

ABRAHAM COLLES.

ERRORS.

Plate Glass Window.  
Professor of Physiology and Anatomy 1804 - 1827

Ancestry Plate.  
Mary Anne Bates.

Curriculum Vitae.  
Born 1773  
Died 1st December, 1843

Submitted by Mr. Martin Fallon.



SOME NOTES  
ON

THE COLLES FAMILY

(MANUSCRIPT BY R. COLLES)  
1923..



1

Some Notes (not intended for  
publication)  
Concerning the Family of  
Colles

in Worcestershire and other counties,  
together with particulars  
regarding various members of the  
Irish Branch of the Family  
from the arrival in that Country  
of their ancestors  
in Queen Elizabeth's reign.

Collected by me and others  
from various sources.

July 1923

Rich<sup>d</sup> Colles

COLLES, RICHARD, Esq., of Millmount, co.  
Kilkenny.

Eldest son of the late Alexander Colles, Esq., of Millmount (who d. 1876), by Isabella, dau. of the late Mark Monsarrat, Esq., of Dublin; b. 1844; m. 1883 Selina Jane, eldest dau. of the Rev. John Mack Williams, M.A., Rector of Burnby, co. York, and has issue \* Alexander Conway, b. 1884. Mr. Colles, who was educated at Trinity Coll., Dublin (B.A. 1867), was High Sheriff of Kilkenny city 1881-2, and is J.P. for co. Kilkenny.  
—Millmount, Kilkenny.

From Walford's "County Families."



The Colles Family is one of considerable antiquity. According to the Heralds' Visitation of Warwickshire, (Harleian Manuscripts 1167), it appears to have been at an early date established in Co. Somerset, ("Oriondus e familia Colloor' de Somerset"), and afterwards, at least as early as the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, in Co. Worcester, and subsequently in Warwickshire and other counties. The name was at first generally spelled "Colle", possibly with the last letter slightly accented, being as appears probable an abbreviation of the French, or Anglo-Norman name, Nicolas. The S which was added subsequently at the end meaning "son of", just as "Roberts" meant "son of Robert", "Williams", "son of William", &c.

At what time the family assumed or acquired the right to bear arms is uncertain. According to Nash, (Hist. of Worcester, Vol. 1, p. 472), their arms "about the reign of Henry IV," (Age of Chivalry), "are a chevron between three birds". When it was that the



change to the present arms, (Gules, a chevron Argent pelletée, charged with two bars gemelles of the field, between three lions heads erased Or), took place, has not been, and probably cannot now be, determined, but it was certainly either before, or at latest during, the lifetime of Edmund Colles, who died in December 1606, and on whose tomb these more modern arms are engraved.

The arms on the pedigree of Edmund Colles the Younger, as recorded at the Herald's Visitation, (Harl. M.S. 1566 in British Museum) are quartered with those of the following families, Hick, Palmer, Harthull, Mounteney, and Cheesman. The family crest is blazoned by Nash, "On a wreath Or and Gules a sea-pie sable seizing on a fish proper wounded and bleeding." Graysbrook, (Heraldry of Worcestershire Vol. 1, p. 125), blazons the crest as follows, "A sea pie with expanded wings Or guttée de trois standing upon a dolphin lying upon its back of the first", and gives as reference (C. 30, Coll. Arm. f. 4. 25, 108.)



In A.D. 1240 Peter Colle held land at Goldgivewik in fee farm, and paid rent quarterly to the Priory of St. Mary, Worcester, on behalf of the Lord of the Manor. (Registry of Worcester Priory, p. p. 35b, 117b, Camden Society)

In the reign of Henry III a farm called Colles Place, in Lulsley, is mentioned in a ledger of the Priory of Malvern as belonging to the family of Colles. (Nash's Worcester, Vol 2, p. 400)

William Colle held a "yardland" in the parish of Claines near Worcester temp. Edward I. (Nash)

In 26 Eds. I, A.D. 1298, William Colle represented the City of Worcester in parliament, and several other persons of the name sat for the same city in parliament during the following century.

8 July 1310. License from the Bishop of Worcester, Lord of the Manor, to William Colle of Worcester,



Allowing him to grant land in his possession to  
the Hospital or Commandery of St. Wulstan.  
(Nash, History of Worcester, Vol 2, p. 336)

A.D. 1314. In a "Calendarium Inquisit. ad  
quod damnum", 7 Edw. II, this entry occurs;

106. Will'us Colles pro priore de Wigorn'

Wigorn' 53 s red.

Romesey / Messuage un' caruc.

} Wigorn'

A.D. 1418. King Henry V issued a commission in  
Latin to John Colles, John Hyngman and John Water,  
to procure carriages for the conveyance of the jewels  
ornaments and furniture of his chapel to Southampton.

The commission is dated 12 Feb. (Rymer's Foedera. Vol 4, p 53. p 36)

A.D. 1422, 22 Nov. Will'us Colle was presented by  
"Joh. Bukebond, mag. Collegii de Ederinghey et socii"  
to the living of "Bukeley cum capellis de Lulseley et de  
Aufwick." (Nash, Hist. of Worcester, Vol 2, p 401)



A distinguished member of the family during the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century was Walter Colles, Chancellor of Exeter Cathedral and Constable of Bourdeaux. (6. 107, p. 20)

In A.D. 1415 "Gualterius Colles, scriba principis," was a member of the embassy sent to France by King Henry V. (Redman's Life of Henry V.)

A.D. 1433. February, 11 Henry VI. "Henri, par la Grace de Dieu Roy D'Angleterre et de France, a n're bien aimé Walter Colles Connetable de n're citie de Bourdeaux et a son lieu illeçs salut &c &c." This is a command from the King to the Constable of Bourdeaux instructing him to pay 1000 marks to the Bishop of Dax, who was about to proceed to the General Council. (IV Harris. Acts of the Privy Council, Ed. 1835, p. 153.)

A.D. 1435. Walter Colles, Constable of Bourdeaux, and six others, (three to form a quorum) were appointed by King Henry VI in a commission under his privy seal



dated Westminster 9 July 1435 to investigate the claims of Bertrand de Monteferrando to the estate of his uncle Berard de la Bret. (Pymers' Poedera Vol. 6, pt. 1, p. 20).

A.D. 1437. A commission under his privy seal, dated 15 July, issued by the King to Walter Colles, Constable of Bourdeaux, and to Peter, Archbishop of Bourdeaux, empowering them to make a truce in his name with Johannes Comes Arminiaci et Karolus Dominus de la Bret. (Pymers' Poedera, Vol 6, pt. 1, p. 42.)

A.D. 1438. "Rex omnibus ad quos &c. &c. salutem. Sciatis quod de avisamento et assensu Concillii nostri, concessimus dilecto clerico nostro Waltero Colles, Constabulario Castri nostri Burdegaliae, plenam potestatem et auctoritatem seiscendi omnes Terras Redditus et Reversiones, ac omnimodo alia Proficua et Commoditates quaecunque quae in Ducatam nostram Aquitaniae ad Manum Mortuam sine licentia nostra data sunt, in casu quo id iuribus et consuetudinibus patriae nostrae ibidem



*praepjudicale non existat.* "In cujus &c Teste Rege  
apud Westmonasterium decimo sexto die Julii." "Per  
breve de Privato Sigillo." (Pym's *Paedera*)

A.D. 1441. "The Kyng at Shene ye xj<sup>th</sup> day of May ye  
xj<sup>x<sup>th</sup></sup> yere etc. by y'advys of my lordis his counsellors  
comanded ye keeper of his privy seale to make sufficient  
warrant unto ye Tresorer of Englande and Chamberlyns  
to delivere money for payment of Cl sherys after ye  
payement of Prance unto my lorde Duke of York under  
yis fourme yat is to say ye sayde money to be put in a  
sewre coffre under two lokkes of which Maister Walter  
Collyp shall have on Kay and Lewys John Knight anoyr,  
which coffre shall be opennyd in ye landyng of y<sup>e</sup> saide  
Duke beyond ye sees and after mustee taken by ye  
sayde Walter and Lewys with oyer of ye sayde Cl sheres  
y<sup>e</sup> sayde money be employde in ye payment of yepm. etc."  
The writ proceeds to order £50 to be paid to the said Sir  
Lewis John on his appointment as one of the King's Council



in Normandy &c. (5 Harris, Proceeding Council, p. 142.)

A.D. 1442. The XIX day of Juny at Windsor. The King being present and with him my lord his Chawncellor and therle of Suff<sup>r</sup> comanded that l<sup>res</sup> und<sup>r</sup> ye prive seal be maad to the Tres<sup>r</sup> and Chamblaine of his eschequier comanding yem by the same to paie or suffceantly assigne unto Maistr Walt<sup>r</sup> Colles late Constable of Bourdeaux alle suche sōmes of monie yat be found due unto him for any cause be al y'accounts maad betwix ye K. and hym and also such sōmes as he<sup>r</sup> befor<sup>e</sup> thei have warrant to pay hy<sup>r</sup>, &c. (Harris, Acts of Privy Council, p/p. 192, 194)

A.D. 1442. 9 Oct. The King in Council in the Great Chamber of Eltham debated the terms of the truce lately made "between ye Duc of York and ye Duchesse of Bourgoigne", and ordered a commission to be issued to the undernamed, empowering them to treat for peace with Charles the 7<sup>th</sup> of France in the following words:

"Be maad a comission to my lord the Duc of York



lieuten<sup>t</sup> gen<sup>l</sup> et gove<sup>r</sup>neur of Fraunce et of Nor<sup>die</sup>, to  
 Cardinal of Luxembour<sup>g</sup> et Arch<sup>b</sup> of Rean, the Bishoppes  
 of Lisieux et of Baies, thele of Shrovesbury Constable  
 of Fraunce, ye Lords Shules and Faukenbergue, ye Lord  
 Sudely, Sir John Montgom<sup>ry</sup>, Thomas Hor, Sir Andrew  
 Ogard knyght, Ric<sup>h</sup> Harinton bailiff of Conk, S<sup>r</sup> Walter  
 Colles Chaunc<sup>l</sup>lor of Exeter, the bailiff of Ca<sup>n</sup>on, John  
 Wenlock Squier, M<sup>r</sup> John Pynel, et S<sup>r</sup> Gerwaise Secretaire  
 &c &c. for ye conca<sup>n</sup>con of ye mation of pees. (Harris  
 5, Proceedings of Privy Council p. 218). The Commission is given  
 in full in Pym<sup>r</sup>'s Paedra, but dated 9 Sept. Walter Colles is  
 styled in it "Magistri Walteri Colles precentoris Ecclesie  
 Cathedralis Exoniæ."

A.D. 1443. "The ij<sup>th</sup> day of March y<sup>e</sup> xx1 etc. (21 Hen. 6)  
 "in y<sup>e</sup> sterred ch<sup>h</sup>l<sup>r</sup> at Westm<sup>r</sup>.

"h<sup>h</sup>t my Lords      Chaucellor      S<sup>r</sup> Adam Moleyns  
    Saint D<sup>o</sup>      S<sup>r</sup> Lord of Suff<sup>r</sup>

"A bre of credence to my lord of York how y<sup>e</sup> ye R<sup>e</sup>



hath received his lres by Montgomery, S<sup>r</sup> Waut Colles and John Saint Yon." (5 Harris, Acts of Privy Council, p.p. 230, 239.

During the Wars of the Roses the Colles's, (as might have been expected from Walter Colles' position in the service of Henry VI), were Lancastrians. After the battle of Wakefield, (29 Dec. 1461), one Michael Colles was reported to have been seized and put to death by some of the fugitive Yorkists.

In the Henry VI reign that the intermarriages between the Puresfords and the ancestor of the present Irish family of Colles is reported to have taken place, but of the fact there is apparently no documentary evidence extant. A Sir Roger Puresford <sup>according to traditional account,</sup> (of Drayton,) died leaving three co-heiresses, of whom one married a Colles, a second -- St Paul, and a third -- Radcliffe, but this Sir Roger Puresford has not been identified in any of the pedigrees of the Puresford family given by Nicholl or Ashmole in their histories of Leicestershire & Warwickshire. It is remarkable also that the arms of Puresford are not represented upon any of the Colles tombs at Lich, nor in the



Pedigree of the Family in the British Museum. The name and arms of Purefoy are stated to have been resumed in modern days by Barry Colles, (1697-1785), and were certainly resumed by Edward Richards Purefoy-Colles and his two sons (who died unmarried), but by none other of the family apparently.

Boniface Colles or Collins, the Pope's "Scriba" and Worcester's Secretary. (Cal. State Papers Henry VIII, No 994). Sylvester, Bishop of Worcester wrote on 7 October 1515 to Wolsey that he could not send over his cardinal's hat before, but has now entrusted it to his friend Bonifacio, who will also bring the Bull of the Cardinalate. (From Viterbo, in Latin)

7 Nov<sup>r</sup> 1515. Sir Rich<sup>d</sup> Wingfield writes from Calais to Wolsey that Bonifacio, Secretary to the Bishop of Worcester has arrived there with the cardinal's hat. (Cal. State Papers Henry VIII, No 1117)

15 Nov<sup>r</sup> 1515. Boniface reached London with the hat. (Calendar State Papers No 1153). "At Blackheath the Envoy was met by the Archbishop of Canterbury with a train of prelates and



nobles, who conducted him with great pomp to London, and afterwards through Cheapside to Westminster, the city companies lining the streets, and the Lord Mayor and Aldermen attending. On reaching the Abbey eight Abbots received the hat, and laid it on the high altar, where it remained till Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> November, when it was placed on Wolsey's head with imposing ceremony." (Egler's History of Henry VIII, p. 77.)

5 Dec<sup>r</sup> 1515. Wolsey writes to Pope Leo X that he had received the hat from Bonifacio, who intimated him in the mysteries of the ceremony, and performed his office with great credit, and by whom he (Wolsey) sends his oath of fealty to the Pope. (Calendar of State Papers No 1248.)

In the King's Book of Payments Dec. 1515 Bonifacio, the Pope's Messenger, gets 66l 13s 4d [Calendar State Papers No 1469]

In a letter (7 June 1517) Tunstall, ambassador to the King of Castille, speaks of him as one "Prior Bonifaci" by whom "my Lady" was reconciled to the Lord Chivers. (Cal. State Papers 3343)



Calendar of State Papers - Domestic

1521. July 3<sup>d</sup>. - License granted to Th. Maners, Lord Roos, to grant to John Wyatt rector of St Margaret the Virgin, Cley-juxta-Mare, Norf., possessions there, formerly of Th. Colles, lying between Cley churchyard, a messuage belonging to the guild of St Margaret of Cley, and demesne lands of the lordships of Cley.

1522. Westminster, 28<sup>th</sup> January. Pardon granted to John Parkington, John Baker and Humphrey Colleys for having acquired a messuage in Penham, for themselves and their heirs, from Sir George, son and heir of James Seyntleger.

1570. April 10<sup>th</sup>. - Humphrey Colles writes from Sturvey to the Council that he has delivered the Privy Seals for the County of Somerset and received answers from various parties. Encloses a list of those assessed by privy seals in the County Somerset. Writes the same day to Cecil that he has returned the privy seals sent to persons who are dead or have left the county Somerset.

