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# JOHN LYNCH OF GALWAY (C.1599-1677):

## HIS CAREER, EXILE AND WRITING

RENÉ D'AMBRIÈRES  
ÉAMON Ó CIOSÁIN

During the Cromwellian era in Irish history (1649-60), hundreds of Catholic priests and religious along with numerous bishops were forced into exile on the Continent, with many seeking refuge in France, Spain and the Spanish Low Countries during the early years of the Puritan repression. For some, refuge was temporary, while awaiting political developments and toleration in the home country. For others however it was permanent; one such was John Lynch, archdeacon of Tuam, church historian, antiquary and polemicist. Lynch ended his days on the northern coast of Brittany, where so many Irish exiles had landed in the course of the seventeenth century. Many Irish priests also chose the province as their adoptive homeland. Several bishops exiled after the Cromwellian victory were particularly generously treated by Brittany's provincial and religious authorities: Andrew Lynch (1596-1681) of Kilfenora, Francis Kirwan (1589-1661) of Killala, John De Burgo (1590-1667) of Tuam, Robert Barry (1587-1662) of Cloyne and Patrick Comerford (1586-1652) of Waterford, Patrick Plunkett of Ardagh (1602-79) and Nicholas French of Ferns (1604-78). All received financial support in France and most worked as suffragan bishops in various dioceses; Kirwan, Barry and Comerford died in exile.<sup>1</sup>

John Lynch is an especially interesting representative of the exiled clergy, and his works are a very important source for tracing the fortunes of the Irish Catholic church during the mid-seventeenth century. His relations among the bishops placed him at a vital nexus between the hierarchy and the common clergy. Three members of his extended family were bishops: Andrew Lynch, James Lynch and Walter Lynch, bishop of Clonfert (1648-63) who died in Hungary in 1664.<sup>2</sup> While John Lynch remained faithful to the teaching of the Catholic Church and although he did not take up ministry in France, he had no desire to return to Ireland. Similarly, he was proposed several times for elevation to a bishopric, but political and other reasons operated against such a career. In any case, it seems he preferred to play a key intellectual role in the community of Irish exiles on the Continent, having several of his works published in Latin by the diocesan printer at Saint-Malo. Without loosening the close links binding him to his compatriots, Lynch engaged with the intellectual élite of the French clergy and became integrated into the host society in rural Brittany. However, there has been some doubt and confusion about the circumstances of Lynch's life and works in exile, and the date of his death; this article seeks to establish facts and clarify these issues.<sup>3</sup>

John Lynch used a Latin version of his name, Joannes Linchaeus, and a French version, Linche. English was his native language, but he understood and spoke Irish. Like most of the Lynches at the time<sup>4</sup>, he was from Galway, a maritime centre with strong commercial links abroad and with the ports of Brittany in particular. His precise date of birth is not known, but there is reason to believe he was born in 1599 or 1600.<sup>5</sup> It has been supposed that he was the son of Alexander Lynch, who had a school in Galway at the time, but there is no evidence to support this statement. He went to France at an early age. He studied first at Douai in the Spanish Netherlands<sup>6</sup>, where he acquired a solid educational foundation based on the *Ratio Studiorum* of the Society of Jesus. He wrote Latin with ease, and indeed in a rather complicated style. The details of two further stages of his education are known, these being his stay during 1618 in the Oratorian college in Dieppe which had opened only two years previously, and his presence in the Irish seminary in Rouen the same year.<sup>7</sup> Like most of his peers, Lynch was often short of money. While at Douai he was helped by William Tirry, future bishop of Cork, who was studying for his doctorate in theology there. In Dieppe Francis Kirwan, who was a teacher in the Oratorians' college, gave him assistance.<sup>8</sup> Was he destined for the clerical state at an early age? One cannot say for certain, as it was only on his return to Ireland that he was tonsured.<sup>9</sup>

Lynch was ordained in Ireland in 1625<sup>10</sup>, and made archdeacon of Tuam around 1631.<sup>11</sup> He held this benefice for some forty years, and resigned it around 1670. According to Matthew Kelly, Lynch lived in the castle of the last high king of Ireland, Ó Conchobhair.<sup>12</sup> He was chaplain to Sir Richard Blake of Galway.<sup>13</sup> He met the scribe Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh in 1642-43 and commissioned him to copy historical documents in Irish for his use, perhaps in preparing *Cambrensis Eversus*. Lynch appears to have met Mac Ffirbhisigh's pupil, Roderick O'Flaherty, in Galway at this time.<sup>14</sup> At the time of the siege of Galway by Cromwell's troops, Lynch held a number of offices in the local church, including the position of archdeacon of Tuam, and the wardenship of St Nicholas' college.<sup>15</sup> He is reputed to have departed to France in late 1652, after the end of the siege of Galway.<sup>16</sup> However, the precise events that led to his exile and the route he took are not known. Nor has any information on his activities during the years 1652 to 1660 been uncovered to date. His role in the siege is unclear. The deeply hostile *Commentarius Rinuccinianus* describes him as naive, bordering on treacherous, because he was favourably disposed to the surrender of the city in the belief that the promises made by the Parliamentary enemies in March 1652 would be honoured.<sup>17</sup> This hostility is scarcely surprising given Lynch's position as an opponent of Rinuccini. Yet he also appears in the list of those who, some months later, refused the final conditions imposed by the Dublin commissioners of parliament.<sup>18</sup> Lynch may well have sailed for France in the year 1652 or 1653, when French sources reported the arrival of large groups of Irish diocesan clergy in western ports such as Nantes and Les Sables d'Olonne.<sup>19</sup>

