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The 1832 Clergy Relief Fund for Co. Tipperary

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Introduction

Tithes were a land tax imposed by the Irish Anglican Church on land occupiers, regardless of their religious persuasion from the sixteenth to the early nineteenth century. They provided the principal means of income for the Anglican parochial clergy throughout the country and were usually collected twice a year in May and November. Due to a 1735 Irish Parliamentary Resolution, grassland was exempted from the payment of tithes, which meant that the large estates of the gentry escaped the tithe net. Thereafter, tithe imposition was confined to tillage crops of wheat and barley although it was also exacted on potato lands in Munster and Leinster. Most of Ireland's population was dependent on land for its livelihood and on potatoes for diet, but the imposition of tithes affected the lower strands of Irish society such as small tenant farmers, cottiers and labourers to a disproportionate degree.

By 1830, tithes contributed over 60 per cent of the Anglican Church's annual income of one million pounds, making it Ireland's wealthiest Church at that time. Yet, it ministered to a minority of 800,000 people approximately from a total population of nearly eight million.¹ Although the 1823 and 1824 Tithe Acts had recommended setting a fixed tithe composition amount for each parish and removing the exemption on grassland, tithe agitation continued sporadically throughout that decade. Furthermore, the 1820s Protestant Crusade had greatly embittered interdenominational relations, while the granting of Catholic Emancipation in 1829 had raised Catholic expectations of improvement of their lot. Finally, the Tithe War was ignited in October 1830, in the midst of an agricultural slump, by a clerical standoff over tithe payment between Fr. Doyle and Rev. Alcock of Graiguenamanagh, Co. Kilkenny

Tithe resistance in the dual format of agrarian outrage and political agitation spread like wildfire throughout Leinster and Munster in the following year. Threatening notices and violent intimidation of proctors, tithe agents and clergymen became commonplace in counties such as Tipperary where Whiteboy activity was already epidemic. Tithes were withheld from the Established clergy in an ever increasing number of parishes. Roman Catholic Bishop Doyle of Leighlin and Archbishop McHale of Tuam attempted to persuade tithe payers to use only passive resistance tactics against the paying of 'an unjust tax'. Such tactics included the refusal to pay tithes, the keeping of cattle in barns in daylight hours (and thus safe from seizure), the 'shunning' of clergymen and their families and the rescuing of cattle seized or distrained for tithe arrears. Such methods of resistance effectively prevented the clergy from legally recovering their tithe incomes, reducing many of them to financial hardship. Rents were also withheld in counties Kildare and Tipperary. Attempts by the clergy to distrain for tithe arrears often resulted in 'tithe slaughters' such as Newtownbarry (Bunclody), Co. Wexford where fourteen people died in June 1831. Finally, the slaughter of twelve policemen and the tithe processor at Carrickoshock, Co. Kilkenny in December 1831 convinced many clergy to abandon distraining for tithe arrears



The Civil Parishes of
Co. Tipperary

Clergy Relief Fund
parishes are shaded

and appeal to the government for financial help. Both Rev. Robert Shaw of Kilmurray & Kilsheelan parishes and Rev. Henry Perry of Tullaghorton parish stated in their memorials below that the 'unhappy business' at Carrickshock deterred them 'to risqué the lives of Police and Process Servers afterwards'.² Within weeks after the Carrickshock tithe affray, two Parliamentary Tithe Inquiries were set up, resulting in the 1832 Clergy Relief Act and Tithe Act.

Politically, the Tithe War was a mostly a grassroots movement, having no main co-ordinating centre or leader although Daniel O'Connell, shrewdly linked the tithe issue to his political objective of Repeal of the Union. Great anti-tithe meetings were held around the country in mid-1832, leading to the highly publicised Tithe Trials and imprisonment of the so-called Tithe Martyrs in counties Cork, Kerry, Dublin and Tipperary that October. It is interesting to note that future Young Irelanders such as Michael Doheny and John O'Mahony of Kilbeheny cut their political teeth, so to speak, on the tithe issue. Doheny was imprisoned in Clonmel Gaol as one of the Tipperary Tithe Martyrs in late 1832. By now, refusal to pay tithes had extended from the south Leinster counties to all Leinster, Munster and Connacht.³

The British Parliament attempted to deal with the vexed question of Irish tithes via Parliamentary Tithe Inquiries, Parliamentary Reports and Tithe Acts in 1832, against a background of increasing tithe related bloodshed. Irish secretary, Lord Stanley, drew up a Coercion Act in February 1833, to counteract both tithe agitation and increased agrarian violence. The same year also saw radical reform of the Irish Anglican Church by the passing of the Church Temporalities Act, which included the suppression of the Archdiocese of Cashel.⁴ Such reform prefaced the 1869 dis-establishment Act of the Irish Church. After three failed tithe bills, tithes were converted into a much reduced rent-charge tax in 1838, formally ending the Tithe War.

