

# Elizabeth Butler, Duchess of Ormond

**Elizabeth Butler, Duchess of Ormond** and **2nd Baroness Dingwall** (née **Preston**; 1615–1684) reunited the Ormond estate as her maternal grandfather, Black Tom, 10th Earl of Ormond had it, by marrying James Butler, later Duke of Ormond, her second cousin once removed (see Family tree). She had inherited her share of the Ormond estate through her mother, Elizabeth Preston, who was Black Tom's daughter and only surviving child. Her husband had inherited his share from his grandfather Walter Butler, 11th Earl of Ormond, Black Tom's successor in the Earldom. Her share was the bigger one and included Kilkenny Castle.

Elizabeth Butler	
	<span>Duchess of Ormond</span>
Born	<span>Elizabeth Preston</span> <div>25 July 1615</div>
Died	21 July 1684, aged 68 <div>London</div>
Family	<span>Butler dynasty</span>
Spouse(s)	<span>James Butler, 1st Duke of Ormond</span>
Issue	<span><i>Detail</i></span> <div><span>Thomas, Richard, Elizabeth, John &amp; others</span></div>
Father	<span>Richard, 1st Earl of Desmond</span>
Mother	<span>Elizabeth Butler</span>

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## Birth and origins

Elizabeth was born on 25 July 1615.<sup>[1]</sup> She was the only child of Richard Preston and Elizabeth Butler. Her father was a younger son of the Prestons of Whitehill, Scottish gentry of the Edinburgh area. He was a page at the Scottish court and became a favourite of James VI of Scotland, who made him a groom of his bedchamber<sup>[2]</sup> and ennobled him by creating him Lord Dingwall in 1609.<sup>[3][4]</sup>

Elizabeth's mother was the only surviving child of Thomas Butler, 10th Earl of Ormond, called Black Tom.<sup>[5]</sup> She had been married before to her first cousin Theobald Butler, 1st Viscount Butler of Tulleophelim, who had died childless in 1613.<sup>[6]</sup> Her family was Old English and descended from Theobald Walter, who had been appointed Chief Butler of Ireland by King Henry II in 1177.<sup>[7]</sup>

