

THE MOORES OF DRUMBANAGHER

BY JOHN CAMPBELL

“He was upright and benevolent in heart, just and honourable in all his ways... amid the wreck of his ample possessions.....The feeling apparent at his funeral solemnity proved that though wealth was lost public esteem for a good and upright man had suffered no diminution.”

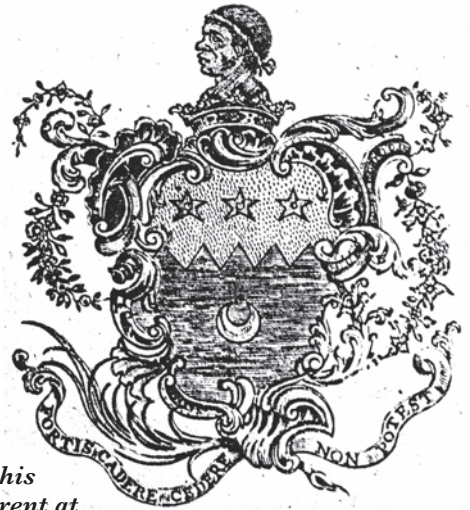
Newry Telegraph 30th May 1834.

This good and upright man was John Moore (sometimes referred to as the last of the Moores of Drumbanagher). The Moore family had arrived in Ireland in 1550 and a branch of the family had been settled at Drumbanagher for over two centuries. John Moore was a man who, among the disastrous Anglo-Irish landlords of the period, was remarkable for his decency and for the humanity with which he had treated his tenants.

But what caused ‘the wreck of his ample possessions’? At the beginning of the 19th Century following the passing of the Act of Union and during the Napoleonic Wars, the country enjoyed a period of relative prosperity. The town of Newry shared in that prosperity to the extent that, uniquely among provincial towns, it could, for a time, boast of having two private banks. Isaac Corry, who had supported the Union legislation, and been well rewarded for doing so, opened a private bank in the town with John Ogle, a member of a prominent business family. The bank of Corry and Ogle subsequently became agents for Bank of Ireland, who opened their bank in Trevor Hill in 1834.

The success of the Corry and Ogle bank may have led to another venture, the bank of Moore, Macan and Foxall opening in 1807. However it is also claimed that resentment towards Corry over his actions at the time of the Act of Union brought the rival bank into existence. Certainly John Moore, who had opposed the Act, in spite of being offered the inducement of a peerage, had reason to resent Corry’s role, for he was forced to step down as MP in the United Parliament in 1802, to allow Corry to be brought in.

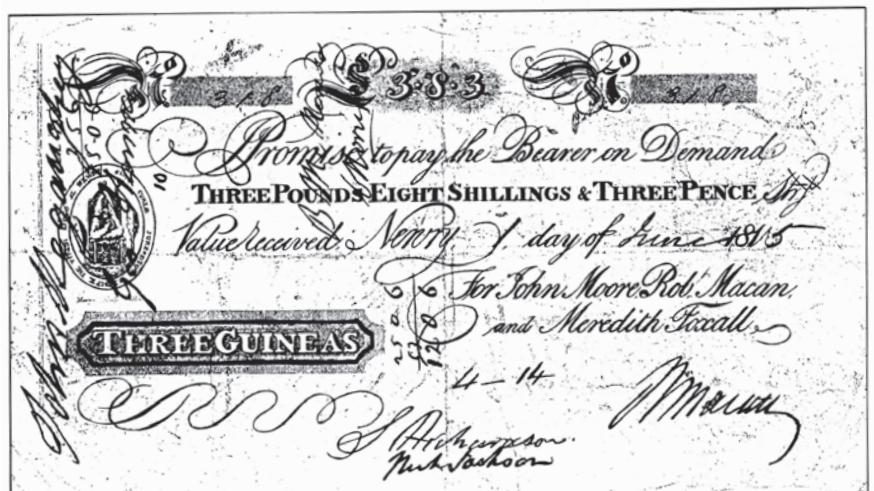
Moore’s partners in the venture were



Robert Macan and Meredith Foxall. Robert Macan lived at Ballinhone House, Armagh and had premises at Canal Street Newry, where he conducted an insurance business with his father-in-law Gillespie. Meredith Foxall lived at Killeavey Castle. The bank was established on 1st March 1807 at Canal Street, Newry.

