

# Writing the Past: a Review of Tipperary Historiography 1997-2006

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## **Introduction**

Ten years ago this Journal published a long review article on the history of Tipperary history: how over centuries different perspectives were taken with respect to the county's people, places and events.<sup>1</sup> Historians like Burke, both Gleasons, Seymour and others, men whose books take pride of place on the shelf of every good Tipperary collection, were discussed and an attempt made to put their work in context. "What was a stream has since the 1970s become a flood." In the decade since that was written, the "flood" has not abated. More to the point, the last decade has not just seen quantity, a case of more of the same. The note of optimism at the close of the 1997 review has been more than justified. Some wonderful work has appeared over the past decade. While the contributions of enthusiasts, individuals with passion about their own places, continue to illuminate shadowy corners and almost forgotten episodes, it is the work of trained historians, geographers and archaeologists that impacted most over the past decade. The primary outlet for research on all aspects of the county's history and heritage continues to be Tipperary Historical Journal which over the past decade published an astonishing 2,351 pages of material about the county. It is not the purpose of this brief review to mention everything written about Tipperary during the past decade but to give an overview while lingering on some of the highlights.

## **Reference**

Launched in January 2007 but published in 2006, *Finding Tipperary* is the book someone working on any aspect of the county's history or heritage over the past decades would very much like to have to hand.<sup>2</sup> It is not a bibliography of sources relating to the county, comparable to the work of Margaret Franklin for Limerick.<sup>3</sup> Published to coincide with and celebrate the move by Tipperary Studies from Castle Avenue to new premises in the heart of Thurles, *Finding Tipperary* calls attention to the rich sources about the county, not just available but now seen to be available. Secondary sources are organized under the following headings:

Country, Towns, Villages & Countryside  
Sports  
Genealogy  
Remarkable Individuals  
Institutions  
Antiquarian Sources  
Archaeology  
Heritage

Women's Studies  
Leabhair Ghaeilge  
Early & Medieval Irish History  
Early Modern Irish History  
Modern Irish History  
Legal Sources  
Reference Material  
Prose & Verse

The section on Modern Irish History is sub-divided into Land; The Famine; Law & Order; Politics; Religion & Education.

The section on Irish language sources, compiled by Donnchadh Ó Duibhir, in terms of the scope of the holding, is perhaps a surprise. One of the strengths of Tipperary Studies Library is the number of travellers' accounts of the country and the region from the 18th through to the early 20th centuries. Apart from secondary sources, *Finding Tipperary* lists and discusses the library's holdings of periodicals, newspapers, maps, photographs and of particular interest to researchers, an expanding collection of official and family documents. A feature of this book is the range of illustrations, many in colour and all from Tipperary Studies. Incidentally *Finding Tipperary* does not include special collections held by Tipperary Joint Libraries elsewhere in the county: the Hugh Ryan Collection in Carrick-on-Suir, the Quinn Collection formerly held in Clonmel but now in Thurles and the George Cunningham Collection in Roscrea.

While the above work deals with paper sources, in 2002 a substantial volume appeared itemising sources on the ground, from megalithic tombs to sweathouses.<sup>4</sup> When the volume for South Tipperary appears, these books will be to the forefront of regional reference material and no one in the county interested in antiquities will be without these volumes on their shelf. (Incidentally Cork county took four volumes.) With nearly 2,500 structures listed for North Tipperary, there is no surprise that ringforts account for around 800 of these features. With the emphasis on using the local environment, natural and man-made, as source material for a deal of the primary curriculum, this book must be a God-send to schools in North Tipperary, allowing teachers and their pupils acquaintance with every feature of interest in their district. For example, to take just one townland entirely at random, Tinvoher in Loughmoe West near Thurles; there is a church and graveyard, enclosure, fortified house, ringfort, ringwork, tower house and possibly a weir. As if this is not enough, this was also the site of a medieval borough. In time, such a compendium of settlement information about the region, hopefully will be the basis of some specialised studies.

