LEABHARLANN CHOLÁISTE NA TRÍONÓIDE, BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH | TRINITY COLLEGE LIBRARY DUBLIN
Ollscoil Átha Cliath | The University of Dublin

Terms and Conditions of Use of Digitised Theses from Trinity College Library Dublin

Copyright statement

All material supplied by Trinity College Library is protected by copyright (under the Copyright and Related Rights Act, 2000 as amended) and other relevant Intellectual Property Rights. By accessing and using a Digitised Thesis from Trinity College Library you acknowledge that all Intellectual Property Rights in any Works supplied are the sole and exclusive property of the copyright and/or other IPR holder. Specific copyright holders may not be explicitly identified. Use of materials from other sources within a thesis should not be construed as a claim over them.

A non-exclusive, non-transferable licence is hereby granted to those using or reproducing, in whole or in part, the material for valid purposes, providing the copyright owners are acknowledged using the normal conventions. Where specific permission to use material is required, this is identified and such permission must be sought from the copyright holder or agency cited.

Liability statement

By using a Digitised Thesis, I accept that Trinity College Dublin bears no legal responsibility for the accuracy, legality or comprehensiveness of materials contained within the thesis, and that Trinity College Dublin accepts no liability for indirect, consequential, or incidental, damages or losses arising from use of the thesis for whatever reason. Information located in a thesis may be subject to specific use constraints, details of which may not be explicitly described. It is the responsibility of potential and actual users to be aware of such constraints and to abide by them. By making use of material from a digitised thesis, you accept these copyright and disclaimer provisions. Where it is brought to the attention of Trinity College Library that there may be a breach of copyright or other restraint, it is the policy to withdraw or take down access to a thesis while the issue is being resolved.

Access Agreement

By using a Digitised Thesis from Trinity College Library you are bound by the following Terms & Conditions. Please read them carefully.

I have read and I understand the following statement: All material supplied via a Digitised Thesis from Trinity College Library is protected by copyright and other intellectual property rights, and duplication or sale of all or part of any of a thesis is not permitted, except that material may be duplicated by you for your research use or for educational purposes in electronic or print form providing the copyright owners are acknowledged using the normal conventions. You must obtain permission for any other use. Electronic or print copies may not be offered, whether for sale or otherwise to anyone. This copy has been supplied on the understanding that it is copyright material and that no quotation from the thesis may be published without proper acknowledgement.

Landlord responses to the Irish land war, 1879-1882

Adam D. Pole

Submitted to the Department of Modern History, Trinity College, Dublin

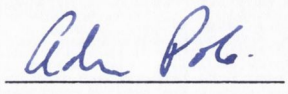
For the degree of Doctor in Philosophy

March 2006

TRINITY COLLEGE
12 MAY 2006
LIBRARY DUBLIN
THESIS
7911

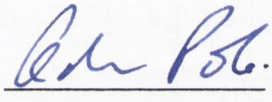
Declaration

This thesis is entirely the result of my own research and has not been submitted to any other university



Adam D. Pole

I agree that the Library may lend or copy this thesis upon request



Adam D. Pole

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank primarily my family for their support and encouragement over my years as a student: my parents Jane and Donald Pole, my brother Simon, and my aunt and uncle, Sharon and Uffe Blok-Andersen.

I would also like to thank the following people:

W. E. Vaughan for his guidance throughout the course of this research project.

Professor David Fitzpatrick, Trinity College, Dublin, and Professor Kevin O'Neill, Boston College, the examiners of this thesis, for their thoughtful suggestions which have made this a stronger thesis.

Jane Ohlmeyer for her encouragement and fostering of a collegiate community among the postgraduate students in the department of modern history.

Greg O'Connor from the National Archives for his expertise, and to the staff at the National Library of Ireland, Trinity College Library and the Public Record of Northern Ireland.

James McGuire and James Quinn for the opportunity to work for the Royal Irish Academy on its *Dictionary of Irish Biography* project.

My friends in Dublin, particularly: Tom Kelley, Emily Edwards, Robert Legg, Alan Forde, David Murphy and Carlito Travis, for their friendship and encouragement.

Fellow teaching assistants at Trinity in room 3077 for their company, including: Anna Bryson, Brian Hanley, Stefanie Jones, Katrina, Emma Tobin, Catriona Pennell, Edward Madigan, Claudia Siebrecht, Mary Muldowney.

Finally, to my grandfather, William Douglas Pole, who passed away in April 2005. He was a farmer who wished to be a professor. I dedicate this thesis to his memory.

Table of Contents

Summary i

Abbreviations ii

Chapter 1: Introduction and historiography of the land war 1

Chapter 2: Landlord power and principles of aggregation 37

- Landlord power in the 1870s 39
- Principles of aggregation 53

Chapter 3: Abatements, rents and evictions 65

- Agricultural distress 65
- Abatements 71
- Rents 93
- Arrears 102
- Evictions 105

Chapter 4: Sheriffs' Sales during the land war 126

- Origins: distraint 128
- Procedures 135
- Sales vs. evictions 143
- Sheriffs' sales as battlegrounds 146

Chapter 5: The Irish Land Committee (ILC) and the public defence of Irish landlordism 163

- Origins: who supported the ILC? 165
- Propaganda pamphlet campaign 177
- Compensation for disturbance bill 186
- Richmond and Bessborough commissions evidence 192
- Land law bill 195
- Challenging the land courts: local branches and judicial rents 204
- Landlord solidarity: January 1882 meeting at Exhibition Palace 208

Chapter 6: Landlord defence groups; the Property Defence Association (PDA) and the Orange Emergency Committee (OEC) 217

- Boycott Expedition 220
- Formation of the PDA 225
- Who supported the PDA? 227
- Organisation of the PDA 239
- PDA local branches of the PDA 255
- Formation of the OEC 258
- Who supported the OEC? 263

Organisation of the OEC 275
PDA and OEC compared 290
PDA, OEC and Land League compared 299

Chapter 7: Conclusion 305

Tables:

Table 1: Ownership of estates in Ireland by Acreage 62
Table 2: Abatements as percentage of rents due, 1879-82 89
Table 3: Comparison of Irish, English and Scottish estate rent receipts, 1879-82 98
Table 4: Yearly rents due compared to government valuation 100
Table 5: Arrears of rent, 1879-82 104
Table 6: Civil bills and civil bill ejectments, 1878-83 110
Table 7: Civil bill ejectments served, and executed, 1878-83 114
Table 8: High court ejectments executed, distinguishing those for non-payment of rent (writs of habere), 1879-82 115
Table 9: Total ejectments executed as percentage of evictions, 1879-82 117
Table 10: Quarterly returns of evictions during the land war 119
Table 11: Evictions by province, 1879-82 122
Table 12: High court writs for eviction and for the recovery of rent, ejectments for non-payment of rent, evictions, and agrarian outrages, 1879-82 141
Table 13: Judicial rents fixed by sub-commissions and civil bills courts up to 28 January, 1882 208
Table 14: Judicial rents fixed by all the methods provided by the Land Law Acts for a first statutory term during the period from 22 August, 1881 to the 31 December, 1902 214
Table 15: PDA charges for services rendered, August 1881 245
Table 16: Legal expenses associated with PDA work 245
Table 17: Receipts for OEC and PDA 294
Table 18: Expenditure of OEC and PDA 296
Table 19: Activities of the PDA and OEC compared, 1881-1883 297
Table 20: Receipts of Land League executive 300
Table 20: Expenditure of Land League executive 300

Figures:

Figure 1: Legal Remedies for landlords to enforce payment of rent 108
Figure 2: Distribution of ILC subscribers' estates by acreage 169
Figure 3: Distribution of ILC subscribers' estates and all landowners over 1,000 acres 170
Figure 4: Distribution of ILC subscribers' estates and Agrarian Outrages, 1880 172
Figure 5: Distribution of PDA members' estates by acreage 232
Figure 6: Distribution of PDA members' estates and all landowners over 1,000 acres 233
Figure 7: Distribution of PDA members' estates and Agrarian

Outrages, 1881 234
Figure 8: Distribution of PDA members' estates and Strength of the land movement using Samuel Clarke's Agitation Scale 235
Figure 9: Distribution of OEC subscribers' estates by acreage 267
Figure 10: Distribution of OEC subscribers' estates and all landowners over 1,000 acres 269
Figure 11: Distribution of OEC subscribers' estates and Agrarian Outrages, 1881 270
Figure 12: Distribution of OEC subscribers' estates and strength of the land movement using Samuel Clark's Agitation Scale 271
Figure 13: Distribution of OEC subscribers' estates and County Grand Orange Lodges in 1880 272

Appendices:

1. Rental, acres, valuation and number of tenants on estates used in this study 316
2. Abatements on twenty-two estates 319
3. Rents on thirty-one estates 322
4. Arrears on twenty-eight estates 325
5. Rent receipts and arrears on estates used (graphs) 328
6. Names and estates used in ILC data 344
7. Names and estates used in PDA data 348
8. Names and estates used in OEC data 356
9. Persons receiving OEC aid 359

Bibliography 361

Summary: 'Landlord responses to the land war, 1879-1882'

This dissertation examines rural class conflict in Victorian Ireland at a critical point when the simmering antagonism of tenant farmers over access to and possession of the land became fused with a nationalist movement and exploded into agrarian agitation during the agricultural depression of the late 1870s. The starting point of this project was that previous accounts of the land war had fixated almost entirely on the agrarian agitation of tenant farmers led by the Land League, but largely neglected to examine the responses of the landowners to this grave challenge.

This study approaches the responses of landlords to the land agitation in two ways: by examining how landlords as individuals responded on their own estates and how landlords responded collectively in forming defence organisations to protect their class interests. It is argued that while landlords increasingly used legal strategies to enforce the payment of rent and thereby combat the land agitation, they increasingly did so by the use of sheriff's sales of livestock and the interest of farms. Too much focus has traditionally been given to evictions during the land war, and generally in the nineteenth century, and this thesis illustrates that while there were thousands of evictions during this period, there were many more sheriff's sales to enforce the payment of rent.

Through the examination of estate rentals it is also demonstrated that contrary to the traditional view and contemporary rhetoric, there was not a general withholding of rents during the land war. This finding casts doubt on the Land League's effectiveness in controlling the actions of tenant farmers when it came to striking a blow against the land system by withholding rent. Although arrears mounted on most estates, use of legal strategies such as the sheriff's sale and ejectment processes successfully forced rent payment and thereby combated the land agitation.

Drawing on a model of collective action, it is illustrated that hundreds of landlords joined defence organisations to protect their class interest and to provide effective and material defence to their estates and farming operations. The Property Defence Association and the Orange Emergency Committee (part of the Grand Orange Lodge) combated the aims and frustrated the tactics of the Land League at almost every turn: supplying men to serve processes, supplying labourers to boycotted farms, sending agents to bid on seized livestock and farm interests at sheriff's sales, and armed caretakers to guard holdings from which families had been evicted.

Abbreviations

CSORP	Chief Secretary's Office, Registered Papers (National Archive, Dublin)
FJ	*The Freeman's Journal*
GC & AS	*Gorey Correspondent & Arklow Standard*
ILC	Irish Land Committee
JSSIS	*Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland*
KCC	King's County Chronicle
NAI	National Archives, Dublin
NLI	National Library of Ireland
OEC	Orange Emergency Committee
PDA	Property Defence Association
TCD	Trinity College, Dublin

Chapter 1

Introduction and historiography of the Irish land war

On 3 January 1882, the duke of Abercorn, one of the wealthiest landowners in Ireland, presided over the largest gathering of landowners in Dublin since the Irish parliament met in College Green in 1800. The estimated 3,000 to 4,000 men and women attended the meeting to show class solidarity by condemning the administration of the 1881 land law act's rent tribunals which had lowered the rents of tenant farmers across the country. With several prominent catholic peers such as the earl of Fingall, the earl of Westmeath, as well as Lord Bellew, Lord de Freyne and Lord Louth, the meeting also demonstrated that the landlord cause was not solely a protestant one. To great cheers throughout the Exhibition Palace, Abercorn thundered: 'We will not allow our fortunes and the birthright of our children to be sacrificed in a vain attempt to perpetuate and appease a seditious and homicidal Land League'.[1] The meeting was remarkable because it demonstrated the unity of Irish landowners in condemning what was seen as extreme partiality in the administration of an act which curbed their property rights. W. E. Gladstone's land law act was a palliative to soothe a disturbed Ireland, the enacting of which was highly improbable without the agrarian agitation directed by the Land League. Although the landlord meeting was

[1] *The Times*, 4 Jan. 1882.

remarkable for its size it paled in comparison to the activities of landowners in the three years preceding it in defending their class interests and enforcing their property rights on their estates.

The starting point of this study is that nearly all previous accounts of the land war had focused on the agrarian agitation directed by the Land League but largely glossed over how landlords responded to this significant challenge. The agitation was, after all, called a 'war', and it seems imperative to a fuller understanding of such an important event to uncover and critically assess how the other 'combatants', the landlords, acted and reacted to this unprecedented class challenge. As discussed in more detail below, there were many reasons for this omission but the most basic has been a reticence to study a class who were popularly viewed as foreign parasites that blocked access to the land and hindered the attainment of national independence from Britain. This dissertation does not argue that Irish landowners in the late nineteenth century should be praised rather than vilified, but it does argue that their responses should be closely studied for a fuller understanding of the land war.