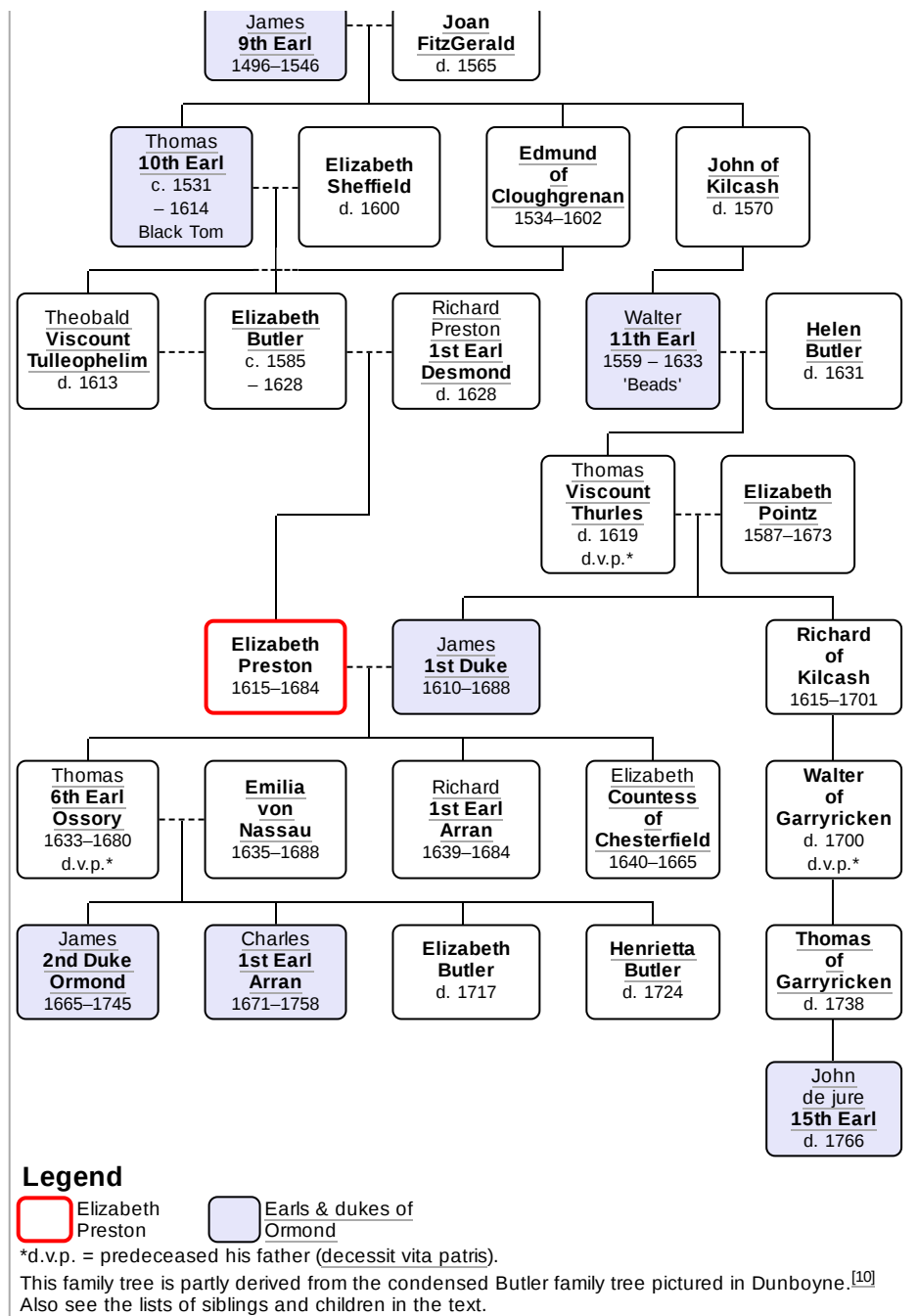
Elizabeth's parents were both Protestant. They had married in 1614,<sup>[8]</sup> not long before her maternal grandfather's death on 22 November 1614.<sup>[9]</sup>

### Family tree

Elizabeth Preston with husband, parents, and other selected relatives.

## Black Tom's succession and inheritance

Her parents' lives were overshadowed by the problems of Elizabeth's maternal grandfather's succession and inheritance. Black Tom, had settled most of his estate on his male heir, his nephew Walter, who succeeded him as Earl of Ormond in 1614, according to the normal rules of succession of his title. However, Black Tom was a Protestant, whereas his nephew Walter, called "of the rosary beads", was a devout Catholic. King James I considered this a setback for his Irish politics. He intervened to keep the Ormond lands in Protestant hands. He decided that most of the estate should go to Black Tom's only child, Elizabeth. The King furthermore ordained that Black Tom's daughter should marry his favourite Richard Preston, 1st Lord Dingwall, a Scottish Protestant. Accordingly, Elizabeth's parents married in 1614 as said before.



## Father's Succession

Elizabeth was a single child. Her mother was about 30 at her birth and Elizabeth was her first child. Her father was about 35. He had married late and as a former favourite of James I he was probably a homosexual. Very soon her potential to become a rich heiress was recognised and marriage plans were made. Marquess of Buckingham wanted to marry Elizabeth, aged 3, to his nephew George Feilding. As a favour for her father he arranged that the King advanced her father to Earl of Desmond in the peerage of Ireland in 1619.<sup>[11]</sup> However this project was abandoned.

In 1628 Elizabeth Preston, aged 13, only child, became a rich heiress when both her parents died in quick succession. First, on 10 October, her mother died in Wales<sup>[12]</sup> and was buried in Westminster Abbey,<sup>[13]</sup> then on 28 October her father drowned during a passage between Dublin and Holyhead.<sup>[14][15]</sup> His title as Earl of Desmond became extinct, but Elizabeth inherited his Scottish title of Lord Dingwall to become **Baroness Dingwall suo jure**<sup>[16]</sup> as the title had been created for her father with remainder to heirs and assigns

whatsoever.<sup>[17]</sup> As the only child Elizabeth inherited all her parent's part of the Ormond estate, which included Kilkenny Castle and the County Palatine of Tipperary. As she was a minor, she became a ward of the crown. Henry Rich, 1st Earl of Holland (1590–1649) was appointed her guardian.

