



MR. JAMES GARLAND & HIS WIFE NÉE CUSTANCE

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### THE GARLAND FAMILY

*(contributed by Mrs. R. G. Jayne)*

An account of the circumstances that led a British family to settle in Portugal is often of interest, not only because it is generally typical of many others, but because it is to them and the trade in which they were engaged that the close relationship between the two countries owes so much.

After wine and cork in Portugal comes the dried fish or «bacalhau» trade which has a British colour in that its early history is closely connected with the old colony of Newfoundland. The following is the story of how a Dorsetshire family were led to embark on its hazards.

The name of Garland has died out in Portugal, and except in a collateral branch, in England; nor as far as the writer knows are there any left in Newfoundland.

Garland, as has been said, is a Dorset name and as long as they existed, and wherever they were, the family maintained a close and proud connection with that county. Like thousands of their kind they were small landed gentry, owning property near Lulworth, Purbeck and Wareham. At some time or other they must have achieved enough distinction to be granted arms, possibly as having held the office of High Sheriff which included knighthood, but until the 17th century they seem to have lived placidly and inconspicuously, farming and raising stock,

buying and selling small manors and embarking on interminable petty lawsuits.

It may have been in hope of recovering by the practice of the law some of the money which had certainly been lost in litigation, that Augustin Garland, born in the early years of James I reign, was led to adopt the legal profession. It took him as far afield as Essex where he tells us that he lived «at the beginning of these troubles». In other words, the Civil War. Not being of a belligerent nature he found himself «enforced to forsake habitation».

«I came from thence to London» (he continues) «where I behaved myself fairly in my way», continuing to practice the law which at this time had become a tricky pursuit after vanishing statutes. Rather to his dismay than otherwise he was chosen a Member of the Long Parliament for Queenborough and was elected in June 1648. This did not last. «After the division of the house by the insolence of the soldiery» he says «some came to he and desired me to go to the House. I was then in my chamber of Lincoln's Inn,» where he had retired hoping to be quit of public life and its perils.

But in this he failed signally for one day «some came to me and desired that I should go to the House.» Scenting trouble he managed to avoid going there for a week or more, protesting that he would not be admitted as he would be looked upon as another person. (probably meaning that the soldiers in possession did not know him by sight.) «but», said they, «if you will go you shall have no contradiction.» This unfortunately convinced him.

«I went, and went in», he states «When I was in, the first business that came was the trial of the King, it was put upon me to be chairman for bringing this act of trial.»

This presumably means the drawing up of the procedure since everything else was in more important hands. Two men, Gilbert Millington and Henry Martin were appointed to act with him as assistants. All this was much too conspicuous for poor Garland's taste, and his next words have a familiar ring to all who have lived through such times.

«I did not know how to contradict that power or authority, «(be it what it will,) in that respect ..... When I came I «was forced to run throughout what they had imposed on «me ..... Having seen I could not shrink from them for «fear of my own destruction: thereupon I did go in and did that «which I have confessed ..... not out of any malignity «to His Majesty. I never had any disrespect to him in my life. «..... I did not know which way to be safe in anything; «Without doors was Misery and within doors was Mischief.»

He escaped as soon as he could from these perilous tasks and went down to Dorset. There he lived in uneasy seclusion till the Restoration, when learning of the Act of Amnesty he hurried to London in hopes (as he thought) of putting himself right by appearing before the Lord Mayor and claiming the benefit of His Majesty's Gracious Declaration. «This, he concludes, «has been the carriage of me, being always under fear and force.»

But it was not so simple as all that. Good reason had to be shown why this Benefit could not be widely interpreted, and he had to stand his trial along with the other twenty eight surviving signatories of the King's Death Warrant. The first hearing of his case, from which the above extracts are taken, passed off pretty well, but then to the poor gentleman's dismay, and we may suppose, disgust, he learned that a witness had been produced who professed to have seen him spit in the King's face as the latter was being hurried down the steps. He demanded to be brought back into Court to deny the charge, protesting that he had no recollection of being anywhere near the King as he went out, and said he feared that the witness was «an indigent person». «If I were guilty of this inhumanity», he cries, «I desire no favour of Almighty God.» The Court having failed to get anything beyond reservations and contradictions from the witness, let the matter go. Such a vehement action was not in keeping with the accused's patent lack of fanaticism, and we may give him the benefit of the doubt.

All the twenty-nine prisoners were condemned to death but only nine were actually executed after the horrible manner of the times. Some were flogged across London behind a cart and there is a current belief that Garland was among these.

Certainly he suffered confiscation and a fine which must have severely crippled a small estate. After this brief and lamentable excursion into public life he retired once more to Dorset and is buried with his forbears at Lulworth: He left a son, John who was born in 1640, and who in turn had two sons, John and Joseph. Times were hard, and after such a disaster as their grandfather's there was no place for younger sons to idle away a pleasant «Will Wimble» existence at home. James, either a younger brother or a younger son of Augustin, seems to have made up his mind to this many years earlier and went to seek his fortune in Newfoundland. By 1698 his son James was already well established in the dried fish trade at Trinity and is referred to as a Justice of the Peace in the notice of his sister Fanny's marriage with the redoubtable John Earle of Little Belle Isle. It was he who repelled a French landing with the aid of a small cannon and a row of scare crows, dressed to look like men posted along the cliffs.

