



The Family of Proby in Chester and Ireland.

(COMMUNICATED BY THE REV. G. P. CRAWFURD, M.A.)



THE family of Proby, which had its origin in Wales (ap Robin), is found settled in Chester soon after 1550, and was awarded a grant of arms in 1586: *Ermine* on a fesse *gules*, a lion passant *or*. Crest: An ostrich's head erased *argent*, ducally gorged *or*, in the beak a key of the last.¹ Its most prominent member in early days was Sir Peter Proby, Knt., a native of Chester, who became a wealthy merchant, and was Lord Mayor of London in 1622.² He was an esquire of the body to Queen Elizabeth and King James, Keeper of the records in the Tower of London, Postmaster for Ireland and Governor of the colony of Ulster; and the pedigree of his descendants has been exhaustively drawn out by Mr. Granville Proby, in a handsome volume describing the pictures at Elton Hall. Mr. Proby's family still resides upon the Elton estate, near Peterborough, acquired by Sir Peter Proby.

But Sir Peter Proby left behind him in Chester near relatives—brothers or cousins or both—from whom another

¹ Burke's *General Armoury*.

² *Cheshire Sheaf*, 3rd S., vols. vii., viii., ix. His father, Ralph Proby, left the Bread Box, the inscribed plate of which is now at the Church of St. Mary-on-the-Hill, Chester, to St. Bridget's Church, Chester (demolished). See *C.A.S. Journal*, N.S. xxiii., 25.

line of the family is descended, which as far as is known has not hitherto received public notice of its descent, although it is found continuously claiming connection with the branch established at Elton Hall.

In the key pedigree attached to this notice of the Proby family an attempt is made to construct the connection of the two branches of the family. It is assumed that "my grandfather Ralph" named in the will of William Proby (Chester 1728), was a younger brother or nephew of Sir Peter Proby, and father of William Proby, founder of the family in Ireland, and of John Proby of Chester, vintner.

An entry in a note book of the 18th century, written up by Rev. Narcissus Charles Proby about 1790 runs:—

"I have heard my father say that his grand-father who was a lawyer was the first of my family [in Ireland] and that he purchased from the Duke of York (afterwards King James II) about 1663 the estate in Ireland. The White House farm house (now Garrets) was built by him and the initials of his name (W.P.) are over the door. I have heard that they originally came out of Huntingdonshire, and that my Uncle William (my Father's elder brother) used to visit there as a relation."

It is almost certain that this William Proby, the founder as he may be called of the Irish branch of the Proby family, is the one mentioned in the Inventory of John Proby, vintner, of Chester, 1662, as "his brother William Probye of Dublin in Ireland"; and that he had three sons: (I) Charles, (II) Thomas, (III) William.

1661-2. 22 March.

Administration of the goods of John Probye, of the City of Chester, vintner, deceased, who died on Saturday night the 8th March, 1661-2, granted to Martha Probye, his widow and relict. The inventory of his goods dated 16 April, 1662, appraised by Richard Hickocke, gent., George Chamberline, John Lingley and Randall Minshull, including money and gold £255 18. 8., by a lease from Robert Calcotte, Esq., £100 0. 0. amounts to £414 16. 5. which with debts and funeral charges amounting to £39 2. 3., including the sum of £15 17. 9d due to "his brother William Probye of Dublin in Ireland," leaves a clear estate of £375 14. 2.

C.C. Chester. *District Probate Registry.*

Atalanta Hickocke, widow, sister of John Proby, deceased, having obtained Tuition of William and Grace Proby his children on account of the alleged misappropriation of money due to them by William Garratt, of Chester, who had married their mother (License, January 9, 1666-7 at Hargreave, St. John's or St. Werburgh's, Chester), Martha Garratt *alias* Proby and Eleanor Cappur sought, April 9, 1668, to have the letters of Tuition revoked.

Allegation. C.C. Chester. *Bishop's Registry*.

William Proby of the city of Chester, goldsmith, free 1680-1, who had license, July 7, 1681, to marry Elizabeth Hulme of Chester, spinster, at St. Mary's or St. Bridget's, Chester, may have been the above son of the vintner.

With regard to Thomas (II) it may be fairly surmised that he was the Thomas Proby of Dublin, Surgeon General, born in Dublin, 1665, whose will was proved in Dublin, 14 Jan., 1730, in which among other things he desires that his son-in-law John Nichols, the husband of his only child Elinor, should cut off the big toe of his left foot with part of the bone of the metatarsus to be preserved as a preparation. A mention of him is preserved in the records of the Ulster Office, Dublin.

