



Cumann Staire Chontae Thiobraid Árann
Co. Tipperary Historical Society, The Source Library, Cathedral Street, Thurles, Co. Tipperary, Ireland
353 (0) 52 616 6123 society@tipperarycoco.ie www.tipperarystudies.ie/thc

Tipperary Historical Journal 2003

Presbyterianism in Clonmel, 1650-1977

By David J. Butler

Introduction

This paper will detail the rise, progress and decline of Presbyterianism in Clonmel in its various forms and locations, from its early days as an Independent house meeting, through its becoming the "Protestant Dissenting Congregation" meeting at the former Franciscan friary, to its relocation to Nelson Street in 1789, and its subsequent split into Unitarian (Old Presbyterian) and Trinitarian (Scots Presbyterian) Congregations in 1832. It then aims to deal with the subsequent history of both congregations – Unitarian (1832-1923) and Trinitarian (1832-1977) – at Clonmel.

Background to Dissent at Clonmel

The first Protestant dissenters at Clonmel were soldiers and officers in the army of Oliver Cromwell who arrived about the time of the siege of 1650. These Puritans included Independents (Congregationalists), Presbyterians and Baptists. At Clonmel, the dominant congregation was a loose association between the Congregationalists and Presbyterians, which met in Old St. Mary's Church between 1650 and 1660, then styled the "Public Meeting House", with Dr. Samuel Ladyman as preacher.¹ The Baptist Church had a separate meetinghouse in High Street, while the Quakers, who arrived in Clonmel about 1660, held meetings for worship in the Westgate Street home of George Collett, head of the earliest family in the town.²

Following the Restoration of the monarchy under Charles II in 1660, the Puritans fell from political power, and in 1661 were, along with the Roman Catholics, virtually outlawed. The Established Church in Ireland disassociated itself from the dissenters to a large degree, for it saw them as a threat, dividing the Protestant interest. While it referred to Roman Catholics derisively as "Papists" and "Romanists", dissenters, particularly the smaller sects such as the Baptists and Quakers were referred to as "fanatics", "schismatics" or "Anabaptists".³ Even the Roman Catholic Church authorities used these terms in describing the Protestant dissenters, for in 1673 Archbishop Oliver Plunkett reported that Bishop John Brenan of Waterford and Lismore had taken refuge with him, "because his city is full of fanatics and mad Presbyterians".⁴

In the early eighteenth century, although the Church establishment was no longer prepared to interfere with established dissenting congregations, it had little tolerance for the creation of new ones, as in 1713, at Macroom, Co. Cork, when a local magistrate wrote with satisfaction: "We had a Presbyterian minister attempted lately to set up here, but he found no rest for the sole of his foot and is travelled".⁵ The intolerance of the Dean of Waterford toward dissenting Protestants extended to his forbidding his clergy to have any dealings with them, and requesting the City Recorder to have their new Meeting House demolished in 1709:

I must confess it grieves me that they [the Presbyterians] should enjoy so handsome a place when

poor father John, the titular [i.e. R.C.] dean of Waterford, has no better than a thatched cabin without gates.⁶

The Presbyterians, for their part, saw the Established Church as ridden with the ritual and superstition of the Papists:

The yoke of [the Book of] Common Prayer, of kneeling, the sign of the Cross, [the] surplice...that is the Devil's yoke and they that bear it are in the way of hell.⁷

In the immediate post-Restoration period, there were some readjustment disturbances in South Tipperary, as the old Cromwellian religious regime battled for survival under the Royalist Episcopalians. In the county town of Clonmel, where the Cromwellians felt themselves more secure than elsewhere in the district, religious disturbances appeared as early as 1660. On learning of the King's intention to erect a new Episcopal hierarchy, a petition was organised so that the "godly ministers of the Gospel who have so long laboured among us might be continued and countenanced".⁸ In reality, this "long" period had been substantially less than a decade. Restoration officials tolerated no such action, and moved swiftly to quash the petition.

In the upheaval surrounding the implementation of the post-Reformation Anglican creed in 1660-2, wholesale arrests were made, and in South Tipperary the conflict grew so intense at the county town of Clonmel that it was seriously proposed to remove "the phanatiques" out of the town, as had been done with the Irish in the previous decade.⁹ When the bishop of the diocese was brought to Clonmel to appeal for unity, the dissenters, undaunted, met at Inishlounaght (Marlfield), in the house of Thomas Batty, who had been recently jailed by the authorities. Information was conveyed to the governor of the town, a company of soldiers was sent to Marlfield, and the entire congregation marched into the town Marshalsea, as the gaol was then termed, where:

Zephaniah Smith, one of those arrested was asked by a soldier why he was not at Church then to hear the Bishop preach, and he replied that he did preach himself in church before now and hoped to preach there again in God's due time, and if he had been at Masse, or at an Alehouse amongst a company of drunkards, swearers or heathens, he doth suppose he should not have been tormented.¹⁰

Smith was a known Congregationalist, and this meeting for worship was probably a joint one with Presbyterian and Baptist elements, in order to present a united front. Protestant nonconformity, as the threat from within the Protestant community, received far more attention from the provincial Protestant establishment in the immediate post-Restoration period than did Roman Catholicism, the perceived threat from without. There were grounds for fear of a general Cromwellian refusal to conform at Clonmel, as another soldier gave evidence of hearing the wife of John Foster of Abbey say, "there must be another boue or blowe for it, and that very suddenlie".¹¹ Many dissenting meetings were held in secret in the house of a member, for though worship was usually allowed, proper meetinghouses were not. Consequently, few Protestant dissenting meetinghouses were built in Ireland before the 1680s, and this was not true of the provincial towns until the early eighteenth century.¹²

It has been argued that the Protestant dissenting congregation obtained a long lease of the Franciscan Friary in Abbey Street "some years" after the Act of Uniformity (1662).¹³ However, the political establishment was anti-dissenter, so that such a development is likely not to have taken place until the end of the Williamite campaign in 1691. The friars seem to have had

virtually continuous use of the friary from about 1662 until 1690. A Visitation in 1675 of his united diocese by Bishop John Brennan revealed two Franciscan residences in the diocese of Lismore, that at Clonmel being the diocesan novitiate of the Order, with three priests, one brother, and four novices then in community.¹⁴

Certainly they were still in full possession in 1689, as the diary of John Stevens reveals:

Clonmel...one of the prettiest towns I have seen, though small. It is walled...the principal streets are in the form of a cross with a handsome town house much about the centre of it, the streets [are] clean and the houses well built, [with] a navigable river running by the side of it, next which are the ruins of a large old convent, then in the possession of the Franciscan friars.¹⁵

The Clonmel Protestant dissenting congregation was not Presbyterian initially. Burke credits Thomas Batty of Marlfield, at whose house Independent meetings were held in the early 1660s, with obtaining a lease of the friary for the dissenting congregation.¹⁶ Little distinguishes Independent congregations from Presbyterian ones, particularly in this period, which lends credence to the argument that during the 1660s and early 1670s the Protestant dissenting congregation at Clonmel was Independent, perhaps with Presbyterian adherents attached to it, in the absence of a Presbyterian preaching supply.

The most significant pointer to the existence of an Independent congregation at Clonmel is the evidence of Burke, who states that a Mr. Wood was appointed minister of the dissenting congregation in 1662.¹⁷ The subsequent ministerial succession, which Burke thought to have comprised Messrs. Palmer, Ford and Carr during second half of the seventeenth century, remains unclear. This lack of clarity has much to do with the subsequent presence of up to three dissenting congregations at Clonmel at this time: Independent, Baptist, and Presbyterian. Mr. Thomas Palmer was most likely a Presbyterian licentiate or preaching supply in the early eighteenth century. Certainly Mr. Robert Carr was appointed Baptist Pastor of Clonmel in 1659, continuing for some years until replacement by Pastor Hough before 1665.¹⁸ The elusive Mr. Ford may well have been a subsequent Pastor of the Baptist congregation.

Elements of more than one dissenting congregation at Clonmel combined in 1672 to approach the Presbytery of Antrim regarding the possibility of sending a resident Presbyterian minister to the town. The letter sent by "Colonel Sankey and other individuals", is all the more interesting given that Sankey had founded the Clonmel Baptist Church in 1652. His descendants lived at Coolmore, Fethard, and were aligned to the Presbyterian Church there, and subsequently to the Church of Ireland. The call to Presbytery was successful and Mr. William Cox, a licentiate of the Laggan Presbytery, was duly ordained at St. Johnstown, on 26 November 1673, and installed as first Presbyterian minister of Clonmel.¹⁹

There was an initial overlap between the ministry of Wood and that of Cox, something the latter attempted to overcome through his application in 1679 to have Presbytery ordain Wood in the Presbyterian tradition.²⁰ It is unclear whether this actually occurred, or whether Wood was in agreement with these overtures, but he certainly still ministered to Independent elements at Clonmel in 1679, for it is recorded in the diary of the Clonmel merchant, William Vaughan, that his son,

Benjamin Vaughan was born April 28: 1679: half an hour past 4: in the morning and baptized May 12 by Mr. Woode²¹

Mr. James Wood had been Independent minister of both Clonmel and Tipperary since 1662, and seems to have resided primarily in Tipperary after 1679.²² In 1680, he published a book

entitled *Shepardy Spiritualised*, which he dedicated to his "beloved friends, the sheep masters and shepherds of county Tipperary and Ireland".²³ It is likely that by agreement between Cox and Wood the latter concentrated solely on the Independent congregation at Tipperary Town. He fled to Cashel during the Williamite disturbances of 1688, and did not return to his Grammar School after 1691.²⁴

However, a remnant Independent Congregation was noted at Tipperary in 1695, one of just seven remaining on the island of Ireland, just prior to the agreement of 1696 between the English Presbyterian and Independent congregations of Munster, whereby the numerically weaker Independents agreed to unite under the larger Presbyterian denomination.²⁵ It is likely that Independent elements had gradually amalgamated with the Presbyterian congregation at Clonmel during the 1670s and 1680s, in light of the resident preaching supplied by that denomination in the town. Nothing else is known of the congregation, prior to the outbreak of the Williamite Revolution in 1688, save that Cox was still minister at that time, and died at Clonmel in 1690.

