

Eureka!

I believe in miracles. This conviction began quite innocently with a telephone call in late June 1985. Margaret Anslow and her brother Ken Smith are great-grandchildren of George Smith, an older brother of James Smith and Elizabeth Smith who married Elizabeth Tennant and George Tennant respectively. Margaret was pursuing history of the Smith family.

Ken and his wife Wilma had plans for a tour which included a stop-over of one day in Dublin. It seemed an opportune time to see a little of County Carlow where his roots were. Somehow he made contact with Thomas Dunne in Tullow who is keenly interested in local history. Their meeting was arranged for September 23rd, the free day of their brief visit.

Mr. Dunne contacted Sir Thomas Butler of the Ballin Temple estate a couple of miles away for a meeting so kindly granted. The group walked around where the beautiful Big house had stood, and also visited the old church and cemetery at nearby Aghade - the very places where our ancestors had trod in the early 1800's.

Margaret provided Mr. Dunne's address and I wrote to him directly, which was received just before the visit. From this fortunate and unexpected contact came factual data and pictures that I had sought for most of my life - and in time to be included in this book.

He assured me that there was record in the old church of the Judith Butler-Tennant marriage. Further, that she was a daughter of a Butler, Baronet of Ballin Temple estate. I then turned to the ancestry of Sir Thomas P. Butler, 12th Baronet and current owner of Ballin Temple. (J.B.S. Vol. 2, No. 1, pg. 51)

Sir Thomas, 3rd Baronet, died in 1703 and was succeeded by his eldest son Sir Pierce as 4th Baronet. He and his wife Anne Galliard left no heirs, so the Baronetcy went to Richard, grandson of Sir Thomas' second son, James of Broomville, as 5th Baronet.

Sir Richard was Member of parliament for Carlow 1729 - 1761. He married Henrietta Percy one of five daughters of Col. Harry Percy of Seskin County Wicklow. (J.B.S., vol. 4, 1972, p. 258) Sir Richard and Henrietta had ten children, four sons and six daughters. Henrietta died January 14, 1794.

In Burke's large tome of Peerage and Baronetage I readily found the desired lineage (105th ed. 1970 and 1975, p. 427) It says that Sir Richard and Henrietta had "with other issue" Sir Thomas 6th Bt., Pierce Butler who went to America, William Paul Butler of Broomville, County Carlow. Unfortunately for us, the six daughters are not named. As this is the correct time period I had hoped to see Judith's name recorded.

Sir Richard 7th Bt., born July 4, 1761 was Member of Parliament for Carlow 1783 - 1800. On August 23rd, 1782 he married Sarah Maria Newnham. Their children included Sir Thomas, 8th Bt. and James Butler of Ballybar born November 9, 1788, died 1865, are referred to in my chapter on Aghade Church and other records.

Sir Richard, 9th Bt., born March 4, 1813, died November 22, 1862 had as second son Richard Pierce Butler who emigrated to Canada and was progenitor of the Manitoba Butlers living in Solsgirth, Birtle and other communities there. One of their sons, Hans Pierce Butler, born 1880 was married December 30, 1908 to Lenora Agnes Selina Moulson. She died February 4, 1931. Six sons are listed in Burke's. The second youngest was born in 1926. Being the same age, he may be the red-haired Butler boy who was Bill Tennant's pal at the Carlyle camp fifty years ago.

The Baronetage had its origin in 1628 when Thomas Butler was created a baronet by Charles I. Thomas was a natural son of Edmund Butler who was the second son of the 9th Earl of Ormond.

Through the foregoing your farm boy cum historian, in study of much material from a variety of sources, and with invaluable assistance from so many people, has endeavoured to give credence to oral history in our family that Judith Butler was descended from an Earl of Ormond.

The news Bulletin of the Butler Society, North America October 1985, describes the heraldic arms of many of the Butler families. The arms of the Butler Baronet of Garryhondon, County Carlow are described as "Or, a chief indented azure, a bordure indental ermine. Crest-Out of a ducal coronet or, a plume of five ostrich feathers argent, therefrom a falcon rising, of the last." The motto is "Comme je trouve."

Mr. Dunne located a copy of a scarce book which told the story of the Butlers of Ballin Temple. The estate of 1500 acres is bounded on one side by the Slaney River. The book contains pictures of the beautiful mansion, its grounds and gardens. He had several of these copied professionally. Some are included in this book for you to admire.

He also sent me color photos taken in September when the Smiths visited there. One view shows the group on the site of the big house. It includes Mr. Dunne and the Smiths with Sir Thomas Butler.

About the same time he took a picture of the site where the Robert Tennant house stood on Townland adjoining the Ballin Temple estate. It had been in the family name until just before 1900. You will see references to Ballinastraw in excerpts from the registers of Aghade Church.