## Marriage and children

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At Christmas 1629, aged 14, she married second cousin once removed, James Butler.<sup>[18]</sup> The common ancestor was James Butler, 9th Earl of Ormond, who was her great grandfather and his great-great grandfather (see Family tree). The marriage made her **Viscountess Thurles** as he was at the time styled Viscount Thurles, which was the courtesy title of the heir apparent of the earls of Ormond. In 1630 the couple went to live at Carrick-on-Suir.<sup>[19]</sup>

Elizabeth and James had at least ten children, but only five survived into adulthood:<sup>[20]</sup>

1. Thomas (1634–1680), predeceased his father, but had a son who would become the 2nd Duke;<sup>[21]</sup>
2. Richard (1639–1686), became the first and last Earl of Arran of the 1662 creation and predeceased his father;<sup>[22]</sup>
3. Elizabeth (1640–1665), married Philip Stanhope, 2nd Earl of Chesterfield<sup>[23]</sup> and had affairs with James Hamilton<sup>[24]</sup> and the Duke of York;<sup>[25]</sup>
4. John (1643–1677), became the Earl of Gowran;<sup>[26]</sup> and
5. Mary (1646–1710), married William Cavendish, 1st Duke of Devonshire.<sup>[27]</sup>

As a consequence of the marriage, the Ormond estate, as her grandfather, the 10th Earl, had owned it, was reunited. Elizabeth and James went to live in Kilkenny Castle, while her grandfather-in-law, the 11th Earl resided at Ormonde Castle at Carrick-on-Suir where he died on 24 February 1633.<sup>[28]</sup> Elizabeth became **Countess of Ormond** as her husband succeeded to the earldom.<sup>[29]</sup> In 1634 her eldest son, Thomas was born in Kilkenny Castle.<sup>[30]</sup>

## Irish wars

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On the outbreak of the Irish Rebellion of 1641, while her husband took command of the king's army in Dublin, she was living in Kilkenny Castle and continued to stay there even when Kilkenny became the capital of the Catholic Confederation. She sheltered Protestant refugees and kept them in the castle.

She became **Marchioness of Ormond** on her husband's promotion on 30 August 1642.<sup>[31]</sup> In that same year she was allowed to rejoin her husband in Dublin. In the city she continued to help refugees. When the city appeared to be menaced by a siege by the Confederates after Owen Roe O'Neill's victory in the Battle of Benburb in June 1646,<sup>[32]</sup> she also helped to reinforce Dublin's defences.<sup>[33]</sup>

She followed her husband to England in 1647 after the surrender of Dublin to the parliamentary forces. As in 1648 he renewed his support for the royalist cause, Lady Ormond moved to Caen, France, where she arrived on 23 June 1648 with her children.<sup>[34]</sup> From September 1648<sup>[35]</sup> to December 1650 her husband was again in Ireland where he tried to reunite the Irish in the fight against the Parliamentarians.<sup>[36]</sup> The family was short of money. In 1652, Lady Ormond and her children returned to England to plead with Cromwell for income from the land she owned. She managed to obtain a pension of £2000 per year under the condition that she would not correspond with her husband.<sup>[37]</sup> In 1655 she returned to Ireland accompanied by her younger children<sup>[38]</sup> and lived at her home in Dunmore, County Kilkenny.

