



*Dromantine House*

throughout Ulster. While he claimed credit for the plot that led to the betrayal and death of the famous highwayman, Redmond O'Hanlon, in April 1681, his claim to the credit was disputed by his brother-in-law Charles Poyntz. Charles Poyntz, in a letter to Sir William Fowler, of May 1681, outlines how it was he, and not William Lucas, who had enlisted Art O'Hanlon to betray Redmond. The Rev McGahan states that William Lucas, *"had obtained his tenancy from Sir Hans Hamilton and remained on until after 1681... probably vacating the Manor after the accession of James II"*. At that point, the Magennis family was reinstated. However, they finally lost their lands in 1737 when, because of mismanagement and accumulated debt, they were forced to sell Dromantine.

The estate was then bought for £11,450, by Joseph Innes, a prosperous Scottish merchant who had settled in Belfast.

A branch of the Lucas family was established at Druminargal House, Poyntzpass by the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Druminargal House had been the home of Francis Dobbs who was agent for the Stewart family and it seems likely that, after Dobbs's departure, the Lucas family of Druminargal acted as agents for

Alexander Thomas Stewart of Acton House, to whom they were related.

In August 1797 a member of the family, Captain William Lucas of Druminargal, died in Belfast of wounds he received in a duel with a Colonel Robert Sparrow of Tandragee who was an officer in the Essex Fencibles. Colonel Sparrow apparently stood trial for murder. He was found guilty and sentenced to death but was later reprieved and pardoned. However, he did not escape unscathed. An item in *'The Belfast Newsletter'* of Friday April 25, 1800 reads; *"Died, in England Col. Sparrow of the Essex Fencibles, of a wound he received in a duel between him and Captain Lucas, brother of the late Captain Lucas, Clair Castle, Co. Armagh."* Whether this wound was inflicted in the original duel with William Lucas or in a second encounter, with a second Captain Lucas avenging his *'late'* brother, is not clear but the latter seems the more likely.

Alexander Thomas Stewart became involved with the United Irishmen and was arrested early in 1798. Following his death in 1801, the Acton estate passed to a Newry merchant named Hanna, but the Lucas family remained in Druminargal, probably as tenants and held