

A
MILLSTREET
MISCELLANY
(2)

Aubane Historical Society

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LOCAL INCIDENTS IN THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

These are extracts from Piaras Beaslai's diary of monthly reports in 1921 relating to Millstreet and nearby areas. The events appear to be listed according to Battalion number rather than date order. Corrections were made in some entries with items crossed out and these are retained in the extracts below. They are Taken from the Piaras Beaslai papers (Ms 33,913 (5)) in the National Library. We are grateful to Claire McGrath-Guerin for providing this information.

COPY/

Cork No. 2 Brigade.

Diary of Activities for Month of May 1921.

May. Battn. Scene of operations.

3	1.	Millstreet.	A party of men from the local Coy. entered the Rly. station and burned two wagons of stores and war material consigned to the local Auxies. This Battn. sniped two enemy round-up parties during the month.
30	2.	Abbeyfeale	Battn. A.S. Unit took up positions in town and waited all day for police patrol. The patrol did not turn up.
	3.		NO REPORT.
15	4.	Banteer	R.I.C. constable fired at - he escaped.
	4.	do	Four men entered local station and seized a quantity of whiskey and other stuffs consigned to local police barracks.
23	4.		Seven men of A.S.U. took up position on BANTEER-MILLSTREET road and sniped 4 lorries of Auxies, travelling from MILLSTREET to BANTEER. The Auxies returned the fire with Machine Guns and fired off a large amount of stuff. The snipers retreated after about 20 mins. having wounded three of the enemy
25	5.		Mourneabbey Six men held up MALLOW-CORK train. No enemy goods on same.
31		Two Pot house	Two men waiting for dispatch rider from BUTTEVANT. No result.
7 (marked X)	L'B'town		Seven men held up MALLOW-NEWMARKET goods train, seized and destroyed enemy stores valued at £500.

23	6	Kildorrery	Two snipers were posted on the main road through area to snipe enemy lorries. Nothing turned up.
8		Mitchelstown	Trip wires erected on roads likely to be traversed by enemy patrols. No result.
	"		Two snipers took up positions on the main road to Ballyporeen to snipe enemy lorries. No result as there was no enemy traffic through area.
May. Battn. Scene of Operations.			
11		Ballindangan	Three snipers were out several days during weekend. Got nothing to do.
11	6	Glanworth	Glanworth and Ballyhooley Coys, tore up Rly. line between Ballyhooley & Fermoy.
11	6	Glanworth	Four men entered village to get a shot at the military stationed there. They were too late as the military had been called back to barracks.
		Killavullen	The local Coy. tore up 120 yds. Rlyline and tried to blow up an important Bridge on the line but failed
20*			Four men entered local station and captured 3 days rations consigned to military at Castletownroche.
		Doneraile	Three men held up the mails and captured all R.I.C. correspondence.
16	7	Rathcormac	Two riflemen and six shot-gin men entered Rathcormac at 7.30 p.m. to get some police. No result.
17		Rathcormac	One man sniped police barrack.
20			Six riflemen and six shot-gun men entered Rathcormac for police. No result.
25		Araglen	Eighteen men lay in ambush for enemy squad. No result as the enemy went back another route.

In addition all Battalions were engaged during the month in trenching roads and destroying bridges with the result that practically all roads leading through the Brigade Area are blocked.

COPY/

H.Q., 1st. Southern Division,

7.7.21.

"Millstreet - Banteer Ambush".

1. Delay in Report:- On the 18th ult. I forwarded you a diary of this operation as I was in this area at the time and had met Officers concerned. You will note report was written at Battn. H.Q. a day after ambush. Brigade H.Q. forwarded report on day after receiving it and same only reached Div. H.Q. this morning. Delay occurred owing to increased and constant enemy activity which prevented Battn. getting in touch with Brigade H.Q. The largest round-up yet carried out in Ireland occurred in this area since, over 6,000 troops being engaged, this round-up report will be forwarded later.
2. Enemy Intelligence:- Previous to ambush, enemy at Macroom wired Millstreet that an ambush was expected to come off near latter place within ten days. This may be only local talk as the people considered it a shame to have such regular enemy traffic. As a result of warning enemy kept a full amount of lorries and men, men are believed to have been picked from Auxiliary Coy. on these days, who said it was impossible to ambush them owing to distance between their lorries .
3. Rifle men:- Note the five Battn. A.S.U. were mobilised and got into position overnight.
4. Time:- This played an important part when scenes of operations was so near enemy strong bases, shades of evening were welcome just after ambush to allow all A.S. Units to get back to their own areas.
5. Mobilisation Point:- This was also of considerable advantage being so near position and enemy passing several times, it also gave cover to select and divide the men.
6. Number of Mines:- Once and a half the number of Mines were needed as all lorries stopped at first explosion. All men in last lorry were instantly knocked out of action by mine containing 7 lbs. high explosives powder.
7. Enemy Morale:- Some of the Auxiliaries fought like devils, some actually standing on fences firing rifle Grenades. It being their first time in Ireland may account for this, however their morale like the morale of Auxiliaries elsewhere must by now be of a low standard.
8. Snipers:- A considerable quantity of the enemy fire was wasted firing at a few men from good cover.
9. Enemy Casualties:- Official account gave only two dead, but 6 coffins were ordered in Millstreet and more in Kanturk. Our men say 12 for certain dead. Note necessity of Divisional papers as mine to Adjutant General. [Note method of gaining intelligence on *casualties*.]
10. Ammunition Fired:- Ammunition would be better employed in small ambushes with greater success, but on this occasion, however, men only actually fired at their target.
11. Necessity of Mine Campaign:- This operation has further urged us on to Mines, and Divisional Area all over are booking up as quickly as possible. I would have launched this campaign long ago could Q.M.G. give supplies of explosives, however we are now falling back on our own make. It is nothing short of murder to attack lorries without mines. Mines even without infantry - say dangerous positions to occupy as Enemy bases - can do enormous damage.

12. Operation O.C.:- Acting Brigade Vice O.C. deserves great credit for the manner in which he handled the situation, the morale of his Officers and men were of course all that could possibly be desired in any Army.

13. This Operation looking at it from a compact and communication point of view backs up my suggestion to divide Cork NO. 2.

(Signed)

Commandant.

COPY/

4/8/21—————
2 Hold up
2 Round Up
H.Q. 1st SOUTHERN DIVISION
———
23rd July, 1921.

1.—Attached is report on round up by enemy on June 24th. This was the largest one yet attempted, and is a good example of what we may expect in future. This round up took in Lombardstown, Banteer, Rathcoole, Millstreet, Kilcorney, Ballinagree, Donoughmore and Bweeng.

Commandant.

H.Q. 1st Batt. Cork 2
6 7 '21.

Report on Round up carried out by the enemy in Rathcoole, Mushera and Kilcorney Company areas:

4: [This big round up was carried out on June 24th. The enemy had about 6,000 troops engaged in this operation.

3. -They were practically three days moving into position before they began to search properly and the closing in movement.

[Rumours were afloat for some time back that there would be a big round up in those areas and soldiers who got into a conversation with a man from Kilcorney (2) area Coy. area in Kanturk a few days previous to the round up said that they were preparing for it. Consequently judging from all the rumours we did not consider those districts safe.

4r [On June 22th it was reported to us that Military horse and foot were coming from the West through Caherbarnagh and on the 23rd it was reported that those had arrived in Millstreet and had pitched camp/there.

5 —It was also reported on the 23rd that the enemy were coming on from the East through Banteer and Nadd and that they were camped on the south at Anyganchay.

6 [When the enemy began to close in on this area they moved from the East starting from Boolomore and holding a line to Nadd. And from North and West starting from Millstreet (the Auxies operated here with the Military).

7 [The troops coming from the South did not cross the Mushera and adjoining mountains but held a line on the South side of the hill from Mauma to Nadd. Horsemen operated on the North or Kilcorney or Rathcoole side of those mountains.

8 [There were about 14 lorries and 2 armoured cars engaged on the re-roads from which the encircling movement started. They were also on the roads going through the roads country being searched.

9 The troops operating from the West, East and North, swept all the country towards the Mushera mountains travelling six paces apart and driving on before them all the male population between the age-ages of 16 and 60.

10 —They were all in position about 3-0 p.m. and began to close in at about 4-0 p.m.

11 [The Auxies entered one house in Kilcorney Coy. area and took out young man a Volunteer they took him a few fields from his house where they tortured him and turned a machine gun on him and shot him dead. The Batt. O/C has already reported this outrage. *

12 [The Auxies did not arrest anyone in the district they searched but they badly beat everyone they came in contact with.

13 The military were not offensive to the people, they treated them alright.

14 There were about 600 of the male population rounded up all were released except 16. The troops going back marched those on to Kanturk with them on June 25th after camping the previous night in Rathcoole Coy. Area.

15 They found 6 motor vehicles in Kilcorney Coy. area in a bog.

16 They also found one dug out in Rathcoole Coy. area, they burned the bed clothes in it.

17 [Any of the arrseted men were not wanted men. I may mention here that Hugh O'Brien (Bank Robber) was one of the men rounded up and detained he was got in a cave in a mountain near his home.

18 Were it not for the find of motors Their /roundup was a failure. They did not get a single man wanted man or a man against whom they could honestly place a charge.

Batt. Adjt.

*This refers to the killing of Mikie Dineen in Ivale on 24 June, 1921 (J. Lane)

SEAN MOYLAN AND THE PROVOST

The following is an extract from a three part series by a former Provost of Trinity College, Dr. A. J. McConnell, on his relationship with Sean Moylan as Minister for Education. McConnell had established an unusually close relationship with de Valera because of their common interest in mathematics. McConnell has been unsuccessful in getting any financial help for Trinity College from the post-war Interparty government and he decided to try his luck again when Fianna Fail came back to power in 1951. He describes the outcome:

"When the Fianna Fail government came back into power they decided that the Department of Education should take control of University funding. Up to then it had been under the control of the Department of Finance.

So I wrote to the Department of Education, asking for an interview with the Minister, Mr Sean Moylan, and indicated that I was going to protest against the treatment that we had received under the previous government as far as grants were concerned.

When I went, accompanied by Dr. Alton, to see Mr. Moylan, I discovered that the Minister was accompanied by Mr Sean McEntee, and also by Mr Terry O'Rafferty, then Assistant Secretary to the Department of Education. I was told afterwards by Mr. O'Rafferty that this was a most unusual occurrence, that the Minister for Finance very seldom went down to the Department of Education. It was always the other way around and he was rather astonished at this happening.

Anyhow, the two Ministers listened very closely to what I had to say and then Mr. McEntee got up to go and Mr. Moylan went to the door with him and they said a few words together. What Mr. McEntee was saying I don't know but I can say now that years afterwards I did ask Dr. O'Rafferty, long after he had left the Department of Education, did he happen to know what Mr. McEntee said to Mr. Moylan.

"I do" says he, "because Moylan told me." He said "Would you look into the case that Dr McConnell is making and if you think that his request is reasonable, give it to him."

It is not insignificant that I had already been two years advisor to Mr de Valera and this was well known to all Ministers of the Fianna Fail government. They were not clear what my relationship to Mr de Valera was, but it came in very useful indeed and the result was the government gave me what I asked for, what I thought was reasonable - £50,000, half the increase that had been given to UCD.

Seeing that UCD was twice our size, I thought it was a reasonable request to make and it was given without any question by the Fianna Fail government. It was the second time I was able to be of some assistance.

In the same interview, after I had put the case for a special increase in the grant of Trinity College, I also mentioned to Mr. Moylan an incident that has occurred a few days earlier, in which a passerby in College Green had just missed a fall of stone from the facade of the college. This caused a certain amount of panic that perhaps the stonework of the college was becoming unstable.

This was because at this particular time some of the colleges in Oxford were experiencing drastic problems with their buildings, the stone of which had become very soft and had to be replaced at very considerable expense.

So I raised the problem with Mr Moylanhad said please could we have a grant to investigate the extent of the damage in the facade of the college and see whether it is very serious or can be dealt with simply.

Mr. Moylan turned to Mr O'Rafferty and said "We can't really let Trinity College fall down, can we?" and he said to me: "Can I come and see for myself because I am interested in this. My father was a builder." So I said of course I would be delighted if he would come.

So along he came and looked over the things and said: "All right I'll see what can be done" and very shortly after I got a communication from Mr Moylan that he was asking the government to include a special grant of £10,000 in the coming budget to be used to investigate the fa9ade of the college.

That in fact was the start of a long programme for the restoration of all the classical buildings in the college. The £10,000 grant was continued for quite a number of years. Then when work was being stepped up these grants were increased to £20,000, then to £40,000 and to £50,000.

In the end the whole period of my provosting something like £³/₄ million must have been spent by the government for the restoration of the historic buildings in the college. In fact during the whole 22 years of my provostship, I don't think there was a single passed that there wasn't scaffolding in some part of the college."

(Irish Press, 12 August 1985)

As the 50th anniversary of Moylan's death occurs in 2007 it is appropriate to recall de Valera's oration at his funeral in Kiskeam

DE VALERA'S GRAVESIDE ORATION

Sara bhfagfaimid an ait seo, silim gur ceart dom cimpla focal a ra faoi threithe agus cailiocht an fhir a bhfuil a chorp sinte anseo. Is e mo thuairim go raibh Sean O'Maolain ar dhuine de na fir ba dhilse agus ba chroga dena daoine dilse, croga go leir a chait a nduthrach, lenar linne, ar mhaithle lenar dtir agus lenar muintir.

Ni ga dhom tracht ar Shean O'Maolain mar shaighdiuir. Ta cuid agaibhse anseo, a sheanchomradaithe, is fearr a thuigeann na mise an cumas a bhu ann I gnothai airm. Bhi eolas cruinn direach agaibhse ar na buadha a bhi aige ag eagni bearta mileata, ag reiteach go ciiramach chun gnimh agus a chur i gerich le barr misnigh agus danachta.

Ni labharfad ach oiread, ar an obair a rinne 's in oige a shaoil ar son Chonra na Gaeilge, ait ar cothaiodh ann, mar a cothaiodh i moran daoine eile, a ghra dar dtir. Na ni thrachtfad ar an mbun-tsaothar a rinne se le haghaidh Oglaih na hEireann.

I knew him best in council. I saw him intimately at close quarters at the meetings of our Party, and at meetings of the Government, and in the Dail. The more I knew him the more I respected him. He was the soul of integrity.

