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LAND, POLITICS, AND SOCIETY  
IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY  
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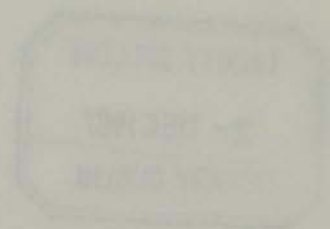
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LAND, POLITICS, AND SOCIETY IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY TIPPERARY.

T.P.Power.



LAND POLICE AND SOCIETY IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY IRELAND

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at any other university, and that it is entirely my own work.

*Thomas P. Power*

T.P.Power

29 June 1987.

## Summary

Chapter I examines the processes operating at the level of landownership, settlement, and economy in the seventeenth century. Using evidence from the Civil and Down surveys and the Books of Survey and Distribution it is shown that the changes in landownership were most radical in the northern part of the county ; that there was a high survival rate for the larger Old English proprietors, the lesser being displaced ; and that Ormond re-emerged as the main landowner. The pattern of landownership was largely unaffected by the Williamite land settlement. New English settlement was mainly a post-1650 development. Utilising the poll and hearth tax returns it is shown that the newcomers veered towards the existing towns or to the baronies of the north where strong protestant rural communities developed. No new urban focus evolved. Economic activity displayed a growing emphasis on pastoralism especially sheep reflected in the rise of textiles locally. The growth of trade in the Restoration period was seen in the expansion and settlement of towns.

Chapter II treats of the structural and personnel changes in the landed class emanating from the disposal of the Ormond, Everard, and Dunboyne estates in the early part of the century, and the Mathew and Meade in the latter part. The changing relationship between levels of income, expenditure, and debt created by the prosperity of the later part of the century allowed for a greater solvency among landed families. Prosperity served to widen the base of the landed class, a process which benefited catholics particularly. Treatment of catholics at the levels of owners in fee, converts, and head tenants concludes that they formed an influential section in landed society. The marriage patterns of the Prittie and Mathew families indicate pervasiveness and isolation in the landed class respectively. The integrated pattern of catholic marriages is highlighted.

The land tenure structures which emerged out of the 1690s are examined in Chapter



III. The granting of long leases at low or moderate rents created the context out of which entrenched interests emerged. The loss of control which this presaged was further consolidated by the 1778 relief act and the 1780 tenancy act, both of which re-inforced the position of the large tenant in the 1780s and after. The tenurial structure did not allow for the pursuit of improvement. Chapter IV treats of political development to 1790 in relation to the county constituency and the county's three boroughs. The emergence of new patrons in the boroughs is detailed as is the narrowing in the number of families competing for political precedence at county level. The pattern of electoral politics is outlined as is the local response to contemporary issues particularly constitutional agitation in the 1780s. The consequences of the shift by the Mathews to support of government and the return of Prittie and Toler in 1783 are emphasised.

Chapter V addresses the background, course, and aftermath of the sectarian conflict of the 1760s concluding that it derived from a unique set of circumstances in time and place. The excesses of the decade provided the context out of which concessions to catholics came from the 1770s onward. Chapter VI outlines the economic development of the county particularly the effects of the decline in textiles, the emergence of flour milling, and the small scale of urban-based industry. Rising prosperity was indicated by the growth of fairs, the emergence of banking facilities, the expansion of towns, and changes in the merchant community. These processes served to integrate the local economy more intimately into the larger market economy.

Chapter VII examines the rise of agrarian unrest after 1760. Unrest derived from the uneven effects of commercialisation as agriculture became more extensive and intensive. The class nature of conflict in traditional grazing areas and the basic economic issues in more southerly areas is outlined. The narrow range of participation by rural groups at times of economic growth and the broader base of agrarian movements at times of

depression is indicated. Chapter VIII looks in more detail at the unrest deriving from the tenant market for land at the level of the large tenant and that of the smallholder. The process whereby both categories attempted to dictate conditions of tenure is traced. It is concluded that the existence of a large and increasing section of marginal elements in rural society and of head tenants whose positions was being undermined, in association with the grievances of others like dairymen, gave unrest in the county a complex character in its persistence and pattern.

The reasons why no radical movement expressed itself in rebellion in the 1790s is explained in Chapter IX. The integration of catholics into county administrative structures precluded them from active involvement in radicalism. The activities of magistrates in disarming potential rebels was also influential, as was the role of the high sheriff in 1798 and the absence of serious rural unrest in the decade. Chapter X looks at the issue of the act of union locally, the politicisation of catholics, and the longer term consequences of eighteenth century developments in the county.



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## Chapter I

The economy and society of County Tipperary by the mid seventeenth century represented the accumulation of forces -- at the level of landownership, race, and culture -- of the previous four and a half centuries. The region later to comprise the modern county was subjugated by the Normans in the late twelfth century and its lands parcelled out to grantees, the largest grant consisting of the entire northern half going to the founder of the Butler family. This northern area, though partly subdued, was not as heavily settled as the centre and south of the county where new forms of village and town organisation began to develop. This basic division of settlement had long term consequences for the nature of landownership and racial structure. In the north a native Irish identity and lifestyle continued in an area only lightly settled by the newcomers. This factor accounts for the facility with which the Gaelic polity recovered its former position during the fourteenth century, leading to the removal of the chief Butler residence from Nenagh to Kilkenny c.1400. The Gaelic recovery failed to overrun the heavily settled areas of Norman influence in the centre and south. Along this contact zone stretching from the south west to the north east of the county a frontier, still evident in the seventeenth century, evolved.

Tipperary's fortunes were closely associated with its most prominent family the Butlers. Their predominance was expressed in extensive landownership and in control of county politics and administration. From the original grant in the north the Butler interest expanded and despite losses to the native Irish in the fourteenth century ( losses which were compensated by gains in the south ), by the early fifteenth century their lands encompassed the basin of the Rivers Suir, Nore, and Barrow. The Butler lands, particularly those of the earl of Ormond, were further enlarged in the sixteenth century through royal favour and the acquisition of the lands of dissolved religious houses.

The concomitant to extensive landowning was local political predominance and control. From the creation of the earldom of Ormond and the elevation of the county to the status of a palatinate liberty in 1328, the most influential person in the county was the earl of Ormond. The Palatinate jurisdiction conferred on him administrative and judicial powers of a virtual semi-regal nature. Though the continuance of the jurisdiction depended on royal favour while it operated it meant that the county could conduct its own affairs virtually immune from royal interference.

The Palatinate maintained law and order at a distance from Dublin in an area where strife between Ormond and Desmond and between rival branches of the Butlers, Cahir



and Dunboyne particularly, was a recurring feature. By the early seventeenth century, however, the central government had re-asserted its control over the whole country and the existence of the Palatinate came to be regarded as anomalous so that it was abolished in 1621, though it was revived again in 1662 in recognition of the services rendered by the first duke of Ormond to Charles II.

With the exception of the Gaelic recovery there was virtual continuity of landownership in the county exemplified by the fact that by 1641, in contrast to neighbouring counties, extensive confiscation or resettlement had not taken place, and it had survived the Tudor break-up of the lordships. At this juncture the transformation of landownership and society becomes associated with the effects of national political events and not with inherent local factors inducing change. In consequence the process whereby a class of protestant New English proprietors was introduced to the county, the accompanying alteration in settlement patterns in the structure of local society, and the changes in economic activity roughly contemporaneous with these two developments, dates largely to the post-1650 period.

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In 1641 about 60% of the land in the county was owned by catholics, a body comprising over 300 Old English and over 900 native Irish proprietors (1). The Old English landowning class was dominated by a group of nine main families, those of Butler, Cantwell, Everard, Fanning, Morris, Prendergast, Purcell, St. John, and Tobin. Of these the Butlers, with a total of 72 individual owners in 1641 including three noblemen Cahir, Dunboyne and Ikerrin, were the most influential family in the county as a whole. The Old English were concentrated in the east, south, and centre in the predominantly fertile areas characterised by singly owned property units, high land values, and an established tradition of urban settlement and commercial activity (2).

The large number of native Irish proprietors is accounted for by a high level of shared ownership (Table I). In areas where the native Irish lands were concentrated i.e. in the baronies of the west and south, joint or multiple ownership of property units was characteristic, particularly where one agnatic or lineage group prevailed. There were six main Gaelic landowning families, those of O'Dwyer, O'Kennedy, Magrath, O'Meagher, (Mul)Ryan, and O'Brien, and seven minor ones (Hogan, Gleeson, Keogh, Birhagra, O'Meara, O'Cleary, and Egan). With the exception of the lowlands of Upper Ormond much of the area held by the Old Irish was marginal being characterised by generally low land values, poor soil quality, and subsistence



agriculture (3). Protestant New English settlement in the county in the pre-1641 period was limited in numbers and in lands acquired. An estimated 21 New English are recorded as holding over 21,000 acres (including over 14,000 acres of church and crown lands), in 1641 (4). Some held in fee, but more characteristically others like the earl of Cork and Sir Philip Percival acquired their interest by purchase or mortgage, or through their dealings in the court of wards.(5). The majority of the New English were absentee their main concerns lying either in other counties or outside the country. Of the New English head tenants the most noteworthy was Gamaliel Warter, who was lessee to the earl of Thomond and to the church of a combined 2,780 acres including the townships of Emly and Cullen. The promotion of English protestant tenants was not confined to incoming New English landowners. For instance, it was said of Sir Richard Everard an Old English catholic landowner in the south of the county, that 'before the Rebellion [he] planted moste of his estate with English tenants', and the evidence suggests that they were 88 in number (6). However, the larger blocks of protestant land were located on the periphery of the Old English area : Warter at Cullen, Fenton in the former Desmond lands at Newcastle, and Alexander at Kilcooley, so that their intrusion did not radically alter the structure of landownership in the central county area.

Ormond's status requires elucidation. Though born a catholic he was raised in the anglican faith and subsequently became the protestant head of an Old English family whose leading personalities were mainly catholic. With his catholic relatives he shared a staunch support for the royalist cause, and with the New English a common religious sympathy. Both loyalties were to influence Ormond's dealings with the two groups in Tipperary in the Restoration period (7). Ironically it was the protestant Ormond branch which was responsible for introducing in the pre-1641 period, through family alliances, two families of catholic New English background one of which was to play an important role in county affairs subsequently. The first was Sir George Hamilton who held Nenagh and Roscrea on lease from his mother-in-law the countess of Ormond, and who was largely responsible for promoting New English settlement at Silvermines (8). In 1620 George Mathew, possibly a younger son of a long established gentry family of Glamorgan, Wales, married the first duke of Ormond's recently widowed mother and thereby became his step father. Mathew's advent was part of the movement from south Wales and the Severn basin to Munster, the settlement of which was primarily based on emigrants from this region (9). Mathew's arrival initiated a process which had far reaching consequences for the future nature of politics and society in the county (10). In



the more immediate context it serves to highlight the fact that in the pre-1641 period New English infiltration, however limited in scale, was not solely protestant.

While the county did not experience systematic plantation, informal intrusion by individuals was reflected in an active market in land. A high level of mortgaged and purchased property was in evidence in 1641 (Table XIX). The incidence of mortgaging is most evident in the south with Iffa and Offa, Middlethird, and Kilnamanagh accounting for a combined 68% of the total number of properties. In these baronies credit facilities were being provided by three groups: first, established families seeking outlets in mortgages for surplus wealth such as Keating, Prendergast, and O'Dwyer; second, protestant newcomers notably Sir Philip Perceval, William Kingsmill, Robert Cox, and the Archbishop of Cashel; and third, a miscellany of others including Clonmel and Thurles merchants and prosperous yeomen with surplus funds. Mortgaging was less a feature of the Gaelic areas encompassed in the northern baronies. Its relative absence from Upper Ormond, Lower Ormond, Ileaigh, Ikerrin, and Kilnalongurty suggests a stable landed structure. Where the outright purchase of land is concerned over 46% of the total occurred in the barony of Owey and Arra, with branches of the O'Briens, O'Hogans, and Ryans buying portions of land owned by relatives. They were supplemented by speculators from outside the area like Lewis Walsh of Thurles, Thomas Arthur of Limerick, and the earl of Cork. Informal New English intrusion was, therefore, most characteristic at the level of the mortgagor and purchaser.

The effect of the Cromwellian land settlement was to permanently alter the structure of landowning in the county. With over 77% of its area affected Tipperary had the highest percentage of land confiscated of any county in Ireland (11). This high amount is explained by the fact that a considerable proportion of the confiscated land was composed of Butler property which, because of the zeal of the earl of Ormond (who with his mother directly owned 85,000 statute acres in the county at this time) and his relatives for the royalist cause, became a particular object of attention to the Cromwellian regime.(12). The county was reserved for division between the adventurers and the army. The 204 adventurers, owed £60,000 out of the county, were to be compensated by grants of land in the baronies of Clanwilliam, Eliogarty, Iffa and Offa, Ikerrin, Ileaigh, and Middlethird, most of which comprised the Old English region. Of the 204 grants 48 were in excess of 1,000 acres each, mainly to individuals who were to maintain their interest and to corporations and philanthropists like Erasmus Smith. The majority of adventurer grants, however, were under 1,000 acres with 129 of them being below 500 acres to small investors, mainly London merchants and tradesmen,



who were subsequently to dispose of their claims (13). The other social group was the army whose officers and privates drew grants in the baronies of Upper Ormond, Lower Ormond, Owney and Arra, Kilnamanagh, Kilnalongurty and Slievardagh and Compsy which, with the exception of the last, were Old Irish areas. Since their grants were very often minute and uneconomic, many of the privates sold their lands to their officers thereby supplementing the lands in the hands of their superiors. For example, Lieutenant John Otway purchased debentures from soldiers for lands in Upper Ormond in the 1650's and 1660's, the purchase price being usually less than half the amount owed in pay or in debentures (14). In this way the officer class, without any property commitments to oblige them to return to England, became committed to their new grants. Thus large estates by officers like Abbott, Finch, Prittie, and Sadlier became a feature of landowning in the three baronies of the north west of the county.

The successful establishment of the new owners on their estates depended on the effective removal of the forfeiting proprietors to Connacht and Clare. Over 200 catholic landowners, Old English and Old Irish, from Tipperary were assigned holdings west of the Shannon mostly in Galway and Clare and also in Mayo and Roscommon (15). The outflow of people and stock from the county appears to have been significant. The available evidence indicates that 8,635 persons transplanted in the first six months of 1654 (16). This figure was nearly half the entire total recorded as removing from Munster and exceeds that for the entire province of Leinster (17). Further evidence of the scale of removal comes from Sir William Petty who was conducting his survey of the county at this time, and who reported in 1655 that 'the people of Tipperary having more universally obeyed the orders of transplantation than other countries generally had done, that countrey became soe uninhabited and wast that it would be impossible to find mearers to doe it [surveying] tolerably well' (18). Indeed it was claimed, certainly with exaggeration, that 'the transplantation hath been so effectually carried on in the barony of Kilnalongurty that no inhabitants of the Irish nacion that knows the country is left in that barony' (19). Exemption from removal was granted in a number of cases. Some of these dispensations resulted from accommodations reached during the last stages of the Cromwellian military campaign. Thus George Mathew at Cahir Castle and the inhabitants of Fethard were specifically exempted from removal due to their respective surrenders on advantageous terms to Cromwell in 1650 (20). Most dispensations, however, were the outcome of individual application as was the case with Lady Thurles, James Mandeville, Lord Ikerrin, and Elizabeth Purcell; while individual groups from the towns of Cashel and Clonmel managed to gain a temporary respite from



removal.(21).

A new situation presented itself with the restoration of Charles II in that those dispossessed by Cromwell and those who had followed the king into exile, hoped for a full recovery of their lands. The act of settlement (1662) tried to accommodate these hopes by providing for the restoration of 'innocents' and a large number of named catholics, the Cromwellians in possession first being compensated elsewhere. Decrees were subsequently issued by a court of claims but these proved unenforceable because the Cromwellians were reluctant to move and there simply was not enough land available to satisfy all needs. The act of explanation (1665) sought to rectify this deficiency by proposing that Cromwellians give up one third of their holdings and out of the resultant accumulation catholics were to be reprised. Attempts to reconcile the opposing claims continued throughout Charles II's reign, but the task was protracted while the actual process of redistribution was tedious and vexatious.

Some groups of New English in Tipperary refused to accept the fact of the Restoration either politically or practically. Alarmed at the large number of catholic officers returning to claim their former estates a number of Cromwellian officers including Thomas Stanley, Richard Le Hunt and Peyton Le Hunt with adventurers Charles Alcock and Bartholemew Foulke, met in Cashel in August 1660 to formulate a petition to be circulated in the county aimed at the 'preservation and advancement of the protestant English interest' (22). Attempts to obtain general consent to the petition foundered, however, when the large group of newcomers around Nenagh (more secure in number than their more isolated colleagues in the countryside around Cashel), declined to lend their support. On the contrary their spokesman, Simon Finch, declared his willingness to keep the county quiet (23). Elsewhere, however, grantees were outspoken in their reluctance to accept the restored royalist political order. Charles Minchin, for instance, was accused in 1663 of having declared that 'if there were but [three] in Ireland to oppose the King's restauracon he would be one of them', and in a practical expression of defiance to the new order the new landowners vowed to resist attempts by the former owners to re-establsih themselves on their estates (24). Thus Minchin declared that he 'would joine [i.e. resist] rather than one ffanning should have his estate (25). Not surprisingly in the two decades after 1660 there are a number of instances of former owners forcibly re-entering their lands and ejecting the newcomers, and also of the latter resisting (26).

The overall character and direction of the land settlement was influenced by Ormond. Enjoying enormous prestige after 1660 for having been instrumental in effecting the



king's recovery of power, Ormond was created a duke in 1661 and was lord lieutenant in the years 1662-9 and 1677-85. Because of his office, his personal outlook, and his family connections he was uniquely positioned to influence the formulation of legislation and the course of events.

In Tipperary Ormond's policy was to confirm the New English in possession and he was explicit in his instructions to his agent in the county on how members of this class claiming lands were to be facilitated. In 1667 he ordered him to 'give up (even whilst I might legally doe otherwise), whatever I was possessed of which was but sett out to adventurers or souldiers, though they had not cleered their title in the court of claymes' (27). After the New English Ormond in descending order of priority favoured the interests of his own family, his relatives, and where possible close connections among the leading Old English families. The Old Irish fared worst out of the restoration settlement and met with no favouritism from Ormond, at least where the ownership of land is concerned.

Ormond despatched two agents to the county to regain possession of his former lands and their successful progression in the Autumn of 1660 is recorded (28). As lord lieutenant Ormond was in a position to influence applications for restoration. It was on his certification of loyalty that the Butlers of Bansha, Kilcash, and Killoskehan for instance were ordered to be restored, and a list of over 200 persons from Tipperary was submitted to him in 1664 and on his recommendation they were to be restored (29). Ormond also used his position to protect the interests of close relatives, for example in 1661 he obtained a grant of the wardship of his nephew, Nicholas Purcell of Loughmoe, and thus ensured the continuity of the estate (30). In another case a relative of Ormond's, Sir Thomas Hume, got custody of over 1,200 acres the former estate of William Moore, a Cromwellian who had fled. (31). In these instances Ormond's position and influence were crucial.

Some individual New English, who may have suffered as a result of this influence, did not allow the matter to go unnoticed. Henry Feltham, for instance, in 1665 was charged with sedition for declaring that 'it was like to goe hard with the English enterest for that the Duke [of Ormond] did rather favo[u]r the Irish ent[e]rest then the English' (32). However such cases are exceptional and the New English in general seem to have been satisfied with Ormond's performance in relation to the land settlement. In 1671 twenty six of them meeting at Nenagh signed a petition thanking him for 'appearing for the English interest in Ireland in the time of their unexpected danger', a reference to Ormond's role in suppressing a commission of enquiry into the grants made by the court



of claims which would have questioned their titles (33). The final element in the land settlement was the commission of grace which in 1684 confirmed a number of defective titles. Its proceedings affected only a handful of individuals notably John Otway, who received confirmation of lands in Kilnamanagh, Upper Ormond, and Ileagh, and James Hackett and Brian Kearney both of Fethard who were confirmed in 350 acres and 300 acres respectively (34).

An examination of the books of Survey and Distribution shows how unevenly the Restoration land settlement affected the different classes in the county (35). As a class the Old English had mixed fortunes with those who were large proprietors in 1641 -- the Butlers of Cahir, Dunboyne, and Ikerrin with senior representatives of the Everard, Purcell, Mandeville, and Morris families -- retaining most or nearly all of their lands (36). It was the lesser families like Tobin, St. John, Mockler, Archer, Stapleton, and Burke who were displaced as proprietors. While large segments of land remained in Old English ownership, the Old Irish areas experienced a virtual transformation in proprietorship with the families of O'Dwyer, O'Meagher, O'Kennedy, and Ryan having their previous dispossession as landowners confirmed. In certain cases some of them continued as head tenants on their former holdings. For example, John Egan in 1669 received a lease from Ormond of 700 acres part of his former lands at Uskane (37).

In general it may be said that those New English grantees who had some or all of their lands confirmed after the restoration, established themselves in areas where the Old Irish and lesser Old English had formerly been proprietors. New English of the officer class seem generally to have been resident, those of the adventurer class less so. A number of large estates belonging to absentees notably James, duke of York, Arthur, earl of Anglesey, and Erasmus Smith were created. In some cases absentee estates introduced to the county tenants or agents who, in the eighteenth century, were to become landowners in their own right. The best instance is Joseph Damer who purchased land from departing Cromwellians and who was also agent for Erasmus Smith.

The Restoration land settlement involved a reduction of about half in the proportion of land owned by Catholics. In addition, Ormond not merely recovered his large estate but also supplemented it. It was the Old Irish and lesser Old English families who were displaced and the larger of the Old English owners, particularly the Butlers, who maintained their interest. A large number of New English established themselves on their estates and in the towns where, though there was a period of transition, Protestant oligarchies began to emerge. In the north and west of the county where New English immigrants formed durable and cohesive rural communities there could be some sense of



security, but outside the towns in the centre, south, and east where a significant amount of land remained in Old English hands, the New English could only feel the restoration land settlement to be incomplete.

The accession of James II instilled in catholics hopes of recovering the political prominence they held previous to the 1641 rebellion. After 1685 there is evidence of catholics being installed into those local civil offices like lieutenancies of the county and as revenue officers, which were subject to royal appointment (38). In addition commissions in the army were granted to a number of prominent catholics in Tipperary, notably Nicholas Purcell who was also made a privy councillor and was a member of parliament for the county in the 1689 parliament (39). King James revoked the charters governing Cashel, Clonmel, and Fethard and issued new charters in 1687 and 1689. All those holding office in the newly constituted towns were obliged to take an oath declaring that James was the lawful king, a stipulation which gave catholics a majority position in the corporations (40). The influential office of high sheriff was not the subject of royal appointment as the duke of Ormond, as lord of the Palatinate, had its nomination. Ormond consistently chose from among the ranks of the New English class for this office and continued to do so during the politically fluid decade of the 1680's (41). In relation to the office of justice of the peace, the evidence suggests that after the changes inaugurated by James II protestants were actively discouraged from participation in this office. Thus Sir Robert Cole, a large landowner in Upper Ormond, at the Clonmel assizes of 1685 was ordered 'to suspend acting or intermed[d]ling in the office of Justice of [the] Peace within the said county tyll further ord[e]rs' (42).

Such developments were paralleled by the desire of those catholics not restored after 1660 to obtain a reversal of the settlement in their favour. Ormond was identified as having been instrumental in frustrating such an eventuality, and with rising expectations among catholics in the 1680's he became the object of hostility to those who had suffered most as a consequence of the land settlement. In 1685 Ormond informed a correspondent that it was the current view that 'but for me [Ormond] they should long since have obtained an act of indemnity and restitution of all their estates' (43). Ormond was no less suspiciously regarded by protestants who generally viewed his catholic connections as too strong to make him trustworthy. In these circumstances Ormond's moderating policy, which he adopted in the 1660's and 1670's, operated to make his position untenable in the 1680's.

For protestants in Tipperary the accession of King James deepened existing widespread fears of a political turnabout. In 1673 and 1678 a clergyman in Tipperary



town recorded his fears of a massacre of protestants (44). The latter year, 1678, witnessed the 'Popish plot' when Richard Moore reportedly 'went about ye streetes of Clonmel w[i]th beads in his hands bidding the souldiers to fling away their swords [and] betake themselves to their beads for yt they must now all goe to masse' (45). Such statements are evidence of rising fears, heightened after James's accession, that a reversal of policy in relation to civil and military appointments, religion, and the land settlement was imminent.

Tension increased when a rumour spread in the north of the county in June 1685 that a repeat of the 1641 massacre of protestants was expected. The rumour made 80 protestants take refuge in the town of Borrisokane on 21 June 1685 the night on which the massacre was predicted to take place. It never materialised and those who gathered in the town were indicted for arming themselves and for unlawful assembly, but out of the 60 who attended for trial only 10 were found guilty and imprisoned (46). This incident, which caused a furore at the time because it was viewed as a threat to authority, is indicative of the insecurity felt by protestants. A government proclamation issued in July sought to diffuse the situation by referring to the 'strange and groundless jealousies' which had occasioned persons to combine for self-protection, it cautioned against such unlawful meetings, and required those involved to return to their habitations (47). Other meetings of the kind were held at Clonmel, Cappagh, and Killenaule in which about 50 of the New English landowners are reported to have participated (48). One of their stated aims was that 'noo Popish King should raigne', and of Stephen Moore it was said that he would not be satisfied 'untill he had the blood of Cap[tai]n George Mathews [and] the Duke of Ormond' (49). Moore and others were reported to be actively involved in purchasing arms and ammunition for an uprising in favour of the duke of Monmouth, having been ordered to do so by Lord Massereene who, however, categorically denied any involvement. As a result of all these proceedings about 100 persons described as 'of the richest men of the county' were returned on charges of treason, sedition, and unlawful assembly at the Autumn assizes of 1686, but were acquitted (50). These events in 1685-6 are important in the long term in that they contributed to the perceptions and fears of protestants locally, and doubtless were part of the folk memory which fuelled the animosities of the 1760's. In the short term the only option for protestants of substance was to leave Tipperary : at least 40 landowners from the county fled to England in 1688, while protestant tenants on Ormond's estate fled to the north and elsewhere (51). Such landowners were attainted in the Jacobite parliament of 1689 which also reversed the land settlement and declared



Ormond's palatinate abolished.

These and the other provisions of the parliament, along with the civil and military policies of the Jacobite regime, were effectively nullified by the success of the Williamite war campaign. Although the county was disrupted by the passage of armies, no major engagement of national significance took place in it and the towns of Carrick-on-Suir, Cashel, Clonmel, Fethard, Nenagh, and Thurles were secured to the Williamites (52). In none of these centres did Catholics resist vigorously enough to extract favourable conditions from the advancing Williamite army. However, the apparent completeness of this victory was qualified by the continued presence of organised bands of Tories and Rapparees whose origins and social composition are obscure (53).

The comprehensive nature of the Williamite victory was not reflected in any avowed policy of confiscation or in any radical alteration in the structure of landownership in the county. Ormond, as lord of the Palatinate and by virtue of its jurisdiction, was entitled to all lands forfeited for treason in the county (54). This right he asserted over the commissioners of forfeited estates who, it was reported, 'doe proceed in seizing of all forfeited goods and estates in the said county' (55). This action possibly accounts for the fact that officials of the Palatinate court were slow about making returns of outlawed Jacobites upon which proceedings for the confiscation of property depended, and those who remained unconvicted by 1699 escaped outlawry altogether. A number of Tipperary Jacobites were, however, outlawed in Dublin notably Sir John Everard, but such outlawries were few (56). Only four individuals with a total profitable acreage of 11,633 acres forfeited land and were not restored, the largest being Everard (6,500 acres) and in the event his forfeiture was not permanent (57).

Over 100 Catholic landowners submitted claims for a total of just under 7,000 acres and were restored under the articles of Limerick or the articles of Galway. They included important figures like Purcell of Loughmoe, Ryan of Inch, Butler of Kilveleagher, Morris of Knockagh and Lord Dunboyne, with a good sprinkling of Old Irish including representatives of the O'Kennedy, O'Hogan, O'Dwyer, and Egan families (58). In addition three other important families were restored by special royal grant: Sir John Morris, Sir Laurence Esmond, and Lord Cahir with their combined acreages totalling 13,367 acres. Lord Cahir was confirmed in over 10,000 acres and this branch of the Butlers were to<sup>BE</sup> the largest Catholic landowners in the succeeding century maintaining their estate intact without conforming (59). Ormond's Catholic relatives, Butler of Kilcash and Mathew of Thomastown though they did not come under the articles of



Limerick or Galway, retained their interests. With the exception of Everard, and his experience was temporary, catholics supporting the Jacobite cause in Tipperary did not fare adversely as a result of the Williamite land settlement.

Treatment of the Jacobite case was only one aspect of this settlement however. The other was consideration of the land grants made by King William, and the disposal of the forfeited estates. The king had in the 1690's made a number of grants of land in Ireland to individuals for services rendered during the reduction of the country and to court favourites. These grants included lands in Tipperary but their precise extent is uncertain (60). One special grant is noteworthy. It was made to Thomas Prendergast as a reward for revealing a plot to kill the king in 1696, and as a result he recovered lands lost by his ancestors at the Restoration (61). This particular grant was confirmed by the trustees for forfeited estates, but they revoked other grants made by the king and these, with the forfeited lands, were to be disposed of.

Under the act of resumption (1700) claims for interest in the forfeited estates had to be submitted to the trustees. A total of 116 claims are recorded as having been entered for forfeited lands in Tipperary and over half of these were allowed (62). The nature of these claims varied widely ranging from mortgages, jointures, and portions to tithes and chiefries, but most relate to interests in leases for 31 years granted in the 1670's and 1680's. The claims came from a mixed group. Some derived from older families seeking the repayment of mortgages or arrears. Lord Ikerrin, for instance, successfully submitted a demand for over £856 arrears of rent due by Thady Meagher a forfeiting Jacobite. Others were claims from Restoration grantees like Charles Alcock, who had his claim for a remainder of a lease for 31 years in Powerstown (74 acres) dismissed. A number of claims were pursued successfully by those who had acquired an interest in the county since mid-century by mortgage or lease: including, for example, John Perry, Matthew Jacob (who had a mortgage claim for £1,200 allowed), and Nicholas Toler (claim for £1,686 in debts and mortgages allowed). Two important leaseholders under Lord Cahir, James Nagle of Garnvella and Robert Keating of Knockagh, had claims for interest in their leases confirmed. Both families continued under Lord Cahir in the eighteenth century.

The remainder of the forfeited estates amounting to about 12,000 acres was put up for public auction (63). Sales began in October 1702 but purchases were slow due to a sluggish land market, most of the Tipperary lands not being disposed of until the period April-June 1703 when 23 individuals paid over £25,000 for purchases of land. What remained unsold was made over to the Governor and Company for Making Hollow



Sword Blades in England, a joint stock company directed mainly by London merchants. A schedule of the lands held by the company in Ireland in 1709 does not include Tipperary implying that it had disposed of its lands there by that date (64). Most of the forfeited property sold was purchased by local interests in the county mainly the New English. The largest single purchaser, however, was Sir Thomas Prendergast who paid about £6,300 for over 1,800 acres to much of which he was already a leaseholder. Indeed the incidence of existing tenants purchasing their interests is recorded in five cases.

The property changes resulting from the Williamite land settlement were not as catastrophic in their effects as had been the case in the 1660's. Rather those with an existing interest in the county had their position consolidated by benefiting in effect from the break up of King James' estate. There was no radical removal of existing proprietors, nor on the other hand was there any perceptible influx of new settlers. Catholic proprietors were not adversely affected by the settlement which, by its relative moderation, allowed a number of large owners, notably Lord Cahir, to continue into the next century.

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The property changes of the post-1650 period served to introduce a body of new immigrants to the county who supplemented existing settlements and in a few cases established new settlement foci. In the pre-1641 period New English infiltration was limited in terms of numbers and land. Most of the New English were absentees whose main interests lay outside Tipperary, so active promotion of colonisation was lacking. Their head tenants, however, could become involved in this process, the best instances being Gamaliel Warter and Sir George Hamilton who introduced new settlers at Knocknaderrig (Silvermines) near Nenagh and Cullen north west of Tipperary town, respectively.

Not a great deal is known concerning the Cullen settlement, but it is significant that early in 1642 there were over 200 English in its castle when it was besieged, a number which suggests considerable local presence of new immigrants (65). Despite the depredations wrought by the rebellion of the 1640's the English settlement at Cullen endured. In 1659 it is recorded as having 25 English including Warter (who was a large lessee of church lands in Clanwilliam before 1641), and three other titulados or main inhabitants, and the township had 21 households returned in 1665, 41 in 1667 (66).



Out of the 41 households 17 are identifiable as New English including Warter's whose household had a considerable 11 hearths. In 1690 'a great many' protestants were reportedly around Cullen, and in 1703 a map of the settlement shows it to have had about 40 habitations spread out along a cross roads with Warter's mansion house astride the junction (67). The motive behind the Cullen settlement is unclear : it may be connected with the landowner, the earl of Thomond, who is known to have been involved in colonisation schemes in Co. Clare at this time, or it may be linked with the status of Warter the head tenant. At any rate it is clear that a dependant English settler population was successfully introduced to this area before 1641 and that it continued into the eighteenth century as a durable community in this agriculturally well endowed region.

At Silvermines the motive is not in doubt as it was the desire to exploit the mineral and timber resources of the area which induced Sir George Hamilton , a catholic relative of Ormond's and head tenant to both Nenagh and Roscrea, to introduce English artisans in the 1630s. Attempts to establish an English colony in the Ormond cantreds had a long history. The initial consideration was political and military aimed at securing the River Shannon from Limerick to Athlone from incursions by the Irish from Connacht and thereby strengthening existing plantations in the midlands (68). In the 1630s state policy joined with private and commercial interests with the intention of promoting a more long term and complete settlement in Ormond. By this stage the motive of plantation had developed in such a way that the main Old Irish areas of the county were being described as 'not halfe well peopled nor husbanded, deserved to be better ordered and planted' (69). In the 1630s an elaborate scheme involving grants to English undertakers, the building of three new towns, grants of fairs and markets, the erection of churches and schools, and provision for the native proprietors was devised (70). By 1637 difficulties over the king's title and the gaining of the earl of Ormond's consent to the scheme remained, and with Wentworth's recall the plantation proposal lost its driving force at central government level (71). Meantime private interests had proceeded with limited plantation. Reportedly £4,000 was spent on opening mines at Silvermines and on bringing over a skilled labour force from England to work them (72). The main projector was Hamilton who later claimed that he incurred over £30,000 in labour costs and expenses, that he was able to provide £800 in annual revenue to the king, and that he supported over 500 Englishmen in the operation (73). It is evident from the depositions that a thriving colony existed in 1641 but a massacre during the rebellion obliterated or dispersed the settlement, and its works and stock valued at £10,000 were



lost (74). The workings were revived by Cols. Abbott and Prittie in the 1650s. By 1681 there was an impressive array of workings on the site including new ones begun in that year, and a new inn had recently been built at the settlement (75). Silvermines and Cullen represent exceptional concentrations of colonists before 1641, elsewhere the process was informal and dispersed. Clearly no large migration or formal plantation could proceed without the concurrence of the earl of Ormond, and such consent was not forthcoming. Ormond did consent to informal colonisation but then only when it was conducted by his relatives like Hamilton, or was located in relatively inhospitable areas like Silvermines.

It is apparent, therefore, that New English settlement though it had its antecedents is essentially a post-1650 phenomenon. The main body of new settlers arrived in the three decades after 1650 and, apart from the return of those who fled during the Williamite wars, no wave of fresh colonists came as a result of the Williamite land settlement. Estimates of their number are difficult to ascertain. All the indications are that new settlement in the early 1650s was light. For instance, of the total of 220 marriages recorded in the register for Cashel district (which covered the baronies of Middlethird, Clanwilliam, Kilnamanagh, and Ikerrin) between 1654 and 1657 only about 15 had New English surnames on the male side (76). Indeed the general absence of new settlers in the county at this time prompted a proposal for the transplanting of colonists from Ulster (77).

Table LXI presents a summary of the returns from the 1659 poll tax with the respective numbers of English and Irish titulados. It enumerates a total of 26,684 persons of whom 24,760 are Irish and 1,924 English. The latter group comprised 8.25% of the total or an approximate ratio of English to Irish of 1:14. The four southern baronies of Iffa and Offa, Clanwilliam, Middlethird, and Slievardagh (a barony allocated to the military) had a total return of 844 English, whereas in the remaining baronies of the centre and north the total was 1,080. This larger total shows that the greater impetus for settlement came from the Cromwellians of military background, with the highest proportion of English to be found in those baronies allocated to the military. Thus Owey and Arra (19.19%), Slievardagh (12.74%), and Lower Ormond (11.10%), for instance, exceeded the county average of 8.25% for English. In contrast those baronies assigned to the adventurers (Iffa and Offa, Middlethird, and Clanwilliam), had a lower proportion of English, their percentages being less than the county average. The basic division in settlement terms between 'military' and 'adventure' baronies is not on the



whole replicated in the distribution of titulados. The number of New English titulados is roughly equal in distribution between the two types of baronies being 79 and 84 respectively. Though the incidence of persons of status among the new settlers was evenly spread, it is significant that it was a 'military' barony, Lower Ormond, which had the greatest number of New English and also the highest total of New English titulados.

Evidence of the broad pattern of settlement from the 1659 return is further supported by the hearth money returns for the mid-1660s. Table LXII presents statistical data from the two returns for 1665 and 1666-7 (78). Both returns indicate that by the mid-1660s, using surname evidence as a basis of identification, there were over 1,000 New English households representing 12.50% of total households returned. This general level is confirmed by the militia return for the county in July 1667 which listed 805 men between 15 and 65 years (79). From the hearth tax returns the pattern of New English settlement is one of wide dispersal though there is a tendency for the newcomers to veer towards the existing nuclei, outside of which they were generally sparse or isolated in number. On a barony basis the largest influx of settlers was to those in the south and east (Iffa and Offa, Middlethird, Slievardagh), where the county average of 12.50% was exceeded. Outside this area, with the exception of Owney and Arra and Lower Ormond, all other baronies had less than this average.

The tendency of the newcomers to settle in the existing nuclei is noteworthy. This is especially noticeable in relation to the south where urban foci were more numerous than in the north. Clonmel, the largest town, experienced a considerable influx of newcomers. In 1661 a poll tax return for the town enumerates 870 individuals and of these about one quarter can be ascribed New English status (80). About half of the households in the 1665 return for the town were New English. The arrival of settlers in the adjoining towns of Carrick-on-Suir and Fethard was less pervasive due possibly to their poverty or, in the case of Fethard, to the survival of the town oligarchy. Significant protestant communities were established at Cashel, Tipperary, Nenagh, and Roscrea. Thurles, Cahir, and Clogheen also experienced some inward movement but this was on a less impressive scale than other centres. New English settlement in Tipperary had a sizable urban dimension but it was directed in the main at the older centres and is put in context by the fact that in the post-1650 period no new large centre evolved as a result of this influx.

Outside the towns concentrations of New English were few. In the centre and south of the county where they replaced the lesser Old English families as landowners, the newcomers display a tendency to settle on the older manorial and ecclesiastical centres.



The hearth money returns show that the new owners established themselves at older settlements like Ardmayle, Kilconnell, Knockelly, and Knockgraffon in Middlethird ; Gormanstown, and Poulakerry in Iffa and Offa ; and Goldenbridge and Abbeyathassel in Clanwilliam. There are hardly any examples in this half of the county of consciously developed rural settlements where the composition of the population was monolithically New English (81). All this would indicate that the arrival of the settlers into the Old English rural areas did not have a radical effect on existing settlement patterns.

The advent of the New English to the Gaelic areas of the north and west was more revolutionary in terms of its effects on the social composition of the population and on settlement patterns. From the hearth money returns the highest average of the New English in this region was in Owey and Arra, and it has been suggested that this large influx was transient being accounted for by the desire to exploit woodland resources (82). Much of Owey and Arra and parts of Upper Ormond were infertile and mountainous and therefore not suitable for permanent settlement so that many of the early colonists in these areas, having exploited the available resources, may have moved on into Lower Ormond where more cohesive protestant rural communities evolved. Families that were to maintain their interest were established here and included Sadlier, Harrison, Hutchinson, Camby, Otway, and Parker. They were all of the Cromwellian officer class and this social background was to contribute to giving Lower Ormond its distinctive character. The dependent tenantry or settler population arrived in this barony in sufficient numbers to provide the county's two instances of village promotion in the later seventeenth century at Cloughjordan and Borrisokane.

An old O'Carroll centre Cloughjordan in 1654 had only a ruined castle, two thatched houses, and four cottages. By the mid-1660s , after the area had been granted to Captain John Harrison, it contained 10 households with hearths half of them owned by New English. Harrison continued to advance the settlement (83). In 1682, when he applied to the duke of Ormond for a grant of a weekly market and two annual fairs for the township, he justified his petition by claiming that he had already 'with great expence and diffuclty [promoted a] plantation which hath drawn many inhabitants there' (84). The settlement at Borrisokane nearby was undertaken by Captain James Stopford. In 1685 80 protestants could take refuge in the town which gives some indication of its size and capacity. In 1691 it was reported that there was 'a pretty English plantation' here (85). Of the baronies in the north of the county Lower Ormond and parts of Upper Ormond were the most fertile and therefore the most conducive to permanent settlement.



The other baronies of Kilnamanagh, Ileagh, and Kilnalongurty were peripheral in terms of suitability for agricultural exploitation and presented a generally inhospitable environment for settlers. Not surprisingly these three baronies were very lightly settled with New English compared with Lower Ormond. As a result in the eighteenth century some of the <sup>175</sup>DESCENDANTS of the original grantees, notably Maude of Dundrum, are found consciously attempting to induce artificial settlement by introducing protestant tenants onto their estates (86).

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Consistent with a pattern of more extensive settlement was an increase in economic activity. An inland county, Tipperary formed part of the rich and extensive hinterland of the ports of south Munster. At the outset of the seventeenth century the economic character of the county was simple and underdeveloped : except in years of dearth an agricultural surplus of grain and livestock and their by-products was conveyed outward. The main export items for the southern ports of Cork, Limerick, Youghal, and Waterford in 1626 with an emphasis on hides, tallow, pipestaves, sheep, cattle, butter, grain, frieze, and wheat, illustrate the range of primary products produced in their respective hinterlands of which Tipperary formed a part (87). With more stable and settled conditions prevailing in the first forty years of the century , enhanced by external demand, there was a gradual quickening of economic life in the county based primarily on a more intense exploitation of its livestock surpluses. Producers in the area began to profit from the export of live cattle for which there was an increasing demand in England (88). The expansiveness of the trade is shown in the scheme for the plantation of the Ormond area in the 1630s, for in 1633 the suitability of the district for cattle raising was being officially recommended and its accessibility to Limerick and Waterford ports stressed (89). Also, evidence of losses in the early 1640s indicates how vital a role stock raising had assumed in the agricultural economy of the county (90). However, the ravages of wartime in the 1640s caused considerable disruption of economic life aggravated further by plague and famine in the early 1650s. Recovery subsequently however provided the basis for the high level of livestock exports in the early 1660s from which the recently arrived settlers profited much (91).

The effect of the Cattle Acts of 1663 and 1667 was to virtually eliminate live cattle and sheep exports for a century and to re-orientate the nature of the livestock trade. Since lean cattle could no longer be exported more of them were fattened and finished at home, then slaughtered and sent as salted beef to service the growing trans-Atlantic demand in



the West Indies by slave populations and ships' crews. The strength of contacts with this new market is exemplified by Sir William Stapleton, a native of Tipperary, who was governor of the Leeward Islands 1672-85 and whose brothers were at different times deputy governors of Montserrat (92). As with the live cattle trade the ports of Cork, Youghal, and Waterford were well located to benefit from this provisioning trade and they became the main victualling centres for the naval and mercantile fleets. Given its convenience and accessibility to these ports Tipperary continued its cattle production but, after the mid-1660s in response to market conditions, becoming more a fattening than a breeding county (93). So as livestock exports declined from the mid-1660s there was a concomitant rise in processed products principally beef, butter, hides, and tallow (94). Dairying was noted as a specialist activity in the Carrick-on-Suir area in the 1630s, but butter exports at this time were small Waterford and Limerick being the two main export centres in Munster (95). In the Restoration period production expanded in Munster with Youghal becoming the chief export outlet. As part of the hinterland of that port south Tipperary sent butter consignments. In 1688, for instance, one Clonmel merchant consigned 144 casks of butter valued at £200 (on which he realised a profit of £43), to Ostend and Rochelle via Youghal and Waterford (96).

The Cattle Acts and market trends in combination led to intensification of sheep husbandry. Before 1641 cattle and sheep were probably equally important in the county. However, sheep were increasing in importance. Even by 1635 most of the area between Carrick-on-Suir and Waterford was already devoted to sheep pastures and was said to have been 'converted' to that use (97). The number of sheep held by individuals could be considerable. In December 1641 Sir Philip Perceval's agent reported that at least 400 of his sheep had been taken by an O'Dwyer rebel, and his losses of stock due to rebels in Kilnamanagh and Clanwilliam baronies totalled £3,000 suggesting considerable flocks and herds (98). O'Dwyer was also claimed to have pillaged 2,000 sheep of the English breed worth £600 belonging to Archibald Hamilton, archbishop of Cashel (99). Further south on the lands of Sir Richard Everard the Irish rebels were reported to have taken possession of his 2,000 sheep in 1641 (100). Over 118,000 sheep were in the custody of the 8,635 persons who transplanted from the county in early 1654, representing a complement of 13.7 sheep per person (101). Ninety two per cent of the sheep transplanted out of Munster came from Tipperary, and the county had over eight times the number of sheep removed compared with the entire province of Leinster (102). After the Restoration sheep became a capital resource and valuable commodity much exploited by the new settlers. Evidence of this can be implied from offences involving



sheep stealing recorded at the Clonmel assizes in the period 1664-84 (103). In fact Tipperary emerged as one of the chief sheep rearing counties in the country in the later seventeenth century with 40,000 sheep being bred during one lambing season alone in 1694, for instance (104). Intensified sheep farming was accompanied by the rise of the large flock masters such as Richard Moore of Clonmel who in 1685, for instance, sold 128 bags of wool for £1,443 to William Vaughan a Clonmel wool merchant, and Joseph Damer of Tipperary who in the 1660s was said to be exporting the fleeces of 10,000 sheep through Waterford (105). These individuals epitomise the participation by the new settlers in the commercial exploitation of the county's chief export resource.

The picture of a pastoral economy is reinforced by the foundation of fairs. In the first half of the century there were 32 grants of new fairs (Appendix II). These show a concentration in the first two decades and in the 1630s. However, only 14 fairs are listed in the Civil Survey suggesting that in the intervening period the fairs had either failed to develop or had suffered dislocation, temporary or permanent, during the disruptions of the 1640s (106). The formal patents granted in the early seventeenth century may have been an attempt by the government to regularise existing clandestine fairs functioning without paying the required patent rent to the crown (107). In this way crown revenue would be supplemented and a semblance of economic integration provided in the country. The most likely locations to bring in the largest revenue were the established centres and this accounts for the granting of fresh patents to towns and manorial centres like Cashel, Clonmel, Fethard, Roscrea, Templemore, and Thurles. At another level patents were granted to less familiar centres such as Drohid and Kilshennan.

On the other hand it is apparent that illegal fairs continued to be founded. Merchants and dealers could meet at an agreed point to mutual advantage without the necessity of a formal patent; they might choose to do so in order to avoid paying tolls and customs at the regular fairs; or the local landowner might deem the expense of obtaining a patent (and subsequent rent payments thereon), excessive and opt to sponsor his own fair. Either of these factors may have influenced the foundation of clandestine fairs in the county. Evidence of their existence before 1650, however, is slight. Seven fairs are recorded as being in existence in the early 1650s which did not receive patents in the earlier part of the century (108).

In spatial terms there was a concentration of fairs in the southern half of the county. This would suggest that the movement of livestock outward from the county was through these points and that their location was influenced by their accessibility to Waterford, Youghal, and Cork in the south and Limerick to the west.



However indifferent the fortunes of fairs before 1650 the succeeding half century witnessed their greater use. Many of the older fairs were revived in the Restoration period, in the last half century 11 new patents were granted, and in 1685 33 fairs were being conducted at 19 locations (109). The cash and credit facilities generated by transactions at these fairs were of great benefit to the local economy. Indeed the desire of local patrons to benefit from the traffic passing through their areas often led to competition to establish fairs with the resultant disputes. This was the case in the south west of the county where much of the fatstock would have been purchased at local fairs by Limerick merchants (110). The foundation of fairs is an index of the increasing integration of the county into the larger economy.

Grain cultivation in the early seventeenth century was more important than has been traditionally assumed (111). Losses of corn are regularly mentioned in the 1641 depositions (112). By mid-century over 56% of the surveyed area of the county was represented as arable, 21% as pasture, and the remainder as mountain, bog, and wood (Tables XXIII, XXIV). The chief arable areas were in the baronies of Iffa and Offa, Middlethird, Clanwilliam, and Eliogarty where the county average was exceeded, and in Upper and Lower Ormond where one of the stated attractions of planting in the 1630s was that they were very rich in grain (113). On the whole these arable areas had the lowest proportion of unprofitable land and the highest land values (Table XXV). The areas in between the two main arable districts, i.e. Ileaigh, Slievardagh, Kilnamanagh, Ikerrin, Owey and Arra, and Kilnalongurty had proportions of arable less than the county average largely because of unfavourable conditions with one third of Ikerrin, for instance, being bog. This emphasis is reinforced by the pattern in the distribution of corn mills with the majority of mills in the southern area and extreme north, and the intervening region exhibiting a sparsity of them (Table XXVII).

Grain production was also important. In September 1649 the corn applotment made on the county for the supply of Ormond's army was 2,333 barrels, with most of the quota being promptly delivered suggesting that harvests were good (114). Many of the corn mills, however, suffered as a result of the wars of the 1640s while others declined because they were situated on or near frontier zones, that on the lands of Newcastle was in 1654 described as 'decayed by reason that the s[ai]d lands are put out of lyne [i.e. outside the effective policing area of the Commonwealth army], for being neere mountaines and woods where Tories usually frequent' (115). The difficulties for grain in the early 1650s are shown by the fact that the 8,653 persons who transplanted out of the county were in possession of only 3,812 acres (statute) of corn representing an average



of in excess of 2 acres per person (116). Table XXVII shows that of the 128 mills recorded in the early 1650s, about three quarters (92) were functioning with the remainder (36) being out of service. The distribution of mills out of repair indicates the areas where arable was giving way to pasture, particularly in Owey and Arra, Lower Ormond, and Clanwilliam. This process may have occasioned depopulation in certain centres (117).

The county is likely to have remained self sufficient in corn with some small surplus for export. The county was able to contribute wheat to the subsidy in kind in 1667, it was self sufficient in grain supplies in the war period of 1690-1 , and the poll tax returns of 1696 show high values for the baronies of the south where arable farming remained important (118) (Table XXXI). Certainly the southern part of the county was a corn region noted by outside observers in this regard, while the north was perceived as backward and underdeveloped (119).

The expansion in the area under pasture was made possible in part by the clearance of woodland, timber from which was much in demand for both domestic and commercial purposes. This clearance process also facilitated the extension of the settlement frontier already evident in the existence of enclosures and quicksets in newly won grazing areas where commercially exploitable woodland was absent (Table XXVI). Timber was a required material for the erection of new dwellings since the majority of dwellings in the seventeenth century were still wooden. There was already concern about the shortage of native timber needed for the construction of dwellings by the colonists (120).

Woodland was widely exploited in the seventeenth century for timber, staves, and as a fuel in the iron mining industry. Woods and forests situated convenient to navigable rivers supplied staves, while timber from other regions was generally used as a fuel in the metal mining industry (121). Tipperary possessed both remote and inaccessible areas and districts with access to two partly navigable rivers in the Suir and Shannon. It has been estimated that the acreage of woodland in the county c.1654 was 18,750 acres (statute), being the second largest area in the country after Co.Clare (122). Those surveying the county at this time were certainly aware of the possibilities its woodland resources presented. They were careful to distinguish the areas in which commercially exploitable timber existed, its extent, and its proximity to navigable rivers and ports. Timber woods adjacent to the Rivers Shannon and Suir were noted particularly because of their accessibility to the ports of Limerick and Waterford respectively (123). Thus the exploitation of such resources reflected the commercial hinterlands of these ports. Exploitation of the woodland also served a semi-political purpose in that since the woods



gave shelter to tories, their clearance would have benefits for the security of the settlers . It was for this reason that such instances were given attention by the surveyors of the early 1650s who, in the case of Clocully near Thurles, recorded that 'This place hath beene a receptakle of Torys and Robbers by reason of the woods and bogs encompassing it' (124).

The effect of the Cattle Acts was to enforce an intensification of sheep grazing (125). The growth in the volume of wool exported gave merchants a profitable and stable return as prices were firm (126). A number of merchants from the county applied for licences to export wool mostly through Waterford and Youghal in 1678-8 (127). Of these the most notable is William Vaughan who in 1678 purchased land near Clonmel from an adventurer, rented further tracts of land as sheepwalks, and stocked them with sheep. In addition to exporting wool on his own account, Vaughan performed a similar function for others. Based in Clonmel he purchased wool from the large flock masters, had it packed in Clonmel, and then had it conveyed either down-river to Waterford or overland to Youghal from which two centres it was sent to the ports of south west England as supplementary raw material for the cloth manufactory in that region. Vaughan's business in the wool export trade provided him with a substantial return (128).

The duke of Ormond was personally involved in the wool trade in this period also. As early as 1663 he received letters patent giving him authority to grant licences for the export of wool from Ireland (129). Difficulties experienced by Ormond in disposing of a large accumulation of wool received for rents on his estate, during the course of the Anglo-Dutch war of the early 1670s, illustrates the scale of production at one point in time. In the Autumn of 1673 8,000 stones of wool (worth £3,000 at the then current price of 7s. 6d. a stone), were brought into Carrick-on-Suir by his tenants as rent payments, but due to the wartime conditions Ormond experienced difficulty marketing the wool abroad (130). Details of these difficulties emerge in the exceptional conditions of war time. In normal times the flow of raw wool from Ormond's estate in Tipperary through Waterford ( which was largely a wool exporting port in the seventeenth century, beef and butter being subsidiary export items), to the English ports of Barnstaple, Exeter, Bideford, and Minehead, merited no attention. Nevertheless the experience of 1673 may have influenced Ormond's decision to promote a woollen manufactory in three of his main towns : Clonmel, Carrick-on-Suir, and Callan.

Already by mid-century the presence of 12 tucking or fulling mills for shrinking cloth attests that processes, however primitive, existed for the working up of raw wool (131). These catered mainly for local needs, but with the growth in sheep and in wool



production in the 1660s, there was an opening for a more export-oriented manufacture. With labour costs low and with wool cheap (in 1677 4s. per stone cheaper than in England) (132), entrepreneurs had a tempting outlet for investment. It was also encouraged by the relatively heavy charges on the export of wool (133). In late 1674 Edward Nelthorpe, a London merchant, proposed to Ormond the setting up of a serge and cloth manufactory at Clonmel. A capital stock of over £20,000 was to be made available, families skilled in cloth-making were to come over from England, £500 was to be laid out on tools, and those involved were to make their own ships available to transport the finished goods overseas. For this large scale project Clonmel was considered amply convenient and accessible as opposed to other centres in Ireland to which the manufacturers had been invited to set up (134). About 500 families of French and Walloon extraction at Canterbury were involved in the scheme (135). Despite some initial problems over accommodation the venture was successfully launched in late 1674 / early 1675 with the manufactory being established in the fort at Clonmel (136). Mortgaging of the concern for £200 in March 1676 reveals how considerable the operation was. A schedule shows that it then had in stock 1,000 stones of wool, 5,400 pounds of other wool, 550 pieces of serge, 8,000 pounds of yarn, 48 kerseys 22 broad cloths, 10,000 pounds of dyeing stuffs, and 100 weavers' looms (137). In the 1670s also, Ormond established Dutch woollen manufacturers at Carrick-on-Suir and the industry in the town was to be one of the largest in Ireland in the eighteenth century (138). In addition Ormond's patronage (through his brother and agent George Mathew), was instrumental in having French craftsmen settle at Carrick in the early 1670s to engage in the linen industry (139).

Prospects for the industry seemed good. In 1699, however, an act (10&11 William III c.10) passed by the English parliament prohibited the export of Irish woollens in order to safeguard the English woollen industry which was then experiencing competition from Irish goods particularly new draperies (140). Despite the importance ascribed to the act in subsequent historiography its effects have been overstated (141). The goods largely affected by the act - old and new draperies - had only assumed importance in the previous thirty years, their manufacture was confined to towns like Clonmel and Carrick, and the industry was far from being highly developed when the act passed. Though some emigration of those employed in the industry resulted, the volume was not large. For instance, an account for Clonmel in 1703 shows that emigrant surnames like Bird and St.Clair ('a Frenchman'), were still present (142). In fact the industry successfully adapted to the new situation by concentrating on production for the home



market to fill the demand in the eighteenth century for coarse and fine woollen cloth. Additionally wool combing and spinning developed in the Suir valley as a significant source of employment in producing yarn for the English market.

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Developing trade and the influx of new settlers influenced the disposition of the county's towns. In origin these were essentially medieval being founded in the century of expansion following the Anglo-Norman conquest (143). All the major centres owed their existence either to their favourable location on navigable rivers or to patronage by the Butlers, especially the earl of Ormond. In the case of Carrick, Clonmel, Cahir, and Thurles both factors were influential. Of the other centres Fethard, though founded as an ecclesiastical borough, came to be under the influence of the Everard family, while Cashel was patronised by successive archbishops. In terms of a hierarchy it has been demonstrated that where size is concerned Carrick (36 statute acres) was the largest, followed by Cashel (28 acres), Clonmel (26 acres), Fethard (13.5 acres), and Thurles (13 acres), with the extent of Tipperary and Nenagh undetermined (144).

At the outset of the seventeenth century economic activity in these towns was either on the decline or indifferent. In 1560 and 1607 legislation was enacted in the Palatinate in an attempt to revive Nenagh, Roscrea, Thurles, and Tipperary, which had fallen into disuse, by the attraction of new settlers (145). In 1613 Carrick was so impoverished that Ormond's agent there received a royal licence allowing him to collect contributions for two years from other towns in Ireland for the relief of the town (146). Yet despite its advantageous location by 1635 Carrick was still poor and stagnant, many of its houses were ruined and there was said to be 'no trade at all' (147). Fethard nearby seems never to have regained the prosperity it enjoyed in the hey-day of the Anglo-Norman colony. Even the granting of a charter of incorporation in 1608 seems never to have been instrumental in aiding a revival in its fortunes. In 1659 its charter and corporation were suspended by the Commonwealth because of 'ye poverty and inability of ye town and inhabitants of ffethard, and that most of them are Popish recusants whereby ye ends of ye government thereof as a Corporacon cannot in any due measure be at present provided for and answered' (148).

Table LXIV presents data on the households in each town based on the hearth money returns for the mid-1660s. In terms of size, population, and therefore diversity of economic function a wide gap existed between the four towns with the largest number of households (Clonmel, Cashel, Thurles, Carrick), and the other centres. Only the former towns had expanded beyond their town walls and acquired large suburbs. The largest



town, Clonmel, still had its town wall intact in the early 1650s and its part in delaying Cromwell's advance in 1650 is famous. Though 870 inhabitants are enumerated for the town in 1661 in the early 1650s its three suburbs alone contained nearly 150 cabins and houses (149). Clonmel's suburbs alone had more than twice the number of habitations as Nenagh which had a strong castle and 60 thatched houses and cottages (150).

The 1661 return furnishes a useful indicator of economic structure and activity within one particular town at the outset of a period of prosperity. The profile of occupations in the town (Table XLIV), shows a large emphasis on the labourer (108) and servant (164) class which together constituted over 57% of all stated occupations, family relatives and unstated or unknown occupations excluded. If the two last categories (330 and 50 respectively), are taken into account this indicates a large dependent population in the town in 1661. The main pursuits in the town were textiles, leather, alcohol, and building trades, with some evidence of the service and semi-agricultural sectors.

Clonmel's primacy was indicated in the extent of its trade and in its merchant community. Its trading links were influenced by its position in the hinterlands of Waterford and Youghal from which two ports it was roughly equi-distant. Trade down-river to Waterford was regulated by a licencing system for boatmen conveying goods to and from the port (151). Trade overland to Youghal was conducted from 1619 onwards under a reciprocal commercial treaty which gave Clonmel merchants freedom from customs, preferences in bargains, and advantageous terms in gaining access to shipping accommodation, for which privileges Clonmel paid Youghal £75 yearly (152). The strength of contacts between the Clonmel region and these two ports is shown by individuals from Clonmel entering into apprenticeship in both ports (153).

Clonmel merchants exported a range of primary materials especially hides, tallow, and woollen goods and imported luxuries like wine and salt. The extent of their external trading links is not easy to determine. They are recorded among those who exported woollen goods to Bristol in 1613, and they are known to have had contacts in Spain following the routes of Waterford merchants (154).

The Restoration period of prosperity witnessed a revival in the fortunes of the towns. This can be seen in three facets. Firstly, the expansion in trade after the Restoration provided the context for town growth. It was the better situated centres which grew at the expense of the less favourably located. There may have been an increased concentration on Clonmel and, to a lesser extent, Carrick. Both centres are included among the seven market towns of Munster in 1691, and since the others were all ports this made them the most important inland towns in the province at that date (155). The



pattern in the movement of exportable products outward from the county was in a southerly direction through these two transit points to the southern ports. The attraction of advanced textile industries to these centres in the 1670s further enhanced their importance. But industry also came to other centres like Cashel in 1675 (156). The upsurge in trade was also reflected in the formation of guilds in the towns as craftsmen and traders became more organised. At Cashel in 1673 the blacksmiths, carpenters, ironmongers, goldsmiths, masons, watchmakers, slaters, pewterers, braziers, glaziers, cutlers, and hammermen were grouped into one company, and in 1698 the merchant tailors and victuallers were incorporated (157). Similarly at Clonmel the traders and craftsmen were organised into three guilds in 1681: brewers, cordwainers, and merchants (158). The growth of trade, therefore, meant centralisation and increased organisation among the merchant community.

Secondly, towns experienced a significant influx of new immigrants. These new arrivals in the long term contributed to bringing about changes in the structure of local towns. Numerically, however, the effect of the immigration movement should not be overstressed. Its dimensions are suggested by the fact that this movement did not lead to the development of a major new urban focus. Their advent simply served to supplement existing urban concentrations notably at Clonmel and Carrick where the distinction between town and country grew sharper henceforth (159). Yet, at another level, their numbers were sufficient to occasion political, social, and cultural change which was to be of long term effect. New protestant oligarchies emerged in the towns though these were not at all times exclusive as in Clonmel where catholic merchants appear as freemen, and conversely in the re-organisation of the boroughs under James II protestants were included in the newly constituted corporations (160). Nevertheless a new ethos was emerging in the towns which was to become more sharply defined as time went on. There was a conscious policy of encouraging English manners and practices, as in 1673 when a newly organised guild in Cashel was required 'from time to time [to] goe in the English attire' (161). The colonial ethos of the protestant town oligarchies is epitomised by the marking of the anniversary of the 1641 rebellion, and their political preference exemplified in the celebration of the defeat of Monmouth in 1685 (162).

Thirdly, some towns experienced actual physical growth after 1660. The patronage of the duke of Ormond was an important factor in this process, particularly in relation to Clonmel. His policy was outlined as being to beautify 'this borough with such public and most useful structures as are not to be paralleled through this whole kingdom, and



by a lasting fixation of several fairs within our walls and of the regality courts at our very doors' (163). After the revival of the Palatinate in 1662 Clonmel once again, after a lapse of forty years, became the centre of its officialdom and courts, a new court house being constructed c.1675 (164). Further building activity is indicated by the erection of a new prison in 1677, by plans for the establishment of a free school in 1681, and by proposals in 1679 for 'erecting good houses without Kilsheelan Gate [on the east of the town], where the situation is pleasant, the water near, and one good slate house already built and converted into an inn' (165). In the 1670s the corporation undertook the paving and repair of the streets and the demolition of fortifications as a hindrance to the passage of carriages, in 1681 the water supply was improved, and in 1699 ground was allotted for the building of a barrack (166).

One of the primary institutions which made Clonmel the main judicial and administrative centre was the Palatinate. From 1662, when it was regranted to Ormond, to 1715 when it was abolished local administration in Tipperary was conducted through this jurisdiction. Its importance and status derived partly from its longstanding association with the Ormond Butlers, and partly from the nature and range of its functions. Originally granted to Ormond in 1328 the liberty was made hereditary in 1372, and was the only medieval franchise to survive the centralising legislation of Henry VIII with its privileges undiminished (167). The grant was revoked in 1621, but was regranted in 1662 with an expanded area of jurisdiction (168). It was finally suppressed in 1715 following the attainder of the second duke of Ormond for involvement in the Stuart rebellion. The revival of the institution in 1662 was in administrative terms an incongruity, but in political terms it was a recognition of the part played by Ormond in the restoration of Charles II. By the time it was extinguished in 1715 (under 2 Geo. I c.8) when Ormond was out of political favour the process had come full circle with the family tacitly acquiescing in its removal because of the financial burden maintenance of the institution entailed at that stage.

Nevertheless for over fifty years from 1662 the administration of justice in the county was the responsibility of a department of Ormond's household. A system of courts was reconstructed by virtue of the letters patent of 1662 (1669). All sheriffs appointed in the period 1663-1715 were Ormond's appointees and held office under his liberty, as did the judges in the courts and other minor officials (170). The courts dealt with civil and criminal cases, with the exception of the four pleas (rape, treasure trove, burning houses, forestalling), which were reserved to the crown. The liberty claimed superior jurisdiction over specifically local courts, reflected in the dispute in the 1660s over



whether the liberty's court leet could be held within the precincts of Clonmel corporation's jurisdiction thereby compromising its charter (171). Ormond, as lord of the liberty, claimed precedence in the granting of patents to corporations confirming their franchises, and in the creation of manors within the county witnessed by a dispute on these matters in 1684 (172).

The work of the courts was varied. On the criminal side between 1662 and 1690, for instance, the number of pleadings heard in the chancery court exceeded 800 (173). On the civil side the fee farm grants, granted on the Ormond estate from the late 1690s, were recorded in the chancery, 60 such grants being enrolled for 1703-14 (174). The courts also had a function in the enrollment of fines and recoveries relating to land, and of grants made under the act of settlement (175). It also sanctioned grants of fairs and markets, and created new manors such as at Dundrum for Sir Robert Maude in 1711 (176). The existence of the Palatinate was of material importance in the adjudication of cases of forfeiture for treason in the 1690s (177). This range of civil and criminal functions indicates that the Palatinate exercised in Tipperary the role which the central courts and departments of state fulfilled at national level.

Given its concentrated level of litigation and business, the Palatinate had a sizable revenue. From a schedule of the cost of fines levied in the Palatinate between 1664 and 1715, the revenue accruing from this source was £1,208 and from recoveries in the period 1666-1715 £1,009, in all £2,217 (178). However, expenditure matched or exceeded revenue. Despite the revenue which these figures attest, it is clear that from an early stage the Palatinate proved to be an unprofitable institution to maintain. In 1672 the duchess of Ormond remarked that it now 'occasions a great charge unto my lord far above the profits of it', and by 1675 it was reported that the courts were in 'great arrears...and other arrears like further to incurr and every day become more and more desperate' (179). Just how critical this was is shown by the fact that out of revenue of £8,000 from the courts up to October 1671, only about £300 had come into the duke's hands by June 1673 (180). In addition, Ormond incurred further expenditure out of his own revenue to the amount of £2,240 which went towards repairing premises for the judges and covering their expences and allowances, which all told left him at a net loss of over £1,940 (181). An attempt was made in 1675 to rectify this situation by means of farming out the collection of fines, and this was successful in the short term for in 1689 the profits of the courts were said to be 'very considerable' (182). But the war which ensued eliminated this advantage, and it is apparent that by the late 1690s the duke's finances from the liberty were again in a critical state (183). Negligence on the part of



some officials appears to have contributed to this situation (184). Despite some success in reducing debt on the Ormond estate as a whole after 1700, the unprofitability of the Palatinate in the interval up to its abolition in 1715, remained. By that stage the institution was an administrative and economic burden on Ormond. Archbishop King remarked in 1715 that 'the Duke himself was weary of it, it being a considerable charge and a mere feather of no value in itself' (185). Ormond's attainder in 1715 thus served to remove this costly and archaic survival, and in consequence the county was integrated into the regular framework of the Irish judicial and administrative system.

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At the outset of the seventeenth century Tipperary in its character was still essentially medieval, and in its economic activity underdeveloped. By the start of the eighteenth century much change had occurred. The transition was not in the main a continuous process, for change accelerated only after 1641 in response to national political events the consequences of which were a radically altered pattern of landownership in some parts and the introduction of new racial, religious, and cultural elements into the county particularly to the existing towns. These developments were paralleled by economic change centring on more intensive sheep farming and cattle fattening which brought increased prosperity for some, displacement for others, and which served to bring the county into the mainstream of the market economy.



## Chapter II

The landed society of the county was composed of families who derived their standing and income from landed estates. Estate and income are the basic determinants by which one distinguishes the different groups composing landed society. For the eighteenth century in contrast to the seventeenth, for which the Civil and Down surveys and the books of Survey and Distribution allow one to determine the ownership and extent of land, composite and detailed surveys are absent. The precise pattern of landownership in the county can not, therefore, be readily deduced. However, utilising the criterion of income as a substitute it is possible to imply emphases and gradations within the landed class.

Table V, compiled from a list of the main political interests in 1775, categorises the incomes of 130 named individuals in Tipperary with similar information for Kilkenny and Waterford used for comparative purposes. The list has its deficiencies (1), but these aside it is apparent that landed society on an income basis was narrow at the top and broadened out as one descended in the level of incomes. Only two persons, the earl of Clanwilliam (£14,000) and Lord Cahir (£10,000), had incomes of £10,000 or over and both were absentees. Beneath them in the hierarchy was a group of 25 persons whose incomes ranged from £2,000 to £10,000, the majority of them in the £2,000 to £3,000 income category. They included Donough O'Brien (£8,000), Henry Grady (£7,000), Cornelius O'Callaghan, Henry Prittie and Matthew Jacob (£6,000 each), the earl of Roden, Sir William Barker and the archbishop of Cashel (£5,000 each), James Butler and John Bagwell had £4,000 each, John Lloyd (£3,500) and Craven Carden (£3,000); and the representatives of 12 families, Pennefather, Otway, Bunbury, Bayly, Sadlier, Head, Hamilton-Lowe, Moore (Barne), Taylor, O'Meara, Butler (Wilford) and Green had £2,000 each. This group as a whole comprised the leading landowners of the county. Beneath them were those on smaller incomes of under £2,000, in all 104 persons who comprised the lesser landowners and smaller gentry. At the base of landed society were the freeholders who in 1776 numbered less than 1,000 individuals (2).

From this categorisation based on incomes one can postulate a four tier structure for the landed class of the county. At the apex was a confined group of very large landowners, usually titled; below them a more numerous group of large landowners; beneath them a larger body of lesser landowners; and finally at the bottom a wide base of freeholders. If the latter are excluded from consideration the 1775 list indicates that



over 160 individuals of consequence composed the landed class. The number of landed families was on the increase during the course of the century. Indicative of this is the fact that the number of persons on the commission of the peace for the county increased over the century as follows : 1715 - 80, 1727 - 108, 1760 - 99, 1795 - 142 (3). In 1799 the number of persons who took out licences for killing game was 185 (4). There is difficulty in trying to interpret these figures. However, the contention can be advanced that in the early part of the century the landed class consisted of about 100 families, that this increased to 150 by the 1770s, and by the end of the century it stood at about the 200 mark. On this basis there was a doubling in the size of the landed class in the course of the century.

This presentation serves to show that the landed class was not a static one where number and personnel are concerned. There has been, on the one hand an over-emphasis on the notion of an uninterrupted stability in the protestant landowning class in the eighteenth century, and of a massive depletion in the catholic landed interest on the other (5). Such views fail to take account of the changes in ownership which took place and who benefited from them, and also fail to appreciate the nature and resilience of the catholic propertied interest. In Tipperary there were some significant changes in the structure and personnel of the landed class in the century in two directions : a levelling at the top and a rise from the base which operated to change the essentially semi-feudal character of society still evident in the seventeenth century. This chapter analyses this dimension of change concentrating on the most important property changes, treating of the problems of catholic proprietorship, and finally some attention is accorded to marriage patterns in the landed class.

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A dramatic transfer of property through confiscation, the consequence of radical political change, took place in the seventeenth century. The eighteenth century experience was less dramatic being characterised by the circumstances of individual families and by changes in the distribution of wealth in society. Changes in landownership took place in two ways : firstly through marriage and inheritance, which was the normal method whereby existing landed families extended their estates ; and secondly, through sale and purchase which was motivated by the desire to consolidate estates, to transfer wealth, or to repay debts, and which was the main means whereby newcomers obtained an estate. The land market in Tipperary in the first half of the century was dominated by the



disposal of three large properties, those of Ormond, Everard, and Dunboyne.

The estate of the first duke of Ormond (d.1688) and his grandson the second duke (d.1746), experienced heavy indebtedness in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. This arose for several reasons the most basic of which was that current income from rents, office, and other sources was proving inadequate to cater for the demands of the family. After the death of the first duke in 1688 there was a period of transition in the management of the estate, aggravated by the military campaigns of 1688-91 which had a disastrous effect on the ability of tenants to pay rents either punctually or at all (6). In May 1688 Ormond's total debts stood at a colossal £98,500 including £12,000 in portions. Yearly interest payments on this debt were £6,000 which with other charges (£10,500), brought total annual outgoings to £16,500. Gross income for one year to May 1688 was £22,600 leaving a net income of £6,100. In 1688, therefore, the main debt exceeded gross income four fold.

Debts at this date were divided between those owed in England (£39,550) and Ireland (£46,950), the latter made up of mortgages (£36,800) and bonds (£10,150). Apart from the interest payments on these debts and the portions, the remainder of the charge comprised annuities, allowances, servants' and agency costs, rents, payments to clergy, and other miscellaneous charges. These excessive charges had accumulated firstly because the social and political status of the first and second dukes required them to provide for themselves and their families to a degree commensurate with their position as the county's leading landowners and the country's premier peers. This led to heavy borrowing and the imposition of charges on the estate. Thus in 1662 the first duke was empowered by act of parliament to raise £30,000 for his personal use and to charge the estate with £20,000 to provide portions for daughters (8). His successor, the second duke, in 1711 imposed a charge of £10,000 for his daughter, and in the same year his grandmother was claiming her jointure of £2,000 (9). These family charges would not of themselves, however, account for the chronic indebtedness which came to affect the family. Rather it was the heavy personal borrowing indulged in by the two dukes which made the reduction of the estate necessary. In 1688 such debts were £86,500 excluding portions (£12,000). When over £81,000 of this amount was paid off through fines in 1701, it is apparent that the bulk went towards personal debts and the £32,000 applied towards repayment of the second duke's debts went for personal debts incurred in England (10).



Secondly, this level of debt could not be sustained because sources of income were proving inadequate. The main source of income for Ormond was rents but in 1688 net rents were a meagre £6,100, which was clearly insufficient to cater for the demands being made to satisfy debts. Low rental income had as its source serious mismanagement of the first duke's estate in the period 1660-1688 (11). This situation was further aggravated by the devastation wrought by the Williamite wars which extensively impoverished the Ormond estate, making its recovery to a position where revenues could sustain normal charges seem difficult (12). In addition exclusion from public office for long periods precluded both dukes from the receipt of official incomes, one such source being worth £5,000 as a pension to the second duke in 1715 (13). The first duke was lord lieutenant in 1662-9 and 1677-85. As high public office was expensive it was fortunate that the second duke did not hold such a position in the 1690s when debts were most critical. The second duke was lord lieutenant in 1703-7 and 1711, but these periods of office post-dated the major legislative measures taken to reduce indebtedness and so can not have aided substantially in that process. Also the Palatinate jurisdiction was proving unremunerative as its revenue was not sufficient to cover the cost of running it. The level of debt on the estate c.1690 was thus of serious proportions with little prospect of it being ameliorated by revenue from the estate or official sources, rather its very solvency was threatened.

These factors also partly explain the timing of debt alleviation. The early 1690s was a time of declining revenues from estates and a decade in which Ormond did not hold public office. Another critical element which materially influenced the point at which debt led to sales was the fact that there was a scarcity of money in the early 1690s (14). In this situation Ormond's creditors made increasing demands that the annual payments on the principal debts be honoured more punctually. In 1692 Richard Warburton, one of commissioners appointed to manage the Ormond estate, referred to 'ye troublesome calls and importunate sollicitations of creditors' (15). The advisability of meeting the annual interest payments was reinforced by Lord Longford, the chief commissioner, who advised Ormond in 1692 also 'to pay the constant charge of interest to your creditors who, if they shall happen to be disappointed in the due payment of their interest . . . will be enraged and will take legal course to enter upon the lands assigned to them for their securities, the consequence whereby will make great confusion in your Grace's affairs and much straighten your Grace in your future support' (16). The need to meet current



interest payments and, more critically, to tackle the substantial accumulated principal occasioned the adoption of radical and novel measures.

The genesis of a scheme for relieving the debt originated in April 1692 (17). Its main elements were embodied in a private act of parliament in 1695 which placed the estate in the hands of trustees empowering them to sell it off, and giving the second duke authority to raise fines on the granting of leases and to impose various family charges (18). An amending act of 1696 arose because Ormond was unwilling to contemplate any outright sales of land by the trustees, 'but would rather have the same preserved and continued in his name and posterity' (19). Accordingly he and his brother, Charles, earl of Arran, were empowered to grant leases for lives or years on which two thirds of the rent levels prevailing in 1687 should be payable. Income from the fines levied on the granting of these new leases was to be applied in the first instance to defraying the debts of the first duke and then those of the second duke. The most important feature of the act in terms of short term and immediate fund raising was the revenue gained from these fines.

Despite the cost of obtaining and administering these acts, which exceeded £9,500, the advantages outweighed the outlay (20). For the period up to mid-Summer 1700 under £115,900 was received from the fines, with the sale of woods contributing a small proportion (21). Of this amount about £45,000 was raised in Tipperary mainly from town property in Clonmel and Carrick, and from land in all baronies except two (Table XV). A further act of 1701 authorised Ormond firstly to sell the fines on the renewals of leases, and secondly to create fee farms of existing leases, for which conversion the tenants were to pay a consideration (22). In this way a further £6,386 was received in 1701-4, and the operation of the act was extended up to Michaelmas 1705 (23). In 1710 Sir Alexander Cairnes, an Irish banker in London, purchased various fee farms and lands on the estate for £18,600 the largest single sum paid by any individual for an interest on the estate (24). As a result of these measures the level of debt on the estate was reduced to £41,634 by March 1711 (25). In the ensuing decade, however, debt crept steadily upward again and by 1720 exceeded £100,000 (Table XVII).

In the interim the continuing process of reducing the debt was disrupted by political events. As a result of his role in the Jacobite rising of 1715 the second duke was attainted for high treason, his annual pension of £5,000 withdrawn, a £10,000 reward offered for his capture, and his estate forfeited to the Crown, being the only instance of



such in Ireland at the time. In a unique decision, however, the final settlement of the estate allowed the earl of Arran by special act of parliament (7 Geo.I c.22) to purchase back the residue forfeited estate in 1721 for £50,000 (26).

The effects of these proceedings internally on the Ormond estate and more broadly on the structure of landowning in the county were significant. In the period 1697-1701 the granting of leases for lives renewable on payment of a lump sum or fine and the fining down of rents to the levels of 1687 was followed in the period after 1701 by the conversion of these and other leases into fee farm grants. This process had the effect of giving tenants on the Ormond estate, who had hitherto held their lands on leases for years, a virtually absolute perpetuity interest (27). It is clear that the opportunity to transform an interest for years into one in perpetuity was widely availed of by the tenants. In the period up to mid-Summer 1700 there were 167 purchasers spread over the county with a large participation from Clonmel and Carrick. They paid a total of £45,000 in order to benefit from the acts (Table XV). The areas where Ormond property was most concentrated, i.e. Eliogarty, Iffa and Offa, Middlethird, and Clanwilliam, witnessed the largest sums paid in fines. Between April 1703 and April 1714, 106 fee farm grants were enrolled in the Chancery Court in Dublin and in the Palatinate. The 60 grants enrolled in the latter accounted for over 13,300 acres spread over seven baronies (Table XVI). Also it is evident from a survey of 1715 that the fee farm was the most common and characteristic form of tenure on the the estate by that date (Table VII) (28). This transformation in proprietorship entailed a considerable outlay of funds, yet it was the perception at the time that lands in Tipperary were disposed of more cheaply than in adjoining counties, one correspondent observing in 1715 that 'the lands in that county where it [the Palatinate] extended being commonly sold at a cheaper rate than the like in neighbouring counties' (29).

The opportunity to transform their tenures into perpetuities was availed of by two classes of tenant : those who were tenants of Ormond's alone, and those who were tenants of his but who also owned land in their own right. The majority of the participants were not grantees or the descendants of grantees under the acts of settlement and explanation. A number of families who were, however, used the opportunity to extend or consolidate their lands, notably Moore (Chancellorstown), Sadlier, Coote, Langley, Baker, Cleare, Dawson, Dancer, Harrison, and Mathew. They were outnumbered by those who used the Ormond sales to establish themselves as large



landed proprietors for the first time, they not being grantees under the acts of the 1660s. Most significant in this category were Lowe, Carleton, Carden, Latham, Toler, Roe, Bayly, and Armstrong. These families were to establish important estate foci at Knockelly, Clonmel, Templemore, Meldrum, Beechwood near Nenagh, Rockwell, Ballynaclough, and Holy Cross respectively ; Carden and Toler were to receive a baronetcy and peerage respectively ; and all were to function as grand jurors at different times.

A good instance of the process in operation is the case of the Armstrongs of Farneybridge. Captain William Armstrong held Farneybridge (803 acres) as a tenant to Ormond under a 21 year lease from 1670 at a rent of £120. In 1697 John Armstrong, his son, on payment of £451 fine received a new lease for three lives renewable forever at a rent of £80. In 1702 this perpetuity lease, on payment of a further fine of £335, was extended to be a fee farm at the same rent of £80. This remained the position until 1724 when William Armstrong bought out the fee farm rent of £80 for a lump sum of £1,933 (30). Thus in the course of three generations the Armstrongs rose from tenants to landowners in their own right by the third decade of the eighteenth century. A similar progression can be documented for Roe of Roesborough and Bayly of Ballynaclough, and these cases must have been typical of the process in general (31).

Of the second category of tenant the most impressive instance of a family altering their status was that of the Meades. The initial association of the family with Tipperary derived from office (John Meade was a chief judge in the Palatinate court), and marriage links (the same John married a daughter of Lord Ikerrin, Ormond's cousin). In 1697 Meade paid two fines amounting to £2,300 for perpetuity leases of nearly 4,000 acres centred on Golden. These were converted into fee farm grants in 1702 and 1703, and finally bought out in 1724. This large addition of lands contributed to the rise of the Meades as a county family for, though they were absentee (their main estate being at Ballintober, Co.Cork), their marriage and personal ties with Tipperary were close, instanced by the fact that they chose the title of earls of Clanwilliam when elevated to that dignity in 1766 (32).

In general those benefiting within the county from the downturn in Ormond's financial position were New English of the post-1640 period. In addition there was a significant participation from individuals from outside the county mainly from Kilkenny with some Dublin interests and a scatter of others, including Joseph Ivie a Waterford merchant who



acquired extensive lands at Holy Cross and Borrisoleigh (33). This external element may be accounted for by the fact that they were either existing absentee head tenants who because of their larger interests elsewhere were in a position to pay the double fine for a renewable lease and a fee farm grant, or they filled the function specified in the act of 1701 which stipulated that if the existing tenants refused to accept the fee farm grants on the terms offered then other purchasers could be sought (34). Although there are some individual cases where sizable fines were paid by outsiders, the total proportionable amount in fines contributed by outside interests was less than that gained from the combined interests within the county.

Outright purchases constituted the more important contribution of the outside interests to the break up of the Ormond estate. Ormond was reluctant initially to entertain the prospect of outright disposals but overawed perhaps by the size of the debt, encouraged by the return gained from the fines levied after 1697, and induced by the prospect of ready cash from purchasers he made provision for limited and selected sales after 1703. The 1715 survey records 13 individuals to whom parcels of land were sold outright (35). The largest was Sir Alexander Cairnes who paid £18,600 in 1710 (36). The next most important were two Dubliners. In 1703 Nehemiah Donnellan, a baron of the exchequer, paid £5,274 for 3,188 acres in north Tipperary including Nenagh to all of which he was already head tenant (37). By 1733 the Holmes family were head tenants on the Nenagh property and were responsible for developing the town in succeeding decades (38).

A similar development is evident in relation to Roscrea, which was part of an outright sale of 2,867 acres for £3,399 to Robert Curtis in 1703 also (39). Curtis himself or a son with the same initials took up residence in Roscrea and up to 1722 granted a number of leases in the town. In 1722 he disposed of his interest in the town to John Damer of Tipperary for £22,000, a sum nearly seven times the amount of the original purchase price paid twenty years previously (40). This John Damer was established in the county by his elder brother Joseph (d.1720), the founder of the family, who had been steadily gaining in wealth and influence since the seventeenth century. Thus the Damers acquired a semi-urban base in Roscrea where the family soon after constructed an impressive mansion house unique for its size at this time in provincial Ireland. These three Cairnes, Donnellan, and Curtis were the largest purchasers in terms of financial outlay and extent of property acquired. The remainder of the group of outright purchasers were absentees



who appear to have generally let out their acquisitions on perpetuity leases.

Thus a situation of acute indebtedness inherited and then supplemented by the second duke of Ormond led via private legislation to the adoption of an innovative leasing policy and the selective selling off of the estate, a process initiated in 1697 and culminating in the 1720s. This process had a two fold effect on the composition of the landed class. Firstly it diminished the Ormond stake in landed estate and in the family status and leadership of the landed class which this conferred. There was a clear break with the past as one of the great lordships to survive from the medieval period lost its economic unity in the face of insolvency. Decline in landed influence combined with the demise of the family politically characterised by the long thirty year exile of the second duke after 1715 spent in a futile adherence to the Jacobite cause ; the abolition of his private jurisdiction the Palatinate in 1715 ; and the permanent loss of the family's highest attainment, a dukedom. After the second duke's death in 1746 the residue estate was inherited by his brother the earl of Arran, following whose death in 1758 it devolved on his cousin John Butler of Kilcash. Following his death without issue in 1766 ownership of the Tipperary estate was transferred to the Garryricken, Co.Kilkenny branch of the Butlers, who had a background of conformity. It was this branch which assumed the Ormond title after its official revival in 1791. Further estate shedding in 1815 meant that by the mid-nineteenth century the Ormond was only the fourth largest estate (15,765 acres) in Tipperary, a reversal of the position a century and a half earlier when Ormond was its leading landowner (41). Thenceforth the family was revered for the antiquity of its title rather than for any pre-eminence based on landed estate. The eighteenth century reversal of fortunes was compounded by the transfer of the family's centre of influence to Kilkenny and at another level by the difficulties of other Butler branches : the absenteeism of Lord Cahir, and the disposal of Lord Dunboyne's lands in Tipperary in 1729.

The second effect was on the landed society of the county. There is no doubt that the mode of procedure adopted by Ormond to alleviate his indebtedness led to a flurry of activity in the local land market more significant in its scale and consequences than that generated by the sales of forfeited land under the contemporary act of resumption. The result was that out of the singly-owned Ormond estate a large body of new owners was created made up of former tenants and supplemented by external purchasers. Although the disposal of the estate created a number of new absentee owners, the number of new



resident proprietors was proportionally greater. Politically Ormond's removal from the hierarchy of the landed class meant that it became less cohesive, leaving the way open for competing interests to vie for political leadership of the county in all its aspects. Thus the vicissitudes undergone by the Ormond interest were radical in their consequences both in the short and long terms.

Another estate which traced its origins to the medieval period and which also underwent difficulties in the early eighteenth century was that of the Old English family of Everard. Here again the twin factors of indebtedness and a close association with the Jacobite cause were present. The indebtedness on the Everard estate was less acute than on Ormond's but the means adopted to alleviate it were basically similar, i.e. private legislation and outright sale.

The Everard estate was confiscated on the outlawry of Sir John Everard in 1691 and granted to Henry, Viscount Sydney in 1693 (42). By a private act of parliament in 1702, however, the attainder of Sir John was reversed in consideration of £2,000, the estate was conveyed to trustees (one of whom was Ormond) who were to raise this sum by sale or mortgage, pay other debts, and attend to the education of Sir Redmond Everard, Sir John's heir who was a minor (43). In relation to the latter function a further proviso in the act stipulated that Sir Redmond be reared a protestant, and if he had not formally conformed at the age of 18 years, then he and his heirs would be barred from inheriting the estate.

Born in 1690 Sir Redmond must have conformed on or before 1708 in order to ensure his succession (44). This can only have been nominal however, for although a convert, Everard was elected to the 1713 parliament by virtue of the catholic interest in Fethard, and after 1714 he was actively involved in France with the advancement of the Stuart cause (45). A nominal protestant Everard's continued adherence to this cause precluded his permanent return to Ireland after 1715. In 1716 he appointed an agent, Richard Purcell, to manage his Irish estate and soon after became closely associated with the duke of Ormond, in 1717 being described as 'Ormonde's agent in England' (46). Thereafter Everard appears to have lived mostly in France.

No estimate is available of the size of the debt on the estate at the time of the 1702 act. The appointment of trustees, however, would suggest that it was sizable. In 1721 total debts stood at £22,161 but an opportune marriage in the same year brought him a dowry of £10,000 which, with the sale of that part of the estate situated in the barony of Iffa



and Offa for £11,500, combined to cancel this debt at one stroke (47). The reduction of a separate debt of £7,000 accumulated from judgement debts, mortgages and decrees, was provided for in an act of parliament in 1727 which appointed trustees to sell off parts of the estate in the barony of Middlethird for a sum not to exceed £7,500 ; while an additional debt of £7,904 was to be satisfied out of the remaining unsold lands (48). In this way the encumbrances on the estate were successfully eliminated during the course of the 1720s.