Mr. John Shaw succeeded as second Presbyterian Minister of Clonmel in about 1691. His authority at Tipperary was unofficial initially, until the agreement of 1696 transferred the remnant Independent congregation of the town to his jurisdiction.²⁶ It was under his leadership the "Protestant dissenting congregation" at Clonmel was enabled to take a long lease of the Franciscan friary, recently vacated by the friars and still partly roofed. The accounts of Phineas Riall, treasurer to the congregation in the opening years of the eighteenth century, detail the re-roofing of the choir of the friary in 1704-05 by the congregation.

The minister, John Shaw, was paid the substantial stipend of £100 per annum, made up by a personal levy on the congregation.²⁷ Some of the congregation had quickly risen in affluence in the aftermath of the Restoration, and many of those involved in urban trade as merchants and bankers were enabled, by the turn of the eighteenth century, to invest in large areas of urban property and also to purchase country estates on which to retire. The merchant houses of Vaughan and Riall of Clonmel acted as bankers by 1700, while Bagwell, who arrived at Clonmel during the 1720s, maintained a provincial branch of La Touche and Kane of Dublin.²⁸

The wills of this period are particularly illustrative of not only the property and kinship networks of the Protestant dissenters, but also of the strict religion of their testators. The earliest will illustrative of dissenter kinships in South Tipperary is that of William Vaughan of Clonmel, proved in 1699, who resolved to:

...give and bequeath to each of my executors Mr. John Perry, Mr. Mathew Jacob, Mr. Joseph Damer, Mr. John Shaw, Mr. Phineas Riall, Doctor Francis Vaughan and to Mr. Phil Carleton, the sume of twenty shillings to buy each of them a mourning ringe.²⁹

All those named were fellow Presbyterians. Another will of 1699, that of John Colsery, through his naming as executors two prominent members of Clonmel congregation, John Perry and Phineas Riall, merchants, demonstrated his express wish that his family continue their separate identity outside the Established Church, most especially in the codicil requiring that each of his sons should obtain:

...a Certificate of their good behaviour and civil deportment and demeanour from any four or more of the following – John Pyke Esq. [of Woodenstown], Mathew Jacob Esq. [of Fethard], Mr. Andrew Roe of Tipperary, The Rev. Mr. John Shaw Sen. of Clonmell., Charles Alcocke Esq., Mr. Philip Carleton, Mr. John Damer [of Tipperary and Dublin], and Mr. John Bagwell of Ballyboy, or be cut off with five shillings, the rest of the moiety share to go to the other.³⁰

There was considerable rigour attached to inheritance in the dissenter community, as it remained the key to the continuance of small congregations dependent on the subscriptions of their membership. Many eighteenth century dissenter households made provision through legacies to aid the continuance of the small congregations in which they had been raised, or had spent a considerable portion of their lives.

The dates of succession of some early eighteenth century ministers of Clonmel are not known. Mr. John Shaw, ordained and installed in 1691, was still minister of the congregation in 1706.³¹ His successor, Rev. Nathaniel Card, was minister from about 1707, having perhaps acted as assistant minister from about 1705.³² Mr. Thomas Palmer presumably succeeded Card as minister or may have acted as his assistant. There is, however, no truth of either having charge of another congregation. Card was still minister of Clonmel in 1713 – see *Will of Andrew Roe or Tipperary Town, dated 1713 (transcript), Grubb (Carrick-on-Suir) Collection*, at National Archive, Dublin. This document, proved in 1714, bequeathed monies to Rev. Nathaniel Card of Clonmel and Rev. Richard Edge of Tipperary, and their successors, in trust for their respective Protestant Dissenting Congregations. Nothing subsequent is known of Card. Rev. Thomas Palmer d. 1738, but not with charge of Clonmel. Mr. William Jackson certainly followed as fifth minister of the united congregation in 1717, as recorded in the diary of Benjamin Vaughan:

June 5 1717: Wensday. I went with a great many to Clonmell to ye Ordination of Mr. Jackson and Mr. Taylor...Thursday [June 6] I saw Mr. Jackson and Mr. Taylor ordained. Mr. Weld [of Dublin] and Mr. Actlinson managed ye Ordination.³³

While Moderator of the Presbytery of Munster, on 21 July 1726, a meeting of Presbytery was held at Clonmel, where “a momentous decision was made, with a resolution adopting the Unitarian creed, and supporting the Presbytery of Antrim against the Synod of Ulster, which had endeavoured to impose the Scotch Confession of Faith”.³⁴ Unitarianism essentially denies the existence of the Trinity – three persons in one God – and argues that God is one person only. The profession of Unitarianism was a capital offence until the passing of an Act of Parliament in 1817, but Presbyterians and Unitarians had long co-existed within the one congregation at Clonmel, as elsewhere in Ireland, under the common umbrella title of the “Protestant dissenting congregation”.

Specifically Unitarian tendencies were in evidence at Clonmel in the pre-1817 period, to the extent that it is probably fair to say that orthodox Presbyterians constituted the smaller part of the Protestant dissenting Congregation there during the years from 1726 to 1817. Certainly, all seven ministers of the congregation between 1726 and 1832 were Non-Subscribers to the Westminster Confession, and Unitarian in religious sympathies. When Ulster Scots Presbyterians began to settle in the town from the 1810s, their presence rapidly transformed the Scots minority at Clonmel into a majority, which then seceded from the original congregation in 1832.

The tenure of Rev. William Jackson ended in 1734, as a result of his death.³⁵ Rev. John Mairs Jr., minister at Newtownards, succeeded as sixth minister of Clonmel congregation on April 9 1735, where he continued in office until 1740. His successor on his removal to Strand Street congregation, Dublin, was Rev. James Mackay, who came from First Bangor congregation, and remained at Clonmel until 1756. In 1747, a Manse (ministerial residence) was built in Kilsheelan (Mitchell) Street, the site of which was

a parcel of ground, being part of the Fort containing in front to Kilsheelan Street fifty feet from the

new wall of the late John Hosken's garden by forty-eight feet and a half in depth towards the old Abbey.³⁶

William Perry of Woodrooff, a principal member of the congregation, gave the site for a 99-year lease at a peppercorn rent on October 15 1747. The principal subscriptions to the building fund comprised £140 from John Bagwell, £61 7s 6d from John Damer of Tipperary (through Perry), £50 from a Mr. Vicars, as well as £50 at six percent interest per annum from Rev. Benjamin Smith of Shronehill [Shronell] on the Damer estate, who was "desirous to show the Protestant dissenting congregation of Clonmel some mark of my regards", which he bequeathed them on his death.³⁷

This successful campaign for subscriptions was also utilised to secure the future of the Presbyterian ministerial stipend at Clonmel. Three houses and out-offices were built between 1747 and 1755 at 9, 10 and 11 Kilsheelan Street, adjoining the Manse at 1 Abbey Street, during which a total of £390 17s 6½d was expended on them. Sadly, though forty manuscript folios giving a minute account of this building activity survived as late as 1877 among the papers of the Rev. James Orr, they were subsequently dispersed and are presumed lost.³⁸

A further innovation of 1747 was the guarantee of the ministerial stipend whereby a rent charge on the estate of Richard Hutchinson of Knocklofty House, in covenant with Bagwell of Marlfield and Perry of Woodrooffe, was commenced paying

the young man and his successors in the ministry [at Clonmel], the sum of fifteen pounds annually as long as his deportment and behaviour as their stated minister and preacher of the Gospel shall be agreeable to the majority of said congregation, and no longer.³⁹

