



***A Forgotten Patriot
Doctor: Charles Lucas
1713-1771***

By Sean J Murphy

Third Edition

Centre for Irish Genealogical and Historical Studies

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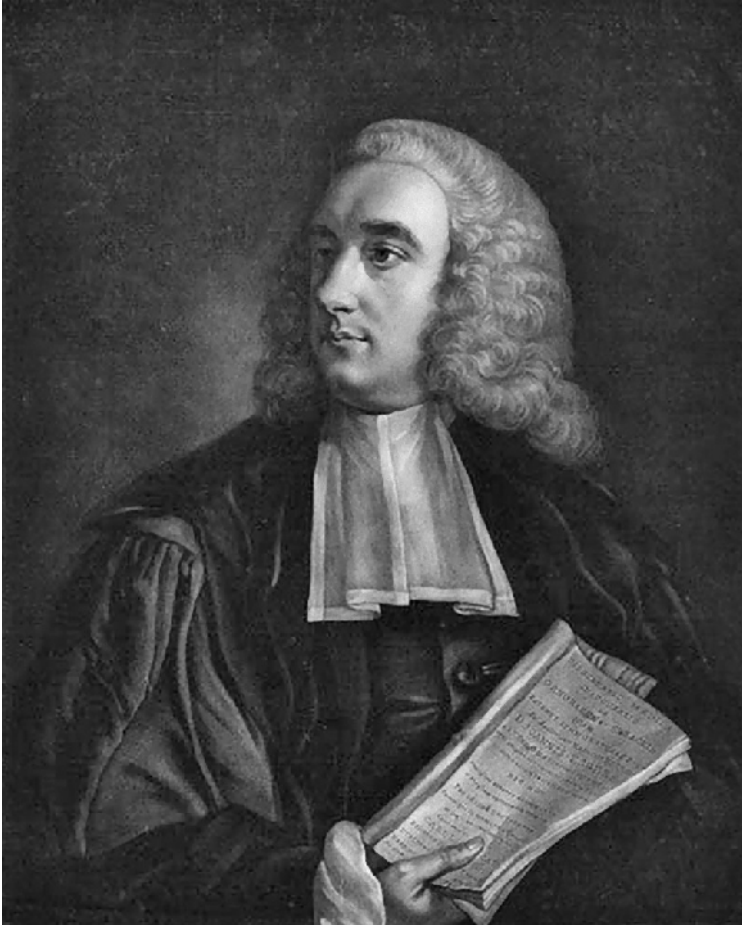
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*Dedicated to my late mother Eileen Murphy, née Keating
(1918-2009)*

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Charles Lucas MD, print by James McArdell from a portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds circa 1756 (courtesy of Teylers Museum)

Contents

Foreword	5
1 Early Life	8
2 Corporation Politician	18
3 The Dublin Election I	26
4 The Dublin Election II	34
5 Exile and Medical Career	50
6 Parliamentarian	64
7 The Octennial Act	74
8 Final Years	81
Appendix 1: Pedigree of Lucas	92
Appendix 2: Lucas on Religious Differences	93
Bibliography: Select Publications of Charles Lucas	96
Illustrations	3, 46-9

Foreword

The present online biography of Charles Lucas is the third edition of a work first published in 2009, and develops a second edition produced in 2013 to mark the tercentenary of the birth of a not very well remembered figure. Lucas's was indeed a busy life, as the present study should show, for he could count among his public achievements the roles of apothecary, author, municipal reformer, radical patriot, medical doctor and parliamentarian. While studying history in University College Dublin in the 1970s the writer developed an interest in eighteenth-century Irish patriotism, and the choice of Lucas as a subject for special study was influenced by the fact that he was relatively neglected by historians, also that a contemporary volume of his political writings was then available for close study on an open library shelf.¹

Lucas's career is described from his birth in County Clare in 1713, through his first surviving published work on Kilcorney Cave and the Burren, his move to Dublin City, training as an apothecary and efforts to deal with abuses in that trade, his election to Dublin Corporation and campaign to reform its governance, his candidacy during the Dublin by-election of 1748-49 and copious pamphleteering, his condemnation by parliament

1 Charles Lucas, *The Political Constitutions of Great Britain and Ireland Asserted and Vindicated*, London 1751.

for alleged seditious writings and exile in Britain and Europe, his qualification as a medical doctor and promotion of hydrotherapy, and following his return from exile in 1761 his parliamentary career until his death in 1771. A case is made that despite Lucas's undoubted Protestant prejudices, he was more than a mere anti-Catholic bigot, and furthermore that his ideology was nationalist and marked a pivotal transition to the republican separatism of the United Irishmen.

The present work is built on the author's master's thesis dealing with the earlier part of Lucas's political career, completed some thirty-four years ago,² and in particular is an expansion of a subsequently published article.³ A proposal to make the later part of Lucas's career the subject of a doctoral thesis did not find favour, while my professional work as a genealogical researcher and teacher progressively left less time for specialised eighteenth-century studies. I have therefore not yet been able to complete the full-length study of Lucas advertised for some time by my publisher.⁴

It has been Lucas's misfortune not yet to have been the subject of a full biography, which fact can be advanced as further evidence of historical insignificance (as though all significant history has been written). The present compact biography of

2 Sean Murphy, *The Lucas Affair: A Study of Municipal and Electoral Politics in Dublin 1742-9*, unpublished MA thesis, University College Dublin 1981 (first-class honours).

3 Same, 'Charles Lucas, Catholicism and Nationalism', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 8, 1993, pages 83-102.

4 Academica Press, Prospectus for Sean Murphy, *The Lucas Affair*, <http://academicpress.com/node/140>, accessed 3 September 2013; the statement that the author is a 'Ph.D., Dublin City University' is incorrect.

Charles Lucas 1713-1771

Lucas is presented therefore by way of compensation, indeed as evidence of work in progress, with apologies for the delay in producing a more substantial offering. The publication is also offered freely to the public via the medium of the Internet, which fulfills many of the functions of the eighteenth-century pamphlet press, and it is hoped that it will help preserve the memory of a man with many human failings but of sufficient worth and importance to merit our attention and respect.

Projects such as the present one always rely on the support of others, and in particular I acknowledge the assistance of the late Professor R Dudley Edwards (who opened the door) and the History Department of University College Dublin, the staffs of the National Library of Ireland, the National Archives of Ireland, Dublin City Library and Archive, the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, Teylers Museum and Leiden University Libraries, Netherlands, and last but not least University College Dublin Library and its Special Collections. In the period since my Lucas work became an entirely voluntary and extra-mural academic project I have benefited from the support of my mother Eileen Murphy (now deceased) and my wife Margaret McGinn. Lastly, I thank the 'Doolin Gang' for their forbearance in occasionally suspending Summer holiday activities to search for traces of Lucas in the Burren and other places in County Clare.

Sean J Murphy MA
Centre for Irish Genealogical
and Historical Studies
Windgates, County Wicklow
January 2015

1 Early Life

Lucas of Ballingaddy

Charles Lucas was born in County Clare on 16 September 1713, the son of Benjamin Lucas, of Ballingaddy near Ennistimon, and Mary Blood. There is a tradition that Charles was born in an old house located in Willie Daly's equestrian centre in Ballingaddy, and a Lucas family still resides in the area at Sandfield Lodge. The Lucases were of Cromwellian stock and hailed from Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk. Charles's grandfather Henry Lucas and his brother Benjamin were soldiers in Cromwell's army in Ireland in the 1640s. Benjamin, who was not Charles Lucas's direct ancestor as frequently stated but rather his granduncle, achieved the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel and was granted extensive lands in Clare. Henry had two sons, Benjamin, Charles's father, and John, and this branch of the family appears to have acquired an interest in Ballingaddy via Lieutenant-Colonel Benjamin.⁵

⁵ Lucas Family, Barry Manuscripts, National Library of Ireland, Genealogical Office MS 412, pages 66-7; Brian Ó Dálaigh, Editor, 'The Lucas Diary, 1740-41', *Analecta Hibernica*, 40, 2007, pages 75-77. Ó Dálaigh's identification of Henry and Lieutenant-Colonel Benjamin's parents as John Lucas and Rose Hudson, on the basis of sparsely detailed entries in the registers of St James's Parish in Bury St Edmunds, may be correct but is not fully proven. See also Appendix 1, page 92 below.

Charles Lucas 1713-1771

While little is known about Lucas's early years, it would not be implausible to speculate that given his background, radical Commonwealth ideals would have played a part in shaping his political awareness and prejudices. Furthermore, although the Lucases may originally have been adherents of a dissenting sect, Charles was certainly a member of the Established Protestant Church of Ireland in adult life. The rhythms of life of a rural Irish Protestant family in eighteenth-century Ireland are well illustrated in the pages of a surviving diary covering the years 1740-41 kept by a Mr Lucas of Drumcavan in the Parish of Ruan in County Clare, probably a son of the above mentioned John, brother of Benjamin. Entries describe the everyday agricultural activities of tending to livestock, growing and harvesting crops, employing and paying labourers, generally in kind not cash, going to fairs, attending church, social visits with relatives and friends, usually within the Protestant network, with some references to illness and death, financial issues and the extremely cold weather which prevailed in 1740.⁶

No records survive to indicate what kind of schooling the young Charles Lucas may have obtained. Parish schools were few in number in the early eighteenth century,⁷ so it is likely that Charles and his siblings may have been taught by a private tutor. Disaffected and often poverty-stricken Catholics would have had less educational opportunities, but the hedge-school master or

6 Ó Dálaigh, Editor, 'Lucas Diary, 1740-41', pages 78-83 and generally.

7 Donald H Akenson, *The Irish Education Experiment*, London and New York 1970, page 24.

travelling teacher provided a vital service. On the basis of exchanges in 1749 between Lucas and an opponent Sir Richard Cox, who was writing under the pseudonym 'Anthony Litten', Morley has suggested intriguingly that despite his Protestant background the young Lucas may have crossed the denominational divide and received some education from such a teacher. This would be Hugh MacCurtin/Aodh Buí Mac Cruitín, the Gaelic poet, antiquary and former active Jacobite, who came from Kilmacrehy, which is not far from Ballingaddy. Morley observes that the description by Lucas (himself using the pseudonym 'A Freeman') of MacCurtin as 'an old Irishman, one Mac Cruttin, who calls himself a Milesian', together with some laborious Gaelic-inspired puns on Cox's pen-name Litten (eg, Litten-Kelliteen/*coilichín-cock-Cox*) would indicate both that Lucas knew MacCurtin and had been in recent contact with him in 1749. Another probable persona of Cox, 'Dick Litten', alleged that MacCurtin was Lucas's tutor, which if not literally true certainly reflected the fact that Lucas's views had been influenced by him.⁸

Benjamin Lucas died about 1727, bequeathing the relatively generous total of £937 to his wife Mary and large family. His named offspring included two apparently natural sons by his servant maid, Ellen Hynes, certainly an indication that the Lucases were not entirely detached from

8 Vincent Morley, 'Charles Lucas and the Irish Past', unpublished article, pages 9-14 (my thanks to the author for giving me an opportunity to view this piece), and *An Crann Os Coill: Aodh Buí Mac Cruitín, c1680-1755*, Dublin 1995, pages 84-6, 135-40.

the native Irish. Charles, Benjamin's second youngest son, was allocated £80 and his father requested that his brother John should arrange a proper occupation for him.⁹ Stories that Benjamin left his family destitute appear to be based on exaggeration and were possibly a result of Charles's later political notoriety and periodic financial difficulties. One nineteenth-century article on Charles Lucas claimed that his father and elder brother were improvident, selling their leasehold interest in their lands, in consequence of which the family was left in 'indifferent circumstances' and had to move to Dublin.¹⁰

The relatively large sum of money left by Benjamin Lucas in his will, together with the fact that he is described as of Ballingaddy and not of Dublin, casts doubt on this tale of improvidence and enforced relocation.¹¹ However, it does appear that complications arose concerning the lease of the lands of Ballingaddy East and West, which the Lucases held from the Viscounts Ikerrin (family name Butler). Thus deeds dated 1710-32 indicate that Benjamin Lucas had raised mortgages on the lands, that at one point he went to law and obtained a Court of Chancery decree against Viscount Ikerrin, and that after his death Ballingaddy East and West passed from the

9 Will of Benjamin Lucas of Ballingaddy, probated 1728, Prerogative Will Book 1726-28, National Archives of Ireland, 10/2/3, folios 309a-b.

10 O'G, 'Charles Lucas', *Dublin Penny Journal*, 1, 1832-33, page 389.

11 The description of Benjamin Lucas as 'a wastrel and a rake' seems a bit harsh: Ó Dálaigh, Editor, 'Lucas Diary, 1740-41', page 77.

possession of his family, being reassigned to George Hickman.¹²

Kilcorney Cave

Ballingaddy of course is not far from Clare's natural wonderland the Burren, and there is evidence that Charles explored the area in his youth. His earliest published work was an article in the form of a letter composed in 1736 describing Kilcorney Cave, with a short account of the Burren.¹³ Lucas, who ventured through the narrow opening for about forty yards, recounted local lore to the effect that a 'stud of fine horses' was sometimes seen emerging from Kilcorney Cave. He observed also that while the cave was normally dry, at uncertain and irregular periods it poured forth 'such a deluge as covers the adjacent plain, sometimes with above twenty foot depth of water' (this unpredictable periodic flooding still occurs and led to the death of a local man as recently as 1997).

Lucas's letter also listed some of the flora of the Burren, including Juniper, Yew, Goldenrod, Vervain and Cinquefoil. Lucas cited the Latin names of most of the plants he listed, and it has been observed that few authors have acknowledged the priority of his account of Burren flora.¹⁴

12 Deeds 15-16 September 1710, 27-28 June 1720, 1 March 1721, 11 January 1722 and 20 July 1732, Registry of Deeds 6/272/2124, 26/438/16108, 34/48/20416, 37/277/22712, 70/382/488185.

13 E C Nelson, 'Charles Lucas's Letter (1736) to Sir Hans Sloane About the Natural History of the Burren', *Journal of the Irish Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons*, 21, 1992, pages 126-31.

14 Same, page 127.

Turning to the local residents of the Lucas described them in the following terms:

The inhabitants are but few, and they mostly poor cottagers whose chief stock is goats. They are courteous and good-natured to strangers, though wild and unspoiled, [and] weak, blind, superstitious zealots of Rome.¹⁵

These comments tend to confirm that Lucas had grown up with a significant measure of prejudice towards his Catholic fellow-countrymen, which was undoubtedly a product of the atmosphere of fear and mistrust existing between the descendants of settlers and dispossessed natives. Yet Lucas's reference to the courtesy and good nature of the Burren Catholics does set him apart from the more extreme and militant wing of Protestantism, which as we shall see tended to be unwilling to make any such concessions.

Dublin Apothecary

In accordance with the wish expressed in his father's will, arrangements were made for Charles's occupational training, and the craft he would follow was that of apothecary. A contemporary source indicates that Charles was apprenticed in Dublin City to Robert King, later to be an Alderman of Dublin Corporation. This account claimed that during his apprenticeship Lucas behaved himself 'soberly and honestly enough, save only a little petulance and self-sufficiency', which his master 'was kind enough to overlook, because he was, in the general, tolerably civil and seemed upon the

15 Nelson, 'Charles Lucas's Letter', page 128.

whole to be a sprightly, hopeful young man'.¹⁶ While it should be noted that the source was hostile to Lucas, the extract quoted probably gives a fair enough flavour of his general disposition and inability to brook authority unquestioningly for long.

Belonging to the privileged Church of Ireland and having completed his apprenticeship under a member of the city's elite, Lucas might have looked forward with some confidence to establishing himself successfully in his chosen trade of apothecary. Dublin at this time was a rapidly expanding capital with a population of about 120,000, of which a majority was Protestant but Catholics were increasing in number. Lucas was admitted to the freedom of the Guild of Barber Surgeons, to which apothecaries were then attached, in April 1735, and to the freedom of the city in July of the same year.¹⁷ Lucas married his first wife Anne Blundell in 1734¹⁸ and by 1736 was established as an apothecary in Charles Street with a house and shop there.¹⁹

Undeterred by the fact that he was a newcomer to the apothecary's trade, in 1735 Lucas published a pamphlet against frauds and abuses in the

16 *An Apology for the Conduct and Writings of Mr C - s L - s, Apothecary*, Dublin 1749, pages 6-7.