Background to the 1832 Clergy Relief Fund

Two parliamentary Select Committees on Tithes in Ireland sat for the first three months of 1832, resulting in both the Clergy Relief Act and Tithe Act later that year. The Commons' First Report on Tithes in Ireland stated that many clergy were now:

reduced to a state of deepest pecuniary distress; and that more especially in the Dioceses of Ossory and Leighlin and that in Cashel [Diocese], several Clergymen with large nominal incomes, are actual want of the ordinary comforts of life.⁵

The Lords' First Report on 13 March 1832 estimated the 1831 tithe arrears of the Cashel & Emly Diocese to be £27,687.⁶ Both Reports advocated immediate financial relief for the Irish clergy for tithes 'illegally withheld'⁷ and the 'absolute necessity of extensive change' of the Irish tithe system.⁸ On 1 June 1832, the Clergy Relief Tithe Act (also called the Attorney-General's Act) was passed into law by Lord Grey's government, giving £60,000 to the Irish parsons, many of whom were without income for months. The Act excluded the numerous lay-tithe owners, who also had not received their tithes. Two thirds of the clergyman's 1831 tithe arrears could be claimed under the Act, having an upper limit of £500. However, the clergy were to repay this money over a set period of years.⁹ In return, the Irish clergy surrendered their 1831 tithe arrears to the government, which determined to collect such arrears itself.¹⁰ The *Limerick Chronicle* and the *Tipperary Free Press* carried notices for the Clergy Relief Fund and completed memorials had to be returned by 7 July 1832 to Dublin Castle.¹¹

O'Connell denounced the Clergy Relief Tithe Act, calling Irish Lord Lieutenant, the Marquis of Anglesey, the 'Tithe-Proctor-General of all Ireland'. He toured all over the country, encouraging his countrymen to persist in non-payment of tithes.¹² However, the policy of making the government the major tithe-holder in Ireland was fatally flawed as it brought the Dublin Castle administration into direct conflict with the peasantry.¹³ Approximately 43,000 decrees were issued to distrain or seize for tithe arrears in 1832-33, with sieges laid to mud cabins in attempts to seize livestock. However, only £12,000 was collected by the administration while the cost of implementing this policy stood at £28,000.¹⁴ Eventually, the government wrote off all 1831 tithe arrears, the 1832 Clergy Relief Fund and the subsequent 1833 Million Pound Fund.

The 1832 Clergy Relief Fund

The 1832 Clerical Relief Fund papers survive for a number of counties including Louth, Wexford, Meath, Kilkenny, Cork, Limerick, Waterford and Tipperary. Each application contains the Rector's memorial and a schedule of tithe defaulters in the parish or union. The memorial details the attempts made to retrieve tithe arrears while the accompanying schedule lists tithe defaulters' names, occupations, townland addresses and tithes arrears. Each application gives a snapshot of tithe agitation at parish/union level for 1831-1832. In all, 29,027 tithe defaulters are listed in 232 civil parishes across the whole country. The greatest number of tithe defaulters listed is for Co. Kilkenny (10,263 names), followed closely by Co. Tipperary with 9,346 names.

Co. Tipperary's lists of tithe defaulters can be compared with the 1820s Tithe Applotment Books for genealogical purposes. These two sources complement each other, giving a fuller account of land occupiers in each civil parish. While the Tithe Applotment Books list mostly small tenant farmers, the tithe defaulters lists also include names of gentry in some parishes, indicating how tithe opposition had crossed the social divide. The Thurles memorial is typical of the social composition of Tipperary's tithe defaulters. Archdeacon Cotton wrote that tithe resistance in Thurles Union 'had been most systematic, long-continued and desperate, even to bloodshed', a reference to the 1831 Leugh tithe murder.¹⁵ Tithe defaulters included noted O'Connellite attorney and farmer John Cahill¹⁶ from Bohermara (£5 16s), John Cormack Esq. of Clongour (£6 5s) and even the Franciscan Friars (£1), Thomas Hunt, a Bailiff of the Glebe (possibly his own bailiff) owned him 8s and tenant farmers at Stradovoher, of whom Denis Spalane (5d) and Mary Hogan (9d) were among the lowest tithe defaulters in Thurles.¹⁷ Despite his huge arrears of £764 out of £900 tithe amount for the union, Cotton was only awarded £240 from the Clergy Relief Fund.¹⁸ Likewise, Nenagh and Knigh tithe defaulters list also includes gentlemen such as Mr. Edward Lee of Castle St., Nenagh who owed 1s 7½d and Richard Power Esq., Munroe, Nenagh who owed 5s 5d.¹⁹

Tithe defaulters for the Bansha, Donohill & Greystown Union included both local magistrates Edmund Ryan Esq. of Bansha Castle (£7 6s) and James Archer Butler Esq. of Aherlow Castle (£3 10s). Both Rev. Trevor Lloyld Ashe, (a catholic convert of the Ashes of Ashgrove) and renowned Bansha poet Darby O'Ryan owned £12 and £1 respectively. Tithes arrears also ranged across the social divide in Donohill parish. Landlord James Scully Esq. owned 11s and small farmers Darby Higgins and John Ryan of Philipstown had tithe arrears of 10½ d and 17½ d respectively.²⁰

Rev. William Galwey of Templechally & Kilmastulla Union detailed the typical escalation of tithe resistance. He stated that tithe payments had 'completely stopped' in January 1832, 'after several promises and excuses' by the parishioners. Therefore, he distrained cattle in lieu of his arrears and 'almost as often as this measure was adopted, they were rescued'. Drivers were

then intimidated by death threats and so they refused to distrain for cattle anymore.²¹ Rev. Thompson of Fernor also had distrained or seized cattle rescued because as he complained 'no military party had accompanied the distraining party'. Eventually, when one cow was seized, none would bid at the subsequent tithe sale.²² Finally, Rev. Robert Shaw of Kilmurray & Kilsheelan Union revealed that even the magistrates were reluctant to support the clergy to recover tithe arrears. Tithe cases for his union were dismissed in October 1831 when the summoning magistrate did not even attend the court. Indeed, the people used the occasion to declare that they would not 'never pay a shilling of tythes, that they would give every opposition to distrain'.²³