Plain, perhaps sometimes blunt, in speech; sparing in words; by a vivid phrase he exposed the kernel of a problem and secured for his view an acceptance more complete than could have been obtained by lengthy argument.

His brusqueness was, however, external merely. At heart he was soft and gentle. To act kindly was his nature. His character was noble through and through. He was just. He was honest. He could not help being scathing in his denunciation of the cowardly and the mean.

In his young days he was a fine athlete - lithe, but with sinews of steel. What he endured during the Black and Tan period broke down a splendid physique.

Always thoughtful and meditative, in his later years he devoted his leisure to a wide reading of history and its philosophy, and brought to that reading the critical discernment of one who had himself, in his experience, encountered the problems, and understood the considerations, which determine decisions and action in all the fields, military, political, economic and social.

He had a keen artistic sense. A love of the beautiful was innate in him as was that of the good and the true. I have known but few men whose character, whose intellect, or whose judgment I respected more.

Happy, indeed, would be the nation that could produce many men like Sean Moylan. That our country would do so is my highest wish. I hope the young people of today will take him as an example; and may this spot become for them a place of pilgrimage from which they may derive inspiration, and an abiding love of their country.

Agus, an Te a chruthaigh agus a thug chun fairfeachta an t-anam uasal seo, go dtuga Se Chuige fein e agus go gcoinni Se e Aige fein e go brach.

(Kiskeam, November 18th 1957)

THE MILLSTREET STARS OF THE PARNELL COMMISSION

The Parnell Commission was one of the great spectacles of Victorian England. The Government and *The Times* newspaper decided to destroy the Irish nationalist movement and the Land League by attempting to prove that they were led by a criminal conspiracy headed by Parnell. Letters purporting to be written by Parnell, the Irish nationalist leader, condoning the Phoenix Park killings of two government officials were published in *The Times* and were the pretext to set up the Commission to carry out the condemnation and humiliation of the movement. All of English society was riveted to the daily drama that lasted several months. Parnellism was made synonymous with crime by every means available.

All sorts gave evidence for the government and *The Times* - police, spies, agents, liars, cowards and opportunists of every sex and of every description from the highways and byways of Ireland. Priests and their Archbishop and every leading Irish politician also gave evidence mostly in defence of the League. Prime Ministers, personalities such as Oscar Wilde and a wide variety of 'society' attended the hearings to witness the unfolding drama which was like a real life soap opera. Loads of journalists attended and delighted in colourful reporting and focusing on the Irish characters on show. It was better than any theatre.

The whole episode ended in triumph for the Irish nationalists when it was established that the letters were forgeries and *The Times* was discredited so extensively that it never fully recovered its status. The Land League, through the organisational genius of Michael Davitt was the main element that countered every attempt by the Government and *The Times* to discredit the League's cause and he orchestrated the defeat of the Government.

The Times published 36 volumes of verbatim accounts of the hearings called "*Parnellism and Crime*" during the hearings. They never reprinted the volumes afterwards, naturally enough, and neither has anybody else. It is quite extraordinary to read histories of the period published these days and the Commission is not even mentioned. The volumes could do with republishing or reciting on radio. It is ready-made drama, full of characters high and low with allegations and descriptions of murder, conspiracy, terrorism, blackmail, robbery, forgery, lies, deception, spying, perjury, disgrace, betrayal, suicide - and much more!

As it was given the appearance of a court - which it was not - a number of artists attended to draw the characters for their readers, as they would have done in proper court cases. Thanks to them we have likenesses of the Millstreet participants taken by the artists of the London popular weekly papers, "*The Graphic*" and "*The Pictorial World*." Also included below are likenesses from "*A Portfolio of sketches taken in Court by a Staff Gownsman, Louis Gacher*." These drawings are probably the only surviving record of what the local individuals looked like.

There are three sets reproduced below, one from each publication, and some of the people appear twice and from what I know of the Commission, between the three sets all the Millstreet witnesses are included.

They were: **1** Jeremiah Hegarty, businessman, **2** Canon Griffin PP, **3** Detective Inspector Starkie of the Millstreet RIC, **4** Jeremiah O'Connor, farmer and relieving officer, **5** Kathy Fitzgerald and **6** daughter Ellen, farmer's wife and daughter, Musher/Aubane, **7** Cornelius C. Kelleher, The Lane, Aubane, **8** Michael O'Keeffe, farmer.

Also included are the local MP, Dr. Tanner and Oscar Wilde.



2 Canon Griffin PP, Millstreet



1 Jeremiah Hegarty,
Millstreet businessman

3 Detective Inspector Starkie
of the Millstreet RIC



4 Jeremiah O'Connor,
farmer and relieving officer



THE GRAPHIC



6 Ellen Fitzgerald, farmer's daughter
Mushera/Aubane



7 Cornelius C. Kelleher,
The Lane, Aubane



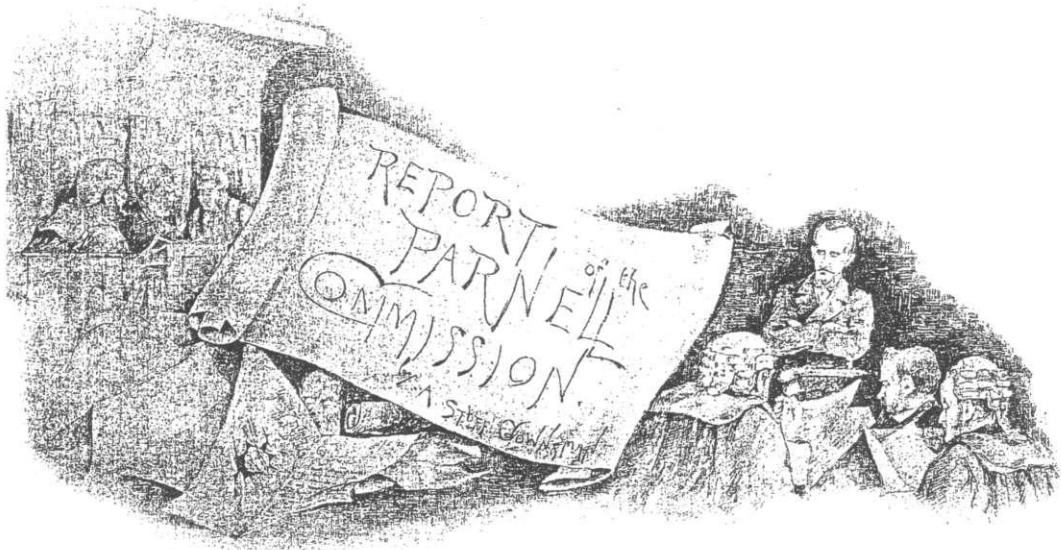
8 Michael O'Keeffe,
Millstreet farmer



Dr. Tanner, local MP



Oscar Wilde



2 Canon Griffin PP, Millstreet



6 Ellen Fitzgerald, farmer's daughter
Mushera/Aubane



4 Jeremiah O'Connor,
farmer and relieving officer

THE PICTORIAL WORLD.



2 Canon Griffin PP, Millstreet

5 Kathy Fitzgerald,
farmer's wife, Musher/Aubane



3 Detective Inspector Starkie
of the Millstreet RIC

CORRESPONDENCE FROM 'THE SOUTHERN STAR'

Old Soldiers Never Die (25.11.2004)

To the Editor, (Southern Star)

SIR—I would be most obliged if you would allow space in your newspaper for the following letter. The reason for its lateness is due to awaiting the outcome of the Armistice commemoration in leper (Ypres), Belgium, on 11 November 2004. Further to an article by your reporter, Mr. Leo McMahon in *The Southern Star* of 9 October last regarding the laying of a wreath by the Irish Government on behalf of the Irish people at the Menin Gate, leper (Ypres), Belgium, your readers and Archon (the person who decides to hide behind the badge of anonymity) may be interested to know that the Irish Ambassador has officiated and laid a wreath.

It is gratifying to know that after being airbrushed from history for so many years the Irishmen whose bodies to use the words of Thomas Davis⁶ in far foreign fields from Dunkirk to Belgrade lie the soldiers and chiefs of the Irish Brigade' are now getting due recognition. Archon's reply 'Old Soldiers Never Die', October 2004, raises a few points that need to be addressed. Nationalists of this person's vintage have always had it in mind to disparage the name of John Redmond, neglecting to inform the readers that he too was not only a Nationalist, but also the leader of the Irish people at the outbreak of the First World War, and was on the same political wavelength as Isaac Butt, Parnell, Davitt and before them Grattan and O'Connell. With regard to Redmond being 'Britain's leading recruiting sergeant of the day', this is a spurious argument as it was reasonable for the young men of Ireland to follow his call when such sections of Irish society as the Church, Archbishops, Bishops, Lord Mayors, Mayors, Chairmen, members of both County and Urban Councils, employers and the community in general were almost in unison in supporting a call to volunteer for military service.

There was no coercion of country boys to enlist, as Archon would have us believe. What he did not inform the readers about regarding those 'Irishmen who refused the shilling' and participated in the 1916 Rebellion was that they were 'a minority of a minority', to use T. M. Healy's words, and their action was against the

general consensus of opinion in Ireland, and who were on the side of the Allies.

Archon also refers to the 'Imperialist war', that it was such a war historians generally agree, however those who rebelled and issued the Proclamation in 1916 referred to their 'gallant allies in Europe', meaning of course Germany, the other Imperial power to whom the Irishmen on the Western Front and elsewhere were fighting against, and there were many more of them than was involved in the rebellion.

Unfortunately, it was British incompetence in executing the leaders of this rebellion that was to contribute to the demise of John Redmond and his patriotic efforts to achieve independence without the blood that was to be shed later on.

The rebels had no hesitation in seeking aid from this power, not only in providing arms but also hoped that an invasion force from Germany, the 'Imperialists' in question, would come to their aid. In future Archon should when writing state all the facts and not some half-truths.

Yours sincerely,
Tadhg Moloney, B.A., M.A.,
Hon. Secretary,
Royal Munster Fusiliers
Association (1992).
86 High Meadows,
Gouldavoher,
Limerick.

Supporting Redmond (9/12/'04)

SIR—Tadhg Moloney tells us (letters 25/11/04) that "*it was reasonable for the young men of Ireland to follow his (Redmond's) call when such sections of Irish society as the Church, Archbishops, Bishops, Lords Mayor, Mayors, Chairmen, members of both County and Urban Councils, employers and the community in general*" supported participation in the First World War.

But how was it reasonable when none of the above, including John Redmond, had ever won a single vote or an election on the basis of taking Ireland to war against Germany which is what John Redmond did in 1914? He won votes

and the elections in 1910 and earlier to get Home Rule which he never achieved.

Germany and Ireland had had a totally positive relationship in all areas of life, culturally, politically and philosophically. Ireland had no quarrel whatever with Germany so why was it reasonable to declare war on it?

Irish people needed a very good reason to go to war on Germany and they were given one but it turned out to be a fraud and a lie. They were told that this was a war "*so that small nations might be free.*" That was why people joined up. Many Irish people knew immediately this was a joke with an ally like Czarist Russia and knowing what the British Empire had done historically in Ireland and was doing throughout the world. These latter were the reasonable and rational people.

After the change of Government in the spring of 1915 — without an election which should have been held five years after the previous one — the Unionists came to power. This was a constitutional coup d'etat and it was then clear that Redmond and his supporters had been fooled and Home Rule would now never happen. The Unionists who had threatened and organised for civil war in alliance with Germany (after visiting the Kaiser) to prevent Home Rule were now in power.

That development is what led directly to 1916 and the growing support for Independence afterwards and which was fully confirmed in the 1918 election.

The tragedy of those 50,000 young Irish soldiers dying was never airbrushed out of Irish history as Mr. Moloney and others claim because that would have been a physical impossibility. The airbrushing is being done by Mr Moloney and others who seek to airbrush away the reason why those young Irishmen went to war. It is too embarrassing for him and others to recall the real reasons because it makes their deaths an unforgivable crime. That is why they were, should be, and I hope always will be remembered in Ireland. I think that will be the case long after Mr. Moloney and his weasel words of justification for that dreadful crime are forgotten.

Yours faithfully,

Jack Lane.

Minister Fusiliers (22/12/'04)

SIR-Mr. Lane (letters 9/12/04) does not like the truth as he endeavours to twist history to suit himself. However, in the interests of historical accuracy and objectivity, without lowering myself to exchanging insults, I will address some of the points that he raises. John Redmond as Mr. Lane so rightly pointed out had won both elections in 1910; however, contrary to the assertion that he had no mandate is spurious to say the least. He was the leader of the Irish people with the exception of a small minority who had no mandate to ferment a rebellion in 1916 or at any time.

This minority were led by members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), who had decided what the nation should want, which was against the wishes of the overwhelming majority of people who were known to be opposed to extremist action. Their action was most definitely against the constitution of the IRB, in other words 'a minority of a minority' as previously stated, which I am sure that Mr. Lane only knows too well. Again as previously stated it was British incompetence in executing the leaders of this rebellion that was to contribute to the demise of John Redmond and his patriotic efforts to achieve independence without the blood that was to be shed later on.

Regarding John Redmond's so-called failure to achieve Home Rule, this is completely and totally without any foundation. Redmond took his responsibility as leader of the Irish people seriously, refusing to ask for the volunteers to support the war effort without Home Rule, which was placed on the Statute Book, accompanied by a Suspensory Bill declaring that it would not be enacted for one year or the duration of the war. It had also received the royal assent at a special session of Parliament. The Irish people were thereafter on the side of Britain and her allies.

Mr. Lane quite correctly states that the Irish people needed a good reason to go to war against Germany and they had it, as Germany were seen as barbarians and aggressors having steamrolled through Belgium whose religion was that of Ireland, Catholic.

Also, Mr. Lane does not state that Great Britain and paradoxically Germany had signed the Treaty of London in 1839 recognising the newly

independent Kingdom of Belgium, and declared that it would remain a neutral state. Germany violated this treaty when it sent 38 military divisions through Belgium. As a result Great Britain in accordance with its obligation as a signatory to the agreement gave the invading power an ultimatum that unless it did not withdraw its forces by 11 p.m., on August 4, 1914, it would be at war. Therefore Ireland as part of the Empire was also at war as were other countries in the Empire.

