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# A Contemporary Account of the Rightboy Movement: The John Barter Bennett Manuscript

Introduced and Edited by  
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## INTRODUCTION

Presented below is a hitherto unpublished and most revealing account of the great Rightboy movement of the mid-1780s written by John Barter Bennett, a Cork city apothecary, primarily for the instruction of his children. It should be stressed at once that Bennett's manuscript does not provide a comprehensive history of the far-flung Rightboy movement, which at its widest extent affected as many as eleven counties in Munster, Leinster, and Connaught.<sup>1</sup> In his observations Bennett restricted himself almost exclusively to County Cork, where the campaign began in the late summer of 1785 and where it persisted longest. Even with respect to his own county, Bennett's version is chronologically truncated; he wrote it in 1787, although parts of Cork remained disturbed, at least intermittently, until well into 1788. For the period of less than two years with which he was concerned, Bennett was also highly selective in treating of specific events related to the movement. While he discussed or mentioned numerous incidents, much of his account consists of general description, analysis, and interpretation. In a word, he neither was nor wanted to be a simple chronicler. That task he could reasonably leave to the *Hibernian Chronicle* (whose twice-weekly issues he carefully read and annotated)<sup>2</sup> or to the *Cork Evening Post*. Instead, he regarded himself as an historian seeking to discover the motives and consequences of

human action and preserving the truth of them for later generations. His prejudices, however, were much greater than he was prepared to admit, particularly those against Catholics and Catholicism. He was strongly biased in favour of the Protestant clergy, whose tithes were the principal object of the Rightboys' resentment. His father-in-law, the Rev. Edward Weekes, had been rector of the parish of Inchigeelagh (lying between Dunmanway and Macroom) since 1773, and Bennett possessed numerous friends among the established clergy of the county, many of whom became financial victims of the Rightboys. Indeed, clerics of the established church or their relatives seem to have been his best informants.

Despite its limitations, however, and partly because of them, Bennett's manuscript is extremely valuable. One contribution stands out above the rest. Unlike any of the other contemporary commentators on the Rightboy movement, Bennett collected and set down a wealth of detail (both fact and rumour) about those members of the Cork gentry who, within limits, allied themselves with the rebellious 'lower orders'. He was indeed the first writer to publicize the fact of gentry participation and even leadership in the campaign through a letter entitled 'The Dublin shopkeeper's address to the gentlemen Whiteboys', which was dated 16 February 1786 and appeared anonymously in the *Hibernian Chronicle* at the

beginning of March.<sup>3</sup> In this bitter letter Bennett accused the gentry Whiteboys of having thrown off all attachment to religion of any kind and warned them that their lower-class followers would soon emulate their pernicious example. This general casting aside of religious restraint, he predicted, would lead inevitably to popular repudiation of all property rights, lay as well as clerical. Not tithes alone but rents too would come under attack. Or as Bennett told the offending gentry in a vivid passage, the common Rightboys

may one night pass a resolution that plated work looks as well as solid silver on a sideboard and vote it highly *unconstitutional and a grievance* that you should have silver cups to drink good beer and cyder, and silver spoons to sup rich soups with, whilst they were obliged to drink sour milk out of wooden piggins and eat stirabout with shells, or pewter, or horn-spoons . . . .

Bennett asserted in his address that the troubles could be laid entirely at the doors of 'a few inconsiderate men of property' who did not realize 'all the consequences of their ill-conduct'. In his private account, however, he was to distinguish between activists and sympathizers among the gentry and to distribute the blame much more widely.

Bennett was not the only writer to contend publicly that the Rightboy movement had been instigated by self-serving members of the landed elite. In different ways the barrister Dominick Trant and the Protestant bishop of Cloyne, Dr Richard Woodward, made essentially the same case in pamphlets which they each published in 1787. Of the two, Trant was the more insistent. At one point, when noting the Cork parishes in which the disturbances had begun, he asserted, 'At no time had some of the great men of some of those parishes been remarkable for their attention to the rights and privileges of the church . . .'.<sup>4</sup> At another point, speaking more generally, Trant maintained that the Rightboys were 'guided

by the whispered counsels of men in the higher ranks of life, regardless of aught but their own interests'.<sup>5</sup> His implication was that they wished to reduce or abolish tithes so that they might then increase their own rents. These 'cool and designing' men, declared Trant, constituted 'the internal cabinet of the Whiteboy republic', and their aim was to spread oath-bound combinations against the established clergy throughout the whole kingdom.<sup>6</sup>

Bishop Woodward was generally more reticent in his published references to the gentry Whiteboys,<sup>7</sup> with the exception of two forthright passages near the end of his famous pamphlet. In one of them, as a proof that 'the *poor* were not the authors of this disturbance, and that *their* relief was not the *real* object of its promoters', Woodward pointed out that the Rightboys 'did not aim to render *potatoes* tithe-free but from the beginning insisted on annihilating the payment of tithe for *hay*', which was predominantly a rich man's crop.<sup>8</sup> In the other passage the bishop claimed that the Rightboy agitation was no 'paroxysm of frenzy originating with ignorant and rash peasants'. Instead, the movement was

a dark and deep scheme planned by men skilled in law and the artifices by which it may be evaded. These enemies to the public peace and [to] the Protestant clergy (though nominal Protestants) suggested to the farmers to enter into a combination under the sanction of an oath not to take their tithes or to assist any clergyman in drawing them. And a form of summons to the clergyman to draw, penned with legal accuracy, was printed at Cork at the expense of a gentleman of rank and fortune, and many thousand copies of it circulated with diligence through the adjacent counties of Limerick, Kerry, and Tipperary.<sup>9</sup>

Neither Woodward nor Trant, however, mentioned any of the gentry Whiteboys by name in their published writings, though the identity of at least some of them was well

known. Trant may perhaps have been restrained by his uncomfortably close relationship to Mrs Arabella Jefferys, a leading member of 'the internal cabinet of the Whiteboy republic'.<sup>10</sup> For Woodward, the conspicuous role played in the movement by certain Protestant gentlemen, and by one remarkably active Protestant gentlewoman, was an inconvenient fact on which this prelate could not be expected to dwell. It was inconvenient because in his pamphlet Woodward generally painted the Rightboys as a 'popish mob' and their movement as a Catholic conspiracy to overthrow the established church or at least to starve it out of existence.<sup>11</sup> Even Bennett himself had been unwilling to point the finger at specific individuals in his address of March 1786. Only in the manuscript which he penned in the following year (never intending to publish it) did he fully set forth what he knew or could learn about the 'gentlemen Whiteboys'. I have argued elsewhere that along with Trant and Woodward, he almost certainly credited them with too much influence over the course of events.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, Bennett performed an admirable service in preserving for posterity the identity and conduct of those well-born Protestants whose actions he found so reprehensible.

While Bennett consciously sought to provide such a service, another important contribution made by his manuscript was unintended. This is the insight which it offers into the workings of the Protestant mind — and that at a social level usually difficult to penetrate — in late eighteenth-century Ireland. Though reared by pious Protestant parents and having numerous Protestant clerical friends, Bennett clearly judged himself reasonably tolerant in religious matters. As he declared early in his manuscript, 'I should be very sorry to have it understood that I am an enemy to the Roman Catholics'.<sup>13</sup> He had, after all, denounced the Rightboys' attack on priests' dues in letters which he published in

the *Hibernian Chronicle*.<sup>14</sup> He was on terms of friendship with some members of the Catholic clergy, including (for a short time) Fr Arthur O'Leary, the well-known Capuchin friar and political pamphleteer. And by his own account, Bennett had 'much rejoiced' at the passage of the Catholic relief acts of 1778 and 1782, 'being convinced that religious toleration and security of property . . . are the just privileges of each and every individual'.<sup>15</sup>

Yet he also readily labelled Catholicism 'an intolerant religion'<sup>16</sup> and could not conceive of Irish Catholics being as generous to Protestants if the latter should lose power as Protestants supposedly were to Catholics while they held it. He doubted Catholic professions of political loyalty because 'with many, if not most, Roman Catholics, it's a principle that for the advancement of their religion the end justifies the means, be they what they may'.<sup>17</sup> He saw nothing to criticize in the original enactment of the penal laws after the Protestants' victory at the Boyne, and while happy that part of this code had recently been repealed, he drew the line against any further concessions. To his mind it was a simple matter of Protestant political self-preservation: 'Roman Catholics being the great majority of the people, the greatest care should be taken not to let them enjoy the most distant privileges in the government of the kingdom as electors, legislators, or otherwise, lest that in time they may acquire such an ascendancy as would be fatal to the Protestant interest'.<sup>18</sup> And like Bishop Woodward, Bennett came to believe that the Rightboy movement embodied distinct elements of a political conspiracy to destroy the established church by eliminating its revenues. In his mature view the efforts of the Rightboys and their gentry leaders to regulate priests' dues (as well as tithes) were nothing more than a ruse to confuse the authorities and loyal Protestants in general about their real designs.<sup>19</sup>

What helped to push Bennett into this erroneous position was his reaction of horror at

two addresses to the Rightboys published in February 1786 by Fr O'Leary.<sup>20</sup> As Bennett sorrowfully remarked more than once in his manuscript, 'I never was so much deceived in any man' as in this distinguished Capuchin friar; the appearance of O'Leary's addresses 'caused me to break off the intimacy I had with him and only retain a distant and complaisant acquaintance, which, considering I kept a shop and depended on the public, I thought it prudent to do'.<sup>21</sup> The intensity of Bennett's adverse reaction was caused partly by the fact that he expected from O'Leary's pen a stinging rebuke to the Rightboys. But instead of delivering a harsh denunciation, O'Leary displayed a certain amount of sympathy for the Rightboys' grievances against the tithe system, while at the same time warning the Rightboys that the more violent of their methods would bring some of them to the gallows.

At first glance it might seem that Bennett should have found far more to praise than to censure in the Capuchin's addresses. O'Leary enjoined absolute obedience to both the laws of God and those of the Irish government. In the process he defended gross inequality in the distribution of wealth, the legality of tithes, and the necessity for patience, indeed resignation, in the face of injustices left unredressed. He took pains to stress the humane conduct of numerous Protestant parsons who had fallen under the Rightboys' displeasure and to emphasize the crucial moral role of the established clergy in general. And he lauded 'the Dublin shopkeeper's' six letters to the Whiteboys for both their contents and the author's disinterested and entirely benevolent motives in writing them.

But in the course of his addresses O'Leary also ventured more than a few remarks to which partisans of the established church like Bennett took strong exception. While defending the Protestant clergy's right to tithes, O'Leary conceded to the Rightboys that they were 'oppressed and impoverished more than

any [other] set of the lower classes of people on earth'. The oppression lay not in tithes themselves, but rather 'in the manner of raising their value and [of] collecting them', that is, through tithe-farmers and proctors. In answer to his criticism of the Rightboys' malicious damage to property, O'Leary said that he expected the reply: 'You will tell me that if you have cropped [the ears of] two or three horses and burnt some ricks of corn, the injury has been done only to parish proctors, those leeches whom you consider as your greatest oppressors, who every season do you infinitely more harm'. O'Leary promptly termed such a response 'a weak plea in the eyes of God'. Yet that still left him evidently agreeing that proctors were indeed leeches and slighting the amount of violence and intimidation used by the Rightboys to enforce their demands. O'Leary also qualified his criticism of the Rightboys' novel practice of posting notices that fixed lower rates of tithes and priests' dues which they would permit to be paid. Though he called this new scheme 'very improper', he also dubbed it 'moderate' and charitably remarked that it was 'certainly founded on your poverty on [the] one hand and the oppressive manner of collecting the tithes on the other'. He did urge the Rightboys to abandon such tactics and advised them instead to petition Parliament for redress of their grievances. But this recommendation assumed that their complaints were legitimate, at least to some extent, and raised the expectation that Parliament would devise appropriate remedies. The victims and opponents of the Rightboys of course denied this assumption of legitimacy and hoped to see the expectation of redress frustrated.<sup>22</sup>

In the view of Bennett and others, O'Leary's sins were even greater. His warnings against violations of the Whiteboy act of 1776, and his suggestion that its provisions be promulgated as widely as possible, were construed by partisans of the established church as an invitation

to the Rightboys to pursue the same goals by means other than those actions which the 1776 statute made capital felonies. As Bennett sarcastically remarked about the public explication of this law, the gentry leaders of the movement 'were no doubt extremely anxious to prevent outrages and explained the Whiteboy act "with proper comments". Combination was their darling object, silent combination against the Protestant clergy, for it would be wrong to alarm government by not "preserving the public tranquillity"'.<sup>23</sup> While O'Leary's motives were not the sinister ones imagined by Bennett, the Capuchin friar did not sufficiently guard himself against misunderstanding or the suspicion of evil intent. In his first address, for example, he quoted with apparent approval Arthur Young's characterization of the Whiteboy act as a statute 'better calculated for the meridian of Barbary than for a Christian country'. He also stated incorrectly that this law was scheduled to expire in June 1787, which was taken by his enemies to mean that the Rightboys should bide their time until then.<sup>24</sup> Lastly, O'Leary's references to 'the prejudices of juries' and 'the perjury of witnesses' for the crown, though intended to frighten the Rightboys into peaceable behaviour, seemed designed to undermine the judicial system in public estimation. It is therefore not really surprising that a man with Bennett's attachments and biases should have been profoundly shocked by O'Leary's addresses.

Bennett was not alone in taking deep offence at many of Fr O'Leary's comments in these two letters of February 1786 (he also published a third in the following November).<sup>25</sup> Bishop Woodward of Cloyne, in a lengthy postscript to his best-selling pamphlet of 1787, *The present state of the Church of Ireland*, focused sharply critical attention on the Capuchin's addresses, which in his judgment were much more likely to inflame than to allay the Rightboy disturbances. Woodward was especially incensed at O'Leary's first letter:

After his having pointed out so strongly and eloquently to the insurgents the extent of their grievances and expressed his sympathy with their distress and *unexampled* misery, which he imputes solely to the persons employed by the established clergy . . . ; after expatiating on the severity of the laws *as not being fit for a Christian country*, and warning them that they could not expect a *fair* execution, even of those *cruel* ordinances, from the law officers of the crown, the witnesses, or jury, I think one may say with justice of *his address* . . . that it is calculated to raise discontent and indignation in the Roman Catholic peasantry against the national clergy, the legislature, the executive power, and their Protestant fellow subjects.<sup>26</sup>

While Woodward's strictures on O'Leary were certainly not mild, they were at least more restrained than those of Patrick Duigenan, a former fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, and a barrister with extensive experience on the clerical side in the ecclesiastical courts. Writing under the pseudonym of 'Theophilus' in a pamphlet published late in 1786, Duigenan sneeringly referred to O'Leary as that 'friar *with the barbarous surname*'<sup>27</sup> and upbraided him for having the audacity to meddle in 'the politics of this Protestant state'.<sup>28</sup> Rabidly anti-Catholic, Duigenan offered the simplest of explanations for the stirrings of the Rightboys. He branded them 'a popish banditti spirited up by agitating friars and Romish missionaries, sent here for the purposes of sowing sedition';<sup>29</sup> it was the Rightboys' practice to 'assemble at their respective mass-houses and bind themselves by solemn oaths at the feet of their altars to abolish tithes or to establish some very inadequate modus or commutation in their place'.<sup>30</sup> Duigenan did not confine himself to implying that O'Leary belonged to the ranks of the seditious; he broadened the charge to include a large portion of the Catholic parochial clergy. Many such priests, he declared, 'have had the boldness traiterously [*sic*] to read to their congregations, in their respective mass-houses, the most rebellious manifestoes of the insurgents,

pretending that they were compelled by threats to do so'.<sup>31</sup>

Not surprisingly, these attacks provoked O'Leary into a trenchant and comprehensive exposition of his views.<sup>32</sup> Dismissing 'Theophilus' as a 'bare-faced slanderer' and 'infamous libeller' of the Catholics,<sup>33</sup> he took relatively little notice of that anonymous author's largely scurrilous pamphlet. Instead, he devoted his considerable rhetorical powers to an elaborate refutation of Woodward's work and furnished a detailed vindication of his own addresses to the Whiteboys, which the bishop had 'garbled' and 'mangled'.<sup>34</sup> In his *Defence*, published in February 1787, O'Leary was also far more critical of the tithe system than he had chosen to be in his public letters of a year earlier, and thus partisans of the established clergy now had even greater reason to resent his sympathy for Rightboy grievances on that score. Those ecclesiastical agents whom O'Leary had previously called 'leeches' now became 'so many locusts that eat up the peasant's green herbage';<sup>35</sup> the consistorial court became 'the strand on which the proctor gathers the spoils'.<sup>36</sup> 'The bishop of Cloyne', O'Leary observed wryly, 'spins out a chapter of his pamphlet to show that his *agents are immaculate*. . . . *From such agents, good Lord, deliver us*.'<sup>37</sup> And while O'Leary did not contradict Woodward's complaint about the supineness of many Protestant magistrates and gentlemen in the face of the Rightboy upheaval, he drew entirely benign conclusions from this phenomenon. It showed, he declared, that 'the lower classes were truly miserable, and that their table of rates [for tithes and priests' dues] was only proportioned to their circumstances'. It also demonstrated that 'the Protestant nobility and gentry were under no apprehension of [danger to] the constitution, either in church or state'.<sup>38</sup> To this exoneration of a supine magistracy O'Leary maddeningly added a perfect hymn of praise to Arabella Jefferys.<sup>39</sup>

When John Barter Bennett came to write his private account of the Rightboy movement later in 1787, he was particularly influenced by the pamphlets of Duigenan, Woodward, and O'Leary. To the views of Duigenan and especially Woodward he responded positively, if not altogether uncritically; they helped to confirm his own, at which he seems to have arrived independently (for the most part). To O'Leary's *Defence*, as earlier to the Capuchin's addresses, he reacted negatively. Indeed, the first portion of Bennett's manuscript mostly consists of a series of commentaries, usually adverse, on specific passages in O'Leary's pamphlet, and Bennett's personal copy of that work is studded with marginal annotations, some of them adding neutral detail, but numerous others challenging the friar's version of events or his interpretations.

Some concluding remarks are in order concerning the material form of Bennett's account and the manner of its presentation below. His manuscript was in his own day bound up in a single volume with a series of nine contemporary pamphlets related to the Rightboy movement or to controversies which it raised. (A list of these pamphlets is provided in appendix no. 1 at the end of this edition.) Either before or after the depositing of the combined volume in the National Library of Ireland, the manuscript and the pamphlets were separated from each other and rebound, the former eventually becoming N.L.I. MS 4161, and the latter N.L.I. pamphlets 161. The historical value of this collection of pamphlets is enhanced by the fact that they contain many informative marginal annotations by Bennett himself, whose personal copies they once were. He considered the collection to be essential to a full understanding of his own account and regarded it as the third and last part of what he repeatedly referred to as 'this volume'. Naturally, only the first and second parts have been edited for publication here.

From this edition certain insignificant passages in the first part of MS 4161 have been omitted, along with about a dozen miscellaneous items (all but one printed) which are attached to the manuscript. (A list of these items is furnished in appendix no. 2 below.) The second part of Bennett's account is presented here in its entirety. The editor, however, has rearranged the original order of Bennett's manuscript because of the nature of the contents of parts one and two, the latter being a much more appropriate opening of the whole subject. In this edition, then, the sequence of presentation will be as follows: (1) Bennett's brief introduction to part one; (2) part two of his manuscript; (3) the remainder of part one; and (4) a note written by Bennett in November 1803 and directed to his children, which, despite its date, occupies an earlier position in the original manuscript.

Bennett's own footnotes to his account have been retained in this edition. In general, however, they have been incorporated in the editor's footnotes. One exceptionally long footnote by Bennett appears here as part of the text immediately before the end of part two of his account, its altered placement being determined by the need for a series of editor's footnotes.

Throughout this edition of Bennett's text and notes I have silently modernized the spelling and normalized the punctuation and use of capitals. Misspellings and minor grammatical errors have been silently corrected. Shortened forms of words or abbreviations

have been silently extended (with the exception of social appendages and prefixes), and all ampersands have been spelled out (except in the mixed form '&c.'). Bennett habitually underlined the names of almost all the persons and places he happened to mention; in addition, he used underlining for the sake of emphasis but did so indiscriminately. With some trifling exceptions, I have eliminated all signs of this habit so as to preserve the sanity of the compositor as well as my own and to remove unnecessary distractions from the reader's sight. Any title of a newspaper or other printed work not underlined by Bennett is here marked in italics.

I wish to thank the Director of the National Library of Ireland for his permission to produce this edition of John Barter Bennett's manuscript. I am also grateful to Sister Evelyn Bolster, R.S.M., Dr David Dickson, the Rev. Patrick O'Donoghue, and Mr Diarmuid Ó Murchadha for supplying various pieces of information about Bennett's more obscure contemporaries, and to the Graduate School of the University of Wisconsin — Madison for providing financial assistance. Above all, I must acknowledge my great indebtedness to my graduate student and research assistant Irene Whelan Hehir, who laboured for months to provide a sound draft of Bennett's account from an unavoidably deficient microfilm copy, and who repeatedly managed to decipher the indecipherable. Without her patient and lynx-eyed efforts the project would never have reached fruition.



