

The Battle
of
Knocknauuss

THE BATTLE OF KNOCKNANUSS

**Knocknanuss the Hill of Sighs,
High cairn above a lonely tomb;
They named thee on a day of gloom,
For women's wailing doleful cries.**

THE LOCATION OF KNOCKNANUSS

Knocknanuss is a long high-shouldered hill that comprises the townland of the same name in the parish of Castlemagner in County Cork. It lies east of the Ballyheen Piers, three miles from Kanturk off the right hand side of the Kanturk to Buttevant road. The hill is the south western end of a wide fertile interrupted plateau from Lackaleigh to Kilbarry. At Knocknanuss its steep west face broods deceptively low over the surrounding countryside. East and south of the plateau it slopes gently to Subulter, Lisduggan and Lackaleigh. The north end drops shortly to the Kilbrin-Subulter road.

The little Owenbeg river or brook winds by Castlecork and Ballyhest to Marybrook. There it touches the north-western corner of the hill and begins a meander that forms the boundary between the townlands of Marybrook and Ballyheen Middle and the townland of Knocknanuss. It returns to touch the hill again at the ancient boundary of Knockaunawinna to define the western boundary of the narrow valley under the centre of the hill which was the main battleground for the battle of the hill which was the main battleground for the battle of Knocknanuss. From there, the river winds around Knockaunawinna in a southerly loop between the townland of Lackaleigh and the townlands of Ballyheen South, Rathmaher and Assolas and crosses under the Castlemagner-Kanturk road at Assolas Bridge. The hill formation is an isolated mass of diorite greenstone which outcrops along the western face and breaks through the shallow-soiled crown plateau. Except for the west face, the hill is arable and has been under the plough from early Gaelic times. The stoney red soil yields a rich tilt that produces beet, wheat and other high-protein crops in abundance.

DATE OF THE BATTLE

The battle was fought in 1647, on Saturday the 13th of November Old Style, or by present-day reckoning, on the 24th of November.

WHO FOUGHT THERE

The battle was an issue of the "Royalist v Parliament" English Civil War 1642-51. It was fought between the 6,800-strong army of Theobald Lord Taaffe the Royalist Lord President of Munster for Parliament.

(The Lord President was the English Civil and Military Governor of the province.)

WHY IT WAS FOUGHT

The great Irish Rebellion which broke out in October 1641 was a nationalist uprising that had as its objectives the creation of an Irish Catholic State. It had the support of the Pope who, in 1645, sent Archbishop Giovanni Baptiste Rinuccini with a large retinue and little else, as Papal Nuncio to promote it. In 1642 the Gaelic nationalists had joined the Catholic Old English in the alliance known as the Confederation of Kilkenny for the common objective of freedom to practice Catholicism in Ireland. They were opposed by the Protestant forces of James Butler Marquess of Ormonde who defeated them in a number of battles, notably at

Kilrush near Athy in May 1642 when he routed an army of Viscount Mountgarret and his own Butler relations. In September 1642 Inchequin routed a Catholic army of Garret Og Barry at Liscarroll when he counter-charged the victorious Confederates as they looted his camp.

The Civil War in England united Royalists of both persuasions. In June 1646, following Owen Roe O'Neill's great victory at Benburb, the Royalist element in the Confederation of Kilkenny manipulated the Supreme Council to unite with Ormond against the forces of Parliament. The Council degenerated into a power struggle between the ultra-Catholic Papal Nuncio and the ultra-Protestant Ormonde. Many Gaelic leaders left the Confederation as their interests in it were over-ridden. Control passed to the Anglo-Irish Royalists, who appointed their own Provincial Lords President. Ormonde remained as the Royalist Lieutenant General at the head of an organisation for government that duplicated that of Parliament. The Catholic Randel McDonnell Marquess and 2nd Earl of Antrim was also a contender for the Lord Lieutenancy and led a further split in the new Council.

In Munster, Donagh McCarthy Viscount Muskerry was the King's Lord President since the previous incumbent Sir William St. Leggier died in 1642. Apparently on the advice of Ormonde that the new arrangements could not hold, Muskerry resigned his commission and the Confederation appointed a 26-year old Catholic Royalist, Toehold Viscount Taffy of Corona Co. Sligo in his stead. Parliament had made a joint appointment of Lord Inchequin and David Barry 1st Earl of Barrymore but when Earl Barrymore succumbed to wounds sustained at the battle of Liscarroll, Inchequin failed to secure the appointment on his own. In 1643, he went to England to plead his case with both camps. Parliament gave him the job but his appointment was yet to be confirmed.

The Parliament's army in Ireland was levied from stood-down units of its army in England, with Anglo-Irish Protestant supporters. It was soon in action to challenge the Royalist new alliance. On the 6th of August 1647 the Confederate/Royalist Leinster army under Thomas Viscount Preston of Tara was routed at Dungan's Hill in County Meath by the army of Colonel Michael Jones, an outstanding cavalry commander and one of six sons of the Bishop of Killaloe who supported Parliament. The Supreme Council brought in General Owen Roe O'Neill with the army of Connaught and O'Neill succeeded in confining Jones's army to the environs of Dublin. In Munster, depleted regiments of Foot and Horse were consolidated under reformed senior officers and in late September 1647 these were reinforced from England with two regiments of Foot and a regiment of horse. This gave Inchequin enough troops to secure his Munster garrisons and to put 1500 Foot and a regiment of Horse. This gave Inchequin enough troops to secure his Munster garrisons and to put 1500 Foot and as many Horse into the field. From Limerick he strengthened his Nenagh garrison and wasted much of North Tipperary. He managed to praise Barnabas O'Brien the Royalist Earl of Thomand, from Parliament's siege of Bunratty and had him conducted to the Thomand estate near Maidstone in Kent. Aside from himself, all the O'Briens were on the Royalist side and his own brothers were Lieutenant Colonels in the Royalist army. Inchequin opened his campaign against the new Council with a 'TOUT' of Munster. His tactic was to come before a town with his 3,000-strong army and to offer quarter on the payment of a large contribution to the cause of Parliament. He began in central and east Limerick which he pillaged and plundered. He stormed Kilmallock and captured there the main Royalist munitions store for Munster. Then he passed to Mallow, the seat of Major General Sir William Jephson, an intimate of Cromwell and a prime influence in having a strong garrison of Parliament's Foot and Horse located there.

He progressed to Cork City where he rested his troops before moving into Waterford, being careful to avoid Lord Broghill's ruined home with its strong Royalist garrison under Major

General Purcell and the Earl of Castlehaven. He took the castle of Dungarvan after a 20-day siege and left a garrison there. He proceeded into Ormonde's own territory of south Tipperary and on the 12th of September he was before Cahir demanding his usual contribution. The strong fortress resisted for a few days until Inchequin stormed it and put its garrison of 180 men to the sword although they had already signalled a readiness to give up the castle to quarter. On the 20th of September he came before Cashel and offered quarter to the town on payment of 13,000 and a month's pay for his army. The offer was rejected and the citadel on the Rock was stormed. The garrison of 500 men and 300 others who had taken refuge there was massacred. Abbot Raymond Barry and some twenty other clerics from the Cashel monasteries were tortured and executed there with extreme cruelty. The outcry among Irish Catholics at these excesses was directed by the Nuncio against the new Supreme Council and the Royalist Catholics. Having let Inchequin unchecked in his tour of destruction, they now had to exert themselves as their credibility faltered through apparent inaction. The season for campaigning was over and the Royalist army of Munster was dispersed for the winter. Nonetheless, the Council ordered Lord President Taaffe to put his army on a war footing and to go against Inchequin without delay. Word had gone out from Viscount Muskerry that Taaffe was not to be trusted and that the excitable Nuncio was not the man to handle the interests of the Gaelic people. Consequently the great Risings Out of McCarthy Mor, Carbery, and Muskerry opted not to join the muster. Many others of the Gaelic and Old English leaders declined to take part and the muster was saved only when Sir Alexander McDonnell threw his weight behind the venture. Sir Alexander was the younger brother and heir to the Marquess of Antrim. The Marquess was in France intriguing with the Prince of Wales to oust Ormonde as Lord Lieutenant. In supporting the muster, Sir Alexander was going against the interest of his brother. Ormonde had called for Munster to be cleared for a Royalist recovery under Charles Prince of Wales and himself. Taaffe's move against Inchequin now incidentally served Ormonde's interest and worked against that of the Marquess.

Sir Alexander had raised and maintained his own regiment of Foot with the army of General Owen Roe O'Neill since 1643. Recently he had parted company with O'Neill and sent his run-down regiment to join the army of General Owen Roe O'Neill and sent his run-down regiment to join the army of Taaffe in Clonmel. There it was merged with the remnants of the regiment of Angus McDonnell Lord of Glengarry. The Glengarry regiment came to Ireland with the Marquess of Antrim at the end of the Montrose campaign. They were in the Royalist line at Dungan's Hill and lost 300-400 men in the general route. A few weeks later their camp near Wexford was surprised by an Ormondite faction under Colonel Sir Thomas Esmond and they lost 200 or so more. The survivors made their way to Clonmel and were drafted into the army of Munster. A contingent of other McDonnells and their followers were already with the Munster army and were now brought out of winter quarters by Sir Alexander to join the Clonmel contingent for a powerful McDonnell presence in the coming campaign. The Provincial Council in Limerick also got together a regiment of Foot from Munster, a regiment from Galway-Mayo and Sligo-Roscommon. They also raised three almost full-strength regiments of Horse drawn mainly from Munster and Southwest Leinster.

THE ROYALIST MUSTER

With Mallow denied, the Royalist Provincial Council decided to assemble the army at Quantock in Co. Cork. It was a fairly central point in South Munster, in secure Gaelic territory and near enough to Inchequin wintering in Cork City for a quick strike against him. The Foot Camp was north of the river at the Dromagh side of Ballymacquirke and the Horse camp was in the grounds of Kanturk castle. Built by Dermot, the father of the current Lord of Duhallow, the castle was said to be the finest building ever raised by a Gaelic chieftain. Its construction was stopped by Elizabeth 1 in 1598 and it was left unfinished. McDonagh was based in the old O'Keeffe castle of Dromiscane in Cullen where he had regally entertained

the Nuncio in 1645. That event had placed him in the Nuncio's side and was the reason why his territory was given for the muster, against the advice of his cousin Muskerry. The muster started in Kilkenny where the Butler, Nugent, Walsh and O'Carroll commanders of South Tipperary and West Leinster replenished their companies and squadrons and headed for Kanturk with the Lord President. Near Tipperary Town the column was joined by the groups from Connaught and the North west and Taaffe arrived in Kanturk with two almost complete regiments of Foot and several squadrons of Horse that remained under his personal command for the duration of the campaign.

Sir Alexander McDonnell got out the various branches of the McDonnell got out the various branches of the McDonnell and O'Donnell galloglasses from Clare, Galway and Limerick, under the command of Sir Alaister McDonnell of Annagh, known as Ellestrum Mor because of his great size. With them were the Gaelic clansmen of Clare, the O'Briens and McNamaras, Phelans and Broes, Nealons and McMahons. A north Tipperary contingent included O'Hanrahans, Kennedys, O'Briens Ara, and McGraths. Many had served in the Scottish Wars or with the Irish regiments of Spain in the 30 Years War soon to be ended with the Peace of Westphalia. Others were of galloglass families, keen to win their spurs and a place in the new regiments abroad. William McWilliam Burke, the 6th Lord Castleconnell, brought his own cavalry regiment with Butlers and Bourkes from Limerick, his cousins O'Briens Carrigonnell, Lacys of Ballingarry. Supples of Castletown and Browns of Kilmallock. From the flat plains of west Limerick came the well mounted horsemen of the Purcells and Gradys under Major General Sir Patrick Purcell of Croagh. From Castleroe came a company of the McSheehy galloglasses who were inter-married with General Purcell's people and of the same stock as the McDonnells and the Galway Joyces. The uniting force in this hasty winter muster was family connections, for which men trudged the rough ways to Kanturk. Men of substance wore the buff leather jerkin and corselet, worsted trews and leather boots. The majority wore cotehardies, trews of frieze crossed-laced and boots made of cowhide with the hairy side out. Headgear was a matter of choice and availability, hair was cut short and beards were in fashion. The captains favoured a wide-brimmed leather hat adorned with a family emblem. Horsemen carried personal belongings in saddlebags. Foot soldiers had a knapsack slung from the left shoulder and carried on the right hip. They were the choice if the family and of the clan, volunteers risking all for a hazardous cause. Private soldiers and troopers had to be single men "fit to be soldiers, free from any other entanglements or dependencies". Farmers and tradesmen were excluded as they were more valuable and productive at home. In funeral gloom the men were seen off with keepsakes, parcels of cooked meat and bread, and flat leather bottles of uisce beatha slipped inside tunics or knapsacks to ease the hardship of this winter adventure. From Kenmare, Donagh McFineen McCarthy brought his company and Donal O'Sullivan nephew of the Lord of Beara, a step first cousin of Dermot McDonagh Lord of Duhallow. At his family home in Ardtully, Donagh McFineen had entertained the Nuncio in style when he first landed in Ireland and he had a personal commitment to the prelate. Of renowned fighting stock, he was a brother of Florence Captain Sugan who fell a hero "with seven or eight musket balls in his chest" against Inchequin at the siege of Cork in 1643. At the battle of the Boyne, Donagh's son Colonel Daniel McCarthy heroically defended the ford at Slane with his "gallant Kilgarvanmen" and fell at Aughrim in 1691 with two brothers and two or three brothers-in-law. From Killarney Florence McCarthy, Governor of Kerry and the youngest son of Florence of the Tower, mustered with his Stephenson and McCarthy relations. With him were some of the Earl of Antrim's McDonnells, Sarah's escort for her nuptial journey to Killarney, and a group of the Kellys of Laois transplanted to Kerry in 1607. At Glenflesk he picked up Owen and Teige O'Donoghue, sons of Geoffrey of the Glens, answering the age-old friendship call of the McCarthys and O'Donoghues, however doubtful the cause. From Ardcanaghty, north of the Maine, Fineen and Eoghan McDaniel McCarthy came north of the Maine, Fineen and Eoghan McDaniel McCarthy came with Garret Fitz Maurice and Donagh

McGillacuddy from Tralee and Tom FitzMaurice from Macroom. These men had carried the Catholic campaign in Kerry and were associates of the forcible Donagh McFineen.

Local men from the O'Callaghans and O'Keeffes, O'Mullanes and Aherns, Corkerys, Sweeneys, Sullivans, Hannons and Noonans took their place with McDonagh 's squadron of Horse and with the Munster regiment of Foot. The hasty assembly took the McAullifes by surprise. Florence McAuliffe the chieftain was away in Spain and most of his men were in Clare, part of a McCarthy detachment sent there by Lord Muskerry for the Confederate garrisons. It took some time to get organised and they arrived a day too late to take their place in the line of battle. From the cities and towns of Munster Foot and Horse arrived singly or in groups under Fitzgerald, Barry, Hodnett, Terry, Forrester and other Old English captains. Notably absent were the Sarsfields, the Roches, Condons, Fitzgibbons, Stapletons, Magners, and the Powers of Kilbolane. They were leading Old English in North Cork but apparently not yet convinced that either of the essentially English causes in the conflict was theirs. The more lately came Elizabethan settlers in the area were on the Parliament side.

It was a bad time of year for going to war. Food was scarce and roads and ways were foul and men and horses churned through seas of mud and filth in the camps. The senior officers were billeted in the castle grounds and in the houses of local chieftains. The others slept in sheds and outhouses in their grey mantles, and scrabbled under walls and trees for a dry place to lie down. In this local war many women followed their men to camp and shared in the hardships. The Officers and troops themselves supplied whatever food they could. Appointed Commissars sold rough rations and the men haggled with the hoards of traders who hawked food, drink, tobacco and other creature comforts in and around the camps. Experienced poachers among the countrymen raided the local rabbit warrens and sheepfolds and roasted their capture whole on the smoky rain-soaked fires. All ranks were on the Royalist payroll at monthly rates of 20 Crowns (£5) for Captains, 12 Crowns (£3) for Sergeants, and 4 Crowns (£1) for common Soldiers. Pay for intermediate ranks was scaled accordingly. In this hurried muster there was hardly time for the rates to be an issue but pay was still an important adhesive in the muster process for the structure and the status it confirmed.

As the companies and regiments, troops and squadrons filled up, the order of battle began to emerge. Men and groups were assigned by arms and by their social ranking. Arms were checked and distributed but were in limited supply. Muskets were new and unfamiliar weapons and the recruits had to be hurriedly trained in cumbersome drills for loading and firing under battlefield conditions. They carried flintlock and matchlock versions weighing 15-20lbs, with about fifty 1 oz lead balls each, and a flask of black powder. The rate of misfire was high. The unstable powder could fire a ball up to 400 yards on occasion, but a man sized target stood a fair chance of being hit only within 50 or so yards. In the wet, the match got doused making the matchlock useless as a firearm. Flints had a life of about 50 shots and tended to fall out and get lost. The delicate adjustments involved in fitting a new flint made replacement under battle conditions almost impossible. In close combat, the musket was used as a club, or was thrown away and the short more wieldy Musketman sword was tried instead. The more progressive horsemen had pistols and sabres. The majority carried the Half-Pike, 2' of steel and 3' of polished wood, finely designed for stabbing, slashing and casting like a javelin. It was the weapon of Gaelic horsemen from time immemorial. On the small fast Irish cob, their skill in its use against Horse or Foot was legendary. One third of the Foot had musket, the rest shouldered the long Irish Pike, 4' of fine steel haft and double-edged swordhead with a crook to tumble horsemen and a 12' handle of seasoned hazel or ash. The Pike was considered a gentleman's weapon with glory to be won carrying the enemy line in the famous Push of Pike. For all, possession of the Scian or short Irish sword was a mark of martial readiness and most were trained in its uses by the roving Journeyman Swordsmasters who combined Swordsmanship with Dance in their merry trade.