The Irish National Land League, established in Dublin in October 1879, roused nascent rural discontent during an agricultural depression and directed it into a class war against landlords. With the effective national leadership of Michael Davitt and Charles Stewart Parnell, and the establishment of hundreds of local branches throughout Ireland, the League directed farmers to thwart

landlords enforcing their property rights. The intimidation of process servers to prevent the delivery of summonses initiating ejectment proceedings curtailed the landlords' ability to evict or threaten to evict tenants who did not pay rent. Where evictions occurred the League propagated a moral code that barred farmers in the community from renting a farm from which the family had been evicted. At a land meeting at Westport, County Mayo, in June 1879, Parnell had spoken of the tenant farmer's moral right to the land he tilled, and advised farmers to 'keep a firm grip on their homesteads,' and to morally ostracize the 'landgrabbers' who rented evicted holdings.[2] Where landlords or their agents refused abatements, or evicted tenants, they could be boycotted and left without labourers to harvest crops, blacksmiths to shoe horses, or even a market to sell cattle or crops. All of these strategies were effective in hampering the ability of landowners to maintain their farming operations and control their estates.

It is the contention of this study, however, that landlords developed successful counter strategies to deal with each of these Land League techniques. In December 1880 two defence organisations were established to protect the interests of landowners and to oppose the Land League. Where process servers were intimidated men were hired from the Property Defence Association or the Orange Emergency Committee to deliver them. Where a landlord or agent was boycotted, such as the eponymous Captain Charles Boycott, agent of the earl of

---

[2] Michael Davitt, *The Fall of Feudalism in Ireland: or, the story of the Land League revolution* (London, 1904), p. 154.

Erne's Lough Mask, County Mayo estate, armed labourers were brought from outside the county to reap the harvest. Where there existed a community-sanctioned moratorium on farms from which families had been evicted, armed caretakers were hired to protect the holding from general trespass and to keep the fences and buildings in repair. The most novel and effective legal strategy adopted by landlords was the use of sheriffs' sales to recover rent. The use of these sales allowed landlords to enforce the payment of rent and collect rent as a debt, thereby not having to rely on ejectments which caused so much anger in the local community. And, where tenant farmers and League members attempted to thwart the purpose of the sales by refusing to bid on the farmer's goods, agents were sent to sheriffs' sales throughout the country to prevent their abortion from a lack of bidders. These were the battles of the land war.

This study takes two approaches. The first is to examine the responses of landlords on their estates and the second is to examine the collective response of landlords. There is, of course, overlapping content between the two approaches. For example, while sheriff's sales are examined in detail in chapter four, they are also analysed in chapter six, in which they form part of the discussion on the effectiveness of landlord defence groups. A study devoted completely to the collective action of landlords and the various defence groups, or another focused solely on landlord and tenant relations on estates, would have only shed partial

light on landlord responses. This study attempts to illuminate landlord reactions as much as possible.

Going against the recent trend for local and regional studies of the land war, this is a national study examining the landlord defence response in Ireland as a whole. The main reason for this was because a national study filled the biggest gap in the historiography: since so little had been written about what landlords did during the land war, it made the most sense to develop a framework which asked the big questions. When faced with the agitation and boycotting did landlords simply opt for ejectment and eviction to clear troublesome tenants from their estates? To what extent were abatements given during the land war and how did this affect landlord and tenant relations and the propensity for tenants to pay their rents? Was there a general withholding of rent during the land war as was claimed at the time and since? Could landlords effectively combine to defend their class interests against the Land League? These important questions were best tackled in a national study.

Local and regional studies are most useful when their microcosmic findings can be compared to a larger and more general picture, to contrast and throw in relief what happened at the local level. Frank Thompson's study of Ulster and Donald Jordan's examination of County Mayo during the land war are more useful and comprehensible because the groundwork had earlier been laid

down by historians such as John Pomfret, Norman Palmer and Paul Bew.[3] It is hoped that this present study provides a similar basis for investigation into topics such as landlord defence movements at the county level and detailed investigation into the key leaders of Irish landlordism in the early 1880s such as Arthur MacMurrough Kavanagh.

Historiography of the land war

Since the 1970s there has been a steady increase in the number and variety of approaches to examining the 'land question' in general and the land war in particular. Where the subject of these studies has been the land war, the focus has been almost entirely on the land agitation directed by the Land League. Until very recently, any mention of the collective response of landowners to the land agitation has been superficial and brief.[4] There have been studies of Land League leaders,[5] of the collective action of the agitation,[6] and of the land war in regional

---

[3] Frank Thompson, *The End of Liberal Ulster: Land Agitation and Land Reform, 1868-1886* (Belfast, 2001); Donald E. Jordan, *Land and Popular Politics in Ireland: County Mayo from the Plantation to the Land War* (Cambridge, 1994); John Pomfret, *The Struggle for Land in Ireland* (Princeton, 1930); Norman Dunbar Palmer, *The Irish Land League Crisis* (New Haven, 1940); Paul Bew, *Land and the National Question in Ireland, 1858-82* (Dublin, 1978).

[4] The exception is L. Perry Curtis, Jr.'s article 'Landlord Responses to the Land War', *Éire-Ireland,* xxxviii, no. 3-4 (2003), pp. 134-189.

[5] T. W. Moody, *Davitt and the Irish Revolution, 1846-82* (Oxford, 1981); Paul Bew, *C. S. Parnell* (Dublin, 1980).

[6] Samuel Clark, 'The Social Composition of the Land League', *Irish Historical Studies,* 17: 68 (Sept. 1971), pp. 447-69; Idem., 'The Political Mobilization of Irish Farmers', *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology,* 22: 4 pt. 2 (Nov. 1975), pp. 483-99; Idem.; *Social Origins of the Irish Land War* (Princeton, 1979).

areas,[7] but a paucity of detail on the responses and activities of landowners during the land war. There are several reasons for this imbalance, probably the most important of which is that most studies of the land question generally have had a nationalist political subtext. Landlords were the villains in the story of independent Ireland, and their predatory nature seemed self-evident. Another reason is that it was not until the 1930s and 1940s that landed families began depositing their estate papers in libraries and archives in greater numbers. Once these primary source materials were available, scholars could frame questions around them. To understand a series of events as important as the land war in initiating a social revolution in rural Ireland – the overthrow of the landed elite in their position of power in local government by tenant farmers – it is incumbent upon historians to elucidate as much of the land war as possible. This means studying the side that lost the land war: the landowners.

Beginning in the 1860s, solution to the 'land question' was tied more and more to the 'national question' of, at minimum, the return of Dublin's parliament, and which culminated in the 'new departure' of 1879 that provided the national leadership for the land war. The one, of course, could prove to be a stepping stone to the other: abolish or curtail the power of landlords, the 'British garrison' in Ireland, by politicising the farmers who, once they owned their farms, would seek the next logical step – national independence. Even after the 1881 land act

---

[7] James S. Donnelly, *Land and the People of Cork* (London, 1975); Jordan, *Land and Popular Politics in Ireland: County Mayo from the Plantation to the Land War*; J. W. H. Carter, *The Land war and Its Leaders in Queen's County, 1879-82* (Portlaoise, 1994).

granted what most smaller farmers wanted – lower rents – and later acts provided increasingly desirable terms for farm purchase to occupying tenants, for large sections of society, the destruction of landlordism and the obtainment of home rule remained the mantras of the day. The connection of these two goals in political terms is also evident in the historiography of the land question and the land war until the 1970s when many studies emerged with an economic focus of how estates worked, leading to a revision of the traditional view of predatory landlords.

There have been three approaches in the historiography of the land war: to link the land and national questions; to examine rural social structures and relations between landlord and tenant; and to study the land war in regions. Early histories focused on the connections between the land and national questions. Influential historians such as John Pomfret, writing in the late 1920s, perpetuated the nineteenth-century nationalist view of landlords as absentee, rack renting and protestant – essentially foreigners in Ireland who buttressed an alien land and legal system: 'The landlords as a class were alien and absentee, and had little interest either in the welfare of the peasants or in the improvement of their property.'[8] As W. E. Vaughan has observed, histories such as Pomfret's helped institutionalise the view of the predator and absentee Irish landlord, who squeezed his tenants for every penny they had, rarely trod across his estates, and

[8] Pomfret, *The Struggle for Land in Ireland*, p. 27.

spent his money in London rather than supporting the local shops.[9] Worse than simply being conspicuous spenders in luxury goods landlords also were not investors in agriculture and therefore did not try to improve their estates, to the detriment of Irish farmers and Irish agriculture. Pomfret propagated the seemingly *a priori* claim that the most important thing to know about the landlord response to the land war was the number of evictions carried out. This was also a continuation of the nineteenth-century fixation on evictions. During the land war, landlords, 'scenting great loss in terms of the land bill before Parliament were evicting tenants at every opportunity.'[10] Certainly evictions dramatically increased during the 1879-82 period in comparison with the relatively prosperous previous ten years: 4,879 actual evictions for the 1869-78 period and 11,215 actual evictions for 1879-82, over half of which occurred in 1881 and 1882.[11] For the families removed from their homes, evictions were the cruel and merciless events that have held such a prominent place in the nationalist ethos of the land question. Too much focus on evictions, however, obscures rather than illuminates much

---

[9] W. E. Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenant in Mid-Victorian Ireland* (Oxford, 1994), pp. v-viii.

[10] Pomfret, *The Struggle for Land in Ireland*, pp. 172-73.

[11] Actual evictions refer to the number of families evicted less those families readmitted to their farms. *Return, 'by Provinces and Counties (Compiled from Returns Made to the Inspector-General, Royal Irish Constabulary) of Cases of Evictions which have Come to the Knowledge of the Constabulary in Each of the Years 1849 to 1880, inclusive,* HC 1881 (185), lxxvii. 725; *Return '(Compiled from Returns Made to the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary) of Cases of Eviction which have Come to the Knowledge of the Constabulary in Each Quarter of the Year Ending 31 Dec. 1880, Showing the Number of Families Evicted in Each County in Ireland during Each Quarter of Families Evicted in Each County in Ireland during Each Quarter, Number Readmitted as Tenants, and the Number Readmitted as Caretakers'* HC 1881 (2) lxxvii. 713; *Return ... to 31 Dec. 1881*, HC 1882 (9), lv. 229; *Return...to 31 Dec. 1882* [C 3465], HC 1883, lvi 99.

about the landlord response during the land war and oversimplifies a complex set of potential responses to the land agitation. A central claim of the present investigation is that eviction was not the tool of choice for landlords dealing with increasingly recalcitrant tenants during the land war, although Pomfret was correct in that there was a correlation between the land bill, the eventual suppression of the League in 1881, and the increasingly vigorous legal strategies employed by landlords. Evictions, however, were not the only legal tactic available to landlords. The sheriff's sale – the seizure and sale of a tenant's goods or chattel interest in his farm – increasingly became the strategy of choice to collect debt and break estate combinations against paying rent.

As Vaughan has noted, part of the problem with Pomfret's study of the land question was framed by the sources available to him, since he consulted records of what people said about tenants, landlords, evictions and estate practices, rather than consulting estate accounts and papers.[12] Estate papers were not prevalent in archives when Pomfret did his research, which was beyond his control, but he also relied too much on Michael Davitt's account of the land war, *The Fall of Feudalism in Ireland* (1904), and Davitt was hardly a disinterested observer of the events in question. Davitt's and Pomfret's histories helped establish the orthodox view of tyrannical landlords who were defeated in the land war, and which fit well into the national story of independent Ireland. Predatory

[12] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, pp. vi-vii.

landlordism had a teleological appeal which explained both the land war and the eventual abolition of landlordism following independence.[13]

A recent study of the political importance of the land question has examined the significance of the land war in how it shaped nationalism in Ireland, concluding that land became a metaphor for nationalism. Philip Bull's *Land, Politics and Nationalism* (1998) was framed as a successor to both R. Barry O'Brien's *The Parliamentary History of the Irish Land Question* (1880) and Pomfret's *The Struggle for Land in Ireland,* and this is evident in Bull's representation of landlords. The fundamental problem facing Irish landlords in the 1870s was, on the one hand, their lack of legitimacy in owning the land, and on the other, their seeming confinement within British *laissez-faire* economics.[14] In this deterministic view, Irish landlords were doomed by their inheritance of the status of confiscators. Like Pomfret, Bull strongly emphasised the 'alien' status of landlords which, for Pomfret was indicative of their inattention and inability to deal fairly with their tenants, and for Bull, seemed to hinder their ability to understand the 'Irish' conception of how the land system should work. Bull referred to the 'defensiveness forced on [landlords] by their alien origin, both ethnically and in the very concept of land tenure implicit in their existence…'.[15] Fundamentally weakened by their foreign status, landlords were also doomed by

---

[13] Ibid., p. vi.

[14] Philip Bull, *Land, Politics and Nationalism. A Study of the Irish Land Question* (Dublin, 1998), p. 84.