## NOTES

- 1 See my article, 'The Rightboy movement, 1785-8' in *Studia Hibernica*, nos 17-18 (1977-8), pp. 120-202. See also Maurice J. Bric, 'Priests, parsons, and politics: the Rightboy protest in County Cork, 1785-1788' in *Past & Present*, no. 100 (Aug. 1983), pp 100-23. I regret that Mr Bric's article appeared too recently to be used in preparing this edition.
- 2 Numerous issues of the [Cork] *Hibernian Chronicle* (hereafter cited as *C.H.C.*) in the bound set held by the National Library of Ireland bear notes written by Bennett during the years of the Rightboy movement.
- 3 *C.H.C.*, 2 Mar. 1786.
- 4 Dominick Trant, *Considerations on the present disturbances in the province of Munster, their causes, extent, probable consequences, and remedies* (Dublin, 1787), p. 48.
- 5 *Ibid.*, p. 64.
- 6 *Ibid.*, pp. 56-7.
- 7 In his private correspondence with Thomas Conolly of Castletown, however, Woodward named Sir John Colthurst and Arabella Jefferys as instigators of the agitation. See Woodward to Conolly, 11 July 1786; Woodward to Conolly, 12 Sept. 1786 (T.C.D., Conolly papers, nos 898, 903). In addition, Woodward referred early in his pamphlet to 'the connivance of some members of the established church, the supineness of more, the timidity of the generality of magistrates, [and] a corrupt encouragement of these lawless acts in not a few' (*The present state of the Church of Ireland* . . . [London edn., 1787], p. 11). Unless otherwise noted, all future references to Woodward's work will be to this edition.
- 8 Woodward, *Church of Ireland*, pp. 76-7.
- 9 *Ibid.*, pp. 75-6. In a note which he appended to Woodward's work (7th ed., Dublin, 1787) in N.L.I. pamphlets 161, Bennett remarked that the 'gentleman of rank and fortune' responsible for the notices was 'supposed to mean Sir J. Colthurst, but Mr Flynn told me it was a gentleman of the county of Kerry who had them printed' (p. 88). William Flynn was the printer and publisher of the *Hibernian Chronicle*.
- 10 Trant's wife Eleanor and Arabella Jefferys were sisters.
- 11 See, e.g., Woodward, *Church of Ireland*, pp. 10-13.
- 12 Donnelly, 'Rightboy movement', pp. 147-8.
- 13 'Some accounts of the proceedings of the Whiteboys, and of the conduct of some of their abettors, from the year 1785 to 1786 inclusive, in three parts, by John Barter Bennett, author of "the Dublin shopkeeper's letters"' (N.L.I. MS 4161, pt 1, p. 7v), hereafter cited as Bennett MS.
- 14 See especially 'The Dublin shopkeeper's second letter to the Whiteboys', 22 Nov. 1785, in *C.H.C.*, 28 Nov. 1785.
- 15 Bennett MS, pt 1, p. 7v.
- 16 *Ibid.*
- 17 *Ibid.*
- 18 *Ibid.*, pt 1, p. 8.
- 19 *Ibid.*, pt 2, pp. 16, 48-51.
- 20 For O'Leary's addresses, see *C.H.C.*, 20, 23 Feb. 1786.
- 21 Bennett MS, pt 1, p. 3v. See also *ibid.*, pt 1, p. 6v.
- 22 All quotations in this paragraph have been taken from O'Leary's first address, printed in *C.H.C.*, 20 Feb. 1786.
- 23 Bennett's note in Arthur O'Leary, *Mr O'Leary's defence* . . . (2nd ed. rev., Cork, 1787), p. 33, N.L.I. pamphlets 161.
- 24 In his *Defence* (Dublin, 1787) O'Leary explained this matter somewhat inadequately: 'A rumour was propagated amongst the insurgents that the Whiteboy act would be no longer in force after the ensuing June [1786]. To guard a deluded multitude against every danger to which they might be exposed from an expectation of impunity in consequence of their ignorance of the law, I informed them that the Whiteboy act would be in force until the month of June, eighty-seven. This was a long warning of fifteen months' since the appearance of O'Leary's first address in late February 1786 (p. 78).
- 25 For his third address, see *C.H.C.*, 20 Nov. 1786.
- 26 Woodward, *Church of Ireland*, pp. 87-8.

- 27 [Patrick Duigenan], *An address to the nobility and gentry of the Church of Ireland as by law established* . . . (Dublin, 1786), p. 17. Art Ó Laoghaire, formerly a captain of the Hungarian Hussars on the continent, was a well-to-do Catholic landowner near Macroom, Co. Cork, allied by marriage to the O'Connells of Derrynane (his wife was the aunt of 'the liberator' Daniel O'Connell). Outlawed after quarrelling bitterly with the Protestant magistrate Abraham Morris, Ó Laoghaire was shot dead in May 1773 before he could carry out his own vow to kill Morris. His death was soon made the subject of what literary scholars consider one of the great keens and love poems in the Irish language, 'The lament for Art Ó Laoghaire'. See Seán Ó Tuama and Thomas Kinsella, *An Irish anthology, 1600-1900: poems of the dispossessed* (Philadelphia, 1981), pp. 198-219.
- 28 Duigenan went so far as to remind O'Leary of the fate of Nicholas Sheehy, the Catholic priest hanged at Clonmel in 1766 (after a travesty of a trial) for alleged complicity in a Whiteboy murder (*Address*, p. 22).
- 29 *Ibid.*, p. 4.

- 30 *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- 31 *Ibid.*, p. 63.
- 32 According to Bennett, Duigenan's abusive epithet — 'the friar *with the barbarous surname*' — hit home; it 'irritated Mr O'leary most amazingly. He was heard to repeat it to himself frequently in great vexation. Perhaps his *Defence* was written partly under the influence of the anger caused by this name. However, this pamphlet [i.e., Duigenan's] appeared about October or November 1786, and O'Leary's not till about the February following, when he might be supposed to be more calm' (Bennett's note in Duigenan, *Address*, p. 17, N.L.I. pamphlets 161).
- 33 O'Leary, *Defence* (Dublin, 1787), pp. 21, 39.
- 34 *Ibid.*, p. 13.
- 35 *Ibid.*, p. 22.
- 36 *Ibid.*, p. 23.
- 37 *Ibid.*, p. 24.
- 38 *Ibid.*, p. 25.
- 39 *Ibid.*, p. 59.



Fr Arthur O'Leary

## Bennett Ms

Some accounts of the proceedings of the Whiteboys, and of the conduct of some of their abettors, from the year 1785 to 1786 inclusive, in three parts, by John Barter Bennett, author of 'the Dublin shopkeeper's letters'

Part the first, written Cork, 1787

(2) It will probably seem extraordinary to whomsoever may happen to get this book into their hands after my decease, as it has been at this day to many, that a private individual of the middling class should engage with so much earnestness in the contest between the clergy and the gentlemen in this part of the kingdom (for the poor wretches called Whiteboys were but the instruments of their landlords), as I have done, being the first man in Ireland who attempted to vindicate and defend the clergy; I think it therefore necessary to assign my reasons for the part I have taken.

First, I was educated a member of the established church, and though I don't think its doctrine and discipline perfect in all parts, yet I am convinced of both being much preferable to any I am acquainted with. Secondly, although it cannot be doubted but that amongst so large a body of men as the (2v) clergy, there must be some of indifferent characters, yet on the whole I believe more really good men are to be found amongst them than amongst any other class of society, their situations in every respect considered; besides, their education must make them more pleasing and agreeable companions in general than any other class of people, more especially the great majority of country squires, most of whom are brutishly ignorant. Thirdly, I am convinced that if the present established religion of the kingdom was abolished, some other (probably the popish) would be established in lieu of it, and I am firmly persuaded people could not be happier, or perhaps so happy, under any form of church government as the present. Fourthly, I am convinced from my observations on the conduct of the papists

during the disturbances [that] they had it at least laterally in view (however they may deny it) to deprive the established clergy of their revenues, though perhaps at the beginning of the outrages they had no fixed design, nor hopes of being able to accomplish this object, and (3) it's not improbable that the entire destruction of the church and probably of the Protestant interest was meditated and would shortly follow, though the Dissenters have in my opinion very imprudently made the cause of the papists and their own the same.<sup>1</sup> Lastly, I am fully convinced that the poor creatures who were made the instruments of artful and designing men could receive no benefit by abolishing tithes, for that the landlords, most of whom, I am convinced, connived at the outrages, would raise their rents at least in proportion; I am informed that the advance [in rent] on lands that are tithe-free is 2s. per acre in this county, and I submit it to consideration how many farmers renting 100 acres pay the clergyman £10, and if tithes were abolished, I think the tenant must be a sufferer in the difference at least of what he pays his landlord more than the parson. And as to Sir John Colthurst, Mr Capel, and Mr Hawkes,<sup>2</sup> who were said (and I believe justly) to be principals in distressing the clergy, the two former were always deemed amongst the most oppressive (3v) tyrants, and the latter, one of the greatest land jobbers of the country, so that I cannot believe it possible they ever had any serious intentions of redressing the grievances of the poor.

As to Mr O'Leary,<sup>3</sup> I never was so much deceived in any man; though it was reasonable to suppose him attached to the interests of his religion, yet I did not think him capable of supporting them under the insidious mark of friendship, as appears in his letters to the Whiteboys, which, when they appeared,<sup>4</sup> caused me to break off the intimacy I had with him and only retain a distant and complaisant

acquaintance, which, considering I kept a shop and depended on the public, I thought it prudent to do. His answer to the bishop of Cloyne<sup>5</sup> contains the most notorious falsehoods and grossest misrepresentations, which prove him not to be any way scrupulous in the means of establishing his religion, which I believe to be a general (though not avowed) principle with those of his church much more than others. He probably thought it better that his falsehoods should be published in foreign countries, where they could not be detected, than to (4) preserve the character of a man of veracity in a small part of this kingdom. I say a small part because the facts that confute his falsehoods are not generally known throughout this nation, and I have observed that though many of his own persuasion are not ignorant of his conduct, yet they don't seem to be ashamed of it, but on the contrary caress him as much as ever, for he supported the interests of the church, no matter by what means; and surely his insolence to the bishop of Cloyne is a proof of the great freedom enjoyed under our church and constitution, and is a good lesson at least to Protestants of every denomination how careful they ought to be to support both, and Dissenters should learn from the disappointments their brethren in France met with in not having their religion tolerated by the Assemblée des Notables<sup>6</sup> this year, as 'twas said they expected, not to make their own a common cause with the Roman Catholics in this kingdom.

As to the elegance of style, I hope the reader will not expect it in anything I write, when I inform him that I never had any education but such as I received at a common country school, and though being of a genteel family, yet the circumstances of my parents were so narrow that I was put to earn (4v) my bread before I was fourteen years of age, and am now obliged to pay the closest attention to business to support a wife, children, and myself, and I come now to declare that I have no obligation to the

clergy, a very few individuals excepted. On the contrary, I have reason to consider myself ill-treated by them. A few of my friends amongst them had a thought of having me complimented by the body with a silver cup and a suitable inscription expressive of their gratitude for my attachment to their interests, by writing the 'shopkeeper's letters'. One of them deposited a guinea in the hands of Mr Kenney<sup>7</sup> (who also wished my being complimented) for the purpose, which was afterwards returned, and there the affair ended.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, I am convinced I hurted myself in my business by my interference, as some of the gentlemen who befriended the Whiteboys dealt with me, but afterwards withdrew their business and probably did what they could to injure me, though two gentlemen of the church dealt a little with me afterwards.

Cork, October 1787

J.B. Bennett

I recommend this volume to be read thus for understanding the subject. First, my narrative. Secondly, Mr O'Leary's addresses to the Whiteboys in the appendix to his pamphlet. Thirdly, Theophilus; the bishop; O'Leary, &c. in succession.<sup>9</sup>

[*What follows is the second part of Bennett's MS.*]

(2) In order to elucidate such parts of the annexed pamphlets as have reference to the shocking outrages of the Whiteboys which have disgraced the province of Munster in general and county of Cork in particular during part of the year 1785 and the entire year 1786 (outrages which have been conducted with a design unknown in any former period), and to transmit a true account of them into whatever hands this book may happen to fall after the principal actors in this wickedness, the sufferers by it, and the writer hereof shall be no more, I think it necessary that the reader should be informed of the following particulars.

About twelve years ago several gentlemen in West Muskerry and other parts (3) instituted a society which met at Blarney and which they denominated the Farmers' Club.<sup>10</sup> The ostensible purpose of this institution was to protect the poor from the oppressions (as they were called) of the clergy, their proctors or agents, and tithe-farmers; but the real purpose was to curtail and in the end totally annihilate the just and lawful rights of the clergy and the revenues of the church in general. Amongst the most active and zealous members of this society were the following gentlemen, the whole tenor of whose conduct as tyrants and oppressors was such as to render it a matter exceedingly whimsical in its own nature and a subject for laughter to all thinking people that (4) they should be the first to step forward as the patrons and protectors of the poor. The first of these worthies was Sir John Conway Colthurst of Ardrum, Bart.,<sup>11</sup> a man of polished manners and insinuating address, possessing a most engaging condescension to his inferiors where he had any purpose to gain by appearing humble, but by nature subtle, vindictive, and cruel, and of a disposition sordidly avaricious. He laid it down as a principle that any man who could convince the world that he did not fear to lose his own life or scruple to take away that of another may do with mankind what he pleased. He accordingly was engaged in several disputes, fought some duels, in one of which he was some years ago desperately wounded, and (5) lately lost his life in one with Dominick Trant, Esqr.,<sup>12</sup> counsellor-at-law, having challenged him for some passages in Mr Trant's pamphlet hereto annexed,<sup>13</sup> which he conceived to have reflected on himself. Sir John let his lands at the highest rates in his power and enforced the payment of his rents with such severity that many who have been his tenants were effectually ruined. Several were, by clauses in their leases to that purpose, obliged to pay him monthly if he required it, and even gentlemen

who have taken lands from him were tied down to pay him quarterly, so that his oppressions became almost proverbial. The next was Joseph Capel of Cloghroe,<sup>14</sup> Esqr., who had been an officer of the (6) army and, having privately married Miss McCarthy, became possessed of the Cloghroe estate on the death of her brothers. This man possessed all the bad qualities of Sir John Colthurst without any of his good ones, being by nature superciliously insolent and arrogant to all whom he considered as his inferiors, and of a disposition sordidly parsimonious. The next was John Hawkes of Surmount,<sup>15</sup> Gent., as great a land jobber as any in the kingdom, a man who raised a considerable property from a small beginning by taking lands and parcelling them out to cottier tenants at short tenures, inasmuch that it has been said of him that he broke more people than any man in the country. The next was Daniel Gibbs, (7) Esqr., of Derry,<sup>16</sup> counsellor-at-law. This man, I heard, boasted that if tithes were abolished, he would raise his fortune fifty percent a year thereby — a plain proof that not the grievances of the poor but his own interest was the object of his concern, as it undoubtedly was that of his colleagues. It was a favourite expression of his that 'the clergy would be pulled down and never hold up their heads again', and a lady of my acquaintance having intimated to him one day 'that the great God was a witness to the wrongs of the clergy', he wittily asked, 'Where is God, is he in this room?' Such were the characters of the leading members of the Farmers' Club, and such were (8) the men whom a wretchedly oppressed and deluded peasantry (oppressed probably more than any people under the sun by rackrents and low wages) were taught to believe their friends and redressers of their grievances, and Sir John Colthurst, Mr Capel, and Mr Gibbs were principally the magistrates who 'explained the laws of the land' during Mr O'Leary's boasted mission in the diocese of Cloyne. In this club were

established the rates for tithes, under the denomination of a *modus*, which have been since adopted by the Whiteboys,<sup>17</sup> as mentioned in several parts of this volume. In the period that intervened between the institution of this society and the breaking out of the disturbances in 1785, the above gentlemen, more (9) especially Sir John Colthurst, took every method in their power to distress the clergy by countenancing, or at least conniving at, every species of fraud and combination against them. Sir John and Mr Capel had some colour, however unjustifiable, for taking this step in the parish of Inishcarra<sup>18</sup> where they resided, the clergyman of that parish being unfortunately a man of dissolute life whom they made a kind of merit of distressing, but Sir John did not confine his operations to Inishcarra only. In the parish of Ballyvourney,<sup>19</sup> the principal part of which was his estate, he laid down such a system for distressing the clergyman as effectually answered the purpose he intended. This was by promoting a (10) general combination against the clergyman, to serve notices on him to draw his tithes and prevent any person from assisting him to do so,<sup>20</sup> insomuch that the gentleman who held this living, though [it was] reputed to be worth £260 a year, resigned it, not being able to make £10 of it, which he paid for doing the occasional duties, exclusive of the visitation fees. In 1783 came on a long-contested election on the dissolution of Parliament for the county of Cork. Lord Kingsborough,<sup>21</sup> eldest son of the earl of Kingston,<sup>22</sup> was set up by those who styled themselves the independent interest in opposition to Richard Townsend, Esqr., the late member,<sup>23</sup> supported by the earl of Shannon.<sup>24</sup> The clergy, as might well be expected, supported Lord (11) Shannon's interest, who was hitherto reputed the hereditary supporter of the Protestant religion and the firm friend of their order.<sup>25</sup> This proceeding highly exasperated Sir John Colthurst, who was Lord Shannon's violent enemy, as well as many

others of that party, and shortly after, the Whiteboys began their depredations. I would not wish to insinuate that many gentlemen of worth and honour who supported the independent interest were any more concerned in these proceedings than gentlemen on the opposite side. Far from it — the truth is that it was an object with many gentlemen in both interests to deprive the clergy of tithes on purpose to let their lands the better by abolishing them, or the better to enable their (12) wretched tenants to pay the rackrents lands were set for, though the gentlemen here mentioned, from resentment as well as avarice, took more open and decided parts in harassing the clergy than others, who probably wished as well to the Whiteboy cause and connived at the proceedings of those miscreants. On the 26th day of October, 1785, the duke of Rutland,<sup>26</sup> lord lieutenant of the kingdom (being on a progress through Munster), arrived in Cork. He was the next day waited on by the mayor and corporation, and by Doctor Mann, the bishop,<sup>27</sup> and the clergy of the diocese with congratulatory addresses. The proceedings of the insurgents had by this time arrived to such a height that the clergy in their address informed the lord lieutenant that (13) 'many of the clergy in this and the adjoining diocese, and even within the liberties of the city, were then suffering under very severe ill-treatment'.<sup>28</sup> The insurgents still continuing their outrages in various places, several noblemen and gentlemen associated on the seventh day of December, 1785, for the prevention of outrages and offered large rewards for the discovery and prosecution to conviction of the offenders. The offences alleged to have been committed, as stated in the advertisement of the association,<sup>29</sup> were — writing letters with feigned names; threatening destruction to any who should take their own or others' tithes;<sup>30</sup> demanding under severe penalties the surrender of tithe notes;<sup>31</sup> cutting off the ears of cows (14) and horses; burning tithe corn and hay; firing shots into a

