WILLIAM BATHE, S.J., 1564-1614

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Seán P. Ó Mathúna

William Bathe, S.J., 1564-1614
A pioneer in linguistics

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A PIONEER IN LINGUISTICS

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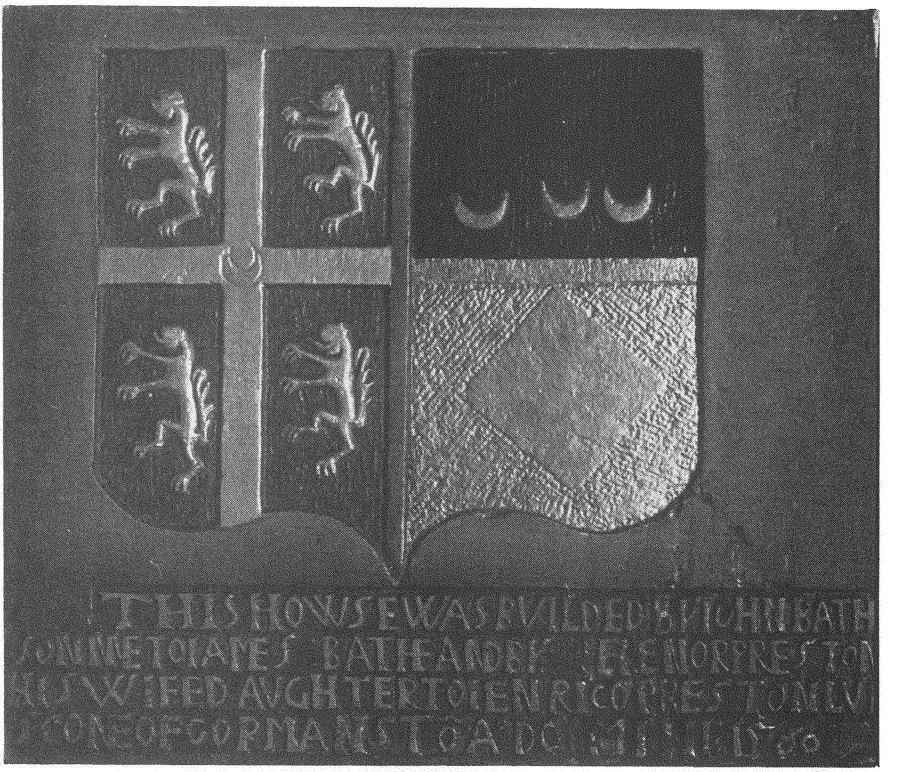

Foundation stone of Drumcondra Castle.
Photograph by M.J. Foley

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This book was first published in Irish in 1981 by An Gúm, the publications branch of the Department of Education. The original title was *An tAthair William Bathe, C.Í.*, 1564-1614: *Ceannródaí sa Teangeolaíocht* and all rights were ceded to the Irish Government. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Minister for Education for permission to issue an English translation and to Caoimhín Ó Marcaigh, Senior Editor. I acknowledge the receipt of generous financial assistance from the National University of Ireland and from the Academic Publications and Grants Committee of University College, Dublin.

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S. Ó Mathúna
Dublin, November 1985.

PREFACE

A hundred years have passed since Fr. Edmund Hogan, S.J. wrote *Ibernia Ignatiana.* He had scrutinised Jesuit archives at home and abroad, and especially at the Rome headquarters, before compiling this chronological account of Irish members of his order up to 1608. From the occasional references to William Bathe it was clear that this son of an Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer was a man of very varied interests indeed. Thirty years later Rev. Professor Timothy Corcoran traced the detailed history of such editions of *Ianua Linguarum* as were then known to exist in *Studies in the History of Classical Teaching:* he translated portion of the preface into English. He concentrated on demonstrating the work's superiority over *Janua Linguarum Reserata* which Comenius wrote later in the seventeenth century.

