

Old Waterford Society

DECIES

XVIII

SEPTEMBER, 1981.



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COVER: 30, The Mall, Waterford. This Georgian doorway with leaded fanlight has been described by Brian De Breffny as a provincial rival of the more well known doorways of Merrion Square, Dublin. (photo by Gerard Power).

Decies is published thrice yearly by the Old Waterford Society and is distributed free to members in January, May and September.

EDITORIAL

My predecessor as editor of DECIES adverted to the fact that the Society should involve itself more in the preservation of what remains of our local records and documents. As Mr. Carroll's contribution below on the "Archives Centre" indicates, some progress has already been made in this direction. Great credit must go to Mr. Carroll for his endeavours over a number of years in assembling and making accessible a considerable body of material relevant to the locality. As Mr. Flynn's article in this issue shows this local resource is already serving a useful function.

However, I think the "Archives Centre" in Waterford needs to be regularised, put on a firmer financial footing, adequate accommodation provided, and the necessary professional staff appointed. Discussion on these issues should involve Waterford Corporation, Waterford County Council, the Municipal and County Library services, and S.E.R.T.O. . Co-operation between similar bodies elsewhere in Ireland has resulted in the provision of archival centres in Dublin, Cork, Limerick, and Kerry.

I wish to advocate as a matter of urgency that within the next few months the officers and committee of the Old Waterford Society initiate contact and discussion with the local bodies named above, with a view to establishing proper archival facilities in Waterford. The destruction of an important collection of papers occurred in Waterford in the recent past, and the present condition of the Poor Law Union records in Dungarvan and Lismore gives cause for concern. There would be no need for these documents to be endangered if an adequate repository was available locally for them to be preserved in. In the meantime if any reader is aware of any documents, papers, photographs and other similar material, surviving in the area or elsewhere, which might be thought worthy of preservation, please contact Mr. J. S. Carroll, c/o Municipal Library, Waterford.

Our collective thanks go to Waterford Corporation for numerous services on our behalf. A retrospective thanks must go to all those members of the Society who have turned up to assemble the journal. This task only involves one evening per issue, so volunteers for future issues will be very welcome. I wish to record a personal debt to Mr. Noel Cassidy, and Mr. Des Cowman for assistance with this issue of the journal. A special thanks to Mr. Gerard Power, School of Communications, N.I.H.E., Dublin for the cover illustration.

Thomas Power.

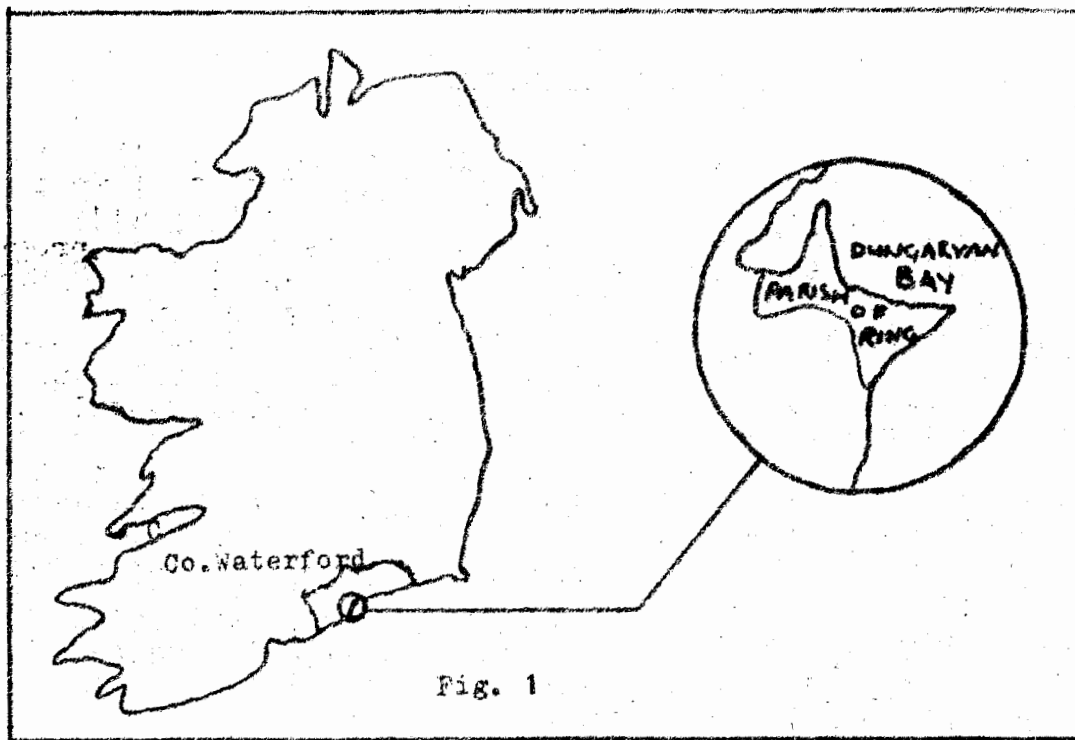


Fig. 1

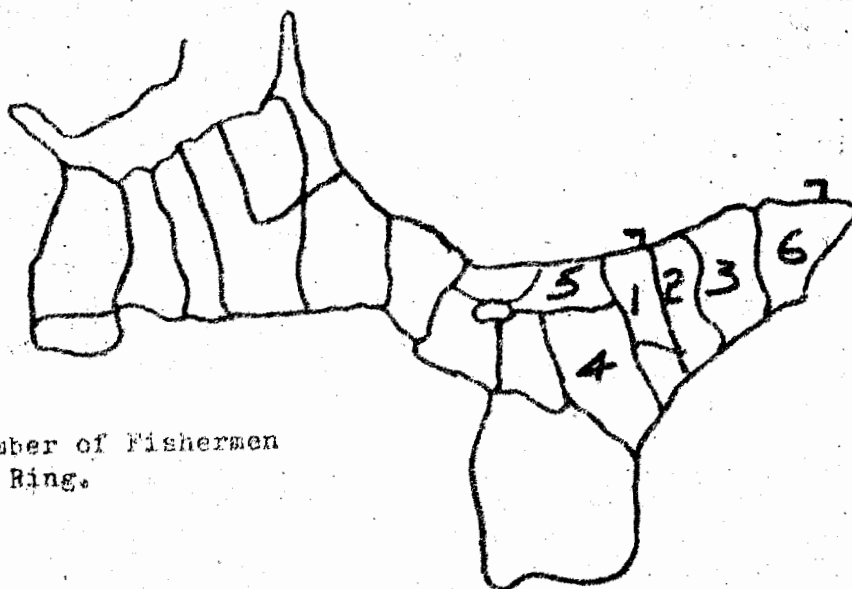


Fig. 2. Number of Fishermen in Ring.

Townland	No. of Men		No of Men < 40 yrs		No of Men > 40 yrs	
	1901	1911	1901	1911	1901	1911
1 Pallinagoul Beg 2 Ballinagoul More	72	56	32	23	40	33
3 Ballyreilly	2	1	1	0	1	1
4 Knockenpower Upp.	2	0	0	0	2	0
5 Knockenpower Low.	3	0	0	0	3	0
6 Helvick	29	27	15	15	14	12
Total	108	84				

THE RING FISHING INDUSTRY 1890-1926.

by Thomas A. O'Donoghue.

Introduction.

From the famine year of 1847 until the early 1860s the fishing industry in the parish of Ring, Co. Waterford appears to have been thriving. (Fig.1.) About 314 men were employed in the parish in the industry and many of them supplemented their income with the returns from their small holdings. From the mid 1860s however the industry began to decline. This decline was due to a combination of factors which need not be gone into here.¹ The result of it however was reflected in the overall population decline in the harbour townlands i.e. from 943 in 1861 to 615 in 1891.² This paper examines the further decline of the fishing industry in the parish of Ring from 1890 to 1926.

1890 - 1900.

It is rather difficult to build up a satisfactory picture of the Ring fishery for this period. There are fishing returns from the coast guard station at Helvick but these include returns at Dungarvan as well as at the Ring harbours of Helvick and Ballinagoul. Despite such limitations however particular trends are discernible from the annual reports of the Commissioners of Fisheries and The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction. The first of these trends relates to the type of fish being caught.

The fish which the Ring men were traditionally most equipped to catch was hake. From the beginning of the 1890s however it appears that this species was beginning to disappear from the coast. The reason for this is difficult to establish and does not come within the scope of this paper. At the same time it is interesting to note that the fishermen of the area attributed it to the large herring fleets which were fishing off the coast and which they believed were destroying many young fish.³ Despite this decline however there are a number of reports of hake being caught, salted and air-dried and sold by the Ring men. In 1890 for example 10 tons of hake were caught between July and September, salted and air-dried at Ballinagoul and Helvick and then sent to Cork, Bandon and Dungarvan at 7d each.⁴

The activity of salting and air-drying fish seems to have been confined in Ireland to places on the coast from Waterford to Kerry i.e. as a commercial enterprise. This was not enough to meet the demands of the country. In 1891 for example £100,000 worth of such fish was imported.⁵ Yet, despite the presence of a big demand it appears that the hake catch was declining fast in the vicinity of Ring. Indeed in 1919 Keohan in his "Illustrated Guide to Dungarvan" was able to write that:

'To see a hake in Dungarvan now would be a rarity but thirty years ago the boats would come in laden with fish and a splendid hake could be purchased for less than 1s.⁶

A second trend can now be noted. At the end of the 1880s and the beginning of the 1890s great shoals of mackerel and herring were stated to be frequenting the coast off Helvick, Dungarvan and Ardmore, yet the Ring fishermen were reported not to be pursuing them. By the 1890s however this situation seems to have changed.

The hake had practically disappeared and herring and mackerel were now being caught. At the same time this activity does not appear to have been very well organised as it was pointed out that the mackerel were being caught by herring nets.⁷ What is not apparent however is whether or not the Ring fishermen went out further than they used to in pursuit of the shoals, whether they invested in larger boats or whether the shoals of herring and mackerel which up to now kept up to five miles off the coast, were coming closer to the shore.

Finally it is interesting to note that a certain income was derived from the catching of lobsters and crabs. In 1891 for example over 3,500 lobsters and 1,100 crabs were caught between Ballinagoul and Mine Head.⁸ These were brought by cart along with the other fish to Dungarvan and occasionally to Youghal to be sold. In 1896 it was reported that lobsters from the area were sold in Cork, Dungarvan and Youghal and many were conveyed across the channel by large schooners every fortnight.⁹

1900 - 1914.

It is from the year 1900 on that the available sources yield statistical information from which a somewhat clearer picture of both the fishing industry and the fishing population of Ring can be constructed. It is helpful to begin this picture by noting the number of fishermen living in the parish in 1901 and again in 1911. In 1901 there were 108 fishermen there but by 1911 this number had decreased to 84.¹⁰ (Fig.2). This decrease was accompanied by a decrease in the number of fishing boats in the parish. In 1901 for example there were 18 sailing boats there but by 1911 this number was down to 14.¹¹ It is not the purpose of this paper to examine this decline. Instead I wish to concentrate on a number of trends related to it.

(i) The population of the parish of Ring fell from 1,053 in 1891 to 866 in 1901 and 777 in 1911. This means that the percentage decrease in population from 1901 to 1911 was equal to 10.27%. When we examine the percentage decrease for the harbour townlands however we find a decrease of 19%. Thus it is not surprising that the overall percentage decrease in the number of fishermen in the parish was 22.22%.

An examination in the regional trends in the parish in relation to the latter decrease is even more interesting. The number of fishermen in the townlands around the harbour of Ballinagoul formed by far the greater proportion of the total number of fishermen in the parish both in 1901 and 1911. (Fig.2). However the actual number of fishermen in these townlands fell from 72 to 56 in these years while they only fell from 29 to 27 at Helvick. As well as this the former decrease was greater than the overall population decline in the parish while the decrease at Helvick was more or less the same as the overall decrease. Furthermore there was no decrease in the number of fishermen less than forty years of age at Helvick. This was in sharp contrast to the experience at Ballinagoul. Because of the non-availability of similar statistics for the intervening years or over a wider time span it is difficult to draw any conclusive results from these figures. However they would prompt one to suggest that while there was a major decrease in the industry around Ballinagoul it was stabilising at Helvick.

The fishermen at Helvick also had particular reason for optimism. In 1908 The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction reported that the question of financial aid for the repair and

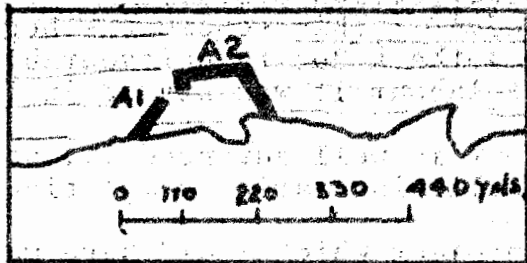


Fig. 3

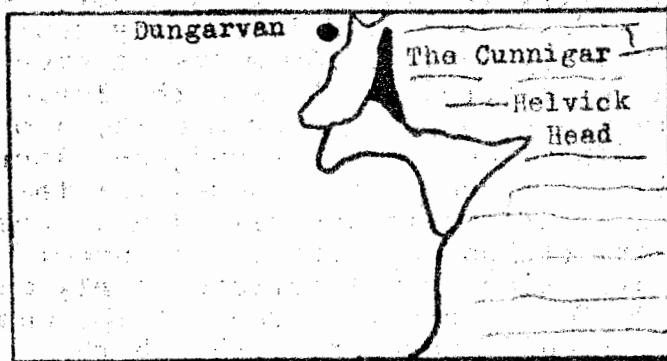


Fig. 4

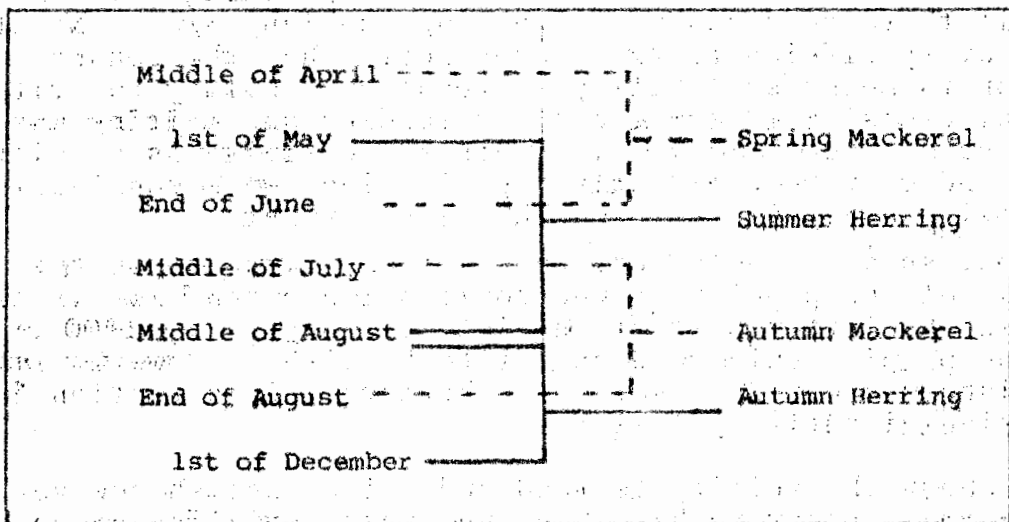


Fig. 5

Spring Mackerel			Autumn Mackerel		Summer Herring		Autumn Herring	
Wt.	Cwts.	Value	Wt.	Cwts.	Value	Wt.	Cwts.	Value
250		£66	745		£160	823		£305
							4,000	£1,000

Fig. 6. Average Weight & Value of fish caught in the general area of Ring based on the returns from the Helvick Coastguard Station from 1900-1914 (inclusive).

the benefit of the local fishermen was under consideration.¹² Then in 1910 a scheme of construction embracing a non-tidal fishing harbour was outlined.¹³ This scheme was begun in 1912 and despite the occasional setback due to unfavourable weather and an inadequate supply of labour it was stated in 1919 that:

'work at the new harbour is well advanced.....and the undertaking generally is nearing completion'¹⁴(Fig.3)

On the other hand another project which would have been of benefit to all the parish but particularly to the fishermen of Ballinagoul never materialised. This was the Cunnigar project.¹⁵ The

Cunnigar is a sandspit extending right across Dungarvan Bay from the townland of Ballinacourty. (Fig.4). It is about 1 mile long, about 200 metres at its widest point and it is only separated from the mainland near Dungarvan by another 200 metre stretch. Thus since the Cunnigar is never covered by the sea the logical step would have been to build a road on it and bridge the gap to the mainland. Thus it would have cut down a roundabout journey of about 5 miles to one mile. A number of schemes for the building of such a 'Cunnigar Embankment' as it was called had been under consideration by the Board of Public Works for a number of years prior to 1912 and an application from Waterford County Council and Mr. P. J. Powell M.P. for grants in favour of the Cunnigar Bridge and Road was submitted. However, although the money required for this project became available in 1913 the scheme was not considered suitable for a grant.