It is not known whether John Moore was involved in the business from the outset or if he only became a director later for, apart from owning the premises in which the business was conducted, he does not appear to have taken any active part in its affairs.

It is said that he became involved owing to having too much confidence in a friend and by allowing his name to be added to a list of directors of the bank. By the time John Moore became a director, the bank was already in a failing condition and it seems likely that his name was added to that of Macan and Foxall in the hope that the high regard in which he was held would be sufficient to restore confidence in the bank. Moore certainly had confidence in his partners as it is



Bank of Newry note.

said that he did not look at the partnership papers before signing them.

However, the bank's state was beyond redemption and it collapsed completely only a few weeks after John Moore had become a director. After the failure it was found that the deed of partnership was so drawn up that the creditors could not touch the Foxall estate.

The arrangements to wind up the affairs of the bank and enforce liability on the directors were lengthy and protracted. Friends of Moore offered to attempt to raise the necessary funds to meet his liability and his tenants, who held their landlord in the highest regard, also offered their support.

All attempts to help were to no avail and on Friday 18th April 1818 the Drumbanagher estate was sold to Major Close. Other adjacent properties also owned by Moore, were sold to Major Douglas and Mr Christopher Moore. The sale realised £95,000. Under the terms of the sale the purchaser could also purchase the furniture, fixtures and farming utensils. The Moores retained possession of the Mansion house, offices and demesne until 1st November that year.



Tablet of John Moore and his wife.

“John Moore died at Loughbrickland House on 21st inst in his 78th year. A man universally beloved and regretted by his numerous relatives and friends. His remains were interred on Monday at the family burial place Drumbanagher Church-yard, County Armagh. The funeral procession left Loughbrickland soon after 9 o'clock am and proceeded leisurely by Poyntzpass arriving at Drumbanagher a little before 2 o'clock. It was attended by all the gentry and persons of distinction in this and adjoining counties for miles around. There were no less than forty to fifty carriages in the procession.”

According to the Moore family history John Moore and Robert Macan, anxious to preserve their honour, ‘beggared themselves to pay off their creditors and all creditors were eventually paid in full’. The children of Robert Macan mounted a legal challenge to the forfeiture of their father's property claiming that a significant portion remained in the names of their grandfathers, Macan and Gillespie but, as far as I can ascertain, the challenge failed.

The Moore's first connection with Ireland was with the marriage of Anne, daughter of John Moore of Beneden, Kent, to Sir Henry Duke of Castle Jordan, Co. Dublin. This was during the reign of Henry VIII (1509-1547).

According to the Moore Family history the family had settled in Kent on arriving in England from Normandy at the time of the Conquest (1066). Anne's brother, Edward, born 1530, was the first of the Moores to settle in Ireland. He came over here about 1550 accompanied by his two brothers, Thomas and George. They came as soldiers of fortune to serve in the war against the rebels led by Silken Thomas, Earl of Kildare. Captain George was killed at the Battle of Glendalough on 25th August 1580 and Sir Thomas died in action on 2nd November 1598.

Drumbanagher March 4th 1818

My Dear Lord Downshire

*My Property is now to be sold by
Townlands; and my Friends recommend me, to get them
valued by Mr Moscy. will your Lordship be so good, as to
allow me to employ him, it will take him but a few days
Mr. Moore joins me, in best compliments to Lady Downshire*

*I have the Honour to be
Y^r Lordship most
Obedt^l Servant
J Moore*

Letter authorising sale of Drumbanagher.