It would have been difficult to anticipate in the early years of this century that Latin would by now have reached such a lowly position on the school curriculum that the relative merits of these two books are largely irrelevant. There was then no public consciousness of the significance of the quantitative analysis of the spoken word with a view to compiling suitable basic word lists. It is not surprising, therefore, that earlier writers should have glossed over many interesting facets of Bathe's work.

Linguists and educators are for the most part unaware of this Jesuit's *prooemium* and method. Scholars who know of the sterling efforts made by Comenius to provide a graded series of Latin primers forget that the Irishman used the same bilingual approach some twenty years earlier. Bathe was fully conscious of the difference between the indirect and direct methods of language teaching and believed that his own bilingual arrangement avoided the weaknesses of both systems. Even more important was his advocacy of an objective analysis of speech with a view to the identification of necessary and useful lexis.

The author's own extended preface best illustrates his linguistic theory. Consequently his complete *prooemium* is translated in Chapter 4. The different editions of *Ianua Linguarum* are discussed at length in Chapter 3, with particular reference to the changes introduced to accommodate an evolving

methodology.

Many official Jesuit publications of the period culminating in *Ratio atque Institutio Studiorum Societatis Jesu* sought to establish a really efficient method of teaching second language, but Bathe was little influenced by any of these. He adopted a method used by his maternal ancestors from the beginning of the previous century to learn Irish. The teaching of language from the renaissance period onwards is discussed at some length in Chapter 5 and Bathe's work is viewed within this broad perspective. His musical and religious writings are examined briefly in Chapter 6. A specialist competence in musicology would be necessary to communicate the full implications of Bathe's attempt to advance the cause of musical education. All that can be said with certainty here is that the Irishman's lifelong concern for efficient methodology extended to music and song.

Apart from his written works Bathe's personal and family backgrounds merit careful study. The man himself cannot be fully understood in isolation from the major political and religious questions of the day. He was forced to leave Oxford without graduating because of religious pressures. Towards the end of his life he devoted himself to personal sanctity and the direction of spiritual exercises to the virtual exclusion of everything else. In the interim, however, he acted as intermediary for the viceroy and spent a period at the court of Elizabeth I: he engaged in important diplomacy on the continent, particularly in connection with the Nine Years War. The accounts of his family background and of his own career, therefore, are central to a full assessment of his work and are discussed in the opening chapters.

In examining William Bathe's personal career, and particularly for the period subsequent to 1608, I was fortunate to be allowed access to the transcripts made by the late Fr. John C. MacErlean from his order's international archives. I am pleased to acknowledge my indebtedness in this respect to Rev. Dr. Fergal McGrath, S.J. and Rev. Dr. Thomas J. Morrisey, S.J. I am particularly grateful to Fr. Seán Ó Catháin, S.J., Professor Emeritus, for many invaluable suggestions.

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I thank the Rev. Dean D.G.A. Clarke who arranged private facilities for me to examine the copy of *Ianua Linguarum* in the Church of Ireland Library in Cashel and Fr. J. Pollock, I.C., for permission to photograph the foundation stone of Drumcondra Castle. I deeply appreciate the expertise provided by Michael Foley, Director of the Audio Visual Centre, University College Dublin.

CHAPTER 1
WILLIAM BATHE'S ANCESTRAL BACKGROUND

St. Joseph's Monastery, Grace Park Road, Dublin stands on the site of Drumcondra Castle. During a major reconstruction in the last century part of the original structure was incorporated in the new building. A stone slab inset in a wall of the inner hallway bears the Bathe and Preston coats of arms and the following inscription:

> This Howse was builded by John Bathe, Sonne to James Bathe and by Elenor Preston his wife, daughter to Jenrico Preston, L. Viscone of Gormanston. Anno Domini 1560.

The slab was the castle's foundation stone: the couple were the parents of William Bathe.

