

LEABHARLAINNA CHONTAE PHORTLÁIRGE



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No. 53

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10 Grange Park Avenue, Waterford.

Editorial Committee: The Chairman (ex officio), Eugene Broderick, Gregory Fewer, Julian Walton.

EDITORIAL

Decies 53 marks a not insignificant occasion in the history of this publication. It is the first issue under a new Editor, Mr. Peter Powell. It is only proper to acknowledge the huge contribution Julian Walton has made to *Decies*. During his years as Editor (1991-96), he was responsible for the production of a journal of the highest calibre in terms of content. In recent years, beginning with *Decies* 51, he played an important role in ensuring a more professional format, which has won for *Decies* a real reputation as a publication of quality. Happily, Julian remains a member of the Editorial Committee. The Waterford Archaeological & Historical Society owes him a real debt of gratitude for many years of generous service to its journal.

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Pat McCarthy is a native of Waterford. He was educated at Mount Sion and U.C.D. where he graduated with a Ph.D. in chemistry, and subsequently with an M.B.A. He is employed in the pharmaceutical industry and has a particular interest in history. He is Correspondence Secretary of the Military History Society of Ireland.

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Dermot Power has worked as a master-cutter in Waterford Crystal and as a professional musician. His published works include *Ballads and Songs of Waterford* (Vols. 1 and 2); *The Street Where You Live*; and *Historical Photographs and Anniversaries of Waterford City*. He is also a regular contributor on local history topics to the *Munster Express*; *Decies*; and *W. L. R.* (Dermot Power was inadvertently omitted from the *Notes on Contributors* in the last edition, in which his article on the People's Park was published).

DECIES 54

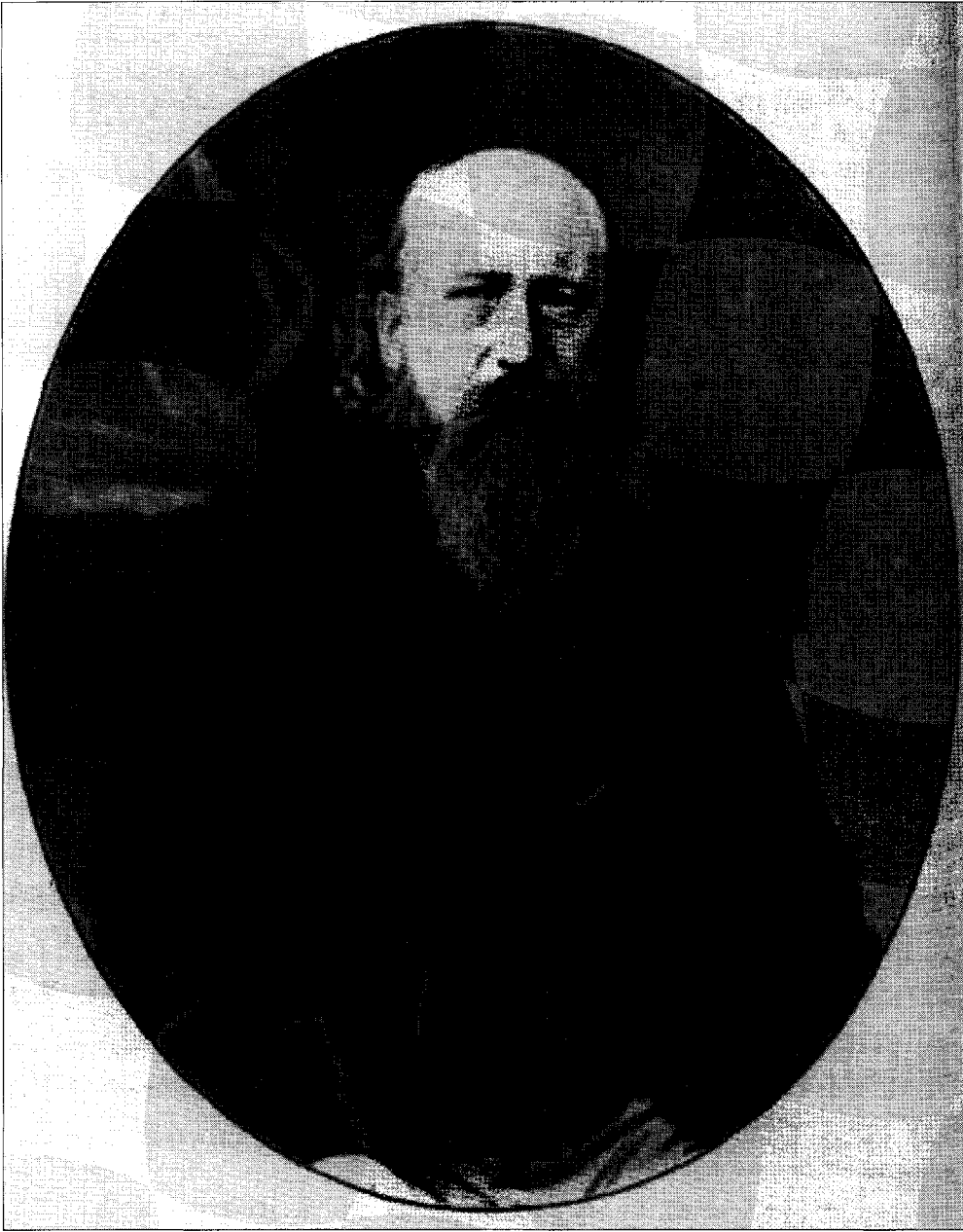
Articles are invited for *Decies 54* which will be published in 1998.

The closing date for receipt of articles is 30 April 1998.

Completed articles and inquiries to the Editor:

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James Stephens – Founder of the Fenian Brotherhood and self styled 'Chief Organiser of the Irish Republic'.

Conflicting Loyalties – Two Waterford Soldier-Fenians

By Patrick McCarthy

ALMOST 50 years after the event, John Devoy recalled the Fenian Rising in Waterford as follows:

There were three other fiascos which were not reported in the newspapers one in Drogheda, another in Mountmellick, and the third in Waterford, but I got the facts from men who participated in them.

Colonel Ricard O'Sullivan Burke was assigned to the command of Waterford in the Rising, but less than fifty answered the call. As they were too few in numbers and short of arms to do anything effective, Burke marched them into Tipperary to effect a junction with the men there, but when he got across the border next day the 'Tips' were all scattered, so he had to send his men home without any attempt at a fight!¹

The fiasco in Waterford reflects the image and folk-memory of the Fenians which is formed mostly by the ill-prepared and disastrous Rising of 1867. But to judge the Fenians solely on the events of March 1867 is to ignore the very real potential of the movement, a potential that drew upon three streams which, if properly co-ordinated, could have presented a very real threat to British rule in Ireland. These three streams – a mass movement, an experienced officer corps and a cadre of trained soldiers – each impacted upon Waterford. This essay looks at some of these impacts and, in particular, on the experience of two Waterford soldier-Fenians.

The Fenian Movement was founded on St. Patrick's Day 1858 in Peter Langan's timberyard in Dublin when James Stephens and Thomas Clarke Luby swore each other in as members. From the beginning, it was an oath-bound society and Stephens devised an elaborate structure to preserve secrecy and to foil police spies. The system took as its unit the circle, also called a regiment, commanded by a 'centre' or A, and contained about eight hundred members. Under the 'A' (or Colonel) were nine 'B's' (Captains), and then came 9 'C's' (Sergeants) reporting to each 'B', each of whom in turn commanded nine Privates. In theory, no member knew anybody beyond his immediate circle of nine fellow conspirators. In practice,

1. Devoy, John. *Recollection of an Irish Rebel* (New York, 1929), pp. 232, 234.

operating from offices in Parliament Street, Dublin, and publishing a newspaper, *The Irish People*, it can best be described as a semi-secret body. A recent study emphasised the urban working class nature of much of the Fenian movement and suggested that Fenianism owed much of its success to the social aspect of its organised drilling.² Whether social or revolutionary or, more likely, a combination of both, organised Fenianism was claiming in excess of 100,000 members by 1864.³ This was due almost entirely to the organising genius of James Stephens.

Waterford Fenians

Shortly after the founding of the Fenians, Stephens, Luby and Joseph Denieffe set off on the first of many organising tours. In the words of the latter:

'On my arrival in Dublin, Luby was sent to the South while Stephens and I went on to Waterford. At that time we did not make much headway in the city of Waterford, but it afterward became a stronghold of National activity. John Dillon, who kept an extensive wheelright business, became one of the leaders, and for many years was the 'centre' of the city. He was a most prudent and conservative man but, at the same time, an intense Nationalist, and carried on his work with such secrecy and precision that the Government remained completely in the dark regarding the existence of the organization until toward the close of the movement.

Denis B. Cashman was another of the leading spirits in Waterford. He was chief clerk for a legal firm and had a wide circle of friends, among whom he instilled his patriotic principles. W.K. Hearn, Terence Kent, John Kenny, John Tobin and P.J. Donohue were also prominent leaders in Waterford'.⁴

It is not possible to estimate the strength of Fenianism in the South-East but it is clear that Stephens sought to build on the foundations laid by the Confederate Clubs of 1848 and he seems to have had considerable success.

In September 1865, the Government acted. In a swoop on the offices of *The Irish People*, police arrested O'Donovan Rossa, Luby and John O'Leary. Stephens and Charles Kickham escaped the first raid but were later arrested. These arrests disrupted the centre of Fenian activity but left the greater part of the body unaffected. By the Spring of 1866, it was clear to the authorities that the arrest of the principal leaders had not noticeably disrupted the Fenian organisation, especially after the escape of Stephens. In February, they moved quickly and decisively. A Bill suspending habeas corpus was rushed through Parliament in a few hours on 17 February 1866. This permitted the indefinite detention of any person in Ireland on warrant of the Lord Lieutenant – in effect, internment without trial. Within hours, the RIC had moved. Hundreds of suspects were arrested. Every Irish-American that could be found was imprisoned. For every Fenian held, others fled

2. Patrick V Comerford. Patriotism as Pastime: the appeal of Fenianism in the mid-1860s. *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. XXII, No. 87, pp. 239-251.
3. Joseph Denieffe. *A personal narrative of the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood*. (New York, 1906).
4. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

to England or to America, went to ground or simply abandoned the movement. The suspension of habeas corpus wreaked havoc on the mass-movement element of Fenianism.

John Dillon's arrest had preceded the passing of the Act – he was arrested on 6 February 1866 and held for more than a year. His successor as local 'centre', Edward Kenny of Francis Street, was arrested three weeks later. William Hearn managed to stay free until January 1868 when he, too was arrested. These arrests and those of thirteen other leading local Fenians effectively decapitated the movement in Waterford. Most of the detainees were freed on bail after periods of up to a year in prison but it is no wonder that so few answered the call in March 1867.

The police were particularly interested in Denis Cashman. He was arrested in Dublin in February 1866 and a year later a confidential police report from Superintendent Ryan stated

'that in the course of enquiry he learned that Cashman and William J. Smith were among the most prominent Fenians in Dublin. Cashman is a native of Dungarvan, Co. Waterford, for which place he is a supposed centre. In the latter end of 1864 or early in 1865 prisoner came to Dublin at the express wish of J. Stephens from whom he received £2/week. Prisoner while living in Summerhill was actively engaged in manufacturing rifle cartridges. Cashman was one of Dr. Power's 'B's and his name was also found in a memorandum book found in William Stack's of Portland Street and had a narrow escape being arrested there as he passed by as the police went in'.⁵

Cashman pleaded guilty at his trial at the February 1867 sitting of the Special Commission and was sentenced to seven years' penal servitude. He was transported to Australia on the prison ship *Huguomont* leaving a wife and three young children in Barker Street.

American Officers

While Stephens and his comrades provided political leadership, military command in the event of a Rising was to be provided by a large cadre of experienced American officers. The demobilisation of the federal army at the end of the American Civil War released thousands of experienced Irish-American soldiers, many of whom were already sworn Fenians. Inspired by Stephens' ringing call that 1865 would be the year of action, hundreds of them made their way to Ireland where they were assigned to various counties. By the end of 1865, 340 American officers had been identified by the RIC in the provinces with the DMP estimating a further 160 in Dublin.⁶ This figure was steadily increasing and the police identified counties Cork, Tipperary, Waterford and Dublin as the most disaffected. With the suspension of habeas corpus most of these American officers either fled the country or were arrested. A Captain Joseph Hyland, formerly of the U.S. Army, was arrested in Waterford on 19 February while boarding a boat for Milford Haven. Although he

5. Habeas Corpus Suspension Act, Police Records, National Archives 129/38.

6. Leon O Broin. *Fenian Fever*, Dublin 1971, pp. 43-45.

denied any connection with Fenianism, he was nevertheless detained until 23 May when he was placed on board a New York bound steamer. Deportation back to America was the standard Government treatment of American officers. The fate of Lieutenant James Daniel of Cappoquin was similar.

The dispersal of the American officers dealt an almost fatal blow to the Fenian organisation. However, enough of them escaped arrest to form a hard core of experienced plotters who were determined to strike a blow for Irish freedom. Chief among them was Ricard O'Sullivan Burke. In the words of John Devoy 'by long odds the most remarkable man the Fenian movement produced, and also one of the ablest'.⁷ A native of Dunmanway, County Cork, he got his first taste of soldiering in the South Cork Militia. After a few years at sea, he emigrated to America where he joined the Union Army rising to the rank of brevet colonel before the end of the Civil War. Returning to Ireland in 1865, he was initially based in Dublin and was charged with sourcing arms for the organisation. Despairing of help from America and frustrated with Stephens' procrastination, he was among the small group who formulated the plans for the 1867 Rising.

According to this plan, the Rising was to start with a guerrilla campaign that would seize railway centres, destroy tracks and bridges and block roads, all designed to prevent the movement of troops. Gustave Fariola, a young Belgo-Italian who had served as a Colonel in the Federal Army in the Civil War and who was close to many of the leading Fenians, described the element of the plan:

The burden on them was to begin with very small bands of men, fifteen to twenty men at most, two or three being allowed to unite only in very rare cases, when success would be twice certain, and not at all in the first week ... They were to resort to ambushes to cut off all isolated or small parties of police or soldiers; to cut the roads, railways, telegraphs and bridges everywhere and every day⁸

Fariola himself was later arrested.

Colonel Thomas Kelly, commanding officer of the Fenians, later defined the object of the Rising as

'the most we expected to accomplish was to hold our ground until we should be recognized as belligerents or until aid should come from America'.⁹

It is in the context of this plan that the idea of the Waterford Fenians marching out of the city and the towns must be understood. The importance of Waterford in the national plan is perhaps best reflected in the assignment of Burke to command in the area. But weakened by arrests, almost without arms and betrayed by spies, it is hardly any wonder that so few answered the call. Many of those who did were arrested by the vigilant RIC as they wandered the roads in March 1867. On 7 March, the police reported the arrest of three 'suspicious looking' characters on the road

7. John Devoy. *Recollections of an Irish Rebel*, New York, 1929, pp. 347-352

8. Gustave Fariola. *Irishman*, 12 September 1868.

9. Colonel Kelly to . . . 19 March 1867 (quoted in D'Arcy, *Fenian Movement in U.S.*, Washington, 1947, p. 240).



Colonel Ricard O'Sullivan Burke – in his US Federal Army uniform.

between Portlaw and Carrick-on-Suir. The three turned out to be James Bible of Lismore, described as a former member of the U.S. Army, Terence Kent, one of the original founders of Fenianism in Waterford, and Thomas Bourke. Since, in the words of the police, 'they could give no good reason for being in Tipperary' they were detained. Bible was released on 17 August on condition that he sail for America.¹⁰

When the help alluded to by Kelly finally arrived, it consisted of only 50 officers on board the *Erin's Hope*. It was O'Sullivan Burke who had the task of meeting the vessel at Sligo and telling them that the Rising was already over. Burke was to continue to work for Irish freedom until his death in America in 1922.

Soldier-Fenians

The third strand of Fenianism was disaffected Irishmen serving in the British Army. To the Fenians, this represented a potential source of trained and armed soldiers.

Throughout the nineteenth century, Irishmen were over-represented in the ranks of the British Army. Irish troops had formed the core of Wellington's army. The formal lifting of the ban on the recruitment of Irish Catholics in 1799 had produced a flood of Irish recruits. Between that date and the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, it is estimated that 150,000 Irishmen had taken the King's shilling. In peacetime, the trend continued. In 1830, 42.2% of all non-commissioned officers and men throughout the British Army were Irish. This over-representation declined as the century progressed but by 1868 Irishmen still accounted for 30.4% of the army's rank and file. This was well in excess of the proportion of Irish in the population of the United Kingdom.

These recruits were not concentrated wholly in distinctive Irish Regiments. In the 1860s, most of the well-known Irish units, the Royal Munster Fusiliers, the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, the Irish Guards, etc. had not been formed. Although there were a few 'Irish' units such as the 18th Foot (Royal Irish) or the 88th Foot (Connaught Rangers), virtually every unit in the British Army contained a proportion, often up to 50% of Irish rank-and-file. This was particularly true of regiments that had been stationed in Ireland and had had a chance to recruit locally. Throughout the nineteenth century, the British garrison varied between 17,000 and 27,000 regulars, depending both on the degree of tension in Ireland and on the other demands on the Army in Victoria's farflung empire. In October 1865, the garrison numbered 17,581. Six months later, in response to the Fenian threat, it had risen to 25,876. Most of the army was stationed in the Dublin Division which included the Curragh Camp. In March 1866, there were 2,836 cavalry and 13,768 infantry in this division. The balance was stationed in small garrisons around the country. If we take an average figure of 30% Irish-born, this represented a pool of between 6,000 and 9,000 potential Fenian recruits. Many of these Irish recruits joined for economic reasons, others from a sense of adventure. D. H. Haire has found an inverse correlation between recruitment in Ireland and emigration from Ireland for the years 1868-1892. It maybe that when Irish emigration looked bad that the recruiting sergeant's shilling looked very attractive. A British Army private's pay and clothing in the nineteenth century has been estimated at £40 per annum; that of a sergeant at £69. A typical Irish labourer might be lucky to

10. Habeas Corpus Suspension Act, Police Records, National Archives, 199/38B.

earn £25-35 in a good year – assuming he could find work for 52 weeks in the year. For whatever reason, Irishmen joined the colours in the 1850s and 1860s and did so for a twenty-one year term. Among them were two Waterford men, both named Foley, William and Patrick, though they were not related. They both joined the same regiment, one of the most illustrious cavalry units, the 5th Dragoons. By 1864 the 5th Dragoons were stationed in the Royal (now Collins) Barracks with a strength of 16 officers and 429 other ranks. Of the latter at least a third were Irish born.¹¹

Recruitment of British soldiers into the Fenians began in earnest in late 1863 or early 1864. It was the brainchild of the eccentric Patrick ‘Pagan’ O’Leary who initially had to overcome strong objections from James Stephens.¹² His career as a Fenian organiser lasted less than a year. In November 1864, he was arrested in Athlone by the local garrison, some of whose members he had been trying to suborn. Nevertheless, impressed by O’Leary’s apparent success, Stephens appointed William Roantree to continue the work. Roantree concentrated on the Dublin garrison using as cover a number of well known public houses such as the Bleeding Horse in Camden Street (still extant and trading), Hoey’s of Bridgefoot Street, Barclay’s of James’s Street and Bergin’s of Thomas Street.¹³ In these establishments, groups of soldier Fenians would gather to socialise, to conspire and often to hear lectures and speeches from American officers.

Roantree did not survive the September 1865 round-up and his place was taken by John Devoy. It is Devoy who has left us the fullest details of the infiltration of the British Army. In his recollections, he claimed that 8,000 of the regular soldiers in Ireland were Fenians and that there was a further 7,000 Fenians in regiments stationed overseas.¹⁴ However, recent research would suggest that those numbers were exaggerated.¹⁵ Nevertheless, one can be certain that there were some thousands of trained soldiers who were sworn Fenians, potentially a vital asset to any planned armed Rising.

The extent of Fenian infiltration varied from regiment to regiment, almost totally dependent on the ‘regimental centre’. Within a short period, the 61st Foot Regiment, the 24th Foot and the 5th Dragoon Guards were, in the words of Devoy, ‘crack Fenian regiments’. The first Fenian in the 5th Dragoons was James Murtha, also known as James Montague who was sworn in during September 1864. A year later, Roantree appointed Patrick Keating, a Clareman, as centre for the regiment. Under his leadership, Fenianism spread in the 5th.

One of the first to be recruited by Montague and the Pagan was Patrick Foley who had been sworn in as a Fenian, and sometime later William Foley joined the circle. Patrick Foley would later testify that at a meeting in January 1866 in Hoey’s public house, an American officer was told that the 5th contained at least 100 sworn Fenians. The officer then outlined in detail the part to be played by the 5th in the planned Rising laying a particular emphasis on cavalry tactics in urban fighting.

11. David Haire. *The British Army in Ireland 1868-1890*. Unpublished M.Litt. Thesis, Trinity College, Dublin 1977.
12. A.J. Semple. *The Fenian infiltration of the British Army in Ireland, 1864-1867*. Unpublished M.Litt. Thesis, Trinity College, Dublin 1971.
13. Michael Kenny. *William Francis Roantree (1829-1918)*, Dublin 1996.
14. Devoy, pp. 60, 62, 68.
15. Semple, pp. 101-150.

The reaction of the army authorities to the spread of Fenianism appears to have been initially rather dilatory. The Commanding Officer in Ireland, Sir George Brown, was under a fairly common delusion that the British uniform could not possibly cover a traitor.¹⁶ He chose to ignore the numerous reports reaching him, especially those from Superintendent Ryan of the 'G' (political) division of the Dublin Metropolitan Police. His deteriorating health may have contributed to this slackness. On his death in July 1865, Sir Hugh Henry Rose was appointed in his place. Rose was of a different mind. As he said himself,

'I soon became aware of the extent and danger of Stephens's intrigues in the army, and of the necessity of counteracting as vigorously as he plotted them'.¹⁷

With the able assistance of the Director of Army Intelligence, Lieutenant Colonel Fielding, Rose set about eradicating the danger. By January 1866, he was ready to act and he set in place a programme of selective arrests. Convinced that the body of the army was loyal, he decided that

'exemplary punishment of Fenian soldiers who have violated their oaths of allegiance and have committed a double crime of treason, that is as civil subjects and as soldiers, is necessary'.¹⁸

Among the first to be targeted was Thomas Henry Hassett, a Corkman who was centre of the 24th foot. Hassett was on sentry duty at the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham, one night in January when a guard arrived at the picket room to arrest him. However, William Foley had become aware of the purpose of the patrol and had managed to alert Hassett. Hassett escaped to join the small band of deserters who were hiding in Dublin awaiting the call to action. He did not remain free for long. On 28 February, he was among a group of deserters arrested when the army and police, 'acting on information received', raided Pilsworth's public house in James's Street. Though not a deserter, Patrick Foley was arrested at the same time. A few days later, William Foley was also arrested. The Foleys were arrested, however, for very different reasons. In all, some one hundred and eighty Fenian soldiers were caught and imprisoned pending trial by court-martial.

The Trials

On 27 June 1866, the first courtmartial convened at the Royal Barracks, Dublin with Colonel Sawyer, 6th Dragoon Guards presiding. The first prisoner to be arraigned was John Boyle O'Reilly, trooper of the 10th Hussar, Fenian centre of the regiment and later poet and distinguished journalist.¹⁹ The charge against him was

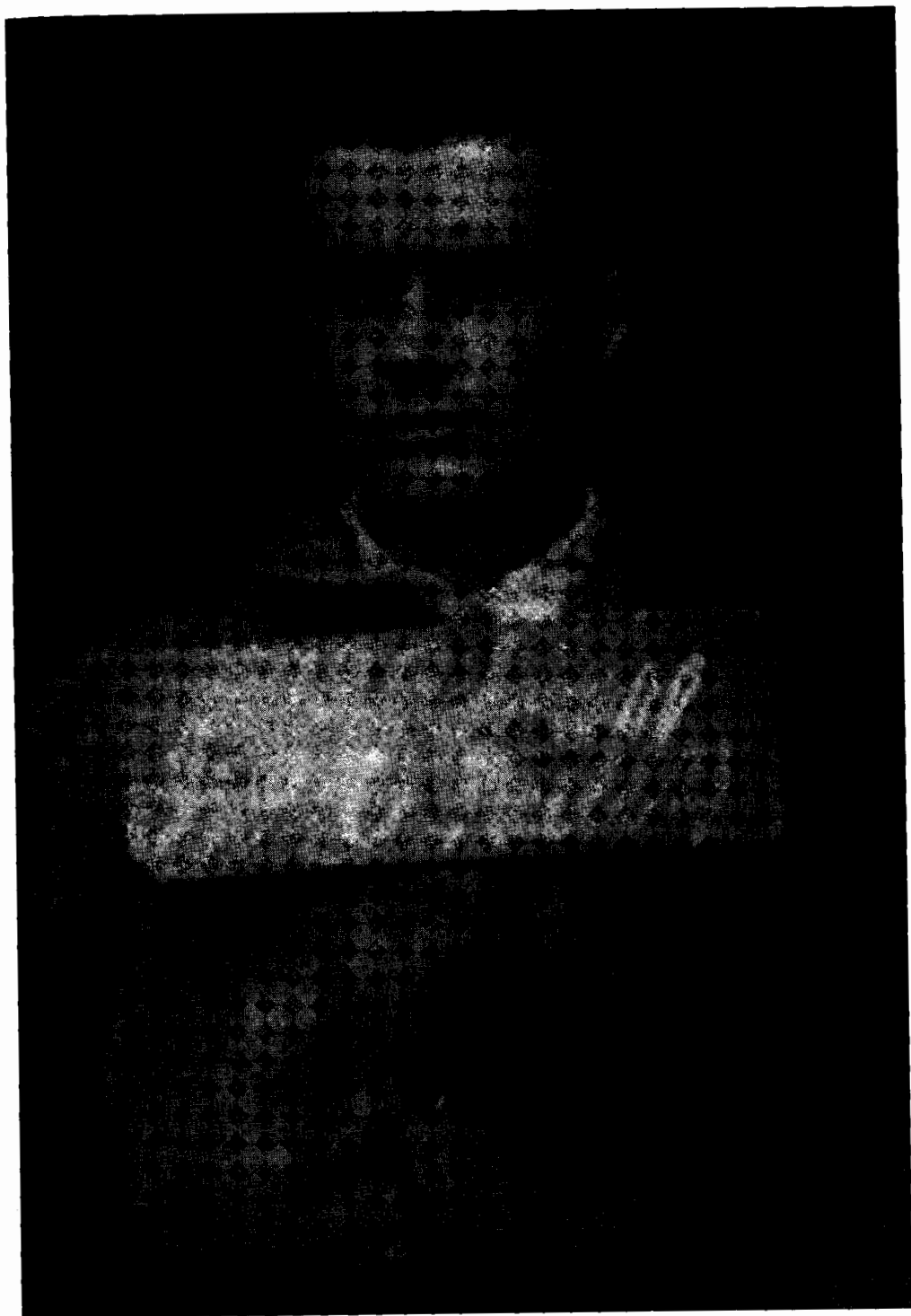
'Having at Dublin, in January 1866, come to the knowledge of an intended mutiny of Her Majesty's Forces in Ireland, and not giving information of said intended mutiny to his commanding officer'.

16. O Broin, *Fenian Fever*, pp. 34.

17. Strathnairn Papers, British Museum add. MS 42830.

18. *Ibid.*, 42824.

19. James Jeffrey Roche. *Life of John Boyle O'Reilly*, New York 1891, pp. 30-70.



John Boyle O'Reilly - most famous of the convicted soldier Fenians - in prison dress.

Most of the initial witnesses testified that they knew O'Reilly, that they frequented public houses with him but that there was no conversation about or mention of Fenianism by him. On the third day, the prosecution put their star-witness on the stand – Private Patrick Foley. He swore that he had seen O'Reilly at Hoey's with deserters, civilians, especially Devoy, and with other serving soldiers actively conspiring and plotting. On cross-examination, Foley said

'I can read and write. I took the Fenian oath. I did not call God to witness I would keep it.... Most decidedly, I took the oath with the intention of breaking it. I cannot see how that was perjury. I had to take the oath or I would have known nothing about the Fenian movement. When I took the Fenian oath, most decidedly I intended to become an informer. I kept no memoranda of the meetings I attended, as I reported them all to my commanding officer in the morning after they took place'.

Foley's evidence was supported by another informer, Private Maher of the 8th Regiment and by a police constable. While the defence tried hard to discredit the evidence, especially that of Foley, the result of the court martial was a foregone conclusion. O'Reilly was found guilty and a formal sentence of death was passed on 9 July. The same day, it was commuted to twenty years' penal servitude.

The courts martial continued throughout the Summer with Patrick Foley featuring prominently. On 22 June, he testified against Corporal Chambers of the 61st Regiment, stating

'I acted as a Fenian during 1865 and the beginning of the year 1866. I took the Fenian oath in 1864; made a report to my troop sergeant major three or four days later; attended the different meetings I have spoken of with the intention of betraying my companions'.

Chambers, centre of the 61st Regiment had been arrested in the raid on Pilsworth's public house. During the cross-examination of Foley, it emerged that Foley had seen one of the deserters, had followed him to Pilsworth's and that it was on his information that the raid had been organised. His own arrest had been part of the cover and subsequently he had been taken into protective custody.

'the deserters of my regiment who were at some of the meetings I knew at the time to be deserters; I was well aware that it was my duty to have them arrested; I was put in the barrack police as soon as I was discharged from custody, which was done to prevent me going out on the town lest I should be shot'.²⁰

One of the defendants, Private Donohue of the 24th Regiment tried a novel defence. He stated

'It appears from the evidence of Private Foley that he mixed among the Fenian soldiers as one of their number from 1864 to the end of February last, a period exceeding a year. I need hardly remind the court that nothing was so calculated to spread and extend Fenianism as the influence of example,

20. Larcom Papers, National Library of Ireland, 7702.

especially example of a soldier whose appearance, demeanour, and intelligence were all calculated to inspire confidence in the minds of the ignorant and unwary. The court will perceive that I am of the latter class. The continued presence of Private Foley at Fenian meetings attracted many to the Fenian ranks who would otherwise have kept clear. He is a tall, handsome, well made, strong and active man of good manners, respectful but not fawning. He is just the man of whom it might be truly said to the hesitating Fenian recruit, you are sure of success and reward when we have Foley'.²¹

While this defence paints a word-picture of Patrick Foley, it did not avail Private Donohue. He too was found guilty.

On 20 August, Private William Foley appeared before the court to face two charges as follows:

- (I) That of having come to the knowledge of an intended mutiny on 27 January last and failed to communicate same to his commanding officer.
- (II) that of having harboured Privates Hogan and Wilson, deserters from the 5th Dragoon Guards.

William Foley pleaded not guilty. Again, Patrick Foley was the chief prosecution witness and swore that William Foley had attended Fenian meetings including one at Curran's public house on 17 January when an American officer had briefed those present on the intended role of cavalry. The C.O. of the 5th Dragoon Guards appeared as a character witness for William Foley and testified that the accused had had a very good character in the regiment with seven years of exemplary service. William was found guilty and sentenced to seven years' penal servitude.²²

The key role of Patrick Foley also emerges in reports made to Sir George Brown which, as noted above, Sir George chose to ignore. On 5 April 1865, Colonel Calthorpe, c/o of the 5th Dragoons wrote to Sir George as follows:

'This morning, Capt. Hampton reported to me that Troop Serg. Major Crofts came and told him Private Patrick Foley (5 D.G.) was ready to give important information about Montague and other soldiers being in league with the Fenian Society, that Montague has for some time been trying to persuade soldiers to join the Fenian Brotherhood and take the Oath and that he, Foley took it some four months ago, partly at the instigation of Montague, but also because he was talked into it by a civilian known as the Pagan. He first visited a Fenian place of meeting in a public house on Cork Hill close to the Castle. The Pagan used often to be up at the Royal Barracks to see Montague and others. Montague told Foley he had induced many men of the 5 D.G. to become Fenians and that he (Foley) now believed that there were upwards of 100 in the Regt. The Society will only take Irishmen but do not care what religion they are of, though most are naturally R. Catholic. Private Patrick Foley bears a good character, is in possession of 1 good conduct badge; has 5 years and 5 months' service and is 30 years of age'.²³

21. Ibid., 7708.

22. Ibid., 7708.

23. Report from Col. Calthorpe to Sir George Brown, Strathnairn Papers 42826.

The Aftermath

In the aftermath of the trials, both William and Patrick Foley suffered for their involvement in Fenianism.

Patrick Foley soon found that as an informer he was no longer welcome among his comrades in the 5th Dragoon Guards. Nor was he welcome in any other unit in the British Army. However, he was still of some use to the British. Late in 1866, Colonel Fielding was transferred to England to help combat Fenianism there. By this time, Foley was in constant danger of assassination by Fenians in Ireland but Fielding decided that he might be of use in England. Foley was directed to travel to Liverpool and to join the Fenians there, even though he had already applied for a discharge. Fielding's attitude to informers can be best summed up in a letter he addressed to Lord Naas, then Chief Secretary for Ireland.

I have written privately to the Assistant Adjutant-General at Headquarters to keep back the discharge of these men so that I may still have some hold on them. I should feel obliged by your writing to the War Office urging upon them the necessity of dealing most liberally with all my informers, and suggesting that before definitely deciding on the sums to be given to each individual, some of us should be consulted ... as it must be most obvious that no one could better judge the best reward for each individual, than those who know their habits and tastes as intimately as I do'.²⁴

By December 1866, Fielding must have decided that he had no further use for Patrick Foley for he recommended that he be discharged with a pension, a lump sum and a free passage to any of the colonies. Foley had expressed a preference for a Civil Service job in England but despite an ability to read and write that he had proclaimed at the trials, he was deemed insufficiently qualified to be awarded a clerkship. At some stage he emigrated to America and descended into a life of misery and vagrancy. There is only one further recorded incident in his life. John Boyle O'Reilly escaped from captivity in 1869 and after making his way to America became the editor of the *Boston Globe*. Sometime in 1872 or 1873, a starving Patrick Foley entered his office and begged for money. It was perhaps typical of O'Reilly that he did indeed assist him, giving him money and paying his train fare to the West. Thereafter Patrick Foley vanishes into oblivion.²⁵

The suffering of William Foley was more systematic. Like the rest of the convicted soldier-Fenians who had received more than 2 years' penal servitude, it began for him on Monday afternoon, 3 September 1866. The Garrison of the Royal Barracks was paraded and in front of the assembled troops the seventeen condemned had their sentences read out and confirmed and their uniforms stripped from them. Then dressed in convict's dress, they were lead away to Mountjoy Prison to begin their sentence. Six of the seventeen were from the 5th Dragoon Guards – Devoy's crack Fenian regiment. Seven of the seventeen were also deserters. To identify this group and to remind them forever of their crime, the capital letter 'D' was engraved on their chests. This was done by cutting with an awl and making the scar indelible with Indian ink.

24. Mayo Papers, National Library of Ireland, MS 11188.

25. Francis G. McManamin. *The American Years of John Boyle O'Reilly* (New York, 1976).

By the 1860s, Great Britain had only one penal colony left in use. This was the Fremantle Convict Establishment in the remote colony of Western Australia. However, the cost of shipping convicts and of maintaining the penal establishment coupled with continual pressure from anti-transportation groups, prompted the Government to announce that transportation would cease in 1868. The decision was announced in 1865 and confirmed in 1867 when it was declared that there would be one final transport of 280 male convicts. This last batch included 45 Fenian civilians and the 17 soldier-Fenians. According to regulations, the soldier-Fenians should not have been subject to transportation but the army authorities were determined that an example should be made. In October 1867, the Fenians were taken from Dartmoor, Millbank and Pentonville and with the other prisoners loaded on board the prison-ship *Huguomont*. The soldier-Fenians were classed as criminals and confined with the ordinary convicts. The other Fenians had separate quarters. However, all were allowed to mingle at exercise on deck and there William Foley would have met his fellow Waterfordman Denis Cashman.

On 12 October, the *Huguomont* sailed for Fremantle. In 1890, Denis Cashman recalled the voyage:

‘A three months voyage on board a British convict ship to an Irish political prisoner is an indescribable horror. It is utterly monotonous, and is only varied occasionally by hearing the cat on a convict’s back, the funeral service now and again, followed with a splash and the fins of a shark or two darting after the prize; the constant rattling of chains on limbs and hands of the unfortunate convicts’.²⁶

Conditions do not appear to have been as bad as Cashman remembered. Only two convicts were flogged – neither of them Fenians – and none of the Fenians were put in chains. Only one, William Foley, was subject to disciplinary procedures and he was confined to a punishment cell below decks for a number of days. But Cashman rightly identified monotony as the main enemy. However, at least he was able to keep a diary and to edit a prison journal called the ‘Wild Goose’ that the political prisoners kept – an unusual start to his later career as a journalist. The Fenians also passed the time hatching a variety of plans to seize the ship but none of them came to fruition. For William Foley and his fellow soldier-Fenians in the more confined spaces below deck the monotony must have been soul destroying.

On 9 January 1868, the *Huguomont* cast anchor off Fremantle and the following morning they disembarked. After two days’ rest, they commenced road-work on the outskirts of Fremantle, breaking stones under the burning heat of the Australian sun where Summer temperatures could exceed 40°C. Even here the authorities differentiated between the ordinary Fenians and their soldier comrades. The former were kept together in a separate work-party while, in the words of the Governor, Hampton:

‘The peculiar aggravated nature of the treason of the military Fenians, and the risk of such men combining together for evil purposes, induced me to disperse them as widely as possible throughout the colony, not sending more than one or two of them to the same station’.²⁷

26. D. Cashman, John Boyle O’Reilly (an obituary), *Boston Herald*, 24 August 1890.

27. Quoted in K. Amos. *The Fenians in Australia, 1865-1880*. Kensington, NSW, 1988, p. 125.

Thus, derived of even the simple pleasure of their comrades, the soldier-Fenians were put to work with murderers, rapists and thieves at the back-breaking task of roadbuilding at the outstations. Denis Cashman was one of the luckier Fenian prisoners. He was retained at the main prison and given clerical work as assistant to the clerk of works.

Though sentenced to penal servitude in far-off Australia, the Fenian prisoners were not forgotten at home. This awareness was heightened when news of the daring escape of John Boyle O'Reilly in February 1869 reached Ireland. In 1868, a well supported amnesty movement was formed. This movement soon achieved a major success. In December 1868, the Conservative Government of Disraeli fell from office. One of Gladstone's first acts on becoming Prime Minister was to announce the release of 49 Fenian prisoners, 15 from English prisons and 34 from Fremantle.²⁸ However, the Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, the Duke of Cambridge, was determined that the soldier-Fenians would serve their sentences in full and none were included in the amnesty. Further releases of the Fenians followed. Denis Cashman was among those who benefitted from the release programme and having made his way to Melbourne along with 14 companions, he sailed for San Francisco on 21 October 1870.²⁹

By 1871 all of the Fenian prisoners, except the soldiers, had been pardoned. The amnesty movement faded away and it must have seemed to the small number of military convicts that they had been forgotten. Some attempted escape but unsuccessfully. Those with shorter sentences were released on 'ticket-of-leave' as their terms expired. The ticket-of-leave convict could live and seek employment outside the penal settlement but had to carry his ticket at all times. He also had to observe a 10.00 p.m. curfew, report regularly to the magistrate and seek the latter's permission for any change of residence or employment. Moreover, his ticket could be revoked at any time by a magistrate for any misconduct.

William Foley was among the first to receive his ticket-of-leave. He worked as a labourer in the colony but, like many ex-convicts, he found it hard to adjust to life in the colony. Moreover, he was hampered by a bad heart condition, a result of his penal servitude. Foley does, however, appear to have kept out of trouble with the law.

By 1876, only the seven soldier-Fenians who had received life sentences were still in prison. Their anguish was summed up by one of them, Martin Hogan, in a letter to an old friend Peter Curran, in whose public house in Dublin he had conspired with his fellow soldiers:

'My Dear Friend,

In order that you may recollect who it is that addresses you, you will remember the night of the 17th January, 1866, some of the Fifth Dragoon Guards being in the old house in Clare Lane with John Devoy and Captain McCafferty. I am one of that unfortunate band and am now under sentence of life penal servitude in one of the darkest corners of the earth, and as far as we

28. Ibid. p. 145.

29. Ibid. p. 185.

can learn from any small news that chances to reach us, we appear to be forgotten, with no prospect before us but to be left in hopeless slavery to the tender mercies of the Norman wolf.

But, my dear friend, it is not my hard fate I deplore, for I willingly bear it for the cause of dear old Ireland, but I must feel sad at the thought of being forgotten and neglected by those more fortunate companions in enterprise who have succeeded in eluding the grasp of the oppressor'.³⁰

Martin Hogan and his companions had not been completely forgotten. John Devoy and O'Donovan Rossa had been busy raising funds and planning a rescue.^{31/32} The leader they chose for the rescue expedition was John Breslin. It was Breslin who had masterminded the rescue of James Stephens from Richmond prison in Dublin and it was to him that Devoy entrusted the task. Breslin left New York on 19 July 1875 and arrived in Fremantle on 16 November posing as a wealthy visiting speculator. To make contact with the prisoners, he needed a trusty intermediary who would have free access to the prison. He found such a man in William Foley. During the next three weeks, Foley set up a series of meetings between Breslin and the prisoners. In January 1876, Breslin arranged passage to America for Foley, who would be at serious risk should his role be discovered and also in very poor health. On 16 January, his last service for the cause of Ireland performed, he sailed for New York. On 18 August of the same year, when the *Catalpa* docked in New York with the rescued prisoners to a jubilant welcome, the first man that John Breslin went to visit was William Foley. The following month, he was admitted to St. Vincent's Hospital, New York, and there he died, on 11 November 1876, happy in the knowledge that all his comrades were now free.

Very little is known of the early lives of the two Foleys. An intensive search of the regimental records at the Public Record Office in Kew revealed no reference to either. Remarkably the attestation papers and the discharge papers of both are missing. Patrick Foley, a Protestant, was born in 1835 and enlisted in 1859. William Foley, born in 1836 of humble parents of the small farmer class' (as his obituary in the *Waterford Mail* recorded),³³ enlisted in the services of the East India Company in 1853. He served in the Bombay House Artillery during the Indian Mutiny. In 1859, he returned to Ireland but after a few months he enlisted again, this time in the 5th Dragoon Guards. Since both Foleys enlisted in 1859, it is possible that they were in the same intake of recruits. However, until their service records are found, it is not possible to confirm their place of birth and other personal details. Nevertheless John Devoy and all other contemporary writers consistently refer to them as Waterfordmen.

Thus, two Waterfordmen, soldier-Fenians, both of whom had taken two Oaths of Allegiance – one to Queen Victoria, the other to an Irish Republic. Each remained true to one, and suffered the consequences we have seen. The last words might best

30. Quoted by Devoy. *Gaelic American*, 23 July 1904.

31. Sean O Luing. *Fremantle Mission*. Tralee, 1965.

32. John Denvir. *The Rescue of the Military Fenians*. (Liverpool, 1882).

33. *Waterford Daily Mail*, 21 November 1876.

be left to John Devoy. William Foley he described as 'one of our best and most faithful Fenian men in the British Army'. To Patrick Foley he accorded an unwelcome distinction

'There were 8,000 sworn Fenians in the regiments stationed in Ireland at that time one, and only one, Patrick Foley, turned informer before being arrested'.³⁴

34. John Devoy. *Recollections of an Irish Rebel*. (New York, 1929), p. 184.

The Origin and Development of the Portlaw Cotton Industry 1825-1840

By Tom Hunt

Introduction

THIS essay deals with the development of the Portlaw cotton industry and the associated development of Portlaw as an industrial village, concentrating on the David Malcomson [1765-1844] era of the business. He was the founding father of what was to become a multinational, multi-faceted business empire¹ during the course of the nineteenth century. The Malcomsons were Quakers, members of a religious group, that played a disproportionate role in business in both northern and southern Ireland.²

The Clonmel Connection

David Malcomson was born in Lurgan on 7 February 1765 and arrived in Clonmel to work for his cousin Sarah Grubb of Anner Mills when she advertised in 1784 for "competent clerks to aid her in her administration of her late husband's business".³

The potential entrepreneur could hardly have been based in a more appropriate town to take advantage of the prevailing economic opportunities. Clonmel, located in the centre of a rich agricultural hinterland, with the river Suir navigable from Waterford, was ideally placed to take advantage of the growing demand for agricultural produce created by England's involvement in the Continental Wars. Over twenty corn mills existed in Clonmel and its environs at the beginning of the nineteenth century.⁴

Better still if that potential entrepreneur happened to be a Quaker. They formed the largest and most influential group to emerge in the flour milling sector in Clonmel in terms of capital provision and extent of operation. The decline of the

1. Cormac Ó Gráda, *Ireland – A New Economic History of Ireland 1780-1939* (Oxford 1995), pp. 278-9.
2. Ó Gráda, *Economic History*, p. 328.
3. Phyllis Miller, 'The Malcomsons of Waterford and Portlaw', *Journal of the Old Waterford Society*, 3, 1972, p. 127.
4. Patrick C. Power, *A History of County Tipperary*, p. 94.

textile industry saw Quaker resources and skills become increasingly diverted into milling. By 1791 they ran ten large concerns; five in Clonmel itself and five others in the immediate vicinity.⁵

On leaving or being dismissed from Anner Mills he became involved in whiskey distilling⁶ and in 1790 became agent to John Bagwell, owner of the Marlfield mill [the largest in Clonmel] and one of the largest property owners in the town.⁷ In this capacity he was responsible for paying the South Tipperary Militia. This was an important alliance for the Bagwells, who were to become politically influential, taking control of the borough [and returning an MP] in 1800, as well as “the lordship, manor or reputed manor of the town of Clonmel and all rights, royalties and franchises appertaining thereto.”⁸ David Malcomson maintained the Bagwell connection for the rest of his life. On 12 December 1837 he wrote that “since 1790 he had never opposed the Bagwell interest in the town or county. For supporting his grandson at the last contested election I and my sons were grossly insulted and one of their lives, with my own, was much endangered.”⁹

A Quaker, living in Clonmel, an area with the most favourable geographical and economic circumstances, well connected politically and possessed of a sharp business brain, David Malcomson was in the next twenty years to earn a considerable fortune in the town. By 1800 he had inherited substantial wealth – inheriting £300 in legacies from his parents¹⁰ and his marriage to Mary Ffennel of Cahir Abbey, Cahir, gained him a dowry of £1,500.¹¹ Up to this point he was not an employer and did not become so until 1801, when he took control of a grain store on the quay in Clonmel.¹² The business quickly developed from this point and by 1818 he owned two corn mills and five stores. He built a property and stock portfolio of impressive magnitude, which can be seen from the figures extracted from his record books.¹³

Table 1: Increasing Wealth of David Malcomson 1809-1816

1809	1810	1811	1813	1816
£33888	£36667	£42272	£52565	£67434

The Malcomson firm specialised in flour milling with the amount of flour exported by the firm increasing from 8,062 cwts. in 1815 to 80,373 cwts. in 1829.¹⁴ Approximately 21% of the flour exports from Waterford port during this time consisted of Malcomson flour.

5. Thomas P. Power, *Land, Politics and Society in Eighteenth Century Tipperary* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 47-48.
6. William P. Burke, *The History of Clonmel* (Waterford, 1907), p. 132.
7. Miller, *Malcolmson*, p. 127.
8. Burke, *History of Clonmel*, p. 174.
9. National Library of Ireland, *Notes on the Malcomson Family*, P6935.
10. Margaret T. Fogarty, *The Malcomsons and the Economic Development of the Lower Suir Valley 1782-1877* (1968). Unpublished M. Sc. Thesis U.C.C.
11. Miller, *Malcolmson*, p. 128.
12. Fogarty, *Malcolmsons and Economic Development*, p. 20.
13. National Library of Ireland, *Notes on the Malcomson Family*, P6935.
14. *Minutes of evidence before the state of poor in Ireland – evidence of John Musgrave*, 6th April 1830, p. 47.

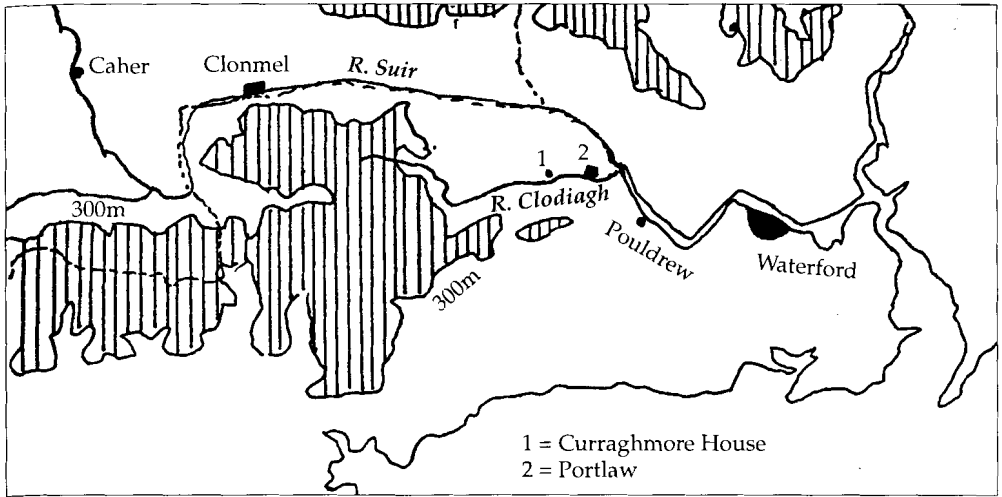


Figure 1. Places of importance to David Malcomson in Waterford and Tipperary.

Table 2: Grain exports from Waterport Port 1820-29¹⁵

	Wheat Brls	M'son Wheat	% total M'son	Flour Cwts.	M'son Flour	% total M'son
1820	261773	2,415	0.9	127,583	16,229	13
1821	279,605	10,369	3.7	184,590	32,146	17
1822	215,114	1,468	0.7	256,844	46,082	18
1823	103,730			206,054	61,886	30
1824	162,036	10		285,235	52,841	18.5
1825	102,406			259,811	70,432	27
1826	113,189	2,378	2	199,080	48,326	24
1827	202,522	1,193		337,858	48,326	14
1828	131,341	1,633		344,844	82,140	24
1829	101,150	20		347,667	80,373	23

David Malcomson's first milling venture in East Waterford began in 1824 when he took control of the Pouldrew [Figure 1] iron and bolting mill, formerly owned by the Wyse family.¹⁶ This location offered a far greater fall of water than Clonmel [20 feet/6 feet] and was of course much closer to Waterford city.

15. P. Solar, *The Agricultural Trade of the Port of Waterford 1809-1909*, in Nolan & Power (eds.), *Waterford - History and Society* (Dublin, 1992), p. 511: Malcomson figures from Musgrave.
 16. Rev. R. H. Ryland, *The History, Topography and Antiquities of the County and City of Waterford* (London, 1824), p. 270.

Diversification in Portlaw

The notion of extending the business to cotton manufacturing was inspired by the visit of a Liverpool Quaker, James Cropper, to Ireland in 1824. Cropper was a shipping agent and cotton importer, who was a founder director of the Liverpool-Manchester Railway and who had also invested heavily in the New York State canal system. He believed that the key to relieving poverty and distress in Ireland lay in the provision of employment through the setting up of cotton factories which would have the advantage of a cheap water power supply and cheap labour. The market for Irish cotton produce was to be found in India and China he argued.¹⁷ Cropper visited Clonmel on 13th December 1824 and addressed a meeting there that was attended by David and Joseph Malcomson. Cropper's visit coincided with a time when David Malcomson was beginning to express concern at the effects of what he perceived to be the forthcoming repeal of the Corn Laws. In a letter of April 18th 1825 to Richard Ussher he wrote:

We fear that we are on the eve of such a change in the Corn Laws as will be very injurious to this company. Canadian wheat is to be admitted at a duty of 5/= and of course we apprehend a large quantity from the States will be smuggled in as such.

Foreign wheat is likely to be admitted at low duty. It is clear that for every barrel of foreign corn imported into England she wants so much less from Ireland. If we cannot give 20/= per barrel for wheat how can the banks be paid.¹⁸

This letter was written six days after he had leased land at Portlaw for the erection of the cotton factory and in it he expresses his hopes and fears for the venture.

