

Lord Trimleston

Matthias Barnewall, 10th Baron Trimleston (c. 1670-92); captain 1689; attended Jacobite parliament 1689; outlawed because of his loyalty to James II 1690-1; a hostage for the Limerick articles, after which he went to France 1691; lieutenant, 1st Troop of Horse Guards in James II's army; killed at the battle of Ortheuville (Roumont) in the former duchy of Luxembourg 10 September 1692; buried in the old church of St Gertrude in Tenneville; his 4 000-acre (1 600-hectare) estate at Trimlestown, Co. Meath and Clonskea, Co. Dublin, was confiscated, but recovered by his brother and heir, who had been a minor during the war.

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This tombstone was originally set into the floor of the old church (1682-1851), near the entrance to the choir, where it marked the burial of Lord Trimleston, an Irish officer who was killed in battle on 10 September 1692 at Ortheuville, not far from here.

Matthias Barnewall, 10th Lord Trimleston, was then 22 years old and an officer of the prestigious Troop of Horse Guards of James II, the exiled King of England, Ireland and Scotland. Matthias was descended from a noble Irish family, whose motto was 'Malo Mori Quam Foedari' – 'Death before dishonour'.

At this period there were numerous troop movements across the Duchy of Luxembourg in which Tenneville and Ortheuville lay, including the troops of Marshal d'Harcourt in the service of Louis XIV, King of France. This was the period of the Nine Years' War, in which Louis XIV faced a European coalition known as the League of Augsburg. Louis's aim was to expand his territory. In pursuit of this policy he had incorporated into his army Irishmen who had followed King James II into exile on the continent. Marshal d'Harcourt's army of 3 500 men was advancing towards Namur when it set up camp at Roumont on 8 September 1692. Matthias Barnewall was one of the officers serving with Marshal d'Harcourt.

Following warnings of the approach of a large enemy force, Marshal d'Harcourt was able to observe troop movements for miles around from the high ground of his encampment. On 10 September 1692 he saw troops descending from the hill opposite his camp. This force was a contingent of German troops attached to the coalition opposing Louis XIV; their aim was to attack the French force. D'Harcourt decided on the strategy of attacking the German force before their infantry was able to approach his camp. He sent his cavalry down the hill to ford the River Ourthe below and, with the advantage of surprise, gave the order to

charge. On their powerful horses, sword in hand, these well-trained horsemen broke the enemy lines, created disorder in their ranks and put the enemy force to flight.

Matthias Barnewall was killed leading his men. Over 7 000 men in all took part in this battle, known today as the Battle of Ortheuville.

This episode in the Nine Years' War – fatal for Lord Trimleston – is part of the history of the 'Wild Geese' – over 20 000 Irish soldiers who, faithful to King James II, followed him into exile. Most of them never saw their native Ireland again.

The tombstone is one of the very few surviving monuments to the 'Wild Geese'. The upper part shows Lord Trimleston's coat of arms, with the motto below: 'Malo Mori Quam Foedari' – 'Death before dishonour'. The inscription records his death at the Battle of Ortheuville 'at the head of the bodyguard of his king which he commanded and where he particularly distinguished himself'. It was less than a year since he had left Ireland.

Érin go brách!

Matthias Barnewall, 10ú barún Trimleston (1670-92); captaen 1689; ball den pharlaimint Sheacaibíteach 1689; ba eisreachtaí é toisc go raibh sé dílis don rí Séamas II 1690-1; bhí sé ina fhinné ar Chonradh Luimnigh; d'imigh sé chun na Fraince 1691; leifteanant sa chéad trúpa marcach in arm rí Shéamais; cailleadh é ag cath Ortheuville (Roumont) i sean-diúcacht Lucsamburg ar an 10ú Meán Fómhair 1692; adhlacadh é i sean-eaglais Naomh Gertrude ag Tenneville; ghabh na Sasanaigh an t-eastát de 4 000 acra a bhí aige i Trimleston i gcontae na Mí agus i gCluain Seach i gcontae Átha Cliath, ach fuair a dheartháir óg an talamh sin ar ais, mar gur mhionúr é i rith an chogaidh.

Érin go brách!

For further information see:

- A Meath officer's tomb at the church of Saint Gertrude in Tenneville, Eoghan Ó hAnnracháin and Stephanie Robertson, *Ríocht na Midhe* (the journal of the Meath Archaeological and Historical Society), Volume XXX, 2019.
- Une pierre tombale qui suscite bien des questions, Dominique Bosendorf, *Revue du Cercle historique de Tenneville*, tome 3, septembre 2019