## Restoration, later life, death, and timeline

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Following the restoration of Charles II, Lady Ormond sent her husband political information from Ireland, and the couple were later reunited in England. In March 1661 she became **Duchess of Ormond** as her husband was made a duke.<sup>[39]</sup> In 1662 she became **Vicereine of Ireland** as her husband was appointed lord lieutenant of Ireland, serving until 1669 and again from 1677 to 1685. Lady Ormond hosted entertainment and spent lavishly on restoring and improving the family estates, but her personal correspondence reveals that she was concerned about the debts of her husband and sons. Her eldest son Thomas Butler, 6th Earl of Ossory, suddenly died in 1680.<sup>[40]</sup> Her health began to decline in 1681, and she died in London on 21 July 1684.<sup>[41]</sup> She was buried at Westminster Abbey on 24 July.<sup>[42]</sup>

Timeline		
Age	Date	Event
0	1615, 25 Jul	Born. <sup>[1]</sup>
3	1619, 19 Jul	Her father created <u>Earl of Desmond</u> in Ireland. <sup>[11]</sup>
10	1625, 27 Mar	<i>Accession of <u>King Charles I</u>, replacing <u>King James I</u>.</i> <sup>[43]</sup>
13	1628, 10 Oct	Her <u>mother</u> died in Wales. <sup>[12]</sup>
13	1628, 28 Oct	Her <u>father</u> drowned during a passage between Dublin and <u>Holyhead</u> . <sup>[14][15]</sup>
14	1629, 25 Dec	Married James Butler. <sup>[18]</sup>
15	1630	Went to live at the <u>Ormond Castle</u> at <u>Carrick</u> with her husband. <sup>[19]</sup>
22	1633, 24 Feb	Became <b>Countess of Ormond</b> as her husband succeeded as the 12th Earl. <sup>[29]</sup>
23	1634, 5 Jul	Birth at <u>Kilkenny Castle</u> of her eldest son, Thomas. <sup>[21]</sup>
27	1642, 30 Aug	Became <b>Marchioness of Ormond</b> as her husband was created Marquess. <sup>[31]</sup>
30	1646, 5 Jun	<i>The confederates win the <u>Battle of Benburb</u>.</i> <sup>[32]</sup>
32	1648, 23 Jun	Arrived at <u>Caen</u> , France, with her children. <sup>[34]</sup>
33	1648, 29 Sep	Her husband went to Ireland arriving at Cork on 29 September. <sup>[35]</sup>
34	1649, 30 Jan	<i><u>King Charles I</u> beheaded.</i> <sup>[44]</sup>
35	1650, 11 Dec	Her husband left Ireland and rejoined her in France. <sup>[36]</sup>
40	1655	Returned to Ireland with her younger children. <sup>[38]</sup>
45	1660, 29 May	<i>Restoration of <u>King Charles II</u>.</i> <sup>[45]</sup>
45	1661, 30 Mar	Became <b>Duchesse of Ormond</b> as her husband is created Duke. <sup>[39]</sup>
47	1662	Became <b>Vicereine of Ireland</b> as her husband became Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.
65	1680, 30 Jul	Her son <u>Thomas, Earl of Ossory</u> , died. <sup>[40]</sup>
68	1684, 21 Jul	Died in London. <sup>[41]</sup>

## Notes

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1. Cokayne 1895, p. 150, line 5 (<https://archive.org/details/completepeerage06cokahrish/page/n151/>): "She [Elizabeth Preston] who was b. 25 July 1615 ..."

