

The Insurrection of 1848¹

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Within weeks of the fiasco at the Widow McCormack's house at Farrenrory, on 29 July 1848, a much more determined and longer lasting insurrection would take place under John O'Mahony's leadership. This was a completely separate and distinct outbreak from the Farrenrory affair and was triggered by different circumstances. Despite the emphasis by historians on the attempted revolt which ended in July 1848, and the Cappoquin rising of September 1849, the present work will argue that the insurrection led by O'Mahony in September 1848 was much more significant and potentially a far greater danger for the British administration. The government and police records show that the authorities perceived this particular outbreak as a very serious threat, an apprehension they never felt during the period of William Smith O'Brien's perambulations in July 1848. O'Mahony, largely because of the extent and intensity of the loyalty to his family and name, was the only leader to pose any real danger or make serious headway against the government forces in 1848.

From 22 August to late September 1848, O'Mahony, along with John Savage and Philip Gray, conducted a guerrilla campaign against the police barracks and smaller military posts along the valley of the Suir in the Tipperary-Waterford-Kilkenny border area. Their forces caused panic among the authorities and forced the police to withdraw from a number of barracks. However, eventually a series of reverses led to the termination of their guerrilla activities. Some weeks after the cessation of active insurrection, O'Mahony escaped to France and Savage made his way to America. Of the triumvirate, Gray alone remained in Ireland and was to play a leading role in the Cappoquin rising of the following year.

Context of Insurrection

By the autumn of 1848 the Famine had wrought havoc among the poorer sections of rural Irish society through death from hunger and associated diseases. The failure of the potato crop, for the fourth successive



John O'Mahony (circa 1867)

year, left millions facing starvation.² While the Famine had certainly ravaged the Irish poor, there was still the potential for armed resistance. Those driven to the brink of economic annihilation, but who had not yet gone over, provided prime revolutionary material. A correspondent from Carrick reported in the *Tipperary Vindicator*:

Having been on the spot, I can say that the [insurgent] movement has been caused, not more by political discontent and disaffection than by the grinding social tyranny under which the vast bulk of the labouring population groan, and that it will be extremely difficult to put it down, unless by the employment of the destitute labouring classes and the termination of the system of wholesale eviction. ... There is a violent feeling against the export of corn, &c. and many are the rumours abroad with respect to the intentions of the insurgents regarding it.³

Clearly the problem was not one of food shortage, but of ensuring that those in need had access to existing supplies. The spectacle of military detachments guarding convoys of grain out of the country from the starving poor, accompanied by the mass evictions carried out with government support, must have been intensely provoking for the insurgents.⁴

The reaping of Mullough, 22 August 1848

In the *Tipperary Vindicator*, of 19 August 1848, it was reported that:

The *Hue and Cry*, of 17th instant contains descriptions of 9 individuals at Carrick-on-Suir who are 'suspected of being engaged in treasonable practices,' and for whom arrest warrants are placed in the hands of the police of that town. The following are the names: Joseph Rivers,⁵ of Tybroughney Castle, Esq; John Purcell, apothecary; John O'Mahony, gentleman; the brothers Robert Quinlan, farmer; David Quinlan, farmer⁶; Patrick Hannigan,⁷ farmer; Patrick Coghlan, farmer; and in Carrickbeg, in the county Waterford, James Quan, victualler; and James Joy, tailor.⁸

O'Mahony's description, in the *Hue and Cry*, as a gentleman indicates a higher social standing than that of the men described as farmers. With a warrant against him, O'Mahony could not attend to his harvest that August. In a report dated 21 August 1848, R.D. Coulson, RM at Carrick, wrote – 'Everything quiet - the country people are now cutting the crops of those against whom warrants have been issued and saving them for them. They did so for Mr. O'Donnell⁹ and propose doing so tomorrow or [the] next day for Mr. O'Mahony'.¹⁰

The project that brought the people together in the launch of the new insurgent movement was the reaping of a large field of wheat belonging to O'Mahony in spite of attempts at intimidation by the military. This event is commemorated in the ballad 'The Reaping of Mullough', composed by John Savage who was in O'Mahony's company on that day. On 28 July, Savage had left Dublin seeking to link up with O'Brien in the South. On Savage's arrival in the Carrick area he first met O'Mahony, with whom he remained for over two months.¹¹ During this time Savage became a firm friend of O'Mahony, and this was a friendship that would last until death.

We are told in Savage's poem that the reapers, on that day of 22 August, came 'from Comeraghs wild to Slievenamon, from Grange to Galteemore' and made their way to Mullough to help in the harvesting of O'Mahony's crops.¹² This is an extensive area encompassing parts of Cork, Limerick, Tipperary, Waterford and Kilkenny. As there were

several hundred involved it is quite possible that Savage's sweep of country is not an exaggeration. In his report dated 23 August, Coulson wrote that:

It was reported to me that a large concourse of people had gone out to Mullough for the alleged purpose of cutting the crops of Mr. O'Mahony, and that a boast had been made by them and him that they would be prepared and he would be there and we could not take him. I also thought this cutting of crops might be an excuse for a meeting of another description.¹³

This 'meeting' was undoubtedly a muster for insurrection. It is not clear from Coulson's account how the vow was made that the authorities would not be able to take O'Mahony; but it would be shown that this was no hollow boast.

On that day, of 22 August, the reapers had scarcely begun working when the approach of a troop of horsemen was announced and O'Mahony and Savage, apparently according to a prearranged plan, decided to leave. The authorities had taken out a force of thirty constabulary with a support party of one hundred military and twenty cavalry following a short distance behind. In his subsequent report, Coulson wrote that:

Upon the constabulary reaching the field they discovered an immense assemblage cutting wheat who instantly began to hurrah and fling up their hats and then look above their heads and gathered into one corner of the field. The officer thought it prudent to load and retire until I came up with [the] military which I did in ten minutes and upon hearing his report I marched the whole column into the field and letting the troops proceed with police and searched every man's face through the crowds for O'Mahony, or any others against whom we had warrants, but found none. He had fled, - if he were there. We also searched three houses. The people instantly became as quiet as mice - not a word from them. They too had daggers but did not dare to use any.¹⁴

The saving of O'Mahony's harvest that day at Mullough was an open challenge to the authorities, but it also demonstrated the insurgents' strong degree of organization and their loyalty to O'Mahony. No record has yet been discovered of the insurgents' activities during the following two weeks. It may have been a period of intense preparation for what was to come. If O'Mahony had his way this period of preparation would have been prolonged to the eve of the opening of the State Trials.

Guerilla Warfare

By the first week of September, O'Mahony felt that he had no choice but to yield to persuasion and consent to give discipline and direction to the simmering insurrection in Tipperary, Waterford and Kilkenny. On 5 September 1848 O'Mahony assigned his interest in the family farm at Clonkilla near Mitchelstown, County Cork, to his brother in law, James Mandeville, of Ballycurkeen House, County Tipperary, for £225.¹⁵ In his report dated 7 September, Coulson is of the opinion that 'this 'rising' if it occurs will be a paltry thing and local and I know there are no funds as O'Mahony is obliged to sell his house - apart from that I think him more dangerous as a leader of this kind of guerrilla warfare than any other'.¹⁶ O'Mahony's presence under the nose of the authorities in Clonmel, Carrick, South Kilkenny and Waterford, presented a serious threat to the government.

From at least 5 September, and continuing for several weeks, parties of police and military engaged in constant pursuit of O'Mahony and his comrades. Because he possessed a thorough knowledge of the terrain, O'Mahony would have had the advantage over the authorities. He eluded the vigilance of the detectives from Dublin Castle in the autumn of 1848 by continually moving about from place to place, and sleeping under a guard provided by his followers.¹⁷

On 5 September parties of constabulary searched an extensive district along the southern base of Slievenamon, in an attempt to trap O'Mahony and his companions. Their efforts included an intensive search of Kilcash and Ballypatrick and along the north banks of the Suir. They failed to make any arrests. On the following night, the authorities searched on the Waterford side (where O'Mahony had drilled 300 men the previous night) but were equally unsuccessful. This indicates that O'Mahony's intelligence was extremely good. In his report, dated 7 September 1848, Coulson admitted that 'I am greatly accursed at not being able to arrest O'Mahony. He is a most dangerous character and has been exciting the minds of the people lately for a rising in both counties [Tipperary and Waterford]. This week is still named for it.'¹⁸ In this same report, Coulson noted that 'All the information I get unhappily comes too late to prove useful.'¹⁹ This is a complaint which Coulson makes repeatedly throughout his reports during the autumn of 1848.

In his retrospective account published in the *Phoenix* (New York) of 25 February 1860, O'Mahony recalled that nearly two months after the attempted rising in July:

A somewhat similar, and no less imprudent and hap-hazard attempt, was made in the neighbourhood of Carrick-on-Suir. Of this I had the misfortune to be, myself, the ostensible mover. This undertaking was urged on by no immediate exhortations of the press. It was simply the result of the popular indignation of the men of that locality, at the disappointment of their hopes at Ballingarry. At first, as if spontaneously, this feeling took the place of a conspiracy. Without any pledge of secrecy to bind us, all our movements of any importance were kept concealed from the enemy. The authorities of the foreign garrison knew, indeed, of our combination, and might easily guess at our ultimate designs; but they could neither form an estimate of our force nor learn when, where, or how, it was about to be brought to bear against them. This uncertainty, on their part, gave us a very great advantage over them. Night and day, during several weeks, they had parties of their myrmidons in almost constant pursuit of me and two or three fellow-outlaws,²⁰ who joined their fortunes to mine – I suppose because they could find no one else then – but though I had no armed or well organized body of men around me, I baffled all their efforts at arresting either myself or my comrades. They never could succeed even in coming within sight of us; and, though we had often to sleep in the open air, and in caverns and woods, still we never lost a night's rest by their pursuit. My friends and adherents were so much more faithful than theirs, that I had better intelligence of their movements than they had of mine. I was nearly always made aware of their intended line of march before they had gone far beyond the precincts of their barracks, so that, by a slight detour, I could always avoid meeting them.