The financial hardship of the rectors as a direct result of non-payment of tithes was highlighted by Rev. Galwey who stated that he had 'received hardly any money of late' and was 'very materially distressed, having a large family to support'.²⁴ Even worse was the financial situation of Rev. Edward Close of Tullamain & Red City Union who pleaded that his application would be successful as:

having a family of nine children and his means but small; and for the last year and a half [having] being deprived of his income, of course being heavily in debt – which circumstances he hopes will be kindly taken into consideration.²⁵

It is also evident that tithe agitation prevailed in both compounded and non-compounded parishes.²⁶ By early 1832, sixty-three per cent of the civil parishes in Munster were compounded. These parishes had a lower tithe rate of four to six pence per acre in contrast to a high rate of eight to the shillings per acre in non-compounded parishes.²⁷ As a result, violence was more prevalent in non-compounded parishes such as Golden and Thurles which both saw a loss of life. Just over twenty per cent of the parishes listed in the Co. Tipperary Clergy Relief Fund are non-compounded parishes. They include Kilvemmon, Derrygrath, Pepperdstown, Thurles, Rathjordan, Kiltegan, Kilmurray & Kilsheelan, Tubrid, Whitechurch & Ballybacon.

Forms for fifty-four civil parishes survive for Co. Tipperary, of which the majority (thirty-four) are in south Tipperary. The accompanying map of Co. Tipperary shows the location of these civil parishes, although many are grouped into their respective unions, reducing the number of Rectors' memorials to thirty-one. The civil parish unit was used by the Church of Ireland, and by the British administration until 1922, for all official records, including the Tithe Applotment Books, the 1901 & 1911 Census and the Clergy Relief Fund. The approximate corresponding Roman Catholic parish is given with each civil parish below, bearing in mind that the civil parish usually covers a smaller area and that its parish boundaries pre-date Roman Catholic ones.

Interestingly, nearly all the parish forms from Archbishop Laurence of Cashel's relations survive, including applications from his son-in-law Archdeacon Cotton of Thurles and his nephews Rev. Banner of Donohill, Bansha & Greystown Union and Rev. Madder of Ballybrood, Kiltely, Aghlishcormack & Inch Laurence Union respectively. No claim survives from his other nephew Rev. French Laurence of Littleton. Summaries of the Rectors' memorials listed below are arranged into the four dioceses of the county: Cashel; Emly; Killaloe and Lismore. Four applications survive for the diocese of Emly, of which only one Templechally & Kilmastulla Union is in the county. The other three remaining memorials in the Emly Diocese are: Ballybrood, Kiltely, Aghlishcormack & Inch Laurence Union, Grean Parish and Rathjordan Parish.

The original documents of the Clergy Relief Fund are held in the National Archives and are arranged according to diocese. A complete typed listing of all Rectors' memorials and Tithe

Defaulters for Co. Tipperary by Stephen McCormac is available in the National Library, the National Archives and the Local Studies Dept. at Thurles Library.

The 1832 Clergy Relief Fund

Cashel Diocese

- 1) *Brickendown Parish*. Compounded. (RC Parish – Cashel)
Rector: Rev. William Lee.
Tithes: Collected £64 12s 3d. Tithe Arrears: £35 14s 2½d
1830-31: Tithes collected without difficulty.
Statement summary: A Mr. John White of Cashel was the Tithe Collector in the parish who had collected tithe composition without difficulty until 1831 when several parishioners refused to pay despite repeated requests. No distraining or seizure was made for any tithes arrears as drivers had been intimidated 'by various menaces'. Afterwards, Mr. White quit his position as Tithe Agent to Rev. Lee's 'great alarm'. Since that time, Rev. Lee has not attempted to collect any tithes for fear of causing bloodshed.²⁸
- 2) *Bansha, Donohill & Greystown Union*. Compounded.
(RC Parishes – Same & Killenaule)
Rector: Rev. Benjamin Holford Banner. Resident in Bansha.
Tithes: Bansha parish £105 19s 3¼d.
Tithes: Donohill parish £300 12s 4d, of which £200 went to a lay tithe owner, Mr. W. Ryan.²⁹
Tithes: Greystown parish £101 1s 3d. Total Tithes : £675 12s 4d.
Total Tithe Arrears: £309 7s 8½ d. Arrears due for 1829 and 1830 as well as 1831.
Statement summary: Repeated applications for tithes due were made through the tithe agents to each individual. No 'coercive measures' were taken due to 'almost universal opposition' in the diocese and 'the unpleasant results' observed in other parishes. Anti-tithe meetings were held in the Union and threatening notices were posted up, implying utmost resistance to tithe collection. Rev. Trevor Lloyd Ashe, a Roman Catholic curate of Ashgrove and Edmond O Riain Esq. (possibly Darby Ryan the poet) were listed as tithe defaulters.³⁰
- 3) *Clogher, Moycarkey, Dovea and Inch Union*. Compounded.
(RC Parishes – Part of Clonoulty & Inch)
Rector: Rev. William Armstrong.
Tithes: £451 7s 7½ d. Tithe Arrears: £411 1s 6½d.
Statement summary: In November 1831, his agents went to collect the tithes. They observed that 'a dread and apprehension' in the parishioners who feared injury if they paid tithes. By the end of 1831, no money at all was received from Moycarky and only £7 7s 3d from Clogher and £32 14s 10d. from the Inch and Dovea parishes.³¹
- 4) *Erry and Ballysheehan Union*. Compounded. (RC parish – Boherlahan)
Rector: Rev. Jonas Poole³². Non-resident in parish but resided in Cashel.
Tithes: £227 1s. Tithe Arrears: £173 3s 8d.
Statement summary: The Tithe Agent applied to several parishioners for tithes, as did the rector himself. All parishioners refused to pay with 'the exception of eight persons in the two