With regard to William (III) it may be assumed that he is the Lt.-Col. William Proby who describes himself as "now commanding the Invalids at Chester," whose will was proved at Chester in 1728, and in which he refers to his brother Charles lately deceased and to Narcissus Charles Proby, son of his brother, and also to the "family in Huntingdonshire."

1728, 28 September.—Will of William Proby, Esq.

In the name of God, Amen. I, Lieutenant Colonel William Proby, commanding now the Invalids at Chester, being of perfect mind and memory. . . . To be interred privately, but like a soldier (if I dye in Chester) in the great churchyard commonly called St. Warborows at the east end of the cathedral where my grandfather Ralph Proby lyes and a son of mine named William, over which grave I placed a stone with their names engraved or cut on it with this motto: OMNES EODEM COGIMUR. To my dearly beloved wife Bridget Proby in consideration of her being ever more than ordinary carefull and tender of me an house and garden that I am possesst of in

Pepper Street in the City of Chester during her life and after to my son Charles and the heirs male of his body, if he die without issue, to my son Thomas and the heirs male of his body and in default to my nephew Narcissus alias Charles Proby son to my brother Charles Proby lately deceased and the heirs male of his body and in default to a Proby whose sir name is Proby and the heirs male of his or their bodies always provided they are Protestants. If anyone possessed of the said house should turn Papist, then the said house shall go to the next Protestant heir. And for failure of heirs above mentioned of which there is a family in Huntingtongshire I do hereby bequeath the said house and garden to the Poor of St. Michael's Parish, in which it is situate, for ever. To my son Thomas Proby and daughter Elizabeth Bourden one guinea each. To my son Charles my Beaurow or writeing desk with my field bed and bedding, my signet ring and all my books and £5 to buy his mourning. To my said wife all my personal estate hoping she will be kind to my son Charles and that he will be dutiful to her. If my said wife should get on the Pention as my widow, the rent of my said house is to go towards the discharging of my debts. My said wife Bridget Proby sole executrix.

WM. PROBY.

Seal : *Ermine* on a fesse *gules*, a lion passant *or*.

Witnesses : Jy. Desborow, Chas. Desborow, Jon. Kilpatrick.

Proved in the Consistory Court, Chester, 11 Feb. 1728-9 by the widow and relict.

District Probate Registry.

" Wm. Proby, Co^{ll} of the Inveleeds " was buried at St. Oswald's, Chester, 19 January, 1728-9.

It is with the descent of Charles that this memoir is concerned and of which particulars are in the possession of the writer.

Charles Proby (1) was born at Dublin in 1661, and was entered at Trinity College, Dublin, on 11 December, 1677, as the son of William, *generosus*, being then 16 years of age, taking his B.A. degree in 1682 and his M.A. in 1685. He took Holy Orders, and distinguished himself by a romantic marriage with Grace Marsh, the niece and house-keeper of Archbishop Marsh of Dublin, the founder of Marsh's library, and daughter of Epaphroditus Marsh, of Fethard, Co. Tipperary. The entry concerning his

marriage in the Archbishop's diary preserved in his library runs thus, under date 10 September, 1695 :—

“ This evening betwixt 8 and 9 of the clock at night my niece Grace Marsh (not having the fear of God before her eyes) stole privately out of my house at St. Sepulchre's and (as is reported) was that night maryd to Charles Proby, Vicar of Castle Knock in a Tavern and was bedded there with him : The Lord consider my affliction.”

This untoward incident does not seem to have disturbed permanently amicable relations between the Primate and the runaway couple : for their second son was named with the Archbishop's name Narcissus and the Archbishop at his death bequeathed a considerable legacy to his niece. Moreover Charles Proby was collated with the Archbishop's consent Precentor of Armagh, 16 July, 1705, and 20 September, 1709, obtained a faculty to hold the Rectory of Derry-nooze with that of Loughcrew. His will was proved at Dublin in 1728. The place and date of his burial is not known to the writer. He had the following children :— William, Grace, Susanna, and Narcissus Charles. William is named as eldest son in his father's will and is appointed the residuary legatee, and as there is no reference to him in extant records of the family it may be supposed that he died without issue or remained in Ireland and continued the family in that country. Grace married in 1739 the Rev. John Cane of Marchfield, Co. Kildare, and died in 1771.

