

# Constance Gore-Booth

## I gCÚIS NA hÉIREANN

### The Gore-Booth Family



Sir Robert Gore-Booth, 4th Bart (1805-1876)  
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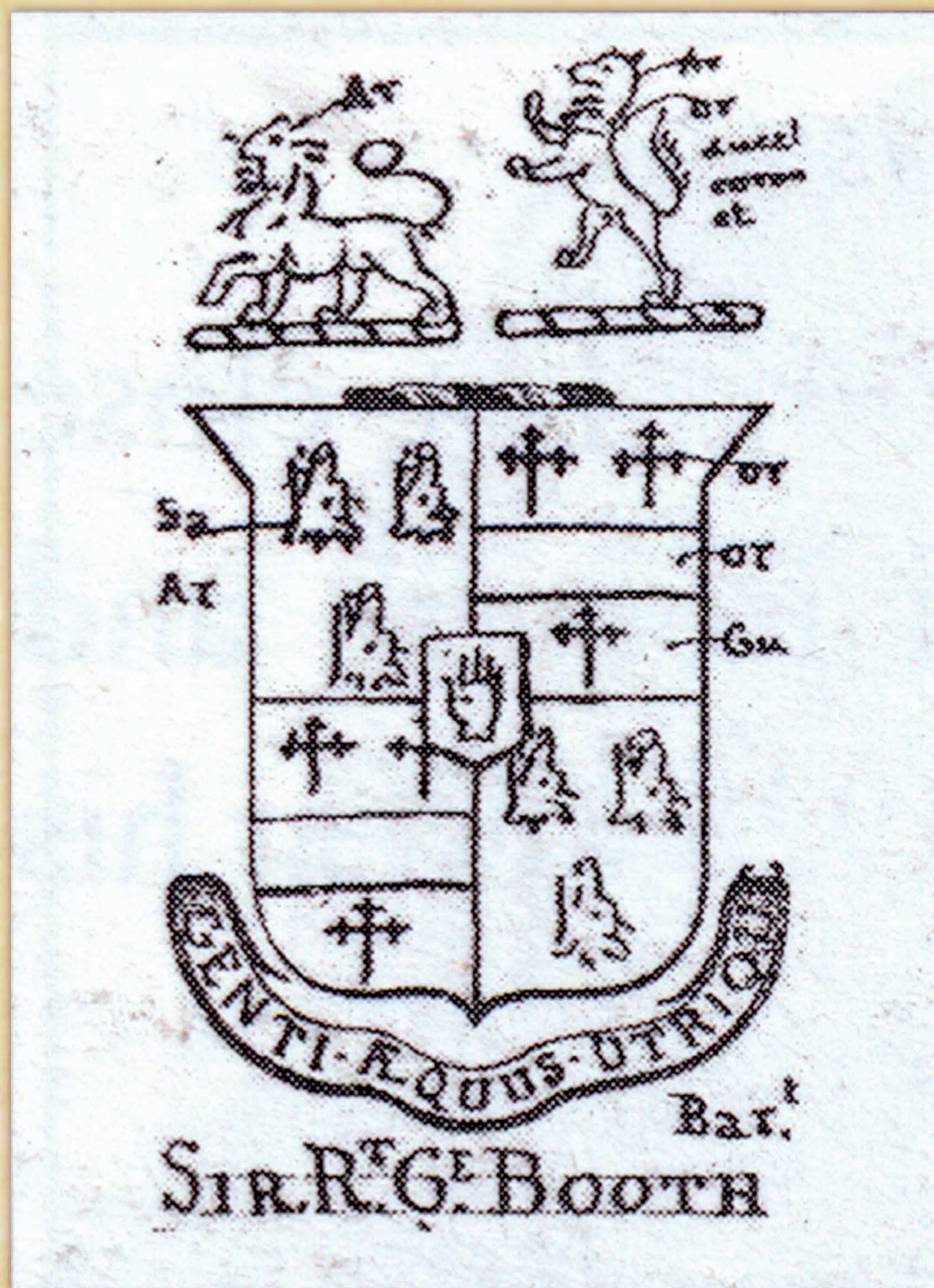
The Gore-Booth family resided in Sligo for over 400 years. The current baronet, the ninth, Sir Josslyn Gore-Booth sold the Sligo house, Lissadell, and its demesne in 2003 and thus ended an unbroken period of habitation since the family was first granted lands in Sligo by Elizabeth I. The man, to whom she granted the land, Paul Gore, arrived in Ireland in 1598 as a commander of horse and served under the Earl of Sussex and Lord Mountjoy. As a reward for his service he was awarded large tracts of land in the Barony of Carbury in County Sligo. This period signalled the end of the Gaelic and Anglo-Norman Lordships, those who had become famously 'more Irish than the Irish themselves' (Irish: *Níos Gaelaí ná na Gaeil féin*, Latin: *Hiberniores Hibernis ipsis*).

However in the areas that Paul Gore was granted land it was the consequential disappearance of the Gaelic O'Connor Sligo and O'Hart families as landowners over the next 100 years that highlight the local change in ownership from a Catholic Gaelic class of ownership to a Protestant Anglo-Irish class. In fact he had the responsibility of escorting Rory O'Donnell and Sir Donough O'Connor to Athlone to submit to Queen Elizabeth's

representative. He was created a Baronet in 1621 and married the daughter of Francis Wickliffe and niece of Thomas Wentworth, who was ennobled by Charles I as, the Earl of Strafford. Thomas Wentworth served as the Lord Deputy in Ireland from 1633-1640 and was involved in the land losses of the O'Connors Sligo. Sir Paul Gore's fourth son, Francis Gore inherited his father's lands in Sligo and resided at the castle his father had built in Ardtarmon. He married the Co. Leitrim heiress Anne Parke (of Parke's Castle) and steered a very 'careful' course through the Cromwellian Wars and was granted further lands in the restoration of Charles II. Frances was succeeded by his son Robert who in turn was succeeded by his son Nathaniel who married Letitia Booth the only daughter and heir of Humphrey Booth. Letitia not only brought land in Ireland to the family but a holding in Manchester that was to prove useful in later centuries. Nathaniel moved the family from Ardtarmon Castle to Lissadell where a house was built on the shore overlooking Drumcliffe bay. Their son, christened Booth, was made a baronet in 1760 and it was his son Robert, who inherited the title and land on the death of his older brother without issue. It was this Robert who assumed the surname Booth and incorporated the arms of Booth into the family crest.

Letitia's grandson the fourth Baronet, and the grandfather of Constance, Sir Robert Gore-Booth (1805-1876) was born at the start of the long decline of the Anglo-Irish class. The Act of Union in 1802 had signalled the end of the Irish Parliament and Members of Parliament were now elected to sit in the House of Commons in London. The Napoleonic Wars heralded a boom in prices for agricultural commodities and the ultimate beneficiaries of this were the owners of the land rather than the tillers of it.

Sir Robert Gore-Booth assumed the running of the estate at his majority, his father having died when he was nine years old. He was a resident landlord not an absentee and his wealth and background paved the way for him to serve the county as High Sheriff, Magistrate, Justice of the Peace and Chairman of the Board of Guardians. From 1850 he served as MP for Co. Sligo for the following twenty six years until his death in 1876. Five years after his death in 1881 the "The Times" in London stated "As a landlord he must be classed with the best...He let his lands at their value and never pressed for rent allowing his tenant plenty of time to wait and sell in the best market".



Crest of Sir Robert Gore-Booth (3rd Bart.)  
The Latin underneath the crest is translated as "Fair to both families" which is taken to mean that the new coat of arms, combining Gore and Booth crests, is fair to both.  
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