1570. Sturvey, April 29<sup>th</sup>. Writes again to Cecil sending list of persons of ability in the Co. Somerset to whom letters of privy seal for loans might be sent.

1579. Aug. 27<sup>th</sup>. John Colles writes from Barton to Sir Francis Walsingham "The 300 soldiers appointed to serve in Ireland are at Bristol, waiting for a wind."

1581. Kidderminster, June 2<sup>d</sup>. Commissioners of Musters for Worcestershire write to the Earls of Warwick and Leicester, and Sir Charles Hatton, desiring that the rate at which Edmund Colles was charged might be abated, as "being over burdensome for his estate and ability."

1585. The Swan, Southwark. S. Scory writes to the Earl of Leicester that he has been brought to London by a Sergeant at the suit of his mother and Mr. Allen, tells of their constant practices against him having conveyed away most of his evidences and £6000 or £7000. Desires that his



suit may be tried at law, and complains of the doings of Edmund Colles and Lancelot Romney. (27 July)

1585. 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct. Edmund Colles, Justice of the Peace, writes to Gilbert Lyttleton, Sheriff of Worcester, respecting what he and Mr. Knottesford are doing in the matter of recusancy with regard to W. Lygon and Thomas Weynford.

1590. 20 July. Edward Colles purchased lands worth £49.16s per annum for which he paid £1743.

The Pedigree of the Colles Family of Leigh is compiled from two in the British Museum, with additions from the Leigh Parish Registers, from Nash's History of Worcester, and from Grazebrook's Heraldry of Worcestershire, &c. The first member of the family mentioned in the Pedigree is Richard Colles of Powick in the parish of Suckley, 26 Henry VI. (A.D. 1448). His son, William Colles, is given as of Braunford Court, (probably named after Braunford or Bransford, a former bishop of Worcester). Richard's grandson, "William Colles of 'Longs' in Com. Worster, sepult. ibidem 1558," is evidently the William of Leigh, of whose tombstone Nash thus writes; "In the south aisle (of Leigh Church), being Bransford's Chancel, on a plain stone the arms of Colles, and round the verge this inscription in great letters: "Hic jacet sepultus Gulielmus Colles de Leigh in Comitatu Wigorniae, gen., qui obiit mense Augusti A.D. 1558, aet. suae 63." And in the same Chancel, on two other stones, Robert Colles 1618, and Natharine Colles 1614. (History of Worcester Vol. II, p. 76.) These monuments are not now visible, but may be covered by the boarded floor with which "Bransford's Chancel", now an organ chamber, has been furnished. The son of this William of Leigh, and great grandson of Richard of Powick, was Edmund Colles of Leigh, who was born A.D. 1530, and died A.D. 1606.

The Manor of Leigh, or Lye, 5 miles to the W.S.W. of Worcester, belonged to the Abbots of Pershore, whose noble tithe barn still remains there. The following reference to Leigh Manor — which was the seat of



and to this Edmund Colles and his successors, is from Nash, History of Worcester, Vol. II, p. 73. "This ancient Lordship of the Abbots of Pershore, falling by the dissolution of monasteries into the King's hands, remained there till Elizabeth's time. The tenants of the house and demesne, both under the abbot and under the king and queen, were the Colles, of which family was Mr. Edward (Edmund) Colles, a grave and learned justice of this shire, who purchased the inheritance of this manor; whose son, Mr. William Colles, succeeded him; whose son and heir, Mr. Edmund Colles, lived in the time of Mr. Habington, and being loaded with debts, (which like a snow-ball from Malvern Hill gathered increase), thought fit to sell it to Sir Walter Devereux, Bart."

Nothing appears to have been recorded of the subsequent history of this Edmund Colles or of any of his children. There was an old tradition at Leigh handed down to quite recent times, and which indeed may still survive, that his troubled spirit continued to haunt the neighbourhood of his former place of existence. The following version of it, contributed to the "Athenaeum" of Sept. 26 1846 by Mr. Jabez Allies, may be of interest;

"I well remember that in my juvenile days old people used to speak of a spectre that formerly appeared in the parish of Leigh in this county, whom they called 'Old Coles', and said that he frequently used, at dead of night, to ride as swift as the wind, down that part of the public road between Bransford and Brocamin called Leigh Walk, in a coach drawn by four horses, with fire flying out of their nostrils — and that they invariably dashed right over the great barn at Leigh Court, and then on into the river Teme. It was likewise said that this perturbed spirit was at length laid in a neighbouring pool by twelve parsons, at dead of night, by the light of an inch of candle; and as he was not to rise again until the candle was quite burnt out, it was therefore thrown into the pool, and to make all sure the pool was filled up —

And peaceful after slept Old Coles's Shade.

Now it is not impossible that the legend may have referred to the unfortunate Edmund Colles the second, who having lost his patrimony, and perhaps died in distress, his spirit may have been supposed to have haunted Leigh Court — which was the seat of



his joys in prosperity, and the object of his regret in adversity."

The manor of Suckley which adjoins Leigh, shared the same fate, as appears by Nash's History, Vol. II, p. 397:—

"The manor of Suckley, which ~~adjoins~~ remained in the name of Hungerford from the reign of Henry V until it passed by purchase from them to Mr. Edmund Colles of Leigh in the reign of Elizabeth. He left it to his son, Mr. William Colles, whose heir, Mr. Edmund Colles, sold it to Sir Walter Devereux, Knight and Baronet."

From T. Nash's Collections for the History of Worcestershire, Vol. I, p. 272.

"In the church at Grimley are painted on the wall in many places the arms of the King and Prince of Wales, and of the Deanery of Worcester, &c. &c. also the arms of Colles, a family of more than 400 years continuance in this County, being, Gules, on a chevron argent between three lions erased Or, two gemelles of the field and a grasses without number; the crest, a sea eagle charged with plates, seizing on a fish wounded proper." These paintings no longer exist at Grimley, and the oldest representations of the family arms now extant are those of Edmund Colles on his tomb at Leigh.

From the same, Vol II, p. 400

"Another capital farm in this hamlet is named Colles Place, which is mentioned in a ledger of the priory of Malvern in the reign of Henry III as belonging to the family of Colles." (According to Hakingdon it was the ancient residence of the family. See Graybeek's Heraldry of Worcestershire, Vol. I, p. 124.) "Mr. Edmund Colles, who has already been spoken of under Suckley, was of this family. He was in the Commission of the Peace and Deputy Lieutenant of the County; he served the office of Sheriff here, and was a justice of the Council of the Marches of Wales. This



respectable person, whose ancestors were possessed of lands in Leigh, Bramford, Hallon, Grimley, Suckley, Broadware and Cotheridge, married Joane, daughter of Robt. Somerville of Somerville's Aston, Com. Glouc., by whom he had one daughter married to Mr. Dansey of Brinsop in the County of Hereford, and a son, William, who married Mary Palmer, daughter and heir of Jerome Palmer by Elionor Paget, third daughter of William, Baron Paget, Lord Privy Seal and Knight of the Garter.

"Mr. Edmund Colles had a second wife of the name and family of Townsend, anciently in Norfolk. but most esteemed in the Marches of Wales. His issue by her were Susan Colles, wife of Sir Edmund Harewell, Knight of the Bath, temp. James I; and Edmund Colles of Grimley, a man esteemed the wisest of his age in the government of this country, whose wife was descended from the knightly families of Camdall and Blount of Vinlet, and was of the blood of Acton of Acton, a name existing before the Conquest.

"A brother of that eminent man, Mr. Edmund Colles was Mr. John Colles of Hatfield, com. Hereford, whose son's heir, Mr. Colles, married the apparent heir of Mr. Ingram of Earles Court, near Warecotie".

From the same, Vol. II, p. 75. "On the south side (of Leigh Church) is a raised monument having the portraiture of a man in a civil habit with a lion at his feet, and some verses over him that are scarce legible, and not worth much trouble. About the tomb is this inscription; -

'Hic jacet sepultus Edmundus Colles arm. qui obiit 19 Dec.  
A.D. 1606, aet. suae 76.'

(This inscription, legible in Nash's time, having been painted on, not engraved, has since disappeared).

"Above are his arms: - Gules a chevron Argent pelteted with two gemelles of the field between three lions heads erased Or. The Crest: - On a wreath Or and Gules a sea-fury Sable seizing on a fish proper wounded and bleeding. At the feet, Colles arms inslating Argent on a fesse between three annulets Gules as many leopards heads Or. (Somerville). On the side, Colles,



impaling Gure a chevron between three escallops Argent. (Townsend). In the second compartment, Colles with a label of 3 impaling Gure a fleur de lis in chief and two trefoils slipped in base Argent within a border engrailed Or (Palmer). In the last compartment, Colles with a crescent for difference impaling barrie undée of six Or and Sable (Blount). At the head Colles with a mullet for difference impaling Or a cross fleurette bezantée (Whitgift). The last scutcheon Argent on a fesse undée Sable 3 hares heads couped of the field (Harewell) impaling Colles. (Harbington M.S.S.)

On the north side of the chancel, on a raised tomb and under an arch supported by two pillars, is the posture of a Knight armed and kneeling; over this the arms and crest of Colles as before impaling 1<sup>st</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>. Azure a fleur de lis in chief and two trefoils slipped in base Argent within a border engrailed Or (Palmer), 2<sup>nd</sup> Gules a bend cotised between six martlets Or. (Mountney), 3<sup>rd</sup> Argent two bars Vert. (Heathull). Over the impaled coat is the Palmer Crest; on a wreath Argent and Azure a dragon's head and neck Or with a collar Gules between his two wings displayed Vert fretted Argent.

On the dexter pillar the arms of Colles, and over it some emblems, and above that the crest of Colles. On the sinister pillar his wife's single coat.

This inscription in great letters; - "Hic jacet sepulta Maria Colles uxor Gulielmi Colles armigeri quae obiit 14 Aprilis A.D. 1602", and about the tomb these words "Here lieth William Colles of Leigh in the County of Worcester Esq., with Mary his wife, daughter and heir of Jerome Palmer Esq. by Esther Paget his wife, third daughter of William, lord Paget, Baron of Beaudesert, lord keeper of the Privy Seal, Knight of the most noble order of the Garter, and a privy counsellor to Henry VIII, Edward VI and Queen Mary - William Colles died 20 Sept. 1615 and Mary his wife died 15 April 1602". Beneath are his seven sons and five daughters kneeling.

The Latin inscription in memory of his wife occupied a gilt



tablet below the inscribed coat above described. Both it, and that about the tomb, having been only painted, not engraved, have perished.

From the same. Vol II. p. 219. Ombroley, St. Andrew's Church.

"Likewise to the memory of Dorothy Colles of South-hall in the parish of Doverdale, daughter of John Nash of Capenhall, first the wife of William Dally, and after wife of John Colles of Hatfield, Com. Hereford Esq. She departed this life 17 July 1630 aged 102."

From the same. Vol II. p. 419. Berrington is a manor one mile north-west of Tenbury, and was annexed to the priory of St. John the Evangelist in Pembroke. After the dissolution of this priory it was granted (36 Henry VIII to Richard Andrews, who conveyed it to Mr Richard Palmer; from him it descended to Mr. Jerome Palmer, whose daughter and heir, Mary, brought it to her husband, William Colles.

From the same, Vol I, p. 181. Bushley. "The White Book of the Bishopricke of Worcester recordeth thus:— 'This manor being the Abbots of Tewkesbury, together with the Parsonage of Bushley appropriate, falling into the King's hands by the suppression of Monasteries, was afterwards passed away (3 & 4 Philip and Mary) to John Handby, or Hundby, from whom it came to Edmund Colles of Leigh Esq., who gave it to John Colles, the son of his younger son, Mr Richard Colles.'" (Habington M.S.S.)

Colles of Park Bury, Co. Herts. "Arms, Gules a chevron Argent pelletée charged with two bars gemelles of the field between three lions heads erased Or a mullet for difference. Crest, a falcon with wings expanded, <sup>preying on a fish</sup> all proper. These produced in a seal and rescripted to London for proof. After proved by Mr. Cole of the Court of Wards." From 'Visitations of Hertfordshire' London 1886.

Colles of Hampton-in-Arden, Co. Warwick. "Arms, Gules a chev. Arg. pelletée charged with two bars gemel. of the field betw. three lions heads erased Or. Crest, a scapie with wings expanded Sa. guttie Arg. preying on a fish of the last. Confirmed by Leonard and Vincent to Humphrey Colles of Hampton-in-Arden, son of Michael Colles of the



same place, a second son of William Colles of Leigh, Co. Worcester." From 'Warwickshire Arms and Lineages' compiled from the 'Heralds' Visitations and Ancient Manuscripts, by Rev. F. Kittermaster, M. A.

Of the seven sons and five daughters of William Colles of Leigh, whose effigies are carved on his monument in Leigh Church, the names of four sons and three daughters only are given in the Worcestershire Pedigree of the family in the British Museum. The sons are Edmund, who married Martha, dau. of William Tinsmith of Kettleby, Co. Lincoln; John, who married Mary, dau. of . . . . Borough; Thomas, and Jeremy. The daughters are Anne, wife of Sir Walter Leveson of Wolverhampton; Jane, wife of Raffe Selby of Barwick; and Mary, wife of Francis Blount of Astley, Co. Worcester. The name of a fourth daughter, Katharine, is recorded in the Leigh Parish Register as having died in Feb'y, 1599, Agnes Colles, whose marriage to William Winsmore in 1612 is recorded in the Leigh Register, was probably the fifth daughter. This leaves 3 sons unaccounted for; possibly some of them may have died in early life, or have left home and been lost sight of prior to the date of the 'Heralds' Visitation in 1634. and Andrew Colles of Lulsley, noted in the Visitation as a 'disclaimer', may have been one of them.

The Pedigree of the Colles Family, compiled at the above Visitation, (M. S. C30 in College of Arms), indicates apparently very prosperous circumstances, which is corroborated by the intermarriage of various members of the family with many of the principal families of Worcesters and adjoining counties. At what date the change in these circumstances took place is not recorded by Nash or any other authority so far as I am aware. Nash indeed tells us that the last Edmund Colles of Leigh, being loaded with debts, thought fit to sell to Sir Walter Dacre, Bart. (Sir W. Dacre was cousin to the Earl of Essex, who was in supreme command of the Parliament's army in the civil war. It may therefore be assumed that he also was a parliamentarian, which is confirmed by the consideration that had he been a royalist he could hardly have been left the means to maintain an estate, and much less to purchase one.) This statement however regarding Edmund Colles does



not account for the apparent downfall of the entire family, and their practical disappearance both from Worcestershire and other counties. To discover the probable reason we must call to mind the state of the time between 1641 and 1660. We learn from the history of that very troubled period that practically all the noble and gentle families of Worcestershire and adjoining counties espoused the interest of King Charles I in the civil war, and devoted their means as well as their lives to his cause. For this reason, as well as owing to the heavy fines imposed on all royalists by the parliament, and through being unable to get in their rents, they were compelled to sell their estates. Still they looked forward hopefully to being in some degree requited for all their losses and sacrifices on the accession of Charles II. In this anticipation they were very shortly undeceived. Charles after his restoration turned his back on those friends of his father, and declined absolutely to assist them in any way. Whether indeed he could have helped them without endangering his crown seems somewhat doubtful, and Charles was not of the stuff from which martyrs are made; true to his instincts he chose the path of the least resistance, and slighted those of his subjects who were no longer in a position either to forward, or to thwart, his wishes. The great majority of the suffering cavaliers found no remedy for their losses by any process of law, as the Act of Indemnity put a stop to any suits at law they might have instituted. They bitterly felt the statute to be, as they expressed it, "an act of indemnity for the King's enemies, and of oblivion for his friends." Thus they found themselves finally "abandoned to the comfort of an irreparable but honourable ruin."