Completing a trinity of reference sources with respect to North Tipperary, is a book about that region's architectural heritage.<sup>5</sup> As above, the volume for South Tipperary has yet to be published. This volume is an "introduction showcasing the highlights of the area" and is part of a national inventory of architectural heritage. The North Tipperary inventory was carried out in the summer of 2004 and lists nearly 1,165 buildings and related structures. More comprehensive information can be accessed at [www.buildingsofireland.ie](http://www.buildingsofireland.ie) This North Tipperary volume, organised chronologically, is beautifully illustrated and includes country houses, industrial buildings, churches, terraces and shops. No doubt readers will have opinions about omissions. Such a source should stimulate more research on the towns of Tipperary as built environments, for example comparative studies on the 19th century growth of two or more towns.

A biographical dictionary: reliable concise sourced summaries of the earthly adventures of the great, the good and especially the interesting, is like the best of presents, something that is both useful and entertaining. Tipperary's biographical dictionary is two dictionaries uncomfortably between the same covers.<sup>6</sup> On the one hand, Tipperary people or individuals with Tipperary connections who fought in various wars, both local and international. This is useful but some editorial insight about the rules of engagement would have been good. On the other hand, everybody else, except that again length of entry seems to reflect easy

availability of information rather than historical importance. The *DNB* of course has extraordinary resources supporting it but it is the model for all such dictionaries.

In the rush to build that has characterised Ireland over the past decade, one of the casualties is place names. Perhaps developers should purchase copies of the official listing of Irish language place names for the county.<sup>7</sup> Prepared by the Place names Branch of the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, this guide gives the Irish and English versions of place names, especially townlands but does not give any information about their origin and history. However the introduction is of interest.<sup>8</sup>

In *Tipperary Historical Journal 2000*, Michael O'Donnell of Fethard (a place which for centuries returned a member of parliament), embarked on a remarkable journey of historical exploration – nothing less than a biographical dictionary of all those who represented the county and its boroughs in parliament, between 1560 and 1800. By the Journal of 2006, he reached MPs whose names began with “L”.<sup>9</sup>

Finally, an index to the Tipperary Historical Journal compiled in MS Excel by Patrick M.A. Nolan can be accessed at <http://www.tipperarylibraries.ie/thj>.

## Archaeology

Over the past decade the amount of archaeological investigation in the county has increased enormously, not least because of road building and *Tipperary Historical Journal* has been a very important outlet for these reports. The most notable example being some ninety pages devoted to excavations in Friar Street Cashel.<sup>10</sup> Excavations outside towns are more likely to throw up information about pre-historic cultures, at least with respect to death, worship or settlement.<sup>11</sup> Because of special circumstances, Lisheen in Moyne near Thurles has been the subject of extensive archaeological investigation, some of which have been published.<sup>12</sup> The annual publication of the Excavations Bulletin, includes excavations in Tipperary county. A general work on medieval settlement has references to Tipperary.<sup>13</sup> Two monographs, while not specifically dealing with Tipperary have much of interest. Ringforts are the most common settlement forms on the landscape and Matthew Stout's study is definitive.<sup>14</sup> Inscribed stones found in religious sites in the Glen of Aherlow are discussed in an exhaustive study.<sup>15</sup> A similar work for a later period, dealing specifically with Tipperary, was also published.<sup>16</sup> Finally, a study of North Munster castles has a gazetteer of Tipperary castles with photographs and ground plans.<sup>17</sup>

## Towns

Anngret Simms in her introduction to a source book for Irish towns opens with the sentence: “In the past Irish towns have contributed very little towards symbolising our identity.”<sup>18</sup> Certainly any search for “Tipperaryness” will not immediately and perhaps not at all, focus on its towns. The heart of Tipperary beats not in crowded streets but in fertile fields. *Knocknagow* is not a novel about urban life. The last decade has seen some interesting work produced about the towns of Tipperary but a great deal remains to be done. As yet Fethard is the only place in the county to be included in the *Irish Historical Towns Atlas* series published by the RIA.<sup>19</sup> Using maps and administrative sources, together with whatever records have been preserved, such an atlas illuminates a town, its history and growth. Availability for other towns in the county will make a huge difference to our knowledge of that part of our history.

