

*New Tipperary Revisited: the Case of Arthur Hugh Smith-Barry*¹

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And when the time comes to write the history of what I hope will be the grand and crowning struggle for freedom in Ireland, the impartial historian who studies the forces, which had gone to make a success of these great fights, will in my judgement give to the Smith-Barry tenants of Tipperary a considerable share of the credit for the struggle...(because) these men without counting the cost to themselves went into what seemed a hopeless and mad fight.²

These nostalgic and disingenuous words by John Dillon following the conclusion of the New Tipperary saga are almost hypocritical as he congratulates the Tipperary tenants of Arthur Hugh Smith-Barry for their bravery in a 'hopeless fight'. He and William O'Brien, the great perpetrators of the Plan of Campaign, had led these tenants blindly into their Plan of Campaign under the guise of helping their brother tenants on the estate of Charles Ponsonby in East Cork. The Ponsonby estate had come under the control of their landlord Arthur Hugh Smith-Barry through the machinations of a landlord syndicate, orchestrated in true machiavellian fashion by the then chief secretary of Ireland, Arthur J. Balfour. However, these words come a little too late to help the people of Tipperary, many of who lost their livelihoods in the pursuit of a noble principle of misanthropy. It is indeed a great misfortune that John Dillon did not speak of the Plan of Campaign as a 'hopeless fight' in June 1889 when the Tipperary tenants were coming under increasing pressure from many different angles to oppose their landlord because of his dealings upon another estate, which he said himself was no affair of theirs. Ironically, the protest that the Tipperary tenants undertook was interference on the affairs of another estate, the very reason they were opposing Smith-Barry! Had Dillon and O'Brien been honest about their intentions from the outset concerning the real reasons why they brought the Plan of Campaign to Tipperary Town, they would have spared the people of Tipperary a great deal of hardship and a lot of hard-earned money.

But what of the man who was the primary target of the New Tipperary action? Why was Arthur Hugh Smith-Barry attacked so vigorously by the national leaders of the Plan of Campaign and, by implication, his own tenants in Tipperary? The answer is simple: Smith-Barry was a threat to the Plan of Campaign and the leaders of the Plan wanted to pre-empt his threat by undercutting what they perceived to be his position of power, his tenants and his land. No other action during the Plan of Campaign drew more notoriety or drama than the New Tipperary agitation. What started out as a means of attacking the chief opponent of the Plan soon spiralled out of control and was eventually the ruin of the Plan of Campaign and the blame for this resides chiefly with the leaders of the New Tipperary debacle, Dillon and O'Brien. The origins of the New Tipperary episode are important as they give a true insight into the real reasons by which Tipperary came to be involved in the Plan of Campaign. It also shows definitively that, although Smith-Barry was not entirely innocent, he was by no means the instigator, nor the direct cause of New Tipperary's ultimate demise. What follows is an attempt to illustrate that not all nationalists were 'good' and not all landlords were 'bad' during the Plan of Campaign. There

were far more shades of grey. This is Smith-Barry's side of the story of New Tipperary, which has been largely ignored and untold.

Arthur James Balfour had succeeded Sir Michael Hicks-Beach as chief secretary of Ireland in March 1887. 'Mickey the botch,' as Hicks-Beach was rather unkindly labelled, was in ill health and the nephew of the prime minister, Lord Salisbury, was given the post with the task of bringing order to Ireland. As the Plan of Campaign progressed, Balfour became increasingly frustrated by the inept show of resistance from the landlords, as it appeared that they were willing to surrender to the Plan without any fight. In the case of the Plan of Campaign on the Ponsonby estate, Balfour recognised that apart from the Cork Defence Union (CDU) and its chairman, Smith-Barry, there was nothing keeping Ponsonby financially afloat. Balfour himself said of the success of the Plan: 'in my opinion it is only by combination that they [tenants] can be adequately met.'³ He also felt that the Irish landlords were morally obliged to form a counter combination in order to protect their interest as a class;⁴ rather than moaning about their dire situation, they should act to help themselves. It was also brought to Balfour's attention at this time that Smith-Barry was privately replenishing Ponsonby's empty pockets, and this was also reported in the local press in Cork:

... through their solicitor negotiations between Mr Ponsonby and his tenants are still proceeding...however it is regarded as an unfavourable sign that Mr Ponsonby was yesterday in consultation with Mr A.H. Smith - Barry, the chairman of the Cork Defence Union, through whose aid, as the monied man of the union, Mr Ponsonby was enabled to continue the struggle by receiving £1,000 some months ago...it is conjectured that Mr. Smith - Barry is now, as then, urging Mr Ponsonby to continue the struggle. The tenantry, however, are making all the requisite arrangements for placing their cases in the Land Courts and availing of the new Land Act immediately.⁵

This sign that there was at least some backbone in the landlord class must have buoyed Balfour. It also set in play the machinations for the landlord organisation that Balfour desired so much. So it is evident from an early stage that Smith-Barry was a strong opponent of the Plan of Campaign but that he was not the only opponent.

Despite the best efforts of Smith-Barry and the CDU, by the winter of 1888-9 Ponsonby was in a dire financial situation. Since the inception of the Plan on his estate, Ponsonby had been deprived of almost £25,000 in rent and he also owed roughly £5,000 to his solicitors, Messrs O'Keefe and Lynch of Cork City.⁶ It appeared that success was imminent for the Plan and this potential success would have enormous consequences, as it would be in spite of the only effective landlord organisation in the country. Balfour saw the situation on the Ponsonby estate as perilous, not just for Ponsonby but also for landlords in general: 'Ponsonby is completely "broke" and has lost all his nerve. He has no money to pay his charges and none to provide himself with bread and butter. I must get him some [money] by hook or by crook: on condition that he fights on.'

Under huge financial constraints, Ponsonby had been forced to reopen negotiations with his tenants during the autumn and winter of 1888-9.⁸ The negotiations were held between J.E. Bruncker, Ponsonby's former agent, and Canon Donal Keller, the outspoken leader of the Plan of Campaign on the estate. Ponsonby used Bruncker as an intermediary as it appeared that the tenants and Keller trusted him. The meetings between Canon Keller and Bruncker had been another sign that victory was imminent and that Ponsonby was about to surrender to his tenants' demands. Balfour had been for some time formulating a plan of campaign of his own, whereby

he would organise a group of wealthy landowners to form a syndicate to buy the Ponsonby estate and begin mass evictions, thus defeating the Plan of Campaign.

