

## Background

The men who invaded and conquered Ireland were of Norman and Welsh blood. When **King Edward, the Confessor**, returned from exile in 1042, he brought with him many Normans that he had grown up with while in exile. He gave them a large amount of land, manors, etc. Later, when **William the Conqueror** conquered England in 1066, he brought more Normans with him and also granted them large amounts of land, etc. By nature, these Norman lords were fighters and conquerors and they were not content with living off the bounty given to them, so, several of them saw that Wales provided them with new territory to conquer. So, they conquered Wales.

After getting Wales under their control they were still restless and so they fought each other until **King Henry II** suggested that Ireland would be a good place to fight. At the same time, one **Dermot MacMorrough**, King of Leinster, Ireland, (see map on right) was driven from his territory so he went to Wales and made deals with the sons and relatives of **Nesta** (wife of ancestor, **Gerald FitzWalter of Windsor**) to recapture his Kingdom. But it was the father-in-law of one of Nesta's sons that took the lead and that was **Richard "Strongbow" De Clare**. Strongbow was also a Norman. Nesta's sons were half Welsh and half Norman.



Except for Strongbow, the invaders were descendants of **Nesta verch Rhys**, the Welsh Princess who had sons by **King Henry I**, ancestor **Gerald FitzWalter of Windsor** and **Stephen the Castellan of Cardigan**, in that order.

The sons and grandsons of Nesta that were substantially involved in the Irish Invasion via each of the three men are as follows:

King Henry I and his Mistress, Nesta

Henry FitzHenry  
 Meyler FitzHenry  
 Robert FitzHenry

Gerald FitzWalter of Windsor and his wife, Nesta

Maurice FitzGerald (leader of 3<sup>rd</sup> landing) (son of Gerald and Nesta)  
 William FitzMaurice (son-in-law of Richard Strongbow De Clare) (grandson)  
 Gerald FitzMaurice (grandson)  
 Thomas Fitzmaurice (grandson)  
 Maurice FitzMaurice (grandson)  
 David FitzGerald (Bishop of St. Davids) (son of Gerald and Nesta)  
 William FitzGerald (Lord of Carew Castle) (son of Gerald and Nesta)  
 Raymond le Gros FitzWilliam (leader of 4<sup>th</sup> landing) (grandson)  
 Griffin FitzWilliam (grandson)  
 Angareta FitzGerald (daughter of Gerald and Nesta)

Stephen, Castellan of Cardigan and his wife, Nesta

Robert FitzStephen (leader of 1<sup>st</sup> landing)  
 Meridith FitzRobert  
 Ralf FitzRobert  
 Geoffrey FitzRobert

The invasion campaigns were staged over a four-year period.

- Pre-Invasion - 1167 - **Dermot MacMurrough** and Flemings under **Richard FitzGodebert**
- Bannow Island, Wexford - 1st landing 1st May 1169 - **Robert FitzStephen**
- Bannow Island, Wexford - 2nd landing 1169 - **Maurice de Prendergast**
- Wexford - 3rd landing 1169 - **Maurice FitzGerald**
- Baginbun, Wexford - 4th landing 1st May 1170 - **Raymond FitzWilliam le Gros**
- Passage, Waterford - 5th landing 1170 - **Richard (Strongbow) de Clare**
- Crook, Waterford - 6th landing 1171 - **King Henry II**

The Role of Ancestor, Maurice FitzGerald (Son of Gerald & Nesta)

In 1168 AD, **Dermot MacMorrough**, King of Leinster, Ireland, was driven from his territory by **Roderick O'Conor**, High King of Ireland. He then sought assistance from the Norman-Welsh and succeeded in enlisting to his cause **Richard "Strongbow" de Clare**, Earl of Pembroke. While returning to Ireland, Dermott visited St. David's (church) where he was hospitably received by **David FitzGerald** (son of Gerald of Windsor), Bishop of the diocese. According to Burke's Peerage, the Bishop persuaded his brother, **Maurice FitzGerald**, and his half-brother, **Robert FitzStephen** to assist MacMorrough with their forces. Both **Maurice FitzGerald** and **Robert FitzStephen** are sons of Nesta.