Lynch settled in the Saint-Malo area. There is definite proof of his presence there from July 1661.<sup>20</sup> It is doubtful that he lived there before then, as during the first half of 1661, Bishop Kirwan spent three months in Saint-Malo with Bishop

Andrew Lynch who was seriously ill for a short time<sup>21</sup>, and yet John Lynch never mentioned Kirwan's sojourn, an episode that he would undoubtedly have referred to in his writing had he been in that town at the time. In 1666 he was to be found a short distance further west, on the borders of the diocese of Saint-Brieuc, where he was a guest of the various branches of the Lesquen family in Saint Lormel and Pluduno. The Lesquens were an ancient Breton noble family and possessed several manors in the area, notably La Villemeneuc and L'Argentais. In 1666 Lynch baptised a child in Saint Lormel and was present in 1669 at a Lesquen de l'Argentais baptism.<sup>22</sup> Although connected to Saint-Malo and having published works there, he does not appear in the list of Irish Catholics settled in Brittany compiled in 1666 which contains a detailed list of Irish clergy and laity for the maritime town.<sup>23</sup> In September 1668 he was resident in the manor at La Villemeneuc in Pluduno, a Lesquen estate, and it was there that he wrote the preface of his life of Francis Kirwan, which he finished on the 25<sup>th</sup> September of that year, in, as he writes, 'Villemenuae'. It is likely that he spent his time between



1	Diocese of Saint Brieuc	2	Diocese of Saint Malo
3	Diocese of Dol	4	Diocese of Rennes
5	Diocese of Vannes	6	Diocese of Nantes

Fig. 1: Diocesan map of Eastern Brittany, including dioceses where exiled Irish prelates resided, and places associated with John Lynch. (Map: René d'Ambrières)

Saint Malo and Pluduno as in a letter written quite soon afterwards, he recommends his letters be forwarded to '*Monsieur Linche archidiacre de Tuam à Saint Malo*'.<sup>24</sup> This of course is not to imply that he did not travel further afield and very probably to Paris for necessities related to his later works such as *De Praesulibus Hiberniae*.

At the time he was publishing his works, Lynch figured in lists of candidates for bishoprics. He was not however elevated to such dignity, and his being called bishop of Killala in some sources is the result of confusion with another John Lynch, a Canon Regular of St Augustine, who was administrator of Killala diocese during Francis Kirwan's absence.<sup>25</sup> A memorandum drafted in 1662-63 includes a proposal in favour of 'John Lynch, a secular priest, archdeacon of Tuam, a writer of Irish history, a learned and good-living man, who is native of Galway City: the Pope is asked to appoint him to Kilmacduagh as bishop or vicar apostolic'.<sup>26</sup> Lynch's profile in another list of clergy living abroad who could be promoted, is 'a most erudite and zealous man who deserves well of his homeland because of his studies and researches, and now lives in Brittany'.<sup>27</sup> Hugh Mac Egan, writing c. 1665, cites Lynch among the bishops' nominees for high office: 'a learned, prudent and very worthy man, but he is not robust; he is a sexagenarian'.<sup>28</sup> Another list (c.1668) of possible candidates also mentions him, alongside James Lynch, future archbishop of Tuam, and Gregory Joyce who was exiled in Brussels.<sup>29</sup> The vast majority of the proposals made in these Roman documents were never acted upon; Lynch's age may not have been in his favour, nor were certain exiled Irish clerics looked upon too kindly in Vatican circles, as they were considered to be unwilling to return to their duties in their native country. Such considerations may have excluded Lynch, as did his association with senior Irish church figures censured by Rinuccini, notably the Old English Connacht bishops who were exiled in the same area of Brittany (Andrew Lynch in St. Malo, Francis Kirwan in Rennes and St Malo, and John De Burgo in Dinan). These prelates were obliged to seek individual absolution in the late 1650s, and remained somewhat under a cloud.<sup>30</sup> Lynch himself does not appear to have desired to return to his homeland, as evidenced by the Latin poem he composed c. 1667, a time when some Irish Catholic clergy were returning to Ireland. In response to Roderick O'Flaherty's question '*Cur in patriam non redis?*' ('Why do you not return to your homeland?'), he answers on a somewhat disillusioned note that he is too old to return, and face insidious persecution, and that he would prefer the religious freedom he experienced in France to the precarious life of a Catholic priest in Ireland.<sup>31</sup>

He was still alive in early September 1677 as is evidenced by a letter written by Archbishop James Lynch, then in exile in Madrid, which mentions 'this very pious priest and most learned historian in exile ... who is now advanced in years'.<sup>32</sup> He was however ill at the time, and died on 30 September, at L'Argentais in Saint Lormel village. The parish register states that '*Messire Iane Linche, prestre, Hiberne de nation*', having been ill, died piously and was buried in the Rosaire chapel, in what is now the old church in Saint-Lormel.<sup>33</sup> (Plate 1)