2. Crawfurd 1716, p. 92 (<https://archive.org/details/peerageofscotlan00craw/page/187/>): "He was educated at the Court, and being of an agreeable and winning Deportment, he soon grew into his Majesty's special favour, attaining first the honour of knighthood, and e're long was made one of the Grooms of the Bed Chamber."
3. Paul 1906, p. 121, line 27 (<https://archive.org/details/scotspeeragefoun03paul/page/121/>): "... [Richard] was on 8 June 1609 created LORD DINGWALL, with remainder to his heirs and assigns whatsoever."
4. Cokayne 1890, p. 128, line 4 (<https://archive.org/details/completepeerage03cokahrish/page/n129/>): "... having purchased the lands of that barony, [Richard Preston] was cr. LORD DINGWALL of co. Ross [S.] to him and his heirs and assigns whatsoever."
5. Perceval-Maxwell 2004, p. 130, right column, line 12 ([https://archive.org/details/isbn\\_0198613598/page/130/](https://archive.org/details/isbn_0198613598/page/130/)): "... was born on 25 July 1615, the only child and heir of Richard Preston, Lord Dingwall (d. 1628), one of James I's gentlemen of the bedchamber, and Elizabeth Butler (1582x1600–1628) the only surviving child of Thomas Butler, 10th Earl of Ormond."
6. Cokayne 1895, p. 150, line 8 (<https://archive.org/details/completepeerage06cokahrish/page/n151/>): "TULLEOPHELIM [I.] who d. s.p. Jany. 1613. ..."
7. Debrett 1828, p. 640 (<https://archive.org/details/debrettspeerage01debrgoog/page/n218/>): "THEOBALD LE BOTELEER on whom that office [Chief Butler of Ireland] was conferred by King Henry II., 1177 ..."
8. Cokayne 1890, p. 128, line 6 (<https://archive.org/details/completepeerage03cokahrish/page/n129/>): "The king likewise secured him, in 1614, a splendid marriage, viz., one with Elizabeth, widow of Theobald (BUTLER) VISCOUNT TULLEOPHELIM [I.] (who d. s.p. Jany. 1613), only da. of Thomas (BUTLER), EARL OF OSSORY AND ORMONDE [I.], by his 2d wife ..."
9. Cokayne 1895, p. 148, line 30 (<https://archive.org/details/completepeerage06cokahrish/page/n149/>): "He d. at Carrick, 22 Nov. 1614, aged 82, having been 15 years blind."
10. Dunboyne 1968, pp. 16–17 (<https://archive.org/details/butlerfamilyhist00dunb/page/16/>): "Butler Family Tree condensed"
11. Cokayne 1890, p. 89 (<https://archive.org/details/completepeerage03cokahrish/page/n90/>): "... was, by the Marquess's influence, cr. by pat. dat. Westm. 11 July 1619 BARON DUNMORE, co. Kilkenny, and EARL OF DESMOND [I.]."
12. Cokayne 1890, p. 89, line 31 (<https://archive.org/details/completepeerage03cokahrish/page/n90/>): "His [Richard Preston's] wife, who d. in Wales 18 days before him was bur. (possibly re-interred) at Westm. Abbey (as "Countess of Desmond") 17 March 1628/9."
13. Chester 1876, p. <https://archive.org/details/marriagebaptism01chesgoog/page/n145/> 128]: "1628/9 March 17 The Countess of Desmond: in St. Paul's Chapel."
14. Cokayne 1890, p. 89, line 29 (<https://archive.org/details/completepeerage03cokahrish/page/n90/>): "... he [Richard Preston] died s.p.m. 28 Oct. 1628 ..."
15. Paul 1906, p. 122, line 16 (<https://archive.org/details/scotspeeragefoun03paul/page/122/>): "... and he was drowned on he passage between Dublin and Holyhead eighteen days later, 28 October same year [1628]."
16. Cokayne 1890, p. 128, line 26 (<https://archive.org/details/completepeerage03cokahrish/page/n129/>): "2. ELIZABETH, *suo jure* BARONESS DINGWALL [S.] only da. and h. b. 25 July ..."
17. Cokayne 1890, p. 128, line 5 (<https://archive.org/details/completepeerage03cokahrish/page/n129/>): "... was cr. LORD DINGWALL of co. Ross [S.] to him and his heirs and assigns whatsoever."
18. Perceval-Maxwell 2004, p. 130, line 31 ([https://archive.org/details/isbn\\_0198613598/page/130/](https://archive.org/details/isbn_0198613598/page/130/)): "... the marriage took place at Christmas of that year [1629]."
19. Perceval-Maxwell 2004, p. 130, right column, line 29 ([https://archive.org/details/isbn\\_0198613598/page/130/](https://archive.org/details/isbn_0198613598/page/130/)): "In 1630 the couple went to live at Carrick-on-Suir ..."