While this development was decisively advantageous in one respect, in another it meant that the size of the estate and its revenue bearing capacity were sharply reduced. What remained of the estate yielded less than £1,000 annually in the 1730s, a situation not aided by the fact that it was difficult to get some of the tenants to pay their rents promptly (49). What rents became available were remitted by the agent to Everard in France where he claimed that he and Lady Everard were engaged in 'extravagant living', while one of his creditors claimed that by 'some mismanagement attending his estate in Ireland he [Everard] was so ill supplied with money that he lived entirely upon credit for five or six years' (50). The result of this situation was that debt began to emerge again in the 1730s apparently from two sources : borrowing on security from the Parisian banker Richard Quane to the amount of £9,500 by 1742, and drawing heavily on his agent in Tipperary by means of drafts or bills of exchange to the amount of £850 in 1738-9, the agent complaining that he was often 'put to great difficulty to raise money to answer his frequent drafts to be remitted' (51).

As it happened fate intervened for Sir Redmond and Lady Everard both died childless in 1742. The estate devolved on his near cousin James Long, a catholic who conformed and who adopted the additional surname of Everard by instruction in Sir Redmond's will (52). When the final figure was computed in 1750 total debts due out of the remainder of the estate amounted to £27,137, and by order of the court of Chancery it was to be satisfied by sale (53). This was soon accomplished when Thomas Barton, a successful Bordeaux wine merchant, paid £30,500 (£7,625 down payment) for the estate in March 1751 (54). This represented a considerable financial outlay, indeed Barton was later to claim that it 'exhausted the greatest part of [my] stock in trade and other personal fortune' (55). Thus, though heavy debts were cleared off by a successful marriage alliance and selected sales in the 1720s, they accumulated again in the the course of a twenty year period after 1730. This had as its basis heavy expenditure in



France (condoned perhaps by political exile and absence from Ireland), defective estate management, and heavy borrowing. Everard's death and the final disposal of the estate marked the disappearance of one of the last of the leading catholic Old English families to survive from the previous century.

The demise of Everard provided the occasion for the introduction of two important new families into the landed class of the county, one having a background in the law, the other in trade. Cornelius O'Callaghan, a small Co.Cork landowner and successful Dublin lawyer who, apart from facilitating Everard with mortgages, had much in common with him politically and otherwise. O'Callaghan like Everard was a convert and as such sat in the 1713 parliament with Everard as representatives for Fethard (56). It is reasonable to surmise that O'Callaghan's return was a political favour rendered to him by Everard in part repayment of debts. In 1721 O'Callaghan paid £11,500 for the Everard property located in Iffa and Offa and centring on Clogheen (57). This purchase was to form the basis of the family's subsequent rise to prominence in the county's landed class. The family obtained the title of Lords Lismore in 1785, ~~THEY~~ forged important political marriages with the Ponsonby and Ormond families, and by the mid-nineteenth century ~~WERE~~ were the county's largest landowners.

The Barton family who purchased that part of the Everard estate around Fethard came originally from Co.Fermanagh, but the purchaser Thomas Barton was an elder son who had after 1725 accumulated large profits from the wine trade in Bordeaux (58). The purchase of the Fethard estate was motivated by the father's concern to provide for or compensate his son William on his marriage and for other more complex reasons (59). By virtue of the purchase the Bartons made a successful transition from trade into land, and acquired a political interest in Fethard borough, but unlike O'Callaghan they did not obtain a peerage.

The Barton and O'Callaghan estates are the two main new interests which arose out of the break up of the Everard property. A separate development was that under the 1727 act certain of the Everard lands in Middlethird were sold off for £7,379 to six individuals with some town property in Clonmel. This sale served to establish a group of minor gentry : Power at Barrettstown, Power at Gurteen, Jacob at Coolmore, and supplemented the estates of Lowe, Cooke, Weeks, and O'Callaghan (60).

The catholic family of Butler, Lords Dunboyne, became indebted in the 1720s and as a result were forced to dispose of considerable lands in the county. The family exhibit a



history of heavy borrowing on mortgage from the 1680s at least and this was mainly with local interests : Fanning of Ballingarry, Moore of Clonmel, Perry (then) of Knocklofty, and relations like Butler of Garryricken (61). Additionally between 1711 and 1732 Pierce and Edmond Butler (8th Lord Dunboyne, d.1732), accumulated judgement debts of £9,000 (62). To alleviate these Dunboyne in September 1729 sold about 900 acres of the ancestral lands in Middlethird barony to John Bagwell, a Clonmel merchant, for under £6,000 (63). Bagwell, apart from his direct mercantile interests, was a Munster correspondent for the Dublin banking firm of La Touche and Kane (64). These functions of merchant and agent may have provided him with the necessary funds for investment in land. At any rate this purchase marked the entry of the family into the landed class of the county. The Dunboyne purchase was supplemented by the acquisition of 1,500 acres centring on Kilmore near Clonmel the estate of John Slattery, a catholic lawyer and agent to Lord Cahir, and by three other properties totalling 413 acres (65). In this way by the early 1730s Bagwell had acquired a substantial rural estate of 2,730 acres and entry into landed society at the expense of largely catholic debtors.

The subsequent history of the property is of interest in illustrating the shifting fortunes of a landed family, and its tendency, like Barton, to retain links with trade. The Kilmore property was used to establish an elder son on his marriage in 1736 and this remained the rural base of one branch of the family (66). The Dunboyne acquisition, however, only remained in Bagwell possession for about 50 years until 1778 when due to debt it was purchased by the Riall family of Clonmel, who like Bagwell in an earlier generation also had a background as bankers and merchants (67). This marks the advent of one of the town's leading quaker merchants into landed society. The younger branch of the Bagwell family remained in trade and banking in Clonmel and in 1780 purchased the Marlfield property and flour mill of the indebted Stephen Moore, and proceeded to become the major political interest in Clonmel after 1800 when the borough was bought from Lord Mount Cashell.

The most important changes in the personnel of the landed class emanated from the experience on the Ormond, Everard, and Dunboyne properties. The first half century also saw some other disposals of minor estates in order to discharge debts and pay legacies or portions. Notable here are the cases of Cooke of Kiltinan near Fethard and Pike of Woodenstown both in the 1720s (68). In the 1740s parts of the estates of Jacob of Coolmore and Sir Stephen Rice were vested in trustees by acts of parliament to satisfy



debts and claims (69). The Rice lands of 3,000 acres at Dovea near Thurles were sold to the Trant family (70). In another direction landowners shed estates elsewhere in order to concentrate on their Tipperary holdings. Thus in 1717 Sir William Barker disposed of 2,180 acres for £21,140 part of his Co.Limerick estate and in 1767 a small Co.Meath property (134 acres) of his was sold for £4,130 (71). These were minor shifts. The experience on the Ormond, Everard, and Dunboyne estates, however, were radical in their consequences for the composition of the landed class in the county in the first half of the century leading on the one hand to the decline of three long established families, and on the other to the introduction of new elements both from within and without the county.

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Changes in the composition and personnel of the landed class in the second half of the century were less dramatic than in the preceding period. There were a number of cases of the outright disposal of lands to satisfy debts but these involved small landowners, their purpose was to consolidate larger estates held elsewhere in Ireland, and they did not have a widespread effect on the land market or on landowning structures. Thus the 1760s saw the selling off of the Perceval, Rogers, Parsons/Cle~~ve~~re, and Warter-Wilson lands, but these were small scale and of minimal effect (72).

Changes in the period 1750-1815 must be assessed from a different perspective than those of the early part of the century. The earlier period was distinguished by an adverse economic environment characterised by static, low or declining incomes from rents making borrowing common. The later part of the century, however, witnessed more favourable conditions with agricultural prosperity producing rising rentals (Table VI). Rising overall incomes and the better management of estates created the context in which landed families were able to borrow without damaging the solvency of the estate. To borrow on mortgage from fellow landlords, merchants, and others became a more widely accepted practice. Yet despite its greater incidence it did not lead to the break up of estates and there were fewer cases among landed families of chronic indebtedness or insolvency. Some leading families like Mathew and Meade indulged their expectations and schemes of expenditure to the full leading in both cases to the necessity to dispose of property. They were the exceptions and the majority of families avoided such a fate. Their continued solvency was made possible by private legislation as with Bloomfield (1774) and Otway (1803), whereby trusteeships tided them over difficult circumstances.



With insolvency due to indebtedness being less likely it is clear that change within the landed class in this period did not stem largely from this cause. On the contrary it derived from the effects of the wider dissemination of wealth in society at large. Agricultural prosperity served to create a larger number of solvent tenants and farmers. Indicative of their number and wealth is the number and value of freeholds in each of the categories 40s., £20, and £50 registered in the county between 1807 and 1815 (Table XXI). In the first classification (40s.) Tipperary had the largest number (13,900) registered in Munster and compared well with the northern counties like Down. It is in the higher valuations of £20 and £50, however, that Tipperary outstrips other counties. In the former category there were over 1,600 registered and in the latter 2,270. The total value of the freeholds registered, assuming a uniform rate in each category, was in excess of £173,300. This shows that Tipperary was very wealthy and that it possessed a higher proportion of farmers holding more highly valued lands than elsewhere. From this one can imply that a more silent transition was occurring in the landed class : generated by agricultural prosperity there was a movement upward into and beyond the farmer / tenant class. All sectors rose but farmers rose more markedly relative to others. This happened without the substantial displacement of the leaders at the apex of landed society, rather the landed class became enlarged at its base.

This presentation provides the conceptual framework within which the changing relationship between income, expenditure, and debt can be considered. The income of the landed class depended on prevailing land values and the level of rents obtainable. Table VI shows the available evidence for the better documented estates. It is not always possible to distinguish in the sources between gross rent, net rent, and income so that this evidence must be used circumspectly. An examination of certain estate before c.1750 indicates that the picture is not a uniform one and where increases in rent are evident their scale varied. Lands were cheap in the early eighteenth century. In 1715 it was remarked of Tipperary that lands there were 'commonly sold at a cheaper rater than the like in the neighbouring counties' (73). In fact in 1699 the average acreable value of land in the county was 4s.6d., with the higher values found in the better lands of Iffa and Offa (6s.6d.), Clanwilliam (6s.6d.) and Middlethird (6s.), and the lower values found in the less well endowed regions of Owey and Arra (3s.6d.) and Kilnalongurty (2s.6d.) (Table XXIX). This pattern of land values coincides with that evident from the poll tax returns of 1696 (Table XXXI). If average land values for the county in the



mid-seventeenth century can be put at under 1s.6d. per acre then by the end of the century this had increased three times to 4s.6d. (74).

Even in the ensuing period up to the mid-eighteenth century land values grew only slowly. Thus rural farms on the Smith (private) estate near Cashel and Tipperary were let in 1729-45 for about 7s. per acre for the better lands, and about 4s. or under for inferior quality lands averaging overall at 5s.6d. (75). By 1755 this had risen to 6s.2d. though it was estimated that if the lands were then set they would average about 12s., showing that lands only began to rise more sharply in value after mid-century (76). Leases granted on the Mathew (Thomastown) estate before 1740 were generally for less than 10s per acre, usually between 1s. and 4s. averaging around 3s. (77). The average on the estate of the governors of the Erasmus Smith Schools estate in 1711 was 5s.9d., but ranged from 9s. for arable and pasture to 9d. for mountain (78). Much the same average - 5s.6d. - is evident on the T.C.D. estate in the early part of the century (79). The available evidence for other estates in Clanwilliam show the average values before mid-century to be : Meade (6s.), Damer (6s.8d.) ; In Kilnamanagh : Maude (6s.6d.) ; in Kilnalongurty : Ryan (1s.4d.) ; in Upper Ormond : Otway (4s.4d.), Bayly (4s.4d.), Butler (Kilcash) (3s.7d.) ; Lower Ormond : Drysdale (3s.9d.) ; O'wney and Arra : Parker (8s.6d.) ; in Slievardagh : Pennefather (5s.9d.), Barker (8s.) ; and in Iffa and Offa : Perry (7s.), Mandeville (6s.5d.), Butler (Kilcash) (5s.5d.), and O'Callaghan (9s.5d.) (80). Because of differences in land quality in various parts of the county and on individual estates, a consistent average for acreable rent before mid-century is difficult to determine accurately. However, a general average of not more than 10s., and in the majority of cases much less than that amount, would not be inconsistent with the available evidence. On this basis land values hardly more than doubled in the half century after 1700 which contrasts with the threefold increase in the half century before that date.

The level of rent increase broadly concurs with the order of increase in land values for the same period. On the Barker estate at Kilcooley east of Thurles and skirting the Slievardagh Hills, rent fell from £240 in the early 1670s to £226 in 1697, but by the mid-1730s rose over two and a half times to £616. A continuous increase is apparent on the 1,800 acre estate of the Erasmus Smith schools estate near Tipperary from £125 in 1673 to £137 in 1682 and by 1721 it was £230 a figure which more than doubled by 1750. On the 3,000 acre Ryan estate at Inch north west of Thurles rents doubled



between 1724 and 1735 from £205 to £430, and on the 1,400 acre T.C.D. estate divided between three locations near Templemore, Tipperary, and Thurles rents grew four fold in the 60 year period 1715-1775 from £280 to £1,168. These four estates, situated in a central band of the county, indicate an average increase in rents up to c.1750 of the order of 180%. However, it can be shown with equal confidence that elsewhere rents in this period were declining. Thus on the 5,000 acre Bayly estate located largely north of Nenagh but also near Cashel while rents rose from £1,400 in 1707 to £1,600 in 1717 by 1730 this level had fallen to £1,080 representing a decline of 32%. The conclusion is that before mid-century one can not generalise too readily : evidence indicating rising rentals can be complemented by contrary data showing a fall. Inevitably the experience on individual estates is the dominant factor.

Land values grew only sluggishly from 4s.6d. in 1699 to under 10s. per acre by c.1750, representing about a doubling over a lengthy period. In the ensuing period land values doubled to 20s. by the mid-1770s (81). Lands in the more fertile areas like Clanwilliam (22s.9d.) and Middlethird (25s.) exceeded this average, while areas with significant portions of bad lands like Owey and Arra (12s.) and Ikerrin (18s.) were below it (Table XXX). In Cork rents averaged only 5s., in Limerick 10s.6d., and in Waterford 7s. and 10s. (82). Thus even the worst of Tipperary lands were more highly valued at this time than some other Munster counties. Acreable rents in Tipperary fell by 4s. or 5s. between 1771 and 1776 reflecting the economic downturn of these years, a fall which would suggest that the average in 1770 can more accurately be put at 25s. representing a two and one half times rise in the twenty year period 1750-70 (83). A comparable index of the rise in land values is the number of years purchase by which the sale price of land was calculated. In 1699 this stood at 13 years purchase, but by the mid-1770s this had risen to 20 years on average (84). In practical terms this meant that, for instance, the Butler (Cahir) estate with an annual value of £3,485 in 1699 would have sold at £45,305 and in 1775 at the same value would have been worth £69,700, though in fact its rental at that stage was larger at £10,000 which would put its value at £200,000 (85).

Landlords themselves attested to a doubling of rents in the county in the twenty year period up to the mid-1770s (86). In the northern part of the county evidence from the Lloyd estate at Gloster near Birr gives an increase of over two thirds from 1750, while a doubling of rents was advanced for the Holmes estate at Johnstown and the Head estate



at Derry both near Nenagh (87). In Clanwilliam rents on rich lands rose by 25% in the years 1757-77 and by 66% from 1748 (88). Estates in this barony included the 4,000 acre Stanley estate near Tipperary and Cashel whose rental grew from £1,872 in 1756 to £2,592 in 1770 or by 37% (Table VI). On the consolidated 32,000 acre Mathew of Thomastown estate also in this barony the level of income increased from £6,000 (1767) to £10,000 (1772) or by 66% ; or alternatively from £8,000 (1759) to £12,600 (1780) equivalent to 57.5%. On the Erasmus Smith estate rents grew from £510 in 1750 to £1,386 in 1794 or by 171%. On other nearby estates the rise in rents on the Ryan of Inch estate was from £430 (1735) to £1,370 (1778) or 218%. Further south two large estates display substantial increases in rental income in mid-century. The O'Callaghan estate at Shanbally had a rental of £477 in 1743, by 1779 it stood at £6,000 or a massive 1175% ; and on the adjoining Cahir estate the landowner's income, stated in 1767 as £2,500 was by 1770 put at £6,000, an increase of 140%. So that, although there are regional variations, an average increase in rents and incomes in the county of 267% (calculated on the basis of the individual estates cited here and including rents and incomes) between 1750 and 1775 can be advanced. Despite these positive indicators overall incomes in the county by the mid-1770s were not phenomenally large with the majority of landlords having incomes of less than £2,000 (Table V).

Land values remained depressed from the early 1770s into the 1780s and a steady upward trend resumed only after 1790. One source puts average acreable rents in the county in 1789 at 16s.6d. which is less than the average for the mid-1770s of 20s.(89). It is clear that values were static or falling. It was argued in favour of the position of one chief tenant on the Ormond estate that land values in 1769 were the same in 1788, and a similar case of depressed land values in the 1770s and 1780s is evident from the case history of a tenant on the Butler (Cahir) estate (90). The main cause of this fall was the local effect of the American war and its aftermath whereby a slump in the prices of meat, butter, and corn reduced the value of agricultural holdings (91). The diary comments of a large grazier, James Scully, for the years 1775-90 are witness to the economic downturn of the period. He records the effects of poor prices and low demand for beef (1775,1777,1782), bad weather leading to the scarcity of hay and loss of livestock (1776), the failure of provision merchants in Cork (1778), poor demand at fairs (1784), and credit restrictions and bank failures in Cork (1779,1784) (92). In a county where so much of the profits of farming depended on cattle and sheep grazing, stock mortality



meant disaster with tenants becoming insolvent and unable to meet rent commitments. Describing the general distress in 1784 the agent on the Stanley estate referred to the fact that tenants on the Tipperary lands were 'near ruined by the death of cattle'(93). In consequence there was emigration, ruin, farms were abandoned or surrendered though some landlords like Lord Cahir remitted arrears, accepted surrenders, and abated former rents thereby helping tenants over a difficult period (94).

The decade of the 1770s halted the upward movement in rents temporarily : they remained static or fell. After 1790 the sustained demand for agricultural produce created by the Continental wars up to 1815 meant that land values resumed their upward movement. Only after 1790 do a succession of optimistic comments on economic conditions become apparent in Scully's diary entries. In 1790 he noted : 'a great prospect of a good season next year for butter, beef, sheep, and wool', and in 1791 : 'land seems high in demand now owing to two good seasons' (95). Similarly in March 1792 Matthew Jacob, a landlord near Fethard, reported that 'the value of lands has encreased (sic) and is encreasing (sic)' (96). Land values may have risen sharply in short periods from an average of 20s. in 1790, 30s. by 1800, 40s. by 1810 and under 50s. by 1815 (97). Thus after a period of depressed land values in the 1770s and 1780s there was a sustained increase in the period 1790-1815.

Following the depression of the early 1770s the upward surge in rents resumed thereafter. On the 10,890 acre estate of the archbishop of Cashel mainly in Clanwilliam and Middlethird income increased from £5,000 to £6,000 between 1775 and 1806 or 20 % ; on the Stanley estate rents grew from £2,734 in 1774 to £4,544 in 1797 or 66% to £8,000 in 1826 (78%) ; and on the Mathew estate worth £12,600 in 1780 income was then expected to rise to £20,000 (or 58%) on the fall of leases and by 1809 was producing £28,000 (40%) (98). Income on the Barker estate rose by 100% between 1775 (£5,000) and 1809 (£10,000), and on the Damer estate mainly in Clanwilliam and around Borrisoleigh and Roscrea an increase in income from £4,000 (1767) to £14,000 (1808/9) or 250% is evident. Further south rents on the Hely-Hutchinson estate south west of Clonmel grew from £3,500 in 1784 to £5,428 in 1809 or 55%. The O'Callaghan estate witnessed a rise in income from £6,000 (1775) to £15,000 (1808/9) or 150% to £12,840 in rents by 1822/3. The level of income on the Cahir estate grew from £10,000 (1775) to an expectant £36,000 in 1809 or 160%. The 15,000 acre Maude estate in Kilnamanagh experienced a rise of £4,000 (50%) in income between 1789 and 1808/9.



In the north of the county on the 3,000 acre Cole-Bowen estate near Nenagh rents grew from £1,200 (1788) to £2,020 (1805) or 68%. Substantial growth in rental income on other northern estates; those of Prittie, Toler, and Bayly for instance, is also in evidence (99). Rent increases were not universal, however, as the Ryan (Inch) and Erasmus Smith estates illustrate, displaying downward and static trends respectively. This reflects the leasing situation on these particular estates whereby lands reset in the mid-1770s were not out of lease by 1800 thereby impeding their owners from increasing rent levels in line with the rise in land values. Nevertheless the overriding trend is of an emphatic growth in rental income in the later eighteenth century of the order of 96% on average for the county as a whole based on the examples cited here (100).

The broad pattern of rent movement in Tipperary is of a slow increase in the first half of the century, a sharp increase in the 1750s and 1760s, a static phase in the 1770s and 1780s followed by rising rents in the 25 year period after 1790. Although the amounts differ this pattern of rents broadly concurs with that evident for other areas of the country like Ulster and with the findings of Large nationally at least for 1790-1815 (101). However in Tipperary the most impressive rise is evident in the middle decades of the century with the increase in the period 1790-1815 being more modest in comparison. This was the case despite the fact that land values grew more sharply in the latter period than they did in the former. The implication from this is that rising land values were not being substantially reflected in enhanced landlord incomes at least on the sample of estates represented here, suggesting that a large proportion of the wealth of the period passed into the hands of those beneath the landowner. This further substantiates the contention that a widening of the landed class at its base occurred in the latter part of the century.

Agricultural rents were the main source of landed incomes. A few landlords such as Smith-Barry, the archbishop of Cashel, Mathew, Damer and Lord Cahir were in a position to benefit from urban rents at Tipperary, Cashel, Thurles, Roscrea, and Cahir respectively. Thus, for example, the rental of the Thurles estate which included the town of Thurles doubled from £4,200 in 1780 to £8,800 in 1818, and Damer could draw rents of £1,400 from Roscrea in 1770 (102). Other landlords like Prittie at Silvermines, Stanley at Gortdrum, Langley at Coalbrook and Vere Hunt at Glengoole at one time or another had lead, copper, or coal mining operations but they entailed considerable financial risk, were not always successful, and did not generate substantial revenues for



their owners (103). More successfully, as the main sponsors of the larger flour-milling enterprises established from 1770, landlords like Stafford O'Brien at Nenagh, Fennell at Cahir Abbey, Lloyd at Castle Iny, Scully at Golden, Moore at Clonmel benefited to a greater or lesser degree from this extra-agricultural source of income. Office holding was an additional source of income for a few landlords like John Hely-Hutchinson who in his own right had a combined income from offices of all kinds of £4,900 in 1775 ; John Toler had a salary of £500 as a judge in 1784, advanced to being solicitor general and later an earl ; and John Scott, who married into the landed class, had an official income in 1787 of £15,000 and in 1799 of £20,000 and he advanced to being attorney general and earl of Clonmell (104). They are the exception in having such supplementary sources of income as most landlords depended primarily on their estates as the chief source of support.

Impressive though the overall increase in income levels is it has to be offset against the level of expenditure incurred by landlords. There were three main areas which absorbed incomes : personal charges, family and estate expenses of which the two last were the most important. Because of the dominance of the strict settlement in the financial regulation of estates family charges constituted a large drain on landed incomes. Family pride and social considerations reinforced the need to provide adequately for daughters and younger sons once the practice of primogeniture catered for the eldest son. The evidence indicates that before c.1750 the amount in portions paid to daughters on marriage was less than £1,000 for smaller families like Fogarty, Kearney, Purcell, and Tobin ; £1,000 or £1,500 for middle ranking families like Kennedy, Bunbury, Holmes, Green, Mathew (Thurles) ; while leading families like Prittie, Mathew (Thurles and Thomastown), O'Callaghan, Maude, Barker, Bagwell, Minchin and Butler (Cahir) could expect to give or receive portions ranging from £2,000 to £6,000 (105).

In 1702 when Henry Prittie married Elizabeth Harrison her portion was £2,000 ; Cornelius O'Callaghan received a dowry of £3,300 with Elinor Ford in 1733 ; Sir Robert Maude of Dundrum received a portion of £3,000 on his marriage to Elizabeth Cornwallis in 1723 ; in 1736 John Bagwell of Kilmore got £4,000 when he married the daughter of a Bristol merchant ; and in 1739 Lord Cahir's eldest son received £6,000 on his marriage to the daughter of a Drogheda merchant, a similar amount being paid in 1745 when George Mathew of Thurles married Isabella Brownlow of Lurgan (106). The amount paid in portions rose as the century progressed. In the 1760s portions of



leading families e.g. Prittie, Minchin, were in the range £2,000-£3,000, one or two were £6,000 (Mathew, Lane), but few were in excess of that (107). Leading families could expect substantial dowries as in 1765 when Francis Mathew, heir to the vast Thomastown property, received £10,000 with Ellis Smyth of Co. Wicklow ; £5,000 was paid with Anne Roche, daughter of a leading Limerick merchant, on her marriage with George Ryan of Inch in 1783 ; and a similar sum applied on the marriage of Lord Dunalley and Maria Trant of Dovea in 1805 (108). Leading head tenants came to be in a position to provide substantial dowries for their charges. Thus James Scully, who received a dowry of £500 on his marriage to Catherine Lyons of Croom in 1760, was able to portion his own daughter to the amount of £2,000 when she married in 1791 (109). Leading families would appear, therefore, to have been able to afford average portions of £2,000-£3,000 in the 1760s and £5,000 by c.1800.

Annuities or jointures paid to wives if they survived their husbands were normally calculated on the basis of 10% of the portion depending on whether or not the marriage had issue. This can be documented for a number of marriage settlements over the century (110). Widows from marriages entered into in the 1760s could expect jointures of £300 or under, those of 40 years later ones of about £500. These figures reflect the arrangements for leading families, those of less wealth and landed status could expect more modest settlements in proportion.

Providing for younger sons and daughters put a considerable charge on estates depending on the numbers to be provided for and this had to be borne by a succeeding generation, sometimes the original provision taking little account of its ability to bear it. Examples of sums charged for this purpose before c.1750 are Mathew (£6,000), Smith (£10,000), Butler (Kilcash) (£11,000), Bayly (£2,000), Prittie (£5,000), Roe (£4,000), Minchin (£3,000) and Vaughan (£4,000), indicating a range of £2,000-£4,000 for smaller families and £5,000-£11,000 for larger (111). In the period after c.1750 for smaller families the amount increased to £4,000-£8,000, and for larger like Meade, Mathew and O'Callaghan up to £20,000 (112). Daughters' portions apart, much of the provision for younger children was intended to facilitate education and advancement to a professional career in the law, the church, or the army, and the fulfillment of these family and social obligations could constitute important charges on finances. In 1776 John Bayly of Ballynacloagh, when seeking borrowing facilities, gave as his reasons : 'I want to buy an ensignsy for one of my sons which will be £400 or more, and my



second son is to go to the temple and his expence there will . . . be about [£]800 a year' (113). In the normal course of events portions, jointures, and provision for younger sons could be met by a prudent management of affairs. They came to be viewed as an oppressive burden, however, when other areas of expenditure became excessive or when unexpected circumstances intervened.

Estate expenditure did not come to constitute an important charge on landed finances until late in the century. The purchase of additional land for economic, political, family or social reasons could involve a considerable outlay of funds. It has been seen in relation to proceedings on the Ormond, Everard, and Dunboyne estates that land purchase tended to be characteristic of rising families or those entering the landed class. One such family, the O'Callaghans, acquired a voracious appetite for land acquisition once they became established. Lord Lismore in his will of 1787 stipulated that his younger son lay out £9,999 in the purchase of lands, and in 1803 his heir bought a Queen's County estate for £43,620 (114). Land acquisition could be less ambitious, however, in some cases having as its purpose the consolidation of an existing interest. Thus in 1768 Peter Holmes bought out his interest in the valuable town and lands of Nenagh for £12,400, of which sum £7,000 was borrowed. By 1784 when £9,000 of this mortgage (including interest) was outstanding he disposed of his small (377 acres) King's County estate to pay it off, in order to concentrate instead on his more substantial (1,200 acres) Tipperary estate (115). The result was a more rational estate unit.

Management costs for the administration of estates affected only a minority of landlords. Professional estate agents began to be appointed more widely in Tipperary from the 1780s (116). This development was not before its time for duplicity in the running of estates was not absent in previous decades as the experience on the Ormond and Everard estates shows. On the Mathew estate in the 1760s receivers were appointed by Chancery and it was said that by their 'mismanagement the rents of the said estates to a very considerable amount had been squandered' (117). The appointment of professional staff could, therefore, be a welcome development. The cost of such agencies nationally has been estimated at 5% of the gross rental (6-7% on larger estates) and the total cost of running the estate at 10% (118). Given the late appearance of professional services on estates in Tipperary this particular cost was less important as a drain on estate finances before c.1780.

Tipperary landlords spent little of their incomes on estate improvements, there is little



evidence of a regular re-investment in estates, and what improvements there were were carried out by tenants (119). There were exceptions, however, notably O'Callaghan at Shanbally, Carden at Templemore, Osborne at Newtown Anner, Maude at Dundrum, and Barker at Kilcooley. They sponsored large scale remodellings of the landscape, drainage schemes, estate villages, new tenants, and resettlement. Such endeavours could entail substantial capital investment the scale of which is indicated by the fact that in 1775 the principal debt owed by Sir Thomas Maude stood at £27,000 at a time when his improvement schemes were most intense (120). Improvement could, therefore, represent a drain on finances for a minority of landlords like Maude whose commitment to transforming the landscape and tenurial arrangements was very marked.

While landlord assistance to tenants was generally minimal, their expenditure on demesne embellishment and house building was greater. References by Clarendon in the 1670s and by Swift c.1718 to the extensive improvements to the Mathew seat at Thomastown are well known (121). What is not appreciated is that they were carried out under conditions of prudent management and, as noted by one observer, 'strict economy' (122). Thus Grand George Mathew (d.1738) of Thomastown reportedly lived frugally on the Continent in the 1710s for seven years on £600 yearly in order to devote his £8,000 rental to the laying out of a 1,500 acre demesne and fitting out the house with 40 guest rooms (123). His successors were less circumspect in their expenditure on the estate. It was said of Francis Mathew that at the time of his death in 1806 the rental was much depleted and that he was much in debt due to sponsoring a private bill to bring a water supply to Thomastown Castle (124). In fact the causes of Mathew's indebtedness were more complex, but this statement does indicate the common perception that landlords as a class were spendthrift by inclination and that much of their expenditure on improvements was unnecessary, self-indulgent, even wasteful. Estimates of the cost of demesne improvements are not plentifully available, but in 1789 for instance the cost of laying out an ornamental lake with associated lawn improvements for Barker at Kilcooley was put at £442 (125). This was at a time when Barker's income was in excess of £5,000 which would put the cost of this particular improvement at 8.8% of annual income.

Associated with demesne embellishment was house building. Nolan has shown that in 1777 there were 184 gentlemen's seats in the county the majority of them beneath the 500 foot contour, with particular concentrations in Iffa and Offa, Middlethird,



Clanwilliam, and the Ormond baronies (126). Many of these mansions were erected in the 1750s and 1760s when incomes rose sharply. Some of the wealthier landowners like Damer at Roscrea, Mathew at Thomastown, O'Callaghan at Shanbally, Sadlier at Sopwell Hall, Pennefather at Marlow, Moore at Barne and the archbishop of Cashel already had large and impressive mansion houses from an earlier period (127). However, although dating houses can be problematic, it is known that new residences were constructed in the mid-eighteenth century by Carden at Templemore, Otway at Templederry, Toler at Beechwood, and Pennefather at Ballyowen (128). So that the picture evident in 1777 is largely the product of the previous 20 or 25 years of prosperity. Although incomes were stagnant in the 1770s the prosperity which resumed thereafter meant that incomes rose again. If one accepts a landed class of around 160 in the 1770s and one of 200 in 1800, then something of the order of 40 new mansions may have been erected in that period. Houses that are datable to this period include Marlfield (Bagwell), Longfield (Long), Kilcooley (Barker), Peterfield (Holmes), Glenconner and Ballingarrane (Watson) (129). Estimates of the cost of such building programmes were not readily forthcoming. In 1793 an estimate for stone work alone on the new gateway at Kilcooley was put at £104 (130).

House building involved a large scale capital outlay on the part of landlords, but never to such an extent in Tipperary at least to result in a crippling financial burden on estates. Even though the Damers started to erect a substantial mansion house called Damers Court on their estate at Shronell in the 1750s and 1760s, the costs of the uncompleted project did not influence its ability to survive as a landed family (131). There is no pattern of reckless over spending on new mansion houses, except to a degree in the case of the Mathews who as British landowners and MPs in the Imperial parliament acquired greater models of grandeur to aspire to. What house building took place among the Tipperary gentry was of a scale not to be an excessive drain on incomes. Indeed it must be concluded that the order of increase in incomes and wealth generation was of such a degree as to allow landed families to sustain and absorb a range of items of expenditure - family, personal, and estate - without leading to rampant insolvency.

Two main families had problems of financial management the resolution of which had important results in terms of the personnel comprising the landed class. The case of the county's leading family, the Mathews of Thomastown, illustrates the dire consequences which could ensue from debt accumulation and marriage settlements. The key dates in



this process were 1759 when George Mathew made his will ; the marriage and related settlements of Francis Mathew in 1765 ; and the act of 1780 which placed the estate in the hands of trustees.

Under the 1759 will of George Mathew (d.1760), the Thomastown and Thurles estates, then valued at £8,000 annually, came to Thomas Mathew of Annfield for life with remainder to his son Francis (132). Particular provisions in the will allowed the inheritor to charge the estate with a jointure of £600 and portions totalling £6,000 ; to make leases of 3 lives or 41 years ; and to pay legacies amounting to £9,000. Following the death of George Mathew, Thomas Mathew inherited and came into possession of the Thurles estate as tenant in tail (by virtue of an earlier settlement of 1713) (133), and into the Thomastown estate as tenant for life under the 1759 will. At that stage the estate was said to be 'incumbered to a very great amount', due to the debts of a previous generation and because of the charges provided for in the 1759 will (134).

Two settlements of 1765 added to the financial burden on the estate. One made previous to the marriage of Francis Mathew to Ellis Smyth, in consideration of her portion of £10,000 (£2,000 of which was payable), charged a jointure of £1,000 and £8,000 as provision for younger children on the Thurles and Thomastown estates. By a second settlement Thomas Mathew made over to trustees the mansion house and lands of Thurles as a maintenance for his son Francis following his marriage. In accordance with the will of 1759 Francis Mathew agreed to charge the lands with £600 part jointure and £6,000 for portions. In addition both agreed to apply for an act of parliament to allow Francis to charge the lands with a further annuity of £400 and £2,000 for portions, so that the entire arrangement would conform with the sums agreed on in his own marriage settlement (135). This particular settlement had disastrous consequences because by it Thomas Mathew was deemed to have curtailed his powers as tenant in tail of the Thurles estate under the 1713 settlement. As a result he was precluded from raising any money on the estate by way of sale or mortgage to satisfy debts. Creditors sought the satisfaction of their claims, the court of Chancery appointed receivers, and by their mismanagement the rents were depleted.

In accordance with the settlement of 1765 an act of parliament was duly applied for in 1772 seeking to have provision made for the enlarged jointure and portions , and for the payment of debts (136). By 1780, when the act was finally obtained, debts on the estate stood at £70,000 made up of a principal of £40,504, interest payments of £19,824, and



legal costs of £9,672 (Table XVIII). The principal creditors were Michael Aylmer who was owed £21,590 and Justin McCarthy who was owed £14,954. At this stage the estate was producing a rental of £12,600 but this was likely through the fall of leases to rise to £20,000 annually. Nevertheless the arrears of principal, mounting interest payments, and the cost of law suits were deemed to be a great drain on the estate following its inheritance by Francis Mathew after his father's death in 1777. These difficulties were compounded because Francis Mathew had to make provision for his own offspring numbering three sons and two daughters to the amount of £20,000 and because his wife's jointure was enlarged to £1,500. In consideration of these encumbrances the 1780 act placed the Mathew estate in Cork, Clare and Tipperary in the hands of trustees who were empowered by sale or mortgage to satisfy the debts and charges (137).

In the ensuing years the trustees proceeded to dispose of the estates, one transaction alone in 1782 raising over £23,000 and by 1810 most of the debts were discharged (138). However by that date a separate debt amounting to £60,000 had arisen largely from judgement debts and from personal borrowing indulged in by Francis Mathew, first earl of Llandaff and his two sons Francis James, second earl and Montague Mathew (139). They borrowed from neighbours like Thomas Lanigan (£5,400), from head tenants notably James Scully (£12,000), and from the Dublin financier David La Touche (£2,400 in 1792) (140). These sums constituted additional claims on the estate and their satisfaction demanded further measures. A number of outright sales took place in consequence. In the period 1809-14 sales on the Thomastown estate raised £148,950 of which £97,750 was applied to debts (141). The principal purchasers were Nicholas Maher (£26,000), Thomas Scott, second earl of Clonmell (£34,000), William Plunkett (£22,750), Daniel Kinahan (£23,000), Thomas Ryan (£8,000), Laurence Waldron (£25,000), and James Scully (£33,200) (142). Maher and Scully were existing tenants on the estate who bought out their interest and became landowners in their own right. Scott excepted, all the major purchasers were catholics showing that a substantial proportion of the wealth generated in the late eighteenth century was in their hands. Scully, one of the county's leading catholics, was enormously wealthy and had established his own bank in Tipperary in 1802 (143).

A neighbouring family which experienced indebtedness and sale at this time also was Meade, earls of Clanwilliam. There is a similar history of large and unsustainable family



settlements and debt accumulation culminating in private legislation and subsequent sales. In the case of the Meades the key dates in this process are : 1765, 1787, 1793, and 1805.

In 1765 on the marriage of Sir John Meade to Theodosia Magill heiress to a Co.Down estate, the settlement made provision for her jointure of £3,500 (£2,500 of which was chargeable on the Tipperary estate), and a sum for younger children of £30,000 (£20,000 on the Tipperary estate) (144). Thus about two thirds of the charge was placed on the Tipperary estate. Three factors made this charge untenable subsequently. First, the large progeny resulting from the marriage ; second, the heavy personal debts incurred by Sir John Meade ; and third, income from the estate was insufficient to satisfy the debts.

The marriage issue of five sons and five daughters made the provision of the 1765 settlement seem inadequate, indeed disastrous. More seriously by 1787 debts had, through lavish spending by the earl of Clanwilliam as he became in 1776, reached £53,807 (exclusive of interest) plus a mortgage of £8,000 on the Tipperary estate and £10,328 in bills and notes, making in all £72,135. Although the debt from bills and notes was settled in annuities of £5,525 to the creditors out of the estate, clearly the earl's income of £14,000 in 1775 (Table V) was inadequate to satisfy the total debt and to cater for the family charges. In consequence in 1787 it was agreed that part of the earl's estate in Cork and Kilkenny (remaindered on the eldest son under the 1765 settlement), be sold or mortgaged to pay off the debts. The Tipperary estate was to remain charged with the £20,000 and £2,500 (145). The marriages soon after of two daughters Ann and Catherine Meade to Lord Powerscourt and John Whaley respectively, required the payment of portions of £4,000 raised on the Cork and Kilkenny lands, leaving Richard the eldest son without a sufficient maintenance. To rectify this in 1788 Richard was granted a maintenance of £1,700 charged on the Tipperary and Down estates (146).

By 1791 debts, including the Tipperary mortgage stood at £31,327 and in that year the earl consented to forego his life interest in the estate in return for £1,000 annually with a similar amount for his wife out of the Down estate. However debt continued to grow for it was £46,251 in 1795, and the choice lay between satisfying this and paying the portions of younger children. It was agreed that the former option should take precedence, the sums to be raised by sale of the Tipperary estate. As a prelude to this it was necessary to resettle the estate by a transfer of the jointure and portions onto the



Down estate and for this purpose an act of parliament was applied for and obtained in 1795. Already a trustee was appointed in 1793 for the disposal of the Tipperary lands of 4,870 acres centring on Golden with head rents of £3,341 (147). This trusteeship facilitated the disposal of the estate, while the act of parliament provided for the transfer of encumbrances.

Although the sales were initiated in 1793 they were not finalised until after 1805. Of the 15 head tenants on the estate the most substantial were the McCarthys who held the 1,000 acre Springhouse lands at a head rent of £1,000 and which gave a profit rent of £500 in 1793, £1,000 in 1805 (148). The McCarthys purchased the fee simple for £18,000 (149). Another large catholic head tenant on the estate was James Scully who held 291 acres in all with a head rent of £172, profit rent of over £300 (150). Scully laid out at least £19,380 in purchases on the Clanwilliam estate in 1806 and 1808 effectively buying out his own interest and that of others (151). The Meade estate in Tipperary, created essentially out of the Ormond estate, passed by virtue of debt accumulation and the contingencies of family settlement into the ownership of some leading catholic head tenants notably McCarthy and Scully, thereby duplicating the contemporaneous trend on the adjoining Mathew estate. While prudence was the hallmark of the Scully family in all its dealings - exemplified in the remark of Denys Scully in 1806 of his father James that 'His principal object . . . was that of acquiring wealth, his next was that of preserving it, his views of public matters were dependent upon these objects' - it was not replicated in a later generation of the McCarthys (152). The calibre of that family's representatives in the early nineteenth century was not high and the estate passed out of the family's possession in 1816 (153).

A number of other minor cases of indebtedness can be documented. In the 1750s there was some estate shedding by the earl of Thomond of most of his small Tipperary estate in west Clanwilliam, most of which passed to Damer (154). Indeed the volatility of landownership in Clanwilliam is further shown by the disposal in 1787 of property in the parish of Clonpet amounting to 1,690 acres belonging to Stephen Creagh Butler of Kilmoyler, for the satisfaction of personal debts of £20,000 and a marriage portion of £4,000 due to Lord Dunboyne's heirs (155). It was followed by the disposal of the fee of about 151 acres of the nearby O'Brien-Butler estate at Bansha in 1794 (156). By a private act in 1778 the estate of the earl of Carrick in Slievardagh of 1,360 acres was placed in the hands of trustees for payment of a mortgage debt of £15,000. The lands



appear to have eventually passed to the La Touche family (157). In 1788 John Hyde obtained an act for the disposal of 1,100 acres part of his 1,960 acre Tipperary estate situated in Clanwilliam and Kilnamanagh in order to consolidate his main estate in Co.Cork (158). In Iffa and Offa the main disposal was of the Chearnley lands of 786 acres mostly in fee near Burncourt (159). For the alleviation of debts on the Ryan of Inch estate over 1,000 acres were advertised for sale in 1816 (160). In contrast to these transfers in the south landownership in the northern part of the county continued to be stable. Few outright sales are in evidence. Proceedings on the Bloomfield (1774), Rogers (1799), Newenham (1802) and Otway (1803) estates, however, are worthy of notice (161). On the whole the main changes in landownership in the late eighteenth century were concentrated in the south of the county principally in the baronies of Clanwilliam and Middlethird and revolved around the Mathew and Meade disposals in the 1790s and 1800s.

The majority of landed families were able to manage their debts without incurring insolvency. For instance between 1755 and 1775 Sir Thomas Maude accumulated debts of £27,000 which passed to his brother Cornwallis Maude, Viscount Hawarden (d.1803) after 1777 (162). A successful marriage by Thomas Ralph, second Viscount (d.1807) to the daughter of the archbishop of Cashel (later earl of Normanton) may have served to reduce debt, for the Hawarden estate survived intact to be one of the largest in the county in the nineteenth century (163). In the 1770s also the level of debt on the Butler (Cahir) estate stood at £51,000 exclusive of 5% interest, which had mounted since 1750 through heavy borrowing from London merchants (164). This degree of debt probably precipitated a general releasing of the estate between 1779 and 1788 which brought in immediate and badly needed cash (165). Debt continued to be a feature of the estate subsequently, though a fortuitous marriage in 1834 brought in £200,000 which was applied to debts which then stood at between £250,000 and £300,000 (166). In the Maude and Cahir cases opportune marriages played a prominent role in reducing debt thereby avoiding loss of landed estate. At a lesser level good financial management appears to have been the general norm. For instance, John Bayly of Ballynaclough near Nenagh incurred judgement debts of £41,000 between 1745 and 1788, but satisfied £30,000 of that amount in the same period leaving only £11,000 outstanding by the 1790s (167).

The experience of the Ryans of Inch shows how an average landed family dealt with



debt and survived successfully as landowners. At the time of John Ryan's death in 1778 rents brought in £1,368, while total debts stood at £10,660 with annual payments standing at £1,024 leaving a net income of only £194 (168). At this point there was some doubt about the succession to the estate not merely because John Ryan left no issue, but also because a younger brother Denis, an officer in the Austrian service, initially sought to press his claims under the gavel clause in the penal laws as the Ryans were catholic (169). However, a letter from an executor and brother-in-law of the deceased, Walter Woulfe of Carrick, to an elder brother George Ryan then in South America soliciting his return to inherit the estate, proved effective. Woulfe wrote that 'he [John] has left you a very good bone notwithstanding tis incumbered with bond and judgement debts of above six thousand pounds sterl[in]g incurred partly by your father [Daniel Ryan (1714-67)] and some by your brother' (170). Another party was suggesting to George Ryan an advantageous match to the daughter of a wealthy Limerick merchant, Philip Roche, as a method of alleviating his situation (171). This marriage came to pass in 1783 : she brought a portion of £5,000 (£3,500 of which was applied to debts), and a jointure of £400 and portions of £6,000 settled on the estate (172).

By 1786 rents stood at £1,596, debts were down to £6,539 with the annual charge running at £845 making the latter 53% of income (173). By 1807 the respective amounts stood at £1,941 (rent), £10,703 (total debt), and £1,024 (yearly charge) showing that the proportion of the latter to the rent had remained much the same (52.75%) (174). The fall continued in relation to the annual charge by 1811 (46.24%). In the same period the net income rose from £194 in 1778 to £751 in 1786, £917 in 1807, and £1,146 in 1811 (Table VI). Thereafter the effects of the post 1815 depression can be seen in the disposal of some lands in 1816 as already noted, and in a fall in net income in 1816 to £694 and a rise in debt to £20,374 (175). The experience of the Ryan estate shows that up to 1815 the net incomes of landowners could improve markedly (almost six fold on the Ryan estate 1778-1811) and yet be able to bear a considerable burden of debt. In fact in the Ryan case the amount of debt actually fell by 5.5% and the annual charge by 3.7%. The Ryans are perhaps representative of the majority of landed families in the county who, by enjoying rising incomes in an inflationary period, were able to provide liberally for offspring and risk estate expenditure, and yet remain solvent until 1815 at least.

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So far income, expenditure, and debt have been considered together with the circumstances and influences determining changes in the pattern of landownership. A number of additional questions must now be addressed so far as marriage alliances are concerned, since they constitute the second method whereby changes in the landed class were attained in this period. Firstly, to what extent was marriage a main cause making for the enlargement of estates ? Secondly, what is the pattern of inheritance achieved through less conventional methods ?

A normal uncomplicated succession through primogeniture was the experience of the majority of landed families such as Barton of Fethard, Bayly of Ballynaclough, Parker of Castlelough, Cambie of Castletown, Hamerton of Hamerton, and Moore of Mooresfort (176). In their cases no extension in landed estate occurred as a result of marriage alliances. It was through marriages to heiresses that estates were extended. The outstanding example of this at the outset of the century is the marriage in 1702 of Henry Prittie of Kilboy to Elizabeth daughter and heiress to James Harrison of Cloughjordan (Genealogy I). This alliance added to the sizable Prittie estate of 3,600 acres a further 900 acres centring on the township of Cloughjordan which had the advantage of being in the same region as the home estate. The joining of the estates brought the Prittie family important political benefits, since by the extension of its landed interest it gained in freeholder strength in an area where rural protestants were more numerous than elsewhere in the county. In this way the displacement of one landed family consolidated the interest of another and enhanced its political prospects, which for the Pritties were largely built on a family interest (177). In the next two generations each of the heirs to the Prittie estate married heiresses : Deborah Bayly in 1736 and Catherine Sadlier in 1766, thereby further consolidating the family's interest, landed and political.

At the other end of the county a marriage in mid-century to an heiress also had important consequences for landed society and politics. In 1751 John Hely, an ambitious barrister of modest origins from Co.Cork, married Christian Nickson, niece and heiress of Richard Hutchinson of Knocklofty near Clonmel (178). The marriage was costly for Hely in that he agreed to pay off Hutchinson's debts of £11,000 (including £1,500 owed to his sister), received no portion and only a reversionary interest in the estate of over 3,000 acres (179). However, in return for adopting the name Hutchinson the estate was to devolve on him and his heirs and he had power to charge it with £2,000 for younger



children. In the process Hely obtained a rural estate and a foothold in the landed class. In this case the presence of an heiress served to introduce a new person into county society who was later to advance the prestige of the family, for it achieved an earldom (1800) and was primarily responsible for carrying the act of union in Tipperary, and was also distinguished for its support of catholic relief. Indeed the family may be said to have acted in an intermediate role between the protestant and catholic gentry of the county on this issue. The family's advent to the landed class was of immense significance.

Two other families who had their surnames perpetuated by virtue of the marriage of heiresses are Cole and Dawson. The Cole estate of 1,800 acres at Ballymackey became part of the Bowen, Co.Cork estate by virtue of the marriage of Jane Cole, an heiress, to John Bowen (180). In this case the alliance had the effect of replacing a resident owner with an absentee one, for the main Cole-Bowen estate was in Cork. However, this was not the case with the second family of Dawson. The marriage of Mary only daughter and heiress of James Dawson of Ballynacourty in 1735 to Hugh Massy of Duntryleague, Co.Limerick, meant an addition of a 2,000 acre estate in Tipperary in return for the adoption of the patronymic Dawson (181). The Massy-Dawsons became an important landed family advancing to the peerage as Lords Massy (1776), maintaining a residence at Suir Castle south of Golden, and with other branches of the Massys intermarrying with other county families like Barton.

Cases where the family surname does not appear to have been retained on the passage of an estate through an heiress include that of Green of Killaghy near Mullinahone. Samuel Green of Killaghy died in 1710 without male heirs so that the estate of 4,300 acres passed to his elder daughter Frances' husband, William Despard of Queen's County, who as a younger son obtained a considerable estate on which he came to reside (182). Lands in the same region came to the Pennefather family by virtue of the marriage of Matthew Pennefather (d.1688) to Lavinia Kingsmill (d.1733), and though it is not clear whether she was an heiress a family history credits her with bringing him a considerable estate (183). Of the cases examined so far the experiences of Harrison, Dawson, Hutchinson, Cole, Green, and Kingsmill represent the passage of estates out of the hands of families who were grantees under the acts of settlement and explanation. In the case of Harrison and Kingsmill the lands went to fellow grantees within the county and so operated to enlarge their interests therein. Of the rest only the Cole lands



passed to a family who were entirely absentee, the new owners of the Hutchinson, Green, and Dawson patrimonies being generally or occasionally resident.

To these case histories of estates descending through females and enlarging others, can be added others of noteworthy importance. The list of heiresses can be supplemented by Frances Juliana, daughter of Edward Warter-Wilson, Bilboa Co. Limerick whose estate in the parishes of Abingdon and Doon straddled the border with Tipperary near Cullen, and whose family were pre-1641 settlers in the region. Following her father's death in 1762 the estate was placed in the hands of trustees for payments of his debts while she was a minor under her mother's guardianship (184). In 1788 she married Sir John Rous of Suffolk who became first earl of Stradbroke (185). Correspondence and accounts from the 1790s and 1806 indicate that Rous was an absentee (186). At a more modest level the operation of heiresses facilitated the transfer of property out of the hands of two long established families, Fogarty and Hackett. The estate of the ancient Gaelic family of Fogarty (after whom a barony Eliogarty, i.e. Eile Ui Fhogartaigh, was named), of Castle Fogarty near Thurles devolved on James Fogarty and on his death in 1788 the right of succession came to the issue of his sister, Elizabeth and her husband, William Lanigan of Co. Kilkenny, whose son came to reside on the mother's estate which was used to establish him (187). Similarly, on James Hackett of Orchardstown near Clonmel being disinherited by his father (d. 1773), his sister Mary who married Thomas Mandeville of Ballydine in 1768, inherited (188). While residence was the outcome in both cases the case of Lady Caroline Damer who inherited the vast Damer estate in 1808 on the death unmarried of her brother George, second earl of Dorchester, resulted in non-residence. For on her death, also unmarried, in 1829 the Damer estate became part of the Queen's County estate of the Dawson family earls of Portarlington (189). The effect here was to transfer ownership of a large property out of the main line after little more than 100 years of being in its possession.

Much the same experience is evident in relation to the Barker estate at Kilcooley. This family was extremely fortunate in earlier generations so far as inheritance is concerned. Indeed their very introduction as landowners to the county was due to marriage to an heiress. The estate at Kilcooley was originally owned by Sir Jerome Alexander, a disreputable adventurer, who had purchased it from the earl of Ormond. Before his death in 1670 he laid down that his daughter Elizabeth, an heiress, should marry a protestant



Englishman which she did in 1676 when she married Sir William Barker of Bocking Hall, Essex (190). Subsequent marriages in the family were successful : Sir William Barker, second baronet, married a co-heiress Catherine Keck ; his eldest son and heir William married Mary daughter of Valentine Quin of Adare, Co.Limerick ; and his grandson, also William fourth and last baronet, married in 1760 Catherine heiress of William Lane, a match which served to consolidate the Barker estate in Slievardagh (191). However, on his death in 1818 without issue the estate passed to his nephew Chambre Ponsonby who adopted the surname Barker. Failure of heirs was an important feature in the descent of the Everard estate, as has been noted, and it was also present in the Holmes estate of Johnstown for the marriage of Peter Holmes (d.1802) and Elizabeth Prittie in 1765 was childless, succession of the estate devolving on his grand nephew.

Instances of inheritance through co-heiresses are few, but the outstanding case is that of the estate of Hugh Smith son of the original grantee Erasmus Smith. This was a private estate distinct from that of the Erasmus Smith Schools estate, though situated in the same district. With no male heirs the estate devolved on his two daughters, Dorothy and Lucy who married respectively Hon.John Barry, youngest son of the fourth earl of Barrymore, and James Stanley, Lord Strange, their son inheriting the title of earl of Derby (192). Both families were substantial landowners in Cheshire and Lancashire already and both adopted the patronymic Smith. In 1755 a division of the Tipperary estate was agreed on with Smith-Barry obtaining 4,908 acres and Stanley 6,108 acres in Clanwilliam and Middlethird (193). In this way the large estate of an absentee was partitioned and absorbed into the larger estates of the earls of Barrymore and Derby by virtue of the failure of male heirs and descent through co-heiresses. This increase in absenteeism was not necessarily detrimental for in the Derby case at least an improvement in the management of the Tipperary estate ensued (194). At a more modest level there is evidence of the operation of co-heiresses on the descent of estates in the case of Clutterbuck family of Derryluskan near Fethard whose estate on the death of Laurence Clutterbuck (1751) devolved on his two daughters who both married Queen's County proprietors ; on the death of Daniel Gahan of Coolquill (1800) his 1,000 acre estate in Slievardagh came to his two daughters only one of whom married an existing county proprietor ; and the case of the Going family, as on the death of James Going of Ballytarsney (1770) he left two daughters as co-heiresses (195). These instances



exemplify that heiresses played a significant role in the descent of estates and in the introduction of new personnel into the landed class.

There were less conventional methods by which progress into and within the county's landed class was attained. The underhand methods adopted by John Scott, solicitor (1774) and later attorney-general (1777), involved an opportunist marriage to the daughter of Thomas Mathew and the appropriation of certain leasehold interests (196). As a younger son of Thomas Scott of Mohubber near Ballingarry (an estate of 1,400 acres), John Scott advanced in the legal profession being called to the Irish bar in 1765 (197). Initially on friendly terms with Thomas Mathew, Scott intruded himself as a trustee for lands (Bouladuff, 170 acres, parish of Inch), which Mathew had settled on his mistress and in 1771 obtained possession of the same which were then producing rents of £450 and were worth £1,000 in 1800 (198). Secondly, Scott in 1768 married Catherine Marianne Roe, widow of Philip Roe (d.1767) and daughter of Thomas Mathew, and eventually laid claim to 312,000 in right of his wife following her death in 1771 without issue by him (199). By these methods Scott established himself by 1778 in a new mansion house at Dovehill between Carrick and Clonmel ; in 1784 he was created Baron Earlsfort and in 1789 Viscount Clonmell ; and in the interim his <sup>INCOME</sup>rose from £15,000 in 1787 to £20,000 in 1799 (200).

These details reveal how advancement could be gained through legal skill, astuteness, opportune marriage, and calculation (a personal trait espoused in Scott's private dairy (201)), leading to landed estate, the peerage, and social eminence. It shows that the landed class of the county was fluid allowing a younger son with talent and ambition to achieve marked advancement. Scott is perhaps the best exponent of those whom a correspondent of James Hutchinson of Timoney referred to in 1759 as 'people who fish for estates' (202). The appropriation of the traditionally inalienable See estate of the archbishop of Cashel by Charles Agar, archbishop (1779-1802) to form part of his private estate as earl of Normanton, must also be viewed as a manifestation of this tendency (203).

Two outstanding cases exist to indicate that abduction could serve as a means of social advancement. The successful abduction by a large middleman, Henry Grady, of Susanna Grove on his second attempt at Tipperary in 1756 brought him significant benefits (204). In right of his wife he received leasehold interests in town property in



Tipperary and also gained a title to lands in Clanwilliam which he used to pay off debts on his Limerick property (205). By 1775 his income was £7,000 the fourth largest of those landlords listed for the county in that year (206). Thus by virtue of an opportune abduction Grady benefited materially obtaining a town base, a reduction in debts, and an enhanced income. Benefits of a greater magnitude accrued to Samuel Phillips as a result of abducting his young cousin Mary Max, an heiress, in 1777. Already well endowed by her father, she became more so on the death of her only brothers in 1775 and 1777 when she became entitled to a large property mid-way between Cashel and Thurles estimated to be worth £30,000-£40,000 (207). In August 1777 Phillips abducted her and in the course of time he came to acquire a large property in her right. A survey of 1798 shows this property at Gaile to contain 880 acres (208). So important an addition did this represent that in the next generation the Phillips' moved from their Co.Kilkenny base to make Gaile their main residence.

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Catholic proprietors experienced particular problems in the eighteenth century deriving from political and social exclusion sanctioned by penal legislation. Yet it is evident that by virtue of a series of devices - single male heirs, legal protection through assignment of estates, preferential leasing arrangements, and conformity - catholics survived in sufficient numbers to constitute an important segment of the landed class at the close of the century. Indicative of this is the number of catholics of status who subscribed to the oath of allegiance in 1775 being 133 in all made up of 23 esquires, 64 gentlemen, and 46 farmers ; between 1778-91 catholic landed oath subscribers numbered 220 comprising 1 peer, 12 esquires, 17 gentlemen, and 190 farmers ; and between 1793-6 it was 364 divided between 12 esquires, 40 gentlemen, and 312 farmers (Tables LXVIII-LXXI). These figures bear witness that catholics formed a significant group within the county's landed class, and their participation is further enlarged if landed converts, who totalled 94 in 1751-90 (59 gentlemen, 21 esquires, 11 farmers, 3 peers/peeresses), are included (Table LXVII). In 1807 it was estimated that of the 6,500 freeholders in the county 5,500 or 84.6% were catholics showing that beneath the level of gentleman the base of the catholic landed class was wide (209). The experience of landed catholics can be treated under three headings : (1) owners in fee ; (2) converts ; and (3) head tenants.

It has already been noted that a substantial catholic interest survived from the



Williamite period including Lord Cahir and Everard. Yet the number of such families who remained catholic right through the century was few, indicating that there was a levelling in the religious sense just as there was at the apex of the landed class as a whole. Though Everard became a nominal protestant and the Dunboyne Butlers were reduced as a result of the 1729 sale and later conformed, the Butlers of Cahir remained catholic without being obliged to conform, forfeit their estate, or undergo the process of subdivision inherent in the gavelkind clause. Neither does the family appear to have fallen victim to hostile discovery proceedings. Much of the explanation for their survival can only be appreciated through an elucidation of family history (Genealogy III).

On the death of Pierce, fourth Lord Cahir in 1676 without male heirs, the estate and title passed to a minor branch of the family, the Butlers of Knockenanomagh or Knockenanneny near Clonmel (210). Though the heir, Theobald fifth Lord, had issue by two marriages a single male heir inherited before 1703. The provisions in the penal laws on inheritance enacted in the decade 1700-1710 did not therefore affect that heir Thomas, sixth Lord. The problems of the family did not become acute until after his death in 1744, when by law the estate should have divided among his five surviving sons. Apparently to avoid that eventuality the estate was in that year vested in trustees and subsequently mortgaged at various times in the 1750s, with the proviso that it was not to revert to the owner until the borrowed money was repaid (211). These mortgages were still outstanding in the 1770s when the stipulation regarding repayment was renewed (212). Thus the devices of trusteeship and the vesting of the legal estate in the mortgagee were used to ensure continuity of ownership. Additionally the outbreak of war with France and a renewed interest by the Irish parliament in framing anti-catholic laws in 1756, stimulated the family into anticipating possible discovery initiatives over the inheritance and their participation in the French service, by entering into collusive discovery arrangements (213).

James became de facto seventh Lord Cahir and significantly the family are included in Lodge's Peerage (1754) (214). He was an absentee living mostly in Suffolk, such absenteeism deriving less from considerations of his position as a catholic landed proprietor than from his disqualification from sitting in the Irish house of lords and a general preference of the peerage as a whole to be non-resident. In the mid-1770s he returned briefly to reside in Tipperary and there is evidence of him participating in social



gatherings and entertaining (215). By the time he died in 1788 the penal restrictions on catholic inheritance were repealed by the act of 1778. Ironically despite their repeal the estate passed into protestant hands in 1788. James died without issue, his brothers were either dead or unmarried, and his sisters were spinsters. Since the two brothers then living were in the Church, the title to the estate devolved on the son of a relation Richard Butler of Fethard who was or became a protestant, tenth Lord Cahir and later first earl of Glengall (216). Thus, having survived the vicissitudes of inheritance for half a century from 1744, the estate came to a protestant by choice rather than compulsion.

These represent the fortunes of the county's premier catholic family. At a lesser level the experience of more modest catholic landowners in fee can be outlined with reference to the Ryans of Inch (Genealogy VI). Following the death of his father Daniel in 1692, John Ryan inherited some lands in Inch parish which had been purchased or assembled since 1668 (217). These were added to by further purchases in 1703 making the entire estate into a formidable block of 3,000 acres (218). Having succeeded before 1700 John Ryan was unaffected by the penal legislation on succession, and on his death in 1723 he left a single male heir Daniel. Though the latter's death in 1767 received notice in the press and though he left three sons (John, George, and Denis the two last being out foreign), no partition of the estate occurred nor is there any evidence of discovery proceedings taking place (219). At this point the outcome becomes similar to that of the Cahir Butlers in that John Ryan died without issue in 1778 passing on the inheritance to his brothers. Possible acrimony would have ensued had a bill under the discovery clause filed by Denis (a younger brother who returned from military service in Austria for the purpose) for a moiety of the estate been proceeded with. However a compromise was reached whereby George Ryan, who returned from South America to inherit, agreed to pay Denis an annuity of £100 for life in return for the withdrawal of the bill (220). Thus a pattern of succession before 1700, inheritance by single male heir in 1723, and mutual succession in the 1770s characterised the fortunes of the Ryans. The fortuitous circumstances which favoured the survival of the Butlers of Cahir and the Ryans, both representatives of different strata of catholic landownership, were firstly inheritance before enactment of the penal laws in the first decade of the century ; secondly, succession in the next generation by a single male heir ; and thirdly, continuity of ownership up to c.1780 by stratagem (Cahir) and good fortune (Ryan), after which the



legal bars on succession were removed.

Both families had overseas connections in the military and commercial spheres, indicating that this was an important component in catholic lifestyle. The movement of catholic sons into officerships on the continent established itself as a distinct movement from the late seventeenth century, and Tipperary was prominent in this. The genealogies of Tipperary catholic families show that many younger sons went into continental military service. For example Thomas Butler, second son of Thomas eighth Lord Cahir, was sent at 16 years in 1737 to France to be an officer in the French army, in a year he was made a second lieutenant in Dillon's regiment of foot and later promoted to the rank of captain in Lally's foot, and he fought at the battle of Fontenoy (221). The Daltons of Grenanstown near Nenagh had a distinguished military service in the Austrian and German armies. Peter Dalton received the title of count from the German emperor. While they were absent from Ireland their landed interests appear to have been attended to by the Pritties of Kilbooy. In 1796 Dalton could write to Prittie of that 'mutual friendship that has so long existed between our family's (sic)' (222). In the commercial area there were strong overseas links between catholic landed families and their overseas relations, a nexus which centred on the port of Waterford through its commercial contacts with France and Spain. The McCarthys, for instance, were one of the largest mercantile interests in Bordeaux and the Ryans of Inch in Spain. These overseas military and commercial activities provided career outlets for younger sons of catholics of gentry status, thereby facilitating inheritance by a single heir to the home estate.

The fact that one can document only two cases of catholic owners in fee in such detail signifies perhaps that they may be exceptional. More representative of the fate of catholics in fee was the resort to conformity as a device for keeping estates in their ownership. The estimated total number of converts for the county in the period 1705-1810 is less than 600, with the number for the early part of the century (1705-1750) low at 188 compared to 337 for the period 1751-1778, with only 48 for the years 1779-1810 following the relaxation of the penal laws (Table LXVI). While in the majority of cases the social or occupational status of those conforming is not specified, where it is the number of persons of landed status converting between 1705 and 1750 was 72 consisting of 53 gentlemen, 11 esquires and 8 farmers. There was a sharp rise in the number of converts after mid-century, and the number of landed converts in



1751-1790 was 94 (Table LXVII). So that between 1705 and 1790 the number of landed converts was in excess of 160 individuals, though a small minority of these were persons who conformed twice particularly in the 1760s (223). In most cases conversion was the characteristic of individual catholics in a particular generation, while in others it pertained to particular families over successive generations. Again, as with owners in fee, the particular circumstances of individual families are paramount if a proper assessment of the effects of conversion on catholics is to be made and viewed in the broader context of the landed class as a whole.

In this respect the position and experience of the Mathew family is vital. How the estate descended in the period up to 1760 and how at that date the entire estate devolved on a junior branch can be demarcated by four key dates : 1713, 1736, 1738, 1760. The Thurles branch, in contrast to that at Annfield, were fortunate in having a succession of three single male heirs following the death of Theobald Mathew of Thurles in 1699 (Genealogy II). There is in consequence no pattern of conversion in this branch. The succession was provided for by a settlement of 1713 whereby, in the event of the failure of heirs male in the Thurles line, the estate was to go to the Annfield and Thomastown branches successively (224). In 1738 the Thurles and Thomastown estates were joined because of the failure of direct heirs to the latter, and thereafter continued as the inheritance of one person until 1760. The heir to this enlarged estate was George Mathew of Thurles who conformed in 1740 to succeed to the Thurles and no doubt to the Thomastown property which he later inherited (225). An earlier conformity in 1702 (which was not enrolled until 1711) by the heir to the Thomastown estate ensured his inheritance and that procedure at gavelkind among two brothers was avoided.

The Annfield branch display a different experience. On the death of Thomas Mathew in 1714 the Annfield fee simple estate should by law have divided between his three sons. But the eldest son Theobald inherited with a residue of the personal estate going to the two younger sons, James and Edmund (226). There is no evidence that Theobald conformed to mitigate any possible threat of disinheritance or discovery by virtue of this arrangement. On the marriage of his eldest son Thomas Mathew in 1736 a settlement was entered into whereby Theobald agreed on his death to leave Thomas £20,000 should the estate not descend to him solely, and bonds to this amount were executed at the same time to secure its future payment, but Thomas did not join in these bonds (227).



On Theobald's death in 1745 the estate descended to Thomas Mathew and neither of his three brothers initiated proceedings to convert the estate into gavelkind (228). In 1746 the real estate equivalent to the £20,000 judgement debt, was made over to trustees (229). All the members of the Annfield branch were still catholic at this stage. Thomas Mathew, however, conformed in 1755. This event was opportune for on the failure of heirs male of George Mathew of Thurles and Thomastown on his death in 1760 and by a clause in his will of 1759 and in accordance with the settlement of 1713, Thomas Mathew became the sole heir to the whole estate which for the first time was consolidated under the ownership of a single individual (230). This was an event of major significance in the evolution of landed interests in the county. It showed that conformity rather than being a stage in the decline of families could, in combination with the devices of trusteeship and failure of heirs, act to consolidate a catholic interest.

After the Mathews probably the most significant conversion before 1760 was that of John Butler of Kilcash in 1739. The experience of this branch of the Butlers is interesting from a number of different perspectives. Thomas Butler of Kilcash, a colonel in the Jacobite army and a leading catholic, died in 1738 when the estate came to his son John as single male heir (231). Given this situation it is initially surprising to find that he conformed in 1739 (232). Yet it becomes comprehensible because in addition to inheriting the Kilcash estate John Butler was also heir apparent to the earl of Arran on whom devolved the residue Ormond estate and title. This point was stressed in the public notices of his conversion (233). The rights of remainder to the Arran/Ormond estate had already been applied for by the Kilcash branch and confirmed (234). Arran died in 1758 following which John Butler experienced an addition to his estate and became *de jure* fifteenth earl of Ormond, though he never assumed the title. Despite this new prominence problems emerged in the 1760s. John Butler was in his dotage and insane and left no heir on his death in 1766 (235). Instead he was succeeded by his first cousin Walter Butler of Garryricken, Co.Kilkenny whose only son John conformed in 1764, inherited, married into the Wandesford family, and in 1791 had the Ormond title restored and formally recognised (236). So while problems of succession could be overcome in the short term by conformity, the ultimate descent of the Kilcash branch in the direct line became frustrated due to more human factors. In the process there was a loss of one of the leading catholic families and also the passage of ownership to a Butler



branch outside the county.

The Mandevilles of Ballydine and nearby branches, an ancient catholic family, displayed a tendency to convert particularly during the 1760s (Genealogies VII,VIII). Before that decade the most important conversion was that of John Mandeville of Ballynaghmore in 1729. This event appears to have been occasioned by the desire to protect a lease made to another member of the family at under two thirds the yearly annual value, for at the same time John Mandeville filed a bill of discovery to this effect (237). Mandeville himself became the object of a discovery bill in 1732 when the plaintiff used it as a method of recovering a debt out of a total claim on Mandeville which one schedule puts at over £3,000 in all (238). The affairs of the Mandevilles appear to have been in disarray in the eighteenth century indicated by the bunching of conversions in the 1760s, when seven members of the family conformed at least once ; by the sale of lands to John Scott ; and by the cross marriages between different branches of the family (239). The process of conversion was only one element in all this, but it was used with less success in comparison to the Mathews for instance ; and there was no pattern of the Mandevilles embarking on careers overseas which would have facilitated inheritance by the elder son.

Conformity in the Morris family of Knockagh west of Templemore had as its background internal family division over religious allegiance and related factors of inheritance. An elder son and heir Col.Redmond Morris conformed in 1703, significantly before the enactment of the penal legislation and seemingly out of reasons of genuine conviction. Redmond's grandfather was a protestant, though his father Sir John Morris was a catholic who vowed to break a strict settlement by disinheriting Redmond if he conformed. It required a private act of parliament to compel the father to adhere to the settlement and thus ensure Redmond's succession despite his conformity (240). In the next generation the reason behind the conversion of John Morris of Latteragh in 1727 is not readily evident, but it may have had as its context the vesting of the estate in trustees in 1722 and related proceedings in the courts in the 1720s and 1730s (241).

As catholic peers, though their estates were reduced due to the sale of 1729, the Butlers Lords Dunboyne are worthy of treatment because of their experience subsequently. The vendor of 1729, Edmund eighth Lord died in 1732 leaving four sons



the eldest, James becoming ninth Lord and dying in 1768 (Genealogy IV). On 19 December 1768 one week after his death a collusive bill of discovery was filed to protect the inheritance and before it came to a decree in June 1769 the heir Pierce, the future tenth Lord, returned from the French service, obtained a royal pardon, and conformed in February 1769 (242). On 3 June 1773 Pierce married Mary McNemara who was heiress to Butler of Kilmoyler and who conformed on 26 May 1773, but he died in August 1773 leaving an heir Pierce eleventh Lord, a minor (243). On his death in 1786 aged 13 the title devolved on his uncle John Butler then catholic bishop of Cork. The dilemma he faced between perpetuating the direct line and allegiance to the church and his choice of the former course of action has been treated by Costello (244). The bishop resigned his see in December 1786, married in April following, and conformed in Clonmel in August 1787 (245). Hence conformity and protectionist discovery proceedings were key elements in the maintenance of the title along with a pragmatic decision on the part of the ultimate heir.

These strategies also played a part in the descent of the Butler (Kilmoyler) estate situated in Clanwilliam and Queen's County, which became interlinked with the fate of the Dunboyne inheritance. Thomas Butler died without issue male in May 1746 leaving his Tipperary estate to Stephen Creagh (subsequently Stephen Creagh-Butler), his future son-in-law (246). Creagh conformed in October 1745 presumably in expectation of Thomas Butler's death as the contents of his will of May 1745 were then known. Butler settled the estate on Creagh for life with remainder to his sons in tail male, with remainder to Helen and Mary McNemara his nieces. Creagh had no issue neither had the devisee of the Queen's County estate, so that a vast inheritance (1,690 acres in Clanwilliam), eventually came to Mary McNemara the heiress expectant whose title was ratified in 1764 following her coming of age (247). In December 1764 discovery proceedings were initiated to safeguard the inheritance (248). In a short period in 1773 the fate of the estate was decided. On 3 May arrangements for the payment of her portion of £4,000 were made provided she married a protestant ; 26 May Mary conformed ; and on 3 June she married Lord Dunboyne who had already conformed in 1769 (249). Here one can detect two catholic families using strategies to mutual advantage.

The families so far discussed were Old English in origin. The experience of the family of Fogarty shows that the problems were similar for an old Gaelic family. Three persons



of the surname associated with the main branch conformed in 1709-1710. The main problems, however, arose after the death of Cornelius Fogarty in 1730 when in due course (after the death of his mother in 1733), the estate (the main component of which at Garrane and Fithmone near Birrisoleigh was held in fee), descended to four surviving sons who were catholic (Genealogy IX) (250). By law the estate should then have descended in gavelkind between the four but in fact the eldest son Thady or Timothy took possession and in 1734 a complex series of discovery proceedings were started which, aided by the conversion of another son Brian in 1740, kept the fate of the estate in the courts for about nine years when in 1743 Fithmone (278 acres) was either sold or mortgaged to John Carden (251). In fact Carden became the ultimate owner of Fithmone (which was used to establish a junior branch of that family), and a new generation of the Fogartys remained at Garrane which under its last chief representative James Fogarty, who conformed in 1783, was restyled Castle Fogarty.

These case histories of the part played by conformity in the descent of seven estates represent the experience of the most important and best documented families in the county. Other piecemeal evidence exists to document the experience of families like Grace, Egan, Keating, Lalor, and others (252). Altogether they exemplify the adoption of specific strategies to ensure continuity in the ownership and descent of ancestral estates. The range of success varied from the case of the Mathews to the Mandevilles. The expediency of conformity did not necessarily imply (except in the cases of Morris and Grace), that the individuals concerned identified with the ethos of protestantism particularly as it expressed itself on political issues. Conformity, as a requirement devised by the Anglican state at the outset of the century to curb catholic inheritance, was adapted to the needs of individual families and in Tipperary at least had unforeseen results for the composition of the landed class.

A numerous group of catholic gentry existed at the level of head tenant. The majority of those of esquire and gentleman rank who subscribed to the oath of allegiance in 1775 were in this category. Taking that year as a bench mark the spatial spread shows a concentration of large catholic tenants in the south of the county (253). Thus in a line stretching from south of Cahir to north of Cashel they are found in Shanrahan, Tubbrid, Cahir, Knockgraffon, Outerath, and Ballysheehan parishes and around Cashel and Thurles ; and a second grouping is found in a broad stretch of countryside veering



northward from a line linking Carrick and Clonmel with representation found in the parishes of Newtownlennon, Templetny, Kilvemnon, Kilcooley, Newchapel, Fethard, Graystown and Killenaule. Over much of this region large catholic head tenants were the dominant social and proprietorial group. Thus McCarthy of Springhouse and Keating of Garranlea held multi-thousand acre holdings which brought them to the notice of Young (254). Catholics like Keating of Knockagh and Nagle of Garnvella dominated the head tenantry on the vast Butler (Cahir) estate, and the bulk of the remainder were also catholic (255). Others of prominence in the region were Doherty (Outerath and Loughloher), Butler (Keylong), Meagher (Ballymorris and Toureen), Kearney (Cashel and Fethard), Scully (Kilfeacle), Lalor (Cregg), Long (Killoran), and Prendergast (Frehans). They were former landowners such as Keating, Kearney and Meagher whose ancestors had been expropriated in the seventeenth century but who had maintained their position by securing advantageous leases on estates. Or they were new families like McCarthy, Nagle and Scully who had come in to the region in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries and who established themselves as large head tenants (256). Some like McCarthy and Scully were to progress to being landowners in fee, but even before this they had a standing in the landed class. For instance, John McCarthy when addressing James Smith-Barry, a large local landowner, in 1785 treated him with the easy familiarity of a social equal and did not defer to the difference in their land titles (257). In 1793 James Scully was one of four catholics chosen for grand jury membership (258).

In contrast substantial catholic head tenants were few in the northern part of the county. A return of catholic tenants in the half barony of Ikerrin in 1750 (Table XXVII) shows only 8 proprietorial units of over 100 acres in size. Even they were minute compared to the multi-townland units held by their counterparts in the south, with the largest being Kennedy (500), Kennedy (400), Lalor (340) and Meagher (300). There were no catholics with holdings in excess of 100 acres in the barony of Kilnamanagh in 1765 and only 4 with acreages between 50 and 100 acres (Table XXVIII). These two returns, however, indicate that catholics were numerous at the strong farmer level (i.e. with holdings between 10 and 50 acres), with 93 (or about one quarter of the total) in Ikerrin and 89 (or half) in Kilnamanagh (259). This was also true of other areas as the large and increasing number of farmers who subscribed to the oaths shows : 46 in 1775,







evidently into the landed class (262). The presbyterians, headed by the Jacobs, were a closely knit group displaying a marriage pattern among a narrow range of families notably Ashe, Sankey, and Latham (263). Mercantile advancement into the landed class was progressive in the case of the Bartons who display a pattern of intermarriage with the Massys, but less so in the case of the Bagwells who clung to their origins in trade for two generations at least shown by marriages to Bristol (1736) and Cork (1749) mercantile families (264).

The pattern of marriage among major catholic families was one of integration. All such major families were related. Thus the Butler (Cahir) family were married to members of the Everard, Mathew, and Morris families (Genealogy III) ; Butler (Dunboyne) to Everard, Keating, and Butler (Kilmoyler) (Genealogy IV) ; and Butler (Kilcash) to Mandeville, Mathew, and Tobin (Genealogy V). A blurring of social distinctions is evident where catholic landowners forged marriage ties with members of large middleman families. Thus the Mandevilles had alliances with the McCarthy and Nagle families, as had the Ryans of Inch with the former ; while the Lalors were related to Doherty, Meagher, Phelan, and Scully all of whom were substantial middlemen (Genealogies VII, VIII, XI). In terms of marriages to leading catholic families outside the county the Butlers of Kilcash were to the fore with marriages to the Burkes, earls of Clanricarde, Kavanaghs of Borris, and Brownes of Kenmare (Genealogy V). Indicative of the social position attained by the McCarthys is that they forged extra-county ties with important catholic families : Tuite, Wyse, Shee and Farrell (Genealogy X). Catholics were married into some of the leading catholic merchant families in the southern ports. The Scullys, for instance, had marriage connections with Wyse of Waterford, Arthur and Sexton of Limerick, and Sause of Carrick (Genealogy XI); the Ryans of Inch married into the Roches of Limerick and Woulfes of Carrick (Genealogy VI) ; and the Nagles were connected with the Longs of Waterford (265). These connections tied the Tipperary catholic families into a far-flung network of mercantile links with catholics overseas especially through the Waterford nexus.

A further index of the standing and status of catholics was their ability to obtain official confirmation of their genealogies and grants of arms. Some junior families like Ryan of Glanogalia and O'Clery received such grants from the exiled Jacobite court in the early part of the century, and there were some privately sponsored attestations of gentry status



as with O'Neal of Ballyneal in 1724 (266). More significant were those grants made by the Ulster King of Arms. Such grants are on record for Egan of Uskane (1715), Walsh of Tenerife late of Tipperary (1732), O'Kearney of Ballyduagh (1750,1772), Purcell of Loughmoe (1757), McCarthy of Springhouse (1772), Ryan of Cadiz from Kilkeill, Co.Tipperary (1773), Fanning of Ballingarry (1775), and O'Dwyer of Spain formerly of Kilnamanagh (1776) (267). In 1785 the Daltons of Grenanstown, who had distinguished military careers on the Continent, were permitted to have their arms and title ('count'), obtained in the German service, for use in Ireland despite the reservation that they were catholic (268). In this way, despite their official exclusion from the normal paths to ennoblement and gentility, prominent catholics did receive confirmation of their genealogies and grants of arms.

There were few significant cross marriages between representatives of catholic or convert families, and protestants. A few minor alliances are on record : for instance, Cambie (Ryan, Lalor, Walsh), Grace (Latham, Langley), Hammersley (Hogan), Lalor (Cambie, Lidwill), Moore of Mooresfort (Scully), and Scully (Roe, Sadlier) (269). Of the 68 parishes (mainly in Cashel and Emly diocese), for which detailed returns for the 1766 religious census survive, only in 4 cases are catholics to be found in protestant households. Thus in the parish of Kilnerath, which included Newport, of the 115 protestant families 53 included catholics in their households, in contrast there was only one protestant in the 852 catholic families listed (270). Further south in the union of parishes formed by Athassel, Relickmurray, Ballygriffin, Dangandargan, Brickendown, and Hore Abbey there were 63 catholics in 15 of the 20 protestant families listed, but no protestants among the 439 catholic families (271). In the parish of Newchapel near Clonmel the 7 protestant families had 13 catholics under their roofs, and in Killea and Templemore parishes 44 catholics were present in 12 of the 25 protestant households enumerated (272). Servants would have formed a high proportion of those catholics present in protestant households, substantiating the fact that cross-marriages were not commonplace.

In this context the most striking feature is how isolated the Mathew family was in the landed class despite the evidence of conformity among its leading members. The association of the Mathew family with Tipperary extends from 1620, when George Mathew married the widow of Viscount Thurles, to 1841 when the estate passed out of



the family's direct ownership. The Mathews were amongst the oldest established gentry families in Glamorgan, south Wales, and it was the Tipperary branch which remained continuously linked with the senior line in Wales. The family's arrival in Ireland in the early seventeenth century could be expressive of a search for career outlets for younger sons, allied to a degree of military adventure. On the other hand the Mathews were novel among the New English of the pre-1641 period not only because they came to Ireland already of landed status, but also because they were catholic.

It is evident that advantageous marriages to widows and heiresses played an important function in the advancement of the family in the course of the seventeenth century (Genealogy II). In the first generation a marriage with the widow of Viscount Thurles formed the basis on which the senior branch of the Mathews became established on the Thurles estate (273). The standing of the family was further enhanced in the second generation by the marriage of George Mathew, a younger son and a half brother to the first duke of Ormond, to the widow of Lord Cahir, and he was to establish a second branch of the family at Thomastown in 1671. Alliances were also forged with other catholic families like Browne (Kenmare), Ryan (Inch), and Sall (Killough). However the family's range of marriage partners was not confined to those of their own religion rather it diversified into matches with representatives of the new interest notably Foulke, Eaton, and Hume. Indeed marriages with the two last families brought substantial benefits to the Mathews. George Mathew of Thomastown's second marriage to Lady Ann Hume (widow of Sir Thomas Hume, a relation of Ormond's who was assigned the large estate of a departing Cromwellian grantee), brought him an estate worth £10,000 in 1680, the title to which he converted to his own use and that of his heirs, and used the money to make further purchases of land (274). This development did not go uncontested (275). Nor did the marriage of George Mathew of Thurles (d.1738) to Martha Eaton, a protestant heiress to an estate worth £1,000 which Mathew made over to himself (276).

These were the most illustrious, beneficial, and in two cases controversial marriages entered into by the Mathews before c.1710. They brought advancement in terms of social standing, wealth, and accretions of land. Additionally family connections brought promotion to positions of trust and office, and also favourable leasing arrangements (277). After c.1710 the pattern of Mathew marriages continues to exhibit social



ambition. Taking the male line, the Thurles branch made matches with the catholic Butlers of Kilcash and the protestant Brownlows of Lurgan, Co.Armagh ; the Annfield branch married into the prestigious Shelley family, the local Morris family, and the heiress of a wealthy Indian nabob named Mathew (no relation) ; and the Thomastown line forged links with the Butlers of Ballyragget and with the widow of the last earl of Tyrone. The female side featured alliances with the local catholic Butlers of Kiveleagher and Ryans of Inch, Sir James Cotter and the Nagles in Co.Cork, and the O'Haras of Annaghmore, Co.Sligo (278). So in its period of formation the Mathew exhibited a mixed and controversial marriage pattern, in three directions : one, links with the older catholic families of Butler (Cahir), Sall, Morris, and Butler (Kilcash) ; two, alliances with the New English families Hume, Foulke, Eaton ; and three, inter-county marriages with prominent catholic (Cotter, Butler (Ballyragget)) or convert (O'Hara) families and others (Brownlow).

This pattern was more flexible in the seventeenth century than it became in the eighteenth when, due to a more restricted religious environment, the choice of marriage partners became more confined. At any rate it is clear that the Mathews did not utilise their conformity to forge marriage links with the leading protestant families of the county. Given that the Mathews were leading landowners (especially after 1760 when the estate was unified under one owner), the landed class outside the north , where the Prittie diaspora dominated, was less unified by virtue of marriage links. The family were, therefore, isolated in the landed class not integrating with its protestant element through marriages, and therefore not able to benefit socially and politically to the degree Prittie could.

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The landed class of the county was not a homogenous one. This was so at the outset of the eighteenth century and it was more so at its close. Members of the landed class were distinguished by differences in religion, race, and income. These differences, resulting from the seventeenth century land settlement were compounded in the course of the eighteenth by structural and personnel changes. In the former case by displacement at the top and the emergence below of more capitalised persons into the ranks of the farmer class ; and in the latter by the persistence of a pervasive catholic head tenantry, by the survival of a residue of catholic owners, and by the emergence of a hybrid group of



converts.

The experience on the Ormond, Everard, and Dunboyne estates exemplifies that landownership was far from static in the first half of the century. Everard and Dunboyne are the prime instances of catholic landowners experiencing the consequences of indebtedness by estate shedding, occasioned more by the mismanagement of personal finances than by the operation of the penal legislation. The Ormond estate shows the successful adoption of innovative measures to reduce debt. The continuing presence of debt accumulation to dangerously high levels on the Ormond (after 1711) and Everard (from the 1730s) estates was conditioned by the adherence of the two owners to the Stuart cause which, because of its rejection by the establishment, necessitated lengthy political exile in France. This in turn condoned absenteeism from Ireland.

The process whereby debt on these three estates was alleviated led to the creation of a body of new landowners the largest on the Ormond estate, and a number of new estate foci emerged. The number of new owners on the Everard (8) and Dunboyne (1) estates was less impressive though both marked the entry of two families, Barton and Bagwell, from trade to land supplemented by O'Callaghan whose background was in the law. The result of these changes, which involved considerable investment of funds in the land, was that landownership became more fragmented and the landed class enlarged.

Landownership was less stable in other respects also. The evidence adduced shows that the personnel of the landed class could alter significantly through marriage. Marriage to heiresses led to the extension or merging of estates in the case of Mathew, Prittie/Harrison, and Massy/Dawson ; division in the case of Smith ; and the introduction of new elements as with Barker, Fogarty/Lanigan, and Hutchinson/Hely. The opportunist strategy of abduction contributed to the material advancement of Grady and Phillips. Fogarty apart, these cases concern the displacement of families whose connection with the county dates only from the seventeenth century.

Changes in the landed class resulting from the disposal of property was a less marked feature of the late eighteenth century. This was largely due to the fact that the scale in the rise of incomes allowed landlords to absorb an expanded and more costly range of items of expenditure including family charges, estate embellishment, and capital schemes, without incurring the status of rampant insolvency. The evidence of the Bayly and Ryan estates shows that good financial management was the general norm of landed families in



this period. The most outstanding cases of land transfer were exceptional stemming as they did from a self-created restriction on borrowing powers, financial mismanagement, and heavy legal costs in the case of the Mathews, and a large family, personal debts and inadequate income in respect of the Meades. The shedding of these estates transformed a number of existing head tenants, notably the catholic Scullys and McCarthys, into landowners. Such a transition may only be of legal significance since such persons even as head tenants had a recognised status within landed society. Nevertheless the change was important because of their position as catholics, the amount of purchase money involved, and because it was resented (279). Here were large middlemen availing of the difficulties of their landlords to transform their status to that of owners in fee. Their upward mobility suggests that the displacement of this middleman class in rural society should not be overemphasised.

If these changes are considered cumulatively with those in the early part of the century then a levelling at the top of the landed class occurred during the course of the century, a trend already apparent from the 1775 list. There was a significant movement upward into the lower and middle income groups, a trend later extended to the farmer class as is evident from the number of wealthy freeholders in the first decade of the nineteenth century. This rise was the most marked transition within the landed class because it was so pervasive.