We consider the attempt a very serious matter, all about us being strangers to the business. If we are able to succeed we will, we expect, lay the foundation for employing many thousands of the people of the country. If we fail we must submit to a serious loss but which we expect to be able to bear up against.

The site chosen for the factory location was situated on the edge of the greatest landed estate in County Waterford, that of Lord Waterford at Curraghmore, valued in 1850 at £22,099, with Curraghmore House the most valuable house in the county at £210.¹⁹

The land, consisting of 4 acres 3 roods 17 perches, was leased on 12th April 1825 from John Thomas Medlycott the elder and the Reverend John Thomas Medlycott the younger for a period of 999 years, at an annual rent of 15 pounds, payable twice yearly, on March 25th and September 29th. The leased lands were located at

17. K. Charlton, 'The State of Ireland in the 1820's – James Cropper's Plan', *IHS*, XVII, 1971, pp. 320-329.
18. Letter of David Malcomson to Richard Ussher, 18th April, 1825. Copy in Library of Society of Friends, Dublin, Portfolio 76.
19. Lindsay Proudfoot, 'The Estate System in Mid Nineteenth-Century Waterford', *Waterford – History and Society*, p. 522.

Mayfield where a corn or flour mill had been located, which had been completely destroyed by fire in the year 1818. The lease included access to all head weirs, mill races, mill ponds and all waters, water courses and streams. A second area of land, 21 acres in extent, on which the Mayfield dwelling house was situated, was also leased.²⁰ This became the residence of David Malcomson's eldest son Joseph and the senior partner in the firm after the retirement of David in 1837. It has been suggested that David Malcomson became aware of the potential of the Portlaw site as he regularly journeyed between Clonmel and Pouldrew, noticing the waters of the River Clodiagh in crossing the bridge at Portlaw.²¹ Before deciding on Portlaw, serious consideration was given to establishing the factory on the river Nore, on land owned by the Earl of Stradbroke.²²

Factory Structure and Resource Management

Shortly after work commenced on the factory, objections were raised by Lord Waterford. George Meara, agent for Lord Waterford, wrote to David Malcomson "that the right of water etc. is not vested in the mills, and that the Marquis of Waterford has always had and still possesses full power to prostrate the weir." David Malcomson in his reply to his manager, Robert Shaw, pointed out that while Lord Waterford may have had originally a right to half the river, "but if he has lost the possession for 50 years and it has been enjoyed as a mill-right, no doubt, he cannot re-assume it, and I cannot suppose there is any deed or writing, or that he has exercised any right or ownership over the weir to preserve what might have been his right".²³ No further correspondence exists on the matter so it must have been arranged satisfactorily. Despite the dispute David Malcomson supported Lord George Beresford in the 1826 election when he lost his House of Commons seat to Villiers-Stuart.²⁴ He also accompanied Beresford in Clonmel on July 17th 1829 as he canvassed the town and neighbourhood with a view to being a candidate at the next election.²⁵

Further difficulties were experienced when the Malcomsons needed to increase their water power. An offer was made to rent 40 acres of the demesne of Lord Waterford for the construction of a mill pond. Not surprisingly this was rejected, as it would have seriously encroached on the demesne and would have involved the destruction of three to four hundred ancient and magnificent trees.²⁶ Steam power was introduced to compensate, but this was only used when the water power was deficient.²⁷ This need for steam power seriously increased the fixed expenses of the

20. Copy of Leases form, National Archives, 975/14/6.

21. E. H. Bennis, *Malcomson Brothers – Additional Reminiscences*, General File 396, Library Society of Friends.

22. *Waterford Mail*, 14th June, 1856.

23. Notes on the Malcomson Family, P6935.

24. *Waterford News*, 26th July, 1935.

25. Reported in the *Dublin Evening Packet*, July 1829 and quoted in *Waterford News*, 26th July, 1935.

26. *Dublin University Magazine*, January 1835.

27. *Minutes of evidence before the Committee on the State of the Poor in Ireland – evidence of John Musgrave*, 6th April, 1830, p. 73.

factory. Steam engines had to be imported from Britain and were difficult and expensive to transport. In 1825 it was believed that on average a water wheel cost about a third of a steam engine producing the same power.²⁸

Work on the erection of the southern end of the factory premises commenced in 1825 and when fully completed around 1837 measured 270 long, 47 feet wide and 72 feet high²⁹ – a six storey vertical integrated spinning mill.³⁰ The process of spinning the cotton yarn began on the sixth floor and was completed on the ground floor. Different construction techniques were used on both parts of the building. The south end had timber floors made from beams of imported memel pine. These beams measured 14" by 6" from front wall to back wall and were one piece 42' in length. The centre of each beam was supported by 8" diameter cast iron hollow columns. The timber planks were covered with timber planks 15" wide by 2.5" thick. The nails were hand made in Portlaw. The flat roof was similarly constructed and covered with layers of unbleached calico run through a tank of hot tar, which the family obtained as a by-product of their gas works, located on the canal bank. The factory walls were built using masonry laid in lime, sand and mortar. The floors in the north portion were constructed of brick arches, resting into saddle backed cast iron beams at 9'6" centres, resting into the front and back walls, and in the centre of the floor on 8" diameter hollow cast iron columns. Over the brick arches were placed 2" thick flag stones laid in lime mortar. This created a strong fire-proof building and iron doors were installed on each floor to act as fire guards in case of fire.³¹ The gas works provided light for the factory and in later years the town.

An elaborate water system was developed to serve the needs of the factory and this involved a great deal of construction work. The Mill Pond – 3.5 acres in extent – was the key to this system. This pond was fed by a culvert which ran underground from the sluice on the Clodiagh river at the north end of the factory. From the south-west end of the pond a second culvert fed water on to a wheel which provided power to drive the pumping plant [Figure 2]. The water from the Mill operations was drawn from the Filler Island which was connected to the pumping plant by a 10" cast iron pipe. The water was then pumped to a small pond – .5 acre in extent – situated in the grounds of Milford House [one of the residences of the Malcomsons], and a half mile distant from the plant. From here the water fell by gravitation to supply the needs of the entire factory and the fire hydrants located therein. This pond was roughly 153 feet over the level of the factory roof, so it had a magnificent fall.³²

The weir on the Clodiagh was strengthened and enlarged to meet the demands of the cotton factory. The main body of the river was diverted into the mill race to turn

28. H. Gribbon, *A History of Water Power in Ulster* (Newton Abbot, 1969), pp. 23-24.

29. Rev. P. Power, 'The Portlaw Cotton Factory', *Waterford and South East of Ireland Archaeological Society Journal* 13 (1910), p. 60.

30. D. Dickinson, 'Aspects of the Irish Cotton Industry' in L. M. Cullen (ed.), *Comparative Aspects of Scottish and Irish Social and Economic History 1660-1900* (Edinburgh, 1978), p. 107.

31. T. G. Kelly, Notes on the construction of old cotton factory at Portlaw; p. 20, contained in R. E. Jacog, *Quakers in Industry and Engineering in Ireland in the Nineteenth Century*. Paper held in Portlaw Branch Library.

32. Kelly, *Notes etc.*, p. 23.

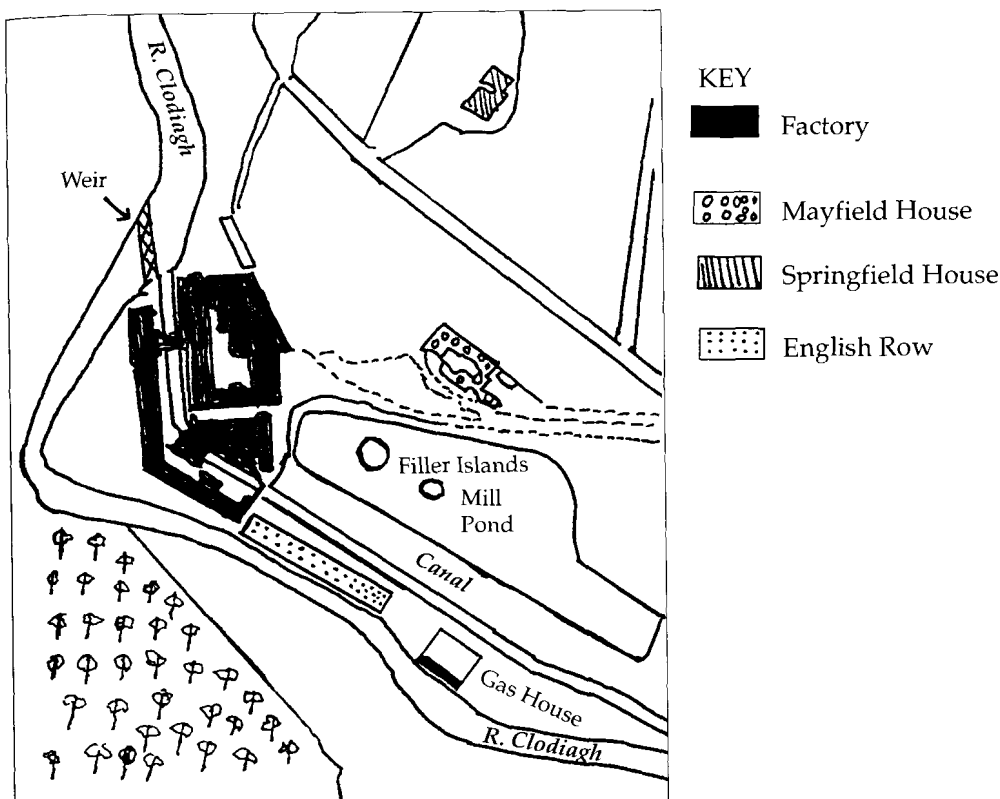


Figure 2. The Cotton Factory, River and Canal.

the water wheels which operated the spinning machinery. The two water wheels were massive constructions, measuring 100 foot each in circumference and possessing a combined face width of 40 feet.³³ A third smaller water wheel also was in use. The efficient operation of the factory required some aquatic engineering to be carried out. Just below the factory the Clodiagh River became very shallow and proved an obstacle to communication. This problem was overcome by constructing a canal – almost a half mile in length – linking the Clodiagh to the river Suir. By this means, using barges up to forty ton capacity,³⁴ coal, cotton, and machinery were brought directly into the factory, for the canal ran in underneath the receiving house and the manufactured goods were carried outwards. According to local Portlaw tradition, these barges, called ‘lighters’ were built in the saw mills that were attached to the factory. The raw bales of cotton were lifted from the barge to the mixing floors, where it was blended and other preliminary treatment carried out. It was then blown by pneumatic tubes to the various floors of the spinning rooms.³⁵

33. Power, *The Portlaw Cotton Factory*, p. 60.

34. Kelly, *Notes etc.*, p. 22.

35. Power, *The Portlaw Cotton Factory*, p. 61.

A foundry was constructed almost as soon as the factory and was vital to the efficient operation of the firm. Machine parts and spares were cast on the premises. Wooden models of all parts of the various machines and engines – ranging in size from the smallest bolt to the interior of a steam engine – were made and kept in the pattern room. A machine part, which broke or became faulty, was cast, tempered, polished, and fitted in the foundry; thus eliminating delay and expense.³⁶ The Portlaw factory developed a level of self sufficiency that was unknown in Ireland and unusual [and probably unnecessary] in Britain.

The initial outlay on the factory was £15,000, according to the *Clonmel Advertiser* of July 1825,³⁷ while David Malcomson estimated in 1828, in conversation with Richard Lalor Shiel, that he had spent upwards of £60,000 on the premises.³⁸

Job Creation

Production began in 1826, initially employing 250 people and by 1830 this number had increased to 600, many of whom were ejected cottiers, whose condition was far superior to what it had ever been previously. The factory inspectors' reports provide more reliable information on employment figures for the 1830's. In 1834, 734 were employed. This was mainly a young [69% under 21 years] and female [64%] workforce. By 1839 the numbers employed had increased to 1011, with three noticeable differences: the workforce was less youthful [52% under 21], with a majority of male workers [51%]. This was probably due to the fact that the factory was being extended at the time, especially as the number of male workers over 21 years exceed female workers by 96. A third difference was that children in the 12-13 age group were no longer employed. Fifty three had been employed in 1836 [28F/25M].

Table 3: Age and Sex Structure of the Portlaw workforce in 1836 and 1839

	Less than 21		More than 21		Total		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
1836	203	304	63	164	266	468	734 ³⁹
1839	205	280	311	215	516	495	1011 ⁴⁰

Management Structure and Workforce

Until 1 November 1837 the firm traded as David Malcomson and Sons [the sons being Robert, John, Joshua, David Jnr., Joseph, William and Thomas] and in that year David retired from the business, which continued as Malcomson Brothers. The original management team in Portlaw was made up of David Malcomson as head

36. *Waterford News*, August 16th, 1935.

37. Quoted in Fogarty, *Malcolmsons and Economic Development*, p. 38.

38. R. L. Sheil, *Sketches Legal and Political*, Vol. 1 (London, 1855), p. 358.

39. *Report of Factory Inspectors 1836* [138], XLV, p. 53.

40. *Report of Factory Inspectors 1839* [41], XLII, p. 5.

of the firm, Robert Shaw as general manager and a key member of the organisation, having control of the workshop and foundry; Robert as the cashier, and John who was responsible for the transport arrangements. Joshua managed the flour milling operations in Clonmel and had no involvement in Portlaw.⁴¹ Joseph emerged as the key figure after David's retirement.

Originally Englishmen were employed as factory operatives and instructors, but it was soon discovered that the native Irish, on being properly instructed, were just as expert.⁴² This decision to introduce English experts to train the local labour force was crucial to the firm's success, as David Malcomson was to experience great difficulty in maintaining a full labour force in his Clonmel hand loom firm, where the workers had no such training. The English workers were housed within the factory compound at English Row and in Green Island.

The Portlaw firm, as might be expected in the heart of rural Ireland, faced problems. Suspicion and prejudice were obstacles to progress. It was found almost impossible to convince the people that the loom was designed to render them comfortable and independent.⁴³ When Shiel visited Clonmel in 1828, he learned of the attack on three Englishmen in the Portlaw firm by a body of the peasantry. In a very wise political move, David Malcomson, inspired by his horror of having anything to do with the courts of justice and his conviction that the people would soon acquire a wiser and better way of thinking, decided not to prosecute. The wisdom of this decision was evident within a few years when the English began to intermarry with the families in the area and a perfectly good understanding prevailed.⁴⁴

In 1837 David Malcomson wrote of the families who came to Portlaw from Counties Galway and Clare and who were not inclined to work. However, the longer the hands remained in the employment the more contented and satisfied they became. Little is known of individual employees at this time, apart from the fact that Samuel Milliken was the head bleacher, and was described as a sober, well conducted, and orthodox Presbyterian from Belfast; and Joseph Turner, who was referred to as a traveller for the firm.⁴⁵

Working Conditions

The working regime was strict and hours of work long. It was the rule to dismiss any girl who was guilty of the slightest impropriety.⁴⁶ In Clonmel a six day week was worked by the all female work force, from seven in the morning to eight in the evening, with 45 minutes for breakfast at nine, and one hour for dinner at two. In summer work began at six and ended at seven.⁴⁷ Portlaw working hours are unlikely to have been any different. David Gaffney in carrying out his survey in

41. Notes on the Malcomson Family, p. 6935.

42. Shiel, *Sketches Legal and Political*, p. 358.

43. Mr. & Mrs. S. C. Hall, *Ireland: Its Scenery and Character* (London, 1841), vol. 1, p. 310.

44. Shiel, *Sketches Legal and Political*, p. 358.

45. Notes on Malcomson Family, p. 6935.

46. Shiel, *Sketches Legal and Political*, p. 358.

47. *Report of Assistant Commissioners on Hand Loom Weavers, 1840* [43], Vol. XXIII, p. 659.

December 1845 for Griffith's Valuation noted an 11.5 hour working day in Portlaw with Christmas Day and Good Friday as closed days, and the employees allowed eight half days in the year.⁴⁸

Wage rates, by the standard of the day, were quite good. In 1834 the wages of the boys and girls varied from 2/6 to 7/= a week; the adults worked at task work and might earn up to £1 per week.⁴⁹ This compares favourably with the general rate of wages of 8 pence per day for an agricultural labourer in 1830 – not necessarily paid in cash.⁵⁰ Information about wage rates are of little value unless evidence concerning the cost of living is taken into account. Emily Boyle has calculated the cost of maintaining a family of two adults and two children at a minimum standard of comfort in 1833 at 10 shillings and 8 pence.⁵¹ A Portlaw adult earning up to £1 per week would be enjoying a very comfortable living standard.

With a large workforce, a new town without banking facilities, and the nearest bank located eight miles away at Carrick-on-Suir, there was considerable risk and inconvenience attached to transporting the large amounts of coin and notes necessary to pay wages. Therefore, it was decided by the firm to introduce their own cardboard tokens as a means of payment. This scheme began in 1834, with the issue of 2/= tokens; 1/= tokens were introduced in 1838; and four pence tokens in 1839.⁵² When an individual's wages exceeded £1, he was paid by bank notes, unless tokens were requested. These tokens were accepted as "legal tender" within a thirty mile radius of Portlaw, such was the strength and reputation of the Malcomson firm.

Social Infrastructure

Quaker paternalism and moral strictness found expression in a number of developments within the factory which aimed at improving the quality of life of the workers, and at the same time improving efficiency.

Included in the factory complex was a news and reading room containing a variety of English and Irish newspapers including *Blackwoods*; the *New Monthly Magazine*; the *Kaleidoscope*; the *Dublin Literary Gazette*; *Farmer's Journal*; and fifty small volumes which were the gift of David Malcomson.⁵³ These newspapers were probably provided for the benefit of the English workers attached to the factory.

Far more important to the general workforce of the firm was the school which was established inside the factory walls. As early as 1827 all the children of the factory were instructed in reading, writing and the elements of arithmetic, and no sort of interference with their religion was attempted.⁵⁴ In 1837, 80 to 100 children

48. Quoted in Griffith's Valuation field book for Barony of Upperthird, parish of Clonegam, town of Portlaw, p. 2.

49. H. Inglis, *A journey through Ireland during spring, summer and autumn of 1834* (London 1835), vol. i, p. 69.

50. Evidence of Musgrave on State of Poor in Ireland, p. 74.

51. Emily Boyle, *The Economic Development of the Irish Linen Industry 1825-1913*. Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis QUB, p. 312.

52. Arthur E. J. Went, 'The Cardboard Tokens of Malcomson Brothers of Portlaw, Co. Waterford', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. 1, C 1968, pp. 75-78.

53. *Waterford Mirror*, 9 March 1830.

54. Shiel, *Sketches Legal and Political*, p. 358.

were being educated at the school.⁵⁵ According to Portlaw legend, the young workers attended school for three days and worked three days, receiving a full week's wages. The factory founder, David Malcomson, regretted his own limited education and the lack of opportunity of learning the history and occurrences of past ages.⁵⁶ His commitment to education is evident from his last will and testament, in which he made generous bequests of £100 to the Provincial Schools of Waterford and Lisburn, £50 to a similar school at Mountmellick, and £200 to the Brookfield Agricultural school at Ballinderry, Co. Antrim.⁵⁷

Health concerns led to the appointment of a resident surgeon to the factory. On 5 January 1835 Dr James Martin was appointed at an annual salary of £100 per annum, payable quarterly, with apartments.⁵⁸ He was informed of all those absent from work every morning and it was his duty to investigate all cases of illness and injury resulting from accidents within a very short time of their occurrence. Dr Martin kept an accurate bill of mortality for the years 1835-37 – a time when factory health was frequently discussed by Parliament – and for this period the deaths only amounted to 20 out of 688 employed; while in the case of 270 persons employed outdoors as labourers, masons, bleachers, carmen, carpenters, smiths and machine-makers, there were 69 deaths.⁵⁹

The Mayfield Provident Society was also set up about the same time. This provided a form of social insurance for the factory workers. All workers under the age of fifty were eligible to become members and on becoming ill were entitled to cash benefits ranging from 16/= to 2/= per week for the first four months of illness; and one half of the benefit thereafter on payment of a corresponding number of half pence per month. A member bringing illness or accident on himself due to drunkenness, debauchery, rioting, quarrelling, or playing at unlawful games on the Sabbath was ineligible for benefit. The widow or next of kin of a member was entitled to a payment equal to six weeks allowances.⁶⁰

On March 24th 1836 the Portlaw Tontine Club was formed with the dual purpose of promoting temperance and the habit of saving. Membership was open to shareholders who paid a weekly deposit of sixpence from the above date, with no limit placed on the amount of shares purchased. The society was controlled by a committee, elected every three months, and any person convicted of being intoxicated, or of giving or taking drink in a public house within four miles of his own residence forfeited his membership. At the end of the year, the entire capital with interest, was divided amongst the members. Thomas Swindlehurst, "King of the Reformed Drunkards" of Preston, and John Finch, a founder member of the Liverpool Temperance Society, addressed the members at different times. Finch made 24 new converts to teetotalism, bringing the total number to 87, and if moderate drinkers were included, 500 in total were pledged to temperance. In an

55. Lewis, *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Vol. II, p. 466.

56. Notes on the Malcomson Family, P6935.

57. Will of David Malcomson, National Archives, 975/14/1.

58. Notes on the Malcomson Family, p. 6935.

59. *Report of the Factory Inspectors 1842* [410], XXII, p. 14.

60. J. F. Maguire, *The Industrial Movement in Ireland as illustrated by the National Exhibition of 1852*, pp. 166-167.

effort to find alternative uses to the public house, coffee shops were introduced the following year.⁶¹ As a last resort some cotton workers, who were not convinced of the benefits of temperance, were sent to Cork by the factory manager in October 1839 for an “audience” and hopefully a miracle cure from Fr. Mathew.⁶² J. A. Stuart, factory inspector for the area, reported in October 1842 that the workers were adhering rigidly to the Temperance system of Fr Mathew.⁶³

Portlaw Village Development

The village of Portlaw underwent three distinct phases of development during the nineteenth century. The original pre-Malcomson village was located to the south of the River Clodiagh and was wholly in the parish of Guilcagh. This village was the property of Lord Waterford. Census returns for the period of its existence show that its population doubled between 1818 and 1831.

Table 4: Population of “old” Portlaw Village 1818-1831

	Male	Female	Families	Houses inhabited	Uninhabited	Building	Total Population
1818	292 ⁶⁴						
1821	195	200	80	71	1	0	395 ⁶⁵
1831	269	320	116	89	0	0	589 ⁶⁶

The houses in the village were probably small mud wall cabins with sod roofs that were typical of the area.⁶⁷ In 1836 the lease of the site of the village terminated and the proprietor levelled about eighty houses, an action that forced nearly all the families to cross the Clodiagh and take up residence in the relatively new industrial village of Portlaw. Only a few public buildings were left standing, including the Roman Catholic chapel; the Presbyterian Meeting House; Police Barracks; Dispensary; Petty Sessions House; a Hotel; and a Public House. The owner, in levelling these cottages, was controlling his liability to poor rate, for he was reducing the poorer population in his own poor law division.⁶⁸

The industrial village is located, north of the river Clodiagh, in the parish of Clonegam and its first census returns were made in 1831. In the next decade the population more than doubled, and Portlaw rose from being the seventh largest settlement to the third largest in Co. Waterford.

61. Colm Kerrigan, *Father Mathew and the Irish Temperance Movement 1838-1849* (Cork, 1992), pp. 32-33.
62. Kerrigan, *Father Mathew*, p. 55.
63. *Report of the Factory Inspectors 1842* [410], XXII, p. 14.
64. W. Vaughan and J. Fitzpatrick (eds.), *Irish Historical Statistics: Population* (Dublin, 1978), p. 34.
65. *Census of Population of Ireland 1821*, pp. 222-23.
66. *Census of Population of Ireland 1831*, p. 206.
67. See Sean and Sile Murphy, *The Comeraghs, “Famine, Eviction and Revolution”* (Waterford, 1996), p. 88.
68. Anon., *Portlaw Document*, p. 3. (Held in Portlaw Branch Library).

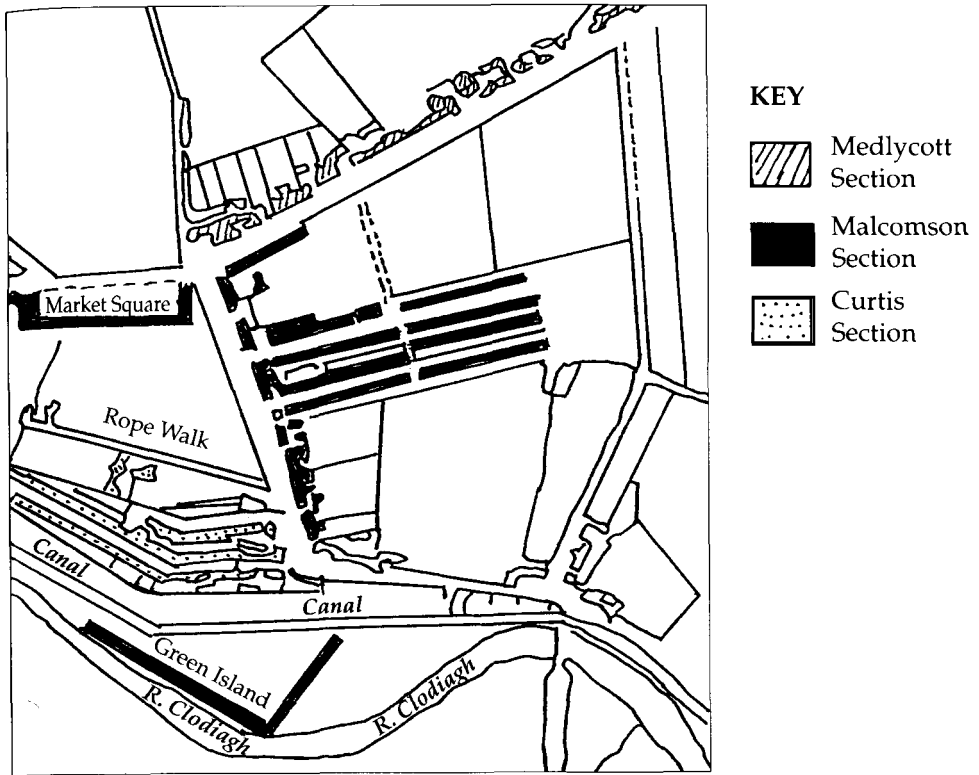


Figure 3. Portlaw in 1841 [Based on 1841 O.S. Map].

Table 5: Portlaw Population and Housing Situation, 1831-1841

	Male	Female	Families	Houses inhabited	Uninhabited Building	Total Pop.
1831						
Clonegam	490	539	165	110	7	1029
Guilcagh	269	320	116	89	0	0589
1831	759	859	281	199	7	1618 ⁶⁹
1841	1642	2005		458	8	3647 ⁷⁰

It was purpose built after 1825 to cater for the needs of the cotton factory workers and, as can be seen from the map, consisted mainly of sections developed by Richard Curtis, Rev. John Thomas Medlycott and the Malcomsons (Figure 3). By 1837, 465 houses had been built, many of which were well built, while the remaining small cottages were roofed with slates.⁷¹ Most of the Malcomson houses

69. *Census of Population of Ireland 1831*, p. 206.

70. *Census of Population of Ireland 1841*, pp. 248-49.

71. Lewis, *Topographical Directory*, p. 466.

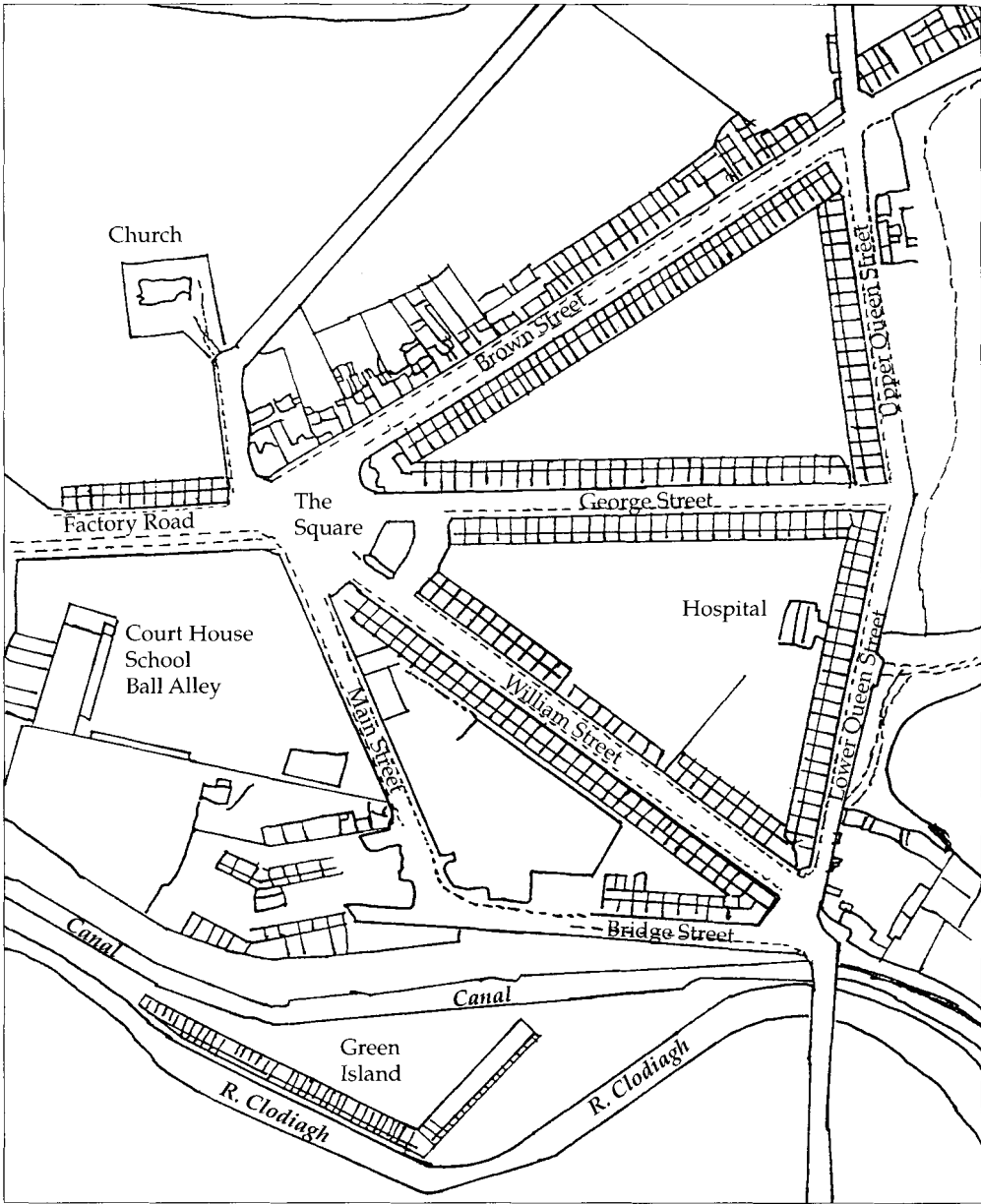


Figure 4. Portlaw in 1901 [Based on 1901 O.S. Map].

were single storey; with a front and back door; a small yard; and garden to the back.⁷² A water pump was located at the top and bottom of each street supplying fresh water from Milford. The company kept the houses in repair and in the 1830's the rents paid were some 30% lower than those paid to other owners for similar houses. In 1841 virtually all the rented houses in Portlaw were valued in the Poor Law valuation at a figure below what was being charged for their rent.⁷³ The prosperous character of Portlaw at this time is best illustrated by quoting a contemporary source, namely Mr and Mrs Hall, who felt that

the town and neighbourhood of Portlaw have of course shared the prosperity of the Malcomsons. The houses are clean and comfortable, the people are all decently dressed; there is an air of improvement in everything that pertains to them.⁷⁴

Less than six miles away Carrick-on-Suir presented a dismal appearance to Henry Inglis when he visited in 1834. He was "struck with its deserted fallen off appearance – with the number of houses and shops shut up, and windows broken – and with the very poor, ragged population – I had not visited any town in a poorer condition than this. I noticed amongst other indications of the small means of the lower classes, stalls set out with a miserable assortment of small bits of meat, the offal of pigs chiefly; and much of the meat was in a state unfit to be eaten."⁷⁵

The Malcomsons established a general store to supply the residents with clothes and groceries – a store that was also used by the local farmers and gentry. This store represented good value for money and in six years trading to 31/7/1841 it made a profit of £865.12.11 on a turnover of £20,925; less than 4%, a profit that could not be considered exorbitant.⁷⁶

The third phase of Portlaw's development took place during the 1860's when its present day configuration was developed. The quality of housing was improved. Most of the houses had four rooms each, having a fireplace and chimney with a small range in the kitchen; an oven; and a side tank with tap giving a constant supply of hot water.⁷⁷ As can be seen from the map [1901], it was redesigned as a planned village, based roughly on four triangles, with the apex of each triangle meeting at an open square, which opened on to a wide street leading into the factory compound [Figure 4]. This was achieved by clearing the central block of streets consisting of Mulgrave Street, Shamrock Street and Albert Street. Further exploration of this topic is outside the scope of this essay, but this is a phase of Portlaw's development that has been ignored by historians and geographers.

72. Kiely, *Notes etc.*, p. 26.

73. A. P. Williamson, *Planning and Perspectives*, 7, 1992: 'Quakers and the Irish Textile Industry', p. 311.

74. Hall, *Ireland*, p. 310.

75. H. Inglis, *Journey*, Vol. 1, pp. 72-74.

76. Desmond G. Neill, *Portlaw, A Nineteenth Century Quaker Enterprise Based on a Model Village*, p. 10.

77. Kiely, *Notes etc.*, p. 26.

Conclusion

This essay has been a basic introduction to the David Malcomson developed cotton manufacturing plant located in Portlaw, concentrating on its growth and development to 1840. The plant expanded in the 1840's and doubled its 1839 workforce. Portlaw became the headquarters of what was one of Ireland's first multi-national business empires, with massive steamship, shipbuilding, linen spinning, cotton spinning and weaving, coalmining, salmon fisheries and railway interests.

Charles Smith 1715-1762

Pioneer of Irish Topography

By William Fraher

Introduction

IN seventeenth-century Ireland, the study of antiquarian remains was linked with the study of natural history. The founding of the Dublin Philosophical Society in 1683 was an important catalyst in encouraging serious research. William Molyneux (1656-98) was a leading member and secretary of the Society, while Sir William Petty (1623-1687) was its first president. The society had tried to persuade Edward Lhuyd, keeper of Antiquities in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, to come to Ireland. Lhuyd did not take up their invitation but did visit Ireland at a later date, his drawing of Newgrange being published in 1726 by Thomas Molyneux. The Society was also interested in the Giant's Causeway and published an engraving of it by Edwin Sandys.¹

The Rev. Arthur Stanhope, Archdeacon of Lismore and later Dean of Waterford, compiled a description of County Waterford in the 1680s for William Molyneux's proposed *Natural History of Ireland*,² Molyneux having previously sent out questionnaires in May, 1682. However, Stanhope's replies were disappointing in their detail.

Sir Richard Cox (1650-1733) had already contributed an account of County Cork to William Molyneux in 1658. In 1687, he compiled another description of County Cork which also covered County Waterford and provides much more detail than Stanhope's.³ Molyneux, however, abandoned work on his *Natural History* in 1685.

Another member of the Society was George Berkeley (1685-1753), Bishop of Cloyne, a philosopher and traveller. Charles Smith in his *History of Cork* (1750) described him as having "successfully transplanted the polite arts ... to this northern climate".⁴ Berkeley and Thomas Molyneux (1661-1733) were members of the newly-founded Dublin Society in 1731. The society included most of the leading antiquarians and became an important promoter of agricultural and artistic education

1. Anne Crookshank and the Knight of Glin, *The Watercolours of Ireland 1600-1914* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1994), pp. 33-46.
2. Julian Walton, 'Two Descriptions of Co. Waterford in the 1680s', *Decies* 35 (1987), pp. 27-32.
3. Julian Walton, *Decies* 36 (1987), pp. 25-33.
4. Charles Smith, *The Antient & Present State of the Co & City of Cork* (Dublin, 1750), p. 139.

in eighteenth-century Ireland. Both the Dublin Society and the Dublin Philosophical Society encouraged and inspired the landed gentry to take an interest in their surroundings and to record items in a more scientific and professional manner.

The Physico-Historical Society

Before the foundation of the Physico-Historical Society, efforts had been made to collect material for a regional account of Ireland to be based on replies to questionnaires. The intention was to publish a book entitled *Hibernia – Ireland ancient and modern*. The list of questions was sent ‘to many curious and learned gentlemen in their several counties’. The organisers of the project made use of material gathered by William Molyneux fifty years earlier. The questionnaires included queries on many subjects including epidemical diseases, meteors, holy wells and petrifying springs, tides and currents, tempests and hurricanes, thunder and lightning, echoes, rivers, waterfalls, and the character of lakes.

In 1744, the project’s organisers published the first Irish county history – *The Antient & Present state of the County of Down* – which was edited by Walter Harris and Charles Smith. Its Down history contains a preface outlining a plan for a series of Irish county histories. Its editors were critical of the poor quality of the maps of Irish counties then available. It was thus decided to found a society to enable them to successfully publish the results of their research.

On 14 April 1744, about 20 people met in the Lord’s Committee Room in the Dublin Parliament House (now the Bank of Ireland) to found the Physico-Historical Society. The main purpose of the group was to publish surveys of all the Irish counties:

They do not doubt, if their Design be carried on with any Degree of publick Spirit, it will increase the Riches and Reputation of this country, and promote the noble Designs of the Dublin Society for the Improvement of our Husbandry, Trade and Manufacturers, by discovery and recommending new materials useful to these Purposes.

There were over 200 members in the society by April 1745 when the society had planned that within five years it would have published histories of all the Irish counties.

The Society was composed of members of the nobility, Fellows of Trinity College, the Dublin Society and representatives of a number of bishops.

In May 1744, the society placed the following advert in the newspapers:

The Physico-Historical Society of Ireland request the favour of all Gentlemen in the Several parts of the Kingdom to transmit to their Secretary for Leinster, James Ware Esq., at his House, Stephen’s Green, Dublin, an account of such manuscripts, rare printed Tracts, or Books, and natural curiosities relating to Ireland, as have or shall come to their knowledge’.

In April 1745, the society published 2,000 copies of a four-page pamphlet – *An Account of the rise & progress of the Physico-Historical Society*. This pamphlet gave details of the aims of the society and listed their achievements to date.⁵

5. L. Gordon Davies Herries, ‘The Physico-Historical Society of Ireland 1744-1752’, *Irish Geography*, 12 (1979), pp. 92-98.

Charles Smith (1715-1762)

We know very little about Charles Smith's family background. P. M. Egan, in his *Guide to Waterford* (1894) believed that the Smiths came to Waterford from Belfast.⁶ In support of his theory, he noted that a family named Smith settled in Waterford in 1746, having been given financial assistance from the Earl of Chesterfield to promote the linen industry in the city. Egan also noted that *Smith's History of Waterford* was dedicated to the Earl and in the book Smith makes particular reference to the promotion of the linen industry. However, Smith was practicing in Dungarvan some years before. In 1743, he attended to the wife of Benjamin Godkin, an episode he recalls in his *History of Waterford*.⁷ Smith was in Dungarvan in April 1740 when he examined an unusual rock in the harbour.⁸ Therefore, there is no definite evidence to link him with the family referred to by Egan. An article on the Quarry family of Johnstown House near Dungarvan was published in the *Journal of the Waterford & South East of Ireland Archaeological Society* and records the marriage of Mary Quarry and one Pierce Smith. The writer referred to this man as a 'near cousin of Dr. Smith, Historian of Co. Waterford'. Further research on this Pierce Smith might provide more information on Charles Smith and his family.⁹

Smith received his medical degree at Trinity College, Dublin, in 1738.¹⁰ The evidence indicates that it was in Dungarvan that Smith worked as an apothecary. Thomas Crofton Croker (1798-1854) met the Rev. R. H. Ryland in the early nineteenth century and the latter confirmed that Smith was based in Dungarvan.¹¹

The Physico-Historical Society's pamphlet published in 1745 referred to Smith as 'An ingenious gentleman' who had been travelling throughout County Waterford gathering information. Other members were also compiling information but Smith's researches were the only ones published.

The Antient & Present State of the County & City of Waterford (1746)

On 5 November 1744, the Physico-Historical Society gave Charles Smith 10 guineas towards his travelling expenses while collecting information for his *History of Waterford*.¹²

On 2 December 1745, the society passed the following resolution:

That the Thanks of this Society be given to Mr. Ch. Smith for his extraordinary Care, Expedition and Diligence in preparing his Account of the County of Waterford.

Smith's *History of Waterford* was published the following year and was laid out in a similar format to the Down survey.

6. P. M. Egan, *History Guide & Directory to the County & City of Waterford* (Kilkenny, 1895), pp. 265-268.
7. Charles Smith, *Antient & Present State of the County & City of Waterford* (Dublin, 1746), p. 315.
8. Smith, *Waterford*, p. 320.
9. G. O'C. Redmond, 'Notes on the western end of Co. Waterford', *Journal of the Waterford and South-East of Ireland Archaeological Society*, 1 (1894-5), p. 254.
10. Alfred Webb, *Compendium of Irish Biography* (Dublin, 1878).
11. M. J. Hurley, 'Charles Smith - Our County Historian & his Works', *Journal of the Waterford and South-East of Ireland Archaeological Society*, 1 (1894-5), pp. 44-47.
12. Herries Davies, op. cit.



C. SMITH, M.D.

This was the first book in which Smith is noted as the author. The book contained 380 pages including a subscribers list, three large plates showing panoramic views of Lismore, Dungarvan and Waterford City, one smaller plate and two maps of the county and city. It was printed by A. Reilly in Dublin and carried the imprimatur of the Physico-Historical Society:-

December 2 1745

At a meeting of the Physico-Historical Society, the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Meath in the chair, Mr. Charles Smith presented a Proposal for printing the antient and present State of the County and City of Waterford, the Work (having been read over by a committee of the Society) was approved of; and he was desired to proceed therein.

signed

James Ware, Sec. Imprimatur

Ed. Barry M.D., Vice President

The book was dedicated to Philip, Earl of Chesterfield, Lord Lieutenant and General Governor of Ireland and the president of the society.

In his introduction, Smith explains the aims of the society:

The Topography and Natural History of this kingdom are subjects which have yet been but slightly attempted and that in such a manner by foreign writers, as rather to cast odium on the country, than to give a just description of it. To remedy this evil, and to collect materials for a natural and civil history of the several counties of this kingdom, are the designs of the Society. As their labours tend to the making useful discoveries for the improvement of husbandry, trade and manufactures, which may in time employ our poor at home, and be an invitation to industrious foreigners to settle among us ...

Smith remarked on the amount of research and publications that had been compiled in England 'with considerable advantage to that kingdom', making particular reference to the works of Camden which were still highly regarded then and noted the lack of similar books relating to Ireland. He also put forward a case for the development of agriculture and the linen and fishing industries. 'The tract now offered to the publick is a specimen of what they intend to publish in like manner of other counties, provided the design meets with a favourable reception'.

Of his *History of Waterford*, Smith had the following comments:

The county of Waterford, at first glance, even to those who are best acquainted with it, seems to be but an indifferent subject either for a natural or civil history ... If gentlemen would make proper searches in their respective neighbourhoods into everything curious and transmit their remarks to the society, the natural history of this kingdom might be soon put into a proper light.

Included in Smith's *History of Waterford* was an important new map of the county dedicated to John, Earl of Grandison:

The map prefixed to this work will be found more accurate than any hitherto published of this county. The distances and bearings of places are as true as the doctrine of

THE
ANTIEN T and PRESENT
S T A T E
OF THE
COUNTY and CITY
OF
C O R K,

In FOUR BOOKS.

- I. Containing, the antient Names of the Territories and Inhabitants, with the Civil and Ecclesiastical Division thereof.
- II. The TOPOGRAPHY of the COUNTY and CITY of CORK.
- III. The CIVIL HISTORY of the COUNTY.
- IV. The NATURAL HISTORY of the same.

The whole ILLUSTRATED by REMARKS on the Baronies, Parishes, Towns, Villages, Seats, Mountains, Rivers, Medicinal Waters, Fossils, Animals and Vegetables; together with a new Hydrographical Description of the Sea Coasts.

To which are added,

Curious NOTES and OBSERVATIONS, relating to the erecting and improvement of several ARTS and MANUFACTURES, either neglected or ill prosecuted in this County.

EMBELLISHED with new and correct Maps of the COUNTY and CITY; Perspective Views of the chief Towns, and other Copper-Plates.

Published with the Approbation of the PHYSICO-HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

By CHARLES SMITH.

Æquum est enim meminisse & me, qui discernam hominem esse, et vos, qui Judicetis ut si probabilia dicentur, nihil ultra requiratis.
Cicero Univerf.

VOL. I.

DUBLIN: Printed by A. REILLY for the AUTHOR,
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The ANTIENT and PRESENT

S T A T E

OF THE

COUNTY and CITY

OF

WATERFORD.

Being a Natural, Civil, Ecclesiastical, Historical
and Topographical Description thereof.

ILLUSTRATED

By Remarks made on the Baronies, Parishes, Towns,
Villages, Mountains, Rivers, Medicinal Waters, Fossils,
Animals and Vegetables ; with some Hints relating to
Agriculture and other Useful Improvements. With several
NOTES and OBSERVATIONS.

TOGETHER WITH

New and correct Maps of the City and County ;
and embellished with Perspective Views of the City of
WATERFORD, and of the Towns of LISMORE and
DUNGARVAN.

Published with the Approbation of the PHYSICO-HISTORICAL
SOCIETY.

By CHARLES SMITH.

*Ut Potero Explicabo, nec tamen ut Pythius Apollo, certa ut
sint & fixa quæ dixero; sed ut homunculus probabilia con-
jecturâ sequens.* Cicero Tuscul. quæst. Lib. I.

D U B L I N :

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sellers, on *Cork-bill.* M, DCC, XLVI.

triangles, and the best information could direct me to put them. The seacoast is entirely new, as will be seen, by comparing this map with the *Atlas Maritimus* and Petty's surveys. Mr. Doyle's chart of *Tramore Bay and the harbour of Waterford*, being an exact survey done with great nicety, is reduced into this map. The harbour of *Dungarvan* is also reduced from an actual survey.

While Smith compiled much of the work, he does acknowledge the assistance of others, in particular 'a gentleman in Dublin, member of the Society, who is well skilled in the antiquities of the kingdom, and who has lately given the publick a proof of his learning that way.' *The Dictionary of National Biography* notes that 'it was said of [Smith] in the counties of which he was the historian, that his descriptions were regulated by the reception he was given in the houses he visited'.¹³ This suggests that he was exaggerated in his praise of those estates where he was hospitably entertained and gave only the briefest mention to those who weren't very receptive to him. There is no evidence to support the view that Smith's descriptions of estates like Curraghmore or Dromana are exaggerated and therefore not to be trusted. For instance, one might have thought that Smith's description of the gardens at Dromana was embellished, but the recent discovery of an early eighteenth-century map of the house and gardens shows an impressive sequence of formal gardens, wilderness and ornamental garden buildings.

In January 1749, the Society paid Smith £30 'to enable him to continue his Collections for the natural and civil history of the several Counties of this Kingdom and to engage to continue the said Encouragement yearly; or to increase it, if their fund will hereafter admit of a larger Stipend'.

On 6 November 1749, Smith submitted his manuscript for County Cork: 'Mr Smith presented to the Board a large and accurate map of the County of Cork in two sheets, laid down by himself from an actual survey'.¹⁴

In 1750, Smith's *History of Cork* was published in two volumes by A. Reilly of Dublin. His *History of Kerry* was published independently six years later following the disbandment of the Physico-Historical Society. In the same year, Smith, along with other eminent physicians, founded the Medical Philosophical Society in Dublin. Smith was appointed secretary and was the author of a *Discourse* detailing the objectives of the society.¹⁵

Smith left Dungarvan in 1760 possibly to go to Bristol where, according to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, he died in 1762. The *Dublin Magazine* carried an obituary notice of Smith's death in July that year.

In 1774, a Dublin printer named W. Wilson printed second editions of Smith's histories of Waterford, Cork and Kerry. These editions also appear with the imprint:- 'Dublin printed and sold in London by W. Cater, Holborn.'

The introduction to the second edition noted:

Another impression of the History of Waterford being sought for, the publisher by the indulgence of a friend, to whom the late Dr. Smith bequeathed all his manuscripts, is

13. *Dictionary of National Biography*.

14. Herries Davies, op. cit.

15. Eoin O'Brien, Anne Crookshank, Gordon Wolstenholme, *A Portrait of Irish Medicine* (1983), pp. 3, 4, 110, 261.

enabled to present the public with a correct and much improved edition ... and embellished with some new plates. (The extra plate depicts a monument in Christchurch cathedral Waterford)

Unfortunately, we don't know the identity of the friend to whom Smith left his manuscripts, or what became of them.

Conclusion: Smith's nineteenth-century successors

There was no history of County Waterford published after Smith's until 1824 when the Rev. R. H. Ryland produced his *History of Waterford City and County*. Ryland's original plan was to reprint Smith's book but he decided that it was 'so replete with extraneous matter which the taste and learning of the period at which he wrote required him to introduce, it was judged more advisable to write a new work, taking freely from all the publications which would add interest.'

The next county history did not appear until 1895 when P. M. Egan published his *History Guide & Directory to the County & City of Waterford*. He had the following to say of Smith's work:

Smith's histories are considered books of reference, but, as they are of a decidedly prejudiced strain upon question of race or religion, they cannot be considered as impartial commentaries ... Considering the facilities of the age in which the author wrote, Smith's histories must be ever looked upon as respectable and able literary performances.

Egan also noted that Smith's *Waterford* 'bore no pretensions to style or literary merit. The book is presently considered scarce and sells from £1 to £2 per copy'.

In his article on Smith for the *Journal of the Waterford and South-East of Ireland Archaeological Society* in 1895, M. J. Hurley concluded with the following comments:

No matter what shortcomings may have been rendered apparent by the light of the present day, we have every reason to be grateful to the pioneer of Irish topography. Indeed his volumes will compare favourably with more pretentious contributions to county history which have appeared in recent years. The shortcomings in the text are in many cases more than compensated for by the manner in which the plates and maps are drawn and engraved.

While Smith's publications may have their faults, all his critics seem to agree that he was the first to produce detailed accounts of the topography and history of Irish counties and deserves to be remembered for so doing. 1996 marked the 250th anniversary of the publication of his history of Waterford. This event was marked by the Waterford Historical and Archaeological Society with a talk on Smith and by Dungarvan Museum Society with an exhibition in Dungarvan Museum.

Appendix: Anthony Chearnley (fl. 1740-1785), Smith's illustrator

One of the most attractive features of Smith's histories are the engraved maps and plates. The panoramic views of Dungarvan, Lismore and other localities are important visual documents of how these places looked in the mid-eighteenth

century. The engravings are based on drawings by Anthony Chearnley (fl. 1740-1785), who, like Smith, is an important figure in eighteenth-century Irish topographical studies. As well as sketching many areas himself, he was also one of the first to build up a collection of Irish views. He would probably be forgotten by now if he hadn't been included in Strickland's *Dictionary of Irish Artists*.¹⁶ A more detailed account of Chearnley and his work now follows.

According to documents in the Chearnley Papers,¹⁷ Anthony Chearnley's family was from Killgrogy, County Tipperary. His grandfather, Anthony Chearnley, leased lands at Coolnetallagh (194 acres), Coolnetallagh east (74 acres) and the western part of Carriginroe for 999 years at £60 per annum from Samuel Jervois on 12 May 1707.

Anthony had a son Samuel who married Mary, daughter of Phil Moore. She was born in Bandon Bridge on 25 October 1681 and died on 31 August 1741. They had two sons: Samuel (1717-1746), an artist, and Anthony, who lived at Burnt Court, parish of Shanrahan, County Tipperary. At Burnt Court, Anthony built himself a new house within the bawn of an old ruined fortified house. This house appears in a plate in Grose's *Antiquities of Ireland*.

By 1750, Anthony was living near Cappoquin. Two years later, he was married in Lismore to Ann, daughter of the Rev. Isaac Gervais, Dean of Tuam. In their marriage settlement of 15 November 1752, Anthony is described as being of 'Burnt Court in the County of Tipperary'. Ann died in 1755 having had one child, a son named Thomas.

