



NUI MAYNOOTH  
Ollscoil na hÉireann Má Nuad

DENIS KILBRIDE M.P. 1848-1924

by

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## ABBREVIATIONS

A.O.H.	Ancient Order of Hibernians
C.S.O.R.P.	Chief Secretary's Office, Registered Papers
I.N.L.	Irish National Volunteers
I.L.C.	Irish Land Commission
I.L.P.U.	Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union
I.R.B.	Irish Republican Brotherhood
N.A.	National Archives
N.L.I.	National Library of Ireland
R.I.C.	Royal Irish Constabulary
T.C.D.	Trinity College, Dublin
U.C.C.	University College, Cork
V. O.	Valuation Office

## INTRODUCTION

KilBride,<sup>1</sup> Denis, Luggacurren, Stradbally, Queen's County, son of Thomas KilBride Esq and Marie Ryan. Born 1848 at Luggacurren. Unmarried.<sup>2</sup> Educated at Clongowes Wood College, Clane. A tenant farmer. A nationalist. Sat for south Kerry from 1887 to 1895. Returned unopposed for south Kerry and north Galway in 1895 but elected to sit for north Galway, which he represented from 1895 to 1900, when he retired. Elected for south Kildare May 1903 and sat until defeated in 1918. Died 1924.<sup>3</sup>

Denis KilBride (hereafter called KilBride) as can be seen from the above was MP for three different constituencies in the period 1887 to 1918. He was a member of the Irish Parliamentary Party, which represented Irish national ideals in the House of Commons at Westminster until the general election of 1918, when Sinn Féin, the nationalist separatist party took most of the seats. Prior to becoming an MP, KilBride had been a member and secretary of the Irish National League at local level and also a Poor Law Guardian for the Union of Athy.

This is primarily a local study, where the aim and focus is to look at the life and times of Denis KilBride MP, who although not a major figure in Irish history, never coming to prominence or having national leadership roles, yet played an important part in the Irish Parliamentary Party's achievements in for example the considerable progress made towards achieving Home Rule and a system of peasant proprietorship in Ireland. KilBride campaigned locally and in the House of Commons for nationalist concerns over a period of thirty-one years and but for three years between 1900 and 1903, he held a seat for the nationalist party in parliament. He also came into close contact with the major political, social and religious figures of the period and his life helps to bring out

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<sup>1</sup> The KilBride family, Denis included, used a capital B in their surname. The custom is used by the KilBride extended family to this day.

<sup>2</sup> In all the accounts of KilBride, he was stated to be unmarried, but in fact he had a son, Joseph Aloysius KilBride. His birth certificate shows he was born on 26 May 1886. His mother was Catherine KilBride, formerly Murphy, living at 64 Miranda Road, Kirkdale, county of Lancaster and the father's name is given as Denis KilBride, farmer. The birth was registered at West Derby registration district, county of Liverpool on 28 June 1886, Liverpool Central Library, St Catherine's microfiche of births, marriages and deaths for England and Wales, West Derby registration district, vol. 8b, June quarter 1886, FC 260839, p. 445. (see illustration).

<sup>3</sup> Stenton & Lees (eds.) *Who's who of British members of parliament: A biographical dictionary of the House of Commons based on annual volumes of Dod's Parliamentary companion and other sources*, (Sussex, 1976, vol 1 (1832-1885) - 4(1845/1979)), ii, p. 202, hereafter cited as *Who's who*.

into the open in an interesting and informative way, what is most often hidden in national history, the origins, growth, development and sometimes decline of social and political movements, as effecting real people at local level, who either conformed or reacted against the forces and restrictions made at a much higher level.

The purpose of this study is to give an account of the life and times of Denis KilBride in as balanced a fashion as possible. KilBride had a long and varied career and lived to be seventy-six years of age. The study concentrates on his life and times, which included the Luggacurren evictions of which he played a major part, his path to political life and his representation of three constituencies, south Kerry, north Galway and south Kildare for a period of thirty-one years. As a result of the prolonged depression in agriculture, KilBride, an educated and politically active gentlemen tenant farmer with his own sub-tenants and labourers, in an era of rising expectations, was to experience insurmountable financial difficulties, which culminated in his eventual eviction from an 868 acre farm on the Lansdowne estate at Wood House, Luggacurren. The Luggacurren evictions took place during the turbulent agrarian agitation years of the plan of campaign from c1886-1906.

The work has been dictated mainly by what the primary and to a lesser extent what the secondary sources dictate. The chapter divisions of which there are seven, discuss the political events in the life of Denis KilBride, his early political consciousness, his eviction and mission to Canada in 1887 with William O'Brien and his representation of the constituencies of south Kerry, north Galway and south Kildare. As south Kildare spans a period of fifteen years, it was necessary to separate the account into three chapters in chronological sequence as follows, 1903 to 1910, 1911 to 1915 and finally 1916 to his death in 1924. Within these seven chapters it was sometimes necessary to make use of a thematic approach, while at the same time keeping to a sense of chronology and time overall.

KilBride's experience ranged over a period of seventy-six years, during which time two of the greatest revolutions in Irish history occurred, namely, the change from landlord ownership of the land to peasant proprietorship and the achievement of Home Rule for Ireland. A study of this nature which has been extracted from contemporary sources, material in private and public archives, debates in parliament and a whole host

of other primary and to a lesser extent in this study secondary sources, reveals much about certain aspects of the Irish experience in post-famine Ireland. As K. T. Hoppen points out in his introduction to *Ireland since 1800, conflict and conformity*, it is perhaps possible in a comprehensive local study to present ‘a flavour’ of lived lives, but no matter how deep one tries to recreate the past or the truth, a ‘flavour’ of the past and not the complete story evolves and sometimes more questions than answer result, or as Hoppen describes the product of historians, ‘the ragged incompleteness which is all that their versions of the past can achieve’.

It is usual in a local study such as this to concentrate on a specific geographical place but KilBride doesn’t fit into this category. The career of KilBride involved his representation of three constituencies, Kerry, Galway and Kildare, but of necessity he resided for most of this period in London. Yet the village of Luggacurren, Queen’s County (now County Laois) is the common denominator for this study, as it was his home base for most of his life and the place where all other aspects of his career radiated from. He was born and reared in the village of Luggacurren; he was later evicted from his large holding by Lord Lansdowne (hereafter called Lansdowne) and was reinstated almost twenty years later on a much smaller farm in 1906. By taking advantage of the purchasing clauses of the Wyndham Irish Land Act of 1903, he was eventually re-instated in Luggacurren and it was there that he eventually retired and died. He was buried in the family plot in the local cemetery at Clopook.

The earlier part of KilBride’s political life was dominated by the emergence of the Irish Land League, the National League and the plan of campaign. The plan of campaign, being as Geary points out an exclusively Catholic movement, originating during the second phase of the land war in 1886, was not the official policy of the National League or the Irish Parliamentary Party, but was tolerated and promulgated mainly by the agrarian arm of these organisations.<sup>4</sup> The plan of campaign may be summarised as a device for collective bargaining on particular estates during the agricultural depression of the 1880-90s.<sup>5</sup>

KilBride never became a prominent member of the parliamentary party, but he participated consistently and loyally as a rank-and-file nationalist in the House of

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<sup>4</sup> Laurence Geary, *The plan of campaign 1886-1891*, (Cork, 1986), p. 3, hereafter cited as Geary.

<sup>5</sup> Geary, p. 21.

Commons for thirty-one years, particularly on the issues he had direct experience of, which were almost invariably bound up in two main concerns, land agitation and Home Rule for Ireland. KilBride was first and foremost a tenant farmer who entered politics at local level and on the strength of the Luggacurren evictions and the subsequent campaign with William O'Brien in Canada against Lansdowne, the Governor-General, he was returned unopposed as a nationalist MP for south Kerry. After the split in the party in 1891, he opted with the majority of his colleagues to be an anti-Parnellite. He was elected as an anti-Parnellite in 1892 for the same division. In 1895 although elected to represent the two constituencies of south Kerry and north Galway, he opted to represent the latter for a further five years. Retiring in 1900 he continued to be involved in the land agitation of the period on behalf of the United Irish League and was jailed for eight months on a charge of inciting to murder Major-General Meares, at Moyvore, County Westmeath in 1902. When M. J. Minch MP from south Kildare applied for the Chiltern Hundreds in 1903, Denis was in the right place at the right time and was returned unopposed on four occasions for the constituency until his defeat by Sinn Féin in 1918.

Unfortunately, parliamentarians like KilBride are even to this day relatively unknown for many reasons. KilBride was a member of a large party, which never had ministerial status, other than holding the balance of power from time to time. Parnell and the other prominent figures within the party, such as John Dillon, William O'Brien, Michael Davitt and others, all have major masterly works either in biography or as part of more general studies of the nationalist movement of the time. Most of these works are listed in the biography. It is only in the last few decades, with the renewed interest in local history as a worthwhile study, that the parliamentarians who served during and immediately after the Parnellite period are being brought out from relative obscurity.

KilBride left no trail of documentation for posterity, which would have been most useful for this study. The only extant memoir was found accidentally in 1999 in Luggacurren. Even though the memoir in two sections (MS 1 and MS 2) is unsigned, from examination of the few letters found in repositories elsewhere, it is almost certainly written by KilBride, the most likely date being 1922. The handwriting corresponds closely with other examples of KilBride's writing style and contextual clues almost conclusively prove the authenticity of the memoir. Both of these MSS are



in the private possession of Raymond Lacey, Clopook Cross, Luggacurren, Stradbally, County Laois. MS 1 is entitled 'History of the plan of campaign' and MS 2 'Recent happenings at Luggacurren'.

MS 1 consisting of three pages is KilBride's short account of the history of the plan of campaign adopted in Luggacurren in late 1886. MS 2 is six pages in length and deals with the period in the early 1920s when an attempt was made by the local farmers of Luggacurren to evict the planters in the district. Both of these manuscripts are used in this study. In the absence of any other specific material, I have had to rely heavily on the newspaper accounts from the various constituencies, particularly the *Leinster Express*, *Kerry Sentinel*, *Tuam Herald*, *Galway Observer*, *Leinster Leader*, *Kildare Observer*, *Nationalist and Leinster Times*; *Irish Times*, *The Times*, *Weekly Freeman*; *Freeman's Journal* and others besides. It is important to note here that the Canadian newspapers used in the writing of chapter two were consulted from newspaper scrapbooks compiled by and for the fifth Marquis of Lansdowne from 1887 to 1888, and now kept as part of the Bowood estate papers at Bowood House, Calne, Wiltshire in England. A full list of these is found in the bibliography.

Other sources, which hopefully give a balance to the account, include police records, in particular the Colonial Office papers dealing with secret intelligence collected by the RIC, otherwise known as CO 904, which was sent to Dublin Castle from every constabulary district and county in Ireland for the period; parliamentary papers and commissions of inquiry in particular the Cowper Report and Evicted Tenants Commission, Hansard's Parliamentary Debates (fourth and fifth series), contemporary accounts such as Wilfrid Scawen Blunt's *The land war in Ireland*, and in the second chapter on the campaign to Canada, William O'Brien's *Evening memories, being a continuation of recollections by the same author*.

Of particular relevance to this study was the material made freely available by the Honourable David Bigham, from the Derreen House archive at Derreen House, Lauragh, Kenmare, County Kerry, for which I am most grateful. Most of the material at Derreen House had been earlier boxed and generally indexed by Gerard J. Lyne of the National Library in Dublin, but the material consists mostly of papers dealing with the Lansdowne Kerry estate. However, by careful analysis, it was possible to find a few

items dealing with the Luggacurren estate and these along with the annual Kerry reports and two indexed volumes from 1873 to 1874, 'Perambulation, valuation and rental of the Lansdowne estate in Queen's County' were of particular value for the study. The Bowood House Papers at Bowood House, Calne, Wiltshire, were also made available by the ninth Marquis of Lansdowne and his curator Dr Kate Fielden, to both of whom I am very grateful. The material here consisted of the Lansdowne Queen's County estate annual reports and accounts compiled chiefly by William Steuart Trench, John Townsend Trench and Lansdowne's chief advisor and friend, William Rochford of Cahir House, Cahir, County Tipperary. However the Queen's county accounts are only extant for the years 1863 to 1889 and 1902. Other material of relevance at Bowood House were the comprehensive newspaper scrapbooks already mentioned, and a large black metal box labelled 'County Kerry Miscellaneous 1852-64' in which there was some relevant material found.

Other archives and repositories used for this study were the manuscripts department at Trinity College Dublin, where the internal muniments gave detailed information on the members of the KilBride family who attended the college. Of particular value here also were the John Dillon papers, where correspondence existed from some to the tenants, including KilBride and his brother, the solicitor Valentine KilBride. The William O'Brien papers at University College, Cork and the National Library in Dublin were also consulted, as were the education files (Ed. files) at the National Archives in Bishop Street, Dublin, along with a very useful source, the 'resident magistrates record of service book' which gave the full service history of Denis's brother, Joseph KilBride RM. The student register 1814 to 1886 and student ledger E 1850 to 1864 at Clongowes Wood College, Naas, County Kildare, also gave useful information of the education of Denis and his two brothers, William and John KilBride.

The research carried out at Liverpool Central Library, the House of Lords and on family records by Pete and Winnie KilBride, 174 Plymyard Avenue, Eastham, Wirral in Liverpool has proved to be very worthwhile in tracing the up to recently unknown immediate family of Denis KilBride, including Catherine KilBride his wife and Joseph Aloysius KilBride his son. To both Pete and Winnie I am very grateful for all their hours of research, interest and co-operation with this study. Other members of the KilBride family who have been helpful with genealogical information were Patrick

KilBride of 25 Ramleh Park, Miltown, Dublin and Jenny KilBride of Woodbarton Cottage, Ditchling Common, Hassocks, Sussex, England. Because this study will be of genealogical interest, it is perhaps relevant to include some of the events pertaining to this family as they occurred in the sequence of the chapters divisions. A section on KilBride family events therefore appears at the end of some of the chapters in the study.

Secondary works have as explained earlier been used mainly in contextualising and filling in the gaps left by the primary sources. Four in particular need to be given special mention as follows: J. Carter's *The land war and its leaders in Queen's County 1879-82*; Laurence Geary's *The plan of campaign*; Mary Ramsbottom's unpublished M.A. thesis 'The Marquess of Lansdowne's Luggacurren estate and the Luggacurren evictions 1887-1890' and Alan O'Day's *Irish Home Rule 1867-1921*.

Carter's work is an authoritative study of the first phase of the land war in Queen's County ending in 1882 and draws on an extensive amount of researched primary source material. At this early stage of the land war in the county, the bishops and clergy were very much against the aims and activities of the land league exemplified very well by Dr Patrick F. Moran, bishop of Ossory who characterised the land league as 'atheist, Protestant, socialist and fenian'.<sup>6</sup> Carter deals among other issues with the nature of the agricultural depression and distress in Queen's County at the end of the 1870s and the subsequent mobilisation of the nationalist movement into twenty-four branches of the land league. In a chapter on the establishment of the land league in the county, Carter explains that as early as October 1879 at a nationalist demonstration at Maryborough, Richard Lalor was evoking the principle of 'subsistence before rent', advising tenants unable to pay their rents not to part with livestock or food supplies to make up the rent money.<sup>7</sup> This principle certainly made a huge impression on KilBride as in September 1888 he espoused the same theory to his own constituents at a demonstration in Glenbeigh, County Kerry.<sup>8</sup>

Geary explains in a very balanced approach, the workings of the plan of campaign on a national basis during the second and less militant phase of the land war in Ireland. He

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<sup>6</sup> J. W. H. Carter, *The land war and its leaders in Queen's County 1879-82*, (Portlaoise, 1994), p. 57, hereafter cited as Carter; Emmet Larkin, *The Roman Catholic Church and the plan of campaign 1886-8*, (Cork, 1978), pp 27-8.

<sup>7</sup> Carter, p.55-6.

<sup>8</sup> *Kerry Sentinel*, 29 Sept. 1888, hereafter cited as K.S.

puts the plan into perspective and argues that even though it was successful on most of the estates where it was adopted, the plan was not the sole agent in reducing crime and curbing evictions. Other factors such as the land acts, Arthur J. Balfour's<sup>9</sup> regime of stringent coercion and the custom of boycotting, a moral sanction, all combined to reduce crime and violent agrarian agitation, such as was witnessed during the period described by Carter.<sup>10</sup>

Ramsbottom's thesis deals comprehensively with 'the origin, course and conclusion' of the Luggacurren evictions from 1887 to 1889.<sup>11</sup> This being the case, it is proposed in this study to focus mainly on the first evictions on the Lansdowne Luggacurren estate in 1887, with particular emphasis on the eviction of KilBride, his sub-tenants and labourers, followed closely by the failed campaign of William O'Brien MP to Canada, accompanied by KilBride. Ramsbottom states in her introduction that she was of the opinion that the two largest tenants on the Luggacurren estate, John William Dunne of Raheenahown and KilBride 'were living beyond their means' and even though this study does not set out to prove or disprove this theory, without documentary evidence it is hard to draw positive conclusions on this issue.

O'Day's work, *Irish Home Rule 1867-1921* has been used extensively in this study. First it deals with the period of the study and the explanation of the development of Home Rule over a long and ever changing period in Irish history, fits well into a study of a member of the Irish Parliamentary Party. Of particular help in this work was the glossary of people and the chronology of events laid out year by year for the whole period, which is well fleshed out in the various chapters.

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<sup>9</sup> Arthur J. Balfour (1848-1930) entered the Cabinet in his uncle Lord Salisbury's government of 1885. In Mar. 1887 he became Chief secretary of the Irish Office, remaining there until Nov. 1891. Balfour was a ruthless administrator and became known as 'Bloody Balfour' after the 'Mitchelstown massacre' in 1887, when police fired on an angry crowd and his tenure in Ireland was dominated by resolute efforts to resist the plan of campaign. He introduced 'perpetual' coercion legislation in 1887. He was also associated with what came to be called 'constructive unionism', establishing the Congested Districts Board in 1891 and supporting proposals for a Catholic university. He was appointed leader of the House of Commons in 1891. He succeeded Salisbury as Prime Minister in 1902, resigned the leadership of the Conservative party in Nov. 1911 but rejoined the Cabinet in May 1915, remaining in it until 1922. He was created the first Earl of Balfour in 1922. His brother Gerald Balfour (1853-1945) also served as chief secretary for Ireland (1895-1900), O'Day, Alan, *Irish Home Rule 1867-1921*, (Manchester, 1998), xii, hereafter cited as O'Day; Connolly, S. J., (ed.), *The Oxford companion to Irish history*, (Oxford, 1998), pp 33-4, hereafter cited as Connolly, *Oxford companion*.

<sup>10</sup> Geary, p. 140.

<sup>11</sup> Mary Ramsbottom, 'The Marquess of Lansdowne's Luggacurren estate and the Luggacurren evictions 1887-1890', (Maynooth, unpublished M.A. thesis, N.U.I., 1995), p. 1, hereafter cited as Ramsbottom.

As Sinn Féin won the vast majority of nationalist votes in the general election of 1918, which had been held for decades by the Irish Parliamentary Party and as KilBride was defeated by the Sinn Féin candidate, Arthur O'Connor in this election, this study has only included the growth of Sinn Féin, mainly in the constituencies of Kildare. Their separatist policy and the resulting war of independence and civil war in Ireland dominated political thinking and the work of historians for decades afterwards. The Irish Parliamentary Party after the advent of Sinn Féin were gradually and eventually almost totally overshadowed by the new wave of militant nationalism that came in the wake of the 1916 rising.

Other aspects in the study which were considered relevant to this local study were as follows: The ongoing campaign by the Irish Parliamentary Party for Home Rule mainly brought to light in this study by the debates in the House of Commons and local newspapers; the origins and development of the United Irish League; the legislation brought about by the various land acts; the reaction of southern unionists to impeding Home Rule legislation; the slow but steady progress of land purchase by the Estates Commissioners; the Easter Rising of 1916; the great war of 1914 to 1918 and KilBride's link with various organisations, which can be broadly termed as coming under the umbrella of the Irish Parliamentary Party.

# CHAPTER ONE

## LUGGACURREN AND THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN

### 1.1 KILBRIDE'S GENEALOGY

Denis KilBride was born to Thomas and Maria KilBride in 1848 at Luggacurren, Queen's County.<sup>12</sup> Luggacurren, Queen's County (now County Laois) is located approximately ten miles south-west of Athy, County Kildare and 'the locality is one which, perhaps, occupies no very prominent geographical position'<sup>13</sup> (Map 1). Denis was the son of Thomas KilBride (1802-1866) and Marie Ryan (1821-1891). His grandfather also Denis KilBride (1768-1844) married Esther Brennan (1766-1852) of the O'Brennan's of Idough and his great grandfather John KilBride (1736-1789) married Judith Byrne (1737-1831) who was descended from the O'Byrne's of Wicklow, whose most famous member was Feagh McHugh O'Byrne. Patrick F. Meehan in *The members of parliament for Laois and Offaly (Queen's and King's Counties 1801-1918)* maintains that the KilBrides were direct descendants of the O'Byrnes of Timogue Caste and had obtained 868 acres as tenants from that family.<sup>14</sup> Denis was the eldest of a family of nine, seven brothers and one sister as follows: Denis (1848-1924), William (1849-1931), John (1851-1920), Valentine (1853-1928), Mary (1856-1937), Patrick (1863-1915),<sup>15</sup> Joseph (1864-1936), James (1864-1925),<sup>16</sup> and Thomas (1866-1936). Valentine, a barrister and solicitor was appointed Senior Taxing Master in July 1913.<sup>17</sup> Patrick, also a solicitor, practiced in Athy and Dublin with his brother Valentine. Joseph, a barrister-at-law on the Leinster Circuit was appointed one of 'Morley's Magistrates' in 1894 and retired as Senior RM in 1921.<sup>18</sup> James KilBride qualified as a doctor and practiced in Athy, County Kildare.<sup>19</sup> John KilBride was a surgeon at

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<sup>12</sup> *Who's who*, p. 202.

<sup>13</sup> *Irish Builder*, 1 Oct. 1868, p. 236.

<sup>14</sup> Meehan, Patrick F., *The members of parliament for Laois and Offaly; Queen's and King's counties 1801-1918*, (Portlaoise, 1972), p. 161, hereafter cited as Meehan.

<sup>15</sup> Patrick J KilBride, son of Thomas KilBride, gentleman farmer, Luggacurren, Queen's County, matriculated at the age of eighteen on 27 Apr. 1881 with the status of pensioner at Trinity College, Dublin. He had earlier attended St Stanislaus College, Tullamore, King's County, TCD, Trinity College entrance book, Apr. 1877-June 1910, Mun. v. 23.7, p.51.

<sup>16</sup> James KilBride, son of Thomas KilBride, gentleman farmer, Luggacurren, Queen's County, matriculated at the age of nineteen on 18 Oct. 1883 with the status of pensioner at Trinity College, Dublin. He had earlier attended St Stanislaus College, Tullamore, King's County. As he was nineteen in 1883, his most probable year of birth would be 1864. TCD, Trinity College entrance book, Apr. 1877-June 1910, Mun. v. 23.7, p.73.

<sup>17</sup> *Leinster Leader*, 12 July 1913, hereafter cited as *L.L.*, quoting from the *Law Times*.

<sup>18</sup> NA, Resident Magistrates Record of Service Book, p. 98.

<sup>19</sup> *Leinster Express*, 1 Nov. 1924, hereafter cited as *L.E.*; *Freeman's Journal*, 27 Oct. 1924, hereafter cited as *F.J.*

Bradford; Mary who lived at Luggacurren until her death in 1937 was the last of the KilBride family to live there. The house and farm were sold immediately after her death and so ended the long association of the KilBride family with Luggacurren.

A good description of the status held by the KilBride family can be deduced from Wilfrid Scawen Blunt's<sup>20</sup> diary entry of 24 July 1887. On that day William O'Brien MP was to arrive by train at Athy to support the Luggacurren tenantry. According to Blunt when O'Brien arrived he breakfasted at the house of 'Mr KilBride, who is a solicitor in Athy and brother of the KilBride who was evicted by Lansdowne'. Both of the KilBride brothers were there 'and their very pretty sister' who were 'all highly respectable people of the upper middle class, who in Ireland are distinctly superior in manners and good breeding to our own middle class'.<sup>21</sup> The *Toronto World* gave a very vivid if not biased description of Denis KilBride as follows:

Denis KilBride is described as a tenant farmer and if he is a specimen of that class of individual, he compares not at all unfavourably with the same class of individuals here, in fact his appearance, his language, his dress, would go to show that he was more of the gentleman than the peasant. 'From his looks' said an old-timer, who lived here when the regulars were in Toronto, 'I would take him for a sporting officer'. His florid countenance is set off with a set of thick, rather closely cropped red whiskers. He has a clear blue eye and when his hat is off, his head is quite handsome. Mr KilBride is in middle life.<sup>22</sup>

KilBride's grandfather, also Denis KilBride (1766-1844) was a bailiff on Lansdowne's property at Luggacurren, Queen's County. In 1848 a number of evictions took place on this estate and the evicted farms were taken possession of by KilBride's father, Thomas KilBride and were amalgamated into one farm of 868 acres. KilBride

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<sup>20</sup> Sir Wilfrid Scawen Blunt (1840-1922) noted adventurer with access to a sector of the political establishment. Blunt was a Catholic had good contacts with some members of the Irish party, especially Michael Davitt. He visited Ireland in early 1886, when evictions were in full swing after the defeat of Gladstone's Home Rule Bill and was present at several evictions and 'was touched by the sufferings of the people'. He was arrested in 1887, accused of organizing inflammatory public meetings in spite of proclamations, at Woodford county Galway. He was tried and imprisoned for two months in Galway and Kilmainham jails, where he suffered from cold 'and the lack of writing material, as well as the plank-bed'. O'Day, xiii; 'Land league days recalled' in *L.L.*, 1 Jan. 1916.

<sup>21</sup> Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, *The land war in Ireland*, (London, 1912), p. 286, hereafter cited as *Blunt*.

<sup>22</sup> *Toronto World*, hereafter cited as *T.W.* quoted in *Ottawa Daily Citizen*, 19 May 1887, hereafter cited as *O.D.C.*

succeeded his father Thomas as tenant of this farm.<sup>23</sup> Griffith's Valuation shows the detail and extent of this farm (Table 1). 'Griffith's valuation' referred to here was the primary valuation of land in Ireland, better known as 'Griffith's Valuation', after its director, Richard Griffith. The valuation was carried out on a county-by-county basis between 1848 and 1860 and when completed, provided printed lists of the occupants, area and value of land, houses and buildings and the immediate lessors in each case.<sup>24</sup>

Table 1: KilBride's Holdings from Griffith's Valuation  
Parish of Tullamoy

Names		Description of tenement	Content of Land	Net Annual Value		
Townlands and Occupiers	Immediate Lessors			Land	Buildings	Total
<u>Luggacurren</u>			A. R. P.	£ s d	£ s d	£ s d
Thomas KilBride	Marquess of Lansdowne	House, offices and land	222 1 3	106 10 0	8 10 0	115 0 0
Vacant	Thomas KilBride	House			0 5 0	0 5 0
Michael Bolger	Thomas KilBride	House and office			0 10 0	0 10 0
Vacant	Thomas KilBride	House and garden	0 0 20	0 1 0	0 5 0	0 6 0
Thomas KilBride	Marquess of Lansdowne	Land	197 3 3	135 10 0		135 10 0
John Corcoran	Thomas KilBride	House and office			0 10 0	0 10 0
William Shalloon	Thomas KilBride	House			0 8 0	0 8 0
Thomas KilBride	Marquess of Lansdowne	Land	54 0 35	50 0 0		50 0 0
<u>Fallowbeg Upper</u>						
Mary Moore	Thomas KilBride	House, offices and land	55 0 28	22 0 0	2 0 0	24 0 0
Thomas KilBride	Marquess of Lansdowne	Offices and land	55 0 28	96 0 0	0 5 0	96 5 0
Vacant	Thomas KilBride	House			0 5 0	0 5 0
Vacant	Thomas KilBride	Offices			0 5 0	0 5 0
Vacant	Thomas KilBride	House			0 5 0	0 5 0
Vacant	Thomas KilBride	House			0 15 0	0 15 0
Catherine Fitzpatrick	Thomas KilBride	House			0 5 0	0 5 0
John Shortall	Thomas KilBride	House			0 5 0	0 5 0
Patrick Brien	Thomas KilBride	House and land	16 0 2	5 5 0	0 10 0	5 15 0
William Lalor	Thomas KilBride	House, offices and land	58 1 9	18 10 0	1 10 0	20 0 0
George Byrne	Thomas KilBride	House and land	2 0 15	0 15 0	0 10 0	1 5 0
Vacant	George Byrne	House and garden	0 0 12	0 1 0	0 5 0	0 6 0
<u>BRENNANSHILL</u>						
James KilBride	William Larkin	House			0 5 0	0 5 0
<b>Parish of Ballyadams</b>						
<u>Dunbrin Upper</u>						
Thomas KilBride	Mrs Stephinea Maguire	House, offices and land	5 1 36	2 5 0	0 15 0	3 0 0

Source: Richard Griffith, *General valuation of rateable property in Ireland*, (Dublin, 1850), Queen's County, Barony of Ballyadams, Union of Athy.

<sup>23</sup> The British in Ireland, Series 1: Colonial Office Class CO 904, Part 1: Anti-Government Organisations, 1882-1921, Reel 8, xviii, Secret Societies. Register of suspects (Home I-J), ii, 1890-1898, Folio No.: 4-18, p. 649/21, hereafter cited as CO 904.

<sup>24</sup> Connolly, *Oxford companion*, p. 461.



## 1.2 KILBRIDE'S EDUCATION

The third marquess of Lansdowne was noted for his interest in national education and was generous in his patronage of the schools on the Kerry estate.<sup>25</sup> This was equally true of the fourth and fifth marquesses of Lansdowne on their estates in general. From the earliest report available for the Lansdowne Queen's County estate, under the heading schools, £21 15s 10d was voluntarily paid in connection with salaries and supplies to schools in 1863. £5 was paid towards the half year's salary of the master at Ballyboy National School (King's County) and £15 towards the master's salary in Luggacurren (Queen's County). 15s 10d was also paid 'for coals for use of Luggacurren national school' and also £1 'for advertisement for Luggacurren school mistress'.<sup>26</sup> It is interesting to note in the 1868 accounts, that in addition to £15 paid to D. Collins, Luggacurren schoolmaster for the same period, £15 was paid to M. KilBride for one year's salary to 31 December 1868.<sup>27</sup> It is most likely that this was Maria KilBride, Denis's mother, not Mary KilBride her daughter, who was only twelve years of age at the time.

The Marquess looked on his involvement in the patronage of schools as good public relations. He believed it was important that he or his agent would have almost total control of the establishment, administration and more importantly the hiring and firing of the teaching staff in schools on his estates. In 1888 the Educational Commissioners objected to the fifth Marquess's under agent, William Rochford of Cahir, County Tipperary retaining the post of manager of the schools in Luggacurren. In his letter to Lansdowne, Rochford points out that he had 'been the manager of these schools since [his] appointment as under agent in 1874 and the Education Commissioners now object to [his] continuing to act in that capacity, owing to [his] residing at too great a distance from the schools to admit of [his] exercising any effective supervision.' In such a case he thought 'the objection [was] reasonable and [he] shall resign as soon as Trench has time to see what can be done in the direction of getting the best available successor to act in [his] place.'<sup>28</sup> Lansdowne replied that he was sorry that Rochford had to resign as

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<sup>25</sup> Lyne, Gerard J. *The Lansdowne estate in Kerry under W. S. Trench 1849-72*, (Dublin, 2001), p. 654, hereafter cited as Lyne.

<sup>26</sup> Bowood House Papers, Report accounts and rental for year ending 31 Oct. 1863, Lansdowne Queen's County estate, hereafter cited as Queen's County report.

<sup>27</sup> Queen's County report 1868, p. 23.

<sup>28</sup> Rochford to Lansdowne, 31 Oct. 1888 (Derreen papers, box 29).

manager of the Luggacurren schools, 'but it seems inevitable.'<sup>29</sup> However, Rochford's letter of the same date also points out that John Townsend Trench (agent for Kerry and Queen's County estates) was also under pressure to resign 'the managership of the school on the south Kerry estate, on the grounds that he does not visit them often enough.' He (Rochford) thought it would be a great pity that the South Kerry agent should cease to be the manager of these schools (including the Derreen schools), 'as the manager appoints the teachers and the teachers influence the rising generation.' If Trench was to resign voluntarily his 'successor would doubtlessly in every case be the PP of the district.' Rochford also thought that Trench was 'inclined to give way' but in his opinion 'Trench is quite sufficiently "residential"<sup>30</sup> to resist being shunted from the managership.'<sup>31</sup> Lansdowne in his reply, noted the hint as to Trench and the Kerry schools and promised to 'endeavour to prevent his resignation. It would be undesirable the PP should be introduced in his place.'<sup>32</sup>

Even in 1922 when Derreen House had been deliberately burned and law and order had completely broken down in the Kenmare region, Lansdowne was slow to change his gratuitous policy to the estate schools, even though little or no revenue had been received from his Kerry estate for the previous few years. Notwithstanding this, in the draft annual estate report of 1922, Henry Perceval Maxwell asked 'why should Lord Lansdowne remain patron and we managers? It means a very serious expense to Lord Lansdowne.'<sup>33</sup> In the same report William Rochford asks Lansdowne 'would [he] be inclined to make a distinction between the several schools? Say to sever your connection with the Kenmare and Dauros schools, while remaining patron of Lauragh and Glenmore as being in the Derreen district – the teachers have large salaries from the Board of Education?' Lansdowne's initial reaction was to comment, 'I rather lean to deferring action till the subject can be discussed personally with you'. A little over a month later Lansdowne agrees to making a 'distinction between the schools in the Kenmare district and those adjoining Derreen. If Derreen were ever to be used again as

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<sup>29</sup> Lansdowne to Rochford, 1 Nov. 1888 (Derreen papers, box 29).

<sup>30</sup> Trench lived at Lansdowne Lodge, Kenmare at the time.

<sup>31</sup> Rochford to Lansdowne, 31 Oct. 1888 (Derreen papers, box 29).

<sup>32</sup> Lansdowne to Rochford, 1 Nov. 1888 (Derreen papers, box 29).

<sup>33</sup> Notes by H.P.M. (Henry Perceval Maxwell) accompanying draft 1922 account, 20 Feb. 1923 (unboxed Derreen house papers 1923-4).

a residence by any member of the family, it would be desirable to remain in touch with the teachers. The financial results are tragical.<sup>34</sup>

Before taking over control of the family farm, Denis KilBride attended the local national school of Luggacurren.<sup>35</sup> Lansdowne, like many of the landed gentry had recognised the paramount importance of education and in Luggacurren 'a school-house was established and placed under the Commissioners of National Education'.<sup>36</sup> The initial application to the Commissioners of National Education for a school at Luggacurren was made on 7 June 1837. The school was erected by the Marquess of Lansdowne, 'on neither church or chapel grounds as a free gift', and 'taken into connexion by the Board' on 8 March 1838. The application was made by Lansdowne's agent at the time, J. R. Rice, Westfield Farm, Mountrath, Queen's County. A previous school established in 1824 was 'in connection with the Kildare Street Society, but is not now, nor will it in future'. In the 1837 application, it was proposed that Saturday be set apart for religious instruction 'when the school opens, five days will be directed to moral and literary education from nine o'clock till three'. The school was under the direction of the above John R. Rice and the Rev. Mr Cummins, Stradbally.<sup>37</sup>

A teacher was procured for the school in Luggacurren, and 'some of the pupils instructed by him passed into private colleges'.<sup>38</sup> On 10 September 1861 KilBride was registered at Clongowes Wood College, Clane, Co. Kildare. His father Thomas made a good bargain at the time, having his three sons, Denis aged thirteen, William aged twelve and John aged ten admitted for the fee of £100 (the actual full fee should have been between £130-£140). This sum of £100 per annum was fixed to cover pension, washing and use of books, with no extras. However, on 31 March 1863 it was arranged that they would be taught dancing and music at sixteen guineas per annum. Later they also took drawing. The three brothers were assigned to third grammar, their professor

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<sup>34</sup> Lansdowne to Rochford, 26 Mar. 1923 (unboxed Derreen house papers 1923-4).

<sup>35</sup> Unfortunately the school register for this school no longer exists and there are no schools in Luggacurren today.

<sup>36</sup> NA ED 1/73 No. 39; ED 2/38 Folio 50.

<sup>37</sup> *Idid.*

<sup>38</sup> *Irish Builder*, 1 Oct. 1868, p. 236.

being the Rev. C. Bellews.<sup>39</sup> According to the register, Denis is said to have already received his First Holy Communion and Confirmation.<sup>40</sup>

### 1.3 HENRY CHARLES KEITH PETTY-FITZMAURICE, FIFTH MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE

1866 was a significant year for the KilBride and Lansdowne families. In that year KilBride was eighteen years of age and had finished his formal schooling at Clongowes Wood College and also his father died. Denis being the eldest son took over responsibility of the farm at Luggacurren, leased from Lord Lansdowne in his mother Maria's name. Leaseholders such as Mrs KilBride and her neighbour John William Dunne had a more secure form of land tenure, in that they held the land under lease from Lansdowne for a fixed period, usually years or named lives, in Mrs KilBride's case, a period of twenty-one years or the life of the eldest son, Denis. The rent was also fixed for the period of the lease and certain conditions, normally negotiated between the landlord and tenant were set down in leases and had to be observed.

The significance of 1866 for the Lansdowne family was that Henry Petty-Fitzmaurice (1816-1866), fourth Marquess of Lansdowne, who had only held the Lansdowne title for three years, suddenly died and his eldest son, Henry Charles Keith Petty-Fitzmaurice, (1845-1927), styled Viscount Clanmaurice 1845-63 and Earl of Kerry 1863-6 became the fifth Marquess of Lansdowne at the age of twenty-one and took over the management of his Irish estates.<sup>41</sup> Henry thus found himself one of the great territorial magnates of the country and inheritor of an historic name and historic

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<sup>39</sup> Denis and William finished their education at Clongowes in 1865. John continued for a further year and Valentine was a pupil from 1867-8; see Clongowes Wood College Student Register 1814-1886; also Corcoran, Timothy, *The Clongowes record, 1814-1932*, (Dublin, 1932), p.191.

<sup>40</sup> Clongowes Wood College Student Register 1814-1886; Clongowes Wood Student Ledger E 1850-1864, p. 298.

<sup>41</sup> The second Earl of Shelbourne, Prime Minister from 1782 to 1783, was created Marquess of Lansdowne for negotiating peace with America after the War of Independence. He furnished Bowood House in Wiltshire and his London home, Lansdowne House, with superb collections of paintings and classical sculpture but died deeply in debt. The second Marquess had to sell most of the contents. The third Marquess (1780-1863) was Chancellor of the Exchequer at twenty-five and he restored Bowood House. The third Marquess, a distinguished statesman, served in the House of Lords under eight prime ministers, formed another great collection of paintings and sculpture. The fourth Marquess married Emily Flahault, daughter of the Comte de Flahault who was Napoleon's *aide de camp*. When the fifth Marquess (1845-1927) succeeded, the family fortunes were again in decline. He became Governor-General of Canada (1883-1888) and Viceroy of India (1888-94). On his return to Bowood, the big house was used only for entertaining and the family lived in the little house at Bowood ([www.bowood-estate.co.uk/index.html#intro](http://www.bowood-estate.co.uk/index.html#intro)).

possessions.<sup>42</sup> Barker explains that the Fitzmaurices were ‘of Norman blood’ and had emigrated in the twelfth century from England to the west of Ireland, where they seized large tracts of land and created themselves barons of Kerry.<sup>43</sup> He further comments on how the Fitzmaurices fared in the intervening centuries as follows:

The Norman strain having been invigorated by a succession of Celtic wives, the Lords of Kerry became the wildest of Irishmen. The estates they had seized by force they held by defiance of and rebellion against their sovereigns; and then lost by mere profligacy.<sup>44</sup>

The family tree of the Lansdowne family is indeed an impressive one, going back to Sir William Petty (1623-1687).<sup>45</sup> Petty had married Elizabeth Waller (c1636-1708) daughter of Sir Hardress Waller and widow of Sir Michael Fenton, Bart, and in her own right became Baroness Shelburne in 1688.<sup>46</sup> Petty was appointed professor of anatomy at Oxford, but came to Ireland in 1652 as physician-general to Cromwell’s armies.<sup>47</sup> It was at this stage he abandoned medicine in favour of cartography and other profitable pursuits. On completing the Down Survey of Ireland (1654-9) he received £9,000, which was mainly invested in large estates in County Kerry, while also mining lead, quarrying marble, manufacturing iron, selling timber and establishing a pilchard fishery.<sup>48</sup> Charles II continued to favour him and awarded him a knighthood in 1662.<sup>49</sup> When Sir William died his estates passed to his sole surviving child, Anne ‘the reputation of whose extreme ugliness has lingered down the centuries’.<sup>50</sup> Barker outlines the Petty-Fitzmaurice connection as follows:

By marrying her, the twenty-first Lord Kerry [Thomas Fitzmaurice 1668-1741]<sup>51</sup> fully revived the fortunes of his family, future generations of which gratefully added the name of Petty to their own, and restored the Earldom of Shelburne. The descendant to become the First Marquess of Lansdowne [William Petty-Fitzmaurice 1737-1805] is better known in history, indeed, as that eighteenth-century statesman, the Earl of Shelburne, whose brief premiership was ended by the unlikely coalition of Fox with Lord North.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Lord Newton, *Lansdowne, a biography*, (London, 1929), p. 7, hereafter cited as Newton.

<sup>43</sup> Barker, Dudley, *Prominent Edwardians*, (London, 1969), p. 141, hereafter cited as Barker.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Petty Fitzmaurice (Lansdowne) family tree compiled by Dr Kate Fielden, Curator, Bowood Estate, Calne, Wiltshire, hereafter cited as Lansdowne family tree.

<sup>46</sup> Lansdowne family tree.

<sup>47</sup> Connolly, *Oxford companion*, p 440.

<sup>48</sup> Barker, pp 141-2.

<sup>49</sup> Connolly, *Oxford companion*, p. 440.

<sup>50</sup> Barker, p 142.

<sup>51</sup> Lansdowne family tree.

<sup>52</sup> Barker, p. 142.

The first Marquess's great estates in Wiltshire came to him by his first marriage to Lady Sophia Carteret (1745-1771), daughter of the first Earl Granville.<sup>53</sup> His son John Petty-Fitzmaurice (1765-1809)<sup>54</sup> succeeded as second Marquess of Lansdowne, but only for four years, when his step-brother Henry Petty Fitzmaurice (1780-1863) became third Marquess. It was the latter who installed the Petty-Fitzmaurices as one of the great Whig families of the land. At the age of twenty-six he was Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was Canning's Secretary for Home Affairs. He refused a Dukedom and the Premiership, preferring to sit in the Cabinet without formal office; informally, he was known as the Nestor of the Whigs.<sup>55</sup>

The fourth Marquess, Henry Petty-Fitzmaurice (1816-1866), who died at the early age of fifty and only held the title of Marquess for three years, yet kept up the 'one family trait which he inherited', by marrying into landed property.<sup>56</sup> His first wife Lady Georgiana Herbert (1817-1841)<sup>57</sup> was the daughter of the eleventh Earl of Pembroke and his second wife Emily Mercer de Flahault (1819-1895) was very wealthy, had a title in her own right (Baroness Nairne) and estates in Scotland at Meikleour and at Tulliallan, near Kincardine-on-Forth.<sup>58</sup> Emily's father, General Count de Flahault de la Billarderie was an illegitimate son of Talleyrand and was chiefly noted for gallantry, 'both in the field and in the bedchamber'. He became Napoleon's *aide-de-camp* and fathered the bastard son of the Queen of Holland.<sup>59</sup> It was Emily's eldest son, Henry Charles Keith Petty-Fitzmaurice who succeeded to the title of fifth Marquess of Lansdowne in 1866. He was to hold the title for sixty-one years until his death in 1927. Henry had one sister, Emily (1835-1939) who married Colonel the Honourable Everard Digby (1852-19??) and one brother, Edmund (1846-1935) who became Baron Fitzmaurice in 1906.<sup>60</sup> Table 2 shows the extent of the fifth Marquess's titles and estates in Ireland.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Lansdowne family tree; Barker. p. 142.

<sup>54</sup> Lansdowne family tree.

<sup>55</sup> Barker, p. 142.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 142-3.

<sup>57</sup> Lansdowne family tree.

<sup>58</sup> Barker p. 143.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143.

<sup>60</sup> Lansdowne family tree.

<sup>61</sup> U. H. H de Burgh, *The Landowners of Ireland*, (Dublin, 1878), p. 260, hereafter cited as de Burgh.

Table 2: Lansdowne Estates 1878

Name, Titles and Addresses	County	Acreage	Valuation
			£
LANSDOWNE, Marquess of (Henry Charles Keith-Petty-Fitzmaurice, 5th Marquess). Educated at Eton and B.A. Balliol Coll., Oxford; J. P. Co. Kerry and Wilts.; was Captain Wilts. Yeomanry 1865-73; Lord of the Treasury 1868-72: Under Secretary of State for War 1872-4, - Bowood, Calne, Wilts., Derreen House, Kenmare, Co. Kerry; Lansdowne House, Berkeley square, w.; Reform and White's Clubs, s.w.	Dublin Kerry King's Limerick Limerick city Meath Queen's	2,132 94,983 617 1,526 116 12,995 8,980	3,182 9,553 542 2,701 264 10,790 5,310
		121,349	32,342
Source: de Burgh, U. H. H., <i>The landowners of Ireland</i> , p. 260.			

Along with the titles listed above, Lansdowne in later years was Under-Secretary of State for India from April to July 1880, but because of his objections to the Compensation for Disturbance Bill introduced on 19 June, which was defeated in the House of Lords on 3 August, he resigned from Gladstone's Liberals and aligned himself with the Conservatives.<sup>62</sup> Notwithstanding this he became Governor-General of Canada from 1883 to 1888 and Viceroy of India from 1888 to 1894.<sup>63</sup> On returning to England in 1894, he was created K.G., received an honorary D.C.L. from Oxford University and was also appointed Lord Lieutenant of Wiltshire.<sup>64</sup> In 1895 he inherited properties of Meikleour and Tullyallan on the death of his mother and was also appointed Secretary of State for War from 1895 to 1900 and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from 1900 to 1905. Lansdowne became leader of the Conservative party in the House of Lords on the death of Lord Salisbury in 1903 and was responsible for negotiating the Anglo-French *Entente* which paved the way for the alliance of 1914.<sup>65</sup> He was a Cabinet Minister without office from 1915 to 1916.<sup>66</sup> According to Barker, Lansdowne was as quiet and reserved as in appearance and it was once remarked of him that he was 'naturally a silent man'<sup>67</sup> and in the sense that Spenser was a poet's poet, the fifth Marquess would be described as a gentleman's gentleman.<sup>68</sup> When he spoke, it was 'in

<sup>62</sup> O'Day, xli.

<sup>63</sup> Gladstone was Liberal Prime Minister in 1883 and Lord Salisbury was the Conservative Prime Minister in 1888.

<sup>64</sup> Fielden, Dr Kate (Bowood House Curator), exhibition leaflet entitled: Henry, fifth Marquess of Lansdowne (1845-1927) at Bowood House, Calne, Wiltshire, 2002, hereafter cited as Fielden, Fifth Marquess.

<sup>65</sup> Fielden, Fifth Marquess.

<sup>66</sup> The Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts. *Guides to sources for British History based on the National Register of Archives: Papers of British Cabinet ministers 1782-1900*, (London), i, p. 50.

<sup>67</sup> Barker, p. 139.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*, p. 141.

an unemotional tone with a matter of fact style' which was 'without pretensions to eloquence'.<sup>69</sup> Barker further describes his manner in the following words:

His courtly manner tended to overawe strangers, but those who persisted found him nevertheless an intent listener. Among men, as the port decanter circulated, he would hear others' opinions of public affairs rather than proffer his own. Only with an old friend might he occasionally proceed to the intimacy of a discussion of some lines of an Horatian ode, or of the problems posed by particular Greek verses, of which the metrical translation into English was one of his private relaxations. That port decanter incidentally, had probably passed him by unnoticed; in an age of elaborate dinners and complicated wine patterns, he ate little and drank less.<sup>70</sup>

His appearance was described as that of a man of 'tallish, spare and trim frame, with a long face, high forehead, aquiline nose, moustache and slight side whiskers, dark tinged with gray'.<sup>71</sup> Among his friends he rarely spoke expansively except on topics such as blood sports, which he delighted in, but he preferred above all else the solitude of fishing.<sup>72</sup> An example of his love of outdoor pursuits and in particular of his favourite fishing spot on Glenmore Lake near Derreen in Kerry, is found in a letter to William Rochford addressed from the Citadel, Quebec, while he was Governor General of Canada. In this letter he relates that during a successful fishing trip 'we got a trivial close on 300 fish, mostly large, the average weight was about twenty-five pounds.'<sup>73</sup> But despite his best fish weighing forty-three pounds, 'I would not mind a day on Glenmore Lake.'<sup>74</sup>

Lansdowne's largest estate situated in Kerry of 94,983 acres was situated in and around the town of Kenmare and the Beara peninsula. His third largest estate, that in Queen's County of nearly 8,980 acres was but a fraction of the Kerry estate. According to Patrick J. Meehan the O'Byrne's of Timogue Castle sold the Luggacurren estate to the third Marquess of Lansdowne and their castle subsequently 'fell into ruins'.<sup>75</sup> The two estates, Kerry and Queen's cannot be compared merely by size alone, as other considerations such as the quality of the land, size of holdings and improvements to the general lot of the tenants' living standards have also to be considered.

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<sup>69</sup> *L.L.*, 7 Mar. 1914.

<sup>70</sup> Barker, pp 139-40.

<sup>71</sup> *L.L.*, 7 Mar. 1914.

<sup>72</sup> Barker, p. 140.

<sup>73</sup> Lansdowne to Rochford, 25 Aug. 1884, Derreen papers, box 29.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid*; Glenmore Lake is situated very close to Derreen House, Lauragh on the Beara peninsula, Kerry.

<sup>75</sup> Meehan, p. 161.



#### 1.4 CONGRATULATORY ADDRESS

The years following the great famine in Ireland were considered good years for the tenant farmers and general prosperity reigned in the years previous to and immediately after the death of Denis's father Thomas in 1866. Denis found himself at the centre of a leasehold farm of 868 acres of mostly good land, with sub-tenants and labourers. He had been brought up in a prosperous family setting relative to the families in the immediate neighbourhood and learned to live the life of a country gentleman at Wood House, Luggacurren. During the prosperous post-famine years Lord Lansdowne was looked upon with benevolence and trust by his tenants. In September 1868 when the fifth Marquess made his 'first appearance amongst us as your landlord', he was presented with a congratulatory address from 'his faithful friends and tenants', amongst the signatories being John William Dunne<sup>76</sup> and Denis KilBride.<sup>77</sup> The tenants thanked Lansdowne 'for contributions to local purposes, charitable or otherwise', and also for 'the liberal expenditure which you have directed to be made in the judicious improvements on your estate, your lordship, though absent from this country has not been unmindful that property has its duties as well as its rights'.<sup>78</sup> Finally they expressed 'every kind wish for the welfare and happiness of your lordship and your noble family'. In reply Lansdowne stated that as he arrived in Luggacurren he noticed 'on one of the arches the words 'A happy happy day' and trusted that 'it will be a day for me to look back on with pleasure in the years to come'. After expressing confidence in his agent William Steuart Trench for his 'excellent management of the estates for both myself and my predecessors', he asked for the continuance of the 'good feeling' they had always shown the Marquess of Lansdowne and promised that 'it will be my endeavour to follow in their footsteps and if possible earn the same good name from the tenantry here'.<sup>79</sup>

#### 1.5 AGRICULTURAL DEPRESSION & DETERIORATING RELATIONSHIPS

In June 1876 William Rochford reported that a lease dated 15 April of that year was executed at Luggacurren to Mrs KilBride at a yearly rent of £444 for twenty-one years from 29 September or the life of her eldest son 'Denis, then aged about twenty-six

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<sup>76</sup> John William Dunne of Raheenahown House, Luggacurren was the largest tenant on the Lansdowne estate having approximately 1,200 acres.

<sup>77</sup> Report, accounts and rental of the estates of the most noble the Marquess of Lansdowne situated in the Queen's County, King's County and County Kilkenny by W. Steuart Trench, 31 Dec. 1868, appendix pp 66-8, Bowood house papers, Wiltshire, hereafter cited as Queen's County account 1868.

<sup>78</sup> Queen's County account 1868.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

years, whichever shall last the longer'.<sup>80</sup> In 1876 Lansdowne borrowed £600 from the Board of Works for the building of new farm offices for Mrs Maria KilBride.<sup>81</sup> Trench reported in 1877 that about seventy-five statute acres were drained, chiefly on the lands of Luggacurren, Fallowbeg and Timogue and 'the interest payable to the Board on this expenditure will be almost entirely defrayed by the tenants whose lands are being improved'.<sup>82</sup>

With the onset of a depression in agriculture at the end of the 1870s the good relationship between Lansdowne and his tenants deteriorated slowly. On 25 November 1879, KilBride wrote directly to Lansdowne noting that he 'did not make Lord Lansdowne's rent of the land this year' as the profits from farming were vastly different to what they were previously.<sup>83</sup> He therefore appealed to Lansdowne for a reduction in the percentage added to his rent for drainage carried out on his lands 'two years ago'. KilBride pointed out that even though he originally consented to pay six and a half per cent on drainage expenditure and five per cent on buildings, yet Lansdowne should know 'perfectly well whether money expended on buildings is worth five per cent or not, even necessary farm buildings'.<sup>84</sup> In this specific case KilBride's appeal was acceded to, even though at this early stage of land agitation, Lansdowne had picked out KilBride as a troublemaker who needed to be dealt with before he and others could influence others to agitate on the Luggacurren estate. Lansdowne stated that he would probably single out the two richest men and make bankrupts of them. 'One of these is a J.P. and pays me a £1,000 a year in rent. His holding is let far below its value and I have no doubt he would not take £5,000 for his interest in it'.<sup>85</sup> Although he doesn't mention names, it is certain that John William Dunne of Raheenahown House was the J.P. in question and the second person was Denis KilBride of Wood House, Luggacurren.

In writing to Rochford on 3 November 1879, accepting advice from him about terms with his tenants for drainage, Lansdowne hoped his 'proposal will be accepted and lead to extensive land improvement'.<sup>86</sup> He further adds:

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<sup>80</sup> Perambulation, Valuation and Rental of the Lansdowne estate in Queen's County, 1873. (Derreen papers, box 38), hereafter cited as Perambulation 1873.

<sup>81</sup> Queen's County account, 1876.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 1877.

<sup>83</sup> KilBride to Lansdowne, 25 Nov. 1879, Derreen papers, box, 29.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> Lansdowne to his mother 8 Dec. 1880, cited in *Newton*, p. 21.

<sup>86</sup> Lansdowne to Rochford, 3 Nov. 1879, Derreen papers, box 29.

In this neighbourhood the farmers have very little to complain of. The corn crop is good, the straw wonderful and the yield better than was expected. Potatoes were sound and selling at twenty-three to twenty-seven pounds an acre in the ground. Turnips bad in places but I have seen some fine fields. Partridges the worst crop of all, but one has no time to think of game these days.<sup>87</sup>

Trench hoped that as a result of the concession to the KilBride's and further concessions to other tenants, that the 'violent agitation, which had prevailed all over Ireland this year, carried on by tenants who demand abatements of rent and improved terms of tenure, may be caused to subside and by reasonable concessions that good feeling and respect for contract may in time be restored.'<sup>88</sup>

Lansdowne knew that the situation in Ireland was continually becoming worse in the early 1880s and he mentions this in his letters to his mother. In one such letter he points out that the Queen's County tenants were 'obdurate' but he wouldn't accept Griffith's valuation as a basis of settlement. He was quite ready to make a reasonable abatement depending on the circumstances of each holding, but he felt that the tenants were 'too far-gone and nothing was left but to fight it out'.<sup>89</sup> In 1880 Lansdowne referred to a large special abatement allowed to the tenants on his Queen's County estate, with a corresponding abatement promised the following year.<sup>90</sup> The abatement granted was twenty-five per cent on tenements rented at over fifty pounds and thirty per cent on tenements rented at under fifty pounds. The above is confirmed in Trench's annual report of 1880, where a total rent reduction amounted to £1,081 and 'your lordship's rents have been paid with considerable punctuality'.<sup>91</sup> Trench however reported that if the abatement granted had not been made, 'it is certain that the payment of rent would have been resisted by the tenants'.<sup>92</sup>

In 1881 the tenants again applied for a reduction, but the land act had then passed and Lansdowne told them to go into the land court and if the leaseholders made out a good case he would be perfectly willing to consider it.<sup>93</sup> The 1881 account reported a

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> KilBride to Lansdowne, 25 Nov. 1879 (Derreen papers, box 29).

<sup>89</sup> Lansdowne to his mother 8 Dec. 1880, cited in *Newton*, p. 21.

<sup>90</sup> Report, account and rental of the Marquess of Lansdowne's Queen's County, King's County and Kilkenny estates, year ending 31 Dec. 1880, hereinafter cited as Queen's County account 1880. Bowood House papers, Calne, Wiltshire.

<sup>91</sup> Queen's County account, 1880.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> *L.E.*, 2 Apr. 1887.

large arrear of £4,211 4s and a small remittance of £2,250 which Trench noted was because of 'a determined combination of the tenants not to pay without a large general abatement on the rent,' which Lansdowne refused to grant.<sup>94</sup> The remittance was usually more than twice this figure. Subsequently steps were taken to enforce the payment of the 1881 rents in full and 'although the process of law is tedious, I have no doubt that the proceedings will ultimately be successful.'<sup>95</sup> Normality returned in 1882 when the payment of the rents withheld by the tenants were enforced and 'I have been enabled to remit £7,500 to your lordship's credit'. In that year Trench reported that 'all dispositions on the part of the tenants to withhold rent, seems to have passed away.'<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Queen's County account 1881.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 1882.

Table 3: Land Court Judgements 1883

THE LAND ACT IN THE QUEEN'S COUNTY									
IMPORTANT DECISIONS ON THE ESTATE OF LORD LANSDOWNE									
Sitting of the Sub-Commissioners at Bagenalstown on Monday 17 December 1883									
in which Mr Kane gave judgement in the cases which were heard at Maryborough									
for the Union of Athy, in the Queen's County									
Tenant's Name	Valuation			Old Rent			Judicial Rent		
	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
James Mahon	132	0	0	203	14	6	160	0	0
Patrick Kelly	32	9	0	56	3	0	47	0	0
Michael Kelly	12	15	0	18	8	0	15	5	0
John Dunne	18	5	0	29	8	0	15	10	0
Denis Dunne	10	15	0	20	0	0	16	10	0
Edward Delany	33	15	0	55	13	2	44	10	0
Thomas Moore	16	10	0	28	5	6	20	10	0
Jeremiah Brennan	20	0	0	33	16	4	27	10	0
John Lyons	14	15	0	24	10	0	16	10	0
Patrick Lawlor	27	5	0	49	16	0	41	0	0
Laurence Byrne	33	5	0	47	0	0	41	0	0
Michael Dunne	12	10	0	21	16	9	15	0	0
Do	22	10	0	29	15	8	25	10	0
Do	5	0	0	8	0	0	7	0	0
Denis Dunne	18	5	0	25	7	2	19	0	0
John Johnstone	17	15	0	30	9	3	22	10	0
Margaret Troy	8	15	0	16	16	0	12	10	0
Do	17	5	0	23	9	0	23	9	0
Edward Kelly	13	15	0	16	18	4	14	5	0
James Moore	16	15	0	25	5	4	22	10	0
Bryan Coffey	14	0	0	18	0	0	15	10	0
John Brennan	13	10	0	25	8	0	18	0	0
Jeremiah Murphy	5	15	0	7	15	0	6	5	0
Do	9	5	0	17	3	0	13	10	0
Julia McGrath	9	8	0	21	10	0	15	0	0
Do	5	7	0	8	0	0	7	0	0
Andrew Murphy	5	0	0	8	15	0	6	10	0
Denis Brennnan	27	5	0	34	7	0	31	10	0
Thomas Evans	33	0	0	70	0	0	64	0	0
James Brennan	15	0	0	19	0	0	16	10	0

Source: *L.E.* (Supplement), 22 Dec. 1883.

According to KilBride, the tenants went into the Land Court in 1882 and got reasonable abatements.<sup>97</sup> The average reduction in 1883 was twenty per cent. (Table 3) KilBride maintained that when the Land Commissioners of 1883 fixed the rents, they fixed them on the basis of the prices in the previous fifteen years, which were the most prosperous years.<sup>98</sup> Trench felt otherwise by deciding to appeal the judicial rents and reports that 'thirty-one of your lordship's tenants [principally on Luggacurren hill] put

<sup>97</sup> *L.E.*, 2 Apr. 1887.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

their holdings into the land court to have fair rents fixed and in nearly every case the present rents have been considerably reduced'.<sup>99</sup> In 1884 Trench reported that 'the general tone of the estate is quiet but boycotting is still a force that makes itself strongly felt in this country' and further that 'contentment with even judicial rents is by no means assured'.<sup>100</sup> The term 'judicial rents' referred to rents that had been adjudicated and fixed by the land courts under the terms of the 1881 Land Act and non-judicial rents referred to verbal agreements between landlord and tenants, which were paid in the normal fashion without third party intervention. In 1884 a branch of the Irish National League was established for the parish of Ballyadams and Wolfhill.

Quite an amount of information about leases held by the KilBride family is contained in correspondence between Rochford and Lansdowne in 1885, when KilBride applied for an abatement in his leasehold rent. Rochford reported that in 1885, KilBride 'holds two leases, one of 1847 and the other of 1876'.<sup>101</sup> Both of the farms referred to were almost entirely in grass. According to Rochford, there was a great agricultural depression in 1847 and the rents fixed at that time were generally very moderate and as the rent was paid ever since, in his opinion it was 'not an impossible rent'. His conclusion was that having made allowances for recent depreciation in the value of lands, grass farms were worth more in 1885 than in 1847. However the 1876 leasehold was not so simple in its history. It was 'made up of three old takes to the rents, of which substantial sums have been added for interest on landlord's outlay or improvements and with the exception of the sums so added, there has been no increase of rent for certainly thirty years'. Rochford maintained that KilBride was anxious to get his lease in 1876 and 'a man of his intelligence may be credited with knowing what he was about'. The only credible reason for an abatement in 1885, according to Rochford, was a depreciation in the value of grassland as compared with 1876, but it had also to be borne in mind that the lease of 1876 'merely embodies rents fixed twenty years and upwards before that date.'<sup>102</sup>

In such a case Rochford advised that 'if a concession is made, I should certainly advise it being in the nature of a temporary abatement, instead of a permanent

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<sup>99</sup> Queen's County account, 1883.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 1884.

<sup>101</sup> Rochford to Lansdowne, 31 May 1885 (Derreen papers, box 29).

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

reduction'.<sup>103</sup> In a subsequent letter Rochford advises that as a 'means of preventing his [KilBride] leading another anti-rent strike, of which there is some danger' and as 'the greater part of KilBride's hill land no doubt deteriorate very considerably owing to the wet seasons of 1877 to 1879', any abatement should be put in such a way as to indicate that it would probably be continued for two years, though leaving Lansdowne free to withdraw it.<sup>104</sup> Months later Lansdowne admits that 'the leaseholders who are precluded from going into court have to some extent a plausible case'.<sup>105</sup> He also thought that 'on KilBride's old take, an abatement was not called for' and agreed with Rochford that 'there should be no exhibition of irresolution on our part, or parleying with miscreants [as] we all know how this ended in 1881 to 1882'.<sup>106</sup>

In 1885 Trench dropped the decision to appeal the judicial rents and subsequently advised Lansdowne that 'there being little likelihood of the judicial rents being increased and some risk of their being further reduced, having regard to the recent decisions of the chief commissioners'.<sup>107</sup> The tenants on the Lansdowne's Kerry estate at Kenmare, had like their counterparts in Luggacurren sought large abatements in the rent both of judicial and non-judicial tenants. Trench when reporting a general depression in 1885, thought 'the outlook is anything but cheering' especially since there was an increase of £3,500 in the arrear remaining due, 'which is just the amount by which the remittances decreased'.<sup>108</sup> He also reported that 'the price of butter has fallen to half what it was and the price of the sort of cattle produced in this part of Kerry has fallen to less than half, for in fact the stock is unsaleable'.<sup>109</sup> In February 1886 Fr Thomas Kehoe P.P. of Luggacurren and Ballyadams was elected president of the branch and KilBride was appointed secretary. This branch of the I.N.L. included the districts of Ballyadams, Luggacurren and Wolfhill.<sup>110</sup>

Unfortunately there was a further deterioration on the Kerry estate in 1886 when thirty evictions representing about 240 persons, men, women and children, were carried out 'and in other cases the tenants only paid when we had the sheriff, bailiffs and

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 26 June 1885.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 9 Nov. 1885.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Queen's County account, 1885.

<sup>108</sup> Kerry account, 1885.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Ramsbottom, p.18.

emergencymen at their doors'.<sup>111</sup> Later in 1886 Lansdowne visited his Kerry estates, in order to examine upon the spot the condition of that part of the property.<sup>112</sup> As a result of his investigation he allowed large abatements to his Kerry tenants as they were in dire straits but in Luggacurren the abatements were much reduced.<sup>113</sup> This was the final straw for the Luggacurren tenantry and was a decisive factor in pushing them to adopt the plan of campaign in November 1886. (Appendix 1) The exact reductions on the winter gale of 1886 in Kerry are reported by Trench when 'your lordship gave in Glenerought an abatement of twenty per cent on judicial rents and twenty-five per cent on non-judicial and thirty-five per cent on non-judicial rents in Iveragh and twenty per cent on judicial rents.'<sup>114</sup> However Trench didn't feel that such generosity was needed and stated so as follows:

Upon the whole the agitation in other parts of Ireland, the weakness of the administration and the legislation proposed, have had the effect of increasing the disinclination to pay rent, even with those who could afford to pay. There is a depression no doubt in agriculture, but not such as should account for the arrears, having regard to the liberal abatement, which your excellency has made.<sup>115</sup>

Meanwhile on the Luggacurren estate 'abatements being equivalent on an average to eighteen per cent on non-judicial rents' were offered in the November gale of 1886.<sup>116</sup> However, the tenants demanded an abatement of twenty per cent on judicial rents and thirty to thirty-five per cent on non-judicial rents. The case for the tenants was made in a letter signed by T. Keogh P.P., J. W. Dunne, J. Dwen and D. KilBride.<sup>117</sup> They pointed out that they 'expected and it was the feeling in the property, that Lord Lansdowne would have made similar reductions here as in Kerry'. Further they argued that 'it is not a question of unwillingness to pay rent, but it is a question of inability in some cases and in all cases (even should liberal reductions be made such as was done by his lordship in Kerry) a sense of being severely pinched this winter'. Consequently they decided that the abatements of ten to twenty per cent on non-judicial rents offered by Lansdowne 'are to our minds and in the opinion of the tenants inadequate'.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Kerry account, 1886.

<sup>112</sup> Russell, T.W., 'An account of the Luggacurren and Glensharrold estates' in *Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union Publications*, (Dublin, 1889), p. 130.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> Kerry account, 1886.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>116</sup> Queen's County account, 1886.

<sup>117</sup> *Dublin Daily Express*, 13 Nov. 1886, hereafter cited as *D.D.E.*

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*



Lansdowne who had been in Ireland a few months previous to this, declined to accede to the demands of the Luggacurren tenants. His reply addressed to Fr. T. Keogh P.P. Luggacurren, through his agent Trench, explains his unwillingness to give the same terms to his Luggacurren tenants.<sup>119</sup> Lansdowne regarded the circumstances 'as being very different from those of his tenants in Kerry'. Further he maintained that 'the class of stock produced in Queen's County is superior to what can be produced in Kerry and the farming generally ought to be less effected by the depression in prices, which admittedly has occurred in both places'. Despite making every effort to improve the agricultural situation on the Luggacurren estate, by 'offering them bulls, offering a subscription of £200 towards establishing a creamery' and 'by assisting them to make silos, instead of the present wasteful system of hay making', Lansdowne's efforts were 'contemptuously disregarded' by 'persistent and virulent' agitators 'to spread feelings of a different nature'.<sup>120</sup> Subsequently the Luggacurren tenants refused the payment of any rent and adopted the 'plan of campaign'.<sup>121</sup> Trench reported as follows:

Steps are now being taken to obtain either payment of the rent or possession of the lands. The cost of these proceedings will be enormous, but there is no escape from the war. The question that we fight for is this – who is to decide what is to be paid in future – the landlord says the 'land court', the tenants say the Land League. It is a question of strength now as we have entered on the most serious struggle of the sort that has yet taken place in Ireland.<sup>122</sup>

The Kerry estate in 1887 remained relatively 'free from agrarian crime'.<sup>123</sup> The only slight ripple occurred in Glencar when 'the evicted tenants planted some potato gardens and oats by moonlight'. The penalty for this transgression was severe as Trench reports that 'we waited until they were nearly ripe and then we sent an armed body of men and destroyed the crops. This struck terror into the agitators and led to much rent being paid, which otherwise we should have lost'.<sup>124</sup> For attending a meeting at Luggacurren on the 9 January 1887 and actively encouraging the adoption of the plan of campaign, John William Dunne of Raheenahown, Luggacurren was deprived of the commission of the peace by the Lord Chancellor.<sup>125</sup> Efforts to appease the tenants on the Luggacurren estate were unsuccessful as 'forty four tenants or rather the occupiers of forty four

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<sup>119</sup> Lansdowne to Keogh, 10 Nov. 1886; *D.D.E.*, 13 Nov. 1886.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> Kerry account, 1887.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup> *L.E.*, 19 Feb. 1887.

holdings' were evicted 'representing a rental of £3,420 4s 11d per annum'.<sup>126</sup> The evicted lands were farmed by the Land Corporation without any profit in the first year. Carter points out that in June 1882, Arthur MacMurrough Kavanagh, a landlord and magistrate from Borris, County Carlow, first proposed the formation of the Land Corporation, whose main objective at that time was the cultivation of boycotted farms from which tenants had been evicted. Carter also confirms that the landlords in Queen's County were 'early and generous supporters' and the *Leinster Express* of 24 June 1882 reported that landlords from Queen's County invested more than £9,000 in corporation shares.<sup>127</sup> The Land Corporation's objectives changed somewhat from 1886 onwards, when their energies were also targeted against combinations of tenants on plan of campaign estates. In 1887 Trench reported that 'about as many more non-evicted campaigners remain to be dealt with and we are proceeding to evict them also'.<sup>128</sup>

#### 1.6 JOHN TOWNSEND TRENCH

In 1886, Lansdowne was residing as Governor General in Canada and all dealings with the tenants were conducted through his agent, John Townsend Trench. John Townsend Trench, son of William Stewart Trench (1808-72) had 1,447 acres of land in counties Meath, Queen's and Tipperary. His Queen's County holding consisted of 460 acres at Cardtown, Mountrath<sup>129</sup> (Table 4).

Table 4: Estate of Rev. W. R. Trench 1878

Name, Titles and Addresses	County	Acreage	Valuation
			£
TRENCH, Rev. W. R.	Meath	170	257
	Queen's	460	339
	Tipperary	817	487
		1,447	1,083
Source: de Burgh, <i>The landowners of Ireland</i> , p. 451.			

In 1862 the agency of the Luggacurren estate had been entrusted to William Steuart Trench, 'a gentlemen esteemed by men of every class and creed throughout the length and breadth of Ireland, for the honourable and humane conduct which has characterised

<sup>126</sup> Queen's County account, 1887.

<sup>127</sup> Carter, p. 291.

<sup>128</sup> Queen's County account, 1887.

<sup>129</sup> de Burgh, p. 451.

his career as agent over some of the most extensive estates in the country'.<sup>130</sup> William Steuart Trench was born at Bellegrave, near Portarlington, County Laois and was a younger son of Thomas Trench, Church of Ireland dean of Kildare.<sup>131</sup> His uncle, Frederic Trench of Moate, County Galway, was created first Baron Ashtown. In 1803 another branch of the family became earls of Clancarty.<sup>132</sup> In addition to their titles of nobility, they had strong connections with the Established Church. Charles A. Read explains that a member of the family, Richard Chenevix Trench was archbishop of Dublin from 1864 to 1884. He took a prominent part in the agitation caused by the proposal to disestablish the Irish Church and was afterwards engaged in some of the animated controversies that were involved in the reconstruction of that Church.<sup>133</sup> From 1843 to 1845 William Steuart Trench was agent of the Shirley estate in Monaghan.<sup>134</sup> About four years later he took over the agency of the Lansdowne estate in Kerry.<sup>135</sup> In 1851 he took over the management of the estates of the Marquess of Bath, also in Monaghan and in 1857 the estate of Lord Digby in County Offaly. These appointments he retained until his death in 1872.<sup>136</sup>

William Steuart Trench's second son, John Townsend Trench (1834-1909) became assistant agent in Kerry at the age of nineteen and in 1862 he replaced his father as chairman of Kenmare Board of Guardians.<sup>137</sup> On William Steuart's death in 1872, John Townsend Trench took over as agent of the Lansdowne estates of Kerry and Queen's County. The under agent William Rochford remained in place after the transition. But Rochford was far more than under-agent to Trench. He was one of Lansdowne chief advisors and confidants, especially in relation to the difficulties which arose following the adoption of the plan of campaign on the Luggacurren estate in late 1886. Lansdowne depended almost exclusively on Rochford's advice when he was Governor General of Canada (1883-8) and later Viceroy of India (1888-94). In November 1885 Lansdowne stated that he had 'been almost expecting a letter from you as you are usually kind enough to give me a word of advice when difficulties are in sight' and 'a tiny word of

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<sup>130</sup> *Builder*, 1 Oct. 1868, p. 236.

<sup>131</sup> Lyne, xlv; see also *Dictionary of National Biography* under 'William Steuart Trench'; also *Burke's peerage*.

<sup>132</sup> Lyne, xlv;

<sup>133</sup> Read, Charles A, *Cabinet of Irish literature*, p. ?

<sup>134</sup> Lyne, xlvii; Trench, William Steuart, *Realities of Irish life*, (London, 1868), pp 63-96, hereafter cited as Trench.

<sup>135</sup> Lyne, xlvii.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, xlvi-xlvii.

confidential information is often worth a great deal to me under such times as the present'.<sup>138</sup> John Townsend Trench was a colourful character in many respects. Lord Newton best describes him while on a visit to the Luggacurren estate in 1887. Newton was a young MP who had never been in Ireland before and was naturally fair game for Trench, whom Newton describes as 'a volatile gentleman who seemed to have stepped straight out of Charles Lever's novels'. Trench 'flourished revolvers' and drove him at break-neck pace over 'shocking roads' and predicted that they should be shot at whenever they approached a corner.<sup>139</sup>

John Townsend Trench was also a successful missionary preacher for the Plymouth Brethren. Although named after the town with the most substantial congregation, the brethren had its origins in Dublin in the 1820s.<sup>140</sup> Its main features were its rigid non-denominationalism, the absence of any form of ordination, the simple sharing of bread and wine, preaching by lay ministers and the informal study of the bible. The Brethren recruited mostly from the social elite of Anglo-Irish landowners, lawyers, academics, with some members from humbler levels of society.<sup>141</sup> The movement received a great boost by the Ulster religious revival of 1859, a principal feature of which was the alleged occurrence of 'unusual physical and psychological phenomena such as visions, trances, swoons, stigmata, and prophecies, especially among women and children'.<sup>142</sup>

Joining the brethren for John Townsend Trench, was probably in protest against the controversial erection of a new Protestant church in Kenmare. A later quarrel with the Protestant parson was never settled.<sup>143</sup> William Steuart Trench was instrumental in erecting this church in 1858, the third Marquess of Lansdowne providing the site and a grant of £450.<sup>144</sup> In response to charges of allocating far too many pews to the Lansdowne and Trench families and friends, leaving very little room for the rest of the congregation, Steuart Trench maintained that only the two front pews, of seven places each, one for Lord Lansdowne and the other for himself as agent, were allocated by

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<sup>138</sup> Lansdowne to Rochford, 9 Nov. 1885, Derreen papers.

<sup>139</sup> *Newton*, p. 46.

<sup>140</sup> Connolly, *Oxford companion*, p. 447.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 485.

<sup>143</sup> Marquess of Lansdowne, *Glanerought and the Petty-Fitzmaurices*, (London, 1937), p. 137.

<sup>144</sup> Lyne, p. 678, quoting from *Tralee Chronicle*, 24 May 1858, hereafter cited as *T.C.*; *Glanerought and the Petty-Fitzmaurices*, p. 135; Kerry annual report, 1861.

him, with a third front pew allocated to his cousin Lord Ashtown.<sup>145</sup> While regretting that there should be ‘any distinction of rank in the house of God’, he believed that ‘such distinctions are universal and inevitable’.<sup>146</sup> William Bowen of Cleady, venting his anger in the *Tralee Chronicle*, claimed that ‘he and 120 others were crushed into ten back pews designed to accommodate seventy persons’.<sup>147</sup> Townsend Trench had donated the stained glass windows ‘from his own pocket’,<sup>148</sup> but two years later and possibly as a result of the above controversy, he joined the Plymouth Brethren. According to Lyne, the Plymouth Brethren first preached in Templenoe in October 1860,<sup>149</sup> but made little progress in the Kenmare area until Richard Mahony, a landlord living in Dromore castle joined, with Townsend Trench later becoming a believer.<sup>150</sup> Another Protestant landowner, Francis C. Bland, of Dromquinna castle was also an active member of the Brethren.<sup>151</sup> Townsend Trench’s conversion may have come about as a result of ‘an extraordinary meteorite seen over Kenmare’ on 27 February 1861.<sup>152</sup>

In a newspaper article of May 1887, headed ‘Lord Lansdowne’s agent as a preacher’, John Townsend Trench is reported as opening a ‘special mission’ in the Christian Union Buildings, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin.<sup>153</sup> Beginning ‘in a loud voice’, he proceeded with ‘remarkable volubility and rapidity’ and the ‘nasal intonation of Brother Jonathan’, as well as the continual use of the words ‘well sirs’. The methods he proposed to adopt to insure a successful mission, were ‘the three old methods of praying, preaching and singing, all of which were great powers’. During this sermon Trench admitted that he didn’t shirk from practical difficulties, but preferred to ‘face them as straight as a die’. On the conversion of sinners he had the following to say:

It awakened a peal of joy in heaven when the angels, who were hovering round their meetings went up and announced the conversion of a sinner, for he believed the angels were with them, but how astonished the angels must be, when they were told that there some who preferred the path of evil to the path of god.<sup>154</sup>

Consequently the *Weekly Freeman* of 21 May 1887 issued a satirical caricature of

<sup>145</sup> Lyne, p. 678.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., quoting from Steuart Trench to *Kerry Evening Post*, 2 Oct. 1858, printed in *T.C.*, 12 Oct. 1858.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., p. 679, quoting from William Bowen of Cleady Cottage to *T.C.*, 26 Oct. 1858.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., p. 681, quoting from supplement to Kerry annual report, 1861.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., p. 681.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., p. 681, quoting from ‘A believer’ to *T.C.*, 12 Apr. 1861.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., p. 681.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., quoting from ‘An observer to *T. C.*, 5 Mar. 1861.

<sup>153</sup> Unreferenced newspaper article headed ‘Lord Lansdowne’s agent as a preacher’ among Lansdowne’s papers at Derreen House, Lauragh, Co. Kerry (most likely date, mid-May 1887).

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

Trench in the agent's role of evicting a woman and child from the Lansdowne Luggacurren estate, alongside his simultaneous religious role of evangelisation at a meeting in Dublin, as a preacher for the Plymouth Brethren. The caricature is headed: 'Preaching and practising: Lord Lansdowne's agent makes a holy show of himself'.<sup>155</sup> Satirical verses complemented this free special supplement with sentiments such as the following:

So if you observe inconsistency, say, stay, brethren, warily!  
Between Luggacurren and Dublin today, stay, brethren, warily!  
Let this explanation all anger allay: man's piety must not his 'business' betray;  
Wealth must be acquired in a different way, yea, brethren, verily!

So while elsewhere evicting, sans mercy or ruth, hey, brethren, merrily!  
I in Dublin shine forth an expounder of Truth, yea, brethren, verily!  
And though some doubt my fitness for 'spreading the light'  
And e'en hint that my views are not orthodox quite,  
If the other work suits then I think all is right, yea, brethren, verily!<sup>156</sup>

In a libel action the following year, taken by William O'Brien against the *Cork Constitution*, John Atkinson, counsel for the defendant, read from an article published in *United Ireland*, in which Townsend Trench was referred to as 'a merciless tyrant, a blasphemous hypocrite and a grim humorist'.<sup>157</sup> Although O'Brien claimed that he did not write the article, the description he felt, probably referred to Trench 'addressing religious meetings in Dublin at the same time that he was depopulating five square miles in the Queen's County'.<sup>158</sup>

Trench was interested in painting<sup>159</sup> and was responsible for the illustrations in his father's book, *Realities of Irish Life* printed in London in 1868. He normally resided at Lansdowne Lodge in Kenmare,<sup>160</sup> where he was a J.P. and a highly respected member of the local community. When Lord Zetland (Lord Lieutenant) visited Kenmare in May 1891 he was addressed by Archdeacon O'Sullivan P.P. and Townsend Trench on behalf of the inhabitants.<sup>161</sup> Trench also had an avid interest in shooting and cycling. On many occasions he took part in bicycle races and was very competitive. He won the great bicycle race of Kenmare in June 1893, which consisted of 'eleven miles - over a very

<sup>155</sup> *Weekly Freeman*, 21 May 1887, hereafter cited as *W.F.*

<sup>156</sup> *W. F.*, 21 May 1887; See appendix 3, 'Preaching and practicing' for full text.

<sup>157</sup> *Irish Times*, 28 July 1888, hereafter cited as *I.T.*

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>159</sup> Ramsbottom, p. 3.

<sup>160</sup> Kenmare Literary and Historical Society, *A bridge to the past*, p. 12.

<sup>161</sup> *K.S.*, 13 May 1891.

hilly road'.<sup>162</sup> In September of the same year he took part in a ten and a half mile race of the Kenmare Cycle Club of which he was captain, when the race resulted 'contrary to anticipation, when Mr J. Townsend Trench, of fifty-nine summers, first crossed the line of victory and was loudly cheered'.<sup>163</sup>

Trench pursued his task as agent vigorously. He would come to his rent-office at Lansdowne Lodge in Luggacurren armed to the teeth. Under Trench's agency the estate had been transformed (Appendix 3). Groves were planted and the whole village practically rebuilt with gates, piers and forge supplied. Drainage and reclamation of land was also accomplished. Between 1862 and 1887 Lansdowne had laid out £20,000 on improvements. In fifteen years one tenant only was evicted for non-payment of rent.<sup>164</sup>

Hoppen in *Elections, politics and society 1832-1885*, quoting from the sixth Marquess's *Glanerought and the Petty-Fitzmaurices*, gives an excellent summary of the isiosyncratic oddity that was Townsend Trench who combined the following feats:

[A] sketcher of landscapes, Plymouth Brother, ardent bicyclist, inventor of the TTT (Trench's Tubeless Tyre), expert sculler, amateur anatomist and sketeton owner, and exponent of the art of shooting chine plates with a revolver while peddling at speed down desmesne avenues.<sup>165</sup>

## 1.7 THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN

In October 1886, Lansdowne reduced the judicial rents in Kerry by twenty per cent and offered reductions ranging from twenty-five to thirty-five per cent to his non-judicial tenants.<sup>166</sup> The Luggacurren Queen's County tenants, who demanded similar abatements were refused because Lansdowne considered that the conditions on these two estates were 'fundamentally different' and that the tenant farmers in Luggacurren 'were less affected by the fall in prices'.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 27 Nov. 1893.

<sup>164</sup> W. J. Prendergast, 'The Luggacurren evictions and other local history' (private Ms formerly in the possession of the late Fr W. J. Prendergast at Parochial House, Millbrook, Killeigh, County Offaly).

<sup>165</sup> Hoppen, K. T., *Elections, politics and society 1832-1885* (Oxford, 1994), p. 143.

<sup>166</sup> Geary, p. 48.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

Geary points out that Lansdowne's position in relation to the plan of campaign was exceptional, in that he has no choice but to continue the struggle with his tenants on the Luggacurren estate.<sup>168</sup> Lansdowne, he explains was 'the financially-pressed Governor-General of Canada in 1887 and as 'an office-holder under the Crown', he was therefore obliged to publicly associate himself with the government's Irish policy.<sup>169</sup> As Governor-General, under a Tory government, representing the Queen to all the citizens of the Dominion, Lansdowne couldn't give in to the demands of the judicial tenants, who were represented by an illegal organisation, which his party 'had denounced on moral grounds'.<sup>170</sup> Geary further maintains that there was far more to the plan of campaign than the reduction of rents. Most of the landlords 'appeared to be carefully chosen and a landlord's known financial vulnerability was the overriding criterion'.<sup>171</sup>

Meanwhile the plan of campaign was officially launched at national level in October 1886<sup>172</sup> and the Luggacurren tenants, who were desperate not only for a solution which could be justified by themselves but also in conjunction with the Irish National League, adopted it on 17 November of that year.<sup>173</sup>

*United Ireland* in late April 1887 published a personal attack on Lansdowne, which was duly copied by newspapers all over Ireland, America and the Dominion of Canada. O'Brien accused Lansdowne of committing a 'black deed of treachery' by evicting the Luggacurren tenants, whereby his meanness, treachery and malignancy were 'as black as hell'.<sup>174</sup> O'Brien further surmised that Lansdowne was in awe of Canadian opinion and realising that Canadian opinion would not think less of him, he tore 'into shreds' the agreement he had made with his tenants.<sup>175</sup> According to the *Toronto Mail* and most of the leading newspapers of the dominion, the motivation for the nationalist personal onslaught on Lansdowne as Governor General of Canada was principally political in nature and it was therefore disingenuous to pretend otherwise.<sup>176</sup> The *Ottawa Daily Journal* suggested that 'some political end' was doubtless behind the visit of O'Brien,

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<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48-9.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48-9.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 141.

<sup>172</sup> See Appendix 1: A plan of campaign – A memo for the country.

<sup>173</sup> *Kildare Observer*, 20 Nov. 1886, hereafter cited as *K.O.*

<sup>174</sup> *Toronto Globe*, 29 Apr. 1887, hereafter cited as *T.G.*, quoting from *United Ireland*, hereafter cited as *U.I.*

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>176</sup> *Toronto Mail*, 30 Apr. 1887, hereafter cited as *T.M.*



but a landlord also had some rights, 'even if he be a Peer and owns estates in Ireland'.<sup>177</sup> Apart from the fact that no settlement could be arrived at on the Luggacurren estate, because 'no one dared to settle' on any terms except those laid down by the campaigners and the league, it suited the nationalists to 'go' for a nobleman in a high position, who had 'thrown in his lot with the Liberal Unionists'.<sup>178</sup>

The Governor-General took the side of law and order and the maintenance of the Union against the disruptionists, and hence all this row about the plan of campaign on his Queen's County estate.<sup>179</sup>

The plan of campaign which was formally announced in *United Ireland* on 23 October 1886, set forth a course of action supporting the tenants in their struggle against the landlords, such as representation and the giving of advice, providing financial payments where necessary, building new homes or huts for evicted families and generally giving the tenants assistance in breaking the landlord's will in reducing the rents to the requirements of the tenants.<sup>180</sup> Although the plan of campaign was 'rooted in economic circumstances', according to Geary, the agitation involved a lot more.<sup>181</sup> Even though the promoters of the plan stressed that it was a 'temporary expedient' to be used solely against 'harsh or exacting landlords' there was no attempt to define these landlords. The decision to adopt the plan was to be determined by the tenants themselves on the various estates. However as Geary argues, there was an 'implicit political role' and it soon became apparent under the leadership of Dillon and O'Brien that its ultimate purpose was the extermination of landlordism.<sup>182</sup> Geary further explains that:

It was not alone an attack on the institution of landlordism but, in the wake of the rejection of the Home Rule Bill, it was for many an attack on the landlord class as part of the English garrison in Ireland, underlining once again the close relationship between land and nationalism.<sup>183</sup>

Once the plan had been made public, John Dillon and William O'Brien, who soon emerged as the most active national leaders, 'fanned out' along with several other Parnellite MPs over the south and west of the country in order to explain the plan of

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<sup>177</sup> *Ottawa Daily Journal*, 28 Mar. 1887, hereafter cited as *O.D.J.*

<sup>178</sup> *T.M.*, 30 Apr. 1887.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>180</sup> J. S. Donnelly Jr., *The land and the people of nineteenth-century Cork*, (London, 1975), p. 334, hereafter cited as *Donnelly*.

<sup>181</sup> Geary, p. 26.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*

campaign to the tenants and to assist them in carrying it into operation.<sup>184</sup> The Luggacurren estate became the focus of attention nationwide. But the distinction of being the first estate in Ireland in which the plan of campaign was adopted may well belong to C.W.T. Ponsonby's property, located between Killeagh and Youghal in Cork.<sup>185</sup> In practice what the adoption of the plan of campaign meant for the tenants was the non-paying of rents for periods ranging from one year to three years; paying the rent less the desired reductions into a local campaign fund and when eventually evicted, being supported in turn from these local funds and also from the funds of the Irish National League. However, the government sought to make the actions of the recalcitrant tenants illegal and accordingly the national league was proclaimed 'a dangerous association' in August 1887. (Appendix 5)

On 21 October 1886, Lansdowne wrote to Trench in connection with abatements of rent on his Kerry estate. Five days later, this letter was printed in full in the *Irish Times*.<sup>186</sup> In this letter Lansdowne stated that he was aware that his decision to grant an abatement of twenty per cent to the judicial tenants in Kerry was criticised for being 'too generous'. He was of the opinion that rents once brought into court and adjudicated by the state, were from then on 'practically inviolate', unless altered at a later stage by the state itself. Lansdowne made it clear that contracts when made should not be interfered with by either party to that agreement. The 1881 Land Act he explained, deprived the landlords of 'many of the most valuable attributes of ownership' and also 'forwarded the issue of the punctual payment of these judicial rents in the future'.<sup>187</sup> Nothing however was guaranteed in relation to these judicial rents, so the landlords he argued were the overall losers as a result of the implementation of the 1881 act. One small advantage of the act however he pointed out, was that when obligations were unfulfilled on the part of the tenants, the landlord should be free to exercise discretion in determining 'whether any given tenancy should or should not be perpetuated'. In many cases the amalgamation of vacant uneconomic holdings would be 'clearly advantageous to the whole community' and in the case of congested districts this was the 'only solution that I have seen suggested for meeting a chronic difficulty'.<sup>188</sup> Even allowing for the decrease in agricultural prices, Lansdowne didn't believe that judicial rents

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<sup>184</sup> *Donnelly*, p. 334.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>186</sup> *I.T.*, 26 Oct. 1886, hereafter cited as *I.T.*

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*

'forced' on his Luggacurren estate were excessive and so, he felt his tenants had no difficulty in paying these rents. However, on the Kerry estate the situation for the judicial tenants was exceptionally bad and on investigation, warranted an abatement. This did not apply to the same extent in Luggacurren, as the economic situation of the tenants there was completely different. The tenants on the Kerry estate had to contend with exceptionally low prices and their class of stock didn't find favour in the markets. Also he pointed to the failure of the Munster Bank and the cessation of credit facilities by the local merchants, which added to all the other difficulties for the judicial tenants.<sup>189</sup>

The lead up to the adoption of the plan of campaign in Luggacurren is well documented in the detailed correspondence between Lansdowne and Rochford from as early as 1884. According to Lansdowne, trouble had been simmering since the reductions awarded to the tenants who entered the land court in December 1883 (Table 3).

Lansdowne was of the opinion that 'the Queen's County reductions were rather startling' so he 'authorised Trench to appeal in some cases'. His rationale was that 'the lands were probably coming at their worst and I understand that only one sub-commissioner visited them'.<sup>190</sup> He also thought agrarian issues could be taken completely out of the political equation by not 'excluding Ireland from the new franchise bill'. If Ireland were included, the labourers would be enfranchised and 'Parnell will have to chose between them and the farmers and the disappointed party will in all likelihood turn against him. A well-contrived re-distribution measure should give an accession of strength to the loyal section of the community'.<sup>191</sup> The Representation of the People Bill was enacted on 6 December 1884, whereby the Irish electorate increased from 126,000 to 738,000.<sup>192</sup> Little over a year later the judicial rents situation hadn't improved for the landlords as William Rochford, of Cahir House, Cahir, County Tipperary, his advisor in these matters reported, that on the adjoining estate of Cosby of Stradbally, the rents 'have been reduced thirty-three per cent by the Land Court'.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Lansdowne to Rochford, 18 Feb. 1884, Derreen papers.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> O'Day, xliii.

<sup>193</sup> Rochford to Lansdowne, 29 Mar. 1885, Derreen papers.

In May 1885 KilBride again applied for a reduction in his rents. He had lost sheep from disease and also felt that 'his farm is dear'.<sup>194</sup> Lansdowne was reluctant to give an abatement principally because 'a rent once reduced can never be raised again'. Another reason for resisting a reduction of rent was that in the future if 'an effectual land purchase bill pass into law', he would like to sell to the tenants.

In this event the fact of the rent being a good stiff one would afford an additional temptation to the tenants to buy, if the purchase could be arranged on terms, which would include a diminution in the sum annually paid by the purchaser.<sup>195</sup>

Trench advised that KilBride's lands be re-valued, but Rochford thought otherwise and advised Lansdowne accordingly. Rochford from his own experience in these matters advised not to set a precedent by having KilBride's lands valued as 'if he values high, such valuation has little or no effect in strengthening the landlord's hands in refusing an abatement, whereas if the valuation is low, the landlord is practically bound by it'.<sup>196</sup> The risks inherent in such a process could be easily adjudicated by reference to the dates and circumstances of the letting of the lands in question.<sup>197</sup>

Two separate leases, 'one of 1847 and the other of 1876' held by KilBride have been discussed earlier. Drainage improvements, Rochford pointed out were carried out by KilBride 'himself [you providing the money], so he cannot allege that the expenditure has been wasteful or injudicious'.<sup>198</sup> Rochford conceded that 'just at present I believe KilBride and many others have considerable difficulty in making the rent', but this situation was likely to improve the following spring. He further conceded that 'the greater part of KilBride's hill land no doubt deteriorate very considerably owing to the wet seasons of 1877 to 1879'.<sup>199</sup> He therefore advised that if an abatement was given in this case, it should be in the nature of a temporary abatement for about two years as 'this might be the means of preventing his leading another anti-rent strike, of which there is some danger'. He also pointed out that if permanent reductions were given 'outside the court', the leaseholders, when eventually 'brought within the scope of the

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<sup>194</sup> Lansdowne to Rochford, 10 June 1885, Derreen papers.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> Rochford to Lansdowne, 31 May 1885, Derreen papers.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., 26 June 1885, Derreen papers.

land act' would most likely receive a further reduction in the land courts.<sup>200</sup> Despite all this advise, Lansdowne was 'exercised in my mind about KilBride' but yet felt that he was 'certainly not entitled to lenient treatment'.<sup>201</sup> In July 1885 the Munster Bank failed and Rochford felt it would 'likely tell against the payment of rent during the autumn and winter'.<sup>202</sup> Many farmers were in debt to the bank and it would be 'interesting to watch how far recourse will be had to compulsion sales of the tenants' interest, in order to realise the debt due to the bank and what countermove the Land League will make'.<sup>203</sup> Lansdowne although realising that 'the leaseholders who are precluded from going into court have to some extent a plausible case' instructed Trench 'on no account to give abatements to judicial rent holders'.<sup>204</sup> This may appear on the surface heartless but Lansdowne had acceded to the demands of the tenants during the earlier phase of the land war and 'we all know how this ended in 1881 to 1882'.<sup>205</sup> Therefore there should be 'no exhibition of irresolution on our part, or parleying with miscreants'.<sup>206</sup> Rochford agreed that 'we are suffering for the unconditional surrender of twenty-five and thirty per cent abatement given to these tenants during the rent strike of 1879 to 1880'.<sup>207</sup>

Although Trench was given strict instructions, the Luggacurren tenants succeeded in persuading him not to press for immediate compliance, but have the question again referred to Lansdowne for a further 'increase in the abatement offered'. Rochford believed the majority of the tenants could have paid and put the blame squarely on the shoulders of Trench who should have 'adopted a firmer attitude and accepted your instructions as final'.<sup>208</sup> He further believed that Trench was 'a weak man' and an 'opportunist' when confronted by determined opponents and 'would concede almost anything to tide over a present difficulty'.<sup>209</sup> According to Rochford's investigations, the 'tenants were by no means unanimous in deciding to refuse the terms offered', but the larger tenants such as John William Dunne, 'who was only offered ten per cent' were the most determined opponents to paying the rents requested.<sup>210</sup> In reiterating his case for firmness and resoluteness, he stated that 'the tenants on various estates are vying

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<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Lansdowne to Rochford, 10 June 1885, Derreen papers.

<sup>202</sup> Rochford to Lansdowne, 19 July 1885, Derreen papers.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid., 19 July 1885, Derreen papers.

<sup>204</sup> Lansdowne to Rochford, 9 Nov. 1885, Derreen papers.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> Rochford to Lansdowne, 18 Nov. 1885, Derreen papers.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> Rochford to Lansdowne, 21 Nov. 1885, Derreen papers.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid, 18 Nov. 1885, Derreen papers.

with each other as to who can “knock” the largest abatement out of their landlords!’<sup>211</sup>  
He also ascertained that John Dunne and KilBride were ‘very hard up’.<sup>212</sup>

John William Dunne, he claimed, ‘plays high and drinks more than he might’ and ‘looks dilapidated’. KilBride’s land on the other hand was ‘most inadequately stocked’ and as a rule no improvements were being made by the tenants and further ‘KilBride has never completed the outlets of drainage that cost £1000’.<sup>213</sup> Lansdowne thought it wiser for the time being to ignore the fact that ‘Dunne and KilBride are neglecting their farms’ and he wasn’t sure ‘that it would not be best to bring the leaseholds into court before the land has been ruined by neglect and misuse.’<sup>214</sup> The leaseholders couldn’t be brought into court in the future ‘unless the landlords are compensated for the injury, which may result to them’.<sup>215</sup>

The act of 1881 proceeded upon the assumptions that such contracts were to be respected, except where the tenant had been coerced into becoming a party to them and I should object to surrendering this point except as part of a larger ‘give and take’ adjustment of the whole question. I doubt whether it would be possible or desirable to make rents fluctuate with the rise and fall of prices.<sup>216</sup>

By the middle of December 1885 there was a ‘decided improvement in the price and demand for store cattle’ and the tenants were ‘paying up very fairly.. as soon as they realised that the crunch of concession had been reached’<sup>217</sup> However, Rochford felt that it was ‘difficult to forecast rent prospects for the spring but doubtless money is scarce’.<sup>218</sup> Philosophically Lansdowne felt that ‘the two classes interested in the land will in time find a *modus vivendi*’ and ‘the new order of things would be healthier and better for everyone concerned’.<sup>219</sup> His forecast for the immediate future was penned to Rochford as follows:

I agree with you that the law against boycotting etc. must be strengthened. Some legislation of this kind will probably be as usual forced upon parliament, when it is too late. The prospect is very alarming. It looks as if Gladstone’s schemes, which seems to me a miracle of clumsiness and crudity would be shipwrecked in the House of Commons. If it is not the House of Lords must throw it out. There

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<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid., 21 Nov. 1885, Derreen papers.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

<sup>214</sup> Lansdowne to Rochford, 7 Dec. 1885, Derreen papers.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., 13 Apr. 1886, Derreen papers.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> Rochford to Lansdowne, 17 Dec. 1885, Derreen papers.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Lansdowne to Rochford, 13 Apr. 1886, Derreen papers.

will probably be a general strike against rent and a fresh outburst of crime and followed by most likely by ill-considered legislation of all sorts.<sup>220</sup>

As anticipated earlier by Rochford, the plan of campaign was adopted on the Luggacurren estate, the main reason being 'the concession to the Kerry tenants not being extended to the Queen's County tenants made the latter crop'.<sup>221</sup> This could have been avoided he felt, and the 'tenants would have paid in considerable numbers but for the fact that John Dunne and KilBride were hard up and undoubtedly used their influence to keep the other tenants back'. His inclination that the opposition to paying 'will not be very prolonged or bitter' was not so well founded.<sup>222</sup> Lansdowne's tenants in King's County estate 'paid fairly well', but 'were very nearly going on strike for the same terms as you offered your Kerry tenants'.<sup>223</sup> Rochford threatened them with proceedings and they caved in. He didn't expect that the Queen's County tenants could hold out much longer if legal proceedings were pressed with vigour by Lansdowne's solicitor Thomas C. Franks.<sup>224</sup> At that stage Lansdowne had indeed 'written to Franks begging him not to lose any time in proceeding against the Queen's County tenants'.<sup>225</sup> He was quite prepared to accept that the concessions made in Kerry increased his difficulties elsewhere, but these concessions at least enlisted 'a certain amount of sympathy' for the landlords in general, 'which it would not otherwise have commanded'.

We have to fight our battle not only on the spot against recalcitrant tenants but in the face of public opinion, in parliament, in the press and in official aids.<sup>226</sup>

There are numerous hints in the correspondence between Lansdowne and Rochford with regard to the pecuniary difficulties experienced by the alleged ringleaders of the plan of campaign in Luggacurren, John William Dunne and Denis KilBride. One such was a letter received by Rochford's father from a 'writer' with 'exceptionally good opportunity of knowing nationalist opinion'.<sup>227</sup> The letter was sent post-haste to Lansdowne in Canada. The writer argues that the League was not very interested in the cause of the Luggacurren tenants and 'if matters are pushed to extremes, they would not reap much benefit from it, having regard to the social position and circumstances of the

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<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> Rochford to Lansdowne, 22 Nov. 1886.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid., 28 Nov. 1886, Derreen papers.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

<sup>225</sup> Lansdowne to Rochford, 13 Dec. 1886, Derreen papers.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>227</sup> Rochford to Lansdowne, 24 Feb., 1887, Derreen papers.

tenants'.<sup>228</sup> More importantly he was of the opinion 'that the cardinal and vital principal of the Irish party is to demonstrate that they [the government] cannot govern Ireland'. The writer also had personal knowledge of the Luggacurren case and maintained that the plan of campaign was adopted 'on the suggestion of Dunne and KilBride who have ruined themselves by betting and drinking, induced the other tenants to join them in a strike against Lord Lansdowne in the hope of retrieving themselves'.<sup>229</sup> Lansdowne, through his solicitor Franks, brought a bankruptcy case against John William Dunne, but Franks 'ought to have seen to his proofs before going into court' because the case broke down on the very elementary point of failing to show that the original lessee (Lyons) had legally assigned his interest to Dunne.<sup>230</sup>

When the decision was taken to adopt the plan of campaign, KilBride's rent was £760 per annum, which he protested 'was eighty per cent over the government valuation'.<sup>231</sup> He recognised the fact that Lansdowne had spend a lot of money on the estate, but he maintained it didn't take from the fact that despite doing his best to pay his way in 1884 and 1885, he 'was at a loss of £500 and that was a very strong conservative'.<sup>232</sup> Yet in his speech to the Irish National League in Dublin in April 1887, KilBride claimed that the Luggacurren evictions differed from most of the other evictions to the extent that they were able to pay the rent. He claimed they owed no arrears, except perhaps, two small tenants and in actual fact they only owed half a year's rent.

It was a fight of intelligence, backed up by the leaders of their race - a fight of intelligence against intelligence on the other side. It was diamond cut diamond, and Mr Trench might think he might put them down.<sup>233</sup>

It is interesting to note here that previous to the land agitation following 1886 on the Luggacurren estate, KilBride was considered a gentleman farmer and took an active part in the outdoor pursuits of the minor gentry of the district, particularly the sport of hunting. Carter points out that some of the more substantial tenant-farmers and merchants, who became prominent land-leaguers in Queen's County were members of

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<sup>228</sup> 'Writer' to William Rochford's father, 23 Feb. 1887, Derreen papers.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Rochford to Lansdowne, 24 Feb. 1887, Derreen papers.

<sup>231</sup> *L.E.*, 2 Apr. 1887.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid; *F.J.*, 30 Mar. 1887.



the Queen's County Hunt until the first phase of the land war commencing about 1879.<sup>234</sup> KilBride was a member of the Queen's County Hounds, despite the fact that the land leaguers were bitterly opposed to the hunting gentry and had succeeded in stopping the Queen's County Hunt for two seasons 1881-2.<sup>235</sup> As to the motivation for the sport of hunting foxes, the *Leinster Express* of 10 November 1883 was of the opinion that men 'hunt because it is the correct think to do - because it gave them something to talk about and put them on equal terms with their associates'.<sup>236</sup> In December 1883 a meeting of the Queen's County Hounds 'at the trysting place' of Ballynockan, included 'Mr R. H. Stubber, Mr Randal Smyth, the popular master, Mr J. Hawkesworth, Mr A. Marsh, Mr R. March, Mr E. Corcoran, Mr C. Corcoran, Mr A. Moore, Mr Loftus, T. Roe, Mr E. Barrington, Mr Denis KilBride, Mr G. Kelly &c' where the 'country people received the hounds with the greatest enthusiasm'.<sup>237</sup>

KilBride in his memoir<sup>238</sup> points out that he was not the original instigator of the adoption of the plan at Luggacurren. He maintained that Michael Dunne and Bryan Coffey, who represented the smaller tenants 'waited' on him and requested him to circularise the Luggacurren tenants to attend a meeting demanding from Lansdowne the same rent reductions as his Kerry tenants. The resolve to fight Lansdowne and adopt the plan of campaign, according to KilBride came from the smaller tenants themselves, despite efforts by him to dissuade them from the path they were planning, which was 'no kid-gloved affair' and one quite likely doomed to failure. Whether KilBride was, as he claims, directly involved in the initial tentative moves in the campaign is still a matter of conjecture. Certainly William O'Brien announced on many a public occasion that KilBride had acted nobly by complying with the wishes of his sub-tenants and labourers, thereby being the first to experience eviction, a sentiment KilBride never contradicted. On the other hand it is more than possible than he was feeling the pinch of the agricultural depression more than he pretended and despite refusing to give advice at the subsequent local meeting, he was the most enthusiastic proponent of the plan when it was eventually adopted.

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<sup>234</sup> Carter, p. 225.

<sup>235</sup> There is a fuller account of this issue in chapter 10 of Carter, 'Disrupting the hunt in Queen's County', pp 223-33.

<sup>236</sup> *L.E.*, 10 Nov. 1883.

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*, 29 Dec. 1883.

<sup>238</sup> MS 1, 'History of the plan of campaign', property of Raymond Lacey, Clopook Cross, Luggacurren, Stradbally, County Laois, undated but probably 1920, hereafter cited as MS 1.

Despite this, the formal request of the Luggacurren tenantry prior to the adoption of the plan of campaign was made by a representative group, in an undated letter (probably 8 November 1886) and directed to John Townsend Trench.<sup>239</sup> The group included Fr T. Kehoe P.P., J. W. Dunne, J. W. Dwen and Denis KilBride. Trench however, in his reply to Fr Kehoe, claimed that the last three signatures were in the same handwriting as his (Fr Kehoe's) own. The tenants felt that the same level of abatements in the rents would be granted to the Queen's County tenants as was earlier offered to the Kerry tenants.