That the Colles family was far from being the only one which suffered from the effects of the civil war and the subsequent financial troubles is clearly revealed by the fact that in Worcestershire alone approximately the names of 130 county families recorded in the *Heraldic Visitation* of 1634 are absent from that of 1682. See *Graybrook's Heraldry of Worcestershire* Vol II. pp. 693 & 696.

The names "Colles of Lye Court" and "Colles of Grimley" occur in a



Catalogue of Gentle Families in the County of Worcester A.D. 1660.  
(Add. MS, Brit. Museum, 19816), but the name of Colles does not  
occur in the Herald's Visitation of 1682 (MS K4 in the College of Arms).  
It would appear therefore that the Sale of the Leigh Estate to Sir  
W. Dacre was subsequent to 1660, but prior to 1682.

Returning to England William engaged his uncle Roger Dingley  
where he was, with eight other gentlemen and twenty women  
Colchester and Colchester, C. Warrington, and Dighton, C. Lincaster, to  
show him to Ireland, where he subsequently settled at a place  
called Dingley, in the parish of Charflemore, Co. Roscommon.  
He married Anne, daughter of one of the Peckham family in the  
King's County, by whom he had (with one daughter), three sons,  
John, William, and Charles. He died, after contracting a variety of  
fevers, in the year 1621, at the early age of 36.

As regards the parentage of William of Dingley, although we have  
unfortunately no first-hand proofs on the subject, owing to the  
want of documentary evidence which might elucidate the question,  
many old family papers having been lost or destroyed by fire, yet the  
following statements apparently connecting him with the Charflemore  
branch of the Leigh family are matters of certainty.

1. That William of Dingley was a native of Charflemore may be  
with confidence inferred from these facts.

1<sup>st</sup>. That on his return from Ireland it was to that County he  
went, as was natural for one having relations or friends  
there.

2<sup>nd</sup>. That he induced a number of gentlemen and women of  
distinction to follow him back to Ireland.

3<sup>rd</sup>. That his son, William, after having lost his wife and  
children in the Irish Rebellion of 1641, arriving in



William Colles of Doughill, near Athlone, ancestor of the Irish family of Colles, was born in the year 1585, (27<sup>th</sup> Elizabeth). He went to Ireland as secretary to John Harrington, (cousin of the first Lord Harrington of Eton), who accompanied the Earl of Essex to Ireland in 1598, and was there knighted by him. "Sir John Harrington is newly arrived out of Ireland, and the Queen is offended with him for going for his knighthood. He was with Sirone in the company of Sir William Warren, he reports him to be very strong. Sir Jeffrey Denton is directed from hence to treat with him, but the new knights opinion is that he will either not hear him, or not believe anything from any but my Lord of Essex." (Extract from a letter from Roland Wigte to Sir Robert Sidney, dated Barnard's Castle 10.<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1599. Collins' State Letters, Vol 2. p. 140.)

Returning to England William engaged his uncle, Roger Puresoy, "whose heir he was", with eight other gentlemen and twenty yeomen of Colesthill and Caldecote, Co. Warwick, and Drayton, Co. Leicester, to follow him to Ireland, where he subsequently settled at a place called Doughill, in the parish of Clonfinlough, Co. Roscommon. He married Lucia, daughter of — Lyons of Philipstown, in the Kings County, by whom he had, (with one daughter), three sons, Job, William, and Charles. He died, after encountering a variety of fortune, in the year 1621, at the early age of 36.

As regards the parentage of William of Doughill, although we have unfortunately no first hand proofs on the subject, owing to the want of documentary evidence which might elucidate the question, many old family papers having been lost or destroyed by fire, yet the following statements apparently connecting him with the Warwick branch of the Esigh family are matters of certainty:—

A. That William of Doughill was a native of Warwickshire may be with confidence inferred from these facts:—

- 1<sup>st</sup>. That on his return from Ireland it was to that County he went, as was natural for one having relatives or friends there.
- 2<sup>d</sup>. That he induced a number of gentlemen and yeomen of Warwickshire to follow him back to Ireland.
- 3<sup>d</sup>. That his son, William, after having lost his wife and children in the Irish Rebellion of 1641, escaping to



England, went to Coventry, in Co. Warwick, as in that County he might naturally look for sympathy and assistance.

4<sup>th</sup>. That it was there he was married to his second wife

5<sup>th</sup>. That William Colles, the surgeon, grandson of William of Doughill, went in his young days to Coventry to perfect his education, thus maintaining connection with Warwickshire to the third generation.

B. That there was in 1619, at the time of the Herald's Visitation, in Co. Warwick, a branch of the family of Colles of Leigh, namely, the family of Michael Colles of Hampton in Arden, the 2<sup>nd</sup> son of William Colles the elder of Leigh, (1495-1558).

C. That in the 1619 Visitation Pedigree there appears the name William, the second son of Michael Colles: x (see below).

D. That this William, one of a family of fourteen, and not the eldest son, might have been disposed to seek his fortune elsewhere if given the opportunity.

In view of the foregoing I requested Mr. G. Woods-Wollaston, Richmond Herald, of the College of Arms in London, to look into the question of the parentage of William of Doughill for me, and particularly with reference to the Warwickshire family; and he very kindly took a great deal of trouble about it. The result unfortunately of his search, so far as it went, proved to be negative, especially as regards William, son of Michael, above mentioned, it being ascertained with comparative certainty that he had died young and unmarried, and could not therefore in that case be the ancestor sought for.

I regret greatly that this effort of mine should not have resulted successfully, but do not feel disposed to incur the trouble and expense involved in following up the question further. Therefore so far as I am concerned it must I fear remain undecided, but the correspondence, Colles and Pusey pedigrees, &c are at the disposal of any member of the family interested in the subject.

Our descent from the Leigh family is proved by the fact that our arms and crest are identical with theirs, that we have always borne them since our ancestor came to Ireland, our right to do so having always been freely admitted. See for example the arms on the Funeral Entry of the youngest son of William of Doughill, Charles Colles of Magheramore, High Sheriff of Co Sligo in 1685, in the office of Ulster King of Arms in Dublin Castle. The arms on this entry show a plain chevron, which <sup>plain chevron is</sup> similarly shown on the British Museum Worcestershire Pedigree (1634) arms given as those of Edmund Colles, the younger, of Leigh. (Harleian M.S. 1566)

\*. In letter (24.2.74) from Ronald Colles: "I have just found W<sup>m</sup> Colles of Parkhouse (3<sup>rd</sup> son of W<sup>m</sup> Colles of Leigh (d. 1558), in the latter Pedigree you sent me"



Job Colles, born 1607. A valliant and distinguished soldier, who served under the great champion of Protestantism, Gustavus Adolphus, in the Thirty years war, but of whom unfortunately but few details have come down to us. He, (in the words of his nephew, William Colles of Kilcollen), "followed my good Lord of Hamilton to the wars, and was grievously wounded at the great fight of Leipsic city in y<sup>e</sup>. yeare 1631, and was honoured with y<sup>e</sup>. gift of one of y<sup>e</sup>. King of Swedes, Gustavus, swordes, with a silver handle, and whose hurt was grievous for 24 yeares" The "sworde" was handed down as an heir loom to his grand-nephew, Wm Colles of Abbeyvale, who setting a great value on it as a relic, and wishing to preserve it in some other shape than that of an old fashioned and useless implement, had its hilt worked into a pair of buckles with an inscription in verse on them, and later on, in London, in the year 1812, his son Richard had them made into two small goblets; and the mounting of a snuff box formed from a shell, which belonged to Barry Colles of Kilcollen, and is represented in one of his pictures. Job Colles had issue one daughter, Mary, who was married to William Stephens.

William Colles of Christchurch Place, Dublin, the second son of William of Droughill, was born in the year 1610. As a royalist he did not escape the troubles of his time. In the Irish Rebellion of 1641, wherein he was "a greate sufferer for his Majestie", he, his wife, and their two young sons, were driven from their home, in winter weather of unusual severity. The wife and children died of cold and hunger, as did countless others at that dreadful time. In the words of a contemporary writer "the rebels attacked Protestants only, leaving the English Papists, as well as the Irish, untouched. Some were killed, all stripped, some almost, others altogether, naked, not respecting women and sucking



infants. Many perished by famine and cold, travelling naked through frost and snow, the rest recovering Dublin in the same distress for bread and clothes."

William Colles subsequently passed over to England, where <sup>on 10 June 1646 he was married to Elizabeth, dau. of Christopher Hunt of Coventry; his</sup> ~~he married at Coventry~~ a second wife, with whom he afterwards in 1658 returned to Dublin. To repair his fortune he took a house in Christchurch Place in that City, and engaged in buying and shipping merchandize to London. His son William in his Journal, and in the history of his own life, mentions more than once his having bought and shipped to London, merchandize for his father. He is also said to have been a "philosophical instrument maker". He died on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1678/9

Charles Colles of Magheramore, Co. Sligo, the youngest son of William of Doughill, was born in 1616. He served as Captain in Cromwell's army, and received large grants of land in the counties of Sligo, Wexford, and Kilkenny, amounting in all to 2296 Irish acres. He served the office of High Sheriff of the County Sligo in the year 1685, was for 14 years Provost-Marshal of Connaught, and was a J. P. of Co. Sligo in the time of Charles II & James II. He was married in 1642 to Anne, daughter of Anthony Stratford, governor of the Fort of Duncannon, Co. Wexford. He died at Phibblestown, County Dublin 15 Nov. 1685, and was buried in the chancel of St. Michael's Church, Dublin.

His funeral entry, which is recorded in the Ulster King-at-Arms office in Dublin Castle, bears the arms and crest of Colles of Leigh. It may be mentioned here that the late Mr. Joseph Foster, the eminent genealogist, in his "Ancestral Families", gives a list of those families in the Co. Kilkenny, Ireland, who at that time bore arms by Right Heraldic, in which list the name Colles of Millmount, Kilkenny, is included, This was in the year 1899.



William Colles of Kilcollen, the second son of William of Christchurch Place, Dublin, was born in England in 1648. He compiled a variety of family records and other documents, among which is a portion of the history of his own life. He informs us of his early determination, "fostered by the example and presence of his grandsire's son", (Job Colles is supposed to be alluded to), to become a soldier and a scholar. Afterwards he desired to become "a minister", but desisted owing to his "imperfect speech", and left the "Church of Christe" to his elder brother, Christopher. (Christopher, b. 1647, d. 1724, was Vicar of Dromfield, Co. Derby.) This imperfect speech induced his father "to set him free from y<sup>e</sup> desk to pursue scholarship in England", when, determining on "physic and chirurgie, the noblest of studies, which demand the head and hand rather than the tongue", he, on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1668, left Dublin for Coventry to perfect his education. From thence he set out for London 19<sup>th</sup> February 1671/2 "to study medecine and chirurgie under the celebrated Lodge of Greenwich". On the 6<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1672 he went in the capacity of surgeon on board a ship bound for Lisbon, whence returning to London he studied again under Lodge until April 1674, when he left London to settle in Sheffield. After spending some years there he left Sheffield and returned to Ireland, and ultimately settled in Wickenny. He obtained through James, 2<sup>d</sup> Duke of Ormond free farm grants of considerable landed property in the County Wickenny, including the townlands of Kilcollen, Mandleen, and Lionapulshin, situate between Slikenny and Castlecomer. This property, inherited after his death by his eldest son, Barry, passed through the marriage of Barry's only child, Susanna, to the Meredith family: The townlands above named formed part of the estate of Lord Galway, on whose attainder they were granted to the "Hollow Blade Company" of London, by whom they were afterwards sold. There is a tradition of this William Colles having been carried off from his own gate in the evening, and confined with the addition of torture for three days in the Cave of Dunmore, then little known. He was ultimately brought back in consequence it was said of threats held out against "the Papists", to whom the misdeed was wrongly or rightly attributed. A portrait of him, painted towards the end of his life, is in my possession. He died in the month of October 1719.



Barry, or Barry Purfoy, Colles, of Stephen's Green, Dublin; Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny; and Clongown, in the Queen's County; the eldest son of William of Kilkenny, was born in the year 1697. Though only 22 years of age at the time of his father's death in 1719 he was already married, and having been appointed joint executor of his father's Will, had the responsibility of providing out of the estate the legacies specified for his stepmother, five sisters, and three brothers, all but one sister younger than himself. In his younger days he was said to have been wild and unsettled, but the responsibility thus thrown on him was quite enough to steady him, as indeed proved to be the case. He himself adopted the profession of a Solicitor, (or of an Attorney, as it was then called), and being a man of public spirit, incorruptible honesty, and distinguished talent, he pursued his business with great success, and added very considerably to the property he inherited from his father. He was an Alderman of the Kilkenny Corporation, and was twice Mayor of that city. An inscription on the city Sword and Mace states that he had them repaired in 1743 during his Mayoralty. He was presented in the same year with a Silver Cup, (now in my possession) by the Corporation of Kilkenny in acknowledgment of his exertions in promoting the Linen Manufacture in the town and district, a manufacture which unfortunately took no permanent root there. He was married to Isabella Murray, sister of Christiana Murray, his father's third wife, both of whom were consins of the celebrated Thomas Prior, founder of the Royal Dublin Society. One only of their children survived infancy, a daughter, Susanna, who in 1743 was married to Joshua Meredith, son of Sir Richard Meredith of Shrewland, Co. Wiltshire, 2<sup>d</sup> Baronet. Their eldest son, Barry Colles Meredith, became 7<sup>th</sup> Baronet in succession to his uncle, the Rev. Sir Moore Meredith, D.D. By this marriage all the property Barry Colles had inherited from his father, or had himself acquired, passed to the Meredith family. He died at his home in Dublin in April 1785, and was buried in St. Patrick's Cathedral, in the vault of D.<sup>n</sup> Richard Meredith, Bishop of Lichlin, and Dean of St. Patrick's. He appears to have been the first in later days to resume the use of the second surname, Purfoy, and to quarter the Purfoy arms, (Argent on a fess Sable three escallopes of the field) with those of Colles.



