



‘Woven frescoes’: tapestry collections in seventeenth-century Ireland

JANE FENLON

ACADEMIC INTEREST IN TAPESTRIES AS AN IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF THE EARLY modern domestic interior has arisen in recent years, culminating in the outstanding exhibition *Tapestry in the Baroque: Threads of Splendor* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and the Palacio Real, Madrid, in 2007-08. Philippe de Montebello’s introductory essay in the catalogue to this show reminds us of the importance of tapestries within patterns of patronage in early modern Europe, noting that ‘despite the growing interest in old master and contemporary painters that began to develop among the cognoscenti during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the tapestry medium continued to exercise its fascination for the grander and more visionary patrons.’¹ To date, few articles about tapestry-collecting in Ireland have emerged, and historians of Irish visual culture have generally shown little interest in the subject. The Revd James Graves, in his essay on the Ormonde collection of tapestries published in 1852, was an early pioneer in the field,² and Ada Leask (née Longfield) later wrote about textile production in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Ireland. She informs us that there were tapestry-makers in Dublin in 1670, and that letters patent had been issued in 1677 granting privileges to one Christopher Lovett to manufacture tapestries at Chapelizod in Dublin.³ By way of introduction to that subject, Leask also made brief reference to tapestries that were in the Ormonde collection.⁴ This essay gathers together new information, drawn principally from inventories, concerning the collecting and usage of tapestries in Ireland, with particular reference to the Ormonde collection from the late sixteenth to the end of the seventeenth century. It thus aims to claim a place for tapestry collections in the historiography of Irish interior decoration.

The Butlers of Ormonde had been associated with tapestry in Ireland since the

1 – *DECIUS MUS DISMISSES THE LICTORS* (1618, 406 x 452 cm, detail)
from a set of *THE HISTORY OF DECIUS MUS THE ROMAN CONSUL* after designs by Sir Peter Paul Rubens
(© Office of Public Works, Kilkenny Castle) (all photographs courtesy of photographic unit, DoEHLG)



early sixteenth century.⁵ Piers Butler, 1st Earl of Ossory and 8th Earl of Ormonde (c.1467-1539), and his wife Margaret FitzGerald (c.1470-1513), have been credited with bringing Flemish weavers to Ireland in order to set good example to the citizens of Kilkenny for the manufacture of ‘tapestries, Turkey carpets, cushions and other like works’.⁶ Piers’ grandson Thomas, 10th Earl of Ormonde (1532-1614), owned a substantial collection of tapestries, some of which were mentioned in the various versions of his wills that were made at different times towards the end of his life. When James, 12th Earl of Ormonde and later Duke of Ormonde (1610-1688), succeeded to the titles in 1632, it seems that he did not inherit any of Thomas’s tapestries because disputes and debts had depleted the Ormonde inheritance following the death of that earl. Later in his career, Ormonde and his wife Elizabeth Preston (1616-1684), who was also his cousin and heiress to most of the Ormonde estates, acquired a collection of tapestries numbering at least twenty-nine sets, including one of the earliest-known sets based on the subject of Don Quixote. Just two sets of seventeenth-century tapestries remain at Kilkenny Castle today. These con-



3 – FIRE – VULCAN IN HIS FORGE (1664, 328 x 442 cm)

from a set of *THE FOUR ELEMENTS* after designs by Charles le Brun

opposite 2 – *DECIUS MUS DISMISSES THE LICTORS* (1618, 406 x 452 cm)

from a set of *THE HISTORY OF DECIUS MUS THE ROMAN CONSUL* after designs by Sir Peter Paul Rubens

(© Office of Public Works, Kilkenny Castle)

sist of six pieces of *The History of Decius Mus the Roman Consul*, woven to designs by Sir Peter Paul Rubens about 1618 (Plates 1, 2, 4-6),⁷ and three other pieces, illustrating allegorical depictions of air, fire and water from *The Elements* set designed by Charles le Brun in 1664 (Plate 3).⁸ This article will present new evidence from the documentary records of those collections in an effort to expand on Graves' original essay on the subject, and to consider the continuity between the earlier tapestries that had belonged to the 10th Earl of Ormonde and the ducal collection.

