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Frideswide Ahmuty

Frideswide Ahmuty the daughter of Thomas Ahmuty and Alice Frideswide Moore married **Robert Smyth** 1776-1847 of Portlick Castle Westmeath in 1812. He was the son of Ralph Smyth and Margaret Gerity and great grandson of Robert Smyth, the Vicar of Ballyloughloe who purchased Portlick Castle for £885 from William Palmer of Dublin in 1703

They had four sons Robert Ralph Smyth 1815-, Arthur Wolfe Smyth 1816-, Ralph Thomas Ahmuty Smyth 1824- and Sidney Nicholas Daniel Smyth 1826- and six daughters Frideswide Maria Moore, Louisa Maria, Alicia, Emily, Maria and Harriet Smyth mentioned as nephews and nieces by Harriet and Alice Ahmuty in their Wills. Arthur Wolfe Smyth married in 1856 Wilhelmina Barry the daughter of Charles Barry of Killcairn and Louisa Maria Smyth married Gorges Graham the son of Captain William Graham and Matilda Manning

The eldest daughter **Frideswide Maria Moore Smyth** 1819-1885 married **Richard Brydges Beechey** 1808-1895 the son of the noted artists Sir William Beechey 1753-1839 and Ann Jessup. He had a very successful naval career and took part in the Survey of Ireland in 1835 as recorded in his **Biography** and on retirement devoted himself to painting many of which were exhibited at the Royal Academy. The 1881 Census listed Richard B Beechey with his wife Frideswide Beechey and daughters Annie L Beechey and Frideswide F Beechey together with their niece Frideswide Smyth living at 13 St James Terrace, Plymouth Devon. He died 14 March 1895 at Southsea, Portsmouth and his **Obituary** was published in the Naval and Military Record

In 1882 **Frideswide F Beechey** 1851-1919 was the first women to win a prize as a composer of chess problems and her book Chess Blossoms was published in 1883 followed by Chess Fruits in 1884 which she co-wrote with her husband **Thomas B Rowland** 1850-1926. He was also a noted chess player and columnist and director of the Clontarf Chess Club in 1891 when challenged by the Belmont Club to a double match contest of chess and tennis and a **Report** of the event was published in the Dublin Evening Mail. In 1899 Mrs F F Rowland edited Pollock Memories: A collection of Chess Games, Problems Etc. in which was 'a biography of the late W H K Pollock compiled from her personal recollections'. Also in the book were two advertisements with the return address of 6 Rus-In-Urbe, Kingston, Ireland: 'Graphology -Frideswide F Rowland the well known expert sends full detail delineations of character from handwriting on receipt of stamped addressed envelope and 6d in stamps or 1/- Postal Order by return post' and 'Typewriting -Authors' MSS, Circulars etc Typewritten at very moderate terms- F F Rowland'

Beechey

Sir William Beechey 1753-1839

Portrait painter to King George III

m 1793 Ann Phyliss Jessup 1764-1833

- 1 Augusta bc 1812
- 2 Fredricka Anne bc 1814
- 3 William Ernest bc 1816
- 4 Frances
- 5 Phyliss bc 1820
- 6 S.R Beechey bc 1822
- 7 Ann Phyliss 1794-1881
- 8 Anna Dodsworth 1800-
- 9 Jane Henrietta Frances
- 10 George Duncan

11 Fredrick William Beechey 1796-1856

m 1828 Charlotte Stapleton 1802-1866

- 1 Fredricka Ann
- 2 Katherine Hannah 1830 -1910
- 3 Fredrick Wm Stapleton 1831-1885
- 4 Augusta 1835-1919
- 5 Frances Anne Beechey 1838-1919
- m 1858 Edward Hopkins**
- 6 Mary 1841-1925

12 Richard Brydges Beechey 1808-1895

m 1822 Frideswide Maria Moore Smyth

- 1 Annie L Beechey 1849-
- 2 Frideswide F Beechey 1855-1919

Chess composer, problemist & columnist

1883 authored book Chess Blossoms

m Thomas B Rowland 1850-1926

- 13 Alfred
- 14 Nelson William 1801-1848
- 15 Charlotte Earle 1801-1878
- 16 St Vincent 1806-1899

1 Sophia Vincent Beechey 1845-1931

m Septimus Kingsford 1836-1913

b 12 Dec 1753 Burford, Oxfordshire d 28 Jan 1839 Hampstead

Portrait of Ann Jessup Lady Beechey in National Gallery

m 27 Feb 1793 b 3 Aug 1764 Thorpe Norfolk d 14 Dec 1833 Harley St

b 1810 chrs 21 Mar 1810 St Marys Marylebone Rd

b 20 Oct 1798 Windsor d 6 Dec 1852 Lucknow India

b 17 Feb 1796 Windsor d 29 Nov 1856

Ent'd RN 7 July 1806

m 13 Dec 1828 Abingdon Oxford dof John Stapleton

Painter exhibited Royal Academy, London & many other

Private secretary of Sir George Simpson, Gov of the Hudson's Bay Co

b 17 May 1808 Windsor d 1895 Portsea

Ent'd RN 1 Mar 1821

1819-1885 b Portlick Castle, Westmeath N Ireland

b Limerick

b 18 April 1855 Galway d 25 Feb 1919 Bray Ireland

1st woman to win prize as composer of Chess problems 1882.