We can say that it is not a question of unwillingness to pay rents, but it a question of inability in some cases, and in all cases, even should liberal reductions be made, such as was done by his lordship in Kerry, a sense of being severely pinched this winter.<sup>240</sup>

Trench replied that the situation of the Queen's County tenants were very different from the Kerry tenants and they were 'less affected by the depression in prices which admittedly has occurred in both places' and he couldn't interfere with Lansdowne's final instructions to refuse any abatement in the judicial rents.<sup>241</sup> At a meeting of Athy Union on 22 February 1887, Dr O'Neill, who had 'lately been a good deal in the district', remarked that the 'action of the people in Luggacurren is a ruinous one'.<sup>242</sup> He could 'well understand the plan of campaign being adopted where the people are trying to starve out a hungry landlord, but what chance have they against a landlord with an official salary of £20,000 a year'. He didn't understand how any person 'outside a lunatic asylum' could recommend such a course of action. He could recommend that a man 'commit suicide and this is in a certain sense financial suicide and the people will find it such if they continue to act as they are doing'.<sup>243</sup> At the next meeting of Athy Union, while admitting that Lord Lansdowne was a rich man, but 'not as rich a man as the Marquess of Clanricarde', KilBride retorted that Dr O'Neill was a 'cast-away politician' and should not have been allowed to air 'his spite against William O'Brien and John Dillon' at a formal meeting of the board.<sup>244</sup>

Subsequently the rents less the reductions demanded were paid by the tenants into the 'war chest' at Kavanagh's Hotel, Athy and were later collected by Sir Thomas G.

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<sup>239</sup> *I.T.*, 26 Oct. 1886.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>242</sup> *L.E.*, 26 Feb. 1887.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 Mar. 1887.

Esmonde MP on behalf of the Irish National League and lodged in Dublin. In March 1887 Lansdowne through his agent John Townsend Trench obtained decrees for one year's rent and costs against KilBride, John William Dunne and their sub-tenants and labourers. On 22 March 1887 KilBride was the first to be evicted.

### 1.8 THE EVICTION OF KILBRIDE, 'THE TALLEST OF THE POPPIES'

Denis KilBride, 'one of the largest tenants' on the Lansdowne Luggacurren estate, 'had been looked upon as the leader of the rest in the plan of campaign' and was also the first tenant to be evicted. For his two lease holdings, both 'making together 768 [should be 868] statute acres, rent £760, valuation £424', he was offered a reduction of twenty per cent in late 1886, which he refused.<sup>245</sup> When Trench initiated proceedings on behalf of Lansdowne to carry out evictions, 'the stock, hay, and manure had been removed from off the lands to the extent of three square miles'.<sup>246</sup> Trench stated that KilBride, 'the poor law guardian of the district, who was the champion of the plan of campaign in the district, and against whom proceedings were going on in the superior courts in Dublin, had removed all his stock and everything else off his lands'. He further claimed that the farmers were not allowed speak for themselves and if they did, 'they would be boycotted or more seriously injured'.<sup>247</sup> Further to this the *Leinster Express* warned that the management of the Lansdowne estate had made 'formidable and complete arrangement for their combat with the campaigners, and when their hands are strengthened by the promised legislation, they will do battle on equal terms with the forces of disorder'.<sup>248</sup>

A correspondent of the *Irish Times* interviewed Trench in relation to the details of the struggle in Luggacurren. When asked why it was that Kilbride's rent was so much over Griffith's valuation, he explained that comparing rents with Griffith's valuation was 'manifestly misleading' as the valuation was made a 'quarter of a century ago'. He further explained that Kilbride's gross rent was £780 per annum, on which he was offered a twenty per cent abatement, bringing his rent down to £608. The government valuation of his holding was £424, but since that valuation was made, Lansdowne had spent £3,000 improving KilBride's farm. Lansdowne paid £186 each year on this outlay

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<sup>245</sup> *The Times*, 23 Mar. 1887, hereafter cited as *T.T.*

<sup>246</sup> *L.E.*, 5 Mar. 1887.

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>248</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 Mar. 1887.

and Trench argued that if this sum were added to the valuation, it would amount to £610 per annum, which was precisely the amount asked of KilBride.<sup>249</sup>

At eleven o'clock on Tuesday morning 22 March 1887 a force of about 100 men was drawn up in front of the school-master's house in the village of Luggacurren, which had been converted into a temporary barracks.<sup>250</sup> A proclamation warning people against obstructing the sheriff during the course of the evictions was posted in the village two days earlier. KilBride's house was about half a mile from the village. The police led the way followed by about twenty emergency men 'carrying axes, crowbars, scaling ladders, corrugated zinc for protecting against attacking parties, and every imaginable implement necessary for carrying out the evictions'.<sup>251</sup> Hundreds of people attended and set up a prolonged howl. Deputations attended from 'all the National League branches in the county, and several came from a considerable distance beyond it to witness the beginning of the campaign'.<sup>252</sup> It is important to state here that KilBride was to be offered a reduction of twenty per cent on his two holdings, whereas John William Dunne, also a leaseholder was only offered reductions varying from ten per cent to fifteen per cent. Although published by the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union two years later, the list of evicted farms on the Luggacurren estate contained shows the abatments offered to the tenants. Judicial tenants were given no reduction whatsoever, while the non-judicial and leaseholding tenants were offered between ten and twenty per cent. (Table 5).

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<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*, 30 Apr. 1887.

<sup>250</sup> *T.T.*, 23 Mar. 1887.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>252</sup> *L.E.*, 26 Mar. 1887.

Table 5: Evicted Farms on Lansdowne Luggacurren Estate

LANSDOWNE ESTATE (QUEEN'S COUNTY)									
LIST OF EVICTED FARMS									
Tenant	Abatement Offered %	Area			Government Valuation		Late Rent		
		A	R	P	£	s	£	s	d
J. W. Dunne	15	159	2	20	73	5	84	3	7
Ditto	10	229	2	5	206	15	392	2	0
Ditto	15	668	3	27	519	0	699	16	0
Ditto	15	24	2	21			18	5	0
Ditto	15	225	0	21	144	0	172	13	5
Denis KilBride	20	192	2	0	129	5	238	18	6
Ditto	20	676	0	0	294	10	521	12	6
Mrs. McHugh	15	308	20	0	145	10	233	0	0
Mrs. Byrne	15	189	3	4	136	15	182	7	8
Jas. Mahon	0	186	2	18	132	0	180	0	0
Gerald Byrne	20	50	2	0	36	0	62	7	0
Will. Brennan	0	37	1	18	17	9	24	0	0
Ditto	0	14	1	19	4	10	5	0	0
Ed. Delany	0	80	2	8	33	5	44	10	0
Pat Kelly	0	80	0	23	31	0	47	0	0
Mick Kelly	0	22	2	6	12	15	15	5	0
Jas Moore	0	43	0	15	16	15	22	10	0
Tom Moore	0	46	1	13	16	0	20	10	0
A. Neill	0	47	0	0	20	0	27	10	0
John Dunne (Johnson)	0	40	3	10	17	15	22	10	0
Rept. Fr. Byrne	20	48	3	13	18	15	29	19	8
Margt. Troy	0	39	0	7	17	5	23	9	0
Ditto	0	18	3	26	8	15	12	10	0
Denis Dunne (sen.)	0	34	1	26			16	10	0
John Dunne	0	38	3	15	29	0	25	10	0
Denis Dunne (jun.)	0	41	0	0	18	5	19	0	0
Mick Moore	20	44	3	13	22	10	32	18	0
Tom Mackey	0	41	3	32	20	0	28	10	0
Mick Brennan	0	25	3	0	12	5	13	10	0
Ditto	0	27	0	7	16	10	15	13	8
Mick Dunne	0	7	1	4	5	0	7	0	0
Ditto	0	29	2	10	20	10	25	10	0
Ditto	0	25	1	18	12	10	15	0	0
Tom Knowles	20	23	1	13	11	0	16	10	0
Denis Moore	15	8	1	20	6	10	7	6	9
Ditto	15	9	3	0	6	0	6	10	2
Ditto	0	0	3	24	3	0	1	0	0
John Lyons	0	19	0	28	14	15	16	10	0
Bryan Coffey	0	18	0	16	12	15	15	10	0
Denis Shalloon	0	32	3	35	13	10	20	10	0
Mick Murphy	20	16	1	0					
Ditto	20	4	2	5	8	5	13	13	0
Mick Murphy (Kelly)	0	29	2	20	12	10	17	10	0
Ditto	0	14	3	23	8	5	11	0	0
Mick M. Hugh	15	31	2	30	24	0	35	4	0

Source: Russell, T. W., I.L.P.U. *An account of the Luggacurren and Glensharrold estates* (Dublin, 1889).

Twenty per cent was the maximum reduction offered to the non-judicial tenants by Trench as early as November 1886<sup>253</sup> and for the sake of another five per cent it had become the sticking point, neither side willing to budge an inch. The *Leinster Express* however, reported that KilBride and Dunne occupied 'splendid residences, beautifully situated' and 'an impartial observer may be a little puzzled to discover the motive that has induced them to relinquish the homes occupied by their families for so many years'.<sup>254</sup> KilBride was to be hauntingly reminded at various times during the plan of campaign of the 'remarkable contrast presented' in signing the congratulatory address to Lord Lansdowne in September 1868 and the 'strained relations of the present day'.<sup>255</sup>

KilBride's residence, Wood House, Luggacurren was at the end of a long avenue, which on the day in question was obstructed by trees deliberately felled across it. The evicting party had to take to the fields and cross a stream en route to the house. Father John Maher,<sup>256</sup> the curate of Luggacurren, who was present throughout, was busy keeping the people somewhat distant from the focus of activity as ordered by the police, but this did not impede them cheering and roaring defiantly at the evictors. At one stage the R.M. for the district, Mr Lynch ordered Father Maher to keep the people back or he would disperse them by force, 'and this warning had the desired effect'.<sup>257</sup> Wood House, a large two-storied dwelling 'containing several excellent rooms', was eventually reached by the police and the sheriff knocked on the door, but as expected there was no reply. Orders were duly given and the door was wrenched open with a crowbar, whereupon P. J. and Mary KilBride, brother and sister of Denis walked out.<sup>258</sup>

While the emergency men were taking out the furniture, William O'Brien MP arrived and was greeted with loud cheers by the people. Captain Slack, the Divisional Magistrate in charge of operations that day informed O'Brien about the proclamation in force, especially in relation to the making of inflammatory speeches but O'Brien stated

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<sup>253</sup> Ramsbottom, p. 19; *Nationalist and Leinster Times*, 20 Nov. 1886, hereafter cited as *Nationalist*.

<sup>254</sup> *L.E.*, 26 Mar. 1887.

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>256</sup> John Maher was born in Ballyloughan, Bagenalstown, county Carlow. He was educated CW 1873-4 and ordained in 1880 for the diocese of Kildare and Leighlin. He was curate in Stradbally, Hacketstown, Clonmore, Luggacurren and Monasterevan. He was Parish Priest in Clonaslee 1903-11 and died Jan. 1916, McEvoy, John, *Carlow college 1793-1993*, (Carlow, 1993), p. 183.

<sup>257</sup> *L.E.*, 26 Mar. 1887.

<sup>258</sup> *T.T.*, 23 Mar. 1887. The *L.E.* reported that Dr KilBride (another brother of Denis) and Mary KilBride walked out of the house.

that he had a right to free speech, guaranteeing at the same time that there would be no violence from the people, unless provoked by the police.<sup>259</sup>

Meanwhile it was discovered that an upstairs room was locked and occupied by Denis KilBride and three men<sup>260</sup>, who had ample provisions in place to last a long siege. A bar across the door was broken away, but no entry could be obtained as there was a solid barricade in place, consisting of iron gates chained together and supported on the inside by solid beams of wood and 'a cart deprived of its wheels'. After failing here it was decided to gain an entry through the roof and so an emergency man scaled a ladder and made an opening through the slates. Denis KilBride and three companions were discovered 'composedly smoking their pipes'.<sup>261</sup> The timbers forming the barricade were then thrown out of the window, accompanied by the roars and cheers of the crowd. Finally Denis KilBride walked out of the house and was greeted with loud cheers and many congratulations on the stand he had taken. This completed the eviction of KilBride and some police and emergency men were left in charge of the house. Another force of about 100 police formed on the roadside in case of disturbances but their services were not required, as everything was peaceful. The emergency men proceeded to clear the avenue of trees and the evicting party marched back to their temporary barracks in the village.<sup>262</sup>

William O'Brien and several others including Father Maher CC addressed the crowd encouraging them in their struggle. Fr Maher emphatically stated that he was on the side of the plan of campaign for however long the struggle would last and promised that 'if the people were true to the priests, the priests would be true to them'.<sup>263</sup> Having regard to the preparations made for the evictions, 'they would be disappointed if the eviction did not take place'. William O'Brien announced that the eviction of KilBride was the first under the plan of campaign and proceeded to give his reasons why KilBride and 'his noble family' was first singled out for eviction. He claimed that KilBride had 'refused to make his own slavish bargain' to abandon his 'humble and his poorer fellow-tenants to the mercy of Mr Townsend Trench, to be crushed and exterminated

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<sup>259</sup> *T.T.*, 23 Mar. 1887.

<sup>260</sup> Edmund Lynch, Laurence Byrne and Martin Troy, *L.E.*, 26 Mar. 1887.

<sup>261</sup> *T.T.*, 23 Mar. 1887.

<sup>262</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>263</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 Mar. 1887.

one by one'.<sup>264</sup> He further promised that Kilbride's title deeds were in less danger than Lansdowne's £20,000 a year as Governor General of Canada, whose 'hands were red with the guilt of unjust evictions' and he [O'Brien] would campaign against him in Canada 'and go from city to city and appeal to the people to assist him in supporting the Luggacurren tenantry'.<sup>265</sup>

If the work of extermination proceeds, I will go from city to city, even to the backwoods of Canada, to denounce the action of Lord Lansdowne, until his name is covered with shame and obloquy for treating a respectable tenant like Mr KilBride as he has done today.<sup>266</sup>

Finally he announced that there would be no resort to physical force, as the plan of campaign would 'strike more dismay into the heart of the landlords' rackrents than all the bullets and bayonets of the police could accomplish'.<sup>267</sup> The eviction of KilBride would make a lasting impression on William O'Brien, probably because it was resolved that KilBride and himself would 'carry the war into Canada and at Lord Lansdowne's palace gates challenge him to trial before the free-born democracy under his rule for the wrong done in the distant Irish valley'.<sup>268</sup>

KilBride in addressing the crowd gathered at his eviction in Luggacurren, stated that although he did not want to be extreme or revengeful because he had been evicted, 'he always had a good hatred of landlords and that day's doing had stamped that hatred in his heart'.<sup>269</sup> One of the obstacles in finding a solution he pointed out, was that the leaseholders were precluded from entering the land courts to seek judicial abatements. He claimed that if he as a leaseholder had been allowed to enter the court, he would have received a reduction of 'forty, fifty or sixty per cent' instead of the twenty per cent offered.<sup>270</sup> However the 'extremely moderate demand' in his view of twenty per cent off the 'judicial rents' was not conceded and this was the principal reason for the adoption of the plan of campaign in Luggacurren.<sup>271</sup> KilBride claimed he wasn't worried about his own situation, but felt sorry for his 'eight or nine labourers, who would have to be

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<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

<sup>265</sup> *T.T.*, 23 Mar. 1887; *L.E.*, 26 Mar. 1887.

<sup>266</sup> *L.E.*, 26 Mar. 1887.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid.

<sup>268</sup> O'Brien, William. *Evening memories, being a continuation of recollections by the same author*, (Dublin & London, 1920), p. 221, hereafter cited as *Evening memories*.

<sup>269</sup> The *Leinster express* quoted KilBride slightly differently as follows: 'He had always cherished an honest, sound hatred of Irish landlordism' (*L.E.*, 26 Mar. 1887).

<sup>270</sup> *T.T.*, 23 Mar. 1887.

<sup>271</sup> *L.E.*, 26 Mar. 1887.



turned with their women and children'.<sup>272</sup> As to the emergency men who were employed on the evicted farms, they were simply 'the scum of the earth' in his view.<sup>273</sup>

On the following two days, Wednesday 23 and Thursday 24 March, nine families, all sub-tenants and labourers on KilBride's farm were evicted. Denis KilBride and his sister Mary were present in each case 'to reassure the people, promising them that they would be back again in their homes and making provision for them under the plan of campaign, while each evicted family received ten shillings temporary relief from the relieving officer'.<sup>274</sup> The relieving officer referred to here was an official of Athy Poor Law Union whose job was to provide limited monetary assistance on a very restricted basis to those most in need and living outside the poorhouse. This kind of 'relief' was known locally as 'outdoor relief'. KilBride's sub-tenants and labourers evicted at this stage were Thomas Kelly who lived at the gate lodge of KilBride's farm; James KilBride, Michael Lawlor and Edward Conron sub-tenants; Thomas and Michael Reddy, herds; John Ryan, Thomas Rigney and Michael Cranny, labourers and Mrs Moore.<sup>275</sup> The Kelly family 'exhibited a strong disinclination to leave' the gate lodge but were persuaded by Miss Mary KilBride who was 'up at each house before the bailiffs reached it'. James KilBride's holding was situated on the opposite side of Luggacurren hill, about three miles or so from Denis Kilbride's house. The journey took over an hour and was 'rendered more disagreeable by frequent heavy showers of rain, hail and sleet'. A crowd of about 1,000 following the evicting party arranged themselves along the top of ditches, howling 'with great vigour'. It seemed that James KilBride was a carpenter and so the furniture in his house 'was by no means so scanty as that in the other cottages'. James KilBride not known to be related to Denis KilBride's family, was then evicted, along with his wife and two children and also his father and mother, both of whom were very old. The police had much more difficulty expelling a donkey and a calf off the land. The *Leinster Express* related the capture of the two animals as a 'very amusing incident'.

Half a dozen of the emergency men rushed in to expel them, and after a long chase, in which they were joined by several dogs, and in the course of which they came to grief more than once, they succeeded in capturing their quarry. The donkey allowed itself to be led off passively, but the calf offered a most

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<sup>272</sup> *T. T.*, 23 Mar. 1887.

<sup>273</sup> *L. E.*, 26 Mar. 1887.

<sup>274</sup> *T. T.*, 24 Mar. 1887.

<sup>275</sup> *L. E.*, 26 Mar. 1887.

determined resistance and managed to upset its captors several times. Ultimately, by the united efforts of three of the emergency men, two of whom dragged it by the head, while the third pushed it from behind, the animal was got out upon the road, where it was turned loose amidst the laughter and derisive cheers of the multitude assembled.<sup>276</sup>

Michael Lawlor, another of Denis KilBride's sub-tenants, had a calf with a broken leg. He explained to the sheriff that he was unable to remove it and consequently Mr Hutchins, the land bailiff was permitted to purchase it 'for the sum of one penny'. Lawlor was given permission to leave the calf on the premises until it had recovered, when he could take it away.<sup>277</sup> This may seem strange but no belongings, including animals, could remain in a house or on the holding of a tenant being evicted, so the purchase of the calf for one penny may have been a technicality agreed upon by both parties in this case in order to make the eviction legal. Michael Reddy when evicted, was invited to become caretaker of his holding 'during Lord Lansdowne's pleasure'.<sup>278</sup> On asking whether he would have to work for Lord Lansdowne, he was told that he would only have to take charge of the house as caretaker. His reply "Begor, I'll take charge till I get something better" was quickly referred to KilBride, who advised him to accept nothing from Lord Lansdowne and accordingly Reddy refused the offer. Michael Cranny had thirteen children when he was evicted, his wife calling for 'three cheers for the plan of campaign'. However, she was offered accommodation for herself and her children in 'Lord Lansdowne's lodge', but the offer was refused. Mrs Moore whose 'husband had been a ploughman of Mr KilBride's' was the last to be evicted on Thursday morning 24 March 1887.<sup>279</sup> The first phase of the evictions would end when John William Dunne of Raheenahown along with his sub-tenants and labourers were also evicted.<sup>280</sup> KilBride recollected that 'at this period the evictions went on for about a week, were then suspended and resumed towards the end of April'.<sup>281</sup> Dunne, an ex-J.P. had a very large holding of over 1,200 acres in the townlands of Raheenahone, Tullamoy, Guileen and Ballycoolan, the valuation of all being about £952 and the rent £1,367.<sup>282</sup> Dunne's house was a 'very fine structure' and 'few more picturesque spots

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<sup>276</sup> Ibid.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid.

<sup>278</sup> *T.T.*, 24 Mar. 1887.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid, 25 Mar. 1887.

<sup>280</sup> For a more comprehensive account of the various phases of the Luggacurren evictions see Rambottom, Mary. 'The Marquess of Lansdowne's Luggacurren estate and the Luggacurren evictions 1887-1890.' (Unpublished M.A. thesis, N.U.I. Maynooth, 1995).

<sup>281</sup> MS 1.

<sup>282</sup> *L.E.*, 26 Mar. 1887.

could be found for a residence'. Dunne was eventually evicted with his family, accompanied by 'a couple of young women, who appeared to be servants'.

The house itself is spacious, with a nice conservatory and extensive out-offices attached, in front of it being a charmingly laid out garden, which appears to have received a large amount of attention.<sup>283</sup>

Just three days before KilBride's eviction, Viscount de Vesci on behalf of the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union was anxious that any information given by Trench to *The Times* commissioner Mr Kirkpatrick, would be 'very accurate and moderately drawn up'.<sup>284</sup> De Vesci felt that the full truth and 'previous history of Luggacurren be given especially and to its development as to the landlords'.<sup>285</sup> Rochford lost little time in assisting Trench draft a statement 'suitable for publishing in the press' advising him to confine himself to statements of fact and the avoidance of controversial matter.<sup>286</sup>

In June 1887 some of the evicted farms were advertised for re-letting. The dates seem to suggest retrospection in the letting arrangements. (Table 6)

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<sup>283</sup> Ibid.

<sup>284</sup> Viscount de Vesci to Rochford, 1 Mar. 1887, Derreen papers.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid.

<sup>286</sup> Rochford to de Vesci, 2 Mar. 1887.

Table 6: Re-letting of Luggacurren Evicted Farms 1887

Re-Letting of Farms at Luggacurren, Queen's County					
To be let, for six months, from the dates herein given, subject to redemption, the undermentioned farms, lately in the possession of the following tenants, and situated in the several townlands named:					
Townland	To be let from	Lately occupied by	Area		
			Statute Measure		
			A	R	P
Ballinteskinn	22 April 1887	Mrs. M. McHugh	308	0	20
Luggacurren	23 April 1887	Bryan Coffey	18	0	20
Luggacurren	23 April 1887	John Lyons	19	0	38
Luggacurren	21 April 1887	Denis Moore	0	3	24
Luggacurren	19 April 1887	Michael Dunne	29	2	10
Luggacurren	19 April 1887	Michael Dunne	7	1	4
Luggacurren	20 April 1887	Michael Dunne	25	1	18
Luggacurren	19 April 1887	Michael Brennan	25	3	0
Luggacurren	19 April 1887	Michael Brennan	27	0	7
Luggacurren	19 April 1887	Thomas Mackey	41	3	32
Luggacurren	19 April 1887	Thomas Knowles	23	1	13
Ferny Hill	19 April 1887	William Brennan	36	3	8
Manger	19 April 1887	Michael Murphy	20	3	5
Luggacurren	19 April 1887	Reps. Garret Kelly	29	0	20
Luggacurren	19 April 1887	Reps. Garret Kelly	14	3	23
Luggacurren	20 April 1887	Patrick Kelly	80	0	23
Luggacurren	20 April 1887	Michael Kelly	22	2	6
Monamonry	20 April 1887	James Moore	43	0	15
Monamonry	20 April 1887	Thomas Moore	46	0	13
Gorrelagh	20 April 1887	Edward Delany	80	2	8
Gorrelagh	20 April 1887	Reps. Terence Byrne	48	3	13
Gorrelagh	21 April 1887	Mrs. Margaret Troy	39	0	7
Luggacurren	21 April 1887	Mrs. Margaret Troy	18	3	26
Luggacurren	21 April 1887	Denis Dunne, sen.	34	1	26
Luggacurren	21 April 1887	Denis Dunne, jun.	41	0	0
Luggacurren	20 April 1887	John Dunne, sen.	38	3	15
Luggacurren	21 April 1887	John Dunne, jun.	40	3	10
Luggacurren	21 April 1887	Michael Moore	44	3	13
Luggacurren	21 April 1887	Arthur Neil	47	0	9
Luggacurren	20 April 1887	William Brennan	14	1	19
Fallowbeg Middle	23 April 1887	Denis Shalloon	32	3	35
Luggacurren	22 April 1887	Denis Moore	8	1	20
Luggacurren	23 April 1887	Denis Moore	9	3	0
Tullamoy	23 April 1887	Rept. James Byrne	189	3	4
Raheenabarna	23 April 1887	Michael McHugh	31	2	30

Source: *L.E.*, 4, 11, 18 June 1887.

George G. Fotherell, solicitor for the letting of these farms, sought a meeting with William O'Brien in Dublin. Fotherell had 'grounds for believing that a settlement would be arrived out soon'.<sup>287</sup> A meeting to be attended by William O'Brien to inaugurate a movement for the building of huts to house the evicted tenants in the village of

<sup>287</sup> George D. Fotherell to William Rochford, 23 July 1887, Derreen papers.

Luggacurren, was to take place the following day on 24 July 1887. Although Fotherrell failed to persuade O'Brien to adjourn this meeting, he did succeed in securing 'that no language will be used at it, which will be likely to embarrass a settlement'. O'Brien's parting words to Fotherrell on that occasion are interesting:

Remember let there be no misunderstanding as to the use of mild language by me tomorrow. We do not lay down our arms and I look to you to see that no improper use shall be made of the fact of my being mild in my language.<sup>288</sup>

Fotherrell strongly advised Rochford to take over 'all the sub-tenants as direct tenants to Lord Lansdowne, otherwise there will be great difficulty in connection with the sale'.<sup>289</sup>

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<sup>288</sup> Ibid.

<sup>289</sup> Ibid.

CHAPTER TWO  
TAKING THE LAND WAR INTO CANADA:  
WILLIAM O'BRIEN V LORD LANSDOWNE 1887

The Quixotic Canadian Crusade of Don Quixote O'Brien and his henchman Sancho Panza KilBride

2.1 LANSDOWNE ON THE EVE OF O'BRIEN'S CANADIAN CRUSADE

Lord Lansdowne normally resided at Government House, Ottawa, but on Wednesday 4 May 1887 he arrived in Toronto for three weeks and 'met with a most enthusiastic reception, the streets being crowded with people. A display of fireworks and a torchlight procession took place in the evening in honour of the Governor-General's visit'.<sup>290</sup> Meanwhile it was reported that the 500 tenants on the Wiltshire estate forwarded an address expressing 'their esteem, regard and unabated confidence in Lansdowne, who had met them liberally in reductions and abatements' during the ongoing agricultural depression. They further hoped that the differences with his Irish tenantry would soon harmonised.<sup>291</sup> In a letter to the *Yarmouth Times* in early May 1887, Mr Dermot Cole of Acadia, a former tenant on the Lansdowne Meath estate stated, that 'whenever you have a good agent you have a good landlord in Ireland'. The agent in this case was Thomas C. Franks, while his father and his uncle had been agents before that. Cole remembered all three, when during the whole period, 'there was never a row on the property, or a case of harsh treatment of a tenant by either landlord or agent'.<sup>292</sup>

In Canada Lansdowne wasn't considered to have the aggressive enthusiasm, eloquence and magnetism of Lord Dufferin<sup>293</sup>, but while he was retiring in his private life, he was judged to have discharged his duties 'capably and acceptably' and was considered 'a true friend' of all worthy projects in the city, especially in his efforts to further educational and charitable enterprises.<sup>294</sup> In Canada the *Quebec Chronicle* maintained that Lord and Lady Lansdowne were doing all they possibly could to

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<sup>290</sup> *L.E.*, 7 May 1887.

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>292</sup> *Yarmouth Times*, early May 1887.

<sup>293</sup> Frederick Blackwood (1826-1902), first Marquis of Dufferin and Ava had estates at Clondeboye, county Down. Published *Letters from high latitudes* (1856), an account of his voyages to Iceland and Spitzbergen. He was Governor-General of Canada 1872-78, ambassador to Russia 1879-80, to Turkey 1881-2, to Egypt 1882-4, Governor-General of India 1884-8, ambassador to Italy 1889-91 and France 1891-6. He was showered with public honours and on his retirement in 1897 he became chairman of London and Globe Finance Corporation, which proved to be a speculative misadventure and he and many others lost heavily, Boylan, Henry (ed.), *A dictionary of Irish biography*, (Dublin, 1999), p. 28, hereafter cited as Boylan.

<sup>294</sup> *O.D.C.*, 11 May 1887.

advance the condition of the people by the encouragement of education, better housing and farm improvements. Further it claimed that there was hardly a charitable or patriotic society, which has not received contributions from Lansdowne and he was 'being constantly thanked for donations of one sort or another'.<sup>295</sup> The *Ottawa Daily Citizen* in an editorial on 9 April 1887 stated that the *Montreal Post* was endeavouring 'to work up feeling' in Canada against Lansdowne, and in doing so was using 'very violent and abusive language'.<sup>296</sup> In contrast the *Montreal Post* of 25 March 1887 had portrayed 'Petty-tyrant Fitzmaurice' as concentrating in himself 'all the worst qualities of an ancestry that it would be gross flattery to dignify with the bar sinister'.<sup>297</sup>

In this instance the blood of the Hampshire tailor, who made a fortune out of the gambling necessities of the swashbucklers who followed Schomberg in Ireland, is displayed with remarkable faithfulness. This man, living in luxurious idleness, at the cost of a hundred thousand dollars a year, paid by the mass of toiling fools who go by the name of the Canadian people, has...entered upon a system of wholesale evictions against his tenants in Queen's County.<sup>298</sup>

A correspondent of the *Daily News* in Ottawa sought an interview with Lord Lansdowne at the end of March 1887. Lansdowne refused to speak except through his private secretary, Captain Strathfield. Lansdowne stated that the evicted tenants, Denis KilBride and John William Dunne were 'the ringleaders of the men who are constantly fomenting disturbances'.<sup>299</sup> He claimed that they were only paying an average of £1,600 a year for estates, on which he had spent £3,000 over the previous eighteen months. These men he claimed, although they held under leases for many years, were protected from an increase of rent when the prices of agricultural produce were high; they constantly received abatements during periods of depression, and were offered reductions averaging between fifteen and twenty per cent in November 1886. He also pointed out that the dwellings upon the estate were as a rule of a superior class and the larger tenants were without exception, 'provided with excellent houses and homesteads'.<sup>300</sup> On this basis they did not deserve the reductions asked for, 'but having adopted the plan of campaign they must stand or fall by it'.<sup>301</sup> The *Saturday Review* didn't quite know what to make of the prosperous tenants of Lord Lansdowne.

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<sup>295</sup> *Quebec Chronicle*, 7 Apr. 1887, hereafter cited as *Q.C.*

<sup>296</sup> *O.D.C.*, 9 Apr. 1887.

<sup>297</sup> *Montreal Post*, 25 Mar. 1887, hereafter cited as *M.P.*

<sup>298</sup> *M.P.*, 25 Mar. 1887.

<sup>299</sup> *Daily News*, 1 Apr. 1887, hereafter cited as *D.N.*

<sup>300</sup> *D. N.*, 1 Apr. 1887.

<sup>301</sup> *Ibid.*

There had been no unroofing and burning of wretched hovels, no poverty-stricken tenants cast out upon the roadside. On the contrary the story is of sleek, well-fed gentlemen, late justices of the peace, and so forth, sitting at rentals of the thousand a year or thereabouts, with horses entered at Punchestown, and two-storied gate lodges and avenues leading through undulating ground charmingly wooded up to houses with bathrooms and lavatories supplied with hot and cold water – replete in fact, as the house-agents advertisements say with every modern appliance.<sup>302</sup>

When Lansdowne was asked what he intended for his tenants who adopted the plan of campaign, he replied that there would be no change in his policy. His instructions to his agent Trench had not differed from the beginning of the campaign. His policy then as before was that if the tenants paid ‘fair rentals and the just proportion of the costs they have brought on themselves all will be well’.<sup>303</sup> The reason for the evictions, according to Lansdowne, was his refusal to allow the tenants on the Luggacurren estate a scale of abatements identical with that allowed the tenants in Kerry. The Kerry tenants he claimed, were the occupants of small holdings in a mountainous country, with little or no capital except their own labour, and had experienced exceptional losses. On the other hand the Luggacurren tenants were an entirely different class, as the greater portion of the estate was held by large farmers, many of whom paid hundreds of pounds a year each for their holdings.

If they cannot in time be made to see the justice of my demands and the error of their ways, then they must take the consequences.<sup>304</sup>

What Lansdowne didn’t tell his interviewer was that from the time he became fifth Marquess in 1866, he had inherited serious financial difficulties. His father, the fourth Marquess had left the Scottish property to his mother, Emily Mercer de Flahault, Baroness Nairne (1819-1895) for her lifetime and debts of £300,000 to himself.<sup>305</sup> Added to this there were family charges and mortgages, which were a crippling annual

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<sup>302</sup> *Saturday Review*, 26 Mar. 1887.

<sup>303</sup> *D. N.*, 1 Apr. 1887.

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>305</sup> Geary, p. 48.



burden and the estate in Wiltshire provided little income.<sup>306</sup> When writing to his mother Emily in July 1887, which he did regularly, especially when out of the country for long periods, he explained that on the Luggacurren property, where the plan of campaign had been adopted ‘the expense is enormous’, with ‘horses, cattle, labourers, agricultural machinery, provisions brought from a distance’. In December he wrote that ‘I really don’t know where the sinews of war are to come from and there will have to be another raid upon the pictures’.<sup>307</sup>

## 2.2 PRELIMINARIES TO CANADIAN CRUSADE

At a meeting of Athy Union on 5 April 1887, Mr Orford P.L.G. vacated his position as in-coming chairman and proposed that the three campaigners in Luggacurren be elected instead.<sup>308</sup> KilBride thanked him for his ‘most magnanimous manner’ in vacating the chair and also thanked the priests of Athy and M. J. Minch for their active participation in the movement on behalf of the Luggacurren tenants.<sup>309</sup> John William Dunne had been superseded in the position of J.P. a few months previous to this, and so it was felt that this was an important political gesture.

On Monday 11 April 1887, a convention to raise funds for the Luggacurren campaigners, consisting of the branches of the National League throughout Queen’s County was held in Maryborough. W. A. McDonald, MPs for Queen’s County, while sympathising ‘deeply with such men as Dunne and KilBride’ sounded a public note of caution. He warned that the Luggacurren campaign was a difficult struggle, because Lansdowne was not an ordinary landlord, or one who was in want of money; ‘and he was also backed up by the government, so that, perhaps, he would fight the matter out to the bitter end’.<sup>310</sup>

During and soon after the first evictions at Luggacurren in March 1887, it was decided that William O’Brien MP and KilBride would go to Canada and ‘show up

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<sup>306</sup> Geary, p. 48, quoted from Lord Newton, *Lord Lansdowne: a biography*, pp 24-5; HC 1876 [C. 1492] LXXX. 35. *Return of owners of land of one acres and upwards...in Ireland*. For details of mortgage and family charges, see Irish Land Commission Records. LCI/LC 797 F.S.I.

<sup>307</sup> Geary, p. 48, quoted in Newton, Lord, *Lord Lansdowne: a biography*, quoting from Lansdowne to his mother, beginning of Dec. 1887.

<sup>308</sup> John William Dunne, Daniel Whelan and KilBride.

<sup>309</sup> *L.E.*, 9 Apr. 1887.

<sup>310</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 Apr. 1887.

Lansdowne, the then Governor General'.<sup>311</sup> In his recollections, published in 1920, O'Brien described Lansdowne as an evicting landlord who was also Governor General of the free Dominion of Canada, one-third of whose population were of Irish blood. However the *Montreal Gazette* maintained that the majority of the Canadian people were of British extraction; they were largely British in their ideas, in their sentiments and in regard to the interests of the Empire to which they were proud to belong.<sup>312</sup> O'Brien felt it 'important that I should make the appeal to the Canadians as strong as possible'.<sup>313</sup> He strongly maintained that the judicial tenants were justified in demanding a twenty per cent abatement. Further he surmised that Trench 'offered twenty per cent to the non-judicial men, to bribe them away from the poorer tenants'.<sup>314</sup>

Five days after KilBride's eviction, the *Ottawa Daily Journal* announced that the Toronto branch of the Irish Land League had cabled O'Brien to go to Canada to speak 'on the subject of the evictions in Luggacurren and the Governor General'.<sup>315</sup> O'Brien maintained that the Canadian campaign was 'a reprisal for Mr Balfour's quixotic invasion of Ireland' and the Luggacurren evictions were 'his first battleground'.<sup>316</sup> He realised from the start that in order to motivate the 'cautious peasants' to be prepared to quit their homes if necessary, their leaders would have to lead the way by self-sacrifice. However, he admits that he constantly questioned himself closely about his indifference to personal consequences and at times his 'sheer recklessness', which made him the least promising of subjects 'for Mr Balfour's policy of striking at the tall poppies'.<sup>317</sup>

Then he [Trench] went over to London and had an interview with Balfour and when he came back he would hear of nothing but war - in the famine times several hundred families were swept clean off the Luggacurren estate. Another fact to be rated, Trench granted twenty-five per cent off judicial rents in Kerry, where there is moonlighting, while refusing a fraction in the peaceable Queen's County. Remember also that Trench is son of the notorious Steuart Trench, the author of *Realities of Irish life* - the most ruthless exterminator of this century.<sup>318</sup>

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<sup>311</sup> MS 1.

<sup>312</sup> *O.D.C.*, 6 Apr. 1887, quoting from the *Montreal Gazette*.

<sup>313</sup> William O'Brien to John Dillon, undated, written on back of cartoon from *W. F.*, 12 Mar. 1887, TCD, Dillon papers, 6736/8.

<sup>314</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>315</sup> *Ottawa Journal*, 28 Mar. 1887, hereafter cited as *O.J.*

<sup>316</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 223.

<sup>317</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 224.

<sup>318</sup> William O'Brien to John Dillon, undated, written on back of cartoon from *W. F.*, 12 Mar. 1887, TCD, Dillon papers, 6736/8.

The *Presbyterian Review* suggested that religion lay at the root of the whole trouble, as Catholics were 'disposed to be loyal to an Italian priest in preference to a British Sovereign'.<sup>319</sup> However the *Winnipeg Morning Call* in an article headed 'Demagogue O'Brien' thought it was 'to secure a little cheap notoriety' that O'Brien came to Canada in spite of the protests from Irishmen of the Dominion.<sup>320</sup>

Even though it was announced in no uncertain terms that O'Brien would be under police surveillance as soon as he arrived in Canada, he was not in the slightest bit perturbed.<sup>321</sup> When he spoke at a demonstration in Athy in early April 1887, he mockingly replied that if it was possible that he might be arrested in Canada, it was a much stronger possibility that he would be arrested if he stayed at home.<sup>322</sup>

The evictions resumed in Luggacurren on Tuesday 19 April 1887 and lasted five days, resulting in the further eviction of about forty families. Two families who were left undisturbed, having paid their rents and costs, had also paid a gale of rent into the plan of campaign fund. Another family named Neill were not evicted 'in consequence of the illness of one of the members of the family'.<sup>323</sup> The remaining tenants, about thirty in number were not evicted at that stage.<sup>324</sup> William O'Brien, who was present on the first day, reminded those present that when next he spoke in public about the Luggacurren evictions, it would be on Canadian soil and 'under Lord Lansdowne's nose'.

O'Brien made quite a stir at the public meeting in Luggacurren on 19 April 1887. At one stage he requested Mr Dunlop, the Irish correspondent of the London *Daily News*, to 'leave the ground'.<sup>325</sup> Dunlop was at first reluctant, but when the crowd became angry, he drove away, 'when the car came into collision with a cart on which some oranges were exposed for sale'. After a minor scuffle between the two drivers, the crowd unharnessed Dunlop's horse and 'turned the car up'. Eventually Dunlop was

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<sup>319</sup> *Presbyterian Review*, 19 May 1887.

<sup>320</sup> *I.T.*, 9 June 1887, quoting from the *Winnipeg Morning Call*.

<sup>321</sup> A dispatch in *T.T.* from Ottawa announced the following: 'The Dominion government has announced its determination to use every effort to prevent agitation, and should Mr O'Brien visit Canada, to place him under police surveillance from the time of his arrival until his departure. Any attempt on his part to incite the people against the Governor-General will be followed by his immediate arrest', *T.G.*, 21 Apr. 1887.

<sup>322</sup> *L.E.*, 9 Apr. 1887.

<sup>323</sup> *Ibid.*, 23 Apr. 1887.

<sup>324</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>325</sup> *T.M.*, 5 May 1887; *L.E.*, 23 Apr. 1887.

escorted away with an escort of police and had to walk about seven miles to Athy alone, 'several cars having passed him'.<sup>326</sup> In Athy he was attacked by a butchers' assistant, who struck him a couple of blows and the mob 'dinged in his hat'.<sup>327</sup> The police again came to the rescue and eventually succeeded in putting Dunlop on the train back to Dublin.<sup>328</sup> Father Maher later recorded his disappointment with the 'two families' who had paid their rents because 'they knew from the commencement there were two traitors in their ranks'.

David Sheehy M.P., who was present on the third day, displayed far more bitterness when he advised that the evicted campaigners 'should not mind spalpeen Kavanaghs, nor soil their hands on their dirty carcasses'.

They should have none of that companionship, or of those friendly greetings which were interchanged between Irishmen. They should be allowed to go their own road, and crawl to the rent office as often as they liked, but what the people had to do was to keep their own honest hearts and hands clear before the world.<sup>329</sup>

O'Brien put off going to Canada when it was rumoured on 23 April 1887 in Maryborough (now Portlaoise) that Lansdowne was in the process of making a settlement, through an intermediary named F. A. Denning, a bank manager in Tullamore. According to the *Leinster Express* of 30 April 1887, the terms for a settlement of the Luggacurren dispute were fifteen per cent reduction on judicial rents and twenty per cent on leasehold rents. All the leases on the property were to be broken it reported and the tenants, even those who had rents fixed in the Land Courts, and those who had been evicted were free to go into the Land Court to have their rents re-fixed. Some differences arose about the payment of legal costs, but the tenants were reported as having approved of the terms 'on the principle of give and take' and their 'hopes were high'.<sup>330</sup> However, it was reported in the *Leinster Express* and the *Freeman's Journal* on 7 May that the negotiations had broken down. A letter written by Trench from 14 Molesworth Street, Dublin on 30 April 1887 and published in the *Freeman's Journal* and the *Leinster Express*, explains why this happened and is perhaps worthy of full insertion here:

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<sup>326</sup> *T. M.*, 5 May 1887.

<sup>327</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>328</sup> *L.E.*, 23 Apr. 1887.

<sup>329</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>330</sup> *F.J.*, 27 Apr. 1887; *L.E.*, 30 Apr. 1887.

At the Kildare palaver on Friday 2 [April 1887] Mr Denning did not act as a plenipotentiary for me or Lord Lansdowne, and Mr O'Brien has admitted this repeatedly; therefore Mr Denning could not make a treaty, and did not make a treaty, and as no treaty was made, no treaty was subsequently broken. This is as plain as daylight, and nobody can get over it. Again, I got no intimation as to what were the terms suggested at the Kildare palaver until I got Mr Denning's letter in London on Monday the 25 April. I did not even know that Mr Denning had intended meeting Father Maher at Kildare. There is as you are aware, no delivery of letters in London on Sunday, and Mr Denning did not telegraph to me the terms suggested at Kildare, and I heard nothing of them until I read his letter in London on Monday morning. Again, the moment I got Mr Denning's letter on Monday in London. I telegraphed to him that I could not accept the terms proposed, though willing to concede certain advantages to leaseholders. On getting my telegram, it appears Mr Denning, on Monday the 25 April wrote to Mr Lalor to say, 'I have got a give way, to a certain extent, from Lord Lansdowne' that is as to the leaseholders though not as to the abatement question. I did not telegraph to Lord Lansdowne on the subject, good or bad, as the instructions I already held made it unnecessary for me to do so. Under these circumstances, it is useless to try and fasten on Lord Lansdowne the breach of a treaty - first, because he absolutely knew nothing whatever, directly or indirectly, about the transaction. I fail to see under these circumstances, what Mr O'Brien has to complain of. Now that he sees plainly Lord Lansdowne did not change his mind, and did not break a treaty, and in fact knew absolutely nothing whatever about the matter.<sup>331</sup>

O'Brien at this stage claimed he felt justified that the negotiations had at least enabled the Luggacurren campaigners to demonstrate that they had 'exhausted every effort to bring about an honourable peace'.<sup>332</sup> Writing to the *Freeman's Journal* he pointed out that since the negotiations had started, the views of the Catholic Archbishop of Toronto, Dr Lynch combined with Reuters telegrams from Irish-American politicians, had turned public opinion against the Irish visit. This he felt, fortified Lansdowne who now believed himself 'strong enough to set Irish opinion at defiance'.<sup>333</sup> Although later described as a moderate, Lynch was certainly more radical than his predecessor Charbonnel, whose once radical advisor was D'Arcy McGee.<sup>334</sup> Dr Lynch became Archbishop of Toronto in 1860, when the Orange Order was at its peak and sectarian strife at its height. He normally managed to be out of town during potentially violent situations and in his speeches displayed a determined admiration for

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<sup>331</sup> *L.E.*, 30 Apr. 1887.

<sup>332</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>333</sup> *F.J.*, 27 Apr. 1887.

<sup>334</sup> Stortz, Gerald J., 'The Catholic church and Irish nationalism in Toronto, 1850-1900' in O'Driscoll, Robert & Reynolds Lorna (eds.). *The untold story: the Irish in Canada*, (Toronto, 1998), ii, p. 871-3, hereafter cited as Stortz.

British institutions.<sup>335</sup> This contrasted in the public mind to his association with the Hibernian Benevolent Society, widely believed to be a Fenian organization.<sup>336</sup> The general belief was that Lynch was a Fenian, who fully approved of nationalists joining with the armed invading forces of 1866. Following the raids he was obliged, in order to prove his loyalty, to adopt a more moderate stance than he might otherwise have done on political issues. However he later encouraged the establishment of Home Rule societies, and in 1875 took a leadership role in celebrations for the centenary of Daniel O'Connell's birth.<sup>337</sup> Yet he was decidedly against O'Donovan Rossa's visit in 1878. On this occasion Lynch was genuinely ill, but like it or not, the nationalists succeeded in having Rossa call upon him, 'a gesture which implied episcopal approval'.<sup>338</sup> In 1880 he was decidedly opposed to Parnell visiting Toronto, but as he happened to be in Ireland, the visit went ahead, but was marred by violence.<sup>339</sup> Interviewed by a *Globe* correspondent, Lynch expressed himself strongly hostile to the O'Brien visit to Canada.

I entirely disapprove of it. It can do no good, but will do a great deal of harm to us, and if those gentlemen who invited him here had considered the interests of Catholics deeply, they would not have done so. In fact I have cabled a telegram already to Ireland to a great friend of the national party to influence Mr O'Brien from his proposed journey here. Feeling the evils that his coming out here would cause, I would spare no trouble to prevent his coming. Until lately I could not imagine that there was any seriousness about it.<sup>340</sup>

Writing to D. P. Cahill, secretary of the I.N.L. in Toronto, he felt it was 'a higher order of spiritual duty' for him to protect against injustice and the oppression of the poor, in this specific case his support for the movement against the re-introduction of coercion in Ireland 'by the present unfortunate English government'.<sup>341</sup> In the same letter he pleads that the I.N.L. should show merciful consideration for the representative in the country of Her Majesty the Queen of England, 'solely on account of the sovereign authority which he represents'.<sup>342</sup> However, while enclosing \$50 for the I.N.L. eviction fund, he stated that the appointment of Lansdowne was very unfortunate, as Canadians had a right to expect a representative whose character and whose ancestry would not

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<sup>335</sup> Stortz, p. 873.

<sup>336</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 874.

<sup>337</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>338</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>339</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 874-5.

<sup>340</sup> *T.G.*, late Apr. 1887, short article entitled 'William O'Brien's visit; Archbishop Lynch expresses himself as strongly hostile'; *O.D.C.*, 30 Apr. 1887.

<sup>341</sup> *T.G.*, 20 Apr. 1887.

<sup>342</sup> *Ibid.*

bring disgrace on her.<sup>343</sup> Right up to O'Brien's arrival in Toronto, Lynch tried to persuade him to cancel and even sent 'his trusted confidant', Eugene O'Keefe to Ottawa to make an eleventh-hour plea.<sup>344</sup>

An anonymous correspondent of the *Toronto Mail* later claimed that the conduct of Archbishop Lynch 'in running with the hare and hunting with the hounds' was plain enough.<sup>345</sup> Another correspondent, an Irish farmer's son, reported Archbishop Lynch as stating that he (Lynch) believed Lansdowne was an exorbitant and tyrannical landlord and that 'Don Quixote O'Brien and his henchman Sancho Panza KilBride's' statements of the cruelty inflicted on the Luggacurren estate were quite correct.<sup>346</sup> Further to this, Archbishop Lynch did not pay his respects to Lansdowne in Toronto, because 'my nature revolts against shaking hands with the oppressor of the poor, as I believe him to be'.<sup>347</sup> The *Toronto Mail* regretted that politicians of the Dominion House of Commons and the legislatures of Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia, passed resolutions in favour of Home Rule and the Irish Parliamentary Party's policy on land agitation, in order to appeal to the Canadian Irish electorate.<sup>348</sup> The *Toronto World* reported that O'Brien also knew that a very large majority of the Ottawa House of Commons voted in favour of Home Rule and 'that that majority included all the leaders of one party and many of the others' for which they deserved nothing but contempt.<sup>349</sup>

John Townsend Trench blamed O'Brien for publishing an account of negotiations that occurred 'making it more difficult for the future'.<sup>350</sup> In O'Brien's retort the following day contradicting Trench's prediction, he assured Trench that the difficulty would be his and 'so he will find, I venture to assure him'.<sup>351</sup> The *Irish Times* argued that if the league had not 'invaded' the Luggacurren estate; that if the tenants were allowed to attend to their own business, 'there would have been a compromise long since effected and peace would have been restored'.<sup>352</sup> Although O'Brien acknowledged that no one would ever know what really happened at the pre-eviction meeting between

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<sup>343</sup> *Ibid.*, 19-20 Apr. 1887.

<sup>344</sup> Stortz, p. 875.

<sup>345</sup> *T.M.*, 21 May 1887, letter to the editor signed 'Scot' and entitled 'The Archbishop and Mr O'Brien' dated 19 May.

<sup>346</sup> *T.M.*, 28 May 1887, quoting from the *Montreal Star*.

<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>348</sup> *T.M.*, 5 May 1887.

<sup>349</sup> *Toronto World*, 6 & 9 May 1887.

<sup>350</sup> *I. T.*, 29 Apr. 1887.

<sup>351</sup> *F.J.*, 30 Apr. 1887.

<sup>352</sup> *Irish Times*, 29 Apr. 1887.

Trench and Balfour in London, he strongly believed that Trench came back to Ireland taking up an uncompromising position with the Luggacurren tenantry or as O'Brien recollected, with a 'determination to split, in the familiar phrase, the difference still existing'.<sup>353</sup>

The land agent returned, at all events, to break off the negotiations and to let slip the dogs of war for an eviction campaign, beginning with Mr KilBride as the tallest of the poppies.<sup>354</sup>

### 2.3 THE ORANGE ORDER AND FENIAN ASSASSINS

A little over a week after KilBride's eviction and seemingly in consequence of the Cowper Commission report of 21 February 1887, the Irish Land Bill, introduced in the House of Lords on 31 March 1887, proposed the admittance of about 100,000 leaseholders to the benefits of previous legislation.<sup>355</sup> The Bill also proposed to allow tenants threatened with eviction to apply to the land courts for reductions 'in proportion to the decline of commodity prices', the courts adjudicating on the payment of arrears so as to spread it over a reasonable period of time.<sup>356</sup> The Bill was later enacted on 23 August 1887.<sup>357</sup>

Meanwhile O'Brien, infuriated by the sudden break down in negotiations with Trench in April 1887, lost little time in keeping his promise to campaign against Lansdowne in Canada and left in early May with KilBride. On leaving Dublin, O'Brien stated he was 'blessed and his mission approved' by Archbishop Walsh of Dublin and on reaching Thurles, Father Ryan, President of St Patrick's College, handed him a letter from Archbishop Croke of Cashel, dated Saturday night 30 April 1887.<sup>358</sup> Croke explained that he had intended to be at the station on O'Brien's arrival 'to give you and your friends a greeting on your way and a bishop's blessing on your undertaking' but as he normally said 'first mass at the cathedral on Sundays at eight o'clock and the train was not on schedule, it was impossible for him to be present. Nevertheless Croke blessed O'Brien's campaign to Canada as follows:

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<sup>353</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 220.

<sup>354</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 221.

<sup>355</sup> O'Day, p. 136.

<sup>356</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>357</sup> *Ibid.*, xlv.

<sup>358</sup> *L.E.*, 21 May 1887.



I will pray for you that the God of our fathers may watch over you on the deep, crown your patriotic mission with success and bring you back to us soon in good health and triumph.<sup>359</sup>

O'Brien admitted that Croke's message had for him 'the sacredness of the *Domhnach Airgid* (the Silver Shrine) with which the Tirconaill clans used to go out to battle'.<sup>360</sup> The following morning, 1 May, O'Brien and KilBride boarded the Cunard liner *Umbria* for Canada.<sup>361</sup> From the outset O'Brien admitted that he sailed away in a 'mingled whirlwind of blessings and curses'.<sup>362</sup> Among the 'curses' and obstacles of the Canadian campaign, O'Brien could hardly have fully comprehended the strength of the Orange Order in Canada, which represented 'an extraordinary successful instance of cross-cultural transfer'.<sup>363</sup> The solemn oath for initiating Orangemen included the following form of words:

I do solemnly and voluntarily swear, that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty....and to her lawful heirs and successors....so long as they shall maintain the Protestant religion and the laws of the country....I will ever hold dear the name of Glorious Deliverer, King William the Third, Prince of Orange....I am not, nor ever will be, a Roman Catholic or papist.<sup>364</sup>

Canadian society in the nineteenth century, like the British, the American and many others, was beset with a fervent anti-Catholic sentiment that flared from time to time in open violence.<sup>365</sup> Even though the majority of Orangemen were Irish, yet the Orange Order was unique amongst Canadian ethnic societies, in that it soon attracted large numbers of English and Scottish immigrants and Protestant Germans, and some Italians as well; that it became a 'garrison of Protestantism and Britishness' and a 'bulwark of colonial Protestantism'.<sup>366</sup> In 1872, an Irish emigrant wrote home to Tyrone from his Tyendinaga township in Ontario :

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<sup>359</sup> Ibid.

<sup>360</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 225.

<sup>361</sup> It is not possible to go into more detail here but the following sources will prove worthwhile: Sally Warwick-Haller, *William O'Brien and the Irish land war*, pp 93-5, hereafter cited as *Warwick-Haller*; Michael Mac Donagh, *The life of William O'Brien, the Irish nationalist: a biographical study of Irish nationalism, constitutional and revolutionary*, pp 104-108; Ramsbottom, pp 36-8; *Evening memories*, pp 219-75.

<sup>362</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 225.

<sup>363</sup> Akenson, Donald H., (review on) Houston, Cecil J. & Smyth, William J., *The sash Canada wore: A historical geography of the orange order in Canada*, (Toronto, 1980), in *I.H.S.*, vol. xxiii, no. 89, 1982, p. 90, hereafter cited as Akenson & Houston.

<sup>364</sup> O'Driscoll, Robert & Reynolds Lorna (eds.). *The untold story: The Irish in Canada*, (Toronto, 1998), ii, p. 743, hereafter cited as *The Irish in Canada*.

<sup>365</sup> *The Irish in Canada*, p. 743.

<sup>366</sup> Akenson & Houston, p. 744.

This township is twelve miles square and the Indians have three miles by twelve in the front of it...They are all civilized and christianised; they are the Mohawk tribe, splendid men and every one of them an Orangeman.<sup>367</sup>

Houston and Smyth argue that 'instead of the order having been a cause of Irish sectarianism, Irish sectarianism was the cause of the order's anti-Catholicism'.<sup>368</sup> The unending tensions between the two communities and the rare bouts of violence that disrupted a usually peaceful coexistence were expected by both Orangeman and Catholic.<sup>369</sup> William O'Brien and Denis KilBride's campaign against Lord Lansdowne in Canada in May 1887, well demonstrate this point, but it could be argued that Houston and Smyth's analysis of the integrative social functions of the Orange Order in Canada were underplayed to the expense of its latent anti-Catholicism. The *Montreal Post* published a letter from Hugh Farrar McDermott of New York, which it alleged was a sample of the sentiment of the American people. In the letter McDermott claimed that a 'Britisher' would 'go without a seat in his breeches to maintain English snobocracy; this is all the glory he wants'.<sup>370</sup>

The *Stratford Times* claimed that Canadians in general supported a policy of Home Rule for Ireland but they deplored the excesses to which 'men of the stamp of O'Donovan Rossa and O'Brien' were urging people to go to achieve it.<sup>371</sup> These agitators it argued came to Canada, just as the American fenians who tried to invade Canada in 1866, when many Canadians died repelling the invasion and were encouraged by such papers as *United Ireland*.<sup>372</sup> Recollecting thirty three years later, O'Brien maintained that the Canadian campaign was portrayed and cabled across the Atlantic as a group of 'fenian assassins' trying to instigate the murder of Lansdowne; that before they were even embarked, it was announced that Lansdowne was afraid to leave his palace and was guarded night and day by police and soldiers. The *Irish Times* later claimed that 'the fenian blathershites, who were so solicitous that public opinion should be put right' in Canada were really orchestrating O'Brien's crusade.<sup>373</sup>

First that they themselves are known to be the sworn enemies of Great Britain: that Canada is a part of that country: that Lord Lansdowne is the official head of

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<sup>367</sup> *The Irish in Canada*, p. 744.

<sup>368</sup> Akenson & Houston, p. 91.

<sup>369</sup> *The Irish in Canada*, p. 752.

<sup>370</sup> *M.P.*, 25 Mar. 1887.

<sup>371</sup> *Stratford Times*, 18 May 1887, hereafter cited as *S.T.*

<sup>372</sup> *S.T.*, 18 May 1887.

<sup>373</sup> *I. T.*, 8 June 1887.

the Canadian government, under a system of which the people here [Canadians] approve.<sup>374</sup>

The *Maritime Farmer* of Fredericton in an article headed 'An Unwelcome Visitor' accepted Ireland had 'crying ills that needed redress' and suggested that if a system of Home Rule would put an end to Ireland's grievances, 'and yet maintain the integrity of the Empire', Ireland should have Home Rule.<sup>375</sup> O'Brien claimed that loyalist propaganda 'lashed the Orange population of Ontario into a perfect blood-frenzy', which led them demand that he would be deported immediately, if he landed.<sup>376</sup> However, the Irish and French population and the majority of the Liberal Party, 'entirely accepted our contention that the people of Canada who paid their Governor-General were within their constitutional rights in passing judgment on the use made of their money'.<sup>377</sup> This effect was completed he felt, by the frankness with which Orangemen prepared to put down free speech 'with revolver shots and organised rioting'.<sup>378</sup>

#### 2.4 FROM QUEENSTOWN TO NEW YORK, MONTREAL, TORONTO AND OTTAWA

On leaving Queenstown for Canada on Sunday 1 May on board the *Umbria*, O'Brien was accompanied by Denis KilBride and Mr Ryan, a special correspondent of the *Freeman's Journal*.<sup>379</sup> Meanwhile hostility had already built up in Canada to the proposed visit. O'Brien's request to speak at a meeting in Toronto was replied to by the Mayor, W. H. Houland. The application was turned down on the basis that O'Brien was 'misinformed as to the facts, as you have been as to the sentiments, of our people here.' Houland could not allow a public attack on Lansdowne, 'who by reason of the high office which he holds is not privileged to meet and answer his accusers in like manner'.<sup>380</sup> Interestingly enough in Toronto, the office of mayor was held exclusively by Orangemen for over a century, until 1955 when Nathan Phillips succeeded in becoming mayor of 'all the people'.<sup>381</sup> The *Ottawa Evening Journal* warned that if there wasn't serious trouble in Canada before O'Brien's visit was completed, it would 'be due

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<sup>374</sup> Ibid.

<sup>375</sup> *Maritime Farmer*, 11 May 1887.

<sup>376</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 222.

<sup>377</sup> Ibid., p. 240.

<sup>378</sup> Ibid.

<sup>379</sup> *L.E.*, 7 May 1887.

<sup>380</sup> Ibid., 21 May 1887.

<sup>381</sup> *The Irish in Canada*, p. 746.

more to good fortune than to good sense' and the responsibility for trouble would be 'upon the heads of O'Brien and his advocates and abettors in Canada'.<sup>382</sup>

The captain of the *Umbria*, McMickan and the saloon passengers were endeavouring to make a record crossing of the Atlantic but they were delayed a 'golden hour or more' because of the national farewell organised by the public representatives of Queenstown with brass bands and speeches.<sup>383</sup> Consequently when O'Brien and KilBride boarded the *Umbria*, they were the 'two most unpopular men on board'.<sup>384</sup> Despite this there were 'four or five hundred Irish emigrants' on board along with the 'genial leader of religious thought in America', bishop and later Archbishop Ireland.<sup>385</sup> O'Brien describes the atmosphere at this stage:

It was a wondrous summer day, and from one bay or creek after another, the people sailed or rowed out to wave their flags and shout their blessings, while from mountain to mountain bonfires shot up from the glowing purple distances in a series of better than royal illuminations.<sup>386</sup>

Six days later the *Umbria* passed Fire Island, within an hour of New York and despite the hour's delay at Cobh, the fastest Atlantic run on record was still on schedule. But as O'Brien describes, it was not to be, as a fog 'as opaque as a world-wide blanket, as cadaverous and impenetrable to argument as death', settled down on the harbour and brought the *Umbria* to a dead stop. The crew and passengers were anchored outside Sandy Hook for three days 'stewing and moaning and horn-blowing'.<sup>387</sup> On the third night, O'Brien was informed that there was 'a frightful row upstairs' as a small steamer, the *J. E. Walker*,<sup>388</sup> had come out from New York to take him off.<sup>389</sup> Captain McMickan initially would not allow O'Brien board the steamer until a medical officer of health was present.<sup>390</sup> The two opposing groups on the *Umbria* heckled each other, both singing conflicting national anthems, but without physical violence. McMickan reluctantly cast a rope to the small tugboat when he was informed that there was a medical office of health on board, with a permit to bring on board O'Brien, KilBride

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<sup>382</sup> *Ottawa Evening Journal*, quoted in *IT*, 3 June 1887.

<sup>383</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 226.

<sup>384</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>385</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 227.

<sup>386</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>387</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 228; *F.J.*, 14 May 1887.

<sup>388</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, (hereafter cited as *F.J.*), refers to the steamer as the John E. Moore.

<sup>389</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 228.

<sup>390</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 229.

and Bishop Ireland, and then ‘bid a calm good night to the remainder’.<sup>391</sup> Amid the clamour and chaos, O’Brien separated from his friends, clambered down a swaying ladder, when ‘somebody’ suddenly attempted to drag him back, but O’Brien continued to descend rapidly down the ladder. While there were still five or six rungs left to descend, the hawser connecting the tug with the *Umbria* snapped ‘with a whirr’ and the ladder and O’Brien came tumbling down. General O’Beirne of the ‘O’Brien reception committee’ caught O’Brien ‘in his brawny arms’.<sup>392</sup> Although it would be easy to imagine the rope being cut deliberately, O’Brien afterwards maintained that the rope was ‘severed at a point closer to the tug than to the *Umbria*, and that its strands were doubtless wrenched asunder by the violence of the sea, and not by the gash of a knife’.<sup>393</sup> Any further communication with the *Umbria* was fruitless and O’Brien found himself pined into a corner by the reporters for his ‘impressions’. It was then he discovered that his friends had spent the previous three days searching for the *Umbria* ‘at instant peril of their lives, in hourly danger of some mortal collision’.<sup>394</sup> According to O’Brien, New York was the next day ‘flaming like a forest fire on reading the reporters’ account of the adventure’.<sup>395</sup>

To prevent reprisals on the *Umbria* ‘that might have ended in a bloody tumult’, O’Brien gave an interview acquitting the crew, making allowances for the temper of McMickan, ‘who had lost his record’.<sup>396</sup> Because of the alleged mistreatment of O’Brien on board the *Umbria*, ‘public sympathy multiplied in an amazing way’. One such instance presented itself the following morning when O’Brien came down to breakfast in Hoffman House, New York and was greeted by about thirty men ‘in drilled attitudes’.<sup>397</sup> O’Brien explained that these were former R.I.C. constables from Castleisland in Kerry, who had ‘thrown down their guns rather than serve in the eviction wars’.<sup>398</sup> The constables he explained were in the care of ‘our friends’ Myles O’Brien and Major Byrne in New York, who provided them with ‘snug berths in a great dry-

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<sup>391</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 231.

<sup>392</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 233; *F.J.*, 14 May 1887.

<sup>393</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 234.

<sup>394</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>395</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 235.

<sup>396</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>397</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 236.

<sup>398</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 235-6; *L.E.*, 23 Apr. 1887, reports an O’Brien speech at Luggacurren, where he referred to seven policemen resigning in Castleisland, in which ‘the Irish blood of these mens’ mothers is beginning to stir and to revolt in their veins against the work they have to do’.

goods store'.<sup>399</sup> The constables came that morning to offer protection to O'Brien and his party as they felt 'there was trouble ahead in Canada'.<sup>400</sup> When O'Brien refused the offer of a revolver from an 'old soldier', he was told that 'the boys will walk across to fetch back your bones, whatever.'<sup>401</sup> In New York, O'Brien was presented with 'a mammoth demonstration in the Cooper Institute', followed by the presentation of the freedom of the City 'by the common council' and 'an unbroken blaze of fireworks at every station as far as the Canadian frontier'.<sup>402</sup>

Meanwhile KilBride, Charlie Ryan of the *Freeman's Journal* and O'Brien's portmanteau were still on board the *Umbria*, but they would catch up later.<sup>403</sup> The first meeting was to be held in Montreal 'and there was nothing for it but to go and to go alone'.<sup>404</sup> When asked about his fears of trouble ahead, he replied that he appreciated the offer of an escort from the Irishmen of New York but would prefer to go to Canada 'just a simple traveller on a peaceful errand'.<sup>405</sup> The failure to procure a public hall in Ottawa was solved by the offer of Ottawa College, which had a large recreation hall, which would accommodate an immense audience.<sup>406</sup> As the train approached the frontier between the US and Canada, O'Brien was 'without so much as a paper parcel in the way of baggage' and the news greeting him was of the Ontario Orangemen equipping themselves for a fight and others 'speaking naked daggers and wilful murder' and the Catholic Archbishop Lynch of Montreal warning him to keep away.<sup>407</sup>

Before 'Editor O'Brien' had time to contemplate further, he was joined in the parlour-car by four correspondents of the New York dailies namely James Clancy of the *New York Herald*, J. M. Wall of the *New York Tribune*, James A. Gill of the *New York World* and Daniel F. Kellogg of the *New York Sun*, 'my lifeguards'.<sup>408</sup> On arriving in Montreal, O'Brien purchased a shirt, comb and brushes. The press was full of

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<sup>399</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 236.

<sup>400</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>401</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 237.

<sup>402</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 236.

<sup>403</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 239.

<sup>404</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 237.

<sup>405</sup> *F.J.*, 14 May 1887.

<sup>406</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>407</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 238.

<sup>408</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 239; see photograph of the journalists accompanying O'Brien and KilBride in Canada in UCC/WOB/PP/A12/6.

descriptions of his Donegal homespun and ‘queer jerry hat’ and a ‘Myles-na-gCopaleen cóta mór’ of Irish frieze.<sup>409</sup>

In sober earnest I am convinced that some stout friends’ hearts sank a bit, if they would only admit it, when I stepped forward under the gaze of four thousand Montrealese ladies and gentlemen in the unadorned garb of old Donegal.<sup>410</sup>

Having learned that the organisers of the Montreal meeting could not secure a hall, O’Brien promised that if necessary he would speak in the open square.<sup>411</sup> However, a more moderate sized building, the Albert Hall was later procured. His headquarters were in St. Lawrence’s Hall, where he was to be addressed by the Montreal Land League.<sup>412</sup> An unsympathetic *Toronto Mail* maintained that the attendance at the lecture in Montreal consisted of 1,500 out of a population of 30,000 Irish Catholics and was marked by a conspicuous absence of priests and prominent laymen.<sup>413</sup> It begged the question as to what was to be done when tenants refuse to pay rent and yet insisted on holding on to the land. Neither was there any sympathy for KilBride who had ‘a large and comfortable three-storey stone house, with tennis lawn attached’. Similarly the tenants were ‘in first class residences fit for anybody, and they all appeared comfortable and well-to-do’.<sup>414</sup>

Mr O’Brien, in short, has come three thousand miles to ask us to condemn the Governor-General of the Dominion for having, in his capacity as a land owner in another hemisphere, treated a number of defaulting tenants with a forbearance to which defaulting tenants in this country are entire strangers.<sup>415</sup>

The *Toronto Mail* claimed that no tenant in Ontario, lived in a ‘mansion’ of the same quality as KilBride, with ‘gardens, hothouse, carriage way and lodge’ attached.<sup>416</sup> The *Family Herald and Weekly Star* of Montreal, stated that if Dunne and KilBride had rented farms of equal value on the Island of Montreal and had refused to fulfill the conditions of their leases, they would have been proceeded against by their landlord as a matter of course, and no one would have dreamt of reproaching the landlord with being

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<sup>409</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 239.

<sup>410</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 239-40.

<sup>411</sup> *F.J.*, 14 May 1887.

<sup>412</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>413</sup> *T.M.*, 13 May 1887.

<sup>414</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>415</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>416</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 May 1887.

harsh or exacting.<sup>417</sup> Any man of the calibre of John William Dunne, ‘who could keep a horse’ capable of running on Punchestown racecourse was scarcely an object of commiseration.<sup>418</sup> In relation to Lansdowne’s ‘undisputed’ title to his property, the *San Francisco Argonaut* maintained that judicial rents were fixed by the courts, in the interest of Irish tenantry; that these contracts were entered into ‘intelligently, without force, fraud, or suppression of facts and that they were ‘sealed and solemnised by every precaution the law of England throws around a civil contract’.<sup>419</sup> Since ‘Papistry versus Protestantism’ was the political war-cry in Ireland, it was criminal of O’Brien to ‘incite an ignorant, superstitious, and priest-ridden people to acts of riot and violence, murder and arson’.<sup>420</sup>

The *Irish Times* in a series of articles published in June 1887 headed: ‘The truth about Mr O’Brien’s tour in Canada’, maintained that the accounts of the Montreal meeting as reported by *United Ireland* and the majority of the American press, grossly exaggerated its scale and impact, whereas in fact it was ‘neither representative nor numerous’.<sup>421</sup> Quoting Reuters who had a representative at the Montreal meeting, there were seats for about 1,200 at the outside in the Albert Hall, of which ‘a very visible proportion were vacant’, whereas the *New York Herald* reported that the building was packed with 3,000 representative citizens, ‘who all but thirsted for Lord Lansdowne’s blood’. The *Irish Times* further maintained that O’Brien got a cold reception in Montreal and had a small audience, consisting in the main of the lower orders of Montreal society.<sup>422</sup> The *Daily Spectator and Tribune* of Hamilton in agreeing with this assessment, stated that ‘blatant hornblower’ O’Brien came to Canada ‘to beg a little money’ and that he was shrewd enough to understand that the more he ‘flourished his trumpet’ the more money he would get.<sup>423</sup> The *Intelligencer* of Belville, Ontario, in a short paragraph entitled ‘O’Brien’s Failure’ commented that if O’Brien the agitator was gifted with common sense, he would at once have put an end to his quixotic crusade in

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<sup>417</sup> *San Francisco Argonaut*, 14 May 1887, hereafter cited as *S.F.A.*, quoting from the *Family Herald and Weekly Star*, 13 May 1887.

<sup>418</sup> *I.T.*, 8 June 1887.

<sup>419</sup> *S.F.A.*, 14 May 1887.

<sup>420</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>421</sup> *I.T.*, 3 June 1887.

<sup>422</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>423</sup> *Daily Spectator and Tribune*, 13 May 1887.



Canada, the only effect of which would be 'to make the Marquess of Lansdowne more popular than ever'.<sup>424</sup>

Meanwhile a protest against the assault of agitator O'Brien on the Queen's representative was being planned to coincide with Lansdowne's return to Government House in Ottawa later in the month. Mayor Stewart instigated proceedings by circulating a requisition for signatures in favour of a public meeting, to consider organising a 'peaceful but splendid' reception for this purpose. 600 signatures were quickly added and subsequently during the next few weeks the citizens of Ottawa were busy organizing this momentous event.<sup>425</sup> A resolution was passed asking the Mayor to declare a civic half-holiday on the date of Lansdowne's arrival.<sup>426</sup> The citizens of Ottawa considered that an attack upon Lansdowne 'would be regarded by Canadians as an attack upon her Majesty herself'.<sup>427</sup>

So long as we remain a part of the Empire, the Governor-General's official position requires that he should be treated with respect.<sup>428</sup>

The reception for the homecoming of Lord and Lady Lansdowne to Ottawa took place on 26 May, when O'Brien was back in Quebec. *St John Sun* reported that up to that time all receptions were compared with that of the Prince of Wales in 1860, but 'the high water mark was passed' by this well-planned celebration.<sup>429</sup> Mayor Stewart was 'regally attired in his crimson robe' and gold chain. The turn of carriages it reported was 'large and varied' and it was above all the people's reception. The Governor General had his 'hat off every second' acknowledging the cheering and the waving of flags.

The little Lansdownes, two damsels resembling their mother, apparently enjoying the proceedings and Lady Lansdowne shed tears when Mr Hesson, the sturdy farmer M.P. took her by the hand. I have shaken hands with Mr Hesson. He does not realise what a tremendous grip he has. If he holds as tight to the constituency of North Perth he will represent it until death grasps him.<sup>430</sup>

A writer describing himself as a republican from Springfield Mass., writing to the *Toronto Mail*, maintained that O'Brien's difficulty, 'like that of all men of insular birth

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<sup>424</sup> *The Intelligencer*, quoted in *I.T.*, 3 June 1887.

<sup>425</sup> *T.M.*, 13 May 1887.

<sup>426</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>427</sup> *O.J.*, 13 May 1887.

<sup>428</sup> *Toronto News*, 12 May 1887.

<sup>429</sup> *St. John Sun*, 3 June 1887, hereafter cited as *S.J.S.*

<sup>430</sup> *Ibid.*

and education' was that he failed to realise that the rest of world had other affairs to attend to beside 'the pet cause which makes his little universe'.<sup>431</sup> Despite adverse publicity in the Canadian papers, O'Brien continued his journey to Toronto on a river-steamer on the St. Lawrence. Howland, the mayor of Toronto, meanwhile summoned a mass meeting in the Queen's Park to demand O'Brien's expulsion from Canada. O'Brien telegraphed him asking for a hearing at this meeting, so that he could 'defend my mission before his citizens'.<sup>432</sup> His request was not granted, but O'Brien felt the Mayor was influenced by an army of fanatics composed of thousands of Orangemen who acted not out of resentment for the forthcoming attack on their Governor General, but 'were worked into a frenzy by a comic mixture of hatred of Popery' and an uninformed belief in the authenticity of the Pigott's forged letters, published in *The Times* to discredit Parnell.<sup>433</sup> Because of the predominance of Protestant immigrants, the Orange Order was indeed one of the largest ethnic voluntary associations in Toronto and the city became known as 'The Belfast of Canada.'<sup>434</sup> Here the order was overwhelmingly working-class in composition, the lodges being filled with labourers, street railway workers, grooms, teamsters, and others from the lower levels of Toronto's working class.<sup>435</sup> Riots were routine events in Toronto, but the jubilee riots of 1875 were undoubtedly the bloodiest sectarian struggles in Toronto's history.<sup>436</sup> The second most violent riot occurred, when O'Donovan Rossa was invited to lecture at the St. Patrick's Day celebrations of 1878. Catholic processions on St. Patrick's Day were commonplace, but the invitation extended to an 'Irish revolutionary' was an affront that could not go unchallenged.<sup>437</sup> In this case the Orangemen of Toronto failed to prevent the lecture from taking place and when Rossa managed to escape after his speech, they stoned the hall and later attacked Cosgrove's Hotel.<sup>438</sup>

The meeting organised by the mayor W. H. Howland of Toronto on Saturday 14 May, in protest against the mission of O'Brien, was attended by 15,000 men in Queen's Park. It was reported that this meeting 'was the largest ever held in Toronto, described

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<sup>431</sup> *T.M.*, 14 May 1887.

<sup>432</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 241.

<sup>433</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>434</sup> Kealey, Gregory S, 'The orange order in Toronto: Religious riot and the working class' in O'Driscoll, Robert & Reynolds Lorna (eds.). *The untold story: The Irish in Canada*, (Toronto, 1998), ii, p. 829, hereafter cited as Kealey.

<sup>435</sup> Kealey, p. 835.

<sup>436</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 845.

<sup>437</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>438</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 846.

by the *Toronto Mail* as a meeting of 'earnest, fair-minded men'.<sup>439</sup> The bishop of Algoma protested at O'Brien's 'audacious impertinence' in coming to Canada to insult their Governor General and warned that if one word in breach of the law was spoken by O'Brien, he would become 'a guest of the city of Toronto'.<sup>440</sup> H.E. Clarke M.P.P. reminded O'Brien's party that if an insult was offered to the representative of the Queen, it was offered to the Queen herself, which would be a very dangerous course of action to undertake. He claimed that O'Brien and his party gave bad advice 'to the poor deluded tenants' in Ireland and were therefore responsible for the misery and discontent in Ireland, and not the landlords they so bitterly attacked.<sup>441</sup> The Anglican Bishop of Toronto stated that the people of Canada would not be persuaded that Lansdowne was an oppressive landlord.

The people of Toronto were too loyal to listen to the voice of sedition, too happy and prosperous under the benign reign of their sovereign whose jubilee they were about to celebrate in the dominion, to be led away by the utterances of leaders of faction like O'Brien.<sup>442</sup>

Professor Goldwin Smith<sup>443</sup> argued that the settlement of Ireland's problems should always be the responsibility of the parliament of the United Kingdom, but if the Irish became lawless, parliament should strengthen the arm of the law, otherwise civilization and society would perish.<sup>444</sup> James L. Hughes, an inspector of public schools responding to O'Brien's allegation that Lansdowne had evicted Irish tenants with Canadian money, stated that the amount paid to Lansdowne in Canada, was not sufficient to meet the expenses of his office. The Toronto meeting terminated with the singing of 'God Save the Queen'.<sup>445</sup>

The Property Committee in Toronto held a special meeting on 12 May where it was emphatically decided to cancel a permit allowing O'Brien to lecture in St. Andrew's Hall on the 17 May.<sup>446</sup> James A. Mulligan of the National League, who had made the application, was present and stated that no other hall was made available. Most of the aldermen had no doubt that there would be a riot and consequently the hall would be

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<sup>439</sup> *L.E.*, 21 May 1887; *T.M.*, 16 May 1887.

<sup>440</sup> *T.M.*, 16 May 1887.

<sup>441</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>442</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>443</sup> Smith was also president of the Loyal and Patriotic Union in Toronto.

<sup>444</sup> *T.M.*, 16 May 1887.

<sup>445</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>446</sup> *Toronto News*, 13 May 1887.

wrecked. The vote for the use of the hall by O'Brien was defeated by five to two.<sup>447</sup> Now that Toronto had 'shut its doors against us', the organisers had no alternative but to hold the meeting outdoors in the 'most conspicuous place in Toronto', the Queen's Park.<sup>448</sup> As early as 22 April a correspondent of the *Toronto World* gave a strong warning to O'Brien that 'we will rise in our might and put the man out of this city, if he shows his face here'.<sup>449</sup> Although it was threatened that O'Brien would never enter Toronto, 'or at the worst, never be allowed to leave it unless in our coffins', not every organ in the dominion was intolerant to the visit. The principal Liberal organ, the *Montreal Herald* which was previously adverse to the O'Brien's visit, now approved his course, and declared that if Lord Lansdowne had any answer, 'the public will expect it from him.'<sup>450</sup> The *Toronto Globe* believed that a very large majority of the people of Toronto thought that just as a Canadian Parliament was necessary for Canada, so an Irish legislature was required in like manner to settle Irish matters.<sup>451</sup>

The newspaper correspondents estimated the attendance at the nationalist Queen's Park meeting in Toronto at 15,000, plus a large force of police.<sup>452</sup> According to O'Brien 'the Orange operatives of the factories were let loose' and with the total disregard of the police, made three separate charges on the platform, but were driven back each time by the nationalists present, who 'to the end maintained an unbreakable wall around the platform against rioters and police combined'.<sup>453</sup> The *Leinster Express* reported that the meeting was very disorderly and 'the mob were charged more than once by the police, and although no serious injuries were inflicted, the scene was one of the wildest that could be witnessed and baffles all description'.<sup>454</sup> The *Ottawa Journal* looked on the disturbances, as being 'a glorious O'Brien triumph' but the people of Toronto would have been of better service to themselves by staying at home and holding their tongues.<sup>455</sup> The *Buffalo Express*, admitted that the Toronto police behaved badly at the O'Brien meeting, yet the 'loyal police and military' cleared the way for him on his arrival and though they did not afterward protect his meeting, they 'did not charge upon

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<sup>447</sup> Ibid.

<sup>448</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 242-3.

<sup>449</sup> *Toronto World*, 22 Apr. 1887.

<sup>450</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 242-3.

<sup>451</sup> *T.G.*, 16 May 1887.

<sup>452</sup> *L.E.*, 21 May 1887.

<sup>453</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 243-4.

<sup>454</sup> *L.E.*, 21 May 1887.

<sup>455</sup> *O.J.*, 18 May 1887.

it, break it up, and imprison the speaker'.<sup>456</sup> The *Toronto Mail* and the *Irish Times* regretted that O'Brien was not allowed to deliver his address in peace as nothing could 'justify the suppression of free speech'.<sup>457</sup> It was also pointed out that not a single member of the dominion parliament or the Ontario or Quebec legislature had appeared with O'Brien on the platform.<sup>458</sup>

In defence of the third Marquess's policy of assisted emigration from his Kerry estate in the immediate aftermath of the famine and in direct refutation of O'Brien allegation that these tenants were boarded on emigrant ships to perish miserably, the *Toronto Mail* argued that the Kerry estate was congested and as the landlord had not received a 'sou for four or five years', he at his own expense, offered to assist his tenants if they so wished and 'a large number eagerly seized the chance'.<sup>459</sup> Another rebuttal came from James H. Richardson of Toronto in a letter to the editor of the *Toronto Mail*. Richardson disclaimed O'Brien's allegations made at meetings in Montreal and Toronto, that 6,000 of Lansdowne's tenants were sent to 'the pest houses of the St. Lawrence' to die 'without coffin or shroud'.<sup>460</sup> These statements he claimed were 'so vile' and the events of the Irish famine had occurred 'so long ago' that existing generations in Canada knew next to nothing about them.<sup>461</sup>

A *New York World* correspondent allegedly had a short interview with Lansdowne at Government House, Toronto. Lansdowne stated that the charge made against his grandfather of cruel injustice and oppression in 1847 was false.<sup>462</sup>

His estates were depleted and his revenues seriously affected; yet notwithstanding the causes which led to that unhappy year, he paid the cost of those families who desired to emigrate to America out of his own pocket, while those who remained were sustained nearly or almost wholly at his own personal expense.<sup>463</sup>

In relation to O'Brien's suggestion that as Lord Cowper's Commission had advised the revision of judicial rents in consequence of agricultural depression, the *Toronto Mail* stated that all that was recommended in fact was 'a revision at the end of five years, the

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<sup>456</sup> *Buffalo Express*, 22 May 1887, hereafter cited as *B.E.*

<sup>457</sup> *T.M.*, 18 May 1887; *I.T.*, 8 June 1887.

<sup>458</sup> *T.M.*, 18 May 1887.

<sup>459</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>460</sup> *T.M.*, 24 May 1887.

<sup>461</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>462</sup> *Evening news*, 18 May 1887, quoted from *New York World*.

<sup>463</sup> *Ibid.*

land court fixing for a period of fifteen'.<sup>464</sup>

For if they [the tenants] are to obtain a revision whenever prices happen to be low, while Lord Lansdowne is by law debarred from increasing the judicial rent when prices are high, what becomes of the equity of the arrangement?<sup>465</sup>

The *Toronto Mail's* most stinging attack was levelled at KilBride, who had alleged that Lansdowne was a rack-renter, whereas when land improvements on KilBride's farm was taken into consideration, his rent in real terms was 'within fifty-four pounds of Griffiths's valuation'. Also it alleged that KilBride sub-let some thirty acres of his holding to a man named Lalor, charging him twenty shillings an acre, while paying Lansdowne only eleven shillings.<sup>466</sup> *The Evening Telegram* sarcastically commented that it was only fair to say that there had been general disappointment at KilBride appearing in a new pair of trousers.<sup>467</sup> Later that evening at Rossin House, a banquet 'of enormous dimensions' was organised by the nationalists of Toronto in honour of O'Brien and KilBride.<sup>468</sup>

On the evening of 18 May, O'Brien visited De la Salle Institute in Toronto and later was presented with a handsome bouquet by the pupils of St. Michael's school, finishing up with the singing of 'O the Shamrock' and 'God Save Ireland'.<sup>469</sup> This was followed with a trip around the bay, where O'Brien gave interviews to pressmen. Later, when O'Brien passed the foundry in Church Street, the workmen rushed to the windows to see him, raising cheers for Lansdowne and hooting and groaning the agitator.<sup>470</sup>

That night crowds 'of many thousands' began to collect in the principal streets of Toronto and marched to O'Brien's hotel, 'where they hooted and groaned violently', but no further serious disturbance occurred.<sup>471</sup> Lansdowne attended the theatre in Toronto that evening and was received with an 'outburst of the wildest enthusiasm' when the whole audience rose to their feet and sang the National Anthem. When Lansdowne left the building, the horses were taken from his carriage and drawn by the

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<sup>464</sup> *T.M.*, 18 May 1887.

<sup>465</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>466</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>467</sup> *The Evening Telegram*, 18 May 1887.

<sup>468</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 245.

<sup>469</sup> *T.M.*, 19 May 1887.

<sup>470</sup> *Ibid.*, 21 May 1887.

<sup>471</sup> *L.E.*, 21 May 1887.

crowd to Government House, where the Governor General made a speech, thanking the people for their loyalty.<sup>472</sup>

At about 8.15 pm, O'Brien 'wearing a silk hat' set off from Rossin House with Mr Mulligan<sup>473</sup>, president of the local branch of the land league and were later joined by the secretary, a young barrister named Cahill.<sup>474</sup> Three policemen on duty with Sergeant Adair followed the main party with R. B. Teefy<sup>475</sup> and KilBride in the rear unnoticed.<sup>476</sup> The *Leinster Express* reported that O'Brien, against the strongest advice, had made plans to take a walk in Toronto that evening; that he left Rossin House with Denis KilBride, Wall, the New York reporter and several friends. Some of the spectators were heard to remark that O'Brien was 'mad to walk the streets without a strong guard', while others allegedly attributed O'Brien's action to his desire for notoriety in inciting the citizens of Toronto.<sup>477</sup>

It wasn't long before they were spotted by a bad tempered group that grew in number and began a 'muttering of growls and curses'.<sup>478</sup> The crowd tried to get at O'Brien, but the police kept them back.<sup>479</sup> Sergeant Adair was struck three times on the head with stones, his helmet saving him from injury.<sup>480</sup> At that stage, J. M. Wall of the *New York Tribune*, hurried up with the news that a torchlight procession was being organised to escort Lord Lansdowne to and from the theatre and that it would be best to return to the hotel, before violence broke out in the streets. Cahill received a blow of a heavy club on the head, which 'laid him prostrate on the footpath beside me in a pool of blood'.<sup>481</sup> A policeman who was present 'took to his heels in a fit of the most abject panic' but when questioned afterwards stated that if O'Brien wanted to throw away his life, he didn't, as he had a wife and children to think of.<sup>482</sup> The mob continued to chase, throwing paving stones. Wall, of the *New York Tribune* was struck with a large stone on the base of the skull and lay on the street with blood gushing from his head. In the ensuing chaos, Wall

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<sup>472</sup> Ibid.

<sup>473</sup> Mulligan according to the *Toronto World*, 7 May 1887, was a law partner of Sir John MacDonald, chief advisor of the Marquess of Lansdowne.

<sup>474</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 245; *T.M.*, 19 May 1887.

<sup>475</sup> Teefy was probably a member of the Toronto Land League in Canada.

<sup>476</sup> *T.M.*, 19 May 1887.

<sup>477</sup> Ibid.

<sup>478</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 245-6; *L.E.*, 21 May 1887.

<sup>479</sup> *T.M.*, 19 May 1887.

<sup>480</sup> Ibid.

<sup>481</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 246.

<sup>482</sup> Ibid.

was assisted back to Rossin House<sup>483</sup> by some passers-by, while KilBride and other Irishmen remained with O'Brien, who were continually harassed by the rioters. KilBride was struck on the arm and O'Brien's silk hat was knocked off by one of the missiles. He also received a 'tremendous thud, which broke one of my ribs'.<sup>484</sup> Two men succeeded in catching hold of O'Brien but the police chased his assailants away.<sup>485</sup>

O'Brien was struck in the stomach, 'which almost doubled him up', as he tried to open the door to Belcher, Sutherland & Co. on Wellington Street, but the door was locked.<sup>486</sup> Eventually he found refuge in a bicycle store, which the rioters quickly attacked, 'wrecking the windows, and forged an entrance through the doorway'.<sup>487</sup> The bicycle store was owned by a man named Lalor, from Queen's County. The mob proceeded to attack, shouting slogans such as "hang him", "three cheers for Lord Lansdowne" and "down with the dynamiter," but O'Brien and his friends escaped through the rear of the workshop into Bilton Brothers' tailoring store, 103 King Street West, owned by a Dublin Protestant, where most of the workers were Irish.<sup>488</sup> The rioters despairingly marched off to join the Governor-General's torchlight procession from the theatre.<sup>489</sup> While those inside waited for the howls to die away, a plain-clothed Tipperary policeman<sup>490</sup> called to the tailor's shop to collect his tunic, which had been torn the previous day at the meeting in the Queen's Park. The *Toronto Mail* reported Switzer being on duty watching the Heintzman's building and fearing the crowd might follow and cause a disturbance, assisted O'Brien into Bilton's store.<sup>491</sup> When about two hours had elapsed, the policeman escorted O'Brien 'through a labyrinth of dark laneways', but the hoarse cries of the rioters, who were still on their tracks, were heard approaching and Switzer the policemen offered his back to O'Brien in climbing a ten foot high wall at the back of Rosin House.<sup>492</sup> The rioters were reluctant to admit failure, 'for they hung about the hotel jeering and hooting right up till midnight'.<sup>493</sup>

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<sup>483</sup> The *T.M.* reported that Wall was taken to Hooper's drug store, where his head was bandaged.

<sup>484</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 247; *T.M.*, 19 May 1887.

<sup>485</sup> *T.M.*, 19 May 1887.

<sup>486</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>487</sup> *L.E.*, 21 May 1887; *Evening memories*, p. 247.

<sup>488</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 247; *T.M.*, 19 May 1887; *L.E.*, 21 May 1887.

<sup>489</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 248.

<sup>490</sup> The *T.M.* doesn't exactly agree with O'Brien's version and named the policeman as patrol constable W. R. Switzer (no 16).

<sup>491</sup> *T.M.*, 19 May 1887.

<sup>492</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 248-9; *L.E.* 21 May 1887.

<sup>493</sup> *L.E.*, 21 May 1887.



O'Brien interviewed later that evening was reported as 'laughing over the incident and bore no mark or bruise'.<sup>494</sup> He stated that he was struck three times, twice on the body and once on the wrist, but nothing was severe.<sup>495</sup> *The Free Press* surmised that the conduct of the Toronto mob was 'the making of William O'Brien' as without it, his mission would have been 'a comparative failure'.<sup>496</sup> The *Ottawa Daily Citizen* considered the stoning of O'Brien and his friends in the streets to be a 'cowardly and disgraceful one' and the crowd who attacked 'an unprotected stranger' in the streets of Toronto were a disgrace to their country and their cause.<sup>497</sup> However, it was O'Brien who 'stirred the smoldering flames' and was the real cause of the fire reaching the gunpowder in Toronto, when he sowed the seeds of bigotry and bad feeling. At the nationalist meeting in Queen's Park the previous day, O'Brien could not be heard except by those within 'ten feet of the platform'. When the citizens of Toronto read the newspapers the following day, it was only then that they realised what O'Brien has actually said and 'not till then did trouble start'. He spoke very violently, with the intention of provoking an attack on his person, with expressions such as 'poor ignorant Orangeman' and 'poor unfortunate fools' aimed at those who tried to attack him on the platform.<sup>498</sup>

*The Week* hoped that O'Brien would perceive that the world was wider than Ireland, and had other interests 'besides fictitious Irish grievances'.<sup>499</sup> The *Buffalo Express* thought O'Brien was brave but rash to walk the streets of Toronto. His cause may have been 'questionable'; he was 'sincere' in his motives; his bravery in meeting his hooting and stone-throwing adversaries 'excited admiration to a certain degree', but in Toronto he went unnecessarily far and made a serious mistake.<sup>500</sup>

With a great deal of bravado and against the advice of his friends, he insisted upon walking the streets, although a howling mob was surging about the hotel where he was staying. He was hustled and jostled and chased and jeered and hissed and groaned at and finally after his chimney-pot hat had been made the target for numerous bricks....he escaped with difficulty.<sup>501</sup>

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<sup>494</sup> *T.M.*, 19 May 1887.

<sup>495</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>496</sup> *The Free Press*, 20 May 1887.

<sup>497</sup> *O.D.C.*, 18 May 1887.

<sup>498</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>499</sup> *The Week*, 19 May 1887.

<sup>500</sup> *B.E.*, 22 May 1887.

<sup>501</sup> *Ibid.*

The independent conservative *Toronto Mail* felt that because of O'Brien's poison rhetoric, the Irish-Catholic fellow-citizens in Toronto and elsewhere in Canada, would feel the effects in their business as well as in social life, long after the visit has faded from public recollection.<sup>502</sup> O'Brien's campaign extended to Ottawa on 19 May. About 500 people, 'including a large number of ladies', welcomed him at the station.<sup>503</sup> The only clergyman among the crowd according to the *Toronto Mail* was Father Whelan of St. Patrick's cathedral and one sergeant sufficed to keep the crowd in order. After being 'subjected to violent hand-shaking and embracing', O'Brien and his party were transferred in 'an elegant carriage, drawn by four white horses' to Russell House.<sup>504</sup> The *Ottawa Daily Citizen*, although declaring in favour of freedom of speech, wanted nothing to do with the 'assailant of Lord Lansdowne in his official position of Governor General', especially as he had been one of the 'most capable, efficient and we venture to say popular of viceroys'. Further, the relations existing between him and his tenants were no concern of Canadians.<sup>505</sup> KilBride was described 'as a gentleman farmer who lived on Lord Lansdowne's Kerry estate in fine style, posing as a martyr, a victim of Lansdowne's tyranny and oppression'.<sup>506</sup> KilBride, the 'victim of landlord tyranny' was earlier described by the *Toronto Mail* as 'a very fashionably dressed, well-got up young gentlemen' whose gloves were irreproachable, and 'his cigars of the best brands'.<sup>507</sup> The *Toronto Mail* noted that there was about as much difference between the evicted tenants at Luggacurren and the tenants who were left homeless in the Glenbeigh Valley<sup>508</sup>, as there was 'between paradise and a penitentiary'.<sup>509</sup> O'Brien and his party were escorted to and from their meetings in Ottawa by students from the Oblate College, where O'Brien experienced 'generous friendship and noble tolerance'.<sup>510</sup> The *Ottawa Journal* stated that all was quiet in Ottawa and the city was to be sincerely congratulated, for 'beyond singing and shouting in the streets by a limited number of hot-heads', nothing unusual happened.<sup>511</sup> However the *Ottawa Daily Citizen* claimed that O'Brien's reception was 'anything but ostentations' and was in fact dull, with between five and six

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<sup>502</sup> *T.M.*, quoted in *O.D.C.*, 18 May 1887.

<sup>503</sup> *T.M.*, 20 May 1887.

<sup>504</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>505</sup> *O.D.C.*, 19 May 1887.

<sup>506</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>507</sup> *T.M.*, 18 Apr. 1887.

<sup>508</sup> Reference to Roe, a land agent evicting, burning and demolishing houses of the tenants in Glenbeigh, as witnessed by Mr Conybeare M.P. for Cornwall, in Jan. 1887, see *I.T.*, 26 Oct. 1886.

<sup>509</sup> *T.M.*, 20 Apr. 1887.

<sup>510</sup> *Evening memories*, pp 251-2.

<sup>511</sup> *O.J.*, 20 May 1887.

hundred cheering him at the railway station.<sup>512</sup> A correspondent of the *Evening Post* in New York, Arthur W. Gundry, witnessed the events in Ottawa from his office window, which was facing Russell House. He declared that the ‘surging multitude’ who waited for his arrival was generously estimated at between 200 and 300 and was nothing to the crowd who ‘assembled on the same spot a few weeks before to listen to the free concert of a traveling theatrical combination’.<sup>513</sup>

*The Free Press* of Ottawa stated the meeting at the roller rink was ‘an immense success’, but it would have been otherwise if O’Brien had been allowed to have his say and depart in peace from wherever he lectured.<sup>514</sup> According to the *Toronto Mail*, the lecture was crowded, while the platform was decorated with the flags of Great Britain and the United States, plus the following mottoes: ‘God save Ireland’, ‘Home Rule’, ‘Justice to Ireland’ and ‘Céad Míle Fáilte to Ireland’s patriot’.<sup>515</sup> The prominent people on the platform were Senator O’Donoghue, four priests, Whelan, Foley, Divine and Cole and Mr Baskerville, ex M.P.P. The earlier part of the meeting was disturbed by a counter demonstration outside, cheering and singing, ‘God Save the Queen’, and ‘We’ll Hang O’Brien on a Sour Apple Tree’. The Archbishop of Halifax in a telegram stated he was shocked as a Canadian and ‘humiliated at the vile blackguardism of Toronto and its educated ruffianism under Mayor Howland’, whom he named as being chiefly responsible.<sup>516</sup> The speeches of O’Brien and KilBride ‘were a repetition of earlier speeches in Montreal, Quebec and Toronto’, abusing ‘His Excellency’ as a landlord and ‘stirring up’ animosity against him as Governor General.<sup>517</sup> Without actually stating that Lansdowne was directly involved in the orchestrated violence in Toronto the previous evening, O’Brien intimated that it was organised ‘in Lord Lansdowne’s interest, by Lord Lansdowne’s friends and almost under Lord Lansdowne’s window’ and further that Lansdowne really didn’t realise the terrible consequences of his visit to Toronto at that time.<sup>518</sup> Also that three unarmed men strolling peacefully through the streets of Toronto were attacked most viciously, could not take from the most basic right of mankind in a civilized society, to walk through the streets, ‘without offending or

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<sup>512</sup> *O.D.C.* 20 May 1887.

<sup>513</sup> *Evening Post*, 2 June 1887.

<sup>514</sup> *The Free Press*, 20 May 1887.

<sup>515</sup> *T.M.*, 20 May 1887.

<sup>516</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>517</sup> *O.D.C.*, 20 May 1887.

<sup>518</sup> *T.M.*, 20 May 1887.

insulting anybody'.<sup>519</sup> The *Toronto Mail* thought that the blame attached to O'Brien in equal measure to his Orange attackers, as it was 'his own willfulness and obstinacy in deliberately persisting in a blunder', despite advanced warnings and entreaties and his direct experience of popular annoyance that his visit to Canada prompted.<sup>520</sup> But O'Brien was not deflected from his chosen mission, when he pointed out that the justification for the adoption of the plan of campaign on Lansdowne's Queen's County estate, was KilBride and Dunne's principled refusal to accept a bribe of liberal reductions for themselves, when the judicial tenants were refused any abatement whatsoever.

These reductions were offered as a bribe to KilBride and Dunne to leave the poorer tenants to their fate.<sup>521</sup>

O'Brien also informed the meeting that Trench was also the agent for Mrs Adair on an adjoining estate to Lord Lansdowne's and that on the day he refused a reduction of fifteen per cent on the judicial rents in Luggacurren, 'he accepted it on Mrs Adair's'. KilBride attempted to redress allegations made against him in the *Toronto Mail* the previous day, in relation to Lalor, a former sub-tenant of his, whom he allegedly rack-rented. KilBride stated that Lalor, instead of paying him a pound, only paid fourteen shillings and that he owed two and a half year's rent. KilBride further alleged that these spurious allegations could only have been inspired by Lansdowne himself.<sup>522</sup>

The *Ottawa Daily Citizen* regarded the attacks on O'Brien and his friends in Toronto the previous evening as 'rowdyism' and 'an outrage' which no one could defend.<sup>523</sup> The *Ottawa Free Press* agreed that what happened in Toronto should not reflect on Canada as a whole, as Toronto mobs had acquired a rather unenviable reputation for 'stoning religious processions made up chiefly of women and children and by other acts of rowdyism'.<sup>524</sup> Before leaving Ottawa, O'Brien and his party were driven through the Parliament grounds, 'but O'Brien did not enter the Commons building'.<sup>525</sup> The *Toronto*

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<sup>519</sup> Ibid.

<sup>520</sup> Ibid., 23 May 1887.

<sup>521</sup> Ibid., 20 May 1887.

<sup>522</sup> Ibid.

<sup>523</sup> *O.D.C.*, 20 May 1887.

<sup>524</sup> *Ottawa Free Press*, 17 May 1887.

<sup>525</sup> *T.M.*, 21 May 1887.

*Mail* reported that the feeling throughout the city was one of gladness that no major disturbance occurred during O'Brien's stay.<sup>526</sup>

## 2.5 KINGSTON, HAMILTON AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

After a quiet departure from Ottawa, seen off at the station by about 200 people, it was a different matter in Kingston, where the Orange Grand Master, Marshall, issued an order as O'Brien claimed, 'as plain as a pikestaff for my assassination'.<sup>527</sup> Kingston and Hamilton were 'historic strongholds of the Orange organisation'.<sup>528</sup> The *New York Herald* warned that the road which O'Brien and KilBride had travelled so far was smooth in comparison with what lay before them, but they would 'strike the old fashioned corduroy at Kingston and Hamilton'.<sup>529</sup> It was expected that trouble would break out at North Fontenac *en route* to Kingston, where Orangemen were 'as thick as bees', but all was peaceful.<sup>530</sup> The party arrived in Kingston at 5.30pm on 20 May, to be met by about 200 people 'without the slightest incident' and from there to Burnett house in the city. The address of welcome made by the Land League was devoted almost exclusively to the cause of Home Rule in Ireland with no mention of the Governor General or the evictions at Luggacurren.<sup>531</sup> According to O'Brien, 'six apologetic-looking policemen represented the entire strength of law and order' in Kingston, after lining up in front of the hotel on O'Brien's arrival, disappeared for the rest of the night.<sup>532</sup> The grand master called up the local company of Volunteers with their rifles and bayonets and 'the town was their own'.<sup>533</sup>

The meeting that night at the roller rink was attended by about 400 people, 'having paid twenty-five cent admission fee'.<sup>534</sup> The inside of the building was decorated with pictures of Davitt and Parnell and banners and flags, 'including the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes'. O'Brien asked those present to assist in fighting coercion in Ireland and entreated them to bring Lord Lansdowne to his senses by sending him home. KilBride in an hour-long speech thanked the citizens of Kingston for their enthusiastic welcome, unlike the 'ignorant mob in Toronto, who answered hard facts with cobble

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<sup>526</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>527</sup> *Ibid.*; *Evening memories*, p. 252.

<sup>528</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 251.

<sup>529</sup> *The New York Herald*, 19 May 1887.

<sup>530</sup> *T.M.*, 21 May 1887.

<sup>531</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>532</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 252.

<sup>533</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>534</sup> *T.M.*, 21 May 1887.

stones'. Meanwhile a mob of thousands had gathered outside the rink, waiting and ready to attack the O'Brien party as they left the meeting.<sup>535</sup> When O'Brien appeared outside, the cry went up: "There he is, give it to him" and the mob closed in.<sup>536</sup> O'Brien was pursued by the mob 'with bludgeons and clubbed guns' whose watchword was "look out for the man with the plug-hat". O'Brien's 'plug-hat' was then snatched from his head by a friend and replaced with a cap, to the confusion of the mob, who mistakenly attacked an innocent elderly JP who had attended O'Brien's meeting.<sup>537</sup>

The war-whoops were instantly diverted in pursuit of this elderly gentleman, who, indiscreetly taking flight, brought the uplifted clubs and gunstocks whirling madly in his train.<sup>538</sup>

A young Irishman named Ryan directed O'Brien through a gateway into a coffin-store of an Orange undertaker.<sup>539</sup> The mob numbering at this stage about 1,000 never thought of looking here and in default, wrecked the office of the *Canadian Freeman*.<sup>540</sup> The police were out in full force, but could not handle the large crowd.<sup>541</sup> When the uproar grew fainter, O'Brien escaped back to his hotel. The mob proceeded to his hotel and smashed the windows. O'Brien stated that a deliberate attempt was made to murder him. Loud complaints were heard against the police arrangements.<sup>542</sup> A priest arrived later with a letter of sympathy and indignation from the Bishop of Kingston, Dr Cleary.<sup>543</sup> However, the *Kingston News* declared that O'Brien's visit was a failure in that 'his reception was remarkably tame, his meeting small and his success a chimera'.

The *Kingston News* argued that land tenure was not the same for Canadian farmers, who didn't share the privileged position of Irish tenants. For instance the legislature of Ontario had recently passed an act giving landlords the right to evict tenants without notice when fifteen days arrears of rent became due, without any compensation for improvements.<sup>544</sup> In Ireland tenants could not be evicted once the rent was paid and then only when a year's rent was due; the tenant as in KilBride's case could redeem their farms within six months on paying arrears due; judicial rents were fixed in courts;

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<sup>535</sup> Ibid.

<sup>536</sup> Ibid.

<sup>537</sup> Ibid; *Evening memories*, p. 253.

<sup>538</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 253.

<sup>539</sup> Ibid., pp 253-4.

<sup>540</sup> *T.M.*, 21 May 1887.

<sup>541</sup> Ibid.

<sup>542</sup> *L.E.*, 28 May 1887.

<sup>543</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 254.

<sup>544</sup> *Kingston News*, 23 May 1887.

tenants could sell their tenant-right by public auction, were entitled to compensation for disturbance and improvements made and finally the land acts had enabled tenants to purchase their farms if they so wished.<sup>545</sup>

Next morning O'Brien crossed lake Ontario to Cape Vincent on the American shore. Here he was treated like a hero.<sup>546</sup> He had been bandaged up for the journey to Ottawa and Kingston, but with a fractured rib, 'complicated with a pleuritic attack not easily distinguishable from pleurisy' he could not endure much more. As he left Cape Vincent for Niagara, via Syracuse, O'Brien was reported as being 'fairly worn out' from all the attacks and the ongoing public meetings.<sup>547</sup> At the city of Watertown, where he had to change trains for Niagara, a large reception was organised but 'before half the town had passed through', he fainting and after been attended to by a doctor, he was put on a train to Niagara. The doctor declared he was suffering from 'severe internal injuries, being bruised and battered in several places'. In fact he had a broken rib.<sup>548</sup> Before reaching Niagara and with one day before the meeting in Hamilton, he had become very ill.<sup>549</sup> His doctors strongly advised not going to Hamilton, but 'jawsmith' O'Brien felt there was 'no alternative but to make the attempt'.<sup>550</sup>

Accordingly, bandaged up to the armpits like a trussed fowl, I was early next morning on the cars for the frontier close at hand.<sup>551</sup>

To make matters worse for O'Brien and his group, their arrival in Hamilton coincided with the Queen's birthday.<sup>552</sup> However, 5,000<sup>553</sup> nationalists assembled in the Palace Rink buildings on 23 May, and the entire audience rose to their feet and waved hats and handkerchiefs when O'Brien came forward. Suffering from great pain and in a somewhat exhausted condition, he spoke briefly in a feeble, low voice.<sup>554</sup> However it was reported that 'no prominent citizen was present'. KilBride followed O'Brien in a long speech about the Luggacurren evictions, but the disorder outside the meeting became so loud that the chief of police, McKinnon read the riot act and charged the

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<sup>545</sup> Ibid.