[15] Ibid., p. 78.

their participation in a *laissez-faire* form of economic interaction with their tenants which further eroded any paternalistic vestiges remaining in the landlord and tenant relationship. After the famine Irish landlords increasingly operated on assumptions of economic right rather than social harmony with economic stability as the basis of landlordism, and this further alienated them from their tenants who expected from landownership some degree of social paternalism.[16] Bull certainly made too much of the alien status of landlords in the 1870s. In political propaganda it made sense to use rhetorical conventions which depicted landlords as foreign. Applied to a small class of wealthy and powerful men, this was effective in the abstract but was not necessarily accurate when applied to individual cases. Firstly, not all landlords were protestant: in 1871, forty percent of Irish landlords were catholic and fifty-six percent were protestant, although the largest and wealthiest landlords were most likely protestant.[17] Secondly, as discussed below in more detail, it is doubtful that landlords were conceptually bound by the practices of political economy. There were too many paternalistic remnants for this to be true. Both Samuel Clark and Frank Thompson have discussed the importance of estate systems which provided some form of social security net for the smallest farmers.[18] From the work of historians who have examined estate papers between the famine and the land war, it is clear that if rent levels were indicative of adherence to a *laissez-faire* approach to landlord and

[16] Ibid.
[17] *Census of Ireland, 1871:* pt. iii. Gen. Rep. 1876 [c.1377] lxxxI.1, p. 91
[18] See below pp. 29-30.

tenant relations, than perhaps most landlords were unaware of its principles, for most landlords charged at least twenty percent below market or competitive rents.[19]

Bull's depiction of landlords in the 1870s and 1880s was not very different from Pomfret's. Between 1930 and 1998, however, many of the stereotypes of landlords were revised. Norman D. Palmer's *The Irish Land League Crisis* (1940) was an important departure from Pomfret in its view of landlords. Although Palmer argued that the tenant farmer was generally in a precarious position in post-famine Ireland ('He held the land at the will of his landlord; he was totally without capital; his rent was always in arrears'),[20] the fault lay with the land system rather than with landlords as a class. Throughout his study, Palmer circumspectly, yet persistently, made the case that although there were absentee, rack-renting and evicting landlords, they were the exception and not the rule: 'Undoubtedly, if distinction had to be made between the "sheep" and the "goats", the good landlords and the bad, the majority of Irish landowners would be found on the right hand of glory'.[21] He still, however, used the moralistic labels 'good' and 'bad' to describe landlords which were so pervasive throughout the nineteenth century. It was not until the 1960s and 1970s that the general framework for discussing landlords broke free of these moral categories.

---

[19] See below p. 16.
[20] Palmer, *The Irish Land League Crisis*, p. 12.
[21] Ibid., p. 22.

Palmer was the first historian to focus on the land war itself, assessing the activities of the Land League and most importantly for this present study, outlining some of the activities of landlords during the land war.[22] He certainly presented a more balanced view on the response of landlords to the agitation than Pomfret. Landlords did not simply opt for eviction but also sought to influence public and parliamentary opinion through a series of 'fact' providing pamphlets produced by the Irish Land Committee. This positive exposure highlighted the benevolent activities of landowners and went some way to countering the perpetual problem of all landlords being tarred with the same negative brush. Palmer's work was innovative because it argued for the first time that landlords were active in their own defence and came to develop collective strategies that in some ways mirrored those of the Land League. The Irish Land Committee, the Property Defence Association and the Orange Emergency Committee figure prominently in this present study, as instrumental parts of the landlord collective, influencing public opinion and aiding landlords in peril through the supply of labour and caretakers to boycotted families.

Although Palmer's work went a little way to establishing that, at the very least, not all Irish landlords were cruel masters, it was not until the post 1940s interest in social and economic history that a sound basis for this revision was established. From the 1950s, new forms of social science-oriented history

[22] Ibid., pp. 218-231.

emerged which emphasised social structures and processes of social change. Whereas previously, landlords had been studied as foils to nationalist Ireland or oppressors of helpless farmers, in the 1960s and 1970s they began to be studied in their own right and how they interacted with their tenants in the rural economy. Certainly the increased availability of rentals, estate records and other primary sources allowed historians to make clearer judgements about what landlords were actually doing on their estates, rather than what contemporaries said they were doing on their estates. At the very least the newly available sources allowed for comparison with the more traditionally used printed sources such as the Richmond, Bessborough and Cowper commissions of the 1880s,[23] and memoirs of nationalist politicians and newspapers, to determine if what was said in public forums matched what was recorded in private documents.

The contrast between Pomfret's work and the newer histories of the 1970s by Vaughan, Barbara M. Solow and James S. Donnelly Jr. was striking.[24] This second thread in the historiography of landlords and the land war revolutionized how landlords were depicted in dealing with their tenants, particularly in terms of rent levels in the post-famine period. Vaughan, using a large number of estate

---

[23] *Preliminary Report from Her Majesty's Commissioners on Agriculture* [C 2778], HC 1881, xv. 1; *Report of Her Majesty's Commission of Inquiry into the Working of the Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, and the Acts Amending the Same* [C 2779], HC 1881, xviii, 1; *Report of the Royal Commission on the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881, and the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1885* [C 4969], HC 1887, xxvi. 1.

[24] W. E. Vaughan, 'A Study of Landlord and Tenant Relations in Ireland between the Famine and the Land War' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Dublin, 1974); James S. Donnelly Jr., *Land and the People of Cork* (London, 1975); B. L. Solow, *The Land Question and the Irish Economy, 1870-1903* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971).

records, and Solow, using parliamentary papers and government statistics, proved that landlords were not the vampiric fiends of lore, raising rents as often as possible. It was established that rents were infrequently raised, though the haphazard nature of the increases and their unpredictability did lend some credence to the arbitrariness of it all. Solow argued for a national rent increase of just under thirty percent between 1850 and 1880.[25] Donnelly, in his study of County Cork, suggested an average rental increase of between twenty and thirty percent in post-famine Ireland and Vaughan's study of the rentals of over fifty estates throughout Ireland arrived at a nation-wide rent increase of twenty percent between the early 1850s and late 1870s.[26] These figures were much lower than had previously, albeit without much actual investigation, been thought.

Not only were rents only moderately raised in the post-famine period, but tenant farmers and landlords benefited by the great increase in crop and livestock prices from the 1850s to the 1870s. The new argument, therefore, was that tenant farmers reaped the great benefits of continually rising prices for their farm products while at the same time their overhead, in the form of rents, was static or infrequently increased. All agricultural incomes rose in post-famine Ireland, but tenants got the greatest share. Between the 1850s and the 1870s, the value of agriculture output rose by seventy percent while rents were only raised by twenty

---

[25] Solow, *The Land Question and the Irish Economy*, pp. 67-70.

[26] Donnelly, *Land and the People of Cork*, p. 194; Vaughan, 'A Study of Landlord and Tenant Relations in Ireland between the Famine and the Land war' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Dublin, 1974), p. 49, cited in Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, p. 48.

percent in the same period.[27] According to Vaughan, 'Far from taking advantage of their tenants' improvements, they [landlords] did not take anything like a proportionate share of the income created by price increases'.[28] Michael Turner has challenged Vaughan on the extent to which tenant farmers were really the winners in the distribution of post-famine incomes, emphasising that landlords were also farmers and therefore shared in the prosperity. According to Turner, the value of agricultural output between the 1850s and the 1870s was much less than Vaughan's estimate, citing an increase of just nineteen percent.[29] Turner noted that whereas tenants' incomes rose by twenty-two percent during this period, landlords' incomes rose by twenty percent, and thus for Turner, 'the difference was marginal'.[30]

Vaughan has pointed out one of the great ironies of the landlords and tenants question in post-famine Ireland: if landlords had in fact raised their rents as high and as often as they were reported to, and believed to, have done but at least in a clearer or more rational way, then they would have fared much better in responding to the agrarian agitation when it came in 1879.[31] Solow concluded that for reasons of social custom landlords charged below a competitive rent for

---

[27] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, p. 51.

[28] Ibid., p. 52.

[29] Michael Turner, *After the Famine. Irish Agriculture, 1850-1914* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 213.

[30] Ibid., p. 205.

[31] Vaughan, 'An assessment of the economic performance of Irish landlords, 1851-81', in F.S.L. Lyons and R.A.J. Hawkins (eds.), *Ireland under the Union: Varieties of Tension. Essays in Honour of T. W. Moody* (Oxford, 1980), p.180.

their farms and thus they were not acting as 'economic maximizers'.[32] Landlords did not approach the rental of their lands as a strictly economic endeavour; they were cognisant of the importance of good relations with farmers on their estates and in their neighbourhood. On a practical side they also would not have wanted a tenant with exhausted capital who would barely be able to pay the rent in a good year.

If landlords had been economic maximizers, would the land war have even happened? Had landlords really charged 'rack rents', or rents obtainable on an open market, then they might have been able to grant levels of abatements that would have satisfied most tenant farmers and might have nipped the agitation in the bud. The fact that rents were not raised as high as they presumably could have been meant that landlords were restricted in their ability to grant abatements and allow arrears to accumulate on their estates during the land war. Indeed, it was the post-famine prosperity, in which rents were punctually paid, that allowed Irish landlords to borrow heavily on their estates to finance building projects, establish jointures and conspicuously spend.[33]

In an interesting confluence, Terence Dooley and James S. Donnelly Jr., both presented arguments that post-famine prosperity and the subsequent high levels of borrowing later determined the behaviour of both landlords and tenants

---

[32] Solow, *Land Question and the Irish Economy*, 32-34.

[33] L. P. Curtis; 'Incumbered Wealth: Landed Indebtedness in Post-Famine Ireland' *AHR* 85: 2 (Apr. 1980), pp. 332-67; T.M. Dooley, *The Decline of the Big House in Ireland: A Study of Irish Landed Families, 1860-1960* (Dublin, 2000), pp. 79-111.

in the late 1870s. Donnelly's thesis was that the agrarian agitation and the land war were principally caused by the 'rising expectations' of farmers, who, once having achieved a level of material comfort and social standing were unwilling to relinquish this lifestyle without a fight.[34] With the wet weather, poor harvests, foreign competition and consequent agricultural depression in the late 1870s, tenant farmers had fixed costs but declining incomes. As Vincent Comerford has explained: 'individual landlords, shopkeepers, and farmers simply reacted, as individuals almost invariably will in such circumstances, by endeavouring to extract as much as ever for themselves, not because they were vicious but because they needed it to maintain the lifestyle on which their socio-economic standing and their self-esteem depended'.[35] Just as tenant farmers rode the wave of prosperity and borrowed and spent heavily in post-famine decades, so too did Irish landowners, who 'had gone in search of mortgages' but 'put very little aside for what were literally to become the rainy days from the late 1870s'.[36] One can see how both farmers and landlords were faced with similar challenges by the agricultural depression in the late 1870s. Both landlords and tenants had benefited from the increased agricultural output and price increases in post-famine Ireland. Both had experienced improvements in income – farmers from mostly static rents but higher agricultural prices and landlords from punctually

---

[34] Donnelly, *Land and the People of Cork*, pp. 184-200.

[35] R. V. Comerford, 'The land war and the politics of distress, 1877-82' in W. E. Vaughan (ed.), *A New History of Ireland*, vol. vi: *Ireland Under the Union, II, 1870-1921* (Oxford, 1996), p. 43.

[36] Dooley, *Decline of the Big House in Ireland*, pp. 79- 80.

paid rents and higher agricultural prices. Both had then done the not uncommon thing of borrowing up to the limit of their resources – farmers, especially after the 1870 land act, from shopkeepers, and landlords from banks and insurance companies.[37] Thus, when agricultural depression set in and creditors came knocking on their doors, farmers did not wish to experience a fall in the standard of living, and debts to shopkeepers were chosen to be paid over debts to landlords. As Comerford has explained, 'not unnaturally, farmers and shopkeepers responded readily to the idea that agricultural rents lacked the moral legitimacy of other debts and might be delayed, reduced, or withheld to facilitate the meeting of other commitments,' and that it was simply tough luck for landlords that this view 'commanded widespread sympathy in and out of Ireland, even among people who proclaimed the sanctity of all other forms of property'.[38] For landlords, on the other hand, their extensive borrowing had left their hands tied in their ability to fully accommodate their tenants by allowance and abatement, particularly when it became clear that many tenants *would* not pay rather than simply *could* not pay their rents.

Both Donnelly and Dooley presented cases in which the over-reliance on borrowing to maintain a particular lifestyle and social standing resulted in the potential responses to face a sudden and dramatic fall in income. It is clear that

---

[37] Gilbert de L. Willis, Paper No.3. Appendix D, *Report of the Royal Commission on the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881, and the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1885. Minutes of Evidence and Appendices,*, [C 4969-I] HC 1887 xxvi. 25.

[38] Comerford, 'The land war and the politics of distress', p. 43.

landlords had few options in obtaining any kind of leniency from their creditors: banks and insurance companies did not allow abatements simply because a particular landlord was not receiving the rents he relied upon to make his loan or mortgage payments. Larger landowners could afford, to a much higher degree, to allow arrears to build up on their estates whereas smaller landlords simply could not. The validity of Donnelly's 'rising expectations' thesis is not as clear, for there was a similar agricultural depression in the early 1860s preceded by many prosperous years yet there was no agricultural agitation at that time. The outbreak of the 1879-82 land war, therefore, is inexplicable without the united political leadership which was ready to exploit agrarian discontent.[39]

Important studies in the 1970s by Samuel Clark and Paul Bew focused on the social structures in post-famine society and how they shaped the Land League and the land war.[40] Clark and Bew studied the land war in terms of the social tensions at local levels, arriving at opposing views on the nature of class alliance in rural Ireland. Clark stressed the importance of organisation and local leadership in his sociological model of collective action. Class antagonisms decreased in the post-famine period allowing for the creation of an environment where a united tenantry could be mobilised against landlords. Tenant farmers of varying sizes

---

[39] Vaughan, *Landlords and tenants in Ireland, 1848-1904* (Dundalk, 1984), pp. 32-33.