Arms were scarce and men scoured the twigyards and copses for likely hazel and ash staves to turn into Pikes, the staves, 12'-14' long and 2-3 inches in diameter, were stripped and shaved to a smooth straight finish. The lighter end was sharpened and fired to a hard tapered stabbing point. The finished greenwood implement weighed around 28lbs and was cumbersome to carry and use. For in-fighting, men who lacked a sword carried a "fighting stone". This was a 5-6 inch flat oval gravel stone about 3lbs in weight which was carried in tunic or knapsack, to be whipped out to batter the skull of an enemy. A fighting stone of preferred weight with good handling qualities was a minded possession."Throwing stones" rounded field or hand stones 3-4 inches in diameter were collected to be thrown with power and accuracy at an attacking or pursuing enemy. In the field the battle-ried men kept a look-out for handy stones which they chipped and rounded to a suitable shape in idle hours. Many of the men had not stood in a battle line and their conduct and performance in action was yet to be tested. The great challenge for the officers was to hold them in the line and to keep them together. At this time the concept of military discipline and authority was yet to be developed. Officers, including the most senior commanders, took their place in the front rank and led by personal example. A charismatic personality with a reputation as a daring and lucky fighting man were the characteristics of a successful leader.

Early in November the skirl of warpipes announced the Scots. They came from Clonmel by Mitchelstown, Kildorrey and Buttevant, and on through Lisgriffin to the Height of Kilbrin. They crossed the Allow River to Knocknacolan, above McDonagh's old castle and set up camp in the high ground west of Kanturk castle. The small vanguard of Light Horse cleared the way for the column. A group of pipers led Lieutenant General Sir Alaister McDonnell and his regimental officers, with his Giolla Donald McGregor bearing the fearsome outsize claymore in a black leather scabbard. Sir Allastair was known in Munster as McEllestrum for his decent from Alexander McLan Cathanach in Antrim. McEllestrum was a huge dark headed man with the three eagle feathers of a Scottish chieftain on his hat. He rode on a black shire horse and was a favourite with the local people who came in great crowds to see this legendary hero, as the strident Scottish pipes filled the countryside with rousing music in the Gaelic idiom.

Behind McEllestrum were his regiment of McDonnell clansmen, fresh from his garrison duty in Clonmel. In their colourful rust-red trews, frieze blousons and Glengarry bonnets, they had the nickname "Redshanks" for the similarity of their dress to that sentinel bird of their native sloblands. Most were bare footed in the Highland style and carried a small round shield or Target. Each had a single-edged basket hilted broadsword slung on his back in a leather scabbard. A pleated tartan Filleadh Mor was held by a clasp at the waist and draped over the left shoulder almost to the ground. Around the column were wives and children, craftsmen and attendants and the hordes of hangers-on of an army in the field. The Scots were in two groups. The larger group of Sir Alexander McDonnell's regiment had about 400 men under Colonel James McDonnell Moye. James had been in the Munster army under Ellestrum Mor of Clare since 1641. The smaller group of the Glengarry regiment was about 300 men under Randel Og McDonnell. Randel had also led them in Montrose's campaign and in their actions in Ireland. Most were Scots from Antrim and the Scottish Isles and were related by marriage and by descent. Among them were O'Donnells and O'Neills, northern men with bitter family remembrance of southerly Kinsale when the Protestant grandfather of Lord Taaffe was a determined and ruthless executioner. Bringing up the rear were 4 or 5 baggage wagons with muskets, powder and accoutrements of war and a rearguard of Lancers alert for trouble in this unfamiliar southern stronghold. As Lieutenant General to the untried Taaffe, McEllestrum had no pretensions as a tactician, ad promised only that his Redshanks "would do some notable service" here. Taaffe's Army was now about mustered and the time for battle was at hand. The preparations of his opponent Inchequin were also nearing completion.

PARLIAMENT'S MUSTER

With characteristic boldness, Inchequin took the fight to the Royalists and mustered at Mallow, one day's march from the camps in Kanturk. Mallow was a major Parliament garrison town and gave Inchequin control of its Desmond castle and the rickety wooden bridge across the Blackwater, as well as the smaller Short castle at the north end of the town. The garrison was readily defensible against even surprise attack and was well-located for a pre-emptive strike against the Royalists. He brought in the Foot regiments of Major General Sir William Craig, which were scattered in garrisons around Munster and numbered more than 3,000 men in all. Many were ex-Royalist garrison troops taken by Parliament in England and given the chance to serve in Ireland instead of facing the penury of disbandment at home. Inchequin had seen at first hand the superiority of the Irish Pike over the much longer English version. For his Foot he selected mainly Shot, experienced musketeers able to load and fire up to 8 volleys per 5 minutes under battlefield conditions. He kept about one third Pike with the shot as a shield against a charge of Horse and Foot. He also mustered his regiment of Anglo-Irish militia. These veteran campaigners had seen action at Liscarroll and at the siege of Cork and were now resting after Inchequin's "tour" of the Munster towns. They were distinguished for the atrocities they inflicted on the prisoners and townspeople who had the misfortune to fall into their hands. They were augmented by conscripts raised in the garrison towns, and were about 1,100 men brigaded under Major General Craig.

A regiment of English Horse under Colonel Edmund Temple was included in the muster. It had about 700 all ranks, in nine troops and was armed, dressed and mounted in the New Model. Selected elements of other depleted English regiments were merged with the Anglo-Irish Horse militia in Bridge's Regiment of Horse. These militia were drawn mainly from the cities of Cork, Waterford and Limerick, with other settler towns also represented. Sir William Bridges was Colonel and the Clareman Nicholas Purdon was Major of Horse. Over 700 strong, as dismounted cavalry the regiment carried out the storming of the Rock of Cashel earlier in September. Most were drawn to the charismatic Roger Boyle Baron Broghill, fifth son of the late Earl of Cork. Broghill was Inchequin's General of Horse and was also his Vice-President.

PARLIAMENT'S MARCH OUT

By the 11th of November, the muster was completed and Inchequin was ready to take the field. A devout and uncompromising Protestant, he led the Council of War in prayer for success to their arms. Early on the morning of Friday the 12th of November, he went by Short castle along the old military road that linked Mallow with Liscarroll via Kilmaclenine, to place his column between the Royalists and their safe refuge in Gaelic Duhallow. The route also greatly reduced the possibility of his being outflanked and gave him a safe line back to Mallow in the unlikely event of something going wrong. He advanced behind a light screen of wide-ranging mounted scouts, the eyes and ears of the column. He himself and his commanders also ranged ahead, probing the countryside for sign of enemy troop movements and keeping at a distance the enemy scouts who reconnoitred the column to assess the direction and purpose of its progression. By the early afternoon his scouts were around Kilbrin and in contact with the leading elements of Taaffe's advance. At Kilmaclenine Cross he swung the column west and moved along a boley track and carters' lane to a prepared camp at Garryduff in the shelter of Kilguilky Wood. He was twelve miles and one day's march from Mallow, within a half day's march of Kanturk, and poised to give battle on the morrow. His Foot camp was on the south side of the wood with "Prevail" were on the north side, near to where Ballinaltig House now is.

Throughout the rest of the evening, the Horse scouted the Royalist lines for strength and deployment, skirmishing with pickets and outriders to gauge their fighting temperament. The battle now seemed inevitable but the battle ground was yet to be decided. The Parliament's Council of War disputed whether to cut their losses and return to Mallow without fighting or to take their chance in what was now likely to be a very close-run battle. Events at Knocknanuss were carefully watched to see if the enemy might opt to hold that high and virtually unassailable ground. For the morbid ultra-zealot Puritans there were prayers and lengthy harangues by their fundamentalist regimental preachers. The Parliament's decree of October 1644 that "there is to be no quarter for any Irish-born person taken in rebellion" was a consideration of major import. With the camp secured the soldiers saw to their weapons by the light of the campfires and sheltered from the biting north wind they settled down to snatch what sleep they could until the cold grey dawn roused them to the day's work on the morrow.

THE ROYALIST MARCH OUT

By late Friday morning, Taaffe was aware that Inchequin was on the march and that the objective of his northerly progression was to attack the Royalists in Kanturk. Taaffe and his commanders were alert to the real danger of entrapment in their separated camps constrained by the Allow and Blackwater rivers. They planned to go against Inchequin and to fight him on ground of their own choosing. At about mid-day they set out towards his approach and threw a dam across the Allow to ease the crossing at Greenane. The military road built by Sir William Pelham in 1579, which ran from Buttevant via Lisgriffin, Castlecor and Kilbrin to Kanturk gave firm going by Ballintubber and Knocknacolan until the column swung right at Corbally and went down by the east side of Knocknacolan Wood to Ballyheen. Purcell's Horse were in the van with a screen of scouts clearing the way ahead and probing for intelligence of the enemy. The regiments of Leinster and South Tipperary followed, with Taaffe himself at the head on a charger led by his McDonagh horseboy. Then came Sir Alaister McDonnell's Scots behind their pipers leading the composite regiment of Munster Foot drawn from Clare, Limerick, North Tipperary, Cork and Kerry. Next were twenty or so wagons with the army's baggage, munitions and supplies. An army of muddied carters strained with the horses to clear the ruts and keep the column moving. The short two-wheeled carts were low slung with high creels and an alarming tendency to tip over. Pulled by two or four horses depending on the going, the small wooden wheels were prone to sliding and in the churned-up way. Bringing up the rear were the squadrons of Horse under Lord Castleconnell. Crowds of local people kept with the marching column, like sporting spectators they came to watch from vantage the deadly game about to unfold.

By two o' clock the Royalist army was drawn-up across the wide valley by Ballyheen Piers, facing Inchequin's approach from Ballyhest and Marybrook. Purcell's Horse and the Scots were on the right, up to the west face of Knocknanuss. The Munstermen were in the centre and Taaffe's two regiments were on the left wing with Castleconnell's Horse up to what is now Nash's house in Corbally. Presently word came that Inchequin had gone into camp at Kilguilky and the Royalists left their stations to spend the night by their chosen battleground. The Scots camped on the hill of Knocknanuss, at the north end, nearest to the enemy two miles to the east. The Horse camped on the low ground of the Church Field and Fylvana to the east and south east of the hill. The Foot Camp and Army Post was in Lackaleigh on level ground between the south west end of the hill and the arc of the river. The camp was substantially protected by entrenchment's and ditches and took in the well at Tubberawinna. The senior officers were accommodated in the houses of local gentry. McEillestrum and his staff officers spent the night in merry roistering in the home of Christopher Og Purcell where Assolas house now is, in the company of the regimental ladies and the McDonnell commissary under John Nieve or Novy. Taaffe was in the house of John Purcell of

Rathmaher with Butler and other Old English staff officers. With the camp secured the junior officers and soldiers fed in scant rations by the myriad campfires and completed their final preparations for the battle. Watchful sentinels tended the fires and trapped absconders trying to escape the work for which they were already paid. Those captured had the unhappy choice of summary hanging or a place in a deadly Bearna Baol. The Royalist army slept and watched around the green bare hill until the dismal winter dawn fingered through the trees in Garryduff and crept over the sleeping forms on Knocknanuss to rouse both armies for the fatal contest.

THE ROYALIST FORMING-UP

Saturday the 13th of November 1647 dawned a cold showery morning with a sharp north-west breeze. After Communion and the blessing of arms, the camp at Lackaleigh broke up and the army prepared to give battle. At that time armies were un-uniformed and here each officer wore a twist of straw around his hat as a mark of respect of identification for his men. The straw was taken from a cornstack left there for winter feed by the Magners and now an early casualty of war. The Ensigns and Cornets, close by their captains, carried each an ornate and distinctive Colour or Standard, fixed to a stave as a rallying point for their men in the chaos and confusion of the battle. The password "God and Saint Patrick" was given to identify strangers as friend or foe.

The Royalists originally planned to fight Inchequin across the wide valley by Ballyheen. This was a strong aggressive line on fair ground for their large Pike formation and gave them the high ground on the wings. However, the low ground towards the river offered no advantage to the Scots for their vital charge. When Inchequin failed to come up and the Scots took post on the hill of Knocknanuss, in the course of the evening McEIllestrum decided that the hill offered better fighting ground for coming down on the enemy line. With the Parliament's Line of Battle predictable, the steep rake of the hill and the narrow valley beneath also denied Inchequin his superior Horse in support of his Foot. After much debate throughout the evening the plan was reluctantly accepted around 9 o' clock on the morning of the battle. The plan now was for the Horse to cover the Wings, Taaffe's regiments to close off the southern slope and the Scots and the Munster regiment to break the Left and Centre of the enemy line and trap the Right between the Royalist wings. The cumbersome business of Forming-Up was carried out under Sir Patrick Purcell, the Royalist Sergeant Major General. He formed up in the usual mode with Horse on the Wings and the Foot in the centre, in a single line of battle. The Right Wing under McEIllestrum was along the crest of the hill over the steep west face. The Left Wing under Taaffe formed a J-shaped line facing west and south over the southern slopes.

First on the right wing were three squadrons of Horse commanded by Colonel Patrick Grady from Kilballyowen near Bruff in County Limerick. They were drawn-up by squadron, each troop 10 horses abreast and 5 deep, about 500 men presenting a front of 90 Horse with two Troops in reserve. McDonagh McCarthy's squadron, over-strength with the Scots Lancers, were on the right flank over the steepest part where the river goes away from the hill at the north end. Their task was to protect the right flank and to oppose any attack by the unlikely north slope. Next on the right wing were the Scots of just over 750 all ranks, away from the Horse over sixty yards of angled hillside. The McDonnells would fight only on the right of the line, a Royal honour granted by Robert Bruce for their charge which broke the English line at Bannockburn on the 24th of June 1314. At Culloden Moor in 1746 the McDonnell pride of position was to prove disastrous. Denied the right wing they refused to charge and stood fiercely un moving in the rake of enemy cannon and musket fire until the regiment was almost annihilated. Here at Knocknanuss they were in 3 divisions, in 6 ranks of about 125 men each, and arrayed for swordplay.

Colonel James McDonnell Moye commanded the divisions on the right, McEllestrum led the centre divisions, and Randal Og led the division on the left. The three were established McDonnell captains, chosen earlier to lead in the Montrose campaign but a shortage of troops had provided a command for McEllestrum only. The arms were muskets, broadswords and targets. The very powerful men like McEllestrum carried the two-handed Scottish claymore, a great weapon with a 3'-5' blade of forged damascus steel. Swung around the head or the body like a throwing-hammer, in the hands of a competent user only weight of musket fire could stop it. The tactic was to smash down the protecting pike and musket and let in the charge of broadsword and broadax slash to carry the line. McEllestrum could hew down six or seven pikeheads with a single stroke. From the Scots' station on the crest of the hill a concave slope ran smoothly down to level ground and out over almost 200 yards of open plain to the riverside, offering ideal ground for the renowned Highland charge.

To the left of the Scots and separated from them by about 60 yards of broken ground was the Munster regiment. This had up to 1,690 all ranks, in 16 companies, each with about 70 Pike and 30 Shot and 4 company officers. They formed up in three divisions of about 550 men each, in 6 ranks in close array forming a solid wall of men along their station. Officers and the best fighting men were in the front ranks and on the flanks. The "shilling-a-day" men, drifters who gambled the lure of ready money against a chance to desert, were placed in the centre to stay their flight. On the rear flanks, sergeants directed the musketfire and maintained formation. Men who would flee had to choose between the enemy in front and the sword-points of the sergeants at the rear. The Right division next to the Scots had the MacSheehys with Lochaber broadaxes and the Clare galloglasses with broadsword, Pike and Shot. The centre division was about 20 or 30 yards to the left arranged like the Right division but fronted with a wall of Pike. The Left division was 20 yards or so left again and completed the regiment's line of battle to the end of the crest. On their left front a crescent-shaped entrenchment faced west and down the hill to protect the unguarded angle of the hill. This Bearn Baol held about 100 Pike and an interspersed of Shot. The regiment presented a front of about 300 yards and was the main formation in the centre of the Royalist line. McEllestrum Mor McDonnell commanded the regiment. Donal Mac McDonnell was his Lieutenant Colonel and John Phelan was the Regimental Major. They were brigaded with the Scots and McEllestrum Mor was also Second-in-Command to McEllestrum in general command of the Wing.

On the Left Wing, Taaffe's two regiments of Foot had about 3,200 all ranks. Each regiment was in 16 companies of 100 men and 4 officers. Among his commanders were Col. Richard Butler, Col. Piers Walsh, Lieut. Col. Lucas Taaffe, brother of the Lord President and Lieut. Col. Christopher O'Brien brother of Inchequin and Royalist bearer of the title Baron of Inchequin. Taaffe's major deployment was to oppose any strong attack up the easier southern slopes from Lisduggan and Lackaleigh and was to force the enemy to concentrate on the west slope where the Royalist battle line was already formed-up. Taaffe's line of battle began to the left of the Munster regiment and extended across the southern slope over the Southwest and south approaches. He formed-up in three divisions each of about 750 men in 6 ranks and closely grouped in a solid wall of men and Pike. The South Tipperary contingent and the Leinstermen made up his First and Second divisions. The contingent from Connaught and the North West were his Third division. Some 60-80 yards to the front of his line, 3 protected entrenchments ran in an arc of about 1,000 yards. Each of the entrenchments was 200-250 yards in length and held up to 350 Pike interspersed with Shot. This very strong defensive array was supported by the divisions of Foot each stationed to cover an entrenchment. With the Royalist plan centred on attack down the hill, re-deployment of the line to lay on the attack would inevitably call for extensive troop movements.

Lord Castleconnell's Horse of about 470 all ranks, formed-up in 3 squadrons, each troop in 5 ranks of 10 or so, with two troops in reserve. It was a mobile force to be diverted along the wide front to counterstrike or to pursue. The Command Post was located towards the left centre of the crown plateau and the centre-rear of the Left Wing. It was out of sight of the Royalist Right Wing and had no view of the valley along the foot of the hill. Around the CP were a few tents, the baggage and munitions wagons with a guard of about 100 selected Pike and Shot, and the Light Horse guard of the Lord President. There also, the cadre of 10 or so barber-surgeons waited under the command of the Regimental Surgeon. With some skill in binding wounds and broken limbs, they would follow the charge to aid wounded and fallen officers and formation leaders. Priests, on the checklists here as regimental preachers, were attached to army CP as mounted officers, being kept out of the line of battle in this ecumenical campaign. By around 2 o' clock, Major General Purcell had completed his forming up. Matches for matchlock muskets were lit as the army held its stations and waited for a fair chance to fall on the enemy already engaged in manoeuvres on the plain of Ballyheen and Marybrook below.