EARLY TAPESTRY COLLECTIONS IN IRELAND

TAPESTRIES WERE CONSIDERED THE ULTIMATE LUXURY GOODS DURING THE SIXTEENTH and seventeenth centuries, and what evidence we have indicates that their acquisition by both the aristocratic and merchant classes in Ireland was in keeping with general trends in northern Europe.⁹ Very few early tapestries have survived in this country, and a number of reasons may be put forward as an explanation: the departure from

Ireland of the Ormondes and the subsequent dispersal of much of their property following the Bill of Attainder against the second duke in 1716, and the wars and widespread confiscation of lands belonging to many of the Gaelic and Old English nobility, including the destruction of their properties, that had occurred during the previous two centuries. For the later period, not reviewed here, Leask informs us that, apart from the prestigious suite of tapestries made for the House of Lords in the new Irish Parliament House (1728-32), illustrating incidents from the Williamite campaigns, most eighteenth-century commissions were for comparatively small pieces.¹⁰

Inventories taken in great houses in Ireland provide sparse details about tapestry collections between 1575 and 1640. In 1575, at Maynooth Castle, seat of the earls of Kildare, the only references are to 'pieces of Tapistry' in the great parlour, valued at £6, and 'pieces of Arras' in the gallery and little chamber, valued at £24 and £6 respectively. Inventory taken in 1628 at Geashill, county Offaly, the Irish seat of Lettice Digby (née Fitzgerald), Countess of Ophaly, records little additional information, describing tapestries there as 'imagery' or 'forest' work.¹¹ Sir Henry Lynch, Baronet and Mayor of Galway, possessed two sets of tapestry that he bequeathed, by his will of 1633, to his wife and son.¹² In 1639, at Bunratty Castle, county Clare, Irish seat of the earls of Thomond, eleven pairs of 'tapestry hangings which have lost their colour' hung in the dining room and were valued at £30.¹³

The most important tapestries brought into Ireland prior to the Restoration in 1660 were those acquired by Thomas Wentworth, Lord Lieutenant, to furnish the drawing and council chambers in Dublin Castle. These cost over £400 for three sets, which had gold and silver threads incorporated in them.¹⁴ Notable also was the tapestry collection of Katherine Manners, widowed Duchess of Buckingham, who had married Randall MacDonnell, 2nd Earl, later Marquess of Antrim. The Duchess (she continued to use the title) and her husband had lived in great splendour at York Place in Whitehall, London (a royal palace that had belonged to Cardinal Wolsey), but because of mounting debts had retired to Ireland in 1638 where they resided at Dunluce Castle, the Antrim stronghold.¹⁵ Following the outbreak of the Rebellion of 1641, the duchess had fled to England, sending a shipload of their goods on to Chester where, in 1645, they were appraised and there remained until seized by the Cromwellian Commissioners in 1651. The surviving inventory records a number of luxurious, high status goods – comprising long cushions, velvet bed furnishings with silk and silver fringing, and Persian carpets – as well as more than fifty pieces of tapestry. Typically, these tapestries are described only as 'forrest or imagery worke', although one item is recorded as 'a set of old worke lined of Cardinall wolseys of 6 ells deep'. Valued at £83 12s, it was by far the most expensive and without doubt the most significant.¹⁶ Indeed, the tapestry collections of Cardinal Wolsey and Henry VIII were famous throughout Europe.¹⁷

opposite 4 – THE BATTLE OF VESERIS AND THE DEATH OF DECIUS MUS (1618, 424 x 615 cm)
from a set of THE HISTORY OF DECIUS MUS (© Office of Public Works, Kilkenny Castle)