Already by 1560 John Bathe was fired with ambition. Not only did he set about building an elegant home, he also registered as a student of the Middle Temple in London.[1] Henry VIII was convinced that the success of his policies in Ireland depended on the availability of a cadre of lawyers well versed in the English legal system. Accordingly he had decreed that any person who wished to practise at the Irish Bar should first be educated at one of the London Inns of Court.[2]

Young Bathe's enrolment in a law course was no surprise. He belonged to a small band of wealthy landowners who engaged simultaneously in legal and administrative careers. He was extremely anxious to advance his position. This is evident from the fine dwelling which he provided for his family on the outskirts of the city. The high surrounding walls were a sensible precaution against the occasional foray from 'the Irish of the mountains'.[3] By the time the castle was complete it was reckoned to be among the four finest residences in all Dublin.[4]

He showed remarkable ingenuity in extending his land holdings and procuring advancement to a series of prestigious administrative offices[5] while adhering to his own religious beliefs during a period of severe persecution. One of the strange paradoxes of the sixteenth century concerns the manner

in which certain Old English families amassed vast tracts of fertile land for very little financial outlay following the dissolution of the monasteries[6], and yet their offspring were in the forefront of the counter-reformation movement within a generation or two.

While this group displayed astute opportunism, it would be an oversimplification to imply that they owed their emergence as a powerful force completely to the suppression of religious foundations. By the middle of the sixteenth century William Bathe's ancestors and their peers were already widely respected within the Pale. For the most part they were wealthy land holders who also engaged in politics and in the law. Yet they were not a homogeneous class, but were heirs to a rich and varied cultural tradition. If we are later to evaluate the career and writings of this extraordinary Jesuit, it will be necessary first to investigate his ancestral tradition.

The Bathe Family

The Bathes[7] were originally an Anglo-Norman family who crossed to England during the reign of Henry II.[8] One branch settled in Devon where they gained possession of extensive farmlands. Younger sons engaged in the law. The most famous of these was Henry Bathe who was appointed Justice of Common Pleas in 1238. At this stage he enjoyed the patronage of Henry III and was rapidly promoted to the position of Justice - Itinerant for the counties of Hertfordshire, Surrey, Essex, Middlesex, Kent, Berkshire and Lincolnshire. By 1250 he enjoyed a salary of £100 a year in addition to countless estates. His ambitions must have known no bounds, however, for soon the king feared he was growing too powerful. He was accused of treason and incitement to sedition.[9] Both the trial and the ensuing political repercussions were among the most celebrated in English legal history. Henry Bathe survived his trial.

There are some references to the family in contemporary academic documents. One Matthew Bathe is listed as a scholar of *Aristotle Hall,* Oxford in 1452.[10] Henry Bathe was principal of *University Hall* around the same period[11] when, it may be assumed, principals were men of some considerable standing. A memorandum dated 19 February, 1453, confirms that Henry Bathe before departing for Ireland, had found sureties[12] who guaranteed to pay the rent for *University Hall* for a period of five years.

By then, however, the Bathes had been in Ireland for almost 300 years: the first arrived with Strongbow. For the most part they settled as extensive landowners in counties Dublin, Meath and Louth. They participated also in

the business life and municipal administration of Dublin[13] and Drogheda. Several members were mayors of Drogheda.[14]

The registered family pedigree shows that Johannes de Bathe was Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1350. A note in a side margin has the pertinent message: *Dominus erat Maneriorum de Rathfagh in Comitatu Midensi et de Drumcondragh, Comitatu Dublinii.*[15] John Bathe's mayoralty in 1350 and the family's residence in Drumcondra are independently vouched for in the *Calendar of Christ Church Deeds.*[16] This establishes beyond doubt that the Bathes had resided in that neighbourhood for at least 200 years prior to the erection of Drumcondra Castle in 1560.[17]

John de Bathe, Lord Mayor, received his lease from Holy Trinity Monastery[18] in the fourteenth century. The lease to James Bathe in 1550 was from the Dean and Chapter of Christ Church Cathedral. While the Chief Baron of the Exchequer and his family profited handsomely from the redistribution of monastic lands, as far as this particular estate is concerned the leasing reflects a transfer of overlordship from the monks to the chapter of the cathedral.