1725, 6 January.—Will of Rev. Charles Proby.

In the Name of God, Amen. I, Charles Proby of Damastown, in the County of Dublin, Clerk, praised be to God in perfect sense and memory. . . . To be buried as privately and with as little expense as decently may be. And whereas by mortgage and bond £600 is secured to me by my brother Thomas Proby, payable with interest at the rate of 6 per cent. on 29th October, 1723, it is my will that the said principal and interest be paid unto my youngest son Narcissus Charles Proby. Also I do bequeath to my said son the sum of £10 out of the interest of my improvements upon the Glebe of my Parish of Loughcrew, County Meath, and whereas Dr. Narcissus Marsh, Primate of all Ireland, did leave a considerable legacy to my wife his niece, which said legacy was by me assigned to certain trustees

for the use of my children, I do earnestly desire the said trustees to dispose of same according to the true purport of the Deed, which is now in the hands of Revd. William Jackson, of Ballinloghlowe, Co. Westmeath. I give and bequeath to my brother Thomas Proby £30, to my nephew and godson, Charles Proby, son to my brother William Proby £100, to each of my executors £20, to the poor of the Parish of Mallyheatherd, Co. Dublin, to be disposed of by the Rector, £10. All the rest of my goods and chattels and arrears of rent I give and bequeath to my eldest son William Proby whom I appoint my residuary legatee, he paying my funeral expenses. I nominate my friend, Dr. Marmaduke Coghil, and Revd. William Jackson, aforementioned, executors of this my last Will and Testament.

CHARLES PROBY.

In the presence of John Cumins, William Hughes, Patrick Sheredon. Proved by Rev. William Jackson, 27th January, 1726.

Ulster Office, Dublin.

Narcissus Charles Proby (v) the younger son of the Rev. Charles Proby, brought back to England in the later years of his life the line that had left it for Ireland and re-established it in its native city of Chester. He was born in Dublin in 1703, and was entered at Trinity College, Dublin, on 5 December, 1719, aged 16, as the son of Charles Proby, *clericus*, and took his B.A. degree there in 1724. He inherited the properties of Damas Town and Rathcote, Co. Dublin, from his father, and resided there. He married at Backford Church, near Chester, on 23 July, 1734, Katherine Elizabeth Howard, one of the two daughters of Mr. James Howard, son of the Hon. Philip Howard and grandson of the Earl of Berkshire, by his wife Katherine, daughter of George Booth of Chester. After the death of Mrs. Howard, his wife inherited a house in Boughton, an outlying portion of Chester, which had been for many years the home of her father, who died in 1722, and of her mother, whose life was prolonged to the year 1765; and shortly afterwards Charles Narcissus Proby and his wife Katherine Elizabeth left Ireland and settled themselves in the house at Boughton. She died there, 10 June, 1775, and her husband 8 December, 1782. His account

book and some of his letters are in the possession of the writer. The portraits of himself and his wife in miniature are the property of Dr. Raymond Crawford, 26, Chester Terrace, Regent's Park. They were survived by a son and daughter, Narcissus Charles and Katherine Grace.

Katherine Grace Proby (VIII), born 30 June, 1735, at Damas Town, and christened 10 July, with Mrs. Howard and Mrs. Proby godmothers, Lord Berkshire and Lord Mountcashel god-fathers, came with her parents to the house in Boughton, remained unmarried, died at Chester 7 March, 1820, and was buried in the vault at the Cathedral. Her portrait in miniature is in the possession of Dr. Raymond Crawford, and many of her letters to her brother and letters of her brother to her are in the keeping of the writer. 1818. 28 November.—Will of Katherine Grace Proby, of Chester, spinster.

Her messuages in Great Boughton, Co. of Chester, she gives in trust to Revd. Dr. Wm. Garrow; to Catherine Cautley my niece, widow, one moiety; the other moiety also, she having a mortgage on it for £400 borrowed from her by her brother, Revd. Narcissus Charles Proby. To Catherine Cautley, £1,000; to her great niece Arabella Cautley, £100; to her niece, Sarah, wife of Mr. Impey, £100; to Charlotte Garrow (wife of Revd. Dr. Wm. Garrow) £100; to Lætitia, wife of Colonel de Montmorency, £100; to niece Mary Proby, £500; to niece Martha, £100; to niece Anne, £100; to nephews John Proby and Joshua Proby, £200 each; to Arabella, wife of brother Revd. Narcissus Charles Proby, £100; to her trustees Rev. Dr. Wm. Garrow and Catharine Cautley, £100 each, and residue to Catherine Cautley.