[40] Samuel Clark, 'The Social Composition of the Land League', *Irish Historical Studies,* 17: 68 (Sept. 1971), pp. 447-69; Idem., 'The Political Mobilization of Irish Farmers', *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology,* 22: 4 pt. 2 (Nov. 1975), pp. 483-99; Idem.; *Social Origins of the Irish Land War* (Princeton, 1979); Paul Bew, *Land and the National Question in Ireland, 1858-82* (Dublin, 1978).

became a more cohesive group with increasing commercial ties to the local town and to the shopkeepers who provided them with credit, and during the land agitation, leadership. The land war was thus a battle between two groups of creditors – shopkeepers and landlords – both of whom were trying to recover their debts from tenant farmers.

Bew, on the other hand, emphasised discord rather than unity in the rural class coalition founded on fragile class alliance. His Marxist interpretation of the agrarian agitation emphasised conflict between large agricultural capitalist farmers and small farmers. For Bew, historians' traditional emphasis on the unity of farmers employing the boycott strategy hid the reality of class antagonism which became evident in the other important strategy, the 'rent at the point of the bayonet' tactic.[41] Bew's major influence on this present study is his exploration of the Land League's policy of advising tenants to resist the landlord and the law to the last possible moment – by paying rent only at the point of the bayonet – when the sheriff was about to auction off their cattle or farm interest for debt to the landlord.[42] Bew characterised this strategy as a more effective offensive tactic than the boycott, which, he argued, was essentially defensive and would not have kept rents down. He made much of rent at the point of the bayonet and saw it as successful until 1881, arguing that landlords' hands were tied and that they lacked the backbone to counteract. The present study will point to the effective

[41] Bew, *Land and the National Question in Ireland,* pp. 222-223.
[42] Ibid., pp. 121-126.

hollowness of the rent at bayonet strategy, as in the case of the sale of the interest of farms at least, the farmer's self-interest was clear: he would allow his cattle to be auctioned off but not his farm. Although for Bew the rent at the bayonet was a more effective and offensive weapon than the boycott, it was also a short-lived success as landlords had successfully challenged this method by 1881.

Critics of those studying the social structures of rural society to account for the land war, in particular Clark's class alliance forming the necessary local leadership and Donnelly's 'rising expectations' thesis, have argued for the missing ingredient of strong national leadership. Vaughan has argued that both Clark's and Donnelly's explanations are weak on timing. Clark's emphasis on the credit and kinship nexus between townsmen, particularly shopkeepers, and tenant farmers does not explain why a land agitation erupted at the end of the 1870s but not during a similar agricultural depression in the early 1860s. It is also clear that shopkeepers sought debt recovery from tenant farmers much more frequently than landlords did.[43] Examination of the decree and order book of the County Wexford sheriff during the land war clearly illustrates that while most debtors were farmers, most creditors were merchants and shopkeepers. This fact surely undermines Clark's townsmen-farmer alliance theory.[44] Similarly, the 'rising expectations' thesis could apply to the prosperity preceding the early 1860s agricultural depression just as that preceding the late 1870s one. The fact that

[43] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, p. 210.

[44] NAI, Sheriffs' Decree and Order Books, Co. Wexford, vol. 15, 1879, IC 43 56; vol. 16, 1880, IC 43 57; vol. 17, 1881, IC 43 58; vol. 18, 1882, IC 43 59.

material expectations rose for tenant farmers in the 1870s seems very plausible, but it is quite a different thing to be able to prove that expectations were rising.[45] What primarily explains the outbreak of the land war in 1879 is the combination of the credit and kinship nexus between townsmen and farmers, the years of prosperity following the famine, the severe agricultural depression of the late 1870s and effective national leadership to whip up and guide the agitation. Both Vaughan and T. W. Moody[46] have stressed the essentiality of the national leadership of Davitt and Parnell. Without it, it is very unlikely the agitation would have lasted as long as it did, across as much of Ireland as it did, or achieve as much as it did.

The work of W. L. Feingold on poor law board elections during the land war has also cast doubt on Clark's theory of class alliance. During the land war there was a concerted movement to seize control of the boards of guardians from the landed interest throughout the country.[47] Feingold examined the Tralee, County Kerry, poor law election of March 1881, and illustrated that while most landowners supported conservative and landed candidates, shopkeepers and farmers were not overwhelming supporters of Land League candidates. Little

---

[45] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, p. 211.

[46] T. W. Moody, *Davitt and Irish Revolution, 1846-82* (Oxford, 1981).

[47] W. L. Feingold, 'Land League Power: The Tralee Poor-Law Election of 1881' in Samuel Clark and James S. Donnelly, Jr., (eds.) *Irish Peasants: Violence and Political Unrest, 1780-1914* (Madison, 1986), p. 286.

more than half of the shopkeepers and farmers who voted in the election supported Land League candidates; they voted according to personal choice.[48]

The third approach in the historiography has been the undertaking of detailed local and regional studies. Beginning with Donnelly's *Land and the People of Cork* in 1975, there have been several important local and regional studies that shed much needed light on landlord and tenant relations and the land war. Local studies are, of course, essential because that is where the land war was actually 'fought'. Although Donnelly focused on much broader and more long-term issues than simply the land war, his history was instrumental in detailing a region using landed estate records. In a more recent county study, J. W. H. Carter examined the land war in Queen's County, and emphasised the importance of national leadership in guiding the agitation there.[49] Because of the importance of the livestock economy to Queen's, the county was not as badly hit by the agricultural depression of the late 1870s as were western counties such as Mayo, and, therefore, the agitation was slower to take hold there. Carter argued that landlords were basically limited in their potential response to the agitation to strategies of either abatement or eviction. There is, consequently, an inevitability in his account of the land war, since tenant farmers would apparently have been driven into the arms of the Land League whether landlords took a hard or soft

[48] Ibid., pp. 304-305.
[49] Carter, *The Land War and Its Leaders in Queen's County, 1879-82.*

approach to the agitation. Eviction or the attempt to recover debt in the courts intensified feelings of insecurity for the tenant, but abatements or concessions indicated weakness on the part of the landlord.[50] In characterising the landlords' response to the agitation, Carter seemed to agree with Gladstone's infamous 7 October 1881 speech in Leeds in which the prime minister characterised the propertied class as cowards totally reliant on the government to defend property without moral force behind it.[51] Although the Property Defence Association was established as a national organisation in December 1880, there was no local Queen's County branch formed until ten months later, indicating that the county was not a prominent area of landlord defense activity. Carter's account focused on the land agitation in the county though his brief account of landlord defence efforts added a new element to local knowledge of the land war.[52]

Donald Jordan, who examined the land war in County Mayo, the birthplace of the land agitation, argued, like Clark, for a united rural alliance of tenant farmers under the leadership of townsmen, but, like Bew, also argued that the alliance was short lived and that class conflict soon emerged between the large graziers and small tenant farmers.[53] According to Jordan, there were two 'simultaneous agrarian revolutions': one by grazier and large tenant farmers who sought reduced rents so they could fully profit from the market economy, and the

---

[50] Ibid., p. 287.

[51] *The Times,* 8 Oct. 1881.

[52] Carter, *The Land War and Its Leaders in Queen's County*, p. 288.

[53] Jordan, *Land and Popular Politics in Ireland: County Mayo from the Plantation to the Land War.*

second by small farmers who sought security of tenure and more equitable access to the land. There was an appearance of unity between these two groups simply because the tensions were not openly evident; however by the end of 1880, their parting of interests had weakened the land movement in County Mayo.[54] Landlords as a group were largely absent from Jordan's account of the land war, though he did briefly look at individual acts of abatement and eviction. There certainly was no evidence of a landlord collectivity in response to the agitation.

The case of Ulster in the land war has often been problematic as it has usually been left out of studies because it has either been seen as outside the main action of the south and west or else viewed as a special case, because of its fewer agrarian outrages and the different dynamic of landlord and tenant relations there, because of the prevalence of the tenant-right custom and because tenants were much more often of the same religious denomination as their landlords. Robert Kirkpatrick's study of twenty landed estates in mid-Ulster during the land war illustrated that Ulster landlords had many of the same responses to the land agitation as landlords throughout the country: the initial disbelief of the severity of the agricultural depression and of the inability or inclination of their tenants to pay their rents and the fear of abatements becoming precedents.[55] He concluded that most mid-Ulster landlords were responsive to the plight of farmers in 1879-80, particularly where hardship was induced through natural disaster such as the

[54] Ibid., pp. 8-9.

[55] Robert W. Kirkpatrick, 'Landed Estates in Mid-Ulster and the Irish Land War, 1879-85' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Dublin, 1976).

widespread flooding of the Erne basin in counties Cavan and Fermanagh, and that on average mid-Ulster landlords granted temporary abatements between seven and thirty percent.[56] However with the emergence of the Land League in mid-Ulster landlords reacted by a heavy-handed reliance on notices to quit and evictions to try and curb the growth of the agitation and to weed out trouble-makers on their estates. Pointing to the fact that in 1881 Ulster had more evictions than any other province, Kirkpatrick depicted mid-Ulster landlords as over-reliant on this legal strategy. The cantankerous earl of Charlemont wrote to his agent in January 1881 that 'any tenant taking part in the Land League meeting was to be at once noticed. If I am to be interfered with after all the low rents and arrears allowed to accrue ... I must now know the reasons'.[57] Significantly, however, Ulster had the highest percentage of families reinstated during the land war: eighty-seven percent for Ulster while the percentage for Munster and Connaught rarely rose above fifty percent.[58]

The warmth or coolness of landlord and tenant relations were instrumental in the extent to which the Land League made inroads on different estates in mid-Ulster, and in Kirkpatrick's account there was an air of inevitability to the actions and responses of tenants and landlords in the land war. Kirkpatrick concluded that most rents on mid-Ulster estates were not high, that most

---

[56] Ibid., pp. 27-28, 58.

[57] Charlemont to Hugh Boyle 9 January 1881, cited in Ibid., p. 388.

[58] R. W. Kirkpatrick, 'Origins and development of the land war in mid-Ulster, 1879-85', in F. S. L. Lyons and R.A.J. Hawkins (eds.), *Ireland under the Union: Varieties of Tension: Essays in Honour of T.W. Moody* (Oxford, 1980), 214.

landlords gave abatements in the first winter of the agitation, and that where a good relationship between proprietor and tenant existed, agitation was unlikely to take root. The land war, however, happened anyway, and it is not clear why. He did suggest that landlords who were not absentees, who had not recently raised rents or who gave unsolicited abatements in 1879-80 were generally left undisturbed during the land war. [59] But this says no more than those who contemporaries deemed 'good' landlords were generally left alone, which is not particularly insightful.

Frank Thompson's *The End of Liberal Ulster: Land Agitation and Land Reform, 1868-1886,* took a holistic view of the post-famine land question in Ulster, examining landlord and tenant relations, landlord power, the tenant-right movement, and the land war. Thompson presented Ulster landlords as less willing to grant abatements than Kirkpatrick allowed, arguing that most northern landlords were much more reluctant to give abatements than southern landlords, and he noted the parsimony of some of the great landlords such as the duke of Abercorn, one of Ulster's wealthiest landowners, who declined to subscribe to the duchess of Marlborough's relief fund in 1880 because he had already donated £100 to local relief in County Donegal.[60] One of the greatest differences often pointed out about Ulster was the prevalence of the tenant-right custom which, although evident throughout Ireland, was nowhere as entrenched or as valuable as

[59] Ibid., p. 222.
[60] Thompson, *The End of Liberal Ulster*, p. 183.

in Ulster.[61] Thompson made a few interesting observations regarding tenant-right in Ulster, such as accounting for the relatively high value of tenant-right in the province partly because the value might also have included benefits of the particular estate: 'purchasers were paying for more than exemption from a full rent; they were paying for the right of occupation, for security, for the actual possession of the land and all that went with it, including whatever social favours the landlord normally allowed'.[62] Samuel Clark has termed these normal estate allowances or indulgences, 'non-contractual privileges'.[63] They were privileges which the landlord granted, but were not legally required to do so. The estate system was particularly important for small farmers, since the only social safety nets available outside the family were the workhouse or private charity. Clark's and Thompson's views on the estate system, which provided some social protection to the tenant, seem to counter claims often advanced that by the 1870s there was little deference or paternalism left in landlord and tenant relations. It is not clear what benefit the landlord got out of this arrangement if not social deference and a tranquil estate.

Thompson argued that a collective landlord response to the agitation in Ulster was slower to materialise than it was in the south. The Irish Land Committee, formed in Dublin in November 1879 to lobby parliament and to run

---

[61] Ibid., p. 25.

[62] Ibid., p. 37.