It was to these cousins that Joseph was sent from Poole, the port close to Wareham, and one of the most important centres of the dried fish trade in England. The best market was the Catholic countries of Southern Europe, and Poole was second only to Bristol as a port for the wine trade. A house controlled by a man who knew of both types of commerce promised well.

Gradually from tentative beginnings the triangular business grew and for more than a hundred years was handled by the same family. First in Newfoundland, then in Poole and finally in Lisbon. Sailing ships laden with dried cod fish from Newfoundland anchored below Belem to await orders whether to discharge in Lisbon, or to proceed to the Mediterranean, or sail north to one of the Spanish ports. On their return voyage they called again at Lisbon and were frequently sent in to Setubal (invariably referred to as St Ubes) to load salt instead of sand as ballast. The salt of course being destined for the fisheries. Thence they were sent to Oporto to load port wine as a means of filling up the space above the salt, a sea trip being supposed to mature the wine. At times the ships were laid up at Poole to refit, and at the same time load with potter's clay for Portugal.

It soon became apparent that an intelligent and trustworthy agent was needed in Lisbon, and about 1778 Thomas, the second son of Joseph was sent there to open the house which became known as Thomas Garland and Company, which as well as the regular shipping business carried on various side lines such as bill discounting.

Meanwhile the activities at Poole grew and flourished. That a European war was not an unmitigated disaster for all is shown by the following extract from an article by the late Mr F. W. Matthews of Poole. Unfortunately his informant omitted to furnish him with any dates but from the context it seems to relate to the blockade prior to the Peninsular War.

«On one occasion Messrs Kemp's vessels sailed from Newfoundland with a cargo of codfish. At that time our own ships were blockading the Spanish and Portuguese coasts and of course such shipments were contraband. The high prices to be obtained tempted the owners to take the risk of capture. The captains reached Lisbon, sold their goods at fancy prices, and loaded up with wine, also of course contraband. Once more they were successful in running the blockade and arrived safely at London. Mr. Kemp proceeded post haste to London, battened down the hatches and retailed the wine in small quantities at very high prices, as stocks of wine were exhausted.

Out of the cargoes of these two vessels it is stated «a handsome fortune was made».

Whether the Garlands practised the same risky if lucrative methods is not known. At any rate they were not caught out. They certainly amassed a very considerable fortune at the beginning of the 19th century to judge by the fine houses they inhabited such as Langton Maltravers and Lychett Manor. They also had a town house in Poole, rendered necessary not only by their business but also by the impassable state of country roads in winter. That they were proud of their success and not ungrateful to its humble author was shown by George Garland, who had two split and dried bacalhau carved on a marble mantelpiece in his house in Thomas Street, Poole.

The family connection was as close as ever thanks to a

constant interchange of sons and nephews, but as the gravestones in the Lisbon cemetery testify they always remained «of Wareham» whether they came from that branch or the Newfoundland one. Each son in turn came to England, was educated at Sherborne and served an apprenticeship in one of the branches. He was then drafted to whichever house his talents or inclinations seemed to fit, and in time John Watts Garland was sent to join his father Joseph in Lisbon. The year was 1803 and the brief Peace of Amiens tempted him to make the overland journey. Its sudden rupture caught him as it did many other Englishmen and he was interned at Arras. There he spent his time not unpleasantly, improving his French and making a collection of books which his descendants possess. The exact date of his release is not certain but he was in Lisbon in 1808 and was a Member of the Factory when it was closed down in 1810.

Soon after this he was joined by James Pointer Garland from Newfoundland, who with his wife, Arabella Bland, settled in Lisbon. Later came their son James who married Miss Leonora Custance. He took over the banking side of the business and acted as agent for the London and Brazilian Bank until it opened its own branch in Lisbon.

John Watts Garland died in Lisbon in 1834 and there was an interval before his young son, Watts John, finished his education in England and joined his cousin. Not long after he joined the firm he married Miss Emily Augusta Laidley, whose uncle, Henry Laidley, had already become a partner in the firm.

Of the subsequent history of the family in connection with Lisbon there is not much left to tell: The codfish business was transferred to Figueira da Foz and handled by a branch of the Laidleys till the house was closed in 1905. After George Garland, the family in England drifted away from commerce and into the Services, principally the Navy.

In Newfoundland the Garlands continued to live busy useful lives in one public capacity or another — John Bingley Garland was the first Speaker of the House of Representatives, and in time they too died out.

The Lisbon branch continued all through the last century

but with the death of Mr. Watts John Garland in 1899 the male line became extinct.

#### AUTHORITIES.

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