William Colles of Patrick Street, Kilkenny, and Abbeysale, in the parish of Blackrath and county of Kilkenny, the second son of William of Kilcollen, was born on 30<sup>th</sup> of August 1702. At an early age, on the death of her only child, he was adopted by his aunt, Elizabeth Colles, who being a person of singular beauty and attraction was thrice married, and each time wealthy, but an unfortunate taste, developed in later life, for litigation, dissipated most of her riches, and she apparently left little to William except some landed property at "Pibblesstown", and a house in Dublin, recently the Catholic University. He was fortunately however well qualified to make his own way, being a man of untiring energy and universal talent, besides being endowed with superior education, and pre-eminent as a mathematician and mechanic. In early life he had also some pretensions as a poet, and wrote several tragedies. He was the inventor of the modern machinery for sawing boring and polishing marble, and was acknowledged to be the first person, (at least in modern times), to apply power to that manufacture, all the processes having previously been performed by hands. Some fine architectural pieces in the county and City of Kilkenny prove the universality of his genius.

An example of the kind of work to which boring was applied may be seen in the form of down-pipes at a house on Viceroy's Quay, Dublin, two doors from Gent's Wool Mart. The Department of Science and Art have also secured some lengths of pipe and a hopper head for the Museum in Kildare Street. The pipes were bored by a machine invented for the purpose, which was probably very similar to the rock drills at present in use. Several lengths of water pipes, externally about 7 inches square, set as steps to doors, may be seen in Kilkenny, though probably no one there now knows for what purpose they were originally intended.

Like his brother, Barry Colles, William was an Alderman, and twice Mayor of Kilkenny City. He and his inventions are the subject of an interesting account in the "Statistical Survey of the County of Kilkenny," by Mr. William Tighe of Woodstock in that County, published in 1802, and dedicated to the Dublin Society, from which the following particulars are extracted;

"The machinery of the Marble Mill was the invention of Alderman



William Colles, (grandfather of the present proprietor). He first tried a model in a small stream, and finding it succeed, took a perpetual lease of the well-known marble quarry near Tickenning-  
'He was', to use the words of an ingenious communication, 'a man of great mechanical abilities, and abounding in a variety of eccentric schemes such as mark original genius, one of which was an attempt to make dogs weave linen by turning wheels; another, the supplying the Corporation of Dublin with bored marble tubes as pipes for distributing water through the city, which was defeated only by a combination of pump-borders and other mechanics, who rose in a mob and destroyed them on their arrival.' While he amused the populace by various devices, such as that of a musical instrument resembling an aeolian harp, which played by itself as it floated on the stream of the river, and many others, he applied himself as well to the construction of useful machinery for different purposes, and invented, among others, a cider mill, a water engine, and an engine for dressing flax, simple and efficacious, though now superseded. Such was the impression that his abilities made on the common people that to this day (A.D. 1802) his feats are proverbial among them, and they speak of him as a necromancer."

"Alderman Colles applied his marble to the construction of a vast variety of articles. In 'A Tour in Ireland', by two Englishmen, published in London in 1748, it is said, 'Near the mill are apartments called warehouses, where you may see such diversity of chimney-pieces, cisterns, buffets, vases, punch bowls, mugs of different sizes, frames for looking-glasses and pictures &c, that they would employ the eye the longest day and yet find something to admire' P. 191."

"The working of the smaller articles is now abandoned, as are also many of the contrivances of the inventor. The English traveller observes justly that 'the marble is full as durable, and bears as fine a polish, as any brought from Italy', and he continues, 'Though the stones in this quarry sometimes might weigh several tons, yet the method the contriver has used to lift them, draw them out, and convey them to the mill, without any other than manual operation, adds still more to the surprise. I am informed that this ingenious gentleman sends yearly several ship-loads to England, which gives me a particular satisfaction that they may find a native of



Ireland has out-done all they have hitherto seen.... I cannot hear that anyone has attempted to imitate the machinery. It is perpetually at work, by night as well as by day, and requires little attendance."

Alderman Colles was twice married, 1<sup>st</sup> to Sarah, widow of Lieutenant Robert Wheeler, by whom he had one daughter, and 2<sup>nd</sup> to Rachel, widow of the Rev. Matthew Gibson D.D., ex-fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, by whom he had four sons.

Against the exterior of the west wall of the south transept of St. Mary's Church, Kilkenny, there is a fine monument to his memory, the inscription on which was from the pen of his nephew, Dr. Jacob, Archdeacon of Armagh, of which the following is a portion;

To the memory  
of  
Alderman William Colles  
whose steady attention to  
all Religious and Civil Duties  
gained him the love of his Fellow Citizens  
and whose ingenuity  
procured him the admiration of Strangers.

His whole life was employed  
in works beneficial to Society.  
He died on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of March 1770  
in the 68<sup>th</sup> year of his age.

A portrait of him, and one of his second wife, which were painted apparently about the time of their marriage, are in my possession.

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Richard Colles of Dublin, fourth son of William of Kilcollen, was born on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1707. He was married to Miss Henrietta Taylor, then living in the parish of St. Andrew's, Dublin, the marriage license being dated 27<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1733. He died in Dublin on 15<sup>th</sup> April 1750, and his will was proved in the same year. He left two sons, Christopher and William, and several daughters.



Christopher Colles, "the first projector of Inland Navigation in America," was nephew to William of Abbeyvale, and, like his uncle, was a man of varied talent, untiring industry, and considerable genius. Left an orphan in early life, he passed into the charge of Richard Pococke, the famous oriental traveller, afterwards Bishop of Ossory; under whose tuition, advice, or example, he seems to have acquired a thorough general education; of which his great natural ability, and the association for several years after leaving school with his uncle William Colles, helped him to make the most. In 1763, when only 24 years of age, he got married to Anne, daughter of Matthew Keogh of Kilkenny, and in or about the year 1766 he left Kilkenny for Limerick where he practised as an Engineer and Architect, and was subsequently appointed 'Director of the inland navigation of the Shannon', an appointment which he apparently found more honourable than lucrative, for in 1771 he emigrated to America; to Philadelphia first, where in 1772 he delivered public lectures upon pneumatics, which he illustrated with an air pump of his invention, and then to New York, where in 1773 he lectured on the inestimable advantages of Lock Navigation.

Previous to the outbreak of the war with England he in 1774 proposed the erection in New York of a reservoir, and the laying down of a system of conduit pipes. With the aid of the cooperation of the City a steam pumping engine was erected near the Collect pond. The engine carried a pump eleven inches in diameter and six feet stroke, which lifted 417,600 gallons daily. The war unfortunately caused the abandonment of this plan when it was practically completed.

In a letter written by John Colles, a cousin of Christopher, who had recently arrived in America, to his brother William in Ireland, this account is given;

"New York, 22<sup>d</sup> Oct. 1778. I arrived here after a severe passage of eleven weeks and three days. The day or two before we arrived five English men of war of 74 guns, and a number of frigates, came here. The troops have evacuated Boston, and the rebels are in possession. Everything here in the utmost confusion, and so dear that there is no such thing as living. Business is not thought of by anyone, nor can I get anything to do, as everyone is thinking of quitting this place. As to the town it is almost burned, and



another fire has just happened. People who once lived in the greatest opulence are now reduced to the greatest beggary.

I have enquired for Christopher, who was coming on well, but this unfortunate dispute has made him fly up the country with the rest of the inhabitants, and the last person who saw him tells me he and his wife with his helpless charge were seen crossing into the Jerseys. This is all I can learn of him. His water works were almost finished when he fled."

"Immediately on the close of the war however he again in New York devoted his attention to his favourite projects of internal improvements. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of November 1784 he addressed a memorial to the two houses of the New York Legislature, proposing a plan for an internal navigation on the Mohawk River and Wood Creek, and thus opening up an intercourse with the interior parts of the United States to the Great Lakes.

"On the 1<sup>st</sup> February of the following year Mr. Colles again approached the Legislature with a report on the practicability of rendering the Mohawk River navigable, and a Committee to which it was referred reported a bill entitled, "An Act for improving the navigation of the Mohawk River, Wood Creek and the Onondaga River, with a view of opening up an inland navigation to Oswego, and for extending the same, if practicable to Lake Erie

"Here we find the great enterprise, later known as the Erie Canal, taking definite shape. All the authorities concur in giving to Colles the credit of having been the first not only to propose but to bring before the public in a practical form, the feasibility and vast national advantage of a system which would unite the Great Lakes and their boundless tributary territory with the Atlantic Ocean.

"Colles visited the country, and took an actual survey of the principal obstructions on the Mohawk River as far as Wood Creek. In a pamphlet published in 1785 he wrote, "The amazing extent of the five great lakes will be found to have five times as much coast as all England, and the countries watered by the numerous rivers which fall into these lakes full seven or eight times as much territory as that valuable island."



"The priority of Christopher Colles in the conception of the grand design is demonstrated by several passages in his pamphlet of 1785. For instance he says that "by this the internal trade will be promoted, by this ~~this~~ the country will be settled, by this the frontiers will be secured, by this a variety of articles, as masts, yards, and ship timber, which will not bear the expense of land carriage, may be brought to New York, by this in time of war provisions and military stores may be moved with facility in sufficient quantity to meet any emergency, and by this in time of peace all the necessary conveniences, and, if we please, the luxuries, of life may be distributed to the remotest parts of the Great Lakes, which beautifully diversify the face of this extensive continent, and to the branches of the numerous rivers which shoot from these lakes upon any point of the compass."

"Although this great project temporarily failed, owing chiefly to financial considerations, Colles continued to interest himself in other public matters. He issued proposals for publishing a "Survey of the Roads of the United States of America", a plan which seems to have attracted the necessary subscribers, as he published his Survey in 1789, illustrated by copper-plate engravings delineating the roads.

"In 1808 he proposed a plan of navigation between New York and Philadelphia, but, as before, without practical benefit to himself.

Colles has also been recognized as having been the first to make "formal proposals" by means of public lectures and newspaper articles during the summer of 1812, "for telegraphic intercourse along the whole American coast, from Passamaquoddy to New Orleans". In this his endeavours were only partially successful. A Semaphore Telegraph was established to signalize intelligence between New York and Sandy Hook, which for some years was under his personal direction. In an article in "The Historical Magazine" in 1869, by Mr. Henry O'Reilly, the writer says with regard to this proposed telegraphic system; "Had the wise suggestions of Mr. Colles been promptly sustained by the Government or by the business community—had his proposed telegraph system been extended along the coast—so as to transmit intelligence rapidly among the American people, many movements of British fleets and armies might have been essentially impeded, if not entirely frustrated; but in 1812 the citizens even



of New York were slow in appreciating the value of Colles' Semaphore Telegraph."

"While engaged in these philosophic schemes and experiments Colles, of whose home the angustiae res seem to have been the normal condition, contrived to eke out a scanty support by lectures on natural experimental philosophy - a course including Pneumatics, Hydrostatics, Hydraulics, Mechanics, Optics, Electricity, and the Terrestrial Globe, explained with suitable apparatus. In his intervals of occupation he took in a trifle for a sight at the wonders of natural history through his microscope, or the glories of the celestial world through a telescope he set up in the Park. In all his trials he seems to have maintained his courage, and preserved his self-respect. He believed in signs as firmly as Napoleon, and was fixed in his opinion that he was born under an unlucky star. Had he been brought up to the trade of a hatter, he was wont to say, mankind would have come into the world without heads. "There was something very engaging in his physiognomy; he was naturally cheerful and buoyant; at times pensive, yet free from any morose melancholy."

"In the last days of his life his friend, John Pintard, secured him an appointment by the American Academy of Fine Arts as Keeper of their valuable collection. Here he died on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of October 1816, in the 78<sup>th</sup> year of his age, and hence he was carried on Sunday afternoon the 6<sup>th</sup> to his grave in St Paul's Cemetery."

"Thus in poverty closed a life which was one of unbroken devotion to the interests of humanity, yet no stone marks the spot where lie his remains. In the ancient cemetery of St Paul's the busy crowd which throng Broadway observe with unflagging interest the monuments erected to Montgomery, Emmet, and McNevin, all of the brilliant race of which Colles was in another walk of life a no less distinguished representative. A memorial shaft should recall the inestimable services rendered by Christopher Colles to the State of New York and the country at large."

"In the great celebration which took place in New York in November 1825, when the waters of Erie united with the Atlantic, the effigy of Colles was borne with appropriate dignity among the emblems of that vast procession."

Mr. O'Reilly closes his account of him as follows; "As



unostentatious as he was sagacious, he was indeed one of those gifted men whose misfortune consists in being ahead of their times. The New York Historical Society has a portrait painted by Jarvis as a mark of respect from some of the eminent contemporaries of Colles, and that valuable Society may well point to it as a memento of one of the best men that ever trod its halls or honoured its membership. Be his memory ever honoured as one of the warthiest pioneers of American Progress!

The foregoing interesting account has been taken almost exclusively from an article on Christopher Colles in the Magazine of American History for June 1878, written by the Editor, John Austin Stevens. It was accompanied by a steel engraving of the portrait above mentioned.



William Colles of Millmount, Kilkenny, son of William of Abbeyvale, was born in the year 1745, and received his education in the celebrated Quaker school at Ballitore in the county Kildare, founded and carried on for many years by the Shackletons, father and son, in which school also the great orator and statesman, Edmund Burke, had some years previously been educated. Though not a school contemporary of Burke, William subsequently made Burke's acquaintance, and when visiting London on one occasion was an honoured guest in his house.

In his young days after leaving school he was rather unsettled, and it is on record that being unwilling to take to business, as his father was most desirous he should do, he, accompanied by another youth, ran away from home with the object of going to sea. They tramped from Kilkenny to Cork, where they were recognized by a friend of William's father who had been asked to have them looked out for in case they had gone that way, and were sent back by him to their homes.

Subsequently however he settled down in accordance with his father's wishes, and assisted him in the management of the marble business and flour milling, and after his father's death carried them on on his own account. In the year 1770 he built Millmount House, and in 1771 he married Mary Anne, daughter of Abraham Bate of the county Wexford, by whom he had three sons; William, Abraham, and Richard; and one daughter, Rachel, afterwards wife of the Rev. J. Ottewill Moore, D.D.

Owing to an accident William met with in early life, he was never really very robust, and was later subject to severe attacks of gout, in one of which, in March 1779, he died, aged 34.

He was buried by his own wish among the Quakers at Ballitore, for whom he had retained the affection of his school days, and to whose tenets he had some years previously conformed. That his wife did not share in his Quaker sympathies would appear from a story my father once told me. William was accustomed to wear, as all Quaker men did, a hat with a very broad brim, of which she did not approve at all. One day in a fit of petulance she took up a pair of scissors, and trimmed the brim in a liberal manner. On taking up the hat to put it on his sole remark was, "Ah! Mary, I see thou art minded to make a game cock of me". His widow outlived him for more than sixty years, dying in the year 1840 at the age of 90 years, and was buried in the old churchyard at Maddoxtown, County Kilkenny.