17 Barber Surgeons' Minutes, 20 April 1735, Trinity College Dublin MS 1447/8; Gertrude Thrift, Editor, Roll of Freemen, City of Dublin, 3, National Library of Ireland MS 78, page 87.

18 *Index to Dublin Grant Books and Wills*, 1, page 1,030.

19 Registry of Apothecaries 1736, folio 11, Royal College of Physicians of Ireland Heritage Centre, Dublin.

preparation and sale of drugs.²⁰ Throughout his career Lucas laid great stress on the necessity for the apothecary to be subordinate to the physician, and to minister and to act under the latter's direction. Unsurprisingly, Lucas's fellow apothecaries did not take kindly to a novice's attempt to lay down the law to his seniors, and he later recalled that his efforts gained him 'the implacable hatred and enmity of all the apothecaries and druggists' in the city.²¹

Nevertheless, Lucas's belief in the need for reform of his profession happened to be shared by those in high places, and in late 1735 a bill 'for preventing frauds and abuses committed in the making and vending unsound, adulterated and bad drugs and medicines' came before the House of Lords. Lucas was heard by the Lords' committee considering the bill on 15 December 1735, and earlier in the same month the apothecaries and druggists of Dublin petitioned against the bill on the grounds that it would greatly affect their trade and business.²² The apothecaries' objections were not accepted, and in March 1736 a drugs act passed into law (by convention the act is dated 1735). Under the act the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland was authorised to inspect

20 No copy of this 1735 pamphlet appears to have survived, but it was titled *A Short Scheme for Preventing Frauds and Abuses in Pharmacy, Humbly Offered to the Consideration of the Legislature* ([Lucas?], *A Critical Review of the Liberties of British Subjects*, second edition, London 1750, page 370).

21 Lucas, *Pharmacomastix, or the Office, Use and Abuse of Apothecaries Examined*, Dublin 1741, page 78.

22 *Journals of the House of Lords of the Kingdom of Ireland*, 3, Dublin 1779, pages 320, 328.

apothecaries' shops and to destroy any adulterated or defective drugs discovered.²³

The enmity Lucas had incurred among many of his apothecary colleagues, perhaps allied with some distraction from his professional duties as a result of involvement in legislative lobbying, may have contributed to a failure in business which necessitated a temporary retreat to London about 1737.²⁴ In February of that year we find him in London petitioning the Duke of Newcastle for the post of state apothecary in Ireland, pleading 'downright necessity' as an excuse for thus abruptly accosting his grace.²⁵ Lucas did not succeed in obtaining the post, but was soon able to return to Ireland, having come to an agreement with his creditors.²⁶

The 1735 drugs act was only valid for three years and would be renewed successively until 1756.²⁷ In 1741 Lucas published a pamphlet, *Pharmacomastix*, in which he dwelt in some detail on abuses common in the apothecary's trade, recounted his involvement in the campaign which led to the 1735 act and laid out a programme for a

23 *Journals House of Lords*, 3, page 337; 9 George II, chapter 10, *The Statutes at Large Passed in the Parliaments Held in Ireland*, 6, Dublin 1786, pages 203-06.

24 *Apology for the Conduct*, pages 7-8.

25 Lucas to Duke of Newcastle, 23 February 1737, British Library Add Ms 32,690, folios 255-56.

26 *Apology for the Conduct*, page 8.

27 Andrew Sneddon, 'Institutional Medicine and State Intervention in Eighteenth-Century Ireland', James Kelly and Fiona Clark, Editors, *Ireland and Medicine in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, Farnham, Surrey, 2010, page 151.

Charles Lucas 1713-1771

more radical drugs act, which would not to be implemented in full.²⁸

Some of the inspecting physicians' reports have survived and these show that Lucas's own apothecary shop was graded 'well' in 1742-43 and 'very well' in 1744.²⁹ Characteristically, Lucas appears to have taken upon himself the task of inspecting the inspectors, on one occasion reportedly altering labels on bottles so that the visitors solemnly identified a substance as rhubarb which was in fact turmeric mixed with toast.³⁰

28 Lucas, *Pharmacomastix*; Sneddon, 'Institutional Medicine and State Intervention', page 150.

29 Returns by Visitors of Apothecaries' Shops, May 1742-May 1743, May 1744, Royal College of Physicians of Ireland Heritage Centre, Dublin (references courtesy of Harriet Wheelock).

30 J Warburton, J Whitelaw and Robert Walsh, *History of the City of Dublin*, 2, London 1818, page 749.

2 Corporation Politician

Municipal Reform

Far from keeping his head down or confining himself to business affairs on his return to Dublin after his difficulties in the 1730s, Lucas decided to become involved in local politics. He began his political career as a representative of the Barber Surgeons' Guild on the Common Council of Dublin Corporation, to which he was appointed in December 1741.

The Common Council or governing body of Dublin Corporation was composed of two houses, the Lord Mayor and 24 Aldermen forming the upper house, while the lower house was called the Sheriffs and Commons and was composed mostly of representatives of the city's 24 trade guilds. The guilds were controlled by about 3,000 Protestant Freemen, who also possessed the right to vote in parliamentary elections, and Catholics of course were excluded from all political power. The constitution of Dublin Corporation was based partly on royal charters granted since 1172, partly on usage, ancient customs and by-laws, and principally on 'New Rules' imposed by the government of Charles II in 1672, whose main effect was to strengthen the oligarchy of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen.³¹

31 Sean Murphy, 'The Corporation of Dublin, 1660-1760', *Dublin Historical Record*, 38, 1984, pages 22-5.

In alliance with James Digges La Touche, a Merchants' Guild representative and a member of the wealthy Huguenot merchant and banking family, Lucas commenced a campaign for municipal reform in April 1742. Lucas and La Touche sought to limit the oligarchic powers of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, and correspondingly to increase the powers of the Sheriffs and Commons.³² In early 1742 Lucas crossed swords with one of the Aldermen, Nathaniel Kane, on the subject of a proposal that the Corporation should acquire mills at Islandbridge beside the River Liffey in order to improve the city's water supply. Lucas opposed the purchase on the grounds that it involved personal gain for Kane, a charge which he denied, and the Corporation sanctioned the deal in March 1742.³³

The outbreak of what was to be a protracted struggle between the two houses of the Corporation coincided with a decision by the Sheriffs and Commons to commence keeping a detailed journal of their proceedings in April 1742.³⁴ Supported by a radical majority in the lower house, Lucas and La Touche scoured old Corporation records in an effort to show that the Aldermen had usurped many of the powers they exercised. A committee of

32 Murphy, 'Corporation of Dublin', page 26.

33 Nathaniel Kane, Editor, *Genuine Letters Between Alderman Nathaniel Kane and Mr Charles Lucas Concerning the Purchase of the Mills at Islandbridge*, Second Edition, Dublin 1749; J T Gilbert, Editor, *Calendar of the Ancient Records of Dublin*, 9, Dublin 1902, pages 49-50.

34 Journals of the Sheriffs and Commons, 1, 1742-61, Dublin City Archives C1/JSC/01. Dublin City Archives appears to be distinct from Dublin City Library and Archive but shares the same premises in Pearse Street, Dublin.

the Sheriffs and Commons chaired by La Touche prepared a report in October 1742 claiming that the New Rules made no reference to the mode of electing Aldermen lower house had formerly participated in the election of Aldermen. A committee of the Aldermen issued a report in reply asserting that the Sheriffs and Commons had no more participated in the election of members of the upper house than they had in appointing Lord Mayors, Sheriffs and Treasurers.³⁵

As the municipal dispute proceeded, Lucas produced two pamphlets arguing the case for municipal reform. The first of these pamphlets, *A Remonstrance Against Certain Infringements*, was published in April 1743 at a time when Lucas had broken with the municipal reform party primarily because of resentment over La Touche's dominance. Lucas explained that he was publishing the results of his research into the charters, by-laws, acts of assembly and other records relating to the constitution of the city, on the grounds that 'little or no regard' was paid to these records, owing to the fact that they 'were not sufficiently promulgated or known among the citizens'. Lucas argued that the government of Dublin was 'truly popular' and he condemned the powers claimed by the Aldermen as unconstitutional encroachments upon the rights and privileges of the Commons and citizens dating only from the time of the New Rules. The *Remonstrance* is relatively cautious and moderate in comparison with Lucas's later works, which

35 Murphy, 'Corporation of Dublin', page 27 (the municipal records cited as being located in City Hall are now with Dublin City Archives).

grew increasingly more strident and radical in their attacks on the 'usurpations' of the Aldermen and the New Rules.³⁶

Lucas's second pamphlet, *Divelina Libera* published in 1744, was more extremely worded, and as well as representing the Aldermen as power-hungry usurpers, the author also took the opportunity to castigate the New Rules as a scheme to prepare a 'highway for Popery and slavery'. Giving a brief historical account of the introduction of English government and laws to Ireland in the twelfth century, Lucas saw this process as occurring by means of a free contract between the people of Ireland and the king, rather than by conquest. Similarly, Lucas presented an idealised view of the evolution of Dublin Corporation, whereby the citizens were left free by royal charter to choose their own form of municipal government, which in time had degenerated with the rise of aldermanic oligarchy. Lucas concluded the pamphlet with a proposal to apply to the King and Parliament for a repeal or amendment of the New Rules and an appeal for support for the campaign for municipal reform.³⁷

Of course the reforming party represented the Protestant freemen or enfranchised citizens of Dublin only, whose entitlement to participate in municipal and parliamentary elections depended on their membership of the city's exclusive trade guilds. Under the penal laws, Catholics were

36 Lucas, *A Remonstrance Against Certain Infringements on the Rights and Liberties of the Commons and Citizens of Dublin*, Dublin 1743.

37 Lucas, *Divelina Libera: An Apology for the Civil Rights and Liberties of the Commons and Citizens of Dublin*, Dublin 1744.

denied participation in politics even at the municipal level, and there is no evidence that they were greatly interested in Lucas's agitation at this stage. The campaign eventually began seriously to impede Corporation business, as when in July 1743 the Sheriffs and Commons refused to pass the city accounts until they were printed and distributed to its members. Both houses of the Corporation agreed in September 1743 to the appointment as moderator of the City Recorder, Eaton Stannard, whose opinion delivered in October was in favour of the Aldermen.³⁸

Clearly still dissatisfied, in January 1744 the Sheriffs and Commons' committee produced a further report with the opinions of several eminent lawyers appended, none of which could be deemed favourable to their case. The dispute came to a head when the determined reform party, with Lucas now back on board, appointed trustees and took a case in the Court of King's Bench in June 1744, arguing that a recent appointment of an Alderman had been invalid. The court, presided over by Lord Chief Justice Marlay, found against the reformers in November. In December the triennial selection of guild representatives provided the victorious Aldermen with an opportunity to remove Lucas and La Touche from the city council. These setbacks, together with the crisis caused by the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745, led to a temporary lull in the municipal dispute but it would be a number of years before it was finally resolved.³⁹

38 Murphy, 'Corporation of Dublin', page 28.

39 Same, pages 28-9.

The Barber's Letters

The next occasion on which Lucas ventured to comment on Catholics and Catholicism is one which reflects least credit on him and sees him exhibiting prejudices perhaps most closely fitting the stereotype of the Protestant bigot. In the wake of rioting in Smock Alley Theatre in January 1747 consequent on attempts by the manager, Thomas Sheridan, to curb rowdy excesses by 'gentlemen' members of the audience, Dublin was split into camps pro- and anti-Sheridan.⁴⁰ Lucas entered the fray as a champion of Sheridan, producing several pamphlets in February and March 1747 in which untypically he concealed his identity behind a pseudonym, 'A Freeman, Barber and Citizen'.⁴¹

Lucas ascribed the theatrical disturbances to a premature slackening of legal discipline in the kingdom and warned of a relapse into the slavery and barbarism which characterised the ancient Irish before they were reformed and brought under 'the best government in the world'. Noting that the most prominent rioter, one Kelly, was a Catholic from the province of Connacht, Lucas claimed that there was more to the riots than a mere theatrical dispute, and that they were the work of a group of 'professed Papists' and 'mercenary converts' who were preparing for 'a foreign invasion, a western insurrection or an universal massacre'.⁴²

The gratuitously insulting references to 'Papists' evidently produced a critical reaction

40 E K Sheldon, *Thomas Sheridan of Smock Alley*, Princeton 1967, pages 81-95.

41 A Freeman, Barber and Citizen [Lucas], *A [First]-Third Letter to the Free Citizens of Dublin*, Dublin 1747.

42 Same, *A [First] Letter*, pages 2-6, *A Second Letter*, page 10.

which Lucas could not ignore, for in the third and final pamphlet of the Barber series he felt obliged to declare that he had ‘never reflected on any man for mere religious principles’, and claimed to have daily contact and friendship with Catholics. He attempted to distinguish between those who accepted the spiritual authority of the pope, whom he merely pitied, and those who accepted temporal papal power, whom he strenuously opposed.⁴³ The obsessiveness of the anti-Catholic propaganda in Lucas’s Barber’s *Letters* of 1747 was in fact uncharacteristic, and it is likely that like many of his co-religionists he had been affected by the scare attendant on the Jacobite Rising of 1745, while the mask of pseudonymity undoubtedly also encouraged lack of restraint. Although, as we shall see, Lucas was to become less preoccupied with the dangers of ‘Popery’ and more favourably disposed towards Catholics and ancient Ireland, the memory of the Barber’s *Letters* was to live on and would become the principal basis for Lucas’s reputation as an ultra-Protestant bigot.

Indicating that the municipal reformers still harboured some hopes, La Touche made a direct appeal to Lord Lieutenant, the Earl of Chesterfield, in 1746 on the subject of the Dublin Corporation dispute.⁴⁴ No doubt following this lead, Lucas made a similar appeal to Chesterfield’s successor, the Earl of Harrington, in December 1747. Commencing with some mandatory flattering

43 Barber [Lucas], *A Third Letter*, pages 18-19.

44 James Digges La Touche, *Papers Concerning the Late Disputes Between the Commons and Aldermen of Dublin, Republished and Humbly Addressed to His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant*, Dublin 1746.

comments concerning Harrington's 'probity and wisdom', Lucas explained that the failure of all other means of redress caused him to plead his case directly, going on to criticise the judiciary in fairly strong terms.⁴⁵ Chesterfield does not appear to have acted on La Touche's address, but Harrington would in time move in relation to Lucas, although not in a favourable manner.

45 Lucas, *The Complaints of Dublin: Humbly Offered to His Excellency William Earl of Harrington, Lord Lieutenant General and General Governor of Ireland*, Dublin 1747.