## LYNCH'S NAMES AND REPUTATION

Lynch's acclaim dates from the time of publication of his works. Even if he hid behind two successive pen names, *Gratianus Lucius* and *Eudoxus Alithinologus*, it appears that his contemporaries knew the true identity of the author.<sup>34</sup> No doubt he felt it proper to maintain some degree of anonymity in order not to make things difficult for himself in his host country. He may have chosen two pen names to address the different intended audiences of his publications, and also as a reflection of the fact that some of his books were works of controversy. *Gratianus Lucius*, the pen name used by Lynch when publishing *Cambrensis Eversus*, is intriguing in several regards. Firstly, one would expect the name *Lucius* to precede the cognomen. More interesting perhaps is the possibility that Lynch, whose classical learning was very wide-ranging, may have had in mind the emperor Gratianus, (375-383), of the house of Valentinian, who was the victim of the insurrection of Magnus Maximus (known also from the Welsh *Mabinogion* as Maxen Wledig). Maximus, who was described as a tyrant by various sources, organised his *coup d'état* by taking control of Roman troops in Britain and launching a campaign in France. Gratianus' troops abandoned him near Paris and passed over to the enemy, and he was later murdered in Lyon. Maximus in turn was overthrown, and after some years, the rule of the house of Valentinian was restored, in the person of Valentinian II, whose position had been protected by his mother Justina while he was a minor. This story has striking parallels to that of the Stuarts, Charles I (abandoned by his troops) and Charles II, with Cromwell in the role of the tyrannical usurper (from Britain) and perhaps the French king as another Theodosius the Great, who allowed the restoration of the house of Valentinian. Such an *exemplum* may well have been in Lynch's mind, as the lengthy dedication of *Cambrensis Eversus* (printed 1662) to the then king Charles II sketches the scenario of the overthrow of the assemblies of the wicked and the restoration of the reign on its second page.

*Eudoxus* ('he who knows true doctrine') is unremarkable as a pen name, but *Alithinologus* is a rarer term meaning 'he who tells the truth'.<sup>35</sup> Lynch no doubt saw himself as defending the truthful version of events in Ireland against the Capuchin Old Irishman O'Ferrall's pro-Rinuccini narrative.

Roderick O'Flaherty (1629-1718), the historian of Ireland and a pupil of Lynch, penned an epitaph for his mentor, stating emphatically that Lynch died in Brittany (Armorica) and calling him 'the light and height of his country'. O'Flaherty had already sent to Lynch in 1665 a long letter concerning the chronology of Irish History, which was published together with the *Ogygia* in 1685. This fact is an other evidence of Lynch's place inside the Irish community. However, Lynch's fame did not diminish after his death. The first account of his life was written by William Nicholson, Anglican bishop of Derry and a native of England, and dates from 1724. Nicholson styled Lynch 'a very learned person... titular archdeacon of Tuam' who had corrected the numerous errors and untruths recorded by the Welsh chronicler, Giraldus Cambrensis in *Cambrensis Eversus*. The 1759 edition of the French *Dictionnaire de Moréri* includes an article on Lynch, written in the same vein by Abbé Heneghan, superior of the Irish college at Collège des Lombards,



Pl. 1: The old church in Saint-Lormel, John Lynch's place of burial. (Photo: René d'Ambrières)

Paris, who draws upon Nicholson's earlier work. A year earlier, Abbé James Mac Geoghegan, a priest in Saint-Merry parish, quoted Lynch frequently in the first volume of his *Histoire de l'Irlande ancienne et moderne*, and in subsequent volumes (1759, 1763). In the section of the introduction which reviews the principal authors who had hitherto written on the history of Ireland, Mac Geoghegan paints the following portrait:

Jean (John) Lynch, priest, archdeacon of Tuam, native of Galway, in Connacht, was a man knowledgeable in the language of his country and well versed in all forms of literature. The disturbances caused in his country by the Parliamentarians' war and Cromwell's tyranny forced him to leave it. He came to France in 1652, where he published, among other works, an in-folio volume printed in 1662 under the title *Cambrensis Eversus*, and under the name of Gratianus Lucius. The author refutes, with good judgment and on solid grounds the slanders of Cambrensis against his nation. His chronology is not very accurate; and although his book is not strictly speaking a history of Ireland, it contains many curiosities drawn from the antiquities of the country.<sup>36</sup>

When the first English translation of *Cambrensis Eversus* was published in Dublin by Theophilus O'Flanagan in 1795, the translator wrote of Lynch: 'I have been traditionally informed that he was a man of the greatest benevolence, amiable manners, and virtuous dispositions, and that the whole course of his life was distinguished by a prominent and unaltered feature, the love of humanity and his country'. From all these pen-portraits it can be concluded that Lynch was thought of as having ended his days in a virtuous state, as Francis Kirwan had done.<sup>37</sup>

#### WRITING AND EXILE

Lynch's work may be divided into two categories, namely works of controversy and studies in history. The greater proportion of his scholarship, however, is reactive as, with the exception of his biography of Francis Kirwan, all his works are criticism, continuations or reworking of existing texts. Lynch's writings would appear to be largely based on research he conducted in Ireland in the period 1630-50. During this time he began translating Geoffrey Keating's history of Ireland, *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*, into Latin, and also translated (or had translated) part of *Annála Rioghachta Éireann* (the Annals of the Four Masters) into Latin.<sup>38</sup> Lynch drew on a broad range of Gaelic sources, and made Keating's history known to Continental readers through the various extracts in *Cambrensis Eversus*.<sup>39</sup> According to the translator, Matthew Kelly, Lynch's translation of Keating's *opus* was 'his first production'.<sup>40</sup> This work, the oldest known version of which dates from 1657, has remained in manuscript but the date of composition is undoubtedly earlier.<sup>41</sup> The presence of a copy in France may indicate that Lynch translated *Foras Feasa* with French ecclesiastical readers in mind: this would support the view that the translation was in fact completed, or perhaps penned entirely in France since the Irish version was the most frequently read in Ireland.