parishes'. The rector was given to understand that if he resorted to force to recover his tithes, bloodshed would ensue. Therefore, he decided that he

would avail of the measures recommenced by His Majesty in the hope that effectual relief would be extended to him as to the other clergy who are suffering from the same cause.³³

5) *Fennor Parish*. Compounded. (RC parish – Gortnahoe)

Rector: Rev. Mungo Noble Thompson. Resident in parish.

Tithes: £489 4s 7½d. Tithe Arrears: £308 6s 3d.

Statement summary: He had made 'several attempts' to distrain but the cattle had been rescued each time as no military party had accompanied the distraining parties. Eventually, one cow was seized. The parish priest Fr. Meagher, 'ordered' every land occupier to attend the subsequent tithe sale on 5 December 1831. Although a great crowd had gathered, none 'would bid a farthing for the cow observing passive resistance'. Three bids had to be made to make the sale valid and so the rector was forced to ask the attending magistrate, (W. Ponsonby of Kilcooly Abbey), to bid. The rector's own servant and his son were the other two bidders before he was forced to return the cow home. Eventually, he sent the cow 'off by night some time after to a fair and sold her'. Meanwhile, 'the full value of the cow was made up by subscription at the pound to indemnify the owner'. The rector had already sent in a report to Lord Stanley at Dublin Castle immediately after 'the alarming resistance' of this incident.³⁴

6) *Hore Abbey Parish*. Compounded. (RC Parish – Cashel)

Rector: Rev. William Henry Bagnell. Resident in the adjacent parish of Cashel.

Tithes: £166 3s 1d. Tithe Arrears: £100 1s 11d.

Statement summary: His income was greatly 'reduced due to the general combination against tithes and tithes arrears 'in this part of Ireland'. No further details were given.³⁵

7) *Kilcooly Parish*. Compounded. (RC parish – Gortnahoe)

Rector: Rev. Edward Pepper. Resident in parish.

Tithes: £507 13s 10d. Tithe Arrears: £389 16s 5d.

Statement summary: Tithe arrears:

had not accumulated by neglect on his part. No person from the highest to the lowest would admit ... the agent into his house, ... in consequence of threatening notices posted up everywhere denouncing anyone who would ... pay any tithe. With the fear of death before his eyes ... the agent resigned his office.

No other person could be found to attempt to collect the tithes since that time.³⁶

8) *Kilfithmone, Killoskehane and Barnane Union*. Compounded.

(RC parishes – Drom & Inch)

Rector: Rev. Robert Forsayeth. Resident in the Glebe House of Borrisoleagh.

Tithes: £315. Tithe Arrears: £147 10s 3½d.

Statement summary: The rector had made 'repeated applications for tithes to parishioners named in the accompanying schedule. They had refused payment, saying that they 'would pay no longer'. Noting the impossibility of enforcing payment by tithe sales 'in adjoining parishes', he was 'reluctantly obliged from threats to desist'.³⁷

- 9) *Kilvemnon Parish*. Non-compounded. (RC parish – Mullinahone)
 Rector: Rev. Edward Labarte.
 1831 Tithes: £757 6s. Tithe Arrears: £687 15s 8½d.
Statement summary: Tithe resistance commenced in Kilvemnon in August 1830 when only half of the parish tithes were collected that year. His custom had been 'in the habit of indulging his poorer parishioners by requiring the tithes of one year when two years were due'. Since 'the combination against the payment of tithe commenced in this parish in August 1830', he was 'not able to collect more than half of his income of that year'. Parishioners usually paid tithes in the last week of November. However, by November 1831, parishioners refused to pay as a result of threatening notices that those who paid would have their houses put on fire. 'On seeing such a determined combination, [he] did not wish to take legal steps on which account so heavy an arrear remains due'.³⁸
- 10) *Pepperdstown Parish*. Non-compounded. (RC parish – Fethard)
 Rector: Rev Henry Woodward. Resident in Fethard.
 Tithes: £263 2s 9d. Tithe Arrears: £239 19s 9d.
Statement summary: 1830 saw a Public meeting against Easter Monday court-case for tithe arrears in Fethard. He had been
 informed by letters from Sir William Gosset (Under-secretary at Dublin Castle) that a force fully sufficient for his protection were he to resort to compulsory measures [for distraining] would be granted, was nevertheless afraid to avail himself of that aid.
 He believed that 'a systemic combination against the payment of tithe was formed in the union of Fethard of which Pepperdstown is a part', citing that 'public exhortations' against tithe payment were given in the Roman Catholic chapel. He also stated that the few parishioners who did pay 'requested that their names be concealed'.³⁹
- 11) *Lismolin, Crohane, Mowry, and Modeshill Union*. Compounded.
 (RC parishes – Ballygarry, Killenaule & Moyglass)
 Rector: Rev. Henry Cotton. Lived in Thurles and Dublin.
 Tithes: £1047 3s 4d. Tithe Arrears £709 17s 7d.
Statement summary: Until autumn 1831, tithes had been paid 'with tolerable regularity' in the union. Immediately after the Kilkenny tithe disturbances, 'the spirit of resistance had spread over the union'. A large anti-tithe meeting took place in the neighbouring parish of Drangan. On calling a meeting, he 'found no one in attendance; but instead a Notice for the parishioners to pay no tithes until after the meeting of Parliament'. From that time, he 'received not one shilling' despite the collector making both public and private applications to parishioners. Many persons declared themselves willing to pay but are afraid to do so due to intimidation.⁴⁰
- 12) *Rahelty, Shyane and Athnitt Parishes*. Compounded. (RC parish – Thurles)
 Rector: Rev. Henry Cotton. Resident in Thurles and Dublin.
 Tithes: £162 3s 6d. Tithe Arrears: £157 19s 7d.
Statement Summary: Opposition had spread from Thurles to this part of the union. Most parishioners declined to pay, some declared a willingness to pay but
 were afraid of personal harm if they should pay: others confidently asserting that they knew that the tithes were henceforth to be abolished, they never would pay one shilling.