Again Britain was a part of an alliance of countries called the Triple Entente, which included France and Russia, and had agreed to come to each others' aid if attacked and the Irish people did not think of this as a joke. The Unionists did not come to power in 1915 and neither was there a constitutional coup. In fact they formed a part of a Coalition Government consisting of the Liberals, Labour, Conservatives and Unionists, a unity of political parties which was found to be necessary at the time. Redmond was in fact offered a position in this Government but declined because of the Irish Party's policy of not accepting a position in a British Government. Certainly the Unionists had threatened civil war, they did not wish to be coerced into a country that they saw as being dominated by Roman Catholic clergy. To the Unionists, Home Rule was Rome Rule, and I am sure that the Kaiser would certainly have liked to have formed an alliance with the Unionists but he did not. As for the Unionists procuring arms from Germany, which they did, Mr. Lane neglected to inform us that the Irish Volunteers did also.

Mr. Lane must be living in another world if he thinks that Ireland's participation in the First World War was not airbrushed from Irish history. It was a part of the agenda of successive Irish Governments since the foundation of the Irish State (selective amnesia) to ensure that it was never included as a part of the history courses in the country's schools. It may interest Mr. Lane to know that even to this day not one question has been asked of students doing their Leaving Certificate about Ireland and World War One. The only embarrassing matter that affects the 'others and myself, as Mr. Lane describes us, is the fact that for so long the sacrifice of these men and the real reasons that they participated were airbrushed from the Irish psyche but thankfully

this is changing, it may be slow, but nevertheless we are getting there in spite of Mr. Lane. It has been through the efforts of the Royal Munster Fusiliers Association and other such organisations that this is happening and will continue ad infinitum.

Yours sincerely,
Tadhg Moloney,

Redmond and WWI (30/12/'04)

Dear Sir, The problem in discussing history with Tadhg Moloney is that he is in denial about irrefutable facts. He denies that John Redmond failed to achieve Home Rule (22/12/04) but neglects to tell us when Redmond became Prime Minister of Home Rule Ireland.

A Home Rule Act was put on the Statute Book in September 1914 with the agreement of the British Unionist Party which had for two years been preparing to fight a war against Home Rule. Unionist agreement to the Act was gained by an explicit undertaking that the Act would never be put into effect. The provisions that a Home Rule government would be established at the end of the war was made conditional on substantial alteration being made to the "Act" on the Statute Book.

Tadhg also denies that the Liberal Home Rule Government fell in 1916. But the Liberals understood the formation of the Coalition to be the fall of the Liberal Government. The Unionists took a share of power in the Coalition in 1915. In 1916 they became the dominant party, sacking Prime Minister Asquith for incompetence in running the war he had started, and putting in Lloyd George as their front man.

The watered-down Home Rule promised in September 1914 was not put into effect in November 1918, and the Home Rule Party was wiped out as gullible dupes in the December 1918 Election.

The IRB certainly acted without an electoral mandate in 1916 as Tadhg says but so did the Government. The Coalition decided to continue governing after the 1910 electoral mandate of the Parliament ran out in 1915. The IRB acted arbitrarily against a Government whose power had become arbitrary. When the Election was held at last in December 1918, the party of the Rising won it hands down.

Britain, through the secret operation of the Committee of Imperial Defence set up in 1906, had made detailed military preparations with France for war against Germany. This has long been public knowledge. The Germans were ignorant of these preparations. If Britain had stated its intention of treating a German breach of Belgium neutrality as a cause of war, Germany would not have marched through Belgium. But Britain's object was to establish a favourable propaganda position for itself in its war on Germany and it misled the Germans about its intentions - and then put on a display of moral outrage which is it's great party trick.

Jack Lane

Redmond and WWI (20/I/'05)

SIR—Mr Lane (letters 30/12/'04) is definitely living in another world and is assuredly the person living in denial, as he continually twists history to suit his own ends. He refuses to recognise the truth when it is pointed out to him, and regurgitates that which has already been addressed in previous correspondence. As this appears to have deviated from the original reason that gave rise to it, that of honouring and remembering the Irishmen who died during the First World War in France and Belgium etc. at the Menin Gate, Ieper, Belgium by the Irish Government, which was thankfully done, it is time to bring the correspondence to a conclusion. Although I have addressed the issues raised by him, he continues to raise them again, and he will not accept the truth when it stares him in the face. However, it is now time to draw a line and move on, but before doing so, and for the last time, some additional points raised by Mr Lane will be dealt with.

The situation regarding Home Rule has previously been addressed, but to point out an error that Mr Lane has made in his letter, the agreement was made, as Mr Lane only too well knows with the British Prime Minister, H. H. Asquith, who was also the leader of the Liberal Party at that time, and not the British Conservative Party.

Incidentally, there was no British Unionist Party, but Conservative Party. Also, there never was an explicit agreement that the Act would not be implemented. There was no watering down of

the Home Rule Act; Redmond only later agreed that the Unionists would have a temporary opt out of the Act for six years, as the Act referred to all Ireland. This occurred after the 1916 rebellion when the Unionists dug in their heels. In fact it could be argued that this rebellion copper fastened partition, but that is a debate for another day. The Liberal Government, as previously stated, had entered into a coalition; however, they retained the key ministries within their grasp. Certainly H. H. Asquith was removed as Prime Minister, this was because he was weak in the prosecution of the war; who, after all would want to retain a weak leader in time of war. By the way, while leaders may change during such a crucial period of time, to my knowledge there has never been a change of government during wartime.

Again, as previously stated, the British government was a democratically elected body, whereas, the IRB was not. I am delighted that Mr Lane has agreed that the IRB or a section of them acted arbitrarily, even against the terms of his own constitution. Reference was made to the party of the rebellion, obviously Mr Lane is referring to Sinn Fein, but contrary to the myth perpetuated down through the years and now apparently by Mr Lane, it was the rebellion that made the party and not vice-versa. Contrary to Mr Lane's assertion, the Irish Parliamentary Party were not "gullible dupes" but had fought long and hard for Ireland, attaining quite a lot in the process.

Regarding the Committee of Imperial Defence, which, incidentally, was established in 1904 and not in 1906, as Mr Lane would have us believe, did not enter into secret negotiations with France to prepare for war with Germany. The explanation for this is quite simple; the committee not only did not have any executive administration function, it was purely advisory and was controlled by the Cabinet who were in the ascent with a few military experts and reported directly to the Prime Minister.

It was also rather strange that if there were secret negotiations taking place in the event of war with Germany breaking out that Britain would have such a small army when the war did commence. That the Germans were ignorant of any preparations against them was most definitely true, for none existed. Mr Lane thinks that the

breach of Belgium's neutrality was fine as long as Britain did not take issue with them (Germany).

Again, Mr Lane has his facts mixed up if he thought that Germany would not have invaded Belgium had Britain shouted stop. Germany had every intention of marching through Belgium to attack France, whatever the consequences. This is a well-known fact of history, which Mr Lane appears to be in denial of. Britain did not establish for itself a favourable propaganda situation in the war against Germany; the latter did all of that on its own by its actions.

Yours faithfully,
Tadhg Moloney, B.A., M.A.,

Redmond and World War I (27/1/05)

Dear Sir,

It is a pity that Tadhg Moloney, B.A., M.A., seems anxious to close this correspondence in his latest letter (20/1/05). '*it is now time to draw a line and move on..*' he says. But it is Tadhg who is trying to prevent us moving on because he wants us to move back to Redmond's position in August 1914. '*It is time to draw the correspondence to a close*' he says, but that is the editor's prerogative and it is rare indeed for a correspondent to seek to end a correspondence he has initiated. The opposite is usually the case, especially one that has raised some very important issues that might take more than a few letters to do them justice.

Perhaps he does not appreciate the importance of the issues he has raised. The crucial one being, as he claimed initially on 26/11/04, that"*... it was reasonable for the young men of Ireland to follow Redmond's call.*" to war. There can hardly be a more important issue for a national leader than taking his country to war. As Tadhg is anxious to get us all to support and honour the people who followed Redmond to war and particularly the 50, 000 who perished I think he is obliged to have the patience to make a thoroughly convincing case on their behalf. I hope the editor would indulge him in this.

John Redmond justified his advocacy of going to war as the best way of getting Home Rule. But the government had already surrendered to the threat of civil war by the Ulster Unionists to prevent Home Rule. The

Curragh mutiny of 1913 was the final proof of that. After that successful mutiny parliamentary assurances about Home Rule were a sham and a charade.

That surrender is the long and short of the matter and that is what discredited John Redmond and what made it unreasonable for Irishmen to follow him into declaring war on Germany in support of the government that had so capitulated and thereby destroyed any reasonable prospect of Home Rule.

It is also a pity that Tadhg wants to end the discussion when he has found something that he is '*delighted*' we agree on, i.e., that the IRB acted arbitrarily in organising the 1916 Rising. But if he agrees with me on that why does he not agree with me that in rising against a government that had not been elected they were dealing with an arbitrary government?

The IRB since their foundation had always acted arbitrarily and never pretended otherwise as their aim was an independent Irish Republic and it was then treason to openly promote and work for such a political objective. The IRB had no choice but to act arbitrarily but they did not act hypocritically

It was the British government that claimed to be acting democratically yet dispensed with an election that should have been held in 1915 when its mandate had run out and in its place installed a new government that included the leaders of the opposition to Home Rule who had organised and planned for civil war. This government was both arbitrary and hypocritical and had no moral authority in Ireland and that is what made 1916 morally justifiable. Tadhg sees 1916 as causing the Unionists to '*...dig in their heels. Infact it could be argued that this rebellion copper fastened partition but that is a debate for another day.*'

This is putting the cart before the horse - 1916 was the end result of the Unionists digging their heels in since 1886 and by repeatedly defying their Parliament had discredited the parliamentary system as a means of delivering Home Rule culminating in the Curragh Mutiny already mentioned. And why is this assertion of his not a debate for today rather than another day? Why bring it up and keep our readers waiting in suspense for the debate?

Tadhg indulges in a number of debating points - but thousands of people did not go to war over debating points. I agree that Sinn Fein did not organise the Rising.

He is mistaken however when he says there was no British Unionist Party but a Conservative Party. In fact the Conservatives had merged with the anti-Home Rule Liberals to form the Unionist party, which entered the government in 1915.

And while it is true that the Committee of Imperial defence existed before 1906, it was only after the 1906 change of government that it began the secret preparations with France for war on Germany, on the authority of the Prime Minister who was a member of it.

Tadhg says that Britain could not be preparing for war because it had a small army. The Home Army had been systematically expanded through the Territorial Army and reorganised by Lord Haldane during his 8 years in charge at the War Office in collaboration with the French (Sir Henry Wilson and Marshal Foch being the relevant officers in charge). The Expeditionary Force had been allocated its place on the line in France long before 1914.

Britain has always had a small standing army at home but built an Empire across the world because its genius was to be able to get others to be prepared to do its fighting for it. Tadhg is a living example of its success in this regard.

Yours sincerely,
Jack Lane

POPULATION FIGURES 1827

Cesar Moreau was a French statistician who compiled some amazingly detailed collections of facts and figures on a variety of social and commercial subjects, including populations, in the 1820s.

Below are small samples from a publication of his in 1827 which includes the population of Millstreet town at the time. After giving the distance from Dublin as 136 ½ (Irish) miles it gives an interesting breakdown of the total of 1,564 persons in terms of: 754 males, 810 females; those engaged in agriculture as 124, traders, manufactures, etc as 192 and all other occupations as 76; 334 families; 257 inhabited houses, 2 uninhabited and none being built.

The publication was produced in very neat, tiny long hand which is not easily readable these days.

His figures on overall Irish population figures are interesting as they give the lie to the official Famine figures. He estimates a possible population of 9,050,000 almost 20 years before the Famine which, because of the very rapid rate of population growth at the time, could mean a population of approximately 13 million by 1847. With an official figure of 6.5 million recorded in 1851 we can get some idea of the real numbers that perished during the Great Hunger while the country overflowed with food of all sorts.

Continuation of the List of Towns having from 1,000 to 4,999 inhabitants.

Principal Towns Named.	In what Province, County, or Barony the Principal Towns are situated.	Total in each set. See table below	Number of Persons employed in each set. See table below	Number of Persons effectively employed				Total in each set. See table below	Rate of In- duc- tion per cent of Persons employed	Rate of In- duc- tion per cent of Persons employed	Rate of In- duc- tion per cent of Persons employed	
				Sp.	Rate per cent of Persons employed	Total in each set. See table below	Rate per cent of Persons employed					
Skibbereen	Cork	161 $\frac{1}{2}$	2,336	2,507	482	626	315	1,483	1,062	769	55	*
Rathkeale	Limerick	108	2,375	2,284	357	556	585	1,248	952	812	50	14
Dingle	Kerry	166	2,131	2,007	149	147	504	1,370	898	713	33	*
Mallow	Cork	118 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,914	2,200	187	807	613	1,625	841	538	49	"
Clonakilty	Cork	146	1,933	1,938	226	732	445	1,873	881	640	53	"
Nichelstotra	Cork	102 $\frac{1}{2}$	2,023	2,023	281	670	274	1,025	895	581	40	"
Bantry	Cork	164 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,763	1,836	1,164	187	680	1,231	768	524	58	2
Filcrea	Clare	148 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,656	1,829	136	507	411	1,054	742	727	58	22
Caher	Tipperary	85 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,570	1,718	366	602	325	1,192	750	536	88	2
Templemore	Tipperary	75	1,617	1,353	351	533	732	1,396	904	224	27	"
Fethard	Tipperary	78 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,570	1,508	221	416	157	794	642	526	53	"
Newcastle	Limerick	113	1,656	1,181	1,375	194	281	1,52	659	539	357	5
Zeneraile	Cork	100 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,650	1,697	193	214	228	552	483	622	2	"
Eismore	Waterford	100 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,650	1,697	193	214	228	552	483	622	2	"
Fallows	Waterford	100 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,650	1,224	116	492	216	254	1471	430	56	2
Middleton	Cork	122	1,502	921	93	264	181	528	399	281	14	3
Dunmanway	Cork	151	1,612	982	123	235	113	459	425	315	14	"
Colveragh	Cork	104 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,663	971	992	184	299	99	572	424	341	11
Cloone	Cork	135 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,647	1,000	103	327	116	540	383	298	31	"
Cappoquin	Waterford	97 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,826	873	953	125	258	201	604	383	279	28
Clogheen	Tipperary	90 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,607	810	93	178	115	504	312	247	11	"
Allstreet	Cork	136 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,564	754	810	124	128	76	398	324	257	3
Rathcorrick	Cork	111	1,539	772	780	102	175	176	453	364	242	13
Poolecarron	Cork	111	1,537	772	787	76	265	116	457	344	205	10
Billingarry	Limerick	137 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,533	733	790	54	280	87	421	278	272	9
Castleisland	Cork	137 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,533	730	807	183	137	155	425	310	264	23
Shanagolden	Limerick	114	1,430	676	751	167	160	102	413	263	237	11
Gillfinane	Limerick	114	1,405	592	723	116	301	107	523	295	228	12
Castletelyons	Cork	111	1,391	687	734	103	172	78	358	297	244	20
Enniscrone	Clare	118 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,369	696	673	72	226	133	431	333	233	10
Castlemartyr	Cork	118 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,323	574	749	94	139	92	325	260	216	6
Giltown	Kerry	86	1,165	641	624	103	132	145	380	252	232	16
Newport	Tipperary	86	1,134	560	574	125	165	78	368	241	203	7
Tullahoe	Clare	86 $\frac{1}{2}$	1,003	480	572	92	112	93	297	221	174	1

Population of Ireland.