(ii) The individual household census returns for 1901 and 1911 also reveal some interesting material relating to the literacy level of the Ring fishermen or to be more specific, relating to their ability to read and write the English language. No attempt was made at specifying to the householders what the census commissioners meant by 'ability to read' or 'ability to write' and the actual decision of competence at reading and writing was left to the head of each household. This subjectivity is a major drawback and must be constantly kept in mind when considering the following analysis based on the Ring returns.

In Ring parish as a whole there was a steady decrease in the percentage of the population who could neither read nor write English in the latter half of the 19th century. By 1900 over 54% of the people could read and write English. However only 49% of the fishermen could do so. Furthermore this situation had not changed significantly by 1911.

Whatever about the ability to read and write English however the Ring fishermen appear to have been the most unwilling group in the parish to forsake the Irish language. In 1901 12% of the fishermen i.e. 23 men were unable to speak English. In 1911 this percentage was up to 22% i.e. 19 men. Again, in view of the subjectivity involved, this latter figure can be misleading. What it possibly does however is add to the evidence which indicates a new 'gra' for the language being awakened amongst the fishermen. In 1901 for instance nobody in Ring filled in their census forms in Irish but in 1911, despite the fact that they were forbidden to do so by law, the vast majority of returns from Ballinagoul (including those of the 16 Church of Ireland fishermen) were in Irish. This was also the case to a lesser extent at Helvick but the vast majority of the returns for the rest of the parish were in English.

It is interesting to note on the above matter that the Gaelic writer, from Ring, Sean O'Cuirrin, in his introduction to Nioclas Toibin's "Duanaire Deiseach" tells us that in 1903

Padraig O'Cadhla, the local Conradh na Gaeilge timire used to teach the reading and writing of Irish to the people of Ring at Ballinagoul.¹⁶ Then in 1905 Colaiste na Rinne was opened at Knockenpower and the parish became frequented by Gaelic scholars and those anxious to learn the language. All of this must have had a profound influence on the parishioners, particularly on those in the vicinity of Ballinagoul since most of the Gaelic revival activities seem to have taken place in this general area.

(iii) The final matter I wish to consider relates to the little amount we know about the life of the fishermen and their fishing. Mackerel and herring were the major fish pursued by them during this period. In Figure 5, I have attempted to show the general way in which the catching of the different species overlapped at different times of the year.¹⁶ While the nature of the returns made do not allow us to estimate the value of the catches at Ring alone, it would appear that if the general trend was followed that the average largest catches between 1900 and 1910 were for autumn herrings, while the average most lucrative catch per cwt. on average were the summer herrings. However it should not be assumed that December to April was spent idle. The annual reports made it very clear that the Ring men fished all the year round and used their boats for trawling, long lining, trammel and seine net fishing. While some of the fish caught must have been salted and dried for personal use there appears to have been no attempt at processing on a commercial scale. Rather most of the fish were transported to Dungarvan if not landed there, and sold fresh for local consumption and occasionally for distant markets including Germany and Russia.

It is extremely difficult to formulate a comprehensive picture of what was happening to the Ring fisheries from 1914 until the establishment of the Irish Free State. No official reports were published during the war years and when they were eventually republished in 1918 we learn very little except that there were 15 boats and 70 fishermen in the parish. This at least is some indication that the decline that had begun in the 1860s, if not still continuing was definitely not on the upswing. However even this point cannot be developed significantly since we have no census for 1921. Furthermore the census for 1926 is not helpful since the returns for the individual parishes are not published. However there is at least some evidence that by that year the Ring fishermen were despairing with the decline of the industry. Certainly the evidence of Liam O'Miodhchain of Ballinagoul to Commisiun na Gaeltachta would seem to suggest this. In his evidence before An Seabhad in 1925 (given in Irish) he stated that nobody in Ring was dependent solely on fishing as many had small holdings, often in separate pieces and usually amounting to about 2 acres.¹⁷ However he also stated that there was a need for a herring curing station at Ring, for new motor boats and new nets. What he was particularly worried about was the activity of other trawlers in the area. As he put it:

"Se tuairm alan gurb iad na tralaeri mor iasachta ata ag deanamh na tubaiste ar an iascaireacht. Is minic a bhionn suas le dha ceann deag diobh seo i bhfoisgeacht mile no dho den talamh".¹⁸

(It is the opinion of many that it is the large foreign trawlers which are causing the greatest damage to the fishery. Very often it happens that there are up to twelve of them within a mile or two of land). This point is also borne out by Keohan in his history of Dungarvan where he states that:

'The only boats now engaged in the Dungarvan fishery are stationed at Ballinagoul and Helvick. They have much to contend against for the English and Scotch boats come along and scour all the ground, leaving but poor provision for the local men.'¹⁹

It seems rather strange that after sixty years of independence that the Ring fishermen can still with justification reiterate this.

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8. *ibid.* session 1.9 Feb '92. Session 2. 4th Aug.'92-18Aug.'92. p.64. 9. *ibid.*
10. These figures and those following are not given in the published census but are based on those which I have worked out from the individual household census forms for 1901 and 1911 in The Public Records Office, Dublin.
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A 19th CENTURY FRENCH TRAVELLER'S VISIT TO WATERFORD.

(Part one)

By Eileen Holt.

The Traveller.

In the summer of 1844, a French traveller, Amédée Pichot, (1795-1877) arrived in Waterford to begin a tour of Ireland. He was a native of the Provençal town of Arles, but had lived for many years in Paris. This was his first visit to Ireland, although he was already well acquainted with England which he had visited on many occasions, and he had also made a tour of Scotland. In 1825 an account of his travels in England and Scotland had been published in France¹, and a translation of this work into English had appeared that same year². Pichot was in fact a man of letters, a Director of the Revue britannique, and a man whose interests in literature and history had led him to translate works of English literature into French, including those of Sir Walter Scott, Byron and Dickens, and to write books on Scottish history. He had also translated Thomas Moore's Lalla Rookh into French, and this translation had been published in 1820.³ Now in 1844 he had embarked upon a tour of Wales and Ireland with a view to writing an account of his travels in a companion volume to his book on England and Scotland. The book on Wales and Ireland was eventually published in 1850, entitled L'Irlande et le Pays de Galles; esquisses de voyages, d'économie politique etc.⁴, although it was never translated into English as his account of his travels in England and Scotland had been. A biography of Amédée Pichot was published in 1942⁵, but while his biographer deals at length with Pichot's English and Scottish journeys and the book which resulted from them, very little space is devoted to the later journeys in Wales and Ireland, and in fact only one page is given to the time Pichot spent in Ireland (page 362), and to the subsequent book he wrote on his travels within that country. Nevertheless, the impressions recorded by this observant man of letters, intended as they were for a French readership, are very interesting and often amusing, and his visit to Waterford, the first Irish town he visited, is recounted in some detail.

The Journey to Waterford.

The account of the journey from Wales to Ireland and the arrival in Waterford are to be found in Chapter IX of the first volume of Pichot's travels in Wales and Ireland, and the departure from Waterford in Chapter X. The two volumes of the book cover the first journey he made to Ireland in 1844 and the second one he made to Northern Ireland some three years later.

He had embarked just before midnight on the steamboat at Milford Haven, and he extols the rapidity of these boats which had made the journey across the Irish sea so much easier than it used to be. On board the next morning he got into conversation with an Irish Member of Parliament whom he refers to as a Mr. G-ths,* who was going to spend the summer Parliamentary Recess on his estates in the County of Waterford. This first Irishman that he met was not, as Pichot points out a supporter of Repeal or of O'Connell, although the Frenchman himself was a great admirer of O'Connell and was in fact to have a meeting with him in his Dublin prison later in the journey. The Irishman he now met was indeed a protestor, but a protestor against what he called the prejudices and bias of his fellow countrymen, although he admitted to the Frenchman that once he got home he would have to keep quiet or modify his opinions. Mr. G- claimed in effect that in Ireland, reputed to be such an oppressed country, the only slaves were the unfortunate landowners like himself, continually reduced to having to go against their own political ideas, and having to cultivate their land by means of absurd practices followed through sheer habit by his farmers and peasants. Pichot smiled to himself, he had expected to hear grievances and laments, but from quite an opposite point of view, and he found the situation

* See Note page 16

somewhat ironic. Mr. G- also confided to Pichot his fears that one day the democratic principles which had manifested themselves in France would be instilled into his own Irish tenant-farmers, for already the rumblings of social discontent, the hatred of the poor for the rich could be heard. Obviously, remarked the Frenchman, Mr. G- on setting foot on Irish soil, felt the earth shake with the impending convulsions of a social cataclysm, and this spoiled for him any pleasure he might have on his return to his native land and the property he owned there. He could not even rejoice in the good weather in which they were approaching the Irish coast. Whereas Pichot congratulated himself on arriving in sunshine, the Irishman immediately perceived far away on the horizon a menacing cloud which, he pointed out with a certain amount of satisfaction, foretold the possibility of their being drenched by a shower on their arrival in Waterford!

Now they were entering the River Suir, a river of which Spenser had sung the praises as Pichot mentions here. The voyage was in part a literary pilgrimage, and specific reference is made to this in the full title of the book where the words 'de littérature' appear in the description of the journeys he made. Spenser (1552-1599) in his famous poem The Faerie Queene refers on many occasions to the Irish rivers which so delighted him^o, and among them are 'the three renowned Brethren' as he calls them, the Suir, the Nore and the Barrow. He tells of :

The first the gentle Shure that, making way
By sweet Clonmell, adornes rich Waterford.

(Book 111 Canto 1X 1 43-44).

Pichot however contents himself with a brief mention of Spenser, and makes a more prosaic comment on the river in stating that he found it to be as wide and as fine as the Mersey or the Thames with banks which were almost as green. He made a remark to this effect to Mr. G-, who hastened to point out that the greenness of the so-called 'Emerald Isle' was less soothing to the eye than that of Albion, and that the trees were more sparse. The County of Waterford, he added, was one of the barest in Ireland, although its true riches lay beneath the earth where mineral-bearing seams lay hidden. In a note to the text at this point, Pichot adds his own opinion. Compared to the chalk cliffs of England he thought the Irish coast was green, but in the interior of the country 'white Albion' was perhaps greener than green Erin. At this point in his journey however, he had of course not seen enough of Ireland to make any comparisons himself, they could only be made when the journey was completed; as the boat sailed along the river towards Waterford he enjoyed the beauty of its waters and its banks, and did not allow the derogatory remarks of his companion to spoil his pleasure in the scenery.

Arrival at and Impressions of Waterford.

When they arrived at Waterford, Pichot's first impression was that the activity going on there was so great that it could be compared to that of Liverpool, although he does admit to the possibility of slight exaggeration! They disembarked at the quay, and the first thing he comments upon is that only three or four beggars greeted them there and they were no more troublesome or ragged than those of any other country, whereas he had been led to expect from other travellers' tales, and from warnings given by his travelling companion, that a whole host of hideous beggars would be waiting for them. He was however to revise his opinion about beggars in Ireland before the day was out.

He had but a short time to stay in Waterford, having arranged to continue his journey that same day with Mr. G- as far as Lismore. They went together to what he describes as a big hotel in the main street, where he arranged to meet his companion in four hours time for the departure of



The Arrival at Waterford. Commin's Hotel.



A French Traveller, Amédée Pichot.

the mail coach. He then set out to see the town, walking along the quayside which he found very fine indeed, extending as it did in a straight regular line from "the entrance of the port" (Adelphi Quay?) to the wooden bridge, and the sight of ships of 800 to a 1000 tons moored between the river banks impressed him. He took the footpath nearest the water so that he could look both at the hills of the northern bank and the houses and shops of the southern bank, and it was here that an incident occurred which he links to one in which he had been involved in the Welsh port of Swansea. There an enormous rat, pursued by a crowd of sailors, had rushed between his legs and nearly caused him to fall.⁷ Now, in Waterford, it was a sow which rushed at him, nearly causing him to fall into the river. The animal which had probably escaped while being loaded on to a boat, which was being pursued by its master, and a crowd of half-naked children who had joyfully joined in the chase. It leapt into the river, and five or six of the children, having no fine clothes to spoil, jumped in after the beast. The last that Pichot saw of it was that it was swimming out in the direction of the sea, its snout thrust forward like the prow of a ship, the animal's pursuers well behind. This anecdote, related in a humorous fashion, presents another opportunity for Pichot to bring in a literary allusion. He is reminded of the central figure of the mock-heroic ballad of the fifteenth century, written in Middle English, The Felon Sew of Rokeby which he must have known of through the text of this ballad reproduced by Sir Walter Scott in the notes to his poem Rokeby.⁸ This tale deals with a wild sow which roamed the banks of the river Greta, a tributary of the river Tees, and when pursued by a friar and his two companions eluded capture by taking refuge in a lime-kiln. The note of burlesque in this poem is present in Pichot's relating of the incident in Waterford, but then he goes on to a serious discussion of the importance of the pig to the Irish ports. He did in fact see beneath the bridge at Waterford three flat boats each containing at least 150-200 pigs which were destined to 'satisfy the gluttony of John Bull'. Now a note of pity is introduced into the narrative as he describes the overcrowded condition of the animals, the lack of any straw beneath their feet, and the buzzing of the flies around their ears in the heat of the midday sun.

Leaving the quayside Pichot now entered into the town itself. Here he confesses to disappointment. The splendid quayside had led him to expect a fine town, whereas he found the streets to be narrow and winding, and there to be few buildings worthy of comment. The cathedral, he thought lacked style both inside and outside, and he did see the ruins of a former religious foundation, which was presumably the 'French Church' because he mentions it had been converted into a home for the aged before falling into ruin. He then returned to "the entrance to the port", walking along what was presumably The Mall, since he describes it as being a fairly wide street at the end of which he found Reginald's Tower.

At this point he gives his readers a short history of the city of Waterford and its environs, including certain aspects of economic development which interested him. In what was, at the time of his writing, the more recent past, he tells for instance of the establishing of the cotton mill near Curraghmore, which at the time of his visit employed some 1200 people, including men, women and children. He asks whether this 'industrial oasis' might not contain the beginnings of an 'Irish Manchester', although he fears not in view of the dependence on coal from England and the importation of the cotton through the port of Liverpool instead of direct from the U. S. A. which imposed the additional cost of trans-shipment, making the finished product uncompetitive in price.

He then goes on to discuss the founding of the colony at New Geneva at the end of the previous century, which would no doubt have particularly interested his continental readers. He attributes the failure of the

to Protestantism instead of first converting them to their industrious and hard-working ordered way of life. Thus he argues they encountered the wrath of the Catholic priests, then they had problems with the municipality of Waterford and this brought about reprisals. Thus they departed, and New Geneva, first transformed into a barracks, was at the time of Pichot's visit, a prison. He makes no mention at all of the Croppy Boy and the place of Geneva Barracks in that connection.

He does go on to contrast the failure of the colony at New Geneva with the success of the trappist community at Mount Melleray which he was to visit the next day. He himself, good Catholic though he might be, confesses that he had little time for monks, making an exception for the Benedictines whom he considered had made a valuable contribution to the production and conservation of valuable books, yet he grudgingly admitted the success of the trappist community of Mount Melleray. He admired the way in which they had transformed wild and stony land into fertile fields and built their monastery in so short a time since their arrival there in 1831. Yet he is amazed that these 'mournful ghosts' as he calls them, who only address each other with the words 'Brother, one has to die' were so easily accepted by the imaginative Irish with their love of merry-making, and not only accepted but aided by the free loan of ploughs, carts and horses. Where a thousand protestants from Geneva had failed, some fifty monks had succeeded in establishing themselves in the Irish countryside far from their native France, and he concludes that the question of religion was all important, the Catholics triumphed in this most Catholic of countries, where the Protestants did not.