<sup>546</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 255.

<sup>547</sup> *L.E.* 28 May 1887.

<sup>548</sup> Ibid.

<sup>549</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 256.

<sup>550</sup> *Chicago Times*, 25 May 1887; *Evening memories*, p. 256.

<sup>551</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 256-7.

<sup>552</sup> Ibid., p. 257.

<sup>553</sup> The *L.E.* gives the number who attended at about 1,500.

<sup>554</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 257.

crowd with his men several times. Many people were knocked down but the police, who were few in number, were unable to disperse the mob.<sup>555</sup>

When the meeting had concluded, O'Brien left the hall for a closed carriage. Some Orangemen ambushed his carriage in the streets. Inside the carriage with O'Brien were KilBride, Roache and McMahon and on the box seat were the coachman J. Nelson and T. P. O'Brien.<sup>556</sup> The carriage had to cross an open marketplace to get back to their hotel. The ambushers rushed forward and revolver shots were heard, but the carriage occupants believed they were rocket discharges in honour of the Queen's jubilee, until T. P. O'Brien cried out, "My God that was a revolver bullet grazed my hat." More revolvers rang out and Nelson, the coachman was shot through the left wrist.<sup>557</sup> One shot remained in the panel of the carriage door.<sup>558</sup> T. P. O'Brien quickly took charge of the carriage and galloped off, but another mob awaited their arrival at the hotel, who proceeded to groan, hiss and pelt mud and eggs and 'the square was in possession of a raging multitude'.<sup>559</sup> The police appeared to be powerless, so McMahon forced his way through the carriage window, presented a revolver and succeeded in getting O'Brien, KilBride and Roache into the hotel, while Nelson, the coachman, was carried off to hospital, where to save his life, his hand had to be amputated.<sup>560</sup> According to the *Leinster Express*, 'a determined attempt was made to murder Mr O'Brien'.<sup>561</sup> The *Hamilton Spectator* like the *Toronto Mail* for an earlier attack on O'Brien, blamed the nationalist admirers of O'Brien for arousing the active hostility of some hot-headed loyalists after the Hamilton meeting ended.<sup>562</sup> Also the 'hacks'<sup>563</sup> of the O'Brien party drove back to the hotel by the same route they had taken in going to the rink. Further to this it claimed that after the initial pelting of the hacks with rotten eggs, the first shots came from the hacks and not the crowd. The bullets it claimed whizzed over the heads of the crowd but did no harm.<sup>564</sup> Only then was a revolver shot discharged, allegedly by a boy from 'the north side of the street', who immediately dived into the crowd and disappeared. This was the bullet that evidently hit John Nelson in the palm of his left

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<sup>555</sup> *L.E.* 28 May 1887.

<sup>556</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 258.

<sup>557</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 258-9; *L.E.*, 28 May 1887.

<sup>558</sup> *L.E.*, 28 May 1887.

<sup>559</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>560</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 259.

<sup>561</sup> *L.E.*, 28 May 1887.

<sup>562</sup> *Hamilton Spectator*, 24 May 1887.

<sup>563</sup> A hack according to O'Brien was Canadian for street carriages, *Evening memories*, p. 259.

<sup>564</sup> *Hamilton Spectator*, 24 May 1887.



hand and would possibly lead to his hand being amputated, so serious was the damage to his wrist. Even though the O'Brien party later denied firing from the hacks, 'it was idle to deny it as shots were heard and the flashes seen by several persons'.<sup>565</sup> The *Chicago Times* reported that O'Brien had a 'glorious reception' in Hamilton, which 'threw all previous receptions in the shade'.<sup>566</sup> Unfortunately it claimed the marksmen were bad, 'only one shot in eight taking effect on the coachman'.<sup>567</sup>

Notwithstanding that he has been bombarded with unmarketable eggs, and battered with paving stones and shot at and reduced by bruises and terror to a state of extreme bodily weakness, it is plain that 'Editor' O'Brien is not happy.<sup>568</sup>

The following day, Tuesday 24 May, O'Brien now very ill and suffering from nervous exhaustion, left for Niagara, determined 'not to spend the Queen's birthday on British soil'. He reached Albany, New York on Thursday 25 May, and although exhausted and unable to stand, 'he was besieged with callers'. That morning he went to the 'State Capital' and also visited the Senate House where he was introduced to the senators and others. He then proceeded to the House of Assembly and was conducted to the speaker's chair (Husted). After O'Brien's speech, the speaker stated that he has 'special pleasure in inviting Mr O'Brien to have the privilege of the floor of the house just as seven years ago he had invited Mr Parnell'.<sup>569</sup> O'Brien's return visit to Montreal is described by him as follows:

Our return to Montreal for our leavetaking of Canada marked a change of public feeling as startling as that from the wintry snows that still shrouded a good part of lower Canada on our first visit, to the glory of spring flowers and orchard blossoms that covered the country on our return after three weeks.<sup>570</sup>

According to O'Brien, there were 10,000 torches lit in the procession through the city and a 'continuous fusillade of rockets', while in the square 'some 30,000 people' gathered.<sup>571</sup> O'Brien felt that the French population were on his side as they refused to disperse until he made a speech in the best French he could muster.<sup>572</sup> The *Ottawa Daily Citizen* thought otherwise by pointing out that there wasn't a 'single clergymen of any

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<sup>565</sup> Ibid.

<sup>566</sup> *Chicago Times*, 25 May 1887.

<sup>567</sup> Ibid.

<sup>568</sup> Ibid.

<sup>569</sup> *L.E.*, 28 May 1887.

<sup>570</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 260.

<sup>571</sup> Ibid.

<sup>572</sup> Ibid.

denomination on the platform with O'Brien in Montreal.<sup>573</sup> Commenting on O'Brien's journalistic friends on his departure from Montreal for Boston on 28 May, it further stated that he brought from New York, the 'most unscrupulous fabricators that ever exercised their talents to the disgrace of American journalism'.<sup>574</sup> Meanwhile in Ireland O'Brien had been elected MP unopposed for north-east Cork.<sup>575</sup> O'Brien received the news of his election by cablegram from Parnell in a cryptic message with words such as the following: 'Let me beg you will not disappoint the wish of all our colleagues'.<sup>576</sup> Although acknowledging that becoming an MP once more was 'not altogether without its influence', he also maintained that he had a 'temperamental horror' of parliamentary life which 'haunted' him with 'ever-increasing intensity' throughout his public life. In his *Evening Recollections*, O'Brien stated that the House of Commons for him symbolised 'the seat of power of Ireland's enemies, the market-place of their cynical and corrupt party intrigues, although for me, as for most men, not without its higher fascinations'.<sup>577</sup>

From Montreal, still burdened with aches and bruises, O'Brien left for the United States, where 'the flow of enthusiasm was more astonishing still'.<sup>578</sup> He was treated like a hero at the Boston theatre on 29 May and a banquet was held at Parker House, where the 'foremost men in the literary, university, and political life of Massachusetts' attended.<sup>579</sup> In his speech KilBride stated that Lansdowne tried to prevent O'Brien and himself going to Canada, a claim the *Toronto Globe* stated was a shameless farsehood.<sup>580</sup>

He went down to Toronto to excite the Orange spirit and he succeeded. He succeeded in inciting the Orangemen, but they did not succeed in doing Lord Lansdowne's wish. They did not succeed in murdering William O'Brien in the streets of Toronto.<sup>581</sup>

However, not all was rosy in America for William O'Brien. On his way back to New York, he was informed that the working classes of New York were organising a huge procession in his honour. At first glance of the signatories and the proposed resolutions

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<sup>573</sup> *O.D.C.*, 30 May 1887.

<sup>574</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>575</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 261.

<sup>576</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>577</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>578</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 262.

<sup>579</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 263.

<sup>580</sup> *T.G.*, 3 June 1887.

<sup>581</sup> *Ibid.*

which were 'in common form', O'Brien saw no reason for declining an invitation to attend. A delegation from the Irish National League who boarded the train before New York, warned O'Brien's delegation that we were the 'victims of a socialist plot in the interest of Henry George's candidature for the Mayoralty of New York', and his attendance would damage the Irish cause. Another delegation argued that O'Brien could not let down the working classes of New York by not attending.<sup>582</sup>

In a word, both combined to celebrate our escape from an Orange Gehenna in Canada by plunging us into another and a worse one newly lighted by our friends.<sup>583</sup>

O'Brien learned that the reception committee was presided over by John McMickan, who a week or two previously had 'presided over a demonstration in honour of Mr P. J. Tynan, the reputed number one of the conspiracy of the Invincibles.' Also he was well aware that Parnell would get a further lashing in *The Times* in respect of alleged 'secret relations of a murderous character between the Irish leader and the Invincibles'.<sup>584</sup> In New York the parlour of the Hoffman House was 'flooded with all descriptions of foreign revolutionaries' entreating O'Brien to attend, but he declined.<sup>585</sup> The meeting in Union Square was attended by an estimated 100,000 men. An eight foot high harp of roses, originally intended for presentation to O'Brien, was presented instead to a controversial priest named Father McGlynn, 'who anathematised me in at least as vigorous terms as any he complained of in the decrees of his ecclesiastical persecutors'.<sup>586</sup> Henry George was subsequently defeated at the polls in New York. In order to extricate himself and the Irish cause from further controversy, O'Brien set to work upon an interview to tell the plain story of what had happened, depicting the ruin which would have fallen upon Parnell and the Irish cause if he had attended the Union Square meeting. The 'interview' had the desired effect and public opinion condemned the supporters of Henry George 'and applauded our answer'.<sup>587</sup>

On the night of his departure, a banquet was held at Hoffman House in honour of O'Brien which included hundreds of representative men of all shades of US politics and wealth. A presentation of a cheque for \$25,000 was made from the treasurer of the Irish

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<sup>582</sup> *Evening memories*, p. 264.

<sup>583</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 265.

<sup>584</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>585</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 267.

<sup>586</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 268.

<sup>587</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 269.

Parliamentary Fund 'to be disposed of as Parnell pleased'. That night he also received a telegram from Parnell consisting of two words: "Well done".<sup>588</sup> This message O'Brien admitted 'was worth more than the applause of a continent of strangers'.<sup>589</sup> On landing in Ireland O'Brien was conferred with the Freedom of the City of Cork, and the next day he was stopped at every one of the twenty-three stations to Dublin, where again he was conferred with the Freedom of the City of Dublin.<sup>590</sup>

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<sup>588</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 271.

<sup>589</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>590</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 274.

## CHAPTER THREE

### DENIS KILBRIDE M.P. FOR SOUTH KERRY 1887-95

#### 3.1 KILBRIDE ELECTED UNOPPOSED FOR SOUTH KERRY

John Dillon and William O'Brien addressed a large demonstration in support of the Luggacurren campaigners in Athy on Sunday 10 July 1887. Dillon stated that he knew of no event that had occurred in modern Irish politics that had better portrayed 'the reality and determination of the people of this country to be free men at last, and to emancipate themselves from the tyranny which was exercised over them in the past than the action of the tenantry of Luggacurren'.<sup>591</sup> KilBride stated that Lansdowne had made rebels of the people of Ireland, 'rebels as great as ever Michael Davitt had been. The government he claimed, might coerce individuals, 'but they could not coerce a nation'.<sup>592</sup>

However unsuccessful the Canadian expedition may have been for O'Brien and the plight of the Luggacurren tenants, it proved otherwise for KilBride. He was now a hero in the eyes of the nationalists of the country and his fame had spread worldwide. He had proved himself an accomplished orator on many an occasion since the beginning of the eviction campaign in Luggacurren. He was still very much involved in the activities of the Irish National League and he was a Poor Law Guardian and a member of Athy Union. Parnell and a few of his most loyal MPs had almost absolute power in the choosing of candidates to fight general and by-elections and it was not uncommon for the local candidates to stand aside in favour of the Parnellite choice. During the Canadian expedition the *Leinster Express* in an editorial entitled 'Qualified for Parliament', carried the news that KilBride would be nominated by Parnell for the constituency of Carlow as soon as he returned. This nomination would it reported be made without consulting the constituency itself as that 'counts for nothing' and the supporters of any local representative will have 'to conceal their humiliation'.<sup>593</sup>

O'Brien had a broken rib and was in need of medical attention when he arrived back to Queenstown from Canada, but a month later he made a visit to KilBride at the residence of his brother Valentine KilBride in Athy, where Denis was still 'suffering

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<sup>591</sup> *L.E.*, 16 July 1887.

<sup>592</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>593</sup> *Ibid.*, 28 May 1887.

from rheumatic gout'.<sup>594</sup> O'Brien then drove KilBride and his sister Mary to Luggacurren for the turning of the first sod in 'Campaign Square'. Campaign Square, named by O'Brien was the ground adjoining the Roman Catholic church, where twenty temporary huts were erected for the evicted tenants. No more was heard of the Carlow nomination but in September KilBride was elected 'member of parliament for south Kerry in the room of Alderman John O'Connor of Dublin resigned'.<sup>595</sup> Subsequent to an inflammatory public speech by O'Brien on 9 August 1887, advising the tenantry on the Kingston estate about the advantages of the plan of campaign, he was arrested and brought before a court at Mitchelstown on 24 September.<sup>596</sup> During the court case, O'Brien admitted using 'grave language' advising the Kingston tenantry to defend their homes 'by every honest means in their power' but he argued that a 'grave responsibility' rested on him also.<sup>597</sup> O'Brien was also found guilty under similar circumstances of making another speech on 11 August. Two periods of three months imprisonment to run concurrently were imposed on O'Brien for these offences to which he lodged an appeal and was freed on bail.<sup>598</sup> John Mandeville, the chairman of Mitchelstown Board of Guardians was also convicted on a similar charge and sentenced to two months imprisonment.<sup>599</sup>

From his prison cell in Cork gaol, O'Brien nominated KilBride for the constituency of south Kerry, which was ratified by the Irish Parliamentary Party.<sup>600</sup> From a nationalist party point of view, this was a good decision and again local representation had been put aside. KilBride was intelligent, he would be able to finance his election expenses, he had promoted the cause of nationalism worldwide and would now represent in parliament 'a great portion of Lansdowne's Kerry property' and besides John Townsend Trench, who evicted him earlier in March, 'one of Mr KilBride's most unrelenting and bitter enemies', with a residence in Kenmare, would now be one of his constituents.<sup>601</sup> Due to illness, KilBride was unable to be present at the nomination in Caherciveen, County Kerry but was nevertheless elected unopposed.<sup>602</sup> James D. Foley of Killorglin was the local representative passed over in this case. No matter how strong

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<sup>594</sup> *Ibid.*, 30 July 1887.

<sup>595</sup> *Ibid.*, 24 Sept. 1887.

<sup>596</sup> *Ibid.* & 1 Oct. 1887.

<sup>597</sup> *L.E.*, 1 Oct. 1887.

<sup>598</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>599</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>600</sup> *K.S.*, 23 Sept. 1887.

<sup>601</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>602</sup> The unopposed nomination of KilBride took place on Wednesday 21 Sept. 1887.

a following Foley had, it was felt that the selection of the Irish Parliamentary Party was 'the man for Kerry'.<sup>603</sup> KilBride was proposed by Canon T. Brosnan of Caherciveen and seconded by James D. O'Connor, shopkeeper, the assenters being shopkeepers Eugene Reardon, John O'Connor, Robert Williams, John Dennehy, Jeremiah J. Keating P.L.G., James Leslie, Main Street, Daniel O'Sullivan P.L.G., Liss Upper and John Deady, Quay street, Caherciveen.<sup>604</sup>

### 3.2 KILBRIDE IN SOUTH KERRY

On Thursday 12 February 1888, KilBride 'still a little lame from the effects of sciatica' was introduced in the House of Commons, one of his sponsors being Arthur O'Connor MP<sup>605</sup> One of his first tasks was to deal with the debate on technical education on behalf of the Irish Parliamentary Party. Meanwhile a slight setback was in store for the plan of campaign and its leaders. The clergy in Ireland were generally strongly supportive of the tenants who adopted the plan of campaign. In Luggacurren this was certainly the case, especially with regard to Fr. John Maher CC, who was actively involved on behalf of the tenants in the day-to-day administration of the campaign. Largely due to English influence in Rome, Pope Leo XIII issued a decree on 20 April 1888<sup>606</sup> condemning the plan of campaign, on the grounds that it was unlawful to break voluntary contracts, that the land courts were there to settle disputes and also because the campaign funds were extorted unlawfully from the tenants involved. Boycotting was considered to be against justice and charity.<sup>607</sup>

It will therefore be your lordship's duty prudently but effectually to advise and exhort the clergy and the laity not to transgress the bounds of christian charity and justice whilst they are striving for a remedy for their distressed condition.<sup>608</sup>

Subsequently the Irish hierarchy, in an act of tactful diplomacy, published resolutions in response to this decree. The decree was judged by them to 'affect the domain of morals alone, and in no way to interfere with politics as such'.<sup>609</sup> They acquiesced that

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<sup>603</sup> *K.S.*, 23 Sept. 1887.

<sup>604</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>605</sup> *Ibid.*, 14 Feb. 1888; Arthur O'Connor (1844-1923) was a former civil servant, returned to the House of Commons in 1880 as a supporter of Parnell. He was a close associate of T. M. Healy, joining the anti-Parnellite ranks in Dec. 1890. O'Connor was Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons between 1895 and 1900 when he lost his seat. He became a QC in 1899 and was later an English county court judge, O'Day, xxix.

<sup>606</sup> O'Day, xlv.

<sup>607</sup> *L.E.*, 5 May 1888.

<sup>608</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>609</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 June 1888.

the Pope, far from intending to injure the nationalist movement, was at one with them in the hope of removing 'those things which he judged might, in the long run, be obstacles to its advancement and ultimate success'. They finally urged against the use of 'any hasty or irreverent language' with reference to the Pope, or the 'Sacred Congregations through which he usually issues his decrees to the faithful'.<sup>610</sup>

After initially getting over the shock, the leaders such as John Dillon and William O'Brien, in consultation with the bishops, decided to take no heed of the misguided decree. John Dillon, while accepting the freedom of Drogheda on 7 May 1888 stated that he was 'prepared to take his theology from Rome, but he declined to take his politics from any foreign power, whether in Italy or in England'.<sup>611</sup> (Appendix 10)

Towards the end of May 1888, William Rochford reminded Trench that about thirty tenants on the Luggacurren estate had not paid rent since the adoption of the plan of campaign, were not evicted and therefore should be proceeded against without delay.<sup>612</sup> Trench replied that as he was trying to negotiate some land sales at Luggacurren, he doubted the wisdom of 'causing a rumpus with the evicted rebels'.<sup>613</sup> Moreover he felt that as Lord Lansdowne was just coming back from Canada 'and as the Government have just given a reduction on judicial rents, the moment might be inopportune and they will keep'.<sup>614</sup> Later in August, Lansdowne stated that he would be glad of any suggestion from Rochford, about the best way of dealing with the evicted tenants, 'supposing they propose to accept my terms. The situation is full of difficulty'.<sup>615</sup>

It was a full year before KilBride visited his constituency in south Kerry in the company of MPs, John O'Connor and J. D. Sheehan, but despite this, the brass band played in the streets of Kenmare for the three members of parliament.<sup>616</sup> A few days later in Caherciveen, KilBride explained that he would have come to Kerry much earlier, but negotiations were pending between Lansdowne and the Luggacurren tenants

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<sup>610</sup> Ibid.

<sup>611</sup> Ibid., 12 May 1888.

<sup>612</sup> Rochford to Trench, 24 May 1888, Derreen papers.

<sup>613</sup> Trench to Rochford, 31 May 1888, Derreen papers.

<sup>614</sup> Ibid.

<sup>615</sup> Lansdowne to Rochford, 6 Aug. 1888.

<sup>616</sup> *L.E.*, 19 Sept. 1888.



and he feared if he had alluded adversely in public to Lansdowne and his agent, John Townsend Trench, it would be used as an excuse for breaking off the negotiations.<sup>617</sup>

Most of the evicted farms in Luggacurren were let to the Land Corporation. Some of the evicted tenants were living in National League huts and were reportedly paid weekly by the League.<sup>618</sup> The ten Protestant tenants on the estate along with three Roman Catholics tenants, who refused to join the plan, were paying their rents as normal. (Appendix 6) There were also eighteen tenants, living at Shanganagh on the Barrowhouse estate, about five miles distant from Luggacurren, who were generally considered Luggacurren tenants. These tenants, with the exception of Daniel Whelan, refused to join the plan.<sup>619</sup> Whelan had formerly been vice-chairman of Athy Board of Guardians, this Union being later declared illegal and administered directly by the Local Government Board, for illegally giving unauthorised outdoor relief to some of the Luggacurren evicted tenants.<sup>620</sup> At a very early hour on a Friday morning in late August 1888, the sub-sheriff of Queen's County, Mr Bull arrived in Barrowhouse to seize goods belonging to Whelan, in order to recover rent and costs owing to Lansdowne, the costs alone amounting to £53 4s. 8d. In this case the seizure was made almost 'stealthily' and no one knew what had taken place until the process was almost complete. KilBride and some others were amongst the first to hear of the event and immediately set out for Barrowhouse. When KilBride arrived, he informed the sub-sheriff that negotiations were ongoing and that William O'Brien was anxious to have a personal interview with Trench, regarding the proposed settlement of the dispute between Lansdowne and his Luggacurren campaigning tenantry. On KilBride guaranteeing that the goods seized upon, would be forthcoming when and if required, the Sheriff's party willingly withdrew pending the result of the ongoing negotiations.<sup>621</sup>

The negotiations to settle the Luggacurren dispute ranged over three months from July to September 1888. The intermediaries were Father Dempsey, P.P. of Ballinakill and George Edge, a businessman and wealthy landowner of Coolnabacca.<sup>622</sup> Trench stated that the initiative for these negotiations came from the intermediaries themselves

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<sup>617</sup> Ibid., 29 Sept. 1888.

<sup>618</sup> Ibid., 9 June 1888.

<sup>619</sup> Ibid.

<sup>620</sup> Ibid., 25 Aug. 1888.

<sup>621</sup> Ibid.

<sup>622</sup> Ibid., 22 Sept. 1888.

and when they called on him at his office in Molesworth Street, Dublin on 21 June, proposals for a settlement of the dispute were subsequently conveyed by Trench to Lansdowne.<sup>623</sup> The proposals consisting of seven points were as follows:

1. That fair rents were to be fixed in court.
2. That the tenants would pay down one year's rent at abated rent offered (by the landlord) in November 1886.
3. That when judicial rents were fixed, the tenants should get the retrospective benefit of that on one year's rent paid down.
4. That the tenants would contract when entering into possession to buy at eighteen years' purchase of judicial rents.
5. That each side would bear their own costs in connection with the evictions.
6. That the non-evicted campaigners would have the same terms, except that they would add one year beyond the year to be paid down to the purchase money.
7. That where judicial rents had been fixed, either they should be let go into court afresh, or Lord Lansdowne should give permanently the temporary abatement given by law as a basis of purchase.<sup>624</sup>

Trench conveyed that Lansdowne was not adverse to an arrangement for the reinstatement of the evicted tenants, provided they didn't delay in making contracts to purchase their holdings under Lord Ashbourne's Act, which he claimed would give them a substantial reduction in their annual payments. However, Lansdowne preferred that the tenants would avoid having further recourse to the courts or to a general re-valuation of the lands, but advised instead that the fixing of the purchase money in each case would be better worked out according to each tenant's ability and willingness to pay certain annuities.<sup>625</sup> Trench further insisted that it would be a '*sine qua non*' that the evicted tenants would pay one year's rent on reinstatement. It was also pointed out at this early stage that the tenants should take advantage of the fact that Lord Lansdowne would be in England until his departure to take up his post as Viceroy of India, after which 'nearly two months will have to pass before I can obtain a reply to a letter addressed to him'.<sup>626</sup> Lansdowne's financial exigencies, according to Geary, persuaded him to accept the Viceroyalty of India, which was offered to him by Salisbury on New

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<sup>623</sup> Trench to *Freeman's Journal*, 17 Sept. 1888, reproduced in *L.E.*, 22 Sept. 1888.

<sup>624</sup> Trench to Father Dempsey, 25 June 1888, published in *L.E.*, 22 Sept. 1888.

<sup>625</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>626</sup> *Ibid*.

Year's Eve, 1887.<sup>627</sup> India would help reduce that 'load of debt which has been so terrible an incubus to us all' and provide an alternative to 'living in a corner' of Bowood House, 'perpetually worried by financial trouble and perhaps increasing, instead of diminishing, the family liabilities'.<sup>628</sup> In a letter dated 30 June 1888, George Edge, in thanking Trench for his 'efforts to restore quiet and peace to the neighbourhood' suggested, that owing to the oncoming season of winter, with no provision for the tenants or cattle on the land, that Lansdowne would accept a half year's rent from the evicted tenants on their reinstatement.<sup>629</sup> Trench replied that Lansdowne was not prepared to accept a half year's rent, but as to the fixing of a date for re-instatement, which would not coincide with the winter season, he had no difficulty.<sup>630</sup>

By mid-July, Edge displayed a willingness to compromise on most issues, but Father Dempsey insisted that before any decision could be taken, a deputation of the tenants would meet William O'Brien to 'reason the matter over with him, when I hope he will be reasonable and let the matter be settled'.<sup>631</sup> Trench continued to put pressure on the tenants to make a decision to purchase and warned that if any further delay was incurred, the 'commissioners would have no more money to advance, in which case the negotiations must fall through'.<sup>632</sup> Father Dempsey was still quite optimistic of reaching a settlement, when he suggested that if John William Dunne, KilBride and Mrs Byrne knew the purchase money of their proposed new holdings, 'it would lead to action'.<sup>633</sup> Trench replied that Lansdowne would be willing to sell to Mrs Byrne for £2,800, which would represent an annuity of £112 per annum, instead of her previous rent of £182, which had been reduced temporarily to £155.<sup>634</sup> In regard to Dunne and KilBride, Trench declared that the purchase money necessary for their former holdings would 'place them outside the scope of the land purchase act, by which the Treasury is empowered to lend a sum not exceeding £5,000 to any one tenant'. Yet he still wasn't adverse to reinstating Dunne and KilBride and proposed that it was up to them to decide what portion of their former holdings they wanted to purchase, as the commissioners would 'not sanction any evasion of the act for the purpose of meeting cases such as

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<sup>627</sup> Geary, p. 48.

<sup>628</sup> Ibid.

<sup>629</sup> Edge to Trench, 30 June 1888, published in *L.E.*, 22 Sept. 1888.

<sup>630</sup> Trench to Father Dempsey, 4 July 1888, published in *L.E.*, 22 Sept. 1888.

<sup>631</sup> Edge to Trench, 13 July 1888, published in *L.E.*, 22 Sept. 1888.

<sup>632</sup> Trench to Father Dempsey, 17 July 1888, published in *L.E.*, 22 Sept. 1888.

<sup>633</sup> Father Dempsey to Trench, 21 July 1888, published in *L.E.*, 22 Sept. 1888.

<sup>634</sup> Trench to Father Dempsey, 30 July 1888, published in *L.E.*, 22 Sept. 1888.

these'.<sup>635</sup> In August, Edge reported that Father Dempsey was having difficulty bringing 'things to near the point', the insistence of paying a full year's rent being a most difficult pill for the tenants to swallow.<sup>636</sup> However he suggested that Trench would agree to meet William O'Brien, 'or some one for him', where there would be a 'very great likelihood of the whole matter being settled'.<sup>637</sup> Trench's patience was at breaking point at this stage in the negotiations, and he felt that the tenants could and would not be persuaded to pay a full year's rent before purchasing their holdings. Yet again he felt that the interests of the tenants would once more 'be sacrificed to the political purposes of their leaders'.<sup>638</sup> He was further annoyed that no proposal for the re-instatement of Dunne and KilBride to purchase under the act was received by him. He therefore declined to attend any further interviews until these points were clarified and agreed by the tenants and further stated that if a decision wasn't arrived at before 1 September, the negotiations 'must be regarded as at an end'.<sup>639</sup>

Infuriated that the negotiations had suddenly come to an abrupt end, William O'Brien, writing in the *Freeman's Journal*, put the blame totally on Trench's shoulders, who when this stage had been reached, and as a justification of his own role in the matter, published the correspondence between the negotiators and himself.

There is an air of angelic candour about his [Trench's] plan of letting his purposely confused and confusing correspondence with the Rev Father Dempsey and Mr Edge speak for itself.<sup>640</sup>

O'Brien maintained that the only item in dispute between the parties was the payment of a year's rent in hand and the difficulty about Dunne and KilBride's farms being too large for purchase was irrelevant, since their only request was to be allowed to have fair rents fixed and this was conceded.<sup>641</sup> He also made it clear that 'without a day's unnecessary delay' he signified his willingness to meet Trench immediately and 'expressed the tenants' confidence and my own that a satisfactory compromise could be arrived at upon the only point in dispute'. O'Brien further surmised that the date on which the proposed interview was suggested to take place, corresponded with

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<sup>635</sup> Ibid.

<sup>636</sup> Edge to Trench, 16 Aug. 1888, published in *L.E.*, 22 Sept. 1888.

<sup>637</sup> Ibid.

<sup>638</sup> Trench to Father Dempsey, 20 Aug. 1888, published in *LE.*, 22 Sept. 1888.

<sup>639</sup> Ibid.

<sup>640</sup> *F.J.*, 21 Sept. 1888; reprinted in *L.E.*, 22 Sept. 1888.

<sup>641</sup> *F.J.*, 21 Sept. 1888.

Lansdowne's impending visit to Ireland, and 'the abrupt frustration of the interview' with Lansdowne's departure for India.<sup>642</sup>

It cannot be too often repeated that the fount and origin of the whole Luggacurren quarrel was Lord Lansdowne's refusal to give any abatement whatever to judicial tenants.<sup>643</sup>

*The Times* commented, that in spite of the tenants' failure to approach the matter in a businesslike way, the negotiations were kept open for three months and were only closed when it became clear, that there were no *bona fide* offers to purchase and that the opportunity of getting the necessary advance from the Estates Commissioners had been missed.<sup>644</sup> The following month, Trench circularised the plan of campaign tenants in Luggacurren, who had not yet been evicted, and who owed over two years' rent, that if they did not pay one year's rent, less the abatement offered two years previously, they would be evicted.<sup>645</sup> He pointed out that the reason why they were not evicted the previous year, with the 'richest and strongest' of the tenants, was that Lansdowne felt that the adoption of the plan had been forced upon them, possibly against their own better judgement and he therefore wanted to spare them the sufferings of their neighbours.<sup>646</sup> On 11 September, Danial Whelan and a sub-tenant, Michael Mara were evicted from the Barrowhouse portion of the Luggacurren estate. On this occasion, when the chapel bell was rung, a large crowd assembled, among them KilBride and 'his brother Joseph KilBride B.L.'<sup>647</sup> No resistance was offered at this eviction and emergency men from Luggacurren were left in charge of Whelan's residence.<sup>648</sup>

A series of public political meetings took place in south Kerry in September 1888. The principal reason for these meetings, apart from the introduction of KilBride to the constituency, was that the Kerry tenants were slow to enter into the activities of the National League and needed to be informed and encouraged to organise themselves into branches of the organisation. At a meeting in Kenmare on Wednesday 19 September 1888, an unusual letter of apology was received from the Church of Ireland Rector of

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<sup>642</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>643</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>644</sup> *L.E.*, 22 Sept. 1888 quoting from *T.T.*

<sup>645</sup> *L.E.*, 8 Sept. 1888.

<sup>646</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>647</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 Sept. 1888.

<sup>648</sup> *Ibid.*

Kenmare, George McCutchan<sup>649</sup>, in which he hoped the meeting would inaugurate a collection in Kenmare for the National Indemnity Fund.<sup>650</sup> KilBride strangely enough spoke at length to his Kerry constituents about the Luggacurren evictions and the Canadian campaign and made several attacks on Lansdowne and John Townsend Trench, issues that were of little real relevance to his audience.

Notwithstanding all the power of Lord Lansdowne, notwithstanding all the rent he extorts out his lands in Kerry to flog the Luggacurren tenants with, notwithstanding all the money he gets from the government, notwithstanding all the astuteness of John Townsend Trench to stifle the plan nearly two years ago in Luggacurren, the plan of campaign will hold the field, and it will hold the field until justice is done to the tenants. The tenants of Luggacurren were prepared to insist that they got reasonable terms, and until they did the Marquis of Lansdowne or John Townsend Trench will get no peace in that direction.<sup>651</sup>

KilBride's biggest boast at the time, as O'Brien had stated earlier in the struggle, was that he was the first tenant evicted under the plan of campaign in Ireland, 'and he was proud to have been the first'. He stated that he was determined to forward O'Brien's policy for the cause of the tenant farmers not only for south Kerry but for the whole of Ireland. He then asked if the Kerry farmers were going to supply cattle to stock the evicted farms of Luggacurren.<sup>652</sup> KilBride was probably referring to the stocking of the lands at Luggacurren in April of the previous year with 350 cattle from the Kerry property of Lansdowne.<sup>653</sup> Townsend Trench had also advertised the evicted farms at Luggacurren in the local papers and the Land Corporation set up by the landlords to fight back against the plan of campaign tenants had reported that 1,793 head of cattle were purchased and placed on lands held by the company and they were making arrangements for the stocking of eleven additional farms.<sup>654</sup>

### 3.3 THE DEFALCATIONS OF ARTHUR HUTCHINS

At a public meeting in Sneem on 22 September, KilBride asked why the people supported Arthur Hutchins of Roughty, an emergency man who was alleged to have pocketed 'a couple of thousand pounds in the shape of county cess' while he was

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<sup>649</sup> See 'George McCutchan, patriot parson' in *A bridge to the past*, Kenmare literary and historical society, pp 59-61.

<sup>650</sup> *K.S.*, 19 Sept. 1888.

<sup>651</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>652</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>653</sup> *L.E.*, 28 Apr. 1887.

<sup>654</sup> *Ibid.*, 11 June 1887.

employed by the Grand Jury of Kerry.<sup>655</sup> Hutchins in 1888 was an under agent to Smith-Barry, who was involved in a classic struggle with his Tipperary tenants. The principal point in KilBride's question was that it was widely felt that the struggle on the Ponsonby estate near Youghal and also the related Smith-Barry estate in Tipperary was backed up by the government who had 'shown a decided *penchant* for the Smith-Barry side'.<sup>656</sup> Hutchins had previously been employed as baronial constable for Dunkerron south and KilBride felt that the Grand Jury were not going to initiate court proceedings against one of their own.<sup>657</sup> What KilBride failed to mention in all of this controversy, was the fact that Hutchins was employed at that stage by Lansdowne as bailiff on the Lansdowne estate, whose duties included the supervision of emergency men on the holdings of the evicted tenants. On 18 July 1890 KilBride asked about Hutchins in the House of Commons. The Attorney-General for Ireland (Madden) stated that the entire amount due by Hutchins at the time he ceased to be collector was £2,484 5s and that H. Stokes and F. R. Bateman<sup>658</sup> were his sureties, in bonds of £2,500 and £4,000.<sup>659</sup> He also stated that proceedings had been taken by the Grand Jury against the sureties, but the proceedings had not at that stage reached a successful conclusion and anyway the government had no control in the matter. KilBride was not deterred and continued to raise the matter for months afterwards.

On Sunday 23 September 1888, it was reported that 'two thousand people assembled in the market square' of Caherciveen 'to greet their member' on the occasion of his first visit to the town.<sup>660</sup> The meeting was also attended by J. D. Sheehan M.P. for east Kerry. Two 'bodies' of the R.I.C. were present at the meeting, 'one armed with batons, the other with rifles'. Before the meeting commenced the local head-constable stood on the platform and asked who was responsible for the meeting. When KilBride stated that he was in charge, the head constable requested that a Government notetaker be allowed on the platform. KilBride duly refused, stating that the notetaker could stand in the crowd where it would be guaranteed 'no injury would be done him'. After speaking at length about the plan of campaign on the Luggacurren estate, the subsequent visit to Canada and the failed negotiations for a settlement, KilBride asked why no branch of

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<sup>655</sup> K.S., 22 Sept. 1888.

<sup>656</sup> Ibid.

<sup>657</sup> Ibid., 29 Sept. 1888.

<sup>658</sup> Bateman was a Grand Juror, so it would have been embarrassing for the same Grand Jury to move against him. Stokes a retired county surveyor had been dead for some time.

<sup>659</sup> K.S., 23 July 1890.

<sup>660</sup> Ibid., 29 Sept. 1887.

the Irish National League had been established in Caherciveen, when John Dillon and William O'Brien were 'going to gaol for three or six months' on their behalf. KilBride proceeded to advise that 'if you want to fight Lansdowne you must all join the League' and further stated that he made 'no difference between a common highwayman who presents a revolver and a land grabber who grabs a farm'.<sup>661</sup>

Then in the name of God, if a land grabber exists in Iveragh, give him a wide berth. Don't touch a hair on his head; don't walk on the same footpath with him.<sup>662</sup>

Kilbride's final advice was that the people should not pay 'cess again if called on to do so'. In justification he again pointed to 'the defalcations' of the baronial constable for Dunkerron south, Arthur Hutchins.<sup>663</sup> A meeting held in Glenbeigh on Monday 24 September 1888 was dispersed by the police. The order to disperse was given because KilBride was encouraging the tenants of Glenbeigh to unite and combine in order to protect themselves against rack rents. KilBride had also advised boycotting those who 'grabbed' evicted farms.<sup>664</sup> The meeting however, dispersed peacefully and no prosecutions were initiated.

### 3.4 ARREST AND IMPRISONMENT OF CAMPAIGNERS

A month after the Caherciveen meeting which was also addressed by J. D. Sheehan MP for east Kerry, Sheehan was arrested at his residence, the Innisfallen Lake Hotel, on the charge of inducing the tenant-farmers 'to take part in an illegal association and the other was for inciting to violence'.<sup>665</sup> Sheehan was a popular figure in Killarney and had been an active member of the I.R.B. and the Irish National League. He had been arrested for fenianism on 26 July 1867 and detained in prison until February 1868 when he was released on condition that he went to America for ten years.<sup>666</sup> When he returned he married the proprietress of the Innisfallen Hotel in Killarney.<sup>667</sup> Following a meeting in Caherciveen addressed by Sheehan on 23 September 1888, there was a failed attempt to adopt the plan of campaign on the Kenmare estate near Killarney. Sheehan was later prosecuted and convicted for taking part in this criminal conspiracy under the Criminal

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<sup>661</sup> Ibid.

<sup>662</sup> Ibid.

<sup>663</sup> Ibid.

<sup>664</sup> *L.E.*, 29 Sept. 1887.

<sup>665</sup> *K.S.*, 31 Oct. 1888.

<sup>666</sup> CO 904/18, p. 175.

<sup>667</sup> Ibid.



Law and Prosecution Act.<sup>668</sup> Previous to this Sheehan was imprisoned for a month for using insulting language to District Inspector Rogers at his hotel.<sup>669</sup> Just as Sheehan was being convicted for the second offence, Mr McGillicuddy S.C.P. representing the District Inspector of the R.I.C. at Caherciveen was 'instructed by the Crown' to ask that Sheehan be discharged from custody as he was 'not in a proper state of health' and a further term of imprisonment would 'endanger his life'.<sup>670</sup> This was granted and Sheehan was set free.

No prosecution in connection with the Caherciveen meeting was taken against KilBride but on 15 January 1889 at Maryborough railway station, KilBride was served with three Coercion Act summonses to appear at Kildare petty sessions on Thursday 24 January.<sup>671</sup> James L. Carew MP and Thomas Robertson of Narraghmore were also summoned in relation to the same charges. All three had previously made incriminating speeches at an eviction of Thomas O'Beirne in Nurney, County Kildare on 11 November 1888. O'Beirne and his mother were evicted from two farms, one at Gurteen containing 333 acres and one at Harristown containing about thirty acres.<sup>672</sup> The first summons charged KilBride, Carew and Robertson with intimidation towards the Marquess of Drogheda at Nurney, County Kildare. The second and third summons charged them with criminal conspiracy in relation to boycotting shopkeepers and advising people not to take farms from which tenants had been evicted.<sup>673</sup> Thomas Robertson appeared in court but KilBride and Carew 'adopted the usual course of not attending'. Mr Carson applied for warrants against Carew and KilBride for non-appearance and the court was adjourned for a fortnight.<sup>674</sup> KilBride was arrested on 4 February at a banquet of the Leicester Liberal Club, where he had addressed the members. After his arrest KilBride was taken back to Kildare.<sup>675</sup> At the reconvened court on 7 February, KilBride was represented by John Redmond MP<sup>676</sup>, who in turn

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<sup>668</sup> Criminal Law and Procedure Act enacted on 23 Aug. 1886, O'Day, xliv.

<sup>669</sup> *K.S.*, 17 Nov. 1888.

<sup>670</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 Jan. 1889.

<sup>671</sup> *L.E.*, 19 Jan. 1889; *K.S.*, 19 Jan. 1889.

<sup>672</sup> *L.L.*, 4 Apr. 1912.

<sup>673</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 Jan. 1889.

<sup>674</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>675</sup> *K.S.*, 6 Feb. 1889.

<sup>676</sup> John E. Redmond (1852–1918) was the eldest son of William Archer Redmond MP and brother of W. H. K. Redmond MP. He was a clerk in the House of Commons in the late 1870s but gave up his post and became involved in Home Rule politics. He was an MP from 1881 to 1918. He supported Parnell in Dec. 1890 and became leader of the Parnellites after Parnell's death. In Feb. 1900 he assumed the chairmanship of the United Irish party, a position he retained until a few days prior to his death on 6 Mar. 1918, O'Day, xxxii.

was instructed by Valentine KilBride, Denis's brother. Carew was again absent but the case against KilBride and Robertson was heard and continued for two days. The Catholic clergy ordered that all the public houses in the town be closed, for the sake of peace and order in the town.<sup>677</sup> KilBride was sentenced to three months imprisonment and Robertson to two months without hard labour. Both of them appealed and were admitted to bail.<sup>678</sup> The appeal was heard at Kildare Quarter Sessions on 4 April and their sentences were confirmed.<sup>679</sup> KilBride was imprisoned in Kilkenny jail and released on 3 July 1889.<sup>680</sup>

The Coercion Act took its toll on many of KilBride's friends in 1889. P. J. Conlon, proprietor of the *Nationalist and Leinster Times* and Fr. John Maher C.C. of Luggacurren were prosecuted and imprisoned. Conlon was imprisoned for publishing a report of a meeting of the Ballyadams and Wolfhill branch of the Irish National League, at which 'seditious and unlawful speeches were made'.<sup>681</sup> Fr Maher was imprisoned in Kilkenny jail for taking part in an unlawful gathering to promote the plan of campaign at Luggacurren. Maher's original sentence was two months but on appeal it was reduced to one month and it was further ordered that he was to be 'treated as a first class misdemeanant'.<sup>682</sup>

### 3.5 KILBRIDE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

In October 1887 the elected board of guardians of Athy was dissolved by the Local Government Board when it was proved that money had been illegally paid to the evicted tenants on the Luggacurren estate. KilBride in his capacity as Poor Law Guardian had instructed the Relieving Officer of the Athy Union to attend the evictions at Luggacurren and pay relief to the evicted tenants.<sup>683</sup> However, in October 1887 the Local Government Board Inspector stated that an act of parliament only allowed relief to evicted tenants for one month, but this wasn't adhered to by the Board of Guardians. The Inspector also stated that the guardians would have to pay all the relief given after the first month.<sup>684</sup> Much was written about the matter in the *Leinster Express* and

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<sup>677</sup> *L.E.*, 9 Feb. 1889.

<sup>678</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>679</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 Apr. 1889.

<sup>680</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>681</sup> *Ibid.*, 23 Mar. 1889.

<sup>682</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 May 1889.

<sup>683</sup> *Ibid.*, 22 Oct. 1887.

<sup>684</sup> *Ibid.*

eventually the board was superseded by paid guardians and the elected guardians were 'locked out'. On 5 December the House of Commons were in the process of considering a vote to defray expenses incurred by the Local Government Board. During the debate KilBride urged that an election of a new board of guardians for Athy should take place as soon as possible so as to minimise friction between the paid guardians and the people of the union.<sup>685</sup>

In July 1888 KilBride asked questions about applications to fix fair rents, which remained unheard in the unions of Athy, Abbeyleix and Carlow.<sup>686</sup> Jury packing was a favourite topic of nationalist MPs at the time and so KilBride introduced a Bill proposing to limit the power of the crown to be equivalent of that possessed by the accused in court cases.<sup>687</sup> On 18 July 1890 KilBride asked about a shooting incident at Lansdowne Lodge, Kenmare, when Mrs Hawkes Maybury of Caher Lodge, Kenmare was allegedly shot in the arm with a revolver by an employee of John Townsend Trench. The Attorney-General answered that the man who accidentally fired the shot was not an employee of Trench and that the police were taking all possible steps to secure public safety.<sup>688</sup> On 1 August 1890 KilBride asked questions in relation to Shelburne National School in Kenmare.<sup>689</sup>

On 11 April 1894 KilBride moved the second stage of the Land Tenure (Ireland) Bill, which was aimed at amending the law relating to the fixing of fair rents and tenure and purchase of land in Ireland.<sup>690</sup> One of the proposals of the Bill as KilBride stated was that twenty years 'quiet enjoyment' by the tenant of his holding would not be held by a court as compensation for improvements.<sup>691</sup> Another proposal was that tenants should not be charged rent on their own improvements or on those of their predecessors in title. The Bill also proposed that the term for judicial rents should be shortened from fifteen to eight years. Other clauses in the Bill proposed giving tenants a modified power of sub-letting in favour of labourers and also the repeal of 'the seventh section of

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<sup>685</sup> *Ibid.*, 8 Dec. 1888.

<sup>686</sup> *Ibid.*, 14 July 1888.

<sup>687</sup> *K.S.*, 17 May 1890.

<sup>688</sup> *Ibid.*, 23 July 1890.

<sup>689</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 Aug. 1890.

<sup>690</sup> *Hansard* 4, xxii, 449-50, 16 Mar. 1894.

<sup>691</sup> *Ibid.*, xxiii, 114-24, 11 Apr. 1894.

the Act of 1887' which was otherwise known as the 'eviction-made-easy clause'.<sup>692</sup> Interestingly Smith Barry MP and others spoke against the Bill but were defeated.<sup>693</sup>

On 1 May 1894 the chief secretary, John Morley in answer to a question from KilBride stated that any extra duties 'in connection with protection' on the Luggacurren estate were provided by the ordinary free force of the RIC of the county. The numbers engaged in this work varied from five to twenty-seven he stated and the total cost up to 31 March 1894 amounted to £4,125. The cost of employing 'detachments on occasions of evictions' on the estate amounted to £680 and the rent paid for the temporary barracks at Luggacurren and Coolglass amounted to £99.<sup>694</sup>

### 3.6 THE TENANTS' DEFENCE FUND

There was considerable financial pressure on the National League during the plan of campaign years in the funding of the on-going struggle. This took many forms such as county and parish collections, donations, fund raising tours of America, Australia, and New Zealand and of course the collection of the funds of the campaigners who adopted the plan themselves on various estates around the country. These collections were haphazard and required quite a lot of effort and time from the leaders, William O'Brien and John Dillon. A more efficient and comprehensive system of bringing in capital on a long-term basis was necessary if the tenants on the plan of campaign estates were to survive. For this reason the Tenants' Defence Association was set up on 24 October 1889 with Parnell's imprimatur, but as in most of the agrarian activities previous to this, without actually taking part in it himself.<sup>695</sup> The Tenants' Defence Association decided to hold county conventions and chapel-gate collections, which successfully raised £61,000.<sup>696</sup>

A public demonstration in connection with the Tenants' Defence Association of Kerry took place in Kenmare on 2 November 1890. KilBride was accompanied by three of his parliamentary colleagues, J. D. Sheehan, J. C. Flynn and M. Dalton (Donegal). Nothing of significance occurred except that the public meeting took place in the market

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<sup>692</sup> Ibid., 121-2, 11 Apr. 1894.

<sup>693</sup> K.S., 14 Apr. 1894.

<sup>694</sup> Hansard 4, xxiv, 30, 1 May 1894.

<sup>695</sup> W. E. Vaughan (ed.), *A New History of Ireland. vi, Ireland under the Union*, (Oxford, 1996), ii, 1870-1921, p. 71, hereafter cited as *New history of Ireland*.

<sup>696</sup> *New history of Ireland*, p. 71.

square in front of the Lansdowne rent office. KilBride took full advantage of this, knowing that Townsend Trench was in Lansdowne Lodge keeping watch on the platform with the aid of a telescope.<sup>697</sup> Referring to the recent reductions for the tenants on the Lansdowne Kerry estate, he advised the people not to be deceived by the ‘apparent philanthropy of the Marquess of Lansdowne,’ at the same time rubbing salt into the wounds of Townsend Trench as follows:

I know that as far as the rack-rented tenants are concerned that they will have the whole benefit of John Townsend Trench. We knew him a long time and there was no great line between us. And now as if by mutual consent he is no longer Lansdowne’s agent in Luggacurren.<sup>698</sup>

Gerard J. Lyne in *The Lansdowne estate in Kerry under W. S. Trench 1849-72*, states that from 1887 onwards Lansdowne began to ‘complain of shortcomings and deficiencies’ in Townsend’s annual accounts. Trench had fallen into disfavour on many accounts, such as his abandonment of the Church of Ireland for the Plymouth Brethern as discussed earlier. He was writing a book to prove the world would end in thirty years and was also engaged in other pursuits for personal gain, such as the retailing of ‘Trench’s Cure for Epilepsy’, which when analysed later ‘was found to contain only coloured water’. These activities, according to Lyne, may have affected his attention to his duties as agent and were certainly factors in prompting Lansdowne to relieve Trench of the agency of the Luggacurren estate.<sup>699</sup> One of the topics contained in the correspondence between Everard Digby and William Rochford in 1889 was the finding of a replacement for Trench as manager on the Luggacurren estate. On 1 August 1889, Everard Digby informed Rochford that Trench was ‘anxious’ to buy Lansdowne Lodge and farm in Luggacurren or at least to rent the land, ‘which I did not advise’.<sup>700</sup> An advertisement for the post appeared in the *Irish Times* on 27 July 1889:

Wanted for an extensive grazing farm in the south of Ireland, a land steward and general manager (Protestant). Must be thoroughly competent to buy and sell stock. Liberal wages given to able man, who can give substantial security. Non need apply who will be unable to produce the highest recommendations as to character and ability. Married man preferred.<sup>701</sup>

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<sup>697</sup> K.S., 8 Nov. 1890.

<sup>698</sup> Ibid.

<sup>699</sup> Lyne, xlix.

<sup>700</sup> Digby to Rochford, 1 Aug. 1889, Derreen House Papers, box 38.

<sup>701</sup> *I.T.*, 27 July 1889.

The County Kerry Convention of the Tenants' Defence Association was held in the Corn Exchange, Tralee on 17 November 1890 with KilBride and other MPs in attendance. The speakers including KilBride held out the example of the tenants in New Tipperary and the Ponsonby estates in order to encourage the Kerry people to contribute to the defence fund, which was suggested as 3d in the pound on their valuations.<sup>702</sup> Jeremiah Sheehan MP who had been imprisoned for fenian activity decades earlier, stated that a fund was set up for them in 1867, while Edward Harrington urged the people to be even more generous than the previous year when £1,700 was collected in the county.<sup>703</sup> Less than two years later Harrington, who had opted for the Parnellites after the split in the Irish party, contradicted himself by printed derogatory remarks about the anti-Parnellite KilBride and the funds raised for the Smith-Barry tenants of New Tipperary. In this article Harrington argued that the funds spend for the upkeep of the evicted tenants of Luggacurren and New Tipperary would have been better spent on the starving tenants of County Kerry. The remarks about KilBride speak for themselves:

Some of the poor Kerry tenants ought to have a good look at Mr D. KilBride, the prosperous looking gentleman whom Mr O'Brien took out to Canada as a sample of an 'evicted tenant'. Let them then ask themselves if it is much wonder that the people of Canada came to the conclusion, Irish evicted who were able to wear good clothes, gold watches and put up at first class hotels, were not the people to whom it was very necessary hard-earned American dollars should be sent.<sup>704</sup>

At a public meeting in Killorglin on 16 November 1890, the chairman Rev. T. Lawlor P.P. stated that the 'distress' in and around Killorglin was alarming. KilBride and himself had calculated over 600 farms whose valuation was under four pounds and their crop of potatoes that year had utterly failed. He stated that these people wanted work immediately. KilBride added that he was of the opinion that the conditions of the people were worse than they were in 1879 and 1881 and that they now demanded advance money for relief works from the government.<sup>705</sup>

### 3.7 THE PARNELLITE SPLIT

Parnell's long and secret relationship with Katherine O'Shea, through which he had become the father of two daughters, one in 1883 and another in 1884 could not be kept

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<sup>702</sup> K.S., 19 Nov. 1890.

<sup>703</sup> Ibid.

<sup>704</sup> Ibid., 29 June 1892.

<sup>705</sup> Ibid., 22 Nov. 1890.

secret forever.<sup>706</sup> When Captain O'Shea realised that he was not entitled to a share in Katherine's 'Aunt Ben's' will of £140,000, he sought a divorce. The divorce case in November 1890 was the catalyst that hastened the political demise of Charles Stewart Parnell. It sent shock waves across the Irish Sea that set all previous political and ecclesiastical arrangements and loyalties into chaos. Even though Parnell had been subsequently re-elected chairman of the Irish party, his opponents who wanted to save face and hold on to the 'Union of Hearts' with the Liberals under Gladstone, hoped he would immediately offer his resignation but Parnell would never resign.<sup>707</sup> After Parnell had issued his famous manifesto outlining his party's policy of separation or independence from the Liberals or any other influences, the party met for five days in the House of Commons and eventually Parnell walked out with between twenty-eight to thirty-two of the MPs supporting him. The Irish party was split into two factions - the Anti-Parnellites with 54 seats and the Parnellites with 32.<sup>708</sup> KilBride declared himself an anti-Parnellite.

The aftermath of the split in the Irish party led to bitter verbal abuse from the rival newspapers and platforms.<sup>709</sup> The *Kerry Sentinel* exemplified these rivalries even as early as December 1890 as the Irish party were meeting in committee room fifteen. Harrington, the proprietor of the paper showed an early loyalty for Parnell.

For us then Parnell is the word, and Parnell is the man. The people of this county regard him still as their unchanged and unchangeable leader.<sup>710</sup>

During the debate in committee room fifteen, KilBride was amongst the majority of forty-four who voted against postponing the leadership decision until the members had consulted their constituencies and had later met in Dublin. Twenty-nine voted for the motion and when the result was announced there was complete silence.<sup>711</sup> It was one of the most dramatic moments in the history of the Irish party.

Edward Harrington MP who had once been on very friendly terms with KilBride was now entrenched in his complete and utter loyalty to Parnell. His newspaper the *Kerry Sentinel* became the mouthpiece of the bitter verbal abuse meted out against the anti-

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<sup>706</sup> *New history of Ireland*, p. 75.

<sup>707</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 75-80.

<sup>708</sup> Twenty-eight Parnellites walked out but nine MPs were absent for the vote.

<sup>709</sup> *New history of Ireland*, p. 78.

<sup>710</sup> *K.S.*, 3 Dec. 1890.

<sup>711</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 Dec. 1890.

Parnellite members. This is well portrayed when KilBride was helping to establish branches of the National Federation in County Kerry. The McCarthyite's (anti-Parnellites) mission to Dingle according to Harrington proved 'abortive as in Tralee.'<sup>712</sup> KilBride and Sheehan booked into Benner's Hotel and Harrington and the Parnellites stayed on guard at Lee's Hotel. KilBride and Sheehan, referred to as the 'two seceders' on leaving Dingle were 'hooted' at by the Parnellite faction.<sup>713</sup> Later in a speech, Harrington castigated KilBride for standing by and allowing the Castlecomer lime-throwers<sup>714</sup> to inflict blows on Parnell during the north Kilkenny by-election in late December 1890.<sup>715</sup>

The anti-Parnellite convention in Tralee on 20 June 1892 nominated their three sitting members in Kerry for the forthcoming general election. Sir Thomas Esmonde was nominated to contest west Kerry in opposition to Edward Harrington MP<sup>716</sup> The candidates for south Kerry included J. D. Foley C.E. (Parnellite); KilBride MP (Anti-Parnellite) and R. G. Allanson-Winn (Unionist).<sup>717</sup> KilBride in his first contested or opposed election regained his seat in south Kerry with a huge majority by receiving 2,097 votes, J. D. Foley (Parnellite) received 225 votes and R. G. Allanson-Winn (Unionist) 86 votes.<sup>718</sup> Of course it has to be admitted that due to the support of the clergy, the anti-Parnellites would probably not have won their first decisive victory, winning seventy-one seats as opposed to nine for the Parnellites. The Parnellites were quick in claiming that the priests assumed the role of dictators in directing people to vote for the anti-Parnellite candidates.<sup>719</sup> Harrington lost his seat to Esmonde at the 1892 election. Esmonde the anti-Parnellite received 2,490 and Harrington (Parnellite) received 1,143 votes.<sup>720</sup>

### 3.8 DEATH KNELL FOR THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN

The split in the Irish party also sounded the death knell of the plan of campaign. No agreement could be arrived about the control of the Paris funds of the National League

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<sup>712</sup> Ibid., 4 Mar. 1891.

<sup>713</sup> Ibid.

<sup>714</sup> This is a reference to the by-election speech, by Parnell in Castlecomer, County Kilkenny in December 1890. Parnell received a blow in the eye with lime thrown by an anti-Parnellite supporter. The anti-Parnellite candidate, Sir John Pope Hennessy won the Kilkenny by-election on 22 December.

<sup>715</sup> K.S., 4 Mar. 1891.

<sup>716</sup> Ibid., 22 June 1892.

<sup>717</sup> Ibid., 29 June 1892.

<sup>718</sup> Walker, p. 354.

<sup>719</sup> K.S., 9 July 1892.

<sup>720</sup> Ibid.



and an American mission for more funds had to be aborted.<sup>721</sup> Soon after the collapse of the negotiations in Boulogne about the future leadership of the party collapsing, O'Brien and Dillon were arrested in Folkstone and subsequently imprisoned for six months.<sup>722</sup> The leaders of the plan of campaign were now in prison and the grants for evicted tenants had dwindled or ceased and there were 'several instances of cheques being dishonoured'.<sup>723</sup> The tenants on the majority of the plan of campaign estates, demoralised and starved of funds capitulated and made unfavourable settlements.<sup>724</sup> By 5 February 1891, the 'despairing and panic-stricken tenants' on the De Freyne and Lord Dillon estates surrendered on the landlords' terms.<sup>725</sup> The plan of campaign entered its terminal phase in April 1891.<sup>726</sup> The collapse of the campaign on the Delmege estate in County Limerick was regarded as a breakthrough. Originally the tenants had demanded a fifty-seven per cent abatement and had subsequently on several occasions rejected proposals for a reduction of thirty per cent. In April 1891 when the same abatement was offered the tenants were 'glad to accept'.<sup>727</sup> The tenants' representatives denied a report in the *Limerick Leader* that far from being well cared for while engaged in the plan of campaign, they were 'induced' into the campaign and on capitulation their homes were 'ruined', their farms were 'like a wilderness' and their pockets were 'empty'.<sup>728</sup> District Inspector Jones of the Cork Special Branch reported on the 1 May 1891 that the 'victims' of the plan of campaign were 'cursing the day they were induced to adopt it'.<sup>729</sup> Hoppen argues that the 'comparative failure' of the plan of campaign, demonstrated, that when 'stiffened' by the determination of a chief secretary such as Arthur Balfour, 'landlords could still win a number of battles'.<sup>730</sup>

In January 1892, the National Federation was supporting the families of 1,500 evicted tenants.<sup>731</sup> By the end of the year, Dillon informed the Evicted Tenants

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<sup>721</sup> Geary, pp 134-6.

<sup>722</sup> Ibid., p. 134.

<sup>723</sup> Ibid., p. 135; see also *F.J.*, 7, 19 Jan. 1891.

<sup>724</sup> Geary, p. 138.

<sup>725</sup> Ibid., pp 136-7.

<sup>726</sup> Ibid., p. 137.

<sup>727</sup> Ibid.

<sup>728</sup> Ibid; NA, CO 903/2, Irish crime records, 1887-92, miscellaneous notes, series xiii, June 1891.

<sup>729</sup> Geary, p. 137.

<sup>730</sup> Hoppen, K. T., *Ireland since 1800, conflict and conformity*, (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Essex, 1999), p. 103, hereafter cited as Hoppen.

<sup>731</sup> Ibid., p. 139.

Commission that the number had fallen to 884 and seventeen plan of campaign disputes remained unresolved.<sup>732</sup> (Table 7)

Table 7: The Plan of Campaign Estates Investigated by the Evicted Tenants Commission

THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN ESTATES INVESTIGATED BY THE EVICTED TENANTS COMMISSION			
We selected the following estates as those upon which combinations had been formed, or the Plan of Campaign adopted, or a number of evictions had taken place.			
The estate of:			
1	The Marquis of Clanricarde, County Galway		
2	Peter De Pentony O'Kelly, Clongorey, County Kildare		
3	Charles W. T. Ponsonby, County Cork		
4	A. H. Smith Barry, M.P. County Tipperary		
5	The Marquis of Lansdowne, Luggacurren, Queen's County		
6	G. F. Brooke, Coolgreany, County Wexford		
7	Viscount Masserene and Ferrard, County Louth and County Meath		
8	Lord Cloncurry, County Limerick		
9	Mrs Hannah Lewis, County Galway		
10	Michael Den Keatinge and Maurice Den Keatings, Woodsgift, County Kilkenny		
11	The O'Grady, Herbertstown, County Limerick		
12	James E. Byrne, Coolroe, County Wexford		
13	Arthhur Langford, County Cork		
14	The late Wybrants Olphert, County Donegal		
15	Henry H. Swiney, County Donegal		
16	Mrs Anne Stewart, County Donegal		
17	William Ancketill, County Monaghan		
Source: <i>Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the estates of evicted tenants in Ireland</i> [C.6935], HC 1893-1894], xxxi, p. 10, paragraph 2.			

Geary explains that the plan of campaign was not a national movement, as it only involved a mere one per cent of Irish estates and consequently expenditure could not be considered excessive.<sup>733</sup> John Dillon informed the Evicted Tenants Commission, that up to the end of 1892, £234,000 had been subscribed to the plan, £129,000 of which was contributed in Ireland, £62,000 in Australia and America, £1,500 in Britain and the tenants directly involved contributed £42,000, £30,000 of which was subsequently returned to them.<sup>734</sup> The balance according to Dillon was disposed of as follows:

£125,000 was paid in monthly allowances to evicted tenants, £51,000 was spent on housing, legal costs accounted for £11,500 and the remainder was spent on miscellaneous items, such as travelling, hotel accommodation, grants to aid

<sup>732</sup> Ibid.

<sup>733</sup> Geary, p. 141, quoting from HC 1876 (412), lxxx, 395-580, *Copy of a return of the names of proprietors and the area and valuation of all properties in the several counties of Ireland held in fee or perpetuity, or on long leases at chief rents*. Quoted in T. W. Moody, *Davitt and Irish revolution*, (Oxford, 1981), p. 560.

<sup>734</sup> Geary, p. 141.

settlements, etc.<sup>735</sup> An independent police inquiry into the plan's finances in May 1892, substantially corroborated Dillon's figures.<sup>736</sup>

### 3.9 THE EVICTED TENANTS COMMISSION

The Evicted Tenants Commission, appointed in October 1892, was set up to investigate the seventeen evicted plan of campaign estates with a view to making recommendations as to the eventual settlement of these long-standing disputes. The Irish Landowners' Convention decided to withdraw their participation from the workings of the Commission the following month, but despite this the commission set to work. The landlords' reason for withdrawing was that the 'commissioners had decided on conducting their inquiry in a one-sided and partisan manner' and they felt that the evicted tenants could make reckless statements with no process for cross-examination.<sup>737</sup> During the debate on the Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Bill in the House of Commons on 29 March 1893, the chief secretary, John Morley maintained that the landlords 'made a great mistake' by refusing to give evidence before the commission.<sup>738</sup> Smith-Barry (Hunts south) summed up the landlords' criticism of the nature of the evidence presented to the commission:

It [evidence] was notoriously one-sided evidence. It was the evidence chiefly of evicted tenants and of clergymen of the Catholic Church who had been mixed up with the plan of campaign....no landlord appeared and none of the tenants on the plan of campaign estates who had stuck to the landlords and paid their rents went before the commission....the evidence taken was not given upon oath and was not sifted by means of cross-examination.<sup>739</sup>

KilBride was invited to give evidence before the Evicted Tenants Commission and did so on 22 November 1892. In his evidence he stated that all the good land he had was in front of his house, which was on a hill. The 200 acres in front of his house was fair land, 'some of it good and some middling', but the land above his house was mountain land, 'which I would make a present of to anybody'.<sup>740</sup> He thought that about two-thirds or sixty-six tenants adopted the plan of campaign in Luggacurren. The actual figure was eighty-seven tenants evicted, made up of sixty-one tenants and twenty-six sub-tenants<sup>741</sup>

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<sup>735</sup> Ibid., quoting from *Report of the commissioners appointed to inquire into the estates of evicted tenants in Ireland*, xxxi, HC 1893-94 [C.6935], 14,955, hereafter cited as *ETC*.

<sup>736</sup> Geary, p. 141, quoting from SPO, CBS, 1892, 4697/S, 'The plan of campaign, disposition and whereabouts of "war-chest"', May 1892.

<sup>737</sup> *K.S.*, 16 Nov. 1892.

<sup>738</sup> *Hansard* 4, x, 1453, 29 Mar. 1893.

<sup>739</sup> *Hansard* 4, x, 1444-7, 29 Mar. 1893.

<sup>740</sup> *ETC*, 4103.

<sup>741</sup> Ibid., 3860.

(Table 8). A crucial factor in relation to the adoption of the plan of campaign in Luggacurren was the equality of treatment demanded with Lansdowne's Kerry tenants, yet KilBride agreed that there was no doubt that the land in Kerry was a great deal worse than that in Luggacurren.<sup>742</sup> On the other hand he felt that judicial rents should have been altered irrespective of the location of the farm, as 'the same claim exists and is good for judicial rents no matter where it came from'.<sup>743</sup> Since the evictions KilBride stated the evicted farms were worked by the Land Corporation, large portions of which were allowed grow into meadow which was not cut, and the portion that was cut was never saved but allowed to rot in the fields. KilBride in his evidence before the Evicted Tenants' Commission of 1892 recollected that in March 1889 'seeing the whole countryside on fire, burning off the old fog grass that had been neither eaten by cattle or mown'.<sup>744</sup>

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<sup>742</sup> *Ibid.*, 3900.

<sup>743</sup> *Ibid.*, 3919.

<sup>744</sup> *Ibid.*, 3979.

Table 8: Number of Tenants Evicted on Seventeen Estates Investigated by the Evicted Tenants Commission 1892

NUMBER OF TENANTS EVICTED ON SEVENTEEN ESTATES INVESTIGATED BY THE EVICTED TENANTS COMMISSION 1892			
The following table shows the number of tenants and sub-tenants evicted on each of the seventeen estates investigated			
	Number of tenants and sub-tenants evicted since 1 May 1879		
Estate of	Tenants	Sub-tenants	Total
The Marquess of Clanricarde	206	32	238
Peter De Penthony O'Kelly	51		51
Charles W. T. Ponsonby	250	108	358
A. H. Smith-Barry	99	4	103
The Marquess of Lansdowne	61	26	87
G. F. Brooke	86	28	114
Viscount Masserene and Ferrard	66	28	94
Lord Cloncurry	37	35	72
Mrs Hannah Lewis	46	10	56
Michael Den Keatinge & Maurice Den Keatinge	9	3	12
The O'Grady	15	16	31
James E. Byrne	9	2	11
Arthur Langford	4		4
The late Wybrants Olphert	357	90	447
John H. Swiney	17		17
Mrs Anne Stewert	53	8	61
William Ancketill	37	4	41
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1403</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>1797</b>
Source: Report of the commissioners appointed to inquire into the estates of evicted tenants in Ireland, xxxi, [C.6935], HC 1893-1894], p. 12, paragraph 11.			

The Commission reported that the condition of the evicted farms on many of the estates was deplorable. The land had gone to waste and fields were covered with furze and weeds. The former tenants had no occupation and hung about their old farms, never relinquishing the hope of re-instatement.<sup>745</sup> This was certainly the case for the majority of the Luggacurren evicted tenants. Sixty tenants had been evicted, twenty-six farms had been re-let to new tenants, twenty farms were purchased by new tenants and only eight had been re-let to 'old' tenants (Table 9). The Commission also reported that they had evidence that sales to new tenant owners on the Luggacurren estate had been sanctioned by the Land Commission, with regard to twenty evicted farms<sup>746</sup> (Map 2).

<sup>745</sup> Ibid., p. 13, paragraph 17.

<sup>746</sup> Ibid., p. 14, paragraph 22.

Table 9: Re-letting and Purchasing of Farms Investigated by Evicted Tenants Commission 1892

RE-LETTING AND PURCHASING OF FARMS INVESTIGATED BY EVICTED TENANTS COMMISSION 1892					
The number of farms re-let to, or purchased by new tenants and the number of tenants reinstated by purchase or otherwise, on the estates into which the Evicted Tenants Commission 1892 inquired appear in the following summary					
Estate of	Total number of evicted farms	Number of such farms relet to new tenants	Number purchased by new tenants	Number relet to old tenants	Number purchased by old tenants
The Marquess of Clanricarde	203	43		52	
Peter De Penthony O'Kelly	51				
Charles W. T. Ponsonby	241				74
A. H. Smith Barry	99	3		55	
The Marquess of Lansdowne	60	26	20	8	
G. F. Brooke	83	80			
Viscount Masserene and Ferrard	66	51		11	
Lord Clonburry	37	3		10	
Mrs Hannah Lewis	46	1		12	
Michael Den & Maurice Keatinge	9			1	
The O'Grady	15			7	
James E. Byrne	9				
Arthur Langford	4				
The late Wybrants Olphert	323	9		146	
John H. Swiney	17	9		2	
Mrs Anne Stewart	53			18	
William Anchetill	34	5		11	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1350</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>74</b>
Source: Report of the commissioners appointed to inquire into the estates of evicted tenants in Ireland, xxxi, [C.6935]. HC 1893-1894. p. 13, paragraph 18.					

The Evicted Tenants' Commission in their report, put a large part of the blame for the continued agrarian agitation on the plan of campaign estates in 1892, on 'the severe and lasting depression in agriculture'. It reported that the great and general agricultural depression which prevailed in Ireland at that period was proved by the witnesses and in support of their statements they cited a passage from the report of the Cowper Commission issued in 1887.<sup>747</sup> The passage in question pointed to the fall in the price of produce of all kinds, and in all parts of the country, which had much impaired the

<sup>747</sup> ETC, p. 10.

ability of the farmers to pay the full rent. Another factor was the general restriction of credit by the banks and other lenders of money, as well as shopkeepers, which greatly increased their financial difficulties.<sup>748</sup> As early as 1878 John Townsend Trench noted that 'the depression of trade in England coupled with the importation of American beef, butter etc' had depressed agricultural prices in Ireland and 'besides this year's grain crop has been short, but probably these disadvantages so far will be compensated by their leading to improvements in agriculture and a practical lesson to farmers, that the welfare of Ireland is immediately dependent on England's prosperity.'<sup>749</sup>

On the other hand the commissioners reported that the refusal of the landlords to accede to the tenants' demands was based on several considerations. First of all the judicial rents were not to be interfered with, the agitation for the reduction of rent was not agrarian but political, the demands of the tenants were excessive and that claims for all round abatements, without reference to the circumstances of each tenant, were unjust.'<sup>750</sup>

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<sup>748</sup> *Report of the royal commission on the Land Law (Ireland) Act of 1881 and the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act 1885*, xxvi, [C. 4969], HC 1887, 1, Paragraph 16, hereafter cited as *Cowper comm.*

<sup>749</sup> Queen's County account, 1878, Derreen papers.

<sup>750</sup> *ETC*, p. 11.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### NORTH GALWAY AND THE UNITED IRISH LEAGUE 1895-1903

#### 4.1 1895 GENERAL ELECTION

‘The general elections [1895] caused no stir whatever in the county and it was very remarkable how extremely little political feeling was exhibited’.<sup>751</sup>

On 3 March 1894, Gladstone resigned as Liberal Prime Minister and was succeeded two days later by Lord Rosebery.<sup>752</sup> A week later on 12 March, in direct contravention to his assurance to Home Rule supporters in the House of Commons that Home Rule would ‘be pressed to the forefront, as far as in me lies, pressed to a definite and successful conclusion’<sup>753</sup>, his ‘predominant partner’ speech in the House of Lords specified that before Home Rule could be concluded, ‘England as the pre-dominant member of the three kingdoms will have to be convinced of its justice and equity’.<sup>754</sup> During Rosebery’s short tenure as Prime Minister, emphasis switched from Home Rule to land reform and in this framework, the Evicted Tenants Bill was introduced in the House of Commons on 19 April, but was defeated on 14 August in the House of Lords.<sup>755</sup> The Bill had contained provision of a compulsory purchase of lands for the reinstatement of evicted tenants.<sup>756</sup> On 5 March 1895, a further bill to advance land purchase was introduced by Morley, the chief secretary but was abandoned in June ‘as the government stumbled towards extinction’.<sup>757</sup> On 21 June 1895 the government lost a vote on the army estimates. Rosebery resigned two days later allowing Salisbury to take office as Conservative Prime Minister on 25 June.<sup>758</sup> On 8 July parliament was dissolved and a general election was called.<sup>759</sup>

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<sup>751</sup> CO 904, Police Reports, Jan. 1892 to Dec. 1897, South Western Division, Sept. 1894 to Dec. 1895, Co. of Kerry - confidential report - July 1895 - Tralee 3 Aug. 1895, p. 466.

<sup>752</sup> O’Day, xlvi; Rosebery, fifth Earl (1849-1929) was brought into the Cabinet in 1885 and was Foreign Secretary in the Liberal government of 1886 and again between 1892 and 1894 when he succeeded Gladstone as Prime Minister. Rosebery resigned the leadership of the Liberal party in Nov. 1896 but remained an influential figure, O’Day, xxxiii.

<sup>753</sup> James, Robert Rhodes, *Roseberry: A biography of Archibald Philip, Fifth Earl of Roseberry*, (London, 1963), p. 337.

<sup>754</sup> Crewe, Marquess of, *Lord Roseberry*, (London, 1931), ii, pp. 444-5, quoted in O’Day, p. 170.

<sup>755</sup> O’Day, xlvi.

<sup>756</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172.

<sup>757</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 173.

<sup>758</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>759</sup> *Ibid.*



KilBride was nominated for two constituencies for the 1895 general election, south Kerry and north Galway. Colonel Nolan of Ballinderry, near Tuam, was a strong Parnellite candidate in the north Galway constituency and it was possible that KilBride would oust him out from his seat. Sister Maura Nolan states that the story of the Nolans of Ballinderry was one 'of Catholic landlords, owners of vast tracts of land, living in comfort and surrounded by misery'.<sup>760</sup> Colonel John Philip Nolan (1838-1912) was the son of John Nolan, Ballinderry, a J.P. and barrister of Ballinderry,<sup>761</sup> who as a member of the Grand Jury for Galway in 1846 was involved in relieving the poor of Tuam during the famine. Unfortunately for him and other leading figures he died while engaged in this task. The *Tuam Herald* of 23 June 1890 later described what happened:

In Galway the following gentlemen met at the last assizes in full health and in the discharge of public duties. The first three were members of the Grand Jury and they have all died within ten days of malignant typhus: Robert Gregory J.P. of Coole Park; T. B. Martin M.P.; John Nolan J.P. Ballinderry; Peter Dolphin J.P. Danesfield and S. Jones R.M.<sup>762</sup>

Colonel Nolan's mother was Mary Ann Nolan, formerly of Loughboy, Mayo. Nolan was unmarried and was educated at Stoneyhurst, Trinity College, Dublin and the Staff and Artillery College. He enlisted in the Royal Artillery in 1857 and served throughout the Abyssinian campaign of 1867, including Arogee and the capture of Magdala.<sup>763</sup> During this campaign he was the war correspondent for the *Daily News* and subsequently the *Morning Post*.<sup>764</sup> During this period he invented a range-finder, whereby a soldier could estimate and measure the exact distance of any object sighted. It was actually first used by the Russian Government, not by the English, as might have been expected and he received £6,000 for the invention.<sup>765</sup>

Colonel Nolan had 6,866 acres in County Galway valued at £1,560.<sup>766</sup> He inherited an estate at Portacarron, near Oughterard from his great-grandfather and in his absence, the agency was taken by a Mr Murphy.<sup>767</sup> Between 1864 and 1866, some of the tenants

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<sup>760</sup> Nolan, Sr. Maura, 'The Nolans of Ballinderry' in *Cummer parish newsletter*, vol. 4, 1991, hereafter cited as Sr. Nolan.

<sup>761</sup> Stenton, M. and Lees, S. (Eds.). *Who's who of British members of parliament, vol. 2, 1886-1918*, a biographical dictionary of the House of Commons. (Sussex, ?), p. 267.

<sup>762</sup> *Tuam Herald*, 23 June 1890, hereafter cited as *T.H.*

<sup>763</sup> Stenton, M. and Lees, S. (Eds.). *Who's who of British members of parliament, Vol. 2, 1886-1918*, a biographical dictionary of the House of Commons. (Sussex, 1976), p. 267.

<sup>764</sup> Sr. Nolan., vol. 5, 1992.

<sup>765</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>766</sup> *T.H.*, 29 Feb. 1896.

<sup>767</sup> Sr. Nolan, vol. 5, 1992.

on the Portacarron estate were sub-letting their land and although they owed no rent, twelve families were evicted.<sup>768</sup> In a by-election for County Galway on 21 February 1871,<sup>769</sup> Nolan was opposed by the Home Ruler, Mitchell Henry of Kylemore Castle,<sup>770</sup> but a strong campaign was mounted against Nolan through the medium of the *Galway Vindicator*, the result of which was that he was obliged to retire. This campaign was mainly orchestrated by Father John Dooley, who vehemently opposed Nolan's candidature. Father Dooley had been the curate of Oughterard when the 'historic Portacarron evictions were carried out'.<sup>771</sup> After the election, Nolan agreed to have the Portacarron eviction case brought to arbitration and a court sat in Oughterard courthouse for three days.<sup>772</sup> The decision of the court was that Nolan should restore the evicted tenantry to their holdings, to which the Colonel agreed but this did not resolve the problem. The Portacarron lands had been subsequently leased to a Mr Murphy of Oughterard. Murphy absolutely refused to surrender the lands, although A. M. Sullivan<sup>773</sup> had authority from Nolan to treat him liberally.<sup>774</sup> On account of his obstinacy, Sullivan denounced Murphy as 'the real Portacarron evictor' and the tenants were never restored to their original holdings.<sup>775</sup> Nolan offered land to the tenants in the neighbourhood of Tuam, equivalent to their former holdings. Some accepted the lands offered and the rest received compensation, which was decided on by the court of arbitration.<sup>776</sup> The evictions at Portacarron became 'heavily linked with the Colonel's future in politics and came to be known as the Portacarron Awards'.<sup>777</sup> For Nolan's agreement to abide by the decision of the arbitrators, he was later 'endeared' by the clergy and his tenants, but was 'called a humbug by his fellow landlords, meaning that he had deserted his class and denied the landlord's right to unrestricted eviction'.<sup>778</sup>

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<sup>768</sup> Ibid.

<sup>769</sup> Walker, p. 114.

<sup>770</sup> *T.H.*, 10 Aug. 1895.

<sup>771</sup> *T.H.*, 10 Aug. 1895.

<sup>772</sup> A.M. Sullivan acted as an amateur councillor for the tenantry and became eminent council later.

<sup>773</sup> Alexander Martin Sullivan (1830-84) was brother of T.D. Sullivan and Donal Sullivan. He succeeded Charles Gavan Duffy in 1874 as editor of the *Nation* newspaper, handing over control to T.D. Sullivan in 1876. He was a pious Catholic who turned the newspaper into a voice of the Catholic hierarchy as well as being an advocate of self-government principles. He was detested by Fenians. Sullivan attended the private meeting at the Bilton Hotel on 19 May 1870, which founded the Home Government Association. He was an MP from 1874 to Feb. 1882 when he resigned, O'Day, xxxv.

<sup>774</sup> *T.H.*, 10 Aug. 1895.

<sup>775</sup> Ibid.

<sup>776</sup> Ibid; The chief arbitrator was Father Duggan, with his colleague, Father Lavelle, Sir John Grey was Chief Baron and A. M. O'Sullivan acted as Counsellor.

<sup>777</sup> Sr. Nolan, vol. 5, 1992.

<sup>778</sup> Ibid.

On 8 February 1872, Nolan contested and won a seat at another by-election for the constituency of County Galway, opposed in this case by Captain the Honourable William le Poer Trench. Nolan, a Home Ruler received 2823 votes and Trench a Conservative received 658 votes.<sup>779</sup> The influence of the clergy was in Nolan's favour during this election campaign, against 'the absolutism and authority of landlordism' represented by Trench.<sup>780</sup> However Nolan only sat for a short time from February to 13 June 1872, when on petition he was unseated on an 'allegation of undue and improper exercise of the spiritual influence of the Roman Catholic clergy, as well as denunciations and threats of ruin' by the clergy if their parishioners voted for Captain Trench.<sup>781</sup> Hoppen quoting from the *Copy of the evidence taken at the trial of the Galway County election petition of 1872*,<sup>782</sup> relates that one particular voter at this election, who was being 'literally' chased by priests and agents alike, stood on a table in the polling booth 'shouting his support for both candidates'.<sup>783</sup> Another voter ran over to 'a landlord' embracing him, promising that he would do anything for his landlord, but that in this case, he would be murdered if he didn't 'vote for Nolan'.<sup>784</sup> The trial was held in the courthouse, Galway and lasted for fifty-seven days, from 1 April to 25 May 1872.<sup>785</sup> In Judge Keogh's 'celebrated judgement', Nolan was unseated and replaced by Trench.<sup>786</sup> Costs in the region of £13,000 were awarded against Nolan, 'which would have been ruinous to him'. As the clergy of Galway had vehemently denounced Keogh's judgement, a public subscription was organised through the medium of the *Freeman's Journal* and £16,000 was collected.<sup>787</sup>

Nolan retired from the army as a Lieutenant Colonel in 1881.<sup>788</sup> Maura Nolan states that because he was a nationalist, he was ostracised by his regiment, boycotted in the army and forced to resign.<sup>789</sup> In the general election of 1874, Nolan was opposed by

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<sup>779</sup> Walker, p. 114.

<sup>780</sup> *T.H.*, 10 Aug. 1895.

<sup>781</sup> Stenton, M. and Lees, S. (Eds.). *Who's who of British members of parliament, Vol. 2, 1886-1918*, a biographical dictionary of the House of Commons, p. 267; Sr. Nolan, vol. 5, 1992.

<sup>782</sup> *Galway County election petition*, H.C. 1872 (241-I), xlvi, 434-5, 443-6.

<sup>783</sup> Hoppen, K.T., *Elections, politics and society 1832-1885*, (Oxford, 1984), p. 158.

<sup>784</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>785</sup> Sr. Nolan, vol. 5, 1992.

<sup>786</sup> *T.H.*, 10 Aug. 1895.

<sup>787</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>788</sup> *Who was who 1897-1916, A companion to Who's who containing the biographies of those who died during the period 1897-1916*, p. 528; Stenton, M. and Lees, S. (Eds.). *Who's who of British members of parliament, Vol. 2, 1886-1918*, a biographical dictionary of the House of Commons. p. 267.

<sup>789</sup> Sr. Nolan, vol. 5, 1992.

Mitchell Henry and Hyacinth D'Arcy, both Home Rulers.<sup>790</sup> Nolan won the seat by receiving 2348 votes, while Henry received 2270 votes and D'Arcy 1080 votes. Nolan represented County Galway as a Home Ruler from 1874-85 and as a nationalist in north Galway from 1885-95. He was unopposed both in 1885 and 1886 but in 1892, after the split in the Irish Parliamentary party, Nolan stood as a Parnellite candidate.<sup>791</sup> He was opposed by an anti-Parnellite, Dr Charles Kearns Deane Tanner of Cork. However, despite a bruising campaign, Nolan won the election with a total of 2,040, while Tanner polled strongly with 1,651 votes.<sup>792</sup>

One of the strongest supporters of KilBride's candidature for the north Galway constituency in 1895 was the Rev Mark Eagleton P.P. of Cummer and at the largely attended Anti-Parnellite convention in Galway city, KilBride was proposed by him and chosen as the candidate for north Galway.<sup>793</sup> David Sheehy was chosen for south Galway, John Roche for east Galway and William O'Malley for west Galway.<sup>794</sup> Colonel Nolan's 'ancient mansion' was situated in Ballinderry, in the parish of Cummer and as such Father Eagleton was Nolan's parish priest.<sup>795</sup>

KilBride's first nomination paper was signed by Dr McEvily, Archbishop of Tuam, another by Fr Curran, administrator of Tuam and a third by the president of Queen's College, Galway.<sup>796</sup> It was surmised there would be no contest in the county, except for north Galway.<sup>797</sup> In general the Catholic clergy supported the Anti-Parnellite candidates in this election and so when KilBride arrived in Tuam, he was met at the railway station amongst others, by the Rev J. Curren C.A., Tuam and the party proceeded immediately to the presbytery. KilBride while addressing his supporters from the steps of the presbytery, asked that they would refrain from 'a single disrespectful word of his opponent Colonel Nolan, their countryman'.<sup>798</sup> However a week later, at a public meeting in Tuam on Saturday 13 July, attended by 'a large number of clergymen', KilBride stated that 'Cordite' Nolan had never voted for a land bill and took no interest

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<sup>790</sup> Walker, p. 117.

<sup>791</sup> Walker, p. 351.

<sup>792</sup> *Ibid.*; Walker, p. 146.

<sup>793</sup> *G.O.*, 13 July 1895.

<sup>794</sup> *T.H.*, 13 July 1895.

<sup>795</sup> *Ibid.*, 10 Aug. 1895.

<sup>796</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 July 1895.

<sup>797</sup> *Ibid.*, 13 July 1895.

<sup>798</sup> *Ibid.*

in the land question, but instead attended only to military affairs.<sup>799</sup> On 27 July the result of the north Galway election was announced, with a majority of 565 for KilBride. KilBride received 2,590 votes against Nolan's 2,025 votes.<sup>800</sup> According to an anonymous correspondent to the *Tuam Herald*, the cause of Nolan's defeat, was 'the splendidly spirited and successful canvassing action of the Catholic clergy', who were determined to succeed.<sup>801</sup> On the other hand 'hundreds, perhaps thousands' of Nolan's supporters were unapproached by him and 'if he is out in the cold today he has only himself to blame'. In a farewell speech to his former constituents, Colonel Nolan stated that one of the principal causes that lead to his defeat was the presence of the clergy in the booths, which had an enormous effect on the voters, especially the illiterate voters.<sup>802</sup> The *Tuam Herald* in reminiscing on the career of Colonel Nolan described him as 'a distinguished military scientist as well as an British artillery officer of distinction'.<sup>803</sup>

There was a slight setback in the election campaign for KilBride. The week after the election, a charge of personation against a Parnellite voter, Michael Murphy of Contoa was dealt with at a special court in Tuam. The charge was initiated by F. J. McCormack, solicitor and agent for KilBride in the general election. KilBride did not appear but Nolan was present. On investigation, it transpired that Murphy's name 'appeared properly' on the voters' list. McCormack was ordered to pay £7 10s compensation to Murphy for false accusation of personation and perjury and if not paid within twenty-four hours 'that it be levied by distraint off the goods of the said F. J. McCormack, agent of Mr KilBride'.<sup>804</sup> KilBride's election expenses for north Galway were later returned at £345, 'all of which money was paid by the Federation'.<sup>805</sup> According to the *Tuam Herald*, 'the maximum expenses that could be incurred are £860'.<sup>806</sup>

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<sup>799</sup> *T.H.*, 20 July 1895.

<sup>800</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 July 1895.

<sup>801</sup> *Ibid.*, 3 Aug. 1895.

<sup>802</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>803</sup> *T.H.*, 10 Aug. 1895; Nolan unsuccessfully contested the constituency of south Louth in Mar. 1896 but was re-elected for north Galway in Oct. 1900 and sat until defeated in 1906, Stenton, M. and Lees, S. (Eds.). *Who's who of British members of parliament, Vol. 2, 1886-1918*, a biographical dictionary of the House of Commons, p. 267.

<sup>804</sup> *T.H.*, 3 Aug. 1895.

<sup>805</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 Apr. 1896.

<sup>806</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 Feb. 1897.

## 4.2 1895 SOUTH KERRY BY-ELECTION

Having been returned unopposed simultaneously for south Kerry and north Galway, KilBride was thus elected for two constituencies but opted to represent north Galway. The withdrawal of KilBride from the division of south Kerry caused a crisis within the anti-Parnellites. This crisis had nothing personally to do with KilBride, except that a by-election had to be held in July 1895 to fill his seat. A rift had been growing for some time between the committee of the party and T. M. Healy.<sup>807</sup> Healy didn't agree with the system whereby this committee of which he was not a member, could decide election strategy. Instead he wanted a national convention to elect a new committee, so that previous to the by-election of 1895 in south Kerry, a split was developing between the 'McCarthyites' on one side and the 'Healyites' on the other. Hoppen explains that the Healyite faction had the support of Cardinal Logue, a faction which 'emphasised the independence of constituencies at the expense of strong central leadership'.<sup>808</sup> Hoppen further argues that the 'Healyites' who epitomised 'the most frenetically virulent exponents of the art' of clerical power and influence in the early 1890s 'represented a return to the localist traditions of the post-famine years.'<sup>809</sup> The R.I.C. reported that the contest between the 'McCarthyite' and 'Healyite' candidates in Kerry had caused much comment in that and the adjoining counties and was much discussed amongst the 'Federation' party. Their opinion was almost evenly balanced as to the action of the leaders of both sides.<sup>810</sup> Immediately after the general election of 1895, KilBride was instrumental in proposing a vote of confidence in Justin McCarthy and the party committee, in opposition to Healy's stubborn action of causing embarrassment at the Tyrone convention.<sup>811</sup>

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<sup>807</sup> T. M. Healy (1855-1931) was an ambitious young journalist who was initially mesmerised by Parnell and briefly served as his private secretary. He was returned to Parliament in 1881, lost the seat in 1886 but was elected in 1887, sitting from then until 1910 when he was defeated, but was returned once more in 1911, retaining his seat until 1918. Healy became a barrister, being called to the Irish Bar in 1884, becoming a QC in 1899 and a KC at the English Bar in 1910. He took the lead against Parnell in Dec. 1890 and played the largest role in the vitriolic attack on him. Healy was closely connected with the Sullivan clan to whom he was linked by family and then marriage to T. D. Sullivan's daughter, but was widely mistrusted. His clashes with John Dillon were legendary. Healy defended the employers in the Dublin lock-out of 1913. He was governor-general of the Irish Free State from 1922 to 1928, O'Day, xxiii.

<sup>808</sup> Hoppen, p. 180.

<sup>809</sup> Hoppen, K.T., *Elections, politics and society 1832-1885*, (Oxford, 1984), pp 481-2.

<sup>810</sup> CO 904, Police Reports, Jan. 1892 to Dec. 1897, South Western Division, Sept. 1894

Dec. 1895, Divisional Commissioners office monthly confidential report for Aug. 1895 - Cork 9 Sept. 1895, p. 484.

<sup>811</sup> F.S.L. Lyons, *The Irish parliamentary party 1890-1910*, (London, 1951), pp 51-4, hereafter cited as Lyons.

Although Healy lost this vote by thirty-three to twenty-six, he continued to be a thorn in the side of Dillon, McCarthy and the majority of the party.<sup>812</sup> At an unofficial convention in Caherciveen on 13 August 1895, the priests chose a Dublin businessman, William Murphy to contest the by-election. Murphy was a supporter of Healy. KilBride reported to Dillon from Castleisland that he had visited almost the whole of the constituency of South Kerry.<sup>813</sup> He found that Archdeacon O'Sullivan of Kenmare, 'who received me most cordially' was strongly opposed both politically and personally to William Murphy.

He [O'Sullivan] asserts that at the time of the Harenc estate business, Murphy grossly insulted Father O'Connor, which is the cause of his personal dislike. He is also opposed to Healy and says he should be fought. Wednesday last he undertook to write to Justin McCarthy and place the situation before him. The principal men in Kenmare share the same views as the Archdeacon.<sup>814</sup>

David Doran, Templenoe, who had seconded KilBride's earlier nomination for south Kerry, now expressed his desire to be the candidate of the anti-Parnellites to 'fill the gap' but although he was 'a very decent fellow', KilBride had misgivings about his receiving general support. Meanwhile Canon Brosnan had recommended Murphy 'from the altar', but KilBride dismissed this as he felt Brosnan's political influence was 'practically nil' and his support for any person was 'a distinct disservice'. KilBride also reported that 'Fitzgerald, Leslie and most of the principal men' were against Murphy and Healy and Doctor Trant of Valentia and Father O'Reilly P.P. in Waterville were 'strongly for majority rule, in the spirit as well as in the letter and this feeling strongly prevails all over south Kerry'. The only strong support Murphy had received according to KilBride, was the 'very slight influence' of Tom Donoghue of the cable station Valentia and a 'chronic medical student' named Sugrue of Caherciveen, 'who now calls himself Dr and sells medicine to the country people in his father's small shop'. KilBride felt that it was a matter for the constituency to choose a candidate for the anti-Parnellites in south Kerry, and 'in the event of there being no local man, which goes without saying, that the best course to adopt would be to communicate with Mr McCarthy as the chairman of the party'.<sup>815</sup>

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<sup>812</sup> Ibid.

<sup>813</sup> TCD, Ms. 6756/767, John Dillon papers, KilBride to Dillon 5 Aug. 1895.

<sup>814</sup> Ibid.

<sup>815</sup> Ibid.

Three days before the official anti-Parnellite convention in Killorglin, KilBride was busy engineering support for their candidate in south Kerry, T. J. Farrell, a London Irishman. He reported to Dillon that Keating of Caherciveen, a friend of Canon Brosnan and Murphy, had written to Archdeacon O'Sullivan of Kenmare informing him that 'the Irish Parliamentary Party are in favour of Murphy'.<sup>816</sup> This misinformation KilBride felt 'must be met' and could be offset by Justin McCarthy writing a letter to Archdeacon O'Sullivan, which could be read at the forthcoming convention, or better still to have 'something published at once'. As there were problems holding the convention elsewhere in Kerry, Killorglin was seen as the 'poorer place' as it was 'gettable by rail from here [Kenmare] and Caherciveen'. Finally KilBride promised Dillon that he would make certain 'as is humanly possible' that T. J. Farrell would be selected at the convention 'after which I should be delighted to see Murphy go to the poll or even get nominated'.<sup>817</sup>

The official anti-Parnellite convention convened in Killorglin on 28 August 1895 chose Farrell and now for the first time there was an open split within the ranks of the anti-Parnellites.<sup>818</sup> On 31 August, KilBride wired Dillon at the House of Commons from Kenmare, that Farrell and Murphy had been nominated and requested 'all help you can at once'.<sup>819</sup> An 'independent elector' writing to the editor of the *Tuam Herald* on 14 September had another version of the Killorglin convention. The allegation was that KilBride 'tried to corrupt the constituency' by getting jobs for two or three of his supporters and accordingly he (KilBride) 'telegraphed to them to bring six men'.<sup>820</sup> The writer further alleged that the expenses of KilBride's 'pals' were paid by KilBride or Farrell, 'men who had never been heard of in Kerry and one of whom had signed the Primrose League petition against Home Rule'.<sup>821</sup>

The *Tuam Herald* expressed dissatisfaction that the newly elected MP for north Galway could not spare time from the 'squabbles' with Healy to devote some thought to his new constituency.<sup>822</sup> It noted that KilBride was in Kerry opposing Murphy, 'who was known in Tuam as a liberal employer of labour on the Claremorris line and whose

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<sup>816</sup> TCD, Ms. 6756/768, John Dillon papers, KilBride to Dillon 25 Aug. 1895.

<sup>817</sup> Ibid.

<sup>818</sup> Lyons, pp 51-4.

<sup>819</sup> TCD, Ms. 6756/969, John Dillon papers, telegram from KilBride to Dillon, 31 Aug. 1895.

<sup>820</sup> *T.H.*, 14 Sept. 1895.

<sup>821</sup> Ibid.

<sup>822</sup> Ibid., 7 Sept. 1895.



only fault and failing is he is follower of the redoubtable Tim and will support his independent policy in parliament if he gets in'.<sup>823</sup> However, Farrell won the by-election for the 'McCarthyites' by 1,209 to 474 votes.<sup>824</sup> It is interesting also to note that Doran the local candidate was passed over, as Dillon thought he was unacceptable to the priests.<sup>825</sup> On 7 November 1895, Healy was expelled from the executive of the Irish National League of Great Britain and on 13 November from the Irish National Federation.<sup>826</sup> The following day, Healy was eventually excluded from the party committee for his conduct during the by-election of south Kerry.

#### 4.3 JOSEPH KILBRIDE RM

The earlier criticism of KilBride was tame in comparison to a letter from 'an independent elector' headed 'Mr Tim Healy on the present member for north Galway.'<sup>827</sup> The writer asked what the priests 'and their deluded tools' had gained by ousting a 'gentleman with such a stainless record and such a noble past as Colonel Nolan' from the constituency of north Galway in order to replace him with 'such a man' as KilBride. Healy reported that Farrell had been sent to south Kerry without the authority of anyone except KilBride and he wondered what KilBride had gained from his efforts. In Healy's judgement, the acceptance of KilBride 'who had got his brother £700' marked a 'decay' in Irish politics for the following reasons.<sup>828</sup>

The whole KilBride family were land grabbers and the descendants of land grabbers. KilBride first got his brother gazetted as magistrate for Kerry to pound down the honest people of that county. He [Healy] went to Mr Morley and said: "It is bad enough to make the brother of a member of the Irish party a resident magistrate but for God's sake do not send him down to the member's constituency, to shame and disgrace it." He got KilBride shifted to Cork and where was he now? He was in Mitchelstown. 'Remember Mitchelstown'. And what was he doing there? He was backing up the landlord party and giving sentence under Edward 111. He sentenced one poor woman to two months imprisonment the other day for crying out 'land grabber' against the man who took her farm.<sup>829</sup>

As to the charge that the KilBrides were land grabbers, it was true that as a direct result of the great famine and its aftermath, in 1848 a number of evictions took place on

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<sup>823</sup> *T.H.*, 7 Sept. 1895.

<sup>824</sup> *Galway Express*, 7 Sept. 1895, hereafter cited as *G.E.*

<sup>825</sup> Dillon MSS, Dillon to O'Brien, 22 Aug. 1895.

<sup>826</sup> O'Day, xlvi.

<sup>827</sup> *T.H.*, 14 Sept. 1895.

<sup>828</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>829</sup> *Ibid.*; CO 904, part 1: anti-government organisations, 1882-1921, reel 8, volume 18, secret societies, register of suspects (home I-J), vol. 2, 1890-1898, folio no. 4-18, p. 649/21.

the Luggacurren estate and that some of the evicted farms were amalgamated and subsequently rented by Denis KilBride's father and grandfather.<sup>830</sup> These farms were gradually amalgamated into one farm of c800 acres. Denis succeeded his father Thomas as tenant of Lord Lansdowne in 1866 on this farm. It was also true that KilBride's grandfather, also Denis KilBride, was a bailiff for Lord Lansdowne on the Luggacurren property.<sup>831</sup> The charge in relation to Denis using his political influence to procure the position of RM for his brother Joseph with a salary of £700 is not easy to prove, although O'Day states that 'all Home Rule factions were consulted about vacant posts' for the Commission of the Peace and local administration.<sup>832</sup> Despite the fact that Joseph KilBride was a Catholic, social class was more significant than religion in determining who became a resident magistrate, although political patronage also played some part.<sup>833</sup> Resident magistrates were in fact selected by the chief secretary, although nominally appointed by the Lord Lieutenant, as head of the executive to which they owed their place and pay.<sup>834</sup>

In regards to a starting salary of £700 being paid to Joseph KilBride RM, this can be easily disproved. In response to general unhappiness by RMs about their salary levels, legislation was passed in 1874 which determined the numbers in the higher salary ranges as follows: class one, of which there were not more than twenty RMs were paid a salary of £675, while class two of not more than thirty-three were paid £550 and class three £425. These pay scales remained unchanged for more than forty years.<sup>835</sup> Healy was disingenuous in surmising that a newly appointed RM would have a salary at the top of the RM scale, which with smaller allowances would approximate to £700. In fact, as a permanent member of staff, Joseph was paid at class three rate from 3 April 1894, class two from 11 February 1899 and only achieved class three on 1 June 1911.<sup>836</sup>

Joseph KilBride (1864-1936) was the younger brother of Denis KilBride. On 18 October 1883 at the age of nineteen, Joseph, the son of Thomas KilBride, a 'gentleman

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<sup>830</sup> CO 904, part 1: anti-government organisations, 1882-1921, reel 8, volume 18, secret societies, register of suspects (home I-J), vol. 2, 1890-1898, folio no. 4-18, p. 649/21.

<sup>831</sup> Ibid.

<sup>832</sup> O'Day, p. 173.

<sup>833</sup> Bonsall, Penny, *The Irish RMs: the resident magistrates in the British administration of Ireland*, (Dublin), p. 21, hereafter cited as Bonsall.

<sup>834</sup> Bonsall, p. 13.

<sup>835</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>836</sup> NA/Resident Magistrates record of service book, p. 98.

farmer', entered Trinity College to pursue a Bachelor of Law degree.<sup>837</sup> As the highest marked senior moderator in ethics and logics at Dublin University in 1887, he graduated with an honours B.L., receiving also the large gold medal.<sup>838</sup> Further to this, Joseph was also in receipt of the Wray prize of 1887 in logics and ethics.<sup>839</sup> This prestigious prize was awarded on an annual basis for 'the encouragement of metaphysical studies among the undergraduates of the University of Dublin'.<sup>840</sup> As a Barrister-at-Law he later practiced in 'Dublin and the Leinster circuit' and was called to the Bar in 1888.<sup>841</sup> His first appointment as RM 'for the county of Kerry' in April 1894 coincided, as Healy correctly stated, with Denis's representation of the constituency of south Kerry.<sup>842</sup> Less than a month later and most likely because of complaints to Dublin Castle and the chief secretary from Healy and his friends, he was transferred as RM 'for the County of Cork'.<sup>843</sup> He was appointed by the Liberal chief secretary, John Morley at a time when structural changes in the resident magistracy after 1890 were part of the wider process known as 'the greening of Dublin Castle', 'whereby the role of the old ascendancy in running the country was diminished'.<sup>844</sup>

#### 4.4 CONTROVERSIAL SALARIES OF MPs

In December 1895 the *Tuam Herald* regretted that KilBride was 'under the doctor's care in London'.<sup>845</sup> He was in 'a delicate state of health', having suffered much from his 'exposure and knocking about incident' in Kerry and consequently contracted rheumatism, which prevented him attending a meeting at Killimor the previous Sunday or from keeping any political engagements.<sup>846</sup> Meanwhile Justin McCarthy resigned as chairman of the anti-Parnellite party on 2 February 1896 and on the 18 February John Dillon was elected (thirty-one to twenty-one) in his place.<sup>847</sup>

On 4 January 1896 the *Tuam Herald* published a letter from an anonymous 'supporter' of Denis KilBride. This letter referred principally to 'a scurrilous assault' on Denis KilBride, by 'another inquirer' published by the *Irish Catholic and Nation* 'the

<sup>837</sup> TCD, Mun/v/23/7, Trinity college entrance book, Apr. 1877- June 1910, p. 72.

<sup>838</sup> *The Dublin university calendar for the year 1888*, p. 86.

<sup>839</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 122.

<sup>840</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>841</sup> NA/Resident Magistrates record of service book, p. 98.

<sup>842</sup> *The Dublin Gazette*, 6 Apr. 1894, p. 385.

<sup>843</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 May 1894, p. 481.

<sup>844</sup> Bonsall, p. 50.

<sup>845</sup> *T.H.*, 14 Dec. 1895.

<sup>846</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>847</sup> O'Day, xlvi.

organ of Mr Healy and of a section of the clergy' on 28 December 1895. Inquirer's main argument related to the alleged exorbitant amount of money Denis KilBride received from Irish party funds 'since the early days of his transatlantic escapades'.<sup>848</sup> The suggested amount paid for the trip to Canada in May 1887 was 'I heard £500' but the result to Ireland 'was not worth a brass farthing'. Inquirer was further 'assured' that since then KilBride was in receipt of '£400 a year on account of his eviction from his farm in the Queen's County', in which he acceded that KilBride was entitled to a fair share from the evicted tenants' fund. But there was a sting in the tail yet to come because:

A report has been and is current that in addition to this £400 a year he also receives £200 a year from out of the parliamentary fund. Now in my humble judgement £600 a year is a splendid and munificent honorarium for an Irish patriot of Mr Denis KilBride's calibre. Now as to his parliamentary stipend of £200 a year, I hold he is fairly entitled to that amount if he is not receiving £400 a year out of the Evicted Tenants' Fund.<sup>849</sup>

O'Day explains that the payment of salaries to Irish Parliamentary Party MPs, which did not exceed £200, only began in 1886 but because of the party's financial difficulties after 1890, the payments became increasingly irregular and the amounts offered were smaller 'and the number of MPs receiving salaries diminished'.<sup>850</sup> Although £200 represented a substantial sum, the payment of salaries were intended merely to compensate MPs for considerable spending expenses involved in attending the House of Commons and also for 'the accompanying loss of income from other sources during the parliamentary session'.<sup>851</sup>

In 1897 the *Tuam Herald* while denouncing KilBride as 'the first man who represented Galway who had no connection with that county whatsoever by birth, residence or relationship', also reported that he had signed 'the new pledge for party pay', calculated at £120 per member and paid by the Irish National Federation.<sup>852</sup> Contradictorily, in another article in the same issue, it was reported that the five members for Galway and county were 'claiming £240 a year for their valuable services' as Anti-Parnellite MPs. Apart from KilBride's occasional involvement in organising

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<sup>848</sup> *T.H.*, 4 Jan. 1896.

<sup>849</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>850</sup> O'Day, Alan. *The English face of Irish nationalism: Parnellite involvement in British politics 1880-86*, (Dublin, 1977), p. 42.

<sup>851</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>852</sup> *T.H.*, 13 Feb. 1897.

branches of the Irish National Federation in Galway, he had very little to do with the constituency other than in the House of Commons. Even this was disputed by the pro-Parnellite *Tuam Herald* which stated that KilBride had ‘not asked one single solitary question, so far as we can see, directly concerning his constituency’.<sup>853</sup> In October 1897 during a potato failure crisis it had this to say:

Why the member for north Galway who owes so much to that division should not venture to visit his constituents at this trying time we cannot see. Is this sort of absentee representation a humbug and fraud? A member should be in touch with his constituents.<sup>854</sup>

On the Catholic feast of Corpus Christi 4 June 1896, Denis’s son Joseph Aloysius KilBride, aged ten celebrated his First Communion.<sup>855</sup> (See illustration). Presumably he still lived with his mother Catherine KilBride at 64 Miranda Road in Kirkdale as the ceremony took place at St John the Evangelist’s Church, Kirkdale in Liverpool. It is not known whether Denis was present, but a photograph still extant shows Joseph accompanied by his mother (see illustrations at end of this study).