The legislatures of Ireland before the Union of that island with great Britain never attempted to procure a correct enumeration of the people; consequently all nations of the population of Ireland for any period during the 17th and 18th Centuries are left in a considerable degree to speculation and conjecture, but the sagacity of political writers has found data capable of affording satisfactory results, as will be seen by the following Table presenting a synoptical view of the estimated Population of Ireland at the several periods of the 17th, 18th and 19th Centuries.

Date	How ascertained	Quantity	Date	How ascertained	Quantity	Date	How ascertained	Quantity
1652	In William Petty	850,000	1754	Health-money collectors	2,372,634	1805	Thomas Newenham	5,325,456
1652	do	1,100,000	1767	do	2,544,276	1813	French & Co. census pr.	5,937,853
1695	Captain Smith	1,034,502	1777	do	2,690,536	1821	1824 pr. 1813 D. 1825 pr. 1821	6,301,827
1712	Journal D'obbes Esq	2,099,094	1785	do	2,845,932		(Moreau's calculation)	7,672,835
1718	do	2,169,048	1788	Farmer Factor Burke Esq	3,010,000	1827	Starting to different communications received	8,113,000
1726	do	2,309,106	1791	Health-money collectors	4,206,612		by Mr. Moreau in 1827	8,420,000
1731	Established Clergy	2,010,221	1792	Peter Petic Paufort	5,035,226		not official	9,050,300

The Rockite movement in County Cork in the early 1820s

Chronic rural disturbances have featured prominently in the modern history of Ireland. In particular, the period from the 1760s to the 1830s witnessed frequent and widespread disturbances, ranging over several counties and lasting for years. The disturbers — contemporaries sometimes called them 'Whiteboys' — were often sworn into secret societies which operated at night under the command of a mythical leader, known variously as Captain Right, Captain Steel or Captain Rock. Historical scholarship has shed light on many of these disturbances. However, the Rockites in the south of Ireland in the early 1820s remain somewhat mysterious. Although this was the only instance of rural unrest in Munster in the early 1820s, the Rockite movement nonetheless constituted one of the most extensive and serious rural disturbances in Ireland before the Famine. Five regiments of troops were dispatched from Britain, 'for the purpose of putting down actual, & most formidable Danger in Ireland', as the home secretary admitted.¹ The Insurrection Act, with its curfew at night and trial without jury, was introduced into eight counties, and in its first year the act brought to trial more than 1,500 men in Munster, of whom more than 200 were convicted and transported.² In County Cork, where the movement was at its most formidable, open engagements between thousands of the Rockites and the military occurred in several places, while incendiarism prevailed to an extent unprecedented in the history of Irish agrarian disturbances. The special commissions appointed in February 1822, specifically to try Rockites in the county, convicted thirty-six men of capital crimes.³

Scholars interpreting the Rockites have stressed the role played by millenarian prophecies, which, although they 'did not provide the Rockite movement with a programme of action ... helped to rally Catholic country people to the Rockite cause'.⁴ While millenarian beliefs undoubtedly influ-

1. Lord Sidmouth to Lord Talbot, 23 Oct. 1821 (P.R.O., HO 100/201/154); Sidmouth to Talbot, 8 Nov. 1821 (*ibid.*, HO 100/202/55-6).

2. *Insurrection Act, Ireland. Returns from the clerks of the crown*, H.C 1823 (311), xvi, 687-95.

3. J. S. Townsend to Under-Secretary Gregory, 23 Feb. 1822 (N.A.I., State of the Country papers (henceforth S.O.C), 2344/58).

4. J. S. Donnelly, jr/Pastorini and Captain Rock:millenarianism and sectarianism in the Rockite movement of 1821-4' in Samuel Clark and J. S. Donnelly, jr (eds), *Irish peasants: violence and political unrest, 1780-1914* (Manchester, 1983), pp 106-7.

enced the Rockites, this article seeks a broader understanding of the Rockite movement, by focusing on a particular region — County Cork — and using sources that have been little exploited hitherto.⁵ It will argue that the Rockites had a political, as well as a millenarian and agrarian dimension, and that they were also organised to the extent of possessing a programme of action.

I

The Rockite movement began in the west of County Limerick in the summer of 1821. In the region around Newcastle a conflict between the land agent of the Courtenay estates, Alexander Hoskins, and the tenants led to the assassination of Hoskins's son in July 1821.⁶ The conflict had been provoked by Hoskins's harsh management of the estates.⁷ His conduct had been criticised by many, including the Under-Secretary in Dublin Castle, William Gregory, who had remarked that 'nothing can be more oppressive than the conduct of Lord Courtenay's agent'.⁸

The conflict between Hoskins and the tenants was in itself a local episode. However, disturbers made an appearance in the north of County Cork from the summer of 1821. They collected arms around Charleville⁹ and visited the two principal towns of Duhallow barony, Kanturk (once) and Newmarket (three times).¹⁰ A magistrate reported from Newmarket, possibly with some exaggeration: Troops of Horse paraded the Town while the infantry forcibly enter'd every house breaking the doors with sledges . . . they have great marks of discipline, being sober . . . entirely directed by their leaders . . . they were about 500 in strength.¹¹

Alarmed magistrates in Duhallow agreed that the disturbers were from County Limerick, but they were unable to diagnose the nature of the disturbances, which were apparently more than mere agrarian Whiteboyism. One magistrate reported to Dublin Castle that 'the mystery & secrecy of their views are among the most alarming symptom',¹² while another wrote

5. The Chief Secretary's Office Registered Papers (henceforth C.S.O., R.P.) in N.A.I. contain papers which are specifically concerned with the state of the country in the 1820s but which are uncalendared. Most of series II of the S.O.C. is also uncalendared. In this article individual documents in these two uncalendared (and hence little-used) series are referred to by box number, description and date.

6. *Limerick Chronicle*, 28 July, 1 Aug. 1821.

7. Chief Secretary Grant to H. Bateman, 19 Jan. 1820 (N.A.I., Private Official Correspondence, letter-book 421); *Dublin Evening Post*, 9 Oct. 1821; see also letters in N.A.I., S.O.C, 2185/51.

8. Gregory to Grant, n.d. (N.A.I., S.O.C, 2185/51).

9. Brigade-Major Croker to Gregory, 6 Oct. 1821 (*ibid.*, C.S.O., R.P., box 631); G. Bruce to_____, 7 Nov. 1821 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2293/20).

10. C. O'Leary to_____, 7 Oct. 1821 (*ibid.*, S.O.C., 2296/16); Rev. T. Allen to_____, 20 Oct. 1821 (*ibid.*, C.S.O., R.P., box 633); W. Allen to Grant, 25 Oct. 1821 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2293/13).

11. W. Allen to Grant, 22 Aug. 1821 (*ibid.*, C.S.O., R.P., box 630).

12. R. Aldworth to Gregory, 24 Oct. 1821 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2293/12).

that their sole object appeared to be the acquisition of arms and ammunition.¹³ No fewer than 223 arms raids were recorded in County Cork between October 1821 and April 1822.¹⁴ Limerick disturbers raided the north of Kerry as well, which further alarmed the authorities.¹⁵ A magistrate remarked in September 1821: 'I am perfectly [convinced] ... that this insurrection will turn out more serious than any which has occurred in the south of Ireland for some years past.'¹⁶

Dublin Castle sent capable police officers into the epicentre, the west of County Limerick, in order to investigate the nature of the disturbances. They warned that the views of the rebel leaders 'now far extended beyond the object for which they originally associated' and that their final object was 'the total upset of the established order of things'.¹⁷ How well founded their warning was is unclear, but the Castle authorities, judging the situation to be critical, mobilised all available resources under the ordinary law in order to contain the Rockites in Munster: a massive dispatch of troops and the Peace Preservation Force (armed police),¹⁸ the formation of yeomanry corps,¹⁹ the mobilisation of pensioners into veteran battalions,²⁰ and the creation of a special commission specifically to try the Rockites in County Limerick.

These measures of repression had some effect. While some Rockites began to act in small parties,²¹ many activists — including Patrick Dillane, the first 'Captain Rock', who had assassinated the agent Hoskins's son — fled into the upland stretching between the three counties of Limerick, Kerry and Cork.²² This region in the early 1820s was relatively neglected, and the state machinery of law-enforcement was weak there. The roads were difficult for wheeled coaches and horsemen, and hence also for troops; there were also very few resident landlords in the area.²³

13. C. O'Leary to———, 16 Oct. 1821 (*ibid.*, S.O.C., 2293/8).

14. Compiled from N.A.I., S.O.C.; *ibid.*, C.S.O., R.R; *Cork Morning Intelligencer*, *Cork Constitution*.

15. Brigade-Major Mahony to Lt-Col. Turner, 19 Aug. 1821 (N.A.I., S.O.C., 2295/3); Major Warburton to Gregory, 7 Oct. 1821 (*ibid.*, C.S.O., R.R, box 638); *Cork Morning Intelligencer*, 18,22 Sept. 1821.

16. R. Leslie to Grant. 15 Sept. 1821 (N.A.I., C.S.O., R.R, box 634).

17. Major Willcocks and Major Warburton to Grant, 23 Oct. 1821 (R.R.O., HO 100/202/25).

18. Grant to Sidmouth, 25 Nov. 1821 (*ibid.*, HO 100/202/201-4); list of the districts under the Peace Preservation Force (N.A.I., S.O.C., 2375/22).

19. Talbot to Sidmouth, 24 Nov. 1821 (R.R.O., HO 100/202/197-8); Grant to Sidmouth, 24 Dec. 1821 (*ibid.*, HO 100/202/385-6).

20. H. Clive to Grant, 6 Dec. 1821 (*ibid.*, HO-100/202/316-17).

21. Major-Gen. Aylmer to Military Secretary, 29 Nov. 1821 (N.A.I., S.O.C, 2293/31).

22. *Cork Morning Intelligencer*, 16 Apr. 1822; *Limerick Chronicle*, 10 July, 16,23 Oct. 1822; *Cork Constitution*, 5 Aug. 1822; information of H. Goold, 10 July 1823 (H.A.T., S.O.C, 2517/47).

23. R. Griffith to Chief Secretary Goulburn, 27 Aug. 1823 (N.A.I., C.S.O., R.R, 1823/6466); evidence of R. Griffith (*Minutes of evidence taken before the select committee appointed to inquire into the disturbances in Ireland ...*, pp 225-41, H.C. 1825 (20), vii, 225-41).

The mountains in Duhallow barony became a particularly important centre of disturbances. A Rockite was arrested near Kanturk in January 1822, reportedly in the act of administering the following catechism:

What distance is there between the Sun and Moon?

A square foot and an Irish heart in the full Bloom ...

What did he say?

That the Romans would obtain their own rights and liberties again.

Who comes there?

A friend.

To what?

To the blooming colours.

What colours are they?

The white and laurel succors.

Are your eyes sore?

No.

Why so?

Because they are purified.

How long?

Since Christianity was read in my countenance ...

how many feet in circumference is the tree of liberty?

3 quarantines ...²⁴

A copy was given to the authorities by a Rockite in Duhallow in December 1821,²⁵ The use of a catechism (however mysterious) to swear people in suggests that the Rockites in Duhallow were not mere lawbreakers but somehow organised disturbers. Interestingly, another copy can be seen attached to the confession of another Rockite coming from Duhallow and taken in West Muskerry barony in County Cork in January 1822.²⁶ Other copies were even found near Shanagolden in County Limerick²⁷ and in Scattery Island in County Clare.²⁸ In addition, several phrases of this catechism were used in Charleville,²⁹ Lower Ormond barony in County Tipperary³⁰ and Rathkeale in County Limerick.³¹

Hence the Rockites in various parts of Munster might have had a common underground organisation, at least on paper. Although it is unclear how these groups were co-ordinated, the disturbances spread quickly and in an alarming way, despite the government's counter-measures. In fact the most troublesome season of the year in rural Ireland, winter, was yet to come, and the disturbances of January 1822 turned out to be particularly destructive in County Cork.

24. W. Allen to———, 22 Jan. 1822 (N.A.I., S.O.C, 2342/58).

25. Information of T McCarthy, 19 Dec. 1821 (ibid., S.O.C, box 170).

26. Major Carter to———, 16 Jan. 1822 (ibid., S.O.C, 2342/38).

27. Contained in an account book (ibid., C.S.O., R.P., box 634). See Major Stewart to Gregory, 20 Oct. 1821 (ibid., C.S.O., R.R, box 636).

28. T. Hunt to Gregory, 16 Dec. 1821 (ibid., C.S.O., R.R, box 633).

29. Evidence of W. H. W. Newenham (*Minutes of evidence taken before the select committee of the House of Lords . . . into the disturbances . . . in those districts of Ireland . . . now subject to the . . . Insurrection Act*, p. 185, H.L. 1825 (200), vii, 685).