After relating the story of the monks of Mount Melleray, Pichot takes up again an account of his stay in Waterford. He returned to the hotel and his meeting with Mr. G- who had reserved places for them in the coach for Cappoquin and thence to Lismore. The name 'Cappoquin' intrigued the Frenchman who found it had a certain Indian or American air about it. The coach for the journey picked them up at the door of the hotel itself, Pichot commenting that he did not know whether this was due to the fact that the Honourable Member of Parliament was to be a passenger, or that it was a courtesy extended to all travellers having business at the splendid hotel. It would seem that the hotel in question was that run by Mrs. Cummins where Bianconi had rented stabling and had an office in the hotel, and from whence his coaches departed daily.⁹ In any event the two men now boarded the coach and prepared to depart from Waterford.

The Departure from Waterford.

Pichot explains that the coach was one of the varieties of Irish jaunting-car, which although it had certain features in common with coaches used by the public on the Continent, was not exactly the same as any of them, and was a vehicle peculiar to Ireland. He then goes on to tell the story of Bianconi and of the beginning and development of his business. Before 1815, Pichot tells his reader, the miserable means of transport available in Ireland were inferior to an Eskimo sledge drawn by dogs, and if he were an Irishman he would vote for a triumphal Arch surmounted by a bronze quadriga, like that in the Place du Carrousel in Paris, to be erected to Bianconi. The jaunting-car in which he travelled was drawn by three horses and travelled at about 7 miles an hour. It carried eight passengers, four on each of the two long seats. Soon after leaving Waterford he noticed that any habitations which could be classed as houses became very sparse, and were replaced by roadside dwellings which were mere huts made of earth. From them emerged ragged men, women and children, although he noted that there were a number left vacant after the emigration of their former tenants, and which had caved in roofs and walls crumbling in decay. But it was the men, women and children who attracted most of his attention. He felt that the beauty of the women and children equalled that of the Italians who had been the inspiration for Raphael, but it was a beauty to be discovered only beneath the most abject of rags. Furthermore, he felt that the women aged

rapidly, subjected as they were to the sufferings and deprivations of poverty. As for the children, they were likened to little angels fallen from the sky into the mud or onto the dung-heap. Not in England, in Italy or in Switzerland had he ever seen such a large number of beautiful children with such delicate and intelligent features. He was surprised that the people by the roadside did not extend their hands or hats for alms, as their dress indicated their extreme poverty. They did not do so however, and to the traveller their demeanour appeared to be one of indifference, or sometimes even of gaiety. It was not until Pichot reached Dungarvan that he experienced his first real encounter with begging in Ireland, but there when the coach drew to a halt it was surrounded by a crowd of some thirty beggars. He found the experience a very unpleasant one and was very relieved when he left them behind.

On the road however, it was the dress of the country people which particularly interested him, and indeed astonished him. Their hats were made of beaver or silk, their coats were dress-coats with tails, the dress of gentlefolk which continued patching and repairs had rendered even more bizarre when seen upon their present wearers. Even the children wore this cast-off clothing, and played among the pigs in what had once been small frock-coats. What however seemed to him to be very rare in Ireland was the wearing of old shoes. The Irish peasant, he declared, goes barefoot in spite of his stylish rags.

Thus did Pichot record his first impressions of the Irish countryside with its people living in dire poverty, curiously clad, yet maintaining a certain dignity. Although he had not yet spent a full day in Ireland, he had seen much to interest him and to challenge his preconceived ideas of Irish life.

1. Voyage historique et littéraire en Angleterre et en Écosse, Ladvocat et Charles Gosselin, 3 vols.
2. Historical and Literary Tour of a Foreigner in England and Scotland, London, Sanders & Ottley, 1825, 2 vols.
3. Lalla Roukh ou la Princesse Mogole, Histoire orientale par Thomas Moore, traduite de l'anglais; Ponthieu, 1820, 2 vols.
4. Guillaumin et Cie. 1850, 2 vols.
5. Bisson L. A., Amédée Pichot, A Romantic Prometheus, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1942.
6. See 'Spenser's Irish Rivers' by P. W. Joyce, in Fraser's Magazine, March 1878.
7. See my article 'A 19th Century French Traveller's Visit' to Swansea and Llandeilo' in Gower, 1977, p.73.
8. Rokeby, Notes to the fifth canto. (Note III, p. lxxxiii, 1813 ed.)
9. M. O'C Bianconi & S.J. Watson, Bianconi, King of the Irish Roads, Dublin, Allen Figgis, 1962, p.71.

Footnote

written. There was no Waterford, or indeed Irish, M.P. at this time whose surname began with 'G' and ended with 'G' and ended with '-th', nor were there any names sufficiently close to have been mis-spelt in this fashion. While J.M. Galwey did contest five elections in Dungarvan between 1832 and 1837, he was unsuccessful each time. This, however, was the only name likely to have been mis-spelt by a Frenchman in this way. (see index to B.M. Walker (ed) Parliamentary Election Results in Ireland, 1801-1922,

The Labour Movement in Waterford City 1913 - 1923 .

by Emmet O'Connor.

Introduction:

The labour movement in Waterford has experienced many vicissitudes, but few times can have been so hectic as the years during and directly after the Great War. Between 1913 and 1923, Labour went through decline, dramatic recovery, and finally a serious reversal in fortunes. From a position of unprecedented strength in 1913, trade unionism had become a demoralised and contracting force two years later. Five years after that, the trades council was confident enough to impose a "Soviet" on the city for two days. Yet by 1923 membership and wage levels were falling, and a process of decline had set in which was to last a decade. Waterford reflected national trends in this pattern of events. Indeed, one of the themes of the period was the gradual incorporation of local trade unionism into a national framework. Local characteristics persisted however, in three important respects: firstly, a strong sectional consciousness survived which resented outside interference; secondly, Labour remained comparatively weak politically and never managed to establish even the core of an electoral base; thirdly, no ideological or intellectual elite emerged that was in any way comparable with those groups of socialist or syndicalist activists who surfaced in Cork, Dublin, or Limerick. This last point has implications for both the nature and calibre of local trade union leadership, a much neglected aspect of the movement.

The Wages Movement in Waterford:

During the later war years, the upward trend in prices caused by shortages and profiteering, led to a "wages movement", sparked off initially by the fall in living standards but fuelled also by a growing antagonism against those who had profited from the misery of war and wartime, and underpinned by the new security of employment created by the conflict. The time lag between price rises and wage increases reflected the weak bargaining position of workers until 1917/18. The defeat of the ITGWU in the Dublin Transport lockout had generated an air of despondency throughout the trade union movement, being a particular set back for attempts to organise the unskilled. Recruitment to the colours from August 1914 onwards further debilitated trade unionism. Many activists joined the army, and to begin with, employees felt that wartime conditions obliterated the need for organisation. Attitudes began to change in the winter of 1916/17. The harvest was bad that year. Talk of famine was widespread and the Government responded by introducing Compulsory Tillage Orders in February 1917. The food crisis was the most important single factor in bringing about the Labour revival.

The decline and recovery of trade unionism among general workers is most obviously mirrored in the fortunes of the ITGWU. This union had consolidated its position in Waterford in 1912, partly due to the organisational work of P.T. Daly. In 1913 Michael O'Connor was appointed as full-time branch secretary and its future seemed assured.² But over the next four years

membership fell, and the union suffered a serious blow when in December 1915 the cross-channel dockers left to join the Dock, Wharf, Riverside and General Workers' Union.³ Throughout 1917, police files put ITGWU membership at no more than 46, and that of the Dockers' Union at 60. They also noted that in July 1917 attempts to expand the ITGWU in Waterford proved unsuccessful, as did a visit by two representatives of the National Federation of Women Workers who tried to organise the girls in the cartridge factory at Bilberry.⁴

It was 1918 before membership began to increase. After a big influx of membership Tommy Dunne was made full-time secretary. It was a measure of the union's new professionalism that it maintained an organiser in the area from 1918-1923. Denis Houston was the first man sent down from Liberty Hall. Houston helped to re-enrol the Wallis carters, and got the Corporation labourers to join up for the first time. Houston was later replaced by Gerry Veale, who was followed by Paddy Coates and James Baird. The Union's leaders were also frequent visitors to the city, particularly Tom Mac Partlin. By the end of 1918, the ITGWU had won representation for factory workers, shop assistants, employees in the timber yards, corn stores, bottling stores, and labourers in the building line. Membership steadily increased and peaked at 900 in early 1921.⁵ This was a fairly small proportion of the total ITGWU presence in Waterford, which in November 1921 stood at 3,145 members in 11 branches, the majority of whom were farm labourers.⁶

The generally held opinion that wage increases were long overdue facilitated the revival of trade unionism. Some resentment nevertheless remained and a few employers strongly opposed labour organisations on principle. The ITGWU had two important disputes over recognition in 1918. In June, negotiations with the Master Builders' Association for increased wages and shorter hours broke down. Strike notice was served, and a stoppage only narrowly averted when the Builders conceded union recognition at the last moment. They further agreed to pay rises and to a 50-hour week.⁷ In the second case, a 10 day strike occurred in Mc Donnell's margarine factory, beginning on November 11, and involving 173 labourers, coopers and packers. It was caused by the refusal of employees to work with two non-union foremen. Both men finally agreed to join the union.⁸ The "closed shop" was seen by trade unionists as being a prerequisite of bargaining strength.

Conflict intensified in 1919 when the Union was involved in three major disputes in the city. On July 22, 60 Corporation labourers struck for twelve days to secure a wage rise of 7s 6d per week, giving them a new weekly rate of 45s.⁹ The following month, a strike of 50 gasworkers was narrowly avoided when the Company granted an increase of 10s per week. The most serious dispute began on October 4, when 100 grain-trade labourers, rejecting an offer of 45s per week, struck to increase their wages from 38s to 55s per week. Porters, carters, and casual storemen were affected, and both the ITGWU and the Dock, Wharf, Riverside and General Workers Union had members involved. A large support meeting was organised on October 26, with 1,000 people marching and 2,000 assembling at the rally. The strike was settled in December 14 through Ministry of Labour intervention. The eventual settlement awarded 48s per week to the permanent labourers, and 11s per day to the casuals. The working week was reduced from 50 to 43 hours.¹⁰

Co-operation between the two general unions in this dispute is interesting, in view of the subsequent rivalry that was to develop between them. Membership of the Dockers' Union also increased after the war, though less spectacularly than that of the ITGWU. A strike of 100 dockers at Clyde Shipping in December 1916 led to the formation of the Waterford Branch. Unable to secure Transport Union backing in a demand for parity with an award given to their Dublin colleagues in October, the cross-channel dockers disaffiliated, and won the support instead of the London-based Dockers' Union.¹¹ Although the dispute with Clyde Shipping was unsuccessful, the branch gradually expanded to include other quayside workers; by early 1919 it had 160 members.¹² In addition to the grain-trade labourers, it also took strike action that year on behalf of nine Harbour Board employees, who increased their wages from 38^s to 45^s per week after a month long stoppage ending on September 23.¹³ Because of the war, rates for dockers were now determined at national level, though variations continued to exist between different ports. A national award in October 1918 gave Waterford cross-channel men an extra 1^d per hour on their war wages, giving them a new rate of 1^s 0¹/₂^d per hour.¹⁴ Pay rates reached their peak for this period with the award of the Shaw Inquiry in May 1920. It was at the bar of this industrial court that Ernest Bevin's presentation of the workers' case won him the title "the Dockers' K.C.". The advances of May 1920 brought cross-channel casuals to 1^s 10¹/₂^d per hour, grain section casuals to 15^s per day, and increased the weekly rate of permanent dockers from 65^s to 85^s.¹⁵

Whilst the craft unions had not suffered the same sharp decline in the wake of the 1913 Dublin lockout, and the outbreak of war, they shared in the general experience of set back and recovery. Local membership figures are difficult to estimate, though some clue is given by the police report that the Waterford Federated Trades and Labour Union had 200 members in 1917.¹⁶ This body was moribund, having been replaced by the United Trades and Labour Council in 1909. But as it was composed almost entirely of craft unions, its paper strength is a rough indication of the number of organised tradesmen in the city. Ministry of Labour statistics provide detailed evidence of pay increases for men in the building line. The Labour Gazette lists the following awards for Waterford.

- 7 July, 1917: Masons, Carpenters and Joiners and Plasterers: War bonus increase of 3^s per week. New rate, 8d per hour.
Painters: War bonus increase of 3^s per week. New Rate 6³/₄d per hour.
Labourers: Increase from 4¹/₂d to 5d per hour.
- 6 May, 1918: Carpenters and Joiners: Increase to 11d per hour. Reduction of the working week from 54 to 50 hours.
- 10 August, 1918: Brick and Stone layers: Increase from 8d per hour to 11d per hour in Summer time, and 1^s 1^d per hour in Winter Time. Reduction of the working week from 54 to 50 hours.
- 1 October, 1918: Plasterers: Increase from 11d to 1^s per hour.
- 7 do. 1918: Labourers: " " 6¹/₂d to 7d " " " "

10 March, 1919: Carpenters and Joiners: Increase from 11d to 1s 2½d per hour. (granted in settlement of a 7 month long strike).
24 March, 1919: Labourers: Increase to 9d per hour.
7 April, 1919: Plasterers: " from 1s to 1s 1s per hour.
1, March, 1920: Carpenters and Joiners: Increase from 1s 2½s to 1s 7d per hour.
1 June, 1920: Carpenters and Joiners: Increase from 1s 7d to 1s 8d per hour.
8 May, 1920: Painters: Increase from 1s 2d to 1s 7½d per hour.
3 November, 1920: Scaffolders: " " 1s 1d to 1s 4d " "
Labourers: " " 1s 2d to 1s 5d " "
(granted in settlement of a week long strike).

By 1921 the wages movement was breaking on the rock of economic recession. In the majority of instances, Irish workers were strong enough to withstand reverses during that year, but by 1922 the trend towards wage reductions had set in.

Together with general and craft unions, industrial unions form the third basic type of trade organisation. Two such bodies which had long been established in Waterford were the National Union of Railwaymen, which had a local branch since the 1890's, when it was known as the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, and the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union. The police noted that the NUR had 275 members in 1917, and the NSFU 80 members. The former enjoyed a slight expansion to a membership of 300 in 1921.¹⁷ White collar unions were also sympathetic to the idea of industry-wide organisation. The Irish Drapers' Assistants Association, and the Irish Clerical Workers' Union became the largest groups catering for workers in the services sector. In 1921, the former had 560 members locally, and the latter 800.¹⁸ Both bodies were shortly to amalgamate as the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks. White collar representation had never been strong in Ireland, and had collapsed in Waterford during the war years, making the new spirit of unrest among hitherto conservative employees all the more remarkable. Sections which took strike action at this time included the law clerks, in June 1919,¹⁹ and the chemists' assistants, who secured a minimum scale of wages and a reduction in the working week to 50 hours for men and 55 hours for women after a six week strike beginning on December 2, 1919.²⁰

Evidence of the strength and industrial performance of most other trade unions in Waterford during these years is very limited. The records indicate that bodies like the Bakers' Union, the Typographical Association, the Amalgamated Society of Tailors and Tailoresses, and the Asylum Workers' Association, were active in pursuit of wage advances; but little is known of smaller organisations like the Coopers; the Pipemakers; the Corkcutters; or the Coschmakers' societies. Nevertheless, the general picture is clearly discernable. The trade union revival began in Waterford in 1918. The next three years saw wage increases, and membership expansion. They also witnessed the development of a new concept of the Labour Movement; one which interpreted it as incorporating a thrust and dynamic, and no longer simply signifying a static relationship between organisations.

The Labour Leadership: From Trades Council to "Soviet".