3 The Dublin Election I

The By-Election of 1748-49

Lucas's next opportunity for political involvement came during the Dublin by-election of 1748-49, when the city's two parliamentary seats fell vacant due to the deaths of the incumbent MPs. In uneasy alliance with James Digges La Touche, Lucas attempted to break the virtual monopoly of Dublin's parliamentary representation by aldermen of Dublin Corporation.⁴⁶ As well as making fiery speeches in the guild halls, Lucas deluged the voters with pamphlet addresses and letters designed as much to educate them in correct political principles as to advance his own candidacy. These tracts were republished by Lucas in a collected edition in 1751, under the title *The Political Constitutions of Great Britain and Ireland*, and in the writer's view this is one of the most important but neglected Irish political works of the eighteenth century. It is true that Lucas's writings lack the weight of Molyneux or the stylistic brilliance of Swift, and not infrequently tend to be overwritten. Yet in an age when an emotive and overblown style was prevalent, Lucas was by no means the worst offender, and those who take the trouble to persevere will find that the *Political Constitutions* is actually quite readable, as well as being systematically laid out and containing much

46 Sean Murphy, 'Charles Lucas and the Dublin election of 1748-9', *Parliamentary History*, 2, 1983, pages 94-5.

matter of interest. The work is composed of lengthy prefatory material, twenty election addresses and six letters to the citizens of Dublin, all written by Lucas, together with selected reprints from Lucas's election newspaper, the *Censor*, many of the latter articles being written by other authors.⁴⁷

It must be stressed that Lucas's election campaign was not confined merely to municipal matters, as has sometimes been implied,⁴⁸ but encompassed much larger political issues. Thus his election addresses contain an exhaustive analysis of the British constitution with its balance between the three estates of king, lords and commons, and stress the ever present danger of degeneration due to corruption. This analysis largely follows traditional Whig and 'Commonwealthman' patterns of thought, and among the authorities listed by Lucas were Locke, Coke and Acherley.⁴⁹

However, it was in his attempt to demonstrate that the British constitution was also the birthright of the Irish that Lucas was to be most controversial, and indeed original, making a distinct but still not adequately recognised contribution to the development of Irish nationalist

47 Lucas, *The Political Constitutions of Great Britain and Ireland Asserted and Vindicated*, London 1751, two volumes continuously paginated and bound as one; copies of this and others publications of Lucas can now be accessed online at <http://books.google.com>.

48 Patrick Kelly, 'William Molyneux and the Spirit of Liberty in Eighteenth-Century Ireland', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 3, 1988, page 138.

49 Lucas, Addresses I-IX, *Political Constitutions*, pages 1-109. These and the following cited addresses are republications of the series A [*First-]Twentieth Address to the Free Citizens and Free-Holders of the City of Dublin*, Dublin 1748-49.

thought. In his tenth address of 13 January 1749 Lucas rejected the claim that Ireland was a conquered colony dependent on the government and parliament of Great Britain, and praised William Molyneux as ‘that strenuous assertor of truth and liberty’. In the course of his summary of Molyneux’s *Case of Ireland*, Lucas made a radical statement which eventually would land him in serious trouble with the authorities:

. . . it must now be confessed that there was no general rebellion in Ireland, since the first British invasion, that was not raised or fomented by the oppression, instigation, evil influence or connivance of the English.⁵⁰

In his eleventh address of 31 January 1749 Lucas went even further in his critique of the misconduct of ‘our mother-nation, England’, a task he undertook ‘with the utmost reluctance’ and without prejudice, as he possessed ‘neither consanguinity or affinity, nor even fosterhood, with any Irish family in the kingdom’.⁵¹ He claimed that though the native Irish in medieval times had shown their willingness to submit to English law, they had been treated as badly ‘as the Spaniards used the Mexicans, or as inhumanly as the English now treat their slaves in America’. He concluded with an attack on the declaratory act of 1720, which he saw as evidence of the increase of the ‘destructive excrescence of English power’, signalling clearly that his words had a contemporary as well as an historical import.⁵²

50 Lucas, Address X, *Political Constitutions*, pages 112-14, 123.

51 This may be to overlook Lucas’s apparent two half-brothers by his father’s servant maid (see page 10 above).

52 Lucas, Address XI, *Political Constitutions*, pages 132-4, 143.

‘National Rights’

A *Censor* article published in June 1749, almost certainly written by Lucas himself, provides additional evidence of a more mellow and sympathetic attitude towards Gaelic culture. Illustrating abuses of power, the article cited the example of a man said to have been imprisoned by a lord mayor of Dublin merely for speaking Irish, following it with the case of ‘one McCurtin, an inoffensive, honest, poor man,’ allegedly committed to Newgate for ‘writing an harmless, silly book’ by Sir Richard Cox, the Tory lord chancellor and lord chief justice during Queen Anne’s reign.⁵³ This was a reference to the poet and Jacobite Hugh MacCurtain and as already noted indicates that Lucas’s anti-English view of Irish history was at least partly influenced by a Gaelic source.⁵⁴ Although Lucas did not press his ideas concerning the treatment of the native Irish further - indeed it is remarkable that he advanced them at all given his Protestant prejudices - he was more than hinting at the existence of an inclusive Irish nation transcending the Anglican and Dissenter sections of the population, and having a common interest in resisting English domination, even if he was not prepared to concede that all sections should possess a complete equality of civil rights.

One contemporary observer ascribed the increased politicisation of Dublin citizens to the events of 1749, specifically mentioning that ‘national rights’ had been added to the agenda for

53 *Censor*, 24 June 1749, Lucas, *Political Constitutions*, page 466.

54 See page 10 above.

discussion.⁵⁵ It seems difficult to deny therefore that Lucas's political ideology was nationalist, and it is hardly 'anachronistic' to claim so.⁵⁶ Indeed as much as the money bill dispute of 1753-56, the Lucas affair of 1748-49 marked a watershed, for both episodes showed that a growing number of Irish Protestants were prepared to accept the existence of distinct Irish interests whose defence required that British domination be resisted. Furthermore, the strength of Lucas's denunciation of English misgovernment in Ireland, and his not unsympathetic portrayal of the native Irish, justify the conclusion that he represented an important pivotal stage in the transition from Anglo-Irish or Protestant constitutional nationalism to the more radical and inclusive republican separatism of the United Irishmen.⁵⁷

In this connection it is significant that Lucas exerted a considerable influence on the radical and republican James Napper Tandy,⁵⁸ while Theobald Wolfe Tone hoped in 1796 that if a republic was achieved, a pantheon might be constructed peopled by figures such as Molyneux, Swift and Lucas, 'all

55 A Freeman [James Digges La Touche?], *A Short but True History of the Rise, Progress and Happy Suppression of Several Late Insurrections . . . in Ireland*, London and Dublin 1760, pages 16-17.

56 Sean Connolly, book review in *History Ireland*, 3(3), 1995, page 58.

57 Sean Murphy, 'Irish Republicanism Before the United Irishmen', unpublished article, 1998, page 10.

58 James Kelly, 'Napper Tandy: Radical and Republican', in James Kelly and Uáit ear Mac Gearailt, Editors, *Dublin and Dubliners*, Dublin 1990, page 2.

good Irishmen'.⁵⁹ Despite his frequently and often fulsomely expressed attachment to the Hanoverians and the British system of constitutional monarchy, Lucas revealed an underlying respect for a rival form of government when he wrote that the British system 'has more of the true republic in its composition than any of those that now bear the name of republic'.⁶⁰ Lucas's pivotal role in the transition to republican separatism becomes clearer still if we look at his evolving views on the question of how far Catholicism was to be tolerated, which subject was also addressed directly in his election publications.

Lucas and Catholicism I

In a tract dated 18 August 1749, which took the form of a letter to the citizens of Dublin, Lucas moved from municipal matters to divest himself in a more personal than usual way of some thoughts on Catholicism and religious and political differences in general.⁶¹ He observed that he had been variously represented by his enemies as a Tory, Jacobite or High Church man, and also as a Whig, Low Church man or Presbyterian who 'could roast or broil Papists'. Noting that ecclesiastical government was the only difference between his (Anglican) creed and that of the Presbyterians, he then specifically discussed the position of Catholics, but in terms more tolerant than those he

59 W T W Tone, Editor, *Life of Theobald Wolfe Tone, Founder of the United Irish Society . . . Written by Himself*, 2, Washington 1826, page 41.

60 Lucas, Preface, *Political Constitutions*, page xvi.

61 Same, Letter, *Political Constitutions*, pages 424-48 (see also pages 93-5 below). This is a republication of *A Letter to the Free-Citizens of the City of Dublin*, Dublin 1749.

had employed in the Barber's *Letters* of 1747. He again claimed that he pitied rather than condemned the religious errors of the 'Papists or Romanists', and had the popes not claimed temporal power, he would 'know no difference between the civil rights of a papist and a Protestant'. Hence he believed that Catholics should be free to worship according to their consciences, and should be compelled only to pay 'due allegiance to the civil constitution'. Lucas concluded his religious reflections by stating that all subjects, 'whether papist or Protestant, Jew or gentile', should have 'the full protection of the law' and the liberty to dispose of their persons and property as they chose, subject to the just laws of God and man.⁶²

Expressions of support for religious toleration were commonly made by the most virulently bigoted Protestants of the period, but Lucas's comments in this letter show that he had undoubtedly modified his position since 1747. While not committing himself to a call for their repeal, he clearly implied that penal laws obliging Catholics and other non-Anglicans to deny their religion or limiting their property rights were unjust, and that all that should be required of them was acceptance of the civil constitution. These were very close to the expressed beliefs of the leading Catholic spokesman, Charles O'Connor of Belanagare, whose pamphlet in defence of Lucas we will examine shortly. While not in any way proclaiming Lucas as a champion of oppressed Catholics, which he certainly was not, it is necessary to point out that the standard view of

62 Lucas, Letter, *Political Constitutions*, pages 442-44.

Charles Lucas 1713-1771

him as an ultra-Protestant bigot should be revised. Certainly there is no evidence that he was an uncritical supporter of the penal code, or that he held so crude a belief as that all Catholics were potential murderers of Protestants sanctioned by papal benediction.

4 The Dublin Election II

Charles O'Connor of Belanagare

The Dublin by-election of 1748-49 generated an extraordinary paper war, with Lucas himself contributing a couple of dozen titles and at least two hundred pamphlets being published by supporters and opponents. Among Lucas's opponents in the pamphlet warfare were Reverend William Henry, Rector of Urney and later Dean of Killaloe, and Sir Richard Cox, a grandson and namesake of the above mentioned Tory Lord Chancellor and Lord Chief Justice. Henry and Cox were two robustly Protestant individuals who were uninhibited in their attacks on Catholicism and who viewed Lucas as a threat to the Protestant interest. Henry declared that the violence of the Jacobite rebels was not so dangerous as Lucas's attempts to create disunity between Great Britain and Ireland, and he equated Lucas's doctrines with those of the 'popish' rebels of 1641. Henry also stated that the dependence of Ireland upon Great Britain was 'the greatest happiness and blessing', and that anyone who doubted this need only look back to the barbarity of ancient Ireland, when 'the whole island seemed rather to be an hell of devils, than an habitation of men'.⁶³ Clearly enraged by the Censor attack on his grandfather, Cox likewise equated Lucas's doctrines with those of the 1641

63 W Britanno-Hibernus [Rev William Henry], *An Appeal to the People of Ireland*, 2nd Edition, Dublin 1749, pages 6-8, 11.

rebels and warned of the dangers of ‘meddling with the dependency of Ireland upon Britain’. Cox went on to accuse Lucas of being a ‘pupil of McCurtin, Sullivan and Carte’, and alleged more scurrilously that he must be ‘the offspring of an Irish popish priest’ and an agent of the Pretender.⁶⁴ Henry and Cox, it is submitted, were true representatives of the kind of extreme Protestant bigotry usually attributed to Lucas, and it is significant that in 1749 they were to be found in opposition to him.

Charles O’Conor of Belanagare was sufficiently interested in the Dublin election controversy to pen a response to Henry and Cox and in defence of Lucas, which was issued anonymously and dated 30 September 1749.⁶⁵ Commencing with some complimentary remarks concerning Lucas, whom he described as ‘an ornament to his country and to human nature’, O’Conor moved on to attack ‘the drivelling author’ Henry, and also Cox, ‘the most abandoned scribbler from Cork’. Posing as a Protestant, O’Conor devoted the greater part of his pamphlet to a brief outline of the history of ancient and medieval Ireland, in which he rejected Henry’s hostile depiction and was at pains to show that the country had then possessed a system of government which enshrined ‘true essential liberty’. The pamphlet closed with an exhortation to the voters of Dublin to elect the ‘champions of liberty’ to ‘the grand council of the nation’.⁶⁶

64 Anthony Litten [Sir Richard Cox], *The Cork Surgeon’s Antidote Against the Dublin Apothecary’s Poison*, Dublin 1749, no 2, page 5, no 6, pages 4-5, 8, 18.

65 [Charles O’Conor of Belanagare], *A Counter-Appeal to the People of Ireland*, Dublin 1749.

66 Same, pages 5, 7, 9, 11, 14.

Yet this apparently strong support for Lucas appears to be undermined if not entirely negated by comments in a letter attributed to O'Connor, which was dated 28 October 1749 and addressed to 'Civicus', the pseudonym of his Dublin relative Michael Reilly:

Your hints are friendly and demand many thanks, but I am by no means interested, nor is any of our unfortunate people, in this affair of Lucas, into which we are dragged by violent and wanton malevolence. I have even some disgust to Lucas on account of his Barber's Letters; a true patriot would not have betrayed such malice to such unfortunate slaves as we.⁶⁷

As a matter of fact, this letter is a fabrication. None of O'Connor's genuine correspondence of the 1740s, such as has yet been discovered, contains any reference to Lucas. What happened was that O'Connor's grandson and biographer, Reverend Dr Charles O'Connor, librarian at Stowe, took a genuine letter from Reilly to O'Connor and recast and embellished it as a letter written by his subject, in order to minimise his support for Lucas. A section of Reilly's letter, dated October 1749, did contain the following critical but not completely dismissive comments concerning Lucas, which formed the basis of the fabrication:

Indeed the greatest aversion I have to him [Lucas] proceeds from his Barber's Letters, for a true patriot would not betray such malice as he has shown in those papers. His behaviour at that time makes a blot in his character that we

⁶⁷ Quoted in Rev Charles O'Connor DD, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Late Charles O'Connor of Belanagare*, Dublin [1796], page 212.

Charles Lucas 1713-1771

can never overlook, otherwise I could wish him success.⁶⁸

In a further letter of 21 April 1750 Reilly mentioned to O'Connor that it would be worth his while to read Lucas's eleventh address, which was written 'in a bold intrepid spirit'.⁶⁹

It will be recalled that in his eleventh address Lucas had accused the English of treating the native Irish in an inhuman fashion and of refusing to give them the benefit of English laws in medieval times. Catholics would naturally view the author of such writings sympathetically, although they might be inclined to go further and point out that this mistreatment still continued in the eighteenth century, with the full participation of Irish Protestants. With the notable exceptions of the Barber's anti-Catholic propaganda in 1747 and an urgent sense of grievance over the penal laws, Lucas and O'Connor therefore had a significant amount in common. It would not be unreasonable to conclude that this common ground and an emergent sense of national solidarity caused O'Connor to support Lucas, and that his attitude was shared by other Irish Catholics.

Matthew O'Connor, who was aware of his brother Reverend Dr O'Connor's fabrications, was later to suggest that though the Barber's *Letters* were 'a wanton attack upon a fallen people', Lucas 'was no real abettor of intolerance, but might have found it necessary to shield himself by pretended hostility to the Catholics against the imputation of

68 Civicus [Michael Reilly] to O'Connor, 15 August-12 October 1749, Royal Irish Academy, Stowe MS B I 1.

69 Same to same, 21 April 1750.

Popery'.⁷⁰ Now while this explanation of the Barber's attacks may seem to err on the side of charity, Matthew O'Connor's is a near-contemporary opinion which deserves much greater respect than that of his dishonest brother.

Despite the suppression of Reverend Dr O'Connor's memoirs of his grandfather, undoubtedly because of his own and others' realisation that he had gone too far in tampering with documents,⁷¹ copies of the work remained available and undoubtedly influenced the tendency of later historians to portray Lucas as a crudely anti-Catholic bigot. Thus when describing Lucas as 'virulently and aggressively anti-Catholic', Lecky referred to the very page of Plowden which quoted in full the letter concerning Lucas fabricated by Reverend Dr O'Connor.⁷² The inclusion of the fabricated letter in the 1980 edition of Charles O'Connor's correspondence⁷³ has meant that it continues to influence the unwary, and indeed it is cited in an authoritative history of the Catholic question.⁷⁴ Although informed that it is not authentic, the editors unaccountably have decided

70 Matthew O'Connor, *History of the Irish Catholics from the Settlement in 1691*, Dublin 1813, pages 236-7.

71 Charles O'Connor SJ, *The Early Life of Charles O'Connor . . . of Belanagare, and the Beginning of the Catholic Revival in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, 1930, typescript, National Library of Ireland, pages iii-v.