1884 co-authored Chess Fruits with Irish husband also a composer

b 1 June 1850 Editor chess column of the Irish Sportsman

b 24 Jun 1803

b 3 Aug 1801 d 28 Nov 1848 Wandsworth

b 3 Aug 1801 d 1 Aug 1878 Brighton

b 7 Aug 1806 13 Harley St d 19 Aug 1899 Hilgay Norfolk

b 1845 Fleetwood Lancs d 16 Dec 1931 honoured for her grandfather

m 26 Aug 1869 Barton Lancs b 13 Nov 1836 Thrapston d 10 Nov 1913

1881 British Census

Census Place St Andrew Plymouth Devon

Richard Beechey

Frideswide Wife
 Annie L Dau unnm
 Frideswide F Dau unnm
 Frideswide Smyth Niece unnm

Dwelling 13 St James Terrace

1809 72 Vice Admiral
 1819 62
 1849 32
 1851 30
 1861 20

Harley Street, London, Middx
 Westworth Co Portluck Liske
 Limerick
 Galway
 Westworth Co Portluck Liske

Sir William Beechey 1753-1839

Artist associated with 80 portraits. English portrait painter was born at Burford Oxford. He was a pupil of Zoffany but greatly influenced by Reynolds. After 5 years working in **Norwich**, Beechey settled in London in 1787. He was appointed **portrait painter to Queen Charlotte in 1793** and painted nearly all the most famous or fashionable persons of the time. What is considered his greatest painting is a large composition of cavalry which included portraits of George III, the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York.

Painted in 1798 it obtained for the artist a knighthood and election to the Royal Academy.

William Beechey 1753-1839

English portrait painter born at Burford. He was originally meant for a conveyancer but a strong love for painting induced him to become a pupil at the Royal Academy in 1772. Some of his smaller portraits gained him considerable reputation; he began to be employed by the nobility, and in 1793 became associate of the Academy. In the same year he was made portrait-painter to Queen Charlotte. He painted the portraits of the members of the royal family and of nearly all the most famous or fashionable persons of the time.

Frederick William Beechey 1796-1856

born 17 February 1796 London died 29 November 1856.

English naval officer and geographer, the son of Sir William Beechey RA, was born in London 17 February 1796. In 1806 he entered the navy, and saw active service during the wars with France and America. In 1818 he served under Lieutenant, afterwards Sir, John Franklin in Buchan's Arctic expedition of which at a later period he published a narrative; and in the following year he accompanied Lieutenant W E Parry in the "Hecla." In 1821 he took part in the survey of the Mediterranean coast of Africa under the direction of Captain, afterwards Admiral, **William Henry Smyth**

Frederick and his brother **Henry William Beechey** made an overland survey of this coast and published a full account of their work... In 1825 Beechey was appointed to command the **Blossom** which was intended to explore Bering Strait.... The whole voyage lasted more than 3 years and in the course of it Beechey discovered several islands in the Pacific and an excellent harbour near Cape Prince of Wales. In 1831 appeared his Narrative of a Voyage to the Pacific... In 1835/36 year Captain Beechey was employed on the coast survey of South America and from 1837 to 1847 carried on the same work along the Irish coasts.... In 1854 he was made Rear-Admiral and in the following year was elected president of the Royal Geographical Society. He died 29 November 1856.

Biography of Admiral William Smyth 1800-1877

Royal Naval officer and artist who entered the Navy in April 1813, passed his lieutenant's examination in 1819 and served as a passed midshipman and mate including on the **Blossom** under **Frederick Beechey** in the Pacific 1825 - 28, until commissioned lieutenant during that voyage in May 1827'

'Accompanying **Beechey** was **William Smyth** of the Royal Navy an artist, who on this journey and subsequent visits to the Americas made many water color sketches of early California life. He later became an Admiral and a member of the Royal Geographic Society.

Fredrick William Beechey 1796-1856 bro Richard Brydges Beechey /Frideswide Maria Moore Smyth
 m 13 Dec 1828 Charlotte Stapleton 1802-1866 Abingdon Oxford dof John Stapleton
1 Frances Anne Beechey 1838-1919 Painter exhibited at the Royal Academy in London
m 1858 Edward Hopkins Private secretary of Sir George Simpson, Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company

Frances was born into a family with a long line of talented artist (from what I've read, man!). Being a upper-class girl in Victorian England, Frances was provided with art classes as part of her upbringing. Being a lady was the one passion for any girl at the time and one of the ways to help become a lady is by learning how to paint and sketch. Being able to sketch or paint watercolours was considered an "accomplishment" that would make a young woman more 'feminine' and 'ladylike'.

'Accomplishment art' was a good way for a lady to pass her time while sitting around home but artwork was only a pass time for a lady, proper girls shouldn't make careers out of their artwork unless they were a widow or something. In art classes ladies would learn basics of water colour but they don't learn anything about oil painting because it was considered to be smelly and dirty. It was also believed that women didn't have the strength of will and power of creation that men did to complete large oil paintings. Girls were told this and so could not do any grand artwork and could not even be called "artists". Girls were also told that work that brought attention over towards themselves was very "unladylike".

At age twenty, Frances married to a man by the name of Edward Hopkins in London, England. Edward was a private secretary of Sir George Simpson who was the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company. Because of Edward's job, Frances moved to Lachine, Canada East (Quebec). Frances often put her artistic talents to work in her sketchbooks. When she first arrived in Lachine, Frances has been filling her sketchbooks with the sights and sounds that were around her, including the canoes and sailboats up and down the Lachine River that ran past their house. When on her husband's canoe trips to fur trade posts, she was able to record in her sketchbooks her observations of the Canadian wilderness and the voyageurs.