There is no shortage of questions to be answered with respect to towns in Tipperary, individually and comparatively. Looking at the past few centuries: how much did landlords promote or impede growth; what was the impact of rail access; what accounts for differing rates of population change; who supported Republican movements; how did inter-denominational relations work; how did different towns respond to the Parnell Split; what was the impact of the Gaelic League; how did cultural life manifest itself in these different communities, with respect to both popular and high culture; what was the role of trades unions and the labour movement generally in the towns of Tipperary; what have been the most important influences on how these towns look; what has been the connection between economic growth and political clout? Perhaps over the next ten years more of these issues will be addressed.

From being in the shadows, Cahir is likely to strike a justified pose before long when it joins the ranks of towns covered by the *Irish Historical Towns Atlas* series, compiled and written by David Butler and Joe Walsh. Until then the former writer's guide gives a glimpse of that town's secrets.<sup>20</sup> Over the past few years collections of photographs have been published for some towns in the county (and a collection of Father Browne's photographs for the county).<sup>21</sup> The collection for Cahir is particularly attractive and has enough text to complement the photographs.<sup>22</sup> Apart from the Grubbs, the Fennells were a prominent Quaker family in Cahir.<sup>23</sup> The story of Carrick-on-Suir has been brought up to date by P.C. Power.<sup>24</sup> A compilation of genealogical information (so far only published for Carrick and Nenagh) is available. This lists information from *Griffith's Valuation*, the census of 1901 and 1911 and also electors' lists 1940-41.<sup>25</sup> One of the most notable Carrick families, the Grubbs, is the subject of an article by Michael Ahern.<sup>26</sup> David Butler has examined the experiences of various Christian communities in Tipperary's towns, including Carrick-on-Suir.<sup>27</sup> *Tipperary Historical Journal* also published an article on the Franciscans in Carrick-on-Suir.<sup>28</sup>

A major work with reference to Cashel is a detailed report of excavations in Friar Street prior to the building of new civic offices. Included is an essay on the historic background to the town.<sup>29</sup> Cashel town wall was discussed by Tracy Collins, who also looked at the archaeological record of Hore Abbey.<sup>30</sup> Richard O'Brien discussed standing stones, part of an attempt to draw attention to field monuments around the town.<sup>31</sup> Three lives enrich our understanding of Cashel. Charles Agar was archbishop there for twenty years at the close of the 18th century and his biographer has directed a searchlight on episcopal politics and ambition, revealing a great deal about the town.<sup>32</sup> Something of the drama of everyday life in Cashel during the 19th and early 20th centuries is preserved thanks to the words of two Cashel men, John Davis White and Francis Phillips.<sup>33</sup> Their lives overlapped for about twenty years, so between them their experiences of life in Cashel stretched from 1831 to 1968. Phillips once acknowledged the debt he owed to White for stimulating his interest in preserving records of the past. A survey of gravestone inscriptions on the Rock and elsewhere in Cashel was also published.<sup>34</sup> A new edition of the official guide to the Rock appeared in 2000.<sup>35</sup>

The past decade has been especially fruitful with regard to books about Clonmel. A 17th century minute book of Clonmel Corporation, from a manuscript in the National Library has information on economic, social and political history.<sup>36</sup> In 1638 for example, James Brenocke petitioned for a job with a variety of duties including keeping the green free from pigs, keeping the bridge swept every Saturday and keeping beggars at bay. Records of Clonmel Corporation feature prominently in Sean O'Donnell's study of the 19th century

town.<sup>37</sup> Move forward hundreds of years and pigs were still causing problems. In 1852, among other difficulties, pigs were rooting up the street surface. One of the consequences of the publication of O'Donnell's book is to draw attention to what has not been researched and written about other towns. On the other side of the county, Nenagh awaits its anatomist.

Touching on every famous person with Clonmel connections, from William de Burgo in the 12th century to Frank Patterson, Michael Ahern has peopled a "Clonmel landscape" with a cast manifesting a full array of vices and virtues.<sup>38</sup> Part of that "landscape" was the subject of an archaeological report by Catyrn Power.<sup>39</sup> Eamonn Lonergan who has written about a number of medical facilities in the region, published a history of St Joseph's Hospital.<sup>40</sup> Clonmel and district were fortunate to have the camera enthusiast William Despard Hemphill to preserve something of the appearance of the 19th century town and some of its citizens.<sup>41</sup> One of the features of Clonmel was the strength of non-conformism.<sup>42</sup> An aspect of its catholic tradition is discussed by Patrick Conlan OFM.<sup>43</sup> The town was well represented in the 2006 *Tipperary Historical Journal*, with articles looking at its Borstal and its Art Gallery.<sup>44</sup> All towns had institutions, indeed may still have, for example loan funds, social clubs, trusts, about which there undoubtedly are records. They deserve their day in court or at least to be recorded on the pages of *Tipperary Historical Journal*.