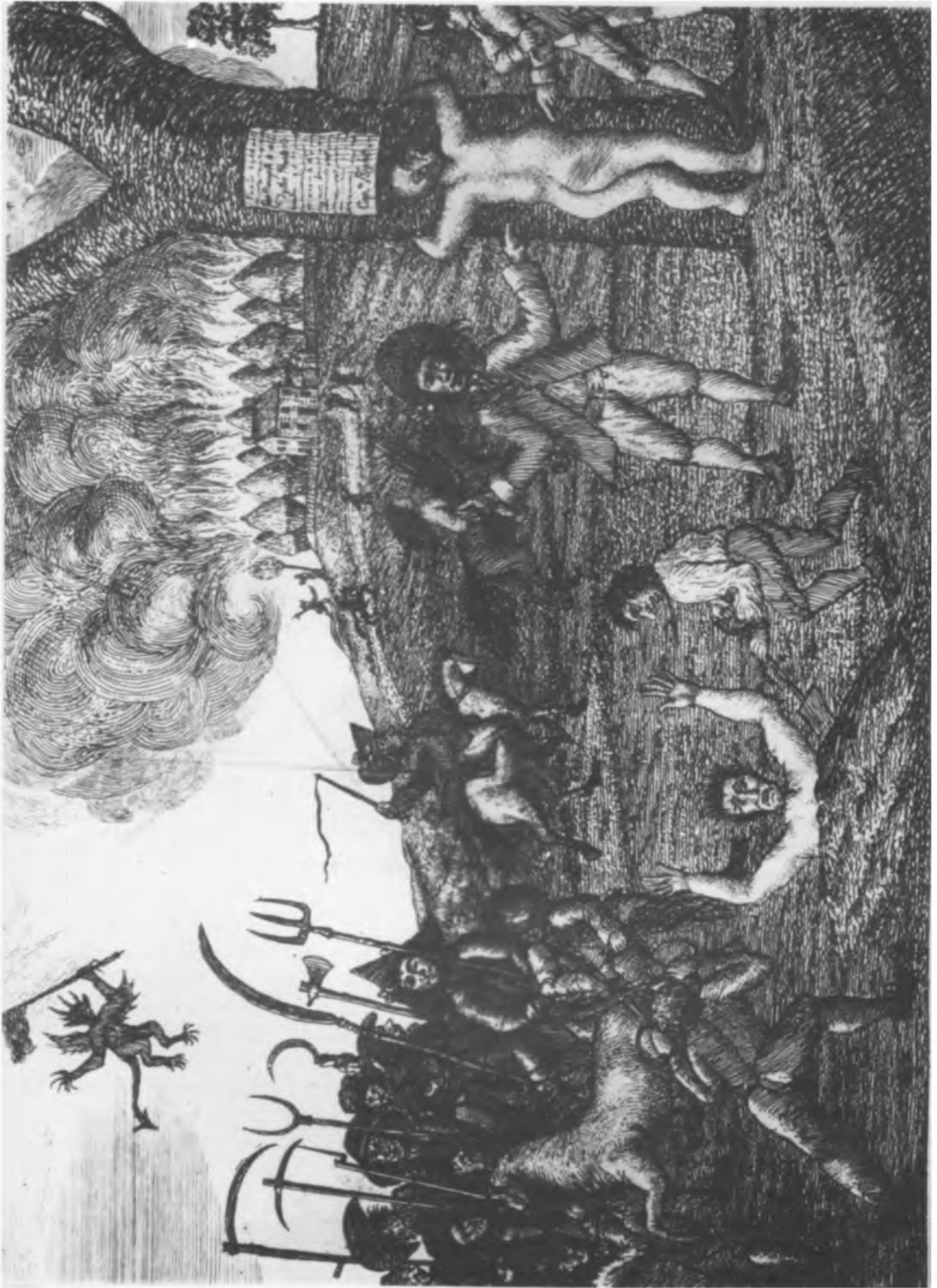
farmer's house and demanding money from him in support of the cause; extorting money and arms from several landholders; parading by night in different parts of the country, with many other enormities. The association shortly after appointed a committee of their own body, consisting of some of the Roman Catholic as well as Protestant gentlemen and clergy, to manage their affairs in the city of Cork. About this time an event of a singular nature happened which surprised many. The country people in several parishes, especially in Inishcarra, the Ovens,<sup>32</sup> and Blarney, suddenly forsook their own worship, chapels, and (15) clergy, and came in great numbers to attend divine service in the Protestant churches, being encouraged thereto by Sir John Colthurst and Mr Capel, who sometimes attended them on these occasions, as well as by Mrs Jefferys of Blarney,<sup>33</sup> who became exceedingly active in this business. The pretence held out for taking this step was the many extortions of the priests, who demanded a guinea for marriage and other exorbitant fees for performing the rites of the church.<sup>34</sup> But it has since appeared that the scheme of their leaders and directors was to impose on the world a belief that the insurgents wished to free themselves from the alleged oppressions of the Romish priests as well as the established (16) clergy, though it is now manifest that the destruction of the established religion and clergy was the principal object, at least with their directors. The well-known hatred of Sir John Colthurst and his colleagues here mentioned to the clergy caused many persons to suspect that the attacks made by the insurgents on the Romish clergy was [*sic*] only a finesse to conceal their own and their leaders' real designs to overturn the present ecclesiastical establishment. However, be that as it may, it is certain that several priests in different parts of the country have suffered severely in their persons and support by the rules and violences of the Whiteboys, who have in this particular as well as every other

been the dupes of artful, wicked, (17) and designing men, who made those poor creatures the instruments of gratifying their own avarice, ambition, and revenge. Here I must break the thread of this narrative in order to show the part I took to put a stop to these outrages. A sincere respect for the established church, in the worship of which I was educated by the piety of affectionate parents, an esteem for the clergy, several of whom were my intimate friends and acquaintances, but above all a compassion and regard for the poor and deluded peasantry who, I believe, were urged on to their ruin, without the least prospect of advantage to themselves, induced me to exert my best endeavours in (18) suppressing the disturbances. I accordingly addressed six letters to the people called Whiteboys, which were published in Mr Flynn's newspaper, called the *Hibernian Chronicle*,<sup>35</sup> under the signature of 'the Dublin shopkeeper'.<sup>36</sup> It required no great abilities to write these letters. They were written in the most low and vulgar language that I could conceive, being entirely designed for the understandings of the common people, and even their particular phrases in many instances adopted. All the arguments in these letters, though turned into many shapes, only tended to show the poor people 'that they were pursuing their own ruin, and that it would be no advantage to them to withhold tithes or the Catholic clergy's dues, for that if both were abolished, their landlords would (19) take advantage of it and at the expiration of their leases raise their rents in proportion, so that in the end they could be no gainers'. As I most earnestly wished to preserve the public tranquility, I was determined to give no offence by espousing the interests of one party more than another. I accordingly exerted myself for the service of the Romish as well as the established clergy, as appears more fully in my letters. On the publication of 'the Dublin shopkeeper's' second letter,<sup>37</sup> a report was propagated that both were written by a clergy-

man, either popish or Protestant, interested in the preservation of his dues. In order to obviate the ill effects which I conceived a report of this nature must produce, by my letters not doing the good I (20) intended, I consulted the Rev. Arthur O'Leary, author of the annexed pamphlet,<sup>38</sup> on the occasion. This gentleman, who is a Capuchin friar, acquired much popularity by his writings. The celebrated Mr Grattan<sup>39</sup> called him, a few years since in the House of Commons, 'a philosopher worthy of the Augustan age'. Memoirs of his life and writings were published in magazines and mezzotints and other pictures of him were taken off. During the war of 1756 he was at one time appointed chaplain to the English prisoners at St-Malo<sup>40</sup> and behaved to them with singular humanity. He resided mostly in Cork for some years and was always very correct in his moral conduct. Amongst the Roman Catholics he was almost adored, as they believed that his writings influenced the legislature very much (21) to repeal several of the penal laws. I informed Mr O'Leary that I was the author of the letters already published and showed him a third, with a certificate annexed, which I entreated him to sign if he approved of it, the purport of which was 'that I was no clergyman of any church, and that any letters being intended for the good of the people, they should be attended to, and the advice given in them followed'. Mr O'Leary highly approved of my design and signed the certificate, first causing me to strike out of the letter a panegyric I intended to publish on himself, to the publication of which he would by no means consent, but made me substitute a more modest compliment in its place. I afterwards showed him three other letters I wrote to the (22) Whiteboys, and one to the gentlemen Whiteboys,<sup>41</sup> at different periods from Christmas 1785 to third March 1786. Now to resume my narrative. In the beginning of the year 1786 the outrages were continued with as much or more violence than ever. The in-

surgers proceeded in large bodies by night to different houses in the country and took from the owners what arms they could find. Letters were written in the name of Captain Right and addressed to different farmers, commanding them, under the most severe denunciations of vengeance in case of non-compliance (which in many instances was rigorously executed on this and other occasions), to deposit certain quantities of powder and shot or bullets in places appointed by the writer, for the use of (23) the Whiteboys. Letters also were sent to people who had horses, commanding them to send the horses, bridled and saddled, to particular places for the use of Captain Right. The horses were accordingly sent, and the boys or others who conducted them were obliged to wait at the places directed until the return of the people who rode them (which they took care to be always before daylight) from their assemblies as legislators or executioners of their own ordinances in the cruelties mentioned in different parts of this volume, and of which the annexed print<sup>42</sup> is a just representation. Doctor Harrington,<sup>43</sup> a Roman Catholic priest, told me that, going one night late from Cork to Passage, he met with upwards of one hundred horses, ridden and led by different people; being (24) surprised at the cause of it, he enquired, and it was some time before he was told by one of the conductors, '*Is do na buacalige b'ána iad*'. 'They are for the Whiteboys.' They likewise made it a practice to take horses by night, without the knowledge or consent of the owners, and returned them before daylight almost fatigued to death. Doctor Gray<sup>44</sup> of Nadrid<sup>45</sup> was frequently thus treated, notwithstanding his humanity, and even though Sir John Colthurst expressly commanded that no injury should be done him. As the spirit of Whiteboyism pervaded almost every person in the country, I believe many sent horses voluntarily. A gentleman of veracity told me that he was informed four of Mr Capel's horses, under the conduct of one of his





(National Library of Ireland) THE RIGHT BOYS PAYING THEIR TYTTES. 1785 and 1786.

grooms, frequently attended the Whiteboys, but if so (with his consent), I (25) am convinced it was to assist his friends in their capacity of legislators only. I took notice of this circumstance in my letter to the gentlemen Whiteboys. The insurgents now proceeded in posting up notices ascertaining [i.e., fixing] the rates of tithes and priests' dues, and swearing at the chapels to the observance of them, as mentioned in different parts of this volume. The method of swearing was this. A letter signed by Captain Right was sent to some reputable farmer in the parish, commanding him to carry a book to the chapel on the following Sunday, where Captain Right's rules (as they were called) were shown fairly written, and every person voluntarily swore to the observation of them, and any person refusing to swear or not adhering to what he had sworn was sure to be treated a few nights afterwards with some circumstance of indignity and cruelty, as (26) represented in the annexed copperplate,<sup>46</sup> or otherwise.

In the month of February this year [1786] I entreated Mr O'Leary to write a letter to those deluded people, hoping that the authority of his name would produce some good effect. He at first declined it but afterwards agreed to comply with my request. Shortly after, he published in the *Hibernian Chronicle* the letters mentioned in his appendix dated the 18th and 21st February 1786.<sup>47</sup> As I never saw these letters until they had been published, my surprise and concern were extreme at reading them. I then perceived that I had mistaken Mr O'Leary's intentions as to his wishes to put a stop to the combinations of the Whiteboys against the Protestant clergy, his sole view being the same as that of their leaders — to (27) make them keep within the laws and prevent those outrages which in the end they feared would defeat the very purposes intended by them. For these reasons I was then convinced, and am still so, that Mr O'Leary's letters justly merit the characters given of them by Theo-

philus and the bishop of Cloyne,<sup>48</sup> nor has Mr O'Leary's glossary in the least changed my opinion, notwithstanding the compliments he pays me in his writings. Sir John Colthurst and the other directors were now really alarmed at the various outrages of the Whiteboys, their great object being (as already mentioned) that the people should combine not to take tithes except at Captain Right's or rather the Farmers' Club rates, but serve legal notices on the clergy to draw, and that no person should assist them in doing so; for this reason (28) they countenanced swearing at the chapels, and it was said that Sir John himself and other gentlemen attended at a little distance from a chapel on a Sunday, together with a piper playing for them, whilst the people were swearing at it. Sir John now procured the Whiteboy act<sup>49</sup> and went to the chapels and even the churches, which some of the deluded rabble still continued to attend at his and his colleagues' suggestion, and read and expounded this law to them. He likewise prevailed on Mr O'Leary to attend him, Mr Capel, and Mrs Jefferys on some occasions of this nature, particularly at two different chapels, whither the people returned from the churches for the purpose, where at the directors' entreaty Mr O'Leary gave the people every warning to cease from outrage, and this was really the purport of Mr O'Leary's mission, (29) as he pompously calls it, in the diocese of Cloyne, which I again repeat to be in substance to warn the people from falling under the cognizance of the laws by committing outrages, but to be content with ruining the established clergy by combinations, as Sir John had effected at Ballyvourney, and of which he has frequently boasted. Nor is it unreasonable to suppose this to be Mr O'Leary's motive when it is considered who were the magistrates Mr O'Leary attended, and that a most intimate acquaintance subsisted between him and Sir John Colthurst, with whom he travelled to Dublin a little before Sir John's death.

As the insurgents continued in many particulars to distress their own clergy by not paying them more than what they called Captain Right's rules for performing the offices of the church, and in some cases the Romish clergy were treated with circumstances of personal insult, some of the (30) principal Roman Catholic inhabitants of Cork formed themselves into a committee to enquire into, or occasion the bishop to make an enquiry into, the causes of those proceedings. As this assembly was composed of laymen only, I am informed that Lord Dunboyne, their bishop (who was then absent),<sup>50</sup> and the Roman Catholic clergy were displeased at their interference; some of the committee, however, went to Cove to Dr MacKenna, the Roman Catholic bishop of Cloyne,<sup>51</sup> who, at their desire, directed a commission to the Rev. Dr Teahan,<sup>52</sup> chaplain to that convent called Miss Nagle's Nunnery,<sup>53</sup> the Rev. Laurence Callanan, and a Recollect friar,<sup>54</sup> both of Cork, and Mr O'Leary, to enquire into the causes of the complaints of the people against their clergy. A protest was entered into against this commission, signed by Mr Scanlon, a parish priest of Donaghmore (a man who made himself so particularly obnoxious to the gentlemen and other Whiteboys that he was forced to resign his parish),<sup>55</sup> and (31) by some other clergymen, in consequence of which all proceedings on the commission were stopped, and Mr O'Leary was inhibited from doing any duty in the diocese of Cloyne without a special license, but when the bishops of the province came to Cork in the summer, Mr O'Leary vindicated himself so effectually as to receive the bishops' thanks for his conduct. The intended commissioners, however, went into the country as private gentlemen and were entertained at Ardrum by Sir John Colthurst. About this time I wrote an address to those people who made it a practice to go to church, exhorting them 'not to sport with their eternal salvation in the manner they were doing by going to church from resent-

ment, entreating them to return to their former worship, except they were convinced of the superior excellence of that which they adopted'. I showed this to Messrs Callanan and O'Leary, who would not (32) consent to its being published 'lest Sir John Colthurst may think they were concerned in it from their intimacy with me, and they did not wish to disoblige Sir John'. Shortly after this, the people returned to the chapels, being (no doubt) permitted to do so by their directors, and have continued to attend them since. Mr Flynn<sup>56</sup> told me he believed 'Sir John had not the zeal for making converts as formerly', and intimated that he had seen his error on this head. Ever since the beginning of this year [1786] Mrs Jefferys made herself remarkably active on all those occasions. She frequently headed the rabble to Blarney church, wrote several letters to different people on the subject of ecclesiastical dues, went in company with Mr O'Leary to Doctor MacKenna and harangued him on the subject of clerical oppressions, and, as I hear, personally abused this venerable prelate, then near 90 years old. She (33) wrote to several priests, dictating to them what fees they should take for marriages, and one of these (I believe Mr McSwiney, parish priest of Kilmurry),<sup>57</sup> having sent a verbal answer to her letter, imparting that 'he knew no such person as Arabella Jefferys', highly exasperated her. She was a fine tool for Sir John Colthurst and his party, and I have heard her made the subject of Mr O'Leary's ridicule, though he has since celebrated her in his *Defence* by the name of the modern Zenobia.<sup>58</sup> I saw a letter written to her by Mr Stopford, minister of Blarney,<sup>59</sup> intended for publication, though afterwards suppressed by the author, which represents her conduct (and I believe very justly) in her treatment of him and other particulars about the disturbances in a most infamous light. It was about this time that Mr Gibbs Ross, the county ranger,<sup>60</sup> carried a party of dragoons to Douglas chapel with a view to

prevent the (34) people there from swearing, who, believing that this was done at the suggestion of Mr Callanan, their priest,<sup>61</sup> declared against attending his performance of any ecclesiastical functions, were near killing a gentleman who spoke in favour of the priest at the chapel (and would have done so but for the presence of mind of Mr Synan, the vicar-general,<sup>62</sup> who held up a crucifix between the gentleman and the sticks of the assailants), and in the end obliged Mr Callanan to resign his parish. At the spring assizes of this year [1786] bills of indictment were preferred against Mr Hawkes<sup>63</sup> on the examinations of a woman of bad character for some action tending to foment the disturbances. The grand jury unfortunately found the bills, but the crown lawyers were obliged to drop the prosecution, there not being the least appearance of the evidence being (35) sufficient to convict him; perhaps she was really innocent of this fact, as of any other that may bring him under the cognizance of the laws, though there is no doubt of his earnest wishes to annihilate the rights of the clergy. The committee of the association were much condemned for prosecuting this affair, and the association and committee were dissolved, or rather dissolved themselves, shortly after. It was suspected (and I believe very justly) that great numbers of the association were in their hearts no enemies to the Whiteboys whilst they confined themselves to the plan laid down by their directors, and the subsequent supineness of most of the country gentlemen and criminal neglect of the magistrates seem to justify this opinion. Great numbers of the common people who were committed to gaol from different parts of the country in the course of (36) the preceding winter as Whiteboys were discharged from prison at this assizes. Some were acquitted for want of prosecution; others were admitted to bail until the ensuing assizes for want of sufficient evidence to prosecute or detain them, though I have no doubt but almost every per-

son who was liberated had been guilty of some action or other in that capacity. Indeed, such was the caution of the insurgents, so well were they instructed to evade the laws, and such was the terror well-meaning people (if any such were in the country) had of them that it was next to an impossibility to bring proofs home against them. When they wanted to punish a tithe-farmer, proctor, or any other person for transgressing their ordinances, it was their rule that the punishment should not be inflicted by people who might be known (37) to the unhappy victim, though sometimes they changed this mode as occasion required. People who were provided with horses in the manner already mentioned came from distant places, perhaps seven miles, for this purpose. When they came to the house, they muffled themselves up and covered their faces as well as they could; one then knocked at the door and bid it to be opened in the name of Captain Right; that done, they seized the culprit (as they deemed him) and first put him to his oath to declare if he knew any of them. He of course answered in the negative. He was then admonished; had his face held over gunpowder put into a hat, which was set fire to; was obliged to ride the spiked saddle of whitethorn;<sup>64</sup> was buried up to the chin or (38) otherwise tortured, according to the nature of his supposed offence. I need not remark that if the wretched sufferer betrayed the least knowledge of any of them, he would most certainly be put to death, and probably the most cruel death that they could devise. Neither exhortations [n]or menaces were sufficient to induce the sufferers to confess they had any knowledge of their tormentors, fearing, and very justly too, that they would be murdered, as happened in one or two instances, I believe, in the counties of Kilkenny or Tipperary.<sup>65</sup> My friend Mr Robert Travers of Cork<sup>66</sup> told me that one Jefford, a tenant of his, came to him, having his face most dreadfully blown up with gunpowder. The man told Mr Travers that this

was done by the Whiteboys. Mr (39) Travers asked him if he knew who did it. Jefford said he did. Mr Travers then entreated him to lodge examinations against the offenders. This Jefford positively refused, alleging that if he did so, he would be murdered. Thus it appears how impossible it was to bring them to justice, and that their acquittal was, rationally speaking, no proof of their innocence. The insurgents now continued their outrages as occasion offered, likewise the practice of swearing obedience to Captain Right's rules at the chapels every Sunday until, as I suppose, the people were sworn everywhere in the country. Mr O'Leary told me that he was informed they had begun to swear children (males, I suppose) from thirteen years old and (40) upwards, with the laudable intention of transmitting their laws to posterity. About the beginning of June this year [1786], Mrs Jefferys (who was called by the country people in some places Lady Jeffors, and in others Lady Jeffry) formed a project to drain the lake or loch of Blarney. Various reasons were ascribed for this. Some said that at the revolution the plate of the Clancarty family,<sup>67</sup> whose estate Blarney had been before that period, was thrown into the lake for safety, to be forthcoming in case that once noble family should be restored to their honours and fortune, and that Mrs Jefferys wanted to get it up. Another report was that she conceived a thought of cutting a canal so as to form an inland navigation from Blarney to (41) Cork. A third report, and I believe the most probable, was that Mrs Jefferys wished to drain this lake to acquire so much land thereby. However, shortly after the work was begun, the common people from different parts of the country, and even at considerable distances, flocked in great numbers to Blarney to assist in it. They required no wages; they expected nothing but victuals and drink. I was told that fifteen hundred men were there one day, but this, I am sure, must be a mistake. From the best information I had, there were

there at different days from two to five hundred. This lady, from the active part she took against the clergy of both churches, was considered as great a friend to the poor as (42) Sir John himself, who was by this time almost adored by the rabble, and the insurgents were determined to show their gratitude accordingly. On Sunday, the 25th of June, public notice was given near the Romish chapel of Mallow that the Whiteboys of that parish would appear early next day at Blarney by order of Captain Right, and notices were sent to different inhabitants to have horses ready at whatever hour of the night they should be demanded, and many were carried away. About the hour of twelve at night, near one hundred attacked the house of Rev. William King, rector of Mallow,<sup>68</sup> demanded his horses, and threatened that they would fire in at the window in case of refusal. One of them even forced into Mrs King's bedchamber but retired on hearing the (43) horses were ordered for his use.<sup>69</sup> The report was that they assembled next day at Blarney to the number of 2,500 men, but this number must be greatly exaggerated.<sup>70</sup> Mrs Jefferys was much displeased at a paragraph stating these particulars being printed in Flynn's paper, and the following post Mr Flynn published a letter from Mr Glissane, parish priest of Blarney,<sup>71</sup> written (as was supposed) at Mrs Jefferys' suggestion, imparting that 'for three months last past no armed, disorderly, or disguised persons whatsoever were on or in the town or lands of Blarney', which the reader will perceive to be no contradiction to the account here stated, and which did not mention that the people assembled there at this time were disorderly, armed, or disguised. The Rev. (44) George Berkeley,<sup>72</sup> minister of Whitechurch, living at Monard within the liberties of Cork, being about this time absent from home, one Maurice Nagle, who lives on the Mallow road, came to Mrs Berkeley and informed her that 'he was commanded by Captain Right to come to her and order her to send

what men and horses she had to Mrs Jefferys's work, as he (Captain Right) had promised to assist Mrs Jefferys with a certain number of men and horses'. Mrs Berkeley wrote to Mrs Jefferys to let her know that 'Captain Right had sent to her (Mrs Berkeley) the above orders; that Mr Berkeley had the horses with him, and what few men she had were at Mrs Jefferys's service'. To this, Mrs Jefferys sent a verbal answer by a servant of her own that 'she knew no such person as Captain Right, that her work was done by the kindness of her neighbours, and that (45) Mrs Berkeley may keep her men at home'. She also desired to know 'who brought Mrs Berkeley the message, that she may have him punished', but it does not appear that she (Mrs Jefferys) ever after took any notice of it. Mrs Jefferys sent the next day to the work to have any of Mrs Berkeley's men that may be there discharged. Shortly afterwards the work was discontinued, and Mrs Jefferys has not interfered openly against the clergy since. It was said at this time that her brother, Mr John Fitzgibbon, the attorney-general,<sup>73</sup> wrote her a very severe reproof for her conduct. I have been particular in relating these circumstances to show the consequences of what Mr O'Leary calls the gratitude of the peasantry to the modern Zenobia and their methods of manifesting it. On the 23rd of June Mr Berkeley's house was attacked in his absence. Mrs Berkeley was called for and was told it was Captain Right and his men, who came to denounce vengeance on Mr Berkeley's proctor for valuing the tithes. They spoke civilly and, on going away, fired a shot. A gun was kept in Mrs Berkeley's sight whilst they were speaking to her.<sup>74</sup>