Richard Colles of Prospect, County Dublin, and of 119 Stephens Green, City of Dublin, Barrister-at-Law, the second son of William Colles of Abbeyvale, was born on the 8<sup>th</sup> of June, 1747. Having entered the Middle Temple he in the year 1782 was called to the Irish Bar, where he rose to considerable eminence. He published some professional works, and had others ready for the press at the time of his death; he also left behind him S. S. translations of Bracton and Glanvill. He was among the sufferers by the enmity of Lord Clare, who unrelentingly revenged himself for some strictures on his conduct which Richard had published.

He married 1<sup>st</sup>, on 5 Nov<sup>r</sup> 1770, Sarah, daughter of Denis George of Stephens Green, Dublin, Esq., and sister of Denis George, barrister-at-law, afterwards Baron of the Exchequer, and of Sir Rupert George, 1<sup>st</sup> Bart., a naval officer of high distinction. By this marriage he had several children, of whom only one, a daughter, Catharine, lived to grow up. His wife dying in 1793, he in 1796 married 2<sup>nd</sup>, Elizabeth, daughter of Goddard Richards of The Grange, in the County Wexford, Esq., and sister-in-law of the Very Rev<sup>d</sup>. Walter Plater Kirwan, the celebrated Dean of Killala, and by her he had issue surviving, two sons, Edward Richards and Henry George. He died on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 1816.

He is said to have been a remarkably small man, and, as sometimes happens in similar circumstances, contracted a close friendship with a singularly tall barrister named Mahaffy; and being inseparable companions, and constantly seen together in public, they became the object to their brother barristers of many witticisms, and at least of one facetious effusion, which in my young days I remember seeing in print, but the words of which I have now quite forgotten. There was a story told of what occurred on one occasion when they appeared in court on opposite sides of the same case, which if not true, is at least amusing. M<sup>r</sup>. Mahaffy addressed the court first, and when he had concluded his remarks the judge said "Please sit down, M<sup>r</sup>. Mahaffy". He replied, "I am sitting down, my Lord". Colles then began to speak. "When you address the court, M<sup>r</sup>. Colles", said the judge, "you should stand up." "I am standing on the seat, my Lord", he replied!

His son, W. H. G. Colles, in his autobiography says of him that he was "a very eminent barrister, and a good natured man, however, who resigned a judgeship on the day of his appointment at the request of his brother-in-law, Denis George, next in nomination to the vacant bench".



William Colles (2<sup>nd</sup>) of Sillmount, the eldest son of William Colles and Mary Anne Bate, was born on the 24<sup>th</sup> of June 1772. Having been, with his brothers, educated at Kilkenny College, he, in the year 1790, when 18 years of age, entered Dublin University, and obtained in 1793 a gold medal and scholarship, but having incurred the displeasure of the heads of the University, owing to his outspoken opinions on political questions, he was compelled to leave without taking a degree.

Of high ability, and a keen politician, he took a prominent part in the movement, at that time agitating the country, in opposition to the payment of tithes, and in favour of Roman Catholic Emancipation, and lived to see his principles triumphant.

The following copy of a letter in my possession, written to him by Daniel O'Connell, "The Liberator", with whom for many years he was on terms of close friendship, due no doubt to the similarity of their political views, may be considered interesting:

"Merion Square, 21<sup>st</sup> August 1840.

"My Dear Colles,

You see I have taken, or rather endeavoured to take, your hint. I did as well as I could, and according to my policy I will repeat the idea in many forms before I think I have fully complied with your suggestion. Sensitive men, — and most men of talent are so, — shrink from the repetition of the same thought. As far as the public are concerned it is a great mistake. It is necessary to say the same thing one hundred times before the public catch it. But then it becomes identified with the popular mind — so I delude myself —

For heavens sake why do you not attend a meeting of the Citizens' Club, and give us the benefit of one sarcastic argumentative interesting speech against the Union? Do not answer the questions, but think of the thing.

Very faithfully yours

Daniel O'Connell."

William Colles never married, and led the life of a man practically devoid of personal ambition. In early life indeed he established a small factory near Sillmount for hand-made writing paper from linen rags. It was quite successful prior to the introduction of paper-making machinery, with which hand made paper could not compete.

He died in October 1849, and was buried at Maddoxtown, beside his brother Richard, whom he outlived only a few days.



Abraham Colles of 21 Stephens Green in the City of Dublin, a very distinguished surgeon, the second son of William of Millmount, was born on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1773. His father died when he was only six years old, leaving his mother, a clever and capable person, with 4 young children. His first public instruction was received in the endowed school or college in Kilkenny, under the auspices of a kind and judicious man, Doctor Ellison, formerly a Fellow of Dublin University.

There was a portrait at Millmount of William Colles of Kilkenny, (his great-grandfather), who was, as mentioned of him in a foregoing notice, a physician and surgeon of some repute, and it is told of Abraham that, after gazing in his boyhood on this picture, he declared his intention of becoming a surgeon also, a decision on which he never changed his mind. Later on, during a visit at the house of an uncle in Dublin, Richard Colles of Prospect, he disclosed to that relative the passion he had conceived for medical and surgical studies, and his mother was soon advised to permit him to follow the bent of his inclination.

In the year 1790 he entered Dublin University. His progress at school had been such as to promise the highest collegiate success, but even thus early he evinced that singleness of purpose which distinguished him through life, by limiting his studies to passing through the course respectably, but without endeavouring to obtain premium and scholarship, as his elder brother had done. He was proof indeed against every seduction that might have lessened or interfered with his success in the profession of his choice. In corroboration of this I may mention that I have a letter of his, written from Edinburgh to his Mother on Nov<sup>r</sup> 30<sup>th</sup> 1795, in which he said, "I purpose not to spare any expence which I think necessary for completing myself in this profession. I would rather live on the Irish dish of Potatoes and points with thorough knowledge of my business, than to eat Beef every day and not know as much as I should of it." He embraced his profession indeed with the ardour of a lover, and paid it no divided allegiance.

In this place an anecdote connecting his name with that of the illustrious Edmund Burke ought not to be omitted. His uncle having had some correspondence with Mr. Burke on the subject of a satirical poem, Mr. Burke's letter suggested to



the young Surgeon" some remarks on the conditions of political satire", which he committed to paper, but on his uncle advising him to publish the paper, he thrust it into the fire with the reply that having a name as an author would injure him in his profession, for "not a dowager in Dublin would then call him in to cure a sore throat."

In the year 1795 J<sup>r</sup>. Colles obtained his diploma from the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, and then repaired to Edinburgh, at that time the first school of medicine in the world. A sojourn of six months made the Irish Surgeon a Scotch M.D., with which honour he started on foot for London, a journey none of the easiest even at so late a date as 1795. Of this expedition he left among his papers an interesting and accurate diary.

In London he attended the principal hospitals assiduously, and at Guy's commenced his acquaintance with J<sup>r</sup>., afterwards Sir Astley Cooper, which soon ripened into the closest intimacy and friendship, that lasted through life.

In 1797 J<sup>r</sup>. Colles returned to the Irish capital with little but his own energy and knowledge to depend on. His industry was astonishing, his spirits ardent, and he was blessed with the serenest temper. In his youth he must have been strikingly handsome, while a robust and well knit frame made his appearance still more engaging.

There was much to dissuade a young man with few friends and little money from embarking in the surgical profession at that time in Dublin, and even with the courage which belonged to him his purpose was occasionally shaken. In Dublin however he continued, and began his career in a sufficiently wide sphere, among the haunts of the poor in the city, as visiting physician to the Death Hospital, in that melancholy district called "The Liberties." There, with humanity equal to his professional zeal, he laboured for some time, waiting for better days. But although the public knew him not, his professional friends did; and among others, M<sup>r</sup>. Stuart, then surgeon-general, urged him to relinquish medicine, and solicit the appointment of resident surgeon to Stewards' Hospital, which happened to be vacant. M<sup>r</sup>. Colles was persuaded, gained the object proposed to him, and thus in the year 1799 made the first great step in his professional life. He was



connected with that hospital for over 40 years, for when in 1813 he ceased to be the resident surgeon of the institution, he accepted the appointment of visiting surgeon which he held until the year 1842.

His position was now a good one, and he turned it to the best account, his humane and unintermitting attention endeared him to his patients, while his knowledge, skill, and dexterity commanded the admiration of his pupils, for he soon began to add the reputation of an able lecturer to that of a profound anatomist and masterly operator. With such intellectual and moral qualifications his success was rapid, at the age of thirty he was in considerable practice, and its increase was steady until he reached the summit of his ambition. For thirty years he was incontestably the first physician and surgeon in Ireland. Though in the receipt of a correspondingly large income however, he amassed but little wealth, for avarice was not a stimulating motive to his exertions, while his benevolence and generosity were profuse. Except for an estate of about £2000 per annum which he purchased, he bequeathed, apart from the inheritance of his name and example, but little to his family.

Mr. Colles became a member of the College of Surgeons in 1800, and from that period down to 1836 he took an active and leading part in the affairs of the institution, of which he was three times President. In 1804 he succeeded to the chair of anatomy and surgery in the college. This was the second great step of his public life. He held this most important professorship for two and thirty years, and discharged its duties with matchless assiduity and zeal. The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland has long enjoyed a European reputation, and much of its celebrity is due unquestionably to the energy with which Abraham Colles devoted himself to its advancement during the entire time of his connection with it. Some idea of the stride which surgical education made in Dublin during this period may be gathered from the fact that when Mr. Colles became a member of the College of Surgeons in the year 1800 the number of medical students in Dublin did not exceed sixty, whereas in 1836 they certainly exceeded eight



hundred.

The uncle already mentioned, whose house he frequented much in his early days, once asked whether he ever passed an idle hour. "I passed two only last Saturday, and probably saved my life by it," was his nephew's answer. That Saturday was the tragical 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1803, the date of Emmet's insurrection. It was Mr. Colles' birthday, and he had visited his mother, who was then in temporary residence near Blackrock (Wharf Street) Thomas Street, on his return to town, he heard the discharge of the last shot which dispersed the insurgents. At that time he wore a yeoman's uniform, and had he not been detained at Blackrock longer than he had purposed, he must have been in the thick of the affray.

At the time when Mr. Colles performed the operation of tying the subclavian artery it had never been attempted in Ireland, and only twice in England. He was the first surgeon in Europe who ever passed a ligature round the largest branch of the aorta.

He was also the first to discover, and accurately to describe, the fracture of one of the bones of the forearm, which was believed up to that time to be a sprain only. The accident in question is now universally known to the profession as "Colles's fracture of the radius." (When my sister, Miss J. M. Colles, was at Stuttgart in Germany some years ago, a doctor there, on learning her name, asked her if she was related to the surgeon who discovered Colles's fracture! R.C.)

So far back as the year 1835 the health of this eminent man began to fail, and he now found the fatigue of lecturing too much. In the summer of 1836 he resigned his professorship in the College of Surgeons, but this step, absolutely indispensable to his health, was taken with great reluctance, and deeply affected his spirits.

On the occasion of his resignation the College assembled, and voted an address, assuring him "That it was the unanimous feeling of the College that the exemplary and efficient manner in which he had filled the Chair of the Theory and Practice of Surgery for thirty two years had been a principal cause of the success, and consequent high character, of the school of surgery in this country." This tribute of appreciation was accompanied by the presentation of a



superb piece of plate, which by his will he bequeathed as an heir-loom to his descendants. The College also adorned their hall with his full length portrait by O'Ryan, and their museum with a marble bust executed by Kirke.

In the year 1841, finding his health still declining, he resigned his appointment in Stevens' Hospital. His practice however continued almost to the close of his career, which took place, after much occasional suffering, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1843, in the seventy first year of his age. His remains were interred in the cemetery of Mount Jerome, and were followed to their resting place by the entire medical profession in Dublin, and by a vast concourse of private friends.

A baronetcy was offered to, and its acceptance more than once pressed upon, Mr. Colles. He firmly however, but modestly, declined it, observing that for himself personally such distinctions had no attraction, and that in consequence of the distribution he intended to make of his property among his children, an hereditary title would be an inconvenient honour.

The leading features of Mr. Colles' character were solid judgement, perfect probity, and the kindest of hearts. The charm of natural courtesy, the simplest manner, a most cheerful disposition, and unwavering good nature, made him the idol of his family, the delight and admiration of his friends.

The foregoing account has been for the most part taken from an article in the Dublin University Magazine for June 1844, and the following are extracts from some newspaper notices in Dec: 1843.

The late Mr. Colles was unquestionably the greatest surgeon that Ireland has produced in the present century. His life has been a career of indefatigable activity, and no man ever brought to the science or practice of his arduous profession a finer combination of the many intellectual qualities it requires. The enthusiasm so essential to success in any pursuit he possessed in a remarkable degree, and to this he united a soundness of judgement, and a vigorous masculine understanding, which preserved him from every speculative delusion, and mainly contributed to the confidence he inspired, and the solid reputation he enjoyed.



As a surgical operator Mr. Colles was without a superior for coolness, decision, and a steady hand. As a surgical lecturer he was unrivalled; his strong common sense, his complete knowledge of the subject, and great perspicuity, rivetted the attention of his pupils, while his sense of justice, and the exactness with which he discharged his duties, won their respect and regard. If he were indeed dearer to one class than another it was to the junior branches of his profession, who not merely looked up to him as an experienced and eminent instructor, but even regarded him with a veneration almost filial.

During a period of thirty four years he was Professor of Surgery in the Royal College of Surgeons, and for upwards of twenty the acknowledged head of the surgical profession in Ireland. This pre-eminence he enjoyed, as well by the decision of the public, evidenced by the vast extent of his practice, as by the judgment of his professional brethren, attested by numerous tributes of their admiration and esteem. Mr. Colles was a singular example of the attainment of the highest rank and honour without having excited the jealousy of a competitor, or made an enemy by his success, and this in a profession which those who admire it most will admit that envy is often evoked on slight grounds.

His experience and sound understanding rendered him a valuable counsellor in every affair of life, but he was ever ready at all times to assist with more substantial succour when the necessities of a friend required his aid, or any urgent distress appealed for sympathy. His respect for true religion was in direct proportion to his aversion for hypocrisy and fanaticism; he entertained a firm conviction of the great truths of Christianity, and in these he found consolation in his latest hours.

In politics Mr. Colles was a liberal, and that party had no adherent more devoted, upright, or unselfish, and in his latter days he looked back with proud satisfaction to the support he had given through life, altogether apart from any personal or interested considerations, to the cause of Catholic Emancipation, and to every great question which affected the peace or the liberty of Ireland. At the time when the Whigs conferred distinctions on a member of the medical, and on one of the surgical, profession, indignation was felt that Mr. Colles



should have been passed over on behalf of a favourite country. We are happy to learn however that, bad as the Whigs are, they were guiltless in this respect. The baronetcy was offered to Mr. Colles, he had the good sense and manliness to refuse the bauble. He died, as he had lived, an honest politician and an honest man.

The last honours paid to his mortal remains were the spontaneous expression of the feeling common to all who knew him. When these were about to be conveyed to their last resting place in Mount Jerome Cemetery, for an hour previously the entire of Merrion Row and the North and West sides of Stephens Green to Dr. Colles' house were impassable owing to the crowd of carriages, while among those on foot were to be seen members of the poorer classes from the neighbourhood of Dennybrook, where Mr. Colles' residence had long been a blessing.