72 Lecky, *History of Ireland*, 2, pages 205-6; Francis Plowden, *An Historical Review of the State of Ireland*, London 1803, 1, page 302.

73 C C Ward and R E Ward, Editors, *The Letters of Charles O'Connor of Belanagare*, 1, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1980, pages 4-5.

74 Thomas Bartlett, *The Fall and Rise of the Irish Nation: the Catholic Question 1690-1830*, Dublin 1992, pages 51-2.

to retain an abridged version of the letter in the latest edition of Charles O'Connor's correspondence.⁷⁵ Other letters attributed to O'Connor may also be distorted or fabricated and caution is advised when using the publications in question.

Burke and Lucas

There exists a further indication that those with pro-Catholic sympathies may have been inclined to support Lucas in 1749, in the form of five articles in the *Censor*, which could be the work of the young Edmund Burke.⁷⁶ The articles, some of which were signed with the letter 'B', a signature believed to have been used by Burke in his own journal, the *Reformer*, exhibit a lofty tone and support Lucas in a relatively cautious and moderate way. In what can only be a reference to anti-Catholic legislation, 'B' counselled that if 'penal laws' had been made for 'turbulent and seditious times', the wise judge would suffer them 'to be forgott in happier days and under a prudent administration'.⁷⁷ These *Censor* articles were first identified as Burke's in 1923 by the Samuelsons, but a 1953 article by Vincitorio blasting Lucas as a bigoted demagogue whom Burke could never have

75 R E Ward, J F Wrynn SJ and C C Ward, Editors, *Letters of Charles O'Connor of Belanagare: a Catholic Voice in Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, Washington DC 1988, page 3.

76 *Censor*, 22 July, 5 August, 26 August 1749, 28 April, 5 May 1750, Lucas, *Political Constitutions*, pages 487-91, 501-5, 517-21, 563-72.

77 *Censor*, 5 May 1750, Lucas, *Political Constitutions*, page 571.

supported swung the balance against the great conservative being the author.⁷⁸

The present writer believes that there is substantial evidence to show that Burke may have composed the 'B' *Censor* articles, and if he was not in fact the author, then this would bring into question the hitherto accepted attribution to him of the *Reformer* articles similarly signed.⁷⁹ It should be noted that Burke's biographer Lock has now made a plausible case that Robert Hellen (1725-1793) is the most likely author of the *Censor* articles, principally on the grounds that he is identified as such in a manuscript table of contents referring to a rare reprint of the articles located in Cambridge University Library.⁸⁰ Although missing the Cambridge attribution, the present writer had also considered Hellen as a possible author of the *Censor* pieces, noting the uncertainty concerning his responsibility for other publications with which his name has been associated.⁸¹

Lock also suggests that the 'B' *Reformer* articles may have been written by Beaumont Brennan and not by Burke,⁸² so that his name must be added to the list of candidates for authorship of the *Censor* articles. This particular

78 A P I and A W Samuels, *The Early Life, Correspondence and Writings of . . . Edmund Burke*, Cambridge 1923, pages 389-95; G L Vincitorio, 'Edmund Burke and Charles Lucas', *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 68, 1953, pages 1,047-55.

79 Sean Murphy, 'Burke and Lucas: an Authorship Problem Re-examined', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 1, 1986, pages 143-56.

80 F P Lock, *Edmund Burke*, 1, Oxford 1998, pages 61-2.

81 Murphy, 'Burke and Lucas', page 149.

82 Same, 1, pages 56-7.

authorship problem remains unsolved, but the point stands that 'B' of the *Censor*, whoever he was, was a moderate who voiced apparent criticism of the penal laws and was prepared to support Lucas.

Parliamentary Condemnation

Even as Charles O'Connor's contribution to the election paper war was being published, the controversy surrounding Lucas's candidacy was coming to a head. The Lord Lieutenant, the Earl of Harrington, pointed in his opening speech to parliament on 10 October 1749 to Lucas's 'audacious attempt to create a jealousy between the two kingdoms'. Following a complaint by Sir Richard Cox, the House of Commons mounted an investigation of Lucas's election writings, and he was called before the house for questioning on 12 October and ordered to re-appear on the 16th.⁸³ With courage that can only be admired, or perhaps exceptional foolhardiness, Lucas returned to the issues of legislative independence and the causes of Irish rebellions even as parliament deliberated on his case. In the *Censor* of 14 October he sought support for his position by quoting from a work by James Anderson DD, which claimed that Ireland was a distinct kingdom, that Catholics had believed they were taking arms in their own defence in 1641, and that both sides had been guilty of atrocities in the ensuing war.⁸⁴

83 *Journals of the House of Commons of Ireland*, Dublin 1796-1800 Edition, 5, pages 9, 12-13.

84 *Censor*, 14 October 1749, Lucas, *Political Constitutions*, pages 555-6; the work by Anderson from which Lucas quoted is entitled *Royal Genealogies*, London 1732.

The belief that Catholics had undertaken a completely unprovoked and indefensible massacre of Protestants in 1641 was deeply ingrained in the minds of most Irish Protestants and was a recurrent theme in sermons and tracts of the eighteenth century.⁸⁵ By associating himself with Anderson's comparatively liberal views on 1641, Lucas showed that he was unrepentant in what his opponents considered to be his justification of Irish rebellions, and this cannot have done his cause any good. Furthermore, Lucas's stance on 1641 and Irish rebellions are further evidence that he was not at the extreme end of the anti-Catholic spectrum.

On 16 October Lucas returned to the parliament house in College Green accompanied by a large crowd, where he maintained an attitude of defiance before the House of Commons. After Lucas had been ordered out, the house voted that certain of his election publications were seditious and promoted insurrection, that he had justified past rebellions and reflected scandalously on the lord lieutenant and parliament, and that he was an 'Enemy to his Country' and should be imprisoned in Newgate. Fearing that his angry followers would attempt a violent uprising and that his health would not withstand imprisonment, Lucas yielded to the pleas of friends and fled by boat to the Isle of Man.⁸⁶

85 T C Barnard, 'The Uses of 23 October 1641 and Irish Protestant Celebrations', *English Historical Review*, 106, 1991, pages 889-920.

86 *Journals House of Commons Ireland*, 5, pages 12-14; Murphy, 'Dublin election 1748-9', pages 103-4.

Lucas's collected election publications of 1748-49 total over 200,000 words⁸⁷ and few election candidates can have expended such energy in striving to achieve their goal. Lucas later recalled of this period that between the calls of his profession and election activities, he 'was not able to allow himself six hours for recreation, upon a medium, in any natural day [for a period] of above fourteen months successively'.⁸⁸ Lucas's writings certainly cannot compete in style with those of Swift, for example, and although undoubtedly sincere, he leaves an impression of frequently being testy and querulous and tending to undermine his case through overstatement and prolixity (of course such characteristics can also be found in the writings of his opponents). The fact that Lucas signed, addressed and dated the great majority of his publications is of great assistance to the historian and biographer.

Lucas suffered greatly from gout and the theatre manager Benjamin Victor recalled that he had commenced his series of election addresses while confined to his chamber with a long bout of the illness. On hearing Lucas read aloud a piece dealing with the relationship between Ireland and England, Victor expressed his dislike for the work 'with some warmth'. Lucas laughed this off, asking Victor's pardon for forgetting that he was an Englishman.⁸⁹

87 Lucas, *Political Constitutions*.

88 Same, Preface, pages iii-iv.

89 Victor to Sir William Wolsley, April 1751, Benjamin Victor, *Original Letters, Dramatic Pieces and Poems*, 1, London 1776, pages 167-8.

Government sensitivity to the nationalist sentiments stirred up by Lucas's agitation is demonstrated by Harrington's decision in late October 1749 to return for correction to England the king's answer to a House of Commons address, on the grounds that the words 'and Ireland' had been omitted inadvertently after 'Great Britain'. Harrington stated that he would have preferred to spare his majesty this trouble, but 'at a time when questions relating to the dependency of this kingdom have been so maliciously and mischievously discussed in a multitude of public writings', sending the answer to the House of Commons as it stood would cause 'invidious comments' to be made, 'as well within doors as without'.⁹⁰

The removal of Lucas from the scene was probably a satisfactory outcome so far as the government and his enemies were concerned, and polling commenced in his absence on 24 October. Although Lucas's running mate La Touche won one of the two parliamentary seats, he was later to be unseated by the House of Commons on the grounds of electoral 'irregularities' and the representation of Dublin city therefore remained safely in the hands of the aldermanic party for the time being.⁹¹ Just before polling commenced, the Catholic clergy had issued directions from the pulpits in Dublin forbidding their flock 'to join in any mob, tumult or meeting . . . or even to appear

90 Harrington to Bedford, 31 October 1749, National Archives, Kew, State Papers Ireland, 63/411, folios 191-2, NLI microfilm.

91 *Journals House of Commons Ireland*, 5, pages 31-56; Murphy, 'Dublin election 1748-9', pages 106-7.

about the place of election, as they have no manner of concern therein'.⁹² This injunction would appear to indicate that though deprived by law of the franchise, some Dublin Catholics at least were taking as keen an interest in the election as was Charles O'Connor of Belanagare, and it is likely that election gatherings contained significant numbers of Catholic tradesmen, journeymen and apprentices.

92 Faulkner's *Dublin Journal*, 24 October 1749.

THE
POLITICAL CONSTITUTIONS
OF
Great-Britain and Ireland,

Asserted and vindicated,

THE
CONNECTION and COMMON INTEREST
of both Kingdoms, demonstrated;

AND THE
GRIEVANCES, which *each*, more especially the *later*,
with it's Capital, has suffered, under *oppressive* and
tyrannical Governors, *usurping* and *lawless* Magistrates,
dependent and *iniquitous* Judges, and *spurious* and *corrupt*
Parlements,

Set forth in several

ADDRESSES and LETTERS

TO THE
FREE-CITIZENS of DUBLIN;

First delivered and published with the sole Intent to *detect*
public Abuses, to revive the ORIGINAL PRINCIPLES
of the POLICY, and to *reform* the CONSTITUTIONAL
FREEDOM of ELECTIONS, in general, *chiefly*
of MEMBERS of PARLEMENT, in particular;

Now republished as a *cautionary* Information to the City of
LONDON, and for the *Justification* of the AUTHOR,

CHARLES LUCAS,
A FREE-CITIZEN of Dublin, *while Dublin was*, now an *Exile* for
the Cause of TRUTH and the LIBERTY of his Country.

To which are added,

The CENSOR: or, the CITIZENS JOURNAL

AND

AN APPENDIX, containing the ADDRESS of the MERCHANTS
and TRADERS, Citizens of DUBLIN, to his
MAJESTY, and the DECLARATIONS and RESOLUTIONS
of several of the free and loyal Corporations of that City.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

L O N D O N:

Printed in the YEAR, M,DCC,LI.

Title page of collected edition of Lucas's writings
relating to the Dublin election of 1748-49
(courtesy Special Collections, UCD Library)

County of the City of Dublin. To wit } Be it Remembred that St. George Countfild
Esq. the Attorney General of our Lord the now King
who for the said Lord the King in this behalf presents
in his proper person Counselors in the Court of the said Lord the
King before the King himself at the Kings Courts on Saturday
in fiftieth days next after St. Martin in this said Term and for
the said Lord the King gives the Court here to understand and be
informed That Charles Lucas late of the City of Dublin in the
County of the said City Apothecary being a pernicious Malicious
and Seditious Man and of a depraved mind and wicked disposition
and unlawfully falsely maliciously and Seditiously intending to
disturb the peace and Tranquility of this Realm of Ireland and
to bring the said Lord the now King and his Government and
Administration of Justice in this Kingdom into Hatred Scandal
and Contempt with the Liges Subjects of our said Lord the now
King and also to bring the Parliament of this Kingdom into Hatred
Scandal and Contempt with the Liges Subjects of our said Lord
the now King and to raise Seditions and Fears and to stir up

Indictment of Charles Lucas 1749
(Courtesy Dublin City Library & Archive)



Bookplate of Charles Lucas
(Courtesy Dublin City Library & Archive)

848

The first year of George III.

A. D.
1761.

C H A P. XIV.

An act for preventing frauds and abuses in the vending, preparing, and administering drugs and medicines.

9 G. 2. 10.
19 G. 2. 15.
21 G. 2. 7.
32 H. 8. 40.
Eng.
10. G. 1. 20.
Esp.
College of
physicians may
enlarge their
number by e-
lection from
time to time.

WHEREAS many most dangerous and destructive frauds and abuses are daily committed in the vending, preparing, and administering of drugs and medicines: for remedy whereof, be it enacted by the king's most excellent Majesty by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal and commons in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that from and after the first day of May in the year of our lord one thousand seven hundred and sixty two the presidents, censors, and fellows of the King and Queen's college of physicians, Ireland, shall have full power and authority to enlarge the number of their body by admitting into the fellowship of their body such and so many other learned and worthy doctors of physick, as the said president, censors, and fellows of the said college of physicians shall from time to time judge necessary and fit to be admitted upon due examination by election of the said college of physicians.

and appoint
4 members in-
spectors of
laboratories,
shops, &c. of

II. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the said president, censors, and fellows, of the said college of physicians may have full power and authority to elect and appoint

Lucas Drugs Act 1761
(Courtesy Special Collections, UCD Library)

5 Exile and Medical Career

‘A Citizen of the World’

Following his flight to the Isle of Man, Lucas made his way to the English mainland, and in December 1749 the Earl of Orrery reported to a correspondent that he was at Liverpool.⁹³ Shortly thereafter, Lucas proceeded to London and spent the early months of 1750 monitoring affairs in Dublin, this time writing under a pseudonym.⁹⁴ He laid his case before one of the Secretaries of State (probably Bedford), but did not receive any positive response. Lucas then turned to the Corporation of London for support, and on 17 March 1751 presented a manuscript copy of the dedication to the forthcoming collected edition of his election publications of 1748-49 to the Lord Mayor of London, Alderman Cockayne.⁹⁵

Now in his late thirties and ‘rendered a citizen of the world at large’ by his misfortunes, Lucas ‘threw aside the political pen’ and decided to travel to the Continent for the purpose of securing medical qualifications.⁹⁶ He studied first at Paris under Petit and then went on to the University of Rheims, where he graduated MD on 20 October

93 Orrery to William Cowper, 10 December 1749, Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Fifth Report*, Appendix, page 359.

94 A Gentleman of the Middle Temple [Lucas?], *A Critical Review of the Liberties of British Subjects*, London 1750.

95 Lucas, *An Appeal to the Commons and Citizens of London*, London 1756, pages 2, 18, 73.

96 Same, page 1.

1751. He next visited 'the principal baths and mineral waters in Germany' in order to analyse their medicinal and chemical properties. The University of Leiden, renowned for its atmosphere of religious toleration, was at this period the fashionable resort of British and Irish students, and Lucas rounded off his studies of physic by graduating MD at this institution on 20 December 1752.⁹⁷

The title of Lucas's published Leiden dissertation, written in Latin, was *De Gangraena et Sphacelo* and it was dedicated to his patron Thomas Adderley.⁹⁸ Whereas today doctors refer only to gangrene, that is, a disease involving localised death of body tissue, medics formerly considered that the terminal stage represented a second condition they termed 'sphacelus'.⁹⁹ The language in which Lucas's dissertation is written and the technicality of the subject matter render the work difficult to comprehend fully on the part of a non-specialist. The dissertation commences with a description of the medical conditions under review, cites the Dutch physician Herman Boerhaave among other authorities, outlines treatments including amputation and concludes with twelve case studies.¹⁰⁰

On his return to London in 1753, Lucas found that the lord mayor had taken no action on his

97 R W I Smith, *English-Speaking Students of Medicine at the University of Leyden*, London 1932, page 145.

98 Lucas, *Dissertatio Medica Inauguralis de Gangraena et Sphacelo*, Leiden 1752 (copy obtained from Library, University of Leyden).

99 *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 2, Oxford 1993, page 2,980.