Four books written by Lynch were published in France between 1662 and 1669: *Cambrensis Eversus* (1662), *Alithinologia* (1664), *Supplementum Alithinologiae* (1667)



and *Pii Antistitis Icon* (1669). Information on the printers only figures on the last of these. However, a comparative analysis of the type featured in the four books leads one to suspect strongly that they were in all likelihood printed by the same printer, La Mare of Saint-Malo, rather than printers in both Saint-Malo and Saint-Omer, as has previously been suggested.<sup>42</sup> There is no doubt that the first three volumes came from the same presses and that they were published in France: their format and presentation is identical. A close examination of the Lynch's life of Kirwan, which incorporates references to Saint-Malo and the printer on the title page, supports the notion that it was produced by the printer who had worked on his three previous tomes. La Mare, the descendant of a branch of a printing family from Rouen, was the only printer in Saint Malo at the time, and his clientele included the local bishops.<sup>43</sup> Soon after their publication, Lynch's books became rare collectors' items, as can be seen from the fact that there exists in the British Library a manuscript of the life of Kirwan copied from the original in the eighteenth century (Egerton 116). Thomas Crofts, a well-known eighteenth-century English bibliophile, noted that most copies of *Cambrensis Eversus* were destroyed in the Great Fire of London in 1666.<sup>44</sup> Today at least ten copies of the original *Cambrensis Eversus* and eight of *Pii Antistitis Icon* are extant in libraries in Ireland, England and France.<sup>45</sup>

John Lynch defended Ireland's originality and authenticity in the face of English detractors. His first published work, *Cambrensis Eversus*, aroused great interest in Irish circles. Lynch defended what he saw as the truthful version of Irish history in opposition to the negative and simplistic depiction of Ireland as a primitive and barbaric country presented by Giraldus Cambrensis in his *Topographia Hibernica* (1188). An edition of the *Topographia* was published in the early seventeenth century, and was both printed and used as a source for contemporary Ireland by the English historian, William Camden, in his *Britannia*. By the time Lynch was writing, Camden's works, featuring material drawn from Giraldus, were available in France in both Latin and French translation.<sup>46</sup> Giraldus Cambrensis' descriptions of Irish barbarity also circulated widely on the Continent in Latin texts as a result of their being included in the collection of the 'Republics', a reference collection compiled for the use of the educated public in many European countries.<sup>47</sup> Lynch's critique represented the most sustained and comprehensive refutation of Giraldus at the time,<sup>48</sup> as Keating's earlier refutation was not in circulation for linguistic reasons, and Philip O'Sullivan Beare's refutation was little known.<sup>49</sup> Lynch began his work with a dedication to the newly-crowned Charles II, citing the great injustices suffered by the Irish people who had nevertheless remained loyal to the king of England, and requesting that the rights and liberties of Catholics be restored. Charles II is described in the English mode as King of Great Britain, Ireland and France. The French printer omitted the clause 'King of France' (which, although traditionally used in England, was deemed unacceptable in France) and only included it in the errata.

Lynch's next work was the *Alithinologia*<sup>50</sup>, which again comprised passages of controversy. Having previously criticised English writing on Ireland (and defended his fellow Old English) in *Cambrensis Eversus*, Lynch now attacked what

he viewed as the intransigent Irish party represented by the Capuchin priest, Richard O'Ferrall. The latter, who was of Old Irish birth, had been superior of his order's Galway residence and had supported Rinuccini's actions and policy. When the nuncio sent him to Rome in 1648 to defend his position, O'Ferrall was appointed consultant on Irish affairs in Rome. After Rinuccini's return to Italy, and with the help of a fellow Capuchin, O'Ferrall assisted him in writing the *Commentarius Rinuccinianus*, a voluminous justification of his actions while in Ireland.

Initially Lynch and O'Ferrall were well acquainted while in Galway and had an amicable relationship. However, over time, their friendship lapsed as in Lynch's opinion, O'Ferrall became misguided by undesirable influences, notably that of Rinuccini<sup>51</sup>. In 1658 O'Ferrall sent a six-page memorandum on Irish affairs to Propaganda Fide, defending Rinuccini's opposition to compromises. Lynch's *Alithinologia* and its supplement represent closely argued responses to this memorandum. The first book was printed in 1664, one year after O'Ferrall's death. It is stated on the first page that the book had been in preparation since 1660, and it may be that Lynch either had preferred out of prudence or had to wait four years before appearing in print. There may have also been financial reasons for this; however, no information has yet come to light on possible patrons of Lynch's first three works. The *Supplementum Alithinologiae* was published in 1667. As one might expect, the *Commentarius* was highly critical of the *Alithinologia*, which is presented as a malign book, its author's adherence '*obstinatissime et scandalosissime*' to the duke of Ormond's faction being denounced in the closing line of the *Commentarius*.<sup>52</sup> The *Commentarius* was not the first work that passed negative judgement on Archdeacon Lynch, as *the Aphorismical Discovery* had already done so regarding Lynch's position during the Confederate and Cromwellian period.

It was also in the mid-1660s that Lynch became embroiled in a dispute with César du Boulay (c1600-1678), and not with Boileau as some authors have indicated. Du Boulay, or Bulæus in Latin, a clerk in the Université de Paris, wrote a number of books, of which the *Historia Universitatis Parisiensis* is the most famous; however he made a number of inaccurate statements regarding the original population of Ireland, the Scoti, whom he confused with the Scots. Lynch, who associated the Scots with the English, sent Bulæus a long letter about 1664, pointing out errors in his study. He concluded by urging that Bulæus try to 'imagine that the French colonies of Madagascar, Guadeloupe and La Martinique were to claim for themselves a national history which can only belong to the French'.<sup>53</sup> Du Boulay responded by admitting his errors and deferring to the superior erudition of his correspondent.<sup>54</sup>

We gain a rare insight into John Lynch's apprehensions and opinions in relation to his publications in a letter that he wrote to Francis Harrold who was based at the Irish college of St Isidore's in Rome, in or about 1670.<sup>55</sup> Lynch looks back at his published works and expresses his happiness that *Cambrensis Eversus* was well received. However, he expresses great anxiety about Rome's reaction to his *Alithinologia* in which he attacks O'Ferrall's position; this may be his natural caution, or a reflection of the delicate relations between his fellow Old English

clerical exiles and Rome, as mentioned above. He also appears interested in knowing how fellow-countrymen had viewed his writings. He sent Harrold two copies of his life of Kirwan (*Pii Antistitis Icon*) and submitted several queries about episcopal and monastic successions for the purposes of the work he was preparing on the history of the Irish Church. On the basis of his letter, one is led to believe that Lynch saw the entire Irish ecclesiastical diaspora as his reading public.