The collector declined to distrain for tithes, having witnessed 'the disastrous consequences which have resulted from such attempts', refusing 'to hazard his safety and his men'.⁴¹

- 13) *Thurles Union*. Non-Compounded. (RC parish – Thurles)
Rector: Rev. Henry Cotton. Resident in Thurles and Dublin.
Tithes: £900 Tithe Arrears: £765 15s 2d.
Arrears, prior to 1831 amount to several hundred pounds.
Statement summary: 'In this parish resistance had been most systematic, long-continued and desperate, even to bloodshed' (a reference to the 1831 Leugh Tithe Affray where one woman, Catherine Maher was killed). After this incident, 'no persons could be got to continue the remainder of the valuation'. He had affidavits showing the 1831 valuations (of £900) 'to be both imperfect and false' as the valuers were prevented from making a fair valuation. In contrast, the higher tithe valuation of £1004 for the union taken the previous year was 'fair and just'. Finally, 'with great difficulty and under constant guard by the police', one hundred processes were served for tithes, but so great was the intimidation at the Thurles Quarter Sessions, 'that even my attorney refused to bring them forward and declined having anything to do with the tithes'.⁴²
- 13) *Tullamain and Red City Union*. Compounded. (RC parish – Fethard)
Rector: Rev. Edward Close.
Tithes: £236 Tithe arrears: £76 1s 2½d.
Statement summary: Parishioners refuse to pay tithes. The rector did not use harsh measures that would have been ineffective, as no person would purchase any tithe seized, 'given the disturbed state of the country'. He states that
- having a family of nine children and his means but small, and for the last year and a half being deprived of his income, of course being heavily in debt – which circumstances he hopes will be kindly taken into consideration.⁴³

Emly Diocese

- 14) *Templechally and Kilmastulla Union*. Compounded. (RC parish – Ballina)
Rector: Rev. William Galwey
Tithe: £724 12s 3d. Tithe Arrears: £293 5s 11¾d.
Statement summary: Tithe payments had 'completely stopped' in January 1832, 'after several promises and excuses' by the parishioners. Therefore, he distrained for cattle and 'almost as often as this measure was adopted, they were rescued'. Drivers were then intimidated by death threats and so they refused to distrain for cattle anymore. The determination not to pay arose from 'the general spirit of the times and more particularly from a Mr. Henry Going of Cranna'.⁴⁴ This gentleman 'had convened a meeting in Kilmastulla parish under the pretext that there would be a considerable abatement of tithe composition' in the parish where he had his land and residence. The rector had received 'hardly any money of late' and was 'very materially distressed, having a large family to support'.⁴⁵

Killaloe Diocese

- 14) *Bourney and Burreesnafarney Union* (partly in King's County). Compounded.
(RC parishes – Bourney)
Vicar and Rector: Rev. William Reynell Gresson.
Tithes: £382 8s 6d. Tithe Arrears: £190 6s 1½d.

Statement summary: Repeated applications for tithes had proved 'useless, owing to a widespread system of combination which extends from Queen's County and other parts of Tipperary into these parishes'. Threatening notices were posted on chapel doors threatening 'destruction and death' to the parishioners who paid tithes. A driver was also threatened. When the agent distrained on one occasion, a magistrate granted a 'Replevin Summons' which 'greatly increased the spirit of opposition' in the same parish. The rector also believed that the actions of the magistrates at the Roscrea Petty Sessions had increased opposition to the paying of Church Cess (another church tax) in the parish. Intimidation was now so great that 'the life of any person who dared to enforce tithe collection would have fallen a sacrifice'.⁴⁶

16) *Nenagh and Knigh Union*. Compounded. (RC parish – Nenagh)

Rector: Rev. James Hill Poe. Resident in Nenagh.

Tithe: £635 4s. Tithe Arrears: £147 15s 3d.