In addition to the members of the College of Surgeons, and the President and members of the College of Physicians, who left their carriages and walked in procession after the hearse, there were also the Master of the Rolls, the Lord Chief Baron, Judges Perrin and Crampton, the Solicitor General, the Hon. Commissioner Plunket, and many members of the Bar, and other professions.

The chief mourners were the five sons of the deceased; his brothers-in-law, the Rev. J. Ottisell Morse D.D., and Dr. Robert Harrison; his sons-in-law, Major Harrison, and James Arthur Wall Esq.; and his cousin, E.R.P. Colles Esq.

Mr. Colles, besides being a constant contributor to medical periodicals, was the writer of two standard works on professional subjects.

I cannot, I feel, conclude this account of the life and the passing away of as perfect a character as humanity rarely presents. Better than with the following extract which I have taken from "The Life and Letters of James Colles", by his grand-daughter, Mrs de Forest of New York. It is from a letter written by Edward R. P. Colles, Dublin, to James Colles of the United States, who was at that time in Paris. It is dated 15<sup>th</sup> December 1843.

"About the middle of last month our cousin, Surgeon



Abraham Colles suffered so much as to make everyone of us wish that all was over. His pain eased on the last day of the month, he became calm and cheerful, and on the following day, collecting his family about him, conversed on ordinary subjects, and at seven in the evening desired them to order tea in his room, that he might see one more cheerful meal. He looked happy when he sat them about the table, encouraged conversation, and placing his arm around his poor wife who sat beside him on the sofa, pressed her to his heart, and expired so gently that until a loud cry from her eldest son announced the fact, she was not aware of it. He died as happily, as he has lived usefully and honourably.

A degree of public feeling was evinced which has seldom been equalled on similar occasions. The next day the clinical lectures at every hospital in Dublin were suspended, the schools were closed throughout the city, and the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons shut up.

On Tuesday the 5<sup>th</sup> his remains were laid in our beautiful Cemetery at Mount Jerome, attended by the noblest and most respectable in the city. But not the least remarkable was the enormous crowd of the poor from every quarter that followed. Even a poor distorted cripple limped from the Incurable Hospital, a distance of three miles, to pay the last honour to his benefactor. I have seen many splendid funerals, but never one in which the splendour was so completely overpowered and forgotten in the manifestation of deep feeling."

Mr. Colles was married on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April 1807 to Sophia, daughter of the Rev. Jonathan Cope, Rector of Ahascragh, County Galway, by whom he had five sons, William, Henry, Abraham, Richard and Graves, and four daughters.



Richard Colles of Riverview, (later known as Lavistown House), County Kilkenny, the third and youngest son of William Colles of Millmount, was born on the 27<sup>th</sup> of October 1774. On completion of his education at Kilkenny College he went to live with a relative in Dublin with a view to entering on a commercial career there, but after a short time he about the year 1795 decided to return home to Kilkenny in order to take up and carry on the marble business, which his Mother had with partial success kept going from the time of his father's death, a decision from which she, (apparently having no strong faith in its future), in vain sought to dissuade him. His character being, like that of his brother Abraham, a resolute one, and his mind being fully made up on the subject, all her arguments against his intention proved to be futile. Fortunately he was justified by the result.

The following notice of him and his business is taken from the "Statistical Observations relative to the County Kilkenny," by Mr. William Tighe before referred to.

"The most important quarry in the limestone district is that which produces the Kilkenny marble. It is called the Black Quarry, and lies half a mile south of the town. This stone when polished has a black ground, marked with a great variety of madrepores, of bivalve and turbate shells. The dressing of the rough blocks and some coarse work is carried out at the quarry, but the principal work is done at the marble mill, by means of which the marble is so easily wrought as to be sold at a very moderate price. The mill, which both saws and polishes, is remarkable for the simplicity of its structure and for the power it exerts; it may fairly be said to do the work of forty two men daily. Water is never wanting, and from the goodness of its structure it is scarce ever stopped on account of repairs.

The importation of the marble in a finished state into England and Scotland has been hitherto prevented by a duty of two shillings the cubic foot, what is exported therefore is the rude block. The blocks are principally consigned to Liverpool and Glasgow; in return Mr. Colles sometimes takes white Carrara marble at the former place, which he works up



at Kilkenny into handsome and high-priced chimney pieces, generally inlaid with coloured stones, and adorned with sculptures in relief.

Mr. Colles is extremely attentive to the business, which seems in a very thriving state, and wants nothing but the passage of a canal through Kilkenny to encrease it."

His close attention indeed, combined with his intelligent management, caused the business quickly to become highly prosperous, and it continued to prosper all through the duration of the war with France, more especially from the time when <sup>Napoleon</sup> enforced a general blockade with the avowed object of ruining British commerce. This blockade gave Richard his opportunity, as it had the effect of keeping foreign marbles from reaching Great Britain. He had consequently a demand for Kilkenny marble at a very lucrative price, and in as great quantities as he could possibly supply.

This ultra-prosperous condition of trade lasted unfortunately for him only during the continuance of the war, foreign marbles beginning to be imported again once peace had been made with the French nation, while the failure of the harvest in 1817 caused a famine in Ireland, which with the general trade depression, and political unrest of the period, made things difficult in that country for a good many years afterwards.

Richard Colles was married to Anne, daughter of Alexander Harper of Gorman, County Kilkenny, on 21<sup>st</sup> of June 1810. They had four sons, William, Alexander, Richard and Abraham, and several daughters. He purchased in the year 1826 a landed property at Rathstown in the Co. Kilkenny, in which he took a great interest, but this estate was sold, and as regards the greater part passed out of the possession of his family, after the death of his widow in the year 1859, the proceeds being divided among his children in accordance with the terms of his will.

He died on 17<sup>th</sup> October 1849 aged 75 years, and was buried in Maddoxton Churchyard, not far from Riverview House, his residence, which was built by him in the year of his marriage, 1810.



William Colles of Dame Street, Dublin, the younger surviving son of Richard Colles of Dublin, and brother of Christopher Colles, was born on 7<sup>th</sup> of April 1745. He was a Bookseller and Publisher in Dublin, and was Hon. Secretary of the "United Company of Booksellers" in that city. To him John Colles, who subsequently emigrated to America, was apprenticed and served his time. He was married in April 1768 to Anne Morris, only child and heiress of James Morris of Grangemore, County Kildare. He died on the 5<sup>th</sup> of May 1790.

Lieutenant William Morris Colles, son of the above William by his wife, Anne Morris, was born about the year 1785. He was an officer in the 8<sup>th</sup> (The King's) Regiment of Foot - (Ensign 1806, Lieut. 1808, on half pay at the end of the war with France 1816.) He was married in the year 1818 to Ursula, daughter of John White of the Castle of Weaford, and by her he had one son. He died while still a comparatively young man in the year 1825, and was buried in St Martin's Churchyard, St Martin's Lane, London.

The Rev.<sup>d</sup> William Morris Colles, M.A., D.D., of Grangemore, Co. Kildare, Ireland, and Vicar of Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, the only son of Lieut. W.M. Colles, was born in Weaford Castle on the 18<sup>th</sup> of April 1819.

Sometime after his father's death his mother was married a second time to Mr. Boxwell of the county Weaford, who was one of the most daring and skilful cross country riders ever known in Ireland, and many were the tales of his prowess in the hunting field. As may readily be supposed his young stepson was from his early years accustomed to ride, often following the hounds for a whole day; a sturdy lad, mounted on a shaggy pony, which he usually rode barebacked.

He was educated at a Weaford school, and afterwards at Trinity College, Dublin, where he took his M.A. degree. He had



all his life a great taste for mechanical pursuits, and in early youth expressed himself fully determined to be an engineer. Indeed his fondness for mechanical work clung to him through life, and nothing pleased him more than to be entrusted with the repair of some article, which was invariably carried out in a thoroughly workmanlike manner.

He however finally decided on the Church as a career, and when ordained was first appointed to a curacy in Preston, Lancashire, subsequently officiating as curate under the famous Hugh Stowell in Manchester.

In 1849 he was appointed Curate in-charge of Melton and the hamlets, and in 1866 he was presented by Mr. Brewen to the living of Melton Monbray, then vacant, an appointment which he held during the rest of his life.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> December 1850 he was married to Louisa, daughter of the Revd. Henry Taylor, Rector of Stoke Rochford, Co. Lincoln, by whom he had issue, William Morris Colles, Barrister-at-Law, of 705 Elm Court, The Temple, London; and two daughters.

The restoration of Melton Monbray Parish Church, some parts of which had fallen into a most dilapidated condition, at a cost of £10,000; and the enlargement and improvement of the Vicarage, also much in need of repair, which last Dr. Colles did entirely from his private purse at an expenditure of over £700, are two worthy monuments of his long and useful pastorate.

The preaching of Dr. Colles was of the highest order, his addresses were wholly extempore, and his utterance was always marked by feeling and eloquence. His indomitable courage and energy, combined with a strict sense of fairness, caused him to be admired even by those disposed to differ from him. In private life he was kind in the extreme, and for children he exhibited a special fondness. His generosity was of so quiet and unostentatious a character that the vast majority of his many charitable acts will never be known. His wit, and brilliant powers of repartee, are matters of common knowledge.

In his later years, in conjunction with Mr. J. H. Glascott of Killymore he compiled an elaborate pedigree of the family of Colles in Ireland, with some particulars regarding those



members of it who had emigrated to the United States, Canada, and Australia, and their descendants.

He died on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 1889, after a severe illness bravely borne, and was buried in the cemetery adjoining the vicarage, where his mother, his wife and his daughter had already been laid to rest.

The foregoing particulars regarding Dr. Colles were taken chiefly from an article which appeared in the "Melton Mowbray Times" of 15<sup>th</sup> February 1889.

"The Colles Memorial Hall," containing a parish hall, reading and writing rooms, a library, gymnasium &c, was erected to his memory in Melton Mowbray in the year 1890 at a cost of upwards of £1000, and was opened in the month of November of that year by the Bishop of Peterborough.

Edward Richards Colles, elder son of Richard Colles of Prospect, County Dublin, was born on 9<sup>th</sup> September 1798. Like his father he was a barrister, having been called to the Bar in the year 1828. Like his father too he was quite a small man, but one of considerable mental ability, and endowed with a most retentive memory; even in old age he could repeat long passages from Homer, Milton, Virgil, &c without momentary hesitation.

While still a young man he was appointed by the British Government Chief Justice of Sierra Leone, an office which he filled for some time, and on the termination of which he returned to Dublin. His long absence from Ireland unfortunately militated in a great degree against his success in his profession after his return, other and younger men having meantime come to the front. His circumstances accordingly during succeeding years were not very good, nor had he apparently energy and tact sufficient to enable him to better his position.



As a member of the Royal Dublin Society his love of literature procured him in April 1838 the position of chairman of the Library Committee of the Society, and in 1855 he was appointed the Society's Librarian on the resignation by Mr. John Patton of that office. He was especially noted for his kindness to the young men who frequented the library as students. He held the position of Librarian until the year 1876, when advancing years and increasing infirmities compelled him reluctantly to resign an office which was dear to his heart.

In his young days he had the reputation of being somewhat of a fire-eater, and though of a generous nature, he had a sharp tongue, and some sayings of his hardly bear repeating. He fought several duels, of one of which the following account is related. He had a dispute on the subject of repairs with the owner of the house he lived in, who, though ranking as a gentleman, was connected with business. The contest growing warm between them, ended in Colles challenging his landlord to a duel, which was accepted probably with reluctance, for when the time fixed for the encounter arrived, and Mr. Colles, a most orderly man, was punctually on the ground, his opponent had not put in an appearance, nor did he and his second reach the place of meeting until more than half an hour had elapsed, which time Colles spent in tramping about, fuming with rage and impatience. When at length his adversary appeared he addressed him as follows; "Sit, were you endowed with the feelings of a gentleman, or possessed with the punctuality of a tradesman, you could not have trespassed on my patience in this manner. Prepare to defend yourself." The duel then took place, but apparently without fatal effect in the result.

Edward Colles was married in the year 1828 to Frances, daughter of John A. Garnett, M.D., by whom he had two sons and three daughters, all of whom died unmarried except one daughter Mina, who was married to Maj. Gen. Robinson, R.H.A.

He died on 27<sup>th</sup> April 1883, and was buried in Donnybrook Cemetery beside his wife who had predeceased him in June 1865.

To him, and to his son, John A. Purser Colles, we are indebted for many of the dates and particulars availed of in the compilation of the Colles pedigree, and of these notes.



John Armstrong Purefoy Colles, the elder son of Edward Richards Colles, was born in the year 1835, and was educated for the medical profession. Having taken his M.D. degree in Dublin University, he went to India on receiving the appointment of Surgeon Major in the Bengal Army, a position which he held for several years. Returning to Dublin, he in the year 1870 became a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, and in the year 1872 went again to India, having meantime been offered the appointment of Professor of Surgery in the Indian Medical College, Calcutta. He died there, suddenly and unexpectedly, in February 1873, at the commencement of a promising career, aged 38.

There is a mural tablet to his memory in St Mary's Church in Donnybrook, Dublin, on which it is stated that it was

"Erected by  
his friends and comrades in India  
in token of the high esteem and regard  
felt by them for him,  
and to mark their sense of the great loss  
which his death caused among them."

Goddard Richards Purefoy Colles, the younger son of Edward Richards Colles, was born in 1838. He was educated in Trinity College, Dublin, where he graduated B.A. in 1860, and took the L.L.D. degree in 1866.

He was ordained Deacon in 1862, and Priest in 1863, and acted as chaplain to the Hackney Infirmary in London from 1877 to 1895.

He died unmarried on 4<sup>th</sup> of May 1895 aged 57.



William Henry George Colles, the younger son of Richard Colles of Prospect, was born in March 1803, a "seven months child", and like others of his family was of diminutive stature. In his autobiography he says, "Had my growth only continued in proportion to my size at birth I might have been a millionaire long before the celebrated Tom Thumb made his appearance."

On completion of his education, <sup>at school he studied law, and became a solicitor,</sup> ~~he was appointed to the office of~~ and not very long afterwards was appointed Patriarch of Swords and Lusk, County Dublin. Later on, from Lord Talbot de Malahide, Lord of the Manor, he received the appointment of Seneschal or Judge of the Manor of Malahide, "the largest and most extensive Manorial jurisdiction in Ireland, holding Courts of Admiralty, Court Baron, Court Leet, and Court Frankpledge, the amount recoverable therein being unlimited, and the jurisdiction extending to criminal as well as civil cases."

This position he held for many years, and in virtue of his office he received at a later date the honour of Knighthood from the Earl of Mulgrave, then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. When or why he ceased to hold his appointment is not on record, probably it was owing to this, like many other local jurisdictions, having been abolished.

