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# TIPPERARY & THE EVICTED TENANTS: THE JOHN DILLON PAPERS

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## Introduction

The papers of John Dillon, M.P. for east Mayo from 1885 to 1918, came to Trinity College Dublin Library in November 1985. An account of some aspects of these papers has been published in *Treasures of the Library: Trinity College Dublin* (Dublin, 1986), pp. 215-221. The largest section of the papers is one which Dillon acquired as a long-term member of the Evicted Tenants Committee. This body existed in conjunction with the Irish National Federation, the support organisation of the Irish parliamentary party. The papers surviving in the Dillon collection consist of both volumes and loose papers.

Volumes include Federation Committee minute books 1881-8; Federation Council minutes 1893-8; Federation letterbooks 1893-8; (Irish) National Fund letterbooks 1891-2, 1896-7; Evicted Tenants Fund letterbooks 1892-4; Federation Finance Committee minutes 1896 7; Irish Tenants Defence Association letterbooks 1889-91; Evicted Tenants Committee minutes 1893-4; minutes for the O'Brien & Sheehy no. 2 account 1894-7 (as well as ledgers and cash books); a Paris Fund minute book 1894-5; and aids to check both Tipperary claims 1890-6 and prior claims on the Paris Fund 1900-5.

There are also some party minute books 1886-1900, those after the split being from the anti-Parnellite majority. The loose papers offer in their arrangement and bulk a glimpse at the local Irish National Federation committees — some are occasionally referred to as the 'Evicted Tenants Committee' of their area — and at the parishes of the Roman Catholic church, and their communications with the central committee in Dublin.

The papers were, and still are, arranged in envelopes labelled by John Dillon or Laurence Ginnell. The arrangement is by placename (usually the placename used in the title of the local INF committee, or the name of the corresponding RC parish), or by surname of the tenant, or by the name of the estate (the surname or title of the landlord, or another name by which the estate was known).

In the arrangement in the library these envelope-titles have been maintained and arranged in groupings as follows: places A - W (TCD MS 6806-11); surnames and estates A - V (TCD MS 6812-13); Smith Barry (Tipperary) surnames B - W (TCD MS 6814); Smith Barry (Cashel) (TCD MS 6818); and the remainder (TCD MSS 6815-7, 6819-22), in which Dillon's or Ginnell's labelling was not followed.

Most of the papers consist of letters from members of the local INF committee, its chairman or secretary or treasurer or its priest or the area organiser, to the Dublin committee. They are mostly addressed to David Sheehy and J.F.X. O'Brien, the national trustees, seeking help for tenants who are in danger of eviction, or who have been evicted and are in distress. Some of these may have taken temporary tenancy of new land or houses from sympathetic minor landlords.

Help is also sought for those who have an opportunity to get back into old tenancies. Cases of boycotting and local disputes are discussed, and public meetings are arranged, through the medium of this correspondence. There are case-histories of some individual tenants on special forms from the Dublin office returned by the local committees., For most areas of INF influence there is, in each envelope, a record of the financial contributions from that local area,

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or from the corresponding Roman Catholic parish, to the numerous appeals which had been made over the previous years.

Annotations are sometimes made on the incoming letters about their date of receipt or of answer, often in shorthand. Some annotations are by Dillon, others by Laurence Ginnell evidently after consultation with Dillon or other party members. These annotations concern the validity of tenants' claims for help, their previous grants (if any), the level of contributions coming from the parish concerned and the question of the actual objective existence of the alleged local INF committee, or of the office (secretary or treasurer) claimed by the letter-writer.

Occasionally there also references to Parnell and Parnellism, and to local attitudes to him or his political legacy. Co-operation between the Parnellites and the anti-Parnellites was maintained in the Evicted Tenants Committee, Timothy Harrington, a Parnellite, being consulted on appropriate occasions.

Because of the Smith Barry conflict with Tipperary town tenants, and because Tipperary is one of the largest counties, the Tipperary element in the Dillon papers is substantial.



# Primary listing

## A. County Tipperary, by placenames

The number in round brackets, where it appears, is the number of documents in the items. The tenants' own spellings of names and addresses is retained.

TCD MS number

- 6806-11 /9 Ardfinnan, 1896 (8)
- /52 Carrick-on-Suir, 1894-6 (20)
- /56 Cashel, 1890-7 (122, incorporating some formerly separate items)
- /57 Cashel, bank book 1890-3
- /57 Cashel, vouchers , accounts, 1890-2
- /59 Cashel, cheques
- /66 Clerihan (Fethard) 1894 (3)
- /70 Cloneen , 1893-7 (23, incorporating Drangan and Kilburry)
- /72 Clonmel, 1884, 1890, 1894-6 (27, incorporating arbitration September 1890)
- /73 Clonoulty, 1894-6 (16)
- /76 Cloughjordan, 1895-6 (3)
- 6806-11 /103 Golden, 1895-7 (9)
- /106 Grangemockler, 1891, 1895-7 (12)
- /127 Kilsheelan, 1894-7, (16)
- /135 Knockavella, 1894 (1)
- /139 Lattin, 1894-6 (19)
- /147 Lorrha, 1894-7 (30, incorporating Rathcabbin)
- /154 Mothel, near Carrick-on-Suir, 1894-7 (19)
- /158 Newcastle, 1895-7 (7)
- /167 Powerstown, 1892-4 (6)
- /179 Sologhead, 1895-6 (3)
- /184 Templemore, 1894-6 (7)
- /186 Thurles, 1895, 1897 (6)