I don't know why Frances did what she did but I'm glad she did it. Maybe water colour was not strong and dark enough to get the full affect of life but when **Frances Anne Hopkins** painted her voyageur paintings, she used the dirty and smelly oil paints. Once she started painting in oil, Frances returned again and again to the fur trade scenes she had in her sketchbooks, even though at the time they seemed not only "unladylike" but also "unpaintworthy" to most people.

It was a honour for any artist, especially for women, to have one's work accepted for exhibition in the Royal Academy in London, England. The Academy did not welcome women into membership with open arms at the time but they sometimes invited "outsiders" to exhibit their work. Frances' first painting to be accepted was her oil painting 'Canoes in a Fog, Lake Superior' which was exhibited in 1869. Frances then had her work accepted again and again like her 'Canoe Manned by Voyageurs Passing a Waterfall', 'Voyageurs at Dawn', and my favourite, 'Shooting the Rapides'. Between 1869 and 1918, Frances had thirteen works accepted for exhibition at the Royal Academy. She also had exhibitions at the Art Association of Montreal, the Royal Society of British Artists and many others. Frances became known years after she died in 1919. Her images of the fur trade life are found on posters, stamps, and history books through out Canada. Frances Anne Hopkins captured on canvas a way of life that will never be seen again.

My Opinion

This bird showed everybody that women can do artwork like any man. If she did all her work in watercolour then it wouldn't have the same effect of life as the oil painting ones. If it weren't for her, my mom, sister, and I wouldn't be able to do what we can do with our artistic talents.

Biography

The 1849 Naval Biographical Dictionary by William O'Bryne

This officer born **17 May 1808** entered the Royal Naval College 1 March 1821 and embarked in June 1822 as First Class Vol. on board the 'Espiegle', Capt Henry Theodosius Brown Collier, on the Home station.

He next joined the 'Owen Glendower', Capt Hon Sir Robert Cavendish Spencer, employed on a Particular Service and 'Seringapatam', Capt Samuel Warren, in the West Indies. On 2 April 1823 he rejoined Sir R C Spencer as Midshipman in the 'Naiad'. In that frigate Mr Beechey served in 1824 at the blockade of Algiers and while on the coast of Barbary took part in several boat expeditions, especially in the cutting out of a vessel laden with grain from under the forts of Bona. He next became attached, for passage home, to the 'Phaeton', Capt Henry Evelyn Pitfield Sturt and in March 1825 joined the 'Blossom' commanded by his **brother Captain Frederick William Beechey** with whom he proceeded on a voyage of discovery to the Pacific and thence to Bering Strait, for the purpose of cooperating in the Polar expeditions of Capts Parry and Franklin

On his return to England Mr Beechey was promoted, immediately upon passing his examination, into the 'Madagascar', Capt Sir R C Spencer, on the Mediterranean station 15 Sept 1828. After a short servitude on board the 'Aetna' bomb, Capt Stephen Lushington, he was further appointed 1 May 1829 to the 'Belvidera' Capt Hon Richard Saunders Dundas, on the Home station and on 2 April 1831 to the 'Curacoa' Capt David Dunn forming one of an experimental squadron. He invalided soon afterwards but taking part in 1835 in the Survey of Ireland, continued to be employed on that service, latterly with his name on the books of the 'Tartarus' steam-vessel Capts Horation Thomas Austin and James Wolfe, until advanced to the rank he now holds, 31 March 1846. He is at present on half-pay.

Commander **Beechey** married **Frideswide Maria Moore eldest daughter of Robt Smyth Esq** of Portlick Castle, co Westmeath

Obituary

Portsmouth, Monday 14th March 1895

The death is announced at Southsea of Admiral Richard Bridges (sic) Beechey, son of the late Sir William Beechey of the Royal Academy. The deceased officer, who retired as a captain in 1870, for some time lived at Plymouth and afterwards moved to Portland-terrace, Southsea where he pursued with remarkable success his father's art as a painter. Several of his pictures hang at Osborne, and in the jubilee year he was commissioned by the officers of the Royal yacht to paint a sea piece for presentation to her Majesty.

In spite of his being eighty-six years of age, his name was recently mentioned as a probable successor to Sir Oswald Bayenly as marine painter to the Queen, but he was then in very indifferent health, and shortly before Christmas he suffered so much from weak action of the heart that his relatives were summoned to his bedside. He however rallied and though feeble from old age he regained some amount of strength. The prolonged frost proved a severe trial to him, but he escaped the epidemic of influenza and died on Friday from heart affection accelerated by his advanced age.

Admiral Beechey joined the navy as a cadet in March 1821 and three years later served as a midshipman in the Naiad at the blockade of Algiers, and in several boat and cutting-out expeditions. He also served in the Blossom in a voyage of discovery to the Pacific and twice visited Behring Strait for the purpose of co-operating in the Polar expeditions of Captains Parry and Franklin

Richard Brydges Beeches

In 1844 he married Frideswide Maria Moore Smyth (1819-1885) of Portlick Castle, Westmeath. They had two daughters, Annie L. Beechey and Frideswide F. Beechey (1851-1919). In 1882 Frideswide was the first woman to win a prize as a composer of chess problems and her book Chess Blossoms was published in 1883 followed by Chess Fruits in 1884, which she co-wrote with her husband Thomas B Rowland 1850-1926. He was also a noted chess player and columnist

In 1888, some three years after the death of his wife, Richard married Frances, daughter of the Rev. Annesley Stewart of Trinity College, Dublin.