100 Lucas, *Dissertatio Medica*, pages 1-43.

earlier appeal, and indeed insisted on returning to him the manuscript dedication and printed collection of election publications. Further approaches to other members of the Corporation proved fruitless, so in 1756 Lucas issued a public appeal to the commons and citizens of London in which he bitterly denounced the inaction of the officers of their Corporation.¹⁰¹

Meanwhile, a new outbreak of political turbulence was occurring in Ireland, in the shape of conflict between the Irish administration and parliament during the years 1753-56 over the question of whether parliament had the right to allocate surpluses in the treasury without prior royal consent.¹⁰² Lucas followed these events closely in London and was once more moved to take up 'the political pen'. Commenting on the fact that many of the MPs who had stigmatised him as an enemy to his country in 1749 were now using his arguments against the government, he observed drily, 'Since the days of the Irish apostle Patrick, no conversion like this was known in the island of saints'. However, he did not believe that these were true patriots, and the dispute 'was no more than a struggle between a few families for power and places'. Lucas also pointed out that by embracing his political doctrines and accepting that the parliament of Ireland was 'a free and competent legislature for that kingdom', the 'mock-

101 Lucas, *Appeal to Commons and Citizens of London*, pages 19-23.

102 Declan O'Donovan, 'The Money Bill Dispute of 1753', in Thomas Bartlett and D W Hayton, Editors, *Penal Era and Golden Age: Essays in Irish History, 1690-1800*, Belfast 1979, pages 55-87.

patriots' had effectively acquitted him of the charges they had formerly laid against him.¹⁰³

Medical Career

Throughout his medical career Lucas was to lay great stress on the curative powers of water. His investigation of spas on the Continent has already been mentioned, and during his time in England he visited Bath and other such centres. Hamlin has pointed out that before the modern era 'legitimization of the properties of mineral waters came not from science but religion' and that 'by the end of the seventeenth century pamphlets and treatises on mineral waters were appealing to medical and chemical theories'.¹⁰⁴ The religio-magic associations of holy water and holy wells in Ireland would hardly have impressed Lucas in view of their association with Catholicism in the main, and while they may have been a subliminal influence these subjects do not feature in his writings. Certainly, cold bathing and the use of sea water for medicinal purposes were well established in Ireland in the eighteenth century, and it may be significant that the surviving diary of Lucas's relative in County Clare contains references to such

103 Lucas, *Appeal to the Commons and Citizens of London*, pages 8-9, 17; *Charles Lucas's Prophecy Concerning the Mock-Patriots of Ireland*, London 1756, page 4.

104 Christopher Hamlin, 'Chemistry, Medicine and the Legitimization of English Spas, 1740-1840', Roy Porter, Editor, *The Medical History of Waters and Spas*, London 1990, page 68.

practices.¹⁰⁵

The results of Lucas's spa researches led to the publication of a substantial three-volume *Essay on Waters* published by the leading London printer Andrew Millar in 1756. The first volume deals with simple waters, the second with cold, medicated waters and the third with natural baths.¹⁰⁶ Various sections of the work are dedicated to a host of notable individuals, including Lord Kingston, the Earl of Carrick, the Earl of Shelburne, Lord Dungarvan, the Countess of Plettenberg (acknowledged as the 'most munificent' of patronesses on the Continent), Lady Arabella Denny (described as a 'friend') and the Countess of Meath (described as 'patroness and friend').¹⁰⁷ Given his limited means, it can reasonably be surmised that some of these patrons may have financed Lucas's medical education and researches on the Continent. Lucas also sat for a portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds in the mid-1750s,¹⁰⁸ which would not have come cheap, and again patronage may be inferred.

Lucas commenced his *Essay* by stating that although it is 'the most useful and necessary part of the creation', water 'has been so far and so long neglected, as to make it, at this day, necessary to compile so large a volume as this'.¹⁰⁹ The following

105 Ó Dálaigh, Editor, 'Lucas Diary, 1740-41', pages 133, 151; James Kelly, 'Drinking The Waters': Balneotherapeutic Medicine In Ireland, 1660-1850', *Studia Hibernica*, 35, 2008-09, page 110.

106 Lucas, *An Essay on Waters*, 3 Parts, London 1756.

107 Same, part 2, pages 112, 147, 173, part 3, pages iii, 185, 265, 348.

108 See illustration, page 3.

109 Lucas, *An Essay on Waters*, part 1, page 15.

passage could be described as Lucas's hydrotherapeutic credo:

I presume, it must be obvious to every reader, who has attentively read this tract, thus far, that there is nothing known, that bids so fair for the character of the much, but vanelly, sought universal remedy, as common water: since nothing is found so necessary to life, so effectual in preserving present, or restoring lossed health, as water.¹¹⁰

The *Essay* contains descriptions and analyses of water sources and spas in a wide range of locations, including London, Epsom, Cheltenham, Bath and Bristol in England, and Aachen, Stavelot, Liege and Malmendy on the Continent. Aachen and Bath waters were subject to the most detailed treatment, accompanied by historical accounts of both places and in the case of Bath details of recent archaeological excavations of Roman remains.¹¹¹ While Lucas is credited with having been the first to analyse the sulphur well at Lisdoonvarna in his native Clare in July 1740,¹¹² there is disappointingly little on Irish spas and waters in the *Essay*, perhaps a reflection of lack of research materials to hand and a lesser appreciation of the quality of the waters of his homeland when compared to those of Britain and the Continent.

Lucas's *Essay* teems with medical ideas and proposals. He recommended that 'Bath or Water-hospitals' should be established in major cities and be open to the poor, offering 'light, simple diet,

110 Lucas, *Essay on Waters*, part 1, page 232.

111 Same, part 3, pages 8-184, 219-347.

112 Dr John Rutty, *An Essay Towards a History of the Mineral Waters of Ireland*, Dublin 1757, page 58.

clean beds, baths of all kinds and water simple and variously medicated of different degrees of heat and cold'.¹¹³ Dispensing a prescription which not everyone could follow in full, Lucas recommended that 'as cold weather is the best season for cold bathing; so is warm weather the best season for warm bathing'.¹¹⁴ In some ways anticipating the modern debate over water-birthing, Lucas also suggested that in cases of difficult labour 'warm bathing' might be of benefit, as opposed to the 'most violent measures' which he associated with the 'modern masculine practice of midwifery'.¹¹⁵

Rheumatism and gout, from which latter disease Lucas suffered as noted, receive a number of mentions in the *Essay*, and while aware of the potential dangers of cold bathing, he offered this particular treatment as a 'most sovereign remedy' for both afflictions. Interestingly, Lucas stated that those subject to gout were generally 'given up to a luxurious, voluptuous course of life' and 'followers of Venus, or the unfortunate descendents of such', the latter comment looking very like a self-diagnosis and an implied criticism of his forebears.¹¹⁶

Lucas was clearly an adherent of Galenist theory, as shown by a number of favourable references to the second-century physician and recourse to the archaic term 'humo(u)rs'.¹¹⁷ Although germ theory had yet to be developed, Lucas specifically used the term 'infection' when

113 Lucas, *Essay on Waters*, part 1, pages 231-2

114 Same, part 1, page 223.

115 Same, part 1, page 210.

116 Same, part 1, pages 184-5.

117 Same, part 1, pages 160, 176, 187, 200, 213, 223.

recommending the installation of baths in prisons, 'obliging the wretched, who from filth and nastiness, contract the most malignant and pestilential diseases, frequently to wash and cleanse themselves'.¹¹⁸ In general, Lucas obviously had a keen regard for hygiene and his emphasis on frequent bathing and cleanliness cannot have done his patients much harm.

Samuel Johnson reviewed Lucas's *Essay* in terms which were perhaps unexpectedly favourable:

The Irish ministers drove him from his native country by a proclamation in which they charged him with crimes of which they never intended to be called to the proof, and oppressed him by methods equally irresistible by guilt and innocence. Let the man thus driven into exile for having been the friend of his country be received in every other place as a confessor of liberty, and let the tools of power be taught in time that they may rob but cannot impoverish.

Coming from the man whose best-remembered comment on patriotism is that it was 'the last refuge of a scoundrel', this was praise indeed, and Boswell quoted this review as proof of Johnson's 'patriotic spirit'. Elsewhere in the review, however, Johnson expressed scepticism concerning the curative effects of cold bathing.¹¹⁹

Lucas's genius for controversy manifested itself also in his study of spas, and he became involved in a public quarrel with the medical faculty at Bath concerning its professional methods and allegedly

118 Lucas, *Essay on Waters*, part 1, page 231.

119 Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, G B Hill Editor, 1, Oxford 1934, pages 91, 311.

unsupported claims about the presence of medically beneficial sulphur in the town's waters, matters which he had raised in the *Essay on Waters*.¹²⁰ One commentator has argued that Lucas's *Essay*, or rather the portion dealing with Bath, 'departed dramatically from previous treatises addressing the thermal mineral waters of Bath in that it served as an expression of the author's political beliefs and libertarian ideals', indeed that it represented 'a continuation of his episodic struggle against what he saw as oligarchic governmental forms'.¹²¹

Lucas also feuded with his fellow Irish physician, the Quaker Dr John Rutty, feeling that his published work was not duly acknowledged by the latter and that he wrote too confidently on waters he had not personally examined.¹²² Lucas was admitted a licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians of London on 25 June 1759, and he appears to have established a fairly successful medical practice in London, though it is highly unlikely that he ever earned anything like £3,000 per annum, as an anonymous supporter later claimed.¹²³

120 *Letters of Dr Lucas and Dr Oliver, Occasioned by a Physical Confederacy Discovered at Bath*, London 1757.

121 Adam Mason, 'The "Political Knight Errant" at Bath: Charles Lucas's Attack on the Spa Medical Establishment in *An Essay on Waters* (1756)', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 36, 2013, page 67, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/>, accessed 9 March 2013 (subscription).

122 Lucas, *Dr Rutty's Methodical Synopsis of Mineral Waters*, London 1757.

123 William Munk, *The Roll of the Royal College of Physicians of London*, 2, Second Edition, London 1878, page 224; *A Vindication of the Corporations of the City of Dublin respecting . . . Dr Charles Lucas*, Dublin [1766?], page 13.

One satisfied patient of Lucas was the Earl of Charlemont, who recalled that he had been afflicted by 'a violent rheumatism', which for two and a half years disabled him 'from every sort of business', during which time he was 'an absolute cripple'. Having gone through 'an excruciating course of pains and physicians', Charlemont stated that at length he was 'restored to health by the tender care and effectual abilities of the excellent Dr Lucas'.¹²⁴

Still another happy patient was the actress George Anne Bellamy, who recalled that in 1756 she was suffering from an illness which a variety of doctors had failed to remedy. Lucas was called in, successfully diagnosed the actress's illness and prescribed a cure. The grateful Bellamy recorded in her memoirs that despite the loss of an eye in a laboratory accident, Lucas 'was not only a son of Apollo in medicine, but likewise in love'.¹²⁵

While only a small portion of Lucas's original correspondence has survived, we have one fascinating letter written from London in 1756 and giving medical advice to a patient, Richard, Lord Boyle, son of Henry Boyle, First Earl of Shannon, and himself future Second Earl. Lucas's recommendations seem eminently sensible in the main, including good diet, exercise, rest, a comparatively light regime of medication and, inevitably, guidance on making best use of the resources of major European spas. Delicate matters were obviously his lordship's alcohol

124 Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Charlemont Manuscripts*, 1, London 1891, pages 8-9.

125 George Anne Bellamy, *An Apology for the Life of George Anne Bellamy*, 3, Second Edition, London 1785, pages 136-7.

intake and amorous activities, which Lucas suggested should be moderated, with 'Ceres and Bacchus . . . to be sparingly used and Venus laid aside'.¹²⁶

Preparations for Return

Indicating that politics continued to hold his attention, in 1758 Lucas was responsible for issuing an edition of Swift's *History of the Four Last Years of the Queen*. Published by Andrew Millar in London, this was an account of the turbulent final years of Queen Anne's reign. In an unsigned preface, Lucas expressed strong disapproval of Swift's Tory politics, stating that he 'long knew the author' and that while he might 'have admired his parts and wit', he had 'been hardily singular in condemning this great man's conduct, amidst the admiring multitude'.¹²⁷ Mahony has referred to a 'degree of reserve in popular reverence' for Swift's memory in Ireland in the period after his death,¹²⁸ and these comments by Lucas certainly do not display high esteem. However, it should be noted that in addition to a favourable mention of Swift in Lucas's election newspaper the *Censor* in 1749,¹²⁹ Lucas referred to the 'immortal Swift' in a tract published in 1756.¹³⁰ Furthermore, an edition of the Dean's *Story of an Injured Lady* had appeared

126 Lucas to Lord Boyle, 26 July 1756, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland D2707/A/2/11/1 (thanks to Anthony Malcomson for drawing this letter to my attention).

127 Swift, *The History of the Four Last Years of the Queen*, Herbert Davis, Editor, Oxford 1951, page 172.

128 Robert Mahony, *Jonathan Swift: The Irish Identity*, Yale 1995, pages 13-15.

129 Lucas, *Censor*, 19 July 1749, *Political Constitutions*, page 494.

in 1749 with a preface signed 'A Freeman, Barber and Citizen', the pseudonym used by Lucas in 1747 and indicating that he was probably the writer.¹³¹

During Lucas's absence abroad the campaign for the reform of Dublin Corporation had continued. One of the city's aldermen, the Presbyterian James Dunn, broke ranks and resigned in 1758, succeeding in being elected an MP for Dublin in the place of the recently deceased Alderman Sir Samuel Cooke.¹³² Matters were brought to a head by a riot in the city in December 1759, inspired by a rumour of an impending union between Britain and Ireland.¹³³ The aldermanic party now realised that some measure of reform was unavoidable, and in February 1760 a bill prepared by City Recorder James Grattan (father of the patriot Henry who opposed his father's politics) was presented to the House of Commons. The bill speedily passed all stages and passed into law having received the royal assent in May. The main impact of the municipal reform act was to dilute the power of the aldermen and correspondingly increase that of the sheriffs and commons.¹³⁴

130 Lucas, *Appeal to Commons and Citizens of London*, page 15.

131 Swift, *The Story of the Injured Lady*, with a preface by A Freeman, Barber and Citizen of Dublin [Lucas?], Dublin 1749.

132 *Calendar Ancient Records of Dublin*, 10, page 476; 'Dublin Elections from 1759 to 1773', Henry Holmes, Editor, *An Alphabetical List of the Freeholders and Freemen Who Voted on the Late Election of a Member of Parliament to Represent the City of Dublin . . . 1773*, [Dublin 1774?], page 38.

133 Sean Murphy, 'The Dublin Anti-Union Riot of 3 December 1759', in Gerard O'Brien, Editor, *Parliament, Politics and People*, Dublin 1989, pages 49-68.

134 Murphy, 'Corporation of Dublin 1660-1760', pages 32-3.

Perhaps predictably, Lucas was unimpressed and dismissed the act as 'a pitiful palliative for some abominable oppressions in the city, agreed upon to silence the clamour of the abused citizens'.¹³⁵

The more relaxed political conditions immediately following the accession of George III in 1760 encouraged Lucas to think of returning to Ireland and standing again for parliament in the general election necessitated by the death of George II. In November 1760 he issued a pamphlet from London which significantly was directed firstly to the electors of Ireland and secondly to those of Dublin. Lucas enthused over the accession of a king 'born and bred a Briton' and announced that he was roused from the 'political lethargy' which formerly had seized him 'at seeing no prospect of redress of our national grievances'. The chief of these grievances he identified as the want of regular general elections at set intervals as in Britain, the practice in Ireland being for parliament to be terminated only on the death of the king or at his pleasure. While stressing that Dublin would have the first claim to his services, Lucas underlined his view of himself as a national figure by reminding the Dublin electorate that 'the representative of any part . . . is a councillor, a trustee and a guardian to the whole community'.¹³⁶

Fearing that he might be subject to renewed legal proceedings on his return to Ireland, Lucas wrote to Charlemont asking him to use his influence on his behalf, and he also petitioned the

135 Lucas, *Seasonable Advice to the Electors of Members of Parliament at the Ensuing General Election*, London 1760 Edition, page 32; a Dublin edition was also published.