20. [Perceval-Maxwell 2004, p. 130, right column, line 33](https://archive.org/details/isbn_0198613598/page/130/) ([https://archive.org/details/isbn\\_0198613598/page/130/](https://archive.org/details/isbn_0198613598/page/130/)): "... between 1632 and 1646 Elizabeth ... gave birth to eight sons including Richard Butler, five of whom died as children, and two daughters."
21. [Cokayne 1895, p. 150](https://archive.org/details/completepeerage06cokahrish/page/n151/) (<https://archive.org/details/completepeerage06cokahrish/page/n151/>): "THOMAS BUTLER, styled Earl of Ossory ('the gallant Ossory') 2d but 1st surv. s. and h. app., b. at Kilkenny 5 July 1634 ..."
22. [Burke 1949, p. 1540, right column, line 31](https://archive.org/details/burkesgenealogic1949unes/page/1540/) (<https://archive.org/details/burkesgenealogic1949unes/page/1540/>): "RICHARD, cr. 13 May 1662 Baron Butler, Viscount of Tullogh and EARL OF ARRAN ..."
23. [Debrett 1828, p. 114, bottom](https://archive.org/details/debrettspeerage03debrgoog/page/n360/) (<https://archive.org/details/debrettspeerage03debrgoog/page/n360/>): "PHILIP, 2nd earl m. 1st Anne, da. of Algernon Percy, earl of Northumberland; 2ndly Elizabeth, da. of James Butler, duke of Ormond; and 3rd ..."
24. [Hamilton 1888, p. 181](#): "Hamilton, therefore was no further embarrassed than to preserve Lady Chesterfield's reputation, who, in his opinion, declared herself rather too openly in his favour ..."
25. [Pepys 1893, p. 360](https://archive.org/details/cu31924070675008/page/n377/) (<https://archive.org/details/cu31924070675008/page/n377/>): "He tells me also how the Duke of York is smitten in love with my Lady Chesterfield (a virtuous Lady, daughter of my Lord Ormond); and so much, that the duchess of York hath complained to the king and her father about it, and my Lady Chesterfield is gone into the country for it."
26. [Burke 1949, p. 1540, right column, line 39](https://archive.org/details/burkesgenealogic1949unes/page/1540/) (<https://archive.org/details/burkesgenealogic1949unes/page/1540/>): "JOHN, cr. EARL OF GOWRAN 1676, m. Lady Anne Chichester, dau. of 1st Earl of Donegal, but d.s.p. 1677, when the dignity expired."
27. [Burke 1949, p. 1540, right column, line 43](https://archive.org/details/burkesgenealogic1949unes/page/1540/) (<https://archive.org/details/burkesgenealogic1949unes/page/1540/>): "Mary m. 1st Duke of Devonshire, K.G., and d. 31 July 1710, leaving issue."
28. [Cokayne 1895, p. 149, line 30](https://archive.org/details/completepeerage06cokahrish/page/n150/) (<https://archive.org/details/completepeerage06cokahrish/page/n150/>): "He [Walter] d. at Carrick, 24 Feb. 1632/3, and was buried 15 June following at Kilkenny."
29. [Burke 1949, p. 1540, right column, line 5](https://archive.org/details/burkesgenealogic1949unes/page/1540/) (<https://archive.org/details/burkesgenealogic1949unes/page/1540/>): "The Earl [Walter, 11th] d. 24 Feb 1632 and was s. by his grandson, JAMES, 1st Duke of Ormonde ..."
30. [Davies 2004, p. 226, left column](https://archive.org/details/isbn_0198613598/page/226/) ([https://archive.org/details/isbn\\_0198613598/page/226/](https://archive.org/details/isbn_0198613598/page/226/)): "... was born at Kilkenny Castle on 8 July 1634."
31. [Cokayne 1895, p. 149, line 27](https://archive.org/details/completepeerage06cokahrish/page/n150/) (<https://archive.org/details/completepeerage06cokahrish/page/n150/>): "He was cr. 30 Aug 1642 MARQUESS OF ORMONDE [l.];"
32. [Cusack 1871, p. 317](https://archive.org/details/compendiumofiris00cusa/page/317/) (<https://archive.org/details/compendiumofiris00cusa/page/317/>): "... encamped at Benburb. Here, on the 5th of June A.D. 1646 he [Owen Roe O'Neill] won a victory ..."
33. [Perceval-Maxwell 2004, p. 130, right column, line 49](https://archive.org/details/isbn_0198613598/page/130/) ([https://archive.org/details/isbn\\_0198613598/page/130/](https://archive.org/details/isbn_0198613598/page/130/)): "... she led a team of women carrying earth in baskets to reinforce the fortifications."
34. [Carte 1851, p. 384](https://archive.org/details/lifeofjamesdukeo03cart/page/384/) (<https://archive.org/details/lifeofjamesdukeo03cart/page/384/>): "The marchioness of Ormond had landed in that country on June 23d [1648], with her two sons and three daughters, and had taken up her residence at Caen."
35. [Airy 1886, p. 56, left column, line 50](https://archive.org/details/dictionaryofnati08stepuoft/page/56/) (<https://archive.org/details/dictionaryofnati08stepuoft/page/56/>): "... and in August, he himself began his journey thither. On leaving Havre, he was shipwrecked and had to wait in that port for some weeks; but at the end of September he again embarked, arriving at Cork on the 29th."
36. [O'Sullivan 1983, p. 284, line 15](https://archive.org/details/oldgalwayhistory00osul/page/284/) (<https://archive.org/details/oldgalwayhistory00osul/page/284/>): "... boarding a small frigate, the Elizabeth of Jersey, at Galway on the 7th December, 1650 ..."
37. [Perceval-Maxwell 2004, p. 131, line 5](https://archive.org/details/isbn_0198613598/page/131/) ([https://archive.org/details/isbn\\_0198613598/page/131/](https://archive.org/details/isbn_0198613598/page/131/)): "... receive £2000 per annum from her estate on condition that she sent no funds to, nor had any contact with, her husband."