A closely knit community

The old English were a closely knit community. In general their sons married the daughters of other wealthy landowners of the Pale, with an occasional marriage to the daughters of Dublin and Drogheda merchants.[19] Elder sons remained on the estates, while administrative positions in Dublin were much cherished for younger sons. Until the last quarter of the sixteenth century the great majority of judicial and higher executive vacancies were filled by men from this background.[20] At this stage as a preparation for these positions quite a number of them attended the London Inns of Court.

The Bathe family received more than their due share of such advancement. James Bathe, Chief Baron, and his son John, Chancellor of the Exchequer were the most prominent of these. Since they were the grandfather and father of William Bathe, they are central to this study and we will treat their careers in greater detail later in this chapter. Several other members, however, held important offices. Thomas Bathe was Chief Baron of the Exchequer in 1475.[21] In 1451 Robert Bathe was removed from the position of Sheriff of Dublin because of undischarged debts.[22] John Bathe of Athcarne was appointed Recorder of Drogheda in 1547 [23] and later became Solicitor General and Justice of the Common Bench.[24] William Bathe (Athcarne) was similarly rewarded in 1599. [25] At the beginning of the seventeenth century

Henry Bathe held the less elevated office of Constable of Clane. [26] This list is not exhaustive.

Burnells of Balgriffen : Link with Hugh O'Neill

Elizabeth Burnell, daughter of John Burnell of Balgriffen, was William Bathe's paternal grandmother.[27]In 1500 Henry VII had 'committed the whole of County Dublin during his pleasure' to the care of Robert Burnell, Balgriffen.[28] Shortly after this date a member of the family settled in Castleknock. This branch flourished. One member was chosen to represent Drogheda in the Reformation Parliament of 1560. Henry Burnell sat for County Dublin in Perrot's Parliament, 1585-86. The family still enjoyed great influence at the century's close.[29]

The branch which remained in the ancestral seat was less fortunate. John Burnell succeeded to his father's estate. He was one of Silken Thomas' most enthusiastic supporters in the hapless rising of 1534 and remained steadfastly loyal.[30] He was captured by Brabazon, dispatched to England and duly hanged.[31] Ironically Jenico Preston, Viscount Gormanston, was among those who gave stout support to Lord Deputy Skeffington against Burnell. Preston was Burnell's nephew as well as the brother-in-law of Silken Thomas.[32] He was also William Bathe's grandfather on the distaff side.

In view of their close relationship to both the Burnell and Preston families, it is not surprising that the Bathes of Drumcondra should figure prominently in the subsequent history of Balgriffen estate. Title at first passed to Conn Bacach O'Neill and his heirs in 1545. The complications of title had a significant bearing on subsequent political events: in the last decade of the century Sir William Warren, who by now had married Chancellor Bathe's widow, acted as an unlikely intermediary between Hugh O'Neill and government forces during the Nine Years War. William Bathe was involved in diplomatic missions to the Spanish Court on O'Neill's behalf during the early stages of those hostilities. Moreover O'Neill's emissary, Captain Hugh Mostian sought out the newly ordained Jesuit soon after the crushing defeat at Kinsale.[33] The Bathe and O'Neill connection, therefore, deserves closer consideration.

Garret More, Earl of Kildare, was an astute leader who, by a series of well chosen marriages with Irish and Old English families, had managed to expand his political influence. His five daughters were married to Mac Carthy Reagh of Carbery, O'Carroll of Offaly, Ulick Burke of Clanrickard, Fleming, Baron of Slane and Sir Piers Butler who deputised temporarily for the

Earl of Ormond.[34] When restoring Garret More as Lord Deputy in 1499, Henry VII arranged for him to marry Elizabeth St. John, a close relative of his own. Earlier, in 1480, Garret's sister Eleanor had married Conn O'Neill. Conn Bacach was a son of this union and in 1519 succeeded to the title *The O'Neill*.