In July 1756, Anthony married Janet, daughter and co-heir of Richard Musgrave of Salterbridge near Cappoquin. Their marriage settlement (dated 9 July 1756) gives Anthony's address as Springfield, County Waterford. This house was situated near Affane House in the townland of Springfield. Richard Musgrave was to pay £800 to Anthony Chearnley, but £400 of this had to be paid to John Damer of Shronehill, County Tipperary to repay debts arising from Chearnley's property in Tipperary. In the Chearnley papers for 1709, Richard Musgrave is described as 'late of Harrfield, parish of Addingham, Co of Yorke, but now of Lismore'. He had two sons, Richard of Salterbridge and Christopher of Tourin. The Musgraves acquired the Salterbridge estate from Matthew Hales of Cappoquin in the mid-eighteenth century.¹⁸

Anthony and Janet had seven sons – Samuel, Richard, Anthony, Christopher, Joseph, John, Christopher, and three daughters – Janet, Mary and another whose name is not recorded. Anthony made his will in 1785 and it was proved in March 1787, indicating that he died sometime between those two years.

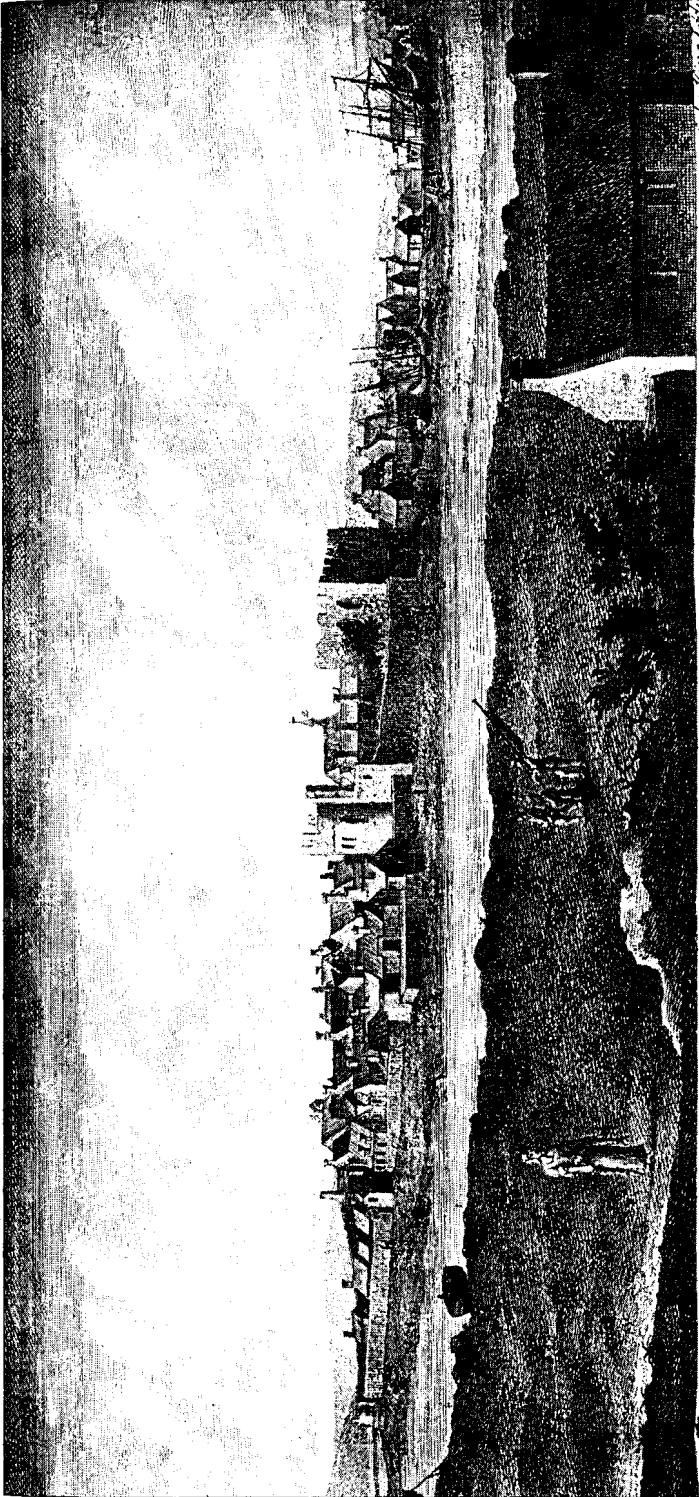
Francis Grose in his *Antiquities of Ireland* (1791-95) refers to Chearnley and includes two plates (after drawings by Chearnley) of his house at Burnt Court built within the bawn of the earlier house. Grose noted that Burnt Court was:

"a fine specimen of those castellated houses so common in the turbulent periods of Irish history. It was surrounded by a high and stony wall, which enclosed a bawn of considerable extent, within which a dwelling house was built by Mr. Anthony Chearnley, who deserves to be remembered for cultivating the art of design, when few practiced it, in 1740, in Ireland. It was he who made this drawing of Burnt Court, and also those in Smith's History of Waterford. He had a large collection of views from

16. Walter Strickland, *Dictionary of Irish Artists*, 2 Vols. (Dublin, 1913), p. 169.

17. Chearnley Papers, Waterford County Library, Lismore.

18. Burke's *Landed Gentry* (1912).



of IRELAND and Speaker of the Hon. ^{ble} House of Commons
is Incribed by his most Obed. Humble Serv^t. Ch. Smith.

Printed by
7. Bowdo's Warehouse
i. the Abbey
9. the Quay.

Dungarvan.

ancient remains, which probably lie in private hands, and well deserve to be made public".¹⁹

The views of Burnt Court were taken from originals by Chearnley then in the collection of Right Hon. William Conyngham.

Crookshank and the Knight of Glin have suggested that Chearnley may have been influenced by the Dutch artist William Van der Hagen (fl. 1721-45), who painted the well-known panoramic view of Waterford.

One of Chearnley's earliest pictures is a view of Ardfinnan castle dated 1744 copied by the antiquary Austin Cooper in 1785.²⁰

In 1746, his drawings were used to illustrate Charles Smith's *History of Waterford*. The panoramic views of Lismore, Dungarvan and Waterford are signed *Antho Chearnley gen: Burnt Court Delint* and were engraved by Giles King (fl. 1732-1746). The originals of these engravings are now lost but they were probably executed in watercolour or possibly in oils. An oil painting which is attributed to Chearnley depicts a view of Kinsale and was used as the basis for the plate in Smith's *History of Cork*. This competent picture shows some well-dressed ladies and gentlemen strolling around while Chearnley is shown seated sketching the town. This is the only depiction of the artist and, unfortunately, it is difficult to see as this area of the painting is very dark.²¹

According to records in the Irish Architectural Archive,²² Chearnley was amongst those who submitted plans in 1768 for a competition to design the new Royal Exchange in Dublin. This suggests that he may have been an amateur architect and may have designed other buildings.

Chearnley may not have been an artist of top calibre but the overall quality of his work was good and he was recording towns and cities in a way which wasn't being done by other artists at the time. It is regrettable that only a few of his works are known to us – no more than a dozen pictures. Chearnley's work should be re-evaluated and recognised as an important contribution to Irish topographical drawing of the eighteenth century.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following for their assistance in the preparation of this article: Mr Donald Brady, Waterford County Librarian (for allowing me to examine the Chearnley papers); Mr Nigel de la Poer; the Irish Architectural Archive; and Mr Julian Walton.

19. Francis Grose, *The Antiquities of Ireland*, 2 Vols. (London, 1791), Vol. 2, p. 58.

20. Crookshank/Knight of Glin, *The Watercolours of Ireland*, pp. 36, 37.

21. Crookshank/Knight of Glin, *The Painters of Ireland* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1978), p. 66.

22. Irish Architectural Archive, Index of Irish Artists.

Protestants and the 1826 Waterford County Election

By Eugene Broderick

Introduction

IN the 1826 Waterford county election Henry Villiers Stuart, a supporter of Catholic rights, defeated Lord George Beresford, an opponent of them, by 1,357 votes to 527.¹ It is the best remembered contest of that year's general election, principally due to the involvement of Thomas Wyse, the future historian of the Emancipation struggle, and because it served as an example and an inspiration to other constituencies. This was not the first time that Catholics had influenced the outcome of an election in Waterford,² but it was the first major public confrontation between them and the chief representative of the local Protestant ascendancy in an electoral contest in the county. This essay is concerned with the attitudes and responses of local Protestants in the months preceding the 1826 election, one of the most significant elections in modern Irish history.

Background

The Catholic Question (i.e., the right of Catholics to be admitted to offices of state and membership of parliament from which they were disqualified on religious grounds) was a major issue in the politics of Ireland and England in the first three decades of the nineteenth century. It led to the collapse of ministries³ and

1. Also returned was Richard Power, whose effective political patron was the Duke of Devonshire. In Waterford City there was no contest, and Sir John Newport was returned once again.
2. In 1807 Catholics influenced the outcome of the election in Waterford City. The two candidates were Sir John Newport, a supporter of Catholic relief and Cornelius Bolton. The latter was defeated and the Catholic vote proved decisive to the outcome. See Thomas P. Power, 'Electoral Politics in Waterford City, 1692-1832', in William Nolan and Thomas P. Power (eds.), *Waterford: History and Society* (Dublin, 1992), pp. 253-4; and Julian Walton, 'The Boltons of County Waterford', *The Irish Genealogist*, 1988, pp. 416-7.
3. William Pitt was forced to resign in 1801 when King George III rejected proposals for Catholic relief. Lord Grenville's 'Ministry of All the Talents' was forced from office in 1806 by the same monarch when ministers insisted that they should be free to express their opinions on the Catholic Question.

parliament devoted much time to the matter. In the years from 1805 to 1823 only six passed without a debate on Emancipation,⁴ which was voted on sixteen times.⁵ In the House of Commons, all but three of the thirteen pro-Catholic resolutions were defeated.

That so much parliamentary time was spent on the Catholic Question was due to the organised endeavours of aristocratic and middle class Catholics who were seeking the repeal of the remaining penal laws. By the early 1820s, the leader of the Catholic Committee was Daniel O'Connell. Since 1792, Catholics had been permitted to practise as barristers. A first generation of lawyers – among them O'Connell – had become active in the debates and affairs of those championing Catholic rights. He achieved pre-eminence by his opposition to the so-called 'veto'. In 1808, in the course of a speech in parliament in favour of Emancipation, Henry Grattan proposed that all future nominations to vacant Catholic bishoprics in England and Ireland would require the approval of the king. This proposal was made to allay the anti-Catholic sentiments of opponents of Emancipation. O'Connell persuaded the Catholic Committee to reject the suggestion and his stance was supported by the Irish hierarchy. In 1813 a Catholic relief bill introduced by Grattan contained in its final form provisions whereby the government would exercise some form of control over episcopal appointments. Again O'Connell led the successful resistance to the veto, and again, the Irish bishops supported his position.⁶ The veto controversy was to have a profound impact on the direction of Irish politics and Irish nationalism. The issues involved were not theological. The British government was asking for no more than any other European state at the time,⁷ and the papacy was happy to acquiesce in the demand.⁸ Rather the issue became politicised. As the controversy unfolded, the independence of Irish episcopal appointments was identified with Irish national consciousness.⁹ O'Connell declared that it was

too gross and glaring a presumption in an administration, avowing its abhorrence for everything Irish, to expect to be allowed to interfere with the religious discipline of the Irish Catholic Church.¹⁰

The freedom of the Irish Catholic Church was being equated effectively with the preservation of Irish nationality.¹¹

4. These years were: 1806, 1807, 1809, 1814, 1818, and 1820. See James Reynolds, *The Catholic Emancipation Crisis in Ireland, 1823-1829* (New Haven, 1954), p. 87.
5. S.J. Connolly, 'The Catholic Question', in W.E. Vaughan (ed.), *A New History of Ireland V: Ireland under the Union I, 1801-70* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 24-73.
6. Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh, *Ireland before the Famine* (Dublin, 1972), pp. 54-5.
7. D. George Boyce, *Nationalism in Ireland* (Second Edition, London, 1991), p. 137.
8. In 1813, during the debate on the relief bill introduced by Grattan, English Catholics favourable to the idea of a veto referred the matter to Rome for its adjudication. In February 1814, a papal rescript was issued accepting the veto.
9. Brian Girvin, 'Making Nations: O'Connell, Religion and the Creation of Political Identity', in Maurice R. O'Connell (ed.), *Daniel O'Connell: Political Pioneer* (Dublin, 1991), p. 27.
10. Boyce, *Nationalism in Ireland*, p. 137.
11. *Ibid.*

Moreover, the words Catholic and Irish became interchangeable as the controversy raged. A resolution of the laity passed on 2 March 1810 asserted:

... as Irishmen and Catholics we never can consent to any dominion or control whatsoever over the appointment of our Prelates on the part of the Crown or the servants of the Crown.¹²

O'Connell tended to make this equation between Catholicism and Irishness as he became more involved in politics, and as he became increasingly politically dominant this equation was consolidated and popularised. Thus, the whole veto controversy had the effect of fusing Catholicism and nationalism,¹³ which had enormous implications for Irish Protestantism.

In April 1823 O'Connell founded the Catholic Association to campaign for Emancipation.¹⁴ Early in 1824, he proposed the admission of associate members at a subscription of a penny a month in order to popularise the Association. This decision transformed it into a mass movement, which "became a colossus of democratic power unprecedented in the annals of political organisation in the British Isles".¹⁵ O'Connell had long favoured a more aggressive and radical approach to the issue of Emancipation. He was now in a position to realise his ideas.

Liberal Protestants

It was a feature of Irish politics in this period that liberal Protestants were to be found supporting the Emancipation cause. They were influenced by the belief that Catholics should enjoy the full benefits of the constitution as they (Protestants) did. It was believed that Emancipation was the surest way to preserve the constitution as it gave Catholics a stake in its operation. For many liberal Protestants, there was the conviction that Catholic inequality was the source of much of the disaffection in Ireland – a disaffection which manifested itself in disorder and violence. In essence, the Catholic Question was linked in an inextricable fashion with the state of Ireland.¹⁶

These liberal Protestants were part of the religious and social class which wielded political power and influence. The granting of Emancipation was perceived by them, and even by Catholics, as the great potential achievement of liberal Protestantism.¹⁷ Liberal Protestants were willing to use their relatively advantaged position in the social establishment to persuade the political elite to confer equality on Catholics. However, from their privileged position many liberal Protestants saw themselves as participants in a campaign to secure equality for Catholics as a concession, not as a right. Such feelings of superiority were the legacy of ascendancy rule. The comment of Thomas Wyse, the first historian of the Catholic Association, is particularly apt:

12. Girvin, 'Making Nations', p. 27.

13. See Girvin, 'Making Nations', p. 33; Boyce, *Nationalism in Ireland*, p. 137.

14. See Fergus O'Ferrall, *Catholic Emancipation: Daniel O'Connell and the Birth of Irish Democracy 1820-30* (Dublin, 1985), pp. 30-35.

15. Reynolds, *Catholic Emancipation Crisis*, p. 18.

16. O'Ferrall, *Catholic Emancipation*, pp. 21-2.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 115-6.

The first Provincial meeting [of the Catholic Association] was held at Limerick. It was distinguished by a very numerous body of Protestant guests, who contributed their efforts, and rather too visibly their patronage, to the exertions of their Catholic countrymen. It is difficult to throw off the semblances of superiority and assumption, even when much of the reality has passed away. They condescended; they advised; they encouraged; they approved of: they had the appearance of masters who had consented generously to the manumission of their slaves.¹⁸

Protestant opposition to Emancipation

Liberal Protestants confronted the vehement opposition of many of their co-religionists to the whole notion of Emancipation. It was the firm conviction of such opponents that the Protestant constitution was the product of a long struggle with popery.¹⁹ They would have agreed with the scholar who has described Protestantism as that form of Christianity that expresses itself on the soil of civilisation which has emancipated itself from the authority of the Roman Catholic Church.²⁰ Opponents of Emancipation argued that the whole body politic of the United Kingdom had been hallowed by its Protestantism.²¹ Therefore, the inclusion of Catholics as equals in the constitutional life of the kingdom was inconsistent with the principles of the Protestant Establishment and the Glorious Revolution of 1689.

However, its defenders argued that one of the leading virtues of the Protestant constitution was its tolerance. Subjects could only be denied full civil rights for reasons of state and such reasons precluded Catholics from participating fully in the constitutional life of the kingdom. Nevertheless, this same constitution conferred on Catholics the maximum degree of toleration consistent with its own preservation. Anything more than toleration would be to abandon the Protestant foundation of the constitution.²²

Such abstract constitutional considerations would not have been uppermost in the minds of many Protestants in their opposition to Emancipation. The fact is that they regarded themselves as superior to Catholics. This feeling of superiority, as was noted above, was the product of years of Protestant ascendancy rule. The legal disabilities which discriminated against Catholics contributed to, and re-enforced, this attitude. Laws which relegated Catholics to second-class status in certain important areas of life conferred a corresponding importance on Protestants who, irrespective of social position, enjoyed rights of citizenship denied to Catholics. The Protestant minority, rich and poor alike, belonged to a section of society which was not subject to specific legal restrictions. A poor Protestant could not aspire to becoming an M.P. but at least, by virtue of his Protestantism, he had the sense of

18. Thomas Wyse, *Historical Sketch of the Late Catholic Association of Ireland*, 2 vols. (London, 1829), vol. 1, p. 241.
19. G.F.A. Best, 'The Protestant Constitution and its Supporters, 1800-1829', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Fifth Series, vol. 8, 1958, p. 107.
20. Wilhelm Pauck, 'The Nature of Protestantism', *Church History*, vol. 6, 1937, p. 5.
21. Best, 'Protestant Constitution and its Supporters', p. 111.
22. *Ibid.*

being, in the eyes of the law, better than a Catholic. In small rural communities, where Protestants were surrounded by a huge Catholic majority, these feelings of superiority were accentuated, thus helping to compensate for a paucity of numbers. Though few, they were legally more important than their Catholic neighbours. The concession of Emancipation, with its consequent equalisation of Catholics and Protestants as citizens, was opposed because such a move would undermine an important foundation of Protestant superiority. Quite simply, Emancipation was opposed because "it came to symbolise all the aspirations of the Irish Catholics in social and political terms".²³

In evidence to parliamentary select committees in 1825 Colonel W. S. Currey, the agent of the Duke of Devonshire's Waterford estate, gave a valuable insight into the workings of the Protestant mind. He told a House of Lords committee that Catholics in every class of society felt inferior to Protestants. He continued:

I am perfectly convinced that there is a feeling generally of superiority among the Protestants; that even the lower orders of Protestants consider themselves as superior to Catholics.²⁴

In evidence to a House of Commons committee he observed upon the reaction of Protestants in Waterford to being presented with a petition in support of Emancipation:

... in offering that petition to individual Protestants, to give them an opportunity of signing it, there was a feeling betrayed by many, that shewed very strongly the jealousy which they felt in bringing the Catholics upon a footing with themselves.²⁵

He also commented on what was described as the cringing manner displayed by Catholics towards Protestants²⁶ and their habit of going upon their knees to supplicate a favour and to give thanks for it afterwards.²⁷

23. Kevin B. Nowlan, 'O'Connell and Irish Nationalism', in Kevin B. Nowlan and Maurice R. O'Connell (eds.), *Daniel O'Connell: Portrait of a Radical* (Belfast, 1984), p. 11.

24. *Minutes of Evidence Taken before the Select Committee of the House of Lords Appointed to Inquire into the State of Ireland 1825*, p. 187.

25. *Third Report: The Select Committee appointed to inquire into the State of Ireland 1825*, p. 298.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 301.

27. *Ibid.* It is worth recording the evidence of the Hon. Denis Browne, M.P., given also in 1825 to a parliamentary select committee. These observations relate to Mayo and Galway, but are of interest and relevant to the situation prevailing in Waterford.

Is it a common notion among them that they (Roman Catholics) exist in a condition of inferiority with respect to other classes of people? No manner of doubt they do. I observe always in speaking of a Protestant of their own sort or condition they say Mr. Parnell or anything else.

How do they call those of their own religion? By their own name; a gentleman of their own religion they call him by his Christian name or his surname, but a Protestant is Mister always.

Is the Protestant of precisely the same class, whom they call Mister, as the Catholic whom they call by his common appellation? Exactly of the same class as themselves, peasantry of the country, living in thatched homes (*First Report on the State of Ireland 1825*, p. 29.).

Liberal Protestants in Waterford

In Waterford there was considerable local liberal Protestant support for Catholic Emancipation²⁸ and it was to play a crucial role in the 1826 election. On 12 February 1825 a meeting of Protestant inhabitants of the county was held at Dungarvan, pursuant to a requisition signed by twelve Protestant magistrates, for the purpose of petitioning parliament in favour of Catholic demands.²⁹ The petition which was agreed upon declared that its supporters' objective was "to terminate those dissensions arising from a difference of Religion, which have long disturbed and retarded the improvement of our country". It was argued that until the disabilities against Catholics were removed there was no hope for security of property in Ireland and that such a removal would promote this security and the prosperity of the country.³¹

On 26 July 1825 a public dinner was given to the twelve Protestant magistrates by Catholics in Waterford expressing approbation of their actions. Wyse has described this occasion as "the seed of all the after events".³¹ At this dinner, it was indicated that Henry Villiers Stuart, a liberal Protestant, would be a candidate in the forthcoming general election against Lord George Beresford. This event marked an alliance between liberal Protestants and the well-to-do Catholics in the county.³²

Henry Villiers Stuart and Lord George Beresford

Villiers Stuart was the grandson of the last Earl of Grandison who had vast estates in Waterford and in 1824, Stuart, having attained his majority, decided to make Dromana his principal residence. By August of that year he was on the Grand Jury³³ and in December he joined the Catholic Association.³⁴ He was the ideal liberal Protestant candidate. It must be remembered that Emancipation was regarded as the great potential achievement of liberal Protestantism. It was this view which prompted the dinner to the magistrates. Wyse commented that "the gratitude of the Catholics was as usual exaggerated".³⁵ If this were the case, the exaggeration was the result of a belief that liberal Protestants were essential allies in the struggle.

By August 1825 Stuart had commenced an active canvass.³⁶ On 8 August he issued his election address. Described by Wyse as being "in the ordinary style",³⁷ it

28. O'Ferrall, *Catholic Emancipation*, p. 122. Waterford in 1826 was described as 'a liberal Protestant area' by Professor D. George Boyce in *Nineteenth Century Ireland: The Search for Stability* (Dublin, 1990), p. 45.
29. For the text of the requisition see *Waterford Mirror*, 5 Feb. 1825. The twelve magistrates were: Richard Power, M.P.; Richard Musgrave; W.S. Currey; Francis Drew; W.J. Homan; John Nugent Humble; Robert Power; Richard Ussher; G.H. Jackson; Pierce Hely; John Musgrave; and Henry Amyas Bushe.
30. *Waterford Mirror*, 16 Feb. 1825. Protestant inhabitants of the city also produced a pro-Emancipation petition. See *Waterford Mirror*, 23 Feb. 1825.
31. Wyse, *Historical Sketch*, p. 263.
32. O'Ferrall, *Catholic Emancipation*, pp. 115-6.
33. *Ibid.*, pp. 121-2; James Auchmuty, *Sir Thomas Wyse 1791-1862* (London, 1939), p. 83.
34. *Waterford Mail*, 11 December 1824.
35. Wyse, *Historical Sketch*, p. 263.
36. *Waterford Mail*, 10 Aug. 1825.
37. Wyse, *Historical Sketch*, p. 268.

was the classic political testament of a liberal Protestant. He asserted his belief that Catholic Emancipation would uphold and strengthen the British constitution and declared his belief in the justice of Catholic claims. He continued:

Ireland can never prosper nor enjoy tranquillity, nor will the security of England rest on a solid basis while seven millions of inhabitants are kept on account of tenets purely religious, in a state of political servitude.³⁸

If Stuart was the embodiment of the ideal liberal candidate, Lord George Beresford represented Protestant conservatism on the issue of Emancipation. He was a member of an ascendancy family remarkable for its resistance to Catholic claims.³⁹ The Beresfords have been described thus:

During the period of the Protestant Ascendancy the Beresford family had become the real rulers of the Irish kingdom. Their influence permeated every government department, their relatives occupied every key position. Whether in church or state their dependents were found to be battenning upon the Irish people in every walk of life. Their tentacles, like those of a gigantic octopus, were everywhere, and embraced everyone and everything, and in no county was this more true than in that of Waterford.⁴⁰

It was claimed in 1812 that one quarter of the places in the kingdom were filled by their connections.⁴¹ The family had been enriched by the Church of Ireland to such an extent that one historian described the Church as the Beresfords' "patrimony".⁴² At one stage in the early nineteenth century three members of the family were bishops – in Tuam, Cork, and Kilmore.⁴³ The County Waterford seat had been held since 1806 by Lord George Beresford and there had been no electoral contest in the seven subsequent general elections. Prior to 1806, the seat had been held for forty-five years by the Right Honourable John Beresford.⁴⁴ Accordingly, to their opponents the Beresfords were the quintessential representatives of an unredeemed Protestant ascendancy and a challenge to them was a challenge to those who believed in a Protestant hegemony. In Wyse's words: "In striking at the Beresfords, they struck at the very heart of the Ascendancy".⁴⁵

The dissolution of parliament was widely expected in October of 1825. Had there been an election at this time, Henry Villiers Stuart would have won as he had ensured a majority of votes on the registry books.⁴⁶ Such an election would have been a traditional contest:

It would have been one of the ordinary aristocratic elections; the House of Dromana would have vanquished in fair feudal lists the House of

38. *Waterford Mail*, 10 Aug. 1825.

39. Oliver MacDonagh, *The Hereditary Bondsman: Daniel O'Connell* (London, 1988), p. 223.

40. Auchmuty, *Wyse*, p. 81.

41. Donal McCartney, 'Electoral Politics in Waterford in the Early 19th Century', *Decies* 20, p. 41.

42. James Godkin, *The Religious History of Ireland* (London, 1873), p. 241.

43. Donal McCartney, *The Dawning of Democracy: Ireland 1800-1870* (Dublin, 1987), p. 28.

44. McCartney, 'Electoral Politics', p. 40.

45. Wyse, *Historical Sketch*, p. 287.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 269.

Curraghmore; and there the matter, without any lesson to the country, would have quietly ended.⁴⁷

This was the type of contest anticipated by liberal Protestants. The election, however, did not take place until July 1826. It became, therefore, a protracted affair. The contest was to be fought in a manner that unleashed forces which Protestant supporters of Stuart would have regarded as inconceivable in 1825. The Waterford election of 1826 opened a Pandora's box for Waterford, and for Irish Protestantism.

'Other tactics'

The delayed dissolution meant that the Beresfords had time to rally their electoral forces. By the time parliament was finally dissolved, the Beresfords enjoyed a majority over Stuart of more than six hundred votes.⁴⁸ The supporters of Stuart found it necessary "to recur to other tactics".⁴⁹ The new strategy, devised largely by Wyse, entailed an appeal to the predominantly Catholic electorate to vote for Stuart, even against the will of their landlords. In the words of Wyse:

Nothing could be done without an incursion into the enemy's territory. The people at last had become important, and all future appeals were made to the people.⁵⁰

This strategy was novel and potentially explosive.

It was novel because the electorate was composed for the greater part of those possessing the forty shilling freehold franchise, which had been granted to Catholics under the 1793 Relief Act. According to a parliamentary return of 1825, there were 2,119 forty shilling freeholders entitled to vote.⁵¹ These predominantly Catholic voters were regarded as the political property of their landlords. In fact, the majority of freehold registrations were managed by landlords.⁵² Colonel Currey stated in 1825 that he knew of no instance in which such freeholders registered themselves.⁵³ They were seen as having no independence.⁵⁴ Wyse, describing the freeholders of Waterford county on the eve of the election, wrote:

[They] still *belonged* to their respective landlords, and did not even conceive the idea of acting, out of the range of this dependence, for themselves. They were, as far as their franchise or its exercise was concerned, mere serfs.⁵⁵

Yet these were voters on which the Catholic Association in Waterford depended for victory.

47. Ibid, pp. 269-70.

48. Ibid., p. 274.

49. Ibid., p. 270.

50. Ibid., p. 270.

51. *Returns of the Number of Freeholders in Each County in Ireland* (H.C.), 1825.

52. P.J. Jupp, 'Irish Parliamentary Elections and the Influence of the Catholic Vote, 1801-20', *Historical Journal*, X, 2 (1967), p. 184.

53. *Third Report: State of Ireland*, p. 303.

54. Ó Tuathaigh, *Ireland before the Famine*, p. 69.

55. Wyse, *Historical Sketch*, p. 267. The italics are those of Wyse.

The strategy was explosive because in the 1820s sectarianism was on the increase in Ireland.⁵⁶ The activities of evangelical proselytisers⁵⁷ and the campaign for Emancipation had poisoned the relations between Catholics and Protestants. The evangelicals and the emancipationists did not, however, create this sectarian climate; they simply brought to the surface tensions which had existed at a popular level, especially among the poorer elements of society. The Gaelic poetry of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, which belonged to a rich and vital popular oral tradition, was blistering in its sectarian tone.⁵⁸ The defeat of “*bodaigh an Bhearla*” (the louts of England) and “*sliocht Luther is Calvin*” (the followers of Luther and Calvin) was a common theme.⁵⁹ Popular ballads in English echoed the sectarian themes of the Gaelic tradition.⁶⁰

There was a pronounced note of millenarianism in the Catholic peasant culture of the 1820s. Millenarian beliefs, holding out the prospect of a divinely ordained overthrow of the existing social and political order, emerge in societies where peasants are excluded from the political apparatus of the state and flourish where repeated defeats are a feature of the historical experience.⁶¹ A basic theme of deliverance endured in the popular political attitudes in the decades before the Famine.⁶² Religion was a prime element in the conceptualisation of role-reversal,⁶³ the Catholic peasants believing, according to an observer in 1824, that “they are oppressed by those who profess the religion of the Established Church and that there is likely to be soon a great change on that subject”.⁶⁴

56. For a discussion of the growth of sectarianism in the early 1820s, see S.J. Connolly, ‘Mass Politics and Sectarian Conflict’, in Vaughan (ed.), *A New History of Ireland*, pp. 74-84. See also Connolly’s excellent account in *Religion and Society in Nineteenth Century Ireland* (Dundalk, 1985), pp. 18-30.
57. See Desmond Bowen, *The Protestant Crusade in Ireland 1800-70* (Dublin, 1978). For a brief account of evangelical activities in Waterford during the 1820s see Eugene Broderick, ‘The Famine and Religious Controversy in Waterford, 1847-1850’, *Decies* 51, pp. 11-13.
58. Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh, ‘The folk Hero and Tradition’, in Donal McCartney (ed.), *The World of Daniel O’Connell* (Dublin and Cork, 1980), p. 39.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 40. Ó Tuathaigh quotes a ballad of the period called the “Banished Defender”, which includes the following verses:
- Poor Catholics of Erin give ear unto these lines I write,
I’ve fled to the mountains, for ever I am banished quite,
For the sake of my religion I was forced to leave my native home,
I’ve been a bold defender and a member of the Church of Rome.
- The reason that they banished me, the truth I mean to tell you here,
Because I was a head leader of Father Murphy’s shelmaliars,
And for being a Roman Catholic I was trampled by Harry’s breed,
For fighting in defence of my God, my country and my creed.
61. James S. Donnelly, ‘Pastorini and Captain Rock: Millenarianism and Sectarianism in the Rockite Movement of 1821-4’, in Samuel Clark and James S. Donnelly (eds.), *Irish Peasants: Violence and Political Unrest 1780-1914* (Wisconsin, 1983), p. 104.
62. Ó Tuathaigh, *Ireland before the Famine*, p. 66.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
64. Quoted in Donnelly, ‘Pastorini and Captain Rock’, p. 125. The extent of the belief in millenarianism is evident from the credence given to the so called prophecies of Pastorini. These derived from an analysis of the Book of the Apocalypse first published in 1771 by an English cleric, Charles Walmesley. The violent overthrow of the Protestant Church in 1825 was foretold.

An appreciation of the existence of this millennial strand in popular culture in the 1820s enables one understand more fully the significance of Emancipation for the peasants. Its achievement became for many the pursuit of the millennium. Bishop Doyle observed in 1825 that he knew of “no class or description of people in Ireland who do not feel a very strong interest in the repeal of the penal laws; those, perhaps, who understand the nature of them least are most anxious for their repeal”.⁶⁵ Colonel Currey made a similar observation when he stated that interest in Emancipation extended through every order of society.⁶⁶ If Emancipation was the objective of millennial hopes, O’Connell became invested in the popular imagination with the mantle of deliverer.

No wonder that ballad writers reflected popular beliefs in picturing O’Connell as the culmination of millennial anti-Protestant prophecies, as, in very truth, a second Moses leading his people into the promised land of prosperity and domination.⁶⁷

The Ireland of millennial expectations was clearly Catholic, to be achieved at the expense of Protestants, who were to be extirpated from their position of ascendancy. In the popular consciousness there was no place for Protestants in the new Ireland. The Catholic faith was identified with the true Irish – Protestantism was the religion of the usurpers. By popularising the cause of Emancipation, the trend towards identifying Catholic and Irish was re-enforced. O’Connell had played a major part in this initial identification during the Veto Crisis; his style of campaign for equality had the effect of consolidating it. Moreover, popularisation of the cause was certain to unleash sectarian forces given the nature of Irish society. Any appeal to popular opinion was calculated to open floodgates of sectarianism. Such is what happened in Waterford in 1826.

Allegations of bigotry

The Waterford election was deeply sectarian.⁶⁸ One observer wrote:

The constant cry is ‘High for Stuart. Down with Lord George. Down with the Protestants’. This is to be heard in every part of the city and I may say all through the county.⁶⁹

The Beresfords were characterised by their opponents as intolerant Protestant bigots. Catholics were told that Lord George was “the enemy of your religion, the libeller of your pious clergy”.⁷⁰ Moreover,

his ancestors it was who polluted and profaned your altars; they who unroofed the sacred temples of your faith, converted them into ruins, and

65. *Second Report: The Select Committee Appointed to Inquire into the State of Ireland 1825*, p. 125.

66. *Third Report: State of Ireland*, p. 298.

67. K. Theodore Hoppen, *Ireland Since 1800: Conflict and Conformity* (London, 1989), p. 19.

68. For an account of the sectarian character of the election see O’Ferrall, *Catholic Emancipation*, pp. 130-33; Hoppen, *Ireland Since 1800*, p. 17; Reynolds, *Catholic Emancipation Crisis*, p. 96.

69. Quoted in Reynolds, *Catholic Emancipation Crisis*, p. 96.

70. *Waterford Chronicle*, 1 July 1826.

made it a crime punishable with death for you or your priests to bend the knee of piety before the tribunals of the living God.⁷¹

The ballad writers helped fuel popular prejudices:

The Beresford faction you know, proved the overthrow of your Country,
Both Bishops and Priests are laid low, for wearing the robes of sanctity,
Our ancestors in former Days, the Rogues sent as slaves to Botany Bay,
If you want to get rid of their schemes, come vote for young Stuart and liberty.⁷²

O'Connell in his address to the electors spoke of the "bigotted Beresfords – the hereditary enemies of your country and your creed". He reminded them of the importance of their religion in times of persecution. They were asked rhetorically whether they believed the Catholic religion was the true one or not. Speaking to the priests he called on them to assume their position of leadership and if the people failed to follow, O'Connell, using very provocative language declared that

the torturing lash of the riding house school and the screams of the victims lacerated by another Beresford may yet ring in their ears and remind them of their iniquity.⁷³

Since the majority of the forty shilling freeholders were Catholics the Beresfords had to refute the allegations of religious intolerance, which were damaging in the increasingly sectarian climate of the election. At a dinner held in Waterford City in honour of the Marquis of Waterford and Lord George Beresford the occasion was used by the Marquis to reject the charges that his family were intolerant bigots. He reminded his listeners that his father had built a Catholic chapel on his Curraghmore demesne. Catholic supporters who were present were called upon to testify to the liberality of the Beresfords towards Catholics. A Captain Power denied that they (the Beresfords) made any distinctions between Catholics and Protestants. A Mr. Anthony spoke of the absence of every narrow feeling in the family dealings with Catholics. Notwithstanding the presence of some Catholics, the dinner was attended principally by Protestants, highlighting the extent to which Beresford was dependent on the support of his co-religionists.⁷⁴ A meeting of his supporters in June 1826 attracted at least 120 gentlemen, the vast majority of whom were again Protestants.⁷⁵

The urgency of winning the Catholic vote forced the Beresfords to employ the traditional tactic of an early nineteenth century election – bribery. Five tonnes of meal were sent to Dungarvan to relieve distress. The parish priest, Dr. Fogarty, observed that the sole object of this exercise was "a splendid opportunity of captivating the freeholders".⁷⁶ Lord Waterford began building fifty freehold houses in the same town.⁷⁷ Five freeholders on the Duke of Devonshire's estate were given

71. Ibid.

72. Broadsheet among Lismore Castle Papers, C/1/5.

73. *Waterford Mirror*, 12 June 1826. The reference to the riding house school related to the popular perception of the role of the Beresfords during the 1798 rebellion.

74. *Waterford Mail*, 12 Oct. 1825.

75. Ibid., 10 June 1826.

76. Rev. Patrick Fogarty to Col. W.S. Currey, 25 Feb. 1826, Lismore Castle Papers, C/1/5.

77. Draft letter from Col. W.S. Currey to James Abercromby, 20 Apr. 1826, *ibid.*, C/1/5.

potatoes by the marquis, while petitioners who went to Curraghmore had money sent to them.⁷⁸ Lord Waterford's agent promised to erect a lighthouse in any part of Dungarvan harbour and that a steam vessel would be ordered to clean the channel.⁷⁹ Lord George Beresford gave £200 to complete the town's Catholic chapel and £40 to another chapel fund.⁸⁰

The election and the *Waterford Mail*

An important aspect of the election was the part played by the local press.⁸¹ The Catholic Association devoted a considerable effort and a lot of money to ensure that its proceedings and point of view were reported in the local and national press.⁸² The *Waterford Chronicle* was the organ of the emancipationists, the contents of which

were a powerful mixture of virulent anti-Beresford propaganda interspersed with much important guidance and information for the Stuart supporters; the paper was an invaluable channel of communication for the liberal organisation.⁸³

If the *Chronicle* played a significant role in the Stuart campaign, the *Waterford Mail*, the organ of Protestant opinion, played an equally significant one in Beresford's attempt to secure victory.

The *Mail* articulated the attitudes and fears of Protestants opposed to Stuart. It was an uncompromising supporter of Lord George Beresford. In this regard it carried many trenchant denials of the Beresfords' intolerance towards Catholics. Readers were reminded that the then Marquis of Waterford had supported the 1793 Relief Act.⁸⁴ The present marquis, it was asserted, had never carried a religious distinction into private or civil life. It was claimed that the staff of his own regiment of the Waterford Militia was composed of fifteen Protestants and thirty four Catholics.⁸⁵

A favoured means of the *Mail* to refute the damaging allegation of religious intolerance was to publish letters purporting to come from Catholic servants or tenants of the Beresfords attesting to their liberal attitude to the adherents of the majority faith. One such letter declared that the anonymous author, supposedly a forty shilling freeholder, regarded the Beresfords as old friends, who never did an ill turn to Catholics on account of their religion; they were treated with the same favour and affection as Protestants.⁸⁶ Two gardeners of the Beresfords, Cornelius and Michael Hayden, wrote to deny charges that they had been dismissed from

78. Notes of Col. W.S. Currey, 8 May 1826, *ibid.*, C/1/5.

79. Letter from William Nugent, Dungarvan, to Col. W.S. Currey, 16 May 1826, *ibid.*, C/1/5.

80. *Waterford Mail*, 10 Sept. 1825. There was, of course, bribery practised by Stuart.

81. O'Ferrall, *Catholic Emancipation*, p. 129.

82. S.J. Connolly, 'Mass Politics and Sectarian Conflict', p. 86. For a discussion on the importance of the press in the Emancipation struggle see Reynolds, *Catholic Emancipation Crisis*, pp. 74-78.

83. O'Ferrall, *Catholic Emancipation*, p. 130.

84. *Waterford Mail*, 22 Oct. 1825.

85. *Ibid.*, 14 Sept. 1825.

86. *Ibid.*

their employment at Curraghmore because of their religion. The marquis they regarded as a kind and liberal master.⁸⁷

More valuable in the refutation of the charge of intolerance were addresses published in the *Mail* from Catholic tenants of the Beresfords rejecting claims of their landlord's bigotry. One in early November 1825 from tenants in the Barony of Gaultier bore 122 signatures.⁸⁸ An address from tenants in the Barony of Upperthird had 386 names attached.⁸⁹

The efforts of the *Mail* to refute the allegations of Beresford intolerance were futile. The newspaper itself recognised this fact because while it engaged in a defence of the family in 1825, it virtually ignored the theme in 1826. In any case the methods it employed were hardly calculated to impress anyone: tenants and retainers of the Beresfords were not exactly disinterested observers, immune to pressure and persuasion! The sectarian nature of the campaign ensured that the criticism, at times the vilification of, the House of Curraghmore would continue.

Instead, the *Mail* attacked the Catholic Association and its supporters for introducing factitious feeling into the county for the first time.⁹⁰ In an open letter to Stuart it declared that the constituency had been heretofore free from the "accursed spirit" of religious division.⁹¹ The activities of Stuart had succeeded in bringing to a head religious discord never known before.⁹² In making this allegation the *Mail* was displaying disingenuousness and deliberate political amnesia. The constituency had been tranquil because all elections since 1807 had been uncontested!

The religious dissension decried by the *Mail* was a consequence of the determination of the Catholic Association to organise the freeholders in opposition to their landlords. It was this democratic trend in politics which really disturbed the *Mail*, especially as this trend had a Catholic complexion. Stuart was accused of "introducing the unconstitutional principle of making numbers outweigh property".⁹³ Rights of election and the distinction of rank and property were in danger of being extinguished forever.⁹⁴ The strategy of the Catholic Association entailed an effective subversion of the relationship which hitherto had existed between landlord and tenant. Tenants were being encouraged to act independently of, and in direct opposition to, their landlords. The success of such an endeavour had monumental implications for Protestants. The very basis of their electoral and political control was being challenged. The *Mail* was determined to offer resistance. It denounced the efforts of Stuart and his supporters to sever what the newspaper called "the long standing and natural connection between landlord and tenant"⁹⁵ It editorialised that to further its objectives the Catholic Association had to destroy the moral influence of great landowners.⁹⁶ Early in the campaign a letter was published

87. Ibid.

88. Ibid., 2 Nov. 1825.

89. Ibid., 26 Nov. 1825.

90. Ibid., 21 Jan. 1826.

91. Ibid., 3 Jan. 1826.

92. Ibid., 22 Mar. 1826.

93. Ibid., 29 Oct. 1825.

94. Ibid., 14 Nov. 1825.

95. Ibid., 1 Apr. 1826.

96. Ibid., 1 Jan. 1826.

which purported to be from a forty shilling freeholder. Whatever about the exact identity of the correspondent the sentiments contained therein accorded with those of the *Mail*. The writer argued that the interest given by the landlord in his property to a tenant entitled the former to the latter's vote. In return for all the benefits conferred on tenants, the only compliment they could give in return was to vote according to their landlords' wishes. Tenancies were described as a sort of marriage contract, and the landlord had the right to a tenant's vote.⁹⁷

The *Mail* and the priests

The principal means employed by the Stuart campaign to destroy the "natural" bond between landlord and tenant were, according to the *Mail*, the priests of the Roman Catholic Church.

The only chance of ever a show of support in favour of the new candidate lies in the hope of being able to effect a separation between the proprietors and the occupiers of the soil; and the only agency whose influence is supposed able to counterbalance the interest which a tenant has in the friendship of his landlord is that of the Roman Catholic priesthood.⁹⁸

It was the task of the priests

to raise a mutiny amongst the tenants against their landlords, to destroy the natural influence of the proprietors of the soil, to lay the foundation of their own ascendancy upon the ruins of that of the landed interest, and from the wretchedness and poverty, the strife and the heart burnings, the discontent and the turbulence that must inevitably follow the success of their schemes, to produce that state of disorganisation most favourable to their ulterior projects.⁹⁹

This theme of the power of the priests and the influence they were exercising commanded much editorial attention in the *Mail*. Inspiring its attacks on their activities was the fundamental distrust, even hatred, of the Catholic priesthood which was so characteristic of nineteenth century Protestantism. The priests were accused of exercising a spiritual and political slavery over their flocks. If the Emancipation cause were to succeed a Catholic M.P. would be a mere creature of his Church's clergy.¹⁰⁰ Stuart's campaign was denounced for introducing the unconstitutional principle of making the priests the virtual constituency of the kingdom.¹⁰¹ The clergy were accused of seeking to make the election a religious business¹⁰² and of being responsible for the introduction of a spiritual power unrecognised by the state into the civil transactions of the country.¹⁰³

97. *Ibid.*, 17 Sept. 1825.

98. *Ibid.*, 13 May 1826.

99. *Ibid.*

100. *Ibid.*, 24 Sept. 1825.

101. *Ibid.*, 22 Oct. 1825.

102. *Ibid.*, 9 Nov. 1825.

103. *Ibid.*, 1 Apr. 1826.

The *Mail* played deliberately on Protestant fears of the influence priests were believed to have over members of the Catholic Church. In so doing the darkest prejudices of Protestants were being appealed to:

Protestants ... must perceive that the whole system [of the Catholic Church] is ingeniously adopted to ensure to that Church a boundless ascendancy over the minds of the members of her communion and that political ascendancy must necessarily result from it.¹⁰⁴

It was alleged that priests used all the terrors and mysteries of the Catholic faith to ensure obedience to their will. They had engrafted a temporal power onto their spiritual one and demanded civil obedience by virtue of their ecclesiastical authority. As a result, "their dictates became to the ignorant the laws of heaven when enforced by the terrors of hell".¹⁰⁵ A few weeks before polling day there was a splenetic outburst which would have done credit to the most fanatical Orange bigot:

The priests are the wretched instruments that preside over the cauldron, and it boils with all the fury which religious fanaticism, blind superstition, ignorance, and rabble prejudices can minister to it.¹⁰⁶

The *Mail* exaggerated the extent of the influence and power which the priests had. The fact is that "it was not the priest who led, but the people".¹⁰⁷ Such authority and influence they enjoyed depended on their articulation of sentiments consonant with those of their parishioners. They were telling people what they wanted to hear; they were not dictating to them. However, in the sectarian climate of the election the distinction between leader and led was blurred; and the atmosphere of anti-Protestant feeling engendered by the campaign was attributed to men who were already viewed with suspicion by many Protestants. It was understandable that these *betes noires* of Protestantism were invested with Swengalian powers and became scapegoats in a sense for what must have been at times the bewildering sectarian forces evident in Waterford.¹⁰⁸

Notwithstanding its belief in the power enjoyed by the priests, the *Mail* was determined that landlords should offer resistance to the clerical machinations inspired by the Stuart campaign. In an address to landlords in May 1826, it reminded them that if the Catholic clergy were successful in their endeavours they

104. *Ibid.*, 17 Dec. 1825.

105. *Ibid.*, 13 May 1826.

106. *Ibid.*, 3 June 1826.

107. Wyse, *Historical Sketch*, p. 283.

108. For a description of the role of the priests in the election see *ibid.*, pp. 281-9. A ballad published in the *Mail* of 10 June 1826 in favour of Beresford highlighted this notion of the extent to which the power of the priests was circumscribed by the views of their parishioners. One verse went as follows:

The Priest on the parish depends for his dues,
Not the parish on him – so he dare not refuse
The whole parish its rites – if we vote as we chose,
And we chose for to vote with the landlord
To vote with the landlord we chose.

would become masters of the landed proprietors who would then have to “bend the knee and doff the cap to the usurpers” of their traditional rights. The gentry were told that if they used their natural influence with discretion and firmness the priests, even with their “armoury of mortal sin”, could be defeated.¹⁰⁹ Shortly before the election it issued a clarion call to action which, in spite of its apparent note of determination, betrayed a sense of panic:

It behoves you (the landlords) to go personally among your tenants and show them their true interests ... and by all means to encourage them in their loyalty and fidelity to their natural leaders. You must keep them together – lead them to the hustings yourselves.¹¹⁰

The Mail and the liberal Protestants

The liberal Protestants of Waterford posed a particular difficulty for opponents of Emancipation, especially the *Mail*. Their espousal of Catholic demands prevented the formation of a united Protestant opposition to the Catholic Association and its supporters. The actions and attitudes of the liberal Protestants had a de-stabilising effect on conservative Protestant opposition to Emancipation, because Protestant opinion was seen as being divided.

Villiers Stuart was criticised by the *Mail* for the fact that he, a Protestant, had associated himself with O’Connell’s movement.¹¹¹ The occasion of a dinner held in Stuart’s honour in Dublin prompted a strident attack on the candidate. He was denounced as bound in a blind bargain with the Catholic Association and that he had reduced himself to the level of a “liveried lacquay” (sic) of the agitators. It was observed that it appeared that Stuart’s Protestantism sat so lightly on his conscience that he was willing to sacrifice his religious professions for a seat in parliament.¹¹² Liberal Protestants in general were accused of giving uncritical support to the Catholic cause, even though the price of that support had risen too much:

Heretofore it had been thought enough if Protestants showed themselves friendly to Catholic Emancipation and when called upon were ready to petition parliament in its favour, but the purchase of that soft appellative ‘our liberal Protestant friend’ rose in price, was soon only to be had by joining a violent and apparently anti Protestant faction, by sacrificing every Protestant feeling.¹¹³

109. *Waterford Mail*, 13 May 1826. The *Mail* was overly optimistic, even politically naive in its appraisal of the landlords’ relationship with their tenants. In the same editorial it asserted: “Formidable as we confess the means of the priesthood to be ... your means of resistance are still greater. You have a hold over the affections of your tenantry and you may command their fidelity without violating one law of humanity or compromising their real prosperity and happiness”.

110. *Ibid.*, 17 June 1826.

111. *Ibid.*, 24 Sept. 1825.

112. *Ibid.*, 25 Feb. 1826.

113. *Ibid.*, 5 Nov. 1825.

In March 1826 the *Mail* published an article which was a call for unity among all Protestants. The practices of the Catholic Association, in opposition to which Protestants, liberal and conservative, could unite were outlined:

1. The spiritual interference of the Priests with the pending election.
2. The *evasion* of the law against the Catholic Association – the combining of the population into an unconstitutional society, and the levy of a tax from the people, called the rent.
3. The system of intimidation and menace, by which it is attempted to carry the Roman Catholic claims.
4. The employment of Cobbett to vilify the Reformation and the Protestant Religion.

Protestant unity, it was argued, would force the whole Catholic body into seeing the improbability of achieving their objectives by such means and “force upon the agitators themselves that degree of moderation and just submission to the laws which are necessary to procure them a just hearing”. The article concluded by stating that it hoped enough had been said “to prove the necessity, as well as the utility, of a union among Protestants”.¹¹⁴

Liberal Protestants’ continuing support for Stuart

In spite of attacks on them and pleas for unity, liberal Protestants continued to support Stuart. A dinner in his honour was held at the Commercial Hotel in Waterford on 3 November and Protestants were among the organising committee. These included Richard Musgrave and John Nugent Humble.¹¹⁵ The event was attended by, among others, Sir William J. Homan, Captain Simon Newport, and Sir John Newport.¹¹⁶ At an election meeting held in the Catholic Cathedral on 20 June 1826, at which large crowds were present, the attendance of Protestants was described as “considerable”.¹¹⁷

There is evidence of an important shift in outlook among Protestants who supported the cause of Catholic equality in 1826. Gone was the attitude of superiority observed upon earlier and the treatment of Emancipation as a concession, not as a right. Wyse, who had been critical of the Protestants at the first provincial meeting of the Catholic Association at Limerick, remarked that

subsequent assemblies held at Waterford, Cork and above all at Clonmel, were of a far different complexion. There the Catholic stood with the Protestant side by side, worthy of equality, and owning no distinction but what had been interposed by the artificial distinction of laws.¹¹⁸

114. *Ibid.*, 4 Mar. 1826. William Cobbett (1762-1835) was a journalist and political radical. His *History of the Protestant Reformation*, described by Reynolds as a ‘shoddy’ work, was strongly recommended from the altars and cheap editions of it enjoyed huge sales in Ireland (*Catholic Emancipation Crisis*, p. 67).