Towards the end of June the following Roman Catholic prelates arrived in Cork for the purpose of quieting the disturbances, viz, the Doctors James Butler, archbishop of Cashel; (46) John Butler, called Lord Dunboyne, bishop of Cork; Michael Peter MacMahon of Killaloe; Matthew MacKenna of

Cloyne; William Egan of Waterford; Francis Moylan of Kerry; and Denis Conway of Limerick.<sup>75</sup> Men of universally good characters and much esteemed, some for their learning and abilities, and all for their very regular and moral lives. After a few some days spent in consultation, they published some regulations for the government of those of their own communion, both clergy and laity, which have been very much and very justly commended.<sup>76</sup> The first was 'a recommendation to the two clergymen who had made themselves obnoxious to their respective flocks (viz, Messrs Scanlon and Callanan)<sup>77</sup> to resign their livings voluntarily', which after some time was complied with. They concluded with informing the people 'that they cannot, without (47) manifest offence to Almighty God, assume to redress themselves in real or imaginary grievances by resorting to the measures of riotous or illegal meetings, or of attempting to bind themselves, by oaths rash and iniquitous, to matters prejudicial to the public peace; that such oaths, far from being obligatory, must be deemed heinously sinful in those who take them and doubly criminal in those who obstinately persist in the resolution of observing them'. Mr Scanlon had for some time been very obnoxious to Sir John Colthurst. Mr Synan, the (titular) vicar-general of Cork, told me that the reason was because Mr Scanlon hindered Sir John from selling cattle at his chapel on a Sunday, which Sir John had distrained for rent. Mr Gibbs,<sup>78</sup> at whose house Mr Scanlon was very intimate, also quarrelled with (48) him, as 'tis said, from Mr Scanlon's opposing his Whiteboy schemes. As to Mr Callanan, I was told that Lord Dunboyne went to his chapel to hear the people's complaints against him, but none appeared that were well founded, so that the cause of his parishioners' dislike was for the dragoons going out, as before mentioned. Many circumstances concurred at this time to induce sober-thinking people to believe that no real injury was ever

intended by the insurgents to the Roman Catholic clergy, and that the appearances of it were only kept up either to persuade government and Protestants in general that the destruction of the established church was not the object aimed at; or that government should cause a provision to be made by law for the popish ecclesiastics. It was said that though it could not be denied but the priests were great sufferers, yet (49) when a point is to be gained, some sacrifices must be made, and it could not be supposed that every priest was in the secret. One reason for these opinions was [that] Sir John Colthurst, notwithstanding it may be supposed he had offended the Roman Catholics by leading the common people to the churches and persecuting their clergy, was now observed to have the strictest intimacy with several of the clergy and laity of that communion. He, though a man notoriously parsimonious, sumptuously entertained the bishops — for whom he could have no regard, and one of whom (MacKenna, it was said, but whether truly or not I cannot tell) he had grossly abused himself some time before at Donaghmore, though I hear he protected him from the fury of the populace — together with many other gentlemen of that religion at the King's Arms Tavern. I have been more than once in Mr Flynn's<sup>79</sup> shop and have seen him [i.e., Colthurst] and different Roman Catholics, clergy and laity, go into the house together, no doubt (50) to consult, and whenever his name was mentioned amongst them, it was always with great respect, which they said was to make a friend of him. A Methodist preacher, I was told, met a number of the country people one night near Clonakilty who, he believed, thought him a friar, and on his expostulating with them about the Whiteboys' conduct, one of them told him they would pay their clergy, as formerly, when their affairs were settled, or [words to] that effect. For my own part I am of opinion that a fixed plan had been laid entirely to overturn the established

religion or at least to abolish tithes totally and reduce the clergy to the same pitiful support that the Scotch clergy have, in which papists were no more concerned at first (though they may take advantage of any circumstance favourable to their interests afterwards) than Dissenters of every denomination and (to their eternal infamy) even Protestants of the church, but that the (51) majority of the insurgents being papists, appearances were more against that body than any other. The gentlemen of this country, by living beyond their incomes, are mostly distressed and of course wished to add to their fortunes the patrimony of the church, to which they could have no right, never having given any equivalent for it, or they wished, by exonerating their tenants from tithes, to enable them the better to pay the rackrents those poor creatures had engaged for. These, I am confident, were the motives of Sir John and his associates, who were stimulated also by implacable revenge, and it has often amused me to behold the appearance of union between Sir John and the Roman Catholics, who, I am convinced, had no further regard for each other than each endeavouring to (51a) make the other instruments of their schemes.

To return to my narrative. The insurgents had now such confidence in their strength that they had the temerity to attack the Volunteers once and even the king's troops in different places,<sup>80</sup> when conducting prisoners to gaol, and many of the poor creatures were killed and wounded on those occasions, and some convicted and severely whipped, fined, and imprisoned at the ensuing assizes. In their persecutions of the Protestant clergy it was very singular that in most instances such of that reverend body as had been eminently conspicuous for their piety, benevolence, and humanity were the more immediate objects of their fury. Mr Edward Kenney,<sup>81</sup> minister of Moviddy,<sup>82</sup> a man who had been the friend, the father, and physician of the poor in his

neighbourhood, left his house (52) in consequence of his life being threatened by the Whiteboys, as did Mr John Meade,<sup>83</sup> minister of Ballymartle,<sup>84</sup> a man who paid a yearly salary to a person for attending the poor and supplied them with medicines. Archdeacon Corker,<sup>85</sup> minister of Rathcooney,<sup>86</sup> had his life threatened and destruction to his house and family denounced by Captain Right, though he was a man of equal character in every particular with the other two. Such was the treatment three gentlemen met with, who were sufficient to rescue human nature from the obloquy cast on it — men to whom may justly be applied the character given by [Alexander] Pope of Bishop Berkeley<sup>87</sup> as possessing every virtue under heaven, and all for no other offence but the great crime of not giving up tithes notes and refusing to set tithes (53) at Captain Right's rates, but intending to draw them. About the beginning of August this year [1786] Mr Meade's house (he being then in England) was attacked in the night by 300 men but gallantly defended by his nephews and a few servants, and many of the assailants supposed to be killed and wounded.<sup>88</sup> It was said one of them died of his wounds on Inishcarra bridge, which shows that some of them came from afar. Some clergymen at this time, influenced by their fears, or their necessities, or other motives, set their tithes at the Whiteboy rates, of which Sir John published a pompous account in the newspapers. A report was also insidiously circulated that 'the clergy would be no sufferers by the new regulations, for that the people would pay them what the proctors did'. The contrary of this was the truth, for in most places the clergy were not only deprived of from one-third to one-half of (54) their incomes by the new rates,<sup>89</sup> but some also had the mortification of being refused payment of what the insurgents had agreed to. Mr Chetwood,<sup>90</sup> minister of Carrigrohane,<sup>91</sup> a man of amiable manners and irreproachable morals, acceded to their terms. Shortly after, a notice

was posted that the people should pay no tithe of potatoes, and a message was sent to Mr Chetwood to take the tenth potato stalk. In other places it was said that in estimating the acre of potatoes, the furrows must be deducted and allowed for; from all this and many other circumstances it is apparent that the ruin of the church was determined on, though Protestants, Dissenters, and papists had separate views in accomplishing it. The insurgents still continued their outrages as violently as ever; on Sunday, the (55) tenth of September, they had the audacity to attempt rescuing about 200 head of cattle, seized for quitrent, which had been placed in Cork cattle market under a corporal's guard. The guard was reinforced and repelled the assailants, but it was not known if any of them were killed, it being their custom on all occasions to conceal their dead and wounded as much as possible. One cow was killed.<sup>92</sup> A fixed determination now appeared to combine in opposition to the laws as much as possible. A Whiteboy was sentenced at Waterford assizes to be whipped through the town of Carrick-on-Suir, and Sir Richard Musgrave, Bart., the high sheriff and a member of Parliament,<sup>93</sup> having used every effort to provide an executioner but in vain, was obliged to inflict the punishment with his own hands. Towards the end of September Lord Luttrell, now earl of Carhampton,<sup>94</sup> a major-general on the staff lately appointed to the command of the forces in (57) Munster, arrived in Cork. On the Sunday after his arrival he went to Blarney and other chapels, attended by Mr Ross<sup>95</sup> and escorted by a party of dragoons. His lordship spoke to the people to recommend obedience to the laws and denounced the vengeance of government on all who should be guilty of outrage, but his admonitions were little regarded. A rate for tithes was at this time published in the *Cork Evening Post*, said to be by his approbation and commonly called Lord Luttrell's regulations.<sup>96</sup> It was a kind of medium rate between



Captain Right's prices and those demanded by the clergy. His conduct on this occasion was deemed extraordinary, it being said that he should not meddle with the clergy's dues, and that his business was only to recommend and, if necessary, to assist in enforcing obedience to the laws. From Cork (58) he went into different parts of the country and into the county of Kerry, attended by Sir John Colthurst, who, it may be supposed, made no impressions on him favourable to the clergy. On the whole, his lordship was reputed to have done more (though probably without any bad intention) to increase than allay the disturbances.<sup>97</sup> After Lord Luttrell's departure for Dublin on the 16th day of October, every attempt was made by the friends of the Whiteboys to show that all disturbances had ceased, notwithstanding well-authenticated proofs to the contrary, until at length Lord Doneraile<sup>98</sup> and some of the first gentlemen in the county signed a requisition to the high sheriff on the 14th day of November to call a meeting for the purpose of considering of the means of suppressing them. Every artifice had been a long time made use of to render the clergy odious, (59) and they, their proctors or agents, and [tithe-]farmers were represented as the most infamous and greatest oppressors of mankind, though scarcely any proofs were or could be brought of abuses in the collection of tithes, for after all, no person could be compelled to give more than the tenth to which the clergyman was by law entitled. A kind of cabalistical jargon principally composed of the words tithes, proctors, the poor, the Whiteboys, &c. was made use of by the people, without sense or meaning, and it is very singular that none were more loud in abusing the clergy than Protestants of the church. The public prints were filled with the most scandalous falsehoods of the clergy's oppressions, and every engine made use of to destroy their characters as well as their properties. Archdeacon Corker<sup>99</sup> told me a very curious circumstance that happened in (60) his

parish. A gentleman of the archdeacon's acquaintance told him one day that he was 'not surprised at the disturbances when in his (the archdeacon's) parish the poor were charged eighteen shillings an acre for potatoes'. 'Astonished at this information (said the archdeacon), and though believing it impossible, I made enquiry into it and found it to be as the gentleman represented. A parishioner who generally paid me no more than from five to six shillings an acre had the conscience to charge his poor labourers, whose tithes he also took from me, eighteen shillings'. No doubt can remain but this man informed these poor people that he charged them no more than he was charged himself by the archdeacon or his proctor, from which two particulars may justly be inferred. First, what infamous arts were made use of to traduce the clergy when even Archdeacon Corker could not escape censure; secondly, how (61) wretched must be the situation of the poor as to tithes if they were vested in the laity. The patience of the clergy and their acquiescence under all the calumnies uttered against them really astonished their friends, who very reasonably believed that they were at least as capable of vindicating themselves from falsehoods as their enemies were of propagating it [*sic*]. Yet it so happened that I was the first man in the kingdom who espoused their quarrel as a writer, being occasionally assisted, and my writings judiciously corrected, by the Rev. Broderick Tuckey,<sup>100</sup> and even at this time was I almost left alone, 'like a sparrow on the housetop', their zealous, though feeble advocate. At length the first pamphlet in this volume appeared, and shortly after, the bishop of Cloyne's,<sup>101</sup> both excellent in their kinds, the first written with the warm (62) zeal of a layman interested in the preservation of the church; the second, with the meekness which should characterize a bishop, to whom the church and clergy of this kingdom ought now and hereafter to consider themselves under the greatest obligations. As

to the idea entertained by the people, and artfully propagated, of these pamphlets tending to create disunion, the notion is absurd and ridiculous. No real union ever was or ever will be in this kingdom between the members of the established church and Dissenters of any denomination so long as tithes continue to be paid to any *one* body of clergy. The pamphlets in this volume written by Doctor Campbell and Mr Barber<sup>102</sup> are proofs of this, for whoever reads them will see that though the test act is repealed,<sup>103</sup> and all offices in the state, as well as every security for property, are indiscriminately enjoyed by Protestants and Protestant Dissenters, yet (63) the latter are as virulent enemies to the church as Roman Catholics, and most certainly if the present clergy were deprived of tithes, the Roman Catholics and perhaps the Presbyterians would endeavour to possess themselves of them, and whichever party should obtain them would enforce the payment with as much or more rigour than is done at present. But to return, the high sheriff, in compliance with the requisition of the 14th of November, called a meeting of the county, to be held at the county courthouse in Cork on Thursday, the 7th day of December. On Monday, the 4th day of that month, Sir John published an address to the independent freeholders of the county of Cork (by which he meant the opposers of the earl of Shannon's interest), wherein he intimated (64) that 'the late disturbances had been stopped while Lord Luttrell remained in the country, that the country (without any exception) was described as in an alarming state, though notorious the fact is that the parts which were disturbed are now (said he) and have been for some time past perfectly quiet'. He also intimated that 'the report of disturbances still existing was to institute a police the same as in Dublin,<sup>104</sup> by which some necessitous gentlemen would be provided for, and a wanton tax laid on a rising body of yeomanry to provide for some necessitous adherents (he meant of Lord Shannon) or

[to] support certain illegal claims of a few wretched ecclesiastics, who have (said he) strangely united in oppression, to the disgrace of the worthy divines of both religions, and who by their folly have injured their own revenues'.<sup>105</sup> This was the substance of his address, which was in some parts very ungrammatical and in others nearly (65) unintelligible, as it was ingeniously contrived by Sir John that this address should appear the post-day preceding the meeting so that no answer could be published to it in the newspapers until after the meeting was held (which was in the forenoon of the next post or newsprinting day, and the papers being published in the evening). Mr Ross, the county ranger, had an account of many outrages of the Whiteboys since Lord Luttrell's leaving Cork printed on half-sheets and distributed them himself. A great number of freeholders and others attended the meeting, and after long debates and various resolutions being proposed and rejected, Richard Longfield, Esqr., M.P. for Baltimore<sup>106</sup> (who is himself a very considerable impropiator),<sup>107</sup> proposed four resolutions, which were seconded by Sir John and agreed to by the (66) meeting, in substance as follows: first, 'that the peace and good order of the community being of late disturbed by a riotous number of people called Right or Whiteboys, and that all possible means would be used to enforce obedience to the laws'. Secondly, 'that the meeting was sorry to be under the necessity of declaring that the inactivity and in exertion of many magistrates and gentlemen of property of this county, on the breaking out of these disturbances and on the continuance of them, appear to the meeting a criminal neglect — recommended to all ranks to unite in reducing all disturbers of the peace to obedience to the laws. That the powers vested in the civil magistrates are fully sufficient to carry the same into execution. Thirdly, a determination to redress such as are really grieved. Fourthly, to thank Lord Luttrell for his endeavours to

restore peace.’<sup>108</sup> Such was the confession, made at a numerous and respectable meeting of freeholders, of (67) the conduct of the magistrates and gentlemen of property of the county of Cork in resolutions proposed by Sir John’s bosom friend, Mr Longfield, and seconded by himself, and surely no language could call louder for a reform of the magistracy; outrages that would disgrace the savages of America being permitted to be continued for many months, with the dishonest intention of plundering the clergy of what they have as just, and a much more ancient, right to than any gentleman has to his estate, and which does not belong to the proprietor of the land, who possesses his property, whether by inheritance or purchase, subject to the payment of tithes. Yet Mr Longfield had afterwards the effrontery to assert in the House of Commons that ‘so much had been said of disturbances in the south of Ireland, so many accounts published of acts of violence perpetrated in different parts of Munster, that when sitting at home in his house, he could (68) scarce believe himself in that part of the kingdom — that in the part of Munster near Cork, where he resided, there has been none of the turbulence mentioned within sixteen miles round’. Such is the influence of party that he was not ashamed to utter these falsehoods in Parliament, notwithstanding his having proposed the resolves already mentioned at the county meeting, and that some of the outrages mentioned by the bishop of Cloyne were committed at no great distance from the place of his residence. I was told that Mr Longfield said that ‘even if tithes were abolished, he could be no great sufferer, for he would raise his rents in proportion’, but I am not certain of his having made this declaration. Lord Luttrell having arrived in Cork on the evening of the day on which the county meeting was held, the high sheriff presented him next day with the address of thanks agreed to. His lordship’s answer imparted that he had (69) received the

lord lieutenant’s commands to ‘exert every constitutional power for the support of the civil magistrates in the southern parts of the kingdom, disgraced by commotions, which were suffered to be committed with impunity’. That he did everything in his power to restore peace and afford protection wherever he went. That his majesty’s forces were so stationed as to remove all pretext from even the most timid magistrates of not having within reach force sufficient for dragging the most daring offenders to justice. That ‘the contagion was stopped from spreading by the exertions of gentlemen zealously active in the Queen’s, King’s, and Kilkenny counties; in other parts the disorder subsided, and if the same did not happen in this county, the resolutions pointed out the reason’. That ‘in no part of the kingdom except the liberties of Cork have the laws been longer or more openly invaded than in this extensive county, and that it (70) was owing to the exertions of a few, comparatively speaking (the number of the magistrates considered), that the whole county was not a scene of anarchy, confusion, and rapine’.<sup>109</sup> The magistrates he meant to except from the general censure are supposed to be Henry Cox, Esqr., of Dunmanway;<sup>110</sup> Henry Mannix, Esqr., of Richmond near Cork;<sup>111</sup> and Robert Hutchinson, of Codrum near Macroom.<sup>112</sup> Lord Luttrell went a few days after to Dublin and, it is said, made a favourable report of the clergy and represented their wrongs and consequent distresses in a forcible light to government. On the 18th day of January, 1787, Parliament met, and the lord lieutenant, in his speech from the throne, took notice of the commotions and recommended to the Lords and Commons the ‘especial support of the established church and the respectable situation of its ministers’. Opposition endeavoured to show that ‘the disturbances (71) were much exaggerated, and even insinuated that government connived at them’, which I believe to be great falsehoods;

however, after some time bills were brought in and afterwards passed into laws — one for more effectually punishing outrage, much of the nature of the English riot act, another for reforming the magistracy.<sup>113</sup> A melancholy event now happened in consequence of these unhappy disturbances. About the beginning of February was published Counsellor Trant's pamphlet, the fourth in this volume.<sup>114</sup> Sir John Colthurst, having conceived himself alluded to in some passages from the 46th to the 51st pages, went to Dublin to demand an explanation from Mr Trant. He insisted on Mr Trant's disavowing under his hand any allusions to him in the offensive paragraphs; (72) this Mr Trant refused. At length, after every human effort to reconcile them had failed, the issue was left to providence. They both fought on Wednesday, the 14th day of February, near a place called Old Connaught in the county of Wicklow,<sup>115</sup> and Sir John, being mortally wounded, expired in great agonies a few days after.<sup>116</sup> His remains were buried at Inishcarra privately about the beginning of March. Thus fell in the 46th year of his age Sir John Conway Colthurst, Bart., a victim to disappointed ambition, avarice, and revenge. In his person he was a little above the middle size, fashionable and genteel in his appearance when he thought proper to dress himself as a gentleman, which was but seldom, choosing rather generally to appear like a farmer, by which title he affected to (73) distinguish himself. His countenance was florid and would have been engaging, was it not for an almost incessant simper which, as it sometimes manifested design, at other times contempt, and at other times self-sufficiency and an opinion of his own judgment, according as he pleased to use it, rendered his aspect rather forbidding and disagreeable. As I was not intimate with him myself, I must endeavour to draw his character from public report, making allowances for the partiality of his friends and prejudices of his enemies. He was a pleasant