#### HISTORICAL WORKS

Later in his lifetime, Lynch's focus and energies shifted away from works of controversy as he came to concentrate on writing history. He wished to pay tribute to Bishop Francis Kirwan, who may have been his uncle, and penned a biography which he entitled *Pii Antistitis Icon* (*The portrait of a pious bishop*), published under his own name, as archdeacon of Tuam. Although they were in exile in Brittany in the same era, Lynch and Kirwan do not appear to have been close as intimated by the fact that Lynch gathered details of Bishop Kirwan's life from the latter's chaplain, Thomas Kelly.<sup>56</sup> The *Pii Antistitis Icon* was prepared in a short period of time. It features a preface dated 1668 and was printed in Saint-Malo the following year. Gregory Joyce, canon of Sainte Gudule in Brussels, and former pupil of Kirwan, financed the publication, which is described as '*comptior Typographia*' (elegant typography) in the introduction. Joyce had also been forced into exile in Belgium, after officiating in Galway, where he had founded the Society of the Holy Sacrament, which blossomed under his guidance. Lynch thanked his benefactor in a lengthy dedication to Joyce. Another dedication, which is only to be found in certain copies intended for the then deceased 'M. de Bicqueneul' of Rennes, who had sheltered Bishop Kirwan, acknowledged the latter's generosity towards the late bishop.<sup>57</sup> In addressing subjects such as Kirwan's relations with French clergy and the conditions in which he lived during his exile, Lynch casts light on experiences that were common to many *émigré* Irish in seventeenth-century France. The book is also a detailed account of the career of an Irish bishop in the course of the mid-seventeenth century, an account of a type all too rare.

Lynch's *oeuvre* came to a close with the publication of his last and perhaps most interesting work from the perspective of historians, *De Praesulibus Hiberniae* (*Of the prelates of Ireland*). It remained in manuscript and was little used by historians until the late nineteenth century. Lynch's title resembles that of historian James Ware's Latin work, published in Dublin in 1665. Ware drew on numerous ancient documents in compiling his history of episcopal succession in Ireland but only included the Protestant successions after the Reformation. Lynch's work serves to complement Ware's as he incorporates some extra detail on the pre-Reformation period, chronicles the history of the Catholic successions after the Reformation, and presents abundant details on individual bishops and on phases of persecution of Catholics in the seventeenth century in particular. The history and purpose of Lynch's *De Praesulibus* have yet to be fully elucidated. Following its completion, the manuscript remained in Paris in the Oratorian seminary of Saint Magloire where a secretary copied the text.<sup>58</sup>

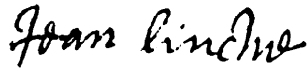
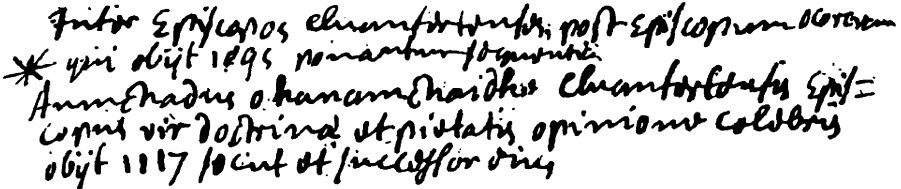


Fig. 2: John Lynch's signature in Saint-Lormel parish register.



Fuit Episcopus Charentensis, post episcopum Orlensensem  
 \* qui obiit 1695 nominatus fuit  
 Annedadius o. hancamerasius Charentensis episcopus  
 fuit vir doctus et pietatis opinione celebris  
 obiit 1617 fuit et successor eius

Fig. 3: Corrections in Lynch's hand.

On comparing the secretary's handwriting with Lynch's signature, one can conclude that the author probably made the corrections to it. This work serves as proof of Lynch's relations with one of the most eminent Oratorians of his time, Père de Sainte Marthe (1621-1697), superior general from 1672 to 1696, who, along with his brothers, published *Gallia Christiana* in 1656. The *Gallia Christiana* detailed episcopal and monastic successions in France from the earliest times, and was regularly updated and re-edited. Once it was completed, Père de Sainte-Marthe planned to extend it to the whole of Christendom by means of an *Orbis Christiana*, for which he distributed a prospectus in 1664.<sup>59</sup> The fourth volume of the *Orbis* was to have covered Britain and Ireland. It has been surmised that Lynch's work was to have been part of this monumental project and that this was how the *De Praesulibus* came to be among Père de Sainte-Marthe's papers. However, this is not a plausible argument as the Sainte-Marthe team's manuscript on Ireland has survived and only features the Anglican succession after the Reformation.<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless, one can be certain that the Oratorian guided Lynch's work. In his introduction, Lynch attributed the original idea to Père de Sainte-Marthe and thanked him for his support while he was assistant to the previous father general, from 1663 to 1669.<sup>61</sup> In addition, he referred explicitly to the *Gallia Christiana* in the letter to Francis Harrold.<sup>62</sup> Lynch was obviously working within the spirit of the Oratorian project, if not contributing directly to it. It is very likely that the manuscript of *De Praesulibus* belonged to the Sainte-Marthe archive that was bequeathed to Saint Magloire. Its existence was not unknown to subsequent writers, as Thomas Carte copied it in the early eighteenth century. Although Lynch finished the work in 1672, it was not to be printed until 1944.