115. *Waterford Mail*, 2 Nov. 1825.

116. *Ibid.*, 5 Nov. 1825.

117. *Waterford Mirror*, 21 June 1826.

118. Wyse, *Historical Sketch*, p. 242.

At the Waterford meeting Catholics and Protestants were assembled “indiscriminately” around the chair on the platform.¹¹⁹ Protestants who identified themselves publicly with the cause of Emancipation in 1826 had to accept the changed character of the Catholic movement under the leadership of Daniel O’Connell, who asserted its demands in an aggressive manner. Sir John Newport acknowledged this reality when speaking at the dinner to honour Stuart in November 1825. He was reported as saying:

He was averse to the use of the word Toleration. The Catholics should seek their object as a right, not as a favour, and the Protestants would find their best security in its concession.¹²⁰

Liberal Protestants, being regarded as valuable allies in the Emancipation struggle and in the more particular struggle against the Beresfords, O’Connell directed some remarks at them in his address to the electors of Waterford.

As fellow Christians we call upon you not to support the Beresfords, who deny to us the rights of Citizens merely because we worship our god in the sincerity and purity of our conscientious belief.

He called for political unity between the members of the two faiths.¹²¹

Protestant alarm

While the leadership of the Catholic Association might employ the language of liberalism in its official addresses, the language spoken on the hustings and in the heat of electoral battle was the “low slang of a county election”¹²² and it had a distinctive Catholic accent. Sectarian utterances struck a chord with an audience steeped in millennial expectations and bitterly hostile to a Protestant establishment which manifested itself at local level in the form of tithes and acts of social arrogance. Audiences of poor uneducated tenants would not have understood subtle constitutional arguments founded on impeccable liberal principles; rather they delighted in the excoriation of “Orangemen” and Protestants in general. Many Waterford peasants would have concurred with the sentiments of the old man, from an unidentified part of Ireland, who when asked his opinion of a speech by Richard Lalor Shiel, one of O’Connell’s most able lieutenants, commented:

Bad luck to the word good or bad, myself knew of what he was saying but sure it was all for our side and against the parsons.¹²³

The Waterford election must have been a very difficult one for all Protestants, liberal and conservative. The rampant sectarianism and the popular climate of anti-Protestantism were alarming, especially for those opposed to Stuart. Professor D. G. Boyce has written that “the Protestant in Waterford might well be forgiven for

119. Ibid., p. 243.

120. *Waterford Mail*, 5 Nov. 1825.

121. *Waterford Mirror*, 12 June 1826.

122. The expression is that of Reynolds. See *Catholic Emancipation Crisis*, p. 87.

123. Ibid., p. 42.

thinking that he was now on the defensive in the county which, since 1690, he had been able to call entirely his own".¹²⁴ The *Mail*, while accepting that riots and disorder were part of electoral contests, deplored the fact that "never until the Stuart dynasty advanced its absurd and extravagant pretensions have we seen the maddening excitement of religious fury thrown into the cup of popular turbulence".¹²⁵ It lamented the fact that the streets of Waterford were infested by mobs of ruffians supporting Stuart.¹²⁶ Given the sectarian excitement caused by the election and the level of hostility directed at Beresford, it is hardly surprising that he was subjected to an attack of a physical nature. On 1 March 1826, while on his way to a private engagement, his carriage was assailed with stones and missiles at the entrance of the city. His servants, according to the *Mail*, suffered actual injuries.¹²⁷ The same journal claimed that previous to this attack, the Marchioness of Waterford had received an anonymous letter threatening her life.¹²⁸ It fulminated that the attack on Beresford proved that "violence is the law and insult the gospel of the mob".¹²⁹ This same incident prompted a significant number of citizens, mainly Protestants, to write publicly to the Mayor deploring what had happened and expressing the opinion that the city was "likely to be the scene of a violent contest at the approaching election".¹³⁰ In June 1826 the Archdeacon of Lismore, Philip Ryan, wrote to Colonel Currey in a state of some distress:

Mr. Steward (sic) is gone through here, I suppose on his way to Mr. Berkes – he has given orders that liquor should be given out to the mobility (sic), which I greatly fear (from the state the minds of the common people have been latterly kept in) will end badly.¹³¹

Another correspondent apprised the colonel of the situation in Tallow:

I have also been informed that the people after coming from chapel were in that state of agitation yesterday that the Protestant inhabitants were under some alarm. The parties were attacked and a rescue made and I have been informed that at Cappoquin the same feelings were exhibited.¹³²

Stuart's election victory celebrations were a dangerous occasion for some Protestants:

Flushed with their victory over 'the oppressors of their country', and maddened with drink (for they had broken open the public houses and rifled the cellars) there was no act of violence or brutality for which the mob were not perfectly ready. Every person, though only suspected of being a Tory, who had the misfortune or impudence of being abroad was savagely beaten. Life was not safe any more than property. Our house was a special mark for their

124. D. George Boyce, *Nineteenth Century Ireland*, p. 46.

125. *Waterford Mail*, 21 Jan. 1826.

126. *Ibid.*, 15 Feb. 1826.

127. *Ibid.*, 4 Mar. 1826.

128. *Ibid.*

129. *Ibid.*, 8 Mar. 1826.

130. *Ibid.*

131. Archdeacon Ryan to Col. Currey, 4 June 1826, Lismore Castle Papers, C/1/6. The actual time of writing is given, 6.00 p.m., which further suggests the writer's agitated state.

132. Henry Witham to Col. Currey, no date, *ibid.*, C/1/6.

vengeance. We had scarcely finished barricading the windows and putting additional fastenings to the front door before a dense crowd appeared before the house, uttering fearful threats. In a moment there was not a window frame or pane that was not smashed. And then came the thundering of bludgeons and hammers against the shutters and door, which we expected to give way at every successive stroke.¹³³

The house referred to in the extract was the Deanery in Waterford City.¹³⁴

Tactics of the Stuart campaign

The espousal of populism had presented O'Connell and his supporters in the Catholic Association with a dilemma, the resolution of which had enormous implications for the relationship between the Catholic Association and liberal Protestants, and even more fundamental implications on the relationship between Protestantism in general and the emerging Catholic democracy. The existence of a deeply sectarian society, especially at popular level, meant that O'Connell had to accommodate his liberalism to this reality if he wished to involve the masses effectively in his struggle for Emancipation and against the Beresfords. This accommodation was facilitated by the fact that the first mass democratic movement in Irish politics was for the resolution of a Catholic grievance and that an integral part of its local leadership were Catholic priests. *Realpolitik* and the demands of victory in Waterford and in the wider campaign meant the primacy of Catholic interests, even when these interests were antipathic to liberal values.

O'Connell's aggressive promotion of Catholic interests reflected his identification of Catholicism with the Irish nation. In a letter to Irish Catholics after the general election of 1826, while expressing his thanks to "the good, the liberal and the enlightened among the Protestants", he declared that "the Catholic people of Ireland are a nation".¹³⁵ O'Connell may have wished to establish good relations with Protestants, but he was "above all a Catholic leader, playing the Catholic card".¹³⁶

Playing this card was easy, even necessary, because the Catholic Association had one enormous advantage in the power struggle with the Protestant ruling class – the numerical predominance of Catholics. This was crucial in the victory over the Beresfords. In evidence to a parliamentary committee in 1825, O'Connell described Waterford as an "extremely Catholic county".¹³⁷ While proposing Richard Power at the 1826 election, John Odell asserted that in the county there were forty four Catholics for every Protestant.¹³⁸ It was not until the 1830s that a census was taken which revealed the respective strengths of religious denominations.¹³⁹ This showed

133. Quoted in Auchmuty, *Wyse*, pp. 89-90.

134. *Ibid.*, p. 90.

135. *Waterford Mail*, 15 July 1826.

136. R.F. Poster, *Modern Ireland 1600-1972* (London, 1988), p. 301.

137. *First Report: State of Ireland*, p. 76.

138. *Waterford Mirror*, 24 June 1826.

139. *First Report of the Commissioners of Public Instruction, Ireland* [45, 46], H.C. 1835, xxxiii, r, 829, pp. 24-5, 3C-11C, 13C-17C. This report concerned itself with the rate of church attendance in Ireland. It was not a census proper. Nevertheless, the figures included therein are a very useful indicator of religious affiliations in Waterford.

that there were around 9,000 Protestants in Waterford.¹⁴⁰ The vast majority (over 5,000) lived in the city or its environs. Those in the county were concentrated in a small number of areas. Of the forty-five civil parishes, only nine recorded a Protestant population of one hundred and over.¹⁴¹ Ten parishes had a Protestant population of ten or under, five of these recording no Protestants at all.¹⁴² An examination of the proportion of Protestants to Catholics in the county's parishes highlights even more the paucity of numbers. In twenty-nine it did not exceed two percent. In nearly a quarter it was 0.5% or under. In only six parishes did the proportion of Protestants to Catholics exceed six percent.¹⁴³

Therefore, in an election campaign employing the tactics of engaging the Catholic masses in the struggle, the numerical advantage over Protestant opponents was exploited and very often dictated the style of language used at the hustings. O'Connell and his supporters sometimes used the language of sectarianism and national hate.¹⁴⁴ The significant numerical inferiority of Protestants meant that their importance diminished according to the exigencies of the political situation. Hence, O'Connell was capable of denouncing Protestants in one breath and praising the more liberal elements among them in the next.¹⁴⁵

Due to sectarianism, the association of Catholicism with national identity and the numerical superiority of Catholics, O'Connell's relationship with liberal Protestants was fragile, while his one with Protestant conservatives was beyond political redemption. That Protestants viewed O'Connell's activities with varying degrees of concern is understandable, for although he might declare his desire to create a nation in which they would feel at home, his whole political career was dedicated to eroding Protestant power, and was based on the assumption that Catholics, being in the majority, would eventually displace Protestants from their dominant political and social role.¹⁴⁶ He and his supporters "showed scant regard for the deep-seated fears of Protestants that, at bottom, Catholic triumph meant Protestant overthrow".¹⁴⁷

140. This writer's calculations, based on the *First Report of the Commissioners of Public Instruction, Ireland*.

141. The parishes are as follows (The number in brackets is the number of Protestants): Aglish (107); Clonegam (259); Dungarvan (335); Lismore (539); Stradbally (112); Ballylaneen (112); Tallow (357); Templemichael (178); Kilrossanty (100).

142. The parishes are as follows (The number in brackets is the number of Protestants): Modeligo (4); Clonea (4); Seskinane (3); Kilrush (6); and Ballymacart (8). The five parishes in which there were no Protestants according to the Report were: Lickoran; Colligan; Kilgobinet; Fewes; and Newcastle.

143. There parishes were (The percentage of Protestants is shown in brackets): St Mary's (11.1%); Clonegam (9.2%); Monksland (8.0%); Tallow (7.2%); Guilcagh (7.0%); and Templemichael (6.7%).

144. D. George Boyce, *Nationalism in Ireland* (Second Edition: London, 1991), p. 144.

145. D. George Boyce, *Ireland 1828-1923: From Ascendancy to Democracy* (Oxford, 1991), p. 13.

146. Boyce, *Nationalism in Ireland*, p. 144.

147. Boyce, *Ireland 1828-1923*, p. 12.

Conclusion

The 1826 county election was a traumatic event for Waterford's Protestants. The liberals among them who supported Catholic relief had expected a traditional electoral contest. The delay in the dissolution of parliament favoured the Beresford interest, which used the interval to strengthen its political position by registering forty-shilling freeholders. This forced the Catholic leadership in Waterford to employ the new tactic of appealing to the predominantly Catholic forty-shilling freeholders to engage in a political mutiny by defying their landlords and supporting Villiers Stuart. This strategy shocked many Protestants, particularly those opposed to the Catholic Association, as it represented a substantial threat to the traditional bond between landlord and tenant, under which tenants were political serfs doing their masters' bidding. This subservience was the very basis of Protestant political power. The *Waterford Mail* played a crucial role in articulating the concerns of Stuart's Protestant opponents, and in seeking to devise a concerted counter response. Liberal Protestants, too, were disturbed. The election released sectarian forces and the hostility felt towards the Beresfords was often directed at all Protestants. The necessity of ensuring victory for the Emancipation cause meant the employment by its supporters of language and tactics which stressed the paramouncy of Catholic interests, with the consequent relegation of those sentiments which emphasised the ideal of religious inclusiveness. Catholic liberalism had to be compromised in the heat of the political battle. The Waterford contest brought home to all Protestants the reality and significance of an emerging Catholic democracy. Protestant numerical inferiority coupled with an increasingly confident and strident Catholic electorate indicated a dramatically changed political landscape. The challenge for Ireland's, and Waterford's Protestants, was how to respond to these changes. On this response depended the long term survival of the Protestant interest as an effective political force. Events in Waterford, before and during 1826, did not augur well for a religious minority who had heretofore enjoyed a power and influence in politics completely disproportionate to their numerical strength.

* * *

The assistance of the Waterford County Librarian, Mr. Donal Brady, is duly acknowledged for facilitating access to the Lismore Castle Papers.

Waterford Steamship Company

Bill Irish

WATERFORD owes more to its majestic river than any other source for its development through the ages. As the lifeblood of its trade and commerce, the Suir, navigable for 16 miles, has contributed largely to its prosperity and expansion.

From as early as the thirteenth century, Waterford merchants had established a flourishing wine import trade, which they monopolised for several centuries. Its shipping trade was predominately with England but strong links were also formed with France, Spain, and Belgium. Export of raw wool, leather, wheat, flour, cheese, butter and hogs grew from this time. Agriculture produce was the main export from a rich producing hinterland that fringed both sides of the Suir.

By the late 17th century Huguenot refugees arrived, adding a big influx of skills and crafts, especially in linen and flax culture, and broadening extensive trading links even further afield. At around the same time the seasonal Newfoundland fishing fleets called for provisions and migrant workers, giving a pronounced surge to the local economy.

The Society of Friends (Quakers) took root here after William Penn held a successful rally in the city in 1697. During the eighteenth century many Quakers moved into the wool trade; others became tanners, grocers, architects, and timber merchants. Quakers prospered in the mid to late 18th century, becoming shrewd and astute traders. By the early nineteenth century many Quakers in the south east were prosperous, becoming land owners, millers, farmers, merchants and shipowners. In Waterford city they were allowed to flourish, building up a powerful business community in the city and along the lower Suir valley, extending as far as Clonmel. Major merchant families in Waterford became shipowners or took shares in ships and initiated industrial developments. Among them were Penroses, Pims, Strangmans, Whites, Jacobs, Malcomsons, Gatchells, Watsons, Beales and Grubbs. Several of these merchants were instrumental in establishing the Chamber of Commerce and later regular cross-channel steam navigation.

Setting the Scene

Waterford port in the early 19th century had 141 sailing ships registered to local owners. Its trade was expanding, and again it centred on agricultural produce for

export, namely pork, bacon, butter, corn and flour. The value of these by 1830 exceeded £2 million. The agricultural surplus of the fertile land of the south east gave Waterford Port almost a monopoly on bacon and flour, shipping out nearly half of all Irish bacon exports and about 60% of Irish flour exports, much of the latter coming from Malcomson Mills in Clonmel and Portlaw. Thus, Waterford Port's development was intrinsically linked to the impressive growth in agricultural trade emanating from the rich hinterland.

A new harbour board, with representatives of Chamber of Commerce and Corporation, was appointed in 1816. Their immediate task was to dredge and widen the channel north of the Island, two miles downstream, to give easier access to large ships coming into port. Other improvements included the construction of new quays to the bridge and the provision of increased depth of water at existing quays. These timely improvements signalled the beginning of a major shipping boom – as in the mid 1820s, 800 vessels a year passed through the port; rising to 928 by 1828; 1088 by 1830 and reaching 1347 by 1832.¹ Meanwhile, in 1817 Benjamin Graham had introduced gas lights along the Quay and Waterford citizens saw their first steamship, *Princess Charlotte*, paddling up the Suir in July 1817.² Seven years later (1824) the first steam packet service between Milford and Dunmore East was in place and it took another two years (1826) before a local group of businessmen, with their Bristol counterparts, set up the Waterford and Bristol Steam Navigation Company. The local partners of the company were Thomas Nevins, Joseph Dunn Lapham and Charles Samuel Tandy.³ They had their first vessel, the paddle steamer *Nora Creina* (202 tons), built at Birkenhead the same year. She was considered a huge success, carrying passengers, goods and cattle between Waterford and Bristol in 1826; completing 52 round voyages that year, which was quite a performance in the early days of steam. Three years later Bristol regularised their own steam packet service with the launching of the *City of Waterford* (272 tons) from the War Office Company's yard at Bristol. Emphasising the closeness of the relationship, ownership of the vessel was shared between Bristol and Waterford merchants (J. D. Lapham), in the proportion Bristol 49,⁴ – Waterford 15. Ownership of the W. and B. S. N. Company's next new vessel included a Malcomson (John), whose name appears with the signatures of George Ivie, William Morris and Joshua W. Strangman in 1833 on a deed of settlement for a wooden paddle steamer *Water Witch* (230 tons), built at Birkenhead. With the delivery of the new vessel, sailings were increased to two per week, and, it was claimed at the time that she was "perhaps the fastest vessel that ever floated". The W. and B. S. N. Co. at this stage was well subscribed to, having a capital of £15,000, divided into 64 shares of £234, 7 shillings and 6 pence each.⁵ In 1833 John Malcomson had procured a store in Bailey's New Street and a house in Adelphi Terrace, both in close proximity to the shipping berths, and his tenure as trustee of the W. and B. S. N. Co. was the nursery and breeding ground that spawned the era of Malcomsons as shipowners.

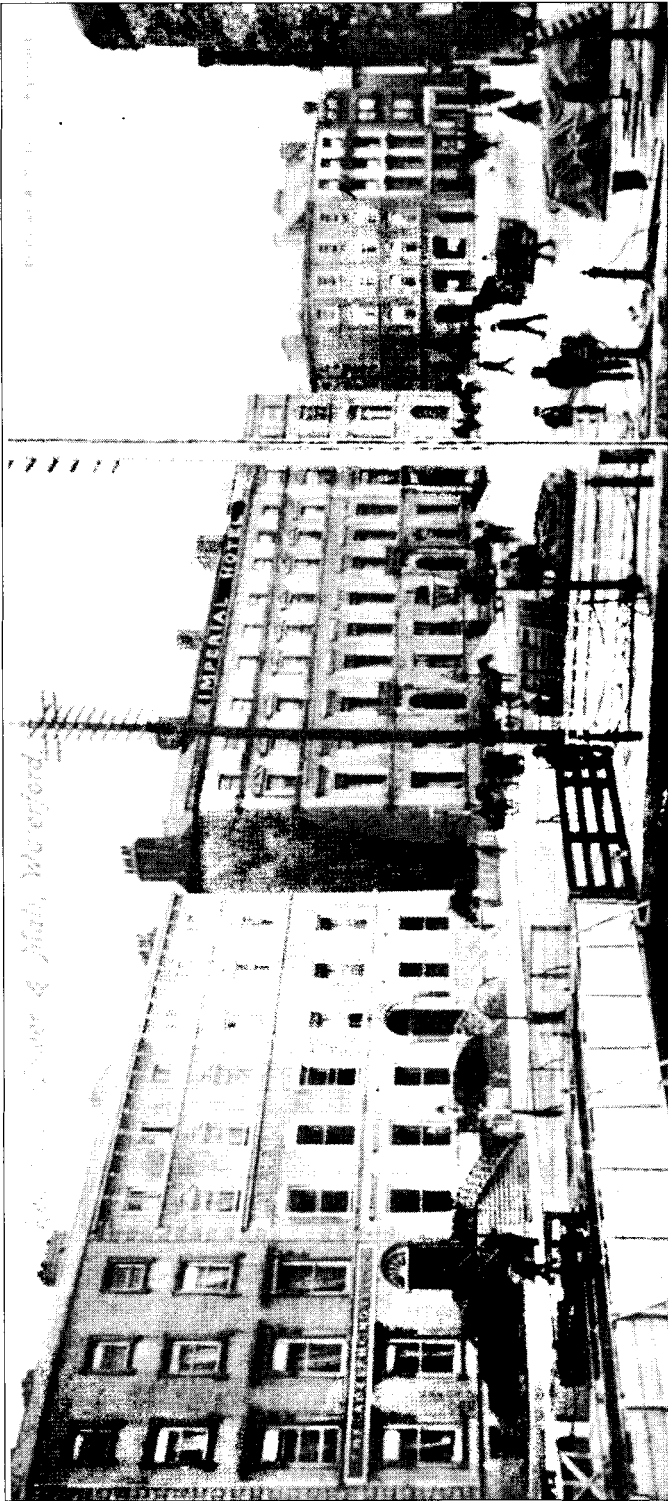
1. *Waterford Mail*, 26th January 1833.

2. *Waterford Mirror*, July 1817.

3. G. Farr, *West County Passenger Steamers*, p. 50.

4. *Ibid.*

5. Malcomson Family History Documents, National Archives Dublin.



Waterford Steamship Co. Offices & Hotel, Waterford

Waterford Steamship Company Offices (second building from left).

David Malcomson, the founder of the Malcomson business empire, had come to Clonmel as a boy in 1774 and worked in several positions before moving into the corn business, which he eventually monopolised, exporting 34,398 cwts. of flour through Waterford port for the period 1815-1819. Flour exports had risen more than ten fold in the next decade, but David, now aged 60, was concentrating his vast energies and capital in a new enterprise at Portlaw – the building of a large cotton mill. Completed in 1826, it initially employed just 250 workers, steadily rising to four figures in the late 1830s, when it had expanded to become the largest cotton mill in Ireland. Certainly a sizeable river trade involving open boats, lighters and barges transporting flour from Clonmel and Pouldrew to Waterford developed. With the establishment of the cotton factory, traffic on the Suir increased, with importation of coal, raw cotton and machine parts to Portlaw and transportation of the factory's produce for export through Waterford. For the cotton factory alone, over 60 sea-going vessels of 100-150 tons and 150 open boats of 30-40 tons made passage between Waterford and Portlaw annually.⁶

Central to all of Malcomson's enterprises at Clonmel, Pouldrew, and Portlaw was cheap and efficient river transport, and critical to this end was the maintenance and improved navigation of the Suir. So David, with other merchants, founded the River Suir Navigation Co. in 1835 – its object being to make the Suir navigable to vessels of 300 tons (doubling their capacity) as far as Carrick-on-Suir. The River Suir Navigation Co. became a statutory body in 1836, and maintained the river passage as far as Clonmel, allowing the occasional coaster up to the quays in Carrick. Beyond Carrick the Suir ceases to be tidal and special flat bottomed boats – 'yawls' – drawing about 16" of water, with a capacity of about 20 tons, transported the merchandise between Carrick and Clonmel. When going upstream against the flow, a pair of 'yawls', one behind the other, were pulled by a team of twelve horses. On the return journey, laden with flour for Waterford Port, they drifted downstream with the current, assisted only by manpower and rudder.⁷

Waterford Steamship Company

With river transport and navigation well controlled, the Malcomsons broadened their canvas to influence and regulate cross-channel freight rates and schedules. They had extensive cross-channel trade, especially with Liverpool, where large consignments of cotton was imported directly from America and shipped on to Waterford. Large quantities of Welsh coal were also required for their steam engines at Portlaw. Shipping and freight costs were inconsistent and became injurious to a point where they were affecting the economic performance of the Malcomson owned enterprise. Several Waterford merchants, the Malcomsons among them, were concerned at the exorbitant fees and freight charges demanded by Pope Brothers, who monopolised the trade on Waterford-Liverpool Bristol run.

Popes (who were not Quakers) were large shipowners and controlled the Waterford Line which employed a fleet of fast schooners on the Waterford-Bristol-Liverpool routes. Three of their schooners *Alexander*, *Martha* and *Rapid* were built in

6. Malcomson Family History Documents, National Archives Dublin.

7. D.B. McNeill, *Inland Waterways South of Ireland*, p. 38.

1833, at Shoreham, and were noted for their fine lines and fast voyages. Popes traded extensively in timber, wine and general cargo. Whereas Popes stayed faithful to the traditional sailing vessel, the Malcomsons were acutely aware of steamer developments, and the technical superiority, consistency and regularity they offered in the cross-channel trade. Their breakthrough came early in 1836 when they were instrumental in founding Waterford Steam Navigation Co., in the process absorbing or taking over the Waterford and Bristol Steam Navigation Co. A group of merchants led by Malcomsons boosted the share capital of the new company to £100,000,⁸ quarter of it held by the Malcomsons, with one tenth contributed by Pope. It is interesting to see Pope as a major shareholder, perhaps realising that the Malcomsons meant business and keeping a leg in both camps.

With a flurry of activity the new company immediately enlarged their fleet and inaugurated river estuary services to New Ross and Duncannon in 1837, commissioning two new paddle steamers – *Shamrock* 135 tons (built in Glasgow in 1836), and *Duncannon* – 200 tons (built at John Lairds Yard, Birkenhead in 1837). Not forgetting their home port, they conferred an immense vote of confidence in local shipbuilders – White’s – with an order for the first ever paddle steamer (wooden hulled) to be built there – *P.S. Waterford* – an impressive vessel of 418 tons, completed in 1836 for the Waterford-Liverpool-London service. These new steamers enlarged the fleet to eight, joining *Nora Creina* (1826); *Water Witch* (1833); *Green Isle* (1833); *Mermaid* (1834); procuring *Clonmel* in 1836, and *William Penn* in 1837. With the exception of their two new estuary steamers, *Duncannon* and *Shamrock*, all the others were wooden hulled. Just to show how vulnerable some of these were, the small *P.S. Venus*, which provided a ferry service on the Suir and Barrow, came to an abrupt end when her engine fell through her wooden bottom.

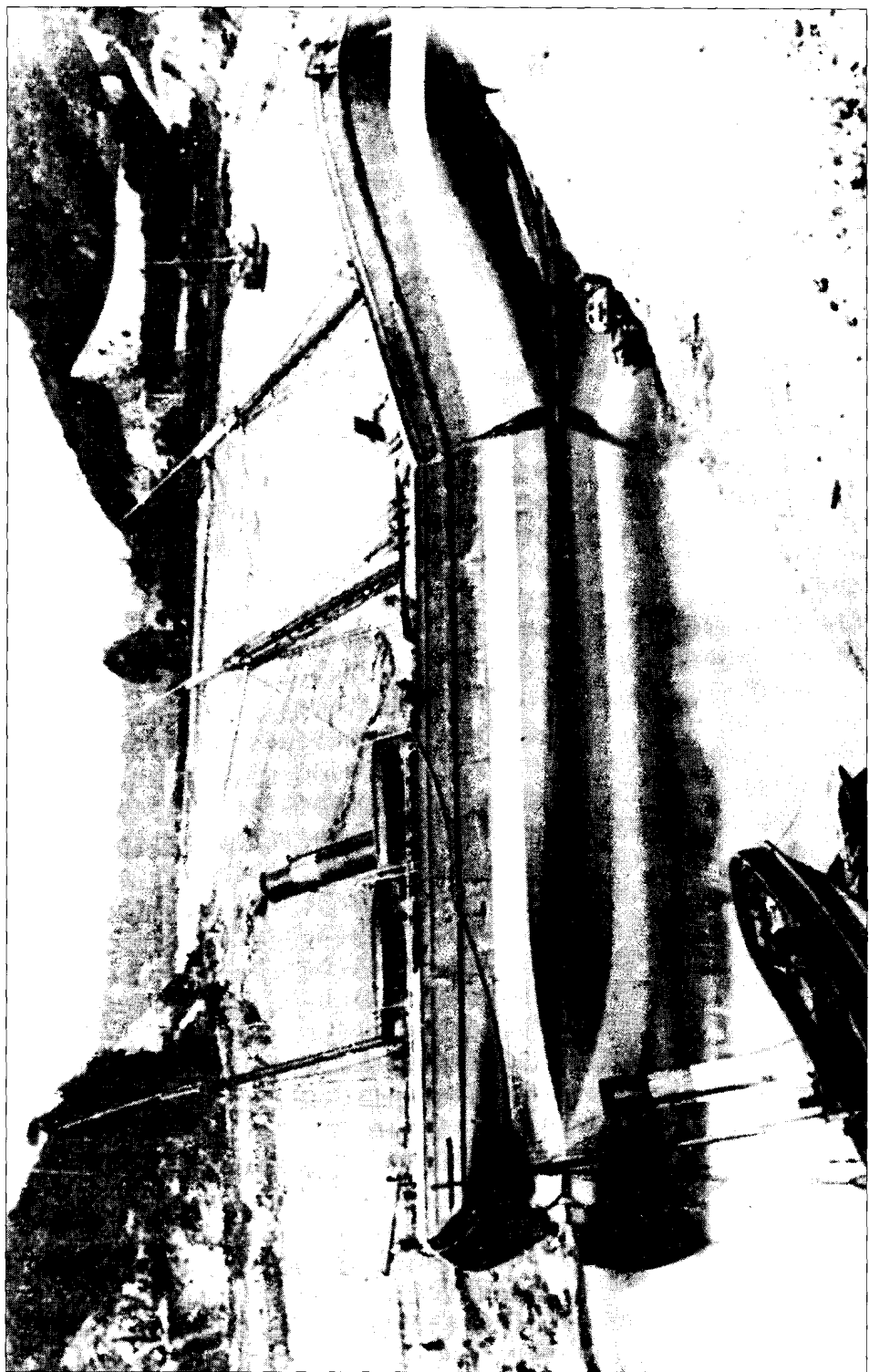
Popes were still quite a force, and although their fleet up to this were all of sail, a late conversion to steam gave White’s yard their second paddle steamer order in as many years. Their experience with Waterford Commercial Steam Navigation Company was obviously enlightening and *P.S. Kilkenny*, built 1837, was put on the Waterford-London run. In a sense Popes provided valuable links and interaction between Whites and Malcomsons, as they owned the site of the White’s dockyard at Ferrybank, and had taken charge of shipping Malcomson produce cross channel for a decade before.

Continuing their expansionist policy, W.C.S.N. Co. bought in 1837 a nine year old steamer *Gypsy* (210 tons, built Liverpool 1828) from Sir John Tobin. Joseph Malcomson’s name appeared for the first time alongside the other trustees – well known shipowners William Millward, Alexander Richard Pope, Joseph Dunn Lapham, and John Barden, with whom he frequently renewed partnership over the next decade. Joseph’s signature, along with J.D. Lapham and Josiah Williams, is present on a deed of ownership for *P.S. Shamrock*, their first iron built paddle steamer for W.C.S.N. Co., and built at Glasgow.

Harvey’s *Directory* of 1839 gives us a glimpse of the rates and schedules that applied to the river steamers and the cross channel Bristol and Liverpool services.

Shamrock leaves Ross 8.45 am., arrives Waterford 10 am.,
Leaves Waterford for Ross at 3 pm. Daily except Sunday.

8. Article in *Clonmel Nationalist* by Sister Magdalene (date unknown).



S.S. *Gipsy* (built 1859): Wrecked on the River Avon, 1878.

Fares – cabin two shillings; deck one shilling and 3 pence.

Duncannon arrives Waterford 9.15 am. every morning,

Leaves Waterford to Ballyhack and Duncannon Fort daily at 4 o'clock

Summer, and 3 o'clock Winter.

Fares – cabin one shilling; deck six pence.

A steamer starts for Bristol twice a week – Tues. and Friday with goods passengers and livestock.

Fares – Cabin 30 shillings, Deck – 10 shillings and 6 pence.

A steamer starts for Liverpool twice a week with goods passengers and livestock.

Fares – Cabin 20 shillings, Deck – 7 shillings and 6 pence.

In January 1841 *Osprey* of Bristol made the passage from Waterford to Bristol in 17 hours – the fastest to date.

By 1843 Malcomsons were owners and part owners of 19 ships,⁹ controlled Waterford Steam Navigation Co., and were about to invest heavily in the Cork Steam Navigation Company, a major controlling interest being held by Ebenezer Pike, a fellow Quaker and first cousin of Joseph Malcomson (both their mothers being a Pfennel). Their growing fleet of steamers was in a transitional stage, where iron hulled vessels were replacing wooden ones as they traded out of London, Liverpool and all the major ports of Ireland. Given the growing number of iron hulled steamers under their control it was logical and proper that Malcomsons built a repair yard on the Park Road, Waterford, known as the Neptune Iron Works. One can appreciate why Joseph Malcomson would embark on a venture as new and challenging as a ship repair yard for iron steamers here. Malcomsons had already experienced the huge industrial development at Portlaw, where one of its key ingredients was relatively cheap labour and easily trained personnel that became proficient at new work practices within a short time. The same parallel could be repeated in the iron shipyard, where again they were confronted with new technology, but were confident of the latent skills and adaptability of the local labour force.

The second generation of Malcomsons benefitted enormously too from the enterprise culture prevalent first in Clonmel, and later at Portlaw, which provided them with the stimulus to emulate David's achievements. Just as they had procured the brilliant Robert Shaw as manager of Portlaw cotton mills for his extensive engineering expertise, so too could they "headhunt" English-trained iron shipyard supervisors to establish the work skills at Neptune. Waterford was not alone in doing this, as Cork and later Belfast imported expertise in the embryonic stages of their iron ship yards. Blacksmithing and foundry practice was well developed in the locality, so the acquisition of new ironworking skills was more of a challenge than an obstacle. Obviously the repair yard was a huge success, with local workers rapidly becoming expert in the iron skills and within three years they had progressed to the building of their first iron ship, as the skeletal structure of the S.S. *Neptune* covered the slipway. In the same three years, 1843-1846, Joseph Malcomson had become a large shareholder at the Cork Steamship Company,

9. List compiled by author from Waterford Custom House Registers (1833-1855).

founded the London-St. Petersburg Steamship Company and had shares in both the P. and O. Navigation Company and Richardson Bros., promoters and first managers of the Inman line.

Before *S.S. Neptune*, their first Waterford built ship came off the stocks, Malcomson Bros. had added a further 14 vessels to their name, among them the *S.S. Dublin* built 1846 at Kingston-upon-Hull and reputed to be the **first** screw steamer owned by **any** Irish Company or firm.¹⁰ So impressed were the Malcomsons with the performance of screw propulsion in both *S.S. Dublin* and *S.S. Neptune* that all their future steamers were fitted with screw propellers, except river steamers, which were still paddle driven; and they encouraged the P. and O. and Inman line to follow suit.

S.S. Neptune, although registered with the Waterford Commercial Steam Navigation Company, spent most of her career in the Baltic for the London-St. Petersburg Steamship Company. When their first ship, the wooden paddler *Nora Creina*, was retired in 1846 after 20 years faithful service, she was replaced by another wooden paddle steamer, *Victory*. *Victory* was on the Bristol-Cork route from 1832 to 1846 and when transferred to Waterford served up to 1853, until she was wrecked off the Wexford coast. In September 1853 she was chartered to carry troops to Liverpool – an interruption to her regular Waterford-Bristol run – and on her return on the morning of 28th September 1853 she was lost on the Barrel Rock off Wexford – fortunately there was no loss of life. Her master was John Stacy.

In the post famine years after 1847 many of those evicted from their homes in East Cork, Waterford, Kilkenny and Carlow made their passage to Liverpool on the Waterford steamers. On one particular evening in August 1848 over 1200 people left Waterford by ship, and figures published in the Denham Report reveal that in April 1849 each steamer from Waterford arrived in Liverpool with 200 deck passengers on board.¹¹ Many of these had received no food and had obtained little shelter throughout the whole **30 hour** crossing. In the preceding 12 months 300,000 ‘deckers’ had passed through Liverpool from all parts of Ireland, about half of these going on to America. About a third were ‘paupers’, described as ‘people in a starving condition, begging alms, asking their way to the relieving officers’.

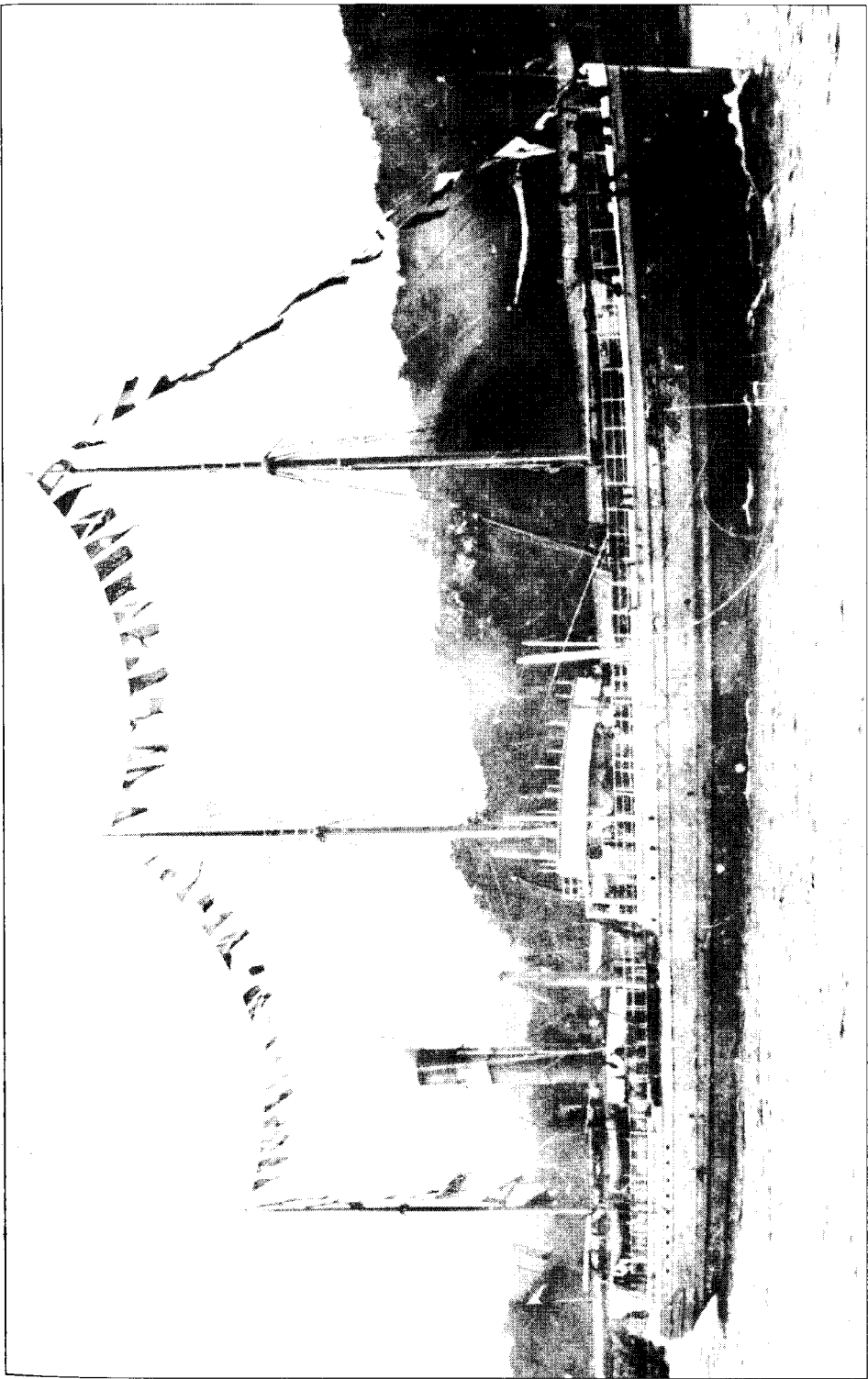
At this time there was still a close relationship between Bristol Steam Packet Company and Waterford Steamship Company, with generous interchange of vessels and even on occasion the Waterford company would use a Bristol steamer on its Waterford-Liverpool route.

In 1849 orders were placed with their own Neptune Ironworks on the Park Road for a paddle steamer – *Nora Creina* (the 2nd) and a screw steamer *Mars*. A policy of having all their steamers built in Waterford was now established and continued for the next twenty years.

The *S.S. Mars*, after her launch on 19th Sept. 1849, had the signal honour of being the **first** screw steamer placed on the Waterford-Liverpool run. In this service she brought several thousands of emigrants to Liverpool on their way to America. The *Waterford News* gives us an insight into her more unusual cargoes.

10. John Kennedy, *History of Steam Navigation* (1903), p. 297.

11. McNeill, *Inland Waterways*, p. 87.



S.S. *Lara* (1868-1908).

Aug. 29th, 1851: The *Mars* sailed for Liverpool having on board a large quantity of apples, whurts, dilisk and blackberries:

Christmas Eve, 1852: The *Mars* arrived from Liverpool at 6.30 p.m. after a 36 hour trip (6 hours more), having to contend with a strong gale after rounding Tuskar. All the iron plates used in constructing the steamers at the Neptune Shipyard were brought to Waterford on the *Mars* from Liverpool, the freight being 10 shillings per ton.¹²

Mar 4th, 1855: A splendid looking and powerful new engine for the Waterford and Tramore Railway arrived here on the *Mars*, the Liverpool steamer on Friday last, and on Tuesday was brought to Tramore for the interesting ceremony of 'Baptism'.

The year 1850 saw the Waterford Steamship Company in the most serious struggle that ever occurred in the steamship trade. There had always been keen rivalry between St. George Steam Packet Company of Cork and City of Dublin Steam Packet Company and when St. George Steam Packet Company was absorbed into a newly structured Cork Steamship Company in 1844, the City of Dublin Company directors were openly hostile to the new management, which included Joseph Malcomson as a director (Pike the Cork Managing Director and Joseph Malcomson were cousins).

This hostility was extended to the Waterford Steamship Company, which was now Malcomson controlled. Railways became the spark that ignited the fuse, as Malcomsons after several representations to Parliament, had failed to get the Waterford and Limerick Railway constructed on the south side of the river, where it would have been of tremendous advantage to their cotton factory at Portlaw. Politically outmanoeuvred and probably smarting from their failure they watched as the W. and L. Railway was constructed through Fiddown. But by 1850 a second railway development – the extension of the Waterford and Kilkenny Railway – was opened from Waterford to Thomastown, and the directors immediately requested the Waterford Steamship Company to change their loading berths from the Waterford side of the river to the Ferrybank side, next to the railway company's terminus. Stung by their impertinence, Waterford Steamship Company refused. They did so for two good reasons; inconvenience and economics. All Malcomson concerns, shipbuilding and cotton, were on the south side of the Suir, and Timbertoes, being a toll bridge, meant they would have to pay every time their carts and vehicles passed over and back to load and unload into their boats at the north side. As a result of the refusal the Waterford and Kilkenny Railway Company pressurised the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company to charter extra steamers and put them on the Waterford and Liverpool run. The extra steamers were chartered from another Dublin shipping company – the British and Irish Steam Packet company – and as well as competing for business at Waterford they extended the opposition to Cork, encroaching on the Cork to London and Cork to Liverpool service. As Joseph Malcomson was the main influence in both companies it was natural that there was a staunch Cork-Waterford alliance in this struggle.

12. Portion of Neptune Ironworks Account book, National Archives.

Malcomson's strategy was simple and direct:

- (1) Hit the originators of the dispute – the Waterford and Kilkenny Railway Company – This he achieved by organising a free service (by horse or car) for any Waterford Steamship Company passengers travelling between Thomastown and Waterford; thus depriving the railway of business.
- (2) Cork and Waterford Steamship companies carried the war into their opponents territory by placing steamers on the London – Dublin and Liverpool – Dublin routes, in direct opposition to the British and Irish Company and City of Dublin Company alliance.

Next the British and Irish Company chartered a steamer from Belfast to run between Cork and Liverpool. Cork Steamship Company countered by poaching business on the Liverpool to Belfast route. The British and Irish Company responded by placing steamers on Waterford-London, Waterford-Liverpool, and London to St. Petersburg lines (all Malcomson owned). Meanwhile, the City of Dublin Company muddied the waters by offering contracts to merchants in Waterford and Cork, undertaking to carry their freight free for three months. In retaliation, Waterford Steamship Company threatened to place steamers on the Holyhead and Dublin stations.

Of course, passengers and the general public were winners all the way, frequently being carried free of charge between Waterford and Liverpool, Cork and Liverpool, Liverpool and Dublin, as well as to London from these ports.

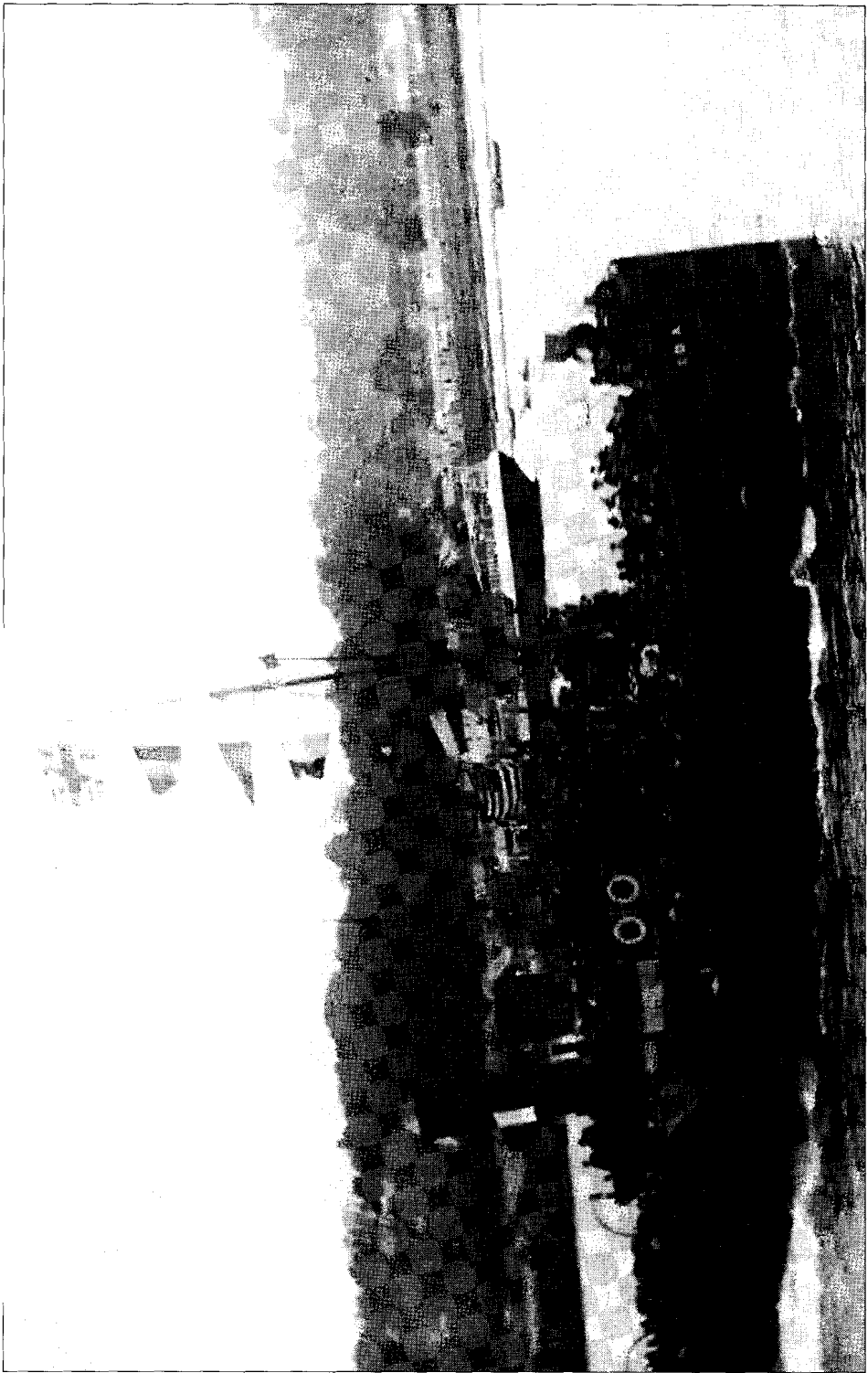
A story is told of a passenger going into the Dublin Company's office in Waterford and asking what the cabin fare was to Liverpool. He was told he would be taken free to which he replied: "That is not good enough, you must feed me as well". On the Liverpool and Dublin service, when one of the rival companies advertised its willingness to carry passengers for nothing and to give them a loaf of bread, the other company bettered it by offering a bottle of Guinness as well. Many pessimists at this time believed that the Waterford Steamship Company and Malcomson Bros. (who had the greatest portion of their shares) would be ruined, but when enquires were made to Malcomson's bank (Overend Gurney and Co. of London) the confident reply was: "We guarantee Messrs. Malcomson Bros. to the extent of two million pounds sterling".¹³

The open war between the companies was fiercely maintained for over twelve months and in April 1851, on the suggestion of Joseph Malcomson, the rival companies met to bring an end to the power struggle. An amiable settlement was arrived at, to which all the parties agreed, reinstating, more or less, allotted routes traditionally held by the rival companies, and a carve up of the busier routes to the stronger companies. The Waterford Steamship Company's entitlement was:

The port of Waterford to be occupied by the Waterford Company and Messrs. Malcomson as they may arrange; also the London and St. Petersburg; London and Rotterdam, or the portion of it in their possession; London and Harlingen; London and Amsterdam; London and Bremen; Dublin and Bristol; half of Dublin and London line and intermediate ports; London and Waterford calling at Torquay; also London and Nieuwe Diep.¹⁴

13. Kennedy, *Steam Navigation*, p. 295.

14. Malcomson Family History Documents, National Archives Dublin.



S.S. *Ida*. Sold in 1908 and subsequently dismantled.

A casualty of the fall out of the struggle was the Bristol Steam Navigation Company which had maintained a close joint service with Waterford Steamship Company between the ports prior to the competition (Bristol's boat sailing on Tuesday). Because of the low rates in force during the struggle a great deal of traffic was diverted from the Bristol to Liverpool route, and the Bristol Company suspended their sailings to and from Waterford. Waterford Steamship Company took up the Tuesday sailing to catch the Bristol cattle market, and when the settlement came, the Bristol Company wished to resume their Tuesday sailings but Waterford Steamship Company refused to withdraw, offering Bristol the Friday sailing. The close and friendly relationship which had existed quickly soured and the breach became so wide that the Waterford Steamship Company deliberately placed the *P.S. Victory* on the Bristol-Dublin run in opposition to the Bristol Steam Navigation Company. This opposition was withdrawn on the Bristol Company agreeing to pay the Waterford Company £1,000 per annum, a sum which they continued to pay for a great many years.

In shipping affairs when you tangled with the Malcomson's you invariably ended up second best!

The Waterford Steam Navigation Company had their next ship, the 208ft. long screw steamer *Nora* built at Neptune Shipyard at a cost of £15,238 in 1855. After a short period she was sold on to French owners and renamed *Stella*.

Joseph Malcomson died on April 15th, 1858 and William, his younger brother, was appointed to head the company. He immediately set about expanding and consolidating Waterford Steamship Company with a flurry of orders for new vessels at the Neptune yard. In 1859 *S.S. Gipsy* was built for the Bristol-Liverpool-Waterford service. Its 210ft. long sister ship, *Zephyr*, was completed a year later, and *P.S. Tintern* for the Suir estuary service between Duncannon and Waterford.

A 60ft. long steam tug, *Seagull*, came into service on the Suir in 1861 and two years later the Neptune Shipyard eased the paddle steamer *Rosa* into the Suir. *Rosa* spent most of her time on the Shannon with intermittent service on the Suir.

The Waterford Steamship Company in the early 1860's had its cross-channel steamers working from Waterford to Bristol, Liverpool and London; its deep sea vessels involved in foreign trade (e.g. *S.S. Neptune*), and its small fleet of paddle steamers servicing the Shannon, Barrow and Suir estuaries. It had all the routes it could manage, a fine fleet of about 20 iron steamers and was very profitable.

Malcomsons, it was claimed in the House of Commons in 1868, were the largest shipowners in the world (90 of them registered in Waterford).¹⁵

But some upsets lay ahead. The first involved *S.S. Mars* – built at the ironworks in 1849 and a rather unfortunate ship. Originally she was to be a paddle boat but her plans were changed while she was on the stocks and she became a screw steamer, but because of the alteration she had a very noticeable list. On 14th June 1859 she heeled over on leaving Waterford Quay, killing a large number of cattle on board. Taken back into the Neptune slipway, her "list" was rectified, but the local cattle shippers had lost confidence in her, believing that screw steamers were not very stable in a rough sea with live cattle. However, Captain Burns was put in command

15. *Waterford News*, 4th December, 1868.

and she proved herself a safe carrier regaining the cattle shippers' confidence and soon became a favourite boat in the trade.