More than twenty years later, when the insurrection of Silken Thomas had been suppressed, Conn Bacach decided to avail of Henry VIII's offer of 'surrender and regrant'. He submitted in December 1541, crossed to England and swore allegiance.[35] He was created Earl of Tyrone at a ceremony in Greenwich in 1542. Three years later Henry VIII made him a grant of the late John Burnell's attainted estate.[36]

O'Neill experienced some difficulty, apparently, in securing possession of these lands because he petitioned Elizabeth for the lease soon after her accession.[37] Livery of the Balgriffen holding was passed to Hugh O'Neill in 1567.[38]There is no mention of Tyrone in the transcript of John Bathe's will, made in 1585, although he included two stipulations concerning Balgriffen.[39] Neither was there mention of O'Neill in the documents which subsequently gave title to William Bathe and his brother John.[40] When O'Neill's estates were estreated after the Flight of the Earls, John Bathe was in some doubt about his own title to Balgriffen and he petitioned the Privy Council about the matter. The Lord Deputy and Council supported his claim to 'a parcel of land within five miles of this city called Balgriffin which the said Bathe's father long since purchased of the late Earl of Tyrone'.[41] Patent of the entire estate was passed to John Bathe in 1617, but the family was to forfeit all these lands a generation later.

Prestons of Gormanston

His mother's family took their surname from Preston in Lancashire where they were prominent merchants at the close of the thirteenth century. The first members to come to Ireland settled in the neighbourhood of Drogheda in 1307.[42] They quickly amassed huge estates and by the sixteenth century they were among the most extensive landowners in all the Pale. [43] From an early date they engaged in the export of wheat to England, in the import of wine from Bordeaux and in its re-export.

Many of the Prestons pursued legal careers. Roger Preston arrived from England in 1326 and was appointed Chief Justice of Common Pleas the following year.[44] His son Sir Robert Preston was Chief Justice of the Court of the Common Bench before his appointment as Chief Baron of the Exchequer

and Keeper of the Great Seal. He was the first Baron Gormanston. His son Christopher was responsible for the compilation of the *Gormanston Register* in 1397/98. This manuscript provides very accurate evidence of the family's involvement in public affairs in Ireland during the fourteenth century.

Their advancement in public administration was even more pronounced during the second half of the following century. Sir Robert Preston was created Viscount Gormanston in 1478[45] and in the same year was apointed Deputy in Ireland by the Duke of York.[46] The second Viscount succeeded to the title in 1503 and was an influential member of the Council in Ireland. In 1515 he was appointed Lord Justice of Ireland by Henry VIII. This marked the zenith of Preston prestige in Ireland.

His son Jenico became the third Viscount Gormanston in 1532. His support for Skeffington in 1534 against his own kinsmen has already been discussed. His political loyalty, therefore, was beyond question but the new Henrician religious policies caused a more severe crisis of conscience for him than was the case for most of his peers. It is interesting that while he was a member of the Irish Privy Council in 1539, his name was missing from the list by 1547.[47] Clearly he was uncompromising where religious matters were concerned. For the next hundred years the house of Gormanston was to prove independent and unyielding.

The Prestons, of course, still enjoyed high social standing. Viscount Gormanston was listed as tenth lord at the Elizabethan Parliament. His son Christopher, fourth Viscount, was named as ninth lord at Perrot's Parliament.[48] He manifested the same doughty independence as his father: he refused to sign the proclamation against the Earl of Desmond in 1574.[49] His sister Catherine offered shelter to the Archbishop of Cashel in 1584 when he was on the run.[50] Thirty years later Viscount Gormanston took an active role in organising the Catholic gentry against the newly arrived Court party in the Parliament of 1613-1615.[51] Thomas Preston, a younger son of the fourth Viscount, arrived off Wexford in September 1642 with a considerable supply of arms and ammunition for the Irish Confederate forces and took a leading part in the fighting. He sided in the main with the Anglo-Irish rather than the Old-Irish party.

