain lies wide,
They start, upon their chargers all,
And round its borders ride,

And then to Kilkea Castle,
Unto the haunted room,
And back again to Mullaghmast,—
For so it is their doom;

But, though at dead of night they ride,
The Earl you well may know,
When sounds of horse and armour pass—
By his charger white as snow;

That charger, too, is silver shod,
And when those shoes are worn,
The spell out-spent, the Earl again
Will gloriously return;

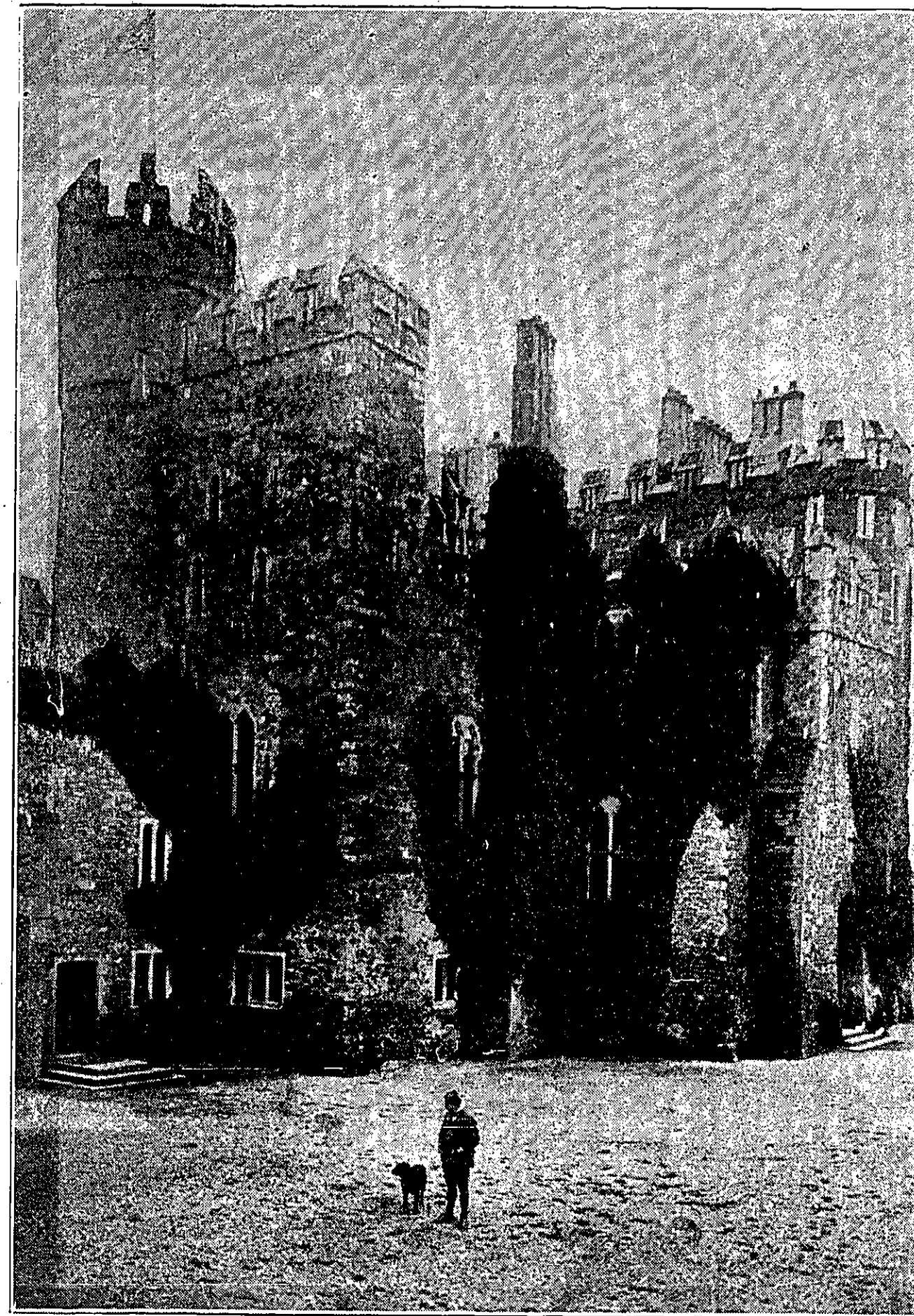
And when he comes, oh, then let all
True men and women pray,
That his good wife may meet him at
The Castle of Kilkea.