On 31st March 1862 she left Waterford. On board were fifty people twenty of whom were crew; 327 pigs; 178 cows and 10 horses and some deadweight cargo of 25 bales of bacon, rags, six barrels of oats, boxes of eggs and poultry. At Linney Head, near Milford, the next day she was driven onto the rocks by a strong gale and heavy seas. There was also a thick fog, which may have accounted for her being so much off course, but it is recorded that she struck rocks with all but one of her sails set – with a gale blowing it is hard to speculate on what the captain was doing.

Tragically 47 people died and there were just four survivors: two firemen, a cattle drover, J. Cane and a small boy, who had earlier crept into a lifeboat seasick and frightened, and who was awakened to find his boat swept from the steamer's deck. Typical of local generosity the citizens of Waterford contributed £3,000 to the dependents fund.

At the time of the *Mars* disaster the iron paddle steamer *Camilla*, which had spent ten years on the London-Baltic route for Malcomson Brothers, was now part of their cross-channel fleet, until her retirement in 1863.

The *S.S. Gipsy*, built in 1859 at a cost of just over £15,000, took over from the *Mars*, and was herself involved in an embarrassing blockade of the Avon, which resulted in her demolition. On Sunday 12th May 1878 she ran aground in the Avon when she struck the bank and stuck on the outward journey to Waterford. A passing tug failed to dislodge her, and it was thought prudent to remove all the passengers, as the tide was falling rapidly. On the next tide she was carried across the river, but failed to rise and her stern became completely submerged. Salvage attempts were abandoned when her back broke. With the river completely blocked, drastic measures were decided on – she was stripped of cargo and fittings by gangs working around the clock. On 17th May Royal Navy torpedo men, with demolition experts, partly blew her up with dynamite. Further charges were laid to disperse more wreckage and it was June 4th before the channel again became navigable.¹⁶

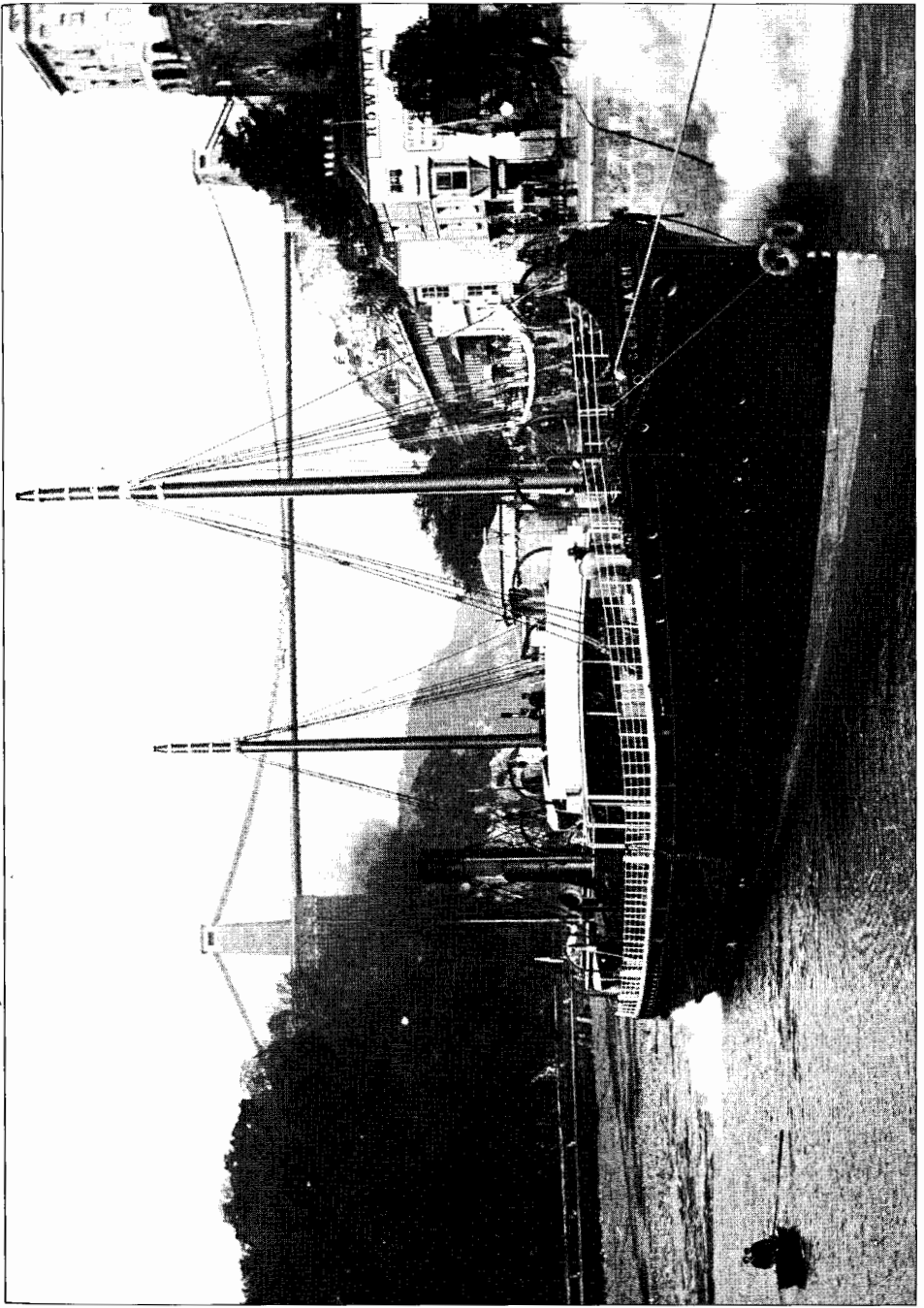
Meanwhile, in the mid to late 1860s Waterford Steamship Company had commissioned several more steamers to be built at the Neptune Shipyard. Among them was the *S.S. Lara* built 1868 for their cross-channel services; the paddle steamers *Vandeleur* 1866 and *Ida* 1867; along with two river barges in 1865 and one in 1868.

We find William Malcomson buying out more shares of the Waterford Steamship Company when on 22nd June 1863 he purchased 102 shares for £8,160 from Joseph Lapham and Richard Pope Williams, executors of Josiah Williams, late Trustee of the company. Josiah Williams' shares in the steamboat *Shamrock of Ross* were also procured by Malcomson nine months later.¹⁷

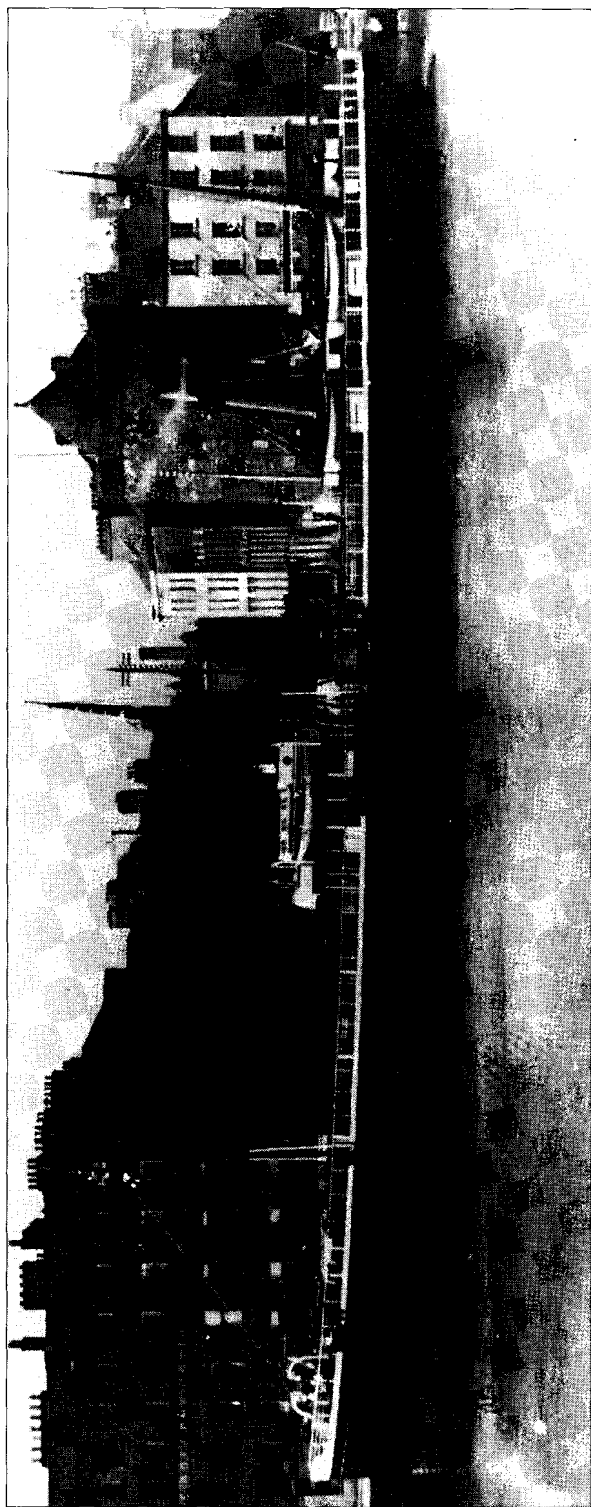
However, there were now ominous signs that the Malcomson leadership had lost its "Midas" touch. The first set back – the American Civil War of 1861 – depleted their raw cotton supplies because of the naval blockade of the southern ports. A two to three year slump in cotton supplies followed, which seriously damaged their Portlaw industry and its viability.

16. Farr, *Steamers*, pp. 55-56.

17. Malcomson Family History Documents, National Archives Dublin.



S.S. Comeragh (built 1879).



S.S. Reginald (built 1879): Berthed in Waterford.

Between 1861-1866 Malcomsons commissioned several large houses of grandeur to be built: one in Dunmore East (now Haven Hotel), Clonmel (Minella), Waterford (Elva Ardkeen House); and two in Portlaw: Clodagh and Woodlock. William was expending vast amounts of money on some extravagant impractical schemes which came to very little. Joseph's widow Charlotte (Pim) had withdrawn her share from the business in 1858 and his aunt Rachel withdrew £10,000. Their bankers, Overund and Gurney of London collapsed, owing £13 million, much of it Malcomson money.

What finally sealed their fate was the death of Joseph's eldest son, David, in 1867. David's wife proceeded through the courts to have her husbands considerable share of £198,000 withdrawn from the business.

Malcomsons struggled on for a few years, their cotton manufacture and ship-building seriously in decline. They sold many of their ships just to keep their reduced operations alive, but by 1877 they had declared themselves bankrupt.

Fortunately for Waterford Steamship Company, William Malcomson's sons-in-law, Cornelius Morley, was a very capable manager and he was retained for his expertise when Malcomsons lost active control.

The Neptune ironworks last big ship was the *Lara* completed for the Waterford Steamship Company in 1868, and with her sleek lines and powerful engines (200 H.P.), she reduced the passage time Liverpool to Waterford route from 30 hours to just over 18 hours. When launched she was one of the largest cattle boats afloat and gave her owners 40 years of consistent and fairly uneventful service before her sale for breaking up in 1908.

The *Lara* was involved in at least two episodes at sea, one a rescue, the other a disaster. She rescued the four masted barque *Earl of Beaconsfield* off the Wexford Coast on 13th February 1884. In a state of distress after losing her masts and sails, the *Lara* towed her safely into Waterford estuary. On the disaster side the *Waterford News* of 14th July 1882 tells us: "We regret to learn on Tuesday last, in the British Channel, the *Lara*, on her voyage from this port to Bristol, ran into and cut down a schooner, name unknown. She and all on board sank immediately. The steamer was promptly backed and cruised about the spot for a considerable time, but no trace could be found of crew or vessel and *Lara* uninjured proceeded safely to Bristol".

Sharing the Waterford Bristol run with the *Lara* was the Neptune built S.S. *Zephyr*. Built on the same lines as the *Gipsy*, she was once specially chartered by the British Government to trade for one year between West Africa and the South American ports. She foundered in the Bristol Channel, September 1889, when homeward bound in heavy seas and gale force winds. Four of the crew and three passengers were saved in a ship's boat. Captain Coffey was usually in charge of her.

Before examining the final phase of the Steamship Company's involvement in the cross channel trade, an appreciation of the service they provided on the Suir and Barrow estuaries is worthwhile.

As we have seen, the New Ross and Duncannon services were inaugurated in 1837 with the paddle steamers *Shamrock* and *Duncannon*. P.S. *Shamrock* was a reliable and popular little steamer and in the mid 1840's she had a consort in the former Cork paddler *Maid of Erin*. She was retired after 30 years service and replaced by P.S. *Ida*, built at the Neptune works in 1867. *Ida* completed her maiden voyager in 1 hour, 10 mins. from Waterford to New Ross, accompanied by P.S. *Shamrock*. Both of these steamers got a great reception when they arrived together

on 31st January 1868. For 37 years the *Ida* gave excellent service to the people of Waterford and New Ross. On weekday mornings she left New Ross and returned from Waterford in the afternoon – her deck fare was six old pence (one shilling and three pence in 1834); with a cabin costing one shilling (two shillings in 1839). Along with passengers she carried pigs, sheep and turkeys upriver, and her mooring point was at the London Hulk near Reginald's Tower. Fondest memories of her in Waterford concern the Sunday trips or excursions downriver. A Waterford newspaper reports: "I have very pleasant memories of the shilling trips return every Sunday by steamer from Waterford to Dunmore East, and the splendid tea for eight pence at Galgey's or Shipsey's hotel at Dunmore. These trips were the best value that have ever been offered to Waterford residents. The boats *Ida* and *Vandeleur* left about mid-day or at 3 p.m. on alternate Sundays. We had three hours in Dunmore and reached Waterford at 10 p.m."

Captain Farrell (92) told me he sailed down the Suir on the *Ida* as a boy. A man by the name of "Friday", with one eye, played a melodeon box on the way up and down the river. The hat was then put round for a collection. The *Ida* stopped in Duncannon for about an hour to allow people to "stretch their legs". Along with the captain was a first mate, two men to handle ropes, two engineers and two firemen. The *Ida* did not have great power but because the paddles could be set to go in opposite directions she could 'turn on a penny', which allowed her to manoeuvre with ease. The Sunday excursions all-in price included barrels of beer. One of John Hurley's (the Bristol ship breakers) last purchase was the *Ida* in 1908 and she was dismantled at Clevedon Pill.

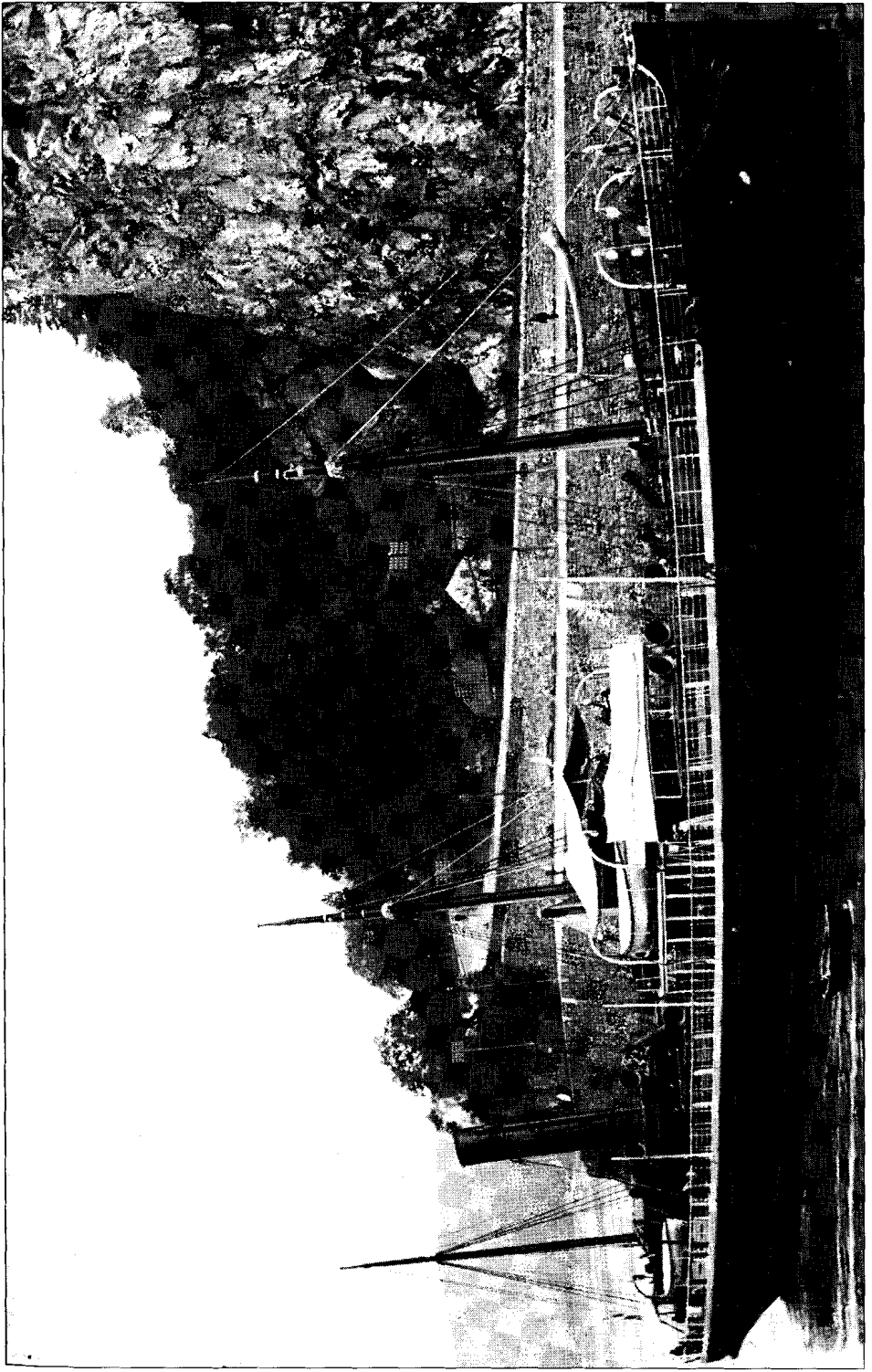
Waterford-Duncannon Service

P.S. Duncannon gave loyal service up to 1861, when she was replaced by the locally built *Tintern*. Again in the mid 1840's the *Duncannon* was partnered by *P.S. Taff* for about seven years, until the *Taff* was retired and ended up a hulk in Waterford. The *Tintern* traded between Duncannon-Waterford up to the mid 1870's when she was replaced by the locally built paddle steamer *Vandeleur*. The *Tintern* then became a relief steamer on the estuary runs, or a cross-channel packet on the Waterford-Bristol service. *P.S. Vandeleur* was built at the Neptune yard in 1866, was 147ft. long and at her launch was described as a beautiful new river steamer, with a very commodious saloon fitted with all the elegance of a modern drawing room.

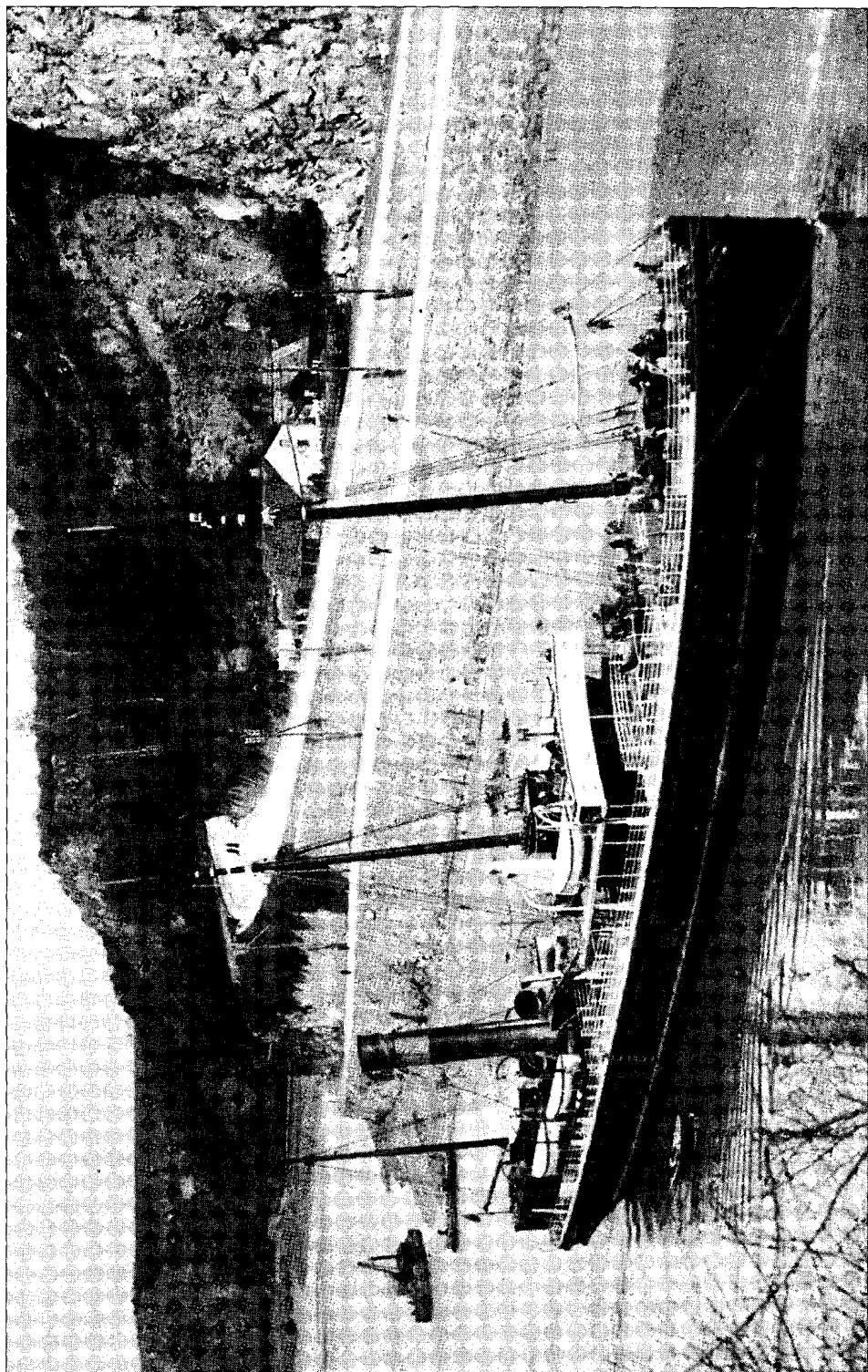
Destined initially for the Shannon estuary, it was appropriate that the *Vandeleur* was named after the Quaker planned co-op community in Clare, which lasted for five years, but which faded when *Vandeleur* became bankrupt. On her return to the Suir, she plied between Duncannon-Waterford up to 1906, when the service closed. Her cargoes from Duncannon included barley, pigs, sheep, and live turkeys before Christmas; while those from Waterford included coal from McCullough's; whiskey from Strangmans; and buyers from Dennys to the famous fairs held at Ballyhack.

By the late 1870s Waterford Steamship Company cross-channel fleet needed updating and replacement. *S.S. Gipsy* had been wrecked in the Avon and the relief steamer *Nora*, built in Cork 1861, was sold to the General Steam Navigation Company, London in 1876.

At this stage the Malcomsons were bankrupt – their Neptune Ironworks Shipyard



S.S. Reginald on the River Avon.



S.S. Dunbrody (built 1886); Twice ran aground on the Avon.

in severe decline. Compelled to go elsewhere, the London and Glasgow Shipbuilding Company of Glasgow was commissioned to build the next two vessels for Waterford Steamship Company. The 240ft. long *S.S. Reginald* was completed in 1878, followed by a similar looking vessel *S.S. Comeragh* in 1879. Fitted with compound engines by the builder *S.S. Reginald* gave 34 years continuous service before being sold on to the Clyde Shipping Company in 1912. She was subsequently sold to the Admiralty in September 1914, where she had a humble, although important part, in the famous naval engagement with the German Fleet at Scapa Flow. *Reginald* became a block ship when she was sunk to protect the sea approaches from the enemy. (My Grandfather could have witnessed her sinking).

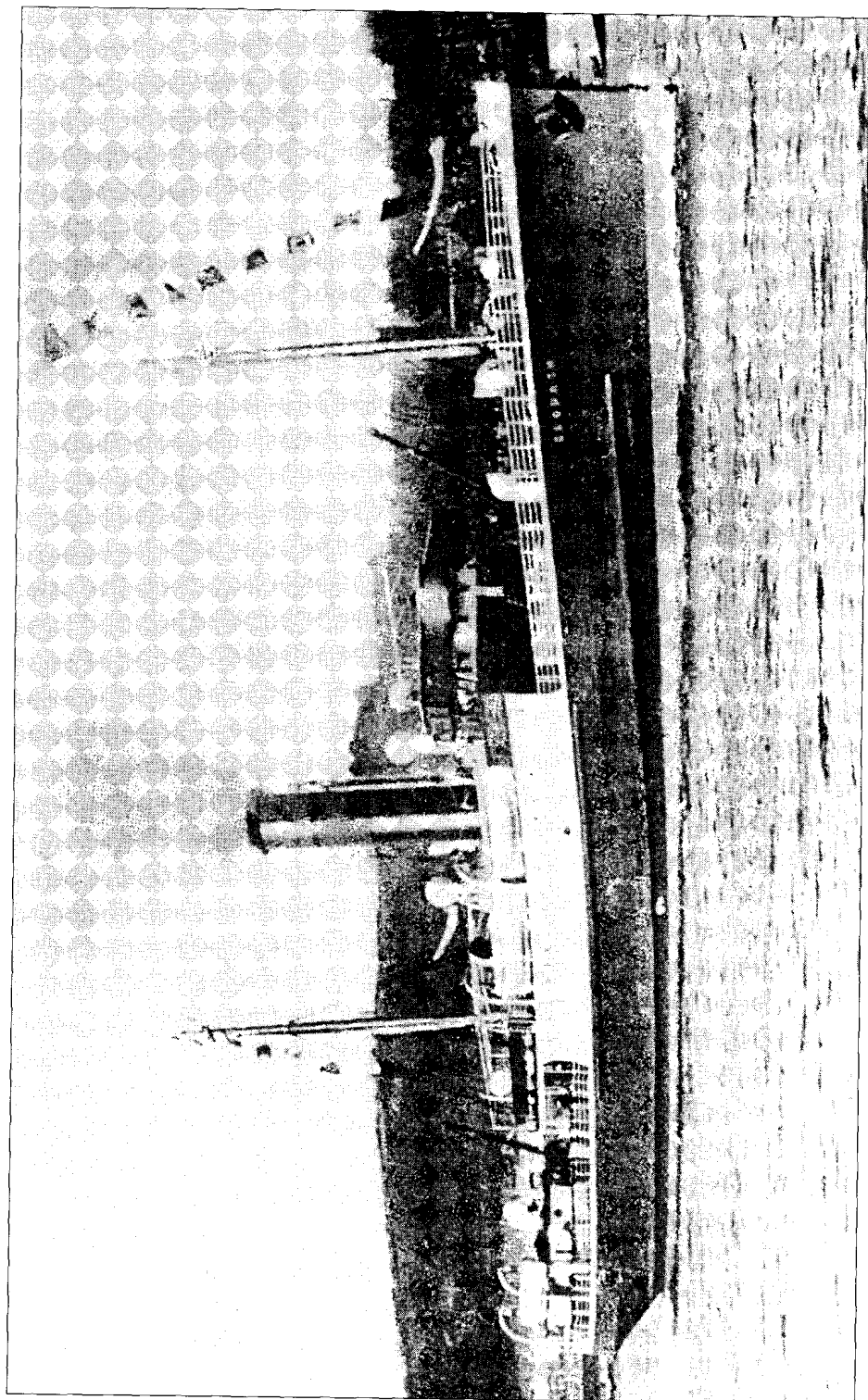
S.S. Comeragh was involved in an accident – a reasonably common affair – when competing with other vessels to be first into the Avon on a rising tide. The vessel with Captain Coffey in command, twenty-two crew, no passengers and a number of cattle entered the Avon on the early afternoon tide of 24th November 1886. At about 2.15 p.m. Captain Coffey judged the tide right for the *Comeragh* to move into the river, where she grounded along with the Cork Steamship Company's *Cormorant* close astern. The paddle steamer *Briton*, of shallower draught, then passed, and the wash of her paddles lifted the *Comeragh* clear, but the small packet *Ossian* coming up fast with the tide could not keep clear, and was driven across the *Comeragh*'s stem. *Comeragh* was broken up in 1906.

Seven years after completing the *Comeragh*, London and Glasgow Steamship Company launched the 940 ton *S.S. Dunbrody* in 1886. Ultra modern she was built with refrigerated cargo holds, which were lit by electricity. It was a fine three-masted cattle carrier with passenger accommodation which included a specially wide berth in a single state room for the comfort of a portly Lord Waterford, who frequently crossed the Irish sea in her. Again the Avon continued its jinx on Waterford ships, with the *Dunbrody* going ashore there *twice*. The most serious episode was on 23rd December 1896 when her bow became pinned on a rock by the falling tide. On the lower tide she presented an awkward salvage problem, there being no hope of lifting her off. It was boldly decided to blast the rock away from beneath her, risking damage to the hull. After blasting, she slid backwards into deeper water and partially sank, as had been foreseen. After her rescue, she continued on the cross-channel service, until the Clyde take-over; when she was renamed *Arklow*, giving almost another twenty years useful service.

S.S. Clodagh was the last vessel commissioned for the Waterford Steamship Company. Built in 1903 she was one of the finest ships on the coast with a cattle capacity of between 500-600 head and a certificate for 86 cabins and 74 steerage passengers. After her acquisition by the Clyde Steamship Company, she was renamed *Coningbeg* (after Coningbeg lightship off the Wexford Coast). Her career with the Clyde Company was relatively short, as she was sunk by a German submarine in December 1917, with the loss of all her crew, on the journey from Liverpool.

End of Waterford Steamship Company

Clyde Steamship Company had regular sailings from Waterford dating back to 1856 but wishing to extend their cross-channel interests was always a problem with two rivals at Waterford. It was agreed in 1912 to buy out their main rival, Waterford



S.S. *Clodagh* (built 1903): The last vessel commissioned for W.S.S. Co. As the *Coningbeg*, it was torpedoed with the loss of all on board, December 1917.

Steamship Company. Negotiations resulted in the purchase of Waterford Steamship Company's Liverpool and Bristol trades and their three steamers, *Clodagh*, *Dunbrody* and *Reginald*, for a total figure of £54,000. As we have seen *Reginald* ended up as a block ship, *Clodagh* became the ill-fated *Coningbeg*; and *Dunbrody* became *S.S. Arklow*, which continued to give impressive service up to 1931.

Before the take over, Waterford Steamship Company were offering the following services cross-channel.

Waterford-Liverpool: 15/- cabin, 7/6 deck (single fare), 25/- cabin (return)

Waterford-Bristol: 15/- cabin, 7/6 deck (single fare), 25/- cabin (return)

Children 10/- cabin, 4/- deck, 15/- cabin (return)

Excursions: July-Aug-Sept.

Waterford-Bristol: cabin return – 20/-

Waterford-Liverpool: cabin return – 20/- but for 15/- if you returned within the week.

There were other steamers owned by Waterford Steamship Company that plied between Waterford, Bristol and Liverpool, but were not in regular service for any length of time serving mainly as relief or stand-by vessels, e.g. *Ranger* 1846; *Diana* 1849; *Galtee* 1881 and *Menapia* 1892.

Conclusions

Waterford Steamship Company showed enterprise and innovation in being among the first owners to build steamers with saloons amidships, to discard the bowsprit and figure head, and to adopt the straight stem.

Malcomsons, the driving force behind Waterford Steamship Company, were probably the largest shipowners in the world in the early 1860s. And even though they lost their fortune within two generations (one less than the customary three), their business acumen, astuteness, and prestige made Waterford Steamship Company one of the strongest in the country.

Waterford Steamship Company and its predecessors gave Waterford a very early steam communication cross-channel, second only to Cork and Dublin. They were responsible for a new breed of sea captain and ships crew, which now included engineers and firemen. They were directly responsible for Waterford's only iron ship-building yard that launched some of the finest specimens of naval architecture this country has seen.

The Waterford Steamship Company's operation brought opportunity, vitality, and prosperity to a maritime centre of repute, to a noble quay and river, and to a people whose well being was always intrinsically linked to the trade and commerce that flowed in and out of the Harbour of the Sun, Cuan na Greine, our safe Haven, 'Vadre Fjord'.

Most of the ship details were obtained from the following:

Lloyds Registers.

Ships' List in *West Country Passenger Steamers* by Graham Farr.

Ships' List in D.B. McNeill's, *Irish Passenger Steamship Services* (1971), vol. 2, South of Ireland.

Waterford Custom House Registers 1833-55, 1855-1870 and 1870-1970.

Land Agitation in County Waterford, 1879-1882

Part 1

From Farmers' Club to Land League: The Politicisation of the Farmers, 1879-80

By *Donnchadh Ó Ceallacháin*

Introduction

BETWEEN the end of the Famine and the 1920s, Irish agriculture was transformed. These years were marked by a trend of increasing productivity, falling numbers working on the land, and alternating periods of growth and depression. The most important change during this period, however, was the fact that Irish farmers became proprietors of their own land, as opposed to being merely tenants.¹

From 1868 to 1876 there was an economic boom in Ireland with the value of agricultural output especially showing a steady rise, from £33.5 million to £43.7 million, with farmers enjoying a relatively good standard of living, despite the fact that rents were considered too high.² There was a gradual decline in tillage farming in large areas of the country (except in midland and some southern counties, including Waterford), as more and more farmers began to produce butter and livestock for the lucrative English market. Banks, and more importantly shopkeepers and traders, were willing to extend credit to farmers for a wide variety of goods.³

The harvest of 1877, however, marked the beginning of three years of sharp decline, culminating in the disastrous summer of 1879, which was the wettest and coldest on record. From March until September it rained two days out of three, and total agricultural output fell to £35.5m. The potato crop of 1879 partially failed, with only 1.1 million tons produced, a 55.9% drop on the previous year.⁴ For the second time within thirty years the threat of famine loomed. During this period also Irish produce began to face stiff competition in Britain from cheap North American grain and meat, and from Danish dairy products. According to one report, meat was being shipped from Chicago to Liverpool and was expected to go on sale at 2½d.

1. Cormac Ó Gráda, *Ireland Before and After the Famine: Explorations in Economic History, 1800-1925*, Manchester University Press (1993), p. 137.
2. T.W. Moody, *Davitt and the Irish Revolution*, Oxford University Press (1982), Appendix G1, p. 569.
3. Samuel Clark, *Social Origins of the Irish Land War*, Princeton University Press (1979), pp. 129-132.
4. Moody, *Davitt*, Appendix G2-3, pp. 570-571.

per lb., as opposed to Irish meat which was selling at 6½d. per lb.⁵ This threat from American imports was also evident in Ireland itself. In September 1879, for example, American beef was available in Waterford butcher shops.⁶ By early 1880, there was an "American Fresh Beef Store" in High Street in the city.⁷

There had been other periods of agricultural depression in Ireland after the Famine, especially during the late 1850s which were potentially more damaging to the country. However, the crisis of 1879/80 differed from previous depressions in a number of important ways. Reduced production did not lead to a rise in prices, as these were kept low by American competition.⁸ What made the depression culminating in 1879 stand out as a watershed in modern Irish history was that it marked the real beginning of the politicisation of tenant farmers – a trend which would continue intermittently until at least 1903. This was in contrast to previous depressions, when very little political activity took place. During the Great Famine, with the exception of a series of confused violent incidents in counties Waterford, Tipperary and Kilkenny, the country was remarkably peaceful.⁹

The west of Ireland was particularly badly affected by the economic crisis, and it was at Irishtown, County Mayo, that the first public meeting of the Land War took place, on an estate managed by the local Catholic Parish Priest. The immediate result of this action was a 25% reduction in rents.¹⁰ From then until 1882 a pattern of conflict between landowners and tenants was established, which gave rise to a countrywide mass movement, combining agrarian and nationalist demands for the first time.¹¹ Many historians do not accept that the increased distress caused by the agricultural recession was the primary reason for the emergence of the Land Campaign of 1879/82.¹² Beresford Ellis, for example, looks upon the events of 1879-82 as the organisation of existing "agrarian warfare into a National United Movement", which was later sold out by "opportunistic politicians".¹³ It can be generally accepted, however, that the depression acted as a catalyst which produced a new leadership and organisation to unite existing tenant right organisations and the Home Rule League into a populist movement for land reform.¹⁴

5. *Waterford News*, 18 July 1879.

6. *Ibid.*, 26 September 1879.

7. Advert in *Waterford Mail*, 3 February 1880.

8. L.M. Cullen; *An Economic History of Ireland Since 1660*, B.T. Batsford (London, 1987), pp. 148-149.

9. Dermot Power, "The Politicisation of the People? Strange Episodes in 1848-49", in Des Cowman and Donald Brady (eds.), *Teacht na bPrátaí Dubha: The Famine in Waterford, 1845-50*, Geography Publication (Dublin, 1995), pp. 291-310.

10. Gerald Moran, "Near Famine: The Crisis in the West of Ireland, 1879-82", in *Irish Studies*, No. 18, Spring 1997, pp. 14-21.

11. Philip Bull, *Land Politics and Nationalism, A Study of the Irish Land Question*, Gill and Macmillan (Dublin, 1996), pp. 96-97.

12. For a discussion of the historiography of the Land War, see Paul Bew, "The National Question, Land and 'Revisionism', Some Reflections", in D. George Boyce and Alan O'Day (eds.), *The Making of Modern Irish History, Revisionism and the Revisionist Controversy*, Routledge (London, 1996), pp. 90-99; and Philip Bull, *Land Politics and Nationalism, A Study of the Irish Land Question*, Gill and Macmillan (Dublin, 1996), pp. 73-75.

13. Peter Beresford Ellis, *A History of the Irish Working Class*, Pluto Press (London, 1985), pp. 152-53.

14. D. George Boyce, *Nineteenth Century Ireland: The Search for Stability*, Gill and Macmillan (Dublin 1990), p. 163.

In Waterford there had been outbursts of political activity, sometimes of a violent nature, before 1879. These, however, were usually very short lived. An attempt was made by Fenians to land arms near Ring in 1867.¹⁵ There were rumours of further Fenian arms landing through Waterford Port during the same year.¹⁶ Although the police escorting prisoners captured at Ring was attacked by a mob of 8,000 in Waterford City, this action, according to Robert Kee, was emotional rather than showing any definite support for the aims of extreme nationalism.¹⁷

It can be argued that the emergence of the land campaign was the first major period of concerted political action in Waterford after the Famine. In this article I will examine the series of events which led to the politicisation of Waterford farmers with the formation of a relatively conservative Farmers' Club in 1879, and its gradual transformation into (at times) a radical mass movement. Moreover the effects of the agricultural depression on that often neglected class, the rural labourer, will be considered.

Agricultural Depression in County Waterford

The *Waterford News* summed up the events of the year 1879 in the following way:

... an unpromising spring, a wet harsh summer, and the result was a harvest bad in the extreme ... farmers were impoverished, many of them utterly ruined.¹⁸

As in the rest of Ireland, agricultural production declined sharply in County Waterford in 1879. Waterford City was one of the main ports in the south of the country, and much employment had been created by the export of agricultural products from the general south-east region. With the onset of the agricultural depression, however, numbers working in the port declined, leading to severe distress among urban workers.¹⁹ These years were also marked by a general decline in commercial activity in the city, as it evidenced by the lack of activity of the Chamber of Commerce.²⁰

By early 1897 there was a growing alarm about the situation in the country. According to the *Waterford News*, "The general depression is making itself felt in agriculture", blaming low prices and keen competition from America.²¹ Andrew Kettle of the Central Tenants Defence Association mentioned the possibility of

15. Sylvester Murray, "The Fenian Landing at Helvic, 1867", in *Decies* 9, September 1978, pp. 34-43.
16. Donal Ó Lunnagh, "Suspected Importation of Fenian Guns Through the Port of Waterford", in *Decies* 22, January 1983, pp. 29-32.
17. Robert Kee, *Volume Two of the Green Flag: The Bold Fenian Men*, Quartet Books (London, 1976), pp. 43-44.
18. *Waterford News*, 2 January 1880.
19. Peter Solar, "The Agricultural Trade of the Port of Waterford, 1809-1909", in William Nolan and Thomas P. Power (eds.), *Waterford History and Society*, Geography Publications (Dublin, 1992), pp. 495-518. Solar gives detailed export figures compiled from the local commercial newspaper, *The Waterford Newsletter*, in the appendices to this article.
20. Des Cowman, *Perceptions and Promotions: The Role of the Waterford Chamber of Commerce, 1787-1987*, Waterford Chamber of Commerce (Waterford, 1988), p. 46.
21. *Waterford News*, 25 April 1879.

famine, and the *Freeman's Journal* prophesied that land agitation would soon become intense because of the continuing recession.²²

In an editorial in the *Munster Express* in April 1879 concern was expressed about the seriousness of the crisis. As a result of the failure of the previous three harvests, there were twenty-four farms in the county unoccupied.²³ In a report of the May fair in Waterford it was observed that demand had not yet improved in England, and that "the poor condition of the stock reflects the harsh season".²⁴ By the end of the harvest of 1879, farmers began to realise that they would make heavy losses for the third year in a row. Michael Anthony, a farmer and Poor Law Guardian from near Dungarvan, wrote to the *Munster Express* giving two examples from the west of the county of the losses farmers made on their wheat crop. One farmer lost £4 12s. 2d. on two acres; while another lost £6 2s. 4d. on four acres.²⁵

Farmers were also increasingly worried about the banks foreclosing on loans. A "Working Farmer" criticised the National Bank, for encouraging farmers to take out loans for improvements when times were good, but was now "pulling us up with a vengeance".²⁶ At the half yearly meeting of the board of the bank in January 1880, the Chairman admitted that "much misery had been caused by too liberal advances to Irish farmers during the prosperous times and the severity with which repayment has been required during the present season".²⁷ In 1880, in an editorial in the *Waterford Mail*, there was an attack on the banks for the "reckless credit" given to farmers during periods of prosperity and withdrawn with the onset of depression.²⁸ Clark points out that deposits in banks were falling between 1876 and 1880, and that the credit system in the country was almost paralysed.²⁹

However, in the report on the half yearly performance of the Bank of Ireland issued in December 1879 it was decided to pay a dividend of 10%, and the Chairman referred to "the great resources of the bank and the transient character of the present depression."³⁰ The Munster Bank was also able to pay a dividend of 10% for 1879.³¹ Deposits in the Waterford Savings Bank actually rose between 1874 and 1879 by £1,000.³² The *Waterford Mail* was to express concern about the fact that £34,000 of "Waterford money" was on deposit in the Savings Bank, and being "lent" to the government at 2½%, while the government would eventually agree to make loans to local bodies to provide employment at a "reduced" rate of 5%.³³

Shopkeepers, especially, were in a very difficult financial position. Many were facing ruin as there seemed to be no prospect of recovering debts owed to them by farmers. Even if they did pursue their debtors through the courts, in many cases

22. Moody, *Davitt*, p. 273.

23. *Munster Express*, 19 April 1879.

24. *Waterford News*, 9 April 1879.

25. *Munster Express*, 8 November 1879.

26. *Ibid.*, 19 April 1879.

27. *Waterford Mail*, 24 January 1880.

28. *Ibid.*, 3 September 1880.

29. Clark, *Social Origins*, p. 232.

30. *Munster Express*, 20 December 1879.

31. *Waterford Mail*, 20 January 1880.

32. *Ibid.*, 18 February 1880.

33. *Ibid.*, 21 February 1880.

there was little likelihood of being paid. Parnell and the Land League leadership recognised this fact, and always insisted that shopkeepers should be paid before landlords.³⁴ In September 1880 “A Shopkeeper” from Portlaw maintained that shopkeepers and traders had been the means of keeping the farmers alive during the worst periods of depression.³⁵

A “Tenant Farmer’s Son” from Fenor believed that the situation was never so gloomy, with free trade causing a general fall in prices.³⁶ One farmer stated at the Iverk Farming Society Show that the situation was worse than in ‘46 and ‘47. Then only the potato crop failed, while all the other crops flourished, and there was abundant cheap labour available to the farmers!³⁷ Landlords were also concerned about the depressed state of agriculture. In May 1879 Henry Villiers Stuart spoke on the deteriorating situation at a meeting of the Dungarvan District Agricultural Society.³⁸

There was a belief in some quarters that quality would have to improve if Irish agricultural products were going to be able to compete with foreign imports in the English market. This was especially true in the case of butter. Numerous articles appeared from time to time in national and local papers on the need to improve butter making skills.³⁹ However, many farmers were not very receptive to criticism. Great exception was taken to the comments of one Clonmel landlord, who maintained that farmers’ wives and daughters were unable to make butter fit enough to eat. He also blamed them for squandering farm incomes during the good years on fine clothes and pianos!⁴⁰ The Aylsbury Dairy Company of London began advertising to buy fresh cream delivered on board ship in Waterford by the farmers at 14d. per quart, instead of buying butter of often doubtful quality in local markets.⁴¹ At the dinner held after the Iverk Farming Society Show, when one of the judges addressed the audience composed mainly of farmers, and tried to point out to them why their exhibits were of such a low quality, he was interrupted by “noise” and shouts of “sit down”, with “uproarious shouting and striking of tables with sticks”. The President of the society, The Earl of Bessborough had to intervene personally to restore order!⁴²

In spite of any defects in the quality and marketing of Irish agricultural produce, it was generally recognised that one of the main problems of Irish farmers was rent. Unlike their counterparts in England, most Irish farmers greatly resented the fact that they had to pay rent to landlords. Folk memories of confiscation, as well as real or imagined historical grievances, were still very much part of the Irish psyche in the nineteenth century.⁴³ Rightly or wrongly landlords and their “rackrents” were

34. Clark, *Social Origins*, p. 240.

35. *Waterford Mail*, 24 September 1880.

36. *Munster Express*, 2 August 1879.

37. *Ibid.*, 11 October 1879.

38. *Ibid.*, 17 May 1879.

39. *Ibid.*, 25 January 1879, *Waterford News*, 23 May 1879.

40. *Waterford News*, 13 June 1879.

41. *Ibid.*, 17 January 1879.

42. *Munster Express*, 11 October 1879.

43. Dáithí Ó hÓgáin, “Nótaí ar Chromail i mBéaloidias na hÉireann”, in *Simsear, The Folklore Journal* No. 2, 1980, pp. 73-83.

“blamed” for the Great Famine, and according to some historians there was a determination among farmers not to “sit back as they had done in ‘47.”⁴⁴ One of the conclusions of the Devon Commission in Ireland in 1845 was that rents were too high and that Irish landlords were generally to blame for the situation in the country. This was often quoted during the later nineteenth century by nationalist politicians and by the nationalist press.⁴⁵

It is generally recognised that farmers as a whole did not suffer as a class because of the famine of 1845-50, unlike labourers whose numbers dropped by an estimated 73% in Ireland as a whole between 1841 and 1861.⁴⁶ In County Waterford, as elsewhere in the country, the famine victims were “primarily the cottiers and labourers and their dependants.”⁴⁷ By 1879 farmers realised that they would face ruin if the situation was not improved in some way, and they saw rent reductions as a right and as an instant solution to their immediate problems.⁴⁸ Although many Waterford farmers were lucky enough to have leases and thus enjoyed fixed rents, many others were tenants from year to year and had no such security. The practice of tenants bidding against each other for farms still continued, with the land going to whoever could pay the highest rent.

Agitation Begins – the Waterford Farmers’ Club

The four largest Waterford landowners, the Marquess of Waterford, Henry Villiers Stuart, the Duke of Devonshire and Count de La Poer of Gurteen, had a very good reputation among their tenants.⁴⁹ The Villiers Stuarts for example were remembered as very kind and lenient landlords in the oral history of the Ring area.⁵⁰ In the opinion of one of the older inhabitants of Clashmore, interviewed in the 1930’s: “Ní rabhador ró-olc”.⁵¹ In April 1879 it was reported in *The Freeman* that Henry Villiers Stuart had reduced rents to farmers in mountain regions by 15% due to the “unfavourable season”, which was described by the paper as “a noble and generous act”.⁵² The Beresfords were also regarded as very generous and popular landlords. In the first general election employing a secret ballot, Lord Charles

44. D. George Boyce, *Nineteenth Century Ireland*, p. 164.

45. *Evidence Taken Before Her Majesty’s Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of the Law and Practice in Respect to the Occupation of Land in Ireland* (London, 1845), Summary, p. 45.

46. Boyle, “A Marginal Figure: The Irish Labourer”, in Samuel Clark and James S. Donnelly Jr. (eds.), *Irish Peasants, Violence and Political Unrest, 1780-1914*, Gill and Macmillan (London, 1983), p. 312; and Caoimhín Ó Danachair, “Cottier and Landlord in Pre-Famine Ireland”, in *Béaloidéas* 48-49, 1980-81, pp. 154-165.

47. Jack Burtchaell, “The Demographic Impact of the Famine” in Des Cowman and Donald Brady (eds.); *Teacht na bPrátaí Dubha: The Famine in County Waterford, 1845-50*, Geography Publications (Dublin, 1995), p. 270.

48. Clark, *Social Origins of the Irish Land War*, p. 235.

49. See John Mulholland, “County Waterford Landowners 100 Years Ago”, in *Decies* 4, Feb. 1977, p. 27, and A.H. Hussey de Brugh, *The Landowners of Ireland, An Alphabetical List of the Owners of Estates of 500 Acres or £500 Valuation and Upwards in Ireland, with the Acreage and Valuation in each County*, Hodges Foster and Figgis (Dublin, 1878).

50. Sylvester Murry, “Life in Ring in the Nineteenth Century”, in *Decies* 13, Jan. 1980, pp. 50-57.

51. C.B.É., S.641: 445 ... (“They were not too bad”).

52. Reported in the *Waterford News*, 25 April 1879.

Beresford, brother of the Marquess of Waterford, was elected as a Conservative M.P. for the county in 1876. However, in the folklore collected in the Stradbally area is the following verse, said to have been composed by a farmer after having been evicted by the Beresford family:

The Curraghmore steeple looms up high,
Above Clonagam where the Beresfords lie,
Do the mouldering tyrants at this house know
How their cruel deeds fill the land with woe?⁵³

On the Duke of Devonshire's estates rents were moderate and the tenants' interest in their holdings was recognised. During much of the 19th century, on average 4.9% of the estate income was donated in the form of grants to local enterprises and to charities. Between 1871 and 1883 only nine tenants were evicted for non-payment of rent.⁵⁴ In April 1880, when the depression was at its height, and agitation was growing, there was still "great rejoicing" at the arrival of the Duke at Lismore Castle, with the local brass band playing and tar barrels burning on the bridge.⁵⁵

The first call for general rent reductions in county Waterford was in an Editorial in the *Munster Express*, which stated that landlords must share in the losses which had been incurred by farmers.⁵⁶

By 1879, Farmers' Clubs had been established in many parts of the country, loosely grouped together under the umbrella of the Central Tenants Defence Association, which was led by Andrew Kettle, a large progressive Co. Dublin farmer, and a strong admirer of Charles Stewart Parnell. After the establishment of the Irish National Land League in October 1879, Kettle, under Parnell's influence, was able to convince the Central Tenants Defence Association to amalgamate with it. The policies of the Land League were to secure the immediate reduction of rents and eventual "ownership of the soil by the occupiers".⁵⁷

In the meantime a small meeting was held in Kilmacthomas in May '79 to discuss the formation of a Farmers' Club for the county. Among those attending were Joseph Fisher, T.C., P.L.G., member of the Central Tenants Defence Association and owner of the *Munster Express* and the *Waterford Mail and Daily Telegraph*; Michael Wall and Michael Anthony, farmers from Dungarvan; John O'Callaghan a farmer from Kilmacthomas; and Aldermen Redmond and Mahony, merchants from Waterford.⁵⁸ Fr. Casey, the radical Catholic curate in Kilrossanty, chaired the meeting.⁵⁹ Joseph Fisher, already the author of three books on the land question in Ireland, spoke at length on the history of land ownership and called for peasant

53. C.B.É., S.649: 123.

54. Lindsay Proudfoot, "The Management of a Great Estate: Patronage, Income and Expenditure on the Duke of Devonshire's Irish Property, c. 1816 to 1891", in *Ir. Econ. Soc. Hist.* XIII (1986), pp. 32-55.