and agreeable companion. His manners and address were insinuating and engaging. He was a man of courage, a sincere friend, and an implacable enemy. There were a few even amongst the clergy whom he esteemed, and I am informed he made a present to one of them of a phaeton and horses worth eighty pounds. He offered his purse to a merchant for whom he had a regard, whose credit he feared was likely to receive a (74) shock, and in other instances manifested acts of friendship. He employed a man to take care of the sick poor in his neighbourhood and, I believe, supplied medicines. He was extremely just in his dealings and punctual in his payments, in the latter [respect] possessing a virtue little known to the generality of country gentlemen. He had a great knowledge of mechanics and, I hear, made many improvements in the machines for spinning cotton which he erected at Ardrum, which improvements were not even thought of by the inventor. His education had been neglected, but he endeavoured to make up for this by reading the best authors in French and English. He had, however, a confused manner of expressing himself in argument, and such things as he published were condemned for this fault as well as their want of grammar and their illiberality. I am told he always had an English dictionary at hand when he wrote, which does not seem to have been of much more use to him than correcting his orthography. His (75) talents were more specious than solid; however, they were such as that, with a great share of cunning, he possessed. He was considered by the generality of mankind a man of great sense and understanding. He had (for what reasons I never could be informed) quarrelled with Lord Shannon<sup>117</sup> in his youth, to whom his father's family had an hereditary attachment. This I believe to have been the primary cause of his misfortunes. He considered clergymen as a useless body of men, but he would say, 'If people will be weak enough to send for them when they are sick,

let them be dismissed with their fee, like the doctors'. Lord Shannon's declining to support his pretensions to be chosen member [of Parliament] for Mallow heightened his resentment to that nobleman, and the clergy, being always and very justly attached to his lordship's interest, (75a) became the objects of his persecution; his hatred to them was further aggravated by their being paid tithes, which he considered as unjust and a grievance. He was an oppressive landlord and very avaricious. Avarice was generally thought to be his ruling passion, but sometimes revenge predominated, for nothing else could induce him, who loved money so well, to be at the expense of entertaining the Roman Catholic prelates, who were mostly unknown to him, and for whom he could have no regard. But I believe he hoped to make them instruments of distressing the Protestant clergy by the bishops' using their influence with the common people not to transgress the laws, but strictly to adhere to combinations. He would persecute any person whom he disliked to destruction, for his anger knew no bounds. He boasted in telling that 'he followed Tom Butler's advice (who is one of the most infamous scoundrels in the kingdom)<sup>118</sup> by (76) killing the clergy with kindness and letting them draw', which he meant as a pun on paying them their tithes in kind. He accordingly professed himself their enemy, openly saying to one of them, 'I know you all think me your enemy and by G\_\_\_ I'll give you cause'. He was exceedingly hurt at being charged as an encourager of the outrages of the Whiteboys and, 'tis said, was much vexed at some fugitive pieces to this purpose published in Cork a little before his death, and being determined to punish the first person he could fix on as the author of any insinuations of this nature, of course Counsellor Trant could not escape his notice. He always feared death, not from any thoughts of an hereafter, but the pain of dying, which he afterwards most dreadfully ex-

perienced. He died fully convinced of the justice of the cause he was engaged in. On the whole, his character was such that, had he confined his ambitions within proper bounds, restrained the violence of his (77) temper, and been more generous in his disposition, he possessed virtues that would have made him a useful member of society, and talents which (considering those of country squires in general) would have made him an honour and an ornament to his country. During this session of Parliament a bill was brought into the House of Commons by the Right Hon. John Hely-Hutchinson, principal secretary of state and provost of Trinity College,<sup>119</sup> to enable all ecclesiastical persons and lay impropiators to break all contracts made for tithes in 1786 and to recover the value of said tithes from the occupiers in each parish at the value of tithes [during the] three years preceding. This passed both Houses with singular unanimity, to the great honour of government and the legislature, and received the royal assent in [1787].<sup>120</sup>

Since writing this,<sup>121</sup> a circumstance has occurred to my recollection which I had long since heard of, and which convinces me that Sir John Colthurst was not always sincere in his profession of friendship, though I have no doubt of his being at all times implacable in his resentments.

Sir John professed a great friendship for Mrs Tuckey, wife of my friend, Mr Thomas Tuckey, and daughter to the Rev. James Hingston, late rector of Donaghmore.<sup>122</sup> Mr Tuckey died in embarrassed circumstances, leaving her a widow with five children. Shortly after Mr Tuckey's death Sir John applied to Mrs Tuckey 'for one of the boys', whom, with much seeming sincerity, he promised 'to educate and provide for'. (2) He accordingly took under his protection James Tuckey,<sup>123</sup> one of her children, then about five years old. He had the child carried to Ardrum and treated him during Mrs Tuckey's life with great humanity.

Here the child continued for about four years, and in the interim his mother died. On Mrs Tuckey's death Sir John altered his behaviour towards this orphan. He kept him at work spinning cotton at a jenny, together with the common children employed by him in this manner. If the child's task was not performed, he was punished accordingly; Sir John made him eat with his steward and sleep with his (3) huntsman. But what was worse, his education was almost totally neglected and would have been entirely so, was it not for the good nature and humanity of Miss Coates, Sir John's housekeeper and reputed mistress, who charitably taught the child to spell a little. At length Mrs Hingston, the child's grandmother, probably having heard how he was treated (as I am informed), sent the Rev. Doctor Hales, fellow of Trinity College<sup>124</sup> (the child's near relation and guardian), to Ardrum. He told Sir John that 'the child's education was neglected, and that it would be necessary to put him to school'. To this Sir John replied 'that as he intended to breed him (4) to the cotton business, it was not necessary to have him taught Greek and Latin, but writing and cyphering only, for which he (Sir John) would pay'. The child was shortly after brought to Cork, and Sir John sent his clothes afterwards, and from that time never (in any way that I could hear) enquired about him.

As Sir John intended to bring up this child to the cotton business, it may not appear unreasonable that he should take the earliest opportunity of learning it; therefore, keeping him to work at stated periods would certainly be exceedingly proper. But surely nothing can excuse Sir John for behaving to the child of an amiable gentlewoman, for whom he professed a (5) friendship, with such indignity and cruelty as to subject his morals to be corrupted by associating with servants at a time when his tender mind was capable of receiving any impression. If to this be added the neglect of the child's education, it most undoubtedly will

show the infamy of Sir John's conduct in the most striking colours. Sir John's well-known love of money caused him (I suppose) to repent of his professions of friendship on this occasion, and since he fell into this error, he was determined to make it as little expensive to him as possible.<sup>125</sup>

*[What follows is the remaining portion of the first part of Bennett's MS; a few insignificant passages have been deleted by the editor.]*

(6) It is with much reluctance and with extreme concern I find myself reduced to the necessity of making any severe remarks on Mr O'Leary's pamphlet, which nothing could induce me to do but a regard to truth and an earnest wish that any person into whose hands this book may happen to come after my decease, more especially my own children, may not be deceived by the partial, uncandid, and false manner in which Mr O'Leary has misrepresented the proceedings of the Whiteboys and the conduct of their directors during part of the year 1785 and the entire year 1786. I have lived for some time in the habit of intimacy with Mr O'Leary and must confess that I (6v) never in the whole course of my life was so much deceived in any man's character as in his, so far as related to the unhappy disturbances which have disgraced this province during the beforementioned periods. I attribute his very reprehensible conduct on this occasion to three causes. First, his zeal for the interests of his church, which he conceived to be attacked in some of the annexed pamphlets; secondly, a vindication of his character, which was also very severely, though I believe very justly handled, for his addresses to the Whiteboys, which were caused by a similar zeal; and thirdly, a firm attachment to Sir John Colthurst, who, I hear, was closeted with him for some days, furnishing him with materials, and in many particulars, I am convinced, deceived him. (7) I really believe Mr O'Leary

to be 'much better than his tenets' and in the usual and common intercourse between man and man would have the greatest reliance on his integrity. When chaplain to the English prisoners at St-Malo during part of the war of 1756, he behaved to them with the greatest attention, tenderness, and humanity. About fourteen years ago<sup>126</sup> he returned to this kingdom and mostly resided in Cork, where he has lived irreproachable in his moral conduct and much esteemed, and very justly, for being a facetious, pleasant, and agreeable companion as well as a man of extensive learning; nor was it in Cork alone he was esteemed. He had an intimacy with some of the most exalted characters in Ireland and even in Great Britain. For my part, I never received the least offence from him, nor have I any other prejudices to him but (7v) what a cause, which I conceive to be the cause of justice and of truth, inspires. I am firmly convinced he was insidious in his addresses to the Whiteboys,<sup>127</sup> and in vindicating said addresses, his *Defence* has most shamefully misrepresented the Whiteboy transactions of those distracted times and the causes of them, which I solely impute to the reasons already mentioned, for otherwise I have not the least reason to suspect his veracity in any instance.

I should be very sorry to have it understood that I am an enemy to the Roman Catholics. Far from it. I espoused the cause of their clergy in my letters to the Whiteboys. I know several of that persuasion distinguished for piety, benevolence, humanity, and every other virtue. I also know some of the Catholic clergy who are men of irreproachable lives and conduct. When it was intended in 1778 to repeal the penal laws,<sup>128</sup> I was much (8) rejoiced thereat and contributed every assistance that so insignificant an individual could do to accomplish it, being convinced that religious toleration and security of property, in every particular which did not affect the safety of Protestants as well as the education of their own children, are the just privileges of each

and every individual. But as I believe the popish to be an intolerant religion, I would be sorry to see it established, and on this account, Roman Catholics being the great majority of the people, the greatest care should be taken not to let them enjoy the most distant privileges in the government of the kingdom as electors, legislators, or otherwise, lest that in time they may acquire such an ascendancy as would be fatal to the Protestant interest. I never did condemn the wisdom of our ancestors in enacting the penal laws, but as the occasion of such (8v) of them as were repealed has in my opinion ceased, I am glad the repeal took place,<sup>129</sup> but I will venture to say to Parliament, as Father O'Leary says to the Whiteboys, 'Thus far you shall go and no further'.<sup>130</sup> I am really of opinion that at the beginning of the present disturbances the great body of Roman Catholics had no fixed design of freeing themselves from the payment of tithes, but I am fully convinced that as the disturbances advanced in their progress, the Roman Catholics hoped to benefit by the confusion, either in totally abolishing tithes or perhaps, as being an object with some, though others may be adverse to it, inducing government to make a legal provision for the Catholic clergy, and on this account were not much displeased at the proceedings of the Whiteboys. As I was not in their confidence, how far their conduct was justifiable or reprehensible I shall not presume to determine, but I think the conduct of those Protestants who fomented the outrages and connived at them is utterly inexcusable, for little do they as well as Dissenters think what their situation would be if the Catholic was the established (9) religion. Tithes would be paid with as much rigour at least as at present, and liberty of conscience probably not otherwise allowed than as it is in France, where perhaps it is at this time connived at.

The reader must not expect that the cursory remarks I have made on Mr O'Leary's pamphlet are intended as an answer to it. I never

had any such intention; I have neither learning nor abilities for the purpose, nor will I answer even for the propriety of my remarks. I shall only say they are the best I am capable of, and that I have stated facts truly so far as I know or was informed of. I shall conclude this with mentioning the opinion of a judicious and learned friend on Mr O'Leary's performance. I am firmly persuaded that Mr O'Leary has done much injury to his own cause by his falsehoods and misrepresentations, and that so far as relates to this kingdom, where his untruths must be known, his own church has a right to wish that she had not been supported '*tali auxilio et defensoribus istis*'.<sup>131</sup>

(9v) Extract of a letter from a friend, dated March 12th, 1787. 'I have read Mr O'Leary's *Defence* and think it a strange piece of stuff, though I dare to say, with the world it bears quite a different character. But there are some particular cases in which a man of sense would pay little deference to the opinion of the world, of which I humbly conceive this to be one. The pamphlet is angry, impudent, and scurrilous, but totally unargumentative, and does not go to confute a single charge that was laid against him. It is a motley piece of business containing some wit, some learning, and a heap of nonsense unworthy of a child. All men are dupes to flattery, and as he has made most honourable mention of 'the Dublin shopkeeper', so I suppose J.B.B. (myself) is in raptures with him. I never read with any attention his addresses to the Whiteboys till he published them by way of appendix to his *Defence*, and I rely on it that he has not answered any one objection that was made against them, nor indeed could he, for beyond all contradiction they are calculated to excite the spirit of Whiteboyism under a very artful disguise of dissuasion.'

(10) *Remarks on Mr O'Leary's Defence: 'The dying speech of Buck Sheehy<sup>132</sup> and others, &c.'* . . . [pages 19-21].<sup>133</sup>

Mr O'Leary has taken the account he gives of this transaction from a partial and uncandid history of Ireland written by a Doctor Curry.<sup>134</sup> That Father Nicholas Sheehy<sup>135</sup> was zealously attached to the cause of the Whiteboys of those days and exceedingly turbulent and troublesome in that capacity are truths which his warmest advocates do not deny. He was tried at the bar of the Court of King's Bench as a Whiteboy and acquitted, which, if a judgment may be formed from the acquittal of Whiteboys in the present times and the causes of it, is no great proof of his innocence. He was afterwards transmitted to Clonmel to (10v) take his trial for the murder of one John Bridge, which was said to have been committed by the Whiteboys, and in which Sheehy was said to be concerned. He was accordingly tried, convicted, and executed. Daniel Toler, Esqr., M.P. for the county of Tipperary,<sup>136</sup> gave the following account of this transaction in a debate, on a motion made by the Rt. Hon. Mr Grattan on the subject of tithes, in the House of Commons, Tuesday, March 13th, 1787. Mr Toler said: 'He thought it was necessary for him to rise, to take notice of a calumny that had been thrown upon the gentlemen in that part of the country in which he lived by a Mr O'Leary, who had presumed to stigmatize some of the best characters by alleging that Bridge, the person for whose (11) murder one Father Sheehy had been hanged, was still alive. He had the honour to be high sheriff of the county when Sheehy suffered, and he had taken care to impanel a most respectable jury; Sheehy was convicted on the fullest and clearest evidence. He (Mr Toler), with some other gentlemen, afterwards visited the convict in gaol, who confessed that Bridge was murdered, but denied that he himself was a Whiteboy or that he had any hand in the murder; yet next day at the place of execution he



told the poor deluded multitude that Bridge was alive and would appear among them in two months. He (Mr Toler) thought it necessary to state this to detect such agitators as Mr O'Leary in their falsehood and said that a cause that required such advocates and such means of support must be desperate indeed.'

(11v) The celebrated Counsellor Curran<sup>137</sup> in this debate made an elegant panegyric on Mr O'Leary, who, he said, 'was a man of the most innocent and amiable simplicity of manner in private life, and that the reflection of twenty years in a cloister had severely regulated his passions and deeply informed his understanding'. Yet Mr Curran did not attempt to vindicate Mr O'Leary from Mr Toler's charges. However, Mr O'Leary cannot be blamed, I think, for his statement of this transaction, which he has taken from Doctor Curry's history beforementioned.

(12) These three leaves are taken from the *Gentleman's Magazine* for April 1766.<sup>138</sup> They contain an abstract of the trials of some of Father Sheehy's real or supposed accomplices, from which a judgment may be formed of what was proved against that unfortunate man. The reader, on examining Mr Toler's account given in the House of Commons and Father Sheehy's letter to Major Sirr,<sup>139</sup> will be enabled to judge of Dr Curry's account.

(15) *Remarks on Mr O'Leary's Defence*: 'To the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Kenmare, &c. The address of the clergy of the established church, &c.' [pages 41-2].

This address was proposed by a clergyman of the county of Kerry not much distinguished for the goodness of his understanding. Mr James Bland, rector of Ballyheige, &c.<sup>140</sup> (who signed it much against his inclination, but would not make himself particular by refusing to do so), told me that Lord Kenmare<sup>141</sup> was much displeased at an address of this nature being presented to him. He is a man of great

property and had good sense enough to see the evils of the public tranquility being disturbed in the manner (15v) it has been by the White-boys. The first attack was made on tithes, the next on rents in some cases, and his lordship may very reasonably fear the latter may become general. He accordingly exerted himself to put a stop to the outrages. Whether his exertions did or did not proceed from a regard to the interests of the established clergy (as Mr O'Leary insinuates), the reader will judge from the following answer to the address of the clergy assembled at Tralee:

*Killarney, October 5, 1786*

*Gentlemen,*  
If according to your very polite address I could flatter myself that in my endeavours to support peace and good order in this county and neighbourhood I (16) had been of the smallest service to your body, it would afford me very great satisfaction.

*I have the honour to be, gentlemen,  
Your obedient servant,  
Kenmare*

*To the clergy of the established  
church assembled at Tralee*

As 'tis reasonable to suppose that Lord Kenmare was well acquainted with the contents of Mr O'Leary's pamphlet before it was published, some are of opinion that he should not have permitted the Kerry clergy's address to be published in it, nor Mr O'Leary's comment, because (16v) it appeared (say they) that Lord Kenmare by doing so has taken a merit to himself of supporting the Protestant clergy, which he had at first declined.

I speak of his lordship's conduct only from report, but from my confidence in the person who told me of his lordship's displeasure at the address, I have little doubt of it, and I can say nothing of my own knowledge. Query: Has not Lord Kenmare by his answer disavowed any original intention to serve the clergy?

.....

(18) *Remarks on Mr O'Leary's Defence*: 'He knows that the Protestant clergyman of that parish was beloved in the place and had a great number of powerful friends' . . . [pages 48-50].

From the manner in which Mr O'Leary states this transaction, it would seem as if the bishop, through whim or caprice, deprived the rector ('the clergyman of the parish') of his benefice, which (as I am informed) bishops can do for trifling causes in the Romish church; and most Roman Catholics as well as ignorant Protestants are of opinion the like may be done by Protestant bishops, but the true history of the affair is this.

The Rev. John Gibbs, curate of Donaghmore,<sup>142</sup> was a man very irregular and immoral in his conduct. Drunkenness was his favourite vice; he likewise was a man of a violent and vindictive disposition. Shortly after Doctor Woodward was appointed bishop of (18v) Cloyne, he openly censured Mr Gibbs at a visitation there, and a little time before, the archbishop of Cashel severely reprimanded him at the triennial visitation for a shameful neglect of duty. It does not appear that either bishop's reproofs had any effect in reforming Mr Gibbs. He continued as irregular as ever. Mr Gibbs being a magistrate of the county and having done (though perhaps not intentionally) something wrong in that capacity, a tenant of Mr Richard Townsend of Palacetown<sup>143</sup> applied to the Court of King's Bench for an attachment against him, but the dispute between them being apparently adjusted, Mr Townsend's tenant ceased proceeding. Some time after this, Mr Townsend and Mr George Davies of Dawstown,<sup>144</sup> returning from grousing [on] the 15th of August [17]85, were met on the road by Mr Gibbs. Mr Gibbs's first address on seeing them was (19) 'G\_\_\_\_\_ damn all poachers and all scoundrels'. The gentlemen naturally asked if he alluded to them. Some altercation of course passed between them; at length Mr Gibbs rode home through the fields

for a pistol, returned with it in his pocket, rode up to Mr Townsend and, using abusive language, raised up the butt end of a loaded whip to strike him, which Mr Townsend prevented by forcing the whip out of his hand, on which Mr Gibbs took out the pistol and swore 'he'd kill that scoundrel Townsend', when Mr Davies interfering, [he] put it aside, and [Davies] asked Mr Gibbs if 'he could be such a villain as to kill Mr Townsend'. He swore 'he would', and when Mr Davies refused to go out of the way, he bade him 'take that and be damned', and firing at Mr Davies, wounded him in the forearm most severely. For this Mr Gibbs was tried, convicted, and fined at spring assizes, 1786, and Mr Davies afterwards obtained £200 damages against him. From the committal of this action until after the trials were over, the bishop of Cloyne took no judicial cognizance of it. So that Mr Gibbs, on making his defence, was not under (19v) the disadvantage of an ecclesiastical censure, but when he was convicted by the verdict of two juries, the bishop removed him from the curacy (but, I believe, did not even silence him) and 'appointed another clergyman to officiate in his room' and did not ask Captain Right's liberty to do so. I believe he was 'beloved and had many powerful friends' amongst the Whiteboys of Donaghmore, nor is this to be wondered at, when it's considered that he was Counsellor Gibbs's brother, who was the Sir John Colthurst of that parish, but I believe no rational being will impute the nailing up [of] the church to any other cause than the Whiteboy spirit, which prevailed more particularly in that and the adjoining parishes, where it first appeared, for at other times such a proceeding would not have been thought of. As Mr Gibbs's conduct and trials were of public notoriety, Mr O'Leary could not be ignorant of them, notwithstanding his manner of recording the affair and his consummate assurance in doing so.

(20) *Remarks on Mr O'Leary's Defence*: 'He mentions a clergyman at whom stones were thrown whilst he was officiating' [pages 48-50].