Meanwhile, as some of you may remember, the revolutionary spirit of the people, in and around Carrick-on-Suir, had again become red-hot. The Middle Classes, indeed, stood aloof from me; but the brave peasantry and mechanics flocked around

me the more zealously, as if for this very reason. I held constant counsel with influential men among the latter, within the sound of the bugles of our enemies, and, more than once, held parley with their rebelliously disposed soldiers, almost within the lines of their encampments. By these means, I caused my pursuers to suffer many of the evils of an actual campaign, though no opposing force could be seen by them anywhere. Their soldiers and policemen were harassed and worn out by forced marches by night and day, and many of them, broken down by fatigue, had, as I have since learned, to be sent off sick to distant hospitals – but sent thither, privately and by night, lest our party should have the satisfaction of knowing the effect of our manner of acting upon their ranks.²¹

O'Mahony's reference to 'popular indignation' in the Carrick area, after the fiasco at Farrenrory, is substantiated by William Ryan, RM, Clonmel, who noted, in his report dated 2 September, that 'I have heard from a respectable person that the people are not satisfied at all with the way the war ended [at Farrenrory]'.²²

Like O'Mahony, Michael Doheny also specifically mentions the existence of a 'conspiracy' among Irishmen in the British army and notes, in his *Felon's track* (1849), that in early August 1848:

What had chiefly animated our hopes for the few days was the knowledge that disaffection and conspiracy existed in the ranks of the British army. But among other intelligence of evil omen that reached us was this, that the conspiracy had been discovered. Whether this were true or not, our means of communication were suspended; and, unable to learn what had occurred, we naturally concluded it was the worst.²³

Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Irishmen in the British army would be sworn into the I.R.B during the early-mid 1860s, but as this incident illustrates, the possibility of winning the soldiers over to the revolution had already suggested itself in 1848.²⁴

In his narrative of 1848, O'Mahony relates that he met with Michael Doheny for the last time in Ireland on Sunday, 13 August.²⁵ However, numerous references to Doheny assisting O'Mahony in his revolutionary efforts can be found in contemporary newspapers and in the government and police records.²⁶ The authorities seem to have been deliberately misled by the reports that they received of Doheny's movements at this time, which would have provided a smokescreen for his escape. In the *Clonmel Chronicle*, of Tuesday 12 September, it was noted that:

Doheny and O'Mahony have been hovering about this neighbourhood for the past week, the former is positively stated to have been here a few nights ago; one person who does not deny sympathy with his cause, told me that he saw him on Wednesday night, about half past nine o'clock; he was disguised very little, and had as an object for his visit to discover the movements of the soldiery, as well as communicate with clubbists, who are more numerous here than in any other place in Ireland, taking into account its size. ...Seven confederate leaders were said to have imitated the tactics of the military by getting up a 'flying column' whose quick and sudden movements are the subject of general surprise – one time at the hill of Carrickbeg, another at Lowry's bridge; in the evening encamped at Curraghmore Wood, and

away at Kilmacthomas in the morning. Informers themselves are puzzled in giving secret information to the authorities as to the whereabouts of the rebels, their movements are so daring and uncertain.²⁷

The term 'flying column' was originally used to describe small mobile military units. Tipperary and Waterford, in September 1848, remained tense with constant reports of the insurgents' use of flying columns which were extremely difficult for the authorities to combat. O'Mahony's strategy at this time appears to have been to build on small-scale local successes until his forces were strong enough to pose a more substantial military threat. The guerrilla tactics adopted by O'Mahony in 1848 anticipated those used even more effectively by the IRA. units in the War of Independence (1919-21) to tie down the numerically superior and better armed British forces.

In his report dated 9 September, Coulson wrote that:

There is no doubt but there has been meetings on a pretty large scale within the last week, but all of rabble, at which most inciting speeches and threats were made by O'Mahony and others. Doheny attended them. Unfortunately all my information comes the day after it could prove beneficial. I have been several times close upon their heels and on Monday night some of them were so closely pursued that they left their horses upon the road. The better description of farmers are now showing a distaste for any movement. A man named Moore of Clonea I think will give me information.²⁸ O'Mahony inspected and drilled 300 men there on Tuesday night. I was then unfortunately searching for him in Co. Tipperary and the next night when I was at Clonea he was at Coolnamuck also with a large body assembled. So I was particularly unlucky. It is a fact that the labourers refused to come to their work at Moore's on Tuesday morning saying they did not know the moment they might be called upon to fight! Any demonstration these men could get up would I think, be very contemptible, but might be most mischievous in their attacks on private property and persons. In the absence of all means of certain or reliable information, I can only give them as many sleepless nights and busy days as they give me by pursuing a constant system of harassing pursuit and search wearing them out or at least prevent their arms being sufficient.²⁹

In the event Coulson's prediction of 'attacks on private property and persons' did not come to pass. During the period of active insurrection there would be no destruction of property or attacks on loyalists.

The political temperature appeared to be rising in South Tipperary throughout early September.³⁰ In his report dated 11 September, William Ryan, RM Clonmel, wrote that:

He [an informant] states that he was in company with several farmers from Ballyneale district and they told him that there is no knowing the moment the people will rise out. They are to muster 30,000 men to commence at Ballyneale, Carrick or Carrick by Glenbower and Nine-mile-House and if not they are to go through the country like [George] Washington and everyman who is against them [is] to be shot. O'Mahony, Doheny and a third man from Dublin³¹ is to lead them. O'Mahony has got a suit of war clothes made himself. Four or five men from the Co. Waterford and from Kilkenny, and letters from Co. Cork, were at Ballyneale on yesterday. He

[the informant] strongly recommends the police to be brought into town, out of harm. The county was never so well armed with pikes and guns, but all carefully concealed. The Rev. Fr. Morrissey [parish priest of Ballyneale and Grangemockler] spoke to the people for a long time after mass recommending them to have nothing to do with any disturbances. The farmers are inclined for peace but the labourers and broken farmers are so badly off that they do not care what they do. O'Mahony is letting them wild, he is a most reckless man. The farmers that he alludes to sold a quantity of corn and vegetables and were afraid but to bring home gold from the town with those people getting the gold in the bank. He also tells me there is 3 kegs of powder hiding at Mullough near Ballyneale.³²

O'Mahony is described above as being a 'most reckless man'. Recklessness was certainly not one of O'Mahony's characteristics. On the contrary, Doheny had rightly perceived during his days with O'Mahony, in July-August 1848, that caution was one of O'Mahony's leading characteristics.³³ It would have made it an easy task for the authorities to capture O'Mahony if he had been 'reckless'. The use of this term may be an indirect reference to O'Mahony's excellent horsemanship or, perhaps, police terminology for a serious threat.

Ryan's report, quoted above, is a very accurate and well-informed account of the state of things at this time. His informant may have been someone in O'Mahony's confidence who was now betraying that trust, or just as likely, an agent used by O'Mahony to mislead the authorities. It would not be surprising if it had been deliberate on O'Mahony's part, because he was a master tactician. The report also indicates that, in addition to the district around Ballyneale in South Tipperary, O'Mahony could raise parts of three other counties (Cork, Waterford and Kilkenny) for his insurrection. Strong farmers, at least in the Ballyneale district, were prepared to take part.

Notwithstanding the factors that appeared to be in his favour for staging an insurrection, O'Mahony wrote in his retrospective narrative:

But where was this system of operations to end? For my own part, I had no distinct plan of action on my mind when I assumed the leadership of my brother rebels in South Tipperary and the neighbouring districts of Waterford and Kilkenny. I did it at first, for the sole object of keeping up the war spirit of my immediate neighbours and friends, and of concentrating around me a remnant of the Club organization, and of thus retaining it together, until some more experienced and better known man, should be found to direct it; for I could not then believe it possible that, all our chiefs and leaders had fled from us, never to return, or even to look back at the pitfall into which their own improvidence had led us. I expected that, some one or other of them would turn up somewhere, when they should have heard that, *we were able and willing to shelter and protect them*, and, coming to take the guidance of myself and my comrades, that they would strive to remedy the disaster and shame that fell upon our country, renouncing the clamorous oratorical appeals and sensation articles of the Confederation, and falling into the footsteps of Tone, Fitzgerald and Emmet. To find them do this, would have afforded some satisfaction for the sad desolation which their first attempt had brought upon the homes of some of us. Alas! I laboured under that illusion over long. It was but of late years that it was thoroughly dispelled. With one or two exceptions, it would seem as if the

prominent Young Irelanders were then fleeing, not alone from the consequences of the crude and rash enterprise in which they had been just foiled; but from the very cause itself, to which they had committed us all. Up to this day, their flight has been to us, like what is expressed to us by the Irish – *Imtheacht an fhiaigh on Airc; Imtheacht gan casadh choidhche*.³⁴ But this is, perhaps, the wiser course. It is at all events the easier, while the world esteems them heroes and martyrs, leaving to us the disgrace and ruin and grief.

Besides this, I fancied that it could not be possible but that some more of their partisans were working in other rural districts, as I was in that of Carrick-on-Suir. Feeling my own personal safety, and feeling how easy it was to reorganize our party with intelligent helpers, I hoped to open a communication, and take counsel with any man that might be keeping the field, previous to taking any aggressive steps whatever. Before I knew my mistake, and learned that I was really alone, I found myself the centre and head of an ardent and zealous, but widely scattered and unorganised force of several thousand brave and faithful partisans.

How was I to bring together in large masses the dispersed, isolated, and undisciplined members of this force. I had scarcely any subordinate officers to divide the labour with me, and to participate in the burthens of command. Whenever I chanced to be personally present, my orders were obeyed; but when I was absent those orders, transmitted through others, were little heeded. In the dearth of assistants, I felt, in my own mind, that some excitement, coming from some outside quarter, should be present, in order to give impetus and direction to a general muster. I dreaded the result of summoning my men together at any preconcerted time and place, or by any command or signal, emanating directly from myself. It seemed otherwise to my most ardent companions and adherents. I now feel that I was right, and that they were wrong; and I shall evermore oppose and condemn any measure of the kind for the muster of undisciplined masses. With experienced and disciplined officers to superintend it and carry it through, in all its parts, the case might be quite different.³⁵

The large numbers of insurgents in South Tipperary, Waterford and Kilkenny, mentioned by O'Mahony above, are attested by police/magistrates' reports and contemporary newspapers.³⁶ O'Mahony's general problem as overall commander of the September insurrection was to maintain discipline and control the enthusiasm of thousands of followers clamouring for action.