THE ORMONDE TAPESTRIES

THOMAS, 10TH EARL OF ORMONDE, MADE A SERIES OF WILLS IN ABOUT 1613/14, AND it is among these documents that we find first mention of the Ormonde collection of tapestries. The major part of that earl's collection was gathered during the second half of the sixteenth-century. The documents in question were drawn up when he was altering his will to ensure that his third wife, Helen (or Ellen) Barry, daughter of David, 3rd Viscount Buttevant, would be well provided for after his death. Ormonde's other beneficiaries were his daughter Elizabeth (d.1628), his heir general, and Walter Butler (d.1633), his heir male, who would eventually succeed to his titles. As well as tapestries, silver plate, pewter and linen, he left richly furnished beds, furniture and hangings in various bequests.¹⁸ To his wife Ellen, he bequeathed 'hangings of [unnamed] tapestries for two chambers viz; twelve peeces', and to his daughter Elizabeth, 'hangings of tapestry for that chamber viz of sixteene peeces' – a total of twenty-eight pieces. No tapestries were designated for his heir-male, Walter Butler, later 11th Earl of Ormonde.¹⁹ The sixteen pieces of tapestry left to Elizabeth were probably the same as those recorded in an inventory of the house at Donnington in England in 1628 – where she and her husband Richard Preston, Baron Dingwall and Earl of Desmond, sometimes resided – and described as 'sixteen peeces of little hangings that were in pawn to Mr William Pearse, wch Mr. Patrick Weemes redeemed from him for the some of 48li10s 0d'.²⁰ An interest-

ing letter of 1623, written by Elizabeth to her husband, contains one of the few references made to hangings, most likely tapestries:

The fair suite of hangings that were bespoken of Mr Corsellius you know were for the Gt. Chamber at Kilkenny, if you could get them and send them over I would be very glad thereof, you and Ferram knoweth where they are (I mean the suite we hung up one day at my Uncle Nottingham, his house) PS ... as also a note of the breadth and length of the hangings that must be had for the gt. Chamber of Dunmore.²¹

Following the untimely deaths of Countess Elizabeth and her husband in 1628, inventory was taken at Kilkenny Castle prior to a sale of goods there. In that inventory a total of thirty-six pieces of tapestry are itemised. The first eighteen were distributed among four rooms: two sets of five pieces each in 'My Lord Tullow's chamber' and 'the stair chamber', and two sets of four pieces each in 'Lord of Desmond's chamber' and in the 'Round Tower chamber'. The remaining eighteen pieces were located 'In the Chamber near the gallery'. The 1629 inventory also provides information about the sale of these tapestries. David Rothe, a merchant of Kilkenny, purchased one set of five, with a few other items, for a total of £12. Further annotations in the margins of the document reveal that the 'Earl of Ormonde' purchased a set of four; Philip Perceval, five pieces for £16; and Henry Masterson, four pieces for £8. The Earl of Cork purchased the remaining eighteen pieces for the huge sum of £150,²² but later discovered that he had been overcharged, the tapestries, comprising three full sets, having been valued at only £50 by the commissioners of Lord Esmonde. In order to rectify this, Cork had another valuation carried out by Marmaduke Shafto, upholsterer, when the price was reduced to £103 and recorded as such in the inventory.²³ From this we can deduce that, of all thirty-six tapestries in Kilkenny Castle at the time of the sale and that can still be accounted for, thirty-two were sold off, Ormonde retaining four that formed part of a set at Carrick [Ormond] Castle.²⁴ Unfortunately, no description of the tapestries other than numbers of pieces is recorded in any of the surviving documents from that period.²⁵

The Rebellion of 1641 and subsequent political events disrupted the lives of the Earl and Countess of Ormonde. In 1647 they fled first to England and then, often living apart, to France with their children, where their goods were inventoried at Caen in 1653. In that inventory, at last, several tapestry sets are named. Of a total of forty pieces of tapestry, only five were listed as 'forrest work', the rest were designated in seven sets of five pieces each, consisting of *Stories of Cyrus, Ahasuerus, [G?]Paul*, two sets of *Tobias (Tobit)*, a set of *Samson*, and one of the *Iliad*.²⁶ Five of these sets, those of *Cyrus*, *Ahasuerus*, the two sets of *Tobias* and perhaps that of *Samson*, have been traced by name in later inventories, although it may be that tapestries described in these documents as 'old and scoured imagery hangings' include the remainder of the earlier named sets.²⁷ Graves suggested that these tapestries were brought over to France by the Ormondes, although no evidence has been found to substantiate this claim.²⁸ From the documents consulted

by this author, it appears that Ormonde himself had managed to retain only one set of eight pieces from those that had belonged to the 10th earl,²⁹ and though life for the Ormondes would have been difficult and unsettled during the 1640s and '50s, this did not prevent them from purchasing luxury goods.³⁰ During this period they commissioned a number of miniatures from the English artist John Hoskins, and sat for large-scale portraits by others. The Earl was painted first by Peter Lely in 1647 in Oxford, and a year later by Justus van Egmont in Paris.³¹ This connection with van Egmont may be relevant to the later Ormonde tapestry collection, as that artist designed the now famous seventeenth-century set of Caesar tapestries, consisting of eight pieces.³² A later inventory of Kilkenny Castle, recorded in 1675, itemises a set of *The Story of Octavius Caesar* of the same number of pieces.³³

