

## **Sir Robert Viscount Jocelyn, 3rd Earl of Roden, 1st Baron Clanbrassil of Hyde Hall KP, PC. (1788 – 1870)**

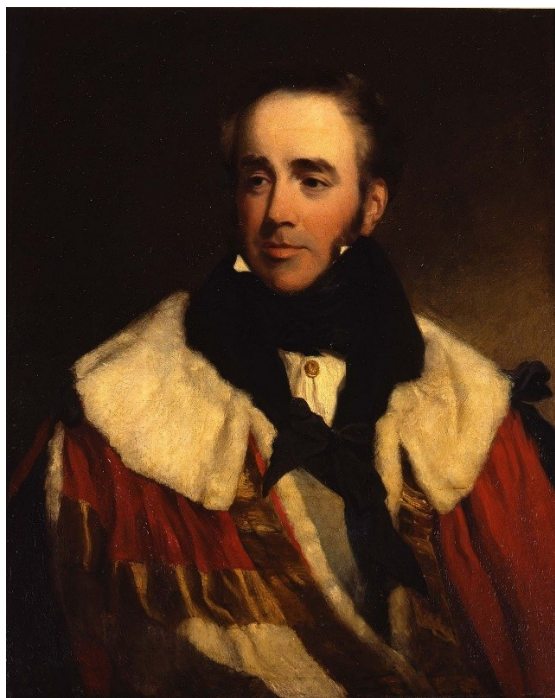
### *Troubles in Ireland and an English peerage*

*This article is the seventh in my series of 'follow-ups' to my earlier article of November 2018, entitled Hyde Hall/Great Hyde Hall, in which I have been writing about the residents and owners of Hyde Hall, especially the Jocelyn family.*

Robert Jocelyn was the eldest son of Robert Jocelyn, the 2nd Earl of Roden (who was the subject of an earlier article dated January 2019) and his wife Frances Theodosia (Bligh). Robert was born on 27 October 1788 at Laois in Ireland.

Following in his father's footsteps, Robert entered Irish politics and from 1806-1807 was the MP for County Louth. He was once again elected as MP for County Louth for the period 1810-1820, and on both occasions was a representative of the Tory Party (later becoming the Conservatives). In 1812, Robert was elected to the Irish Privy Council and became Treasurer (later Vice-Treasurer) of the Royal Household in Ireland.

Robert only formally relinquished national politics on becoming the 3rd Earl of Roden in 1820. He nonetheless maintained an active role in local affairs in Ireland, in which he was to prove contentious and unpopular.



*Robert Jocelyn, 3rd Earl of Roden in about 1821*

On 4 January 1813, Robert married Maria Frances Catherine Stapleton who was the daughter of Baron le Despenser. They were to have six children together, three sons and three daughters.

#### *The children of Robert and Maria*

1. Maria. Born 28 December 1811. Died 17 March 1894.
2. Lady Elizabeth Frances Charlotte. Born 13 December 1813. Died 2 September 1884.
3. Frances. Born 20 November 1814. Died 12 May 1885. A Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Victoria.
4. Robert Viscount Jocelyn. Born 20 February 1816. Died 12 August 1854. MP for King's Lynn. Served in China during the 1st Opium War. Lt. Colonel of the Essex militia. Died of cholera whilst a serving officer at the Tower of London. Although Robert pre-deceased his father, Robert's son (yet another Robert), the 3rd Earl's grandson, would become the 4th Earl of Roden. Robert Viscount Jocelyn was buried at Great St. Mary's in Sawbridgeworth.
5. Hon. John Strange. Born 4 June 1823. Died 3 July 1897. Became 5th Earl of Roden and is the subject of a later article.
6. Sir William Nassau CB. Born 23 October 1832. Died 11 November 1892. A foreign affairs politician who served in the Ottoman Empire and the German States.

In 1821 Robert was created a Knight of St. Patrick. Also in 1821, Robert was created Baron Clanbrassil of Hyde Hall in the County of Hertford and Dundalk in the County of Louth. This new title was in the peerage of England and therefore entitled Robert to a seat in the House of Lords at Westminster. Robert's London home was a substantial dwelling at Carlton Gardens, just off Pall Mall in Westminster. It was here that his eldest son was born.

Robert was a very religious man and was deeply Protestant. He personally would conduct the services at his private chapel at his home at Bryansford in County Down. Furthermore, he would always strictly keep the Sabbath. With his connections, Robert rose to become Grand Master of the Orange Order.

In a precursor to the 'Troubles' which have plagued the North of Ireland in the recent past, Robert was implicated in a notorious incident in 1849. On 12 July that year, Robert invited a large group of Orangemen onto his estate at Bryansford. This was to commemorate the Battle of the Boyne. These Orangemen were escorted by a troop of dragoons (presumably those of his family's 'private regiment', the 1st Fencibles). Whilst they were on his estate, Robert exhorted the Orangemen to 'do their duty as loyal protestant men'. What happened next, is that the Orangemen and dragoons left the estate and marched through 'Dolly's Brae', a staunchly Catholic area of Dundalk. In the ensuing violence, several Catholics were killed (reports variously state six or seven fatalities) and many homes were burned down. It is unclear, even now, despite Robert being anti-Catholic, if this was an outcome which he actually desired, and there was never any proof that he was guilty of a crime. He was nonetheless censured for his actions of that day and was removed from his office as a Justice and Commissioner of the Peace.

The final result of this was that the names of Jocelyn and Roden became vilified locally around Dundalk, and Robert subsequently moved to his Edinburgh home 'for the benefit of his health'.

On 25 February 1861, Robert's first wife Maria sadly died. He was, though, destined to marry a second time. On 16 August 1867, Robert married Clementina Janet Reilly (nee Andrews). This marriage, however, was childless.

Robert Jocelyn's connections to Sawbridgeworth are somewhat tenuous. He was the owner of Hyde Hall from 1820 until his death. Furthermore, he is recorded in 1838 as owning (as well as his Hyde Hall estate), Three Mile Pond farm, together with 49 surrounding acres of land. However, he is not recorded as living here on any census return, and the only definite record of his visiting the town is for the funeral of his son in 1854.

On 20 March 1870, Robert died at his Edinburgh home. He was later buried on his Irish estate at Bryansford in County Down. He was contentious to the end, being variously described at the time as 'bigoted' and 'obstinate', but also 'virtuous'; clearly a complicated character.



*Robert, 3rd Earl of Roden, photographed later in life at Bryansford*

Robert was survived by his second wife Clementina, who died 9 July 1903 at Newick in Sussex.

Possibly of interest is an episode of the BBC TV programme *'Fake or Fortune'*, first screened on 1 August 2019, which featured a painting which was once owned by Robert Viscount Jocelyn, the eldest son of the 3rd Earl of Roden. It was later owned by Arthur Saunders Gore, 5th Earl of Arran, who had inherited it because he had married Edith Jocelyn, the daughter of Robert Viscount Jocelyn.

The painting was found to be genuine, with an estimated value in excess of £1.5M.

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