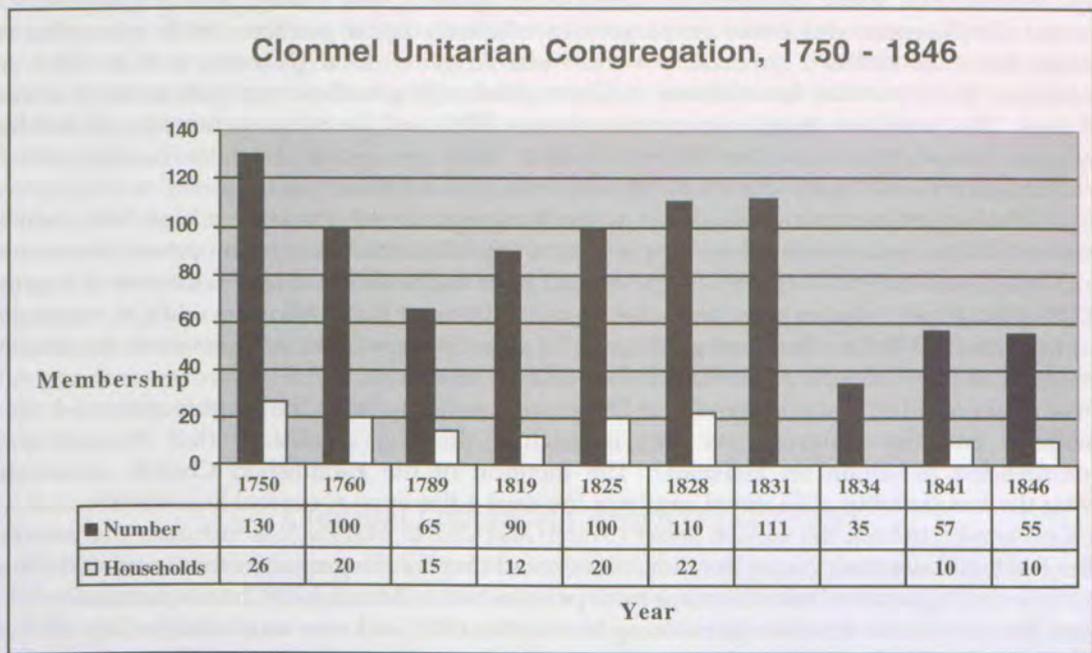
This covenant, signed by Mackay with William Riall and Patrick Donnell as witnesses, was a more reliable future ministerial stipend than voluntary subscriptions, and neatly secured the next ministerial succession. Patten, who was young and unmarried, used just a few rooms of the new manse and let the remainder. He married a member of the wealthy Colville family, after whom Colville Road is named, and built Annerville, near Clonmel, which served as their residence for the remainder of his ministry.⁴⁰

The earliest documentation now known to survive relating to the Clonmel dissenting congregation dates to the ministry of John Patten, and comprises a loose manuscript folio of 1759, on which twelve individuals are recorded as subscribers toward the salary of George Cox, clerk of the congregation. The reverse side reveals William Bagwell then building a new pew for his family in the Abbey Street meetinghouse.⁴¹ A folio of January 1760 lists 26 subscribers as connected with the congregation, of whom six had not paid their dues. Similar accounts survive from 1761 and 1762, though without subscriber's names, while an account of November 1765 details repairs to the meetinghouse. Frequent repairs and improvements of the medieval structure at Abbey Street were required, and in 1781 a list was opened toward the expense of erecting a porch into the meetinghouse.⁴²

Rev. John Patten died at Annerville in 1787.⁴³ During the two-year vacancy that followed, the congregation obtained a site rent-free from John Bagwell in nearby Nelson Street, which was then developing into a fashionable district. Rev. Dr. William Campbell DD, minister of Armagh, succeeded as ninth minister in May 1789, by which time the chapel was virtually completed. The elderly Campbell had been tutor to the Bagwell household during the 1750s. According to a surviving list of *Annual Subscriptions and Donations of the Presbyterian Congregation*, dated May 1 1789, Dr. Campbell derived his annual stipend from fifteen

subscribers, besides income from the three houses in Kilsheelan Street and from the Royal Bounty or *Regium Donum*, an annual government grant to Protestant dissenting congregations. An identical account survives for 1791, as well as various miscellaneous accounts toward heat, fuel and expenses for the 1794-99 period.⁴⁴

All was not well with the congregation, however, for as its leading members accumulated wealth, they began to feel socially isolated and transferred their allegiance to the Church of Ireland. The Perry family of Woodrooff may have initiated this trend, as the last recorded Perry



involvement in the Clonmel dissenting congregation was in 1770, when William Perry described it as "sinking".⁴⁵ By 1810 the family were sufficiently Anglican to apply for a government grant to replace the medieval parish church of Derrygrath with another at the entrance to their estate, which aim was achieved in 1815.⁴⁶

Similarly, in 1799 the Bagwell family instigated the reading of a service of the Established Church among the ruins of the Cistercian Abbey on their Marlfield estate. Portion of the ruins were roofed to serve as a church in 1800, which was subsequently rebuilt in its present form by the Tinsley firm during 1818.⁴⁷ As Burke put it, Bagwell found the non-conformism of his ancestors "an obstacle to his social progress [which] he soon discarded".⁴⁸

While the dissenting congregation at Clonmel went into numerical decline during the 1770s, its finances continued intact, largely due to the efforts of previous generations of its leading families in the formation of trusts and endowments, and the continued association of a few of these families with the congregation into the mid-nineteenth century. Of particular importance here were three members of the Riall family, who kept up an involvement in their church

despite also purchasing pews in Old St. Mary's Church. The Riall household were private bankers at Clonmel from 1754 until 1820, in succession to their Bagwell relations. Their bank was one of only eleven in the country prior to 1800, and this contributed in no small way to the stability of subscriptions in the congregation.

Dr. Campbell died in November 1805 while still in office as minister, and was succeeded in June 1807 by Rev. James Worrall, minister of First Presbyterian Congregation, Larne, who held the office of Postmaster of Clonmel jointly with the ministry. Worrall also ran a private school, as the combining of posts was fashionable in this period. A scrap of accounts from 1807 notes that John Evans was clerk of Clonmel Meetinghouse that year.

Some loose baptismal entries in the handwriting of Rev. Worrall also survive, covering the years 1808 to 1814. These indicate a relatively busy ministry, and a congregation composed of Clonmel shopkeepers and estate employees in relatively equal portions, with a handful of families from the military garrison.⁴⁹ Worrall was involved in a Chancery suit in 1810, to remove the trustees of the three houses in Clonmel belonging to the congregation, all of whom had died. This was done at his sole expense of over £300, and the congregation agreed that his successor would reimburse the Worrall Family from the rental of these houses, which generated income of £75 per annum to the value of £200 over three years.⁵⁰

In 1819 the first surviving Visitation of the congregation by Presbytery was held, which observed twelve households subscribing a total of £60 10s. Other income comprised the annual Knocklofty Estate Rent Charge of £15, the annual *Regium Donum* grant of £75, interest on capital of £100 at six percent per annum, and a Presbyterian General Fund Allowance of £20, making a total income of £176 10s. The average attendance at public worship varied between 60 and 100 persons, who were "chiefly of the Established Church or strangers".⁵¹

Five or six families from Scotland and Ulster were noted to be in the employ of Stein & Co., Marlfield, and the congregation was in such a thriving condition, that Worrall was recommended to obtain an assistant.⁵² The mention of the Established Church connexion among the membership at Clonmel confirms the dual adherence of several households, such as the Riall family, to both the Nelson Street Church and Old St. Mary's. It is fortunate that several of the Rialls did not marry as at Bandon it was noted that the congregation there was in decline "partly in consequence of intermarriage with persons of the Established Church persuasion".⁵³

Rev. James Worrall died in office during November 1824, and was succeeded in July 1825 as minister by Mr. William Crozier, a licentiate of Dromore. His ordination at Clonmel, his first congregation charge, was a joint affair with Mr. Robert Ferris, who was ordained to the charge of Fethard congregation on the same day in Nelson Street Meetinghouse by the ministers of the Synod of Munster. During the six-month vacancy, the officers of the congregation at Nelson Street commenced the volume entitled *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Presbyterian Church in Clonmell*, which indicates that in January 1825, there were 29 subscribers, of whom five were unpaid to date, but which still represented considerable growth on the 1790s. Twenty-six persons (sixteen men and ten women) signed the call to Crozier to be ordained as eleventh minister of the congregation of Clonmel.⁵⁴

During the early years of Crozier's tenure the congregation was well maintained. There were 44 baptisms during his seven-year tenure up to 1832, averaging over six per year. In 1827, there were 21 persons subscribing a total of over £40 per annum, while the three rented houses brought income of £81 and the Knocklofty Bequest brought £15, making a respectable total of £136. In 1828, 22 persons subscribed a total £10 toward the purchase of a silver communion service, with the surplus used to install Gas lighting in the meetinghouse.⁵⁵ Most of the congregation were either Clonmel shopkeepers, employees of Stein & Co. at their Marlfield

distillery, or in the Provincial Bank or military garrison. In addition, a few of the old families still survived, particularly the Riall's.