[63] Clark, 'Landlord Domination in Nineteenth-Century Ireland' *UNESCO Yearbook on Peace and Conflict Studies, 1986* (Paris, 1988), p. 12.

a public relations campaign to improve the reputation of landlords, was essentially a southern organisation. Even by the end of 1880, 'leading northern landlords were still at this stage displaying a curious reluctance to come out and campaign openly against the league'.[64] Indeed, the Orange Order provided the strongest opposition to the Land League, but the 'irresponsible and embarrassing extremes' of some of the Orangemen, and open hostility of many Orange speakers to the landed classes, helps explain the initial reluctance of the landowners in the province to join and combat the agitation.[65] By 1881 Ulster landlords became more combative and likely to evict, and consequently Ulster had the highest eviction rates for all provinces that year. With the two coercion acts of March 1881, suspending *habeas corpus* in proclaimed districts, empowering the government to detain without trial persons suspected of agrarian or treasonable offences and restricting the sale and possession of guns in proclaimed districts,[66] and Gladstone's land law bill introduced on 7 April 1881,[67] many landlords had renewed vigour in pressing their legal rights in terms of a tenantry they more often saw as unwilling rather than simply unable to pay their rents. Thompson, however, emphasised the depressed value of tenant-right as one explanation for increased evictions, as it was traditionally the case on larger estates to convince a tenant who was heavily in arrears to sell out rather than be forced out, so that by

[64] Thompson, *The End of Liberal Ulster*, p. 223.
[65] Ibid.
[66] 44 Vict. c. 4 (2 Mar. 1881); 44 Vict. c.5 (21 Mar. 1881).
[67] *A Bill to further amend the law relating to occupation and ownership of land in Ireland.* HC 1881 [bill 135], iii. 7.

1881 there was a depressed market for tenant-right, and as tenants increasingly would not sell out voluntarily, they were evicted.[68] It is, of course, difficult to determine the precise cause of any eviction without direct evidence such as the correspondence between landlord and agent over ejectment proceedings, or detailed analysis of hundreds of rentals to determine if tenants who disappear from the rental ledgers were heavily in arrears beforehand. Most evictions after 1870 were a form of insolvency,[69] so it is seems probable that the increased number of evictions was indicative of rising numbers of tenants in arrears but also an increased vigour, after 1880, of landlords who sought to quell the rising agitation on or near their estates.

Other historians have commented on the initial inertia of landlords at the beginning of the agitation in the fall of 1879. Landlords are generally seen not to have exerted themselves until at least late 1880 or early 1881. Donnelly argued that the failure to act resulted from 'temporary paralysis induced by the first shock of agrarian agitation'.[70] A recent examination of the land war has characterised landlords as in denial: 'Even as the Land League expanded and captured the support of the middle classes in 1880-81, landlords were loathe to recognize their own dispensability' and they continued to see the agitation as the 'connivance of a

---

[68] Thompson, *The End of Liberal Ulster*, p. 237.
[69] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, p. 24.
[70] Donnelly, *Land and the People of Nineteenth-Century Cork*, p. 275.

few scoundrels' rather than 'the popular association that it was'.[71] Writing forty years earlier Palmer had an acerbic yet sympathetic characterisation of landlords as inherently committed to defend their individual and class interests. That landlords were 'supinely inactive, while the agitation raged about them' was 'utterly incompatible with the character of the proprietary class in Ireland, who were always ready to assert and protect their rights, even while they were neglecting the duties of ownership'.[72] Palmer dated the beginning of landlord action as a group to the formation of the Irish Land Committee in November 1879 with its aims to supply information to the royal commission on agriculture and to counter what they saw as exaggerated claims about landlords. The Irish Land Committee's efforts were 'practically coterminous with the agitation conducted by the Land League'.[73]

Clark, with his emphasis on understanding the actions of groups, argued that landlord inaction resulted more from the fact that landlords, with legal control of their estates and therefore legal remedies to curb their tenants' behaviour, initially had the upper hand. Landlords expected the government to enforce the ordinary law or to secure coercion powers to curb the land agitation and its consequent unlawful behaviour. Their view was that if only the government would enforce the law than the agitation would swiftly fall apart.

---

[71] M. K. Zinck, 'Two Nations: The Land war and the Making of Irish National Political Culture, 1879-1890' (Ph.D. thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 2000), p. 81.

[72] Palmer, *The Irish Land League Crisis*, p. 218.

[73] Ibid., p. 219.

Clark argued that there was a landlord collectivity predating the land war, in 'the routine control that landlords had for centuries exercised over the majority of tenants'.[74] This was collectivity in a narrow and passive sense and is not helpful in assessing how landlords proactively worked together to defend their interests. Principles of landlord aggregation and the dominant place of landowners in rural Ireland in the 1870s will be explored in the following chapter.

In the most recent essay on the land war, and the first to focus on the response of landlords, Curtis characterised the landlord response as 'flight and fight'.[75] Curtis argued that many landlords were frightened by the growing agricultural outrages and assaults on bailiffs and took their families abroad for a year, resulting in the temporary closing of the big house and laying-off of many indoor and outdoor servants. On the other hand, Curtis pointed to the 'fight' instinct of many landowners who were avid hunters or who had served in the army and who went about their business in seeming normality except for constantly being armed. Portraying landed families living with an almost siege mentality, some of the contemporary illustrated papers showed the importance of preparedness in contemporary big house life, with, for example, an illustration of a young gentleman teaching his wife how to hold a gun and another depicting guests handing their pistols to the butler upon arrival at a big house dance.[76] The

---

[74] Clark, *Social Origins of the Irish Land War*, p. 308.

[75] L. Perry Curtis, Jr., 'Landlord Responses to the Land War', *Éire-Ireland,* xxxviii, no. 3-4 (2003), p. 356-66.

[76] See the illustrations in Ibid., pp. 360-61.

real importance of Curtis' essay, however, is his discussion of the collective 'fight' of landlords in which he described the major landlord collective groups throughout the 1880s. This was the first extended treatment of the Irish Land Committee, Property Defence Association, and the Orange Emergency Committee. Most references to these groups, excluding Palmer's study, had previously merely been in passing.[77] Although in Curtis' study the discussion of each group was necessarily brief, the centrality of it to the overall discussion of the landlord responses to the land war marks it as a key topic in any account the land war. Detailed examination of all these groups form the backbone of this present study of landlord collective responses to the land war.

Perhaps a final comment on the historiography is in order, which is not really to point to a separate strand of the historiography of the land war but to note an interesting pattern in the scholarship over the last seventy years. Examination of the 'land question' and the land war seems to be a particularly American interest. Elizabeth Hooker,[78] Pomfret, Palmer, Donnelly, Clark, Solow, Jordan, Curtis, and Zinck were either American historians or studied at American universities. It is difficult, however, to see any particular thread running through these diverse works to account for this cross-Atlantic obsession with landlords and tenants or the land war. It has really only been since the 1970s that Irish

[77] Ibid., pp. 366-380.

[78] Elizabeth R. Hooker, *Readjustments of Agricultural Tenure in Ireland* (Chapel Hill, 1938).

historians have turned their attention in any detail to these key questions of post-famine Ireland.

Chapter 2

Nature of Landlord Power and Principles of Aggregation

This chapter will consider two related topics: the nature and extent of landlord power in the late 1870s, and the principles of aggregation which brought landowners together to defend their interests against the land agitation during the land war. Landlords were the most powerful group in Irish society in 1879, an elite who never had to defend their own class interests to such an extent as during the land war. Although landlord power was declining in the 1870s, landlords were still so powerful that it was unlikely they would need to combine, but they did. Elucidating the principles of aggregation shows *how* landlords could combine – what opportunities they had to associate.

In his account of the land war Samuel Clark emphasised the social structures of rural society to explain why the land agitation took the form that it did. He argued that in order to understand a rebellion it is necessary to study the social relationships of those participating in it, to determine why the groups of people joined together for particular goals. Since most people join a group or movement through the influence of a friend or acquaintance, it is necessary to study the pre-existing social relationships of its members or participants in order to understand a particular example of collective action.[1]

[1] Clark, *Social Origins of the Irish Land War*, pp. 4-6.

Thus a substantial portion of Clark's book on the land war examines the social structures of pre- and post-famine rural Ireland to illustrate the layers of association and interdependence between farmers and shopkeepers and how they could unite to challenge the landowning elite.

Clark's analysis of the collective action of farmers and shopkeepers presents a useful model to consider landlord responses to the land war. It will be important to look at the social relationships of landlords which allowed for a form of collective action to take place. There has been no effort in the past to examine, however briefly, *why* landowners responded to the challenge of the land agitation in the ways which they did. Perhaps there have been assumptions about the homogeneity of the landowning class which somehow might dictate particular responses As discussed below, however, landlords were not homogeneous, if religious denominational affiliation is still taken as the measure. One of the most surprising findings of this present study is the realisation that landlords did not follow reflexive responses of, in particular, simply evicting tenants when they withheld rent. The importance of varied strategies such as seizing and selling a tenant's cattle or farm interest at a sheriff's sale were much more effective. More importantly, landlords successfully combined to defend their interests. Just as thousands of farmers joined the Land League to achieve their goals, so too hundreds of landlords joined defence groups and other organisations which sought to protect their interests by influencing public opinion and attempting to combat the Land League. The Irish Land Committee, the Property Defence Association, and

the Orange Emergency Committee, in particular were the foremost successful organisations. While these groups will be considered in detail in subsequent chapters, it is first necessary to account for how landlords could combine. A brief look at the social and associational ties of landowners will help explain why many landowners collectively responded to the challenge of the Land League in the particular ways in which they did.

Landlord power in the 1870s

One of the most intriguing aspects of the question of landlord responses to the land war is that there was a collective response at all. Landlords dominated Irish society in terms of local and national political representation, administration of justice, ownership of land and natural resources, patronage and clientage, pomp and circumstance. In 1880 around 2,500 landowners owned fifteen million acres or over seventy-eight percent of the total land area of Ireland.[2] By most criteria, landowners were in a very strong and sanguine position in the late 1870s. Thus, when the challenge of the land agitation became fully evident to landowners as a class it was not inevitable that they would present any kind of coordinated or effective response. It is much easier to explain why a group that is ostensibly oppressed will combine in collective action to achieve its goal; it is perhaps more difficult to account for the collective response of an elite who never had to unite *as an elite* before.

---

[2] David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (London, 1996), p. 9.

The positions in which landlords held most power were local rather than national, often as intermediaries between the state and the local community. Indicative of their domination at the local level, landlords held the most prestigious and influential county positions: high sheriff, custos rotulorum, lieutenants of counties, deputy lieutenants, magistrates, grand jurors and poor law guardians. Although some of these positions were practically more honorific than powerful, each position provided opportunities for the patronage which was so important in maintaining class dominance.[3] Those in higher positions of local government were influential in choosing men for lower positions. The high sheriff, appointed annually by the lord lieutenant from a list of names returned by the judge of assize, was the principal representative of the central government in the county in the execution of the law.[4] Although most routine duties relating to the execution of writs were delegated to a sub-sheriff (who was appointed annually by the high sheriff), the high sheriff was entrusted with the conduct of parliamentary elections and selecting the financially powerful (and landlord dominated) body, the grand jury.[5] During the land war when many landlords successfully employed a strategy of seeking to recover debt from their tenants through a

---

[3] Samuel Clark, 'Landlord Domination in Nineteenth-Century Ireland' in *UNESCO Yearbook on Peace and Conflict Studies. 1986* (London, 1988), p. 7.

[4] R. W. A. Holmes to T. H. Burke, 15 November 1879. CSORP/1880/14673.

[5] George Y. Dixon and W. L. Gilliland, *The Law Relating to Sheriffs in Ireland, with an Appendix of Statutes and Forms.* (Dublin, 1888); Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union, *Local Government in Ireland. A Sketch of the Present System and Methods of Procedure* (Dublin, [1887?]), p. 5.

sheriff's sale of the farmer's cattle or farm interest, farmers often saw the sheriff as siding with the landowning class by oppressing farmers through executing writs for debt accumulated through rental arrears: sheriffs were not impartial officers of the law but defenders of landowner's property.

County lieutenants provided the names of suitable deputy lieutenants to Dublin Castle, and as head of the county magistracy, provided valuable local information on the background and character of men proposed for the commission of the peace. Their recommendation could open or close entry to the magistracy.[6] County lieutenants were also in control of the county militia. The offices of county lieutenant and custos rotulorum (the keeper of county records) were invariably united in the same person, often the largest and most influential landowner in the county, as they were in the duke of Abercorn for county Donegal in 1880.[7] There was also a strong correlation between those who held the office of high sheriff and deputy lieutenant. Of the seventeen deputy lieutenants in County Galway in 1880, for example, eleven had held the office of high sheriff.[8] A deputy lieutenancy, appointed by the county lieutenant, was a completely honorary title.[9]

Magistrates, appointed by the lord chancellor on the recommendation of the county lieutenant,[10] were drawn from the county gentry and were

---

[6] Virginia Crossman, *Local Government in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Belfast, 1994), pp. 15-20.

[7] *Thom's Directory, 1880.* Abercorn was also a deputy lieutenant for Co. Tyrone.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union, *Local Government in Ireland*, p. 8.

[10] CSORP/1880/10090.

expected to be men of such social standing as to gain the respect of their neighbours and have some influence over them. They were most often smaller landowners, land agents or relations of great landowners and one of the ways they upheld the interests of landowners in decisions of local government expenditure was their role in the presentment sessions which examined applications for county funds prior to their presentation to the grand jury.[11]

Unlike the strictly legal purpose of the English grand juries, Irish grand juries were the principal governing body of the county, empowered to raise money by taxes for public works, such as the building or repair of roads and bridges, erection or repair of court houses or jails, the upkeep of hospitals and lunatic asylums, the awarding of compensation for malicious injuries to property and the payment of salaries of county officers.[12] Membership of the jury was drawn from the leading property owners (those valued at £50 freehold or £100 leasehold) in the county, and the jury selection was entirely at the discretion of the high sheriff. Landowners relied on relatives and their land agents to protect their interests there.[13] As one commentator in 1871 noted of the selection process by the high sheriff, grand jurors were 'selected by one individual irresponsible to all authority, except public opinion' and he

[11] Crossman, *Local Government in Nineteenth-Century Ireland*, p. 21.