THE PARLIAMENT'S FORMING UP

In the camp at Garryduff, the Council of War were uneasy about their plan to confront the Royalist army in its strong position. The scouts were out around Ballyhest and Subulter at first light and reported that the enemy were holding to the high ground and the hill. The Council of War decided that to fail now to give battle was no better than surrender and resolved to go against the enemy despite the serious disadvantages of ground. After a meal of ale and bread, and a session of prayer for success to their arms, the password "Victory" was given out. The officers put a sprig of broom on their hats as a mark of identification. Kilguilky, the name of the wood in which they camped, is the Irish version of "Wood of the Broom". The shrub was actually the colourful autumnal red Buonymous Europa Rua. The wood has long since disappeared but the shrub still grows wild in the area.

Around 9 o' clock the scouts confirmed that the Royalists were forming-up over the west face of Knocknanuss. The camp in Garryduff was broken and the army went by Ballymacpierce and Ballyhest following the natural contour of the land for a northwesterly approach on Knocknanuss. Temple's Horse, with Inchequin himself in attendance, swept through Kilbrin and Ballynoe clearing the area and studying the Royalist positions. Inchequin sent his wagons and stores to set up a defended camp on a selected site off Sir William Pelham's road on the crest of the hill at Corbally, near where Nash's house now is, with about 100 Foot and Horse Scouts for a camp guard. Bridge's Horse covered the left flank of the advancing column ranging through Ballrushion and Ballyhest. Inchequin's consideration was to place his army between the enemy and their natural refuge in Gaelic Duhallow and Muskerry. With Taaffe's strong Left Wing deployment discountenancing a main attack by the south slope, Inchequin had to draw up his line of battle against the steep west face of the hill, over which the enemy line was already formed-up. Covered by the Horse on both flanks, his column progressed through Marybrook and halted on the Fair Green at Ballyheen at around 11 o' clock.

From the Fair Green in Ballyheen a fallow plain of open ground went for 1,100 yards to where the Owenbeg meanders by the Foot of Knocknanuss. However, a narrow fall of ground lying along the west bank of the river from Marybrook to Lackaleigh was hidden from view and offered more difficult ground for forming-up. Inchequin centred his line on the enemy Right Wing where the Scots were certain to leave the high ground to deliver their "notable service", bringing the rest of the Royalist line with them. His plan was to receive the charge with his Centre division at the bottom of the hill, to break the charge with concentrated musketry and to complete the destruction of the Royalist army with his Wings of Horse in a classical concentric envelopment. Forming-up commenced around mid-day and followed the

usual mode of Horse on the wings and Foot in the centre. Major General Sir William Craig was General of Foot, Broghill was General of Horse and Inchequin himself was Army Commander. His artillery was two 2.6ins cannon captured at the battle of Liscarroll. The guns were fired with black powder with a high rate of mis-fire and a low muzzle velocity. His single line of battle was parallel to the centre of the hill. It formed-up from near where Colemans house now is on the Lackaleigh side of the river, through where Sherlocks house now is in the Ballyheen side, and extended left almost to the quarry known as Savages Cave in Marybrook.

Bridge's Horse was first on the Left Wing. They were in 6 troops drawn up by troop in 5 ranks of about 15 horse each and numbered about 470 all ranks with a reserve of 2 troops posted to the right rear. They were armed with pistols and sabres and directly opposed the Royalist right wing of Horse. The Foot were in three divisions, drawn-up in 6 ranks in open array. To engage in battle, the formations advanced on a drumbeat at a deliberate 80 paces per minute, then they closed-up in 3 ranks and opened fire with co-ordinated volleys of musketfire. This battle drill was developed by Gustavus II Adolphus in the early 1630s and was intended to intimidate the enemy in its display of control and military discipline. Next on the left was the Anglo-Irish militia under Colonel Thomas Grey, who were the Left Division of Parliament's Foot, about 1,000 men, armed mainly with muskets with a company of Pike on each flank and interspersed in the front ranks. The division also found the Forlorn Hope of some 80 men under Lieutenant Colonel Peter Crispe. The Forlorn Hope was located 60-80 yards forward of the Parliament's line and its task was to fire on the enemy centre and to skirmish forward and draw it on.

The Centre division was comprised of around 1,500 selected English musketeers under Major General Craig and Colonel Simon Needham. They also had a cover of Pike on the flanks and their task was to take the brunt of the Royalist charge and break it with heavy and co-ordinated musketfire. The Right division had about 1,100 men drawn from re-constituted English regiments. Under Colonel Francis (Franck) Roe, they were mainly Shot with some Pike and were in open array to advance in line of skirmish against Taaffe's regiments. The Reserve of Foot of about 500 men under Lieutenant Colonel Walter Croker, was located to their rear. This division was posted well to the right to give Inchequin flexibility to pull it left to support his Centre or to send it up the southwest slope to exploit any opportunity arising on that easier approach. About 200 yards to the right rear of this division, Temple's regiment of Horse was stationed on open ground on the Rathmaher/Ballyheen side of the river. They formed-up in 7 troops arranged similar to Bridge's Horse with a total of about 550 all ranks and 2 troops in reserve. They were placed to contain the enemy Left Wing and to exploit any advantage occurring on that end of the line. Inchequin's CP was at Knockaunawinna in the bend of the river at Lackaleigh where he had a view of the hill and valley to his left and also up the hill to his front where Taaffe's line was mostly out of sight from the valley.

As the Forming-up progressed, Inchequin personally checked his emerging line and placed his centre to more directly confront the Royalist Right Wing. He moved Bridge's Horse further to the left into hilly marshy ground with ditches and enclosures, just to the south of Marybrook House and more opposite the north end of the hill. The terrain was unsuitable for Horse but the move was necessary to allow the whole line to move to the left. He moved his Left division until its flank rested near Poul na Pheist and a stream that came down there from Clash. The division was to hold this position until he himself ordered it to move out. Inchequin expected the Royalist charge to break in that direction and the task of the Left division was to hold them on the killing ground, with Bridge's Horse placed to shut off escape by Marybrook and Subulter. His left wing was now farther from the centre and out of sight of his CP. However the many ditches and enclosures around it and the river along its front, provided a very strong defensive position for receiving a charge.

His Centre and Right divisions followed on to take up positions more centred on the Scots and Munster stations, as if he would ignore the Royalist Left Wing isolated on the southern slopes. He placed his field guns on the left flank of the Centre division and fired on the Royalist line above, to unsettle their formation. One gun could not be got to fire at all, the other did some small service. He brought his right wing of Horse forward to the Lackaleigh side of the river, facing the west and south slopes, between Colemans and the Fort near Lackaleigh. The move put Temple's Horse in an easier position against the enemy left wing. The Right division now confronted mainly the unassailable west and southwest angle of the hill and he ordered it to move right again to its earlier position facing the south west slope. As the line settled, he ordered his Centre and Right to go forward on the Knocknauuss side of the river towards the ditch and bank of a sunken lane that ran along the foot of the hill in front. Parliament's Forming-up was now completed and both armies were in battle array. The wind was from the northeast, down the length of the battle line. It was past 3 o'clock on a cold cloudy winter day with intermittent sunshine and an expectation of snow when the day went down. The field gun and sporadic exchanges of musket fire had bloodied both protagonists and the battle was already precipitated by the reaction of the Royalists to Inchequin's manoeuvres. The action was to unfold in a series of three almost separate phases.

THE FIRST PHASE

The Royalists recognised that Inchequin's manoeuvres would move the centre of his line to more directly confront their right wing, and that of the threat of a main attack by the south slope seemed no longer to pertain. McEllestrum's response was to consolidate his formation by moving the three Munster divisions into echelon behind his own to form three composite McDonnell regiments, each of around 800 all ranks. The right regiment of the new formation was commanded by James McDonnell, McEllestrum himself led the Centre and Randal Og McDonnell commanded on the left. At the same time, Taaffe's deployed commenced re-forming away from the entrenchments to take up the stations vacated on their right by the Munster regiment. The very extensive movements caused intense confusion and dis-organisation as the un-standardised and cumbersome field drills were attempted. To cover his vulnerable line of foot while these manoeuvres were being completed, Taaffe brought up Lord Castleconnell's Horse to his right front.

While the re-forming was going on, Taaffe saw that the Parliament's Right -division was moving back to its right again to a stronger and more threatening position. He ordered Lord Castleconnell's Horse to attack it while it was still moving and he sent down some companies of foot to support the horse as the attack went home. When the charge came down, the enemy line was concealed by a false crest above its new position and the attackers had had no sight of it until they were right on top of it. Inchequin saw the attack coming down and immediately threw his right division behind the big ditch and bank of the lane across their front and fortuitously he gained full advantage from this classical defensive position for foot against horse. In a hail of musketfire, the front ranks of the attacking squadrons were annihilated. The rest broke back up the hill, riding down the supporting foot in their headlong flight. Inchequin sent Temple's horse to counterstrike. They came up in a phalanx of horse and assailed Castleconnell's left flank to tumble and scatter the formation in a confusion of horses and riders. They re-grouped and rode over the panicking foot in a sweep of destruction, until Castleconnell's fleeing horsemen got away by Lisduggan and Castlemagner with Colonel Temple's right -wing of horse coursing after them.

As the broken Royalist charge turned back up to the hill, the parliament's right division came up in a line of skirmish, mopping up wounded and stragglers until halted by forward elements of Taaffe's line holding their ground in a stout defensive stand around the entrenchment and stopped the counter-attack. The first division, re-formed in a solid wall of a pike, supported the entrenchment and stopped the counter-attack. Inchequin saw his attack falter and sent up

his reserve of under Lieutenant Colonel Croker. In heavy fighting, Taaffe's men held the advance for five or six minutes until the line broke from the left and was rolled up. A few minutes later the first division also broke and most of the men threw away their arms and fled. The officers re-grouped and fought their way to join McDonnell's regiments already in action at the foot of the hill. On the crown plateau the route took hold and men fled in all directions. Immediately Inchequin himself came up with Temple's reserve of horse to finish off this total destruction of the Royalist left-wing.

When Taaffe saw his first division under weight of attack, and his leftwing of horses gone, he called up General Purcell. With about 600 horses and the surviving 2,200 or so of his foot, he left the field. He led down the south slope and crossed the river south, of Assolas house. He moved with good order, with Purcell's horse and the reserve of Castleconnell's regiment holding the enemy from his rear and flanks, his foot having discarded their pike and musket were better suited to the rough and marshy terrain by which they went. The good pace of their going quickly took them out of reach of pursuit as Inchequin abandoned the chase for easier game. The column went by Raheen, Killavallig and Gurteenard and crossed the Allow behind Kanturk castle to take up a strong position in the camp. The Horse covering the withdrawal got involved with scattered elements of Bridge's and Temple's regiments and fighting went on over Bannagh and Ballymacmorrhagh and down the Blackwater until darkness fell. As Taaffe distanced himself from the field, the absolute abandonment of his flight was apparent. After back to Knocknauus and re-joined the fighting beside the regiments of McDonnell.

When the main Parliament's attack gained the crown plateau, the left wing of the Royalist army was gone. Taaffe CP was left with all its equipment, stores and documents, including Taffe's own ornate field bed and his commission from the Royalist controlled Supreme Council. Men from Taaffe's line and displaced stranglers from the Munster regiment made across Subulter for Ballygiblin and Ballyhass. Inchequin led his foot and horse in pursuit. The Horse worked in groups, riding down the fugitives while the foot followed on mopping up the fallen in an orgy of slaughter. A large group of fugitives blundered into the forty-fifty acre marsh and black thorn thicket called Ballinamona Bog in the townland of Ballygiblin. There the Foot and dismounted horse determinedly hunted them out and killed them among the reeds and into the bushes. Over 1,000 men, mostly from Taaffe's regiments, and some two hundred horsemen were killed in this route for only slight losses to Parliament. Eventually Inchequin re-grouped most of Horse and Foot and headed back to Knocknauus, leaving a detachment to clear Ballinamona Bog.

THE SECOND PHASE

As Castleconell's Horse and the supporting Foot came down on the left wing, McDonnell's regiments went into action. To the wild piobrach of "McEillestrum March", the Musket men fired into the advancing enemy and threw down their muskets. In a single body the regiments charged,

"Thundering down without the least sense of danger" in the silent Highland style, with McEillestrum's scything claymore ripping a bloody corridor through the musket men. Around him the swords men hewed through the shield of pike and musket, annihilating the forlorn hope and taking its commander prisoner, and rolled on "like a torrent impetuously" to smash into the left and centre divisions of the enemy foot. At the same the horse on the right wing started to lead down, the two squadrons on the left angling more left over the contour to gain smoother going down to the level ground. As they came Colonel Grady got Taaffe's countermand and recalled his squadrons. They turned back up the hill and raced off with the reserve to the CP. Bridge's horse saw the withdrawal and against orders they fell on and raced up the hill, the troops on the left veering hard to the right to get around the steep

hillface in front of them. In the movement, they blocked the advancing troops of their regimental Colonel in the centre and the attack rushed with the formation in disarray. When they gained the plateau, they joined in the scattered chase of Taaffe's fleeing foot and horse and soon lost their formation. They were heavily engaged in protracted diversions at Ballinamona Bog and had little involved in the fighting around Knocknauss.

McDonnell McCarthy missed or ignored the recall and took his horse straight down the rough precipitous hillside immediately below his station. He arrived on the plain to fall on the rear of Bridge's Horse and reserve. With the advantage of surprise, his squadron routed and chased them over Marybrook, Ballyhest and the surrounding townlands. The smaller faster horses and horse to horse style of combat of the Gaelic troopers denied the enemy the chance to re-group and took a heavy toll of their horsemen. The Colonel of the militia horse, Sir William Bridges who led the storming of Cashel a few months earlier, was among the many who fell in this action. The left division of parliament seeing Bridges horse apparently routing their opponents, disregarded orders and went forward after their centre division. They fired a single volley, the gunsmoke of which blinded their centre. Then they threw down their arms and fled as the shock of the Redshank charge hit them. The fifty or so regimental officers attempted to stand their ground and were killed with their Colonel in the total destruction of the left division. McDonnell's charge also ripped away the left flank of the centre division, taking the loaded field gun and firing point blank into the distressed formation.

McDonnell's left regiment, late in forming-up and coming down over more uneven ground, was held by the unbroken main formation of Parliament's centre division. The first heavy encounter drove back the left and centre of the division forcing the formation to pivot on its right flank and face more or less north across the valley. Stragglers and survivors from the other formations rallied to each side as close order musket fire met the repeated charge of pike and sword in an engagement of attrition. Inch by inch the ground was debated as the centre division fell back to the right under the hill and around by the fort field. Major General Sir Henry Craig was mortally wounded as his men were steadily pushed to a slight rise near the river at Assolas. There they were able to form a square of shot, with pike on the flanks, and held their ground against fierce attacks of broadsword, claymore and musket hurled on them from all sides. Lacking weight of musket fire, press of men or the charge of Horse, the attackers were unable to break the division. The action extended over two hours and across three-quarters of a mile of ground leaving a trail of slain and wounded from under the hill to the last position. Ellestrum Mor McDonnell, fell in the action under most of the Scots and Munster losses were in repeated charges on the unbroken phalanx. McDonnell's right and centre regiments, which had smashed through the enemy line for the loss of about five men, pushed through the route of the parliament's foot to prevent re-forming. Some went on towards Ballyheen and Clash and up the long slope under Inchequin's camp to Corbally, clearing the enemy and taking prisoner such officers as they found. A group of the Scots found a deep wooded ravine or gully that led up the hill to the right and rear of Inchequin's camp. By this ravine they gained the rear of the camp and quickly over ran it. Most of the defenders were killed, among them Sir Robert Travers the Parliament's Judge Advocate for Munster. He was there only to watch the fighting. His daughter Elizabeth was married to William Meade of Ballintubber who was a grandson of Lord Sarsfield. Sir Robert's other daughter Martha was married to Captain Robert Stannard of Newmarket who along with William Meade was an officer in the parliament's army. In his choice of this privileged grandstand Sir Robert paid the price of those who mis-comprehended the fatal business of war Major Robert Brown, a reformed officer on Inchequin's staff, was also killed there. The Scots got possession of some barrels of Ale and wine and drank themselves to a stupor as they consumed the stores of the Parliament's officers. Most of the Scots officers left the field and made for Kanturk with prisoners. Some of the more local contingent set out for home

confident that they carried the day. The company of MacSheehys headed for Drumcollogher, their day's work done. Others straggled back from the pursuit and set to robbing the slain, friend and foe alike, while awaiting a leader to shepherd them off the field.

The fugitives from the Parliament's the left wing and Centre broke along the banks of the river towards Marybrook, where high ground on both sides of the river made a narrow gullet. There they piled up and were killed in great numbers as the route spilled along a lane which ran by the riverbank under Subulter to Castlecor. The Horse came in and rode them down and tumbled men into the river where many were drowned. The rout raced on for Kilguilky and headed back to Mallow with Horse and foot chasing them to the gates of Mallow castle. Returning from Mallow, McDonagh's horse came up on the Parliament's detachment still occupied with the killing in Ballinamona Bog. A running fight ensued which spread over the surrounding townlands and drew in several hundred Horse and foot of both sides as it developed. The roles of the hunter and hunted were reversed repeatedly in wild chases over Ballyclough and Castlemagner. The regimental captain of the militia was killed in a duel with a Royalist soldier who jumped on a riderless and overcame the captain in a demonstration of keen swordsmanship, while the comrades of each cheered on their man. The fighting went on until dark and was renewed the next day when both sides returned to extricate their men still trapped in the morass. Another group of fugitives went towards Lisgriffin and went into the bogs and coverts at Ardprior where a grim hide-and-seek went on into the next day. Others got lost around Lisscarroll and Freemount and made their way to Mallow and Buttevant over the next few days. As groups of survivors worked their way towards friendly territory, the paths of opposing groups crossed and fighting and killing ensued. A few found refuge among the local people who hid them from pursuers, whatever their cause. Many exhausted by wounds and fatigue lay down in remote sheltered corners and left their bones to be found by wayfarers of later times. In the rout of its left wing and part of its centre, Parliament lost over 1,000 foot and several hundred of its horsemen.