Since writing these notes, I have taken some pains to become acquainted with the particulars of this transaction and, from the best information I could obtain, find them to be as follows.

In 1780 the churchwardens of the parish of Clondrohid,<sup>145</sup> of which Mr Edward Synge Townsend was curate,<sup>146</sup> went into the parish to collect the church rates but returned without making any collection, the people having positively refused to pay them.<sup>147</sup> Shortly after, they went again into the parish [to collect the church rates], attended by a few Volunteers from Macroom (20v) belonging to a corps called the Muskerry Blues.<sup>148</sup> The churchwardens, assisted by the Volunteers, took the distresses of some people in the parish, and as they were carrying off the distresses,<sup>149</sup> they were attacked by great numbers of the country people. Being hemmed in at a particular place, the insurgents now assaulted them most furiously, and so near were both parties to each other that a stone which was thrown by one of the assailants struck off the sight of one of the Volunteers' firelocks, by which the bayonet fell off and was never found since. Thus circumstanced, the Volunteers fired and killed two brothers, who left their work and came a considerable distance on purpose to join in the (21) riot, neither of whom ever had a child.<sup>150</sup> The rioters, however, effected their purpose by rescuing the distresses. Mr Townsend was collocated to the parish of Ballyvourney, as mentioned by the bishop of Cloyne, p. 57, in 1784, so that the abuse he received in reading the liturgy and the above transaction happened at two distant periods. It therefore evidently appears that the former proceeded principally, if not solely, from the combination mentioned by the bishop, which was effected by Sir John Colthurst in that parish,<sup>151</sup> of which he was the principal owner, and not

to the causes so infamously misrepresented by Mr O'Leary, whose 'inferences are indeed very different' from the bishop's. I had this account from my uncle Mr Barter, a magistrate of the county,<sup>152</sup> and from Mr (21v) Townsend.<sup>153</sup> Mr Barter also told me that the ancient method of levying church rates was by applotment, according to the supposed circumstances of the people, but they have been for some years charged proportionably on ploughlands, agreeable to act of Parliament,<sup>154</sup> which is certainly a more just method than the other, as many are supposed to be richer than they really are.

Nothing, I think, more strongly marks Sir John Colthurst's character than Mr O'Leary's statement of these transactions. Sir John could not be ignorant of them and, I suppose, saw Mr O'Leary's account before it was published, yet he did not prevent Mr O'Leary, although he professed a friendship for him, from exposing himself by publishing these glaring falsehoods, which I impute to Sir John's hatred to the clergy, that caused him not to be scrupulous in the means of distressing them.

.....

(23) *Remarks on Mr O'Leary's Defence*: 'Whether there had been in his own diocese a certain tithes-jobber of such art, &c.' [pages 72-3].

This paragraph relates to my father-in-law, the Rev. Edward Weekes,<sup>155</sup> whom Mr O'Leary insinuates (whether through ignorance or design I know not) to be in the bishop of Cloyne's diocese — though Inchigeelagh,<sup>156</sup> Mr Weekes's living, belongs to the diocese of Cork. Mr Weekes was appointed minister of this parish in April or May 1773. He determined to keep his tithes in his own hands<sup>157</sup> and let them to the occupiers or others who may want them, and by doing so for two or three years was a considerable sufferer. A spirit of combination equal, except in outrages, to the present Whiteboy spirit was raised against him in the parish. One dozen notices to draw were

(23v) served on him in a day, and every possible method so as to keep within the law was taken to distress him. The people by this accomplished one point: they abolished such of the small dues<sup>158</sup> as were paid to Mr Weekes's predecessors, in which Dennis Dilea the elder, since outlawed or proclaimed, was a principal instrument. Mr Weekes instituted a suit in the ecclesiastical court against Dilea for subtracting these dues but afterwards withdrew at the instance of Mr Jasper Masters.<sup>159</sup> Dilea at this time took a solemn oath that he would pay Mr Weekes's debt and costs, which he never did, nor did Mr Weekes ever since receive any small dues from the people, a plain proof that the clergy will suffer the same hardships as to the great tithes<sup>160</sup> if not protected by government and the legislature, and nothing can be more evident than that the (24) entire suppression of tithes was aimed at both by the Whiteboys and their Protestant as well as their popish landlords. Mr Weekes, finding himself thus oppressed and having a large family, was at length obliged to set the great tithes to Mr William Barry of Kilbarry<sup>161</sup> for £160 a year, who had (as Mr O'Leary mentions) 'art, power, and influence' enough to set on foot this infamous combination, of which the beforementioned Dilea was the principal agent, whom Barry had afterwards proclaimed [by government] for being a great agitator amongst the insurgents of 1786 and promoting the taking of oaths, . . . though when he was taken, nothing was proved against him which could prevent his being admitted to bail, and he was accordingly set at liberty. Hence it appears that if the people of the parish of Inchigeelagh are oppressed in the manner described by Mr O'Leary, it is entirely their own fault by not suffering the (24v) tithes to remain in the hands of the 'tenured and lawful owner' (who is in every particular such a character as Mr O'Leary describes), except at the hazard of starving him and his family. On enquiry I believe it may be found that many other

clergymen and parishioners are in the same predicament with the minister and people of Inchigeelagh. Mr Augustus Warren<sup>162</sup> had an inveterate enmity to Mr Barry for some reasons foreign to the present purpose. At the county meeting held on the 7th December 1786, Mr Warren declared that Mr Barry made four hundred pounds a year off the parish (I suppose he meant Mr Weekes's rent included), which Mr O'Leary has thought proper to say 'about five hundred'. That Barry was a dishonest and oppressive man, almost as any on earth, is not questioned, but how he could possess the (25) influence ascribed to him is surprising, as he was a man of small property and always necessitous, and in the present instance can only be accounted for by the people's wishes to distress the clergyman. At the county meeting Mr Warren stated what Barry's method was to enforce the payment of tithes. By his own authority he took up a poor man's cow and put her into pound. The owner came afterwards to treat with him; Barry then said, 'I'll enlarge the cow, provided you give your oath that you'll neither eat nor drink until you pay me'. This the poor man did and was twenty-four hours or more fasting. This method was really whimsical, but one good consequence arose from it, which Barry afterwards pleaded at the chapel when the people were (25v) swearing last summer. 'He never (he said) put them to any law costs, either in the bishop's court, the manor court of Macroom, or otherwise.' So that Mr O'Leary's account of harassing the poor by 'rect decrees'<sup>163</sup> is erroneous, and as to fictitious ones, they could be of no effect. Theophilus<sup>164</sup> shows the process used in the ecclesiastical court in suing for tithes. Sir John, Mr O'Leary's bosom friend, had a quarrel with William Barry and perhaps gave Mr O'Leary the information he has published here, but Sir John was not the only person to whom Barry was obnoxious. When Lord Luttrell<sup>165</sup> came to this country last September, a (26) magistrate of this county who also had a quarrel with

Barry was employed for three days (as I am informed) in taking depositions against him from willing witnesses, and I hear that accounts of Barry's real or pretended oppressions, so far back as fourteen or fifteen years in matters that had no reference to tithes, were taken cognizance of and the depositions transmitted to Lord Luttrell. The people declared one Sunday last summer at Kilbarry chapel that they would be willing to pay Mr Weekes what Barry paid him, and £20 (for an agent) besides, as Mr O'Leary mentions, but whether they will do so or not will soon be evident, as Mr Barry is dead and Mr Weekes will this year let the tithes (26v) himself. The treatment which Mr Kenney, Mr Meade, Archdeacon Corker, Mr Chetwood, &c. have met with from a base and ungrateful people shows how little their promises are to be depended upon. Mr Weekes, pursuant to his determination, in the year 1787 kept the tithes in his own hands, but what was the consequence? So far were the people from performing the promise they made of paying him the £160, and £20 for an agent, as so pompously described both by Mr Warren and Father O'Leary, that it was with the utmost difficulty Mr Weekes could set [tithes] to the amount of about £130, even at rates rather lower than those of the Whiteboys, and some would not take [their tithes] by any means, and so much did combination exist that 74 notices were posted up at one time on the church and a person left to watch them. Some of the people afterwards said that this was because Mr Weekes left the parish, but at the time they made the promise, he was then out of it and for some time before, and they made no objection — a plain proof of their little sincerity. In 1788 Mr Weekes farmed the tithes into one stand for £160.

.....

(29v) This whole section (entitled 'A refutation of the lord bishop of Cloyne's arguments drawn from the legate's letter and the Catholic

bishop's consecration oath'),<sup>166</sup> truly . . . misrepresented so far as I know, except as to stating facts, I shall not presume to comment on, being by inclination as well as nature and education little qualified for entering into a controversy on speculative points. I shall therefore content myself with mentioning the following remarks of Mr Powle,<sup>167</sup> one of the managers on the trial of Lord Stafford for high treason [in] 1680,<sup>168</sup> who in his defence asserted that 'the doctrine of killing and deposing princes was not taught by the church but was private opinion'. Mr Powle answered that 'as a misguided conscience could engage the best of men in the worst actions, so he thought that the principles of the Roman Catholic religion (30) were such as were more likely to pervert men from their duty and allegiance than any other religion or persuasion whatever. The last thing he took notice of was his lordship's affirming the doctrine of killing and deposing princes to be a private opinion, whereas the most celebrated writers of the church of Rome had publicly avowed and maintained that doctrine, and that the pope and church of Rome never failed to avow these actions when they were done. He acknowledged that many private writers did hold a contrary opinion, but he looked on it as a piece of policy and artifice in that church to leave this point in some measure undetermined, that so they might make use of it as occasion served, for if it succeeded, then it was owned and justified; but if it miscarried, (30v) then the doctrine was said to be but private opinion and the plot but the practice of particular persons that were either desperate or discontented, &c., &c.'

As I shall not presume to determine either on the innocence or guilt of Lord Stafford, neither shall I on the justice of this remark of Mr Powle, which I have taken from the trial of his lordship amongst the state trials. Let the reader judge for himself. As to the Catholic bishops' consecration oath, Mr O'Leary very

properly observes that 'they themselves know best in what sense they take it'. The oath is discussed in this volume.<sup>169</sup>

(31) My reasons for introducing this anecdote of the trial of Lord Stafford here, which has no apparent connection with the present subject, is this.

The dangerous doctrine charged by Protestants on Roman Catholics, such as killing kings, breaking faith with heretics, and those charges made in the bishop of Cloyne's pamphlet against the legate's letter and the bishops' consecration oath, have been supported by some of the ablest writers of the Romish church, though denied by others, so as to leave these points in some measure undetermined, thus to be made use of as occasion offered, either by denying that the church held such opinions if there was a necessity for it, or otherwise justifying, though perhaps not openly avowing them if the object sought after was obtained. For I really believe that with many, if not most, Roman Catholics, it's a principle that for the advancement of their religion the end justifies the means, be they what they may, and Father O'Leary's many falsehoods, (31v) by which he no doubt hoped to serve the interests of his church and party, are to me a proof of it, and the more so because I never heard any of his untruths disavowed by Roman Catholics, nor did they ever seem ashamed of them but caressed him as much as ever.

Here I cannot but lament (to use Mr Powle's words) that 'a misguided conscience often engages good men in the worst actions', because I know many Roman Catholics who possess in the highest degree the virtues that usually adorn human nature, and as to Mr O'Leary's life and morals, they have been very correct and unexceptionable since his residence in this city, nor have I the least reason to doubt his veracity in any instance in the usual common intercourse between men, nor would I suppose him capable of a falsehood for any

pecuniary consideration. Hence Protestants — who should always be tolerant — should be cautious not to trust too much to the sincerity of Roman Catholics.

.....  
[End of first part of MS]

—————  
[The following note by Bennett occupies a different position in his MS]

When I wrote this narrative consisting of three parts to hold up to you Whiteboyism and its abettors as objects of abhorrence and detestation, I was, though not in a state of affluence, yet in a condition to support my family; but now, my beloved and unhappy children, I feel myself and, what is much dearer to me, all of you, degraded. Blessed be God, not by crime but by poverty. It has pleased the Almighty Disposer of events that as my family increased, my business decreased, insomuch that it became necessary for me last September [1803] to solicit a subscription. I at present know but few of my benefactors, but as it is very probable that some of them might have been persons mentioned in this work, as well as the descendants and relatives of such, I in the most earnest manner charge and command you, my children, that on no account whatever, you permit to be made public to their dishonour, in print or otherwise, the names of any persons herein, and the other parts mentioned, no, not even by initials or any other circumstance so that they may with certainty be known. What have been matters of public notoriety, such as the proceedings of Parliament, county and other meetings, resolutions of grand juries, Fr O'Leary's writings, in short, everything (2) that has appeared in print and to which the names of any of the persons mentioned have been annexed, it would be a ridiculous affectation to make a secret of, and indeed I think I may add an affair so very

public as Mrs Jefferys's intention of draining Blarney loch (without adverting to any other parts of her conduct), which is even noticed by Father O'Leary. But I would by no means have the names of those who were concerned in other matters, I mean of conniving at and encouraging the proceedings of the Whiteboys for the purposes of serving their own interests and ruining the clergy, made public by me for the reasons abovementioned. I compiled this narrative for your information, concerning an event which has in a great measure contributed since to the calamities of the kingdom, and which may be particularly interesting to you, my Eliza, who was born in the great Whiteboy year. Now, although all whose conduct tends in any shape to injure the public are (3) just objects of public animadversion and censure, I am not of sufficient consequence to be the censor, nor, even if I was, would I find myself disposed to incur the charge of ingratitude by publishing or consenting to publish even what I conceive to be truths, that may in the most distant manner hurt the feelings of my benefactors, their descendants, or relatives, nor would I have you reproached with such conduct of your father. I therefore again charge you to make no names public to any person's disadvantage, except it has been already so and in print on the occasion of the Whiteboys of 1785, 1786, and the following years I have treated of.

Cork, 21st November 1803

#### NOTES

1 Bennett had in mind the pamphlets of the Ulster Presbyterian ministers Samuel Barber and William Campbell. See n. 102 below.

2 Sir John Conway Colthurst (1741-87) of Ardrum; Joseph Capel (d. ca. 1800) of Cloghroe; and John Hawkes (d. ca. 1803) of Surmount.

3 Fr Arthur O'Leary (1729-1802), the eminent political writer, was born of peasant stock in Fanlobus parish near Dunmanway, Co. Cork, and received his higher education in the Capuchin monastery

at St-Malo in Brittany, where he was ordained a priest of that order. As chaplain to the prisons and hospitals at St-Malo during the Seven Years' War (1756-63), O'Leary attended to the British prisoners of war, many of whom were Irish, and spurned a proposal to persuade the Catholics among them to transfer their allegiance to France. After returning to Ireland in 1771, O'Leary ministered and preached in Cork city, in an edifice which soon became and long remained known as 'Father O'Leary's chapel'. In the late 1770s he published several pamphlets in which he both asserted and promoted the loyalty of Irish Catholics to the British government. But he also advocated Catholic rights and won wide acclaim among Catholics and Protestant liberals through his pamphlet, *An essay on toleration, or Mr O'Leary's plea for liberty of conscience* [1780?], through his *Miscellaneous tracts* (Dublin, 1781), and through his public support of the Volunteer movement. At some point in the early 1780s, however, he accepted an annual government pension of £200 in return for supplying information about disloyal Catholic political designs. Though this pension was not fully paid until after O'Leary left Ireland at the end of the decade, he was in the service of the government at the time of the Rightboy upheaval. In his pamphlet, *Mr O'Leary's defence* . . . (Dublin, 1787), he repudiated charges by Bishop Richard Woodward of Cloyne and 'Theophilus' (Patrick Duigenan) that the Rightboys were seeking to overturn the Protestant church establishment. In 1789 O'Leary left Cork city for London, where he became a chaplain to the Spanish embassy; he later preached regularly in St Patrick's Chapel, Sutton Street, Soho Square. He continued to publish on Catholic issues and attended meetings of the English Catholic Committee in the years before his death.

4 For Fr O'Leary's three letters to the Whiteboys, see *C.H.C.*, 20, 23 Feb., 20 Nov. 1786. These letters were reprinted in O'Leary, *Defence* (Dublin, 1787 edn.), appendix no. 1, pp. 145-73.

5 Richard Woodward (1726-94), dean of Clogher, 1764-81; chancellor of St Patrick's, Dublin, 1772-8; rector of Louth, 1778-81; and bishop of Cloyne, 1781-94. Born in Gloucestershire and educated at Wadham College, Oxford, Woodward was persuaded to settle in Ireland by Thomas Conolly of Castletown, to whose influence he owed

all or most of his preferments; he was nominated to Cloyne by the 2nd earl of Buckinghamshire, Irish viceroy, 1777-80, whose wife was Conolly's sister. Woodward's earliest publications (1768, 1775) urged the establishment of a public provision for the Irish poor, but neither enjoyed the success of his famous pamphlet, *The present state of the Church of Ireland*, which went through four editions within twelve days, and nine editions within a few months of its first issuance early in 1787.

6 The following footnote appears here in the MS: 'An assembly of some of the great men of France, convened by the king in February this year [1787], who it was supposed and even said in this city would grant the Protestants a full toleration of religion'.

7 Rev. Edward Kenney (1729-1818), vicar choral of Cork, 1757-61; prebendary of Inishkenny, 1761-1818; rector and vicar of Kilmichael, 1762-77; rector of Moviddy, Kilbonane, and Aglish, 1768-1818; rector of Templetrine, 1769-1818.

8 The following footnote, written many years later, has been added to the MS: 'Here candour obliges me to say he told me I must repay him the guinea. I mentioned this anecdote to show my impartiality in compiling this narrative, but, my children, let this not prejudice you against the clergy. I have no doubt but I experienced the friendship of many of them in the subscription [more than £350] made for me in 1803, and Mr James Hingston, one of their body, zealously promoted it, indeed, to speak more properly, was its chief promoter. I charge you, ever remember with the most respectful gratitude to him, his children and their descendants.' The 'Mr James Hingston' to whom Bennett refers was probably the Rev. James Hingston (1755-1840), rector and vicar of Carrigdownane, 1788-99; prebendary of Subulter, 1789-1828; vicar-general of Cloyne, 1794-1840; vicar of Ballyclogh and Castlemagner, 1798-9; rector and vicar of Whitechurch, 1799-1836; rector and vicar of Aghabulloge, 1799-1840.

9 For a list of these pamphlets, see appendix no. 1 below.

10 The precise date of the founding of what Bennett calls the Farmers' Club is unknown, but a body having the same aims and labelled the Blarney

Association was busily canvassing for support among the gentry of County Cork by the spring of 1777. See Hugh Hovell Farmar to Jasper Farmar, 22 May 1777 (P.R.O.N.I., Farmar papers). I owe this reference to the kindness of Dr A.P.W. Malcomson.

11 Colthurst was the owner of large properties in counties Cork and Kerry as well as a textile manufacturer. He also reportedly managed all the Irish estates of his cousin-german, the 1st marquis of Lansdowne (*Finn's Leinster Journal*, hereafter cited as *F.L.J.*, 2-5 May 1787). Colthurst's seat at Ardrum lay in Inishcarra parish in the barony of Muskerry East. His father, whom he succeeded as 2nd baronet in 1775, had been M.P. for Doneraile, 1751-60; for Youghal, 1761-8; and for Castlemartyr, 1769-75; he had been closely allied with the politically powerful earls of Shannon. The son, who was not so allied, was a frustrated politician.

12 Colthurst, 'reckoned one of the best shots in Munster', was mortally wounded by the barrister Trant in a duel fought near Oldconnaught, Co. Dublin, on 14 February 1787; he died five days later (*F.L.J.*, 17-21, 21-24 Feb. 1787). Trant was acquitted of the charge of murder when tried in the Court of King's Bench in the following July (*F.L.J.*, 18-21 July 1787).

13 See appendix no. 1, pamphlet no. 4 below.

14 In par. Matehy, bar. Muskerry East.

15 In par. Athnowen, bar. Muskerry East.

16 In par. Donaghmore, bar. Muskerry East.

17 See Donnelly, 'Rightboy movement', pp. 156-7.

18 In bar. Muskerry East.

19 In bar. Muskerry West.

20 To oblige a parson to draw his tithes in kind, with all or most of the parishioners serving notice to this effect at the same time, had long been a standard technique in popular resistance to payment of tithes. The normal method of payment was a monetary composition. See Donnelly, 'Rightboy movement', pp. 154-6.

21 Robert King (1754-99), styled Viscount Kingsborough, 1768-97; married in 1769 his cousin Caroline FitzGerald of Mount Ophaly, Co. Kildare, who inherited the Mitchelstown estate in Cork and



adjacent counties; M.P. for County Cork, 1783-97; a governor of County Cork, 1789; Custos Rotulorum of County Roscommon, 1797-9; succeeded his father as 2nd earl, 1797. The Irish estates of the earl of Kingston in 1799 were reportedly worth £18,000 per annum.

22 Edward King (1726-97), 1st earl of Kingston, of Rockingham, Co. Roscommon, grand master of freemasons, 1761-3 and 1769-70; Custos Rotulorum of County Roscommon, 1772-97; M.P. for Boyle, 1749-60; for County Sligo, 1761-4; created Baron Kingston, 1764; advanced to viscount, 1766, and to earl, 1768.