There is an ancient prophecy
That when this Earl shall come,
Victoriously, as I have said,
Unto his castle home,

He there will reign till seven years
Are seven times told o'er,
And yet will do a greater deed
Than e'er he did before;

Even the ancient enemies
Of Erin to withstand,
And north and south, and east and west,
To drive them from the land.

Then Heaven send those silver shoes
May wear away full fast,
If so thereby our native land
May rest in peace at last.

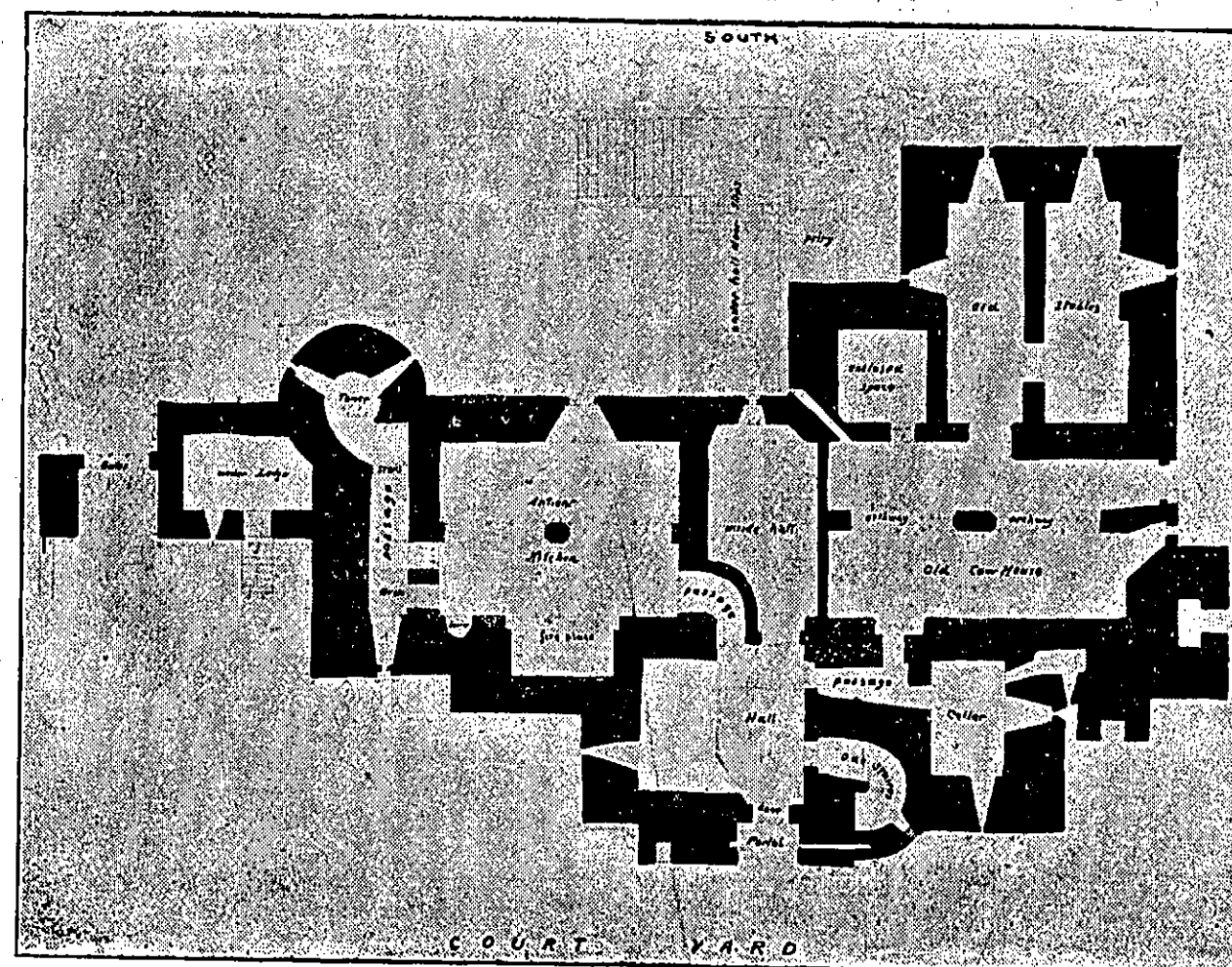


KILKEA CASTLE FROM THE NORTH.

Showing the Haunted Wing.

Such is this old-world tradition, the like of which should be recorded wherever they exist, as the simple belief in them by the rising generation is now ridiculed, and every year will make it harder and harder to get them told over.

In former times the private chapel of the castle is said to have been on the north side. In 1839, Mr. James Caulfield, brother to Mr. Peter Caulfield, then living in the castle, wrote to the Duke of Leinster from Newtown, near Castledermot, and referring to this chapel, said:—"Perhaps you are not aware that there is a room in the castle that was a private chapel, and that it has a beautiful carved oak roof, which some tasteless person has covered in with a modern ceiling."



GROUND-PLAN OF KILKEA CASTLE.

(Previous to the restoration.)

The 4th Duke of Leinster finishes his notes on Kilkea Castle with the following account of a discovery by an old man named Walsh, formerly living at the castle, and which he related in 1865:—"Many years ago," he said, "I was driving a nail into the wall of the castle, and as it sounded hollow I made a hole there, and looking in I saw an old gentleman sitting on a chair, with a table and glass before him. He appeared to have been built into the wall. As soon

as the air was admitted he fell to dust." Whereabouts this occurred has unfortunately not been recorded.