However, in 1828 Crozier reported to Presbytery that portion of his congregation had been in some degree disturbed by "recent agitations of speculative opinions", but that he had "strong hopes of their continued attachment to the Presbyterian interest in Clonmel".⁵⁶ This coded statement makes reference to the Unitarian/Trinitarian controversy then raging, and is further backed by the revelation that the Clonmel congregation, always substantially Unitarian in membership after 1726, was about to become openly and exclusively Unitarian in outlook. In 1830 the attendance was still 60 to 80 persons, unchanged from 1819, and it was revealed to Synod that the "members have evinced a very general and decided feeling in favour of Liberal Christianity".⁵⁷ The Minute Book reveals this "liberal Christianity" to be the decision of the congregation to take courses in Unitarian Christianity, which was furthered in 1831 through the establishment of a lending library, supported by 17 subscribers (£11) and book donations from the Unitarian Society of Cork. The congregation at Clonmel was now all-embracing, performing several inter-church marriages, even one between a Quaker couple.⁵⁸

Matters came to a head during 1832, with the withdrawal of a large portion of the congregation, mainly those of Ulster Scots Presbyterian stock who had arrived in the Clonmel district during the previous decade, to the Presbytery of Ulster, and their application for a resident minister to be sent to live among them. This was the final year that the Nelson Street chapel housed the entire Presbyterian congregation of Clonmel. Rev. William Crozier left Clonmel in July 1832 for Rademon, Co. Down, and the congregation split was further consolidated during the one-year vacancy. In July 1833, Mr. James Orr, a licentiate of the Bangor Remonstrant (Non-Subscribing) Synod, was installed as minister of Nelson Street, where he remained in office almost 50 years.

Clonmel Unitarian Church (1832-1923)

The Nelson Street Congregation expended considerable energy in the consolidation of their Unitarianism, and in 1835 gave two courses of lectures to explain and vindicate their views. At this time, the attendance was from 30 to 35 persons, indicating that approximately one-half of the congregation had remained and slightly more than one-half had seceded.⁵⁹ In 1840, there were eleven subscribers, giving a total stipend of £74, though over one-third of this came from four members of the Riall family. This would, however, seem to vindicate the later assertion of Rev. James Orr that the remnant of the original families were Unitarian from long before the controversy, and remained so in sympathy until the end.⁶⁰

A Census of the Clonmel congregation, taken in 1841, revealed it to comprise ten households with a total of 49 persons, an average of five per household, besides also eight individuals, so that a membership of some 57 persons existed at that time.⁶¹ Membership was maintained in this period, as the survey *Unitarianism: Its Actual Condition* (1846) gives Clonmel a membership of 55 in 1845-46.⁶² The Manse of the minister of the congregation, Rev. James Orr, was Airmount, located on the Cashel Road, which was probably his private residence also. Very little of the congregational history from this period survives, as no minutes were entered over the years from 1855 to 1876. There were no marriages performed at the church after 1841, but 27 baptisms were performed between 1833 and 1849, with a further twelve between 1852 and 1877.⁶³

Rev. James Orr continued as minister of Clonmel Unitarian Church until his death in September 1882, and services were maintained through a ministerial supply each Sunday

between then and 1907, a testimonial to the determination of his three spinster daughters, the Misses Orr.⁶⁴ Several Unitarian (Old Presbyterian) causes in Ireland flourished at this time, as with Limavady Unitarian (1886) and Bandon Unitarian (1890). In 1907, Rev. Robert James Orr, son of Rev. James Orr, commenced as stated supply of Clonmel, on his retirement from York Street Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Congregation in Belfast, in which role he continued until his death in Sept. 1915. One month later, in October 1915, an English Unitarian Minister, Rev. Alfred Amey, was installed as minister of Clonmel, presiding over a congregation of five elderly ladies, besides occasional visitors.

The Orr sisters died in 1917, 1918 and 1920 respectively, and the last two members of the congregation, Mrs. Day and Miss Margaret Bradford, left the town during February 1921, leaving instructions that the meetinghouse was to be kept open each Sunday, regardless of whether there was a congregation or not, until the endowments and church property were legally secured, and the sale made possible.⁶⁵ This sale was delayed by the War of Independence and Civil War, so that it was not until July 1923 that this was achieved, with Clonmel Unitarian Church closing on the last Sunday of that month.

Rev. Alfred Amey then left Clonmel, retiring to Somerset, where he was paid a half-yearly stipend of seven pounds up to 1926.⁶⁶ The chapel and other properties in Clonmel were sold that year, in three lots, for a total of £900. This sum was invested by the Commissioners for Charitable Donations and Bequests, with the proviso that if it were ever possible to re-establish Unitarian services at Clonmel, the interest would revert to Clonmel alone, and in the meantime would be used by the Synod of Munster for Unitarian purposes.⁶⁷

In tying up the Clonmel Unitarian story, the effects of the church, comprising pulpit, pews and harmonium were probably re-used in other churches of the denomination. Certainly, the Clonmel Bible has been in All Soul's Non-Subscribing Church, Belfast since the 1920s. The Birth and Marriages Register and Minute Book made their way to Cork Unitarian congregation, and to the private ownership of a Cork antiquarian after the closure of that congregation about 1960. After prolonged negotiations, the Minute Book was donated to Tipperary (S.R.) County Museum, Clonmel, in March 1999, with the Births and Marriages Register remaining in the hands of the genealogist who purchased portion of the collection.⁶⁸

The Clonmel Silver, dating to 1828 and comprising three pieces, was initially stored in Belfast and then in Dublin, but is now misplaced, presumably in a bank vault or in private hands. An unsuccessful attempt at reviving the congregation was made by Dr. Pulbrook of the Dublin Unitarian Church in March 1999. Pending the future re-establishment of Unitarianism at Clonmel, the annual interest from its substantial endowments is diverted to the Unitarian Church at Dublin, and the congregation meeting at Cork.

Clonmel Scots Church (1832-1977)

It would appear that the earliest linkage of Clonmel to the Scots Synod of Ulster dates to 1830, when a number of families made known their increasing unhappiness with existing arrangements. At a meeting of the Dublin Presbytery of the Synod, the Moderator, Rev. S. Simpson, reported that while on a visit to the South of Ireland he had found, both in Cork and Clonmel, a number of families who desired to be supplied with worship according to the (Scots) Presbyterian discipline.⁶⁹ The congregation was fortunate on two fronts, in that a preaching supply was readily provided, and that the recently completed Baptist Chapel at Morton Street was placed at their disposal for worship meetings.

By 1834 the Scots Presbyterians already had a considerable congregation of from 130 to 150 persons at morning service, and from fifty to sixty persons at their evening service in Morton Street.⁷⁰ It is certain that this number included a considerable number from other faiths, as the total number and distribution of Presbyterians for Clonmel town and district in 1831 and 1834 were as follows:

	1831	1834
Clonmel Town	44	44
Inishlounaght	57	65
Rathronan	09	09
Killaloan	01	01
Total:	111	119

At this time the Commissioners made no distinction between Unitarian and Trinitarian Presbyterianism, and as the combined attendance at the two "Presbyterian" morning services (Nelson Street and Morton Street) varied between 160 and 185 persons, (most of the attendance at evening service having already been in the morning), there must have been at least fifty to sixty adherents from other denominations.⁷¹

The Scots congregation reached a firm financial footing in a surprisingly short period of time, considering that all endowments stayed with the Old Congregation at Nelson Street. A tender was advertised in March 1836 for the building of the Scots Church at Clonmel.⁷² By this time Rev. M. Mitchell of Moneymore had accepted a call to Clonmel congregation, though he died before he could be installed. Mr. John Dill, a licentiate of Derry, was therefore first minister of the Scot's Church, Clonmel, and was duly ordained in May 1836 at Gordon Street Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, (the predecessor of White Memorial Theatre, built in 1804, and replaced in current chapel in 1843), owing to a lack of seating capacity in Morton Street Baptist Chapel.⁷³

This indicated considerable goodwill among the growing dissenter community at Clonmel, not at all common in this age of increasing competition for congregations. The Scots congregation continued to meet at Morton Street until Christmas 1836, when the arrival of a new Baptist Pastor, likely opposed to sharing his chapel with them, prompted their move to the Courthouse, directly opposite the Unitarian Chapel in Nelson Street, where they met until the Scots Church was completed during 1838.⁷⁴ This imposing building is in the typical temple style then favoured by Presbyterian and Methodist denominations, and in Griffiths Valuation (1848), the Clonmel building compares well with the annual rateable valuation of other Scots Churches in provincial Ireland, as also with the chapels of other Protestant dissenters in the town.⁷⁵

The Presbytery of Cork (Synod of Ulster) of which the Scots Church, Clonmel constituted part, commenced minutes of its dealings in 1843, and the first recorded Visitation of Clonmel took place shortly afterward. In 1844, Clonmel was holding Sunday services at 11.30 am and 6.30 pm, on Thursday at 6.30 pm and on Monday at 11 am. The weekday services attracted twenty-five and twelve persons respectively, while Sunday morning service three-quarter filled the church. There were about 150 individuals in connection with the congregation; the Sunday School had thirty-five children and five teachers; thirty-one persons contributed to the ministerial stipend, and there had been ten baptisms in the previous year. In addition, there was a congregational library of 330 volumes, and a Mission Station at Dungarvan. The Elder at Clonmel was James McQueen, joined by John Going, Wm. Sibbald and Wilson Kennedy in 1848. In 1852 Mr. Kennedy stood for election as Member of Parliament for Coleraine, which was carried with much Presbyterian support.⁷⁶