**Dermot MacMorrough**, offered to give **Maurice FitzGerald**, and his half-brother, **Robert FitzStephen**, the land of Wexford (see map on page 1) if they would help him regain his kingdom. Thus, by the summer of 1167, after much planning, Dermot had achieved the promise of substantial aid. Evidently, however, the prospect of waiting a year for the recovery of his



position was too much for the Irish chieftain. After concluding his agreement with **Robert Fitz-Stephen**, he immediately contacted **Richard Fitz-Godebert**, a Fleming from near Haverford who apparently commanded a small body of mercenaries. At any rate, Dermot and Fitz-Godebert and his small body of troops sailed from St. David's in August, and landed in Leinster where they were defeated southeast of Carlow town in 1168 by the High King of Ireland Ruairi O'Connor and his ally Tiernan O'Rourke, the same who had ousted him in 1166. But the victors were generous and Dermot was allowed to retain the chieftainship of his own small tribe, and retired to Ferns. The small mercenary band returned to Wales, where they no doubt spread the word of Dermot's defeat and the terms of the peace he had accepted.

Following up on his promise of aid, **Robert FitzStephen** landed, about the 1st of May 1169, with

three ships of Norman, Welsh and Flemish forces, about 400 strong, on the southern coast of County Wexford at Bannow (probably Bannow Island). Bannow is about halfway between Wexford and Waterford. This is known as the "1<sup>st</sup> landing". The following day **Maurice de Prendergast** with a force of about 200 reinforced FitzStephen's group.

Later, in 1169, **Maurice FitzGerald** entered the invasion with two ships of armed followers, and with the aid of his Norman allies, landed at Wexford, and took the town of Dublin. The map on the right shows the various counties in Ireland. The map one page 1 locates, Dublin, etc. After taking Dublin, Maurice and his youthful



sons, Gerald and Alexander, together with Strongbow and a small English force, were besieged for two months by Roderick O'Connor, King of Ireland, and a huge army, while the port of Dublin was blockaded by a fleet of thirty Manx vessels (from the Isle of Man). In this emergency, by

Maurice's advice and earnest and inspiring exhortations, the beleaguered garrison determined to trust to their superior warlike prowess and daring, and regardless of the disparity of numbers, to encounter the foe. The bold exploit was crowned with success; the Irish were completely defeated, and the King, Roderick, with difficulty escaped. One of the results was that Maurice was granted the middle barony of Offelan in County Kildare, (called "Naas"), as well as Wicklow. Maurice appears to have been a capable administrator as well as a keen soldier; to him "was due the making of Youghal as a medieval town". Youghal is in County Cork. He colonized it with citizens of Bristol, built its fortifications, and perhaps founded St. Mary's. **Maurice FitzGerald** is considered to be the progenitor of the Irish FitzGeralds. For 20 generations and until 1641, Maurice's descendants were Lords of Kerry and Lixnaw, Ireland. Lixnaw is in the northern part of County Kerry. See map [above](#) for location of Kerry (southwest corner).



A drawing of Maurice is on the left.

**Maurice FitzGerald** had married **Alice de Montgomery** before he got involved in the Irish invasion (in about 1135) and had 6 sons of record (grandsons of Gerald and Nesta), that he gave lands and titles as follows::

**William FitzMaurice FitzGerald** who married Alina de Clare, the daughter of "Strongbow" and was Baron of Naas. Their line included son William, and grandson David who married Maud de Lacy to carry on the baronage of Naas.

**Gerald FitzMaurice FitzGerald** (1st Baron of Offaly) (Offaly County – see map) married Eve de Bermingham, relative of Robert de Bermingham who was one of the invader. See page 6 for more information.