Balfour's machiavellian plans for a landlord counter-combination were realised when Ponsonby, suddenly and without warning, withdrew from negotiations in February 1889 under the guise of the difference in the perceived offers for the estate. Balfour intended for his landlord syndicate to act upon a few test estates, where the landlords were being battered into submission by the Plan and he secretly offered the landlords of the syndicate exemptions from estate tax duties, through an agreement that had been made with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Goschen.⁹ Balfour had kept the idea of a landlord syndicate secret, especially his personal involvement. It was to be seen as a purely spontaneous entity with nothing to do with the Irish administration. Lord de Vesci, a wealthy and powerful landlord, was Balfour's 'contact man' and, through De Vesci, Balfour instigated Smith-Barry to act as chief organiser and spokesperson for this syndicate.¹⁰ Whereas Smith-Barry became the driving force behind the landlord syndicate, it is important to recognise that Balfour brought him into that role. Smith-Barry's obvious landlordism and his campaigning on behalf of landlord rights in County Cork no doubt made the decision much easier for Balfour. Balfour's choice of Smith-Barry to head this syndicate may seem surprising. However, when Smith-Barry's record as chairman of the CDU and as Ponsonby's financial backer are considered the choice is more obvious. The exact dates for the genesis of the landlord syndicate are unclear but Smith-Barry had been a staunch supporter of Ponsonby- financially and personally- since the Plan's inception on his estate. The clearest sign of any external involvement by Smith-Barry on the Ponsonby estate came on 14 February 1889 at a gala unionist banquet held at the Imperial Hotel, Cork, to honour the work done by Arthur Hugh Smith-Barry and R.U. Penrose – Fitzgerald, a fellow Cork landowner and member of the CDU. During the evening many of the unionist gentlemen present gave speeches in honour of Smith-Barry and Penrose-Fitzgerald. Smith-Barry himself gave a strongly unionist speech. However, his comments relating to the Plan of Campaign and Ponsonby are most revealing, his reference to Balfour are of particular interest considering his future involvement in the landlord syndicate.

We have got signs from every side that the policy of the government- the firm execution of the law- the manner in which it is carried out by that great statesman Mr Balfour- is bearing fruit from one end of the land to the other. This is denied by our opponents but it still remains a fact...the policy of the law is winning...We see the Plan of Campaign, which has caused much misery to many landlords but which has caused tenfold misery to the unfortunate tenants who have been duped by this most iniquitous and abominable system. We see it is not succeeding...with regard to the Ponsonby estate, I am confident that those who instituted the Plan were further off from defeating Mr Ponsonby than they were at the beginning.¹¹

A week later, the *Cork Constitution* announced the sale of the Ponsonby estate to a 'glittering group of English capitalists.'¹² The Ponsonby estate was sold for £71,433, subject to mortgages on it of £22,200 and to the annual charges on the property. The sum of £20,320 was paid immediately and a further £25,000 was to be paid in instalments between then and 28 March 1896, leaving a balance of £26,113 due on that date. The agreement was concluded with Ponsonby around the beginning of March 1889 and signed by him on 2 April 1889,¹³ leaving Ponsonby as merely nominal owner of the estate. Smith-Barry, who was exposed in both the *Freeman's Journal* and *Cork Examiner* as the chief investor and director of this conspiracy, was vilified nationwide.

It is true that Smith-Barry was at the head of this landlord syndicate but about a dozen of the wealthiest landowners in England and Ireland were also persuaded to donate £10,000 each to buy out the Ponsonby estate and Smith-Barry was put forward as one of the three directors to supervise the management of the estate,¹⁴ thus immediately the question is raised why didn't Dillon and O'Brien carry the Plan of Campaign on to the estates of the other investors of the syndicate? Was Smith-Barry seen as a more appropriate target because he was the public head of the landlord syndicate? Smith-Barry was quick to gain personal control of the Ponsonby estate and convinced his own land agent, Horatio H. Townsend, to be agent for the syndicate and to manage the estate. Speaking of Smith-Barry's involvement with the Ponsonby estate, W.J. Lane, a nationalist MP, said that it was 'outrageous' and 'unauthorised' and he also declared that he thought it 'lies that this syndicate has £100,000 to fight the tenants if necessary.'¹⁵ In a letter to T.P. Gill, one of the leading organisers of the Plan, Canon Keller declared that

everything is all right...the tenants are relying upon each other and take no notice of their [landlord syndicate] communications at all. Some here tell me that their whole party condemn Smith-Barry for his actions...Resolution passed at meeting on Easter Sunday condemning Smith-Barry, Landlord Syndicate and vowing to fight on.¹⁶

This declaration was honest but, in the face of what was to come, optimistic at best, especially considering that Smith-Barry said he would clear the estate into a vast cattle ranch rather than concede to tenant demands.

Before this threat could be acted upon, Smith-Barry and the landlord syndicate made a conciliatory gesture towards the Ponsonby tenants in April 1889. The syndicate made an offer to the tenants and had they not refused it out of hand and examined the offer in detail it would have been attractive to them. The landlord syndicate were willing to sell their Ponsonby holdings to the tenants on terms outlined below, the figures are hypothetical, used by the syndicate to illustrate an example of the offer they were making. The offers were made on the basis of sale or rent as follows:

RENT: the new annual rent is £33. Your rent and arrears to 25 March 1889 are £115 10s. If before 1 May 1889 you pay the sum of £33, the landlord will not require payment of the arrears due, if you pay 3% per annum on the sum of £74 8s 4d, being the proportion of your arrears on which interest at that rate will be charged.

PURCHASE: Your annual rent is £33. If before the 1 May 1889 you pay the sum of £33 the landlord will agree to sell your holding to you, under Lord Ashbournes [Land Purchase] Act (1885), for a sum on which the future instalments will be £25 1s 7d a year instead of the present £33. By this means all balance of arrears due by you to the 25 March 1889 will be forgiven and on the payment for 49 years of the instalments at the reduced rate of £25 1s 7d a year, you will be absolute owner of your holding free of rent.¹⁷

It is also significant that the landlord syndicate published these offers in the local paper, as if to show the public and nation at large that they were making a genuine offer. The offers given to the tenants were the equivalent of a 24% abatement on judicial rents and a 32% abatement on non-judicial rents,¹⁸ insignificantly less than the abatements requested by the Plan in November 1886. Canon Keller did not agree that these reduced rents were generous. He claimed that they were less than the negotiated abatements he had gotten from Bruncker before the negotiations had been suddenly halted in February 1889. Keller also felt that the offer would result in considerably

higher rents than those of tenants on neighbouring estates.¹⁹ This view was confirmed rather sensationally a few months later when the *Cork Examiner* intercepted a correspondence between H.H. Townsend- the agent of Smith-Barry and the Landlord Syndicate- and W.Gyles, the secretary of the Land Corporation.

The content of the letter was as follows:

From what I have seen on the Ponsonby estate, I am sorry to say that I believe the land commission, if it ever goes before it, will reduce the rents on it very heavily...I advise Mr Smith-Barry and the other members of the [landlord] syndicate to make public as soon as possible that they are only fighting the way in which the tenants want to get their rents down.²⁰

These revelations must have come as a gift to the Ponsonby tenants and the Plan organisers and a huge embarrassment to the landlord syndicate and especially Smith-Barry who had invested his trust in Townsend. However, this airing of Townsend's private opinions only proved to be a temporary obstacle to the landlord syndicate. In the previous May, Smith-Barry addressed his constituents at Brompton, South Huntingdonshire, and was unsurprisingly vociferous and outspoken concerning the Ponsonby estate and his involvement with the landlord syndicate. While speaking to his constituents, many of whom were also his tenants, plans were already underway to clear the obstinate tenants from the Ponsonby estate. Smith-Barry stated that the situation on the Ponsonby estate was regrettable and that he had come to speak to them to address some concerns that they might have about the policies of the current government. He claimed he felt their dissatisfaction also because, as a result of the Liberal filibustering and the Plan of Campaign, the House of Commons had become a place for talk and not for work.²¹ The Smith-Barry speech at Brompton contained a perfect synopsis of the history of the Plan of Campaign on the Ponsonby estate. Regarding the landlord syndicate, Smith-Barry said that they purchased the Ponsonby estate 'for the purpose of defeating the Plan of Campaign. They (Landlord Syndicate) hoped to inflict such a lesson upon these who had to their great misfortune taken part in the Plan of Campaign as would, he hoped, deter others on the estate from embarking on so wicked, so criminal and so misfortunate a venture.'²² Smith-Barry went on to detail the annual income of the Ponsonby estate and the series of abatements Ponsonby had granted to his tenants over the years and also the £10,000 Mr Ponsonby had spent on improvements to the property since he had bought it in 1867.²³ These facts and figures quoted by Smith-Barry were no doubt an attempt to depict Ponsonby as a good natured and generous landlord, and prior to the rise of the Plan of Campaign, landlord-tenant relations on the Ponsonby estate were very good. Smith-Barry reiterated the very generous offer that Ponsonby had made to his tenants in the previous September (1885) and how similar it was to the offers made by him and the syndicate and, except for a small element on the estate, the matter would have been finished a long time ago. Finishing his speech, Smith-Barry declared again that 'he and his friends had joined a syndicate to defeat the Plan of Campaign on the Ponsonby estate and much as I deplore the misery which, unfortunately, could not help being produced by evictions, they were determined that that conspiracy should be defeated.'²⁴