THE THIRD PHASE

It was going on for five o' clock and the day was fading when Inchequin came up the East slope of Knocknauuss. He was met with the spectacle of his entire left wing gone from the field. Off to his left, the phalanx remnant of his centre division was surrounded by the enemy, with the smoke and rattle of their musket volleys telling of an ordered but desperate stand. Down in the open ground at the foot of the hill and all along the river valley, the dead were piled in mounds and enemy foot ranged about in an apparent possession of the battlefield. From Corbally across the valley, the wild carousal of the Scots told of the loss of his camp and boded ill for its occupants and its contents. With orders of "No Quarter", he sent Temple's Horse with several companies of foot to sweep the battlefield. Temple charged down the hill and spread out his formation. In groups of fifteen or sixteen, his troops rode down the enemy Foot scattering and tumbling men who were mopped up by the sabres and pistols of supporting groups. The Foot followed on, killing wounded and bringing men down with pike and musket fire. Among the slain were men making their way back the scattered pursuit, their blood lusted sated they came to find ironic death on their field of victory. With the valley cleared, Temple swung his charge up the hill to Corbally. His progress was stalled momentarily when the more sober defenders rolled the empty ale and wine barrels down the hill against him. The attack went home as his men poured over the half-raised defences and quickly recovered the camp. The Scots there were put to the sword, too drunk to fight back. In all about 300 of McDonnell's regiments, including the wounded from the earlier action, were killed in Parliaments countercharge.

When McEllestrum's charge broke through the Parliament's line, the field was apparently won. In the fog of battle, McEllestrum followed the cross-county pursuit as far as Lisgriffin, where it bogged down around Ardprior. There McEllestrum's Giolla came up with his horse and McEllestrum made his way back to the main battlefield. He arrived to find Taaffe gone, and only the beleaguered centre division left of Parliament's army. With stragglers who grouped on him, he made his way across Lackaleigh and joined with the remnants engaged in the fighting of Assolas. There events unfolded that in a few minutes changed victory to defeat and left him with the hopeless options of annihilation or surrender. The first disastrous event for him was the arrival of Parliament's largely intact right rear. The second was Temple's lighting sweep of the battlefield as another formation of about 700 Horse deployed to attack his flanks as dismounted cavalry. The last 500 or 600 men of his regiments left on the battlefield were now completely surrounded and Parliament's army engulfed them on every side. With men falling all around him, finally and for the first time in his eventful career of war, McEllestrum accepted the offer of Quarter. Whether persuaded by the more humane Colonel Temple, or because of generous Quarter ceded by his own men in other actions of the battle, McEllestrum's sword was accepted by a senior officer of Parliament. In the wintry dusk the last 300 or 400 men of his regiments laid down their arms and stepped over fallen friend and foe to join McEllestrum in final surrender.

As they gathered to move off under escort, McEllestrum found himself near to the well at the boundary between Lackaleigh and Lisduggan, on the Knocknanuss side of the river. Under a beehive cowl, the water was unpolluted by battle, its ice-cold outflow crystal clear to the nearby river. McEllestrum turned to the well and as he bent to scoop up a handful of water, a wounded militiaman lying in tall felled drums behind him, either shot him or ran him through with a pike-thrust from the back. The escort and his captains rushed to his aid but he was mortally wounded. He was carried to Inchequin's new CP at Rathmaher House, the home of Mr John Purcell a quarter of a mile or so across the river. There he was laid in a cobble-floored stable on a bed of straw, with his own McDonell plaid for a blanket. Within the hour, the great Sir Alexander McColla Ciotach. McDonell hero of his name and race, were laid to rest in a shallow grave in the nearby kitchen garden. He was in the 42nd year of his age.

AFTER THE BATTLE- THE PARLIAMENT'S ARMY

Darkness shrouded the battlefield as the remnants of the Parliament's Foot led on for Corbally and threw the looted half- raised foot camp there into a strong defensive order. Inchequin's concern was that Taaffe was still in the area with much of his army still intact. Horse patrols probing towards Kanturk reported that Taaffe's camp was also in a defensive poise and more or less stalemate existed between the two armies. Taking stock, there was less than 2,000 of Parliament's men in the Foot Camp and at the horse Camp in Rathmaher less than 950 could answer the muster . The rest lay dead or wounded or were scattered in the countryside by headlong flight. The list of fallen officers was long and the number of senior officers killed and wounded was the longest in any of the battles of the English Civil War. Many Parliament officers had been taken prisoners by the Scots, including Lieutenant Colonel Peter Crispe, the commander of the aptly named Forlorn Hope. This was pyrrhic victory and for Inchequin to keep his command the full extent of its near disaster must be kept from Parliament and its zealot supporters. A few days were needed to compose an appropriate report and in the meantime the business of war went on.

Most of the supplies in the camp were destroyed by the Scots and the hungry battle weary troops had to make do with scant rations. The prisoners were secured by bringing the senior officers quarters where they were treated with civility. The junior officers and the sergeants were held in detention compounds and faced the long winter night in the open, huddled against the cold and black despair of the defeated. It was a measure of Inchequin's chastening

that none of the prisoners suffered the usual mis-treatment or execution. This was in sharp contrast with his behaviour after the battle of Lisscarroll when 48 of the 50 prisoners taken were summarily hanged the next day, and his recent killing of the prisoners out of hand at Cahir and Cashel. Having first tended to the Parliament's wounded, the surgeons among the prisoners were permitted to tend to their own men, with little more than water and rags by way of medication. The few common soldiers taken were mainly the Giollas who held with their officers and were let free the next day. During the night the expected snow came to blanket the camp and the fields around, hiding the disgrace of the slain with a knee-deep mantle of decency. The heavy snowfall largely confined the army to the camp, and held up any prospect of "search and destroy" patrols against re-grouping Royalists. Food and firewood were urgently required and local people were pressed into work gangs to bring in firewood and such food and fodder as could be found. Over the next few days, stragglers and groups of Parliament's fugitives came in and brought reports of fighting still going on, and of great numbers of slain. As the snow eased and a thaw set in, the Horse and foot were able to go out in force. The famished soldiers shouted "Home! Home!" in mutinous protest at the terrible conditions as they went in search of cattle and sheep to feed the starving army. All animals seized were paid for in cash, at a price fixed by Inchequin. Cattle made about 13/4d (67p), sheep and pigs about 2/6d (12p) and fowl, eggs and other home produce were sold for a few pence (around 1p).

Most of the Parliament's dead were collected to Marybrook and buried there in mass graves in the old Norman graveyard. The thousands of arms and Knapsacks strewn around the battlefield were collected and, except for those of use to Parliament or having curiosity or resale value, were put into piles and burnt. During the operations the dead of both sides were systemically robbed even to their clothes. Petty thieves chanced their lives with the battlefield guard for the few spoils they could sneak from the dead to hawk in the local towns and villages. By the next morning prisoners were listed and contact was made with the Royalists to arrange head-for-head exchange of prisoners. The sponsors of prisoners were soon aware of their plight and began to arrive at the camp with supplies and money to pay the ransom of three months pay according to rank which was the price set by Inchequin to secure their release. Some had friends or family who had paid this honourable debt but others had mortgage property to effect release. All had to sign submission to Parliament and faced summary execution in battle, Inchequin sent in his report and London was rejoicing for a "A Mighty Victory at Knocknones". The House of Commons voted £10,000 as payment for the victorious army and voted a gift of £1000 for Inchequin himself. An order was issued for all church bells throughout England and Wales to be rung in Thanksgiving and for a church collection to be taken up "for the poor Protestants coming out of Ireland". In the cautious corridors of Whitehall, the discerning Major Generals were less enthusiastic over Inchequin's service and quietly neglected to sign the authorisation to have the monies released. Inchequin also quietly kept the ransom money amounting to over £1000.

With Taaffe holding defensively in Kanturk, Inchequin struck up camp at Corbally and took his much depleted column back to Mallow. He went by Garryduff and Killmaclenine burdened with many wounded, chastened and troubled for his future with the Parliament's cause, as he re-traced the route by which he became so buoyantly a week before. He rested for a few days at Mallow to refresh his men before starting a victory march to Cork where a hero's welcome awaited him. The wounded were tended and many, including Major General Sir William Craig died and were buried in Christ Church. Inchequin went into winter quarters, resisting the persistent attempts of the Broghill faction to unseat him, while most of Munster still remained in the hands of the Royalists.

AFTER THE BATTLE - THE ROYALISTS

Most of the Royalist survivors made their home after the battle and the army of Munster stood down once more. Major General Sir Patrick Purcell took his regiment of Horse to join the army of Leinster under Viscount Prestor. When Inchequin left for Cork, Taaffe rode out for Limerick where he lost his command and he lost his command and his Lord Presidency but he got his subordinate post with Preston's army. Counting the cost of the 5,800 or so Royalist Foot who took their station in the line, about 2,100 were killed. Over half were from Taaffe regiments which lost more than 1,000 men. The Scotts lost around 300, and the remainder were from the Munster regiment which lost about 800 men in the various actions. Of the 1,000 or so Horse who took the field, about 250 were lost mainly from Castleconnell's regiment caught in the deathtrap charge on Parliament's right division. Many of the Butlers, Walshes, and Nugents were taken prisoner. They had their own Troops of Horse and had been taken prisoner in earlier battles. Now they faced possible execution or the payment of another heavy ransom to secure release. Also taken were supplies, Lacys and Brownes of Castleconnell's regiment and his relatives Donagh O' Brien and John Fitzgerald. All were taken by Temple's Horse, the Royalist dead lay, where they fell as Inchequin had closed the battlefield until his own dead were buried and the arms lying there were gathered up and burnt. Led by guides who knew where the dead of the various regiments lay, the women searched the battlefield at night

**Daughter, mother, maid and wife,
They came when war's red work was done;
Searching for father, lover, son
The gory swath of battle strife.**

**Like spectres in the shadows moved,
Stooping to scan a pallied face.
Peering through scars and blood to trace
The features of the men they loved.**

When they found their men they wrapped them in mantles and carried them home on horseback. There they were cleaned and laid out for family waking, the sight of the dead a balm for grief. Many held community ceremonies for the near relatives and neighbours who fought and died together in this battle. Ellen O' Callaghan, a near cousin of Inchequin and wife of the non-combatant Colonel Donagh O'Callaghan was allowed to take up the body of McEllestrum a few days after the battle. The remains were ceremoniously conveyed to Clonmeen where they were re-buried in the Callaghan family vault. By order of Inchequin the grave was left unmarked. Clonmeen churchyard was vandalised by Broghill's troops after the battle of Dromagh in July 1651 and the exact location of McEllestrum's burial place is not now certain.

With Inchequin gone, the fashionable set from Mallow and Cork rode out to Knocknanuss to view the scene at first hand. McEllestrum's great claymore was taken by the young Sir Philip Perseval. It was kept by his descendants at Loughort Castle until it was lodged in the Royal Arsenal at Kinsale in the 1820's. It was taken to the Phoenix Park Arsenal around 1890 from where it was lost; but another account holds that it was given to a museum on the west coast of Scotland around 1910. Gradually the local people ventured onto the battlefield to flavour the sensations of this place of carnage and brutality. They marvelled at the great size of the men who lacerated bodies lay among the litter of broken swords, pikestaves, fighting stones, and throwing stones disregarded by Inchequin and the souvenir hunters. When the tenant farmers got onto the fields, they commenced the process of cleaning up. The local people were afraid to go near the bodies lest the fatal violence of the event might somehow extend its awesome malevolence to themselves. Gangs of labourers were brought in to collect the bodies bury them in the entrenchment on the hill, tumbling them in along the length of the

5' wide x 4'9 deep trenches and covering them with breastwork spoil. Quarries were converted into graves and levelled and levelled with the surrounding fields. A single rock was put on the top to mark the resting place of these nameless victims of war. Priestor conducted the last rites over the gauntlet of informers to impart this final valediction. For two or three miles around, closed off corners of fields held the graves of men who died alone or in the deadly pursuit from the main battle field.

As the work went, the burial parties had to be anaesthetised with uisce beatha to get them to handle the now decomposing bodies. The burials became less than particular and men were buried in shallow graves from which many were turned out by the spades and ploughs of later generations. With the advent of Spring, bludgeoning new life crept over the dreadful conflict. The grass, enriched with the blood of the 4,500 men who fell there in the murk of winter, grew green again and the toil of living went on humdrum as before.

THE AFTERMATH

The publication of the "Mighty Victory at Knocknanosse" led to an immediate and the wide public debate in England and Ireland, centred on the flight of the old English Royalists and the killing of McEllestrum. The objective was to discredit the Royalists and Inchequin's defection to the Royalist side. Colouring the debate was a bitter frustration among Parliament's Major Generals that a showcase propaganda execution of the legendary rebel McEllestrum had slipped from their grasp. The surrendered McEllestrum faced only the dramatic public execution recently meted out to James Duke of Hamilton and later to James Graham Earl of Montrose. The circumstance of McEllestrum's death would not have weighed unduly with the Gaelic fighting men who generally neither gave nor expected quarter, and whose record in maltreatment of prisoners was surpassed even by the English. It was never claimed among the Irish or the Scots that McEllestrum was a murdered while a prisoner under Quarter. There was an acceptance that he died in an accident of war and that the great man, burdened with wounds and crowded with great family sorrows, found a relief in death that life is no longer afforded.

The parliament's propagandists insisted that Taaffe was well paid by Inchequin to desert McEllestrum and the Munster men. The Irishmen, Captain Matthew Mulholland, in his strange account of the war published in 1654 "Aphorismical Discover of Treasonable Faction", was a wordy detractor. He quoted the price as £1,500 and made much of the threat by Ikerrin's son to pistol Taaffe. By 1654 the new Ikerrin, a nephew of the man at Knocknanuss, had conformed to Protestantism and was firmly in the camp of the Cromwellians as a persistent hunter of Catholic fugitives. An order for Transplantation issued against him was held off, he regained his estate and the restoration of his descent survivors in the Earldom of Carrick.

There was controversy regarding the strength of the Royalist army and over the completeness of the victory as claimed by Inchequin. Cromwell leader of the Independent grouping in Parliament, was critical of Taaffe's behaviour and of the number of rebels Inchequin claimed to have slain. On the 27th of June 1648 Inchequin issued a "Declaration and Engagement of the (Royalist) Protestant Army in the province of Munster", to be accepted by all serving officers and men under his command. In the body of the declaration he remarked on the scepticism by then abroad about his "Mighty Victory" at Knocknanuss.

"the endeavour used by some Independents to take off the reputation of our late engagements with the Rebels at Knockanosse calling it (in the open exchange) a project to draw on the adventurers (then convening to advance monies for our relief) and for the greater disparagement of the action, subtracting from the number of the Rebels both alive and slain, lest the considerableness of the service should induce any proportionate relief".

REPORTS OF THE BATTLE

Several contemporary accounts of the battle exist. None are from a Royalist or Gaelic perspective. The first report published was that of William Moore datelined the 13th of November 1647, the day of the battle. Moore was captain in Temples Horse and was connected with the family of Lord Drogheda. He reported that the battle had resulted from an exchange of notes between Taaffe and Inchequin, with each inviting the other to join in battle. He reported that the action lasted for over two hours and that the Scots “held our Carriages and Baggage” for half an hour. He named some of the senior officers killed, but offered no explanation for the circumstances of their demise. He included a list of the prisoners taken and added “we have not taken many of the common soldiers for that would have hindered the victory. Besides the officers listed were divers that escaped after they were taken”. He referred to the death of McEillestrum in a counter-charge while the Scots “were slaughtering our men” and he gave the Parliament’s as 120 men for over 4,000 of the Rebels slain. He described how Inchequin chased a senior Rebel slain. He described how Inchequin chased a senior Rebel officer into a wood and killed him there, and how Inchequin was so active in the pursuit that he broke his sword in the fighting. He said that 6,000 Rebel arms were recovered from the battlefield. Throughout the report he referred to Knocknanuss as Englishman’s Hill - the English form of its Hibernico-Norman name “Cnoc na Gall”, by which it was briefly known in the fourteenth century.

Inchequin’s report was next and was datelined Gortnaturbrid, 18th November 1647. He enclosed a note which he claimed to have sent to Taaffe on the evening before the battle but note was dated for the day of the battle is given in appendix here. Essentially he described a facile victory that lasted no more than 7-8 minutes in all and implied that the rest of the action was concerned with mopping-up operations. He ascribed the death of McEillestrum to “an exceedingly well performed charge” of after he “looked that way and saw the rebels chasing our men”. He made no mention of his centre division although it was his largest formation and the keystone of his battle plan. The rest of his rambling report dwelled on outdated politics of the Royalist Supreme Council and his own offer to Taaffe for a cessation in July 1647.

The third report was published as a Tract on the 30th of November 1647 for Robert Bostock MP, a rabid propagandist of Parliament. The author of the report was not named but the detail could only have come from an officer of Parliament present at Knocknanuss and was from the perspective of the right division or reserve of Foot. The report quoted a series of three letters purportedly exchanged by Inchequin and Taaffe, and gave an account of Taaffe’s final verbal response which was exactly as given in the other two reports. It described the battle lines of both sides, and outlined Inchequin’s manoeuvres to centre his line on the Rebels right wing, as well as Castleconnell’s charge which precipitated the battle. It reported that Inchequin’s eyes “were presented with the rueful spectacle of his men’s slaughters and the rebels overturning all before them even to our wagons.... (he) posted some regiments of foot, and a troop or two of horse, which had been there for the reserves. These coming down fell upon the rebels in their return from our baggage among them fell Sir Alexander Mack-Donnell and his Lieutenant Colonel....”. It claimed that the Parliament lost fifty men, for not less than four thousand Rebels. It included Moore’s list of the prisoners taken and a list of the Parliament’s senior officers killed.