[12] Charles H. Foot, *The Grand Jury Laws of Ireland* (Dublin, 1884), p. xvii.

[13] Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union, *Local Government in Ireland,* p. 5; Crossman, *Local Government in Nineteenth-Century Ireland*, pp. 27-29.

chose 'such landed proprietors as favour, friendship, political influence, or relationship, may induce him to prefer'.[14]

Each justice of the peace for the county was entitled to vote at each of the two presentment sessions: the baronial sessions, which considered expenditure for the particular barony, and the larger 'county at large' sessions, which approved expenditure for the whole county.[15] Thus, the landed class had complete control over the choice of public works to be carried out and the distribution of local patronage that went along with it. Cooperative tenants could receive employment while work for bothersome tenants could be blocked. This was particularly important during periods of agricultural depression and distress such as the land war, when public works gave employment to men to buy food for their families and pay their rent.

Magistrates, amateurs administering the law, presided over the petty sessions courts where there was a high probability they would adjudge some of their tenants appearing before them on the bench. Excluding the Dublin Metropolitan area, in 1880 there were 194,371 summary convictions at the petty sessions,[16] on a wide variety of criminal matters from common assaults to the destruction or theft of property under £5 in value.[17] For offences such as assault or discharging a gun on a public road, magistrates could impose a

---

[14] George Orme Malley, 'On the Expediency of the Total Abolition of Grand Juries in Ireland' *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland*, vol. vi, pt. xl, (July, 1871), p. 11.

[15] Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union, *Local Government in Ireland*, pp. 5-6.

[16] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, p. 165.

[17] 14 & 15 Vict., c. 92 (7 August 1851).

fine or imprisonment with or without hard labour, up to two months for assault and up to seven days for the gun offence.[18] There was the very real possibility that strained relations on the estate between landlord and tenant could be 'settled' before the bench and that one method of reprisal potentially open to landowners or their agents was summary conviction of the troublesome tenant at the petty sessions. In November 1880, W. B. Smythe excused himself from the bench at petty sessions when a tenant he had evicted six months before and whom he had re-admitted to the farm as a caretaker was brought before the bench for trespassing. There does not appear to have been a rule necessitating self-exclusion in such a case, for as Smythe told chief secretary W. E. Forster, 'I was not present – not wishing to seem to influence the proceedings'. However, before excusing himself, Smythe took the opportunity to address the crowd in court, 'just explaining to them the position of the evicted Pauper Tenant; and my readiness to reinstate him if paid'.[19]

Magistrates were also involved in the criminal proceedings at the quarter sessions presided over by the county court judge. In 1856 Peter McKenna noted the influence which the personal knowledge of JPs had at quarter sessions. Although perhaps an exaggeration, he claimed that each accused person put forward for trial was likely the tenant of a magistrate of the

[18] Henry Hunphreys, *The Justice of the Peace for Ireland.* 5th ed. (Dublin, 1876), pp. 10, 169.

[19] Smythe to Forster, 21 Nov. 1880. CSORP/1880/29211.

court, and the magistrate would invariably have some local knowledge of the tenant which could go against him or be in his favour:

> [The accused] is put forward, and some such whispered observations as the following pass on the bench: -- 'That is a bad boy; he is from my neigh-bourhood, and I hear very bad accounts of him; in fact he is a positive nuisance, and my bailiff tells me that some saplings of mine that were stolen must have been taken by him. I know myself he is always trespassing'. Or, on the other hand: -- 'That poor fellow is a tenant of mine, a very regular kind of man, and I hear this whole thing is a charge trumped up against him, because he is going to get some land from me, out of which had to turn a lot of idle ruffians who never would pay a halfpenny rent.[20]

Landowners dominated the execution of local justice and as magistrates had at their disposal the powers to administer summary fines and to even imprison. They could also order families to leave tenements with little notice. Upon proof of a summons having been served and proof of the termination of a tenement tenancy, magistrates could order a warrant for the occupant to give up possession in seven to ten days.[21] Justices also had the power to refuse certificates for the renewal of public house licenses which was a potentially powerful weapon. Publicans were often local leaders in the land agitation and their public houses were frequently used for meetings and League 'courts' where a kind of summary justice could be just as partially administered as at the petty sessions. This strategy of refusing licenses to local League leaders, however, was not widespread during the land war.

Magistrates were amateurs from the gentry or landowning class and

---

[20] P. J. McKenna, 'On the criminal jurisdiction of courts of quarter sessions in Ireland' in *Journal of the Dublin Statistical Society* (April, 1856), pp. 278-9, quoted in Clark, *Social Origins of the Irish Land War*, p. 187.

[21] Humphreys, *The Justice of the Peace for Ireland*, p. 185.

possessed summary powers to fine and imprison their own tenants. According to Clark: 'Irish magistrates were notorious for showing up at court sessions in order to secure the conviction of persons whom they did not like or to defend the interests of those whom they did'.[22] Unfortunately Clark provides scant evidence to back this claim. Magistrates were, however, notorious for their absence at petty sessions. This was such a problem that figures for the attendance of magistrates at petty sessions were recorded and sent to the chief secretary's office at Dublin Castle, and county lieutenants were reminded of their duties to ensure appropriate numbers of petty sessions.[23]

In accounting for landlord power in nineteenth century Ireland, both Clark and Theodore Hoppen have also pointed to the political domination of landowners.[24] Certainly by the later 1870s the political influence of landlords over their tenants was in sharp decline. Irish landlords were supposedly infamous for coercing their tenants to vote for the landlord's candidate in

---

[22] Clark, 'Landlord Domination in Nineteenth-Century Ireland', p. 10.

[23] *Table of proceedings in the year 1879 as to the attendance of magistrates and the number of civil cases other than proceedings as to cottier tenants, and as to cottier tenants under statute 23 & 24 Vic., c. 154, and as to over-holding tenants under 14 & 15 Vic., c. 92, from returns made by clerks of petty sessions.* CSORP/1880/13911; 'Circular to Lieutenants of Counties above referred to' April 1879 reminded county lieutenants to adopt 'such measures as will ensure the regular holding of Petty Sessions; either by securing the more frequent attendance of the Magistrates of the district, or … adding to the number of Magistrates in those districts where there may at present be an insufficient number'. CSORP/1881/22731.

[24] Clark, 'Landlord Domination in Nineteenth-Century Ireland'; K. Theodore Hoppen, 'Landlords, Society and Electoral Politics in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Ireland' *Past and Present* no. 75 (May 1977)'; Idem., 'Landownership and Power in Nineteenth-Century Ireland: The Decline of an Elite', in Ralph Gibson and Martin Blinkhorn (eds.), *Landownership and Power In Modern Europe* (London, 1991).

elections, but this effectively ended with the 1872 secret ballot act.[25] The 1874 general election resulted in the lowest percentage of men from landed backgrounds ever returned to parliament: only fifty percent, whereas in 1868 it had been seventy percent.[26] Although landowners' domination of national representation was declining they still held the reins of power at the local level, although their grip here too was relaxing. The dominance of landed men on the grand jury has already been mentioned. During the land war landowners began to lose control over the increasingly important boards of poor law guardians, the only local authority in rural districts containing a representative element. Half of the board members were elected by ratepayers under a liberal franchise and the other half were appointed *ex officio* from the highest rate paying magistrates in the poor law union. Until the 1870s landowners had completely dominated the boards until they became increasingly challenged by land reformers and nationalists, who, according to William Feingold, by 1886 had 'succeeded in gaining total or partial control over most of the boards in the predominantly Catholic regions of Ireland, thus completing a far-reaching revolution in Irish local government.'[27] Originally created for poor relief in 1838, the poor law board's remit gradually expanded to administer a social services system, dealing with burials, sanitation, and health services generally,

---

[25] 35 & 36 Vict., c. 33 (18 July 1872).

[26] K. Theodore Hoppen, 'Landlords, Society and Electoral Politics in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Ireland', pp. 79-84; Idem., 'Landownership and Power in Nineteenth-Century Ireland: The Decline of an Elite', p. 175.

[27] William Leo Feingold, *The Irish Boards of Poor Law Guardians, 1872-86. A Revolution in Local Government* (Ph.D. thesis, University of Chicago, 1974), p. viii.

as well as having a considerable amount of patronage at its disposal. Feingold argued that a movement to capture the boards by tenants indicated a revolution in the political reality of rural Ireland and the emergence of a new governing class, a new elite which began to displace the landed one.[28] The critical time for this transformation came during the land war when local branches of the Land League began to take an interest in local board elections to win a majority of seats at the board, to take over its executive offices and thereby gain control over the body, which, for example, the local League branch successfully did at the Tralee poor law board election in 1881.[29]

Besides positions of local governance, of course, landlords were dominant in their relations with their tenants. Landlords could, by legal process, evict their tenants. Ejectments, the legal action to regain possession of the land which resulted in eviction, were either for arrears of at least one year's rent, or on title, which meant that the tenancy was determined, whether through expiry of the lease, breach of some condition of the tenancy, or if the landlord wished to regain possession of the farm and served a notice to quit the holding to the tenant.[30] After the abrogation of imprisonment for debt in 1872,[31] eviction was the most powerful civil action since it resulted in the loss

---

[28] Feingold, *The Revolt of the Tenantry: the transformation of local government in Ireland 1872-86* (Boston, 1984).

[29] Feingold, 'Land League Power: The Tralee Poor-Law Election of 1881' in Samuel Clark and James S. Donnelly, Jr., (eds.) *Irish Peasants: Violence and Political Unrest, 1780-1914* (Madison, 1986).

[30] Thomas de Moleyns, *The Landowner's and Agent's Practical Guide.* 7th edition. (Dublin, 1877), pp. 163-66.

[31] 32 & 33 Vict., c. 57 (6 Aug. 1872).

of home and left the family at risk, necessitating the reliance on neighbourly charity or the poor house as a last resort. The image of the evicted family left on the roadside to witness the unroofing of their home has been one of the most resonating images of rural Ireland in the nineteenth century and has continued to reinforce the callous image of the Irish landlordism. Landlords, however, could not simply evict a family without legal process, though with the notice to quit, the landlord could evict 'good' tenants, who kept up their farms and punctually paid their rent. This, however, was less likely, for with the 1870 land act, tenants could claim compensation for improvements or disturbance. Landlords could also seize and sell a tenant's goods, such as cattle, farm machinery or implements, or what was much more valuable, the interest in the tenant's farm, which could lead to an eviction. This power, however, was open to all other creditors, and, as will be discussed in a later chapter, was also used extensively by shopkeepers. Landlords had real power over their tenants, and the threat of ejectment or sheriff sale often induced obstinate tenants to pay their rents.

Clark has emphasized landlord domination on the estate in the indulgence of what he called 'non contractual privileges', which seem to be the 'three F's' by another name. The threat of removal of one of these privileges – low rent, undisturbed occupancy and permission to sell one's interest in the holding – were the landlord's most effective weapons in controlling tenant

behaviour.[32] K. Buckley has argued that after 1881 landlords pressured smaller tenants into agreeing to a fixed judicial rent rather than seeking a judicial rent in the land commission or civil bills court. Rents arbitrated in court had a greater percentage reduction on average than rents fixed by private agreements. Buckley suggested that the fear of losing customary privileges such as turbary, motivated smaller tenants to accept a rent fixed out of court.[33]

Clark pointed out that in their relations with their tenants, landlords were mostly passive, in that they did not raise rents, evict or forbid sale of interest.[34] However, it was the power to do these things which was effective in dominating tenants and attempting to control their behaviour. Pointing to the relatively small numbers of recorded instances of intimidation, coercion, and threats by landlords taken against recalcitrant tenants, Frank Thompson has suggested that this was 'in itself a reflection of how successful and deeply entrenched the whole system of intimidation was'.[35] One of the major questions of the present study will be to determine the nature of landlord action with the tenants on their own estates when rents were withheld. It is clear that landlords did not simply revoke Clark's non-contractual privileges but instead developed new strategies to combat the agitation and recover arrears as an ordinary creditor through sheriffs' sales.

---

[32] Samuel Clark, 'Landlord Domination in Nineteenth-Century Ireland', pp. 12-13.

[33] K. Buckley, 'The Fixing of Rents by Agreement in Co. Galway, 1881-85', *Irish Historical Studies* 7: 27 (Mar. 1951), pp. 151-53.

[34] Clark, 'Landlord Domination in Nineteenth-Century Ireland', p. 15.

[35] Frank Thompson, *The End of Liberal Ulster*, p. 9.

W. E. Vaughan has been more sceptical of the supremacy of Irish landlords on the eve of the land war, noting that landlords remained 'politically powerful, although not by any means dominant' and that they had economically neither been 'vigorous [n]or constructive after the famine', failing to maximise rental income or in general develop and exploit the wealth potential in their estates.[36] Unlike other European landed elites, such as the Prussian Junkers, Irish landowners did not have state force under their control or at their disposal. The constabulary, for instance, was under direct government control, and constables had to serve outside their home counties.[37] Besides lacking control of potential force against their tenants, landlords also had much more popular competitors to contend with for dominance and the allegiance of tenant farmers from parish priests and shopkeepers. No elite, however, ever has it easy. As Vaughan has put it: 'no European landed elite crowed without challenge on its own dunghill'.[38]

Vaughan presented a picture of landlords in post-famine Ireland as failures. They failed to maximise the potential of their estates by raising rents in line with agricultural prices (or at least by some rational means) or by consolidating holdings or significantly investing in their estates. Indeed better investments in their estates might have helped maintain some of the deference among local shopkeepers through orders for slates, timber and fertilizer.[39]

---

[36] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, p. 218.