Trades Council activity has always been a barometer of the health of trade unionism in Waterford. As the natural forum of expression for activists, participation in its affairs provides a rough indication of the cohesion of the movement. Waterford United Trades and Labour Council heralded rather than reflected the Labour revival. The principal reason for this was the war. Deteriorating social conditions thrust responsibility onto the Trades Council; the inadequacy of Labour's political representation created a vacuum into which the local Labour leadership were compelled to step. This process, enhanced by the growth of the movement nationally, turned the Trades Council into the chief defensive organ of the working class. It was to lead it eventually to a position of unparalleled prestige, but one which stopped short at the prospect of waging direct class conflict.

The broadening horizons of labour leaders are illustrated in the following resolution which was adopted by Waterford Corporation in February 1915, at the bequest of the Trades Council:

"That having regard to the present high and rapidly advancing prices of coals, breads, flour, meat, and other necessities of daily life, which are pressing so heavily on those whose life is already a struggle for bare existence, the Corporation calls on all our representatives to demand a day in Parliament to debate same in order that steps may be taken to remedy the above or take over supplies in the same way as the Government took over the Railways and Sugar, so that the working classes may be protected from unjust and extortionate demands."²¹

The Corporation was also persuaded to agree to the sale of bread by weight, something trade unionists had been demanding since the 1890's.²² Nearly two years later the Corporation endorsed the following demands of the Irish Trade Union Congress, submitted to it by the Trades Council:

1. Price Control,
2. Prohibition of the export of food from Ireland - particularly potatoes - as the country would otherwise face famine,
3. Reduction in the amount of sweets and confectionary manufactured so as to ensure supplies of sugar for the working class.²³

From 1918 onwards, the Trades Council maintained an Anti - Profiteering Committee, which sought to highlight cases of overcharging.²⁴

The grievances outlined above, though illustrative of a growing sense of collective identity, fell well within the compass of civic consensus. Yet, there was also a new ideological awareness being infused into the leadership. This was evident in September 1918, when the United Trades and Labour Council was restyled the Waterford and District Workers' Council. R.J.P. Mortished, an executive member of the Irish T.U.C. saw the change, which was quite common in Ireland at this time, in the following light:

"the latter name is merely a new-fashioned variant of the former and dates from 1917, reflecting the councils of Workers, Soldiers, and Peasants, which the Russian Revolution of that year made famous, and expressing also a growing desire to emphasise a broad solidarity, and to minimise distinctions between the craftsman and the labourer, who had in cases shown a tendency to organise separately."²⁵

Undoubtedly, there were members of the Workers' Council who aspired to a revolutionary role. Whether there was a solid collective will to use the Council as an instrument of social change is unclear. A glimpse of its potential is revealed in the part Waterford played in the four general strikes during this period. The first of these was called on April 23, 1918 in protest against conscription. Labour also declared Mayday 1919 to be a national holiday as a gesture of support for Irish self-determination. A sudden two-day stoppage took place on April 13-14, 1920 to demand the release of political prisoners on hunger strike in Mountjoy Gaol. The fourth general strike on April 24, 1922, was directed against militarism, in a vain attempt to prevent Civil War. The Workers' Council successfully supervised all of these actions in the city with a command of events that was impressive; most particularly so in the case of the 1920 strike. During this operation the Workers' Council shut down all business premises in the city, and controlled the movement of traffic over Redmond Bridge. Pickets with red badges fluttering in their coats patrolled the streets, keeping order and ensuring the strike was observed. Only vehicles displaying permits issued by the Council were permitted to move about the city. The local Commandant of the Auxiliary Division RIC had to obtain such a permit. The stoppage in Waterford appears to have been one of the most successful, and drew the attention of the Manchester Guardian. In an article headed "Soviet Government in Waterford", it reported that a deputation of southern Irish loyalists had met the British Prime Minister, Bonar Law, to express concern at what had taken place in the city.

"A member of the deputation gave a full account of happenings in Waterford under Soviet government. The city, he states, was taken over by a Soviet Commissioner and three associates. The Sinn Fein Mayor abdicated, and the Soviet issued orders to the population which all had to obey. For two days, until a telegram arrived reporting the release of the hunger strikers, the city was in the hands of these men."²⁶

The significance of the general strikes has been disputed by some historians who contend that as they were declared in furtherance of popular political issues, rather than exclusively working class objectives, they merely demonstrated Labour's satellite status to Sinn Fein in the national struggle; they were a sign of weakness rather than strength. Three points can be made in this respect. Firstly, the general strike was a tactic associated with anarcho-syndicalism. Sinn Fein were opposed to it, and it was never approved of by Dail Eireann. Secondly, in all instances where it resorted to direct action, Labour was acting on its own initiative and executed its policies independently. Thirdly, the relationship between Labour and Sinn Fein was not as biased towards the latter as has been suggested. In return for standing aside in the political field, Labour was given an opportunity to "Constitutionalise" the trade union movement, and thereby assure its future. The leadership also sought to channel impulses for direct action into a constitutional framework. In this way the radical thrust from trade union members was defused and "made safe" for their more conservative leaders. The question therefore arises as to what extent the energies of Waterford workers were deflected from direct class conflict by the pageantry of manifestations like the "Soviet".?

From a necessarily superficial analysis of local leaders and industrial tactics, it seems fair to conclude that the Waterford Workers' Council would have supported radical direct action if called upon by the Irish TUC, but was in no position to act on its own initiative. The achievement of the Council lay in the sense of discipline it instilled into its affiliated organisations. This was aided by the generational change affecting the leadership personnel. Older trade unionists, of the "new model" vintage, whose motto was "defence not defiance", were being replaced by activists for whom industrial organisation was but the pathway to a fairer society. This transition was made easier by the relative weakness of the Trades Council idea in pre-war Waterford. A fresh start was now possible; the post-war Workers' Council was dominated by men with a political vision, and a strong commitment to working class unity.

A number of clues testify to this concern with organisational solidarity, and the hope that out of it, Trades Councils might emerge as a weapon for socialism. Firstly, in the debate on the adoption of a constitution for the Irish Labour Party and TUC in November 1918, two resolutions were submitted from Waterford, both designed to give Trades Councils a more meaningful role in the movement. The first proposed that Councils with 5,000 or more affiliated members ought to have two representatives at Congress; the second proposed that Councils not abiding by Labour Party policy could be compelled by the National Executive to take a plebiscite of its affiliated unions to ascertain the propriety of its actions.²⁷ Waterford Workers' Council was also the first to discuss the Limerick Soviet in April 1919, expressing support for the action taken by the Limerick body.²⁸ Secondly, unlike its counterparts in Dublin and Limerick for example, the Waterford Council was not adversely affected by inter-union rivalry. The possibility of friction undoubtedly existed. At least two strikes arose out of conflict between the ITGWU, and the Irish Engineering Union and the Dockers' Union.²⁹ Nationally, the ITGWU's objectives also led to clashes with the Sailors' and Firemen's Union, and with the Railwaymen. Avoidance of disruption owed much to leaders like Tommy Dunne, Secretary of the Waterford branch, whose promotion of the ITGWU was devoid of any sectionalism.

Thirdly, the political vision of Trades Council activists stemmed from industrial unionism. Linkage between the two was particularly close in the ITGWU and the National Union of Railwaymen, of which Luke Larkin was a member. Larkin was Chairman of the Irish Council of the NUR in 1921, and probably the best known Waterford/trade based unionist of his time.³⁰ He made a special plea for Labour to look to its political interests at the 1913 Congress, which was held in the City Hall, and reiterated the point at Drogheda the following year, when he told the delegates :

"Today, although it might not appear so clearly to them, the dangers to the Irish Labour Movement were ten times greater than they appeared twelve months ago. Let no personal bias be asked, or the welfare of any individuals over-ride the general welfare of the workers. In the past he said, they had allowed their greatest weapon - that was the political machinery of the country - to remain in the hands of their oppressors. No matter how far they advanced in their struggles, all their efforts would be futile while they allowed political power to remain in the

hands of the exploiters." 31

However, notwithstanding the rhetoric and aspirations of its leaders, the evidence suggests that Waterford's trade unionism was, by contemporary standards, fairly moderate in tone. Direct action was seldom resorted to without the approval of the Irish TUC, and sabotage was rare. One of the very few occasions on which property was destroyed occurred during the Motor Permits Strike, when pickets of the Irish Automobile Drivers' and Mechanics' Union removed a car from its garage on the Mall, and rolled it over the quay into the river.³² It must be remembered that industrial sabotage was quite common in Ireland at this time, not least in County Waterford. The "Battle of Fenor" alone resulted in compensation claims worth £11,270.³³ Allowing for the fact that violence was considerably less frequent in urban areas, the virtual absence of active sabotage in the city is still remarkable. Other forms of direct action were employed when necessary, but with the exception of the "Gasworks Soviet", they were all related to conventional industrial conflict.

Accordingly, the Trades Council played an important role in promoting the cohesion of the Labour movement in Waterford, but it never realised its higher ambitions. The influence of the Council in forging unity is evident. It was more than simply a reflection of its member organisations, and herein lay its success. The area of greatest difficulty for the Council was politics. An outline of the political state of the City illustrates something of the forces for conservatism which kept Labour, ideologically, on the defensive.

Labour and Party Politics.

Waterford City was a deviant case in Irish politics at this time. In the General Election of 1892 it was one of just nine constituencies to return a Parnellite M.P. In 1918 it was the only division outside Ulster to elect a Nationalist. This had the effect of heightening tension in the city, and rivetting attention on the sheer partisanship of political conflict. It was also to underline Waterford's sense of distinctiveness, thereby reinforcing localistic tendencies in popular behaviour. The competitive nature of city politics gave Labour a new strategic importance as both Nationalists and Republicans jostled for the trade union vote. However, without a firm electoral backing of its own, Labour was unable to exert much influence over its relationship with the other parties. At local level, there was little scope for bargaining, though the possibility of converting industrial strength to political currency ensured that Labour could not be neglected.

Overtures to Labour varied from paternalistic to hostile. Most of the evidence cited below relates to Sinn Féin, who were more active and better organised than the United Irish League and became increasingly prominent in local politics after 1918, but the Nationalists were equally ready to cultivate workers' support when necessary. During the 1918 general election campaign, Capt. Redmond solicited a telegram of support from J.H. Thomas, secretary of the N.U. Railwaymen, and declared that he had widespread backing from union leaders.³⁴ His opponent Dr. Vincent White got a chance to curry favour with the Railwaymen at a big NUR meeting in April 1920, shortly after the "Soviet". Dr. White commended the men for their conduct of the recent general strike and said that Labour and Sinn Féin had nothing to fear from each other. He was proud to co-operate with Labour and come under the red flag.³⁵ Just over a year



Ald. RICHARD KEANE.
First Labour Mayor of Waterford, 1925.



DANIEL FOLEY, N.T., President, 1931.



THE RECEPTION COMMITTEE, 1920.

later Dr. White had another opportunity to express his sympathies with Labour.

"The Mayor (Dr. White) said that he understood that a copy of the Labour manifesto issued by the Irish Labour Party had been received by every member of the Corporation. He said that in it were mentioned about twenty very important points. After paying tribute to what Labour had done, was doing, and would continue to do when they had attained their freedom, the Mayor suggested that the Secretary be written to and that the members at some future meeting would be able to give practical effect to some of the very important points mentioned in the document."³⁶

Disruptive tactics also featured prominently, where Labour looked like posing a political threat. On October 15 1918, the Trades Council convened a meeting in the City Hall to outline party policy in the forthcoming general election. Dalton, the President of the Council, was unable to commence the proceedings for some time because of interruptions from the public who demanded to know whether or not he had obtained a police permit for the meeting.³⁷ When Labour finally did enter national politics in 1922, disruption of this kind was resumed. The party came under pressure not to field candidates in the Waterford - East Tipperary constituency.³⁸ Republicanism criticism of Labour's collusion with the Free State reached a crescendo in 1923 during the agitation for the release of political prisoners. Labour's forthright condemnation of detention without trial did not prevent regular obstruction of its election campaign that year. On May 27, Tom Johnson was prevented from addressing a large meeting in the City Hall by the heckling of agitated Republican women, who complained that Labour was doing nothing for IRA prisoners.³⁹ The proceedings became farcical when Johnson endeavoured to restore order by singing the National Anthem ! 40

In many respects, Tom Johnson's behaviour epitomised the response of Labour generally to political pressure from nationalists. The Trades Council was unaware of its footing, defensive, reticent, occasionally vacillating where party politics were concerned. Initially, it "heartily endorsed" the Irish TUC's election programme for 1918, but later called for a plebiscite on participation in the campaign.⁴¹ In late October, it was finally decided at a mass meeting of workers, not to contest the election.⁴² Labour also fared badly in the local elections of 1920, taking three seats on the Corporation, compared with thirteen for the Nationalists and Independents, and twenty for Sinn Fein.⁴³ The creditable performances in the 1922 and 1923 general elections were mainly due to Labour activities in the county. Following the defeat of rural Labour in the wake of the 1923 Farm Strike, the city was unable to sustain the movement, and the Labour vote fell sharply from 31.3% of the valid poll in 1922, to 17.8% in 1923, to 6.7% in June 1927. The decline of the vote in 1923 is interesting, and owed much to the candidature of Capt. Redmond. The persistence of Redmondism in local politics after 1921 undoubtedly deprived Labour of an important section of the working class vote. It may also have had ramifications for demobilised troops. Although the evidence is limited, there appears to have been intermittent co-operation between the National Federation of Discharged Soldiers and Sailors and Labour groups in other parts of the country, whereas ex-soldiers in Waterford seem to have had surprisingly little impact on the trade union movement.⁴³

Nevertheless, the vulnerability of the Trades Council in party politics should not be allowed to camouflage the extent to which a fundamental shift in attitudes had taken place as a consequence of the Great War. Post-war trade unionism had a confident swagger about it, and its mood was self-assertive. The marked contrast with pre-war social relationships is best encapsulated in the proceedings of the NUR meeting in April 1920, when the local establishment, in the form of the Mayor, Dr. White, and the Professor of Theology at St. John's College, Fr. Kelleher, sat, reverentially, on the platform. Ordinarily they would be present on their own terms. On this occasion both made tortuous efforts to reconcile the recent "Soviet" with their own political views. Fr. Kelleher praised Labour and the stoppage, and went on:

"Enemies had said that Labour was a class movement. It wasn't (laughter). Labour was a movement in the interests of the nation (applause)." 44

Six years earlier the local clergy were openly condemning Larkinite trade unionism. Six years later, Fr. Kelleher felt free to express himself more honestly when he wrote :

"Irish Labour had ^{two} besetting sins in the past which combined to sterilise its activities - foreign entanglements and class consciousness." 45 But in 1920 Fr. Kelleher thought it wise to be a little more cautious with his opinions. And workers, for their part, could afford to laugh in disbelief at the bizarre statement that trade unionism wasn't a class movement. No one was going to accept that kind of nonsense in 1920.

In summary, the Trades Council was unable to assert itself effectively in electoral politics, because although Labour's importance had significantly increased, so also had the pressures placed upon it by its opponents. Waterford Labour leaders were uncertain of their standing in party politics, and reluctant to jeopardize industrial solidarity by unguarded forays into political debate. The problem of cultivating a support base was accentuated by the persistence of Redmondism, which immeasurably complicated the task of confronting conservative nationalism. Not unreasonably, Trades Council activists concluded that any political initiative would not succeed unless backed up by the movement nationally ; which would have the additional advantage of linking industrial organisation to politics - making the latter appear to be a natural extension of the former. As the "Soviet" incident demonstrates, workers could be extraordinarily class conscious when mobilised as trade unionists. Removed from that context, they displayed little cohesion.

Industrial Conflict and Decline.

The reversal of the wages movement began in mid-1921, and took about 2½ years to complete. Initially, the conflict was about wages and conditions, but as the employers' offensive gathered momentum the broader question of the role of trade unionism in society became increasingly central. Two sets of reasons made the contest an overtly class struggle. Firstly, trade unionists hoped to resist the wage reductions en masse, and to this end resorted to sympathetic action in a large number of instances. Secondly, the creation of acceptable institutions of State in 1922 provided employers with the effective weaponry they had been lacking over the previous five years. The result was a set-piece confrontation between the State and the organised working class. Both sides had strong ideological reference points. For the employers, the economic recession made pay cuts unavoidable. Trade unions were acting in restraint of trade and had to be severely curbed if industry was to recover the self-confidence and freedom of action

necessary to make it competitive. Workers were particularly conscious of the sacrifices they had made during the Great War, and blamed the economic crisis on capitalism and the war. Their viewpoint was summed up in a resolution proposed by the Trades Council, and passed at a mass meeting in Waterford in June 1923.