The next Visitation of Clonmel congregation, in 1858, taking place as it did after the trauma of the Famine, revealed significant decline in the congregation. The individuals in connexion now numbered one hundred and thirty-five, and baptisms had declined to four annually. Stipend payers had also declined from thirty-one to twenty-four persons. There were, however, still six marriages per year on average, displaying some hope for the future. In addition, the landlord, John Bagwell Esq. had lowered the annual leasehold ground-rental from £10 to 10s. The church officers were William Sibbald and John Going, Elders; Dr. Prosser, Congregation Secretary; J. B. MacNamara, Treasurer; with Alex Boyd and Thomas Scott, Congregation Representatives. The attendance at church varied between was about one hundred and forty persons during the early 1860s, which declined slightly to about one hundred and thirty by 1868.⁷⁷

In 1868 Rev. John Dill, first minister of the Scots Church died, and a marble memorial tablet was erected to his memory in the church he had ministered for thirty years.⁷⁸ Mr. Henry Haslett Beattie, a licentiate of Belfast, succeeded four months later and ministered ten years at Clonmel until his appointment as Chaplain to the Forces in 1878. Within a few days, a unanimous call was issued to Rev. James Wilson, minister of the small Presbyterian congregation at Fethard, which then comprised just fifteen families, and which had an attendance of twenty persons at Sunday service.⁷⁹

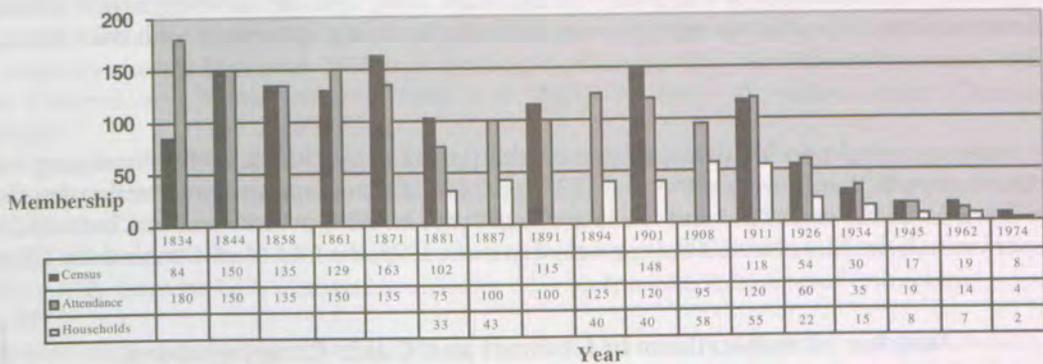
It was resolved at a Joint Meeting of the Presbyteries of Cork and Munster, held at Tipperary in September 1879, that owing to the decline of Fethard Congregation, the two congregations would be united under the Minister of Fethard, who would reside in Clonmel. Within a year Fethard congregation was virtually non-existent as a mark of protest by that congregation, concerning the removal of its resident minister. The continuation of services at Fethard, in order to prevent the very substantial endowments on that congregation from falling into abeyance, was to dog the ministry of Rev. James Wilson, until his transfer to Carlow in 1891. From 1881, the primary mission of Clonmel was not Fethard, but rather Cahir, which represented a growing centre of work.⁸⁰

Further Visitations of Clonmel were held in 1881 and 1887. In the former year, the congregation had thirty-three families, with fifty attending at morning and twenty-five attending at evening service.⁸¹ Cahir mission station was very promising, with five families in residence in 1881, and an attendance of twenty persons. In 1887 there were forty-three families in the grouped congregations, and Clonmel was judged in very good condition, with thirteen children in the Sabbath School, and five baptisms in the previous year. This still represented a great decline from the heights reached during the 1840s.

In 1891, at end of the Wilson ministry, an installation of elders and deacons was held at Clonmel, that allows a further glimpse at the main families then active in the congregation. Thomas R. Scott and John N. McCuaig were the new elders, while John R. Scott, John Main, and John Winchester were made Deacons. In May 1892 Rev. Robert Wilson Reid Rentoul, minister of Darlington, was installed, and under his ministry both Clonmel and Cahir congregations grew considerably, and Fethard was temporarily revived.

A Visitation of Clonmel with Cahir, held in 1894, showed it to consist of forty families, with attendance of from fifty-five to seventy-five persons at morning service and fifty persons at evening service. Seven baptisms had been performed in previous year, and there were twenty-five children in the Sabbath School. In a further Visitation of 1901, the number of families remained constant, with attendance from forty to seventy persons at morning service, from twenty-five to fifty persons in the evening and with from fifteen to thirty children in the Sabbath School. The congregation was noted as flourishing, particularly the Mission Station at Cahir, which surviving congregational accounts appear to confirm.⁸²

Scots Presbyterian Congregation, 1834 - 1974 (Clonmel Catchment Area)



By 1908, Clonmel comprised fifty-eight families, though many of these were apparently individuals in an aging congregation. The attendance at Clonmel had declined to between thirty-five and sixty persons at the morning service and to from eighteen to thirty-five persons at the evening service. The attendance at Cahir Church continued to increase, and now averaged thirty to forty persons in the morning and from twenty to thirty persons in the evening. Clonmel-Cahir was a promising group of congregations, with three local students training for the Presbyterian ministry, including a son of the Manse. In 1919, Rev. Rentoul retired, and was replaced by Rev. John Thompson Montgomery, minister of Greenbank, who remained only three years at Clonmel during this troubled period in Irish history.

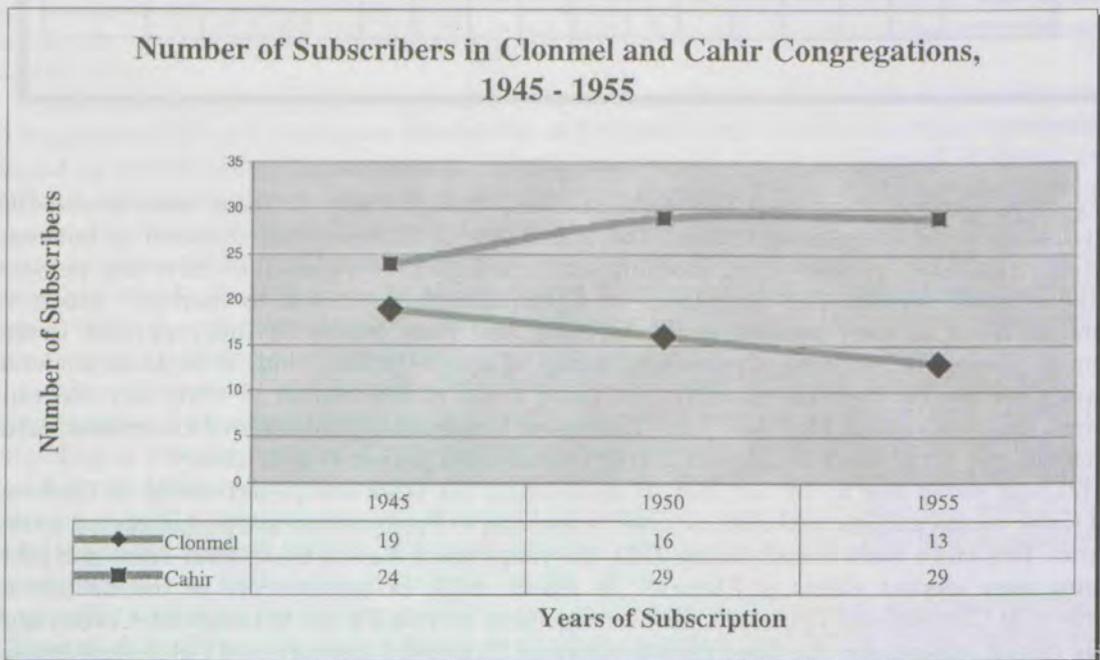
This was partly due to the fact that on installation, his work comprised charge of Clonmel and Cahir congregations, and also included preaching to Presbyterian troops garrisoned in the district. This latter work ended during 1922, the year Messrs. Lewis, Eyne, John Toms and John Munro were elected elders at Clonmel. In March 1923, in consequence of the decline in numbers at Clonmel and Tipperary, Rev. Montgomery accepted a call to Longford, Corboy and Tully circuit, whereupon the three congregations of Clonmel, Tipperary and Cahir were linked under the Minister of Tipperary, Rev. David McCausland, who came to reside at Clonmel. This union incorporated a working arrangement with the Methodist Minister of Clonmel, Rev. John Boullier and his successors, whereby both ministers jointly supplied the two Mission Stations of Cahir (Presbyterian) and Bawnlea, Kilcooley (Methodist).⁸³

The congregation at Clonmel had fluctuated between fifty and sixty families in the period from 1898 to 1915, but serious decline commenced prior to Irish independence, with forty-one families in 1920, thirty-six in 1922, and thirty-five in 1923. This last figure held until 1947, though families were increasingly located at Cahir, which as a Mission Station did not provide separate statistics in this period.