The most comprehensive listing of tapestries in the Ormonde collection is recorded in inventories taken in 1675 at Kilkenny Castle and their houses in Dunmore and Clonmel, and in 1678 at Chapelizod in Dublin.³⁴ In these records, several tapestry sets are listed by name, number of pieces and drop (depth) measurements, although they are not valued. The earlier inventory (1675) was taken in the summer of that year, which may explain why the tapestries are listed as a group and not described as hanging in their appropriate rooms at Kilkenny Castle: as textiles were highly valued, the finest sets were customarily taken down and stored during the family's absence, or sometimes replaced by lighter hangings during the warmer months. This was certainly how rich textiles were generally looked after; bed hangings typically had case covers and silk damask window curtains were often replaced by serge. There may of course have been another reason why all the textiles were listed as a whole in this inventory. Major building work and refurbishment was still taking place at Kilkenny Castle at that date, and it is probable that an evaluation of all furnishings was also being carried out at the same time.³⁵

By 1675 the Ormonde collection of tapestries comprised a total of twenty-nine sets, consisting of 144 pieces that were listed in the inventories.³⁶ Among these were ten sets described as 'Antwerp' and eight were new to the collection; the remaining two, sets of *Cyrus* and *Ahasuerus*, had been listed in 1653. Those sets that had not been listed in earlier documents were the *Stories of Caesar* (eight pieces); *Poliphone (Polyphemus)* (seven pieces); *Diana and her Nymph* (five pieces); *Decius Mus the Roman Consul* (seven pieces) (Plates 1, 2, 4-6); three other sets, described as 'from Antwerp' and of 'Landscape and Forest work'; and a final three pieces of 'Fine Antwerp hangings, Landscape, small imagery'. There were also two sets of Brussels tapestry, *The Story of Achilles* (eight pieces), and an old set described as having 'very small figures'.³⁷ Two further sets were described as new, consisting of *The Story of Don Quixote* (five pieces) and a set of three pieces of tapestry hangings that were annotated 'made for My Lord Dukes New Dressing Room'. A set of Lambeth hangings, described as 'Several Horses' (six pieces), was perhaps one of the famous sets designed by Francis Clein and woven at the Mortlake and Lambeth tapestry works.³⁸ Finally, there were two sets of 'English hangings' and three sets of 'Dutch hangings' (five pieces) at Kilkenny Castle – one of which illustrated *The Story*



5 – *DECIUS MUS RELATES HIS DREAM TO HIS OFFICERS*
(1618, 413 x 396 cm, detail)
from a set of *THE HISTORY OF DECIUS MUS*
(© OPW, Kilkenny Castle)

of the Cobbler – and four sets of ‘ould scoured imagery and Landscape hangings’ at their house in Clonmel. In addition, at Chapelizod, another house just outside Dublin, three more sets were recorded in 1678: *Story of Europa* (six pieces), *Story of Samson* (five pieces), and five pieces ‘of small imagery’.³⁹ It was also customary for tapestries and other items of soft furnishing to be moved between the various Ormonde residences. The Lambeth hangings of *Horses* had been transferred to the ‘Drawing Room’ in the Vice-regal apartments in Dublin Castle by 1678.⁴⁰ Four years later, in a letter dated 1682, instructions were given by the housekeeper at Kilkenny Castle for three sets of tapestries, the *Decius*, *Achilles* and *Horses*, to be sent to London.⁴¹

