

Mulplaquet, ended his grand career as a soldier. After that fight the war was feebly waged—France being completely exhausted—until the Peace of Utrecht and Treaty of Rastadt, 1713-14, closed the bloody record.

From the fall of Limerick, in 1691, to the French Revolution, according to the most reliable estimate, there fell in the field for France, or otherwise died in her service, 480,000 Irish soldiers. The Brigade was kept recruited by military emigrants, borne from Ireland—chiefly from the Province of Munster—by French smugglers, under the romantic and significant title of "Wild Geese,"—in poetical allusion to their eastward flight. By this name the "Brigade" is best remembered among the Irish peasantry.

After the death of Louis the Fourteenth, the Irish Brigade had comparatively very little wholesale fighting to keep them occupied, until the war of the Austrian Succession, thirty years later. They made many expeditions to the smaller States on the Rhenish frontier, with which France was in a chronic state of war, under the Duke of Berwick. In every combat they served with honor, and always appeared to the best advantage where the hail of death fell thickest. At times, like most of their countrymen, they were inclined to wildness, but the first drum roll or bugle-blast found them ready for the fray. On the march to attack Fort Kehl, in 1733, Marshal Berwick—who was killed two years afterward at the siege of Philippsburg—found fault with Dillon's regiment for some branch of discipline while en route. He sent the Colonel with despatches to Louis XV., and among other matters, in a paternal way—for Berwick loved his Irishmen—called the King's attention to the indiscreet battalion. The monarch, on reading the document, turned to the Irish officer, and, in the hearing of the whole Court, petulantly exclaimed—"My Irish troops cause me more uneasiness than all the rest of my armies!" "Sire," immediately rejoined the noble Count Dillon—subsequently killed at Fontenoy—"all your Majesty's enemies make precisely the same complaint!" Louis, pleased with the repartee, smiled, and, like a truer Frenchman, wiped out his previous unkindness by complimenting the courage of the Brigade.

The great war of the Austrian Succession inaugurated the fateful campaigns of 1743 and 1745, respectively signalized by the battles of Dettingen and Fontenoy. The former was a day of dark disaster to France, and Fontenoy was a mortal blow to the British.

At Dettingen the Earl of Stair commanded the English and Hanoverians, although George II., and his son, Cumberland, were present on the field. Marshal de Noailles commanded the French, and was badly worsted, after a desperate engagement. The Irish Brigade, summoned from a long distance, arrived too late to restore the battle, and met the French army in full retreat, hotly pursued by the allies. The Brigade under the orders of Lord Clare, opened their ranks and allowed the French to retire, and then, closing steadily up, they uttered their charging cry, and, with leveled bayonets, checked the fierce pursuers. Thus, once again, the Irish Brigade formed the French rear-guard, as the *Fleur de Lis* retired from the plains of Germany.

The celebrated battle of Fontenoy was fought May 11, 1745. The French were besieging Tournay with 18,000 men. A corps of 6,000 guarded the bridge over the Scheldt, on the northern bank, of which Marshal Saxe, accompanied by Louis XV., and the Dauphin, having with him 45,000 men, including the Irish Brigade, took post, to cover the siege of Tournay, and prevent the march of the allies, English, Dutch and German, under the Duke of Cumberland and Prince Waldeck, to its relief. The Duke was a brave soldier, but fierce and cruel as a tiger. History knows him by the well-won title of "the butcher Cumberland." His business was to raise the siege of Tournay and open a road to Paris. He had under his command 55,000 veteran troops, including the English household regiments.

The French lines extended from the village of Rhamecroix, behind De Barri's Wood, on the left, to the village of Fontenoy, in the center, and from the latter position to the intrenchments of Antoine, on the right. This line of defense was admirably guarded by fort and flanking battery. The Irish Brigade—composed that day of the infantry regiments of Clare, Dillon, Bulkeley, Roth, Berwick, and Lally—Fitz James' horse being with the French cavalry in advance—was stationed, in reserve, near the wood, supported by the brigades of Normandie and de Vassieux.

Prince Waldeck commanded the allied left, in front of Antoine. Brigadier Ingoldsby commanded the British right, facing the French redoubt at De Barri's Wood, while Cumberland, chief in command, was with the allied center, confronting Fontenoy.

The battle opened with a furious cannonade, at 5 o'clock in the morning. After some hours