#### 4.5 HOUSE OF COMMONS DEBATES<sup>856</sup>

KilBride’s first contribution in connection with the constituency of north Galway was a question to the chief secretary to Ireland (Gerard Balfour) asking whether a scheme drawn up by the corporate body of the Queen’s College, Galway, for new statutes for the college after the dissolution of the Queen’s University, were laid before the Lord Lieutenant.<sup>857</sup> A further question appeared on the same topic on 4 June 1896.<sup>858</sup> Yet again in August 1897, KilBride asked to what extent Queen’s College, Galway served as an ‘educational endowment’ for Ulster students and whether the chief secretary was aware that ‘out of fifty-four students in arts in Galway, thirty were Presbyterians’. KilBride further advised that the statutes of the college be altered to enable the Catholic

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<sup>853</sup> Ibid.

<sup>854</sup> Ibid., 9 Oct. 1897.

<sup>855</sup> Certificate of first communion for Joseph KilBride in the private possession of Peter and Winnie KilBride, 174 Plymyard Avenue, Eastham, Wirral, Liverpool, England, CH62 8EH.

<sup>856</sup> In this section KilBride’s contributions in parliament are treated thematically rather than chronologically. The themes dealt with are education, law and order, land, labourers’ cottages, Land Commission, distress in Ireland, Local Government Bill 1898, issues connected with Galway and fraudulent trading of foodstuffs.

<sup>857</sup> *Hansard* 4, xxxxi, 63, 21 May 1896.

<sup>858</sup> *Hansard* 4, xxxxi, 413-4, 4 June 1896.

students of Connaught to have a share 'in the advantages and endowment' of the college, 'without incurring the censure of their church'.<sup>859</sup>

Consistent with KilBride's general interest in Irish education and in particular the conditions of Irish national school teachers, he asked the chief secretary (Balfour) to consider a revision of examination papers of national school teachers who sat for examinations in July 1896 and whether the teachers involved would get 'the benefit of the good marks' for teaching in the schools in connections with their examinations. The chief secretary answered that the question would be referred to the Commissioners of National Education.<sup>860</sup> During the supply debate of May 1897, KilBride stated that agriculturalists were suffering mainly from 'ignorance' and asked the President of the Board of Agriculture to provide substantial funding for the promotion of agricultural and dairy education. In particular KilBride strongly approved of experimental farms, provided they were not confined to experiments in fruit-growing but 'should cover every branch of the agricultural industry'.<sup>861</sup> In August KilBride made a case for the relief of the ratepayers of the Belmullet Union, to which the chief secretary stated that of the distressed unions, 'the case of Belmullet was the hardest'.<sup>862</sup> In relation to the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into 'the procedure, practices and methods of valuation of the Land Commission', KilBride strongly disagreed with the appointment of Dr Traill to the Commission, who was 'notoriously a landlord partisan and also George Fotherell<sup>863</sup>, who never 'sacrificed a penny in the interests of the Irish tenant farmer'.<sup>864</sup>

He was simply desirous of increasing his own professional business and of earning the two per cent to which he was entitled for every purchase transaction which he was instrumental in bringing about between landlord and tenant.<sup>865</sup>

In relation to expenditure on the constabulary in Ireland on 9 June 1896, KilBride asked the chief secretary (Balfour) why he refused to reduce the numbers in the RIC in Ireland, despite the fact that 'tranquillity' prevailed and 'had done during the administration of his predecessor'.<sup>866</sup> KilBride argued that the constabulary was not a

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<sup>859</sup> *Hansard* 4, xli, cols 517-8, 6 Aug 1897.

<sup>860</sup> *Hansard* 4, xliii, 1354-5, 3 Aug. 1896.

<sup>861</sup> *Hansard* 4, xlix, 1584, 28 May 1897.

<sup>862</sup> *Hansard* 4, lii, 142-3, 2 Aug. 1897.

<sup>863</sup> See end of chapter one for an earlier reference to Fotherell.

<sup>864</sup> *Hansard* 4, lii, 144, 2 Aug. 1897.

<sup>865</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>866</sup> *Hansard* 4, xli, 754, 9 June 1896.

police force in the strict sense of the word but a semi-military force, like the Cape Mounted Rifles and as such 'the putting down of crime did not assist a policeman's promotion'.<sup>867</sup> He further argued that it was the high rate of pay that induced men to join the RIC, yet notwithstanding that, several men of 'intelligence, honesty and straightforwardness' left the force for the USA 'because they could not bring themselves to act against their countrymen'.<sup>868</sup>

In the supply (Civil Service Estimates) debate on 22 June 1899, KilBride joined with Michael Davitt, J. G. Swift MacNeill (south Donegal),<sup>869</sup> James Flynn (north Cork)<sup>870</sup> and others in condemning the Attorney General for Ireland (John Atkinson) for 'jury packing' and for the 'shunting' of Counsel. The McDermott QC was for instance replaced by George Wright at the Sligo Winter Assizes in the case of Sergeant Sullivan, accused of inciting to murder in County Mayo.<sup>871</sup> KilBride wondered if a sum of £400 in the estimates 'transferred for expenses of actions taken against magistrates, the constabulary and others for acts done by them in execution of their duty' was used for the successful defence of Sergeant Sullivan. Atkinson replied that the sum mentioned was for 'payment of the sheriff's expenses' and had nothing to do with the case. KilBride responded that it was 'impossible' to get justice in Ireland as long as 'jury packing' continued and the conduct of the Crown in the Sullivan case was 'weakening the little respect' Irish people had for it.<sup>872</sup> Later in the debate T. M. Healy (north Louth) while arguing the case of two policemen, one in Kilkenny accused of murder and another convicted of bigamy, both of whom then at liberty, added that it was not the Attorney General who packed juries 'but it is the act of 1876, because you have so arranged matters by a system of valuation that is practically impossible for a Catholic to get on a jury'.<sup>873</sup>

For practically ten months KilBride made no contributions in the House of Commons in the period from the beginning of August 1899 to mid-May 1900 and only two minor

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<sup>867</sup> Ibid.

<sup>868</sup> *Hansard 4*, xli, 755, 9 June 1896.

<sup>869</sup> Maume points out that J. G. Swift MacNeill MP for south Donegal, 'possessed legal expertise and an encyclopaedic knowledge of parliamentary rules', which was invaluable to the Irish Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons, Maume, Patrick, *The long gestation: Irish nationalist life 1891-1918*, (Dublin, 1999), p. 73, hereafter cited as Maume.

<sup>870</sup> J. C. Flynn was MP for north Cork from 1885 to the January general election of 1910.

<sup>871</sup> *Hansard 4*, lxxiii, 347-54, 22 June 1899.

<sup>872</sup> Ibid.

<sup>873</sup> *Hansard 4*, lxiii, 355, 22 June 1899.

contributions before the dissolution of the parliament in October 1900. KilBride's first question on 17 May 1899 asked for statistics in relation to the RIC force in Galway, to which the chief secretary was briefly forthcoming.<sup>874</sup> The second question related to a proclaimed meeting in 'Newbridge, County Galway' asking the chief secretary for the number of police drafted into Newbridge, from what stations the men were taken, the cost and from source of payment.<sup>875</sup> Gerald Balfour answered that 'two officers and sixty-five men' were drafted from various stations in the East Riding of Galway, costing about £25 defrayed from the constabulary vote.<sup>876</sup> KilBride's last contribution in the House of Commons in relation to his own constituency was during the Supply (Civil Service Estimates) debate on 25 May 1900.<sup>877</sup> Here KilBride contested that the meeting in Newbridge, County Galway was proclaimed because it was 'suspected' that it would lead to 'intimidation, boycotting and possibly a breach of the peace'.<sup>878</sup> The chief secretary, KilBride conjectured, based his information on the report of a district inspector who was 'only fifteen months in the police force', who was not an Irishman nor was he educated in Ireland but had a B.A. from Cambridge.<sup>879</sup> If the chief secretary had investigated the matter more fully, he would according to KilBride, have understood that the meeting was held to strengthen the hands of the Congested Districts Board in assisting them to acquire more grass lands in the neighbourhood of Newbridge and in the parish of Ballygar, for distribution amongst the small holders in the district.<sup>880</sup> The people in this district KilBride stated, were living in bogs or on the edge of bogs 'and not one of the families holds more than three or four acres'. If the meeting was illegal, KilBride asked why were the MPs or the priests attending were not prosecuted and further stated that:

Father O'Keefe's house was surrounded by a cordon of police, as though there was some murderer or frightful law-breaker inside. He ordered the police off his private premises and a collision nearly took place between him and the county inspector. That collision which if it had occurred would certainly have led to a riot, was prevented by the only intelligent and common-sense officer there, who happened to be a Tipperary Irishman, the others being intelligent Englishmen.<sup>881</sup>

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<sup>874</sup> *Hansard* 4, lxxxiii, 423, 17 May 1900.

<sup>875</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>876</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>877</sup> *Hansard* 4, lxxxiii, 1363-8, 25 May 1900.

<sup>878</sup> *Hansard* 4, lxxxiii, 1363, 25 May 1900.

<sup>879</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>880</sup> *Hansard* 4, lxxxiii, 1364, 25 May 1900.

<sup>881</sup> *Hansard* 4, lxxxiii, 1365, 25 May 1900.



The object of the United Irish League he stated, was to 'break up the vast grazing ranches in the west of Ireland' and he further contended that the ranchers were not making much profit since 'the great change' in the prices of agricultural produce.<sup>882</sup> Another related aim of the UIL was its desire to put an end to the constant drain on the populations which was going on day after day and in evidence he stated that the 'very week' of the Newbridge meeting, eighty-two people left the one station of Roscommon for the Unites States and 112 people left from Connemara 'for the same part'.

Two days every week you will find the trains for the Queenstown boats filled from end to end with young boys and girls of from sixteen to twenty-three, the very flower of the manhood and womanhood of the country, going to seek a livelihood in a foreign land.<sup>883</sup>

On 2 August 1897, in the debate on the Supreme Court Judicature (Ireland) Bill, KilBride joined with John Dillon and some English members in condemning the case of 'some fourteen or fifteen clerks' employed in the Bankruptcy Court for twenty years, who would lose their jobs 'without compensation, owing to the abolition of one of the assignees'.<sup>884</sup> Although Gerald Balfour, the chief secretary, didn't hold out much hope of compensation, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Michael Hicks Beach undertook 'that if it should be found possible to deal fairly with these persons under the existing law, that their cases shall be considered'.<sup>885</sup>

During the debate on the Land Law (Ireland) Bill 1896, KilBride proposed that in an application to fix a fair rent, an improvement should mean 'any increased letting value due to or arising out of any expenditure of labour or capital on or in respect of the holding'.<sup>886</sup> The tenants he argued were entitled to the 'increased letting value', simply because of the labour and expenditure invested by them in the property.

If a tenant should expend £100 in the improvement of his holding and the value of the holding were thereby increased by £5 or £10 a year, the tenants ought to receive the entire benefit of that £5 or £10.<sup>887</sup>

KilBride felt that the existence of unreclaimed land was due to the fact that formerly the tenants knew that if they made improvements, 'they were liable to be robbed of

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<sup>882</sup> *Hansard* 4, lxxxiii, 1365-6, 25 May 1900.

<sup>883</sup> *Hansard* 4, lxxxiii, 1366, 25 May 1900.

<sup>884</sup> *Hansard* 4, lii, 163-6, 2 Aug. 1897.

<sup>885</sup> *Hansard* 4, lii, 166, 2 Aug. 1897.

<sup>886</sup> *Hansard* 4, xlvi, 514, 23 July 1896.

<sup>887</sup> *Ibid.*

them' and that all they could claim with success was an undefined percentage of their expenditure.<sup>888</sup> In a later contribution to the debate, KilBride admitted that the Irish tenant farmers of 1896 were not as united and determined in their own interests as they were in 1886 and as long as they remained disunited and 'squabbled' over differences of procedure in politics, their best interests would be neglected by the house and if they were, 'he as an Irish tenant-farmer would heartily say "serve them right"'.<sup>889</sup> The Land Law Bill was later enacted on 14 August 1896.<sup>890</sup>

During the supply debate of February 1897, KilBride called attention to appointments of temporary sub-Commissioners to the Irish Land Commission. In moving to 'reduce the vote by £5,000', KilBride stated that it was not a question of whether those appointed 'belonged to one party or another' but they ought to have a practical knowledge of the work they were called on to perform and they ought to understand all about the value of land.<sup>891</sup> Edward Carson for Dublin University added weight to the debate 'by joining with honourable gentlemen opposite' in stating that the appointment of the 'new assistant lay Commissioners' had given great dissatisfaction among the landowners because they were reducing the rents 'at enormous rates', without giving any reason for the reductions.<sup>892</sup> Carson expressed great anxiety about the qualifications of the sub-commissions, 'about whom strange stories were told from time to time'. The chief secretary for Ireland (Gerard Balfour) stated that he was 'unfortunate' in having to make 'some forty or fifty of the appointments referred to but no matter how 'conscientiously' the appointments were made, they were 'necessarily subject to considerable criticism'. He further pointed out that he had 'spared no trouble' in making the appointments in order to select the best men for the positions and quite a considerable time had been occupied in interviewing the 'hundreds of gentlemen' who had applied for the appointments and further:

In answer to a question from one of the honourable gentlemen opposite [Carson], he had to say that the appointments were for a year with the exception of four, whom he might term "emergency men" [ironical cheers and laughter from the nationalist benches] who were appointed by the day.<sup>893</sup>

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<sup>888</sup> *Hansard* 4, xliii, 515, 23 July 1896.

<sup>889</sup> *Hansard* 4, xliii, 860, 28 July 1896.

<sup>890</sup> O'Day, xlvii.

<sup>891</sup> *Hansard* 4, xlvi, 1276, 26 Feb. 1897.

<sup>892</sup> *Hansard* 4, xlvi, 1277, 26 Feb. 1897.

<sup>893</sup> *Ibid.*

In a question to the chief secretary on agricultural rate (county cess and poor rate), KilBride asked if it was the chief secretary's intention to give financial relief to occupiers of land in Ireland on similar terms to English occupiers under the Agricultural Rating Act. The chief secretary answered in the negative.<sup>894</sup> On the issue of supply to the military in Ireland, KilBride stated that he was glad there was going to be an inquiry into 'the relative nutritive properties of home-grown and foreign or refrigerated beef' and welcomed a pledge that the best and not necessarily the cheapest beef would be purchased in the future.<sup>895</sup> KilBride also maintained that the supply of forage should be examined. Most of the forage, 'especially hay', according to the member for Cambridge, obtained in Fermoy and in other parts of County Cork, was of 'foreign production, although the troops were in a forage-producing district'. Although home-grown forage had been supplied for over a year at Newbridge, County Kildare, KilBride reminded the house that the member for Cavan and himself had already pointed out in 1896 that not only was the supply of hay to Newbridge from foreign production, but it was 'heated hay, and they pointed out the injurious effects of this to the service'.<sup>896</sup>

On 6 May 1897, KilBride asked the chief secretary whether he was aware that the lands of the small holders in Galway and Mayo were 'being seriously deteriorated' by the continued use of artificial manures and whether he could use his influence with the railway companies in reducing the rates charged for the carriage of 'permanently beneficial manures' such as sea-sand and sea-weed.<sup>897</sup> Although the chief secretary agreed to communicate with the railway companies, he maintained that he had no means of exercising any influences on them.<sup>898</sup> KilBride pointed out to the chief secretary in March 1898 that the registration of title under the Local Registration of Title Act 1891 was 'unsatisfactory' and occupied a 'period of two years' and asked if an inquiry could be made into the working of the act. Gerald Balfour replied that he was aware that 'in some cases' this can be true, but the chief cause of delays was the 'apathy or neglect of the applicants themselves to answer requisitions' issued by the Registrar of Titles.<sup>899</sup>

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<sup>894</sup> *Hansard* 4, xlvi, 1341, 1 Mar. 1897.

<sup>895</sup> *Hansard* 4, xlvi, 832, 19 Feb. 1897.

<sup>896</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>897</sup> *Hansard* 4, xlvi, 1602, 6 May 1897.

<sup>898</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>899</sup> *Hansard* 4, lv, 757, 24 Mar. 1898.

On 21 January 1897 in his contribution to the debate on the Queen's speech, KilBride spoke at length about the situation of Irish labourers' cottages and the prolonged and depressed state of Irish agricultural prices. KilBride stated that the reason why so many cottages had been built in Leinster and Munster was that there the majority of the Boards of Guardians were nationalists and the reason why so few had been built in the other provinces, was that the majority of the guardians in Ulster were Protestant and that in Connacht, agricultural labourers were not as numerous as in any of the other provinces.<sup>900</sup> The potato crop in several of the congested districts in Connacht, he said, had been more seriously affected in 1897 than in any other part of Ireland and the government would therefore be compelled 'by the necessity of the situation', to legislate again during the session in regard to Irish land.<sup>901</sup> The general condition in Ireland, KilBride pointed out, was worse than it had ever been before, 'worse than in 1879, though that was an extremely bad year'.<sup>902</sup> Although he admitted there was no immediate danger of famine, yet since 1879 the price of agricultural produce had been falling 'and no one could say that they had yet touched bottom'.<sup>903</sup> The government proposed to do nothing, he claimed, because Ireland was peaceful, but if the farmers were organised as they were in 1879, the response of the government would not have been the indifference it displayed. KilBride further thought that if the shopkeepers 'who were owed enormous sums by the farmers' took proceedings 'at the next quarter sessions' in any county of Ireland, there would be a general state of bankruptcy brought about.<sup>904</sup> Quoting from what the member for South Tyrone had earlier stated, 'the soil of Ireland could no longer support the three classes which then subsisted on it and that one of those classes must go', KilBride maintained that the class which ought to go should not be the farmers or the labourers but the landlords, 'who were fewest in number and did least to aid the prosperity of the country'.<sup>905</sup> Confessing that the large graziers and some of the landlords were also feeling the pinch of agricultural depression, he stated that:

The landlords had always acted in Ireland as the English garrison of the country and if they were to be relieved, he thought their relief should come out of the taxes of England.<sup>906</sup>

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<sup>900</sup> *Hansard 4*, xlv, 207, 21 Jan. 1897.

<sup>901</sup> *Hansard 4*, xlv, 207-8, 21 Jan. 1897.

<sup>902</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>903</sup> *Hansard 4*, xlv, 208, 21 Jan. 1897.

<sup>904</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>905</sup> *Hansard 4*, xlv, 208-9, 21 Jan. 1897.

<sup>906</sup> *Hansard 4*, xlv, 209, 21 Jan. 1897.

During the supply debate of May 1897, KilBride differed in opinion with J. Pinkerton for the city of Galway, who maintained that labourers' cottages were not needed in north-east Ulster because the agricultural labourers 'entirely resided in the houses of the farmers'.<sup>907</sup> KilBride argued that not all the labourers so described were 'unmarried men' with no need of labourers cottages and he (KilBride) understood that the reason for introducing the act (Labourers' Act 1883) at all was, not so much to better house the agricultural classes but to give them 'a feeling of independence' from the farmer.<sup>908</sup>

While they had saved the farmers from being the slaves of the landlords, they were equally anxious to emancipate the labourers from their dependence on the farmers.<sup>909</sup>

When the chief secretary replied that distress in the west of Ireland 'was not beyond the average', KilBride advised him to go to the 'best sources of information' to find out the exact conditions of the country, instead of relying completely on inspectors' reports, which were not in his (KilBride's) view reliable.<sup>910</sup> KilBride insisted that the inspectors should visit 'all the ministers of religion' and personally visit the houses of the labourers and farmers and see the 'almost absolute starvation in which the people live'.<sup>911</sup> KilBride particularly asked the chief secretary to 'watch closely' the state of the Union in Glenamaddy in his own constituency, where the condition of the people was 'precarious' because of a poor potato crop. The land, he explained, in the Union district was chiefly 'reclaimed bog land' and the people depended almost exclusively on the potato for their livelihoods.<sup>912</sup>

In his contribution on the supply debate of May 1897, KilBride again complained about the composition of the Sub-Commissioners on the Land Commission in Ireland.<sup>913</sup> KilBride pointed out that whether it was nationalist, unionist or Presbyterian farmers, 'they were all alike dissatisfied with the reductions they had received'.<sup>914</sup> Contrary to the 'favourite argument on the other side of the House' that reductions in

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<sup>907</sup> *Hansard 4*, xlix, 1090, 21 May 1897.

<sup>908</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>909</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>910</sup> *Hansard 4*, xlix, 1091, 21 May 1897.

<sup>911</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>912</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>913</sup> *Hansard 4*, xlix, 571, 21 May 1897.

<sup>914</sup> *Hansard 4*, xlix, 573, 14 May 1897.

rent should be in direct proportion to the fall in prices, his contention was that the Irish tenant farmers had not only been injuriously affected by the fall in agricultural values 'but still more by the shrinkage in produce'.<sup>915</sup> KilBride was also opposed to the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the operation of the Land Commission courts because he objected to any further 'interference by this house or any other body' with the judicial functions of these land courts.<sup>916</sup> Later in the debate KilBride commented as follows:

The chief secretary would find that his policy of killing Home Rule with kindness would be more difficult when they [MPs] heard that this Royal Commission was to be appointed to decide whether they were to have any reductions or not...the Royal Commission was simply to whittle down reductions or to prevent the tenant farmers from getting any at all.<sup>917</sup>

KilBride's first contribution of 1898 was in relation to the appointment of 'temporary assistant lay commissioners' to the Land Commission.<sup>918</sup> Temporary lay commissioners appointed by the conservative government, he argued, would be bound to give decisions in favour of the landlords and in the same way if appointed by a liberal government, would be open to the same objection, 'except that it would come from the other side'.<sup>919</sup>

During the supply debate of March 1898, KilBride pointed out that distress existed 'not alone on the west coast of Ireland', but in parts of east and north-east Galway and in the county of Roscommon, where he claimed, 'the people were reduced to a very distressed condition indeed'.<sup>920</sup> He asked the chief secretary to pay particular attention to the condition of the occupiers in the barony of Iveragh in County Kerry and in particular he asked that the Great Southern and Western Railway be extended to Waterville, which would give 'a great deal of much-needed employment'.<sup>921</sup> During the supply debate of May 1898, KilBride in a long contribution, urged the chief secretary not to place too much confidence on misleading reports from his permanent officials in Dublin Castle, in relation to poverty and distress in Ireland.<sup>922</sup> Later in the debate KilBride took exception to Colonel Kirkwood, Local Government Board inspector, who was sent to Kerry to investigate distress there, but as far as KilBride or anybody else

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<sup>915</sup> Ibid.

<sup>916</sup> *Hansard* 4, xlix, 575, 14 May 1897.

<sup>917</sup> *Hansard* 4, xlix, 574, 14 May 1897.

<sup>918</sup> *Hansard* 4, liii, 1313-5, 21 Feb. 1898.

<sup>919</sup> Ibid.

<sup>920</sup> *Hansard* 4, liv, 936, 7 Mar. 1898.

<sup>921</sup> Ibid.

<sup>922</sup> *Hansard* 4, lvii, 1295-1300, 13 May 1898.

knew, never had a residence in County Kerry as was portrayed in his report and further that Kirkwood was about the 'last, judging by his antecedents', that anybody in Ireland would take to be a good judge in matters relating to the condition of the peasantry of Ireland.<sup>923</sup> When asked why this was so, KilBride replied that Kirkwood, residing in Roscommon, was the 'most notorious landlord in the west of Ireland', a man that nobody would ever accuse of having 'any popular sympathy' and in KiBride's opinion was specifically chosen because he had 'no sympathy with the people'.<sup>924</sup> Sir J. Colomb (Great Yarmouth) made a controversial speech which contradicted almost all the information KilBride and the Irish members had read earlier in the debate.<sup>925</sup> Colomb normally resided in Kenmare in Kerry, but from his own personal and intimate knowledge of the Kenmare union and although he agreed with the member for north Kerry that the union was in debt, yet this debt was not caused by 'exceptional distress' but by a 'persistent course of folly' in the administration of the union:

It has been caused by the too good-natured element in the Irish character. The rate collectors neglect their duty and the result has been that the rates have not been punctually and properly collected....If the guardians had had the ordinary backbone of Englishmen or Scotchmen, the collectors would have been sent about their business long ago and these unions would not now be in debt.<sup>926</sup>

Colomb also stated that he had seen 'more distress, more pinch, more want' in the constituency of Bow and Bromley in London (which he represented for six years) than he had ever witnessed in Kenmare.<sup>927</sup> Finally Colomb contradicted KilBride's opinion of Colonel Kirkwood, who was 'a fair-minded and admirable inspector', who always took great pains to investigate cases of distress brought before him.<sup>928</sup>

In the debate on the Queen's speech on 20 February 1899, in relation to an amendment by Michael Davitt about distress in the west of Ireland, KilBride first of all complemented the President of the Board of Agriculture for 'effectually debarring foreign competition' in store cattle in Ireland in 1898, which in KilBride's opinion raised the value of grazing land in Connaught by fifty per cent.<sup>929</sup> The grazing lands of Connaught according to KilBride was 'second-class country', unfit for fattening cattle

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<sup>923</sup> *Hansard* 4, lvii, 1323-6, 13 May 1898.

<sup>924</sup> *Hansard* 4, lvii, 1324, 13 May 1898.

<sup>925</sup> *Hansard* 4, lxii, 1327-1330, 13 May 1898.

<sup>926</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>927</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>928</sup> *Hansard* 4, lvii, 1329, 13 May 1898.

<sup>929</sup> *Hansard* 4, lxvi, 1503-7, 20 Feb. 1899.

or sheep and despite the yearly increase of £20,000 to the Congested Districts Board, the only long-term solution to the chronic distress in the west of Ireland was to offer compensation to the graziers for the surrender of their lands and migrating the people to good lands instead. Finally KilBride drew attention to a case in his own constituency where Colonel O'Hara, 'a large landlord in the district' decided to divide two grazing farms between his smaller tenants, increased their holdings by ten to fifteen acres. In this venture the Colonel was 'satisfied' that he improved the condition of the small tenants and also 'secured a fair rent for his land'.<sup>930</sup> The scheme, although yielding to the demands of the United Irish League, was praiseworthy according to KilBride and should be held out as an example to other landlords, provided they were given the necessary 'assistance and monetary aid to do it'.<sup>931</sup>

Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice<sup>932</sup> (Wiltshire, Cricklade), brother of the fifth Marquess of Lansdowne, introduced an amendment to the Local Government (Ireland) Bill on 2 May 1898. The amendment provided that county councils 'may' contribute towards the costs of roads, highways or public footpaths 'although the same is not a main road'.<sup>933</sup> KilBride joined the majority of his colleagues in supporting Fitzmaurice's amendment as it would 'work very beneficially in mountainous districts', especially in the west of Ireland.<sup>934</sup> Two days later KilBride was on his feet protesting about a clause in the Local Government (Ireland) Bill, compelling the large ratepayers 'who farmed hundreds of acres in Galway' to pay for relief of peasants in Connemara and enquired why the shopkeepers for instance in Ballinasloe should pay the relief of the people elsewhere.<sup>935</sup> KilBride agreed with John Dillon for east Mayo, that the clause was inserted into the Bill 'as a relief to the British Treasury' but if the chief secretary wanted to relieve distress in the poor districts of Ireland, 'it could only be done by opening the purse-strings of the British Treasury'.<sup>936</sup> A week later the debate on the Local Government (Ireland) Bill had moved to the topic of the appointment of magistrates. KilBride argued that the Bill, far from its intended popular introduction, would only run smoothly if the suggestion to elect all urban council chairmen as magistrates in the future was accepted. The fact that a person was elected chairman of a Town Commissioner according to

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<sup>930</sup> Ibid.

<sup>931</sup> Ibid.

<sup>932</sup> See chapter one, Henry Charles Keith Petty-Fitzmaurice, fifth Marquess of Lansdowne.

<sup>933</sup> *Hansard* 4, lvii, 91, 2 May 1898.

<sup>934</sup> *Hansard* 4, lvii, 93, 2 May 1898.

<sup>935</sup> *Hansard* 4, lvii, 318-9, 4 May 1898.

<sup>936</sup> *Hansard* 4, lvii, 319, 4 May 1898.



KilBride, was 'proof positive' that the person was 'a fit and proper person and the ablest man for that position'.<sup>937</sup> In the debate on the Local Government (Ireland) Bill on 23 May 1898, KilBride opposed the portion of the Bill which would make clergymen such as 'the Bishop of Raphoe and Father Denis O'Hara' ineligible as members of the new bodies (county and district councils).<sup>938</sup>

On 9 March 1899, KilBride asked the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr Hanbury) to provide telegraph facilities to the post office in Waterville, County Kerry.<sup>939</sup> Hanbury replied that an offer to extend telegraph facilities from the Commercial Cable Company to the post office in Waterville 'under guarantee' was made 'some years ago' but didn't meet with acceptance. The extension to the post office would 'involve considerable expense' but the Postmaster-General would however 'look into the matter'. When KilBride stated that the local postmaster was willing to give the guarantee, Hanbury replied that 'that is not the sort of guarantee that we require'.<sup>940</sup>

On 8 March 1897 KilBride asked the secretary of the treasury (R. W. Hanbury, Preston) for information in relation to decrees granted by the county court judge of Galway under the Suck drainage award, to which the information was given.<sup>941</sup> On 15 March 1897 KilBride asked whether extra police had been drafted into north and east Galway to protect the Sheriff's bailiff in making seizures under decrees granted in connection with the Suck Drainage Award.<sup>942</sup> The chief secretary stated that a few of the local police protected the Sheriff's bailiffs and no extra police had been drafted into the county for the purpose.<sup>943</sup> On 9 July 1897 during the supply debate, KilBride at length outlined the hardship being endured by some of his constituents, who in one case was charged 'a sum almost amounting to as much as the judicial rent' in connection with the recovery of taxes under the Sub-Drainage Acts.<sup>944</sup> In the case of Thomas Scott who was charged £2 5s 8d, KilBride had been 'over the whole of this holding' and

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<sup>937</sup> *Hansard* 4, lvii, 1022-3, 11 May 1898.

<sup>938</sup> *Hansard* 4, lviii, 489-90, 23 May 1898.

<sup>939</sup> *Hansard* 4, lxviii, 287-8, 9 Mar. 1899.

<sup>940</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>941</sup> *Hansard* 4, xlvii, 186, 8 Mar. 1897.

<sup>942</sup> *Hansard* 4, xlvii, 661-2, 15 Mar. 1897.

<sup>943</sup> *Hansard* 4, xlvii, 662, 15 Mar. 1897.

<sup>944</sup> *Hansard* 4, l, 1507-9, 9 July 1897.

asserted that the tax was unjustified because his land was not improved by the drainage in question.<sup>945</sup>

As a matter of fact, his land had not been benefited by the drainage of the river. His land, which used to be flooded in wintertime, was now never flooded and there were consequently none of the deposits on the land which used to be left after a flood. As a result, his grass was now not so long or so succulent as it used to be.<sup>946</sup>

In answer to a further question from KilBride on the Suck drainage award on 5 May 1898, Mr Hanbury stated that the Board of Works held meetings 'as prescribed by statute' to hear tenants' objections to the individual costs of the drainage works. As to a reconsideration or the making of fresh assessments, Hanbury stated that the award was 'final' and there was 'no power' for making fresh assessments.<sup>947</sup> On 21 May 1897 the chief secretary, in reply to KilBride's question about who removed 'the metal and iron' from a derelict Portumna railway in County Galway, stated that 'a good portion of it was stolen'.<sup>948</sup>

On 25 April 1898 KilBride asked for clarification from the chief secretary, in a situation where the Tuam Town Commissioners might refuse to become an urban district, would they retain their existing status as well as their property and powers, namely the 'tolls and customs of the fairs and markets'. Balfour confirmed that would be the case.<sup>949</sup> During the debate on the Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill of April 1897, KilBride argued at length about the extent to which consumers were defrauded by dishonest traders 'who sold foreign produce as home-grown'.<sup>950</sup> KilBride agreed with the bill when it provided that anybody dealing in foreign meat should be registered and 'should display over his shop a sign which communicated that fact to the public', thus safeguarding consumers against fraudulent dealers.<sup>951</sup> KilBride pointed out that while the bill dealt with cheese and English beef and mutton, it said nothing about other agricultural produce, such as butter, 'where an enormous amount of fraud was perpetrated on English and Irish butter producers by foreign producers'. It was therefore important KilBride stated, that in order to suppress fraudulent dealing in foreign meat,

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<sup>945</sup> *Hansard* 4, I, 1509, 9 July 1897.

<sup>946</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>947</sup> *Hansard* 4, lvii, 407-8, 5 May 1898.

<sup>948</sup> *Hansard* 4, xlix, 1415, 27 May 1897.

<sup>949</sup> *Hansard* 4, lvi, 960, 25 Apr. 1898.

<sup>950</sup> *Hansard* 4, xlviii, 691-2, 7 Apr. 1897.

<sup>951</sup> *Ibid.*

butter and other agricultural products, the subject must be dealt with, 'not piecemeal but comprehensively'.<sup>952</sup>

KilBride didn't confine himself to matters within his own constituency but frequently contributed on matters from other constituencies, sometimes in the name of absent members. In one case he asked the chief secretary about the inappropriateness of a Justice of the Peace, Mr Warden of Sneem, County Kerry attending Kenmare Petty Sessions and giving judgement about 'three men fined £5 each for poaching salmon and two others £5 each for game trespass'.<sup>953</sup> KilBride pointed out that Warden's usual district was Sneem, which was sixteen miles from Kenmare and therefore he was likely to be outside his own jurisdiction.<sup>954</sup> The chief secretary stated that Warden was authorised to attend Petty Sessions in both districts.<sup>955</sup> On 16 March 1897 KilBride asked the chief secretary for information on the number of inmates in the Tuam, Glenamaddy and Galway Poor Law Union workhouses, which information was forthcoming.<sup>956</sup>

#### 4.6 FORMATION AND GROWTH OF UNITED IRISH LEAGUE

In the mid-1890s the momentum for land agitation had come to a virtual standstill in comparison to the early days of the formation of the Irish Land League and the plan of campaign under the leadership of William O'Brien. At this stage O'Brien had withdrawn from politics and lived near Westport in County Mayo.<sup>957</sup> During this temporary retirement he experienced at first hand the plight of small farmers eking out a barely substantial living, in direct contrast to the more prosperous graziers or 'ranchers' in the same neighbourhoods. This according to O'Brien, smacked of economic injustice and the situation needed to be remedied but as he foresaw not without a fight. The remedy was plain in that these 'ranches' would have to be purchased and re-distributed. This was the beginning of the United Irish League 'with both economic and political ends in view'.<sup>958</sup>

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<sup>952</sup> *Hansard* 4, xlviii, 692, 7 Apr. 1897.

<sup>953</sup> *Hansard* 4, xlvii, 566, 12 Mar. 1897.

<sup>954</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>955</sup> *Hansard* 4, xlvii, 567, 12 Mar. 1897.

<sup>956</sup> *Hansard* 4, xlvii, 750, 16 Mar. 1897.

<sup>957</sup> Lyons, F. S. L., 'The aftermath of Parnell 1891-1903' in Vaughan, W. E. (Ed.). *A new history of Ireland. vol vi, Ireland under the Union, 11, 1870-1921*, (Oxford, 1996), p. 91.

<sup>958</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

The economic objective was to break up the ranches but this was essentially a western problem and as the league spread to other parts of the country, its programme broadened out to include the time-honoured demand for the conversion of tenants into owners, by compulsion if necessary.<sup>959</sup>

O'Brien formally launched the United Irish League in Westport on 23 January 1898.<sup>960</sup> A meeting in early February 1898 to establish a branch of the United Irish League in Westport was very largely attended. O'Brien stated that he was very proud to know that there was a 'splendid spirit rising up amongst the people' and a remarkable change in the 'attitude of the grabbers and of their sympathisers'.<sup>961</sup> He also advised that Westport town 'had as substantial an interest as any parish in the division in putting down land grabbing and in supporting the United Irish League'.<sup>962</sup> Almost a month later in the House of Commons, Swift MacNeill (south Donegal) scoffed at the First Lord of the Treasury, Arthur J. Balfour, who was 'booed in Donegal, as well and as loudly as the police were booed at Westport'.<sup>963</sup> The reason why no baton charges were initiated by the police in Westport, according to MacNeill, was because the 'First Lord had learned the lesson' during his administration as chief secretary when 'no fewer than thirteen men had lost their lives at the hands of the police in Ireland' and further:

It is because I know that the police have been associated with murder under the *regime* of Balfour the first that I warn Balfour the second.<sup>964</sup>

KilBride followed MacNeill in attacking Gerald Balfour, the chief secretary for informing the House that the people of Westport and west Mayo 'had entered into an organised campaign against the occupiers of evicted farms'.<sup>965</sup> In this statement KilBride maintained that the chief secretary was anticipating the decisions of the courts of justice in Ireland 'to pass the sentences that he [Balfour] desires'.<sup>966</sup> Later in October 1898, KilBride congratulated O'Brien 'and your Westport friends' on the great success of the United Irish League'.<sup>967</sup> The motivation for KilBride's acclamatory epistle can only be guessed at, but it is likely that because of the re-emergence of Colonel Nolan, his political rival in north Galway, who had made his peace with the Archbishop of Tuam and the clergy in general and had also remained closely involved in the local

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<sup>959</sup> Ibid.

<sup>960</sup> O'Day, xlvii.

<sup>961</sup> *T.H.*, 12 Feb. 1898.

<sup>962</sup> Ibid.

<sup>963</sup> *Hansard* 4, liv, 741-2, 4 Mar. 1898.

<sup>964</sup> Ibid.

<sup>965</sup> *Hansard* 4, liv, 742, 4 Mar. 1898.

<sup>966</sup> Ibid.

<sup>967</sup> KilBride to O'Brien, 18 Oct. 1898, UCC/WOB/PP/AIB/32(1&2).

politics of north Galway, that he would win back the constituency whenever an opportunity came about in the future. KilBride had been following the growth of the United Irish League and was 'more than gratified and somewhat astonished at the progress made in every way'. This new movement he felt would show that the policy of killing Home Rule with kindness was 'a sham and a fraud'. His further comments on the value of carrying out the policy of the UIL in enlarging small farmers' holdings, especially in the congested districts of Ireland are worthy of insertion:

Dublin Castle hates it [UIL]. The people should love it, as no doubt they do in Mayo. It is sound. It is on right lines. It is fraught with good for Ireland. The proclamation proves it, puts the hallmark on it, eighteen carat. What commands it greatly to me is the broadness and tolerance of the platform. It is large enough for all sections and no section. It embraces all nationalists. It does not look back. Let the dead past bury it's dead. It looks to the future. It has hope and trust in the future. It believes in the potency of a United Ireland. It believes in 'the land for the people'. That is the only live organisation in Ireland and in my opinion ought to be spread far and wide. As I understand it sprung out of the famine of last year. The original object being to prevent periodical famine in the west, by enlarging the holdings in the congested district and to relieve the country from the shame and disgrace of being obliged to appeal to the charitable public everywhere to save the lives of the people.<sup>968</sup>

However, no movement is perfect and the improvements suggested by KilBride were probably motivated by self-interest. For instance he felt, that worthy as the new movement was, its scope should in time be more comprehensive and should include the evicted tenants, of which KilBride himself was one and had been for eleven years. KilBride also enumerated other improvements such as the provision of allotments in towns for labourers, the compulsory sale of estates administered by land judges, that tenants' improvements would in future be their own, the protection and improvement of tenant right in towns and finally the equitable administration of the land acts.<sup>969</sup> What reply O'Brien made to KilBride will probably never be known but it is interesting that at a meeting of the United Irish League in early February 1899, O'Brien enumerated the proposed objectives by which the organisation would in future be guided:

1. To obtain full national self-government for Ireland.
2. Abolition of landlordism in Ireland by compulsory sale.

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<sup>968</sup> Ibid.

<sup>969</sup> Ibid.

3. Suppression of famine in the west by compulsory purchase of the grazing lands of Connaught on equitable terms as to all interests affected with the view of providing the small occupiers with liveable holdings.
4. Reinstatement of evicted tenants.
5. Complete educational equality for the Catholics of Ireland, including a university in whose benefits they can participate.
6. Election of nationalist county, district and urban councils.
7. Encouragement of Irish manufactures.
8. Preservation of Gaelic as a living language.<sup>970</sup>

The proclamation of a special meeting in Ballinrobe on 16 October 1898, was in response to the establishment and the momentum of the United Irish League in Mayo and the revival of popular demonstrations in connection with large grazing farms. Earlier in February 1898, it was reported that there were ‘over eighty extra police....in Westport district’, that all the outstations were doubled, and that ‘four huts are being put up....to keep up this enormous force’.<sup>971</sup> The *Tuam Herald* also reported that on several farms in and about Westport, the herds had left their employment owing to the pressure of the league.<sup>972</sup> On the day of the Ballinrobe meeting all roads leading into the town were blocked by armed police, no one being allowed into the town ‘no matter what his occupation or need’.<sup>973</sup> Michael Davitt, the MP for the constituency along with William O’Brien and Haviland Burke were stopped on the way from Westport and were prohibited from getting ‘nearer than a few miles of the town’. However as happened many times before, they made a detour and succeeded in making ‘some lively speeches’ in Ballinrobe and Partry. The *Tuam Herald* reported that ‘there was some excitement, some battoning and on the whole some bad blood excited’.<sup>974</sup>

In early December 1898 KilBride attended a meeting of the United Irish League in Headford, which was attended by large crowds and deemed ‘a success in every sense of the word’ by the *Tuam Herald*, even though it sarcastically noted that it was the ‘first occasion’ since the general election of 1895 that KilBride had visited his constituents

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<sup>970</sup> *T.H.*, 4 Feb. 1899.

<sup>971</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 Feb. 1898.

<sup>972</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>973</sup> *Ibid.*, 22 Oct. 1898.

<sup>974</sup> *Ibid.*

and consequently 'few recognised their parliamentary representative'.<sup>975</sup> The chairman of the meeting, Canon Barrett P.P. Headford, struck one of the first notes of unity within the divided Irish party when he stated:

There was a vista of hope, a tendency towards reconciliation at which they all rejoiced and this reunion of the forces should be insisted on and those who would come to seek their suffrages should only be supported if they promised to unite in a hearty working party, doing their best for the interests of the people of Ireland.<sup>976</sup>

In the strange new climate of unity KilBride felt 'indebted' to be on the same platform again 'beside his old and valued friend, Mr Timothy Harrington'. He also believed that the land could not be secured for the Irish people 'until they first compelled a united Irish party to work together in the House of Commons and he believed for the accomplishment of their objects, of all national objects, unity was now the essential thing'. The success of the United Irish League he claimed was due to the fact that it had sprung from the people and was 'a pre-eminently democratic movement'. Tim Harrington MP in reference to the divided Irish party, stated that there was 'no desire to continue a wrangle which brought nothing but national disgrace and national humiliation'.

The country desired no recriminations; the people were determined to give no inducement to continue a fruitless and mischievous quarrel. All were welcome on the platform of the United Irish League and under its banner, adhering loyally to its programme, it was possible again to build up in Ireland an organisation that would win the sympathy of the Irish race in every clime and to have in parliament a party whose earnestness, devotion and discipline would win the admiration of their enemies.<sup>977</sup>

#### 4.7 RE-EMERGENCE OF COLONEL NOLAN IN GALWAY POLITICS

The Local Government (Ireland) Bill had been introduced in the House of Commons on 21 February 1898 and enacted on 12 August.<sup>978</sup> On 29 March the Registration Act included 'women and peers' in local government franchise.<sup>979</sup> In December Colonel Nolan was selected as the nationalist candidate to contest the town of Tuam as a County Councillor in the forthcoming elections to replace the Tuam Town Commissioners. Nolan was deemed to earn this nomination, because in the intervening years since his

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<sup>975</sup> *T.H.*, 10 Dec. 1898.

<sup>976</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>977</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>978</sup> O'Day, xlvii.

<sup>979</sup> *Ibid.*

failure to retain his seat in 1895, he had 'given years of the best portion of his life for the good of the public'.<sup>980</sup> He had been chairman of Tuam Board Of Guardians and a J.P. where his decisions at Petty Session courts were 'characterised by leniency in the right place and sternness when due'.<sup>981</sup>

In the County Council election for the division of Tuam, Colonel Nolan was elected by 658 votes, beating his namesake John Nolan by 144 votes. On 15 April 1899, at a meeting of Tuam District Council, Nolan was elected chairman.<sup>982</sup> A fortnight later the first meeting of Galway County Council was convened. Two candidates were proposed for the position of chairman, Colonel Nolan and Professor Pye of Queen's College, Galway. The thirty-four votes were cast in the following manner: Colonel Nolan seventeen, Professor Pye sixteen with Sir S. J. McDonagh abstaining.<sup>983</sup> On a simple majority Nolan was elected 'upon which announcement there was great cheering in the body of the room'. Nolan in his first speech stated that he had not canvassed for the post of chairman, 'but he felt none the less complimented at their demonstration of confidence in him'. Towards the end of the meeting a resolution was carried by the Council, with only 'Col Daly, Mr O'Hara Trench and Hon Mr Dillon, grand jury representatives voting against'. The resolution pledged the members of Galway County Council 'to the principles of Home Rule and urged the British Government to grant 'legislative independence to Ireland in order to enable the Irish people to make their own laws and manage their own affairs in harmony with the wishes of the great majority of the population'.<sup>984</sup> The resolution further looked on the Local Government Act<sup>985</sup> as an 'instalment of justice' to prepare the Irish people for the larger and more comprehensive measure of autonomy, 'which is the only scheme that will ever satisfy the hopes and aspirations of our people and make a happy, prosperous and contented nation'.<sup>986</sup>

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<sup>980</sup> *T.H.*, 17 Dec. 1898.

<sup>981</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>982</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 Apr. 1899.

<sup>983</sup> *Ibid.*, 29 Apr. 1899.

<sup>984</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>985</sup> The Local Government (Ireland) Bill was introduced in the House of Commons on 21 Feb. and enacted on 12 Aug. 1898; O'Day, xlvii.

<sup>986</sup> *T.H.*, 29 Apr. 1899.



John Dillon resigned as chairman of the anti-Parnellites on 7 February 1899 'to make way for the unification of the national party'.<sup>987</sup> Two months later Colonel Nolan was elected to Tuam Rural District Council in mid-April 1899. He defeated Mr O'Rorke by thirty-three votes to twenty-four. At a meeting of this council in early June 1899, a motion of Mr McDonagh proposed that a new official stamp 'with harp and shamrock engraved' should in future be used by the Council and that 'the old official stamp with the crown be disposed of'.<sup>988</sup> The proposal was lost by twenty-one to eleven with three abstentions. Colonel Nolan in opposing the resolution said that disposing of the old stamp would be 'a slight on the crown' which was not good policy for Home Rulers. He further stated that:

The Orangemen at one time threatened to kick the Queen's crown into the Boyne and he did not think they should follow that example of bad taste. He [Colonel Nolan] was a Home Ruler of the old sort and advocated the freedom of Ireland under the supremacy of the crown.<sup>989</sup>

#### 4.8 LONDON BANKRUPTCY COURT 1900

On 30 January 1900 the Irish party was reunited while John Redmond was elected chairman on 6 February.<sup>990</sup> In early March 1900 a meeting of the creditors of Denis KilBride was held at the London Bankruptcy Court. KilBride was described as a 'provision merchant of Duke Street, London and MP for the County Galway (north)'.<sup>991</sup> However the meeting was adjourned in order to give him 'an opportunity of making a proposal'.<sup>992</sup> In September the previous year, KilBride wrote to John Dillon from the House of Commons. KilBride, knowing that his representation of north Galway might soon come to an end, asked if Dillon thought there would be 'any chance of getting a decent job in Ireland' at the same time acknowledging that there was 'little hope in that direction'.<sup>993</sup>

I suppose I shall have to face another decline, as many a better man had to do before. Needs must when the devil drives. Although I don't matter much I am not converted to Healyism and never shall.<sup>994</sup>

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<sup>987</sup> O'Day, xlvii, xix.

<sup>988</sup> *T.H.*, 17 June 1899.

<sup>989</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>990</sup> O'Day, xlvii.

<sup>991</sup> *T.H.*, 3 Mar. 1900.

<sup>992</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>993</sup> KilBride to Dillon, 22 Sept. 1899, TCD, Dillon Papers, 6756/775.

<sup>994</sup> *Ibid.*

The decline referred to seemed to be very real as KilBride ‘was getting eggs and butter from Ireland’ and selling them in London. It is therefore not surprising that KilBride asked specific questions in the House of Commons about exports from Ireland, as for instance when he asked the President of the Board of Trade (Mr Richie) about official returns of quantities of butter, bacon, lard, and eggs.<sup>995</sup> KilBride also displayed great interest in the regulations surrounding the importation of ‘adulterated’ dairy products as described by the President of the Board of Agriculture on 6 March 1899.<sup>996</sup> During the debate on the Sale of Food and Drugs Bill on 17 July 1899, KilBride was in favour of many of the provisions on the sale of butter and margarine, such as determining the percentage of water ‘legitimate’ in butter making, ‘inspection at the port of entry’, the prohibition of fraudulent practices with the consequent benefits to ‘honest traders’ and finally the pressure on local authorities to put into operation the act of 1887 by the appointment of agricultural inspectors.<sup>997</sup> The principal fraud in the trade alluded to by KilBride was the practice of ‘colouring’ margarine to resemble butter where:

I know no other article of food than margarine which after the colouring process had been gone through, is so changed as to be made unrecognisable by anyone who knows the article in its nature condition.<sup>998</sup>

KilBride was at this time supplementing his earnings as a provision merchant in London or as he noted to Dillon, dealing ‘a little in margarine’. In a letter he explained to Dillon that ‘these things fluctuate a good deal in price and I am sorry to say Irish senders will let you down without hesitation’.<sup>999</sup> KilBride stated that he could ‘still place orders for new laid eggs’ and enquired if Dillon knew of any reliable sender. A PS to this letter asked if the secretaryship of Mayo County Council was vacant and if so who the probable candidates were.<sup>1000</sup> This is not surprising as the *Tuam Herald* reported that KilBride was a candidate for the secretaryship of Kildare County Council ‘and is likely to be elected’.<sup>1001</sup> Referring to impending bankruptcy proceedings against him, KilBride informed Dillon that he had written to the archbishop of Tuam and Father Mark Eagleton P.P. ‘acquainting them of the facts, as of course should the bank

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<sup>995</sup> *Hansard* 4, xli, 59, 21 May 1896.

<sup>996</sup> *Hansard* 4, lxvii, 1434-42, 6 Mar. 1899.

<sup>997</sup> *Hansard* 4, lxxiv, 1071-4, 17 July 1899.

<sup>998</sup> *Hansard* 4, lxxiv, 1073, 17 July 1899.

<sup>999</sup> KilBride to Dillon, 22 Sept. 1899, TCD, Dillon Papers, 6756/775.

<sup>1000</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1001</sup> *T.H.*, 17 Feb. 1900. KilBride was not appointed to this or any other similar position.

proceed, I am a goner'.<sup>1002</sup> The London Bankruptcy Court met again in mid-March 1900.<sup>1003</sup> This time KilBride was joined by his brother Thomas KilBride, 'provision merchants' and were duly examined. Denis stated that he had 'little or nothing' to do with the provision business and made no profit from it but instead had lived on 'about £120 a year' as a member of the Irish Parliamentary Party.<sup>1004</sup> The final outcome of the London Bankruptcy Court on 12 May 1900 outlined a scheme whereby KilBride could escape bankruptcy and thus save his seat in north Galway, by arranging to 'pay his creditors 7s 6d in the pound'.<sup>1005</sup> It is presumed that the creditors included a bank or lending institution and possibly English and Irish suppliers and distributors of food produce such as eggs, butter and margarine.

Interestingly enough, *Punch* in an extract from the diary of Toby MP, poked fun at KilBride in the House of Commons on 6 March 1899.<sup>1006</sup> Toby claimed that the members in the House of Commons were more than surprised at what they heard when KilBride spoke on a food and drugs bill. The topic in hand was the 'legalising, under certain conditions, [the] sale of margarine', which was opposed 'in interest of British butter'. KilBride in defending a margarine clause, stated that seventy-five per cent of the margarine coming into Britain was 'used for cooking porpoises'.<sup>1007</sup> The 'house [was] plainly puzzled' as if porpoises were being cooked, 'stewing in butter or its substitute would be a desirable process' but perhaps KilBride was alluding to a custom in the west of Ireland. This imaginary episode was linked to a previous speech by Lecky<sup>1008</sup>, which blamed the Atlantic for distress in the west of Ireland, wherein it was also possible that at full tide, a porpoise could be washed up on the beach, 'which is straightway carried off to the nearest cabin, cunningly treated with margarine and dished with the ready potato'.<sup>1009</sup> The mystery was soon solved, according to Toby, when the members eventually realised that KilBride was speaking about 'cooking purposes' and thus the 'homely word declaimed in fine north Galway accent becomes

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<sup>1002</sup> KilBride to Dillon, 22 Sept. 1899, TCD, Dillon Papers, 6756/775.

<sup>1003</sup> *T.H.*, 17 Mar. 1900.

<sup>1004</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1005</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 May 1900.

<sup>1006</sup> *Punch or the London Charivari*, cxvi, p. 132, 15 Mar. 1899.

<sup>1007</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1008</sup> Lecky, W. E. H. (1838-1903) was known primarily as an intellectual and historian. He was a Unionist MP from Dec. 1895 until his death. A statue of Lecky graces the front quadrangle of Trinity College, Dublin, *O'Day*, xxv.

<sup>1009</sup> *Punch or the London Charivari*, cxvi, p. 132, 15 Mar. 1899.

the sportive dish'.<sup>1010</sup> The *Tuam Herald*, while alluding to and re-printing Toby's article on several occasions, took exception only to the last phrase as follows:

We beg to inform friend Toby that in north Galway we can pronounce the English language probably better than do spouters in the Westminster talking shop. Wherever Mr KilBride got his accent we beg to say that it isn't from north Galway.<sup>1011</sup>

On 1 April 1900 a special meeting of the executive of the north Galway United Irish League, requested that KilBride would attend the next meeting 'for the purpose of explaining his absence from meetings held in support of the league in his division'.<sup>1012</sup> A resolution was also passed in relation to the delight felt by the executive on the reunion of the Irish parliamentary party, which it claimed was 'the result of the advance of the United Irish League' and therefore branches should be established in every part of the division.<sup>1013</sup> Two weeks later KilBride was in attendance at United Irish League meetings at Creggs and Glynsk 'his first appearance before his constituents since his election six years ago'.<sup>1014</sup> On 13 June 1900 Colonel Nolan was unanimously re-elected chairman of Galway County Council.<sup>1015</sup> A week later John Redmond was elected President of the United Irish League at its convention on 19-20 June and it was further confirmed that the league was the organisational arm of the Irish party.<sup>1016</sup>

Unfortunately for KilBride it was too late to woo the constituency of north Galway and three months later a general election was looming. Colonel Nolan had been reported as calling on the Archbishop of Tuam, Dr McEvilly 'with regard to the representation of north Galway and was cordially and favourably received'.<sup>1017</sup> On 21 September 1900 a deputation from the Tuam branch of the United Irish League interviewed Nolan 'with a most favourable result' and from then on, it was generally assumed that Nolan would be returned unopposed for north Galway.<sup>1018</sup> Consequently on 28 September 1900, Nolan was unanimously chosen as the nationalist candidate by 'priest and people' to represent the constituency'.<sup>1019</sup>

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<sup>1010</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1011</sup> *T.H.*, 25 Mar. 1899.

<sup>1012</sup> *T.H.*, 7 Apr. 1900.

<sup>1013</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1014</sup> Ibid., 21 Apr. 1900.

<sup>1015</sup> Ibid., 16 June 1900.

<sup>1016</sup> O'Day, xlvii.

<sup>1017</sup> *T.H.*, 22 Sept. 1900.

<sup>1018</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1019</sup> *T.H.*, 29 Sept. 1900.

On 13 June 1900 Colonel Nolan was unanimously re-elected chairman of Galway County Council.<sup>1020</sup> A week later John Redmond was elected President of the United Irish League at its convention on 19-20 June and it was further confirmed that the league was the organisational arm of the Irish party.<sup>1021</sup>

#### 4.9 UNDERHAND DEALING AND INTRIGUE

On the last day of the nineteenth century it was announced that the Clongorey eviction dispute which has lasted for twelve years was finally settled.<sup>1022</sup> The Clongorey O'Kelly estate was situated on the margins of the bog of Allen in County Kildare and consisted of almost 2,500 acres in the townlands of Clongorey, Barrettstown, Blacktrench and Tankardsgarden, but known locally as Clongorey.<sup>1023</sup> The evicted tenants agreed to purchase holdings from the Land Commission, subject to the payment of annual instalments for forty-nine years. C. J. Engledow, MP for north Kildare was instrumental in bringing this settlement about 'and despite countless difficulties and obstacles he never desisted till he made the restoration an accomplished fact.'<sup>1024</sup> The Evicted Tenants' Restoration Committee were to advance funds to enable the tenants to rebuild their houses and stock their holdings. On the same day it was also rumoured that there was every likelihood of a settlement on the Luggacurren estate. Engledow was again involved and it was reported that Lansdowne had agreed to negotiate directly with the tenants' representatives in purchasing their lands.<sup>1025</sup> William Rochford had replaced John Townsend Trench as agent of Lansdowne's Irish estates in 1898, but at that stage most of the land was in the process of being sold to the tenants through the Land Commission. According to KilBride, the Luggacurren evicted tenants were informed that Engledow would have had them re-instated but for his (KilBride's) opposition and that it was Father Parkinson P.P. who was 'more or less responsible for the rumour'.<sup>1026</sup> As the only available lands for re-instatement were the former farms of John William Dunne and KilBride, 'now on Lansdowne's hands' and as KilBride always made it clear that he wanted to be re-instated on his own farm, he was therefore 'not likely to fall in with this arrangement'.<sup>1027</sup> KilBride informed Dillon that no communication had been

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<sup>1020</sup> Ibid., 16 June 1900.

<sup>1021</sup> O'Day, xlvii.

<sup>1022</sup> For a fuller understanding of the Clongorey evictions see Ryan, Mary, *The Clongorey evictions* (Naas, 2001), hereafter cited as Ryan.

<sup>1023</sup> Ryan, p. 10.

<sup>1024</sup> *Nationalist*, 30 Dec. 1899.

<sup>1025</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1026</sup> KilBride to Dillon, 6 Dec. 1900, TCD, Dillon papers, 6756/779.

<sup>1027</sup> Ibid.

received by him from Father Parkinson or Engledow in connection with a settlement of the Luggacurren dispute and therefore 'how I prevented a settlement or thwarted Engledow I know not'. KilBride alleged that the motivation for Engledow's involvement was that the constituency of north Kildare which he formerly represented 'was shaky and Mark McDonald might be shifted'. KilBride's reading of the situation was that when nothing came of the negotiations, it was necessary to find a scapegoat. All of the above would not have occurred in KilBride's view, if a branch of the United Irish League existed in the Luggacurren/Ballyadams district and Father Parkinson's treacherous behaviour didn't help matters, as KilBride explains to Dillon:

Last summer Father Parkinson P.P. sold his hay at Luggacurren, grown in front of Father Maher's door, to Malcomson the head emergencyman and sent a horse and cart to assist in drawing it to the rent office yard.<sup>1028</sup>

In January 1901 the exasperated tenants' representatives reported that the negotiations were abandoned and put all the blame on KilBride. KilBride they alleged had prevented a settlement by his interference with the Evicted Tenants Restoration Committee, who were making real progress with Lansdowne. He was also alleged to have had an argument with Engledow in the House of Commons in relation to his (Engledow's) participation in the negotiations. The tenants representatives wanted to make it clear to the general public that KilBride had always shirked his responsibilities for the adoption of the plan of campaign in Luggacurren and further stated that KilBride had in actual fact started the whole campaign by 'underhand dealing and intrigue'. The Evicted Tenants Restoration Committee were at that stage endeavoring to find suitable holdings for the Luggacurren evicted tenants in County Leitrim.<sup>1029</sup>

KilBride, in reply to these allegations pointed out that he had not 'attacked' Engledow and in fact they were always and remained the best of friends and Engledow was prepared to testify as to the truth of this. As to the allegation of shirking his responsibilities, KilBride recollected that a deputation had asked him to attend a meeting in Luggacurren in late 1886 and when he was asked for his advice at that meeting he had declined to do so. The proposal to adopt the plan of campaign he argued came from the smaller tenants and he was the last tenant 'to cross the road' in favour of its adoption. As far as KilBride was concerned, his responsibility was 'a joint

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<sup>1028</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1029</sup> *Nationalist*, 5 Jan. 1901.

responsibility' with all the other tenants who adopted the plan of campaign, but he was not the instigator. KilBride further claimed that since the evictions, he never had any communication 'either directly or indirectly' with Lansdowne about a settlement of the Luggacurren dispute. As to his thwarting the negotiations, he made no secret of the fact that he did not favour planting people on evicted farms other than their own. He saw no difference between planters, be they evicted tenants or Orangemen and would never subscribe to 'turn any class into grabbers'.<sup>1030</sup>

#### 4.10 TRIAL BY SPECIAL JURY

N. Chamberlain, Colonel Inspector General reported to the under secretary on 15 September 1902 that members of the United Irish League were advocating boycotting at public meetings, in an orchestrated plan of agitation which had and would lead to a lot of evil.<sup>1031</sup> The foregoing probably explains why on 27 July 1902 KilBride delivered a speech at Milltown Cross, near Moyvore, County Westmeath, for which he was charged with using language 'calculated to incite people to murder' Major-General Devenish Meares, of Meare's Court in County Westmeath.<sup>1032</sup> KilBride said he was sent there by the secretary of the central organisation of the United Irish League to form a branch.<sup>1033</sup> General Meares evicted a tenant (Edward Wynne) on 6 June for non-payment of rent and a public meeting organised by the United Irish League was called to meet at Meare's Court on the 27 July 1902, to condemn General Meare's action.<sup>1034</sup> A warrant for KilBride's arrest, signed by Captain John Preston RM on 5 August, charged that KilBride 'did solicit, encourage, persuade or endeavour to persuade, a person or persons to murder one Major-General Devenish Meares, of Meare's Court' at Milltown Cross, County Westmeath on 27 July 1902'. On foot of this warrant, KilBride was arrested in Templemore courthouse on 12 August 1902 and 'conveyed in custody to Athlone' where he was given four months imprisonment, which he appealed.<sup>1035</sup> He was removed in custody from Tullamore and brought to Athlone to the appeal court on 29 August, where the bench were 'equally divided' and KilBride was freed 'to appear when called

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<sup>1030</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1031</sup> CO 904, Reel 40, Box 75, Apr.-Aug. 1902, p. 589.

<sup>1032</sup> *L.E.*, 13 Dec. 1902.

<sup>1033</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1034</sup> CO 904, Reel 40, Box 75, Apr. to Aug. 1902, county inspector's report - Westmeath, 4 Aug. 1902, p. 571; *L.E.*, 13 Dec. 1902.

<sup>1035</sup> United Irish League, *Stand aside, trial by jury in Ireland in the twentieth century*, (Dublin, 1903), p. 4, hereafter cited as *Stand aside*.

upon'.<sup>1036</sup> A month later he was duly served with notice to appear at Athlone court on 9 October. Sergeant Gildea who was present at Culaghboy on the 6 June at the eviction of Wynne and also at Milltown Cross on 27 July, reported that KilBride referred to General Meares as a 'feather-bed general' who showed the 'white feather at the Crimea war'.<sup>1037</sup> KilBride was returned to appear before Justice Kenny for trial at the Leinster Winter Assizes in Maryborough on 8 December. His bail was set at one surety of £200 or two sureties of £100 each.<sup>1038</sup> A 'friend' of KilBride's acted as surety for the full sum of £200, which the court accepted and he was released.<sup>1039</sup>

KilBride's case was tried over two days, before a special jury as it was deemed to be a very serious case.<sup>1040</sup> According to the United Irish League the trial was conducted fairly by Justice Kenny, who 'was no believer in the guilt of the accused',<sup>1041</sup> but they insisted that the jury was 'packed' and a conviction would be a foregone conclusion. KilBride, the accused, was limited to six challenges, which his counsel exhausted, 'while the Crown ordered forty-seven to stand by'.<sup>1042</sup> The jury consisted of eleven Protestants and one Catholic, 'the latter gentleman being of the landowning class.'<sup>1043</sup> (Table 10) According to the United Irish League, 'not only were Catholics set aside, but liberal-minded and upright Protestant citizens were challenged by the Crown Solicitor and insulted by not being allowed to enter the jury box'.<sup>1044</sup>

An exclusively hostile jury was empanelled, and trial by jury degenerated in this case into trial by opponents.<sup>1045</sup>

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<sup>1036</sup> *Stand aside*, p. 5.

<sup>1037</sup> *I.T.*, 10 Oct. 1902.

<sup>1038</sup> *Stand aside*, p. 7; *I.T.*, 10 Oct. 1902.

<sup>1039</sup> *I.T.*, 10 Oct. 1902.

<sup>1040</sup> *L.E.*, 6 Dec. 1902.

<sup>1041</sup> *Stand aside*, p. 14.

<sup>1042</sup> *L.E.*, 13 Dec. 1902.

<sup>1043</sup> M. F. Plunkett, Ballybrophy House, Esq., J.P.

<sup>1044</sup> *Stand aside*, p. 3.

<sup>1045</sup> *Stand aside*, p. 3.



Table 10:

## List of Special Jurors

	NAME	ADDRESS	OCCUPATION	RELIGION
1	Dobson, William	Ballycarroll	Farmer	Protestant
2	Meredith, Henry	Corbally	Farmer	Protestant
3	Meredith, Jeremiah	Meelick	Farmer	Protestant
4	Meredith, Philip E. <sup>1046</sup>	Reary Valley, Portarlington	Gentleman	Protestant
5	Mole, Joseph	Ballagh House	J.P.	Protestant
6	Ringwood, Richard	Harristown	J.P.	Protestant
7	Ruskill, Robert	Clonbrook	Farmer	Protestant
8	Swan, Graves C.	Allworth	J.P.	Protestant
9	Thompson, Abraham	Cappalough	Farmer	Protestant
10	Thompson, Joseph	Laurel Hill	Farmer	Protestant
11	Weldon, Major Sir Anthony A.A. Bart.	Kilmorony House, Athy	D.L.	Protestant
12	Plunkett, J.M.F.	Ballybrophy House	J.P.	Catholic

Sources: U.I.L., *Stand aside, trial by jury in Ireland in the twentieth century*, p. 14; *L.E.*, 13 Dec. 1902.

The United Irish League argued that it was grossly unfair to have a Catholic tried in a predominantly Catholic county, when thirty-two Roman Catholics and fifteen Protestants were ordered to 'stand aside' and a jury of eleven Protestants and one Catholic was selected, whereas the population (according to the last census), consisted of 50,599 Roman Catholics and 6,818 persons of other persuasions.<sup>1047</sup> J. Wakely, K.C. and Dr Falconer K.C. instructed by Dr Todd, Crown Solicitor for Westmeath, appeared on behalf of the Crown while D. Sullivan K.C.<sup>1048</sup> and M. M'D Bodkin, K.C. instructed by a Mr Seales (Messrs KilBride & Seales), appeared for KilBride.<sup>1049</sup> Wakely, in opening the case for the Crown stated that all through KilBride's speech 'there was a strain of physical force' delivered chiefly 'to encourage and solicit' the people attending the meeting to murder Major-General Devenish Meares.<sup>1050</sup> Sergeant Jeremiah Wallace referred in his evidence 'to the excited manner of the people'.<sup>1051</sup> He further stated that when KilBride's speech was over 'Mr KilBride and others'<sup>1052</sup> went on towards Meares

<sup>1046</sup> A glimpse at the status of Meredith can be gleaned from the following advertisement from the *L. E.*, 8 July 1899: 'Wanted at once, careful, steady man, as groom, etc; must understand care and management of horses, ride and break well; weight ten stone; good wages to capable man. Send copy of discharges or apply personally to P. E. Meredith, Reary Valley, Portarlington.

<sup>1047</sup> *Stand aside*, p. 14.

<sup>1048</sup> Donal Sullivan (1838–1907) was the brother of A. M. and T. D. Sullivan and closely linked to T. M. Healy. Sullivan was returned to Parliament in 1885, retaining his seat until he died. He supported the anti-Parnellites in Dec. 1890, O'Day, xxxv.

<sup>1049</sup> *I. T.*, 10 Oct. 1902; *L.E.*, 13 Dec. 1902.

<sup>1050</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1051</sup> *I. T.*, 10 Oct. 1902.

<sup>1052</sup> According to the *I. T.*, 10 Oct. 1902, 'speeches were delivered by Mr Ginnell and Mr KilBride'.

Court'.<sup>1053</sup> Wallace followed but as they neared Meares Court, the crowd were intercepted by a District Inspector and a cordon of police, 'but Mr Ginnell<sup>1054</sup> the organiser called on them to go on', wherein the crowd tried to pass but failed. The crowd then got into the fields at both sides of the road and scattered in the direction of Meare's Court.<sup>1055</sup> Sergeant Parker corroborated the above evidence, stating that 'the police followed them and endeavoured to prevent them from gathering in numbers'.<sup>1056</sup> When cross-examined he was of the opinion that the crowd were not going to Major Meares residence to murder him.<sup>1057</sup>

D. Sullivan, counsel for KilBride acknowledged that the charge brought against his client was serious 'and the time is not long past when it was a capital offence' but legislation had limited it to a sentence of ten years penal servitude. As no one was even slightly hurt in this incident, he argued that 'it was incumbent on the jury to find that the language was not alone calculated to induce the result, but that it was also intended to produce the result'. He further argued that this was not a midnight ribbon meeting. It was a constitutional meeting held at midday, attended by a large force of constabulary and was not proclaimed by the authorities.<sup>1058</sup>

Had they ever heard of such an opportunity being taken to incite to an illegal purpose? It did not matter what the jury thought of the league of which a branch was about to be formed, it was still a legal organisation and anyone who wished can join its ranks. However they might differ from the political opinions of the accused [KilBride], they should acquit his client of the charge against him.<sup>1059</sup>

Bodkin argued that it was ludicrous of the Crown that the 'laughing, good-humoured crowd' listening to KilBride's speech, rushed off to murder Major Meares, 'and were only prevented by the force of police'.<sup>1060</sup> Towards the end of the hearing on the first day, the nationalist MP for south Kildare, Matthew J. Minch was called to give evidence. He stated that he had known KilBride since boyhood and considered him to

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<sup>1053</sup> *L.E.*, 13 Dec. 1902.

<sup>1054</sup> Laurence Ginnell (1854-1923) was a founder of the Irish Literary Society and a barrister. He was arrested several times. He was a leading advocate of 'cattle driving' during the ranch war, 1907-09. He was first elected M.P. in 1906, but was expelled from the Irish party in 1909 and suffered defeat at the polls in 1910. He was elected under the Sinn Féin banner in 1918, but declined to take his seat, O'Day, xxi.

<sup>1055</sup> *I. T.*, 10 Oct. 1902; *L.E.*, 13 Dec. 1902.

<sup>1056</sup> *L.E.*, 13 Dec. 1902.

<sup>1057</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1058</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1059</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1060</sup> *I.T.*, 10 Oct. 1902; *L.E.*, 13 Dec. 1902.

be a man of excellent character and did not believe him capable of inciting to murder.<sup>1061</sup> Canon Germaine P.P. Athy also gave an excellent character reference. Dr Falconer for the Crown argued that evidence of good character in the case at hand 'was quite useless' and although KilBride had an excellent character, he 'had erred before by making a speech for which he was made amenable it was possible he had again transgressed' and the fact that he was highly connected, well-educated etc, 'made his action all the more serious'.<sup>1062</sup> The indictable sections in KilBride's speech, recounted as court evidence are worthy of inclusion here:

They were doing nothing to get rid of the landlords and landlordism...God helps those who helps themselves...now, let me put you a practical question. You are all sick and tired of the landlords, there is not one amongst you, God between him and all harm, if the Major died tonight who would say, the Lord have mercy on him....suppose now God between him and all harm, you can't say a good thing too often, how many would go to the trouble of going to his funeral....I know as well as you do that himself [Meares] and Lowry were fired at fifteen years ago....I was told by a man coming to this meeting, and it is the last word I'll say to you, that the hand that drew the trigger was never cold in the grave....You remember that a man named Lowry and the Major were shot at a few years ago, and they were missed. But why were they missed? Drink was the cause of it. What made them miss their landlords? The curse of drink.<sup>1063</sup>

The verdict 'guilty of encouraging to murder' and a recommendation for mercy was given after the special jury had been away for 'about forty minutes deliberation'.<sup>1064</sup> Justice Kenny, passed the sentence with the following words:

Denis KilBride, it has been a matter of very great pain to me, who sat in the House of Commons with you several years, to be obliged in the discharge of my duty to preside at the trial and now to pass sentence. I confess that I cannot see how the jury could have arrived at any other conclusion than that in the verdict they have brought in. Your speech was one long recommendation to active and stern measures. You constantly referred to the attempted murder of General Meares as a deed worthy of praise and to be imitated. That language was addressed in serious phrase and serious tone to the people of the district, including the tenants on the estate of General Meares. Most unquestionably it amounted to an incitement to murder. In passing this sentence I take into consideration the recommendation which the jury have made. I take into consideration the high character that had been given to you by Canon Germaine and by your co-member of parliament, Mr Minch. I take into consideration above all the fact that the district has remained in a peaceable state and that no

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<sup>1061</sup> *I.T.*, 10 Dec. 1902.

<sup>1062</sup> *L.E.*, 13 Dec. 1902.

<sup>1063</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1064</sup> *Ibid*; *I.T.*, 11 Dec. 1902.

injurious results have followed. I accordingly impose upon you a sentence of eight calendar months imprisonment, without hard labour.<sup>1065</sup>

#### 4.11 THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND THE CRIMES ACT<sup>1066</sup>

During the debate on Supply, Civil Services and Revenue Departments Estimates of 20 July 1903, the topic of the Crimes Act was discussed by the Attorney General for Ireland, John Atkinson and the Irish members.<sup>1067</sup> Atkinson in responding to criticism that no person should suffer 'who happened to be a member of parliament or a member of a county council' stated this to be ludicrous. He thought intimidation was a crime and in order to 'grapple' with that crime, 'so widely spread in Ireland', the Crimes Acts had been applied. Atkinson sharply denied charges that the resident magistrates were coming to decisions 'at the behest of the government'.<sup>1068</sup> However, KilBride insisted that the 'principal' resident magistrates, 'those whom the authorities in Dublin Castle knew they had most confidence in' happened to be in Dublin Castle when the proclamation of the Crimes Act was made and there received instructions on the carrying out of the Crimes Act in their respective courts.

That it was done he [KilBride] was as certain as that the right honourable gentlemen was at that moment sitting on the Treasury bench.<sup>1069</sup>

Atkinson at one stage during the debate alluded to 'KilBride's case', stating that KilBride had borne his punishment 'like a man' and had displayed 'commendable good temper and courtesy' since returning to parliament.<sup>1070</sup> KilBride quickly responded that he would 'do the same thing again'. When Atkinson was accused by 'a member on the Irish bench' of packing the jury at KilBride's trial, he explained that when Dr Todd, the Crown Solicitor heard that there were 'planters in the district' on the jury panel, he came to the conclusion that planters would be 'unfair to the accused' and duly communicated with KilBride's solicitor in order to challenge them on behalf of the Crown.<sup>1071</sup> KilBride's solicitor, according to Atkinson, stated that there was 'a strong feeling among the planters' and accordingly twelve 'planters' were set aside 'as likely to be hostile to the accused'.<sup>1072</sup> Another person was challenged successfully by

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<sup>1065</sup> *I. T.*, 11 Dec. 1902; *L.E.*, 13 Dec. 1902.

<sup>1066</sup> Though chronologically out of sequence, this section relates directly to the previous section, trial by special jury.

<sup>1067</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxv, 1231-44, 20 July 1903.

<sup>1068</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxv, 1232, 20 July 1903.

<sup>1069</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxv, 1239, 20 July 1903.

<sup>1070</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxv, 1231-44, 20 July 1903.

<sup>1071</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1072</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxv, 1236-7, 20 July 1903.

KilBride, so that according to the Attorney General, 'out of a panel of forty, thirteen were set aside at the direct suggestion' of KilBride's solicitor.<sup>1073</sup> Atkinson also stated that thirteen Protestants were set aside and assured the house that the prosecution was conducted with 'absolute fairness to the accused'. As to the change of venue to Maryborough, he intimated that it was 'quite competent' of KilBride to object 'but he did not do so'.<sup>1074</sup> When John Dillon asked whether it was not a packed jury when in 'Catholic Queen's County' a jury consisted of eleven Protestants and one Catholic, Atkinson replied that 'at all events' he had only stated what was reported to him by the Crown Solicitor.<sup>1075</sup> KilBride retorted that he couldn't accept the Attorney-General's statement because when he was in Maryborough prison, he saw the special jury panel of 240 from Queen's County and 'it was marked in blue and red pencil by Dublin Castle'.<sup>1076</sup> More specifically KilBride stated that the panel was marked with information received from the police by a 'certain gentleman who was the most prominent unionist in Queen's County'. The thirteen Protestants set aside, according to KilBride were Home Rulers or sympathised with the tenants.

Why was William Davidson, a Scotch gentleman, who had lived the better part of his life in Ireland, retired? It was because he had been constantly giving evidence in the land courts on behalf of the tenants as a land valuer. Would the Attorney-General give the name of one man who was ordered to stand by who was not a Liberal and a Home Ruler, and the name of one man who was kept on who was not a unionist and possibly an Orangeman.<sup>1077</sup>

KilBride stated that 'it looked curious to the uninitiated' that 240 special jurors were necessary to try one case under the Crimes Act and he thought that 118 common jurors who had been summoned to try eighteen cases, 'two being capital offences, for which a man and a woman were hanged' would have been sufficient to try one Crimes Act case.<sup>1078</sup> KilBride further argued that the police notetaker was inaccurate in his report at the trial. What convicted him he stated, was a story he told about the sermons of a clergyman friend of his, who was a strong advocate of temperance and against excessive drink in the following words:

Why are you not able to pay your rent? Drink, the cursed drink! Why is it that you are evicted and thrown on the road by your landlord? Drink, the cursed

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<sup>1073</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1074</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxv, 1237, 20 July 1903.

<sup>1075</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1076</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxv, 1238, 20 July 1903.

<sup>1077</sup> Ibid

<sup>1078</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxv, 1240, 20 July 1903.

drink! Why when you are evicted do you form criminal conspiracies? Drink the cursed drink! Why do you fire at your landlord? Drink, the cursed drink! Why do you miss him? Drink, the cursed drink!<sup>1079</sup>

Finally KilBride stated that, although he had been imprisoned in Mountjoy for eight months it 'only confirmed his view that he had held for twenty-five years' that nothing had ever been got, or would ever be got, from the British government except by opposition.<sup>1080</sup>

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<sup>1079</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxv, 1240-1, 20 July 1903.

<sup>1080</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxv, 1241-2, 20 July 1903.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DENIS KILBRIDE MP FOR SOUTH KILDARE 1903 TO 1910

Through the provision of the Land Act of 1903 and subsequent amending legislation, between 1903 and 1920 ‘nearly nine million acres changed hands and two million more were in process of being sold’.<sup>1081</sup>

#### 5.1 KILBRIDE ELECTED UNOPPOSED FOR SOUTH KILDARE 1903

In June 1900 it was reported from ‘well-informed quarters’ by the *Tuam Herald* that south Kildare was ‘about to lose the services of Mr M. J. Minch M.P.’.<sup>1082</sup> The reason for Minch’s resignation were understood to be ‘increased business obligations’ as the demands on time and energy were so great that he could no longer give ‘close attention’ to his constituency. Minch’s close connection with north Galway arose from his marriage to Miss O’Kelly of Gallagher, Tuam.<sup>1083</sup> Minch however didn’t retire in 1900 but in 1903, less than five months into KilBride’s prison sentence, his fortunes were changing for the better, as Minch had finally decided to apply ‘for the Chiltern Hundreds’,<sup>1084</sup> and had accordingly vacated his seat in South Kildare, which constituency he had represented for eleven years.<sup>1085</sup> Minch had first been elected to south Kildare as an anti-Parnellite in 1892, defeating the sitting Parnellite candidate James Leahy by 2,642 votes to 975.<sup>1086</sup> Minch was returned for the constituency unopposed as an anti-Parnellite in both 1895 and 1900.<sup>1087</sup> On 16 May 1903 the *Leinster Leader* expressed dismay that KilBride had been recommended for the constituency of south Kildare ‘at a private meeting in Athy’ and has been invited by John Redmond to stand.<sup>1088</sup> The editorial recommended that KilBride should ‘be weighed in the scales of public judgment with other eligible and desirable men’, such as Thomas Sexton<sup>1089</sup>,

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<sup>1081</sup> *New history of Ireland*, pp 96-7.

<sup>1082</sup> *T.H.*, 2 June 1900.

<sup>1083</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1084</sup> Chiltern Hundreds, the obsolete (since the nineteenth century) administrative districts of Stoke, Burnham, and Desborough in Buckinghamshire, south central England. The stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds is an obsolete office with only a nominal salary. It is, however, legally an office of profit under the crown and, as such, may not be held by a member of parliament. Since members of Parliament may not resign, ‘applying for the Chiltern Hundreds’ or for the similarly obsolete stewardship of the Manor of Northstead is the method by which a member gives up his seat.

<http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0811877.html>

<sup>1085</sup> *L.E.*, 9, 16, May 1903.

<sup>1086</sup> Walker, pp 355-6.

<sup>1087</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1088</sup> *L.L.*, 16 May 1903.

<sup>1089</sup> Thomas Sexton (1848-1932) was a journalist, first returned to Parliament in 1880, remaining an MP until 1896 when he retired. He was High Sheriff of Dublin in 1887, Lord Mayor in 1888 and 1889 and chairman of the *Freeman’s Journal* between 1892 and 1912. Sexton had immense influence within the Irish party and supported the anti-Parnellites in Dec. 1890. In the Edwardian era party leaders were ever

who would stand 'if properly approached'.<sup>1090</sup> Engledow was also considered a worthy candidate as he had 'a considerable stake in the division' and also that he was 'popular with both priests and people'.<sup>1091</sup> Despite this criticism, KilBride was the only candidate nominated to take Minch's place and was therefore declared returned unopposed, MP for South Kildare on 22 May 1903. KilBride's nomination was proposed by Canon Germaine P.P. and seconded by Thomas Hickey, J.P.<sup>1092</sup> KilBride thanked the 'priests and people' of the constituency for the honour of electing him unopposed and promised that he would be present in parliament during the committee stage of the Land Bill, 'as some of the provisions, such as the £3,000 limit affect the tenant farmers of south Kildare in an exceptional manner'.<sup>1093</sup> He also declared that he would be available to his constituents 'at the close of the session of parliament', when he hoped to make himself 'personally acquainted with the requirements of each district'.<sup>1094</sup> In a letter to Athy Union on 21 September 1903, KilBride stated that he would be very glad to assist the tenant farmers of the Union with advice and assistance in relation to the land act, which would ultimately achieve for them 'the ownership of their holdings on such terms as will enable them to live and thrive'.<sup>1095</sup>

## 5.2 THE LAND ACT OF 1903

The land legislation referred to by KilBride was introduced into parliament on 25 March 1903 by the Liberal chief secretary Wyndham as a land bill, which became law as the Irish Land Act on 14 August 1903.<sup>1096</sup> The legislation was preceded by a land conference which convened in Dublin on 20 December the previous year and reported its findings on 3 January 1903.<sup>1097</sup> The act encouraged landlords to sell entire estates, provided that three-quarters of the tenants were in favour. The purchase money would be advanced to the tenants by the state and repaid in annuities at the rate of three and a quarter per cent over sixty-eight and a half years. Landlords would receive a twelve per cent bonus on each sale. Although the nationalist party accepted the bill subject to certain amendments, they had some reservations, such as the purchase price being too

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conscious to placate Sexton because he often determined the stance of the *Freeman's Journal*, sometimes in opposition to official party policy, O'Day, Alan, xxxiii.

<sup>1090</sup> *L.L.*, 16 May 1903.

<sup>1091</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1092</sup> *L.E.*, 23 May 1903.

<sup>1093</sup> *L.L.*, 30 May 1903.

<sup>1094</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1095</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 Sept. 1903.

<sup>1096</sup> O'Day, xlvi.

<sup>1097</sup> *Ibid.*



high, the conditions concerning rent reductions being difficult to work out and they were not satisfied about the landlords receiving such generous bonuses.<sup>1098</sup> Timothy Harrington (Dublin Harbour) typified the sentiment of nationalist MPs when he stated that there could be no doubt that under the bill the landlords had got the most generous terms they could have hoped for:

The landlord who sold now could get a payment in ready cash, where before he was paid in land stock, which was variable and therefore involved risk; the landlord now got his money immediately, in addition to which he was relieved of all the expense of proving a title for the purposes of sale; and he got a bonus of two, or three, or four years purchase from the State.<sup>1099</sup>

KilBride was involved in the debate on the Irish Land Bill of 1903. When Wyndham raised the amount that could be advanced by the Estates Commissioners for land purchase from £3,000 to £5,000, provided that the land was ‘substantially used for tillage or dairying purposes’, KilBride indicated that the Duke of Leinster’s estate in Kildare would be adversely affected in that ‘the largest employers of labour in Kildare’ would be exempt from the benefits of the bill.<sup>1100</sup> He had no objection to the limits being fixed for grass farms and residential grass farms but not for ‘large agricultural tenants’ paying more than £200, ‘the men who in south Kildare were of the greatest good to the community’.<sup>1101</sup> KilBride felt that if the working classes were to find employment in rural districts, the bill should not be confined solely to the tenant farmers and the landlords but should be extended to the large farmers in Leinster who employed many labourers and also the dairy farmers in the Golden Vale.<sup>1102</sup> Wyndham subsequently raised the limit for the purchase of large mixed farms to £7,000.<sup>1103</sup>

One of the controversial amendments in the name of John Redmond was in connection with zones and the minimum and maximum reductions for tenant purchasers under the Bill. Herbert Robertson (south Hackney) explained that the two zones or classification of tenant purchasers, ‘one for rents fixed before and another for rents fixed after 1896’ were decided by the land conference, not by the government.<sup>1104</sup> The conference report he stated, suggested a minimum reduction of fifteen per cent and a

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<sup>1098</sup> *New history of Ireland*, p. 96.

<sup>1099</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxiii, 1127, 16 June 1903.

<sup>1100</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxiii, 972-3, 15 June 1903.

<sup>1101</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1102</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxiv, 427, 24 June 1903.

<sup>1103</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxiv, 429-30, 24 June 1903.

<sup>1104</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxiii, 1136, 16 June 1903.

maximum reduction of twenty-five per cent but the chief secretary enlarged the limits by adding five per cent to each end, so that that the fifteen per cent minimum became ten per cent and the twenty-five per cent maximum became thirty per cent.<sup>1105</sup> KilBride argued that the arrangements for land purchase would have to 'hold good' for sixty-eight years and a reduction of ten per cent wasn't adequate to meet any present or future agricultural depression.<sup>1106</sup> He further argued that tenant purchasers in the past had been punctual in their payments mainly because the price of store cattle had been 'largely increased' by a ban on the importation of Argentinian cattle but he asked, what guarantee was there that the 'existing law' with regard to the importation of cattle would continue for sixty-eight years. Four years previously he stated, an act was passed 'compelling all foreign cattle to be slaughtered within six days of their being landed in this country' but a future act could give 'free access' to store cattle all over England and Scotland and for that reason 'the minimum price ought to go'.<sup>1107</sup>

Another 'vital' amendment for KilBride personally, in the name of William O'Brien was one to include the evicted tenants.<sup>1108</sup> O'Brien stated that his amendment aimed to put the evicted tenants on an 'equality with the others' by not confining them to an advance of £500. John Dillon in agreeing to this amendment, hoped to see all the evicted tenants in Ireland restored to their old holdings.<sup>1109</sup> Colonel Saunderson (north Armagh) stated that Dillon and O'Brien in particular were anxious to restore the evicted tenants because the 'distressing circumstances of their eviction' was mainly caused by them.<sup>1110</sup> Saunderson also stated that the landlords had 'no objection' to restoring evicted tenants to their holdings provided they were 'not occupied', but they had the 'strongest objection' to displacing tenants for the purpose of restoring their evicted predecessors. Wyndham pointed out that his desire was to facilitate a solution 'as much as possible', providing no pressure was used 'to put in people who were not really farmers'.<sup>1111</sup> He therefore was prepared to alter the £500 to '£1,000 or £2,000', making it possible for evicted tenants to get advances 'to make a start in life', but he could not make an advance to evicted tenants 'against others'.<sup>1112</sup> KilBride, without publicly

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<sup>1105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1106</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxiii, 1140, 16 June 1903.

<sup>1107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1108</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxiv, 447-8, 24 June 1903.

<sup>1109</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxiv, 448, 24 June 1903.

<sup>1110</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxiv, 449, 24 June 1903.

<sup>1111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1112</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxiv, 449-50, 24 June 1903.

declaring a personal interest, stated that he understood from Wyndham's statement, that if evicted tenants could not be restored to their former holdings, it would be impossible to give them equivalent positions 'to that which they had formerly held'. He therefore argued that if the bill was to promote a final settlement, the 'wounded soldiers of the land war' must not be prejudiced and he suggested that the Estate Commissioners should have discretion as to the amount advanced to evicted tenants.<sup>1113</sup> Dillon argued that the cost of settling the question of evicted tenants was minute as there were only 'a dozen or fifteen such men' involved. He admitted that there was 'a matter of sentiment' attached to the question but he estimated that there wasn't 'more than 1,000 or 2,000 acres of land in dispute' and he was therefore confident that Wyndham would understand 'this was a matter vital in importance'.<sup>1114</sup> Although John Redmond understood that the 'overwhelming majority' of evicted tenants could be restored to their 'old holdings' yet there remained 'the one section of men whose farms had been grabbed'.<sup>1115</sup> It would be like 'losing the ship for a pen'orth of tar' he explained, if the question of the evicted tenants was not settled by the bill for, if not, Redmond argued:

They were going to leave a sore in Ireland which would not only have an evil effect in the localities where the men resided and where they were known and where their old farms were but also inflict injury on every part of Ireland, cause irritation all over the country and militate against the chances of the bill being satisfactorily received and worked.<sup>1116</sup>

Wyndham replied that he wanted to draw no distinction, to 'let bygones be bygones' and give the 'same facilities' to the evicted tenants as to others who had 'farms which were not adequate to support their existence'.<sup>1117</sup> No evicted tenant, he pointed out, was excluded from the bill but as the amount at the disposal of the government was limited and the classes to be relieved were many, some evicted tenants would be excluded if he allowed 'a higher value than £2,000'.<sup>1118</sup> Where it was not possible to reinstate a tenant on his former holding, he stated, the evicted tenant would get a higher advance than was originally intended, 'which would be dangerously high' if increased to the exclusion of those who deserved to have their needs attended including he believed 'many of the evicted tenants'.<sup>1119</sup> KilBride asked Wyndham whether he was going to allow 'twenty

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<sup>1113</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxiv, 450, 24 June 1903.

<sup>1114</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxiv, 450-1, 24 June 1903.

<sup>1115</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxiv, 451, 24 June 1903.

<sup>1116</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxiv, 451-2, 24 June 1903.

<sup>1117</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxiv, 454, 24 June 1903.

<sup>1118</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxiv, 455, 24 June 1903.

<sup>1119</sup> *Ibid.*

of the wounded soldiers in the land war' to continue in their 'present position' because they were 'more active' than other people in the land struggle.<sup>1120</sup> T. W. Russell (south Tyrone) was reluctant to join in the debate as it didn't concern the part of the country he represented, but 'in justice to the land conference', he agreed that there had to be a settlement of the evicted tenants situation and he therefore associated himself with the nationalist members 'in their contention' and in doing so, wished to 'draw a sponge over those bitter memories'.<sup>1121</sup> T. P. O'Connor (Liverpool) stated that the question of the evicted tenants was to the Irish people something like 'the exchange of prisoners in a campaign' and it would be a 'shame to desert these men' whom in number he could count 'on the fingers of his hands'.<sup>1122</sup> There were a 'few' evicted tenants on the Luggacurren, Massereene and Clanricarde estates and of the 100 families on the latter estate there were just two who would come under the amendment of William O'Brien.

On the Luggacurren estate there were six or seven families who were affected by this amendment. That was the estate of the Marquis of Lansdowne, a member of the Ministry and one of the men responsible for the introduction of this bill. He was sure the noble Lord was most desirous that it should pass into law. He was a man of sense, judgment and tact and he did not believe that he would for a moment say that these six or seven tenants were to stand between Ireland and a satisfactory settlement of the question.<sup>1123</sup>

Herbert Robertson in a long speech outlining the classes of tenants in the bill, stated that in the distribution of large estates, the Estate Commissioners would also by default create 'a considerable body of labourers' and it was therefore desirable that there should be 'persons round about' who could provide employment for them.<sup>1124</sup> It was therefore wise he felt, that the Estate Commissioners should be allowed to use their discretion in creating 'good-sized farms allocated to 'substantial persons'.<sup>1125</sup> At a later stage in the debate Wyndham agreed that a man would be enabled to acquire a holding 'other than that from which he was evicted up to £7,000' and that it was expedient to do this in order to put estates in a proper state to be resold.<sup>1126</sup>

Another long and protracted debate took place on the issue of gaming rights being reserved to the landlord even after the sale of their estates. KilBride felt that the gaming

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<sup>1120</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxxiv, 455-6, 24 June 1903.

<sup>1121</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxxiv, 456, 24 June 1903.

<sup>1122</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxxiv, 458, 24 June 1903.

<sup>1123</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxxiv, 461-2, 24 June 1903.

<sup>1124</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1125</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1126</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxxiv, 1433-4, 6 July 1903.

rights should also be transferred to the tenant purchasers 'if the landlord did not put any value on them'.<sup>1127</sup> Tim Healy argued that sporting rights should 'as a national asset' be vested in a public authority, whereas John Redmond felt that sporting right should not be reserved to a landlord except as a result of a bargain with his tenants.<sup>1128</sup> Words to this effect were subsequently drawn up and agreed upon.<sup>1129</sup>

In March 1904 the tenants on the Lansdowne Meath estate, situated at 'Ballyboggan, Ballinakill and Harristown' were seriously considering purchasing their farms under the new land act. Detailed agreements were worked out between William Rochford, Lansdowne's agent and T. O'K White, solicitor for the tenants. Under the agreement, one year was added to the purchase money to clear all arrears to 29 September 1903, which had accrued due to the tenants 'owing one year's rent or upwards'.<sup>1130</sup> Lansdowne was reported to have accepted the tenants' offer, and arrangements were made 'to close the matter'.<sup>1131</sup> Less than a week later during the debate on the Consolidated Fund (No.1) Bill, KilBride asked the chief secretary if the Estates Commissioners could use their own initiative to ascertain whether a 'new tenant' was willing to accept compensation to leave a farm.<sup>1132</sup> The Attorney General for Ireland (Atkinson) replied that it would be impossible for the Estates Commissioners to purchase a tenant purchaser's holding 'in order to sell it to somebody else'.<sup>1133</sup> He also expressed his dissatisfaction with the manner in which the office of the Estates Commissioners was managed, complaining that 'it was very short-handed'. Wyndham replied that the staff in the office was at first adequate but 'when the operation developed' it was not.<sup>1134</sup> In May 1904 KilBride asked the chief secretary whether the tenants on the property of the Marquis of Drogheda at Nurney, County Kildare had agreed to buy their holdings and would he make provision for the reinstatement of the evicted tenants. Wyndham replied that no application had been received by the Estates Commissioners but if an application was made it would be considered.<sup>1135</sup>

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<sup>1127</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxxiv, 963-4, 30 June 1903.

<sup>1128</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxxiv, 965-7, 30 June 1903.

<sup>1129</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxxiv, 968, 30 June 1903.

<sup>1130</sup> *L.L.*, 19 Mar. 1904.

<sup>1131</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1132</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxxxii, 724, 24 Mar. 1904.

<sup>1133</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxxxii, 730-1, 24 Mar. 1904.

<sup>1134</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxxxii, 726, 24 Mar. 1904.

<sup>1135</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxxxiv, 1181-2, 12 May 1904.

### 5.3 THE IRISH LAND BILL 1904<sup>1136</sup>

The Irish Land Bill of 1904 had its second reading in the House of Commons at the beginning of July. John Brownlee Lonsdale (mid-Armagh) commenting on an amendment of John Redmond stated that the measure would serve as a useful purpose by facilitating sales under the 1903 Land Act, 'making clear what was the evident intention of Parliament in regard to the distribution of the bonus'.<sup>1137</sup> Redmond argued that it was 'merely a landlords' bill' and landlords unwilling to sell despite many inducements, should be simply compelled to sell. Lonsdale was an advocate of compulsion only 'as a last resort' and he believed that a 'premature agitation for compulsion' would delay the establishment of the system of occupying ownership of agricultural land in Ireland.<sup>1138</sup> KilBride opposed the bill and 'defied' anyone to say that the act of 1903 had been anything but an 'abject failure', as it had neither relieved congestion nor restored the evicted tenants.<sup>1139</sup> KilBride's main argument was that land prices were inflated because of the 1903 act and he 'frankly' admitted that that he did everything he could to prevent his own constituents in Kildare from paying inflated prices, because he believed that 'twenty-five years purchase on second-term rents reduced twelve and a half per cent on first-term rents was not a solid bargain' nor a sound investment for the future.<sup>1140</sup> He (KilBride) didn't enter into the Irish land agitation simply to improve the Irish tenant's position but because it was 'a step towards Home Rule' and once the Irish tenant farmer became a free man he would be a far stronger Home Ruler than ever before.<sup>1141</sup> KilBride again asked whether the Estate Commissioners had the power 'to approach a grabber' in possession of an evicted tenant's holding, offering compensation to allow the evicted tenant 'to negotiate with his former landlord'. If the Commissioners only had power to advance money the bill would not settle the evicted tenants' question, he argued, and further:

In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the evicted tenants had no wish to be transplanted; they wanted no other land than that farm from which they had been evicted. All that every evicted tenant wanted was to be restored to the holding upon which he had been born and brought up and where his forefathers had lived before him. It was the old associations which the evicted tenants wanted

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<sup>1136</sup> O'Day makes no reference to the Land Bill of 1904. Maume comments that William O'Brien hoped to revive conciliation by a conference on the labourer's question to overcome the defects of the 1904 bill 'as the land conference remodelled the Land Bill of 1902', Maume, p. 72.

<sup>1137</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxxvii, 1119-21, 8 July 1904.

<sup>1138</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1139</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxxvii, 1122, 8 July 1904.

<sup>1140</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxxvii, 1122-3, 8 July 1904.

<sup>1141</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxxvii, 1123, 8 July 1904.

restored more than anything else....and if they could not be reinstated, they were willing to go on to other farms of approximately the same size as those from which they had been evicted.<sup>1142</sup>

Finally instead of a system of zones, KilBride argued that the former system of inspection should be restored. The inspectors under the previous land acts he pointed out, reported that prices were too high and did not give sufficient security to the Treasury and for all these reasons he would 'with all his heart' vote against the bill.<sup>1143</sup>

In July 1904 rent applications were heard by the Land Commission at the courthouse in Athy. Interestingly, Bryan Coffey, a tenant of Lansdowne on the Luggacurren estate, was an applicant, represented by his solicitor, Valentine KilBride (brother of Denis).<sup>1144</sup> This was the same Bryan Coffey who according to KilBride in his memoirs, was one of the chief instigators of the plan of campaign on the Luggacurren estate.<sup>1145</sup> Coffey was evicted, owing a year's rent of £15 10s from a 'comfortable house about a mile from the village of Luggacurren' on 23 April 1887.<sup>1146</sup> Before the Land Commission in 1904, he stated that he had purchased c18 acres in 1889 for £650, but the houses were in ruins and he was obliged to knock them down and rebuild at a cost of up to £400.<sup>1147</sup> Coffey further claimed that his land was poor and at a high elevation and although a portion had been reclaimed years earlier, 'it had got back to its original state'.<sup>1148</sup>

#### 5.4 NEW PHASE OF LAND AGITATION 1904

Public meetings under the auspices of the United Irish League were organised to bolster support for the organisation and heighten awareness of the new land act, especially in places where the movement had become dormant or in need of revival. On 17 January 1904 a nationalist demonstration was held in the parish of Borris-in-Ossory, which was attended by Michael Davitt M.P., KilBride, William Delany M.P. for Queen's County, and P.A. Meehan, Chairman of Queen's County Council. The place chosen for the meeting, the hill of Knockaroo, was synonymous with demonstrations of this nature and this was the 'third great meeting held on the same spot' since the famous eviction of the

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<sup>1142</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxxxvii, 1124, 8 July 1904.

<sup>1143</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxxxvii, 1126, 8 July 1904.

<sup>1144</sup> *L.L.*, 30 July 1904.

<sup>1145</sup> MS 1.

<sup>1146</sup> *L.E.*, 30 Apr. 1887.

<sup>1147</sup> *L.L.*, 30 July 1904.

<sup>1148</sup> *ibid.*

late Malachi Kelly from the 'Black Farm', nearly twenty-five years previously.<sup>1149</sup> This farm had been derelict since the eviction, when 'the whole countryside around was startled with the news that the Black Farm had been let to a stranger'. Both Malachi and the then landlord had since passed away, but as Fr James Dillon, administrator of Borris-in-Ossory explained, on the death of the 'present landlord's father', he had written to the new landlord a most 'courteous' letter, asking that a settlement be made with Kelly's widow and daughter for the tenancy of the land in question. However the reply to his letter was 'insulting' as the new landlord stated that his father had 'a great deal of trouble over that farm and that he and no intention of ever letting one of the Kelly family into possession of it again'. Fr Dillon felt this was a grave injustice especially as 'one of the first planks' of the Land Conference agreement was the restoration of evicted tenants. Michael Davitt was hugely sceptical of 'the Lord Dunravens and company' in the Land Conference, which in his view was 'a pro-Chamberlainite movement for protection' of the landlord classes.<sup>1150</sup>

In this instance the pro-protectionists were chiefly the landlord classes of the three countries, classes who already exploit the labour and commerce of these three same countries to the extent of £150,000 every year in rents on land, in ground rents in cities and towns, and in mineral royalties, all because these classes own the House of Lords and largely the House of Commons and had thereby been in a position to make laws for their own interests, which enabled them to grab all the land and all the minerals under it that of right belonged to the people, that was to the nation.<sup>1151</sup>

Davitt pronounced that the demand for protection was a 'fraud on the face of it' and those who went into conference with the landlords 'on any question, showed their gullible qualities'. In relation to the land act, Davitt advised vigilance, as the higher the price the landlords demanded from the tenants, 'the higher the rent they would have to pay' in years to come. On the question of Catholic university education, Davitt advocated that the only settlement was 'to make Trinity College an Irish and national university, with equal rights and privileges for Catholics and Protestants'. KilBride also poured scorn on the land conference, stating the most appropriate place for the signing of any agreement would be on the treaty stone of Limerick, where the 'so-called treaty of old was broken'. He could see no reason why the price of land had been so inflated

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<sup>1149</sup> *L.L.*, 23 Jan. 1904.

<sup>1150</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1151</sup> *Ibid.*



by the landlords in the recent past, from 'eighteen or nineteen years' purchase to twenty-four years.<sup>1152</sup>

A United Irish League public meeting was held in Timahoe, Queen's County on 25 September 1904. The meeting was attended by William Delany M.P. and P. A. Meehan, chairman of Queen's County Council. The chairman of the meeting, Fr J. Delaney P.P. Stradbally, stated that there was more necessity than ever for 'some organisation, in order that they might share as far as possible in the benefits of the land act'.<sup>1153</sup> Among the resolutions passed was one which condemned land-grabbing and the eleven months system was stated to be 'ruinous to the best interests of the country'. Delany stated that the Irish party would be 'impotent' without the backing and support of a 'strong, firm, and resolute organisation in Ireland' and although the land act was capable of good prospects, the people needed to be organised under the banner of the United Irish League or 'they would only get the chaff and the landlords would get the wheat'.<sup>1154</sup>

Another meeting of 'a large dimension' was organised on 6 November 1904 at Monasterevan.<sup>1155</sup> Fortunately for KilBride, this meeting was organised mainly to express appreciation to him for 'valuable parliamentary services' in the constituency of south Kildare, 'as well as for considering with him the position of the land purchase act of 1903'. The meeting was attended by a representative number of clergy and amongst the MPs were KilBride, Michael Flavin and William Delany. The chairman of the meeting, Fr J. Donovan C.C. Monasterevan, recounted the history of land purchase in Kildare, highlighting that land was dearer in Kildare 'than any other part of Ireland'. One of the explanations 'it was said' was that the land sold by the landlords under the previous acts, 'was only the bankrupt stock, the bad and inferior land occupied by the bankrupt tenants and owned by the bankrupt landlords'. Donovan's advice was that although the landlords were receiving a '£12,000,000 bonus', the purchasers should 'pay no price, except a fair price'.<sup>1156</sup> KilBride while thanking his constituents for the honour of returning him as MP of the division, recognised that it was 'not the man but the principle that in his person they adopted'. In his speech he announced that he had attended a meeting of the Catholic Truth Society in the Rotunda and listened to the

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<sup>1152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1153</sup> Ibid., 1 Oct. 1904.

<sup>1154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1155</sup> Ibid., 12 Nov. 1904.

<sup>1156</sup> Ibid.

Bishop of Limerick addressing the question of a Catholic university but 'mere talking would not do' and it would have been better if 'Dr Dwyer and the Cardinal and the Archbishop of Tuam' had joined the United Irish League instead. Agreeing with Fr Donovan that although the land question was settled but the terms were not, he pointed out that it was their duty to safeguard their own interests and those of future generations. The most important issue in relation to the new land act was the number of years purchase annuities were to be paid into the future, but notwithstanding this, land issues were progressing favourably and an end to landlordism was in sight.

The Parliament of England had at last solemnly decreed that landlordism in this country as an institution could not continue, that its death warrant had been signed and sealed and they were now to consider the price of the funeral.<sup>1157</sup>

A week later the 'Leix Divisional Executive' of the United Irish League shifted the emphasis to the evicted tenants. A unanimous resolution called on the Estates Commissioners to restore the evicted tenants of the county to 'their old homes,' advising that sales shouldn't be sanctioned, without first making provision for them.<sup>1158</sup> The chairman of the meeting, P. A. Meehan, when listing the evicted tenants of the county, omitted the Luggacurren tenants. This he explained was because the executive had been informed that the necessary forms from Luggacurren had not been supplied and 'owing to local causes', only a small number had communicated with the League. Because of this Joseph Devlin<sup>1159</sup> intended taking 'special action with reference to them'.<sup>1160</sup> From local intelligence it was ascertained that the list included Denis KilBride M.P., John William Dunne, Thomas Mackey and the representatives of Michael Dunne of Luggacurren along with William Lyons, James Brennan, Michael Kelly and the representatives of James Mahon of Stradbally and finally Edward Conroy of Timahoe.<sup>1161</sup> The year ended with another 'rousing' meeting at Clonaslee, which was chaired by the former curate of Luggacurren, then P.P. Clonaslee, Fr John Maher.<sup>1162</sup> KilBride also attended and again the main topic of the day was the recent land act. Fr Byrne, Clonaslee in responding to the usual round of resolutions, stated that 'very few estates had been sold' and the tenants who had purchased holdings 'were and must be

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<sup>1157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1159</sup> Joseph Devlin (1872-1934) was a Belfast Catholic. He used the power of the Ancient Order of Hibernians to great effect. He was a close ally of John Dillon and succeeded him as Irish party chairman when Dillon lost his seat in Dec. 1918, O'Day, xviii.

<sup>1160</sup> *L.L.*, 12 Nov. 1904.

<sup>1161</sup> Ibid., 19 Nov. 1904.