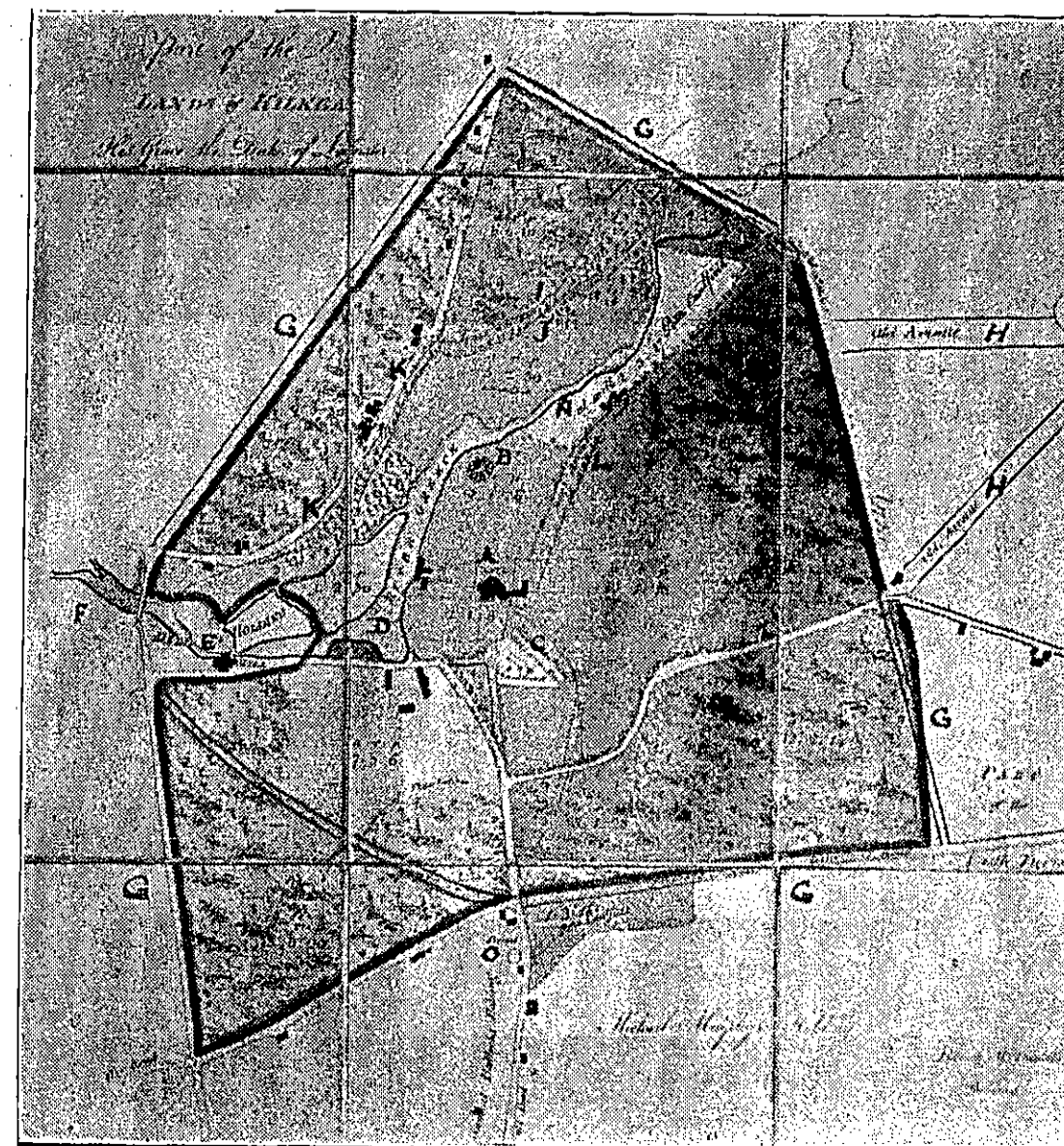
There are the usual traditions of underground passages, common to most castles, attached to this one; one is said to lead to the moat, and another to the churchyard. I have spoken to a gentleman who told me that in Mr. Caulfield's time he actually went a considerable way down the latter, till stopped by an obstruction.

In the castle demesne are two wells bearing Irish names. One is by the riverside a short distance above the moat; it is called "Tubberara," possibly meaning the well of the Rath. The other is not far from it, and is now covered over with an arch of masonry; it is known as "Tubbershawn," and also as "the Bohernash Well," from an ancient road of that name which formerly passed beside it. This latter well was in old times considered a holy well, and is said to have been dedicated to St. John.

REFERENCES TO THE MAP OF KILKEA CASTLE DEMESNE.

- A. THE CASTLE.
- B. THE MOAT.
- C. THE CHURCHYARD.
- D. THE MANOR MILL-POND.
- E. THE BLACK (MANOR) MILL.
- F. MONAVILLIA.
- G. THE NEW ROADS.
- H. PORTION OF THE ANCIENT AVENUES.
- I. THE NEW WATERCOURSE TO MILLBROOK.
- J. THE OLD WATERCOURSE.
- K. THE "DAIRY ROAD."
- L. THE BOHERNASH LANE.
- M. TUBBERSHAWN WELL.
- N. TUBBERARA WELL.
- O. THE FORMER POUND ON THE OLD ROAD OVER MULLACHREEHAN HILL.

[To face page 32.]



MAP OF THE KILKEA CASTLE DEMESNE,

Showing the alteration of public roads.

Circa 1822.