55. *Waterford Mail*, 20 April 1880.

56. *Munster Express*, 26 April 1879.

57. F.S.L. Lyons, *Charles Stewart Parnell* (London, 1978), pp. 98-100.

58. See Edwin Garrow, "A Note on Waterford Newspapers and the Fisher Family", unpublished typescript, WML 29/36.

59. Shelia and Seán Murphy, *The Comeraghs – Fact and Famine* (1975), pp. 56-68.

proprietorship, as in other European countries. It was generally regretted that none of the landlords of the county were present, and with the exception of Fr. Casey no clergymen attended.⁶⁰ It was decided at the meeting to establish the County of Waterford Central Independent Farmers' Club. Its aims were to obtain a 15% reduction in rents, fixity of tenure, rents by arbitration and a right of sale (otherwise known as the 3 F's, fair rents, fixity of tenure and free sale). Afterwards those at the meeting dined in Walshe's Hotel with "the Portlaw Brass Band in attendance during the meal!"⁶¹

In June a further meeting of the Farmers' Club was held in Dungarvan to enrol members. Letters of support were read from the Catholic clergy, although again it was noted that none were in attendance. The situation in the county was described as "being worse than the famine". Many of those felt that it was the duty of the landlords to join with their tenants in pressing the government for a proper land bill, protection from American competition and to grant general rent reductions. It was decided not elect a committee until further meetings were held in Waterford and Lismore.⁶²

The reaction of landlords to the formation of the Club was in general hostile from the beginning, although at a meeting of the Dungarvan Poor Law Guardians, Henry Villiers Stuart congratulated the farmers on "the general tone of the meeting and the moderation which characterised the proceedings". However, Nicholas Power O'Shee of Kilmacthomas probably reflected the opinions of the majority of the landowners, stating that he did not think that "a temperate discussion of the question was probable at any such meeting", and challenged the Club to produce evidence that the agricultural depression was caused by landlords raising rents. He believed that the farmers should have saved during the good years instead of squandering their money.⁶³

Throughout June more and more letters began to appear in the local press on the Land Question. "A Farmer" from Glенаheiry praised the establishment of the Club, criticised several Waterford newspapers for ignoring it, and also criticised Catholic priests in the county for not giving it their full support. Whether as a result of the formation of the Club or not, some landlords began to offer their tenants rent reductions. Sir Charles Edward Kennedy gave a 25% reduction in the rents on his Waterford estate. Gerald Fitzgerald of the Island also gave reductions to his tenants.⁶⁴

However, in June the first signs of defiance began to appear. When the agent for the land owned by the College of Physicians arrived in Bonmahon to collect the rent, the tenants offered him 75% only, stating that they were unable to pay more. This he refused to accept; so none of the tenants paid him anything.⁶⁵

60. *Munster Express*, 31 May 1879.

61. *Waterford News*, 30 May 1879.

62. *Ibid.*, 13 June 1879.

63. *Ibid.*, 20 June 1879.

64. *The Munster Express*, 7 June 1879. For more information on Gerald Fitzgerald see Tom Dooley, "From Anglo-Norman Demesne to Modern Luxury Hotel: The Story of Little Island, Co. Waterford", *Decies* 52 (1996), pp. 46-47.

65. *Munster Express*, 14 June 1879.

On the 8th June a land meeting was held in Westport, Co. Mayo. It was addressed by Davitt and Parnell and was given wide coverage in the national and local press, unlike the Irishtown meeting of April which had been almost totally ignored. According to the account in the *Munster Express*, Davitt called for the ownership of the land by the people, and exhorted the crowd to follow the example of the Zulus who had recently destroyed a British army at Isandhlwana in South Africa. Parnell addressed the meeting with his famous statement that was repeated many times after that: "You must show the landlords that you intend to hold a firm grip on your homesteads and lands. You must not allow yourselves to be disposed as you were disposed in 1847 ... you must not let your small holdings be turned into large ones". It was estimated that 4,000 attended, in spite of the rain and a warning from Archbishop McHale of Tuam against "a few unknown strolling men", urging Mayo Catholics "to be guided, as of old, by their faithful allies, the priests".⁶⁶ The *Waterford News* seemed very much alarmed by the remarks of Parnell and Davitt and it hoped that the Waterford Farmers' Club meetings would not be as acrimonious, stating that "the worst enemies to farmers are extreme unprincipled 'spouters' like whom the great Archbishop of Tuam had recently to condemn in the west".⁶⁷

In fact at this stage Waterford seemed to be taking a very moderate line on the land question. It was decided by the Farmers' Club to support the Farmers' Alliance which was being established in England as a pressure group to represent farming interests throughout Great Britain and Ireland. Although Joseph Fisher would have been considered one of the more radical of the Club leaders, at this stage he seemed to have paid little attention to the revolutionary policies of the Mayo Land League under Davitt. In fact Fisher was sent as the Waterford delegate to the inaugural meeting of the Farmers' Alliance in London on 2nd July.⁶⁸ The *Munster Express* carried a full report on the Farmers' Alliance meeting, and Joseph Fisher's rather lengthy speech. He stated that he represented a Farmers' Club which approved of the aims of the Alliance, and which rejoiced in the fact that the new organisation hoped to unite the farmers of England, Scotland and Ireland. He also seemed to be distancing the Waterford farmers from the extreme statements of Davitt and Parnell, concluding: "We do not seek for class legislation – but we are engaged in an association that will conduce to the wealth, the power and the greatness of the empire".⁶⁹

A further meeting of the Farmers' Club was held in Waterford in July. In contrast to the growing agitation in other parts of the country, the Waterford farmers were still very moderate. Michael Anthony of Dungarvan was glad to see the farmers of the entire United Kingdom uniting together. Mr. Dennis, a large farmer near the city seemed to fear the involvement of labourers in the Club, believing that any action should be confined to farmers alone. In his opinion the poverty of the labourers was of their own making: "They had brought the wretched state upon themselves". In fact he believed that their wages should be reduced! Joseph Fisher, however, was

66. Moody, *Davitt*, p. 308.

67. *Waterford News*, 4 July 1879.

68. *Munster Express*, 28 June 1879.

69. *Ibid.*, 5 July 1879.

very quick to defend the labourers, and stated that their average earnings of 10s. a week was hardly sufficient to support a family. It was decided to hold a "monster meeting" on the 3rd August in Dungarvan.⁷⁰

As preparations went ahead for the meeting in Dungarvan, disturbing reports began to appear in the press from different parts of the country on the state of the potato crop. Cases of potato blight, especially in the west, began to be reported throughout the summer. Then, on the 2nd August, the day before the Dungarvan Monster Meeting, blight was reported in the south east for the first time. It was stated that on the previous Wednesday, blight had appeared overnight in south Kilkenny. It had spread since, and was now in "every third field".⁷¹ Later in the month it was stated that "rumours of blight prevail".⁷² At the end of August the blight seemed to be spreading.⁷³ At the beginning of October according to the *News*:

The potatoes may be said to be gone. The few that are in it are like marbles. A fellow would be hungry before he could dig his dinner".⁷⁴

It must have seemed that 1845 was repeating itself.

Monster Meetings and Growing Militancy

The first public land demonstration in County Waterford was held in Dungarvan, on Sunday, 3rd August. Large crowds attended, with several bands and groups travelling from Lismore, Cappoquin and Waterford. None of the Waterford M.P.s or clergy were there, although letters of support were read at the meeting from the Catholic Bishop of the diocese and the clergy of the parish of Dungarvan. The Parish Priest, Fr. Cleary, stated in his letter that the priests were with the people "in heart and soul", but asked those attending the meeting "to be just, tolerant and considerate for the feelings of landlords". Letters of support were also received from Joseph Fisher, Parnell, Joseph Biggar and Villiers Stuart. The main resolution was a call for rent reductions in view of the disastrous situation. It was felt that there was a need for unity between landlord, tenant and labourer. It was also resolved to thank those landlords who had already given rent reductions; that nobody should take a farm from which another had been evicted; and that perhaps a tenant farmer should be returned for parliament at the next election.⁷⁵ The only excitement came at the end of the meeting when Michael Wyse was invited to speak. After expressing some surprise at being asked to address the crowd, he then got carried away. He spoke of the Wyse family and what they had done for Ireland in the past. He asked where were the Beresfords – they had been prepared to fight for Irish independence in 1782, but had now deserted the cause! He was disappointed that Villiers Stuart was not present – "It was not for that their forefathers worked for in '26!" Then he went on to mention John Mitchell and Thomas Francis Meagher, and although his remarks

70. Ibid., 19 July 1879.

71. Ibid., 2 August 1879.

72. Ibid., *Waterford News*, 22 August 1845.

73. Ibid., 29 August 1879.

74. Ibid., 3 October 1879.

75. Ibid., 8 August 1879.

were met with "great cheering", he was silenced at this stage by Michael Anthony (a supporter and tenant of Villiers Stuart), who maintained that the meeting should be strictly non-political.

There was general praise for the Dungarvan meeting in the local press. The *Waterford News* praised the meeting for its moderation, stating that landlords, farmers, traders and merchants must unite to save the country. The *Munster Express* was happy that the meeting was organised by the "farmers and working classes", and hoped that the coming general election would give farmers a chance to elect their own M.P.s.⁷⁶

After the Dungarvan meeting many more landlords began to grant rent reductions. Thomas Sherlock of Carrigmona was praised for reducing rents by between 20% and 30%. The Marquess of Ely gave reductions of from 10% to 20%.⁷⁷ Archbishop Trench reduced rents on his land near Dungarvan by 25%. In October Nicholas Power O'Shee, Robert Thomas Carew of Ballinamona, the Duke of Devonshire, Sir Edward Kennedy, James Howlett, Major O'Gorman M.P., Lord Ashtown of Glenaheiry, and Captain Armstrong of Ballydavid House all gave rent reductions to their tenants.⁷⁸

Accounts were still appearing in the local press of the good relations between landowners and tenants in Waterford, although there were signs of more troubled times. When Captain William de La Poer and his bride returned to Kilsheelan from honeymoon in Killarney they were welcomed by the tenants and the Kilsheelan Fife and Drum Band, and "all the festivities passed off very peacefully and the services of the police who were present were not needed". The very mention of police being present, however, seems to indicate that there were fears in certain sections of society of growing dissatisfaction in the county.⁷⁹ Lord Waterford was described as a model landlord by the *Irish Times*, stating that there would be little agitation in the country if other Irish landlords followed his example.⁸⁰ It was reported that when one of Villiers Stuart's tenants had to sell everything, including his horse to pay the rent, Villiers Stuart returned all the money to him and gave him a new horse as well!⁸¹ Showing that a paternalistic view of landlord tenant relations still existed in the county, Dennis Slattery, who chaired a Farmers' Club meeting in Dungarvan, stated that the landlords should be "the father of his tenants".⁸²

However, many landlords were slow to grant any reductions. In September 1879 the tenant farmers on the Waterford Corporation lands called for a rent reduction, but this was refused.⁸³ By December the Corporation still had not granted reductions.⁸⁴ In November twenty two tenants of Sir Henry Page Turner Barron in Ring sent him a memorial through his agent Newport Barron, signed by the Parish Priest, asking for the rents to be reduced. It ended with the following plea;

76. *Munster Express*, 9 August 1879.

77. *Ibid.*, 23 August 1879.

78. *Waterford News*, 31 October 1879.

79. *Munster Express*, 20 September 1879.

80. *Waterford News*, 10 October 1879.

81. *Ibid.*, 5 December 1879.

82. *Munster Express*, 27 September 1879.

83. *Waterford News*, 12 September 1879.

84. *Munster Express*, 6 December 1879.

... heart rending to behold the state of the weather, crops cut but not saved, and as we write, rotting under the downpour of Heaven. How are the rents to be paid? We ask to take our position into consideration. We do not wish to be considered bad tenants while circumstances enable us. We hope that we proved ourselves punctual honest and improving. We now appeal to his love of justice and humanity to grant us an allowance on our rents.

The agent sent his sympathy, but was unable to help. He wrote to the tenants stating that "if you think your holdings unprofitable and desire to relinquish them by mutual agreement, you will receive from your landlord every facility and consideration".⁸⁵

Also in December the Waterford Farmers' Club drew the attention of the landlords of the county "to the grave responsibility they are assuming because of their apathy ... which goes to prove that as long as the county is quiet they will continue to expect high rents".⁸⁶ In November the *Munster Express* published a list of Waterford landlords who had granted rent reductions to their tenants, commenting that "it is disappointing to find so few of the County Waterford landlords have come forward to make reductions".⁸⁷

Even though the Irish National Land League was founded in Dublin in October 1879, and amalgamated with the Central Tenants' Defence Association two months later, the County Waterford Farmers' Club did not become a branch of the Land League until mid 1880. After the Dungarvan meeting in August, no other public demonstration was held in Waterford during 1879. Club meetings were held in Dungarvan at regular intervals, where resolutions were passed calling for rent reductions, praising landlords who had granted them, and calling on the government to do something about foreign competition. Very little concern was expressed about the plight of farm labourers or the urban unemployed. Occasional calls for rent reductions in urban areas were ignored.

At a Club meeting in December in Dungarvan, there was some discussion on the fact that, with a few exceptions, none of the Waterford clergy had joined the movement; and that no farmers from the Lismore area had attended the meetings, although invited to do so. A voice from the crowd was heard to shout; "No wonder they are like that when their own clergy hold aloof and will not encourage them". Michael Anthony, who was in the Chair for the meeting, agreed that unlike other areas the local clergy were not supporting the Farmers' Club, although nothing was said or done at the meetings that they could object to.⁸⁸ Concerning the situation in Lismore, according to one of those present: "It is too much under Castle influence ... no use holding a meeting there". However, Joseph Fisher was of the opinion that a meeting should be held in the district. Lismore Castle tenants might be afraid to attend a meeting but, in his opinion, their sympathies were with the movement. It was decided to hold a meeting in the town on the 14th January.⁸⁹

85. Ibid., 22 November 1879.

86. *Waterford News*, 17 December 1879.

87. *Munster Express*, 22 November 1879.

88. *Waterford News*, 24 December 1879.

89. *Munster Express*, 20 December 1879.

The most radical of the Club leaders was Joseph Fisher. He had already outlined his views on the land question in a number of publications, and continued to promote them in his two newspapers, and at meetings of the Farmers' Club, the Waterford Board of Guardians and Waterford Corporation.⁹⁰ His main policies were the "3 Fs" (fair rent, fixity of tenure and free sale, with Griffith's Valuation the basis of fair rent), and eventual peasant proprietorship through government aided purchase of farms.⁹¹ He was opposed to violent revolution, rejecting claims of landowners and some Catholic bishops and priests that the land movement was communist. He was also advocating that Waterford farmers should not elect landlords like Lord Charles Beresford or Henry Villiers Stuart to Parliament in the coming election.

It was expected that Parliament would be dissolved sometime in 1880. Lord Charles Beresford had been elected as a Conservative member for the county in 1876. Although he was very popular, held liberal views, and constantly supported Catholic Church teaching in all matters, he would not have been regarded as an ideal tenant farmers' candidate.⁹² It was rumoured that Villiers Stuart would stand for election as a Liberal at the coming election, since he had recently failed to secure his father's seat in the House of Lords. Fisher himself hoped to be the Farmers' Club candidate, according to a "Press Association Telegram" in the *Munster Express*.⁹³

In spite of meetings, resolutions and speeches the Farmers' Club had not yet begun to organise agitation. Very few agrarian outrages took place in the county during 1879, in contrast to other areas, with the Waterford police reluctant to become involved in evictions. It was stated at Portlaw Petty Sessions that "these abnormal duties should not be imposed upon the police".⁹⁴ In March the burning of a fox cover belonging to Lord Waterford was considered a serious outrage!⁹⁵ Where evictions did occur, there were few reports of violence. An exception, however, was the case of Mary Connors of Ring, who was charged with obstructing an eviction on the 8 of October. Constable Sullivan stated at Dungarvan Petty Sessions that she led a "large mob", and addressing them in Irish, urged them to stone the police. Constable Sullivan (who must have been an Irish speaker), also stated that she used "very bad language"!⁹⁶ There were some reports of hay stacks being burned.⁹⁷ In October a house occupied by a caretaker on a farm in Kilcohan was maliciously burned.⁹⁸ At Dungarvan Petty Sessions in November, a man and his wife were

90. Joseph Fisher, *The History of Landholding in Ireland*, Longman's Green and Co. (London, 1877), is an expansion of a paper he read before the Royal Historical Society in 1876; and *The Case of Ireland*, Ridgeway (London, 1863).

91. *Griffith's Valuation*, a survey of land and property in Ireland, carried out between 1847 and 1865 for purposes of local taxation. A valuation book was produced for each Poor Law Union.

92. Mark Bence-Jones, *Twilight of the Ascendancy* (London, 1993), p. 17.

93. *Munster Express*, 22 November 1879.

94. *Ibid.*, 12 July 1879.

95. *Ibid.*, 8 March 1879.

96. *Waterford News*, 17 October 1879.

97. *Munster Express*, 27 September 1879.

98. *Ibid.*, 1 November 1879.

charged with "rescuing" a cow which had been seized by bailiffs.⁹⁹ In December at Dungarvan Petty Sessions there were "a couple of undefended ejectment cases".¹⁰⁰

The main success of the Farmers' Club during 1879 was in supporting the Widow Walsh of Ballinaparka against her landlord, Thomas Fitzgerald, for illegal distraint of goods in lieu of one years rent. This case was regarded as of vital importance in the struggle against unjust landlords, and it was decided to use the entire funds of the club in legal fees.¹⁰¹ Eventually the Widow Walsh won her case, and was awarded £400 in damages.¹⁰²

Labourers

In spite of the mounting debts of the tenant farmers and their inability to pay rents to their landlords, it was the class of labourers and cottiers who bore the brunt of the suffering. During the years of depression, outdoor relief distributed by the Poor Law Unions in Ireland rose by 100%.¹⁰³ Although conditions of Waterford labourers did improve after the Famine, with wages rising by 80% between 1849 and 1869, their main grievances remained unaddressed.¹⁰⁴ In oral history collected in Kilishal, Capagh, is the following description given in court by a labourer of the food he was supplied with by his employer:

Well, me Lord, a Ghiúistís, salt upon water and male upon that, agus a Ghiúistís na n-árann (and my dear justice), what kind of eating is that?¹⁰⁵

Henry Villiers Stuart described the average labourer's home in west Waterford as follows: "Walls and floors of mud, roofs of rotten thatch, one wretched chamber". In his opinion there was very little effort being made to better labourers' living conditions because they had no votes.¹⁰⁶ It would not be until the final stage of the land agitation in the 1890's that the aspirations of small farmers and labourers would be begun to be fulfilled.¹⁰⁷

For a minority of labourers, employed directly by landowners on the large well managed estates, life could be reasonably comfortable. According to one report:

There is no estate in Ireland in which the comforts of the labourer are more studied and looked after than on the Duke of Devonshire's estate.

Slate rooted cottages had been built for the estate workers, and prizes were given annually for the cleanest cottage.¹⁰⁸

99. *Ibid.*, 22 November 1879.

100. *Ibid.*, 20 December 1879.

101. *Waterford News*, 10 October 1879, 24 October 1879, 24 December 1879.

102. *Waterford Mail*, 9 February 1880.

103. Clark, *Social Origins*, p. 243.

104. Emmet O'Connor, *A Labour History of Waterford*, Waterford Council of Trade Unions (Waterford, 1989), pp. 81-82.

105. *C.B.É.*, S. 645: 50.

106. *Waterford News*, 18 June 1880.

107. K. Theodore Hoppen, *Ireland Since 1800, Conflict and Conformity*, Longman (London, 1989), p. 99.

108. *Waterford News*, 30 December 1880.

Attempts to organise a union for labourers during the mid nineteenth century were not successful. In December 1865, Philip Frances Johnson founded the Kanturk Labour Club, and the movement spread to other Munster counties, including Waterford. In 1866 the Irish Agricultural Labourers' Union was founded by Johnson in Kanturk with Isaac Butt as President. However, the union was never very effective in furthering the cause of labourers, and after 1877 Johnson became interested in emigration as a solution to labourers' problems. In 1879 he joined the Executive of the Land League.¹⁰⁹

In spite of the failed attempts to organise the labourers, "spontaneous action" with regard to wages did occur from time to time. At a hiring fair in Carrick in September 1880, one labourer, Thomas Brien, agreed to work for a farmer for 7s. 6d. a week instead of 8s. On hearing of this, another labourer hit Brien on the head with his spade. When he was arrested he told the policeman that he was sorry that he had not done more damage.¹¹⁰ It was not to be until the mid 1880's that Waterford labourers made any serious attempt to organise, and then the movement was short lived.¹¹¹ A labourers' strike took place in Ballyduff for more wages in 1880, but was settled without any violence.¹¹² Although lip service was paid to their needs by the Land League and Farmers' Clubs, in general they got very little practical support.

As a result of three bad harvests many labourers faced unemployment and destitution. With the partial failure of the potato crop in 1879, they faced starvation. Although later during the crisis relief would be provided by a variety of national and international bodies, and by government agencies, in 1879 the only solution was either the workhouse, or the somewhat haphazard efforts of local charitable organisations. Emigration was always an option, if all else failed. Between 1851 and 1871, 3,500 left county Waterford each year. By 1881 this had risen to 8,200.¹¹³

Although there was still employment in the Portlaw cotton factory, and in Lord Waterford's tweed factory in Kilmacthomas, the copper mines at Knockmahon had closed. Many of the miners emigrated to Montana in the United States, but those who remained were living in conditions of extreme destitution. An account in *The Mining Journal* of 1878 stated:

The area was now almost deserted and the misery and wretchedness of the people that survived was painful almost beyond description ... They are in a state of destitution to amount almost to starvation.¹¹⁴

In January 1879 the streets of Waterford city were reported to be "crowded with men out of work".¹¹⁵ More ominous signs of possible famine were also being

109. Pamela Horn, "The National Agricultural Labourers' Union of Ireland", in *Irish Historical Studies* XVII, No. 13 (March 1971), pp. 340-352, and J.S. Donnelly; *The Land and the People of Nineteenth Century Cork*, pp. 236-238.

110. *Waterford Mail*, 11 September 1880.

111. O'Connor, *Labour History*, p. 83.

112. Patrick P. Power; *History of Waterford City and County*, Mercier Press (Dublin, 1990), p. 202.

113. Thomas A. O'Donoghue, "The Development of the Ring Fishing: 1846 to 1864", in *Decies* 16, January 1981, pp. 3-14.

114. Des Cowman, "Survival, Statistics and Structures: Knockmahon Copper Mines, 1850-1878", in *Decies* 46, Autumn 1992, p. 16.

115. *Waterford News*, 31 January 1879.

reported. In Kilshelan in November 1879, a pregnant woman was reported to have died of starvation and exhaustion on the road between Carrick and Clonmel.¹¹⁶

A number of private charities were providing relief in Waterford, although mainly in urban areas. The Committee of the Dungarvan Charity Fund distributed tickets for groceries and coal during Christmas 1878. At Christmas a bazaar was organised for the Sisters of Charity in Waterford City.¹¹⁷ In Dungarvan an "entertainment" was held for the St. Vincent de Society.¹¹⁸ However, in Waterford City it was decided to suspend the operation of the Poor Relief Committee because of the "good weather and an increase in outdoor employment among the working classes". They had collected £360, but it was observed that nothing was donated by any of the large companies of the city.¹¹⁹

In announcing their annual collection May 1879, the Waterford St. Vincent de Paul Society gave an account of their work in the city during the previous year. They maintained four infant schools in charge of "poor widows", distributed 6,941 loaves of bread, 575 stones of meal, 51 tons of coal and 161 straw beds.¹²⁰ There was praise for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Lismore at a Board of Guardians meeting. As a result of their work many people were kept out of the workhouse – thus saving money on the rates.¹²¹ After an appeal from the Society in the town, Mr. Currey, agent of the Duke of Devonshire provided employment for thirty six labourers. In Kilmacthomas £28 was collected at a concert held for the alleviation of distress in the district.¹²² During February a concert was held in Clonea for the relief of the poor.¹²³ In Dungarvan it was reported at a meeting of the Poor Law Guardians that the funds of the local St. Vincent de Paul Society were inadequate to relieve "the intense destitution that prevails in the town".¹²⁴ It was noticed that there was a decrease in drunkenness in Waterford City due to the increasing poverty.¹²⁵

In October the *Waterford News* commented on the lack of employment in the city. The paper hoped that the wealthy bodies and citizens would provide work and keep people from "the big house of despair on John's Hill" (the workhouse).¹²⁶ By December the Waterford Poor Relief Committee decided to distribute the £100 remaining in the fund since they had suspended operations the previous January. It was decided to give £70 to the St. Vincent de Paul Society, and £25 to the Church of Ireland Sick and Indigent Relief Society. At the same meeting a rather strange letter was read from the Sons of Saint Patrick in Cincinnati "who on hearing of the great distress in some parts of our Mother Country and remembering the dreadful suffering of '46 and '47", asked for information on distress in the region and how best help could be sent. There followed an interesting discussion on how to get as

116. *Munster Express*, 31 January 1879.

117. *Ibid.*, 4 January 1879.

118. *Waterford News*, 10 January 1879.

119. *Ibid.*, 17 January 1879.

120. *Ibid.*, 2 May 1879.

121. *Munster Express*, 18 January 1879.

122. *Waterford News*, 24 January 1879.

123. *Munster Express*, 1 March 1879.

124. *Waterford News*, 24 January 1879.

125. *Munster Express*, 15 March 1879.

126. *Waterford News*, 10 October 1879.

much relief as possible without admitting that the situation in the south east was not as bad as in Connemara! However, the letter proved to be an elaborate hoax!¹²⁷

The Workhouses and the Poor Law System

The workhouses had been established under the 1838 Poor Relief Act, which divided the country into a number of Poor Law Unions, each with its own workhouse. In County Waterford there were four such Unions: Dungarvan, Lismore, Kilmacthomas and Waterford City, which had a total capacity of 2,500 "paupers".¹²⁸ After the Famine they catered mainly for those who were too old, too sick or too young to work. The workhouses were administered by Boards of Guardians, and were financed through the Poor Law Rates levied by the Guardians each year. The Boards were also empowered to grant outdoor relief on a short-term basis to those who were too sick to work.

The Boards of Guardians were the only popularly elected local government institutions outside cities and towns. Half of the Guardians were elected by rate-payers with a rateable valuation of £4 and over. The remainder were appointed from among the Justices of the Peace. The result was that the boards were controlled by landowners, large farmers and merchants; and therefore tried to strike a balance between keeping the rates low and providing relief for the "deserving poor".¹²⁹ With increasing distress, however, the Boards of Guardians came under growing pressure to cope with the extra numbers seeking help.

Although extreme distress was not to appear in Waterford until early 1880, from the beginning of 1879 disturbing reports began to appear in the local press of increasing applications to the Boards of Guardians for relief. In January 1879 there was a report of "a number of strong healthy agricultural labourers and their families" applying for admission to Dungarvan Workhouse. They could not find any work. They were all admitted.¹³⁰ In April "large numbers" were again applying to the Dungarvan Board for outdoor relief, especially from around Dromana, the home of Villiers Stuart.¹³¹ In October the Waterford Board of Guardians were concerned about the "want of employment and the coming harsh winter".¹³²

By then, however, the situation was becoming critical. In November the Local Government Board wrote to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland outlining the deteriorating situation in the country as a whole. Almost everywhere the potato crop was affected by blight, and was expected to be 50% less than in 1878. The turf could not be saved during the summer because of almost continual rainfall. In the opinion of the Board, "there will be a considerable increase in pauperism in the country during the winter season".¹³³

127. *Ibid.*, 24 December 1879.

128. John O'Connor, *The Workhouses of Ireland: The Fate of Ireland's Poor*, Anvil Books (Dublin, 1995), Appendix B, pp. 259-263.

129. Christine Kinealy, "The Workhouse System in County Waterford", in Nolan and Power (eds.), *Waterford History and Society*, p. 589.

130. *Munster Express*, 18 January 1879.

131. *Waterford News*, 2 May 1879.

132. *Ibid.*, 17 October 1879.

133. *Munster Express*, 15 November 1879.

At the end of November the Local Government Board sent a circular to all Boards of Guardians informing them that there would probably be “unusual amounts of distress in Ireland during the coming winter”, advising them to expect increased applications for relief. Ample provisions and bedding were to be acquired, and unoccupied wards cleaned and whitewashed.¹³⁴ On receiving the circular the Waterford Board acted very quickly, remembering perhaps the scenes of panic 30 years previous. Within a week, it was decided to repair and whitewash the sheds in the fever hospital, and to advertise for 40 iron beds.¹³⁵

In December a meeting of Dungarvan Town Commissioners was disrupted by about 50 unemployed labourers demanding work as they were “near starvation”. One man stated that he, his wife and six children were existing on only one meal a day for the previous six weeks. As a temporary measure it was decided to use £300 from the Harbour Fund to give work to the men carrying out improvements around the harbour area.¹³⁶

The response of the County Waterford Boards of Guardians to the mounting crisis varied. Even within Boards there was often a considerable difference of opinion on how distress should be dealt with. Some guardians were very opposed to granting outdoor relief, believing that if applicants for relief were really in need they would enter the workhouse and suffer the almost prison-like conditions imposed on the “paupers”. All guardians were agreed that life in the workhouses should be as hard and as cheerless as possible. A number of guardians refused to accept that there was any crisis at all, in spite of mounting evidence. At a meeting of the Waterford Board in December 1879, one guardian, Mr. Brennan, believed that any distress in the city was caused by the improvidence of workers. He stated that while quay porters were well paid “they don’t have a farthing at the end of the week; it all goes on drink”.¹³⁷

The workhouse diet had changed very little since the Famine.¹³⁸ Occasional treats were given at Christmas, in the form of a “meat dinner”, and at Easter, with boiled eggs for breakfast. However, the provision of eggs at Easter was strongly resisted by some Boards of Guardians as an extravagance. In Carrick Workhouse the Master was forced to pay for eggs given to the paupers at Easter 1879!¹³⁹ In January 1879 the annual treat at the Lismore Workhouse was given by Lady Musgrove of Tourin, with tea, bread, butter and jam, cakes and oranges, snuff, tobacco and a magic lantern show!¹⁴⁰

There were regular attacks in the local press on the possible abuses of the outdoor system of poor relief, especially in Joseph Fisher’s newspapers, the *Munster Express* and the *Waterford Mail*. In spite of the fact that he would have had a more radical outlook on political and agrarian matters than many of the other guardians, he took his position as a Poor Law Guardian very seriously, arguing that it was not

134. *Ibid.*, 22 November 1879.

135. *Ibid.*, 29 November 1879.

136. *Ibid.*, 20 December 1879.

137. *Waterford News*, 24 December 1879.

138. Tom Nolan, “The Lismore Poor Law Union and the Famine”, in Cowman and Brady (eds.), *Teacht na bPrátaí Dublin: The Famine in Waterford*, pp. 101-119.

139. *Munster Express*, 26 April 1879.

140. *Ibid.*, 18 January 1879.

the function of the Board to support the able-bodied during times of recession. In an editorial in the *Munster Express* in April there was a strong attack on outdoor relief. It would be much cheaper to keep people in the workhouse.¹⁴¹

In June 1879 there was a discussion on outdoor relief at a meeting of the Waterford Board of Guardians. It was pointed out that since this system of relief had been adopted in 1853, there had been no decrease in the numbers of paupers. It was believed that outdoor relief had "an injurious effect on the poor". The *Munster Express*, which carried the account of the Board discussion, also published an extract from *The Report of the Commission on Irish Poor Laws* on the advantages of indoor relief as opposed to outdoor relief, stating that they "were worthy of consideration". According to the report, the workhouse was the only test of destitution, going on to point out that

the true sanction of the workhouse is compulsory labour, discipline and the classification of inmates (breaking up families), ... the principle of the workhouse is thus: offer everybody relief, but make it so disagreeable that none but those in real want will accept it.¹⁴²

In August the matter was again discussed at a meeting of the Waterford Board. It was alleged that some employers in the city were using the outdoor system to reduce the wages of their employees. One woman came before the Board looking for relief. She was working at Denny's. Her wages had been cut from 9s. to 5s., and she was told to claim the balance from the Board!¹⁴³

Throughout 1879, numbers in the workhouses in the various County Waterford Poor Law Unions began to increase. The largest rise was in Waterford City. In January there were 1057 in the workhouse.¹⁴⁴ By December this had risen to 1141. The numbers receiving outdoor relief remained constant at about 1000.¹⁴⁵ In spite of the rise in numbers, the Waterford Board managed to reduce expenditure in 1879. In June the board cut the Poor Rate by 2d. in the pound, to 2s. 8d.¹⁴⁶ In March it was decided to reduce all salaries of those employed by the Board by 10%.¹⁴⁷ Throughout the year constant attention was paid to the accounts of the workhouse. There was regular questioning of the quantity of "stimulants" (alcohol) consumed. Under the regulations "stimulants" could be prescribed by the workhouse doctor for patients in the hospital. In April there was a query about the increased consumption of beer – an extra 50 pints per week over three weeks. It turned out that this extra beer was for the nurses!¹⁴⁸

In May further problems were uncovered. Under the workhouse regulations, 5s. 1d. per week was allowed for rations for each of the workhouse officers, but in fact 8s. was being spent. Another 3s. 10d. was being spent on "expenses" for a nurse who did not exist!

141. *Ibid.*, 5 April 1879.

142. *Ibid.*, 14 June 1879.

143. *Ibid.*, 9 August 1879.

144. *Waterford News*, 24 January 1879.

145. *Munster Express*, 27 December 1879.

146. *Ibid.*, 28 June 1879.

147. *Waterford News*, 21 March 1879.

148. *Munster Express*, 19 April 1879.

Joseph Fisher pointed out that ten glasses of whiskey were missing from one of the gallon jars, and questioned the master closely about the matter.¹⁴⁹ The following week it appeared that two patients in the hospital consumed 36 lbs. of beef in one week! The matter was to be "looked into" by the Master. At the same meeting Joseph Fisher asked about the "samples" of wine and spirits that were sent to the Board by various spirit merchants when they were submitting tenders. It appears that these samples were kept in the board room as "refreshments" for the guardians after meetings. Eventually, after much hilarity, the Board voted to return these samples to stock.¹⁵⁰

Finally, in December it was decided to appoint a sub-committee to investigate the consumption of drink in the workhouse.¹⁵¹ At a board meeting in August the Master was censured for eating strawberries growing in the workhouse garden! There was also concern about the increased amount of coal burned.¹⁵²

From 1879 the Boards of Guardians in the country became more and more politicised. During 1880 and 1881, the Land League began a concerted campaign to capture seats on the Boards.¹⁵³ In August, at the Waterford Board, a motion was proposed by a Mr. Clampett, and seconded by Joseph Fisher, that tenant farmers needed liberal reduction in rent. He was strongly opposed by the Hon. Dudley Fortesque, agent of the estate of his brother the Earl of Fortesque, who stated that there was no need for rent reductions, and that the land movement had originated not with farmers, but with "outside interests". The motion was carried by eight votes to three.¹⁵⁴ In November a motion proposed by Fisher that all rents should be reduced to Griffith's Valuation was passed.¹⁵⁵ Also in November Fisher spoke on the matter of peasant proprietorship at the Waterford Board. The *Munster Express* carried pieces from the *Carlow Independent* and the *Clare Advertiser* praising Fisher for raising such matters at Board meetings.¹⁵⁶ Finally in January 1880 Fisher's motion calling for peasant proprietorship was passed, with the surplus of the Church of Ireland Fund to be used to purchase the land.¹⁵⁷

By October 1879 it was generally recognised that the harvest was a failure, with the added horror of a disastrous potato crop making the situation critical. There had been mounting appeals from Boards of Guardians, Corporations and Town Commissioners to the government to provide public works on the same scale as during the Famine. In August 1879 a Commission was established to investigate problems in agriculture throughout the United Kingdom as a whole. However, it took until January 1881 for the *Preliminary Report From Her Majesty's Commission on Agriculture* (The Bessborough Commission), to be published. In the meantime the official view was that the existing Poor Law System, supplemented by a system of

149. *Ibid.*, 10 May 1879.

150. *Munster Express*, 17 May 1879.

151. *Ibid.*, 27 December 1879.

152. *Ibid.*, 9 August 1879.

153. William L. Feingold, "The Tenants' Movement to Capture the Irish Poor Law Boards, 1877-1886", in Alan O'Day (ed.), *Reactions To Irish Nationalism 1865-1914*, Gill and Macmillan (Dublin, 1987), pp. 79-95.

154. *Munster Express*, 30 August 1879.

155. *Ibid.*, 9 November 1879.

156. *Ibid.*, 15 November 1879.

157. *Waterford News*, 23 January 1880.

low interest loans from the Board of Works to local bodies, was sufficient to deal with any distress that might arise.¹⁵⁸

Throughout the winter of 1879/80 there had been constant calls in Waterford for government funded public works to relieve destitution, especially as many of the Boards of Guardians did not think it their duty to relieve unusual distress by having to increase the rates. In December a deputation from Waterford, headed by the Mayor, went to London to petition for funds to create employment. Waterford Harbour Commissioners had been granted a loan of £15,000 for the city water-works, on condition that the Corporation strike a higher water rate. According to the *Munster Express*, however, only £1,000 of this would be used for labour.¹⁵⁹

A deputation from the Board of Directors of the Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford Railway met with the Chief Secretary in Dublin to ask for a loan of £300,000 to build a new line from Ballywilliam, through New Ross, to Waterford. In their opinion this would give employment and relieve destitution. However, when questioned by the Chief Secretary, the deputation did not seem to be very well informed about the extent of distress in the region, except that they believed that the poor rate in New Ross was higher than the previous year! The deputation conceded the fact that famine might not break out in the south east, but pointed out that there could be overcrowding in the workhouses, leading to an increased burden on the rate payers. They were informed by the Chief Secretary that the government had to confine its activities to really distressed areas.¹⁶⁰

Deepening Crisis – January to December 1880

By 1880, a number of relief measures were introduced by the government. For farmers with land valued at under £15 the most important of these was the Seed Potato Bill. It was recognised that one of the main problems during the Famine of 1845-50 was the fact that many of the very poor ate their seed potatoes before they could be planted the following year. Therefore, provision was made for the Boards of Guardians to borrow money to buy seed potatoes and to distribute them to the farmers in the spring of 1880 in distressed unions. All the Waterford unions were eventually able to benefit from this scheme. As well as that, public bodies and land-owners could borrow money at reduced rates of interest from the government to provide work for the unemployed labourers.¹⁶¹

These measures, as well as the fact that local relief committees were established in many districts, meant that many of the poor were saved from starvation. In February Boards of Guardians in the county were authorised to distribute external relief to the able-bodied in the form of food and fuel.¹⁶² Reports of distress in the local press begin to appear less frequently from March 1880, as the various relief measures began to take effect, although hunger would be a feature of many peoples' lives up to the end of the year.

158. T.W. Moody; *Davitt*, p. 335.

159. *Munster Express*, 12 December 1879.

160. *Ibid.*, 13 December 1879.

161. Moody; *Davitt*, p. 416.

162. *Waterford Mail*, 26 February 1880.

Numbers applying for admission to Waterford Workhouse continued to rise steadily during 1880, from 1153 in January to 1198 in December. During the same period those receiving outdoor relief increased from 995 to 1141.¹⁶³ The Local Government Board was concerned about the numbers in the workhouse. It was meant to cater for 828 inmates, and when there was an inspection in June there were 1122 in the house. The Waterford Board was requested to increase the accommodation, but they were reluctant to do this because of the cost involved.¹⁶⁴ In August Joseph Fisher estimated that 10% of the population of Waterford city were living on charity. He was particularly concerned about the increase in the number of children in the workhouse – from 303 in 1879 to 390 in 1880.¹⁶⁵

However, the Board of Guardians continued to make savings in the workhouse in spite of the increased numbers. Joseph Fisher continued his campaign about the use of “stimulants” in the workhouse.¹⁶⁶ In an editorial in the *Mail* it was pointed out that Waterford Union was an example of how poor law unions could make savings through the vigilance of the guardians.¹⁶⁷

There was much hostility at the fact that Waterford was not scheduled as a distressed union by February 1880. When an inspector was sent to investigate reports of poverty in the union hostility was expressed at the fact that he had been sent to “spy out the nakedness of the land”.¹⁶⁸ Finally, at the end of the month it was announced that all of the county had been scheduled as a distressed area.¹⁶⁹

By the beginning of 1880, a number of private nation-wide charities had been established to deal with the deteriorating situation. The Mansion House Fund, the Duchess of Marlborough Fund and the Land League Fund were the most important of these, and soon began to make donations to local relief committees. The Land League Fund was largely made up of money collected by Parnell in America. Money was also collected by the *New York Herald*, and forwarded to Ireland.¹⁷⁰

During 1880 local relief committees began to be established in many parts of the county. These relief committees acted as a liaison between local communities and the major national or international funds. This money was used in a variety of ways; some of it being distributed to established charities such as the St. Vincent de Paul Society, or the Church of Ireland Sick and Indigent Society. Sometimes local relief committees worked with bodies such as the Board of Works, Boards of Guardians or Town Commissioners to commence public works. In other cases food was bought and distributed directly to the starving.

In January in Waterford city the Mayor proposed the establishment of a soup kitchen, believing that there was a real danger of deaths from hunger in the city.¹⁷¹ On the 15th January the soup kitchen opened, selling soup and bread for 1d. On the

163. From the *Waterford Mail*, January and December 1880.

164. *Waterford Mail*, 3 June 1880.

165. *Ibid.*, 6 August 1880.

166. *Ibid.*, 8 January 1880.

167. *Ibid.*, 19 April 1880.

168. *Ibid.*, 21 February 1880.

169. *Ibid.*, 27 February 1880.

170. Moody, *Davitt*, p. 348.

171. *Waterford Mail*, 6 January 1880.

first day 349 portions were sold.¹⁷² By the following Saturday, this rose to 1032 portions.¹⁷³ There were some complaints about the soup kitchen, however. In February it was reported that the soup kitchen "had filled the city with beggars".¹⁷⁴ Between January and December, 114,770 portions had been sold.¹⁷⁵

A number of Waterford City cultural organisations staged social events to support the relief of distress. A review in the *Mail* of a charity concert given in the City Hall by the Waterford Literary and Scientific Society must have left the amateur performers, who included some of Waterford's most distinguished citizens, a little embarrassed! Many of the acts were "laughed at and hooted at". During much of the concert

the uproar was tremendous with every description of ejaculation being indulged in, while several parties at the rear of the hall added to the noise by beating their seats with their sticks and hurling every description of epithets at the unfortunate vocalists.

It was reported that £40 was collected.¹⁷⁶ A number of individual relief operations were also carried out. In February a local businessman, Mr. W.C. Allingham, offered to transport two ship loads of coal free from Wales to Waterford for the benefit of the poor of the city. He advised the Mayor to approach Welsh collieries to see if they would donate the coal.¹⁷⁷

A report on the proceedings of a Waterford Relief Committee meeting in February gave a very good indication on the state of the city. The Mayor, Alderman Laurence Ryan, was in the chair. He stated that he had received reports from many Protestant and Catholic clergymen on the state of poverty in Waterford. There were very few ships in the port and thus very little work for dockers. Although one of the Poor Law Guardians present disapproved of public bodies giving "unnecessary employment", it was generally accepted that the situation was very bad. Fr. Roger Power reported that there was a great deal of distress in the Michael Street and John Street areas. However, the Mayor refused to make any application to the Mansion House Fund or the Duchess of Marlborough Fund for aid, believing that charitable resources in Waterford were not yet exhausted.¹⁷⁸

A further meeting of the relief committee took place later in the month. It was decided to distribute food, fuel and straw to the poor, and 100 volunteers were called on to supervise the operation. Alderman Scott believed that there were certain abuses connected with the soup kitchen, as many children were sent out to beg for the money to buy bread and soup, instead of being in school.¹⁷⁹ The level of unemployment among dockers was illustrated by the fact that a "riot" broke out between two gangs of dockers competing to unload the same maize ship. Several arrests were made.¹⁸⁰

172. *Ibid.*, 16 January 1880.

173. *Ibid.*, 20 January 1880.

174. *Ibid.*, 10 February 1880.

175. *Munster Express*, 29 January 1881.

176. *Waterford Mail*, 12 January 1880.

177. *Ibid.*, 4 February 1880.

178. *Ibid.*, 18 February 1880.

179. *Ibid.*, 21 February 1880.

180. *Ibid.*, 23 February 1880.

At a further meeting held in the Council Chamber to consider applications for relief there were 2,000 applications, many from heads of families! The Committee decided to give 1s. 6d. to a single person in the form of food and fuel, with 2s. 6d. for a married couple, up to a maximum of 6s. for a family. Many more claims were anticipated. The Committee decided to ask the Harbour Commissioners to renew its application for a loan to build a dry dock, and to ask the Board of Guardians to support the application.¹⁸¹

By the end of February the situation had not improved. According to the Relief Committee, the distress would continue "due to the dearth of employment among our labouring classes".¹⁸² In early March the Relief Committee had to make an appeal for more funds as their resources were exhausted. During the course of the previous week £200 had been spent.¹⁸³

In April, the Catholic Bishop of Waterford reported that he had received £1,000 from the New York Herald Fund to buy seed potatoes and distribute them among the poor of the city and county.¹⁸⁴

By the end of April the Relief Committee had only £72 16s. 3d. remaining. It was decided to give £40 to the St. Vincent de Paul Society and £10 to Sick and Indigent Society. The Mayor's clerk was given £20 for his assistance in the operation of the committee, leaving a balance of £2 16s. 3d.¹⁸⁵

In the rural parts of Waterford Union distress was every bit as severe as in the City. This was especially true of Tramore. In February 1880 a deputation from the Tramore Relief Committee was received by the Board of Guardians. The funds of the committee had been exhausted. Relief had been given to 300 families in the area, and the previous day a person had nearly died of starvation. If funds were available, it was proposed to give employment by deepening the area around the pier.¹⁸⁶

At a meeting of the Relief Committee held in the railway station later in the month it was resolved to petition the Lord Lieutenant directly for a grant to build a new pier and dock at Newtown Cove.¹⁸⁷ A deputation from the Relief Committee again appeared before the Board of Guardians later in February seeking relief "to save the lives of the people of Tramore". One member of the deputation, Daniel Corrigan, "with deep emotion", described the condition of the people. He had never witnessed such destitution, and "if sickness were to break out the consequences would be terrible". There were between 800 and 900 receiving relief from the committee.¹⁸⁸ In April there was a death from starvation in Tramore. The verdict at the inquest was that he died from "neglect", and the relieving officer was blamed.¹⁸⁹

In Dungarvan there seemed to be no shortage of public works that could be carried out; including a waterworks, paving the town, deepening the harbour, and improving the quays. However, the major improvement to the town would be a

181. *Ibid.*, 28 February 1880.

182. *Ibid.*, 6 March 1880.

183. *Waterford News*, 5 March 1880.

184. *Waterford Mail*, 13 April 1880.

185. *Ibid.*, 24 April 1880.

186. *Ibid.*, 5 February 1880.

187. *Ibid.*, 25 February 1880.

188. *Ibid.*, 26 February 1880.

189. *Ibid.*, 22 April 1880.

bridge/causeway linking it with the Cunigar. Dungarvan seemed in a very good position to be able to raise the necessary finance from the Board of works or the Local Government Board through the combined action of the Town Commissioners, the Board of Guardians and its local M.P., Frank Hugh O'Donnell. It also could be said to have a second M.P., Henry Villiers Stuart, who although a Liberal member for the county, was Chairman of the Dungarvan Board of Guardians. There was criticism of O'Donnell in certain quarters, however. In January 1880, when conditions were very harsh, he was in Paris, according to the *Waterford News*, instead of attending to his parliamentary duties.¹⁹⁰

There was constant friction between the Board of Guardians and the Town Commissioners as to which body should be responsible for raising a loan for carrying out these works. The result was that no decision was taken.¹⁹¹ By the middle of 1880 attempts were still being made to raise money for the bridge to the Cunigar. A deputation from Dungarvan travelled to London and petitioned Lord Frederick Cavendish at the Treasury on the matter, but without result.¹⁹²

In early January 1880 a "large number of unemployed labourers" came to a meeting of the Dungarvan Board looking for work. They were told that a loan was being applied for to begin relief works.¹⁹³ The Board was unable to grant them outdoor relief, as they were not sick. They were given the option of entering the workhouse, but they all refused, and "quietly dispersed".¹⁹⁴

The situation in the town and surrounding districts continued to deteriorate. One week later a public meeting was held to discuss the situation, and a Relief Committee of forty members, including the Parish Priest, Fr. Cleary, and the Protestant clergymen was established. This Committee, in contrast to the Board of Guardians and Town Commissioners, decided to take immediate action. A petition was sent to the government to have County Waterford declared a distressed area. A subscription list was opened, and £130 was collected.¹⁹⁵

The following week about two hundred unemployed men and their families gathered outside the Board of Guardians meeting, again looking for relief. They had been given a few days work by the Town Commissioners, and then were told to go to the Board of Guardians. They were described as "starving". The Board again refused to grant them outdoor relief, as they were not sick. Instead the Board passed a resolution calling on the Town Commissioners, to begin the waterworks for the town.¹⁹⁶ According to Fr. Cleary, there were over 1,500 people "in absolute need of instant relief".¹⁹⁷

In the meantime, the Relief Committee in Dungarvan began to distribute food to the destitute. In all probability deaths from starvation were avoided as a result of these efforts. Much of the money was collected locally at first. However, the committee decided to return a check for £2 to a local landlord Sir Nugent Humble,

190. *Waterford News*, 16 January 1880.

191. Edmond Keogh, *An Illustrated History of Dungarvan* (Waterford, 1924), p. 92.

192. *Waterford News*, 23 July 1880.

193. *Waterford Mail*, 5 January 1880.

194. *Waterford News*, 9 January 1880.

195. *Waterford Mail*, 15 January 1880.

196. *Waterford News*, 16 January 1880.

197. *Ibid.*, 23 January 1880.

as they regarded it as inadequate!¹⁹⁸ By the beginning of February, £13 a day was being spent on relief by the committee.¹⁹⁹ In February a grant of £75 was received from the Mansion House Committee.²⁰⁰

Later in the month the Local Government Board placed Dungarvan on the schedule of distressed unions, enabling the Board of Guardians and Town Commissioners to apply for cheap loans to carry out public works.²⁰¹ In February Henry Villiers Stuart advised the Board of Guardians to apply for funds from all the relief schemes in operation. The Board applied to the Marlborough Relief Committee for a grant to buy seed potatoes, but were informed that this committee were already aiding 57 unions, and were not in a position to help the Dungarvan Board. They also applied to the Mansion House Committee, but were again refused. The Mansion House Committee only aided local relief committees, and not Boards of Guardians.²⁰² The Town Commissioners again discussed the proposed bridge to the Cunigar, and decided to ask the Board of Trade to send an engineer to carry out a survey.²⁰³ In the meantime the Town Commissioners decided to apply to the Relief Committee for sixteen men to break stones for the roads! The Commissioners also continued to discuss applying for loans to build labourers' cottages, to flag the town, and the proposed bridge to the Cunigar. However, no decisions were taken.²⁰⁴

By this stage the Relief Committee had exhausted its resources. A meeting of the Board of Guardians was visited by a deputation from the committee, led by Fr. Cleary, and including a large crowd of unemployed and their families. The Committee had been coping with the distress for over three months. Fr. Cleary informed the Board that he was "handing over" 300 people that the Committee could not support anymore. They had no money left, and were unable to raise further funds locally, or from any of the national relief committees. This caused consternation among the guardians, even though they now had permission to grant external relief to the able-bodied unemployed. Michael Anthony believed that many were "getting relief elsewhere", although he was unable to say from where. Another guardian, Captain Curran, stated that he had met someone in receipt of outdoor relief, "with a strong smell of whiskey from him", and according to another many of the unemployed were unwilling to work for 1s. 4d. per day but were demanding 1s. 6d.! The guardians, however, were forced to take an immediate decision. It was finally resolved to distribute food to the starving, at a rate of 4 lbs. of bread and 1½ st. of Indian meal per week for a family of five.²⁰⁵

At the end of June it was reported that applications for external relief continued to be granted.²⁰⁶ In early July Michael Anthony raised the problem the "great

198. *Waterford Mail*, 30 January 1880.