There is little doubt that Smith-Barry had done his research and had a vast array of facts and figures to prove how unjustifiable the Plan of Campaign was on the Ponsonby estate. But, as previously noted, the Plan organisers and even Townsend had opinions and facts of their own to counter those of Smith-Barry. So, removing this argument, the only option open to Smith-Barry was the role that the landlord syndicate took in defeating the Plan of Campaign. As I have

already discussed, the landlord syndicate was a Balfour - driven counter combination. However, what is interesting is to discover another hidden motive behind the landlord syndicate for both Smith-Barry and Balfour. They both felt that if the Plan was to succeed on the Ponsonby estate, it would reduce land prices considerably in the south of Ireland,²⁵ a fact that no doubt inspired Smith-Barry and some of his landlord colleagues to support the idea of a landlord syndicate so vigorously. Evictions began on the Ponsonby estate once more at the end of May 1889 and continued into June, under the terms of Balfour's 1887 Crimes Act.

The issue of his involvement on the Ponsonby estate continued to haunt Smith-Barry. During question time in the House of Commons on 21 June 1889, John Ellis, a Home Rule - supporting M.P. from Wales, made further accusations against Smith-Barry. These accusations centred upon Smith-Barry's interference in the Ponsonby estate, especially at the head of the landlord syndicate. Ellis felt that 'it does seem to me an extraordinary thing for an English gentleman or an Irish gentleman to interfere in this fashion for the purpose, which the hon[orary] member (Smith-Barry) has avowed of wreaking vengeance on tenants or of "teaching them a lesson" which is the expression used by the paper reporting the hon. members speech to his constituents.' Ellis proposed a resolution, 'in the interests of humanity,' for a competent and impartial solution to the present agrarian struggle in Ireland, that removes the necessity for evictions and the 'humiliating employment of the forces of the crown.'²⁶

Smith-Barry's reply to Ellis' accusations was once again to quote the facts, as he saw them, on the Ponsonby estate. Smith-Barry's argument, which was again very similar to all the others he had made is significant for the reason that it illustrates that the nationalists had only one line of attack and he had a logical argument to respond to these attacks. He again quoted the reductions given by Ponsonby in 1881 of 6% and 'in addition to these, reductions of 20% on the non-judicial rents and 10% on the judicial rents were the reductions offered when the Plan of Campaign was started.' Smith-Barry also declared that he had it on good authority that Mr Ponsonby instructed his agents to tell the tenants that all round rent reductions were unfair and that he would decide rent reductions on a case-by-case basis. It was only after this that the Plan of Campaign was instituted on the estate.²⁷ The constant accusation that had been made by the Nationalists against Smith-Barry was that the situation on the Ponsonby estate was on the verge of being settled when the landlord syndicate intervened in February 1889. Smith-Barry took this opportunity during his reply to Ellis to once and for all give the definitive reason why the negotiations had broken down. As far as Smith-Barry was concerned, the point at which the negotiations split was over a difference of £24,000, not £6,000, as Ellis, Brunner and Canon Keller had claimed. This difference relates to the offers made by both parties during negotiations. Smith-Barry agreed that there was a difference of £6,000 between the basic offers of Ponsonby (£110,000) and Keller (£104,000) but he found it convenient that the nationalists would leave out the outstanding £18,000 that was due for charges on drainage, commutation of tithes, rent charges and other government charges in dispute, which Ponsonby felt the tenants should pay and which Keller felt Ponsonby should pay. Smith-Barry stated that 'it is scarcely necessary for me having made that statement, to follow the hon. Member into the charge that it was I who broke off negotiations. The negotiations were already broken...on account of the large sum of difference between them.'²⁸

In response to the accusations made by Ellis in relation to his speech at Brampton, Smith-Barry used elusive political word play to distance himself from the statements: 'I never made use of such a statement, I did say that if there was an estate where the question of whether the Plan of Campaign- an acknowledged illegal conspiracy- was to be broken or not, this was an estate

upon which that question should be tried.' This is an obvious lie from Smith-Barry as the contemporary press relayed the speech in all its varieties. Smith-Barry's 'recollection' of his speech is the equivalent of a modern day claim of being misquoted by the press. J.J. Clancy, another Home Ruler, vented his frustration at Smith-Barry's silver tongued response: 'should anyone in the House or in the country be surprised that the hon. Member who has just spoken was kicked out of representation of Cork, an explanation may be found in the speech we just heard.'²⁹ Clancy then proceeded to produce a copy of the speech by Smith-Barry at Brampton, and read it to the House, the result of which led the Speaker to call order and ask for a vote on the resolution put forward by Ellis. However, Clancy was not finished as he took his opportunity to attack the Tipperary tenants of Smith-Barry: '...these tenants are acting very foolishly for themselves and for their class in continuing to provide the sinews of war to the hon. Gentleman to exterminate their brother tenants.'³⁰

Regardless of the accusations and counter accusations, the Ponsonby estate was firmly in the grip of the landlord syndicate and the Plan fizzled out there over the next few months. The climactic phase of the Plan was now to move to Tipperary and involve Smith-Barry far more than he would have wished and rather needlessly provoke the Tipperary tenants from a position of guilt or inaction to join what Dillon referred to as a mad and hopeless fight. But does the evidence of Smith-Barry's involvement on the Ponsonby estate, as outlined above, justify the Tipperary tenants involvement in the Plan of Campaign by attacking Smith-Barry? Smith-Barry was the only consistent link between Ponsonby and New Tipperary. None of his Tipperary tenants had any ties, business or familial, to the Ponsonby estate. In the history of land tenure in Ireland there are countless occasions where landlords were called in as a third party to mediate in a dispute on a neighbouring estate or supply a fellow landlord who had fallen on hard times. Smith-Barry's motives may have been more militant as they applied to unionism and landlordism but the question remains, why attack Smith-Barry and why use his Tipperary tenants in that attack, when the root cause for the attack was in Cork, would not the Cork tenants of Smith-Barry been a more logical choice? Did the criticism and lobbying of nationalists like Clancy, Ellis, Dillon and O'Brien justify the Tipperary tenants attack on their landlord? On the basis of their prior relationship with him, it did not. Did Smith-Barry's involvement on the Ponsonby estate justify his own tenant's involvement?