38. [Sergeant 1913](https://archive.org/details/littlejenningsfi01serg/page/146/), p. 146 (<https://archive.org/details/littlejenningsfi01serg/page/146/>): "Lady Ormonde took no share in any plot, to our knowledge; but whether or not her residence in London was at least considered inconvenient, before the end of 1655 she retired to Ireland, accompanied by her younger children."
39. [Cokayne 1895](https://archive.org/details/completepeerage06cokahrish/page/n150/), p. 149, line 39 (<https://archive.org/details/completepeerage06cokahrish/page/n150/>): "... and was cr. 30 March 1661 DUKE OF ORMONDE [I.]"
40. [Cokayne 1895](https://archive.org/details/completepeerage06cokahrish/page/n151/), p. 150, line 28 (<https://archive.org/details/completepeerage06cokahrish/page/n151/>): "He [Ossory] d. v.p. of a violent fever, after four days illness, 30 July 1680 ..."
41. [Cokayne 1895](https://archive.org/details/completepeerage06cokahrish/page/n151/), p. 150, line 6 (<https://archive.org/details/completepeerage06cokahrish/page/n151/>): "... d. 21 July 1684 in her 69th year ..."
42. [Chester 1876](https://archive.org/details/marriagebaptism01chesgoog/page/n227/), p. 210 (<https://archive.org/details/marriagebaptism01chesgoog/page/n227/>): "1684 July 24 The Duchess of Ormond: [in the Abbey]."
43. [Smyth 1839](https://archive.org/details/chroniclelawoff00smytgoog/page/n21/), p. xiii, line 18 (<https://archive.org/details/chroniclelawoff00smytgoog/page/n21/>): "Charles I. . [Accession] 27 March, 1625"
44. [Burke 1949](https://archive.org/details/burkesgenealogic1949unse/page/n266/), p. cclxvii, line 9 (<https://archive.org/details/burkesgenealogic1949unse/page/n266/>): "... after the decapitation of CHARLES I at Whitehall, 30 Jan. 1649 ..."
45. [Seaward 2004](https://archive.org/details/isbn_019861361x/page/127/), p. 127, right column ([https://archive.org/details/isbn\\_019861361x/page/127/](https://archive.org/details/isbn_019861361x/page/127/)): "... he sailed to England and on 29 May [1660] he entered London in triumph."

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- [Cokayne, George Edward \(1895\)](https://archive.org/details/completepeerage06cokahrish/). *Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom, Extant, Extinct, or Dormant* (<https://archive.org/details/completepeerage06cokahrish/>). **6** (1st ed.). London: George Bell and Sons. – N to R (for Ormond)
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