## CONCLUSION

As with many other Irish clerical exiles in France, Lynch's career in Brittany was characterised by considerable dynamism: he was neither marginalised nor assimilated. He engaged in debate with his fellow-countrymen abroad and with his French counterparts alike, as well as keeping up correspondence with Roderick O'Flaherty in Ireland. Through his writing he bore witness to the exile of the Irish Catholic clergy at the time, and provided numerous and precious details of the life and tribulations of his fellow Irish churchmen in their dioceses and abroad. His biographies of Irish bishops express the cosmopolitan nature of their education, career and outlook; he himself was also a product of the internationalisation of Irish clerical education. While knowledge of Ireland remained poor in France down to the mid-eighteenth century, when much of French opinion was based on vague and contradictory clichés about the Irish,<sup>63</sup> Lynch may be said to have tried to provide what he saw as a corrective to centuries of hostile descriptions, beginning with *Cambrensis*. Using his considerable literary gifts, he strove to draw Continental attention to Ireland's long history, the works of its churchmen and its learned traditions in various languages.

## NOTES

- 1 Further information can be found in R. d'Ambrières, 'Les tribulations des ecclésiastiques irlandais exilés en Bretagne', in *Le Pays de Dinan*, vol XXI, (2001), pp. 165-189. An expanded English version of this article is being prepared for publication.
- 2 P. Walsh, *The history and vindication of the loyal formulary*, p. 749. *ibid.*, p. 575.
- 3 The authors are grateful to the following, who read drafts of this article and made suggestions: Dr Marian Lyons, Prof. Nicholas Canny, Dr Thomas O'Connor, Dr Niall Ó Ciosáin.
- 4 There was another branch of Lynches in Waterford.
- 5 He could not be ordained before the age of twenty-five according to the rules laid down by the Council of Trent. His ordination took place in 1625 (see below). This points to his birth not having been later than 1600. It can also be inferred from his presence on the Continent in 1618 to finish his studies that he was not more than eighteen at the time. He describes himself as '*adolescens*' in 1618 in *De Praesulibus Hiberniae*. It is likely that his studies in Douai preceded those in Rouen. Kelly states (vol. i, p. iv) that Lynch wrote *Cambrensis Eversus* around 1660 at sixty years of age, but no source for this statement is given; we have not been able to locate such a source.
- 6 Lynch, *De Praesulibus*, ii, p. 148 (diocese of Cork).
- 7 For Rouen see Lynch, *De Praesulibus*, i, p. 142 (diocese of Armagh), and for Rouen and Dieppe, Lynch, *Pii Antistitis Icon*, p. 33. N. Ó Muraíle's biographical sketch of Lynch in 'Aspects of the intellectual life of seventeenth century Galway', states that Lynch 'presumably' spent the years 1621-24 in Rouen. Ó Muraíle, in G. Moran (ed.) *Galway, History and Society*, Dublin, 1996, p. 156.
- 8 See previous footnotes.
- 9 Lynch, *De Praesulibus*, ii, p. 66 (diocese of Emly).
- 10 Lynch, *De Praesulibus*, i, p. 79 (diocese of Armagh), ii, p. 90 (diocese of Limerick). Richard Arthur, bishop of Limerick, ordained Lynch in that year.
- 11 This date is based on the following evidence: in *De Praesulibus*, ii, p. 279 (archdiocese of Tuam) Lynch writes that he had held the office of archdeacon for roughly forty years '*fere quadraginta annos*'. In 1672, the date of writing of *De Praesulibus*, Lynch was no longer archdeacon, as he styles himself '*Johannes Lynchaeus nuper archidiaconus Tuamensis*', 'formerly archdeacon of Tuam'. He had been archdeacon at the time of publication of his life of Kirwan in 1669. Malachy O'Queely was consecrated archbishop in 1631 and it can be surmised that he appointed Lynch archdeacon as part of the reorganisation of his diocese on his accession.
- 12 See Matthew Kelly's introduction to *Cambrensis Eversus* (3 vols Dublin, 1848-52), Vol. I, p. vi but again, no source given.