Proved in the Consistory Court, Chester, 22 March, 1820.

District Probate Registry.

Narcissus Charles Proby (IX), son and heir of Narcissus Charles Proby and Catherine Elizabeth (née Howard) his wife, was born in Co. Dublin 1736, christened 23 July, with Lady Grey and Mrs. Daveys (afterwards Lady Barrymore) as god-mothers, Lord Andover and Thos. Tindale, Esq. as god-fathers, confirmed with his sister at New Ross, co. Wexford, was entered at Trinity College, Dublin, 30 May, 1757, at the age of 19, taking his B.A. degree in 1760, and his M.A. in 1764. He took Holy Orders, and probably

coming to England at the same time as his parents, became curate of Stoke-by-Nayland, in Suffolk, 1771 to 1774; of Monks Eleigh, 1775-1779; Vicar of Tuddenham and latterly Vicar of Stratford St. Mary, all in the county of Suffolk, dying at the latter place 20 December, 1804, where he was buried.

1802. 10th November.—Will of Revd. Narcissus Charles Proby.

I, Narcissus Charles Proby, of Stratford St. Mary, Suffolk, only son and heir of Narcissus Charles Proby, Esqr., late of Boughton, in the County of Chester, formerly of Dublin (Damastown). I desire to be buried in the family vault at the east end in the church of Stratford St. Mary, the funeral expenses not to exceed £20. Whereas by articles of Agreement dated 2 Aug., 1770, before my marriage to Arabella Weller, spinster, I settled my estate lands in Rathcole, Co. Dublin, and £2,116 in 3 per cent. Bank Annuities on her the said Arabella. I bequeath to my eldest surviving son, John Thomas Proby, £100. To Frederick Henry Proby my third son, £400. To Henry Joshua Philadelphus Proby (second son) £400. To Arabella, wife of Charles Payne Crawford. To Catherine, wife of Revd. Thomas Cautley. To Mary Margaret Proby. To Sarah, wife of Archibald Elijah Impey, of the Inner Temple. To Charlotte Caroline Proby. To Letitia Proby. To Martha Proby. To Ann Weller Proby. To Revd. Thos. Cautley, Vicar of Royston, in Suffolk. To Catherine Grace Proby, spinster, my sister, of Boughton, in Chester. £1,037 10s. 0d. was sold out with the consent of the Revd. Thomas Dawson, trustee, to pay off a mortgage of my father's on certain Irish estates. To delay the estates in Ireland to pay my daughters certain sums, as they reach the age of 21 or marriage.

Three codicils are added, the last in 1804 of any interest, states that on May 15th, 1803, Captain Redmond Morres made deed of settlement on his wife Lætitia Morres, and in pursuance of his bond had made provision for his wife. Witnesses to this codicil are David William Garrow, Richard Leeds, Alex. Wotten.

Proved in the P.C.C. 26 January, 1805.

His portrait by Constable is in the possession of Dr. Raymond Crawford.

He married on 6 Aug. 1770, at Stoke-by-Nayland, Arabella, only surviving daughter of Captain Weller, R.N., of Rolveden, Co. Kent, and Catherine his wife, daughter of T. Dawson, of Dawson Street, Dublin.

Writing of his marriage to his sister Katherine Grace, he says :—

“ As well as I can understand your Frenchified letter you did not receive a second epistle from me containing the very important intelligence of my going to be married to Miss Weller : everything is now fixed for next Monday, the 6th of August. You would laugh at me if I was to call her an angel ; but be assured I have no doubt of her proving a most aimiable woman : pretty, lively, sensible, good humoured and ingenious is what she is allowed to be by all who know her. . . . ”

The Revd. Narcissus Charles Proby had a family of fourteen sons and daughters, but his descent has terminated in the male line and is continued through four only of his daughters : Arabella, who married Charles Payne Crawford (see Crisp's *Visitation*, Vol. II, and *Miscellanea Genealogica*, March, 1926) ; Catherine, who married the Revd. Thos. Cautley ; Charlotte Caroline, who married the Revd. Dr. Garrow ; and Letitia, who married Col. Montmorency.

