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**ROBERT BOYLE**







THE HONOURABLE ROBERT BOYLE

*From a painting by Kersboom, in the rooms of the Royal Society.*







# ROBERT BOYLE

1627-16

*A BIOGRAPHY*

BY

FLORA MASSON

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FLORA MASSON.

*Edinburgh,  
March 1914.*



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# ROBERT BOYLE

## CHAPTER I

### HIS BIRTH AND FAMILY

“ . . . Not needlessly to confound the herald with the historian, and begin a relation with a pedigree. . . .”—ROBERT BOYLE'S *Philaretus*.

“ MY wife, God ever be praised, was about 3 of the clock in thafternoon of this day, the sign in gemini, libra, Safely delivered of her seaventh son at Lismoor : God bless him, for his name is Robert Boyle.”<sup>1</sup>

So runs the entry, under the date January 25, 1626 (7), in the private diary of the great Earl of Cork, a manuscript preserved at Lismore to this day. When he wrote those words, the Earl was already a man of sixty, who, after forty strenuous years, was nearing the zenith of his great fortunes. The Countess—his second wife—was twenty years younger : she had been just seventeen when he married her, and he a widower of thirty-seven. They had been married three-and-twenty years, and in those three-and-twenty years, at one or other of their roughly splendid Irish homes, seven daughters and seven sons had been born to them.

Their earliest home had been the College house of Youghal, “re-edified” to suit the Earl's requirements ; but in these later years they were used to divide their time travelling in state, with coaches and horses and a mounted retinue, between Youghal and

<sup>1</sup> Lismore Papers, first series, vol. i.

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