<sup>1162</sup> Ibid., 3 Dec. 1904.

the sufferers'.<sup>1163</sup> He also informed the meeting that the bonus paid to the landlords was a concern for everyone because it would have to be paid out of the 'general taxation of the country'. However there were two saving features in the Wyndham Act, namely, the restoration of the evicted tenants and the purchase of 'grazing ranches' for distribution amongst the occupiers of uneconomic holdings' P. A. Meehan in his address advised that the tenants should remember that once the British Treasury took the place of the landlords of Ireland, there would be little hope of the yearly instalments being reduced and if exorbitant prices were paid, 'it would be certain that many a house would be laid desolate in the future'. They also had to bear in mind that they would be 'tied to their bargains' for a further sixty-nine years.<sup>1164</sup>

### 5.5 SALE OF LANSDOWNE LUGGACURREN ESTATE 1904-6

During 1904 Lord Dunraven had been working towards the idea of devolved government in Ireland and had made great progress with the Lord Lieutenant and the Under-Secretary for Ireland, Sir Anthony MacDonnell.<sup>1165</sup> On 25 August 1904 the idea was given expression in the formation of the Irish Reform Association. The plan for devolution was published on 31 August 1904 but MacDonnell never checked on whether he had the support of Wyndham, the chief secretary:

The initiative however, was abruptly terminated when in a letter to the *The Times* on 27 September Wyndham declared without reserve or qualification that the Unionist government is opposed to the multiplication of legislative bodies within the United Kingdom.<sup>1166</sup>

On 6 March 1905, Wyndham bowed to the 'scorn within his own party' and resigned as chief secretary. Walter Long<sup>1167</sup> was appointed his successor on 12 March 1904.<sup>1168</sup> According to O'Day, Long's brief period as chief secretary was marked by his anxiety to re-establish conservative policies, thus restoring Unionist confidence and was convinced that what the country wanted was 'rest and peace, steady quiet but firm administration, wholesome food and drink' because 'she had too much quack medicine

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<sup>1163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1165</sup> O'Day, p. 198.

<sup>1166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1167</sup> Walter Long (1854-1924) was a Conservative with close ties with southern Irish landowners. Long was Chief secretary for Ireland from Mar. to Dec. 1905, Chairman of the Irish Unionist Party, 1906-10, and its Vice-Chairman from then until May 1921. He chaired the committee in 1919 charged with drawing up a plan for Irish self-government. In May 1921 he was created Viscount Long of Wraxall, O'Day, xxv.

<sup>1168</sup> O'Day, p. 199.

lately!<sup>1169</sup> Coinciding with the date of Wyndham's resignation, Edward Delany MP for Queen's County asked a question in the House of Commons about an unsuccessful application for reinstatement by M. Moore, an evicted tenant on the Lansdowne Luggacurren estate.<sup>1170</sup> John Atkinson, answering for the chief secretary, stated that Moore's application was received on January 1905, but because he was evicted 'from a house with a rood of ground at a rent of £1 a year', his holding was not an agricultural holding and therefore he was not eligible under the act of 1903 to be reinstated.<sup>1171</sup> During the debate on the Civil Services Estimates 1904-5, KilBride criticised the lack of progress reported by the Estates Commissioners in the restoration of the evicted tenants of Ireland.<sup>1172</sup> The restoration by the Estates Commissioners of 'forty-six' evicted tenants and 'ninety' by the landlords was not in his estimation, 'a very great result to show for a year and a half's working of the Land Purchase Act of 1903'. This was despite the fact that 'the enormous bulk' of 4,550 applications were genuine, 'some from America, some from Australia and other countries' and out of £250,000 at the disposal of the Estate Commissioners for the reinstatement of evicted tenants, about £3,500 was spent 'which came to about £72 each tenant'.<sup>1173</sup> KilBride stated that he was 'the first tenant' evicted under the plan of campaign but had no regrets. He had taken the 'rough and the smooth side of Irish political life' and although 'every trick and device of the law to put him into jail and keep him there' was used by the government of the day, yet when he arrived in the House of Commons he didn't 'attack or complain'.<sup>1174</sup> KilBride reminded Atkinson that he had on 'several' occasions asked whether the Estates Commissioners had authority 'to approach a grabber' by offering 'monetary compensation or a similar farm elsewhere' for the reinstatement of an evicted tenant but he never obtained a satisfactory answer.<sup>1175</sup> If nobody had a 'power of initiative' he claimed, there couldn't be a settlement where evicted tenant's holdings had been possessed by grabbers who:

were rather the camp followers and jackals, who came in after the battle was over to rifle the wounded and the dead. In nine cases out of ten they were not and never had been practical farmers.<sup>1176</sup>

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<sup>1169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1170</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxlii, 415-6, 6 Mar. 1905.

<sup>1171</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxlii, 416, 6 Mar. 1905.

<sup>1172</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxlii, 996-1000, 9 Mar. 1905.

<sup>1173</sup> Ibid

<sup>1174</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxlii, 997, 9 Mar. 1905.

<sup>1175</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxlii, 998, 9 Mar. 1905.

<sup>1176</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxlii, 999, 9 Mar. 1905.

An amendment to the 1903 Land Act in the name of Peter Ffrench representing south Wexford proposed that because the act had ‘utterly failed’ to solve congestion by providing economic holdings, the Estate Commissioners and the Congested Districts Board should be given ‘compulsory powers’ to purchase congested estates and ‘untenanted lands necessary for the relief of congestion’.<sup>1177</sup> Ffrench pointed out that although 4,550 applications were made on behalf of evicted tenants, only 137 had been restored to their homes.<sup>1178</sup> He argued that land was not being sold, the evicted tenants were not being restored, ‘except at a snail’s pace’ and the Land Commissioners he felt ‘were opposed to sales; they had fat salaries and they did not want to lose them, consequently they sold as little as they could’.<sup>1179</sup> KilBride in seconding Ffrench’s motion alluded to the inflation in land prices largely due to ‘the system of zones set up by the act’, the swindling of the tenant farmers out of reductions in the annuity charge from ‘four per cent to three and a quarter per cent’, that they also received little or no advantage compared to the £12,000,000 bonuses paid to the landlords and a whole host of other factors including the depressed real value of agricultural land.<sup>1180</sup> The only inducement for tenants entering into ‘fraudulent’ agreements he argued, was the ‘cheapness of the money’ and the inducement for the landlords was the twelve per cent bonus on sales.<sup>1181</sup> As regards the ‘immorality’ of the United Irish League, KilBride stated that he was ‘proud’ to be a member of the league, which was ‘the descendant of the old Land League’ which first made the landlords ‘sit up’ and ‘compelled’ the government to pass the land acts and the United Irish League would finally settle the land question in Ireland.<sup>1182</sup> Another one of the arguments KilBride and several of his colleagues used from time to time was the ‘£3,000,000 used to repatriate the Boers and this was done for men who had been up in arms against England’.<sup>1183</sup> The new chief secretary, Walter Long in a lengthy reply, argued that previous to the Land Act of 1903, the landlords who could afford it ‘accepted the prices of the tenants’ but ‘had other reserves’ besides and therefore only the ‘very fringe’ of the Irish land question had been touched.<sup>1184</sup> To make it possible for the smaller landlords to voluntarily sell their estates

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<sup>1177</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxliii, 763, 21 Mar. 1905.

<sup>1178</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxliii, 750, 21 Mar. 1905.

<sup>1179</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxliii, 752, 21 Mar. 1905.

<sup>1180</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxliii, 753-8, 21 Mar. 1905.

<sup>1181</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxliii, 762, 21 Mar. 1905.

<sup>1182</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxliii, 758, 21 Mar. 1905.

<sup>1183</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxliii, 760, 21 Mar. 1905.

<sup>1184</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxliii, 764-6, 21 Mar. 1905.

he argued, the British taxpayer found £100,000,000 and a further £12,000,000 was necessary 'by way of bonus'.<sup>1185</sup>

This act offers these facilities to the owners of that particular class [smaller landlords without reserves] and how in the name of justice can you describe it as a failure when it has been in operation for less than two years?<sup>1186</sup>

Long admitted that the 'paramount difficulty' in the slow progress of land sales under the 1903 act was the 'financial difficulty' which he could 'possibly' improve on in the future.<sup>1187</sup> Under the act the average purchase price was 'twenty-two and nine-tenths years purchase' which in his view was a fair price and in any voluntary purchase scheme, it was 'the commonest experience' to have variations but with compulsory powers it would be a much more expensive system. Asked by Edward Mitchell (north Fermanagh) what he proposed doing about the landlords who refused to sell at any price, he simply answered that it was 'obvious that you cannot get their land'.<sup>1188</sup>

On Friday, 10 November 1905 the Land Commission Court considered the Lansdowne Luggacurren estate under the Irish Land Act of 1903.<sup>1189</sup> The reference from the Estates Commissioners as an important milestone in the history of the Luggacurren estate is perhaps worthy of full inclusion:

On 27 June 1905, the Estates Commissioners agreed, pursuant to the provision of section six of the Irish Land Act, 1903, to purchase this estate, which consists partly of tenanted and partly of untenanted land. The advances have not yet been made. Denis Moore a person who within twenty-five years of the passing of the act was the tenant of a holding to which the land law acts apply, and who was not at the date of the purchase the tenant or proprietor of that holding, has undertaken to purchase a 'parcel' of the estate containing 33a 0r and 30p and an undivided ninth part of the 242 acres, by means of an advance of £1,076 from the Land Commission and the Estates Commissioners have sanctioned an advance of that amount. The said Denis Moore has applied for assistance in restocking the lands and the commissioners, when allotting the said 'parcel' to the said Denis Moore and sanctioning the said advance considered that it would be necessary to assist him by means of a grant out of the reserve fund and decided to make him a free grant of £130 to be expended as follows: £80 on farm buildings and £50 for purchase of stock and implements. The commissioners are of opinion that the making of such grant is necessary to enable the said Denis Moore to use and enjoy the said 'parcel' of land and is expedient for the benefit of the estate and for the purposes of the act. The Estate Commissioners refer to

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<sup>1185</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxliii, 765, 21 Mar. 1905.

<sup>1186</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1187</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1188</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxliii, 770, 21 Mar. 1905.

<sup>1189</sup> *L.L.*, 11 Nov. 1905.

the Judicial Commissioners for decision the question: whether the said proposed grant of £50 for the purchase of stock and implements can be made out of the reserve fund.<sup>1190</sup>

The Solicitor General, James Campbell,<sup>1191</sup> stated that the question involved in this case had far reaching importance and ‘merited the gravest consideration’.<sup>1192</sup> One issue that would have ‘startling results’ was that public money was to given ‘not lent’ and without security for the purchase of stock or implements. This free grant could be used for multifarious purposes other than what was intended, such as for instance to ‘pay a shop account’ or in betting on a racecourse. Prior to the Act of 1903, he (Solicitor General) knew of no provision for free grants for the improvement of an estate and more importantly there was no appeal allowed to the Court of Appeal. After some legal argument from Myles Kehoe K.C. (instructed by Valentine KilBride) who appeared for a number of tenants on the Lansdowne estate and Hubert Wilson K.C. for Lansdowne, Justice Meredith decided to retain the case for decision ‘before himself’ and announced that the case would come up for judgement at a future date.<sup>1193</sup> Less than a month later Meredith decided that the Estate Commissioners had power to make grants from the reserve fund, ‘for the purchase of stock and implements by evicted tenants’.<sup>1194</sup> He argued that as the ‘legislature had enabled the commissioners to place evicted tenants on untenanted portions of estate’, it must have contemplated that many of these tenants would be ‘resourceless’ and consequently grants were justified to enable them to cultivate and stock their newly assigned holdings. As to the reinstated tenants disposing of these grants, other than what was intended, he thought it need not be ‘very seriously discussed’.<sup>1195</sup>

On 4 December 1905, the Prime Minister Balfour resigned and the following day Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman<sup>1196</sup> was appointed Liberal Prime Minister.<sup>1197</sup> James

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<sup>1190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1191</sup> James Henry Mussen Campbell, First Baron Glenavy (1851-1931) was a lawyer, born in Dublin and educated at TCD. He was called to the bar 1878, became a leading junior and QC in 1892. He was Unionist MP for St. Stephens’ Green 1898-1900 and University of Dublin 1903-16. Campbell was Solicitor-General for Ireland 1901-5, Attorney-General 1905 and 1916; member of provisional government formed by Carson during home rule agitation; Lord Chief Justice of Ireland 1916-8, baronet 1917, baron 1921. He was chairman of the first Free State Senate 1922-8 and described by W. B. Yeats as ‘handsome, watchful, vigorous, dominating’, Boylan, p. 56.

<sup>1192</sup> *L.L.*, 11 Nov. 1905.

<sup>1193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1194</sup> Ibid., 2 Dec. 1905.

<sup>1195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1196</sup> Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman (1836-1908) was returned to the House of Commons in 1868, sitting until his death. Campbell-Bannerman was Chief secretary of the Irish Office (without a seat in the Cab-

Bryce<sup>1198</sup> replaced Walter Long as chief secretary on 14 December 1905.<sup>1199</sup> Campbell-Bannerman remained Prime Minister after the general election which took place from 13 to 27 January 1906.<sup>1200</sup> KilBride was elected unopposed for the constituency of south Kildare. After the general election of 1906, the Liberals had a record total of 399 seats, Conservatives and Liberal Unionist 156, Labour twenty-nine, Irish Parliamentary Party eighty-three and 'others' had three seats. With the 'independent majority' gained by the Liberals, Home Rule was 'shelved' until the two general elections of 1910.<sup>1201</sup>

According to KilBride, Lansdowne kept the land from which John William Dunne of Raheenahown was evicted (Appendix 14). After the Wyndham Land Act of 1903 became law, he sold all the land to the Irish Land Commission and he (KilBride) got seventy-two acres two perches, in lieu of what he had lost 'one seventh or eight of former holding'.<sup>1202</sup> The records of the Irish Land Commission show that KilBride was one of the beneficiaries of the Irish Land Act of 1903, as on 15 February 1906 he agreed a deed of covenant with the Irish Land Commission 'under sections twelve and forty three'.<sup>1203</sup> On 6 November 1907, £300 was advanced to him for the purchase of a holding of 115 acres eleven perches at Luggacurren, 'situated in the barony of Stradbally and in Queen's County. KilBride purchased a further ten acres thirteen perches, his title being registered with the Irish Land Commission on 5 February 1909'.<sup>1204</sup> KilBride's new holding was situated adjacent to his former holding and it was ironic that the house he was given and later accepted was Lansdowne Lodge, the rent office of former times. KilBride changed the name to Luggacurren House. The *Freeman's Journal* commented as follows:

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inet) from Oct. 1884 to June 1885. He became leader of the Liberal party in 1899 and Prime Minister in Dec. 1905, an office he surrendered only a few days before dying. Campbell-Bannerman was committed to Home Rule and enjoyed good relations with senior figures in the Irish party, particularly with T. P. O'Connor, O'Day, xv.

<sup>1197</sup> O'Day, xlviii.

<sup>1198</sup> James Killen Bryce (1841-1923) was a noted intellectual who was a liberal MP between 1906 and 1918. An Ulster Presbyterian, Bryce served as Chief secretary for Ireland from Dec. 1905 to Feb. 1907, O'Day, xiv.

<sup>1199</sup> O'Day, xlviii.

<sup>1200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1201</sup> Ibid., p. 207.

<sup>1202</sup> MS 1.

<sup>1203</sup> Deed of covenant, KilBride to Irish Land Commission 1906, EC 836, hereafter cited as Deed of covenant.

<sup>1204</sup> Deed of covenant.



Lansdowne, vindictive to the very end, refused to allow KilBride to return to the old family seat. The house where successive generations of his family have been born remained in the hands of the stranger.<sup>1205</sup>

Coinciding with KilBride's reinstatement in Luggacurren in 1906, John Redmond asked the chief secretary (Bryce) if under the Land Act of 1903 the Estate Commissioners could negotiate with 'new tenants', otherwise known as 'planters', on evicted holdings, providing them instead with compensation or holdings elsewhere. Bryce answered that they had no such power and when KilBride further asked whether they were prohibited from doing so, Bryce didn't think so.<sup>1206</sup> In connection with the reinstatement of the evicted tenants in Luggacurren, Patrick A. Meehan (Queen's County) asked the chief secretary about the decision of the Estates Commissioners in appointing a civil engineer, Mr Bates from County Down, to superintend the 'completion of seven cottages for evicted tenants' at Luggacurren which should have been completed in December 1905, although there were two engineers in the union of Carlow and Athy who were resident in the immediate vicinity which would have saved a lot of needless expense. The Estates Commissioners informed Bryce that the houses were superintended by their 'permanent officials', Mr Bates being one of their surveyors, who was 'a non-pensionable officer at a salary of £120 rising to £180 with an allowance of ten shillings a day when absent from home on duty'.<sup>1207</sup>

## 5.6 LEGISLATION FOR EVICTED TENANTS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS 1903-8

KilBride argued on many occasions in the House of Commons that land being purchased under the Land Act of 1903 was sold at inflated prices and suggested that the old system of inspectors surveying lands to ascertain whether 'security for the advance' existed was a better and fairer system and it also took into consideration the 'interest of the landlord and of the tenant'. On 10 April 1906, Bryce in answer to one such question by KilBride, pointed out that the inspectors were dispensed with in 1901 and that the Estate Commissioners had informed him that 'considerable time' would be needed along with the withdrawal of clerks 'at present fully occupied' in analysing all the applications and in Bryce's opinion would 'delay the progress of their very important

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<sup>1205</sup> *F.J.*, 27 Oct. 1924.

<sup>1206</sup> *Hansard* 4, cliv, 1549, 29 Mar. 1906.

<sup>1207</sup> *Hansard* 4, clv, 1183-4, 10 Apr. 1906.

work'.<sup>1208</sup> On 29 January 1907, Augustine Birrell was appointed to succeed James Bryce as chief secretary.<sup>1209</sup> In answer to a question by W. Lunden about Irish land being sold at 'sixty-eight per cent in advance' of the average prices under former land acts, the new chief secretary replied that there was 'no doubt' that during the period of the 1903 Act, higher prices had been paid which had come about 'through the willingness of the tenant purchasers to pay the higher prices'.<sup>1210</sup> During the debate on the Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Bill of 1907, the Attorney-General James Campbell, gave his views in connection with John Redmond's amendment proposing that the Estate Commissioners could 'apply compulsion' in relocating 'new tenants' (otherwise known as planters) to equivalent holdings where evicted tenants were concerned.<sup>1211</sup> He was not in favour of the amendment, not only because of legal issues but more importantly because of 'the difficulties of honour and solemn undertakings and pledges given as deliberate expressions of the intentions of the government' in the House of Commons and elsewhere.<sup>1212</sup> Charles Craig called the amendment 'a monstrous proposal' and the evicted tenants seeking the amendment he stated, had 'lost all connection with the districts in which they one lived' and most likely didn't care whether they were reinstated in their former holdings or somewhere else.<sup>1213</sup> KilBride who next entered the debate said he understood from the Attorney-General that if the amendment was accepted, the government would have to 'deal with the cases of planters' who had purchased under any of the Land Purchase Acts and as this would involve 'a large financial transaction' the Treasury wouldn't accept it.<sup>1214</sup>

He knew of cases himself where tenants had got back into farms from which they were evicted and where a difficulty existed in making them tenant purchasers, because the person who purchases previously had not repaid the full purchase money to the Treasury.<sup>1215</sup>

In reply to Charles Craig and the Unionist members, KilBride argued that the planters supposed by them to be *bona fide* farmers, were anything but and some of them who purchased during the period of the plan of campaign were 'shoemakers'.<sup>1216</sup> Most of the 'planters' he said were 'advertised for' coming from 'the slums of the Ulster

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<sup>1208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1209</sup> O'Day, xlix.

<sup>1210</sup> *Hansard* 4, clxx, 996, 7 Mar. 1907.

<sup>1211</sup> *Hansard* 4, clxxviii, 1438-41, 23 July 1907.

<sup>1212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1213</sup> *Hansard* 4, clxxviii, 1442-3, 23 July 1907.

<sup>1214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1216</sup> *Hansard* 4, clxxviii, 1443, 23 July 1907.

towns'.<sup>1217</sup> The chief secretary (Birrell) had one glimmer of hope for nationalists when he indicated 'a willingness to consider the cases of the planters who had only signed agreements and had not obtained their vesting orders'.<sup>1218</sup> Walter Long (former chief secretary) pointed out that there was no difference between the *bona fide* desire of the person with vesting orders and those whose vesting orders had not been issued as 'the latter was not a bit less willing', nor had they shown any less desire than the former and the government were therefore 'bringing in train the gravest difficulties to the people of Ireland interested in the settlement of the land question'.<sup>1219</sup> A week later the Attorney-General for Ireland, (R. Cherry) said there was 'a great deal to be said in favour of voluntary purchase' and he hoped the nationalist members therefore would not press the compulsory amendment further. KilBride however argued that the British taxpayers would never have pledged £100,000,000 unless they 'firmly believed' that it would 'get rid once and for all the Irish land trouble and the evicted tenants question'.<sup>1220</sup>

KilBride made an impassioned speech about the reinstatement of evicted tenants during the supply debate on 21 May 1908. The main object of the Land Act of 1903 he stated, had not been attained and he refuted a statement made 'last year' by the chief secretary that the evicted tenants on the Lansdowne estate had been restored, because there were still 'fifteen or twenty evicted tenants or direct representatives of evicted tenants' on the estate that were not reinstated.<sup>1221</sup> Wyndham's policy, he reminded the house, that where untenanted land came into the possession of the Estate Commissioners, the evicted tenants or their direct representatives should have 'first claim' on the land before the uneconomic holdings were enlarged or before the sons of farmers were provided with new holdings.<sup>1222</sup> There wasn't much point either in restoring evicted tenants without giving them the free grants to get 'a start in life' and there were two or three cases on the Lansdowne estate which he was 'personally acquainted with' where the Commissioners had 'absolutely refused' to make free grants.<sup>1223</sup>

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<sup>1217</sup> *Hansard 4*, clxxviii, 1444, 23 July 1907.

<sup>1218</sup> *Hansard 4*, clxxviii, 1445, 23 July 1907.

<sup>1219</sup> *Hansard 4*, clxxviii, 1446-7, 23 July 1907.

<sup>1220</sup> *Hansard 4*, clxxix, 519-22, 29 July 1907.

<sup>1221</sup> *Hansard 4*, clxxxix, 573-7, 21 May 1908.

<sup>1222</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1223</sup> *Hansard 4*, clxxxix, 576, 21 May 1908.

If the tenants in the plan of campaign who were evicted in 1887-8 and had been on the roadside ever since were to be restored under a general act of appeasement, he [KilBride] could not understand why some were to have free grants and others not, or why some should have £300 for the building of houses and others only £100, the same amount of money being expended on building the houses.<sup>1224</sup>

KilBride asked the chief secretary about an 'extraordinary letter from the Estates Commissioners to a board of guardians or district council', which stated that when untenanted land became available for redistribution, 'no man who had taken part in, given support to, or practiced cattle-driving' would receive any grant. KilBride asked if the Estates Commissioners had constituted themselves a 'star chamber' and if so how were they to know who took part or maintained cattle-driving, because when such accusations were made, the accused parties were not given the opportunity of denying the charges made against them 'by policemen or interested parties looking for the land perhaps themselves'.<sup>1225</sup> Finally KilBride alluded to the case of William Dorley who received a 'stocking' grant of £200 and a house, while he 'could be seen every day in the week walking between Trinity College and St Stephens's Green in the uniform of the Dublin Metropolitan Police'.<sup>1226</sup> Dorley was 'undoubtedly a representative of one of the evicted tenants', but while he received generous assistance, 'they left others who had no means of livelihood on the road'.<sup>1227</sup> Proceedings in the House of Commons were postponed at this stage and no answer was immediately forthcoming.

### 5.7 O'BEIRNE, EVICTED TENANT OF NURNEY 1908

On 19 October 1908, KilBride asked the chief secretary about the occupier of Gurteen Farm, Nurney, County Kildare on the Drogheda estate, who had advertised the interest in his farm and whether the Estates Commissioners would purchase it and reinstate the 'former tenant' and also enlarge the uneconomic holdings in the district.<sup>1228</sup> He further asked about thirty-three small holdings in the townland of Oghill, Monasterevan and the sale of the 'late Mr Conlon's farm of 300 acres' on the same estate with a view to having the lands divided among the uneconomic holders.<sup>1229</sup> Birrell answered that purchase agreements were already lodged for the twenty-three holdings in question including an agreement signed by Peter Conlan for the purchase of his 296 acres, but

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<sup>1224</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1225</sup> *Hansard 4*, clxxxix, 577, 21 May 1908.

<sup>1226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1227</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1228</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxciv, cols. 718-9, 19 Oct. 1908.

<sup>1229</sup> Ibid.

the Commissioners had no power 'to attend and bid at sales by auction' or to purchase a tenant's interest.<sup>1230</sup>

On 4 May 1909 KilBride asked the chief secretary about an application for reinstatement on his former holding by Patrick O'Beirne of Walterstown, Kildare. His former farm of Gurteen was then taken by the 'grabber' Williams and KilBride pointed out that the lands at Ballyshannon were composed mostly of 'swampy bog out of which it would be impossible to make a living'. Birrell replied that O'Beirne was offered a farm of fifty-three acres and with a free grant of £100 at Ballyshannon in March 1909, subject to an annuity of £24 17s 6d, which he refused. The Estates Commissioners he reported had already provided his brother with a farm.<sup>1231</sup> The editorial of the *Leinster Leader* reported that O'Beirne, the evicted tenant of Nurney, had still not received justice.<sup>1232</sup> The chairman of Kildare County Council, Stephen J. Brown objected to the 'crude administrative work' of the Estate Commissioners who offered O'Beirne a piece of land that was 'unsuitable, unsatisfactory' and 'in point of fact no proper compensation' for his eviction years earlier. When O'Beirne refused to accept he was 'thrown overboard' by the Commissioner who gave him the ultimatum to 'take it or leave it'. This man it argued, was entitled to proper compensation and the Estate Commissioners should 'place it within his grasp'.<sup>1233</sup> In March 1909, O'Beirne was offered part of the Price property at Ballyshannon, containing about fifty-five acres.<sup>1234</sup> The *Leinster Leader* of 4 April 1912 reported that O'Beirne refused to accept the land offered as it was 'nothing but furze and bog' and the police sergeant in charge of Ballyshannon 'never saw a four-footed animal on the land until the year previous' when the military authorities rented it for military horses, but as the horses had to be constantly pulled out of the swamps, 'they very soon gave it up'.<sup>1235</sup>

## 5.8 UNITED IRISH LEAGUE

It was mainly the work of the United Irish League which exercised the minds and energies of nationalist politicians in 1907. Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman was at that stage Liberal Prime Minister with a huge majority in parliament and the chief secretary

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<sup>1230</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxciv, cols. 719, 19 Oct. 1908.

<sup>1231</sup> *Hansard* 5, iv, 899-900, 4 May 1909.

<sup>1232</sup> *L. L.*, 27 Aug. 1910.

<sup>1233</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1234</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 May 1912.

<sup>1235</sup> *Ibid.*

for Ireland was James Bryce.<sup>1236</sup> The thorny issue of Home Rule was conveniently set aside in favour of the so-called 'step by step' approach and the Liberals who didn't totally dismiss Home Rule settled for a form of 'administrative devolution'.<sup>1237</sup> Although the Irish Parliamentary Party had no real leverage with this administration, Dillon outlined to Bryce the nationalist agenda, an agenda which was largely fulfilled in the short-term:

Legislation on the land question, a labourers' housing act, repeal of coercion, improved financing of the development grant, some changes in the personnel of the Land Commission...action to aid the remaining evicted tenants and financial and official encouragement for the teaching of Gaelic in schools.<sup>1238</sup>

Bryce who was appointed Ambassador to the United States was replaced by Birrell on 27 January 1907.<sup>1239</sup> One of the 'step-by-step' approaches emerged from Bryce's and Sir Anthony MacDonnell's (Under Secretary) 'council scheme' which was loosely based on the original proposals of the Earl of Dunraven in 1904. The general idea of the Council Bill if accepted by Redmond and his party, was the creation of an 'elective body to supervise a large portion of, but not all local services in Ireland'.<sup>1240</sup> Following exhaustive consultation with Redmond and Dillon, Bryce introduced an improved bill in the House of Commons on 7 May 1907. Earlier in January, Dillon was of the opinion that the new measure would be 'consistent with a lead up to the larger policy' of complete Home Rule, while in March, Redmond intimated that it would be 'no bar, but a help and further advance to complete Home Rule'.<sup>1241</sup> However it later emerged that Redmond would support the bill only when it had been fully considered at the United Irish League convention on 21 May 1907. T. M. Kettle's attitude that the Council Bill was a 'contemptible and vicious measure' epitomised the convention's eventual rejection of the measure.<sup>1242</sup>

Meanwhile, the issues discussed at United Irish League public meetings were broadly similar and allowing for local variations, they included first and foremost the desire for Home Rule, the distribution of grazing ranches held under the eleven months system, the re-instatement of evicted tenants and labourers, the compulsory sale of

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<sup>1236</sup> O'Day, xlviii.

<sup>1237</sup> Ibid., pp 208-9.

<sup>1238</sup> Ibid., p. 209.

<sup>1239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1240</sup> Ibid., p. 213.

<sup>1241</sup> *F.J.*, 28 Jan. 1907, 17 Mar. 1907.

<sup>1242</sup> *Weekly Freeman's Journal*, 18 May 1907.

estates under the Irish Land Act of 1903 to peasant proprietors at the best terms that could be negotiated and a host of other related issues. One such public meeting was held in Timahoe on 26 May 1907, where both clergy and politicians filled the platforms. The chairman of the meeting, Rev J. Delaney P.P. was quite optimistic about the eventual outcome to be derived from the Land Act of 1903. 'After all the years of agitation', he exclaimed, 'an act had been passed calculated to go a long way in settling the land question in Ireland and very considerable powers had been conferred on the Estates Commissioners enabling them to communicate to the people the benefits intended for them by the British Parliament'.<sup>1243</sup> The local resolution in this case referred to the allocation of land on the Wills Sandford estate of Cullenagh and Garryglass as follows:

That we request the Estates Commissioners to refuse to sanction the sale of the lands so allocated to Joseph Dobbs, R.O. Seale and the representatives of J. R. Tarleton; and that unless those lands together with the holding of 135 acres formerly held by John Duane and out of which he was rack-rented and now occupied by Richard Seale, is acquired by the Commissioners for allotment to provide economic holdings, no satisfactory settlement of this estate is possible; and we request those gentlemen in the name and the interests of the country and in their own interests, to treat with the Estates Commissioners for the surrender of those lands.<sup>1244</sup>

However in this case the above named Dobbs and Thomas Moyles (of Abbeyleix) had already 'surrendered' their portions to the 'authority of the League', which met with general acclamation by all present. P. A. Meehan M.P. had written extensively on 'the story of Cullenagh and Garryglass' and explained that on the Wills Sandford estate of about 1,300 acres, '600 acres of the best land' had been distributed to four individuals, while twenty-four tenants 'were tied down' and 'confined on miserable patches that would not grow potatoes for their children or a turnip for a cow'.<sup>1245</sup> Interestingly when examined by the Royal Commission on Congestion in Maryborough that same week, Meehan stated that '300 acres of untenanted land' had been sold to four people, 'who were already in possession of land in another portion of the estate of 600 acres'.<sup>1246</sup> Meehan praised the local efforts of clergy and the United Irish League in bringing about a satisfactory settlement in Garryglass, where 'by well-sustained and active organisation', they would also have settlements on the Cosby and other estates 'and

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<sup>1243</sup> *L.L.*, 1 June 1907.

<sup>1244</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1245</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1246</sup> *Ibid.*, 8 June 1907.

secure for the people a foothold in their native land'.<sup>1247</sup> An inspector from the Estates Commissioners had already inquired into the lands in question, but he was reminded at the time that there were still evicted tenants on the Luggacurren estate who were still without holdings. The chairman reported that one of the applicants was from America. The man in question had left the district when there was no prospect of getting land, but on hearing that conditions had changed in favour of re-instatement of evicted tenants, he had applied stating that 'he would return and live and die in his native land'. Thomas Breen, a County Councillor of Wolfhill reported that since the time of the inspection, he was very glad to see the 'nice houses that had been built at Guileen' on the Luggacurren estate, but he was not happy with the conditions under which these evicted tenants had been re-instated, as 'they would not be able to hold on'.<sup>1248</sup>

He did not blame the Estates Commissioners. They had to deal with Lord Lansdowne and he left them tied hand and foot....If land purchase did not succeed it would be very hard to stop the tide of emigration.<sup>1249</sup>

KilBride praised the efforts and achievements of the Estates Commissioners. For the first time in the history of the country he stated, 'they had men engaged in administrative work who were in unison with the people and 'desired to undo the unholy work of past ages'. However, he felt that the Commissioners were seriously hampered by regulations introduced by George Wyndham, such as the impossibility of dealing with cases of evicted tenants, unless the landlord 'was willing to sell his property'.<sup>1250</sup> 'He was sorry to say' that he strongly disassociated himself from the vast majority of Catholics who put their trust in men they 'thought ten times better than themselves'. He (KilBride) had come to the conclusion 'forced upon him much against his will', that the majority of his fellow Catholics thought better of those who were descended 'from the spawn of a Cromwellian and who followed Henry VIII and Elizabeth in religion', in particular Coote of Ballyfin and Poe of Ballinakill<sup>1251</sup> who were engaged 'to manage the affairs of the county'.<sup>1252</sup>

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<sup>1247</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1248</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1249</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1250</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1251</sup> The probable reason for this outburst is that KilBride looked upon Sir Algernon Coote and Sir Hutchinson Poe as the descendants of Cromwellian settlers, who were Anglican in religion, who prospered as the gentry of Ireland in later generations, were magistrates and office holders in Queen's County, but in KilBride's view were not to be trusted by Irish nationalists, even though at this stage Coote was making tentative steps to sell his estate at Ballyfin to the local tenantry and was becoming pro-nationalist in his political beliefs.

<sup>1252</sup> *L.L.*, 1 June 1907.



He had no faith in any man of that blood or that kind in the fight for Irish freedom.<sup>1253</sup>

KilBride believed the Council Bill was an insult to Ireland. He didn't blame Campbell-Bannerman or Birrell but 'the Cootes, Hutcheson Poes, Dunravens, Everards and O'Reilly of Louth and the whole devolution crowd'.<sup>1254</sup> During the second week of June 1907, the scene of activity was the village of Nurney, County Kildare. Nineteen years previously KilBride had been imprisoned for three months in Kilkenny jail for making incriminating speeches in Nurney at the eviction of Thomas O'Beirne. However on this occasion, his colleague Mr Reddy M.P., announced that KilBride was unable to be present as he was engaged in the 'storm centre of the west'.<sup>1255</sup> O'Beirne and his family were still living in a 'hut' and it was in a field adjacent to this hut that the meeting was held. A temporary branch of the United Irish League was formed at the meeting, which protested against the holding of O'Beirne's evicted farm by a tenant from the area. Denis Johnson, U.I.L. organiser first sympathised with John Dillon M.P. on the death of his 'patriotic and loving wife'. He then spelled out to those present the true meaning of the term 'grabber'. A grabber he stated, was a man who took possession of a farm 'without paying compensation to the [evicted] tenant', who in turn had not received compensation from the landlord 'for their years of toil and improvement of the farms and hardship'. However, he also pointed out that the Land Act of 1903 gave the right to the evicted tenant to be reinstated in his former holding, 'and it was not to be tolerated that any man should step in between the tenant and his lawful farm'.<sup>1256</sup> His advice to them was they should 'not go near those that had taken evicted farms at marriage or christening' occasions. Mr Reddy M.P. in the same vein, referred to the 'grabber' of O'Beirne's farm being present at a Gaelic concert in Nurney the previous week and although 'challenged' to leave, he refused to do so. 'It might be legal' he continued, to take an evicted farm, 'but was not moral or just'.<sup>1257</sup> O'Beirne was duly elected temporary secretary of the local branch of the United Irish League. On 30 June 1907 KilBride was present at another large public meeting in Nurney and gave 'a stirring address' at the inauguration of the local branch of U.I.L. He reminded his audience that they did not meet for 'talk or resolutions', but instead encouraged them to

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<sup>1253</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1254</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1255</sup> Ibid. 8 June 1907.

<sup>1256</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1257</sup> Ibid.

fill up 100 cards of membership of the U.I.L. sent to their secretary by 'his friend and colleague' Joseph Devlin.<sup>1258</sup>

Speeches were made by MPs Meehan, Delaney and KilBride at a meeting to re-organise the U.I.L. in Ballickmoyler on 22 September 1907, but because of 'some local friction' the meeting wasn't large and it was reported that there was 'an entire absence of enthusiasm'.<sup>1259</sup> KilBride attended another U.I.L. meeting in Clonaslee on 22 November 1907 at which the usual set of resolutions were passed.<sup>1260</sup> The last public meeting of the year on 22 December was held at Abbeyleix and demanded that the evicted tenants on the De Vesci estate be reinstated. The MPs present included KilBride, P. A. Meehan, William Delany, Stephen Gwynn, T. M. Kettle and Thomas Lowry. T. M. Kettle in his address assured his audience that the nationalist movement was not a 'dying movement' and meetings such as the one he was now attending, were the answers to 'the cowards and compromisers' who put their trust in the 'pirate motley of Lord Dunraven, Lord de Vesci and Lord-knows-who'.<sup>1261</sup> However he insisted that untenanted ranches were on their 'death-beds' and this was 'thanks to the cattle-driving movement'.<sup>1262</sup>

The landlords they were told, wanted conciliation; they wanted a union of all creeds and classes, and Lord de Vesci's answer, when he was asked to sell his interest in his untenanted lands in this neighbourhood at forty per cent above the market price, to carry out the policy of the Evicted Tenants' Act, passed by his own House of Lords, was to create, or attempt to create, sham tenancies and interpose another barrier between the evicted tenants and the lands from which their fathers were driven.<sup>1263</sup>

He (Kettle) therefore called on the Estates Commissioners to compulsorily take the '400 acres on the de Vesci estate' for the settlement and reinstatement of the evicted tenants. Referring to the Council Bill, he reiterated John Redmond's attitude that 'when they said Home Rule, they meant Home Rule', not devolution, 'which bore about the same relation to that as a ghost did to reality'.<sup>1264</sup> Finally he stated that if Birrell<sup>1265</sup> gave

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<sup>1258</sup> Ibid., 6 July 1907.

<sup>1259</sup> Ibid., 28 Sept. 1907.

<sup>1260</sup> Ibid., 30 Nov. 1907.

<sup>1261</sup> Ibid., 28 Dec. 1907.

<sup>1262</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1264</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1265</sup> Augustus Birrell succeeded James Bryce as chief secretary on 29 Jan. 1907.

them a definite guarantee to introduce a compulsory land bill, 'then cattle driving would be stopped'.<sup>1266</sup>

As land purchase accelerated, so too did land agitation diminish, but not totally. Early in 1908 another great demonstration took place at Cullenagh, Queen's County, which was attended by the MPs, KilBride, Meehan and Delany. The estate under scrutiny was the Toler estate, where the evicted tenants were campaigning for reinstatement. The meeting was an impressive one as 'two hundred horsemen rode in the procession to the meeting place at Kearne's Cross, accompanied by bands from the surrounding parishes.'<sup>1267</sup> Unusually no priest appeared on the platform, their places being taken by the members of County Councils and Rural District Councils and according to the *Leinster Leader* of 25 January 1908, it was the first time women appeared on a public platform locally, their names being 'Mrs Kelly [evicted tenant] Abbeyleix, Mrs McCormack, Miss McWey, Miss Kelly, Mrs Higgins and Mrs McCarthy'.<sup>1268</sup> The total area of the Toler estate according to P.A. Meehan M.P. was 1,800 acres with a population of 146 in Cullenagh. 1,500 acres of the estate were held by twelve men, 'six of whom were non-resident and the extent of the labour employed on those 699 acres of the lands of Cullenagh is five herds'. Meehan therefore demanded, as he had done at many similar U.I.L. meetings before, that 'the grabbers and the eleven month system must go'. Finally he advised that the people of Cullenagh should accept no compromise as to the reinstatement of evicted tenants but warned that progress under the Land Act of 1903 was very slow and tedious and therefore they had to be 'patient in the matter'. William Delany M.P. reminded those present that as a result of the great meeting in Knockaroo in 1904, the family of Malachi Kelly had been reinstated. He announced that Birrell, the chief secretary had pledged his position on the question of university education for Catholics and the government had also promised a measure of land reform to amend the various land acts, in particular the abolition of 'the zones', the reduction of the judicial term from fifteen to ten years and the alteration of the bonus paid to landlords, so that it should be 'the higher the price the lower the bonus' and visa versa. KilBride advised those 'in treaty with the landlords' for the purchase of their holdings, to wait until the end of the coming session as the bonus of twelve per cent on the gross sum for which a landlord sold his estate 'was a premium on high prices' and

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<sup>1266</sup> *L.L.*, 28 Dec. 1907.

<sup>1267</sup> *Ibid.*, 25 Jan. 1908.

<sup>1268</sup> *Ibid.*

John Dillon's proposition that the bonus 'should be in inverse proportion to the price of the purchase would be carried'. On 11 March Captain Craig asked the chief secretary in the House of Commons about a cattle drive which took place on 3 March on 'three farms at Cullenagh', if he could name the owners of the farms in question and had the police assigned any reason for the outrage or charged anyone in connection with it. Birrell answered that the farms belonged to Mr Toler of Birr, that the farms were occupied by 'Messrs Hodgins, Wynne and Waters' but the police couldn't state the reason for the offence and no offenders had been brought to justice in the matter.<sup>1269</sup> When asked by KilBride whether the property had been sold to the Estates Commissioners for redistribution, Birrell didn't know.<sup>1270</sup>

One of the burning issues still on the agenda for nationalist in 1908 was the restoration of the evicted tenants and the furtherance of the aims and objectives of the United Irish League. At a meeting of Athy Union in late December 1908, the case of Mr Kelly, Tankerstown was discussed. Kelly was endeavouring to be restored to the holding on the Lansdowne Barrowhouse estate from which his grandfather Daniel Whelan had been evicted, but was now in the possession of Henry Hosie D.C.<sup>1271</sup> Thomas Orford, County Councillor, stated that he had known the late Daniel Whelan well and was sorry that he had joined the plan of campaign and 'went out', when most of those evicted at the time 'could live well'.<sup>1272</sup> However, the general feeling of the meeting was that evicted tenants or their immediate descendants should be given precedence in getting economic holdings through the Estates Commissioners.

Although the descendants of Daniel Whelan hadn't been reinstated, quite a lot of progress had been achieved by the rest of the Luggacurren evicted tenants. P. A. Meehan called attention to this issue when addressing Birrell, the chief secretary in the House of Commons in early January 1909. The Land Commissioner informed Birrell that the purchase money for the untenanted land on the Luggacurren estate was paid to Lansdowne on the 15 December 1905; that the evicted tenants had been put into possession on 11 July 1905 and the lands vested in them on the 5 April 1906. The only exception was 'necessarily made' in cases where the commissioner 'sanctioned

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<sup>1269</sup> *Hansard* 4, clxxxv, 1543, 11 Mar. 1908.

<sup>1270</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1271</sup> *L.L.*, 2 Jan. 1909.

<sup>1272</sup> *Ibid.*

advances for improvement repayable as part of the tenants' annuities'.<sup>1273</sup> When asked why twenty-one evicted tenants on the Lansdowne Luggacurren estate were rejected out of a total of seventy-three who applied for reinstatement, Birrell answered that for 'one reason or another' the Estates Commissioners had decided not to take any action in twenty of the applications. Meehan further asked about the case of Mr Byrne who had been evicted from a farm of 230 acres at Tully Castle and had subsequently 'to enter Athy Union hospital', while the farm had been later purchased by the 'planter Tarleton'. Birrell in answer stated that he had no power to interfere in the exercise of discretion vested in the Land Commissioners, who in this case had made an advance of £2,700 for a holding purchased by Tarleton in 1892 and for which Hugh Byrne now made an application for reinstatement and the Land Commissioners could take no action.<sup>1274</sup> On 22 June 1909, Walter M. Kavanagh (Carlow) and KilBride asked Birrell why Gerald Byrne, an evicted tenant from Luggacurren, who had been assigned a holding without buildings at Upton, County Carlow, was refused a free grant for building purposes, when all the other evicted tenants received free grants.<sup>1275</sup> Birrell answered that the Estates Commissioners didn't sanction a free grant in this case as Byrne resided 'with one of his sons on another holding of seventy acres'.<sup>1276</sup>

In June 1910 Knockaroo in Queen's County came back into political focus. Another large public meeting was held here on 19 June, which was attended by three MPs, KilBride, William Delany and P. A. Meehan.<sup>1277</sup> The chairman, Rev J. Dillon, Administrator, Borris-in-Ossory, reminded those present that Meehan had been present thirty years previously when Michael Davitt attended to initiate the fight for the 'Black Farm', which 'terminated in such a glorious victory'.<sup>1278</sup> The purpose of the meeting was to publicise the objective of the local tenants for the abolition of the eleven months system of letting land in the district of Cappagh and the purchase of such lands for those who had been in negotiation with Captain Lyster the landlord. Dillon explained that the local tenants made what he termed a 'generous offer' and very little remained between the two parties to the agreement. Subsequently Captain Lyster applied to the Estate Commissioners, the untenanted lands were duly inspected, an offer was made but was

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<sup>1273</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 Jan. 1909.

<sup>1274</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1275</sup> *Hansard* 5, vi, 1547, 22 June 1909.

<sup>1276</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1277</sup> *L.L.*, 25 June 1910.

<sup>1278</sup> *Ibid.*

rejected by the landlord who looked 'upon it as too small'. The lands were at the time 'grazed' by a man named Bennett, who 'to his credit' according to Father Dillon, gave up the grazing land, as he felt he was an 'obstacle to the sale'. The lands he explained were left upon the landlord's hands for about two years, when they were again leased to a man who 'came on the scene' named Thomas Colclough.<sup>1279</sup> Colclough had since been asked to give up the lands and had written saying that he would be willing to surrender his interest, provided Captain Lyster did not take action against him 'to carry out the terms of the agreement he already holds'. Meehan advised those present not 'to drive the cattle just now' until they ascertained first whether Colclough was genuine or not. Referring to Colclough as a 'Scottish gillie' he commented that 'a few years ago Scotch gillies grabbed the lands of Luggacurren and went away without paying a penny to the landlord'. His advice was that nobody should be afraid to risk a few months in jail to get 'some of his native soil' and the ladies should 'make a resolution not to speak to or marry any land grabber or anybody connected with the administration of bad laws'. KilBride who spoke last, reminded his audience that he had been in Knockaroo three times with Michael Davitt and he wished to proclaim the same message that land grabbers such as Colclough should not be allowed to 'defeat the intentions of a beneficent act of parliament'. It was self-defeating he advised to drive Colclough's cattle as Judge Fitzgerald would give him £2 a head, which would in turn be levied off their district. However he warned:

The Government in Dublin Castle don't believe you are in earnest. Colclough does not believe you are in earnest. It depends upon yourselves whether Colclough believes you are in earnest or not....Was it not time after thirty years that every man in the country, gentleman and simple, poor and rich, without insult to anybody would have the courage of his convictions and make it plain to Colclough and people like him that public opinion was dead against him.<sup>1280</sup>

A month later another U.I.L. demonstration was held in the market square, Kilcock, County Kildare, which was attended by four MPs, O'Connor, KilBride, Clancy and Meehan.<sup>1281</sup> The chairman John Field J.P. believed it was imperative for nationalist to support their MPs, especially since it was possible that the 'opponents of nationality' would contest every seat at a general election, which 'was not far off'. He also believed that there was no hope of securing Home Rule without first 'smashing' the House of Lords, that 'in future the masses should govern and not the classes'. O'Connor and

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<sup>1279</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1280</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1281</sup> Ibid., 30 July 1910.

KilBride both defended the Irish party for not turning out the Liberal party in condemnation of 'the whisky tax', especially when they felt it wasn't in the long term interests of Ireland. KilBride explained that the whisky tax was due to two causes, the old age pensions and the building of dreadnoughts, 'each of which cost two millions' and any budget which raised £3,000,000 for old age pensions would have his support.<sup>1282</sup>

The district of Timahoe was also in the news in late October, this time for similar reasons, but with a different outcome. A 'representative meeting' was held in the district on 27 October 1910 to protest against the burning of a 'portion of a rick of hay' at Ballintlea belonging to a Mr Anderson of Castlemitchell.<sup>1283</sup> Seemingly Anderson had two farms in the townlands of Ballintlea and Fossy, which the tenants in the immediate vicinity were campaigning to divide among the evicted tenants, occupiers of uneconomic holdings and labourers. The previous year it had been announced that Anderson would offer the lands in question to the Estates Commissioners, but in the interim nothing had happened and peaceful negotiations were renewed by the local branch of the U.I.L., urging Anderson to keep his 'promise'. However the 'outrage' of rick burning has since happened and the 'common suspicion was the burning was the act of some person opposed to the movement for the division of the lands'. The chairman of the meeting, Father Delaney P.P. Stradbally, summarised the attitude of the meeting when he stated that the outrage was an act of a coward and an evil-minded person, who 'selected a time for his work when there could be no witness of his foul deeds, the evil doer hateth the light'.<sup>1284</sup>

#### 5.9 IRISH LANDOWNERS' CONVENTIONS 1908 TO 1909<sup>1285</sup>

The Irish Landowners' Convention of 1908 took place in Dublin with Lord Clonbrook presiding.<sup>1286</sup> The delegates from Kildare were the Earl of Mayo K.P. and William T. Kirkpatrick, B.L., while the Queen's County delegates included Colonel R. G. Cosby V.L., Lieutenant Colonel William Hutcheson Poe C.B., D.L.; Major Sir Anthony

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<sup>1282</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1283</sup> Ibid., 29 Oct. 1910.

<sup>1284</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1285</sup> The published reports of the Irish Landowners' Conventions and in particular the Kildare Landowners' Convention of 1909 give some evidence of the concerns both locally and nationally of the changing circumstances of landowners in the early years of the twentieth century and as such give some worthwhile insights for this study.

<sup>1286</sup> *L.L.*, 17 Oct. 1908.

Weldon, Bart., D.S.O., D.L. and Captain Lachlan White D. L. who was also honorary secretary and treasurer.<sup>1287</sup> Hutcheson Poe protested about the 'delay, uncertainty and loss' arising from the administration of the purchase provisions of the Land Act of 1903, which amounted to 'over forty million sterling' in applications and that unless there was an acceleration in dealing with applications, 'neither landlords nor tenants will derive any advantage from the provision of larger funds'. He further stated that:

While less than £24 million worth of land had been dealt with in the four and half years which had elapsed since the act came into force, there still remained over £41 million worth to be satisfied, which as the existing rate of progress, would not be fully disposed of for something less than another eight years.<sup>1288</sup>

The Earl of Mayo<sup>1289</sup> was disappointed that the administration of the act had 'stopped', because it had been instructed to investigate and 'put back the evicted tenants'.<sup>1290</sup> When he thought of the bitterness of the past, he was most astonished to find Lord Barrymore and William O'Brien 'on the same platform' asking the government to carry out the provisions of a bill which affected landlords and tenants.

And Mr Tim Healy too, one of their ablest advocates at the Irish Bar and one of their bitterest opponents in the past, whose tongue was as bitter as it could be when he chose, his bitterness on this occasion was employed and his arguments were employed in showing that the act must go on.<sup>1291</sup>

The 1909 Kildare Landowners' Convention took place on 10 February at the residence of the Earl of Mayo, Palmerstown House, Straffan.<sup>1292</sup> The organisation had arrears of £666, which the Earl explained was mainly because of the sharp decline in subscriptions from the county. These he thought would not be possible to collect, because in many cases, owners had sold their properties and subsequently 'left the county'. H. D. Connor K.C. who was the prospective candidate for the Stephen's Green Division, attended the meeting to explain the provisions of the land bill. The first part of the bill, he stated, dealt with compulsory purchase. In all 'future purchase agreements' the tenant would have to pay a purchase annuity of three and a half per cent on their purchase money instead of the 'present' three and a quarter per cent and consequently the landlord's position would be effected, because it would be 'obviously difficult' to

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<sup>1287</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1288</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1289</sup> The seventh Earl of Mayo (1851-1927) succeeded to the title in 1872. A prominent southern landlord and Unionist, he represented the owners at the land conference in Dec. 1902, O'Day, xxvii.

<sup>1290</sup> *L.L.*, 17 Oct. 1908.

<sup>1291</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1292</sup> Ibid., 13 Feb. 1909.



get the tenants to agree to pay a higher annuity. As to pending purchase agreements, the landlord would be given the choice, either of waiting 'if not till the Greek Kalends', for years before being paid, or instead being paid at an earlier date by accepting 'Guaranteed Land Stock at ninety-two'. By accepting Guaranteed Land Stock at its 'present price', Connor explained that the landlords would lose £7 in every £100, which was bad enough, but the Land Commission was only dealing with an output of five million a year, in which case it would be 'eleven years before the last pending agreement was disposed of'.<sup>1293</sup> While it was suggested that this output might increase 'to ten millions per annum at the outside', he was pessimistic about this outcome being attained 'for several years to come'. Further to this, 'fifty-two million or more' was needed for pending agreements and therefore he thought, it would be more than thirteen years before they were disposed of. Clause five of the bill would bring about radical changes to the bonus payments paid to landlords. Instead of a twelve per cent bonus at 'present', in all 'future' agreements the vendors would be paid on a sliding scale, varying from no bonus, if sold at twenty-five years' purchase to sixteen per cent, if sold at seventeen years' purchase. Clause eleven of the bill 'struck at the roots of probably the greatest source of the success of the Land Act of 1903, the zones'. Under the 1903 act, if the price of a holding held under a judicial tenancy fell within the zones, the Land Commission were bound to assume that the holding was good security for an advance, but clause eleven abrogated this and enabled the Land Commission 'to order that in the case of any holding the zones shall not apply'. Clause twelve reduced the amount which could be advanced for one purchase from £7,000 to £5,000 and further prohibited an advance of more than £3,000, unless the purchaser resided on 'or in the immediate vicinity of the holding'.<sup>1294</sup> The compulsory purchase of estates also worried the landowners as the Land Commissioners would be empowered to inspect lands to be compulsorily purchased 'and this would not be calculated to assist the recovery of any rent subsequently'.<sup>1295</sup> Further to this, the Commissioners could make an offer to the owners in question and publish the offer in the *Dublin Gazette*, serving notice about the acquisition of the lands at the stated prices. The only land excepted by the compulsory clauses were 'lands in occupation of the owners', such as 'demesne, garden, pleasure ground, home farm or town park' and this could only be given, if a special application was made to have such land excluded. Lord Cloncurry concluded that the proposals in

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<sup>1293</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1294</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1295</sup> Ibid.

the new bill were 'equally unsatisfactory to the landlord and tenant'. He was in the 'unfortunate position' having sold a large amount of land, but he could not see the 'slightest prospect of being paid during his lifetime'. However he had to admit that having the land in the hands of the occupiers was 'undoubtedly very much to the betterment of the country'.<sup>1296</sup> KilBride while attending a United Irish League meeting in Errill, Queen's County on 18 April 1909, stated that he did not believe the land bill, 'which was read a second time before Easter', would settle the land question, but he would support it because he thought 'it was the first honest attempt made to undo the work of Cromwell in Ireland'.<sup>1297</sup>

#### 5.10 INTIMIDATION OF PLANTERS AT LUGGACURREN

Cases of animosity towards 'planters' often ended up as assault cases in court. A 'charge against a planter' on the Luggacurren estate was heard at Ballylinan Petty Sessions on 2 January 1909.<sup>1298</sup> The 'planter' in this case was Frederick Thomas Gillespie, Tullamoy who was prosecuted by his neighbour Edward Whelan, Loughglass for assault. Gillespie also had two summonses served on Whelan for 'obstruction and threatening language'.<sup>1299</sup> Gillespie had been boycotted in Luggacurren by the evicted tenants and enmity had existed between the two men for many years. At Athy fair on 2 December 1908, Whelan allegedly 'squared himself out and looked wickedly' at Gillespie on the public footpath and 'brushed past' him. An assault took place 'near Ballylinan' while both men were on the way home from the fair. Whelan was in 'a small jennet's car' while Gillespie was in a 'creel and had a stick in his hand'. Whelan, in overtaking Gillespie on the main road, allegedly pulled his pony close against Gillespie's creel 'till the axle of his car stuck into the wheels of mine'. Whelan also was alleged to have verbally abused Gillespie with the following words: 'you Orange scoundrel, you Orange ruffian, you blackguard' and 'cowardly dog'.<sup>1300</sup> According to Gillespie, Whelan had a stick in his hand and made a 'swipe' at him and 'I hit him across the head with my stick'. Whelan claimed that 'if he had been struck on the top of the head, he would have been killed'. William Doran, a witness called on behalf of Whelan, swore that Whelan was bleeding from the side of his head and that blood was running down his neck. It further transpired during the court case that Whelan's forge

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<sup>1296</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1297</sup> Ibid., 24 Apr. 1909.

<sup>1298</sup> Ibid., 9 Jan. 1909.

<sup>1299</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1300</sup> Ibid.

was subsequently 'broken into' and Gillespie's cattle 'were driven off the Crossard farm' and were not found for three days in County Kilkenny.<sup>1301</sup> Sir A. A. Weldon, Bart., held that the case was one of common assault and decided to adjourn the case for three months, 'in the hope that there would be no repetition of the offences complained of and that the parties would observe the ordinary civilities and courtesies of life towards each other in the future'.<sup>1302</sup> The case for compensation for the above cattle drive was held at Carlow Graigue Quarter Sessions on 23 January 1909.<sup>1303</sup> The claim was that twenty-seven head of cattle, belonging to Frederick Gillespie 'at a value of £270 were wantonly and maliciously driven off his lands' and one of his cattle was never recovered, 'whereby he has sustained a loss of £120'.<sup>1304</sup> Interestingly Valentine KilBride instructed James O'Connor K.C. to oppose the claim on behalf of Athy Number Two Rural District Council. Gillespie swore that he was aware that he was unpopular in the district and had been denounced at a nationalist meeting and a herd of his, John Murphy had been intimidated into resigning his position. Murphy swore that he resigned as 'he didn't want to go against the rules of the country'. The county court judge, Hon. David Fitzgerald, gave a decree for £86 compensation and ordered that the amount should be levied off five parishes, 'Crossard, Kyleabehey, Kellystown, Wolfhill and Ballylinan Upper'.<sup>1305</sup>

The leasing of evicted farms on landlords' hands often led to intimidation, boycotting, violence against the 'grabbers' and in some instances, court cases. Such a court case came before Stradbally Petty Sessions on 9 October 1910.<sup>1306</sup> Two sons of John Byrne, Terence and John of Knockleade were charged with 'unlawfully assembling' on 12 September 1910, to disturb the public peace by 'sounding horns' to intimidate Robert Warnock from a holding he had taken.<sup>1307</sup> A similar charge was brought against John Byrne, the evicted tenant. A large force of police were drafted into the village of Timahoe to curb a possible outbreak of violence on the part of Byrne's sympathisers. The Lord Chancellor had written to a J.P. named Arthur Hume of Maryborough, warning him not to adjudicate in this case, even though he had already done so on a previous occasion, when the bench were equally divided and had to

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<sup>1301</sup> *Ibid.*, 9, 30 Jan. 1909.

<sup>1302</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 Jan. 1909.

<sup>1303</sup> *Ibid.*, 30 Jan. 1909.

<sup>1304</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1305</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1306</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 Oct. 1910.

<sup>1307</sup> *Ibid.*

adjourn. The reason for refusing to allow Hume to adjudicate was because he had attended a meeting of the Timahoe branch of U.I.L., where a resolution was passed pledging support for the reinstatement of the Byrne family. Warnock swore that he had taken Byrne's evicted farm and that the defendants blew horns and shouted "land grabbers" to intimidate him. Sergeant McMahon swore that Warnock was under constant police protection since he took the evicted farm and that a 'rick' of hay had been burned on a previous occasion. The case and the subsequent one against the boys' father were dismissed with a caution for the defendants. One of the magistrates, William Byrne, Ballymenus subsequently stated that the root of the trouble in Timahoe lay in the stirring up of trouble by 'itinerant patriots' who were trying to 'make heroes of themselves and that sort of thing'.<sup>1308</sup> P. A. Meehan MP who was present, took exception to these remarks and rebuked the J.P. in the following words:

If those observations are directed at me and the part I took in the meetings held in Timahoe, I may tell Mr Dunne that I, one of the 'itinerant patriots' whom he evidently intends to sneer at, that any services I have given to my country and its people have been given whole-heartedly and gratuitously.<sup>1309</sup>

On 29 November 1910 one of the former evicted farms on the Luggacurren estate was sold at auction by 'direction of the courts'.<sup>1310</sup> The farm in question 'of over 190 acres of good land and a splendid residence and out-offices' was once held by a Mr Byrne, but had since then been in the possession of 'the late Mr Gillespie'. 'It was hoped locally' that the farm would be successfully purchased by Miss Byrne, the daughter of the former evicted tenant, who opened the bidding with an offer of £500. However, the farm was eventually 'knocked down' to P. Farrell D.C. Ballintubbert, 'a steady nationalist' for £1,350. However, the 'strong contingents' from Stradbally and Ballyadams branches of the U.I.L. expressed great satisfaction with the sale.<sup>1311</sup>

#### 5.11 RAILWAY LINKS IN COUNTIES KILDARE, QUEEN'S AND KILKENNY

On 29 March 1906 Michael Meagher asked the chief secretary (Bryce) about grants 'repeatedly applied' for in relation to a railway to the mines at Castlecomer, County Kilkenny. The proposed railway was only 'about eight miles' in length he argued and would 'connect the mines with all the Irish railways'. Bryce replied that the funds

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<sup>1308</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1309</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1310</sup> Ibid., 3 Dec. 1910.

<sup>1311</sup> Ibid.

available for railway extension in Ireland were devoted 'to poorer and more isolated districts' and unfortunately Castlecomer's claims were 'less strong than those of some other districts'.<sup>1312</sup>

Irish Parliamentary MPs placed the majority of Irish grievances whether political, social or economic, in the context of what could be achieved from a Westminster government. A good example of this for KilBride was the proposed linking by railway of Athy in his constituency to Castlecomer and Kilkenny. Two London financiers, Perkes and Spyers associated with the building of the 'tube' and 'underground railways in London', had made known their companies' interest in a local enterprise to investigate and build a railway linking Athy to Castlecomer and Kilkenny.<sup>1313</sup> The preliminary expenses however, involved in the preparation of a bill, which had to be presented to the British parliament would be '£3,000 or £3,500 and of those expenses the companies were willing to contribute one half, the remaining half to be contributed by the people of Athy, Kilkenny and Castlecomer'. In explaining the proposal to a conference in Athy attended by KilBride, J. P. Fogarty, County Councillor, explained that parliamentary committees had to be careful about 'giving bills to company promoters' in Ireland, 'because of the number of instances in which such powers were given and nothing was done'. Consequently he pointed out, parliament would only pass bills on the recommendation of the district directly concerned. Before this enterprise could be implemented, not only was general assent and local contributions needed but also the thorny issue of the consent of the royalty holders in the districts concerned. The royalty holders referred to here were normally landlords, who had been granted royal rights over mineral deposits on their lands. This proved to be a sticking point as the Castlecomer mining operator and local landlord, Wandesforde was not keen on the project from the start. P. J. McAndrew, a London engineer when asked to explain Wandesforde's views, explained that for eleven years previous to this, Wandesforde had a survey completed for a railway line from Castlecomer to Kilkenny, mainly to service his mining operation at Castlecomer. Since then he explained, Wandesforde had been endeavouring to get the project properly financed, but 'I believe he may go on till Doomsday and still never succeed'. KilBride, while worried about the support of the royalty holders and Wandesforde in particular, approved wholeheartedly with the

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<sup>1312</sup> *Hansard* 4, cliv1, 1547, 29 Mar. 1906.

<sup>1313</sup> *L.L.*, 31 Oct. 1908.

proposal, especially since it differed from previous suggestions in that no baronial guarantee was asked for.<sup>1314</sup>

If there was a good prospect of the scheme being financed and the railway built, his [KilBride's] colleagues and himself in parliament would see that no hampering conditions would be included in the bill or act of parliament.<sup>1315</sup>

A public meeting in Athy on 8 November 1908 approved of the proposed railway project and a memorandum guaranteeing the required subscription was signed.<sup>1316</sup> Although the confidence of some of those present was weakened by the opposition of the royalty owners, Dr John KilBride, Chief Medical Officer and brother of Denis KilBride, stated that even if the proposal went 'no further than the securing of the bill, he would still be prepared as a private subscriber to put his money into it, believing the bill in itself to be a valuable asset'.<sup>1317</sup>

A letter from George D. Perks in favour of the Kilkenny, Castlecomer and Athy railway appeared in the *Leinster Leader* on 24 April 1909. Wandesforde and 'some of the other opponents' he reported, had spent 'probably £1,200 on a standing order opposing the bill for the proposed railway. Perks anticipated that he would have no difficulty in raising the necessary capital for the project and in direct contravention to Prior Wandesforde's objections, gave assurances that all landholders along the proposed line would receive full compensation for any loss sustained. Perks also referred to Wandesforde's application for a line under the Tramways Acts from Foulksrath to Cloneen, which according to Perks would mainly serve his own collieries in Castlecomer and be of no use to the other collieries which would be served by the Kilkenny to Athy line.<sup>1318</sup> Finally Wandesforde's anxiety about the capital expenditure on the Kilkenny to Athy line not proving remunerative, was he (Perks) felt, 'touching, but in view of his having deposited a scheme of his own, not convincing'.<sup>1319</sup> The Select Committee in the House of Commons met to decide on the bill in question on 4 April 1909, the only objector being R. H. Wandesforde.<sup>1320</sup> Mr Bushe K.C. appearing on behalf of the promoters, stated that the area to be served by the proposed railway had no

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<sup>1314</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1315</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1316</sup> Ibid., 14 Nov. 1908.

<sup>1317</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1318</sup> Ibid., 24 Apr. 1909.

<sup>1319</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1320</sup> Ibid., 8 May 1909.

railway connections and yet it was the most important part of Ireland in which coal was to be found. The output of 60,000 tons a year came from four pits owned by Wandesforde, but there were a number of other pits, which had to be abandoned due to a lack of communications. The estimate for capital works involved in the twenty-five miles of railway line was £213,000 and the share capital of the company was £250,000 and a loan capital of £125,000, proving that the promoters anticipated no difficulty in raising the required capital. Valentine KilBride, solicitor, when called, handed in the resolutions in favour of the bill from the County Councils of Kildare, Dublin, Waterford, Kilkenny and the Rural District Councils of Athy and Castlecomer. The chairman of the Select Committee, Mr Samuels remarked that they did not require further evidence to show that the railway was necessary as 'this was not denied'.<sup>1321</sup> The Kilkenny, Castlecomer and Athy Railway Bill had its second reading in the House of Commons on 27 April 1909, the only speaker being KilBride, who stated that other than the opposition of the member for Carlow, which he quite understood, there was no opposition to the success of the railway.<sup>1322</sup>

#### 5.12 THE LAND ACT OF 1909

The Irish Land Act of 1909, enacted on 3 December, provided more funds for land purchase 'but made selling less attractive' because the landlords were paid in stock not cash as under the 1903 act, the twelve per cent bonus paid to landlords was replaced by a sliding scale ranging from three to eighteen per cent, 'but generally working to the disadvantage of sellers' and the annual payments or annuities paid by the purchasing tenants were increased from three-and-a quarter to three-and-a-half per cent.<sup>1323</sup> During the debate on the Irish Land Bill, Wyndham thought it 'mere folly' to change the detail of the bargains reached between landlords and tenants under the act of 1903 and the sliding scale of bonuses didn't meet with his approval in 1903 'and he [Birrell] will find that it will not do'.<sup>1324</sup> Another general criticism Wyndham had was that the new bill would only provide 'one million pounds a year' to solve a problem stated to be of 'ninety-three years' duration.

It is ludicrous to put it on the basis of one million pounds a year for ninety-three years.<sup>1325</sup>

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<sup>1321</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1322</sup> *Hansard* 5, iv, 262-3, 27 Apr. 1909.

<sup>1323</sup> O'Day, pp 228-9.

<sup>1324</sup> *Hansard* 5, iii, 375, 31 Mar. 1909.

<sup>1325</sup> Ibid.

T. M. Healy stating that he 'interfered as little as possible in politics' because many disagreed with him, intimated an early intention to vote for the bill. He asked that the 'block' relating to land purchase be lifted and was of the opinion that the landlords should in future be induced 'on proper terms to take paper and stock instead of sovereigns'.

The shareholders do not want sovereigns because if they got sovereigns they would have to go to Argentina or Jamaica or the South Pole looking for somewhere to put their money.<sup>1326</sup>

At a later stage in the debate KilBride argued that the bill would not settle the Irish land question unless it contained the principle of 'compulsion all round' and that it was not confined to the nine congested counties. If compulsion was not insisted upon he stated, the house would soon again be occupied in prolonged discussion about 'the interminable Irish land question'.<sup>1327</sup> The following month (September) further amendments to the Irish Land Bill of 1909 were discussed. KilBride led the opposition to an amendment in the name of Birrell the chief secretary, that later transpired to have been suggested to him by a former chief secretary, Walter Long, when 'he could not put it down in his own name'.<sup>1328</sup> The amendment provided for tenancies created up to the date of the passing of the bill coming 'within the possibility of purchase'.<sup>1329</sup> KilBride and his colleagues felt that this amendment would further legitimise the practice of creating 'bogus tenancies' wherein 'not a perch of untenanted land' would be available for the lawful and needy purchasers. KilBride was so strongly opposed that he warned the Attorney-General (Cherry) to 'prepare for active work in Ireland' because pressure to defeat the amendment would come 'either within the law or without the law' and further that 'as soon as you like you can increase your military forces from 40,000 to 80,000'.<sup>1330</sup> James Flynn also warned that:

What the government proposes by this amendment is to convert a number of men who are bogus and fraudulent tenants, who were notoriously introduced for the purpose of emergency and not for agriculture into purchase annuitants and thereby using the credit of the state to promote disorder and to increase turbulence in Ireland.<sup>1331</sup>

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<sup>1326</sup> *Hansard* 5, iii, 380-2, 31 Mar. 1909.

<sup>1327</sup> *Hansard* 5, ix, 2404-5, 26 Aug. 1909.

<sup>1328</sup> *Hansard* 5, x, 2223-38, 15 Sept. 1909.

<sup>1329</sup> *Hansard* 5, x, 2224, 15 Sept. 1909.

<sup>1330</sup> *Hansard* 5, x, 2225-6, 15 Sept. 1909.

<sup>1331</sup> *Hansard* 5, x, 2231-2, 15 Sept. 1909.



Surprisingly, Birrell agreed that bogus tenancies existed ‘simply to enable’ people to apply for advances. Although the Land Commissioners had complete discretion in these matters, he had to say that he ‘flattered’ himself ‘perhaps unduly’ into thinking that this would take care of the matter and on that basis ‘ I shall not in any way press forward this amendment’.<sup>1332</sup>

### 5.13 RIVER BARROW DRAINAGE

T. P. O’Connor (Liverpool) speaking during the Supply, Irish Arterial Drainage debate on 22 April 1909 was very critical of the Board of Works in Ireland. Queen’s County Council he stated, legitimately requested maps and plans in relation to the river Barrow but the request was met with an ‘insolent and arrogant refusal’ by ‘these petty Czars, who are naturally distrusted and hated by the people for the manner in which they behave’.<sup>1333</sup> Repeating the historic phrase of the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman that ‘good government is no substitute for self-government’ he argued that the government then in existence was not only ‘not self-government, is not only not good government but is the worst government that exists in Europe’.<sup>1334</sup> T. W. Russell followed by referring to a statement of KilBride’s that the Department of Agriculture had a surplus of £400,000 out of which it would be possible to contribute £50,000 for the drainage of the Barrow or other drainage purposes. Russell explained that by the Act of 1899, funds were paid to the department before schemes were even put into operation and these large sums became known as ‘the reserve fund’. This money he explained was earmarked since for agricultural schemes, agricultural education, loan funds for farmers and other works so that in fact there was no more than the minimum £20,000 left in the fund.<sup>1335</sup> KilBride outlined at length the case for remedial works on Barrow drainage, urging the chief secretary to communicate immediately with the two county councils of Kildare and Queen’s, who were prepared to co-operate with him for the ‘permanent good of the district’.<sup>1336</sup> In any new drainage department argued William Delany (Queen’s County) there should be representation from the general council of the county councils and have nothing to do with the Board of Works:

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<sup>1332</sup> *Hansard* 5, x, 2223-38, 15 Sept. 1909.

<sup>1333</sup> *Hansard* 5, iii, 1744-5, 22 Apr. 1909.

<sup>1334</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1335</sup> *Hansard* 5, iii, 1745-6, 22 Apr. 1909.

<sup>1336</sup> *Hansard* 5, iii, 1748-9, 22 Apr. 1909.

I [Delany] had an instance in my own division where they [Board of Works] carried out some drainage works on the Nore and they put up a sluice but on the wrong side, so that instead of allowing the water to go they sent it back. There is another instance [in connection with] the jewel robbery in Dublin Castle. The Board of Works built a strong room for the safe and when they had it built they could not get the safe in. That was one of the reasons why the robbery was carried out so easily.<sup>1337</sup>

Among the local issues KilBride attended to was the ongoing problem of the drainage of the river Barrow, chiefly at Athy and Carlow town. In March 1914 KilBride contributed to the debate on the Irish Rivers (Drainage) Bill. Jeremiah MacVeagh (south Down) first outlined the general and particular grievances experienced in Ireland where ‘thousands of acres of the best land in Ireland’ were each year ‘covered by a waste of waters’ causing enormous financial loss and although ‘modern engineering’ could easily solve the problem ‘nothing had been done to abate it’.<sup>1338</sup> The trouble arose explained MacVeagh, from the neglect of the Board of Works to efficiently drain the river valleys ‘or dredge or deepen the river beds’. The Barrow he explained, was once navigable for boats carrying fifty tons from the Grand Canal junction at Athy to the tidal lock at St Mullins in Carlow, a distance of over thirty miles.<sup>1339</sup> Twenty locks and weirs were erected by ‘the Irish Parliament’ and the Barrow Navigation Company was constituted to take custody and control of the river, which included the dredging and repair to the works.<sup>1340</sup> However the work was discontinued ‘since 1860’, the river was ‘therefore choked’, the carrying capacity of the boats was reduced by half, lands and towns such as Athy, Monasterevan, Portarlinton and Mountmellick were frequently flooded and the general health of these districts was ‘most seriously effected’.<sup>1341</sup> In seconding MacVeagh’s resolution to institute an effective drainage scheme of Irish rivers, KilBride stated that although a Commission had reported on the river Barrow ‘eighteen years ago’, nothing but pious promises had resulted from successive governments.<sup>1342</sup> The extent of the flooding was serious he stated, ‘and he had himself known it possible to row across seven miles of cultivated land’.<sup>1343</sup>

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<sup>1337</sup> *Hansard* 5, iii, 1749-52, 22 Apr. 1909.

<sup>1338</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxxxii, 455-6, 22 Mar. 1904.

<sup>1339</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1340</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxxxii, 460-2, 22 Mar. 1904.

<sup>1341</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1342</sup> The question had been considered by two commissions of enquiry, the Viceregal Commission of 1885 and the Royal Commission on Public Works in Ireland 1887, taken from Delany’s (Queen’s County) speech, *Hansard* 4, cxlvi, 1339, 24 May 1905.

<sup>1343</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxlii, 465-6, 22 Mar. 1904.

In May 1905 during the debate on Arterial Drainage (Ireland), Edward Delany for Queen's County suggested that county council committees should be entrusted with the drainage scheme for the river Barrow and if money and machinery were put in place, it would be 'amply and fully justified'.<sup>1344</sup> Walter Long, the chief secretary in stating that this was solely a question of arterial drainage, accepted Delany's suggestion as a 'practical solution' and admitted that there was 'necessity for reform as the present condition of things could not continue'.<sup>1345</sup> KilBride pointed out that a conference of the relevant county councils concerned had been held and they came to the conclusion that 'a joint board' should be formed to deal with the drainage of the Barrow.<sup>1346</sup>

The matter came up for discussion again in the House of Commons on 19 June 1907. Patrick A. Meehan called the attention of the chief secretary (Birrell) to the Barrow Drainage Commission of 1885 where the reports of the medical officers of Mountmellick, Portarlinton, Monasterevan and Athy outlined that flooding of the Barrow was 'most injurious to the public health' of the inhabitants of the districts concerned.<sup>1347</sup> KilBride referred to the evidence of his brother, Dr James KilBride, medical officer of Athy district, who reported that 'chronic rheumatism, diphtheria and typhoid fever of a very virulent type were prevalent', that the water supply was contaminated and that no system of sewerage was possible while the conditions prevailed.<sup>1348</sup> Birrell explained that legislation was necessary before any large drainage scheme could be undertaken and the recent report of the Arterial Drainage Commission had been fully considered. However, he promised that legislation would be introduced 'this session'.<sup>1349</sup> Less than a month later Birrell stated that it would be impossible to consider legislation 'during the present session'.<sup>1350</sup>

A public meeting in relation to Barrow drainage was held in the town hall, Athy on 29 June 1907. The meeting was attended by clergy and people of all denominations, along with MPs including KilBride for south Kildare. The Barrow Drainage Committee requested a grant of £100,000 from the government to alleviate the 'most grievous

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<sup>1344</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxlvi, 1339-40, 24 May 1905.

<sup>1345</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxlvi, 1340-2, 24 May 1905.

<sup>1346</sup> *Hansard* 4, cxlvi, 1345, 24 May 1905.

<sup>1347</sup> *Hansard* 4, clxxvi, 463-6, 19 June 1907.

<sup>1348</sup> *Hansard* 4, clxxvi, 465-6, 19 June 1907.

<sup>1349</sup> *Hansard* 4, clxxvi, 466, 19 June 1907.

<sup>1350</sup> *Hansard* 4, clxxviii, 697-8, 17 July 1907.

injuries to health and property' caused by the flooding of the river Barrow.<sup>1351</sup> KilBride pointed out that an enormous amount of country was flooded every year and it was proved in the evidence from 'one Royal and two Viceregal Commissions' that the public health of the district was 'injuriously' affected by the flooding of the river and it has also 'an injurious effect' on the sanitation of the towns between Athy and Clonaslee. Because 'everyone in the country' was desirous of seeing the Land Act of 1903 worked to its full capacity, KilBride foresaw that the British government would never give a free grant of £100,000 for arterial drainage and he therefore had to be pragmatic in suggesting that the financial solution to having the works carried out, was that 'the flooded lands would be taxed to the full value of the improvements' and the remainder would be a free grant by the English government. Another reason why a full free grant would not be given in his opinion was that 'they were already absolutely united' in their demand for sufficient funds for primary education and this he claimed, involved 'an enormous expenditure of money'.<sup>1352</sup>

#### 5.14 THE GROWTH OF SINN FÉIN<sup>1353</sup>

As the coming together of divergent nationalist groupings under the umbrella of the Irish Parliamentary Party, was in its infancy, another nationalist movement, Sinn Féin was gaining slow but steady momentum. The first number of *Sinn Féin* was published under the editorship of Arthur Griffith<sup>1354</sup> on 5 May 1906.<sup>1355</sup> Almost a year and a half later, the *Leinster Leader* published an article headed, 'The record of the Irish Parliament [Grattan's]: The solid work accomplished'.<sup>1356</sup> The article summarised the opening lecture by Griffith at the central branch of Sinn Féin in Dublin. Griffith believed that a charge of intolerance against the 'independent Irish parliament' was untrue. He maintained that the Irish parliament between 1782 and 1793 'abolished nine-tenths of the penal enactments' against Protestant dissenters, repealed all the 'most obnoxious portions' against Irish Catholics, restored the franchise and the right of carrying arms to Catholics, as well as opening up the professions, the jury box and the

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<sup>1351</sup> *L.L.*, 6 July 1907.

<sup>1352</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1353</sup> As the Sinn Féin organisation would have a major effect on the loyalties and sympathies of Irish nationalists and eventually the seats held by the Irish Parliamentary Party, it is relevant to look at the growth of Sinn Féin in this study and in particular the growth of Sinn Féin, particularly in the constituencies of north and south Kildare.

<sup>1354</sup> Griffith, Arthur (1872-1922) was the leader and Vice-President of the Sinn Féin movement. He was editor of *Sinn Féin* from 1906 to 1915 and of *Nationality* in 1916. He was the head of the Irish delegates to the Treaty conference in London between Oct. and Dec. 1921, O'Day, xxii.

<sup>1355</sup> O'Day, xlviii.

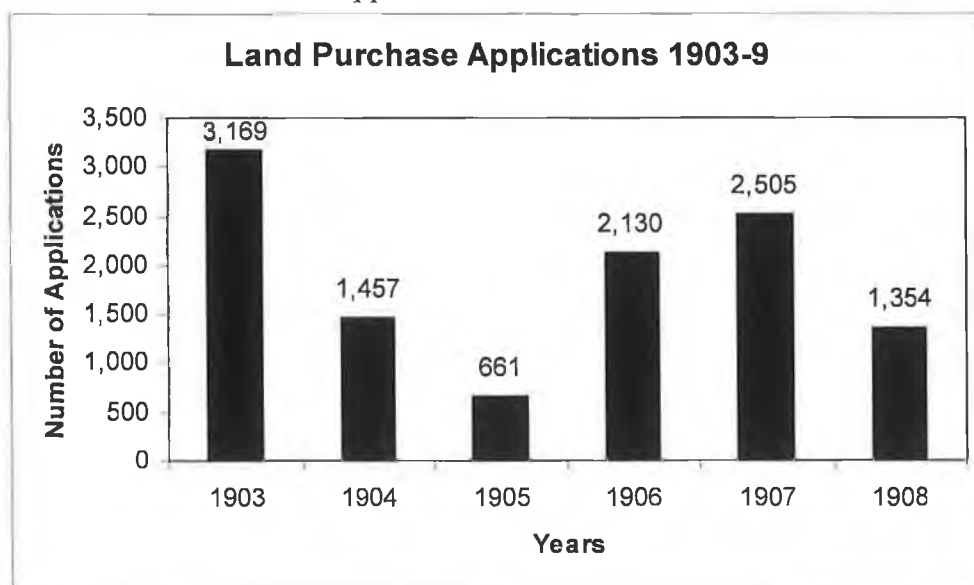
<sup>1356</sup> *L.L.*, 17 Oct. 1908.

magisterial bench to Irish Catholics. The fundamental error of Irish politics since then he argued, was ‘the acceptance of the Union’ of Ireland and Great Britain as legal and binding and Irish national life would be ‘vitiating until the acquiescence in the usurped claim of a foreign parliament to legislate for this country was withdrawn’. In consequence he concluded that the parliament of Ireland ‘existed to be called into being by Irishmen in Ireland, not by Englishmen in London’.<sup>1357</sup> However, the Irish Parliamentary Party under John Redmond, while continuously campaigning for Home Rule during this period, thought best to continue their battle in the House of Commons using purely peaceful and legitimate methods, believing that in time their overall aim would be finally and totally achieved.

#### 5.15 THE LAND COMMISSIONERS 1909

The *Leinster Leader* published a *resume* of the Land Commissioners annual report on 11 September 1909. Initially the Commissioners only evidence of the number of evicted tenants was contained in the report of the Evicted Tenants’ Commission of 1893, which reported on seventeen plan of campaign estates, where 884 tenants were ‘out of occupation’ of their holdings.<sup>1358</sup> Along with this, 2,755 applications had been made to the Evicted Tenant Commissioners in respect of estates, other than plan of campaign estates, making a total of 3,639 applications at that time.<sup>1359</sup> However the volume of applications to the Estates Commissioners up to 1909 totalled 11,276 as follows:

Table 11: Land Purchase Applications to Estates Commissioners 1903-9



Source: *L.L.*, 11 Sep. 1909.

<sup>1357</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1358</sup> *Ibid.*, 11 Sept. 1909.

<sup>1359</sup> *Ibid.*

The Estates Commissioners reported that 1,302 applications were outside the provisions of the act and a further 4,151 were rejected for 'one or other' reason, making a total of 5,453 applications rejected. However up to 31 March 1909, 1,451 evicted tenants 'or their representatives' had been reinstated, with the assistance 'where necessary' of grants and a further 712 were reinstated on estates purchased by the commissioners, making a total of 2,163 evicted tenants reinstated to 31 March 1909. £77,784 9s (£58,519 9s for free grants) was reported expended from the Reserve Fund for the improvement of holdings, the erection of buildings, purchase of livestock, compensation to existing tenants on surrounding evicted lands etc., 'bringing up the expenditure sanctioned' during the period up to 31 March 1909 to £175,805 7s 10d, of which £140,443 7s 10d was for free grants. The only one of the E.T.C. seventeen evicted estates reported not settled in 1909, was the Clanricarde estate, County Galway. Finally the annual report proceeded to show at considerable length the difficulties experienced in acquiring lands under the Evicted Tenants' Act of 1907.<sup>1360</sup>

During the Supply debate of 24 June 1909 it was proposed to pay £183,677 for salaries and expenses of the Irish Land Commission for the coming year ending 31 March 1910.<sup>1361</sup> KilBride first reminded Birrell that 'some months ago' he had promised to inform the house whether 'a block' existed causing delays at the Estates Commissioners office. Referring to a return he had received in reply to a question on 22 June, KilBride was critical of the fact, that of the 8,107 estates where purchase agreements had been made for advances, only 2,379 had been finally dealt with, leaving 5,638 outstanding which involved arrears of £49,209,741.<sup>1362</sup> (Table 12)

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<sup>1360</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1361</sup> *Hansard* 5, vi, 1918, 24 June 1909.

<sup>1362</sup> Ibid.

Table 12: Purchase Agreement Sanctioned by Estates Commissioners since 31 May 1903

Purchase Agreements Sanctioned by Estates Commissioners since 31 May 1903					
Classification	No. of estates	No. of agreements lodged	Purchase Money		Total
			Amount of advances made or applied for	Amount lodged or to be lodged in cash by the purchasing tenants	
1. Estates for the purchases of which advances have been made and the holdings vested in the purchasing Tenants	2,379	54,855	£22,900,653	£264,658	£23,165,311
2. Estates for the purchase of which advances have not yet been made	5,638	157,805	£49,209,741	£78,937	£49,288,678
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,017</b>	<b>212,660</b>	<b>£72,110,394</b>	<b>£343,595</b>	<b>£72,453,989</b>

Source: *Hansard* 5, vi, 1671-3, 22 June 1909.

Although KilBride had to admit that things were ‘improving’, he still wanted to know whether a ‘block’ existed and if Birrell had applied for more than £5,000,000 a year from the Treasury.<sup>1363</sup> Referring to the fact that some of the tenants who were evicted under the plan of campaign were still not reinstated, KilBride stated that he could give ‘several cases’ to demonstrate that the evicted tenants weren’t evicted because of inability to do so. He knew of ‘several men’ who subsequently bought tenant’s interest in other holdings. The true cause for their eviction, according to KilBride was that ‘they were soldiers in the land war’ and he protested that the Estates Commissioners refused to consider cases such as these, simply because the tenants concerned were ‘sufficiently well off’ to purchase ‘the interest of somebody else in a farm’.<sup>1364</sup> Another objection of KilBride’s was exemplified by the case of a ‘gentleman in Queen’s County’ who received a fraudulent advance of £18,000 for land purchase in the following manner:<sup>1365</sup>

<sup>1363</sup> *Hansard* 5, vi, 1919, 24 June 1909.

<sup>1364</sup> *Hansard* 5, vi, 1923-4, 24 June 1909.

<sup>1365</sup> *Hansard* 5, vi, 1927, 24 June 1909.

When a sale is about to take place, the occupier of several farms returns himself as tenant of one, the price of which would be somewhere about the maximum of £7,000. He will then make his son John the tenant of the second, his son Michael tenants of the third and his daughter Mary Ann tenant of the fourth. That is how it is done. Why is it that the Estates Commissioners never discovered one of these cases until some member of the nationalist party drew their attention to it?<sup>1366</sup>

Birrell replied that the 'block' referred to in the Estates Commissioners offices was 'occasioned to a very large extent by a faulty system of inspection and by over inspection and also by delays in the shifting' referred to by KilBride.<sup>1367</sup> That office had since been reorganised he stated and a 'better' inspection system introduced.

We would get rid of the delay if we could but we cannot and we must recognise that this is a very long furrow that we have to plough and it will be many years before you carry these transactions through.<sup>1368</sup>

Birrell reported that there were seventeen plan of campaign estates reported by the Evicted Tenants' Commission and on 10 April 1905, eight of these estates remained unsettled and all that remained was the Clanricarde estate.<sup>1369</sup> The Ponsonby evicted tenants were restored under previous acts and the residue was being sold by the Estate Commissioners. The Luggacurren estate he stated, was purchased from Lansdowne by the Commissioners who proceeded to place 'thirty-four' tenants on the estate in their holdings.

I daresay some of the persons may be new tenants or planters as they are called but the estate having been purchased by the commissioners and having been distributed amongst the tenants, a few of the evicted tenants have not yet been provided with land.<sup>1370</sup>

P. A. Meehan (Queen's County) reminded Birrell that twenty-one of the 'old evicted tenants' were not reinstated.<sup>1371</sup> Birrell responded that the obligation of restoring the evicted tenants was the responsibility of the Estates Commissioners and outside the 'body of the wounded soldiers of the war' some tenants were refused because they were unfit to have holdings, but he thought it would be unwise to publish the reasons why.<sup>1372</sup> Birrell agreed with KilBride that sums in excess of the £7,000 limit for land purchase

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<sup>1366</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1367</sup> *Hansard* 5, vi, 1955, 24 June 1909.

<sup>1368</sup> *Hansard* 5, vi, 1956, 24 June 1909.

<sup>1369</sup> *Hansard* 5, vi, 1958, 24 June 1909.

<sup>1370</sup> *Hansard* 5, vi, 1958-9, 24 June 1909.

<sup>1371</sup> *Hansard* 5, vi, 1959, 24 June 1909.

<sup>1372</sup> Ibid.



‘could only be obtained by fraud’ and if it had been discovered in time, the grants would not have been paid but he doubted whether anything could be done to rectify the matter.<sup>1373</sup> One of the evicted tenants still not restored to his holding in April 1910 was Thomas Dooley.<sup>1374</sup> Dooley of Coolglass, Luggacurren was evicted during the plan of campaign from a holding of sixty acres. KilBride asked the chief secretary if an ‘equivalent holding’ could be provided, to which Birrell replied that his name was noted ‘for consideration in the allotment of untenanted land to be acquired by the Estates Commissioners’.<sup>1375</sup> Another evicted tenants in similar circumstances to Dooley was James Moore, Monamanry, Luggacurren.<sup>1376</sup> In this case Birrell informed KilBride that Moore’s former holding consisted of about forty-three acres at a rent of £22 10s., that he was offered a holding of fifty-one acres with an annuity of £23 10s but he refused to accept and therefore no further action was taken by the Estates Commissioners.<sup>1377</sup>

## 5.16 FURTHER CONCERNS OF KILBRIDE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

1909 TO 1910<sup>1378</sup>

KilBride made a very long contribution to the debate on the Police Malicious Injuries (Ireland) Bill of 1909<sup>1379</sup> at the conclusion of which the Attorney-General, J. H. M. Campbell admitted that he always had a feeling of uncertainty when KilBride spoke:

It is a feeling somewhat analogous to that of which is created when we see the heroine on the variety stage beginning to undress.<sup>1380</sup>

KilBride argued that the Grand Jury Act, ‘sections 106 and 135 to 140’ which the government wanted to repeal was passed in 1836 during the tithe war, when ‘unquestionably’ there was destruction of property and other outrages committed such as the burning of property to offset what he described ‘wholesale evictions’ by the landlords. Agreeing with Laurence Ginnell’s (Westmeath) objections to the bill which were centered on the continued existence of informers or as KilBride stated, ‘the Whelahans and the Cullinans exist today as they did in the past’.<sup>1381</sup> KilBride continued

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<sup>1373</sup> *Hansard* 5, vi, 1961, 24 June 1909.

<sup>1374</sup> *Hansard* 5, xvii, 206-7, 25 Apr. 1910.

<sup>1375</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1376</sup> *Hansard* 5, xvii, 258-9, 25 Apr. 1910.

<sup>1377</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1378</sup> In this section KilBride’s further contributions in parliament are treated thematically rather than chronologically.

<sup>1379</sup> *Hansard* 5, v, 777-86, 21 May 1909.

<sup>1380</sup> *Hansard* 5, v, 784, 21 May 1909.

<sup>1381</sup> *Hansard* 5, v, 777-86, 21 May 1909.

uninterrupted to enthrall and entertain the members of the house with numerous examples to prove his case. The first example given was the murder of Head Constable Whelahan by moonlighters at Sexton's house in west Clare.<sup>1382</sup> The outrage according to KilBride was a 'put-up job' between Cullinan and Head Constable Whelahan who wanted promotion. Cullinan, 'one of the principal men' in the moonlighting organisation arranged the raid for arms on Sexton's house but the raid backfired when Whelahan was fired at by the moonlighters inside the house. Whelahan wasn't killed by gunshot according to KilBride but instead was knocked and his 'skull smashed' by the escaping moonlighters. Whelahan's widow was awarded the 'enormous sum of £2,000 compensation' from 'the county cess-payers'. The government of the day had to admit that the informer involved was Cullinan, 'a thorough vagabond and rogue' who later received ten shillings a week from the local police and was 'kept in the informers' house in Dublin for years'.<sup>1383</sup>

KilBride continued with the case of Sheridan, a police Sergeant in Limerick who was in his opinion equally corrupt when 'he had Mrs Quinlan's hayrick burned' in Limerick, for which the ratepayers had to pay compensation. The case of Maughan was more interesting. Maughan's house was burned in Woodford, County Galway. He subsequently claimed compensation of '£25 or £30 in the county court' but lost and then appealed to the Galway Assizes Court. The day before the court, Maughan handed a threatening notice written on 'half a sheet of note paper' into the police barracks. The notice had 'armorial bearings' of a death's head, crossbones and coffin and 'I believe a representation of a loaded rifle or blunderbuss'. The letter allegedly warned Maughan not to go to Galway in pursuit of his claim or he would 'meet with a sudden end'. The police later went to Maughan's house and found the remaining half sheet of paper from which they easily deduced that Maughan, an amateur 'calligraphist' had written the notice 'in pencil with a heavy hand'. When Maughan came back to the police barracks to collect the original notice, the police ordered him to make a copy and it was found that the original notice and the copy were written by the same hand. At this stage in the debate, Cherry, the Attorney General asked KilBride to tell the house what happened on

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<sup>1382</sup> Whelahan's murder took place in Lisdoonvarna, County Clare on Sunday 11 Sept., *Leinster Express*, 17 Sept. 1887.

<sup>1383</sup> *Hansard* 5, v, 777-86, 21 May 1909.

the appeal case being heard. The police KilBride stated, refused to produce the evidence and the judge dismissed the case.<sup>1384</sup>

Maughan got away and this is the way we are treated by Dublin Castle when we try to maintain law and order in Ireland.<sup>1385</sup>

KilBride also outlined the case of an ‘unpopular’ man in Galway who ‘wantonly’ burned heather on a mountainside for a period of ten years for which he successfully received compensation which enabled him to live ‘in comfort and decency’. Finally KilBride claimed that certain county court judges were ‘prejudiced’ as exemplified in the compensation awarded to a farmer ‘in my neighbourhood’ in compensation for a cattle drive. The ‘unpopular’ farmer was awarded the inflated price of £3 10s per head for the twenty-nine cattle he stated and the county council paid ‘a good deal’ to fight the case.<sup>1386</sup> Despite KilBride’s oratory, the bill was passed by 176 votes to 88.<sup>1387</sup>

During the debate on the Butter and Margarine Bill 1907, there was much discussion on a new product loosely called ‘milk-blended butter’, which unlike butter legally containing ‘no more than sixteen per cent moisture’, it was proposed that this new product have no more than twenty-four per cent moisture.<sup>1388</sup> KilBride argued that milk-blended butter was ‘fraudulent butter’ because it was really ‘colonial butter into which separated or skim milk had been injected’.<sup>1389</sup> He suggested that ‘milk-blended butter’ should therefore be given a name which ‘in no way suggested’ a dairy product.<sup>1390</sup> Mr Stewart (Greenock) agreed that margarine and milk-blended butter were ‘manufactured articles’ and they were not fraudulent unless they were sold under a fraudulent name and he claimed the name of margarine ‘did not describe that article at all’.<sup>1391</sup>

On 4 March 1909 KilBride asked the President of the Board of Trade, the Secretary of State for the Home Department, the President of the Local Government Board and the Member for south Somerset (Sir E. Strachey) representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, for the number of prosecutions and subsequent convictions obtained for the fraudulent substitution and sale of margarine for butter in the previous

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<sup>1384</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1385</sup> *Hansard* 5, v, 781, 21 May 1909.

<sup>1386</sup> *Hansard* 5, v, 777-86, 21 May 1909.

<sup>1387</sup> *Hansard* 5, v, 800, 21 May 1909.

<sup>1388</sup> *Hansard* 4, clxxix, 307-10, 26 July 1907.

<sup>1389</sup> *Hansard* 4, clxxix, 307, 26 July 1907.

<sup>1390</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1391</sup> *Hansard* 4, clxxix, 308, 26 July 1907.

year.<sup>1392</sup> The question was answered by the President of the Local Government Board, John Burns who stated that none of the departments referred to had instituted any proceedings and the Local Government Board could only act if local authorities 'failed to execute or enforce the Sale of Food and Drugs Acts in relation to fraudulent sales.'<sup>1393</sup> Later that day KilBride put the same question to the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture which was answered by the Attorney-General for Ireland, R. R. Cherry. Cherry stated that the department purchased 920 samples sold as butter, 'six proved on analysis to be margarine' and proceedings were instituted for the fraudulent cases and convictions were obtained in five.<sup>1394</sup> On 22 March KilBride asked if steps would be taken to outlaw the 'dishonest practice' of selling margarine as the 'best Dorset butter' and eggs 'bought in crates' as fresh farm eggs in the suburbs of London. Sir E. Strachey offered to make enquiries when proper information was supplied and legal proceedings would be taken 'if necessary'<sup>1395</sup>.

In May 1909 KilBride introduced the Sale of Margarine Bill in the House of Commons aimed at protecting the Irish butter industry.<sup>1396</sup> Margarine being sold as butter was 'seriously' affecting the butter industry in Ireland and this bill would hopefully prevent margarine 'being coloured so as to resemble butter or to be fraudulently sold as such'.<sup>1397</sup> On 15 June 1909, P. J. Power (east Waterford) asked the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture, T. W. Russell if sampling of sales of Irish butter in towns and cities of Great Britain had taken place and if so what were the results. Russell replied that 115 samples sold in London and Liverpool were submitted for analysis, twenty-two of which being 'genuine butter'. Russell also explained that the administration of the Food and Drugs Act was the responsibility of the local authorities but the department had sent a 'special officer' to England and Scotland 'for two years past' and they were doing their best to prosecute the offenders.<sup>1398</sup> KilBride insisted that the Local Government Board should take action also.<sup>1399</sup> During the debate on Supply, Local Government Board on 17 June 1909, KilBride noticed a sum of £2,954 for salaries for inspection under the Food and Drugs Act and yet he confirmed that 'frauds

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<sup>1392</sup> *Hansard* 5, i, 1581-2, 4 Mar. 1909.

<sup>1393</sup> *Hansard* 5, i, 1582, 4 Mar. 1909.

<sup>1394</sup> *Hansard* 5, i, 1584, 4 Mar. 1909.

<sup>1395</sup> *Hansard* 5, ii, 1446, 22 Mar. 1909.

<sup>1396</sup> *L.L.*, 15 May 1909.

<sup>1397</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1398</sup> *Hansard* 5, vi, 821-2, 15 June 1909.

<sup>1399</sup> *Ibid.*

to an enormous extent' were inflicted on the poorest class of the population and he further maintained that the work should in fact be carried out and paid for by the Local Government Board in England.<sup>1400</sup> KilBride also pointed out that the profits far outweighed the fines imposed for these frauds:

The great difficulty in cases of this kind is due to the fact that people interested in the continuance of the frauds, those who make a profit out of defrauding the working classes are themselves frequently members of the local authorities; consequently the inspectors do not interest themselves very much in bringing members of their own authority before courts of justice and having them convicted for what is not alone a gross but a very mean class of fraud.<sup>1401</sup>

An editorial in the *Leinster Leader* reported on an issue that would not normally command serious comment. A bill before parliament, the editor referred to as 'Mr KilBride's bill', which was strenuously opposed in England, was aimed at reforming a loosely worded act of 1907 which led to 'so much fraudulent' dealing in 'margarine opposed to butter'.<sup>1402</sup> This could be simply rectified by legislating that margarine be sold in its natural colour and consequently the price would also fall from the present 'purely artificial one'. The householders it argued, who purchased large quantities of margarine for 'cooking purposes' would have no objection to using white-coloured margarine.<sup>1403</sup>

In the debate on the Army (Annual) Bill of 1909, KilBride responded to Richard B. Haldane who was of the opinion that court proceedings in relation to the Army Act should be held in 'some public court' where reporters were present. KilBride whose brother Joseph was a resident magistrate stated, that 'sane people' were sent to gaol by courts 'sitting in places which were not public courts of justice' and were often in fact the private houses of resident magistrates.<sup>1404</sup> These places argued KilBride were the 'recognised' places for exercising summary jurisdiction in Ireland and 'under the Act of Edward III', the police brought men before resident magistrates in their private houses every day.<sup>1405</sup>

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<sup>1400</sup> *Hansard* 5, vi, 1171-8, 17 June 1909.

<sup>1401</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1402</sup> *L.L.*, 27 Aug. 1910.

<sup>1403</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1404</sup> *Hansard* 5, iii, 1089-90, 6 Apr. 1909.

<sup>1405</sup> *Hansard* 5, iii, 1091, 6 Apr. 1909.

Although KilBride's political activities were mainly confined to the land issues of the day, he strongly advocated other causes, one of which was the grievances of national school teachers and primary education in Ireland, which he looked upon as one of Ireland's greatest needs. In the debate on the Irish Development Grant Bill of 1903, KilBride argued that the grant system under the bill for Irish schools would be 'unfair' and consequently Irish children would be worse off than Scottish children as the bill 'stereotyped the sum of £185,000 per annum'.<sup>1406</sup> He further argued that if the Irish school population increased, Irish schools would get less per child, as was the case in England.<sup>1407</sup> Wyndham, the chief secretary replied that a great part of the 'legitimate set-off to Ireland' could have been allocated to increasing the salaries or providing pensions for national teachers, but changes had been made in the position of the national teachers of Ireland and although they were not satisfied, 'their position had been improved in recent years'.<sup>1408</sup> Finally he admitted that it would have been 'an act of extravagance' to give increased salaries to the national teachers of Ireland as there were other groups 'which deserved attention'.<sup>1409</sup>

Three years later KilBride attended a public meeting about primary education in the town hall, Kildare on 20 October 1906. The chairman of the meeting, Mr Cole, Dean of Kildare<sup>1410</sup> stressed the 'primary importance' of better salaries for teachers and 'the proper fitting out of the schools'.<sup>1411</sup> The initial yearly salary for teachers he stated was £56 for men 'and the females £44'. In some cases the teachers had houses provided but they still had to support and clothe themselves on a paltry salary. Teachers had to be 'thoroughly trained for their work' to teach all kinds of children, 'some to them very cross, others very stupid and others very bold'. Dean Cole further explained that the Archbishop of Dublin at the United Synods of Dublin, Glendalough and Kildare the previous day, had provided some 'interesting statistics', which outlined the salary structure of primary teachers:

He [Archbishop of Dublin] said that there were 5,082 male teachers. Of these 3,546 had increments, which ranged from £50 up to £86 as a maximum, and no person could expect to get that until they had been at least twelve years in the service. In the case of the female teaches there are 6,725. Of these, no less than

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<sup>1406</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxvi, 1087, 31 July 1903.

<sup>1407</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1408</sup> *Hansard 4*, cxxvi, 1090, 31 July 1903.

<sup>1409</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1410</sup> No evidence for the presence of Roman Catholic clergy at this meeting.

<sup>1411</sup> *L.L.*, 27 Oct. 1906.

5,201 had salaries which ranged from £44 as the initial to £72 as the maximum....within the last two years one hundred teachers, principally men, had left Ireland.<sup>1412</sup>

Among the many resolutions passed were that salaries should be paid to teachers monthly instead of quarterly, that pensions were entirely inadequate, that the teaching of mathematics on which triennial increments of salary largely depended was a deplorable system and that the regulations of the Commissioners of National Education in relation to the teaching of Irish was 'calculated to discourage' the teaching of 'our ancient language, the programme being unsuitable and the payment entirely inadequate'. KilBride in agreeing with the remarks of Dean Cole and other speakers, explained that more than mere salary expectations were involved and pointed to the 'larger, wider, and broader question' where no country could make progress without a proper system of education.<sup>1413</sup> He went on to compare and contrast the life and work of teachers and policemen as an instance of how unfairly teachers were and had been treated. The teacher's life, KilBride stated, was a life of drudgery but the policeman in contrast was 'the representative of the English government in Ireland' and was 'infinitely better treated than were the teachers'. The policeman received a larger salary and retired on 'infinitely more generous terms' than the teachers and if the policeman was maimed or wounded, 'was it £14 retiring pension he got?' KilBride's opinion was that the 'office' of a teacher was most onerous and the teaching of children was the 'hardest work in the world'. At one point in his long speech, KilBride in alluding to the financing of the Land Act of 1903 to the detriment of Irish education, stated that 'he would not hesitate for a moment' in saying that education was of 'far more importance than the settlement of the Irish land question'.<sup>1414</sup>

On 22 March 1909, KilBride asked the chief secretary why the teaching of Irish in Castledermot, County Kildare from 1907-8 was not as yet paid, although the teaching was judged to be satisfactory by an inspector of the national board. Birrell replied that the Commissioners of National Education informed him that the instruction wasn't given throughout the year, 'the teaching of Irish in that school not having begun until October 1907'.<sup>1415</sup> KilBride asked several question about the need for a new building for a post office in Athy, County Kildare. In March 1906 the Postmaster-General,

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<sup>1412</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1413</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1414</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1415</sup> *Hansard* 5, ii, 1473, 22 Mar. 1909.

Sydney Buxton 'recognised' the need and stated that advertisements for a new site had been issued two years previously but no offers were received at the time. Since then 'three offers' had been received and were 'under consideration'.<sup>1416</sup> On 5 April 1906 KilBride wanted to know what the difficulty was in the choice of site to which Buxton replied, that he regretted the delay but on the most suitable site, there were 'certain restrictions' in connection with a right of way and difficulties with a 'head rent' but he would proceed to acquire the site provided the title was satisfactory.<sup>1417</sup> Three months later Buxton stated that because of 'financial exigencies' the new building would not be commenced 'during the current financial year'.<sup>1418</sup>

### 5.17 TWO GENERAL ELECTIONS OF 1910

With the election of early January 1910 forthcoming, the Athy Board of Guardians were formally requested by the central executive of the United Irish League to select delegates to attend a divisional convention, at which a candidate would be selected for the constituency of south Kildare.<sup>1419</sup> Although there was dissatisfaction expressed with KilBride by some of the members, the chairman informed the meeting that the candidate would not to be selected by Athy alone, but by the constituency of south Kildare.<sup>1420</sup> As a convention of the United Irish League could not be convened because there wasn't 'sufficient branches to constitute a convention', it was suggested that the selection could be made at a meeting of the South Kildare Farmers' Protection Association. In fact the only branch of the United Irish League in Kildare was in Nurney. The clerk pointed out that the position of M.P. carried a yearly salary of £300 'and that will make the position attractive enough'. The Athy Farmers' Protection Association met on 14 December 1909 to select a candidate for south Kildare, but as the constitution of the U.I.L. had been amended the previous July to enable the calling of a convention to be 'representative of all the public bodies', it was decided to postpone their meeting, pending a divisional convention of the U.I.L.<sup>1421</sup> F. R. Jackson stated that KilBride played an important part in securing the passing of the land act and it was 'owing to his efforts that they got £7,000 from the government' when purchasing their holdings, 'which they should not and would not forget'. J. B. Deegan, vice-chairman of the urban

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<sup>1416</sup> *Hansard* 4, cliv, 397, 21 Mar. 1906.