**Thomas FitzMaurice FitzGerald** (Lord of Connello) (in Limerick County). See page 7 for more detail.

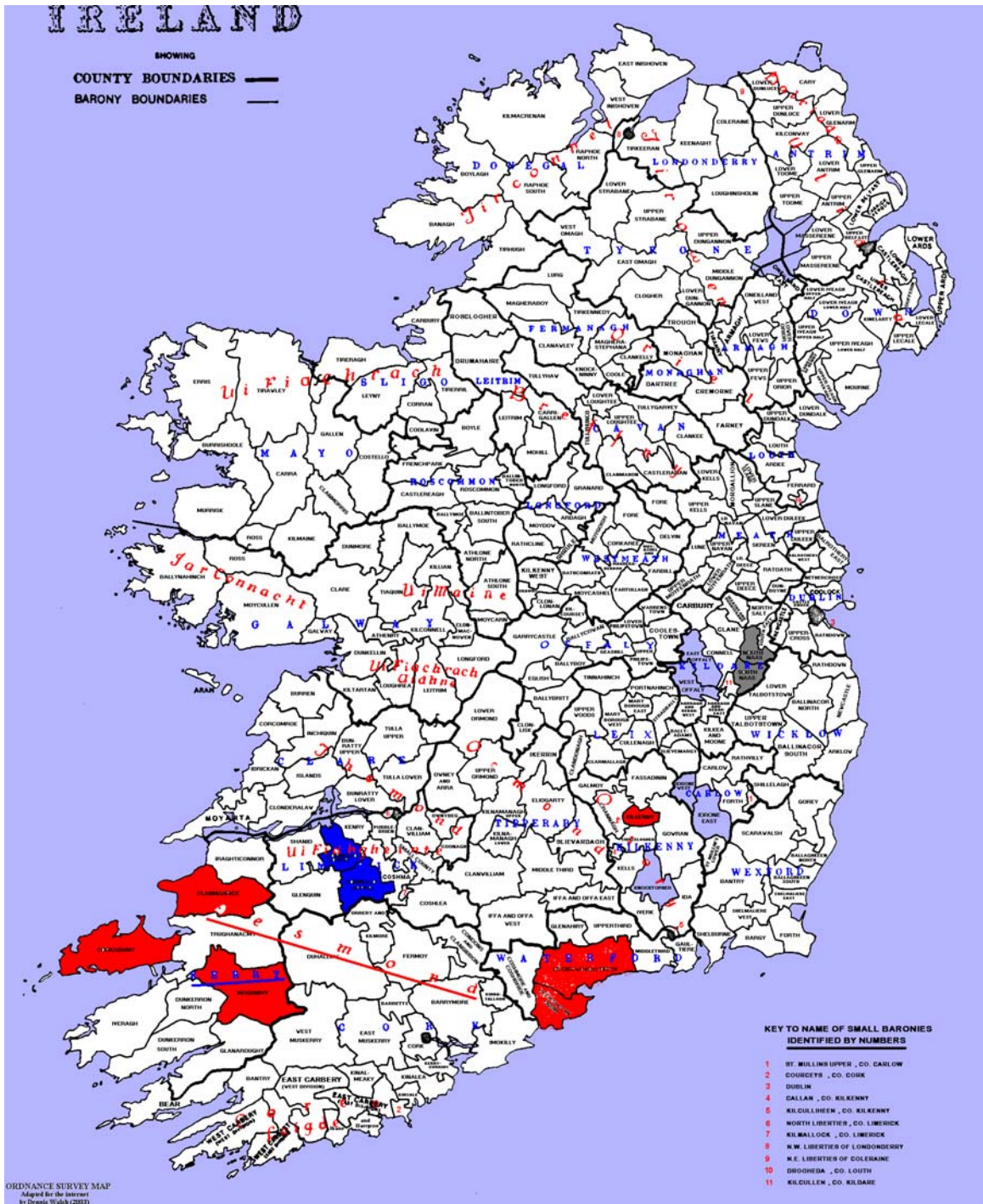
**Maurice FitzMaurice FitzGerald** (ancestor of Barons of Burntchurch, Kilkenny Co.). Burntchurch is in the barony of Shillelogher. Just north of Knocktopher – see map on page 12..

**Alexander FitzMaurice FitzGerald** apparently died young. No detail is available..

**Robert FitzMaurice FitzGerald** – no detail is available.

**Maurice FitzGerald** was an ancestor of **President John F Kennedy** and (ugh) Senator Teddy Kennedy.

The map below outlines all of the Baronies in Ireland. I have colored-in some of the ones mentioned in connection with the Garrett descendants.