After William Smith O'Brien's arrest in Thurles on 6 August, O'Mahony had been consumed with the single thought of securing his release and that of Thomas Francis Meagher and Terence Bellew McManus. In his report dated 2 September, William Ryan, RM, Clonmel, wrote that 'The general idea is that it is Doheny and O'Mahony that is stirring up the people, and that the meeting [of insurgents] is relative to the State Prisoners and their trials'.³⁷ O'Mahony recalled later that:

These trials were so likely to rivet the attention of all that remained hopeful and true of the National party upon the above-named town [Clonmel], that any movement, made by my party upon it at that crisis, would have been almost certain of wide support. While, if as was most probable, an attempt at rescuing the prisoners should

be made by parties from elsewhere, my force would have been near to second and to complete it. Such were my thoughts. They were, perhaps, the thoughts of the enemy likewise. My presence, almost in their midst, and the large number of my friends, must have caused them great embarrassment and alarm. They were entirely ignorant of the extent of my power to attack them. All they knew was that they could not find me, and that in whatever locality I chanced to spend a day or night, there was always found, on the very spot, an improvised band of some fifty or a hundred men to watch over my safety and to guard me, if need be, while I staid [sic] with them. They were also ignorant of my designs and plans.

In this predicament, their obvious plan was to cause me to display my full strength openly, so that they might be able to crush it, before the State Prisoners should be brought to Clonmel – at least, I now think, that such was their intent. Having seen my hand, they could more easily defeat my plans. But no open force, that they could employ, was able to effect this end – I laughed at their force. How, then, was I to be forced to expose my resources to them. I verily believe that they effected that object, *by getting persons to act covertly upon the impatient and ardent tempers of many of the very truest and most earnest of my supporters.* The latter were insensibly impelled to a headlong course by the spreading abroad of false rumours of risings, now here, now there, which had existence nowhere. One day a report reached us that the inhabitants of some town or district of Kilkenny was up in arms, and marching to join us. Another day, the rising was said to be in some part of Waterford, Cork or Limerick. At other times, men came running to tell me that, some barrack or other could be taken with some small number of men. It was reported to me more than once that a certain number of the soldiery, in one or other of the neighbouring garrisons, were ready to turn over to us on our first onset. I still steadily refused to take the open field, and soon found that those rumours were, for the most part, unfounded.

But the agents of our tyrants were not to be so readily defeated in their schemes. They seemed but to continue working still more incessantly upon the impatience of my adherents.

At last those adherents were, as I have reason to think, urged by those concealed agents, or, at least, by rumours disseminated by them, to ask me seriously – ‘Did I mean to let Mr. O’Brien and his fellow-prisoners be hanged before my face, without striking a blow for their deliverance?’ To meet my excuse that, ‘these gentlemen had not been as yet sent down from Dublin to stand their trial,’ it was confidently reported that 6,000 British soldiers were ordered to march upon Clonmel, and to form an encampment in the immediate vicinity of that town, and thus render abortive, or impossible, any movement of mine. To this, also, I might have paid little heed, had not the rumour been spread at the same time that my only object in keeping up the excitement was for the purpose of effecting my own escape under its cover. I was openly taunted with this even by some well-meaning folk that should have known me better.

My feelings were irritated at so ungenerous a charge, and, in an evil hour, I yielded to the wishes of my companions, and named a time for a general rising of that part of the country. ...Having thus made up my mind for bringing matters to a final

issue, I visited in person each locality within my reach, during the short interval left to me. I assigned special leaders and special duties to the men of each place, and pointed certain works to be done by them on the first night of the rising. Trusty messengers were despatched to such quarters as were too distant or too out of the way for a personal visit.³⁸

O'Mahony's account of the use of agents *provocateurs* by the authorities is consistent with contemporary reports. On Sunday, 10 September, the police at Fethard, County Tipperary, discovered notices posted in various parts of the town, which were headed 'Voice from the prison, Liberty, liberty, liberty' and proclaimed:

Brave young men of Tipperary, you are called on to come forward in the cause of your country, as these gentlemen are about to be put on their trials, who forfeited their lives and properties to free you from English tyrants. Will you stand silent, to see those men dragged to the gallows, or the transport ships. No never, men of Tipperary, Cork, Clare, Kilkenny, Limerick (W. S. O'Brien), Kerry, Waterford, Wexford, Wicklow, Dublin, Carlow, Meath and Galway, all Ireland will be with you; come, hold your meetings and free yourselves.³⁹

The *Tipperary Vindicator* recorded the appearance of certain notices in other parts of the county, and commented:

With whom these notices have originated, it is impossible, of course, that we can conjecture, except from circumstances; and these circumstances amply warrant us in arriving at the conclusion that the notices have not come from parties who may be supposed friendly to the political prisoners to be tried at the Special Commission, which opens tomorrow (Thursday); for that they are calculated to harm rather than serve the political prisoners, is unquestionable. The inference is plain, therefore, that these notices are the handywork of spies and informers, who are just now prowling about all parts of the country.⁴⁰

Government agents may have posted such notices in order to precipitate the insurgents into premature action before the trials of the Irish Confederate leaders commenced on 21 September.

Preparations for Insurrection

In his *Felon's track*, Doheny wrote that Savage acted as O'Mahony's principal counsellor and comrade during the insurrection of September 1848. Together they visited the disaffected districts of Tipperary and Waterford in organising the insurrection.⁴¹ The next most prominent man in the revolutionary movement after Savage was Philip Gray.

In late July, Gray had collected over a hundred men in Carrick and had marched them towards Ballingarry to support O'Brien. By the time Gray arrived, it was already too late. After his discovery of the fiasco at Farrenrory, Gray led his contingent back to Carrick where he was arrested after being found with a case of pistols and ammunition.⁴² Following his release, a few weeks later, Gray got into communication with O'Mahony and succeeded in winning his confidence.⁴³

Thomas Hickey, who lived on a hill farm at Coolnamuck, a townland of Carrickbeg, about a half-mile from Carrick-on-Suir, was another of O'Mahony's lieutenants in September

1848.⁴⁴ John Savage wrote a poem later, entitled 'The Rebel Cot', after the Hickey family's hill-farm, which was a meeting place and a safe haven for O'Mahony, Savage and Gray.⁴⁵ Hickey would take part in the attack on Portlaw police barracks, on 12 September. Some years later, he became a local leader in the I.R.B.⁴⁶

A John Grant, who served later as an officer of artillery in the Mexican army, was also one of O'Mahony's lieutenants in September 1848.⁴⁷ Another was a man with the surname of Hannan who would appear to have been the same person whom the police discovered at O'Mahony's home at Mullough, on 31 July 1848, with part of his thumb shot off.⁴⁸ Hannan would play a prominent role in the '49 movement.⁴⁹

From at least the evening of 11 September, the insurgents in South Tipperary began to muster in a great camp established by O'Mahony on Carrigadoon Hill (about 5 miles north of Carrick) near the village of Aheny (also known as the Slate Quarries) on the borders of Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny. The division that met at the camp on Carrigadoon Hill was the main body under the command of O'Mahony but it also became the focal centre for the insurgents⁵⁰ in the three bordering counties.

In his report dated 12 September, William Ryan, R. M. Clonmel wrote that about 200 men had left that town the night before and were seen going down the north bank of the river Suir, in parties of 15 or 20, to join the insurgents. It was remarked subsequently in the *Kilkenny Moderator* that:

No doubt now remains of the fact of an insurgent force having assembled and shown a spirit of the utmost determination. The main body of the rebels, said to be 4,000 strong, is encamped on Aheny [Carrigadoon] Hill, in the county of Tipperary, but immediately adjoining the slate quarries, in this county. The position is an extremely strong one, and every possible measure appears to have been taken to add to its security. There is no doubt that leaders of some military experience are in the camp, and the peasantry are being regularly drilled. They are chiefly armed with pikes, but many have rifles. ...Another report asserts that yesterday morning 800 men armed with pikes marched through Coolnamuck wood, from the county of Waterford, to join the insurgents at Aheny Hill. It is also stated that a temporary encampment of insurgents was held last night at Lisnatigue in this county, and near Kilcash, in Tipperary.⁵¹

The *Clonmel Chronicle*, of Tuesday 12 September, noted that:

Not a labourer was to be seen between Carrick and Clonmel until he [the reporter] reached this town; all have joined the rebels on the hills, who are represented to number several thousands. ...Their commissariat is said to be most abundantly supplied at the expense of the neighbouring farm-houses.

In his recollections, Thomas Clarke Luby also remarked that when he was in the Suir valley in 1849: 'Tom Hickey and other countrymen used to enjoy telling how the insurgents roasted oxen whole on iron gates dismounted and placed over a huge fire'.⁵² Although well fed for the moment, the insurgents would have needed to go further away from the camps to seek provisions after a time.

Meanwhile, John Savage took his station, along with Philip Gray, at a camp which had been formed on Cruachán Paorach, the hill dominating the town of Kilmacthomas in East

Waterford.⁵³ In his *Felon's track*, Doheny wrote that 'He [Savage] was entirely unknown to the people; and owed his influence over them to his singular resolution'.⁵⁴ Savage's leadership role is remarkable considering that he was only twenty years of age at this time and, as a Dublin newcomer, utterly unknown in Waterford.