30. Information of J. Slattery, 22 Mar. 1822 (N.A.I., S.O.C, 2355/60).

31. J. Delmege to Gregory 29 Nov. 1821 (ibid., C.S.O., R.R, box 632).

II

By early 1822 the mountains of West Muskerry barony, as well as Duhallow, became a centre of the disturbances. Evidence suggests that mounted parties of Rockites from West Muskerry went as far afield as Bantry and Bandon, where they raided numerous houses for arms.³² On 8 January 1822 an engagement occurred near Bandon between the yeomanry and the Rockites. Several of the latter were killed or wounded, one of whom was later captured in the mountains near Inchigeelagh.³³ On the night of the 20th people in the north-west of Bandon were reported to have deserted their homes to assist the insurgents of Bantry and Macroom.³⁴ On the next day Lord Bantry went with a military party to the glen of Keimaneigh between Bantry and Macroom, where he was attacked from both sides by Rockites, among whom there were reportedly some 'strangers'.³⁵ A soldier was killed in the action.³⁶ Rockites dropped huge stones in the entrance of the glen to render it impassable after this engagement³⁷ and held a regular encampment in the glen.³⁸

On the two days of 24 and 25 January thousands of men in and around West Muskerry and Duhallow were mobilised to attack several targets.³⁹ On the morning of the 24th the military commander at Macroom observed 'every hill covered with large Bodies ... at least 8 or 900', armed with pikes and other weapons. Later they attacked and wrecked the mail-coach from Cork city, which prompted the troops to pursue them. In the engagement, in which twelve men were reported killed, Rockites fought with 'presumption & bo[il]dness altho so badly armed .. .They frequently made attempts towards a charge on any small parties they suddenly encountered.'⁴⁰ From Millstreet the commanding officer reported that upwards of 5,000 rebels had assembled on the hills around the town.⁴¹ At the same time the house of an old loyalist between Inchigeelagh and Macroom, destined for a military detachment, was totally destroyed by a mob of between 400 and 500 people.⁴² Thereafter all communication between Cork city and Tralee was cut off for two days.

32. [Dublin Castle?] to Sidmouth, 11 Jan. 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, box 170).

33. *Cork Morning Intelligencer*, 10,12,15 Jan. 1822; *Waterford Mirror*, 23 Jan. 1822.

34. *Cork Morning Intelligencer*, 26 Jan. 1822.

35. Lord Bantry to Goulburn, 22 Jan. 1822 (N.A.I., S.O.C, 2342/60); Major-Gen. Lambert to Military Secretary, 24 Jan. 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2343/13); M. O'Sullivan to J. Browne, 24 Jan. 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, box 170); *Dublin Evening Post*, 26 Jan. 1822.

36. Major Carthew to Major-Gen. Lambert, 21 Jan. 1822 (N.A.I., S.O.C, 2343/5); J. Gillman to Goulburn, 25 Jan. 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2343/12).

37. R. O. C. Nevvenham to Gregory, 24 July 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2346/17).

38. *Cork Morning Intelligencer*, 1 Feb. 1822.

39. For the accounts in newspapers see *ibid.*, 26, 29, 31 Jan., 19, 21, 26 Feb., 5 Mar. 1822; *Limerick Chronicle*, 26, 30 Jan., 2,13 Feb. 1822; *Waterford Mirror*, 2, 4, 9 Feb. 1822; *Dublin Evening Post*, 29,31 Jan., 5 Feb. 1822.

40. Lt-Col. Mitchell to Major-Gen. Lambert, 24 Jan. 1822 (N.A.I., S.O.C, 2343/5).

41. Major Darcy to Col. Broke, 24 Jan. 1821 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2343/23).

42. J. Barry to Lord Wellesley, 27 Apr. 1822 (*ibid.*, C.S.O., R.P., 1822/515); *Cork Constitution*, 23 Aug. 1822,22 Aug. 1823.

The situation had worsened by the next morning. The entire male population north of Palace Anne, between Bandon and Dunmanway, was reported to be proceeding towards Inchigeelagh, with the sounding of horns all around.⁴³ A magistrate in Millstreet reported that 'The people are all risen with what Arms they possess and crown all the h[e]ights close unto the town .. .A party of two thousand men attacked the town but were dispersed by seven soldiers.'⁴⁴

At the hills of Deshure, between Macroom and Dunmanway, another engagement occurred. The commanding officer reported: This morning ... found the Insurgents strongly posted ... 2000 people —1000 of whom upon our approach descended from the Heights & came to attack us.., but upon my Men advancing ... & commencing firing they immediately retreated. We pursued [and] Killed at least 6 of them Wounded many & took 30 Prisoners.⁴⁵ In the east of Rathmore in Kerry several hundred people assembled from neighbouring parishes. They attacked a mail-coach and killed the mail-coach agent.⁴⁶

Mobilisation was seen also in Duhallow. From near Kanturk a magistrate reported that from the night of the 24th to the next morning expresses travelled in every direction calling on the people to assemble. He wrote: "The fields around are all deserted, not a single man at work notwithstanding the favourable weather. I myself have seen the men in parties travelling towards the place of rendezvous."⁴⁷ As many as a thousand men assembled near Newmarket. A correspondent to a newspaper reported that people assembled, waited for some time, and at four o'clock in the afternoon drew near the town. As the military approached, they rose from behind the ditches on both sides of the road; they all shouted, and their advance post fired at the troops without effect. The chief body then took flight, while 'a few boys in white persevered and fired in very quick times'. One soldier and forty insurgents were said to have been killed in the action.⁴⁸ Several other attacks on the same day in this region can also be identified.⁴⁹

Evidence concerning these actions is limited and circumstantial. However, the information from various quarters is sufficiently consistent to shed some light on what was happening — evidently something very different from ordinary Whiteboyism. First, these actions represented large-scale mobilisation of the people on particular days in daytime. At times the 'whole

43. A. Bernard and Lord Carbery to Major-Gen. Lambert, 25 Jan. 1822 (N.A.I., S.O.C, 2343/23).
44. E. McCarty to Goulburn, 25 Jan. 1822 (ibid., S.O.C, 2343/8).
45. Lt-Col. Mitchell to Col. Broke, 25 Jan. 1822 (ibid., S.O.C, 2343/23).
46. R. Day to C Tod, 26 Jan. 1822 (ibid., S.O.C, 2348/24); C D. Oliver to Goulburn, 27 Jan. 1822 (ibid., S.O.C, 2348/26).
47. Rev. J. E. Orpen to_____, 25 Jan. 1822 (ibid., S.O.C, 2343/6). See also J. Craster to Col. Gough, [26?] Jan. 1822 (P.R.O., HO 100/203/168).
48. Captain Keappock to Col. Gough, 25 Jan. 1822 (N.A.I., S.O.C, 2343/31); W. Allen to Col. Stratton, 26 Jan. 1822 (ibid., S.O.C, 2343/42); Major Carter to Goulburn, 28 Jan. 1822 (ibid., S.O.C, 2343/25),
49. For example, see Captain Stephenson to Major-Gen. Lambert, 26 Jan. 1822 (ibid., S.O.C, 2343/23).

'population' in localities acted in toto. Second, people from outer regions also participated. From Doneraile and Buttevant it was reported on the 26th that "Numbers of ill disposed Persons have proceeded since last evening to join the Insurgents in the Neighbourhood of Kanturk and Newmarket and ... labourers work is suspended in many parts."⁵⁰ Support in Kerry had also been canvassed. People near Killarney were intimidated on or around the 25th to join the rebels near Millstreet,⁵¹ while it was reported even from Tralee that a large body of peasants had been seen proceeding towards County Cork.⁵²

In such cases there were reports of emissaries exerting pressure on people to join the rebels. At the trial for the murder of the mail-coach agent, a witness testified that a mounted party of five to six men had come to a principal's house the preceding night, telling him their party had besieged Millstreet and Macroom and would take Killarney before the next evening.⁵³ Some strangers were reported as threatening and swearing people near Killarney to go in the direction of Cork at once.⁵⁴ According to a Catholic clergyman in Mitchelstown, a person 'rode twelve or fourteen miles through the country ... calling on people to attend on the following day'.⁵⁵ Cork rebels were said to have tried to mobilise Limerick men also.⁵⁶

The appearance of emissaries or the actual mobilisation of people, however, should not in itself lead one to conclude that *all* of these actions formed a *single* premeditated and concerted rebellion. In rural Ireland a rumour could be conveyed from place to place very quickly to cause a popular panic.⁵⁷ Furthermore, it should be noted that hot many of those assembled on the battlefield were actually prepared to 'attack the military. A magistrate reported on the battles of Newmarket and Millstreet: 'The assailants . . . amounted to thousands, but . . . by far the greater part were totally unarmed, driven like sheep to a slaughter house.'⁵⁸

On the other hand, it is difficult to describe *all* of the actions of the 24th and 25th as a mere 'panic'. As open engagements with the military were rare (the third point of distinction), this implies a degree of organisation, and on the battlefield Rockites showed some discipline. A key point here is that the use of the military in this region to hunt down the Rockites in the mountains was only recent,⁵⁹ A yeomanry officer reported that Rockites about to

50. A. Hill to Goulburn, 26 Jan. 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.C., 2343/22); W. H. W. Newenham to _____, 1 July 1823 (*ibid.*, S.O.C., 2514/1).

51. Rev. R. Herbert to Gregory, 28 Jan. 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.C., 2348/27).

52. T. Busteed to _____, 26 Jan. 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.C., 2348/25).

53. *Waterford Mirror*, 17 Aug. 1822; see also *Limerick News*, 4 Mar. 1822.

54. *Limerick Chronicle*, 30 Jan. 1822; *Cork Morning Intelligencer*, 31 Jan. 1822.

55. Evidence of Rev. J. Kiely (*Minutes of evidence taken before the select committee ... to inquire into the state of Ireland* . . . pp 318-21, H.L. 1825 (521), ix, 318-21).

56. Major Willcocks to Gregory, 25 Feb. 1822 (N.A.I., S.O.C., 2350/82); G. Ray to Gregory, 28 Mar. 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.C., 2349/25).

57. S. J. Connolly, 'The "blessed turf": cholera and popular panic in Ireland, June 1832' in *I.H.S.*, xxiii,no. 91 (May 1983), pp 214-32.

58. Rev. J. Orpen to [E.] Orpen, 2 Feb. 1822 (N.A.I., S.O.C., 2344/8).

59. Major-Gen. Aylmer to Military Secretary, 8 Dec. 1821 (*ibid.*, C.S.O., R.P., box 636); Major-Gen. Lambert to Military Secretary, 13 Jan. 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.C., 2342/30).

attack Millstreet told a Catholic clergyman on the 25th: 'We know from what has already happened in other places that there will be an attempt to hunt us down, we may as well die one way as another.'⁶⁰ It thus seems reasonable to suggest that what happened on 24 and 25 January combined both a plan by the Rockite leaders to attack military posts *in the region* and a mass mobilisation occasioned by popular panic *around the region*. There is circumstantial evidence to suggest that the Rockite leaders who had fled into Duhallow from County Limerick might have been involved in the battle of Newmarket.⁶¹

The actions of 24-25 January 1822 constituted the most dramatic event of the Rockite movement, but these actions seem to have represented a short-term phenomenon in a neglected region. Immediately after the engagements people began negotiating with magistrates for pardon, on the conditions of surrendering arms and taking the oath of allegiance.⁶² Rockites in other regions, though not in a dramatic way, persisted in their activities well after January 1822 despite the repressive efforts of the state.

III

By January 1822 disturbances had affected almost all the southern half of Ireland,⁶³ and after the engagements of January the government hurriedly introduced new measures to contain the Rockites: the Insurrection Act and a new police force.⁶⁴ In March Gregory wrote that The executive is more strongly armed, & no seeming demonstration of tranquillity should relax any one measure of meeting Terror by Terror.⁶⁵ The new police force consisted of 325 men in County Cork.⁶⁶ Furthermore, two regiments were sent into the northern region of the county. This force was the largest military concentration in Munster.⁶⁷ A chain of military posts was established to enforce the Insurrection Act, and thousands of houses were searched at night for arms and suspected persons.⁶⁸ Facing these measures, Cork Rockites changed their tactics. In contrast to the large gatherings in Duhallow and West Muskerry in January 1822, they now appeared in

60. Brigade-Major Mahony to Goulburn, 25 Jan. 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.G, 2343/9).

61. J. D. Freeman to Gregory, 31 Mar. 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.G, 2345/50); Gregory to Freeman, 4 Apr. 1822 (*ibid.*, Private Official Correspondence, letter-book 422).

62. C. O'Leary to_____, 1 Feb. 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.G, 2344/6); *Waterford Mirror*, 2, 4 Feb. 1822; J. Leader to J. Lloyd, 4 Mar. 1822 (N.A.I., S.O.G, 2345/13).

63. Wellesley to Peel, 3 Jan. 1822 (P.R.O., HO 100/203/10-16).

64. Geo. IV, c. 1; 3 Geo. IV, c. 103.

65. Gregory to Goulburn, 22 Mar. 1822 (Surrey History Centre, Goulburn papers, 304/69).

66. *Cork Constitution*, 6 Nov. 1822.

67. Major-Gen. Lambert to Military Secretary Lt-Col. Sorell, [26?] Sept. 1822 (N.A.I., S.O.G, 2346/69).

68. Col. Gough to Military Secretary Lt-Col. Sorell, 15 Sept. 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.G, 2346/51); Gough to Sorell, 1 Oct. 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.G, 2347/3); Gough to Military Secretary Lt-Col. Finch, 11 Jan. 1823 (*ibid.*, S.O.G, 2511/6).

smaller parties and visited houses one by one in the countryside at night. It is at this stage that the incidence of Rockite outrages, mostly agrarian, reached its peak.

The rural population in Munster suffered severe economic conditions in the early 1820s. The potato failure of 1821 had led to hardship and even famine in 1822. In the summer of 1822 almost every parish in Munster was forced to organise a committee for the relief of the distressed poor. However, it is difficult to argue that the famine of 1822 was an immediate cause of the Rockite movement. The parishes worst hit by the famine in County Cork were those in the south,⁶⁹ but these southern parishes were little disturbed by violent outbreaks. Moreover, the famine was over by the harvest of 1822, but the disturbances continued long afterwards.