[37] Rosemary Fennell (ed.), Thomas Fennell, *The Royal Irish Constabulary. A history and personal memoir* (Dublin, 2003).

[38] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, p. 218.

[39] Ibid, pp. 220-221.

Landlords could have done more to maintain their elite position in society; they could have done more to warrant the social and political deference they sought as their due from their tenantry. Perhaps Vaughan's claim that 'more [landlords] should have become Catholics, if they had cared about governing the country' is not as flippant as it first appears.[40] Landlords could have done more to ensure they were indispensable to their tenants and the local community. If they simply collected rents it was not unforeseeable that elements of rural society – divided by class and religion – might call for the removal of these renters who blocked direct access to the land. Landlords had allowed their great territorial power to decline into mere *rentier* wealth; they were not leaders in innovative farming technology, improving the methods and therefore the yields of their tenants' crops; they were no longer leaders or specialists in any field. In the end, Vaughan concluded, 'tenants rebelled against their landlords because they were allowed to rebel.'[41] Although Vaughan has shown many of the landlord weaknesses by the 1870s, it is still the case that landlords were dominant in relations with their tenants and in holding influential local and county government positions. Landlords were not as commanding as they had been even twenty years earlier, but were nevertheless the most powerful figures in rural Ireland. As such, it was unlikely in 1879 that tenant farmers would pose such a substantial threat that landlords would be forced to combine themselves for class protection.

---

[40] Ibid., p. 13.
[41] Ibid., p. 215.

Principles of Aggregation

What factors allowed landowners to combine? To return to Clark's model of collective action, one must be able to explain some of the integrating factors which pull people together in social groups and thereby allow for collective action to take place. In Clark's analysis of the land agitation he emphasised the communal structures of kinship and an economic relationship based on credit as integrating factors between farmers and townsmen (shopkeepers) in combining to lead the agitation at a local level.[42] Besides local government bodies dominated by landlords there were various coalescing factors which drew landowners together and provided opportunities for association.

Marriage was certainly one of the most important ties between landed families, the endogamy necessary to maintain social exclusivity of the landed class and obtain the periodic capital infusion of a sizeable dowry into a declining family's fortunes. While marriage alliances were endogamic class affairs there was also a sectarian dimension in that families married among their own religious communities. Class may have been the primary demarcation for potential marriage partners but within that boundary, religion was the second most important factor. The Dublin ball season, from January to March each year, provided ample opportunity for matches to be made, and the wealthier landed families might continue the season in London, which lasted from May until the end of July.[43] In a sample of 159 peers who owned

[42] Clark, *Social Origins of the Irish Land War*, pp. 125-131.
[43] Terence Dooley, *The Decline of the Big House in Ireland*, pp. 65-66.

Irish estates and who married between 1850 and 1914, sixty percent married the daughters of other peers; and of the younger sons and daughters of these 159 peers, seventy-five percent married into peerage families or families of large landowners.[44] Smaller landowning families married more often within their own county or regional social circle, even marrying neighbouring families, as some of the Somervilles did in County Cork.[45] It is difficult to generalise about the extent to which landed families in Ireland were related, and to comment from this on the strength of these ties as integrating factors, but kinship appears to be one of several elements that help explain the interconnectedness of landowning families.

As well as the more obvious ties of kinship perhaps the most integrating factors were associational which result from groups forming for a particular purpose, be it civic, religious, social or economic. Associational structures can be just as strong when they are regional or national and therefore can bring people together over wide geographical areas.[46] Depending on the nature of the organisation, associational structures can blur class and religious divisions. Leisure activities were one such associational tie, and no sport was more favoured by the landowning class than fox hunting.

---

[44] Ibid., p. 67.
[45] Ibid, pp. 64-65.
[46] Clark, *Social Origins of the Irish Land War*, p. 8.

Professor J. P. Mahaffy quipped in 1882 that 'Many gentlemen are so devoted to this sport, that they regard the summer as merely a disagreeable interruption to hunting', and L. P. Curtis, Jr, has commented that 'every Big House worthy of the name had stables large enough to accommodate seasoned hunters along with the usual assortment of carriage horses, brood-mares and ponies'.[47] In 1881 there were five packs of staghounds, eighteen to twenty-one packs of foxhounds, and fifty-two to fifty-four harrier packs in Ireland, which clearly does not suggest that even the majority of Irish landlords participated in the sport, but with some of the hunts meeting at least twice a week, there was ample opportunity for landed fraternisation.[48]

The magistracy, 'a self-perpetuating oligarchy' sometimes referred to as the 'rural House of Lords',[49] certainly gave landowners or their agents a regular opportunity for association, and in a unifying context in which they held power over their tenants and had matters of rural violence and perhaps the land agitation constantly before them. The meeting of magistrates at petty sessions and quarter sessions must have given the local gentry a fine opportunity to discuss the state of the county, what landowners were doing on their own estates in terms of abatements and evictions, and what might be done collectively to combat the agitation. As Theodore Hoppen has

---

[47] J. P. Mahaffy, 'The Irish Landlords' in *Contemporary Review*, xlii (January, 1882), p. 162, cited in Dooley, *The Decline of the Big House in Ireland)*, p. 56; L. P. Curtis Jr., 'Stopping the Hunt, 1881-1882: An Aspect of the Irish Land War' in C. H. E. Philpin (ed.), *Nationalism and Popular Protest in Ireland* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 351.

[48] Curtis, 'Stopping the Hunt', p. 352.

[49] Cannadine, *Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, p. 14.

commented, 'Magistrates used quarter sessions as much for tribal solidarity as for law enforcement'.[50]

Clubs provided another opportunity for association among large and small as well as protestant and catholic landowners. Smaller landlords tended to frequent the provincial clubs in towns and cities such as Galway, Limerick and Cork. The County Galway Club had 181 members in 1881, of whom eighty-five percent were gentry and the remaining fifteen percent were constabulary officers, doctors, resident magistrates, large land agents, and army and navy officers.[51] The Sackville Street and the Kildare Street Clubs were the landed nerve centre in Dublin. Mark Bence-Jones has called the Kildare Street Club 'the real centre of masculine Ascendancy life in Dublin' and Hoppen referred to it as 'the landowners' chief metropolitan watering-hole'.[52] It is easy to see why the Kildare Street Club was such an important social and political club to join. Conveniently located (the Sackville Street Club was on the north side of the river), renowned for its table, cellar and décor, it provided a haven for landed men while in Dublin, and was essentially an extension of landed big house life in the city: 'Members were at ease with one another, since they almost all belonged to the same Ascendancy world; if everybody did not actually know everybody else, at least everybody knew who everybody else

---

[50] Hoppen, *Elections, Politics and Society in Ireland, 1832-1885* (Oxford, 1984), p. 119.

[51] Patrick Melvin, 'The Landed Gentry of Galway, 1820-1980' (Ph.D. thesis, Trinity College, Dublin, 1991), pp. 208-209.

[52] Mark Bence-Jones, *Twilight of the Ascendancy* (London, 1998), p. 54; K. Theodore Hoppen, *Elections, Politics and Society in Ireland, 1832-1885*, p. 119.

was'.[53] Indicative of its establishment ethos, the club offered hospitality to the viceroy, visiting members of the royal family, and British army officers of the rank of major and naval officers of the rank of lieutenant commander and above could be temporary members while stationed in Ireland.[54] With 800 members the Kildare Street Club was the political nerve centre of landed Ireland in Dublin, and during the land war no doubt became a locus of planning collective landlord activities. It certainly played host to some of the early meetings of the Irish Land Committee in December 1880, and much political correspondence concerning landlord defence was written on club stationary. Many landlords belonged to more than one club, often to a London club such as the Carlton. In 1880 the earl of Courtown subscribed to four clubs: £10 to the Carlow and Island Hunt Club; £10 to the Kildare Street Club; £10 to the Carlton Club; and £3 3*s* to the County Wexford Club.[55]

In close proximity to the Kildare Street Club in Dublin was the Freemasons' Hall at 17 Molesworth Street. The Freemasons were an important non-sectarian fraternal organisation and several important landlords were involved in the association's hierarchy. The duke of Leinster had been the Grand Master from 1813 until his death in 1874, whereupon the duke of Abercorn, a strong supporter of landlord defence during the land war, became Grand Master until 1886. Two other supporters of property defence during the land war, the marquess of Headfort and the earl of Bandon, were the

---

[53] Bence-Jones, *Twilight of the Ascendancy*, p. 55.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Courtown account book, 1880. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. 11183 v/62.

Senior Grand Warden and Grand Secretary respectively.[56] Since the Freemasons were not an open organisation it is difficult to make claims about the nature of their membership but it can be suggested that the organisation provided a non-sectarian association which emphasised mutual assistance of brother masons. A printed list of Freemasons in Dublin City for 1876, representing thirty out of thirty-four Dublin lodges, shows a predominantly business-oriented membership of mostly merchants, solicitors, and agents, with a smaller mix of army officers, publicans, clerks, engineers and a variety of trades.[57]

Another large gathering of landowners in Dublin, and clearly a sectarian one, was at the general synod of the Church of Ireland, which has been called 'the largest regular gathering of Irish gentry in Dublin since 1800'.[58] A resolution was passed at the diocesan synod of Dublin in October 1880 and forwarded to Dublin Castle, commenting on the 'the present sad state of anarchy prevailing particularly in the South and West of Ireland' and calling on the government to take measures to curb lawlessness and protect 'our suffering fellow countrymen'.[59]

The meeting of landowners involved in Church of Ireland government raises the issue of religious homogeneity of landlords during the land war.

---

[56] *Thom's Directory*, 1881.

[57] Michael di Gargano, *Irish and English Freemasons and their Foreign Brothers: Their System, Oaths, Ceremonies, Secrets, Grips, Signs, and Passwords…With Official List of Names* (Dublin, 1876), pp. 87-104.

[58] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, p. 220.

[59] 30 October 1880. CSORP/1880/26698.

Unfortunately, detailed information relating to landowners for the 1881 census was no longer tabulated. Curiously in that census, persons returning themselves as 'peer', 'gentleman', and 'land proprietor', were no longer deemed to have a distinguishable occupation; people formerly returned under these categories were now classified as 'Persons not returned as following any specified occupation', which category, it was pointed out in the report of the census, also included 'vagrants and such like'.[60] Consequently it is not possible to note the denominational breakdown of Irish landowners in 1881. From the 1871 census, however it is clear that most landed proprietors were still protestant. From a total of 7,179 landed proprietors returned: fifty percent were Church of Ireland, forty percent were Roman Catholic, and six percent were Presbyterian.[61] Although the census figures should be taken with some reservations, the denominational breakdown of landowners points to the fact that too much can be made out of religious homogeneity for the landlord class. Certainly more were protestant than catholic, but not that many more. Although there are no direct statistics to confirm or deny the claim, it seems to have been the case that the largest landowners in Ireland were protestant rather than catholic. However, the fact that most tenant farmers and shopkeepers were catholic was more significant for their collective actions in the land war than the religious affiliation of landowners. The more important

[60] *Census of Ireland, 1881:* pt. ii. Gen. Rep. [c. 3365] HC 1882 lxxvi. 385, p. 20.
[61] *Census of Ireland, 1871:* pt. iii. Gen. Rep. [c.1377] HC 1876 lxxxi. 1, p. 83.

difference between landlord and tenant was, particularly from the landowners' view, class rather than religion.

While it is argued in this study that class was a strong coalescing factor to unite landlords, it is also important to note the potential divisions among landlords which might have hindered collective action during the land war. Sectarianism was a potentially divisive factor for landlords, although it seems to have manifested itself more openly between protestant landowners and their catholic tenants than between protestant and catholic landowners. Discussing the sectarianism of landowners in the nineteenth century Hoppen played down the significance of the protestant evangelical revival of the 1820s on landowners, emphasising instead the social component of religious identity, noting that protestant landlords' attitudes to catholic priests 'often exhibited a mingled fear and contempt, with religious abuse serving as little more than code for the expression of social and political distrust' towards their catholic tenants.[62] Again emphasising the social nature of denominational identity, Hoppen claimed that most landowners were 'social rather than spiritual Protestants' who exhibited 'a curious mix of bigotry and tolerance'.[63] A County Limerick landlord did not endear himself to his catholic tenants in August 1881 by such public exclamations as: 'To Hell with the Pope'.[64]

---

[62] Hoppen, *Elections, Politics, and Society in Ireland, 1832-1885* (Oxford, 1984), p. 124.

[63] Ibid., p. 123.

[64] See below p. 131.

Since one of the two landlord defence organisations examined in this study was part of the Orange Order it is legitimate to question the essentiality of protestantism to collective landlord defence. The Orange Emergency Committee (OEC) was part of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland and was clearly a sectarian organisation, yet, remarkably, during the land war the OEC aided at least two catholic landlords: one, a count of the Papal States and the other a former Home Rule MP.[65] The two other prominent landlord groups, the Irish Land Committee (ILC) and the Property Defence Association (PDA) both publicly claimed to be, and do appear to have been, non-sectarian and non-political. Thus, while sectarianism was a potentially divisive force among landowners it does not seem to have been a great obstacle to landlords uniting as class. Hoppen, for instance, concluded that the shared backgrounds and activities of schools, universities and hunting were more important uniting factors among landlords than religion was a divisive factor.[66]

Divisions of rank and wealth within the landlord class were also potentially divisive. While an estate of 500 acres can be taken as the minimum acreage that granted access to the landowning class, there were hundreds of much larger landowners who led practically different lives than these smaller landowners.