The insurgents' plan of campaign was based on the understanding that one body from the north of the river Suir (under O'Mahony), one from the south (under Savage/Gray) and a third consisting of an equal number of men promised from Kilkenny (leader unnamed) would march simultaneously on the town of Carrick and Lord Bessborough's estate at Piltown, County Kilkenny, where five hundred British soldiers were encamped.⁵⁵ This plan required the insurgents to either capture or force the evacuation of all the police barracks along the valley of the Suir. Once this was accomplished one arm of the government would be neutralised and the countryside would be in the hands of the insurgents. In order to delay the military from advancing quickly out of Waterford City it was necessary to destroy the bridge at Grannagh (east of Carrick) over the Suir and also to cut the city's road link with South Kilkenny. Similarly, to prevent any military advance along the south bank of the Suir, the insurgents needed to hold the town of Portlaw on the main road from Carrick to Waterford.⁵⁶ Some years later, O'Mahony recalled that:

I proceeded in due time to the point where I resolved to take up my own position. On my arrival there I found a large number of my friends assembled together without any order or discipline. It was useless to set subordinate officers over them, for no one seemed willing to obey any orders but my own, and the men appointed over small parties of their comrades, were disobeyed and deserted to follow myself, as soon as ever I left the position where I had stationed them. Thus they kept moving to and fro, like a crowd at a fair. But that was not all. I was disappointed in the attendance of that particular portion of my supporters, whose presence was indispensable to the execution of the special enterprise laid down for that division of our muster. At length day dawned upon us to show that not one of the works, which I had commanded to be executed previous to taking a single step in advance, had been anywhere performed – works, without which, I could not hope to hold the field for any time – and that several attempts which I had forbidden, as destructive, had been tried and had failed.⁵⁷

It is clear from the above that O'Mahony's own magnetism hindered his effective leadership. Whether due to the serious deficiency in officer material, or to O'Mahony's popularity, or both, his followers would only obey orders that came directly from him. O'Mahony would make sure that this situation would not be repeated: in Fenian times spontaneous insurrection was to be replaced by a fully-fledged military organization with adequate officers to implement his revolutionary policies.

From as early as 5 September, the authorities in Carrick had anticipated an outbreak and accordingly had taken precautions to meet any sudden attack on the town or upon the military encampment on the Bessborough estate.⁵⁸ The evidence would suggest that a concerted effort at insurrection had been planned for the evening of 11 September. In his report dated 12 September, William Ryan, RM Clonmel, wrote that:

The chapel bells of Kilcash and Ballyneale were rung between nine and ten o'clock last night to collect the party to go into Carrick-on-Suir to take the town and rise [sic] the rebellion. There was a messenger came out from Carrick to tell them not to

go in as there was [a] strange army in Carrick and that they were not strong enough. Almost every man has left the town of Carrick and is out at the Stony Rock, Co. Waterford, where there are a great number of the people and also more at Newtown mountain [which] borders [on] Co. Kilkenny. They lit sops [i.e. a piece of hay] after the bell rung at the top of Kilcash, Cephain [Seefin, County Waterford] and near Carrick. About an hour before the bell rung the men about Kilcash commenced getting the pikes ready, some of them came to Ballypatrick and then went to Kilcash. Doheny, the two Quinlans, O'Mahony, Coghlan and Pat Hannigan were about the mountain foot all day backwards and forwards. O'Mahony and Coghlan went into Carrick about twelve o'clock in the day. It was those that sent word out not to go into Carrick. They were planning about eight days ago to attack the police barrack and take their arms. James Murphy of Ballypatrick did all he could to make the people go into Carrick last night. Doheny is constantly going to and from the Co. Waterford across the Suir.⁵⁹

The proposed attack on Carrick did not take place. The authorities were not only misled about Doheny, they were also misinformed about Patrick Coghlan whose days as a club leader had ended on 27 July 1848. O'Mahony wrote later that 'Young Coghlan never came near us after. He was two months on his keeping, and availed himself of the very day of the rising I attempted to give himself up, and make his peace with the English authorities.'⁶⁰ A reporter for the *Tipperary Vindicator* ascertained that on the evening of Tuesday 11 September:

O'Mahony had a review of a large body of armed men, estimated at nearly 1,000, last night on a road leading from Slievenamon to Carrick, which they lined at either side for a considerable distance, and who are supposed to have gone on towards Curraghmore.⁶¹

In an intelligence report, dated 7 September, Coulson had noted that 'It was the [insurgents] intention to attack Curraghmore [House] last night and take their cannon, had [the Marquis of] Waterford been absent.'⁶² Savage may have planned an attack on Curraghmore House, the residence of Henry Beresford, the third Marquis of Waterford (about two miles west of Portlaw in County Waterford) perhaps with the assistance of O'Mahony's forces from north of the river Suir. The attack did not take place in the end because the house was strongly fortified.

Kilkenny and Waterford Insurgents

In his *'98 and '48*, John Savage relates that 'After some weeks of preparation, we finally 'lit the fires' on the midnight of 12 September'. According to Savage, the Waterford insurgents were active at Portlaw, Rathgormack and other places along the northern slopes of the Comeragh mountains.⁶³

Michael Doheny's account of the September insurrection, given in his *Felon's track*, was definitely second hand. He obtained his information from O'Mahony, whom he may have met in Paris later that year (and with whom he remained in contact) and Savage, whom he met afterwards in New York. In his *Felon's track*, Doheny relates that the unnamed leader of the Kilkenny men went on to carry out his mission. This left O'Mahony and Savage at either side 'to contend with the impetuosity of their respective followers who demanded with



John Savage

violence to be led on.⁶⁴ The Kilkenny men were unable to take Kilmacow barracks in the south of the county. They attempted to make Grannagh bridge unusable but failed; it is a very sturdy structure built to last. Scouring parties from each rebel camp went through the country in search of weapons. While a raid for privately held arms was successful near Rathgormack, an attempt made to seize the arsenal of a Reverend William Hill near Mothel failed.⁶⁵

At five o'clock in the morning of Tuesday, 12 September 1848, a detachment of 300 insurgents, under Savage and Gray, surrounded the police barracks at Portlaw, and demanded a surrender of their arms. The eight policemen and a local magistrate who defended the barracks refused to comply; several shots were then fired on both sides. Although the police escaped

uninjured, the insurgents sustained the loss of a young man named Wade, the son of a stocking vendor from Kerry. Two unnamed insurgents were also wounded. An attempt to burn the barracks failed and the attack soon petered out. Upon receiving word by express, Coulson left Carrick for Portlaw with a strong force, and pursued the insurgents, who dispersed. On the following morning the authorities discovered that the rebel force had evacuated their camp on Cruachán Paorach, and disappeared into various woods and mountain passes of the district.⁶⁶

One of the principal men arrested after the attack on Portlaw barracks was James Kenna, president of the Owen Roe Confederate Club in Carrickbeg. Kenna was a master smith who kept two forges. He was imprisoned in Waterford county gaol from 5 February 1849 to 4 December 1850. Patrick Hannigan, mentioned in the *Hue and Cry* of 17 August, was also arrested for taking part in the attack and was imprisoned in Waterford county gaol from 23 September 1848 to 29 September 1849.⁶⁷

In a letter dated 13 September 1848, Edward Ashbury, sub-inspector of police at Kilmacthomas, County Waterford, wrote to Coulson that:

About 3 o'clock p.m. on yesterday the Rathgormack police received information that their barracks was to be attacked by 5,000 rebels, and at [the] same time police saw about 2,000 persons near the village, the most of whom were armed with pikes. ...The police on seeing so large an assemblage of armed men deemed it unsafe to remain there longer, and made their escape here [Kilmacthomas] through the fields.⁶⁸

The above is the first record we have of the forced evacuation of a police barracks by the authorities. Seventy years later in 1920, such an occurrence marked the beginning of the end for British rule.

Tipperary Insurgents

According to Savage, the Tipperary insurgents, commanded by O'Mahony, carried out assaults on the barrack of Glenbower, Scough and the localities around Slievenamon.⁶⁹ At about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, of 12 September, a detachment from the camp of Ahenny, led by the brothers Michael and Richard Comerford of Newtown, proceeded to the Ahenny barracks. The police had left about twenty minutes earlier to take refuge at Piltown, in South Kilkenny. The insurgents, at some distance from the barracks, fired through the windows but, finding that there was no one within, soon took possession of the building and set it on fire.⁷⁰ This is the first record we have of the burning of a police barracks.

At about seven o'clock that same evening, of 12 September, a group of one hundred men advanced down both sides of the glen from the north on the police barracks at Glenbower.⁷¹ This building was strategically located as it commanded the junction of the Carrick to Kilkenny road with the main Clonmel to Kilkenny road and the road from Kells, County Kilkenny. Felix O'Neill, of Lisronagh, in South Tipperary, led the attack on Glenbower barracks.⁷² The insurgents were armed with pikes, guns and pistols and some of them were dressed in '82 Club uniforms.⁷³ This indicates that at least some of those involved had prior involvement in nationalist politics. The brothers Michael and Richard Comerford (who had burned Ahenny barracks earlier that day) took a prominent part in the attack.⁷⁴ Michael would later become a local leader of the I.R.B. in the Carrick area.⁷⁵

The Glenbower police, eight in number, had been ordered to fall back on Carrick. They had been placing their equipment upon carts, when they saw the insurgents approaching, and thereupon retreated to the barracks. The insurgents captured some of the equipment which the police had abandoned outside, and then demanded a surrender of their arms. The police, having in the meantime strengthened their defence, replied by firing a volley at the insurgents. The attack failed when eight policemen from Nine Mile House (also on retreat to Carrick) arrived while the assault on the barracks was in progress. They opened fire from the rear and forced the insurgents to withdraw. It was a terrible oversight on O'Neill's part not to have posted scouts. Patrick Keating of Rathclarish was shot dead during the course of the fight and O'Neill himself was badly wounded by a shot in the hip.⁷⁶ William Kelly, a labourer from Ballyneale, was also wounded. After their failure to overrun Glenbower barracks, the insurgents did not press on to Carrick. Kelly was subsequently arrested and the following statement was obtained from him:

I was on Newtown Hill this day [12 September] together with several others amounting to about 300 or four hundred. John O'Mahony was there. He was going amongst them on horseback there. He was there all day there [sic]. The Glenbower barracks was to be attacked, and that the armed men were to do it. Nobody told me to do it but a man named John Bryan of Michael Quin's of Ballyneale, where I lived, had a gun but he was tired having been out last night. I offered to take the gun from him and did so. About 13 [insurgents] armed with firearms were there, a priest, many pikemen but also many with only their two hands. The others stopped on the hill until we would return.⁷⁷

The priest mentioned above, who obviously carried influence with the insurgents, was probably Fr Patrick Power, the curate of Ballyneale and Grangemockler, who had asked O'Mahony to form a Confederate Club in his parish in the early summer of 1848.⁷⁸ In his

report dated 13 September, Coulson wrote that 'It [William Kelly's statement] affords the only proof we have against O'Mahony of active participation'.⁷⁹ William Forbery, sub-inspector stationed at Clonmel, wrote later that:

I heard a man named Michael Donovan, (a stone mason of Kilsheelan), say that he had heard from a man of good authority and one who was at the camp, that O'Mahony was the man who encouraged the people to attack the police barracks at Glenbower and that they were so anxious to do it that they immediately jumped up and ran down the hill so fast that they left O'Mahony behind.⁸⁰

This suggests that O'Mahony was unable to hold his men back any longer. However, neither Forbery's testimony, a vague third-hand account, nor Kelly's deposition provide conclusive evidence that O'Mahony actually ordered the assault on Glenbower barracks. If the attack here or at Portlaw had met with success then the insurrection would probably have gained its own momentum.