- 13 Lynch, *De Praesulibus*, i, p. 79 (diocese of Armagh). Kelly's introduction to *Cambrensis Eversus*, 1848, Aubrey Gwynn, 'John Lynch's *De Praesulibus Hiberniae*' in *Studies*, xxxiv (1945), pp 37-52 and more recently Corish, 'Two contemporary historians of the Confederation of Kilkenny', *Irish Historical Studies*, viii (1952), pp 217-36 are the best sources for this phase of Lynch's life. Some details about his Galway years and his associations with Sir Richard Blake and others are added by Nollaig Ó Muraíle in the biographical sketch mentioned above, and in a study of Lynch's fellow antiquary, the scribe and genealogist Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh, *The celebrated antiquary Dubhaltach Mac Firbhisigh (c.1600-1671): his lineage, life and learning* (Maynooth, 1996).
- 14 Relations between Lynch and O'Flaherty appear to have lasted for a considerable period, as the two were still corresponding in the 1660s. See Ó Muraíle, *The celebrated antiquary Dubhaltach Mac Firbhisigh*, pp 88-89, 100-01, 109, 116-17.
- 15 Ó Muraíle, *The celebrated antiquary*, pp 116-17.
- 16 It is likely that he fled to France after the siege. *Commentarius Rinuccinianus*, v, p. 181, states that Lynch was in Ireland from the beginning of the war and 'remained there until the surrender of Galway and beyond, and finally went into exile to avoid the extreme fury of the English'. This does not specify a date for his departure; however, the fact that this passage is included under the year 1654 may be some indication that Lynch left Galway later than 1652. Another source which indicates 1652 is much later, see James Mac Geoghegan, *Histoire de l'Irlande ancienne et moderne* (Paris and Amsterdam, 1758-63), i, p. 55. A memorandum in the *Fondo di Vienna* states that Lynch resided in France for the previous twelve years; the document, written by Burgat, is unfortunately undated but Millett surmises 1633-4, no doubt an error for 1663-4 as all other documents in the volume are from the 1660s. See 'Calendar of Volume 16 of the *Fondo di Vienna*' in *Collectanea Hibernica*, vol. xxxviii (38), 1996, p. 63. If the 1663-4 dating is correct, it confirms the accuracy of Mac Geoghegan's date.
- 17 *Commentarius Rinuccinianus*, v, p. 18.
- 18 Hardiman, *History of Galway*, appendix, October 1652 list, among those being 'John Lynche cler.', who is most probably our author.
- 19 Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Correspondance Politique, Angleterre, vol 61, f. 247, note to Cardinal Mazarin on such arrivals, circa July 1653.
- 20 Indication in Point 11 of Instructions for William Burgat, dated 18 July 1661, in 'Miscellaneous documents' in *Archivium Hibernicum*, xv (1950), p. 39. It should be noted that the date of 12th August 1660 which figures on the letter from John Lynch in the archives of St Isidore's college, Rome, as published by Brendan Jennings in 'Documents from the archives of St Isidore's college, Rome' in *Analecta Hibernica*, vi (1934), p. 246, is clearly an error as it is incompatible with the entire content of the letter which describes Lynch's published work, none of which had been printed in 1660. Our analysis of this letter (see below) suggests the date 12 August 1670 (probably due to a clerical mistake).
- 21 Lynch, *Pii Antistitis Icon*, p. 233.
- 22 His signature appears twice on the Saint-Lormel parish register: see for example 10 July 1666.
- 23 Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Mémoires et Documents, France, Mss, 1508.
- 24 See Jennings, 'Documents from the archives of St Isidore's college, Rome', *Analecta Hibernica*, vol VI, (1934), p. 246.
- 25 For this other John Lynch, see Millett, *Coll. Hib.*, vol 41 (1999), pp. 14-15; it would appear this is the same John Lynch 'prior' mentioned in *Comm. Rin.*
- 26 Benignus Millett, 'Volume 14 of the *Fondo di Vienna*' in *Coll. Hib.*, xxx (1989), p. 29. Millett dates 1663, whereas the letter refers to the exiled bishop of Cork being alive in France, *ibid.*, p. 27; this is Robert Barry, who died in 1662; it may be that news of Barry's death took time to reach the author of the memorandum.
- 27 Millett, 'Calendar of volume 16 of the *Fondo di Vienna*', *Coll. Hib.*, vol 41, (1999), p. 15.; further mention, p. 20.
- 28 Millett, 'Calendar of volume 16 of the *Fondo di Vienna*', *Coll. Hib.*, vol 41, (1999), p. 12.
- 29 Millett, 'Calendar of *Scritture riferite nei congressi*' in *Coll. Hib.*, vols. 6-7, (1963-64), p. 109.
- 30 See Corish, 'Two contemporary historians of the Confederation of Kilkenny' and *Commentarius Rinuccinianus*, V, p. 278.
- 31 Printed by J. Hardiman, in *Miscellany of the Irish Archaeological Society*, 1846, pp. 90-98.
- 32 *Spicilegium Ossoriensis*, ed. P.F. Moran (Dublin, 1874-84), ii, p. 249.
- 33 Oral tradition collected by Abbé Marot from a member of the Lesquen family approximately 1835, published among his notes in *Revue de la Société Polymathique du Morbihan* (1970), confirms that Lynch lived in L'Argentais at the end of his life. The date given for his death is nearly always wrong, as it is confused with the time at which he resigned his archdeaconate.