The number of catholic landowners in fee was reduced. The fact that the descent of only two estates in fee can be documented in detail may point to their exceptional status. More representative of the position of catholic proprietors was their experience as converts and as large head tenants. That conformity was the chief method whereby landed catholics retained their patrimonies can be shown from a sample of the better documented families. It manifested itself at different times in different families according to circumstance, usually at critical stages in the evolution of such families. For the majority of those examined the critical point appears to have been reached in the 1730s and 1740s when either a generation of catholic owners whose succession pre-dated the enactment of the penal legislation as with Butler (Kilcash), Butler (Kilmoyler) and Fogarty, or a succession of single male heirs no longer obtained as with Mathew (Thomastown and Thurles). One can view conversion alternatively as a process in the decline of families as with Mandeville, or of their survival which applies in most of the



cases examined. Catholic landowners who conformed came to constitute a hybrid group within landed society. Their assimilation to the protestant landed class could be difficult as the situation of the Mathews exemplifies and as the experience of the 1760s was to show. But ultimately it was these converts or their descendants, in association with the large grouping of catholics at head tenant and farmer level and liberal protestants, who were to triumph in the political leadership of the county particularly on sensitive issues like catholic relief.

Success on such issues depended on the shifts which had taken place in the landed class. Smith has argued for continuity in the distribution and size of estates in the county between 1641 and 1850, in particular for a survival of a residue of Butler lands, the old urban estate foci, and continuities especially in Eliogarty, Middlethird, and Iffa and Offa, and for discontinuities in the northern part of Tipperary (280). Superficially there is a certain credence to this view if analysis is confined to a strict comparison of the evidence for the two terminal dates of 1641 and 1850. However, account needs to be taken of the extensive changes on the Ormond estate in particular and their effect in creating a more diversified tabula rasa of new estate foci, a pattern itself modified subsequently. Secondly, the activity on the Mathew, Meade, and Creagh-Butler estates mostly in Clanwilliam in the period 1787-1814 shows that landownership was particularly fluid there. Thirdly, while property changes were most sweeping in the northern baronies as a result of the seventeenth century confiscations, a general pattern of stability in landownership is evident there in the eighteenth. Such a view is consistent with the fact that close marriage ties existed between the families there which contributed to the political cohesion of the region in the Prittie interest.



## Chapter III

The most characteristic economic relationship in Irish rural society was that between landlord and tenant, a relationship regulated by the covenants of the lease. There were two basic categories of landowner in Tipperary : the majority who were single or private owners of estates, and the less numerous institutional owners civil and ecclesiastical. Resident or absentee, landlords were concerned to maximise the revenue bearing capacity of their estates by the regular accumulation of rents accruing from the lease obligations of tenants. Factors pertaining to the internal leasing circumstances of the particular estate and the current disposition of its owner in combination with prevailing economic conditions, influenced the timing and kind of lease granted, and conditioned the number, quality or solvency of tenants available at any point in time.

With the onset of the Williamite wars the common experience of landowners was one of devastation, dislocation of economic life, and disruption to tenurial arrangements. In the wake of these wars land values slumped, rents were depressed, and reliable solvent tenants were in short supply. It was reported in January 1692 that 'by reason of ye late warr ye price of lands in generall throughout this Kingdom is much lessened at p[re]sent, but more especially in this county [Tipperary], being so near Lymerick ye seat of warr dureinge ye two campanes, so that it is impossible for the ten[a]nts whose leases are not yet expired to pay the old reserved rent' (1). In addition to established armies, Tories and rapparees caused much disruption in the county preventing many existing tenants from retaining possession of their lands, and discouraging prospective tenants from offering more than one third or one quarter of the former value of lands (2). Of a former tenant, John Smith of Drumbane, on the estate of the governors of Erasmus Smith near Thurles, it was said : 'he is dead and his substance wasted ; the land now lyes wast[e] being a mountaine farm and under the insults of the rap[paree]s' (3). It was the nature of the response by landowners in Tipperary to the critical situation of the early 1690s which was to influence the kind of land tenure system which characterised rural society in the county in the eighteenth century.

The new leasing arrangements devised on the Ormond estate in the 1690s were formulated against a background of tenant impoverishment and landlord indebtedness. A large arrear of rents had arisen as a result of the wartime devastation, a situation compounded by a general scarcity of money. The total arrear for two years culminating



in early 1690 on the Tipperary estate was in excess of £9,780 out of a total for the entire estate in Ireland of under £17,300 recorded as unpaid in 1693 (4). These arrears arose from the fact that the few tenants, who remained on their lands during the course of hostilities after 1688, found on the cessation of war that they were impoverished with the source of their livelihoods decimated. Other tenants who fled the county never returned and those who did found their lands lying waste. In 1691 it was reported of Ormond's estate that 'all my lord's lands but in the county of Tipperary are in [a] good condition' (5). The personal circumstances of those tenants who had continued in occupation were critical. Richard Melsham, tenant of Ballinure, was said to be 'now very poor having lost all his stock in ye beginning of ye troubles'. At Dromineer, in the tenancy of John Parker, 'the lands [were] quite waste, ye house ruined and demolished, [and] ye tenant lost all his stock and mightily impoverished by the wars', and Thomas Dwyer at Ballycloghy was no better off being 'poor, ye lands wasted by ye wars' (6). The Mathews, who at this time were part head tenants and close relatives of Ormond's, had their arrears of rent respited and another tenant was in the fortunate position to be able to claim an abatement for the war period as such an eventuality had been provided for in his lease (7). In some cases distress for non-payment of rent and arrears might be obtained, though this could prove self-defeating as in one case at least the tenant rescued the cattle taken as distress (8). However, the characteristic feature of the estate in the immediate post-war period was that most tenants had abandoned their holdings, were unaccounted for, or were dead leaving a large arrear of rent and little assets or stock from which distress could be had (9). Indeed the Ormond estate was said to be 'disserted (sic) by tenants by reason of the great fall of lands and his lands thereby lay wast[e]' (10). With premises untenanted, land waste and no distress to be obtained, lands were re-entered and repossessed on behalf of the landlord and retained in his hands until reset either to relatives of former tenants, temporarily to undertenants or, in the majority of cases, to others by the commission headed by Lord Longford in 1692.

The second factor contributing to a reformulation of policy on the Ormond estate in the 1690s was the indebtedness of the landlord. In May 1688 the debts of the first duke amounted to over £98,500 on which there were annual interest payments of £6,000 (11). The origin of this estate indebtedness was the practice of the commissioners who managed the duke's affairs in the 1660s of granting leases to themselves and their



relations from whom they were lax in demanding rent payments. The result was that a large arrear began to accumulate forcing the duke to borrow heavily (12). The death of the first duke in 1688, the succession of the second duke, and the intervention of the Williamite wars were events which signified a break in continuity in dealing with estate and overall debt. Only with the appointment of the commission under Longford in 1691 was the serious management of the estate renewed.

The commission had two objectives : to regulate the position of the existing tenants, and to procure new tenants for lands which had gone out of lease or become untenanted during the war period. The existing tenants comprised those who had remained on their lands and those who returned having fled in 1688, and as a group they were clearly incapacitated and required the indulgence of the commission. Its senior member, Longford, thus sought Ormond's direction on 'whether allowance or abatement should not be made to such tenants as have continued upon your lands and have been plundered both by our army and the rap[p]arees' (13). Given their poverty this suggestion formed the basis of the approach ultimately adopted in relation to the existing tenants.

The untenanted lands were more extensive than the tenanted and there was an urgent need to have them reset to Ormond's best advantage. A dual approach to the setting of lands was adopted. Outside the two north western baronies of Lower and Upper Ormond leases for 31 years or 3 lives at the old rent, with a recommendation for abatement for 4 or 5 years, were to be granted. In these two baronies, however, short yearly tenancies at the old rent were to be given which, it was calculated, would only be an interim arrangement which, once the tenants proved themselves able to meet rent payments, could later be revised to the benefit of the landlord. Lands in these baronies were those which Longford had in mind when he advised that 'leases should not be set of those lands for a longer term than two or three years at most because, as the kingdom grows to a settlement after so sharp and rapacious a war , the rent of lands will increase' (14).

The major part of the untenanted lands in Tipperary was reset by the commission in Kilkenny in March 1692. In general the rents agreed on with the new tenants, who were described as 'very substantial English and Protestant', reached the old 1687 level and in some cases exceeded it (15). The offer of terms of 31 years or 3 lives, combined with abatements for a few years, was sufficiently attractive in inculcating prospective tenants



to accept rents at at least the 1687 level (16). There were fears expressed by Ormond's acquaintances in Ireland that the lands had been set at too high a rent, but Longford countered this criticism by asserting that few of the English would have been secured as tenants had this been the case. Valentine Smith, the caretaker manager of the estate during the war period, was disappointed that the rates of rent suggested by him had not been achieved. But Longford was adamant that an arrangement favourable to the landlord had been concluded suggesting that 'had he [Smith] been here with us and insisted upon those measures, not a foot of my Lord Duke's estate had been now set, but every man living had been frightened from dealing with us' (17). In addition he claimed that it was more to Ormond's advantage 'to have reasonable rents well secured by able tenants than to have an high racked rent roll but scurvily paid by beggarly tenants that would break every year and run away with their rents' (18). In the difficult circumstances of the early 1690s the granting of long leases at the 1687 level of rent, cushioned by a system of short term abatements, seemed the best possible arrangement from the landlord's viewpoint.

However satisfactory the arrangements made elsewhere the special circumstances of the Ormond lands in the baronies of Upper and Lower Ormond, made the outcome of dealings with tenants for lettings there less clear cut. These baronies had formed a frontier zone during the Williamite wars and in consequence had been particularly ravaged, and in the aftermath of war were waste possessing few inhabitants. For instance, the lands of Uskane were said to be 'fully waste, there being no tenant upon it nor an house standing, the lands having had the misfortune to be on the frontiers and liable to the rapine and destruction of both armies' (19). Two of the most valuable blocks of land to be set in the region were those centred on Roscrea and Nenagh. The former tenant to Roscrea, Hector Vaughan, failed to get his tenancy renewed despite pressing a claim of tenant right. Instead the farm was set for a term of three years at the old rent to John Carden, an outsider from Carlow, who was preferred because he was considered reliable as he could stock the land and he undertook to settle 40 protestant sub-tenants on the farm (20). A similar arrangement was arrived at with Carden's brother with respect to the lordship of Nenagh (21). It is significant that for both farms the tenancy agreements were concluded by way of minute and not, as elsewhere, by lease. The temporary arrangement implicit in the granting of the minutes to the Cardens reflects



caution on the part of the Longford commission, its purpose being to test the rent paying ability and solvency of the new tenants until a larger rent could be demanded. Of the remainder of Ormond lands in this region some farms were set for only one year, while there was some difficulty getting good tenants for Templemore (22). For Lackagh the only proposals came from 'Irish papists' whose offers were judged inadequate and rejected by the commission (23). The Egans were continued as tenants on their former ancestral lands at Uskane (24). On the whole, in the context of lands in the Ormond baronies, policy had to be guided by the consideration that tenanted lands at moderate rents were preferable to untenanted ones yielding no revenue.

In the event, however, the 1687 levels of rent agreed on in March 1692 proved excessive and overambitious. As much can be implied from the contemporary scarcity of money, and because in July and November 1692 the commission was forced to concede additional abatements. The promotion of tenant petitions in favour of such concessions owed much to the vigour of local officials in Tipperary notably Valentine Smith, Sir John Meade, and Sir Thomas Butler, whom Longford identified as the chief prompters of the tenants claims with Smith being singled out as intent on frustrating the work of the commission (25). The successful advancement of abatement claims -- in some cases for rents for the period before the commission was constituted as well as later -- could only result in declining or at best static income. In this situation the need to satisfy the demands of Ormond's creditors, who had been fairly tolerant in the immediate post-war period but who by late 1692 were threatening re-entry on lands assigned to them as security, became more critical (26). The solution to the dual problems of static or declining revenue from rents and the pressing demands of creditors was found in the adoption of an innovative system of fining, which brought in immediate sums of money in large amounts and also had the simultaneous effect of transforming the standing of participating head tenants on the estate. This new strategy was first advanced by Richard Warburton, a member of the commission, in April 1692 as a result of consultations and observations made on a tour of inspection of the newly set lands in Tipperary (27). While the ultimate end of the plan was to alleviate Ormond's critical financial position, it also had implications for leasing strategy, tenant status, and improvement elements whose successful interaction were deemed vital to the execution of the scheme.

The pre-1690 leasing history of the estate may be stated briefly (28). Before 1641



most leases were for 21 years and were granted mainly in the period 1628-34, for which 45 such grants are recorded for the estate in Tipperary. During the 1640s fines were taken on the granting of long leases usually for 99 years, while in the 1650s (when the estate was out of ownership of the family), few leases were given and those that were were for short terms : 8 one-year leases are recorded for 1655, for instance. In the period 1658-90 a significant resetting was undertaken with leases for lives being granted on an extensive scale for the first time. For this period 53 leases for 3 lives, 34 for 21 years, 12 for 31 years, and 6 for other yearly terms (varying between 10 and 28 years), were granted on Ormond's Tipperary estate. In total this represents about an even number of leases for lives and leases for years.

The scheme as advocated by Warburton envisaged the up-grading of this two tier tenurial structure by the granting of a perpetual term in the form of leases for lives renewable forever to the existing tenants holding for leases for lives, and the advancement of the tenants for years to tenures for lives, both groups paying fines in the process. The intended effect of this new procedure was to alter the tenants' status favourably making it freehold and in favoured instances perpetual, and in the process encouraging improvement.

Warburton's recommendations, as further modified, were embodied in a private act of parliament (1696) which empowered Ormond and the earl of Arran to grant leases for lives or a term of years (not to exceed 41) on payment of a fine and at two thirds the rent of 1687, renewable on payment of one year's rent as a fine on the fall of each life (29). Accordingly between 1697 and 1700 a number of substantial fines were received for lives renewable leases from individuals within the county like Sir John Meade (£3,325), David Lowe (£75), John Armstrong (£451), John Carleton (£148), John Carden (£1,671), Nicholas Southcoot (£1,100), Charles Alcock (£280), Thomas Moore (£380), and Thomas Cleare (£125). Others from outside the county like Alexander Montgomery, Co. Monaghan (£600), Joseph Ivie, Waterford (£1,525), Robert Curtis, Dublin (£1,933), and Sir Thomas Butler, Dublin (£1,025) also participated and are likely to have become aware, through legal and official circles in Dublin, of the investment potential the lands had (30).

The scheme proved so effective in raising immediate finance to pay debts that a further private act (1701) was obtained in order to satisfy the remaining debts more speedily. In



tenurial terms the most important provision of this act was that it brought the process initiated in 1697 a stage further. Thus if tenants holding on renewable leases desired to hold their lands free from the future cost of renewal, they were now presented with the option of doing so. Such tenants could now buy out prospective, future renewal fines for a lump sum (generally calculated at four times the existing rent), and have their tenures transformed into fee farms at a nominal rent. If the tenants neglected or refused to take up this option provision was made for Ormond and Arran to treat with other individuals, not existing lessees, for the purchase of the future renewal fines (31). This provision was unnecessary, however, as the existing tenants opted to pay the fines and accept fee farm grants (32). Between 1703 and 1714, 106 notifications recording such grants were enrolled in the chancery of the Palatinate and in Chancery in Dublin. The 60 grants enrolled in the former accounted for a total of 13,377 acres, dispersed over 7 baronies, transformed into fee farm tenures (Table XVI). A survey of the estate in 1715 shows that a distinct alteration in the leasing structure had occurred. If lands sold outright and lands settled on Arran are excluded, the remaining 220 leasing units consist of 131 fee farms, 21 leases for lives, 55 leases for lives renewable forever, 5 31-year leases, 3 from year to year, 3 special grants, and one each for 200 and 900 years (Table VII). Thus the most common and characteristic form of tenure subsisting on the Ormond estate in Tipperary by 1715 was that of the fee farm, followed by the other kinds of perpetuity lease, with the number of leases for years being of minimal significance. A number of further fee farm grants were made after 1715 which, with those pre-dating 1715, were liable to the fixed annual rent which a number of individuals like Bunbury, Armstrong, Meade, and Mathew bought out in the 1720s, but which was still being collected for the remaining denominations in the 1760s (33). By that stage such payments were merely token being made by individuals who, though tenants in a narrow legal sense, were effectively landowners in their own right.

The strategy, as provided for in the 1696 act, of inserting a renewal clause in new leases had a simultaneous dual effect : it raised ready money for Ormond from fines, and it gave the tenant a long term interest. The effect according to Warburton would be that 'Ev[e]ry person reckons upon posterity who they would have enjoy the fruits of their cost and labour, the expectation whereof improves their industry, cost, and expence on the land to the profit of the present occupier and his successor, and very great pleasure to



a landlord to see and behold' (34). In this way the leases for lives renewable forever granted between 1697 and 1700 were in effect perpetuities conferring on their possessors a degree of security unavailable to other classes of leaseholders. The fee farms given after 1701 developed the process further by the establishment of a fixed annual payment of a fee farm rent : tenants who paid the additional fines and obtained the fee farm grants were freed from the obligation to pay any future renewal fines. In this developed form fee farm tenure approximated more closely than the lives renewable forever lease to the fee simple estate. In fact it was in legal terms equivalent to a fee simple estate but incurring a nominal, fixed rent.

The exact chronology of diffusion in Ireland of the form of tenure contained in the lease for lives renewable and the fee farm is difficult to ascertain precisely. The granting of such tenures is associated with the Ulster plantation of the early seventeenth century. Their employment on the Ormond estate in the 1690s suggests sparsity of solvent tenants and underdevelopment in the county in the wake of the Williamite wars, a view given further substance by the stated aim of the 1696 and 1701 acts to promote English protestant settlement. Indeed the judgment of one contemporary observer was that the lands had in fact passed into the hands of 'English improvers', and this was also the perception of a later generation (35). The advancement of English tenants was in response partly to a shortage of solvent tenants and partly as a device to strengthen Ormond's claim to forfeitures in the county (36). These elements were, however, subsidiary to the primary purpose which was the alleviation of his acute indebtedness. The broader effect, though, was to give the new form of lease a wider currency on the estate. This bears out the view of later writers that the Ormond family can be credited with the more general dissemination of the perpetuity lease, at least in the southern part of Ireland (37).

Table XVI shows the spatial effect of these changes in acreage terms over a number of baronies, while Table VII gives the different categories of tenure in 1715. It is clear that a significant transition in tenurial arrangements took place from 1697. Families such as Armstrong, Bayly, Carden, Carleton, Bunbury, Latham, Lowe, Southcoot, and Toler became established as landowners in their own right, such families not being recorded as grantees under the acts of settlement and explanation in Tipperary at least. Families who were grantees elsewhere in the county under these acts but who took tenancies on the



Ormond estate and participated in the new leasing scheme by paying fines, also advanced their interests. The most important of such families were Alcock, Baker, Coote, Dawson, Langley, Moore, and Sadlier. Some of these families acquired town bases in Carrick and Clonmel complementing their lands in adjoining baronies (38). The landlord's financial straits and the procedures adopted to alleviate them thus facilitated the emergence from tenant status of a significant group of families on the Ormond estate whose subsequent role as county families was important, and also enhanced the position of existing landowners who supplemented their estates with Ormond lands.

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The dispersed nature of the Ormond estate over several baronies means that it serves to illustrate general conditions in the county as a whole in the 1690s. However, if the observations of Warburton in 1692 are taken into account, other landowners were not as successful in attracting tenants in the post-war period as Ormond was and those who succeeded did so only by conceding lower rents. In consequence much land remained untenanted for long periods after 1690. After his tour through the county in April 1692 Warburton commented that 'the country thereabouts belonging to other proprietors does generally lie wast[e] for want of tenants and what they have set are at much lower rates' (39). In addition he ascribed the success of the commission in concluding with tenants for the Ormond lands to a recognition of Ormond's status and of his zeal for the Protestant and Williamite causes, factors which were articulated by the commissioners in their negotiations to gain tenants. A view also promoted by them was that Ormond, above other landowners, was prepared to take into account the difficult contemporary situation and accommodate prospective tenants accordingly (40).

Nevertheless the context was similar for all landowners : tenant impoverishment or untenanted lands, depressed land values, and a shortage of solvent tenants. There was as a result a heavy turnover of tenancies after 1690 which presented landlords with a range of three options. First, where the larger of the existing tenants could vouch for their solvency they were retained as with the Keatings on the Butler (Cahir) estate. Second, landowners themselves were tempted to offer themselves as head tenants for other lands because of their cheapness and the advantageous terms, with the prospect of a profit rent in the long term. Examples of this are Baker and Damer taking leases on the T.C.D. estate. Third, the general shortage of suitable tenants within the county and the low



price of land, served to attract outsiders who took up leases on a number of estates. The arrival of Carden and Bunbury from Carlow to take leases on the Ormond estate is an instance of this as is the participation of Curtis and Donnellan from Dublin and Ivie from Waterford, while the advent of Nagle and McCarthy from Cork to the Butler (Cahir) and Mathew (Thomastown) estates respectively in the 1690s, further exemplifies this pattern. In order to attract or hold tenants landlords had perforce to be moderate, flexible, and concessionary in the terms of tenure they offered.

It has already been demonstrated that lands were cheap at the outset of the century and that the rise in land values subsequently was spread out over a long period (41). In this context the taking of lands appeared an attractive prospect to those with capital. To attract such persons into lease commitments landlords needed to grant long leases. In the 1690s shorter periods, for instance three or seven years for lands forfeited to the King, were agreed reflecting the harsh post-war situation and the fear that tenants might break (42). Once new tenants established their solvency, however, long leases were granted and a survey of a number of estates exemplifies that leases tended to be of long duration. On the Butler (Cahir) estate out of a total of 141 leases and tenures recorded as being granted on the estate between 1720 and 1750, a majority (97) were for 31 years or under (Table VIII-1). This reflects the landlord's compliance with the penal restrictions confining catholic landowners to the granting of such terms. This compliance was not absolute as the existence of 7 leases for lives to tenants like Bagwell, Fennell, Keating, and Nagle (the two latter being catholic), testifies (43). A similar general compliance is also evident on the Butler (Kilcash) estate in the 1720s and 1730s with the recorded leases being for 31 years or less, though here again two leases for lives were given by this catholic landowner in 1723 and 1726 (44). The 31-year lease was also predominant on the neighbouring catholic Mandeville estate, though 21-year leases were not unknown in this district (45). On the O'Callaghan estate at Shanbally between 1739 and 1750 leases of 31 years and 3 lives renewable were granted (46). The pattern on the Mathew (Thomastown) estate to 1740 was the granting of 31-year or 3 lives leases to a small group of large tenants. The phrase employed in a lease to one of them in 1705 to the effect of including 'all other usual covenants in said George Mathew's other leases for lives renewable', suggests that this duration of lease was commonly given on the estate at this stage (47). The lettings on the Smith (private) estate in and near Tipperary and



Cashel (estimated to contain 13,648 acres) between 1729 and 1745 comprised 41 three lives leases, 10 31-year leases (to catholic farmers) for rural farms, and longer terms (41, 61, 99 years) for town property in Tipperary (Table IX).

Further north in Kilnamanagh evidence for 1723 indicates that the Maude estate had 19 tenants but their lease terms are not specified, though an advertisement for untenanted lands on the estate in that year had a stated preference for 21 or 31 years which may suggest the norm (48). Leases for 3 lives were not unknown for favoured individuals (49). In Clanwilliam the Meade estate preferred 31-year terms for catholics like McCarthy, and lives leases for protestants like Alleyn and Smithwick (50). On the Damer estate, which maintained a large protestant head tenantry, 3 lives leases were the norm before mid-century (51). In Slievardagh leases on the Pennefather estate show a pattern of 31 years for catholics and 3 lives for protestants (52). In the 1720s advertisements for lands in Lower Ormond, Owey and Arra, and Eliogarty display a preference for the 21-year lease term, though longer terms were not unknown (53). On private estates over the county, therefore, the tendency was to grant long leases with denominational considerations being an influential factor.

On corporate estates the situation was theoretically different. The most extensive of the institutional estates was that of the church divided into lands held by the bishops and other ecclesiastical dignitaries composing the cathedral chapters of Cashel and Emly, Killaloe, and Lismore, and the vicars of parishes holding glebe land (54). In the leasing of their estates the bishops were restricted to the granting of leases for a maximum of 21 years (55). This stipulation was intended to safeguard future incomes of successive occupants of a see. The method adopted to circumvent this was the granting of renewals on payment of fines before the full term had expired. This was more likely to be resorted to if it became apparent that the bishop's occupancy of the see seemed likely to be brief. For the see of Cashel the average period of tenure for the 10 archbishops between 1661 and 1779 was just under 12 years, for Killaloe 8 years, and for Waterford and Lismore 20 years. The relatively high turnover of <sup>ARCH</sup>bishops at Cashel suggests that they may have regularly taken fines and granted renewals. The sixfold increase in the gross income of the see lands from £664 in 1640 to £4,000 in 1779 implies that the practice became well established (56). The system appears to have attained final definition and wider application under archbishop Bolton (1730-44) (57). The system practiced by him was



one which allowed for a progressive increase in the amount of the renewal fine demanded over the 21-year term with a minimal rise in rents. In this fashion the archbishop was assured of a steady income from rents, supplemented at regular intervals by lump sums from fines (58). For the tenant, once the renewal fine could be met, the system conferred near perpetuity status at a moderate rent. Thus the statutory inflexibility of the 21-year stipulation was overcome to the advantage of archbishop and tenant alike.

A similar restriction applied on the estate of the governors of the Erasmus Smith schools, for its foundation charter of 1669 empowered the governors to give leases of not more than 21 years (59). This rule was rigidly adhered to in contrast to the Cashel see estate (60). Instead a system of graded rent increases was implemented, giving a structured rise in rents within the strictures of the 21-year rule. Much the same situation prevailed on the estate of Trinity College (61). Evidence from a number of estates for the first half of the century suggests that lease terms were usually of long duration usually 31 years or 3 lives for the larger denominations, and although a 21-year lease term was obligatory on the estates of corporate institutions, civil and ecclesiastical, this stipulation could be circumvented by various devices.

A situation where there was a sparsity of solvent tenants, where lands were cheap, and where landowners gave long leases was complemented by the fact that units of tenure were large, consisting of townland or multi-townland units. A pamphleteer, describing himself as 'an humble farmer' and writing from Cashel in May 1741, referred to County Tipperary as a place where 'vast tracts of land are held by single persons, where not only farmers but gentlemen keep from three to six or seven, nay, eight thousand acres in their own hands' (62). In fact Cashel was in the centre of a region incorporating the baronies of Clanwilliam, Eliogarty, Middlethird, and Iffa and Offa where this pattern of large patrimonies evolved.

Table VIII-2 summarises the number of holdings of different sizes on the Butler (Cahir) estate from information in leases granted in the period 1727-48. The large number of holdings of 10 acres or under comprised town plots in or near Cahir usually held on 31-year leases or at will. The holdings between 11 and 100 acres (two thirds of which were under 50 acres), belonged to the middle and strong farmer class on the estate consisting of 15 individuals including three partnership arrangements. The tenantry, however, were dominated by 15 persons who held denominations in excess of 100



acres. Principal among these were the Nagles who held 1,744 acres spread over six townlands, and the Keatings (five members of which family are named in 1750), whose interest comprised 1,100 acres. The remainder of the group also held large acreages (63). The estate in 1750 is, therefore, characterised in structure by at the bottom a large number of town plots of 10 acres or under, a middling group averaging 50 acres in holding size, and at the top a group of large head tenants who between them controlled over 7,000 acres on the estate and whose individual holdings ranged in size from 101 to 1,744 acres, averaging at 540 acres. The neighbouring O'Callaghan estate exhibits a similar structure at this time for it was dominated by a group of 8 or 9 resident middlemen holding multi-townland units (64). The size of holdings on the Butler (Kilcash) estate in the period 1710-60 was also large ranging from 24 to 796 acres averaging at 300 acres (65). On the Mathew (Thomastown) estate the average size of lettings between 1703 and 1740 was about 480 acres, but ranged as high as 1,000 acres in the case of a lease to McCarthy in 1703 (66). These examples from a select number of estates show that holdings tended to be large.

However, as can be implied from the remark of the 1741 pamphleteer, it was not merely that certain individuals were large tenants on single estates alone in the region, rather the fact that they took perpetuity or long leases on a number of adjacent estates which made them into multi-thousand acre tenants. Thus in addition to being tenants on the Butler (Cahir) estate, the Keatings appear also as large holders on the Butler (Kilcash), Ormond, Everard, and Bayly estates (67). Similarly the McCarthys, having gained an initial 3 lives lease for 1,000 acres on the Mathew estate in 1703, progressed in 1719 to obtaining a further 1,600 acres on the nearby Meade estate (68). By the 1770s the McCarthy holdings were said to extend to 9,000 acres (69). The McCarthys and Keatings are the prime examples of the engrossing tenants in this region in the early eighteenth century. The pattern was general however. The presence of the Bunburys initially on the Ormond estate and later on the Mathew (Thomastown), Maude, Smith, and T.C.D. estates; the Bradshaws on the Mathew (Thomastown) and Damer estates; Smithwick on Damer and Meade; Alleyn on Mathew and Meade; and Lockwood on the Smith and Cashel see estates, testifies to this general pattern of a concentration of holdings in the hands of a few individuals in this region (70). This pattern evolved in two stages in the early decades of the century. The first stage was when they became



tenants to lands on a single estate as with McCarthy (1703), Nagle (1695), and Bunbury (1697). Landlords gave low or graded rents, long leases and large holdings to encourage such tenants. As time went on and as the solvency of such tenants became apparent, a second stage followed. They were entrusted with additional lands in the 1710s and 1720s either on the same estate as with Nagle and Keating or, having established their credibility with other landlords, on neighbouring estates as with Bunbury and McCarthy. By this process the large holdings of a select group of tenants evolved in the early eighteenth century in this region. Elsewhere the pattern of holding size was somewhat different.

Insufficiency of evidence hinders presentation of data on holding size on the Maude estate. In 1723 the 19 tenancies on the estate (which was not fully tenanted at this date), were composed of single townlands held by 10 individuals and 5 partnerships, and multi-townlands held by 2 individuals and 2 partnerships (71). A survey of the holdings held by catholic tenants in the barony of Kilnamanagh in 1765, most of which incorporated the Maude estate, shows no holdings in excess of 100 acres held by catholics (Table III). The bulk of the 181 holdings were in the range 5-10 acres (68) and 10-20 acres (70), with only 22 in the range 20-100 acres, 17 between 1 and 5 acres, and none less than 1 acre. It is evident that there were no multi-townland catholic tenants in this barony at this date comparable to those in Clanwilliam, Middlethird, and Iffa and Offa. This pattern may be a reflection of the evangelical preferences of Maude who favoured protestants with larger holdings. A different emphasis is evident for catholic tenants in the barony of Ikerrin in 1750 (Table II). There were 8 persons who had holdings in excess of 100 acres : Kennedy (400), Lalor (340), Meagher (300), Lalor (200), Kennedy (500), Carroll (240), Meagher (150), and Carroll (150). Though these were large in themselves and contrasted sharply with the pattern in Kilnamanagh, yet they were still inferior to the larger units of the south and centre of the county. At the other extreme Ikerrin shows that at the base of proprietorship almost half (187) of total holdings (415) were of one acre or less. Comparing the returns for both baronies as to holding size, it is clear that Kilnamanagh had no holdings of 1 acre or less in catholic hands and no catholic tenants of over 100 acres, while Ikerrin had a large base of smallholders and a significant group of large catholic tenants. In the small farmer classification (1-10 acres) Kilnamanagh had almost half (47%) of its total complement of



units, the corresponding category in Ikerrin accounting for only 26.50% of the whole. In the middle farmer category (10-30 acres) the respective percentages were 45% (Kilnamanagh) and 16% (Ikerrin). For the larger farmers (30-100 acres) the proportions were 5.50% and 10% respectively. Overall the emphasis in catholic proprietorship between the two baronies was one where 60% of units in Ikerrin were less than 5 acres with 10% in Kilnamanagh, over 35% of 5-100 acre holdings in Ikerrin while the bulk (86%) in Kilnamanagh were in this category, and holdings over 100 acres in Ikerrin (2%), but none in Kilnamanagh. There were extremes in holding size in both areas. In addition partnership and joint tenancy arrangements were more common in Kilnamanagh than in Ikerrin especially in the 5-30 acre classification. Overall neither of the two baronies can compare with the pattern of large catholic tenants evident in the southern half of the county.

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The situation in which landowners found themselves in the years after 1690 required novel solutions because they were in a weak negotiating position where tenants were concerned. The liberal terms, in the form of long leases, large holdings, and moderate rents granted to tenants had the advantage of giving landlords a stable income however moderate. Such concessionary terms, conceded at a time when economic prospects seemed inauspicious, were to have unforeseen consequences. The difficulties of the post-1690 period and the way in which landowners adapted to them, in the long term entailed a loss of control on their part and an undermining of their position in local society, particularly if they were absentee. Something of this derogation of authority was mentioned by Warburton as a possible objection to his scheme of granting perpetuities on the Ormond estate in 1692. In answer to the objection that the plan might 'lessen ye dependancy a tenant should have of his landlord', he advanced the view that 'gratitude will oblige ten[an]ts ye more to hon[ou]r and esteeme their landlord when they and posterity are to remaine under them . . . , [and] the Duke is above ye slight of any ten[an]t and his hon[ou]r and eminency as well as meritt will ever gaine reverence unto (and dependancy on) his person and favour' (72). This contention was valid so far as the lives leases are concerned and so long as the landowner remained in a position of eminence. Warburton could not have foreseen the consequences of the extension of his scheme into the granting of fee farms, nor the political demise of the Ormond family.



The result of both was a lessening of social bonds between landlord and tenant.

Large head tenants became entrenched and established a vested interest as well as social prominence in rural society. It was in the region where their most notable exemplars -- Alleyn, Doherty, Keating, and McCarthy -- became ingrained that they are taken notice of by Young in the 1770s. Attempts by the landlord or his agent to remove such interests, as with Robert Keating the chief tenant on the residue Everard estate in the 1730s, were rare, difficult, and where eventually successful, costly (73). Their position was enhanced by the fact that, in addition to being large head tenants, some acted as agents for their landlord. Nagle acted in this capacity for Lord Cahir, and McCarthy for Mathew and he also looked after the Ryan of Inch estate in the years 1737-56 (74). Such responsibility added to their influence and prestige locally. It gave them access to surplus funds which they loaned to local interests, and this function developed to such a degree in McCarthy's case that it gave him an influence over protestant borrowers which he used to mitigate the application of the penal laws, an issue which became a source of resentment in the 1760s. Entrenched though such interests were, by their residence they nevertheless provided a social presence and cohesion in local society in the absence of such head landlords as Butler (Cahir), Meade, and Damer. Thus at one level while landlords had to confront the difficult tenurial circumstances of the post-1690 period by conceding liberal lease terms this in consequence involved a loss of control condoned by absenteeism. At another level those who replaced them as the local purveyors of influence were resident, provided a focus of cohesion, and as graziers engaged in pastoral farming in line with the economic demands of the time.

The composition and distribution of the head tenantry over the county reveal some interesting patterns. As part of the Williamite settlement it was a decided preference of landowners, including Ormond, to advance protestant tenants where possible (75). However this objective was not always achievable given the circumstances of the 1690s and after. Thus one landowner in the region, Edward Cooke, admitted in 1737 that 'I and every other gentleman wou[l]d have good substantial protestant tenants if we cou[l]d get them, but as they are not to be had we must take the best wee can get, or have our land wast[e] w[hi]ch is next to having noe estate' (76). It was the policy of adaptability and economic realism implicit in this remark which illustrates the compromises which



landowners had to undergo in the early eighteenth century in order to make their estates viable. It was from the response of individual landowners across the county that a characteristic type of tenant distribution established itself.

Moving westward from Carrick-on-Suir it is evident that catholic head tenants (Butler, White, Esmond, Neal) dominated the Butler (Kilcash) estate with at least one protestant, Shaw (77). The neighbouring Mandeville estate was mostly sub-let to members of the family on 31-year leases, but for the rest the surnames of Davin, Power, Walsh, Hickey, Quinlan, and Coroban suggest a strong catholic presence (78). On part of the Bagwell estate at Lisronagh, north of Clonmel, in 1757 half of the 646 acres were in lease to John Keating, and the other half divided between Carleton, Birmingham, Fahy, Burke, and Doohy (79). On the other lands acquired by Bagwell in this region protestant tenants like Edwards (1732) and Bacon (1740) were encouraged with improvement leases, though some leases still subsisted at the time (1729) Bagwell purchased these lands and were then in the tenancy of catholics like Hackett, Hogan, and Kennedy on 31-year leases (80). On the Perry estate west of Clonmel three head leases granted in the period 1717-60 were to Downing, Fennell, and Quinn, the last two being for three lives (81). On the 3,000 acre Hely-Hutchinson estate at Knocklofty in 1771 only four surnames can be identified that would suggest protestant tenants : Bagnell, Miles, Cuffe, and Serjeant, but the estate was dominated by branches of the Prendergasts and Lonergans former proprietors in the region (82). The vast Butler (Cahir) estate next adjoining was dominated by large catholic head tenants : Keating, Nagle, Shee, Fitzgibbon, Butler, Ross, and Griffith with Bagwell and Fennell being the only protestants of identifiable significance in 1750 (83). The Nagles had acquired a considerable interest on the estate since the 1690s, while the Keatings represented catholic expropriators maintaining their social position as substantial head tenants (84).

To its south west the Butler (Cahir) estate was flanked by the O'Callaghan estate where an improving landlord in the 1740s introduced a group of protestant head tenants including Miles, Richardson, Sadlier, Franklin, Hammersley, and Bagnell, coupled with artisans and craftsmen settled in the revived village of Clogheen (85). The O'Callaghan estate is remarkable for the conversion of the landlord to the Established Church and his promotion of protestant tenants in the 1740s. In September and October 1747 22 individuals including 8 couples conformed on the estate. This number included 6 farmers



the rest being tradesmen (shoemaker, apothecary, perukemaker) or merchants in Clogheen (86). Of these farmers the surnames of Curtin, Fennessy, Murphy, and Walsh imply catholic status, while those of Bradshaw and Burnet would suggest non-catholic background. Bradshaw was a tenant on the estate from at least 1741 and the pressure on both to conform may have stemmed from the fact that their wives (forenames Mary and Eleanor) were catholic, a status increasingly incompatible with the new evangelical preferences of the landlord. This demonstrates that the pressure to conform emanated from the landlord and not from a desire among catholics to gain more advantageous leases than they would legally be entitled to. Thus Thomas Walsh, one of the farmers who converted in 1747, received a 31-year lease of lands with a house in Ballyboy (18 acres) in 1750 to be retrospective from May 1741 (87). Conformity, therefore, did not facilitate his obtaining a more favourable or longer lease term. Walsh was no different from Theobald Hackett, gentleman, who was not among the 1747 converts and who was given a 31-year lease of 295 acres in 1749 (88). The estate was dominated by newly introduced protestants, with an attendant group of convert farmers, under the direction of a landlord intent on pragmatic changes in the tenancy structure in accord with a new evangelical zeal on his part.

Moving northward into the baronies of Clanwilliam and Middlethird protestant tenants became more numerous and possessed larger holdings. Between Cashel and the border with Limerick were a number of estates on which protestant tenants were dominant. The extensive Damer estate, for instance, was characterised by the granting of head leases between 1708 and 1750 to 13 protestants : White, Smithwick, Roe, Moore, Evans, Franklin, Grove, Taylor, Cooke, Bradshaw, Hutchinson, Robbins, and Damer (89). Evidence for 1742 indicates that Damer almost exclusively favoured these large protestant tenants for that part of his estate in the better lands of Clanwilliam. For the less attractive lands in Kilnamanagh and Ileagh to the north he took on catholics notably the Burkes and Fogartys, though the presence of Cooke, Middleton, and Richardson as tenants on his lands in these baronies reinforces the overall preference for protestants (90). This situation was consistent with the unitarian outlook of the family. A similar pattern was evident on the neighbouring Smith (private) estate, where leases for the period 1705-37 record some of the surnames present on the Damer lands : Cooke, Roe, and Grove, and where the largest tenants were Bunbury and Lockwood (91). In 1748 a



rent roll of the Smith estate shows that protestants dominated the head tenantry with names such as Hyde, Massy, Taylor, Bunbury, Lockwood, Grove, Pope, Jones, Sadlier, and Emmet (ancestors of the patriot Robert Emmet) (92). Catholics were notably absent on this estate, those like Phelan being advanced to favourable leases only because of conformity (93). In the same region the estate of the Erasmus Smith schools displayed a similar preference for protestants, as did the estate of Trinity College reflecting the espoused protestant ethos of those bodies (94).

An interesting mixture is apparent on the estate of the archbishop of Cashel. Although half the acreage was taken by the Pallisers (7,325 acres), significantly the next three tenants in order of magnitude of acres, i.e. Hickey (1,280), English (1,031) and Heffernan (1,000), were catholics reflecting the facility which the 21-year lease for bishops' land allowed them (95). In this instance the stricture of the penal law that leases to catholics not exceed 31 years operated to their advantage. Beneath this top four the other tenants were Lockwood, Toler, Roberts, Gabbet, Irwin / Mason, Hyde, Willington, Power, Perry, Shaw, and Fogarty. On the 2,000 acre Ashe estate near Bansha (demesne lands excluded) the composition of the tenantry in 1761 shows the larger farms in the hands of Bourk, Ryan and Archer, and the smaller ones held by Smithwick and Baker (96). Keating was the largest tenant on that part of the Bayly estate located in Middlethird at Shanballyduffe (628 acres), and he had his 31-year lease renewed in 1754 (97). Catholics were also to the fore on the nearby Meade estate with McCarthy holding over 1,000 of the 3,300 acres with a small group of protestants, Smithwick and Alleyn being the largest, holding lesser amounts (98). The same individuals, Alleyn and McCarthy, occur as large tenants on the neighbouring Mathew (Thomastown) estate where, though McCarthy appears as the largest single tenant, numerically protestants are in a majority with persons like Alleyn, Bradshaw, Lidwell (an outsider from Carlow), Sadlier, Price, Lloyd, Hunter, Carden, and Rolleston, though other catholics like Egan (836 acres) and Walsh (658 acres) were important also (99). Further north on the Mathew (Thurles) estate a rental of 1744 shows that the largest payments (>£20) were made by Keating and Shee, and others of importance were Armstrong, Bigger, Browne, English, Goodwin, Hodgson, Hickey, and Ryan (100). By 1819 the numerical strength of protestants on the Thurles part of the Mathew estate was diminished with Armstrong remaining the largest, but the others being replaced



principally by the Mahers (101).

Flanking the region to the west was the barony of Kilnamanagh dominated by the Maude estate. The 19 tenancies on the estate in 1723 consisted of single townlands held by 10 individuals and 5 partnerships, and more than one townland held by 2 individuals and 2 partnerships (102). Protestants were present in both categories : thus Potter, Crow, and Garforth held 2 townlands each, Sadlier, Sexton, Domvill, Flood, Hyre held single townlands, while Sadlier (2) and Bradshaw, Foulkes (2) and Jordan shared single townlands (103). This varied pattern of tenancy exhibits the landlord's inability to obtain sufficient numbers of British tenants to take multi-townland units, the single or shared unit being largely predominant. This is partly explicable on the basis of the inhospitable agricultural environment of the barony compared to Clanwilliam further south where, because of the fertility of the soil and presence of an assured return, tenants could be entrusted with large acres not only on one estate but on a number. The deficiencies of the tenurial arrangement were to be addressed by Sir Thomas Maude in the next generation through an active policy of promoting protestant settlement and adapting the landscape for its success. This process was less in response to the need to redress any imbalance of catholic tenants on the estate than to bring untenanted lands into lease. In 1723 catholics held 9 of the tenancies and were either former proprietors like Dwyer holding single townlands, or were involved in partnerships of single townlands. Significantly the return of 1765 (Table III) gives no catholic holding over 100 acres. Protestants like Dawson, Ellard, Gardner, Andrews, Sadlier, Bradshaw, and Bullen received leases of 3 lives or 31 years on the Purefoy estate also in this barony (104).

Further north on the Ryan of Inch estate in 1724 there were 22 tenancies the majority of them held by catholics : Ryan, Bourke, Stapleton, Sall, Morony, with two protestants Armstrong and Hale (105). By 1807 no protestants are self-evident from the surnames of the 19 head tenants on the estate (106). In Ikerrin the return of 1750 (Table II) shows that there were 8 units of over 100 acres held by catholics, and though these were inferior in size to those held by catholics in Clanwilliam, Middlethird, and Iffa and Offa they were superior to those in Kilnamanagh. For the rest protestant tenants (Talbot, Abbott, Betteridge, Willington), appear on the Carden estate at Templemore and Barnane before mid-century (107).

The three northern baronies of Upper Ormond, Lower Ormond, and Owey and Arra



had a greater proportion of protestant tenants than elsewhere as a result of the seventeenth century land settlement. On the 3,000 acre Cole-Bowen estate in 1760 only 2 of the 18 tenancy units were held by non-Anglicans (108). Similarly on the Bayly of Ballynaclough estate near Nenagh where in 1707 its tenants included Rose, Brogden, Watson, and Cole (109). In 1788 on Thompson lands (990 acres) near Birr in Lower Ormond, 4 of the 11 denominations were on surname evidence held by protestants comprising 320 acres, the remainder being held by Clerys, Burkes, and Bryan (110). A survey of Castle Otway in Upper Ormond in 1725 gives 4 tenants on 840 acres : Lee, Wright, Tool, and May (111). A schedule of tenancies on 11 denominations (covering 4,580 acres), on the Otway estate in 1803 indicates that 12 of the 30 tenancies belonged to protestants. The largest single tenant was John Brenan (2,400 acres), the next in magnitude being Rev. Richard Lloyd (721), Henry Hunt (447), and James Otway (317) (112). Although some leases for Owney and Arra are in evidence, much of the land here may have been set until the 1740s (113). In 1784 of the 14 head tenancies on the Parker estate only 2 can be said to be protestant : Shouldice and Switzer (40 acres), and John Basketville (33 acres), and their holdings were modest in size (114). Because of its unattractive aspect Owney and Arra may have experienced the same difficulties in attracting tenants until the 1740s as was partly the case in Kilnamanagh. This factor may also have operated with reference to Slievardagh not merely because of its difficult terrain but also because it was a region particularly disturbed by tories and rapparees, thus making its recovery slower and hindering the attraction of tenants there.

If one takes the county as a unit, then an examination of the head tenantry on a select number of estates in the first half of the century shows it to be largely protestant across the county. Certainly in the three most northern baronies (at least those under lease before the 1740s), they were numerous, and were also found in Clanwilliam, on the Mathew, Maude, and O'Callaghan estates, and around Clonmel. However, it is the interjection of a group of large catholic tenants into this pattern, on the southern estates at least, that was most significant so far as tenant denominational distribution is concerned. They can be said to form a linking interest in a frontier zone stretching from Carrick to Cahir to Cashel and onward to Thurles, being entrenched on the Butler (Kilcash), Mandeville, Butler (Cahir), and partly on the Mathew estates. A more hybrid pattern is apparent on the Meade and Mathew estates, in the case of the latter this mixed tenantry



paralleling the accommodation arrived at by the family itself with the protestant establishment.

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The foregoing demonstrates that in the half century after 1690 there is a positive correlation between long leases, low or moderate rents, and relatively sizable leasing units. This pattern was consistent with an underdeveloped agricultural economy concentrating on grazing and an underpopulated countryside. This disposition of circumstances provided the context for the emergence of entrenched interests across the county. After mid-century this stable pattern altered markedly because an expansion in agricultural production, coupled with a growing diversification into cereals, created a more widely disseminated prosperity which served to increase land values, and multiplied the number of potential solvent tenants. Competition for access to land became more intense. Agricultural prosperity and population growth (Table LXIII) reacting upon each other served on the one hand to create a more stratified society locally thereby modifying the earlier pattern, and on the other to find expression in a series of agrarian movements in which certain interest groups sought to protect themselves against the unequal effects of prosperity. Thus the determinants by which leasing strategy was formulated shifted markedly after mid-century.

Land values rose sharply in the middle decades. In the period of rising land values in the 1750s and 1760s significant amounts of property came on the market for reletting especially in the south and west of the county : Iffa and Offa, Clanwilliam, Middlethird, and Kilnamanagh. A pattern of resetting is evident on the Mandeville, Bagwell, and Butler (Cahir) estates in the south, and on the Damer, Mathew, and Maude estates in the west for the 1760s (115). Lesser, though still important, segments of property were relet in the Ormond baronies particularly Lower Ormond (116). Tenants who took lands at high rents in the 1760s found it difficult to meet their rent commitments in the critical years after 1770. Landlords, enjoying enhanced incomes as a result of the 1760s, found it hard to obtain tenants after 1770 at the previous rent levels for land then coming up for resetting. For the 1770s as a whole no overall pattern of reletting can be observed comparable in scale to a decade earlier. The northern baronies are generally devoid of lands coming up for releasing at this time ; Clanwilliam and Kilnamanagh similarly ; some property is advertised for Iffa and Offa and Middlethird notably the O'Callaghan



and Stanley estates ; but the main concentration in this period<sup>as</sup> in Eliogarty (Mathew (Thurles) estate) and Slievardagh (Barker estate).

In marked contrast the 1780s witnessed much property being put on the market. As in the 1760s the baronies of Iffa and Offa, Middlethird, and Clanwilliam are most prominent, with Upper Ormond also to the fore in this decade. Major estates reset in the 1780s were Butler (Cahir), Butler (Ormond), O'Callaghan in the south ; Damer, Erasmus Smith, Stanley, Cashel See, Meade in the west ; and Ryan (Inch), Carden, Langley, Bayly, and Prittie in the north. This upsurge in the land market is confirmed by newspaper advertisements which display a particular emphasis for the years 1781-6 (117). Tenants who took lands at moderate rents on long leases in the 1780s were to benefit substantially from the sustained demand and favourable prices for agricultural produce during the period 1790-1815. A Scully family history compiled in 1806 recorded of this time that 'Lands were then generally low and solvent punctual tenants difficult to be had, the American War and the succeeding event of a peace having much depressed the markets, consequently the rents of lands about 1788 they (sic) began to rise again and thenceforward have so advanced that those leases antecedently taken are of high and encreasing (sic) value' (118). Landlords had little opportunity to benefit more substantially from this situation by adjusting rent levels in line with the rise in agricultural prices. Few if any of the major estates were reset in the 1790s or 1800s, and no pattern of general reletting is evident the exception being Otway (1801), Rous (part) (1791, 1806), and Erasmus Smith (1810) estates. Thus the 1780s is a vital decade comparable to the 1690s, when much land came up for releasing, at low rents based on slumped land values, and on long leases. Unlike the indifferent economic prospects which ensued in the half century after 1690, the 1780s were followed by 25 years of accelerated economic growth from which tenants more than landowners reaped substantial benefits.

Leases generally continued, as in the past, to be of long duration (119). Though in the newspaper advertisements in many cases the term on offer was unspecified or was given merely as years or lives, stipulations which suggest that a degree of negotiation was involved, in practice 31-year or 3 lives leases were granted. This could be general estate policy. In 1764 when Thomas Mathew granted John McCarthy a power of attorney, he empowered him to make leases of any part of his estate then out of lease for terms of 3



lives or 31 years (120). The 31-year term was regarded as normal in the improvement leases granted on the Barker estate in the early 1770s, though in one case in 1775 a term of 7 lives was given (121). It was also preferred on the Rous estate, with one prospective tenant remarking in 1806 that "y[ou]r L[or]ship has an aversion to grant any other lease' (122). However the 3 lives lease was the preferred term in a memorandum outlining leasing policy on the Stanley estate in 1774 when it was about to be relet (123). Where a choice of 3 lives or 31 years appeared in advertisements, it seems to have been normal that the former term was actually given sometimes with the choice of renewal being optional as for Lidwell lands in 1772 and Sparrow lands in 1802 (124). Even tenants who took a 31-year term could have the lease renewed yearly, as with Latham's Killenaule lands in 1778 (125). Most of the extensive Butler (Cahir) estate was released between 1779 and 1788 on long 61 year leases whereby the existing middlemen (Ross and Nagle for instance) had their interests renewed (126). This reletting followed the catholic relief act of 1778 which revoked the earlier restriction on leases to catholics to a maximum of 31 years. Thus in a period of falling or static land values in the 1770s and 1780s the long lease continued to be favoured by most landlords.

This pattern is confirmed by profiles of the leasing structure on a number of estates. On the O'Callaghan estate a profile of the leases current on the estate in 1780 shows that the 31-year and 3 lives leases predominated, though the number of 21-year terms was also important (Table XI). Further north on the Damer estate in Clanwilliam, Kilnamanagh, and Ileagh a survey of leases current in 1787 indicates the 3 lives lease to be almost universal being mostly granted since 1768 (Table XII). Like the situation on the Butler (Cahir) estate, these long leases ensured the perpetuation of the large interests like Lockwood, Cooke, Sadlier, Chadwick, Moore (Mooresfort), Grady, and Smithwick, whose leases were renewed in 1768-9 (127). Further north again the Roden estate (7,346 acres) scattered over five baronies (mainly in Upper and Lower Ormond but also in Eliogarty, Owey and Arra, and Middlethird), displayed a similar preference for the 3 lives lease as indicated by a profile of 1803 (Table XIII). Long lease terms also characterise the Ryan (Inch) estate in 1807 (Table XIV).

Attempts to introduce shorter lease terms were limited in scale. The 21-year head leases evident on the O'Callaghan estate in 1780 (Table XI) are an expression of the landlord's desire to give shorter leases to undertenants or occupiers as part of the process



of replacing the large middlemen taken on in the 1740s when capitalised tenants were needed but whose role subsequently was viewed as anachronistic (128). The 21-year term was, of course, obligatory on corporate estates : church lands (Table X), Erasmus Smith, and T.C.D. Some landlords sought to adopt the 21-year lease as the norm on their estates. Thus Anthony Parker of Castlelough specified in his will of 1766 that his wife, as main beneficiary, was not to make any leases for longer than 21 years (129). In consequence when 635 acres of the estate were set in 1774 the 21-year term was preferred, and in 1784 of the leases then current on the estate 7 were for 21 years, 4 for 31 years, 2 for 3 lives, and one had expired (130). References to the 21-year lease being the preferred term are rare in newspaper advertisements and its currency did not become more widespread as time went on (131). There is evidence of both trends : a continuing preference for long leases to existing large tenants, and limited attempts to introduce shorter terms on a select number of estates. Attempts to alter tenancy structures led to a conflict of interests between landlords and chief tenants.

The overall pattern was one of long leases. In this context the removal of the restriction on leases taken by catholics by the 1778 relief act has been judged to have been of little significance in tenurial terms (132). However if it is remembered that the period immediately following its passing, i.e. the 1780s, coincided with a time when large amounts of property came up for letting and when land values were depressed, then its importance in the local context must be re-evaluated. It is clear that many catholics availed themselves of the relaxation to accept longer lease terms in the 1780s particularly (cf. Table LXIX). The best instance of this is the Scullys. In fact the 1778 act emerges as a keystone in the evolution of that family's extensive interests. As a result of the act the Scullys took long leases of new farms and, by paying fines, got longer leases for their existing interests mainly in the 1780s (133). In this way Scully took out 3 lives leases on the Damer estate in 1782 and 1786, and on the Mathew estate in 1789 (134). A genealogical memoir of the family compiled in 1806 viewed these developments as a milestone noting that James Scully availed himself of the relaxation of the penal laws in 1778 to take long and permanent interests in lands, to take new farms, and to obtain longer leases for existing ones by fines mainly between 1780 and 1790 (135).

The result of these transactions was that the Scully leasehold interest doubled from 2,000 acres in 1776 to upwards of 4,000 acres in 1792, to over 6,000 acres in 1803



(136). How this extensive interest was utilised is instructive in the broader context of land tenure structures in the county. Of Scully's 4,000 acres in 1792 he stocked about 1,500 acres and sub-let the remainder (62%) at easy profit rents (137). A similar practice is evident among the large tenants renewed on the Butler (Cahir) estate after 1779 (138). This had disastrous consequences so far as the undertenants were concerned, but it also influenced the position of the head landlord. As a consequence of the long leases granted in the 1780s he was unable to benefit greatly from the rise in agricultural prices after 1790. Middleman like Scully and others prospered enormously from substantial profit rents because their head rents were moderate. In 1803, for instance, for the 6,000 acres held by Scully there was a gross rent of £7,670 and a profit rent of £6,700 ; and in 1793 the McCarthys, holding their Springhouse lands under a 61-year lease from May 1781, paid a head rent of £1,000 and had a profit rent of £500 which had increased to £1,000 by 1806 (139). These profit rents appeared all the more substantial because head rents were modest and continued to be so. The 1778 act is important in the local context for a select group of catholics who took perpetuity or long leases in the 1780s, who benefited materially from the moderate rent levels then established which continued subsequently, and from the profit rents from sub-letting. On the one hand this situation tended to erode the landowner's influence over the tenorial situation on the estate, and on the other as it occurred at a time of emergent consciousness among catholics, it had important political implications.

The position of the perpetuity tenant was further enhanced by the passage in 1780 of the tenancy act. This legislation was occasioned by a decision on appeal in the British house of lords in 1779, whereby the failure of a tenant to make known the fact that a life in his lease had expired and to pay the renewal fine in due time, was adjudged to give the landlord the right to repossess in such circumstances (140). The effect of this decision in Ireland, where perpetuity tenure was unique and extensive, would have been to undermine the position of many of the lesser landlords whose title derived from this form of tenure, and upon which many family settlements and mortgages were dependant. It has been noted how, due to the shortage of tenants in the early part of the century, many landowners became tenants to lands (141). This situation continued to subsist later on. To cite an instance of a landowner who was also a large head tenant, Anthony Parker of Castlough as well as owning an estate in fee of 1,438 acres also



held under six landlords in Tipperary (to whom he paid £351 annually in rents), and seven in Co. Limerick (£563 in rents) (142). The legislation of 1780 was advanced to protect such tenants and to mitigate the effects of the 1779 judgment.

The act enacted that failure to pay a renewal fine, where not fraudently intended, was not to lead to the defeat of a tenant's interest, so that the flexibility of the arrangement between when a life expired and a renewal fine paid was enshrined in law (143). Within landed society and in parliament the controversy over the issue was between those holding in fee who wished to avail themselves of the 1779 judgment to repossess property which could have been out of their effective control for generations, and those with perpetuity interests who wished existing arrangements to stand.

The balance of opinion came out in favour of the latter stance and locally the issue was supported by the earl of Clanwilliam, John Toler, Peter Holmes, Richard and John Hely-Hutchinson, Francis Mathew, William and Richard Pennefather, while its most vigorous opponent was the archbishop of Cashel. Appointed to the see in the year before the act passed, Charles Agar was concerned to oppose the act because of his experience of perpetuity tenants on the see estate, in particular the largest one Dr. John Palliser who delayed payment of his renewal fine (annual value £1,000) for long periods (144). On his estate in the same region Lord Milton (Damer) was obliged in October 1783 to issue a notice to his lives renewable lessees warning them that if they did not immediately pay fines on the death of lives in their leases, then his law agent would be instructed to proceed against them (145). The subsequent appointment of the Coopers as professional agents to manage the Damer and other estates (including the Cashel see) locally, may be viewed as a strategy to circumvent or restrict the flexibility given to the perpetuity tenant under the 1780 act. Significantly by 1787 the number of lives renewable leases on the Damer estate at least was less pronounced (Table XII). Nevertheless attempts to repossess estates where head tenants had failed to renew their interests contributed to a number of celebrated cases of forcible possession in the 1780s (146). The tardiness with which renewal fines were paid and the inability of landlords to enforce their punctual payment was given legal support by the act of 1780. Ostensibly promoted by those in parliament who had their own interests to protect, the measure by default came to give protection to the extensive perpetuity sector in the countryside. In Tipperary this sector was entrenched on a number of estates and after 1778, when Catholics were permitted to



take longer leases, a trend marked in the 1780s, the 1780 act was beneficial in protecting their position. On the other hand the act must be regarded as a defeat for landowners (at least those less resolute than Lord Milton), who were anxious to regain control of tenancies on their estates.

There were attempts after 1800 to break these long leases so that landlords might benefit more fully from the prosperity of the period through granting shorter leases at higher rents. Lord Cahir was unsuccessful in his attempt, however, because any decision in his favour in the higher courts was frustrated by local juries, and large middlemen remained on the estate until the 1840s when the 61-year leases granted in the 1780s fell in (147). It was calculated that had he succeeded in such an attempt in 1811 the consequence of resetting the lands would have been a rise in his rent roll of £3,000 per annum (148). But a test case, on which the position of 50 other tenants on the estate depended, brought in that year went against him (149). In another case the trustees of the Ormond estate brought a legal action in 1805 with the intention of impeaching all the 3 lives and 31-year leases granted on the former Kilcash estate between 1766 and 1796, on the ground that the previous owner, John Butler of Kilcash (d.1766), had laid down in his will that only 21-year leases were to be given (150). The action was unsuccessful because the will in question (dated 1764) was shown to be of dubious legal standing, and the position of the lessees on the estate was upheld (151). These attempts illustrate the inability of landlords to reverse the tenurial situation on their estates in their favour.

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To what extent did the circumstances just outlined influence the degree to which landlords were able to administer their estates effectively? This can be considered in relation to four areas of estate administration: holdings, rent, agents, and courts.

The size of holdings being leased in the early eighteenth century was large. While maintaining a preference for the individual solvent tenant after mid-century, landlords allowed the option of taking on a number of tenants for a single leasing unit. In advertisements for land the terms 'in whole or divisions' and 'entire or in parcels' occur suggesting that landlords were prepared to split up leasing units (152). While making a public declaration of such a choice, in practice some landlords preferred to take on the individual tenant and give him the entire farm (153). Such an arrangement indicates that the landlord in such cases was satisfied to obtain a guaranteed rent, and it normally



implied that the tenant was absentee. On the other hand, resident improving landlords embarked on a policy of dividing up their estates into smaller more viable farming units as old leases fell in. Thus Sir Thomas Maude of Dundrum in 1767 sought 'protestant manufacturers' for over 270 acres which he proposed to let in lots of 5-10 acres on 3 lives leases ; and in 1765 Bloomfield at Redwood in Lower Ormond had divided his large estate into farms of 30-40 acres (154). Tardy rent payments by large tenants in the early 1770s led some landlords to favour more compact farming units. On the Stanley estate an integral part of the new leasing policy enunciated in 1774 was direct letting to the tenants in small parcels, the agent recommending that 'you will find farms of 200 acres or thereabouts most suitable', and as old leases fell in subsequently there was a policy of dividing up the farms and letting direct to the occupier (155). Barker at Kilcooley was also involved in a similar process in the 1770s (156).

More characteristic was the sub-letting into smaller units by large middlemen or those who became middlemen by so doing. On the Butler (Cahir) estate, following its resetting on long 61-year leases in the 1780s, the lessees proceeded to sublet extensively dividing the estate into an array of small sub-tenancies from which they reaped large profit rents between 1790 and 1815 (157). In the judgment of a later owner the Cahir estate was 'subdivided and loaded with paupers', and the leases were 'Shamefully abused, the lands were sub-let and ruined, and the farmers pauperized by the lessees' (158). It can be argued that the same result was achieved by the improving landowner, like Maude, setting farms in small units to tenants directly, as the middleman. The difference relates to a question of control : Maude, with direct control over the size of leasing units, was able to implement an improvement policy and to enjoy the full benefit of rising rents from occupying tenants ; whereas landlords like Lord Cahir had effectively foregone any control over the regulation of holdings below the level of head tenant (159). In consequence Lord Cahir was unable to implement any extensive estate reforms until the 1840s (160). His experience was general : by 1815 it could be remarked that 'The land in Tipperary generally is not let directly by the landlord to the cottier, but most certainly through the intervention of the middlemen' (161). Thus for the majority of landowners there was a general inability to control the actual size of holdings on their estates. While in theory they could regulate them through lease covenants, these commonly were unenforcible. As a result while the size of holdings remained nominally large for chief



tenants, in practice smaller sized units became the norm.

Landlords did include clauses in leases prohibiting the alienation or selling of an interest without prior written consent and against subletting, with infringement incurring penalties in the form of extra rent payments (162). The degree to which this operated in practice varied. For instance, it can be shown that even in the case of an improving landlord like Barker his approach to alienation developed from one of deterrent in the 1770s, to incentive in the 1780s, to accommodation in the 1790s (163). Most landlords did not intervene in the subletting activities of their head tenants. This partly reflected the entrenched position established by the latter over a wide area of the county in the post-1690 era, and it partly demonstrates the lack of resolution on the part of landowners to confront a major social group. Such a process became redundant anyway after 1790 since many of the large head tenants like McCarthy and Scully bought out their interests becoming landowners in their own right.

Clauses against subletting were contained in the leases granted on the Butler (Cahir) estate in the 1780s, but due to the boom in agricultural prices in 1790-1815 particularly for grain, these tenants sub-let to a large degree thereby obtaining large profit rents, a process the landlord was unable to stem (164). Those tenants of Lord Cahir's, such as the Fennells of Rehill who exceptionally had not engaged in rampant subletting, were using the threat as Cahir himself reported 'to cut up this noble place into cottier tenancies if I did not give them a renewal of the lease [of Rehill], which I refused to do' (165). This experience relates to the post-1815 period when a slump in cereal prices undermined the solvency of middlemen, allowing landlords the collective incentive to proceed against them more resolutely. Also before 1815 landlords who had a high political profile were not themselves entirely blameless. For, after the act of 1793 admitted Catholics with the required freehold value to the franchise, an impressive number of 40s freeholders were created across the county (Table XXI), and those who were politically active in the 1790s and 1800s gave leases to farmers and labourers to enhance their political prospects (166).

Thus where size of occupiers' holdings is concerned landowners could exercise little direct influence, a situation condoned by political self-indulgence on their part. The long term consequence was that in reaction to the situation landowners became reluctant to grant leases at all, but preferred to allow tenancies at will. Such a process can be



documented for the Butler (Cahir) estate where subletting and subdivision were acute (167). It may well serve as the exemplar for similarly circumstanced estates elsewhere in the county.

The main concern of landlords was a solvent tenant. Proposals were normally made in writing as on the Stanley estate in the 1770s or Rous in 1806 (168). While the process of canting lands through public advertisements operated to produce the highest bidder, the other method of rent fixing was by fining i.e. paying a lump sum for entry to the farm and having subsequent rent payments adjusted downward. In some cases the fining down of part of the rent or a small fine was specified (169). In other instances the choice of whether a fine was taken or not was often a matter of agreement rather than obligation with the option being left with the tenant, as on the Hemsworth (1767), Palliser (1783), O'Meara (1793) and Burke (1802) lands (170). In general the landlord's immediate need of cash determined whether a fine was taken. The amount of a fine could range from an arbitrarily chosen sum to a proportion of the annual rent, for instance one year's rent on the Sankey (1799) and a half year on the Doherty (1803) lands (171). On the Massy estate in 1782 a tenant was given a choice of fining down one third part of the rent, and on lands let by Walter Woulfe near Carrick the same year £20 or more per annum could be fined down at 5% (172). These inducements and adjustments to the rent level were incentives to the tenant to commit himself to a lease.

Upon entry the tenant was expected to be punctual with rent payments. Times of payment were twice yearly either 25 March and 29 September for leases in mixed farming areas, or 1 May and 1 November on pastoral farms. Rents were almost universally paid in cash or bills, though on some estates e.g. O'Callaghan, Otway, and Hely-Hutchinson some individual tenants paid in kind at least in part (173). Leases usually stated a period of 21 days before distraint for non-payment took place, and 41 days (as on the Erasmus Smith estate), before possession was resumed. The custom of having a running or hanging gale, whereby the tenant was not expected to pay one half year's rent until the second was due, became prevalent (174). On estates where a more strict management was emerging there were attempts to reverse this practice. Thus the new leasing policy on the Stanley estate in 1774 specified that 'The first half year's rent to be paid before the second is due' (175). This was exceptional however.

This running arrear, kept within limits in normal years, could extend itself in periods



of economic difficulty. As a result of the distress of the early 1740s an arrear of £2,500 accumulated on the Butler (Kilcash) estate by 1747, £700 of which had to be written off (176). At such times a degree of indulgence was required of a landlord or his agent in order to tide tenants over hard times, as on the Stanley estate in the early 1770s or the Barker estate in 1810 (177). When arrears mounted resort was had to distraining the tenant's stock either to make up part of the rent through public auction, or to hold them as security until the tenant paid up. At this point relationships could become strained : unless the landlord agreed to cancel the arrear and allow the tenant to continue, then on his refusal to surrender a situation of forcible possession arose. Alternatively if the arrear was cancelled this set a precedent which other tenants might seek to take advantage of or, if the old tenant was successfully removed through ejectment proceedings, the new tenant was commonly the object of threats from the displaced tenant. These situations contributed to the agrarian unrest in the county. Ejectment was a last resort because it was cumbersome and costly, rather the threat of ejectment was more commonly employed as on the Parker estate in 1789 (178).

Payment of rent and rent arrears required some delicate management on the part of the landlord. Yet in normal times it is clear there was great flexibility in respect of rent payment, and even in periods of distress difficulties were not insurmountable. In the 1780s when arrears rose on some estates, e.g. Stanley £559 in June 1781, £414 in June 1784, tenants were facilitated to settle accounts and re-establish their tenancy (179). Thus in 1782, when tenants were sought for 1,250 acres near Thurles, bids were welcomed 'provided the [sitting] tenants should not redeem, being lately evicted for non-payment of rent', and a similar proviso of redemption was made on the Erasmus Smith estate in 1792 (180). With difficulties being experienced in the 1780s in the collection of rents this decade witnessed a closer management of estate affairs, a circumstance reflected in a more widespread appointment of agents.

The better management of estates over the century is illustrated by the changing role and function of the agent. At the outset of the century such a role was confined to the narrow ones of making leases and collecting rents. Both were the dominant considerations in the work of the Longford commission on the Ormond estate in the early 1690s. What made the commission unique as an agency at the time was the way in which its members, notably Warburton and Longford, formulated ideas on estate



management and improvement novel for the period. More characteristic were agents like Damer on the Erasmus Smith schools, Nagle on the Butler (Cahir), Purcell on the Everard, and Meade on the Smith estates, whose functions were more narrowly defined in rent collection and the granting of leases (181). The greater amount of property coming regularly on the market after mid-century at the least brought an intensification in these functions. Firstly, the downturn in the 1770s and 1780s caused a rise in arrears of rent making landlords employ more resolute agents to enforce their collection. Secondly, the large amount of land being relet in the 1780s heralded the appearance of more professional agents notably the Coopers. Already by this stage the agent whose main function was to implement the landlord's estate improvement initiatives had made his appearance. One of the earliest was Daniel Lenihan on the O'Callaghan estate in the early 1740s (182). The number of improving landlords, however, was few consequently the agent with a role primarily as rent receiver continued to be the norm.

Salaried agents like the Coopers appeared late. At an earlier period agents were more commonly found among the landlord's relatives, large head tenants on the estate, or from the ranks of attorneys or merchants in the larger towns. Two of the main requirements of the agent, trust and security, were most conveniently found among those related to the landlord. Thus the McCarthys tended to the estate affairs of their in-laws the Ryans of Inch between 1737 and 1756, while a cousin tended to the Bayly estate in the 1780s (183). Head tenants who had proved their solvency and who held large acres might also possess the credentials of reliability. In the early part of the century Nagle on the Butler (Cahir) and McCarthy on the Mathew estates acted as rent receivers, a function still being fulfilled in the case of the McCarthys in the 1760s; while Lalor of Long Orchard was agent on the Butler (Ormond) estate in the 1770s (184).

Valued for their specialist knowledge the existence of attorneys as agents was most likely where the owner was a permanent absentee. Before its division in 1755 the Smith estate, situated in four counties (Louth, Limerick, Meath, and Tipperary) was managed by Edward Meade of Drogheda (185). After the 1755 division the agency for that part of the estate which passed to Lord Strange (Stanley), came to the Dublin attorney family of McGuire who continued to hold it until the 1820s (186). The Stanley estate espoused good management with rents paid regularly, tenants arrears tolerated through bad times, and sub-agents employed to provide a local presence, all indicating that the estates of



absentees were not necessarily badly conducted (187). Indeed attorneys might be preferred as new agents in cases where landlords had suffered at the hands of unscrupulous agents. The Mathews of Thomastown had a run of bad agents in the late 1760s and 1770s in the persons of Ignatius Browne and Denis O'Brien, who contributed much to the revenues of the estate being alienated at this time (188). A Dublin attorney was appointed to the Mathew agency in 1781 (189). Similarly the agent who fraudently granted the long leases on the Butler (Cahir) estate in the 1780s, was replaced following the landowner's death in 1788 again by a Dublin attorney (190).

Merchants, who from situation could conveniently remit rents, appear as agents occasionally. Thus Martin Murphy, a Waterford merchant, was Lord Cahir's agent in the 1760s, and the management of the Bunbury lands in 1807 was in the hands of a Waterford resident, William Perceval (191). Two Carrick merchants, Valentine Smith and James Sause, were agents to the Arran and Scott estates respectively in the 1780s (192). Among the spate of new agents appointed in the 1780s were the Clonmel merchant-banker Phineas Riall and Edward Collins of the same who was given the management of the Barton estate (193). This illustrates the different range of persons who functioned as agents. Their inter-changeability is shown in the case of the Butler (Cahir) estate which experienced all three types in the course of the century : from Nagle the head tenant in the early eighteenth century, to Murphy the merchant in the 1760s, to Scott the attorney in 1789.

The decade of the 1780s, with its background of rent arrears and much property being relet, provided the context out of which a more professional agent emerged. The prime example of this is the Coopers. The family originally settled at Killenure near Cashel in the 1740s as part of the household of archbishop Price and later rose to prominence in the Treasury office in Dublin (194). In the 1780s they used their position to pick up agencies on the Damer, Lloyd, Cashel See, Erasmus Smith, and Maude estates (195). That their appointment sprung from the accumulation of arrears and debts is clear from a public notification as to their new agency on the See estate in May 1782 (196). In addition to those already mentioned, new agents were appointed in the 1780s to the Newenham estate, and in that decade also agents are present for the Cole-Bowen estate near Toomavara and the Massy near Golden (197). Sub-agents or stewards also begin to be more plentifully evident in the 1770s and 1780s, their work being taken up with



buying and selling cattle, tillage management, laying out grounds, keeping labourers' accounts, and running a large house (198).

Just as the appointment of more professional agents in the 1780s can be viewed as a re-assertion of the landlord's power, so also can the revival of manor courts in that decade. These institutions were largely medieval in origin though some came into existence in the seventeenth century. About 1650 there were 37 locations which had the privileges of manorial jurisdiction (Table XXVIII) (199). By the 1830s this number had fallen to 6 located at Cahir, Rehill, and Castlegrace (Lord Glengall), Everard's Castle (Lord Lismore), Roscrea (Portarlinton ?), and Killenaule (Waldron ?) (200). Functionally the manor court was divided into a court leet and a court baron. In the former, which was convened twice yearly by the manor's seneschal who was appointed by the landowner, matters pertaining to the manor were dealt with : land boundaries, roads, regulation of markets, weights and measures (201). The court baron, also summoned by the seneschal, adjudicated in cases concerning the recovery of cash debts (£5 or under), promissory notes (£10 or under), and trespass (202). The court proceedings for the manor of Coolkill near Thurles c.1790 shows it to have been mainly taken up with disputes between tenants, adjudicating small debts, and awarding costs (203). The business done by the courts could be considerable because of their accessibility and inexpensiveness, particularly if the jurisdiction of the court was extensive, Lord Lismore's for instance extending over 38 townlands (204).

The business of the manor courts grew subsequent to an act of 1785 which confirmed and enlarged their powers in civil cases (205). Following its passage a number of manor courts were revived. In the same year as the act passed George Ryan of Inch appointed a seneschal to the manor of Kilnalongurty or Coolkill ; in 1792 following the revival of the Ormond title the manor courts of Carrick were re-instituted ; Lord Cahir appointed a seneschal for his three manors in 1802, as did Lord Llandaff for his manor of Thurles in 1817 (206). The revival of these courts reflected the desire of certain landlords to reassert control over matters on their estates, which in the case of Lord Cahir had been sharply diminished due to the experience of the 1780s. The revival of such courts from the 1780s was more significant in areas other than in that of landlord re-assertion of control over head tenants, indeed it could prove self-defeating as in Lord Cahir's case. The fundamental problem remained that where there were long leases and large head



tenants landlords could exercise little influence.

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The chief deficiency on estates where the above situation persisted was that progress towards improvement was impeded. While the aspiration towards improvement existed in the early eighteenth century, formulated on the twin pillars of a preference for protestant head tenants and solvency, this was compromised due to an insufficiency of the former and a toleration of the large head tenant who did no more than pay a regular rent. From mid-century, however, landlords increasingly encouraged the solvent, improving tenant who would undertake a range of building and landscape schemes in return for generous lease terms. Encouragement assumed a variety of forms, and a number of pre-conditions were deemed desirable before improvement could proceed. The landlord might be in a position to offer the land under benefit of improvements already executed. Most basically land was expected to be suitable for agriculture and in Tipperary land had a wide suitability and use range. Where fertility levels were inadequate manuring programmes might be undertaken (207). Apart from good soil conditions and fertility, other advantages which could be offered the tenant were running water, shelter, orchards and deer parks (208). A good dwelling house for the farmer was a distinct advantage, particularly if it was slated and if it had outoffices (stable, barn) to adjoin it (209). The extent to which fields were enclosed and orchards and deer parks walled were also important pre-conditions (210). Locational factors were also important, notably the fact that lands being leased were convenient to fair centres, market towns, and turnpikes (211).

The landlord was not the main agent in the execution of improvement schemes, rather his function lay in providing a range of incentives which took two forms : access to the use of additional resources on the lands, and attractive lease terms. Landlords increasingly allowed tenants access to limestone, marl, and culm deposits as a form of encouragement (212). Accessibility to coal pits for culm to burn the limestone in kilns was advantageous, and in this respect lands adjacent to the collieries in the Slievardagh Hills were particularly favoured (213). The existence of culm deposits in such quantities operated to reduce the cost of improvement in this region where the terrain was difficult environmentally. In general where the provision of lime is specified for lettings the lands concerned were improveable or capable of being better improved.



Other resources offered by the landlord to a new tenant might be crops or stock remaining from the older tenant in the transition between tenancies (214). The choice of purchasing the stock on the lands on attractive terms might be given to the incoming tenant, as on the Scott (1762) and Nagle (1769) lands, while timber might also be offered as on the Massy estate at Suir Castle in 1793 (215). Where land had lain waste in the change-over between tenancies, say between May and November, the benefit of this would normally be given to the new tenant (216). The existence of commonage, whether as bog common of which there were extensive tracts in Eliogarty and Ikerrin, or mountain common associated with the Galtees, Slievardagh Hills, Knockmealdowns, Slievnamon, the mountains south of Clonmel, or in Kilnamanagh, as an appendage to the main farm unit formed an incentive to the tenant (217). Valued for its convenience as rough pasture ground for cattle and sheep, commons were traditionally accessible for the benefit of all tenants in adjoining lands, and the numerous cases in which it was included in advertisements indicates that it continued to constitute a valuable resource with which the landlord could attract the tenant (218). Access to turbary was an additional resource which was much valued.

A range of attractive lease terms could be offered by the landlord. A moderately long lease was judged desirable if the tenant was to undertake long term improvements. Very long or perpetuity leases, however, were self-defeating as was proven on the Butler (Cahir) estate. In preference the 31-year lease was regarded as sufficiently long, and for tenants who engaged to build a longer term or renewal of their leases might be promised for example on the Dancer (1761), O'Callaghan (1772), and Barker (1770s) estates (219). In conjunction with a moderately long lease some in-built adjustment to the level of rent whether in the form of an abatement or a graded increase, could be made to aid the tenant in the initial period of the lease when, usually, the most expensive of the improvements were required to be executed (220). Thus an array of financial inducements could be devised in order that tenant improvement endeavours could proceed unimpeded. Exceptionally individual landlords might also forego a renewal fine on the fall of a life during the early stages of an improvement lease (221). In addition to the tenant's solvency that he should reside was contingent for improvement schemes to be executed. A preference for resident tenants is openly stated in respect of lettings on the lands of Perry at Woodroff (1776), Butler (Carrick) in Slievardagh (1779, 1811),



Lockwood near Fethard (1782), Gason near Borrisoleigh (1794), Stanley near Tipperary (1804), and others over a wide area (222). Residence was also a stipulation in the 'political' leases granted by landlords like Mathew (1807) and Lalor (1795-6) (223).

The requirement that prospective tenants be protestant was of special significance. It had existed as a stated preference in the 1690s and to a degree it was achieved in the settlement of the Ormond estate. The policy was re-advocated from time to time particularly in the aftermath of disaster. One farmer near Cashel in May 1741 after the heavy frost and snow, advocated the settlement of colonies of linen workers from Ulster to replace the labourer and cottier population which was decimated through loss of the potato crop (224). Such a proposal was novel advanced in response to particularly harsh circumstances. In normal times landlords had to compromise their ideal of having a full complement of protestant tenants on their estates. Its re-emergence in practice was fore-shadowed by the settlement schemes promoted by O'Callaghan around Clogheen in the early 1740s, with one tenant, Bagnell, for instance in a lease of Shanrahan in 1741 being obliged to 'make, encourage, and continue two protestant freeholders' (225). The main stimulus to its revival as a preference came as a result of the events of the 1760s. Sir Thomas Maude and Sir William Barker, who were closely involved in the events of that decade, were subsequently associated with schemes to promote protestant settlement on their estates. As early as February 1767 Maude was seeking protestant manufacturers for settlement on his estate at Ballintemple, and in the 1770s he promoted the linen industry (226). Barker's promotion of palatine settlers from Co. Limerick at Kilcooley derived from three sources : he had an estate in Co. Limerick ; his mother was a Quin of Adare, a family which also sponsored palatines ; and difficulties were experienced by the original colony in Limerick after 1760 when a sixfold increase in their acreable rents in new leases forced them to seek new outlets (227). Barker offered the settlers lands at a low rent in 1773 and by 1776 many families had settled in a colony in the Slievardagh Hills later known as Palatine Street (228). Other cases of an active promotion of protestants are on record : the Limerick connection may also have influenced the settlement by Anthony Parker of Castlelough of palatines on his estate ; on the Osborne lands near Carrick ; under Prittie at Silvermines ; and the schemes of Sir John Carden at Templemore (229).

There were four areas in which improvement was undertaken : building, planting,



enclosure, and land use. The requirement of residence necessitated a scheme of building, and the building clauses in improvement leases were to be found in their most precocious form in the estate village. The earliest, at Clogheen in the 1740s, shows houses being erected of a standard and uniform type intended to accommodate artisans and manufacturers (230). For large head tenants the building clauses were more ambitious and elaborate, in that the dwelling houses were more substantial in terms of height and roof material. Thus one tenant on the O'Callaghan estate in 1740 was required 'to throw down as much of ye house where Squib [the previous tenant] lives as shall appear not to be built with lime and sand, and rebuild and raise ye same so as there shall be two lofts well floor[e]d, the walls and chimneys to be of lime and sand and ye stair case without side ye house, the whole to be new roofed, slated, and completely finished within two years with a stable for 6 horses' (231). Such a structure reflected the status of this particular tenant, Daniel Lenihan, who was also O'Callaghan's new agent. The farm houses of larger tenants on other estates were equally ambitious and formidable (232). The time period within which the building had to be completed varied between one and four years, and the cost ranged from £10 to £200 (233).

The planting of an orchard sought to provide a long term resource from which the tenant could benefit. Apple growing was widely spread over the county (except in the Keeper Hills, Slievardagh, and Eliogarty) by the mid-seventeenth century with 80 orchards on record, and in the south of the county (south of a line from Bansha to Fethard and Callan), cider making grew as a side industry in the eighteenth century (234). When mature an orchard could be very productive for the tenant, so that its planting was deemed a highly desirable form of improvement. The number of acres planted with cider fruit trees varied from 1 to 4 acres, and the period within which planting was to be completed was 4-5 years (235). Normally the orchard had to be fenced in with a stone wall or double quickset ditch, and any apple trees that died had to be replaced (236). Timber was also a valuable resource but until mid-century tenants had little incentive to engage in planting trees, since they were traditionally reserved by the landlord in leases. However, an act of 1765 made provision whereby the tenant became entitled to all trees planted or their value on the expiry of the lease (237).

The enclosure of fields was the most widespread manifestation of improvement on the landscape. It had advanced to an extent, particularly in the south, by the mid-seventeenth



century (Table XXVI). The process continued piecemeal thereafter. It received a boost with the rising demand for pastoral products (emphasising the need for closer management of stocking levels), and was promoted by the enclosure of common land to accommodate extra stock (238). Involving as it did a considerable deployment of time, labour, and resources, enclosure could prove as costly as building. A tenant on the Bagwell estate near Cashel in 1759 undertook to lay out £100 on ditching and improvements within 7 years (239). Enclosure advanced from the 1760s : lands were enclosed, sub-divided with walls and quicksets in districts near Clonmel, Fethard, Killenaule, Cashel, Tipperary, Ballina (near the Shannon) and Roscrea during that decade (240). Enclosure was also a feature of demesne agriculture, and it could also be associated with the development of roads (241).

Landlords were concerned to preserve the fertility of the soil, fearing that it might be exhausted by over-cropping in the last few years of a tenant's lease. Such concern, expressed in lease covenants, sought to restrict the amount of land devoted to tillage and to stipulate a course of manuring. The restriction on tillage might apply to the entire property as in leases on the Butler (Kilcash) estate in the 1750s and the Erasmus Smith schools estate (242). But as time went on the restriction became more specific with the preferred ratio of tilled to untilled land emerging as 1 : 10 (243). If, however, land was ploughed or tilled then a course of manuring was required. In the O'Callaghan leases of the 1740s this was required after every third crop and by the 1760s after every second crop (244). The burning of land was occasionally indulged in as a cheap way of providing manure in the form of ashes, but increasingly this became shunned as archaic and detrimental. Many acts were passed prohibiting the practice but only with one of 1765, which tightened up the judicial process and the system of penalties, may it have declined (245). References in leases obliging tenants to reclaim lands are few, those relating to the palatines on the Barker estate and on Erasmus Smith estate are exceptional (246). Drainage schemes involved a heavy capital outlay, and at any rate the proportion of unprofitable land in the county was low.

In-built into these improvement leases were penalties to enjoin the carrying out of *their* provisions. Commonly these were compounded into an overall sum at so much extra per acre rent as on the Butler (Kilcash) and Bagwell estates in the 1750s and 1760s (247). Where improvements were more detailed separate penalties might be specified. The



penalty for ploughing up land without licence reached a norm of £5 per acre rent by the early nineteenth century (248). Penalties for non-performance of enclosure works appear to have been particularly heavy, and similarly with reclamation and the abuse of turbary rights (249).

Improving landlords might also provide direct incentives in the form of capital investment or aid, or more usually an allowance or remission in the rent, or an adjustment in the term of the lease. Direct capital in-put by the landlord was exceptional and was indulged in only by the most committed of improvers. Thus in 1747 O'Callaghan paid a tenant £10 towards the erection of a dwelling; in 1769 Barker spent £300 on ditching and draining a mountain farm of 300 acres ; in 1769 also Bagwell agreed to compensate a tenant in two thirds of the cost of improvements estimated at £100 ; and in 1807 Henry Otway covenanted to repay a tenant £250 for the repair of Lissenhall mansion house over the succeeding 7 year period (250). It was more common to offer a rent allowance on the completion of certain works, which could amount to half on Riall (1798) and Erasmus Smith (1810, 1814) lands, and other levels on the Maude, Carden, and Power estates (251). Where works were partly undertaken by the landlord on the tenant's land, some compensation might be paid as on the Barker estate (252). Alternatively a certain proportion of land might be given rent-free on the completion of designated works as with Lalor of Cranagh, or an extension in the lease term might be offered (253). However, such cases were as exceptional as the evidence for direct capital investment by landlords.

The degree to which an improvement policy was implemented depended on the prevailing leasing structure on individual estates and on the commitment of individual landlords. The tenorial situation on the majority of estates was inimical to improvement proceeding. The experience on the Butler (Cahir) estate was typical. Leases given to tenants on that estate in the 1780s contained clauses against sub-letting and, in most cases, for the building of good farm houses (254). But in the decades that followed sub-letting became rampant, scarcely any houses of any value were built, the land was exhausted through over-working, and by the 1840s there was little evidence of any improvement. The landowner at that stage commented despairingly : 'The lands have been sub-divided and loaded with paupers, not a house stands on them worth a farthing, the land is given up in a miserable state, not a single covenant in the leases is fulfilled'



(255). This experience illustrates the fact that the over-large tenant holding on a long lease was not the best choice when it came to improvement. This constrained the capacity of the landlord to act and only when leases expired, as on the Otway (1766), Maude (1770s), and Butler (Cahir) (1840s) estates, could an improvement policy be implemented. Even when this occurred and conditions were favourable, the motivating factor was the commitment of the landlord himself. Improving landlords were in a minority. Less than 20 persons from the county were elected to membership of the Dublin Society, for instance, between 1766 and 1782 and a farming society founded in 1802 had an initial membership of 44 (256). The number of improvement schemes which received premiums from the Dublin Society is impressive and suggests that most success was achieved at the level of the small farmer or cottier, as opposed to the large tenant (257). Overall, however, whatever the aspiration towards improvement and however widely shared, in practice the implementation of such a policy was restricted in the case of the majority of landowners due to the leasing structure inherited from the early part of the century.