136 Same, pages 11, 23, 26, 35, 63.

Charles Lucas 1713-1771

duke of Bedford for relief. In addition, he made a personal appeal to the newly crowned George III at a levée on 22 December, and claimed to have received a sympathetic hearing. Finding that his opponents had 'not been hardy enough to complete the outlawry', in other words, that there was little danger of any further prosecution, Lucas made preparations to return home in February 1761. He found himself in the embarrassing position of having to ask Charlemont for a loan of £500 to settle his affairs in London, an indication that his medical practice was not in fact a very lucrative one.¹³⁷

137 Lucas to Charlemont, 22 November, 23 December 1760, 12 February 1761, Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Charlemont Manuscripts*, 1, pages 265-6, 268-70.

6 *Parliamentarian*

The General Election of 1761

After an exile of nearly eleven and a half years, Lucas arrived back in Dublin on 15 March 1761. The 'Free and Independent Electors of Dublin', meeting at the Rose and Bottle in Dame Street, resolved to support the candidacies of Lucas and James Dunn in the approaching general election, at the same time declaring in favour of securing a law limiting the duration of parliaments.¹³⁸ The degree of election fever gripping the country can be gauged by the fact that Faulkner's newspaper could not print them all, giving instead a summary list of constituencies and candidates. By December 1760 a total of 34 constituencies throughout the country were being contested, and notices from candidates and constituents in favour of limiting the duration of parliaments show that this had become the main election issue.¹³⁹

Six candidates were in competition for Dublin City's two seats, these being Alderman Sir Charles Burton and Dunn, the outgoing MPs, Lucas, Recorder Grattan, Alderman Percival Hunt, and another veteran from the 1748-49 by-election, James Digges La Touche. When it became obvious that both he and Lucas could not both be elected, Dunn generously withdrew from the election. The

138 Faulkner's *Dublin Journal*, 17 March 1761.

139 Same, 18 November, 6 December, 23 December, 30 December 1760.

actual voting took place from 22 April 1761 until 6 May, when Recorder Grattan topped the poll with 1,569 votes, undoubtedly a reflection of his popularity in the city since framing the Corporation reform bill, followed by Lucas with a respectable 1,302 votes. Grattan and Lucas were declared duly elected, both were carried in chairs to the Parliament House and the event was celebrated in the city that evening with the ringing of bells and lighting of bonfires.¹⁴⁰ It was undoubtedly a triumph for Lucas to find himself elected as an MP for the city from which he had had to flee ignominiously nearly twelve years earlier and to sit in a parliament which had previously declared him to be an 'Enemy to his Country'.

Shortly after his return from exile Lucas had also petitioned Dublin Corporation to have his disfranchisement of January 1750 reversed. The Corporation referred this petition to a committee in April 1761, but obviously dissatisfied with the pace of proceedings, Lucas secured a writ of mandamus from the Court of King's Bench on 4 May ordering that he should be restored to his freedom of the city. Having obtained legal advice to the effect that the charges made against Lucas in 1749-50 had not been proven and that the disfranchisement had been erroneously conducted, the Corporation was obliged to obey the writ of mandamus and restore Lucas to the freedom of the city on 21 May.¹⁴¹

140 Faulkner's *Dublin Journal*, 25 April-9 May 1761.

141 *Calendar of Ancient Records of Dublin*, 11, pages 18-19; *The Case of the Lord Mayor, Sheriffs, Commons and Citizens of the City of Dublin . . . Relative to the Restoring Dr Charles Lucas to his Freedom of Said City*, Dublin 1761.

MP for Dublin

Lucas threw himself with enthusiasm into his new role as a parliamentarian, co-operating with Henry Flood and others of the minority patriot party to maintain an active opposition. True to his election pledge, Lucas's principal aim was to secure a limitation of the duration of Irish parliaments by securing mandatory general elections every seven years as in Britain. While publicly supporting a limitation bill many MPs privately opposed such a measure, no doubt because they did not relish the inconvenience and expense of more frequent elections. Working with other patriots including Edward Sexten Pery and Flood, Lucas attempted to have a limitation bill passed in the parliamentary sessions of 1761-2 and 1763-4, but although legislation got as far as the drafting stage it failed to secure passage.¹⁴²

Among Lucas's other legislative concerns was of course supply of medicines, and the 1735 act having lapsed he introduced a bill in January 1762 providing for new controls on the preparation and sale of drugs. Although the Apothecaries' Guild was critical of its provisions, the bill was approved by parliament and the resulting legislation passed in April was known into the nineteenth century as the 'Lucas Act' (again by convention being dated 1761).¹⁴³ This act was to be periodically renewed

¹⁴² *Journals House of Commons Ireland*, 7, pages 14, 82, 186, 288; Halifax to Egremont, 4, 8, 11 December 1761, and Northumberland to Halifax, 11 and 28 February 1764, *Calendar of Home Office Papers*, 1760-65, pages 84, 85-86, 388, 391.

¹⁴³ *Journals House of Commons Ireland*, 7, pages 110, 117, 172; 1 George III, chapter 14, *Statutes of Ireland*, 7, pages 848-58; T P Kirkpatrick, *Henry Quin MD*, Dublin 1919, pages 27-8.

and was eventually made permanent in 1791.¹⁴⁴ Remarkably, the 1761 act is still on the Irish statute book, being one of the pre-1922 statutes excepted from repeal by the Statute Law Revision Act 2007.¹⁴⁵ Lucas was also associated with a pioneering attempt to create a national network of county infirmaries and an act to this effect would be passed in 1765.¹⁴⁶

There is evidence that Lucas's parliamentary duties were interfering with his work as a physician, a serious matter in that he was paid for the latter but not for the former. On his return to Ireland it would have made sense for Lucas to obtain a licence from the Royal (then King's and Queen's) College of Physicians of Ireland, just as he had been licenced by that body's counterpart in London. However, having been approved following a first examination for a licence on 12 June 1761, on 21 December he was granted a deferral of a second examination when he stated that 'through his attendance in Parliament he could not be duly prepared'. Two other deferrals were recorded in May and December 1762, but it does not appear

144 Sneddon, 'Institutional Medicine and State Intervention', page 154.

145 Now styled the Royal College of Physicians Act 1761, *Irish Statute Book*, <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1761/en/act/pub/0014/index.html>, accessed 13 September 2013.

146 Susan Mullaney, "A Means of Restoring the Health and Preserving the Lives of His Majesty's Subjects": Ireland's 18th-Century National Hospital System', *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History*, 29, 2012, pages 223-42, <http://www.cbmh.ca/index.php/cbmh/article/view/1509/1525>, accessed 9 March 2013.

that Lucas was ever licenced by the Irish College of Physicians.¹⁴⁷

Lucas somehow found time to participate in Dublin Corporation politics again, being elected once more as a representative of the Barber Surgeons' Guild in December 1762. A new dispute soon broke out between the Aldermen and the Sheriffs and Commons in April 1763, with both houses electing a separate Lord Mayor and Sheriffs. The Lords Justices and Privy Council sat in judgement on the dispute in May, deciding not to approve either set of elections, and it was not until June that the two houses of the Corporation managed to agree on a mutually acceptable Lord Mayor and Sheriffs.¹⁴⁸

Personal health and family matters were now to intervene to divert Lucas's attention from his political duties for a time. Lucas's first wife Anne having passed away before his exile in 1749, he married his second wife Penelope Catherwood at St James, Westminster, in March 1760.¹⁴⁹ In the Autumn of 1764 Lucas and Penelope travelled to Bath as both his and his wife's health required taking a course of waters there.¹⁵⁰ The stay in England proved to be an extended one, and Penelope died at Bristol Hot Wells on 2 August 1765.¹⁵¹ Returning to Ireland, Lucas expressed his

147 Minutes of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, 3, 1743-85, pages 164, 171, 176, 180, RCPI Heritage Centre.

148 *Calendar of Ancient Records of Dublin*, 11, pages 463-6.

149 IGI Individual Record, <http://www.familysearch.org>, accessed 6 August 2009.

150 Lucas, *A Third Address to the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, Sheriffs, Commons and Citizens of Dublin*, Dublin 1766, pages 55-62.

151 *Freeman's Journal*, 13 August 1765.

grief at the loss of his wife in affecting but typically florid eighteenth-century style:

She that was the sum of worldly happiness to me, she who could blunt the keenest edge of adversity, and sweeten the bitter cup of life, is not much more than a month fled from me, from calamity to which I wedded her, to a place fitter for her angelic spirit. You know that in her, Heaven fulfilled all the wishes and desires of my heart.¹⁵²

Lucas was clearly at low ebb financially as well as personally during this period. His supporters in Dublin Corporation endeavoured to have him granted an annual stipend of £365 for his services in parliament, but the Lord Mayor and Aldermen rejected this proposal in January 1766. Another petition was placed before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen calling for 'instructions' to be issued to Dublin's MPs to bring in heads of a bill for limiting the duration of parliaments, but this again was refused.¹⁵³ These episodes were primarily residues of the pre-1760 municipal dispute and were not of so serious or prolonged a nature as previous disruptions.

Lucas and Catholicism II

After a long period of enforced quiet, by the mid-eighteenth century Irish Catholics had begun to bestir themselves to try and secure an amelioration of the penal laws. A Catholic Committee had been founded in 1760 by Charles

152 Lucas to Mrs Heatly, 6 September 1765, Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Charlemont Manuscripts*, 1, pages 277-78.

153 *Calendar of Ancient Records of Dublin*, 11, pages 472-3, 475-6.

O'Connor of Belanagare, Dr John Curry and others, with the aim of bringing about some improvement in the legal position of Catholics.¹⁵⁴ However, bills to confirm the right of Catholics to take mortgages on landed property failed in 1762 and 1764, largely due to renewed sectarian tensions resulting from the outbreak of the Whiteboy agrarian disturbances.¹⁵⁵

We do not have any significant commentary from Lucas on the subject of the mortgage bills, and while it would be unwise to attempt to draw any firm conclusions from silence, it can be suggested at a minimum that he was not prominent in the often frankly sectarian opposition to the measure. Accounts of the contributions to debate of other MPs have survived, including that of Sir Lucius O'Brien, member for Ennis, who proposed a compromise measure which would enable Catholics to recover money lent, while precluding 'their dominion over the lands of their debtors'.¹⁵⁶ As a fellow-Clareman and parliamentary ally, it would not be unreasonable to speculate that O'Brien's views on the Catholic question would have been close to those of Lucas, that is, showing some willingness to support relief, but apprehensive lest Protestant liberties should be undermined by granting Catholics too much political power.

One reported observation by Lucas on the Munster and Ulster agrarian disturbances of the

154 Gerard O'Brien, Editor, *Catholic Ireland in the Eighteenth Century: Collected Essays of Maureen Wall*, Dublin 1989, page 118.

155 Same, page 119.

156 Matthew O'Connor, *History of Irish Catholics*, pages 306-7.

1760s, if interpreted correctly, may indicate that he was still prone on occasion to lapse into the sectarian insecurity which he had displayed in 1747. In a contribution to a House of Commons debate in October 1763, Lucas wondered why indictments in the north were for high treason, while those in the south were only for riot and breach of the peace, the apparent implication being that Catholics were being treated more leniently than Protestants. Yet he also stated that the crimes committed in both parts of the country were precisely the same, underlining his belief in equal application of the law and continuing attachment only to lawful and 'constitutional' forms of protest.¹⁵⁷ Lucas was a member of the parliamentary committee appointed to enquire into the causes of agrarian disturbances in December 1765, but was not among those MPs charged with preparing legislation in the wake of the committee's report.¹⁵⁸ In fact, Lucas displayed much more interest in a recent military riot in Dublin in August 1765, during which Newgate Jail had been broken open by a group of soldiers, and he sought to use this outbreak to embarrass the government.¹⁵⁹

A useful barometer of radical Protestant attitudes towards Catholics is to be found in the newspaper the *Freeman's Journal*, which was

157 [James Caldwell, Editor], *Debates Relative to the Affairs of Ireland . . . 1763 and 1764*, 1, London 1766, page 47.

158 *Journals House of Commons Ireland*, 8, pages 61, 70-1.

159 Lucas, [Address] to the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor, the Worshipful the Board of Aldermen, the Sheriffs, Commons, Citizens and Freeholders of Dublin . . . Upon the Proposed Augmentation of the Military Establishment, Dublin 1768, pages 21-9.

founded in September 1763 with the dramatist Henry Brooke as its first editor and Lucas as a prominent contributor. It has frequently erroneously been stated that Lucas was the founder or indeed editor of the newspaper, but Madden pointed out that its founders were in fact three Dublin businessmen, John Grant, William Braddell and Edward Tandy, calling themselves the 'Committee for Conducting the Free Press'.¹⁶⁰

Madden asserted that despite its patriot principles, the *Freeman's Journal* was 'a fierce assailant of the religion of Roman Catholics and an incessant reviler of popish priests', and he associated Lucas with its supposed editorial policy.¹⁶¹ There is no doubt that hostility towards Catholics was to be found in the columns of the paper, but many of the worst attacks were contained in letters reflecting the prejudices of the paper's mostly Protestant readership, while correspondents sympathetic towards Catholicism were sometimes given space to put their point of view.¹⁶²

There are few references to Lucas in the correspondence of Charles O'Connor of Belanagare in the 1760s. In one reference O'Connor stated in September 1763 that he 'would gladly know the *Freeman's* political plan', adding that Lucas was 'associated in the execution of it'.¹⁶³ The paucity of references to Lucas in O'Connor's correspondence in the 1760s does seem to indicate that he simply did

160 Madden, *Irish Periodical Literature*, 2, pages 373-4.

161 Same, page 388.

162 Letter of 'Homo', *Freeman's Journal*, 28 December 1765.

163 O'Connor to Curry, 15 September 1763, RIA, Stowe MS B I 1; *Letters of Charles O'Connor*, 1988 Edition, page 157.

not figure prominently in the Catholic party's concerns during this period, and certainly not as a major foe. When it is considered that the strategy of Catholics in the 1760s was to lobby and court favour from government, and that of Lucas and the patriots to protest and oppose at nearly every turn, it can be seen that conditions did not exist for a repeat of the marked convergence of interests which had occurred in 1749. It is also true that Lucas never again expressed himself with such frankness in his writings as he did in the latter year on the subjects of mistreatment of the native Irish and the causes of Irish rebellions, perhaps because his experience of exile and the constraints of his new role as an MP had rendered him more cautious on those issues at least.

7 The Octennial Act

Limitation Campaign

The recently bereaved Lucas was in attendance following the opening of parliament in the Autumn of 1765. A matter which caused Lucas great concern was an alteration to heads of a bill to prevent the exportation of grain from Ireland during a period of shortage, which subject he addressed in a pamphlet issued in December 1765. While Lucas clearly supported the bill in principle, he strenuously opposed the alteration of a clause empowering the Irish Viceroy and Privy Council to suspend the law if deemed expedient, to one assigning this power to the King and his Council in England. Lucas again took the opportunity in this publication to call for support for a law 'dissolving this and limiting the Duration of all future Parliaments'.¹⁶⁴

It was Flood who took the lead in the 1765-66 session in endeavouring to secure a limitation bill. He introduced a bill in January 1766 and there followed efforts to amend it, particularly by extending the length of parliaments from seven to fourteen years. The proponents of a seven-year session on the British model prevailed and Lucas was delegated by the Commons to present a septennial bill to the Lord Lieutenant. Having

164 Lucas, *[Address] to the Right Honorable the Lord Mayor, the Aldermen, Sheriffs, Commons, Citizens and Freeholders of Dublin*, Dublin 1765, pages 4-7, 15.

passed the Irish houses of parliament the bill was sent to England but was not approved by the King.¹⁶⁵

The house voted on 5 June 1766 to return an address of thanks to the King, begging leave to lay before him the 'strongest assurances' of duty and loyalty and 'intire reliance on Your Majesty's goodness'. An effort was made to present an alternative address to the King, in which protestations of loyalty were combined with regret that 'the voice of his faithful subjects of Ireland' and 'the repeated applications of the representatives of the people' had not proven more successful. This form of argumentative address, in which one suspects the influence of Lucas in particular, clearly came close to breaking the convention of never personally criticising the monarch, and was not surprisingly negatived.