23 Richard Townsend of Castle Townsend, high sheriff of County Cork, 1753; M.P. for County Cork, 1776-83; appointed colonel of county militia, 1793.

24 Richard Boyle (1727-1807), 2nd earl of Shannon; M.P. for Dungarvan, 1749-60; for County Cork, 1761-4; succeeded to the earldom, 1764; Irish privy councillor, 1763-70, 1774-1807; master general of the ordnance, 1766-70; muster master and clerk of the cheque of the armies of Ireland, 1774-81; Irish vice-treasurer, 1781-9; governor of County Cork, 1786; a lord of the Irish treasury, 1793-1804. The earl of Shannon's stature on the national scene derived in part from his local position as the traditional arbiter of Cork politics. He 'controlled Castlemartyr, Clonakilty, and Youghal boroughs, one seat for Charleville, and two parlous seats for Cork city and county' (A. P. W. Malcomson, *John Foster: the politics of the Anglo-Irish ascendancy* [Oxford, 1978], p. 197, n. 3).

25 The result of the contest, with four candidates contending for two seats, was mixed. The 'independent interest' managed to secure Lord Kingsborough's election and to force Richard Townsend into third place, but James Bernard, who stood in the earl of Shannon's interest, topped the poll, and Colthurst came far at the bottom. For this election, see *F.L.J.*, 17-20, 20-24, 24-27 Sept., 27 Sept.-1 Oct., 1-4, 4-8, 8-11 Oct. 1783.

26 Charles Manners (1754-87), 4th duke of Rutland, Irish viceroy, 1784-7.

27 Isaac Mann (1710-88), Protestant bishop of Cork and Ross, 1772-88; previously archdeacon of Dublin; absent from diocese after 1785 because of ill-health; died at Bath.

28 For the full text of this address, see *C.H.C.*, 27 Oct. 1785.

29 For the advertisement of this body, the General Association for Suppressing Acts of Outrage in the County of Cork, see *C.H.C.*, 29 Dec. 1785.

30 To take one's own tithes meant to pass a note promising to pay the agreed value of the tithes in cash on a future date, generally twelve months after the date of the note; to take the tithes of another person usually meant to buy the tithe produce when it was canted, or put up for sale to the highest bidder at an auction, a technique used in cases of default.

31 Since tithe notes were the legal records of debt, their surrender or destruction could render the debt 'uncollectable in practice.

32 Located near Ballincollig, in par. Athnowen, bar. Muskerry East.

33 Mrs Arabella Jefferys, chatelaine of Blarney Castle, was a sister of the Irish attorney-general John Fitzgibbon. Arabella's younger sister Eleanor was married to the barrister Dominick Trant of Dunkettle, Co. Cork, who mortally wounded Colthurst in the duel fought in February 1787. Arabella's husband, James St John Jefferys, had died in 1780.

34 On opposition to priests' dues and the reasons for it, see Donnelly, 'Rightboy movement', pp. 163-75. See also John A. Murphy, 'The support of the Catholic clergy in Ireland, 1750-1850' in J.L. McCracken (ed.), *Hist. Studies*, v (London, 1965), 103-21; S.J. Connolly, *Priests and people in pre-famine Ireland, 1780-1845* (Dublin and New York, 1982), pp. 243-55.

35 William Flynn (d. 1801), founder of the *Hibernian Chronicle* in 1768 and its publisher until his death, was also a printer, bookseller, and stationer on South Main Street in Cork city.

36 For these six letters, see *C.H.C.*, 21, 28 Nov., 12 Dec. 1785; 5, 23 Jan., 13 Feb. 1786. For two additional letters by 'the Dublin shopkeeper', see *C.H.C.*, 2, 16 Mar. 1786.

37 For the text of this letter, see *C.H.C.*, 28 Nov. 1785.

38 See appendix no. 1, pamphlet no. 5 below.

39 Henry Grattan (1746-1820), the greatest orator in the Irish House of Commons, in which he sat almost continuously from 1775 to 1800; leader of the 'patriot' party there during the late 1770s and early 1780s; father of Irish legislative independence in 1782; champion of tithe reform in the late 1780s; advocate of parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation in the 1790s; M.P. for Charlemont, 1775-90; for Dublin city, 1790-7 (retired in disgust); for County Wicklow, 1800, when he opposed the union with Britain; and for Dublin city at Westminster, 1806-20; buried in Westminster Abbey. Of the Irish Parliament, he aptly remarked, 'I watched by its cradle; I followed its hearse'.

40 The port city in Brittany in northwestern France located on an island in the Gulf of St-Malo.

41 For 'The Dublin shopkeeper's address to the gentlemen Whiteboys', dated 16 Feb. 1786, see *C.H.C.*, 2 Mar. 1786.

42 Reproduced in this edition, and previously in James S. Donnelly, Jr, *Landlord and tenant in nineteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 1973), p. 28.

43 Fr Michael Harrington of the Great Island near Cove, established the Redington Academy, a school in Templerobin parish attended by (among others) Daniel O'Connell and his brother Maurice (Evelyn Bolster, R.S.M., 'The Moylan correspondence in Bishop's House, Killarney: part 1' in *Collect. Hib.*, no. 14 [1971], p. 95, n. 31).

44 Richard Gray (d. 1790), apparently a physician; appointed a justice of the peace for County Cork, Apr. 1768.

45 In par. Magourney, bar. Muskerry East.

46 See n. 42 above.

47 See n. 4 above.

48 For the works by 'Theophilus' [i.e., Patrick Duigenan] and Bishop Richard Woodward, see appendix no. 1, pamphlets no. 1 and no. 2 below. Patrick Duigenan (1735-1816), to whom the first pamphlet has been attributed, was the son of a Catholic farmer, yet became one of the best known anti-Catholic speakers and writers of his day. Elected a fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, in 1761 and called to the Irish bar in 1767, he led the unsuccessful opposition to the election of John Hely-

Hutchinson as provost of Trinity in 1771, a campaign during which he wrote numerous pamphlets (collected and published as *Lachrymae academicae*). After resigning his Trinity fellowship, he pursued a lucrative practice at the bar, where he specialized in ecclesiastical law and admiralty law. He served as vicar-general of the Protestant dioceses of Armagh, Meath, and Elphin, and as judge of the consistorial court of Dublin; he was appointed king's advocate-general of the Dublin High Court of Admiralty in 1790 and later became a judge of that court. He made a strong impression as a bitterly anti-Catholic speaker both in the Irish Parliament, where he sat for Old Leighlin, 1791-8, and for Armagh city, 1798-1800, and in the United Kingdom Parliament, where he represented Armagh city, 1801-16. Despite his public convictions, he married a Catholic, allowed her to have a Catholic private chaplain, and left his entire fortune to his wife's Catholic nephew. His professional connection with the established church in the 1780s made him something of an expert on tithes and helps to explain his partisanship.

49 Presumably the Whiteboy act of 1776 (15 & 16 Geo. 3, c. 21), under which tumultuous risings and the administering of unlawful oaths, even by armed and disguised bodies at night, were regarded only as misdemeanours. This law also recited those Whiteboy offences which were capital felonies.

50 John Butler (d. 1800), Catholic bishop of Cork, 1763-86, became 12th Baron Dunboyne and inherited his young nephew's estate on the latter's death in December 1785, an event which explains the bishop's absence from the diocese at this time. In 1787 Lord Dunboyne doubly scandalized and outraged Irish Catholics. First, though nearly seventy years old, he married a Protestant cousin without ecclesiastical dispensation in what proved a vain effort to prevent the extinction of the family line. Then, in August, he was received into the established church in a special ceremony at Clonmel. But he again embraced the Catholic religion on his deathbed and indeed bequeathed most of his property to the seminary at Maynooth, thus founding the burses which still bear his name. See W. M. Brady, *The episcopal succession in England, Scotland, and Ireland, A.D. 1400 to 1875* (2 vols., Rome, 1876-7), ii, 95-6; John Brady, *Catholics and Catholicism in the eighteenth-*

century press (Maynooth, 1965), pp. 149, 232, 252-3, 257.

51 Matthew MacKenna (1706-91), Catholic bishop of Cloyne and Ross, 1769-91; previously parish priest of Cove, 1751-69; had an apparently deserved reputation for clerical avarice but also one for partiality to the Irish language, which he 'spoke upon almost every occasion and in every company' (Brady, *Eighteenth-century press*, pp. 276-7).

52 Fr Gerard Teahan (or Teaghan) was to serve as Catholic bishop of Ardfert and Aghadoe (i.e., Kerry) from June 1787 until his death in July 1797 (Brady, *Episcopal succession*, ii, 62).

53 This convent of Presentation nuns, opened in 1777 and dedicated to the education of poor children, took its popular name from Nano Nagle (1728-84), the foundress of the Presentation order and a famous benefactress of the poor in Cork city.

54 Fr Laurence Callanan (1739-1818), educated and ordained at Louvain; joined Franciscan community in Cork city, 1773; often chosen as guardian, or head, of the community; also elected provincial of the order; master of the Cork diocesan conference for many years; advisor to Nano Nagle while she was founding the Presentation order; selected by Bishop Francis Moylan to draw up the rule now followed by the Presentation nuns (William D. O'Connell, *Cork Franciscan Records, 1764-1831*, Historical and Archaeological Papers, no. 3, ed. Seán P. Ó Ríordáin [Cork, 1942], pp. 20-2). The Recollects were Franciscan friars belonging to the branch of that religious order known as the Observantines. Seeking detachment from creatures and recollection in God (whence came the name), their initial leaders required especially strict observance of the Franciscan rule. The Recollects flourished in France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries but were suppressed there at the time of the great revolution. Descendants of the Recollects and other Observantines are today known as Friars Minor.

55 Fr John Scanlon (d. 1820), parish priest of Donaghmore, 1786-7, and of Cloyne and Churchtown, 1787-1820; nominated as parish priest of Mallow after resigning from Donaghmore but rejected by the parishioners of Mallow because of his reputation for active opposition to the Rightboys; also the subject of protest by the parishioners of

Cloyne and Churchtown prior to taking up his duties there (Brady, *Eighteenth-century press*, p. 257, n. 2).

56 William Flynn, publisher of the *Hibernian Chronicle*.

57 Fr Patrick McSwiney, parish priest of Kilmurry, ca. 1770-86.

58 Zenobia, queen of Palmyra in the third century who briefly shook the Roman empire; secured Syria, conquered Egypt (A.D. 269), and finally overran almost the whole of Asia Minor (270); all her gains and Palmyra itself soon lost to the Roman emperor Aurelian, who captured the queen but later granted her a pension and a villa at Tibur. What apparently prompted Fr O'Leary to use this classical allusion was Zenobia's reputation for intelligence, beauty, and virtue, combined with her evident ruthlessness, or as he put it, Arabella Jefferys had 'a manly heart in a female breast' (*Defence*, p. 59).

59 Rev. Joseph Stopford (1732-1801), son of James Stopford, former bishop of Cloyne; prebendary of Ballyhay, 1758-1801; rector and vicar of Clondrohid, 1759-80; rector and vicar of Garrycloyne and Grenagh, 1780-95. Since 1766 the church at Blarney had served the parishioners of Garrycloyne.

60 Gibbs Ross, salesmaster in the Stamp Office, Cork city, and county ranger, charged with the preservation of public order.

61 Probably Fr William [?Timothy] Callanan, parish priest of Carrigaline, 1772-86. The person responsible for the coming of the dragoons was his brother Dominick Callanan, an apothecary well known to Bennett (Bennett's note in O'Leary, *Defence*, p. 37, N.L.I. pamphlets 161).

62 Fr Edmund Synan (d. 1806), vicar in parish of Saints Peter and Paul, 1774-5; served in parish of St Finbarr's South, 1775-9; vicar-general of the Catholic diocese of Cork, ?1779-?1806.

63 John Hawkes of Surmount.

64 In some places the Rightboys took along with them 'the white horse called Cromwell, with the seats of the saddle stuck with sharp-pointed nails for the punishment of the disobedient' (*F.L.J.*, 15-19 July 1786). But see Donnelly, 'Rightboy movement', pp. 182-3.

65 Though the Rightboys committed very few murders, Bennett probably had in mind the killing of John Dunn, a wealthy Tipperary farmer, in December 1786. See Donnelly, 'Rightboy movement', pp. 184-5.

66 Robert Travers, an attorney on Patrick Street, Cork, served as law agent of the General Association for Suppressing Acts of Outrage in the County of Cork (*C.H.C.*, 12 Jan. 1786).

67 Donogh MacCarty, 4th earl of Clancarty, strongly supported the cause of James II in Ireland. In 1689 he commanded an infantry regiment in James's army, and in 1690 he was captured at the siege of Cork city. As a result, he forfeited his immense estates and his honours. Though attainted, he escaped from prison and died in exile in 1734.

68 Rev. William King (1728-1807), rector of Knocktemple, 1764-94; rector of Mallow, 1770-1807; vicar of Carrigleamleary and Rahan, 1794-1807.

69 In Bennett's MS the following footnote appears here: 'A Mr Jackson Delacour, Mr King's brother-in-law, told me that a horse of Mr King's worth 25 guineas was so abused this night that Mr King sold him for £5. He also told me that Mrs King was at this time near lying in.' Jackson Delacour (or De La Cour) was the third son (though the first by a second marriage) of Robert Delacour of Cork city; his sister Mary was the wife of the rector of Mallow.

70 For the report, see *C.H.C.*, 29 June 1786.

71 Fr James Glissane (d. 1799), parish priest of Blarney and Whitechurch, 1775-99. For his letter, see *C.H.C.*, 3 July 1786.

72 According to a footnote in the MS, 'Mrs Berkeley told me these particulars'. The Rev. George Berkeley (1735-1804), a nephew of the great philosopher of the same name, married Ursula Browne in 1772; he was rector and vicar of Whitechurch (Cloyne), 1766-89; a vicar choral of Cork, 1769-1804; rector and vicar of Carrigrohanebeg, 1777-1801; precentor of Killala, 1784-1804; rector and vicar of Nathlash and Kildorrery, 1789-1804.

73 John Fitzgibbon (1749-1802), 1st earl of Clare, eminent lawyer who served as Irish attorney-general, 1783-9, and as lord chancellor of Ireland,

1789-1802; a moderate nationalist until 1785 but a staunch opponent of parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation in the 1790s; a chief architect of the act of union in 1800; M.P. for Dublin University, 1778-83; for Kilmallock, 1783-9; created Baron Fitzgibbon, 1789; advanced to viscount, 1793, and to earl of Clare, 1795; often speaker of the Irish House of Lords; created Baron Fitzgibbon of Sidbury in the British peerage, 1799; hated by the Dublin populace, who threw dead cats at his remains.

74 In Bennett's MS the following footnote appears here: 'A Captain Right said, "We hear you have got one Rowland, a proctor, to value your tithes, but the devil Rowland us if we don't Rowland him"'. The proctor was Richard Rowland, and one of his assistants was beaten by the Rightboys of Whitechurch parish in August 1787 (*F.L.J.*, 15-18 Aug. 1787).

75 Their terms of office were as follows: James Butler, archbp of Cashel, 1774-91; John Butler, bp of Cork, 1763-86; Denis Conway, bp of Limerick, 1779-96; William Egan, bp of Waterford and Lismore, 1775-96; Matthew MacKenna, bp of Cloyne and Ross, 1769-91; Michael Peter MacMahon, bp of Killaloe, 1765-1807; and Francis Moylan, bp of Kerry, 1775-87, as well as bp of Cork, 1787-1815.

76 For the text of these regulations, see *C.H.C.*, 29 June 1786. They have also been printed in Brady, *Eighteenth-century press*, pp. 235-7.

77 See nns. 55 and 61 above.

78 The 'gentleman Whiteboy' Daniel Gibbs of Derry, Co. Cork.

79 William Flynn. See n. 35 above.

80 On these attacks, see Donnelly, 'Rightboy movement', pp. 200-1.

81 See n. 7 above.

82 In bar. Muskerry East.

83 Rev. John Meade (1720-1800), rector of Ballymartle, 1751-94, succeeding his father, the Rev. William Meade, dean of Cork, 1736-63, and rector of Ballymartle, Dunderrow, and Ringrone. A second son became rector of Dunderrow, and a third, rector of Ringcurran. The Rev. John Meade

became a large landowner in 1787, when he purchased the estates of Ballymartle and Ballintober from his cousin, the 1st earl of Clanwilliam.

84 In baronies Kinalea and Kinsale.

85 Rev. Chambre Corker (d. 1790), prebendary of Caherlag and rector of Rathcooney, 1767-90; rector and vicar of Little Island, 1769-90; archdeacon of Ardagh, 1778-90; son-in-law of Jemmett Browne, bishop of Killaloe (1743-5), Dromore (1745), Cork and Ross (1745-72), and Elphin (1772-5), and arch-bishop of Tuam (1775-82).

86 In bar. Cork.

87 George Berkeley (1685-1753), Protestant bishop of Cloyne, 1734-53, and previously dean of Derry; the famous philosopher and theologian, most of whose writings on these subjects were published before he went to Cloyne.

88 For a report of this attack, see *C.H.C.*, 7 Aug. 1786.

89 On the matter of lost clerical income from tithes, see Donnelly, 'Rightboy movement', pp. 161-2.

90 Rev. John Chetwood, or Chetwode (d. 1814), treasurer of Ross, 1762-99; rector and vicar of Skull, 1767-80; precentor of Carrigrohane, 1780-90; prebendary of Caherlag and rector of Rathcooney, 1790-1814; a vicar choral of Cork, 1799-1814.

91 In baronies Cork and Muskerry East.

92 For a report of this incident, see *C.H.C.*, 11 Sept. 1786.

93 Sir Richard Musgrave (1746-1818), an extreme loyalist and bigoted Protestant who in several pamphlets written before 1798 warned of approaching rebellion. His notorious history of the 1798 rebellion, first published in 1801, is riddled with anti-Catholic prejudice but remains of some merit. Called to the Irish bar, 1774; created a baronet, 1782; high sheriff of County Waterford, 1786; M.P. for Lismore, 1778-1800; appointed collector of the Dublin city excise, a lucrative post, 1801.

94 Henry Lawes Luttrell (1743-1821), styled Lord Luttrell, 1785-7, soldier and politician, succeeded his father as 2nd earl of Carhampton in 1787. Though defeated by John Wilkes in the famous Middlesex by-election of April 1769, he was never-

theless declared elected. Made a major-general in 1782, a lieutenant-general in 1793, and a general in 1798, he held a succession of Irish military posts: adjutant-general of the land forces, 1770-83; lieutenant-general of the ordnance, 1789-97; commander-in-chief of the forces, 1796-7; and master-general of the ordnance, 1797-1800. His lenity toward the Rightboys in 1786 contrasted sharply with his severity toward the Defenders in the west midlands in 1795, when he threw the law aside and ordered suspected rebels to be sent to the fleet without trial. Relieved of the supreme command in December 1797, he sold his estate at Luttrellstown soon afterward and spent his later years at Painshill in Surrey. He was returned to the Irish Parliament for Old Leighlin in 1783, and both earlier and later he sat for various English constituencies at Westminster.

95 Gibbs Ross, the county ranger.

96 For the tithe rates proposed by Lord Luttrell, see *Cork Evening Post*, 25 Sept. 1786.

97 This was not the general view. See Donnelly, 'Rightboy movement', pp. 190-1.

98 St Leger St Leger (d. 1787), 5th Viscount Doneraile (of the second creation); assumed the surname of St Leger in place of Aldworth after succeeding in 1767 to the estates of his maternal uncle; M.P. for Doneraile, 1761-76; created Baron Doneraile, 1776; advanced to viscount, 1785. His son Hayes St Leger (1755-1819), M.P. for Doneraile, 1776-87, who succeeded his father as 6th Viscount Doneraile in 1787, had become notorious in 1780, when at the Cork summer assizes he was convicted of brutally assaulting an aged Catholic priest; the priest had enraged Lord Doneraile by refusing to lift his excommunication of a local adulterer. John Philpot Curran pleaded for the priest and won damages against Lord Doneraile, who was then said to have ordered 'every mass-house on his estate nailed up' (Brady, *Eighteenth-century press*, p. 210).

99 See n. 85 above.

100 Rev. Broderick Tuckey (d. 1818), licensed as reader at St Finbarry's cathedral, Cork, 1777; Thresher's lecturer, 1786-95; prebendary of Killanully, 1788-94; vicar of Drinagh and Fanlobbus, 1794-1818. In a footnote to his MS here,

Bennett remarked of Tuckey: 'This gentleman I considered as a friend until he was sordid enough to refuse me with insult at his own house a quarter of a sheet of sixpenny writing paper, which I wanted to take extracts from a Whiteboy act, then at St Finbarry's library, where he lived'.

101 See appendix no. 1 below.

102 See appendix no. 1, pamphlets no. 3 and no. 9 below. Campbell had been the Presbyterian minister of First Armagh since 1764; Barber served as Presbyterian minister of Rathfryland, Co. Down, 1763-1811, and was a decided political radical, active in the cause of the Volunteers and sympathetic toward the United Irishmen. Asked to contribute to the rebuilding of Barber's meeting-house at Rathfryland, Lord Kilwarlin replied that he 'would rather pay to pull it down' (*D.N.B.*, i, 1069).