Information about the location of tapestries in the several houses is given in the 1684 inventory. By that date only eight sets were listed as hanging in Irish houses. At Kilkenny Castle, five sets (a total 37 pieces) of tapestry hung in prestigious rooms: the Duke and Duchess both had tapestries in their respective bedchambers; the drawing room

was hung with four pieces illustrating *The Story of Diogenes*; the set of *Don Quixote* tapestries were displayed in the council chamber in the round tower; and a further unnamed set hung in the large room above. At Dunmore House, three sets (total 15 pieces) were recorded: the set of *Decius Mus* was hung in the dining room, while the *Pollido* and *Backonell* [Bacchanal] sets were displayed in the drawing room and ‘my Lady’s chamber’ respectively.⁴²

At the time of his elevation to an English dukedom in 1682, Ormonde bought a splendid house in St James’s Square, London, which required equally splendid furnishings. This purchase was followed shortly by the death of the first duchess, events that resulted in the tapestry collection at Kilkenny Castle and Dunmore being dispersed. A number of tapestries were sent to England and distributed among Ormonde’s houses there. Several sets may be identified from an inventory of the St James’s Square house in 1689. Ormonde had also rented a house for his retirement in the country, Kingston Hall, later Kingston Lacy, in Dorset. By 1689 there were 104 pieces of tapestry in the English houses, including those in a small house in Chelsea that had been rented by the Duchess, and in the 2nd Duke’s villa at Richmond near London.⁴³ It is notable that, by this date, many of the tapestry sets had been divided up. For instance, in Ormonde House in St James’s Square, the *Horses* set of Lambeth tapestries was divided between ‘the drawing room’ and ‘the duchess’s bedroom’, while four pieces of the *Augustus* (Caesar) set were hung in ‘the great [state] bedchamber’.⁴⁴ Stored in ‘the long wardrobe’ in the same house and distributed in minor rooms were a number of older named sets that had been in the collection since at least the 1650s, namely the *Tobit* (also called *Tobias*) and *Samson* sets. The *Decius Mus* set had been transferred to the house at Kingston Lacy by that time.⁴⁵

Following the Bill of Attainder, passed against the 2nd Duke of Ormonde in 1716, a final set of inventories was taken by the Forfeited Estates Commissioners at all of the ducal houses. By that date, the collection at Kilkenny Castle had been halved and there were fifty-one pieces of tapestry remaining, valued collectively at a miserly £183 10s. Of these, thirty-nine pieces were hanging, most of them still *in situ* since the 1684 inventory. Five pieces of unnamed tapestry had been added to the Alcove, valued at £20, which was the same price as the set of *Don Quixote* that still hung in the council chamber. An interesting price comparison may be made here with the gilt leather hangings, which had by then been installed in several rooms throughout the buildings; these were appraised at more or less the same price as the tapestries. However, when it comes to a comparison between the valuation of tapestry with that of paintings, by far the most expensive item in the castle was a painting described as ‘the Duke of Richmond and his Duchess by van Dyck’ valued at £150. Another item added to the end of the Kilkenny Castle inventory, headed, ‘Mr Ha[o]skins [the upholsterer’s] House accounts for the remainder’, is of particular interest. This itemises fifteen pieces of tapestry, apparently then being refurbished, with a corresponding valuation of £40 for three pieces of thirteen feet deep ‘Fresh and lined with canvas’.⁴⁶ From this we may gather that renovated tapestries were still highly regarded.



6 – *MARCUS VALERIUS
CONSECRATES DECIUS*
(also known as *THE
INTERPRETATION OF THE VICTIM*)
(1618, 414 x 423 cm, detail)
from a set of *THE HISTORY OF
DECIUS MUS*
(© OPW, Kilkenny Castle)

It may be helpful here to speculate on the material quality of some of the tapestries collected by the Ormondes. Given that the recorded descriptions are typically brief, and the valuations themselves are not that informative, any efforts at identifying the various sets must remain tentative at best. The one set that has survived, and that can therefore be traced with some certainty, is *The History of Decius Mus*, now consisting of six pieces (originally seven). As noted above, these were woven to early designs by Rubens, the subject having derived from the sequence of events in Book VIII of Livy's *History of Rome*. The episodes depicted in the six surviving pieces are as follows: *Decius Relates his Dream to his Officers*, *Marcus Valerius Consecrates Decius*, *Decius Mus Dismisses the Lictors*, *The Battle of Veseris and the Death of Decius Mus*, *The Funeral Obsequies of Decius Mus*, and *Titus Manlius Presenting the Roman Senators with Plunder*.⁴⁷ Missing from the Kilkenny set is *Decius Mus Consults the Oracle*. Unlike the prestigious sets of tapestry of the same subject in the Spanish Royal collections, which contain precious