Kildare Background

William Bathe's maternal grandmother was Catherine Fitzgerald. She was the daughter of Garret Oge, ninth Earl of Kildare and Elizabeth Zouche.[52] The house of Kildare had declined from enjoying the most influ-

ence of any family in Ireland to a position of almost insignificance in the half century prior to Bathe's birth, and especially since 1534. The Kildare background, however, was subsequently to exercise a great influence on him. Without any doubt his interest in the harp sprang from that source.

By the early fifteenth century the Fitzgerald earldoms of Kildare and Desmond, by reason of frequent marriages with Gaelic-Irish families and through placing their children with Irish foster-parents[53], had thoroughly assimilated the native way of life and had merited the description *Hibernis hiberniores*. Following his defeat of Sir John Butler, who supported Lancastrian interests at the Battle of Piltown in 1462, Thomas Earl of Desmond was appointed Chief Governor of Ireland. Because of the marriage connections already mentioned his authority was readily accepted outside the Pale by the Irish and Old English alike.[54] The noblemen and officials of the Pale, however, did not share the same enthusiasm for him and the Earl of Worcester was sent from England to replace him. Desmond was beheaded in 1468. This caused such widespread resentment among Fitzgerald's followers that Worcester had to be recalled and he too was executed.

Garret More was named Lord Deputy in 1478. Between then and 1513, despite his espousal of the house of York in the civil war and his support for the Yorkist Pretender, Lambert Simnel, the eighth Earl was the most powerful man in Ireland. Henry VII was not sufficiently secure to remove him from office and he granted him an official pardon.[55] When Perkin Warbeck came to pursue his claim in 1491, Garret More did not offer him the same measure of overt support as did Desmond and several of his kinsmen: nevertheless he was suspected of implication in a plot to substitute Warbeck for Henry VII. Temporarily he fell from grace and in 1494 Sir Edward Poynings was sent to replace him. Kildare, who had been dispatched as prisoner to London, was voted guilty of treason at Poynings Parliament. The policy adopted by Poynings proved such a heavy drain on revenue, however, that the king decided to pardon Garret More once again and to send him back as Lord Deputy. This time, however, Henry VII took the precaution of arranging for his own cousin to marry Kildare and he also insisted that the latter's eldest son should be educated at court. Nobody was to challenge the Earl's authority in Ireland between then and his death in 1513.

Garret Oge, ninth Earl of Kildare, succeeded his father as Lord Deputy. By now, however, Henry VIII was king. He took an active interest in Irish affairs and summoned Garret Oge to London on several occasions. By 1533 the Butlers of Ormond, old adversaries of the Fitzgeralds, had new influence

at court in the person of Anne Boleyn.[56] When Garret Oge was called to London in 1534 to defend himself against charges levelled at him, there was a strong suspicion that he might never return. He took the precaution of naming his eldest son Thomas, Lord Offaly, his deputy during his absence.[57]

A false rumour spread that Garret Oge had been executed in London.[58] Silken Thomas declared before the assembled Council at St. Mary's Abbey that he was now the king's enemy. Several of his Irish and Old English associates rose with him in support. At first the effort looked promising. He sought military aid from Catholic powers on the continent on the ground that he was opposing Henry's new religious policies. Some of the savage atrocities carried out in his name, however, called his own motives into question.[59]

Within two years the rising was ruthlessly crushed by Sir William Skeffington. Silken Thomas and his five uncles were dispatched to London. All six were hanged in February 1537. The glory of the house of Kildare had all but vanished. A younger son of Garret Oge and Lady Elizabeth Grey escaped to Donegal with his aunt Eleanor Fitzgerald[60] who had married Manus O'Donnell. From there he fled to France.[61] Later he returned as the eleventh Earl of Kildare. Fifty years on he barely escaped the fate of his half brother and uncles. He was imprisoned in London when suspected of implication in the Baltinglass conspiracy and died in the Tower in 1585.[62]It was to him that William Bathe had dedicated his first book the previous year.