103 Under an act of 1704 all holders of civil or military office under the crown were required, as a condition for occupying their posts, to take the sacrament of the Eucharist in accordance with the Anglican rite. Since Catholics were already barred from office in other ways, the law worked a special hardship on Presbyterians and other Protestant Dissenters. It was repealed in 1780.

104 The Dublin police act of May 1786 (26 Geo. 3, c. 24) provided for the creation in the capital of a force consisting of one high constable, four constables, forty petty constables, and 400 night watchmen. Opponents of the measure feared that it would furnish a precedent for the establishment of a centrally controlled national police force, funded by direct taxation. See Stanley H. Palmer, 'The Irish police experiment: the beginnings of modern police in the British Isles, 1785-1795' in *Social Science Quarterly*, lvi, no. 3 (Dec. 1975), 413-18.

105 For the full text of Colthurst's address, see *C.H.C.*, 4 Dec. 1786.

106 Richard Longfield (1734-1811) of Longueville, large landowner and active local politician; high sheriff of County Cork, 1758; M.P. for Charleville, 1761-8; for Clonakilty, 1768-76; for Cork city, 1776-83, 1790-5; and for Baltimore, 1783-90. Created Baron Longueville, 1795; advanced to viscount, 1800.

107 An impropiator was a lay owner of tithes.

108 For this county meeting and the resolutions adopted, see *C.H.C.*, 11 Dec. 1786.

109 For the full text of Lord Luttrell's answer to the address of thanks, see *F.L.J.*, 13-16 Dec. 1786.

110 Henry Hamilton Cox (d. 1821) succeeded to the Dunmanway estate, but not to the baronetcy, of Sir Richard Eyre Cox, 4th bart., on the latter's accidental death by drowning in 1783; added the surname of Cox in 1784.

111 Henry Mannix (1740-1822), called to the Irish bar, 1763; created a baronet in September 1787 in reward for his anti-Rightboy activities; died without a legitimate heir, the baronetcy then becoming extinct; had three illegitimate children.

112 Hutchinson, Mannix, and Cox had all been active in committing accused Rightboys to gaol in previous months. See, e.g., *C.H.C.*, 20 Feb., 3 July, 14 Aug., 11, 14 Sept. 1786. The latter two men won renown as heads of private armed companies which pursued Rightboys, Mannix as colonel of the Glanmire Union Volunteers and Cox as colonel of the Dunmanway Rangers (*C.H.C.*, 20 Feb. 1786; *F.L.J.*, 5-8 July 1786).

113 27 Geo. 3, c. 15, and 27 Geo. 3, c. 40, respectively. On these two statutes, see Donnelly, 'Rightboy movement', pp. 192-3.

114 See appendix no. 1 below.

115 Oldconnaught, though near Bray, Co. Wicklow, is in fact within the bounds of County Dublin.

116 On this duel and its outcome, see *C.H.C.*, 19 Feb. 1787; *F.L.J.*, 17-21, 21-24 Feb. 1787. For a hostile obituary of Colthurst, see *F.L.J.*, 2-5 May 1787. See also n. 12 above.

117 See n. 24 above.

118 ?Thomas Butler of Nedsborough, appointed justice of the peace for County Cork, Dec. 1755.

119 John Hely-Hutchinson (1724-94), M.P. for Cork city, 1761-90, and for Taghmon, 1790-4, was a noted place-hunter determined above all to aggrandize his family. His official posts included those of prime serjeant-at-law and principal secretary of state, but he was best known as the highly unpopular but quite efficient provost of Trinity College, Dublin, 1774-94.

120 27 Geo. 3, c. 36. See Donnelly, 'Rightboy movement', p. 192.

121 By 'this', Bennett meant specifically his earlier statement that Colthurst was 'a sincere friend'.

122 The Rev. Thomas Tuckey (1708-72) of Greenhill near Mallow, rector and vicar of Litter and Marshallstown, 1743-72, was twice married: first to Mary, daughter of the Rev. Barry Hartwell, rector of Rathcormack (1719-41) and Mourneabbey (1732-41); and second to Elizabeth, daughter of the Rev. James Hingston, vicar of Clonmeen (1751-75), vicar of Roskeen and Kilcorney (1751-71), and prebendary of Brigown (1771-2) and Donaghmore (1772-5). The youngest of Thomas Tuckey's children, James, became a British naval commander and a distinguished explorer.

123 James Hingston Tuckey (1771?-1816), raised by his maternal grandmother after leaving Colthurst's custody; entered the navy, 1793; served in the East Indies on board the 'Suffolk' and the 'Fox', rising to lieutenant, 1798; published in 1805 an account of his voyage (1802-4) to Port Phillip in New South Wales; wrote *Maritime geography and statistics* (4 vols., London, 1815) while a French prisoner until 1814, mostly at Verdun; promoted to commander, 1814; commissioned to explore the Congo, where he died, a diary of this expedition being published posthumously in 1818.

124 William Hales (1747-1831), son of the Rev. Samuel Hales, D.D., long a curate and preacher at the cathedral church of Cork; educated by the Rev. James Hingston before entering Trinity College, Dublin, in 1764; became a fellow of Trinity in 1768 and later professor of Oriental languages; resigned professorship in 1788 to become rector of Killashandra, Co. Cavan, where he lived for the rest of his life. Of his twenty-two published works, the most notable was *A new analysis of chronology* (3 vols., London, 1809-12), devoted to the chronology of the entire bible and produced after twenty years of labour.

125 In a footnote to his MS here, Bennett remarked: 'Mr and Mrs Hartwell, who are closely connected and intimate with Mrs Hingston, with whom a brother of James Tuckey now lives, informed me of the above particulars. Mrs Hingston, the child's

grandmother, likewise confirmed to me the truth of the foregoing particulars.' Brodrick Hartwell, son of a former rector of Rathcormack and himself a post-captain in the British navy, was co-heir of the large estates of the Barrys of Rathcormack (the estates were later sold); his sister Mary was the first wife of the Rev. Thomas Tuckey, rector and vicar of Litter. It was through the influence of Brodrick Hartwell's elder son, Captain Francis (later Sir Francis) Hartwell that his kinsman James Tuckey received his first naval assignment in 1793, and Tuckey dedicated the earliest of his books to Sir Francis Hartwell. In a further note Bennett recorded the following story: 'Some time after Sir John Colthurst's death Mr Richard Orpen, a young gentleman who had a most affectionate regard for Sir John, on his return from France, where he had been for the recovery of his health, in his way from India, waited on the marquis of Lansdowne, who was Sir John's cousin-german, and on lamenting Sir John's untimely death to that nobleman, his lordship's answer was, "Poor man, he fell a dupe to the popish interests of Ireland". I had this account from a near relation of Mr Orpen, to whom he told it.' Richard Orpen (later Orpen-Townsend, 1771-1849) was the eldest son and heir of Richard Orpen of Ardtully, Co. Kerry. The family seat lay in the barony of Glanarought, most of which was owned by the 1st marquis of Lansdowne (1737-1805), better known as the earl of Shelburne, British prime minister, 1782-3.

126 In fact, in 1771.

127 See n. 4 above.

128 What was proposed in 1778 and eventually enacted was the repeal of most of the provisions of the popery act of 1704 relating to land. The relief act of 1778 allowed Catholics to take long leases, whether for lives or for years (not exceeding 999), and to bequeath and inherit land on the same terms enjoyed by Protestants.

129 Despite the passage of a series of relief acts between 1771 and 1782, Catholics were still prohibited from voting in parliamentary elections, from holding political or military office under the crown, from sitting on grand juries, and from bearing arms.

130 In a footnote to his MS Bennett added: 'What was much more honourable and of much more

consequence to the Roman Catholics, my lord bishop of Cloyne earnestly supported the repeal, so that they had no cause to consider him their enemy'. Woodward had warmly endorsed the Catholic relief bill of 1782 in the Irish House of Lords.

131 I.e., 'by such assistance and by these defenders'.

132 Edmond Sheehy, a well-to-do Catholic farmer, was executed at Clogheen, Co. Tipperary, in May 1766 for alleged complicity in the murder of John Bridge. Sheehy's 'dying declaration', in which he protested his innocence, was published in the *Gentleman's and London Magazine*, xxxvi (May 1766), appendix, 114-16.

133 Here and below, the page references are to the Dublin 1787 edition of O'Leary's *Defence*.

134 John Curry (d. 1780), eminent Dublin physician and Catholic historian; author of *An historical and critical review of the civil wars in Ireland* . . . (Dublin, 1775). After Curry's death his friend Charles O'Connor of Bellanagare, Co. Roscommon, prepared a new and greatly expanded edition of this work, which was published in two volumes (Dublin, 1786). To this edition O'Connor added an account by Curry entitled 'The state of the Catholics of Ireland from the settlement under King William to the relaxation of the popery laws in 1778'. The affair of Fr Nicholas Sheehy was treated in this new section of the work. Curry was one of the founding members of the Catholic Committee, a body established in March 1760 in Dublin with the aim of removing or reducing Catholic disabilities.

135 Fr Nicholas Sheehy, parish priest of Clogheen, Co. Tipperary, was executed at Clonmel in March 1766 for Whiteboy offences after a trial aptly described by Lecky as 'infamously partial' (Lecky, *Ire.*, ii, 44). See W.P. Burke, *History of Clonmel* (Waterford, 1907), pp. 361-405. Bennett's brief account of this episode, especially his uncritical acceptance of the testimony of Daniel Toler (see n. 136), does him little credit.

136 Daniel Toler (1739-96) of Graigue (otherwise Beechwood), Co. Tipperary; high sheriff, 1766; M.P. for County Tipperary, 1783-90. His younger brother, John Toler, later served as Irish attorney-general, 1798-1800, and as chief justice of the Court of Common Pleas in Ireland, 1800-27; he was

created Baron Norbury in 1800 and advanced to earl of Norbury in 1827 on his retirement from the bench. Both men were staunch supporters of Protestant ascendancy.

137 John Philpot Curran (1750-1817), eminent barrister, liberal politician, and powerful orator, was born at Newmarket, Co. Cork, and educated at Midleton Free School, Trinity College, Dublin, and the Middle Temple, London. Called to the Irish bar in 1775, he long travelled the Munster circuit twice a year; at the Cork summer assizes in 1780, in the case which first made him a popular figure, he won damages for a priest assaulted by Hayes St Leger (later 6th Viscount Doneraile). A strong supporter of parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation in the 1790s, Curran acquired his greatest fame by his defence of United Irishmen in a long series of state trials, 1794-1803. Appointed master of the rolls by the Whigs, 1806; retired from the bench, 1814; M.P. for Kilbeggan, 1783-90; for Rathcormack, 1790-7; for Banagher, 1800.

138 See *Gentleman's and London Magazine*, xxxvi (Apr. 1766), 244-8, for the 'three leaves' mentioned by Bennett. For related material, see *ibid.* (Mar. 1766), 191-2; (May 1766), 310, appendix, pp. 113-16; (June 1766), 374-6.

139 John Sirr, town-major of Dublin, eventually succeeded in this post by his son, Henry Charles Sirr (1764-1841), who was so active in arresting United Irishmen in the late 1790s. For the letter, see *ibid.* (Apr. 1766), 247-8.

140 Rev. James Bland of Derryquin Castle, Co. Kerry, eldest son and heir of Nathaniel Bland, judge of the prerogative court of Dublin and vicar-general of Ardfert and Aghadoe. Ballyheige parish lies in the barony of Clanmaurice.

141 Thomas Browne (d. 1795), 4th Viscount Kenmare, headed one of the few great Catholic landed families to survive the era of the penal laws with their estates intact. Twice during penal times, in 1720 and 1736, there was fortunately only one son to inherit the whole property on the death of the family head. Thus were the Brownes spared the consequences of gavelkind, which required equal division of a Catholic landowner's property among all of his Catholic sons.



- 142 Rev. John Gibbs, ordained, 1779; licensed as curate of Donaghmore (diocese of Cloyne), 1780; removed from the curacy by episcopal order, 1786, prompting the Rightboys to nail up Donaghmore church to prevent the new minister from officiating; licensed as curate of Inchigeelagh (diocese of Cork), 1791.
- 143 Near Kinsale.
- 144 In parishes Garrycloyne and Matehy, bar. Muskerry East.
- 145 In bar. Muskerry West.
- 146 Rev. Edward Synge Townsend (1741-1819), licensed as curate of Clondrohid, 1773; rector and vicar of Ballyvourney, 1784-9; of Nathlash and Kildorrery, 1788-9; of Whitechurch, 1789-93; of Ballyvourney, 1793-9; and of Clondrohid, 1793-1808; prebendary of Killeenemer, 1789-99; vicar of Clonmeen and Roskeen, 1808-19; the father of fourteen children.
- 147 Church rates, assessed by the votes of Protestant vestrymen on all parishioners, regardless of their religion, were used for the upkeep of service and the construction or repair of buildings belonging to the established church. For opposition to church rates among the Rightboys, see Donnelly, 'Rightboy movement', pp. 177-8.
- 148 The Muskerry True Blue Light Dragoons were originally a local corps of the Irish Volunteers. Like other corps elsewhere, they sometimes functioned as an armed police force. During the Rightboy upheaval a body called the Muskerry Police Association was established at Macroom, with the Rev. Edward Synge Townsend among its subscribers (*C.H.C.*, 2 Feb. 1786).
- 149 To distrain, or to levy a distress, was an ancient and simple legal remedy used to enforce the payment of debts. Distrained goods were commonly called 'distresses'.
- 150 Bennett apparently meant that they were unmarried.
- 151 I.e., in Ballyvourney parish.
- 152 ?Thomas Barter of Cooldaniel, appointed a justice of the peace for County Cork, Nov. 1781.
- 153 I.e., Rev. Edward Synge Townsend.
- 154 See Donnelly, 'Rightboy movement', p. 178, n. 257.
- 155 Rev. Edward Weekes (1731-94), rector and vicar of Kilcully, 1771-3; of Inchigeelagh, 1773-91; and of Rathclarin, 1791-4; prebendary of Kilbrittain, 1791-4.
- 156 In baronies Carbery East and Muskerry West.
- 157 I.e., to avoid the leasing of his tithes to a tithe-farmer.
- 158 Small dues were clerical charges for cows and sheep.
- 159 Jasper Masters, appointed a justice of the peace for County Cork, Jan. 1780.
- 160 The so-called great tithes were in common parlance those levied in the south on grain and potatoes.
- 161 In par. Inchigeelagh, bar. Muskerry West. William Barry was a special target of the Rightboys because of his exactions as a tithe-farmer. See *C.H.C.*, 29 June 1786.
- 162 Augustus Louis Carré Warren (1754-1821) of Warren's Court, large landowner and zealous magistrate during the Rightboy upheaval; M.P. for Cork city, 1783-90; high sheriff of County Cork, 1796; succeeded his father as 2nd baronet, 1811.
- 163 I.e., decrees in due legal form.
- 164 I.e., Patrick Duigenan. See n. 48 above and appendix no. 1, pamphlet no. 1 below.
- 165 See n. 94 above.
- 166 This is a reference to the third section of Fr O'Leary's *Defence*, pp. 94-115.
- 167 Henry Powle (1630-92), called to the English bar, 1754; M.P. for Cirencester, 1670-80; for East Grinstead, 1680-1; for New Windsor, 1689-90; a Whig who opposed the second declaration of indulgence, endorsed the test act of 1673, urged a Dutch alliance, and supported Danby's impeachment and the exclusion of the duke of York; took no significant part in the agitation over the 'popish plot' yet played a leading role in the impeachment trial of Lord Stafford; speaker of the Convention Parliament, 1689-90; master of the rolls, 1690-2. For the declaration by Powle to which Bennett refers, see *Cobbett's complete collection of state*

trials and proceedings for high treason and other crimes and misdemeanors from the earliest period to the present time, vii (London, 1810), 1516-18.

168 William Howard (1612-80), 1st Viscount Stafford, a Catholic, was accused by Titus Oates and others of complicity in the alleged popish plot. Arrested in 1678 and imprisoned, he was later tried, convicted of high treason, and in December 1680 beheaded on Tower Hill.

169 I.e., in the third section of Fr O'Leary's *Defence* and in Woodward's *The present state of the Church of Ireland*.

APPENDIX NO. 1

List of works included in N.L.I. pamphlets 161

1. Theophilus [Patrick Duigenan], *An address to the nobility and gentry of the Church of Ireland as by law established, explaining the real causes of the commotions and insurrections in the southern parts of this kingdom respecting tithes, and the real motives and designs of the projectors and abettors of those commotions and insurrections, and containing a candid inquiry into the practicability of substituting any other mode of subsistence and maintenance for the clergy of the church established, consistent with the principles of reason and justice, in place of tithes*. Dublin: Henry Watts, 1786.
2. Richard Woodward, *The present state of the Church of Ireland, containing a description of its precarious situation and the consequent danger to the public, recommended to the serious consideration of the friends of the Protestant interest, to which are subjoined some reflections on the impracticability of a proper commutation for tithes and a general account of the origin and progress of the insurrections in Munster*. 7th ed. Dublin: W. Sleater, 1787.
3. Samuel Barber, *Remarks on a pamphlet entitled 'The present state of the Church of Ireland', by Richard, lord bishop of Cloyne*. Dublin: P. Byrne, 1787.
4. Dominick Trant, *Considerations on the present disturbances in the province of Munster, their causes, extent, probable consequences, and remedies*. Dublin: P. Byrne, 1787.

5. Arthur O'Leary, *Mr O'Leary's defence, containing a vindication of his conduct and writings during the late disturbances in Munster, with a full justification of the Catholics and an account of the risings of the Whiteboys, in answer to the false accusations of Theophilus and the ill-grounded insinuations of the Right Reverend Doctor Woodward, lord bishop of Cloyne, to which is annexed a letter from the Right Rev. Doctor Butler, titular archbishop of Cashel, to the Right Hon. Lord Viscount Kenmare, concerning the nuncio's letter and the consecration oath of bishops*. 2nd ed. rev. Cork: William Flynn, 1787.

6. *A short refutation of the arguments contained in Doctor Butler's letter to Lord Kenmare, by a dergyman*. Dublin: W. Sleater, 1787.

7. *A letter to the Rev. Doctor O'Leary found on the great road leading from the city of Cork to Cloughnakilty*. Dublin: W. Sleater, 1787.

8. *The O'Leariad translated into English verse and illustrated with notes*. Dublin: W. Sleater, 1787.

9. William Campbell, *A vindication of the principles and character of the Presbyterians of Ireland, addressed to the bishop of Cloyne in answer to his book entitled 'The present state of the Church of Ireland'*. Dublin: P. Byrne, 1787.

APPENDIX NO. 2

List of materials attached to N.L.I. MS 4161 and not reproduced in this edition

1. *Gentleman's and London Magazine, or Monthly Chronologer*, xxxvi (Apr. 1766), 243-8 (pt i, pp. 12-14v).
2. 'To the Right Hon. Lord Viscount Kenmare: the address of the clergy of the established church assembled at Tralee' (press cutting from *Freeman's Journal*, 28 Oct. 1786, inserted in pt i between p. 15 and p. 16).
3. Part of a printed circular listing Rightboy outrages since Lord Luttrell's return to Dublin, distributed by Gibbs Ross, county ranger, at the County Cork meeting, 7 Dec. 1786 (pt i, pp. 17-17v).
4. 'Sir John Colthurst's advertisement or address published previous to the county of Cork meeting, held the 7th December 1786' (pt i, p. 35, in Bennett's hand).

5. Fugitive piece no. 1: 'A full and true account [of] how the *devil* appeared lately to an elderly gentleman in Muskerry and of the discourse they had together concerning the Whiteboys' (pt i, p. 40). Aimed at Sir John Colthurst, this broadsheet is one of four fugitive pieces included by Bennett and said to have been published at Cork between Christmas 1786 and February 1787.

6. Fugitive piece no. 2: 'A full and true account [of] how a certain elderly gentleman denies his having conversed with the devil concerning the *Whiteboys*; and how he threatens, if justice is not done him, to quit the country and accept the government of Botany Bay' (pt i, p. 35v).

7. Fugitive piece no. 3: 'A dialogue between Lucifer and Beelzebub in hell concerning the elderly gentleman' (pt i, p. 37, but placed at the end of the volume).

8. Fugitive piece no. 4: 'An excellent new ballad entitled Captain Right's lamentation for the departure of his friend to Botany Bay' (pt i, p. 36). This broadside ballad is torn in two; the rest of it has been placed at the end of the volume.

9. 'To the Reverend Henry Agar, rector of the united parishes of Inniscarra and Mathea in the diocese of Cloyne and county of Cork, or to his procurator . . .' (a printed form of notice to draw tithes, inserted in pt 2 between p. 37 and p. 38). Bennett claimed that the notice was found at the residence of Joseph Capel after his death.

10. 'Letter to Lord Earlsfort written by myself and first published in the *Dublin Evening Post* of December 26th, 1786' (press cutting with the heading above in Bennett's hand; no page number marked).

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- Wilson, James, *Cloyne parish priests* [?Cork], n.d.