Statement summary: Distraining for tithes had proved ineffective on two occasions. When animals were successfully distrained (seized), 'the auctioneer refused to sell on the grounds he could not get bidders and from fear of personal injury.' On another occasion, the distraining party 'were violently driven off and obliged to flee for their lives'. He believed that had he attempted to enforce payment by a tithe sale, he believed that bloodshed would have ensued as had happened previously in Cork, Carlow and Limerick (the latter possibly refers to the Bilboa Tithe Sale in April 1832). When distrained cattle from another parish were brought into Nenagh, such was the level of intimidation that the cattle 'had to be given up to their owners'. Finally, he volunteers 'additional information can be detailed if necessary and verified by affidavits' from his agents.⁴⁷

17) *Union of Castletownarra, Youghalarra & Burgessbeg*. Compounded.

(RC parishes – Portroe, Youghalarra & Burgess)

Rector: Rev. Robert Gabbett of Castletown Glebe

Tithes: £997 16s 11d. Tithe Arrears: £405 15s 4d.

Statement summary: Resistance and outright refusal to pay tithes have been present in the parish for the past eight months (since November 1831). In February 1832, notices were posted up on the chapel door and 'on one of the turnpike gates threatening death and destruction on anyone' that would dare pay tithes. Printed hand notices were also circulated. Despite the magistrates at the local Petty Sessions offering a reward for information as the writer of these notices, no information was obtained.

Despite these notices, the agent and his drivers seized some cattle for tithes, some of which were rescued by their owners. Threats were made that the remaining cattle 'should be branded as for Tithes' to deter purchasers. The rector held a meeting with the local magistrates and decided to defer the subsequent tithe sale as 'some very unpleasant circumstances might occur . . . and . . . not to proceed further' until the passing of the [tithe] Bill by the House of Commons and to apply for general financial assistance.⁴⁸

Lismore Diocese

18) *Clonmel Parish*. Compounded. (RC parish – Clonmel)

Rector: Rev. Daniel Henry Wall

Tithes: £300 Tithe Arrears: £210 1s 8d.

Statement summary: No attempts have been made to recover tithes other than repeated applications on tithe payers which had proved ineffective, owing to resistance. Neither had the rector resorted to the distraining owing to the consequences in other parishes from this course of action. His tithe collector

had been threatened by a notice posted on the door of a neighbouring chapel, if he should take steps directed by law for the recovery of sums due to the Me moralist, and the said collector would have been afraid to distrain the lands, if he had been directed to do so.⁴⁹

19) *Derrygrath Parish.* Status: Non-compounded. (RC parish – St. Mary’s, Clonmel)

Rector: Rev. Sackville Gardiner Bourke

Tithes: £92 Tithe Arrears: £71 14s 10d.

Statement summary: His tithe collector informed him in January 1832 that the parishioners had refused to pay tithes to the agent anymore. The rector then contacted each parishioner personally. All promised that they would pay tithes by the end of February or the beginning of March. However, by mid-June, the date of the submission for this statement, he has ‘not received a farthing’.⁵⁰

20) *Donoughmore Parish.* Compounded. (RC parish – part of Killusty / Powerstown)

Rector: Rev. Robert Carey. Resident in parish.

Parish Tithes: £138 9s 2d. Tithe Arrears: £123 7s 5d.

Statement summary: The rector had

taken no other proceedings for the recovery of the tithe of the year 1831 than sending a confidential person to demand the same. No violence or insult was encountered but his repeated demands have with a very few exceptions been disregarded.

If distraining for tithes had been made, probably no ‘serious resistance in the first instance is offered’. However, should he have gone ahead with a tithe sale, ‘serious opposition’ to further distraining would be offered. The rector had also been warned by a well-meaning individual (not named) that if he distrained, he would have to ‘abandon his residence in the country and... the duties of his parish’.⁵¹

21) *Kiltegan Parish.* Non-compounded. (RC parish – St. Mary’s, Clonmel)

Rector: Rev. Robert Carney. Also rector for Donaghmore.

Tithes: £98 7s 9d. Tithe Arrears: £70 7s 9d.

Statement summary: He stated that he and his family would be in danger if he distrained for tithes as

his residence is situated in a remote part of the county and that he received intimation from a person well acquainted with the feelings of the peasantry and in whom he has reason to place every confidence.⁵²

22) *Innislonagh & Monksland Parishes.* Compounded. (RC parish – Powerstown)

Rector: Rev. Richard Maunsell

Tithes: £596 19s 3½d. Tithe Arrears: £250 4s 8d.

Statement summary: The tithe agent, Mr Thomas Slattery had ‘repeatedly demanded’ tithe in person’ without success. Threatening letters and notices were also posted up around the parish. He believed that one notice is believed that the police took down one notice and sent it to the Government [i.e. Dublin Castle].⁵³

