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Remarks On The Life and Writings Of Dr. Jonathan Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin

Orrery, John Boyle of

London, 1752

An account of his family.

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-49109](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-49109)

AND WRITINGS OF DR. SWIFT. 5

“there remain a few.”” But Dr. SWIFT, in his cooler hours, never denied his country: on the contrary, he frequently mentioned, and pointed out the house where he was born. The other suggestion concerning the illegitimacy of his birth, is equally false. Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE was employed as a minister abroad from the year sixteen hundred and sixty five, to the year sixteen hundred and seventy: first at *Brussels*, and afterwards at the *Hague*, as you will find by his correspondence with the Earl of *Arlington*, and other ministers of state: so that Dr. SWIFT's mother, who never crossed the sea, except from *England* to *Ireland*, was out of all possibility of a personal correspondence with Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE, till some years after her son's birth.

I have already mentioned to you the exact place, and date of Doctor SWIFT's nativity, but the rules of biography make it necessary to give you some account of his family. It shall be as short as possible, since, although his ancestors were persons of very decent, and reputable characters, he himself has been the herald to blazon the dignity of their coat. His grandfather was the Reverend Mr. THOMAS SWIFT, Vicar of *Goodridge* near *Ross* in *Herefordshire*. He enjoyed a paternal estate in that county, which is still in possession of his great grandson DEANE SWIFT, Esq; He died in the year sixteen hundred and fifty eight, leaving six sons, GODWIN, THOMAS, DRYDEN, WILLIAM, JONATHAN and ADAM.

Letter LXXX. Mr. POPE to Dr. SWIFT, *March* 23, 1736-7.

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Two

6 REMARKS ON THE LIFE

Two of them only, GODWIN and JONATHAN, left sons. The descendants of GODWIN are mentioned in GUIL-LIM's heraldry. JONATHAN married Mrs. ABIGAIL ERICK of *Leicestershire*, by whom he had one daughter and a son. The daughter was born in the first year of Mr. SWIFT's marriage; but he lived not to see the birth of his son^a, who was called JONATHAN, in memory of his Father, and became afterwards the famous Dean of *St. Patrick's*.

The greatest part of Mr. JONATHAN SWIFT's income had depended upon agencies, and other employments of that kind: so that most of his fortune perished with him: and the remainder being the only support that his widow could enjoy, the care, tuition, and expence of her two children devolved upon her husband's elder brother, Mr. GODWIN SWIFT, who voluntarily became their guardian, and supplied the loss which they had sustained in a father. Mrs. SWIFT, about two years after her husband's death, quitted *Ireland*, and retired to *Leicester*, the place of her nativity.

The faculties of the mind, appear and shine forth at different ages in different men. The infancy of Doctor SWIFT passed on without any marks of distinction. At six years old, he was sent to school at *Kilkenny*, and about eight years afterwards, he was entered a student of Trinity College in *Dublin*. He lived there in perfect regularity, and under an entire obedience to the statutes: but the moroseness of his temper, often rendered him very

^a Doctor SWIFT was born two months after his father's death.