A more important factor in the economic discontent behind the Rockites was the collapse of the prices of agricultural products. The prices of wheat, oats and butter in 1822 were far short of their level of 1812 (7.14, 4.99 and 76.76 shillings per hundredweight in 1822, compared with 23.73, 12.14 and 116.24 respectively in 1812).⁷⁰ These harsh economic conditions explain to an extent why the Rockites covered a wide area and committed so many agrarian outrages. A total of 285 cases of agrarian outrages (that is to say, excepting arms offences) occurred between October 1821 and September 1824 in the four baronies of Duhallow, West Muskerry, Orrery and Kilmore, and Fermoy, the most disturbed region in County Cork.⁷¹ The majority of these outrages took the form of arson, slaughter of cattle, violent actions against people, the turning-up of fields, or threatening notices, all of which were common tactics of Whiteboyism.

The immediate victims of the price fall were farmers, who at a time of falling current incomes found themselves faced with demands for rents which had been fixed when prices were high. In all, 113 outrages concerning tenancy of land and rent occurred between October 1821 and September 1824 in the four baronies named above. Evidence shows that farmers were 'deeply implicated in the disturbances' in this region.⁷² On the other hand, the decline in prices forced farmers to cut employment or to raise the rent of potato land, which in turn hit the labourers who were employed by farmers for potato land. Eighty-six outrages concerned employment or potato land. It was reported by the local authorities that farmers were to some extent forced to respond to demands made by the labourers on employment

69. The relief committees returned the numbers of people in hardship. I have calculated the rate of distress by dividing the reported numbers by the population figures in the 1821 census. For the reports see *Cork Constitution*, June-July 1822. For the distress of southern parishes see *Cork Morning Intelligencer*, 4 June 1822.

70. Cited in Cormac O Grada, *Ireland: a new economic history, 1780-1939* (Oxford, 1994), p. 56.

71. Compiled from *Cork Morning Intelligencer*, *Cork Constitution*, *Limerick Chronicle*, N.A.I., S.O.C.; ibid., C.S.O., R.R Only those cases have been counted in which the particulars were reported.

72. Col. Gough to Military Secretary Lt-Col. Finch, [24?] Nov. 1823 (N.A.I., S.O.C., 2516/25).

and potato land.⁷³ At the same time, both farmers and the labourers found a common interest in resisting the tithe, which was charged in the south of Ireland on both corn and potatoes.⁷⁴ Hence attempts were made to regulate these, and farmers were 'at best neutral',⁷⁵ or sometimes actively took part in the disturbances.⁷⁶ Eighty-six outrages concerning tithe have been counted.

Seen as an agrarian disturbance, the Rockite movement was thus a complex phenomenon, as was the case with other Irish rural disturbances in time of agricultural depression.⁷⁷ The number of outrages set out in six-month periods also suggests that the Rockites had something in common with ordinary Whiteboys. Winter was the most disturbed season of the year in rural Ireland, largely because of seasonal unemployment and longer nights. Rockite outrages numbered 49 in the period October 1821 - March 1822 in the four baronies, falling to 32 in April-September 1822, before rising again with the onset of winter to 51 in October 1822 - March 1823. Again, there were 58 between October 1823 and March 1824, but only 29 between the following April and September. This pattern was broken for the six months from April to September 1823, when the number rose from 51 in the preceding period to 66. However, this was the single most disturbed period in the history of the Rockites: arguably active leaders and effective organisation, as shown below, explain the divergence from the pattern.

Rockite activity was more extensive than the Rightboy activity in the same county more than thirty years previously and provoked a much fiercer reaction from the government. In the period 1785-8 there had been 255 incidents of Rightboy disturbances throughout the whole of County Cork.⁷⁸ The Rightboy movement was a largely open agitation, undertaken by non-violent means of withholding tithes and priests' dues, and was not driven by severe economic conditions. In comparison to the Rightboys, the Rockites were more clandestine, violent and disaffected. Rockites often resorted to arson to destroy the property of those who either refused to meet their demands or had incurred their displeasure. In fact arson emerged at this time as an effective and comparatively new weapon for rural disturbers in Ireland. It was the simplest way of making a protest, easily committed by a small party in secrecy and without much preparation.

73. Col. Gough to Military Secretary Lt-Col. Finch, 12 Apr. 1823 (*ibid.*, S.O.C., 2512/18).

74. Maurice J. Brie, 'The tithe system in eighteenth-century Ireland' in *R.I.A. Proc.* lxxxvi (1986), sect. C, p. 273.

75. W. Dunn to———, 3 Dec. 1821 (N.A.I., C.S.O., R.P., box 632).

76. Lord Ennismore to Gregory, 17 Feb. 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.C., 2344/44); Major Carter to Gregory, 13 June 1823 (*ibid.*, S.O.C., 2513/67).

77. J. S. Donnelly, jr, 'The social composition of agrarian rebellions in early nineteenth-century Ireland: the case of the Carders and Caravats, 1813-16' in P. J. Corish (ed.), *Radicals, rebels and establishments: Historical Studies* XV (Belfast, 1985), pp 154-5.

78. Maurice J. Brie, 'Priests, parsons, and politics: the Rightboy protest in County Cork, 1785-8' in C. H. E. Philpin (ed.), *Nationalism and popular protest in Ireland* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 184.

Rockites were particularly active in Fermoy barony. Fermoy was an old settled farming region, with a tradition of rural disturbances.⁷⁹ In 1823 68 cases of arson can be identified in Fermoy barony alone, from a total of 172 in the whole of County Cork.⁸⁰ The parish of Doneraile, within the barony, where there had been a dispute concerning tithe in the early 1820s,⁸¹ witnessed one of the most spectacular cases of Rockite arson in December 1822. Near the town of Doneraile four hundred barrels of corn and several tons of hay were burned at a tithe agent's house, with the arsonists standing by, firing shots and shouting in exultation as the flames gathered higher.⁸²

Detailed evidence survives of the activities of Rockites in the baronies of Fermoy, and Orrery and Kilmore, in County Cork. In March 1823 John Hickey, a young gardener, was arrested near Doneraile. He was allegedly associated with 300 men and had been very active in committing agrarian outrages in and around the barony of Fermoy.⁸³ The authorities even suspected that he was the mysterious leader, 'Captain Rock'.⁸⁴ However, the real Captain Rock in County Cork was David Nagle, who was betrayed by his associates and arrested in July 1823 near Cork city.⁸⁵ His activities covered a wider geographical area than Hickey's, and he was an outstanding leader, also cutting a fine figure — dressed in a blue coat with a sash and sword and wearing a military cap with a big white feather.⁸⁶ Nagle was from Annakishy in the parish of Clenor in the barony of Fermoy, and evidence suggests that he belonged to the Nagle family of that place, one of the most influential Catholic families in Cork.⁸⁷ Nagle himself admitted that he had participated in the December case of arson near Doneraile.⁸⁸ After his arrest he became an informer, and his appearance, accompanied by the police and the military, created great alarm and sensation in the country.

79. David Dickson, 'An economic history of the Cork region in the eighteenth century' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 1977), pp 323-5; 'Rev. J. Blackwood to———, 30 Aug. 1814 (N.A.I., S.O.C, 1553/16).

80. Compiled from *Cork Constitution*, *Cork Morning Intelligencer*, N.A.I., S.O.C; ibid., C.S.O., R.P. Some may have been committed by proprietors themselves in order to gain compensation: see Col. Gough to Military Secretary Lt-Col. Sorell, 31 Oct. 1822 (ibid., C.S.O., R.P., 1822/2654).

81. Evidence of Rev. W. O'Brien (*Report from the select committee on the state of Ireland*, pp 586-7, H.C 1825 (129), viii, 586-7).

82. A. Hill to Col. Gough, 12 Dec. 1822 (N.A.L, S.O.C, 2347/53); *Cork Constitution*, 16 Dec. 1822.

83. Lord Doneraile to———, 2 Apr. 1823 (N.A.L, S.O.C, 2512/3); Col. Arbuthnot to Military Secretary Lt-Col. Finch, 2 Apr. 1823 (ibid., S.O.C, 2512/3).

84. Major Carter-to Gregory, 8 Mar. 1823 (ibid., S.O.C, 2511/43); Major-Gen. Lambert to Field-Marshal Combermere, 1 Apr. 1823 (ibid., S.O.C, 2512/5).

85. J. McCarthy to Gregory, 3 July 1823 (ibid., S.O.C, 2514/4).

86. *Cork Constitution*, 5 May 1823; J. Browne to Gregory, 5 June 1823 (N.A.L, S.O.C, 2513/55).

87. Lord Doneraile to M. Blacker, 22 Apr. 1825 (N.A.L, C.S.O., R.P., 1825/11210); L. M. Cullen, 'The Blackwater Catholics and County Cork society in the eighteenth century' in Patrick O'Flanagan and C. G. Buttner (eds), *Cork: history and society: interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county* (Dublin, 1993), pp 551-60.

88. Confession of Nagle, [23?] Aug. 1823 (N.A.L, S.O.C, 2514/55).

Farmers acknowledged their former association with him and declared they would now exert themselves to make their labourers give up their arms.⁸⁹

Such a Captain Rock — or, if promoted, General Rock — often played a role similar to other secret society leaders in popular movements in Europe. A notice near Doneraile in March 1822 runs as follows:

You seem to be ignorant of the 3d article of the Statute of the new Code of Laws as recently given out by the legislator of Ireland, Genl. John Rock. As I am informed you intend to appropriate to your own that part of the Lands of [Clounbawn] as lately held by John O'Donoghue by him surrendered last Sep[.] You are not it seems afraid of increasing the General's displeasure nor do you care [for] the industrious poor of your neighbourhood . . . Now Sir I command you in our General's name to set said Lands to some industrious man who is not a stranger in your Parish at a reasonable Rent...

Signed by order of General John Rock
by his Secretary of State
Major Genl. Deep thought⁹⁰

This '3d article' decreed, as was defined in another notice nearby, that 'It is unlawful for any Gentleman to hold any more Lands than that which Immediately adjoins his Dwelling Residence.'⁹¹ Numerous notices of a similar nature were issued, and in each case the captain in his district attempted to regulate the local economy by appearing as a lawmaker to dispense a popular concept of justice.

Nagle's detailed information, given after he was sentenced to death,⁹² and confirmed by local authorities and corroborated by other evidence,⁹³ suggests that Cork Rockites were more than mere local disturbers. According to Nagle, the Rockites had developed a network of local secret 'committees'. The committee at the town of Mallow seems to have formed a focal point in County Cork. At a meeting held there in late 1822 which was attended by Hickey as well as more than sixty leaders and 'committee men' from several baronies around, the Rockites discussed their strategy against the police and resolved to manufacture pikes and to collect money for this purpose from farmers. This decision implied they were planning to stage an uprising, a fact confirmed by the manufacture of pikes in Doneraile and other places⁹⁴ and by the increase of 'visits' for money.

That the Cork Rockites had an inter-local organisation can be substantiated by the information of Hickey. Hickey refused to reveal the names of his

89. Major Carter to Gregory, 8 May 1824 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2615/23); Col. Gough to Military Secretary Lt-Col. Finch, [24?] May 1824 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2615/28).

90. Enclosed *ibid.*, S.O.C, 2345/28.

91. *Ibid.* '3d article of... law' was a favourite term of the Rockites of this region: see the four notices enclosed *ibid.*, S.O.C, 2515/39.

92. Mainly *ibid.*, S.O.C, 2514/55, 2614/1, 2615/23.

93. Col. Gough to Military Secretary Lt-Col. Finch, 24 Feb. 1824 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2614/42); Gough to Finch, 3 May 1824 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2615/21); see also letters *ibid.*, C.S.O., R.P., 1824/10851. For corroboration see information of P. Kelleher, 26 Sept. 1823 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2515/35).

94. Major Carter to Gregory, 8 Mar. 1823 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2511/43); *Cork Constitution*, 4 Apr. 1823; confession of Nagle, c.1824 (N.A.I., S.O.C, 2614/1).

associates, but a few days before his execution he made the following confession which hinted at the structure of the Rockites' organisation. As it was not prompted by prospects of a reprieve, it may be regarded as relatively reliable:

There are [committees]: the first in the County is at Mallow, there are others at Buttevant, Doneraile and other places . . . Committee men are appointed. A head committee man is ordered to move to the next Parish or District and the men composing the Committee in said Parish are ordered by summons with blank signature to attend on a certain day, hour and place under forfeiture of life and the next head committee Man does the same to the next district.⁹⁵

Evidence confirms that such committees were active. For example, a committee was seized in a pub near Charleville in May 1823. Fifteen painters, tailors, farmers, servant boys and the like from various parts of the district were seated around a table. A letter from the committee of Mallow was found.⁹⁶

The Rockite organisation in this region was based on the following oaths, of which copies were found near Charleville, Buttevant and Doneraile respectively (the last of these found on Hickey's brother):

I will not associate, join, aid, or assist... that might coincide or come within the limits of the present patriotic system, prevailing at present in Ireland . . .⁹⁷

I will join, aid, and assist to destroy all tyrants Kings, suppressors, and heretics not of the true Roman Catholic . . .⁹⁸

... the crying of children, the moaning of women, or the groaning of men shall never terrify or undaunt me without fighting for the long promised Liberty of the Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church.

Thus, on the one hand, Rockites were local groups dealing with local agrarian grievances in their own district with their familiar methods of protest. Accordingly, the regulations they tried to impose on rural economic activities, such as those preserved in hundreds of Rockite notices, differed from district to district. To take the example of tithes, at times, as in Doneraile, a complete boycott was ordered; at times an upper limit was set

95. W. H. W. Newenham to———, 13 Apr. 1823 (N.A.I., S.O.C., 2512/16). Hickey's account was reportedly corroborated by another informer's intelligence: evidence of W. H. W. Newenham (*Minutes of evidence taken before the select committee of the House of Lords ... into the disturbances ... in those districts of Ireland ... now subject to the ... Insurrection Act*, p. 184, H.L., 1825 (200), vii, 684); cf. evidence of Rev. W. O'Brien (*Report from the select committee on the state of Ireland*, pp 584-6, H.C. 1825 (129), viii, 584-6).

96. *Cork Constitution*, 9 June 1823; *Cork Mercantile Chronicle*, 9 June 1823; Major Maxwell to Sergeant Torrens, 11 July 1823 (N.A.I., S.O.C., 2514/14).