## The Role of Gerald FitzMaurice FitzGerald

**GERALD FITZMAURICE FitzGerald** (grandson of Gerald and Nesta), the second son of **Maurice FitzGerald** and **Alice de Montgomery** was born in Windsor Castle in about 1152 and became first Baron Offaly. In about 1197, he took part in the conquest of Limerick and acquired Croom in that County.

His son, **Maurice FitzGerald** was 2nd baron Offaly. Between 1232 and 1245 he was Justiciar of Ireland. He: founded the Franciscan Friary at Youghal and Dominican Friary at Sligo and took vows as a friar before his death. In: 1250 he was Commissioner of the Treasury and Council of Ireland. In 1235 took part in the subjugation of Connaught. He acquired manors and built castles in Sligo, Banada and Ardree, in Sligo County; at Lough Mask in Mayo County; and Ardrahan and Kilcolgan in Galway County. He was knighted in July 1217. He saw his good reputation damaged by the report that it was he who (ultimately - because the wounded Earl was in his care) contrived the death of Richard (Marshal), Earl of Pembroke in 1234. He is criticized by the King for his proceedings in office, described as "little pleasant, nay, beyond measure harsh, in executing the King's mandates,"

## The Role of Thomas FitzMaurice FitzGerald

**Maurice FitzGerald's** son, **Thomas FitzMaurice**, was made Lord of Connello and is considered the progenitor of the original Earls of Desmond. The area of the Connello is the two blue baronies above the name "Desmond" in red letters on the map above. (The location of the Earls of Desmond was in Limerick County – see map on page 3.) He had a son named **Maurice FitzThomas**, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Desmond who was a builder of castles in Kerry. He held the Manor at Altry which was in the Barony of Clanmaurice – the most northerly red area on the west coast of the above map.. He was known as "**Maurice the Great**". He led the Anglo-Irish movement against the English officials and rule from Westminster. He was pardoned, appointed Justiciar of Ireland, acquired the property of Decies and Desmond in 1312 and of Kerry in 1315, created **Earl of Desmond** in 1329, died in Dublin in 1355, buried at Tralee. As Justiciar, he starved to death his own kinsman, Maurice, Lord of Kerry. in prison for rebellion. He had a son, named **Thomas FitzMaurice FitzThomas** who became the 1<sup>st</sup> Baron of Kerry. Decies is the red area on the southeast coast on the map on the prior page.

In what is now the town of Listowel (in the barony of Clanmaurice), the Listowel castle was built, probably by **Thomas FitzMaurice** to be their stronghold.. Two architectural features of this castle are worthy of note - there is the unusual two turrets joined, a feature shared with Bunratty Castle in County Clare. The other, that of the sculptured head is thought, by some, to represent an ape rather than a person. Credence can be given to this if one believes the legend relating to Maurice's second cousin, Thomas, father of the first Earl of Desmond. The story goes that after the Battle of Callan in 1261 Thomas was cared for by an ape who was a household pet. The Fitzmaurice family began what was to be a long association with Listowel Castle at the end of the 13th Century. The principal family seats were at Ardfert and Lixnaw. Listowel was of tremendous strategic importance to them, since they were constantly feuding both with the neighbors, the



Desmonds and the O' Neills, but also with the Crown Forces. Since Listowel Castle was built on the North bank of the River Feale, where the river could be forded, it provided a stronghold to control the movements of visiting would-be marauders across the Anglo-Irish neighbors. Today, one can take a tour of the remains of this castle.