One brother was the famed British sea captain Frederick William Beechey. Other brothers included the portraitist Henry William Beechey and the painter George Duncan Beechey

Frederick William Beechey

17 February 1796 – 29 November 1856 was an English naval officer and geographer.

He was the son of Sir William Beechey, RA., and was born in London. In 1806 he entered the Royal Navy, and saw active service during the wars with France and America.

In 1818 he served under Lieutenant (afterwards Sir) John Franklin in David Buchan's Arctic expedition, of which at a later period he published a narrative. In the following year he accompanied Lieutenant W. E. Parry in HMS Hecla. In 1821 he took part in the survey of the Mediterranean coast of Africa under the direction of Captain, afterwards Admiral, William Henry Smyth. He and his brother Henry William Beechey, made an overland survey of this coast and published a full account of their work in 1828 under the title of Proceedings of the Expedition to Explore the Northern Coast of Africa from Tripoly Eastward in 1821-1822.

In 1825, Beechey was appointed to command the HMS Blossom. His task was to explore the Bering Strait in concert with Franklin and Parry operating from the east. He passed the strait and penetrated as far as 71°23'31" N., and 156°21'30" W., reaching a point only 146 m. west of that reached by Franklin's expedition from the Mackenzie river. The whole voyage lasted more than three years and in the course of it Beechey discovered several islands in the Pacific, and an excellent harbour near Cape Prince of Wales. In July 1826, he named the three islands in the Bering Strait. Two were the Diomed Islands that Vitus Bering had named in 1728: "Ratmanoff Island" (Big Diomed) and "Krusenstern Island" (Little Diomed). Beechey called the uninhabited third islet "Fairway Rock", which is still its contemporary name. In 1831 there appeared his Narrative of a Voyage to the Pacific and Berings Strait to Co-operate with the Polar Expeditions, 1825-1828. In 1835, and the following year Captain Beechey was employed on the coast survey of South America, and from 1837 to 1847, carried on the same work along the Irish coasts. He was appointed in 1850 to preside over the Marine Department of the Board of Trade. In 1854, he was made rear-admiral, and in the following year was elected president of the Royal Geographical Society.

His daughter was the Canadian painter Frances Anne Hopkins. Three of his brothers were painters: the admiral and painter Richard Brydges Beechey, the portraitist Henry William Beechey, and the portraitist George Duncan Beechey.

November 1838 At Benowen Lieut. R B Beechey RN to Frideswide Maria Moore eldest dau of Robert Smyth esq of Portlick Castle co Westmeath.

United Service Magazine vol 26 p.1 Benowen Athlone co Westmeath

m1st 1844 Frideswide daughter of P Smyth of Portlick Castle, Westmeath

m2nd 1888 Frances daughter of Rev Annesley Stewart of Trinity College Dublin

Annual Register 1896 vol 137 .166

FS m 1879 Frances A. Frideswide d. 1885

Smyth of Gaybrook

William Smyth -1650

m Ann Hewley

1 William Smyth

m Mary Dowdall -1704

2 Ralph Smyth -1689

m 1643 Elizabeth Hawksworth -1689

1 William Smyth 1644-1698

m 1672 Mary Povey -1730

2 Thomas

3 Ralph

4 Robert Smyth 1655-1707

Portlick Castle Westmeath

m Miss Arnold

1 Jane Smyth

m 1714 Stephen Radcliffe

2 Alice Smyth -1788

m 1718 John Travers

3 Michael Smyth -1756

m Isabella Johnstone

1 Ralph Smyth -1782

m 1775 Margaret Gerity

1 Robert Smyth 1776-

m 1807 Frideswide Ahmuty 1786-

1 Robert Smyth Esq

1 Robert Smyth

1 Robert Smyth

1 Robert Smyth

m Agnes Gleeson

1 Harriet Smyth

The last Smyth in Portlick was Harriet a great great granddaughter of the second Robert Smyth.

Her stepson was killed in WW2 and her husband Norman Wallard Simpson died in 1955"