metallic threads, the Kilkenny set is woven in silk and wool.⁴⁸ We cannot be sure of the date when this set was acquired, but there is a good provenance for its presence in the Ormonde collection since 1675.⁴⁹ Another set in the collection, *The Story of Achilles*, was also woven to designs by Rubens but designated as being ‘from Brussels’. Yet another set, *The Story of Augustus Caesar*, may have been designed by Justus van Egmont.⁵⁰ Overall though, one of the most interesting sets was that described as *The Horses*, and designated as woven at Lambeth. From this unpromising description, scholars have identified such tapestries as depicting large dramatic figures of horsemen, based on stories from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*.⁵¹ Their location in such prestigious rooms as the council chamber at Kilkenny Castle, and later in the drawing room of Vice-regal apartments in Dublin Castle, indicates that their importance was clearly recognised by successive members of the Ormonde household. The listing of the set *The Story of Don Quixote* in Kilkenny in 1675 would seem to be the earliest recorded date for these. No indication is given as to their source or weaver, their only designation being ‘new’ and that they were eight-foot deep and consisted of five pieces.⁵²

Any effort to compare the quality of the tapestry collection of the 10th Earl of Ormonde with the later ducal collections must prove unsatisfactory due to the lack of descriptive information other than numbers of pieces. There are, however, important indicators here in terms of changing tastes or fashions when comparison is made between the numbers of paintings with pieces of tapestry in both collections. While the 10th earl had some twenty-eight pieces of tapestry and forty-four paintings in his collections, the ducal collections consisted of over 500 paintings and some 144 pieces of tapestry. While this represents a somewhat bald comparison, it clearly demonstrates that contemporary Irish trends regarding collecting and patronage were similar to those in other European countries.

CONCLUSION

FROM THE EVIDENCE PRESENTED HERE, THE ORMONDE COLLECTION WAS REMARKABLE in terms of quality and numbers of tapestries in elite Irish households. It is also likely that there were tapestries adorning the walls of the many earlier castles belonging to the FitzGerald earls of Desmond and Kildare, and other sources confirm that the O’Briens hung tapestries in their castle at Bunratty.⁵³ Further research will no doubt reveal the presence of valuable textile hangings on the walls of tower houses belonging to other Irish lords.

APPENDIX

A LIST OF THE ORMONDE COLLECTION OF NAMED TAPESTRIES
IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

This table contains simplified titles, number of pieces, origin (if given), location and date.

<i>tapestry name</i>	<i>no. in set, description</i>	<i>location + date</i>
Story of Cyrus	5 pieces	Caen 1653
Story of Ahasuerus	5 pieces	ditto
Story of [P]Gaul	5 pieces	ditto
Story of Tobias	5 pieces	ditto
Story of Tobias	5 pieces	ditto
Story of Iliad	5 pieces	
The Story of Octavius Caesar	8 pieces, Antwerp	KK/Dunmore 1675
The Story of Polyphemus	7 pieces, Antwerp	
The Story of Diana and her Nymphs	5 pieces, Antwerp	
The Story of Decius Mus	7 pieces, Antwerp	
The Story of Achilles	8 pieces, Brussels	
The Story of Don Quixote	5 pieces	
Several Horses	6 pieces, Lambeth	
The Story of the Cobbler	5 pieces, Dutch	
The Story of Europa	6 pieces	Chapelizod 1678
The Story of Samson	5 pieces	ditto
The Story of Palidore [Pollido]	5 pieces, fine English	Dunmore 1675
The Story Bacchanal	3 pieces, English	ditto
The Story of Janus	6 pieces	in London before 1684
The Story of Diogenes	4 pieces	Kilkenny Castle, 1684