In the context of relations between the two ridings and their leading towns Clonmel and Nenagh, the past decade has seen far more in print about the southern town. Apart from references to the town in a study of Nenagh PLU and a few other publications, there is clearly much research to be done.<sup>45</sup> A number of articles have dealt with Nenagh topics.<sup>46</sup> Neighbouring Roscrea has fared rather better, at least with respect to more substantial works in print. The emphasis has been on buildings: castle, college and church.<sup>47</sup> Complementing these studies and adding to an appreciation of the town's built environment is a study of Roscrea's architectural heritage.<sup>48</sup> As elsewhere in the county over the past decade there has been a growing appreciation of the value of old photographs.<sup>49</sup>

Thurles is an odd town. It has the Tipperary Studies Library. It is the centre of the Catholic archdiocese. The GAA resonates there and it has third level educational facilities. But the town appears to have no sense of itself, at least not that appeared in print over the past decade. A new version of a walking guide to the town was published in the late 1990s and in 2005 there was a booklet to commemorate the refurbishment of the cathedral.<sup>50</sup> Other than a report on archaeological excavations in Cathedral Street and articles by Mary Ó Drisceoil on Thurles material the Schools Collection of the Irish Folklore Commission and on the politics of the Croke statue unveiling, the town did not trouble the pages of the county's historical journal over the past decade.<sup>51</sup> James Condon released a CD of Thurles sources.<sup>52</sup>

Nearly twenty years after part two of Des Marnane's history of mid-west Tipperary, the first part was published and covers the early history of Tipperary town and region.<sup>53</sup> Clearly there is scope for historians to tackle other regions of the county and break from the hold of the parish. The only other example is a mixture of family history and regional study.<sup>54</sup> There is also a walking guide concentrating on the history of the town's buildings.<sup>55</sup> Several of the town's institutions have been the subject of monographs.<sup>56</sup> Des Marnane is exploring various aspects of the town's history during the first half of the 20th century and to date three articles have been published.<sup>57</sup> A young historian took a fresh look at New Tipperary, while a more mature practitioner threw fresh light on an episode from the War of Independence.<sup>58</sup> A second volume of photographs for the town and district was published.<sup>59</sup>

Useful material was published during the past decade about some of the smaller towns/villages in the county. Aherlow, Bansha and Galbally feature in an interesting mix of history and memoir.<sup>60</sup> Bansha also featured in an article about the Gaelic league and in a history of Muintir na Tíre, founded by Canon John Hayes who was PP of Bansha.<sup>61</sup> W.J. Hayes published a nicely illustrated short study of Newport, with the focus on its bridewell.<sup>62</sup> Facilities to lock people up point towards one of the unworked topics of the county's history: crime as a spur to infrastructural development such as roads, bridges, prisons and even asylums. Templemore was well served by someone with a surname that meant something there. Arthur Carden brought to local notice some wonderful drawings from the 19th century.<sup>63</sup> Apart from the previous reference to the mapping of Fethard, a number of articles illuminate the place, especially perhaps the first one.<sup>64</sup>

## Land

Apart from *Tipperary Historical Journal*, the county has another annual periodical exclusively devoted to archaeology, history and folklore. More remarkable perhaps than the county journal which draws on material from Carrick to Nenagh, *Boherlahan-Dualla Historical Journal* has been published annually since 1998 and mines the resources of just one parish. Surely an enterprise to be emulated by other Tipperary parishes. While much of the material is of purely local interest, two series of articles, each looking in detail at an estate in the parish, are of much wider value and address issues of general historical interest. Since 1998, Paddy O'Dwyer has been writing about the Nodstown estate, owned by the Blue Coat Hospital in Dublin (in fact a school) and based on the records now in the keeping of the King's Hospital School in Palmerstown Dublin.<sup>65</sup> Since 2001 Des Marnane has been tracing the history of the Smith-Barry Boherlahan (Cashel) estate, some 3,500 acres held in eleven townlands and again based mainly on estate records.<sup>66</sup>