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The context for the character of the county's land tenure in the eighteenth century was established in the 1690s through the impoverishment of estates, scarcity of tenants, and depressed land values, and the response of landowners to this situation. That response took the form of the granting of long leases at low or moderate rents for large holdings. Entrenched interests became established across the county as a result and there was a loosening of bonds between landlord and tenant. The position of existing interests was re-inforced in the 1780s which emerges as a key decade. At a time when the upward movement in land values temporarily lost momentum, as rent arrears accumulated, and when much land came on the market, large tenants benefited from the 1780 tenancy act with Catholics additionally advancing due to the 1778 relief act. Large interests were confirmed in the 1780s and despite the efforts of landlords to re-assert their control through the appointment of professional agents and the revival of manor courts. Given the loss of control conceded by landlords in the early eighteenth century and its confirmation in the 1780s, the leasing structure did not permit an advanced improvement policy except by a minority.



## Chapter IV

Up to 1760 electoral politics were fairly uncontentious in so far as the county representation is concerned. This situation derived partly from landownership changes and inheritance patterns and partly from the nature of the electoral system itself. The process of estate disposal involved in the changes on the Ormond estate between 1692 and the 1720s, the selling off of the extensive property of the Hollow Sword Blades company in the 1700s and 1710s, the break up of the Everard estate initiated in the 1720s and culminating in 1750, and the sale of Lord Dunboyne's lands from 1729 : all this signalled fluidity in the county's landownership pattern in the early decades of the century. Some estates were also in the stage of attaining their full extent or unified form, the prime example being that of the Mathews whose three properties were not finally consolidated under the ownership of one individual until 1760. The lack of stability indicated by these changes meant that solid political interests were still in the process of formation.

The emergence of such interests to full expression was dictated by the nature of the electoral system. Until the octennial act of 1768, which limited the life of parliament to eight years, parliament could only be dissolved by the death of a sovereign which event occasioned general elections in 1702, 1714, 1727, and 1761. Equally unpredictable were the deaths of sitting members which precipitated by-elections for Tipperary County in 1707, 1735, and 1737. Yet despite the fact that in practice elections occurred in every decade before 1760, except for the 1740s and 1750s, the expectation at the time dictated by the form of the electoral system itself was that they would be infrequent.

Taking the number of seats for the county (2) and its three boroughs (6), the outlets for political representation in Tipperary were low compared with adjoining counties like Cork (28) or Kilkenny (18). Fluidity in landownership and the nature of the electoral system accounts for the fact that between 1692 and 1760 representation for the county constituency was shared by nine families : Damer, Dawson, Donnellan, Harrison, Mathew, Meade, Minchin, Moore, and Pennefather (1). The majority of these were New English families of the post-1650 period. Meade and Donnellan are instances of persons who had acquired land in the county by virtue of the break up of the Ormond estate, illustrating with what facility newcomers could attain political representation in a short period in the absence of any one dominant interest. The presence of George Mathew



(MP 1713, 1727-36) in this group is significant. He was a convert from catholicism a qualification which allowed him to be elected in 1713 (following the dissolution of parliament in the Spring of that year) and again in 1727, a process which was to be repeated by his successors in 1761 (unsuccessfully) and in 1768 (successfully). The Mathew family was the only one present among the pre-1760 and post-1760 members of parliament for the county constituency. They are the only family to display any degree of continuity in political prominence right through the century and beyond. The early association of the Mathews with controversy is indicated by George Mathew's inclusion among a group of four convert MPs associated with Tipperary who sat in the Tory interest in the 1713 session of parliament, and by his election again in 1727 despite a petition against his return (2).

In the pre-1760 period acrimony or contest at the level of the county constituency is evident in three years : 1713, 1727, and 1735 with Mathew being involved directly or by implication on each occasion. In 1713 Mathew's return in the Tory interest is to be attributed to the duke of Ormond who was a champion of the tory cause and who up until 1715 had a decided influence on the political patronage of the county, and to the government which was anxious to obtain a majority in the forthcoming parliament (3). A pro-Tory sheriff and convert, Terence Magrath, was appointed for the county (an influential office since he acted as returning officer for the election), nationally many converts appeared as candidates, and the widespread participation of catholics was a feature of the election (4). The election was a highly contested one with one defeated Whig candidate protesting that his successful opponent, Sir Redmond Everard, was a convert and that 'his adversary being set up by a popish interest, he can not lie couchant [i.e.resting] under it till the knife comes to the throat or he be led to the stake' (5). The 1713 election is witness to the influence the duke of Ormond exercised locally in favour of his relative Mathew, to the strength of the catholic interest indicated by the return of three convert MPs for the county (1) and Fethard (2), and to the hostility which this success provoked.

The participation of convert candidates and charges of catholic influence were to be recurrent features of elections. In the general election of 1727 the four candidates were : George Mathew, William Waller, Kingsmill Pennefather, and Col. James Dawson who was father of the sheriff for that year, John Dawson. After five days polling Waller and



Dawson withdrew leaving Mathew and Pennefather with a majority, but the sheriff abruptly closed the poll and declared his father elected but on Mathew's petition this was reversed (6). No explicit evidence regarding the participation of catholics or their interference in the election on this occasion is forthcoming. It is possible that it was the case given the fact that a measure enacted in 1728 explicitly deprived catholics of the parliamentary franchise (7).

Given his defeat in 1727 it may be no accident that Dawson was again involved in a disputed election in 1735 brought about by the death of Kingsmill Pennefather. George Mathew, the other sitting MP, in correspondence with Henry Otway in May 1735 referred to 'all ye schemes going forward towards a further division in our county', this being a reference to Dawson and his followers (8). In an effort to halt a conflict Mathew, Richard Pennefather (a relative of the deceased member who had an interest in the filling of the vacancy) and others resolved to avoid a contest (9). Despite this attempt the by-election developed into a contest between Dawson and Joseph Damer, who was advanced in the Mathew interest. Damer was returned and Dawson attributed his failure to the fact that the sheriff, Theobald Mathew (Annfield), delayed the opening of the poll in order to facilitate the creation (much of it by catholics) of freeholders who voted for Damer. He also alleged that Damer used bribery to obtain votes and despite his having a majority of legal votes illegal ones cast for Damer were allowed by the sheriff (10).

Thus in two key years, 1713 and 1735, two convert sheriffs influenced the outcome in favour of the Mathew interest, and even in 1727 when a sheriff favourable to Mathew was not in office the decision still ultimately went in his favour. The year 1736 marks the end of the first phase of the Mathew involvement in the county representation. Mathew and Damer both died in 1736, and in the subsequent by-election Nehemiah Donnallan and Stephen Moore were returned apparently unopposed and both were to represent the county uninterruptedly between 1737 and 1760 (11). At the latter date the Mathew interest in county politics was revived in controversial circumstances. The pattern of electoral politics before 1760 at county level was one of an absence of continuous domination by any one interest, a situation which left the way open for a large number of interests including new landowners to compete for the representation.

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Like the county constituency Tipperary's three boroughs -- Cashel, Clonmel, and



Fethard --were politically active up to mid-century. All three are classifiable as freeman boroughs i.e. the right to return MPs was vested in a body of freemen, the mayor or sovereign, and burgesses. In the course of the century all three came under the control of new patrons who effectively dictated the voting preferences of the electorate : the Pennefathers at Cashel (1733), the Moores at Clonmel (1756), while the O'Callaghan and Barton families came to share the patronage of Fethard (1787). In this way the boroughs progressed from being open (where the freemen had an independent voice) at the outset of the century, to being close (where the freemen were limited in number and voted according to the patron's wishes), at its culmination.

The ability of one family to establish control was facilitated by the structure and powers of the particular corporation. At Cashel the governing charter of 1640 vested the franchise in the mayor, 17 aldermen, and an indeterminate number of freemen (12). The fact that admission to freedom was at the nomination of the mayor and aldermen meant that this privilege could be employed for political purposes. Similarly, since the mayor acted as returning officer at elections appointments to this office were crucial to those attempting to gain control of a borough. The first indication of the rise of the Pennefathers to influence in Cashel comes in 1696 when Kingsmill Pennefather was chosen as an alderman (13). In 1708 he was elected as mayor and other members of the family were again chosen for this office in 1720, 1723, and 1725 (14). The struggle for supremacy in the borough was not finally achieved until 1733.

In the interim the Pennefathers had sat in parliament for the borough : Kingsmill Pennefather from 1704 to 1713, after which a relative Matthew Pennefather sat until his death in 1733. The succeeding by-election was the critical event so far as the future fate of Cashel is concerned. In advance of the by-election over 120 freemen were created between September 1731 and September 1732, when John Cooke was chosen as mayor in the Pennefather interest and he was followed in that office by Kingsmill Pennefather in 1733 (15). The election was contested by Stephen Moore and Richard Pennefather who, despite Moore's charges of favouritism towards him on the part of the mayor and of evidence of some freemen being married to catholics, was elected (16). This victory was attained at the expence of the archbishop of Cashel who had supported Moore (17).

It is significant that Henry Boyle, who was then establishing a political power base in Munster and who as future speaker of the house of commons was to be the chief



government opponent, was applied to by the Pennefathers for his favour in their support in the struggle in Cashel in 1733 (18). Thus on the one side was an alignment of Moore, the archbishop of Cashel and the government, and on the other Pennefather and Boyle. The outcome can be regarded as a defeat for government and a success for Boyle in his formation of a Munster block of MPs in the house of commons. For the Pennefathers the victory meant that they exercised complete and uninterrupted control of the borough subsequently. Indicative of this is that the number of freemen never grew to a large and therefore unmanageable size, the high number of over 120 in the early 1730s falling to 80 by 1791 (19). One member of the family sat for Cashel from 1703 and two members from 1753. The only break in this pattern was occasioned by the Union in 1799 when Richard Bagwell was brought in for one of the seats. This was exceptional, however, for it was the normal practice of the family never to dispose of the borough seats by sale (20).

The struggle for control of Clonmel borough was less clear-cut in the short term than at Cashel and the outcome was different in terms of the affiliations of the eventual patrons. Under its governing charter of 1608 the corporation of Clonmel consisted of a common council comprising 20 burgesses (from among whom a mayor and two bailiffs were chosen), and the commonalty (consisting of an unlimited number of freemen), both together forming one body politic (21). In the later seventeenth century the common council was appropriating to itself the right of nominating freemen without consulting the commonalty. Attempts by the larger assembly in 1681, 1693, and 1704 to limit the mayor's powers of nominating freemen were to no avail (22). By 1705 this process had developed into an attempt by the faction supporting the Moore family to exclude the freemen altogether from any right in the selection of mayor and bailiffs, the purpose being to limit this right to the burgesses alone. In 1705 the Moores gained a signal success. In that year Richard Moore was proposed as mayor by the burgesses in opposition to the choice of the freemen who was Phillip Carleton, the sitting mayor who had the support of 60 freemen including about 10 catholics (23). Moore succeeded despite the protestations of the defeated candidate that the choice was contrary to the 1608 charter.

The conflict of 1705 brings to the fore the divisions and opposing groups that were to subsist in future years (24). Its next manifestation came in the 1720s. In 1724 Stephen



Moore was chosen mayor and during his mayoralty the efforts of his family to gain outright control were revived. As in Cashel this took the form of the creation of freemen who would act in the Moore interest. A restriction was imposed on the right of the commonalty (as embodied in the d'oyer hundred court), to select freemen and Moore instead named 43 freemen only two of whom were resident (25). A further 49 freemen (1 resident) were created against a background of struggle over the choice of the town recorder and next mayor (26). These developments acted as a prelude to rivalry over representation of the borough in parliament, which came to a head in the 1727 general election.

Before the decline in influence of the duke of Ormond he was, as proprietor of the soil, able to recommend candidates as MPs for the borough, as in 1692 for instance (27). Between 1692 and 1713 Moore and Hamerton (the latter representing the opposing faction in the corporation) enjoyed periods of representation as MPs for the borough and again in the period 1713-26 reflecting the division in the corporation itself. The 1727 general election presented Stephen Moore with the opportunity to consolidate his victory in the mayoral controversy of 1725 and to deprive Hamerton of the second seat. In the event, however, though Moore and his co-candidate achieved a majority, this on petition was declared invalid as it had been obtained by virtue of the 92 freemen created by Moore in 1724-5 (28). The rival candidates, Robert Hamerton and Robert Marshall both representing the group opposing Moore, were accordingly elected. This was a significant defeat for the Moores and it was compounded by the removal of a Moore from the office of mayor in 1731 and by the failure of Guy Moore to achieve a by-election success on the death of Hamerton in 1733 (29). The successful candidate in that by-election, Sir Thomas Prendergast a convert, sat continuously with Marshall for Clonmel in the period 1733-55. In the wider context it is noteworthy that Prendergast owed his success in part to the influence of Henry Boyle who in the same year had supported Pennefather's candidature at Cashel (30). The year 1733 was a key one for the extension of Boyle's interest into two Tipperary boroughs, and it marked the defeat of government favoured candidates, the Moores, in both centres.

Excluded from the borough representation the Moores maintained their struggle to gain full control of the corporation after 1730. Both factions proceeded to elect rival mayors with the Moore nominee obtaining approval from government (31). In 1736 compromise



proposals submitted by Robert Marshall were rejected by the Moores who continued to dominate the corporation until 1747 (32). In that year an unexplained break occurred in the Moore domination and the opportunity was seized upon by the opposing group to install its own mayor, Jeremiah Morgan. During his mayoralty an important set of by-laws was enacted by the anti-Moore faction. They had a threefold purpose : to confine election to the offices of mayor, bailiff, and burgess to those who were residents for at least twelve months ; to vest the right of election in 20 burgesses and 10 'select' freemen ; and to limit the choice of select freemen to residents of at least twelve months (33). Inherent in these by-laws was an attempt by Moore's opponents to re-establish control and to ensure a perpetual influence in future over the corporation and, by extension, its function in returning members to parliament. The main stimulus for the formulation of these by-laws came from the Quaker merchant interest in Clonmel mainly the Bagwell and Riall families, indicating that a shift in the composition of the opponents of the Moores compared to the early phase of the struggle had occurred (34). Despite the success of the Moores in regaining the mayoralty in 1748 the by-laws of that year were confirmed and extended in 1750 (35).

At this point it is well to remember that while the Moores retained virtual control of the corporation, the parliamentary representation of the borough was since 1733 in the hands of their opponents, a position sanctioned by the nature of the electoral system. In 1754, however, a by-election was occasioned by the promotion of Marshall (one of the sitting members) to a judgeship and the Moores seized the opportunity to fill the vacancy. The mayor William Kellett backed the Moores, the by-laws of 1748 and 1750 were repealed and all powers, including the selection of freemen, were vested in the common council alone (36). The candidates for the vacancy were Guy Moore and William Bagwell who was successful on petition but who died soon after allowing the seat to devolve on Moore (37). Significantly the house of commons divided evenly (106 to 106) in the matter of the petition, and it was only with the casting vote of the speaker, Henry Boyle, that victory went to Bagwell (38). This decision was consistent with Boyle's support of Prendergast in 1733 and therefore with the anti-Moore group now represented by Bagwell.

The Moore family remained supreme in Clonmel thereafter with two members of the family representing it continuously from 1761 to 1799, when ironically the patronage



was disposed of by Lord Mount Cashell to John Bagwell a descendant of the opposing party in the 1750s. Although it was observed of Clonmel in 1775 that 'Lord Mount Cashell at present has the sole dominion over this borough', the non-residence of its MPs was regarded as a weakness to their interest and popularity and one observer remarked in 1773 that 'this borough is very open and if any person attended to it and resided in the town he would probably succeed' (39). This situation operated to the advantage of the Bagwells who, being resident and popular merchants, took advantage of the Moores' neglect.

Expressive of this was an attempt in 1782 by a committee of 17 persons led by John Bagwell and dominated by Quaker merchants to break the monopoly held by the Moores over the creation of freemen (40). Encouraged by the current pre-occupations of constitutional agitation and, in particular, the demand for parliamentary reform, this attempt was directed with the general election of 1783 in view. It was unsuccessful as Stephen and William Moore were returned without difficulty. Yet in the years that followed Bagwell accumulated much wealth ( in 1780 he had purchased Moore's flour mill at Marlfield), office, and influence locally making his purchase of the borough in 1799 a popular and not unexpected outcome.

In the interim the universal hold of the Moores remained, indicated by the fact that the number of freemen was static or rose only slightly from 60 in 1705 to 80 in 1754 and fell to 72 in 1783 ; and by the fact that they, like the Pennefathers at Cashel, never disposed of their seats by sale (41). The Moore family had engaged in a struggle stretching over 50 years before its control over Clonmel was finally made secure in 1756. That struggle demonstrates that the borough led an active and eventful political existence in the first half of the century, while after 1756 the reverse was the case.

Like Cashel, Fethard had its origins as an archiepiscopal borough and like Clonmel its governing charter dated from 1608 when a corporation was established consisting of a sovereign, portreeve, recorder, 12 burgesses, and an unspecified number of freemen (42). This last provision and the fact that the admission of freemen was at the discretion of the sovereign, were to be key elements in the struggle for control of the borough in the eighteenth century (43). The Everard family came to have an influence over the borough from an early period, and in 1713 Sir Redmond Everard and Cornelius O'Callaghan, both converts, were its MPs. But it was more usually represented by local



families like Sankey, Jacob, and Cleve particularly when Everard's Jacobite leanings entailed his absence from the locality, thereby allowing resident interests to assert their aspirations. The Moores, politically active at county level and in Clonmel at this time, established a temporary foothold in the borough in the early 1720s at a time when some of the Everard property was changing hands and when Everard's absence in France caused him to neglect his interest in Fethard (44). However, in the general election of 1727 the local families re-established their position with Matthew Jacob and John Cleve being its MPs continuously from 1727 to 1754, Jacob to 1760 (45).

Just as in Clonmel the year 1754 in Fethard witnessed some crucial developments. The death of Cleve in 1754 allowed Robert O'Callaghan to enter parliament via Fethard through a by-election. The O'Callaghans had built up an influence in the corporation by virtue of their association with Everard in 1713, and because they had acquired part of the encumbered Everard estate in the 1720s. As with Pennefather at Cashel and Moore at Clonmel, O'Callaghan's emergence at Fethard was aided by the creation of 98 new freemen in April 1754 (46). Already a rival to the emergent O'Callaghan claims had arisen when Thomas Barton purchased the bulk of the remainder of the Everard estate in 1750. The Bartons found it difficult initially to achieve any solid influence in the borough. For instance, a Barton made a showing in the 1761 election for Fethard but was defeated by a substantial majority (47). The rivalry between the O'Callaghan and Barton families for control of Fethard was not finally resolved until 1787. The intervening period was characterised by the attempts of William Barton to be chosen as a burgess, in which he was unsuccessful until 1772 ; and in 1774 by the creation of 413 freemen (mostly non-resident) by O'Callaghan in order to attain precedence as a result of which Barton and his supporters seceded from the corporation (48).

Internal rivalry in the corporation was duplicated by division in the parliamentary representation of the borough. The large number of freemen created by O'Callaghan in 1774 operated to his advantage in the 1776 election when he and his joint runner David Walshe obtained 353 and 340 votes respectively, William Barton and George Gore getting 64 and 57 (49). By 1782 a resolution of the rivalry in the corporation was emerging, indicative of which was the conjunction of Barton and O'Callaghan in the 1783 general election (50). The final agreement on the division of the corporation and the borough representation came in 1787. By it an equal division was agreed on whereby



the nomination of one of the MPs was to lie with O'Callaghan, the other with Barton. To complement this it was proposed to reduce the number of freemen so that the influence of both parties could be exercised more effectively (51). Thus the 900 freemen of 1783 had by 1790 been reduced to 300 and by the 1830s to a nominal 13 or 14 (52). This pattern of a reduction in the number of freemen once a dominant interest had become established, accords with that at Cashel and Clonmel.

The foregoing is an outline of the development of new political interests in the county's three boroughs over the century. The key element in all three is the weakening of aristocratic control in the early decades : at Cashel by the archbishop, at Clonmel by the duke of Ormond, and at Fethard by Everard. In the case of the two last this was occasioned by the break-up of the estates in question and absenteeism, in the case of the first the cause was neglect. All three boroughs were as a result active politically with the emergence of new patrons confirmed at Cashel in 1733, Clonmel in 1756, and Fethard in 1787. The early association of Henry Boyle with developments in the first two cases particularly in 1733 and his decisive intervention in the Clonmel petition of 1754, is significant for indicating the alignment of the politically active gentry locally. Boyle was successful in influencing the outcome at Cashel and Clonmel (but only in the short term in the case of the last), and thereby gaining an accretion of support for the Munster party he was creating in the house of commons.

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The year 1760 stands out as a dividing point in the political evolution of the county for several reasons. Firstly, the passing of the octennial act in 1768 made elections predictable. The expectancy that elections would be held more regularly allowed interests to develop in advance. In this way between 1760 and 1790 the county representation was shared by four families : Mathew, Meade, Prittie, and Toler. Power and influence became concentrated in a lesser number of families than was the case in the pre-1760 period. Some families that represented the county before 1760 disappear from prominence after that date. Thus the Harrison interest was subsumed into that of Prittie as the latter inherited the former estate, and similarly with the Dawson interest which became submerged into the patrimony of the Massy family whose personal political aspirations lay largely in Co.Limerick (53). Neutralisation of interests occurred in



another direction also. Thus the political energies of the Moores were redirected away from the county constituency towards the borough of Clonmel, and those of the Pennefathers to Cashel. Both families had stood for the county at some stage before 1760 but this was not to be repeated after 1760 as both had by then become established borough proprietors.

Secondly, while some families disappeared politically others emerged. In particular the period after 1760 is marked by the emergence of two new strong political interests in the north of the county : Prittie and Toler. They came to act as a focus for the numerous body of protestant freeholders in north Tipperary. Thirdly, amid this pattern of disappearance or redirection of old and the emergence of new interests, the only family to display any degree of continuity of representation before and after 1760 were the Mathews. Finally, just as the pre-1760 period witnessed contested elections on several occasions, so also was the period 1760-1790 marked by contest.

The occasion on which a new pattern of political rivalry first emerged was the general election of 1761. The electoral campaign saw a keen contest between three candidates : Henry Prittie of Kilboy, marking the successful entry of the family into the county representation ; Sir Thomas Maude of Dundrum, an evangelical protestant and noted estate improver ; and Thomas Mathew of Thomastown, a convert advanced in the catholic interest. The 1761 election had profound consequences for the sectarian conflicts of the 1760s (54). Its significance so far as electoral politics is concerned lies in the fact that it showed the ability of Mathew and prominent catholic landholders to mobilise a protestant freeholder gross poll of 532 votes in his favour (Table XX). Mathew was surprised at the level of support he received, remarking that 'It is almost impossible to describe the great success I have meet (sic) with here [Clonmel], there is scarce a man but is with me' (55). This success represented the first public espousal by Mathew of an association with the substantial and wealthy catholic interest in the county, an association that was to prove of benefit to both subsequently. However, it was this very association which brought forward the candidature of Maude in opposition to Mathew and which ultimately led by way of petition to Maude's overturning of Mathew's majority with the support of a sympathetic parliament (56). The long term effect of the 1761 election was to establish a pattern whereby county electoral politics became divisive centring on the status, sympathies, and associations of the Mathews.



The 1768 election was also closely contested the candidates being Sir Thomas Maude (the sitting member), Francis Mathew (son of Thomas Mathew defeated in 1761), Henry Prittie the younger (son of the deceased sitting member who died in 1768), and John Bagwell. Mathew and Prittie, Maude and Bagwell went forward as joint runners though the juncture is only explicit in the case of the first two. This coalition was designed to maximise the benefits of the double voting system which had not been effectively availed of in 1761, there being only three candidates on that occasion. It is evident that catholic influence was again brought to bear in favour of Mathew and Prittie in 1768. The most explicit statement of this is the remark made following Mathew's success that he 'Came in by the papist int[ere]st of this Co[unty]' (57). How this influence operated in practice is most obviously seen where catholic landlords influenced protestant freeholders to vote in certain way. Prominent catholics were also well placed to act as canvassing agents. Walter Woulfe, a wealthy Carrick merchant, recommended persons whom Mathew and Prittie could usefully approach with a view to obtaining their favour (58). Also it is clear that nationally there were a large number of conformities to the Established Church in advance of the election in order that such persons might qualify to vote (59). The occurrence of conformities would be more particularly the case in counties like Tipperary where a contest was expected, less so in counties where the outcome was pre-arranged. In 1768, 32 conformities are officially enrolled for the county representing one seventh of the national total for that year, and the largest annual figure for any year in the 1760s (Table LXVI). In contrast to the pattern in other counties the majority of these conformities took place before the election in July. This figure may seem low in isolation, but it must be viewed in the context of the total number of conformities for 1760-67 of 127 persons who also would have had the right to vote in 1768. The significance of the figure is also put into context by the slim margin of 25 votes by which Mathew was returned.

John Bagwell of Kilmore was the earliest of the candidates to publicly solicit the freeholders' votes in February 1768, and Mathew and Prittie did so jointly in April (60). Maude made no public appeals though anonymous solicitations were made on his behalf in the press. One of these declared that it would be 'impossible to vote against Sir Thomas Maude without disclaiming the principles upon which he has acted' (61). In contrast there was a campaign launched in April in the Freeman's Journal, the organ of



Dublin liberalism, with the aim of publicly discrediting Maude to his electoral disadvantage (62). This campaign arose out of the prominent part played by Maude in quelling a supposed popish plot in the county in the early 1760s. The charges articulated by him and others were not credited by moderate opinion inside or outside the county. The juncture between Prittie and Mathew may have been an attempt to allow this moderate opinion to express itself at the polls, thereby halting Maude's return for a second term (63). Certainly it was unusual in the context of eighteenth century politics to have a coalition between two major political interests stated so publicly and sealed privately by a bond of £1,000. Yet it is indicative of the strength of feeling produced by the events of the early 1760s that the need for it arose. Bagwell's implicit juncture with Maude arose out of the same context but for the opposite motives.

The issues of the early 1760s apart, the two other concerns which played a role in the election were the measure to limit the duration of parliament and a proposal by government to increase the size of the army. The desire to have shorter parliaments was a popular one which first emerged in the 1761 election following the end of the long parliament which had begun in 1727 (64). In March 1766 the grand jury assembled at Clonmel issued an instruction to their representatives in parliament to support the measure for reducing the length of parliaments, in which Maude concurred (65). A measure limiting the duration of parliament to eight years received the royal assent in February 1768, and at the election held in Clonmel in July following an oath was formulated whereby candidates who were returned would undertake not to alter this new measure, except to shorten the duration further (66).

Included in the test oath also was a provision whereby successful candidates would agree to publicly declare their opposition to a proposal to increase the size of the army in the country in peacetime. This plan to augment the army was introduced by the lord lieutenant, Townshend, in the belief that the concession of the octennial act had provided the precedent for the compliance of the political community to the measure. However, because of the expenditure augmentation of the army would entail and the fact that support from the leading interests like John Hely-Hutchinson was unforthcoming, the plan was defeated in the house of commons in May 1768 (67). The inclusion of a clause on this measure in the test oath for the Tipparary election in July shows the residual effect it had politically.



In the poll Maude's vote of 696 over Mathew (621) gave him a majority for the first seat, while Mathew's majority of 25 votes over Prittie (596) was sufficient to give him the second seat (Table XX). In normal circumstances this narrow margin would have provoked a petition from the defeated candidate, but on this occasion Prittie's alliance with Mathew precluded this and at any rate provision was made for Prittie's entry to parliament through the purchase of a seat in Gowran. Bagwell had declined proceeding further in the poll on 28 July claiming that his respectable vote of 400 could have been exceeded but that gentlemen were obliged to vote contrary to their inclinations (68). In his address of thanks Mathew commended the impartiality of the sheriff, Anthony Parker, in his conduct of the poll and declared his intention of supporting the protestant interest, manufactures, freedom and independence of the country in general and Tipperary in particular (69). It is clear that the election had been divisive, a point stressed in an assessment of Mathew that he was 'Sir Thomas [Maude]'s antagonist in Tipperary' (70). In 1768 the legacy of defeat in 1761 was overturned by Mathew's success, but the pattern of opposition to the family was maintained through Maude's return.

Following the 1768 election Maude came in as a government supporter having been made a privy councillor by Townshend, while Mathew's status was described as 'doubtful against', suggesting that on balance he was in opposition to government (71). The political issues current in the early 1770s stemmed partly from the policy of direct control by a resident viceroy, inaugurated by Townshend and continued by his successors, and partly from the concerns of the political community itself. Maude's advancement must be viewed as an expression of the new policy enunciated by Townshend of creating a strong 'Castle' party dependent on the lord lieutenant and rendering him a majority in parliament in return for patronage (72). Another member who had the expectation of benefiting from Townshend's disposal of patronage was Guy Moore Coote (MP Clonmel 1761-82), but on the whole Tipperary gentlemen entering parliament in 1768 had not been won over to the government side.

There were, however, degrees of opposition. Thus while Colvill Moore (MP Clonmel 1761-76) was 'against', suggesting strong opposition ; others like Peter Holmes (Banagher), John Hely-Hutchinson (Cork City), and John Croker (Fethard) were deemed 'doubtful government' ; while others still notably Richard and William Pennefather (Cashel) were designated as 'doubtful against' like Mathew. It must be



assumed that the connection of Cornelius O'Callaghan with Speaker John Ponsonby, one of the main opposition spokesmen, placed him in the anti-government camp, while the position of Sir William Osborne (Carysfort), a landowner near Clonmel, was considered 'doubtful' such that he 'must be particularly applied to' (73).

Thus in so far as the response to Townshend's approaches in and after 1769 are concerned, Tipperary representatives included a large section of MPs whose support was at the very least doubtful, Maude and Guy Moore Coote being the only committed government supporters. This scenario is not altogether surprising for, with the single exception of Colvill Moore who was insane, never attended, and was emphatically against, it was to the advantage of most MPs particularly new members like O'Callaghan and Mathew entering on a parliamentary career, to adopt a distant stance and thereby obtain the best terms possible from government approaches seeking support. The fluid nature of much of their opposition is exemplified by the fact that by 1773 the Pennefathers, Holmes, Croker, and Prittie had been won over to support (74). Mathew and O'Callaghan were still in opposition by 1773 and Osborne had been lost to the government side (75). These positions of a pro- and anti-government line were to be tested by the current political issues as Townshend and his successor, Harcourt, grappled with a resilient parliamentary opposition articulating the grievances emanating from the economic difficulties and political concerns of the early 1770s.

In November 1773 an assembly of freeholders at Nenagh formulated a set of instructions on what line their parliamentary representatives were to follow (76). This is an important, detailed, and informative document much of it taken up with economic issues (77). Fears that a proposal to impose a tax on absentee proprietors would be extended into a more general land tax was a chief political concern of the freeholders. The proposal for an absentee tax was advanced by the Irish administration in the belief that by carrying a popular measure against absentees, who were regarded with disdain, it would at the same time provide additional revenue (78). Resistance to the measure was successfully organised by the absentees themselves in England (Lord Milton included), the government relented, and the proposal was defeated in the commons on the day (26 November) that the freeholders met to draft their address (79).

The freeholders also expressed concern about the appointment of pensioners and placemen, and of members of parliament to office. This issue arose out of the means



adopted by Townshend to win support after 1768 (80). The prime exemplars of this locally are Maude who was made a privy councillor; Colvill Moore who was made collector of excise in Cork with a salary of £1,000 ; the Pennefathers and G.M. Coote who received pensions , while ensigncies were conferred on the former and on Croker ; and John Hely-Hutchinson, the chief exponent of self-aggrandisement (81). It was the strong belief that acceptance of such places and offices necessarily involved a compromise of independence, and the freeholders wished their MPs to support a bill to limit their number 'as the independency (sic) of parliament is nearly annihilated by the enormous increase of placemen and pensioners'. Opposition was also advised to the stamp act, a measure introduced by government whereby a stamp duty was to be levied on newspapers and pamphlets. Seen by government as a fiscal measure, the act was vigorously opposed because it was seen as an infringement on the liberty of the press. However, the act came into force in January 1774 (82). The MPs were also instructed to seek a further shortening in the duration of parliaments. Finally, in a cautionary clause, they were informed that their constant attendance in parliament exerting themselves on the above issues was expected, and they were told that 'it is our determined resolution that parliamentary conduct shall be the invariable rule of our future choice'.

The publicly stated responses of Maude and Mathew to the address are of interest. The latter replied in very general terms broadly concurring in the stance adopted by the freeholders and assuring them that he would attend parliament constantly and take their advice seriously (83). Maude, though he replied at greater length, declined to give an explicit response to all points saying that 'many of them must necessarily undergo the more particular deliberation of those with whom they seem to be more locally connected' (84). Despite this evasiveness he agreed that it was incumbent on government to adopt a greater system of economy given the national debt. In this respect he concurred with the desirability in principle of a tax on absentees, though the burden of a general land tax would be too great to bear. He believed that parliaments should be shortened though he questioned 'what effect the frequency of elections may have on the morals and industry of the people'. Of particular interest to Maude, given the press campaign against him in 1768, was the stamp act and on this issue he agreed that there should be freedom of the press but he insisted that 'the peace of individuals and the tranquillity of families should not be left exposed to the hidden shaft of calumny and detraction'. Maude, however,



continued to be attacked in the popular press (85).

On the whole these were cautious and circumspect replies on Maude's part reflecting his commitments as a government supporter and, at the same time, his anxiety to maintain a semblance of popularity among the freeholders. Attempting to reconcile the two purposes probably accounts for the description of Maude in 1775 to the effect that 'he supports pretty steadily, but upon two occasions last session opposed and affected independence, but seeing his seat in the [Privy] Council and Peerage in danger he returned to government' (86). He was rewarded for his support by being elevated to the peerage in 1776 as Lord De Montalt. He was part of a crop of 22 new peerages created in that year as part of the government's winning of support for delicate measures, notably the despatching of 4,000 troops to America.

Mathew was noted as having remained 'constantly in opposition', a position that was more likely to prove beneficial in the election of 1776 and in terms of popularity given the trend of constitutional agitation during the 1770s. By 1775 the other MPs connected with the county supporting government were Guy Moore Coote, the Pennefathers, John Damer (Swords), Peter Holmes and John Hely-Hutchinson ; those in opposition with Mathew were Cornelius O'Callaghan, Henry Prittie, and Sir William Osborne ; while Colvill Moore was absent and John Croker could not be depended on (87). Thus by 1776 doubts about the support of five members had been clarified from the perspective of their positions in 1769, so that a majority of MPs associated with Tipperary supported government. Only Mathew and O'Callaghan remained consistent in their opposition.

\* \* \* \*

The role of Prittie in the 1768 contest was decisive and he was again to have a crucial influence on the outcome in 1776. In 1768 Prittie had agreed to give his interest to Mathew conditional on a bond of £1,000. Payment on the bond was not subsequently demanded, Mathew presumed that the juncture with Prittie was to be binding in the 1776 election also, and on this basis Prittie was applied to for his interest on Mathew's behalf. Disavowing any obligation to be bound Prittie declared his intention of standing singly and unconnected, and at this stage Mathew offered to honour payment of the bond. Prittie remained uncompromising in his neutrality but conceded that his second preference votes should be equally divided between Mathew and Daniel Toler another



candidate, a proposal which Prittie contended freed him from the obligation of the bond (88).

These circumstances, and the fact that each of the candidates declared that they would stand singly, led to the justifiable belief that the Tipperary election was to be one of the most contested in the country (89). In the event out of a gross poll 1,470 Prittie was elected with a majority of 104 votes as also was Mathew with a margin of 66 votes over Toler.(Table XX) (90). Given the narrowness of the margin and, in contrast to 1768, the absence of an alliance, Toler proceeded to petition but this was unsuccessful (91). As a result Mathew was returned a second time for the county and Prittie achieved the prestige of attaining a first time victory at county level.

More significant than the outcome itself was the pattern of support evident for the candidates. It is possible to reconstruct the support groups and the voting pattern because of the survival of a list of the main interests in the county for 1775 and of the election poll book for 1776 (92). These sources indicate that Prittie had a large following partly based on 95 freeholders on his estate, but more importantly on a network of links by marriage and connections (93). Prittie's main direct support from relatives came by way of Thomas Otway, Peter Holmes, Michael Head, and Matthew Bunbury all of whom were his brothers-in-law and important landowners (Genealogy I). More vitally for political purposes these family connections could vouch for the votes of their freeholders, it being remarked of Holmes for instance that he 'has a good interest (as to freeholders) in this county'. This remark was also made with reference to Francis Sadlier of Sopwell Hall, who was Prittie's father-in-law. In this way the votes of freeholders in one barony, Lower Ormond, where in 1784 there were 400 freeholders (equivalent to one quarter of the county total at that date), were accounted for (94).

From this initial circle of close relatives the net widened whereby others became linked into the Prittie interest. Wider family sympathies accounted for the support of John Bayly (a half-brother), John Head, and Loftus Otway. Strong connections by marriage were forged not merely with the leading families of north Tipperary, but stretched down to lesser families also. Thus William Woodward with an income of £600 supported Prittie by virtue of a family connection through the Otways (95). While the Prittie interest had a basis from beneath, it also benefited from support from above. This derived from the earl of Clanwilliam, one of the county's leading landowners, who could vouch for a



large freeholder support for Prittie and who served to extend the Prittie support base out of its northern stronghold further south. This particular link was doubly significant in that Prittie was related to Clanwilliam (Genealogy I). Thus family ties, combined with a strong freeholder base, ensured Prittie a strong real and personal interest. All told the Prittie interest could account for landed estate of at least £30,000 per annum, including Prittie's own income of £6,000.

The Toler interest, in contrast, in terms of landed estate, marriage and personal connections, was less extensive and impressive than that of Prittie. Daniel Toler had an income of £1,500 while his brother John Toler, the future attorney general had £1,000 making the Toler stake inferior in point of wealth and, by implication, number of freeholders to that of Prittie. The vital element in the Toler political interest was the fact that Daniel Toler was a relative of Prittie's (96). This connection was all-important for, deficient in wealth and freeholders, Toler became dependent on the second preference votes of Prittie and on his family support to gain an advantage in the poll.(97).

In the event the bulk of the support for Prittie and Toler came from the leading landowners and freeholders of the north of the county. To the strong family core group of Otway, Holmes, Head, and Sadler and a solid freeholder base, was added the support of other northern families. The most important of these were : Cole-Bowen, Cambie, Falkiner, Finch, Gason, Going, Hawkshaw, Hemsworth, Lloyd (Gloster), Minchin, Minnitt, Pepper, Rolleston, Stoney, and Poe. This strong protestant alignment ensured that Prittie would top the poll. Outside the northern area those who voted for Prittie and Toler jointly included chief interests like Barton, Bagnell (Marlhill), Bagwell (Kilmore), Barker, Clutterbuck, Lane, Langley, the Moores (Marlfield, Clonmel, Chancellorstown, and Garrane branches), and Sankey.

The Quaker community was divided in its political preferences with three members of the Fennell family siding with Prittie and Toler, and three others voting singly for Mathew. The Quaker bankers, Rialls of Clonmel, sided fully with the former. A further dimension to the basis of support that Prittie and Toler achieved was the case of Matthew Jacob of Mobarnan near Fethard. In 1775 he was described as the 'chief of the Presbyterian party in this county' (98). On a broader canvass it is worth noting the wider dimensions of support rendered to the two at inter-county and national level (99). So far as the former context is concerned Prittie and Toler were supported by John Congreve,



William Christmas, and Simon Newport all of Waterford who constituted an emergent opposition group there. Prittie's main political connection outside the county was Sir Henry Cavendish, his uncle by marriage. By virtue of this link Prittie became associated with the Devonshire interest and by extension the Ponsonby interest which, from the 1760s, was making successful encroachments on Boyle's power base in Munster (100).

The pattern of support for Mathew was quite different. He had some advantage in that he was a sitting MP for the county (101). Against this, however, was the fact that he had few direct connections by marriage with the protestant political community in the county, indeed nothing on a scale comparable to that of Prittie (Genealogy II). Mathew had married into a minor Co. Wicklow family the Smyths of Tinna Park in 1765, though a more ambitious link was forged by a second marriage in 1784 into the important Massereene family. Lacking support through marriage links, Mathew became dependent on freeholders on his estate and the backing of other interests sympathetic politically. The majority margins attained by the Mathews in earlier elections were narrow : 36 votes in 1761, 25 in 1768 (Table XX). Conscious of this narrow margin, lacking in political support, and unable to avail of a pre-arrangement as in 1768, Mathew was concerned to maximise the potential of his freeholder vote. For this reason he granted to 60 or 70 persons, who were rent chargers, the status of freeholders on the Thurles estate (102). Taking this figure into account it can be reasonably supposed that a large proportion of the 467 freeholders (representing about one third of the gross poll) who voted singly for Mathew, were freeholders on the Mathew estate (103). In proportion to his stated income of £1,200 in 1775 this figure may seem high, but it must be remembered that Mathew was still an elder son who was not to inherit the estate until 1777 when his father Thomas Mathew died.

Apart from the large number of 40s. freeholders those who voted singly for Mathew included important families like Armstrong, Bradshaw, Lockwood, Smithwick, Lidwell, Ellard, Hamerton, Roe, Newcomen, Price, Moore(Ardmayle), Pennefather, and Baker (Ballymoreen). Those who voted for Mathew and Sir Skeffington Smyth, his running partner, jointly included Armstrong (Thurles), Bradshaw, Bagnell (Shanrahan), Cooke (Kiltinan), Max, and Yelverton. The latter with Hutchinson of Knockballymeagher were the only important interests from the northern part of the county to side with Mathew. A significant number of catholics are noted in the 1775 list including Lord Cahir, John



McCarthy, John Galway, and Walter Woulfe, and one can safely assume that where they could influence the disposal of freeholder votes it would have been in Mathew's favour (104). Support for Mathew singly or jointly with Smyth was forthcoming from a group of converts notably Milo Burke, John Butler, James Archer-Butler, William A.English, Richard Long-Everard, William Kissane, Paul Phelan, John Prendergast, Denis Kearney, Lalors and Mandevilles.

Outside support for Mathew came from individuals like Thomas Sherlock and Thomas Fitzgerald in Co. Waterford, George Green, Co. Limerick and Sir Haydock Evans Morres, Co. Kilkenny. In a wider perspective Mathew had government support in the election since his nominee or sponsor was John Scott, the recently appointed solicitor general who was Mathew's brother-in-law. Scott's participation is noteworthy. Recently won over to the administration side through the offer of office, Scott had staunchly defended the administration against the patriots' most vociferous spokesmen the Floods who had opposed Thomas Mathew in the Callan election of 1768. Scott may have been influential in winning over Mathew, who had been in consistent opposition up until then, as a supporter of government. Certainly after 1776 Mathew was in support and this was to favour his elevation to the peerage (1783) and his advancement of catholic relief as a condition of his support.

Apart from the main interests supporting each candidate, the pattern of voting in the 1776 election shows that there was a middle party in the county. By this is meant families who were not committed to the Prittie / Toler side or Mathew / Smyth but rather voted Mathew and Prittie. (Excepted from consideration here are those freeholders of Prittie's on whose instruction their second votes were to be equally divided between Toler and Mathew). Prominent families who voted in this way were Massy, Parker, Waller (senior branch), Willington, O'Callaghan, Hyde, Moore (Mooresfort), Lidwell (Dromard), Smithwick, Hamilton-Lane, Alleyn, and the senior branch of the Pennefathers who were divided politically in so far as preferences at county level are concerned. Something of the dilemma of this group is exemplified in the case of O'Callaghan. His marriage connection with Ponsonby meant that his support would go to Prittie, but otherwise his preference lay with Mathew. Further division in the political choices of the Quaker community is evident in the appearance of John Grubb of Anner Mills as a voter for Mathew and Prittie. The middle group of voters also contained a



sprinkling of converts like Barnaby Phelan, and some extra-county elements notably St. Leger, patron of Doneraile borough, who was connected with Lord Shannon.

In addition to this middle party, there was an assemblage of politically uncommitted persons. This is evident from the pattern of cross voting one can perceive : i.e. those who voted for Toler and Mathew, of whom there were 53 cases representing over 3.6% of the gross poll. Included were members of the Bunbury family who as tenants felt some obligation to Mathew, but otherwise opted for Toler. Divided loyalties also applied to the rector of Thurles, Rev. Francis Garnett, and Oliver Smithwick. It is striking that families like the Lathams, despite being related to Jacob the Presbyterian leader, opted to vote Toler / Mathew as did members of the Lloyd (Cranagh), Cooke, Hutchinson (Timoney) and Watson families, and individuals like Vere Hunt and Sir Edward Newenham. Interests from outside the county who appear as cross voters include John Blunden, Co.Kilkenny and St. John Jefferies, Co. Cork.

The 1776 election was a controversial and keenly fought contest given the allegiances of the respective candidates, the matter of the bond, and a duel. It marked a decided shift in the political character of the county. Mathew turned from opposition to standing as a government nominee in opposition to Prittie whose loyalties lay with Ponsonby, a government opponent. In this sense Mathew, ironically, may be seen as replacing Maude (who had been raised to the peerage), as the pro-government choice in the county representation. This transition was to be of great significance subsequently because the enfranchisement of the catholic 40s. freeholders after the act of 1793 increased the number of voters the Mathews could mobilise to their advantage. Yet in 1776 this was far in the future and Mathew was still dependent on a narrow electoral majority to obtain the return which was only assured by the creation of fictitious freeholders. Although Mathew could marshal an impressive number of freeholders and could get support from a range of other interests, his inability to achieve a more decisive majority was a reflection of his isolation in the landed class of the county. The Mathews exhibited no pattern of integration by marriage with the leading protestant families and as a consequence suffered politically (105). This handicap of isolation was to be offset in the next generation, not by the adoption of a forward marriage policy but by the exploitation of the massive rise in catholic voters after 1793 (106).

In contrast to this the solid support advanced by Prittie, based on the combined



strengths of pervasive marriage alliances and a numerous protestant freeholder interest in the north, carried the day. Prittie's personal popularity and his articulation of the constitutional grievances of the day further enhanced his prospects of success. His victory and Toler's good showing signalled a shift in the leadership of the protestant political community compared to the 1760s. At that time the gentry around Clonmel with Maude were prominent leaders and grand jurors, a pattern influenced by the location and emphasis of sectarian tension in that decade. Prittie's victory in 1776 saw the transfer of political leadership to the north. The disposition of interests implicit in the 1776 election result with one member for the government, the other against, was to be tested in the constitutional and political issues which arose in following years.

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Following the 1776 election the issues of the period up to 1783 were dominated by the achievement of concessions in trade and politics. The achievement of these concessions was due in part to the pressure brought to bear by the Volunteer movement. The origins of this body locally lie in the emergence in early 1776 of small groups joining for mutual self-defence against the Whiteboys (107). Their more formal association came in May 1776 with two corps under Benjamin Bunbury and Sir Cornwallis Maude, followed by another at Templemore under John Carden before the end of the year (108). The real stimulus to volunteering came with the defence needs of the country consequent on the withdrawal of troops to engage the American colonists then in revolt, and because of the fear of invasion resulting from the declaration of war with France in 1778. Volunteer corps were formed under John Hamilton-Lane (Slievardagh) in 1778 ; under Henry Prittie (Ormond), Daniel Toler (Ormond), George Stoney (Borrisokane), Richard Moore (Clonmel), Richard Pennefather (Cashel), Peter Holmes (Nenagh), William Barton (Fethard), Francis Mathew (Lorrha, Thurles, and Drum), Sir William Barker (Kilcooley), the earl of Tyrone (Carrick), the earl of Clanwilliam (Clanwilliam), John Lapp Judkin (Munster), Lord Jocelyn (Newport), Stewart (Ballintemple), and Lawrence Parsons (Roscrea) all in 1779 ; and two further corps in 1781 under Cornelius O'Callaghan (Clogheen) and Pierce Butler (Cahir) (109). In 1782 Tipperary had a complement of 9 corps and 9 troops of volunteers representing about one quarter of the provincial total (110).

The formation of these corps is indicative of the strong feeling of colonial nationalism



of the late 1770s and is expressive of the *esprit de corp* of protestants in the county. This was particularly so in the north where the leading interests (Prittie, Toler, Carden, Holmes, Stoney, Jocelyn and Parsons) participated and where the complement of officers in each corps was more impressive. This northern prominence apart, significantly Francis Mathew was able to support three corps. The one catholic corps was that under Pierce Butler, brother to Lord Cahir, though individual catholics were included in other corps (111). In 1782 of the corps then functioning 11 were led by landowners who were or who had recently been members of parliament either for the county, its boroughs, or boroughs outside ; or as members of the house of lords. They were : Henry Prittie, Francis Mathew (3), Cornelius O'Callaghan, Richard Pennefather, Peter Holmes, Lawrence Parsons, the earls of Clanwilliam and Tyrone, and Lord Jocelyn. Each corps was composed of about 40 rank and file members drawn from the head tenantry or friends or political associates of the colonel.

It was the existence of the volunteers as an extra-parliamentary body which served to extract the concession of free trade in 1779-80 (112). This succes was followed by renewed constitutional agitation in the years 178-83 over legal provisions which appeared to bind Ireland unfairly to Britain and which came to be a source of resentment among the political community in Ireland. Expressive of the range of constitutional issues being articulated was an address issued after a meeting in February 1780 of the Slievardagh Light Dragoons at Killenaule presided over by Jacob Sankey (113).

The meeting resolved not to support candidates at any future election unless they gave assurances of advocating 'the real constitutional interest and rights of the Kingdom'. In particular they expected that their present county and borough MPs would strive to achieve the repeal of Poynings law. The meeting also expressed its abhorrence at the act of 6 Geo I (1720) which had asserted the British parliament's right to legislate for Ireland, and which denied the appellate jurisdiction of the Irish house of lords. They resolved to oppose the operation of this act. While they attested their allegiance to the British connection, they resented the claim by the British legislature to legislate for Ireland and they resolved to continue their association for mutual self-defence.

Following the meeting in late March 1780 a meeting of the freeholders in Clonmel presided over by Lord Kingsborough (a large Co. Cork landowner whose estate extended over the Tipperary border), moved several resolutions advocating that unless



parliament asserted its independence then the recently won commercial concessions would be endangered (114). Those present at this meeting included John Bagwell (Belgrove), John Bagwell (Kilmore), Daniel Toler, Sir Edward Newenham, and Counsellor (Thomas Judkin ?) Fitzgerald. In advance of the new session of parliament in late 1781, where these issues were to be debated, an assembly of the freeholders and borough electors was being advocated in order to instruct their MPs on what line of conduct to follow (115). These addresses and meetings exemplify well the concerns and pre-occupations of the local political community at this time.

The national context was provided by the resolutions adopted at the Dungannon volunteer convention in February 1782 which asserted the legislative independence of Ireland, demanded an amendment to Poynings law, a limited mutiny bill, relaxation of the penal laws, and a bill to secure the independence of the judiciary (116). The formulation of these resolutions provided a lead to other liberals to concur, and in the course of March and April at least seven volunteer corps in Tipperary passed resolutions specifically approving of the proceedings at Dungannon (117). These were corps commanded by John Bagwell, the earl of Clanwilliam, Edward M. Mandeville, George Stoney, Daniel Toler, Richard Waller, and Edward Birch. All agreed to press for the redress of their grievances by constitutional means and defended their action by claiming that any freeholder who learned the use of arms did not abandon his civil rights.

This expression of support for the Dungannon resolutions had a dimension in terms of the county political representation. Of the two county MPs, Prittie, came out strongly in favour of the resolutions. His conduct in parliament on the matters in question was commended by the Borrisokane and Roscrea corps, and at a meeting of delegates from all the county's corps at Clonmel on 14 March, at which Prittie as the county's chief volunteer presided, his 'meritorious' stance was noted (118). In contrast Mathew was more cautious in respect of his support of the volunteers engaging in radical constitutional politics. Only one of his corps is recorded as formulating an address in response to the Dungannon resolutions, and this was more moderate in tone than the rest (119). The different emphases put by the two MPs on the constitutional issues was reflected in a grand jury address in late March 1782.

The division arose because of Mathew's support for government on some key matters. As foreman of the grand jury he took the unprecedented step of authorising but not



personally concurring in the resolutions arrived at by the grand jury. A total of seven resolutions were agreed on by 16 members of the grand jury (120). They were as follows : firstly, that members of parliament were representatives of and derived their power solely from the people ; secondly, that the King, Lords and Commons of Ireland was the only body competent to make laws for the kingdom and attempts to usurp this function were unconstitutional and illegal ; thirdly, that the power exercised by Poynings law was unconstitutional ; fourthly, that the ports of the country should remain open to all foreign nations not at war with the king ; fifthly, that a mutiny bill not limited from session to session might be dangerous to the constitution ; sixthly, that the independence of the judges in Ireland was essential for the administration of justice ; and finally, that all constitutional means would be used to seek redress of these grievances. The 16 grand jurors who subscribed to these declarations were John Bagwell (Marlfield), John Bagwell (Kilmore), Wray Palliser, Henry Prittie, Daniel Gahan, Anthony Parker, William Perry, Samuel Jacob, Gamaliel Fitzgerald-Magrath, Robert Nicholson, Edward Moore, John Power, Minchin Carden, William Baker, Samuel Alleyn and John Lapp Judkin. A majority of these were voters for Prittie and Toler in the 1776 election, and most of them were leaders or officers in volunteer corps.

Though he was unsuccessful Mathew strongly resisted the adoption of these resolutions, he refused to accept the majority decision in the matter, and instead published a separate notice explaining the points at issue (121). While this refusal was unprecedented Mathew was careful to stress that 'the difference of opinion was not on the great or essential articles', being one of degree rather than of substance. Accordingly Mathew with six other grand jurors who supported him -- Cornelius O'Callaghan, Richard Pennefather, Richard Hely-Hutchinson, Theobald Butler, William Armstrong, and James Fogarty -- declared their agreement with all the resolutions except those relating to Poynings law and the mutiny bill. These last they felt were too strong and in their stead they substituted a more general and moderate statement expressing their wish to support any measures which their parliamentary representatives deemed necessary in order to prevent any encroachment on the constitution.

This view of the Mathew group met with only minority backing, and it is clear that more radical expressions were the order of the day. What Mathew later depicted as a 'patriotick frenzy' had, he said, 'seized upon everybody and the strictest ties of



friendship gave way to this frantick zeal of passing resolutions' (122). In consequence hitherto reliable friends to the Mathew interest in normal times such as Samuel Alleyn, Anthony Parker, William Baker, and John Power were swept on by the forward expressions of colonial nationalist hysteria in 1782 (123). This division within the grand jury over the constitutional issues illustrates the inability of Mathew, a government supporter, to stem the tide of patriotic fervour at a crucial point. The volunteer movement led by Prittie gained a singular success by its influence over the majority of the grand jurors. Nevertheless Mathew benefited from his efforts on behalf of government for in April he was recommended for the peerage, which request was granted, and the resultant vacancy in the county constituency was to provide the context for the 1783 election in the county (124).

These developments coincided with the pace of constitutional agitation nationally. Thus in April 1782 Grattan's motion for a declaration of rights was carried by the house, in June success was achieved when the British act for repeal of the declaratory act (6 Geo.I c.5) passed, and finally in July Poyning's law was amended to fulfil Irish demands coupled with a measure to secure the independence of the judiciary and limiting the duration of the mutiny act. For this granting of legislative independence there was a loyal address of gratitude from the sheriff, gentlemen, and freeholders of Tipperary (125).

From this success the reform movement proceeded in 1783-4 to formulate demands for a reform in the system of parliamentary representation. Their purpose was to reduce the influence of the crown on parliament by limiting its disposal of patronage, to make representatives more responsible to the views of their constituents, and to make the franchise more equitable by a reduction in the influence of the great interests (126). For this purpose, in advance of the election in July 1783, a body designated as the 'Constitutional Associating Freeholders' was formed in Clonmel in April to promote the demand for parliamentary reform (127). Using the opportunity of Mathew's elevation to the peerage, which served to remove a major political interest, and the forthcoming election the association sought to mobilise independent freeholder opinion based on the ideas of the volunteer movement. Its aims were to maintain the independence of the county and to restore a proper connection between representative and elector. To implement these aims a test oath was formulated and candidates taking it would be



assured of support in the election. By the oath the candidate agreed to be bound by the instructions of the freeholders expressed at a properly convened meeting, and undertook not to accept title, place, or emolument without their approval. Prospective candidates were requested to state their position in relation to the taking of the oath. This was a clear challenge to the major interests, though it was less so to Prittie and Toler who were already closely linked to the more forward demands of the volunteers and who readily expressed their acceptance of the test oath (128).

The promoters of the association were Lord Kingsborough, Edward Moore, Sir William Barker, John Bagwell (Marlfield), Robert Nicholson, John Bloomfield, John Congreve, Richard Biggs, and Samuel Jacob. They were prominent in the volunteer movement locally, they had supported the resolutions on parliamentary independence in March 1780, and in March 1782 they were among the 16 grand jurors who had forwarded the seven declarations against the consent of the foreman, Mathew (129). The initial 300 signatures which the promoters of the association received came from such families as Carden, Massy-Dawson, Fennell, Gason, Head, Jacob, Latham, Lane, Lloyd, Langley, Massy, Minchin, Newport, Otway, Parsons, Roe, Riall, Sankey, Smithwick, and Toler. The Emmet family of Tipperary subscribed as did the Quaker merchant interest in Clonmel, which Bagwell was moulding in his favour against the Moore monopoly of the borough, and David Walshe candidate for Fethard. Neither the Moores of Clonmel nor the Pennefathers of Cashel lent their support, not surprisingly since to do so would have endangered their respective borough interests. Similarly with Fethard as neither Thomas Barton nor Cornelius O'Callaghan appear as subscribers. Mathew's followers in the county, particularly those grand jurors who dissented from the majority in March 1782, are absent though some Mathew head tenants like the Smithwicks subscribed. Peter Holmes, swayed possibly by his borough interest in Banagher, was not present among the initial subscribers (130). The formation of the association indicates how the issue of parliamentary reform acted as a focus for the emergence locally of an independent interest opposed to the large electoral interests.

It achieved a singular success by default in the 1783 election in exceptional circumstances. One of the promoters of the association, Sir William Barker, put himself forward as a candidate in August 1782 as did Sir Cornwallis Maude, brother of the late Sir Thomas Maude (d.1777) (131). Mathew's advancement to the peerage precluded his



candidature, his eldest son Francis James was too young to stand in the family interest, and because of the political volatility of the times Mathew could not trust someone like Samuel Alleyn to go forward to hold the seat until the eldest son was old enough to stand. In January 1783 Barker withdrew as a candidate declaring that 'it would be extremely disagreeable to me to be the cause of reviving party animosity', and he subsequently supported the constitutional association (132). Maude declined to accept the test oath devised by the association and withdrew as a candidate in June 1783 (133). This left the field open and Prittie and Toler were returned without a contest marking a notable success for the association and a singular defeat for the major interests of Mathew and Maude, though the association had no influence on the borough returns (134). So as the new session opened in October 1783 the two county MPs were in opposition, Clonmel and Fethard were each divided, and both Cashel members were in support (135).

In the new session pressure for reform proceeded apace. There were five Tipperary delegates at the national convention of the volunteers which sat in Dublin in November to discuss parliamentary reform. They were : Samuel Alleyn, Daniel Toler, Edward Moore, Sir William Barker, and Thomas Hackett (136). The major obstacle to the advancement of the reform proposals was the house of commons itself and in late November it rejected the volunteers bill on the matter by a large majority (137). Votes of thanks were later passed to Toler, Prittie and Thomas Barton (Fethard) for voting with the minority (138). From this it is clear that only a minority of the county's MPs backed reform, though it is important to stress that this minority included the two county representatives. The major borough interests of the Moores at Clonmel, the Pennefathers at Cashel, and O'Callaghan at Fethard opposed.

Undaunted by this fact and by the commons vote, 45 freeholders requested the sheriff in late December 1783 to convene a meeting of all the freeholders to consider instructions to their representatives on the subject of reform (139). The sheriff James Fogarty, a convert who had supported Mathew his patron on the issue of the declaration in March 1782, refused but the freeholders proceeded to plan a meeting regardless (140). Very likely it was at this meeting that a lengthy petition on reform was decided on and later forwarded to parliament. This petition addressed itself to some of the main deficiencies in the electoral system as identified by the independent freeholders (141). Proceeding



from the principle that legislative independence was inconsistent unless the political community had a direct role in the choice of its representatives, the petition sought to define in practical terms the nature of the elective franchise in relation to residence, polling, and qualification ; it advocated a limit of three years to the length of parliament ; and it sought to restrict the enjoyment of places and pensions (142). Such reforms were a direct assault on the power and privilege of the borough owners, a majority of whom composed the house of commons which for this reason and because government was hostile to the measure again rejected the proposals for reform in March 1784.

The matter did not rest there for in July the sheriff was addressed by Napper Tandy, on behalf of the Dublin radicals, seeking a meeting of the Tipperary inhabitants to choose delegates to attend a national congress where reform would be debated (143). The sheriff, Richard Moore of Chancellorstown, who was colonel of the Clonmel Independents and who was also related to the proprietors of Clonmel borough the undermining of whose position was implicit in the reform proposals, declined assembling the county (144). Despite this refusal 120 freeholders (representing 7.5% of the total electorate of 1,600), met in Clonmel in mid-August and voted by a narrow majority of 65 to 55 in favour of general resolutions on reform which were to be presented by the two county MPs and sent to the king, but against electing delegates for the national congress (145). While Moore authorised the resolutions by adding his signature, it is significant that the freeholders and independents were unable to secure a grand jury resolution on the issue as in March 1782. Despite the congress being held in October it was evident by then that the impetus had fallen out of the reform movement as it had with the volunteers, the main spring of reform.

The proposals formulated by Pitt for a commercial treaty between Ireland and Britain were introduced into the Irish house of commons in February 1785. They sought to regulate trade between the two countries and they were accepted by both houses (146). Due to opposition from manufacturing interests in Britain, however, the proposals had to be modified subsequently to such an extent as to make them less attractive to Ireland and in this modified form they were perceived to undermine the legislative independence achieved in 1782. The local response to the proposals first became apparent in late June when 43 freeholders mainly from the Tipperary town and Cashel area requested the sheriff to convene a meeting of the county in order to instruct their representatives on the



issue. The sheriff Thomas Barton, who was a supporter of reform and who as MP for Fethard opposed the commercial treaty, fixed the meeting for Cashel (147). It is not apparent whether anything of substance emanated from the meeting, but in late August the commons by a slim majority granted leave to introduce a bill based on Pitt's proposals but this was not proceeded with largely because a majority in the Irish parliament was no longer assured. At a meeting of the freeholders at Cashel on 1 November the measures were condemned outright as tending to further the interests of Britain at the expense of Irish prosperity, that they would be subversive of commercial rights, and would prove destructive of Ireland's trades and manufactures (148). The conduct of Henry Prittie and Daniel Toler, who had voted with the minority in August in opposing the introduction of the revised proposals in bill form, was commended and a public declaration of their position on the matter was solicited from the freemen and burgesses of Cashel, Clonmel, and Fethard (149).

This last was clearly intended to be an embarrassment to the five borough representatives who supported government on the issue. One of them, Cornelius O'Callaghan, progressed to the peerage in 1785 as Lord Lismore as a result of government's disposal of patronage to the Ponsonbys to whom O'Callaghan was allied and whose threatened defection forced government to drop the commercial propositions (150). It is not evident how much freeholder support the meeting enjoyed, but presumably it would have included the members of the Constitutional Association and those who had met in July in Cashel. Significantly the two county MPs and Barton opposed the proposals thereby maintaining their position as government opponents, but that the five others did not and that no grand jury resolution on the matter was forthcoming. As the experience of March 1782 had shown the position of the grand jury on any particular issue was to be the influential factor. In the absence of any movement by the grand jury on the issue the efforts of a section of the freeholders on the commercial proposals were likely to be ineffective. Greater unanimity was evident locally in the years 1785-8 in confronting the more pressing issue of the challenge to law and order presented by the Rightboys. The remaining constitutional issue of the decade i.e. the regency crisis produced by the temporary insanity of George III between November 1788 and March 1789, did not produce any major political reaction locally other than a congratulatory address from the grand jury on the king's return to health



(151).

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The foregoing political profile of Tipperary in the period up to 1790 exhibits a number of distinctive features. Before 1760 active political life was a feature more characteristic of the boroughs than of the county. This process of change witnessed the displacement of older interests at Cashel, Clonmel, and Fethard by new, politically ambitious interests. These were firmly established (Cashel, Clonmel) or introduced by mid-century, and once this process had taken place the boroughs concerned were submissive subsequently. In contrast the county constituency came to reflect more the pre-occupations and concerns of the active political community locally after 1760.

Before 1760 the range of families representing the county in parliament was large. After 1760 this narrowed down to four families showing that wealth, influence, and family connections became more concentrated and more important. The Mathew family is the only one to have any semblance of continuity in political representation at county level over the century. Its position and role is vital in any assessment of political reaction locally to prevailing issues. Their own status provided the context for the extreme reactions of the 1760s. That decade also saw the introduction of shorter parliaments and a more active engagement by the freeholders in the issues of the day.

The emergence of two strong political families, Prittie and Toler, in the north of the county signalled the transfer in the leadership of the right wing protestant grouping from its 1760s southern emphasis to the north. This transfer was to be of great significance in the debate over catholic relief particularly in the 1790s.

The period of political and constitutional agitation between the early 1770s and 1785 saw Tipperary shift from having a majority of its MPs on the opposition side to a majority in favour of government in 1785. This transformation materialised because of the differing emphasis in the local response to current matters of debate especially parliamentary reform and the commercial proposals. In the process the 1776 election was a turning point as it marked Mathew's parting of the ways with Prittie and his association with government henceforth. After 1776 political agitation locally became more radical reflected in the popularity of volunteering, the majority grand jury address of March 1782, and the inauguration of the Constitutional Association in April 1783. With the return of Prittie and Toler in the 1783 election, the concentration of power in the hands



of two northern, anti-government MPs and the absence of Mathew as a government supporter seemed to seal the fate of Tipperary politics indefinitely. The experience of the 1790s was to show how short lived the achievement of the 1780s was.



## Chapter V

The decade of the 1760s saw the conjunction of a unique set of circumstances in the political, legal, economic, and religious spheres, and in time and place, which made protestants feel threatened because of their own minority position in the county and because of, as they perceived it, a new assertiveness on the part of catholics.

In the political sphere conflict initially focused on the 1761 election. On this occasion rivalry centred on the candidature of Thomas Mathew of Thomastown because of a number of factors which made his standing for election suspect. Mathew conformed in 1755 but the sincerity of this conversion was questioned especially by Sir Thomas Maude of Dundrum, the opposing candidate, who later charged that he objected to Mathew on the grounds that he had 'professed the popish religion many years after the age of twelve and had not conformed to the protestant religion, or educated his children as required by the several acts of parliament' (1). Suspicions about Mathew on religious grounds were paralleled by those in the political area. An earlier member of the Mathew family had married Sir James Cotter the chief advocate of the Stuart cause in Ireland in the early eighteenth century for which he was executed in 1720 (Genealogy II) (2). This association may have been recalled in the context of the election given the contemporary threat from France, but it is clear that the Stuart cause had lost its attractiveness for Irish catholics by then, one peer remarking that 'all impressions in favour of the Stuart family are worn out with the gentlemen of consequence and fortune in this country' (3).

More significantly Mathew had very recently inherited a large estate in the county. After the death of George Mathew (d.1760), the Thomastown and Thurles estates devolved on Thomas Mathew of Annfield thereby uniting for the first time the hitherto separate estates of the family under the ownership of one individual (4). This made Mathew one of the county's largest proprietors a fact which had its implications in terms of the election and which made him seem a threat to the other political interests. Given that the family was absent from the county representation since 1736, Mathew may have sought to use his recent accretion of property to re-establish the family's political interest.

Apart from this personal political motivation it is evident that Mathew was advanced in the catholic interest and it was this aspect which provoked the greatest resistance among



his opponents. It was said that the catholics of Tipperary 'imprudently at that time made great exertions at a contested election in favour of a gentlemen whose mild principles conciliated their affections', and this this they did 'through resentment to some intolerent gentlemen who were in opposition to their favourite and avowed enemies of their profession' (5). Though catholics could not vote or be elected they could bring their influence to bear in three ways : nominal conformity in order to qualify to vote ; influencing protestant freeholders, some of whom were their tenants, to vote in a certain way ; and impersonation.

It is difficult to assess Mathew's support in the larger county context. It is possible that his position as head of the freemasons may be indicative of his wider standing in the county. The majority of lodges in the county in the 1760s were founded after 1756, the exception being one of the two Thurles lodges which was one of the earliest having been established in 1735. Thomas Mathew formed a second lodge in Thurles in August 1757 with an initial membership of 23 persons, with a further 20 added in 1758, and 3 more in 1760 (6). The two Thurles lodges had the largest membership of all lodges in the county by the 1760s and their patron, Mathew, was elected provincial grand master of Munster in 1757 and was grand master of England in 1766-70 (7).

Mathew was suspect on a number of grounds : the sincerity of his conversion, his large landed estate, his Jacobite association, and the overt catholic support in his favour. The expression of catholic assertiveness did not go unchallenged. The 1761 election turned out to be an intense sectarian affair. During the course of polling Maude's election agent, Daniel Gahan, questioned the qualifications of freeholders, whether they were born of catholic<sup>s</sup> educated as catholics, or if converts to produce their certificates of conformity (8). On this basis Gahan challenged Mathew's election agent, Thomas Prendergast, with the assertion that his wife was catholic and that therefore he was disqualified from voting ; Gahan accused Prendergast of perjury after the latter took the freeholder's oath, a duel ensued resulting in Prendergast's death (9).

The fact that three candidates, Maude, Mathew, and Henry Prittie of Kilboy, went forward for the county seats meant that a contest was inevitable as the benefits of the double voting system could not be availed of. When polling closed on 8 May 1761 the poll stood thus : Prittie 924 votes, Mathew 532, and Maude 486 (Table XX), with Prittie being elected and a double return made in respect of the other two (10). By virtue of this



double return both candidates were obliged to petition. This was unusual as it was more normal for the defeated candidate only to petition and Mathew's supporters insisted that this be the case, and the requirement that Mathew should also petition was obviously a diminution of his success in the poll suggesting that parliament was giving Maude an advantage (11).

Maude's petition bears witness to how sectarian the election was. He had already made his objections to Mathew's candidature known to him before the election on the basis that he was not a fully qualified protestant and in consequence was incapacitated to stand. Maude claimed that during the election a great number of Mathew's voters refused to show their certificates of conformity ; that most of them 'admitted themselves to have been born of popish parents and educated in the popish religion'; and that 'great mobs of Irish papists' crowded the election hall and intimidated him. After the close of polling Maude demanded a scrutiny because, as he claimed, a 'very great' many of the votes cast for Mathew were invalid those concerned being 'papists or born of popish parents and not having duly conformed and having married popish wives' (12). Thus the charge made by Maude was that catholics not merely influenced the election but that they actually voted or attempted to do so. Had their votes been excluded Maude claimed that he would have achieved a majority over Mathew. By emphasising this aspect in emotive terms Maude hoped to gain favour for his case from a sympathetic protestant parliament.

In his petition Mathew, in contrast, does not allude to the sectarian issue but rather concentrates on the partial way in which the sheriff, Richard Waller, conducted the election. Mathew claimed that Waller in many ways acted 'illegally, arbitrarily, and partially in prejudice of the petitioner and in favour of . . . Sir Thomas Maude'. The result was that though Mathew gained a majority of 36 votes in the gross poll, the sheriff refused to return him as duly elected (13). Mathew clearly did not dwell on the sectarian nature of the election as this would have had no advantage in parliament. Rather he confined his defence to matters like unqualified voters and intimidation which traditionally would have been commonplace in petitions over disputed elections.

In the event parliament came out strongly in favour of Maude. During the debate on the petitions the house showed a disregard for Mathew's case, while it acquiesced in the claims made by Maude. Something of this stance is indicated in the report of a Dublin lawyer writing to a friend in Co.Cork in November 1761. He wrote that 'When one of



the friends of Mr. Mathew attempted to speak there was such a coughing and snorting that 'twas impossible to hear, but when one of the friends of Sir Thomas did so it was all silence' (14). Mathew could only rely on about 20 supporters in the house, whereas the majority were in favour of Maude. On 12 January 1762 the house voted by 67 to 17 votes that Mathew be obliged to withdraw his petition, and on the following day Maude was declared duly elected and returned as the second member for Co. Tipperary (15).

The 1761 election in Tipperary was unique in the history of parliamentary politics as it is the only instance of an attempt to disqualify a member on the grounds that he was a catholic (16). It displayed the ability of the substantial catholic landholding and gentry class to mobilise in favour of a crypto-catholic of large landed estate and to achieve an initial victory over the evangelical Maude. The view that catholic gentry were excluded from the political nation and lacked influence in the eighteenth century is no longer sustainable (17). Though Mathew's victory was later overturned this was only to be a short term setback and the family was to achieve a resumption of the county representation from 1768. In the interim the local protestant consciousness was informed by a range of other fears and concerns the articulation of which was to galvanise a section of the gentry into a course of action leading to the trials of 1765-6.

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The political threat, local and national, perceived by protestants was made more ominous by coincidental developments in relation to land title which, had they succeeded, would have seriously undermined the basis of protestant proprietorship. In 1762 and 1764 three legislative measures were passed in the Irish parliament to give protestants greater security of title. A bill, introduced on 2 March 1762, to secure protestant purchasers of estates which formerly belonged to catholics or persons in foreign service received the royal assent on 30 April 1762 (18). By it it was enacted that no sales of land or interests therein made to protestant purchasers were to be called into question and their recovery sued for by virtue of provisions in the penal laws. In effect the act gave protestant purchasers immunity from proceedings under the penal legislation. A second bill, introduced in February 1762 and also receiving the royal assent on 30 April 1762, sought to secure the title of protestants holding lands under converts (19). The act provided that the title of protestants to lands held under converts



was not to be affected by the failure of such converts to fulfil the full legal requirements of conformity. Any deficiencies in this regard had to be rectified before 25 March 1763, but this was later extended to 1 December 1765 by a third act which received the royal assent on 12 May 1764 (20). The main provision of the 1764 act was to confirm protestants who had purchased catholic lands in their title and to secure them against any proceedings at law which might bring that title into question.

The insecurity of title which these three acts sought to mitigate derived from litigation under the penal laws and from deficiencies in the registration of converts, both of which served to undermine protestant land titles. The need for the act of 1762 to protect protestants holding under converts arose from decisions in the cases of Tomlinson versus Farrell (1759) and Nugent versus Nugent and Howth (1762). The judgments in these two cases questioned the legal status of existing converts and the title of protestants holding under them, and the result was the act of 1762 which sought to rectify these anomalies. In the former case the plaintiff was decreed as a protestant discoverer to the defendant's estate in Co. Longford on the grounds that he could prove that Farrell, a nominal protestant, had not completed the full legal requirements of conformity : i.e. filing his certificate of conformity within 6 lunar months as opposed to 6 calendar months, and as a consequence was still legally a catholic (21). As a result of this difference of a few days his conformity was declared to be invalid and the estate was decreed to the discoverer, a decision upheld on appeal to the English house of lords in 1761 (22). In the Howth case, in an amazing decision consistent with the judges' interpretation of the letter rather than the spirit of the penal laws on land, the property was awarded to a nominal protestant against one who was born and bred as one (23).

Under the act converts were required to perform the full legal requisites of conformity before 25 March 1763, later extended to 1 December 1765. These consisted of taking and receiving the sacrament, subscribing the declaration, taking the oath of abjuration, and filing a bishop's certificate to this effect within 6 (lunar) months following conversion (8 Anne c.1, s.11). It was Farrell's failure to fulfil the latter provision which allowed the decision to go against him. It was the requirement in the act of 1762 which accounts for the rise in conformities, hitherto an elusive phenomenon, in the early 1760s (Table LXVI). Thus catholics who had conformed before 1762 and who were still living were obliged to conform again in order that their status as protestants might be legally



validated and the title of protestants holding under them made secure.

For this reason there was considerable pressure to conform in these years, and the act would appear to have been used by the ultra protestant gentry in Tipperary as an instrument to get comfortable catholics to conform for the first time. Between 1762 and 1765 inclusive, there were 90 conversions recorded of Tipperary persons (Table LXVI). This number included Thomas Mathew of Thomastown (a convert of 1755), Francis Mathew his son and heir, Richard Lalor, gentleman, James Mandeville of Ballydine, and James Hackett of Orchardstown. When the act was further extended to 1 December 1768 the number of converts for the years 1766-68 inclusive was 70, with half of this number being for 1768 an election year (24). Among the converts of these years were Milo Burke of Rapla (a large middleman near Newport), William Kissane of Scalliheen (a large grazier on the Damer estate), Thomas Mandeville of Ballydine, and James Nagle of Garnvella (a large middleman on the Butler (Cahir) estate).

Those landowners in fee, like Mathew and Mandeville and middlemen like Kissane and Burke, made themselves secure by virtue of their full legal conformity against the hostility of their protestant tenants at least on the issue of title. It was known catholics and converts who were large landholders who failed to comply with the provisions of the 1762 act who became the objects of protestant gentry hostility in south Tipperary in the early 1760s. This is the key to understanding why certain individuals and not others became implicated in the purge of 1765-6. It was not persons like Mathew and Mandeville or other legal converts who were identified as victims of the purge, rather it was catholics particularly middlemen on the Butler (Cahir) estate -- Farrell, Sheehy, Buxton, Nagle (who only had his certificate of conformity enrolled on 28 December 1765), and Keating -- who held out against complying with the act who became the objects of attack .

The act of 1764 which sought to secure protestant purchasers of catholic estates is also relevant in the Tipperary context, particularly in relation to John Bagwell. His grandfather had in 1729 and in the early 1730s purchased about 2,700 acres in the baronies of Iffa and Offa and Middlethird, the bulk of it from two catholics Lord Dunboyne and John Slattery (25). In 1761 Bagwell was seeking legal opinion on the validity of his title to these lands particularly those of Dunboyne (26). This uncertainty in relation to the Dunboyne title was added to by the fact that the then current holder of the



title, Pierce Butler, was an idiot and in consequence it was said that he 'could not acquire the positive merit of being a protestant' (27). This made his status suspect and created apprehensions among people like Bagwell that proceedings against Dunboyne under the penal laws might result in an undermining of his title and the loss of his estate. It is not surprising that Dunboyne was on the black list for persecution. In April 1762 the lord lieutenant issued a warrant for Dunboyne's arrest and though he was arrested in Waterford, he was later released but was then conveyed circus-fashion around Ireland in the 1760s to avoid subsequent detection (28). It is conceivable that similar fears arose over the Everard estate the main purchasers of which were O'Callaghan, Power of Barrettstown, Jacob of Coolmore in the 1720s and Barton in 1751. While Everard was a catholic who had conformed nominally, this would have appeared retrospectively suspect in the light of the Tomlinson versus Farrell judgment and made the estate subject to potential discovery proceedings. However, these fears were diminished by the 1764 act.

A further manifestation of protestant fears about land title in the early 1760s concerned the attempt to introduce legislation which would allow catholics to invest money in mortgages on land. A bill to this effect was introduced in the 1761 session by Monck Mason and was carried by 12 vote on the last day of the session when only 62 members were present, but it was rejected by the privy council in England (29). In February 1762 a bill was introduced to remove doubts in relation to securities taken by catholics under the penal laws (30). Monck Mason made a successful attempt to bring forward the measure again in November 1763, a committee was appointed to investigate the matter, and a bill materialised in February 1764 (31). Although it had the support of the attorney and solicitor generals and the legal members of the house, it was opposed by government and defeated (32). Another attempt to obtain the concession in 1772 proved ineffective despite the representations of persons like John Hely-Hutchinson (33).

The arguments in the early 1760s in favour of allowing catholics to lend money on land as security were stimulated by the credit crisis of 1759-60 of which the failure of banks and merchant houses in Cork and Dublin was symptomatic (34). Although there is no direct evidence, the smaller banks in Clonmel and Waterford must have been affected by this slump as well. The contraction in credit which ensued was of public concern and in 1760 the house of commons held an enquiry into the recent bank failures. Indicative



of the effects of the restriction on credit locally is the remark made by William Perry, a landowner near Clonmel, to Simon Newport, a Waterford banker, in May 1761 that 'Altho' money perhaps may be a little scarce now, yet within these few years it might have been had on land[ed] security I know at 4 1/2 p[er] c[ent], very large sums and perhaps shortly may again' (35). Apart from the direct evidence it gives of the scarcity of credit in south Tipperary, there is also made explicit in Perry's remark the existence of considerable funds locally and the expectation that they might be availed of in future. These funds were in the hands of large catholic middlemen, and it was from a desire to release such funds in the form of mortgages on land that the movement in parliament from 1761 to formulate legislation accordingly arose.

As things stood large catholic tenants and merchants who had accumulated surplus funds as a result of the economic upturn of the 1740s and 1750s were at a serious disadvantage. By law they could not obtain any interest in land beyond a lease for 31 years, which provision excluded them from holding mortgages on other people's land. In this situation rich catholics wishing to lend money had to do so on the more precarious security of bonds or legally enforceable i.o.u.'s. An instance of such a transaction was in 1763 when James Nagle, the catholic middleman, loaned Ambrose Congreve £500 repayable in 6 months at 5% interest conditional on a bond of £1,000 (36). It was partly in an attempt to eliminate the necessity of catholics having recourse to the risky and insecure practice of loans by bond, that the proposal for mortgages on land was advanced. Already the right of catholics to lend money on the security of the borrowers, whereby the lender could receive the profits of the estate though not enter into possession of it, was being questioned in law in the 1750s with the result that such arrangements became discoverable (37) (Table XXII).

Advocates of the measure argued that the fact that catholics were confined to taking personal security only for loans was a restriction both on them and on protestants who wished to borrow more extensively (38). In addition it was argued that if a suitable outlet was not obtained for half of the money then in circulation held by catholics, then they would be obliged to invest in foreign securities which would be detrimental to the country economically and politically (39). At a time when land values were rising and when there was a demand for extra land to cater for the growing market for livestock products, these were very potent arguments in favour of liberalising the access of



catholics to mortgage facilities. The proposal received the support initially of over 50 members in the commons particularly those with a legal background who saw the concession as desirable on grounds of equity (40).

Opponents of the measure judged it in political rather than economic terms, opposing it on the grounds that it sought a liberalisation of the penal laws. Most obviously by increasing the number of protestant debtors to catholic creditors the proposal would allow catholics to adopt a superior stance and thereby negate existing protestant precedence, a development which would be totally at variance with the penal legislation as originally formulated. Secondly, the measure would permit catholic creditors, as tenants by elegit, to come into the actual possession of lands by virtue of default in repayments by debtors unable to redeem their lands. It was feared that this would lead to a sharp growth in the catholic landed interest that prompted the defeat of the bill on its first reading in 1764. It also led to a later motion seeking to allow catholics to take securities on land but without interfering with its management or possession, being introduced but this was also defeated though less decisively than the first vote due to a large number of absentions (41). Once catholics had obtained possession of the lands of their protestant debtors, it was argued, catholic tenants would be introduced in place of protestants. Lands so possessed would not be subject to the penal laws on catholic landholding particularly the gavel clause and protestant children would not be entitled to a maintenance out of them (42). Articulate protestants were, therefore, concerned that the mortgage bill proposal would have serious consequences for the land settlement.

Thirdly, the measure was seen to have a more direct political implication in that if it passed it would allow catholic creditors to influence tenants on appropriated estates at elections and would also give them an undue influence over members of parliament who were their debtors. It was recognised that many MPs were already heavily dependent on catholic money lenders on the basis of personal security, Lord Charlemont referring to 'a sort of Popish patronage in both houses of parliament, where the members were ... many of them ... deeply indebted to Papists' (43). To extend this influence by granting catholics the right to lend on landed security was judged to be politically inexpedient. What was advanced by its proposers as an economically desirable and legally consistent measure, was opposed by its detractors as being detrimental politically. Both sides viewed it as a pro-catholic measure and adopted their respective positions accordingly.



Amongst those who resisted the measure in parliament was Sir William Osborne the owner of a large estate east of Clonmel and other reaction locally was also hostile (44). An important figure who influenced public opinion on the matter was Sir James Caldwell who published a pamphlet before the bill was introduced in 1764 outlining his opposition (45). Coming from a military background, having experience of suppressing rural disturbers in the north, possessing a strong religious sense, and being an improver, Caldwell is of importance in the Tipperary context (46). His arrival in the county to suppress the Whiteboys brought him into contact with kindred spirits among the Tipperary gentry notably Maude, an improver ; Bagwell, a strong unitarian ; Jacob, a staunch presbyterian ; and Rev. John Hewetson. His local contacts in 1762-3 provided Caldwell with material and insights on the strength of wealthy catholics which he utilised in his publication which ran to two Dublin editions during 1764.

In fact Caldwell provides direct evidence of the existing strength of catholic creditors in the county and how this position was used to negate the operation of the penal laws. Thus he cites the case of Justin McCarthy of Springhouse, an extensive catholic middleman of 9,000 acres between Tipperary and Golden, who Caldwell says 'merely by the number of protestants that were his debtors, kept all persons of that religion in awe throughout the whole county ... and effectively prevented them from by mere intimidation from putting any of the popish laws in execution for many years' (47). This is an extremely important observation and is of material significance not merely in relation to the mortgage bill itself but also with reference to the wider context of the conflict of the 1760s. It points back to the similar situation described by Pennefather in 1729 (48). On the point of the mortgage proposal it is evident that protestant debtors to McCarthy and other catholics would not wish to have their position legitimated whereby they could suspend the penal laws from being enforced, nor to have their potential influence consolidated and extended by allowing them to take land as security for loans. To concede on the mortgage issue would serve not merely to increase the wealth and landed interest of catholics like McCarthy, but it would also be instrumental in making the penal laws more ineffective than they were already recognised to be. As Caldwell noted, a justice of the peace was unlikely to exert himself in implementing the law against a catholic to whom he was indebted and who could produce a bond to that effect (49). He would be less likely to do so if the catholic creditor was allowed to have a claim



on his estate had the mortgage bill succeeded.

Caldwell was an important catalyst in translating these local concerns to a national plane. Faced with the daunting prospect outlined by him protestant opinion collectively rejected the mortgage proposal. The prospect of an extension of catholic credit facilities must also have been an additional cause of concern to the Clonmel merchant-banker John Bagwell. For, though lending on mortgage was not one of the primary functions of Irish banks, increased competition from catholics in the area of credit would clearly be inimical to Bagwell's position by restricting his range of business (50). From the perspective of the protestant political nation, the land settlement, law enforcement, and of the individual business concerns of people like Bagwell it was vital that the mortgage bill be defeated as it was. So that while the precise significance of the implications of the proposal at national level are unclear, locally the measure was of decisive importance given the position of McCarthy and other catholics.

In the wider context of the conflict of the 1760s the choice of McCarthy as a prime exemplar of the power and influence of catholic creditors is important in three respects. Firstly, it accounts for the inclusion of catholic merchants in the port of Waterford, who were related or connected with Tipperary families, being included in the purge of the 1760s. The Justin McCarthy cited by Caldwell died in 1756 and his heir Denis died in 1761 leaving the estate and fortune to his son Justin, a minor (51). These events received public notice in the press of the time (52). Because of the minority the estate came to John McCarthy, second son of Justin (d.1756), who married Anne daughter of Thomas Wyse a wealthy merchant in Waterford (Genealogy X). Wyse participated at the meeting of leading catholics in 1760 at which the Catholic Committee was founded (53). Waterford also had other catholic merchants with ties in Tipperary : Martin Murphy was agent for Lord Cahir ; the wealthy merchant Dominick Farrell was possibly a relation of James Farrell, farmer, of Rehill who was executed in 1766 ; Philip Long and Bartholemew Rivers. Complementary to this were the ties between protestants in the port and the hinterland. The banking connection between Bagwell and Newport existed, the latter as a banker sharing Bagwell's apprehension over an extension of credit facilities to catholics, being in correspondence with people like Perry on the issue, and being aware of the position of Wyse in the port.

Secondly, the McCarthys had important overseas interests in Bordeaux where they



were leading merchants (54). Given the context of the Seven Years War with France and the re-emergence of Pretender invasion scares in the early 1760s, the French factor was to be a vital catalyst in making Tipperary protestants believe that the Whiteboys were led by French officers and financed and armed by French funds channelled in through catholic merchants in Waterford. Catholics in the ports were, therefore, doubly suspect because of their French connections and because of the links with prominent catholics in the hinterland. Finally, the McCarthys were head tenants to about 1,000 acres on the estate of Thomas Mathew of Thomastown (55). Mathew's participation in the 1761 election had provoked protestant resistance, and this now became further consolidated because of the mortgage bill debate in which one of his large head tenants was cited by opponents of the measure.

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In the economic and social sphere rivalries developed over competition for land and over quarterage. In the period 1760-67 over 2,640 acres came up for reletting on the Butler (Cahir) estate (56). Most of these lands were situated between Cahir and Clogheen or Cahir and Ardfinnan, the region from which most of the catholics implicated in 1765-6 were drawn. The early 1760s was a period of rising land values and of increasing demand for extra land required for stocking. The lands on the Cahir estate were eminently suitable for pasture and had the added convenience of large mountain commons on the Galtys to the north and the Knockmealdowns to the south. Land situated adjacent to commonage let at a dear rate. There was considerable competition for these and other lands (57).

The large sitting tenants on the Cahir estate : Nagle, Keating, and Baldwin who were catholic middlemen, had their interests renewed at this time and remained undisturbed as the dominant social group. This group appear to have been more socially acceptable to protestants allowing for the minority status of the latter in the district and the extensive acreages held by the former. A report on the trials in 1766 remarks of them that 'The general character of the prisoners until this unfortunate affair was very respectable as they lived in affluence and with reputation, associated with the gentlemen of their neighbourhood with whom they lived in the highest hospitality, frequently receiving and returning visits' (58). On the other hand, however, other lands were taken up by more



minor catholics such as Edmund Sheehy, James Buxton, and James Farrell. Their success in securing leases, at a time of expanding demand for livestock, caused resentment among protestants who had failed in their bids. Thus it was said that the cause of hostility towards Sheehy was his taking of a farm at Dawson's Lodge east of Clogheen which one of the Bagwells was bidding for (59). At a time of general scarcity of money, adverted to by Perry in May 1761, these catholics possessed the capital resources to successfully bid for leases and thereby take on extra ground at an economically favourable time. In Sheehy's case this allowed him to expand the family holdings under Lord Middleton at Bawnfune, Co. Waterford to taking extra land at Lodge where a comfortable house was erected.