These reports of Parliament of “a mighty victory”, invited comparison with the undisputedly facile and complete victory of Colonel Michael Jones at Dungan’s Hill a few months earlier. The facts were far from comparable. Although outnumbered three to one, Jones routed the enemy and killed 1,500 for the loss of a Captain and forty-five of his own men. He captured

the Army Commander, General the Earl of Westmeath, with most of his command and took almost 300 prisoners. Inchequin had lost more senior officers at Knocknanuss than Parliament had lost in any battle of the English Civil War and his briefer list of 68 prisoners taken were hardly consistent with "a mighty victory". The facts could not be concealed from the Major Generals in London and Inchequin was accordingly in danger of losing his Army Command. The whisperings of the Broghill faction and the hostility of Cromwell eroded his position further and left him little option but to go over to the Royalist side a few months later. The Reports published by Parliament were constructed by propagandists for public consumption to bolster and win support for Parliament's unpopular cause and reputation. From military perspective they were neither complete nor consistent and fell short of affording reliable accounts of the battle of Knocknanuss. The topic of the exchange of notes was a stock device to introduce an apolitical immediate cause for the battle. The notes avowed that the Royalists had issued a challenge to Inchequin which he accepted with boldness and courage when both the time of year and the ground left advantage with the challengers. Parliament could not risk its fragile public support by revealing that the battle was brought on by support by revealing that the battle was brought on by public outcry in Ireland at the atrocities inflicted on the civil population by Inchequin and the army of Parliament.

The medieval tone of the notes combined with archaic symbols of meteors and omens to give a supernatural lustre to the cause of the victors. The reports had contrived accounts of McEllestrum's death which had to be included to offset the major losses of senior officers on the Parliament's side that otherwise would be without apparent counter-loss to the enemy. The versions of his death as an uncontroversial act of war also pre-empted any claim that it arose from some circumstance of personal vindictiveness or neglect- as was actually put forward later. Aside from Inchequin's comment that the new Supreme Council threatened to have Taaffe's life, no specific reference was made to Taaffe's spectacular departure from the field. The tract reported "their main body of Foot and left wing of Horse ran clean away and our Horse followed after them in the chase". This was a very muted comment for an event that was to be a major topic of public comment on the battle. Although all three reports make substantial reference to Parliament's left and right divisions, the Centre division is not mentioned at all. By default, its heroic rearguard action had to go without recognition to conceal the true course and the closeness of the battle.

The common theme of Inchequin's famished army was a matter of controversy. For three or four years the Boyles and the Earl of Cork's family conducted a political campaign against Inchequin, whom they despised as a Gaelic chieftain, and sought his appointments for the Anglo Broghill. Recognising the threat to his command, Inchequin became more assertive in demanding pay, provisions and war supplies. He also had to display more aggression with rebels and rebel territory and demonstrated this in his severity at Cahir and at Cashel and his callous "we were killing until night as fast as we could" at Knocknanuss. His claim of great numbers of rebels killed and his reports of the harsh campaigning his troops had to endure, were aimed at convincing Parliament that he was a diligent in the Cause despite the difficult conditions.

A different perspective on events was given by John Hodder in a letter to Philip Perseval 16th November 1647. Hodder was a Cork City man and steward of Sir Philip's Burton estate in Churchtown. Later in 1656 he was the first post- Rebellion Lord Mayor of Cork. At Knocknanuss he was Quartermaster with Inchequin's Own Troop and saw all the main actions at first hand. In the letter he wrote "it was as hot a fight for the hours space as ever was seen in Ireland". Crispe was exchanged for Randal Og McDonnell a day or so later. He was of Ludenham in Kent and was one of two brothers who served the cause of Parliament.

The Papal Nuncio also wrote of the battle in the expansive diary of his Irish adventures. His details were second-hand and mainly from the Butler faction within the Ormondite coterie. He wrote that the Royalists lost about 1,700 men and that Inchequin lost about 2,000. He mentioned that McDonnell's Scots held the Parliament's camp for more than an hour, and that "on the left wing our men fled so basely that many of them were soon slain". Mr James Buckley was a modern writer in the *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society* for April- June 1899. His account is based on the Bostock Tract, with some input from the Rev. Henry Swanzy. Although he was associated with Newmarket in Co. Cork, Swanzy was of staunch Northern Unionist stock and wholly unsympathetic to the national interest. One of his nephews was the R.I.C. Inspector Swanzy of Ballymena, who paid with his life for his maltreatment of Republican prisoners during the War of Independence. The Reverend Henry was Church of Ireland Rector of Castlemagner. Being not disposed to question the thin repute of the English intervention in Ireland, his claims, as an informed local historian was dubious. Consequently Mr James Buckley's patently uncritical account were mis-led on material points. At the time of his writing, there was a wealth of tradition among the local nationalist population which might have formed a basis for even a modest re-evaluation of the battle and which has since has decayed.

Inchequin, the Nuncio and Parliament's propagandists were unlikely bedfellows, washed together at Knocknanuss by the tide of war. It is no longer possible to make a full and safe assessment of the battle because the witness of too many of the protagonists remains unheard. The account given here places the battle in the relevant historical, political and topographical setting. Details of the events of the battle are drawn from consistent descriptions in the contemporary sources, from the actual contours and lie of the land, and from the military skills and resources of the period. A strong thread of tradition and folk memory is woven through this account to apprehend a local colour and definition that is on the edge of oblivion.

LOCAL TRADITION

Up to fifty or sixty years ago, many traditions about the battle resided in the local countryside. Those particular to the native and nationalist population had to do with the visit of the Scots. Known locally as The McAlasdrums, their "same but different" language, culture, love of sport, and song lent them an abiding attraction. The country took them into their homes and into their community life. Although many Scots were accompanied by wives and families, there were enough heroes for romance to blossom. Many of the women who wept at Knocknanuss were mourning for a new found soon lost Scottish lover.

In the traditions of the battle, people traced the sites of the camps and the lines of march, following the movements of both armies through the events of the campaign. The course of the battle was marked by the location by which the various actions went, much of it preserved in the place names of fields, hollows and riverside. Deep holes along the river were pointed out as "soldiers Holes" where numbers of soldiers fleeing from the battle were drowned. In an account of the route of Parliament's left wing, there was a story that Colonel Sir William Bridges was fatally injured when he jumped his horse into a quarry at Creggs near Ballinaltig and broke his neck in the fall. There were other stories of fugitives ingeniously hidden under stacks and ridges, and of wounded men nursed back to health to wed their nurses. Scottish and Northern Irish first names were kept for an ancestor or for a hero of the battle. Others had tales handed down over the generations of the Redshanks passing by the family home on their way to or from the camp in Kanturk. History-minded families kept swords, pikeheads and pistols carefully preserved as souvenirs of the battle. Lead musketballs and a few of the stone shot fired by the field gun were ploughed up and kept. Most of the mementoes are now lost and the old people who knew their stories have likewise passed away. Through the traditions

there was a perception that this was a dispute between strangers, alien in race, religion or language, with little common cause for the local people.

In this district which bred strong athletes such as a Denis Horgan, the Callaghans, the Ludgates and the Guineys, there was a ready challenge and a sporting appreciation for the demonstrations of strength and agility which the Scots excelled. Down to recent times there were many oddly - placed large stones said to have passed there were many oddly placed large stones said to have been put there by an athletic Scot in a test of strength that succeeding generations of local strong men strove to match. A favourite pastime of the Scots was putting large stones across the nearby rivers and it was said that Dennis Horgan's interest in Shot Putting was fired by his efforts to emulate the feats of the Scots across the Allow at Kilcaskin. There was also a story that a youthful Scot joined jumped across the deep ravine at Kiskeam where the local women washed their clothes on the rocks below. A woman was said to have seen the leap and expressed her wonder as the magnificent feat, to which the droll Scott is said to have replied "Cuir a rith maith air!- I had a good run at it!". Local enthusiasts were diligent in picking up Scottish airs and techniques of mouth-music and the instrumental playing of Sliabh Luacra was said to have taken its distinctive colour from this Scottish influence. Until a generation ago there were men in the locality who were well known for making and playing "home made" Bagpipes after the Scottish style. Their rude emporiums have long since gone but the locations can still be traced in many "Pipers Crossroads" throughout the district. The very elaborate McEllestrum's March was in the repertoire of every serious local musician down to recent times.

McEllestrum himself was admired from a distance because of his aloof and unfriendly manner. His overbearing superior air was matched only by the extreme arrogance of the host Dermot McDonagh and it was said that the pair had to be kept well apart until their manifest warrior gifts could be focussed on the common enemy. McEllestrum was remembered for the elegance of his dress and personal grooming and was said to have gone into battle in full regalia down to fine leather gloves. Although he was almost 7 feet tall, many of his men matched his size and it was said that the militiaman who stabbed him mistook the usually elegant McEllestrum for a mere common highlander because of his battle-rent dress and begrimed appearance in the darkling dusk at the well.

The death of McEllestrum was never disputed locally and the well where he was mortally wounded is known as Sir Alaister McDonnell's Well, although it is now closed-in and buried under field rubble. The other local version of his death is that he was stabbed in the back while watering his horse at the chieftain's Ford. It came into the area through George Hill's "History of the McDonnell's" (1878) which was itself based on mis-information regarding the location and origin of the Chieftain's Ford. There was no local tradition that Major Nicholas Purdon was any way involved in the killing of McEllestrum. The version may have come from the Broghill faction to divert some repute to themselves for the event. Purdon's Broghill connection got him a Knighthood and the McRobeson Barry estate in Ballyclough despite John Barry being nominated for its return. Locally he was said to be a small bitter man who grudgingly let to local people only when his English tenants left him. An involvement in the killing of McEllestrum was a stain too dark for it to be so readily forgotten of such a marked local figure.

Down to modern times, the battle of Knocknanuss had a very ambiguous significance in the Psyche of the Ascendancy of Cork and Kerry. Their staunch loyalism was uneasy with the manifest republicanism of the victors and some of them were connected with Royalist and parliament families engaged in the fighting there. There overt or public tradition placed the

battle as a massacre of a large and inept Catholic and Irish army by a determined Protestant English force. This tradition of a facile and bloodless victory was at variance with another covert group tradition which remembered a high courage and sacrifice for the victors at Knocknanuss. In an insidious decline of the local Old Order after the Boer War, the weapons and horse furnishings they had as souvenirs of the battle were lost or were disregarded as inauthentic. Most notable was a saddle in Castlecor House said to have been used by Teig McCarthy of Kilbarry. The story went that Teig's horse went lame on the morning of the March Out and he had borrowed a horse from an uncle called Scully of Castlecor. He came off the horse during the battle and the animal made its own way home to Castlecor where the saddle was left unclaimed. The location of the saddle is not now known but it was said to have been buried with the last Mrs Norton-Barry of Castlecor in 1958 in mistake for her own.

With the advent of commercial farming in the prosperity of the Napoleonic wars before the Great Famine 1847, in the parish of Lisgriffin there were old forgotten graveyards where the deep-sod plough brought up the bones of monks and priests from their shallow graves. The RC Parish Priest of Templebreda had the bones taken up and placed in the crypt of the Abbey in Buttevant. Among the bones were those of the men, both Royalist and Parliament, who were killed in the grim hide-and-seek around Ardprior and whose graves on the slopes of the nearby hillsides were giving up their remains to the busy plough. At the time of the battle, the men who fell around Lackaleigh were buried in a quarry to the north of the fort there. In 1870 the ground caved-in under a ploughman and his team and all were tumbled 15-20 feet to the bone-littered quarry floor. When the casualties were recovered the quarry was filled-in again and levelled with the field. Many of the entrenchments and ditches of Taaffe's overnight camp were also levelled at that time. Otherwise, the men who fell around Knocknanuss still lie undisturbed in the graves they found some 350 years ago.

**For I have told an age old tale
Long have both loved and lover slept.
And pulseless dust the eye that wept,
The heart that broke in moan and wail.**

**Ah grief of love! thou hast no power
To match with death - Else those would rise
And life leap back to glazed eyes
To touch, and cry of love, that hour.**

On Knocknanuss now, no proud monument or stone stands as a mark to age-old courage and sacrifice. Its story is obscured and carried through the years only in the memory and lore of the local people. The men who fought at Knocknanuss were moved by a care for family bonds and friendship loyalty that timelessly ennobles their poor common humanity, like the grief of the women who loved them and mourned for them. That much at least, the present generations of men and women can share with them.

**And oft in Autumn's winds, 'tis said,
When evening spreads her ebon sheen.
And yet may hear the ghostly caoin
of women wailing for their dead.**

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To Mary Bridget Sullivan of Ballygraddy and Ballyhest whose stories of the glory and the sadness of Knocknanuss were the inspiration for this account.

To Noreen Connell of Knocknanuss who very kindly supplied the words of the poem "Knocknanuss the Hill of Sighs", the verses of which are interspersed through this account. It was written by Fr. Peter Mackassey of Cork City around the turn of the century. Under the original title "The Women of Knocknanuss", it was a very popular recitation in the locality up to a generation or so ago.

LOOSE ENDS

McEIllestrum

Alexander or Alasdair McColle McDonnell was the youngest son of Coll Ciotach McDonnell of Colonsay in the Scottish Isles, descended from Coll Dhu brother of Sorley Bhui McDonnell. Following the execution of Coll Ciotach on the 21st September 1647 Alexander assumed headship of the McLain Mhor branch of the McDonnells also known as Clanranald South. He was associated with Randal 1st Marquess and 2nd Earl of Antrim and was himself knighted by the Earl of Montrose on behalf of the king in 1645 for his outstanding campaign successes in Scotland. His family home was in Ballypatrick, Culfeightrin in Co. Antrim and his wife was Elizabeth McAllister, daughter of McAllaister of Loupe in Cantyre. He was survived by at least three of his sons Colla A'Voulin, Gillaspic Mor and John of Tanaughconny, all of whom married and had children. John of Tanaughconny, all of whom married and had children. Gillaspic Mor, also known as Archibald, was created Lord of Murlogh & Kilmore in 1662. He had his father's giant stature and was the only son to bear arms. He was a captain in the Earl of Antrim's regiment in King James's army and at the battle of Aughrim in August 1691, despite being wounded, his extraordinary fighting prowess extricated the regiment from disaster. He died in 1720 aged about 88 years.

Alexander McColla was a notable addition to the muster for Knocknanuss, having shown legendary vigour and courage in many campaigns against both Royalists and Covenanters in the Ulster area. He was lucky to have survived in a minor action at Drummacquin near Raphoe in June 1642 when he was left for dead on the enemy defence works. He was taken off in a horse litter by his own McNeills and eventually he recovered. In June 1644 he led an expedition to Scotland and served under the command of Montrose in winning the Highlands and Isles for the King. In the campaign, his prowess as a swordsman and his fearless leadership gained him heroic repute among the Highland clans. However, disruptive inter-clan strife allowed the Covenanters to recover and in May 1647 Alexander returned to Antrim leaving most of his gallant army of 1600 Ulster Scots scattered and dead. He never fully recovered from the wounds incurred at Raphoe but, a man of action, he was restless to get back to the fighting

In July the Marquess of Antrim got him a command at Dungan's Hill with Preston's Royalists. Preston's army was routed and massacred and Sir Alexander had to battle out of the fiasco with "three or four hundred of his Glengarry's and with as many more men killed or taken prisoner. Then he was Governor of Clonmel, where he had command of the McDonnell contingent of the army of Munster, the marauding army of Parliament taking care to stay well clear of so formidable a foe. At the time of the battle of Knocknanuss, he was the head of The McDonnells of the Glens of Antrim who had the Irish clan name Na McAlasdroma for their founding chieftain Alexander McLain Cathanach McDonnell. After the Irish Style, the clan head was entitled An MacAlasdroma, or The McAlasdrum, later familiarly shortened to McAlasdrum or correctly McEIllestrum. The more reliable account of his death is in the tradition of the Lochaber district of the Highlands. It is that he had already given up his sword to a senior officer to save the lives of his men. The Montgomery Papers contain an undated note that he was stabbed while watering his horse in the river when the act of bending opened his slate back armour. However, the Scots of that time fought without

body armour and the very wealthy McDonnells of Antrim were hardly reduced to equipping their prideful chieftainry in shoddy slate armour. The account accords with another local version, sponsored by the Rev. Swanzy and Mr Buckley, which draws on an earlier tradition about the killing by the O'Connors Kerry of an O'Callaghan chieftain at The Chieftain's Ford. Mulholland picked up the shooting version in his tract "Aphorismal Discovery etc". but ascribed the assassination to an officer of rank. Historical accounts show that McEllestrun fought on foot and that he wielded a conventional broadsword or an outsize Scottish claymore. The story of the fantastic sword weighted with a ball of steel is hardly more than a later importation from Arthurian legend. McEllestrum's lines through Colla A'Voulin and Gillaspic Mor joined in 1825. John of Tanaughconny had at least one surviving child raised by Gillaspic Mor but any descendants of John are yet to be identified. Those of the other lines are numerous.

Randal Og was seriously wounded at Knocknanuss but made his way back to Kilcummin. A reference to him in a poem by Ian Lom McDomhnaill indicates that he died the following year. The Glengarrys remained staunch Catholics and retained the "McDonnell" version of their clan name. Following clearance from their ancestral lands after 1779, they moved into the Glasgow area where they stayed together and worked in the cotton industry. In 1794 they formed their own regiment of Glengarry Fencibles and were the first Catholic regiment in the British army since the time of the Reformation. They served mainly in Guernsey and were sent to Ireland during the '98 Rebellion when their kindness towards the people was notable. The regiment was disbanded in 1801 and in 1805 the clan emigrated to Glengarry County in Ontario, Canada. The settlement there is still strong. Randal McDonnell, the Last Chieftain, remained in Scotland and died there in 1828. At that time, his son sold the heavily mortgaged family lands and settled in Australia. Randal's brother was General James McDonnell who heroically held the Hougemount Chateau at Waterloo and was Commander of British Forces in Canada in the period of national stabilisation there in 1838-1841.