<sup>1417</sup> *Hansard* 4, cliv, 749-50, 5 Apr. 1906.

<sup>1418</sup> *Hansard* 4, xlx, 248-9, 5 July 1906.

<sup>1419</sup> *L.L.*, 11 Dec. 1909.

<sup>1420</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1421</sup> *Ibid.* 18 Dec. 1909.



council agreed that KilBride gave valuable services to the country, and the people of south Kildare owed him 'a debt of gratitude'.<sup>1422</sup> Not all local nationalist leaders were on the side of the Irish Parliamentary Party. For instance Fr Kelly P.P. Ballyfin chose the election to voice his opposition to the party in general and in particular the candidate for King's County, William Delany.<sup>1423</sup> His opposition he claimed was not personal but simply because Delany was a member of the Irish party, 'which is now pledged to the English Liberal Party'.<sup>1424</sup> P. A. Meehan, M.P. for Queen's County, who was chairman of so many public boards, was also criticised as he 'rated himself as second only to St. Patrick'. Fr Kelly reminded his parishioners that Meehan had 'defied the bishops and priests' twenty years earlier by espousing a cause 'which he afterwards reprobated'.<sup>1425</sup> The leading members of the Irish party he claimed, such as John Redmond, John Dillon and T. P. O'Connor were 'ruffians who would ruin their country for the sake of filthy lucre'.<sup>1426</sup> Later in his speech his true motivation for this outburst emerged when he stated that the Liberal Party wanted a 'free hand' in dealing with the Church and Ireland and quoted from a letter of Prime Minister Asquith<sup>1427</sup> to the nonconformists as follows:

In the first session of this parliament popular control of all the elementary schools of England and Wales would have been an accomplished fact but for the House of Lords. We cannot in the next parliament if returned to power, allow the present injustice and the limitations or absence of popular control to continue to deface our educational system.<sup>1428</sup>

Kelly argued that the budget would 'crush' Ireland with enormous taxation and peasant proprietorship would cease to exist and would instead be substituted by a form of 'land nationalism, a scheme by which the farmer will be the slave and the government the lord and master'.<sup>1429</sup> Finally in encouraging his parishioners to vote instead for 'Mr Kavanagh' he warned them that the Irish party had taken a dangerous step in pledging themselves to Prime Minister Asquith and the Liberals as the question of Home Rule would only be dealt with 'as soon as the veto on the Lords is cleared out

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<sup>1422</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1423</sup> *Ibid.*, 8 Jan. 1910.

<sup>1424</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1425</sup> Kelly was probably referring here to Meehan supporting the Parnellites after the split in the Irish party in the 1890s.

<sup>1426</sup> *L.L.*, 8 Jan. 1910.

<sup>1427</sup> Asquith, Herbert H. (1852–1928) was a Liberal MP from 1886–1918. He re-entered the House of Commons in Feb. 1920. He was Home Secretary 1892–95, Chancellor of the Exchequer 1905–08 and Prime Minister, 1908–Dec. 1916, O'Day, xii.

<sup>1428</sup> H. H. Asquith, 10 Downing Street, Whitehall to the nonconformists, 29 Oct. 1909, quoted in *L.L.*, 8 Jan. 1910.

<sup>1429</sup> *L.L.*, 8 Jan. 1910.

of the road'.<sup>1430</sup> Despite Kelly's opposition, William Delany was elected for King's County and both John O'Connor B.L.<sup>1431</sup> and Denis KilBride were re-elected unopposed for the constituencies of north and south Kildare respectively.<sup>1432</sup> Interestingly it was reported that KilBride arrived in Athy on 19 January (the day of his election) from north Louth, where he had been electioneering for weeks to oust Tim Healy from the constituency.<sup>1433</sup> In Athy, KilBride was proposed by Father James Nolan C.C. Athy and seconded by M. J. Minch, Rockfield House, Athy.

On the night of John O'Connor's election, a celebratory public meeting was held in Naas at which a branch of the U.I.L. was formed in the town. O'Connor was supported on the platform by John Clancy M.P. for north Dublin. Clancy vehemently defended the record of the Irish Parliamentary Party in a long speech. In relation to the budget he maintained that the party had voted against it at every stage 'except the last' and voted against every resolution 'that imposed additional taxation on Ireland'.<sup>1434</sup> Continuing, Clancy informed his audience that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had excluded all agricultural land from taxation, 'but not building land'. Also half of the taxes collected in Ireland would in future be distributed amongst the local authorities and because of this, there was not 'a single town in Ireland' that would not be enabled to provide houses for the working classes 'without charging rents which they could not pay'. One final important point he addressed was what he termed the 'indiscriminate system of taxation' imposed on Ireland. By this he meant that everyone in the United Kingdom was taxed at the same rate in respect of every article. He argued that the Union guaranteed that Ireland would be taxed at a lower level than the rest of the United Kingdom and that was the position 'we have always maintained'. However, O'Connor argued that the Union had also caused the ruin of Ireland in the following way:

Since the Union her manufactures have gone. Every river in Ireland will show you along its banks the ruins of what was once a flourishing manufactory. Her agricultural people came into a lower condition than any in all England. Her agricultural labourers were declared to be not long ago to be the worst fed, the

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<sup>1430</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1431</sup> O'Connor, John (1850-1928) was returned at the by-election for Tipperary in Jan. 1885 after Parnell overturned the selection of a local man as the party candidate. O'Connor supported Parnell in Dec. 1890 and lost his seat in 1892 and also failed to gain a seat in Kilkenny city at the same election. On the death of Edmund Leamy in 1905, he was returned as MP for North Kildare, where he remained until 1918, when defeated by Daniel Buckley, Sinn Féin. He became a KC in 1918, O'Day, xxix.

<sup>1432</sup> *L.L.*, 22 Jan. 1910.

<sup>1433</sup> *L.L.*, 22 Jan. 1910.

<sup>1434</sup> Ibid.

worst housed and the worst clothed in the whole world. That statement was made by a great Englishman, a man who lost his life in Khartoum, the late General Gordon.<sup>1435</sup>

O'Day points out that the budget veto and the status of the House of Lords were important issues in the session of 1910. The Home Rulers who held the balance of power, included O'Brien's new party, the All-for-Ireland-League, knew that self-government would always be blocked by the House of Lords, unless legislation was adopted in the lower house to 'shrink' its power. Redmond's ultimatum to Asquith's government, 'no veto, no budget' on 4 March, meant that if the power of the House of Lords was not diminished by legislation in the lower house, 'the Irish party would not vote for the budget'.<sup>1436</sup> However, on 10 November 1910, while this matter was being discussed in the House of Lords, the Liberals announced the dissolution of parliament.<sup>1437</sup> The outcome of the election was broadly similar to the previous election of 1910 and Redmond still 'held a paper balance of power'.<sup>1438</sup> On 22 February 1911, the Parliament Bill was introduced, the third reading being competed in the House of Commons on 15 May and in the House of Lords on 10 August, while it received the royal assent on 18 August.<sup>1439</sup> O'Day outlines some of the significant changes included in the act, which curtailed the powers of the upper house:

It limited the House of Lords veto to three years; if a bill unaltered in major details passed through the House of Commons in three successive sessions, though not necessarily within the lifetime of the same parliament, it would become law; after the first passage, a bill could only be amended by means of 'suggestions', requiring the assent of both houses; additionally, the upper chamber surrendered its veto over finance bills [and] parliaments were reduced from seven to five years' duration.<sup>1440</sup>

The second general election of 1910 returned John O'Connor unopposed to the constituency of north Kildare.<sup>1441</sup> KilBride was also returned unopposed for south Kildare.<sup>1442</sup> The nomination ceremony at the courthouse, Athy 'excited little interest' with only a few electors present.<sup>1443</sup>

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<sup>1435</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1436</sup> O'Day, pp 231-2.

<sup>1437</sup> Ibid., p. 235.

<sup>1438</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1439</sup> Ibid., p. 242.

<sup>1440</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1441</sup> *L.L.*, 10 Dec. 1910.

<sup>1442</sup> Ibid., 17 Dec. 1910.

<sup>1443</sup> Ibid.

## 5.18 KILBRIDE FAMILY EVENTS

In July 1906, Denis KilBride's nephew, Thomas KilBride, the son of Dr James KilBride of Athy Lodge, passed his final examination in medicine in the Royal University of Ireland.<sup>1444</sup> It was reported in the *Leinster Leader* that he 'passed with distinction' and was called for further examination for honours in zoology and physics.<sup>1445</sup>

On 8 May 1909 the Local Government Board held a sworn enquiry into complaints made by J. B. Alexander Bosanquet against Denis KilBride's brother Dr KilBride, who was at that time was medical officer of the Athy dispensary district.<sup>1446</sup> The complaint was that Dr KilBride neglected to attend and treat an infant child 'of a man named Devereaux', a workman employed by Bosanquet. From the evidence it seemed that there was an epidemic of whooping cough in the Athy district and Dr KilBride had visited Devereaux's house on two occasions to treat Devereaux's children and had prescribed medicine and medical advice to the parents. Despite this the infant later died. The members of the Board of Guardians, including M. J. Minch, when called to give evidence stated that Dr KilBride was a 'kind, considerate and humane practitioner' and during the epidemic had to attend 'to upwards of fifty or sixty sufferers and was put to the pin of his collar to reach them all'.<sup>1447</sup> At a subsequent meeting of the board, when the complaint against Dr KilBride was discussed, 'there was not a dissident voice', when every member held that 'no fault could be found to lie against the doctor'. Dr KilBride swore that he hadn't anticipated the death of the infant, as in his view on the occasions he visited Devereaux's house, the sickness was 'an ordinary case of whooping cough'.<sup>1448</sup> As a result of the inquiry, Dr KilBride was exonerated by the Local Government Board, as they were of the opinion that 'there was no neglect of duty'.<sup>1449</sup>

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<sup>1444</sup> *Ibid.*, 7 July 1906.

<sup>1445</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1446</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 May 1909.

<sup>1447</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1448</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1449</sup> *L.L.*, 17 July 1909.

## CHAPTER SIX

### DENIS KILBRIDE MP FOR SOUTH KILDARE 1911 TO 1916

Redmond's Parliamentary Party, despite the increasing rustiness of its organisation in general and its electoral machinery in particular, was still clearly managing to retain the support of the majority of Irish nationalists.<sup>1450</sup>

#### 6.1 UNITED IRISH LEAGUE

Since the foundation of the United Irish League by William O'Brien in 1898 to agitate for the redistribution of large grazing farms to small farmers, KilBride had wholeheartedly supported its aims and objectives and was usually in attendance at public meetings and events organised by the league, especially in his constituency of south Kildare and adjacent constituencies. However, he was unable to be present in Castletown, Queen's County on 15 January 1911 at a public meeting organised by the U.I.L. The meeting attended by the MPs, P.A. Meehan and William Delany, was organised to muster support in the neighbourhood for the Cullen family who had been evicted by Major Hamilton, agent for Lord Castletown, and to call on the government 'to introduce a compulsory purchase Bill'.<sup>1451</sup> The meeting was a routine U.I.L. demonstration, the speakers describing the local circumstances of the eviction and calling on the landlord and the Estates Commissioners to have the family reinstated. However, Meehan made some interesting comments in his speech which had a wider focus. William O'Brien, he stated, 'who at one time was the idol of the Irish people' had become one of the 'factionists' and 'turned his back on the good work he used to do, just as he is nearing the grave'.<sup>1452</sup> O'Brien had become the leading nationalist advocate of the conciliation of Unionists but Meehan argued that he was 'attempting to ruin the country'. Meehan also scoffed that the previous election had taught O'Brien a lesson and it was a pity that 'an Irish constituency was represented by O'Brien's friend, a Tory from London, Mr Fretton Frewin'.<sup>1453</sup> In reply to critics of the 1909 budget, Meehan stated that it was one of the best that was ever passed for Ireland as it 'relieves the poor and taxes the rich'.<sup>1454</sup> It decreased the taxes on tea and sugar he said by nearly £500,000 a year and gave £2,500,000 a year in old age pensions to the poor and even though it was not an Irish party budget, yet the Irish party had 'promoted the scheme'.

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<sup>1450</sup> Hoppen, p. 148.

<sup>1451</sup> *L.L.*, 21 Jan. 1911.

<sup>1452</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1453</sup> O'Day, xxix; *L.L.*, 21 Jan. 1911.

<sup>1454</sup> *L.L.*, 21 Jan. 1911.

Meehan also argued that none of the land acts surpassed that of 1909, which contained the principle which the Irish party had long campaigned for, the principle of compulsory purchase in congested districts.<sup>1455</sup>

Land agitation had also recurred in the neighbourhood of Wolfhill<sup>1456</sup> on the ‘ill-fated Gillespie<sup>1457</sup> farm’ of Crossard, when a farm was occupied by a ‘grabber’ named Corcoran.<sup>1458</sup> The eighty-six acre farm had formerly been in the possession of a Mrs McGrath and Michael Knowles. Both were evicted in 1904 and the lands were occupied by Captain Whitely Gillespie, ‘one of the Luggacurren planters’. However, Gillespie was not left in peace. His cattle were ‘driven’ off the farm two years previously and he was awarded over £50 compensation by the county court judge, David Fitzgerald. The district council appealed this judgment, but Gillespie died suddenly before the case was heard. The Gillespie family made ‘an abortive attempt’ to sell their interest but finally ‘threw up the farm’. As no other tenant could be found to take the farm, the ‘homestead of the McGraths and the Knowles became ruins’ and ‘wandering cattle’ of the neighbourhood made good use of the pasture.<sup>1459</sup> Negotiations to have the lands divided among the uneconomic holders continued for two years and the local people were hopeful of a good outcome. However, the lands were again ‘taken’ by a man named Robert J. Corcoran, ‘the son of a well-known planter of that name in the neighbourhood’. The usual treatment for the ‘grabber’, such as driving his cattle and other forms of intimidation were meted out to Corcoran, but Corcoran took the former tenant Knowles to court for trespassing on the lands and was awarded thirteen shillings in compensation. This further incensed the local people and despite ‘a strong escort of police’, Corcoran was blocked from entering the lands by a group of ‘forty or fifty men’. The police, although later reinforced from four to seventeen men, were unable to control the situation and Corcoran’s house was later burned. Another outhouse belonging to one of Corcoran’s neighbours, named Joseph Stone was ‘pulled down’.<sup>1460</sup>

The *Leinster Leader* reported that on Sunday 9 July 1911, an ‘Aeridheacht’ or open-air concert was held in Wolfhill with an attendance of over one thousand people. The

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<sup>1455</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1456</sup> Wolfhill is a village a few miles south of Luggacurren.

<sup>1457</sup> See sub-section 6.1 in this study.

<sup>1458</sup> *L.L.*, 8 July 1911.

<sup>1459</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1460</sup> Ibid.

recitations of the visiting 'Mangan Gaelic Troupe' from Ballyfin were described as 'brimming with treason', so much so that the 'peelers' threatened to arrest those who recited 'the unsavoury lines' to them 'and who afterwards treated the force to a good supply of anti-recruiting literature to help them pass the long hours watching and guarding Corcoran of Crossard'.<sup>1461</sup> At Ballylinan Petty Sessions on 15 July, twelve men were prosecuted for an 'alleged unlawful assembly' at Crossard on 1 July in order to intimidate Robert J. Corcoran into surrendering his farm.<sup>1462</sup> The names of those prosecuted were: Patrick, John and Andrew Murphy, Michael Delaney, Michael Knowles jun., John and Francis Shiel, John Byrne, Owen Smyth, Thomas and John Brennan and John Shore.<sup>1463</sup> M. J. Minch and Dermot Hurley were sworn in as magistrates at the opening of the sessions. The court was informed that reinforcements of over forty extra police had to be brought into Wolfhill from Bagenalstown, Carlow 'and other centres'. Corcoran swore that he was prevented from going to the Clonard farm by 'men armed with sticks', that he wasn't assaulted or struck but instead called names such as 'planter, grabber, a Jew, a ragman, an Orangeman and names like that'. Sergeant McMahon R.I.C. gave evidence that the 'feeling' in Wolfhill was so great against Corcoran that a protection post had been established there. However, the magistrates decided to adjourn the case for six months and agreed with P.A. Meehan's pragmatic advice that 'no recurrence of any ill feeling' would arise in the meantime as an attempt would be made to have the lands acquired by the Estates Commissioners for restoration to the evicted tenants and those entitled to them.<sup>1464</sup>

KilBride was involved in land agitation in Brackna, King's County on 7 April 1913. A public meeting was organised by Brackna U.I.L. in support of evicted tenants and uneconomic holders, for the acquisition by the Estate Commissioners of Ballynowlart farm on Lord Ashtown's estate.<sup>1465</sup> Long speeches were made by the invited MPs., P.A. Meehan, KilBride and William Delany. A sergeant and eight constables including two police notetakers were also present. The farm in question consisted of 900 acres at Ballynowlart, which, it was reported, would be 'surrendered' by the holder Captain Trench, in compliance with the wishes of the U.I.L. However, it seemed that Ashtown wouldn't willingly sell to the tenants, so it was resolved that the Estate Commissions

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<sup>1461</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1462</sup> Ibid., 22 July 1911.

<sup>1463</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1464</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1465</sup> Ibid., 13 Apr. 1912.

would be requested to put the compulsory clauses of the Birrell Land Act into force, but in the event of failure the local people would 'resist to the last' any further letting of the farm from which their ancestors 'were evicted in defence of their religion'. Meehan explained that the eviction on this farm sixty years previously, had come about because the parish priest had removed the local Catholic children from the 'proselytising school' erected and maintained 'by the soup and bribe of the Ashtowns'. Meehan continued by repeating what Ashtown had allegedly stated on the occasion:

'If you emptied my school I will empty your church. I will drive the sixty families off the townland of Ballynowlart' and he did it...the sons of the men who made that sacrifice...are here to say that Ballynowlart must be restored to the children of the men who in the days when sacrifice was necessary made that sacrifice for their faith and country.<sup>1466</sup>

Meehan in calling attention to the strong police presence at the meeting, likened it to a revival 'of the Land League meetings', when the 'devilry officials of Dublin Castle' protected the landlord class 'against the liberties of the people' and sent the police 'to report our words and to overawe us' but despite this he was adamant that he would advise 'the people as to what is their right'. While advising his listeners to be on good terms with the police, they should also be independent of them and 'we will have them please God under Home Rule'. He also mockingly criticised the inspectors in the R.I.C. in the following words:

We all know that it is the head constables and sergeants that really do the effective work of the force and that those ornamental county inspectors and district inspectors, their principal business in life is to do the lawdy-daw, to play lawn tennis and to play golf and hockey.<sup>1467</sup>

KilBride stated that he had previous first hand knowledge that Lord Ashtown was 'one of the hardest nuts in Ireland to crack'. Ashtown he stated had refused to sell untenanted land to Catholics in Cappatagle, County Galway and wanted to remove every Catholic herd, shepherd and servant in his employment and replace them with Protestants, so as 'to keep a congregation for the church of Woodlawn'. His advice to them was that they should be united because 'bigger men than Lord Ashtown have been brought to their knees' by a combination of the people and 'every man in the parish of Clonbullogue, Brackna and the neighbouring parish of Monastereven' should enrol in

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<sup>1466</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1467</sup> Ibid.



the U.I.L and 'Ashtown will be beaten'.<sup>1468</sup> On 17 April 1913 Haviland-Burke asked Birrell, the chief secretary if after 'prolonged litigation' in connection with Lord Ashtown's estate resulting in the 'termination of the rights of Captain Trench' to the grazing of lands at Ballynowlart, that the Estates Commissioners would exercise their 'statutory powers if necessary' in dealing with the 176 occupiers under £7 valuation who applied for purchase agreements and if 'special precautions' would be taken in the interim against the creation of tenancies on unoccupied lands in the district.<sup>1469</sup> Birrell replied that Ashtown was willing to negotiate for the sale of the lands to the uneconomic holders. As the purchase arrangements would take time, Ashtown was asked to continue his arrangements for the 'temporary user of the lands' until the sale was completed.<sup>1470</sup>

Less than two months later Captain Craig asked the chief secretary for information about a 'riot' which took place on 16 May 1913, involving the police and 'a large mob of cattle drivers' on a farm near Clonbullogue, King's County. Craig stated that in spite of the presence of a force of eighteen constables, the cattle were 'violently driven' off the land, one animal being killed and some of the police and rioters being 'severely injured in the fight'.<sup>1471</sup> Birrell in confirming that the cattle drive took place and that the police were powerless to prevent the incident, stated that none of the police were seriously injured and sixteen people were arrested and 'returned for trial on a charge of riot and unlawful assembly'. KilBride was asked to give notice of a question inquiring whether the disputed 700 acres of land in question was the property of Lord Ashtown from which Captain Trench, 'one of his own relatives' was evicted.<sup>1472</sup>

Although Birrell's Land Bill<sup>1473</sup> of August 1913 provided an additional £1 million for the building of labourers' cottages in Ireland, the work of the United Irish League continued more or less as before.<sup>1474</sup> At a 'largely attended' meeting of the U.I.L. in Kildare town on 4 September 1913, the chairman Fr Campion P.P. was sorry that Denis KilBride was not available to attend. One of the resolutions expressed best wishes to

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<sup>1468</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1469</sup> *Hansard* 5, li, 2138-9, 17 Apr. 1913; KilBride was present during this written answer session in the House of Commons.

<sup>1470</sup> *Hansard* 5, li, 2138-9, 17 Apr. 1913.

<sup>1471</sup> *Hansard* 5, liii, 1018-9, 5 June 1913.

<sup>1472</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1473</sup> A bill to amend the law relating to the occupation and ownership of land in Ireland and for other purposes relating thereto.

<sup>1474</sup> *L.L.*, 9 Aug. 1913.

him 'for the devotion to duty he has shown by his constant attendance during the session in parliament'.<sup>1475</sup> KilBride was also absent from another important demonstration in Ballybrittas organised jointly by the U.I.L. and the Land and Labour Association on 14 September, which was attended by MPs, P. J. Meehan and William Delany.<sup>1476</sup> The meeting was organised to support of the twin demands for Home Rule and the acquisition of lands on Mrs Adair's estate for distribution among the uneconomic holders in the district. The parliamentary representatives were asked to communicate with Mrs Adair in furtherance of these demands.<sup>1477</sup> One of the resolutions welcomed the extra million made available for labourers' cottages but as this amount was not nearly enough, the Irish party were encouraged to press for at least another grant of five million. P. J. Meehan was of the opinion that Birrell's new Land Bill would settle the land question 'finally'. This was because additional funds were being provided and landlords who sold land at a reasonable price would get a 'big bonus'. The compulsory clauses in the Bill, which would enable the Estates Commissioners to acquire lands 'for the purpose of relieving congestion', were also to be very much welcomed he stated. In dealing with the Adair estate, J. J. Aird, County Councillor stated that Mrs Adair was recognised as a 'good' employer. There were 103 employed on her tillage farm and these employees should receive a portion of the land, if and when it was purchased by the Estates Commissioners. The chairman, Fr L. J. Kehoe C.C. agreed that relations between Mrs Adair and the labourers had been very 'cordial' and he personally knew that she had also 'expended a lot of unostentatious charity' and these facts should be remembered by all involved in future negotiations with her.<sup>1478</sup>

KilBride attended a poorly attended nationalist meeting at Crookstown, County Kildare on 21 September 1913.<sup>1479</sup> In his address he stated that opposition to Home Rule was 'nearly dead' and no serious notice was taken of Carson 'and his mock volunteer force', even within his own Unionist party. KilBride also expressed regret at the 'apathy' of Kildare for the nationalist movement which was demonstrated by the 'absence' of branches of the U.I.L. in the county.<sup>1480</sup> The last public meeting attended

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<sup>1475</sup> Ibid., 6 Sep. 1913.

<sup>1476</sup> Ibid., 20 Sep. 1913.

<sup>1477</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1478</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1479</sup> Ibid., 27 Sep. 1913.

<sup>1480</sup> Ibid.

by KilBride in 1913 was in Carlow town. This meeting, presided over by the chairman of Carlow Urban Council, Michael Governey was also attended by John Dillon M.P. and his parliamentary colleagues P. J. Meehan, Michael Molloy, William Field and M. Keating.<sup>1481</sup> An unusual aspect to this meeting was a 'slight interruption' by two Dublin suffragettes who were escorted from the meeting by the police. John Dillon complemented Asquith for his speech about Home Rule the previous Saturday, 'the speech of a statesman, a man of honour and a genuine and brave friend of Ireland'. Dillon while curiously calling for three cheers for Asquith, continued to quote from two passages from the premier's speech, the first stating that there was a constitutional case for proceeding with the Irish Government Bill in the next session of parliament 'by applying to it the operation of the Parliament Act'. The second quotation dealt with Asquith's promise 'not to betray the cause' of the vast majority of the Irish people in their demand for Home Rule. Dillon condemned the opposition of the Unionists in the north of Ireland, who made 'cowardly and savage' attacks on the Catholics and nationalists of Belfast. These attacks were not confined to Catholics he stated but 'Scotsmen and Englishmen' were 'brutally assailed' and driven from their workplaces in Belfast. These attacks he stated were only stopped when the leaders of the Unionist party in England sent word that their behaviour was 'ruinous' to their cause. The majority of Unionists in the south he claimed, were not apprehensive about Home Rule, as they knew it was 'inevitable' and were therefore 'quite prepared to make the best of' their compelled 'equality with their fellow-countrymen'. KilBride in his speech focused on County Carlow, where he claimed land purchase under the 1903 Act 'operated less' than in other counties. This he claimed was because Carlow had 'no organisation' to settle the land question with the local landlords. Finally he promised that if the landlords supported the Irish party on the Land Bill during the next session, 'they would be able to get for them payment in cash'.<sup>1482</sup>

A public meeting in Cullohill, Queen's County which KilBride was unable to attend, took place on 1 February 1914, for the purpose of progressing the breaking up of 'ranches' in the area for the usual purposes.<sup>1483</sup> A troop of the 'Cullohill Lancers'<sup>1484</sup>

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<sup>1481</sup> Ibid., 1 Nov. 1913.

<sup>1482</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1483</sup> *L.L.*, 7 Feb. 1914.

<sup>1484</sup> The Cullohill Lancers was not as the name implies a British army regiment but most likely a group of local volunteers mounted on horseback, which formed together on special occasions in the Cullohill district.

galloped throughout the surrounding countryside that morning to announce the meeting which was held in a field close to the ruins of Cullohill Castle, with the 'Lancers' forming at the edge, 'giving it a touch of picturesqueness to the assemblage'.<sup>1485</sup> Having discussed local issues, such as the acquisition of lands at Gorteenahilla, William Delany M.P. stated that the most momentous session in parliament was about to begin with a new land Bill and the Home Rule Bill and he and his colleagues 'had no doubt as to the result'.<sup>1486</sup>

## 6.2 MAIMING CATTLE (IRELAND) BILL 1914

KilBride was also prominent in debates on Irish land issues in the House of Commons. One such occasion was when Mr Rupert Gwynne introduced the Maiming Cattle (Ireland) Bill on 7 July 1914.<sup>1487</sup> The Bill aimed to increase the penalties for malicious injuries to animals in Ireland and to disqualify those convicted of such offences from election as MPs in the future. Gwynne proposed to increase fines from £20 to £50 and to allow magistrates to order 'whipping in addition or in substitution of imprisonment' for second convictions.<sup>1488</sup> KilBride stated that there would be 'no stronger supporter' than himself for outlawing the 'horrible offence' of cattle maiming. However, he first took exception to the fact that the Bill only applied to Ireland. He then reminded the House of the case of Sergeant Sheridan of Hospital, County Limerick who 'stabbed a donkey', subsequently swearing that the offence was carried out by a man named Murphy, who 'got two years penal servitude' though innocent of the charge. Sheridan's guilt was later admitted by the then chief secretary, George Wyndham in the House of Commons and the Bill he (KilBride) argued was 'a piece of hypocrisy that appealed to the Noble Lord' [Lord Robert Cecil]<sup>1489</sup> who would 'sell Ascot tickets with a view to matrimonial alliances' or 'cadging for American millionaire wives'. This was in reference to a 'former occasion' when the above comment was made by KilBride when Lord Cecil interrupted a speech of T. P. O'Connor. Cecil admitted subsequently that 'as long as I have been in the House of Commons that was the best shot I ever got'. The vote to increase the penalties in this Bill was lost by 261 to 130.<sup>1490</sup>

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<sup>1485</sup> *L.L.*, 7 Feb. 1914.

<sup>1486</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1487</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxiv, 915-21, 7 July 1914.

<sup>1488</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1489</sup> Lord Robert Cecil (1864-1954) was a son of the Marquess of Salisbury. He was an MP between 1906 and 1910 and from 1911 to 1923, becoming a member of the government in May 1915. In 1923 he was created Viscount Cecil of Charlwood; he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1937, O'Day, xv.

<sup>1490</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxiv, 915-21, 7 July 1914.

### 6.3 NATIONALIST QUEEN'S COUNTY CONVENTION 1915

KilBride was unable to attend the nationalist county Convention of 1915 at Maryborough on 21 November 1915.<sup>1491</sup> The convention demonstrated that the Irish Parliamentary Party held most of the nationalist groupings under its wing during the period. In this case the convention was attended by representatives of the United Irish League, the Land and Labour Association, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Queen's County Council and the Rural District Councils and Town Commissions of the county. The clergy were as usual also well represented. Joseph Devlin M.P. was the guest speaker and the other MPs attending were William Delany, P. J. Meehan, John Hackett and Michael Molloy. Devlin in his speech was adamant that the Irish party was not going to disappear 'at this critical moment', when so much was still at stake and as the war continued Irishmen would continue to give assistance and support 'until the war is over'. Devlin expressed satisfaction that a recent voluntary appeal made to them was 'a conspicuous success' but in keeping with nationalist demands, he was opposed to conscription because among other issues it would 'arouse bitter feelings among all classes' in Ireland. Fr Brennan C.C. Castletown, although assuring the convention that the clergy were solidly behind the Irish party, expressed one of the only negative concerns when he stated that some people in Ireland thought that 'England would betray Ireland' when the war was over.<sup>1492</sup>

### 6.4 INTIMIDATION OF PLANTERS IN LUGGACURREN 1911 TO 1914

Echoes of the 'Luggacurren dispute' were heard at the Maryborough Quarter Sessions in late October 1911 when Joseph Stone, Coolglass claimed £20 compensation for the destruction on 30 June 1911 of 'a wooded gate and walls and setting fire and destroying a thatched dwelling house containing twelve hundred weight of hay, a quantity of timber, hay forks and cattle feeding racks'.<sup>1493</sup> Valentine KilBride appeared as solicitor on behalf of Athy Number Two District Council. Stone stated that on leaving the court the previous night he was 'boohed and called a grabber'. Judge Fitzgerald in this case gave a decree for £10 to be levied off Athy Number Two District Council. In another case the same Joseph Stone sought the recovery of £5 for the breaking of a gate and wall leading to his farm at Coolglass and £25 as 'consequential damages'. This farm he

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<sup>1491</sup> *L.L.*, 27 Nov. 1915.

<sup>1492</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1493</sup> *Ibid.*, 28 Oct. 1911.

testified was one of the evicted farms on the Luggacurren estate, which was sold to him privately at an auction. There was he stated, ill feeling towards him since that time over the taking of the farm, which eventually led to the destruction of his property, which he personally witnessed. Judge Fitzgerald in his judgment stated that this was a case 'of conspiracy to damage and injure Stone' and awarded £20 against the defendants, John Ryan, Michael and Patrick Brennan and Michael and Patrick Corcoran.<sup>1494</sup>

## 6.5 ESTATES COMMISSIONERS 1913

Meanwhile the Estate Commissioners continued the slow pace of land purchase and distribution to the uneconomic holders of the country. Their annual report for the year ending 31 March 1913 reported that advances during the year had 'exceeded those made in any previous year under the land purchase acts'.<sup>1495</sup> £90,932,824 of untenanted lands sales had been administered to, £56,887,014 of which had been advanced and £527,629 was paid in cash by the purchasing tenants. On the 1 April 1912 there were 'pending direct sales' of £33,737,000, of which £5,773,633 was advanced, while 440 applications for advances of £69,028 were refused. This represented 694 'originating requests' for compulsory sales during the year, of which thirty-seven were withdrawn or refused representing 821 'separate estates'. The commissioners acquired 25,313 acres on 119 estates, of which 20,203 had been allotted to 482 evicted tenants. On the 31 March 1913, 1,700 evicted tenants 'or their representatives' were reinstated on their former holdings and 1,498 on other holdings. Despite these figures being apparently satisfactory there was a prevailing dissatisfaction expressed at meetings 'in north Kildare and throughout the midlands' where according to the *Leinster Leader* of 3 January 1914 'land tenure was unchanged for over thirty years'. The newspaper here made the following reference to the second Marquis of Clanricarde of Woodford, County Galway, who up to that time was stubbornly reluctant to do business with the Land Commission in selling his vast estates to his tenants:

We saw this in the example of Lord Clanricarde who rode the proverbial coach and four through the Land Purchase Acts, by fighting against the compulsory acquisition by the Commissioners of the estates he refused to sell to his tenants.<sup>1496</sup>

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<sup>1494</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1495</sup> *L.L.*, 3 Jan. 1914.

<sup>1496</sup> Ibid.

The editor further argued that the commissioners had not displayed any great desire to fully avail of the compulsory clauses 'vested in them...and a total of three estates compulsorily acquired in four years is not a big record to boast about'.<sup>1497</sup> Three weeks later, the same editor could not have been aware of his prophetic statement, that the call for a general election and the threat of Ulster resistance were 'merely subterfuges to gain time, in the hope that some untoward event may arise to assist them out of the straits to which they are reduced'.<sup>1498</sup> At the beginning of 1914 the introduction of a 'new' Land Bill had first to surmount the landlords' refusal to accept the principle of compulsory sales to the tenants. However, the Irish Parliamentary Party had compromised by agreeing to co-operate in paying the landlords in cash for land purchase, while also campaigning for a reduction in tenants' annuities.<sup>1499</sup> Bonar Law<sup>1500</sup>, the leader of the Conservative opposition and the Prime Minister, Asquith held secret talks on 14 October 1913, with further meetings taking place on 6 November and 10 December 1913. These meetings were held with the intention of coming to some agreement on the passing of the Home Rule Bill. However Bonar Law announced that these meetings had come to an end on 15 January 1914.<sup>1501</sup>

#### 6.6 KILDARE AND QUEEN'S COUNTY UNIONISTS 1912 TO 1914

It is important not to forget the concerns and anxieties of southern unionists to the steady sale of estates by the Estate Commissioners and more importantly to impending Home Rule legislation for Ireland in the House of Commons. This is epitomized in a letter by A. A. Mills, honorary secretary of the County Kildare Unionists Club and published in the *Leinster Leader* of 10 February 1912. The letter summed up the proceedings of a meeting of the Women's Unionist Association of South Kildare, which was held at Barrettstown Castle, home of Lord Mayo.<sup>1502</sup> Other than Lady Burrowes, the president of the branch stating that women took an interest in Home Rule 'and meant to do all in their power to oppose it', the remainder of the meeting focused almost exclusively on the speech of Lord Mayo. In his speech he stated that the country was almost 'face to face with Home Rule' but the Bill to be introduced 'shortly' was

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<sup>1497</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1498</sup> *Ibid.*, 24 Jan. 1914.

<sup>1499</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1500</sup> Andrew Bonar Law (1858-1923) was born in Canada and became an MP from 1900 to 1910 and from 1911 until he died. Law, from Ulster Presbyterian origins, was leader of the Conservative party from Nov. 1911 to Mar. 1921 and subsequently from Oct. 1922. He served in the Cabinet from May 1915 to Jan. 1919. In 1922 he became Conservative Prime Minister, O'Day, xxv.

<sup>1501</sup> O'Day, I.

<sup>1502</sup> *L.L.*, 10 Feb. 1912.

different from all previous Bills in that 'the power of the House of Lords had been destroyed'. Ireland he claimed had 'substantial advantages' by being part of 'the greatest Empire the world had ever seen', such as for instance the 'richest treasure' giving grants for fishery piers, the construction of light railways, old age pensions, land purchase and the improvement and stocking of farms. Under a Home Rule government he argued, none of these grants could be continued, as the revenue of Ireland would be 'totally inadequate' but their worst fears would be realised when a unionist minority would be 'perpetually governed by the nationalists'. Captain Cape in a short address argued that a 'new Irish government' would be composed of men with no practical experience of government and warned that it would quickly become bankrupt.<sup>1503</sup>

The Irish Unionist Alliance of Queen's County didn't agree with KilBride's sentiments that it was only a question of time until Home Rule for Ireland would be a certainty.<sup>1504</sup> A meeting of the Alliance was held in the courtyard of Colonel Cosby's residence at Cosby Hall, Stradbally on 10 June 1912, with between four and five hundred people attending. 'Brakes' and motor cars conveyed the visitors from Maryborough railway station to Stradbally with admission being 'regulated by ticket'.<sup>1505</sup> Colonel Cosby stated that thousands of people in Ireland were hostile to Home Rule and wished to remain 'under the imperial parliament and no other'. The expenditure for Ireland in the previous year, he explained exceeded revenue 'by £6,040,000' and under Home Rule, Ireland would be insolvent.<sup>1506</sup> Nobody in Ireland he claimed wanted Home Rule, not even the Irish MPs, who would prefer 'drawing £400 a year' in Westminster. They [unionists] had been born 'under the Union Jack' he stated and they 'hoped to die under it'. Mr Jefferson K.C. of the Irish Unionist Alliance, emphasised that 'Ulster was the rock' on which the Home Rule Bill would split and unless they could call a general election within two years, the 'nefarious' Home Rule Bill would become law.<sup>1507</sup> Their only hope of its rejection he stated, was the petition sent to the King, asking him to exercise his prerogative and 'save the empire intact'.<sup>1508</sup>

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<sup>1503</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1504</sup> Ibid., 1 June 1912.

<sup>1505</sup> Ibid., 15 June 1912.

<sup>1506</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1507</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1508</sup> Ibid.



In contrast to the Unionist Alliance's attitude to Home Rule, Sir Anthony A. Weldon of Kilmorony, Athy appealed to 'moderate men of all shades of politics' to be pragmatic in solving the question of Home Rule in Ireland. He argued that self-government was demanded by three quarters of the population, to which 'a deaf ear can no longer be turned' and the new Bill offered a basis for the settlement of this 'long-standing dispute'.<sup>1509</sup> His appeal to his fellow countrymen was as follows:

I would especially appeal to the landed gentry of Ireland, to put aside all past differences and prejudices and to approach the consideration of this Bill in a spirit of reasonable criticism and with a view to obtaining such amendments as will make it acceptable to all classes of Irishmen.<sup>1510</sup>

It's not surprising therefore that less than six months later, Lady Weldon was officiating at the opening of new cottages in Athy and was also elected a member of Athy Board of Guardians and Athy Number One Rural District Council.<sup>1511</sup> The *Leinster Leader* of 3 May 1913 had the following words of praise for Lady Weldon:

Her election was intended as a mark of popular appreciation of the many services rendered by herself and Sir Anthony Weldon, not only locally but in matters of national concern.<sup>1512</sup>

## 6.7 HOME RULE 1912 TO 1913

The Home Rule Bill was introduced in the House of Commons by Prime Minister Asquith on 11 April 1912.<sup>1513</sup> The main features of the Bill he explained were that an Irish parliament was to be established consisting of two houses, the House of Commons and a Senate to legislate for Ireland, but supreme authority was to remain with Westminster in regard to important matters such as 'territorial limitations, the Crown, the army and navy, peace and war and treaties'. The House of Commons was to consist of 164 elected members from constituencies in Ireland, 128 from county constituencies, thirty-four from the boroughs and two from the universities. The Senate consisting of forty nominated members holding office for eight years was to be nominated at first by the 'Imperial parliament' and after eight years the Viceroy was to make the nominations. The Irish representatives at Westminster were to number forty-two with a right to vote on all matters, but Dublin University was to cease its representation at Westminster. The 'religious disability' in selecting Irish Viceroys was to be removed

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<sup>1509</sup> *L.L.*, 26 Oct. 1912.

<sup>1510</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1511</sup> *Ibid.*, 3 May 1913.

<sup>1512</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1513</sup> *Ibid.*, 13 Apr. 1912.

thus opening up the post to Catholics. The Dublin Metropolitan Police (D.M.P.) were to be controlled by the Dublin parliament but the R.I.C. force would only come under Irish control after a period of six years and in the intervening period, the cost of the R.I.C. would be paid by Westminster. All financial Bills were to originate at Westminster, which could also alter any act of the Irish parliament.<sup>1514</sup>

The editorial of the *Leinster Leader* of 20 April 1912, while remaining sceptical of some of the main features of the Home Rule Bill, which has just passed its first reading, believed it was ‘as good a Bill as Ireland could ever hope, or can ever hope to gain by parliamentary agitation’ and would be ‘the groundwork of a workable measure’.<sup>1515</sup> Nationalists welcomed the news about the introduction of Home Rule with bonfires ‘along the hills of Queen’s County and west Wicklow’, while in the towns and villages people celebrated in a ‘quiet and dignified way’ by marching in parades. In Athy, St. Michael’s Temperance Band marched through the town playing national airs. M. J. Minch, chairman of Kildare County Council was quoted as ‘heartily’ approving of the Bill, “which in its fiscal aspects contains everything essential for ultimate fiscal autonomy”.<sup>1516</sup>

KilBride was reported to be seriously ill in his London lodgings in April 1912.<sup>1517</sup> At first it was feared that he had pneumonia but this was dispelled when a specialist was called to treat him. The *Freeman’s Journal* reported that he was suffering ‘from a sharp attack of congestion of the lungs’ which would necessitate him missing the second reading of the Home Rule Bill.<sup>1518</sup> After six weeks sickness KilBride was able to return to Ireland accompanied by his niece.<sup>1519</sup> On his return to Athy, the local branch of the A.O.H. presented him with an address of welcome. In his reply, KilBride said that he regretted being absent from the House of Commons during the second reading of the Home Rule Bill. Before departing to the residence of his brother, Dr James KilBride at the Lodge, Athy with his nephew Dr John Lane KilBride and then to Luggacurren, he assured the reception committee about the future of Ireland under the new Home Rule Bill:

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<sup>1514</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1515</sup> Ibid., 20 Apr. 1912.

<sup>1516</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1517</sup> Ibid., 4 Apr. 1912.

<sup>1518</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1519</sup> Ibid., 1 June 1912.

They had now arrived at the stage in that long continued fight when the success of their cause was assured. It was only a question of time, a very bitter time, until Irishmen would have the right to manage their own affairs in their own land.<sup>1520</sup>

Despite Carson's<sup>1521</sup> motion on 1 January 1913 to exclude Ulster from Home Rule, the House of Commons passed the Home Rule Bill by an 'unprecedented majority of 110' on 16 January.<sup>1522</sup> The second reading of the Bill in the House of Lords commenced on 27 January but according to an editorial in the *Leinster Leader*, it was 'confronted' by an 'attitude of absolute negation'.<sup>1523</sup> However in this case the power of the Lords, 'handed down from remote ages' to overturn the will of the lower chamber had disappeared with the destruction of the veto.<sup>1524</sup> The editorial continues:

All that the House of Lords can do is to delay the passage of Home Rule, or at best or worst, precipitate a general election but they cannot kill the Bill, the principle of which will triumph sooner or later.<sup>1525</sup>

The Marquess of Zetland argued that Ulster loyalists, who 'represented the wealth and industry of Ireland' abhorred the idea of Home Rule. In contrast, Lord Dunraven called for pragmatic compromise, instead of total hostility to the Bill and proceeded to suggest 'his own panacea for curing the ills of Ireland' through a policy of devolution.<sup>1526</sup> On 30 January the Bill was rejected by the upper house.<sup>1527</sup> The following day the Ulster Volunteers were formed.<sup>1528</sup> Synchronising with these events was the 'capture' of the constituency of Derry by a presbyterian Home Ruler, David C. Hogg. As a direct result the *Leinster Leader* maintained that Ulster returned 'a majority of Home Rulers to the British parliament' and because of this, a firm determination

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<sup>1520</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 June 1912.

<sup>1521</sup> Sir Edward Henry Carson, (1854-1935), was a lawyer and political leader. Educated at Portarlington school and TCD, he was called to the Bar in 1877 and built up a large practice and became Solicitor-General for Ireland 1892. He was MP for University of Dublin 1892-1918. He joined the Unionist government in 1900 as Solicitor-General and received a knighthood. In parliament he vigorously opposed any move to weaken the links between England and Ireland, and became leader of the Irish Unionists in 1910. When Liberals under Asquith introduced the Home Rule Bill (1912), Carson took a leading part in the formation of the Ulster Volunteers, who drilled openly to show that they were prepared to resort to force of arms rather than come under an Irish parliament in Dublin....Boylan, pp 59-60.

<sup>1522</sup> O'Day, 1; *L.L.*, 18 Jan. 1913.

<sup>1523</sup> *L.L.*, 18 Jan. 1913.

<sup>1524</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 Feb. 1913.

<sup>1525</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1526</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1527</sup> O'Day, 1.

<sup>1528</sup> *Ibid.*

should be maintained to carry Home Rule through all its remaining stages, despite the opposition of the House of Lords and Carson's Unionists.<sup>1529</sup>

Two weeks after Carson's motion in parliament to exclude Ulster from the Home Rule Bill on 1 January 1913, the Bill passed its third reading in the House of Commons, which the House of Lords rejected on 30 January.<sup>1530</sup> In connection with this, the Athy branch of the A.O.H. unanimously adopted a resolution in mid-March 1913 congratulating Redmond and the Irish Party and in particular expressed their gratitude to KilBride, 'for his constant attendance in the House of Commons and the devotion he has shown in helping the passage of the Home Rule Bill through parliament'.<sup>1531</sup> It was also reported that the ladies auxiliary branch of the order continued 'to do excellent work' and were busily engaged making dresses for the 'poorer classes of children, who are preparing for the making of their first communion in the parish'.<sup>1532</sup>

In anticipation of Professor T. M. Kettle<sup>1533</sup> attending a Home Rule demonstration in Newbridge on 6 June 1913, the *Leinster Leader* featured an appreciation, in which it was stated that Kettle 'as a philosopher, a literateur, an economist and a politician', had prominently involved himself in 'every modern progressive movement' in Ireland.<sup>1534</sup> On the day of the demonstration it was discovered that there was to be a service in the presbyterian chapel, adjacent to the hall hired for the meeting. So as not to disturb the service, the Newbridge A.O.H., who were organising the event, decided to hold their meeting 'out of doors and at much inconvenience had a platform erected opposite the town hall'.<sup>1535</sup> The meeting was described as one of 'enthusiasm' and 'confidence in the coming triumph of Home Rule' with an 'amused attitude towards the Ulster theatricals'. Kettle didn't disappoint his audience when he gave a speech, which dealt mainly with the 'alleged' objections to Home Rule by unionists in the north and south of Ireland. One such objection was that the Catholics in Ireland would establish religious tyranny over the minority of the population. They would oppress nobody he promised, but were

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<sup>1529</sup> *L.L.*, 8 Feb. 1913.

<sup>1530</sup> O'Day, I.

<sup>1531</sup> *L.L.*, 22 Mar. 1913.

<sup>1532</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1533</sup> Kettle, Thomas M. (1880-1916) was son of Andrew Kettle, a leading associate of Parnell. He was called to the Bar in 1906 and was Professor of Economics in the National University from 1910. He was an MP between July 1906 and Dec. 1910, being regarded as a leading intellectual and something of a young turk. He died on 9 Sept. 1916 on the Western Front, O'Day, xxiv.

<sup>1534</sup> *L.L.*, 7 June 1913.

<sup>1535</sup> *Ibid.*, 14 June 1913.

campaigning instead to 'revive industry and to redeem labour'. Referring to a meeting of the Presbyterian Assembly days before, Kettle denounced a resolution which imposed a ban or boycott on Presbyterians supporting Home Rule, which 'embarrassed, outraged and cast into fetters every free man within their folds'. Episcopalians he stated were no better and the contributions of the Church of Ireland had been a 'blasphemous' prayer 'intended, devised and calculated to call out every forgotten ghost of religious bigotry'. In an amused tone, he stated that the problem of Ulster was of 'wooden rifles', imported genuine although old-fashioned rifles from Italy..imported papist rifles to maintain the Protestant ascendancy'. He didn't know whether to take loyalists seriously, especially when they promised to 'rise in rebellion' if Home Rule were granted to Ireland but they 'were going to die in the last ditch'.<sup>1536</sup> Carson and Craig<sup>1537</sup> he argued and their 'nigger minstrel band would act upon the old and familiar principle of absenteeism' and:

When Sir Edward Carson pulled the hair-trigger of Ulster hooliganism, he would pull it with a long string, the other end of which would be in London. When guns were fired in Ulster, Sir Edward Carson would fire them by the aid of Marconi wireless telegraphy and since he got 1,700 guineas for defending the managing director of the Marconi Company, he supposed he might count upon special facilities.<sup>1538</sup>

Kettle maintained that the Orangemen in the north of Ireland, who objected to Home Rule had been 'corrupted by misrepresentations of history' and prejudicial appeals 'by every base and unworthy device that politics had ever been able to construct'. The 'so-called Ulster problem' he argued had to be dealt with as any other state would deal with any insubordinate faction that challenged its authority and those involved in insubordination should be either 'shot, hanged or sent to penal servitude'. Kettle finally assured his listeners that Home Rule was 'rounding Tattenham Corner on the inside, three lengths to the good and that no disqualification was possible'.<sup>1539</sup>

The *Daily Telegraph* and several other newspapers including the *Leinster Leader* of 23 May 1914, published a letter calling for a conference of Irishmen, before or after the

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<sup>1536</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1537</sup> Sir James Craig (1871-1940) was returned as a Unionist for east Down in 1906, holding this seat until 1918 when he moved to the mid-Down constituency. He resigned in June 1921 on becoming Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, a post he retained until his death on 24 Nov. 1940. Craig was made a baronet in 1918 and created Viscount Craigavon in 1927, O'Day, xvii.

<sup>1538</sup> *L.L.*, 14 June 1913.

<sup>1539</sup> Ibid.

passing of the Home Rule Bill. The eight signatures to the letter were George F. H. Berkley, Roger Casement, Darrell Figgis, Alice Stopford Green, Eoin MacNeill,<sup>1540</sup> George W. Russell (A.E.), E. A. Stopford and Alex Wilson. In the letter they argued that no group of Irishmen had called for the partition of Ireland and if enacted 'every part of the country would suffer, both materially and spiritually'.<sup>1541</sup> At the annual meeting of the Women's Unionist and Tariff Reform Association, Sir Edward Carson stated that he heard a lot about 'offers and counter offers' but he claimed the only offer or counter offer made was in the House of Commons, an offer he rejected 'as a hypocritical sham' and if Home Rule was offered in Ulster 'we should say "never"'.<sup>1542</sup> Asquith had announced on 12 May that an Amending Bill was to be brought forward and introduced into the House of Lords 'in the hope and with the object, that agreement might be attained'.<sup>1543</sup> However, the Home Rule Bill passed its third reading in the House of Commons on 25 May 1914 by a majority of seventy-seven.<sup>1544</sup> Asquith in a rebuttal to Bonar Law's objections, stated that the amended proposals would eventually come back further 'amended and transformed' from the House of Lords but the government would have the 'final and determining voice in the controversy'.<sup>1545</sup> William O'Brien in his final speech before the vote, was greeted with cries of 'divide' and subsequently cheered by Unionists when he stated:

Mr Redmond spoke as if the technical passage of this Bill would be a joy day for Ireland as a nation. It would be one of the greatest frauds that ever was perpetrated, little short of a cruel practical joke at the expense of the intelligence of the Irish people, as well as of their feelings. If the Bill ever became an act it would be borne as a rope round Ireland's neck. It was a Bill for the murder of Ireland and he would have neither hand, act or part in it.<sup>1546</sup>

As the 1911 Parliament Act could negate a rejection in the House of Lords, the Home Rule Bill was for all intents and purposes safe to proceed onto the statute book, once it received Royal assent. In the euphoria the *Leinster Leader* thought 'it was one of

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<sup>1540</sup> Eoin MacNeill (1867-1945) scholar and patriot was originally a law clerk who studied early Irish history. One of the founders of the Gaelic League in 1893, editing *Gaelic Journal*. Professor of early Irish history UCD in 1908. Chairman of council that formed Irish Volunteers in 1913, later becoming chief of staff. Was against an armed rising in 1916 and issued an order countermanding the mobilisation. Arrested after the rising and sentenced to penal servitude for life, but released in 1917. Elected MP for NUI. Supported Anglo-Irish Treaty in 1921 and became Minister for Education in the first free state government. Resigned ministry and lost his seat in 1927, later becoming chairman of Manuscripts Commission and retired from politics to devote himself to scholarship, Boylan, p. 259.

<sup>1541</sup> *L.L.*, 23 May 1914.

<sup>1542</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1543</sup> O'Day, 30 May 1914.

<sup>1544</sup> O'Day, 1; *L.L.*, 23 May 1914.

<sup>1545</sup> *Ibid.*, 30 May 1914.

<sup>1546</sup> *Ibid.*

the most important pieces of legislation ever framed for peace and progress and that ever triumphed over tyranny, regression and class hatred'. When a 'wire' was received bringing the news from London to Newbridge, there were 'memorable scenes of rejoicing' and a special meeting of the Newbridge Town Commissioners was immediately called, where the members were each congratulated on their entry into the chamber. The scene in Newbridge that day could epitomise the events in many towns and villages in Ireland on the occasion. Enthusiastic resolutions were passed congratulating the leader John E. Redmond and members of the Irish Parliamentary Party, bands marched through the main streets followed by torchlight processions with 'brilliant illumination' of important buildings, tar barrels blazed while speeches by local leaders were made at a meeting in the square, 'the eager uplifted faces of thousands' overcome by the momentous event just taking place, the emotion well captured by the editor of the *Leinster Leader* in the following words:

The swell of the chorus outside showed a passionate intensity which was one of love for the old land and the joy which was felt on seeing the dawn at last on the fair sweet face of our sireland – a dawn which now promised to break into glorious day.<sup>1547</sup>

The celebrations continued in the neighbouring towns and villages of Kildare, Ballymore, Dunlavin, Naas, Kilcullen, Sallins and Nurney 'where the entire district to a man, assembled to show their rejoicing at the passing of the Home Rule Bill'.<sup>1548</sup> The Amending Bill that Asquith first announced on 12 May was introduced into the House of Lords on 23 June 1914.<sup>1549</sup> Failing unionists putting forward their desired amendments, Asquith was determined to frame the Amending Bill, 'which came as a surprise to all parties'.<sup>1550</sup> The Bill provided an exclusion for counties for a period of six years from the first meeting of the Irish parliament.<sup>1551</sup> Within three months of the passing of the act, any county in Ulster after organising a poll proving a majority in favour of exclusion, would not be bound by the Government of Ireland Act. At the end of six years, Parliament would be bound to consider whether the excluded areas would

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<sup>1547</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1548</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1549</sup> O'Day, l.

<sup>1550</sup> *L.L.*, 27 June 1914.

<sup>1551</sup> O'Day, p. 260; *L.L.*, 20 June 1914.

remain as they were, or whether inclusion should take place.<sup>1552</sup> On 2 July the House of Lords substituted the permanent exclusion of nine counties without a referendum.<sup>1553</sup>

At a Cabinet committee meeting on 7 September 1914, it was decided to proceed with Home Rule and a suspending bill, which immediately met with Unionist and Conservative anger and protest.<sup>1554</sup> On 14 September 1914 Asquith gave notice that the two acts (Government of Ireland and Welsh Church Acts of 1914) would not come into operation for a year and if the war was prolonged beyond that period 'not later' than the end of the war.<sup>1555</sup> The Press Association stated that the Irish unionist members 'shared fully the resentment expressed by Lord Lansdowne in the House of Lords' that the government would place the Home Rule and Welsh Disestablishment Bills on the statute book. Lansdowne duly gave notice in the House of Lords of the introduction of a Bill suspending 'controversial legislation' while the war continued. On 15 September Asquith stated that the Amending Bill could not be 'satisfactorily or adequately or even reasonably' discussed and therefore the second reading would have to be postponed, but as the 'Irish and Welsh Bills' had gone beyond the control of parliament, they 'must be passed or be prejudiced'.<sup>1556</sup> The difficulties expressed at the Buckingham Conference he stated 'were for the time being unbridgeable and irreconcilable' and therefore a moratorium was the only way to deal with the situation. Bonar Law subsequently led the unionists out of the House of Commons and Asquith stated that Home Rule would not come into operation until general consent was arrived at and further that it would be 'absolutely unthinkable' to force Ulster into accepting Home Rule.<sup>1557</sup> While O'Day points out that on 18 September 1914 an act suspending Home Rule for one year or the duration of the war was followed by the Government of Ireland Act, he also states that 'Home Rule was a legal, if not an actual reality'.<sup>1558</sup> The *Leinster Leader* noted that although this was a truly momentous event, yet the national rejoicing and spontaneous celebrations experienced after the success of the previous stages was 'altogether absent on the royal assent being given'.<sup>1559</sup> The events of the war would necessitate the conflict

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<sup>1552</sup> *L.L.*, 27 June 1914.

<sup>1553</sup> O'Day, p. 260.

<sup>1554</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 261

<sup>1555</sup> *L.L.*, 19 Sept. 1914.

<sup>1556</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1557</sup> O'Day, p. 261.

<sup>1558</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1559</sup> *L.L.*, 26 Sept. 1914.



in Ireland lying dormant 'but not forgotten'.<sup>1560</sup> In the meantime north and south would 'vie against each other in providing fighting material for the front', united to an extent in a common cause which might hold hope for the future.<sup>1561</sup>

## 6.8 THE IRISH NATIONAL VOLUNTEERS AND ULSTER VOLUNTEERS

Although KilBride was a constitutional nationalist who believed in purely peaceful methods of obtaining Home Rule for Ireland, he and the Irish Parliamentary Party supported the formation and development of the National Volunteer movement in direct opposition to the Ulster Volunteers whose aim was to obstruct the passage of Home Rule for Ireland. On 9 July 1914 Birrell, the chief secretary in answer to a question stated that the Ulster Volunteers commenced in early January 1913, the Irish Volunteers on the 25 November 1913 and the proclamation against the importation of arms was put into force on 4 December 1913.<sup>1562</sup> Birrell gave the approximate strength of the Irish National Volunteers as 132,00 and 85,000 in the Ulster Volunteers.<sup>1563</sup> Despite the arms proclamation 35,000 rifles were imported successfully into Larne, County Antrim for the Ulster Volunteer Force from 24 to 25 April 1914.<sup>1564</sup> Asquith announced that the government would 'take steps' to deal with those involved but the *Leinster Leader* in demanding fairness had the following opinion:

Contrast the dilatoriness of the government in setting the law in motion in the north with the promptitude with which nationalist agitators have been clapped into prison and in numerous cases the sacrifices of whose lives have been demanded in a vindication of the law for offences which were trivial compared with the open defiance of all law and constituted authority which marked the gun-running exploit.<sup>1565</sup>

Despite a series of cabinet meetings on the matter, the organisers of the gun-running episode were not prosecuted.<sup>1566</sup> Previous to this from 20 to 25 March 1914, Edward Carson's hand was strengthened, when officers in the Curragh camp stated their intention to resign rather than use force against Ulstermen in imposing Home Rule upon the province. This episode became generally known as the Curragh incident or Curragh mutiny.<sup>1567</sup> Hoppen points out when the Irish Volunteers formed in the aftermath of the

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<sup>1560</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 Jan. 1915.

<sup>1561</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1562</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxiv, 1214, 9 July 1914.

<sup>1563</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxiv, 1215, 9 July 1914.

<sup>1564</sup> O'Day, 1.

<sup>1565</sup> *L.L.*, 2 May 1914.

<sup>1566</sup> O'Day, 1, 260.

<sup>1567</sup> *Ibid.*

Curragh mutiny, they were ‘rapidly penetrated by the IRB’ and were soon ‘importing arms from abroad’.<sup>1568</sup>

The formation of a corps in Athy on 14 May 1914, followed a specially organised meeting, addressed by The O’Rahilly<sup>1569</sup> in the town hall. O’Rahilly argued that the mistake of Grattan’s life was the disbandment of the volunteers ‘but they were determined that a second mistake would not be made in Ireland’ because in his view, as had been proved by the Ulster Volunteers, ‘the ultimate arbiter of human destiny was the man with the gun’. He further warned that:

If the national demand of the overwhelming majority of the Irish people was refused the volunteers proposed to make things remarkably unpleasant and to make the government of Ireland under the old system an absolute impossibility.<sup>1570</sup>

That same day in Athy ‘several hundred young men’ joined the Kildare regiment of the National Volunteers by forming a corps in the town.<sup>1571</sup> The declaration signed on enrolment was as follows:

Oglaig na h-Éireann [Irish Volunteers]

I, the undersigned, desire to be enrolled in the Irish Volunteers formed to secure and maintain the rights and liberties common to all the people of Ireland without distinction of creed, class or politics.<sup>1572</sup>

In the months that followed the Home Rule celebrations of May 1914, many public meetings presided over by clergy and local public representatives were held to establish corps of the Irish National Volunteers. Support from the clergy was strong, as exemplified in a letter to the Naas meeting of the volunteers of 31 May, when Fr Donovan of Kill encouraged the formation of ‘rifle clubs’, where men would be trained to shoot, because ‘a man who can’t shoot straight is no use in Ireland today’.<sup>1573</sup> L. J.

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<sup>1568</sup> Hoppen, p. 147.

<sup>1569</sup> The O’Rahilly was born Michael Joseph Rahilly (1875-1916). He was educated at Clongowes Wood College, Clane 1890-3. After researching family tree he reverted to the old spelling of his surname ‘O’Rahilly’, noting that he was eldest male line and so adopted the style ‘The O’Rahilly’, co-founder of the Irish Volunteers, during the 1916 rising while evacuating the GPO, O’Rahilly was shot leading a charge up Moore Street and died in Sackville Lane, now O’Rahilly Parade. Yeats wrote poem ‘The O’Rahilly’ in his memory, <http://www.compapp.dcu.ie/~humphrys/FamTree/ORahilly/the.orahilly.html>

<sup>1570</sup> *L.L.*, 16 May 1914.

<sup>1571</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1572</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1573</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 June 1914.

Kettle<sup>1574</sup> explained that a commitment to the Volunteers necessitated 'turning up at drills and rifle practices' involving the sacrifice of other pursuits, to become 'efficient soldiers in the Irish national army'.<sup>1575</sup> John Shiel J.P., M.C.C. who chaired the Kildare demonstration of the volunteer movement at Gibbet Rath, adjacent to the Curragh Camp on 7 June 1914, explained the significance of the place chosen as 'a historic spot where our forefathers died for freedom in 1798'.<sup>1576</sup> Among those who addressed the meeting were the Kildare MPs KilBride and John O'Connor, The O'Rahilly and Dr Rowan. The O'Rahilly who was there to represent the provisional committee of the Volunteers, explained that the formation of the Volunteers arose from a conversation he had with Eoin MacNeill about six months previously and in the intervening period, the movement had spread to all thirty-two counties in Ireland, with corps 'in 300 out of the 340 baronies'. Continuing The O'Rahilly stated that:

They had on the committee members of the A.O.H., U.I.L., Sinn Féin and the Gaelic League, men who were moderate in their political views, men who were advanced in their views and men who never had any political views at all and men who were simply volunteers.<sup>1577</sup>

One of the most essential features The O'Rahilly noted for the success of the volunteers was the possession of arms and therefore 'the arms proclamation had to go'. KilBride welcomed every man of 'Irish blood' into the movement regardless of what creed they belonged to, provided they were 'prepared to do a man's part'. In keeping with earlier pronouncements, KilBride pointed out that the volunteer movement was not an aggressive one but 'would not permit the ascendancy of any class or creed in the future'.<sup>1578</sup> That night another corps of the Volunteers was formed at a meeting in Celbridge attended by P.H. Pearse<sup>1579</sup> and L.J. Kettle.<sup>1580</sup> Kettle boasted that the Volunteers were going to have arms, 'proclamation or no proclamation' while Pearse explained that the only politics of the volunteers was to fight 'when Ireland wanted it to

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<sup>1574</sup> Son of Andrew J. Kettle, one of the principal founders and organisers of the Land League and brother of Thomas Kettle who joined the Irish National Volunteers on their formation in 1913 and in July 1914 was sent to Belgium to obtain arms. Thomas was killed in France at the battle of Somme in Sept. 1916 as a commissioned officer in the Dublin Fusiliers, Boylan, p. 208.

<sup>1575</sup> *L.L.*, 6 June 1914.

<sup>1576</sup> *Ibid.*, 13 June 1914.

<sup>1577</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1578</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1579</sup> Patrick H. Pearse (1879-1916) was the founder of a Gaelic speaking school and active advocate of Irish cultural ideas. He was the Provisional President of the Irish Republic in 1916 and chief author of the Proclamation of the Irish Republic. Accused and found guilty as one of the 1916 rebel leaders, he was shot by firing squad on 3 May, O'Day, xxx-i.

<sup>1580</sup> *L.L.*, 13 June 1914.

fight for her'. Pearse continued that the government's proposed Amending Bill could not be allowed and if guns were imported into the north of Ireland, 'that was a game two could play at'.<sup>1581</sup>

In the House of Commons on 9 July 1914 KilBride asked Birrell the chief secretary how many soldiers and ex-soldiers belonged to the forces of the Irish National Volunteers and Ulster Volunteers respectively. Birrell replied that there were a 'considerable number of reservists in both forces' but he believed that there were more in the National Volunteers. KilBride's estimate of ex-soldiers and reservists in the volunteers was 38,000.<sup>1582</sup>

Several meetings of the volunteers were held during the summer of 1914 at places such as Ballacolla, Queen's County, Ballyteigue, County Wicklow and the Athy meeting attended by KilBride was held on 19 July.<sup>1583</sup> Arrangements were made earlier in the day to establish a branch of the Irish Ladies Council and this meeting was addressed by 'Miss Bloxham, Miss Crowley and Mrs Mary M. Colum B.A'.<sup>1584</sup> Large numbers of men 'all wearing their bandoliers' arrived by special trains to Athy from Queen's County and south Kildare that day and it was estimated that there were at least 5,000 present. 'Professor' McDonagh<sup>1585</sup> who represented the executive committee of the Volunteers, informed the meeting that 'with inside knowledge' he knew that guns had been landed in many parts of Ireland and promised 'that where we want to do it we have been quite as effective [as the Ulster Volunteers]'.<sup>1586</sup> KilBride noted that the following day 'Monday would be the most fateful day' in the history of Ireland in 114 years, as the Irish party would then decide what action to take about the Amending Bill, giving it 'a decent burial' and that if the session then came to an end, the Home Rule Bill would 'automatically go on the statute book'. KilBride and P. J. Meehan M.P. were

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<sup>1581</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1582</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxiv, 1215, 9 July 1914.

<sup>1583</sup> *L.L.*, 25 July 1914.

<sup>1584</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1585</sup> Presumably this was Thomas McDonagh (1878-1916) poet and revolutionary, born in Cloughjordan, county Tipperary; educated at Rockwell College, Cashel; later taught in Kilkenny and Fermoy. While learning Irish on the Aran Islands he met P. H. Pearse and in 1908 helped him to found St. Enda's School in Ranelagh, McDonagh becoming the first teacher on the staff. He later graduated from UCD and was appointed assistant in the English department. He joined the Irish volunteers as soon as they were formed in 1913 and became director of training the following year. He joined the IRB in 1915 and was in command of Jacob's factory during the 1916 rising. He was one of the signatories of the proclamation and was shot by firing squad on 3 May 1916, Boylan, p. 242.

<sup>1586</sup> *L.L.*, 25 July 1914.

kept busy that day (19 July) as they also attended another large demonstration of Volunteers at Modubeagh, close to KilBride's home in Luggacurren.<sup>1587</sup>

The place of meeting was close to the 'old colliery workings' with over 500 attending from the neighbouring corps of Ballickmoyler, Newtown, Clough, Stradbally, The Pike, Chatsworth, Killeshin and Knock.<sup>1588</sup> The meeting was also attended by Lieutenant Liam Mellows<sup>1589</sup> and Seán MacDiarmada,<sup>1590</sup> representing the executive committee of the volunteers.<sup>1591</sup> Fr Wilson C.C. Luggacurren explained to the meeting that KilBride and Meehan had come at great inconvenience to themselves and only 'by a great stretch' had Redmond consented to their absence but they had to return to London that night, so as not to miss a division in the House of Commons. KilBride he said was welcome back in his native parish and was 'never found wanting' in forwarding the Irish cause. KilBride reminded his friends and neighbours that times had changed from 1887 when 'the last great military movement' they witnessed was the 'whole Shropshire regiment' and 600 armed R.I.C. with 'three ambulance wagons' and the battering ram in Luggacurren. The aim on that occasion he stated was 'to drive the native Irishman from his native soil' exchanging them with 'the stranger and the foe'. He further stated that he was very proud to see the day of freedom 'from foreign

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<sup>1587</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1588</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1589</sup> Liam Mellows (1895-1922) born and educated in county Galway; joined Na Fianna founded by Constance Markievicz; arrested 1915 and interned for four months in Mountjoy Gaol. Arrested again in early 1916, deported to England and interned in Reading Gaol but escaped. Commanded Western Division of the IRA during 1916 Rising. Escaped to America and imprisoned without trial in The Tombs, New York on a charge of partaking in an Irish-German plot to sabotage the allied forces during the First World War; released 1918 and went on a lecture tour of America, collecting money for the IRA before returning to Ireland in 1919; IRA Director of Supplies during War of Independence. Mellows opposed 1921 Anglo-Irish Treaty and on 25 June 1922 he and fellow republicans, Rory O'Connor, Joseph McKelvey and Dick Barrett, among others took over the Dublin Four Courts, but surrendered after two days bombardment; imprisoned in Mountjoy Gaol where Mellows and O'Connor contributed to a handwritten notebook of short stories, poems and articles dated 26 Oct. 1922 and entitled 'The Book of Cells'. Mellows, O'Connor, McKelvey and Barrett were executed by Free State firing squad on 8 Dec. 1922, [http://www.searcs\\_web.com/mellows.html](http://www.searcs_web.com/mellows.html).

<sup>1590</sup> Seán Mac Diarmada (1884-1916) a revolutionary, born in Kiltyclogher, county Leitrim; emigrated at sixteen to Glasgow, worked as gardener and tram conductor. Moved to Belfast in 1912 as conductor and barman; joined Gaelic League and with Bulmer Hobson helped to organise the Dungannon Clubs in Ulster for the IRB. Appointed treasurer of supreme council IRB in 1906; full time organiser for Sinn Féin in 1907. Manager *Irish Freedom* 1910 for IRB. Crippled with poliomyelitis in 1912, but continued to work in the republican movement; elected to provisional committee of Irish Volunteers 1913; member military council in 1915 to plan a rising. Fought in GPO Dublin during 1916 rising; court-martialed and shot by firing squad on 12 May, Boylan, p. 241.

<sup>1591</sup> *L.L.*, 25 July 1914.

domination' when they could shape their own destinies – 'Esto perpetua! God save Ireland'.<sup>1592</sup>

The following few days as KilBride had pointed out earlier in Athy and Modubeagh, were to be eventful, if not in the way he and the Irish Parliament Party had envisaged. The impasse created with the unionists, whose co-operation was necessary for the passing of the Amending Bill, was discussed between Asquith and King George V, who suggested an all-party conference which would hopefully settle the issue. The subsequent Buckingham Palace Conference of 21 to 24 July included Asquith, Lloyd George,<sup>1593</sup> Lord Lansdowne, Bonar Law, Redmond, Dillon, Carson and Craig<sup>1594</sup>. However the conference disbanded without agreement on the question of the area to be excluded and the period for exclusion was not discussed.<sup>1595</sup>

On Monday 26 July 1914, the Irish National Volunteers attempted to bring guns ashore at Howth but British troops of the King's Own Scottish Borderers, having failed to impound the weapons, later on that same day fired on a crowd at Bachelor's Walk in Dublin, killing four people and wounding thirty-seven.<sup>1596</sup> The soldiers claimed they only fired when they were assaulted on their way back to their barracks. On 4 August 1914 Britain declared war on Germany. O'Day argues that the declaration of war altered the Unionists' stance from an offensive to a defensive posture, the effect being to enact the original bill in the face of Unionist opposition.<sup>1597</sup> Asquith accepted an offer from Carson and Bonar Law to postpone the Amending Bill on 30 July. On 5 August Asquith informed Redmond that his intention to 'see the bill on the statute book this session is

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<sup>1592</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1593</sup> David Lloyd George (1863-1945) became a liberal MP in 1890 and remained in the House of Commons until his death. He was Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1908 to Dec. 1916. In May 1916 he was directed by Asquith to negotiate with Redmond and Carson for immediate Home Rule with the exclusion of six Ulster counties. Succeeded Asquith as Prime Minister in Dec. 1916 until 1922. His Government of Ireland Act secured a settlement with the Unionists and in 1921 his contacts with De Valera led to the negotiation of the Anglo-Irish Treaty, O'Day, Alan, xvi; Connolly, *Oxford companion*, p. 324.

<sup>1594</sup> Sir James Craig, (1871-1940) Craig was returned to the House of Commons as a Unionist for East Down in 1906, holding this seat until 1918 when he moved to the mid-Down constituency. He resigned in June 1921 on becoming Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, a post he retained until his death on 24 Nov. 1940. Craig was made a baronet in 1918 and created Viscount Cragnavon in 1927, O'Day, xvii.

<sup>1595</sup> O'Day, p. 260.

<sup>1596</sup> Ibid; *L.L.*, 2 Jan. 1915.

<sup>1597</sup> O'Day, p. 261.

absolutely unchanged'.<sup>1598</sup> The editor of the *Leinster Leader* summed up the situation as follows:

But it will be noticed that Ireland had no say in these arrangements or terms upon which the truce at home should be observed and it is sufficient that Mr Bonar Law and Sir Edward Carson are satisfied.<sup>1599</sup>

The editor also asked why the Home Rule question was not settled there and then, when the future was so doubtful and full of anxiety 'for our rulers'. Redmond's 'magnanimous' offer to defend the coasts of Ireland against possible invasion with the aid of the Irish National Volunteers was however considered praiseworthy in the circumstances but eventually Ireland must be appeased 'and the sooner the better for all concerned'. Lord Lansdowne in his statement to the House of Lords on 10 August 1914 stated that it would be 'a grave calamity' if anything was to happen to revive differences or to 'mar the unanimity of our patriotism'.<sup>1600</sup>

John Redmond presided in Maryborough on 16 August for the presentation of colours to the Maryborough corps of the Irish National Volunteers. Redmond 'motored' from Aughavanagh, accompanied by his wife and his brother William Redmond M.P. In his speech to the volunteers, John Redmond stated he was disappointed because of the lack of arms and ammunition but informed them that he had a declaration from Asquith that 'it will be possible for me very shortly to distribute....several thousands of rifles' for the defence of Ireland.<sup>1601</sup> The Government he stated were 'about to arm, equip and drill a large number of Irish Volunteers' and soon 'every Irish Volunteer would have a rifle in his possession'.<sup>1602</sup> A manifesto from Redmond was published in the *Leinster Leader* on 19 September. Proof of the great change that had come about between England and Ireland he stated, was demonstrated by the fact that the defence of Ireland 'might safely be left' to Irishmen.<sup>1603</sup> Because of this new-found friendship, he felt that Ireland would become a 'strength' instead of a weakness to the empire. The war was just in his opinion, 'provoked by the intolerable military despotism of Germany'. He was further of the opinion that:

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<sup>1598</sup> *Ibid.*, quoted in Gwynn, Denis, *The life of John Redmond*, (London, 1932), pp 363-4.

<sup>1599</sup> *L.L.*, 8 Aug. 1914.

<sup>1600</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1601</sup> *Ibid.*, 22 Aug. 1914.

<sup>1602</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1603</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 Sept. 1914.

It is a war for the defence of the sacred rights and liberties of small nations and the respect and enlargement of the great principle of nationality. Involved in it is the fate of France, our kindred country, the chief nation of that powerful Celtic race to which we belong; the fate of Belgium, to whom we are attached by the same great ties of race and by the common desire of a small nation to assert its freedom; and the fate of Poland, whose sufferings and whose struggle bear so marked a resemblance to our own.<sup>1604</sup>

Ireland he claimed should 'willingly' bear its share of the war, but Irish recruits should be kept together as an 'Irish Brigade' gaining national credit for her deeds 'in this historic struggle'. In order to form this Irish Brigade the volunteers would have to be efficiently prepared for the defence of Ireland and at the end of the war, Ireland would have its own army.<sup>1605</sup>

Public meetings for the promotion and extension of the volunteer movement continued apace during 1915. One such meeting was attended by KilBride and J. O'Connor MPs in Athy on 29 July.<sup>1606</sup> Canon Mackey P.P. was loud in his praise for KilBride, O'Connor and the Irish Parliamentary Party in general, who he claimed had successfully put three of the most important measures on the statute book, the abolition of landlordism, a Catholic university and the greatest of all, 'the legislative independence of the Irish nation'. The chairman of Athy Urban Council, M.E. Doyle J.P. praised the party for the 'Labourers Act' which was responsible for replacing the 'wretched hovels' of the labourers with 'neat and sanitary dwellings'. KilBride stated that the success of the party was 'almost entirely due' to the unanimity and support the members had received from Irish people both at home and abroad. He reminded those present that an Irish parliament had not yet been established but this was 'largely due to this terrible war'. However he didn't take the recent 'vapourings' of Orange resistance to Home Rule very seriously when he stated that:

He remembered that in '69 the Rev Mr Flanagan in the county of Armagh or Down, declared that if Mr Gladstone disestablished the Irish church, the Orangemen would kick the King's crown into the Boyne. The church had been disestablished but the crown had not been kicked into the Boyne from that day to this.<sup>1607</sup>

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<sup>1604</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1605</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1606</sup> Ibid., 7 Aug. 1915.

<sup>1607</sup> Ibid.



KilBride didn't anticipate any serious opposition by Ulster Unionists to the Amending Bill and he didn't believe that Fermanagh, Tyrone, Derry or Antrim would 'contract out' of Home Rule. Although professing that O'Connor and himself were approaching the 'sear and yellow leaf of life', if a dispute arose in the future, they would be ready to 'teach the Orangemen to be as mannerly as the people in the south of Ireland'. In regard to conscription, he referred to the policy of the party outlined by John Dillon in Limerick some days previously, promising that conscription would never become the law in Ireland 'as long as they remained as an Irish party'. O'Connor speech was far more conciliatory. O'Connor emphasised that the hatred they formerly had for England was slowly dissipating as 'the cause of hate was removed' and now that they had won Home Rule for Ireland, it was up to the people to defend it. John Gore, solicitor and treasurer of the national committee of the volunteers, while encouraging weekly subscriptions for the purchase of rifles, explained that £7,000 had been paid for rifles but that wasn't enough to equip '150,000 men at £2 17s 6d for each rifle'.<sup>1608</sup>

#### 6.9 COALITION GOVERNMENT OF 1915

Asquith issued an invitation to all parties to form a coalition government on 18 May 1915, an invitation that was accepted by Bonar Law and Carson, while Redmond declined.<sup>1609</sup> Birrell was to say in evidence later that if Redmond had consented to enter the cabinet, 'he would at that instant have ceased to be an Irish leader'.<sup>1610</sup> The first coalition government was formed on 26 May 1915 and as would be expected in such an arrangement, Unionist influence gradually increased, while Irish party influence decreased.<sup>1611</sup> Later in September William O'Brien was pessimistic in his outlook about a political agreement for the implementation of Home Rule. He accused Redmond of insincerity for making a statement that Home Rule would be brought into operation as soon as the war was over, without explaining how the coalition government was to be 'coerced into putting it into operation'.<sup>1612</sup>

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<sup>1608</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1609</sup> O'Day, p. 268.

<sup>1610</sup> *L.L.*, 27 May 1916, quoting from Birrell's evidence to the Royal Commission on the Rebellion of 1916.

<sup>1611</sup> O'Day, p. 268.

<sup>1612</sup> *L.L.*, 18 Sept. 1915.

#### 6.10 REDMOND'S RECRUITING MANIFESTO 1916

John Redmond issued a recruiting manifesto in February 1916. Remarkably for the leader of Irish nationalists, the manifesto called on Irishmen 'of military age' to join the Irish regiments of the British army.<sup>1613</sup> Redmond maintained that Ireland's political future depended upon the outcome of the war and Ireland should join in the fight against the 'grinding tyranny and destructive confiscations' that Germany sought to impose on small nations. The Irish party's change of heart he explained came about because for the first time Ireland was trusted by England and therefore this voluntary recruiting campaign would prove that the concession of freedom would be in a future 'a strength instead of a weakness to the empire'.<sup>1614</sup> One of the issues to exercise the minds of public representatives, both local and national in Ireland was the cost to Ireland of the war in extra taxation. This issue was taken up by the Dublin Mansion House meeting of 29 February 1916. Redmond however, felt very strongly that this meeting was a pretext for a hostile attack on his leadership and the 'constitutional movement' embodied in the Irish party.<sup>1615</sup> Redmond further maintained that the organisers were either avidly pro-German Sinn Féiners, opposed to voluntary recruiting and committed to the 'monstrous doctrine that Ireland should remain neutral in the war'. Redmond felt that the Irish party's approach to taxation in this context was more pragmatic in that a costly and 'just war' would have to be paid for, but Ireland would only pay a just share.<sup>1616</sup>

#### 6.11 FOOT AND MOUTH OUTBREAKS 1912 TO 1914

KilBride who took a general interest in matters agricultural in the debates in the House of Commons was not surprisingly one of the main Irish contributors to the prolonged debates about outbreaks of foot and mouth disease in Ireland during the period 1912 to 1914. An outbreak of foot and mouth disease reported in County Dublin in July 1912 caused 'inconvenience and disappointment' to farmers in County Kildare.<sup>1617</sup> On 25 July 1912 Birrell, the chief secretary informed Mr Stannier and KilBride that foot and mouth disease was confined to the Swords district in County Dublin, where 580 cattle, 314 sheep, twenty swine and eight goats had been slaughtered.<sup>1618</sup> Police in Naas prevented cattle and sheep being taken by road to Dublin and elsewhere and regulations

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<sup>1613</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 Feb. 1916.

<sup>1614</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1615</sup> John E. Redmond to Michael Governey J.P., Carlow County Council, 27 Mar. 1916, quoted in *L.L.*, 1 Apr. 1916.

<sup>1616</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1617</sup> *L.L.*, 6 July 1912.

<sup>1618</sup> *Hansard* 5, xli, 1334, 25 July 1912.

were 'rigidly enforced' in all the country districts. The pig, cattle and sheep fairs in Athy were abandoned and the 'entire' police force of the district guarded all the roads leading into the town.<sup>1619</sup> The regulations for instance insisted on cattle being milked in the pastures but 'in a few instances' it was reported that farmers eluded the police and smuggled their cows to their milking sheds.<sup>1620</sup>

Later in 1912 an outbreak of foot and mouth was reported at Ballysax, near the Curragh in County Kildare, which was allegedly caused by 'straw packing' from the army barracks given to a Mrs Behan for bedding cattle. On 7 January 1913 Russell in answer to a question from KilBride, stated that the opinion of the 'veterinary officers who superintended the work at Ballysax' was as KilBride suggested, that the outbreak of foot and mouth there was caused by pigs being bedded 'with some straw packing from France and also with straw bottle-envelopes from France'.<sup>1621</sup> On 23 February 1914, T. W. Russell, Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture thought it was 'curious' that another outbreak in January 1914 at Ballysax was 'in the same place as the outbreak of 1912-13 and on the same spot'. Since then he explained, nothing had been heard of the disease in County Kildare.<sup>1622</sup>

In October 1912 foot and mouth disease had spread to Mullingar, County Westmeath. Russell explained that twenty-six animals had been affected in the Mullingar district and 200 animals 'in contact' were subsequently slaughtered.<sup>1623</sup> KilBride asked if the outbreak in Mullingar was caused in similar circumstances to that of Ballysax to which Russell replied that there was no evidence to connect the barracks with the outbreak in Mullingar but that the facts would be investigated fully.<sup>1624</sup> On 28 October 1912 Russell reported in the House of Commons that 'three separate districts in Ireland' had been scheduled in connection with the disease. The first was County Kildare and parts of counties Wicklow and Carlow where 'five outbreaks had occurred a few miles apart', three in County Kildare and two in County Wicklow. Russell also confirmed that because the last outbreak of the disease in Kildare had occurred on 16

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<sup>1619</sup> *L.L.*, 6 July 1912.

<sup>1620</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1621</sup> *Hansard* 5, xlvi, 998, 7 Jan. 1913.

<sup>1622</sup> *Hansard* 5, lviii, 1439-40, 23 Feb. 1914.

<sup>1623</sup> *Hansard* 5, xli, 1904, 22 Oct. 1912.

<sup>1624</sup> *Hansard* 5, xlii, 1904-5, 22 Oct. 1912.

September, he had arranged that restrictions there would be 'materially relaxed'.<sup>1625</sup> The second district scheduled was portion of counties Fermanagh, Cavan and Leitrim and the greater part of County Westmeath and small adjoining portions of Longford, King's County and Meath formed the third district.<sup>1626</sup> Seven counties in all he stated had been 'infected', four of which were 'actually freed from restrictions'.<sup>1627</sup> Asked by KilBride whether the fair of Athy in early November could be held, Russell replied that he 'would rather not give any undertaking' as Kildare would be 'materially restricted tonight'.<sup>1628</sup> On 20 November Mr Runciman, President of the Board of Agriculture informed KilBride that as no outbreak had been confirmed outside the Westmeath prohibited area since 7 October 1912, he would in a weeks time reduce the period during which Irish 'cattle and swine' were detained at the 'authorised' landing places from 'fourteen days to four days' from the time of shipment, after which they could be 'moved under licence' either to a slaughterhouse or bacon factory for slaughter or to 'premises on which they could be detained and isolated for a further period of twenty-one days'.<sup>1629</sup>

The foot and mouth outbreak of 1913 was causing quite considerable confusion and in some cases opposition to the strict restrictions of movement of animals. One such letter in opposition to these restrictions was written on 9 January 1913 by Joseph O'Connor, Mylerstown, Naas and published in the *Leinster Leader*.<sup>1630</sup> O'Connor believed that farmers were in agreement that the 'regulations, restrictions, and stand-still orders' enforced since the first outbreak at Swords, County Dublin were 'unjustifiable and cruel'. The first 'scheduling order' he claimed, in relation to the Swords outbreak, included the counties of Meath, Louth, Dublin, Kildare and Wicklow. To place restrictions on places 'twenty, thirty and forty miles away' from an outbreak of the disease was in his view 'nonsense'. O'Connor had experienced foot and mouth disease on previous occasions and he claimed he 'never saw a death from this disease' and further that it 'did no harm to stores' as meat from slaughtered cattle was eaten 'by the public without complaint or any injurious effect'. At this early stage, O'Connor believed that the disease 'had come to Ireland from France' which had been 'recking

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<sup>1625</sup> *Hansard* 5, xliii, 10-12, 28 Oct. 1912.

<sup>1626</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1627</sup> *Hansard* 5, xliii, 10-11, 28 Oct. 1912.

<sup>1628</sup> *Hansard* 5, xliii, 10-12, 28 Oct. 1912.

<sup>1629</sup> *Hansard* 5, xliv, 292, 20 Nov. 1912.

<sup>1630</sup> *L.L.*, 18 Jan. 1913.

with foot and mouth disease all the summer'.<sup>1631</sup> A little over a month later the *Leinster Leader* announced that the disease seemed 'to be stamped out completely' and measures were taken to prevent a recurrence.<sup>1632</sup> It had been ascertained that the outbreak of the disease in Swords had been 'brought in packing stuff in a case of imported wines from the continent'. The Curragh outbreak was traced to the same source as the packing from a wine case was removed from the Curragh camp 'as bedding for pigs and so the trouble spread' in the immediate locality.<sup>1633</sup>

On 17 February 1914 Russell announced in the House of Commons that the number of cargoes infected with foot and mouth 'at Birkenhead landing-stage' had increased from eight to fourteen in one day.<sup>1634</sup> While his department had not been able to trace back the disease in these cases to their respective owners, KilBride was suspicious that the disease was maliciously spread and therefore as suggested 'by persons some of whom are large stock owners and some of whom occupy prominent positions in the country', would he (Russell) not think it advisable to offer 'a monetary reward' for information leading to the causes and origin of the disease. Russell stated that he had never harboured such suspicion but would be happy to receive any information in this regard.<sup>1635</sup>

During the debate on the Supplementary Estimates Agriculture (Ireland) on 23 February 1914, T. W. Russell gave an update on the progress in his department on the foot and mouth disease. He claimed to have 'stopped' the disease in Ireland stating that there was 'no trace of disease in Ireland at the present moment'.<sup>1636</sup> KilBride praised the department 'who acted with great promptness and rapidity' in stamping out the disease.<sup>1637</sup> However, he again alluded to the suspicions people in the trade had, including the Royal Dublin Society, that the disease was 'planted in Ireland maliciously' by 'interested persons' who import foreign beef thus coming into competition with Ireland.<sup>1638</sup> Further outbreaks of the disease were reported in County Cork on 2 March 1914 at Ballinacourta, Kinsale, Ballinacusha near Queenstown and

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<sup>1631</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1632</sup> Ibid., 22 Feb. 1913.

<sup>1633</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1634</sup> *Hansard* 5, lviii, 773, 17 Feb. 1914.

<sup>1635</sup> *Hansard* 5, lviii, 774, 17 Feb. 1914.

<sup>1636</sup> *Hansard* 5, lviii, 1443, 23 Feb. 1914.

<sup>1637</sup> *Hansard* 5, lviii, 1445, 23 Feb. 1914.

<sup>1638</sup> Ibid.

Douglas.<sup>1639</sup> On 1 April 1914 Russell reported that two further outbreaks of foot and mouth disease occurred in County Cork and two in County Dublin, 'making fifty-four outbreaks in Ireland altogether'.<sup>1640</sup> In answer to a question from KilBride, Russell stated that no cattle 'north of a line drawn from east to west' across Ireland were under new regulations to be exported and that included store cattle from Mullingar which KilBride inquired about.<sup>1641</sup>

During the first year of the war, foot-and-mouth disease was still inflicting serious losses on the farmers of Ireland and the authorities were still busily engaged in preventative measures, such as putting restrictions on the movement of cattle in affected areas.<sup>1642</sup> Despite this the *Leinster Leader* stated that the Irish Party 'collectively' were apathetic and only spasmodically alluded to the subject in parliament, which was understandable in one sense because all other issues had been overshadowed by the 'excitement and alarms surrounding the Home Rule issue'. The root of the disease it argued had been admitted as not originating in Ireland and if this was continuously ignored, the country would continue to experience huge financial losses along with 'irritating and costly impositions which follow the appearance of the disease'.<sup>1643</sup>

## 6.12 LOCAL CONCERNS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS 1911 TO 1916

KilBride often 'interested himself' in matters relating to the constituency of south Kildare.<sup>1644</sup> In the House of Commons on 18 May 1911, KilBride asked Birrell the chief secretary about the sale of the Latouche estate in south Kildare, whether '1tyr any tenants had been excluded by the Estates Commissions and if so why but more importantly whether any 'one family consisting of father and son' had received more than the limited advance envisaged under the 1903 Act. Birrell replied that the father and son referred to were probably William Ashe and William W. Ashe who obtained advances of £4,687 and £7,000 respectively and the commissioners were satisfied that both were *bona fide* tenants and therefore the advances were properly advanced.<sup>1645</sup> In April 1912 it was announced that there was a likelihood that the Harristown farm from which O'Beirne of Nurney was evicted in 1888, would be disposed of and KilBride and

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<sup>1639</sup> *Hansard* 5, lix, 13, 2 Mar. 1914.

<sup>1640</sup> *Hansard* 5, lx, 1187, 1 Apr. 1914.

<sup>1641</sup> *Hansard* 5, lx, 1188, 1 Apr. 1914.

<sup>1642</sup> *L.L.*, 2 May 1914.

<sup>1643</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1644</sup> *Ibid.*, 22 Feb. 1913.

<sup>1645</sup> *Hansard* 5, xxv, 2120-1, 18 May 1911.

John Dillon M.P. were endeavouring to have this 'most unfortunate and ill-used tenant' finally 'restored to his own'.<sup>1646</sup> KilBride was informed by Birrell that the Harristown farm in Nurney 'now in possession of James Hendy' was purchased by him under the land purchase acts and therefore the commissioners were not prepared to take any action for the reinstatement of O'Beirne on this farm.<sup>1647</sup> O'Beirne stated that he had buried seven of his children, ranging from six to two years since his eviction, attributing their deaths to living in 'unsanitary dwellings'.<sup>1648</sup> In 1912 he was living in a labourer's cottage at Walterstown, Nurney and although Kildare County Council and several members of parliament had represented his case, 'nothing had been done for him'.<sup>1649</sup>

On 13 February 1913 KilBride asked the Postmaster-General, Herbert Samuel about the delay in allocating telephone links between Athy, Dublin and Carlow. The Postmaster-General replied that the delay was caused by 'pressure of work in the engineering department' but despite this, the service would be provided by the following June.<sup>1650</sup> Two years previous to this KilBride had been informed that the offer to guarantee the extension of the telephone to Athy by Athy Urban Council had been regrettably refused.<sup>1651</sup> In February 1913 KilBride asked why the train leaving Athy should not stop in Kildangan 'for the convenience of people attending Athy fairs and markets'.<sup>1652</sup> It was explained that the Board of Trade had no control in the regulation of the service provided by the Great Southern and Western Railway Company.<sup>1653</sup> As early as April 1910 KilBride had first asked about the sale of the Verschoyle estate at Cloney, County Kildare. At that time Birrell, the chief secretary informed him that proceedings to purchase the land by the Estates Commissioners were instituted in November 1907 but would be dealt with in order of priority as 'its turn has not yet come'.<sup>1654</sup> In April 1913 KilBride was again informed by Birrell that the estate was on 'the principal register of direct sales pending' under the 1903 Irish Land Act but because of the claims from other estates, it was expected that it would not be dealt with for 'several years'.<sup>1655</sup> The owner Birrell repeated, had included 400 acres at Cloney for sale by the

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<sup>1646</sup> *L.L.*, 4 Apr. 1912.

<sup>1647</sup> *Hansard* 5, xxxvii, 1379, 25 Apr. 1912.

<sup>1648</sup> *L.L.*, 4 Apr. 1912.

<sup>1649</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1650</sup> *L.L.*, 22 Feb. 1913; *Hansard* 5, xlvi, 1216-7, 13 Feb. 1913.

<sup>1651</sup> *Hansard* 5, xxiii, 1794, 25 Apr. 1910.

<sup>1652</sup> *L.L.*, 22 Feb. 1913.

<sup>1653</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1654</sup> *Hansard* 5, xvii, 202, 25 Apr. 1910.

<sup>1655</sup> *L.L.*, 26 Apr. 1913.

Commissioners but this sale would have to be dealt with 'in order of priority'.<sup>1656</sup> KilBride took an extraordinary interest in the breeding and sale of horses in Ireland to the British Army during the war. On 30 March in the House of Commons he had a series of questions for the Under Secretary of State for War, Mr Tennant.<sup>1657</sup> The main tenor of these questions was his disappointment and sense of injustice that the market for light horses in Ireland was limited to sales to the Remount Department of the British Army and even allowing for this, he argued that farmers and breeders could not dispose of their animals because as in the example of Kildare, no remount depot was open to the farmers in offering their horses for sale.<sup>1658</sup>

In answer to a question on 20 July 1911, Birrell the chief secretary informed KilBride that the local authorities had taken proceedings in 'fourteen cases in London and in nine cases in Glasgow' for fraudulent sales of butter, proving subsequently on analysis to be margarine.<sup>1659</sup> Convictions were obtained in all cases he stated but the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries had no information about a trader in St Pancras who according to KilBride had sold margarine as butter to an inspector 'while two charges were pending against him for similar offences'.<sup>1660</sup>

### 6.13 SALE OF BALLYPRIOR FARM

The Catholic curate of Stradbally, Father Kane had been engaged on behalf of the uneconomic holders in the Stradbally district of Queen's County to acquire Ballyprior farm.<sup>1661</sup> It was announced in early April 1912 that the owner Mr Odlum had agreed to sell to the Estate Commissioners. The Athy Number Two District Council were to act as trustees and if agreement was reached with the Estate Commissioners, the farm would be 'parcelled out in May or June next'.<sup>1662</sup> Athy Number Two District Council announced that it was taking over the farm at Ballyprior on 8 January 1913 on behalf of interested tenants but that the Irish Land Commission refused to purchase the farm for 'residential holdings'.<sup>1663</sup> A local advisory committee of the council would be appointed to look after the details of the distribution of these lands called 'Ballyprior farm'. This

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<sup>1656</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1657</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxxxi, 903-5, 30 Mar. 1916.

<sup>1658</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1659</sup> *Hansard* 5, xxviii, 1399-1400, 20 July 1911.

<sup>1660</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1661</sup> *L.L.*, 13 Apr. 1912.

<sup>1662</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1663</sup> Ibid., 4 Jan. 1913.



committee would consider 'applications for allotments or grazing rights' and then submit them to the council by 1 February 1913, together with observations and advice.<sup>1664</sup>

#### 6.14 ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS

The Ancient Order of Hibernians grew at a phenomenal rate in the aftermath of the National Insurance Act of 1911.<sup>1665</sup> At a meeting for the formation of a branch in Athy in April 1912, the chairman of Athy Urban Council, M. E. Doyle explained that it was compulsory for all between the ages of sixteen and sixty-five, who had an income 'less than £160 per annum' to be insured under the act and in order to benefit, everyone had to belong to 'an approved society' or a post office depositor.<sup>1666</sup> The national secretary of the A.O.H., J. D. Nugent explained that contributors through the A.O.H. would be entitled to 'extra benefits' as well as 'a weekly pension allowance' from the age of sixty-five until becoming eligible for State pensions. KilBride who spoke at 'considerable length' stated that the Irish Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Methodists had already formed their own societies in order to get 'the greatest possible benefit' from the insurance act and in his view the A.O.H. was 'the most advantageous association to join' and their interests would be 'thoroughly safeguarded' in the hands of the organisation.<sup>1667</sup> On 11 June KilBride was the recipient of a vote of confidence in the form of a resolution from the Athy AOH as follows:

We wish in an especial manner to thank our own representative, Mr Denis KilBride for his many attendances in the divisions on the Home Rule Bill, thereby doing his best to thwart and defeat the evil machinations of the begrudging Tory Party. We trust Mr KilBride will be spared many long years to represent south Kildare.<sup>1668</sup>

Joseph Devlin, national president of the A.O.H. issued a manifesto in January 1915.<sup>1669</sup> Ten years previously he stated, there were 'scarcely 200 branches' of the A.O.H. with a membership of less than 5,000 but in 1915 the number of branches 'male and female' was over 1,800 with a membership of about 100,000, 'in addition to an insurance membership of 200,000'. During 1914 'a large number' of clubs and halls had been built or purchased for the benefit of the Order and in 1915 Devlin hoped that the

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<sup>1664</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1665</sup> Local Authorities Qualification and National Insurance Acts were passed on 16 Dec. 1911, O'Day, 1.

<sup>1666</sup> *L.L.*, 6 Apr. 1912.

<sup>1667</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1668</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 June 1914.

<sup>1669</sup> *Ibid.*, 23 Jan. 1915.

number of halls and clubs would increase because they provided amusement and attractions to 'relieve rural life of much of its dismal and gloomy atmosphere' and consequently were 'efficient instruments' in preventing emigration. Devlin was also proud to report that the Ladies Auxiliary had also mushroomed with over 300 branches in existence and consequently the distribution of Catholic literature, 'which was one of its most constant endeavours' had discouraged the sale of 'undesirable literature which is daily dumped on our shores'. The A.O.H. Insurance Society was by far the largest approved society in Ireland he claimed and even though it was 'confined to Catholics', yet almost twenty per cent of the entire insurable population of Ireland were members.<sup>1670</sup>

#### 6.15 RAILWAY LINKS IN COUNTIES KILDARE, QUEEN'S AND KILKENNY

One of the projects which engaged KilBride's interest over a long period was the ongoing need and campaign to provide a railway connection between the coal mines of Wolfhill to the Great Southern and Western Railway at Athy. J. J. Parkinson, a wealthy businessman of Maddenstown Lodge, the Curragh, County Kildare proposed a railway link between Athy and the collieries of Modubeagh and Mullaghmore in the Wolfhill district of Queen's County and in connection with this a special meeting was convened between the promoters and the 'local gentlemen of the districts' concerned on Wednesday 13 December 1911.<sup>1671</sup> A Bill had been procured for the building of this railway on condition that 'other persons' interested in providing a light railway 'for other districts' would not materialise. The other districts referred to above were the districts of Kilkenny, Castlecomer and Athy, which had already successfully submitted a Bill to parliament. However, the building of this railway had not commenced as M. J. Minch explained because the necessary funding of £200,000 could not be raised within the two years stipulated, which time had elapsed in October 1911. The Bill had also been bitterly opposed by Wandesforde of Castlecomer, who was a landlord and mine owner and held most of the mineral rights in the Castlecomer area. Parkinson explained that Wandesforde had applied in his own right to the Privy Council for the building of a light railway from his mines in Castlecomer to connect with the Great Southern & Western Railway, 'about six miles this side of Kilkenny'. However as the original Bill would never be implemented because of Wandesforde's opposition, he wished the local gentlemen to support his proposal for the Athy to Wolfhill railway link. M. J. Minch on

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<sup>1670</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1671</sup> Ibid., 16 Dec. 1911.

behalf of those present stated that so far as Athy and the district was concerned, they promised every support for Parkinson's proposal.<sup>1672</sup> A further public meeting attended by KilBride and other public representatives was held in the town hall, Athy on Monday 8 January 1912. The resolution approving of the railway connection was 'carried with acclamation amidst scenes of enthusiasm'.<sup>1673</sup> KilBride in wholeheartedly supporting the project warned the people of Athy that if Parkinson's offer was rejected by them, other towns in the vicinity would 'approach him for the purpose of securing the railway'.<sup>1674</sup>

At the end of February 1912, the *Leinster Express* reported on the progress of the proposed railway from Athy to the Wolfhill collieries.<sup>1675</sup> The original route, which was to run through the town of Athy was abandoned and instead would cross the canal and the river Barrow on the outskirts of the town, proceed to Ballylinan and beyond 'by the public road', an 'iron viaduct' would be provided at Wandesforde bridge and branch lines would extend to the Gracefield and Modubeagh mines.<sup>1676</sup> Parkinson's railway project received the unanimous approval of all the local authorities concerned during the first half of 1912 and subsequently the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council 'unanimously approved' of it on 9 August 1912.<sup>1677</sup> Parkinson lodged £4,000 within fourteen days of the order being approved, which sum could be forfeited if the development didn't take place.<sup>1678</sup> The Board of Trade was also satisfied with the details of the proposed railway. Valentine KilBride in giving evidence stated that the coal in the Wolfhill mining area was 'a semi-anthracite coal, free from sulphur and suitable both for household purposes and for gas production' and there would be no difficulty in finding markets for this coal, of which 200 million tons were available for mining purposes. Father W. Wilson C. C. Luggacurren, stated that the coal mines were an enormous benefit to the whole district as they brought many people from an existence of 'poverty and misery' to a life of relative comfort and the opening up of a

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<sup>1672</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1673</sup> Ibid., 13 Jan. 1912.

<sup>1674</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1675</sup> Ibid., 24 Feb. 1912.

<sup>1676</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1677</sup> Ibid., 27 July 1912, 10 Aug. 1912.

<sup>1678</sup> Ibid., 10 Aug. 1912.

railway link to Athy 'would be a great boon to them'.<sup>1679</sup> The leader of the Irish Parliament Party, John Redmond M.P. visited the mines of Gracefield in May 1913.<sup>1680</sup>

In August 1913 J. J. Parkinson acquired Crossard farm 'containing close on one hundred acres', on which he intended erecting dwellings for the miners in the Wolfhill collieries and also 'making provision' for the extra population which would settle there on the re-opening of the Modubeagh mine, which was hoped would bring back the miners who 'had to seek employment in the mining districts of England, Scotland and Wales'.<sup>1681</sup> In July 1915 the *Leinster Leader* reported on 'good authority' that the Development Commissioners had recommended that the Treasury give 'a substantial grant' towards the building of the railway linking up the collieries of Wolfhill with the town of Athy.<sup>1682</sup> The main reason for this recommendation, other than giving employment, was the 'cheapening of the supply of coal' which was deemed to be of major importance during the war.<sup>1683</sup> During the war it was reported that 'nearly sixty' of the miners at Wolfhill collieries had joined the army since August 1914 but most of their places were filled by older men 'belonging to this county'.<sup>1684</sup> These men had worked earlier in Welsh and Scottish collieries, while colliers from Belgium were also employed, but only those who were 'certified unfit for active service' by the Belgium Government.<sup>1685</sup>

#### 6.16 WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL, MAY 1911

In the course of the debate of the second reading of the Women's Enfranchisement Bill in May 1911, KilBride declared that although the Irish Parliamentary Party were generally in favour of woman suffrage, 'not one in twenty' women in Ireland were in favour.<sup>1686</sup> Burdett-Coutts didn't believe that even if a majority of women were in favour, 'it would be a final reason for making such a great change' in the law.<sup>1687</sup> If women had the vote he stated, they would force their rights 'out of man' and questioned whether it was necessary to continue with such a position 'between the sexes in

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<sup>1679</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1680</sup> Ibid., 31 May 1913.

<sup>1681</sup> Ibid., 9 Aug. 1913.

<sup>1682</sup> Ibid., 31 July 1915.

<sup>1683</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1684</sup> Ibid., 8 Jan. 1915.

<sup>1685</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1686</sup> *Hansard* 5, xxv, 778-9, 5 May 1911.

<sup>1687</sup> *Hansard* 5, xxv, 775, 5 May 1911.

England'.<sup>1688</sup> The women's rights agitation he confidently argued was more hopeless than it had been fifty years previously when it was first introduced. If women received the franchise he argued, the 'sex barrier' would be broken, women would be 'taking their seats on these benches' and if they were elected members, they were 'bound to be Ministers'. His further comments on retaining the *status quo* in the House of Commons are perhaps worthy of insertion here:

Is it really possible that we should contemplate making such a spectacle of ourselves to the civilised world? We are a nation of men which – with all the honour in which it holds its women, all the immeasurable debt it owes and is willing to pay to their ennobling influence, their high example, their pure and lofty inspiration – has yet become great and glorious under men's government and strong and prosperous and happy under man-made laws.<sup>1689</sup>

#### 6.17 KILBRIDE FAMILY EVENTS 1911 TO 1914

The *Leinster Leader* reported in October 1911 that Denis KilBride's nephew, John Lane KilBride, Athy had passed his 'final in medicine and surgery with honours' at the National University and coveted an 'M.B degree'.<sup>1690</sup> John was then acting as *locum tenans* for his father, Dr James KilBride M.O.H., who was on a short holiday.<sup>1691</sup> Another son of Dr James KilBride, Dr Thomas J. KilBride was recommended for 'second class honours degrees of B.E., B.Ch, B.A.O.' from the National University in March 1912. His brother John Lane KilBride has received first class honours the previous year 'securing the highest distinctions in almost every branch of professional knowledge'.<sup>1692</sup> The *Leinster Leader* announced that Athy Board of Guardians would elect a successor to Dr James KilBride as dispensary medical officer and medical officer of health on 31 July 1912.<sup>1693</sup> It would be 'a foregone conclusion' that his son, Dr John Lane KilBride would be unanimously appointed to the position. John Lane had 'qualified last year after a distinguished University career' and previous to this, had been acting as *locum tenans* in Athy and various other parts of the county.<sup>1694</sup> The initial salary was fixed at £155 a year, rising to a maximum after twenty-five years to £180 per annum. Subsequently the superannuation allowance of Dr James KilBride, came up for decision at a meeting of the Athy Union on 7 August 1912.<sup>1695</sup> Dr James had provided

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<sup>1688</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1689</sup> *Hansard* 5, xxv, 777, 5 May 1911.