The upward social and economic mobility displayed by this group of minor catholic gentry, consequent on their gaining leasing preferences, their relative status being indicated by Sheehy's income of £300-£400, operated to convey on them a degree of pretentiousness. This was epitomised in the designation 'buck' being applied to Farrell and Sheehy. In 1766 Farrell was described as 'a young man of genteel appearance', while Sheehy was quite young being 33 years of age at the time of his execution in 1766 (60). The appellation 'buck' and the youth of those concerned suggests that they were indiscreetly assertive of their new-found status. This is the basic reason why these parvenus in local catholic society, flaunting their new prestige, were proceeded against with such vigour by an interested group of gentlemen, many of whom had failed to obtain leases. This reletting also accounts for the inclusion of Lord Cahir's agent, the Waterford-based Martin Murphy who was responsible for deciding on new tenants, in the list of those targetted for persecution. Additional factors notably the Whiteboy violence and Fr. Sheehy's presence in the area also contributed to the tensions in this region.

Catholic merchants in the towns became suspect because of suspicions that they were channelling French money. Contemporaneous with this catholic demands for the removal of quarterage were being advanced. From the late seventeenth century (in Clonmel from about 1680) catholics were allowed second class guild membership on payment of intrusion money or fine on entry to a town or upon opening a house, and on payment of quarterage every quarter. In Clonmel, where there were three guilds of merchants, cordwainers, and brewers, intrusion money varied in amount from 5s. to



half a guinea or more, quarterage from 6d. to 3s., more commonly not more than 12d. per quarter by the early 1760s (61). These sums were not unduly severe but they were resented by catholics since they conveyed no real or lasting privileges, and because they had no legal basis. There was intermittent resistance to the tax and this received an impetus when a judgment in the case of Mahony versus the mayor of Cork decreed damages against the mayor for imprisoning catholics who had refused to pay the tax (62). The judgment also found that quarterage had no statutory basis.

In 1764 anti-quarterage agitation arose in Clonmel but the reaction of the local authorities to it represented an extension of the basic issue to the broader sectarian dimension of the time. Thus by February 1765 it is evident that in Clonmel catholic opposition to quarterage was being equated with disloyalty, complicity with the Whiteboys, and by extension, treason. In that month a protestant writing from the town informed a Cork correspondent that when catholics there were summoned to take the oath of abjuration, they appeared but refused in conscience taking it and were fined £2 per man as a result (63). In their defence the catholics of the town declared that they had willingly taken the oath of allegiance when requested to do so, and admitted that they had protested over quarterage but only on the firm understanding that it was an illegal impost (64). Their requests to have the matter submitted to the judgment of the council had always, they claimed, been rejected by the town guilds. The attempt to enforce quarterage payments by means of a summons to take the oath of abjuration was, in their view, a perversion of the original intention of that oath. In addition they dismissed any suggestion of being associated with the Whiteboys (65). From the altercation it is clear that sectarian criteria were being applied to an essentially economic matter.

The corporation of the town, seeking to have its position on the issue made more secure, petitioned parliament soliciting legislation which would confirm its role in relation to guild membership and quarterage. The petition from Clonmel Corporation in January 1766 would appear to be exceptional among towns in tending to buttress its case by linking refusal to pay quarterage with sympathy for whiteboyism. Thus it declares that 'within these two or three years last past and particularly since these deluded insurgents called White Boys have intruded themselves in this county, sundry of these Quarter Brothers countenanced by those, under the specious pretence of redressing grievances have refused to pay quarterage' (66). The catholics countered this with a



petition of their own in which they stressed the illegality of the tax (67).

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The proceedings of the 1760s assumed a distinctly sectarian character but to what extent were they intrinsically sectarian and what were the antecedent attitudes to the personnel and open practice of catholicism ? Much of the answer to these questions revolves around a consideration of the condition of the Catholic Church and the disposition of the local establishment to it. Although dislocated initially due to the impact of the penal legislation passed between 1690 and 1710, the catholic church and clergy in the county continued to exist largely unhindered and it was to re-emerge in a renewed state by mid-century. The church locally experienced a resurgence in the late seventeenth century under John Brennan, bishop of Waterford and Lismore (1671-93) and archbishop of Cashel (1677-93) (68). Significantly in the period 1712-91 the leading office in Tipperary and Munster, i.e. the archbishopric of Cashel, was held by prominent members of the Butler family who were favoured by the protection accorded them by their own and other leading catholic families. Although he had to remain itinerant due to the political situation in the 1710s, not merely because of his episcopal status but also because of his connection with the attainted duke of Ormond, Christopher Butler (archbishop 1711-57) remained generally resident in the region at Kilcash and during his long episcopate was able to attend to church organisation unimpeded.

In 1704 a total of 62 persons registered as priests in the county (69). About half of them were aged 50 or under so that there was a fair prospect of long years of service remaining. Most of the towns had priests including Clonmel (2), Fethard, Tipperary, Cashel, Thurles and Nenagh in a few of which they were actually resident. The complement of clergy stayed at much the same level subsequently, for in 1731 there were 62 priests many of them resident officiating in Cashel diocese, in addition to itinerant clerics (70). A seminary was established in Cashel by archbishop Butler for the education of clerical aspirants (71). In 1731 there were 40 mass houses of varying quality known to the authorities to be in use. One private chapel is mentioned, that of Justin McCarthy at his residence in the parish of Kilshane near Tipperary, and possibly another in the Kearney household at Killusty, Fethard. Of their nature there may have been other private chapels in existence unknown to the authorities. Of the 40 structures 6



were then newly built or then building including an impressive new structure at Tipperary and others at Knockgraffon, Newchapel, Emly, Borrisokane, and Nenagh. The new chapel at Tipperary town (measuring 92 feet by 76 feet in cruciform design), was cited by the local protestant establishment as an instance of the vibrancy of the catholic church, but it must be viewed as part of the overall redevelopment of the town then being sponsored by its landlord, Smith (72).

By the 1750s the Catholic Church though materially poor was well organised. The diocesan visitations undertaken by James Butler, appointed coadjutor to archbishop Christopher Butler in 1750 and his successor in the see from 1757 to 1774, show that church buildings were modest in terms of size and furnishings. In the systematic series of visitations carried out by him in 1752, 1754, 1758, 1759, 1760, and 1764 numerous chapels were visited at locations spread across the diocese of Cashel (73). Newly built chapels or those under construction were evident at 8 centres in these years, many of them got financial assistance from local catholic families who also made donations of furnishings as with Fogarty, Purcell, Mathew, and Butler (Dunboyne), and protestant families like Lidwell also made gifts of this kind (74).

Though the church was lacking in material resources it was becoming better organised with a wider parochial structure well established by the 1750s. There were 57 secular and 6 regular clergy in the archdiocese in 1752, 85 in all in Cashel and Emly in 1800, and synods and conferences were regularly held mostly in Thurles at which regulations on the conduct of the clergy and on their pastoral functions were formulated (75). Appointments to parishes were under the strict control of the archbishop and many priests were required to produce evidence of their title on visitation. Indeed the dangers regarding the proper functioning of clergy derived more from interloping clerics rather than from local justices of the peace (76).

For the purpose of clerical discipline the so-called 'Psalter of Cashel', originally produced by archbishop Butler in 1731 was in 1750 rewritten and made available as the Constitutions of the Dioceses of Cashel and Emly great and small (77). This work, which was unique for the time, laid down a strict code of conduct for priests and was reinforced by the diocesan synods and conferences where also individual pastoral incidents requiring resolution were dealt with. As part of the greater administrative efficiency priests were required to maintain registers of baptisms, marriages and deaths,



and this duty appears to have been adhered to in about half of the parishes visited. Particular attention was paid to the preparation of candidates for the priesthood and regular ordinations took place mostly at Thurles in the 1730s, 1740s, and 1750s (78). In the wider realm of education 73 teachers are identifiable as functioning in the period 1752-60.

The foregoing evidence demonstrates that the Catholic Church enjoyed a wide toleration in the county by the 1750s despite the statutory provisions to the contrary. It is sufficient evidence of the extent of toleration that such thorough going visitations took place without interference (along with the numerous meetings of the clergy), that the archbishop could socialise freely during his perambulations, and that there are hardly any references in the visitations to acts of persecution.

The attitude of protestants in Tipperary was dictated by their numerical inferiority relative to catholics. This was recognised by a visitor to the county in 1760 when he remarked that 'The protestants here are what we should call in England red-hot protestants . . . the smallness of their number makes it necessary for them politically to be so' (79). Apart from the north of the county, where durable protestant rural communities developed as a result of the seventeenth century land settlement, protestants elsewhere were concentrated in the towns and thin on the ground in rural areas. A series of censuses were compiled at times when protestants felt insecure. In 1691 during the Williamite campaigns a listing of the protestant and catholic inhabitants of Cashel was ordered by the corporation to be compiled (80). In 1731 at a time of fear a national religious census was taken. The return for Tipperary gives an enumeration of 1,627 protestant and 16,465 catholic families representing a ratio of 1 : 10 (81). Similar circumstances, in the form of a Jacobite invasion scare, operated in 1745 to influence the making of a return by Col. Pennefather of all catholics and protestants aged between 16 and 60 who were capable of bearing arms. This showed that there were in Tipperary at that date 2,600 protestants 18,000 catholics equal to a ratio of 1 : 7 (82). At the outbreak of war in 1756 the array of protestants in Munster stood at 11,863 of which Tipperary accounted for 2,300 or nearly 20% (83). The conflict of the 1760s resulted in the compilation of a further religious census in 1766, some of the best surviving returns being from the southern half of Tipperary. They indicate that the overall ratio of protestants to catholics at that date was 1: 9 (84).



There was a Presbyterian presence in the county from the mid-seventeenth century (85). The Commonwealth had supported independent or baptist ministers at Clonmel (2), Carrick, Cashel, Thurles, Fethard (3), and Cullen in 1655 (86). The Sankey family of St. Johnstown advanced the appointment of a minister at Clonmel in 1673 and ministers continued to be provided for thereafter. One of them Rev. William Campbell, author of A vindication of the principles and character of the presbyterians in Ireland (Dublin, 1787) and a controversialist with Bishop Woodward of Cloyne, was tutor to the Bagwells in 1750 (87). Other presbyterian centres were Fethard where Rev. Samuel Hemphill was appointed in 1728, and Tipperary for which appointments were made from 1673 onward (88). These dissenter groups were small and were ultimately dependent on the patronage of local families like Sankey at Fethard, Bagwell at Clonmel, and Roe at Tipperary (89). Nevertheless the grouping of such prominent individuals into a sect was important enough to gain political notice. Thus in 1775 Matthew Jacob of Mobernan near Fethard was said to be the leader of the presbyterian party in the county (90).

The Quaker community traced its origins in the county to the mid-seventeenth century also. From this time quaker groups were functioning at Cashel, Clonmel, Tipperary, Kilcommon near Clogheen based on the Fennell household, and Knockballymeagher near Roscrea based on the Hutchinsons (91). French protestant Huguenot families were settled by the duke of Ormond at Clonmel and Carrick in the Restoration period as part of his schemes to promote the textile manufactory in those centres (92). Methodism arose in the mid-eighteenth century at a number of centres following the many visits of John Wesley to the region. It grew at Shronell near Tipperary where the Damers were already displaying unitarian tendencies (93). Methodist preachers tended to attract large audiences, for instance there were 200 to 300 present in Clonmel when Mr. Ball preached there in February 1752 (94).

The dissenters as a whole were concentrated in the south of the county particularly in Clonmel and its adjacent area. This may appear surprising given that the largest protestant communities were in the north. However the dissenters came late to that part of the county. Rather, because of the seventeenth century settlement the attractions of the better lands and the towns of the south and the preferences of local personalities, dissenters struck deepest roots in the southern half. This emphasis is borne out by the



statistics of the 1831 census. It shows that in the parishes of north Tipperary covered by the diocese of Killaloe the total number in the category 'other denominations', which included Methodists and Quakers, was 84 divided between Roscrea (38), Borrisokane (37), and Templederry (9). There were no Presbyterians returned for north Tipperary. In contrast the southern half, covered by Cashel and Lismore dioceses, returned a total of 157 Presbyterians with 370 others. The largest Presbyterian congregations were in Inislounaght (57) based on the Bagwells, Clonmel (44), and the parishes around Fethard (Fethard 14, Pepperstown 10, St. Johnstown 10, and Tullamain 5), totalling 39 persons. Other dissenters, mainly Quakers and Methodists, were present in the 'other' category notably at Clonmel (202), Shanrahan (47), and Cahir (68). (95). The main centre of protestantism, anglican and dissenter, was Clonmel itself which was the focus of the proceedings of the 1760s.

The 1760s saw a greater expression of activity in the Established Church locally. For instance, the archbishop of Cashel Michael Cox held triennial visitations of the dioceses under his control in 1763, 1766, and 1769 at Cashel, Clonmel and other centres (96). Indicative of a greater self-consciousness within the local protestant church was the building of a new cathedral at Cashel re-initiated in 1763 when £1,180 was raised locally and a further £4,000 granted by parliament (97).

Attempts to redress the numerical imbalance between protestants and catholics took two forms : the promotion of protestant settlement in areas where it was sparse, and conversion schemes. Colonisation schemes have been treated above (98). They were an integral part of the strategy to revitalise the Ormond estate in the 1690s, but in this case were unsuccessful as sales were to local interests and there was no substantial influx of protestant tenants who at any rate were in short supply. The Damer family were engaged in introducing protestant textile workers onto their estate at Shronell in the wake of the famine of 1740. In 1766 82 protestant families were in Shronell and 5 adjoining rural parishes equivalent to 451 persons (if a family size multiplier of 5.5 is assumed), but by 1831 they had fallen to 97 (99). O'Callaghan was engaged in similar colonisation schemes at Clogheen also in the 1740s, drawing on different social categories from the artisan to the large tenant. Following the 22 conversions on the estate in 1747 an interesting social and religious mix emerged. The head tenantry came to include catholics like Walter Woulfe and Bryan and Roger Sheehy, converts like Prendergast and



McGrath, the quaker Fennell, and new anglican leaseholders of the 1740s like Bagnall and Beer. In 1766 there were 23 protestant families in Shanrahan parish and if the adjoining parishes of Templetenny (10), Ardfinnan (41 individuals), Rochestown (8 individuals), Neddans (5), Newcastle (3) and Cahir (63), then the total reaches 301 individuals. By 1831 the respective numbers were Shanrahan (237), Ardfinnan (50), Templetenny (15), Rochestown (13), Neddans (0), Cahir (276) and Newcastle (8), in all 599 showing that the protestant population in this district doubled in the 65 year period after 1766.

A greater growth rate is apparent on the Maude estate at Ballintemple where, stimulated by the events of the 1760s, the landlord began to promote protestant settlement from 1767. In 1766 there were 8 protestant families or 44 individuals in Ballintemple. By 1831 the figure stood at 158 persons representing a threefold rise from 1766. By this growth the ratio of catholics to protestants on the estate was reduced from 10.5 : 1 in 1766 to 4 : 1 in 1831. In fact Ballintemple and Shanrahan with their improving landlords and Templemore with a new military barracks, were the only centres outside the established protestant concentrations to display an increase in settler populations over the period. There was also a successful colonisation of the Kilcooley estate with Palatine settlers sponsored in the 1770s by Sir William Barker, who was also a participant in the events of the 1760s. The 1766 return for Kilcooley does not survive, but by 1831 there were 532 protestants there. It is significant that the most successful experiments in protestant colonisation were sponsored by individuals or families who had a close connection with the purge of the 1760s.

The other means of reducing the numerical superiority of catholics was by an active policy of conversion. It can not be said that the 600 or so conversions recorded for the county in the eighteenth century resulted from any evangelical or missionary endeavour on the part of the Established Church (Table LXVI). These were largely the result of legal, family, social and occupational circumstances and considerations. The only area in which any formal structure for active conversion existed was in the charter schools. The background to the foundation in July 1733 of the Incorporated Society for Promoting English Protestant Schools in Ireland was the strength of catholicism as revealed in the report of 1731 and the desire of prominent clergymen, notably Edward Synge of Tuam, to promote the protestant religion. It was perceived that the decaying state of the Church



of Ireland and the vitality of catholicism could be reversed by an educational process through the establishment of charter schools which would also serve as vehicles for improvement and inculcate loyalty to the state. The purpose of the schools was, therefore, many-faceted : educational, religious, political, and agricultural / industrial many of their leading promoters being also members of the Linen Board (founded 1711) and the Dublin Society (founded 1731) (100).

Locally the three main charter schools were founded in the 1740s, a decade which also witnessed improvement endeavours in other directions. In 1743 John Dawson of Greenane bequeathed £500 to be used to purchase lands for the erection of a charter school near Clonmel, and in 1747 this materialised when Sir Charles Moore granted a perpetuity lease of 24 acres near the town and £100 towards the building of the school (101). In 1751 local benefactors and subscribers to the school included Moores of Barne, Chancellorstown, and Marlfield, Bagwell, Perry, Osborne and Power, with the Moore and Bagwell families remaining its main supporters (102). At Cashel the corporation granted 21 acres for 99 years to the society in September 1745, archbishop Price donated £50 yearly during his life and £300 in his will for its support, and other local donors included Price of Ardmayle, Palliser, Damer, and Lord Jocelyn (103). The latter also promoted a charter school of his own on his estate at Newport in 1747 as part of the development of that estate village in the 1740s (104). He spent £200 on the building and other local benefactors included the Waller, Gason, Phelps, and Bloomfield families (105). The school at Clonmel opened in 1748, those at Cashel and Newport in 1751 (106). A fourth school was intended for Fethard and for that purpose the corporation made a grant in perpetuity in 1747 of 42 acres within the liberties of the town, £400 was donated and £33 subscribed by local benefactors, but by 1766 no building had been erected (107).

It can not be said that these schools achieved their object of acting as agents for the advancement of the state religion through the attainment of large scale conversions. The complement for each school was 40 pupils but they were conducted at considerable expence, this in 1789 reaching £353 (Clonmel), £336 (Cashel), and £371 (Newport) (108). Reports on their condition in the 1780s were generally unfavourable and the schools came to act as showcases for local protestants being maintained for vested interests (109). Nevertheless they are a useful index of local gentry pre-occupations and



perceptions, the personnel involved in their promotion, and their location in the south. Both endeavours in the realms of colonisation and conversion failed to markedly increase protestant numbers relative to catholic.

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The purpose of the successive penal laws, especially those of 1695, 1697, 1703 and 1709, was to restrict the political rather than the religious manifestation of catholicism, lay and clerical. In the minds of protestants, however, both were inextricably linked so that in times of political instability or controversy the effect was an enforcement of the penal provisions against religious practice. But in this the authorities locally had to be goaded into activity by directions from Dublin. This is understandable in the light of Pennefather's remark in 1729. In early 1713, following the important discovery by Tyrell the priest catcher of two bishops and a leading jesuit in Clonmel, the government ordered the local magistrates to apprehend them (110). One of them then admitted to the existence of the clerics, but reported that they had dispersed when the main catholics of the town were summoned to take the oaths (111). A significant point to emerge from Tyrell's report is the implication that some protestants in the town were compromised financially by catholic interests there to allow the open practice of religion (112). In this context it is worth noting that the jesuit identified by Tyrell was still active in Clonmel in 1748 and indeed in that year was, as superior of the order in Ireland, advancing plans for further jesuit foundations at Carrick, Cashel, and other centres (113).

In 1714, against a background of a Jacobite invasion scare, the government issued orders for the enforcement of the laws against catholics. There was a keen local response to this directive with the high sheriff giving assurances of vigour on the part of the justices (114). The main catholics of Clanwilliam were summoned to appear before the magistrates at Tipperary on 23 June but failed to do so, as did new converts whom the justices suspected 'were not sincere Protestants' (115). The justices of Lower Ormond were more successful in making catholics there take the oath of abjuration, while justices at Killenaule and Cashel were active at this time also (116).

The pattern was repeated subsequently. In 1722 when some information about the loyalty of catholics in west Tipperary to the Pretender was sworn, government ordered the enforcement of the laws and the shutting up of chapels (117). The 1731 report



revealed an unsubdued church suspect to government because its activities were conducted without hindrance. Thus the lords reported to the primate that 'the parish priests even unregistered ones appear every where with little reserve and . . . the papists frequent their mass houses as openly as protestants do their churches' (118). Fears were further heightened in 1732 when an apparent scheme involving archbishop Christopher Butler, whereby funds were allegedly to be raised to aid the cause of the Pretender, was revealed (119). Although the evidence adduced was of dubious authenticity, deriving as it did from a dismissed priest who had a grudge, the episode made government recognise and admit the existence of an ecclesiastical jurisdiction in Munster in the form of an archbishop and suffragan bishops (120).

The mid-1740s, which had its context the Jacobite invasion of Scotland, saw renewed enforcement of the penal laws against catholic religious practice. In response to a government directive to the justices in 1744 the chief catholic residents of Thurles were obliged to appear before three magistrates to give information on clergy officiating in the town, and a similar procedure was adopted at Cashel (121). At Clonmel the mayor enquired into the clergy but they were found to have fled, yet he had the large mass house, described as 'well slated and in good repair', locked up with the friary and the keys of both taken into his custody (122). Following the Jacobite success in Scotland in September 1745 the Anglican archbishop of Cashel instructed his clergy to remind catholics of the leniency with which they had been treated and 'how far their future ease may depend on their peaceable behaviour at this time' (123). Despite this warning the open functioning of the catholic church is evident from the visitations of the 1750s and early 1760s. In the 1750s, however, the toleration hitherto enjoyed by the church was to be permanently dented as a result of a number of incidents involving belligerent activity on the part of catholic clergy and their communities.

There were at least three important incidents involving priests which had the effect of sharpening local protestant sensibilities in the 1750s. The first of these concerned the attempt of Rev. John Haly of Killerke to convert Charles Moore a protestant and for this he was presented at the assizes of 1750 (124). He was charged under the tory acts and those who presented him for trial included Maude, Stephen Moore, Barker, Pennefather, Bunbury, Judkin, and Taylor, individuals who were to figure prominently in the events of the 1760s. The importance of being charged under the tory acts was that the amounts



decreed in damages were to be recovered from catholics only. Interestingly the two accounts of such a tax that survive date to this period and relate to the half barony of Ikerrin (1750) and the barony of Kilnamanagh (1765), where the Maude estate lay (125).

The second incident concerned Rev. Daniel O'Neill (or Neale) of Cullen or Oola. In 1753 a reward was issued for his capture following the marriage ceremony he had performed for Henry Grady who had abducted Susanna Grove. Following his arrest and during the course of being conveyed from Clonmel to Limerick for trial, he was in April 1754 rescued by a large mob from the under sheriff and army near Cashel (126). The high sheriff, Jonathan Lovett, reported that a crowd of 'at least 3,000 men and women' participated in the rescue and admitted that 'it was not in my power to get [information] at present for the priests have such an influence on the people' (127). Clearly the incident led to concern among justices about the size of such rescue parties. Joseph Damer remarked to government that 'the common papists are insolent and provide themselves with arms' (128). As a consequence of the tide of hostility which the whole affair unleashed (one of the rescue party was shot dead and others seriously wounded), Lovett had to abandon his country mansion at Kingswell and take refuge in Tipperary nearby (129). A government reward of £100 for O'Neill's recapture was to no avail for by 1766 he was still openly officiating in Cullen a fact which was given particular notice in the census of the parish in that year (130). The incident represented an open challenge to local law and order, it witnessed the mobilisation of a catholic mob, the use of violence, and the subsequent renewal of his clerical functions by the priest concerned. In all it was a clear overriding of the authority of the justices.

The third incident was more serious and was to provide the context for the hostility towards catholic clergy in the early 1760s. In September 1758 Lord Kingston published a notice offering a reward for Bishop John O'Brien of Cloyne who had imposed an edict of excommunication on the town of Mitchelstown. This action had as its background not any intrinsic rivalry between Kingston and O'Brien, rather its source lay in a dispute between O'Brien and archbishop James Butler of Cashel. Its primary cause lay in Butler's determination to retain the revenues of Mitchelstown parish and O'Brien's design to remove them from him (131). Added to this was the fact that both had been rival candidates for the see of Cloyne in 1748 with O'Brien being successful, and there



was a dispute between the two about the encroachment of the Franciscan friars of Galbally into Mitchelstown (132). The result of this rivalry was twofold : there was a confusion of authority in relation to church matters in Mitchelstown, and the conflict gave churchmen a high public profile which brought them to the attention of the civil authorities. Far from achieving a resolution, the conflict became more fully public in the late 1750s.

In April 1755 Butler sent Rev. Andrew Meagher to the town to induce the friars to return to Galbally. He was still in the town by 1758 and by then had become a additional source of conflict between the two bishops. Meagher was suspended for performing a clandestine marriage, but only agreed to abide by the suspension if it was served on him in person. When Pierce Creagh, bishop of Waterford, came to the town in August 1758 to meet Butler he was violently assaulted by the mob who mistakenly believed he had come to suspend Meagher, and who were intent on hanging Creagh but in the event he was saved in time. Later Creagh suggested to O'Brien that the town be placed under interdict for six months which accordingly was announced in all surrounding parishes in August. O'Brien blamed Butler for all that had happened particularly for his support of Meagher. This was a serious situation and Kingston, then an absentee, having been informed of events and viewing the incident as a threat to his authority, issued his reward for O'Brien. In this way an internal quarrel between two bishops, who by law were not supposed to be in the country at all, was transferred to the public stage thereby bringing them into direct confrontation with the authority of the landlord.

The Mitchelstown affair served to bring Rev. Nicholas Sheehy, parish priest of Ballyporeen, to the notice of the gentry of south Tipperary since priests in adjoining parishes were obliged by O'Brien to publicise the edict he had imposed on the town (133). Because of his gentry status and the coincidence in time and place of the Whiteboy outbreaks in his parish, he became marked out for destruction. Belonging originally to the Sheehys of Drumcollogher, Co. Limerick, who were large middlemen on the Courtenay estate there, Nicholas Sheehy was of a branch of that family which settled (probably through a marriage with the Powers), at Bawnfune on the Waterford / Tipperary border as tenants to Lord Midleton (134). Evidence from 1758 shows that William Sheehy, possibly the priest's brother, was tenant to over 600 acres including



Bawnfune making the family substantial tenants (135). This gentry background permitted Sheehy (b.1728) to obtain a continental education at Louvain and he was ordained in Rome in 1752 (136). On his return to Ireland he became curate of Newcastle near his family home and later parish priest of Shanrahan, Ballysheehan, and Templetenny. One report suggests that he had an income of £200 yearly which was quite high for the time but which would have been consonant with his expectations as a person of gentry origins (137). He became a person of some standing locally. For instance he acted as witness to deeds executed by Cornelius O'Callaghan the major landowner in the district (138). However as the Mitchelstown affair displayed, he became publicly involved in matters of controversy though in its origins this episode was not of his own making.

In later years Sheehy received no support for his stance from his clerical superiors. A later poem lamenting Sheehy's execution includes the line 'Aodhagan is Creach a dhiol thu' (Egan and Creagh betrayed you) (139). Bishop Creagh, in whose diocese Sheehy officiated, rendered him no support once the charge of whiteboyism was made and in fact behaved severely to him (140). Sheehy appears to have been generally regarded as a troublemaker by the church authorities at least by 1765 (141). Creagh, archbishop Butler, and William Egan, parish priest of Clonmel were against the type of socially aggressive behaviour espoused by Sheehy. In the wake of Kingston's response to the Mitchelstown episode clerical leaders were anxious to re-establish their credibility with the civil authorities locally, a process hindered by the course of action adopted by Sheehy.

λ Either from situation or sympathy or both Sheehy became involved in issues of social concern in his area. He openly declared his opposition to tithes and encouraged people not to pay them, and he favoured the abolition of commonages (142). He advocated the non-payment of church rates and for this reason abolished them in the parish of Newcastle on the grounds that it had no protestant community or church (143). From situation and inclination Sheehy was predisposed to favour the demands of the Whiteboys when their agitation over commons and tithes broke out in late 1761 and who became most active in the district where he ministered. Even a contemporary catholic apologist conceded the point of Sheehy's 'unavoidable connection with those rioters several hundred of whom were his parishoners' (144). Doubt, however, has been cast on the credibility of his one overt whiteboy act and he may only have associated himself



with the movement in its early stages distancing himself from its proceedings once it became more violent. (145). By that stage protestants in the area had become alarmed and came to identify Sheehy and others as the fomentors of the violence.

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As an expression of and background to the fears of protestants it is noteworthy that Tipperary had a sizeable complement of militia units in 1761. Some of these were in existence in 1745 at the time of the Pretender invasion scare when it was enumerated that 2,600 protestants were capable of bearing arms (146). In 1761 there were 25 units in all 7 of which had existed in 1745, 17 were arrayed in 1756 at the start of the war with France, and one whose date is uncertain but can be reasonably ascribed to 1756 (147). The units of 1745 were mostly formed of protestants from the north of the county, the leaders being Humphrey Minchin, John Minchin, Nehemiah Donnellan, Sir Thomas Dancer, Francis Sadlier, Sir William Barker, and Benjamin Bunbury. The northern commissions were added to in 1756 by the formation of units under Henry Prittie, Anthony Parker, William Parsons and Lord Jocelyn, but the remainder had a decidedly southern emphasis. Thus independent units were arrayed in 1756 under Sir Thomas Maude, Stephen Moore (Barne), William Armstrong, William Barton (John Bagwell, lieutenant), Stephen Moore (Clonmel), Henry Cavendish, Thomas Chidley Moore, Richard Moore, the sovereign of Fethard, and Kingsmill Pennefather, with regiments under Robert O'Callaghan and Richard Pennefather. The formation of these militia forces is indicative of the defence needs of the protestant community locally in these years. It is also expressive of the strong corporate sense among protestants and this was to carry itself through into the 1760s.

To this strong local defence presence was added that of a large number of military designated to aid in the suppression of the Whiteboys. They were led by Lord Drogheda, who was publicly commended for his ready assistance by the assembled magistrates following the trials at Clonmel in March 1766, and by Sir James Caldwell whom one source claims was introduced to the county to lead irregularly raised local forces (148). Under orders approved by government in March 1763 and renewed in August 1764 the regular forces were required to assist the justices in Tipperary against the Whiteboys and justices of the peace were empowered to lead parties of the military for this purpose



(149). The justices had, therefore, considerable forces at their disposal to be used at their discretion. Their powers were further extended by an act which came into force in May 1764 whereby magistrates were indemnified for actions taken by them in the course of suppressing unrest (150). The arbitrary use of this privilege of immunity was evident in the extreme course of action adopted by the justices in 1765-6.

As a practical expression of local defence needs there was a concerted effort in the early 1760s, as part of the process of re-imposing the penal laws, to disarm catholics. The need to do so was sanctioned by the superiority in numbers of catholics over protestants (given formal recognition in the 1766 census), by the open evasion of the laws on arms by catholics, and by the security threat created by the war time situation. In response to this the restrictions on catholics carrying arms were re-invoked because of the fear that they would be used in favour of the French should they invade.

Such fears had a long history in the minds of protestants. The possession of arms by catholics was a major cause of concern to the authorities in the early part of the century when sympathy for the Stuarts was still strong. In order to regulate the situation a system of licences was introduced, and in 1704 nine catholics including Col. Thomas Butler, Dwyer of Ballycomisk, Mathew of Thurles and Purcell of Loughmoe were so licenced in Tipperary (151). These licences were renewed subsequently as in 1713 Ryan of Inch, Meagher of Cloneen, and Morris of Latteragh were added to the list (152). Many of these licencees were imprisoned in 1714-5 when there were fears of a Jacobite invasion in which it was suspected that Irish catholics would participate. These fears were especially potent in Tipperary because of the connection with the duke of Ormond who was a main supporter of the Jacobite cause (153). Because of this threat a government proclamation of 9 July 1715 ordered the seizure of arms and horses in the possession of catholics, and following this there were systematic arms searches by the magistrates as at Cashel with prominent catholics like Col. Nicholas Purcell, George Mathew and his son, and John Ryan (Inch) being taken up (154). At least one person, Butler of Derrycloney, resisted these arms searches but one magistrate admitted in 1715 that 'I don't find any arms worth speaking of in possession of the papists' (155).

Because of the considerable catholic interest in the county protestant fears of support for the Stuart cause sharpened when there was the threat of a foreign invasion. In 1722 evidence was sworn to the effect that a large number of gentlemen in west Tipperary,



including Ryan of Drum, Dwyer of Cashel, Fogarty and Keating of Shanbally, were involved in treasonable meetings in favour of the Pretender (156). It is unlikely that these claims had any substance, but they reveal the perceptions of local magistrates at a time of insecurity. In normal times protestants in the county were apathetic towards the enforcement of the penal laws, at least those relating to security, and indeed appear to have been intimidated by the strength and numerical superiority of catholics from the normal process of law enforcement. In 1729 one magistrate, Kingsmill Pennefather of Cashel, admitted that 'the number of papists . . . is so great that it is hazardous for the civill power to put the laws in execution' (157).

The early 1730s was a time of insecurity when the laws on catholics bearing arms were tightened and when there were arrests of persons suspected of recruiting for France, as in the case of Richard Walsh in Clonmel in 1733 (158). The invasion scare of 1739-40 prompted legislation providing for the delivery of arms by catholics to magistrates, and in 1744-5 there were local searches for arms and arrests on suspicion of enlisting for the Pretender (159). The official view during the Seven Years War which began in 1756 was that there was little likelihood of a threat from Irish catholics acting in collusion with the enemy. In May 1759 the archbishop of Armagh informed the duke of Bedford that 'the Roman Catholics of property, whether landed or monied, would not assist' (160). This attitude on the part of government persisted despite the shock of Thurot's landing at Carrickfergus in February 1760. Government was assured by catholic peers and gentlemen that the Stuart cause had no support among them and such assurances were officially accepted as genuine (161). Hostilities with France ceased in 1762 though a formal peace was not signed until February 1763. This chronology is important in relation to local circumstances. It was only after the war had concluded that charges of the Whiteboys being led by demobilised French and Irish officers began to emerge in Munster (162). These charges were not credited by government (163). It is against this background that the retrospective participation of individual catholics in south Tipperary as leaders of the Whiteboys favouring the French was formulated by a group of protestant gentry. It provided the framework for charges brought against a section of leading catholics and had as its outcome the proceedings of 1765-6.

Local opposition to catholics bearing arms received an early manifestation in the scheme to raise a catholic legion in Ireland for service under the king of Portugal on



Britain's side in the war against Spain. In February 1762 the proposal that regiments of catholics be raised in Ireland for service under George III's ally the king of Portugal, who was then threatened with a Spanish invasion, was put forward by leading catholic peers (164). Traditionally the British government, though it regretted the fact that the penal laws precluded catholics joining the British army thereby forcing a large recruitment to the foreign brigades of countries hostile to Britain, had tacitly accepted this trend as it tended to rid Ireland of the more truculent elements. Accordingly the plan for the recruitment of catholics for the king of Portugal received official sanction, Egremont specifying that those catholics chosen were 'to be selected as, from their suspected religious principles, are least to be trusted with the defence of Ireland' (165). Rumours of the scheme caused a furore in the Irish parliament in April 1762, but motions in both the commons and lords requesting the lord lieutenant to formally state his position were defeated comfortably (166). One of those who spoke in favour of the proposal in the lords was Lord Carrick who became associated with the extreme party in Tipperary (167). In doing so he was aligning himself with the traditionalist view that the proposed regiments would serve to rid the country of a potentially dangerous catholic rabble.

More typical of local opinion were the sentiments of a protestant author writing from Clonmel in March 1762 who advocated resistance to the scheme (168). This is an extremely revealing statement of local views not merely on the issue of the catholic regiments, but also on the wider aspects of other perceived threats to the established order. The author rejected the notion of a catholic legion on several counts. For one it would only serve to aid Britain's enemies as catholics were subjects of the pope and any oath of theirs to serve king George III's ally would therefore be venal and their implicit loyalty was to France. Secondly, if catholics were armed as suggested then they could with easy facility act in unison with the Levellers who were already threatening wide areas of Munster. Replying to the objection that catholic peers leading the legion would be responsible for those under them, the Clonmel author asks whether such leaders can 'answer for their own tenants who it is notorious here are the ringleaders of these Levellers?' (169). Here was a clear challenge referring to tenants on Lord Cahir's estate, identifying them as the instigators of the rural unrest who would be presented with the opportunity of extending their influence through the projected legion plan. Thirdly, the plan was judged to be economically unwise as it would, by removing so many artisans



out of the country, lead to a decline in tillage and manufacturing and lessen the price of land by increasing the price of labour (170).

More pointedly the tract evinces a deep mistrust of the intentions both of the Dublin government and Britain in relation to the whole legion plan. The author declares his surprise that 'the Protestant interest of this kingdom is so little regarded by ourselves or our neighbours, that our lives and properties are to be trifled with, and so fair an open[ing] given for an invasion on both by either foreign or domestic foes' (171). Seeking to determine from what source the scheme originated he states : 'if it was recommended from the other side it is equally difficult to be accounted for . . . either that the M[inistr]y there are utter strangers to the circumstances of this country, or that they make light of any misery they may involve us in to serve any purpose, however trifling, of their own' (172). He concludes that the cause was the lack of acquaintance of the English ministry with conditions in Ireland. Further mistrust of government motives was generated by rumours that the penal laws were to be substantially repealed. Here the author is articulating his concern over the mortgage bill introduced in parliament the previous month. His fear was that further concessions were intended and in this context he invoked an historical perspective by stating that implicit in the repeal of the penal laws was a questioning of the wisdom of their forefathers who had enacted them. In emotive terms he questioned his correspondent on popery : 'it was then a tyger let loose and is now a tyger chained, will you slip the chain ?' (173).

The Clonmel tract rejecting the catholic legion for very specific reasons and Lord Carrick advocating the measure, may suggest an irrational perception of the project among protestants. Nevertheless both views indicate what real alarm and fear the plan evoked locally. It was credited that the French were assisting the Whiteboys and the legion scheme would further re-inforce this alliance (174). However none of this was given any credence at government level and Halifax, the lord lieutenant, circumspectly rejected charges of French involvement and saw that the charge was contrived by an interested faction (175). In the event the legion failed to materialise but the episode stands out as an important bench mark in the development of local protestant perceptions about their own security and in their attitude to the motives of government. In the immediate term following the legion controversy at the Summer assizes the grand jury made available rewards of £20 (additional to the sum stipulated in the penal legislation),



for the first three catholics found guilty of carrying arms (176). Thus a law, which had only been periodically enforced previously and which it was recognised was openly flaunted in normal times, was renewed with an added incentive.

The invocation of an historical dimension by the Clonmel author was duplicated shortly afterwards by the republication of a number of works which served to re-inforce the position and arguments of the militant gentry in Tipperary. Prominent in promoting this were the Cork merchants Phineas and George Bagnell whose brother William Bagnell of Marlhill was an active member of the Tipperary grand jury and a distinguished Whiteboy hunter. In 1763 the Bagnells, describing themselves as 'paper makers', claimed to have spent £1,148 on fitting out a paper mill near Cork and were applying to parliament for additional funds to complete the enterprise (177). In 1766 they republished Sir John Temple's The Irish rebellion or the history of the beginning and first progress of the general rebellion raised within the kingdom of Ireland upon the three and twentieth day of October 1641, which was first issued in a London edition in 1646. In 1767 a new edition of William King's State of the protestants of Ireland under the late King James's government (first edition London 1691), was published.

The importance of the re-issuing of these publications was threefold. Firstly, originally issued following attacks by catholic forces on protestant colonists, they retrospectively provided the intellectual and historical justification for the actions of the Tipperary gentry in 1765-6. Secondly, the publications were available for public purchase in Clonmel indicating that there was demand for such works (178). Thirdly, the works were subscribed to by those members of the gentry who were closely associated with the course of events in the 1760s. The subscribers included William Bagnell of Marlhill, Matthew Bunbury of Kilfeacle, John Bagwell of Kilmore, and Matthew Jacob of Mobarnan, all grand jurors (179). In the context of the historical perspective being portrayed by these works it is also relevant that following the events of 1765-6 the anniversary of the battle of the Boyne was celebrated in flamboyant fashion on 1 July 1767, an event which had not been marked to such a degree hitherto (180). A further indication of local sympathies is that there were 418 subscribers mostly from Tipperary to the publication of the convert priest Rev. Andrew Megher entitled The popish mass (Limerick, 1771), originally delivered as a sermon at Thurles in August 1767 (181).

There were a number of defences of the catholic position published in the 1760s also.



Already in the 1750s Charles O'Connor had published several works notably the Case of the Roman Catholics of Ireland (1755) which advocated the loyalty of catholics to the existing order and sought means whereby this could be given expression. In 1761 appeared Henry Brooke's The trial of the cause of the Roman Catholics which went into a fourth edition in 1762, and in 1766 an apologetic work by Viscount Taaffe, a member of the Catholic Committee, appeared (182). Another member of that committee and a correspondent of Edmund Burke and O'Connor was John Curry who in 1762 published a work disassociating respectable catholics from the Whiteboys in Munster (183). Curry also brought out a collection of historical memoirs of the Irish rebellion, a controversial work in which he sought to clarify the role of catholics in relation to the events of 1641, and with which Burke was associated in the bringing out of London editions in 1765 and 1767 (184).

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The occurrence of a unique set of circumstances in time and place made the local establishment feel threatened. On the one hand Tipperary gentry were mistrustful about the motives of government on the catholic issue exemplified by local resistance to the catholic legion proposal. In consequence they felt alienated from the administration, a situation not aided by the fact that the early 1760s saw a succession of lack-lustre and irresolute lord lieutenants. On the other hand the Tipperary gentry had to contend with what they perceived as a new truculent assertiveness on the part of catholics as demonstrated in the 1761 election, the existence of a group of parvenu gentry on the Butler (Cahir) estate, the struggle for the removal of quarterage, the threat to authority shown in the Mitchelstown episode, and the aggressive behaviour of Fr. Sheehy. Added to this was the threat to land titles as expressed in a series of adverse legal decisions and in the proposal that catholics be allowed to lend money on landed security. To compound matters the local gentry were experiencing psychological paranoia as a result of their failure to gain convictions for whiteboyism. All this was re-inforced by the minority position of protestants in the region. Presented with the spectre of resurgent catholicism in its manifold forms and a lack of confidence in the motives of government, the nerve of the protestant gentry broke leading to a heightening of hysteria and inevitable sectarian conflict.

The outcome was a systematic re-assertion of the penal laws, and the presentation of



the Whiteboys as a treasonable force in league with the French intent on the overthrow of the establishment. The reputation of the Tipperary gentry in the eyes of the country would be enhanced for their public spirit in uncovering and quelling an insurrection by rebels designed to subvert the state. It was the need to vindicate themselves in this regard which drove the gentry relentlessly onward towards the traumatic events of 1765-6. Indicative of the arbitrary construction placed on events and of a greater fixity of purpose was a shift in the kind of appointments made to the office of sheriff and justice of the peace.

The persons appointed as sheriff successively after 1762 were those who identified closely with the more extreme interpretation of events. They were John Bagwell, Kilmore (1763), Sir William Barker (1764), Sir Thomas Maude (1765), and Daniel Toler (1766) (185). To complement this there were some notable appointments as justices of the peace. There were 99 justices in the county in September 1760, the third largest per county in Ireland after Cork and Limerick (186). Despite this large number the quality and distribution of justices varied enormously. It was recognised that in south west Tipperary where the Whiteboys were most active, i.e. in the Cahir-Clogheen-Ardfinnan district, justices were thin on the ground. In December 1763 William Perry of Woodroff remarked to a Dublin correspondent: 'Nor is there from Stephen Moore's [Marlfield] to the bounds of the county [with Cork], (as Dick Folks has quitted the country and gone to town), a justice when our members are attending in Dublin, that such persons as you or I would care to rely on; and therefore it is not to be imagined the want there is of a proper one in this part of the country' (187). This deficiency was soon rectified. Perry recommended William Bagnell of Marlhill ear Ardfinnan for selection as a justice and, although he was not deemed to qualify as regards income, he was appointed in March 1764 (188). Others appointed were John Miles of Rochestown, north of Ardfinnan (April 1764), and Cornelius O'Callaghan, junior, appointed in March 1763 (189). These appointees meant a significant addition to the complement of justices in the region where unrest was rife.

Bagnell and Miles were head tenants on the O'Callaghan estate, and Bagnell is important in a wider context because of his relatives in the Cork publishing trade. Bagnell was to distinguish himself against the Whiteboys for which he was publicly commended by the grand jury in 1766 (190). Another prominent grand juror was John



Bagwell. He was a head tenant on the O'Callaghan and Butler (Cahir) estates, and so like Bagnell and Miles would have had direct experience of the Whiteboys. Other factors also influenced his participation : he was concerned about his title to the Dunboyne lands purchased in 1729, and the success of the upstart Sheehys in gaining a lease advantage over him (191). He was also a supporter of the charter schools, in 1765 he was appointed to a parliamentary committee enquiring into the disturbances in Munster, and in 1767 he was a member of a commons group charged with the duty of preparing a revision of the 1766 Whiteboy act (192). At crucial times Bagwell was in influential positions locally and nationally.

What is evident, however, is how various were the motives of the protestant gentry who adopted a more militant stance. The motive of Sir Thomas Maude was political arising from the challenge made by Thomas Mathew in the 1761 election and this extended itself into a desire to suppress any expressions of catholic assertiveness. Barton of Fethard with other purchasers of the Everard property like O'Callaghan, Power, and Jacob, were apprehensive over their titles. They were all members of the grand jury that of April 1766 especially. An additional cause may have influenced Barton to associate himself more closely with the militant faction. At the outset of the war with France Barton was obliged to make a declaration to government that he had not purchased property in that country by virtue of his partnership with Samuel Delap in the Bordeaux wine trade, and that he was not engaged in any activity favourable to the French. On the contrary his loyalty had been expressed by his purchase of land around Fethard where he and his family had settled (193). Given this attestation of loyalty and the context of a perceived French invasion threat aided by the French, the need for Barton to identify with the establishment was obvious. In the context of the early 1760s it was also more than a coincidence that Barton had strong mercantile links in Bordeaux where the McCarthys were rising into prominence in the merchant community. The role of O'Callaghan may seem incongruous. There was a tradition of conformity in the family and in its first generation as landowners in the county it identified strongly with the ethos of anglicanism introducing protestants onto the estate in the 1740s. The need for a closer identification became more apparent in the 1760s because of the presence of whiteboyism on the estate, the role of Fr. Sheehy whose relatives were found among O'Callaghan's tenantry, and O'Callaghan's fears over his own title because of the



original purchase from Everard.

Of the rest, although not a justice for Tipperary Rev. John Hewetson of Suirville, Co. Kilkenny (for which he was made a justice in 1764), was closely associated with proceedings there, so much so that he has been distinguished by later generations with the title 'Whiteboy Hewetson'. A lowly curate in the Established Church, he was keen to gain advancement and his desire to ingratiate himself with the authorities by a firm display of loyal activity against the Whiteboys and catholic gentry, is clearly evident from the construction he imposed on the situation in the early 1760s (194). Subsequent to the events of 1766 he was reminding Townshend of 'my faithfull services in quelling our late commotions in the south of the Kingdom and bringing the chief delinquents to justice', and requesting promotion to a parish as a reward (195). Hewetson may also be said to exemplify the greater zeal among protestant clergy as advocated by one critic in 1759 who saw it as the key element in reducing the superiority in numbers of catholics (196). The grand jury of 1766, the most useful index of those who formed the right wing grouping, in addition to those already adverted to also included Richard Perry, William Perry, John Walsh, Thomas Hackett, Richard Moore, and William Chadwick, who themselves or their tenants suffered from Whiteboy outrages or were active in their suppression. Representatives from north Tipperary in the persons of John and Daniel Toler were also members.

Following these appointments to the grand jury the penal laws were enforced in a number of areas. There was a curb placed on the open conduct of schools by catholics. The reports for Cashel diocese reveal that about 73 teachers were functioning there in the period 1751-60 (197). Their operation was now restricted especially in Clonmel for in October 1765 a notice appeared to the effect that 'a stop is now put to teaching by popish schoolmasters and that it is determined to put the law in force against any such who shall presume to teach in said town', and this decision had been arrived at by 'the fixed resolution of the magistrates and principal inhabitants' (198). Encouragement was to be given to additional protestant schoolmasters to open schools in the town (199). There were suspicions that schoolmasters were instrumental in aiding the Whiteboys (e.g. they wrote threatening notices for them), but it is evident from the above that such suspicions were now subsumed into the wider realm of sectarianism.

More serious in its import was the enforcement of the 1704 act against unregistered



clergy. In June 1762 Fr. Sheehy, Rev. Doyle of Ardfinnan and Rev. Daniel of Cahir were presented by the grand jury at the Summer assizes as unregistered priests (200). This action represented the enforcement of a provision which had long fallen into disuetude by the 1750s. It was followed in May 1763 by an indictment against Fr. Sheehy for whiteboy involvement but he was, in the event, bailed for £2,000 (201). This particular charge followed the first two major capital convictions made by the previously embarrassed Tipperary magistrates of whiteboys who up until then had evaded conviction. In the ensuing period up to 1766 only one other capital conviction on a charge of whiteboyism was obtained. This explains why a section of the gentry became so militant after 1763. Since the mass of the common people, labourers and cottiers, who constituted the Whiteboy movement were anonymous to the authorities and so could avoid detection, gentry efforts at obtaining arrests became directed at the leaders of the community. Thus Rev. John Hewetson was subsequently to refer to Sheehy as 'a very capital ringleader of those insurgents and the very life and soul of those deluded people' (202). The process whereby the magistrates linked the agrarian crimes to the priests was made explicit in a grand jury statement of 14 July 1763 endorsed by John Bagwell. In it they refer to the ill treatment and threats accorded to the owners of tithes and voice their suspicion that such acts were encouraged by priests illegally officiating in the parishes concerned. They resolved to prosecute such priests to the utmost, and requested aggrieved parties to apply to them with information (203).

Such information was to be vital in formulating a prosecution case, but nothing further is heard of Sheehy until the Spring assizes of 1764. This lapse is significant in two ways : first, it marked a period when material information was compiled on Sheehy and others, and secondly it was a stage when more serious charges were devised (204). The paucity of capital convictions for whiteboyism meant that the position of the justices in relation to the agrarian movement was critical. Faced with this what happened in 1763-4 was the projection of the charge of whiteboyism onto a wider plane, that of high treason. Doing so had three advantages for the justices : it would serve to restore their reputation previously dented due to the acquittals of whiteboys ; it would help to convince government of the seriousness of affairs in the county ; and it would allow them to proceed with impunity and vigour against persons who were regarded as traitors. This represented a crucial transformation in perceptions as a right wing group took matters



into their own hands. This precedent was facilitated by an act (3 Geo.III c.19) which came into force on 12 May 1764 whereby magistrates were indemnified for their actions taken in the course of suppressing rural unrest. Already at the March assizes of 1764 Sheehy and three others were indicted for intending to raise a rebellion at Clogheen and for being armed for that purpose with 200 others dressed in white apparel, which coincidentally was also the colour of the Jacobite Pretender (205). These proceedings were of sufficient gravity to cause Sheehy to flee the county and go to his relatives in Co. Limerick for shelter (206).

As late as November 1764 government, in the persons of two lords justice Shannon and Ponsonby, were unconvinced as to the charge of treason being advanced particularly by Lord Carrick (207). They encouraged him to seek further evidence and were reluctant at that stage to issue a proclamation against Sheehy but favoured his private apprehension by Cornelius O'Callaghan (208). However, the knowledge of Sheehy's disappearance, the renewal of Whiteboy outrages, and pressure from local justices resulted in the issuing of a proclamation in February 1765 offering a reward of £300 (209). This action shows the ability of the Tipperary gentry to convince government of the validity of the charges brought against Sheehy.

The subsequent facts of the case are well documented and do not require detailed repetition (210). A number of points pertinent to the case, however, necessitate a certain emphasis. Firstly, the fact that Sheehy voluntarily surrendered within a month of the proclamation being issued implies a degree of innocence on his part. Secondly, the fact that his surrender was made privately to O'Callaghan, as had been the original intention in November 1764, and that a condition of that surrender was that his trial be held in Dublin, suggests a recognition by government that the local gentry could not be trusted to administer justice impartially. As much was stated by Sheehy himself in his hope for impartial justice in Dublin which, he said, 'was more than he could expect in the county Tipperary' (211). Thirdly, there was a long delay in bringing a prosecution case against him. Following a four month period in confinement in Dublin, Sheehy was admitted to bail of £4,000 in July on condition that he stand trial in November following (212). Yet when November arrived no prosecution case was forthcoming which made Sheehy, fearing that witnesses would be interfered with, petition that the trial be held as agreed. Not until February 1766, however, 11 months after the original surrender, did Sheehy



stand trial in Dublin where he was acquitted following the discrediting of the prosecution evidence.

The long delay involved in the assembling of their case by the Tipperary gentry and its failure in the event to stand up in court, meant that the prosecution charge of treason was entirely undermined. Once again the Tipperary justices were disgraced but on this occasion, having been frustrated in their attempts over five years to gain substantial convictions on whiteboy and associated charges, they were livid with revenge and were determined to obtain Sheehy's conviction as a test case at any cost. For this purpose Sheehy, after his acquittal in Dublin, was charged with the murder of John Bridge and was conveyed to Clonmel where he stood trial, was found guilty, and executed on 15 March 1766 (213). This event created shock and comparisons were made with the only other event of similar gravity in the century, the execution of James Cotter in 1720.

At the time of Sheehy's surrender in March 1765 the grand jury began to proceed against a group of catholic gentlemen and farmers. At the assizes of that month bills of indictment for high treason were found against 32 persons who were described as 'mostly men of good circumstances and considerable influence', and three were allowed bail of £500 each (214). Something of the spatial spread of these persons is indicated in the remark of Buxton that Rev. John Hewetson's list of people to be purged included 'every man gentle and simple that is worth speaking to from Clonmell to Mitchelstown' (215). Among them were catholic middlemen on the Butler (Cahir) and O'Callaghan estates. A number of them, subsequent to the indictments, applied to the grand jury for bail but this was refused. Conscious of their innocence at least 12 of them issued public notices in June outlining the circumstances and declaring their willingness to surrender and, if indicted, to stand trial (216). Those concerned were John Bourke of Rouska, James Hickey of Frehans, James and Thomas Coughlan, James Hilan, Lisfunchion, all farmers ; John Baldwin, Cahir, Robert Keating, Knockagh, James Nagle, Garnvella, Edmond Doherty, Roxborough, Edmund Sheehy, Lodge, and Thomas Beer, Burgess (a protestant) all gentlemen, and John Coughlan, Crana, M.D. (217). The most important figures in the group (Sheehy, Nagle, Keating, Baldwin, Doherty, and Hickey), gave public notice of their having surrendered and of being in actual custody in Clonmel jail (218).

Three aspects of these developments are worth emphasis. First, the refusal to grant



bail was very serious. In common law a person accused or indicted of high treason was bailable upon good surety until he was convicted, and refusal to grant bail where the party ought to be bailed was a misdemeanour punishable not only by suit of the party concerned but also by indictment (219). Refusal of bail by the local justices showed their concern that there might be interference with witnesses, that further offences might be committed, or that the accused might not, despite assurances, turn up for trial. Due process of law was not, therefore, being observed by the magistrates. Secondly, the group of catholic gentry and farmers who were indicted stated that they were unaware of who their prosecutors were. This implies, as with Fr. Sheehy, that the right wing gentry faction had not yet put together a proper prosecution case, which again casts doubt on the legality of the whole proceeding. Thirdly, again like Fr. Sheehy those who voluntarily surrendered in the Summer of 1765 had to undergo a long confinement of 8 months before their trials came on in March 1766. It was not merely the convictions and executions which astounded public opinion, but also the arbitrary methods outside the law by which they were achieved.

Early in 1766 further persons, 'some of them farmers of substance', were imprisoned in Clonmel on a murder charge and at the time of Fr. Sheehy's trial in March John Purcell of Thurles, 'a man of considerable property', was charged with high treason ; and James Buxton believed to be Fr. Sheehy's deputy was captured at this time also (220). At the assizes held in March six persons including Edmund Sheehy, James Farrell, and Robert Keating were ordered to stand trial in Kilkenny for their involvement in the Newmarket affray in September 1764 (221). They were acquitted but were then returned to Clonmel where a special commission to try all those charged was to sit in April (222). At these trials the convictions of Sheehy, Farrell, and Buxton were obtained on a murder charge, while 8 others though acquitted of that charge were allowed bail to appear to answer the further charge of high treason (223). Despite the appeals and petitions made by them in which they declared their innocence, Sheehy, Buxton and Farrell were executed in Clogheen on 3 May 1766 (224). This was the culmination of the hysteria, for at the March 1767 assizes the remainder of the chief catholics like Doherty, Keating, and Nagle were acquitted and passions abated thereafter (225).

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The executions and terror in south Tipperary generated widespread fears both within the area itself and in east Munster generally. Not only the events themselves but their epilogue caused real apprehension among the common people. Thus in July 1766 farmers innocently bringing corn to market in Clonmel were harshly intimidated (226). One catholic peer reported that because of fear of persecution hundreds had abandoned their habitations and were destined for Newfoundland (227). An index of the fears is also to be seen in the high level of conformities throughout the 1760s not all of which derived from the motives relating to landholding already outlined (Tables LXVI, LXVII). In a wider perspective the victims of the executions were celebrated (and their assassins derided), in popular poetry, and they became folk heroes (228). Because of the charges made that catholic merchants in the ports were supplying funds for the advancement of the plot, they also came under suspicion. Evidence from the dying declarations of Farrell and Buxton shows that attempts were made to make them turn approver by swearing against catholic merchants and clergy in Waterford particularly, but in Cork also (229). They included Martin Murphy, Philip Long, Thomas Wyse, Bishop Pierce Creagh, and Dominick Farrell (230). This was a clear attempt by the extreme party to extend the purge outside the county. It served to generate real fears for their safety among protestants in Waterford, but in April 1766 the main catholics of the port had a loyal address sent to the lord lieutenant which was endorsed by five MPs, the mayor, and others (231). It had the desired effect of stemming any possibility of the purge extending itself to the port and it calmed protestants.

The judgment of catholic apologists like Curry, Griffith, O'Connor, and Taaffe was to view the events of 1765-6 as a catastrophe. Parallels were drawn with previous acts of persecution against catholics. Curry and Griffith likened the episode to the Titus Oats plot in 1678 (232). O'Connor felt that a movement towards concession could result from the events especially if liberal protestant MPs could be canvassed. In June 1766 he wrote to Curry that 'The Tipperary affair is I find become a very important one, not only to our people in general but to some patriots in particular' (233). He encouraged Curry to assemble material on the entire course of events and to publish them which he did in a Cork edition in 1767 (234). While O'Connor's purpose was as much to dissociate the catholic gentry from the Whiteboys as to rehabilitate catholicism in general, this publication was one element in opening the way for catholic relief from the 1770s



onward.

Another element which aided in that process was the fact that as a result of the purge militant protestantism was discredited. The charges of treason and murder were not widely credited outside the region (235). The only formal mark of approval came from the grand jury of Co. Dublin in April 1767 which gave credence to the charges of rebellion and congratulated Maude, Carrick, Bagwell, and Bagnell for their public service (236). Indicative of government reaction was the payment of £227 to Hewetson for his efforts, but a request from the grand jury that the two prosecution witnesses be rewarded in the amount of £600 was not conceded (237). The events did stir government to seek a reform of the grand jury system. Local reaction to the right wing party was displayed by assaults on them, threats to the lives of Bagwell and Maude, and the stoning to death of Fr. Sheehy's executioner at Phillipstown in 1770 (238). By that stage the entire prosecution case based on the murder of Bridge was totally undermined when in 1768 one of the prosecution witnesses retracted his evidence (239). Despite the discredit engendered by the episode much of the truculent attitude displayed was perpetuated in reactions to later political events. Hewetson wrote a long memorandum in a self-important tone to Lord Townshend c.1790 in which he traced the origins and implications of the rural unrest, and posited the astounding proposition that the Rightboys were associated with the revolutionists in France. He also advocated union with Britain if the franchise was extended to catholics (240). That concession came in 1793 and the movement towards catholic relief was to sharpen the truculence of the gentry around Clonmel, thus making comprehensible the observation made of them in 1809 that 'The bigoted class of protestants are exceedingly unruly and troublesome. They have no idea of subordination and are as regardless of the law as of the rights of their fellow citizens' (241).

Moderate opinion at the time was shocked at the events of 1766. One of the patriots to whom O'Connor referred, Lord Charlemont, reacted sharply to the proceedings declaring that 'The furious and bigoted zeal with which some Protestants were activated was shocking to humanity and a disgrace to our mild religion'. Religious zeal, he claimed, had been used to advance motives of a more devious kind and the notion of a French plot was conceived in order to promote such motives (242). The liberal Lord Chesterfield, who had been lord lieutenant in Ireland in 1745-6, disbelieved the notion of a massacre



intended by catholics, the idea of French officers being dressed in white, and cautioned the bishop of Waterford, his correspondent, that 'The Papists are very quiet here because we let them alone, and therefore do not provoke them in Ireland where they are three to one' (243). Another contemporary, Charles O'Hara of Co. Sligo, voiced the view that Fr. Sheehy was guilty of murder but doubted whether proofs of a rebellion would be forthcoming and suspended judgment on the validity of the treason charge (244). O'Hara's correspondent, Edmund Burke, was interested in the episode from a personal and a political viewpoint. Burke's assistance was sought on behalf of a distant relative James Nagle of Garnvella, who conformed in December 1765 reflecting the fears current following his declaration of innocence in June 1765. Though convinced of his and the others' innocence, Burke was reluctant to take the matter outside the course of law (245). Nevertheless he was interested in the wider aspects of the case shown by the survival among his papers of copies of the petitions and dying declarations of Sheehy, Buxton, and Farrell (246). Also present there are letters to O'Hara in which Burke castigated the self-interest of the gentry who promoted the violence, and expressed his incredulity at the charges advanced by them (247).

Out of the excesses of the 1760s arose on the one hand a greater readiness by catholics to identify openly with the establishment, and on the other a protestant willingness to make concessions to catholics. Already from the 1750s a movement was taking place among catholics to devise an acceptable means of expressing their allegiance to the sovereign (248). The refusal of the pope to recognise Charles Edward as the legitimate sovereign of Britain, after the death of the old Pretender in 1766, encouraged a renewal of these attempts whereby catholics could attest their loyalty which had just been brought into question in Tipperary,

These efforts came to nothing as a draft formula for an oath was rejected by Rome in 1768. This decision was conveyed through the nuncio in Brussels who instructed the archbishops of Armagh and Dublin to inform the other bishops of the decision, which they failed to do. However the verdict was published by Thomas Burke, bishop of Ossory, as a supplement to a new edition in 1772 of his *Hibernia Dominicana*, originally published in 1762 (249). This caused a sensation among those catholics who had been working for a compromise, yet it quickened their resolve to devise an acceptable oath in which process the anglican bishop of Derry, Frederick Hervey, played a leading role



(250). An oath was embodied in an act of parliament (13, 14 Geo.III c.35) which received the royal assent in June 1774. The oath formally denied the more extreme papal doctrine especially the pope's claim to exercise temporal power and to excommunicate rulers and have them deposed or murdered by subjects. At this point a division arose in the Irish episcopate between those who judged the oath acceptable and those who did not.

Significantly the movement to advance acceptance of the oath was foremost in Munster where the excesses of the 1760s were centred. In September 1774 James Butler assumed office as the new archbishop of Cashel. He viewed the oath as legitimate and in this was supported by his suffragan bishops. What hastened Butler's favour towards the oath was the background of sectarian tension in the 1760s and the renewal of whiteboy violence in the early 1770s, particularly during 1775 when the unrest became more violent marked by an upsurge in arms attacks. Such events created the context out of which the tensions of the 1760s might be repeated so that Butler was keen to display catholic loyalty openly. Indicative of this is Butler's staunch defence of his brother, Robert Butler's, spirited action in organising resistance to the Whiteboys at Ballyragget, Co. Kilkenny in February 1775, which served to allay government suspicions of catholic complicity or apathy (251). In the course of the following months Butler took steps to establish the acceptability of the taking of the oath.

Firstly, he submitted the oath to the scrutiny of the theologians of the Sorbonne who in March declared that it could be taken by Irish catholics without danger to their religion (252). Secondly, having obtained this clarification Butler convened a meeting of the Munster bishops at Cork where on 15 July 1775 they adjudged the oath as containing nothing contrary to the catholic religion (253). This unprecedented declaration was later to bring Butler into conflict with Rome. In his defence he argued that the particular situation in Munster, where government blamed the clergy for the rural unrest, required that the clergy prove their loyalty. The necessary delay in getting Rome's decision in the matter could have proven fatal (254). Butler's action was a critical move as it showed the willingness, indeed urgency, with which the southern bishops wished to advance the taking of the oath even without the consent of the other bishops and without Rome's prior approval. The third action taken by Butler was to arrest the damage done by the re-issuing of Hibernia Dominicana. The Munster Bishops took the radical step of



entering Burke's Ossory diocese in order to make him retract, but he protested at this intrusion and they withdrew (255). They re-assembled at Thurles where on 20 July they issued a strong condemnation of Burke's work as tending to weaken the allegiance due to the king, as causing controversy among catholics, and as providing an instrument to ascribe disloyalty to catholics (256). These actions by Butler opened the way for catholics to accept the oath at least in Munster. In August 1775 a group of Tipperary catholics said to be 'most respectable' took the oath in Clonmel (257). Such an open display of loyalty just when the American war of independence was beginning and when the Irish parliament was due to re-assemble, was timely.

Archbishop Butler issued an instruction to the people and clergy in October 1775 condemning the Whiteboys, declaring excommunicate all those who assisted them, and ordering all stolen arms to be returned (258). This appeal was to no avail as the violence continued unabated culminating in the atrocious murder of Ambrose Power of Barrettstown in late November (259). Power was a member of the grand jury which had convicted Fr. Sheehy in 1766. His murder caused alarm. A report from Clonmel to Sir Edward Newenham (who was foreman of the Co. Dublin grand jury which sent the congratulatory address to the Tipperary gentry in 1766), in the wake of the murder shows that some persons viewed the Whiteboys as a cover movement to arm catholics and feared a massacre of protestants would be the result (260). This context provided the stimulus for the widespread taking of the oath at Clonmel, Carrick, Cahir, Cashel, Fethard and Thurles in the first three weeks of December (261). With 368 subscribers including gentry, clergy, farmers, and the mercantile class Tipperary had the largest number per county in Ireland (Table LXVIII). The oath-takers came from about 60 locations throughout the county but were concentrated in Iffa and Offa, Middlethird, Slievardagh, and Eliogarty. This was broadly in a region from south of Cahir to north of Thurles, the region where the catholic interest was strongest. Together the landed interest and the catholic commercial interest in the towns were emerging as a middle class which was to be the most articulate group outside parliament in the furtherance of catholic relief (262).

The taking of the oath was voluntary. While no formal relaxation of the penal laws resulted from its taking and while papal disapproval delayed its universal acceptance, it created a favourable climate for concessions. The Mathews also re-emerged to political



prominence . It was their championing of the catholic cause, in alliance with the catholic interest and a group of liberal protestants, which was to characterise political developmant locally for the remainder of the century and beyond. In 1768 Francis Mathew, son of the defeated candidate of 1761, was elected, re-elected in 1776, and was sheriff in 1769 (263). In parliament he voted in favour of pro-catholic measures in the 1770s, while his fellow MP Sir Thomas Maude, a leader of the faction in the 1760s, was said to be 'diametrically opposite to him in his parliamentary conduct' (264). Most members for the county and its boroughs were opposed to relief at this time (265). O'Callaghan's opposition was to alter with a new generation from the mid-1770s, a process aided by Cornelius O'Callaghan's marriage into the Ponsonbys in 1774 and by his desire for a peerage. To Mathew, O'Callaghan, and Hely-Hutchinson who favoured relief was to be added Prittie. By the early nineteenth century the political leadership of the northern protestants had shifted on the catholic issue. This shift was partly influenced by Prittie's opposition to Bagwell. In turn Bagwell's political isolation was reflected in defence of the gentry around Clonmel (266).

The first sign of concession came with an act of 1772 (11, 12 Geo.III c.21) which allowed catholics to take 61-year leases of bogland. The 1770s was also marked by continued agitation over quarterage. Despite the fact that draft quarterage bills were prepared in 1767, 1771, 1773, and 1778 the tax never received the legislative sanction which had been sought by the corporations. Clonmel petitioned in 1768 and 1774 seeking confirmation in law of the tax, and support for quarterage was stipulated in an address by the freeholders to the two county MPs in 1773 (267). Interestingly the Clonmel petitions continued to associate the agitation over quarterage with sympathy for whiteboyism. The ultimate success of the catholic mercantile lobby on the issue was a significant milestone.

The lessons of the American war had parallels in Ireland particularly in relation to catholics. The government came to accept that concessions would be opportune from a security viewpoint. Public opinion was also moving in this direction, instanced by the views of Edmund Burke and the comments of G.E.Howard in his collection of cases under the penal laws published in 1775 (268). The outcome of pressure from Britain on the Irish parliament was the act of 1778 (17,18 Geo.III c.49), which removed the most severe of the resrtrictions imposed by the acts of 1703 and 1709 on leasing and



inheritance. The 31-year stricture on leases was repealed as was the requirement of descent in gavelkind, and also the method whereby the conformity of the eldest son made the parent tenant for life (269). These concessions, particularly that relating to leases, proved important locally. Among those who supported the bill were Mathew and O'Callaghan, while its opponents included the Pennefathers, Prittie, John Toler, and G.M. Coote (270).

Only those who took the oath of allegiance could benefit from the act of 1778, and again Tipperary catholics subscribed enthusiastically. At Clonmel in September 1778 it was reported that 'upwards of 600' persons took it in one day at the assizes (271). Nationally within the first year of the act's operation over 6,500 persons took the oath and in the period 1778-92 the national total exceeded 12,000 (272). Apart from Dublin city, where particular circumstances prevailed, those qualifying under the act were most numerous in Munster. The official returns put the total of oath-takers in Tipperary in 1778-92 at 730, but if those with addresses in the county who took it elsewhere are included the figure was over 900 (Table LXIX). Occupational or social status is not ascribed in over half (455) of this total because only the surnames and not necessarily occupations or even addresses were required to be recorded (Table LXX) (273). For this reason the large number of persons with unspecified occupations or status included gentlemen and esquires like John Baldwin (Cahir), Peter Dalton (Grenanstown), Thomas Lanigan (Castle Fogarty), Thomas McCarthy (Springhouse), Edward Mandeville, Sause, Scullys, Sheehys, Woulfe and others. From those who specified their status an indication can be had of the politically responsive catholics. They included Lord Cahir, Count Christopher Dalton (Grenanstown), Murtough O'Brien-Butler (Bansha), Richard Doherty (Loughloher), John Galway (Carrick), William Meagher (Toureen), Denis Meagher (Ballymorris), Denis and George Ryan (Inch).

The large number of farmers (190) is to be noted as it was the group within the catholic middle interest which would benefit from the relaxation of the 31-year lease restriction. Farmers were earliest to subscribe to the act with 33 recorded in 1778-9 alone and there must have been many more in the unspecified category. This is certainly the case if one compares the number of farmers (312) who took the oath to qualify under the 1793 act (Table LXXI). There may have been pressure to take the oath in some areas. Thus the only concentrations of oath takers outside the towns are at Barnane (15),



Templemore (13), and Templee (13) on the Carden estate, and of the total for these three centres 24 were farmers. To the wealthy and numerous catholic landed class was added the articulate clergy (23) and the mercantile and service sectors in the towns. These classes together constituted those who would gain most from the 1778 act. They formed the politically conscious grouping in catholic society pressing for social and economic advantages. Outside this body were the politically unrepresented segment in urban and rural society. Significantly only one labourer declared his occupation in the list.

The new climate created by the taking of the oath of allegiance (1774) and the 1778 act was manifested in June 1779 when there was fear of a French invasion, an event which formerly had led to a degree of apprehension. On this occasion catholic gentlemen offered their services for defence to the magistrates in Clonmel and Fethard which was accepted and publicly acknowledged (274). This development was in sharp contrast to the early 1760s when a similar invasion threat had produced a contrary reaction among protestants.

Once the political climate seemed favourable catholics pressed their advantage. Already in January 1780 archbishop Butler was in contact with the speaker of the house of commons, Edmund Sexton Pery, requesting to know whether any further concessions might be forthcoming and whether a bill introduced into parliament at that point might be successful (275). Amid the conclusion of the American war in late 1781, with declarations from MPs like Peter Holmes (being a radical shift on his part), John Hely-Hutchinson (who was also advocating the admission of catholics to T.C.D. at this time), and David Walshe (Fethard) in favour of a further relaxation of the penal laws and with government support, two extra acts giving relief received the royal assent in May and July 1782 (276). The first of these (21,22 Geo.III c.24) enabled catholics who took the oath of allegiance to acquire land (except in parliamentary boroughs) on the same terms as protestants. It also recognised *de jure* what was already in existence *de facto* i.e. the open practice of the catholic religion and the validity and legality of catholic marriages. The second act (21,22 Geo.III c.62) freed catholic education from its former legal constraints and also repealed laws relating to the guardianship of children.

These concessions were important gains for catholics. Yet the forward manner in which catholics advanced their demands was productive of some hostility locally in



1780. This was directed at archbishop Butler who was prominent in the catholic cause from 1774. The basic charge against Butler was that he had used his position and family influence to advance the interests of the Catholic Church in the diocese to the detriment of the Established Church. Because of this it was reported to him that 'the established church appeared in your diocese scarcely tolerated, whilst the Church of Rome assumed uncommon usurpations in show as well as in substance' (277). This charge proceeded in large measure from particular grievances of Rev. Francis Garnett, rector of Thurles, relating to circumstances in that town. His attempt to present them in more general and seditious terms failed to convince government in the person of John Scott, attorney general, who was sympathetic to the opposite view (278). This again is in marked contrast to the situation in the 1760s when government was being informed by people like Rev. John Hewetson whose representations on the threat then current were accepted in practice. The exceptional nature of the controversy of 1780 is shown by the fact that at the funeral of Mrs. Mathew in July 1781 there was a large attendance of the nobility, gentry, volunteers, and the protestant and catholic archbishops of Cashel and their clergy (279). According to one report 'the family dissensions which for a century have divided the great people [i.e.families] of the county seemed to be buried with the body, and is an happy presage of succeeding days of peace and harmony' (280). The Mathews came to have a reconciling function between the catholic interest and an increasing body of liberal protestants. Far from being a liability, as it has been customarily interpreted, conversion proved to be a positive advantage for the family in the decades after 1770 when catholic relief measures were obtained.

In the immediate context of the controversy of 1780 relations between Butler and the new anglican archbishop of Cashel, Charles Agar (1779-1802) were good (281). This good relationship appears to have continued despite the involvement of Butler in public controversy with Agar's fellow bishop, Richard Woodward of Cloyne, in the 1780s over the latter's charge that little trust could be placed on the oath of allegiance taken by catholics (282). As a result of the 1782 measures the activities of priests became less restricted. Thus Rev. Marnane openly advertised the establishment of his school in Tipperary in November 1786, and the deaths of priests were given more regular notice in the newspapers indicating public recognition of their status in local society (283). Organisational improvement in the church continued with a general visitation held in a



Cashel diocese in 1776 and a synod in 1782 (284). The Tridentine decrees were published in Cashel in 1777 (285). The most serious problem faced by the church in the 1780s was that of the Rightboys. Butler was active in disciplining those priests who had caused much of the Rightboy resentment by exacting exorbitant fees. Firm measures were adopted at a meeting of the bishops in June 1786 to eliminate such abuses, while Butler visited two parishes (Holy Cross and Moycarkey) to personally dissuade the parishioners from becoming associated with the Rightboys (286).

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The excesses of the 1760s conditioned the response of Tipperary catholics subsequently and provided the context whereby a liberalisation of legal restrictions could proceed. However, resistance to change remained a feature of the northern political interest in the short term. Daniel Toler, for instance, resurrected the Fr. Sheehy affair in a parliamentary debate in 1787, and a more hardened attitude persisted among the gentry around Clonmel (287). This resistance carried itself forward into the crucial decade of the 1790s.



## Chapter VI

As an economic region Tipperary formed part of the extensive hinterland of the Munster port towns of Cork, Waterford, and Limerick. As the century progressed the county evolved into an important source for beef cattle required for provisioning purposes in the southern ports and this demand induced an intensification in beef production. This development was followed by the emergence of cereal production after 1770, partly in response to government policy and partly to market forces, which brought a transition to commercial grain production in certain favoured areas especially in the River Suir valley more particularly around Clonmel.

The development of cereals coincided with a decline in the textile industry at least in spinning activity. However a successful transfer of capital, resources, and entrepreneurial skills occurred between the two sectors. In the region's towns other subsidiary industrial activities developed to some extent out of the by-products of agriculture, especially in brewing, distilling, malting, and tanning. These pursuits, however, were modest in scale. Primary products like beef and grain constituted the main export items but butter, bacon and pork acquired a growing importance. Imports were mainly luxury or manufactured goods, fuel, or raw materials. Over the century the increased volume of trade was translated into physical growth of towns and changes in their functions and infrastructural character ; the multiplication of fairs ; and the evolution of credit and banking facilities. The growth of trade and output integrated the county more intimately with the market economy and in particular served to develop stronger market relationships with the port towns of Munster.

The county's economic development lay in the exploitation of its agriculture. Tipperary has a generally moderate and mild climate (1). Temperatures are moderate and, subject to local variations, average rainfall is low in the months from February to June. The relationship of the hills, notably the Silvermine Mountains, Keeper Hill, Galty Mountains, and Slievnamon, to the prevailing winds determines the pattern of rainfall. There are prolonged periods of dry weather in the March-May period, the degree of sunshine being influenced by the amount of cloud on either side of the Silvermine mountains with areas to the west being more cloudy, those to the east less so. The



lowest rainfall is in the region to the north and north west of Nenagh towards Lough Derg, and in an area stretching from north east of Thurles along the River Suir catchment area to the Galty range.

The general mildness of the county's climate is substantiated by contemporary works and comments on weather conditions (2). There were years of extremity with periods of absolute drought (1704, 1717, 1722, 1723, 1724, 1729, 1740), low rainfall (1730, 1734, 1743, 1744, 1746), wet summers (1724, 1754, 1756, 1758), floods (1744), snow (1744, 1807), and heavy frosts (1739, 1740-1). These had an effect on farming activity. The frosts of 1740-1 for instance had a decimating effect on the potato crop the failure of which, according to a Cashel correspondent in May 1741, led with the accompanying diseases to the death of at least one third of Munster's cottier population (3). However, its inland situation and its physical geography meant that Tipperary seldom experienced a season too wet or a summer too dry (4). This mildness meant that grass growth was good, and in favoured areas like the Golden Vale livestock could graze out all year.

In physical geographical terms the county is characterised by six principal divisions. The dominant region is a lowland central plain based on carboniferous limestone encompassing an area roughly within a triangle formed by the points of Thurles, Clonmel, and Tipperary. This area is drained by the River Suir and its tributaries and covers most of Eliogarty, Middlethird, Clanwilliam, and Iffa and Offa. Its western section, west of Cashel and running into east Limerick, forms the fertile grassland region of the Golden Vale. This core area is flanked by three ranges of upland or mountainous districts. On its northwestern side is the hill complex formed by the Slieve Felim, Keeper Hill, Silvermines and Devil's Bit group. This region incorporates much of Kilnamanagh, Owey and Arra, and Upper Ormond. To its south eastern side are the Slievardagh Hills and Slievnamon covering much of east Iffa and Offa and Slievardagh. On the south west side the Galty mountains project into the county from adjoining Cork and Limerick. The northern tip of the county in Lower Ormond has features such as undulating lowland and bogland which are characteristic of the great central plain of the country. Finally, a distinct area of flat to undulating lowland containing basin peat is to be found in a broad arc from north east of Cashel round to just east of Roscrea, giving eastern Ikerrin and



Eliogarty bog and moorland characteristics.

Soil type and quality are a major determinant of agricultural activity. The most extensive soil type covering the county is the grey brown podzolics found on the flat to undulating lowlands and overlaying the carboniferous limestone (5). These soils stretch from Clonmel in a broad sweep northward beyond Thurles and westward through Tipperary into Limerick. They are also extensive around Nenagh and Roscrea, and north eastwards from Thurles stretching down the boundary with Kilkenny. Broadly speaking these soils cover west Iffa and Offa, Middlethird, Clanwilliam, Ikerrin, and large areas of Lower Ormond and Eliogarty. This soil type has in agricultural terms a wide use range being alternatively capable of supporting rich grassland, as in the Golden Vale, or in other districts cereal and tillage crops. This dominant soil type has no serious limitations as regards its potential for agricultural exploitation. Its multi-purpose nature and wide usage were to be features in the agricultural changes of the eighteenth century.

This broad area of soil type is intersected and intruded upon by four areas of different soils. The first, in the south east, is the acid brown earths associated with the Slievardagh Hills and the podzolic soils found in the mountain and hill terrain east from Slievnamon, and cover much of east Iffa and Offa and Slievardagh. The second veers west of Cahir forming an area of peaty podzols and blanket peat centring on the Galty Mountains. The third comprises the complex range of hill and mountain formed by Slieve Felim, Silvermines, Keeper Hill, and Devil's Bit group. This area has a mixture of soil types but is dominated by peaty podzols, brown earths, and gleys which are characteristic of mainly upland areas. They cover the major part of Upper Ormond, Ileagh, and Kilnamanagh. Finally, immediately north of Thurles stretching about half way to Roscrea is an area of gley soils, while east of the town there is a parallel area which has basin peat as its principal soil. These four areas possess limitations deriving from their soil type which make their range of agricultural uses more restricted than the main soil type area (6).

Contemporary estimates differ as to the precise proportion of productive to marginal land in the county : an estimate of over 80% available for productive agriculture and 20% uncultivated area would be representative (7). This relative proportion accords with that obtaining in the 1840s (8). Attempting to deduce a comparison between this



mid-nineteenth century estimate of 80% cultivable, 20% uncultivable, and that obtaining in the mid-seventeenth century for the purpose of estimating the change wrought in the intervening period, is hazardous. However, the relative pattern of agricultural suitability and land use in the mid-seventeenth century was one where most of the land in Slievardagh, Iffa and Offa, Middlethird, and Clanwilliam was suitable for pasture and arable use ; that the conditions for such pursuits were less favourable in Ileagh, Owey and Arra, Kilnamanagh, Kilnalongurty, Lower Ormond, and Upper Ormond due to the presence of bogs, mountains, woods and heaths ; and that in Ikerrin and Eliogarty, in addition to these limitations, the meadow and arable ground (estimated to form one third of each) was said to be 'much spent by tillage' (9). Thus the best endowed areas for agriculture at this point were situated in the south and south east, with the proportion of unsuitability increasing as one moved northward from this zone (Table XXIII).

This broad pattern is verified by evidence showing the percentage of unprofitable land to the total area in each barony (Table XXIV), and by the acreable value of lands between the baronies (Table XXV). This evidence indicates that the average amount of unprofitable land for the entire county was over 13%, but that the highest proportions were to be found in Ikerrin, Eliogarty, and Kilnalongurty. The ratio of unprofitability decreased as one moved southward such that the amount of marginal land in Iffa and Offa was negligible, while the remaining baronies contained segments of marginal land and so were transitional between the two extremes. The average value of lands in the county stood at 17 1/2d. per acre. The highest acreable value was in Iffa and Offa but significantly it is followed by Upper Ormond, Eliogarty, Clanwilliam, and Kilnalongurty. If the 20d. value is taken as a point of distinction these five baronies exceeded the average, while the remainder were beneath it. It is evident that profitability and land values do not coincide exactly, except in the cases of Iffa and Offa and Ikerrin both representing the respective extremes.

The evidence for the seventeenth century shows a concentration on pastoral farming (10). That this continued to persist up to and beyond the mid-eighteenth century is explicable because of four factors. Firstly, economic conditions, particular market demand, and prices favoured pasturage as opposed to other agricultural activities (11). Secondly, the leasing policy pursued by landlords in the seventeenth and early eighteenth



centuries was conducive to the emergence of large scale grazing (12). Directly managed farming units devoted to pasture, with acreages of 3,000 to 6,000 and often 8,000 acres, were characteristic of parts the county in 1741, were still prevalent in the mid-1770s, and the pattern persisted into the nineteenth century (13). These large grazing farms, most characteristic of the region stretching northward from Cahir to Cashel and westward to Tipperary and on a scale unrivalled elsewhere, were partly a consequence of tenancy arrangements and partly a function of the expansion in demesne sheep farming in the late seventeenth century. In the most intense grazing area, that is northwards from Cahir to Cashel and then westwards into Limerick, the most successful large-scale graziers were those on the estates of Butler (Cahir), Mathew, Meade, Damer, Stanley and the archbishop of Cashel. Some of the tenants on these estates held under a number of different landlords which again explains the large size of grazing farms. Many of these head tenants were catholic, indeed persons like McCarthy, Keating, Doherty, and Scully were the most extensive graziers in the region. Grazing admitted of an easy investment (14). For instance, McCarthy's stock in 1776 was valued at £20,000, and Scully's stock for the 1781 season was bought at a cost of £6,985 (15). After the relief acts of 1778 and 1782 and the tenancy act of 1780 catholics took extra leases, stocked such grounds, and availed of the favourable demand of the period 1783-1815 (16). Thus these large catholic tenants, far from indicating the detrimental effects of penal legislation, are witness to the fact that the massive head tenant accumulation of land could be preserved and even added to.

Thirdly, an important inducement to the maintenance of the grazier system was the fact that pasture lands were tithe free. This exemption came into practice in 1735 (at a time when cattle and beef prices were beginning to show an upturn), and it received formal sanction in law in 1800 (17). This tithe exemption re-inforced the grazing system. Finally, the system allowed for large profits which were primarily responsible for making up head rents. Even with the existence of a guaranteed market for grain between 1758 and 1797 due to the subsidy system, the swing to corn was mainly among small or medium sized farmers and not among the large graziers. Thus the agent for the Stanley estate remarked in October 1773 that 'we have some people under £2,000 a year rent and higher on those sort of lands and who have not so much trouble as a plow (sic) farmer of



£300 -- all they do is buy in stock, graze (?) or rear them, and sell out when the markets answer' (18).

Thus it is apparent that the structure of agricultural activity in Tipperary was a two-tiered one. On the one hand there was a system of extensive demesne farming by landowners and large head tenants who engaged in pastoral activity. Adherence to this grazing system was re-inforced by the economic environment, tenurial preferences, and tithe exemption. The direct management of farms was a barrier to agricultural innovation and was one slow to respond to economic incentives particularly the conversion of lands for cereals. This latter, on the other hand, became the activity associated with the farmer.

From the Restoration to the 1770s sheep farming was the dominant activity in Tipperary both within agriculture as a whole and within the grazing sector itself (19). Sheep declined in importance in the period 1780-1815 due to the emergence of arable farming as a profitable enterprise, but their significance in the local economy was renewed after 1815. Tipperary was engaged both in the breeding and fattening of sheep. The sheep system as it developed in the county was two-tiered : firstly, lambs were bred until they were three year old wethers, fattened and sold in October, while the ewe lambs were fattened to replace the older ewes which were sold off ; and secondly, part of the stock of fat wethers were winter-fed for disposal on the Dublin market as mutton the succeeding Spring (20). This dual system ensured that the two elements which determined whether sheep farming was to be profitable, i.e. an adequate lambing percentage and a ewe replacement strategy, were present. Thus the arrangement of a flock of 2,500 sheep in Tipperary in the 1770s was such that there was an average lambing percentage of 20% and an annual replacement level of 250 on old ewes, and so in proportion to larger flocks (21).

Cattle and sheep were grazed together. This was a beneficial system resulting in higher lamb and cattle growth rates and higher output per farm, and the rise in cattle numbers reflected some degree of intensification in farming from earlier decades when sheep predominated even more markedly (22). Something of the ratio of cattle to sheep is indicated in the case of Keating of Garranlea in 1767 with 11,000 -- 13,000 sheep, 3,000 ewes, 200 rams, and 3,000 -- 4,000 cattle of all types ; Doherty of Kedragh in 1769 with 9,400 sheep and 880 cattle ; Alleyn of Golden in 1776 with 2,500 sheep and



120 bullocks ; and McCarthy in the same year with 10,000 sheep and lambs, and 1,310 cattle of all types (23). These examples give a stocking ratio of cattle to sheep of 1 : 4.3 (Keating), 1 : 10.6 (Doherty), 1 : 20.8 (Alleyn), and 1 : 7.6 (McCarthy), giving a cumulative average for all four of 1 : 11. Sheep flocks tended to be large . In the 1770s Alleyn maintained 2,000 sheep besides lambs on 1,200 acres ; McCarthy kept 10,000 sheep (including 2,000 lambs ) on 9,000 acres ; and Keating had 16,300 sheep on 13,800 acres (24). They were among the very large sheep graziers who were able to achieve a stocking level of 5 sheep per acre on the rich lands of Clanwilliam and Middlethird, whereas in north Tipperary this ratio fell to 1 sheep per acre (25). Total flock numbers emphasised the difference in intensification between the two regions. In the north flocks ranged in size from 100 to 2,000 sheep (Gloster), 1,500 sheep to 1,000 acres (Johnstown), to 400 sheep (Derry), with few large flocks in Owney and Arra (26). Flocks were larger and the system more intense in the south.

An integral component of the sheep system was the sending of part of the flocks for the winter period to farms in east Limerick rented by the Tipperary graziers for the purpose. Thus the Spring lambs were sent to the east Limerick farms in October and maintained there until the ensuing May when they were returned to the Tipperary home farms fattened (27). Some of the main sheep farmers rented large holdings in Limerick for this purpose : John Keating of Garranlea held over 2,000 acres there in 1767, and Richard Doherty of Kedragh had over 1,600 acres in 1769 (28).