- 23) *Kilmurray & Kilsheelan Parishes*. Non-compounded. (RC parish – Kilsheelan)
 Rector: Rev. Robert Shaw.
 Tithes: £836 1s 8d. Tithe Arrears: £254 2s 11d.
Statement summary: Court summons were served on many parishioners in October 1831 but the summoning magistrate did not attend, these cases were dismissed. The people used that occasion in court to declare that they would not 'never pay a shilling of tythes, that they would give every opposition to distrain' and appointed to hold a meeting to form resolutions for tithe residence.
 That meeting was held and 'determined resolutions' for tithe residence were formed. As the rector was preparing to issue other court summons,
 the unhappy business of Carrickoshock⁵⁴ took place within five or six miles of the parish and the spirit exacted by this and the terror induced was such that no tithe processor would or could go out without a large military force . . . which would greatly widen the spirit of disturbance and induce riot and bloodshed.
- Since that time, meetings have been held 'almost every week' in the parish where 'violent resolutions' are formed and threats issued against those who would pay tithes, resulting in 'a complete system of terror which makes it impossible to get a shilling of tythes'.⁵⁵
- 24) *Outragh and Mortlestown Parishes*. Compounded. (RC parish – Knockgraffon)
 Rector : Rev. William Hughes.
 Tithe: £242 3s 8d. Tithe Arrears: £212 19s 1d.
Statement summary: His tithe collector, Mr. John Cusack of Cahir, made repeated applications for tithe arrears to no avail. The rector 'himself applied personally to many of these individuals – to others by letters but in vain'. He then applied to the Court of the Exchequer for subpoenas to be served on Mrs. Margaret Doherty and John Doherty Esq. However, he did not follow up these proceedings as 'threatening notices' were put up around Cahir town and a large anti-tithe meeting was held. Above all, the murder of Rev. Whitty 'in his immediate neighbourhood had deterred him from pursuing his tithes'. Hence, the rector
 resolved to seek redress from His Majesty's Government hoping to take into consideration as that an individual totally deprived of the means of respectable support for himself and his family and submitting to great privations rather than risk the peace of the Country by any attempt to enforce payment of his lawful claims.⁵⁶
- 25) *Rathronan parish*. Compounded. (RC parish – Powerstown)
 Vicar: Rev. Walter Giles.
 Tithes: £92 6s 4½d. Tithe Arrears: £35 12s 4½d.
Statement summary: He had
 appointed a Receiver to collect his tithes who acted until December 1831 'when he declined all further interference with the parishioners having received threatening notices to desist collecting any more tithes.
- The rector then applied in person but was refused outrightly by some parishioners while others told him 'when all were paying they would pay but not until then'. He did not 'consider it justifiable in him to distress this hitherto peaceable neighbourhood' when he understood that the Government would 'relieve' financially distressed clergy.⁵⁷

- 26) *Tullamalan Parish*. Compounded. (RC parish – Ardfinnan)
 Vicar: Rev. Charles Hickey.
 Tithes: £206 5s 4½d. Tithe Arrears: £35 2s ½d.
Statement summary: ‘Repeated’ demands for tithes were made in vain due to the ‘systematic combinations and resistance to tythes across the country’. He did not proceed ‘to enforce payment lest Death to those employed might have been the consequence’.⁵⁸
- 27) *Shanrahan Parish*. Compounded. (RC parish – Clogheen)
 Vicar: Rev. Charles Hickey.
 Tithe: £250 Tithe Arrears: £136 12s 9d.
 Statement reads: ‘As for Tullamalan Parish’.⁵⁹
- 28) *Newcastle parish*. Compounded. (RC parish – Newcastle)
 Rector: Rev. Charles Hickey.
 Tithes: £140 Tithe Arrears: £86 9s 7d.
 Statement: reads ‘As for Tullamain Parish’.⁶⁰
- 29) *Tubrid, Whitechurch & Ballybacon Parishes*. Non-compounded.
 (RC parishes – Ballylooby & Ardfinnan)
 Vicar: Rev. Henry Palmer.
 Tithes: £569 7s 1d. Tithe Arrears: £263 13s 7½d.
Statement summary: His tithe agent had made repeated demands for tithes in the parishes to no avail. He had distrained cattle which had been rescued by parishioners. He then proceeded to the Petty Sessions and the Quarter Sessions to obtain court decrees against the defaulters but no tithe sale followed. The local Magistrates also advised him ‘to avoid collision’ [i.e. bloodshed] with the peasantry:
 Threatening declarations have been made and alarming messages sent to the Vicar, his Tithe Agent & Assistant: the latter’s house was entered by four armed men and he was warned to avoid having anything to do with the collection of Tithe in the future or assisting in the managing thereof. Doctor Doyle’s pamphlets [i.e. the 1831 letters of Catholic Bishop Doyle of Leighlin] have been circulated throughout the Union that have tended much to excite opposition and point out the mode of effective resistance.
 An anti-tithe meeting had also been held. He ended his statement with an appeal to the Government to “charitably step forward and aid him financially or otherwise, he and his large family must continue without any means of support”.⁶¹
- 30) *Tullaghorton Parish*.⁶² Compounded. (RC parish – Ballylooby)
 Rector: Rev. Henry Perry.
 Tithe: £250 Tithe Arrears: £125 1s 5d.
Statement summary: He took court proceedings by ‘Civil Bill’ against several parishioners but ‘no persons could be found to bid for the distress’ [bid for distrained cattle at a tithe sale]. The ‘melancholy termination of affair at Carrickoshock’ further deterred him ‘to risqué the lives of Police and Process Servers afterwards’.⁶³