## B. County Tipperary, by surnames and estate names

- 6812-3 /211a Mrs . Honora Dalton, Croughmore and Bridge Street, Tipperary, 1896 (3)
- /214 Dowling estate, Cappawhite, 1894-7 (13)
- /217 James Foley, Cashel (and of Co. Waterford, 1894 (26)
- /218 James Fribbs, Carrick-on-Suir, 1892-5, (16)
- /220 Fr. Howard and the Waller estate, Newport, 1896-7 (4)
- /233 O'Brien estate, Mullinahone, 1891, 1893-5 (20)
- /234 Malachy O'Dwyer, Clonoulty, 1890-3 (23)
- /240 Mrs. Anne Ryan, Bohercrowe House, Tipperary, 1893-5 (17)
- /244 Twiss estate, Ballina, 1893-6 (17)



## C. Smith Barry and New Tipperary, by surname, etc.

References to streets or roads are to streets or roads in Tipperary, unless otherwise stated.

- 6814 /246 Patrick Bailey, Bansha Road, 1895 (1)  
/247 Patrick Bourke, Old Road, 1892-6 (26)  
/248 John Bourke, secretary Smith Barry Evicted Tenants Committee, Ballykisteen, 1892-6 (25)  
/249 John Vincent Bourke, Dillon Street, New Tipperary, 1893-4 (13)  
/250 Thomas Bourke, c/o 1 Emmet Street, New Tipperary, 1894 (2)  
/251 Joseph J. Carew, Emmet Street, 1892-4 (13)  
/252 John Casey, Church Stret, 1896 (1)  
/253 Kate Connolly, 40 Bank Place, 1893-7 (28)  
/254 Jeremiah P. Cotter, Emmet Stret, 1894-6 (4)  
/255 William Cronin, Ballykisteen, 1896 (1)  
/256 Michael Dunne, O'Brien Street, 1895 (2)  
/257 Kate Fahey, Main Street, 1894 (1)  
/258 John Finn, Eatons Cottage, 1895 (2)  
/259 Mrs. Bridget Foley, Emmet Street, 1896 (1)  
/260 John Hannon, Clonmel Road, 1896-7 (2)  
/261 Laurence Hayes and John Walsh, Ballinahow, 1893-6 (7)  
/262 Maurice Hayes, (also Clonmel, Cahir and Dublin) 1891-6 (35)  
/263 Miss B. Humphries, O'Brien Street, 1893-4 (5)  
/264 Mrs. Kerwick and Thomas Kerwick, Main Street, 1894-5 (2)  
/265 John Lysaght, Spital, 1896 (4)  
/266 B. McCarthy, Bank Place, 1892-3 (3)  
/267 John McCarthy, Pallasgreen, Co. Limerick and Ballykisteen, 1893 (3)  
/268 Mrs. Mary McCarthy and Mrs. Johanna Sweeney, Limerick Road, 1896 (2)  
/269 John R. McCormack, Cappamore, Co. Limerick, 1895 (6)  
/270 Mrs. Anne McGrath, Gurtnacara/Sologhead, 1893 (2)  
/271 Mrs. Annie McGrath, Dillon/Emmet Street, 1891-5 (28)  
/272 John McNamara, Shelbourne Cottage, Limerick, 1892, 1894 (2)  
/273 John Merrigan, O'Brien Street, 1892 (1)  
/274 John Moore, Meeting Street/Dillon Street, 1894-5 (3)  
/275 James Young Murray, Emmet Street, 1893 (3)  
/276 William O'Brien, Ballinalard, 1896 (3)  
/277 Mrs. Eliza O'Connor, Dillon Street, 1889-93 (6)  
/278 Laurence O'Donnell, O'Brien Street, 1894-5 (4)  
/279 Mrs. O'Dwyer, Patrick Bourke, Mrs. Scully, Mrs. Connelly, 1895 (1)  
/280 Philip O'Dwyer (or Dwyer) and Dennis O'Brien, 9 Meeting/Davis Street, 1893-7 (30)  
/281 Philip O'Neill, Ballykisteen, 1896 (3)  
/282 Richard Price, Brickendown/Bank Place, 1893 (2)  
/283 Michael Quirke, Dillon Street, 1894, 1896, (9)  
/284 Mrs. Annie Ryan, Emmet Street, n d (1)  
/285 Edmond Ryan, Emmet Street, 1894 (6)  
/286 James J. Ryan, Bohercrowe Cottage, Tipperary, 1893-6 (6)  
/287 Jeremiah Ryan, Ballinalard, 1896 (2)  
/288 John Ryan, Ballykisteen, and Carron, Co. Tipperary. 1893 (3)  
/289 Matthew Ryan, Bank Place, 1896 (6)