Rev. David McCausland remained as minister of the South Tipperary circuit of congregations for four years, until accepting a call to the congregations of Poyntzpass and Fourtowns in April 1927. The congregations of Clonmel and Tipperary were given leave in July 1927 to call a new

minister, Clonmel-Cahir congregation undertaking to contribute fifty pounds to the annual stipend, and Tipperary contributing twelve pounds.⁸⁴ The ministry of the incoming minister, Rev. George A. McElhatton, installed in January 1928, lasted only ten months owing to his call to Limerick congregation in October 1928. Rev. William Samuel Heron, minister of Dromore, Co. Tyrone, was installed in his place during May 1929, and his seventeen-year ministry restored stability to the three congregations, while the working agreement with the Methodist minister also continued.⁸⁵

Clonmel averaged one baptism per year in the period from 1940 to 1948, displaying more consistent growth than during either the 1920s or 1930s. However, only three further baptisms were carried out between 1952 and the last one in 1960. In 1934, a Visitation of Clonmel-Cahir was performed, the first since 1908. It reveals that since 1923, the Old Manse behind the Church



was no longer used as the ministerial residence, and the minister now lived at Bellevue Place. The congregational representatives at Clonmel were W. B. Curry, John E. Howard and David McCaw. The union of Clonmel, Tipperary and Cahir was ministered to through the holding of a morning, afternoon and evening service, one in each church.

Clonmel itself had fifteen families, and an attendance of from thirty to thirty-five persons. Three-quarters of the members held family worship, indicating a heavy church involvement, and there were four children in the Sabbath school, with Presbytery well pleased at the condition of the church buildings and congregations, particularly those of Clonmel and Cahir, which were described as "a devoted band of church people".⁸⁶ However, much of the enthusiasm had left the congregation at Clonmel by this time, and although mention was made

of celebrating the centenary of the Scots Church in March 1938, nothing was done for over a year.

In May 1946, following the retirement of Rev. Heron, the last resident minister of Clonmel, the congregations of Fermoy and Lismore were united to those of Clonmel and Cahir, and the church at Tipperary was closed. There followed a three-year vacancy, during which time a licentiate, Mr. James MacCartney, was placed in charge of Cahir and Clonmel, and continued in this capacity during 1947 and 1948 until leaving for Canada. The minister with general charge over Clonmel and Cahir between 1946 and 1949 was Rev. Alexander Stuart Cromie of Limerick.⁸⁷

In December 1949, at a meeting held in Cahir Church to fill the vacancy, Rev. James Craig, previously minister of Portstewart, and supply of Cahir and Clonmel during the year 1948-49, was called as minister of the grouped congregations of Fermoy, Lismore, Clonmel and Cahir. The call was signed by 64 members, with the following annual subscriptions were offered: Fermoy £18; Lismore £12; Clonmel and Cahir £11, so that the total annual ministerial stipend was £41.⁸⁸

Almost immediately the unsuitability of the Scots Church in Clonmel was acknowledged, due to its low gas pressure and large size, and it was proposed to write to Rev. H. Ritchie, the Methodist minister of Waterford and supply of Clonmel, to see if the Methodist Church opposite could be rented at a nominal fee.⁸⁹ Investigations were made to see if the congregation was enabled to sell the Scots Church. In 1952, they offered £500 for the Methodist Church, and in 1953, it was offered them for £1,000.

It was decided the Scots Church and Manse would be sold to raise funds, and the Clonmel Presbyterian Congregation eventually moved into the seldom-used Methodist Church during 1960. This was appropriate, given that from the 1940s, in the face of a monthly and less frequent Methodist preaching supply, the Presbyterian Congregation attracted the attendance of the Methodist remnant congregation at Clonmel, particularly Mr. and Mrs. Clingan, who resided in the old Methodist Manse.

From 1950 until 1962, the annual membership statistics of the Clonmel and Cahir congregations continued to be given jointly, and averaged fifty persons, spread across twenty families. From 1962, the decline at Clonmel became acutely evident, with only seven families, comprising fourteen persons, remaining there out of a total group figure of nineteen families, so that the twelve families resident at Cahir, comprising twenty-four persons, now constituted the main congregation.⁹⁰ In 1961, Clonmel was separated from Fermoy, Lismore and Cahir and placed under the charge of the minister of Waterford and Kilkenny, Rev. Gordon Stevenson, from 1961 until 1967, a circuit requiring a round trip of over 100 miles each Sunday. Fermoy and Cahir were ministered by Rev. Robert (Roy) Hill during this period. Following Mr. Stevenson's removal to the North of Ireland at the end of 1967, charge of services at Clonmel Presbyterian-Methodist Church was transferred to the Methodist minister of Waterford, who conducted monthly services until final closure in July 1977.

Throughout the 1963 to 1970 period, the congregation at Clonmel Presbyterian Church comprised six or seven families, or from nine to twelve individuals. Cahir also experienced decline with the decease of older members, and the migration of the young, so that its membership slipped from twelve families or twenty-four persons in 1963 to eight families or fifteen persons by 1970. The final statistics given for Clonmel congregation are for 1972-74, by which time numbers had halved from six families or eight persons in 1970 to two families or four persons by 1974.⁹¹

No figures were given Clonmel in 1975 or 1976, and the remnant congregation was officially

amalgamated with Fermoy and Cahir on July 1 1977, with any remaining members of the denominations in the area since attending at Cahir Presbyterian Church. The joint Presbyterian-Methodist chapel was sold to its present owner, the SIPTU trade union, in 1980. Interestingly, within three years, it was again in weekly use for worship by a Christian group, the Clonmel Evangelical Church. This congregation affiliated to the Baptist Union of Ireland during 1997, and is now the third reincarnation of the Clonmel Baptist Church.

Presbyterianism in the South Tipperary district has continued since at Cahir, where members from across a wide area of the county gather for Sunday worship. By 1974 this congregation had declined to six families, comprising eleven persons. It was then the sole responsibility of the minister of Fermoy, Rev. James Hall Flack, following the closure of Lismore in 1970. This grouping continued under Rev. William Mills, a retired minister with charge of Fermoy and Cahir, between 1971 and 1981, until the withdrawal of the resident minister from Fermoy in the latter year and the transferral of Cahir Presbyterian Church to the responsibility of the new minister of Kilkenny with Cahir, Rev. John D. Woodside, during 1984.

Cahir congregation experienced some growth under his ministry. A resident mission worker, Mr. Keith Preston, was placed at Clonmel in 1984,⁹² and the Cahir building was re-roofed and improved. The congregation maintained an attendance of from eleven to twenty persons, during the 1980s, which further increased to between fifteen and thirty persons during the 1990s. In 1993, Rev. Stephen Johnston, now minister of Carlow, took over most of the work at Cahir, relieving Rev. Woodside, whose expanding congregation at Kilkenny required more attention. Dr. Samuel Mawhinney was ordained minister of Fermoy with Cahir on 19 September 1997, in a ceremony held at Cahir Presbyterian Church, by the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster (Home Mission).

The Manse was located at 37 Abbey Meadows, Clonmel, to enable proximity to Cahir congregation, and mindful of the Presbyterian heritage at Clonmel. Peter and Christine Maitland arrived shortly afterwards, also residing at Clonmel, and working as missionaries in Clonmel and Cahir. Both Fermoy and Cahir Presbyterian Churches were extensively renovated over the years 1998 to 2000, and during 2001, the Manse was removed to Fermoy, which was recognised as a growing centre of work, while the compact church building at Cahir remains the centre of Presbyterian worship in County Tipperary.

This article is based on a lecture delivered to Clonmel Historical and Archaeological Society on 21 January 2002, at Hearn's Hotel, Clonmel.

Appendix¹

Clonmel "Protestant Dissenting" Congregation

<i>Minister</i>	<i>Succession</i>	<i>Resigned (r) / Died (d)</i>
James Wood	1662	r.1673
William Cocks (Cox)	26 Nov. 1673	d.1690
John Shaw	c.1691	d.1706
Nathaniel Card	c.1707	c.1714
Thomas Palmer		

Clonmel Unitarian (Old Presbyterian) Congregation

William Jackson	6 Jun. 1717	d.1734
John Mears Jr.	9 Apr. 1735	r. 9 Jan. 1740
James Mackay	1740	r.1756
John Patten	1756	d.30 Jun. 1787
Dr. William Campbell	14 Sept. 1789	d.17 Nov. 1805
James Worrall	3 Jun. 1807	d.28 Nov. 1824
William Crozier	8 Jul. 1825	r. 7 Nov. 1832
James Orr	4 Jul. 1833	d.30 Sept. 1882
Various Ministers (supplying)	Oct. 1882	1907
Robert J. Orr (supplying)	1907	d.26 Sept. 1915
Alfred Amey	24 Oct. 1915	r. July 29 1923