James Bathe, Chief Baron of the Exchequer

If the fortunes of William Bathe's maternal ancestors had taken a turn for the worse in the decades before his birth, his paternal grandfather's star was definitely in the ascendant. He profited to a considerable degree from the re-distribution of monastic estates. He put his timely promotion to high administrative office to personal advantage and acquired large tracts of land for a minimal financial outlay.

He received his legal training in London, having registered in Gray's Inn in 1527.[63] When his first wife, Marjerie Ballard from Drogheda, died in the 1530's, he married Elizabeth Burnell, the daughter of John Burnell of Balgriffen and herself the widow of Robert Barnewall.[64] The couple lived in Drimnagh Castle until Edward Barnewall came of age. Their son John, the future Attorney General and Chancellor was born in Drimnagh.[65] The family transferred to Drumcondra around 1553.[66]

James Bathe was politically conscious from an early age. At first he seems to have aligned himself with Kildare interests. In a letter to Cardinal

Wolsey in 1525 Robert Cowley warned[67]:

> One Bath, of Ireland, has made a book to present to you, feigning it to be for the reformation of Ireland, but the effect is but to drive the king to extremity to send home my Lord of Kildare with authority. He has no more experience of the land than I have of Italy. He deserves to be a little touched for his presumption.

Apart from his link with John Burnell, he had close associations with several of the gentry who sided openly with Silken Thomas in the rebellion. His political opponents were not slow in questioning his loyalty. In the summer of 1538 Walter Cowley advised Thomas Cromwell against Bathe's advancement to even a minor administrative post on the grounds that his behaviour was 'disagreant to the dueti of a trew subject'.[68] George Brown, Archbishop of Dublin, in a bitter castigation of Lord Deputy Grey to Essex, cast serious doubt on the quality of advice proffered by Bathe and his associates.[69]

Bathe, however, was not without powerful support. Thomas St. Lawrence of Howth was a staunch ally and introduced him to Grey. The Lord Deputy was greatly impressed and shortly before his own fall from grace he sent Bathe to London where the latter prepared a memorandum for Cromwell on dissensions among members of the government in Ireland.[70] James Bathe returned to Ireland in 1540 as Chief Baron of the Exchequer. In addition to financial security his position brought him the prestige and influence which went with membership of the Irish Privy Council.[71]

On appointment he was paid £40 per annum: this was the salary level for the second highest tier of administrative officers. [72] Throughout his long career he showed great flexibility in adapting to changing political moods. With the recall of Grey he joined forces with his erstwhile enemies. In 1546 Walter Cowley, by now Solicitor General, wrote to the Privy Council in London on the origin of the dissent between St. Leger and the Earl of Ormond: in a postscript he mentioned the Chief Baron's zeal in advising Ormond 'to recant and submit himself to the Lord Deputy'.[73] The following year he was re-appointed under Edward VI at the enhanced salary of £45.

He happened to be in London for the accession of Philip and Mary.[74] He experienced no difficulty in coping with the new situation and fresh patents were passed to him in 1558. [75] There were several allegations during this reign that he was lax in collecting rent and revenue.[76] Nevertheless Elizabeth was happy to renew his appointment and to confirm his membership of the Irish Privy Council.[77] The new queen also had occasion to complain to Sussex about his tardiness in accounting for public revenue: 'Baron Bathe shall do

well to accompt before the Commissioners for all such rents as have come to his charge'.[78] Within three years, however, his salary was increased to £67.10s. per annum.[79] In 1564 he was appointed by the queen to a commission with the remit 'to visit, reform, and redress, in all places all errors, heresies and schisms spiritual and ecclesiastical'. In short James Bathe was an astute and complex survivor.