The Tipperary tenants referred to by Clancy were woefully ill-equipped to deal with Smith-Barry, yet their hackles were up at the constant criticism levelled at them. From the beginning of the Tipperary tenants' involvement in the Plan of Campaign, it had little to do with the Plan of Campaign's principles, a fact testified to in 1894 by a commission for evicted tenants:

The dispute (Plan of Campaign) originated in each case, with the exception of the Tipperary estate of A.H. Smith-Barry, in the question whether there should be abatements, and if any, what the amount of such abatements should be. On that estate, the difficulties arose in consequence of the intervention of Mr Smith-Barry in the dispute between Mr Ponsonby and his tenants, as to the propriety of which we express no opinion.³¹

The history of the Smith-Barry Tipperary estate has proven that the Smith-Barry tenants were too divided on issues of internal politics and financial interests to pay much attention to national politics.³² Until Smith-Barry became so prominently involved in opposition to the Plan and the consequent apportioning of blame such as Clancy's in the House of Commons, the Tipperary tenants were not involved in any way with the Plan of Campaign. But that was about to change.

As far back as 7 March 1889, certain elements within the town were beginning to take notice of Smith-Barry's involvement with events on the Ponsonby estate. Fr David Humphreys, who would later rise to prominence as a local tenant leader in Tipperary, criticised the *Freeman's Journal* for spreading stories that he felt would incite fear of landlords in the people.³³ The evolution of Tipperary's involvement with Smith-Barry and the Plan of Campaign is not as straightforward as one would assume. Dillon and O'Brien recognised the potential that the Tipperary tenants offered as early as March 1887. This potential was further emphasised when Humphreys held a rally in Tipperary in support of the Plan of Campaign, and against landlordism. Although this was some time before the creation of the landlord syndicate and Smith-Barry's active involvement with the syndicate on the Ponsonby estate, Dillon and O'Brien had identified Smith-Barry as a formidable force behind a number of unionist organisations, especially the CDU, and both were eager to carry the Plan onto his estate.³⁴ But Smith-Barry was a fair landlord, as far as rent was concerned, and years later even O'Brien had to concede that Smith-Barry was 'a great landowner who was unimpeachable in the management of his private property.'³⁵ In 1888, the local constabulary in Tipperary reported that the National League branch in the town was 'weak' and the 'possibility of any agrarian outrages were slim.'³⁶ However, the rise of the landlord syndicate was fortuitous for the Plan organisers, in a way, because it gave a perfect opportunity to launch the Plan on Smith-Barry's property. O'Brien in particular believed that Smith-Barry was using the rents of his Tipperary tenants in the policy he had employed on the Ponsonby estate, and took every opportunity to remind the Tipperary tenants of this scenario, as Clancy had done at Westminster.

The Tipperary tenants lived in a prosperous region of the country and their financial situation was not nearly as bad as that of tenants on other estates. The main problem that many of the tenants faced on Smith-Barry's Tipperary estate was the number of wealthy businessmen in the town who doubled as middle landlords. As a result many of the tenants had no direct link to Smith-Barry. Politically, the town was a mess. Much of the political power and influence lay with this small group of middle landlords who were reluctant to change their policies, fearing that any such change might affect their status and monopoly in the local region. These men had been the leaders of almost every movement in the town for almost twenty years and so it is not surprising to find them as the tenant leadership of the Plan of Campaign when it came to the town. What was surprising was the role that they took in opposing Smith-Barry, as it was totally out of character with the history of their actions on the estate. Perhaps they hoped to supplant Smith-Barry as landlord and share out the control of the estate among them once the Plan of Campaign had successfully dealt with their landlord.

The hopes of those for some form of agitation on the Smith-Barry Tipperary estate came to fruition when a meeting was called in the Market Yard of the town on 23 June 1889 to discuss Smith-Barry's role in the landlord syndicate and his recent comments at Brampton and Westminster. The meeting, with Canon Cahill, P.P. chairing and William O'Brien in attendance, was to decide what action, if any, the tenants were to take against their landlord. The origin of the Plan of Campaign on the Tipperary estate of Smith-Barry can be pinpointed to this date. The meeting decided that the most pertinent course of action was to send a deputation to meet Smith-Barry in London in order to avoid violence and the scenes of anarchy seen on other estates.³⁷ Significantly, Canon Cahill travelled with this delegation as its leader. Priests were an important political component of the Plan, as seen with Keller on the Ponsonby estate and Cahill in Tipperary. Cahill had a very clear view of what he hoped to achieve at the meeting:

I will earnestly urge him (Smith-Barry) in the interest of tranquillity upon his hitherto peaceful estate, to relinquish a work of extermination, which was calculated to inflame the worst antagonism between landlord and tenant and to produce a counter combination for the tenants protection, to which we could feel ourselves forced by every feeling of humanity and self protection to adhere.³⁸

His archbishop, Thomas W. Croke of Cashel and Emly, echoed Cahill's opinion. In a letter to Cahill, dated 26 June 1889, Croke referred to Smith-Barry as an 'aggressive busybody and a virulent partisan' adding that 'Mr Smith-Barry's intervention in a landlord tenant dispute that does not concern him proves, beyond all manner of doubt, that he is at the head of a nest and network of bad landlords that still infest and have long impoverished this country.'³⁹ Thus, the tenants set off to Smith-Barry with the intention of forcing one of the most powerful and wealthy landlords in Ireland to halt his actions. Ironically, this action by the Tipperary tenants would be the most sensible course they would take throughout their involvement in the Plan of Campaign.

The Tipperary tenants were joined by a delegation of Smith-Barry's Clonakilty tenants from his Cork estate. Richard Dalton, Dr J. O'Ryan, Michael O'Brien-Dalton, J. Sadlier, W. Eaton, Patrick Crosse and P. McGrath attended from the Tipperary estate; Canon Cahill and Fr Lane, of the Smith-Barry Cashel estate, joined the delegation that met Smith-Barry and Penrose-Fitzgerald at his London residence on 3 July 1889. Robert Saunders of Clonakilty doubled as secretary to the delegation. Before the meeting began, Canon Cahill presented memorials to Smith-Barry, signed by 'nearly all Smith-Barry tenantry in the counties of Tipperary and Cork in reference to the evictions on the Ponsonby estate.'⁴⁰ The Clonakilty tenants, who were to settle with Smith-Barry less than a month later read a very strongly worded statement. Canon Cahill asked Smith-Barry to understand the feelings that had been incited among the tenants by his 'terrible crusade' against the Ponsonby tenants. He stated that for a long time they had lived in the finest of conditions with Smith-Barry and they had travelled to see him, at their own expense, only to request that he remove himself from the syndicate.

Smith-Barry's response was bullish and it is clear that he intended to concede as little as possible to his tenants. He began by stating that the only reason that he had assented to the meeting was to explain, once more, the true position between the Ponsonby tenants and himself, because, he said, 'it is evident you are quite unaware of the true facts of the case and cannot have seen any of the correct reports of the answers made in the House of Commons on Friday June 21 to the charges brought against me and reiterated in your memorial.' Smith-Barry declared his position quite emphatically: 'I cannot, for one moment, acknowledge that you have the slightest right to demand such an explanation or to interfere in any way between tenants and men living on other estates, with which I may have some connection, but you have none.' But was not this the claim of the nationalists concerning Smith-Barry's involvement with the Ponsonby tenants? As to the threat of a counter combination, along the lines of withholding rents, Smith-Barry showed himself to be a skilled politician, having crafted an intricate and logical argument:

If I were to assent to such a claim (withdrawal and rent reductions) I must equally be bound by the instruction of my English tenantry in my dealings towards you and they may very well insist that having paid their own rents in full, you must also be made pay yours without allowance or abatement of any kind. That would be a perfectly logical sequence, but I doubt whether it would find any favour in Tipperary.