- /290 Mrs. Patrick Ryan, Blind Street/Bansha Road, 1895-6 (3)
- /291 Thomas Ryan, Dillon Street, 1895-6 (22)
- /292 Thomas Ryan (of Byron or Lacken), Foxfort, Bansha, 1892-3, 1896 (5)
- /293 William Ryan, solicitor, St. Michael St., earlier from Shronell, Co. Tipperary, 1891, 1894 (3)
- /294 (Mrs.) Johanna Scully, Church Street, 1896 (1)
- /295 Mary Sheehy, Garnacanty, 1892, 1896-7 (4)
- /296 James Skehan, People's Dining Hall, Main Street/Dillon Street, 1892-6, and undated (42)
- /297 Thomas Slattery, Meeting Street, 1895-7, (4)
- /298 Miss Maggie Spring, Meeting Street, 1894-5 (2)
- /299 Mary Toomey, Dillon Street, 1894, 1896, (4)
- /300 Mrs. Traynor, nee Burke, Ballinalard, and Kenilworth Square, Dublin, 1889, 1892 (2)
- /301 Michael Wall, Bansha, 1893 (2)
- /302 James Walsh, Dillon Street, 1895-6 (8)
- /303 Richard Wilkinson, Newtown, Aherlow and Ballinahow, 1893, 1896 (3)

#### D. Other general papers

- 6815/ /304 General correspondence (348)
- 6816 /305 Tipperary charges of religious persecution, 1890 (11)
- /306 Building of New Tipperary, correspondence and receipts, 1889-90 (64)
- 6817 /307 Accounts, vouchers, receipts, and related letters 1889-97 (184)
- /308 A.H. Smith Barry's accounts, by his agent H.H. Townsend, J.P., 1890 (14)
- /309 Summary accounts, liabilities (10)
- /310 Liabilities, 1890-1 (2)
- /311 Lists of evicted tenants 1891; evicted shopkeepers (?1894); record of evicted tenants, their holdings and the help given to them (3)
- /312 Reports for the weeks May 1890 - January 1891
- /313 Legal costs, 1891-2 (16)
- /314 Newspaper cuttings (19)

#### E. Smith Barry, Cashel, County Tipperary

- 6818 /315 Smith Barry estate, Cashel, 1890-1 (74)

The remainder of the Evicted Tenants papers may contain some references to County Tipperary, e.g.—

- 6819 /316 Miscellaneous evicted tenants, 1890-99 (92)
- 6820 /317 Miscellaneous accounts, 1885-1898 (9)
- /318 Expenses of the land war, 1889
- /319 Evicted Tenants Fund; accounts, by estates (9 sheets)
- /320 Evicted Tenants Fund; accounts, by counties (102 sheets)



## Notes on Detailed Lists and Indexes

Item-by-item listings of all of the Evicted Tenants Committee papers have been made in recent years, and these lists have been placed at the disposal of the (British) National Register of Archives, since as yet there is no equivalent Irish institution. The NRA has provided a limited number of copies for distribution in Ireland.

The complete Dillon listings are expected to be available on published microfiche in the near future. These listings are, however, skeletal and do not indicate, for instance, the subject-matter of the correspondence. An index of the tenants and landlords mentioned in these papers was compiled during the listing process. This index may be of continuing usefulness, although it is probably not exhaustive or wholly reliable. For instance, it was impossible, without local research, to distinguish all the Annie Ryans in New Tipperary correctly; or a tenant's mistaken information about his/her landlord is recorded without question.

Records of a similar nature for most of the thirty-two counties are present, Cork and Tipperary being well represented, followed by Leitrim, Clare, Limerick, Sligo and Mayo. Down and Tyrone are scarcely mentioned, and there is little for Kildare, Wicklow, Meath or Dublin (except in so far as evicted tenants may be resident in Dublin after eviction), nor for the remaining Ulster counties.

The records stretch from 1883 to 1919, but are concentrated mostly in the years 1893-7. The phase of activity which has attracted most attention in the story of evictions up to now has been the Plan of Campaign, but this is not represented in the Dillon Papers.

In addition to the self-help funding, by their fellow-tenants through collections in the parishes and by other fellow countrymen, there was funding from the Irish abroad, in various parts of the British Empire. Dillon's part in the fund-raising activities can often be traced in his own correspondence, notebooks (including diaries), and in his collection of newspaper cuttings.