Clonmel Scots Presbyterian Congregation

<i>Clonmel</i>		
John Dill	25 May 1836	d.5 Aug. 1868
Dr. Henry H. Beattie	30 Dec. 1868	r.1878
<i>Fethard and Clonmel</i>		
James Wilson	27 Jun. 1878	r.17 Dec. 1891
<i>Fethard and Clonmel with Cahir</i>		
Robert W. R. Rentoul	3 May 1892	r.30 Sept. 1919
<i>Clonmel with Cahir</i>		
John T. Montgomery	12 May 1920	r.16 Mar. 1923
<i>Clonmel with Cahir, and Tipperary</i>		
David McCausland	25 May 1923	r.25 April 1927
George A. McElhatton	31 Jan. 1928	r.5 Oct. 1928
William S. Heron	2 May 1929	r.31 May 1946
<i>Clonmel with Cahir</i>		
Alexander S. Cromie ²	Oct. 1946	Dec. 1949
Mr. James McCartney (Licentiate)	1947	1948
James Craig (supplying)	1948	1949
<i>Fermoy, Lismore, and Clonmel with Cahir</i>		
James Craig	15 Dec. 1949	r.30 Apr. 1961
<i>Waterford, Kilkenny and Clonmel</i>		
Gordon Stevenson	1 May 1961	r.31 Dec. 1967
Methodist Ministers (supplying)	1 Jan. 1968	1 Jul. 1977
<i>Fermoy with Cahir</i>		
Robert Hill	1962	r.9 May 1967
James Hall Flack (supplying)	5 Dec. 1967	r.2 Jun. 1971
William Mills (supplying)	1971	1981
Brian Graeme-Cook ³	1981	1984
<i>Kilkenny with Cahir</i>		
John D. Woodside	25 May 1984	r. 19 Sept. 1997
Stephen Johnston (Assistant)	June 1993	Sept. 1997
<i>Fermoy with Cahir</i>		
Dr. Samuel Mawhinney	19 Sept. 1997	

1. Compiled using these sources: Burke, *Clonmel*, 294-95; *The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian 1082*, (Jan. 1997), 50-1; 1091, (Jan. 1998), 7-8; *A History of Congregations in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*; *Clonmel Minute Book*; *Minute Book of the Presbyterian Church, Princes Street, Cork (1717-1830)*; Cromie, *Controversy Among Southern Presbyterians*.
2. In charge of the congregations of Clonmel and Tipperary with Cahir, while also Minister of Limerick, during the vacancy of 1946-49
3. In charge of the congregations of Fermoy with Cahir, while also Minister of Trinity Church, Cork, and Aghada, during the vacancy of 1981-84

Footnotes

1. W. P. Burke, 1907: *History of Clonmel*, 293.
2. See D. J. Butler, 1998: "An Historical Geography of the Irish Baptist Churches, 1650 – 1870, *Chimera: U.C.C. Geographical Journal* 13, 56-62; *Idem*, 2002: "A Survival of the Fittest": Protestant Dissenting Congregations of Tipperary, Cork and Waterford, 1660-1810", *Chimera: U.C.C. Geographical Journal* 17, 86-96; See Burke, *Clonmel*, 296 for the Society of Friends.
3. Carte Papers, quoted in Burke, *Clonmel*, 99.
4. P. Power, (ed), 1932: *A Bishop of the Penal Times, being Letters and Reports of John Brennan, Bishop of Waterford (1671-93) and Archbishop of Cashel (1677-93): Irish Historical Documents* 3.
5. *Richard Hedges to Joshua Dawson, 23 April 1713*, quoted in S. J. Connolly, 1992, *Religion, Law and Power: The Making of Protestant Ireland, 1660-1760*, 162.
6. *Diary of the Rev. John Cook, Presbyterian Minister of Waterford: Memorandum 8 September 1709*, in the Presbyterian Historical Society Archive, Church House, Belfast.
7. P. Kilroy, 1994: *Protestant Dissent and Controversy in Ireland, 1660 – 1714*, 202.
8. Burke, *Clonmel*, 99.
9. Carte Papers, xxxii, 72; quoted in *Ibid*.
10. *Ibid*; See also R. L. Greaves, 1997: *God's Other Children: Protestant Nonconformists and the Emergence of Denominational Churches in Ireland, 1660-1700*, 86.
11. Carte Papers, quoted in Burke, *ibid*.
12. D. J. Butler, 1999: "The Meeting House of the Protestant Dissenter: A Study of Design, Layout and Location in Southern Ireland", *Chimera: U.C.C. Geographical Journal* 14, 119.
13. Burke, *Clonmel*, 294.
14. Diocesan Report of Waterford and Lismore to the Vatican, dated September 20, 1675, quoted in Power, *A Bishop of the Penal Times*, 48.
15. R. H. Murray, (ed.), 1912: *The Journal of John Stevens: Containing a Brief Account of the War in Ireland, 1689 – 1691*, 48.
16. Burke, *Clonmel*, 294.
17. *Ibid*.
18. T. Laffan, 1911: *Tipperary's Families, Being the Hearth Money Rolls of 1665-6-7: Ville of Clonmel*; Thomas Palmer died in 1738 – see Presbyterian Historical Society, 1982: *A History of Congregations of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland – Entry for Clonmel Congregation*.
19. The ordination either took place at St. Johnston, Donegal, or at St. Johnstown Castle, seat of the Jacob family, prominent Presbyterians then attending the Clonmel meeting. Resident Presbyterian ministers were also settled at Cork, Limerick, and Waterford in 1673. See *Presbytery of Antrim Minutes*, November 1673, quoted in Kilroy, *Protestant Dissent*, 121, 134. St. Johnstown became the focus of a Presbyterian house meeting from the 1660s, and continued until the appointment of a shared minister in 1728, commuting from Ballybrittas, Co. Leix. On his removal to Fethard in 1739, the St. Johnstown meeting moved to a purpose-built meetinghouse on Burke Street. See my article "Presbyterianism in the Fethard District, circa. 1690-1919: Part I", *Tipperary Historical Journal* 13, (2000), 64-72.
20. See *Minutes of Presbytery of Munster*, quoted in Kilroy, *Protestant Dissent*, 122, 135; Greaves, *God's Other Children*, 378.
21. C. L. Vaughan-Arbuckle, 1902: "A Tipperary Farmer and Waterford Tradesman of Two Centuries Ago", *Journal of Waterford and South East Archaeological Society* 7, 81. The manuscript pedigree of Vaughan of Clonmel (1699-1891) is at the Society of Genealogists Library, London, notice of which was published in *The Genealogist's Magazine* 10 (4) in December 1947.
22. He was minister of Youghal from 1657 until 1662. See Kilroy, *Protestant Dissent*, 134.
23. *Ibid*, 52, 68, 135.
24. *Ibid*; See also Greaves, *God's Other Children*.
25. This agreement came into effect on July 15 1696: See Rev. Dr. William Campbell, *Sketches of the History of Presbyterianism in Ireland* (Unpublished Manuscript); A. S. Cromie, 2000: *Controversy*

- Among Southern Presbyterians*, 25; Kilroy, *Protestant Dissent*, 68.
26. According to an entry in the *Diary of Rev. John Cook*, dating to 1700, the members at Tipperary endured a journey to Clonmel for the quarterly communion service held by Rev. John Shaw, and he requested ordination by Presbytery to release them from journeying there. His ordination took place in the house of Mr. Roe, at Tipperary in May 1701. Roe has been a member of New Ross Independent Congregation, Dublin, up to his removal to Tipperary early in the 1690s.
 27. Burke, *Clonmel*, 294.
 28. *Ibid*, 175; T. P. Power, 1993, *Land, Politics and Society in Eighteenth Century Tipperary*, 60-1.
 29. Will of William Vaughan, proved 1699, quoted in Burke, *ibid*, 340.
 30. Will of John Colserly, dated 7 December 1699, proved 1709, quoted in *Ibid*, 329-30.
 31. See Congregation Accounts, quoted in *Ibid*, 294.
 32. NLI Ms. 1435: Sermons of the Rev. Nathaniel Card given at Clonmel and elsewhere, 1705-07.
 33. Vaughan-Arbuckle: "A Tipperary Farmer" 86.
 34. Burke, *Clonmel*, 294.
 35. His will was proved in 1734. See *Ibid*; GO Ms. 141, 145-94: Detailed Abstracts of Jackson Wills of Clonmel, Co. Tipperary, and counties Kilkenny, Kildare, Galway, Meath and Waterford, 1637 - 1797.
 36. Burke, *Ibid*.
 37. Rev. J. Orr, 1877: "History of Protestant Dissent in Clonmel Vicinity, No. III: Old Congregational Records" in *Clonmel Chronicle*, September 23, 1877. Rev. J. Orr, 1877: "History of Protestant Dissent in Clonmel Vicinity, No. III: Old Congregational Records" in *Clonmel Chronicle*, September 23, 1877. The arrival of some sixty northern Presbyterian weaver households on the Damer Estate, shortly after 1741, dictated that the minister of Tipperary, Rev. Smith, should live among them as the core of his congregation. Smith was ordained at Mallow in 1710 to the charge of the congregation there, and resided at Buttevant. He was minister of Tipperary by 1736, and died in office during 1757. For the background to the estate settlement at Shronell, see J. Heuston, 2002: "The Weavers of Shronell - 250 Years Ago", *Tipperary Historical Journal* 15, 99-100.
 38. Orr, *Ibid*.
 39. Burke, *Clonmel*, 295. See also Orr, *Ibid*.
 40. Later purchased by William Riall, a member of the congregation. See Orr, *Ibid*
 41. Loose manuscript folios, at the front of the Minute Book, deposited at the Tipperary (S.R.) County Museum, Clonmel.
 42. See *Ibid*: Loose Folios at the beginning of the volume. Family size is estimated for use in the graphs below, using the recommended multiplier of 5 for each household given: See the research of D. Dickson, *et al.*, 1982: "Hearth Tax, Household Size and Irish Population Change, 1672-1821", *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 82C(6), 125-181. The validity of this multiplier is affirmed in the Census of Clonmel Unitarian Congregation (1841), where there were ten households, and the congregation, including seven individuals, totaled 57 persons.
 43. *Ibid*.
 44. *Ibid*.
 45. Perry Papers, quoted in Burke, *Clonmel*, 295.
 46. This church at Woodrooffe, little used from the early 1900s, survived intact until *circa*. 1970, when dismantled to prevent further vandalism. The tower and shell were demolished in the early 1990s, removing a familiar landmark from the Cahir-Clonmel road. A photograph survives in the lobby of Cahir Credit Union, while the date stone is on display in the porch of Fethard Church of Ireland.
 47. Vestry Minutes of Inishlounaght (Marlfield), 1804-72: Parish Office, Old St. Mary's, Clonmel.
 48. Burke, *Clonmel*, 175.
 49. Loose folios, dated August 1808 to October 1814, at the beginning of the *Births and Marriages Register of the Clonmel Unitarian Church*: (In Private Ownership in Dublin). There were seven baptisms performed between August and December 1808 - four of children of the Armagh Militia, then stationed at Clonmel, and three of Clonmel shopkeepers.