Many third level colleges give courses in local studies, some of the work produced in Maynooth being published in a series of short studies. Only one (so far) deals with Tipperary, a study of the Castle Otway estate in North Tipperary.<sup>67</sup> Published comprehensive studies over time of individual landed estates in Tipperary are fewer than might be expected. However over the past decade some interesting articles were published looking at specific topics relating to estates.<sup>68</sup> Some of the stories associated with twenty of the county's landed families appear in *The Tipperary Gentry*, while the tithe war of the 1830s is discussed in Noreen Higgin's study.<sup>69</sup>

Land not only sustained, it also betrayed. The past decade saw the 150th anniversary of the Great Famine, during which much was published (unlike earlier anniversaries). The experience of the Famine in Nenagh Poor Law Union was discussed by Danny Grace in a model study.<sup>70</sup> Callan PLU included part of Tipperary and the impact of the Famine was outlined in another monograph and includes a section on Slieveardagh by William Nolan.<sup>71</sup> The Famine in South Tipperary was the subject of several articles by Des Marnane begun in 1995 and continuing to 2000.<sup>72</sup> *Tipperary Historical Journal* under the editorship of Marcus Bourke published a fine selection of other Famine related material.<sup>73</sup>

The conventional parish history, of which relatively few were published during the past decade, all deal with land, its ownership and exploitation.<sup>74</sup> Michael Larkin's *Mullinahone* is a conventional example and covers 17th century ownership and confiscation, 19th century landlord-tenant relations and of course in that parish the great agrarian romancer, Kickham. Worth noting is that the illustrations are especially interesting.<sup>75</sup> Aspects of Cloughjordan's

history were discussed in a number of publications.<sup>76</sup> Perhaps the most remarkable event in the past decade with respect to Tipperary history was the publication of a parish history.<sup>77</sup> Described by William Nolan as “an extraordinary book”, the story of Moyne-Templetuohy fills three large volumes and will stand alone in Tipperary historiography. Edited and largely written by W.J. Hayes and with substantial contributions from George Cunningham, Anne Lanigan, Paddy Doyle, W. Butler and W. Kennedy, *A Life of its Own* is richly detailed and comprehensively illustrated. A humble parish has been dressed in robes any county would be pleased to wear. Pity about the shoes. It would be wonderful if a detailed index was prepared, thus allowing three exceptional volumes stand even taller on any shelf. W.J. Hayes also wrote the official history of South Tipperary NFA/IFA.<sup>78</sup>

## People

The past decade saw the publication of some exceptional biographies of Tipperary interest.<sup>79</sup> Lives of a cleric, a swindler, a soldier, a “witch” and a scholar illustrate the richness and diversity of the subjects. Charles Agar from a Kilkenny landed family, occupied the Anglican archbishopric of Cashel 1779-1801, just one rung in his relentless ascent to glory and a funeral monument in Westminster Abbey.<sup>80</sup> His biography, has a great deal of information about Cashel and the building of the new cathedral, not to mention local and national politics. One of the great “you couldn’t invent it stories” in Tipperary history is the life and spectacular dispatch of John Sadleir in 1856. James O’Shea’s study of this extraordinary man is definitive.<sup>81</sup> William Butler was born and died in Tipperary but in between as a soldier pushed the frontier of Victorian empire.<sup>82</sup> Ever since 1895, the story of Bridget Cleary has represented the dark side of Irish and Tipperary identity but Angela Bourke’s study is far more than a biography. It is a world laid bare.<sup>83</sup> One of the great Tipperary figures is Geoffrey Keating and Bernadette Cunningham’s study cast light on much that was in shadow.<sup>84</sup>