Demonstrating that he was retaining contact with his native County Clare, in January 1766 Lucas was presented with the freedom of Ennis in a silver box, via his parliamentary colleague Sir Lucius O'Brien. Asking him to accept this 'testimony of esteem' from Ennis, O'Brien noted that the corporation members had the 'satisfaction of recollecting that Doctor Lucas is by birth their countryman'. Lucas responded graciously from Dublin to the honour conferred on him by Ennis, adding, 'I must exult in the place of my nativity'.¹⁶⁶

There is also an indication that despite his Protestant prejudices Lucas was not held in low regard by all contemporary Catholics, in the form of some comments in a letter of the Catholic

165 *Journals House of Commons Ireland*, 8, pages 23, 76-77.

166 *Freeman's Journal*, 1 February 1766.

surgeon and antiquary, Sylvester O'Halloran. Although they differed in religion, O'Halloran and Lucas shared a similar medical background, having both attended the universities of Paris and Leiden.¹⁶⁷ In a letter to Charles O'Connor of Belanagare dated February 1766, which dealt among other matters with 'oppressions' laid by Protestants on Catholics, O'Halloran concluded with an unexpectedly warm tribute to Lucas, while conceding that he must be considered an opponent of Catholicism:

I received last post a very long and a very polite letter from my old acquaintance Dr Lucas, in which he is pleased to bestow many encomiums on my work. I find the popular honours lately conferred on him have not made him forget his friends. He has even gone so far as to relate to me private anecdotes which bespeak a warm friendship. He is a stiff promoter of our coup de grace, but is in the mean an honest man as he acts from principle.¹⁶⁸

Octennial Act

Displaying characteristic tenacity, Lucas once more took the lead in the struggle for limitation of the duration of parliaments in the session which commenced in Autumn 1767. Working again with Flood and also William Ponsonby, Lucas prepared heads of another limitation bill which he presented to the Commons on 16 November, and as on previous occasions these were referred to the

167 J B Lyons, *Brief Lives of Irish Doctors*, Dublin 1978, page 47.

168 O'Halloran to O'Connor, 11 February 1766, RIA., Stowe MS B I 1.; J B Lyons, Editor, 'The Letters of Sylvester O'Halloran', *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, 8, 1961, pages 177-8.

consideration of a committee of the whole house. Outside parliament Dublin Corporation and many of the city guilds petitioned parliament in favour of the measure. In November the Speaker and the Commons attended Lord Lieutenant Townshend with a further septennial bill, and having been approved by the Irish Privy Council it was transmitted to England in December.¹⁶⁹ Townshend traded his support for the bill for promises from MPs, including a number of the patriots (excluding apparently Lucas), to support in return his proposals to augment the strength of the army in Ireland.¹⁷⁰

In February 1768 there came the good news that the King in Council had approved the limitation bill, with some alterations. The most important change was that the length of parliaments was set at eight as opposed to the seven years which applied in Britain, this being considered to be better adapted to the biennial sessions of the Irish parliament.¹⁷¹ The House of Commons accepted the amended limitation bill, sent it to the House of Lords whose members also agreed it and on 16 February Townshend announced the royal assent to MPs and peers assembled together in the House of Lords.¹⁷²

The resulting Octennial Act of 1768 greatly increased the influence of public opinion on

169 *Journals House of Commons Ireland*, 8, pages 161, 186, 191, 198, 203, 229.

170 Townshend to Shelburne, 12 December 1767, *Calendar of Home Office Papers*, 1766-69, pages 228-29.

171 Shelburne to Townshend, 2 February 1768, same, pages 301-02.

172 *Journals House of Commons Ireland*, 8, pages 226, 228, 229.

parliamentary representatives, involving as it did regular general elections.¹⁷³ Indeed the act was itself the product of public opinion, ably orchestrated outside parliament by Lucas and the patriots, and it helped pave the way for the final assault on Poyning's Law in 1782-83. Charlemont gave full credit to Lucas for his role in securing the Octennial Act, which he described as 'that root from whence all our subsequent acquisitions have sprung'.¹⁷⁴ While Lucas was clearly the leading light in the campaign which led to the Octennial Act, a recent commentator has recorded merely that the measure 'was due in part to his efforts', which tends to show that there may still be some difficulty paying the man his proper dues.¹⁷⁵

Quarterage

Other elements of the patriots' reform programme did not fare so well in the parliamentary session of 1767-8, for example, bills relating to the tenure of judges and better securing the liberty of the subject were not approved.¹⁷⁶ An issue impacting negatively on Catholics was also the subject of intended legislation, namely, 'intrusion' and 'quarterage', sums which were levied by the guilds on Catholic merchants and traders despite their being denied full membership of the bodies. In the face of increasing Catholic

173 7 George III, chapter 3, *Statutes of Ireland*, 9, page 504.

174 Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Charlemont Manuscripts*, 1, pages 24-7.

175 James Kelly, 'Charles Lucas', *Multitext Project in Irish History*, http://multitext.ucc.ie/d/Charles_Lucas, accessed 9 September 2009.

176 Shelburne to Townshend, 2 February 1768, *Calendar of Home Office Papers*, 1766-69, pages 301-02.

willingness to test the legality of intrusion and quarterage in the courts, the guilds decided to press for legislation which would confirm the charges and put the matter beyond dispute.¹⁷⁷

In contrast to other issues involving Catholics in the 1760s, there is absolutely no doubt concerning Lucas's position on intrusion and quarterage, for he fully supported the right of the guilds to levy the charges. In November 1767 he introduced in the House of Commons a bill to confirm the legal right of the guilds to collect quarterage, but the bill was rejected by the English privy council, largely due to successful lobbying by Catholics.¹⁷⁸

Lucas published a pamphlet devoted entirely to the question of guild levies on Catholics in January 1768, which by his standards was studiously moderate. He was prepared to concede that there were 'sensible non-freemen who through mistake, but with proper attention to their own rights,' refused to pay quarterage. Lucas concluded his pamphlet by urging legislative support for the guilds on the intrusion and quarterage issue, claiming that this would assist manufactures and 'extend and secure the established religion'.¹⁷⁹ Of course Lucas was defending the indefensible in attempting to justify intrusion and quarterage, but his position was based primarily on a desire to support the guilds, his most important political power base, and of course on a pragmatic need to

177 O'Brien, Editor, *Essays of Maureen Wall*, pages 65-7.

178 Same, pages 67-8.

179 Lucas, *The Liberties and Customs of Dublin Asserted and Vindicated*, Second Edition, Dublin 1768, pages iii, iv, 48, 52-3, 64.

Charles Lucas 1713-1771

satisfy his constituents, who were in the main
guild members.

8 Final Years

Dispute with Townshend

Having won the Octennial Act Lucas did not rest on his laurels, and his final years were marked by even more intense conflict with the administration, continued assertion of Irish autonomy and criticism of English misgovernment. Following on from his opposition to the proposed augmentation of the army in Ireland, in 1768 Lucas also took up the case of David Blakeney, a matross (gunner's mate) in the Regiment of Artillery whom he claimed to have been victimised and sentenced to 500 lashes, later reduced to 200, for daring to complain about short-pay.¹⁸⁰

Lucas claimed that after the sentence was executed at the Royal Barracks, Blakeney was forced to march from the place of punishment back to his station at Chapelizod.¹⁸¹ Lucas's pamphlet on the Blakeney case also contains an interesting statement of his general attitude to the military. He declared that he held 'the gentlemen of the Army in general in high honour and esteem', but that there was 'no class of men in the state so likely to be unacquainted with the liberties and rights of the subject' as the same gentlemen. Instancing numerous violent outrages committed by the

180 Lucas, *A Mirror for Courts-Martial, in Which the Complaints, Trial, Sentence and Punishment of David Blakeney are Represented and Examined with Candour*, Dublin 1768, pages 14-15.

181 Same, pages 24-25, 35-36.

military, Lucas declared that he did not oppose the army per se, declaring, ‘. . . some military force is necessary for this Kingdom . . . until the natives of Ireland become capable and qualified to defend their liberty and property, in the form of a militia’.¹⁸²

Townshend was undoubtedly referring to Lucas’s involvement in the Blakeney case and his opposition to military augmentation when he wrote as follows:

Here is a Dr Lucas, the Wilkes of Ireland, who has been playing the devil here and poisoning all the soldiery with his harangues and writings, but I have treated this nonsensical demagogue as he deserves, with the mob at his heels.¹⁸³

Such lofty denunciation of Lucas still has its effect and has liberated some historians from the need to pay too much attention to the career of a figure they regard as little better than a rabble-rouser.

Lucas’s relations with Lord Lieutenant Townshend were probably the worst he had with any viceroy, and his attacks on government sharpened after the controversial prorogation of parliament in December 1769, as a result of its refusal to pass a money bill. Lecturing Townshend on the respective rights and privileges of the executive and legislature, Lucas declared that had the parliament been allowed to sit, he would have moved for censure of those counsellors who had advised ‘the late most extraordinary exertion of the

182 Lucas, *Mirror for Courts Martial*, pages 5-6.

183 Townshend to Granby, 5 April 1768, Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Rutland Manuscripts*, 2, page 303.

prerogative'.¹⁸⁴ Lucas also republished with commentary a pamphlet on Irish parliamentary procedures, attributed to John Lodge, which was allegedly first commissioned by and then suppressed by the authorities as it did not fit their purpose.¹⁸⁵

The parallels between the case of Ireland and that of the increasingly restive American colonies were clear to the patriots, and following the Boston Massacre in March 1770 a committee of the townsmen sent Lucas an account of the incident. The committee's letter explained that after the 'execrable deed' in Boston on 5 March the town thought it expedient that 'a full and just representation of it should be made to persons of character', in order 'to frustrate the designs of certain men' who sought 'to bring an odium upon the town as the aggressors in that affair'.¹⁸⁶ Lucas replied to the Bostonians that all he could do was to loudly exclaim against 'your oppressors' and to republish the narrative of the massacre they had sent him. He observed further that if the Government of Britain should oppress and plunder its dependencies, 'the bond of filial affection and

184 Lucas, *The Rights and Privileges of Parliaments Asserted upon Constitutional Principles*, Dublin 1770, page 4 and generally.

185 [John Lodge], *The Usage of Holding Parliaments and of Preparing and Passing Bills of Supply in Ireland*, Lucas, Editor, Dublin 1770, page 2.

186 *A Letter from the Town of Boston to C Lucas Esq, One of the Representatives of the City of Dublin in Parliament*, Dublin [1770].

duty, as well as of allegiance must be cancelled'.¹⁸⁷

Death

The most important event, on the face of it, in Lucas's late medical career was the appearance on the scene of a certain Achmet Borumborad, a Turk no less who with parliamentary support opened Turkish Baths in Dublin which were also to be available to the poor. Alas, Achmet was an imposter whose real name was Patrick Joyce. According to Barrington's comical but not necessarily totally reliable account, Joyce's fortunes suffered when some drunken MPs fell into a cold bath on his premises, and went into further decline after he had dispensed with his beard and robe in order to gain the hand of a monied beauty.¹⁸⁸ Lucas, his rival Ruttly and a host of leading physicians and surgeons were taken in and solemnly endorsed Joyce's baths in newspaper notices in 1771.¹⁸⁹ Joyce also did Lucas the posthumous honour of republishing a section of his *Essay on Waters* in 1772 with his own marginal notes, contriving to continue claiming Lucas's endorsement while advertising his own enterprise.¹⁹⁰

187 Lucas, *A Letter to the Boston Massacre Committee 1770*, Sean J Murphy, Editor, Windgates, County Wicklow, 2013, <http://homepage.eircom.net/~seanjmurphy/epubs/bostonletter.pdf>, accessed 16 September 2013.

188 Sir Jonah Barrington, *Personal Sketches of His Own Times*, London 1871 Edition, 1, pages 125-32.

189 *Freemans's Journal*, 29 August 1771.

190 Lucas, *The Theory and Uses of Baths, Being an Extract from the Essay on Waters . . . with Marginal Notes by Dr Achmet*, Dublin 1772.

So disabled by gout that he frequently had to be carried to and from the House of Commons during his final years, Lucas died on 4 November 1771 and was buried in St Michan's Churchyard, Dublin. Lucas's son Henry and other relatives, together with his friends and colleagues Charlemont, Flood, Adderley and Sir Lucius O'Brien, were in attendance at what was a large and impressive public funeral. The mourners also included officers and many hundred brethren of the city's guilds and, indicating the deceased radical's now more respectable status, the Speaker of the House of Commons and several MPs, the Lord Mayor with nine Aldermen and other representatives of the Corporation and the Vice-Provost and 200 scholars of Trinity College. The *Freeman's Journal* observed that as the 'grand and solemn Procession' travelled about mid-day from Henry Street, crossing the Liffey to Castle Street and then recrossing to Church Street and St Michan's, the 'Assemblage of People' was 'never so numerous on any Occasion before'.¹⁹¹ While the latter newspaper did not refer to this aspect of the ceremony, a London publication described rich heraldic funeral trappings, the pall containing 'plumes of black feathers, and borders of escutcheons in black and white silk, with a cock in the centre, being the Doctor's crest'.¹⁹²

Lucas had married his third wife Elizabeth Hely in 1768 and his widow survived him by many

191 *Freeman's Journal*, 5 and 9 November 1771.

192 *London Magazine*, November 1771, page 574 (thanks to David Atkinson for drawing this reference to my attention). See also Lucas's bookplate, with arms possibly adopted rather than formally granted by an heraldic authority (page 48 above).

Charles Lucas 1713-1771

years. She was granted a small pension by Dublin Corporation and was still alive as late as 1818 aged 78, when a public appeal was issued for additional funds for the continued support of both herself and her daughter (probably Maria Charlotte). It was 'now nearly forgotten', the appeal read, that Lucas 'sacrificed his Private Fortune to his Public Duty, and thereby left his Widow and Daughter in absolute Poverty'.¹⁹³

While a full copy of Charles's 1771 will has not been located, a surviving abstract lists his sons Colley, Charles and Richard, daughters Penelope, Medicis Oakes, Julia-Anna Foster and Maria Charlotte, and finally another son Lucius Hampden and his wife Elizabeth.¹⁹⁴ Strangely there is no mention of Charles's eldest son Henry, who was to pursue a career as a poet of little note,¹⁹⁵ and it is possible that there was some sort of estrangement between father and son. Periodically prone to financial problems as we have seen, it is no surprise that Lucas left his family in poverty, for he had the misfortune to devote himself to politics in an age when remuneration was the preserve of government, its supporters and hangers-on, the 'placemen and pensioners' so detested by the patriots. Lucas held at least an an interest in such substantial assets as a house in Henry Street,

193 *Doctor Lucas*, printed appeal 1818, British Library Add Ms 40,279, folio 300 (copy obtained).

194 Betham Abstract of Prerogative Will of Dr Charles Lucas, dated 1 October 1771, proved 12 December 1771, National Archives of Ireland, BET 1/43, MFGS 38/5, page 91. Most original testamentary records were destroyed in the Public Record Office of Ireland in June 1922 during the Civil War which followed Irish independence.

195 See *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* entry.

Dublin, and a residence in Ballybough, which of course were disposed of after his death,¹⁹⁶ no doubt to help cover his debts.

Lucas apparently left an autobiography in manuscript, whose fate is unknown, and his son-in-law Dr Edward Foster's plan to publish a collection of his works appears to have foundered due to differences with Lucas's widow Elizabeth, with both advertising rival editions.¹⁹⁷ The absence of a published memoir or collected works¹⁹⁸ is one obvious reason for the relative neglect of Lucas by historians, in contrast to those other members of the Anglo-Irish nationalist pantheon, Molyneux, Swift, Flood and Grattan. While regrettable, the survival of only a relatively small amount of Lucas's correspondence is significantly compensated for by the remarkable range of his published works which have come down to us.