2 Ralph Smyth

1 Robert Ralph Smyth

3 William Smyth

4 Thomas Smyth

1 Frideswide Smyth 1861-

5 Frideswide Maria Moore 1819-1885

m 1840 Richard Brydges Beechey

bro Fredrick Wm Beechey 1796-1856

m 1828 Charlotte Stapleton 1802-1866

1 Annie L Beechey 1849-

2 Frideswide F Beechey 1855-1919

Chess composer, problemist, columnist

m Thomas B Rowland 1850-1926

6 Louisa Maria Smyth

m Gorges Graham 1816-

sof William Graham/Matilda Manning

7 Alicia

8 Emily

9 Maria

10 Harriet

Burkes IFR 1976

Dundrum co Down later Lisburn co Antrim left Rosssdale Abbey c 1630

dof Sir Thomas Hewley

Dundrum co Down

dof John Dowdall/Anne Cusack

Ballymacash

Will 15 Aug 1688 p'd 1690

dof Sir Richard Hawksworth, Hawksworth Hall Yorks

Bishop of Kilmore & Ardagh

dof Sir John Povey Chief Justice Common Pleas Ireland

Drumcree

Ballingarry

Vicar of Ballyloughloe

b Lisnagarvey, Antrim

Purchased 1703 for £885 from William Palmer of Dublin

Rev

Rector Ballyloughloe co Meath 1774

Portlick Castle

1756 inherited Portlick Castle

sis Jane Smyth m Mr Rogerson

Portlick Castle co Westmeath

m 27 Nov 1807 St George Dublin dof Our TA/Alice Frideswide Moore

Portlick Castle appt 19 Sep 1857 Magistrate Westr News from Ireland

Portlick Castle

his nephew Robert Wolfe Smyth

Portlick Castle

b Portlick

1881 Census

b Portlick d Sept 1885

1808-1895 b 17 May 1808 Harley St d Mar 1895 Ent RN 1Mar 1821

sons of Sir Wm Beechey/Ann Phyliss Jessup Ent RN 7July 1806

dof John Stapleton

b Limerick

b 18 April 1855 Galway d 25 Feb 1919 Bray Ireland

1882 1st woman to win prize as composer of chess problems

b 1 June 1850 Editor of Chess column for The Irish Sportsman

b 31 Aug 1816 m1 June Tisdall m3 Elizabeth Agnew-Martin

10 APRIL 1869

At Portlick Castle, Ralph Thomas Ahmuty Smyth, 3rd son of the late Robert Smyth of Portlick Castle, co. Westmeath.

1 page matching The Register "Ralph Thomas Ahmuty Smyth" in this book

Page 445

Copper, eldest daughter of the late Thomas Copper, of Hastings, granddaughter of John Robertson, author of the Elements of Navigation, and other nautical works. At Bath, aged 71, Elizabeth Bartlett, widow of John William Fraser, of that	Wilkinson Estlin, esq. of Gloucester-place, Hyde-park-gardens, and St. Croix, Danish West Indies. At Pembroke Dock, aged 64, the Rev. Eliakim Lloyd Shadrach, minister of Albion-square chapel. At Portlick Castle, Ralph Thomas
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Chambers Fraser, of Malpas. At Brompton, aged 81, Miss Agnes Martin. Katherine Blicke, wife of Bransby William Powys, esq. of Russell-square. At Hillcraigs, Robert Russell, esq. of	Robert Smyth, of Portlick Castle, co. Westmeath. April 11. At Prince's gate, Hyde-park, aged 80, Anselmo de Arroyave, esq. At Seole, Norfolk, aged 75, Jane, wife of William Ayton, formerly of
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Common Wylie - site
Robert Smyth magistrate 1880
Lime Park Caledon co Tyrone

Lime Park co Tyrone - Northern He
or " " Lodge

house pre 1833 with mature
trees + walled garden

Robert Smyth - Frideswide

Portlick Castle is the only medieval castle, which has always been lived in.

The Norman family of **Dillion** under the charter of King John built Portlick Castle in 1185. The family were devout Catholics who fought in the Irish rebellion. Although banished for a time to Connacht by Cromwell they did not leave their home for good until 1696.

The Dillions were supporters of King James during the Jacobian and Williamite wars so the new monarch King William granted the property to someone more loyal to himself, a privy councillor of Ireland Thomas Keightly

Thomas Keightly promptly sold his new home to **William Palmer of Dublin**.

The Price tag was £365, £1 for every acre the castle was attached to.

Seven years later in **1703 Palmer then sold the castle to the Rev Robert Smyth** for £885.

The Smyth's like the Dillions before them were long-term and colourful owners, although as soon as 1782 their rein their looked destined to have come to an end. The **Rev Robert Smyth's son Ralph** had just died. It was generally assumed as a bachelor he had no heirs. **Jane Rogerson, Ralph's sister** prepared to take over the castle. As was to be expected distant relatives imagined and otherwise also began to lay claim to Portlick insisting that they were the true and rightful heirs. The future ownership of the castle was decided however when a local woman came forward.

Maggie Gerrily presented her son Robert as Ralph's secret child and heir.

A local clergyman confirmed the story and the Smyth name was secured in Portlick once more.

In 1812 the granddaughter of the 2nd Robert Smyth, Frideswide Smyth, began courting a young navel officer by the name of **Richard Brydges Beechey**.

Beechey was at the time assisting in the preparation of the Admiralty Chart of Lough Ree. It is because of this relationship it is said that the bay at Portlick received a lot more attention in this report than other areas.

The pair later married and **their son R B Beechley** became known as one of Ireland's top three marine painters.

A large part of the castle was gutted by fire in 1861 which destroyed much of the Smyth family treasures including portraits and furnishings.

The last Smyth in Portlick was Harriet, a great great granddaughter of the **2nd Robert Smyth**.

Her stepson was killed in WW2 and her husband Norman Wallard Simpson died in 1955.

In it's near 1000 year history Portlick Castle has witnessed civil war, family disputes, devastating fire and the natural ravages of time but despite these, it is still as impressive and as well preserved as ever. Now no longer a family seat, the story of Portlick Castle enters a new phase as a country retreat, a deserved escape from everyday routine and a chance to experience life, as it should be, luxuriously.

www.irelandexplored.com/portlick/history.htm

1881 British Census

Richard B Beechey

Household	Relation	Gender	Born	Age	Birthplace	Occupation	
Richard B Beechey	Head	M	Male	1809	72	Harley Street, London, Middx	Vice Admiral
Frideswide Beechey	Wife	M	Female	1819	62	Westworth Co Portluck Liske	
Annie L Beechey	Dau	U	Female	1849	32	Limerick	
Frideswide F Beechey	Dau	U	Female	1851	30	Galway	
Frideswide Smyth	Niece	U	Female	1861	20	Westworth Co Portluck Liske	
Isabel Barnes	Serv	W	Female	1823	58	Shoriock, Cornwall, England	Cook Domestic Serv
Alice Luckham	Serv	U	Female	1861	20	Stoke Damerel, Devon, England	Housemaid Servant

Source Information:

Dwelling 13 St James Terrace

Census Place Plymouth St Andrew, Devon, England

Family History Library Film 1341529

Public Records Office Reference RG11 Piece / Folio 2199 / 76 Page Number 37

Family Search

(7)

Robert Smyth 1655-1707 d 1707 aged 52

Robert Smyth, the Tanner's fourth son received one guinea by his father's will 'by reason I have lately given him a considerable portion.' He had been set up by his father on the estate (worth only three pence an acre in 1632) at Portlick Castle near the shore of Lough Ree six miles from Athlone in County Westmeath. 'A whack of high bank bog' was included in the estate... Robert was rector of **Ballyloughloe** (Mount Temple) nearby and had a small family whose descendants continued to live in the castle until recently.