The 'leaders of this conspiracy', Smith-Barry claimed, had been influential 'in denying the tenants the right to go to Mr Gladstone's land courts' in an attempt to seek abatements, a right

that Mr Ponsonby had always left open to his tenants. Smith-Barry went on to say that

I should feel very sorry to have any difference of opinion with my tenants, either in Tipperary or Cork, and I do not think on reflection that they will seek to force on a condition of affairs which must lead to very serious consequences. The result of a contest between us would cause comparatively very slight trouble to me, while it would inevitably bring suffering and misfortune to all those of my tenants who might be so ill judged as to listen to the selfish and vindictive advice of those who have themselves nothing to lose by such counsels.

These words of Smith-Barry were to prove prophetic.

During the ensuing debate, Smith-Barry continuously pointed to the facts, while the tenants' representatives increasingly grasped at straws. Smith-Barry even passed around a circular to each member of the delegation, detailing the facts and figures of the Ponsonby estate. When confronted by the evidence, the delegation seemed struck dumb. Their last avenue of attack was upon the issue of the arrears that the Ponsonby tenants were expected to pay under the terms offered by the syndicate. Michael O'Brien-Dalton in particular felt that having to pay almost four years' arrears of rent when the land had lain fallow was outrageous, to which Smith-Barry asked, was the landlord to suffer because of the actions of the Plan? He also directed their attention to the circular to see that the offer only asked for 3% of the rent owed and that it was preposterous to think a tenant could walk back onto his lands without having paid a penny. Smith-Barry finished by stating that nobody in Ireland detested evictions more than he did but if the Ponsonby tenants persisted in ignoring their generous offers, evictions would, unfortunately, be the result. Canon Cahill then asked, 'are we to understand that future evictions on the estate will be made with your sanction?' To which Smith-Barry bluntly replied, 'I think I have answered you [already].'⁴¹ The tenants then left, dismissed, almost, by a superior foe.

Both sides had adopted a very strict stance: the tenants were prepared to oppose Smith-Barry and he was more than ready to face them head on. A stalemate had been arrived at. As the delegation returned home empty-handed, the nationalist press were vitriolic in their assessment of Smith-Barry's behaviour towards his tenants but Smith-Barry was not without his share of support. In a letter dated 6 July, Robert Pratt of Gawsorth, Carrigrohane on the Smith-Barry Cork estate, declared:

From the storm of abuse raised against Mr Smith-Barry it is evident that the National wire pullers recognise, in the stand he takes, the danger to their pet idea of being able to exterminate any landlord who will not submit to the terms dictated by his tenants...sympathy for the sufferings of the unfortunate cat's paws of the National League is now the sentiment uppermost in many minds...then let all those who value freedom as they ought, stand firmly by Mr Smith-Barry in his honest and commendable effort to do his duty by his country.⁴²

With the gale day of 10 July approaching on the Tipperary estate, a dispute was now inevitable.

The events of the rent day on 10 July were not helped by the arrival of William O'Brien in Tipperary town. His arrival, heralded by great fanfare, quenched any doubts that may have remained with the tenants. Sixty percent of the half-yearly rents went unpaid as Townsend sat alone in the estate office all day. Those who did pay did so through their solicitors in order to avoid the expected boycotting and abuse that would ensue.⁴³ Tipperary had now been pushed to the vanguard of the Plan of Campaign, from a position of guilt; the tenants had now committed themselves to a process that nobody had any control over. Smith-Barry was quick to

respond to this non-payment of rent by serving sixteen tenants with writs of non-payment; six of these were middle landlords and three had been members of the London delegation.⁴⁴

The situation in the town at the time was tense, with many of the decisions being made by the wealthy businessmen and middle landlords, and their sub-tenants were swept into the agitation, whether they wanted any part of it or not. The pace with which the decisions to oppose Smith-Barry were made is an indication that the tenants were being swept up by O'Brien's and Dillon's propaganda. Michael Davitt wrote that the whole episode in Tipperary was a grave mistake, in that it was foolish to put shopkeepers, the weakest element of the tenants, against Smith-Barry, a mistake that Davitt felt was a direct cause of the ruin of the Plan of Campaign.⁴⁵

In response to the writs for non-payment of rents issued by Smith-Barry, the tenants held a large meeting in Tipperary on 9 August, where the Plan of Campaign was officially adopted. The Smith-Barry tenants decided that 10% of the value of their holdings would be contributed to help the Ponsonby tenants. As a result, the Tipperary tenants requested a unilateral 25% rent reduction from Smith-Barry to enhance their support of the Ponsonby tenants.⁴⁶ These demands proved that the Tipperary agitation was not dealing with the Plan of Campaign but was an issue of money directly linked to Smith-Barry's involvement on the Ponsonby estate. The reasons behind their sudden interest in the Plan of Campaign had to do with their attention being drawn to Smith-Barry's involvement with Ponsonby, as detailed by the nationalist press. However, there was also a sense of selfishness behind this involvement. The middle landlords had always wanted to carry out their business without Smith-Barry involvement but had never had the appetite to carry the fight to him. The Ponsonby situation and the Plan of Campaign offered them the perfect scenario to oppose Smith-Barry and also to be seen as helping others, drawing attention away from their obvious greed. It is no coincidence either to find that much of the tenant leadership during Tipperary's involvement with the Plan of Campaign came from the middle landlords and wealthy businessmen in the town.

Disaster struck the Tipperary tenants on the very day they adopted the Plan. William O'Brien was sentenced to four months in gaol because of the earlier agitation by him inciting tenants on the Ponsonby estate, an offence under Balfour's Crimes Act. In his absence, the Tipperary tenants were expected to capitulate. However, at a meeting of the tenants on 8 September, further resolutions were adopted. This meeting was attended by one of O'Brien's able lieutenants, John Redmond. The tenants also met to discuss the events in Thurles on 24 August and 4 September. These events came about as a result of Smith-Barry auctioning the holdings of five tenants on 24 August. Tenant solidarity took a thorough beating in the absence of O'Brien as the five tenants bought back their holdings.⁴⁷ Nineteen tenants went into negotiations with Townsend in Thurles on 4 September. Again, tenant solidarity took a trouncing as all but six of the tenants settled with Smith-Barry. Burke, O'Brien-Dalton, Maher, Merrigan, Hayes and Hogan were those who had not settled and these men constituted the nucleus of the tenant leadership in the town.