Aftermath

In a letter dated 13 September, John Luther, mayor of Clonmel, wrote to Thomas Redington, the Under Secretary, that Carrick and the surrounding countryside was in a 'shocking state of disorder'.⁸¹ In fact, there was unrest in the entire Suir valley between Clonmel and Waterford at this time. Coulson also comments on this state of affairs in his report of the same date:

All around this country it is in a frightful state and the difficulty is most with us hunting from hill to hill after them in escaping and must prove most harassing to the troops. ...The rebel movements and the numerous points they come from renders our duties most difficult. The arms of the rebels are generally speaking most crude pikes. The fire arms are not good nor of ready means to ammunition as it was supposed, at least I think so, but they are rapidly increasing their store by taking them through the country. If we could manage a combined movement to hem them in would be the only means. Their tactics are so cunningly devised they don't afford us an opportunity of doing so. ...The organization and resources of the people are greater than I thought but still they are nothing more than guerrilla banditti and their strength consists in their power of harassing and fatiguing us.⁸²

O'Mahony's strategy did not set the insurgents' objectives beyond their capabilities and allowed them to evade superior enemy forces. In spite of the insurgents' shortage of arms, their guerrilla strategy based upon flying columns presented the authorities with considerable problems. There had been two to three weeks of preparation leading to the outbreak on 12 September. All of the military operations took place within two days, after which time the camps dispersed. In his *Felon's track*, Doheny wrote about the failure of the assaults on the barracks:

These repulses checked the ardour of the boldest, and gave rise to disunion and distrust. Meantime, the promised reinforcements from Kilkenny failed to redeem the pledge that was given in their name. A whole day and night passed, and no tidings of them arrived. Several of those who were loudest and most urgent left the camp [on Carrigadoon]. A very large force, however, remained; but after delaying two

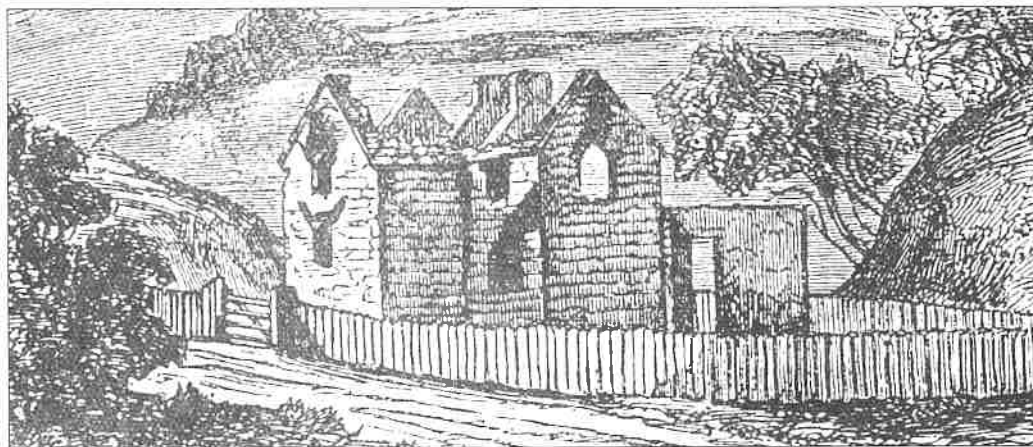
days without hearing of the Kilkenny men, they determined to disperse. The party at Portlaw adopted the same resolution, and O'Mahony and Savage had to sift for themselves. ...The Kilkenny men arrived at Aheny on the morning after those under O'Mahony had dispersed and finding the place deserted, they immediately returned. This accident once more baffled all hope of a struggle.⁸³

By the middle of September O'Mahony had crossed the Suir into County Waterford where apparently he still had men in the field. In his report dated 15 September, John Orr, Head Constable at Carrick, informed Coulson that the previous day he had received information at Clonea, County Waterford, that 'The rebel leader O'Mahony passed that place some time previous from the [Comeragh] mountains where the insurgents had collected, in company with Burke catholic curate of that parish, who rode together in the direction of Rathgormack'.⁸⁴ Fr Thomas Burke was a curate to Fr John Condon, parish priest of Rathgormack and Clonea.⁸⁵ Coulson noted later that 'Burke seems clearly to have succoured O'Mahony'.⁸⁶

On the night of 15 September Coulson and his troops searched for O'Mahony in the Comeragh Mountains. In his subsequent report Coulson wrote that:

We discovered a band of rebels assembled around a fire, the latter having first attracted our attention. ...A man was seen on horseback in front flying with the rebels. Chase was given and so close was he pursued that he was obliged to abandon his horse and fly to the upper mountain. A mist came on and he was lost [from sight]. That man was we believe, and are almost certain, O'Mahony. The horse was caught and is [William] Villiers Stuart's of Castletown Estate [South Kilkenny], which was taken a few nights ago by the rebels from his servant.⁸⁷

The owner of the horse, William Villiers Stuart, was a liberal M.P. for County Waterford (1835-47). O'Mahony may have agreed with Villiers Stuart to take his horse in a manner that would not compromise him. Although Villiers Stuart held the office of Deputy Lieutenant for County Kilkenny in 1848, he does not appear to have been constrained by his ties with the government.⁸⁸ In fact, all indications are that some of the gentry's sympathies were with O'Mahony and that they were prepared to move with the insurrection if it took off.



Ahenny police barracks.

However, as was consistent with his character, O'Mahony did not mention the support that he had received from such influential people so as not to put them in an embarrassing position.

O'Mahony would appear to have been trying to determine whether further action was feasible, or advisable, at this time. In his report dated 16 September, Coulson noted that: Letters are going from one county to the other (Waterford) from and to O'Mahony relative to this movement. What its particular object is I must say I know not. But many arms have been taken in the last week, which of course must strengthen them. It is in their weapons they were greatly deficient before. I do not think they will ever dare meet us in a body – so much the worse. I will not dignify the movement by calling it a rebellion. It is a predatory warfare.⁸⁹

Coulson further observed that the political consciousness of the insurgents north of the River Suir (under O'Mahony's leadership) was higher than on the Waterford side where, perhaps, the driving force was to regain the possession of lands. In an account dated 18 September, written by a correspondent to the *Tipperary Vindicator*, it was remarked that:

The adjoining portions of the county Kilkenny and county Waterford have taken up the flame. Iverk, Mullinavat, Scough, and other portions of Kilkenny, the whole barony of Uppertthird in Waterford, with portions of Glenaheiry and Decies; Kilcash, Ballyneale, Newtown, Fethard and [the] country around Slievenamon, in this county [Tipperary] - in all this extensive district the feeling on the part of the population is intense; and it will be out of the question to think that the spirit by which they are animated can be put down unless [the] Government interferes with employment and food and stops the career of extermination which has pauperised and upset the entire country. ...The insurgents, no doubt, are said to have expresses running in all directions. It is said they do not mean to fight, but lead the military [on] long marches through the country until the force is sufficiently strong to enable them to make a stand; but this I hope they will have better sense than to do. This town [Carrick] was never so peaceable as it now is, and I hope most sincerely that it will continue so. There were about forty police last night [16 September] on the alert for Mr. O'Mahony about Ballyneal[e]. They did not succeed in their object.⁹⁰

Further details of this attempt to capture O'Mahony are found in a report by a John Leech, of Carrick-on-Suir, who noted that:

Last night the police was [sic] in pursuit of O'Mahony the rebel leader and he was pushed so hard with them that he left his pistols and a pair of boots behind him and clothes and a good deal of ammunition in his own house where he was. The rebels has [sic] their camp still on the hills.⁹¹

The evidence suggests that O'Mahony's followers continued to protect him as they had done in the weeks prior to the outbreak of insurrection on 12 September. Nevertheless, whatever hopes O'Mahony had for a successful outcome now began to fade and he was forced to give up the guerrilla tactics that he had followed up to that point. In his retrospective narrative, O'Mahony explained that:

The enemy soon learned of our disorder, and our consequent weakness and perplexity. They took their measures accordingly. They intercepted the

communication between our several gatherings – sent out persons in peasant garb to disseminate false intelligence – incited certain villages to petty risings, one here one there, through means of their hidden emissaries, so as to be themselves first upon the appointed ground, to anticipate and prevent them from ever coming to a head. What wonder that I was forced to give up any further persistence in my attempt after the manner I had proposed. All order among my followers was destroyed. Their very signal fires were counterfeited by night upon the hill-tops, so that many straggling insurgents, attracted thereby, were shot at and had to flee affrighted, finding foes where they expected to meet none but friends. No trust could be placed anywhere.

Now, my Brothers, this defeat could not have been effected so easily, had I waited until the national excitement, produced by the State Trials, had reached its height. Knowing that I had the materials for insurrection at my command in its immediate neighborhood, the scattered remnants of the Young Ireland party might have concentrated from all quarters upon Clonmel. This would, in some degree, have supplied the kind of persons [with whom] I most wanted to divide and share my labours so as to utilize the willing masses, and I would have ceased to be alone. Every true heart in Ireland would have been on the alert. Thus, the slightest commotion might easily have been fanned into a revolutionary conflagration.