- 34 See *Commentarius Rinuccinianus* completed about 1666. In vol. v, p. 17, Lynch is identified as Gratianus Lucius, and on p. 432, it is stated in a very hostile manner that various persons claim that the notorious *Alithinologia* was written by Lynch. This is the closing paragraph of the thousands of pages of the *Commentarius*, and this fact may be an indication of relations between its authors and Lynch. Another possible indicator is the epithet 'juvenis' which O'Ferrall applied to Lynch to distinguish him from the other John Lynch of Galway, an Augustinian priest. Applying such a term to a man of fifty years is surprising, and no other writer used this nickname for Lynch. One possible explanation could be a translation from the Irish language, where such an epithet would be quite frequent. Perhaps one should read 'juvenis' as slight mockery on O'Ferrall's part.
- 35 This is derived from the Greek, meaning 'truthful'. We wish to record our gratitude to Dr Mark Humphries and Dr Michael Clarke of the Department of Ancient Classics, NUI Maynooth, for their assistance in elucidating these pen-names and their possible contexts.
- 36 Mac Geoghegan, *Histoire de l'Irlande*, i, p. 55 (our translation).
- 37 Since the late eighteenth century, Lynch is often quoted in works on Irish history.
- 38 See B. Cunningham, *The world of Geoffrey Keating: history, myth and religion in seventeenth-century Ireland*, Dublin, 2000, pp. 187-190 for an analysis of the use Lynch made of Keating in *Cambrensis Eversus*.
- 39 For further study of Lynch's use of sources in the Irish language, see Ó Muraíle, 'Aspects of the intellectual life of seventeenth century Galway', pp. 159-163.
- 40 Introduction to *Cambrensis Eversus*, p. viii. Kelly does not specify which manuscript of the translation he saw.
- 41 Bibliothèque Municipale de Troyes, France, MS 919.
- 42 Corish, 'Two contemporary historians' also concludes that all four works were published in Saint-Malo, p. 227, n. 31; Theophilus O'Flanagan wrote in his preface to *Cambrensis Eversus*, p. viii, that it was published in Saint-Malo. M. O'N Walsh, 'Irish books printed abroad 1470-1700', *The Irish Book*, ii, no. 1 (1962-63), p. 18, gives 'Saint Omer' as place of publication for *Cambrensis Eversus* and *De la Mare* as the printer of the three subsequent books.
- 43 J.-D. Mellot, *L'édition rouennaise et ses marchés*, Mémoires et Documents de l'École des Chartes, no. 48, Paris, 1998, p. 207.
- 44 Catalogue of the library of Thomas Crofts, 1783, no. 7399.
- 45 Copies of the 1669 *Pii Antistitis Icon* are available for consultation in the following repositories: National Library of Ireland, Trinity College Dublin, Russell Library Maynooth, British Library, Bodleian Library (Oxford), Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, and Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, Paris (2 copies). The preface to the 1951 reprint in the Irish Manuscripts Commission series claims that the copy in the National Library of Ireland is the original proof with Lynch's corrections. However, it is clear upon examination that this is not so as far as the introduction is concerned; the corrections were not included in the definitive printing, such as 'Apolapsis' corrected to 'Apocalipsis' on the eighth page. The matter remains doubtful.
- 46 William Camden's annals of Irish affairs during the reign of Elizabeth I were translated into French and published by Bellegent in 1624, see *Catalogue de la Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris*, Camden, and for other printings of Camden, see the numerous Camden entries for the seventeenth century in this catalogue.
- 47 *Respublica sive Status regni Scotiae et Hiberniae Gulielmi Camdeni et diversorum auctorum* (Leiden, 1627).
- 48 This is also the view of W.R. Jones, 'Giraldus Redivivus – English historians, Irish apologists and the works of Gerald of Wales' in *Éire-Ireland*, ix (1974), pp 3-20, esp. pp. 17-20.
- 49 Lynch acknowledges O'Sullivan and other authors such as Stephen White who had sought to contradict the writings of Giraldus and Richard Stanihurst, *Cambrensis Eversus*, Chap. I.
- 50 The title begins: *Alithinologia sive Veridica Responsio...*, the Latin roughly translates the Greek word.
- 51 See letter from Lynch to Francis Harrold in Jennings, 'Documents from the archives of St Isidore's college, Rome', p. 244.
- 52 *Commentarius Rinuccinianus*, v, p. 432.
- 53 Letter published in R. O'Flaherty, *The Ogygia Vindicated* (Dublin, 1775).
- 54 Before Lynch, several seventeenth-century Irish clerical writers in France had attacked Dempster and others who claimed the medieval Scoti for Scotland. David Rothe, for example, criticised Dempster's appropriation of Irish saints for Scotland; see Colm Lennon, 'The *Analecta* of David Rothe' in H. Morgan (ed.), *Political ideology in Ireland 1541-1641* (Dublin, 1999), esp. pp. 187, 200.
- 55 Jennings, 'Documents from the archives of St Isidore's college, Rome', p. 244. For the date of this letter, see above, note 20.

- 56 Lynch, *Pii Antistitis Icon*, p. 211. As Bishop Kirwan's mother was called Juliana Lynch, it has been written that Lynch was Kirwan's nephew; however, no proof of this has been produced.
- 57 Lynch unwittingly misspelled the kind-hearted clerk's name, Béquineul being the correct form; this error could be seen as further indication that Lynch gathered information on Kirwan after his death without having lived in his company to any extent.
- 58 Bibliothèque Mazarine, Paris, MS 1689, originating in Saint Magloire.
- 59 Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, MS Fr 20159, f. 702.
- 60 Bibliothèque Mazarine, Paris, MS 1614. Père Batterel, in his *Mémoires domestiques pour servir à l'Histoire de l'Oratoire* (c. 1720, printed 1902, reprint 1971), iv, p. 7 reports the existence of these manuscripts and adds that Père de Sainte-Marthe donated them to the Saint Magloire seminary library.
- 61 Lynch, *De Praesulibus*, i, p. 8.
- 62 See above, note 20.
- 63 Éamon Ó Ciosáin, 'Voloumous deamboulare: the wandering Irish in French literature 1600-1789' in T. Coulson (ed.), *Exiles and migrants: crossing thresholds in European culture and society* (Brighton, 1997), pp 32-42 and idem, 'Attitudes towards Ireland and the Irish in Enlightenment France' in G. Gargett and G. Sheridan (eds), *Ireland and the French Enlightenment 1700-1800*, (Basingstoke 1999), pp 129-51. See also G. Gargett, 'Voltaire's view of the Irish' in Gargett and Sheridan (eds), *Ireland and the French Enlightenment*, pp 152-70. Voltaire wrote in the first edition of his *Siècle de Louis XIV*: 'There are some nations which seem to be made to be subject to another. The English have always had over the Irish a superiority of genius, wealth and arms.' He may have acquired his prejudice during his stay in London. This seems to have been Mac Geoghegan's judgement: 'the author of the *Siècle de Louis XIV* draws an unflattering picture of the last wars in Ireland, which is demeaning to the Irish. Apart from the impressions he received from the English, who are incapable of giving people they oppress their due, he scrupulously followed the memoirs written in Holland by refugees who were equally attached to the glory of Prince William of Orange and to the interests of a religion whose support was the cover for his usurpation and tyranny'. See Mac Geoghegan, *Histoire de l'Irlande*, preface.