Important improvements in the breed of sheep took place in the late eighteenth century. The native Irish sheep were of small stature and their wool growth small, but their crossing with the imported Leicester breed enhanced the quality of the stock overall improving its size and its wool type. The credit for the introduction of new breeds in the county devolves on Dexter of Cullen , who was agent or steward on the Maude estate in the 1770s and who also gave his name to a new breed of cattle (29). Maude encouraged the replacement of his sheep stock in favour of the Leicester strain, as did his relative Moore of Marlfield who by c.1760 was importing Leicester rams (30). Once established the new breed came into demand and the letting out of Leicester rams for breeding purposes became a specialist activity in some areas especially under Dexter's auspices in Clanwilliam, in the north east of the county around Urlingford, and in the Slievardagh



Hills (31). In the north of the county Johnston of Derry between 1765 and 1777 imported over 185 rams and 370 ewes from England at a cost of £6,660, which he sold at various locations (including Clonmel, Slevire, Ballinasloe) and to individuals (e.g. Richard St. George and Charles Walsh of Derrylahan), in order to disseminate the new breed. It was claimed by Johnston that on the basis that one ram produced 30 lambs in a season his had produced 27,300 in a six year period 1765-71(32). He claimed that sheep from his new strain were larger in size, gave a greater quantity of wool and tallow, and obtained a higher price on the Dublin market as mutton (33). Individual sheep masters also undertook the direct importation of new breeds : John Hemphill of Golden paid 60 guineas in 1779 for a ram of Robert Bakewell of Leicester ; in 1791 Sir William Barker purchased 2 rams from Chaplin of Lincolnshire ; and in 1792 Scully of Kilfeacle sent his son to purchase sheep from Bakewell (34). By the early nineteenth century the Leicester breed were in general use though they were then supplemented by some further new strains notably the Merino and South Down breeds introduced by Lord Lismore in 1810 and 1813 (35).

The most intense sheep grazing district was contained within the area comprising the country between Cullen-Thurles-Callan-Clonmel, with its western point extending into Limerick and its eastern into Kilkenny. From the 1770s, with the expansion of grain production around Clonmel, the southern tip of the sheep region was made to recede, the shift being most noticeable between Clonmel and Cashel (36). The baronies of Upper and Lower Ormond were the most important sheep areas in the north where the sheep were maintained for breeding purposes mainly. The movement out of sheep in its formerly established areas continued in the early nineteenth century shown by the pattern of distribution in sheep numbers (Table XXXIX). From this table it is evident that the two Ormond baronies were by then the most important sheep areas with Iffa and Offa West, while the movement out of sheep is evident in the comparatively lower numbers in Iffa and Offa East, Clanwilliam, Middlethird, and Eliogarty where sheep grazing had formerly been strongest.

Commercially sheep were valued for their wool and meat. Mutton was an important commodity in the home market and Tipperary was a supplier of mutton to Dublin in the spring (37). Sheep were also despatched to Cork butchers (38). The main commercial



item from sheep was their wool which went to serve the domestic woollen industry in the county (39).

In the grazier system the broad pattern of movement was from the small farmers of the west of Ireland who passed on their reared cattle to the store breeders of the south, the stock being subsequently fully fattened and finished by the large farmers of the east. In Tipperary the system in its most characteristic form involved the purchase of young bullocks at the major fair of Ballinasloe and the more local fairs of Banagher, Newport, and Toomavara in September -- November. In this way north Tipperary and adjacent areas of Offaly developed as a feeding or store supply region serving the local fairs (Table XXXII and Maps I-IV), where the graziers from the south assembled to buy (40). Indeed so well known did this function become that cattle from the region were labelled 'Ormond stores' (41). Such stock, maintained initially on coarse ground, were kept on hay until the following May when they were put out on grass for the summer and fattened up. Contracts with the butchers in the ports of Cork, Limerick, and Waterford were made in July - August, and the fattened stock came to market from September to December. Subsidiary to this main activity the practice was to buy in six month old bull calves in September / October, feed them with grass and hay over the winter months, and sell them the following May and June. On those parts of the farm where such bull calves were not kept, sheep were substituted. A fourth system linked with cattle grazing was the practice of purchasing old cows in the March - June period, fattening them up and selling them (42).

Improvements in cattle breeds enhanced the value and saleability of stock and, in consequence, the profit margins of graziers. This did not take place to a marked degree until the 1760s. For ten years after 1765 Thomas Johnston of Derry introduced at great expense breeds from England, and by 1775 500 - 600 of his new cattle were in circulation (43). He claimed that they were superior in quality and size and produced better beef, hides, and tallow (44). Similarly Sir Cornwallis Maude imported a Bakewell bull (45). Despite this introduction of new strains by a select number of landlords, the dominant breed of cattle continued to be the long horned or lowland breed of the native Irish type (46).

The county then was primarily a fatstock region, its products being directed towards



the beef export trade. Before the passing of the Cattle Acts (1666-7) the emphasis in Ireland was on the raising of lean cattle for export to England for fattening. From the time the acts became operational up to 1758-9 when they were suspended, Irish cattle and beef were excluded from the English market. This loss, however, was compensated for by the development of the specialist needs of the colonial market, the victualling requirements of armies and navies, and the Continental demand. Cattle numbers all over Munster increased in the 1760s with Tipperary noted for bullocks, sheep, and dairy cows (47). The perception locally was that the suspension of the Cattle Acts would not lead to any upsurge in live cattle exports. One visitor to the county c.1760 enquired what effect the suspension of the act had and he was told : 'none at all for that in the whole Kingdom, at least their part of it, there was scarce any [i.e.live cattle] exported' (48). In fact the boom in colonial demand made the repeal of the Cattle Acts unimportant. It is clear that Tipperary graziers remained in the beef sector. Beef exports to England

quadrupled in the period 1770-1800 by which date it was the main export market, surpassing those of the Continent and the colonies which declined in importance after 1780 (49).

Cork, Waterford, and Limerick were the main ports for the disposal of cattle from Tipperary. All the leading Cork firms and contractors purchased bullocks there. Before the shift to arable in south Tipperary after 1770 beef cattle were still being supplied from that area to Cork firms (50). In the main grazing area where fattening remained predominant, Scully of Kilfeacle supplied orders to the Cork firms of Lawton, Coppinger, Benson, Ferguson, Sadlier, Cuthbert and Hare, Wood and Mee, Roche and Atkins (51). There was a preference among graziers to dispose of their cattle to Cork dealers because prices were more generally favourable there, payment was more prompt, and there was an assured demand with government contracts for the army and navy (52). This dependence on the Cork market was emphasised at the time of the embargo on the export of provisions in the late 1770s. It prevented feeders in Tipperary disposing of their fat cattle and in turn made them unable to purchase new stock from the rearers because of accommodation problems, and also because the bar on trade denied them the funds to make such purchases. A credit crisis developed whereby the Cork merchants could not purchase new consignments from the Tipperary graziers until their existing



beef stocks were disposed of, which was prevented by the embargo (53). The crisis created by the embargo was temporary the beef trade usually benefiting from war time demand or anticipation of it. In 1790 for instance speculation among the Cork merchants of an expected war with Spain caused them to buy up several hundred head of cattle in Tipperary and other counties for a ten day period in May (54).

Individual consignments of cattle were large, those of Scully to Cork in select years being 108 (1772), 570 (1782), 810 (1792) and 509 (1802), and others also filled large orders on a regular basis (55). Profits on the sale of stock could be considerable. This was because, though the price of stock to the grazier displayed an upward trend after 1770, the sale prices obtained for beef were sufficient to give him a good and sustained profit margin (Table XXXIV). The profit levels to be had for stock increased in the period. For the early period the profits gained by a grazier from Kilnamanagh were continuous from the late 1730s except in two years : 1744 when there was a murrain of cattle, and 1752 (Table XXXIII). Between 1738 and 1767 the level of profit grew almost fifteen times from £27 to £400. This demonstrates the return achievable by a small scale grazier at a time of growing demand. The profit margins of the larger grazier were substantially higher. Thus Scully in November 1781 disposed of stock at Cork at £7. 5s. each which he had purchased for £4. 5s. ; in 1785 stock bought for £4 each were sold for £7. 12s. 6d. ; and in 1790 his profit per beast in Cork was £5. 14s., in 1792 £5. 10s. (56). When translated into total sums these amounts gave a substantial return even allowing for foddering and other costs. Thus in 1775 Scully calculated that his total revenue from beef sales would be £3,700 ; in 1783 his revenue from beef alone was expected to be £5,520 ; in 1787 it was £6,500 out of a total projected revenue from livestock sales of £9,400 ; and by 1798 revenue from beef was expected to reach £12,000 (57). Thus Scully achieved a threefold increase in revenue from beef sales over a twenty three year period. It is not apparent how typical he was. Demand for beef between 1770 and 1815 was sufficiently consistent for most Tipperary suppliers to benefit, though in different degrees depending on the scale and extent of their operations, their location, their contacts in trade, and their business acumen.

Dairying was not an enterprise engaged in to any large extent by landowners, gentry or large grazier tenants. Thus the nominal stocks of cows maintained by people in the



grazing region like McCarthy (80 cows), Alleyn (40), and Maude (12) were either for their own use or for letting in small numbers to tenants, rather than for their own active commercial exploitation (58). Large graziers were not primarily involved in promoting dairying; rather what cows they kept were for convenience, calving, or fattening. That dairying was not the primary agricultural enterprise is emphasised by the function and character of the fairs in the county which was to transfer surplus young stock from dairying and rearing regions outside the county for fattening within it (59).

Since the lowland pastures were devoted exclusively to dry cattle and sheep, dairying became a family enterprise conducted by dairymen and smallholders. This made good sense since dairying fitted into the economic organisation of the small farm because of the moderately intensive production per acre involved, the regular income provided, and the availability of cheap family labour (60). Thus dairy farms were found in upland and mountainous areas and in pockets of less well endowed ground within grazing districts themselves which, because of their light soil and poor growth, made them unsuitable for cattle fattening. For the smallholder ground, usually of 1 or 1 1/2 acres with a cabin and two cows, let in the 1770s at rents varying from £3 and £4. 10s. in the Ormond baronies to £6. 2s. between Golden and Clonmel, to £8. 8s. 3d. in Clanwilliam, the most intense grazing area (61). Cows kept by such smallholders provided milk for family needs and a valuable income in the form of butter (varying between areas but about 1 cwt. per annum), and skimmed milk for areas adjacent to towns and, in their absence, a calf or calves (valued at 2s. 6d. to 3s. in the mid-1770s) (62). Possession by cottiers, landholding labourers and smallholders of such an income generating resource as cows, marked them off from the landless labourers or *spailpini* some of whom hired out their labour, and others who rented grassland for potatoes, but neither of whom could because of lack of resources secure land with cows. On the whole dairying was characteristic of smallholders located in the hilly and upland areas.

It was an important enterprise for smallholders near towns particularly if such centres adjoined hill or upland regions. Tipperary town thus developed as a centre in a dairying region lying as it did between the Galty Mountains to the south and the Slieve Felim range to the north ; so also did Cashel as it lay on the western extremity of the Slievardagh Hills ; while Fethard and Mullinahone were significant subsidiary centres



for this reason also. The practice of landlords letting out cows to dairymen for an annual cash or butter rent, extensive in Cork, Kerry, and Waterford, may have developed to a moderate extent near such centres, and their scale of dairy operations was more considerable than that of the smallholders already described. For instance in 1782 Robert Scott advertised the letting of 20 cows to a dairyman near Cashel ; some land on the Stanley estate near Tipperary was described in 1774 as suitable for dairying ; and land advertised on the Butler (Cahir) estate, at the eastern foot of the Galty Mountains, in the 1760s and 1770s had a similar suitability (63). Dairying advanced to a greater extent in the extreme south east of the county largely as an extension of the activity from south Kilkenny (barony of Iverk) and Waterford from the 1750s. This was because of the town demand for milk and milk products in Carrick and Clonmel, and because of the demand from butter merchants in Waterford (64). A valuable dairyman lease from the region in 1755 involving the letting of 115 acres with 30 cows suggests that the initial expansion in dairying here was financed (in terms of land and cows) by town merchants who were also head tenants to outlying lands (65). Dairying remained resilient in this area with dairies of 200 milch cows being the average around Carrick in 1814, and a survey of Clonmel in 1813 reported that 'A great part of the parish is pasture ground the farmers, especially those near the town, depending mostly on dairies for making their rents' (66). Indeed by that stage both towns had become important butter exporting centres through Waterford.

There was a large export trade in butter through Cork, Limerick, and Waterford supplying the English and colonial markets. There had been a dependence on the French market in the late seventeenth century but this was subject to fluctuation and became restricted from the 1730s. Butter exports to Spain and Portugal remained important, however, largely for re-export to their colonies. In the 1780s an expanding demand for butter in the English market meant that this market came to dominate the Irish butter trade subsequently (67). Information as to the volume of Tipperary's contribution to this trade is slight. In 1766 Walter Woulfe of Carrick supplied Dominick Farrell of Waterford with 45 casks of butter (68). In 1791-2 under half the amount of butter -- 7,337 casks out of a total of 17,955 -- supplied to a large firm of Waterford butter exporters came from merchants in four Tipperary towns (69). The 7,337 casks were valued at the considerable



sum of £29,317 being consigned from Carrick, Clonmel, Cashel, and Tipperary (Table XXXVIII). These butter purchases were made by the merchants from the farmers in their localities between whom and the exporters in the port they acted as intermediaries (70). The four centres named represent the points around which dairying was most prevalent at this stage. In fact Clonmel and Carrick grew to be major butter exporting centres by the early nineteenth century with 60,000 to 70,000 firkins being disposed of in the former's market in the 1820s (71). A large part of this trade consisted of butter redirected from Limerick where beamage rates were high and from districts like Fermoy avoiding Cork where there was a requirement that the butter be in firkins of Cork manufacture (72). These factors explain the redirection of the butter via the markets at Clonmel and Carrick to Waterford where no stipulation requiring the firkins to be of local manufacture existed. A large proportion of the butter passing through both centres had its origins outside the county, so that the large volume of trade in butter is not an accurate index of local production levels.

Pig rearing developed as an enterprise in dairying areas. It had certain advantages as a source of income. Its main one was that the return was likely to be more immediate since pigs accumulated body fat early in life and therefore showed a greater capacity to achieve earlier maturity than cattle or sheep. Given that the pig's capacity for rapid growth and fattening was high, the rate of capital turnover was correspondingly accelerated. Secondly, pig culture lent itself readily to being a small, easily managed enterprise absorbing surplus family labour. Thirdly, the feeding requirements of pigs were supplied from the by-products of the farm, especially whey, skimmed milk, and potatoes so that little extra cost was incurred for feeding stuffs. These advantages made pig-owning a viable cash pursuit for smallholders and small farmers. The result was that pig ownership became widely diffused throughout the county especially in Iffa and Offa West, Clanwilliam, and Slievardagh which were strong dairying areas. Conversely its relative unimportance in large grain producing districts notably Iffa and Offa East, centring on Clonmel, is notable (Tables XL, XLII).

Pig breeding developed in dairying areas because the dairyman kept pigs in order to consume the waste products of the dairy. He generally sold the litter from his breeding sows to the cottiers and labourers who fattened them up for about six months when they



were sold to bacon curers. The sale of a pig became an important source of income for the peasantry as it made a significant contribution to paying the annual rent. A typical cottier in west Tipperary in the mid-1770s derived his income from labour and the sale of commodities (a pig, poultry, a calf, and butter). Of the disposable items the sale of a pig, bought for 7s. and sold for 47s., brought in a profit of £2 equivalent to 12.8% of total income. For a peasant at Gloster (over the border from north Tipperary) the percentage was 7.5%, at Johnstown it was 21% and at Derry 6% (73). Income from pigs thus made a substantial contribution to cottier rents just as cattle and sheep made up grazier rents.

Profitability from pigs was enhanced by improvements in breeds. The native Irish breed of pig was ungainly in size and aspect. The introduction of Berkshire and Hampshire strains had the effect of shortening the period of maturity, so that such breeds fattened quicker and so were ready for slaughter earlier. Thomas Johnston of Derry introduced the Hampshire breed in the north of the county and by the mid-1770s about 6,000 of the breed were diffused through the countryside (74). Maude at Dundrum brought the Berkshire strain to his estate and fed them in clover which was an innovation in the Irish context given the established preference for farm by-products (75). A relation of Maude's, Stephen Moore of Marlfield, also had the Berkshire breed and also adopted a novel feeding system in that he fed his pigs entirely on bran, the residue of grain separated from flour after grinding, which he had in plentiful supply from his large Marlfield mill (76). These new breeds had a beneficial effect.

After the spread of dairying from mid-century pig ownership became more common and an active trade in pigs evolved. Thus in west Tipperary stretching into east Limerick the numbers of pigs had greatly increased by the 1770s and an important twice yearly pig fair in April and June developed in Cullen (77). Pig ownership also increased among cottiers in north Tipperary by the 1770s where the demand from Limerick port was an influential factor (78). Similarly in the extreme south east corner of the county pig fattening developed as an adjunct to the spread of dairying and the demand for pig products in Waterford port. Such demand was created by the need for salted pork in the British plantations. The pork trade through Waterford catered for the specialist needs of the Newfoundland market (79). Towards the end of the century a decline in pork exports was linked to the growth in demand for bacon in the English domestic market (80).



Waterford was supplied with pigs from south Tipperary and the barony of Iverk in Co. Kilkenny. By the early nineteenth century Carrick and Clonmel had emerged as important despatching points in the pig export trade. An estimated 12,00 pigs were slaughtered in Clonmel in 1808, while the volume of pig meat and pig by-products being processed at Carrick was substantial as the following figures indicate (81) :

	<u>Nov.1812 - Nov.1813</u>	<u>Nov.1814 - Nov. 1815</u>
Bacon (flitches)	39,406	37,502
Lard (cwt.)	1,482	1,394
Pork (tierces)	101	150
Pork (barrels)	163	150

This volume of trade indicates that the increase in pig rearing from mid-century, sustained by high prices for pigs, provided smallholders with an added cash income (Table XLIII).

The growth in the livestock trade integrated the internal economy of the county as the number of new fairs grew. The low density of fairs in the seventeenth century is indicative of the county's underdevelopment in that period (82). Table XXXII and Maps I-IV show the pattern in the number and location of fairs subsequently. In 1685 the chief fair centres were at Cashel, Clonmel, Holy Cross, and Tipperary. The slow growth and poor demand of the early eighteenth century are seen in the meagre increase of only two new fairs between 1685 and 1723 and in the concessions which the proprietors of fairs had to offer, for instance the corporation of Cashel in 1721 ruled that its twice yearly fair would be custom free for three years thereafter (83). Nevertheless two new fairs at Dundrum and Clerihan illustrate a trend away from the south into the northern half of the county reflecting the growth in demand for cattle from there. This trend was re-inforced in the 1720s and 1730s with the upsurge in demand for cattle in those decades. By 1732 11 new foundations are on record and a further 8 sites by 1743. The direction of new fairs by 1732 was northward with foundations at Borrisokane, Borrisoleigh, Nenagh, Toomavara, and Silvermines ; and by 1743, though new fairs were widely spread, there was a certain concentration of new points west of Cashel like Galbally, Golden, and



Kilfeacle, these adding to the already large number of fair locations in west Tipperary and east Limerick. The pace in the establishment of fairs continued between 1743 and 1760 with 11 new foundations on record for that period. From this the implication is that fair centres were responding to the pattern of demand with modifications being undertaken as at Kilfinnane in east Limerick in 1750 when the fair green had to be enlarged to accommodate the growing number of cattle being brought for disposal there (84). The most significant new fair founded at this time was that at Newport.

The most active periods in the establishment of new fairs were the 1720s, 1730s, and 1760s. Thereafter two trends are evident : the pace of foundation decelerated so that by 1815 no new fairs were being founded, and although the number of fairs being held grew from 101 (1760) to 125 (1788) to 155 (1815), these were being conducted at a static or declining number of centres. Even the new centres established in the late eighteenth century e.g. Templetuohy, display a northern orientation or were on landlord sponsored sites in marginal areas within the existing catchment area e.g. New Bermingham. The trend is further confirmed by the location of fairs held over a number of days. Thus Castle Otway had a two day fair twice yearly in April and September, and Templemore held two three day wool fairs in July. Cahir apart, these were the only centres where fairs were conducted over a number of consecutive days.

The consequence of this was that a section of the business in the fairs shifted northward away from the southern centres. The shift to cereals in the south contributed to this, an index of its effects being the complaint of distress among the coopers in Waterford at the lack of supply of cattle (for which they made casks following slaughter) from Tipperary and elsewhere because of the conversion of lands to tillage (85). This trend influenced local fairs. In 1784 it was said of the twice yearly (May and November) fairs in Clonmel that they had been 'for some years past much neglected', while in 1787 it was reported that the Cashel fairs in September and November were 'not being of late much attended' (86). In both cases efforts were made by the corporations to revive the attendance of buyers and farmers by offering free tolls and customs for three years, free passage for cattle through approaching turnpike gates, free grazing, and premiums for the most substantial purchaser and vendor (87). The revival of business in such centres had to await the sustained demand for livestock which became evident from the late



1780s. Already in 1786 the November fair in Clonmel experienced brisk demand and by 1790 the new fair at Callan in November witnessed a large number of cattle being disposed of to Cork buyers to fulfil provision contracts (88). The demand for livestock in the period 1790 - 1815 was of such an order as to increase the number of fairs held, but the number of new foundations was minimal suggesting a concentration within the existing network which had reached its maximum extension by 1800.

Some of the Tipperary fairs were specialist in function. The majority of fairs took place in the latter half of the year especially in September / October which was the period when young cattle were bought for fattening by the county's graziers from small farmers. Specialist fairs evolved at Newport and Toomavara (stores), Golden (stores and fat cattle), and Templemore (wool) (89). These fairs assumed a higher profile in the hierarchy of fairs unlike the remainder whose influence would have been local. Newport is the best documented of these specialist fairs. It developed as a meeting point for the transmission of stores from the west of Ireland particularly from Clare via Killaloe and O'Brien's Bridge, and north Tipperary to the graziers of west Tipperary and Limerick for fattening, and also for the sale of fat cattle (90). The fair had a well situated location being founded in the early 1740s as part of a landlord promoted estate village, and it received local support from 23 signatories to an advertisement (mainly rearers from the north of the county and fatteners from the centre and west), who in 1762 indicated their intention of attending it in October (91). The proprietor of the ground, Waller, agreed to provide free grass before and after the fair, premiums for the drivers of the largest number of stores and fat cattle were offered, and other inducements included the non-imposition of customs (from 1763 for two years) and by 1768 free passage of cattle through the approaching turnpikes (92). With attendance of buyer and seller being made more attractive the fair prospered from the 1760s. In 1764 over 2,000 stores were sold there yet even this number failed to satisfy the large demand from buyers (93). In 1765 over 10,000 stores were disposed of and yet again the demand went unsatisfied ; by 1768 the volume of business was so great that the fair had to be extended over two days ; and by 1775, as numbers continued to grow, a greater range of livestock were on offer (94). The evolution of Newport fair shows the importance it came to assume especially after 1760 as an exchange point for livestock servicing the needs of the county's



graziers.

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The emphasis in the county's agriculture at mid-century was largely pastoral. In 1755 the county's chief products consisted of cattle, sheep, butter, rape seed, and corn (95). In the ensuing forty years, however, cereals were to advance significantly as a cash crop in an area veering north from Clonmel, and by the 1840s the total county area devoted to crops was 30% (96). The principal cereal crops were wheat, oats, and barley (Table XLII). From mid-nineteenth century data the pattern seems to be as follows. The main wheat growing areas were located in the very south of the county from Clogheen to Carrick, in the central region focussing on Cashel and Thurles, and in the north around Nenagh. Oats, because of its adaptability in the crop rotation, was an important crop in all areas and especially in hill regions. Barley was less important in the south than wheat except in the south west around Clogheen, and there were strong barley growing areas in the centre of the county and north of Nenagh. Barley was grown to meet the needs of local distilleries and breweries, while wheat, and oats also to an extent, were almost entirely export items.

The amount of pasture would have been correspondingly greater before the mid-eighteenth century. Arable cultivation in the seventeenth century is borne witness to by the number of corn mills in the 1650s (Table XXVII), and by the fact that over half (3,812 acres) the acreage in Munster (7,373 acres) of corn detailed in the transplantation certificates of 1653-4 came from the county (97). The southern emphasis in arable cultivation is apparent from a comment c.1687 that 'The South p[ar]t is fertill (sic), full of corn and hay', and from a further observation in 1732 that 'Tipperary County, excepting ye more northern parts of it, is reckoned ye finest in ye kingdom and indeed ye large vales here presented us with more barley, flax, and potatoes than we had seen anywhere in Ireland' (98). The extent of cereal cultivation before mid-century in normal years satisfied local consumption needs and in good harvest years left a surplus for export.

The balance between pastoral and arable farming shifted as a result of the introduction of subsidies on the inland carriage of corn and flour to Dublin from 1758. The serious



food shortages experienced in the mid-1750s induced government to promote an expansion in the area under cereal crops beyond the traditional supply counties surrounding Dublin which had become exhausted through constant working. It was envisaged that counties such as Tipperary, where it was said that the land had become 'unwholesome for sheep from the length of time it has been under grazing', had extensive areas suitable for corn growing so that the time was opportune for a transition to arable on a large scale (99). An act of 1758 (31 Geo.II c.3) made provision for bounties on the conveyance of grain and flour to Dublin, and in the ensuing decades this acted as a stimulus to effect a transition to extensive cultivation of corn crops in certain favoured areas of the county.

The initial local response to the subsidy system was meagre because of the traditional reluctance to set lands to corn farmers who were normally undercapitalised and because the early 1760s saw an upsurge in livestock production (100). From the late 1760s, however, as the benefits of the system in terms of a guaranteed market and price at the local mills became evident tillage spread. In 1772 it was reported that 'The corn premiums has (sic) cutt up all the grass lands in the Golden Vales of Killcash and Limerick' (101). The ready sale and guaranteed price available at the growing number of local mills served to capitalise the farmer and lessened the reluctance of landlords to encourage corn growers. One of the instructions issued by the county's freeholders to their MPs in November 1773 was to resist demands for the removal of the bounty, stemming from the government's policy of reducing expenditure (102). This did not happen and by 1776 Tipperary was receiving 17% or £10,320 of the total subsidies paid (103). Spatially the catchment area where commercial cereal growing became most intense is defined by the distribution of flour mills, with evident concentrations around Clonmel and Fethard and along the River Suir (Map V). Something of the degree of intensification is shown by the fact that in 1788 one visitor was struck by the number of bags of wheat brought to Thurles for sale, and by 1818 that town was said to attract 1,000 cartloads of corn for sale on market day (104).

The second phase in the growth of cereal production locally came after 1790. Despite the termination of the bounty system in 1797 corn producers found a new market in the war years between 1793 and 1815 when Ireland became a granary for supplying Britain.



Complementing this external demand harvests locally were good in the the 1790s with good crops in 1790, 1791, 1794, and 1798 though bad harvests are on record for 1792, 1793, 1795, and 1799 (105). To match enhanced demand and favourable harvests prices displayed an upward movement (Table XLIII). Prices nationally rose by 50% in the decade 1792-1802 (106). Prices in the ports influenced trends in their hinterlands and the mean price of wheat rose threefold from 19s. 6d. per barrel in 1788 to 63s. in 1801 ; barley fourfold from 21s.(1788) to 70s. 6d.(1801). Overall cereal prices rose more rapidly than prices for pastoral products (107). These favourable market conditions induced a further expansion in the area devoted to cereals. In 1791 one observer claimed that the county could grow twice as much corn as it did, and in 1813 farmers sowed near double the amount of ground with corn according to one grain merchant in Clogheen (108).

The withdrawal of the subsidy system in 1797 did not have a detrimental effect on local corn producers. Tipperary had benefited substantially from the system since its introduction as it actually favoured counties at a distance from Dublin. The quaker merchants, who came to dominate the grain trade locally, had a system of family links in the ports and canal towns which facilitated the county's accessibility to external markets via the river and canal system. On the surface the halting of the bounty payments could have had serious implications locally. Pressure for change arose from Dublin interests who felt that the city's export trade languished through the absence of an export bounty comparable to that which existed in other ports. A movement for the suspension of the bounties in favour of export subsidies through Dublin arose in the early 1790s, though local interests were actively petitioning against *this* as early as 1791 (109). In 1797 an act was passed (37 Geo.III c.24) whereby from September 1797 the inland bounties were to cease and be replaced by an export bounty on corn, flour, bread and malt exported through Dublin, as was operable in other Irish ports.

The local impact of the removal of the subsidies after 1797 was not adverse its effect being softened by the vibrancy of the pastoral sector, by the relative absence of barley and malting in the county, and by the re-orientation of the trade towards exports through Waterford. Up to 1797 the internal market for grain was probably more significant than the export one. Table XXXVI shows the amounts of flour and grain conveyed to Dublin



from Tipperary in the period 1768-1794 (110). The volume of wheat showed a general decline over the period as a whole especially after the mid-1770s when it was increasingly diverted to the local flour milling concerns which were then entering upon a phase of expansion (111). Similarly there was an overall fall in the amount of bere and barley as most of the crop came to be used in the malting concerns locally, the volume of malt conveyed to Dublin displaying some increase in the period. Consignments of oats and meal to Dublin fluctuated reflecting the importance of these items in the diet of rural Ireland. Grain not utilised in the local flour mills was normally exported through Waterford and the export bounties there were availed of. The volume of Tipperary's contribution to this export trade is not readily deducible, however individual consignments could be considerable. For instance between September 1791 and May 1792 Thomas Taylor, a Clonmel corn merchant, sent 1,790 barrels of oats, 1,215 of wheat, and 200 of barley valued in all at £3,042 to a Waterford firm for export (112). The result of the termination of the subsidy system in 1797 was to transform Clonmel with Waterford close at hand into a major centre of the corn trade. Something of the volume of its trade is indicated by the amounts of oats and wheat sent down river by one of its merchant houses (113).

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The success of the grain trade was partly achieved through a transfer of capital and entrepreneurial skills from the declining textile industry. The expansion in sheep grazing during the Restoration period provided the context for a growth in wool exports and for the promotion of woollen manufacturing concerns at Carrick and Clonmel (114). This period of growth was followed by one of dislocation consequent on the disruption to economic life occasioned by the war of 1688-91, as a survey of the Ormond estate, including the above two woollen towns, shows (115). In 1692 most of Carrick was reset to protestant tenants and plans were in hand to encourage a manufactory there which suggests the degree to which the earlier concern had been reduced by war (116). The act of 1699, which prohibited the export of woollen goods from Ireland, induced manufacturers to concentrate on the home market. Carrick grew as a textile town for the supply of the domestic market. One revenue official remarked in 1733 that it was 'very



remarkable for the manufacture of rateens which is carried on in a very extensive manner' (117). At Clonmel the making of serges, camblets, and yarn was firmly established and as the assize town it became the centre where contracts were made for wool, a function it was still fulfilling in 1773 (118). Ratteen or coarse woollen cloth was worn by a wide spectrum of Irish society and was distributed to many parts particularly to the north east of the country to cater for the requirements of those in the linen manufacturing areas (119). Carrick and Clonmel were the main centres of the industry.

The woollen industry did not experience significant growth again until the 1740s from which time there was a rise in the wool supply particularly connected with worsted yarn which was combed and spun in the Suir valley. By mid-century Tipperary with Cork and Limerick were recognised as the main counties where woollen manufacturing was conducted (120). It was during this period that a number of new locations in the industry developed. At Clogheen it was reported c.1750 that O'Callaghan had 'encouraged artificers particularly manufacturers of friezes and ratteens to settle here' (121). In 1768 a Cork merchant with local interests, Richard Pope, advertised his intention of establishing a woollen manufactory at Tipperary town by offering houses and gardens on easy terms and continuous employment to wool workers who would agree to settle there (122). At Thurles in 1774 Denis Kearney advertised cabins to let in the town stressing as an inducement that it was a thriving centre of the woollen industry (123). Five years later in 1779 John Bayly was seeking combers to settle at Farneybridge near Thurles by offering accommodation, plots, and employment for 20 combers capable of working up 10,000 stones of wool (124). The industry is also known to have existed in Roscrea, Golden, Tipperary, and Cahir where Fennell maintained wool combers for a period (125). The industry thus developed at a number of minor centres in the county.

Coarse woollens or ratteens remained the main stay of the industry particularly in Carrick, but in addition from the late 1760s it expanded into broad cloth making. This development was initiated by the arrival in early 1769 of John Moore, clothier, from Dublin whence he had been induced to remove by the Dublin Society premiums for advancing broad cloth production in Carrick. He experienced some local opposition initially but later came to employ over 100 persons in his concern. Supported by premiums and a contract for the supply of clothing to the army, Moore's enterprise



achieved a good level of output in the 1770s (126). Other established manufacturers expanded their operations to include the making of broad cloth (127). Despite this diversification within the industry locally, the 1770s marked a high point indicated by the levels of employment and the degree of prosperity. These were aspects commented on by contemporaries, one remarking in 1776 that 'the manufacture increases and is very flourishing', and another in 1778 that ratteen making was conducted 'in great abundance and give[s] a flourishing air to this part of the country' (128). From the early 1780s, however, difficulties were experienced in the industry which in combination led to its ultimate decline. Four elements contributed to this : raw material ; organisational aspects ; new technology ; and imports.

The industry was affected by a decline in the supply of its basic raw material, wool. This trend was evident as early as 1760 when one visitor to the county commented that 'another reason they give for the dearness of wool is that there are not so many sheep breed (sic) in Ireland as formerly, the breeding and feeding of horn[e]d cattle being more profitable' (129). There was a contraction in sheep grazing in the county in the last three decades of the century as pasture lands were increasingly devoted to cattle fattening and as the spread of corn cultivation took place. Indicative of the shift was the foundation of a six-day wool fair in July at Templemore, suggesting the displacement of Clonmel in the south as the centre where contracts were made (130). Also sheep numbers were falling : the number of sheep shorn by Scully of Kilfeacle declined from 2,800 in 1786 to 1,150 in 1808 (131). Consequent on a reduction in supply was a rise in the price of wool threefold from 5s.-6s. per stone in 1776 to 19s. 6d. in 1806 (132). Reduced wool supply and higher prices meant an increase in production costs for the manufacturer. In 1786, for instance, the master combers of Clonmel had to leave off 80 journeymen combers because the rise in wool prices made it impossible for them to sell the finished product at a price which would give a profit, the result being that they were left with thousands of pounds of unsold worsted on their hands (133).

Shortage of raw wool supplies and its high price led to the development of fraudulent practices in the industry. The main abuse arose out of the practice of stretching or pulling the piece of cloth (134). This stemmed from the position of the journeymen turned manufacturer who, having experienced insecurity of employment under a master



manufacturer, set up on his own with some small capital. Due to the absence of a class of wool sorters he was obliged to purchase his supply of wool (generally of inferior quality) from the master manufacturer. Moreover, when working up the yarn he lessened the amount of warp which his web should consist of and reduced the weft by laying it thin on the cloth. The result of this stretching process - undertaken to gain a rapid return on a small capital - was that goods of poor quality were brought to market where they sold cheaply, thereby underselling those of the better manufacturer. Because these goods lacked firmness and decayed quickly when worn, the Dublin dealers eventually refused to buy them so that there was a loss of sales and ultimately of a valuable market outlet (135).

Attempts to eliminate abuses were made initially by the main clothiers in Carrick. In 1774 they established a seal to be administered by three seal masters or inspectors and measurers of tenters, a system of penalties was devised for those not including the full amount of warp in their pieces, and the seal had to appear on all pieces made in the town as a guarantee of quality to merchants, the public, and dealers (136). This development, whereby the main clothiers or master combers (the capitalist employers who, in terms of manufacture and distribution, controlled the industry), formulated regulations themselves operated successfully for a number of years until their legality was questioned and abuses arose again (137). The failure of local initiative brought into greater focus the need for statutory provision. A seventeenth century act had proven ineffective in dealing with abuses and further acts of 1780 and 1782, which provided for the appointment of alnagers or examiners, had a similar fate largely because the officials concerned accepted the fees of office without actually examining the goods they sealed (138). Already in 1773 the Dublin Society had appointed a resident inspector for one year in Carrick to examine goods being produced by Moore, by 1781 the manufacturers of the town had agreed to the establishment of an alnage office there, and in 1783 there were five alnage officers operating in the Carrick district alone (139). Only with a more comprehensive act of 1800 was effective protection given to the legitimate manufacturer from his fraudulent opposite (140). By this stage, however, other factors had come into play to make the decline of the industry irreversible.

Difficulties in the industry were reflected in a fall in employment levels. The worsted



branch was more labour intensive than the woollen sector because of the greater number of processes involved in production (141). Commenting on Carrick in 1746 one observer wrote that 'it is incredible what numbers are employed in that little town in this manufactory men, women, and children finding sufficient work' (142). Estimates as to the actual scale of employment in the industry vary. One for the mid-1770s puts it at between 300 and 400, another putting it at 3,000 before 1798 (143). The latter is the more accurate as a census of Carrick in 1799 shows that textile manufacturing accounted for 17.3% of total occupations out of a population of 10,907 (144) (cf. Table XLVI). By 1814 the numbers employed in the industry in Carrick had experienced a sixfold decrease to 500 persons (145). Employment levels thus fell sharply reflecting difficulties in the industry.

The period of prosperity in the industry between c.1740 and 1780 brought a degree of prosperity to a large number of people. The judgment of one observer in 1762 was that 'all the common people [of Carrick] live comfortably and are enriched [by the textile industry] to a very great degree' ; while over 20 years later the belief was that the progenitors of the town's industry and their descendants had 'made great properties, improved the town and neighbourhood, and gave subsistence to great numbers of industrious poor' (146). How this comfort was reflected in wage levels can be exemplified by the fact that in 1786 it was calculated that 80 combers in Clonmel could earn £8,000 in wages in one year working up 25,000 stones of fleece wool, equivalent to £100 each per annum (147). Any setbacks in the industry could, therefore, be damaging and widespread in terms of employment, income levels, and living standards.

The economic difficulties of the early 1770s caused a slump in the domestic market for woollen goods and in 1773 the county's freeholders instructed their MPs to press for a removal of restrictions on the industry in order to make it more competitive (148). The early 1780s was also a critical period for employment in the industry. Unemployment among the worsted weavers of Munster forced them to seek employment in the manufacturing towns of the midlands (Mountrath, Mountmellick, Ballinakill, and Edenderry), but without success since these centres were also experiencing a recession (149). The increasing level of unemployment in the industry and consequently a rise in poverty can be seen in Carrick at the end of the century. In 1799 there were 113 persons



described as of 'no profession' and 91 as 'persons wholly dependent on charity' in the town (Table XLVI) ; while in 1814 out of 1,424 families in the town and parish 1,217 were employed in trade and manufacture, 82 in agriculture, leaving 125 families families with no designated occupation (150). Assuming a uniform family size of 6 persons then a threefold increase in poverty in the 15-year period can be advanced. Decline in the industry affected the towns more seriously than adjacent rural areas where, like the barony of Iverk near Carrick in Co.Kilkenny, the sons of farmers formerly engaged in weaving had agriculture to fall back on whereas town dwellers had not (151). Decline in the industry was reflected therefore in a fall in living standards and in an increase in poverty levels particularly in the towns.

The industry's urban location represented an organisational weakness because it added to employers' costs. In contrast to the linen industry in Ireland and the woollen industry in Britain which were both rural in location, the urban character of much of the Irish industry meant higher wages and the prospect of industrial disputes. The income of £100 for a comber in Clonmel in 1786 was high by contemporary standards, and such wage levels were increasingly difficult for employers to sustain what with the growing shortage of wool and its high price (152). The industry was also threatened by combinations among the journeymen weavers, the most serious of which was in 1764 in Carrick when 500 of them conducted a lengthy strike lasting five months chiefly over the issue of substitute labour and apprentices (153).

Employment prospects were further diminished by the introduction of new technology in the 1790s. Traditional labour intensive processes in the industry were slow and time consuming. More mechanical methods would assist in reducing employers' labour costs, a regular supply could be depended upon, and combinations in the industry would be defeated (154). Attempts by outsiders to introduce such techniques into a tradition-bound industry were resisted in Carrick in the early 1790s. Thus a spring loom introduced there in 1791 allowed one man to do the work hitherto performed by four and led to violent opposition (155). New techniques introduced by local partnerships, however, appear to have been more successful (156). For such initiatives to be a success a necessary prerequisite was for persons skilled in the use of the new machinery to be brought into an area, as at Ardmayle near Cashel in 1802 (157). The effect of the introduction of this



new technology was to further erode employment levels in an industry already suffering from inherent weaknesses.

Declining wool supply and its high price precluded any expansion in Irish manufacturing to match the British industry which because of cheaper and better quality wool was able to produce goods more competitively. In the 1780s and 1790s imports rose to compete successfully with home produced goods on the domestic market. In 1783 the worsted weavers of Roscrea petitioned parliament for the imposition of protective duties to mitigate their distress caused by a rise in cheap imports (158). The manufacturers of Carrick also sought relief against imports particularly coarse woollens. They claimed that had they not in previous years attempted to hold down their share of the market by lowering their prices and by making inferior goods for the common country people, then their industry would have become extinct (159). Although these complaints against imports were voiced at a time of general crisis in the Irish economy it is clear that the long term prospects for the industry were not auspicious. A permanent decline took place in the woollen industry in the late eighteenth century in the towns in Tipperary especially Carrick where it had hitherto been most prominent.

The woollen industry was the chief branch of textiles in terms of employment, capital, and organisation. It was supplemented by two other minor branches. The linen industry did not develop to any prominent degree in the county, though there were attempts to promote it. These attempts show experimentation on the part of the local gentry in measures to advance linen-making at a time when it was fashionable for their class to do so, or as adjuncts to the promotion of protestant settlement or charter schools. The earliest instance of such promotion comes from the early 1730s at a time of soaring linen exports. In 1735 George Mathew granted 100 acres near Thurles adjoining the River Suir to a linen manufacturer on a three lives lease and agreed to spend £200 in two years on buildings and utensils for the industry. This Mathew failed to do and Turner, the linen manufacturer, claimed that by 1740 he had accumulated debts of £800 (160). Other instances of gentry participation in linen schemes are recorded for Newport under the Jocelyn and Waller families at the time of the charter school there in the 1740s ; at Tipperary pupils from the local Erasmus Smith school were bound apprentice to craftsmen in the town including one case in 1722 of apprenticeship to a linen weaver ; at



Shronell west of Tipperary a colony of northern weavers was introduced in the 1740s ; Dundrum under Maude in 1771 ; Bakestown near Thurles in 1783 under William Armstrong ; Nenagh under Peter Holmes ; and Sir William Osborne near Clonmel (161). Gentry interest persisted into the nineteenth century, for in 1823 Lady Glengall was vigorous in introducing the benefits of flax growing to the country people around Cahir where she also promoted a regular linen market (162). The industry is also mentioned after 1755 for Clonmel (Grubb), Cashel (Chandlee and Muttar), Clogheen (Moorhead), and near Carrick (Shaw and Briscoe) (163).

For some of these concerns the Linen Board granted premiums but the industry suffered from some basic disadvantages which hindered its growth. The chief of these was that the amount of flax sown was both insufficient and of poor quality. In 1823 a mere 640 acres of flax were sown in the county placing it twenty fifth in order of magnitude out of the 32 counties (164). The scarcity of flax seed continued despite the efforts of a group of gentlemen to distribute it among farmers for sowing (165). The industry was imposed from the top down : there was a concentration on the bleaching side of the industry, and at a lower level employment in linen was unreliable and unremunerative for rural dwellers compared with worsted spinning.

The cotton industry had a brief existence from the 1780s at Clonmel and Tipperary in response to bounties offered by the Dublin Society on the home sales of cotton. The Clonmel venture was promoted by a partnership of local (Grubb) and Dublin (Jones and Malone) interests in 1788 : in February they advertised for a person with a sufficient knowledge of the industry and its machinery to develop the project (166). The venture was initially successful but after 1800 it declined in line with the experience of the industry in Munster at large (167). The Tipperary concern was a partnership between two local merchants William Baker and Clement Sadlier, the latter possibly being an associate of the Cork firm of the same name which was the largest cotton manufactory in Munster at this time (168). The firm adopted the Manchester method of production and a description of its layout in 1788 shows it to have embodied a large number of workhouses for weavers, accommodation for 16 apprentices, and an extensive bleach green (169). By 1793, however, the partnership had been dissolved and the concern, including the stock of cloths, cottons, and drapery goods was assigned over for the



payment of creditors (170).

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The advancement of the bounty system provided the initial stimulus for the development of flour milling and this was later supplemented by the transfer of capital from the declining textile industry particularly from among the quaker community. In fact decline in the one sector is reflected in growth in the other with the transition taking place in the 1770s. Only in the post-1770 period does flour milling expand rapidly with the number of mills sending flour to Dublin growing from 8 in 1771-2 to 12 (1781-2), 28 (1784-5), to 47 in 1791-2 at which date Tipperary had the largest number of mills in the country (Table XXXVII). The most concentrated period of growth between 1770 and 1796 was in the years 1786-1790 when 19 of the county's mills were erected. There was a commensurate increase in the volume of flour transported, rising from 14,203 cwt. in 1771-2 to 32,257 cwt.(1781-2) to 123,484 cwt. in 1791-2 (Table XXXVI). Despite the termination of the subsidy in 1797 the flour milling industry had become sufficiently well established not to suffer any adverse effects. On the contrary the industry was sustained by the years of external demand up to 1815 and beyond, new mills continued to be established, and Clonmel emerged as a major centre of the industry.(171).

Map V in conjunction with Table XXXVII shows the location of the mills and the dates of their first appearance in the subsidy scheme in the period 1768-94. The mills were concentrated along the River Suir and its tributaries and also around Clonmel and Fethard. The riverine situation provided both the motive power for mills and the means of conveyance for the grain and flour down the Suir initially to Dublin by canal via the Barrow navigation, and later to external markets through Waterford. The most intensive region of milling was in Clonmel and within a twenty mile radius of the town (172). The mills created an accessible and convenient market for grain at the farmer's doorstep. Previously with market towns distant participation in grain production was unattractive (173).

The new mills were large multi-storey structures requiring substantial capital investment, and were significant also in terms of capacity and equipment. One of the



largest mills in the country, at Marlfield near Clonmel, had a storage capacity of 10,000 barrels of wheat, it processed 3,000 barrels at its opening but by 1776 this had risen to 20,000 barrels this accounting for half the production rate of all mills in the county at that date (174). Excepting the Clonmel group of mills and that at Anner, the capacity of the other mills was much less than that of Marlfield (175). On the basis of the evidence the average mill had a processing capacity of 3,000 barrels, with the Marlfield and Anner concerns having a larger capacity and turnover. The mill structure with its machinery required a large input of capital. Stephen Moore's Marlfield was erected in 1769 at a cost of £15,000 (176). Since this was the county's largest mill the cost of the other mills was much less, but altogether the existence of 47 mills in 1791 represented a substantial investment.

The experience of the later owners of Marlfield serves to illustrate the nature of the partnership structure in the milling business at a period of rapid growth in the 1780s. In December 1782 Sir Cornwallis Maude of Dundrum put up a capital of £5,000 and agreed to operate a partnership with Edward Collins of Clonmel in the Marlfield mill, in which Maude had acquired an interest as a result of insolvency proceedings in 1780 (177). In 1784 Maude entered into a new partnership with Henry Ormsby of Dublin, on this occasion contributing £2,500 to the capital stock while Ormsby put up £1,000. Contributing only half of the 1782 amount, such were the terms of the arrangement that Maude was guaranteed a return of £3,300 even if no profit was obtained (178).

Investment in other milling concerns was also substantial. Maude's earlier partner, Collins, leased the corporation mills in Clonmel in 1781 on which between £10,000 and £12,000 had been spent, while in 1805 a capital fund of £9,000 was involved in a joint milling venture by two other Clonmel merchants (179). Much of the necessary funding for the expansion of flour milling came from the landed class, Moore and Maude being notable instances. In 1790 when Mortough O'Brien-Butler, a local landlord, opened his new mill at Bانشa he hosted a reception for Lady Cahir and others ; Robert Keating promoted the mill at Garranlea ; James Scully paid £3,000 for the mill and mill lands at Golden ; and the Bartons were associated with the mill at Springmount near Fethard (180). Much of the essential working capital was provided by Dublin flour factors by facilitating the millers with advance cash with which to purchase quantities of grain from



farmers. Thus William Colville, a large Dublin flour factor, advanced £3,000 to Stephen Moore in 1777, a sum repaid on the basis of the amounts received for subsidy which in 1777-8 were over £6,200, the margin of difference being indicative of the scale of return obtainable (181). Similarly the Dublin firm of Geale acted as agents for the Maude / Ormsby partnership and in this role provided the necessary working capital (182).

The largest and most influential group to emerge in the flour milling industry locally, in terms of capital provision and extent of operations, were the quakers particularly in Clonmel. They had been traditionally associated with the textile industry, but with its decline quaker resources and skills were increasingly from the 1770s diverted into the emergent milling concerns (183). By 1813 a successful transition in this regard had taken place (184). The earliest quaker mill was that at Anner conducted by the Grubbs which was second only to Marlfield in output. After 1780 the quaker presence became more evident : in 1791 they ran 10 large concerns, 5 in Clonmel itself, and 5 others in its immediate vicinity. Their success in the flour milling business was sustained by family connections in the ports, and sons were bound as apprentices in the large mills like Anner (185). The expansiveness of the industry is clear from the fact that family members were being established in their own right in new concerns at locations such as Clogheen away from the main focus at Clonmel (186).

Specifically urban industries were small scale. As industries deriving from grain brewing, distilling, and malting however merit attention. Brewing developed to some extent in a few of the towns as a revenue report of 1733 shows that there were 24 brewers in the Cashel walk of the Kilkenny revenue district, 10 in the Roscrea walk (187). The low profile of brewing as an industrial pursuit is shown by the fact that in 1788 individuals for whom it was the sole occupation are recorded for only three centres : Carrick (1), Clonmel (1), and Tipperary (2) (Table XLV). In addition persons who pursued brewing in association with other activities were present in Cashel (1), Clonmel (2), and Thurles (2). The fewness of these concerns and the fact that half of them were carried on with other occupations indicates the non-specialist nature of brewing, the smallness of the operations, and the localised market (188).

The organisation and scale of individual concerns is evident from the Woulfe brewery at Carrick in the mid-1760s. In 1765 Matthew Woulfe established a brewery in the town



with his son Walter in partnership with James Wyse, a Waterford merchant with whom they dealt regularly (189). The essential supplies of bere barley were obtained locally to some extent but mainly through merchants in New Ross, Youghal, and Dungarvan. The amount and value of individual consignments are an indication of the size and capacity of the Carrick brewery : from Youghal came 175 barrels valued at £80, and from New Ross 600-800 barrels valued at £300-£400 (190). The hops were imported through Woulfe's London contacts M. Reilly and Dillon and Cruise, and imported via Waterford or brought coastways from Cork or Dublin. It is not known how long the Woulfe brewery lasted as it is not listed in the 1788 trade directory, though brewing did continue in the town as in 1799 there were 2 brewers and 3 working brewers in trade there and it remained in Clonmel into the nineteenth century also (Tables XLVI, XLVII).

The role of brewing in the county's industrial profile was influenced by an entrepreneurial consideration. There is no evidence of quaker capital and enterprise in brewing, an association which was a key element in the growth of the industry in England at this time. Of the four concerns listed in 1788 none was quaker. This non-involvement precluded the growth of large scale brewing (comparable to inland Kilkenny) particularly in Carrick and Clonmel where quaker resources were sunk in textiles and later in flour milling. Additionally during the 1790s the Irish brewing industry as a whole became concentrated in large scale breweries in the port towns, and the smaller inland concerns like those in Tipperary lost out in consequence.

There were also a number of small distilling outlets. In 1782 there were 59 licenced stills at 19 locations conducted by 54 individuals (191). All the towns had at least one still in operation, but the main centres were Thurles (11 stills), Roscrea (9), and Carrick (5). The majority of these were small scale concerns, their limited output being suggested by the fact that most were single operations their individual capacity generally not exceeding 260 gallons. The exception was at Roscrea where the 3 stills conducted by Edward Birch had a capacity of 1,000 gallons (192). Indeed Roscrea with Thurles were the chief centres of the industry, the former emerging after 1800 to predominance chiefly because of an expansion in Birch's concern (193).

By that stage Roscrea had benefited from the reduction of stills in other locations as a result of official policy. Already by 1791 the number of licenced stills in the county had



fallen to 22, and by 1835 this figure had fallen to 14 (194). In 1791 excise duties on spirits were raised and thereafter no stills of less than 500 gallons capacity were to be licenced. On the basis of the capacities of the Tipperary stills in 1782 this provision would have excluded the majority of them and favoured the larger concern like that of Birch at Roscrea. The result was an increase in output by a lesser number of distilleries and a greater competition between them.

An essential process in brewing and distillation was malting. Only one maltster is listed in the 1788 trade directory (Table XLV), John Cook near Borrissleigh, and no one is listed as combining malting with other occupations (195). However other sources show that malt houses were established at centres like Cashel (1758) and Clonmel (1730, 1776) (196). The number of malt houses recorded for Clonmel revenue district in 1785 was 191 which was the third largest after Maryborough (276) and Wexford (243) the main centre (197). Given the trend in the brewing and distilling industries, malting as a related activity experienced a similar process of concentration over time. Thus by 1835 the number of maltsters in the Clonmel revenue area had fallen sharply to 15 the number for the entire county being 48, and the main centres of the industry were at Clonmel, Carrick, and Roscrea (198).

A number of minor industrial pursuits developed out of the main activities associated with the livestock trade. The 1788 trading list gives tanning and related leather trades as important occupations in seven of the county's towns, chiefly in Carrick, Clonmel, and Tipperary (Table XLV). Tanning existed in these centres from the early part of the century at least, some even at that stage on a fairly large scale (199). A riverine location was a necessary requirement for the industry as also was bark as a treatment agent. Bark appears to have been available locally to some extent up to the mid-1760s supplemented by imports from Wales, but these became depleted and the tanners came to rely on imports. In 1791-2, for example, three main tanning concerns one in Carrick, two in Clonmel, imported between them through Waterford over 134 tons of bark valued at over £1,300 (200). The basic raw material was hides and tanning developed inland where there was slaughtering of stock particularly in Clonmel and Carrick since their situation on the Suir gave them a water supply and access to external markets. Leather working developed as a subsidiary activity in the tanning centres, especially boot and



shoe making, and saddlery (Table XLV). As an extension from the livestock business chandling and soap boiling developed to a degree in most of the larger centres (Table XLV), and barilla was an imported product much used in these processes (201). As a service industry for the beef and pork trade (by providing barrels), and for the butter trade (by providing firkins), coopering existed mainly in Clonmel and Carrick both of which developed as points of exit for beef, pork, and butter exports (202). As an adjunct to this salt refining, essential for preserving meat exports, was conducted near Clonmel (203). These industries were essentially involved in working up primary products and were unsophisticated in their structure.

Exploitation of the county's mineral resources took place at a number of locations. The chief area of coal workings was in the Slievardagh Hills. The coal bearing area situated on the plateau of these hills had been worked in the seventeenth century if not earlier (204). Between 1730 and 1740 Langley discovered a new seam of coal at Coalbrook near his demesne and at Lisnamrock; Gahan at Coolquill also exploited coal found on his demesne; later on Going investigated a deposit at Earlshill; and Barker at Kilcooley and Vere Hunt at Glengoole did similarly (205). The main focus of coal workings was at Killenaule under its landlord Newenham and his tenants the Lathams. It is probably the best instance in the county of a landlord town developing around a mining activity, and Vere Hunt's promotion of the new town of New Birmingham was influenced by coal mining (206).

The market locally for this coal was good if one can judge from a comment in 1814 that Cahir, Cashel, Thurles, Fethard, and Littleton were said to 'entirely depend on the collieries of Killenaule for fuel' (207). The Slievardagh area also produced culm (coal dust) and limestone which were widely valued and widely distributed among farmers who used both in reclamation and manuring (208). Of the other instances of active exploitation of minerals most significant was the discovery of copper on the Stanley estate at Gortdrum in 1757 and an active involvement of local and outside interests in assessing the viability of working them commercially followed in succeeding decades (209). The workings at Silvermines were elaborate, of long standing, and of national significance. A revival in their working for lead was encouraged by Prittie in the 1720s and 1730s, but they seem to have remained inactive thereafter until 1802 when the



Dunalley Mining Company was formed for exploiting the ore there, and there were other ore workings nearby and at a scatter of other locations (210).

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The upsurge in economic activity in the course of the century is reflected in town growth. After a period of indifferent prospects in the early seventeenth century the larger towns of Carrick and Clonmel grew in the Restoration period. Thereafter sustained growth may have halted until the second half of the eighteenth century though the case of Tipperary town, where the landlord Smith granted numerous building leases in and from 1731, shows that activity was taking place (211). Similarly overall physical growth can be implied from the rise in the valuation of town property, that for the minister's money in Clonmel increasing from £476 in 1703 to £760 in 1796 (212). Such a rise is consistent with an extension in building activity over the century as a whole and with a growth in the county's population from an estimated 74,450 in 1706 to 99,500 in 1732, 169,000 in 1792 to 300,000 in 1813 (Table LXIII). The larger towns experienced a complementary rise in their populations (Table LXIV). From this a ranking of towns can be suggested with Clonmel the largest followed in order by Carrick, Cashel, Roscrea, Thurles, and Nenagh each about half as important as Clonmel in size and population ; and then the minor centres of Tipperary, Cahir, Clogheen and Templemore which were about one quarter or less its size.

While most of the existing centres expanded those with a strong industrial base and distributive functions grew more markedly than others. Thus Clonmel and Carrick advanced relative to other towns because their riverine situation allowed them access to markets externally through Waterford and internally via the Barrow navigation system, and because of the presence of vibrant textile and later flour milling sectors. Evidence from the window tax returns of 1800 suggests that Clonmel was Ireland's third largest inland town and had a population of 12,000 in 1806 making it an important regional centre (213). With a population of 10,907 in 1799 Carrick was almost as important. Indeed it is an index of the volume of commerce in the region that two such large population centres could be sustained despite their close proximity. Yet in the long term Carrick lost out to Clonmel as a growth centre for three reasons. First, the decline in the



textile industry in Carrick though long drawn out was permanent and was not compensated by the grain trade and flour milling as in Clonmel. Second, the rise of pork and bacon as important exports through Carrick does not appear to have been sufficiently labour intensive to adequately compensate for the decline in textiles. Third, the Clonmel merchant community, the quakers especially, began to engage in importing articles direct by by-passing Waterford a practice for which Carrick, though closer to that port, was not suitable. While trade and urban functions were increasingly centralised in Clonmel and Carrick to an extent, there was a corresponding decline in nearby centres formerly important like Fethard.

On a more modest scale the development of semi-urban functions can be seen in the estate villages which landlord sponsors hoped would ultimately develop into larger centres. However those most successful were based on an expansion of existing centres. The prime instances of this were Clogheen where O'Callaghan revived the functions of an older centre in the 1740s, and Templemore where Carden from 1766 developed an older manorial centre into a town with a long main street adjoining his demesne. This was supplemented by the granting of extra fairs in 1794 and the building of an infantry barracks in 1808 which stimulated the local economy and brought a large influx of protestants (214). The motivation in both cases was mixed : it was partly an exercise in social experimentation on the part of the landlords, partly from a desire to enhance their own incomes, and partly from security considerations by the promotion of protestant settlement. A similar mixture of motives was evident in the case of the new centres. Newport was influenced in its foundation by the construction of the Nenagh-Limerick turnpike road from 1737, the establishment of a charter school in 1747, and by its phenomenal growth as a fair centre in the 1760s (215). Dundrum developed by Maude from 1767 centred on the attraction of protestant settlers, the advancement of the linen industry, and the promotion of novel farming practices (216). The stimulus to its foundation derived from the sectarian fervour of the early 1760s and from the personal commitment of the proprietor to improvement. When both factors ceased to operate - sectarian tension did not persist beyond the 1760s and Maude died in 1777 - the progress of the new settlement waned. Maude's brother and successor, Sir Cornwallis Maude, contracted his farming and became involved in flour milling so that Dundrum's



development, though not aborted, was slow (217).

A similar pattern of fluctuating fortunes is evident in relation to New Birmingham on the western edge of the Slievardagh Hills. Deriving its inspiration from the English industrial city, New Birmingham was intended by its promoter Vere Hunt to be 'principally inhabited by English manufacturers', and in August 1802 he received a patent for 12 yearly fairs (one per month), including a wool fair in July (218). It was one of the few new fair centres to be given fairs at this time and they promised to be novel in that, exclusive of cattle, they were to have 'imported merchandise' for sale in addition to linen and woollen goods (219). Some dealers were attracted to the settlement early on and it did secure the functions of a post town, military station, spa, and chapel site. But despite this profusion of functions it is clear that by 1815 many of the buildings were unfinished and untenanted, and Hunt was still trying to attract settlers, finance, shopkeepers and tradesmen (220). The long term prospects for the development of this estate village were not good because the scheme was over-ambitious ; the achievement of a multiplicity of functions based primarily on industrial enterprises proved unpromising particularly in the post-1815 climate of economic decline ; and with many existing towns in the region (Thurles, Killenaule, Fethard) coupled with a large number of fair centres (Map V), New Birmingham had little prospect of attracting trade and commerce.

Its fate is a reminder that the pattern of urbanisation in the county must be assessed in the following terms : no new major urban focus emerged ; economic activity was centred in the existing centres whose large number and distribution reflected an historical situation ; Clonmel emerged as the major town because of its favoured location and because of its role in textiles and flour milling ; new centres were few and often artificially induced ; and the context and scale of the urban nexus can be more usefully gauged in terms of the diffusion of fairs.

The majority of the county's towns functioned primarily as market and trading centres for the collection of produce from their hinterlands and the exchange and distribution of goods from outside. The range of commodities constituting the inward trade of Clonmel in 1750 shows a concentration on grain and animal products (Table XXXV). This emphasises the essential distributive function of the towns which is also apparent from a profile of the merchant and trading community in 1788 (Table XLV). This is evidence of



the non-specialist functions of the towns, re-inforced by the fact that most of the merchant body were engaged in more than one occupation, in some cases these were entirely unrelated trades.

Apart from their market and distributive functions a few towns developed strong industrial bases. In character this was based on the working up of agricultural produce into manufactured products, and in a number of centres specialist industries emerged as with textiles (Carrick, Clonmel, Clogheen, Thurles, Roscrea), distilling (Thurles, Roscrea), brewing (Carrick, Clonmel) and related downline industries based on by-products. Towns like Cashel and Fethard did not develop manufacturing sectors but depended on their position as marketing centres at key points in the road system, and such towns remained semi-agricultural in character. In addition many towns acquired the functions of military centres, the best instance being Templemore. But other towns also had a military presence in one form or other. In 1716 Cashel corporation was making ground available for the erection of two foot barracks ; in 1732 Carrick had a good barracks for horse cavalry as had Thurles (2), Clonmel (2), Nenagh (2), and Clogheen (2 troop), and for foot Roscrea and Cashel (2 companies) (221). A large new barracks was being planned for Cahir in 1810 (222). The presence of military barracks was significant not merely in a security sense, but also from the point of view of consumption as they required large amounts of victuals particularly bread and biscuit, and also hay and forage for horses. In 1778 Carrick could cater for 3,000 infantry and 300 cavalry, Clonmel 6,000 and 2,000 respectively, figures which bear witness to the capacity of these centres to provide accommodation and food supply (223). Additionally three centres were important because of their religious and ecclesiastical functions : Clonmel because it contained large numbers of dissenters and because until the late eighteenth century it was the residence of the catholic bishop of Waterford ; Cashel because it was the capital of the anglican ecclesiastical province of Munster and where at least two archbishops, Bolton and Agar, resided and contributed to the improvement of the town ; and Thurles as it was the centre of the catholic archdiocese of Cashel where the archbishop resided. A combination of functions appeared in Clonmel as it was the county's chief town and functioned as assize town, military and ecclesiastical centre with a strong industrial function supporting a large population.



Those towns closely involved in trade and industry experienced growth in their physical layout and in their suite of municipal buildings particularly in the period 1790-1814 when much of the modern streetscapes came into being. Indicative of this expansion is the displacement of the old town walls. As late as 1732 Clonmel and Carrick still had their town walls with attendant gates virtually intact, but these were breached as the towns grew as were those at Cashel by the end of the century (224). On the other hand Fethard, which ceased to grow after the medieval period, retained its impressive array of walls to a much later date (225). So far as the layout of streets is concerned Clonmel, Roscrea, and Nenagh were regarded as being regularly built while Carrick and Cashel were irregular (226). Tipperary town's evolution from 1731 was based on its main street and the clearance of outlying cabins to accommodate new stone houses ; Thurles developed along an axis of the bridge at one end and the Mathew residence at the other ; and Cahir was influenced in its development by Lord Cahir's new residence (1785) at one end of the square and a new market house at the other (227). In the course of the century towns acquired many of the buildings regarded as necessary for their proper functioning as trading and manufacturing centres. Fethard had a market house in 1712, a new one was building at Carrick in 1726, monies were allotted for the erection of one at Cashel in 1732, Tipperary had one by 1737 as had Thurles in 1743 erected by Mathew, and they were present at Clonmel and Nenagh before the end of the century at least (228). Clonmel had acquired a new quay by 1788 and a new jail in the 1790s to add to the existing range of buildings which included a tholsel and court house ; in 1748 a shambles with 27 stalls for butchers was erected and by 1813 John Bagwell had built a new shambles rented from him by the town's 41 butchers (229). A distinctive and large new chapel was erected in Tipperary (1730), and Clonmel had a new meeting house by 1788, while coffee houses had made their appearance in Clonmel by 1774 at least and a new one opened in Tipperary in 1791 (230).

Towns were subject to a number of hazards the chief of which, fire, was particularly dangerous especially as many towns had large suburbs of cabins. A number of serious cases during the century show the catastrophic effects of fire. In 1754 an accidental fire in Nenagh destroyed 112 houses besides outoffices and stables with the entire loss amounting to £5,000; in 1768 an outbreak of fire consumed most of Clogheen



destroying army stores and ruining many of the artisan families, an incident which accounts for the rebuilding of the town in the 1770s ; and in 1798 up to 500 persons were made homeless when a fire decimated their houses in Tipperary town (231). Such disasters often led to public subscriptions for relief of those in distress.

Distress became a feature of town life on occasion. At one level the problem was addressed in the form of an annuity company like that established in Clonmel in 1785. By this members paid a certain amount into the capital stock or fund from which annuities were paid to widows and children of members who died. By 1797 the membership had reached 77 consisting mainly of merchants, millers, and clothiers (232). This institution was intended to provide for those who were already well off, its subscription level (£11. 7s. 6d. and 4 guineas annually) put it beyond the means of the real poor. What caused most distress was a failure of the potato or reduced grain supplies caused by an outflow to dearer markets elsewhere. Thus during a period of scarcity in 1729 particularly in the north there were riots in Clonmel and Munster in an attempt to prevent the conveyance of grain (of which there was a plentiful supply available locally), outward to fill deficiencies elsewhere (233). Similarly in April 1741 following a severe frost a mob of 1,000 at Carrick prevented a consignment of oats being conveyed downriver to feed the poor of Waterford city ; there were food riots in Clonmel and Carrick in 1757 during general dearth in the south ; and in June 1782, with the prospect of a bad harvest in sight, the inhabitants of Clonmel had to be re-assured that there was sufficient wheat in the millers' stores to maintain them (234). The years 1799 and 1800 were difficult locally producing near famine conditions (235). In such times of scarcity the main merchants bought up available corn supplies and sold them cheaply to the poor (236). Relief had to be administered to over one quarter of the population of Carrick as a result of the distress of 1799 and in 1800 a meal fund amounting to £8,200 was set up in Clonmel to provide corn meal and soup for poor relief (237).

Experience of these disasters brought to the fore a new concern with the underlying causes of poverty. The causes were identified by a commentator on the situation pertaining in Carrick in 1799 when he wrote : 'The principal causes of poverty are sickness, old age, want of employment, children becoming orphans, and very



principally idleness and intemperance' (238). These causes contributed to making 6% (or 660 persons) of the town's population of 10,907 in 1799 dependent on aid or charity of some kind, and it is clear that poverty was on the increase (239). One of the chief causes of poverty in the town was the decline of the textile industry. In addition the seasonal migration to the Newfoundland fisheries which had been a feature of the south Tipperary area for half a century or more before 1800, was ceasing to be an option as a source of income for the artisan or labourer element in society.

Already, however, attempts were made to confront the problem through the foundation of alms houses as Thomas Wadding of Cadiz did in Carrick in 1756, by charitable donations and bequests for the poor, and by public infirmaries like those founded in Cashel and Clonmel in 1767 (240). The imaginative and cost-effective proposals forwarded by William Morton Pitt for the relief of poverty in Carrick in 1799 were novel for the period. He observed that while charitable relief was praiseworthy it was insufficient to tackle the long term problem of urban poverty (241). Instead of alms giving he proposed that a society be established of which the poor themselves would be members with financial contributions coming mainly from honorary members. An annuity society for widows on the Clonmel model but with a smaller subscription should be established; a loans system for manufacturers in temporary difficulties should be initiated, and a savings scheme for the poor with regular and attractive interest payments be started. He also advocated a more systematic allocation of workers between different firms, cheaper fuel for the poor, and better hospital and educational facilities (242).

Pitt highlighted the importance of educational facilities and these had developed to some extent. Clonmel had a free school endowed by the duke of Ormond in the seventeenth century and a charter school was added in the 1740s as they were also at Cashel and Newport (243). Already Cashel had a separate new school house built in 1724, in 1789 John Bagwell endowed a new Sunday and daily school in Clonmel, and individual clergymen established schools in other centres as at Carrick in 1792 (244). From the prospectus for a Carrick establishment it can be deduced what the function of such schools was. It claimed to prepare candidates for the revenue, army, navy, and university through instruction in writing, arithmetic, and book-keeping (245). The appearance of such schools with this kind of programme shows the needs of the



comfortable urban classes in terms of social and career advancement.

As part of the infrastructural development in the local economy improvements in the transport and communications network are an important index of greater integration into the wider market economy. The development of roads coincided with the upturn in economic activity in the 1730s. From this point of view roads developed in Tipperary by virtue of the needs of internal trade flowing towards Cork, Limerick, and Dublin. The need to have these ports linked more effectively with their hinterlands meant that Tipperary, encompassed within the triangular axis of these three ports, came to be well served by roads by the end of the century (246).

One of the earliest turnpike acts for the county in 1731 named a large number of trustees to supervise the repair of the road from Kilkenny to Clonmel via Callan and Ninemilehouse and gave them power to erect toll gates and houses, the profits from the tolls to go towards the repairs (247). The intention of making such projects self-financing seldom materialised simply because the tolls proved inadequate (248). The turnpike system of road making was open to abuse : there were too many trustees with no accountability or collective responsibility (no specific property qualification was needed to be chosen as a trustee) ; where intended roads crossed county boundaries the arbitrary allocation of funds in the one often meant a deficiency in the other ; no proper system of accounts with gate keepers and farmers of tolls was maintained ; and the farming out of tolls was conducive to jobbing. Some of these factors were adduced in 1751 as the primary causes why the Kilkenny-Clonmel road was described as 'in a ruinous condition and almost impassable' (249). In the 1750s three further acts followed designed to provide better roads in the southern part of the county : one in 1751 for the repair of the Clonmel - Urlingford road via Fethard and Killenaule ; another in 1755 for improvements to the Clonmel - Doneraile road via Clogheen and Mitchelstown ; and one in 1757 for the repair of the Castlecomer - Limerick road which passed through Urlingford and Dundrum linking up with the road from Timahoe to Cashel and Tipperary provided for in 1739 (250). While such roads came to be vital for the traffic between the terminal points they could also stimulate the growth of minor points en route. This was the case with Ninemilehouse (a toll gate point), Littleton mid-way between Cashel and Johnstown on the Dublin road, and Ballyporeen where the Clonmel



road forked out one to Doneraile the other to Cork city (251). Even for a centre like Cashel (described as a 'poor town') the new Dublin-Cork road was in 1752 considered to be contributing to its development as it was also to Cahir (252).

Roads were also developing in the northern part of the county by mid-century. The earliest act in 1735 provided for the repair of the Maryborough - Toomavara road which went via Roscrea, a line which was extended in 1737 to Silvermines and Nenagh and thence via Shallee turnpike and Tullo (later to develop as Newport) to Limerick (253). Though the tolls collected on this road were considered to be the highest on any of the approach roads to Limerick, by 1772 the road had fallen into disrepair due to lack of unanimity among the trustees and to jobbing (254). Nevertheless the link-up of the northern area into the road network shows its integration into the wider market economy.

The passage of acts in 1759 and 1765 changed the emphasis henceforward in road building. This was because they empowered the grand jury to become more actively involved through the levying of a road cess on a particular barony where roads were intended to be made (255). These laws put the management of the roads in the hands of the grand jury. Thereafter the majority of the turnpike acts were revisionary of acts passed before 1760 (256). Indeed Tipperary was perceived to have set an example by not initiating the demand for new turnpike acts (257). Although law and order costs loomed large in grand jury expenditure in the county, evidence from 1793 and 1810 indicates that relatively large sums were allocated to individuals for the building and repair of bridges, lowering hills, and cutting gullets (258). All this bears witness to the fact that by the end of the century the county was well integrated into the national grid network of roads. The direction of traffic on these roads was such that the movement of grain veered towards either Clonmel or Limerick, butter moved towards Clonmel and Carrick, the movement of livestock was dictated by the location of fairs (Maps I-IV), and there was a lively cross-county trade in coal from Killenaule.

An additional point in the communications axis was Waterford port, but as a map of 1728 shows the road network in its hinterland was sparse because the three rivers of the Suir, Nore, and Barrow, which converged on the port, facilitated the carriage of goods by water (259). The Shannon was less important as a means of conveying goods in this period. At any rate the region in Tipperary adjacent to it came to be well served by roads



during the century, and only in 1794 did the grand jury formulate demands for an improvement in the river's navigation (260). The River Suir, which was tidal to Carrick and navigable for boats to Clonmel, was the main artery of trade for the conveyance of the county's export items outward to the south-eastern port. This was a resource of great natural advantage and an index of the growth of trade along it were demands for improvements in the facility in order to make the flow of traffic more smooth and efficient. In 1755 local gentry and merchants with their Waterford counterparts sought a parliamentary grant to remove impediments in the river to allow an increase in the carrying capacity of boats ; and the construction of a towpath for horses to draw the boats thereby eliminating by one third the heavy expense of men doing such work and reducing markedly the time involved ; and with a reduction in wage costs freight charges would fall (261). A grant of £1,500 was made , but it was another decade before the works were satisfactorily completed (262). The advance in grain production in ensuing decades brought the need for further improvements in the river system. In the 1780s plans for bettering the navigation of the River Suir from Clonmel to the River Barrow were advanced (263). The sustained growth in the grain and flour trade in these years was reflected in the demand, expressed by the corporation and traders of Clonmel and the grand jury in 1789-91, to empower the grand jury to levy amounts to repair the towpath (264).

Much of the building boom in towns after 1790 was financed by the credit facilities made available by banks. The export and import trade was facilitated by the system of credit which had been evolving over a long period. By the eighteenth century a system of payment based on bills had developed between merchants inland, their colleagues in the ports and Dublin and London discounting houses, as the practice of a Carrick merchant in the 1760s illustrates. Actual discounting and banking facilities at inland locations evolved more slowly. In time, however, Clonmel emerged as the main inland town where banking business of any volume was conducted.

Banking had some early precursors in the county before 1700, which developed out of surplus accounts in the hands of rent receivers transmitting payments to absentee landlords (265). In the local context the most notable exponents of this practice were William Vaughan, Phineas Riall, and Joseph Damer (266). Only with the Bagwell



establishment does a concern of any significance emerge. John Bagwell, merchant, acted as a country correspondent in Clonmel for the Dublin banking house of La Touche and Kane in the 1720s (267). Out of this association Bagwell developed a banking business of his own based in Clonmel and it was still being conducted by a third generation in 1760 (268). By this stage the Rialls had become established in banking and by 1788 they were the town's only bankers, Bagwell having by then entered the flour milling business (269). The Riall concern was considered to be secure as it survived the crises of the early 1770s and 1793, and by the end of the century the Rialls were reputedly worth £70,000 (270).

The growth of trade and the long period of high prices after 1793 encouraged an expansion in the number of outlets offering banking services. Four new concerns at three locations were established: Watson at Clonmel (1800), Scully at Tipperary (1802), Carshore at Carrick (1806), and Sause also at Carrick (1807) (271). On the basis of the amounts paid in stamp duty between 1800 and 1804, Clonmel was the main inland banking centre and, taken in conjunction with the banks in Carrick, this is further evidence of a concentration of wholesale trade in both centres, Clonmel particularly (272).

Where note issue and circulation are concerned confidence was expressed in the local houses and those at Waterford. During the crisis of 1793, for instance, about 70 merchants and traders in Carrick expressed their confidence in the Waterford bank of Newport and declared their intention of continuing to accept the bank's notes as payment 'as we have usually done' (273). Newport's and Riall's note issue had a general currency in the south of the county and it was said to be preferred by the common people to Dublin notes (274). In 1808 the note circulation of the Clonmel banks was said to be £200,000 (275).

The degree to which the circulation of such note issue facilitated trading transactions locally and also, for instance, assisted payments on military account, is illustrated in the strength of opposition from Clonmel to the proposal of the Irish parliament in 1799 to limit the denominations in which small notes could be issued (276). Note circulation and issue was only the final stage in the evolution of these banks for at an earlier stage their main function was the discounting of bills and, to some extent, receiving sums of money



on deposit for safe-keeping (277). With the exception of Scully's bank all those which emerged in Tipperary were mercantile in origin and exhibit a distinct element of kinship links in their evolution (278).

The progression of those involved in banking out of trade into land was uneven. Bagwell used the surplus accounts on hand and the profits of trade to purchase the Dunboyne and other lands in the late 1720s and early 1730s, and the Rialls did similarly in the 1770s. Yet both families retained their links with trade : Bagwell in flour milling, Riall in banking. Catholics on the other hand, like Sause, tended to progress out of trade entirely using the profits obtained therein to establish themselves in landed society. Scully is exceptional in being of landed status and becoming involved in banking.

The merchant community reflects the changing character of economic development closely. A 1788 directory, although incomplete (Roscrea and Fethard are excluded and for those centres included the lists are deficient) (279), allows one to profile the personnel of the merchant community at that date for seven towns (Table XLV). Taking the different sectors of urban activity made up of manufacturing, distribution, building, personal and professional services, it can be observed how certain groups dominated certain pursuits. In manufacturing catholics dominated the textile sector in Carrick with 14 of the 17 clothiers (who controlled the industry) catholic at that date. In Clonmel protestants dominated textile activity with only one catholic out of seven clothiers named. The textile industry in Tipperary town, in its cotton and woollen branches, was in the hands of the Sadliers at this time. Such specialisation in textiles was less evident elsewhere as in Borrisoleigh where John White in addition to being the sole manufacturer of broad stuffs and serges, was also a corn dealer and linen and woollen draper, while Cashel does not figure at all in textiles at least on the manufacturing side (280).

In the alcohol industries catholics dominated distilling in Thurles (which with Roscrea was the main centre) and they were also to the fore in Carrick and Cashel, while protestants were its sole conductors in Borrisoleigh, Nenagh, and Tipperary, and in Clonmel representation was about even. Brewing as a sole pursuit in Carrick, Clonmel, and Tipperary was the monopoly of catholics. Flour milling was a widely disseminated activity but in its main centre, Clonmel, it was the preserve of quakers. The profile of



1788 shows 6 described as miller, corn merchant or dealer. Allowing for the fact that Carrick was not as a good location for milling as Clonmel was, there appears to be an implicit reluctance on the part of catholic clothiers in the former to make the transition to flour milling with this gap being filled by quakers by the early nineteenth century (281). Yet in a related area, the baking and confectionary trades, catholics dominated especially in Clonmel. In the various sectors of the leather industry catholics were to the fore in tanning in Carrick, Nenagh, and Thurles with representation about even in Clonmel and Tipperary ; boot and shoe making was the preserve of protestants in Clonmel and of catholics in Nenagh, and mixed elsewhere ; and in saddling and leather cutting the craft was dominated by protestants, with catholics underrepresented. Tallow chandling and its associated activities of soap and candle making was mainly in the hands of protestants particularly in Clonmel, but in Thurles catholics had a monopoly. Coopering was largely the preserve of catholics. The heavy metal industries like ironmongering, smithing, and pewtering tended to be evenly distributed. Activities such as coach making, gun making, glass, china, and glazing were not dominated by any one group.

The wholesale but mainly retail distribution of goods was the most pervasive activity of traders and is illustrated in Table XLV for the grocery trade, alcohol, textiles and general merchandise. Where the occupation is given as grocer either separately or in combination with other trades, catholics were prominent especially in Thurles, Cashel, Tipperary and Carrick, with protestants also involved in Clonmel. In the area of alcohol distribution incorporating vintners, porter room owners, spirit dealers, no one group dominated. The textile drapery trade in linen and woollen goods was monopolised by catholics especially in Carrick, Cashel, and Tipperary, while in Clonmel protestants were involved. In the area of personal service, apothecary for instance, representation tended to be mixed. In the different professions attorneys were present in all centres, and with conformity as a requirement for entry to the legal profession surnames like O'Kearney (Thurles) and Dwyer (Tipperary) show the catholic presence, though most attorneys tended to be protestant notably in Clonmel and Cashel where the ecclesiastical court functioned. For the professions of doctor and surgeon (from which catholics were not excluded under law), representation was mixed.

Overall, accepting the fact that the primary function of the merchant community in the



towns in Tipperary was distributive rather than specialist, protestants were to the fore in the manufacturing areas of flour milling, chandling, and textiles (Clonmel), and in the distributive sector in textiles (Clonmel) and in grocery. Catholics dominated manufacturing in Carrick, distilling in Thurles (both main centres of the respective industries), brewing, tanning, and chandling (Thurles). As general grocers and textile drapers catholics were prominent in all centres outstripping protestants except in Clonmel. Representation was mixed in the heavy industries like metals, the alcohol distributive trade, and in the professions. In this way the protestant merchant community was predominant in Clonmel, the catholic in Carrick and Thurles, and elsewhere no clear hegemony emerged.

Subsequent changes in the merchant body can be most readily assessed as far as Clonmel is concerned in 1820 (Table XLVII). Although Clonmel can not be taken as representative, as the largest town with a greater diversity of functions than others, it should indicate general trends. The overall pattern was of a decline of 19% in the numbers engaged in manufacturing, and increase of 5% in those engaged in personal service coupled with the sharpest increase (15%) in the area of distribution (Tables XLV, XLVII). The successful transition made by the quakers out of textiles into milling ensured their continued pre-eminence in the merchant community. They monopolised the occupations of corn miller and corn merchant, and were to the fore in banking, boat transport, and the bacon trade. In contrast catholic merchants and traders retained a connection with the secondary pursuits of retail grocery, baking, linen and woollen drapery and taverning, and were not well represented in the primary manufacturing sectors.

The religious involvement in trade was reinforced by external trading links. The correspondents of catholic merchants in Tipperary in the outports tended to be their co-religionists. Walter Woulfe of Carrick dealt mainly with Wyse in Waterford, Comerford in Cork, and Connor in Dublin (282). By such links catholic merchants in Tipperary became tied into a network of Irish mercantile interests overseas. In Woulfe's case this reflected the nature of his main trade which was in wines and spirits, these commodities being obtained through expatriate Irish merchants in Bordeaux and Charente (283). Such external trading links were used to launch younger members of



some catholic landed families into trade, In 1766 Woulfe promised to provide George Ryan of Cadiz (his nephew and son of Daniel Ryan of Inch), with an order for £500 worth of goods in order to launch him into trade in the West Indies (284). Protestants also had extensive trading contacts. The quakers in particular depended on a network of kinship links among their co-religionists in the textile and grain trades. In the 1760s and 1770s evidence shows the contacts between the Gurneys of Norwich and their fellow quakers in the south-east for the supply of yarn from south Tipperary (via the Clonmel group, the Grubbs especially ) through Waterford (285). The grain trade also benefited from these kinship links.



## Chapter VII

Agrarian unrest has loomed large in the history of County Tipperary not merely because of its persistence over time but also because of the violence of its expression. This unrest was a complex phenomenon neither uniform in its range of grievances, in its methods and organisation, nor in the social groups or regions affected. At its most basic it derived from the unequal effects of rapid commercialisation. Before mid-century the county was devoted to sheep and cattle grazing. After mid-century, while grazing continued to be important in certain areas, increasingly from 1770 there was a swing to cereal cultivation by farmers in areas adjacent to the River Suir, around Clonmel in particular. This shift to a more labour intensive agricultural enterprise occurred at a time when an accelerated growth in the population level locally was taking place (Table LXIII).

While Tipperary was a predominantly grazing county the social framework was simple in terms of stratification. With population growth and commercialisation after mid-century the social complexion began to alter, especially in the extreme south and Suir valley experiencing change due to the spread of cereal cultivation. The diffusion of intensive grain production here and the wealth derived therefrom served to create new social categories in rural society especially at the intermediate level of the farmer. This development led to a more stratified society in these areas and in consequence to a wide range of grievances in times of unrest. In this region unrest stemmed primarily from economic issues : for the peasant these were conacre rents, access to commons, potato tithe and employment ; and for the farmer rents, distraint, eviction, and tithe corn ; while opposition to tithe in general was a unifying factor between classes in this region. It was only secondarily a class conflict in this region.

Class conflict was the most obvious characteristic of unrest outside this region. Thus the intense grazing region centred on Cashel had a simple social structure, a point implicitly made in the remarks of a local author in 1741 who identified in this region vast tracts of land held by 'single persons . . . in their own hands' and on the other hand there were 'herdsmen and shepherds and a few, a very few cottiers' (1). Lacking intermediate categories of tenants, this region saw the sharpest and most direct conflict between the grazier and the smallholder, because of the resistance to agricultural change in grazing districts. This context defined the narrow range of grievances in this region, and because unrest here involved direct confrontation it was less complex than in the more southerly parts.



This chapter looks in more detail at the character of rural unrest in the county, its underlying causes, and the attempts to control it. The succeeding chapter extends the analysis into a more specific treatment of the issues emanating from tenant access to land and associated issues.

\* \* \* \*

In chronological terms agrarian unrest, expressed in collective and widespread action seeking the redress of a broad range of grievances, is essentially a post-1760 phenomenon. Previous to that date cases of agrarian outrage were confined to individuals seeking specific redress and were isolated and localised in their occurrence (Appendix III). As Tables XLVIII and XLIX indicate agrarian crime, though not continuous, was a marked feature of the period 1760-1814 (2). Within this time span the most serious phases or outbreaks were in the years 1760-66, 1770-76, 1785-8, 1799-1803, 1808-9, and 1811-14. Within these periods outrages display an intensity in individual years namely 1763, 1775, 1786, 1800, 1802, 1808, 1811, and 1814. For present purposes detailed analysis of agrarian movements is not being extended beyond 1805, a year which marked a departure from the older forms of rural agitation and the adoption of the more pronounced methods of factionalism (3).

Outside the main periods of unrest the county was relatively free of major incidents. Thus the late 1760s, late 1770s, late 1780s, and most of the 1790s were quiet periods. Indeed, in contrast to other areas, the county was remarkably quiet in the 1790s so far as the expression of specific agrarian demands is concerned. Serious outbreaks emerged only in 1799 after the semblance of political revolt had been detected and vigorously suppressed. Having identified this framework it must be stressed that within individual years there was a general absence of outrage between the months of June and September, a period during which the demands on peasant time and labour were high. The only significant departures from this rule occurred in 1775 and 1786 when the high Summer months exhibited a sustained level of unrest, reflecting the seriousness of peasant demands in both years.

Maps VI-IX give representational effect to the data on outrages contained in Table XLVIII concentrating on the four main periods when movements as such can be identified. Map VI covering the period 1760-66 shows that for the 42 cases of serious outbreaks reported, the chief centres of unrest were in the south of the county being associated with the areas around Cashel, Clogheen, Clonmel, Fethard, and



Mullinahone. The unrest of these years derived primarily from the context of direct management by large graziers in areas where there had been no conversion to tillage and where stocking levels had increased sharply because of market attractions, hence the encroachments on commons. The earliest recorded incident was in Borrisoleigh in February 1760, but the level of unrest in northern parts did not maintain itself to make a significant contribution to the movement as a whole in this period or later in the century (4).

By the early 1770s expressions of rural outrage became more numerous and more concentrated (Map VII). The number of serious cases recorded for the period 1770-76 reaches 76, a figure which is almost double that for 1760-66. The epicentre of unrest shifted eastwards away from the Clogheen district and had its first serious manifestation in the Carrick area. It is in the triangle formed by Fethard-Cahir-Carrick that the unrest is concentrated in this period. This was the region in which the agrarian issues deriving from the spread of dairying and grain production found expression.

The third phase of unrest in 1785-8 shows a reversal in two respects (Map VIII). Firstly, in terms of incidence the number of outrages recorded at 33 has fallen below even the level of the early 1760s, reflecting the more sophisticated methods of action employed by the Rightboys. Secondly, the previous concentration in the Fethard-Cahir-Carrick triangle is not repeated with outrages being more scattered. This indicates a more broadly based concurrence with Rightboy aims particularly in relation to tithes and church rates. Thus the unrest of the 1780s is more diffuse expressive of the more widely shared grievances of these years.

Finally the years 1799-1803 witness a rise in the number of cases recorded and new concentrations in the levels of unrest (Map IX). A total of 58 incidents are on record placing this phase second only to the 1770s in terms of magnitude of agrarian crime. There is a bunching of incidents in areas adjoining the River Suir in its upper reaches north of Clonmel. The eastern and south eastern parts of the county are relatively free of major unrest at this time.