Two families have been objects of scrutiny; one by a family member, the other by a scholar who along the way reveals much that was unknown about 19th century engineering. The lives of three members of the Gaynor family from Tyone near Nenagh have something to say about politics, education and clerical life in the late 19th and 20th centuries.<sup>85</sup> Patrick Leahy was Archbishop of Cashel & Emly 1857-1875 and Brendan O Donoghue’s fine study pulls the archbishop’s father and brothers into the limelight and along the way says much that is new about engineering in Tipperary, Munster and further afield.<sup>86</sup> Also of value is Arthur Carden’s privately published work on the Cardens of Barnane.<sup>87</sup>

Over the past decade, in *Tipperary Historical Journal* some Tipperary people, long gone, speak to us again. Frank R. Maloney of Nenagh played a role in the early history of the GAA.<sup>88</sup> As did Joe Ryan, who was at the historic meeting in Hayes’s Hotel.<sup>89</sup> Philip Cunningham was active in the United Irishmen in Clonmel and was transported to Australia.<sup>90</sup> John Rutter Carden (“Woodcock”) did as he pleased but failing to get the girl, became a legend.<sup>91</sup> Alice O’Sullivan brough her faith from Clonmel to China and paid the ultimate price.<sup>92</sup> Fr Nicholas Sheehy also paid the ultimate price and became a folk hero.<sup>93</sup> Edward Ryan was born in Tipperary and when a child, emigrated with his family just before the Famine, to the United States where he became hugely successful - the dream of every emigrant fulfilled.<sup>94</sup> John Lanigan was born in Cashel and died in Dublin, in between making major contributions to Irish scholarship.<sup>95</sup> Henry Woodward was rector of Fethard for some

fifty years and was a voice for religious moderation.<sup>96</sup> Nine lives linked by a Tipperary connection and scholarship dedicated to make them live again.

A handful of interesting monographs were also published during the past decade, each revealing something about very different lives. Constantine Maguire a landowner was murdered in Tipperary in 1834 and W.A. Maguire's short study is full of fascinating detail about a character at home in *Vanity Fair*.<sup>97</sup> Robert Bradshaw and Martin Mansergh share a connection with Tipperary town and district and each very different modern life is the subject of a biography: Robert Bradshaw a missionary priest who worked from Iceland to Russia and died in Siberia in 1993 and Martin Mansergh, civil servant and politician.<sup>98</sup> Finally three lives unmediated through biographers but delivered straight by the subjects themselves. Hester Cooke and Marjorie Quarton, from similar backgrounds but different parts of the county wrote their biographies.<sup>99</sup> Michael Renihan wrote no biography but worked as a teacher in Boher Ballina in North Tipperary and kept a diary from the 1880s through to the mid-1920s. What was an ordinary life is rendered exceptional because of the legacy of his diary, through which we can encounter a vanished world.<sup>100</sup>

### Politics

It might be argued that the 19th and 20th centuries receive too much attention from scholars writing about the county. This is unlikely to change because of the great interest in exploring the impact of republicanism on Tipperary. Also, historians follow sources and coming to terms with earlier centuries is difficult. David Butler showed what can be done in his magisterial study of "religion, land and rivalry" in South Tipperary between the reigns of Elizabeth and Victoria.<sup>101</sup> This study which can be viewed as a history of the Church of Ireland in the region is also of necessity an examination of property and patronage and how especially in the 18th century, catholicism survived and in some instances prospered.

Also the work of an academic geographer is a study of the Kilnamanagh region of Tipperary in the 16th and 17th centuries. This heartland of the O'Dwyers was opened up to colonization and settlement, partly through business and partly through war.<sup>102</sup> A new edition of Sir Michael O'Dwyer's well known book on the O'Dwyers of Kilnamanagh is worth noting, not least for its comprehensive introduction.<sup>103</sup> Incidentally, there was also a new edition of Dermot Gleeson's 1938 study of the Cromwellian plantation in North Tipperary.<sup>104</sup> Something of the history of the county in the middle ages is outlined in an article based on the calendars of the justiciary rolls.<sup>105</sup> Tadhg O'Keeffe's important work on Romanesque Ireland has a detailed section on Cashel in the 12th century.<sup>106</sup> Fr Colmcille the Clonmel-born scholar and Cistercian wrote a great deal about the War of Independence period. His study of the Cistercian abbeys of Tipperary - Inislounaght, Holy Cross, Kilcooly and Hore- was published after his death.<sup>107</sup>