Commissions

In addition to his fiscal duties he acted as a member of several commissions during the reigns of Edward VI and of Philip and Mary. From his own point of view the most important of these were charged with the re-allocation of confiscated ecclesiastical estates: proposals to suppress the monasteries themselves had been passed before Bathe's first appointment to public office.

The Act of Supremacy had been passed without great opposition in the Reformation Parliament of Henry VIII (1536-1537). During the second session of this parliament the Monasteries Bill was introduced. This provided for the dissolution of certain religious houses, without a preliminary royal visitation as was the case in England.[80] While the latter stages of this parliament witnessed stubborn independence and dissent from lay members it would be wrong to conclude that this opposition was based solely on religious considerations.[81] They realised full well that dissolution would result in the loss of lucrative stewardships for many of themselves.[82] The spiritual lords in the Upper House did not offer any serious resistance to Henry's religious legislation. The proctors of the lower clergy had a far keener appreciation of the long-term implications of these measures and they made a vigorous stand against them. As a result of this opposition a resolution was passed at the final session which henceforth excluded the proctors from parliament.[83]

Henry VIII's plan to press ahead with the dissolution of the monasteries was based in part on the desire to secure some much needed revenue although in fact neither he nor his successors acquired significant wealth from the move. He realised, moreover, that the regular clergy offered a formidable threat to his proposals.[84] The local ordinaries of the Pale, who had control of the secular clergy, were quite prepared to humour his whims. The religious houses on the other hand were independent of this local authority. Ultimately they were subject to superiors who in many instances lived in Rome. These were far more likely to hold out for papal supremacy. In the event they led the fight against the reformation measures.

A small number of monasteries were suppressed in 1538 and 1539.[85] Lord Deputy Grey showed no great enthusiasm to hasten the procedure, though there were rumours that he made ample provision for himself.[86] He requested that certain of the monasteries should be exempted, but to no avail. The king was seriously dissatisfied with progress and early in 1539 strict instructions were sent to Grey to implement the proposals forthwith. William Brabazon, John Alen, George Brown, Robert Cowley and Thomas Cusack were appointed to a commission in February of that year and charged to seek out:

> Any notable images or relics to which simple people .... are wont to assemble superstitiously and as vagrants to walk and roam in pilgrimage, or else to lick, kiss or honour.[87]

Such objects of veneration were to be destroyed. More significantly the commissioners were to receive and dissolve the monasteries and pay any outstanding debts.

The same members were appointed to another commission in April 1539 and instructed to receive the submission of religious superiors and communities. Grey was recalled in 1540 and replaced by Sir Anthony St. Leger. The new Lord Deputy was an avid supporter of dissolution. By the end of 1540 virtually all religious houses within the Pale had been suppressed.

Abbey lands and possessions seem in general not to have been immediately re-granted. The new Chief Baron was a member of several committees which made interim surveys prior to new leasing. In April 1541 he was appointed to a commission with Alen, Sir Gerald Aylmer, Thomas Luttrell and his good friend Thomas St. Laurence:

> to ascertain by oathes of honest men of the counties of Dublin and Meath, what monasteries, lordships, manors, lands and advowsons devolved to the Crown, by the Statute of Dissolution, their annual value, of whom held, by what service, and who were the founders thereof.[88]

In March 1547 the Chief Baron was appointed to a similar commission to dispose of the estates of St. Patrick's Cathedral.[89]

Land Acquisition

James Bathe's interest in monastic estates was not confined to commissions. It appears that neither Archbishop Brown nor John Alen, Master of the Rolls, who were engaged in dissolution proceedings from the start, benefited personally to any undue degree. On the other hand several of the Old English of the Pale gained in great measure from the change. Many of these