Two important locational factors influenced the spatial occurrence and spread of agrarian outrages. Firstly, many of the incidents can be traced to areas in which the building of new turnpike roads was undertaken. There were 11 acts of parliament which promoted road building through different parts of the county during the course of the century (5). An upsurge in this activity is apparent from the early 1750s when a number of new or amending acts were passed. An act of 1751 proposed the repair of the road



from Clonmel to Kilkenny. In 1755 the extension of the network from Clonmel was provided for by legislation for a road from there through Clogheen and Mitchelstown to Doneraile in Co.Cork. A further act of 1757 advanced the making of a road from Castlecomer through Ballyragget, Freshford, and Urlingford to Dundrum and on to Limerick (6). Further acts followed (7).

The erection of these roads is an index of the growing commercialisation of the county. However they could be a source of grievance on two counts. Firstly, leases of land along the proposed routes were overridden, tenancy arrangements disturbed, and tenants' holdings reduced in consequence. Secondly, the toll houses and gates erected at various points along the turnpikes for the collection of tolls on country produce and animals (cf. Table XXXV), represented an additional imposition. Such toll houses or gates were built at Urlingford, Longford Pass, Ninemilehouse, Ballypatrick, Twomilebridge, Marlfield, Clogheen, Knockboy and elsewhere. These became the focus for attack by agrarian groups on occasion and in this way turnpikes and their toll points account for a certain segment of outrages. They are, therefore, important in a locational sense. These roads are also significant in another sense in that they often acted as a means whereby unrest was disseminated to wider areas. This was the case in the Whiteboy movement of 1760-66, when the outrages spread from Tipperary to Cork via the new Clogheen-Ballyporeen-Mitchelstown road.

A second locational influence accounting for the incidence of a different category of unrest was the fact that the eastern part of Tipperary, with its expanding commercial farming, attracted labourers from south west Ireland. Competition for employment often led to rivalry between labourers. The demarcation became contentious in relation to the employment of seasonal migrant labour in farming and in textiles. The issue of outside labour was most prominent in the 1770-76, and 1785-8, and 1799-1803 phases of unrest. It found expression along the Tipperary-Kilkenny border its flashpoints being Carrick, Ninemilehouse, Mullinahone, Fennor, Longford Pass, and Urlingford. It is to be noted that some of these locations were also toll gates in the turnpike system, thus conveying on them a double significance in terms of determining the spatial occurrence of outrages. Rivalry was not confined to the employment of agricultural labourers, but is also evident in the textile industry particularly at times when outside labour was introduced into Carrick and Clonmel as a means of circumventing combinations among local journeymen (8).

In terms of organisation the post-1760 agrarian movements adopted traditional



practices then current in rural society, but also used more innovatory strategies. This fusion of the traditional and new characterises the movements of the 1760s and 1770s. The use of traditional practices assumed a number of different forms. The long inheritance of tory activity in the county may have provided an imitative stimulus for the Whiteboys given the emphasis on pillaging and the captaincy structure. This last is a discernible feature of the movements of 1760-66 and 1770-76. Figures of authority with titles such as Captains Fearnot, Flint, Alcock, Slasher, and Squib and untitled individuals holding leadership positions, are in evidence (9).

The organisation and size of the rural movements beneath the captaincy level, which in some instances could be shared by up to six persons, was not uniform (10). In March 1763 it was reported that over 14,000 persons were involved in the Whiteboy movement in the county, and individual assemblies (as distinct from specific attacking parties) could be large, that in 1772 at Clonoulty reportedly numbered 2,000 and it was said to have 'went through the excercises of a disciplined army' (11). The size of individual parties could range from a handful up to 600, but was more normally under 100 persons. There was also a borrowing from the themes of contemporary poetry. Thus use of designations like 'Joanna Meskil', which was equivalent to a female personification of oppression, indicates that the rural groups sought to depict themselves in a more symbolic guise as the redressers of more general, perhaps semi-political grievances (12). The use of white dress, uniforms, and regalia to distinguish themselves appears to have been borrowed by the Whiteboys from the contemporary apparel of mummers. This conclusion is reinforced by the fact that Whiteboy parties were often accompanied by musicians and horn sounding, and occasionally legitimate mummers were mistaken for Whiteboys, as happened at Clonmel in 1774 (13).

The post-1760 agrarian groups derived much of their discipline and cohesion from the imposition of an innovative system of oath-taking. This was to ensure adherence to the movement's objectives and secrecy, as the evidence of revenge actions taken against recalcitrant followers illustrates (14). The imposition of oaths had a wider function in that it was employed to gain more extensive support in the rural community for the movement's aims. This strategy was widely and successfully used in 1785-8 as a means of winning popular concurrence with Rightboy aims. Thus in 1786 locations as far apart as Owing near Carrick, Cahir, Moycarkey, Knockingtemple, Newport and Cashel were the scenes where Rightboys swore the local inhabitants (15). In this way the method of swearing was effectively extended to the larger populace thereby broadening social



concurrence in the aims of the movement. This was one element of sophistication not discernible in the two previous phases of unrest when oath-taking was used as a means of control rather than as a device for disseminating aims.

In the 1760-66 phase the chief Whiteboy grievances concerned the enclosure of commons, conacre rents, and tithe especially that on potatoes (16). The methods used in order to gain alleviation reflect their prominence as issues. The levelling of ditches and stone walls around commons was a registering of Whiteboy disapproval of the enclosure of such lands for grazing purposes by the landlord, his agent, or by newly installed tenants. The aim was to have such lands revert to communal use. Levelling activity was most widespread in the years 1761-4, and though it was the opinion of one contemporary writing from Clogheen in 1762 that 'all the damage they [the Whiteboys] ever did that way [i.e. levelling] is so very inconsiderable that it is not worth naming', it is clear that in individual cases losses were not insignificant (17). The loss was occasioned by a lessening of the value of lands consequent on the destruction of improvements represented in this case by enclosures. Levelling was also used at this time as a method for destroying walls erected around deer parks, lands which the Whiteboys considered should be available as conacre or potato ground. In March 1763 the deer park of John Watson of Clonbrogan near Fethard was thrown down and four of his deer killed (18). John McCarthy at Lisheen and John Carden had similar experiences at the hands of the Whiteboys (19). Related to the issue of access to potato ground was that of tithe on potatoes resentment over which was expressed by their being destroyed as happened at Clogheen in 1763 (20). Other forms of activity can be directly linked with the redressing of the main grievances of the early 1760s. These relate to the destruction or incapacitation of various kinds of property. Thus the demolition of dwelling houses can be identified with the desire to eject new tenants introduced onto recently enclosed commons, as happened in 1762 near Fethard, at Market Hill near Cashel, and in 1763 near Clogheen (21). Other types of destruction recorded include the cutting down of an orchard on the Damer estate at Borrisoleigh in 1760, the burning of turf at Newcastle and the scattering of stacks of corn at Rossmore both on the Perry estate in 1765, and the burning of farm buildings in a number of areas (22). Intimidation was sometimes a part of Whiteboy activity. There was the physical maiming of persons deemed inimical to the Whiteboys; the whipping of tithe proctors and others; and the sending of threatening letters (23). Despite all this there is a general absence of serious assault with only one case of agrarian murder on record (24).



In the unrest of the early 1770s the main issues were tithe especially that on corn, the employment of outside labour, and the introduction of new tenants particularly dairymen (25). It is evident that the form of action employed to gain redress of these grievances was that of personal intimidation. In relation to tithe this took the form of the beating of tithe proctors, often allied with the administering of oaths connected with the collection of tithe as was the experience of Rev. Nicholas Herbert in 1773 and Rev. Edward Herbert a year later (26). Beatings and oaths were also administered to outside labourers or spalpeens working seasonally in the county. Such incidents are recorded for Ballynattin (between Clonmel and Cashel), Roxborough, and Knocklofty, while their employers were maimed at Rehill near Cahir (27).

So far as direct intimidation of new tenants is concerned a dual approach is evident. Firstly, there was the standard formula of physical attack, singly or often in association with the imposition of oaths. Thus in 1771 the dwellings of farmers and dairymen at Killusty and Kiltinan near Fethard were attacked, their occupants whipped and sworn, and another dairyman was buried in a grave and made to swear to return to Co. Waterford (28). The second approach was the issuing of threatening notices to new tenants enjoining them to relinquish possession to the former tenants or else violence would ensue (29). Alternatively the notices cautioned the landlord not to replace existing tenants in favour of outsiders, instanced in 1775 in the case of Hugh Daniel (30). This level of intimidation extended itself in this period into several murders of members of the upper class notably Ambrose Power in November 1775 and in the attempted murders of Philip Going in 1773 and John Bagwell in 1775 (31). A new form of intimidation introduced at this time was the imposition of a levy on the better off farmers either to finance legal proceedings on behalf of the Whiteboys, or more generally simply as protection money (32).

The destruction of property in the 1770s was significant though subsidiary in its incidence to acts of intimidation. Houses of new tenants were demolished or broken as at Pallashill, Wilmar, Darlinghill, Carrickbeg, and Cregg (33). The dairy utensils of dairymen from Co. Waterford were destroyed, for instance at Graig near Fethard, at Shanbally, and at Tinvane (34). Tithe corn was either set on fire or scattered (35). There was a residue of levelling activity in areas where it had been to the fore in the early 1760s. But levelling as an instrument of redress declined in the intervening period, a trend consistent with the fact that enclosure of commons receded as a major issue (36). Activities necessary for or preliminary to the execution of acts of intimidation or for



accomplishing the destruction of property assume a greater prominence in the 1770s. In particular there is a marked increase in attacks on houses for firearms, a practice not greatly evident in the 1760s. At least 15 such attacks are on record for the years 1771-6 mostly in 1775 which was a particularly violent year (37). This marks a departure from previous practice and reflects the desire of the Whiteboys to maximise the effect of their agitation. The arms attacks must also be associated with the stealing of horses which became more common in these years (38).

The unrest of the mid-1780s is characterised by a general reduction in the level of serious violence as the strategies adopted by the Rightboys were more sophisticated than those practised previously. This transition is partly explained by the nature of the grievances articulated at this time. These were tithes, clerical dues and rates, church rates, and rent (39). These issues were less sectional than the objectives pursued in the 1760s and 1770s. Because the grievances were more widely experienced the Rightboy aims received a degree of popular, communal sanction making the need to resort to violence less contingent. The absence of serious violence can also be attributed to the highly effective leadership of the Rightboys, and also to the degree of upper class support which the movement enjoyed. The methods of achieving redress in this period, particularly in 1785-6, were therefore different in character from the two earlier phases of organised unrest.

Although some cases of intimidation against clergymen are evident, the new strategy devised to regulate tithe payments was that of swearing entire parishes to pay only certain prescribed amounts, proved to be a more effective weapon (40). A similar approach, entailing threats and collective swearing sessions, is evident in relation to attempts to regulate rates and dues paid to the catholic clergy (41). Rent and general tenancy arrangements as issues are reflected in the number of cases of forcible possession, refusals to pay rent, rescuing of distress, and a residue of resentment against outside tenants (42). Of their nature many of these incidents involved a degree of confrontation, but that serious personal attacks had become less common is re-inforced by the fact that there was a sharp decrease in the number of attacks for firearms (43).

In contrast the direction of violence in 1799-1803 was mainly towards attacks on the person and various forms of intimidation, with the destruction of property being less prominent and then usually as an accompaniment to intimidation (44). This level of personal violence arose out of the main grievances of these years namely shortages created by the bad harvest and the failure of the potato crop, the displacement of estate



employees and sitting tenants, and the employment of outside labourers. The chief means used to gain redress on these issues was by personal attack entailing murder, assault, and beatings. New tenants or new estate employees were murdered as were a proctor, Lord Cahir's steward, a caretaker, and a miscellany of others (45). Beatings and floggings were administered to new tenants, outside labourers and their employers, and estate employees (46). The various types of intimidation invoked were directly related to the main issues of grievance. It was employed as a method to regulate the price of potatoes, to obtain potatoes, and to enjoin the quitting of farms on new tenants (47). Threatening notices were also circulated in relation to the quitting of farms and to potatoes (48). Essential for the execution of these personal attacks was the availability of firearms the requisitioning of which displays an upturn in these and following years (49).

The foregoing section has attempted to relate the methods adopted by agrarian movements to the main issues current during the four phases of unrest. It is clear that the level, form, and direction of violence or its absence reflects the changing nature of the issues over the period and the trenchancy or sophistication with which they were pursued. The first phase of unrest in the 1760s was characterised by attacks on property chiefly through levelling, with a degree of intimidation but with a low level of personal attack and a low use of firearms. This balance altered in the 1770s with intimidation (in its standard and innovative forms), assault and murder foremost, property destruction subsidiary, and an accompanying increase in the robbery of firearms and horses. The mid-1780s witnesses a further alteration in that the overall level of violence declines with a fall off in firearms attacks. Finally in 1799-1803 there is a re-emergence of serious violence particularly personal assault, murder, and intimidation with firearms attacks again to the fore.

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In the majority of cases, given the inexplicit and non-composite nature of the source material, the social status of the participants in the post-1760 agrarian movements is not readily apparent. Hence a detailed occupational analysis and statistical enumeration of their social composition is not feasible. As a point of departure it is realistic to assume that just as the methods of agrarian unrest relate to the issues, so also can the involvement of different social groups. In the 1760s the judgment of contemporaries indicates what social strata were advancing the issues of that time. Thus one observer labelled the Whiteboys of Tipperary as a 'parcell of wretches' and, more specifically,



'swineherds and cowboys' (50). For the grand jury of the county in 1762 the agitators were 'low, idle, and disorderly persons', while the Levellers referred to themselves as 'revengers for wrongs done the poor' (51). These remarks point to the lower order within the rural community, labourers and cottiers.

This class was not uniform embracing as it did those both in the occupancy of small conacre plots and in employment (whether casual or long term), or a combination of both. The issues of conacre and potato tithe which they advanced were also ones which attracted support from artisans and craftsmen in the towns like Clonmel, Clogheen and Carrick where textile workers held outlying plots (52). Furthermore the movement attracted some other subsidiary elements who either acted in a supportive capacity or who were motivated by self-gain. Of the former category schoolmasters, of whom two cases (one a Whiteboy leader) are recorded for this time, were able to provide the necessary skill for writing threatening letters (53). Some catholic priests may have had an identity of interests as the destruction or depopulation of village communities consequent on enclosure decimated a main source of clerical income. One commentator remarked in 1763 that 'very many of these priests who had villages with an hundred or two of cottages upon them, which paid them 6 pence or a 1s. a year each, are now deserted and their poor stipends dwindled to nothing' (54). In this way catholic priests like Rev. Nicholas Sheehy of Shanrahan, Rev. John Doyle of Ardfinnan, and Rev. Pierce Daniel of Cahir may have seen fit to render some token but non-active support to the agrarian rebels of their parishes (55).

Catholic gentlemen were visualised by the protestant junto in the county as playing an active role in promoting the disturbances (56). This was a mistaken view as many of them were the victims not the instigators of Whiteboy violence. Leading catholics renounced any implication of involvement. Edmund Sheehy, a catholic tenant, denied any association and referred to 'those fools called Whiteboys', that he knew of no 'man in the light of a gentleman connected with them', and that 'I have endeavoured as much as was in my power to suppress this spirit of Whiteboys' (57). The only catholic of any standing involved in the Whiteboys was the Clogheen woollen manufacturer James Hyland who was described as 'a very wealthy man and [a] considerable dealer in wool', whose participation arose from motives of profit (58).

Levelling activity over enclosure was directed at new grazier tenants such as Pierce Dwyer near Clonmel, Ferris at Newcastle, and Edward Hodgson at Kill; at landlords' stewards as in the case of Edward Briscoe on the lands of John Bagwell near Clogheen;



and at landlords themselves as in the cases of Thomas Hackett of Fethard, John Willington at Roanstown, and John Damer at Borrisoleigh (59). Large graziers, who by creating new deer parks reduced potential conacre lettings, were also victims and they included John Watson of Clonbrogan, Richard Moore of Barne, John Carden, and John McCarthy of Lisheen (60). So far as tithe is concerned the chief victims were the tithe farmers or jobbers. Acts of intimidation on them are recorded for Ardfinnan, while one person attempting to obtain a valuation for tithe corn was intimidated and made to take oaths (61). Labourers sent by Rev. Richard Foulke to collect potato tithe at Tulloghorton near Clogheen were accosted and he himself was assaulted when he tried to collect his tithe (62). Employees or labourers on estates were often the victims of attack largely by those displaced from such employment or those who had not secured it. The most explicitly stated case was in 1765 when the dwelling house of a person, who had taken charge of a gentleman's stock at Rathsalla near Cashel, was demolished because he had taken the position of a dismissed employee (63). Thus the Whiteboy movement of the early 1760s was characterised by a conflict between on the one hand a large body of marginal elements in rural society mainly labourers and cottiers, and on the other substantial tenant farmers, graziers, and tithe farmers.

In the early 1770s as the nature of the grievances altered so also did the related social composition of the agitators, accompanied by a shift in the make-up of the group against whom the violence was directed. In these years the issue of tithe corn was one which affected a broad section of rural society incorporating those from the farmer class and below it. Farmers, whose participation in the unrest of the early 1760s had been negligible, now became active. This was occasioned because tithe on corn became more onerous as a result of the recent expansion in cereal growing. This was mainly in the Suir valley in districts hitherto devoted to stock raising and largely tithe-free as cattle were effectively exempt from tithe since 1735. In south Tipperary, where the transition to grain was most marked, farmers or their sons resisted the taking of tithe corn, intimidated those attempting to do so, or destroyed it before it could be collected (64). Because of their social position there were attempts to press large farmers into leadership roles in the movement, as in the case of Andrew Grainger of Cloran near Fethard (65). Their involvement is also apparent from the description of those who led the attack on the Grubb household at Anner mills in July 1775, when it was remarked that they were 'far above the lower order of people, were decently dressed, and spoke the English language very well' (66). Farmers and their sons were also concerned in rescuing goods



distrained by their landlords for arrears of rent (67).

Local dairymen were active in protecting their interests against the intrusion of dairymen from Co. Waterford or, if the latter had already become established, in attempting to remove them. This situation arose partly because the local dairymen were unable or unwilling to pay the high rents demanded by the dairymasters (68). The outcome was an attempt by the local dairymen either to intimidate the dairymasters not to dispossess them but to continue them in tenancy in preference to the Co. Waterford men, or to destroy the dairying utensils of the latter, inflict beatings, or impose oaths (69).

The intrusion of outsiders, whereby they came to be a threat to their economic interests, was also a grievance among the labourer / cottier element at this time. The expansion in cereal cultivation created a demand for extra labour at harvest time, a demand largely filled by the recruitment of migrants from south west Ireland. Their arrival in large numbers became a threat to the employment prospects of the local labour force, working as the outsiders did for generally lower wages. They thus became the objects of attack at a number of locations in cereal growing areas of south Tipperary in the early 1770s (70). Labourers, cottiers, and country people generally were also resentful of a number of financial and material impositions which they regarded as arbitrary. Tithe exactions were a unifying grievance to which found expression in the destruction of stacks of wheat and barley and by the intimidation of proctors (71). There was also resistance to church rates, notably in the Birdhill-Newport district where in 1774 it was reported that 'thousands' of country people defied their imposition (72). The substantial role of labourers and cottiers is again evident in the number of attacks for firearms and in the taking of horses and their accoutrements (73).

Many of the grievances were shared by the artisans and craftsmen of the towns. Their participation accounts for the spread of serious unrest to the Carrick area in the early 1770s, coinciding as it did with difficulties in the textile industry there. At a time of economic difficulty textile workers sought to mitigate their hardship and protect their interest by, for instance, trying to maintain tithe potato rates in the deer park near the town at current rates, by destroying barley and wheat stacks, and by general acts of intimidation directed against those identified as being contrary to their welfare (74). A number of town dwellers acted in a leadership capacity notably Patrick Hackett, a carrier from Carrick, and Richard Dooly, a weaver from the same town (75). Others such as schoolmasters and publicans acted in a supportive role (76).

The agitation of the mid-1780s was pre-occupied with the issues of tithe corn, clerical



dues and rates, church rates, and rent. These issues, particularly tithe, cut right across rural social divisions. While the bulk of the membership of the Rightboys, as in previous movements, continued to be drawn from the lower orders in society upper class involvement was more general than in previous decades. The participation of labourers is mentioned as early as 1780 (77). They with cottiers, servants, and artisans constituted the great majority of those who travelled seasonally to Newfoundland to obtain employment in the fisheries. Indicative of the inter-action of this class of seasonal migrants with Rightboyism, is the case of John Heirk. He was involved in the notorious murder of John Dunn of Fenor in 1786 and following the crime went to Newfoundland, later returned and having gained a position as gardener near Castle Otway was arrested (78). The class to which Heirk belonged was primarily associated in the unrest because of the exaction of tithe on corn as shown in the opposition to Rev. Nicholas Herbert in 1782, and because of clerical impositions exemplified in nearby Cahir in 1787 when it was reported that 'the lower class of peasantry shut up the chapel every Sunday and would not permit the priest to say prayers' (79).

Upper class involvement was triggered off through resentment of tithe as a burdensome imposition and the continued expansion of corn growing. This involvement is authenticated by the remark made by one peer who reported to government in 1786 that 'Those who have risen in the county of Tipperary and indeed elsewhere declare that they are encouraged by people of consequence' (80). However this tendency was evident in certain areas much earlier, for example in Rev. Herbert's parish of Knockgraffon where in 1780 it was said that 'many of the head parishoners' were actively concerned in resisting tithe claims (81). This pattern must have been replicated in many of the adjoining cereal growing parishes. The most eminent example of gentry participation is perhaps Samuel Middleton, a reported leader of the Rightboys in the Borrisoleigh area where he had large property and distilling interests (82). Additionally there were attempts to involve socially prominent persons as leaders of Rightboy groups. Thus in July 1786 about 1,000 people met at Ninemilehouse and made James Connolly, innholder, take oaths, and later threatened him to proceed to swear others which he refused to do whereupon further intimidation ensued (83). In the same month the Rightboys tried at Moycarkey to enforce oaths on John Mannin of Shanbally, gentleman, and attempted unsuccessfully to make him assume 'a title or command among them' and to lead them in swearing other parishes (84). Mannin is the only case forthcoming at gentry level where force was used in order to induce involvement on the side of the



### Rightboys.

Large farmers became associated with the unrest from another source of grievance which derived from tenancy arrangements. Richard (Buck) English near Cullen took and retained forcible possession of lands for an extended period (85). Large farmer participation is also indicated by the cases where the rescuing of distress for rent arrears was undertaken and by acts of repression against new tenants (86). Overall the social composition of the Rightboys was pyramidal in character : a large base of the labourer / cottier class with representation from other classes narrowing as one rose in the social scale.

Those who were the victims of Rightboy action are identified by the central issues. Regarding tithes clergymen such as Rev. William Ryan, rector of Kilvemnon, Rev. Samuel Riall, vicar of Ballingarry, and Rev. Richard Lloyd of Clonoulty were personally threatened or had their property destroyed (87). Others, whose duty it was to collect tithe, were also maltreated (88). Catholic clergy such as Rev. Francis Power and Rev. William Lonergan of Carrick and the parish priest of Newport, were the objects of attack over dues and rates (89). The rescuing of distress, the refusal to pay rent, and the forcible possession of lands were practices adopted largely in defiance of landowners like Richard Read and John Butler, or head tenants like Richard Kiely (90).

The unrest of the period 1799-1803 largely involved the labouring class and landless because of the particular issues of those years. One landlord writing from Cordangan near Tipperary in November 1802 described the rural disturbers in his area as consisting of 'labourers, mechanicks (sic), discharged militiamen, and farmers who are yearly tenants' (91). A different perspective of their social composition is provided by a commentator from Clonmel who remarked in January 1803 that the unrest 'arose out of local prejudices and antipathies between the resident peasantry and those itinerant labourers commonly designated in the south by the name of Kerry-men' (92). This period saw a re-emergence of conflict over access to land and employment. This arose because some of the essential means of support for the lower peasantry were undermined or curtailed in these years. Shortages were exacerbated by wartime inflation. Firstly, the prices of basic food items rose sharply. The bad harvest of 1799 and the failure of the potato crop in 1800 led to a shortage and consequent price rises in these commodities (93). An object of the unrest was to force a reduction in the prices of essential food stuffs like potatoes and milk, and to regulate their supply and disposal. In May 1800 the Long family at Drumbane, Thurles, were sworn to sell as much of their potatoes as



possible to the area at 4s. 4d. per barrel and only to feed their pigs once with them (94). Attacks with a similar intent took place at Thory (parish of Clonoulty) and at Clonmore near Templemore (95). This situation of shortage and high price was compounded by the fact that the price of grain also rose. The situation was exacerbated because some farmers combined to keep their corn from disposal at market, such forestalling apparently going unchecked (96).

The second factor affecting the position of the labouring class at this time was that in the intensive grazing areas of the county rents for potato ground were high and were not matched by the availability of employment in such areas, nor by wage levels which tended to be low at 5d. or 6d. per day much the same as thirty years previously (97). It became an object of the unrest in grazing districts to undertake the break up of grass land in order to reduce the price of potato ground (98). This motivation also accounts for the attacks on estate workers engaged in erecting deer park walls on the Massy-Dawson estate at Newforest, thereby keeping the enclosed land from use as potato ground (99). Conversely, unrest arose in the by now traditional arable areas of the south east because of the selective reversion by certain landlords to pasture. Such a process raised fears among smallholders that they would be obliged to pay more for their tillage grounds than formerly. These fears were expressed in attacks on or intimidation of new employees like shepherds and herdsmen installed to oversee the new pasture lands. This occurred twice in 1802 to Sir Thomas Osborne's herdsman once at Kilmore and again at Tickincor, and also to John Grace's herdsman near Cashel and Rev. John Aldwell's at Dogstown in the same year (100). Given these circumstances it is hardly surprising that that there was a renewal of attacks on migrant labourers simply because their presence in the county frustrated efforts by local labourers to gain concessions in relation to wage rates and extra conacre. Attacks and intimidation of outsiders and their local employers are recorded for the Clonmel area in 1800, Ballynavin, Redmondstown, Hospital, Knockgraffon, and Kiltinan in 1802, and Giant's Grave near Clonmel in 1805 (101). The second most important social element were displaced farmers who were unable or unwilling to reach the new rent levels demanded when land fell out of lease at this time. They were prominent in leading attacks against new tenants with the intent of forcing them to surrender their recently taken farms and return them to their former occupiers (102).

A review of the social composition of agrarian movements in Tipperary in the four main periods of unrest between 1760 and 1803, suggests that they derived their main



support from the lower order in the rural and urban community consisting of landholding and landless labourers, cottiers, servants and artisans. Existing at a level of subsistence or just above it, this was the class which was largely affected by the issues of access to potato ground, conacre rents, tithe (particularly that of potatoes), and employment. These issues survived with a certain consistency right through the period and so point to the lower peasantry as being the core group in the agrarian movement. It is at this level that the element of class conflict is most evident. A practice indicative of this is abduction which increased at times of serious unrest. For the 1760s 5 cases are on record, 14 for the 1770s, 11 for the 1780s, and two for the 1790s, a decade devoid of major agrarian activity (103). These abductions were carried out on the daughters or relatives of those whom the Whiteboys or Rightboys identified as having countered their economic interests by displacing them from the occupancy of land or denying them access to employment.

The catalyst which widened out the movement to involve those higher up in the social scale was that of tithe which acted as a unifying grievance between different social groups, and which accounts for the association of the more substantial elements like large farmers with the unrest of the 1770s and 1780s. The latter group had issues peculiar to itself especially in relation to tenancy arrangements and the introduction of new tenants in their place as in the 1770s and 1799-1803. Those against whom the agitation was directed comprised those with a vested interest in tithes, migrant labourers and dairymen, local land speculators who took lands over the heads of sitting tenants, and large graziers who enclosed commons or refused conacre. The agitation was not simply one existing between different social groups, although this was substantially the case. It also entailed conflict within the labouring class for access to employment and within the tenant farmer and dairyman class for lease preferences.

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An array of charges on land, ranging from rent to parish cess, were included in the catalogue of grievances advanced by agrarian movements after 1760. Excepting rent, which was an issue more associated with the occupation of land, tithe was the main charge deemed burdensome. The tithe system was inequitable. Inequity regarding payment arose because of two basic anomalies in the tithe system : since 1735 pasture land was effectively exempt from tithe, and in Munster potatoes were subject to tithe (104). In 1735 some landlords petitioned parliament against recent novel exactions ( at



least outside the north) made on them for tithe of agistment on their cattle. Parliament resolved that the demand was burdensome (105). The result was the effective exemption of pasture and grassland from tithe.

In a county like Tipperary where the rural economy before 1770 was dominated by grazing this decision favoured the large grazier and served to place the onus for paying the bulk of tithe on the tiller. The effect was aptly stated by Rev. Patrick Hare, vicar general of Cashel, who in 1801 observed that the implication of the house of commons resolution in 1735 was that it 'exonerated the grazier of tithes and left the burden on the tiller ; the grazier grew rich, the tiller grew poor ; the landlord preferred the rich grazier who could engage for large tracts, and dispossessed the poor tiller with his ragged family ; the tiller was then under the necessity of contracting with the rich grazier for the worst parts of the land at most exorbitant rents with tithes superadded, the poor tiller with his family is reduced to beggary' (106).

This arbitrary situation was worsened by the fact that in Tipperary, as well as other Munster counties and parts of Leinster, potatoes were subject to tithe and in addition the rate demanded for potato tithe was higher than that for other crops (Tables LIII, LIV). Those dependent on potatoes as a means of support, i.e. labourers and cottiers, thus became the main group in rural society from whom tithe payments were extracted.

The tithe system was also inequitable because of those intermediaries who evolved between tithe owner and tithe payer, and who came to have a vested interest in the maintenance of the system. These functionaries arose because of the cumbersome nature of tithe collection and the difficult circumstances concerning parochial provision in the established church. The number of parishes per benefice per clergyman in Tipperary was too great to make the personal collection of tithes feasible. In 1791 the average size of a parish situated in the respective dioceses in Tipperary was : Cashel 2,881 acres ; Emly 2,595 acres; Lismore 2,875 acres ; and Killaloe 3,281 acres. This gives an overall average for the entire county of 2,908 acres per parish (107). In terms of the number of parishes per benefice the ratios for those parts of the respective dioceses located in Tipperary was : Cashel 3.5, Emly 3.3, Lismore 2.1, and Killaloe 2.7. This gives an overall average for the entire county of parishes per benefice of 2.9 making it higher than the national average which stood at about 2. On average the size of a benefice was 8,410 acres (107a).

The existence of large benefices is further substantiated by the trend towards the union of parishes, reflecting manpower and income difficulties in the church locally. The union



of parishes occurred where tithes were insufficient to support a clergyman. A number of unions were in existence at the start of the eighteenth century namely those which were attached to the cathedral chapters of Cashel and Killaloe, and in those areas where tithes were in the hands of lay owners (108). The number of unions subsisting by mid-century was about 13 and their institution does not resume until 1767 between which date and 1807 a further 38 were made (109). The number was static up to 1767 but grew markedly in the forty years thereafter indicating that large and extensive benefices were created for clerical support. Some indication of the actual sizes of these benefices can be had for 1807, when of the 29 unions whose total acreages can be determined 17 were less than 7,000 acres each and 12 were between 7,000 and 14,000 acres (110). Individually the larger unions were Fethard (10,987 acres), Tubbrid (10,211), Shanrahan (9,870), Ardfinnan (5,138), Knockgraffon (4,780), Kilbragh (4,029), and Cahir (6,338) in the south of the county ; and Cullen (10,751), Tipperary (8,835), and Lattin (1,810) in the mid-west bordering on Limerick. Other large unions whose acreages are not forthcoming but which had a significant complement of parishes included Carrick and Clonmel (111).

Given the existence of such extensive parishes, non-residence of clergymen was common. In consequence there was a natural resentment against paying a tax for which no equivalent service was rendered. This was understandable among protestants but was doubly so for catholics. Even where a minister was resident there was an intrinsic difficulty in getting a body of parishoners to co-operate in its payment, compounded where catholics the majority population were concerned because of cultural differences.

The union of parishes was designed to improve the incomes of clergymen. As things stood income levels tended to be low. In the mid-seventeenth century of 167 parishes in the county for which figures are available, 133 were in the income range from tithes of £1-£40, 31 were between £41 and £100, and 3 in the range £100-£200 (Table LI). Income from tithe was small and was obtained with difficulty. For example the living of Clonmel in 1739 had an income of £100 but was declared to be 'one of the largest and yet poorest parish[es] in this kingdom'. Out of this amount a salary of £40 was paid to a curate, a person indispensable because of the extent of the living, and towards this tithes contributed £24 derived from 'very small pittances collected from a great number of [the] poorest people' (112). The value of the tithes of Clonmel a century previously was £40, so that at £24 there was a net decline in the amount of tithe revenue of £16 in the intervening period (113).



Given the inconvenience and cost of taking tithe in kind in such extensive parishes the tithe owner had two options. In the first place he could reach agreement with the tithe payers of the parish for a monetary composition (modus decimandi) in lieu of the tithes. This method was one whereby the tithe payers effectively purchased their own tithes and agreed by written bond to meet the tithe owner's demand at a valuation to be arrived at between them and his proctor or valuator (114). Secondly, in cases where such agreements could not be reached because the tithe payer considered the proctor's valuation unacceptable, the tithe owner could lease out the tithes of a parish or group of parishes to a tithe farmer, or in smaller lots within a single parish to tithe canters (115). Such farming or leasing of tithes could be resorted to where the parishoners proved troublesome over a period about agreeing for a composition. It could also be the most convenient option when litigation in the ecclesiastical courts (to which the tithe owner could resort when the tithe payers sought to pay tithes in kind which was their legal right), proved to be costly, tedious, and ultimately ineffective.

The intrusion of these middlemen functionaries between tithe payer and tithe owner, while they were regarded as necessary by the latter, came to be viewed by the former as exploitive and arbitrary. This was because tithe farmers demanded an increased amount in tithe payments from the lower peasantry above the amount they passed on to the clergyman ; while tithe proctors demanded a percentage for their work as collectors and valuers ; and tithe canters were regarded as undermining the bargaining position of tithe payers when, compositions not having been arrived at, they leased small denominations from the clergyman (116). There were, therefore, inequities in the tithe system because the burden of payment, due to the exemption of pasture and the liability of potatoes as tithable, fell on the gardens and plots of the peasantry. This position was made more exploitive by the existence of tithe middlemen who from a profit seeking motive and in varying degrees had an interest in system being perpetuated.

Unrest over tithe arose after 1760 because the resources of the peasantry, in terms of access to conacre, conacre rents, and wage rates, were not sufficient to meet outgoings of which tithes were regarded as particularly onerous as they were a tax on essential food items and on productivity. The main thrust of the agitation over tithe in the early 1760s was directed at achieving a more equitable dealing by restricting or eliminating the activities of tithe intermediaries and by refusals to pay potato tithe. It was the opinion of one gentleman writing from the county in 1766 that the Whiteboy disturbances had arisen from 'A parcell of wretches opprest with tithe farmers', while it was the view of



James Buxton a catholic gentleman executed in 1766, that the troubles originated from a desire to put 'a stop to the oppressive and arbitrary valuation of tithe jobbers' (117). The demands of tithe farmers were looked on as oppressive at a time when the income resources of the peasantry were restricted.

Attempts were made to force the tithe farmers or jobbers to relinquish their agreements with clergymen for tithe, and to prevent such agreements being arrived at. These attempts were widespread if one is to judge by the statement by the magistrates in July 1763 when they referred to 'several lawless persons [who] have illtreated several who dealt and threaten those who shall deal, with the proprietors of tithes in several parishes . . . and have contemptuously . . . posted up public advertisements to that purpose' (118). Instances of such attacks are forthcoming for areas in the south west of the county where parishes were extensive and where tithe farming was common. Thus in October 1763 Timothy Loughnan of Clashavagha was seized by nearly 100 persons and threatened to be buried alive if he did not promise to relinquish an agreement which he had since 1760 with Rev. Richard Foulke and Rev. William Downes for the tithes of Newcastle parish near Ardfinnan (119). Loughnan would appear to have succumbed to these threats for a prospective successor, Edmund Wall (who offered to lease the tithes for 60 guineas for 1763), received a threatening notice shortly afterwards vowing his death if he closed the agreement with the two clergymen (120). Interestingly one of them, Rev. Foulke who was vicar of Tullaghorton, was also intimidated because he had taken a lease of the tithes of Derrygarth parish and as a result he gave up his lease to Rev. Laurence Brodrick, rector of Newcastle, in 1763 being as it was said 'frightened by the Whiteboys' (121).

The main impetus in all this was to deter actual and potential tithe farmers from carrying out their functions, the objective being to eliminate them and, as Buxton put it, 'to deal for tithes with none but the immediate proprietor' (122). Accordingly surplus amounts going to the tithe farmer would be dispensed with and the amount actually paid by the parishoners reduced. The desire was not for a total abolition of tithe rather it was for a more equitable dealing through the elimination of the tithe middlemen and their excessive demands. Such a motivation accounts for the intimidation of proctors in 1765 as at Clonmel and Ardfinnan where one was whipped and made to swear not to deal any longer in tithes (123).

The second area of tithe agitation at this time related to demands for potato tithe. In the early 1760s conacre lettings were being sold for four or five guineas, and in Tipperary the price of conacre was estimated at twice or three times that formerly paid (124). Given



this level of expence and the fact that income at a daily wage of 4d. for 300 working days brought in £5 annually, the peasant household budget was tight. Often, however, there were only 200 working days in the year which gave earnings of four guineas, leaving 9s. to spare which went towards hearth money (2s.), rent of cabin (2s.), and tithes (5s.) (125). In addition, with the expence of seed and manure and without a commensurate increase in wages tithes on potatoes, because it was such a substantial variable cost which could make the difference between solvency and beggary, was particularly resented (126). Because the early 1760s witnessed a sharp rise in conacre rents without an accompanying rise in labourers' wage levels, there was a widespread campaign among this class to refuse payment of potato tithes.

By late 1764 a large number of occupiers had refused to set out or pay potato tithes, with the consequent sharp decline in clerical incomes (127). There were calls for the total abolition of tithes on potatoes in certain districts, but the general emphasis was on hindering their collection. For instance this occurred to Rev. Richard Foulke when he failed to gather his potato tithes in Clogheen (128). The tithes agitation of the early 1760s saw the passage of an act (7 Geo. III c.2) in 1767 which sought to provide for the better collection of tithes and to make more effective litigation in tithes disputes. However, as became evident no law could be devised to draw tithes effectively if those liable were uncooperative.

The emphasis in the tithes issue shifts somewhat with the movement of the 1770s. As to tithes exactment that on potatoes recedes in significance while that on corn assumes a greater prominence. This latter grievance came to the fore in the light of the recent expansion in cereal cultivation in the county. The dimensions of this movement into cereals, involving the conversion of pasture land and the erecting of flour mills, have already been detailed. The demands for tithes on corn which resulted were viewed as punitive as they were a tax on gross yield of produce, especially by those farmers who were just earning a good return after a large initial outlay on the conversion of pasture to tillage (129). This situation was compounded by the economic depression of the early 1770s, this context accounting for the role of farmers and their sons in the unrest.

The methods enforced in an attempt to defeat the demands for tithes on corn were threefold. Firstly, the Whiteboys sought to force a departure from the customary form of tithes payment and bond in favour of a reversion to making the clergyman take it in kind. This was a strategy decided on in the knowledge that it would present major problems of organisation and collection. But in cases where individual clergy mobilised, the second



strategy came into play. This entailed the destruction of tithe corn and hay and the breaking up of carriages intended for its conveyance. Instances of the former practice are on record for Deerpark and Tinvane near Carrick and near Clonmel, and of the latter at Knockgraffon.(130). Associated with the two preceding strategies was that of restricting the functions of tithe proctors whose basic duty of valuation would have been made redundant if tithe was paid in kind. A statement reportedly made by two Whiteboys before their execution in Clonmel in April 1776 suggests that the elimination of proctors was one of the main aims of the movement of the 1770s. It declared that 'we know of no design among the White Boys but the infatuated one of discouraging proctors and tythe jobbers' (131). One such proctor, John Wharton who acted for Rev. Nicholas Herbert, was severely maimed in October 1773 when he was at Knockgraffon to bring in tithe, and another of Rev. Herbert's proctors was ill-treated on the same count the following year (132). As to the tithe jobbers or farmers it would appear that they lost heavily as a result of the unrest of these years with some having to surrender their contracts (133).

Tithe corn came to be an especial focus of grievance for the quakers as they were prominent in forwarding the transition into grain production locally. The community opposed the payment of tithes on religious and conscientious grounds, and evidence from the so called sufferings dating from the 1660s onward indicates that tithe payment was enforced on the quakers by distraint of stock and crops (134). This situation was recognised in the tithe act of 1767, for a clause in the act (7 Geo.III c.21 s.11) enacted that quakers refusing to pay tithe could be summoned by two justices of the peace and payment ordered if the sums involved were not in excess of £10, and upon their refusal distress could be taken. However there was a proviso whereby the decision of the justices could be appealed against at the assizes, and in the event of such an appeal being lodged no distress could be taken until the case was decided (7 Geo.III c.21 s.12).

Previous experience of litigation on these matters locally indicates that the assize judges tended to favour the appellants (135). Thus quaker evasion of tithe was made more easy by the fact that decisions to take distress could be appealed with every likelihood that the judges would favour the appellant. In addition the act itself was a temporary one only remaining in force for a period of two years from 24 June 1768, a clause which shows that, in the tradition of the resolution of 1735, parliament was not eager to facilitate greater efficiency in tithe collection. The quaker case for non-payment was re-inforced by the publication of tracts which outlined their objections and these were accepted as valid at the time (136). Resentment among quakers locally over tithe,



particularly those engaged in corn cultivation, continued to be a strong feature of their relations with the Anglican clergy (137). In the more immediate context of the unrest of the 1770s there was some resentment against quakers themselves for their reluctance to pay tithes. It is possible to view the attack by persons of comfortable standing on the house of Joseph Grubb of Anner Mills in July 1775, in this light (138).

Tithe corn continued to be the central issue in the Rightboy movement of the 1780s as the trend towards the conversion of pasture to arable accelerated (Table XXXVII). When pasture land was ploughed up and sown with cereals it ceased to be tithe free so that from the harvests of 1785 new demands for tithe on wheat, oats and barley were forthcoming. These were resented by those farmers and gentlemen who had undertaken the movement into cereals and out of this developed various strategies designed to defeat clerical expectations of increased income from tithe corn. The agitation which ensued was more sophisticated in its methods compared with previous phases of unrest. It had four main objectives in relation to tithe payment.

The first aim was to effect the payment of tithe in kind rather than agreeing on a valuation and composition with the tithe owner. If this occurred on a limited scale it might prove manageable, but it became Rightboy practice to universalise the method over a wide area (by the swearing of whole parishes to do so), thereby making it untenable for the clergyman to consider drawing in kind. An early manifestation of the problems involved was in 1780 when Rev. Nicholas Herbert, rector of Knockgraffon, received 50 or 60 notices from his parishioners for his tithe to be drawn in kind on one particular day. In an effort to defy this challenge Herbert obtained the loan of the extra horses, carts, and labour required for the operation from local friends. But the drawing of the tithe was carried out at great cost, effort, and risk, his daughter, Dorothea Herbert, remarking that 'Feeding and providing for such a number of men and horses was a dreadful expence and trouble. Every soul in the house was out from four in the morning till 12 or one at night counting the sheaves to get the property ensured on the county'. As the tithe corn was drawn in there was the danger that there would be attacks made to regain or destroy it. The rector's daughter reported graphically that her father 'stood out each night patrolling to see that all was safe and my mother sat out in the gravel walk with a candle and her account book till break of day. Whilst every individual amongst us had a station to guard . . . [and] spies [were] scatter'd throughout the parishes to watch that none was subtracted by night. We had not a servant in the house the whole time and were in continual peril of our lives' (139). This experience illustrates the inconvenience and



dangers attached to collecting tithe in kind, involving as it did a degree of defiance of the parishoners. However Herbert's experience is confined to the years 1780-82 and it may have been exceptional as there are no other detailed reports of clergyman successfully drawing tithe in kind at this time on such a large scale.

The device of setting out tithe in kind was a practice subsequently adopted by the Rightboys on a more universal scale. The inhabitants of the districts of Owing near Carrick, Cahir, Moycarkey, Knockingtemple, Newport, and Cashel were sworn by Rightboy groups in 1786 in order to gain their compliance with this strategy (140). The aim was to create an impossible situation for clergymen and force them to comply with Rightboy demands. One landowner, Edward Moore of Mooresfort near Tipperary, was concerned about the effect the demand for tithe to be gathered in kind would have and about the inability of tithe owners to confront the challenge with any degree of effectiveness. Writing in late June 1786 Moore observed that the country people 'are under oath to leave their tythes in kind unless a small value be offered for them ; I take it for granted this will be done upon the same day in the several parishes. How can these tythes be drawn ? Where will be the horses got to draw them ? After they are drawn may they not easily be destroyed ?'(141).

The experience of individual clergy shows the seriousness of the problem in practice. When Rev. Patrick Hare went in August 1786 to collect his tithes in the parish of Kilbragh near Cashel he found that the inhabitants were sworn not to sell them to him, which suggests that they were being offered in kind only (142). Even if the tithe was drawn away the Rightboy intention was not to allow consignments to remain intact, as Edward Moore apprehended and as Rev. Hare experienced when his tithe was destroyed (143). Similarly in December 1788 a considerable amount of wheat in a barn and two stacks of wheat (one each of oats and bere) and four of hay were maliciously set on fire at Ballagh near Clonoulty the property of Rev. Richard Lloyd (144). Part of the strategy also was the intimidation of labourers who were employed to assist in the collection of tithe for the tithe owners (145). Also those who undermined Rightboy rules by agreeing to pay tithe by monetary composition felt the wrath of the rural agitators. This happened in September 1786 when 150 Rightboys on horseback and 500 on foot marched through Newport vowing destruction on those who signed such tithe notes or bonds, and they visited the houses of those who had already done so (146). The more universal adherence to the offering of tithe in kind, the more effective it was in gaining the tithe owners' acceptance of reduced rates for tithe which was the second objective at this time.



Table LII gives the amounts in tithe rate decreed for different crops by the vicars court of Cashel between 1766 and 1785 in cases cited before it by clergy. From this evidence it can be deduced that the average amounts decreed for the respective crops in this period were : potatoes 5s. 3d., wheat 6s. 11/2d., barley and bere 7s. 2d., oats 3s. 7d., meadow 6s. 6d., and rape 7s. 8d (147). These amounts should be compared with those in columns I,II, and III of Table LIV which detail the average rates for 'several years preceding 1786', the average for five years before 1785, and rates cited by individual clergy respectively all applicable to the diocese of Cashel and Emly. Differences in amounts can be explained by the fact that different rates per acre were arrived at between parishes. What is in common between the rates outlined in Table LII and Table LIV columns I-III is that they all relate to set tithe i.e. the price agreed on directly between tithe owner and tithe payer. However, as Table LIV columns IV and V (using Cloyne for purposes of comparison), indicate the real amount paid in tithe could be twice or three times the amount of set tithe, the difference being accounted for by supplementary demands made by tithe middlemen. The profit margins obtained by the latter at a time of rising agricultural prices especially for grain crops, were deemed to be excessive. It became a Rightboy aim to prescribe schedules of tithe rates of their own and to gain the concurrence of clergy and tithe payers to them (Table LIV column VII). The amount of these rates differed according to the level of compromise achievable in different parishes, but in general it is apparent that not only did the Rightboy schedules seek to eliminate the profiteering of tithe middlemen altogether, but also they sought to have the amount in set tithe reduced by up to half in the case of potatoes and barley and a greater fall in the case of oats and wheat.

The ability of the Rightboys to gain concurrence with their schedules of tithe rates by tithe owners was closely linked with their third objective which was the removal of the tithe intermediaries, particularly the tithe farmers. Their elimination was presented as being desirable to the tithe owner as income would then accrue more readily to him, and to the tithe payer because as a consequence of direct dealing with the clergyman the amounts demanded in tithe would be more equitable. The farming out of tithes of parishes or groups of parishes continued to be a widespread practice previous to the outbreak of unrest, judging by the appearance of advertisements to that effect. In 1782 the tithes of Ballingarry near Killenaule were advertised for letting ; in 1783 those of Clogher, Clonpet, and Cordangan near Tipperary and of Fethard Union ; in 1784 those of Mullough near Ardfinnan, Kilmore near Dundrum and St. Patrick's Rock, Cashel ; in



1785 Bourney near Roscrea, Templemore, and Tipperary Union ; and in 1786 Thurles Union (148). Persons who entered such leasing contracts were the group who made such heavy demands on occupiers and who reaped large profits for themselves. The oppression which they wrought was recognised in government circles (149). The Rightboy strategy of paying tithe in kind and of seeking adherence to schedules of tithe rates was designed to make the role of the tithe farmer redundant. That tithe farmers felt under threat at this time is shown by the case of Mary Strang's agent for the farm of Garrane in Ballysheehan parish north of Cashel. When Rev. Patrick Hare demanded tithe composition to the value of £33. 1s. 4d. for the produce of the farm, the agent refused unless Hare agreed to make a new lease of the tithes of the parish to him during his incumbency, which Hare declined to do (150).

Despite Rightboy insistence on the taking of tithe in kind the essential function of another tithe middleman, the proctor, remained which was that of viewing and subtracting the appropriate amount of the respective crops. Proctors thus became the focus of Rightboy attention largely with a view to dissuading them from executing their duty. In 1785 Thomas Hayden was compelled to take an oath not to come into Lismoylan on any tithe business ; in January 1786 Meagher, a proctor living at Kilmakil near Thurles on Sir William Barker's estate, was forcibly brought to Urlingford and there cropped and buried ; and at Clonmel in September an attempt was made to make a proctor surrender his lease (151). Similarly the proctors of Rev. Patrick Hare, who were sent in June 1786 to view and value the tithes of the parish of Kilbragh near Cashel, were beaten, robbed of their valuation books, and made swear not to carry out their duties again (152).

The final aim of the Rightboys was to maximise the effect of offering tithe in kind, specifying tithe rates, and restricting tithe middlemen by direct action against the tithe owner himself. At least three major acts of personal intimidation against clergymen are on record. The first of these was directed at Rev. Samuel Riall, vicar of Ballingarry near Killenaule, in June 1783 when he received a notice threatening him with the fate of Ambrose Power (who was murdered in November 1775 for his opposition to the Whiteboys), if he persisted in making demands for tithes (153). The tithes of the parish had been advertised for letting the previous year and opposition to their collection continued after the delivery of the note to Rev. Riall at least until September 1783 (154). A more violent attack took place in October 1785 when it was reported that 'a great number of persons armed with clubs, poles, pitchforks, and firearms some of whom



were covered with white shirts', broke into the house of Rev. William Ryan, rector of Kilvemnon, at Mullinola near Mullinahone, violently assaulted him and tried to make him swear that he would dispense with his proctor and that he would value his own tithes and set them (155). Finally in December 1788 a large quantity of tithe corn belonging to Rev Richard Lloyd, minister of Clonoulty near Holy Cross, was set on fire and destroyed (156).

The cumulative effect of the Rightboy campaign was to force a sharp reduction in the income from tithe for clergy in Tipperary in 1786 and 1787. By December 1786 the archbishop of Cashel was circulating a notice to his diocesan clergy seeking 'as accurate an estimate as you can make of your losses this year in consequence of the combinations or outrages of the Whiteboys' (157). The clergy of Waterford and Lismore diocese, which included south Tipperary, lost one quarter of their revenue in 1786, losses which had to be made up by emergency legislation in 1787 and 1788 (158). Another index of loss of income due to the agitation may be the creation of unions of parishes of which there were seven in the period 1785-9 (159).

There may have been a temporary decline in tithe farming due to the success of the Rightboys. As early as 1787 an acreable tax in lieu of tithes was being implemented in certain parishes, and it became the policy on the Hely-Hutchinson estate to encourage a commutation of tithes (160). On the whole, however, the farming of tithes continued to be resorted to by tithe owners as a convenient if onerous and costly means of gaining income from tithe. Archdeacon Robert Baillie, for instance, granted 10 leases for tithes in the parishes of Ballysheehan and Ardmayle in the period 1785-1803 (161). Proctors, though they may also have experienced a downturn in the short term, continued to be required for the essential function of valuation. Their continued role can be seen in the predominance which valuation had as a method of tithe assessment in the parishes of Ardmayle and Ballysheehan in 1791 (Table LV). On the broader front tithe appears to have receded as a major issue in the catalogue of rural grievances after its high profile in 1785-8. The wartime inflation of 1793-1815 brought the more fundamental issues of land occupancy, rent, and employment into greater focus relegating charges on land, of which tithe was one, into a more subsidiary position.

While it may have been less important in reality, tithe did remain as one of the elements in the general armoury of expressed grievances. In 1793, for example, the inhabitants of a parish in west Tipperary proceeded to an adjoining parish in Limerick and, reportedly, 'swore the people to pay no more rents, no tythes, and to go to the next parish to



administer the same oath there' (162). The politicisation of the agrarian movement does not appear to have occurred in the county in the 1790s. Indeed in order to win support among the Munster peasantry in general it was reported of the United Irishmen that they had to 'dwell with peculiar energy on the supposed oppressiveness of tythes' (163).

In 1799 with the bad harvest and the failure of the potato crop in the summer of 1800, the rising price of basic food stuffs ; static wages ; and a rise in the acreable amount being demanded for tithe on the respective crops (Table LIV columns VIII, IX), incidental charges like tithe were brought into prominence again. Resentment was directed primarily against proctors. In March 1799 a proctor to the Rev. A. Herbert, rector of New Inn, named Shortis and his wife were murdered (164). In November 1800 Colonel Littlehales reported that one of the causes of the renewal of violence in his district of Cashel was the proctors 'who they state to be oppressive in the collection of tithes' (165). General statements regarding renewed activity over tithes are also in evidence for Cordangan near Tipperary in 1802 and in the barony of Slievardagh in 1804 (166). In February 1802 two of the tithe valuers of Rev. William Miller of Killeen were attacked and maimed, and the following October the attack was repeated (167). Proctors continued to be the object of serious attack in the years following, with the destruction of barns and crops in evidence also (168). Under this type of pressure some tithe owners may have thought it wise to dispense with the services of their proctors at least temporarily and to issue public notices to that effect. This Francis Benson did in respect of Fethard Union in November 1802 (169).

Though not on as extensive a scale as previously the leasing out of tithes is apparent for this period also. In 1803 Thomas Barton received a lease for 61 years at £24 of the tithes of the parish of Coolmundry from the non-resident incumbent, and in 1811 a memorandum concerning the leasing of the tithes of the parish of Ballymurreen was agreed between the earl of Ormond and Ossory and local parties at £60 for seven years (170). Attacks on tithe farmers, at least in their capacity as such, are non-existent for the first decade of the nineteenth century. The continuing importance of tithe as a major issue is indicated by its elevation onto a plane of litigation and politics. Litigation over tithe increased in the first decade and a half. Thus in 1807 there were 653 actions tried at Tipperary quarter sessions involving tithe, while ten years later the figure stood at 1,084 (171). Tithe also became an important issue in county politics in 1807. In August of that year a meeting of the freeholders was held in Cashel for the purpose of instructing their representatives in parliament to introduce a bill to abolish tithes and devise some



alternative means of support for the clergy (172). Such radical proposals took over thirty years to come to fruition. In the interim the underlying inequities of the system entailing the exemption of pasture, the existence of exacting tithe intermediaries, higher tithe rates in Munster counties like Tipperary despite a narrower tithe base, and the methods of enforcing payment being exploitive, cumbersome, and resented, persisted. The agitation over tithes initiated after 1760 witnessed attempts to restrict or regulate the operation of the system in a way intended to be more equitable to the tithe payer.

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Tithe was the major incidental charge which provoked rural opposition. There were others which occasionally emerged in the catalogue of rural grievances. These can be examined under three headings : payments due to the Established Church ; dues paid for the support of the Catholic clergy ; and various civil payments.

Other payments due to the Established Church derived from the church rates agreed on at the local church vestry and apportioned on all parishioners. This church tax went to support of a miscellany of purposes. It was used for the maintenance and repair of churches, the employment of teachers and parish clerks, donations to the poor and the support of orphans and foundlings, supplies for church services, the repair of roads, and latterly as payments for substitutes in the militia (173). Table LVII presents the amount in church rates levied in two different areas : the parishes of Shanrahan, Ballysheehan, and Templetenny in south Tipperary for 1725-96, and for Duntryleague a union skirting the Tipperary / Limerick border for 1766-1810. In Shanrahan the amount levied by the vestry increased over fourfold in the 70 year period. Before 1760 the rate remained below £16 but in that year there was a sharp rise to over £40 the levying of which coincides with the outbreak of Whiteboy unrest in these parishes. However, right through the 1760s until 1778 the rate was relatively stable at the £20 mark. A major refurbishment of Shanrahan church took place in 1778 and this accounts for the rise in the rate to £50, and it maintained this high level in the early 1780s. It reverted back to a more moderate level after 1787 and remained so until 1795. In that year there was an extraordinary rate of £83 struck, accounted for by a sum of £54 which was to be paid for providing substitutes for nine men balloted on the parish under the militia act. The levying of high church rates in Shanrahan coincides with the periods of agrarian unrest in 1760 and 1785-6.

In Duntryleague the amount of church rate rose from £26 in 1766 to £88 in 1811.



However, as in the case of Shanrahan, the trend was not uniformly upward as the amount struck by the vestry depended on the circumstances of individual parishes. In Duntryleague the rate remained below £30 before 1771 but in that year shot up to £118 and stayed above £50 until 1775 when it fell to £34. So the period of the early 1770s was one of rising church rates, the acreable amount doubling from 4s. 9d. per 100 acres in 1770 to 9s. 7d. in 1774. The rate remained at about the £30 mark for the rest of the 1770s. It rose sharply in 1781 to £81 but fell off thereafter and was not abnormally high in the years 1786-93 being uniformly at £27. 14s. 0d. It only exceeded earlier levels in 1802 when it reached £118 a level maintained for three years. Up until 1811 it was uniformly at £88. 18s. 6d. except in 1808 when the largest rate yet struck (£288) was accounted for by the need to raise 13 men from the union under the militia act. High church rates in Duntryleague coincide with rural unrest most obviously in the early 1770s.

Shanrahan and Fethard (where in October 1762 there were reports of opposition to the collection of church dues) apart the issue of church rates was not advanced as a major grievance by the Whiteboys (174). The lack of evidence regarding widespread resistance may be due to a general evasion of payment and opposition may only have emerged when the local vestry made a concerted effort to enforce payment. As much is to be implied from the incidents at Newport in 1774. In that year the local vestry struck a rate of 4d. per acre on the protestants and 2d. per acre on the catholics in the four parishes in the union of Newport, towards furnishing a new church. It was reported that the catholics, 'who it appears have not paid any church rates for 15 years past, . . . refused to pay it or anything at all, whereupon the church wardens attempted to distrain but were beat[en] back wherever they went' (175). This opposition was conducted mainly by cottiers on the Birdhill estate.

Church rates were an important item in the catalogue of Rightboy grievances. The rate struck at Shanrahan was consistently high in the early 1780s. There is a general statement as to hostility being expressed towards Rev. Samuel Riall over parish cess in 1783, and much of the swearing activity outside chapels must have included provision for a curtailment in the general level of parish rates (176). Evidence from two other parishes, Shronell and Relickmurry in Clanwilliam barony, shows that there were sharp increases in church rates in the early 1780s (177). This period would seem to have been one when church rates were resisted most because of their rising level, the rise occurring at a time of widespread poverty.



Catholic clergy received voluntary payments for officiating at baptism, marriage, and funeral ceremonies in addition to Christmas and Easter dues. Priest's money, as one contemporary termed it, was one of the charges identified in the 1760s as being oppressive to the rural poor (178). But it was not, apparently, until the 1780s that there was any movement as such advancing it as a grievance. In this the concentration was on enforcing certain rates which the clergy should be paid mainly for performing marriages but for other services also (179).

Attempts to impose such rates took two forms, the first of which was the intimidation of individual priests. Thus in June 1786 between 400 and 500 Whiteboys made the priest of Newport swear to take only 5s. for a marriage and 1s. 6d. for a christening (180). Other acts of violence or destruction directed at priests, or attempts to curtail them carrying out their functions at Carrick, Cahir, Knockgraffon, and Golden in 1786-8, can be associated with regulation also (181). The second method was to swear entire districts or towns to adhere to the rates laid down by the Rightboys. Thus in late June 1786 up to 2,000 of them swore the people of Cahir regarding such rates, and the declared intention was to do the same at Clonmel (182). The rates as prescribed by the Rightboys varied from parish to parish according to the degree to which existing or prevailing levels were considered excessive, and the assertiveness with which the new schedules were pressed (Table LVI).

Civil taxes took a number of forms. Most of these were unpopular with the peasantry and agitation in the respective phases of unrest was largely directed at their reduction rather than their total abolition. The amount of county cess shows an overall upward trend from 1738 onwards (Table LVII). There was a sharp increase in the middle decades of the century with the sharpest rise in individual years occurring in 1778, 1781, 1786, 1787, 1789, 1794, and 1800. Rises in the county cess were most continuous in the 1780s and this contributed to demands for a reduction in a range of incidental charges in these years.

Resented by Catholics in particular was the rapparee tax levied on them to compensate for the destruction wrought by Tories and rapparees. A rate under the act was agreed on at the general sessions held at Fethard in October 1765 in order 'to reimburse the several persons [for] their losses sustained by their burning by papists' (183). From the agreed rate a proportional amount was assigned on each barony, Kilnarnagh having a rate of 1/2d. per acre levied on every Catholic as its contribution to the total (184). A more universal tax, the hearth tax, was regarded as an unpopular imposition until its abolition



in 1793. It was levied at the rate of 2s. per hearth and agitation was directed at gaining a reduction of half in this amount.

The increasingly defence-oriented nature of the local administration in the 1790s involved additional demands on inhabitants to support the military establishment. There was, for instance, considerable resistance to the raising of militia units locally in 1793. In 1796 there was further hostility in several baronies to the levying of extra money intended for the augmentation of the militia (184a). Thus in March the grand jury reported that 'a spirit of resistance has appeared in many of the baronies' against the constables collecting the extra cess (185). In the same year a proposal for the revaluation of houses in the parish of St. Mary's, Clonmel (comprising the bulk of the town on the northern bank of the Suir), was resisted unsuccessfully by the parishoners especially the quakers (186).

Turnpike gates could also be the source of complaint at times due to the tolls levied at them on farm produce and animals passing through. In 1775 up to 50 Whiteboys paraded through the street of Twomilebridge near Clonmel having passed the turnpike gate there several times issuing threats and firing a shot (187). In 1786 the keeper of the turnpike gate at Longford Pass was attacked and robbed of money and arms and sworn not to remain in the area or to collect any further tolls at the turnpike (188). What made all these incidental charges resented was that at times of rising rents for smallholders and of static wages (1760s), or economic difficulty (early 1770s, 1780s), they collectively represented a variable cost in outgoings which could make the difference between peasant solvency or impoverishment.

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When the local establishment was first confronted with unrest in 1761-6 the response progressed from one of a mixture of disbelief and lethargy and a reliance on traditional methods of repression, to one where the Whiteboys were suppressed through severe means. The reason ascribed by government as to why the movement had gone unchecked for so long was, as Halifax reported in April 1762, 'the want of spirit in the magistrates who have suffer'd the mischief to grow from small beginnings to the <sup>LENGTH</sup>: it has of late been carried' (189). The first recorded response to the unrest which began in October 1761 was five months later in March 1762 when the grand jury petitioned the lord lieutenant to adopt effective measures (190). This appeal was occasioned by their inability to obtain solid evidence on which to bring charges, reflecting the tight oath-bound nature of the agrarian organisation. The government response was the sending of troops under



the earl of Drogheda and Sir James Caldwell who in co-operation with local gentry had by late May scoured the countryside and imprisoned many suspects (191). However this activity was not reflected in convictions at the proceedings of a special commission under judge Richard Aston sent down to try those charged in June. To the disappointment of the magistrates there were no capital convictions, only one person was found guilty of riot and he received a light sentence (192). Despite some outrages committed during the Summer there was no business of consequence at the Autumn assizes of 1762, pointing to the continued inability of the gentry to check the unrest which by March 1763 had spread to the north (193). All the leaders of the movement remained uncaptured and for their apprehension a subscription was opened with the rewards increasing in amount from £130 to 300 guineas (194).

Not until the Spring assizes of 1763 were two capital convictions on Whiteboy charges obtained, 6 others were found guilty of riot, and 40 others were to be tried by a special commission (195). A third capital conviction was had in May when John Fogarty alias Captain Fearnot, a schoolmaster and reputed Whiteboy leader, was found guilty of high treason and hung in Clonmel (196). However 20 others out of the 40 facing charges were acquitted because of lack of evidence (197). These proceedings were a mortal blow to the self-confidence of the gentry as 40 Whiteboys went free and only three hangings were had after a year and a half of rural outrages.

To add to this setback the unrest continued unabated in late 1763 and 1764. There were no Whiteboy convictions at the Summer assizes of 1763 nor at the Spring assizes of 1764, while at the Summer assizes of 1764 the trials of Whiteboy leaders were deferred because of a lack of evidence to prosecute (198). All this occurred despite the appointment of extra justices of the peace, the passing of legislation in May 1764 indemnifying magistrates for their actions taken in quelling riots, and the re-iteration of orders in August whereby the local magistrates were empowered to lead detachments of the military against the agitators (199). The lack of success of these measures is implicit in the passage in 1765 of a comprehensive Whiteboy act which extended the list of capital felonies and made the giving of informarion more of a requirement (200). The provisions of the act provided the stimulus for the local purges of 1765-6, but in relation to the rural unrest its application was superficial for two reasons. Firstly, the lessons of the years 1761-5 for the gentry were the strenuous hold which the oath-taking and intimidation of the Whiteboys had in maintaining the silence of the populace at large, the way informers were treated, and the unreliability of prosecution witnesses. Given this



context belief in the ability of the 1765 act to induce a greater co-operation among the rural community against the disturbers was mistaken, a point recognised by John Hely-Hutchinson (201). Secondly, a downturn in economic conditions brought on by a severe drought beginning in April 1765 and continuing throughout the Summer, resulted in poor harvests and depleted livestock numbers (202). These adverse natural conditions affected the cohesiveness of rural agitation and thereby performed a service in quelling unrest which the 1765 act of itself was unable to do.

The unrest of the early 1770s was a more serious threat to law and order in that it saw the wider acquisition and use of firearms, and there were for the first time serious personal attacks on members of the upper class. There was no effective response to these threats in their early stages. Despite the extended catalogue of felonies prescribed under the act of 1765, convictions for Whiteboy crimes in 1771-5 were few a situation due more to deficiencies in the processes of law than from lack of vigour among the gentry. For instance, a spirited exertion in May 1773 resulted in the taking of Thomas Rafter, a Whiteboy leader, near Carrick but this effort was frustrated by failure to secure his conviction, a situation exacerbated by Rafter's later escape from custody (203). This lack of success made the magistrates fall back on the reward system to induce informers, the success of which can be judged by the fact that the next major arrest did not materialise until January 1774 ; and though a few other apprehensions followed in succeeding months these did not have a deterrent effect on the growing cycle of unrest (204). To add to the low morale of the gentry in May 1774 Rafter, who was convicted and was due to be executed, was granted a free pardon by the lord lieutenant (205).

As the level of violence increased in late 1774 and 1775 there were calls for the adoption of a more resolute stance. Candidates intending to stand in the forthcoming general election were told pointedly to be in the forefront of such efforts (206). Evidence of strong action, however, did not come until August 1775 when after another disappointing assizes a meeting of the gentry in Clonmel resolved on greater effort. For this purpose committees were established in each barony to receive subscriptions for a central fund out of which payments of £50 were to be made to anyone who would inform on Whiteboy meetings in advance, and of £20 for information on the location of stolen firearms. A promise of protection and a pardon were offered to those who would inform on their colleagues, and in all cases an assurance was given that the names of the informers would be kept secret (207). Thereafter the Fethard gentry notably William Barton, Matthew Jacob and the ill-fated Ambrose Power were particularly active in



tracking down offenders, but despite some success the overall level of outrage remained undiminished (208). In addition the new archbishop of Cashel, James Butler, in October 1775 issued a statement to be read in all chapels condemning the Whiteboys of the Fethard / Killenaule area (209). But since the incidents at Ballyragget, Co. Kilkenny in February 1775, in which Butler supported the action of his brother in openly resisting a Whiteboy attack on the town, clerical admonitions were less likely to meet with a positive response among the disaffected.

With the reward system and clerical sanctions not meeting with the desired response the situation seemed hopeless. In the end what induced a greater determination to quell the unrest was the brutal murder of Ambrose Power of Barrettstown in late November 1775 (210). The event provoked a quick campaign of repression resulting in a large number of arrests (23 between December 1775 and January 1776), in which the Fethard gentry excelled (211). A special commission in January 1776 produced four capital convictions and dramatic executions immediately after sentence accompanied by full confessions (212). In the following months two developments took place which strengthened the resolve of the gentry. Firstly, a revised and extended Whiteboy act received the royal assent in April 1776 which added to the list of felonies incurring the death penalty and increased the powers of the magistrates (213). Secondly, from February 1776 a number of volunteer corps were formed. Ironically the first of these were not in the disturbed area of the south east, but in the north in an area free of unrest at this time. It was reported in February that the protestant inhabitants of Roscrea had 'voluntarily agreed to clothe themselves in uniforms and arm themselves in defence of their lives and properties, and for the preservation of the peace of the county against those rioters called White Boys and all other disturbers of the peace and tranquillity of the protestant inhabitants' (214). By May two further corps under Benjamin Bunbury and Sir Cornwallis Maude were formed, in July another at Nenagh under Peter Holmes, and by the end of the year another under Sir John Carden at Templemore (215). These corps, coupled with the determination of the gentry following Power's murder, operated to quell Whiteboy agitation at this time.

Gentry concern with the threat of rural unrest remained evident in the early 1780s. A meeting at Killenaule of the gentlemen from Slievardagh and Middlethird baronies in 1781 passed resolutions for the suppression of the Whiteboys, the offering of rewards for information, and the giving of assurances that informers would not be obliged to prosecute nor would their identity be revealed (216). It is clear also from these



resolutions that the volunteer corps still had a function in policing at this time, though by 1784 the volunteering spirit in the county had declined (217). This was despite the fact that in 1782-5 the gentry were confronted with some serious agrarian incidents even in advance of the Rightboys in late 1785 (218). Despite a number of committals, notably the capture of the Englishes for forcible possession of lands, capital convictions in the early 1780s are conspicuous by their absence (219). Indicative of local concern was a meeting of the gentry in late September 1784 at which they resolved to uphold and vindicate the law and recommended that the sheriff apply to government for military aid (220). The request for military intervention reflects the gravity of the situation and indicates that the local gentry were incapable of dealing with the problem on their own.

The crisis became a more widespread threat to law and order with the arrival of the Rightboys in the autumn of 1785. The events which heralded a general extension of unrest from late September were the murder of Lyons Cane and the assault on Rev. William Ryan, rector of Kilvemnon (221). These personal attacks spurred the gentry into activity just as had the murder of Power a decade earlier. A meeting was quickly convened at Fethard at which a revival of the volunteers was called for to act in co-operation with the military, and a county-wide subscription was opened for which a substantial sum of £1,000 was lodged with the Clonmel bank (222). This renewed resolution produced the desired effect such that during December some of Rev. Ryan's attackers were taken, but at the assizes in April 1786 despite there being 170 prisoners on capital charges in Clonmel jail, only one capital conviction for an agrarian related crime was obtained (223).

The response of the local establishment to the high phase of Rightboy agitation in 1786-7 can be characterised in two ways. The first was one of reform. Many of the gentry lent tacit approval to the Rightboy resistance to tithe. This attitude is seen in the expressions of some like Edward Moore of Mooresfort, colonel of the Tipperary volunteers, who in June 1786 advocated to government 'the abolition of the tythe laws and the substitution of some other mode in lieu thereof' (224). Similar statements advocating reform of the tithe system through parliament were forthcoming during the Summer of 1786 from the peasantry of Golden, the catholics of Roscrea, 60 freeholders and protestants of Roscrea, and the inhabitants of Carrick (225). Implicit in these requests was the essential recognition that while a reform of tithe was needed, this was only to be obtained through parliament; and while the Rightboys had a legitimate grievance their methods were to be disavowed. In an effort to inculcate this view some



magistrates, like Edward Moore and Francis Rolleston of Frankfort and landlords like John Mannin (who led a party of 40 of his tenants against 500 Rightboys), sought to dissuade them from their course of action by persuasion (226). This approach was to be ineffective because of Rightboy indifference to such appeals and because the Established Church resisted change; and the Rightboy strategy of non-payment of tithes except at set rates won the day in 1786 and 1787, the clergy experiencing a sharp fall in their incomes in these years. The Catholic Church locally, headed by archbishop Butler, initiated reforms intended to mitigate the more blatant abuses among the clergy of which the Rightboys complained (227).

Appeasement proved ineffective and advocates of reform and of social control by the church were overtaken by events so that the more established ways of dealing with the disturbers came to be re-invoked anew. The issue of a proclamation by government on 22 June 1786 and assurances that army units in the various districts were to assist, led the gentry into displaying a keener resolve (228). During the months between July and September 1786 a number of Rightboy leaders were taken and there was a revival of volunteering (229). There were calls by the bishop of Killaloe and also at a badly attended meeting at Cashel, for the gentry to become more actively involved (230). Despite this apathy, which meant that a large proportion of the arrests were attributable to the military especially Lord Luttrell, eight persons were found guilty at the September assizes with one execution (231). One of the controversial decisions of the assizes was the acquittal of Rev. Patrick Hare on a charge of murdering John Swiney of Kilcock who had opposed his tithe demands, which Hare conceded were at rates higher than those of other clergy (232).

The year 1787 saw significant changes in confronting the Rightboy problem. In late March a new act came into force which increased the penalties for various types of rural disorder (233). The likelihood that the application of this act would be effective increased because a further legislative measure in May 1787 provided for the division of specified counties including Tipperary into districts for each of which a chief constable and 16 sub-constables were appointed with the holding of general sessions eight times annually (234). The county was divided into seven districts and four centres (Cashel, Clonmel, Thurles, and Nenagh) were designated for the sessions twice yearly (235). The good effects of these measures were seen in the number of committals for Rightboy crimes in subsequent years (for which the sub-constables were primarily responsible), and in the busy sessions at Cashel (November 1787) and Clonmel (April 1788) (236). All this was







## Chapter VIII

loss of responsibilities mirrors the declining influence of the landed class in other areas of rural society a development which was to have its implications for social organisation in the nineteenth century.



## Chapter VIII

Presiding at a special commission in Clonmel in 1811 Lord Norbury, solicitor general, who was a large landowner in north Tipperary, gave it as his opinion that the object of the recent unrest in the county was 'the regulation of landed property and its produce ; it is the vain and idle attempt to fix a maximum for rent and to prescribe the price of labour ; [and] it is the frantic project to prevent the transfer of property' (1). This comment identifies the fact that issues emanating from access to and occupation of land were an important component in the agrarian unrest after 1760. Conflict arose because the landlord response to rising land values and favourable agricultural prices, reflected in demands for higher rents and in new leasing preferences, came to undermine the position of established elements. The resistance which ensued was weak and localised at first, but by the time Lord Norbury made his remarks it had evolved into an attempt to impose a systematic regulation on the occupancy and price of land and its attendant obligations.

A combination of very large farming units, mainly pastoral, and rapid commercialisation meant that tenurial problems were acute. In character the problem essentially stemmed from the existence on the one hand of large tenurial units, and on the other of smallholders and labourers. The conflict deriving from this situation became more sharply defined over time, and Norbury's remarks in 1811 represent a judgment on the cumulative effects of preceding decades. The problem manifested itself at three different levels. Firstly, at the level of the smallholder and labourer who were concerned with conacre plots, employment, wages, and commonage. Secondly, rent and occupancy which could affect all classes but was a particular issue among the somewhat better-off in the conditions of the 1770s and 1780s. Thirdly, the special problem associated with the dispossession of head tenants which could affect them or their sub tenants, and which was a distinctive feature of the 1780s.

The most persistent issue was that of access to land and employment of the lower stratum. The enclosure of commons took place in response to a sharp growth in demand for *pastoral* products in the late 1750s. To meet this demand landlords repossessed commons in order to stock them themselves or to let them to those who would (2). In this process they over-rode traditional grazing rights in order to increase profits. There were degrees of gravity, however, in this regard relating to the status of commons. Common lands were of two kinds. The first category was that adjoining the towns of Cashel, Clonmel, Fethard, Nenagh, and Thurles. The evidence suggests that by mid-century some of this common land was coming into the possession of private individuals. At Fethard, for instance, the extensive commons near the town, which were by report 'time out of mind grais[e]d in com[m]on by the people bounding and mearing



the same and the inhabitants of Fethard', were being appropriated from the early 1740s (3). The corporation of the town allocated about 40 acres of the commons for a proposed charter school in 1742, and the remainder was publicly auctioned the ultimate lessee being Thomas Hackett one of the burgesses (4). He apparently proceeded to enclose much of this land thereby excluding the customary access for he was a victim of Whiteboy levelling activity in 1762 (5).

The second category of common land was more widely distributed, but was particularly evident on mountain slopes like the Galtees, Knockmealdowns, and Comeraghs. From the time of the mid-seventeenth century land settlement large tracts of unreclaimed land were left in common between neighbouring estates. Their proprietors conceded grazing rights on these commons to their tenants but retained ultimate ownership including the right to enclose (6). That enclosure was proceeding by mid-century is indicated by the comment made regarding the lands of Kilcash in the 1750s when it was said that they had been 'inclosed and taken into John Butler's [the landowner] own hands' (7). When enclosure such as this took place resistance by those affected would appear to have been unjustified as the original arrangement was informal and the landlord was within his rights. In other cases, however, there was a genuine cause of complaint. This was because some landlords set lands at a high rent to smallholders and in order to ease the burden allowed them tracts of common as part compensation. In response to favourable external demand for livestock and a rise in land values after mid-century, landlords were induced to enclose these commons thereby providing an expanded area for grazing by new tenants or by stewards installed by landlords themselves (8). This constituted an over-riding of the privileges previously accorded to the sitting tenants. Their reaction was to register their discontent by attacks on the new or prospective occupiers of the commons and their property in the form of ditches, dwelling houses, and livestock.

Evidence from individual estates serves to illustrate this pattern more fully. On the Barker estate at Kilcooley near Thurles prospective tenants in the late 1760s and early 1770s, as part of an overall improvement scheme, were being offered large areas of common in association with better quality land. In 1768 tenants were solicited for Bawnleigh and Jeffrey's Garden containing 300 acres to which was attached a commonage of 105 acres (9). A sum of £300 was spent on Bawnleigh before it was re-advertised for letting in 1770 (10). Similarly on the Perry estate between Clonmel and Ardfinnan where in 1764 tenants were sought for an extensive multi-townland area divided into large cattle fattening farms of 200-300 acres, each of which had access to a tract of mountain pasture (11). Similar allocations of common whether rough land, bog,



or mountain, are documented for other lands advertised for letting in the 1760s and 1770s : on the estates of Moore and Walsh near Clonmel ; on the O'Callaghan and Prendergast lands near Clogheen ; the Power estate near Fethard ; the Kearney, Lalor, Ryan, and Trant lands near Thurles ; the Willington estate near Nenagh ; and McCarthy lands near Tipperary (12).

It is not surprising that much of the Whiteboy or Leveller activity over commonage occurred on some of these estates. A threatening letter delivered to one tenant outlined the main purpose of such attacks. Addressed to 'the gentlefolks of this county', it warned that the Levellers had combined to 'level all walls and ditches yt have been mid (sic) to enclose [that] which is ordained for ye benefit of ye poor. We begin here tonight and will not cease till we level down all ye commonage in this county' (13). In October 1763 at Rathkeveen near Clonmel on the estate of John Walsh, his tenant Patrick Dwyer had part of his ditches thrown down (14). Similarly 130 perches of walls and ditches on the lands of Killaghan, held by Edward Hodgson under John Willington, were levelled in 1762 ; while a further 90 perches of wall at Roanstown worked by Willington himself were also demolished (15). In 1762 also four houses on lands held by Thomas Hackett near Fethard were pulled down, and levelling was also in evidence on the McCarthy lands at Rathkennan in 1763 (16). A residue of levelling activity persisted into the 1770s : for example in 1771 on the Mathew estate at Pallas Hill near Annfield a new house was partly demolished and its timber doors and frames removed ; while in 1772 a newly built lime kiln and 15 perches of stone wall on the lands of Giant's Grave near Clonmel, held by Simmons Sparrow under Nathaniel Mitchell, were levelled as were hedges on the Prendergast lands at Garrakissy and Coran near Ardfinnan (17). A certain resentment over commonage survived in the Clonmel area largely directed against Thomas Grubb for flaunting traditional rights by enclosing part of the commons attached to the town (18).

The re-organisation of tenures consequent on the enclosure of commons led to the displacement of some village settlements. On part of the Butler estate at Kilcash, for example, only four tenants ( who were the more substantial if one is to judge by the amounts they paid in tithe), remained out of the original 23 when John Butler, the landowner, enclosed the lands and took them into his own hands in the 1750s (19). It is difficult to gain an overall view of how widespread this practice was. An analysis of a recent survey of deserted sites and villages indicates that of the 40 or so sites identified in the country, there is a heavy concentration in Tipperary (20). Certainly contemporaries were struck by the depopulation which they saw as coinciding with the unrest of the early 1760s. At the least this unrest occasioned a certain mobility among the poor whom



one observer witnessed 'in swarms [on] the high roads, which throughout the southern and western parts are lined with beggars who live in huts and cabins' (21).

All this activity was expressive of the desire of former occupants to re-assert their claims of access to common land which they regarded as an established right. But for the landlord such claims had no legal basis and any earlier concession regarding access to common could be revoked. In consequence in the long term commercial agriculture advanced at the expense of subsistence farming. It heralded the evolution of a more commercial relationship between landlord and large tenant, and the displacement of a more archaic, communal agriculture. This process was the first symptom of a trend whereby the claims of sitting tenants were undermined. It led in the succeeding forty years to the formulation of concepts of tenant right by sitting or displaced tenants fearing or experiencing discontinuity of tenure.

The system of conacre was a source of grievance in the early 1760s. The term 'conacre' referred both to the contract made between the farmer and the labourer or cottier, and to the portion of ground so contracted for. The contract, usually made verbally, granted the right of occupancy for a specific period and did not create a legal relationship of landlord and tenant. There were two characteristic forms which the system could take. Firstly, a farmer ploughed and manured a plot of ground and then let it for a season (normally an eleven month period expiring on 1 November) at a high rent to a labourer who took one or more crops of potatoes from it. Alternatively potatoes might be set in ground given rent free to a labourer who undertook to supply the manure, and who paid for it by his own or his family's labour (22). The choice between these two kinds of the conacre system ultimately devolved on the status and resources of the parties concerned : a labourer lacking in resources would be unable to supply seed and manure, and therefore had to offer labour services in order to make up the rent ; while more capitalised cottiers and labourers were in a position to pay the high conacre rent as well as supply seed and manure (23).

The conacre system was exploitive because it involved risk and insecurity. The fact that the contract was for an eleven month period made the arrangement inherently insecure, and the contract entailed the prospect that if the season was good then a good crop was forthcoming, but if it was bad and the crop failed then the labourer was ruined. Secondly, since the contract did not have the status of the lease the position of the labourer was precarious as he had no legal standing if the terms of the contract were disputed (24). Thirdly, rents for conacre tended to be high because as it was essential as a source of food supply competition pushed up its price ; because the presence or absence of manure tended to be an additional determinant of price ; and because there



was a reluctance on the part of graziers to break up prime pasture ground for conacre. Despite its high price access to conacre was essential for the peasantry as a source of food and so the high rent was vouched for without any necessary guarantee of ability to pay, but with the hope that any deficiency might be made up by labour services.

Conacre rents rose sharply after mid-century. In Munster in the early 1760s potato ground was rented at four or five guineas per acre, and in Tipperary at this time conacre rents increased two or three times in value (25). In 1776-7 conacre rents in the Tipperary - Cashel district and in the barony of Clanwilliam in general stood at between £5 and 6 guineas (26). This sharp increase stimulated labourers and cottiers to participate in the Whiteboy movement of the early 1760s in order to force a reduction, and to make more pasture ground available for potato cultivation. In the words of a contemporary much of the movement was directed at 'digging up the rich ground of those who would not set their ground for tillage' (27).

The market attractions for livestock encouraged landlords to concentrate on pasture in the early 1760s and this encouraged graziers to restrict the amount of conacre being made available (28). This had two results : it had the effect of raising the rents of what conacre was made available for letting, and it caused deer parks and orchards which were deemed suitable for tillage to become the objects of Whiteboy attention in an attempt to cajole landlords to make them available for conacre. Thus in 1763 deer belonging to John McCarthy of Lisheen and John Watson of Clonbrogan were killed and the latter's deer park wall was demolished (29). New orchards also became the objects of destruction as on the Perry lands at Rossmore in 1765 and on the Alleyn lands near Ballyporeen in 1774 and 1775 (30). It seems that not only was the purpose to make land available for tillage , but to have certain tillage land made use of solely for potato cultivation. A contemporary reference to the Whiteboys engaging in the 'burning [of] barns and haggards' suggests this, as does the destruction of the corn of John Ferris ( a tenant of William Perry) at Rossmore near Clonmel in 1765 (31). Thus the Whiteboy unrest of the early 1760s was dominated by labourers and the landless who at a time of rising prosperity for the farmer and grazier sought to protect their position by attempts to reduce conacre rents and to make conacre more widely available. Because there was no parallel rise in wages to match the inflated rents between the 1750s and 1770s the position of the peasant became more restricted economically.

In 1799 - 1803 the most serious violence was associated with conacre. Potato ground was let out at high rates in grazing areas especially in the rich grass lands west of Cashel running into Limerick. Given that employment on grazing farms was minimal compared with the labour intensive nature of employment in tillage areas, that wages were low, and



that the price of food (milk and potatoes particularly) <sup>was</sup> high in 1799 -1803, the demand for conacre was pressing for the labourer and cottier class. They had an inherent interest in maintaining conacre rents at existing levels and in seeking an expansion in the area available as potato ground. These objectives could be achieved by a number of methods. Thus much digging activity was engaged in at this time to break up grass land and thereby gain a reduction in the price of conacre. Part of the lands of Ardmayle near Cashel were dug up and a notice sent to the proprietor threatening him with death unless he made a certain number of acres available (32). Edmund Scully's lands at Erry were treated similarly and he also received a threatening notice (33). Sir Charles Asgill, the active military commander for the Clonmel district, tried to counter such activities by making the residents of one area turn back the land again after it had been dug up in May 1801 (34). The turning up of land is also recorded for Shronell in March 1800 and Hospital and Bilboa on the Limerick border in 1802 (35).

Associated with this type of activity was the intimidation of those engaged in the erection of deer park walls, structures which were traditionally regarded by the peasantry as keeping suitable land from letting as conacre. This happened to an employee on the Massy - Dawson estate at Newforest in September 1802 (36). In so far as controlling conacre rents is concerned the most effective means was by direct action against the farmers. Thus in November 1801 farmers near Chancellorstown were made to swear not to accept more than a certain price for their potato ground and to refund whatever they had already accepted above that price, threats which they complied with (37).

There was an interdependence on employment and access to land for the smallholder. Lord Norbury identified one of the objects of the agrarian unrest as the desire to 'prescribe the price of labour'. The context out of which grievances over access to employable situations arose was one where, though the demand for labour was increasing, labourers were in a more vulnerable position because rents for plots soared and subsidiary rights, once valuable, like commonage and free grazing of a cow either disappeared or acquired a price. Additionally in Tipperary there was a contraction in two areas which had traditionally provided supplementary sources of income for the smallholder. Firstly, there was a decline in spinning and combing locally in the late eighteenth century which, while long drawn out, deprived artisan families in the Suir valley catchment area of an important source of income. This decline was partly offset by the spread of labour intensive corn cultivation in the southern parts of the county and by the development of pig and fowl enterprises by the smallholder. The second area of contraction was that seasonal migration to the Newfoundland cod fishery reached its apogee in the 1770s at a time when spinning was entering upon a period of long term



reversal. Emigration to Newfoundland increased in the 1770s and after 1800 permanent Irish settlements were established on the island (38). The four counties of the south east (Kilkenny, Wexford, Waterford, and Tipperary) accounted for 85% of the total Irish outflow of immigrants in the period 1790 - 1850. Tipperary made up 16% of this total drawn from the south eastern part of the county principally around Carrick where the woollen industry experienced difficulties (39). The consequence of this reduction in the rural supplements to income was that the labourer's and smallholder's economic position came to depend more exclusively on the issues of rent and employment than in the less commercialised, recent past. While these traditional supplements to income were contracting population was increasing most among the class in rural society most dependent on employment (cf. Table LXIII). Thus in 1841 the ratio of farm servants and labourers to farmers was almost 3 : 1 (40). The inevitable consequence of a situation where supply exceeded demand was sharp competition for land and demands for wage increases.

There was a basic threefold division in peasant society. Firstly, there were cottiers who occupied less than 10 acres with a cabin on a year to year basis ; those holding in excess of 5 acres paid a cash rent, those with less paid in labour. Secondly, there were landholding labourers holding a cabin and garden who depended on the cultivation of potatoes for subsistence in combination with what work became available. By 1816 a social differentiation had emerged among this class in Tipperary based on the amount paid for the plot and the amount paid in wages (41). In addition such labourers got the grass of a cow from their farmer employers paid for in labour at the same rate as the cabin and garden. Labourers with a cabin, conacre, and milk from their employers (which was normal), were considered to have the equivalent of one third or one half of wages.