Ralph Smyth/Alice Hawksworth - had 7 children who survived childhood all born in **Lisnegarvey or Lisburn**
1William b1640 2Thomas b1643 3Ralph b1645 4Alice b1648 5Mary b1650 6**Robert b1655** 7Margaret b1657
In 1688 Ralph now an old man made his will setting out his wishes with regard to his landed property, leaving Ballymacash to his 'dearly loved wife.' By this time Ireland was again in a sad state, and Ralph had suffered with the rest. The final blow was the death of his wife Elizabeth, nee Hawksworth, in April 1689, so that he had to add a codicil to his will. He said that he had "sustained many and great losses by these sad and troublous times," and that in the circumstances, he had "thought fit to recall several legacies left unto my poor friends." By his will he divided his property between his three elder sons, the **fourth Robert** having been provided for during his lifetime. **Robert the 4th son** entered holy orders and became **rector of Ballyloughloe in Westmeath.**

In 1703 he bought Portlick Castle on the shore of Lough Ree for £885. This castle had belonged to the Dillon family, who joined the rebel side in 1641, and consequently had their properties confiscated. Portlick Castle was granted in 1696 to Privy Counsellor Thomas Keightley who sold it for £365 to William Palmer who sold it to Robert Smyth a few years later for more than double that price.

Voyages In Time ~ Family, Friends & Places

Robert Smyth the clergyman son of Ralph Smyth and Elizabeth Hawkesworth purchased Portlick Castle in **1703** but the Burke reference works are curiously reticent on what happened after that. Burke's I F Records notes merely that **Robert had a son Michael**, who in turn had two **daughters Alice and Jane.**

It does not even mention Portlick Castle. Burke's LG of Ireland does mention Portlick Castle but lists Robert's brother Ralph as the owner. However, nothing further on the subject

All of this is **contradicted** by **The Grand Juries** of Westmeath 1727-1853 another reference work which lists a whole dynasty of Smyths of Portlick Castle beginning with "**Robert Smyth, the 4th son of Ralph by Alice Hawksworth.**" According this source Robert was succeeded at Portlick by his son **Michael**, who was followed by his own son **Ralph.**

The discrepancy: "**Ralph married Margaret Gerity in the year 1775 and dying in 1778 left issue a son Robert born in 1776.**" The succession then continues through Margaret Gerity's son as though nothing untoward had happened.

However **Portlick Castle** website account authored by a Niamh Coghill

"**In 1782 Ralph Smyth** grandson of Rev Robert died. Were 14 claimants to the estate mainly from other branches of the family. However Maggie Gerity a local woman came forward with her son **Robert Smyth b 1776** claiming him to be the son of Ralph Smyth and thus heir to Portlick. A law suit commenced and **Maggie Gerity** produced her 'father-in-law's' will granting the castle to the male heir. Robert Smyth became the legal owner of the estate."

Portlick Castle Bence-Jones describes as follows: "An old keep with a battlemented later wing.

In the 19th c. was the seat of **Robert Ralph Smyth and then of his nephew Robert Wolfe Smyth"**

Portlick Castle - Late medieval tower house built by the Dillions and occupied by them until 1696 when Garret Dillon was attained under the articles of Limerick. Portlick was then granted to Thomas Keightley a member of King William's privy council of Ireland who sold his interest to William Palmer of Dublin. The indenture reciting the property for sale to William Palmer included:

"The lands of Portlick, Whinning and Cartron one third part of the great island (Inchmore), the houses, edifices, orchards, gardens, mills, mill seates, water, water courses, boggs, loughs, mountains, heaths and fishing wyers".

William Palmer held the property for seven years but by 1703 Keightley's grant was repudiated and the property, which reverted to the Crown, was sold to **Robert Smyth** a descendant of the Smyths of Barbavilla and Drumcree. On the death of Robert Ralph Smyth the property passed into the hands of his son Michael. **In 1756 Ralph Smyth inherited his fathers property.** By 1763 the property was up for rent and by 1773 for sale.

After **Ralph's** death in **1782** the property was to fall to his sister **Jane Rogerson.** There were 14 claimants to the estate from other branches of the family. However a local woman named **Maggie Gerity** came forward with a son **Robert Smyth** born in 1776 claiming he was the son of Ralph Smyth and heir to Portlick. Maggie Gerity produced her father-in-laws will granting the castle to his male heir and son Robert Smyth who then became owner Last Smyth of Portlick - **Robert Smyth** who married **Agnes Glession** of Athlone, they had one **daughter Harriet.** It was intended that the house would fall to her stepson but he was killed in the 1939-1945 war. Her husband Norman Wallard Simpson died in 1955 and the castle was sold the following year (O'Brien 1990, 35).