Tension was at an all time high in the town before the meeting on 8 September, which was attended by John Redmond; this elevated level of tension in the town was a direct result of the proceedings during the last few weeks, including the selling of the tenants' holdings by Smith-Barry. The day after the meeting in Thurles, the local constabulary attempting to disperse a riotous crowd in the town by firing buckshot into the crowd. A fourteen-year-old boy, Stephen Heffernan, was shot and later died of tetanus infection, which he contracted as a result of the unsanitary conditions of the local dispensary.⁴⁸ As a result of the shooting and the evictions and Smith-Barry's policy towards the rise of the Plan on his estate, the meeting was extremely

heated. The first resolution to be passed by those present was to deal with the absence of Dillon and O'Brien by establishing a committee of tenants to take up where they had left off. This committee consisted of Michael O'Brien-Dalton, chairman of the Tipperary board of guardians, Edmund Hogan, Richard Ronan, Dr James O'Ryan, Eamonn FitzGerald, James Maloney, Thomas English and John Carrigan. The committee and John Redmond took the opportunity to declare that they would not give up the fight against Smith-Barry, irrespective of the consequences. They emphasised all of the resolutions and policies, which they had passed in the previous three months.⁴⁹ Amid the bedlam that followed the meeting, an explosive, 'comprising a thick metal pipe filled with bits of lead and iron fillings and powder with a fuse attached', was thrown into the Smith-Barry estate office on St. Michael Street but other than a lot of noise and some smoke, there was no damage.

An editorial in the local paper on 27 September gave the first real indication that the tenants had more than a simple opposition to Smith-Barry in mind:

It would not be a very impossible thing to build a New Tipperary very convenient to that place, which the unspeakable scion of Barrymore calls his own. The people built the town; their descendants will rebuild it on another site if necessary sooner than surrender that which is dearer to them than [the] world's goods.⁵⁰

This editorial is the first mention of a 'New Tipperary' but the pace with which the tenants took on this idea of a separate town was astounding and proved to be their ruin and the ruin of the Plan of Campaign.

The tenants were quick to act upon this idea of a New Tipperary. Fr David Humphreys became the leader of this dynamic action, as he headed a committee of Smith-Barry tenants that planned the removal of furniture and stock from the properties of those who were expected to be evicted. However, the Dublin administration did not neglect the needs of Smith-Barry after he had upheld the law and order policy of the government through his involvement on the Ponsonby estate. On 11 October, the National League branch in Tipperary town was suppressed in an effort to prevent any further agitation.⁵¹ This did not deter Humphreys, as he assumed a more prominent role in the leadership, planning and policy of the tenants. Indeed, one of the enduring images of Tipperary's involvement in the Plan of Campaign was the sight of the constabulary 'shadowing' Humphreys, again in an effort to curb his influence.⁵² Humphreys perfectly embodied the dynamic radicalism that the Plan of Campaign had had at its inception. In Humphreys, Smith-Barry had an adversary who was as stubborn, idealistic and committed as he was. When the National League branch had been banned, it was Humphreys who arranged meeting places, often in his house or in the sacristy of St. Michael's church in the town.

The eviction process began on 2 December 1889 but it was unlike any other seen during the Plan of Campaign. The committees that had been formed to remove all items from the houses had worked extremely hard from 14 November in an effort to make the evictions little more than a formality. Colonel Caddell, who had also been the Regional Magistrate in charge of evictions on the Ponsonby estate, led the police on the eviction trail. Of Smith-Barry's 355 tenants in the Tipperary Town area, 233 withheld their rents while 122 had paid through their solicitors, but not all of the 233 were evicted. By August 1891, 175 tenants had been evicted and set up in New Tipperary.⁵³ The work on New Tipperary had begun on the neighbouring Stafford-O'Brien estate on 18 November 1889 and continued throughout the winter of 1889-90. The building process was kept to the forefront of the nationalist press as a rallying cry to tenants nationwide. The National

League kept all the business of building New Tipperary 'in the family'. Robert Gill, brother of T.P. Gill, was the chief architect of the enterprise. However, from an early stage it was obvious that the New Tipperary project was going to be a huge drain upon the finances of the Plan of Campaign. About £250 a week was being spent on the building programme, with most of the money being spent on the centrepiece of the new town, the William O'Brien arcade, which was to house the businesses of the evicted businessmen and tenant leaders.

The dubious high point of the New Tipperary episode came on 12 April 1890, when, in the eye of the world's media, the William O'Brien arcade was officially opened. The arcade was a truly Victorian manifestation of grandeur and it was a symbol of defiance to Smith-Barry and the landlord class in general. The opening was attended by the 'hero' William O'Brien, six Liberal MPs, Archbishops Croke and Walsh and the lord mayors of Dublin and Cork. Special trains were run on the day from all local districts, which meant that the turnout was an estimated 20,000 people.⁵⁴ The opening of the William O'Brien arcade and the New Tipperary project was a fine achievement for the whole nation to marvel at. However, it masked the problems that were beginning to take a toll on the Plan of Campaign, difficulties, which were to bring the Plan of Campaign to its knees and the fading of the April 12 celebrations into a cold memory.

Smith-Barry wrote to Archbishop Croke at this stage to ask his help in bringing the New Tipperary situation to a sensible conclusion because he did not understand his tenants' folly. Croke replied tartly: 'you have acted unwisely in joining the syndicate and in refusing afterwards to retire from it. You thus flung down the gage (sic) of battle to your tenants, never dreaming that they would have dared to take it up.'⁵⁵ It appears that Smith-Barry was being conciliatory and giving the tenants one last chance to settle amicably with him before they were destroyed by their own creation.

The tenants in the town were not united and the long-planted seeds of hostility began to bloom as opposing opinions and groups appeared among the tenants. The issues of the middle landlords reappeared but, surprisingly, it was not these issues that had the divisive effect. There appeared to have been a split in the National League branch in the town. Not surprisingly, Fr Humphreys was heavily involved. Humphreys led a group of more radically minded tenants who were not satisfied with just the achievement of New Tipperary; they wanted to go further in their opposition to Smith-Barry. The other faction was led by another curate, Fr Noel Cantwell, and was far more moderate in its approach. Cantwell's group consisted largely of those with business interests in the area who were concerned with consolidating what they had already achieved before making a decision to proceed with further action or not. During this time Humphreys, through his argumentative nature, came under far stricter scrutiny and the shadowing policy increased.⁵⁶ To the members of the Irish Parliamentary Party, Humphreys was beginning to be viewed as a liability and New Tipperary as an ever-growing millstone around the neck of the Plan of Campaign.

The government by the autumn of 1890 had determined to be rid of the whole New Tipperary debacle and the Plan of Campaign as a whole and proceeded to charge five MPs and seven other leaders, including O'Brien-Dalton and Humphreys, with conspiracy arising from their actions at New Tipperary.⁵⁷ Their trial was timed perfectly for September 1890, just as O'Brien and Dillon were planning a fundraising trip to the US. The authorities hoped that their incarceration would put an end to New Tipperary and the Plan of Campaign as well. The trial opened in Tipperary Town on 25 September 1890 and the Dublin administration sent Edward Carson as the Queen's prosecutor. Indeed, New Tipperary was being viewed more and more as a victory for unionist politics and landlord policies of Smith-Barry and an abject failure for the nationalists. New

Tipperary, ironically, became a propagandist tool for unionists as they used it as another example of how incapable the nationalists were at self-government. In light of this, it is no surprise to discover that the nationalist press affected to ignore the trial proceedings.⁵⁸ The drama of the trial was heightened when Dillon and O'Brien absconded, with their intended destination the US via Paris.⁵⁹ With the main organisers of the Plan gone it did not look like the agitation was going to survive. Then the Parnell scandal dealt the Plan and New Tipperary a final fatal blow.