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dolores Gaffney of Kilkenny Castle and Tony Roche of the photographic unit of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government for providing images of the tapestries.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Thomas P. Campbell (ed.), *Tapestry in the Baroque, Threads of Splendor* (New Haven and London, 2008) vii.
- ² James Graves, 'Ancient Tapestry of Kilkenny Castle' in *Transactions of Kilkenny Archaeological Society*, II, 1, 1852, 3-9.
- ³ Ada K. Longfield, 'History of Tapestry-Making in Ireland in the 17th and 18th centuries', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, VIII, 1, 1938, 91-105.
- ⁴ *ibid.*, 92-93.
- ⁵ Spelling of the title Ormond/Ormonde has traditionally caused confusion in the literature on this family. This essay uses the spelling Ormonde in all cases, even though the earldom was Ormond until the eighteenth century and the 1st Duke of Ormonde signed himself as Ormond.
- ⁶ Graves, 'Ancient Tapestry', 5. It may be that some of these locally produced tapestries found their way into the collection of Robert Shee, merchant of Kilkenny, in whose will of 1556 'six pieces of tapestry' are itemised. See 'Power O'Shee Papers', *Analecta Hibernica*, 20, 1958, 218-58.
- ⁷ Sir Peter Paul Rubens designed just four sets of tapestry, two of which were in the Ormonde collection: the stories of *Decius Mus* and *Achilles*. The *Decius Mus* set was Rubens' earliest design for tapestry, and that of *Achilles* his last. Friso Lammertse and Alejandro Vergara, *Peter Paul Rubens: The Life of Achilles* (Rotterdam, 2003) 11.
- ⁸ Florian Knothe, catalogue entry no. 39 in Campbell (ed.), *Tapestry in the Baroque*, 356-64. The element of Fire in the Kilkenny Castle collection is a reversed image with coarse colour and texture, which may indicate that it was 'turned' at some time.
- ⁹ Thomas P. Campbell, 'Continuity and Change in Tapestry Use and design' in Campbell (ed.), *Tapestry in the Baroque*, 491-508.
- ¹⁰ Longfield, 'History of Tapestry Making', 94-95.
- ¹¹ Jane Fenlon, *Goods & Chattels: a survey of early household inventories in Ireland* (Dublin, 2003) 20-23.
- ¹² Kenneth W. Nicholls, 'The Lynch Bloss Papers', *Analecta Hibernica*, 29, 1980, 113-218.
- ¹³ Brian Ó Dálaigh, 'An inventory of the contents of Bunratty Castle and the will of Henry fifth earl of Thomond, 1639', *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, 36, 1995, 139-65.
- ¹⁴ David Howarth, *Images of Rule: art and politics in the English Renaissance, 1485-1649* (London, 1997) 209, 303, n.30.
- ¹⁵ York Place was renamed Whitehall Palace by Henry VIII who had made extensive additions to the original house. It was extensively damaged by fires in the 1690s.
- ¹⁶ Hector MacDonnell, 'A Seventeenth Century Inventory from Dunluce Castle, county Antrim', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 122, 1992, 125-26.
- ¹⁷ Thomas P. Campbell, 'Stately Splendor, Woven Frescoes, Luxury Furnishings: Tapestry in Context, 1660-1660' in Campbell (ed.), *Tapestry in the Baroque*, 107.
- ¹⁸ Fenlon, *Goods & Chattels*, 15-16.
- ¹⁹ *ibid.*, 16-17. There may have been some in Kilkenny Castle that were not named in the wills, as that