"We recognise that all the forces of capital and of the ruling powers are combined to break the Labour movement and drive the working classes back to pre-war conditions. We claim that we are entitled to a decent living in our own land, and we are prepared to insist upon that right and if necessary to fight for it."⁴⁶

The first major group of local workers to experience wage cuts was the railwaymen. Ireland's thirty two railway companies had been placed under Government control in December 1916, and were scheduled for de-control in August 14 1921. With the removal of government subsidies, the private companies signalled their intention to introduce reductions of 18s to 20s per week and extend the working day to between ten and twelve hours. Railwaymen were equally determined to reject pay cuts, and defend the eight-hour day. Conflict was averted by the establishment of an Arbitration Tribunal, which reported on September 10, finding in favour of pay cuts on a sliding scale and recommending the extension of hours. It also confirmed a 6s reduction made in August.⁴⁷ The NUR executive's willingness to compromise provoked strong opposition from its membership. Luke Larkin, chairman of the NUR's Irish Council, had already condemned reductions and warned the companies that if they wanted a dispute, the men would meet them "in no half-hearted way."⁴⁸ A series of unofficial strikes broke out in late August in Dublin, Cork and Waterford, where forty engine cleaners struck on 29 August against the 6s reduction.⁴⁹ Reluctantly, however, the NUR's Irish Council agreed to accept the wage cuts, provided the eight-hour day was maintained. This was finally conceded in principle in February 1922 to avert a national strike, which railwaymen in Waterford and elsewhere had been calling for since early December.⁵⁰

The assumption that a defeat for relatively strong sections like the railwaymen, the engineers, and the dockers, who agreed to a cut of 1s per day in September 1921, would lead to a rapid re-adjustment of wages generally, did not prove true. Historians have inaccurately portrayed certain groups of workers, like dockers or operative flour millers, as being in the van of militancy.⁵¹ Although key sectors may be discerned, the idea that any one group played a determinant role in the conflict is misleading. Indeed the diffusion and relative autonomy of militancy is remarkable. So also was its persistence. Despite further set backs in 1922, it was not until the end of the following year that industrial relations recovered its stability. The prolonged character of unrest was exceptional given the fairly recent origins of mass trade unionism, the fall in the level of wages that had taken place in Britain in the wake of "Black Friday" (April 15 1921, when British Labour unity collapsed in the face of the recession), and, most importantly, the high unemployment rate, which stood at over 25% in December 1921.⁵²

In his report for 1923, the director of Waterford Chamber of Commerce noted it to be the worst ever year for industrial unrest.⁵³ The farm labourers' strike was unquestionably the most serious and had a big impact on the city as workers were locked out or dismissed for taking sympathetic action. Three other major disputes directly affected the city. In February, a disagreement between dockers and gasworkers over the trimming of coal led to the

occupation of the Gas Co. premises.⁵⁴ The dispute was complicated by the fact that the parties were in the (Amalgamated) Transport Union and the ITGWU respectively. It also took place against the background of impending redundancies in the Gas Co. . Attempted intervention by the Company manager, Mr. Ellacott, was not appreciated. He was ejected from the premises by his employees, who declared a "Soviet" and hoisted a red flag over the plant. Talks between management and staff ensued, and it was agreed that the workers should hold a secret ballot to determine whether they wished to continue the occupation, or return control to the manager. A unanimous decision in favour of continuing was recorded. Over the next two weeks the company was operated by the workers " in the interests of shareholders and consumers". The management tried various stratagems to sabotage the "Soviet". They removed all cash from the Company safe, appealed to customers not to pay their bills, and induced a government official to try to persuade the workers to return the plant. All efforts being to no avail, the army was sent in on March 10.⁵⁵

Whether the "Soviet" could have continued indefinitely is debatable. A bank account for the payment of bills had been opened by the workers, but there was no means of enforcing payment. The dockers withheld coal from the Gas Co. pending the settlement of the demarcation dispute. The ITGWU leadership strongly opposed occupation tactics, and this inhibited the local union leadership from mobilising support for the "Soviet".⁵⁶

Following the eviction of the workers, the conflict took the form of a strike. After three weeks the men agreed to accept management control, but by this stage the bone of contention had shifted to the demand that fourteen of the forty four staff be made redundant. In mid-June the workers stepped up pressure by organising mass pickets. The Company then offered to take back all but two members of the strike committee. On August 28 the strike finally ended on these terms, with an ex-gratia payment of 10s compensation being given to each of the two men involved.⁵⁷

Considerably more disruptive to trade and commerce was the dock strike, which closed the port from July 16 to October 26. This stoppage was a national one, originating in a demand for a reduction of 2s per day.⁵⁸ Employers hoped to press home the advantage that had been accruing to them during the year, and were reluctant to make any concessions. However, the Government was fearful of the social crisis that industrial conflict was creating. The Cabinet could not afford to share the sanguine view of the employers, and resolved ;

"As the Dockers' and other disputes were becoming very serious and might lead to disruption in the forthcoming elections, it was agreed that the Assistant Minister for Industry and Commerce should ask employers to maintain the Status Quo regarding wages for three months during which it was hoped that Conferences under the auspices of the government might resolve the disputes."⁵⁹ In response to Government pressure, a settlement was arrived at based on a reduction of 1s per day.⁶⁰

A third important strike took place in the building industry in September. Wage rates for building workers had been falling since early 1921. On April 4 of that year, the hourly rates for scaffolders and labourers were cut by a penny to 1s.5d. and 1s.4d. respectively.⁶¹ In January 1922, a general reduction of twopence per hour was introduced, giving craftsmen 1s.11d., scaffolders 1s.3d., and labourers 1s. 2d.⁶² Following a short strike of 200 craftsmen in September 1923, a further cut of 1d

per hour was agreed. Employers had originally demanded a reduction of 6d per hour. 300 labourers also accepted a reduction on the hourly rate of 1d.⁶³

The pattern of industrial conflict in Waterford 1921-1923 reflected national trends. All over the country, the recession was generating conflict between employers and employees, and in turn creating strain between these protagonists and their allies, the Government and Union leaders respectively. Although the balance of forces had tilted decisively in favour of the employers by late 1922, workers showed a surprising determination to resist the attack on living standards. This was partly due to the desperate nature of their position. Both sides had pitched their objectives at a very high level. For Capital, wage cuts were only the means: the demoralization of the trade union movement, and, hopefully, its disorganisation, was the end. Labour sought to maintain living standards and protect jobs in the face of a 25% unemployment rate. The consequences of defeat would be disastrous. But the intensity of struggle was also due to the Syndicalist dynamic which had been infused into Irish trade unionism. In Waterford as elsewhere, it was the union membership who forced the pace against the wishes of a leadership that was bent on compromise. This is why the wage settlements of 1923 represented the victory that employers had been seeking; because they were achieved only after the exhaustion and demoralization of the working class.

Conclusion .

It would be untrue to say that the wheel had come full circle. 1923 was not quite a return to 1913. Unions were now better established in the City, and the principle that all grades, white collar and unskilled as well as craftsmen, should be represented was recognised, though not always by employers. However, Labour had suffered an obvious reverse in two respects. Firstly, union membership fell, particularly where general workers were concerned. During the 1920's, the timber yards, bottling stores, builders' yards, and many small firms, became unorganised. Jobs remained scarce, and the Government ceased publishing unemployment figures in 1924 to avoid embarrassment. The great difficulty of protecting jobs and defending wage levels considerably restricted the scope of trade unionism. Secondly, Labour's ambitions to social leadership were severely dented. This was clearly reflected in the role of the Trades Council which again became a trade union, rather than a working class representative organisation. Despite the Council's efforts it was unable to assert any significant social influence in the changed political climate. From a civic point of view, this was to have a stifling effect on Waterford. In the absence of challenge, commercial opinion returned to the theme of industrial decline, evoking the imagery of a once great municipality floundering in economic decay. The near monopoly of social values by the middle class made stagnation a self-fulfilling prophecy.

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An Account for the Manor of Old RossSeptember 1284 to September 1285

(Part I)

By Mary C. Lyons

The survival of a series of excellent accounts for both the manors and boroughs of the lordship of Carlow in the late thirteenth century¹ was probably due to Edward I's interest in and ultimate acquisition of the lands of Roger Bygod.

Bygod, in his capacity as Earl of Norfolk and Marshal of England was one of the most powerful magnates and had played a leading role in opposing the King during the constitutional crisis of 1297.² Thus, any diminution of his power and influence would have been in the royal interest. In the event, Bygod's own improvidence led to his ultimate embarrassment. His Irish lands were taken into the King's hands at sometime prior to 15th of September 1299 and on a second occasion prior to 24th of May 1301, in all probability as security against outstanding debts.³ In 1302 as a result of utter financial embarrassment and with the consent of his brother and heir, John, Bygod surrendered the earldom, the marshalsea and his lands to the King.⁴ These were regranted to him and to the heirs of his body. This merely amounted to the grant of a life interest in the titles and lands as Bygod had no children and thus, on his death these lands and titles were to revert to the crown. In return for this surrender he was relieved of his financial difficulties. From 1302 until the Earl's death in 1306, the lordship of Carlow was in a similar position to that of the liberty of Kildare following William de Vesey's surrender of this lordship to the King and his subsequent death in 1297.⁵

The accounts of the manors and boroughs of the liberty of Carlow were probably removed to London to provide some indication of the value of the lordship. This removal probably occurred in the winter of 1301-2, as Bygod was a poor credit risk and some evidence of the value of his lands might have been needed prior to the arrangement of 1302. It should be noted in this context that none of these accounts postdate 1294.⁶ It is also possible, though, in my opinion, not as likely, that the accounts were removed for the use of royal officials estimating the value of the lordship to use in conjunction with the 1307 inquisition post mortem or to give Thomas de Brotherton some indication of the value of the Irish lands granted to him with the earldom of Norfolk in 1312.⁷

Accounts of individual manors and boroughs within the lordship of Carlow fulfilled a dual purpose. They formed one of the particulars for payments made by the local reeve to the Treasurer of the liberty and by the Treasurer or by other reeves to the local reeve, thus providing a control for certain sections of accounts rendered either by the Treasurer or by other officials. These accounts also provided a thorough record of the issues of the manor or borough in question and of necessary expenditure there during a given period.

Manorial accounts had a simple, balance sheet type of structure. An initial entry noting arrears was followed by a number of sections noting income from various sources. A general total of the year's income was followed by sections detailing necessary expenditure, the payment of the famuli and the maintenance of manorial buildings. Two further subordinate accounts were given on the dorse of the manorial account. One of these, the account of the grange, which listed the grain harvested at the beginning of the reeve's term of office and the subsequent use or sale of this grain, is of crucial importance in any examination of agricultural techniques and the quality of yields in these manors. The other, the stock account, is of equal importance in assessing the importance and development, if any, of stock rearing on the manor in question. Where a series of these accounts has survived it is possible to examine in detail the administration and development of the manor in question. Earlier abstracts from the Old Ross accounts published by Hore have obscured the potential of this source.⁸ The economic aspect of the account was ignored in these publications and large sections of all of these accounts, including the endorsed accounts were omitted.

Old Ross was the largest of the Bygod manors. It was primarily a centre for stock rearing, and more specifically, for the rearing of sheep. The importance of tillage and the area under grain increased throughout the 1280's probably reflecting a growth in the demand for grain to supply troops stationed in Wales. This diversification occurred at the time when New Ross was at its most prosperous and evidence of a decline in this aspect of operations at Old Ross appears to coincide with a slump in the grain market of the south east and a diminution in the prosperity of New Ross caused by a shift in the theatre of war to Scotland. Dublin and Drogheda were more important as centres of supply for the Scottish wars than centres such as New Ross and Waterford.⁹

By 1307, the manorial caput at Old Ross had, if the extent in Bygod's inquisition post mortem¹⁰ is an accurate reflection of conditions on the manor,

become dilapidated through lack of maintenance. Two halls, a stone house, which was in poor condition and a storehouse roofed with straw were all 'extended at no price because there is no one who will rent them.' There were 76 acres of arable land and 4 acres of moor and pasture in demesne, which the jurors extended at 26s. 8d. or 4d. an acre and an oak wood of 20 acres with pasture worth 2s. Of 4,247 acres and 1 stang of land held at will and 2,292 acres held by betaghs 2,33 acres and 80 acres respectively lay waste. The demesne land extended in 1307 only represented a portion of the demesne lands under cultivation in the 1280's and it is worth noting that the outgranges of Kilcolman and Ballyconnor which were both cultivated on a regular basis during the second half of this decade had passed out of cultivation by 1307.

The expansion of the 1280's forms an interesting contrast with the evident decline of the early fourteenth century. Land improvement and clearance had been in progress at Old Ross from 1280 onwards. In an account of expenditure of 1280-1, 15s. worth of sand was bought for spreading on the land and an unspecified amount of woodland was cleared through burning.¹¹ The sand, which probably came from the Barrow estuary near the borough of Insula,¹² was used to enrich the land at Old Ross. In 1283, 5½ acres of land were sanded, while a further 3 acres were sanded in the following year.¹³ A peak was reached in 1285 when 9½ acres of land were sanded.¹⁴ The first major clearance of land by burning was of 22 acres in 1282.¹⁵ In 1283 and 1285 a further 16½ acres and 10 acres were cleared in this manner.¹⁶ Fertilisation with animal dung also played an important role in land improvement at Old Ross. Manure was gathered and spread on at least three occasions during the decade.¹⁷

On only one occasion for which evidence has survived, 1280-1, were there less than 76 acres of demesne land under cultivation at Old Ross.¹⁸ In the period for which manorial accounts are extant there were never less than 113 acres under cultivation there.¹⁹ By 1286, 161 acres were under cultivation and this had risen to 286½ acres in 1288.²⁰ A similar expansion occurred in the amount of land under cultivation in the outgranges of Ballyconnor²¹ and Kilcolman,²² but was more marked in the case of the latter area. In 1283 32 acres and 1 stang were sown in Ballyconnor.²³ This only rose to 38½ acres in 1288,²⁴ an indication, perhaps, that the resources at Ballyconnor were being fully exploited, even at the beginning of the decade. Land at Kilcolman first came into cultivation in 1285, when 4 acres and 1 stang were sown with oats.²⁵ By 1288, 85 acres there were sown with wheat, rye and oats.²⁶

Cropping techniques and land use at Old Ross changed throughout the 1280's.

The major crop sown was always oats, but in relative terms the amount of land under wheat increased to such an extent that it was the major factor in the constant expansion of the demesne. Rye was the third crop sown on this manor. In 1283 only 15 acres were sown with wheat.²⁷ By 1286 this had risen to 34 acres and in 1288 73 acres were under wheat.²⁸ The acreage sown with rye declined somewhat in the middle of the decade, but reached its earlier level again in 1288.²⁹ While the acreage under oats also increased during this decade, the rate of increase was not as dramatic as was the case with the acreage under wheat. In 1283 114 acres and 1 stang were sown with oats.³⁰ By 1288 184 acres were under oats.³¹ The amount of land under oats in Old Ross and the attempts to improve the soil there and bring new land into cultivation are an indication that the land there was probably damp and in some areas rather marginal. The increase in the cultivation of wheat was a direct response to the growing demand for this grain. Two inter-related factors probably lay behind the abandonment of so much of the newly cleared and improved demesne land at Old Ross: the slackening of the demand for grain in the ports of the south-east and the marginal nature of some of the land under cultivation. With a slackening of demand for grain, marginal land would have become unprofitable and eventually would have been abandoned.