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It is at this point in the family history that we should make a brief excursion into a collateral branch of the **Smyth** clan and explain how we lost possession of **Portlick Castle** to other family claimants. **Robert Smyth**, the clergyman son of **Ralph Smyth** and **Elizabeth Hawkesworth** and brother to our ancestor **Thomas Smyth**, purchased **Portlick Castle** in 1703, but the **Burke** reference works are curiously reticent on what happened after that. **Burke's Irish Family Records** notes merely that Robert had a son **Michael**, who in turn had two daughters, **Alice** and **Jane**. It does not even mention **Portlick Castle**. **Burke's Landed Gentry of Ireland** does mention **Portlick Castle** but lists **Robert's** brother **Ralph** as the owner. However, nothing further on the subject.

All of this is contradicted by *The Grand Juries of Westmeath 1727-1853*, another reference work which lists a whole dynasty of **Smyths** of **Portlick Castle**, beginning with "Robert **Smyth**, the fourth son of **Ralph**, by **Alice Hawkesworth**." According to this source, Robert was succeeded at **Portlick** by his son **Michael**, who was followed by his own son **Ralph**. And this is where the trouble starts. "Ralph married **Margaret Gerity** in the year 1775, and, dying in 1778, left issue, a son, **Robert**, born in 1776." The succession then continues through **Margaret Gerity's** son as though nothing untoward had happened.

Michael, who became possessed of the property in Galway and Westmeath, married in 1733, **Isabella Johnston**, by whom he had issue,

I. **Ralph**. II. **Jane**.

Ralph married **Margaret Gerity**, in the year 1775, and dying in 1778, left issue, a son,

Robert, born in 1776, who married in 1812, **Frideswede Ahmuty**, and dying in 1847, left issue,

I. ¹ **Robert Ralph**, born in 1815.

II. **Arthur Wolfe**, born in 1816.

III. **Ralph Thomas Ahmuty**, born in 1824.

IV. **Sidney Nicholas Daniel**, born in 1826; and six daughters, of whom the eldest, **Frideswede Maria Moore**, married **Richard B. Beechey**, Captain in the Royal Navy.

Site Note

A number of searches on this site have contained the name "**Frideswede Smyth**" - who is of this **Portlick Smyth** (questioned) line. **Ralph's** son, **Robert**, married **Frideswede Ahmuty** in 1812. One of their sons was **Arthur Wolfe Smyth**. In the modern era, **Eamonn Smyth** of **Milton Keynes**, England, states (Guest Book 16/10/03) "... my maternal grandmother's maiden name was **White** ... could be related to the **Woulfe**? family - possibly of **General Wolfe** fame. If anybody knows of any

other connection to the above I would be interested to hear from them."

The family listing which shows this information is provided by courtesy of **James Smythe** of London, whose **Smythe** descent is via the **Meade Smythe** line of **Barbavilla** - connecting with **David Smyth** (**Hutchinson Smyth** line) at the generation of **Ralph "the Tanner" Smyth**. Click on the DNA image for further information on the line of **James Smythe** and for information relating to some DNA research currently (November 2003) being undertaken.



David Smyth continues ... However, the website for **Portlick Castle** has a different slant on the affair. This account, authored by a **Niamh Coghill**, has this to say:

"In 1782 **Ralph Smyth**, grandson of **Rev. Robert** died. There were 14 claimants to the estate, mainly from other branches of the family. However, **Maggie Gerity**, who was a local woman, came forward with her son **Robert Smyth** (born 1776) claiming him to be the son of **Ralph Smyth** and thus, heir to **Portlick**. A law suit commenced and **Maggie Gerity** produced her 'father-in-law's' will granting the castle to the male heir. **Robert Smyth** became the legal owner of the estate."

The unsuccessful claimants most probably included our ancestor **Thomas Hutchinson Smyth** and his children, including my great-grandfather **Edward Smyth**. Perhaps they should have won the case. **Coghill** at all events seems to take a skeptical view of **Maggie Gerity** and the legitimacy of her son. However, **Maggie's** son **Robert** got the castle in the end, so that is that. In any event, **Coghill** reports that "Portlick Castle was destroyed by fire in 1861. Many portraits and furnishings of the **Smyth** family also perished in the fire. The last **Smyth** of **Portlick** was another **Robert Smyth**. He married **Agnes Gleeson** of **Athlone** and they had one daughter **Harriet**. The Castle was intended to pass to **Harriet's** step-son but he was killed in **Norway** in the 1939-45 war. Her husband **Norman Wallard Simpson** died in 1955. The following year the castle was sold. This ended the second great dynasty in **Portlick**." (The first was the **Anglo-Norman Dillon** family).



As a footnote: in 2001 my son, **Clifford Smyth** (pictured) finding himself in that area of Ireland, happened to visit **Portlick Castle** - it was rebuilt in Victorian times and is now a hotel. In fact, the castle that the **Rev. Robert Smyth** bought for 885 pounds in 1703 happened to be up for sale, for several million pounds. The caretaker told **Clifford** that the castle needed a dozen extra rooms to make money as a hotel and that the heating bill for the cold and damp structure was horrendous. So if anyone thinks of reclaiming the property for the family, it looks like a very large white elephant.

Site Note - **Portlick Castle** from there to here ...

Voyages in time

In 1812 the granddaughter of the second Robert Smyth, **Frideswide Smyth**, began courting a young naval officer by the name of **Richard Brydges Beechey**. Beechey was at the time assisting in the preparation of the Admiralty Chart of Lough Ree. It is because of this relationship it is said that the bay at **Portlick** received a lot more attention in this report than other areas. The pair later married and their son **RB Beechley** became known as one of Ireland's top three marine painters".