Lucas's grave still survives in St Michan's Churchyard and a fine statue of him by Edward Smyth can be viewed in Dublin's City Hall, Dame Street. The aforementioned portrait by Reynolds shows Lucas holding his Leiden medical thesis and there are a number of other portraits.¹⁹⁹

196 *Freeman's Journal*, 31 December 1771.

197 Same, 28 October 1773.

198 There exists a collection of Lucas's main publications, with cuttings from the *Freeman's Journal* and a small quantity of short letters, compiled by an associate 'for his own use' but with printed title pages: Henry Holmes, Editor, *The Political Works of C Lucas, Complete*, 7 volumes and 2 appendices, Dublin 1785, Bodleian Library, Oxford, 232 f.146-154 (a number of these volumes are accessible via Google Books).

199 Prints by Andrew Miller (2), Patrick Halpin (National Library of Ireland), portrait by Thomas Hickey (Royal College of Physicians of Ireland), various prints (National Gallery of Ireland).

Legacies

When he has come to the attention of historians, Lucas has more often than not tended to be portrayed as a minor politician and/or anti-Catholic bigot. Charlemont's biographer Hardy set the tone by describing Lucas as 'a sovereign of the corporations' whose importance in the House of Commons 'was withered and comparatively shrunk to nothing', yet he did allow that Lucas 'annexed a species of dignity to himself in the House of Commons'.²⁰⁰ While Henry Grattan Junior conceded that Lucas 'laid the groundwork of Irish liberty', he considered that he was without the talent and knowledge of men like Malone, Pery and Flood.²⁰¹ Lecky characterised Lucas as 'wholly destitute of oratorical power and bitterly intolerant to his Catholic fellow-countrymen'.²⁰² In contrast, perhaps surprisingly given his views on the subordination of the Irish, Froude presented a relatively favourable account of Lucas's campaigns against political corruption, observing that 'to misgovern with a high hand was ceasing to be possible'.²⁰³ Historians of nationalist bent also tended to present Lucas in a positive light, for example, Thomas D'Arcy Magee described him as

200 Francis Hardy, *Memoirs of the Political and Private Life of James Caulfield, Earl of Charlemont*, 1, London 1812, pages 303-4 (in this edition pages 289-304 are erroneously printed as 189-204).

201 Henry Grattan, *Memoirs of the Life and Times of the Rt Hon Henry Grattan*, 1, London 1839, page 82.

202 W E H Lecky, *A History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, London 1913 Edition, 1, page 461.

203 James A Froude, *The English in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, 1, London 1872, pages 607-8; the author erroneously described Lucas as a Presbyterian.

attempting with 'zeal and energy to play the part of Swift', adding that he had 'an honourable niche in his country's history'.²⁰⁴

Coming to more recent times we find McDowell describing Lucas as a 'bustling, public-spirited tradesman' who 'condoned the penal code'.²⁰⁵ Edwards dismissed Lucas as a 'reforming crank and anti-Catholic bigot',²⁰⁶ but I think that in the course of his exacting and always fair supervision of my postgraduate research he may have come to view the man a little less unfavourably. Leighton has referred to Lucas's 'retrograde patriotism' and identified anti-Catholicism as central to his thinking.²⁰⁷ Hill opined that there was nothing new in Lucas's political philosophy and pointing to his 'corporatism' and 'championing of guild values', accorded him the status of 'a traditional rather than a forward-looking thinker'.²⁰⁸ Most recently, while again presenting Lucas as 'vigorously anti-Catholic', Bartlett has quipped that his 'patriot polemics' were 'tireless (and frequently tiresome)'.²⁰⁹

204 Thomas D'Arcy McGee, *A Popular History of Ireland: From the Earliest Period to the Emancipation of the Catholics*, 2, New York 1863, pages 622-3.

205 R B McDowell, *Irish Public Opinion 1750-1800*, London 1944, pages 11, 17.

206 R Dudley Edwards, *A New History of Ireland*, Dublin 1972, page 142.

207 C D A Leighton, *Catholicism in a Protestant Kingdom: A Study of the Irish Ancien Régime*, Dublin 1994, page 77 and following.

208 Jacqueline Hill, *From Patriots to Unionists: Dublin Civic Politics and Irish Protestant Patriotism, 1660-1840*, Oxford 1997, pages 89-90.

209 Thomas Bartlett, *Ireland: A History*, Cambridge University Press 2010, page 159.

Any evaluation of Lucas should refer of course to his medical as well as political work, and in fairness it should be recorded that historians of medicine have not adopted quite so dismissive a tone as many political historians have done.²¹⁰ Lucas was undoubtedly a skilled apothecary and doctor and possessed a keen sense of public service, while those who take the trouble to read them will find that both his medical and his political writings are not without value. As we have seen, Lucas's 1761 drugs act remains on the Irish statute book and his emphasis on proper control of medicines is certainly as valid as ever in an age when sale of drugs via the Internet has greatly expanded the opportunities for quackery.²¹¹ While Lucas may have overstated the healing powers of water in itself, the health value of hydrotherapy and spas is still appreciated, although recreational facilities may currently outnumber the medical. Lucas's emphasis on cleanliness and its part in medical treatment certainly continue to have resonance in the light of recurrent concerns about patient infection in hospitals. In short, it can be said that while Lucas was in general a doctor subject to the limitations of knowledge of the era in which he lived, in some respects at least he was ahead of his time.

Returning to the subject of Lucas's politics, Townshend's the 'Wilkes of Ireland' is perhaps the best-remembered contemporary description of

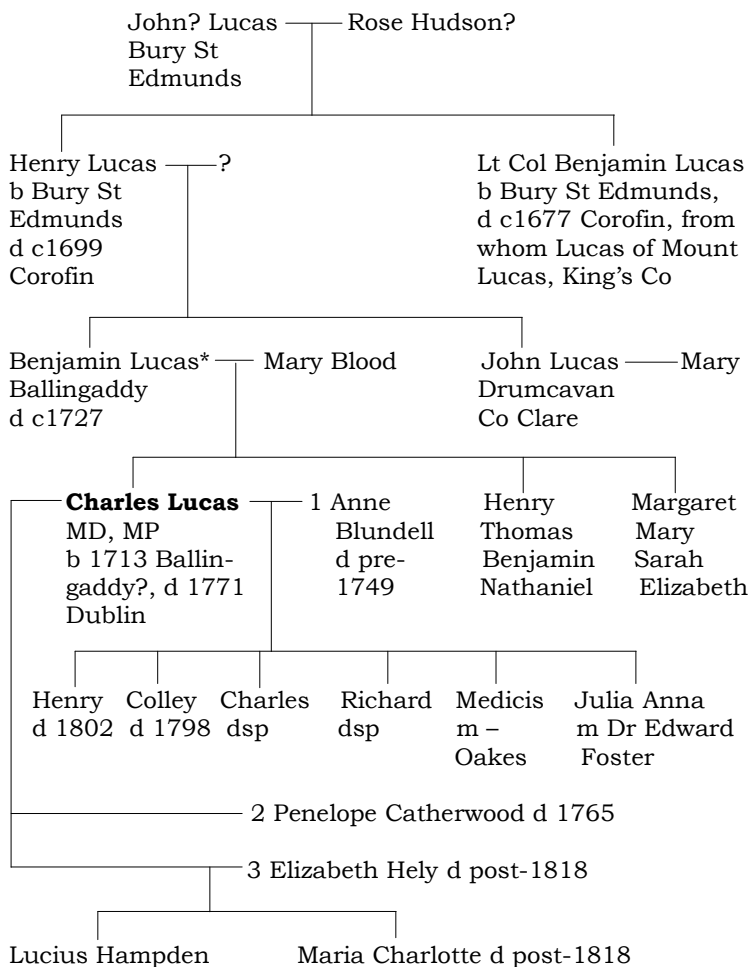
210 See for example Sneddon, 'Institutional Medicine and State Intervention' and Mason, 'The "Political Knight Errant" at Bath' (pages 16, 58 above).

211 The Dublin headquarters of the National Drugs Advisory Board, replaced in the 1990s by the Irish Medicines Board, were called 'Charles Lucas House'.

Lucas, although it obscures the fact that the Irish radical's career predated that of his English counterpart. Lucas was undoubtedly a pugnacious and difficult character whose political activities must ever seem somewhat futile to devotees of power, while those drawn to oppositional politics may be more likely to regard him a little more favourably. Lucas undeniably possessed a strong measure of prejudice against Catholics, but was not quite the ultra-Protestant bigot portrayed by some commentators. While in no way denying their unpleasantness, it has been shown that the Barber's *Letters* were not typical of Lucas, and he avoided such a nakedly sectarian tone in subsequent publications.

The degree of Lucas's emphasis on an Ireland oppressed by an external power and the strength of his denial of the country's colonial status were such that his ideology can legitimately be termed nationalist. Lucas's brand of nationalism, like that of his predecessors Molyneux and Swift, stopped short of being separatist, seeking maximum autonomy for a distinct kingdom of Ireland, which happened to share a monarch with the kingdom of Great Britain. Of course this variety of nationalism conceded full rights only to the Protestant and indeed Church of Ireland section of the population, which is why it is properly distinguished as 'Protestant' or 'Anglo-Irish' nationalism. In conclusion, just as Lucas's reputation as an intolerant bigot needs to be revised, his crucial contribution to the evolution of Irish nationalism and his pivotal role in the transition to republican separatism should also be acknowledged.

Appendix 1: Pedigree of Lucas of Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, Ballingaddy, County Clare, and Dublin



*Benjamin apparently also had two natural children, William and John, by his servant maid Ellen Hynes.

Sources: Prerogative Will Benjamin Lucas, 1727; NLI GO MS 412, pages 66-7; Ó Dálaigh, 'Lucas Diary,' pages 75-7.

Appendix 2: Lucas on Religious Differences²¹²

Another, of the many and innumerable Artifices used to make me hateful in your Sight, is, the branding me with opprobrious Party Appellations. The Emissaries of the Board [of Aldermen], occasionally, tell the Presbyterians, and other Protestant Dissenters, that I am a Tory, or a Jacobite, and an High-Church Man, if not a Papist, in mine Heart; to these, they represent me, as a red-hot Whig, a very Low-Church Man, if not a Presbyterian, and that I could roast or broil Papists. Thus, Men who know no Principle in Morality, Religion, or Policy, have no Medium, or Moderation, and judge of all others by the variable Standard of their own inconstant and insincere Hearts.

By the Fruit, every Tree is known. Judge of my Morality, Religion, and Politics, by my Life and Actions, not by mine, or other Men's Words. As to my Morals, though I have Passions, or Affections, as strong as most Men, my Life and Conversation, I hope, are such, as neither can give Offence or Scandal to mine innocent Neighbour. As for my Religion, I am, to the best of my Knowledge, a Christian. Not because my Parents were such, or because I was educated in that Faith; but, from the Conviction of mine own Senses: For, I pin my Faith on no Man's Sleeve. I am therefore neither of Paul, or of Cephas. I worship the God of Truth, not so much in ostentatious, human Inventions, or superficial Forms, as in the Spirit. I submit to the Forms of the Church, because they are established by human Law; which is ever to be observed and obeyed in all things, that are not contradictory to the Divine Law.

I know no Tenet, necessary to Salvation, in which I differ from the Presbyterians. And am of Opinion, that

212 Extract from Lucas, *A Letter to the Free-Citizens of the City of Dublin*, Dublin 1749, dated 18 August, as reprinted in *Political Constitutions*, pages 442-44. The original text has been edited minimally, with re-paragraphing and amendment of possible misspellings and anomalous spellings, eg, 'Knowlege', 'Presbiterian'.

ecclesiastical Government is the only essential Difference between them and the established Church, which makes me judge it wicked to sow Discord between them and Us. I confess if I had had my Religion to choose, and were not better informed, when I lately saw the Creatures of the Faction running through the Streets, possessing every one with the old exploded wicked Notion, The Church is in Danger; when they said, 'that it was the Presbyterian Party, that was raising the Spirit of Liberty, and endeavouring to give its Friends and Assertors all due Encouragement, by just Marks of Respect and Distinction'; I should, like Montezuma, the pagan American Prince, rather be of any Religion, than that of Slaves, or Tyrants. And, I am persuaded, that if the laic and clerical Creatures of the Faction go on with their blind Fury and Bigotry, they will drive every free Man from the Pale of that Church, whose true and generic Characteristic, as laid down by its Divine Founder, is perfect Liberty, universal Benevolence and Charity, extensive as his Love.

As for the Papists, or Romanists, I pity, not condemn, their religious Errors. Had they only differed from us in religious Matters, or Modes of Worship, as was the Case within these few Centuries, before some of the Bishops of Rome claimed a temporal Power in these Realms, and taught their Votaries to blend religious Tenets and political Principles together, which are found dangerous to the present Establishment, I should know no difference between the civil Rights of a Papist and a Protestant. But, when I see the extreme Change a few Centuries have universally wrought in the Minds of these People, when I consider them, in the Reigns of John, Henry III, Richard II and other Tyrannical Kings of England, making the most glorious Stand for their civil and religious Liberties, and obtaining, in Magna Carta, greater and more effectual Security for their Liberty and Property, than any People upon Earth can boast; and observe them in some short Time after, submitting every Thing, that Man should hold dear, to the despotic Sway

of a foreign Bishop, I look upon them, with extreme Pity and Astonishment.

However, I would by Reason and good Example reform, not by any Means, persecute, or annoy them. They shall ever, for me, worship their God, as their Consciences direct, and shall feel no compulsive, or coercive Means, by my Consent, more than other Subjects; except, as far, as it may prove necessary, to oblige them, for common Peace and Safety, to pay due Allegiance to the established Civil Constitution, which is founded on a Christian Precept, submitting themselves to the Ordinances of Man, in temporal Government. I sincerely wish they might be brought to this Way of thinking, and I am persuaded, no good Protestant would wish, or suffer them to lye under any painful Restrictions, in Matters, merely religious.

My Notions of Policy are of a Piece with those, in respect to Religion. I would have every Part of Civil Society, from the Head to the lowest, or meanest Member of the Common-Wealth, all the Officers and Servants of the State, whether civil, ecclesiastical, or military, observe and execute the Law, in their respective Spheres, and fulfil the Duty of their several Functions, without clashing, or interfering the one with the other. And I would have all the Subjects, whether Papist, or Protestant, Jew, or Gentile, have the full Protection and Benefit of the Law, and the fullest Scope of Liberty; that is, Power to dispose of his Person and his Property, in whatsoever Manner he should choose, as far, as it was consistent with the End of his Creation, his Duty to God and to Society, and agreeable to just Laws, made for the general Good of Society.

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A Forgotten Patriot Doctor: Charles Lucas 1713-1771

In contrast to figures such as Swift and Grattan, Charles Lucas is little remembered today and has not infrequently been dismissed as a minor politician and anti-Catholic bigot. Born in County Clare in 1713, Lucas's earliest surviving published work described Kilcorney Cave and the Burren. After moving to Dublin city he trained as an apothecary and agitated against abuses in that trade. Following his election to Dublin Corporation in 1741 Lucas led an unsuccessful campaign for municipal reform. Lucas's candidacy during the Dublin by-election of 1748-49 was accompanied by copious pamphleteering on national as well as local issues, leading to his condemnation by parliament for alleged seditious writings and exile in Britain and Europe.

Having qualified as a medical doctor, Lucas promoted hydrotherapy in particular as a cure for many illnesses. Following his return from exile in 1761 Lucas succeeded in being elected as one of Dublin's MPs, and in parliament he continued to assert Irish autonomy and to oppose perceived English misgovernment until his death in 1771. A case is made in the present work that despite Lucas's undoubted Protestant prejudices, he was more than a mere anti-Catholic bigot, and furthermore that his ideology was nationalist and marked a pivotal transition to the republican separatism of the United Irishmen.

Centre for Irish Genealogical and Historical Studies
Carraig, Cliff Road, Windgates, Bray, County
Wicklow, Ireland