- was the principal seat of the family.
- ²⁰ National Library of Ireland (NLI), MS 2552, f.12, and Graves, 'Ancient Tapestries', 7.
- ²¹ NLI, MS 2302 (60).
- ²² NLI, MS 2552. See also Graves, 'Ancient Tapestries', 5.
- ²³ Valuable items of furnishing such as tapestries were often purchased second-hand.
- ²⁴ Fenlon, *Goods & Chattels*, 25. Graves also refers to a set of sixteen pieces of little hangings that in 1628 were at Donnington in Berkshire, the Desmond's house.
- ²⁵ *ibid.*, 27-29. See also Revd Alexander B. Grosart (ed.), *The Lismore Papers*, 3 (1886) 33.
- ²⁶ Fenlon, *Goods & Chattels*, 37-8.
- ²⁷ NLI, MS 2527, f.2, and Fenlon, *Goods & Chattels*, 42. See also NLI, MS 2529, Ormonde House, London, Room 66, and other rooms listed.
- ²⁸ Graves, 'Ancient Tapestries', 6.
- ²⁹ This would be the four pieces that Ormonde had bought from the Kilkenny Castle sale, plus the four that were 'suitable' hanging in Carrick.
- ³⁰ Jane Fenlon, 'Episodes of Magnificence' in Jane Fenlon and Toby Barnard (eds), *The Dukes of Ormonde 1610-1745* (Woodbridge, 2000), 140.
- ³¹ Jane Fenlon, *The Ormonde Picture Collection* (Dublin, 2001), 13.
- ³² Koenraed Brosens, 'Flemish Production 1660-1715' in Campbell (ed.) *Tapestry in the Baroque*, 460.
- ³³ Fenlon, *Goods & Chattels*, 41.
- ³⁴ NLI, MS 2527. These tapestries are also listed in the article by Graves but in a slightly altered form. Graves, 'Ancient Tapestries', 6-7.
- ³⁵ Fenlon, 'Episodes of Magnificence', 143.
- ³⁶ Fenlon, *Goods & Chattels*, 41-42. This inventory was taken of Kilkenny Castle, Dunmore House and Clonmel. The tapestries were grouped together in a separate list and rooms were not designated in this particular inventory.
- ³⁷ Lammertse and Vergara, *Peter Paul Rubens: The Life of Achilles*.
- ³⁸ Wendy Hefford, 'The Mortlake Manufactory' in Campbell (ed.), *Tapestry in the Baroque*, 171-201.
- ³⁹ NLI, MS 2554, 32.
- ⁴⁰ Fenlon, *Goods & Chattels*, 101.
- ⁴¹ Graves, *Ancient Tapestries*, 8. See also a letter dated 28 February 1683 in Historic Manuscripts Commission, *Ormonde Papers*, 11 vols (London, 1895-1920, New Series) VI, 538. It is not certain whether the tapestries were sent at that date or not because the *Decius Mus* set was listed as hanging in Dunmore House in the 1684 inventory but was recorded in Kingston Hall in the 1689 inventory (NLI, MS 2528, 155-60 and verso).
- ⁴² NLI, MS 2554, 105. See Fenlon, *Goods & Chattels*, 124.
- ⁴³ NLI, MSS 2528 (Kingston Hall), 2529 (Richmond and Chelsea).
- ⁴⁴ NLI, MS 2529, 3-37.
- ⁴⁵ NLI, MS 2529, 1689, Room 94 (no pagination on later pages).
- ⁴⁶ National Archives, Kew, FEC1/876.
- ⁴⁷ Elizabeth Mc Grath, *Rubens Subjects From History, Corpus Rubenianum*, 2 vols (London, 1997) I, 74-81; Thomas P. Campbell, 'New Centres of Production and the Recovery of the Netherlandish Tapestry Industry, 1600-1620' in Campbell (ed.) *Tapestry in the Baroque*, 73; and Concha Herrero Carretero, catalogue entries nos 10 and 11 in Campbell (ed.) *Tapestry in the Baroque*, 95-105.
- ⁴⁸ Campbell, *ibid.*, 95.
- ⁴⁹ *Diary of a Tour in 1732 throughout parts of England, Wales Ireland and Scotland made by John Loveday of Caversham 1711-1789* (Edinburgh, 1890) 30. See also Philip Luckombe, *A tour through*

Ireland (London, 1778) 74, and Edward Ledwich, *Antiquities of Ireland* (Dublin 1804), 480-82.

- ⁵⁰ Listed as 'Augustus' in the 1689 inventory, it is probably the same set recorded as 'Octavius Caesar' in the 1675 inventory.
- ⁵¹ Wendy Hefford, 'The Mortlake Manufactory, 1619' in Campbell (ed.), *Tapestry in the Baroque*, 195-201. See also Fenlon, *Goods & Chattels*, 41 and 101.
- ⁵² Fenlon, *Goods & Chattels*, 42. Fenlon, 'Episodes of Magnificence' in Fenlon and Barnard (eds), *The Dukes of Ormonde 1610-1745*.
- ⁵³ Brian Ó Dálaigh, 'An inventory of the contents of Bunratty Castle, 1639', *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, 36, 1995, 139-65.