<sup>1690</sup> *L.L.*, 21 Oct. 1911.

<sup>1691</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1692</sup> *Ibid.*, 30 Mar. 1912.

<sup>1693</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 July 1912.

<sup>1694</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1695</sup> *Ibid.*, 10 Aug. 1912.

thirty-four years of service and was reported as satisfactorily discharging his duties 'to the poor of the district'. It was within the power of the Board to add ten years to the period of service but only six were needed in this case to amount to forty years service. His average yearly salary for the previous three years was £148 and two-thirds of that, estimated at forty years service, together with vaccination and registration fees amounted to £117 17s 3d. On this basis Mr McLoughlin proposed that £110 a year be granted. Mr Plewman thought Dr KilBride should get the full amount and suggested £120. M. J. Minch agreed that he should be given the 'maximum amount to which he was entitled after adding the extra years of service'. This was unanimously agreed to.<sup>1696</sup>

At a meeting of Athy Urban Council in early July 1913, Valentine KilBride, who had been 'connected professionally' as solicitor for the council for many years, was congratulated on his appointment as Senior Taxing Master in the High Court.<sup>1697</sup> The *Law Times* had the following to say about the appointment:

The appointment is one of the best that could have been made, Mr KilBride might be described as the George Lewis of Ireland. He has conducted most of all the great *causes celebres* that have taken place in this country for the past thirty years and his experience in all classes of business is really unrivalled.<sup>1698</sup>

On 6 October 1913 Denis's son, Joseph Aloysius KilBride, aged twenty-seven, a cotton salesman of Moss & Delph Lane, Aughton was married to Catherine Milner, aged twenty-nine of 172 Longmoor Lane, Aintree. Catherine was the daughter of Charles Milner, a butcher and the marriage took place in the Church of the Blessed Sacrament, Walton, West Derby, Liverpool in the presence of Charles Culshaw and Kathleen Horan. The marriage certificate names the father of Joseph KilBride as Denis KilBride MP.<sup>1699</sup> Dr John KilBride asked permission from Athy Union to volunteer his services to the War Office and that his father Dr James KilBride would do his duty during his absence with 'no expense to the rates'.<sup>1700</sup> While Mr McLoughlin expressed surprise 'to see the fighting spirit in the KilBride family', the chairman T. J. Whelan stated that they all approved of Dr John's decision and unanimously granted him

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<sup>1696</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1697</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 July 1913.

<sup>1698</sup> *L.L.*, 12 July 1913, quoting from the *Law Times*.

<sup>1699</sup> Liverpool central library, St Catherine's microfiche index of births, marriages and deaths for England and Wales, West Derby registration district, vol. 8b, Dec. quarter 1913, AA 600810, p. 876.

<sup>1700</sup> *L.L.*, 15 Aug. 1914.

leave.<sup>1701</sup> The *Leinster Leader* of 17 April 1915, announced the death of Patrick J. KilBride, 'brother of Mr Denis KilBride M.P., Master [Valentine] KilBride, Dr James KilBride and Mr Joseph KilBride R.M.'<sup>1702</sup> Patrick, a solicitor had earlier volunteered for service with the Royal Fusiliers Battalion, East Africa Frontiersman and went to London for preliminary training but 'contracted a chill' which developed into pleurisy causing his death. The funeral to the KilBride burial plot at Clopook, Luggacurren was 'attended by a large and representative cortege'.<sup>1703</sup>

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<sup>1701</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1702</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 Apr. 1915.

<sup>1703</sup> *Ibid.*

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE SEAR AND YELLOW LEAF OF LIFE 1916 TO 1924

#### 7.1 THE EASTER RISING OF 1916

The 1916 Easter Rising or Dublin insurrection commenced on Monday 24 April.<sup>1704</sup> The insurrection was mostly confined to Dublin<sup>1705</sup> and ended on 29 April when the insurgents surrendered.<sup>1706</sup> It is of interest to note that many of those who appeared on platforms with KilBride at public meetings of the Irish Volunteers over the previous few months and years were directly involved in the rising. The rising secretly planned by the Irish Republican Brotherhood, included in its membership the key figures of the Irish Volunteers such as Séan MacDiarmada, Pádraic Pearse, Thomas MacDonagh and Eamonn Ceannt.<sup>1707</sup> The original plan was that the insurrection would take the form of a general rising, 'in Dublin and the provinces', but firstly the *Aud*, a steamer carrying guns for the insurgents was captured and another factor leading to the confinement of the rising to Dublin was that the commander-in-chief of the IRB, Eoin MacNeill, who was initially 'induced to acquiesce', published an order cancelling all Volunteer movements for the previous day, Sunday 23 April.<sup>1708</sup>

The constitutional policy of the Irish Parliamentary Party was badly bruised by the events of the rising but this would not become apparent until much later when nationalist public opinion began to react to the hasty execution of fifteen of the leaders ordered by General Maxwell<sup>1709</sup>, Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in Ireland, also to the imposition of martial law to the whole country at large with the perceived injustice of imprisoning innocent people from the provinces in English jails and the breakdown of civil administration in the country. The Irish administration under Birrell was strongly criticised in the House by Lord Middleton, while Lord Lansdowne endeavoured to prove that 'the futile outbreak' would be 'predestined to ignominious

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<sup>1704</sup> O'Day, li.

<sup>1705</sup> Other than Dublin city, smaller skirmishes took place in Wexford, Galway and County Dublin and an attempted mobilization in Cork, Connolly, *Oxford companion*, pp 487-8.

<sup>1706</sup> As many scholarly works exist in relation to the Easter rising of 1916, it is not envisaged to further deal with it in this study, other than to state that there was very little sympathy for the insurgents or the leaders executed in the immediate aftermath of the rising. A detailed local reaction to the rising in Kildare will be found in the *L.L.*, 6 Apr. 1916, p.6.

<sup>1707</sup> Connolly, *Oxford companion*, pp 487-8.

<sup>1708</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1709</sup> General Sir John Maxwell (1859- 1929) was sent to Ireland in the wake of the Easter rebellion of 1916. He was in command when the executions of the leaders took place and the policy of internment implemented, O'Day, xxvii.



failure'.<sup>1710</sup> Middleton accused Birrell of indifference to the warnings, which had been repeatedly made by 'men of weight and knowledge and influence'. The administration in Ireland he claimed knew well in advance that 'the Sinn Féiners' possessed explosives in considerable quantities.<sup>1711</sup> Lansdowne argued that 'nothing like specific warning' was given to the administration in Dublin that a rising would take place 'at the moment'. Birrell resigned as chief secretary on 3 May and Asquith announced the Royal Commission on the Rebellion on 10 May, which would open on 18 May and report on 3 July.<sup>1712</sup> Asquith also visited Ireland from 12 to 18 May to see for himself the effects of the insurrection.<sup>1713</sup> On the day of Asquith's return, John Dillon made an impassioned protest in the House of Commons about the methods used by General Maxwell in putting down the rebellion in Ireland.<sup>1714</sup> His long and detailed speech appealed to the coalition government for a full statement about executions following secret military trials, the continuance of martial law, military rule and searches and arrests made all over Ireland.<sup>1715</sup> Using the example of the arrest and shooting of Francis Sheehy Skeffington<sup>1716</sup> in Portobello (Cathal Brugha) Barracks on 26 April, Dillon warned that public opinion in Ireland was becoming embittered against Britain and law and order and further warned that:

The horrible rumours which are current in Dublin and which are doing untold and indescribable mischief, maddening the population of Dublin, who were your friend and loyal allies, against this insurrection last week and who are rapidly becoming embittered by the stories afloat and these executions.<sup>1717</sup>

An indication of the change in attitude towards the insurgents of Easter week is contained in Dillon's speech. Although he maintained that the Sinn Féin insurgents were 'misguided' and the 'bitterest enemies' of the Irish Parliamentary Party, they however fought a 'clean' and brave fight, 'three thousand men against twenty thousand

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<sup>1710</sup> *L.L.*, 6 May 1916.

<sup>1711</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1712</sup> O'Day, li.

<sup>1713</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1714</sup> *L.L.*, 20 May 1916.

<sup>1715</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1716</sup> Francis Sheehy-Skeffington (1878-1916) writer, socialist, pacifist and feminist. Married Hanna Sheehy, founder of the Women Graduates' Association in 1903 and adopted his wife's surname. Assisted Tom Kettle in editing the *Nationalist* in 1905. Active in labour movement. Editor of *Irish Citizen* 1912. Vice-chairman of Irish Citizen Army in 1913 but later left. Campaigned against recruitment and arrested in 1915 and sentenced to six months' imprisonment, but released after six days while on hunger strike. Campaigned in America for Irish freedom and tried to persuade Irish leaders to arm and equip 'with the weapons of the intellect and will'. While organising groups to stop looting in Dublin during 1916 rising, he was arrested on 25 Apr. and shot the following day, Boylan, p. 397.

<sup>1717</sup> *L.L.*, 20 May 1916.

with machine guns and artillery'.<sup>1718</sup> On 22 May 1916 the two MPs for Kildare, KilBride and John O'Connor visited Kildare prisoners arrested in connection with the Dublin rebellion, who were subsequently deported and imprisoned in Wakefield Barracks, Yorks. O'Connor wrote to the Provost Marshal asking on behalf of himself and KilBride, for the release of the men as well as others from County Kildare.<sup>1719</sup> O'Connor stated that the imprisonment of the men proved the 'amazing stupidity' of the government, making recruiting impossible and any prolongation of internment would make the situation even more difficult in the future.<sup>1720</sup> Several of the Kildare prisoners at Wakefield were released in early June without charge. Among those released were the editor of the *Leinster Leader*, M. O'Kelly, Naas and the chairman of County Kildare G.A.A., J. Fitzgerald.<sup>1721</sup> It was reported that the remaining prisoners from the county would also be released.<sup>1722</sup>

On 24 May Redmond entertained T. J. Ryan, Prime Minister of Queensland in the House of Commons. In reply to an address, Redmond declared he was 'heart-broken' by the events of Easter 1916 especially when he considered how near he and his party colleagues had come in achieving Home Rule. Part of his address was as follows:

All I know is that at the moment when our cause had been practically won and when it was a mere question of a few short months, when the realisation of our hopes would become a reality, that at that moment a body of our own fellow-countrymen, misguided, ignorant, I think of the lessons of history, reckless and I am sorry to say instigated by a foreign foe to a large extent, so far at least as their leaders were concerned, struck what might have been and may be, a deadly blow against the liberties of their own country.<sup>1723</sup>

In the House of Commons on 25 May Asquith announced that Lloyd George would visit Ireland in the hope of finding an agreement to the Home Rule question between Unionists and nationalists. The following day Birrell gave evidence at the Royal Commission on the Rebellion. He stated that 'a great and dangerous explosion of rage and disappointment' was brewing in Ireland over the uncertainty of the Home Rule Act. The 'sneers of the O'Brienites' and the 'daily naggings' in the *Irish Independent* didn't help matters either he thought. Among the contributory factors to the rebellion he

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<sup>1718</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1719</sup> Ibid., 27 May 1916.

<sup>1720</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1721</sup> Ibid., 3 June 1916.

<sup>1722</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1723</sup> Ibid., 27 May 1916.

claimed was the reaction of a minority in Ireland to Redmond's recruiting campaign, which netted 150,000 Irishmen into the British army, the formation of the coalition government with Carson as a member, the effect of which was impossible to 'over-rate' in Ireland and German assistance which was 'at the bottom of the outbreak'. When asked by the chairman, Lord Hardinge whether 'after consultation with the Irish leaders', he concluded that non-intervention in the activities of Sinn Féin was the safest policy, Birrell declared in the affirmative, stating that Redmond always believed that Sinn Féiners were 'negligible' and said so in the House of Commons. In reply to criticism from Viscount Middleton, Birrell summed up his opinion of Sinn Féin activity:

Sinn Féin drilling was to be laughed at and not taken seriously and that to take notice of speeches made by crack-brained enthusiasts and priests would only hinder the slow growth of loyalty in Ireland.<sup>1724</sup>

KilBride would have been in broad agreement with most of the points contained in a statement to the Royal Commission on the Rebellion by Thomas O'Keeffe of the Irish Evicted Tenants' Association. O'Keeffe maintained that agrarian issues, although not immediately obvious, contributed to the 'unrest', 'disaffection', 'hopelessness' and 'mistrust' built up among tenants and the landless classes in Ireland before, during and after the land war.<sup>1725</sup> Young men who had 'great hopes of an independent living on the soil' he claimed, felt betrayed by the government and its representatives in Ireland and even 'by their own party leaders'. O'Keeffe argued that the system operated by the Estates Commissioners in rejecting applications for land purchase, without having to furnish reasons and with no hope of further redress for the applicants, a system that was unaccountable to 'the Executive or the House of Commons', justified his conviction that the 'continued unrest' was due in a large degree to an 'utter want of confidence of the Irish people'. This system he claimed was not confined to the Estates Commissioners but was the case 'for almost all Irish Boards'. Evictions followed by emigration in a lot of cases he stated, sent 'dissatisfied Irishmen' to many parts of the world and these or their descendants later encouraged, supported and financed 'every trouble in Ireland as they did in the recent one'. Referring to disturbances in the labour movement, he maintained that the influx from the land to the towns and cities caused 'overcrowding' in the market for skilled labour. In other countries he pointed out, 'some' alternative employment was found for 'dispossessed peasants' but Dublin had 'a small trade and no

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<sup>1724</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1725</sup> Ibid., 1 July 1916.

industry', which further added to the existing poverty and consequential discontent of the inhabitants. The causes of discontent were not confined to land and labour but also to a conceived stalemate in Irish politics as he further outlined:

The delay in putting the Home Rule Act into effective operation, the very vexed question of the Amending Act, the difference in the treatment of the Ulster Volunteers and the Irish Volunteers, the Curragh incident and the Bachelor's Walk tragedy [led to] the majority of the young men and a considerable number of the elder men ..cast[ing] off allegiance to all parties. This state of mind naturally led the way to extreme views.<sup>1726</sup>

Although nationalists had a tiny minority<sup>1727</sup> in the debate on the Supply [Report] Resolutions Agreed to on 25 July 1916, it didn't stop KilBride and his colleagues challenging the government on many aspects of the vote. Mr Lundon complained about the refusal to reinstate men who were employed by the Insurance Commissioners of Ireland, who were 'arrested on suspicion' but were subsequently released as 'innocent men'.<sup>1728</sup> Richard Hazleton was annoyed that not enough notice had been given and Joseph King suggested that the vote be postponed until proper and full replies could be given to Members in the House. Patrick Meehan suggested that it was because of the 'initiative' of the Home Secretary Sir Harry Samuel, that the clerks in the Insurance Commissioners and other government offices were suspended or dismissed because of their alleged participation in the rebellion in Ireland.<sup>1729</sup> Samuel stated that 'no officials' of the Irish government were dismissed although some had been suspended 'pending investigation' and he had heard nothing about the Insurance Commissioners official referred to.<sup>1730</sup> The amount of people in Dublin under investigation in this regard amounted to 'about twenty men', which he claimed was 'a very small proportion'. He regretted the delay in investigating these cases 'owing to pressure of work and other circumstances' and then informed the House that two 'very distinguished civil servants' Sir Guy Fleetwood and Sir William Byrne had been assigned the task of 'carefully' investigating the cases and that they would 'cross to Ireland' the following day to start their work.<sup>1731</sup> KilBride suggested at this stage that because the Home Secretary knew nothing whatever about these cases, it would be proper to postpone the vote and made the following comments:

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<sup>1726</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1727</sup> In this division list (no. 41) the house divided, ayes 104 and noes twenty-three.

<sup>1728</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxxxiv, 1611-8, 25 July 1916.

<sup>1729</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1730</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxxxiv, 1612, 25 July 1916.

<sup>1731</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxxxiv, 1612-3, 25 July 1916.

He [Sir Harry Samuel] has apparently diverted the attention and the energy that might be given to the defence of the country, owing to the fact that he is a military man, by parading about this House in military uniform – sometimes only – and devoting his time to putting questions about the rebellion in Ireland and getting officials in the employment of the Irish government suspected.<sup>1732</sup>

KilBride also challenged the vote during the second reading of the Consolidated Fund (no. 4) on 26 July 1916. Michael Reddy had earlier referred to a case of the arrest and imprisonment in Kilmainham gaol of a man named John Nathan, because he allegedly ‘obstructed the military authority in the execution of their duty’ but who was later released without charge. Reddy’s further comments on liberty in Ireland also portrays his attitude and many of his nationalist colleagues at this time to the insurgents of 1916:

You talk of the rebellion of 2,000 men in Dublin – madmen – and half the city of Dublin was levelled in putting them down and then hundreds were shot in backyards! Why, if this happened in Portugal or Spain or any European country, you would talk about it; but here is the home of liberty and freedom and it is allowed!<sup>1733</sup>

KilBride focused his attention on the ‘extravagant expenditure’ of the Remount Department of the War Office on the Curragh in Kildare. He expressed great dissatisfaction on behalf of ‘his unionist friends in Kildare’ with the conduct of Colonel Wood ‘who I believe is head of the Remount Department in Ireland’. What KilBride complained about was the ‘futility’ of offering horses for inspection and sale at the Curragh when the horses were rejected without cause. These horses he was ‘perfectly satisfied’ were excellent quality half-bred horses from the ‘premier hunting county of Ireland’ but the reply received by him for information on why they were rejected and supplied by Colonel Wood was ‘on account of want of action and that they were horses of no stamina’<sup>1734</sup> KilBride pointed out that two horses which were rejected in this fashion were later bought by a ‘certain well-known gentlemen in the horse trade in Ireland’ for £60 each to be sold on the Remount Department for £70. He also alleged that three days after these particular horses were rejected, Colonel Wood purchased thirty horses ‘of the same class’ at a place seventeen miles from the Curragh and the reason KilBride and Michael Flavin stated was ‘airgead síos’ or ‘honey dough’ which

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<sup>1732</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxxxiv, 1613, 25 July 1916.

<sup>1733</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxxxiv, 1796-7, 26 July 1916.

<sup>1734</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxxxiv, 1797, 26 July 1916.

KilBride explained meant ‘money down’.<sup>1735</sup> The facts in this case were endorsed by Patrick Meehan who also complained about the hardship inflicted on small farmers who while being refused permission to sell hay in the public markets, were also denied the sale of the hay to the army because it was not in a ‘rick’. Meehan pointed out that these small farmers with holdings of ‘three or four acres’ with probably only an acre available for hay, could not be expected ‘to put his one or two cocks in a rick’.<sup>1736</sup> While confessing that he had two offices of State to administer to, Samuel replied that the purchase of horses and hay were ‘not included’ but he would draw the attention of the War office to the matters raised.<sup>1737</sup> Interestingly he then steered the debate to the plight of the ‘gallant young soldiers’ who were killed and wounded during the Easter rebellion and the subsequent devastation and ruin of the ‘most beautiful city’ of Dublin where there was ‘considerable loss of life’. He viewed the actions of the ‘rebels’ as crimes against society and ‘an outrage upon the people of the city of Dublin itself’ and praised General Maxwell as follows:<sup>1738</sup>

These were the conditions with which General Maxwell, a very distinguished soldier of long, most honourable and efficient service was called upon to deal. I know well that the task that he had to undertake at the call of duty was to him a distasteful one. For anyone to be the agent of Ireland must necessarily be in the highest degree distasteful.<sup>1739</sup>

Samuel went into minute detail about the numbers of people arrested, court-marshalled, released, interned or repatriated after the rebellion. However, he thought it was ‘most lamentable’ that Sheehy Skeffington ‘and his two companions’ were shot by an officer who was later found on investigation to be ‘insane and is now confined in Broadmoor’.<sup>1740</sup> Public political meetings were seldom held during the period following the 1916 rising. On 12 October 1916 Henry Duke, the chief secretary explained to Sir J. Lonsdale in the House of Commons that ‘no parade, procession, or political meetings’ were permissible anywhere in Ireland without written authority ‘previously obtained’ from the local county inspector of the RIC.<sup>1741</sup>

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<sup>1735</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxxxiv, 1798-9, 26 July 1916.

<sup>1736</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxxxiv, 1800-1, 26 July 1916.

<sup>1737</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxxxiv, 1802-3, 26 July 1916.

<sup>1738</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>1739</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxxxiv, 1803-4, 26 July 1916.

<sup>1740</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>1741</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxxxvi, 174, 12 Oct. 1916.

## 7.2 HOME RULE IN THE WAKE OF THE 1916 RISING

On 12 June 1916 the Ulster Unionist Council accepted Lloyd George's proposals for the exclusion of Ulster from Home Rule.<sup>1742</sup> On 23 June KilBride made a speech to the committee of the Irish National Volunteers in Athy, in which he stated that when the war ended and an election was eventually called, he anticipated that preference would be given to candidates who participated in the war. He also foresaw that there would be a lot of antagonism in parliament towards Irish nationalists as a result of the Easter rising. He further maintained that the Curragh mutiny was financed by the 'most influential English classes' and that the rifles of the Ulster Volunteers were purchased in Germany and shipped from Hamburg 'by people in the south of England Tory constituency'.<sup>1743</sup> He was also conscious that a lot of 'young men' had lost faith in constitutional politics and he didn't believe that anyone arrested 'rightly or wrongly' under martial law, would come 'back into the constitutional movement'. Although he didn't agree with the insurgents who took part in the rising, he had to agree that they had 'the courage of their convictions' in doing something they thought was useful for their country. In relation to the Home Rule question, he was of the opinion that if the opportunity they now had was allowed to pass, the constitutional movement would be at an end and it would be impossible to keep it together in the immediate future. The choice before them he pointed out, allowing for the temporary exclusion of some of the northern counties was one which every nationalist should examine, asking the following questions:

Would any general refuse to take possession of three-fourths of Belgium after the Germans gave it up because he could not get the fourth? Would he not take all he got, entrench himself there and be in a better position to get the other quarter later on?<sup>1744</sup>

KilBride thought it wouldn't be long until the other six counties opted for Home Rule, but the permanent question he explained would not be decided until after the war by an 'Imperial conference' consisting of the 'prominent men in the different colonies'. Finally he suggested that the only way in which there would be a general amnesty for prisoners was a settlement, such as that worked out by Lloyd George between John

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<sup>1742</sup> O'Day, li.

<sup>1743</sup> *L.L.*, 24 June 1916.

<sup>1744</sup> *Ibid.*

Redmond and Sir Edward Carson, which was worthy of their consideration. This proposal when discussed further by the meeting was passed.<sup>1745</sup>

In a 'manuscript' written by Richard Malone P.L.G. of Athy Union and read at the weekly meeting by the clerk on 5 July, the members were asked to discuss the acceptance by the Irish party of Lloyd George's proposals for the 'exclusion of Ulster' from Home Rule.<sup>1746</sup> Malone considered KilBride a 'great nationalist', as he had given up his 'fine possessions in the Milk Pail valley of Luggacurren' to join the plan of campaign and 'went out with the poorer tenants'. The members were amused when Malone stated that KilBride had raised money for his 'chief' in America to 'establish Home Rule and a parliament in College Green'. However on a more serious note, the chairman Thomas Plewman J.P. later objected to the meeting 'being turned into a debating society'. At the annual meeting of the U.I.L. in Maryborough on 2 July, P. J. Meehan proposed the adoption of a proposal stating that any settlement of the Irish question, which would place the six Ulster counties 'permanently' outside the operation of Home Rule 'would be emphatically rejected by the nationalists of Ireland'.<sup>1747</sup> Meanwhile the trial of Sir Roger Casement<sup>1748</sup>, lasting a fortnight from 26 June ended in his execution on 3 August.<sup>1749</sup>

The first inklings of disfavour and 'disappointment' with Redmond's recruiting mission for the British Army, began to surface towards the close of the Somme offensive, which lasted from 1 July to 13 November 1916.<sup>1750</sup> The *Leinster Leader* of 14 October stated that Redmond's 'political proposals' during the war were 'never acceptable to public taste' but were accepted in trust by the majority of Irish nationalists in the hope of the full implementation of the Home Rule Act. Instead the editor felt that this trust had been 'betrayed' by a 'sterile' Home Rule Act, 'military law and castle rule under an exclusively Unionist executive' and a 'conspiracy' to impose conscription on

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<sup>1745</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1746</sup> Ibid., 8 July 1916.

<sup>1747</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1748</sup> Sir Roger Casement (1864-1916) was born into an Ulster Protestant family, becoming a distinguished civil servant and humanitarian and gradually converted to radical nationalism. During the First World War he recruited Irish prisoners of war to serve under the German flag. He was convicted and executed by hanging at Pentonville prison, London for this activity. He was captured in Kerry attempting to land a shipment of German arms, O'Day, xiv.

<sup>1749</sup> O'Day, li.

<sup>1750</sup> Ibid; *L.L.*, 14 Oct. 1916.



Ireland.<sup>1751</sup> The formula for the proposed six county exclusion from Home Rule, whether temporary or permanent, was also a cause of disaffection, although Redmond strongly resented 'the lie' that his colleagues and himself were in favour of partition and had been 'at pains' to emphasise the 'temporary' nature of the proposal for an eventual settlement.<sup>1752</sup>

KilBride spoke at length in opposition to the third reading of the Parliament and Local Elections Bill on 18 April 1917.<sup>1753</sup> He was confident that British democracy would eventually give Ireland the right to manage her own affairs and while he felt the chief secretary (Duke) was a 'good man struggling with adversity' who would gladly grant Home Rule to Ireland, he was in fact powerless to do so. Ireland he argued had not received her freedom because of the opposition of a 'small section of religious bigots' in the north-east of Ireland, 'some to them so extreme, so unreasonable and so fanatical that they would sooner see the Germans win tomorrow than that Ireland should get Home Rule'.<sup>1754</sup> The government he argued were committed in Ireland to 'the minority having the permanent right to coerce the majority' and he therefore called for a general election when English people could declare in favour of 'revolutionary or constitutional methods'. In such a case KilBride gave the following personal commitment:

If the majority of the Irish people at home declare in the ballot boxes that they were in favour of revolutionary methods, I shall retire to my native obscurity for the rest of my life and let revolutionary methods have a fair chance.<sup>1755</sup>

Another important reason for a general election KilBride argued was that the 'propagation of physical force' by the government in Ireland should be terminated, especially when action was taken against the humbler peasantry. Here he instanced the case of a peasant brought before the High Court of Justice for singing the 'doggerel rhyme of one of the country poets' which under existing circumstances was regarded as such a 'heinous crime' as not to be brought before magistrates in an ordinary court. Finally he contrasted his attitude to the Boer War and the war they were presently engaged in. During the Boer War he admitted that he 'cheered enthusiastically any reverse to British arms' simply because he believed that England was 'absolutely wrong' and that the Boers were fighting for the cause of freedom and justice, 'fighting

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<sup>1751</sup> *L.L.*, 14 Oct. 1916.

<sup>1752</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1753</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcii, 1771-7, 18 Apr. 1917.

<sup>1754</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcii, 1774-5, 18 Apr. 1917.

<sup>1755</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcii, 1776, 18 Apr. 1917.

for the right of small nationalities to manage their own affairs'.<sup>1756</sup> However his attitude had changed to the present war because England was fighting 'in the interest of civilisation and of common humanity'.<sup>1757</sup> He professed that he wanted to see the Germans beaten in the war and reminded the House that three of his colleagues, including William O'Malley (west Galway) had sons killed in the war. Matthew Keating who followed KilBride in the debate noticed 'smiles of amusement' emanating from the government benches at the 'passionate expressions of feeling' expressed by nationalist members. He strongly advised that more attention be paid to the 'feelings expressed than to the amusement aroused in their breasts' and repudiated the 'superior attitude' of the government towards Ireland and 'the cause for which they [were] fighting'.<sup>1758</sup>

Carson resigned from the British War Cabinet on 21 January 1918 'over difficulties about the conduct of the war'.<sup>1759</sup> The *Leinster Leader* pointed out that Carson's period in the cabinet didn't add to his popularity or political strength but suggested instead that it had found him to be 'a failure'.<sup>1760</sup> This was further compounded when his colleagues were 'not weighed down by sorrow', evidenced by their 'readiness' in accepting his resignation. It was also possible that Carson would now be 'free and unfettered' from decisions arrived at about the future government of Ireland, made at the Irish Convention which was still in session. The findings of the Irish Convention would soon be before parliament but the editor argued that the convention had been 'regarded with suspicion' and doubt by a very 'considerable section' of Irish people, which hadn't diminished either in numbers or influence since it's commencement.<sup>1761</sup>

The *Leinster Leader* reported that as a result of the Representation of the People Act,<sup>1762</sup> 'about six hundred thousand, a large majority of whom will be woman' would be eligible to vote at future parliamentary elections.<sup>1763</sup> The right to vote would be extended 'to every man with a residence or business premises'. A woman would qualify for a vote under the act, if she was 'thirty years of age and over and occupying land or

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<sup>1756</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcii, 1774, 18 Apr. 1917.

<sup>1757</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1758</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcii, 1778, 18 Apr. 1917.

<sup>1759</sup> *L.L.*, 26 Jan. 1918; O'Day, p. 283.

<sup>1760</sup> *L.L.*, 26 Jan. 1918.

<sup>1761</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1762</sup> The Representation of the People Act was enacted on 6 Feb. 1918, O'Day, lii.

<sup>1763</sup> *L.L.*, 16 Mar. 1918.

premises value of £5 and over, or a dwelling house £5 a year and over'. A married woman 'whose husband had a vote' was also entitled to vote. Another provision of the Franchise Act was that a person could vote in several constituencies but at a general election could 'only vote in two', namely in a constituency where they were resident and in another where they had a business premises. The act in short extended 'the franchise to the masses' who would therefore have in the future 'the power of direct representation'.<sup>1764</sup>

### 7.3 FIRST WORLD WAR 1914 TO 1918

On 9 September 1916 Lieutenant T.M. Kettle of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers was reported killed 'in the great advance of the Irish brigade'.<sup>1765</sup> A letter he has written the previous day to his brother Lawrence expressed the enormous danger he then faced at the front. It was reported that his company commander was 'put out of action' and Kettle, who assumed command 'fell at the post of honour leading his men'. Professor Tom Kettle who had addressed meetings of the United Irish League in Clonaslee in 1907 and Newbridge in 1913 was remembered in the *Leinster Leader* for his academic achievements, his remarkable ability for debate, 'his ready gift of repartee' and the 'force and conviction' of his arguments, which made him 'an outstanding platform speaker'. As MP for East Tyrone he took a special interest in 'financial and economical problems' on behalf of the Irish Parliamentary Party and was also appointed to 'the chair of National Economics' at University College, Dublin. Apart from his early and close involvement in the United Irish League, Kettle also became synonymous with the growth and development of the Irish Volunteers and during the earlier years of the war, he had been in action in Belgium, but whenever he returned to Ireland he 'threw himself wholeheartedly into the recruitment movement'. On 15 September 1916, the Prime Minister's son, Lieutenant Raymond Asquith of the Grenadeer Guards was also killed in action.<sup>1766</sup>

The issues which affected ordinary people of course were not the intricacies of the war but the cost and shortage of food. During an oral answer session in the House of Commons on 19 October 1916, on the topic of disease in the potato crop in Ireland that year, KilBride asked T. W. Russell, the President of the Department of Agriculture

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<sup>1764</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1765</sup> Ibid., 23 Sept. 1916.

<sup>1766</sup> Ibid.

(Ireland) for the names of the varieties of potatoes that were disease-resisting. Russell demanded notice of the question but informed KilBride that one of the non-resistant varieties was 'Up-to-dates'. Mr O'Shaughnessy reminded Russell that the price of potatoes in Ireland was 'twice what it had been' the previous year to which Russell agreed.<sup>1767</sup> Another indication of how the war effected administration at local level was demonstrated at the weekly meeting of Athy Union on 22 November 1916.<sup>1768</sup> KilBride in answer to a query from the board to the chief secretary, explained that the Local Government Board declined to sanction the appointment of a Dr J. H. McKenna as Medical Officer for Monasterevan dispensary because 'he was of military age and doctors were urgently needed in the R.A.M.C.'<sup>1769</sup> Meanwhile KilBride's nephew, Dr John Lane KilBride was reported to be home for Christmas 1916.<sup>1770</sup> He had volunteered at the outbreak of the war and his position as dispensary doctor in Athy was 'kept open for him by the guardians'.<sup>1771</sup>

Food production and the control of prices were important issues in Ireland during the First World War and government intervention was often called into being. Such an intervention was a scheme of compulsory tillage to increase the production of food at a time of escalating prices and shortages. KilBride in a letter published in the *Leinster Leader*, believed that the fixing of prices was essential to the success of such a scheme and would be an inducement to bring a further ten per cent of arable land into cultivation.<sup>1772</sup> However, he foresaw that there would be problems to consider, such as the absence of equipment, 'horses, implements and skilled ploughmen' but the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland would make loans available towards the purchase of equipment. Scarcity of labour 'in the grass districts' would be the greatest difficulty he thought but 'migratory labour from the west and north-west would supply the need'.<sup>1773</sup> Restrictions were also put on the brewing and malting industries which effected grain growing areas such as Athy. KilBride in a letter to Athy Urban Council stated that although it would be 'futile' to expect preferential treatment for Irish brewers, the threatened industries should demand compensation for

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<sup>1767</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxxxvi, 720-1, 19 Oct. 1916.

<sup>1768</sup> *L.L.*, 25 Nov. 1916.

<sup>1769</sup> *Ibid*; *Hansard* 5, lxxxvii, 92-3, 7 Nov. 1916.

<sup>1770</sup> *L.L.*, 23 Dec. 1916.

<sup>1771</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>1772</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 Jan. 1917.

<sup>1773</sup> *Ibid*.

loss of income and consequently save their industry.<sup>1774</sup> On 12 March 1917, KilBride asked the chief secretary, Henry Duke whether anybody in Ireland had been licensed to export potatoes to which Duke replied in the affirmative. Mr O'Shaughnessy followed by asked Duke to put an end to the practice of military officers buying potatoes from farmers 'in their homes for export purposes'. Duke replied that potatoes would continue to be bought as 'cheaply as possible' for the supply of the troops at the front and sailors at sea but 'requisitioning' would only be used 'for the express purposes of necessary supplies'.<sup>1775</sup>

On 2 April 1917 KilBride contributed to a debate in the House of Commons on land cultivation in Ireland and in this case after providing statistical evidence he asked the chief secretary to 'safeguard and encourage' barley growing on 'lands more suitable for its production' in preference to wheat and other grain.<sup>1776</sup> Duke agreed that 'certain districts' in Ireland were suitable for growing barley and farmers had been subsequently 'advised' to grow it on 'good barley soils' in preference to oats 'but on land where oats give the best return the Department consider it advisable to grow this crop instead of barley'.<sup>1777</sup>

On 24 April 1917 the second reading of the Corn Production Bill was in progress.<sup>1778</sup> This Bill proposed to obtain an increase in arable farming by means of a minimum price for wheat and oats. The minimum price was determined to a great extent by as KilBride explained the price 'in the first seven months of each year' which the President of the Board of Agriculture, Rowland Prothero explained was the 'harvest year' beginning on the first of September.<sup>1779</sup> KilBride announced that the nationalist representatives supported the second reading of the Bill because they welcomed 'the principles laid down by it and the objects which it is designed to achieve', one of these being the repopulation of country districts, undoing the policy of Irish landlords for over a century 'aided and abetted by this House'.<sup>1780</sup> Although this was 'panic legislation' it was one of the 'largest revolutionary measures' ever introduced but Ireland differing fundamentally from England and therefore 'a wholly different measure was necessary' in Ireland he

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<sup>1774</sup> *Ibid.*, 24 Mar. 1917.

<sup>1775</sup> *Hansard* 5, xci, 697-8, 12 Mar. 1917.

<sup>1776</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcii, 934-6, 2 Apr. 1917.

<sup>1777</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcii, 935, 2 Apr. 1917.

<sup>1778</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcii, 2449-511, 24-5 Apr. 1917.

<sup>1779</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcii, 2455-6, 24 Apr. 1917.

<sup>1780</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcii, 2469-10, 25 Apr. 1917.

claimed.<sup>1781</sup> KilBride claimed that Ireland already had a good record ‘this year’ for increased tillage because in England the increased tillage area, as reported by the President of the Board of Agriculture was 300,000 acres, in Scotland 50,000 acres but in Ireland it was ‘something like 700,000 or 750,000 acres’.<sup>1782</sup> But there were some serious defects in the Bill for Ireland he wanted to point out.<sup>1783</sup> To ensure permanent tillage the minimum prices should be higher, because the proposed minimum prices would make it ‘a tight squeeze for the farmer to cultivate his farm, pay increased wages, meet increased expenditure during the war and finally continue to keep the land in cultivation’.<sup>1784</sup> The quantity of corn sold in England in any one month, or in any week of the seven months used to calculate the average price, didn’t vary to anything like it did in Ireland. Because farmers in Leinster and Munster had no proper facilities for storing corn, it was sold immediately after the harvest.<sup>1785</sup> Hence during the two months of October and November, the farmer normally sold ‘eighty per cent at least’ to the corn merchant but the average price took no account of quantities sold ‘on any particular occasion’.<sup>1786</sup> KilBride therefore advised the chief secretary that if a ‘true average’ was to be arrived at, it was essential that ‘quantities’ actually sold should also be taken into consideration and the period for determining the average price should be reduced to ‘three months instead of seven’ because the vast bulk of the corn was sold over a period of three months.<sup>1787</sup> Other defects referred to by KilBride included the fact of joint ownership of land in Ireland as opposed to England, that the Bill would only operate for a term of six years whereas fair rents were fixed for fifteen, that the authority referred to ‘in everything’ was the Lord Lieutenant which ‘to the average Irishman meant Dublin Castle’ and because of the definition clause, the Bill ‘went a long way’ to preserve the ranches thus defeating the main aim of the measure.<sup>1788</sup>

On 31 July 1917 KilBride proposed two amendments to the Corn Production Bill.<sup>1789</sup> The first proposed that the average price of corn should be on the basis of the ‘actual price’ paid for wheat and oats ‘in the different counties of Ireland’ during the first four

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<sup>1781</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcii, 2497, 25 Apr. 1917.

<sup>1782</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcii, 2497-8, 25 Apr. 1917.

<sup>1783</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcii, 2499, 25 Apr. 1917.

<sup>1784</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcii, 2500, 25 Apr. 1917.

<sup>1785</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcii, 2500-1, 25 Apr. 1917.

<sup>1786</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcii, 2501, 25 Apr. 1917.

<sup>1787</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1788</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcii, 2505-6, 25 Apr. 1917.

<sup>1789</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcvi, 1981-2, 31 July 1917.

months of the harvest year.<sup>1790</sup> The chief secretary, James Duke in rejecting KilBride's proposal stated that it into conflict with the 'general scheme' which was of 'general application', that KilBride's proposal was 'sectional in its application and you cannot have a fair and effective sectional operation of this Bill, applying in every district of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland.'<sup>1791</sup> Duke softened the blow somewhat when he stated that he would have given KilBride a more favourable reply 'out of good feeling and good nature' but it couldn't be done under the circumstances.<sup>1792</sup>

KilBride's second amendment proposed that the amount to be paid to the occupier growing wheat would be 'four and a half times and in the case of oats six and a quarter times' the difference between the average price and the minimum price per quarter.<sup>1793</sup> KilBride decried the change of procedure from production to acreage. The average production of wheat in England, KilBride pointed out was four quarters per acre while in Ireland according to the government's own figures was 'considerably more than four and a half'.<sup>1794</sup> More or less the same statistics applied to oats, so that on the new procedure the Irish farmer would be 'robbed' of what he believed was intended by the government.<sup>1795</sup> Duke replied at length but was unable to make the concession referred to in KilBride's second amendment. However, he explained that the farmer received two major benefits from the Bill, a large price and a guarantee against loss.<sup>1796</sup> The vote in favour of this amendment divided with the ayes twenty and the noes on the government benches 116.<sup>1797</sup> KilBride put down a further amendment on 1 August 1917. This amendment proposed that every occupier of a non-residential farm or holding exceeding 100 acres would have to cultivate at least twenty per cent of such lands.<sup>1798</sup> KilBride explained that the purpose of the amendment was to give the government an opportunity of facilitating the breaking up of grassland.<sup>1799</sup> Duke replied that no disposition was envisaged in the Bill for any particular class of landholders, there was no reason for exemption in the case of non-residential or holdings over 100

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<sup>1790</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcvi, 1979-85, 31 July 1917.

<sup>1791</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcvi, 1981-2, 31 July 1917.

<sup>1792</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcvi, 1983, 31 July 1917.

<sup>1793</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcvi, 1985-98, 31 July 1917.

<sup>1794</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcvi, 1986, 31 July 1917.

<sup>1795</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1796</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcvi, 1992-3, 31 July 1917.

<sup>1797</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcvi, 1995-8, 31 July 1917.

<sup>1798</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcvi, 2128-50, 31 July 1917.

<sup>1799</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcvi, 2128, 31 July 1917.

acres in extent and furthermore the measure was 'oppressive'.<sup>1800</sup> The final amendment of KilBride's which was eventually negated, proposes the insertion in paragraph 7b of the words 'to advantage having regard to the qualities of the soil'.<sup>1801</sup> In this amendment KilBride pointed out that the tendency of land brought under the plough for the first time was to 'revert back' but his chief objection was the nature of land inspections and the quality and manner of those employed to do the inspections.<sup>1802</sup>

I do not want farmers harassed who have co-operated with the Board of Agriculture in having the prescribed area of their holdings tilled and have shown themselves anxious to co-operate with the government in the endeavour to have a larger food supply grown in the country.<sup>1803</sup>

KilBride gave an example of a country gentleman with a large land holding, who was not one of his supporters but 'on the contrary a supporter of the landlords of the conservative interest and of the unionist party in Ireland'. According to KilBride, when this gentleman applied about the quantity of land to be 'broken up' or tilled, the inspector in question didn't walk the land but inspected 'a good many fields from a motor car on the county road', informing the occupier that he would have to till ninety acres. KilBride argued in this case that he had been over this land 'hundreds of times' but certainly couldn't describe it as 'arable' and the land was 'unfit to be broken up for tillage'.<sup>1804</sup> The amendment would not be pressed to a vote however, if he was satisfied that a proper definition of arable land could be arrived at, which to his mind was 'land capable of being cultivated to advantage'.<sup>1805</sup> Duke pointed out that if there was dissatisfaction with inspection, the farmers had the right to appeal to the Department 'or the advisory committees in every part of Ireland'. The words in the original schedule were needed he stated and called on KilBride not to press his amendment which KilBride acceded to.<sup>1806</sup>

On 5 November 1917 KilBride asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office, Philip Forster about the Royal Engineers works yard at the Curragh, County Kildare, where according to his information a competent filter was available to carry out welding work but his services were not availed of and would inquiry be made into the matter.

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<sup>1800</sup> *Hansard 5*, xcvi, 2130, 31 July 1917.

<sup>1801</sup> *Hansard 5*, xcvi, 2144-50, 1 Aug. 1917.

<sup>1802</sup> *Hansard 5*, xcvi, 2145-6, 1 Aug. 1917.

<sup>1803</sup> *Hansard 5*, xcvi, 2146, 1 Aug. 1917.

<sup>1804</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1805</sup> *Hansard 5*, xcvi, 2147, 1 Aug. 1917.

<sup>1806</sup> *Hansard 5*, xcvi, 2148-9, 1 Aug. 1917.



Forster replied that no competent fitter had been available 'but endeavour is being made to find a really competent man'.<sup>1807</sup> Forster also promised to inquire about the 'unrest' which KilBride alleged existed among the seventy men employed in the yard. These men KilBride stated received only one bonus since the outbreak of war, while other groupings had received a second bonus.<sup>1808</sup>

#### 7.4 LAND AND LABOUR ASSOCIATION

KilBride attended and spoke at a public meeting of the Land and Labour Association in Ballylinan on 8 October 1916.<sup>1809</sup> The meeting in which nationalists were encouraged to support Redmond and the Irish party as the 'only practical means' of obtaining redress of Ireland's grievances, was also attended by MPs P. J. Meehan and J.J. O'Shee. The resolutions dealt with a whole host of issues including a demand for a reduction in rents of labourers cottages during the war, the demand for the qualification of tenants of 'union cottages' in the distribution of untenanted lands, an adequate supply of goods at reasonable prices for labourers and 'humbler classes' along with the 'long promised' increase in old age pensions. As would be expected there was strong condemnation expressed against conscription in Ireland and finally a declaration that no measure of self-government would be accepted by nationalists unless it embraced the 'whole' of Ireland. In dealing with the general condition of the labourers, KilBride stated that even though the labourers worked more in a day than the constabulary 'did in twelve months', the R.I.C. were far better paid. On the issue of conscription he stated that Irish people would never be 'forced' to serve in the British Army and on conscription he had the following to say:

It would be sufficient time to put conscription in force against Irish nationalists when all these unionists thirsting for an opportunity of losing the last drop of their blood, began to lose the first drop.<sup>1810</sup>

Finally KilBride attacked the 'distorted' opinions of William Martin Murphy<sup>1811</sup> in the *Irish Independent* for depicting 'every action' of Redmond and the Irish party as

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<sup>1807</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcvi, 1822, 5 Aug. 1917.

<sup>1808</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1809</sup> *L.L.*, 14 Oct. 1916.

<sup>1810</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1811</sup> William Martin Murphy (1844-1919) founder of independent newspapers was originally a building contractor, building churches, schools and bridges throughout Ireland, as well as railways and tramways in Britain and Africa. Elected nationalist MP for St. Patrick's, Dublin 1885-92. Established the Dublin United Tramways Company. In 1904 he bought three Dublin newspapers and replaced them with the *Irish Independent* and in 1906 founded the *Sunday Independent* and refused a kingship from King

traitorous 'to the Irish cause'. Murphy as Biggar<sup>1812</sup> once pointed out to KilBride was not the member for St Patrick's Division but 'member for tramways and light railways'.<sup>1813</sup> Athy Number Two District Council at their meeting on 8 November denounced the MPs who spoke at Ballylinan on 8 October, for interfering in the business of the District Councils in relation to the rent of labourers' cottages.<sup>1814</sup> Patrick Dunne 'who had a difference with KilBride', reprimanded him in the following words, after which Richard Malone left the room:

Mr KilBride who spoke there was himself an evicted tenant and the meeting never passed a resolution about the evicted tenants – twenty of them – who were not so lucky in getting back as he was and were never since provided for. Mr KilBride was now living in the rent office in Luggacurren and was drawing £400 a year for serving his country as well. Mr KilBride was the first man to go out and he should be the last man to go back. He [KilBride] took over the farm of a man named Elliott who broke the slates over Mr KilBride's head and carried out the evictions of Luggacurren.<sup>1815</sup>

KilBride was present at a meeting of the Land and Labour Association in Ballymore-Eustace, County Kildare on Sunday 26 August 1917. The other MPs present were John O'Connor and J. T. Donovan.<sup>1816</sup> The usual demands of the Association were now compounded by the 'abnormal' cost of living during the war and therefore better wages and conditions were demanded. KilBride spoke of the importance of a 'fairly constituted Wages Board' for Ireland, because the 'labourer was entitled to and must receive a reasonable wage'.<sup>1817</sup> In the House of Commons on 16 July 1917, KilBride had asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Bonar Law) about the delay in setting up the Wages Board which was suggested in the Corn Production Bill to which Bonar law had no definite answer.<sup>1818</sup> On the political front KilBride admitted that 'never in the history of Ireland' were so many classes in Ireland 'divided', such as for instance the agricultural labourers, the farmers, the professional men, the priests and the bishops.<sup>1819</sup> As to the policy of Sinn Féin, he stated that an Irish republic 'was an impossible dream'

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Edward V11 in 1907. He later led Dublin employers of the Dublin Employers' Federation against trade unions, which culminated in the 1913 lockout, Boylan, p. 290; Connolly, *Oxford companion*, p. 373.

<sup>1812</sup> Joseph G Biggar (1828-1890) was a prominent Ulster Protestant Home Ruler who subsequently converted to Catholicism. He took a major part in the National Conference in Nov. 1873, being an MP from 1874 until his death. He was a key participant in the obstruction struggles of the 1870s and a prominent figure in the Irish party during the 1880s, O'Day, xiii.

<sup>1813</sup> *L.L.*, 14 Oct. 1916.

<sup>1814</sup> *Ibid.*, 11 Nov. 1916.

<sup>1815</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1816</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 Sept. 1917.

<sup>1817</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1818</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcvi, 35, 16 July 1917.

<sup>1819</sup> *L.L.*, 1 Sept. 1917.

which he contrasted with his own strong belief in the eventual success of the constitutional movement of the Irish party in the following words:

Those who told the young men of Ireland that a republic could be established were but deceiving them. It was a curious thing that Sinn Féin numbered among its followers so many who lived on British soil and others who had always been opposed to the programme of the Land League. The constitutional movement had been fully vindicated by the great concessions won for Ireland and he was hopeful that before very long Ireland would achieve a full measure of legislative independence.<sup>1820</sup>

John O'Connor bluntly observed that the Sinn Féin party was 'full of imaginations'. It took a good deal of imagination he argued, 'not to feel ashamed of Dublin after the ill-advised and futile rising of a few hundred men on Easter week' and still the Sinn Féiners were appealing for force to establish an Irish republic a year later. J. T. O'Donovan M.P. pointed out that the Sinn Féin policy of 'running away from the enemy' and staying at home was a policy of 'egregious futility'.<sup>1821</sup>

#### 7.5 THE GROWTH OF SINN FÉIN IN KILDARE AND NORTH LEINSTER

One of the first outward signs of the growth of Sinn Féin was in a by-election when Count Plunkett<sup>1822</sup> was elected MP for north Roscommon on 3 February 1917.<sup>1823</sup> The first anniversary of the Easter rising also gave a huge impetus to the organisation. The *Leinster Leader* reported that on Easter Monday 7 April 1917, a man dressed in 'kilt and saffron, representing the old Irish national costume' climbed a flagstaff at the General Post Office in Dublin and hoisted the republican flag to half-mast while crowds cheered in the street below.<sup>1824</sup> The police had the flag quickly taken down 'followed by a good deal of hostile interest by a section of the crowd'. Soon after this seemingly innocuous incident, another flag was flown from the top of Nelson's Pillar in Sackville Street. During the day more flag flying was attempted in various parts of the city and in some cases bricks and stones were thrown at the police 'by gangs of youth of the hooligan element', who were also involved smashing windows and causing damage to private property. Small posters of the 1916 'Provisional Government's Proclamation'

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<sup>1820</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1821</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1822</sup> George Noble (Count) Plunkett (1851-1948) was made a Count of Rome in 1884. He stood unsuccessfully as a Parnellite candidate for Parliament in 1892, 1895 and 1898, being returned in 1917 supported by Sinn Féin but declined to take his seat. He was the father of Joseph Mary Plunkett (1887-1916), one of the executed leaders of the Easter Rising, O'Day, xxxi.

<sup>1823</sup> O'Day, li.

<sup>1824</sup> *L.L.*, 14 Apr. 1917.

were also posted up in various places that morning with the words 'The Irish republic still lives' added in.<sup>1825</sup> These scenes were repeated in some towns and cities in other parts of the country. The previous day the United States of America entered the war.<sup>1826</sup> On 9 May the south Longford by-election was won by Sinn Féin.<sup>1827</sup> A correspondent of the *Leinster Leader* reported that 'the old spirit of Luggacurren has not yet been quelled' when a republican flag was hoisted 'at the very summit of a tall tree in the village' at the entrance to KilBride house, 'one time known as the rent lodge'.<sup>1828</sup> The 'police and the planters' were reported vainly exhausting their 'ingenuity and the resources of a thirty foot ladder' to remove the flag with the slogan 'Up McGuinness',<sup>1829</sup> written across it.<sup>1830</sup>

On 21 May, Lloyd George announced the establishment of an Irish Convention.<sup>1831</sup> John Redmond's brother, William Redmond was reported killed on the western front in the war on 7 June 1917.<sup>1832</sup> Three days after the government announced the release of Sinn Féin prisoners on 16 June, a Sinn Féin flag was hoisted on the telegraph wires at the canal bridge, Athy and on the following Wednesday morning the police burned the flag down 'by means of a torch attached to a long pole'.<sup>1833</sup> In Dublin on 19 June the G.P.O. was broken into and a flag was hoisted 'as a welcome to the released prisoners'.<sup>1834</sup>

The Seán Connolly branch of Sinn Féin was formally established in Naas on 18 June 1917. Seán Connolly, a Kildare man was killed during the 1916 rising leading an attack on City Hall in Dublin. The first resolution passed at the inaugural meeting tendered 'heartiest congratulations' to the 117 rebellion prisoners released from English prisons. In total contrast to the views of the Irish Parliamentary Party, Sinn Féin 'recognised' the policy expounded at the 'great convention held in the Mansion House, Dublin' on 29 February 1916. Of immense importance to Sinn Féin was the hope that Ireland's 'claim to nationhood' could be settled at a peace conference of the 'belligerent nations' which

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<sup>1825</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1826</sup> O'Day, li.

<sup>1827</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1828</sup> *L.L.*, 5 May 1917.

<sup>1829</sup> In Apr. 1917, a by-election was won at Longford by Joe McGuinness.

<sup>1830</sup> *L.L.*, 5 May 1917.

<sup>1831</sup> O'Day, li.

<sup>1832</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1833</sup> Ibid; *L.L.*, 23 June 1917.

<sup>1834</sup> Ibid.

was promised to assemble when the war was over. In the meantime the party would endeavour 'by every means' to return as many Sinn Féin candidates as possible at all future parliamentary and local government elections.<sup>1835</sup> Among the prisoners released on Monday 18 June was Countess Markievicz,<sup>1836</sup> while Count Plunkett and Cathal Brugha<sup>1837</sup> who had been arrested on 10 June were also released. The reporting in the nationalist press of the arrival of the prisoners at Westland Row railway station and the activities of that day were quite extensive. Eoin MacNeill was reported 'to be stripped of his beard' and was 'quite unrecognisable'.<sup>1838</sup> Thomas Ashe<sup>1839</sup> 'minus his curly locks' and moustache 'did not look himself' and Éamon de Valera<sup>1840</sup> who 'towered' above his comrades was 'a striking figure'.<sup>1841</sup>

A 'new era of political development' commenced in Athy with the formation of a branch of Sinn Féin on 18 May 1917.<sup>1842</sup> At a meeting of the branch on 30 May, Mr Fleming, a Sinn Féin organiser warned the members that if they failed to organise their constituencies, Redmond at the next general election would be returned with a majority 'and continue to misrepresent the country' and if Ireland continued to send representatives to the House of Commons in London 'she recognises the Act of Union as valid'. Weekly committee meetings were arranged and fortnightly meetings of the 'club' were also arranged for the rest of the year. On 6 June 1917 it was decided to

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<sup>1835</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1836</sup> Countess Markievicz or Constance Gore-Booth (1868-1927) was sentenced to death for her participation in the Easter Rising of 1916, but this was commuted and she was released in the general amnesty of Jan. 1917. She was elected a Sinn Féin MP in 1918 but declined to sit in the House of Commons, instead being a member of the first Dáil Éireann, O'Day, xxvii.

<sup>1837</sup> Cathal Brugha (1874-1922) revolutionary born Charles William St. John Burgess. He was a clerk in church supplies and founded Lalor Ltd in 1909 to manufacture candles. Joined Gaelic League 1899 and became lieutenant in the Irish Volunteers 1913. Second in command at South Dublin Union in 1916 rising, severely wounded and lamed for the rest of his life. Elected MP for Waterford 1918-22 and took leading part in the war of independence. Chief of staff of IRA 1917-1919, then Minister for Defence until Jan. 1922. Presided at first meeting of Dáil Éireann 21 Jan. 1919 and voted against treaty in Jan. 1922. Fought in O'Connell Street, Dublin in civil war and died 7 July 1922 from shot wounds received two days previously, Boylan, pp 44-5.

<sup>1838</sup> *L.L.*, 23 June 1917.

<sup>1839</sup> Thomas Ashe (1885-1917) a revolutionary and teacher in Waterford and Lusk, county Dublin. He was active in the Irish Volunteers and Gaelic League. Engaged armed RIC at Ashbourne, county Dublin during 1916 rising, capturing four police barracks and large quantities of arms and ammunition. Arrested, court-martialed and sentenced to death, later commuted to penal servitude for life, but released in 1917. Arrested in Aug. 1917 for making 'speeches calculated to cause disaffection' and sentenced to one year's imprisonment with hard labour. Went on hunger strike in Mountjoy Jail when refused status as a political prisoner, but died on 25 Sept. as a result of forcible feeding, Boylan, p. 8.

<sup>1840</sup> Eamon de Valera, born in New York (1882-1975) revolutionary, politician and President of Ireland was condemned to death for his role in the Easter Rising of 1916, but was reprieved. He was a leading figure in the Sinn Féin movement between 1919 and 1921, O'Day, xviii; Boylan, p. 101.

<sup>1841</sup> *L.L.*, 23 June 1917.

<sup>1842</sup> Ibid., 30 June 1917.

establish a library in the 'club rooms for the use of the members', while on 13 June an 'amusements and sports committee' was formed. At a meeting of Timahoe Sinn Féin on 27 June 1917, A. J. O'Connor B.E., in a speech urging the members to work for the new political movement, stated that 'people often said the Irish party were wrong in doing this or wrong in doing that' but in his opinion 'the Irish people were wrong to let them'. The policy of Sinn Féin 'in a nutshell' he stated was that they should in the future trust no one but themselves. The settlement of the Irish question was theirs to work out he claimed and it was important that they shouldn't 'lose the present opportunity' or they would be 'nothing more or less than a lot of fools'. Other aspects of O'Connor's appeal to the members included the importance of Ireland's 'distinctive language' which he argued gave Ireland a greater right to freedom 'than any of the others'. He also stressed that they should remember the sacrifice of those who had died during Easter week or were imprisoned afterwards, 'for the men who fought did the spade work and put in the crop and we were only asked to reap the harvest'.<sup>1843</sup>

Eamonn de Valera won the east Clare by-election for Sinn Féin on 10 July 1917.<sup>1844</sup> The general reaction to this result might be exemplified by the events in Ballybrophy, when 'everyone seemed to be carried away by their feelings at the magnificent victory' and a huge bonfire 'consisting of tar barrels' lit up the district.<sup>1845</sup> It was reported that 'all the inhabitants young and old, including the young women' marched in military formation 'four deep, headed by a large republican flag'.<sup>1846</sup> The County Kildare Sinn Féin organisation met in Athgarvan on 22 July, where discussions took place about such issues as the harvest, Sinn Féin policy, home industries, teachers' grievances and the 'attitude of public boards towards the organisation'.<sup>1847</sup> It was decided to hold a convention in Naas on 5 August to welcome the leaders expected to attend. The nationalist boards of the county and neighbouring districts were to be invited and Arthur O'Connor C.E., Celbridge was selected to chair the convention. In Maryborough a Sinn Féin conference was announced for 29 July 1917 which would be addressed by Arthur Griffith.<sup>1848</sup>

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<sup>1843</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1844</sup> O'Day, li.

<sup>1845</sup> *L.L.*, 21 July 1917.

<sup>1846</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1847</sup> Ibid., 28 July 1917.

<sup>1848</sup> Ibid.

The Irish Convention which commenced on 25 July 1917 in Trinity College, Dublin was one of 'several attempts' by the Prime Minister, Lloyd George to bring about an Irish settlement.<sup>1849</sup> Redmond's party were losing ground to Sinn Féin, which was ably demonstrated at several by-elections and just before the convention commenced the National Volunteers switched their allegiance to Sinn Féin.<sup>1850</sup> Ninety-five delegates met under the chairmanship of Sir Horace Plunkett.<sup>1851</sup> The main outcome was the assent of both nationalists and southern unionists to a scheme for immediate domestic self-government, although the two groups were unable to agree on whether this should include fiscal autonomy.<sup>1852</sup> Sinn Féin boycotted the convention and the Ulster unionists demanded the exclusion of nine counties from any proposed Irish legislature, 'condemned the proceedings to irrelevance'.<sup>1853</sup>

Although the Irish Convention was still in session, during the late summer and early autumn of 1917 many Sinn Féin activists were arrested and imprisoned in Ireland and Kildare and its hinterland were no exceptions.<sup>1854</sup> 'Sudden midnight raids' for rifles held by the officers of the volunteers were made by the police in 'motor cars' in County Kildare on Tuesday 14 August 1917. In Newbridge it was reported that the arms were handed over to the police and immediately conveyed to the RIC barracks. At Ballymore, rifles were seized and in Rathangan the police 'commandeered' rifles as well as swords and bayonets, the police 'finishing up at about 6 a.m.'<sup>1855</sup> The *Leinster Leader* reported many arrests under the Defence of the Realm Act throughout the country, including Austin Stack, Tralee in connection with a 'visit to Casement's Fort' aimed at landing arms and ammunition in Kerry assisted by Sir Roger Casement and for 'wearing of volunteer uniform'. In Ennis arrests were made for 'illegal drilling on various occasions', in Ballinagh, County Cavan 'for carrying of hurleys' at the Casement anniversary parade in the village and in Drogheda for 'riot' and breaking 'windows with stones'.<sup>1856</sup> Heavy sentences were usually meted out in cases such as these, in the form of terms of imprisonment varying from months to two years, with or without hard labour. Of particular Kildare interest was the arrest of Thomas Ashe in Dublin on

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<sup>1849</sup> Connolly, *Oxford companion*, p. 267; O'Day, p. 281.

<sup>1850</sup> O'Day, p. 281.

<sup>1851</sup> Connolly, *Oxford companion*, p. 267; O'Day, p. 281.

<sup>1852</sup> Connolly, *Oxford companion*, p. 267.

<sup>1853</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1854</sup> O'Day, li.

<sup>1855</sup> *L.L.*, 18 Aug. 1917.

<sup>1856</sup> *Ibid.*

Saturday 18 August 1917 on a charge of making 'a seditious speech' in County Longford which was 'likely to cause disaffection to his Majesty King George of England' and the wearing of Volunteer uniform.<sup>1857</sup> Ashe was brought to Newbridge military barracks the following night and later removed under 'a very strong military escort' to the Curragh Camp nearby.<sup>1858</sup> Ashe and James Grehan of Mountmellick were visited here by Michael Collins of the National Aid Association who had travelled from Dublin 'with some local friends'.<sup>1859</sup> Ashe was removed on Wednesday 29 August to Mountjoy prison in Dublin.<sup>1860</sup> A number of prisoners from Clare who were arrested under the Defence of the Realm Act were campaigning in Mountjoy at that time for treatment 'as political prisoners'. Stack was later sentenced by court-martial to two years imprisonment without hard labour. Joseph McDonagh, brother of the executed leader Thomas McDonagh of the 1916 rising, was arrested at his office in Dame Street, Dublin on 30 August under the Defence of the Realm Act. It was reported that shortly after the execution of his brother, Joseph was compelled to retire from the Inland Revenue Service.<sup>1861</sup> Thomas Ashe died on 25 September 1917 as a result of forced feeding while on hunger strike for political status. In defiance of martial law, his funeral was followed by 30,000 people, 'led by armed volunteers in uniform'.<sup>1862</sup> In the House of Commons on 1 November 1917, Mr Byrne asked the chief secretary, James Duke about the treatment of the late Thomas Ashe by the Prisons Board. Duke replied that he first heard of Ashe in London after his death.<sup>1863</sup> Since then he had received a statement from the Lord Mayor of Dublin and Sir John Irwin about the conditions in Mountjoy prison where Thomas Ashe and a group of similar prisoners were kept. There was no interference in the prison regulations made by the executive government in Ireland Duke stated and 'no power to interfere with the administration of these regulations'.<sup>1864</sup>

By the autumn of 1917, the Sinn Féin organisation had grown at a phenomenal rate and were very well organised both locally and nationally. One of the chief instruments in the growth of the organisation was its organised propaganda campaign. One aspect of this was the printing and distribution of leaflets explaining in detail the Sinn Féin

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<sup>1857</sup> *Ibid.*, 25 Aug., 1 Sept. 1917.

<sup>1858</sup> *L.L.*, 25 Aug. 1917.

<sup>1859</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1860</sup> *Ibid.*, 1 Sept. 1917.

<sup>1861</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1862</sup> Boylan, p. 8.

<sup>1863</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcvi, 1603-4, 1 Nov. 1917.

<sup>1864</sup> *Ibid.*



policy, which were made available at the headquarters of the organisation, but more importantly were easily accessible from the local branches. Not only did this propaganda promote Sinn Féin, but it also aimed to downgrade the respect for John Redmond's MPs, who 'remain loyal to a power that scourged them in the past and dupes and spurns them at present'.<sup>1865</sup> An anonymous letter from Newbridge in this mode, written on 15 August 1917 and signed 'Sinn Féin', complained that the 'parliamentarians' deserted Parnell, abandoned the evicted tenants, voted for increased taxation, 'reversed the historical lessons of England's difficulty, disbanded the Volunteers and turned recruiting agents for England'.<sup>1866</sup> The chairman of Newbridge branch of Sinn Féin Jack Fitzgerald, also condemned the Irish Parliamentary Party on many fronts. The rifles supplied by John Redmond to the Volunteers he argued, were 'worse than useless' and he had the following to say about John O'Connor MP for north Kildare:

The man who went to the continent and went to Antwerp with respect of the shipping of the rifles, was the member who misrepresents this constituency and the English Consul had every facility to give John O'Connor to enable him to take rifles to Ireland. He had not told them that.<sup>1867</sup>

An opportunity to further discredit the Kildare MPs for accepting salaries was not lost by Fitzgerald, when he stated that the MPs 'draw £400 per year' although they were 'well to do' and know 'how to hang on to it'. Fitzgerald surmised that support for the Irish Parliamentary Party was fading fast as the country was 'steadily going against' them and therefore he encouraged the members to fight 'this rotten system' by sending the Sinn Féin Party to the 'top of the poll' after Longford, Clare and Kilkenny.<sup>1868</sup> He was referring here to the victories of Éamon de Valera in the east Clare by-election on 10 July, William Cosgrave's in Kilkenny on 10 August 1917 and the earlier win in the south Longford by-election on 9 May.<sup>1869</sup> On Sunday 23 September 1917 it was reported that public meetings organised by Sinn Féin were held 'in every county in Ireland' to protest against the imprisonment of Irishmen under martial law.<sup>1870</sup> The Kildare meeting was held in Naas following a football match, when 'an imposing procession of several hundreds' marched from the football field 'to the weigh-bridge'

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<sup>1865</sup> *L.L.*, 18 Aug. 1917.

<sup>1866</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1867</sup> *Ibid.*, 25 Aug. 1917.

<sup>1868</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1869</sup> O'Day, li.

<sup>1870</sup> *L.L.*, 29 Sept. 1917.

where speeches were delivered. An interesting feature of this meeting was the presence of a priest, Father O'Brien who proposed the adoption of the resolutions from the platform.<sup>1871</sup> At the inaugural meeting of a branch of Sinn Féin at Ballymore-Eustace on 22 September, Father Bryan C.C. wrote to the secretary 'wishing it every success' in the following words:

As the archbishop said a few months ago that the Irish Parliamentary Party had sold the country, I believe that the Sinn Féin party is now the only national party in Ireland.<sup>1872</sup>

Eamonn Fleming who spoke at the Ballymore-Eustace meeting, argued that Carson was 'fairly right' when he described the Home Rule Act as 'an act, but not a fact'. At another public meeting in Clane on 7 October, Fleming urged Sinn Féiners to 'support Irish industries, smoke Irish tobacco, wear Irish clothes' and establish the Gaelic League.<sup>1873</sup> A resolution of sympathy with the relatives of the Thomas Ashe was passed, protesting against the treatment he was subjected to in Mountjoy jail.<sup>1874</sup> At the formation of a branch in Prosperous on the 28 September, a vote of sympathy was also passed 'with the relatives of the late Thomas Ashe' and it was further decided that the branch would be called the 'Thomas Ashe Sinn Féin Club' in his honour.<sup>1875</sup> There was great anticipation in Newbridge that the president of Sinn Féin, Éamon De Valera, would attend a public Sinn Féin meeting on 19 October in the town. Jack Fitzgerald who presided, stated that de Valera's presence in Newbridge would 'awaken the spirit lying dormant' in Kildare and its environs.<sup>1876</sup> De Valera was also expected to visit Athy in early November and it was decided by the Athy Board of Guardians to present him with an address on the occasion.<sup>1877</sup> In the months immediately previous to this, Richard Malone P.L.G. had been well known for his firm stance and undying support for the Irish Parliamentary Party.<sup>1878</sup> Yet in late October 1917 Malone, at a meeting of the Athy Board of Guardians successfully moved a resolution welcoming de Valera 'who had played a noble part' in the struggle for Irish freedom during the previous three years. The chairman commented that personally there was 'no reason for departing' from the policy of the Irish Parliamentary Party he has always supported but Malone

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<sup>1871</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1872</sup> Ibid., 6 Oct. 1917.

<sup>1873</sup> Ibid., 13 Oct. 1917.

<sup>1874</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1875</sup> Ibid., 6 Oct. 1917.

<sup>1876</sup> Ibid., 13 Oct. 1917.

<sup>1877</sup> Ibid., 3 Nov. 1917.

<sup>1878</sup> Ibid.

'appeared to have changed his mind'. However G. Kelly admitted that he has also changed his mind and seconded Malone's proposition. Mr Dunne (who had an earlier difference with KilBride) also supported the motion and stated that 'they would have more converts shortly' and he went further in predicting Ireland's political future:

When the elections come along they [Irish Parliamentary Party MPs] will be all dropped out of public life and in their place we will have men who instead of taking salaries will devote their time and the money to works like draining the Barrow. We will have no more paid servants to deceive the people. When the Plunkett circular came before that Board early in the year, it was only defeated by a few 'die hards'. The next time such a circular would pass unanimously.<sup>1879</sup>

At the County Kildare executive meeting of Sinn Féin in Athy on 8 November 1917, Art O'Connor condemned 'people of anti-Irish tendencies' for hunting over farmers' lands and proposed a resolution calling on Kildare farmers 'to prevent the garrison element' from hunting over their lands 'as a protest against English methods in Ireland'.<sup>1880</sup> The executive was also informed by their district representative that a proclamation was in force for a forthcoming demonstration in Newbridge on Sunday 4 November. However, the meeting was afterwards abandoned when de Valera was arrested at Kildare railway station on Saturday evening 3 November. The police arrangements were reported to be 'complete' with the 'military and constabulary authorities' in Newbridge, the Curragh and surrounding districts working 'hand in hand' to secure the town. At nine o'clock on Sunday evening the railway station in Newbridge was crowded in anticipation of the arrival of a train from Athy. De Valera was in a carriage and conversed with friends on the platform 'while the train was at rest' There was loud cheering when the train left for Dublin.<sup>1881</sup> At the Sinn Féin executive convention for south Kildare in Athy in early December 1917, the chairman and president E. Moran when speaking in support for Irish manufacture, stated that before the meeting he 'purposely' asked two or three Sinn Féiners for matches but got none. A delegate present, who was one of those referred to by the chairman, complained about the quality of Irish matches stating that 'you would want to carry a box of foreign matches with you to light the Irish ones'.<sup>1882</sup>

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<sup>1879</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1880</sup> Ibid., 10 Nov. 1917.

<sup>1881</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1882</sup> Ibid., 15 Dec. 1917.

New Year's night 1918 was celebrated at Naas Sinn Féin Club with a concert of 'song, story and recitation', which entertained the members from ten to three o'clock in the morning, where it was reported 'the proceedings continued without a dull moment'.<sup>1883</sup> A week later Arthur O'Connor of Sinn Féin in a letter to the editor of the *Leinster Leader*, pointed out that next to the destiny of Ireland the 'gravest question' holding the attention of the population of Kildare was 'food or famine'.<sup>1884</sup> The danger signals of food shortages were discernible in 'queues outside shops, children crying for bread, the fabulous charges in shops and the scarcity of butter and flour'. In order to avoid disaster he suggested that immediate practical measures should be undertaken, such as the work of collecting statistical information on the availability of food, which had been already initiated by Sinn Féin and was 'now almost complete'.<sup>1885</sup> According to this Sinn Féin census, O'Connor maintained that there seemed to be a surplus of oats, barley, potatoes, sheep and cattle in Kildare but a shortage of wheat, butter and milk. He advised that arrangements could be made for the purchase and distribution of surplus stocks by the co-operative societies, the county, district or urban councils and also by appealing to the 'wealthier members of a parish' for subscriptions towards purchasing food for 'their less fortunate brethren'.<sup>1886</sup> In February 1918 the Department of Agriculture issued appeals for assistance in the 'effective working of the increased tillage scheme for this year', with the slogan 'grow more food, the need is urgent' and in one of the many leaflets on the subject pointed out that 'every acre and every rood that can be ploughed and sown this spring must be tilled if we are to have food enough for our population'.<sup>1887</sup> Owing to the 'alarming outlook' about food shortages in Ireland, the south Kildare Comhairle (executive) of Sinn Féin representing Athy, Barrowhouse, Monasterevan, Ballytore, and Kildangan at their meeting in Monasterevan on 10 February unanimously passed a resolution urging public elected bodies to formulate schemes for the 'just distribution' of food in their respective districts. The Comhairle also congratulated the 'thirteen hundred and five true men' who voted for Dr McCartan in the recent south Armagh election and the secretary of the Ballytore Club reported on the 'satisfactory' collection in aid of an election fund in their district.<sup>1888</sup>

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<sup>1883</sup> Ibid., 5 Jan. 1918.

<sup>1884</sup> Arthur O'Connor, Elm Hall, Celbridge, to the editor of the *L.L.*, 8 Jan. 1918.

<sup>1885</sup> *L.L.*, 12 Jan. 1918.

<sup>1886</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1887</sup> Ibid., 16 Feb. 1918.

<sup>1888</sup> Ibid.

On Saturday 17 February 1918, a Sinn Féin demonstration of 'one thousand people' took place at Clongorey in connection with the sale of Barrettstown estate and specifically for the purpose of protecting the turbary rights of the people in the locality, which could have been threatened by the sale in question.<sup>1889</sup> 'Mr A. O'Connor, B.A., B.E.' stated that he took an interest in the 'land for the people' movement as he had been 'born and bred on a tillage farm'. Commenting on the prevalence of 'grazing ranches' in Kildare, he claimed that the reduction in the population of the country was primarily caused by the people being 'driven from the land to the edges of the bogs and the tops of the hills', being 'crowded out' from the rich lands given over to the 'bullocks and the grazier'. O'Connor stated that 'he and those associated with him in the Sinn Féin movement' supported the people of Clongorey in their campaign to retain their turbary rights. Dr Dillon from the 'Sinn Féin organisation' first apologised for the non-appearance of 'the member for Ireland' Laurence Ginnell, who couldn't be present owing to a prior engagement with his own constituents. Dillon reminded those present that during the land war, 'fifty families' from Clongorey were evicted and their 'houses burned' but events such as these could not happen again 'because of the Sinn Féin movement started in Ireland in the eighties by Parnell'. Parnell he claimed, expressed Sinn Féin's policy when he stated that 'it is no use relying on the Irish members. It is no use relying on the government. You must rely on yourselves alone and if you rely on yourselves alone the game is in your own hands'. Dillon further argued that the recent reforms gained in Ireland were not achieved by the members of parliament 'talking in Westminster' but by the 'united' actions of the people. On the question of the future government of Ireland, Sinn Féin he stated 'took full advantage of the statement made by allied statesmen' that every country had the right to self-determination and whether this could be achieved through the Peace Conference or not, they would 'certainly not get what they didn't ask for'.<sup>1890</sup> After criticising Asquith, Lloyd George and the Ulster Unionists for their lack of action in relation to the enactment of the Home Rule Bill, Dillon proceeded to deride Redmond for claiming that the 1916 rising didn't 'express the views of the people', who were in fact against it and didn't wish 'to interfere with England when Germany had her by the throat'. Recent by-elections he argued had shown the support for Sinn Féin policy. When the meeting closed, the local Volunteers marched into Newbridge 'in military uniform' where another largely attended meeting was held in the town hall. Dillon here expounded further on the policy of Sinn Féin,

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<sup>1889</sup> Ibid., 23 Feb. 1918.

<sup>1890</sup> Ibid.

stating that it wasn't wrong to obtain freedom 'of your own country by force of arms'. It was on this issue he claimed, that Sinn Féin differed from John Redmond 'and in the same way differed from Joe Devlin, who said that they didn't want to get arms into Ireland'. A large number were enrolled into the ranks of Sinn Féin at the end of this meeting.<sup>1891</sup> The *Leinster Leader* was of the opinion that although Sinn Féin had its origin 'apart from the land question', yet the movement had since captured the allegiance of the rural population and in some districts 'superseded' the United Irish League.<sup>1892</sup> This it argued was due to a whole range of factors including:

...resentment produced by the demand for conscription, the denial of land to those able and eager to till it, while at the same time appealing to the people to grow more food, the scandal surrounding the administration of the departments entrusted with the operation of the tillage order, food control and distribution.... Furthermore, in such times of trouble and turmoil, more sinister influences are let loose, to take advantage of public wrong.<sup>1893</sup>

In March 1918 the Sean Connolly branch of Sinn Féin in Naas opened a store for the sale of potatoes 'at a moderate price'. By operating this store on a non-profit basis, a limited quantity of potatoes would be supplied to each family 'at a lower price than they are to be obtained at present'.<sup>1894</sup> Whether this was an act of philanthropy or not, at Naas Petty Sessions of 22 April 1918, Sinn Féin were prosecuted for organising this potato market, 'without being duly registered for such sale by the food controller'.<sup>1895</sup> Mr Lamphier who gave evidence for Sinn Féin argued that the sales were organised to reduce the price at which potatoes were sold to the poor. The bench in this case decided to adjourn, on the undertaking that there would be no further sales or 'substantial penalties' would be imposed as the offences were 'deliberate deviances of the law'.<sup>1896</sup>

For making an anti-conscription speech Kevin O'Higgins served a sentence of six months in Belfast prison in 1918 under the Defence of the Realm Act.<sup>1897</sup> While in prison he received huge acclaim, to the detriment of the Irish party members in the adjoining constituencies. The Athy Number Two District Council co-opted O'Higgins 'unanimously' at their meeting on 14 June 1918.<sup>1898</sup> Arthur O'Connor was at this stage

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<sup>1891</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1892</sup> Ibid., 2 Mar. 1918.

<sup>1893</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1894</sup> Ibid., 9 Mar. 1918.

<sup>1895</sup> Ibid., 27 Apr. 1918.

<sup>1896</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1897</sup> Boylan, p. 333.

<sup>1898</sup> *L.L.*, 22 June 1918.

on the run from the police authorities and on Sunday 16 June ‘some armed and plain clothes police’ were posted at the main cross-roads in north Kildare, stopping all passers-by for questioning, the purpose of which was believed to be that O’Connor was ‘passing through the district’. Meanwhile a night raid was made on the powder-house at Mullaghmore colliery by ‘ten masked men who arrived in a motor car’ in an apparent effort to procure explosives. Two revolvers were presented but despite their success in breaking into the powder-house, the raiding party did not succeed in their mission and no arrests were reported in the immediate aftermath of the event.<sup>1899</sup> On 20 June 1918, Arthur Griffith of Sinn Féin won the east Cavan by-election and conscription and Home Rule plans were dropped.<sup>1900</sup> The Sinn Féin victory was celebrated in Athy by a parade through the streets of the town, headed by the two local bands and ‘a stirring address was delivered by James J. O’Byrne B.A.’<sup>1901</sup> O’Byrne deplored the fact that ‘seven of the elected Irish parliamentary leaders’ were in jail and ‘seventy-one Irishmen and women were unlawfully detained in English jails’, without in his opinion any justification ‘beyond suspicion and that even of the most shadowy character’. O’Byrne also made the following plea to the members of the Irish Parliamentary Party:

He asked the members of Parliament as honest, honourable men, whose policy for the last thirty years had culminated in the failure so painfully patent to all, to efface and sacrifice themselves and so achieve the greatest consummation any party has yet achieved. In surrendering place, influence, position, they would confront the world with an unprecedented display. They would secure immortal renown and a grateful nation would in generations to come, see that justice was done to their names and their services.<sup>1902</sup>

On 27 July 1918 in an editorial entitled ‘The Government of Ireland’ the *Leinster Leader* elaborated on the decision of the government to ‘proclaim certain associations as dangerous’.<sup>1903</sup> The government’s reply to the grievances of Ireland it argued, in relation to the ‘rights to nationhood and self-determination’, was the abandonment of Home Rule, involuntary conscription, the suppression of political meetings and efforts aimed at discouraging ‘the cultivation of the Irish language, the playing of Irish games and the singing of Irish songs’. The newspaper further pointed out that:

The immediate effect of the proclamation however has been a remarkable impetus to the study and speaking of the language while Gaelic games have

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<sup>1899</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1900</sup> O’Day, lii.

<sup>1901</sup> *L.L.*, 29 June 1918.

<sup>1902</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1903</sup> Ibid., 27 July 1918.

never been more popular and as to the political consequences, it would be unwise and premature as yet to presume that public opinion will be anything more amenable to the terms of the proclamation.<sup>1904</sup>

The Parliamentary session ending in early August 1918 coincided with the 'jubilant spirit aroused by the retreat of the Germans' from the occupation of many towns and villages.<sup>1905</sup> Consequently if a general election was announced, it could result in a return of the existing government, but this was 'still uncertain'. The return of the existing government was possible according to the *Leinster Leader* despite the enactment and continuation of martial law 'in certain parts of the country', along with the proclamation of Sinn Féin, the Gaelic League 'with kindred organisation' and further warnings of complete suppression in the future.<sup>1906</sup>

The police finally caught up with Arthur O'Connor when he was arrested in Spiddal, County Galway.<sup>1907</sup> It was reported that O'Connor spent his holidays the previous year at Carrigaholt, County Clare, where he made 'much progress in the study of Irish' and this he was trying to perfect when arrested in Spiddal and 'conveyed to Dublin under escort'.<sup>1908</sup> Later it was reported that O'Connor was deported 'it is understood' in Durham prison.<sup>1909</sup> News was received in Athy on 21 September 1918 that the Sinn Féin activist and organiser, Ned Fleming, a native of Wolfhill, who had just completed a sentence in Belfast had been re-arrested in Dublin and deported to England.<sup>1910</sup> The original charge was for illegal drilling but Fleming at his trial in Trim refused to recognise the jurisdiction of the court.<sup>1911</sup>

## 7.6 CONSCRIPTION IN IRELAND 1918

Just as the Irish Convention came to a close, John Redmond whose health was rapidly deteriorating wrote to John Dillon on 26 February 1918 resigning the chairmanship of the parliamentary party. Redmond died on 6 March 1918.<sup>1912</sup> Six days later Dillon was elected chairman of the Irish Parliamentary Party.<sup>1913</sup> On 22 March the Irish party

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<sup>1904</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1905</sup> Ibid., 17 Aug. 1918.

<sup>1906</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1907</sup> Ibid., 24 Aug. 1918.

<sup>1908</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1909</sup> Ibid., 31 Aug. 1918.

<sup>1910</sup> Ibid., 28 Sept. 1918.

<sup>1911</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1912</sup> O'Day, p. 284.

<sup>1913</sup> Ibid., lii.



candidate, John Redmond's son, Captain William Archer Redmond, defeated the Sinn Féin nominee in the parliamentary by-election to fill his seat at Waterford by 1,242 votes to 745.<sup>1914</sup> The Irish Convention concluded its business on 5 April 1918 and its report was carried by forty-four votes to twenty-nine. This report was presented to parliament on 9 April and published on 12 April 1918.<sup>1915</sup> On the same day as the Irish Convention report was presented to parliament, the Military Services (Amendment) Bill was introduced in the House of Commons and was later enacted on 18 April.<sup>1916</sup> On 16 April John Dillon and the Irish party walked out of the House of Commons in protest as though 'working with Sinn Féin against conscription'.<sup>1917</sup> The extension of conscription to Ireland led to opposition from many parts of the country. Sinn Féin organised public protest meetings in Naas and Newbridge on 14 April.<sup>1918</sup> At the Naas meeting, George Wolfe J.P., C.C. who opposed conscription as 'unwarrantable and unconstitutional', stated that it was impracticable to enforce it as tillage could not be carried out, the building of railways would have to cease, farms would be left derelict 'and the crops could not be saved'.<sup>1919</sup> The urgency of controlling food supplies however, was by far the main preoccupation of people in Ireland and Sinn Féin at local level was quick to take advantage of this situation.

The *Leinster Leader* noted 'sinister signs' in an 'Order of Council' postponing the enforcement of conscription and also the appointment of Lord French to succeed Lord Wimborne as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.<sup>1920</sup> Lord French the newspaper noted, 'commanded the home forces' and his appointment was significant 'as probably establishing a military administration'. But his immediate task of enforcing conscription would be onerous when pitched against 'the united determination of the people' which was demonstrated at Ballaghaderreen on 5 May, when John Dillon and Eamon de Valera 'appeared on the same platform and fifteen thousand people responded to the declaration to defeat conscription'.<sup>1921</sup> The Sinn Féin leaders including de Valera were arrested on 17 and 18 May for alleged complicity with Germany.<sup>1922</sup> Although they

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<sup>1914</sup> Ibid., p. 285.

<sup>1915</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1916</sup> Ibid., lii.

<sup>1917</sup> Ibid., p. 291.

<sup>1918</sup> *L.L.*, 20 Apr. 1918.

<sup>1919</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1920</sup> Ibid., 11 May 1918.

<sup>1921</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1922</sup> Ibid., 25 May 1918; O'Day, p. 292.

were immediately deported to England, the decision was counter-productive as it increased 'pro-Sinn Féin sentiment among Catholics'.<sup>1923</sup>

The Irish Parliamentary Party were equally determined to defeat conscription in Ireland. KilBride and P. J. Meehan spoke at an anti-conscription rally in Monasterevan on 19 May 1918, where contingents from Athy, Portarlinton, Rathangan, Vicarstown, Ballybrittas and surrounding areas attended. KilBride argued that England had the 'same virtual right' to conscript Australia, Canada and New Zealand as Ireland but Ireland was conscripted because Irish people were not free.<sup>1924</sup> As to why 'no overt act' was taken to enforce conscription in Ireland, KilBride gave credit to the Irish hierarchy 'leading the press and the Catholics of Ireland against it'. Concluding, KilBride praised the fact that a Defence Committee supported by the Bishops and 'composed of the best element in all sections of Irish thought' had been established in Monasterevan.<sup>1925</sup> At the conclusion of the meeting with the singing of 'God Save Ireland' reference was made to Kevin O'Higgins B.A.,<sup>1926</sup> who was in jail 'for recent advocacy of Ireland's claims to justice at the hands of the English government'.<sup>1927</sup>

#### 7.7 OTHER CONSTITUENCY MATTERS

Among the ongoing interests and duties involving KilBride in the constituency of south Kildare during the period 1916 to 1918 were issues relating to the development of the coalmines at Wolfhill and the construction of a railway link to Athy, primary education and the concerns of the South Kildare Farmers Organisation and Timogue Land and Labour Association during the war. The development of a railway link from the mines at Wolfhill to the Great Southern and Western Railway at Athy was one of KilBride's

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<sup>1923</sup> *L.L.*, 25 May 1918; O'Day, lii, 292.

<sup>1924</sup> *L.L.*, 25 May 1918.

<sup>1925</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1926</sup> Kevin Christopher O'Higgins (1892-1927) a politician was born at Stradbally, Queen's County, educated at Clongowes Wood College, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth and UCD. While still a student he joined Sinn Féin, was imprisoned for six months in 1918 for an anti-conscription speech and while in jail was elected MP for Queen's County. He was on the run in 1920 and in 1922 was elected TD for south Dublin. When Dáil Éireann was established in 1919, O'Higgins was appointed Assistant Minister for Local Government. He was a strong advocate for acceptance of the Treaty of 1921 and after the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922, he became Minister for Justice and External Affairs and vice-president of the Executive Council. When the civil war broke out he took vigorous measures to restore law and order and defended the execution of seventy-seven republicans in 1922-23. His father was shot dead when republicans raided his house in Feb. 1923. O'Higgins established the Garda Síochána as an unarmed police force to replace the RIC. His external policy aimed at a free and undivided Ireland within the British Commonwealth and at the Imperial Conference of 1926, he took a leading part in redefining Commonwealth relations on the basis of equality between members. While on his way to mass at Booterstown, county Dublin on 10 July 1927 he was shot dead by unknown gunmen, Boylan, p. 333.

<sup>1927</sup> *L.L.*, 25 May 1918.

greatest interests during this period. During the debate on the Leyland Company in the House of Commons on 26 July 1916, Lunden (east Limerick) referred to the need for a 'short railway' to the collieries in Queen's County, which if constructed at a reasonable cost of £50,000 would 'leave more ships for other purposes'.<sup>1928</sup> Patrick Meehan in whose constituency the collieries were situated, stated that the output from the mines was 1,500 tons per day, that the whole enterprise was developed privately without government assistance and as a light railway was needed in a time of great scarcity of coal in Ireland that 'the government should finance it'.<sup>1929</sup> KilBride asked Harcourt<sup>1930</sup> to look on the construction of the railway 'from a business point of view'.<sup>1931</sup> There was a considerable extra cost he argued in the 'overland carriage' of coal from the colliery at Mudubeagh to Athy and the government would save by the 'lesser price' at which they could get munitions needed in the war from Kynock's and Company in Arklow' if the railway were in existence. Harcourt promised to give the idea 'very careful attention to its merits'.<sup>1932</sup> In explaining the shortage of coal supplies in Ireland, he pointed to the 'unpleasant consequences' of the war, which were further accentuated by Ireland's insular position with huge 'dependence on sea carriage and upon shipping'. There had been a great decrease in the world tonnage of coal available for general use and prices of coal and other material had 'gone up very largely' he stated principally caused by German and British ships 'laid up or interned' on either side in the war:

A large number of ships are held up in the Baltic and the Black Sea; they are blockaded there and enormous numbers, far beyond the knowledge or belief of this House, of our mercantile ships have been commandeered and taken up by the Admiralty for war purposes....at least fifty per cent of British shipping is under requisition.<sup>1933</sup>

In late January 1917, the new chief secretary, Henry Duke<sup>1934</sup> visited Wolfhill colliery and according to reports he was 'obviously impressed'. Although there were difficulties in regard to the proposed railway between Athy and the collieries 'he hoped

<sup>1928</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxxxiv, 1828-34, 26 July 1916.

<sup>1929</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxxxiv, 1829-30, 26 July 1916.

<sup>1930</sup> Lewis V Harcourt (1863-1922) was the son of Sir William Harcourt and an influential Liberal in his own right, who acted as his private secretary and confidant, entering the House of Commons in 1904 and leaving in 1917 when he was created the First Viscount Harcourt, O'Day, xxii.

<sup>1931</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxxxiv, 1830, 26 July 1916.

<sup>1932</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1933</sup> *Hansard* 5, lxxxiv, 1831-2, 26 July 1916.

<sup>1934</sup> Henry E Duke (1855-1939) was a barrister who became a QC in 1889. He was a Conservative MP, serving as Chief secretary of the Irish Office from 31 July 1916 to Apr. 1918 when he was appointed a Lord Justice of Appeal, O'Day, xx.

they would be overcome'.<sup>1935</sup> The *Leinster Leader* reported on 21 July 1917 that about 300 labourers engaged in the building of the colliery railway from Modubeagh to Athy had gone on strike for better pay and conditions.<sup>1936</sup> The work involved was termed 'relief employment' allocated to labourers who had lost employment 'owing to war exigencies' and many men from the west joined 'under the National Service' and were sent to Athy.<sup>1937</sup> The labourers were paid 'thirty shilling a week' and were supplied with 'housing and sleeping accommodation' for the duration of the works, but it was reported that approximately £1 of their weekly wages was spent on living expenses, leaving them with very little to send to their families in Dublin and elsewhere.<sup>1938</sup> The strike was settled and the labourers went back to work on 23 August 1917. Under the terms of the settlement, where formerly the labourers were paid '6d an hour for a sixty hour week', they would now receive 'an advance of 6d daily, making a wage of 5s 6d per day'.<sup>1939</sup> The regulations for wet days when the labourers couldn't work were to remain and a small reduction was also made in the working hours. It was also announced that the railway line would not now run on the public roads as originally planned. Because of the danger to life, the 'public bodies' had protested against the original proposal and the 'desired change was conceded'.<sup>1940</sup>

On 14 February 1918 the employees engaged in the building of the Athy to Wolfhill railway struck for an increase of two shillings a day.<sup>1941</sup> There were about 300 men involved working from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with a daily rate of 5s 6d and 'by arrangement' this work was to be extended until 6 p.m., which the men objected to.<sup>1942</sup> The building of the railway line was at that stage nearing completion and 'many of the men can now be done without' whereas the tradesmen working on a railway bridge and other skilled workers were not affected.<sup>1943</sup> On Saturday 23 February in Ballylinan, in an effort to find a solution, the employees agreed to allow mediation of their dispute to be undertaken by Father Wilson and the MPs KilBride and P. J. Meehan.<sup>1944</sup> Subsequently three mediators had a 'consultation' with the owner, J. J. Parkinson and the manager of

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<sup>1935</sup> *L.L.*, 27 Jan. 1917.

<sup>1936</sup> *Ibid.*, 30 June, 25 Aug. 1917.

<sup>1937</sup> *Ibid.*, 25 Aug. 1917.

<sup>1938</sup> *Ibid.*, 30 June 1917.

<sup>1939</sup> *Ibid.*, 25 Aug. 1917.

<sup>1940</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1941</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 Mar. 1918; *L.E.*, 16 Feb. 1918.

<sup>1942</sup> *L.E.*, 16 Feb. 1918.

<sup>1943</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1944</sup> *L.L.*, 2 Mar. 1918.

the mines, J. J. Bergin. Here it was agreed that KilBride and Meehan would place the men's grievances before the Board of Trade, the men resuming work on 25 February, the probable outcome being that the employees' demands would 'be met half-way'.<sup>1945</sup> Three months later the line was 'rapidly' nearing completion and a light engine with ballast wagons was reported crossing the 'handsome bridge' over the Barrow and canal at Athy daily.<sup>1946</sup> Large engine sheds were erected close to the existing station and new signalling was installed. Owing to the intermittent flooding of the mines, 'powerful new pumps' were installed, which would help boost the output of coal from the mines and guarantee employment for the miners in the future.<sup>1947</sup> In answer to a question from Mr O'Dowd about the scarcity of coal supplies in the west of Ireland and whether the government would encourage the development of mines in Arigna and elsewhere, Shortt the chief secretary replied that the west of Ireland was getting 'full share of the available supply' but it had been decided to construct a railway connecting the coalfields with the Cavan and Leitrim light railway at Arigna station.<sup>1948</sup> The connection between the Great Southern and Western Railway and the Wolfhill colliery was nearly completed he stated, and the construction of a railway connecting Castlecomer colliery with the same railway had been 'taken in hand'. KilBride asked whether the Wolfhill light railway and the Kilkenny-Castlecomer railways were to be linked to which Shortt replied that it was 'under consideration'.<sup>1949</sup>

Primary education was an ongoing interest of KilBride's during his parliamentary career. On 21 June 1917 KilBride spoke at a public meeting in Kildare, organised by national teachers in demand for better salaries and conditions and 'proper financial assistance' for the needs of education in Ireland.<sup>1950</sup> KilBride who was in 'thorough sympathy' with the claims of the teachers and in particular with the claim that teachers should be 'properly housed' and that the restrictions imposed since the beginning of the war on grants for school buildings and teachers' residences should be removed. The 'scandalous' expense of the war would have been better spent on education he stated and Irish national teachers should be placed on an equal footing with their counterparts

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<sup>1945</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1946</sup> *L.E.*, 25 May 1918.

<sup>1947</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1948</sup> *Hansard* 5, cix, 582-3, 1 Aug. 1918.

<sup>1949</sup> *Hansard* 5, cix, 583, 1 Aug. 1918.

<sup>1950</sup> *L.L.*, 30 June 1917.

in England where 'salary, housing and retiring allowances were concerned'.<sup>1951</sup> In an oral answers session in the House of Commons on 25 July 1918, Colonel Yate asked the chief secretary, Mr Shortt about Irish history questions set in a Christian Brothers scholarship examination, which were later published under the title 'how Irish crime [was] nurtured' and whether the educational authorities in Ireland had power to disapprove of school books or historical courses which tended 'to inculcate disaffection'.<sup>1952</sup> Shortt replied that the Christian Brothers were 'not in connection' with the Board of Education 'nor subject in any respect' to the Educational Commissioners' control. KilBride asked whether the boys in these schools would be 'acquainted with the history of Geraldus Cambrensis, the biggest liar that ever came to Ireland'. Short replied that he would consider that.<sup>1953</sup>

The importance of controlling the supply and demand for farm produce especially meat was of major political and social importance during the war years and KilBride was often involved both in the House of Commons and in his constituency in issues relating to these matters. A letter from KilBride was read at a meeting of the South Kildare Farmers on 4 September 1918.<sup>1954</sup> In the letter KilBride outlined his meetings 'more than twelve months ago' with Mr Clynes MP and the principal officials of the Food Control Department at Grosvenor House in London.<sup>1955</sup> KilBride had then intimated that the policy proposed for spring prices for beef and mutton 'would result in a famine of home grown-meat after Christmas'.<sup>1956</sup> Notwithstanding the previous year's experience, KilBride stated that the Food Control Department were 'bent on creating the same state of affairs' in the coming spring. KilBride who was present at the meeting noted that foreign meat was so inferior in London in July and August that the people absolutely refused to buy it but that was all changed and they were now using home-grown beef and the Food Controller hoped to supply the English market with beef from Ireland until the beginning of the following year.<sup>1957</sup>

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<sup>1951</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1952</sup> *Hansard* 5, cviii, 1974, 25 July 1918.

<sup>1953</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1954</sup> *L.L.*, 7 Sept. 1918; *L.E.*, 17 Sept. 1918.

<sup>1955</sup> *L.E.*, 17 Sept. 1918; *L.E.*, 17 Sept. 1918.

<sup>1956</sup> *L.L.*, 7 Sept. 1918; *L.E.*, 17 Sept. 1918.

<sup>1957</sup> Ibid.

Agrarian difficulties dominated the proceedings of a meeting of the Athy Number Two Queen's County District Council on 20 September 1918.<sup>1958</sup> The first of these related to the efforts of the Timogue Land and Labour Association, who were campaigning for the sale of the Edge estate of 365 acres at Coolnabacy, then held by Mr Moyles. However, Moyles wrote to the association stating that he had 'no present intention' of offering the lands for sale. The association intended renewing their campaign and hoped for the support of the council, which support was forthcoming. The second issue related directly to the Luggacurren estate. William Lynch Relieving Officer for the Athy Union, outlined the 'harsh treatment' received by Miss Byrne and her brothers, who were 'turned out of their farm at Tullamoy about thirty years ago'. Since then Lynch pointed out, Miss Byrne had been 'driven into a back street in Athy', where she had been struggling 'to keep body and soul together and was now practically destitute'. Mr Dunne announced to the meeting that the auctioneer Mr Jessop, who was selling the lands in question at Tullamoy, was now considering the reinstatement of Miss Byrne 'and her people in her old home', which he believed would end satisfactorily.<sup>1959</sup> The *Leinster Express* reporting on the same meeting took a completely different interpretation in stating that Jessop the auctioneer had 'nothing whatever' to do with the sale of the farm in question.<sup>1960</sup>

In an earlier chapter, reference was made to the Verscoyle estate near Athy, County Kildare. Proceedings for the purchase of this estate were initiated in November 1907. On 7 August 1917 KilBride asked the chief secretary, James Duke about the progress of this application and in particular about an evicted tenant Andrew Darby. Duke had no information about an agreement to purchase Darby's holding and the estate he stated had not yet been reached 'in its order of priority'.<sup>1961</sup>

## 7.8 THE GENERAL ELECTION OF 1918

Germany sought an armistice on 4 October 1918 and this was effected on 11 October.<sup>1962</sup> According to the *Leinster Leader* 'scenes of almost delirious joy' were witnessed throughout Great Britain and Ireland and in Dublin 'the demonstrations were

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<sup>1958</sup> *L.L.*, 21 Sept. 1918.

<sup>1959</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1960</sup> *L.E.*, 5 Oct. 1918.

<sup>1961</sup> *Hansard* 5, xcvi, 223, 7 Aug. 1917.

<sup>1962</sup> O'Day, lii.

almost unparalleled'.<sup>1963</sup> In Naas the news was received early on Monday 11 October and 'general relief was evidenced that the slaughter had ceased'.<sup>1964</sup> The coalition government called a general election on 14 November 1918 and parliament was dissolved on 25 November.<sup>1965</sup> In late November 1918, the clerk of Athy Union received 'a wire' from Captain John Lane KilBride medical officer for Athy, who had been on active service in the war for the previous four years, stating that he hoped to resume his position. His father Dr James KilBride had been acting medical officer in Athy during his absence.<sup>1966</sup> Dr John was duly congratulated by the board 'on returning safely' and was 'glad that his father had been able to do the duty in his absence'.<sup>1967</sup>

'Arthur O'Connor B.E., Celbridge' who was interned in England was the Sinn Féin candidate chosen to contest the south Kildare seat held by KilBride.<sup>1968</sup> It was 'persistently mentioned' that J. J. Parkinson, owner of the Wolfhill collieries would be a candidate for the Irish party but this was quickly ruled out when KilBride opened his election campaign in south Kildare on Tuesday 19 November. William P. Triston, solicitor was appointed KilBride's 'conducting agent' and premises in Duke Street, Athy were procured 'in combined occupation of Mr Triston and the A.O.H. as his electioneering headquarters'. A meeting of KilBride's supporters was called for 22 November at the Urban Council rooms. In north Kildare, John O'Connor MP had been 'resident in Naas for some weeks' and was busy electioneering and organising private meetings of his supporters. It was reported that John O'Connor's prominent supporters were 'reticent' regarding the outcome of the election in north Kildare, mainly because it was impossible to speak with any degree of accuracy 'as a new element in the women's enfranchisement had to be yet dealt with'.<sup>1969</sup> The Sinn Féin candidate for the constituency was Dónal Buckley<sup>1970</sup> (Dónall Ó Buachalla), whose supporters were confining their attention to a general canvass, while Sinn Féin literature and flags appeared all over the constituency and the organisation was 'becoming more active every day'.<sup>1971</sup> The Catholic hierarchy issued an appeal, suggesting a compromise

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<sup>1963</sup> *L.L.*, 16 Oct. 1918.

<sup>1964</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1965</sup> O'Day, p. 293.

<sup>1966</sup> *L.L.*, 23 Nov. 1918.

<sup>1967</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1968</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1969</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1970</sup> Buckley was a merchant from Maynooth, County Kildare.

<sup>1971</sup> *L.L.*, 23 Nov. 1918.



between the Irish party and Sinn Féin leaders 'with a view to saving Ulster seats from the Unionists' but the possibility of this happening was judged to be 'slight'.<sup>1972</sup>

KilBride's campaign officially opened on 22 November 1918, when the chairman of Athy Urban Council, M. E. Doyle J.P. explained that the meeting had been called at the request of 'several gentlemen of representative character' to select a candidate for south Kildare 'under the leadership of Mr John Dillon'. Canon Mackey P.P. after a long speech outlining the achievements of the Irish Parliamentary Party, proposed KilBride as their candidate. The nomination was seconded by Charles Duncan, which was 'carried unanimously and with acclamation'. KilBride in an acceptance speech stated that he was not in favour of abandoning the House of Commons as a 'platform' for the voice of Ireland. Considering the possibility of Sinn Féin winning the election and opting for complete separation from England, he pointed out the repercussions of such a policy, especially when Carson had 'no desire to abandon the House of Commons'.<sup>1973</sup> KilBride addressed a private meeting of the Transport Workers in Athy on Sunday 24 November, which was followed by an address by Councillor J. Dalton<sup>1974</sup> of Limerick in the Sinn Féin interest.<sup>1975</sup> Later that same day the first meeting to further the Sinn Féin candidate Arthur O'Connor was held in the Market Square, Athy. W. O. Esmond, son of Sir Thomas Esmond 'and a great-great-grandson of Henry Grattan' addressed the Sinn Féin supporters, with a plea for votes for the 'brave men' of Sinn Féin who were imprisoned for the 'sole crime' of being Irishmen. J. Dalton who also spoke criticised KilBride in the following words:

Mr KilBride....deserted the evicted tenants and took a farm for himself. He [KilBride] also had a brother in the west sentencing honourable and unselfish young men to jail and taking his instructions from Dublin Castle and for that dirty work he was drawing £800 per year [groans].<sup>1976</sup>

On 26 November another Sinn Féin meeting was held in Kildare to further the candidature of Arthur O'Connor who was still in Durham prison. J. J. Fitzgerald, chairman of Kildare G.A.A. county board, stated that 'a new doctrine was initiated in 1914' by the Irish Parliamentary Party, in which the need for freedom 'no longer

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<sup>1972</sup> Ibid., 30 Nov. 1918.

<sup>1973</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1974</sup> Dalton was a member of Limerick Typographical Association and an ex-president of Trades Congress, *L.L.*, 30 Nov. 1918.

<sup>1975</sup> *L.L.*, 30 Nov. 1918.

<sup>1976</sup> Ibid.

existed' and that 'true nationalism' lay in a portion of Ireland becoming a permanent province of England 'and the other portion cut off to be governed, God know how'.<sup>1977</sup>

On Sunday 1 December 1918 a large meeting in support of KilBride's candidature was held in the Square, Athy. KilBride and the other speakers were frequently interrupted by 'a number of young men wearing Sinn Féin colours' but no trouble resulted.<sup>1978</sup> Canon Mackey P.P. called for support for KilBride on the strength of 'Ireland a nation, Ireland an independent nation, but of Ireland not a separate nation' and in his view the House of Commons was the 'best' place to carry out 'the influence of moral persuasion' because there the opinions expressed were not censored. KilBride while referring to the Sinn Féin hecklers in the crowd, said he never believed 'until lately that there were so many young men in the asylums in Ireland and so many damn lunatics outside'.<sup>1979</sup> He further maintained that Ireland should be an independent nation and strongly disapproved of the Sinn Féin policy of complete separation from Westminster.<sup>1980</sup> Sinn Féin's advocacy of a rebellion against the might of England he argued, 'with five millions of soldiers, one for every man, woman and child in Ireland was out of the question' and on the topic of political sacrifice he had the following to say:<sup>1981</sup>

Before 1916...many of them like Mr Sheehy and himself, had done their time in jail but they never showed the sore leg. They took their punishment and the plank bed. One would imagine the young men of today were the first Irishmen to go to jail...All they want now is cigarettes, chicken and champagne. As for an Irish Republic, they might as well ask for a piece of the moon as they would be just as likely to get it.<sup>1982</sup>

The Sinn Féin meeting in Athy also took place on 1 December 1918 was a much more interesting and colourful occasion. From early morning there was a display of Sinn Féin colours from the windows of 'homes of sympathisers', while almost everyone in the Square 'wore a republican badge or other favour'.<sup>1983</sup> The reason for an early morning meeting was the attendance of the Vice-President of Sinn Féin, Fr Michael

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<sup>1977</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1978</sup> *L.L.*, 7 Dec. 1918; *L.E.*, 7 Dec. 1918.

<sup>1979</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1980</sup> *L.E.*, 7 Dec. 1918.

<sup>1981</sup> *L.L.*, 7 Dec. 1918.