Old Ross was the centre of sheep rearing in the lordship of Carlow. Even in 1280-1 when the flock was at its smallest, its breeding potential in the number of ewes kept on the manor was more than double that of the Ballysax flock at its apogee in 1283-4,³² but in absolute terms the flock at Old Ross was not larger than that at Ballysax until 1284-5.³³ Thus, the effects of a widespread murrain, such as that of 1285 and 1286,³⁴ at Old Ross were minimised because of this breeding potential, while they were relatively more severe in the other two manors of the Bygod lordship, Ballysax and Fothered where there were also extensive flocks. By October 1289 there were 2,423 sheep at Old Ross including ewes, yearlings and lambs.³⁵

The increase in the flock at Old Ross was reflected in an increase in the amount of wool sold from that manor. In 1282-3 only 63½ stones of wool were sold and accounted for by the reeve.³⁶ By 1287-8 this had risen to 2½ sacks or 189 stones of wool.³⁷ The other important by-product of sheep rearing, ewes' milk, was made into cheese and sold.³⁸ There was also a vaccary at Old Ross, with never less than 24 cows being kept in any particular year between 1283 and 1288.³⁹ In October 1289 there were 38 cows on the manor.⁴⁰ Thus, the raw material for the manorial output of cheese came from both the vaccary and the sheep flock. A small amount of butter was also churned.

The usual draught animals were kept at Old Ross, where there were on average 6 affers and 30 oxen in any particular year throughout the 1280's.⁴¹ These numbers increased at the end of the decade and in 1289 there were 13 affers and 56 oxen at Old Ross.⁴² The increase in the number of draught animals kept was probably necessitated by the expansion of the area of demesne land under cultivation towards the end of the decade.

The number and nature of the famuli on the manors of the lordship of Carlow in the 1280's reflected directly the size of the manor on which they were retained and the forms of tillage and stock rearing carried out there. Unlike the manors of the Bishopric of Winchester, where most of the famuli held base serjeantries, i.e. rent free tenements,⁴³ while also receiving food allowances, the famuli of the lordship of Carlow were all retained by stipend and food allowance. By the 1280's the food allowance offered on the Bygod manors had been commuted to a monetary payment of 4d. per week, received by most of the famuli,⁴⁴ though in the case of persons employed for a short period of time, stipend and food allowance were frequently coupled. This level of allowance compared very favourably with that received by stipendiary ploughmen on the Bishop of Winchester's estates in the thirteenth century.⁴⁵

The number of famuli retained at Old Ross increased consistently in line with both the expansion of the flock and area of demesne land under cultivation. In 1282-3 eight ploughmen, three shepherds and a cowman were retained there.⁴⁶ By 1284-5, ten ploughmen and five shepherds were attached to the manor,⁴⁷ with a further two ploughmen being retained in 1287-8.⁴⁸ Two ploughmen were also retained on a more casual basis for 38 weeks at Kilcolman in 1287-8.⁴⁹ A dairymaid was retained for the half of the year when the cows and ewes produced most milk, generally from sometime in May to the following Michaelmas, in order to make cheese.⁵⁰ Harrowers were retained for the spring and winter sowings.⁵¹

The annual stipend paid to the famuli varied little on the manors of the lordship of Carlow. There were two basic stipendiary scales, a higher one of 6s. per annum, though this was only 5s. per annum in Old Ross and a lower scale of 4s.⁵² The only persons receiving payment on the higher scale in Old Ross were the holders of the plough (tentores). The drivers of the plough (fugatores), the reap reeve (messor), the shepherds, the cowman, the doorman and the reeve all only received the lower scale of 4s. per annum. Much of the seasonal work at harvest time was done by casual labour at piece rates (ad tascham), though there are instances, in some of the accounts of the famuli threshing grain. Thus,

the famuli at Old Ross and for that matter, the famuli of Bygod's other Irish manors formed a hard core of specialist labour and were retained by stipend and by food allowance rather than by the granting of base serjeantries.

Thus, while the 1280's saw the expansion of Old Ross as a centre of grain production and sheep rearing, this prosperity had apparently withered away by the early years of the fourteenth century. While the profits derived from stock rearing may have remained at the level reached by them in the late 1280's, the abandonment of so much demesne land must mark a fairly steep decline in the value of the manor. This decline was precipitated by the increasing unprofitability of the cultivation of marginal land and the slump in the grain trade of the south-eastern parts of Ireland which was the result of the transferral of the theatre of war from Wales to Scotland.

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- 1 These accounts, along with a number of Receivers' accounts of Elizabeth de Clare's Irish lands and two accounts with duplicates and a third badly damaged account of Kildare lands in the fifteenth century comprise P.R.O. S.C. 6 1237-9.
 - 2 For an account of this crisis see F.M. Powicke, The Thirteenth Century 1216-1307, Oxford 2nd edition 1962, pp. 677-83.
 - 3 Calendar of Documents relating to Ireland 1293-1301, Ed. H. Sweetman, London 1881 nos. 653 and 813 respectively.
 - 4 F.M. Powicke, King Henry III and the Lord Edward, vol. 2, Oxford 1947, pp. 705-6.
 - 5 A.J. Otway-Ruthven 'The Medieval County of Kildare', Irish Historical Studies, vol. 2 (1958-9) p. 181.
 - 6 The latest of the Treasurers' accounts runs from 30th September 1293 to 30th of September 1294, P.R.O. S.C.6 1239/9.
 - 7 For a brief account of this grant to de Brotherton see A.J. Otway-Ruthven, Medieval Ireland, London 1968, p. 239.
 - 8 P.H. Hore, History of the Town and County of Wexford, vol. 1 (New Ross, Old Ross etc) London 1901.
 - 9 G. Mac Niocaill, Na Buirgeisí, vol. 2, Dublin 1964, p. 525 for a table of receipts from the great custom at Drogheda and p. 528 for receipts from the same custom at New Ross. While the volume of trade was still greater than that at Drogheda, there is a steady decline in receipts from this custom overlaid by periodic erratic fluctuation at New Ross. The Drogheda receipts are more stable.
 - 10 For all material relating to this extent see C.D.I. 1302-7, Ed. H. Sweetman, London 1886, pp. 175-6, Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem, vol. IV, p. 306 and P.R.O. C133 file 127 m 33.
 - 11 P.R.O. S.C.6 1239/10.
 - 12 Great Island in the parish of Kilmokea, County Wexford. Some accounts for the borough and its mills have survived, P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/1 - 9.
 - 13 P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/44 and 45 respectively.

- 14 See Pt. II*, in textual appendix under Expensa Necessaria.
- 15 P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/43.
- 16 P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/44 and see below in textual appendix under Expensa Necessaria.
- 17 i.e. in 1284, 1285 and 1288. See P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/45 and 53 for 1284 and 1288 and see below in textual appendix under Expensa Necessaria, for 1285.
- 18 See P.R.O. S.C.6 1239/10. 59 acres were probably under cultivation as 29½ crannocs of seed grain were sown. The rate of sowing was that of ½ crannoc to the acre.
- 19 Ironically enough this nadir was reached in 1285. See below in textual appendix under Exitus Grangie.
- 20 P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/49 and 53 respectively.
- 21 Baliconeh' (P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/48) Baliconwr (P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/51) and Balicongor (P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/53). The civil parish of Old Ross contains no townlands of this name. The only townlands of this name in the county are Ballyconnor Big and Little, which lie in the barony of Forth (Townland Index).
- 22 As is the case with Ballyconnor, it is impossible to produce a definite identification of Kilcolman. Kylcoleman (P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/51) and Kilcoleman (P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/53) might possibly be Coleman in the barony of Shelburne (Townland Index).
- 23 P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/43.
- 24 P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/53.
- 25 See Pt. II, textual appendix under Exitus Grangie.
- 26 P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/53.
- 27 P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/43.
- 28 P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/49 and 53 respectively.
- 29 In 1283, 23½ acres and 1 stang of land was under rye (P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/43). By 1285 this had fallen to 3 acres (See Pt. II, textual appendix under subsection entitled siligio). It subsequently rose to 13 acres in 1286 and 29½ acres in 1288 (P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/49 and 53 respectively).
- 30 P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/43.
- 31 P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/53.
- 32 There were some 925 sheep on Ballysax in this year (P.R.O. S.C.6 1237/4), while there were 821 sheep at Old Ross in 1280-1.
- 33 1,446 sheep (P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/48, see Pt. II, textual appendix under compotus stauri. I have made a slight adjustment to the figures to take account of natural wastage, murrain etc.) as opposed to 739 sheep at Ballysax.
- 34 The number of sheep at Ballysax fell from 739 in 1284-5 to 690 in the following year and had dropped to 614 in 1287-8 (P.R.O. S.C.6 1237/4, 5 and 6 respectively). There were never more than 200 ewes at Ballysax in any year from 1284 onwards. Numbers at Old Ross constantly grew during these years, rising from 1,232 in 1285-6 to 1,569 in the following year (P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/49 and 51 respectively) and rose even more dramatically to 2,221 in 1287-8, when the check imposed on growth by a relatively high incidence of murrain was removed (P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/53). There were never less than 600 ewes on the manor of Old Ross during these years.
- 35 P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/55.
- 36 P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/43.
- 37 P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/53.

* Pt. II. will be published in Decies XIX.

- 38 i.e. See Pt. II, textual appendix under Exitus Manerii.
- 39 See P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/43, 44, 45, 48, 49, 51 and 53.
- 40 P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/55.
- 41 See P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/43, 44, 45, 48, 49, 51 and 53.
- 42 P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/55.
- 43 M.M.E. Postan, 'The Famulus. The Estate Labourer in the XIIth and XIIIth centuries', Econ. Hist. Review, supplement no. 2 (1954), p. 18.
- 44 See Pt. II, textual appendix in the section entitled Potura Famulorum.
- 45 M.M.E. Postan, 'The Famulus. The Estate Labourer in the XIIth and XIIIth centuries', Econ. Hist. Review, supplement no. 2 (1954) p. 22. The ploughmen on the Bishop of Winchester's estates received $4\frac{1}{2}$ quarters of grain per annum. The 17s. 4d. received by the famulus on the Bygod manors would have purchased a little over $4\frac{1}{2}$ crannocs of grain if the crannoc were selling at 4s. or under.
- 46 P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/43.
- 47 See Pt. II, textual appendix under Potura Famulorum and Stipendio Famulorum.
- 48 P.R.O. S.C.6 1238/53.
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 See Pt. II, textual appendix under Stipendio Famulorum.
- 51 They would not have been considered, strictly speaking, famuli due to the casual and temporary, rather than seasonal nature of this employment. See Pt. II, textual appendix under Expensa Necessaria.
- 52 See Pt. II, textual appendix under Stipendio Famulorum.

G L O S S A R Y

Extent, to extend: An extent was a detailed and itemised valuation of a tenement, a manor or a borough, or, indeed any piece of real property such as the advowson of a church.

The Medieval Acre: All land measurements in this article are expressed in terms of the medieval acre which was $2-2\frac{1}{2}$ times the size of the statute acre. A stang (estanga) was a quarter of a medieval acre and a carucate or ploughland contained 120 medieval acres.

Retagh: A tenant of serville or villein status. The term is a corruption of the Brehon Law term biatach, which originally meant a superior client who provided food services.

Tenant at will: A tenant at will held his land ad voluntatem domini. The tenure was thus precarious and could be terminated at the lord's pleasure.

Reap-Reeve: Messor: An official who superintended the operation of harvesting.

Crannoc: A dry measure of grain, containing in the case of wheat, 8 bushels and in the case of oats 16 bushels.

Stone of wool, sack of wool: A stone of wool could contain up to 12 fleeces of full-grown sheep and comparatively more in the case of a stone of lambs' wool. A sack of wool contained 42 stones of wool.

Affer: A rather inferior type of small work horse.

THE YOUNG IRELAND MOVEMENT IN WATERFORD, 1848 -

Part I

By Georgina Flynn.

Society in Waterford c.1848:

The population of Waterford city in the year 1848 was approximately 29,000 people.¹ In examining the figures for the population of Waterford city over a period of ten years it shows a slight increase from² 23,216 people in 1841 to approximately 29,000 people in 1851.³ At this particular time the Famine struck Ireland and it had disastrous effects which were expressed in a variety of ways both socially and economically. As rural areas were directly hit the fact that the population increased in Waterford city may be attributed to a movement of people from the country to the city to seek jobs. The population of the county of Waterford was 172,971 and as could be expected there was a falling off in population over the ten year period from 172,971 to 167,421.

Population figures for Clonmel district show a tendency to decrease also. In 1841 figures for this district are estimated at 29,692. While in 1851 figures tend to be about 28,670. It is evident from the figures quoted for Tipperary that this county was very heavily hit by the famine. The figures for the population of the males in 1841 was 27,560. By the year 1851 the number had decreased drastically to 21,151. Similarly, figures for female population dropped from 27,508 to 22,830. Thus it is clear that the Famine changed the social conditions of the county of Tipperary to a significant degree. There seems to be a similar trend for figures in Wexford where population figures fell from 202,033 to 179,790. Thus Wexford appears to have suffered severe losses in numbers during this period. The conclusion to be drawn is that both Waterford city and county seem to have escaped lightly the consequences of the famine. They did suffer the same fate as did the rest of the country but the conditions did not appear to be as bad as were the consequences in Wexford or Tipperary at this time.

The present city of Waterford, with the recent boundary extension covers an area of 9,500 acres. Before the extension the area was 6,000 acres. The estimated figure of the 1981 city population is 40,000. The City of Waterford in 1848 was a little more than 3,000 acres and into that small area was compressed a population estimated at 29,000.

Though the city of Waterford in 1848 had a population of 29,000 people only 700 people were entitled to the franchise or one vote to every 40 inhabitants.⁴

There were many rich landowners in Waterford. These were people who owned estates of £500 valuation and upwards. T.F.Meagher makes reference to many of these in his "Recollections of Waterford" in "Meagher of the Sword". Meagher himself was a member of the "Waterford Club" whose members included many rich landowners. The Marquis of Waterford, the Earl of Huntington, Lord Carew, Sir Joshua Paul, Sir Henry Barron and Sir Nugent Humble were members of it. Very nearly three quarters of the club were conservatives, politically.

The majority of the manufacturers and traders in Waterford were members of the Chamber of Commerce of which Benjamin Budd was President and Thomas Hanton was Secretary. All of these men were strongly loyal and in the year 1848 gave in writing their loyal support to the government in combating revolutionary outbreaks in Waterford city.

The Mayor of Waterford was Silvester Phelan, Esq. He, together with some prominent magistrates of the county and city of Waterford, D.L. Newport, Michael Dobbyn and John Harris, also expressed their loyalty to the government. Thomas Meagher (Senior) was into the business of shipping and commerce in Waterford city. He expanded the business by becoming a ships chandler and entered local politics. He became Mayor of the city, the first Catholic to hold the office since the seventeenth century. He was elected to the post in 1843. He later became an M.P. for Waterford city from 1847-1857.