It was, therefore, all-important to the English authorities, that my partisans should be scattered and put down and myself disposed of in some way, before those trials. This would leave on their hands but one difficulty at a time.⁹²

After the loss of two men not under his immediate command (one at Portlaw and one at Glenbower), O'Mahony probably realised that the proper training and arming of a guerrilla force of thousands of men would require more time than was available to him and decided to send his followers home.

In his report, dated 24 September, Coulson wrote that:

O'Mahony I hear is drinking very hard and reckless. He is not about Mullough but may be about his father's place [Clonkillla]. If a reward were offered for him it might get him. People will now be more ready to avail themselves of it. When they see others becoming approvers – they will wish to be first in the field.⁹³

Coulson's information was probably received from an informer. His statement that 'O'Mahony is drinking very hard and reckless' is not consistent with his being impossible to capture. There is no evidence whatsoever to suggest that O'Mahony was ever anything but abstemious and prudent. In fact, this circumstance helped to ensure O'Mahony's safety.

On 26 September 1848, Dublin Castle offered a reward of £100, which could be obtained by anyone who gave information leading to O'Mahony's arrest. Despite the offer of this reward and the concentrated searches conducted on the countryside around Carrick-on-Suir and across the Suir in Waterford, and although his whereabouts must have been known to hundreds or thousands over time, O'Mahony succeeded in eluding the authorities. In his report, dated 26 September 1848, Coulson remarked that:

There are very many contradictory reports about O'Mahony. He was seen a few days ago near Ballymahon [Bunmahon?], Co. Waterford but took to tale [sic]. I don't

believe half of the gossip about him. He is certainly stalking about endeavouring to make his escape from Waterford and crosses and recrosses the river from one county to the other, whenever pressed. I think we shall get him yet. ...This morning about two o'clock the constabulary patrol stopped a car on which was John Killilea and Miss Ellen Mary Power – the latter the young person who lived in Miss Jane Ryan's house at Mullough where O'Mahony resided and who was sitting on the balls and caps the night I arrested a Mr. O'Ryan⁹⁴ there. On both of these persons were found powder and balls and shot this morning, also a portmanteau, which belonged to O'Mahony. They were evidently on their way to aid his escape.⁹⁵

In the *Tipperary Vindicator* of the same date a correspondent from Carrick gave further details of this incident:

Mr. J. Killilea, proprietor of the *Waterford Chronicle* and a young lady, Miss [Ellen Mary] Power, were arrested by one of the patrols of police as they were entering the town [Carrick] from the Clonmel side. The car was driven into the yard of the police barracks, as it was said some suspicious articles were concealed in a trunk upon it. 12 police were dispatched to Mullough, the residence of Miss [Jane] Ryan to search the house and in a few hours returned with her under arrest. She was then accused of harbouring her outlawed nephew, and the magistrates allowed her to give bail in a large amount to answer the charge in Clonmel.⁹⁶

John Killilea, the owner and editor of the *Waterford Chronicle*, was charged with treasonable practices and aiding, abetting and succouring O'Mahony. Killilea was imprisoned in Clonmel gaol from 27 September 1848 to 10 February 1849. Ellen Mary Power (very likely a cousin of O'Mahony) was charged with having gunpowder, balls and shot in a proclaimed district and aiding and abetting O'Mahony. She was imprisoned in Clonmel gaol from 27 September 1848 to 4 October 1849.⁹⁷

Doheny's Escape, 29 September

A reporter for the *Tipperary Vindicator*, of 23 September, wrote that 'I am assured that Doheny has succeeded in effecting his escape from the country, and that it is now nearly a month since those most closely related to him have heard from him'.⁹⁸ This is at variance with Doheny's own account. In his *Felon's track*, Doheny wrote that, on 28 September, after he had reached Cork City:

News arrived that Tipperary was again in arms, under the command of my friend, O'Mahony. The report added that I was associated with him in command. Hour after hour brought some story stranger than that which preceded it; but in each and all I found myself figuring in some character or other, all, of course, contrary to the truth. This fact led at once to a suspicion of the accuracy of the whole. But I was aware that caution was a leading characteristic of O'Mahony's genius, and I felt assured that he would not attempt any open movement without strong probabilities of success. The fabrications about myself I reconciled to the belief that he wished it to appear he had my sanction and support.⁹⁹

In view of what we know of O'Mahony's widespread following, it is hard to visualize what Doheny's approval would have added to it. Doheny believed that the reports he received

(most likely by mail) meant there was still a chance and delayed his departure for France. After confirmation that O'Mahony had terminated active insurrection, Doheny made his escape, in disguise as a drover, from Cove harbour on board the *Juverna*, on 29 September 1848, across the Irish Channel to Bristol and made his way to London the following day. He took a mail packet from that city to Boulogne, thence to Paris where he arrived in early October 1848.¹⁰⁰

State Trials, 21 September – 23 October

On the evening of Monday 18 September, William Smith O'Brien, Thomas Francis Meagher, Terence Bellew McManus, Maurice Richard Leyne and Patrick O'Donoghue were taken from Kilmainham gaol, Dublin, to Clonmel. Their trials for high treason commenced in that town on 21 September 1848.¹⁰¹ In a letter dated 8 October 1848, the spy who signed his letters as Mr. M. reported to William Ryan, RM Clonmel, that:

I am informed that Mahony did not yet go abroad but that he is in some place waiting to know what would become of the State Prisoners and still I can't make off where he is. There is many more besides him that did not yet go though people imagine they did. In the course of the next week we will have news in circulation. When it's known what is become of Mr. Smith O'Brien the minds of the people will be re-animated.¹⁰²

On 7 October, the thirteenth day of the trial, the jury pronounced O'Brien guilty of high treason and, on 9 October, he was sentenced to death. Meagher, McManus and O'Donoghue were also convicted of high treason and, on 23 October, received like sentences. The prisoners were returned to Kilmainham on 16 November but moved to Richmond Bridewell after a few days. Here they would remain for eight months.¹⁰³

As O'Mahony explained in his article of 25 February 1860, quoted earlier, it had been his intention to commence his insurrection during the trials of the leaders of the Irish Confederation in Clonmel. He had hoped that they would provide the 'external impulse' required to ignite the revolt.¹⁰⁴ In his '98 and '48, John Savage wrote that 'He [O'Mahony] was in Clonmel during the trial of O'Brien organizing a force to attack the Court House, when he was discovered, and saved himself by leaping from a back window.'¹⁰⁵ O'Mahony does not mention this incident in his own writings, but John Savage as his chief lieutenant may be regarded as a reliable source. On the other hand, in Thomas Clarke Luby's recollections there is independent corroboration of the general outline of Savage's story:

In '49, when I was myself endeavouring, in connection with that able political writer, James Fintan Lalor, Joseph Brenan, [Philip] Gray, John O'Leary, John D. Hearn, and others to get up a fresh insurrection in the valley of the Suir, and other parts in the south of Ireland, I heard some of the Tipperary and Waterford peasantry speak of O'Mahony's athletic feats, and also of his hairbreadth escapes, during the months when he was a hunted fugitive with a price set on his head. There were stories then current of his having once baffled his pursuers by swimming his horse across the Suir. I heard too, how he lay concealed one day in a house in Clonmel while the trial of Smith O'Brien or some other of the state prisoners, was going on, within hearing [distance] of the din of the pleadings. The late Joe Brennan and I stood in the room and were shown the window from which he had to take A DESPERATE LEAP,

clearing a high wall, in order to escape from the same town, while the police or soldiers were actually rushing up the stairs to capture him.¹⁰⁶

The above account is an encapsulation of O'Mahony's style - of his caution and his courage. O'Mahony knew the danger that he willingly placed himself in and planned his route of escape in case it was needed. There are some differences in detail between the accounts of Savage and Luby, but there is no reason to question that O'Mahony was planning a rescue attempt at this time.

In the *Tipperary Advocate* of 10 May 1862, Charles Joseph Kickham, wrote that after this incident it was made clear to O'Mahony that the prisoners would not accept a rescue attempt.¹⁰⁷

Nevertheless, Philip Gray organized an abortive attempt to rescue O'Brien and the others from Clonmel Gaol on 8 November 1848. Though Gray avoided capture, his lieutenant, John O'Leary from Tipperary town and the rescue party of sixteen others were arrested in a field at the Wilderness, Clonmel, and spent a few weeks in Clonmel Jail. O'Leary would play a significant role in planning the following year's rising, a rehearsal of his later revolutionary experience as a leader of the I.R.B. during the 1860s.¹⁰⁸ It is a tempting hypothesis to consider that the O'Mahonys who lived at the Wilderness may have assisted Gray and the others at this time.

Early in June 1849 the Lord Lieutenant, Lord Clarendon, influenced by Irish public opinion, conveyed to O'Brien, Meagher, McManus and O'Donoghue his decision to commute their sentences to transportation for life. On 9 July 1849, the prisoners were taken from Dublin's Richmond Bridewell and despatched on board the *Swift* at Kingstown (Dun Laoghaire) on their journey to Van Dieman's Land, which they reached on 27 October 1849.¹⁰⁹

The exact date of O'Mahony's departure from Ireland is unknown. Some time in the late autumn of 1848, with a price on his head O'Mahony made good his escape from Island Castle, between Bunmahon and Dungarvan in County Waterford, on board the Dungarvan schooner *Johanna*. He proceeded to Newport, Wales, and thence, after a delay, to France.¹¹⁰

Assessment

O'Mahony was the last of the Gaelic chiefs and became the first of the guerrilla leaders.¹¹¹ It is hard to find a parallel to this unique dual role being combined in one individual. The disturbances which had been inaugurated by a spontaneous outpouring of loyalty and support to O'Mahony at Mullough, had lasted six weeks in total. If similar insurrections had taken place in other areas, the potential for a general revolution would have been far greater. Nevertheless, the adoption of guerrilla tactics with flying columns, rather than full-scale open warfare, now allowed the insurgent forces to withdraw underground and to keep the nucleus of the revolutionary organization intact.