97. Major Maxwell to Gregory, 28 Feb. 1823 (*ibid.*, S.O.C., 2511/37).

98. Col. Gough to Military Secretary Lt-Col. Finch, 5 Mar. 1823 (*ibid.*, S.O.C., 2511/41).

99. Major Carter to Gregory, 21 Mar. 1823 (P.R.O., HO 100/208/91); Hickey's letter, [16?] Apr. 1823 (N.A.I., S.O.C., 2512/25).

to the amount;¹⁰⁰ and grievance was variously directed against either the proprietors of the tithe or the proctors.¹⁰¹ On the other hand, Rockites were also interconnected groups of insurrectionaries with a committee-based organisation, and a distinct language not relevant to agrarian matters.

IV

'When destruction of property and the system is established in each County, then there will be a general rising,' Hickey had remarked.¹⁰² Though this 'general rising' was probably less than a concrete plan, an eighteenth-century Whiteboy would not have had such a vision. This leads one to ask what the political notions (however crude) of the Rockites were.

To give an accurate definition of popular political notions is not easy; however, in the case of the Rockites, sources survive concerning the nature of their discourse, which can provide revealing clues. In the first place, it should be noted that the vocabulary of the Rockites was based solely on the English language, which had functioned well as an instrument of politicisation for the Irish-speaking peasantry since the 1790s.¹⁰³ This process, it has been observed, had created 'an intensely politicised peasantry'.¹⁰⁴ What is also striking about the Rockites is their strong religious sectarianism. A notice posted in the barony of Condons and Clangibbon runs as follows:

We the honorable parliament of Ireland do offer a reward of 50 Pounds to any person or persons that "will Kill a protestant General, Justice [of the] peace, or a Member of parliament.. and 20 pounds to any person or person[s] that will Kill a protestant, rich or poor, Big or little —

Signed by our Catholick General at Limerick . . .¹⁰⁵

Rockite sectarianism needs to be seen within the context of period and place. The Rockites' main theatre of activity, Munster, had seen throughout the eighteenth century social tension unparalleled in the other provinces, which had manifested itself as an aggressive Catholic attitude towards Protestants.¹⁰⁶ Social divisions in rural Munster largely overlapped with religious divisions, owing to the nature of the plantation there. This seems to have been the background to the sectarianism of the Rockites.

In addition, the early 1820s saw religious differences in Ireland become much sharper and more intense, with the inevitable effects on social and

100. E. Hutchinson to Grant, 15 Nov. 1821 (N.A.I., C.S.O., R.P., box 633).

101. Major Carter to Goulburn, 9 Nov. 1823 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2516/6).

102. See above, n. 95.

103. David Dickson, *New foundations: Ireland, 1660-1800* (revised ed., Dublin, 2000), pp 217-18; J. S. Donnelly, jr, 'Propagating the cause of the United Irishmen' in *Smd/«,lxix(1980)*, p. 20.

104. Thomas Bartlett, *The fall and rise of the Irish nation: the Catholic question, 1690-1830* (Dublin, 1992), pp 268,296,311-26.

105. W. C. Collins to Goulburn, 10 Dec. 1821 (N.A.I., C.S.O., R.R, box 631).

106. L. M. Cullen, *The emergence of modern Ireland, 1600-1900* (London, 1981), p. 199.

political relations in Ireland In 1823 Gregory observed that 'During my long residence in Ireland, I never remember the same violence of party animosity, as prevails at this day'¹⁰⁷ One cause was the evangelical movement within Irish Protestantism, with its stress on education, against which Catholics reacted violently. A second was the revival of agitation over Catholic emancipation. In early 1821 a Catholic relief bill was introduced into parliament by William Conyngham Plunket, with a clause for a royal veto over Catholic episcopal appointments. Irish Catholics were divided between vetoists and anti-vetoists, the latter of whom welcomed the bill's ultimate failure.¹⁰⁸ The division and agitation was intense in Munster.¹⁰⁹ In Cork city and other places anti-vetoists held public meetings, which were reportedly dominated by the lower orders led by Daniel O'Connell.¹¹⁰ The problems of Catholic politics were essentially constitutional, but the Rockites were fully conscious of the issues. Hickey confessed that one of the Rockites' objectives was placing the 'Catholics upon a level with the Protestants'.¹¹¹ The following was found attached to a Rockite catechism near Shanagolden in 1821:

. . . veto . . . plunket as their agent . . . plunkets rumanition and hellish Observation and dismal consternation to the Nation . . . we renounce his insinnuation . . . by consecration we ill plant an imansipation . . . what Did he Sea that the Romans would Obtain the rights...¹¹²

A third factor, undoubtedly, was the spread of the millenarian religious prophecies of Pastorini and others, which predicted the annihilation of Protestantism on earth in the year 1825. Naturally the currency of such ideas had a strong impact upon the minds of many people, including the Rockites. In encouraging a confident expectation of the demise of Protestantism, these popular millenarian prophecies certainly added to the general agitation.

There were, however, other elements in popular political culture which help to explain the fevered atmosphere of the 1820s. Of particular interest is the way in which the Rockites revived the language and vision of the revolutionary movement of the 1790s. Several notices around Mallow bore the signature 'John Rock Commander in chief of the united Irishmn' or words to that effect.¹¹³ Hickey mentioned that 'assistance was to be given from France'.¹¹⁴ The members of his organisation were sworn: 'I will plant the

107. Gregory to Peel, 22 Jan. 1823 (B.L., Peel papers, Add. MS 40334, ff 27-8).

108. Bartlett, *Fall & rise of the Irish nation*, pp 308,310.

109. F. Hely-Hutchinson to Lord Donoughmore, 2, 5 Apr. 1821 (T.C.D., Donoughmore papers, D/48/184-5).

110. *Limerick Chronicle*, 28 Mar. 1821; *Dublin Evening Post*, 29 Mar., 3,5,7,10 Apr. 1821; Daniel O'Connell to his wife, 23 Mar., 2 Apr. 1821 (*The correspondence of Daniel O'Connell*, ed. M. R. O'Connell (8 vols, Dublin, 1972-80), iii, 311,312).

111. Major Carter to Gregory, 21 Mar. 1823 (P.R.O., HO 100/208/91-6). See also above, n. 95.

112. See above, n.27.

113. N.A.I.,S.O.C, 2345/52; *Cork Constitution*, 24 Mar. 1823,23 Sept. 1824.

114. See above, n.95.

Tree of Liberty in as many hearth as I can depend my life upon.¹¹⁵ The oath, copies of which were found near Nagle and given by an informed contained the phrase 'when I was put up to this United Irishmans Oath'.¹¹⁶ The oaths found near Listowel in Kerry also contained the phrase 'I ... swear to help the French and my brothers in case of invasion'.¹¹⁷ In one instance a reference was made to the son of Arthur O'Connor, a Cork man and a prominent United Irish leader of the 1790s, still resident in France in the 1820s. A rebel 'captain' who had fled from Duhallow allegedly told an informer that 'Captain Rock, who is Son to one O'Connor who went to France from this country formerly . . . promised to return precisely the 16th ultimo [May 1822].'¹¹⁸ While an uprising in May 1822 was mentioned in other instances in County Cork,¹¹⁹ this story of 'Captain Rock's return from France in May 1822' had a parallel in Kerry,¹²⁰ and several notices were posted in County Limerick in February 1822 telling people to be ready to meet Captain Rock that May.¹²¹

No evidence suggests that a United Irish organisation survived into this period. The revival of the language and vision of the 1790s was probably a product of the structure and traditions of local society. The divisions created in the 1790s were not extinct and at times resurfaced, as is demonstrated by an example from the region of Mallow. The town of Mallow was a centre of the Protestant interest in County Cork, a politicised and 'very disaffected place',¹²² which may explain why it became the focal point of the Rockite organisation in the county. In the 1790s United Irishmen had planned to make a Surprise attack on the soldiers there, whereupon loyalists in the region had organised themselves into two corps of yeomanry to keep the peace.¹²³ Sir James L. Cotter, captain of one of the corps, the Mallow Boyne Cavalry Corps, had had his house burnt down in 1798 by the rebels.¹²⁴

115. See above, nn 97-9.

116. J. McCarthy to Gregory, 10 Aug. 1823 (N.A.I., S.O.C, 2514/4); information of I Walsh, 13 Jan. 1824 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2614/13).

117. J. Church to———, 30 Nov. 1821 (*ibid.*, C.S.O., R.R, box 631). To join the French' appeared also in the oaths around Tralee and Ballyheige in Kerry (*Limerick Chronicle*, 29 Dec. 1821).

118. J. Connery to E. Johnston, 5 June 1822 (N.A.I., S.O.C, 2345/77); A. Keily to Gregory, 19 June 1823 (*ibid.*, C.S.O., R.R, 1823/6590). Major Carter had some doubts about this informer, but not about this case (Carter to Goulburn, 27 Nov. 1823 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2516/32)).

119. C. O'Leary to———, 1 Feb. 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2344/6); O'Leary to———, 3 Mar. 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2345/7).

120. Information of J. Houlahan, no. 12, [Mar?] 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2349/22); Barrington to Gregory, 14 Aug. 1822 (*ibid.*, S.O.C, 2349/54).

121. *Limerick Chronicle*, 27 Feb. 1822; *Limerick News*, 28 Feb. 1822.

122. Brigade-Major Croker to Peel, 28 Sept. 1813 (N:A.I., S.O.C., 1544/79).

123. Sean O Coindealbhain, 'The United Irishmen in Cork County — IV: Mallow and mid-Cork' in *Cork Hist. Soc. Jn.*, lv (1950), pp 73-90.

124. James Grove White, *An account of the Yeomanry of Ireland, 1796 to 1834* (Cork, 1893), p. 17; Bartlett, *Fall & rise of the Irish nation*, p. 230.

This conflict re-echoed in later politics. In 1818 Cotter, an opponent of Catholic emancipation¹²⁵ and M.P. for the borough of Mallow, had to withdraw from the electoral contest, thereby enabling the seat to be taken by William Wrixon Becher, representing the Catholic interest.¹²⁶ The 1820 election became a heated one, with no less a person than Daniel O'Connell acting as election agent for Becher.¹²⁷ The example of four forty-shilling freeholders, 'poor labourers', who had voted for Becher 'according to their conscience' and against their landlord's directions, was highlighted, and after the poll both Becher and the labourers were chaired in triumph.¹²⁸

Into this politically charged situation came the formidable Rockites. At the request of the local authorities, the Mallow Boyne Cavalry Corps was once more placed on permanent duty,¹²⁹ a measure which reminded the people of the harsh conduct of the same corps in the late 1790s. The prominent Nagle family, to which the Rockite leader David Nagle probably belonged, had had their house ransacked by the yeomanry in the 1790s.¹³⁰ A priest in Doneraile remembered in 1823 'that system of blood which in 98 disgraced the government ... those whippings that were inflicted on innocent victims, to extort the confessions of crimes of which they were not guilty'.¹³¹ A notice near Cork city in 1823 reveals the popular perception of the yeomanry:

READ AND BE WISE. — REMEMBER 98!!!!

... We have herd that you made yourself very busy ... to rise a corpse of Yeomanry ... As you attempt to take arms again ... you will meet The fate of Hoskins ... we dont expect the noble Wesly¹³² will give arms to orangemen to tiranize Over his loyal Catholick subjects ...

sir John Rock K. C. B. gon to inspect his patriots.¹³³

It was a common reaction of the local authorities facing the Rockites to embody yeomanry corps just as it had been in the 1790s.¹³⁴ According to the observations of the chief secretary, there was a fear that 'we are again to have the scenes of 1798 and that the proceedings in the Co. Cork correspond in every particular with what then occurred'.¹³⁵

125. *Hansard 1*, xxxiv, 676 (21 May 1816); xxxvi, 439 (9 May 1817).

126. *Dublin Evening Post*, 25 June 1818; *Limerick Evening Post*, 2 July 1818.

127. Daniel O'Connell to his wife, 19 Mar. 1820 (*O'Connell corn*, ed. O'Connell, Hi, 245-6).

128. *Dublin Evening Post*, 23,30 Mar. 1820.

129. *Army: Yeomanry and Volunteers. A return of the number of troops or corps...so far as relates to Ireland*, p. 4, H.C 1821 (306), xix, 180.

130. Basil O'Connell, 'The Nagles of Annakissy' in *Ir. Geneal*, ii,no. 11 (1954),p.343.

131. Rev. W. O'Brien to Brigade-Major Mahony, 14 Apr. 1823 (Surrey History Centre, Goulburn papers, 304/71).

132. Wellesley, lordlieutenant of Ireland.

133. *Cork Constitution*, 21 May 1823.

134. In N.A.I, S.O.C. and C.S.O., R.R are recorded numerous proposals to that effect from local magistrates to Dublin Castle.

135. Goulburn to Peel, 26 Jan. 1822 (P.R.O., HO 100/203/120-21).

When the Rockites were disturbing Munster, the Ribbonmen, who were political and sectarian insurrectionaries based on secret committees, were active in many places in Ireland.¹³⁶ Although the evidence is inconclusive, the link between Rockites and Ribbonmen seems to have been more than superficial. Two important Rockites in County Limerick were known to Ribbonmen in Dublin,¹³⁷ while there is information that one of them actually attended a Ribbon meeting there.¹³⁸ Information from Dublin corresponded to that from County Limerick in other instances as well.¹³⁹ The oaths used by Ribbonmen in Dublin were reportedly used in Newcastle, Rathkeale and Limerick city.¹⁴⁰

On the other hand, there is no evidence to suggest that there was any material communication between Cork Rockites and, Ribbonmen. It seems possible that the Rockites, having borrowed from Ribbonmen their organisational structure (and possibly mentality), began to develop their own movement independently in Munster. When the Rockite movement began in the summer of 1821, Dublin Ribbonmen, embarrassed, dispatched men to stop the premature movement, alleging that the 'old members' in Limerick were not involved in the outrages.¹⁴¹

In any event, the Rockite movement, as an organised movement, was almost over by the summer of 1824. Local grievances still occasionally led to sporadic instances of Whiteboy-type violence, but the Rockites had failed to initiate a concerted uprising (except, perhaps, for the attempted uprising of January 1822), partly because of the measures taken by the government. Leaders were arrested, some of whom gave information; consequently, many Rockites fled from the country or were arrested.¹⁴² In January 1824

136. M. R. Beames, 'The Ribbon societies: lower-class nationalism in pre-Famine Ireland' in Philpin (ed.), *Nationalism & popular protest in Ireland*, pp 245-63; Tom Garvin, 'Defenders, Ribbonmen and others: underground political networks in pre-Famine Ireland', *ibid.*, pp 219-44.