Ellestrum Mor

Sir Alexander McDonnell known as Ellestrum Mor, was a son of Sir James McDonnell of Annagh near Milton Malbay in Co. Clare and Ballybranagh in Co. Down. The family had Constablership of the Connaught Galloglasses and held several castles in Inchequin until the Cromwelian confiscations. Sir James was himself a native of Ballypatrick in County Antrim and his wife was Mary daughter of Teig O'Brien of Ennistymon, a cousin of Inchequin. Ellestrum Mor was the eldest of his 6 sons and at the time of his death was about 22 years old; bred to fighting and war, he was an experienced commander even at that young age. He was married to Lady Elizabeth Howards (Ivers) but they had no children. His young wife was at Assolas and in the darkness and the snow she searched all night for his body among the slain, wailing and calling out "Ce bhuil se, ce bhuil se-where is he, where is he". It was said that he was killed by a stray musketball from his own side as he headed the charge with Randal Og. Ellestrum Mor was buried in a single grave marked by a table tombstone, beside the other McDonnells who fell in the battle. The burial place was above the rocky escarpment to the rear of Sherlocks house. When the tomb fell into decay, the site was cleared and became an orchard - a common end for old burial grounds. An informal stone memorial cairn on the crown plateau disappeared when sod/stone field ditches were raised subsequent to the Enclosures Act 1857.

Sir James died in 1688 and was succeeded by his second son Randal McDonnell. Sir Randal was married to Hannah Roche of Limerick and was on the Jacobite side in the Williamite war. His estate was confiscated and he went to France with some of his large family. His descendants in France were later distinguished with the regiments of the Irish Brigade and the descendants of his line who remained in Ireland are numerous throughout the world. The

Gaelic poet Sean Clarach McDonnell who was born in Charleville in 1691 was of this family and the weight thrower Pat McDonald who won gold and silver medals for the USA in 1920 and 1924 Olympics was born Pat McDonnell in Co.Clare. McDonnells were prominent in the republic movement and were also well represented in the Gaelic sporting life of Clare, Limerick and Tipperary.

Lord Taaffe

With Inchequin gone, Taaffe ventured out from Kanturk and headed for his Provincial Council in Limerick. The showy cavalcade raced through the hibernal prospect, blowing trumpets and hunting horns for a Royalist victory. However, the story of his flight at Knocknanuss soon came out to discredit his command and his Provincial Council. In Athlone in May and at Nenagh in August when General Owen Roe O'Neill put Preston's forces to rout on both occasions.

One of four brothers in the Royalist armies and a grandson of Viscount Dillion on his mother's side, Ormonde made him Master of Ordinance in 1649. The Taaffe castle in Ballymote was handed up by his brother Major General Lucas Taaffe in 1652, on very favourable terms that left their mother with a life-interest in the estate. Lucas (or Luke) Taaffe had earlier given up New Ross to Cromwell in October 1649. His appeal for freedom to practice the Catholic religion drew the tart remark from Cromwell "I meddle with no man's conscience!". Another brother Major William Taaffe gave up Ballinfad in July 1652. In June 1650 Theobald got colonelcy of a Royalist/French regiment in Belgium. He remained there until the Restoration when he recovered Ballymote and was created Earl of Carlingford. His wife Mary Whyte of Leixlip died in 1662 and he re-married Ann Pershall an English lady of society. He died on the 31st of December 1677 aged 56 and was buried in Ballymote. Three of his sons were active in the Williamite war on the side of James II. Major John Taaffe was killed at the siege of Derry and Colonel Nicholas Taaffe was killed in the attack on the Dutch guard at the Boyne. The third son was Francis who went into the service of the Austrian Emperor at an early age and achieved high rank. After the Williamite War he was made a Field Marshal and Count of the Austrian court. Count Eduard von Graf Taaffe was a descendant of Count Francis. He was Prime Minister of Austria for a total of 14 years between 1868 and 1893. He was particularly noted for the many concessions he won for Polish and Czech landowners whose support for "Taaffe's Iron Ring" economic and defence policy underpinned the recovery of Austro-Hungarian power during his term of office. The Earl of Carlingford title was taken from the family by the British Parliament in 1919, because the then incumbent had served with Austro-German army in the Great War.

Sir Patrick Purcell

Major General Sir Patrick Purcell was the son of Sir Pearce Purcell of Croagh near Rathkeale, and Martha daughter of Sir George Thornton. Sir Pearce married secondly Margaret McSheehy of Newcastle West and their son Richard succeeded to the family estate in 1636. Sir Patrick succeeded to the title and was very active on the Catholic and Royalist side throughout the Great Rebellion. Until 1643 he served with Colonel Donagh O'Callaghan under Inchequin who quartered their Horse on the Magners of Castlemagner and Liscarroll. After Knocknanuss he retained his regiment and saw action again under Inchequin. Although he was an uninspired Colonel of Horse he was noted for his energy and high courage. At the siege of Limerick he led successive sallies against the besiegers and stoutly opposed all talk of surrender. When the city gave up in October 1651, Purcell refused to sign the Terms of Surrender and he was hanged by the Cromwellian General Ireton who himself died two weeks later. The lineage of the Purcells of Croagh was extant down to modern times

Lord Castleconnell

William McWilliam Burke, 6th Baron Castleconnell inherited his title and estate from his father Sir Edmund in 1638. His mother was Thomasina, the daughter of Sir Thomas Browne of Kilmallock, and he was married to Hon. Margaret Bourke a daughter of Lord Brittas. At that time he openly converted to Catholicism and raised his own regiment of Horse to serve the Catholic and Royalist cause throughout the Rebellion. His castle and estate were confiscated in 1655 and the title and estate were given to a Protestant cousin. Lord William went to France and served under James Duke of York until the Spanish defeat at the Battle of the Dunes near Dunkirk in 1658. He recovered his title and estate at the Restoration, with the title 8th Lord of Castleconnell. He was Lord Lieutenant of Limerick City and County at various times and was MP for County Limerick until 1689. In the Williamite War he renewed his allegiance to James II and his castle was slighted and destroyed by the German mercenary, the Prince of Hesse. His estate was confiscated again in 1692 and Lord William went back to France. His direct family line died out there in the service of the Dalcassian regiment of the Irish Brigade but his title is extant.

Giovanni Baptism Rinucci

Rinucci was Archbishop of Fermo in Italy and Papal Nuncio to Ireland for the period of the Royalist domination of the Supreme Council. He heard about the result of the battle of Knocknanuss, which he had worked so hard to bring about, in the comfortable home of John Rothe in Kilkenny. He berated the Royalist Catholics for running away and ascribed it to an Ormondite plot to destroy Catholicism. Later in 1648 his attack on the Supreme Council for permitting Inchequin to join them split the Confederation irrevocably. He attached himself to the army of Owen Roe O'Neill who was now a loose cannon opposed to all interests. The Catholics complained of his conduct to the Pope who ordered that O'Neill be removed from his command. The Nuncio became more marginalised as the conflict between Royalists and Parliament took up the time and energies of the Supreme Council. He spent some time in Galway until he finally left for Rome early in 1649, leaving very few friends and many enemies in his wake. In Rome he was chastised by the Pope for his mis-handling of the Irish mission. The Cardinal's Hat was denied him, he lost his archbishopric and died in obscurity a few years later. Like many other well-intentioned outsiders, he was a casualty of many other well-intentioned outsiders, he was a casualty of the Irish tangle, although he was hardly an innocent one.

Lord Muskerry

Donagh McCarthy Viscount Muskerry continued to oppose English rule and raised an army to go to the relief of the siege of Limerick. The entire McCarthy Rising-Out gave him an army of about 2,000 Foot armed mainly with Pike, and about 300 Horse. On the way to Limerick he was surprised by Lord Broghill's much larger army at Castleishen and had to withdraw to Dromagh. There, in the night of 26th July 1651, his Horse camp at Rathbarry was beaten up by Lord Broghill. Muskerry's casualties appear to have been light and his Foot camp, three miles south of the river was not disturbed. The armies met the next day at Knocknaclashy on the south side across the river from Dromagh castle. Muskerry's small force was opposed by Broghill's 2600 Foot and huge formation of some 2,000 Horse. Henry Cromwell, younger son of the Lord Protector, led his own Troop of Horse on Broghill's Left Wing. Despite the Cromwellians great superiority in numbers, Muskerry took the fight to them and the result of the battle was inconclusive. However, in their ferocious repeated charges on the Cromwellian line, so many McCarthy leaders were lost that Muskerry finally gave up as darkness fell and withdrew in good order with 1,500 Foot and several hundred Horse to Ross Castle in Killarney. He left among the slain Dermot McDonagh McCarthy

Lord of Duhallow, killed as he charged Broghill's line at the head of his squadron of 60 horse. McDonagh was then aged about 60. Donagh McGillacuddy, an Ensign at Knocknanuss, was the Lieut. Col. Of Horse. He was wounded and taken prisoner along with Major Fineen McFineen McCarthy brother of Donagh McFineen who fought at Knocknanuss, and Teige O'Connor Lord of Tarbert. Teige had also been taken at Dungan's Hill but managed to get away from Knocknanuss. He was hanged in Tralee a year later with another spirited McFineen associate, John O'Connor Kerry. Muskerry held Ross castle until June 1652 when his was the last Munster stronghold to give up. Ludlow brought boats over the mountains from Kinsale to attack the castle on the undefended lake side to force concession. Muskerry was tried for killing unarmed prisoners and only avoided conviction by having inconsistencies forged into the charge documents. In April 1653 he took 3,000 Foot and 900 Horse into the French service in Belgium and won high repute there. In 1656 his regiment was given to James Duke of York on the Spanish side and served with great distinction under the Duke's personal command. Donagh was created Earl of Clancarthy in 1658 and at the Restoration he recovered his estates, mainly tenanted by his kinsmen. He died in 1665 aged 71 years. Contemporary records describe him as "a facetious fellow and a good companion".

By a first wife, or concubine, he had a son Donal, known as An Buachaill Ban. Although the detail of Donal Ban's life is obscure, Donal's descendants are still to be found in the USA. Donagh's other three sons, by Ellen Butler, were noted public figures but the most famous was Justin. Justin was married to Margaret Wentworth, daughter of the ill-fated Earl of Strafford. He spent most of his life in the army of France where he was a Lieutenant General. In the Williamite War he returned to Ireland to lead a Jacobite Army and in 1689 he was created Earl of Mountcashel (near Inishannon). As a Marshal of France, he led the Mountcashel Brigade to France and died there aged 69 in 1693 of wounds received at the battle of Landen. Patrick Sarsfield, who was married to Justin's grand-daughter Nora (Clanrickarde) Bourke, was also mortally wounded at Landen. Justin's nephew Donagh McCarthy 4th Earl of Clancarthy succeeded Sarsfield as Colonel of the Kings Horse Guard although a prisoner in the Tower of London at the time. He escaped to take up the command and left a wooden wig block for a dummy in his bed with the note "the block will answer for me!". He lost his estates in the 1698 Williamite confiscations - the death knell of the McCarthy Clan - and died in Hamburg in 1734. His lineage is extant in Ireland and abroad.

Lord Inchequin

At the time of the battle of Knocknanus, Inchequin's role as Parliament's Man in Munster was under threat from the Broghill faction who contrived reports that Inchequin, as "a native man of the country", was not a suitable person to command an English army. Broghill's Anglo-Irish faction also accused Inchequin of incompetence in not securing all the military supplies voted by Parliament for them. They complained that he kept more than his fair share of the plundered spoils and that he shipped cattle to England that they wanted as replacement stock. Their reports, describing a neglected, ill-equipped and ill-led army, found little credence with the Parliament's Major Generals, themselves the instigators and beneficiaries of the cattle exports. They recognised that local political intrigue, not any military concern, underlay the reports and that their armies in Ireland were adequately led, organised and commissaried to deal with the dangerous Royalist threat in and from there. On the 27th July 1647 Inchequin referred them to Lord Lisle's recent report that the Munster army was in a good condition and in August 1647 his English and Anglo-Irish commanders supported Inchequin and refuted the allegations of the Broghill faction in a formal declaration published over their personal signatures. The response of Parliament's Major Generals was to delay confirmation of Inchequin's appointment and to withhold the gratuities voted by the Commons for Inchequin and his army. They instructed him on the precise of spoil that was to go to each officer, NCO, soldier and civilian agent and emphasised that the Horse were to get

three times as much as the Foot at all levels of rank. Early in 1648 Inchequin brought the matter to a head and held Lady Broghill and her children hostage until an infant marriage of Inchequin's eldest son William to Broghill's eldest daughter Margaret was agreed. Later, the young couple had six children and lived through many adventures until Margaret died in 1683, aged 42. Inchequin's daughter Mary later married Broghill's other son Henry. Inchequin changed sides in April 1648 and served as a Royalist General of Cavalry for the rest of the Cromwellian War. The distrust of Ormonde frustrated his ambitions to engage Cromwell in formal battle and he gave up to General Hardress Waller in Clare in April 1652. He joined Muskerry in Kerry and Cork until April 1653 when he took his regiment of 1,200, mainly Claremen, into the Spanish service in Belgium. In July 1654 he lost the siege of Stenay to Col. Cormac McCarthy Muskerry and went over to the French. He was created Earl of Inchequin and Lieutenant General in the army of Louis XIV. After distinguished service in Italy and in Spain, he was created French Viceroy of Catalonia when that region attached itself to France to escape suppression by the Spanish Court. From Barcelona, he harassed Parliament's ships in the Mediterranean with his own Privateer. In 1657 he and his son William were captured aboard his own ship by Tunisian pirates. Inchequin had to spend a few months in captivity until Louis XIV paid the ransom of 7,000 crowns. William was set free a year later but Inchequin himself had to pay the 1,400 crowns ransom.

At the Restoration, he recovered his estate in Clare and he lived the rest of his life there. He died in 1674, aged 60, and was buried in the family vault in the Protestant St Mary's Cathedral Limerick. He was a man of strong Protestant beliefs and was raised by his mother's father, Sir Edmond Fitzgerald of Cloyne and Ballymaloe, when his own father died in 1624. He was also strongly influenced by his wife and by Lady St Leger his mother-in-law, who were devout Dutch Calvinists. His conversion to Catholicism is disputed but in his will he left £100 to Ennis Cathedral for Masses for himself and his father's family. The uncompromising Catholics of Limerick would not forgive his days as arch persecutor of their persuasion, and threw his body into the Shannon a few days after his burial. He is often referred to as "Morragh of the Burnings" for his practice of firing the strongholds and crops in rebel districts that incurred his displeasure. However the nickname "Morragh nan Dotain" more correctly belongs to an ancestor of the same name who was in rebellion in 1482. The earlier Morragh was demonstrating against Desmond oppression and raided into County Limerick, Desmond and North Cork and burned many towns, including Mourne Abbey and Buttevant. The place of Inchequin in Irish history has yet to be fully evaluated. Many impartial historians of military tactics rate him as one of the most able of all Irish Generals.

Colonel Edmund Temple

Edmund Temple was the third son of Sir Peter Temple of Willesburgh and a distant relative of Sir John Temple the Dublin-born Solicitor General and Parliament's Commissioner for Munster. He was a career cavalryman who served the Franco-Dutch cause for most of the 30 Years War. He was with his regiment in many of the decisive battles of the English Civil War, with the substantive rank of Lieutenant Colonel of Horse. He crossed to Ireland when the army of Parliament in England was retrenched. His father was then in disfavour with Parliament because of a reputed cowardice against the Scots of Preston. After Knocknanuss, Temple was a favourite with Cromwell and served in the Oxford area. He returned to Ireland with Cromwell's Regiment of Horse and settled in the Carlow area. His professionalism was appreciated by Lord Henry Cromwell who sent him to oppose the diehard republication Edmund Ludlow who in 1659 was campaigning in Waterford against the restoration of the monarchy. Temple denied his old commander supplies and contained him in Wexford until Ludlow left the country. Edmund Temple's lineage was distinguished in the armies of Marlborough and later in the Napoleonic Wars.

Lord Broghill

Roger Boyle was the 5th son in the 13 children of the 1st Earl of Cork. His title came from the townland of Broghill, now part of the site of Charleville town in Co. Cork. It was the ancient Gaelic settlement of Rath Gogan but was bought from the Cogans by the Lord Cork around the time of Roger's birth at Lismore in 1620. The title was remaindered to his father's family and was not inheritable. He married Margaret daughter of Lord Howard of Walden (Earl of Suffolk) and had 7 children. After the battle of Knocknanuss, he dallied with the Royalist cause and intrigued with the Parliament faction at the same time. He was an intimate of Cromwell and after the execution of the king in January 1649, Cromwell made him founder and Colonel of a regiment of Horse raised in England for the subjunction of Ireland. Called Broghill's Regiment of Horse, it was up to 3,000 strong and had in its ranks many men from both sides at Knocknanuss. One of his former captains was Robert Phayre, a native of Castlemagner and Kilshannig, who was the founder and Colonel of another new Parliament cavalry regiment, the Regiment of Kent. Phayre was commander of the Pike Guard at the king's execution. He was governor of Cork City during the Cromwellian War and was noted for his brutal treatment of Catholics and Royalists. Broghill's regiment had a large contingent of ex-Royalist and Gaelic horsemen disillusioned with the overt political intrigues and lack of fighting spirit in the Ormonde clique. The regiment served in Munster and was in numerous minor actions. A brash supreme egoist, his engagements were marked by high losses and extraordinary personal escapes. His victories were on a small scale - against 500 or so before the castle of Macroom and the 30-40 at Clondrohid which he took after he hanged Bishop Beotius McEgan for encouraging resistance.

After Cromwell's departure in February 1650, the campaign progressed through a series of static sieges conducted by the Cromwellian Artillery and Dismounted Cavalry. Broghill had command of the residual Horse and Foot in Munster with the role of pursuing Search and Destroy operations against the scattered Gaelic forces still in the field. His army varied from 2000-4000 Horse and up to 2000 Foot and was engaged in numerous small engagements. His only substantial encounter was at Dromagh from which he had a lucky escape and for which history credits his great army with a "most spectacular victory" in routing Muskerry's small group of no more than 300 Horse in a night attack. History is strangely silent on the pitched battle which was fought the following day and which effectively decided the outcome of the war in Munster. In the settlement he got great estates throughout the country and also secured appointment as Cromwellian Lord President of Munster. He was particularly hostile to the people of Duhallow and Orrery and was insistent that the criteria of Disaffection was applied rigorously to the landowners in that rebellious and contumacious district. Most of the lands confiscated there went to men of his own regiment or to himself and his associates.