Note (April 2004) from Mike House - received with gratitude. (qv Guestbook)

"Richard Brydges Beechey was born to Sir William and Anne Beechey on 17 May 1808. So that would mean he was only 3 or 4 at the time he was courting Frideswide. Beautiful as Irish girls are, I think you ought to let the lad reach puberty first? He joined the Royal Navy in 1822 and was soon sailing all over the globe."

Site Note

This LDS link from the 1881 UK census places Vice Admiral **Richard B. Beechey** was aged 72 living at 13, St. James' Terrace in Plymouth, Devon. Frideswide (Smyth) Beechey is stated as being aged 62 (so, born circa 1819). Richard Beechey was born in Harley Street, London. Frideswide in (poorly transcribed) Ireland. So, in 1812, she wasn't even on the scene and in 1822, she would have been about four and her betrothed just fourteen!

The Portlick Castle site clearly needs to "update" details! 1832 would probably be closer to the mark - even then, Frideswide would have been in her early teens. It is more than likely that the Portlick researchers have mistakenly extracted the date of **Frideswede Ahmuty's** marriage (1812) - see family history panel above - and taken her as being Frideswide who married the (later) Vice Admiral R. B. Beechey. A matching of historical fact as to the date when Beechey was preparing the Admiralty Chart of Lough Ree will give the answer.

The 1881 census appears to have captured the Frideswide jackpot with three family women of that name being present at this time! Frideswide (Smyth) Beechey (mother), Frideswide F Beechey (daughter) and Frideswide Smyth (niece).

The LDS entry for Richard Brydges Beechey accords to him (confirming Mike's date) the birth date of 17th May 1808 and date of death as March 1895. He is recorded as having married **Frideswide Maria Moore Smyth** in about 1840. She predeceased her husband by about ten years, dying in September 1885.

Mike writes subsequently that in 1826-27, Richard Brydges Beechey "was surveying California and Hawaii with his elder brother Frederick William Beechey (1796-1856), commander of the "Blossom". The "Blossom" was also involved in looking for the Northwest passage from the West in 1825 but I don't know whether Richard Brydges Beechey was with him at that point. This was at the same time as a famous expedition, led by John Franklin, was looking for the passage from the East, and they came within about 150 miles of each other - but of course, did not know it because communications were not possible. The Franklin Expedition all perished, and tracing their fate became a cause celebre with much controversy because some of the crew resorted to cannibalism to try to survive."

Mike has kindly supplied the following links as background to the Beechey line, the late Canon Emyr George Beechey being Mike's father-in-law.

FS LDS entry

Richard Brydges Beechey b 17 MAY 1808 Harley Street, London d Mar 1895

m 1840 Frideswaide Maria Moore Smyth 1819-Sept 1885 Portluck Castle Westworth County Limerick

The Time Traveller Anyone for Tennis?

In the summer of 1891 the Belmont Lawn Tennis and Chess Club issued an unusual challenge to the Clontarf Chess Club - to contest a double match at **chess and tennis**.

The Dublin Evening Mail for the 26th August 1891 revealed why the Belmont Club had chosen Clontarf for this unique event.

"The Clontarf Club in being singled out for the distinction of receiving the challenge was known to possess a strong element of tennis, for many of its members figure prominently in the records of that prosperous young institution - the Clontarf Lawn Tennis Club."

The Mail went on to report that:

"The Clontarfites at once gallantly accepted the unique challenge, and after settlement of preliminaries, sallied northwards on the appointed day 16th August 1891 with the following team -

Messrs. C. Drury, S. Fitzpatrick, Powis Hault, H. Jenkins, W. Morrow, **T. B. Rowland**, K. A. Rynd, Porterfield Rynd and A. Stephens - and accompanied by Mr. R. McFerran.

Most cordially welcomed on their arrival in the Northern capital by Mr. D. R. Lowry, President and other officers of the Belmont Club, the Clontarf team lost very little time in repairing to the picturesque grounds of the Belmontites, near Sydenham."

The Belmont Club was determined to make the day a gala occasion. The Band of the 2nd Battallion Rifle Brigade performed numerous musical numbers, conducted by Sergeant F. McGarry, while an impressive banquet was prepared for the southern visitors.

The report in the Mail continues the story of the day's events:

"The tennis events were the first to be decided....In the singles honours were divided, while in the doubles Belmont obtained a majority. The rack and dust of the journey had an obvious effect on the nerves and optics of the visiting team, which would account for them not exhibiting their very best form; nevertheless the Belmont players were a strong lot, and played so well that the result may fairly be attributed to their superior skill....

Before the Chess events came off, a repast of a sumptuous kind was laid in the Ferguson Hall, adjoining the tennis grounds. The tables and walls were gorgeously decorated with flowers; and the eye caught the conspicuous display of Clontarf colours - red and blue [provided by yellow marguerites and blue iris] - alternating with the Belmont colours - blue and yellow [red poppies and blue cornflowers].

The Clontarf director, **Mr. T. B. Rowland**, was visibly affected with anxiety for the fate of his chess team who if they yielded to the temptation of the rich banquet

[many joints of roast meat and fowl were accompanied by a profusion of fruits - strawberries, raspberries, grapes, "while a wonder of size and flavour was the enormous salmon carried to the table in two halves which put together made a young whale in length and height"]

might be unable to cope with their adversaries. At 8 o'clock, he however had the satisfaction of seeing his valiants march off to the chequered squares in good fighting form."

The following game shows one of the Belmont players getting in a fearful tangle after his ninth move.