50. *Visitation of Clonmel, 1819*, quoted in *Extracts from the Minutes of the Transactions of the Southern Association of Protestant Dissenting Ministers (Comprising the United Presbyteries of Dublin and Munster), Commencing in the Year of Our Lord, 1809* by Rev. G. T. C. Clements. This notebook, compiled during 1929, is held at the Presbyterian Historical Society Rooms, Church House, Belfast.
51. *Ibid.*
52. *Ibid.* From the commencement of records in 1825 until 1833, twelve baptisms of children, from eight distinct households employed by the Marlfield Distillery, were performed at Nelson Street Chapel. Other and subsequent baptisms comprised eight from military households, five from Provincial Bank household, and ten of minister's children. The majority, comprising 43 baptisms came from twelve middle-class households of Clonmel, with surnames such as Atcheson, Prosser, Howell, Kelvin, Bradford and Crawford-Ledlie. Forty-four baptisms were performed between July 1825 and August 1832; twenty-seven between October 1833 and December 1849; eleven between 1852 and 1867, with a final baptism in 1877. Seventeen marriages were performed between the commencement of records in December 1825 and the final ceremony in November 1841: See *Births and Marriages Register*.
53. See Clements, *Extracts from the Minutes* – entry for Bandon.
54. See *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Presbyterian Church in Clonmell*, deposited in Tipperary (S.R.) County Museum, Clonmel.
55. Gas Lighting was first introduced to Clonmel town during 1824: See *Vestry Minutes* of Old St. Mary's Church, 1824.
56. Clements, *Extracts from the Minutes*.
57. *Ibid.*
58. See *Clonmel Minute Book and Marriage Register*
59. *First Report of the Commissioners of Public Instruction* (1834): Entry for Clonmel.
60. See *Clonmel Chronicle*, 1877.
61. Loose folio *Census* inserted in the *Minute Book*. The congregation comprised these households: Charles Achison (7); William Achison (6); Richard & Samuel Bradford (4); James Kelvin (5); Owen Downey (6); Mrs. Fell (2); Mrs. MacNamara (3); Rev. Mr. Orr (4); Mr. Stewart, Marlfield (7); Mr. Wallace (5); Mrs. Howell (1); William Riall (1); Charles Riall (1); Miss Bradford (1); Margamin McFawley (1); John Strene (1); John Stirling (1), Thomas Delap, Kilmore (1): 57 persons.
62. I am grateful to Rev. Andrew Hill of the Unitarian Historical Society in Manchester for this reference
63. *Births and Marriages Register* of the Clonmel Presbyterian Congregation.
64. A detailed list of ministers supplying survives in the *Minute Book* at the County Museum, Clonmel, covering all but three Sundays over the period 1896 to 1915.
65. Jane E. Orr d. 15 March 1917; Margaret Orr d. 1 Dec. 1918; Elisabeth N. Orr d. 5 Nov. 1920: See minute of January 27 1921 in the *Minute Book* of Clonmel Congregation.
66. See A. Amey, 1924: "Clonmel Meeting House, Ireland", *Proceedings of the Unitarian Historical Society* 3, 285-86.
67. Much legal research has been carried out by Dr. Martin Pulbrook, formerly of Maynooth University, in following up leads unearthed by the author regarding the endowments of the Clonmel Unitarian Congregation.
68. Between the author and Dr. Martin Pulbrook on one hand, and the antiquarian's estate on the other.
69. *Minutes of the Presbytery of Munster, 1830*
70. A *Baptisms Register* was commenced in 1833, which volume continued to 1868. Other surviving records include a *Marriages Register* from 1846 to 1880 and various *Account Books*.
71. *First Report of the Commissioners of Public Instruction* (1834): Entry for Clonmel.
72. *Tipperary Constitution*, 1 March 1836
73. *Ibid*, 25 May 1836.
74. *Ibid*, 23 Dec. 1836.
75. In Clonmel, there were nine Protestant denominations meeting for worship in 1848, with the Scots

and Unitarian Church buildings occupying third and joint-fourth positions respectively, in terms of annual rated valuation: Old St. Mary's Church, Mary St., £54; Quaker Meeting House, Market St., £49 10s; Scots Church, Anglesea St. £27; Unitarian Church, Nelson St., £22 10s, Wesleyan Methodist Church, Gordon St., £22 10s. Others included the Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Church, Mary St, the Baptist Chapel, Morton Street, the Independent Church (Private House), Gordon St., and the Christian Brethren (Private House), Sarsfield St.

76. See *Minutes of the Presbytery of Munster, 1844, 1848, 1852*: Held at Church House, Belfast.
77. *Visitation of Clonmel, 1858: Minutes of the Presbytery of Munster, 1858-68.*
78. "Erected by the Members of Attached Congregation to the Memory of the Rev. John Dill A.M., who died Aug. 5th 1868: He was the First and for 32 Years the faithful and beloved Pastor of the Scotch Church, Clonmel. Blessed are the Dead who die in the Lord". This plaque was removed to the Methodist Church in 1960, where it still remains. This church, the SIPTU Hall since 1977, is used by Clonmel Baptist Church since the early 1980s.
79. See D. J. Butler, 2001: "Presbyterianism in Fethard District, c.1690 – 1919, *Tipperary Historical Journal* 1001, 129-137.
80. See further in D. J. Butler, 1999: *Cahir: A Guide to Heritage Town and District* – entry for Cahir Presbyterian Church; *Minutes of the Presbytery of Munster, 1879-81.*
81. The maximum combined attendance at Sunday service is given in the graph of the Scots Church Congregation in this paper. The household figures are taken from the *Minutes of General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church* (in Belfast), while the census figure combine figures noted in *Visitations* with those of the *Census of Ireland*.
82. *Subscription Lists and Accounts of the Clonmel, Cahir and Fethard Congregations, 1894 – 1902.*
83. A. S. Cromie, 2000: *Controversy Among Southern Presbyterians*, 118; 142-3.
84. *Ibid*, 118.
85. The resident minister of Clonmel was withdrawn in June 1932, from which time Clonmel and Kilcooley were supplied from the adjacent circuits of Waterford and Kilkenny-Carlow respectively.
86. *Visitation of Clonmel, Cahir and Tipperary, 1934: Minutes of the Presbytery of Munster.*
87. Rev. Alexander Stuart Cromie MA, LLB lives in active retirement at Bangor, Co. Down. Despite now being in his ninety-second year, he recently completed the book *Controversy Among Southern Presbyterians* (2000), and is currently completing *A History of Presbyterianism in the City of Cork* (2003), where he was minister between 1950 and 1955.
88. *Minutes of the Presbytery of Munster, 1949*
89. Rev. H. Ritchie was also last resident Methodist Minister of Clonmel, June 1930 – June 1932
90. *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, 1950-62*
91. *Ibid*, 1963-74
92. Ironically, the address of Mr. Preston during his work was at Airmount, Clonmel, in a house adjoining the old Orr family residence of 1833 to 1920.
93. In charge of the congregations of Clonmel and Tipperary with Cahir, while also Minister of Limerick, during the vacancy of 1946-49
94. In charge of the congregations of Fermoy with Cahir, while also Minister of Trinity Church, Cork, and Aghada, during the vacancy of 1981-84