He was an incorrigible schemer and after death of Cromwell in 1658, he was a key figure in the complex secret negotiations for the restoration of the monarchy. His activities as an arch-prosecutor of the supporters of the king were forgotten and he was created Earl of Orrery in 1662 and was also appointed Lord President of Munster for life. He returned the compliment and called his new Presidential seat Charleville after the King. Later the King said of him "he is a rogue and will continue to be so" and to the ruling Ormonde faction he was known as "The Charlatan of Munster". Nevertheless he was a major public figure in the post-Restoration period and worked his way to several lucrative positions, including Chief Justice for Ireland. He wrote a treatise on warfare that militarily was hardly more than pretentious nonsense and an attempt to justify his claim for a great victory at Dromagh. Vaulting ambition brought him before the House of Lords in 1669 for attempting to seize the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland. Like his father before him, he successfully bribed his way to frustrate the prosecution, but he lost his appointment as Lord President of Munster. He was of very small and slight stature, like so many of the favourites of the diminutive Charles II. He was

an implacable destroyer of the Gaelic chieftainry and was virulently anti-papist. Notoriously miserly and grasping, he cheekily billed Parliament for £200 for bringing his wife back to Ireland in 1649. He had ambitions as an artist and dramatist and was a member of Ormonde's commission for the development of Dublin city. He died aged 59, in 1679. His second son Henry Boyle was distinguished only for being a paid spy of William III while confidential secretary to James II in the Williamite war. Many of the Boyles were scientists and literary figures and achieved distinction in their time. Broghill's brother Robert formulated Boyle's Law in 1662, defining a relationship concerning the compression and expansion of gasses at constant temperature. The 4th Earl of Orrey was spuriously associated with "The Orrey", an accurate mechanical model of the solar system. The model was developed around 1720 by George Graham for a Dutch client but was captured en route by an English privateer.

THE LIST OF PRISONERS

Bostock's Tract and the report of William Moore emphasised that more prisoners were taken than listed. Both reports stated that a number of (unlisted) prisoners were also exchanged for officers of Parliament taken by the Royalists. This was intended to explain the shortness of the listings but it also revealed that the supposedly defeated Royalist army still retained such organisation and presence that Inchequin was forced to negotiate with it over several days to secure the release of his captured officers. In this connection, Moore's claim that Crispe was recovered in an exchange of prisoners on the 13th of November is clearly not borne out by the other reports. The list of Royalist officers who were taken at Knocknanuss was structured similar to that for the prisoners taken at Dugan's Hill but is very much shorter. It read like a Who's Who of the Gaelic clans and Anglo-Irish Royalists of Munster, and reflected the complex family relationships that underpinned the hasty muster. Taaffe's mother was a daughter of the 1st Viscount Dillion and her family connections extended into Nugents, Bourkes, Butlers, O'Briens and such as the Marquess of Antrim whose sister Anne had married Lucas Dillion. The list was very short in senior officers, confirming that most got away, and showed that the men who remained on the battlefield long enough to survive in the final concession of Quarter, were drawn mainly from the Scots and the Munster regiments. The absence of identifiable Foot officers from Leinster and Connaught indicated that most of Taaffe's regiments got clean away. Among those listed was Captain William Butler the son of Lord Ikerrin. He was an officer of the South Tipperary group and left the field with Taaffe. It was later claimed of him that he threatened to shoot Taaffe if he tried to stop him rejoining the battle. He went back and rejoined McDonnell's regiments and fought on to survive to the final surrender. A few years earlier his uncle Col. Richard Butler had been taken prisoner at the battle of Liscarroll and was one of two men spared there by Inchequin because his mother was Inchequin's favourite grandaunt. Col. Richard Butler was also a brother of the Marquess of Ormonde.

Of the 20 companies who held their station, almost half of their officers were in the list of prisoners. Most of the rest had left the field in good order before Inchequin's countercharge. The men killed in the general rout were mainly common soldiers, recruits lacking the skill at arms to protect themselves or the wit to hold their arms and re-group. Their officers were more battle-wise and grouped well to survive in the thick of the fighting. Heading the list of prisoners taken was Colonel Randal Og McDonnell who led McDonnell's Left regiment. He was exchanged a few days later for Lieutenant Colonel Peter Crispe. The Scots had taken and held most of the prisoners from Parliament's ranks and other of their men were similarly exchanged. The McDonnells and their followers were back in Antrim within two weeks of the battle. Some remained in the Munster area where their descendants augmented the spirit of independence and love of sport which characterises that province.

Lieutenant Edmond Sweeney and Ensign John Corkery were with the Munster regiment and were local men from Castlecór. The descendants of both are still in the area. Also of interest is Captain Richard Giolla Reagh, a veteran who served in the Spanish Forces with Colonel Garret Og Barry for some 40 years. He was taken prisoner at Liscarroll and was the other man spared there by Inchequin who decided that he was too old to hang. He was again taken prisoner a Major of Foot at Dromagh and was later transplanted in Clare in 1656 where he finally left the pages of history. Captain Lieutenant Christopher Nugent was a son of the Earl of Westmeath and a grand-nephew of the Marquess of Antrim through his father's mother Ann McDonnell. He was married to Mary Butler daughter of Richard of Kilcash and had his own Troop in Butlers's Regiment of Horse with Castleconnell's Horse at Knocknanuss. Henry Stepheson was brother of Oliver of Dunmoylon (Glin) who was killed by a straight shot at Liscarroll when taking Inchequin a prisoner from the field. Their father Richard, High Sheriff of Limerick, was shot dead by the redoubtable Lady Dowdall at the siege of Kilfinny Castle in 1642. Their mother Margaret O' Brien was an aunt to Inchequin. Their sister Catherine married Donagh O'Brien of Carrigagunnel and Oliver's wife, Eleanor Browne, was re-married to Donal O'Sullivan. Both men were listed with the prisoners at Knocknanuss. Eleanor was a first cousin, on his mother's side, to Lord Castleconnell. Donal O'Sullivan was a nephew of Philip O'Sullivan Beara who died in Spain and of Sheila O'Sullivan, second wife of Dermod McDonagh McCarthy Senior. Later Donal settled in Tullylease and was the progenator of the Sullivan of Tullylease. The Blessed Father John Sullivan S.J., who is venerated in Dominick Street Church in Dublin, was of Donal's lineage. Donagh McGillacuddy's wife was a daughter of Donagh McFineen and Castleconnell also had two sons married to McCarthys.

Some of the prisoners were included in the Ireland list of "49 Officers" indicating that they took no further part after June 1649 in the war against Parliament and were not otherwise in rebellion. Others were dead when the war ended in August 1652 and their widows or heirs appeared in the "49 List" or in the schedules for forfeiture and transplantation 1654-58. Many first names were missing from the original list of prisoners. In the list which follows the actual or probable name is filled in and shown in brackets.

List of the Prisoners taken at Knocknanuss

Colonel Randal (Og) McDonnell	Captain Florence McCarthy
Lieut. Col (Donal) MacNamara	Captain Donnagh McCarthy
Major John Fealane	Captain John MackNeeMara
Captain Garret FitzMorris	Captain Richard Ferrester
Captain (Edmund) Pursell	Captain William Butler
Captain Hugh Kelly	Captain Theobald Butler
Colonel Randal (Og) McDonnell	Captain Florence McCarthy
Lieut. Col (Donal) MacNamara	Captain Donagh McCarthy
Major John Fealane	Captain John MacNamara
Captain Garrett Fitzmorris	Captain Richard Ferrester
Captain (Edmund) Pursell	Captain William Butler
Captain Edmond Bourke	Captain RO. Mack Drumfohugh
Captain Pierce Wealsh	Captain Alexander Jamson
Captain Robert Supple	Captain M'laghlane
Capt. Lieut. (Chris.) Nugent	Captain William O'Dudie
Captain (Richard) Gully Reagh	Captain Farriah O'Donnell
Captain (John) Bryan	Captain Eneas O'Donnell
Captain (?Teig) Mack nee Marra	Captain John O'Donnell

Capt. Lieut.. (Henry) Stephenson
Captain Donnagh O'Brien
Captain Daniel Mack nee Marra
Capt. Lieut. Kennedy O' Bryen

Captain Arthur Lyncie
Captain Marcus Nestor
Captain Hugh O'Conner
Captain Doniell O'Sullivan

Lieut. Thomas Hellihed
Lieut. Patrick Hogan
Lieut. Conner Mack Namarra
Lieut. Conner O'Brien
Lieut. Edmond Swine
Lieut. Manus Mack Donough
Lieut. John Bourke
Ensign Thomas FitzMorris
Ensign (John) Hanraghane
Ensign Lillice
Ensign Francis Gordan
Ensign Edmond O'Grady
Ensign Donnoh Mack Maghane
Ensign Doniell O'Nelane
Ensign Danneill McCody
Ensign Loghlin Kelly

Lieut. Noll Dignum
Lieut. Thomas Butler
Lieut. William Kennedy
Lieut. Eneas O'Duly
Lieut. Teige O'Donnoghue
Lieut. (Donagh) Dwyer
Lieut. (Edmond) Dalton
Ensign William Hodnett
Ensign Donnogh O'Broe
Ensign John Mack Doneill Carthy
Cornet (Nicholas) Purcell
Ensign Daniel Bourke
Ensign John Corcrew
Coronet John Fitzgerald
Quartermaster Richard Segerson
Ensign William Lacy

Gentlemen of the Countrey
Master (John) Purtell
Master Christopher Oge Purtel
Afterward Found Out with the Soldiers
Lieut.. Bryan Mack Cragh
Ensign Richard Barrett
Ensign John Bourke.
Troopers 14; Sergeants 9; Corporals 7; Soldiers 22; Chirurgions 6.

Master Stephen Brown
Master John Novy

Ensign Edmond Bourke
Q'master William Lee

EXTRACT FROM REPORT BY LORD INCHEQUIN ON
THE BATTLE OF KNOCKANUSS 13th NOVEMBER 1647

“(The army of the rebels numbered 7,000 foot and 1,000 Horse), we came in view of one another about one in the afternoon, ours being 1,200 Horse and 4,000 Foot. Whereupon they instantly took a hill of strength and drew up, which being about two miles distant from us, we had not daylight enough to attempt anything upon them, from whence we could observe that we could not charge them where they were but upon such disadvantages , and being doubtful that they might stand awhile the next morning upon that ground in expectation that we would come up on them I write to the Lord Taaff to invite him to fight upon a fair plain. He would not be drawn from the hill..... to which we did advance and finding (that as they were drawn up) we should not only loose the advantage of the wind and sun but having been also forced to charge upon such a disadvantage to our horse if we had gone on directly on their front, we drew to the right hand of them and found a piece of ground within a convenient distance to play with Ordance upon their right wing where I caused two pieces to play to the extent that I might discompose the form for they were in and in the meantime I directed the drawing of our men to the ditch at the foot of their hill, that they might be ready to fall on, whilst they should be moving from their ground.

But after two shots were made(one which slew a Trumpeter of theirs) they perceiving that the Ordance would force them from the ground, presently came on down the hill to meet our men and at the same instance that we brake their main Body and left wing they brake a part

of our left wing of horse being the middle division of three that were on that side, the other two routed those that charged them, and following the execution, discerned not the advantage gained by the rebels upon those close to them, where Colonel Purcel with his Horse and Sir Alexander Mac Donnell whom they call Colla Kittach, with his Red-shanks slew Sir William Bridges and Col. Grey, they had an execution of our forlorn hope of Foot under the command of Lieutenant Col. Crisp who was taken prisoner, and Major Brown who was slain with about forty of their men that were drawn tither to secure the Ordance which Sir Alexander Mac Donnell possessed for a while (as also our Baggage) until I happened to look back that way (and perceiving them chasing our men) I commanded two divisions of Horse who were the reserve of the right wing to charge them, which was exceedingly well performed and Sir Alexander and his Lieutenant Col. slain with most of his Red-shanks of whom I believe there was not a fourth part escaped. This fight began a little before two in the afternoon; the dispute lasted not above half a quarter of an hour, but the execution ended not on that day, though we were killing til night, as fast as we could ,yet we found two or three hundred the next day in the Woods , as we were viewing the bodies, but could not possibly get any exact account of the number slain, for after I had an account of more than 2000 that the pursuing parties slew in their several walks, I was informed of many hundreds that were slain in divers other places, so as our men believe there was not less than five thousand slain: but I do not think it possible that it should be above 3000 because the dispute lasted not at all and that except for the three regiments that came on with Sir Alexander Mac Donnell, the rest made the best use they could of their heels, to the Woods and Bogs towards Kintuirk, Newmarket and Lyscarrol; yet we cut down two hundred of their Horse and killed many of their horsemen. We took four wagons full of ammuniion, but have not yet taken up their arms, whereof I am most confident tat they have left us near six thousand in the field, which is so much more considerable a loss because scarcity of arms among them is very great, as appears by some of their letters, which doth discover all the secrecy of that party and their designs. Wherefore I thought it my duty to present them to our Lordships & C. I am told by a gentlemen we have taken that if my Lord Taaff undoubtedly will take away his life having knowledge of his design against them which they were first occasioned to grow jealous of the information he gave them of my offering and he rejecting a cessation, which he laboured to possess them with, while he fought to gain one from me, to the end that he might destroy them and bring the sole power into his own hand.....”.

Inchequin’s (purported) note to Taaffe:

“ My Lord- Here is a very faire piece of ground between your Lordship’s army and ours, on this side the brooke whether if you please to advance, we will do the like, we dot not so much doubt the gallantry of your resolution, as to think you will not come, but give you this notice, to the end you maybe see wee do stand upon no advantage of ground and are willing to dispute our quarrel upon indifferent terms; being confident that the justness of our cause will be this day manifest by the Lord, and that your Lordship’s judgement will be rectified concerning”

Your Servant
 INCHIQUIN.
 13th November. 1647

Taaffes (purported) reply:

“ to which the Lord Taaff returned verbal answer any advantage he had of ground or otherwise which he doubted not the President would do in like case.”
 In 1647 the townland of Knocknanuss lay in the civil parish of Subulter, in a stable well ordered farming district. The ancient Gaelic or Brehon Law system had a long before given

way to a mixed farming community in the English mode. Most of the local population were tenants of the Magners, or worked for them, and enjoyed a progress and a prosperity which that sturdy yeoman family had wrought during their 450 year association with the district. The Magners were farmers and business people and traded with Mallow, Cork, Limerick, and Tralee. They were also in shipping agricultural produce to France and the Lowlands, through family connections in Dungarvan and Waterford.

Subulter parish was part of the Barony of Orrey and Kilmore and was under the influence of the Lords Barry Mor from the Norman invasion. Under Barry protection and the rule of English Law, the district was saved the ravages of the Geraldine rebellion and the aftermath of the battle of Kinsale. The many small villages which still define the locality were established. A network of poor roads, carter lanes and boley tracks connected with fair roads to Mallow, Tralee, and Limerick. Most of the woods and bogs were cleared and drained in Gaelic times and the well-tended fields were marked off by stretched wooden fencing and earthen banks over field drains. The Protestant churches and parishes of Kilbrin, Subulter, Castlemagner, and Roskeen were co-terminous with the Catholic parishes. A religious tolerance was well managed by the Barrys, Magners, O'Callaghans and McCarthys, who were the local landowners and all closely related by marriage. The Owenbeg river separated the civil parishes of Kilbrin and Subulter. It was also the barony boundary between Norman Orrery & Kilmore and Gaelic Duhallow, both carved from the ancient Mor Tuatha of Duth Eala which lay from Sliabh Luacra to Mallow town. Subulter, Knocknanuss and Lackaleigh were granted as a manor farm of 630 acres to a preceptory raised around 1190 at what is now Subulter House. It was a gift from William Fitz Philip de Barry to his Sicilian Medi relatives and its first commander was Maurice Fitz Gerald of Mallow castle. It was raised by the poor knights of Christ and the Holy Temple of Solomon, known as Knights Templar, as a novitiate for young men of high Norman nobility who were schooled and trained there as Knight-Monks for protection of Christian pilgrims in the Holy Land. They complimented vows of poverty, in the Holy Land. They complimented vows of poverty, Chastity and obedience with a high skill at arms and were the pallanins of their day.

This powerful station, in no-mans land between Norman and Gael, was part of a fortified line from Blarney to the Limerick border, which opposed the resurgent McCarthys in Duhallow and Muskerry. In Gaelic times the land between the Owenbeg and Cathragh rivers comprised the Gaelic Tuatha of Monamandrach. Seized by Robert FitzStephen around 1178, 1,500 acres were already held by William Magnel who founded Castle Magner around 1183. One thousand-five hundred acres were also held by the Templar station at Subulter. "Subulter" is a corruption of (preceptoiri di) Sacre Sepulcre, after the Order of Knights Hospitallers of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem who took over the station when the Templars were suppressed in 1324. Around this time, for reasons now unclear, the hill was re-named Knockagall or The Hill of the Foreigners, but the name reverted to Knocknanuss some short time later.

The Hospitallers gave up the station around 1350 when, as beneficiary of unassigned Crown land, the Bishop of Cloyne held it for the Crown. From Templar times, the Magners and the Barrys were the main tenants. At the Reformation it was sold to the O'Callaghans of Clonmeen who were registered owners in 1641 and at the battle of Knocknanuss. The Townlands of Subulter, Knocknanuss and Lackaleigh were in the civil parish of Subulter until civil parishes were subsumed into County Councils by the Local Government Act of 1898. All traces of the Templar preceptory have now gone, except for the name of the Townland of Subulter and a 90 foot stonelined well in the yard of Subulter House. The manor village of Marybrook which was attached to the preceptory was on the site of Marybrook House. Only the outline of the village graveyard survives. In its frontier location, Subulter saw many confrontations as the resurgence of Gaelic power in Duhallow pushed the tide of Norman invasion back to Mallow itself by the mid-fifteenth century. A crossing point on the

Owenbeg river at the boundary of Ballyheen South and Rathmaher had the name The Chieftain's Ford for an O'Callaghan chief killed there in a skirmish with raiding O' Connors Kerry in mid 16th century.