O'Mahony's leadership was hindered by the very intensity of his followers' personal loyalty. The lack of competent officers, and the impossibility to secure the people's obedience to any potential leader other than himself, obstructed the formation of a fully disciplined force. Although O'Mahony's magnetism was an obstacle on this occasion it would be utilised to its full potential when combined with an adequate supply of officers in Fenian times. Michael Cavanagh from Cappoquin, County Waterford, a local leader of the 1849 rising in

his native area, and subsequently O'Mahony's secretary in the Fenian Brotherhood, wrote that:

The eagerness with which the peasantry and mechanics of the valley of the Suir flocked around the insurrectionary standard raised by John O'Mahony in September of that eventful year, and the courageous devotion with which they adhered to him for the seven weeks during which he baffled all the forces the authorities could bring against him, and plotted against them in their very garrisons and camps, afforded sufficient proof that, had they been properly organized and led by a sufficient number of skilled officers, they could, even with their scanty armament, have inaugurated a formidable insurrection that would extend through the island.¹²

This factor is also mentioned by Luby in his recollections where he recalled that:

O'Mahony always attributed the rapid dissolution of his own insurrectionary movement, which embraced several thousand insurgents in South Tipperary and Waterford, to the fact that little or no material to officer his raw and undisciplined bands to give them some shape and consistency was then at his disposal. He maintained that the very numerical strength of the insurrection, under the circumstances, only added to the unwieldiness of the machine. ...A very slight change of circumstances might have rendered this insurrection far more formidable. Some of the local gentry were inclined to coquet with it. Richard Lalor Shiel's wealthy son-in-law, [John William] Power, of Gurteen (who afterwards, in a fit of temporary insanity, said to have resulted from some losses at the gaming table, committed suicide¹³) paid a visit to one of the insurgent camps. Of this there need be little doubt. Indeed, if O'Mahony had been in a position to represent the prospects of his movement in a somewhat more favourable light, there are reasonable grounds for thinking that Mr. Power might have joined him. [James William] Wall, of Coolnamuck, the all but ruined head of an ancient and once wealthy family, was also said at the time to be far from hostile to the aims of the insurgents. Subsequently, in '49, Phil Gray told me that Mr. Wall would at any moment be willing to place all the horses in his stables at our disposal, if we should require them. Whether or not Gray deceived himself to any extent in entertaining this notion I won't take on me to decide positively. O'Mahony certainly seemed to me to think that Mr. Wall was, in those days, by no means troubled with ANY QUALMS OF ULTRA-LOYALTY to the British crown.¹⁴

James William Wall, of Coolnamuck Court, County Waterford was a magistrate and a Deputy Lieutenant for the county.¹⁵ That August O'Mahony had met Doheny, Stephens, and some three or four Carrick men, for a three-day conference in Coolnamuck wood most likely with Wall's co-operation.¹⁶ In a letter dated 13 September, T. Moore Grubb, of Carrick, reported to the authorities that the insurgents had lit signal fires in close proximity to Wall's house.¹⁷

The Powers, who lived at Gurteen le Poer Castle near Kilsheelan, were descended directly from Robert le Poer who arrived in Ireland in the early years of the Anglo-Norman conquest. They were allied by various marriages with the Mandeville and O'Mahony families. John William Power, referred to by Luby above, was the son of Edmond Power (who died in 1830) and Anastasia (née Lalor) whose second husband was Richard Lalor Shiel.¹⁸ John William was a liberal M.P. for County Waterford (1837-40); he was a Deputy Lieutenant for the County in 1848.¹⁹

An account written in the *Irish People* (New York), of 23 January 1869, by the Tipperary born journalist John Augustus O'Shea, throws further light on the alleged visit of Power to the insurgent camp:

On the midnight of the rising, John Power, of Gurteen, a Catholic Member of Parliament, step son of Richard Lalor Shiel, penetrated to the camp fires of the insurgents on the brow of Corrig-a-Nook. He was well known to the people, and, being a Catholic and Repealer, had much influence over them. His mission to the camp was to implore them to throw down such arms as they had and return to their homes. Savage saw that if he permitted such discourse he would not answer for the result. He promptly arrested Power and told him to dismount. He kept him a prisoner for a couple of hours, and at the request of some farmers, after consultation, released him on his parole of honour. Power was a high-bred, gallant gentleman, and was actuated, no doubt, by the best motives. His sad fate some months subsequent to this remarkable adventure with the youthful leader of the Waterford men was deeply deplored.¹²⁰

This account is somewhat inconsistent with Luby's. However, it is at least clear that Power was trusted by the people and he knew it.

Conclusion

The events that took place during the late summer and early autumn of 1848 caused the revolutionary involvement of John O'Mahony, Michael Doheny, John Savage, Philip Gray, and significant for subsequent events, James Stephens. In that year of 1848 O'Mahony showed his leadership capacity both organizationally and in the field. However, O'Mahony was never again to enjoy such intense revolutionary activity in his native land, where 'no man was ever followed with truer devotion or more unwavering fidelity,'¹²¹ as he had done along the valley of the Suir in 1848. The events of that fateful year had longstanding consequences for O'Mahony who, up to then, had lived the comfortable life of a gentleman farmer, contentedly pursuing his scholarly interests. In the crucial hour of 1848, O'Mahony spontaneously emerged as a man of action which brought him from his home and drove him into exile. O'Mahony had now made his public pledge to the cause to which he would devote the remainder of his life - the attainment of complete Irish independence.

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- ¹Continues from 'Attempted Rising - July 1848', *Tipperary Historical Journal* 2005, 105-36
- ²Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh, *Ireland before the famine 1798-1848* (Dublin, 1990), pp.203-4 (Hereafter cited as Ó Tuathaigh, *Ireland before the famine*).
- ³*Tipperary Vindicator* (Nenagh), 20 Sept. 1848.
- ⁴Peter Gray, *The Irish famine* (London, 1995), pp.46-7; Ó Tuathaigh, *Ireland before the famine*, pp.220-1.
- ⁵In the *Tipperary Vindicator* (Nenagh), of 16 September 1848, it was reported that Joseph Rivers had safely arrived in France.

- ⁶Before they had parted on their separate ways in early August, O'Mahony and Michael Doheny had breakfasted at the family home of the brothers Robert and David Quinlan in Ballinderry. See Michael Doheny, *The felon's track* (New York, 1849), p. 186 (hereafter cited as Doheny, *Felon's track*).
- ⁷Patrick Hannigan was president of the Kilcash Confederate club: Information of Constable Patrick Coughlan, 1 Aug. 1848 (N.A.I., Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary 27/2613).
- ⁸*Tipperary Vindicator* (Nenagh), 19 Aug. 1848.
- ⁹This was most likely James O'Donnell or his brother William both from Ballybo, County Tipperary. Curiously, neither appears in the *Hue and Cry* list of 17 August.
- ¹⁰Report of R.D. Coulson, R.M. Carrick-on-Suir, 21 Aug. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1616).
- ¹¹John Savage, *'98 and '48: The modern revolutionary history and literature of Ireland* (New York, 1860), pp.327-8 (hereafter cited as Savage, *'98 and '48*); Doheny, *Felon's track*, pp.284-5.
- ¹²The Reaping of Mullough' is printed in John Savage, *Fenian heroes and martyrs* (Boston, 1868), pp.303-4 (hereafter cited as Savage, *Fenian heroes and martyrs*).
- ¹³Report of R.D. Coulson, R.M. Carrick-on-Suir, 23 Aug. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1629).
- ¹⁴*Ibid.*
- ¹⁵Memorial of an assignment dated 5 Sept. 1848. Parties: John O'Mahony and John Mandeville (Registry of Deeds, 1848/17/211).
- ¹⁶Report of R.D. Coulson, RM Carrick-on-Suir, 7 Sept. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1837).
- ¹⁷Savage, *'98 and '48*, p.353; Doheny, *Felon's track*, pp.284-7.
- ¹⁸Report of R.D. Coulson, RM Carrick-on-Suir, 7 Sept. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1837).
- ¹⁹*Ibid.*
- ²⁰O'Mahony is referring here to Savage and Gray.
- ²¹Letter from O'Mahony 'To thirty-one very impatient correspondents – somewhere', dated 10 Feb. 1860, published in the *Phoenix* (New York), 25 Feb. 1860 (hereafter cited as O'Mahony account in the *Phoenix* (New York), 25 Feb. 1860).
- ²²Report of William Ryan, RM Clonmel, 2 Sept. 1848 (NAI, Outrage Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1948).
- ²³Doheny, *Felon's track*, p.207.
- ²⁴See also Michael Cavanagh, *Memoirs of Thomas Francis Meagher* (Worcester, Mass., 1892), pp.165-70.
- ²⁵*Personal narrative of my connection with the attempted rising of 1848* by John O'Mahony (N.L.I., MS 868), p. 17 (hereafter cited as O'Mahony's narrative of 1848); Doheny, *Felon's track*, pp.208-9.
- ²⁶Report of William Ryan, RM Clonmel, 2 Sept. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1948); *Tipperary Vindicator* (Nenagh), 20 Sept. 1848.
- ²⁷Quoted from the *Clonmel Chronicle*, 12 Sept. 1848 and reproduced in the *Tipperary Vindicator* (Nenagh), 16 Sept. 1848.
- ²⁸There are two Cloneas in County Waterford – Clonea (Power) near Carrick and Clonea (Decies) near Dungarvan. Coulson is referring above to the former. Moore of Clonea (Power) may also be Ryan's informant, who signed his letters as Mr. M.
- ²⁹Report of R.D. Coulson, RM Carrick-on-Suir, 9 Sept. 1848 (NAI, Outrage Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1870).
- ³⁰Letter from Mr. M to William Ryan, RM Clonmel, 5 Sept. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1825).
- ³¹This was either Savage or Gray.
- ³²Report of William Ryan, RM Clonmel, 11 Sept. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1863).
- ³³Doheny, *Felon's track*, p.269.
- ³⁴'The flight of the deer from the ark; a flight without ever looking back'.
- ³⁵O'Mahony account in the *Phoenix* (New York), 25 Feb. 1860.
- ³⁶*Tipperary Vindicator* (Nenagh), 16 Sept. 1848; Report of William Ryan, RM Clonmel, 12 Sept. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1882); Report of Edward Ashbury, Sub Inspector in Kilmacthomas, to R.D. Coulson, RM Carrick-on-Suir, 13 Sept. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1905).
- ³⁷Report of William Ryan, RM Clonmel, 2 Sept. 1848 (NAI, Outrage Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1948).
- ³⁸O'Mahony's account in the *Phoenix* (New York), 25 Feb. 1860.
- ³⁹Copy of a notice taken down in Fethard, Tipperary by the police on Sunday, 10 Sept. (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1863).
- ⁴⁰*Tipperary Vindicator* (Nenagh), 20 Sept. 1848.
- ⁴¹Doheny, *Felon's track*, p. 284; Savage, *'98 and '48*, p.353.