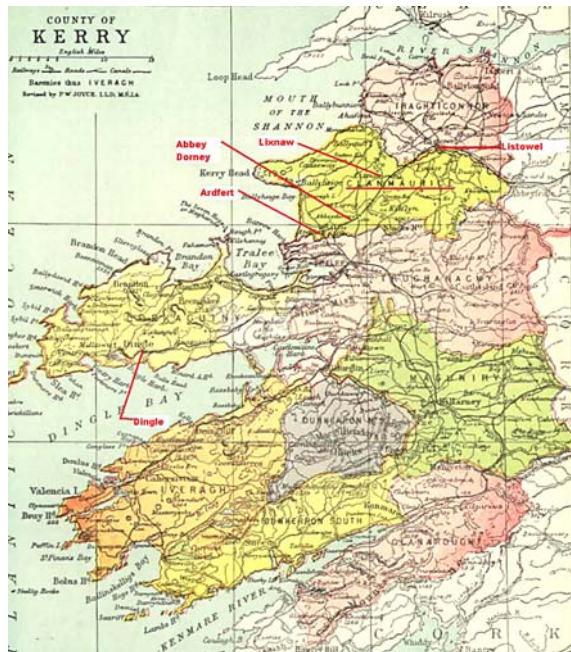
1<sup>st</sup> Baron of Kerry - Thomas FitzMaurice FitzThomas - was born about 1220. Around 1260, Thomas was created Baron of Kerry and Lixnaw. This is said to have made him the Premier Baron of Ireland. He founded the Franciscan Monastery at Ardfert (near Tralee) in A.D. 1253. The Monastery is sometimes called the Grey Franciscan Friary of Ardfert and is sometimes referred to as an Abbey.



**Thomas FitzMaurice FitzThomas** died on the feast of St. Peter and Paul in 1280, at Browry, at the house of his son-in-law (Otho de Lacy). He was interred on the north side of the great altar in the above mentioned Abbey.

Thomas married Grainne, a granddaughter of **Dermot MacMorrogh** (sometimes called Diarmuid MacMurrough), the king of Leinster who brought the Normans to Ireland to assist him in a local war that he would have lost without additional allies. The Normans came, defeated the enemies of MacMurrough, and then conquered most of Ireland for themselves.

Almost everyone named FitzMaurice today is descended from **Thomas FitzMaurice FitzThomas**, the first Baron of Kerry. However, the name FitzMaurice was adopted by some members of the Prendergast family in Mayo. On the other hand, some members of the FitzMaurice family in Kerry assumed the surname MacShane (from Mac Seáin meaning son of Seáin or son of John).



2<sup>nd</sup> Baron of Kerry - Maurice fitzThomas fitzMaurice - His birth date is not known but was probably around 1250. He died on April 14, 1305 at Mayflayth (Molahiffe), Kerry, Ireland. He married Elena, daughter and heiress of William FitzElie, with whom he got Listowel and other lands in Kerry.

3<sup>rd</sup> Baron of Kerry - Sir Nicolas fitzMaurice fitzThomas - Died in A.D. 1324 or 1332 and was buried at the Monastery in Ardfert. Nicolas was knighted at Adair for assisting John, Lord Offaly, to suppress a rising in Munster. He made several grants of land for religious purposes, and built the Leper House at Ardfert, as well as the castles of Portrinanda and Ardfert. He also erected a stone bridge at Lixnaw, and made roads to that place. Ardfert and Lixnaw are both in Clanmaurice as shown on the map on the right.

4<sup>th</sup> Baron of Kerry - Maurice fitzNicholas fitzMaurice - Died in A.D. 1339. Maurice (4th Baron) married Honor, daughter of O'Conor Kerry but had no issue.

The land granted by Henry II to Thomas, (1<sup>st</sup> Baron of Kerry) was taken by conquest from the Killarney branch of the MacCarthy family. As might be expected, the hostility between the two families continued for many years.

In 1325, Maurice FitzMaurice, (4th Baron of Kerry), had a dispute with Diarmaid Óg MacCarthy (son of Cormac Mór MacCarthy) and murdered him upon the bench, before the Judge of Assize at Tralee. For this act, Maurice was tried and attainted by the parliament in Dublin. Maurice probably avoided a sentence of death only because his victim was a Gael. His lands were forfeited, but after his death passed to his brother John FitzMaurice, 5th Baron of Kerry.



5<sup>th</sup> Baron of Kerry - John fitzMaurice fitzNicholas - (Died A.D. 1348 or 1378). Son of Sir Nicholas fitzMaurice fitzThomas 3<sup>rd</sup> Baron of Kerry) Summoned to Parliament by Edward III in 1375. He married Elenor, daughter of **Garrett FitzPierce** of Bally McEquim and had a son named **Gerald (Garrett) FitzMaurice**.