It is not improbable also that while <sup>he</sup> was residing at Belgiffin Park near Malahide, and as he informs us partaking of the hospitality of Lord Talbot, and dining frequently at his table, his business as a Solicitor in Dublin must have suffered by his constant absence.

At any rate in the year 1859 he retired, and left Ireland with his wife and family for Canada. He settled at Blyth, in the province of Ontario, where he spent the rest of his life, and where he died in the month of September 1880. He was an enthusiastic Freemason and a prominent member of the order.

In or about the year 1836 he was married to Jane, daughter of Captain Phepoe, by whom he had four sons and three daughters.



The following notice, copied from an Oak Park, Illinois, newspaper of October 1911, refers to the youngest son of William H. G. Colles;

Edward G. J. Colles, a resident of Chicago for thirty three years, but interested in Oak Park because of his big real estate holdings here, died at his home, 3446 West Monroe Street, after a long illness.

He was an inventor of some note, having patented twenty feed water heaters, purifiers, separators &c. which bear his name, and for the more correct and economical working of power plants, which are used by many of the great railroads and manufacturing firms throughout the country.

Mr. Colles was one of that noted Irish family of the name. He was the youngest son of W. H. G. Colles, K<sup>t</sup>, barrister, serjeant of the Manor of Malahide, and Judge of the Malahide Manor Courts, son of a much respected member of the bar, Richard Colles of Dublin, and a first cousin of the celebrated surgeon, Abraham Colles.

Mr. Colles had that innate modesty and kindness of heart characteristic of his more illustrious predecessors. He was possessed of an indomitable perseverance, working continuously until success crowned his efforts. He devoted his time to business and to home life rather than to society.

He was married to Diana Elizabeth, eldest daughter of the late Charles G. Charteris, for thirty years Treasurer of Kent County, Ontario, son of the late C. G. Charteris of Ainsfield, Scotland, formerly a captain in the Light Dragoons.

His wife and daughter survive him. Interment was at Chatham, Ontario.

William Colles died on the 18<sup>th</sup> of June 1892 aged 83, and was married to Sophia C. Darley in June 1846, and died, 27<sup>th</sup> in June 1899; and his daughter, the youngest, is wife of the Rev. Richard D. Kebley, Dean of Chatham, Dublin.



William Colles of 21 Stephens Green, Dublin, Surgeon-in-Ordinary to the Queen in Ireland, the eldest son of Surgeon Abraham Colles, was, like his father, a distinguished physician and Surgeon. He was born on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 1809, and was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, where he graduated B.A. in the year 1831, M.B. in 1841, M.D. in 1865.

He was appointed Regius Professor of Surgery to the University in the year 1875, and the following is from an article which appeared in "Sanander's News Letter" on the occasion of this appointment:

"The place of the last of the great Irish Surgeons of the old school, (Mr. Adams), has been worthily filled by the election of one of the great Irish Surgeons of the present day. Mr. Colles is the distinguished son of a very distinguished father. The eminent son, to whom the University has just paid so high and well merited a compliment, has shown himself to be a worthy successor of his revered father. He is esteemed by his professional brethren as a man of great erudition and of the soundest judgment. As an operator few can surpass him, while in diagnostic skill and the judicious treatment of disease he has no superior. We do not think we exaggerate when we say that in difficult cases the most brilliant of our surgeons would willingly yield their opinions to those of Mr. Colles."

He was a Fellow and a past President of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, and acted as Honorary Secretary to the College for many years. He was also Surgeon to St. Steven's Hospital, Dublin, for over half a century, and only resigned the post of Acting Surgeon, and accepted that of Consultant instead, in 1891, owing to his advanced years and failing health. The latter position he held up to the time of his death.

William Colles was married in September 1859 to Penelope, daughter of Cadwallader Waddy, M.P., of Kilmacoe, County Wexford, by whom he had one son, Abraham Richard, Wesley Prize-man and Gold Medallist, Dublin University, Barrister at Law, who was married to Sophie E. Darley in June 1896, and died, s.p., in June 1899; and two daughters, the younger of whom is wife of the Very Rev. Herbert B. Kennedy, Dean of Christchurch, Dublin.

William Colles died on the 18<sup>th</sup> of June 1892 aged 83, and



was buried in the family vault, Mount Jerome Cemetery, Dublin.

The following are a few extracts from an eloquent address delivered at his funeral in St. Anne's Church, Dublin, by the Very Rev. & H. H. Dickinson, Dean of the Chapel Royal: -

"We are gathered together this morning, and in almost a public way, to pay a tribute of respect to one whose life was singularly marked by a shrinking from all publicity; yet we who so greatly revered him in his life cannot but join to honour him in death; and all the more so, and not the less, because he did not seek, or even seem greatly to care for, the 'honour that cometh from men'."

The heir of a name which stands <sup>among</sup> the highest in the roll of his profession, William Colles might as you know have been the inheritor also of a title that would have been well bestowed upon his father, well borne by himself, but that that father in declining the proffered offer of a baronetcy, was marked by the same modest unworldliness which with other and nobler gifts than earthly titles he transmitted to his likeminded son. To that best greatness he was born. He never 'achieved' greatness by any anxious seeking after fame; and what acknowledgments he did obtain were rather thrust upon him than coveted or sought.

For upwards of sixty years he was connected with a hospital whose high traditions of surgical and medical genius are associated with the history of Dublin; and until ten years ago he was a sedulous, invaluable, and daily visitor and worker in its wards.

None knew so well as those who are present here how greatly his sagacity and skill were valued by his professional brethren. How glad you were to have him with you in a consultation when you had work to do that was most difficult, and you knew also that in counsel and co-operation his interest would always be simply for the patient, and with no ulterior thought for his own credit or advancement. How ready he was to retire and efface himself when the counsel and aid had been effectively given.

Some more worldly than he might have supposed him, from reserve of manner, to be indifferent, but the poor knew better, to whom he ministered in Stevens' Hospital, who thronged his



hall each morning, when his practice was busiest, and to whom he gave his time and skill as patiently as to all others. They saw and knew that he was never indifferent to them, or to any form of suffering that he could relieve.

Our friend who has left us was not a talker. He never made a display of his knowledge in his own special fields of thought and work, nor was he likely to speak to many of his own more sacred and inner feelings, but he laboured and lived as one who did sincerely believe all that as a Christian he professed, and he died peacefully, calmly, and with a childlike trust in the Master whom he had tried to follow. What higher model, what nobler life, what better epitaph, can one propose to you?"

Henry Jonathan Cope Colles, of 14 Ely Place, Dublin, and Monkstown, Co. Dublin, the second son of Surgeon Abraham Colles, was born on the 24<sup>th</sup> of June 1810. On the completion of his education he was called to the Irish Bar, and not very long afterwards was offered the position of Principal Taxing Master of the Courts of Chancery and Common Law in Ireland, a position which he accepted, and continued to occupy for many years.

He was married in the year 1845 to Elizabeth, daughter of John Mayne Esq. of Dublin, Barrister at Law (1816), and grand-daughter of Mr Justice Mayne of the Court of King's Bench in Ireland. By her he had three sons, Abraham, John Mayne, and Henry J. Cope; and five daughters, all of whom were married; the eldest in 1866 to Sir Edmund Basley, Judge of the Supreme Court in Ireland, and a Judicial Commissioner of Irish Land; and the second in 1868 to the Right Hon. Edward Gibson P.C., Lord Chancellor of Ireland, who was in 1885 created Baron Lishbourne.

Mr. Henry Colles died on the 26<sup>th</sup> of December 1877, aged 67 years, and was buried in Mount Jerome Cemetery, Dublin.



Abraham Colles, the eldest son of Henry Colles, was born on 13<sup>th</sup> of November 1847. He graduated in Dublin University in Arts and Medicine, and received his M.D. degree there in 1878. He was also a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

He settled as a physician and surgeon in Wellington, Somerset, at first; and subsequently, at South Hampstead, where he practised for many years, during which time he was the Irish Lord Chancellor's Visitor of mental patients in the London District. In consequence of ill-health he was compelled to live for several years in the Isle of Wight, and eventually to give up his practice of his profession altogether. He died suddenly of heart failure at his residence "Inisfail", North End Road, Hampstead, on the 29<sup>th</sup> of January 1912, aged 64 years.

D<sup>r</sup> Colles, previous to the breakdown of his health, was a well known figure in Irish circles, and an active member of the Irish Literary Society. At the time of the distress in 1898 in the West and South of Ireland, he took a prominent part in promoting the fund for its relief which was raised through the joint efforts of Irish Associations in London.

He was married in September 1875 to Emily, daughter of Major Alexander Dallas of the Madras Infantry, by whom he had two sons, Henry Cope, born 20<sup>th</sup> April 1879, and Alexander Dallas, born 12 November 1880; and five daughters.



John Mayne Colles, K.C., LL.D., of 'St Petroe', Stillorgar, County Dublin, the second son of Henry Colles, was born in the year 1858, and was educated at St. Columba's College, and at Dublin University, where he was awarded the Gold Medal in English Literature. He was called to the Bar in 1880, and was subsequently for some time Private Secretary to his brother-in-law, the first Lord Ashbourne, then Lord Chancellor of Ireland.

But the work of his life was done as Registrar in Lunacy, an office which he held for over thirty years, and only resigned when compelled by failing health to do so. In this post of responsibility for the welfare and property of wards-in-chancery of unsound mind, his personal gifts found scope, it brought him into close touch with every side of Irish life, and his relations with those among whom he came in contact were always extremely cordial. His periodic visits to asylums were looked forward to by the patients, who knew that they had a most sympathetic friend in the Registrar.

Having become a member of the Medico-Psycho Association, the scientific study of mental diseases which he undertook made the medical profession regard him as almost one of themselves.

It is remarkable that in all the disturbances in Ireland, though he was constantly travelling all over the country as a Government servant, he never met with personal interference, nor was the business of his department at any time obstructed.

He was an excellent German scholar, and translated, from the German of Louisa Fichlet, "A Daughter of Rome", a Romance, published in 1893. He also edited "The Journal of John Mayne", his grandfather, during a tour on the Continent in 1814, after the fall of Napoleon, which was published in 1909.

He was married in April 1885, to Elizabeth Agnes, daughter of the Rev. Charles Dickinson, rector of Bodmin, Cornwall, and grand-daughter of Charles Dickinson, D.D., Bishop of Meath, by whom he had two sons and one daughter.

He died in London on 17<sup>th</sup> December 1922, aged 64.



William Colles of Pubna, Bengal, India, Physician and Surgeon, the eldest son of Richard Colles of Phiverview, was born in October 1811, and was educated in Trinity College, Dublin, where he took his degrees in Arts and Medicine.

He, on completion of his college course, went to Paris with the avowed object of studying in the Medical Schools there, but not being apparently by any means devoted to his profession, and having a very decided taste for painting and music, he spent most of his time in Paris in the study of Art rather than Medicine, in copying pictures in the Louvre and other galleries, and in the society of spirits congenial with his own. His father however insisted on his returning home, and taking up the practice of his profession; and he accordingly did so, entering into partnership with a doctor in England.

This partnership however for some reason or other did not last long. The love of the Bohemian life in Paris probably proved too strong, for we shortly find him there again, where soon afterwards he was married somewhat imprudently to a charming and amiable French lady, Marie Françoise Galmiche, with whom, in genteel poverty, he led for several years an existence of mutual affection, and by whom he had several children, none of them, except one daughter, living to grow up.

Shortly after his father's death he, accompanied by his wife & child, returned to Ireland, and thence at a later date they went to India, where he was offered, and accepted, an appointment under the Government as medical officer of the district of Pubna in the Province of Bengal. The Indian climate however after a few years proved fatal to his wife, and fearing its effects on his child also he resigned the appointment, and came back again to Ireland.

He was married a second time, in Dublin, to a Miss Anna Dorsling, with whom and his daughter he went to London, and took up residence there for the purpose of practising as a physician. This design apparently proved unsuccessful, and consequently they returned to Dublin where on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1873 he died rather suddenly, in the 62<sup>nd</sup> year of his age.



A Short Memoir of Alexander Colles of Mullinownt,  
Kilkenny, my Father.

Alexander Colles, born on 5<sup>th</sup> of February 1815 was the second son of my grandfather, Richard Colles of Riverwin House, Co Kilkenny. He was educated at Kilkenny College (the old school where many distinguished men had received their education), under the late Doctor Baillie. He attended school as a day scholar, but in those days day-boys were expected and required to be early and late at school, and my father has told me that he was often shivering outside the College gate waiting for admission before five o'clock on a winter's morning. There were at that time no such things as lucifer matches; a preparation of phosphorus being used, which was kept in a jar, and splinters of wood tipped with Sulphur, which each boy used to prepare himself, being dipped in the jar, a flame was produced, enabling them to light their candles. In these days of electric lighting one can scarcely realize such a primitive arrangement!

As a boy, my father was small for his age, and with a set figure, and his schoolfellows consequently bestowed on him the nickname of 'Grand daddy'. But when about fourteen years old he began to develop rapidly, and in a few years was considerably over six feet high and broadly made in proportion. He used to say of his height that he was 'Six feet two without a shoe'. His weight when in the prime of life was approximately seventeen stone. In appearance he was handsome, in manners quiet but attractive. In disposition he was open handed and generous to a fault.

He entered Dublin University when he was fifteen years of age, and studied there for two or three years, but for some reason or other did not take out a degree. In fact at that period of his life he appears to have been much more disposed for physical exercises and amusements, hunting, shooting, athletics, in all of which he excelled, than in anything in the nature of work or that required continued and steady application. Under his father's exhortations however he undertook more than once to study for a profession, but did not in any case carry out his intention. He walked the hospitals but never became a physician, attended lectures on anatomy but never became a surgeon, etc his dinners but did not get called to the bar. All through his life he had nevertheless more than a smattering of these things; his excellent memory and strong



Common sense, combined with the knowledge he had acquired to make him a very good amateur lawyer. His neighbours frequently came to put their legal difficulties before him, and his opinion readily given was generally found to be correct.

As a young man he was a daring rider, and a conspicuous figure in the hunting field, and many stories I have heard, from those who had been admiring spectators, of the towering fences and yawning ditches he negotiated which everyone shrank but himself. His great penchant however, which almost amounted to a passion, was for shooting, at which he excelled. As a snap shot, with the muzzle loading gun which he carried for many years, and which he used when as a boy I went out with him first, he very rarely missed a shot. He afterwards got this gun converted into a breechloader, but I think did not always shoot quite so well with it then as he did when in its old form, though he carried it every season up to the last year of his life, and never seemed to wish to change it for another.

About the year 1840 he accepted an agency from the firm of Mack Monsarrat and Son, the well known Wine Merchants of Dublin, which proved a successful venture, and in the following year Miss Isabella Monsarrat, a singularly gentle and attractive girl of 19, then fresh from school, came on a visit to his father's house. The natural result followed. Mutually attracted they soon became engaged. The story of how the engagement came about involves a somewhat romantic incident. Taking her with him one day to the city of Kilkenny to show her the various objects of interest, among other places, he brought her up the Round Tower of St. Canice's Cathedral for the ostensible purpose of letting her see the very extensive view of the town and surrounding country visible from thence. But while there he opened before her mental vision a prospect of a very different kind by proposing to marry her. Whether she accepted him then and there history saith not; if she did not then accept his proposal however she must have done so shortly afterwards, for they were married in the month of October following.