- ⁴²Letter from Mr. M to William Ryan, RM Clonmel, 8 Dec.1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/2647); Letter from Mr. M to William Ryan, RM Clonmel, 1 Dec. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/2529).
- ⁴³Savage, *Fenian heroes and martyrs*, p.328.
- ⁴⁴Report of William Ryan, RM Clonmel, 30 Sept. 1849 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/2674).
- ⁴⁵Mella Cusack, 'Something about a cabbage patch – The Hickey's of Waterford, Thomas Francis Meagher and others' – copy of a paper presented to a Conference celebrating the 150th anniversary of 1848 at Hobart University in 1998; Micheál Briody, 'From Carrickbeg to Rome – the story of Fr. Michael O'Hickey' in *Decies: Journal of the Waterford Archaeological Society No. 57* (2001), pp.143-4. Thomas Hickey's son, Michael, was appointed Professor of Irish at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth in 1896 and became one of the two vice-presidents of the Gaelic League in 1899.
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- ⁴⁷Thomas Clarke Luby, 'Personal reminiscences of Colonel John O'Mahony' in *Irish World* (New York) 3 Mar. 1877 (hereafter cited as Luby, 'Personal reminiscences').
- ⁴⁸Report of R.D. Coulson, RM Carrick-on-Suir, 1 Aug. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/2613); Report of William Ryan, RM Clonmel, 30 Sept. 1849 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/2674).
- ⁴⁹Anthony M. Breen, *The Cappoquin rebellion 1849* (Suffolk, 1998), p.51.
- ⁵⁰Report of William Ryan, RM Clonmel, 12 Sept.1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1882).
- ⁵¹Report from the *Kilkenny Moderator* reproduced in the *Tipperary Vindicator* (Nenagh), 16 Sept. 1848.
- ⁵²Luby, 'Personal reminiscences' in the *Irish world*, (New York) 3 Mar. 1877. Luby would play a leading role in organizing the 1849 rising and later still in the I.R.B.
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- ⁵⁴Doheny, *Felon's track*, p. 285.
- ⁵⁵*Ibid.*
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- ⁵⁷O'Mahony's account in the *Phoenix* (New York) 10 Feb. 1860.
- ⁵⁸Report of William Ryan, RM Clonmel, 5 Sept. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1825); *Tipperary Vindicator* (Nenagh), 16 Sept. 1848.
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- ⁶⁰O'Mahony's narrative of 1848, p.8.
- ⁶¹*Tipperary Vindicator* (Nenagh), 16 Sept. 1848.
- ⁶²Report of R.D. Coulson, RM Carrick-on-Suir, 7 Sept.1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1837).
- ⁶³Savage, '98 and '48, pp.328-9.
- ⁶⁴Doheny, *Felon's track*, p.285.
- ⁶⁵*Tipperary Vindicator* (Nenagh), 16 and 20 Sept. 1848.
- ⁶⁶*Ibid*; Report of John Luther, mayor of Clonmel, 13 Sept.1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1892); Report of Edward Ashbury, Sub Inspector in Kilmacthomas, to R.D. Coulson, R.M. Carrick-on-Suir, 13 Sept. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1905).
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- ⁶⁹Savage, '98 and '48, pp.328-9.
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- ⁷¹Report of John B. Graves, Magistrate in Carrick, 7 June 1849 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1946).
- ⁷²Eoghan Ó Néill, *The Golden Vale of Ivowen* (Dublin, 2002), p.481 (hereafter cited as O'Neill, *Golden Vale of Ivowen*).
- ⁷³*Tipperary Vindicator* (Nenagh), 16 Sept. 1848; Richard Davis, *The Young Ireland Movement* (Dublin, 1987), p.162.
- ⁷⁴Report of John B. Graves, Magistrate in Carrick, 7 June 1849 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1946).
- ⁷⁵See letter from Michael Comerford to Thomas Clarke Luby, dated 8 Aug. 1860 printed in *Rossa's recollections*, pp.298-9.

- ⁷⁶*Tipperary Vindicator* (Nenagh), 16 Sept. 1848; O'Neill recovered from his injuries and joined the Fenian movement shortly after its foundation in 1858. See O'Neill, *Golden Vale of Iwoven*, p.481.
- ⁷⁷Information of William Kelly of Ballyneale, 12 Sept. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1898). Although Kelly pleaded guilty at the Tipperary Spring Assizes of 1849 for his part in the attack on Glenbower barracks, he was sentenced to ten years transportation to the colony of Bermuda where he died of dysentery. See Kiely, *Waterford rebels of 1849*, pp. 38-9
- ⁷⁸O'Mahony's narrative of 1848, p.1.
- ⁷⁹Report of R.D. Coulson, R.M. Carrick-on-Suir, 13 Sept. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1898).
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- ⁸³Doheny, *Felon's track*, p.286.
- ⁸⁴Report of John Orr, head constable at Carrick-on-Suir, to R.D. Coulson, R.M. Carrick-on-Suir, 15 September 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1998).
- ⁸⁵*Catholic Directory*, 1849, pp.325-6.
- ⁸⁶Report of R.D. Coulson, R.M. Carrick-on-Suir, 15 Sept. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1928).
- ⁸⁷*Ibid.* See also *Tipperary Vindicator* (Nenagh), 20 Sept. 1848.
- ⁸⁸*Thom's Irish almanac and official directory* (Dublin, 1848). William Villiers Stuart's brother, Henry, was the candidate backed by the Catholic Association in the famous Waterford County election of 1826.
- ⁸⁹Report of R.D. Coulson, R.M. Carrick-on-Suir, 16 Sept. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1935).
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- ⁹¹Report of John Leech, Carrick-on-Suir, to a Magistrate Godly in Dublin, 17 Sept. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary).
- ⁹²O'Mahony's account in the *Phoenix* (New York), 10 Feb. 1860.
- ⁹³Report of R.D. Coulson, R.M. Carrick-on-Suir, 24 Sept. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/2034).
- ⁹⁴This was Francis O'Ryan of Cashel who was arrested near O'Mahony's home at Mullough on 31 July 1848.
- ⁹⁵Report of R.D. Coulson, R.M. Carrick-on-Suir, 26 Sept. 1848 (NAI, Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/2075).
- ⁹⁶*Tipperary Vindicator* (Nenagh), 30 Sept. 1848.
- ⁹⁷Clonmel prison records, 1848, 1/7/4 (on microfilm in NAI). There is no entry for Jane O'Ryan in these records.
- ⁹⁸*Tipperary Vindicator* (Nenagh), 23 Sept. 1848.
- ⁹⁹Doheny, *Felon's track*, pp.269-70.
- ¹⁰⁰Savage, *Fenian heroes and martyrs*, pp.270-82.
- ¹⁰¹*Tipperary Vindicator* (Nenagh), 20 Sept. 1848.
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- ¹⁰³Robert Sloan, *William Smith O'Brien and the Young Ireland rebellion of 1848* (Dublin, 2000), pp.291-301 (hereafter cited as Sloan, *William Smith O'Brien*); John Mitchel, *Jail journal* (Dublin, 1910), p.300 (hereafter cited as Mitchel, *Jail journal*).
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- ¹⁰⁶Luby's Personal reminiscences in the *Irish World* (New York) 3 Mar. 1877.
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- ¹⁰⁸*Tipperary Vindicator* (Nenagh), 11 Nov. 1848; Marcus Bourke, *John O'Leary, A study in Irish separatism* (Tralee, 1967), pp.18-19.
- ¹⁰⁹Sloan, *William Smith O'Brien*, pp.291-301; Mitchel, *Jail journal*, p.300.
- ¹¹⁰John O'Mahony to Jane Maria Mandeville, 11 Feb. 1853 in James Maher (ed.) *Chief of the Comeraghs: A John O'Mahony anthology* (Tipperary, 1957), p. 73; Savage, *Fenian heroes and martyrs*, p. 304. Captain Timothy

Curran, who skippered the *Johanna*, was a brother-in-law of Fr Patrick Byrne, catholic curate at Carrick-on-Suir.

¹¹Diarmuid Ó Mathúna 'The vision and sacrifice of John O'Mahony' in *Iris Mhuinntir Mhathúna* (1978), p.32.

¹²Michael Cavanagh, 'Joseph Brennan' (N.L.I., MS 3225, Hickey Collection).

¹³Power was in fact the step-son of Lalor Shiel and took his own life, on 12 May 1851.

¹⁴Luby's Personal reminiscences in the *Irish World* (New York), 3 Mar. 1877.

¹⁵*Thom's Irish almanac and official directory* (Dublin, 1848), pp.521-2.

¹⁶Doheny, *Felon's track*, pp. 208-9.

¹⁷Letter from T. Moore Grubb to William Ryan, R.M. Clonmel, 13 Sept. 1848 (NA), Outrages Papers, 1848, Co. Tipperary, 27/1825). The Grubbs were a Quaker family who owned a coal and iron business in Carrick.

¹⁸*Burke's family records* (London, 1976), p.779. Richard Lalor Sheil, a Protestant from Drumdowney, County Kilkenny, tried to conciliate liberal Protestant opinion to Catholic emancipation. He was made a Privy Councillor in 1839.

¹⁹H.A. Doubleday, Geoffrey H. White and Lord Howard de Walden, *The complete peerage or a history of the House of Lords and all its members from the earliest times, vol. x* (London, 1945), p.633; *Parliamentary election results in Ireland, 1801-1922*, edited by Brian M. Walker (Dublin, 1978), p. 66; *Thom's Irish almanac and official directory* (Dublin, 1848), p.521.

²⁰John Augustus O'Shea, 'John Savage: Student, poet, patriot' in *Irish People* (New York), 23 Jan. 1869.

²¹Doheny, *Felon's track*, p.284.