6<sup>th</sup> Baron of Kerry - Maurice fitzJohn fitzMaurice - Died at Lixnaw in A.D. 1398. Interment at Ardfert.

7<sup>th</sup> Baron of Kerry - Sir Patrick FitzMaurice - Son of Maurice FitzMaurice (6<sup>th</sup> Baron). It has been reported that Patrick (7<sup>th</sup> Baron) was the first Baron of Kerry who used "FitzMaurice" as a surname. He was killed in Co. Clare in A.D. 1410

8<sup>th</sup> Baron of Kerry - Thomas FitzMaurice - Died in A. D. 1469 in Dublin. Son of Sir Patrick FitzMaurice (7<sup>th</sup> Baron)

9<sup>th</sup> Baron of Kerry - Edmund FitzMaurice - Died in A. D. 1498 or 1510. Son of Thomas FitzMaurice (8<sup>th</sup> Baron). In 1489, Edmund (9<sup>th</sup> Baron) recovered in the Earl of Desmond's Court Palatine at Dingle, lands granted to his ancestor by King John. Dingle is the most westerly red barony shown on the page 5 map.

10<sup>th</sup> Baron of Kerry - Edmund FitzMaurice - Died in A.D. 1543 Son of Edmund FitzMaurice (9<sup>th</sup> Baron). He was the Baron of Kerry in 1535 when Henry VIII of England left the Catholic Church, organized his own church, and initiated the persecution of Catholics that continued for more than 300 years.

11<sup>th</sup> Baron of Kerry - Edmund FitzMaurice – Died in 1541 - 1<sup>st</sup> son of Edmund FitzMaurice (10<sup>th</sup> Baron). In 1537, Edmund (11<sup>th</sup> Baron) was created by Henry VIII Baron of Odorney and Viscount Kilmaule, Co. Kerry, and had a grant of several abbeys to him and his male issues. Odorney is in Clanmaurice – see map on page 5.

12<sup>th</sup> Baron of Kerry - Patrick FitzMaurice - Died in A.D. 1547. He was 2<sup>nd</sup> son of Edmund FitzMaurice (10<sup>th</sup> Baron). He died of a "cold" caught while hunting.

13<sup>th</sup> Baron of Kerry - Thomas FitzMaurice - Son of Patrick FitzMaurice (12<sup>th</sup> Baron) Being a minor, Thomas (13<sup>th</sup> Baron) was granted in ward to the 14<sup>th</sup> Earl of Desmond. Thomas (13<sup>th</sup> Baron) died under age and unmarried at the Castle of Listowel, Co. Kerry, in 1549, and was succeeded by his brother Edmund (14<sup>th</sup> Baron).

14<sup>th</sup> Baron of Kerry - Edmund FitzMaurice - Son of Patrick FitzMaurice (12<sup>th</sup> Baron) Edmund (14<sup>th</sup> Baron) was also in ward to the 14<sup>th</sup> Earl of Desmond, but died unmarried at the Castle of Beale, a month after his brother's death in 1549

15<sup>th</sup> Baron of Kerry - Gerald FitzMaurice - Son of Edmund FitzMaurice (10<sup>th</sup> Baron) Gerald (15<sup>th</sup> Baron) married Julia, daughter of Cormac Óg MacCarthy (Chieftain of Muskerry), by whom he left no issue. Gerald (15<sup>th</sup> Baron) was killed in Desmond a month after his marriage. He was buried at Ardfert, 1 August 1550.



16<sup>th</sup> Baron of Kerry - Thomas FitzMaurice - Born A.D. 1502. Died 16 December 1590 at Lixnaw. As the fourth son of Edmund (10<sup>th</sup> Baron) and Úna (daughter of Teige Mac Mahon), Thomas (16<sup>th</sup> Baron) could not reasonably expect to inherit the title.

Thomas was trained as a soldier at Milan in Italy and served many years under the Emperors of Germany. When Gerald (15<sup>th</sup> Baron) died, the whereabouts of Thomas (16<sup>th</sup> Baron) were unknown and another person temporarily assumed the title and estates of the Lord of Kerry. Then, Joan Harman, the old childhood nurse of Thomas, set off to find him. She went first to France and then to Italy. She finally found him at the court of the Duke of Milan. Joan died not long after delivering her message.

