

The Fitzgeralds of Lahardan, Inchicronan.

The Fitzgeralds of Lahardan were a branch of the Fitzgibbon family of Coolcam Castle in the barony of Clangibbon, Co. Cork, (1) relatives of Fitzgerald "The White Knight". They were the direct descendants of Garrett Fitzjohn Fitzgibbon of Coolcam, who died in 1637, leaving one son Maurice who married Mary O'Keefe. Maurice had one son, Gerald Fitzmaurice Fitzgibbon. Gerald forfeited Coolcam in 1641, and was transplanted to Inchicronan, where it is thought he set up residence in Carrahill Castle. Gerald's son, Gerald Fitzgerald Fitzgibbon married the daughter of Moses Ashe who had been a captain in Cromwell's army and who had settled in the townland of Ballylinebeg in the parish of Kilraghtis on one hundred and eight profitable acres. (2)

Ballylinebeg was that portion of the present townland of Ballyline situated just south of the Ballyline river. **The Fitzgibbons and Ashes were close neighbours, and this union produced one son whom they named Maurice Fitzgerald, dropping the name Fitzgibbon then and thereafter.** Maurice married Penelope Barrett of Hillsborough and died in 1736. It was about this time that the Fitzgeralds built and moved into Lahardan House. William Fitzgerald of Lahardan, second son of Maurice, who was born in 1714, married Elizabeth daughter and co-heiress of Pierce Lynch who was betrothed to a daughter of Theobald Butler of Cregg. William became an attorney-at-law.

The lands of Lahardan were leased in 1734 by Theobald Butler to the Fitzgeralds, (3) who by c. 1830, according to the Tithe Applotment Lists, were proprietors of the lands of Dromaneen, Glenwilliam, Inchicronan Island, Cloonmoney, Brodagh, Ballinruan, Knockacloghan, Cahir and Ahish, Gortnamerican, Knockroe, one third of Callura, and also some islands, presumably in Inchicronan Lake. The total Tithe levy on these lands was £10 18s. 1 1/2d. (4)

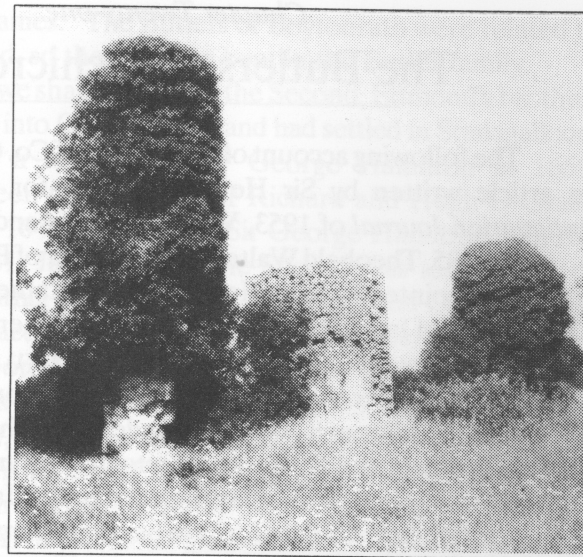
William Fitzgerald's son, James, later The Right Hon. James Fitzgerald was born in 1742. He was educated in Trinity College, Dublin, and was called to the Irish Bar in 1769. He built up a large practice and became Prime Sergeant in 1787. He had entered the Irish Parliament for Ennis in 1772 and represented Co. Kildare in the last Irish Parliament. He became a distinguished orator and was dismissed

for his speeches against the Union. He became M.P. for the Borough of Ennis in the Imperial Parliament 1802-1808, and 1812-13. He refused a peerage but he married Catherine, daughter and co-heiress of the Rev. Henry Vesey, Warden of Galway. In 1826 she was created Baroness Fitzgerald and Vesci. James died in 1835.

(5)

James' son, William, Lord Fitzgerald and Vesci, was born in 1783. In 1808 he took over his father's seat for Ennis. He was made Irish Privy Councillor and Lord of the Irish Treasury in 1810; English Privy councillor in 1812; Chancellor of the Irish Exchequer 1812-16; M.P. for Clare, 1818; Envoy to Sweden 1820-23; Paymaster General 1826 and President of the Board of Trade in 1828. William was defeated by Daniel O'Connell in the Clare by-election in 1828. Some few years before 1820, Lahardan House was burned down and the Fitzgeralds went to live in Moyriesk House, which was also destroyed by fire on 17th April 1875.

The Fitzgerald association with Inchicronan ended with the burning of Lahardan House, the ruin of which can still be seen and is known locally as "an Cabhal Mor".



'Cabhal Mor', Remains of Lahardan House, home of The Fitzgerald Family.

- (1) Burke; *The Landed Gentry of Ireland*. p. 285.
- (2) *Down Survey Map*.
- (3) Frost; p. 428.
- (4) *Tithe Applotment Books*.
- (5) *Dictionary of National Biography*.
- (6) Power, J; *The Other Clare*, Vol. 14. pp 49-51.

Note. For further information on the Fitzgeralds see Joseph Power's article on pages 48-51, in Vol. 14 of The Shannon Archaeological and Historical Society's magazine 'The Other Clare'.