199. *Ibid.*, 4 February 1880.

200. *Ibid.*, 10 February 1880.

201. *Ibid.*, 14 February 1880.

202. William Fraher, Bernadette Sheridan, Seosamh Ó Loinsigh, Willie Whelan, *Desperate Haven: The Poor Law, Famine and Aftermath in Dungarvan Union*, Dungarvan Museum Society (Dungarvan, 1997), p. 229.

203. *Waterford Mail*, 20 February 1880.

204. *Ibid.*, 6 March 1880.

205. *Waterford News*, 5 March 1880.

206. *Waterford Mail*, 26 June 1880.

distress in the Union" at a Board of Guardians meeting. A petition was received from 200 men and their families – there were between four and ten in each family – asking that the bridge to the Cunigar be started soon. According to Michael Anthony, these men had been unemployed for two to three months, and were not receiving aid from any source.²⁰⁷

Some landowners were giving extensive employment to labourers in the Union. Henry Villiers Stuart was widely praised for giving work to the unemployed. According to one of the Guardians, "from Youghal to Cappoquin he has been keeping hundreds of families from starvation by the extensive employment he has given". This was not always appreciated by the large farmers, as it reduced the numbers of unemployed willing to compete against each other and work for low wages. As another of the Guardians remarked: "That employment is interfering with the farmers of the country".²⁰⁸ In March 1880 it was reported that he was giving employment to 100 labourers.²⁰⁹

In the area of the county covered by the Kilmacthomas Union increasing distress began to be noticed early in 1880. In January a "number of able-bodied men" came to a board meeting looking for work. The chairman, Captain Hoare, told them that the Board could not provide work for them, and that their only means of relief was to enter the workhouse. They were brought before the Board, one by one, and questioned. All stated that they were looking for work. They had been working for local farmers for their food and 3s. per week, but had been let go. One man stated that he had a wife and seven children. Finally, forty seven men and their families entered the workhouse that night.²¹⁰ In an editorial comment on these admissions the *Mail* stated that this was evidence of extreme distress in the county, and that it would be better if the Union could have provided useful work.²¹¹

Parts of the Comeraghs, and the area around Kilrossanty were very badly affected by hunger, and a local Relief Committee was established by the Catholic Curate, Fr. Richard Casey, and the Church of Ireland Minister, the Rev. Mr. Lane. The Committee has been granted £50 from the Mansion House Fund. At a meeting of the Board of Guardians, Fr. Casey and the Rev. Lane, accompanied by a number of labourers, came to ask for aid for the area. The state of the labourers was described as "deplorable". Between 50 and 60 families were living totally on charity. Their diet consisted of turnips and Indian meal twice a day. Many would have starved without this food. The resources of the Committee were now coming to an end, and some families had not eaten for several days. A number of men told their stories to the members of the Board. One man, named Walsh, stated that there were seven in his family, and that they had been living on two meals a day supplied by the priest. Before that they had nothing to eat except turnips. Another named Dillon had eaten nothing for several days. A third, Carthy, had eight in his family, and had not worked since the 1st November. He rented ½ acre from Sir Edward Kennedy at £1 a year. He had been starving before he had got the Indian meal from the priest,

207. *Ibid.*, 10 July 1880.

208. *Ibid.*, 20 August 1880.

209. *Waterford News*, 26 March 1880.

210. *Waterford Mail*, 8 January 1880.

211. *Ibid.*, 10 January 1880.

and would have to go back stealing turnips when the meal was finished. Fr. Casey told him to “steal them if you have to”. The Relieving Officer confirmed the distress in the area. Captain Hoare told the men that they would have to come into the workhouse with their families if they wished to receive any relief. Fr. Casey asked the guardians to apply to the government for relief, and to have the union included in the schedule of distressed areas, or else they would have 50 to 60 families in the workhouse. This the board was unwilling to do. Instead they appointed a committee, headed by one of the guardians, Mr. Ardagh, and including Fr. Casey and the Rev. Lane, to see what could be done.²¹²

A charity concert was held in Kilmacthomas for the relief of distress and Lady Waterford received much praise in the local press for her skill at the piano!²¹³ Perhaps some of the £30 collected was sent to Fr. Casey in the Comeraghs. Some money reached Fr. Casey from abroad. The Father Matthew Temperance Association in Vicksburg, Mississippi sent £47.²¹⁴ In February he wrote to the *Mail*, thanking the Land League Relief Committee for donations, stating that he can “now stem the dreadful evil of starvation”. He reported that there were ten cases of “fever” in the workhouse because of lack of food, and went on to state that the main cause of distress in the area was unemployment. He praised Mr. C.E. Kennedy, a local landlord, for giving work to labourers, although he was critical of the wages of 6s. a week and diet. He did not think that this was enough for a family of eight or nine people, but it was “better than nothing”. In his opinion there was still very great distress around Kilrossanty, in spite of the funds received. In Glendalligan the children were in a very bad state. The people had very little food, and many could not attend Mass, as they had sold their clothes. Most had old sacks instead of bedding.²¹⁵ Even though by this stage, the Local Government Board was granting permission to Boards of Guardians to grant relief to the able bodied, the Kilmacthomas Board refused to apply.²¹⁶ By the end of April, however, it was reported that there were very few applications for relief to the Board of Guardians as more employment was being given by the farmers.²¹⁷

Throughout 1879, reports on meetings of the Lismore Board of Guardians had been very brief. As we have seen, in other County Waterford Unions quasi-political debates took place on such matters as rent reductions, employment and the condition of labourers. None of this seemed to occur in Lismore. However, from the beginning of 1880, there was evidence of mounting problems in the union. At a meeting of the Lismore Board at the end of January it was reported that “300 chiefly distressed farmers” from the estates of Mr. Woodroff of Ballysagartmore, and Barry Young of Flower Hill, crowded around the entrance to the workhouse. Then “they actually took possession of the stairs leading to the Board Room”, looking as if they were “suffering from real want”. They asked for seed potatoes. Fr. Byrne, Parish Priest of Lismore, led a deputation to meet the board. The Duke’s agent, Mr. Currey

212. *Ibid.*, 31 January 1880.

213. *Ibid.*, 7 February 1880.

214. *Ibid.*, 6 March 1880.

215. *Ibid.*, 6 March 1880.

216. *Waterford News*, 20 February 1880.

217. *Ibid.*, 30 April 1880.

was in the Chair. According to Fr. Byrne, the people were starving, and asked the Board to petition the Local Government Board to have Lismore declared a distressed Union. He stated that if no steps were taken people would die. Mr. Currey agreed to make the application to the local Government Board. Then another 50 to 60 men arrived from Tallow. One man told the Guardians that they were all starving, and if they did not get help soon there would be deaths. He reported that there were "hundreds in Tallow who were too hungry to come". The clerk was told to take their names. These were followed by a further thirty men. These were told that the Board could do nothing for them. They left.²¹⁸

However, at a meeting on distress in the Tallow region in January, a letter was read from the Duke offering employment to a "large number of men".²¹⁹

As in other unions, private charity had to deal with the conditions of near starvation until the Boards of Guardians were empowered to grant more flexible relief. Fr. Byrne organised a Relief Committee and began to feed the people. In February another demonstration took place at a Board of Guardians meeting. About 100 people crowded into the Board room seeking relief. They were mainly small farmers from Ballyduff. Their spokesman told the Board that they were starving. Another stated that they were saved from death by Fr. Byrne who gave them meal. They asked for relief of any kind. They were informed by Mr. Currey that it was against the regulations for the Board to grant outdoor relief to the "able-bodied", telling them that they would have to come into the workhouse. They all refused to enter the workhouse and left. However, after this correspondence was discussed. Among the letters read was one from the Local Government Board informing the Lismore Board that they now had permission to grant outdoor relief to able-bodied unemployed labourers.²²⁰

In spite of the fact that the granting of relief was now more flexible, reports of extreme distress continued in Lismore Union. One man, John Griffin from Lackin in the parish of Affane, was described as "suffering from extreme want". One of his children had already "died from want". Although increased relief was being granted to those who were in danger of "dying from want", there was always great concern to keep the rates low. There was praise at the same meeting for Mrs. Richard Keane for her good work in the Cappoquin area, as, "a considerable amount is annually saved to the Union through her efforts".²²¹ One week later, "cases of extreme poverty ... which were of a painful nature" were reported at a Board meeting. Relief was granted in most cases.²²²

There was also concern expressed about proselytism during this period. According to the *Waterford News*: "The fanatical tactics of over-zealous bigots during the previous famine are again being employed". After Mass on the 8th February in Tramore, Fr. McCarthy addressed the congregation with the following rather unlikely story;

218. *Waterford Mail*, 31 January 1880.

219. *Waterford News*, 13 February 1880.

220. *Waterford Mail*, 20 February 1880.

221. *Ibid.*, 6 March 1880.

222. *Ibid.*, 13 March 1880.

... ladies with more money than brains, charity or religion lay hold of the young with promises of food, lead them to lonely places where the disgusting and blasphemous tracts of the Church Missionary Society are read to them.

Distress in the country remained widespread up to the end of 1880, even though the harvest of that year was a slight improvement on that of 1879, with the total value of agricultural output rising to £36.9 million, an increase of £1.4 million. The largest increase was for the value of the potato crop, from £6.77 million in 1879 to £9.30 million in 1880. In tonnage terms, this represented a 168.1% increase from 1.1 million tons in 1879 to 3 million tons in 1880.²²³ In a report on the potato crop at a meeting of the Lismore Board of Guardians in October, it was stated that the crop was the largest in 40 years, with yields of nine tons per acre.²²⁴ The slight improvement in the economic situation in the country, coupled with grants from the various local, national and international relief committees, as well as government relief measures meant that famine on the scale of 1845-50 was averted. However, agrarian and political agitation did not come to an end. In fact matters deteriorated further during the course of 1880.

Land Agitation and Politics in 1880

The first Farmers' Club meeting of 1880 took place in Lismore in the Blackwater Vale Hotel. Joseph Fisher was in the chair. He took great pains to point out that the meeting was not intended as an attack on the local landowner, the Duke of Devonshire, who was "an example" to the other landlords in Ireland, nor was it the intention of the Farmers' Club to interfere with the rights of landlords. However, in his opinion, rents were too high. Michael Anthony outlined the case of the Widow Walsh against her landlord. It was decided that a public meeting would be held on the next fair day in the town, and that Mr. Currey would be asked to allow the courthouse to be used for the meeting.²²⁵

Before the public meeting in Lismore was held, an "Address to the Farmers of Waterford" was issued outlining the benefits of joining the Club.²²⁶

In spite of the praise from members of the Club for the Duke of Devonshire, his agent, Mr. Currey, refused permission for the courthouse to be used for the public meeting. According to the *Mail*, this was "proof of landlord hostility". As well as that a ploughing match was organised on the same day for the Duke's tenants, which, in the view of the paper, was to prevent them from attending the meeting. Nevertheless six tenants sent in their names to be enrolled as members of the Club. There was praise for Villiers Stuart for granting rent reductions, for giving coal and firewood to the poor, and work to unemployed labourers. It was decided to petition the government to allow large farmers to be able to borrow money on the same conditions as landlords to carry out improvements. It was felt by many at the meeting that large farmers had more cause for complaint than small farmers, because they had to employ labourers!²²⁷

223. Moody, *Davitt*, Appendix G, pp. 569-571.

224. *Waterford Mail*, 22 October 1880.

225. *Ibid.*, 17 January 1880.

226. *Ibid.*, 4 February 1880.

227. *Ibid.*, 13 February 1880.

Apart from the Widow Walsh's case, very little action seemed to be emanating from the Farmers' Club, except holding meetings and passing resolutions. Resistance to eviction when it did occur, was organised locally seemingly without the official participation or sanction of the Club. At an eviction in Grange near Dungarvan, it was reported that the "tenants were stung to resistance by acts of cruel oppression". The Sub-Sheriff, John Hudson, accompanied by bailiffs and police, was attacked by "an immense concourse of the inhabitants" who "pelted them with stones". Police reinforcements were sent for, and four arrests were made.²²⁸ When the Secretary of the Farmers' Club was evicted from his farm near Kilmacthomas, and his farm was taken by another farmer for grazing, something which was completely against Land League rules, no action was taken by the Club.²²⁹

When the details of one eviction case were raised at a meeting of the Dungarvan Board of Guardians there was consternation. In Ballycurran, Old Parish, a middleman and four sub-tenants were evicted – thirty one persons in all. It appeared that the sub-tenants had paid their rents in full to the middleman, who then defaulted. The result was that everyone was evicted, and left homeless on the side of the road. The Relieving Officer stated that he could not remember "such a case of hardship". According to one of the guardians, "the Nuns" were the landowners, adding: "The Devil a worse landlords in Ireland, they ought to be ashamed of themselves". Michael Anthony said that he would report the matter to the Farmers' Club.²³⁰

When the matter was discussed at a Farmers' Club meeting there was a great deal of embarrassment. Michael Anthony referred to the nuns as "holy pious ladies who know nothing of the law". It was decided that the safest course would be to blame the agent, and to refer the entire matter to the Catholic Bishop. In the meantime the evicted families had been re-admitted to their homes as caretakers.²³¹ The Bishop took "prompt action". He announced that the eviction had taken place "without his knowledge or sanction". All the sub-tenants were re-instated on their land, but the middleman was not.²³²

Even though the Waterford Farmers' Club was in theory a branch of the Land League, there seemed to be a lot of dissatisfaction with its activities. In a letter to the *Mail* on the subject, "M.J.O.S." wrote that the Club had been established "through the exertions of a few gentlemen – all honour to them", but was not effective in supporting the cause of the tenants against the landlords. He proposed that a branch of the Land League be established and a public meeting held in Waterford in August. In a note the editor pointed out that the Farmers' Club was already a branch of the Land League, even though "some of its members seem to think that the Club should support the landlords".²³³

There was criticism of the Club from other quarters and for other reasons also. One of the Dungarvan Town Commissioners believed that the members of the

228. *Ibid.*, 19 February 1880.

229. *Ibid.*, 21 May 1880.

230. *Ibid.*, 16 June 1880.

231. *Ibid.*, 19 June 1880.

232. *Ibid.*, 21 June 1880.

233. *Ibid.*, 23 June 1880.

Farmers' Club should "conduct themselves as gentlemen ... not as drunken rowdies" at their meetings in Dungarvan Town Hall!²³⁴

In spite of the fact that the umbrella body for the Farmers' Clubs had decided to amalgamate with the Land League in November 1879, it was not until February that the Waterford Farmers' Club decided to do this, although it continued to be referred to as a Farmers' Club until the end of 1880.²³⁵

Any dissatisfaction with the effectiveness of the Farmers' Club in representing the grievances of the farmers of the county was temporarily forgotten as most people began to turn their attention to political matters. Parliament had been dissolved in early 1880, and campaigning was beginning to get underway for the general election. Although this would be the first national test for Parnell's agrarian policies and his attempt to take control of the nationalist movement, in Waterford county and city, the personalities of the individual candidates and local matters seemed more important to the electorate. Early closing of public houses, for example, became a very contentious issue during the course of the campaign!²³⁶

In fact there had been much annoyance expressed at times in nationalist circles that Waterford was not taking its proper place in the "old cause". In a manifesto issued in 1880, the provisional committee for establishing a National and Literary Club in the city appealed to the patriotism of the citizens with the following words:

Our ancient City, hallowed by so many patriotic memories, has often in the struggle precipitated by Parnell and Davitt been charged with an ungenerous apathy ... Let our Fellow Citizens show by their prompt enrolment as members of the Club ... that they too desire to go hand in hand with the gallant spirits who strive for our Country's weal.²³⁷

Lord Charles Beresford was seeking re-election as a Conservative, giving complete support to Catholic Church policies on education, and stating that he would have "the best interest of the tenant farmers at heart".²³⁸ Villiers Stuart was standing as a Liberal, supporting Land League policies but not the agitation. He also promised to give "independent support to Home Rule".²³⁹ Blake, a Parnellite was also standing for the county, with Leamy, Power-Shaw and Major O'Gorman as the main candidates for the city. O'Donnell hoped to be re-elected for Dungarvan, and at one stage was regarded as a possible leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party instead of Parnell.²⁴⁰ Joseph Fisher was standing as a "Farmers' Club" candidate, supporting the "Irish Party and national independence".²⁴¹ Most of the other candidates rather vaguely described themselves as Home Rulers and supporters of the land question, with the exception of Conservatives like Matthews in Dungarvan. The *Waterford News* had a deep distrust of Parnell and his supporters in Waterford. In an editorial in March it attacked Parnell, and described Villiers Stuart and

234. *Ibid.*, 24 June 1880.

235. *Ibid.*, 22 February 1880.

236. Robert Kee, *The Bold Fenian Men*, p. 80.

237. "A National and Literary Club – To The Citizens Of Waterford", WML, 32/16.

238. *Waterford Mail*, 15 March 1880.

239. *Ibid.*, 16 March 1880.

240. Joseph Lee; *The Modernisation of Irish Society*, Gill and Macmillan (Dublin, 1973), pp. 74-77.

241. *Waterford Mail*, 18 March 1880.

Beresford as "genuine candidates for the county".²⁴² According to the *News*, Parnell was a "vain glorious man" who only wanted "a following of creatures in the House of Commons".²⁴³

Fisher, however, did not have the complete support of all the members of the Farmers' Club. At a club meeting in Dungarvan it was pointed out that as the Club was now a branch of the Land League, it should nominate its own candidates for the election. When this was attempted, two candidates were nominated, Fisher and Villiers Stuart! The confusion was so great that no final decision could be taken.²⁴⁴

It was generally accepted that Villiers Stuart would be elected, even though he was a Liberal. Therefore, Fisher's main rival for the remaining seat in the county was Blake. The *Mail* was naturally very supportive of Fisher, and did its utmost to discredit Villiers Stuart, and especially Blake, even though he was a Parnell supporter. At one meeting it was reported that Fisher was "received with loud cheers" when he told the crowd that he was glad that Parnell had finally accepted his views on the land question!²⁴⁵

Fisher's candidature was not to last long. When he had agreed to stand it seemed to have been on the understanding that the Farmers' Club would cover his expenses; a very important consideration at the time as M.P.'s were not paid. Lord Charles Beresford, for example, spent over £1200 on his election campaign.²⁴⁶ At the beginning of April Fisher announced that he was withdrawing from the election as sufficient funds had not been collected.²⁴⁷

In Britain Gladstone's Liberal party won the election. In Waterford, Villiers Stuart (Liberal) and Blake (Home Rule), were elected for the county, O'Donnell (Home Rule) for Dungarvan; and Power-Shaw and Leamy, both Home Rulers, for the city. The election victories were celebrated in the traditional manner in many areas. In Dungarvan, where O'Donnell had defeated the Conservative candidate Matthews, it was reported that the police were unable to cope with the crowds "maddened with whiskey". A calf's head with its tongue sticking out was set up in front of the Devonshire Arms Hotel where Matthews was staying. "Barley soup" (poteen), was available freely, and a sailor in Bridge Street was "kicked senseless". The correspondent was very concerned with the fact that the women "acted more like furies than human beings".²⁴⁸

In contrast to other areas of the country, Waterford remained very peaceful during most of 1880. It was reported that one of the Waterford guardians living in County Kilkenny had been provided with a police bodyguard, but always used to dismiss him on arriving at Ferrybank in Waterford.²⁴⁹ When the Leinster Winter Assizes were sitting in Waterford in December, it was remarked that although there was a "spirit of agrarianism" creeping into the county, the situation was not as bad

242. *Waterford News*, 26 March 1880.

243. *Ibid.*, 9 April 1880.

244. *Waterford Mail*, 19 March 1880.

245. *Ibid.*, 27 March 1880.

246. *Waterford News*, 28 May 1880.

247. *Waterford Mail*, 2 April 1880.

248. *Ibid.*, 7 April 1880.

249. *Ibid.*, 14 October 1880.

as in other counties.²⁵⁰ Another indication of the general peaceful condition of the county was that landlord sponsored events continued to take place, unlike districts. In May it was reported that the Curraghmore Steeplechase attracted the largest crowd for many years, with plenty of poteen available!²⁵¹ Lord Waterford's Curraghmore Hunt continued to meet without interference.²⁵²

The number of evictions was low in Waterford in contrast to other counties – 68 in total for 1880.²⁵³ These evictions lived on in the folk memory of people in many areas until comparatively recent times. A song in Irish from Clashmore, composed by a farmer called Power after his eviction in 1880 describes his sadness as he is forced to emigrate to Canada;

“Slán le hÉirinn is fágfad féin í,
Is ní chasfaidh mé ar an slaibh níos mó,
Slán lem’ ghaoltaibh dob fhearr a bhí ag aoinne,
Cé gur dubhach an scéal liom bheith ag scarúint leo”.²⁵⁴

The very few outrages that did occur were strongly condemned, such as the burning of a fox cover on the estate of Congreve Rogers in Carrigavantry, near Tramore.²⁵⁵ An agrarian murder near New Ross received wide coverage and condemnation in the local papers when Charles Boyd, the son of a landowner was shot by four men with blackened faces, wearing white surplices and white linen caps.²⁵⁶ A number of men were arrested after the assassination. Despite the fact that Boyd was “deservedly popular, having given an extremely large amount of employment on his estate”, the prisoners were “cheered as they were passing through Thomastown on the way to Kilkenny”, to the horror of the *Waterford News*.²⁵⁷ In August there was a case of malicious burning of thirty five tons of hay in Ballyduff near Dungarvan.²⁵⁸

The Land League

Although conditions in Waterford never approached the state of near anarchy in the west of Ireland, the tranquil state of the county was soon to change. After the excitement of the General Election, concern began to be expressed again about the effectiveness of the Farmers’ Club, especially in Joseph Fisher’s papers. In contrast to other parts of the country, no public meetings were being held and no form of agitation was taking place. In many cases officers of the Club did not know that evictions had been carried out until they read about them in the press and, as we

250. *Waterford News*, 17 December 1880.

251. *Waterford Mail*, 5 May 1880.

252. Bence-Jones, *Twilight of the Ascendancy*, p. 38.

253. Patrick C. Power, *History of Waterford City and County*, Mercier Press (Dublin, 1990), p. 200.

254. *C.B.É.*, S. 644: 102.

“Farewell to Ireland, and I now leave her,
And no more shall I go to the hill,
Farewell to the best relations anyone ever had,
Even though it is sad for me to be parting from them”.

255. *Waterford Mail*, 13 May 1880.

256. *Ibid.*, 10 August 1880.

257. *Waterford News*, 16 August 1880.

258. *Waterford Mail*, 18 August 1880.

have seen, any resistance that occurred was not organised by the Club, but tended to be spontaneous and locally based. There was only one branch for the entire county, a situation which would not have suited the smaller farmers. Meetings of the Club continued to be held in Dungarvan, and according to the newspaper reports, many of their discussions tended to concentrate on motions of praise, or of condemnation of Villiers Stuart.

The *Mail*, especially, was very concerned about the fact that the Club did not always follow Land League policy. There was much discussion in the country about the proposed establishment of a Land Commission (the Bessborough Commission), by the government to investigate the general agricultural situation. In the meantime the Land League decided not to co-operate with this Commission, and instead to continue to agitate for its main demand of peasant proprietorship. The Waterford Farmers' Club, however, voted to pursue a more moderate course of action, and to give evidence to the Land Commission, a policy which received much praise in the *Waterford News*.²⁵⁹

More and more letters began to be published criticising the Farmers' Club and advocating the establishment of Land League branches in the county. "A Tenant Farmer" from Dunmore East wrote of the need for a branch of the Land League in the area. In his opinion there was not one good landlord in the Barony of Gaultier. There had been no evictions yet, but rents were very high. Fr. Casey was also very dissatisfied about the direction the Club seemed to be taking. He wrote to the Club advocating a continuation of the agitation and co-operation with the League. He gave examples of "rack-renting" from the Kilrossanty area. One farm was valued at £43, but was rented for £100. A woman who wished to sell her interest in her farm and join her husband in America was refused permission by the agent, Langby. He told her that she would have to vacate without compensation. In spite of the calls for more extreme action, Michael Anthony was of the opinion that moderate policies would be more effective. He told the meeting that the 3 F's were more important than peasant proprietorship at this stage.²⁶⁰

Very detailed reports were carried in the local press of Land League meetings in counties Cork, Tipperary, Kilkenny and Wexford, which seemed in total contrast to the lack of activity in Waterford. The tone of these meetings was also becoming increasingly violent. When one speaker at a meeting in Carrick denied that they were Socialists or Communists, there was a shout of "more power to them" followed by great cheering from the crowd. There were also calls to shoot landlords: "We'll shoot the lot of them down and be done with them!"²⁶¹

In the meantime the Waterford Farmers' Club continued to pass resolutions thanking landlords for rent reductions.²⁶² At one Club meeting there was a great deal of opposition to the proposal to invite Parnell to speak in Waterford. According to a Mr. Walsh, the Land League "were a set of schemers", adding: "Hurrah for Stuart of Dromona and down with Parnell".²⁶³

259. *Waterford News*, 10 September, 1880.

260. *Waterford Mail*, 18 September 1880.

261. *Ibid.*, 7 October 1880.

262. *Ibid.*, 8 October 1880.

263. *Ibid.*, 22 October 1880.

Joseph Fisher, John O'Callaghan and Fr. Casey and many of the more radical members of the Club were by now advocating the establishment of local Land League branches throughout the county. In a letter published in his own paper, Fisher pointed out that tenants in the baronies of Gaultier, Middle Third and Kilcullaheen were not represented by the Farmers' Club.²⁶⁴

A number of days after this letter was published, Waterford's first Land League branch was established at a meeting held in Shanahan's public house in Ballybricken. Between 70 and 80 people attended. Joseph Fisher was elected President of the branch and John O'Callaghan elected Secretary.²⁶⁵

With a Land League branch now established in the city, preparations went ahead to hold a monster meeting and to invite Parnell to address it. Fisher proposed at a Corporation meeting to confer the Freedom of the City on Parnell during his visit. There was a great deal of opposition to this motion, and it was finally only carried by a majority of one. Alderman Allen thought that Parnell "should go to Hell for shooting landlords" stating that the Freedom of Waterford should not be given to a "ruffian".²⁶⁶

The establishment of the Waterford City branch of the League seemed to give the impetus to other areas to set up their own branches and on the 9th of November a branch was established at Tallow.

Although the Waterford Farmers' Club was nominally affiliated to the Land League, it continued to be the power base of the more conservative farmers in the county. Therefore, there was great consternation when a majority of the more radical members of the Club staged what almost amounted to a coup in November 1880. At a Club meeting in Dungarvan it was proposed to dissolve the Club and form a branch of the Land League in its place. Michael Anthony was in the Chair, and he refused to accept the original wording of the resolution that a Land League branch be established and "prayers be said over the rotten defunct County Waterford Farmers' Club". After great "confusion and disorder" it was decided by a majority of those present to accept the resolution.²⁶⁷

At a meeting in Kilrossanty some days later, another branch of the League was established. Over 100 attended. Father Casey was elected President.

Preparations were continuing in Waterford City for Parnell's visit. Meetings took place almost every night to organise the arrival, procession, public meeting and banquet. As the demonstration was to take place on a Sunday, the Bishop requested priests to have early masses for those attending. It was decided to escort Parnell into the city with a mounted escort of 50 farmers. At a Trades' meeting Joseph Fisher stated that "the birthplace of Thomas Francis Meagher will not be slow to show its sympathy for a movement designed to benefit Ireland". When someone mentioned the name of a Town Councillor who voted against granting the freedom of the city to Parnell there were confused shouts from the crowd in Irish – to which someone on the platform replied "Na bachlish" (Ná bac leis – Don't mind him).²⁶⁸

264. *Ibid.*, 23 October 1880.

265. *Ibid.*, 27 October 1880.

266. *Ibid.*, 3 November 1880.

267. *Ibid.*, 12 November 1880.

268. *Ibid.*, 15 November 1880.

Over much of Ireland, Land League activity on a local level seemed to be aimed at setting up an alternative form of administration to the Government.²⁶⁹ League branches, which were usually parish based, endeavoured to either force or persuade people to reject the law of the land, and instead to obey its own "laws".²⁷⁰ Farmers' Club meetings had often been thinly attended, with rather vague "resolutions" passed, and with very little action taken. In contrast, Land League branch meetings often attracted large crowds, very often resembling law courts, with farmers bringing their complaints to the meetings, evidence being heard, and decisions handed down. Very often landlords, their agents and others were "sentenced" to be boycotted. At times land agents and landlords were summoned to the meetings to account for their actions, although in practice very few ever attended. Clark identifies four methods the league used to enforce its policies; public open-air meetings, assistance to evicted tenants, boycotting and violence.²⁷¹ Many of these elements of Land League activity began to be practised in Waterford with the establishment of local branches from November. There was a number of cases of forced re-instatement of evicted tenants. A farmer, who had moved to Tramore after being evicted from his farm in Carrick Beg, was visited by twelve men with blackened faces, returned to his farm and was told not to leave it again.²⁷² John O'Callaghan, Secretary of the Waterford Land League, was re-instated on his farm by over 100 armed men and told to remain there unless evicted by force. The authorities, however, did not accept the fact that he was an innocent victim in the operation. In his statement to the police about the affair he was not able to identify any of the men, although he was full of praise for their kindness. On arrival at the farm they removed the caretaker, cleaned the house, lit fires in all the rooms and cooked dinner for himself and his family! John O'Callaghan was subsequently arrested, charged with forcible possession and returned for trial.²⁷³

Threatening letters or notices were traditional methods of intimidation used by agrarian secret societies in Ireland. In west Waterford, especially, there must have been a certain overlap of membership between the Caravat and Shanavest secret societies which were still in existence and the emerging Land League branches.²⁷⁴ William Bonaparte Wyse had to be given police protection after receiving threatening letters for condemning land agitation. A farmer named Rockett in Whitechurch also received threatening letters for taking a farm from which a widow had been evicted.

Tenants at Carroll's Cross near Kilmacthomas, were offered a 20% reduction in rent, which they refused. Instead they offered to pay Griffith's Valuation, which would have amounted to almost a 50% reduction. The agent would not accept this offer so the tenants refused to pay any rent at all.²⁷⁵

269. Bull, "Land and Politics; 1879-1903", in D.G. Boyce (ed.), *The Revolution in Ireland, 1879-1903*, Gill and Macmillan (Dublin, 1988), pp. 23-46.

270. Terry Eagleton, *Heathcliff and the Irish Hunger: Studies in Irish Culture*, Verso (London, 1995), p. 95.

271. Clark, *Social Origins*, pp. 303-326.

272. *Waterford Mail*, 15 November 1880.

273. *Ibid.*, 20 November 1880.

274. For evidence of secret societies and faction fighting in west Waterford during the late nineteenth century, see C.B.É. S. 637: 57.

275. *Waterford Mail*, 24 November 1880.

One of the main complaints about Waterford farmers was that they were in the habit of bidding against each other for farms. This now began to change. At an "auction" of a farm of 110 acres near Dungarvan, there was only one bid – Griffith's Valuation – in spite of the fact that a large crowd of farmers was in attendance.

There seemed to be a growing satisfaction in the county with the increased militancy and the support the *Mail* was giving it. Richard Costin in a letter praising the paper and the Land League ended with the following: "We have in the grand old Irish language, but not in the English, words expressive and suitable enough to praise the Land League".

As more local branches were established, many of the Catholic clergy now became involved in the movement. A meeting was held in Ballyduff to form a Land League branch, at which the Parish Priest, Fr. Slattery, presided. The case of labourers was strongly promoted (maybe because of the recent labourers' strike!), and a resolution was passed calling on shopkeepers to refuse credit to farmers who were not members of the League. About 150 members were enrolled.

Signs of a more active and sometimes violent style of agitation continued to be reported as Land League branches continued to be formed in the county. A cow house and two in-calf heifers belonging to Congreve Rogers was burned at Carrigavanry near Tramore.²⁷⁶ Fr. Casey wrote to the *Mail* protesting about the fact that extra police had been sent to Kilrossanty.²⁷⁷ Ten tons of hay owned by Captain Palliser of Annestown were burned. The Curraghmore hunt was stopped by a large crowd who called on "one member of the hunt to retire". Lord Waterford refused to allow this to happen and the entire hunt returned home. Meanwhile, a Land League branch was established in Cappoquin.²⁷⁸ The Boycott finally arrived in Waterford when a farmer refused to sell butter in Waterford Market to a member of the Corporation, who had voted against granting the Freedom of the City to Parnell.²⁷⁹ In December Sir Nugent Humble was boycotted in Dungarvan. At a fair in the town, nobody would buy his cattle. At the same fair, Patrick Coffey was also boycotted. His brother was a Catholic curate in Dungarvan and had strongly condemned the land agitation.²⁸⁰ At a meeting to establish a Land League branch in Lismore, it was regretted that seventeen cattle had been houghed on a farm in the district. The tenant had lately been evicted and the land had been let for grazing.

There were other examples of growing militancy to be seen at the Lismore meeting. It was decided to write to Sir Richard Musgrave's agent and to "request" him to attend the next meeting at Lismore and explain why he had evicted a tenant. One of the tenants on the Devonshire estate told the meeting that he had offered Mr. Currey Griffith's Valuation, but that this had been refused. It was decided to hold a monster meeting in Lismore on the 12th December, in the "Repeal Field" where Daniel O'Connell had spoken.²⁸¹ Tramore also held its first Land Meeting at the end of November, although a Land League branch would not be established in the town until early 1881. Fr. Roger Power chaired the meeting.

276. *Waterford News*, 19 November 1880.

277. *Waterford Mail*, 25 November 1880.

278. *Ibid.*, 27 November 1880.

279. *Ibid.*, 29 November 1880.

280. *Waterford News*, 17 December 1880.

281. *Waterford Mail*, 29 November 1880.

At a meeting of the Waterford Land League the cases of a number of farmers were discussed. Pat Corcoran held land from the late John Marcus Barron for 21 years. He was evicted for owing £26. He and his family got shelter in his brother-in-law's house, but had to leave after threats from the agent. Jeffrey Power had been evicted from his farm but "some niggers" put him back. He was told to stay there. In the case of Michael Walsh, who had been evicted by Sir Richard Musgrave, it was reported that the agent, Mr. Deane, had not come to a League meeting to explain himself. It was decided to forward the information to Dublin and to ask advice on what action should be taken.²⁸²

At a Kilrossanty Land League meeting the cause of the labourers was again advocated. One of the resolutions was that any settlement of the land question must address their grievances.²⁸³

After Christmas, Land League branches were formed in Clashmore and Fenor. In both of these areas the Catholic clergy were involved in establishing the branches. In Clashmore the Parish Priest moved the proposal to establish the League, calling for "legitimate and determined agitation". The other resolutions pledged the members not to take a farm from which another had been evicted, and support for the case of the labourers. In Fenor the inaugural meeting took place in the church yard, and the parish priest chaired the meeting.²⁸⁴

After Christmas Fr. Casey from Kilrossanty was active again. He led sixty tenants to Dungarvan, where the agent of Sir Edward Kennedy was waiting to collect the rent. There the tenants offered him Griffith's Valuation only, stating that they were unable to afford more. The agent refused to accept this. Fr. Casey led the tenants to the National Bank in the town where the money was lodged.

The year came to a close with two major land demonstrations in Waterford. The most important of these was undoubtedly in the City, where Parnell addressed an immense crowd in Ballybricken. The meeting took place on the 3rd December. Quotations from his speech in Ballybricken, and his address at the subsequent banquet held in his honour, appeared in a volume of his speeches published by his supporters after his death.²⁸⁵

Parnell's visit united all shades of nationalist opinion in the county. Even the moderate *Waterford News*, in an editorial, remarked after his visit that Waterford might have been late in joining the movement, "but when it moved, it moved right loyally to the cause".

The city was extensively decorated for the event with evergreens, banners and triumphal arches. Even the ships in the river flew all their signal flags and bunting in honour of the occasion. Parnell was received at the railway station by the Mayor and his supporters on the Corporation, where he was presented with an address of welcome. On the bridge he was presented with a second address of welcome from the Trades of Waterford, and a third by the Town Commissioners of Dungarvan. He

282. *Ibid.*, 1 December 1880.

283. *Ibid.*, 6 December 1880.

284. *Waterford News*, 23 December 1880.

285. Jennie Wyse-Power, *Words of the Dead Chief: Being Extracts from the Public Speeches and Other Pronouncements of Charles Stewart Parnell, From the Beginning to the Close of his Memorable Life*, Thom and Co. (Dublin, 1892), p. 48.

was then led by an immense procession to Ballybricken, where he addressed "the largest demonstration yet held in Ireland". Parnell told the crowd to support the land movement, calling for the "land of Ireland for the people of Ireland". Without the Land League the people would have been driven from the land as had happened in '47. He launched a strong attack on the government and on the Prime Minister, Gladstone in particular. He warned the people about the hardships that lay ahead before peasant proprietorship could be achieved: "hundreds exiled from the country, or driven into the workhouse". The meeting was addressed by a number of other speakers, and resolutions were passed supporting Parnell's leadership, pledging not to take the land from which another had been evicted, and in support of the claims of the labourers.

That night a banquet in Parnell's honour was held in the Town Hall. Parnell again addressed those present. He called for the "breaking of the neck of English misgovernment in Ireland" and peasant proprietorship. He opposed emigration, and warned against any compromise with the government.

The following day Parnell was made a Freeman of Waterford. In his reply to the Mayor, Parnell spoke on Home Rule, and warned of the sacrifices that would be necessary in the future, reminding the members of the Corporation of those who had suffered in the past "on many a blood-stained field", and of those who "cheerfully gave their lives ... in the cause of Ireland". That night, Parnell again addressed the people of Waterford from the Imperial Hotel, and a torchlight procession led by the Thomas Francis Meagher Brass Band "paraded the town for a couple of hours".

Although Parnell had planned to leave Waterford on Tuesday morning, he delayed his departure to ride out with Lord Waterford's Curraghmore Hunt, where according to reports he passed a very enjoyable day! The following morning he was accompanied to the railway station by the Mayor, the Thomas Francis Meagher Fife and Drum Band and a large crowd. In the opinion of the *News*, Parnell, "by his courteous and unassuming manner had made many new friends in the city of Waterford".²⁸⁶

At the end of December another huge demonstration was held, this time in Lismore, the stronghold of the Duke of Devonshire. By this stage, the Duke's agent, Mr. Currey seemed anxious to co-operate with the Land League. He gave permission for the use of the field where the meeting was to take place, and allowed evergreen branches to be cut on the grounds of Lismore Castle for the decoration of the platform. The platform party included two M.P.'s - Roger Power, and Tim Healy - as well as ten clergymen, nine Catholic and one Church of Ireland.

The first resolution, calling for peasant proprietorship, was proposed by the Catholic Parish Priest of Lismore, Fr. Byrne. He also advised the people to obey the law, and not to carry boycotting too far. The second resolution was proposed by Mr. Geary of Lismore, and called for everyone to join the Land League. It was seconded in a lengthy speech by Timothy Healy M.P., who delivered a savage attack on landlordism. He pointed out that the land could not be owned by any one individual, but was the common property of the people. He stated that the ancestor of the present Duke, Richard Boyle, came to Lismore from London with £28 in his pocket and got the land "by fraud and robbery". Michael Anthony from Dungarvan, now seemingly reconciled to the end of the Farmers' Club and the

286. *Waterford News*, 10 December 1880.

triumph of the Land League, attacked the Duke of Devonshire for not accepting Griffith's Valuation as a fair basis for rent.²⁸⁷

Conclusion

By the end of 1880, therefore, the situation in Waterford came to finally resemble that of the rest of Ireland, as a coalition was established between the forces of rural protest and parliamentary nationalism. Since 1879, the county had passed from a stage of political apathy, through a period of relative conservative protest to a new era of mass struggle, as the conflict between tenant farmers and landowners developed. In many areas this struggle was characterised by a combination of the twin pillars of respectability in nineteenth century Ireland, the farmer and urban merchant. This new movement was given an added aura of legitimacy by the involvement of large numbers of the Catholic clergy; their first major foray into political agitation since the days of O'Connell's Repeal movement in the 1840's. In spite of this clerical involvement, there was little evidence of the wild sectarian millenarianism which characterised earlier political campaigns.²⁸⁸

Unlike previous periods of rural protest during the earlier part of the century, the intense, often violent class struggle, between labourers and farmers was not evident.²⁸⁹ During these years, and up to the temporary halting of the agitation in 1882, rural labourers did not attempt to exploit the situation to further their own aims. Although they had very little involvement in the leadership or organisation of the campaign, they swelled the numbers at demonstrations and evictions.

The winter of 1879/80 was also characterised by intense economic distress in areas of the county as thousands of labourers and their families were affected by unemployment, eviction and hunger; and only the speedy response of local bodies and the government were responsible for saving large numbers of people from starvation.

The next stage in the land movement would be marked by an increase in the number of evictions as landlord attitudes hardened. These evictions would also lead to violent confrontations between police and people. New government coercive legislation would see the imprisonment of many local Land League leaders. Fr. Casey from Kilrossanty would also incur the wrath of his ecclesiastical superiors and find himself transferred from the district. Lord Waterford would have to suspend the meetings of the Curraghmore Hunt, and remove himself and his hounds to England. January 1881 would also see the establishment in Waterford of the Ladies Land League, the first branch in the county formed by Fr. Casey in Kilrossanty.

Abbreviations

- C.B.É.: Coimisiún le Béaloideas Éireann (The Irish Folklore Commission)
WML: Waterford Municipal Library.

287. Ibid., 23 December 1880.

288. James Donnelly, "Pastorini and Captain Rock: Millenarianism and Sectarianism in the Rockite Movement of 1821-24", in Clark and Donnelly, *Irish peasants ... 1780-1914*, pp. 135-7.

289. Emmet O'Connor, *A Labour History of Waterford*, pp. 21-26; and Paul E. W. Roberts, "Caravats and Shanavests: Whiteboyism and Faction Fighting in East Munster, 1802-11", Clark and Donnelly, *Irish Peasants ... 1780-1914*, p. 97.



Caroline Fairholme and Patrick Carmody: picnic in Comeragh, 1898.

Patrick Carmody, Irish Scholar

By Pádraig Ó Macháin

AN introduction by John Fleming to a sermon in Irish published by him in 1889 in *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge/The Gaelic Journal* reads as follows:

Spoken about 80 years since by Father John Meany, P.P. of Kilrossanty, in the County of Waterford, and transcribed for the *Gaelic Journal* by Mr. Carmody, of Comeragh Mills, from a MS. in the possession of Father Michael Casey, P.P., successor to Father Meany, in the parish and in the residence, Tigh na Sagart.¹

Here is a partial index to Irish culture in one of its great strongholds in Co. Waterford in the nineteenth century, the parish of Kilrossanty and Fews. If its ramifications were pursued, they would lead into adjoining parishes and beyond: to Fr Meany's nephews Fathers Patrick and Gerard; to Philip Barron; to John O'Daly; to William Williams; and to the great Michael Cavanagh of Cappoquin; to mention but a very few.

It is in the nature of things that such people should, by now, be largely forgotten. This, however, is not to say that their memories should not be revived; nor, being revived, that they should not be honoured in some way. Though minor figures in the eyes of many, to them, and to others like them, is owed the survival of much of what is distinctive in the record of native culture in Co. Waterford. It is the purpose of this article to shed some light on the contribution of one of these figures: 'Mr. Carmody, of Comeragh Mills', mentioned above.

Patrick Carmody was born in Co. Clare in either 1833 or 1834.² He was of farming stock, the son of Patrick and Mary Carmody, and, on the occasion of his marriage in 1856, was schoolmaster in Kilballyowen, a townland and civil parish near Loop Head in the south-west extremity of Co. Clare. This was an area noted for proselytism, to which the founding of Protestant schools c. 1849 in Dunaha, Kilballyowen, and Kiltreilig, was perceived as giving impetus.³ At what time

1. *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge* 4 (1889) 4.
2. 1833 is the date given by Seaán O Cadhla, *Cathair Phortláirge agus na Déise* (Waterford 1917) 184. Carmody gives his age as 67 in the 1901 Census, and was 75 at the time of his death in January 1909.
3. P. White, 'Proselytism in West Clare: a retrospect', *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* 3rd Series, 8 (1887) 411-21.

Patrick Carmody converted to the Church of Ireland – as family tradition records he did – is not known; that he had done so by the time of his marriage appears certain.

Patrick Carmody and Catherine Cox were married in the Church of Ireland Parish Church of Kilfearagh, at Kilkee, 2 April 1856. Catherine was daughter of John Cox, farmer, of Kilnagalliagh, parish of Kilfearagh. It was at Kilnagalliagh that their first child, Samuel, was born, 12 February 1857. By 7 November of the following year the family had removed to Rathlaheen, parish of Tomfinlough, between Newmarket-on-Fergus and Sixmilebridge, where the second child, James Arthur, was born on that date. Between then and 9 September 1860 – when their third child, John William, was born in Comeragh – Patrick and Catherine had transferred to Kilrossanty.⁴

The particulars of how Patrick Carmody came to Kilrossanty are unclear. He was employed in the local Church of Ireland school at Mahon Bridge, a school which was run under the auspices of the Church Education Society, with partial financial support from private local sources. The Church Education Society was active in the placement of teachers in its schools throughout the country, though no record of such a placement in the case of Carmody is in evidence in the records of the Society which survive today.⁵ There is also a suggestion, in the Carmody family tradition, that Patrick may have acted as tutor to the daughters of Grace Fairholme (daughter of Lt.-Col. Wray Palliser), who appears to have alternated between Comeragh House and her matrimonial home at Chapel-on-Leader (Lauderdale, Scotland), before returning to Comeragh, following the death in 1868 of her husband, William Fairholme.⁶

In 1884 Mrs Fairholme's brother, the explorer John Palliser, mortgaged the Comeragh estate to his niece Mary Fairholme in conjunction with William Downes Webber of Mitchelstown Castle.⁷ In November 1888, following Palliser's death in 1887, the estate was conveyed from Mary and others to her sister Caroline.⁸ Naturally enough, these events had a bearing on the organisation and management of the estate, one result of which, perhaps, was that Patrick Carmody and Robert Weldon became neighbours. Records in the Valuation Office show that from his arrival in Comeragh until about 1887, Carmody lived at Mahon Bridge, in the townland of Kilcomeragh, in a house next to that occupied at present by Power's shop, a short distance from the schoolhouse. Weldon, up to around the same date, lived in Graiguearush in a house leased from Patrick Stack. Thereafter, both seem to have moved to the complex at Comeragh Mills at a time when the Comeragh estate was passing, or had passed, from the Pallisers to the Fairholmes.

4. This is based on information in the possession of the Carmody family. Seaán Ó Cadhla, *loc. cit.*, dates the transfer to 1859. Their fourth and last child, William Patrick, was born in Comeragh 17 March 1862.
5. Neither is there any mention of Carmody in the records of the Kildare Place Society, who trained Church Education Society teachers from 1847.
6. Burke's *Landed gentry* (London 1972) III, 315; *Landed gentry of Ireland* (London 1958) 305. The daughters, who never married, were: Anne (died young, 1869), Caroline, Mary, Louisa, and Katherine. A Palliser house at Shrevenham, Berkshire, appears as an address for the Fairholmes on some documents. The Fairholmes also had a house at 19 Waterloo Road, Dublin.
7. Reg. Deeds 1884/29/229.
8. Reg. Deeds 1888/55/101.

It is possible that Grace Fairholme's antiquarian pursuits had some bearing on the belated awakening of Patrick Carmody's scholarly interests. She was a member of John O'Daly's Ossianic Society from 1859 to 1861,⁹ and was elected a member of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland in 1889. Her daughter, Caroline – who herself became a member in 1912 – communicated the discovery of an 'ancient smelting works'¹⁰ in one of the fields of the Comeragh estate to the Society in 1895,¹¹ and Caroline's interest in local history is further evidenced by her correspondence with James Power of Mahon Bridge.¹²

Two more definite influences on Carmody were John Fleming and Carmody's sometime neighbour, Fr Maurus Phelan. Michael Beary of Dungarvan, Borough Surveyor and member of the Gaelic League, writing in 1911, says:

I knew Mr P Carmody to be a very upright man & a good Gaedhlich scholar. He was a fellow student of the Present Abbott [*sic*] of Mount Melleray (Rt Rev Maurus M. O'Phelan). They were pupils of the late John Fleming of Rathgormac Co. Waterford . . . & though Mr Darmody [*sic*] was a Protestant their friendship did not ceas[e] when Dr Maurus O'Phelan was a monk & Prior of Mt Melleray. Mr Carmody used often spend a week there also with his friend.¹³

To what extent Patrick Carmody was ever a pupil of John Fleming is doubtful. The likelihood is that Beary is here drawing his own conclusions from the fact that both Maurus and Carmody had associations with Fleming.¹⁴ But that Carmody did learn from Fleming – if not in the manner envisaged by Beary – is true. In a letter to Fr Maurus, 1 November 1887, referring to a recent visit by Fleming to his home village of Clonea Power, Carmody states:

'Nuair a bhí an t-saoi Plemion a g-Cluain Fhiadh bhí mé go minic 'na comhlúadar agus dar n-doigh d'fhoghluim me a lán a d-taobh na Gaedhilge uaig agus chualaidh me uaig ó chuaidh se air n-ais go Baile Atha Cliath.¹⁵

[When Mr Fleming was in Clonea I was frequently with him, and indeed I learned a lot about Irish from him, and I heard from him since he returned to Dublin.]

As we will see, Patrick Carmody was able to repay Fleming for his tuition with contributions to *The Gaelic Journal*, of which Fleming was editor (1884-91).

The thirteen letters which survive of Carmody's correspondence with Fr Maurus are an important source for the former's development as an Irish scholar. Though apparently a native speaker of Irish, as was his wife Catherine,¹⁶ it is clear from the

9. Membership-lists in Society's *Proceedings* for those years.
10. The description given, however, suggests a *fulacht fia*.
11. *RSAL Journal* 25 (1895) 230.
12. Pádraig Ó Macháin, *Catalogue of Irish manuscripts in Mount Melleray Abbey, Co. Waterford* (Dublin 1991), 8 (1) 181.
13. Coláiste na Rinne MS 4, p. [119].
14. Maurus (born Richard) spent the year 1867 in Rathgormack at school to John Fleming; see M. O'Shea, 'Abbot Maurus Ó Faoláin', *Cill Rosanta: a 100 years of football in the parish* (Kilrossanty 1984) [47-8].
15. Ó Macháin, *op. cit.*, 8 (1) 15.
16. There is no evidence to show what familiarity with the language, if any, their children gained from their parents.

first surviving letter, dated 19 July 1887, that Patrick had only relatively recently acquired a knowledge of the written language (a not uncommon phenomenon at the time):

Tá fhios agad na b-fuil mé ro-clisde air an Ghaedhilge a sg[r]íobh fós agus air nós gach aon tíonsgantóir do gheobhadh tu í so lán do luchda acht tá fhios agum gur feárr leat mar so í ná cean[n] deighsgriota i m-Bearla.¹⁷

[You know that I am not very good at writing Irish yet, and, like every beginner, you will find this full of errors, but I know that you prefer it this way than one well-written in English.]

In the letter already quoted, dated 1 November 1887, Carmody explains further that he has little practice at writing Irish but that it is his ambition to improve.

If his writing was coming on but slowly – and the evidence of his letters suggests that he was being somewhat modest in this regard – his reading ability was sufficiently developed for him, on his frequent visits to Fr Maurus’s family on the Kilrossanty road in Briska Upper (where Maurus’s father had a cooperage), to read poems and other pieces in Irish to Maurus’s mother. Carmody, by now, had begun to collect books printed in Irish – in time he was to assemble a sizable library – and was regularly exchanging such publications with Maurus, as well as informing him of new acquisitions.¹⁸

John Fleming, by now in his fourth year as editor of *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge*, and ever anxious to publish material from his native county, asked Carmody if a complete version of ‘O’Curnan’s Song’ could be found in the district; Fleming had originally published a six-stanza version in 1878.¹⁹ Carmody promptly collected the song from a noted Kilrossanty singer, Patrick Hally, a worker on the Comeragh estate, and enlisted the help of a former pupil of his, Mary Jane Armstrong of Briskey House, in transcribing the air. The music he then sent to Fr Maurus for inspection.²⁰ Words and music were, shortly afterwards, published in the *Irisleabhar*,²¹ and this, to the best of our knowledge, was Carmody’s first appearance in print.