Notes

- 1 Gearoid O'Tuathaigh, *Ireland before the Famine 1798-1848* (Dublin, 1972) p. 172..
- 2 The Carrickoshock tithe slaughter in December 1831 saw the deaths of twelve policemen in a tithe affray and led to the establishment of the Select Committee Inquiry of Tithes in Ireland in Spring 1832..
- 3 Patrick O'Donoghue, 'Opposition to Tithe payments 1832-33' in *Studia Hibernica 12* (Dublin 1972) p. 81.
- 4 Galen Broeker, *Rural Disorder and Police Reform 1812-1836* (London, 1970), p. 213.
- 5 *Select Committee of Tithes in Ireland*, British Parliamentary Papers 1831-1832 (cited hereafter as *Tithe Inquiry*), Vol. XX11 (271) First Report of Commons p. 3.
- 6 *Tithe Inquiry*, Vol. XX1 (271) First Report of Lords p. 3.
- 7 *Tithe Inquiry*, Vol. XX1 (271) First Report of Lords p. 4.
- 8 *Tithe Inquiry*, Vol. XX11 (271) First Report of Commons p. 4.
- 9 *Clonmel Advertiser* 11 April 1832.
- 10 2 William 1V, c.41.
- 11 *Limerick Chronicle* 27 June 1832.
- 12 Broeker, *Rural Disorder*, p. 213.
- 13 Alan Akenson, *The Church of Ireland 1991-1991* (Dublin, 1997) p. 156.
- 14 Broeker, *Rural Disorder*, p. 213.
- 15 CSORP 1832 OPMA Clergy Relief Fund 156/2/46 .
- 16 Donal A. Murphy, *The Two Tipperarys*, (Nenagh, 1994) p. 81. John Cahill (1805-1850) was the eldest son of Cornelius & Margaret Cahill, of Rathleasy, Thurles and appointed as Crown Solicitor from 1835-1841 by the Whig government. .
- 17 CSORP 1832 OPMA Clergy Relief Fund 156/2/46 .
- 18 Henry Cotton, *Letter to Unknown*, 31 January 1835 (St Mary's Archives, Thurles).
- 19 CSORP OPMA 1832 Tithe Papers Clergy Relief Fund 156/2/47.
- 20 CSORP OPMA 1832 Tithe Papers Clergy Relief Fund, 156/2/49.
- 21 CSORP OPMA 1832 Clergy Relief Fund 165/2/69.
- 22 CSORP OPMA 1832 Tithe Papers Clergy Relief Fund, 156/2/25.
- 23 CSORP OPMA 1832 Clergy Relief Fund 156/2/44.
- 24 CSORP OPMA 1832 Clergy Relief Fund 165/2/69.
- 25 CSORP OPMA 1832 Clergy Relief Fund 165/2/40.
- 26 A compounded parish had a fixed tithe rate under the 1823 and 1824 Tithe Acts. These acts allowed tithe to be demanded on grassland, which had previously been exempt and thus extended the tithe net to the large landowners. However, tithe composition was not compulsory which had led to different tithe rates being struck in neighbouring parishes, further fuelling tithe resistance.
- 27 *Tithe Inquiry*, Vol. XX11, p.22 Fitzgerald.
- 28 CSORP OPMA 1832 Clergy Relief Fund 156/2/32.
- 29 Some tithes were paid to non-clergy called lay tithe owner.
- 30 CSORP OPMA 1832 Clergy Relief Fund 156/2/49. Tradition states that Darby Ryan was imprisoned in Clonmel Jail for attending an Anti-tithe meeting and penned his famous poem 'The Peeler and the Goat' upon his release in revenge.
- 31 CSORP OPMA 1832 Clergy Relief Fund 156/2/68.
- 32 Rev. Jonas Poole later became rector of Golden Union (Relickmurry) in mid-1832 after the tithe related murder of Rev. Whitty in January of the same year. .
- 33 CSORP OPMA 1832 Clergy Relief Fund 156/2/43.
- 34 CSORP OPMA 1832 Clergy Relief Fund 156/2/25.
- 35 CSORP OPMA 1832 Clergy Relief Fund 156/2/39.
- 36 CSORP OPMA 1832 Clergy Relief Fund 156/2/42.
- 37 CSORP OPMA 1832 Clergy Relief Fund 156/2/86.
- 38 CSORP OPMA 1832 Clergy Relief Fund 165/2/48.

- 39 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 165/2/38.
40 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 165/2/70.
41 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 165/2/34.
42 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 165/2/46.
43 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 165/2/40.
44 Mr. Henry Going of Granna was a cousin of Rev. John Going of Moyalliffe, who was murdered in October 1829 over a tithe dispute in the parish.
45 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 165/2/69.
46 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 156/2/67.
47 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 156/2/47.
48 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 156/2/50.
49 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 156/2/26.
50 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 156/2/31 The rector was obviously newly appointed to this parish, as he states that 1831 was the first year that he was entitled to its tithes.
51 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 156/2/22.
52 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 156/2/29.
53 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 156/2/27.
54 A noted tithe incident near Knocktopher, Co. Kilkenny in which twelve police, the process server and three peasantry died in a clash between the distraining party and the peasantry during December 1831.
55 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 156/2/44.
56 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 156/2/37 Rev. Irwine Whitty of Golden was murdered on 26 January 1832 over a tithe dispute with his parishioners. Golden is about twelve miles from Cahir.
57 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 156/2/30.
58 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 156/2/41 Rev. Charles Hickey was also the rector for Shanrahan and Tullamalan and the Treasurer for Lismore Diocese.
59 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
61 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 156/2/45.
62 CSORP OPMA 1832 *Clergy Relief Fund* 156/2/36.
63 The Carrickoshock tithe slaughter in December 1831 saw the deaths of twelve policemen in a tithe affray and led to the establishment of the Select Committee Inquiry of Tithes in Ireland in Spring 1832.