Through the influence of friends while still a young man he was appointed to several important land agencies, which at first were



profitable enough, but which afterwards during the lean and troubled years 1845 to 1850 became, owing to the famine and the disturbed state of the country, almost valueless. During those years, though it was almost impossible owing to the unfortunate condition of Ireland to do his duty by his employers without undue harshness to the tenants, it speaks volumes for his kindness and consideration to the latter, that he never lost his popularity with them nor his influence over them. Many a time, he has told me, he rode, after a long day in the County Wexford collecting rents, the whole way thence to Kilkenny with hundreds of pounds in his pockets, and was never once molested. That he had a pistol in his pocket also, and was fully prepared to use it if necessary goes without saying, but at any rate he never had occasion to use it.

It was about this time that an admiring contemporary wrote of him as follows, "Alexander Colles is a fine athletic young man, of great ability; prudent, wise, generous; successful in all his undertakings, yet bearing himself with modesty in everything; in short an example for all young men to copy."

When they were first married my parents had no house of their own. They came to live at my Grandfather's, which proved to be a somewhat unfortunate arrangement, as my Mother, though gentleness itself, found her many sisters-in-law rather difficult to get on with, which made her very unhappy. Accordingly about two years after their marriage they left my grandfather's house and went to live at Millmount, at that time inhabited only by my bachelor grand-uncle, William Colles, and two old servants. (I have a fond recollection as a child of this dear old man. He always carried sugarcandy in his pockets for me!)

On 31<sup>st</sup> July 1844 their first child (myself) was born at No. 17 Belvedere Place, Dublin, which was then the residence of my grandmother, Mrs. Monsarrat.

The next year, 1845, commenced the failure of the potato crop in Ireland which culminated in the following season, and brought in its train the twin scourges of famine and fever, among a people the most patient and light-hearted in the world, but a very large percentage of whom even in prosperous times lived in touch with hunger and nakedness. For them the failure of the potato crop,



their almost sole means of subsistence, meant untold suffering and death; but even for the comparatively well to do the time was trying in the extreme. My father carried on his land agency business as best he could, but it became more and more unprofitable, for few or no rents were paid, and money could not be kept by anyone who was at all charitably disposed in the face of so much misery and want.

At last the crash came. A friend, for whom he had in an unguarded hour gone security, failed to meet his engagements, and his creditors came down on my father, who in the impoverished state of his purse was unable to stand the shock. Imprisonment for debt was then the law, and to the degradation <sup>of imprisonment he resolved</sup> ~~and degradation~~ not to submit. He fled the country, first to London, and thence to Paris where his elder brother happened to be then living, and determined to remain abroad until his friends could come to terms on his behalf with the creditors. This they had not much difficulty in doing, for all expressed themselves well disposed towards him, and sorry for his misfortune; but he lost all his agencies, and had to begin the world afresh with a wife and six young children, the eldest only eight years old, dependent on him. Happy was he then in the love of his devoted wife, a better or more unselfish no man ever had.

After looking about him for some time in London and elsewhere he decided to return to Kilkenny, and take up the marble business there with which he was more or less familiar. It had been practically derelict since his father died in 1849, and for many years before then had been in a decaying state like almost every other business at that time in Ireland. To resuscitate and extend its operations he devoted himself with untiring energy, and in a few years he had acquired additional water power, erected a quantity of the most modern machinery, and collected a large body of skilled workmen. Thus being equipped, he succeeded in opening up a large and lucrative trade in a comparatively short time with all parts of the United Kingdom. About this date (1856) the duty was taken off foreign marbles, and henceforth they could be imported duty free, but for a considerable time afterwards this made no very perceptible difference, in fact the effect of foreign competition in the marble trade was not fully felt until some years after my father's death, which took place in 1876. From 1862 when I left school I was associated with him in his



business. In that year and the following (1863), he filled the office of Mayor of Kilkenny City. It was during his mayoralty, and owing to his exertions, ability, and influence, that the present Fair Green and Public Markets in Kilkenny were acquired and enclosed. Their establishment has been of great and lasting benefit to the town, both by the income derived from the tolls, and by taking the fairs and markets off the streets, where, much to the discomfort of the inhabitants, they had previously been held from time immemorial.

He was for many years a member of the Kilkenny Corporation, and a magistrate for that city. He was also a member of the County Asylum Board, and an ex-officio guardian of the poor.

In the year 1854 my father suffered from a very severe attack of gout, caused by a fall from his gig when driving, which brought him almost to death's door; and though after an illness of several months duration he gradually recovered, to all appearance seeming to be as well as ever, he subsequently was liable to recurring seizures of the complaint, which gradually undermined his fine constitution, and eventually caused his death. But for the gout he was a remarkably healthy man. He often told me he had never had a headache in his life, and did not know what the feeling was like. At the time of his death all his teeth but two were perfectly sound, one of these two had been stopped, the other he had got pulled out when it pained him, the only occasion on which I ever knew him to have a toothache. He never wore gloves, but so good was his circulation that he could hold the reins and drive all day in midwinter without feeling his hands cold.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of October 1841 he was married to Isabella Christiana, daughter of the late Mark Monsarrat of Dublin, and had issue by her two sons, Richard and Alexander, and five daughters.

He died on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 1876, in his 62<sup>nd</sup> year, and was buried in the churchyard of Maddoxtown, near his residence, as was also his widow who died on 12<sup>th</sup> of January 1881.

Probably had my father been more worldly wise his career would have been a more successful one, that is, as men count success; but I would far rather have had him as he was. I well remember in my schoolboy days his repeating to me the Latin sentence which throws some light on the character of one of



the great men of antiquity, "Caesar dando, sublevando, ignoscendo, gloriam sibi adeptus est." It has often occurred to me since then that these words convey in great measure a clue to his own feelings and impulses, and to his conduct in life.

I conclude with the words of an old friend of his spoken to me some years after his death. "He was a man of rare ability, and of an attractive, unselfish, and lovable nature. You have every reason indeed for being proud and thankful for having had such a father." And truly from my heart I can confirm this opinion of him, for I have never known any other man, (apart altogether from my relationship to him), whom I could feel capable of regarding with the same degree of reverence and affection.

R. C.

Returning to Ireland he in the year 1855 went thence to Liverpool, where he started an agency business to which he was entirely unskilled, and which consequently was not a success.

In the following year he proceeded to India where he applied for and succeeded in securing engineering employment under the Government, at first in a temporary capacity; but on proving his ability he was given, and without being required to pass the usual examination, a permanent appointment at Calcutta as Civil Engineer under the Government of India, which he held during the remainder of his life.

In the year 1859 he came to Ireland on leave, and on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January 1860 he was married to Mary, daughter of the late James W. O'Rourke of Dublin, accompanied by whom he returned to India, and by her he had one son, Richard William, and two daughters.

A sudden illness, probably due to sunstroke, unfortunately cut short his life on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January 1862 (the anniversary of his wedding day), in his 45<sup>th</sup> year.



Richard Colles of Gaya, Bengal, Civil Engineer, the third son of Richard Colles of Riverview, was born on the 26<sup>th</sup> of November 1827. Clever and handsome, he was as a boy wild and wayward, and the despair of an indulgent father, but having a pronounced taste for mechanics and engineering, and spending most of the time when he should have been, and was believed to be, at school, in the workshop of a gunsmith and general mechanic which he found irresistibly attractive, and where he picked up a wonderful amount of manual and mental dexterity, helped by a quick eye and active intelligence.

A desire for seeing the world, impatience of restraint, and a buoyant disposition, induced him in early manhood to go to America, where he travelled over a considerable part of the United States, gaining information and experience, but settling nowhere. Returning to Ireland he, in the year 1855 went thence to Liverpool, where he started an agency business to which he was entirely unsuited, and which consequently was not a success.

In the following year he proceeded to India where he applied for, and succeeded in securing, engineering employment under the Government, at first in a temporary capacity, but on proving his ability he was given, and without being required to pass the usual examination, a permanent appointment at Gaya as Civil Engineer under the Government of India, which he held during the remainder of his life.

In the year 1859 he came to Ireland on leave, and on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January 1860 he was married to Mary, daughter of the late James W. Ramsay of Dublin, accompanied by whom he returned to India, and by her he had one son Richard William, and two daughters.

A sudden illness, probably due to sunstroke, unfortunately cut short his life on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January 1868 (the anniversary of his wedding day), in his 41<sup>st</sup> year.



Richard William Colles, or, to give him the name he preferred to be known by, Ramsay Colles, the only son of Richard Colles of Gaya, was born at Buddha Gaya, Bengal, on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October 1862.

His father having died when he was little more than five years old, his mother with her three young children returned to Ireland. Her brother, Major General Ramsay, who had spent most of his life in the 10<sup>th</sup> Madras Native Infantry Regiment, and who, on retiring from the army, had also come back to Ireland, took on himself the education of his nephew, and he was accordingly sent to school at Dectio College, and Wesley College, Dublin.

On leaving school he entered the service of the Ulster Bank in Dublin, in which his ability and industry earned for him within a few years rapid promotion and the confidence of his superiors, but a desire for novelty, a love of literature, and an ambition for authorship, coupled possibly with other unacknowledged reasons, induced him to resign his position in the bank; the directors of which presented him, in recognition of his past services, with a testimonial and a gratuity when leaving:

He became the editor of the "Irish Pigaro", a weekly publication, and of one or two other magazines. He was also the author of a number of books and pamphlets, the most important of which were "In Castle and Court House, being Reminiscences of 30 years in Ireland", published in 1911, and a "History of Ulster" in 4 volumes, published in 1919. He also founded, and took a deep interest in, a weekly publication during the Great War, named "Blighty", which contained jokes, ironisms &c, and was illustrated with pictures, taken from "Punch", "London Opinion", and similar papers, and which was distributed gratis among the troops in the trenches, with whom, as may easily be believed, it was immensely popular.

He was a member of the Royal Irish Academy, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Antiquaries in Ireland. He was also for many years a magistrate for Dublin City.

He was gifted with plenty of ability, but seemed to have little liking for giving continuous attention to any subject. He was possessed by many notions and projects for securing success in the world, but benefited very little by any of them. His conversation was



vivacious and entertaining, full of witticisms and good stories. He was deeply read in practical literature, for which indeed, and for facts in general, he had a love amounting almost to infatuation.

In the year 1896 he was married to Annie, eldest daughter of the Rev. P. J. Sweeney, M.A., the rector of Annascaul, County Kerry, and widow of — Ross, and by her he had one son.

He died suddenly in London in October 1919 from a heart affection of long standing, at the age of 57 years.

William Morris Colles F.R.G.S., of 5 Elm Court, The Temple, London, and later of 3 Southampton Street, Strand, London, and The Grange, Slindon, Arundel, the only son of the Revd W. Morris Colles, Vicar of Melton Mowbray, was born at Melton Mowbray on 23rd November 1855. Educated at Oakham School, and later at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where he took his degree in 1877, he was called to the Bar by the Inner Temple in 1880, and not long after joined the staff of the "Standard" newspaper as a leader writer, where he widened his knowledge of men and affairs, and developed the pen of a ready writer.

Highly-informed common sense was a salient attribute of his mind, and he was well able to specialize as was shown when he took up the question of international copyright, and collaborated a book on the subject, "Playright and Copyright in All Nations." In 1890 he founded "The Authors' Syndicate," of which he acted as managing director, and in the same year he joined the council of the Society of Authors.

To the Authors' Syndicate he gave up a considerable part of his personal ambition as a writer, in order to devote himself to work which meant getting fair terms for authors, by making proper contracts with their publishers on their behalf, and finding the best market for their productions. Though this was admittedly a business undertaking it did not lead to his personal enrichment. A silver cup presented to him inscribed with the



He died on 11<sup>th</sup> October 1926.

## OBITUARY.

Series

### MR. W. M. COLLES.

Mr. William Morris Colles, who died on Monday, at The Grange, Slindon, Arundel, at the age of 70, was a remarkable man of exceptional mental powers, which he exercised with ardour, first in the profession of journalism and later in directing the Authors' Syndicate, which he founded. It was largely due to the influence of his friend, Walter Besant, that Morris Colles concentrated the wide experience which he had gained through journalism on the intricate problems of literary agency.

Born in 1855, at Melton Mowbray, of which town his father was vicar for nearly 30 years, Morris Colles went up from Oakham School to Emmanuel College, Cambridge, took his degree in 1877, and was called to the Bar by the Inner Temple in 1880. As a leader writer on the staff of the *Standard* during Mudford's editorship, Morris Colles widened his knowledge of men and affairs, and developed the pen of a ready writer. He was fond of telling in later years how Mudford consistently refused to let a man write a leader on a subject of which he claimed expert knowledge on the ground that a leading article must be the contribution of common sense, reasonably well informed, and be beyond the enthusiasms and the technical terms of the expert. Well-informed common sense was a salient attribute of Morris Colles's mind, but he was certainly not superior to enthusiasms (his were all generous ones), and he was well able to specialize, as he showed when he took up the question of international copyright and collaborated in a book on the subject, "Playright and Copyright in all Nations." The Authors' Syndicate, founded in 1890, in which year he joined the Council of the Society of Authors, was a business undertaking, and Morris Colles never pretended that it was anything else. But he gave up a considerable part of his personal ambition as a writer in order to devote himself to work which meant getting fair terms for authors with their publishers by making proper contracts on their behalf and finding the best market for their productions. His efforts did not lead to personal enrichment. A silver cup presented to him, inscribed with the names of many distinguished authors whose interests he had served, was a possession of which he was justly proud, but it was characteristic of him that he would spend ungrudging pains in favour of whatever he saw to be honest work though it might bring little or no return to himself. A tender heart, however, which he undoubtedly possessed, did not make him tolerant of incompetence. "Madam," he was known to say, "the fact that you are left a widow with five children does not qualify you for a literary career." His book, "Success in Literature," written in collaboration with Henry Cresswell, aimed at summarizing the elements which make for successful writing largely by quotation from what great writers have said of their work. In private life his sensitive and wayward humour endeared him to many friends. Morris Colles married, in 1880, Fanny Elizabeth, daughter of William F. W. Bird, of Walmer. She and two sons survive him.



names of many distinguished authors whose interests he had served, was a possession of which he was justly proud.

He would spend ungrudging pains indeed in favour of what he saw to be honest and promising work, but this did not make him tolerant of incompetence. "Madam," he was known to say, "the fact that you are left a widow with five children does not qualify you for a literary career." His book, "Success in Literature", aimed at summarizing the qualities which make for successful writing.

He was married on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1880 to Fanny Elizabeth, daughter of W. F. Wheatstone Reed of Watner, Es. Kent, Solicitor, and she, with two sons, survives him. He died at The Grange, Arundel, on 11<sup>th</sup> October 1926. In private life his wayward and sensitive humour endeared him to many friends.