Clearly influenced by the experience of having been able to rescue a song of which no variant had been known to Fleming, Carmody acquired a taste for publication; and with it came a sense of purpose. He would strive to preserve the old Gaelic songs, which he saw as disappearing rapidly from the countryside. Apologising for troubling Fr Maurus with his queries, he remarked:

17. Ó Machain, *op. cit.*, 8 (1) 14.

18. Letters and books were taken to Melleray by Maurus’s sister, Mary, on her many visits. She went to live in Melleray before her death, 14 April 1934, and is buried there.

19. *Irish Teachers’ Journal* 12/24 (June 1878) 295; this he reprinted in *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge* 3/26 (1887) 22-3. A version collected in this century from Mrs Bray of Knocknafalla is to be found in *Waterford history and society*, 671-4.

20. Ó Macháin, *op. cit.*, 8 (1) 15.

21. 3/27 (1887) 47-8. The publishing of music in *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge* was an innovation introduced by Fleming earlier in the same year with the publication of the song ‘Seaghán Gabha’ (by the Lismore poet Seán Ó Laoi), 3/25 (1887) 13.

sé mo leithsgeul go bh-fuil fhios agam gur maith leat seanabhráin air [a]n duithche a coimead gan muchadh.

[my excuse is that I know you wish to preserve from extinction old songs about the locality.]

And again:

I am anxious to preserve as many as possible of the beautiful songs of our language, and I know no one whose taste & studies & zeal too equals yours in these matters.²²

This was said while Carmody, having collected another song from Patrick Hally in the spring of 1888, was obtaining Maurus's opinion of Miss Armstrong's transcription of the air. The intention, as before, was publication in the *Irisleabhar*, but on this occasion, for whatever reason, the song was not published. The correspondence with Maurus on the subject is significant, however, as it reveals that Carmody was now not content merely with faithfully transcribing the words as sung, but saw it as his duty to purge them of what he took to be corruptions which their transmission through time had inevitably produced:

All the fine old songs have suffered through ignorance of the language of the poets – and I had to make alterations in the song to preserve the sense.

and:

The song as I took it down from Hally was teeming with mistakes. Scarcely any singer of the present day knows the sense of the words they use. It appears to me that where they forget the right word they substitute a word of the same sound and quantity.... If I knew of anyone from whom I could ask help in clearing the productions of our poets from the mistakes which later singers have introduced I would not intrude on your time which I am well aware is fully occupied.²³

While this attitude towards the native tradition-bearer may have been in keeping with the spirit of the times, one cannot help but detect an increase in confidence – to say the least²⁴ – on Carmody's part in his approach to the language, as though his familiarity with the written word had given him an authority which, without question, outweighed that of any given source. This has implications for Carmody's later dealings with Robert Weldon, as does the consultative role of Fr Maurus, which in the 1880s anticipates a similar role in the early 1900s with regard to Weldon.

22. Ó Macháin, *op. cit.*, 8 (1) 16-17.

23. *Ibid.*

24. Compare his remarks (*ibid.*) concerning Fr Michael Casey (who, as well as introducing him to local singers, supplied him with the manuscript mentioned at the beginning of this article): 'He is a great admirer of the Irish poets but though he speaks the language well his knowledge of it grammatically is not great & he is not well up in the "Cruaidh Gaidheilge"'.

Patrick Carmody's activities as a collector were not confined to songs and music. It would appear that it was his habit to carry a pocket notebook for the purpose of jotting down words, phrases, and pieces of verse in Irish from local speakers whenever an opportunity arose. These were written in pencil, which he later retraced in ink. Two such notebooks of his survive today.²⁵ One, NLI MS G 412, contains material collected in the late 1880s and early 1890s from local people.²⁶ The other notebook²⁷ contains similar items, none of which better illustrates his working method than a song by Darby Ryan of Bansa to which Carmody appended the following note:

Toigthe síos o fhear bhoichd siubhail dárab ainm Tomás Ó Briain do chasadh liom air bhothar a Teampuill trathnóna Domhnaig.

[Taken down from a poor travelling man named Thomas O'Brien, whom I met on the Church road one Sunday evening.]

Even such apparently random jottings had their uses. From what is now G 412 Carmody was able to provide John Fleming's friend Padraig Ó Briain – the printer and publisher of Cuffe St, Dublin – with a list of Irish words and phrases current in Comeragh: NLI MS G 336 [d] is a fair copy made from G 412, and postdates Ó Briain's edition of 'Cúirt an Mheán Oíche' (1893), mentioned by Carmody in one of the entries.²⁸ Carmody was in a position to be of more substantial assistance to Ó Briain for his edition of Keating's 'Eochairsgiath an Aifrinn'.

Mr. P. Carmody, Mill House, Comeragh, Kilmacthomas, County Waterford, lent me a good MS. copy, which I found very useful. The scribe's name was not given, nor the year in which it was written, but it must be over a hundred and fifty years. Mr. Carmody also read the proofs, and his suggestions on some points were very practical.²⁹

From Ó Briain's description, it is likely that the manuscript in question was what is now NLI MS G 315 (written by Sean Ó Conaill of Kilworth about the middle of the eighteenth century), which has Carmody's signature, dated 1891, on its front endpaper.³⁰ Another manuscript which at one time was in Carmody's possession

25. A notebook containing jottings by Carmody from literary sources is NLI MS G 418, which also contains a copy by him of the poem known as 'An siota agus a mháthair'.

26. Sources cited are Fr Michael Casey, Micheál and Bríd Gambún, Pádraig Brasail, Wat. Drohan, J. Phelan, John O'Reilly (Seán Ó Raghallaigh), Bob and Johanna Weldon.

27. Given to the present writer by Ms Helen Dixon; formerly in the possession of her father, James Carroll (see below).

28. On 26 May 1900 Carmody wrote to Fr Maurus: 'I spent a week lately in Dublin and I met a bosom friend of Mr Fleming's who gave me some particulars of the last few months of his life. It appears that when he had to resign his post at the Academy there was no prospect before him but the Workhouse! But when the Revd Mr Close heard this he sent P. O'Brien the printer and bookseller to Mr Fleming to say that he would allow him £40 a year while he lived. This he did and defrayed all the expenses of his funeral when he died, so that the poor desolate old man was spared the humiliation of a pauper's end. O'Brien was my informant.' (Ó Macháin, *op. cit.*, 8 (1) 19.)

29. Patrick O'Brien, *Eochair-sgiath an aifrinn* (Dublin 1898) p. iii.

30. This manuscript was also in the possession of James Carroll (see below, and note 27 above), whose widow sold it to the National Library in 1936; Nessa Ní Shéaghda, *Catalogue of Irish manuscripts in the National Library of Ireland VII* (Dublin 1982) 52-3.

appears to be what is now NLI MS G 230, though previously the property of Coláiste na Rinne (Iolscoil na Mumhan).³¹ From this manuscript, written by Tomás Ó Ící in 1821, the tale 'Teacht agus imtheacht an Ghiolla Dheacair' was published by John Hogan in *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge*, from January to November of 1900, and subsequently in book format in 1905.³²

Similarly, in his edition of the prose tale 'Bruidhean Chaorthainn', Patrick Pearse records his indebtedness to his friend, Patrick Carmody, for lending him a manuscript written 1840-44 by Mícheál Brúnn of Lismore.³³ This manuscript is now NLI MS G 495, and bears Carmody's signature dated March 1899.

This readiness to facilitate generously the academic work of others was another token of Patrick Carmody's enthusiasm for the language, in both its spoken and literary traditions. A measure of that enthusiasm may be gauged from two letters written by him to Míchéal Ó Foghlú, master of Ring National School, and father of the great Ring poet Áine Ní Fhoghlú.³⁴ Ó Foghlú had contributed an article entitled 'Irish in National Schools' to the *Irisleabhar* of February 1892,³⁵ in which he gave an account of his successful efforts at introducing Irish as a subject at school. On reading this article, Carmody wrote to Ó Foghlú (4 March 1892) introducing himself and asking to make an appointment with him in Dungarvan. As in his letters to Maurus, the preservation of the native traditions were his prime concern:

Foraor ta na daoine aosda aig imtheachtd uain gach aon la agus nil an dram óg a cuir aon spéis 'na d-teanga duthchais agus measaim go bh-fuil se do dhúalgas air gach sgoilire Gaedhilge a dhithcheall a dheanadh na seaneachtraidhe agus na sean abhrain a choimeád beo. Bhi Gaedhilge blasda timchioll na h-áite seo deich m-bliaghana 7 fiche o shoin acht d-tionntugh na daoine óga ro usal [sic] agus caitheadar uatha a nGaedhilge caoinbhlada fein agus da dheasga sin nil Beurla na Gaedhilge aig a urmhor.

[Alas the old people are departing us every day and the young people are showing no interest in their native language, and I believe that it is the duty of every scholar of Irish to do his utmost to keep the old stories and songs alive. There was good Irish in this locality thirty years ago, but the young people became too snobbish and discarded their own beautiful Irish and, as a result, most of them have neither English nor Irish.]

31. The stamp of Iolscoil na Mumhan is to be found on the manuscript, which is annotated throughout in the hand of Richard Henebry, in one instance a meaning being attributed to his mother E[ibhlín] Ní C[h]laisín. Many of Henebry's books and papers are still in the library of Colaiste na Rinne. Fr Henebry knew Carmody – cf. Richard Henebry, *The sounds of Munster Irish* (Dublin 1898) 51 – and may have loaned the manuscript to him.
32. Seaghán Ua hÓgáin and Seosamh Laoide, *Teacht 7 imtheacht an Ghiolla Dheacair* (Dublin 1905), p. iii. Source identified by Pádraig de Brún, *Lámhscríbhinní Gaeilge: treoirliosta* (Dublin 1988) 61.
33. Pádraic Mac Piarais, *Bruidhean Chaorthainn* (Dublin 1908) p. vi. The manuscript was previously owned by Fr Patrick Slattery, curate in Lismore prior to his appointment as Parish Priest of Ballyduff in 1870.
34. Maynooth College Library, RB 334. (I am indebted to Mícheál Briody for bringing these two letters to my attention.) For Míchéal Ó Foghlú see Míchéal Ó Domhnaill, *Iolscoil na Mumhan* ([Rinn Ó gCuanach 1987]) 13-14.
35. *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge* 4/41 (1892) 125-8.

Two weeks later (18 March 1892), following an unsuccessful attempt to rendezvous at Kilmacthomas Railway Station on 12 March, Carmody wrote again. In this letter he reveals that he had asked Douglas Hyde to translate to Irish some of the hymns commonly sung in their church, and that Carmody himself had made an effort at such a translation which won praise from Hyde. Such praise was not forthcoming from Míchéal Ó Foghlú, however, to judge by Carmody's response:

bidheadh fhios agat nách bh-fuil aon mheas agam orm fein mar fhile agus is docha go bh-fuil tusa ceart a d'thuairm.... Nior mheas me ariabh an dán a chuir a g-cló.

[you must know that I have no regard for myself as a poet and I suppose you are right in your opinion.... I never thought to publish the poem.]³⁶

In a postscript to this letter, Carmody informs Ó Foghlú that 'I know your friend Fraher well'. The reference is, of course, to Dan Fraher of Dungarvan, and three years later Carmody, Ó Foghlú and Fraher were all in Dungarvan when, in the presence of Eoin Mac Néill and Fr Michael Hickey, a branch of Conradh na Gaeilge was formed in the town, 7 May 1895.

A meeting was held in Dungarvan on the 7th ult., at which, among others, the following were present: Rev. M. P. Hickey, religious inspector for Waterford Diocese (chairman); Messers. P. Carmody, Kilmacthomas; M. T. [sic] Foley, Ring, Thomas McCarthy, Town Clerk, Dungarvan; Daniel Fraher, Patrick Sweeny, James Daly, all of them representative local men, good Irish speakers, and noted supporters of the movement. A branch of the Gaelic League was formed, a number of members were enrolled, and subscriptions were handed in, the chairman subscribing one pound. The central committee was represented by Mr. J. MacNeill, hon. secretary.³⁷

A year previous to this Patrick Carmody had made for Dan Fraher a copy of Anna Ní Chadhla's well-known elegy for Fr Seán Ó Maonaigh, P.P. Kilrossanty,³⁸ whose sermon on Charity he had already published in the *Irisleabhar*. Clearly, by this time, Carmody had acquired a reputation, not only as a scholar, but as a scribe as well. This conclusion is reinforced by three manuscripts written by Carmody during this period.

For a variety of reasons, Keating's 'Forus feasa ar Éirinn' is among the most frequently-copied texts in late Irish scribal tradition. What was a literary and historical *tour de force* on the part of its author, became a palaeographical one on the part of the scribes who copied the work from the mid-seventeenth century on, as though one's scribal curriculum vitae would never be complete unless a copy of the 'Forus feasa' was included therein. In November 1887 Carmody had remarked to Fr Maurus:

36. An Irish translation of Burns's poem 'To a mountain daisy' is credited to 'P. Ó Cearmada' in *Fáinne an Lae* (3 May 1919) 4, but whether or not this is our Carmody is not known.

37. *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge* 3/6 (1895) 45.

38. This copy does not survive, but is listed among Fraher's manuscripts by Séamus Ó Casaide, NLI MS G 554 f. 30.

Dar n-doigh geóbbhadh tu morán luchda am litir acht b-fhéidir le cunghnamh Dé go m-beith mé fós clisde go leór air an Gaedhilge a sgríobh.³⁹

[Indeed you will find many faults in my letter but perhaps, with God 's help, I will yet be clever enough to write Irish.]

What better way to demonstrate, to himself at least, his progress and perseverance in writing, and to conform to a tradition which was clearly cherished by him, than to complete a copy of the 'Forus feasa'?

The three manuscripts referred to above all contain copies, or partial copies of this text. One, the earliest,⁴⁰ contains the Introduction and Book I. The calligraphy here is not as accomplished or as consistent as in the other two copies, and has the appearance of a trial copy, made prior to executing the work proper. The second copy⁴¹ of the 'Forus feasa' was begun in 1893 – the Introduction and Book I were completed 25 October and Book II was completed 5 April 1894. From notes inserted by Michael Beary (see above) in April, May and October of 1911, it would appear that the manuscript had come into the possession of Dan Fraher by that time, though whether it was actually written for Fraher – at the same time as the elegy for Fr Ó Maonaigh – is unknown.⁴²

The third copy⁴³ which Carmody made he dedicated to his friend and former pupil James Carroll, originally of Graigueshoneen, Kilmacthomas, later Land Commissioner in Ely Place, Dublin.⁴⁴ It is not stated when the writing was begun, but the book was finished 24 July 1896, and the dedication inscribed in August of that year. This is the finest of all three copies, with rubricated initials and careful and methodical calligraphy throughout.⁴⁵

The exemplar for all three copies was a manuscript written in 1750 by Diarmuid Ó Faoláin of Lismore.⁴⁶ In Coláiste na Rinne MS 4 Carmody supplemented this with references – mainly in the form of marginal notes and readings – to William

39. Ó Macháin, *op. cit.*, 8 (1) 15.

40. Coláiste na Rinne MS 5; though undated, examination of the text shows the writing to predate the other two manuscripts.

41. Coláiste na Rinne MS 4.

42. In 1900, Beary – a native of Sliabh gCua, and a former student at Mount Melleray, where, at the turn of the century, he was to design some of the monastery buildings – undertook for Fraher the restoration of an eighteenth-century manuscript copy of Keating's 'Trí biorghaoithe an bháis', now NLI MS G 525. The 'Forus feasa' does not feature in the Ó Casaide list referred to above, although the 'Eochairsgiath' does.

43. NLI MS G 1151; previously inaccessible until recently unearthed through the diligence of Tom Desmond, a library staff member.

44. Died 22 March 1921, aged 57 years, and buried in the Church of Ireland churchyard at Stradbally. I am indebted to Mr Carroll's daughter, Helen Dixon, for much help and encouragement during the writing of this article.

45. Carmody's meticulousness in making these books may be mirrored in another of his pastimes, namely wood-turning. He had a workshop, complete with lathe, in his house at Comeragh Mills, where he specialised in making children's toys. Through another pastime – fishing – he acquired an intimate knowledge of the topography of the Comeragh mountains, which was to prove invaluable to Fr Maurus for his publication on this subject in *An Sléibhteánach* (1903) 11-17; see Ó Macháin, *op. cit.*, 8 (1) 21-6.

46. Now UCC Library MS 91; by October 1904 it was in Canon Power's possession (*Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge* 14/169 (1904) 647) so that whether it was ever owned by Carmody is doubtful.

Haliday's edition of the 'Forus feasa' (Dublin 1811). NLI G 1151 also contains a reference to Haliday, with more copious references to Dermot O'Connor's eighteenth-century translation (edition not specified). G 1151 also has a number of references to 'Comyn's copy', which may refer either to a manuscript loaned by David Comyn to Carmody, or to Comyn's 1902 edition of Keating;⁴⁷ which would mean that, though dedicated to James Carroll in 1896, the manuscript was not in fact presented to him until some years after that date.

Having referred so far to his efforts towards the preservation of local songs and traditions, to his co-operation with other scholars, to his enthusiasm for the language movement both locally and nationally, and to his achievements as a scribe, it is now possible to see how Patrick Carmody's lasting legacy – the encouragement and promotion of the poet Robert Weldon, and the preservation of his compositions – involved a combination of all these different aspects of his work.⁴⁸ As already mentioned, Carmody, the collector, bibliophile and enthusiast, and Weldon, the best – and one of the last – of the later traditional poets of County Waterford, were next-door neighbours from about 1887 on. Carmody lived in the spacious Mill House at Comeragh Mills on the banks of the Mahon; Weldon in a far more modest dwelling in the same complex where he worked as a sawyer. The poet being unable or unpracticed in writing down his own work (which, after the traditional manner was composed in his head, and generally to music), Carmody took it upon himself to copy down the poems and songs from Weldon's dictation.

Availing himself of Fr Maurus's expertise, linguistically and musically, and still, apparently, of the view that traditional compositions might need 'correction' or 'improvement', Carmody sent the poems to Melleray. These form the basis of Fr Maurus's collection of Weldon's work published in an essay in the *Sléibhteánach* of December 1903 (pp. 17-22), which together with a further collection in a similar article by Maurus in the same journal of 1912 (pp. 20-22), form the nucleus for Pádraig Ó Dálaigh's edition of 1925.⁴⁹ On receiving the 1903 *Sléibhteánach* Carmody replied to Fr Maurus:

D'fheuch mé tríd an leabhrán 7 aon rud na'r chonnairc me cheanna léigheas éadh acht i d-taobh deantús Riobáird ta cuid diobh do ghlanmheabhair agam.⁵⁰

[I looked through the journal and read anything I had not seen already. Regarding Riobard's works, however, I know some of them by heart.]

Carmody was responsible for the first ever appearance of Weldon in print,⁵¹ and for putting the poet forward for competition in the Munster Feis (where he was successful three years in succession, 1900-1902). Of the nearly forty poems and

47. Comyn's 1898 edition contained only Keating's Introduction. Carmody's references include the portion of Book I edited by Comyn in 1902 (Irish Texts Society Volume IV).

48. I summarise here what is dealt with in more detail in Pádraig Ó Macháin, *Riobard Bheldon: amhráin agus dánta* (Dublin 1995).

49. *Riobárd Bheldon: File an Chomaraigh*.

50. Ó Macháin, *Melleray* 8 (1) 25.

51. *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge* 10/118 (1900) 549.

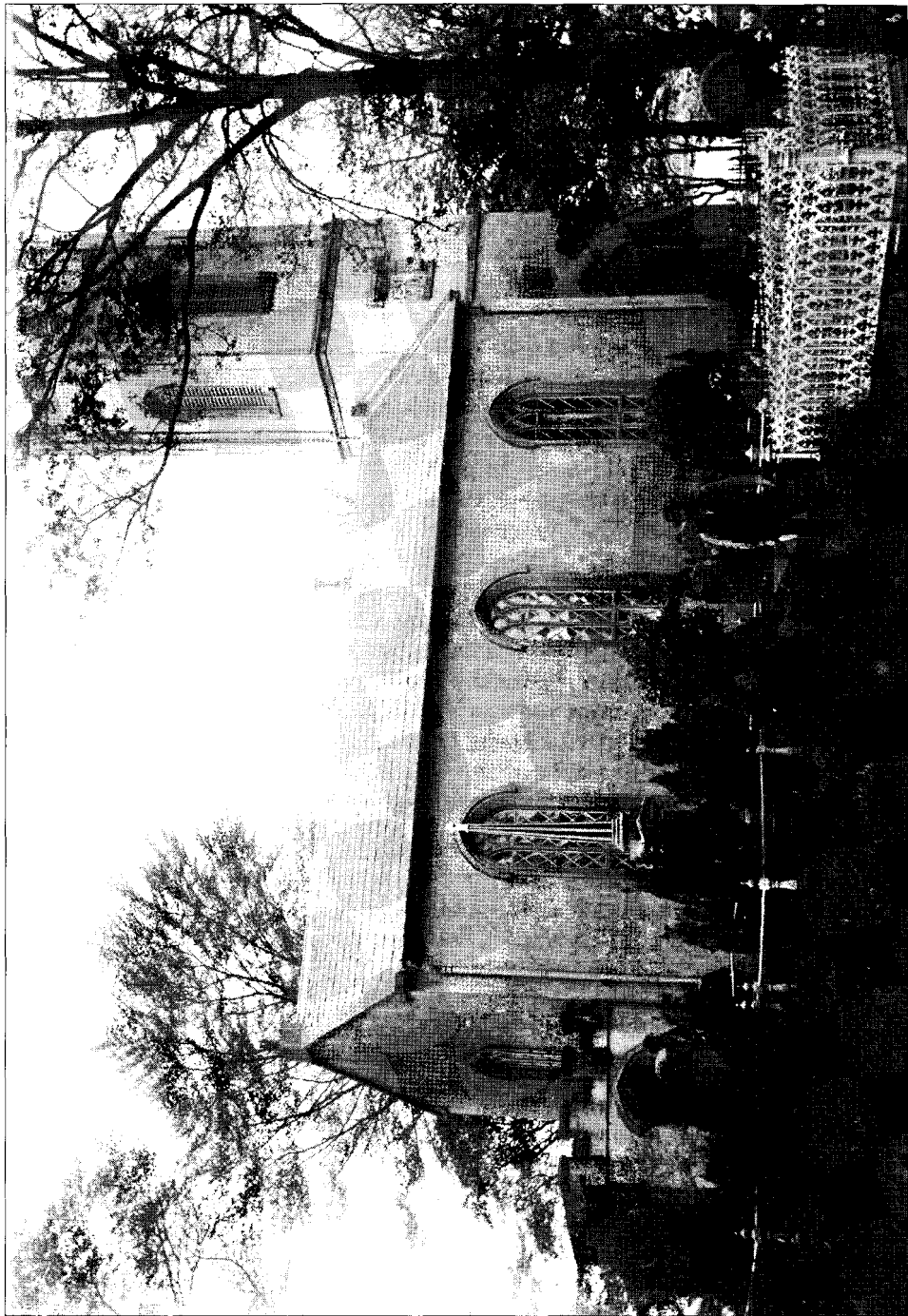
songs of Weldon's surviving today, copies of fifteen are in Carmody's hand.⁵² Though only two of these are not found elsewhere,⁵³ Carmody's is the prime manuscript source for Weldon's work, and much of what is in print may be inferred to have originated through his agency. The attitudes to the integrity of the poet's compositions, shared by Carmody, Maurus, and others (Fr Pádraig Breathnach, for instance), make it difficult for the modern editor to untangle the textual history of any particular piece in detail, thereby rendering it practically impossible to reproduce a text as the poet might have recited it at any given time. The general progression from Carmody to Maurus to Pádraig Ó Dálaigh seems established, however. This is why, with Carmody's written record of Weldon's opus, we get as near as we can, in most instances, to the poet himself. Such a record is invaluable.

Carmody's wife, Catherine, died 5 July 1904. Of their children, William Patrick seems in particular to have inherited his father's love of scholarship. Though his own forte lay in the areas of archaeology and local history, William Patrick is known, at one time, to have owned at least two Irish manuscripts: NLI MS G 284 and the Rathlin Catechism.⁵⁴

Patrick Carmody's health appears to have failed him in the closing years of his life. Since disestablishment (1869) he had held the positions of Parochial Secretary, Church Warden and Treasurer in the Church of Ireland parish of Kilrossanty, Rossmire and Fewes. In March 1907 he resigned these positions due to ill health.⁵⁵ He died 8 January 1909; paralysis is given as the cause of death in the registrar's entry. Because of the prohibition on attendance at Church of Ireland ceremonies, his old friend Bob Weldon was unable to attend the burial in the churchyard at Kilrossanty. Though Weldon's elegy on Carmody⁵⁶ suffers from striving to achieve a detached formality, as well as from a lack of cohesion in the closing stanzas, it is fitting to end this account with an extract from the poem, which avers that because of Carmody's tireless scribal activities, Ireland's stories, poems and history will still be accessible:

Bhíodh peann de ghnáth ina láimh go héasca,
 gach oíche is lá is tráth dá mb'fhéidir;
 beidh eachtraí is dánta is stáir na hÉireann
 go fóill ar fáil de bharr a shaothair.

52. Fourteen items in NLI MS G 381; one item in the Melleray documents (8 (1) 18). A fragment of verse in Carmody's hand may also be Weldon's composition: Ó Macháin, *Riobard Bheldon*, 130.
53. Ó Macháin, *Riobard Bheldon*, numbers 4 and 14.
54. PRONI D.3577. William Patrick ultimately became Dean of Down, and published books on local history as well as a number of articles in different journals and newspapers; he was a member and vice-president of the Royal Irish Academy; he died 4 March 1938. His eldest brother, Samuel Carmody, also trained for the ministry and died rector of Knockbreda, Co. Down, 13 October 1912. Of the two other brothers, John died aged 29, 27 September 1889, and is buried in Kilrossanty, as is his brother James, a noted athlete, who died 16 October 1943.
55. RCB Library, Kilrossanty, Rossmire and Fewes Vestry Book. The parishioners erected a plaque to his memory which may be seen inside Kilrossanty Church.
56. Ó Macháin, *Riobard Bheldon*, number 32; an English translation of this was made by Labhrás Ó Cadhla, teacher at Crehana, Carrickbeg, for James Carroll; a photocopy of this document is now NLI MS 29035 (1). (Thanks are due to Michael Coady for help in identifying Ó Cadhla; and to Síle Murphy and Aoibheann Nic Dhonnchadha for help in other respects.)



Kilculliheen Church at the turn of the century (Photograph courtesy of Mr Bill Irish).

Monumental Inscriptions at the Abbey, Kilculliheen, Ferrybank, Waterford

By Michael O'Sullivan

Introduction

Since the publication of all 322 monumental inscriptions from Kilculliheen in *Decies* 49-52 (1994-96), Mr O'Sullivan has located additional obituary notices in Waterford newspapers that relate to some of the individuals buried in the graveyard. These are presented here as an appendix to the inscriptions and are listed according to the alphabetical and numerical sequence used previously. The inscriptions relating to the obituaries for Ainsworth, number 2, down to Conn, number 65, can be found in *Decies* 49; those from Fitzgerald, number 95, to Hoey, number 147, are located in *Decies* 50; and those from Kennedy, number 171, to Pounder, number 250, may be read in *Decies* 51. There are no additional obituaries for the entries in *Decies* 52.

Greg Fewer

Part V (Appendix)

AINSWORTH, Number 2.

Waterford Chronicle, Saturday, July 15th, 1893, p.3, c.5: We deeply regret to record the death of Mr Thomas Ainsworth, secretary of the Waterford Steamship Company, which took place today at his residence, Park Villa after a protracted illness. The deceased who had been for many years secretary of the Waterford Steamship Company, and formerly secretary of the Waterford and Limerick Railway, was much esteemed in life, and his death is sincerely mourned.

ALLEN, Number 3.

Waterford Mail, Wednesday, June 7th, 1848, p.3, c.6: On Friday 2nd after a short illness, Captain Allen, of the schooner *Royal Eagle*.

ALSTON, Number 4.

Waterford Mail, Wednesday, May 26th, 1847, p.3, c.6: On the 21st, Captain Alston, at Annemount, County Kilkenny.

ANDERSON, Number 11.

Waterford Mail, Saturday, February 24th, 1855, p.2, c.1: On the 18th, at Prospect, County Kilkenny, Catherine, daughter of the Rev. Joshua Anderson, in the 28th year of her age.

Waterford Mail, Saturday, April 9th, 1859, p.1, c.1: On the 6th, at Prospect, County Kilkenny in the 90th year of his age, the Rev. Joshua Anderson, Rector of the parish of Messhall diocese of Leighlin.

BENFIELD, Number 30.

Waterford Chronicle, Saturday, January 16th, 1892, p.3, c.5: On the 9th at his residence, 3 Marine View, Tramore, Captain John Read, aged 82 years.

BOND, Number 40.

Waterford Mail, Wednesday, March 8th, 1837, p.3, c.4: Suddenly on Monday last on board his vessel, now lying in the river, Captain Bond, of the *Mary* of Newhaven.

BOUTCHER, Number 42.

Waterford Mail, Wednesday, April 21st, 1841, p.3, c.3: On Monday, Agnes, wife of Mr William Boutcher, of this city.

BROWNE, Number 46.

Waterford News, Friday, August 3rd, 1849, p.3, c.4: At Newtown, Fanny, wife of Joseph Browne.

CARLISLE, Number 54.

Waterford Mail, Friday, August 1st, 1864, p.3, c.6: March 29th at the house of her son-in-law, the Rev. William McCance [of] Lady Lane, in her 83rd year, Mary Carlisle, widow of Colonel Charles Carlisle of the Hon. East India Company's Artillery.

CARROLL, Number 55.

Waterford Mail, Wednesday, July 15th, 1846, p.3, c.6: On Monday evening, at his residence on the Quay, Mr James Carroll, silk mercer. By the death of Mr Carroll, a young family of five are thus bereaved of their second parent.

CLAMPETT, Number 60.

Waterford Mail, Saturday, August 27th, 1853, p.2, c.3: On Thursday evening the 25th, at her residence, Henry Street, Manor, Anne; relict of the late Mr Joseph Clampett of this city, aged 66.

Waterford Mail, Saturday, October 18th, 1845, p.3, c.3: On Wednesday at his father's residence, Beresford Street, after a lingering illness, Mr George Clampett, aged 27.

Waterford Mail, Wednesday, May 3rd, 1848, p.3, c.3: On Monday night, at his residence, Beresford Street, after a few days illness, Mr Joseph Clampett, aged 66.

CLAMPETT, Number 61.

Waterford Mail, Wednesday, December 6th, 1865, p.4, c.5: On this Wednesday morning at William Street, Frank Edwin, son of Mr Joseph Clampett.

Waterford Mail, January 25th, Tuesday, 1876, p.2, c.1: On Tuesday morning at her residence, 9 William Street, after a protracted illness, Harriett Sarah, wife of Joseph Clampett Esqr. T.C.

CONN, Number 65.

Waterford Chronicle, Saturday, September 2nd, 1893, p.3, c.4: On the 29th, at Mount Ida, William B. Conn.

Waterford News, December 16th, 1893, p.2, c.6: On Saturday, December 9th, at Mount Ida, Waterford, John L. Conn Esqr., aged 81.

FITZGERALD, Number 95.

Waterford News, Friday, January 30th, 1863, p.2, c.3: On the 28th, Sarah Anne, wife of William Fitzgerald, Belmont, Ferrybank.

FORTHE, Number 103.

Waterford Mail, Wednesday, July 23rd, 1845, p.3, c.3: On the 20th, Charles Gerrard Forthe Esqr., County Surveyor for Waterford.

GARRAWAY, Number 111.

Waterford News, Friday, July 1st, 1932, p.9 c.2-4: The death occurred at his residence Rockshire, Ferrybank, on Tuesday of Lieut. Colonel Sir Edward Charles Frederick Garraway, KCMG, after a long illness. Eldest son of the late Colonel Charles Sutton Garraway, Rockshire, Waterford, he was born in the Borough of Waterford 68 years ago. He received his early education at the Waterford Diocesan School, whence he passed to the medical school, Trinity College Dublin, and later the Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland. He was appointed District Surgeon at Koruman, Bechuanaland, in 1891; surgeon to the Bechuanaland border police in 1892 a position he held until 1901. From 1901 to 1905 he acted as divisional medical officer to the South African Constabulary, holding the rank of major. He was principal medical officer to the S.A.C. from 1905 to 1908; and from 1910 to 1913 he acted as military secretary to the Governor General and High Commissioner of South Africa. He was special commissioner of the Southern Rhodesian Native Reserves Commission from 1914 to 1916; Resident Commissioner of Bechuanaland 1916-17; Resident Commissioner, Basutoland, and Lieut.-Col. commanding the Basutoland Mounted Police from 1917 to 1926. When he served in the Matabeleland in 1893-4 he was awarded a medal, and won the clasps for gallantry in 1896. He served in the Boer War from 1899 to 1902, being awarded the Queen's medal with four clasps and the King's medal with two clasps. He was created K.C.M.G. in 1922, having previously, in 1911, had conferred on him the distinction of C.M.G. Following his retirement some five years ago, Sir Edward returned to his ancestral home at Ferrybank, where he lived up to the time of his death. He successfully contested the West Ward in the 1928 municipal elections, when he was returned as senior alderman for the division. As master of the County and City Infirmary he carried out many improvements, and did much to place that institution in the front rank of modern hospitals.

In 1905 he married Winifred Mary, daughter of J H Harvey JP, Blackbrook Grove, Fairham, Hants, by whom he had two daughters. He is survived by his widow, daughters, and a brother and sister who reside in South Africa, and another sister resident in Carlow.

The funeral took place on Thursday to the Abbey Church. The officiating clergymen were the Right Rev. Dr Day, Bishop of Ossory, assisted by Very Rev. Canon Norris. The chief mourners were Colonel Thurston, Major Herbert and Captain Garraway.

GOSS, Number 120.

Waterford Mirror, October 19th, 1839, p.3, c.3: MELANCHOLY ACCIDENT. About one o'clock yesterday, Captain Nicholas Goss of the schooner *Ashburton* of Liverpool, lying above our bridge, fell overboard while executing some painting work leaning over the vessel's side and was unfortunately drowned, notwithstanding attempts made to save his life. His dead body was immediately recovered. The deceased, a Liverpool man, was 58 years of age, and was a very respectable man in his line. Dr Briscoe, coroner, held an inquest upon the body, when a verdict of accidentally drowned was returned.

HOEY, Number 147.

Waterford Mail, Saturday, November 15th, 1828, p.1, c.3: In William Street at an advanced age, Mrs Hoey.

KENNEDY, Number 171.

Waterford Mail, Wednesday, September 15th, 1847, p.3, c.6: On the 29th August, Letitia, relict of the late Rev. John Kennedy of Fethard.

KIZBEY, Number 176.

Waterford Mail, Friday, December 16th, 1859, p.2, c.1: On Thursday night, Mrs Kizbey of the Parade.

Waterford News, Friday, March 13th, 1868, p.2, c.3: At his residence, Quay, on Monday night, after a short illness, Mr William Kizbey, boot and shoemaker, aged 79 years.

KOVY, Number 178.

Waterford Mail, Friday, 30th December 1859, p.2, c.1: This morning, at her lodgings on the Mall, after a short illness, Madame de Covey, wife of Capt. de Covey, late of the Hungarian Service.

LAWSON, Number 181.

Waterford Mail, Saturday, December 20th, 1845, p.3, c.6: On 18th inst. aged 64, Ellen, relict of the late William Lawson Esqr. of this city.

Waterford Mail, Wednesday, April 2nd, 1845, p.3, c.4: On the 29th ult., aged 14 years, Adelaide Helena, eldest daughter of the Rev. James Lawson.

LLOYD, Number 188.

Waterford Chronicle, Saturday, March 10th, 1849, p.3, c.1: On Thursday night suddenly, after having retired to rest, Mrs Harris, the lady of John Harris Esqr. of Newtown, took suddenly ill, medical assistance was immediately at hand, but unfortunately within an hour she was a corpse.

Waterford News, Friday, August 26th, 1853, p.3, c.6: At Newtown in this city on the 20th inst., Emma Elizabeth, eldest daughter of William Lloyd Esqr. in the 7th year of her age.

LONGMIRE, Number 191.

Waterford News, Friday, October 24th, 1862, p.3, c.7: Mr John Longmire, many years in the inland revenue office, died suddenly, it is supposed from a fit of apoplexy Sunday evening.

LUNHAM, Number 193.

Waterford Chronicle, Saturday, October 31st, 1846, p.3, c.6: On Thursday morning, at her residence on the Mall, Mrs Lunham, senior.

McCLELLAND, Number 196.

Waterford Mail, Wednesday, May 17th, 1848, p.3, c.6: Of consumption on Monday night the 15th, Rhoda Maria, the youngest daughter of Mr McClelland of Colbeck Street.

MacKENZIE, Number 200.

Waterford Mail, Wednesday, May 5th, 1847, p.3, c.6: On Sunday last of fever, Basil MacKenzie, manager of the Waterford Branch of the Provincial Bank. He leaves a widow and 8 children.

MADDEN, Number 201.

Waterford Mail, Wednesday, June 21st, 1854, p.2, c.1: On the 20th, at Cove Lodge, the residence of her brother-in-law, Arthur Smith Esqr., Leonara, last surviving daughter of the late George Berkeley Madden of Maghera, in the County Down, Esqr.

MORRIS, Number 213.

Waterford Chronicle, Saturday, July 29th, 1893, p.2, c.4: The death occurred on the 26th at his residence Seafield, Tramore, after a protracted illness of George W R Morris Esqr. The funeral took place today (Saturday) to the Abbey Graveyard.

MORRIS, Number 215.

Waterford Mail, Saturday, May 10th, 1828, p.1, c.3: On the night of the 5th, aged 76 years, Agnes, wife of William Morris of Newtown Road, Esqr., and daughter of the late Jordan Roche of Ballymountain, in the Co. of Kilkenny Esqr.

MORRIS, Number 217.

Waterford Mail, Friday, January 9th, 1863, p.3, c.6: At the house of her son-in-law, Garrett R Carey Esqr. of Keylong House, Co. Tipperary, Frances, relict of the late William Morris Esqr., JP, Bellelake, Co. Waterford.

PALMER, Number 234.

Waterford Mail, Saturday, August 16th, 1845, p.3, c.3: Yesterday morning at the Manor, aged 48 years, after a lingering illness, Mr William Palmer.

PENROSE, Number 238.

Waterford Chronicle, Saturday, January 2nd, 1892, p.3, c.5: June 30th, Arthur John Penrose, third son of Robert W Penrose, Riverview, Ferrybank.

PERKINS, Number 240.

Waterford Mail, Wednesday, March 2nd, 1836, p.3, c.5: At the Cove of Cork, where she had been removed for the benefit of her health, in the bloom of youth, Eliza, fifth daughter of the late Captain John Perkins of Waterford.

PERRY, Number 241.

Waterford Mirror, April 26th, 1820, p.3, c.3: On Monday of erysipelas, Capt. James Perry of the ship *Success* of London.

POPE, Number 245.

Waterford Mail, Saturday, April 23rd, 1853, p.2, c.5: On Monday evening, 18th, aged two years and 8 months, Richarda, youngest daughter of the late Richard Coleman Pope Esqr., Sion Hill.

Waterford Chronicle, Saturday, January 2nd, 1892, p.3, c.3: On Wednesday, the remains of the late Mrs Pope – whose death occurred on the 28th at the advanced age of 87 years – were removed from Sion Lodge at 12 o'clock for interment in the Abbey graveyard. The breast plate on the coffin bore the following inscription: Sarah Pope died Dec. 27, 1891, aged 87 years.

POPE, Number 248.

Waterford Mail, Wednesday, March 4th, 1846, p.3, c.6: In Dublin on Sunday morning last, the 1st March, Richard Pope Esqr. of Rockshire.

POUNDER, Number 250.

Waterford Freeman, Wednesday, November 12th, 1845, p.3, c.6: In Stephen Street on the 11th instant in her 64th year, after a tedious illness, Mrs Hannah Pounder.

Discovery continues her voyage: Sheet 76 of the Ordnance Survey's new 1:50,000 scale maps

By T. G. Fewer

DISCOVERY SERIES/SRAITH EOLAS 76 (covering part of county: Carlow, Kilkenny, Waterford, Wexford/Ceatharlach, Cill Chainnigh, Port Láirge, Loch Garman). 1:50,000 scale map published by the Ordnance Survey of Ireland/Suirbhéireacht Ordanáis na hÉireann. Dublin, first edition, 1996, £4.20.

Two years ago, I discussed the preliminary edition of a new Ordnance Survey map for northern and central County Waterford (*Discovery Series*, Sheet 75).¹ At that time I criticised the map for various problems including the omission of certain archaeological or historical sites and other details but praised it for its overall value for money and its level of detail. My praise is even greater for this newer map, though it is still mitigated by some omissions. Sheet 76 partly overlaps with Sheet 75 and this allows us to make some comparison between the two. The area covered by Sheet 76 is from Kilcurl (near Ballyhale), County Kilkenny, in the north-west across to Rathpaudin, County Wexford, in the north-east, and from a point 4 km off Islandikane (near Tramore) to another spot 12 km off the coast of Bannow, Co. Wexford.

There are many improvements over the earlier edition of Sheet 75. All symbols used on the map are now explained, the South Leinster Way is clearly marked with a dashed red line, and road details are more refined. For example, the directions of roads that continue off the map are indicated with the distance in kilometres and miles to their next important (but off the map) destination. Some road designations have been upgraded from that of a track such as at Ballylegat (NGR S 525 049) or Kilcarton (S 538 035), while some tracks or roads have been lengthened as at Loughdeheen (S 525 066). Even the track leading out to the tip head at Tramore dump is delineated (but, alas, no indication of the dump's existence is given).² Presumably, these revisions are due to new evidence supplied by aerial photographs which, the map tells us, were taken in 1995. Tramore Race Course

1. T. G. Fewer (1995) 'Discovery Series 75: A new map of north/central Waterford', in *Decies* 51, pp. 75-8.
2. The same might be said for Waterford City dump (598 100) now shown to be approached by a road rather than a track.

(S 583 025) is also more distinctly defined by the use of double dashed lines rather than the single line of the earlier map.

Another improvement is the clearer definition of built-up areas in the city of Waterford and in smaller localities such as Kilmacow in County Kilkenny.³ Watercourses and small areas of woodland or forest to the west of Tramore that were omitted in Sheet 75 have also been included. However, no changes have occurred in the data regarding the siting of public phones, which was already found to be out of date with regard to Sheet 75. Also, a small peninsula of land jutting into the Black Strand near Corballymore (S 626 004) is shown on the map yet this topographical feature disappeared many years ago!⁴

In terms of toponymy, Gaelic versions are more common (which is welcome) but they still appear to be *ad hoc* in certain contexts. Thus, some cross-roads are translated as at Garrarus near Tramore (X 553 994), but others are not, such as Fairybush Cross Roads near Kilmacomb (S 675 034). Some place-names (e.g., Killoteran/*Cill Odhráin* [S 544 105] or Half Way House/*Tigh Leath Slí* [S 664 097]) might be given in Irish as well, but it is not clear why they have been singled out when the majority are given only their English versions. Most of the headlands of Gaultier barony are given in both English and Irish except for Brownstown and Brazen heads. Great Newtown Head on the western side of Tramore Bay is similarly given only in English as are all of the named rocks and islands off the coast. However, one toponymical omission from Sheet 75 that has been addressed (albeit monologically) for Sheet 76 is the inclusion of Waterford Industrial Estate.

As with Sheet 75, archaeological and historical sites are frequently drawn from the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR),⁵ so any site which does not appear in the SMR tends not to be indicated on the map. Thus, a standing stone at Corballymore which was reported on in this journal⁶ following the publication of the SMR in 1988 goes unmentioned. Many of the prehistoric sites identified in the Bally Lough Archaeological Project⁷ of the 1980s which centred on the region around Belle Lake (S 665 050) were included in the SMR, but their subsequent delisting means that they do not appear on the *Discovery* map. However, some other SMR sites not

3. On Sheet 75, areas of open ground in Waterford were marked as built-up areas such as the land to the west of Ballybeg (S 580 013) or in the vicinity of the city dump (S 597 017).
4. Off this small peninsula was an island bearing a coastguard station at the time of the 1841 edition of the Ordnance Survey 6" map (Sheet 27), a fact recalled in 1937-38 by schoolgirl Katherine Mary Gear in a tale collected for the Irish Folklore Commission (Schools' Manuscripts Collection, Dept. of Irish Folklore, University College Dublin, MS. S652, p. 21). Gear stated that a coastguard 'used to live [on the island] long ago'.
5. For the Waterford SMR, see M. Gibbons, O. Alcock, T. Condit and M. Murphy (1988) *Sites and Monuments record Waterford: A list of archaeological sites in County Waterford* (Dublin: Office of Public Works).
6. T. G. Fewer (1989) 'A standing stone at Corballymore, Co. Waterford' in *Decies* 41, pp. 42-45.
7. S. W. Green and M. Zvelebil (1990) 'The Mesolithic colonization and agricultural transition of south-east Ireland', in *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 56, pp. 57-88; M. Zvelebil, J. Moore, S. Green and D. Henson (1987) 'Regional survey and the analysis of lithic scatters: a case study from Southeast Ireland', in P. Rowley-Conwy, M. Zvelebil and P. H. Blankholm (eds) *Mesolithic Northwest Europe: recent trends* (Sheffield: Dept. of Archaeology & Prehistory, University of Sheffield), pp. 9-23.

explored by the Bally Lough team, such as a prehistoric midden on Tramore Strand,⁸ also go unmentioned. As with Sheet 75, battlefield locations of the 1922-23 Civil War continue to be left out, perhaps because of the sensitive nature of this period in Irish history. Less sensitive (but equally important) sites that could be included in future editions of the map relate to the Famine period. The former location of Waterford Workhouse⁹ (which had been almost entirely demolished and replaced with the construction of St Patrick's Hospital some years ago) and the Famine plot in Ballynaneashagh cemetery¹⁰ over which a formal memorial had been placed by Waterford Corporation in 1996 are two candidates that would merit inclusion. Military constructions from the 1939-1946 'Emergency' period such as the lookout post on Brownstown Head (X 612 977), the two bunkers at Dunmore East and the pillboxes at Blenheim Hill (S 651 096) and Carrigroe (approximately located at S 598 092), might also have been considered for inclusion, though their omission from Sheet 76 may mean that they are still regarded as functional military buildings.

Archaeological sites in existence in the last century that are no longer extant are not marked, nor are their former locations such as *Lios na gCaorach* (an earthen-banked enclosure) in Kilmacleague East (S 635 014) or a group of now completely destroyed enclosures in Corballymore that were in existence at the time of the first (1841) edition of the Ordnance Survey's six inch map series. A more serious omission is an earthen-banked enclosure in Gortahilly (X 642 995) near Ballymacaw, half of which still stands and so it should not be treated as if it was totally destroyed.¹¹ Other omissions include Butlerstown castle (ruin) S 554 089) and a holy well (S 522 087) to the west of The Sweep which were both recorded on Sheet 75 but are not listed here. In both cases, it appears that they were excluded from the map to allow for other information to be provided. In the well's case, this occurred due to the site's location right at the edge of the map where its inclusion would not have facilitated the naming of the R681 road which begins at this point. If this is a common situation with the *Discovery* series, then it would be wise to acquire overlapping sheets to be sure of having all the information available on the overlapped areas.

Other archaeological sites have been named or re-classified since the publication of earlier maps. For example, Knockeen Megalithic Tomb is now individually identified though this was not the case on Sheet 75, while a site formerly regarded as a 'castle' at Castletown (S 616 052) on earlier Ordnance Survey maps is now described as a 'Fortified House'.

8. The relevant SMR number for this midden is WA026-066. See also T. G. Fewer (1995) 'Why the Tramore sand hills should be protected from development – an archaeologist's viewpoint', in *The Munster Express*, 19 May, p. 14, cols 1-7.
9. R. Byrne (1995) 'The workhouse in Waterford city, 1947-49', in D. Cowman and D. Brady (eds) *The Famine in Waterford 1845-1850: Teach na bprátaí dubha* (Dublin: Geography Publications in association with Waterford County Council), pp. 119-36.
10. D. Power (n.d.) 'An early history of Ballynaneashagh [sic] or St Otteran's Cemetery from 1847'. Typescript in Waterford Municipal Library, item 38/4.
11. For more information on these and other sites in this part of Gaultier barony, see T. G. Fewer (1993) "A look at some antiques of Corbally and Rathmoylan" in *The Munster Express* (part i) 9 July, p. 32, cols 1-6; (part ii) 16 July, p. 25, cols 1-7.

Despite the various omissions and other minor problems of Sheet 76, this map is still good value for money and contains many improvements made since the publication of the preliminary edition of Sheet 75 in 1993. This chart is a must for any tourist – foreign or local!

Membership W.A.H.S. Paid Up to 30 September 1997

Abbeyside Reference Archive, 6 Park Lane Drive, Abbeyside, Dungarvan,
Co. Waterford.

Ahearne, Miss S., 8 Sweetbriar Park, Waterford.

Allen County Public Library, P.O. Box 2270, 900 Webster Street, IN 46801-2270,
U.S.A.

Bayle, Mr. N., 48 John Street, Waterford.

Bourke, Mr. M., 17 Brook Lawn, Dublin 3.

Brazil, Mr. D., "Killard", John's Hill, Waterford (Hon.).

Broderick, Mr. & Mrs. E., 1 Pheasant Walk, Collins Avenue, Waterford.

Brophy, Mr. A., "Bushe Lodge", Catherine Street, Waterford.

Buckley, Mr. E., c/o A.I.B., Tramore, Co. Waterford.

Burns, Mrs. G.W., 97 Park Road, Lough Borough, Leicester LE11 24D, England.

Burtchaell, Mr. J., Gyles's Quay, Slieverue, via Waterford.

Byrne, Mr. & Mrs. N., "Auburn", John's Hill, Waterford.

Byrne, Mrs. R., Ballyscanlon, Fenor, Tramore, Co. Waterford.

Carroll, Mr. P., "Greenmount", Crooke, Passage East, Co. Waterford.

Carroll, Mrs. S., "Ardaun", Newtown, Waterford (Hon.).

Cherry, Mrs. N., Cathedral Close, Cathedral Square, Waterford.

Clarke, Mr. F., 9 Leoville, Dunmore Road, Waterford.

Coady, Mr. M., 29 Clairin, Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary.

Cody, Mr. P., Portnoe, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.

Colclough, Mr. B., 9 Pearse Park, Waterford.

Condon, Rev. Fr. E., P.P., Killea, Dunmore East, Co. Waterford.

Condon, Mr. S., 52 The Moorings, Ballinakill.

Cooney, Mr. T., 145 Rockenham, Ferrybank, Waterford.

Cowman, Mr. D., Knockane, Annestown, Co. Waterford.

Coulter, Mr. & Mrs. D., "Selby", 46 Lower Newtown, Waterford.

Cranley, Mrs. J., 6 Parnell Street, Waterford.

Croke, Mrs. N., Cathedral Close, Cathedral Square, Waterford.

Crowley, Mrs. M., "Fernhill", Ballyvooney, Stradbally, Co. Waterford.

Curham, Mr. L., 19 The Folly, Waterford.
Curran, Mr. C., 20 Friarsland Road, Goatstown, Co. Dublin.
Cusack, Mrs. A., Granville Hotel, Waterford.

Deady, M/s. P., 29 Lower Grange, Waterford.
Deegan, Mr. P., 2 Fairfield Walk, Belvedere Manor, Waterford.
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WATERFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society aims to encourage interest in history and archaeology in general, with particular reference to Waterford and the adjoining counties, and to promote research into same.

Lectures on appropriate subjects are arranged for the autumn, winter and spring, details of which are advised to members or can be obtained by contacting the Hon. Secretary, Mr. Eugene Broderick, 1 Pheasant Walk, Collins Ave., Waterford.

The Society's annual publication *Decies* is issued free to all members. Back numbers of issues 1-51 (1976-1995) may be obtained from Waterford Heritage Genealogical Centre, Jenkin's Lane, Waterford. The following issues are available: Nos 9, 11, 15, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 35, 37, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 45, 48, 49, 50, 51.