From December 1890 to May 1891 the cracks among the tenants became more apparent in the town. By January 1891 *The Irish Times* declared that the Plan of Campaign was pretty-well broken, not just in Tipperary but on all Plan of Campaign estates in Ireland. This was compounded in Tipperary by the fact that some tenants were beginning to settle with Smith-Barry.⁶⁰ The Parnell scandal drove a wedge between the already split factions in the town, and Parnell had never been an entirely popular figure in the town anyway. The public disintegration of the Parliamentary Party into Parnellites and anti-Parnellites left Humphreys with free reign in Tipperary. He set about raising funds in an attempt to revitalise the ailing New Tipperary project. Humphreys vented his bitterness to Dillon by criticising Parnell as having 'shown himself lost to every sense of honour and principle.'⁶¹

The continued difficulties of the National League were felt most acutely in New Tipperary through the lack of funds and the lack of money for the overdue payments to the builders of the arcade, Messrs Meade of Sackville Street, Dublin, dug the grave of Humphreys and New Tipperary. The Parnell split ensured they were buried alive. In February 1891 Dillon and O'Brien returned from Paris and received their six months' prison sentences. This left Humphreys isolated, especially as it seemed that O'Brien wanted to distance himself from the shambles New Tipperary was fast becoming. Humphreys and his ardent supporters were forlorn and popular dissent was now commonplace, especially from John O'Leary, the leading Fenian. O'Leary had always been an outspoken critic of the New Tipperary action and reiterated his opinion that New Tipperary was 'a piece of cowardly cruelty on the part of Mr William O'Brien with no intelligent reason behind it save lying to England.'⁶² O'Leary raised a valid point in asking what O'Brien had hoped to achieve by his support and encouragement of the New Tipperary action. True, New Tipperary was a seemingly spontaneous action by its tenants while O'Brien was in prison during the autumn of 1889. Yet the role that O'Brien had in raising a sympathetic strike for the Ponsonby tenants and letting it descend into untamed anarchy must be seen as careless and cruel. The tenants carried on regardless and eventually cost O'Brien his Plan of Campaign through the massive drain that New Tipperary made on the funds of the agitation.

By the end of 1891, fifty five of the original 104 evictees had settled with Smith-Barry after meeting with him on his property at Marbury Hall, Cheshire in May 1891.⁶³ From a position of considerable power Smith-Barry was able to dictate humiliating and draconian terms to the tenants. Smith-Barry had attempted on numerous occasions to be conciliatory towards his tenants during the New Tipperary saga and had been rebuffed, so it is no surprise that he dictated such terms. The tenants had to: (1) pay half the arrears owed, which amounted to almost three years' rent. (2) They would assume their former station, without any compensation for loss of business or damage to property. (3) The same allowance was offered as in 1889, which was 15% reduction on all rents, the original 25% requested less the 10% that the tenants had hoped to contribute to the Ponsonby tenants. These terms were to be accepted by the tenants at the estate office by 29 May or the offer would be retracted.⁶⁴ The nationalist press took this opportunity to criticise the tenants who had accepted these terms,⁶⁵ while the unionist press led with headlines like 'The Rent Office Crowded' and 'Tenants returning to their Homes'.⁶⁶ The

unionist press was not found to be gracious in Smith-Barry's victory: 'The settlement arrived at between Mr Smith-Barry and his tenants in Tipperary has naturally given widespread satisfaction...The collapse of the Plan of Campaign in Tipperary may therefore be regarded as complete. It matters little whether a dozen or a score are prevailed upon to withstand the liberal terms so readily accepted by their neighbours.'⁶⁷ The tenants who had negotiated the terms from Smith-Barry sent a letter to the press detailing some of the reasons they had settled. They were convinced that the division in the Irish Parliamentary Party served to make their struggle with the landlord hopeless. The 'terrorism' used by an 'irresponsible junto' also withdrew any dignity or grace that they claimed the struggle had had. This was no doubt a dig at the policy that Humphreys had adopted. Finally, the tenants felt that the 'proposals of Mr Smith-Barry, far from being generous, are the best that we could have hoped for.'⁶⁸

The capitulation by the Tipperary tenants also had implications for the Plan of Campaign. New Tipperary was a gross mistake by William O'Brien. It has to be questioned what purpose it served other than being for a time an elaborate and expensive propagandist tool. At the finish Smith-Barry was still head of the landlord syndicate and an outspoken unionist. The financial consequences of New Tipperary are the most significant of the whole abortive process. The Parliamentary Party and the Plan of Campaign were practically cleaned out by New Tipperary. The total cost to the nationalists was estimated to be in the region of £45,000, costing almost £20,000 to build the Arcade and houses, the remaining funds provided the tenants with income and legal fees. But they were not the only ones to suffer. The cost to the exchequer of the whole saga is estimated at £12,817 4s 4d, the cost to the local rates at £3,395 9s 11d, giving a total cost to the government of £16,213 9s 11d.⁶⁹ Although this figure is only a third of the estimated cost to the Parliamentary Party, it is still a significant figure in its contemporary context.

The future of nationalist land agitation was dealt a serious blow, which would take almost eight years to recover from. From the conclusion of the New Tipperary episode it was obvious that there were a number of fundamental flaws with both its conception and its planning. John Dillon and William O'Brien saw Arthur Hugh Smith-Barry as a real threat to their policy of land agitation and wanted to undermine him as a landlord. Smith-Barry's career as a landlord activist⁷⁰ had brought him to the attention of the nationalists. True, he was representing an archaic and greatly diminished class in landlordism, but was it not his right to defend his class and their position just as it was the nationalists right to agitate in favour of change? The key to the New Tipperary episode is exploitation.

O'Brien and Dillon exploited Smith-Barry's involvement with the Ponsonby estate in order to undermine his position as a landlord activist. Dillon and O'Brien also exploited the Tipperary tenants of Smith-Barry into an agitation that had nothing to do with them. It can also be surmised that the Tipperary tenants, and in particular the middle-landlords in the town, exploited the Plan of Campaign and Smith-Barry's involvement in it in order to gain a more favourable deal for themselves and more control of the estate.⁷¹ Balfour exploited Smith-Barry by using him as a puppet to represent his policy through the landlord syndicate. And indeed Smith-Barry exploited the situation to further his own opinions relating to landlord rights, land prices and of course the consistent unionist claim that nationalists were not fit for self rule.

Was Smith-Barry entirely to blame for New Tipperary? Archbishop Croke and the nationalists thought he was. However, the facts of the case do not support the nationalist's argument in this case. Again, this is not to say that Smith-Barry was totally innocent. He did exacerbate the course of the New Tipperary episode through evictions and the hard-line policy he adopted throughout the course of the agitation. He was not as culpable as the nationalist side made out.

Their attacks upon Smith-Barry may have been an attempt to deflect attention from the fact that the whole situation was begun by Dillon and O'Brien without any clear concept of what direction they intended the agitation to take. It was a careless venture to involve the Tipperary tenants and let them continue on such a course that ultimately led to the fall of the Plan of Campaign. Michael Davitt later wrote in his *Fall of Feudalism in Ireland* that the whole episode in Tipperary was a grave mistake, in that it was foolish to put shopkeepers, the weakest element of the tenants, against Smith-Barry, a mistake that Davitt felt was the cause of the ruin of the Plan of Campaign and the reason why O'Brien and Dillon received so much blame and criticism for their part in it.⁷² After the initial suggestion of involvement came from Dillon and O'Brien came in the summer of 1889 there was a succinct lack of input or leadership from the nationalists, therefore Davitt's claim would seem to be justified. Smith-Barry may have been a fortuitous pawn in elevating the Plan of Campaign to a national level but he was by no means to blame for the outcome of the whole debacle. That responsibility lies with the tenants themselves and Dillon and O'Brien. The romanticism of the whole affair has been greatly exaggerated.