John Moore was a broken and changed man from the date of the sale and neither he nor his wife (who, it is recorded, was removed in a fainting condition) could ever be induced to see Drumbanagher again. John Moore retired in comparative poverty to Loughbrickland where he lived until his death in 1834. By direction of his will he was buried in one of the family vaults at St. Mary's Church of Ireland, Drumbanagher. In the Newry Telegraph dated 28th May 1834 the following report of John Moore's funeral appears:-

FAMILY TREE

Sheriff of Louth
Knighted 1579

Sir Edward Moore *m* Elizabeth Brabazon
Mellifon Nee Clifford
B 1530 d 1602 (Christopher Blount
Humphrey Warren)

Baron Moore of M/F
Viscount Moore
of Drogheda

Sir Garrett Moore *m* Mary Colley Henry William
Mellifont

M.P. Charlemont
1634 - 35

Arthur Moore *m* Dorothy King Edward, Ursula, John
Mallemonehan D 9.1.1636 Jane, Thomas, Francis
Drumbanagher James, Anne, Eleanor
B - F 9/04/1635

High Sheriff
Co. Armagh
1671 - 73

John Moore *m* Elizabeth Honeywood Charles Moore
Drumbanagher D 5/1682
B - d 10/1680

M.P. Charlemont
1720(7) - 1752

John Moore *m* 1(Cathering Savage Henry, Catherine
Drumbanagher (2) Mary caulfield Margaret, Frances
B 5/1675 d 1752 D 26/1/1769

High Sheriff
Cos. Armagh, Down
M.P. Ballynakill
1769 - 1783

John Moore *m* Gertrude Bayly (1) Anne, Elizabeth,
Drumbanagher (2) Mary, James, Sarah
B 21/12/1726 Arthur, Henry, William
D 24/09/1809

M.P. Ballynakill
1769 - 1783
M.P. Ballynakill 1783 - 1790
M.P. Lisburn 1791 - 1797
M.P. Newry 1799 - 1800
UK 1801 - 2

John Moore *m* Mary Stewart Mary, Sarah,
Drumbanagher D 22/06/1852 Charles, Francis
B 7/1756
D 21/05/1834



Tyrone's false submission

In 1563 Edward had married Elizabeth, widow of Sir William Brabazon. He was Elizabeth's fourth husband. Former husbands included Humphrey Warren and Christopher Blount. After the marriage to Edward Moore, Elizabeth retained the Brabazon name until her husband was knighted in 1579 when she became known as Lady Moore Brabazon. Lady Moore had inherited a lease of the lands of the dissolved Cistercian Abbey of Mellifont. In 1535 the Irish Parliament passed a Royal Decree declaring Henry VIII as Head of the Church in Ireland and by 1539 Henry's dissolution of the religious communities was being implemented. New laws to reduce the power of the Irish Chieftains were introduced under which their lands were surrendered to the Crown in return for knighthoods, earldoms and peerages. The lands were held under English law. Hugh O'Neill was created Earl of Tyrone. Queen Elizabeth (1558-1603) made a grant of the lands at Mellifont to Edward Moore. Through the Moores there is a strong link between Mellifont and the events that formed part of our local history.

Edward, who died in 1602, had two sons Henry and Gerald or Garrett. Garrett, knighted on 6th September 1599, was appointed to succeed his father at Mellifont, and, in 1621, was created Viscount of Drogheda.

When the English offered terms at the end of the Nine Years War O'Neill requested that some gentleman should be sent to treat with him. The English sent Garrett Moore, who returned with O'Neill to Mellifont where, in the presence of the Lord Deputy, his council, and a great assembly O'Neill was pardoned and as it was described, "Made a humble submission on his knees for a long space"

In spite of this the English remained suspicious that O'Neill continued to engage in treasonable activities and in July 1607 King James summoned O'Neill to London allegedly to resolve a dispute between himself and his son-in-law. It is claimed that Garrett Moore, who was a member of the Privy Council, tipped O'Neill off that he would be arrested and tried for treason. O'Neill did not go to London and, on Sunday 29th August, he travelled to Moore's home at Mellifont. Moore was foster father to one of O'Neill's sons. O'Neill collected his son and, as he was leaving, the manner of his departure was described as follows:-

"His departure provoked considerable speculation about his intentions. He wept abundantly giving a solemn farewell to every child and servant in the house."