Thirdly, there were landless labourers, a numerous group who were unmarried farm servants who lived with their employers receiving food and wages in return for their labour. To this group belonged labourers in the county not bound by the year and the migrant workers or spalpeens from the south west whose labour was particularly in demand at harvest time and at the period when potatoes were dug. At such times wage rates paid to this group were three times higher ( 2s.-2s. 6d.) than those ( 8d.-10d.) paid to bound labourers with land (42). This class was entirely reliant on employment compared to the two preceding groups. The viability of each of these three groups depended on a combination of constants remaining in place : food being cheap and plentifully available, and conacre rents being reasonable and commensurate with wage levels. It was when these constants shifted that conflict arose within and between these



groups themselves, and between them and their employers.

Table LXIX presents data on wage rates for a number of locations in the county recorded in the years 1776-7. It shows that rates were not uniform over the county as a whole, that they were lower than the national average, and that the rise in wage rates over the preceding twenty years had only been about 1d. per day. Some of the activities engaged in by the Whiteboys imply that they sought to achieve an improvement in wage levels. Much of the vendetta waged against a select number of estate employees in the 1760s such as herdsman, shepherds, carriers, and limeburners was because they had accepted or taken such situations at existing or lower wages in defiance of Whiteboy orders (43).

The context for employment was changing, however, mainly because the growth in commercial cereal cultivation which took off after 1770 created a new and expanded source of employment. The demand was sufficient to attract migrant labourers from Cork and Kerry as seasonal workers. Their arrival was regarded as a threat to the economic interests of local labourers because it tended to raise rents and because the outsiders undercut the locals by accepting lower wage rates. Attempts by local combinations to rectify these disadvantages took the form of direct action against the outsiders with a view to their expulsion. Such attacks are in evidence for Ballynattin between Clonmel and Cashel, and Donegal and Roxborough near Clonmel in 1774 ; while the employers of such workers were also the victims of attack as at Rehill near Cahir in 1776 (44).

The sustained expansion in cereal growing after 1784, evident in the rise in the number of flour mills in the county from 38 in 1778 to 70 in 1788 (Table XXXVII), is indicative that agricultural employment at this time was good. It was of a sufficient scale to absorb the local and seasonal labour supply. As a result conflict between both groups over access to employment on land is not evident as one of the sources of Rightboy unrest in the years 1785-8.

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Grievances concerning the occupation of land shifted in emphasis in the early 1770s. Whereas in the 1760s the issues of enclosure of commons and conacre were articulated by smallholders, in the 1770s grievances were advanced by persons higher up in the social scale. The issues centred on the intrusion of outside tenants into the county : dairymen from Co. Waterford and others. Dairying was expanding in the county from mid-century, but the growth in Co. Waterford was relatively greater forcing dairymen there to seek extra ground across the River Suir in south Tipperary and Kilkenny (45). Relatively more prosperous than their Tipperary counterparts, the Waterford dairymen



were able to offer higher rents for dairying land to those letting it locally. This had the consequence of bringing them into competition with local interests who resented their intrusion.

Attacks on Waterford dairymen and their local landlords are recorded in the early 1770s for Fethard, Kiltinan, Killostoy, Poulakerry near Kilsheelan, and locations near Clonmel and Carrick (46). The range of these locations testifies to the extent to which the outsiders had intruded. The purpose of such attacks was to intimidate the dairymen (by means of beatings, the destruction of milking utensils, and threats) to quit their holdings and remove back to Waterford (47). Those who made land available to them were also intimidated. In a well documented case in April 1775 (at the opening of the dairy season when lettings were entered into), Hugh Daniel of Poulakerry was served with a threatening notice not to dispossess his sitting dairyman in favour of one Power, an outsider whose surname suggests a Waterford origin. This conflict arose because Lonergan, the sitting dairyman, had refused a rent demand of £40 for part of the dairy which he held from Daniel, the implication being that Power was able to furnish an amount equal to or in excess of this (48). These attacks demonstrate the developing sense among certain categories of tenant, in this case local dairymen, of the need to control the occupancy of land in their own favour. The threat to Daniel is a case in point. Another relates to the tenants of Thomas Mulcahy at Ballynaratra near Clonmel who in 1771 were reportedly sworn 'not to continue on said lands', while Mulcahy himself was warned not to set any of the lands concerned but to hold them in his own hands or give them up to his landlord (49).

Resentment was also expressed against outside tenant farmers taking lands in the county. A significant number of landlords advertised lands for letting in the first half of the 1770s. On twelve estates between 1770 and 1776 a total of 7,900 acres were advertised all contained within the area joined by Kilcooley, Cashel, Cahir, and Carrick (50). This was the area in which unrest was most concentrated in this period (Map VII). This large acreage coming up for letting was divided among the respective estates as follows : 394 acres on the Bagwell (Kilmore) estate near Fethard in 1770 ; 580 acres in 1770 and 313 acres in 1774 on the Barker estate at Kilcooley ; 996 acres on the Cooke estate at Kiltinan in 1771 ; 400 acres on the Lowe estate near Killenaule in 1771 ; on the Minchin estate at Ballingarry 243 acres in 1770 ( and again in 1773) ; 800 acres on the Perry estate near Clonmel in 1770 and a further 530 acres in 1776 ; 643 and 80 acres in 1770 and 1771 respectively on the Power (Barrettstown ) estate ; in 1776, 130 acres on the Power (Gurteen ) estate ; 474 acres on the Taylor estate at Noan in 1772 ; 520 acres on the Walshe estate between Clonmel and Fethard; 681 acres on the Watson estate near



Cashel and Killenaule in 1771 and 1772 ; and 1,118 acres on the Butler (Cahir) estate in 1775 (51).

Such large segments of land coming on the market within a defined area and within such a short period were bound to affect existing tenancy arrangements. In addition the fact that such public solicitation of bids from prospective tenants was sought in this way represented a departure from the customary practice of renewing the term and tenure of the sitting tenant. That these were not lands being let for the first time can be implied from the inclusion in the public notices declaring the landlord's intention of auctioning them, of the terms 'no preference given', 'proposals in writing only', and 'now in the possession of'. The result was the introduction of new tenant farmers over the heads of the existing tenants. On the basis of surnames some of these were from Waterford (52). They with their landlords became the objects of intimidation with the aim of forcing them to quit their farms and return them to their former tenants. Cases are recorded for 1772-9 for locations at Donaghmore, Ballynattin, and Orchardstown near Clonmel ; Carrick and adjacent areas in the barony of Iverk, Co. Kilkenny ; Crohan near Killenaule, Barrettstown and Coolenure near Fethard, Dovehill and Roesgreen ; and resentment against Waterford intruders was still in evidence in 1805 (53). In one sense the inter-county rivalries between local farmers and dairymen, and their Waterford counterparts respectively replicates the rivalries between sections of the labourer and textile worker class.

Some landlords were motivated to replace their existing tenants because they were unable in the economically difficult period of the early 1770s, to meet the high rent commitments entered into in the inflationary period of the early 1760s. A visitor to the county in October 1772 wrote of the farmers being 'to[o] hardly tied up in all their leases' (54). Farmers who, stimulated by the premiums on the carriage of corn to Dublin, had invested in the conversion of their pasture ground in the late 1760s found that they were unable to meet their rent obligations in the early 1770s because of the economic downturn. Landlords, anxious to have regular rent payments, were forced to distrain the goods of such defaulting tenants as on the Stanley estate in 1773 and on the Cooper lands in 1775 (55). Much of the unrest associated with the rescuing of stock distrained for rent arrears arose out of this context (56). Ejection of head tenants was proceeded with where distress could not be obtained (57). With almost 8,000 acres being publicly advertised for reletting the turnover of tenants was substantial. Those still in possession or those displaced reacted in the form of violence against the newcomers, whether dairymen who were occupiers or those of greater substance who took the lands over the heads of the sitting tenants and who likely <sup>WERE</sup> absentee. In response to the action of



the landlords ( whom the 1772 visitor labelled as 'as wild and savage as tis possible to be conceived'), of introducing outsiders in order to guarantee their rents at a time of economic difficulty, the formulation of strategies to regulate the transfer of property among displaced tenants began to emerge as a result of the experience of the early 1770s (58). Already by 1777 tenants on the lands of William Minchin at Fole near Ballingarry were reportedly obliged to take an oath which stipulated that they were 'not to propose for or take any part of each other's land at the expiration of their leases' (59). This notion of regulating property transfer by trying to ensure that the sitting tenant had a prior claim on renewal of a lease before the landlord could entertain other bidders, developed further in the 1780s.

In the 1780s, as in the early 1770s, considerable segments of land were publicly advertised for letting. On 15 of the larger estates 20,676 acres were so advertised in the period 1780-88, representing two and one half times the amount of land coming on the market compared to a decade previously (60). This total acreage breaks down as follows : Barker (592 acres), Damer (1,881), Derby (3,940), Lloyd (785), Langley (963), Lowe (624), Lockwood (720), McCarthy (1,000), Massy (1,432), Otway (1,241), Palliser (964), Perry (1,304), Prittie (1,339), Roe (870), and Willington (2,021). With such large blocks of land being auctioned keen competition was inevitable putting landlords in a strong bargaining position enhanced after 1784 by the demand by tenants for land due to high grain prices. That such demand was high is indicated by the fact that a number of landlords offered facilities for fining down the rents on new lettings. While the exact proportion of fining offered on the Perry lands, for instance, is not specified on the Massy estate it was one third of the rent (61). How much this could amount to in individual cases is exemplified by the case of one Cashel attorney who in 1784 was prepared to make £2,000 available as a fine for a three lives lease (62).

With so much land coming on the market the position of sitting tenants was bound to be affected. The 1780s saw unrest being waged at the level of the head tenant of substance for the first time. Where they were unsuccessful in being renewed in their tenancies the new tenants became the objects of resentment. Often this resulted in their ejection and the forcible re-occupation of the lands by the former tenants. Attacks on new tenants are on record for the Roberts lands at Mortlestown in 1782 ; on Andrew Hely a new tenant at Tulla near Ardfinnan in 1783 ; on John Murphy of Outrath in 1784 ; and on Perry tenants at Kilmolash in 1785 (63). The objective in such attacks was to threaten the new tenants with more serious violence, or to make them swear to quit their recently taken farms and leave the area.

It is not recorded whether the lands concerned in the above incidents were repossessed



or not. It is clear, however, that forcible or illegal possession was a prominent feature of the unrest in the 1780s. In 1784 its common incidence was represented by the high sheriff to government with the request that additional military aid would be required to suppress the practice (64). In a letter to government in 1784 the archbishop of Cashel highlighted the fact that 'many forcible possessions are kept at this moment [in Tipperary]'; while government proclamations against the practice were issued in 1785, 1789, and 1790 (65). Clearly the large amount of land advertised caused apprehensions among sitting tenants about their positions, and they responded to this threat by maintaining illegal custody of their holdings in defiance of the authorities.

In August 1785 a group repossessed the lands of Fenor, the estate of Richard Read, and erected a garrison thereon in order to prevent attempts to remove them (66). Cases of illegal custody are also on record for Thurles and Ballyvirane in 1787 and for Oldcastle in 1789 (67). The two most serious cases involved the forcible occupancy of Balliulta near Cullen on the Damer estate, and of Ballynamona near Golden owned by Richard Kiely. In the former case the trouble arose out of attempts by the head tenant, English, to safeguard his position against attempts by the landlord to deal directly with the occupying tenant. By at least October 1784 and for a year thereafter English and his followers established and maintained illegal custody of Balliulta and defied successive attempts at their removal (68). The event caused a sensation at the time. It elicited a government proclamation in 1785 and landowners were anxious that those concerned be quickly subdued or else, as the archbishop of Cashel remarked in an alarmist tone, 'all the gentlemen of the county will be dispossessed' (69). In another equally serious case in October 1784 a party entered on the lands of Ballynamona then held by Michael Mulcahy, farmer, for several years under lease from Kiely, who was an absentee in Co. Waterford. They took forcible possession of the lands, expelled Mulcahy, fortified themselves in a strong castle on the lands, and defied initial attempts by the military to remove them (70). Both these cases and the others recorded show that as the position of head tenants were threatened by the large amount of land being publicly auctioned in the 1780s, their response was a resort to forcible possession or repossession in order to protect their interests. The evidence suggests that tenants on a number of estates were slow to fulfil their lease obligations in relation to meeting rent payments. The situation appears to have been most serious on the extensive Damer estate near Tipperary. In October 1783 the tenants holding renewable leases on the estate were publicly cautioned that as one or more of the lives in the majority of their leases were dead and that renewals had not been made, legal proceedings would ensue unless the situation was rectified immediately (71). This cajolment of the tenants may not have had the desired effect as



much of the Damer lands were subsequently advertised for letting (72).

In large measure the unrest of the 1780s, in so far as head landlord and head tenant are concerned, can be interpreted as an attempt by the former (e.g. Damer, and the archbishop of Cashel), to challenge the position of the latter through an attempt to negate the operation in practice of the 1780 tenancy act by the repossession of lands for which tenants neglected to promptly renew lives in their leases. The cases of forcible possession represented confrontation undertaken in response to the actions of a few landlords, but on the whole the majority of landlords renewed their existing tenantry at this time with generally long leases, as on the Butler (Cahir) estate.

Rent was often a matter of contention in the 1780s, not surprisingly perhaps as so much land was up for leasing in a decade in which conditions were exceptionally difficult both because of bad harvests in 1782 and 1783 and a post-war slump. In fact the event which sparked off the Rightboy disturbances in the county was the murder of the absentee landlord Lyons Cane of Westmeath in October 1785, when he came to collect rent from one of his tenants, William Doherty, whose son shot Cane (73).

Tenants defaulting in rent payments faced the prospect of distraint by the landlord. While distress was obtained in a number of cases, it is evident that it was also rescued or recovered by tenants. An instance of the former process was in 1786 when a large amount of farm produce and implements were put up for sale having been taken for rent and arrears of rent on the lands of Poulakerry (74). On the other hand stock and produce distrained by H. Lockwood from the lands of Ballyvara near Cashel in 1785 were retaken by the tenants (75). A further indication that rents were difficult to obtain in the early 1780s is shown by the appointment of agents or rent receivers for a number of estates including those of Damer and Perry where unrest was to the fore (76).

The displacement of head tenants multiplied cases of new direct leases and hence new rent levels for occupying tenants on the lands affected. Grievances over the occupancy of estates in the 1780s centred on the position of tenants on a number of key estates who had run into arrears. This situation obliged landlords to reset their lands, but there was widespread resistance to their removal among tenants which contrasts with their response in the early 1770s. The extensive occurrence of the practice of forcible possession by tenants represented an advance in the formulation of notions of tenant right compared to a decade previously.

The 1780s represented a critical phase in the evolution of tenant and landlord attitudes stemming from the market for land. Previously in the 1760s the issues deriving from this context related specifically to the smallholder and occupier, and were addressed to grievances over commons and conacre. In the 1770s agitation also operated largely at the



level of the occupier but at a higher social stratum, that of the dairyman and farmer. In these years it proved difficult to secure tenants at the high rents of the 1760s, and tardy rent payments led landlords to favour outsiders as new tenants, more compact farming units, and shorter lease terms. However, this policy provoked conflict in a number of directions. At one level the early 1780s had as its background stagnant land values, rent arrears, and a large amount of property coming up for reletting ; and at another level the relief act of 1778, whereby catholics extended their interest by taking both longer leases for existing holdings and new leases for other lands, and the tenancy act of 1780 which confirmed the position of the perpetuity tenant. The appointment of professional agents and the revival of manor courts can be viewed as elements in this process also. The attempt to confront the large tenant was unsuccessful. In consequence, as the 1780s unlike the 1690s were followed by economic prosperity, tenants more than landlords benefited from high prices and moderate rents in the period up to 1815. The bargaining position of the landlord was weakened because few of the large estates fell out of lease in the 1790s, a fact which strengthened the position of the tenant.

The unrest of the first decade of the nineteenth century was viewed by the landed elite of the county in more serious terms than previous phases of unrest. This serious view was also influenced by the legacy of the 1798 rebellion. Indicative of upper class responses to these fears are the remarks made in the Clonmel Herald in 1802 when it commented that the object of the recent outrages was 'to acquire by physical strength a dominion over the landowners, and to regulate the prices of the acres by enhancing the difficulty of labour' (77). The attempted restriction on outsiders or 'strangers' taking lands on the expiry of a lease, which was a distinct feature of the unrest of these years, was contrary to landlord interests. The result would be the effective loss of control over the disposal of land by the landlord, because he would be forced to treat with the sitting tenant. The effect, as the Clonmel Herald warned, would be 'on the expiration of a term there can be no competition of bidding and the peasant becomes in fact the owner of the land which he can depreciate as he pleases'(78). The unrest of the period after 1800 had serious implications for landlords with their right to dispose of and fix the price of property as they thought appropriate being challenged by the sitting tenantry.

The basic concept of regulating the transfer of land was also identified by the judges of a special commission sent to try the disturbers in Tipperary, Limerick, and Waterford in 1803. They concluded that the source of the recent unrest was the attempt 'to join in a system of opposition to the introduction of strangers (by whom they meant persons of any other vicinity) from becoming the tenants of farms, and to compel the land[ed] proprietors . . . to treat with, exclusively, the ancient occupiers' (79). One of the



magistrates for the county, Edmund Power, concurred in this view remarking that 'It is well known . . . that the farmers who are nearly or out of lease are principally the cause of all the disturbances and outrages ... which are done to deter others from bidding for their farms and their landlords from raising their rents'(80).

Clearly there was a conflict of interests subsisting, at a time of rising land values, between landlords who sought to obtain the best possible increase in rent when leases fell out and those sitting tenants who, unable to meet such demands, sought to protect interests by a resort to violence. So far as access to land in the period 1799-1803 is concerned the two key and interrelated issues which prompted the violence were new or outside tenants and rent demands.

Attacks on new tenants or their landlords are recorded for locations around Cahir, Cashel (New Inn district), Clonmel, and on the Limerick border (81). These attacks were executed by bands led by or including displaced tenants who had not had their tenancies renewed, those with leases running out, and a minority who contrived attacks in order to relinquish their lease commitments. These were largely tenant farmers who combined with labourers, artisans, and other associated elements who were pressing their own specific grievances.

The majority of attacks were directed at new tenants who had recently taken lands, with a view to making them surrender their farms and quit the area. The earliest and most serious of such attacks was in April 1801 on William Price, a tenant to lands near Cashel. He was shot as he inspected lands he had recently leased at Ballinree on the Smith - Barry estate near the town, and he later died of his wounds. The motive behind the attack was stated by a resident in the locality when he wrote that 'the alleged reason . . . is that he [Price] took a farm from Smith - Barry Esqr., or rather from a Mr. Boys who held under Mr. Barry, which had been tenanted by the ruffians that perpetrated this horrid act' (82). Price was the successful bidder in a recent canting of the lands, but it is significant that the unsuccessful bidders were reported to be the intended targets of future attack (83).

The murder of Price was the manifestation of resentment by the former tenants in response to their dispossession under a former head tenant. The majority of the other assaults on new tenants were less extreme, probably because those involved were of lesser stature than Price. Such modified forms of attack were mainly intimidatory. They took the form of beatings (as at Roesborough in March 1801, Dundrum, and Glosa near Clonmel in June 1802); the burning of farm and other buildings (as at Clonpet and Donohill near Tipperary in October 1800, and Castle Uniack in March 1803); the administering of oaths (as at Killerk in December 1802); and the issuing of threatening



notices (as at Clonmel in September 1802) (84).

Sitting tenants were also active in attempting to ensure their continuance in advance of their leases expiring. This activity took the form of issuing notices to their landlords and prospective bidders with the aim of deterring them from entering any arrangement detrimental to the occupier. In September 1802 William Bourke of Garrane near Newpark was arrested for posting threatening letters to prevent persons taking a farm he held under Richard Moore of Clonmel, and he addressed a notice to Moore cautioning him against countenancing such dealings (85). In November 1802 the houses of M.Reilly and J.Casey, tenants to Thomas Grubb at Kilgreaney near Clonmel were attacked by 40 or 50 men. Casey by pre-arrangement with the attackers was absent, but Reilly was flogged because he was to succeed the following March to the old tenant (86). This latter case points to the fact that some of these outrages may have been contrived or collusive.

The corollary was when a sitting tenant arranged a mock attack in order that it might act as an excuse for giving up a farm. Naturally enough we only get notice of such attacks when their execution was unsuccessful. One noteworthy case was at Garnvella near Cahir in September 1803 when one Mara was ordered to resign a farm he held near Ardfinnan, to which request he agreed to comply. Mara allowed one of the attackers to escape having been instructed to detain him by one of the local gentlemen. From this action it is to be implied that Mara contrived the whole affair as an excuse for relinquishing the farm which had not proved to be as profitable as he had expected (87). Not all tenants, however, had the option of resorting to such novel tactics in order to forego their lease obligations. Tenants unable to meet their rent payments had to face the normal sanctions of distraint or ejection. In 1802, for example, distraint in the form of crops and livestock seized for rent and arrears of rent due to William Riall and the representatives of Samuel White, were publicly auctioned (88).

The victims also included those who were acting in a caretaker capacity over certain lands, instanced at Lisgibbon near Tipperary in August 1799 when Thomas O'Brien overseer to the lands for Mr. Ronan was murdered ; and at Clerihan in November 1802 when John Brien was flogged by tenants to the other parts of the lands of Ballynattin near Clonmel which Brien was caretaking for Parsons (89). Dairy men were also the victims of outrages in these years as in the case of the murder in 1804 of John Daniel who kept a dairy at Mocklerstown ; and attacks on them were sustained as part of the more formal organisation of factionalism which developed from 1805 (90). Additionally estate stewards were the objects of violence because their functions included receiving and arbitrating on bids for farms, the removal of old tenants on the expiration of leases,



and the installation of new tenants. Both functions made stewards figures of odium to the displaced tenantry. The most serious assault on an estate steward was in February 1800 when Alexander Mollison, Lord Cahir's steward was murdered, while in June 1803 John Murphy, Mr. Watson's steward, was severely beaten at Chancellorstown near Clonmel (91).

The second major issue of the unrest of the years 1799 -1803 was rent. The public solicitation of bids for lands or canting tended in effect to raise the rent beyond the reach of the sitting tenant (92). An instance of this process in practice can be seen in the reletting in 1806 of the lands of Tureenbrien part of Bilboa on the Rous estate skirting the Tipperary / Limerick border. George Ryan the sitting tenant had died and the lands were advertised for reletting from 25 March 1806. Ryan's son Ewer offered £150 for the lands, but was prepared to go as high as £200 (93). The other bids received, however, equalled or exceeded this latter sum as follows : T. Carpenter (£200), T. Frend (£200), G. Maher (£200), P. Ryan who was another son (£220), T. O'Brien (£265), and M. Ryan (£270) (94). It is not recorded who was the successful bidder, but clearly the son of the former tenant was in a position of disadvantage. Tenants in such a position tried to protect their interests either by trying to maintain rents at their existing levels, or by forcibly staying on in their lands after their leases had fallen in. Both strategies were intended to force the landlord into an impossible situation where he was intimidated from proceeding with public auction of the lands, and by default was forced to treat with the existing tenantry.

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On the basis of the foregoing Lord Norbury's analysis of the object of the agrarian unrest in the county being the control of rent and the regulation of the transfer of land, is in outline correct. He was of course articulating the views and values of his class one which had sought but largely failed to take advantage of the increasing prosperity of the period by demanding higher rents and by dictating the use to which land was put agriculturally. External elements were introduced namely dairymen and others who became with their landlords the objects of local resentment. Much of the unrest of the period was waged at this level as established tenants tried to control or reverse the acquisition of land by intruders. At another level the farmer class were themselves the victims of violence from those beneath them, i.e. from labourers and cottiers whose own grievances centred on gaining access to conacre lettings and controlling the rents thereof. As a class they were at issue with outside labourers who came to the county and worked for lower wages thereby undermining the economic position of their local counterparts. The combination of an exceptionally large proportion of marginal figures, i.e. labourers



and cottiers, reflecting unequal access to land, and of threatened head tenants if seen with grievances experienced by other categories such as dairymen, meant that Tipperary had not only persistent unrest but a complex pattern. In the expression of discontent and violence Tipperary was unique among Irish counties.

and the growth of radicalism, deriving its intellectual basis from French revolutionary ideas, found its ultimate expression in the 1794 rebellion.

Given the problems which the decade threw up it is striking how Tipperary avoided the insolent incident elsewhere. The chief issue of the early years of the decade was Catholic relief. The Catholic Committee, which had gone into abeyance since the early 1780s, experienced a revival in its fortunes and the towns of Cashel, Carrick, Clonmel, Nenagh, and Thurlough came to have representatives on the general committee; Droghda Ryan of Cash played an active part; and there was a network locally for the collection of funds (1). Following the execution of the rebel leaders in the County in late 1791 in protest against the adoption of a more radical programme by the committee, led by Edward Byrne (who was executed at the Madmartin) and John Keogh, the committee in 1792 were to secure the elective franchise and grand jury representation for Catholics. For this purpose county delegates were chosen for a Catholic convention to be held in late 1792. In July 1792 Keogh was the Munster bishop in Tipperary town and received their support for the Committee's aims (2). The clergy were to play an important role in building up support locally for the Committee. These arrangements were later made with the new Archbishop of Cashel, Thomas King, in late 1792, the parish priest appointed to choose county delegates for the general committee, and the Dean of Clonmel participated in the distribution of pamphlets for Catholic relief (3). Protestants locally were a powerful barrier to the proposed Catholic relief in 1792 and the contemporary French revolutionary movement. During the summer of 1792 county meetings were convened at which the proposed committee was established but it is significant that Tipperary was not among them (4).

Only from October 1792 does any clearcut of discontent over the progress of the Catholic issue locally. On 2 October the Catholics of the county met at Thurlough where a carefully worded declaration signed by 57 of their present was signed (5). At the meeting the delegates for the committee were chosen. They were Edward Ryan of Cashel, Thomas King of Long Orchard, and James Scully of Killybeggs. Significantly a day after the Thurlough meeting on 3 October a very successful meeting of the present grand jury, and freeholders took place at Nenagh. This was the first local meeting to be held since the outbreak of the county. The meeting also had a declaration in favour of the committee (6). Daniel Toland and John Bagnall, in support of



## Chapter IX

The 1790s were a decade of crisis in Irish society. Changes in legislation and in the political order occurred rapidly ; traditional alignments and loyalties between classes and individuals and within the upper class became less assured ; and the growth of radicalism, deriving its intellectual basis from French revolutionary ideas, found its ultimate expression in the 1798 rebellion.

Given the problems which the decade threw up it is striking how Tipperary avoided the tensions evident elsewhere. The chief issue of the early years of the decade was catholic relief. The Catholic Committee, which had gone into abeyance since the early 1780s, experienced a revival in its fortunes and the towns of Cashel, Carrick, Clonmel, Nenagh, and Thurles came to have representatives on the general committee ; George Ryan of Inch played an active part ; and there was a network locally for the collection of funds (1). Following the secession of the aristocratic elements in the Committee in late 1791 in protest against the adoption of a more radical programme by the merchant interest led by Edward Byrne ( who was related to the Mathews) and John Keogh, the aims in 1792 were to attain the elective franchise and grand jury representation for catholics. For this purpose county delegates were chosen for a catholic convention to be held in late 1792. In July 1792 Keogh met the Munster bishops in Tipperary town and received their support for the Committee's aims (2).The clergy were to play an important role in building up support locally for the Committee. Thus arrangements were later made with the new archbishop of Cashel, Thomas Bray, to have two persons from each parish appointed to choose county delegates for the general committee, and Dr. Egan of Clonmel participated in the distribution of parchments for obtaining signatures (3). Protestants fearfully saw a parallel between the proposed catholic convention or congress and the contemporary French revolutionary assembly. During the summer of 1792 many county meetings were convened at which the proposed convention was condemned, but it is significant that Tipperary was not among these (4).

Only from October 1792 does any element of discord enter into the progress of the catholic issue locally. On 2 October the catholics of the county met at Thurles where a cautiously worded declaration signed by 57 of those present was issued (5). It was at this meeting that delegates for the convention were chosen. They were Laurence Smith, a Carrick merchant, John Lalor of Long Orchard, and James Scully of Kilfeacle (6). Significantly a day after the Thurles meeting on 3 October a 'very numerous' meeting of the protestant gentry, clergy, and freeholders took place at Nenagh. This was the first formal response to the emergent catholic agitation on the county. The meeting addressed a declaration to the two county MPs, Daniel Toler and John Bagwell, to support the



constitution and to 'vigorously oppose all attempts at innovation or alteration in Church and State'. On the occasion the address was signed by 60 of the principal gentry, and provision was made whereby further signatures were to be obtained in their respective areas by a committee made up of Barker, Pennefather, Moore of Barne, Bagwell of Kilmore, Parker, Curtis, and Carden (7). By report 'near 600 freeholders', equal to about two fifths of the entire body of the county's freeholders, signed the address (8). The Nenagh meeting shows the quick response of the protestant gentry to the proceedings at Thurles. The initiative exercised by the northern gentry reflects the shift which had taken place in the political leadership of the county in the 1780s when Prittie and Toler were the county MPs.

There was a division of opinion among Tipperary protestants on the issue of concessions to catholics. On the one hand a minority including Prittie and Toler opposed it vigorously. On the other hand an influential group of liberal protestants like Lord Donoughmore and families with a background of conformity, like Lords Lismore and Llandaff, favoured a relaxation. For instance, when the petition of the Irish catholics was prepared in December 1792 Lord Donoughmore, who was the chief spokesman in favour of relief in the house of lords, played an important role in making its contents acceptable to the convention and the British side (9). Finally, others were unsure how to respond, remained apathetic, and accepted the reforms passively when they came. Given the background of sectarianism in the early 1760s a concerted campaign by protestants to resist change at this <sup>FINE</sup> might have been expected. But the issues in the early 1790s had a different context from thirty years previously, in particular the conjunction of interest between catholics ( who were making considerable advances in their own right ), and liberal protestants had strengthened in the intervening period. The result was that catholics were proceeding from a position of strength rather than weakness in the early 1790s, given the significant sympathy for their aims among liberal protestants. The balance between signatories to the address (two fifths of the county's freeholders) and non-signatories (three fifths) may loosely represent the weight of protestant opinion in the county.

The most active resistance among protestants was in the northern half of the county, this trend contrasting with the early 1760s when activity was more to the fore in the south particularly among the gentry around Clonmel. An indication of this is the way Tipperary members of parliament responded to the bills for catholic relief. In February 1792 Daniel Toler (county MP), John Toler (solicitor general), and Peter Holmes (Kilmallock), all northern landowners, spoke against the measure of relief introduced in that month ; whereas those who welcomed the measure in varying degrees included Sir



Thomas Osborne (Carysfort), Francis Hely-Hutchinson (University of Dublin), and John Bagwell of Marlfield (county MP), whose estates were in south Tipperary (10). The initiative for defending the protestant interest locally came from the northern gentry inside and outside parliament. Resistance to catholic claims intensified in late 1792, indicated by the measures pursued to obtain signatures for the address agreed on at Nenagh on 3 October. In November it was reported that a number of large landowners in Lower Ormond, including Toler and Prittie, were forcing their catholic tenants to sign the address ; while the agent on one estate assembled the tenants and compelled them to sign (11).

This local opposition did not influence the outcome at national level. The British government was determined to have a relief measure for catholics pushed through the Irish parliament for security reasons. In the debates in February 1793 following the introduction of the relief bill Bagwell and Holmes, though they had reservations about extending the elective franchise to catholics, sided with Osborne and Hely-Hutchinson in favouring the measure (12). The act (33 Geo. III c.21) as passed represented a major concession to catholics as it made the oath of allegiance more acceptable ; it repealed the abjuration oath and test ; it restored catholic 40s freeholders to the franchise ; and it opened a wide range of civil and military offices, local and national, to catholics. The passage of the act was marked by celebrations in Tipperary and by expressions of thanks from local delegates and towns (13).

The relative absence of upper class conflict in the county in the 1790s can be ascribed in large degree to the success with which local catholics became active in obtaining concessions without provoking a serious protestant backlash comparable in scale to the 1760s. The opportunist conversion from at least 1792 of John Bagwell (MP 1790-96) in favour of catholic relief contributed to the ease with which the new measures were implemented locally (14). This is most evident in relation to catholic representation on the grand jury, which was a particularly sensitive index of local influence. In March 1793 the first catholic in the county to be chosen as a justice of the peace was John Ryan of Ballyvistea (15). One of the county's chief catholics, James Scully of Kilfeacle, was made a magistrate through Bagwell's recommendation and two other appointments as justices followed (16). At the Summer assizes of 1793 four catholics, Ulick Allen, Laurence Smith, Denis Meagher, and James Scully, were on the grand jury with Scully remarking that 'Mr. Bagwell [of Kilmore, high sheriff] paid me a great compliment' by so doing (17). The later pattern of appointments is noteworthy. The total number of justices of the peace newly appointed for the county in the period from August 1793 to April 1798 was 65, 5 of whom had military commissions and they and 19 others having



appointments in other counties also. Of the total possibly 12 were catholic (18). A further indication of the recognition of prominent catholics is that at least 12 and possibly 17 others are list on the commission of the peace for the county in 1801, the total membership of which was 277 (19).

So far as the selection of catholics on the grand jury after 1793 is concerned the available figures for the different assizes are : Spring 1794 (3), Summer 1794 (5), Spring 1795 (4), Summer 1795 (3), Spring 1796 (2), Summer 1796 (3), and Spring 1802 (2) (20). This catholic representation was drawn from a circle of six individuals : Ulick Allen, James Scully, Laurence Smith, Denis Meagher, Denis McCarthy, and Thomas Lalor. The admission of catholics to positions of responsibility after 1793, achieved as it was by the consent of the Bagwell interest (John Bagwell of Kilmore being sheriff in the vital year of 1793) with opposition evident only in the north of the county, served to recognise the influence they had in local affairs. This process gave greater cohesion to the landed class as a whole as it faced the difficulties of the late 1790s. It also meant that leading catholics, having received recognition of their status, did not feel alienated from the status quo and as a result were less receptive to radicalism.

All who sought to qualify under the 1793 act had to subscribe to an oath and the first opportunity to do so was at Clonmel in June 1793 (21). Previous experience of oath taking in 1775 and 1778-91 indicted a high response rate among Tipperary catholics and also provided an index of their high profile among the landed, farmer, professional and mercantile classes (Tables LXVIII, LXIX). As Table LXXI indicates a total of 534 subscribed to the oath in the period 1793-6, the majority (525) in the first two years (1793-4) of the act's operation. The high profile of rural catholics of substance especially farmers (312), esquires (12), and gentlemen (40) as in previous oath taking exercises is a distinct feature of the early 1790s reflecting a prosperous and numerous catholic landed and middle interest in rural society. Urban middle class catholics in the towns of Carrick, Clonmel, Thurles, Nenagh, Cashel, Borrisoleigh, and Tipperary were also to the fore with merchants (23), shopkeepers (13), and a whole range of craftsmen and tradesmen with those in the textile, provisioning, and alcohol branches prominent. Accompanying these was a range of persons from the professional and service sectors.

The large number of farmers taking the oath is striking because there was little to be gained by this class from the 1793 act. It was the earlier act of 1778 which had benefited them most for it conceded greater rights in relation to the granting and receiving of leases and to the disposal of lands, while the act of 1782 allowed catholics to take and dispose of lands on the same terms as protestants. Rather the main significance of the act was political in that it conferred on catholics who registered their freeholds as being worth at



least 40s. per annum, the right to vote in elections. Already before the act had passed the political advantages to be gained by a restoration of the franchise were recognised locally. In January 1793 Nicholas Maher of Thurles, a tenant on the Ryan of Inch estate, was requesting his landlord to change his term of years into a freehold with a view to availing of the revived franchise (22). A similar desire to avail of the franchise accounts for the bunching of catholics registering their freeholds following the passage of the act at Loughmoe (20), Long Orchard (21), Templetouhy (25), Buolick (35), and Bawnmore (10) (23). The renewal of the electoral franchise to catholics was a major concession which was to assist in the restoration of the Mathew family to political prominence in the county.

The next phase of catholic pressure for relief from the remaining disabilities began in 1795. In January of that year the catholics of Cahsel, Fethard, Golden, Thurles, Borrisoleigh, Nenagh, Killenaule, and Templetouhy with those of the parishes of Dundrum, Dunaskeagh, Dually, Boherlahan, Cloneen, and Killosty petitioned parliament to this effect (24). This petition, along with those from other parts of the country, sought to take advantage of the declared preference of the new lord lieutenant, Lord Fitzwilliam, in favour of full concessions to catholics. The main focus of attention on the issue locally was the calling of a meeting of freeholders in Cashel in April in order to devise the best method of advancing catholic demands. The fact that an open meeting for this purpose was held is instructive as it indicates catholics mobilising their influence behind a major issue at county level for the first time after 1793. The mixed meeting agreed unanimously to petition for the removal of the remaining restrictive statutes on catholics which placed them 'beneath the rank of citizens', and by doing so to disclaim 'on the part of the protestants of the county of Tipperary any wish for distinction in consequence of their religion' (25). This petition was presented to the house of commons and to the king (26).

County meetings had traditionally been divisive and in the context of the 1790s they were avoided by many protestants particularly when the matter of concessions to catholics was under discussion. The Cashel meeting was badly attended by protestants, especially by those from the north of the county. Some protestants were divided on how to deal with the catholic question. Some were in favour of further relief, like Rev. Anthony Armstrong of Emly who, writing to Charles Agar, archbishop of Cashel in advance of the Cashel meeting, expressed his wish that 'no man s[houl]d be deprived of his civil liberty on acc[oun]t of his religious persuasion', and that it was his intention to 'promote catholic emancipation as far as can be done consistent security' (27). Others, however, like Rev. Patrick Hare of Cashel and Lord Kingsborough, opposed any



advance in catholic claims. At the Cashel meeting both were prominent in speaking out on the issue, but found themselves in a minority on the day (28). In between these two extremes were those who were undecided on the matter and did not know how to react. To the regret of some protestants this group included the high sheriff in 1795 Peter Holmes. Significantly, Holmes unlike sheriffs in some other counties seemed reluctant to oppose outright the holding of the meeting. He clearly felt himself to be in a quandary and sought advice from Agar who himself trenchantly opposed extra relief being conceded. Holmes acknowledged 'my embarrassment how to act on the approaching meeting at Cashel' and sounded Agar out on what line the government would advise (29). After the event Holmes directed his criticism at non-attending protestants for allowing the sentiments expressed at Cashel to go unchecked, remarking that 'it is gentlemen who might have attended and now complain must blame themselves for it was impossible to resist the tide'. And he was confident that 'had there been a reasonable attendance of the protestant gentlemen of the county . . . we sh[oul]d have been able either to have confined the resolution within the bounds of moderation or defeated their effect by a protest' (30). The experience of 1795 showed protestants to be in disarray on the catholic question, there was no evident reaction from the northern gentry which had been so marked in October 1792, and the voice of hardline protestant opinion was passing to people like Rev. Patrick Hare, possibly under Agar's tutelage, and Kingsborough.

Despite carrying the issue locally at national level Grattan's bill advocating complete emancipation was defeated in May with the minority, including John Bagwell, John and Francis Hely-Hutchinson, Thomas Barton, and Sir Thomas Osborne, voting in its favour (31). So that, ironically, success locally for catholics was not followed through by the achievement of further relief, as had been the case in 1793. This was primarily due to the political circumstances obtaining in 1795 for Fitzwilliam, by offering total emancipation, had produced a crisis which could only be solved by a change in the Irish administration and Fitzwilliam's removal for wanting to give too much too quickly.

Concessions to catholics in 1792 and 1793 were carried through without widespread sectarian hostility. In fact sectarianism was not a major component in upper class or popular relationships in the 1790s in Tipperary. What token resistance to change there was came from the northern half of the county. It was here that there was denser rural protestant settlement. Table LXV compiled from a computation of 109 statistical units from the 1831 census returns shows the numerical spread of protestants and their percentage in relation to overall population. At that date protestants formed less than 5% of the total county population. In only 12 parishes did the percentage range between 5 -



10% ; in 7 between 11 - 20 % ; and in only 2 cases (Borrisokane and Cloughjordan) did it exceed 20%. Numerically protestants were strongest in the towns of Clonmel, Cashel, Nenagh, Roscrea, Thurles, and Tipperary ; and they had a substantial though smaller presence in Cahir, Carrick, Fethard, Killenaule, Newport, and Templemore.

Protestant rural communities were most in evidence in the parishes in the north. Thus out of 26 parishes (including urban parishes) containing over 200 protestants, 15 were situated in the northern baronies especially those of Ballingarry, Ballymackey, Bourney, Corbally, Cullenwaine, Finnoe, Kilmastulla, and Kilmore, parishes which clustered around the larger concentrations of Nenagh, Roscrea, Cloughjordan, and Borrisokane. Outside the northern half of the county protestant rural communities were few the main ones being at Kilcooley (612), Ballintemple (230), and Shanrahan (252) ; with some important clusters at Athassel (197), Ballingarry (126), Clonbeg (152), Holy Cross (106), Inislounaght (182), Magorban (101), Templeineiry (135), and Tubbrid (116).

It is in the northern area that token sectarianism emerges. In 1797 some appearance of sympathy with orangeism among protestant craftsmen in Nenagh manifested itself, and in 1798 fear of an Orange attack drove catholics from their homes near Templemore (32). However such sympathy did not develop into a more radically politicised junto as it did in north Wexford. Certainly orangeism received no cognisance among the major political interests in the county. The high sheriff, Thomas Judkin-Fitzgerald, was determined to discourage the emergence of an orange faction in the county and, in the context of 1798 and the individual concerned, such a determination counted for a good deal (33). No massacre of protestants took place despite retrospective reports that this had been the intention at Ballintemple in 1797 and 1798, and at Kilcooley in 1798 (34). This was also despite the claim by Musgrave that the conspiracy in the county was promoted by propertied catholics and clergy and that it had been frustrated by the exertions of the sheriff (35).

The catholic issue emerged in the county's electoral politics in the 1790s. Prior to the 1790 election predictions were that Prittie would be returned and a keen contest was expected for the second seat between Daniel Toler, the other sitting member, and Francis James Mathew, Lord Llanfdaff's eldest son (36). In the event, however, Prittie declined going forward and instead sponsored John Bagwell as a candidate (37). Polling opened in Clonmel on 6 May and from the start Toler built up an unassailable lead over the other two candidates who, despite the introduction of other candidates to draw the vote away from Bagwell in Mathew's favour, remained closely tied until the end (38). At the close of the poll on 26 May Toler had 1,491 votes, Mathew 845, and Bagwell 776 (Table XX), with the first two declared elected. Bagwell, although he was assured of a seat in



parliament by virtue of his election for Doneralie borough, petitioned against the Tipperary return and a separate petition on his behalf was put forward by a group of freeholders led by Sir John Carden and leading Clonmel quaker merchants (39). The committee examining the petition began its work in February 1791 and did not formally give its decision until January 1792 when, with Mathew's original majority of 69 being eliminated and Bagwell being accorded a majority of 19, the latter was returned in Mathew's stead (40). This was a major setback for the pro-catholic Mathews, for at the opening of the 1790s two ultra-protestants represented the county. It also represented a personal failure for the Mathew family for they proved unable to re-take one of the county seats last held by them in 1782. The result in 1790 was reminiscent of that in 1761 when a Mathew victory was overturned. To add insult to injury Bagwell was appointed to the prestigious position of colonel of the new county militia as constituted in 1793, much to the declared annoyance of the Mathews who had made their strong preference for the post known to government (41).

The exclusion of the Mathews from the county representation was temporary however, for in August 1796 Francis Mathew was elected without opposition to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of Daniel Toler (42). This development was fortuitous as it restored the balance to county politics and ensured that no contest occurred in the general election of 1797 when Bagwell and Mathew were returned unopposed (43). By the mid-1790s the harmonisation of county politics which this outcome reflects can be attributed to national and local factors. Nationally the gentry as a whole, given the context of an attempted French invasion in 1796, were anxious to exhibit their patriotism, and therefore shunned possible electoral contests in 1797 which might appear anti-patriotic (44). Locally two considerations operated in 1797. Firstly, Bagwell's espousal of the catholic cause since 1792 won him much favour among catholics and liberal protestants. Of mercantile background Bagwell operated from a narrow electoral base in the south of the county and had little influence among the majority protestant freeholders of the north, whose interest went either for Prittie or Toler. Hoping to expand his influence Bagwell opportunely backed the catholic cause in the hope of extending his political interest, though as a dissenter he may have been influenced by contemporary presbyterian radicalism which advocated catholic rights. This flirtation with the catholic cause did not outlast the Union debate, but while it persisted in the 1790s it served to reduce the prospect of contest and division.

Secondly, the independent interest represented on this occasion by Sir William Barker of Kilcooley and Edward Moore of Mooresfort failed to mobilise and offer a challenge to the more wealthy and powerful interests. Moore was deterred from proceeding as a



candidate out of fears that his pro-catholic leanings would provoke, as he himself wrote, 'jealousy and commotion' ; that his disavowal of the war would be construed as sanction for French principles ; and that more practically he feared that his income, 'tho[ugh] independent moderate', would be insufficient to defray the costs of an election campaign (45). Also an earlier conjunction between Lords Llandaff and Lismore, whereby both their eldest sons were to go forward and have Bagwell removed, failed to materialise when Lismore withdrew his consent for his son's candidature (46).

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In the absence of major agrarian disturbances, in the absence of serious division over the granting of concessions to catholics, and because politics in the county remained cohesive, what then is the context in relation to the development of political radicalism in the county in the 1790s ?

It has been a common assertion of Irish historical writing that there was no rebellion in Tipperary in 1798 comparable to that in Leinster and elsewhere (47). Traditionally Tipperary has been regarded as an anomaly in the 1790s. The fact that no rebellion of serious proportions manifested itself there in 1798 has seemed peculiar given the county's earlier experience of rural unrest. A number of factors contributed to making the county generally subdued in comparison to other areas. In this respect the degree to which catholics could promote their claims and benefit from their results when achieved, without provoking a concerted protestant backlash comparable in scale to the early 1760s, was a vital element. The ease with which catholics received official recognition of their social and economic status, reflected in a high grand jury membership, was instrumental in creating cohesion among the landed class during a period when changing influences were intruding from outside. It meant that catholics were not alienated from the status quo and thus were not pre-disposed to recruitment into leadership positions in the United Irishmen as happened elsewhere. Rather catholic sympathies at a broader level were successfully channelled into the realm of traditional politics whereby the liberal protestant interest epitomised by the Mathews utilised the increased enfranchisement of the catholics to consolidate and extend its alignment with that body.

The absence of sectarian rivalry in the 1790s becomes explicable when one considers that the concessions to catholics achieved in that decade represented, not a beginning but, a continuation and part culmination of a process which had begun in mid century. In the interim the extent of ultra-protestant resistance to concessions had diminished considerably, shown by the absence of an active junto around Clonmel in the 1790s and by the conversion of the Bagwells towards favouring catholic relief, though admittedly this was in expectation of short term political advantage. Rather token resistance came to



manifest itself in the north where the protestant population was higher than the county average. Yet despite evidence of the advance of Defender ideas from the midlands, the expression of United Irishman ideas transported from the north, the fact that the region threw up one United leader Harvey Morris and some evidence of Orange sympathies in one or two centres, all these elements did not coalesce to produce a conflagration comparable to the Leinster experience.

Four factors contributed to this situation. Firstly, whatever the retrospective claims of the sheriff, Judkin-Fitzgerald, the Nenagh gentry and others, Defender and United Irishman organisation in the region does not appear to have been elaborate. Secondly, Harvey Morris in north Tipperary was exceptional for protestants there did not experience the rivalry of catholic middlemen which in Wexford presaged disaster. Large catholic middlemen were concentrated in the centre and south of the county where rural protestant settlement was sparse, so that the pre-conditions for conflict at this level were absent. Thirdly, orangeism was not subscribed to extensively by protestants who felt themselves threatened and it was actively discouraged by the sheriff where it appeared. Finally, the north of the county was not as strongly involved in corn cultivation at this time as were the areas adjoining the River Suir and especially around Clonmel. It therefore did not experience the downturn in prices after the withdrawal of the subsidies in 1797 as did regions in the south. Had the north had a closer involvement in commercial grain production and a greater presence of catholic middlemen, then the events of 1798 might have been different.

Despite the fact that no outright large scale rebellion materialised it is evident that there was some initial sympathy for republican objectives in the early 1790s. In July 1791, for instance, a numerous and respectable number of gentry from the Tipperary town district met there to mark the anniversary of the French revolution (48). After the formation of the Society of United Irishmen in October 1791 in Belfast it remained strongest there and in Dublin. Attempts were made, however, to contact and encourage radical groups in the provinces. By January 1792 contact had been made with such a group in Nenagh and in March the Tipperary United Irishmen met in Clonmel where, according to Leonard McNally who was present, it 'promised to become extremely numerous' (49). In June 1792 the secretary of the local society was written to from Dublin 'encouraging them in a pursuit of the grand object as that body, it is supposed, will consist of many hundreds in a very short time' (50). Clonmel and Nenagh were the two centres where radical groups receptive to the United Irish ethos developed earliest.

Some prominent catholics were associated with the movement at this early stage. Such involvement is explicable, as Maureen Wall has demonstrated, because catholics in



addition to pressing their demands at a constitutional level with the government, were also responsive to the prospects for promoting claims through the United Irishman organisation, at least in 1792 (51). This dual strategy accounts for the presence of some catholics from Tipperary in the United Irishmen in the early 1790s. It is known that three such persons took the oath and joined the society at a meeting in Dublin on 15 December 1792 : Mr. Lidwell, Mr. Lew (Lowe ?), and Laurence Smith of Carrick (52). Smith is worthy of particular notice. A wealthy merchant, he was prominent locally in the advancement of catholic claims being one of the county delegates selected for the catholic convention in 1792, and he was also one of the first four catholics to be chosen for grand jury membership in 1793. Mr. Lidwell is very likely George Lidwell of Dromard, a large protestant head tenant on the Mathew estate, a liberal in politics, and belonging to a family inter-married with the Lalor, Scully (Cashel), and O'Brien-Butler (Bansha) families, members of which were closely involved in the promotion of the catholic cause (53). The identity and status of Mr. Lowe has not been determined.

These three were introduced to the meeting by Thomas Addis Emmet whose association with them probably derived from family and landed connections in Tipperary, and because of his contacts with prominent catholics there through correspondence. The Emmet connection with Tipperary is of interest. The great grandfather of Thomas Addis Emmet (d. 1823) and Robert Emmet (executed 1803) was Robert Emmet ( b.1678, d.1725) of Tipperary town (54). Richard Sadlier, writing from Tipperary to Thomas Addis Emmet in Dublin in December 1790, mentions aunt Emmet's will in which she bequeathed all her freehold property in the county to Robert Emmet (d. 1802) for life, with remainder to Emmet himself, remainder to Robert Emmet the younger. The property concerned, at Raheen and Crossoil, amounted to over 220 acres and some plots at Bohercrow near Tipperary, was leased from three landlords Lord Milton, Roger Harris of Derry, and Henry O'Brien. The total yearly rent was £342.15s. of which £221.19s.8d. was profit rent. The land was sub-let to undertenants under leases made in the 1770s which were of varying duration : 21,30, and 31 years, three lives and three lives renewable forever (55). The Emmet connection was an important one and the three persons concerned were of some standing. But there is no evidence to suggest that their involvement in the United movement persisted after the achievement of major concessions for catholics in 1793.

The progress of radical ideas among the rural classes was far less advanced in the early 1790s than elsewhere. A government report on the spread of defenderism compiled in July 1795 excludes Tipperary from the list of counties affected (56). Only with the repressive legislation introduced in early 1796 and the dissemination of radical ideas



brought by catholics fleeing the northern counties, does radicalism begin to infiltrate the county. According to Lord Waterford, writing in September 1796, the upper class, the middle class, the merchants and farmers were loyal, but the shopkeepers of Carrick and other towns were the most likely to prove disaffected as they 'frequent clubs and [are] full of pride and declarations' (57). The towns apart it was in north Tipperary that the new ideas infiltrated most largely as a spill over from the spread of defenderism into the midlands in 1792-3. Northerners from Antrim were reported to have passed through Nenagh in September 1796 on their way to Cork via Cashel (58). Oath taking became more common in the Nenagh and Roscrea districts in the months following and by April 1797 confirmation of the spread of United activities to the county was forthcoming from government (59).

It is from the north Tipperary area that some indication is had of how the ideas emanating from outside were spread and interpreted. In May 1797 cottiers in the Tipperary Hills, i.e. the Slieve Felim and Silvermines Mountains, informed their farmer landlords that they would not pay their conacre rents as they had been assured that 'thousands were coming from the north to join them in (sic) their way to Cork, where they were assured the French would soon land'. No tithes were to be paid the coming season and after the northern protestants came to assist the catholics of Munster land was to be divided equally (60). This exemplifies the millenarian appeal much of the radical ideas had. Such separatist notions were introduced into the county from two sources : discharged militiamen, and so-called 'pedlars' from the north of Ireland. In the above case in the Tipperary Mountains, men discharged from the Limerick militia spread the ideas. In addition the Tipperary militia, which was on duty in Derry in 1797, is also known to have picked up treasonable notions there. One Derry magistrate remarked that 'great numbers' of them had acknowledged themselves as Unitedmen (61). As there was little attempt to purge militia regiments of treason before they departed from Ulster , the Tipperary militiamen on their return home carried the separatist message back (62). The second method whereby the radical ideas were spread was through printed papers which, for example, contained the oath and promises to make the people 'all rich and happy' and which were distributed by persons from the north of Ireland dressed as pedlars (63).

Despite the infiltration of ideas by means of these two sources and some evidence from the Clonmel area of swearing activity, the Defender and United movements were weak organisationally in the county in mid-1797. In May 1798 Camden, the lord lieutenant, could confidently report of Tipperary that 'as the system was not organized there, so it has been more easily checked' (64). The fundamental cause was the general absence of



major agrarian issues, like tithes, which would have provided an essential layer of grievance upon which a more separatist political movement could have thrived. Indeed it was reported that the United Irishmen had 'to dwell with peculiar energy on the supposed oppressiveness of tythes' and had to contrive a series of agrarian outrages such as the burning of corn and the houghing of cattle in order to win support among the peasantry in Munster (65). In this sense much of the violence which occurred may have been artificially created having no other purpose than to win over the peasantry to a greater political commitment.

The fact was that the pre-conditions necessary for a radical political movement to develop locally did not emerge. Before 1799 the county was comparatively free of serious economic upset, though there were years of difficulty in 1793 and 1797 for instance. Harvests were generally good, and the land market was stable. Serious and organised agrarian unrest was in abeyance with only four cases of forcible possession, for instance, on record for the entire decade (66). Rent was not a major source of grievance. Admittedly in the summer of 1793 the inhabitants of parishes in west Tipperary swore those in adjoining parishes in Limerick not to pay rents (67). However this can be viewed as an extension of the militia disturbances of the time and not as a well defined refusal to pay rents *per se*. The ensuing Summer of 1794 may have witnessed some difficulties in rent collection for one agent, Austin Cooper, was obliged to advertise his intention of resorting to distraint or ejection in the event of non-payment of rents then due on the Damer, Cashel See, Burgh, and Hawarden estates (68). In the Summer of 1797 cottiers in the Tipperary Hills were refusing to honour promissory notes given as payment for potato and meadow ground taken by them the previous year from farmers (69). The unsettled state of the country from late Spring to late Summer 1798 was used as an excuse by some tenants to delay paying their rents, and some agents like Peter Walsh on the Barker estate at Kilcooley had difficulty getting rents in. In July Walsh remarked to Barker that 'the rents came in very slowly' (70). However Walsh's appreciation of the novelty of the situation and his stressing that rents were paid punctually for many years back, points to the fact that the meeting of deadlines for rent payment was the general norm for most of the decade.

Evidence of opposition to tithes appeared in the Summer of 1793 but it seems to have been part of a general agitation lacking specific direction and stemmed from the militia riots of the period (71). Serious resistance to tithes did not re-emerge until after 1798 when less favourable economic prospects made them appear onerous. There was a rise in the amount of parish and county cess in the 1790s (Appendix IV, Table LVII). Yet despite this rise neither were prominent as declared grievances, the implication being that



rising incomes were sufficient to absorb these incidental charges.

With the traditional forms of local taxation ( tithe, parish and county cess ) not constituting an issue of grievance what provoked such expressions of discontent as occurred ? It would appear to have been novel forms of taxation ( or the fear of such being imposed ) and their associated obligations, which provoked some hostility. The most innovative new imposition was that legislated for by the militia act of 1793 (33 Geo. III c.22). A specific number of men were to be raised by ballot in each parish and the whole to form the county regiment. On 17 May 1793 a meeting at Cashel decided on the allocation of 560 men to the 140 parishes in 11 baronies based on the proportion of houses in each barony and parish (Table LX) (72). A newspaper report of the time suggested that very few individuals were being taken from each parish, and that double the number would volunteer for militia service could they be received (73). In fact only an average of four men were recruited from each parish which does not appear unduly exploitive. Rather it was the compulsory nature of enlistment which provoked popular resistance. This displayed itself in the Borrisoleigh area by late May, and local baronial meetings of the magistrates to decide how to implement the array had to be postponed at Cashel (for Middlethird), Cahir (Iffa and Offa West), and Clonmel (Iffa and Offa East) (74). In addition to the enforced method of recruitment there were also fears that the militia when embodied would be obliged to serve outside Ireland and this contributed to resistance (75). A further indication of hostility to the measure was the formation of a company in Clonmel in late May which offered insurance for those who wished to avoid service, if chosen by ballot, by providing substitutes in their stead at prescribed rates (76). In the face of this opposition the government dropped the ballot method of enlistment, and when this was done recruitment proceeded apace without opposition in June and July at locations like Carrick, Roscrea, and Tipperary (77). So despite some initial resistance to its compulsory character, the militia act was successfully implemented.

The cost of maintaining the militia was borne by central funds so that the localities did not have to bear a direct burden in this respect. The Tipperary militia was placed on the Irish establishment on 8 June 1793 and in its first year of service cost the exchequer over £12,000 to maintain, an amount which was to increase in subsequent years (78). The larger cost of maintenance to the county only became a reality with an additional act of 1795 (35 Geo. III c.8) which augmented the militia by about one third and which specified that parishes failing to meet the quota of men had to pay £10 per man short in lieu. In addition, by a further act of the same year ( 35 Geo.III c.2), counties were obliged to defray the cost of maintaining the immediate family of the recruit during



service outside the county. In later years the amount levied on the county for this purpose of family maintenance increased from £190 in 1795-6 to £497 in 1796-7 to £839 in 1797-8 to £889 in 1798-9, representing a fourfold rise in a short span of four years (79).

So far as the levying of a cess on parishes where the quota of men was deficient is concerned, by early March 1796 it is clear that there was extensive resistance, spread over several baronies, to its collection (80). As Dickson has indicated the militia maintenance cess was one element in the growing burden of taxation in the 1790s with the Munster counties to the fore in their resistance to the tax (81). Opposed on the grounds that it was an innovative and novel measure and occurring in a year (1796) which was difficult in other respects, resistance did not repeat itself in other years. Ironically it was after the disbanding of the Tipperary militia in May 1802 that the unemployed militia recruits contributed to the violence and disturbances then becoming more serious again (82).

The Summer of 1793 when agitation over the militia arose also witnessed the expression of local fears that parliament had passed a land tax and a tax on cattle, fears which had to be countered by public statements from the gentry that such reports were untrue (83). Further local hostility to taxation became evident in 1796 in Clonmel over attempts by the rector to gain a re-evaluation of the amounts paid by householders for minister's money, the urban equivalent to tithes (84).

More serious in its local implications was the withdrawal of the subsidy scheme for the carriage of corn and flour to Dublin. By an act (37 Geo.III c.24) passed in 1797, from September 1797 the subsidies were to cease and be replaced by an export bounty through Dublin as already applied to other Irish ports. This alteration had a material effect on the malt trade in Wexford where production was closely dependent on the subsidies and on the demands of the Dublin alcohol industry (85). The cessation of the subsidies had some of the effects in Tipperary *it* had in Wexford, where the resultant dislocation to economic activity in the Spring of 1798 has been said to have contributed to unrest there. The fact that Dublin was no longer available as a ready market meant that farmers were more dependent on the local market which was depressed. Rev. John Garnett, writing from Thurles in early March 1798, commented that 'the stoppage of the bounty for the land carriage for corn, meal, and malt to Dublin . . . lays them under a necessity of selling their grain at home for whatever pittance they can get' (86). In addition a prospective rise in the amount of duty on bere and barley from 12s. 9d. to 16s. per barrel, to come into effect after 25 March 1798, was having an equally bad effect in the county. This was because with barley prices to the producer depressed at 5s.



to 6s. farmers were finding it hard to make up their rents (87). It was this conjunction of detrimental circumstances in the Spring of 1798 which made sections of the rural community more receptive to radical ideas and more prone to agitation than they were previously. This abrupt alteration was noted by Rev. Garnett when he reported that 'till lately this union [Thurles] was well effected, but now such a change has taken place that most of the lower order of people and several who were a year or two ago in a comfortable way have been infected with defenderism'. After emphasising the withdrawal of the bounty and the imposition of the extra duty on bere and barley as being the ultimate causes of this, he continued : 'their minds are so exasperated by having nothing but beggary in view that they have been induced to listen to the delusive prospects of relief held out to them by our domestic enemies' (88).

So serious was the economic situation that in April in Carrick, a textile town perhaps affected by the credit crisis of 1797, the grain merchant Matthew Scott gave over 1,000 barrels of oats to be sold in meal under the market price to the poverty stricken of the district ; and in June he was arranging to raise a large sum of money to be distributed in small loans to the textile workers of the town (89). With the exception of the few minor outbreaks treated below, the county was quiet during the Summer. With a good harvest in prospect large numbers of countrymen in south Tipperary and around Callan accepted amnesty and surrendered their arms in order to take employment in saving it (90). There were complaints from at least one yeomanry corps at being kept on permanent duty as it detained its members from tending the harvest (91). The brief association of local elements with a more radical agitation in February and March 1798 did not lead to the development of a mass separatist movement. It took two successive bad years in 1799 and 1800 to produce a renewal of rural agitation when the whole range of traditional grievances began to be canvassed again.

In Tipperary as elsewhere in Ireland concern with the issues of the loyalty of the inhabitants and of law and order were increasingly to the fore in 1797. Raids for arms became more common in March 1798 when houses of the gentry were attacked notably around Cashel, Templemore, and in the Slievardagh Hills (Table L). The effect of these arms raids was to heighten the sense of insecurity among the gentry and their attempts to deal with the situation showed marked differences of approach. A successful policy of disarming the peasantry was pursued by some with great effect, while in other instances the taking of the oath of allegiance was successfully administered by all types of gentry. Much of the south and south west of the county was kept quiet by Lord Donoughmore and the yeomanry corps operating in Iffa and Offa barony. Already in November 1797 the gentlemen of that barony had assembled in Clonmel at Donoughmore's request and



resolved to keep the disturbances from spreading from adjoining baronies in County Waterford by the creation of a fund nearing £1,000 to reward those giving information (92). The problem in this region was created because small parties began to come from Waterford through the mountain passes at Ardfinnan and Newcastle into south Tipperary in search of arms. Donoughmore countered this tendency by leading counter raids into Waterford and forcing the peasants there to surrender arms and take the oath of allegiance (93). By late December 1797 he could report to government that 'we are perfectly quiet in this neighbourhood and I have no doubt will continue so' (94).

Gentlemen in other areas of the county also exerted themselves during 1797 to disarm and arrest suspected persons. In north Tipperary the gentry reacted quickly in March 1797 to disturbances around Nenagh by entering into a subscription for the purpose of obtaining informations, and the voluntary taking of the oath of allegiance was proposed (95). The Nenagh magistrates were subsequently successful in arresting 11 persons who had participated in holding nightly meetings and in the administration of oaths in the Roscrea area (96). So successful were they in quelling disturbances that by April 1797 Peter Holmes of Nenagh reported to government that 'all appearances of ferment in this district have subsided', and he was confident that this stable situation could be maintained (97). His optimism was justified for as late as February 1798, despite the spread of unrest to other areas in the interim, he could report of the baronies of Upper and Lower Ormond that they were as yet 'untainted with that turbulent and unruly spirit' (98). In Slievardagh the officers of one of the two yeomanry units operating in the barony resolved in November 1797 to resist the spread of disturbances into their area and for this purpose established a fund of £500 for obtaining informations ; in December 1797 the gentry of Clanwilliam and Middlethird baronies planned to meet in Cashel for the purpose of adopting the best measures to prevent an appearance of outrages in their area ; and in January 1798 Lord Mathew administered the oath of allegiance to over 1,000 people at Golden chapel and others continued to come to him for a similar purpose (99). The cumulative effect of these gentry exertions was that the county was relatively quiet and subdued at the opening of the auspicious year of 1798.

The events of 1798 in the county were closely influenced by the appointment as high sheriff of Thomas Judkin Fitzgerald of Lisheen near Thurles. He was later to claim that had he not adopted severe methods against suspected persons then there would have been an uprising to equal that elsewhere. These claims were made after the event to justify his actions, but even impartial evidence indicates that no rebellion of serious proportions occurred. The amount claimed for losses shows how little Tipperary was affected compared to other counties. One source gives five claims amounting to £1,223



and another gives twenty claims totalling £1,577. Yet despite these differing totals the amount for the county was infinitesimal compared to the £306,630 claimed for Wexford or even the £33,454 claimed in neighbouring Kilkenny. Even the magnitude of this small amount is further reduced when one considers that of the losses for which Tipperary persons claimed compensation 11 of the 20 claims related to losses sustained outside the county (100). These figures indicate that there was no rebellion of any magnitude. What is more decisive is the retrospective construction put on events by the sheriff.

It was the bizarre, eccentric, and ruthless nature of his methods which brought his motives into question, provoked resentment, and left a bitter legacy. There were elements in his personal and family background which perhaps go some way towards explaining his character and the vigour of his commitment. The process whereby his unusual surname was created is revealing. He was the second son of Robert Uniacke of Corkbeg, Co. Cork by Frances daughter of John Judkin of Greenhills, Co. Tipperary. By the will of an ancestor his father assumed the surname of Fitzgerald, while Thomas was obliged to adopt that of Judkin in accordance with the will of his maternal uncle John Judkin of Cashel (101). His perception of and attitude to popular violence was influenced by the fact that in February 1798 a relative, Jasper Uniacke of Araglin, Co. Cork and a magistrate Col. St. George, were brutally murdered by rebels (102). These facts provide some indication of why Fitzgerald acted so strongly in uncovering any semblance of disaffection in 1798.

Fitzgerald was recommended for the office of sheriff by the earl of Llandaff with the concurrence of John Bagwell. In Llandaff's opinion his credentials for the position were that he was a brother-in-law to John La Touche, that he had an income of £6,000, and that he was 'the firmest friend to the constitution and one of the most determined and resolute men in the kingdom' (103). Fitzgerald accepted the position on condition that government 'enable me to execute the office with spirit in case of invasion', and that he be allowed to return the juries without interference (104). These conditions were agreed to.

The course of action pursued by the sheriff is easier to appreciate if other factors are considered. March 1798 witnessed an upsurge in attacks for arms (Table L) and the common opinion was that large sections of the rural community were ready and equipped to rise. The arms attacks stretched in a broad arc from Newport round to Templemore and were directed at gentry houses at Newport, Kilfeacle, Golden, Cashel, Thurles, Lanespark, Ballydavid, and Castle Fogarty. Some gentlemen surrendered their arms readily out of fear, one Cashel clergyman remarking that 'It is said some of them invited the insurgents to come and take their arms' (105). Others like Russell of



Ballydavid exhibited initial resistance but being overawed eventually surrendered. A few, like Thomas Lanigan of Castle Fogarty successfully repelled the intruders (106). The quantity of arms taken was considerable. After the event the sheriff put the number of arms surrendered to him in the county at 9,500 pikes and 1,500 stand of arms, figures which he later inflated to 36 car loads of pikes and 22,000 stand of arms (107). The gentry of Nenagh claimed that 10 cart loads of pike heads were seized in the baronies of Upper and Lower Ormond, and Owey and Arra (108). The amount of arms taken from individuals was significant. An estimated 18 stand of arms and a considerable quantity of ammunition were secured from Russell of Ballydavid, while 80 stand were obtained in an attack on Lord Massy's (109). Reports from Sir John Carden at Templemore, Rev. John Garnett at Thurles, and James Scully at Kilfeacle show that the requisitioning of arms in their respective areas was fairly thorough during March (110). By the end of the month it was the sheriff's estimate that the total number of firearms in the possession of the disturbers stood at between 300 and 400 stand (111).

The consequences of this activity were twofold. Firstly, gentlemen robbed of arms could no longer participate in their local yeomanry corps whose activities were in consequence either curtailed as at Newport (Owey and Arra cavalry), or disbanded as with Lord Hawarden's Ballintemple infantry (112). Secondly, gentlemen over a wide area were left defenceless, a situation which left them no option but to flee to the towns for security. Thus writing from Cashel on 21 March Rev. Patrick Hare remarked that 'the gentlemen of the country flock into the towns with their families', and of those who stayed on he complained that 'too many of our magistrates are timid and inactive' (113). The result of this lack of resolve was that it served to create a vacuum of authority in certain areas which had the effect of encouraging the disturbers in their purpose. The absence of their social superiors meant that a traditional deterrant to violence was foregone and one of the constraints or bulwarks of the 'moral economy' became redundant.

There was an upsurge in serious violence during and after March. Reports were forthcoming from Thurles, Cashel, Golden, Slievardagh, Newport, and Templemore of the generally unsettled state of the country (114). At least two important pitched battles were fought : at Dundrum where the sheriff, leading the Louth militia and Cashel yeomanry, in the course of dispersing an assembly killed a number, wounded others, and arrested a blacksmith whose forge was found to contain several pike heads ; and, more significantly, at Toberadora near Holy Cross where Col. Pennefather ordered the Cashel yeomanry and Louth militia to charge on 300 or 400 persons, killing several and taking others prisoner (115). At Cahir 800 insurgents were reported to have entered the



town, plundered houses, and paraded the streets 'as a regular army' ; while near Clogheen they attacked the military and yeomanry (116). However, the commander in chief of the army, Sir Ralph Abercromby who toured the disturbed areas in the south in April, put the figure for those who entered Cahir at 300 and thought the attack less formidable than had originally been reported to government (117).

Because of the serious dimensions of the situation and of declarations such as that of Sir John Carden of Templemore that his area should be declared to be in a state of 'absolute rebellion', the entire county was proclaimed on 2 April, thereby making it subject to the provisions of the insurrection act (118). This provided for the death penalty for administering illegal oaths and for the imposition of a curfew and arms searches in proclaimed districts. Following on this a notice issued from Cashel on 6 April to the inhabitants of the county through the military commander of the district, Sir James Duff, had an important influence. It required those who had robbed arms to surrender them within ten days or else troops would be authorised to live by free quarter among the people until the arms were given up (119). An indication of the public response to this order was when William Latham made 900 men in his parish of Ballysheehan assemble and lay down their arms, ask forgiveness, and take the oath of allegiance and the parish was quiet thereafter ; by early May Sir John Carden had nearly all the stolen arms and pikes in the Templemore area delivered up ; and the inhabitants of the parish of Templetenny (which was very disturbed), under the influence of their priest, voluntarily surrendered their arms to Lord Lismore and Sir James Foules the military commander at Mitchelstown (120). While this method of disarming was very successful military search parties were also employed to actively seek out arms in the more stubborn districts, such as Thorny Bridge and Cahir (121).

The consequence of this campaign of disarming was that potential rebels were rendered inactive in many areas, and the arrest of the suspected leaders of the disturbances further tended to defeat the prospect of outright insurrection (122). By mid-May the consensus locally and at government level was that stable conditions were restored. So much did Lord Llandaff and the sheriff feel this to be the case that they were recommending that the army might in large measure be withdrawn, and the sheriff confidently issued a proclamation requiring all those who had fled to the towns to return to their rural domiciles (123).

The only trouble spots to remain were in Upper and Lower Ormond baronies and it was to these areas that the sheriff directed his energies for the remainder of May. This was the area which had proven receptive to the spread of defenderism from the midlands. It was also the area in which United sympathies were strongest, with Hervey



Morris of Knockalton being regularly chosen as the county representative from May 1796 and having command of a Nenagh group of rebels (124). In addition great quantities of arms remained undelivered around Nenagh but as a result of the sheriff's activities in north Tipperary large numbers of persons surrendered arms and gave information against those who swore them, who made their pikes, and who their leaders were (125). As a result of such information J.F. Rolleston, captain of the Dunkerrin yeomanry, was able to arrest many United men in his corps, and also the leaders of the movement in his district (126). This successful disarming of the north of the county was timely for after the rebellion began in Leinster on 23-4 May and emissaries were sent from King's county into Ormond to get it to rise, no support was forthcoming. As Fitzgerald proudly reported to government : 'they all ans[were]d that they were determined to stand to their engagements with me, and for them to return safe and if ever they returned again that they would give them up to me, and if them attempted force they w[oul]d join me and the king's troops' (127). The conjunction of interest which this reflects persisted for, despite the eventful happenings elsewhere, Tipperary remained quiet all through June into late July, with emissaries trying to provoke revolt being handed over to the sheriff, and with an absence of reports of persons leaving the county to join in the main theatre of action in Leinster (128).

Ironically the two most serious events in Tipperary occurred long after the rebellion elsewhere was suppressed. The first of these was on 16 July when, according to one witness, 2,000 persons from the Glen of Aherlow, Cahir, and other parishes were to assemble at Boytonrath for an attack on Cashel, but the numbers actually assembling were deemed insufficient so they dispersed (129). The other major incident was on 23 July at Slievnamon when a party of rebels led by John Power of Ballinaclogh, farmer, were routed by a party of the military (130). Also plans to attack a number of towns in the south of the county and Roscrea in the north were uncovered (131). In late August the appearance of the French in Mayo provided the stimulus for some renewed activity. The most serious was the appearance of the United leader Harvey Morris in the county, but any plan of his to lead the disaffected towards a conjunction with the rebels in Connacht was forestalled (132). Thus despite the traumatic events elsewhere between May and August Tipperary did not participate in the general conflagration. What marks Tipperary off is that the peak of law and order activity was reached in June after not before the rebellion began.

However the wide powers conveyed under the insurrection act were abused by the sheriff in particular, and because of the low military presence in the county during the Summer months much of the discipline for law enforcement was delegated to him. His



arbitrary practice of accusing innocent persons of complicity and his widespread use of flogging for obtaining confessions, provoked a strong reaction from some gentlemen and fear and resentment among the peasantry. His methods at the very least were unorthodox. In May 1798 while at Templemore he made a speech lasting three hours, partly in Irish, explaining the potential threat which the French posed to the peasantry, and made suspects kneel down before him and pray for the king and then forgave them all their past offences ! (133). More unusual still was his scheme to raise a personal corps of 100 men, each one of whom was to be a former United Irishman, and the corps was to operate on the maxim of (as Sir John Carden related) 'set a rogue to catch a rogue' (134). Such methods, however novel, were regarded as being a necessary requirement at a critical time. But when some of the sheriff's actions became directed against some of the loyal and well affected inhabitants, then his tact and motives were called into question.

In an amazing episode in late June the sheriff concurred in the arrest by Col. Deering of Cashel of seven catholic and four protestant gentlemen, and in their charging with being captains and officers of the United Irishmen (135). This development was extremely serious not merely because those concerned were innocent , but because it displayed the sheriff's willingness to go against the wishes of his patrons the Mathews who did not wish the charges to be proceeded with and who vouched for the integrity of those implicated. It was also recognised by some as an anti-catholic gesture. This was more obviously the case in respect of Fitzgerald's proceedings in June 1798 against two wealthy catholic merchants in Carrick : Matthew Scott, corn merchant and Francis Doyle, cloth manufacturer. The former was charged with supplying the Wexford insurgents with pikes hidden in his corn boats, and the latter also with supplying pikes and being a rebel (136). The charges had no foundation but legal actions initiated by both against Fitzgerald for recovery of damages, failed because the sheriff was able to resort to the provisions of the indemnity act which conferred retrospective legal sanction on acts done outside common law (137).

Not only were his actions interpreted as being anti-catholic but in particular cases were regarded as detrimental to the protestant interest. The flogging of a Clonmel teacher of French and editor of the Clonmel Gazette (the politics of which were pro-catholic and which served the political interests of the Mathews), Bernard Wright, on suspicion of treason was a case in point for many Clonmel protestants vouched for Wright's loyalty (138). Equally serious was the sheriff's burning down in early May of two houses on Lord Hawarden's estate at Dundrum, one of which was owned by a protestant who had been clerk of the parish; and he issued a warning to the rest of the tenantry that they



would be treated in like manner if all arms were not given up within a specified period (139). Lord Hawarden found the sheriff's behaviour inexplicable and on this basis would no doubt have agreed with Rev. Patrick Hare's assessment of Fitzgerald as being 'absolutely a madman' (140). In other areas also he displayed his high-handedness. For example, he presumed to suggest to government two protestant clergymen worthy of promotion and he also suggested that certain catholic bishops be transported and his appointees replace them (141).

Much of this kind of activity served to promote division rather than cohesion among the upper class at a period of crisis. His contrasting of the stout resistance offered by Mrs. Bunbury in warding off rebels aided by only two man servants with the timid behaviour of those gentlemen who fled to the towns, was provocative to gentry sensibilities and self-respect (142). His proposal to levy the amount of £137, calculated to be the cost of damage caused in the Ormond baronies, on the rich absentees of the area was equally provocative (143). His attitude and actions were therefore unhelpful and lacked discrimination. It is interesting in this respect to note which persons spoke for and against him. Those who sided with him included Lord Mathew (his patron), Peter Holmes, John Toler (attorney-general), Stephen Moore, and 64 gentlemen and others from the Nenagh area. Those who spoke against him included Lord Donoughmore, Francis Hely-Hutchinson, Samuel Watson, Phineas Riall, William B. Ponsonby, and Laurence Hickey-Jephson. The latter admitted that had not the responsibilities of office, property, and allegiance restrained him he would have joined the rebels because of Fitzgerald's conduct (144).

Jephson made a valid point for it was widely recognised that hitherto quiet areas, like Carrick or Clonmel, with little or no indication of disaffection were plunged into that state in June after the sheriff visited those centres. This was certainly the view both of outside observers and of impartial locals (145). The cumulative effect of these arbitrary activities was to alienate many influential sections of the loyal community, protestant and catholic.

It is clear that Fitzgerald had only minority support for his actions. Only the Nenagh gentry made a public statement defending his actions (146). This defence was issued after the event in February 1799 and was made in the context of the legal actions then being brought against the sheriff for his behaviour. As part of that defence Fitzgerald found it necessary to retrospectively construe the existence of a rebellion in Tipperary in 1798 as a cover for his extremities. Part of this process of manufacturing evidence was the inclusion of a report that Fitzgerald had been instrumental in restraining a mob in Wexford in 1793 in one of the most serious confrontations to mark the pre-1798



rebellion there (147). In these attempts to validate his position and justify his actions, it is instructive to note that he was supported by the northern gentry. They were the most active in resisting catholic claims in the early 1790s but without any ultimate effect.

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The course of events in reality was much different. There were some signs of organisation in 1797 and some gentry activity. This was followed by complacent reports by Donoughmore in December 1797, and by Holmes in April 1797 and as late as February 1798. Preventive action by the gentry was on a minor scale shown by the establishment of a fund by the Slievardagh yeomanry in November 1797, the meeting of the gentry at Cashel in December 1797, and the administering of the oath by Lord Mathew in January 1798. However in March 1798 raids for arms intensified, some of the gentry fled to the towns, and there were significant incidents at the end of the month involving the Louth militia and Cashel yeomanry led on successive occasions by Fitzgerald and Pennefather respectively. Declarations from Holmes and Carden in the north and many letters in late March testified to the gravity of the situation with even the fear of massacre broached. There was a tendency to exaggerate as the reports on the incidents at Cahir and Roscrea illustrate.

The county was proclaimed on 2 April and this with Duff's notice of 6 April had the desired effect, for large amounts of arms were given up and the oath subscribed to. The result was a quick return to loyalty evident from Fitzgerald's order to the gentry to return and from Llandaff's request that the army be withdrawn. With order restored in most areas by mid-May the scene shifts to the Ormond baronies and this coincides with a questioning of the state of mind of Fitzgerald, as exhibited by his Templemore speech and his letters of 24 May and 1 June. In June the action returns to the south particularly to Cashel, Clonmel, and Carrick where the sheriff adopted a distinctly anti-catholic bias in his actions. Finding that he had over-stepped the mark, as is apparent from Rev.Hare's judgment, Fitzgerald found it necessary to construct an extreme interpretation of events in order to cover up for his excesses. In this he was supported by the northern gentry. In his chronology Fitzgerald was misplaced for the climax in the law and order threat came after not before the rebellion began.



## Chapter X

Historically Tipperary is a complex county because it has themes of continuity and change. Because its members and branches could be either catholic or protestant the Butler family contributed to maintaining continuity over time and place. Even when tension between native and settler in its modern form emerged in the seventeenth century, the first duke of Ormond performed a reconciling role between both at a difficult time of change after 1660. In a sense this function was maintained by the Mathews in the eighteenth century, though at times as in the 1760s their position was subject to question and the family's position only became finally secure with the enfranchisement of the catholics after 1793. Though new political interests emerged in the course of the century, the Mathews are the only family to display any continuity in political representation. The tradition of the Butler (Ormond) family and its catholic cousins being pro-royalist in the seventeenth, is paralleled by the experience of the Tipperary gentry as a whole in politics in the eighteenth century. It is clear that they were pro-government despite the ultraism of the 1760s and the artificial opposition of 1769 - 73. The strength of this inclination was indicated in the local debate over the act of Union.

The weight of opinion locally came out strongly in favour of the union in 1799 and 1800. This outcome was achieved despite an inauspicious prelude whereby the two county members, Lord Mathew and John Bagwell, voted against the measure on its first introduction in parliament on 23 January 1799 (1). A petition to the same effect from the county was before the house by 5 February 1799 and Clonmel published resolutions hostile to the proposal (2). With the anti-unionists earliest in the field the initiative was clearly theirs. Opposition was led by Lord Lismore and Hon. Francis Mathew (commonly called Lord Mathew), Lord Llandaff's son who with 48 others on 14 March, during assize week, requested the sheriff to call a county meeting to consider the matter (3). This request was successfully resisted by a counter requisition signed by 192 persons with catholic support on the basis that it would be non-productive to discuss an issue not then before parliament as it would only serve to agitate the public mind at a time of internal insecurity (4).

There was some concern about the desirability of publishing the proceedings of the foregoing request as it was feared by the sheriff, Francis Hely-Hutchinson, that doing so would formally commit those who made a declaration against the measure from altering their opinion subsequently (5). However the government view that publication in the newspapers should ensue prevailed, as it would indicate the weight of property in favour of the measure and that it would have a good effect on influencing the outcome elsewhere in Munster (6). The result was that the minority anti-unionists appeared



discredited by their failure, and their ranks were depleted thereafter (7). Thus in the first phase of the debate on the issue the pro-unionists carried the day strategically out-manoeuvring their opponents by not acceding to the demand for a county meeting.

The next phase in the debate took place in the Summer of 1799. Although government was satisfied with obtaining pro-union signatures, it felt that a timely chosen and carefully managed county meeting productive of a pro-union address would be instrumental in converting the two county MPs away from their opposition stance (8). Once government received assurances of a successful outcome a county meeting was called for Clonmel on 10 August. At it Lord Donoughmore spoke in favour of union and proposed that an address on these lines be drawn up, in which he was seconded by Lord Ormond, and it was formulated. The meeting in consequence instructed its two county representatives to follow the wishes of their constituents by supporting union and both duly made a commitment accordingly (9). The address expressed the sentiments of the leading propertied interests (calculated at £300,000 per annum), excepting Lords Lismore and Mount Cashell. Catholics declared in favour with Thomas Bray, archbishop of Cashel, assuring Troy of Dublin that he would use his influence for that purpose, and with individual pro-union addresses forthcoming from the catholics of Tipperary town and Cahir (10). Clonmel, influenced by Bagwell's enforced conversion, sent up a pro-union address thereby foregoing its previous opposition (11).

The successful outcome of this phase of the debate was due in large measure to Lords Donoughmore and Llandaff. The episode was an embarrassing defeat for the opposition, whose strength in the county has been over-stated by Bolton, led by Lismore who was unwisely egged into this role by his connection with the Ponsonbys (12). The event bore witness to the ability of Donoughmore and Llandaff to harness the newly enfranchised body of catholics in their favour on a major political issue. So far as government was concerned the formal accession of the county to the unionist camp deprived the opposition of five votes in voting strength (13).

The final phase in the debate took place in April 1800. The intervening period was marked by vacillation on the part of the Bagwell party. Richard Bagwell, John Bagwell's younger son and MP for Cashel (1799-1801), spoke in favour of union in January 1800 (14). In February, however, Bagwell senior on the instructions of his constituents (some of whom he claimed had formerly supported but now opposed), and encouraged by the expectations held out to him by the opposition leaders, changed sides, declared his opposition, and brought his two sons with him (15). Following on this an attempt was made by Lismore in April to have the county re-assemble to debate the matter anew, but this request was successfully countered by Donoughmore on the basis that the issue had



already been unanimously decided on in August 1799 (16). This was the final show of opposition to the measure locally.

The county received a high proportion of new peerages for its support of the union : Donoughmore was made an earl, John Toler was created Lord Norbury, and Henry Prittie made Lord Dunalley ; and among the peers to represent Ireland in the imperial house of lords were Donoughmore, Llandaff, and Cahir (17). The ease with which the strong pro-union lobby carried the issue locally reflects the effectiveness of the identity of interests between liberal protestants and catholics responding to a central political issue. In particular, the favoured position enjoyed by Lord Donoughmore among the county's catholics and clergy allowed him to harness their considerable support on an issue which he championed. In contrast opponents of the measure were a fragmented group made up of disparate elements namely Bagwell whose position was dictated by motives of personal advancement rather than consistency of policy ; Lismore who was influenced by his Ponsonby connection and who on other issues would have sided with the majority view ; and Hon.Francis Mathew (Lord Mathew) who was a maverick politically.

The role of catholics in Tipperary politics shows that our definition of the parameters of the political nation in the eighteenth century needs to be redefined. The excesses of the 1760s created the context out of which concessions were made, and their achievement contributed to relatively harmonious upper class relationships in the 1790s. Only from the first decade of the nineteenth century is it possible to gauge the actual influence of the recently enfranchised catholics on elections in the county. The potential of that influence is evident from the sharp increase in the number of freeholders following the act of 1793. Estimates for the number of freeholders before 1793 vary, but at that date they were not more than 1,600 (18). Following the enfranchisement of the catholic 40s. freeholders it was estimated by 1807 that out of 6,500 registered freeholders a majority of 5,500 were catholic ; in 1808 it was claimed that there were upwards of 10,000 catholics having 'freehold lands or considerable chattle (sic) property in that county' ; and as Table XXI indicates there was a dramatic increase in the number of newly created freeholders for the period 1807-15 of the order of 17,768 (19). Tipperary had a fourfold increase in freeholders between 1793 and 1807, and by at least another two and one half times between 1807 and 1815 giving an elevenfold increase between 1793 and 1815, which is above the national average (20). Apart from confirming the fact that catholics held a substantial propertied interest (seen in the large number of freeholds created in the upper categories of £20 and £50 (Table XXI), and that they used their wealth to transform their tenures into freeholds, the sharp rise in catholic freeholders served to



transform Tipperary into a monolithically catholic county in voting terms. This had two effects in terms of the pattern of elections and in relation to a greater articulation of the catholic question.

In the general election of 1802 the two sitting members, Mathew and Bagwell, were returned unopposed with Francis A.Prittie, the other prospective candidate declining a contest (21). In the election of 1806, caused by the vacancy created by Mathew's elevation to the peerage consequent on the death of the first earl of Llandaff in August 1806, the catholic vote was organised with clerical support in favour of Montague Mathew and Francis A.Prittie which conjunction deterred Bagwell from standing (Table XX) (22). This was to remain the pattern in the two following contested general elections in 1807 and 1812 with Mathew and Prittie joining to ward off the Bagwell challenge on both occasions (23).

This pattern is significant in a number of respects. Firstly, it shows that the family best positioned to benefit from the enfranchisement of the catholics, i.e. the Mathews, used that development to established a prominence in county politics. Previously the family, because of its narrow freeholder base, experienced slim electoral margins but this deficiency was eliminated by the rise of the catholic vote. This natural sympathy was decisive in the elections of 1807 and 1812. After the 1807 election a meeting of the catholics at Clonmel acknowledged the 'firm attachment' that subsisted between them and the Mathews, and Mathew in reply declared that it was the 'principle' of his family 'to maintain the most cordial good understanding' with them (24). Secondly, the position established by the Mathews was such that they were able to return one member for the county due to their wealth and their influence with the catholics, and also to assist in the return of another. Given the substantial increase in catholic freeholders making them a majority of the electorate, it was in the interest of families other than the Mathews to espouse the catholic cause in varying degrees. That the Pritties, who had a large political interest based on family connection in the north, came to ally with the Mathews in county politics and to be pro-catholic, is a measure of the shift in attitude which took place.

Much of the support for Prittie derived from his opposition to Bagwell. The latter had espoused the catholic cause in 1792 for political advantage but his opposition to the Union, which held out the prospect of further concessions for catholics, marked a decline in his popularity among that body and his turnabout was not forgotten by catholics subsequently (25). With this loss of support among catholics and Prittie's shift to a pro-catholic stance, Bagwell's electoral base narrowed again to the Clonmel vicinity where an ultra-protestant rump came to prevail (26). The advent of the mass catholic vote



thus served to unite two major political interests, Mathew and Prittie, and to isolate protestant ultraism electorally. With two pro-catholic members representing the county from 1806 the catholic issue was brought into the forefront of county politics, and a number of resolutions were adopted calling for the complete abolition of the remaining penal disabilities (27). The conjunction between Prittie and Mathew ensured that the debate was conducted without disharmony, epitomised by the large number of protestants who signed a petition in favour of catholic emencipation in 1813 (28). The tradition of gaining concessions for catholics, established at an early stage in Tipperary, was maintained in the nineteenth century by the strong nationalist spirit evident in the county at various stages and by the vibrancy of the Catholic Church.