Since inception, *Tipperary Historical Journal* has published articles about the 1913-23 period in the county. The great issues of that period have received more attention than any others and this has not changed in the past decade. Much of this has been first-hand material from the Bureau of Military History.<sup>108</sup> Insightful studies by some historians have also appeared on the pages of the Journal, most pertinent perhaps Joost Augusteijn's question: "Why was Tipperary so active in the War of Independence?"<sup>109</sup> Articles have also been published about the Young Ireland Rising of 1848, especially Tipperary's role.<sup>110</sup> Of interest with respect to the IRA in North Tipperary is a reference book.<sup>111</sup>



Under legislation of 1898, Irish local government was reformed and county councils were created. The centenary of that act was marked by the publication of a history of each local authority in the county. Donal A. Murphy's study of what happened in North Tipperary is detailed and authoritative, looking at the first few years of the new order.<sup>112</sup> The official history of South Tipperary county council covers the 20th century and is a journalist's treatment of the topic.<sup>113</sup>

### Sport

Three very different books are highlighted. In 2000 the County Tipperary Board GAA published a wonderful collection of GAA ballads, memories in verse of epics long past but not yet over.<sup>114</sup> The title of the second book comes from a quotation from Archbishop Croke, castigating "foreign and fantastic field sports". Pat Bracken's study of cricket in county Tipperary is more than a book about sport but draws attention to the legitimacy of willow in face of the triumph of ash.<sup>115</sup> Finally, a celebration of hunting in Tipperary, a beautifully produced book, with text and illustrations in balance.<sup>116</sup>

### Conclusion

Twenty years ago when the launch of a county historical journal was being discussed, concern was expressed about the availability of interesting articles of a high standard to sustain such a journal. Filling the first few issues would not be a problem but people did wonder about the well running dry around the fourth or fifth journal. After twenty journals, water still flows and continues to sustain and invigorate. *Tipperary Historical Journal* remains at the heart of Tipperary studies, thanks to the contributors but most especially to the work of the editors over the past decade: Marcus Bourke who took the ship out of harbour and guided it until 2001 and since then successively Kevin Griffin, Carmel Quinlan and Proinsias and Mary Ó Drisceoil. From the beginning Tipperary Joint Libraries and County Tipperary Historical Society have enjoyed a fruitful partnership and with the opening of a new Tipperary Studies Library in The Source, our county is better equipped than most to promote and cultivate enquiry into all and every aspect of the county.

There is a problem however, discussed in more detail elsewhere in this Journal.<sup>117</sup> A possible agenda for the next ten years would be schools in the county, primary and secondary, taking full advantage of the resources available. Apart from schools and teachers making greater use of resources available in Tipperary Studies Library in Thurles, each school might plan to have its own library of sources allowing students access to the wider world and its complexities through what is local and familiar. In the past there may have been a plausible plea on the part of teachers that resources were not available. After twenty years of *Tipperary Historical Journal*, the increasing volume of excellent Tipperary material in print and now *Finding Tipperary*, that plea can no longer be made.

## Acknowledgements

My thanks to Mary Guinan Darmody.

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- <sup>4</sup>J. Farrelly & C. O'Brien (eds.), *Archaeological Inventory of County Tipperary, vol. 1 – North Tipperary* (Dublin, 2002).
- <sup>5</sup>*An Introduction to the Architectural Heritage of North Tipperary* (Dublin, 2006).
- <sup>6</sup>M. O'Dwyer (ed.), *A Biographical Dictionary of Tipperary* (Cashel, 1999).
- <sup>7</sup>P. Ó Cearbhaill (ed.), *Líostaí Logainmneacha: Contae Thiobraid Árann/County Tipperary* (Dublin, 2004).
- <sup>8</sup>Seé P. Ó Cearbhaill, 'Logainmneacha dar críoch –ach i gCo. Thiobraid Árann' in *THJ* (2005), pp. 9-24 and P. Ó Drisceoil's review in the same issue.
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- <sup>10</sup>E. O'Donovan et al., 'Excavations at Friar Street Cashel: a story of urban settlement' in *THJ* (2004) pp. 3-90. See below for archaeological reports for specific towns.
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