Notes

- 1 G. Sutton, *The Political Career of Arthur Hugh Baron Barrymore, 1867-1903*, unpublished M. Phil thesis, UCC, 2004. The idea and much of the content for this paper draws much of its inspiration from chapters III and IV of my thesis and also from the pioneering work on New Tipperary by Denis G. Marnane.
- 2 F.S.L. Lyons, *John Dillon*, Dublin, 1975.
- 3 L.P. Curtis Jr, *Coercion and Conciliation in Ireland 1880-1892: a Study in Conservative Unionism*, Princeton, 1963, p.241.
- 4 Ibid, p.237.
- 5 *Cork Examiner*, 29 September 1887.
- 6 *Cork Examiner*, 7 March 1889.
- 7 Balfour to Lord Salisbury 18 January 1889, in Curtis, *Coercion*, p.248, J.S. Donnelly Jr., *The Land and People of Nineteenth Century Cork: the Rural Economy and the Land Question*, London, 1975 *Land and People*, p.357, D.G. Marnane, *Land and Violence: a History of West Tipperary since 1660*, Tipperary, 1985, p.106.
- 8 *Cork Constitution*, 4 January 1889.
- 9 Curtis, *Coercion*, p.241.
- 10 Ibid, p.250.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 *Cork Constitution*, 23 February 1889; Donnelly, *Land and People*, p.358.
- 13 L. M. Geary, *The Plan of Campaign 1886-1891*, Cork, 1986, p.112.
- 14 Curtis, *Coercion*, p.250. As well as Smith-Barry, the other investors who invested £10,000 were: the Dukes of Norfolk, Devonshire and Westminster, Lords Fitzwilliam, Ardilaun and Derby, Walter Morrison, the Duke of Bedford, Viscount de Vesci and the Earl of Pembroke.
- 15 *Cork Examiner*, 11 March 1889, W.J. Lane to the editor.
- 16 Canon D. Keller to T.P. Gill, 27/4/1889, Gill Papers N.L.I. MSS 13,500 (4).
- 17 *Cork Constitution*, 11 April 1889.
- 18 Donnelly, *Land and People*, p.359.
- 19 *Cork Examiner*, 29 April 1889.
- 20 *Cork Examiner* 27 July 1889, H.H. Townsend to W. Gyles, 17 June 1889.
- 21 *Cork Examiner* 28 May 1889, *Hunts County News*, 25 May 1889.
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 Ibid. The annual income from rents on the Ponsonby estate from 1867-1881 was £7,977 and after

Gladstone's Land Act of 1881 the annual rents decreased to £7,809. There were a series of abatements over the years on the Ponsonby estate before the Plan of Campaign era. As a result of the Land League there had been 15-20% abatements and the next year as a result of the 1881 Land Act there was a further abatement on all rents of 6%. Again, as a result of Lord Ashbournes Land Purchase Act 1885, there was another abatement of 15% on judicial rents. As a result of the worsening agricultural conditions during 1886 Ponsonby gave a further rent reduction of 9% on all rents but the tenants who were not satisfied took a claim to Land Court, and their abatements were so little that the Plan of Campaign was adopted.

- 24 *Hunt's County News*, 25 May 1889.
- 25 Curtis, *Coercion*, pp.250-51.
- 26 *Hansard House of Commons debates*, Volume 337, Columns 473-524, 21 June 1889.
- 27 *Ibid*, columns 488-490.
- 28 *Ibid*, columns 490/491.
- 29 *Ibid*, column 493.
- 30 *Ibid*, columns 501-2.
- 31 *Royal Commission to Enquire into the Estates of Evicted Tenants in Ireland*, British Parliamentary sessional papers, XXXI, C.6935, paragraph 7, p.11.
- 32 D.G. Marnane, *Land and Violence*, pp70-2
- 33 Geary, *Plan*, p.114.
- 34 Curtis, *Coercion*, p.249.
- 35 W. O'Brien, *Evening Memories*, London, 1920, p.421.
- 36 Marnane, *Land and Violence*, p.106.
- 37 *Tipperary People*, 24 June 1889.
- 38 O'Brien, *Evening Memories*, p.425.
- 39 *Freeman's Journal*, 28 June 1889; M. Tierney, *Croke of Cashel: the Life of Archbishop Thomas William Croke, 1823-1902*, Dublin, 1976, p. 227.
- 40 *Cork Constitution*, 4 July 1889; *Cork Examiner*, 4 July 1889.
- 41 *Cork Constitution*, 4 July 1889.
- 42 *Cork Constitution*, 8 July 1889.
- 43 Marnane, *Land and Violence*, p.107.
- 44 *Cork Examiner*, 22 July 1889.
- 45 M. Davitt, *Fall of Feudalism in Ireland*, London, 1904, pp.521-22.
- 46 *Freeman's Journal*, 10 August 1889; *United Ireland*, 17 August 1889; *Tipperary People*, 12 August 1889.
- 47 Marnane, *Land and Violence*, p.106.
- 48 *Tipperary People*, 27 September 1889. For a full report of the incident and the report of his funeral see *Irish Times*, 21 September 1889.
- 49 *Freeman's Journal*, 9 September 1889.
- 50 *Tipperary People*, 27 September 1889.
- 51 *Irish Times*, 12 October 1889.
- 52 D.G. Marnane, 'Father David Humphreys and New Tipperary', in W. Nolan and T.G. McGrath, (eds), *Tipperary: History and Society*, Dublin, 1985, pp 371-3; also see *Freeman's Journal*, 21 April 1890.
- 53 *Tipperary People*, 21 August 1891.
- 54 Marnane, *Land and Violence*, p.108.
- 55 Croke to Smith-Barry, 10 May 1890, Croke Papers, NLI.
- 56 Marnane, 'Humphreys', p.373.
- 57 F.S.L. Lyons, *Charles Stewart Parnell*, Oxford, 1977, p.442.
- 58 Marnane, *Land and Violence*, p.108.
- 59 *Freeman's Journal*, 11 October 1890.
- 60 *Irish Times*, 21 January 1891.
- 61 Humphreys to Dillon, 17 January 1891, Dillon Papers, TCD MS 6770 (74).
- 62 *Freeman's Journal*, 8 June 1891.

- 63 Marnane, *Land and Violence*, p.108.
- 64 *Cork Constitution*, 1 June 1891. Commission on evicted tenants 1893/94, British Parliamentary Sessional Papers, 1893-94, XXXI, p.11.
- 65 *Cork Examiner*, 30 May and 1 June 1891.
- 66 *Cork Constitution*, 1 June 1891.
- 67 Ibid.
- 68 Ibid, *Cork Examiner*, 1 June 1891.
- 69 Report of Evicted Tenants Commission 1893-94, British Parliamentary Sessional Papers, XXXI, paras 6193-224.
- 70 Sutton, *Baron Barrymore, 1867-1903*.
- 71 Ibid. Marnane's conclusions, in his *Land and Violence*, are similar.
- 72 M. Davitt, *Fall of Feudalism in Ireland*, London, 1904. pp 521-2.