The youthful uncertain Taaffe hardly concealed his prospects the night before the battle with the old Gaelic adage

**McDonagh futureage shall see
A man of thy posterity
By whom the English Lord shall fall
Blood shall ascend to the legs small
In the place we Knocknanuss do call.**

He would have known from the children in the fields that the prophesy was long fulfilled by warlike McDonagh McCarthys on hard pressed Barrys and Roches. In a curious turn of events among the lands granted after Kinsale to Captain Sir William Taaffe, grandfather of Theobald was a townland also called Knocknanuss in the parish of Dysertserges near the town of Clonakilty. By neglect of Sir William, the land remained in the patrimony of McCarthy Carbery, a notable absentee from the muster at Kanturk. There is another Knocknanuss in the parish of Moycarky, near Thurles in Co. Tipperary but it has no known connection with the Taaffes.

The civil parish of Kilbrin was McDonagh demesne lands. Although Ballyheen, Rathmaher, Marybrook(Garrane), Ballyhest and Ballyrushion were in the parish of Kilbrin, they were owned by the O'Callaghans from around 1540. At the time of the battle there was a Norman style village at Ballyheen, with a charter to hold fairs. The village had developed from an earlier Gaelic settlement, the Killeen church of which are still outlined in Middle Ballyheen. A chieftain's stone built Cahir associated with this village can still be traced on the site known as Ballyheen castle. Ballyphilip, Knocknacolan and Corbally were part of the old Gaelic Tuatha of Ballintubber which was mortgaged to Lord Sarsfield by the McDonagh McCarthys to finance the building of the new castle in Kanturk. In Gaelic times, the townland of Corbally was called Gort Na Tubrid for the many springs which came up through its limestone formation. In Norman times it was re-named An Cor Baile for a baile beathaig that was located there on the crest of the hill. At that time Corbally was subsumed within the civil parish of Kilbrin. In his report to William Lenthall, Inchequin gave the old Gaelic form for his field address. With a fine legal sensibility, he used the name given in the ancient title deeds for Ballintubber, now held by Lord Justice Sir Dominick Sarsfield(known as Lord Sarsfield), but already scheduled for forfeiture Papist property.

Clash and Ballynoe were demesne lands of Cormac McDonagh McCarthy, a cousin and rival of Dermot. There was a Gaelic village, church and graveyard in Ballynoe. The Brehon law and system of land tenure still prevailed in all the McCarthy territories, which were stable and settled but lacked the development of the anglicised communities across the river. The declining prosperity of McDonagh McCarthy was also impoverishing the area. Kilbrin church and village lay within the now walled enclosure which comprises Kilbrin graveyard. The church land at Ardtemple, a concession of 47 acres to the founding northerner Bran O' Neill, was taken over in 1250 by Dearmuid McCarthy 1st Lord of Duhallow in defiance of a Norman claim, and was in the legal patrimony of McDonagh McCarthy in 1641. The main burial grounds for Kilbrin Parish were in Marybrook and around an old parochial church at Ballyhest. The site was part of a gaelic monastic settlement at Ballyhest(East) -The Baile of the stallage named the practice of wintering store cattle sheltered glen there in Gaelic times.

Generally the strong tenants lived in stone houses in the villages. Workers lived in sod-and-wicker cabins clustered around the farms. Some lived in the baile beathaig, as extended family communities, in round wicker and thatch huts. Food was basic but not scarce and famine was not a living memory. The life expectancy for a man was about 40, that for a woman was around 30 years. Most disease was not yet controllable and the child mortality rate was more 1:2. The professions were replacing quacks and botchers at a price and the life of the people, patterned by the seasons, was settled and steady. Daily life was settled and steady. Daily life was leavened and made bearable by a strong native culture, a pervading love of sport, and an intense religious exercise that reflected a sort of intense religious exercise that reflected a morbid fatalism of the age and a temporal quality of life that the uncertainty of the times accentuated.

The local people were hardly touched by the events of the campaign. From cabin doorways people watched the opposing armies move through the area and were unduly bothered by the soldiery of either side. On the day of the battle crowds followed the battle from vantagepoints. In Kilbrin and Ballyphilip they were put under the personal protection of Inchequin when he and his officers confronted him with the challenge "Who are ye for!, Who are ye for now!". This was home territory for Inchequin and his officers would have known, and have been known to, some of the local spectators. Mainly tenant farmers and labourers excluded from the role in the political process, their interest on that day was confined to watching the course and outcome of the rare and awesome event, while the daily burdens of life had to be laid aside until the conflict was over.

The last item in Inchequin's report to parliament was an explanation as to why he did not disturb the local people or lay waste the countryside. He explained that it was an unseasonal time of year that there was nothing to waste and that he left the people in their homes so that they would supply his army "...yet if I did not invite the inhabitants to stay in their habitations and to make provision for us, I could not possibly get one days victual; so as I should be forced to return home, and leave the country neither useless to them by destruction, nor useless to us by present supportation or future Contribution."

This was in accord with Parliament's policy of courting tardy popular support through overt considerate treatment of non-combatants and contrasted with the mindless spoiling of the Royalist armies. It was again demonstrated a few years later when, on route to Drogheda, Cromwell cashiered two of his own soldiers for stealing "two hens not worth sixpence" from an old lady along the way. In circumstances of the times, the cashiering was tantamount to a death sentence.

In the Cromwellian Settlement, Knocknanuss, Subulter and Marybrook (Garrane) were given to Captain Richard Childe-Burnell. The Childe family were Elizabethan planters in the Caherciveen area. The Burnell or Barnwell family were old English Ormonde supporters in Kilkenny. The property title descended through various lines of Captain Burnell's four daughters until the middle of the last century. One was named Henry Herrick who lived with his mother's people in Marybrook House and was a lively member of the riotous local Rakes. At a Christmas dinner in the house in the mid 1760's the youthful Henry was challenged to jump his prize hunter over the laden table in the dining room. The horse jumped clear but Henry was thrown against the wall of the room and broke his neck. On Christmas Eve night 1882, an elderly couple Jim and Bridget Connell were murdered in Marybrook House by robbers. Their killers were known to be local people but were never brought to justice. At the end of the 1700's the tenant of Knocknanuss was Eoghan Egan. He was a successful businessman who contributed significantly to the development of native Catholic business in Cork City and County. His legs were crippled by polio and with another local man who was blind, he was instrumental in the revival of the pattern at Tobar Ri Domhnaigh (St Bridget's/Mary's Holy Well) in Castlemagner.

THE OPPOSING FORCES AT KNOCKNANUSS

Rivalries and mistrust among elements of the Royalist army imposed a rigid predictable form on their line of battle. The McDonnells were committed to the Right of the Line, but also they would not fight beside the Leinstermen due to bad relations after Dungan's Hill and Wexford. With visceral animus, Taaffe and his staunchly loyalist old English fellow officers saw with jaundiced eye the mustered display of Gaelic power and were determined that the weight of battle should be taken by these, their erstwhile enemies. On the Right Wing the imperious McDonagh would serve no master and participated as an equal, subordinate to neither Taaffe nor McEllestrum. The army of Parliament had similar problems. The English Horse would not fight beside Anglo-Irish militia whom they considered no better than Irish rebels. Sir William Bridges demanded command of the English Horse. He was of the aristocratic Chandos family and based his claim on the alleged cowardice of Colonel Temple's father. He challenged Temple to a duel and Inchequin had to arrange for Colonel Percy Smith to stand down and avoid bloodshed by giving Sir William his command.

Parliament's Horse was organised and equipped in the style developed by Gustavus II Adolphus in his German campaign of 1630/31 as adopted by Parliament for its New Model Army. Its Troop was 78 all ranks, with 7 Troops to a regiment of 550 all ranks. The Royalist Troop was 55 all ranks, with 3 all ranks. The Parliament's troopers were selected for intelligence, courage and comrade loyalty and were paid three times as much as the Foot at all levels of rank. Their horses were also bigger and heavier and their cavalry tactics centred around a mobile cohesive mass of horse ploughing into enemy formations and re-grouping again and again to break-up the formation for the pikes and swords of supporting Foot. Under Cromwell the role of the Foot was more and more marginalised and the regiments of Horse grew to 3-4, 000 with a ready capacity to function as dragoons or dis-mounted cavalry in place of the Foot.

At Knocknanuss, Parliament's Horse had more and heavier horses at all unit levels, and a flatter command structure from trooper to regimental commander. This gave them the flexibility to function as a massed regiment or as a troop or sub-troop without unduly distorting the direct line of control and co-ordination between the commander and the troops in action. Inchequin learned his trade as a young captain in the Spanish Cavalry and Broghill was an able cavalry General. With the New Model Regiment of Colonel Edmund Temple, in this battle their Horse was a match for the best in the world. By comparison, the Royalist Horse was raised by their commanders and the only criteria for command were social rank and a willingness to bear the cost. At the time, the cost of raising a squadron of Horse was around £10,000. The Royalist Commanders were gentlemen-soldiers with no real training or experience in the employment of cavalry in the modern warfare of the time. Their lighter and numerically smaller formations lacked co-ordination and their battle drills were developed for horse-to-horse fighting. Generally Royalist Horse Squadrons put in one charge only and then left the battlefield. It was only in running man-to-man combat that the Royalists could match the Parliament's horse and both sides were well aware of that.

Parliament's Foot was also arranged in the new style with a higher proportion of Musket than their Royalist opponents, mainly because the Royalists were reluctant to discard the traditionally superior status of the pike. Parliament was top-heavy with Generals and Colonels who raised their own regiments but could not muster enough men to keep the unit operational. Their regiment was 940 all ranks compared to about 1,690 in the Royalist formation. On a head count basis, this gave them more senior officers in the line, a useful advantage when officers led by example. It also gave the hidden advantage of flatter lines of command for a faster response to events on the battlefield. In this battle, the total number of

men in basic formations was not critical. The number and quality of the officers in the formation was the determining factor in performance.

McDonnell's "Regiments", which Inchequin's manoeuvres had incidentally consolidated, was one of the finest regiments of Foot ever to take the field in a battle in Ireland. A high proportion were veterans and mercenaries. They were well-armed and the unit drew a strong cohesion from the family and follower connections which pervaded it. It was led by the incomparable McEllestrum, the greatest and last field commander to lead his regiments on foot and from the front. An officer of Parliament present at Knocknanuss described him as "making such havoc among the enemy, in proper person that was admirable. No such feats were seen by our progenitors acted by an ordinary man (unless assisted by a higher power) who could not be either killed, vanquished or taken prisoner but of his own accord."

Other commanders, such as those of the Irish Brigade, also led from the front, but none of them combined in themselves McEllestrum's fighting prowess, his total lack of fear and his apparent invulnerability. His fatal flaw was an inability to take a command overview, as illustrated at the battle of Knocknanuss, where his failure to re-group his regiments when they broke through the enemy line left the Centre division unbroken until Inchequin returned to recover the initiative. Such a re-grouping would have left him with the press of men to wipe out Inchequin's remaining Foot and to take the charge of Temple's Horse if not to break it. The suggestion by Inchequin that McDonnell's powerful regiments, which had already smashed through more than 2,000 of the Parliament's choice Foot, could be broken by a charge of two Troops of Horse however exceedingly well-performed, was militarily unsustainable. The parliament claimed that Taaffe had almost 10,000 men in the field and evoked the usual captured muster roll as the confirmatory source. This was at variance with the report of Inchequin to colonel Jones in January 1647 that Taaffe's army was 700 Horse and 3,500 Foot. As Inchequin's was an operational report it was the more likely to be accurate. That army included several thousand men from the houses of the McCarthys for which the McDonnell call-out could hardly make replacement. In these wars of rebellion through the British Isles there was little popular support for any cause and army recruitment was through a local leader who could bring out a personal following in his district. It was not possible to predict how many might turn out for a campaign or even stay around for a battle. The Parliament brought in two Conscript Acts which enabled them to press men in a locality. The Royalists had no such device to fill their ranks and were wholly dependent on their local leaders to bring out a muster. In the early days the supreme Council ordered each ploughland held by the membership to give eight fightingmen and horsemen pro rata to yield an army of 25,000 men for their war of religious liberation. However, the council lacked the nationwide coercive power to enforce the levy and the plan came to nought. In the event, Taaffe may have mustered no more than the 700 Horse and 3,500 Foot that Inchequin had estimated was his fighting strength 10 months earlier. The accounts of Parliament are also unreliable for the English habit of exaggerating the number of rebels and disparaging their fighting qualities to promote the propaganda that the Irish rebels were too inept to defend or govern themselves, a justification for English intervention in Ireland not unfamiliar to later generations.

In the condemnation of Taaffe some of his detractors had vested interests, none more so than the rabid propagandists of Parliament who used the event to denigrate the King's supporters as a prelude to the execution of the king himself. With his battle line in chaos, Taaffe still held the advantage of ground to throw an all-out attack down the hill against the enemy line. However this required personal qualities of courage and leadership that he clearly could not call on. He chose to run and took most of his men with him. Nonetheless, his First division of South Tipperary men stood their ground and fought well and with the men of South Leinster they took more than half of the Royalist casualties in the battle. As the army

commander Taaffe proved to be an incompetent and the case is there that he was a traitor as well.

The count of Inchequin's muster is also controversial. Money to provision and pay his troops was paid to Quartermasters in Ireland who paid the monies on to the field commanders. Many Quartermasters were racketeers who constructively claimed for more troops than they actually had. Broghill's father had a narrow escape when arraigned before Parliament shortly before he died, for his extensive activities in this regard. Field officers also consistently understated losses in action to preserve the myth of rebel ineptitude or to conceal their own. The losses were adjusted in reports of plague, starvation and the Irish weather which fitted well with the myth of English natural superiority, while at the same time compounding the malignancy of all things Irish, even to the weather. In the contemporary accounts of the battle, there was a consensus that Inchequin had about 4,000 Foot and 1,300 Horse. Allowing for the reinforcements diverted from Leinster after Dungan's Hill, Inchequin could have put up to 5,000 Foot and 1,500 Horse into the field and could be expected to do so. Any advantage that the Royalists might have had in Foot was offset by the superiority in quality and numbers of the Parliament Horse.

The determination with which Inchequin pushed home the chance attack on the Royalist Left Wing exemplified his outstanding ability to read a battle. His gift for building contingency planning into his battle tactics enabled him here to exploit a chance of war with decisiveness and bold action and marked his high ability as a general. This he amply confirmed in the armies of France where his command was freed from personal and political intrigue and his leadership brought brilliant successes. His genius was marred by a cold indifference to battle losses, whether his own or the enemy, armed or unarmed. In taking his reserve of Foot and Horse to support the attack on the Royalist Left Wing and in his long delay over the easy prey of the rout, he left his other divisions to their fate with McDonnell's regiments. Most of his men died because he failed to push home his basic battle plan which was for his Wings to support the centre division in the destruction of the Royalist army at the foot of the hill. He also seriously under-estimated the fighting ability of McEillestrum and his regiments. Both Taaffe and Inchequin were disadvantaged because they were unable to stay in touch with the progress of the fighting at the foot of the hill. From the crown plateau the hill-foot was out of sight and this chance circumstance was a major impediment for which neither commander made provision. Neither could see McDonnell's initial success, a factor which might have stayed Taaffe's flight and held Inchequin from his over-reached pursuit of the Royalist rout. In the event both commanders lost control of the field and both commanders lost control of the field and both armies got severely mauled without either realising its objective of destroying the other.

The battle of Knocknanuss was the biggest ever fought in Munster and the casualties there were higher than in most of the battles of the English Civil War where much larger troop formations were engaged. The tactics and battle drills were of a period of transition as the massed assault of steel and shield was giving way to firearms, field artillery and a professionalism set to blossom in the heroic military genius of the Irish Brigades in Europe. The transition pitted the raw courage and great claymore of McEillestrum, the highland charge and the push of pike, against the tactual sense, the co-ordinated musketry and new model formations of Inchequin. The outcome of the battle was hardly relevant to the war overall and had little impact on affairs in Munster as the province remained under Royalist control until the advent of the English Cromwellian forces changed all definitions.

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- Hugh Burke Assolas. Many items. Tells of Scots' battle Eve night of revelry at Assolas, fall of McEllestrum at Well. Had Irish pikeheads from the battle.
- Richie Fitzgerald, Ballyphilib Many items. Tells of battle stations, entrenchments, fall of McEllestrum at well and death in the stable at Rathmaher House.
- Denis Keating, Terenure, Dublin. Many items. Told of McEllestrum's manner and bearing Scots athletic feats. Retired Principal from Civil Service he served with Michael Collins in London and was his agent during War of Independence. His grand-uncle John Sullivan, Ballyhest was Whiteboy reprieved from gallows by Deane Freeman, Castlecor. Sullivan was later a Fenian and made pikes at O'Briens Forge, Castlecor. Dinny was native of Kilguilky.
- John McAuliffe, Subulter Guide to Sir Alexander McDonnell's Well and other sites. Father and uncle were active in old I.R.A.
- Jack Noonan, Ardaprior Repository of lore on Knocknanuss. told of redshanks dress, charge, routes; Course of battle, tactics and burials. Held a direct ancestor with McDonagh Horse. Great grand-uncle Noonan hanged for "Knoght of the Knife" attack 1811. Jack and his brothers were old I.R.A.
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- Tom Reilly, Ballyhest Many items. Told of personal appearance and acclaim of McEllestrum, capture of Inchequin's camp by Scots, Taaffe's flight, the horsemen and the saddle preserved at Castlecor House.
- Others Many of the traditions given here come from local people whose individual contributions overlap with others and with the passage of time can no longer be personally distinguished or attributed. Among them, to mention but a few, in alphabetical order are :
- Pat Barrett Ballyheen
Tim Barry Castlemagner
Connell Family Knocknanuss
Paddy Crowley Knocknanuss
Noelie Curran Lisduggan

Albert Dromey Drumcummer
Ned Duggan Kilguilky
Jackie "The Cooper" Fitzgerald, Rathnagard Kilbrin
Pat Hannigan Subulter
Tom Hannon Ballygraddy
John "The Boss" Kelleher Kilbarry
Chris Langley Ballyhass
Danny Mahony Ballyrushion
Paddy Ryan NT Ballygraddy NS
Sherlock Family Ballyheen
Connie Sullivan Marybrook
Barry Taylor Subulter

(These sources or their relatives are still in the area.)