

Charles Davis Lucas VC.

By Griffith Wylie

Winners of the Victoria Cross are universally held in the highest esteem, as the award is reserved for only those who display extraordinary courage in time of war. Our district is justifiably proud of having produced a winner of the Victoria Cross, for Charles Davis Lucas VC was born at Druminargal House, Poyntzpass in 1834. In 1855, when a midshipman in the Royal Navy, Lucas became, not just a winner of the Victoria Cross, but the *very first* winner of this most prestigious award. *'Burke's Peerage'* states that the Lucas family, who settled at Castleshane, Co. Monaghan, were descended from one Thomas Lucas of Saxham, Suffolk. Thomas Lucas was secretary to Jasper Tudor, Henry VIII's solicitor. The Lucas family had a strong tradition of military service and Thomas Lucas's grandson, Henry, a cornet in Cromwell's cavalry, settled at Castleshane around 1650 in the aftermath of the

Cromwellian war. Henry married Mary Poyntz, daughter of Sir Charles Poyntz of Acton and their daughter, Lucy, in due course, married Charles Poyntz, her first cousin, Charles being the son of Mary Poyntz's brother, Sir Toby Poyntz. This firmly established the connection with the Acton area.

A son of Henry Lucas and Mary Poyntz was Lieutenant William Lucas. William resided at Dromantine Manor House in the second half of the seventeenth century, the Magennis's having been dispossessed for their part in the 1641 rebellion and war. According to Rev McGahan's *'History of Dromantine'*, the lands, which had previously been owned by Art Magennis, were acquired by Sir Hans Hamilton of Hamilton's Bawn in 1662. William Lucas was an active and successful *'tory hunter'* who was much involved in the hunt for *'tonies'* or outlaws who made life difficult for the rich landowners



Druminargal House