Thomas (16th Baron) returned to Ireland where he apparently had no trouble in claiming his title and estate..

Thomas is said to have revolted against Queen Elizabeth

17<sup>th</sup> Baron of Kerry - Patrick FitzMaurice - (Born 1541 or 1555; died: 12 August 1600 in Downloagh.) Patrick (17th Baron) was brought up at the court of Elizabeth I in England but returned to Ireland after his succession. He remained loyal to Ireland and fought against the Tudor English invaders.

18<sup>th</sup> Baron of Kerry - Thomas FitzMaurice - Born: 1574. Died: 3 June 1630 at Drogheda. Interment at Cashel Cathedral. Thomas (18th Baron) revolted against James I of England but later submitted and surrendered his estate, whereupon the King, by patent 16 July 1604, granted him a free pardon and restored his estates. During the revolt, in 1600, after a siege of three weeks, an English force captured the FitzMaurice castle in Listowel, Co. Kerry. Soon thereafter, Patrick, the five-year-old son of the 18th Baron, was captured and taken to England where he was raised in the English church. This abduction had two significant consequences:

1. Young Patrick was a useful hostage who made unlikely another revolt by his father, the 18th Baron of Kerry.
2. At age five, Patrick was young enough so that he might be transformed into a loyal Englishman if kept in England until reaching adulthood. Patrick would then be acceptable to the English government as the next Baron of Kerry.

19<sup>th</sup> Baron of Kerry - Patrick FitzMaurice - Born at Lixnaw, 1595; died at St. Gile's in the Fields, England, Jan. 1660.

The first fifteen **FitzMaurice** Barons of Kerry were able to rule with little regard to what was happening in England. During the reign of **Elizabeth I**, however, the English effort to destroy Catholicism reached Kerry. The 16th, 17th, and 18th Barons (Thomas, Patrick, and Thomas) all fought against the English and in the defense of Ireland, the FitzMaurice family, and their freedom to remain Catholics.

After becoming the 19th Baron of Kerry in 1630, Patrick apparently turned traitor and sold out to the English in order to retain title to the FitzMaurice estates (100,000 acres granted by Henry II). Patrick (19th Baron) took his seat in Parliament 14 July 1634 but fled to England upon the start of the revolt in 1641. There were several lawsuits in which Patrick's father, Thomas (18th Baron), tried unsuccessfully to disinherit his son.

Patrick (19th Baron) was  
 the first Baron of Kerry to die outside Ireland,  
 the first Baron of Kerry to desert his country in time of war,  
 the first Baron of Kerry to become an absentee landowner, and  
 the first Baron of Kerry to abandon the religion of his ancestors and join the church of Henry VIII.

Patrick (19<sup>th</sup> Baron) was Baron of Kerry while Oliver Cromwell was slaughtering, and selling into slavery, the Catholic people of Ireland. Since Patrick survived that period, he could not have been an active opponent of Cromwell while living in London.

For many generations, the Irish would not name their sons, Patrick.

### Role of William FitzGerald

Gerald and Nesta's son, **William FitzGerald** had two sons that were also heavily involved in the conquest of Ireland. They were:

**Raymond FitzWilliam** le Gros de Carew led one of the expeditions for Strongbow and laid claim to most of County Cork.

**Griffin Fitzwilliam** de Carew supposedly killed Tiernan O'Rourke and became Baron of Knocktoper, Kilkenny, Ireland

### Role of Raymond FitzWilliam le Gros de Carew

**Raymond FitzWilliam** got the name of "**Raymond le Gros**," from his great size and strength; he was one of the most valiant of the Anglo-Norman commanders. He was married to **Basilia de Clare**, sister of **Strongbow**; held the office of standard bearer of Leinster; and was for some time chief Governor of Ireland. Raymond died about A.D. 1184, and was buried in the Abbey of Molana, on the island of Darinis, on the river Blackwater, in the bay of Youghal. Youghal is present today on the southeast coast of Ireland close to Waterford.