<sup>1982</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1983</sup> Ibid.

O'Flanagan<sup>1984</sup> who had five meetings to attend that day. O'Flanagan had 'motored from Carlow' the previous night, while his car was 'commandeered by some youthful Sinn Féiners' who proceeded to decorate the car with 'tricolour bunting and from which during its progress through town they waved flags.. amidst a perfect hurricane of cheering'.<sup>1985</sup> O'Flanagan in a long speech stated that they were 'fooled' for two years by the Home Rule Act on the statute book, which was 'unthinkable' to put into operation during the war. Then he claimed they were fooled by 'Lloyd George's sham convention', which Sinn Féin branded as a 'sham' before it started but which 'the Party' was only able to brand as a sham when it was finished.<sup>1986</sup> Referring again to the convention he stated:

Now they [convention delegates] are dropping out one by one, first there was the O'Brienite party, then Tim Healy and then Pat White and thirty of the party have refused to go forward and the members of the party themselves were asked to stand aside and allow Sinn Féin to bury them with honour.<sup>1987</sup>

O'Flanagan also visited Newbridge and Naas that day, where he was received in a similar fashion. In Naas O'Flanagan stated that he didn't blame the 'brave and honourable men' who joined the army during the war but he certainly blamed their leaders 'who deceived them'.<sup>1988</sup> During the speech of the Sinn Féin candidate Dónal

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<sup>1984</sup> Father Michael O'Flanagan (1876-1942) was a priest and republican, born at Cloontower near Castlerea, county Roscommon and educated at Cloonbonive NS and the Diocesan College, Summerhill, county Sligo. He was ordained at Maynooth in 1900 and returned to Summerhill to teach. In 1904 he as send to America to raise funds to defray the debt on Louglinn convent. His preaching ability brought him invitations to be advent preacher in St Sylvester's in Rome in 1912 and 1914. He disputed the Congested Districts Board's reservation of turf banks for its own tenants and in June 1915 led his congregation in cutting turf every day until the board secured an injunction against him. The turf rights were restored to the people in 1916. Shortly afterwards he was transferred to the parish of Crossna. He began to address nationalist meetings and he gave the oration at the lying in state of O'Donovan Rossa. In 1917 he managed Count Plunkett's successful campaign in the Roscommon by-election and became vice-chairman of Sinn Féin. He said the prayers with which the first Dáil was opened at the Mansion House in Jan. 1919, although at the time 'silenced' by his bishop. He became an executive member of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society and a vice-president of the Gaelic League. In Nov. 1921 he went to America and from there to Australia, where 'for some compliments paid to St George on the occasion of his feast', he was arrested, held for three weeks and finally deported on a French ship. He then worked for the republican cause in America until de Valera invited him back to assist in forming a new electoral policy. He acted as chairman of a sub-committee appointed to draw up a social programme for Sinn Féin. In 1937 he again toured America, this time in support of the Spanish Republic. During his career he was suspended several times by his bishop. His final suspension was removed in 1927 and he spend his last years in Sandford, Dublin acting as chaplain to nearly convents. He also undertook historical research, editing *The John O'Donovan archaeological survey* (fifty volumes) between 1924 and 1932 and his *County histories* between 1932 and 1942. He died in Aug. 1942, Boylan, p. 326.

<sup>1985</sup> *L.L.*, 7 Dec. 1918.

<sup>1986</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1987</sup> *Ibid.*; O'Day maintains that Healy and O'Brien declined to attend the Irish convention, the latter believing that the conclave would make 'a hateful bargain for the partition of the country under a plausible disguise', O'Day, p. 281; McDowell, R. B., *The Irish convention 1917-18*, p. 83.

<sup>1988</sup> *L.L.*, 7 Dec. 1918.

Buckley, a scuffle broke out between some soldiers and the Sinn Féiners, the latter who had removed a Union Jack, which the soldiers had placed on top of a lamppost. Some 'blows were exchanged' but the police restrained the soldiers and the prominent Sinn Féiners restrained the civilians and thus 'averted further trouble'.<sup>1989</sup>

Nominations for the general election closed on 4 December.<sup>1990</sup> In north Kildare, Dónal Buckley of Sinn Féin was nominated by Dr Grogan, Maynooth and Fr M. O'Brien C.C. Kill.<sup>1991</sup> John O'Connor of the Irish Parliamentary Party was nominated by Fr Norris P. P. Naas and John Healy, County Councillor, Firmount. In south Kildare, Arthur O'Connor, Elm Hall, Celbridge, Engineer was nominated for Sinn Féin by Michael Dooley and Peter Doyle, both of Leinster Street, Athy. KilBride was nominated by Canon Edward Mackey P.P. and M.E. Doyle J.P. KilBride was also accompanied on the occasion by his solicitor W. Triston and his nephew Dr John Lane KilBride. In Queen's County Kevin Christopher O'Higgins of Sinn Féin was nominated by Joseph Delaney, County Councillor, Ballyteegan and by Thomas Moore, Maryborough. P. J. Meehan of the Irish Parliamentary Party was nominated by Fr James Lalor P.P. Abbeyleix and Fintan Phelan.<sup>1992</sup> KilBride spent the last week leading up to the election visiting places such as Castledermot, Moone, Ballytore and made final arrangements for the appointment of 'personation and other agents'.<sup>1993</sup> Polling took place on a single day (14 December 1918) for the first time.<sup>1994</sup> A remarkable aspect of polling day in Maryborough was when the ballot boxes arrived in military wagons 'accompanied by escorts of Sinn Féiners in motor cars'.<sup>1995</sup> Not only was this tolerated but when the boxes were stored in the County Council chamber, the doors and windows were sealed by the returning officer and 'representatives of the Sinn Féin candidate'. The returning officer also gave permission for the placing of a Sinn Féin guard of two men in the courthouse but when the police later objected, the Sinn Féiners left the premises the following night.<sup>1996</sup>

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<sup>1989</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1990</sup> O'Day, p. 293.

<sup>1991</sup> *L.L.*, 7 Dec. 1918.

<sup>1992</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1993</sup> Ibid., 14 Dec. 1918.

<sup>1994</sup> O'Day, p. 293.

<sup>1995</sup> *L.L.*, 21 Dec. 1918.

<sup>1996</sup> Ibid.

The results of the general election were announced on 28 December.<sup>1997</sup> The Sinn Féin candidate in south Kildare, A. O'Connor received 7,104 votes while KilBride polled 1,545, a surplus for Sinn Féin of 5,549.<sup>1998</sup> In north Kildare Dónal Buckley received 5,979 votes, while the outgoing John O'Connor received 2,772, a majority of 3,207 for Sinn Féin.<sup>1999</sup> The pattern was similar in Queen's County where Kevin C. O'Higgins was elected with 13,452, while the nationalist candidate P. J. Meehan received 6,480 votes, a surplus of 6,972 for Sinn Féin.<sup>2000</sup> Leaving out the north-east, the general election of 1918 put Sinn Féin in possession in Ireland. After the 1918 general election the Conservatives had 339 seats and the Liberals 136, giving a total of 475 out of 707 seats to the outgoing coalition.<sup>2001</sup> John Dillon lost his seat to de Valera in east Mayo and the Irish Parliamentary Party had six seats, Unionists twenty-six and Sinn Féin seventy-three, twenty-three of which were unopposed.<sup>2002</sup> According to O'Day the 1918 election had four implications:

The Coalition was Conservative-dominated; there was no longer a need to negotiate with the Irish party; Sinn Féin abstention lessened problems in the House of Commons and the government could strike an agreement with Unionists first and deal with national representatives afterwards.<sup>2003</sup>

The first full meeting of the Paris Peace Conference was held on 18 January.<sup>2004</sup> The *Freeman's Journal* published a message at the end of January 1919 stating that Irish delegates would not be admitted by the French government to the Peace Conference, 'without the approval of the British authorities' and even if Irish delegates arrived, 'their reception by the allied representatives would be cold'.<sup>2005</sup> On 21 January two policemen were killed by an Irish Volunteers unit of Dan Breen, Seán Tracey and Séamus Robinson at Solohead, County Tipperary.<sup>2006</sup> On the same day twenty-eight of the Sinn Féin elected members who were not in prison met at the Mansion House in Dublin and constituted themselves as Dáil Éireann, meeting six times in 1919, six in 1920 and six in 1921.<sup>2007</sup>

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<sup>1997</sup> O'Day, p. 293.

<sup>1998</sup> *L.E.*, 28 Dec. 1918.

<sup>1999</sup> *L.L.*, 4 Jan. 1919; *L.E.*, 28 Dec. 1918.

<sup>2000</sup> *L.E.*, 28 Dec. 1918; *L.L.*, 4 Jan. 1919.

<sup>2001</sup> O'Day, p. 293.

<sup>2002</sup> Boylan, p. 102; O'Day, p. 293.

<sup>2003</sup> O'Day, p. 293.

<sup>2004</sup> *Ibid.*, lii.

<sup>2005</sup> *L.L.*, 1 Feb. 1919.

<sup>2006</sup> O'Day, p. 293.

<sup>2007</sup> *Ibid.*

## 7.9 KILBRIDE'S RECOLLECTIONS: 'RECENT HAPPENINGS AT LUGGACURREN'

Manuscript two (MS 2) entitled 'Recent happenings at Luggacurren' is one of only two documents written by KilBride still extant today.<sup>2008</sup> This document describes the local land agitation still in existence in Luggacurren in 1922 (most likely date). At that stage there was great excitement among the extreme nationalists or Sinn Féiners in the locality as they realised that 'there was no government and if they waited until the government was fully established, they felt that they would not be allowed to act as they thought fit. As KilBride describes the scene, a 'self-constituted' land committee was formed without the support of the former evicted tenants. The main aim of the committee was to evict the Protestant 'planters' from the estate.<sup>2009</sup> The first two 'planters' to be evicted were Thomas Stone and William Stanley. Thomas Stone had purchased his farm from Thomas Mullins, who in turn had been originally 'planted on KilBride's holding (Appendix 15). On the appointed day fixed to evict Stone and Stanley, KilBride 'went down to the village uninvited, to see what was going on'. The small gathering of people were not by any means unanimous about evicting the planters and a meeting was held 'in an empty coal store in the village'. The meeting was acrimonious, some pushing for immediate action and others arguing why the 'planters were not evicted while the Black and Tans were around. Those of a more conciliatory disposition suggested seeking the assistance of Fr Wilson CC<sup>2010</sup> who would consult with Mr Kevin O'Higgins instead of 'embarrassing the provisional government.' KilBride the 'evicted tenant' was one of those elected to wait on Fr Wilson. While this meeting was in progress, some of those who remained outside proceeded unannounced to the holdings of Stone and Stanley and cleared their stock off the lands. The committee put 'some young fellows in the planters' houses in case they were burned by 'someone unknown'. The elected delegation eventually met with Kevin O'Higgins, Sinn Féin member for Leix and Patrick Hogan,<sup>2011</sup> Minister for Agriculture.<sup>2012</sup>

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<sup>2008</sup> MS 2, 'Recent happenings at Luggacurren', undated but probably 1922, property of Raymond Lacey, Clopook Cross, Luggacurren, Stradbally, County Laois.

<sup>2009</sup> A 'planter' was a person (usually an outsider and a Protestant) who took possession of a farm from which another tenant had been previously evicted.

<sup>2010</sup> Fr Wilson was curate in Luggacurren from 1909-23.

<sup>2011</sup> W. Hogan in MS 2.

<sup>2012</sup> Patrick Hogan (1891-1936) was Minister for Agriculture from 1922-32. He was on the conservative wing of Cumann na nGaedheal, opposing protectionism and advocating minimal taxation, in order to keep down the price of Irish agricultural exports. However, he also introduced close regulation to maintain the standard of Irish produce and in 1923 put through the last of the Land Acts that since the 1870s had changed the ownership of rural Ireland. A fatal car crash prematurely ended his political career, Connolly, *Oxford companion*, p. 247.

According to KilBride, both O'Higgins and Hogan wrote to Father Wilson 'giving their views and advice'<sup>2013</sup> and their letters were read from the altar on the following Sunday morning.<sup>2014</sup>

#### 7.10 'DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND'

KilBride lived at Luggacurren House from 1906 to the time of his death on Friday 24 October 1924. 'He had reached the ripe old age of seventy-six, having been born in 1848.'<sup>2015</sup> Previous to this he was in bad health. His funeral took place on 25 October to Clopook cemetery, where he was buried in the family plot. Office and high mass were celebrated on 28 October.<sup>2016</sup> In its usual patriotic fashion the *Freeman's Journal* stated that his name was always associated with the Irish land war and he was one of the few surviving 'captains of the struggle' who finally won the land of Ireland for the people and created a great peasant propriety, which was the bone and sinew of the nation's future. He was therefore worthy to be placed on a 'roll of patriot' with all the other nationalists who struggled in their respective localities:

KilBride of Luggacurren, John Roche of Woodford, Matt Harris of Ballyhaunis, John Mandeville of Mitchelstown, T. J. Condon of Clonmel, David Sheehy, Michael Reddy of Shannonbridge, John Fitzgibbon of Castlerea, Pat McDermott of Loughrea, P. A. Meehan of Maryborough, the Haydens of Mullingar, John O'Connor of Cork, E. P. O'Kelly of Baltinglass, John Cullinan of Bansha, Tom Barry of Killavullen, O'Brien D'Alton of Tipperary, Dean Keller of Youghal, Father Matt Ryan (The General), Father Kennedy of Meelin, Father McFadden of Gweedore and Father David Humphreys of Tipperary. These men fought landlordism foot by foot, from field to field, in prison and out, until they broke the head of the monster and freed the soil of Ireland from its cruel and abhorrent ravages. No roll of Irish patriotism can be complete without their names.<sup>2017</sup>

Denis's son, Joseph Aloysius KilBride died on 26 May 1927 aged forty-one years. A mass obituary card still extant states his age as forty-two, that he was 'fortified by rites of holy church' and interred at 'SS Peter and Paul on May 28, 1927'.<sup>2018</sup> Joseph Aloysius KilBride's wife, Catherine KilBride formerly Milner, died in 1949. Joseph

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<sup>2013</sup> KilBride gave no indication about the advice given in the two letters.

<sup>2014</sup> MS 2.

<sup>2015</sup> *L.E.*, 1 Nov. 1924.

<sup>2016</sup> *F.J.*, 27 Oct. 1924.

<sup>2017</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2018</sup> Mass obituary card of Joseph A. KilBride in the private possession of Peter and Winnie KilBride, 174 Plymyard Avenue, Eastham, Wirral, Liverpool, England, CH62 8EH.

Aloysius and Catherine KilBride had two sons, Joseph Wilfrid KilBride (1916-1995)<sup>2019</sup> and Charles Michael KilBride (1917-31 January 1954). Michael Charles KilBride married a Mrs Woods in Bristol and had two sons, Michael J. KilBride, died 22 July 1957, aged eleven and Geraldine KilBride, born c1953 but unknown since. Joseph Wilfrid KilBride married Dorothy Catherine McGoldrick (1918-1982) and they had four sons, Joseph Anthony (1947-), Peter John (1950-), John Charles (1955-), Paul Michael (1957-) and Kevin Patrick (1958-).<sup>2020</sup> The following are the inscriptions on the KilBride family headstone at Clopook cemetery, Luggacurren:

In memory of Thomas KilBride of Luggacurren who died 21 May 1866 aged sixty-four years and of his wife Maria KilBride who died 10 March 1891 aged seventy years. May they rest in peace. Also their son Patrick J. KilBride who died the 7 April 1915 aged fifty-two years. Denis KilBride died 24 October 1924 aged seventy-five years. Valentine KilBride died 29 May 1928 aged seventy-five. William KilBride died 15 April 1931 aged eighty-one years. Mary Ester KilBride died 20 July 1937 aged eighty-two years. Thomas KilBride died 19 July 1956 aged seventy-six years. R.I.P.

Denis's sister Mary KilBride was the last of the KilBride family to live at Luggacurren. She like Denis never married. A marble altar was donated to the Roman Catholic Church in Luggacurren by the KilBride family in 1937. The brass plaque reads: 'Donated to the memory of the KilBride family of Luggacurren R.I.P. March 1937.'

Lansdowne outlived KilBride and died at the age of eighty-two in Newtown-Anner, Clonmel on a visit to his daughter in 1927. His remains were brought back to Bowood House, Wiltshire but unlike his predecessors, who were buried in the family mausoleum on the estate and according to his own wishes, he was buried in the graveyard of the local parish church of Derry Hill, just outside the gates of Bowood House. The struggle for the control of the land was as KilBride pointed out 'a fight of intelligence against intelligence. It was diamond cut diamond, and Mr Trench might think he would put them down'.<sup>2021</sup>

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<sup>2019</sup> The sponsors of Joseph Wilfrid's baptism on 12 Oct. 1916 were Charles Culshaw and Kate Murphy, information researched at Douai Abbey, Reading by Denis KilBride's great-grandson, Peter John KilBride, 174 Plymyard Avenue, Eastham, Wirral, Liverpool, England CH62 8EH.

<sup>2020</sup> Information given by Denis KilBride's great-grandson, Peter John KilBride, 174 Plymyard Avenue, Eastham, Wirral, Liverpool, England CH62 8EH.

<sup>2021</sup> *L.E.*, 2 Apr. 1887.



## CONCLUSION

This study has examined the profile of a Catholic nationalist MP during and after the second phase of the land war in Ireland. Denis KilBride emerged into politics as a Queen's County gentlemen farmer on Lord Lansdowne's Luggacurren estate. An examination of the life of a politician such as KilBride helps to lift the distortion that very little happened during the second phase of the land war, as it was relatively much more peaceful than the first phase from 1879-1882; that evictions were few and that the plan of campaign as a national movement was the prime mover in solving the land question in Ireland. KilBride's career emerged at a time when little other than the names and activities of the main players were widely known. He brought to life the agrarian policy of the plan of campaign, which substituted or overshadowed the main policy of independence from England in Irish political and social affairs.

As outlined in the introduction to this study, KilBride's life and career were not of any major national importance, in comparison with the leading political figures of the day. Yet he is not without significance for many reasons. He was, like P. A. Mc Hugh in Sligo and Leitrim, 'a footsoldier for the party' who fell in line with the dictates of successive nationalist leaders such as Charles Stewart Parnell, Justin MacCarthy, John Dillon and John Redmond and could be relied upon to carry a constituency largely on the strength of his so-called heroism built up in consequence of his being an evicted tenant. His long career as a politician brought him into close contact with important national figures, both before and after the Parnell split in the Irish party. He represented the rising aspirations of the peasants, the farmers, the shopkeepers and the town inhabitants for a better existence, taking the first step by throwing off what they felt to be the tyranny of serfdom imposed by the landlords and the eventual achievement of Home Rule for Ireland. One of KilBride's over-riding ambitions was the abolition of the institution of landlordism and its replacement with a system of peasant proprietorship, the only system he thought capable of permanently solving the land question. Little did KilBride know that Lansdowne realised, even in the early stages of the plan of campaign, that this was the only way forward for him also, and one which would free him from constant financial difficulties and endless responsibilities in relation to his Irish estates.

The KilBride family as Wilfrid Blunt described them, were of the 'highly respectable' upper-middle class and considered to be gentlemen tenant farmers in the post-famine period in Ireland. The KilBrides according to Blunt, were 'distinctly superior' to the British middle class in 'manners and good breeding'. Thomas KilBride ensured that his sons were well educated in order to maintain the family's excellent social standing. As gentlemen farmers, the KilBrides had many tenants and employed labourers.

The importance of Lord Lansdowne both politically and as a landlord with estates in Ireland, England and Scotland was undisputed. Lansdowne, being of the aristocracy and a man with imperial responsibility, was in a position whereby he had to take a hard-line approach with his tenants in Luggacurren. The plan of campaign being in essence a strike against landlord's power and control on chosen estates, precluded Lansdowne from capitulating to the tenants' demands. He gave large abatements to his tenants in Kerry because of the exceptionally poor living conditions but did not feel justified in giving similar rent reductions to his Luggacurren tenantry. Although Lansdowne was known to be in financial difficulties in the late 1880s, he was perceived as a conciliatory landlord who made considerable improvements on his estate. He insisted at a very early stage in the struggle that he saw no justice in giving the same rent abatement to his Queen's County tenants as he had to the poorer tenants in Kerry. He was firm in his conviction that he had been more than fair in his dealings since he took over the management of the Luggacurren estate and beyond that he was not prepared to go. The non-payment of rent at Luggacurren came at a wrong time for Lansdowne, as his family was in imminent danger of financial ruin, if he didn't accept the offered position of Governor General in Canada and later the Viceroyalty of India. Also as a nobleman who held an important government position, he felt morally precluded from capitulating to the tenants' demands. He had no real choice in the matter once the plan of campaign had been adopted and he had to leave the management of his estates in the hands of his agent John Townsend Trench.

John Townsend Trench took over the agency of Lansdowne's estates, when his father William Steuart died in 1872. He was considered to be a colourful idiosyncratic character. However, he was determined to carry out the will of the landlord. He was also a magistrate who was held in high regard by the people of Kenmare, County Kerry.

Trench acted as agent for an absentee landlord who was also Governor-General of Canada and later Viceroy of India. However, he failed to deal with tenants effectively during the plan of campaign years.

Although the leaseholders were excluded from going into the land courts in 1886, Lansdowne offered them liberal abatement of between fifteen and twenty per cent in the rents. John William Dunne, being the leaseholder with the largest combined holding, was offered fifteen and KilBride was offered the maximum of twenty per cent reduction in their rents. As the judicial tenants on smaller holdings such as Brian Coffey who held eighteen acres and Michael Dunne with sixty-one acres had already received an average of twenty per cent reduction through the land courts of 1883, Lansdowne felt justified in refusing any further abatement to them. On this basis, KilBride argued that the proposal to adopt the plan of campaign on the Luggacurren estate came from the smaller judicial tenants, such as Bryan Coffey and Michael Dunne and he (KilBride) was the last tenant 'to cross the road' in favour of its adoption. As far as KilBride was concerned, his responsibility was 'a joint responsibility' with all the other tenants who adopted the plan of campaign, but he was not the instigator. Although KilBride clung to this view throughout his life, he was often accused of being the leading force behind the scenes in the adoption of the plan of campaign. This is well exemplified in a letter of 23 February 1887 to Rochford, but intended for Lansdowne, from a 'writer' with personal knowledge of the Luggacurren situation. The writer argued that KilBride and John William Dunne had 'ruined themselves by betting and drinking' and accordingly induced the smaller tenants to publicly instigate the plan, with an assurance of the backing of the league, whose only realistic interest in the affair he argued, was political expediency in discrediting the Governor-General of Canada, Lord Lansdowne and by implication the government itself.

In KilBride's case it should not be forgotten that although a leaseholder precluded from having his rent fixed in the land courts before 1887, he was offered an abatement of twenty per cent in 1886, which he claimed could not be accepted because the non-judicial tenants were offered less and the judicial tenants were offered no reduction whatsoever. That the adoption of the plan of campaign on the Luggacurren estate was a mistake was without doubt and the leaders such as John Dillon and in particular William O'Brien, might have been more conciliatory and comprising during

negotiations for the settlement of the dispute. The usual criteria in choosing estates if there was an unbridgeable gap in the landlord/tenant relationship was the possibility of the landlord facing serious financial ruin if the plan of campaign were to be adopted. In some cases the tenants on plan of campaign estates had to take the risk of complete ruin, but in Luggacurren the risks were never really weighed up and it could be argued that the tenants, especially the smaller sub-tenants and labourers were used for the sake of political expediency. The quality and size of the holdings on the Luggacurren estate, together with bigger and better housing conditions and superior farm buildings could not be compared with the conditions on the Kerry estate.

KilBride claimed that since the evictions, he never had any communication 'either directly or indirectly' with Lansdowne about a settlement of the Luggacurren dispute. As to his thwarting the negotiations, he made no secret of the fact that he did not favour planting people on evicted farms other than their own. He saw no difference between planters, be they evicted tenants or Orangemen and would never subscribe to 'turn any class into grabbers'.

In May 1887, the Orangemen of Canada were engaged in celebrating the Queen's jubilee and were in no mood for a move against their esteemed Governor General. O'Brien and KilBride were jeered and mocked, physically attacked and beaten up on several occasions and shots were fired at their carriage in Hamilton - the carriage driver being shot in the hand. They were lucky to escape with their lives into the USA. The editorial of the *Exeter Advocate* claimed that the Canadian crusade would have been 'a series of fizzles', but for O'Brien's near martyrdom at the hands of the mobs of Toronto and Kingston. They 'stoned him into notability' and gathered a crowd of 8,000 people in Montreal to hear him.

The Governor General far from his popularity being diminished was hailed as a hero and welcomed as never before into the streets of the cities of the dominion and was also backed up by anonymous letters in the Irish press. KilBride in his own account noted that both the American and Irish press of May and June 1887 contained long and graphic accounts of the meetings held in New York, Boston, Montreal, Quebec, Ottawa and the hair breath escapes in Toronto, Kingston, Hamilton where the Orangemen attacked the Irish nationalist meetings. The *Buffalo Express* was at a loss in ascertaining

the value to O'Brien of his Canadian tour, stirring up 'one city after another with his grievances', being the recipient of sympathy and violence in equal measure, but hardly expecting the reaction that 'caused great sympathy for Lord Lansdowne'. In Quebec and Montreal, the newspapers reported that O'Brien was surrounded equally by sympathisers and adversaries, in Toronto he was assaulted and hissed, in Ottawa he was cheered and befriended, 'action and reaction are equal'.

O'Brien always insisted that the Canadian expedition was an unqualified success, stating 'that it was roses, roses, all the way from one end of lower Canada to the other,' whereas the *Irish Times* stated that 'a more hopeless and ill-advised mission no man of Mr O'Brien's attainments ever undertook.' In a libel action the following year, taken by William O'Brien against the *Cork Constitution*, O'Brien was reminded that he had accused Lansdowne of 'cowardly incitement to assassination in Canada'. O'Brien commented that when he was journeying to Canada, 'Lansdowne fled from his capital, Ottawa, to the Belfast of Canada, Toronto, gathering about him all the Orangemen of that province'. O'Brien alleged that when he arrived in Toronto, Lansdowne was very well aware that his (O'Brien's) life was in danger, yet upon the night of the nationalist meeting in Queen's Park, 'Lord Lansdowne allowed his carriage to be dragged through the streets by the Orangemen, and made a speech of a most fiery character to them regarding his [O'Brien's] visit', which placed his life in deadly peril.

In any objective reading of the trip, there was no doubt that the Orange grand lodges were very powerful in parts of Canada and they organized successful demonstrations against O'Brien's visit. It should be noted that no prominent citizens, members of the hierarchy or other dignitaries of the Roman Catholic church gave official approval to O'Brien's crusade and 'not more than half a dozen' priests appeared with him on any of his five platforms. Neither did the Legislatures of the Dominion follow up on their resolutions in favour of Home Rule and their detestation of the proposed re-introduction of coercion in Ireland for 'not a single member, Federal or Provincial', greeted O'Brien on his arrival, or appeared at his meetings or countenanced his crusade in any manner whatsoever. They knew the drift of public sentiment too well to risk their re-election chances by identifying themselves with the agitation; and so, after misleading the agitator, they left him to his own devices. Eight years after the event, a correspondent to the *Irish Catholic & Nation* was very sceptical of the benefit to Ireland of O'Brien and

KilBride's 'wild cat' trip to Canada, maintaining that the trip cost the Irish people £500, whereas 'the result to Ireland of their Canadian masquerading was not worth a brass farthing'.

Apart from the serious physical injuries O'Brien received which he later completely recovered from, he achieved a certain degree of heroic status in America and Ireland because of the trip to Canada. He succeeded not only in raising much needed cash for the plan of campaign in Ireland but achieved quite a considerable amount of free propaganda in the newspapers of Canada, America, England and Ireland, some of which was not in his favour nor as he had originally designed. As well as becoming an MP for an Irish constituency again, he also amassed material for his trade as a journalist, both at the time of the trip and later for his *Evening Memories*.

The selection of Lansdowne as a landlord to agitate against seemed ill-advised. The condition of his tenants in Luggacurren was perceived to be well over the average, and many of the complaints against Lansdowne and his agent Trench were not entirely well founded, reasonable or at best understood by Canadians. It was probably a mistake to portray KilBride as a representative of the wretched down-trodden evicted tenants, when it was obvious that he was a comparatively wealthy gentleman, leased a large farm with sub-tenants and labourers, and before the evictions took place associated with the county gentry, rode with the Queen's County hounds, whose colleague John William Dunne owned race horses, and 'generally kept up good style'. The *Halifax Chronicle* probably pronounced the situation best when it stated that 'Mr KilBride can hardly be classed among the poor tenantry whom Mr O'Brien commiserates'.

However unsuccessful the Canadian expedition of May 1887 may have been for O'Brien and the plight of the Luggacurren tenants, it proved otherwise for KilBride. He became the hero of the moment and his fame had spread worldwide. He had proved himself an accomplished orator on many an occasion since the beginning of the eviction campaign in Luggacurren and had plenty of practice while in Canada and the United States.

On the political front, KilBride was perceived by the National League as being intelligent, with personal experience and knowledge of agrarian and political issues and

if approved for a constituency, he would have no difficulty in financing his election expenses. He had in a short period of time, promoted the cause of nationalism worldwide and would represent in parliament as his first constituency 'a great portion of Lansdowne's Kerry property' and besides John Townsend Trench, who evicted him in March 1887, would be one of his constituents.

The clergy in Queen's County and surrounding counties were generally strongly supportive of the tenants who adopted the plan of campaign. In Luggacurren this was certainly the case, especially with regard to the extreme nationalist curate, Fr John Maher, who was actively involved organising the campaign and directly responsible for the day-to-day administration involved and was imprisoned in Kilkenny jail for encouraging the continuance of the plan of campaign in Luggacurren. The clergy in the surrounding parishes were also very supportive of the Luggacurren tenants and were very often at the head of the league in their parishes, organising fund raising and speaking in favour of the plan of campaign at public meetings. The support of the bishops and clergy gave a huge impetus to the nationalist movement and once the priest was involved, the parishioners usually fell in line. Keeping the vital support of the hierarchy and the clergy on the side of nationalism was sometimes tricky, especially when for example, the agrarian movement was judged to be 'contrary to justice and charity' by Pope Leo XIII in Rome. In April 1888 the Pope issued his 'misguided' decree against the plan of campaign and boycotting, but the majority of the bishops and clergy in Ireland and the nationalist leaders such as John Dillon and William O'Brien, took no heed of the decree, taking as their maxim that they were prepared to take their theology from Rome, but they declined to take political advice or direction from any foreign power, 'whether in Italy or in England'.

Although, as correctly claimed by the *Tuam Herald*, it was a year before KilBride visited his constituency in south Kerry, this was not then perceived to be of any great importance in the constituency. In fact he was to operate in a more or less similar fashion for his representation of the constituencies of north Galway and to a lesser extent in south Kildare. KilBride saw his mission as an MP first and foremost as a parliamentarian and on many occasions he announced publicly that he was only available to the constituency when the House of Commons was not in session. As none of KilBride's personal correspondence is extant, it is impossible to estimate to what

degree he was involved in the concerns of his constituents, so an alternative method of ascertaining this, was to analyse his frequent contributions in parliament over a time span of thirty years.

KilBride had an early political allegiance to William O'Brien, his political sponsor, both before and after the Parnell split. He was to receive a lot of verbal abuse, as did many of his colleagues who chose to abandon Parnell's leadership, especially during the bitter by-election campaigns in the months immediately following the Parnellite walkout in the House of Commons. KilBride strongly believed in the stance taken by the anti-Parnellites in fostering the 'meeting of hearts' with the Liberal party in England, which had been building new ties of friendship and trust as never before experienced by Irish representatives in parliament. This policy he adhered to for the rest of his political career, believing that the normalising of Irish affairs in a strictly constitutional, rather than a confrontational framework was the correct, if not a much slower process towards their ultimate goal of Home Rule.

After winning the two constituencies of south Kerry and north Galway, it was more expedient for the anti-Parnellites to have KilBride opt for the Galway constituency, where the Parnellite, Colonel John Nolan, had contested and lost his seat. Although both constituencies were equally removed from his home in Athy and lodgings in London, KilBride would have had a more personal link with Kerry. He had no links whatsoever with north Galway, but in the interests of the anti-Parnellites he had to at least take the seat which Nolan had held on to for a period of twenty-three years. Nolan wasn't the epitome of a nationalist MP, either Parnellite or anti-Parnellite. He was at that time a retired colonel from the British army, a former foreign newspaper correspondent, the inventor of a range-finder and a large landowner in the district of Tuam. Because of his nationalist sympathies he had been deserted by the landlord class in Galway and had been boycotted in the army, ostracised by his regiment and probably had had no alternative but to resign from the army.

By opting to represent north Galway, KilBride had vacated the constituency of south Kerry, but couldn't have foreseen the consequences which were to materialise within the executive of the Irish National Federation and the committee of the anti-Parnellites. The independent-minded member of this executive, Tim Healy who had shown



disloyalty to the anti-Parnellites about election strategy in the months and years previous to this, was the cause of a rift within the anti-Parnellite party in the by-election to fill KilBride's seat in south Kerry. This embarrassing rift in the anti-Parnellite ranks developed into what was generally called the 'McCarthyites' on one side and the 'Healyites' on the other. The battle lines were drawn when two opposing candidates were chosen to contest the election and KilBride was to spend the first few months as MP for north Galway, back in the constituency of south Kerry, campaigning for the anti-Parnellite candidate, the London businessman, T. J. Farrell. In 1894, Healy had publicly poured criticism on KilBride as a 'land grabber' and it was Healy who was mainly responsible for the shifting of his brother Joseph KilBride RM from Kerry to Mitchelstown, so that KilBride's involvement in this by-election contest was more than a political battle, and must have been deeply satisfying for him, when the seat was eventually won for the anti-Parnellites. The public display of disloyalty by Healy in the south Kerry by-election, was to be the catalyst for his expulsion from the executive of the Irish National League of Great Britain and later from the Irish National Federation and ultimately and more importantly for internal unity within the ranks of the anti-Parnellites, from the party committee where he had created conflict in the past.

Apart from KilBride's occasional involvement in organising branches of the Irish National Federation in Galway, it is true that he had very little to do with the constituency of north Galway other than in the House of Commons. The pro-Parnellite *Tuam Herald's* accusation that KilBride had 'not asked one single solitary question' is however disproved when an analysis of his frequent contributions in parliament shows that he had a broad range of concerns, such as his claim for equality for Catholics at Queen's College, Galway. Apart from a ten months absence from August 1899 to May 1900, KilBride was to contribute to the debates on law and order, land, labourers' cottages, the Land Commission, distress in Ireland, the Local Government Bill of 1898 and on many issues connected with Galway and of course his constant concern, the fraudulent trading of foodstuffs. Another of KilBride's constant concerns in the House of Commons in the latter period of his representation of north Galway, was his advocacy of the policy of the United Irish League in enlarging small farmers' holdings, especially in the congested districts of Ireland and the fact that the league later took on board the reinstatement of the evicted tenants as a priority in any land distribution was a bonus for him personally. KilBride always claimed that the United Irish League was

successful because it had sprung from the people and was 'a pre-eminently democratic movement'.

In December 1899, KilBride was a strong advocate of the unity of the Parnellite and anti-Parnellite parties, even though it was strange for him to be on the same platform again with his Parnellite rival in Kerry, Timothy Harrington. He also believed that the land could not be secured for the tenants of Ireland, without a united Irish party working together in the House of Commons where the disgrace of internal wrangles would be healed and forgotten. In early 1900 KilBride was to witness this coming together of Irish nationalists under the banner of the Irish Parliamentary Party, reunited under John Redmond.

An interesting aspect of KilBride's career and one which perhaps explains his great interest in the sale of butter and margarine, was his personal involvement as a provision merchant in London with his brother Thomas and the subsequent case against them in the London Bankruptcy Court. It is quite likely that because of the shortage of money in the party funds, to continue paying salaries to MPs at the same rate as before, that KilBride had no alternative but to find other means of subsistence during this very lean period. Had the court not dealt leniently with him, he would not only have faced imprisonment and fines, but would have automatically lost his seat in parliament. However, his involvement in the constituency of north Galway was to end with the general election of 1900, when Colonel Nolan who had earlier been elected the first chairman of Galway County Council regained his seat, while KilBride retired.

The only major event in KilBride's life during the three year period before becoming M.P. for south Kildare, was his public speech in July 1902 at Moyvore, County Westmeath, for which he was charged with using language 'calculated to incite people to murder' Major-General Devenish Meares. When arrested he was charged with soliciting, encouraging, persuading 'or endeavouring to persuade' the people of the district to murder Meares. KilBride compounded the mistake by appealing his conviction of four months imprisonment, which was doubled by Justice Kenny. KilBride no doubt was 'sent' to Meare's Court by the United Irish League, to establish a branch there, but he came to an area and a situation he had very little or no previous knowledge of, except for the fact that a tenant had been evicted by Meares and KilBride

had personal experience in these matters and was available at the time to the league. KilBride was also aware that the RIC were there in force along with a police notetaker, whose evidence would most certainly be used to prosecute him if he made an illegal speech. He was perhaps unwise and careless to listen and react to some of the comments from intoxicated men in the crowd. The substance of KilBride's speech was recounted and repeated during the trial, and he might have escaped indictment altogether, but for his erratic references to the funeral of Meares and an earlier attempt to shoot him.

KilBride was to represent the constituency of south Kildare unopposed for fifteen years until he was defeated by Sinn Féin in 1918. The early part of this period was mostly taken up in the consideration of Wyndham's Land Act of 1903 and subsequent amending legislation in the years following. During these debates KilBride proved his worth to the Irish Parliamentary Party by questioning each and every clause in the various land bills coming before parliament and subsequently achieving quite an amount of advantage for the purchasing tenants of Ireland and in particular the evicted tenants, who had not been reinstated under previous legislation. One of KilBride's constant concerns, which he questioned on every occasion provided in the House of Commons was whether the Estates Commissioners had power to negotiate the sale of holdings of 'new tenants' or 'planters', in favour of reinstating the evicted tenants on their original holdings. KilBride didn't achieve this aim for himself, but he continued to argue for the restoration of the evicted tenants to the holdings of their forefathers, because 'it was the old associations which the evicted tenants wanted restored more than anything else'.

KilBride was quite often involved in the activities of the United Irish League during this period and appeared on public platforms on several occasions, advocating the aims and objectives of the league on public platforms to fit the occasion. On 17 January 1904 for example, KilBride was present and spoke from the same platform as Michael Davitt in Borris-in-Ossory, the occasion brought about by the letting of the famous Black Farm of Malachi Kelly to a stranger. During this period KilBride and several of the Luggacurren evicted tenants were reinstated under the Irish Land Act of 1903. In 1906 KilBride accepted a farm of 125 acres at the former Lansdowne Lodge in the village, which was adjacent to his former and much larger holding at Wood House, Luggacurren. The purchase money for the untenanted land on the Luggacurren estate

was paid to Lansdowne on the 15 December 1905 and the evicted tenants were put into possession on 11 July 1905, with the lands finally vested in them on the 5 April 1906. In June 1907, KilBride while not altogether happy with the speed of land purchase, praised the efforts and achievements of the Estates Commissioners because for the first time in the history of Ireland he felt that the administrative work was undoing the 'unholy work of past ages'.

Intimidation of planters continued apace during this period in line with the policy of the United Irish League for the break-up of the cattle ranches. Cattle-drives, maiming of cattle, verbal abuse, threats and physical violence needing redress in the courts took place on and adjacent to the Luggacurren estate, the most outstanding case being that of Frederick Gillespie of Tullamoy and Edward Whelan of Loughglass.

However, the Irish Parliamentary Party preferred to find redress for Irish grievances whether political, social or economic, in the House of Commons and plenty of examples of this can be found in KilBride's contributions during the period. These include the proposed railway between Athy in his constituency to Castlecomer and Kilkenny; the Barrow drainage question for which money never seemed to be available from the British treasury; the Butter and Margarine Bill of 1907 and the Sale of Margarine Bill of 1909; the Police Malicious Injuries (Ireland) Bill of 1909 and primary education and the grievance of national teachers.

Despite praise and criticism from different quarters, KilBride was elected unopposed during the two elections of 1910, but the budget veto and the status of the House of Lords were to take centre stage for the Irish Parliamentary Party in the session of 1910, out of which several significant changes were brought about curtailing in future the powers of the upper house.

The United Irish League continued to grow during the first decade of the twentieth century. William O'Brien who founded the movement had in the interim formed his own party and as P. A. Meehan MP for Queen's County stated, O'Brien who was at one time 'the idol of the Irish people' had become an advocate of the conciliation of Unionists. Arising from the policy of the United Irish League, there was a considerable amount of agitation in proximity to the Luggacurren district. At Petty Session courts in

1911, offenders accused of intimidating graziers to surrender their farms to the uneconomic holders in the district were oftentimes successfully prosecuted. KilBride continued to participate in public demonstrations in support of evicted tenants and uneconomic holders. These demonstrations such as in the case of Brackna, near Clonbullogue in King's County, where speeches were followed by riots, with the police and rioters suffering severe injuries. Cattle-drives were the usual resort of the dissatisfied tenants during this period and those involved were normally charged and prosecuted, with compensation being awarded to the aggrieved parties. Some of the planters in Luggacurren such as Joseph Stone of Coolglass received the brunt of intimidation during this period from the dissatisfied Luggacurren farmers. Stone and others as a result sought and achieved redress in the courts.

Home Rule was high on the agenda of the United Irish League in the years previous to the outbreak of the first world war. The Liberal party recognised the inevitability of Home Rule despite the opposition from the Unionists. The Irish Parliamentary Party under John Redmond during the war years of 1914 to 1918 had reached a critical stage. The idea of conscription however, was arousing protest from the majority of the Irish people. The party had put themselves at huge political risk by placing their trust in Asquith's Liberals and the Home Rule Bill being put on the statute book whenever the war ended. As K. T. Hoppen in *Ireland since 1800, conflict and conformity* states, Asquith as Prime Minister, knew little about the problems of Ulster when he introduced his Home Rule Bill 'to pay off his obligations to the Irish Parliamentary Party'. As the Sinn Féin organisation would have a major effect on the loyalties and sympathies of Irish nationalists and eventually the seats held by the Irish Parliamentary Party, the growth of Sinn Féin particularly in the constituencies of north and south Kildare was considered important for this study.

The pace of land purchase was very slow and caused considerable anxiety to both landlords and tenants and their political leaders both in and out of the House of Commons. This was compounded by the landlords' refusal to accept the principle of compulsory sales. The Unionists of Kildare and Queen's County also had concerns. They worried that because the power of the House of Lords was diminished, the enactment of Home Rule for Ireland would bring to an end Ireland's link with the British Empire. A severing of the link with the Empire would bring to an end the

financial benefits from the British treasury, such as old age pensions and the finance necessary to continue land purchase in Ireland. In Queen's County, at a meeting of the Irish Unionist Alliance, it was argued that Ireland under Home Rule would become insolvent. There was a great welcome among nationalists for the Home Rule Bill which Asquith introduced in 1912. The outbreak of the 1914 war however, resulted in the postponement of Home Rule for 'one year or the duration of the war'.

KilBride as a constitutional nationalist, supported the formation and development of the Irish National Volunteers. In KilBride's constituency there was an enthusiastic response to the formation of corps, which were supported by the clergy and local public representatives. KilBride during this time of growth of the Irish Volunteers became acquainted with the leading figures of the day, such as The O'Rahilly, Padraic Pearse, Seán Mac Diarmada, Professor Tom Kettle and his brother Laurence, Thomas MacDonagh and Liam Mellows. KilBride was a strong supporter of John Redmond and the Irish Parliamentary Party in the recruitment of Irishmen to fight in what they believed was a just war, considering that small nations such as Belgium, would not have to suffer much longer against the 'intolerable military despotism of Germany'. A recruiting manifesto was issued by Redmond in 1916.

Other political issues of concern to KilBride during this period were the foot-and-mouth outbreak of 1912 to 1914, which effected his own constituency of Kildare; the provision of telephone links between Athy, Dublin and Carlow; the breeding and sale of horses for the British Army and railway links between Athy, Castlecomer and Kilkenny. The National Irish Insurance Act of 1911 brought about a phenomenal growth in the membership of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, which KilBride felt was the most advantageous organisation for Irish Catholics workers to join.

The Irish Parliamentary Party was badly effected in the aftermath of the events of the 1916 Rising, particularly by the public reaction to the executions of the leaders and the consequential imposition of martial law. Although Birrell, the chief secretary was accused in the House of Commons of indifference to the warnings he received of an impending rebellion, Lansdowne in the House of Lords argued that Dublin Castle had no specific warning that a rebellion was to take place. As a direct result of Maxwell's hasty decision to execute the leaders, impose martial law and imprison and deport the

rebels to prison camps in Wales and England, nationalist opinion in Ireland swung sharply to the side of Sinn Féin, especially when the internees returned to Ireland. The Irish Parliamentary Party initially had no sympathy for the rebels, believing their actions were 'misguided'. However, as early as 20 May, John Dillon admitted in the House of Commons that they fought a clean and brave fight. KilBride on 22 May 1916 visited some of the Kildare prisoners in Wakefield Barracks, Yorks. Along with John O'Connor MP for north Kildare, he petitioned for the release of the Kildare prisoners.

In May 1916 Redmond, on behalf of the Irish Parliamentary Party, stated that the Sinn Féiners were 'negligible' and Birrell publicly stated in the House of Commons that Sinn Féin drilling was to be laughed at and their organisation was made up of 'crack-brained enthusiasts'. As a consequence of the new chief secretary's (H. Duke) ban on parades, processions or political meetings, little or no public political demonstrations took place for a long period after the rising. KilBride like Redmond didn't fully realise the consequences for the future of the Irish Parliamentary Party arising from the popularity of Sinn Féin and at one stage KilBride anticipated that if a general election was called, preference would be given not to the Sinn Féin activists, but to those who participated in the war. He was also conscious at an early stage that the young men who were arrested under martial law on suspicion of involvement in the rebellion, were not only losing interest in constitutional politics, but were actively becoming more involved in Sinn Féin, to the detriment of the Irish Parliamentary Party. It is interesting to note here that KilBride was prepared to accept the temporary exclusion of some of the northern counties as the eventual route to the full implementation of Home Rule in Ireland. In the House of Commons on 18 April 1917, KilBride foreseeing that the demise of the Irish Parliamentary Party was on the horizon, stated that if the Irish people voted in the next election for 'revolutionary methods', he would retire to his native obscurity and let the revolutionary methods have a fair chance.

The issues which affected ordinary people of course were not the intricacies of the war but the cost and shortage of food. Food production and the control of prices were important issues in Ireland during the First World War and government intervention was often called into being. Such an intervention was a scheme of compulsory tillage to increase the production of food at a time of escalating prices and shortages. KilBride

contributed to the debates on land cultivation, and was a frequent contributor on the Corn Production Bill debate of 1917 and proposed many amendments.

The growth of the separatist Sinn Féin organisation in Kildare and surrounding counties shows the enormous strides the party made in a few short years to a position where in their first major general election contest of 1918, they carried the three southern provinces of Ireland and where the majority of the Irish Parliamentary Party, Kilbride included, lost their seats. One of the reasons for the growth of Sinn Féin at local level was its well organised propaganda campaign, one aspect of which was the printing and distribution of leaflets explaining Sinn Féin policy to the masses. The names to capture the imagination and support of nationalists were no longer John Redmond's party, but names such as George Noble (Count) Plunkett who won a by-election seat for Sinn Féin in 1917, the internee Countess Markievicz or Constance Gore-Booth who was released along with Cathal Brugha in June 1917, Eoin MacNeill, Thomas Ashe who was to die on hunger strike in Mountjoy Jail in September, Arthur Griffith who won east Cavan by-election in June 1918, Eamon de Valera the leading figure in the Sinn Féin organisation and Fr Flanagan the vice-president of Sinn Féin who campaigned in Kildare during the general election campaign.

A new era of political development in the town of Athy and Kilbride's home constituency was the establishment of a branch of Sinn Fein on 18 May 1917. The Sinn Féin organisation thrived, as it met frequently, had club rooms and reading libraries in many towns, organised amusements and sports activities and in keeping with their policy of trusting no one but themselves, a shop was opened in Naas, selling potatoes at more reasonable prices to the poor people. On new year's night 1918, the Seán Connolly Sinn Fein Club organised a concert of song, story and recitation, where the members were entertained from ten to three o'clock in the morning. Sinn Féin were also to take on most of the concerns formerly monopolised by the Irish Parliamentary Party, such as national independence, land and labour issues, home industry, teachers' grievances and during the Irish Convention on 1917 the Irish Volunteers switched allegiance to Sinn Féin. The *Leinster Leader* of 2 May 1918 stated that although Sinn Féin had its origins apart from the land question, it still captured the allegiance of rural people and in some districts superseded the United Irish League.



Another organisation KilBride supported during this period was the Land and Labour Association, whose main aim was the betterment of conditions for labourers in towns and rural areas. Among the ongoing interests and duties involving KilBride in the constituency of south Kildare during the period 1916 to 1918 were issues relating to the development of the coalmines at Wolfhill and the construction of a railway link to Athy, primary education and the concerns of the South Kildare Farmers Organisation and Timogue Land and Labour Association during the war.

Arthur O'Connor, an engineer from Newbridge, who was interned in Durham prison was the Sinn Féin candidate chosen to contest KilBride's seat in south Kildare in the general election of 1918. Dónal Buckley, a merchant from Maynooth was chosen for Sinn Féin in north Kildare. During the election campaign, KilBride maintained that Ireland should be an independent nation and strongly disapproved of the Sinn Féin policy of complete separation from Westminster. The results of the general election were announced on 28 December. Arthur O'Connor of Sinn Féin received 7,104 votes, while KilBride polled 1,545, a surplus for Sinn Féin of 5,549. In north Kildare, Dónal Buckley received 5,979 votes, while the outgoing John O'Connor received 2,772, a majority of 3,207 for Sinn Féin. The pattern was similar in Queen's County where Kevin C. O'Higgins was elected with 13,452, while the nationalist candidate P. J. Meehan received 6,480 votes, a surplus of 6,972 for Sinn Féin. Leaving out the north-east, the general election of 1918 put Sinn Féin in possession of Ireland. John Dillon lost his seat to de Valera in east Mayo and the Irish Parliamentary Party were left with only six seats, Unionists twenty-six and Sinn Féin seventy-three, twenty-three of which were unopposed.

KilBride made a high profiled and long career for himself as a direct consequence of the plan of campaign and even though he wasn't reinstated at Wood House and his farm of 868 acres as a tenant farmer, he had a wealthy family to assist him and he became his own master on a more manageable and less mountainous farm in 1906 at the former Lansdowne Lodge in Luggacurren. The battle of 'diamond cut diamond' at Luggacurren was, despite the consequences to both sides in the dispute, not the type which epitomised the nature and pattern of disputes on other plan of campaign estates. Both KilBride and Lansdowne took huge risks and both suffered the consequence for a long period of years. Yet as a direct result of the passing of the various land acts and in

particular the Wyndham Land Act of 1903, both achieved a great measure of success. KilBride had gambled with his ancestral farm in the late 1880s but was fortunate not to fare as badly as those who held on and lived at Campaign Square in the shadow of their former farms, hoping for a solution worked out by their political leaders. The solution didn't come in time for many who moved off the estate. Some of the tenants purchased with the assistance of the 1885 Ashbourne Land Act and subsequent legislation, but the remainder were disillusioned and became very distrustful of their former leaders, including as has been seen Denis KilBride. The struggle for the control of the land was as KilBride pointed out 'a fight of intelligence against intelligence. It was diamond cut diamond, and Mr Trench might think he would put them down'.

KilBride retired to Luggacurren House, where he died at the age of seventy-six on Friday 24 October 1924. Lansdowne died at the age of eighty-two in Newtown-Anner, Clonmel on a visit to his daughter in 1927.

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## APPENDIX 1: THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN - A MEMO FOR THE COUNTRY

Except in a few districts of Ireland, evictions have not been as numerous during the past two months as in the earlier portions of the year. This is simply the annual breathing time of the crowbar brigade. The 'long vacation' in the Superior Courts has, however, now drawn to a close, and already the County Courts have resumed their quarterly sittings. Ejectment processes have been issued wholesale, writs of the Superior Courts will soon follow, and again the fell work of destruction will proceed. Irish homes sanctified by many happy memories will be unroofed; Irish families will be scattered. One who has borne his part in the struggle of the past half dozen years, who has seen almost every phase of the agitation, thinks it his duty at the present critical moment to offer to the Irish tenantry and their friends the following suggestions as the result of his experience. Present rents, speaking roundly, are impossible. That the landlords will press for them let the rejection of Mr Parnell's bill testify. A fight during the coming winter is therefore inevitable, and it behoves the Irish tenantry to fight with a skill begotten of experience. The first question they have to consider is

### HOW TO MEET THE NOVEMBER DEMAND

In a few weeks at most the agents will issue invitations from the rent-office. There should not be an estate in Ireland where the tenants would not by that time have their minds fully made up as to the course they intend to pursue. To delay action until the gale-day means to go into the struggle handicapped. Should combinations be formed on the lines of branches of the National League or merely by estates? I say by estates decidedly. Let branches of the National League, if they will, take the initiative in getting the tenantry on each estate to meet one another. But it should be distinctly understood that the action or resolution of one estate was not to bind any other, and the tenantry on every estate should be free to decide upon their own course. When they are assembled together, if the priest be not with them, let them appoint an intelligent and sturdy member of their body as chairman, and after consulting, decide by resolution on the amount of abatement they will demand.

A committee consisting say of six and the chairman should then be elected, to be called the Managing Committee, and to take charge of the half-year's rent of each tenant should the landlord refuse it.

Everyone present should pledge himself (1) to abide by the decision of the majority; (2) to hold no communication with the landlord or any of his agents, except in presence of the body of the tenantry; (3) to accept no settlement for himself which is not given to every tenant on the estate.

Should any tenants be excepted? Question is likely to be raised as to large holders. It should be remembered, however, that the large tenant plays for high stakes, and there is no reason why he should not throw in his lot with the rest. Holders of town-parks who are shopkeepers have a stronger claim to exemption, for a judgement against them may mean ruin. But no case for exemption arises at this stage until it be known how the landlord will proceed. In any published report of the meeting the names of the committee should not be given.

On the gale-day the tenantry should proceed to the rent-office in a body. If the agent refuses to see them in a body they should on no account confer with him individually, but depute the chairman to act as their spokesman and acquaint him of the reduction which they require.

No offer to accept the rent "on account" should be agreed to. Should the agent refuse - then every tenant must hand to the Managing Committee the half year's rent which he

tendered to the agent. To prevent any attempt at a garnishee this money should be deposited by the Managing Committee with some reliable person whose name would not be known to any but the members of the committee. This may be called the Estate Fund, and it should be absolutely at the disposal of the Managing Committee for the purposes of the fight. Broken tenants who are unable to contribute the reduced half year's rent should at least contribute the percentage demanded from the landlord - that is, the difference between the rent demanded and that which the tenantry offer to pay. A broken tenant is not likely to be among the first proceeded against, and no risk is incurred by the general body in taking him on these terms. Thus practically a half-year's rent of the estate is put together to fight the landlord with. This is a fund which, if properly utilised, will reduce to reason any landlord in Ireland.

#### HOW SHOULD THE FUND BE EMPLOYED?

The answer to this question must to some extent depend upon the course the landlord will pursue; but in general I should say it must be devoted to the support of the tenants who are dispossessed either by sale or ejection. It should be distributed by the committee to each evicted tenant in the proportion of his contribution to the fund. A half-year's rent is supposed to maintain a tenant for half a year, and based upon this calculation a tenant who funded say fifty pounds would be entitled when evicted to receive two pounds per week.

But not one penny should go in law-costs. This should be made an absolute rule, for there is no principle in the whole agitation more grossly misunderstood. I have known combinations where the tenants agreed to pay the law-costs for any man proceeded against, and all the while they never seemed to realize that it was the landlord's law-costs they were paying, and that they were helping to defeat their cause rather than serving it. Incidents undoubtedly may arise in the course of the struggle where the expenditure of some small sum in legal defense would be judicious, such as defending a tenant who takes possession of his home. But these are exceptional cases, and can be easily provided for. The 'law-costs' which must be guarded against are the costs of attorneys' letters, writs, and judgements incurred by the landlord. To pay these means to arm your enemy for the quarrel and furnish him with provisions to boot. In a determined fight there are no 'law-costs' on the side of the tenantry, and they should remain out for ever rather than pay those which the landlord incurs in fleecing them.

Grants and expenses should all come out of common fund. Everyone settling before majority have agreed to accept settlement should forfeit his contribution. When the tenants decide upon settling, the balance in hands should be divided among them in proportion to the amount they funded.

#### THE ASSISTANCE OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE

To inspire confidence among the tenants, the National League should guarantee:

1<sup>st</sup> That in the event of the trustee with whom the Estate Fund was lodged proving dishonest, the money would be made good to the tenants, and grants in proportion to their contributions given to them just as if their own fund had not disappeared.

2<sup>nd</sup> That when the Estate Fund of the tenants has been expended, or so diminished as not to be able to meet the grants required, then the grants would be continued on the same scale by the National League.

3<sup>rd</sup> That this grant would be continued as long as the struggle lasted and the majority of the tenants held out.

## THE LANDLORD'S REMEDIES

Before referring in detail to the different remedies open to the landlord, it is first necessary to caution the tenantry against some artifices to which it is not uncommon for the landlords to have recourse. Rumors are industriously sent round after the gale-day that a certain proportion of the tenants have secretly paid their rent. Instances have occurred where bailiffs, by trying to get into conversation with some of the tenants at public places or making an ostentatious call at their houses, try to spread the belief that certain men are breaking away from the combination; and to push the deceit still farther, only every alternate tenant in a townland is sometimes served with the first attorney's letter. I need only mention that these artifices are practiced to put tenants off their guard. So long as the main body, the majority in fact, of the tenants hold out they need give little heed to rumors about back-sliding. Those who do backslide in such a case invariably come off the worst of the whole body.

### EJECTMENT

is the most common of the landlord's remedies. The procedure, unfortunately, is too common to need much explanation. When a landlord intends to seize cattle or sell the interest in the holding, the writ or process states that the plaintiff's claim is for £. s. d. (setting forth the amount of money due); when on the other hand the claim is for the recovery of possession, etc., then he is proceeding by ejectment. In ejectment the tenant is allowed six months after eviction to redeem, the landlord being bound to account for the crops, etc., if not left to the tenant. Every legal and constitutional obstacle which could oppose or delay eviction should be had recourse to. Every hour by which the sheriff is delayed in one eviction gives another brother tenant so much more grace. There are only 310 days in the sheriff's year, and he must do all the evictions in a whole county within the time. If, after eviction, a tenant is readmitted as caretaker, he should go in, but never upon the understanding that he would care any other farm but his own.

Should the tenant not be readmitted shelter must be procured for him immediately by the Managing Committee, and then if necessary, a day appointed when all would assemble to build him a hut on some spot convenient to the farm where the landlord could not disturb him. Wooden huts such as those supplied by the Land League waste too much of the funds, and become valueless when the tenant is readmitted.

Sometimes it happens, that when a landlord evicts he burns, or otherwise demolishes, the home of the evicted family. Here the Managing Committee would do well to consider, if only little rent is due, whether it would be wise to redeem and take an action against the landlord to compel him to repair the injury.

Any labourer evicted in consequence of the strike should be carefully seen to by the committee, and provided with suitable shelter and employment.

### SALE

This is the resort of the landlord when he proceeds by writ or process as an ordinary creditor. From eight to twelve days are allowed after service of the writ before judgement can be marked. The sheriff may seize cattle if he finds them on the farm, or he may seize and sell the tenant's interest in the farm. A tenant who has his mind made up for the fight will have his cattle turned into money before the judgement comes on. Every tenant who neglects to dispose of them is preparing himself to accept the landlord's terms, for he will not wish to see the emergency-men profit by taking his cattle at some nominal price, and if he buys he is in reality handing the landlord the amount of his demand. Sale of a farm is not of so much consequence. Every farm sold in this manner during the agitation either has come or is bound to come back to its owner even on better terms than he first held it.

But if a man has a very valuable interest in his farm he can place it beyond the sheriff's power by mortgaging it to some one to whom he owes money. Mortgage effected thus for a *bona fide* debt or consideration, bars the sheriff's power of conveyance.

At a sale, if the landlord or emergency-men be represented, the cattle should not be allowed to go at a nominal sum. They should be run up to their price, and, if possible, left in the hands of the emergency-men at full price. It must be borne in mind that if the full price be not realized, the sheriff could seize again for balance.

In bidding for a farm it should also be run to amount of debt, but by a man of straw, or some one who, if it were knocked down, would ask the sheriff for time to pay. By making the landlord's bidder run it up to the amount of debt and costs, and leaving it on his hands, the sheriff cannot follow the tenant further. No auction fees should be allowed. A farm held on a lease for a life or lives, any one of which is extant, cannot be sold by the sheriff. After sale a tenant is still in possession of holding until a fresh writ is served and a judgement for title marked against him. All this involves the landlord in fresh costs. The eviction may then follow, and my observations in case of eviction on ejection apply here.

#### DISTRESS

another of the landlord's remedies, cannot be resorted to for more than one year's rent. Few landlords can have recourse to this without exposing themselves to actions. The chief points to attend to are:

That distress must be made by landlord or known agent, or bailiff authorized by warrant signed by the landlord or known agent; that particulars of distress be served; seizure on Sunday is unlawful; seizure before sunrise or after sunset is unlawful; or for any rent due more than one year. Distress is illegal if growing crops be seized; or the implements of a man's trade; and if other property be on farm to answer landlord's demand, it is illegal to seize beasts of the plough, sheep, or implements of husbandry necessary for the cultivation of the land. These points should be carefully watched when landlord has recourse to distress.

#### BANKRUPTCY PROCEEDINGS

are too costly a machinery for general use, and no landlord is likely to have recourse to them except in dealing with a holder of a town-park, or someone who has an industry in addition to the farm in dispute. As I hinted already, such a tenant might be exempted by the general body from any action which involved the marking of judgement against him. But he should at least remain in the strike to the extent of leaving his money in the common fund until the struggle be over.

It is unnecessary to add that landlords and their partizans on the magisterial bench, and among crown officials, will do all in their power to twist the operation of the law so as to harass the tenants.

A tenant taking possession of his home to shelter his family from the severity of the winter, is not likely to escape. A summons for trespass must be preceded by a warning to the tenant if he be found in possession. I have known a case where the father complied with this warning, and on the bailiff's next visit the mother only was found, and she complied. Next time the eldest daughter only was in possession, and so on through the length of a long family such as an evicted tenant nearly always has. A goodly time had been saved before the father's turn came again. He was fined, and went to jail. Prison then lost its terrors for him. When he came out he stuck boldly to his home, and he soon won the victory which rewards determination.

### PUBLIC SYMPATHY

The fullest publicity should be given to evictions, and every effort made to enlist public sympathy. That the farms thus unjustly evicted will be left severely alone, and everyone who aids the evictors shunned, is scarcely necessary to say. But the man who tries boycotting for a personal purpose is a worse enemy than the evicting landlord, and should be expelled from any branch of the League or combination of tenants. It has often surprised me that tenants waste their energy in puny efforts to boycott a few bailiffs or emergency-men. On estates where some tenants have been unjustly evicted, the others are paying their rents with punctuality, while they expect publicans and shopkeepers and others to boycott police or emergency-men. No landlord should get one penny rent anywhere, or on any part of his estate, wherever situated, so long as he has one tenant unjustly evicted. This policy strikes not only at the landlord, but the whole ungodly crew of agents, attorneys, and bum-bailiffs. Tenants should be the first to show their sympathy with one another, and prompt publicity should be given to every eviction, that the tenants of the evictor wherever he holds property may show their sympathy. Such a policy indicates a fight, which has no half-heartedness about it, and it is the only fight which will win.

Source: *United Ireland*, 23 Oct. 1886, re-issued as a special supplement, 20 Nov. 1886.

APPENDIX 2: PREACHING AND PRACTISING

The following verses appeared in the *Weekly Freeman* to accompany an illustration of John Townsend Trench preaching and practising his religion.

TRENCH (Evictor and Evangelist)

When tenants impoverished I calmly evict,  
Hey! brethren, merrily!  
Or try if O'Brien can deftly be tricked,  
Yea, brethren, verily!  
Don't rush in a passion my conduct to blame;  
With those who employ me I leave all the shame,  
While to speak as a genuine Christian I claim,  
Yea, brethren, verily!

But, pray, don't imagine my doctrines are meant,  
Nay, brethren, verily!  
For the pauperised peasant who can't pay his rent!  
Nay, brethren, verily!  
No; my 'mission's' intended to cast holy spells  
Over merchants, old maids, and 'society' belles,  
For whose errors my bosom with sympathy swells!  
Yea, brethren, verily!

So if you observe inconsistency, say,  
Stay, brethren, warily!  
Between Luggacurren and Dublin to-day,  
Stay, brethren, warily!  
Let this explanation all anger allay:  
Man's piety must not his 'business' betray;  
Wealth must be acquired in a different way,  
Yea, brethren, verily!

So while elsewhere evicting, *sans* mercy or ruth,  
Hey, brethren, merrily!  
I in Dublin shine forth an expounder of Truth,  
Yea, brethren, verily!  
And though some doubt my fitness for 'spreading the light'  
And e'en hint that my views are not orthodox quite,  
If the other work suits then I think all is right,  
Yea, brethren, verily!

Source: *Weekly Freeman*, 21 May 1887. (See illustration)



### APPENDIX 3: QUEEN'S COUNTY ESTATE OF THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE

For upwards of six years the agency of this estate has been entrusted to William Steuart Trench Esq., a gentleman esteemed by men of every class and creed throughout the length and breadth of Ireland, for the honourable and humane conduct which has characterised his career as agent over some of the most extensive estates in the country. It is always a pleasing task to chronicle the acts of a benefactor of mankind, and that Mr Trench has proved himself such will appear from what good he has effected on the Luggacurren estate, or more correctly speaking the Queen's County estate, of which it forms a part. The locality is one which, perhaps, occupies no very prominent geographical position, and the period is but recent since the village was occupied of a few not over comfortable thatched dwellings; but when Mr Trench assumed the management, the signal for improvement was given, and the dawn of better things was ushered in. There were then, as now, gentlemen of high standing in society, tenants on the estate, whose residences dotted the country round, but their appearances, as also the natural aspect, was marred by the very often, miserable habitations on the smaller holdings. They disappeared, however, in the brief interval of a few years, and in their place have been erected dwellings in which the substantial and the ornamental are harmoniously combined. Not in one, two or three places have these excellent houses been built, but all over the estate, which covers a space of twenty or thirty thousand acres. The tenants have not been thought of either, to the neglect of the labourers, who have also been given better dwellings than they formerly occupied. Especially noticeable among these are some which the labourers of Mr Francis Hinds (an old and upright and respected tenant) have had built for them. We have seen model houses for tenants on several nobleman's estates, but we have not yet met anything to compare with these in the occupation of Mr Hinds's labouring men. Due regard was first of all paid to the sites, and then the best materials were procured. Each house is provided with kitchen, sitting-room and two commodious bedrooms, besides various other occupations. All are conducted on the same excellent plan. Many other interesting evidences of liberality on behalf of the lord of the soil present themselves, which are well worthy of notice. All the signs of progress visible in the district would be almost valueless, or at least would be incomplete if provision were not made for the education of the tenants' children. Recognising the paramount importance of this, a school-house was established and placed under the Commissioners of National Education. A teacher of large and varied attainments was procured, and pupils instructed by him have passed into private colleges, where they have signalled themselves most creditably. Two years ago a residence for the master was completed, which is a perfect model of the Swiss cottage, so familiar to us from paintings. The present school-house will soon give place to a more extensive and pretentious one, to be built on a more elevated situation. Not the least remarkable building in the place is the 'Village Smithy', on which a considerable sum of money was expended, and a laudable pride lights up the countenance of the intelligent son of Vulcan as he challenges any part of Ireland to show "a forge like his 'an' sure, 'twas his honor Mr Trench who made it for him", the feeling called up by this expression of gratitude finding vent in a mighty blow of the hammer upon the anvil. The modernised look of this town in embryo is increased by a hotel which shames many establishments of the sort found in large commercial towns. Altogether the foundation of a prosperous town is laid on a sure basis, the proportions being more noticeable each successive year.

Source: *The Irish Builder*, 1 Oct. 1868, p. 236.

#### APPENDIX 4: PROCLAMATION OF THE IRISH NATIONAL LEAGUE

At a meeting of the Privy Council at the end of last week, in Dublin Castle, at which the Lord Lieutenant, the Lord Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor were present, a proclamation was signed and issued, proclaiming the Irish National League as a 'dangerous association'.

The following is the text of the proclamation:

By the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council in Ireland  
A Special Proclamation  
Londonderry

Whereas we are satisfied that there exists in Ireland an association known by the name  
of the  
Irish National League  
and that said association in parts of Ireland promotes and incites to acts of violence and  
intimidation, and interferes with the administration of the law.

Now we, the Lord Lieutenant-General and General Governor of Ireland, by and with the  
advice of the Privy Council in Ireland, by virtue of section six of 'The Criminal Law  
and Procedure (Ireland) Act 1887', and of every power and authority in this behalf, do,  
by this our special proclamation, declare from the date hereof, the said association  
known as the Irish National League, to be dangerous.

This proclamation shall be promulgated by the same being published in *the Dublin  
Gazette*, and by a printed copy thereof being posted at every police station or barrack,  
and every place in which divisional police courts or petty sessions are held respectively  
in Ireland.

Given at the Council Chamber, Dublin Castle.  
The 19<sup>th</sup> day of August 1887,  
Ashbourne, C. Hedges Eyre Chatterton.  
God Save The Queen.

Source: *L. E.*, 27 Aug. 1887.

#### APPENDIX 5: A CONSERVATIVE VIEW OF THE LUGGACURREN EVICTIONS

This property extends over 8,500 acres and consists for the most part of magnificent pasture land. All the tenants are graziers, and it is a well-authenticated fact that the cattle on the farms are generally in prime condition. The gross rental is about £7,000 and the Government valuation (made in 1832, when tillage was more profitable than pasture) is £5,310. The Marquess of Lansdowne has expended the sum of £24,000 in improvements on the estate, viz., draining and building. The greater part of the money was borrowed from the Board of Works at three and a half per cent interest. The tenants complain that they are paying five per cent to their landlord on this outlay; but in addition to the three and a half per cent interest, the landlord is paying three per cent to the sinking fund (i.e. to wipe off the debt); so that his payments to the Board of Works amount to six and a half per cent per annum.

The tenants on the estate were nearly all yearly tenants, very few holding under lease, and very few having entered the court and become judicial tenants. However, in the winter of 1886 they demanded a reduction in their rents, viz., thirty-five per cent on non-judicial, and twenty-five per cent on judicial rents and as an alternative, threatened the adoption of the plan of campaign. This demand was refused by the landlord, who offered to give reductions varying from thirteen per cent to twenty-five per cent on non-judicial rents, but no reduction to judicial tenants. This offer was refused by the tenants, who thereupon joined the plan of campaign and immediately the struggle between the landlord and tenants commenced in earnest. It is worthy of note that Mr Denis Kilbride (now MP for a division of Kerry) and the local leader of the 'Plan', stated in the National League rooms, Dublin, on 29 March:

The Luggacurren evictions differed from most of the other evictions to this extent, that they were able to pay the rent; it was a fight of intelligence against intelligence; it was diamond cut diamond, *F.J.*, 30 Mar. 1887.

The fight continued for some months and Mr W. O'Brien paid repeated visits to the estate, urging the tenantry to stand firm and the landlord would yield to their demands. However, the Marquess of Lansdowne determined to assert his rights as a landed proprietor and consequently, had to resort to eviction. The eviction of Mr Denis Kilbride, who rented a large farm of over seven hundred acres, with modern dwelling house and very extensive outhouses (all built by the landlord), at a rent of £760 10s., poor law valuation £433 13s., took place on the 22 March 1887; and John Dunne, who rented a farm of 1,304 acres was shortly afterwards evicted.

The second evictions commenced on the 9 April and about seventy tenants were evicted for non-payment of rent. The evicted farms have now been let to the Land Corporation and the evicted tenants are living in National League huts on a non-evicted farm. They are reported to be paid weekly by the league.

It would be well to understand that all the Protestant tenants on the estate (ten in number) have paid their rents and that the three Roman Catholics have also refused to join the plan; there are also some tenants of the Marquess of Lansdowne, eighteen in number, living at Shanganagh, about five miles distant from Luggacurren, who are generally considered Luggacurren tenants, but who, with the exception of one man, have refused to join the plan. It is also interesting to know that the Marquess of Lansdowne, out of a rental of £7,000, allows £1,100 to be expended yearly on the estate and that the rent has never been raised on any of the farms unless substantial

improvements have been made. He also allows thirty pounds a year to the national school, and has built the village of Luggacurren, the houses in which are let at nominal rents. He cannot be called a hard landlord; and it is believed that the tenants who have adopted the plan are now very sorry for having done so, as they have ruined themselves, and have done but little damage to the landlord.

Source: *L.E.*, 9 June 1888.

#### APPENDIX 6: THE PAPAL DECREE

The following is the full text of the Circular which bears the date of 20 April and the signature of Cardinal Monaco la Valleta, the Secretary to the Holy Inquisition:

‘On several occasions the Apostolic See has given to the people of Ireland (whom it has always regarded with special benevolence) suitable admonitions and advice, when circumstances required, as to how they might defend their rights without injury to justice or to the public peace. Our Holy Father, Leo XIII, fearing lest in that species of warfare that has been introduced amongst the Irish people into the contests between landlords and tenants, and which is commonly called the plan of campaign, and in that kind of social interdict called boycotting, arising from the same contests, true sense of justice and charity might be perverted, ordered the Supreme Congregation of the Inquisition to submit the matter to serious and careful examination. Hence the following question was proposed to their eminences, the cardinals of the congregation – ‘Is it permissible in the disputes between landowners and tenants in Ireland to use the means known as the plan of campaign and boycotting?’

‘After long and mature deliberation, their eminences unanimously answered in the negative, and the decision was confirmed by the Holy Father on Wednesday 18 April. The justice of this decision will be readily seen by anyone who applies his mind to consider that a rent agreed on by mutual consent cannot, without violation of a contract be diminished at the mere will of the tenant, especially when there are tribunals appointed for settling such controversies and reducing unjust rents within the bounds of equity, after taking into account the causes which diminish the value of the land; neither can it be considered permissible that rents be extorted from tenants, and deposited in the hands of unknown persons, to the detriment of landowners. Finally, it is contrary to justice and charity to persecute by a social interdict those who are satisfied to pay the rents they agree to, or those who, in the exercise of their right, take vacant farms. It will therefore be your lordship’s duty prudently but effectually to advise and exhort the clergy and the laity not to transgress the bounds of christian charity and justice whilst they are striving for a remedy for their distressed condition.’

Source: *L.E.*, 5 May 1888.

APPENDIX 7: RESPONSE OF THE IRISH HIERARCHY TO THE PAPAL  
DECREE

At a meeting of the Archbishops and Bishops of Ireland, held on Wednesday in Clonliffe College, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted, and ordered to be published:

1. In obedience to the commands of the Holy See, and in willing discharge of the duty thus placed upon us, we desire to put on public record, that the recent Decree of the Holy Office, addressed to the Irish Hierarchy, was intended to affect the domain of morals alone, and in no way to interfere with politics as such, in this country.
2. Even this very day we have had from our Holy Father the Pope direct and unequivocal assurances of his deep and paternal interest in the temporal welfare of our country, and that, so far from intending by this Decree to injure our national movement, it was the hope and purpose of his Holiness to remove those things which he judged might, in the long run, be obstacles to its advancement and ultimate success.
3. With these facts thus clearly before us, apart altogether from his other numerous titles to our filial affection and respect, we must warn our people against the use of any hasty or irreverent language with reference to the Sovereign Pontiff, or to any of the Sacred Congregations through which he usually issues his decrees to the faithful.
4. While expressing our deep and lasting gratitude to the leaders of the national movement for the signal services they have rendered to religion and country, we deem it our duty, at the same time, to remind them and our flocks, as we most emphatically do, that the Roman Pontiff has an inalienable and Divine right to speak with authority on all questions appertaining to faith and morals.

Source: *L.E.*, 2 June 1888.

## RETURNS FURNISHED BY LAND COMMISSION.

TABLE A.—PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACTS, 1885 AND 1888.

## ESTATE OF THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE.

## QUEEN'S COUNTY.

RETURN of completed SALES on above ESTATE, showing the following particulars, viz. :—

Townland.	Purchaser.	Area in Statute Measure.	Rent.	Purchase Money.	Advance made.	Guarantee Deposit.	Date of Advance.
		A. R. P.	£ s. d.	£	£	£	1890
Barrowhouse, . . . .	Sir Anthony C. Weldon, Bart.	16 3 19	9 10 0	116	115	29	November 7
Do., . . . .	James Malono, . . . .	20 0 17	10 0 0	152	152	31	"
Shanganaghmore, . . .	James Brennan, . . . .	33 3 9	18 6 0	324	324	65	"
Ballycoolan, . . . .	Thomas Moyles, . . . .	247 3 16	313 0 0	4,400	4,100	380	"
Ballycoolan and Guileen (Parish of Tullomoy). Do., . . . .	Henry Moyles, . . . .	179 3 18	206 10 8	3,163	3,163	634	"
Do., . . . .	Richard E. Odium, . . . .	150 0 0	91 5 7	1,413	1,413	230	"
Fallowbeg Lower, . . .	Martin Byrne, . . . .	60 0 16	28 0 0	532	532	167	"
Luggaurren, . . . .	Valentine Hinds, . . . .	138 0 25	107 0 0	1,400	1,400	280	"
Do., . . . .	Patrick Kavanagh, . . . .	00 0 38	85 2 8	1,150	1,150	270	"
Do., . . . .	Thomas Kavanagh, . . . .	25 2 28	12 0 0	162	162	33	"
Do., . . . .	Andrew Byrne, . . . .	39 2 18	35 0 0	665	665	133	"
Tinogue, . . . .	William S. Fisher, . . . .	311 3 23	250 15 5	4,000	4,000	800	1891
Ballyprior, . . . .	James C. Trench, . . . .	260 1 28	153 0 0	2,200	1,650	Balance paid in Cash.	July 27.
Tinogue, . . . .	James C. Trench, . . . .	116 0 1	144 0 0	1,750	1,312	Do.	"
Barrowhouse, . . . .	Sarah Keating, . . . .	30 1 30	15 11 0	238	238	48	"
Shanganaghmore, . . .	Rev. James Doyle, R.P., . . . .	15 9 18	7 10 0	111	111	23	"
Do., . . . .	William Connor, . . . .	13 1 37	0 10 0	169	130	20	"
Do., . . . .	Mary Donnelly, . . . .	23 3 6	15 2 0	230	230	46	"
Scotland and Coolglass, . . . .	John McGrath, . . . .	52 0 39	21 0 0	413	418	81	"
Luggaurren, . . . .	Thomas Byrne, . . . .	46 1 38	44 0 0	836	836	168	"
Manger, . . . .	Thomas Kavanagh, . . . .	14 3 13	10 11 8	143	143	29	1892
Barrowhouse, . . . .	Bridget Ryan, . . . .	6 1 22	5 0 0	76	76	16	January 27.
Do., . . . .	William Kelly, . . . .	24 3 31	10 3 8	293	293	59	"
Shanganaghmore, . . .	Daniel Whelan, . . . .	22 2 39	15 2 0	233	233	47	"
Do., . . . .	Edward Kelly, . . . .	30 2 35	16 5 2	248	248	50	"
Tullamoy, . . . .	John W. Threlton, . . . .	200 1 33	150 0 0	2,700	2,700	540	"
Do., . . . .	Frederick Gilheople, . . . .	194 1 28	152 0 0	2,736	2,736	548	"
Ballintekin, . . . .	Teresa Byrne, . . . .	312 2 21	357 10 0	4,712	4,712	943	"
Ballycoolan and Ballin- teekin, . . . .	John Edge Dwen, . . . .	153 0 18	106 10 0	1,917	1,917	384	"
Clondubhugh and Fallow- beg Lower, . . . .	Thomas Crawley, . . . .	61 1 1	40 0 0	725	725	145	"
Coolglass, . . . .	John Kavanagh, . . . .	00 3 28	51 8 0	924	924	185	"
Do., . . . .	Thomas Dodey, . . . .	15 3 13	7 11 0	100	100	20	"
Fallowbeg Lower, . . .	John Edge Dwen, . . . .	171 3 21	110 0 0	2,520	2,520	504	"
Fallowbeg Middle and Luggaurren, . . . .	Henry Stanley, Jun., . . . .	70 0 23	50 0 0	900	900	180	"
Fernyhill, . . . .	John George, . . . .	35 3 26	22 15 0	412	412	83	"
Gorroolagh and Lugga- gurren, . . . .	Henry Stanley, son, . . . .	68 0 33	50 0 0	900	900	180	"
Gorroolagh and Mona- mory, . . . .	John Kavanagh, . . . .	144 3 37	72 0 0	1,300	1,300	260	"
Luggaurren, . . . .	Thomas Mullins, . . . .	142 2 0	107 0 0	3,000	3,000	600	"
Do., . . . .	Valentine G. Hinds, . . . .	113 1 12	69 0 0	1,062	1,062	213	"
Do., . . . .	Samuel Carter, . . . .	07 2 23	81 0 0	1,440	1,440	288	"
Luggaurren and Ferny- hill, . . . .	James Brown, . . . .	23 1 13	16 10 0	238	238	48	"
Luggaurren, . . . .	John George, . . . .	37 0 29	19 5 0	350	350	70	"
Luggaurren and Cool- glass, . . . .	Andrew Murphy, . . . .	64 2 35	27 15 0	500	500	100	"
Luggaurren, . . . .	David Bell, . . . .	34 3 20	23 0 0	414	414	83	"
Scotland and Brennanshill, Luggaurren, . . . .	John Byrne, . . . .	47 1 33	31 2 0	480	480	96	"
Do., . . . .	Henry Milbourn, . . . .	260 1 0	225 0 0	4,000	3,000	Balance secured by a mortgage.	June 22.

By order,

J. H. FRANKS, Secretary,

Source:

*Report of the commissioners appointed to inquire into the estates of evicted tenants in Ireland* xxxi, [C.6935], HC 1893-1894], p. 51.

ESTATE OF THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE,  
 APPENDIX 9: LAND COMMISSION RETURNS 1892  
 LUGGACURRAN, QUEEN'S COUNTY.

[NOTE.—In cases in the following Return where the Farms have been sold, the purchase money is shown in the Return furnished by the Land Commission and printed in Appendix IV].

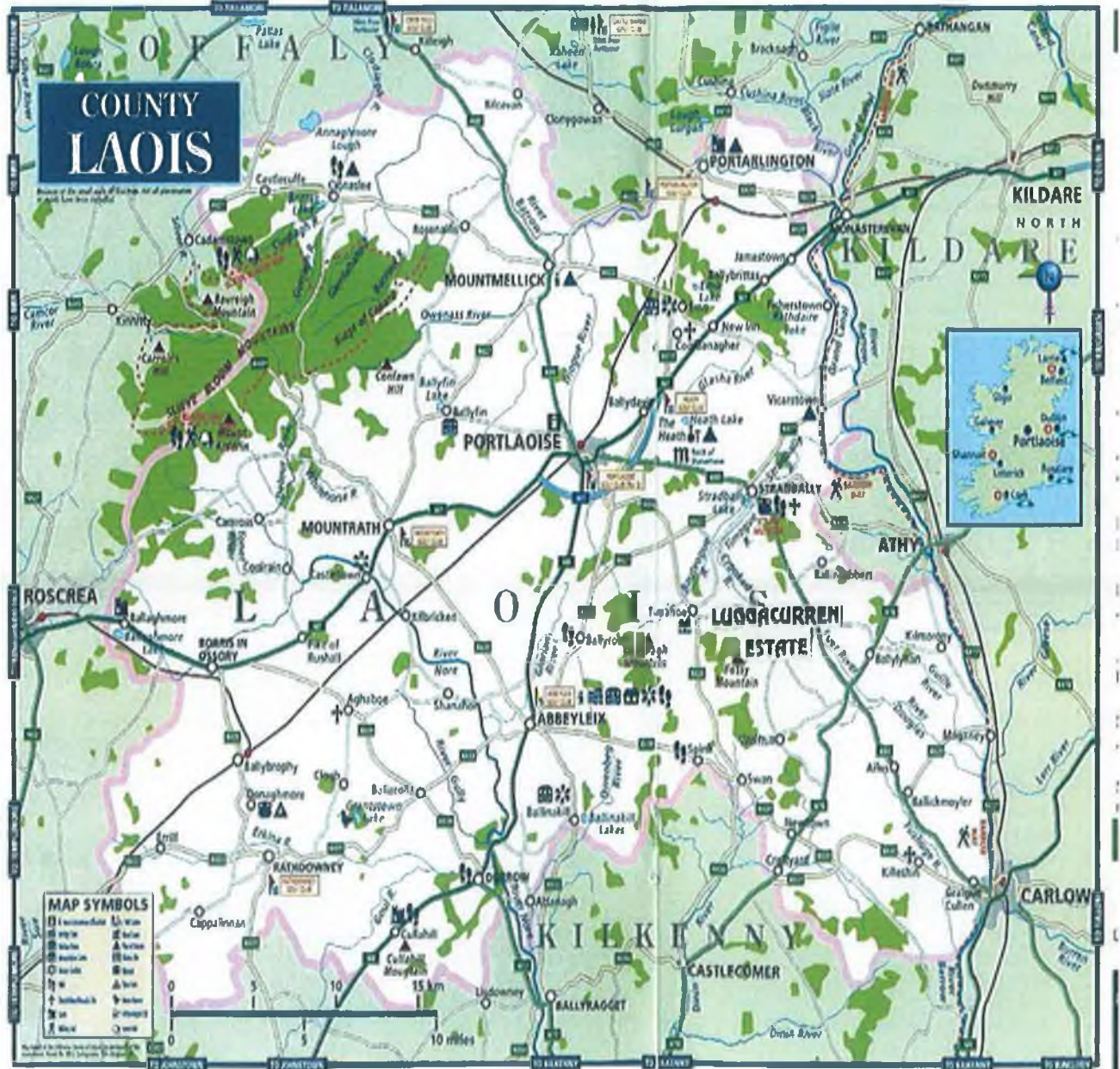
Name of Evicted Tenant.	Area of Farm in Statute Measure.	Rent before Eviction.	Amount of Rent for which Eviction was brought.	Amount of Costs.	Date when Eviction was carried out.	Person now in occupation.	Terms of re-instatement: new rent or purchase money.
	A. R. P.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			
Daniel Byrne, . . . . .	31 1 15				5th November, 1889.	Old tenant was re-admitted, and on 29th May, 1889, his son, Laurence Byrne, was evicted from the farm. See further on.	
Denis Kilbride, . . . . .	868 2 0	760 11 0	760 11 0	23 0 0	22nd, 23rd, & 24th March, 1887.	40½ acres on hands of landlord. 146 acres. New tenant purchaser. 260 do. New tenant, 56 do. Do.	New rent £225, and about to purchase. New rent £20; will probably purchase.
James Kilbride,	} sub-tenants.			3 10 0			
Thomas Beddy,				3 10 0			
Michael Beddy,				3 10 0			
Michael Lawlor,				3 10 0			
Margaret Moore,				3 10 0			
Thomas Rigney,				3 10 0			
Michael Cranny,				3 10 0			
Thomas Kelly,				3 10 0			
John Ryan,				3 10 0			
Edward Conroy,			3 10 0				
J. W. Dunne, . . . . .	917 2 0	890 14 5	890 14 5	24 0 0	26th March, 1887.	Used by landlord.	
William Dunne,	} sub-tenants.			3 10 0			
Jer. M'Evoy,				3 10 0			
James Kinsella,				3 10 0			
Michael Moore,				3 10 0			
John Morris,				3 10 0			
William Mullins,				3 10 0			
Esther Kelly, . . . . .	44 0 0	28 10 0	28 10 0	3 10 0	19th April, 1887.	20 acres. New tenant purchaser. 10 do. New tenant, Portion. Do.	New rent £10. Let at £1 per acre.

Source: *Report of the commissioners appointed to inquire into the estates of evicted tenants in Ireland xxxi, [C.6935], HC 1893-1894], appendix iv, p. 91.*



MAP 1:

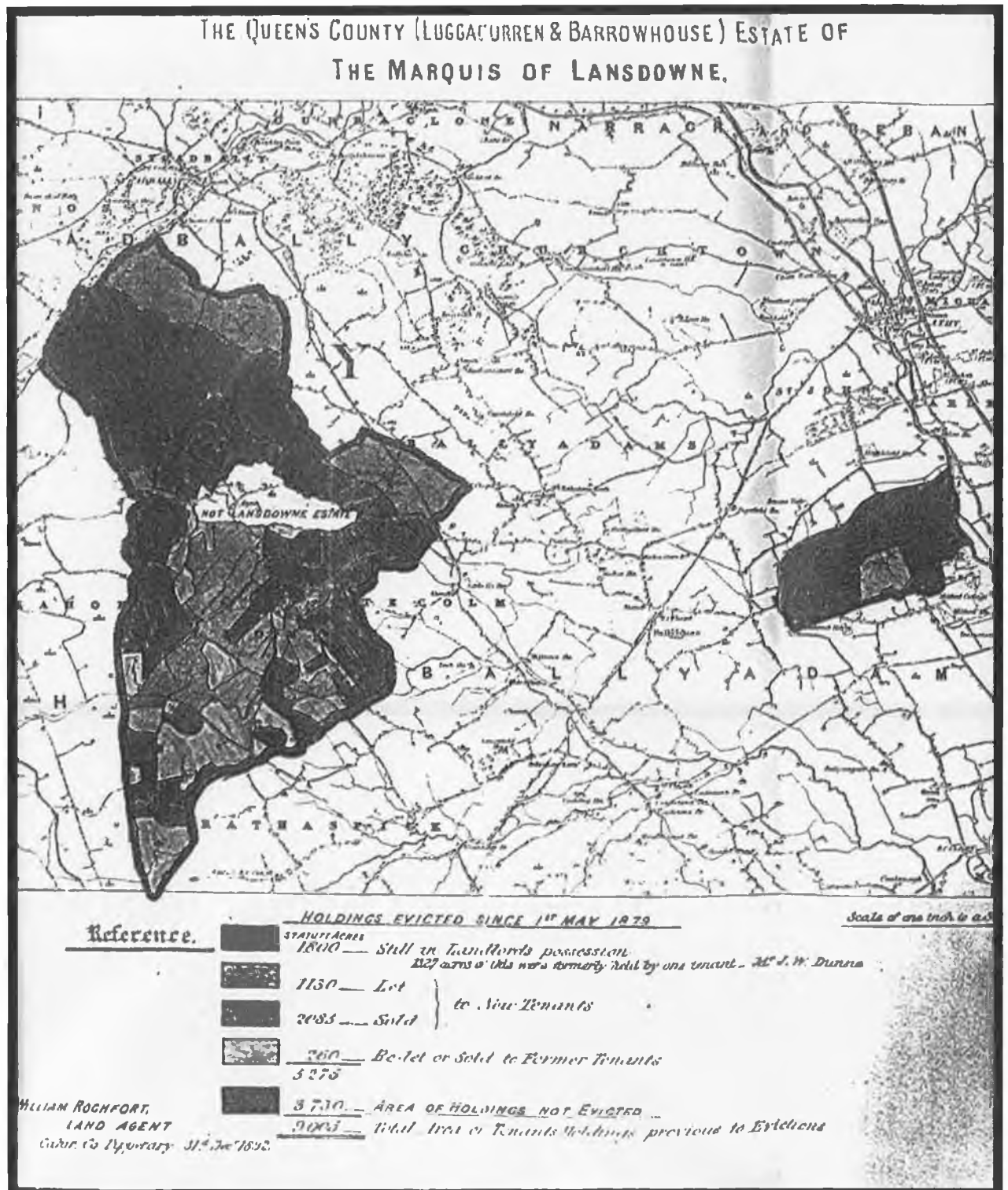
COUNTY LAOIS



Source: Laois Leader, Pepper's Court, Portlaoise, County Laois.



MAP 2: QUEEN'S COUNTY (LUGGACURREN & BARROWHOUSE)  
ESTATE OF THE MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE



Source: N.A., C.S.O., Evicted Tenants Commission 1892.



Wood House, Luggacurren, Stradbally, County Laois 1999.  
This is the house Denis KilBride was evicted from on 22 March 1887.



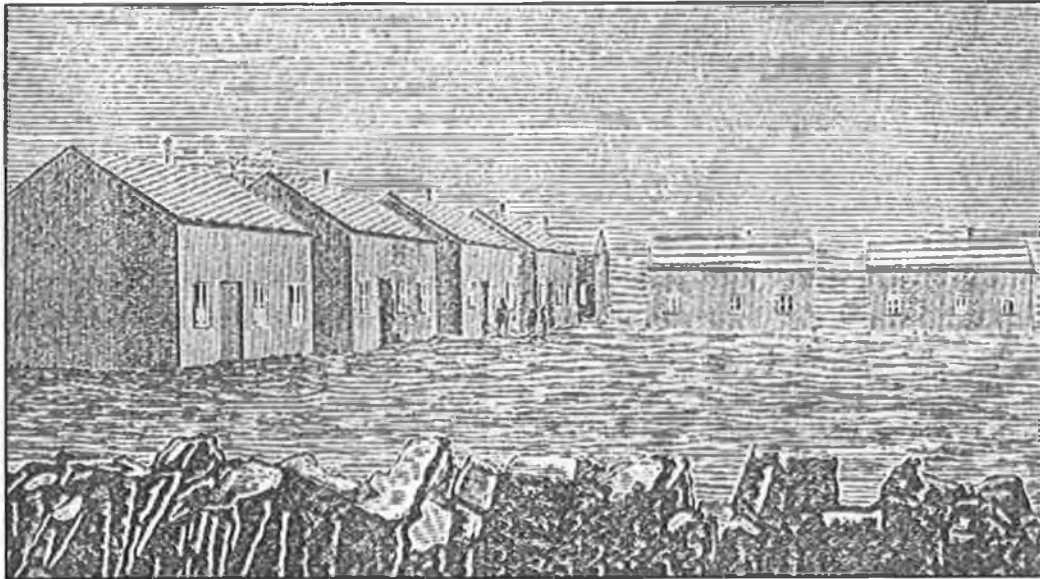
KilBride's Gate Lodge 1999

Thomas Kelly, his wife Margaret and three children were evicted from the gate lodge on 23 March 1887. 'The fire was then extinguished and a couple of caretakers, with a police guard, were placed in charge'. *L.E.*, 26 Mar. 1887.



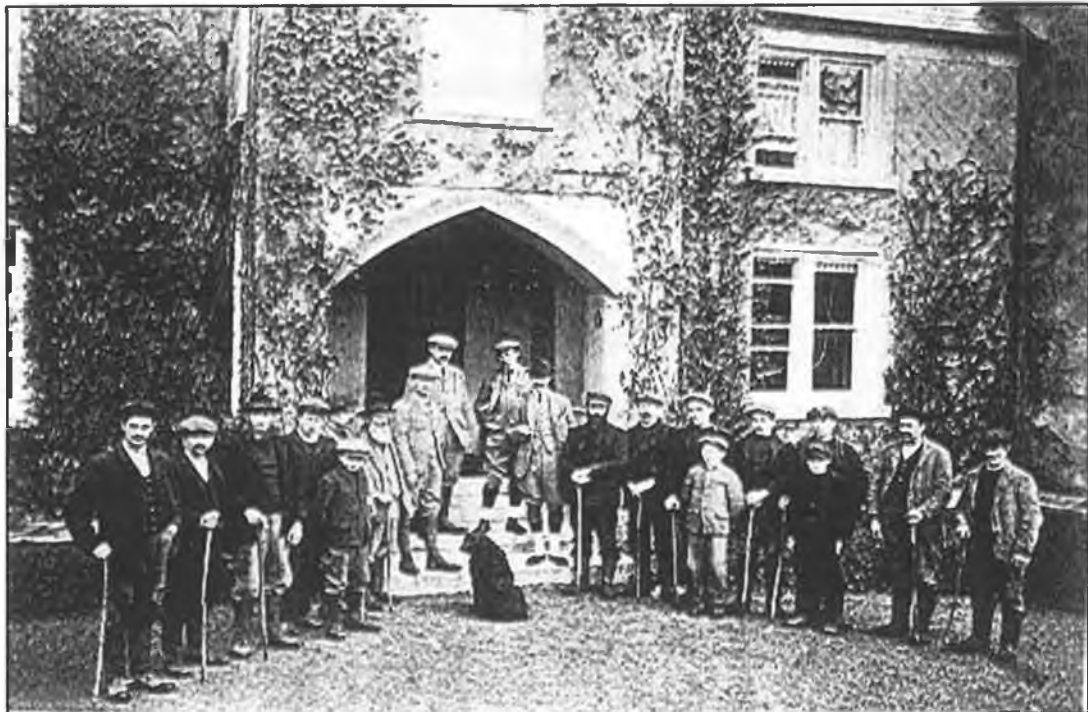
Raheenahown House, Raheenahown, Stradbally, County Laois.  
John William Dunne, who held a farm of over 1,200 acres was evicted from this house on 24 March 1887. Subsequently his sub-tenants and labourers were evicted.

'CAMPAIGN SQUARE' WHERE TWENTY-ONE HUTS WERE PROVIDED  
FOR THE EVICTED TENANTS



Source: Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union. *An account of the Luggacurren and Glensharrold estates.* (Dublin, 1899).

WOODCOCK SHOOTING AT DERREEN HOUSE,  
KENMARE, COUNTY KERRY, 1913  
Lord Lansdowne (bottom step left) with H. P. Maxwell,  
Sir Edward Hope and Lord Kerry



Source: Marquis of Lansdowne (Sixth), *Glanerought and the Petty-Fitzmaurices*, (London, 1937), p. 194.

TWENTY-ONE HUTS ERECTED FOR THE EVICTED TENANTS  
 BESIDE RC CHURCH AT CAMPAIGN SQUARE,  
 LUGGACURREN, QUEEN'S COUNTY  
 SURVEYED BY C. O. DWEN B.A. ARCHITECT, 1891



Source: Correspondence Irish estates 1888-94, printed copy of an appeal in the House of Lords, Kehoe and others V Marquis of Lansdowne, in large metal black box at Bowood estate office, Calne, Wiltshire, England.

V. & P. J. KilBride, 4 Dame Street, Dublin appellants' solicitors.  
 Clay & Close, 23 Great Marlborough Street West, appellants agents.  
 Thomas C. Franks, 21 Lr. Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin, respondent's solicitor.  
 Cookson, Enright & Pennington, 64 Lincoln Inn Fields, respondent's agents.





**PREACHING AND PRACTISING.**

TRENCH, THE EVICTOR, IN LUGGACURREN.



TRENCH, THE EVANGELIST, IN DUBLIN.



WILLIAM O'BRIEN, DENIS KILBRIDE AND CORRESPONDENTS  
WHO ACCOMPANIED THEM TO CANADA IN MAY 1887



Front (left to right): Charley Ryan, Dublin *Freeman's Journal*; William O'Brien, Editor *United Ireland*; Denis KilBride the evicted tenant of Luggacurren; James A. Gill, *New York World*. Back (left to right): Daniel F. Kellogg, *New York Sun*; J. M. Wall, *New York Tribune*; James Clancy, *New York Herald*.

Photograph taken by C. D. Fredricks, 770 Broadway, New York.

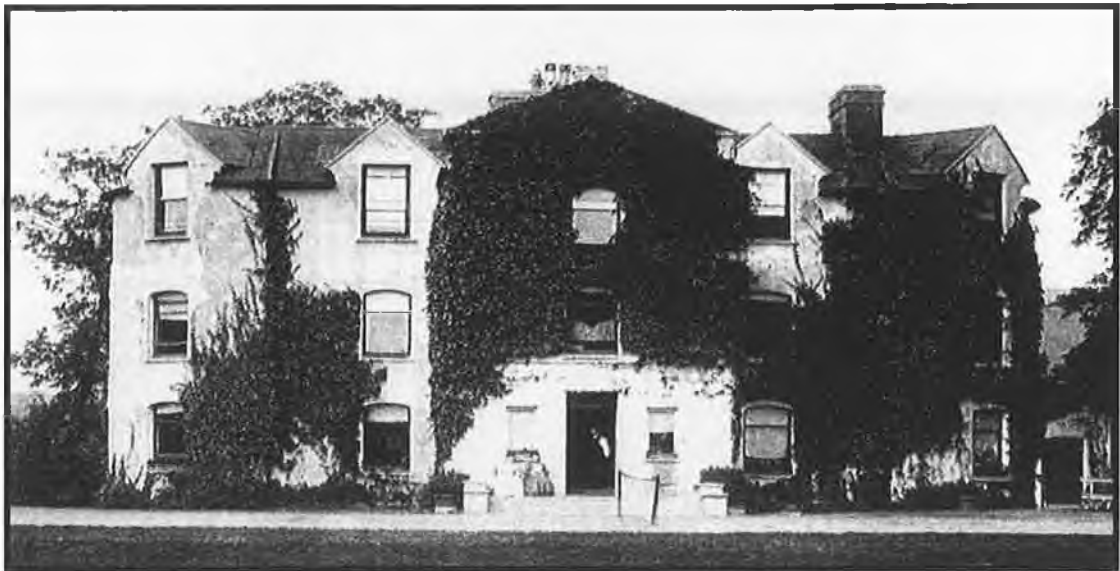
Source: University College Cork, William O'Brien papers, ucc/wob/pp/a12/6.



Luggacurren House, formerly Lansdowne Lodge the rent office.

This photograph was most likely taken in 1906 when Denis KilBride was re-instated in Luggacurren, nineteen years after he was evicted. Mary KilBride, sister of Denis is third from the left at the back and her brother John James KilBride of Bradford, surgeon 1851-1920 is beside her on the right.

Source: Jenny KilBride, Woodbarton Cottage, Ditchling Common, Hassocks, Sussex.



Lansdowne Lodge, Kenmare, the residence of John Townsend Trench and also the rent office for the Lansdowne Kerry estate. This house which no longer exists, was built as the residence of the chief agent of the Shelburne-Lansdowne estate, the construction of which appears to have occupied a long period. In 1773, the agent, Joseph Taylor stated that 'it has lain nine years at sixes and sevens, labouring against nature, through cragged rocks, where she never intended there should be a habitation but for goats'.

Source: Kenmare Literary and Historical Society, *A bridge to the past*, p. 12.

## FIRST COMMUNION OF JOSEPH ALOYSIUS KILBRIDE 1896



On the Catholic feast of Corpus Christi 4 June 1896, Denis KilBride's son, Joseph Aloysius KilBride, aged ten celebrated his First Communion. Sitting beside him is presumably his mother Catherine KilBride (formerly Murphy). The ceremony took place at St John the Evangelist's Church, Kirkdale in Liverpool.

Source: Photo in the private possession of Denis KilBride's great grandson, Peter KilBride and his wife Winnie, 174 Plymyard Avenue, Eastham, Wirral, Liverpool, England, CH62 8EH.

## MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE OF JOSEPH ALOYSIUS KILBRIDE TO CATHERINE MILNER 1913

On 6 October 1913, Joseph Aloysius KilBride, aged twenty-seven, a cotton salesman of Moss & Delph Lane, Aughton was married to Catherine Milner, aged twenty-nine of 172 Longmoor Lane, Aintree. Catherine was the daughter of Charles Milner, a butcher and the marriage took place in the Church of the Blessed Sacrament, Walton, West Derby, Liverpool in the presence of Charles Culshaw and Kathleen Horan. The marriage certificate names the father of Joseph KilBride as Denis KilBride MP.

CERTIFIED COPY of an ENTRY OF MARRIAGE Pursuant to the Marriage Act 1949		REGISTRATION DISTRICT		M. Cert. S.R. (H.H.)		
Registration District		West Derby		AA 600810		
solemnized at <u>The Church of the Blessed Sacrament, Walton</u>						
District of <u>West Derby</u> in the County of <u>Liverpool</u>						
Name and Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Residence at the time of Marriage	Father's Name and Surname	Rank or Profession of Father
Joseph Kilbride	27 years	Bachelor	Cotton Salesman	Moss Delph Lane Aughton	Denis Kilbride	M.P.
Catherine Milner	29 years	Spinster		172 Longmoor Lane Aintree	Charles Milner	Butcher
of the Blessed Sacrament according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church by me,						
J. H. Hillbride		Charles Culshaw		James Day		
Catherine Milner		Kathleen Horan		J. H. Hillbride		
in the Presence of us,				Negotiator		
Notary in a register in my custody.						
31.10.02						

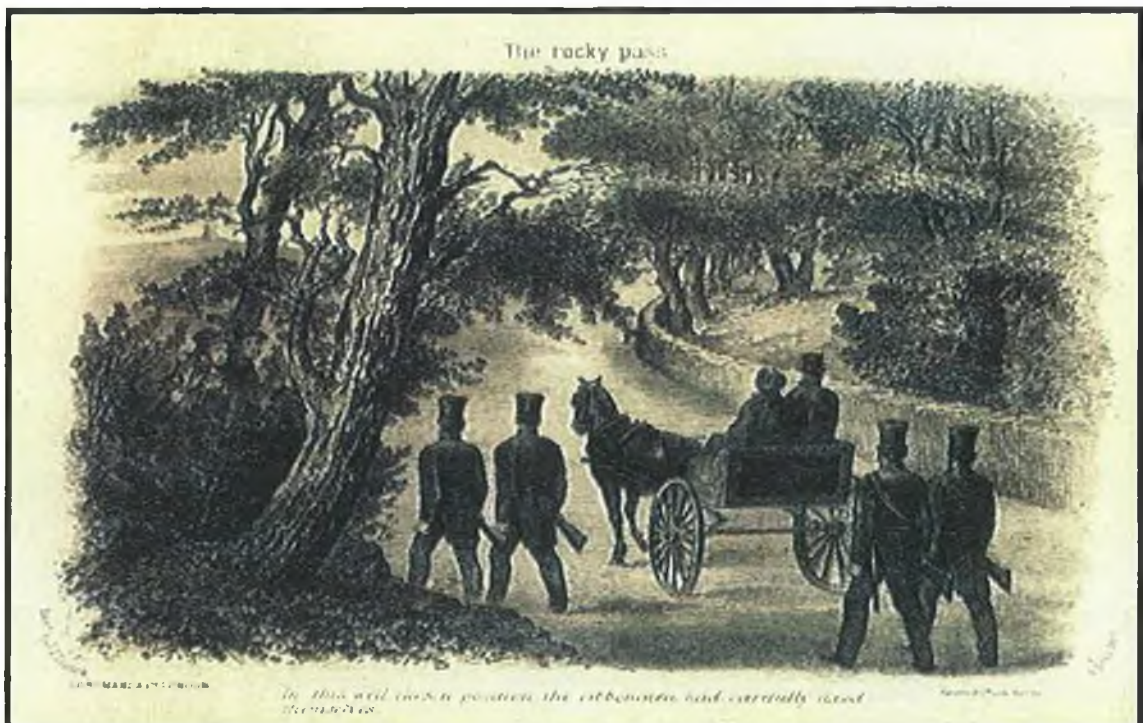
Source: Liverpool central library, St Catherine's microfiche index of births, marriages and deaths for England and Wales, West Derby registration district, vol. 8b, Dec. quarter 1913, AA 600810, p. 876.





Illustration entitled 'The message' by John Townsend Trench for his father's book, with the following caption: 'Down on your knees boys!' shouted the same voice, 'we will ask him once more upon our knees'.

Source: W. S. Trench, *Realities of Irish life*, (London, 1868), plate 7, p. 73.



The title for this illustration is 'The Rocky Pass' with the caption, 'In this well chosen position the ribbonmen had carefully fixed themselves'.

Source: W. S. Trench, *Realities of Irish life*, (London, 1868), plate 30, p. 244.