On 4th September 1607 with a party of ninety nine, O'Neill embarked on a boat from Rathmullan in Donegal in what became known as the Flight of the Earls. O'Neill later claimed that he had been forewarned by an intimate friend on the King's very council that dire consequences would ensue from his proposed visit to London.



Rathmullan

Under the conditions of the Plantation of Ulster Garret Moore was granted 1000 acres of land in Ballmonehan, sometimes spelt Ballmonchan, afterwards known as Drumbanagher in the Baronies of Upper and Lower Orrior. Pynar's Survey states

"Lord Moore hath 1000 acres called Ballemonchan upon which there is a Bawne of Lime and Stone very near 100 feet square with two flankers; in one of them there is a small house built, inhabited by an Irishman. The lands granted include those called Kılnebodagh, Denone, Drombanchor and Liscomon, Kılrie, Knockduff, Kılmanaghan, Ballineseasagh and Cavankill. In this establishment we believe the Protestant colony at Drumbanagher, which has since flourished so exceedingly under the ancient family of the Moores, had its origin. There was a Protestant Church as early as 1622."

The estate was described as a capital demesne with rich soil and the plantation "in great vigour" surrounding a very excellent mansion house.

Sir Garrett Moore died on 19th November 1627 and is buried in Drogheda. He had twelve children, seven boys and five girls, and by his will, his son Arthur inherited Drumbanagher. Arthur married Dorothy King of Boyle Co. Roscommon. They had two sons, Charles who was born in 1629 and died an infant, and John, who inherited the estate on the death of his father in 1635. And so the estate was handed down through the generations of the family for the next two hundred years.

In the late eighteenth century Armagh was one of the most densely populated counties in Ireland with the linen industry and agriculture being the main areas of economic activity. It was from the weavers and farmers that agitation about the imposition of taxes and tolls led to the formation of organisations such as the Hearts of Oak and Hearts of Steel. There was a spirit of revolution about, influenced by the American War of Independence, and a growing confidence in peoples strength to challenge authority. With the English army engaged elsewhere it fell to local gentry to provide the funds to arm and equip local militia against the threat of invasion by France and so the Volunteers was formed. John Moore of Drumbanagher was a captain in the local Volunteers and had a company of 60 men under his control for whom he was issued with arms by order of the Governor of the Volunteers, Lord Charlemont 1779.

There are accounts of one incident involving John Moore and the Volunteers locally when on St. John's Eve, 23rd June 1789, they were called to a gathering. A report describes the incident as follows:-

"A number of Roman Catholics were celebrating the ancient festival of St. John; men, women and children were present dancing with fiddlers, pipers and a large garland of flowers. However Peep-o-Day boys construed this meeting as a mob of Defenders and John Moore brought down his Volunteers to scatter the meeting. He demanded the garland which was given to him but as he gave the signal for the Volunteers to depart a shot was fired from a mob who had accompanied him and one of those attending the festival was shot"

A month later John Moore wrote to the Earl of Charlemont expressing grave concern about the state of lawlessness in the area. He wrote:-

"It is with the greatest concern that I am obliged to trouble your Lordship on the most disagreeable business and were it not for downright necessity I would not have done it now. The whole country for ten mile round is in absolute rebellion and confusion.... My party was shot at from behind ditches and pelted with stones in a most alarming manner. As I have been rather active in my duty as magistrate I am now the person pointed out and am concerned that they will some time or other take my life away. No later than last night They made preparations to burn my house and were it not for a party of Jolly Dogs that I had for a guard I really believe they would have executed their purpose." He ends his letter with a plea, *"For heaven's sake don't forget the powder and ball."*