**Raymond FitzWilliam le Gros** led the 4<sup>th</sup> landing in Ireland on May 1, 1170. He landed at Baginbun, near Waterford City, with a small force of about 100 setting about to secure a landing point for the arrival of **Strongbow**, who would lead the 5<sup>th</sup> landing party. At Baginbun, Raymond was said to have hastily built his defenses and later resisted an attack from a larger Norse-Irish army sent out from Waterford.

Strongbow arrived around the 23rd of August 1170, with a force of about 1,000. The landing occurred at a point very near to Waterford called 'the Passage' (Passage East). The combined armies of **Strongbow** and **Raymond le Gros** advanced toward the walled city of Waterford. Two attacks on the city were repulsed before the Norman-Welsh force found a weak spot in the walls, allowing them to enter and capture the town. Forces under **Dermot MacMurrough**, **Robert FitzStephen** and **Maurice FitzGerald** arrived on the 25th of August after the fall of the city.

The next target for the Norman armies in Leinster was the strategic political and trade centre at Dublin. Although many of Ruairi's forces had been doing battle fighting against an O'Brien rebellion in Munster, the High King was already amassing a large army toward Dublin. The Norman-Welsh armies managed to reach the southern walls of Dublin and muster an assault on the town. Even though negotiations had already begun between the Norsemen of Dublin and the combined Strongbow/MacMurrough forces, **Raymond FitzWilliam le Gros** and **Milo de Cogan** burst into the city from different directions and routed the Ostmen of Dublin. Asculf MacTorkil, the Norse king of Dublin was forced to flee with his remaining forces by ship.

**Giraldus Cambrensis** claimed that Raymond did not have "issue"; however, some records say that he had a son, Harmon le Gros and his descendants took the name of "le Gros," or "le Gras," afterwards changed to Grace from the which the Graces sprang eventually to become the founder of W. R. Grace and Company.

## Role of Griffin Fitzwilliam de Carew

The 1st Baron of Knocktopher was said to be **Griffin FitzWilliam**, brother of **Raymond le Gros**, both sons of **William FitzGerald** (of Carew Castle, Pembroke, Wales). **Griffin FitzWilliam** was likely given the barony of Knocktopher, which lay north of Miles FitzDavid's barony of Iverk. See map of County Kilkenny on the right. Griffin had four sons, Gilbert, Matthew, Raymond and Griffin.



**Gilbert FitzGriffin** is cited as the 2nd Baron of Knocktopher, likely the eldest (surviving) son of Griffin, and the first owner of Knocktopher manor of whom there is certainty. Griffin was sheriff of Dungarvan, where he and Thomas FitzAnthony seem to have worked together in a high handed way, for between them they relieved the Bishop of Waterford of his property at Lismore, Ardmore, and Ardfinan. They parceled out a great deal of land among their friends -- not forgetting themselves. Dungarvan, Lismore, and Ardmore can be seen on the map below. Gilbert died about 1203/4.

**Matthew FitzGriffin** was the 3rd Baron of Knocktopher, probably following the death of his brother Gilbert. He was described as a great warrior and is possibly the "Matthew fitz Griffin, of Leinster, who built a castle at Knocktopher about 1200." He stood by William Marshal, took part in all the wars of the time, and got his share of the spoils of Connacht. Matthew was seneschal (major domo) of Munster before Thomas FitzAnthony. He was a great benefactor of Kells Abbey, and his gifts to it give some idea of the extent of his property, for they included Finnach, in the diocese of Lismore, Waterford; Tullylease, in the diocese of Cloyne, Cork; Kellistown in Carlow, and a number of livings in Kilkenny. Documents describe Matthew as the lord of the manor of Carrick, or Carrick Mac Griffin, which was later to become the town of Carrick-on-Suir.



Knocktopher remained the property of the family for several generations.

## Role of Other Descendants

**Lord William de Carew** was given the barony of Idrone in County Carlow by his uncle Raymond le gros. His sons, **Nicholas de Carew** and **John de Carew** became barons of Idrone. See map on page 5 for location.

**Robert Fitzwilliam de Carew** became one of the 15 most important men in Ireland in 1235. It is believed that he was the son of **Otho de Carew**. His uncle is also **Raymond le gros**.