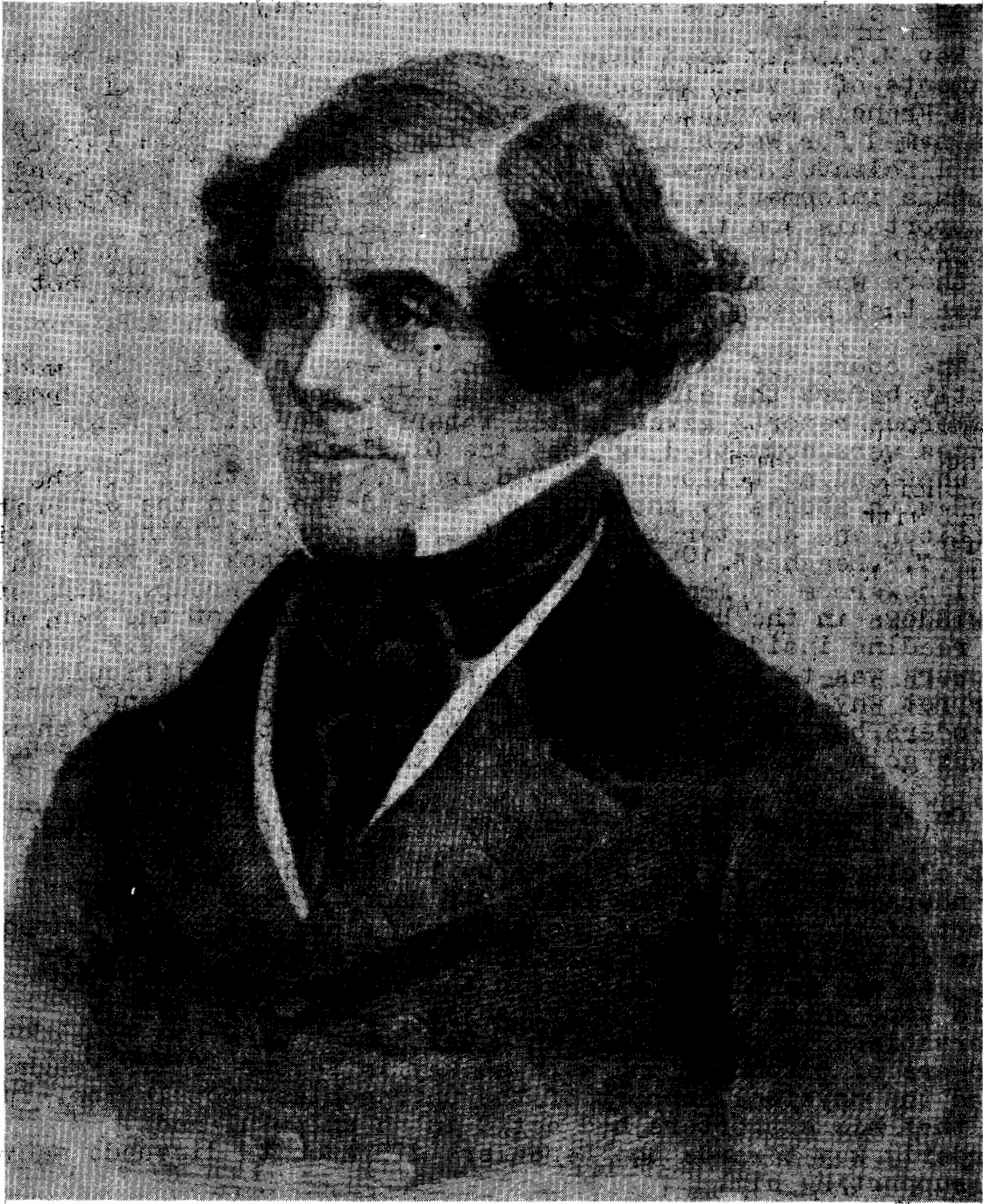
T.F. Meagher was the son of Thomas Meagher. He joined O'Connell's repeal movement. He slowly grew bored with the endless debates of the Repealers. T.F. Meagher was a Republican in the tradition of the United Irishmen of 1798. In 1845 he joined the Young Ireland Movement and through his membership of the movement he was to have an important influence on events in the locality in 1848.

1848 Election in Waterford:

At the beginning of 1848 Daniel O'Connell, the junior member of Parliament for the city of Waterford resigned his seat for the purpose of accepting the position of British Consul at Boulogne.⁵ Never since the great Waterford Election of 1826 did any parliamentary contest evoke such excitement in the city by the Suir. Thomas Francis Meagher decided to stand as a Confederate candidate. Patrick Costelloe, a retired Kilkenny attorney was selected as a suitable candidate. The local whigs put forward their own local candidate Sir Henry Winston Barron.⁶ A meeting was held on Monday February 14th in the Town Hall for the purpose of arranging as to who the electors were to select for the future representation of the city of Waterford. During the meeting Rev. M. Cuddihy and Sir Benjamin Morris Wall expressed regret at the resignation of Daniel O'Connell. The importance of careful selection of a new candidate for the seat of parliament was stressed by the latter. Thomas Francis Meagher and a number of Young Irelanders were present at the meeting. Mr. Meagher expressed an opinion that it would be against his very beliefs to express regret at the retirement of Daniel O'Connell. According to a report given in the Waterford Chronicle the Mayor was obliged to dissolve the meeting due to the fact that confusion arose as a result of Thomas Francis Meagher's speech.

On Wednesday, February 16th a meeting was held in the Town Hall with the same purpose as the previous meeting. The meeting consisted of freeholders, leaseholders, householders and freemen of the city. Rev. J. O'Shea and Mr. Delahunty expressed their willingness to support and work for T.F. Meagher if the repealers of Waterford wished to select him. Not all the people who attended were of the same opinion. Alderman Sherlock convincingly persuaded the people present, that Meagher was far from suitable as a candidate: "What chance has Mr. Meagher in the City of Waterford? What chance will Mr. Meagher have I ask again? None whatever. He will surely be a means of dividing a sector of the people and no more. If you are repealers you ought to advance the cause".⁷ Rev. M. Cuddihy read out a letter written by

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... .. **Thomas F. Meagher**
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Mr. Michael Egan, chairman of the Wolfe Tone Confederate Club in which he expressed the willingness of the club to support T.F. Meagher at the election "provided he will be selected by the majority of the repeal constituency of the city".⁸

Rev. M. Cuddihy used this very opportune moment to quote the sentiments of a very important repealer, Thomas Meagher, father of Thomas Francis Meagher: "I am now disposed to think that of all those named for Waterford Mr. Costelloe is the one most likely to prove a faithful representative of the repealers of Waterford".⁹ From this information it is clear that Mr. Meagher was not prepared to support his son in the coming election, thus showing disapproval of his ideals as a Young Irelander. Meagher felt that there was a misunderstanding in that his father did not realise that he was running for the election.

The course of activities taken by Meagher during the week directly before the election proved to be momentous. According to numerous reports given in the Waterford Chronicle, many offences were committed against the Old Ireland group - "The unoffending followers of Old Ireland were struck to the ground with stones by those at whose head stood in the capacity of officer and abetter the gallant brave sword-wielding and pike daring T.F. Meagher".¹⁰ On Monday night an attack was made on the Repeal newsroom by members of the Young Ireland group. All of the windows in the building were broken and many of the men who were reading inside were also struck. The object of T.F. Meagher's followers was to intimidate the Repealers. It is difficult to interpret why such violent action was taken by the Young Irelanders but it is evident that they were determined to show who was going to win the election in their opinion.

On February 28th it was necessary for those who could vote for a candidate to perform the duty. The polling began at eight o'clock and it was evident by 11 that the Young Irelanders were not at the top. Sir Henry Barron had the support of the majority of the landlord class, the united support of the 40 shilling freeholders, and the support of the clergy also. As was mentioned before, in the city of Waterford 700 people were entitled to the franchise. These were mainly conservatives in principle. An equal number were old time followers of O'Connell and were no way in favour of T.F. Meagher. He had the physical support of the unfranchised population. The fact that his supporters had acted in an unlawful and disorderly way towards the Repealers did much to dissuade many from supporting him.

The result of the election was as follows: - Sir Henry Barron won with a slight victory of 317 over Pat Costelloe who received 301 votes. Meagher received 154 votes. Thomas F. Meagher, in realising his coming defeat, gave his vote to Sir Henry Barron and many of the Young Irelanders did likewise.

The reaction to the results of the election was one of increasing distrust on the part of the city inhabitants towards T.F. Meagher and his followers. Many members of the community felt that the Young Irelanders had betrayed their confidence. They expressed conviction that "a vile undercurrent was at work and the true hopes of the people failed because of the treachery of those who had vowed the vow of fidelity and devotion to their country".¹¹ In betraying the community's confidence Young Ireland had gained a liability, the mistrust of their most loyal and influential supporters in the county

and city of Waterford. The following slogan was adopted and used throughout the city and it undoubtedly expressed the feeling of many of the people of Waterford - "Young Meagher, anybody for us but a Young Irishman".¹²

Reaction:

In anxious response to preparations made by the Wolfe Tone Confederate Club to light bonfires and raise the tricolour flag, the Mayor of Waterford, Silvester Phelan wrote a letter to Dublin Castle seeking advice on what action should be taken by the magistrates of Waterford.¹³ The main objective of the Mayor in this letter was to inform Dublin Castle of the ensuing possibility of an outbreak of violence. The Mayor, having been alarmed on numerous occasions before the election at the outbreaks of violence, felt it necessary to have a strong control over the situation in Waterford. It was as a result of consultation with three of the magistrates, Captain Newport, Sir Benjamin Morris Wall and James Keating, that this letter was written.

It was evident that great excitement was to be found in Waterford city, especially when one considers the raising of the tricolour flag on the confederates' building on the Mall. It must be noted that Silvester Phelan was very worried about the situation in the city and what strengthened this even further was the fact that the magistrates advised him strongly to consult the government.

However on March 10th one of Waterford's resident magistrates P.C. Howley wrote a letter to Dublin Castle confirming the fact that despite the evident excitement at the time, no disturbance or outbreak of violence had occurred.¹⁴ One reference was made to the unemployment of large numbers of the lower classes which could be a contributory factor to the tendency towards an outbreak of violence. However, it is evident from the letter that there was no immediate necessity to get alarmed in any way.

A meeting of the members of the Chamber of Commerce, was held on March 16th. The members included manufacturers and traders of the city of Waterford, many of whom acted as justices of the peace also. During the course of the meeting regret was expressed at the outbreak of revolutionary activity in the country. All the members deemed it necessary to express their wholesome loyalty to the crown and their willingness to co-operate in all activities to prevent any disturbance of the peace in Waterford. The following resolution was adopted: - "A committee of five gentlemen be appointed to form an address to his Excellency". The following members were appointed to form the committee, Henry Denny, William Aylward, Thomas S. Harvey, Thomas Barnes, and William Beale Jacob. The resolution itself was signed by the following members: J. Penrose, William Marchant, Edward Clibborn, Henry Denny, and W. Aylward. The letter itself expressed disgust at the recent revolutionary outbreaks and more important expressed their utmost loyalty to the crown: - "We deeply regret the prevalent attempts to procure revolutionary outbreaks in this country and deem it our duty unequivocally to declare our unalterable attachment to our beloved sovereign, and our determined resolve to co-operate with your Excellency to the utmost of our ability".¹⁵ From the letter it is clear that a very important and influential sector of the community of Waterford were anxious to express their loyalty at a critical moment.

Arming:

In a monthly report sent by P.C. Howley of Tramore to Dublin Castle during May 1848, distress and fear were expressed at the increased involvement of people in the locality in pike-making and in training in the use of such implements. It is evident that a considerable number of people in that district were engaged in such activities as arming themselves with pikes, hatchets and other implements. As to who was encouraging such activities Howley was of the opinion that: "I am sure that the clergy counselling the movements referred to do encourage disaffection among their parishioners".²¹ Another interesting report was written by Sub-Inspector John Spillane and it gave a typical account of the type of training activities which were going on during that time. During a trip which the inspector had taken to Gallowshill in the suburbs of the city he came upon a group of people who were in the process of a training session. He approached Mark Sheridan who was armed with a pistol to discover that the latter knew nothing of the magistrates' caution to the public against such practices. When Mr. Spillane produced a copy of the caution for him to read he said he hoped he would soon see the English laws burned in a pile and he would use all his power to upset them.²² The magistrates held a meeting during April and decided to caution the public against drilling. Posters were put up in different districts of the county and city of Waterford warning people against partaking in activities such as training in the use of firearms and drill. In addition they appointed 242 extra constables for the district of Waterford whose work it was to prevent disorderly conduct and unlawful activity. It appeared to them that "a considerable number of the well disposed inhabitants of the city of Waterford were in great alarm and apprehension of tumult and disorder breaking out in said city".²³ On May 10th, 1848 a warrant to search for arms was issued and sent to the County Inspectors and District Sub-Inspectors of the Constabulary. The warrant itself gave specific instructions to seize any arms that were in the possession of the ordinary people "and all guns, pistols and other firearms, parts of guns, pistols and other firearms, swords, cutlasses, pikes and bayonets, bullets, gunpowder and ammunition found upon any search or searches you shall seize".²⁴ It was anticipated that there would be some hostility towards the execution of this warrant.

Confederate Clubs:

In almost every district clubs began to spring into existence pledged to the policy of Young Ireland. For instance during 1848 they were established in Clonmel, Tipperary, and Carrick-on-Suir. John Mitchell promised an insurrection as soon as the harvest could be got in. Smith O'Brien acted in a more cautious manner. He felt a need for a proper programme of organisation and once this was completed then decisive measures could be taken and plans drawn up accordingly. According to him the organisation was to be completed as soon as there were 18,000 clubs set up with 300 men properly armed in each.

John O'Mahoney gives a detailed account of how the clubs were organised, who were the main leaders and what activities went on in the clubs. In his particular area, Ballyneale, the parish priest wished to establish a club in his locality. From this club sprang other rural groups of which John O'Mahoney took over management. In Carrick there were several clubs established all under the patronage of Rev. Mr. Byrne who was "the great originator and chief promoter of the movement in that quarter"²⁵. Under the

authority of this dominant and influential figure a central board was set up which was composed of the presidents of various clubs. Dr.A.Ryan was appointed Chairman of this central committee.

In South Tipperary the organisers of the movement were undoubtedly of the religious denomination. They publicly told people to form clubs and to make pikes and to prepare themselves for battle. These priests also made it clear that they wished to lead them when the time was opportune. Thus the Young Ireland priests acquired an importance at first but were so influenced by Mitchell's trial and deportation that they soon changed their attitudes. Some of the older clergy decided to remain in silence and the Young Ireland movement was given the undivided support of the young priests, and the silent disapproval of the older clergy. According to John O'Mahony there would have been no point in organising for an insurrection if the priests were not willing to motivate the people and give them confidence to pursue their goal.

Arrest of T.F.Meagher:

Wednesday, July 12 1848 marked the occurrence of the second major event in Waterford city. Thomas Francis Meagher was arrested. At ten minutes to three, Captain Gunn accompanied by Constable Hughes presented themselves at Mr.Meagher's residence. At a meeting held on July 5, at Rathkeale, Co.Limerick, Mr.Meagher was accused of having stated the following : - "that the time had come for striking, now that the Government attempted to repeat the atrocities perpetrated at John Mitchell's trial. That people were disgraced forever unless they arose and struck a blow for their liberation".²⁶ Two policemen from Rathkeale swore that this was what he said. They felt that the object of the speech was to upset the Queen's throne and dignity. The warrant was backed by the Dublin authorities and transmitted to Waterford.

According to the Waterford Chronicle many people became excited and the crowd dispersed to Ballybricken for the purpose of arming themselves. The general opinion was that it was debasing when a handful of policemen were allowed to take a leading citizen of Waterford away without any force. Mr.Meagher advised the crown to prepare for the coming insurrection, saying " you must recollect that to strike home you must be prepared. Are you prepared? I say you are not, therefore you must obey me and bide your time".²⁷ After this speech the police arrested him in a most quiet and informal manner. They had done no more than what was on their part an imperative duty.

Rev.Mr.Tracy also addressed the meeting and called upon the Ballybricken boys to keep the peace. "It may be that you do not value the interest of your own country. Be therefore peaceable, permit the law to take its course and all may yet be well".²⁸ The general opinion of the authorities was that the atmosphere was conducive to an outbreak of violence. As soon as the people went to seek for the implements of war the artillery and infantry were sent for. There was nobody more certain of an ensuing outbreak to defend his leaving than T.F.Meagher himself. But he realised that the time had not yet come to strike and here succeeded in keeping the people to a policy of peace. "I know that you are fully prepared to prevent my going out of the city tonight but by doing so you could effect no object".²⁹ That evening Mr.Meagher was carried to Dublin by the Dublin Mail Coach.

The fact that T.F.Meagher, the Young Irelander from Waterford was arrested is more significant in a local context than on a national basis. The event showed the lengths to which the people

There is evidence that sections of the tenantry expressed their loyalty also. Early in 1848 a letter signed by 143 tenants of the Earl of Stradbroke in the county of Waterford was sent to the Lord Lieutenant. The tenants declared their loyalty to the crown and also expressed contempt towards the activities of the Young Ireland movement. They expressed a wish "to discountenance all agitation tending to jeopardise the peace and prosperity of the country".¹⁶ Apparently the tenants resolved on the petition independently, for Mr. Coates, Stradbroke's agent, declared that all who signed the petition did so "uninfluenced by landlord or agent, which proves that there are a body of tenant farmers in the country anxious to support the laws and to serve peace and order".¹⁷ However this is the only case of tenants on county Waterford estates expressing loyalty, and from this point of view it may be more the exception than the rule.