137. Diary of Major Sirr, 27 Oct., 11 Nov. 1821 (T.C.D., Sirr papers, 869/3); *Limerick Chronicle*, 15 Mar. 1823; *Cork Constitution*, 26 Mar. 1824; R. Peppard to Goulburn, 7 Dec. 1824 (N.A.I., C.S.O., R.P., 1824/10438).

138. Grant to Major Willcocks, 15 Nov. 1821 (Emory University, Gregory papers, 624/13/8).

139. Diary of Major Sirr, 12 Feb. 1821 (T.C.D., Sirr papers, 869/3); Talbot to Sidmouth, 4 Nov. 1821 (P.R.O., HO 100/202/9); Major Warburton to Grant, 12, 24 Nov. 1821 (N.A.I., C.S.O., R.P., box 637).

140. Evidence of Major Warburton (*Minutes of evidence taken before the select committee of the House of Lords ... into the disturbances ... in those districts of Ireland . . . now subject to the . . . Insurrection Act*, pp 84-5, H.L. 1825 (200), vii, 584-5; *Minutes of evidence taken before the select committee appointed to inquire into the disturbances in Ireland . . .*, pp 135-6, H.G 1825 (20), vii, 135-6); information of J. Hickey, 16 Sept. 1820 (N.A.I., S.O.C. box 169); diary of Major Sirr, 9 Dec. 1821 (T.C.D., Sirr papers, 869/3); *Report of the trial of Michael Keenan for administering an unlawful oath* (Dublin, 1822), pp 41-5.

141. Diary of Major Sirr, 27 Oct., 5, 11 Nov. 1821 (T.C.D., Sirr papers, 869/3).

142. For example, Col. Arbuthnot to Military Secretary Lt-Col. Finch, 23 June 1823 (N.A.I., S.O.C. 2513/79); Arbuthnot to Finch, 6 July 1823 (*ibid.*, S.O.C., 2514/8).

the lord lieutenant could send a report to London noting "a gradual progress towards amendment... connected with the restoration of order, and the due administration of the law".¹⁴³

The most striking feature of the Rockite movement was its complexities. In one respect, the unrest revealed a reaction to the severe economic circumstances of the early 1820s: a defensive and apolitical attempt to regulate a local economy (in other words, a species of Whiteboyism). However, despite what were familiar instances of agrarian discontent — labour disputes, threatening notices, and a high incidence of arson attempts with their implications of attacks on property — the movement was also characterised by a secret, committee-based structure and by the use of language with insurrectionary implications. At the same time, its language and ideology reflected both the agitation of national Catholic politics and of sectarian and millenarian tensions of the period, feeding on bitter local memories of the security measures of the 1790s and the alarm caused by the re-embodiment of the yeomanry. There was more to the Rockites than agrarian grievances, sectarian hatreds and millenarian aspirations; their movement was also, to some degree, a political and organised movement.¹⁴⁴

SHUNSUKE KATSUTA
Faculty of Education, Gifu University, Japan

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143. Wellesley to Peel, 28 Jan. 1824 (P.R.O., HO 100/210/13-19).

144. I am deeply grateful to Louis Cullen, David Dickson and Kazuhiko Kondo for their assistance and encouragement in the preparation of this article

A POEM TO WILLIAM O'BRIEN

There is a need to make available the collected poetical and dramatic works of Joseph Dinneen, 'Joe the Poet,' and hopefully this will be done in the near future. Joseph was born in Corran in the shadow of the Paps in 1870 and tragically died at Headford Junction on 29th April 1928. He was the brother of 'the Dictionary man' Padraig and has been overshadowed by him.

This is one of his poems from a collection provided by Dan Cronin of Abhanasciortan. It is on William O'Brien commemorating one of those occasions when he was absent from the House of Commons and residing in what is now Portlaoise jail.

WILLIAM O'BRIEN.

Dedicated to THOMAS HICKIE, M.B., B.A.,
Millstreet.

God bless those brave undaunted men,
They never feared the foe,
And in your cause they battled when
Your flag was drooping low.

B. O'NEILL, *Blackwatertown.*

Lament, oh, Green Ireland, thou woe-stricken isle !
So long domineered by foul despots and vile,
Lament, for now surely coercion is thine,
Since gone from the Commons your William O'Brien,

Alas ! our great member no longer could stay,
Base Tory devices expelled him away,
And now with the wretches 'tis pleasingly fine,
For none could oppose them like William O'Brien.

Ah, now they can pass us what measures they please,
Since no one to stay their inhuman decrees,
They may murmur at "Irish outrages" and whine,
Since silenced the voice of great William O'Brien.

No more shall the House with your accents resound,
No more shall your speeches the Tories astound ;
No more shall your rarest of eloquence shine,
In pleading for Erin, great William O'Brien !

Then well may you weep him, you sons of the Gael,
Whose life was devoted to free Innisfail ;
Who did for your sake in a dungeon repine,
'Neath foulest abuses, great William O'Brien !

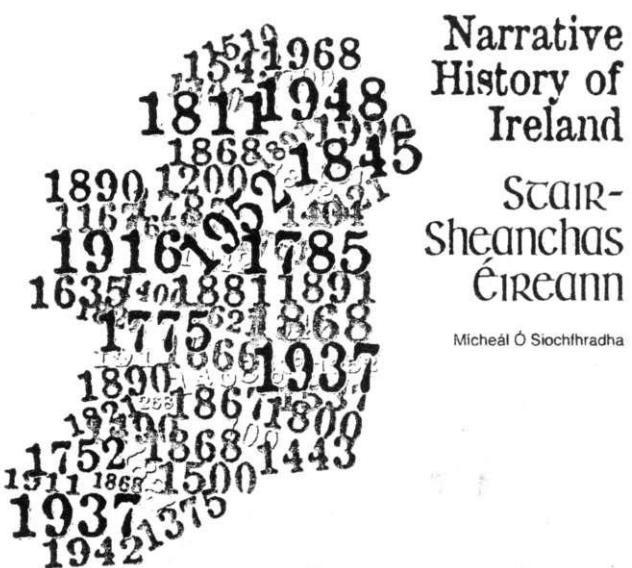
Ah ! well may you wail him, the patriot true,
Whose soul no deceit nor hypocrisy knew ;
Who did all his thoughts and his actions combine,
In the cause of old Ireland, great William O'Brien.

Oh ! weep our great leader, who fain would have freed
Our down-trodden island from tyranny's greed ;
Whom her loved mission crossed over the brine,
At his life's greatest peril, our William O'Brien !

But, why thus bewail him, as though he had flown
For ever away to the land of th' unknown—
Sure Willie is hale, and still first in the line,
Lie stands the undaunted great William O'Brien !

Oh ! not your expulsion one whit could avail,
Nor yet how the Saxons degradingly rail,
To stay the swift throbs of that true heart of thine,
With love for old Ireland, great William O'Brien.

Still on will you lead us to victory's goal,
Which alone can appease the desire of thy soul—
Oh ! then, shall we garlands and laurels entwine
To crown you our monarch, great William O'Brien !



Aubane Historical Society

DUARIGLE CASTLE

Further Research on the above.

Original work by Diarmuid Ua Cadhla, Cullen.

As the traveller winds his way from Cullen to Millstreet, he sees perched high over the banks of the Blackwater, the ruins of Duarigle Castle.

Its situation is without doubt the most picturesque in the parish of Cullen and very impressive in its own right.

The O'Keeffe chieftains who originally built it in the 16th century certainly knew what they were about. It is protected from the North Wind by sharply rising ground at its back. It has a spring well close by; and has a view of the Blackwater valley which would rouse Thomas Moore to song.

Looking at it just now, it is hard to realise that a mere 20 years ago it was a habitable building; and many people in this area, and further afield, can tell about the times they had tea there. Mrs. J. Smyth of Kanturk, who lived there for some years in the 1920s remembers it as a magnificent place with beautiful furniture and antiques. I was present at the brief auction proceedings in August 1955 when the Castle with its 22 acres of land and substantial gate-house, where the Houlihan family now live, was knocked down to Tim Houlihan for 1,400.00 pounds.

The roof was removed some years later and now the bare walls stand, gaunt and forlorn, a fit subject for some poet's Lament. Even the once beautiful avenue leading to the Castle is now completely obliterated.

The early history of the Castle is rather obscure. Built in 1576 it was owned by Art O'Keeffe, Chief of his clan. He was succeeded by Art Og, who died in 1610. Next came Manus O'Keeffe who in turn was succeeded by Daniel O'Keeffe. Daniel lost all his lands in 1654, but after the restoration, with the help of Ormonde, he recovered some.

The Williamite wars finally broke the power of the O'Keeffes and their lands passed to the Hollow Blade Co.

There is a tradition that the O'Keeffes managed to gain two townlands in Cullen as tenants until about 1790 when they were turned out on the road.

The Castle had been destroyed in the Cromwellian wars and there are several references in the 18th century documents to the "ruined Castle of Duarigle".

In 1712 Abraham Dickson of Cork, a Quaker in his will leaves "Duargan containing a castle and seven plowlands" to his grand-nephew Hugh Dickson. In 1728 the Castle lands were owned by Henry, Bishop of Cloyne who made them over to James Maule. The next known owner was Henry Wrixon who leased the lands to Thomas Justice. Gibson writing in 1861, said that the Justice family had been in possession of the lands of Duarigle for 200 years. This was hard to sustain unless they were merely tenants for much of that period. George Justice, father of Thomas, had lived in Lislehane (died 1768).

This Thomas Justice was known as "Blind Tom". He had been blinded while out hawking. It was his son, Thomas Holmes Justice, who repaired the Castle in 1806. And his son in turn, Dr. Thomas Holmes Justice MD, lived in Mallow and used the Castle as an occasional residence. He had a Corn mill there, and mined large quantities of coal or culm. Hence the name "Coalpits" of the adjoining townland.

Meanwhile, in Blind Tom's time, the family lived on there until 1921, the last being "Miss Bessie". She was on good terms with the local people. They looked after her in old age, and when she died they buried her in Millstreet Protestant Cemetery. She was a great animal lover, and when her domestic pets died, she had them buried in a box, wrapped in a linen cloth. Alas they were soon, in the darkness, to be unceremoniously exhumed, and the linen cloths removed.

Her brother Thomas had emigrated to Australia and his son Thomas became a Protestant clergyman there (died 1960).

One of the Mount Justice family, Robert, became a Catholic at marriage in the early 1800s and his descendants have been Catholics to this day. Very prominent among them is Fr. Cornelius of Mount Mellery Abbey, who supplied much of the information for this article.

Dr. Justice died in 1875 at Mallow, leaving in his will less than 300.00 pounds, to his widow. The Castle lands seem to have passed from him about 1850 to Henry Chinnery Justice, a barrister who lived at 4, Ely Place, Dublin, and who also owned Garrane House, Derrinagree (now Con Jerrie O'Keefe's). He died in 1859 in Dublin, and is buried in Millstreet. He had a daughter, Grace Justice, who married a carpenter named O'Shea, and her daughter Annie was claiming the Castle and surroundings near the end of the last century.

However, Henry C. Justice left the Castle and lands to his sister Ellen (Mrs. Wallis), and her daughters Ellen (Mrs. Moriarty), Mary Ann (Mrs. Crofts) and Dora, who were in possession of the Castle around the turn of the century. Most of the land had meanwhile been purchased by tenants under the Lands Acts.

Some years later the Castle passed to the Land Commission, who leased it and finally sold it to its most colourful owner, Madame Halikiopulo. Madame was the daughter of Denis C. O'Callaghan, of Killeenlea, Kanturk. She had gone to England at an early age, worked wisely and well, and acquired property there. She married a Greek shipping merchant. He became an invalid after an accident, and Madame having negotiated her lease of Duarigle, came to live there. She had a constant stream of guests and was noted for her tea parties. She was a very gracious hostess and once completely disarmed a parish priest who came to admonish. After the death of her husband she married Mr. Collins. She died about 1950 and is buried in Dromtariffe.

A Mrs. Newling of Killarney then bought the Castle, thinking to run it as a Guest house. Unfortunately she changed her mind. This episode in the history of the Castle must remain open to any information that can be gathered about it.

Duarigle Castle was built on the banks of the Blackwater. It is a castellated house of early 19th century appearance. The seat of the Justice family, more recently of the O'Conners, maternal forebears of Mr. Norman St. John-Stevas, MP, whose mother, Mrs. Stephen S. Stevas, was formerly Miss Kitty St. John O'Conner of Duarigle Castle.

A USEFUL WEBSITE ON MILLSTREET

Jean Prendergast is creating a very informative website called "Cork Ancestors, Aspects of Cork Local History & Genealogy" (Jean Prendergast 2005. All Rights Reserved.) and it currently includes some fascinating information on Millstreet at:

<http://homepage.tinet.ie/~ridgway/Millstreet.htm>

Items included are lists such as local Discharged Soldiers, Game Certificates issued, Pigot's Directory 1824, Tithe Defaulters 1831, entries from Lewis' Topographical Dictionary for Millstreet, Drishane and Cullen, the O'Connell Tribute for 1843, 1844, 1845 and 1846, Slater's Directory 1846, Subscribers for a Testimonial to John Leader, Esq., MD, 1878, Subscribers to the Presentation Convent, 1879 and various news items and notices.

Stop Press:

The current issue of '*Ireland of the Welcomes*', July-August 2005, (Vol. 54, No. 4), published by 'Failte Ireland', Baggot St. Bridge, Dublin 2, (Tel. 01 602 4000) includes a very informative and colourful article by Jo Kerrigan with photographs by Richard T. Mills on "The Butter Road."

"250 YEARS OF THE BUTTER ROAD

1st MAY 1748 - 1st MAY 1998"

by

The Aubane Historical Society

AUBANE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Aubane, Millstreet, Co. Cork.

jacklaneaubane@hotmail.com

- * Ned Buckley's Poems
- * Canon Sheehan: A Turbulent Priest, by B. Clifford
- * A North Cork Anthology, by Jack Lane and B. Clifford
- * Local Evidence to the Devon Commission, by Jack Lane
- * Spotlights On Irish History, by Brendan Clifford. Includes chapters on the Battles of Knocknanoss and Knockbrack, Edmund Burke, The Famine, The Civil War, John Philpot Curran, Daniel O'Connell and Roy Fosters approach to history.
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