John Moore refers to his role as magistrate and throughout the generations the Moores were very much involved in Public Office. Arthur who inherited Drumbanagher from his father in 1627 had been MP

for Charlemont. Many of his descendants served as High Sherriffs, as Members of Parliament and in other public offices. The last John Moore of Drumbanagher,

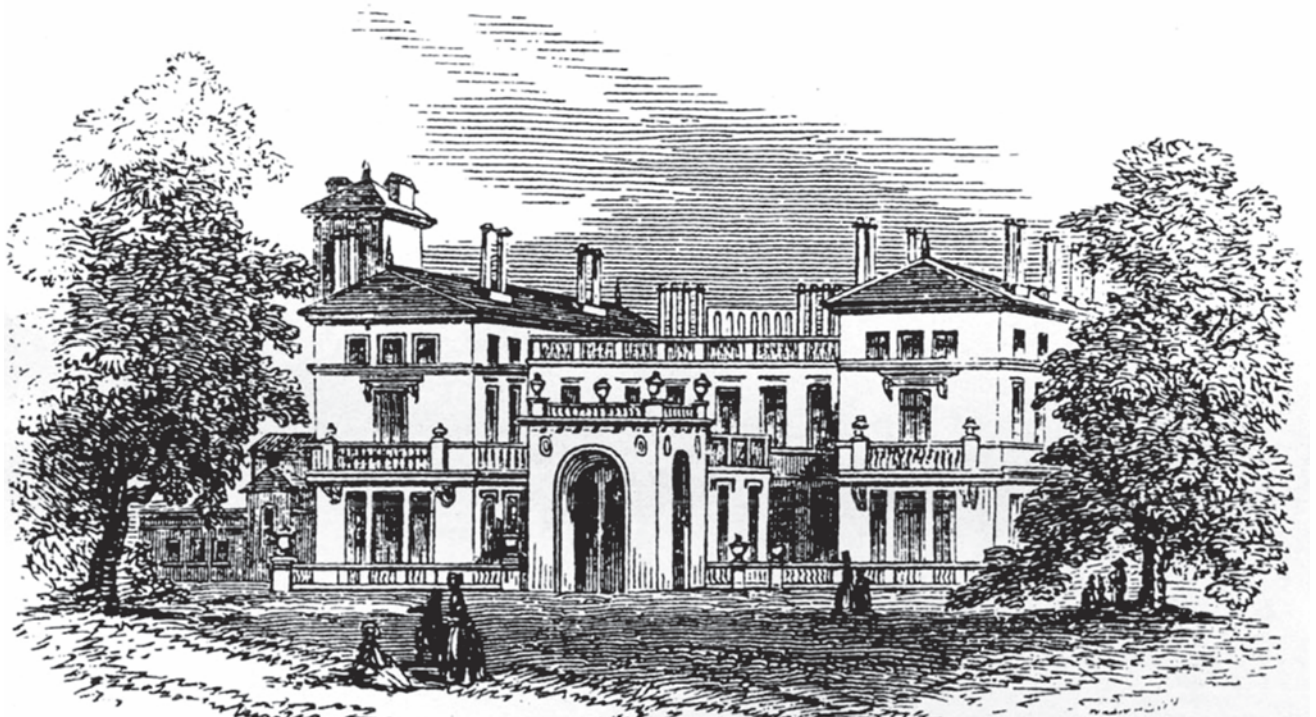
who succeeded his father as MP for Ballykill in County Laois in 1783, owed that position to the patronage of his relative Lord Drogheda.

So with the sale of Drumbanagher estate in 1818 a long association with this area came to an end but the last of the Moores is still regarded as 'a good and upright man'.

A tablet erected by John Moore's tenants reads: *"As a landlord his kindness and compassion for the poor was manifested in innumerable instances. He received his own rents and consequently had every opportunity of knowing the state of his tenants and has been known to forgive large arrears of rent in cases of poverty and distress.....His connection with the Newry Bank and its disastrous consequences are well known. On that trying occasion it is universally admitted that he earned the highest sense of honour..."*



Moore Grave, Drumbanagher.



Drumbanagher House