The merchants of the city of Waterford were also concerned about the situation. A letter was sent by Michael Montimery to Thomas Reddington, Esq., who was the representative of the Lord Lieutenant at that time, on behalf of the merchants of the city. It stated: "We the undersigned merchants of the City of Waterford considering the alarming state of the country and the general excitement existing at present beg respectfully to request his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant will please to appoint a stipendiary magistrate for the city of Waterford, and to give the citizens of Waterford the advantage of one of Her Majesty's army's steam vessels to be stationed in the Harbour".¹⁸

The Catholic clergy of the locality were also concerned about what was happening. A meeting of the Catholic Clergy of the united Diocese of Waterford and Lismore was held on Friday, April 21st in the vestry of the Cathedral. A strong address to the Sovereign was unanimously adopted. While expressing their loyalty the clergy also sought to remind the Queen that unless some of Ireland's grievances were alleviated, then the peace of the country might be endangered.

The following is an extract from the address - "We who live among the people and from whom no change of their fortunes or impulse of their feelings is concealed, beg leave to assure Your Majesty that after the lamentable sacrifices of so many hundreds of thousands of lives of Your Majesty's Irish subjects by famine and its attendant diseases the conditions of the survivors is daily becoming more and more desperate this people who seek only for that which every people in Europe are now possessing or recovering the means of living on their native soil or the power of legislating for their own benefit".¹⁹

On Saturday, April 22 a letter was written by Rev. Patrick Byrne parish priest of Lismore to F. Conway, General Editor of the Dublin Evening Post. In it he expressed his own private sentiments on the conditions that were to be faced at the time. As a positive advocate of the Young Ireland policy he expressed a sincere wish to stand with the people come what may: "The priests of Ireland are determined to stand by and with the people come what may and should the sure Whig policy drive them to the adoption of those means which the Milanese so successfully tried the Irish Priest will be found amid the fight invoking heavens blessing upon it".²⁰

were prepared to go to show their support for Meagher and Young Ireland. If Meagher had advised them to attack they would have done so. In addition the co-operation between the Young Ireland leaders and the clergy in unanimously deciding to keep the peace showed a unity of thought between the two groups. The fact that they were of the same opinion gave motivation to the crowd to refrain from any forceful activities.

On the following Monday morning, July 17, great excitement was reported in the townland of Carrick on Suir. The arrest of T. F. Meagher was to be followed by the arrest of two of the club leaders. The government probably felt that by arresting the leaders the ordinary people would lose confidence and be dissuaded from causing any further disturbances. But in fact the arrest of the leaders had the opposite effect. The news of the arrest brought the members of the different clubs together within a very short time. The news spread through surrounding districts far and near Ballyneale, Newtown, Rathgormack, Dysert, Clonea and Carrickbeg. The cry was "to your pikes in great numbers".³⁰ However, the intervention of Rev. Fr. Byrne caused them to disperse on the assurance that the prisoners would soon be liberated.

On Saturday, July 22 a proclamation was issued by T.F. Meagher immediately after the Castle proclamation was posted up throughout Waterford. T.F. Meagher's Proclamation was a direct warning to the people of Waterford that the impending insurrection was about to occur. Meagher maintained that by disqualifying the people to bear arms if they so wished the government was taking from the citizens their rights as free citizens. The objective of the Castle proclamation according to T.F. Meagher was "to surprise, to alarm and to intimidate".³¹ It is apparent that Meagher had his doubts about the vulnerability of the ordinary people. They could have been very easily guided by the government to refrain from involvement with the Young Ireland group. Meagher urged them to "organise calmly, speedily and fearlessly".³² In so doing they were to continue with earnest preparation for the rebellion which was soon to follow.

REFERENCES :

1. P.P., Census Returns 1851. 2. idem 1841. 3. idem 1851.
4. Cavanagh, M., Memoirs of Gen. Thomas Francis Meagher (1892), p. 90.
- 5 This Daniel O'Connell is not the renowned winner of Catholic Emancipation but a member of Parliament for Waterford City.
6. Waterford Chronicle, 16th Feb. 1848. 7. idem. 8. idem. 9. idem.
- 10 Cavanagh, op. cit., p. 110. 11. W. Chronicle, 4 March 1848. 12. idem.
- 13 Waterford Room, Waterford City Library; Raftis Collection, No. 160. 14. idem.
- 15 Chamber of Commerce, Waterford; Minutes of meeting, 16 March 1848.
- 16 Waterford Chronicle, 5 April 1848. 17. idem.
- 18 Raftis Collection, No. 165. 19. W. Chronicle 28 April 1848.
- 20 Cavanagh, op. cit., p. 171. 21. Raftis Collection, No. 169. 22. idem.
- 22 *ibid.*, No. 168. 23. *ibid.*, No. 174. The letter was sent by J. Newport, Michael Dobbyn and John Harris, three Justices of the Peace, and was signed by Silvester Phelan, Mayor of Waterford. 24. *ibid.*, No. 171.
- 25 John O'Mahony, Ms. (NLI) - Some portion of proceedings in the Valley of the Suir, Autumn 1848.
- 26 Waterford Chronicle, 12th July 1848. 27 idem 28 idem 29 idem
- 30 Waterford Chronicle, 17th July 1848. 31 idem 32 idem.

NEWS OF THE SOCIETY

1. Waterford Archives Centre.

Some members may not be aware of the fact that reasonable facilities for local research now exist in the Waterford Municipal Library. An archival collection has been assembled over the past few years and is housed in the "Waterford" room.

Here may be found copies of all sorts of documents obtained from the National Library of Ireland, the Public Record Office, and other sources, private as well as public. The principal contents of the collection includes : -

1. Books (history, biography, travel, etc.) relating directly to Waterford.
2. Offprints of Waterford reference in books of wider scope.
3. Articles of Waterford interest appearing in magazines (from the Hayes Catalogue).
4. The Journal of the Waterford & South-East of Ireland Historical & Archaeological Society, 1894-1915.
5. Articles relating to Waterford taken from the Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland and the Cork Historical & Archaeological Society, the Transactions of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society, "The Irish Genealogist", "The Irish Sword", etc.
6. Abstracts from the Calendars of State Papers.
7. Medieval manuscripts (from the Lodge Collection).
8. A miscellaneous collection of letters, etc. from State archives dating from 1723 to 1848 (presented by the late Mr. Liam Raftis).
9. Parliamentary Papers.
10. Theses and Lecture Notes (including the late Fr. Benedict O'Sullivan's, presented by Fr. Hugh Jennings, O.P.) .
11. Transcripts and Notes on the Charters (presented by Prof. Seamus Pender).
12. The Civil Survey, 1654.
13. Census & Valuation returns (1901 Census and Griffith Valuation in full).
14. Directories and Guides.
15. The Waterford Shipping Register (1843 onward) and other shipping records.
16. Newspapers, including the "Waterford Mirror" from 1804 to 1842 and some 18th century newspapers.
17. Maps, from 1591 to 1871.
18. Photographs from the Lawrence collection .

A Zeiss microfilm reader has recently been installed and a start has been made in the assembly of a microfilm library with the purchase of the Council Minutes from 1727 to 1838 on 35 mm. film.

It is to be hoped that this facility of reference will encourage the more diffident (or the less energetic) members of our Society, and other individuals, to undertake a study of some aspect of local history, with a view to giving a lecture or contributing an article to "Decies".

Perhaps, too, readers would feel disposed to donate to the Collection any documents in their possession that would be of local interest. These could take the form of letters, pamphlets, journals, newspapers, photographs, etc. - in fact, any paper matter that is old and that has some connection with the city. Anyone so disposed should contact Mr. J.S. Carroll, c/o the Municipal Library, Waterford.

2. Arland Ussher.

Many people in Ireland will have noted the death in December 1980 of the writer Percival Arland Ussher. We in Waterford should be particularly grateful for the literary legacy he left behind him. For in the 1940's he published two books relating to the Irish spoken in the locality of the Ussher estate at Cappagh, midway between Dungarvan and Cappoquin.

These two books were entitled : Caint an tSean Shaoghail (1942), and Cursai an tSean Shaoghail (1948). Both works were compiled by Ussher (who had taught himself Irish) from the conversations of Tomas Ui Mhuirthe, a ploughman whom he followed up and down the fields with his notebook.

The first book is a series of 555 pieces of short conversations between Ui Mhuirthe and others. These give a good insight into the rural life and attitudes of the period, covering such topics as the sowing and harvesting of crops, visits to fairs, and comments on the weather and everyday events. The second book takes the twelve months of the year and for each gives the associated traditions and the agricultural tasks performed as related by Ui Mhuirthe.

Both works are valuable social documents for the period and are deserving of greater notice.

3. Archaeological Excavation.

Members of the Society and the general public will have been pleased with the news that Waterford Corporation has given permission for a trial excavation to take place on the medieval site adjoining the former Bishop's Palace on the Mall. The excavation will hopefully be supervised by Dr. T.B. Barry, of the Department of Medieval History, T.C.D.

Dr. Barry hopes to unearth the foundation of the original city wall which Giraldus Cambriensis mentions as having been there in 1170 (Bulletin of the Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement 5 (1978) p.16). Given that Waterford was one of the earliest locations in Ireland where town life and trade emerged, there is hardly need to stress the potential this excavation may hold.

Difficulties have arisen, however, in that Waterford Corporation had filled in the site intended for excavation with rubble and earth. It is to be hoped that either the necessary funds will be forthcoming for the removal of the layer of earth thus giving greater access to the site, or that the offer of an alternative site may be taken up.

4. Eigse Sliabh Rua .

Eigse Sliabh Rua was formed in 1978 by people who are interested in the promotion of the general culture of the South Kilkenny area. The purpose of Eigse, usually held in November each year, is to provide a weekend of lectures, concerts and informal discussions on the history and customs of the area.

Eigse Sliabh Rua, 1981, will be held on the 6th, 7th and 8th of November next. A very attractive programme is being prepared. It will include a talk by Mr. Hughes from Carlow on the abbeys of South Kilkenny with a particular emphasis on Duiske Abbey in Graiguenamanagh. There will be an afternoon trip to the Abbey. Mr. Des Cowman will speak on "Slieverua and the civil parish of Rathpatrick in the 19th Century". There will also be a lecture on the battle at Carraig Seac. An interesting feature of the weekend will be when Donncha O'Dulaing presides at an interview session during which he will talk to notable people who have associations with the area and a knowledge of its history, traditions, and customs. Musically the main attraction of the Eigse will be the concert by Stocktons Wing. A detailed programme of events will be available soon.

5. Membership.

Membership of the Old Waterford Society now stands at 300, which is probably a three fold increase on the membership as it stood about six years ago. Yet, welcome though this increase is, it is still remarkably low for a city the size of Waterford. If each member brought along a friend whom they thought might be interested in the Society's activities, then the membership level might be significantly improved upon.

We would like to welcome the following to the Society, who are recorded as having joined since January, 1981 :

Miss J. Barton ,	Mr. & Mrs. T. Brown,
Mr. N. Byrne ,	Mr. & Mrs. T. Chapman,
Archdeacon R. Coady,	Mr. & Mrs. A. Duncan ,
Miss E. Evans ,	Mr. R. Falconer,
Mr. N. Fewer ,	Mr. M. Fitzgerald,
Mrs. E. Fitzpatrick,	Mr. P. Flood,
Mr. P. Foley ,	Fordham University,
Miss P. Grant,	Mr. J. Keane,
Mrs. M. Kervick,	Mr., Mrs. W. Laracy,
Miss M.C. Lyons,	Dr. H.F. Morris,
Mr. D. McGrath,	Dr. M.A. Murphy,
Mr. D. O'Caomh,	Mr., Mrs. J. O'Leary,
Mr. P. O'Keefe,	Mr. J. O'Neill,
Miss A. O'Loughlin,	Mr. A. Powers,
Mr. B. O'Shea,	Mr. W. Terry,
Mr., Mrs. J. Shortall,	
Mrs. F. Timoney,	Mrs. S. Upton.

Membership of the Society is open to all those with a genuine interest in the area and activities. The subscription for a calendar year is a moderate £3, entitling members to attend all lectures and functions, and to receipt of the Society's journal DECIES three times per year post free.

6. Old Waterford Society Survey.

As already notified in Decies this is intended as a listing of the present state of all sites of historical interest in south Kilkenny, south Tipperary and Waterford county. It is anticipated that publication of lists, comments, distribution maps and illustrations will be in three parts. The first part will deal with the southernmost civil parishes in County Kilkenny and the two eastern baronies in County Waterford (east of a line roughly from Kilmeaden to Annestown). This is provisionally scheduled to form all of Decies XXII (Jan. 1983). The following members have either completed or are still working on one or more civil parishes in this area : -

South Kilkenny: Dunkitt: - Jim O'Meara; Kilmacow - Ian Lumley; Portnascully - Maurice Wigham; Rathkieran - John Brennan ; Rathpatrick - Brian O'Donoghue.

Gaultire: Ballinakill, Kill St. Lawrence & Killure - Wendy Collier, Helena Kingston, Angela McDonald & Jacque Sheridan (of Newtown School); Crook, Kilcop, Kilmacombe & Rossduff - J.S. Carroll ; Corbally & Brownstown - B. Madden (Mrs.); Faithlegg & Kill St. Nicholas - Francis O'Neill; Killea - Austin Duncan; Rathmoylan - Don Holman.

Middlethird: Butlerstown - Emma Verling; Duncannon - Andy Taylor; Islandikane & Reisk - Tom Nolan; Kilbride and Kilronan - Alice Doolan; Killotteran - Eddie Fanning.

To complete this part of the survey we now have documentation ready to give volunteers for the following civil parishes: -

South Kilkenny: Aglish; Kilmacow; Pollrone.

Gaultire: Ballygunner & Kilcaragh; Kilbarry; Kilmacleague and Monamintra.

Middlethird: Dunhill; Kilmeaden; Lisnakill; Newcastle.

No skill needed ! Maps, details of parishes and full instructions will be provided to volunteers. Winter is an ideal time to do the survey: if you are interested, contact Des Cowman (96157) or any Committee member. It would be appreciated if survey forms could be returned by Easter 1982 so that the work of collation may begin.

7. Waterford Labour History Group.

The Waterford Labour History Group was formed in February 1980, to complement the work of existing historical societies by promoting interest in local labour and social history, and to provide a forum for the study of labour and social history generally. Two meetings were held in 1980, and the Committee of the WLHG have planned four talks over the 1981/82 season. The first of these will be held on Thursday October 22. at 8.30pm. in Connolly Hall, Summerhill. The speaker will be Mr. Des Cowman. This year the Group has affiliated to the Irish Labour History Society and intends to convene a regional seminar on Waterford social history in conjunction with the ILHS, in December. Additional details of forthcoming events will be announced in the Press.

OLD WATERFORD SOCIETY

WINTER PROGRAMME, 1981-'82.

Lectures will be held in Teacher's Centre 31, The Mall, Waterford at 8 p.m. until December. Further notice in January issue.

- OCT. 23rd. "The Early Irish Churches".
Mr. Donnadh O'Curraín. U.C.C.
- NOV. 20th "First Century of Church of Ireland. 1560-1660".
Dr. Aidan Clarke, Trinity College.
- DEC. 4th "The Callan Workhouse".
Rev. Fr. Sean O'Doherty.
Kilkenny Archaeological Society.
- DEC. 13th Annual Luncheon of O. W. S.
(Separate notice will be sent to members).
- JAN. 1982 Decies XIX. Will be sent to Members.
- JAN. 22nd "Excavations of Dublin's Viking Age Houses".
Mr. Pk. Wallace, National Museum.
- FEB. 19th "Waterford Elections in first half of 19th Century".
Dr. Donal McCartney, U. C. D.
- MAR. 12th "Four Sieges of Waterford".
Mr. Jack O'Neill (member).
- MAR/APR. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
(Separate notice will be sent to members).
- APR. 16th "political Philosophy of Wolfe Tone".
Dr. Thomas Dunne, U.C.C.
- MAY Decies XX. Will be sent to Members.
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Those who have not yet paid their 1981 subscription may do so at any function of the Society. Intending members are welcome to these meetings. The sub. for 1981 remains £3.00. This may be sent to Hon. Treasurer of the Old Waterford Society:

Mrs. R. Lumley, 28, Daisy Terrace, Waterford.

Correspondence re DECIES should be sent to:

Mr. Noel Cassidy, Lisacul, Marian Park, Waterford.
Telephone No. 051/73130.