---

[65] Count Edmond de la Poer and Henry Owen Lewis. See below chapter 6, pp. 286-87.

[66] Hoppen, *Elections, Politics and Society, 1832-1885,* p. 122.

Table 1. Ownership of estates in Ireland by Acreage[67]

Estate Size (in acres)	Number of Owners	Acreage	Valuation £
100-500	7,989	1,955,536	1,772,570
500-1,000	2,716	1,915,528	1,332,435
1,000-2,000	1,803	2,514,743	1,452,982
2,000-5,000	1,198	3,675,267	1,997,210
5,000-10,000	452	3,154,628	1,583,472
10,000-20,000	185	2,478,493	1,113,673
20,000-50,000	90	2,558,850	1,071,616
50,000-100,000	14	1,023,677	397,829
100,000 +	3	397,079	37,644

Table 1, above, illustrates that most individuals in the landowning class between 500 and 2,000 acres, a group whose estates covered roughly 4.4 million acres of the country. Landowners with estates over 2,000 acres were a much smaller group – representing less than half the number of owners as in the previous category – but owning most of the land of Ireland, some 13.3 million acres. Landowners with estates greater than 10,000 acres also tended to be members of the peerage.[68]

The argument could be made that the owner of a 500 acre estate might have more in common with a large farmer renting several hundred acres than a peer holding upwards of ten thousand acres. However, prosopographical evidence from the subscription lists of the ILC, PDA and OEC illustrates that

[67] *Summary 'of the Returns of Owners of Land in Ireland, Showing, with Respect to Each County, the Number of Owners Below an Acre, and in Classes up to 100,000 Acres and Upwards, with the Aggregate Acreage and Valuation of each Class'*, HC 1876 (422), lxxx. 35.

[68] *Thom's, 1881.* 'Alphabetical List of Landowners in Ireland of Ten Thousand Acres and Upwards, with Valuation in 1873', pp. 749-750.

there was a diversity in the estate size of landowners suggesting wide support for landlord defence among all levels of the landlord class.

A third potential division among landowners to consider was political party affiliation, particularly between the Liberal and Conservative parties. Irish landlords as a class had traditionally supported the Conservative party. Using London club membership as an indicator of party affiliation, Hoppen concluded that somewhere between sixty-six and seventy-four percent of Irish landlords were Tory with a larger Liberal presence among smaller landlords.[69] Like denominational sectarianism, however, Hoppen also saw political division as less of an actual division than a potential one among the landlord class: 'Within gentry politics the only divide that mattered was between Tories and Whigs and even that becomes blurred when external threats demanded a closing of ranks'.[70] Even among supporters of the same political party, however, selfish and divisive acts could occur. Thompson has illustrated how the support of Conservative Ulster MPs for Gladstone's 1881 land law bill undermined the strenuous opposition of Conservative MPs from the three southern provinces.[71] While religion, social rank, and politics were potentially divisive for landlords, none of three significantly hindered the uniting of

[69] Hoppen, *Elections, Politics, and Society, 1832-1885*, p. 127.
[70] Ibid., p. 126.
[71] Francis Thompson, 'Attitudes to reform: political parties in Ulster and the Irish land bill of 1881', *IHS*, xxiv, no. 95 (1985). See below, pp. 200-201.

landlords as a class to defend their property rights or interests during the land war.

The purpose of the foregoing chapter has been to situate the landlords in their dominant position in Irish rural society in the late 1870s, where they controlled the highest offices and governed the most important local government boards, and consequently had substantial amounts of patronage at their disposal. Particularly on the magistrates bench landowners held vast potential power of summary jurisdiction over their tenants. This description of the place of landlords in their local context is to point out how unlikely was a challenge to their authority in the locality and on their estates. Since landlords dominated the judicial structures, one of the key powers for any group to dominate in a society, how they could be dislodged from their eminent position? On the face of it, landlords should have had little problem combating the land agitation.

Chapter 3:

Abatements, Rents and Evictions

Integral to a fuller understanding of the land war is to determine what occurred between landlords and tenants on estates. Did landlords give abatements as they usually did in times of distress or did they hard-heartedly initiate legal proceedings to evict their tenants? How well were rents paid during the land war; was there a rent strike or a general withholding of rents? There were a variety of responses by landlords to the distress of tenants and the challenge of the Land League. Most landlords gave abatements; many landlords evicted their tenants. Many more undertook ejectment proceedings to determine if tenants were unable to pay their rent or were withholding it at the League's behest. This chapter will examine the interconnections of rents, abatements and evictions, beginning with the context of the agricultural depression and calls of distress from tenants in 1879.

Agricultural Distress

Eighteen seventy-nine was a year of harsh weather, reduced crop yields and threatened fuel supplies. Mortality rates in the first quarter of 1879 were the highest since statistics were first recorded in 1864, which, according to *The Irish Farmers' Gazette*, was 'directly attributable to the long-continued severe

weather, which rendered the winter of 1878-9 remarkable'.[1] By February 1880 the registrar-general sought statistics on deaths due to starvation, circulating a new printed form to coroners to record all deaths from starvation or from other causes 'directly attributable to the distress at present prevailing in many parts of Ireland'.[2]

There was a saying that 'no husbandman can farm against the climate'[3] and Irish agriculture suffered from the wet weather. The agricultural report of the RIC county inspector for the Ballyjamesduff district of County Cavan was representative: 'Owing to the continuous rains during the summer and autumn of this year, the various crops have been generally greatly damaged, and the yield is considerably below the average. The potato crop especially is very bad, both in quality and quantity, in many instances being scarcely worth the digging'.[4] While most districts reported reduced yields in crops, the Pilltown district in County Kilkenny fared better than many:

> With the exception of the potato crop on the hills, turnips, mangel-wurzel, and such like roots, which, owing to the continuous rain, did not bulb, the crops of this locality are very good. Oats is more than an average crop; hay also was a first rate crop, but owing to the wet weather, it was badly saved. Wheat however is rather 'smutty' from the same cause. On the whole I consider the produce of farming as good as any other year.[5]

---

[1] *The Irish Farmers' Gazette*, 10 May 1879. Mortality figures rose highest for persons over 60 years of age. The mortality figures were based on the recently released social statistics from the registrar-general (T. W. Grimshaw).

[2] 14 Feb. 1880. CSORP/1880/[unstamped, box 2684].

[3] *The Irish Farmers' Gazette*, 26 April, 1879.

[4] *The Agricultural Statistics of Ireland for the year 1879* [C 2534], HC 1880, lxxvi. 815, p. 889.

[5] Ibid., pp. 833-34.

The inclement weather and consequent low crop yields exacerbated conditions for farmers since it coincided with a general United Kingdom economic depression and slump in agricultural prices. As Michael Turner has commented, 1879 'was indeed a deep trough in the recent better fortunes of Irish agriculture, and it was the year which signalled the onset of the arable depression in Britain as a whole, a depression which was to last for well over a decade'.[6] The loss of manufacturing and mining jobs in England resulted in diminished consumption of Irish meat at a time when refrigerated ships laden with North American fresh meat were increasingly common arrivals at Liverpool.[7] In February 1879 the Cork Farmers' Club held a meeting and publicly brooded over the threat to Cork industries when 'every pound of oatmeal now sold in the City of Cork was manufactured in Canada', and a 'cargo of cattle would be sent from Canada every day to England as soon as the spring was over'.[8] Between 1876 and 1879 the value of agricultural output fell by £9.5 million.[9] *The Irish Farmers' Gazette* commented that 'When the artisans of England, and others who have been long without employment, are again in the receipt of fair wages, the demand for butcher meat will improve, and the effects of importations from America, large as they, undoubtedly, are, will be less felt than they have been whilst the great consuming classes have

---

[6] Michael Turner, *After the Famine: Irish Agriculture, 1850-1914* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 200.

[7] *The Irish Farmers' Gazette*, 11 Jan. 1879.

[8] Ibid., 15 Feb. 1879.

[9] This figure averages the estimates of Vaughan, £8 million, and Turner, £11 million. Vaughan, 'An Assessment of the Economic Performance of Irish Landlords, 1851-81', in F.S.L. Lyons and R.A.J Hawkins (eds.), *Ireland under the Union: Varieties of Tension. Essays in Honour of T. W. Moody* (Oxford, 1980), n. 2, p. 199; Turner, *After the Famine*, table 4.2, p. 108.

been without means to purchase meat'.[10] Poor harvests, foreign competition, and reduced livestock prices undermined the prosperity of large farmers, while wet weather rotted potatoes and prevented the drying of turf, crucial for smaller farmers over the winter. A report on the country's fuel supply in October 1879 estimated that the amount of turf saved in 1879 was one-half, and in many places, one-quarter, less than the normal supply.[11]

The government response to the distress in Ireland was slow, underlying the scepticism of much of the English public. In mid-September, *The Times* suggested that 'the losses of the Irish farmer have been trifling compared with those of the English farmer' and in an after-dinner speech in November, Prime Minister Beaconsfield, after applauding how English farmers had borne the depression without a murmur of discontent, described the Irish as 'an imaginative race' with 'somewhat irregular logic', suggesting that Irish claims of distress were exaggerated.[12] Initially, the government chiefly relied upon the poor law to cope with distress and the work of private relief organisations such as the Duchess of Marlborough Relief Fund, established 18 December, 1879, and the Dublin Mansion House Fund for Relief of Distress in Ireland, established 2 January, 1880. In December 1879, loans to landowners and boards of guardians for estate improvements and public works to provide local employment were made available out of the Irish

---

[10] *The Irish Farmers' Gazette*, 29 Mar. 1879.

[11] Grimshaw, *Special Report on Agricultural Produce and Fuel Supply in Ireland, as ascertained by Inquiries made in October 1879, with appendix* (Dublin, 1879) in CSORP/1880/[unstamped, box 2684].

[12] *The Times*, 17 Sept. 1879; Ibid., 11 Nov. 1879.

church surplus fund. By March 1880, over £1,325,00 had been applied for.[13] The fourth earl of Leitrim, Robert Clements, a much more generous landlord than his uncle who had been shot in Donegal in April 1878, borrowed over £14,000 for drainage works in 1880 to provide employment and improve his estate.[14]

Finally, in March 1880, two acts were passed to deal with the distress of farmers and labourers in Ireland. The seed supply act empowered boards of guardians to borrow money, interest free, from the board of works to supply seed potatoes and oats at cost to farmers with holdings valued under £15. Close to £600,000, half of it in Ulster was advanced, ensuring a good supply of seeds for the following year's crops.[15] Much of the impetus behind the call for the government to become involved in the distribution of seeds came from landowners and boards of guardians. In January 1880, Hugh O'Beirne, landlord and deputy lieutenant for County Leitrim, wrote to James Lowther, the chief secretary, stating that a number of his tenants were unable to buy seed for their lands and warned that 'this is a very grave peril for the future'. 'I cannot', he continued, 'afford out of my curtailed rents, to lend them money to buy seed' but suggested the government or board of works should do so.[16] The relief of distress act established a fund of £1.5 million, appropriated from

---

[13] Frank Thompson, *The End of Liberal Ulster*, p. 176.

[14] Ibid., p. 183.

[15] 43 Vict., c. 1 (1 Mar. 1880); Thompson, *The End of Liberal Ulster*, p. 177.

[16] O'Beirne to Lowther, 24 Jan. 1880 CSORP/1880/2633. The Swinford, Co. Mayo, and Killarney boards of guardians both sent memorials to the castle, calling on the government to aid in the acquiring and distribution of seeds for farmers. CSORP/1880/ 3144; CSORP/1880/4187.

the Church of Ireland disestablishment fund, for loans to landlords and sanitary authorities, and allowed boards of guardians to grant outdoor relief to persons holding land (without necessitating the surrendering of the holding).[17]

Some landlords, mindful of the burden of poor rates, opposed baronial relief projects. Denis O'Donoghue, a parish priest in Clanmaurice, County Cork, complained to the lord lieutenant in February 1880, that at the recent baronial presentment session for relief works, the earl of Bantry's agent, Warren Paine's movement for the rejection of all the applications for relief works was carried. O'Donoghue feared that at the next presentment session, the landlords and their agents, 'as associated cess-payers will repeat Mr. Warren Paine's tactics, and while they neglect to provide any employment themselves, deprive the distressed labourers in my parish of the opportunity of employment in Relief Works'.[18] Lord Clonbrock opposed any of his tenants receiving relief meal from the local charitable fund at Ahascragh, County Galway. His agent informed the Ahascragh relief committee in February 1880 that Clonbrock would 'give labour to such as require it – one or two men from a family, according to the number in family' and that free meal would be given to those who needed it.[19] The Dillon family was active in alleviating the condition of their tenants. Lady Augusta Caroline Dillon, wife of Luke Gerald Dillon, later 4th Baron Clonbrock, spent many days in January and February 1880 collecting, washing and distributing clothing to cottages on the County

[17] 43 Vict., c. 4 (15 Mar. 1880).

[18] O'Donoghue to Marlborough, 16 Feb. 1880. CSORP/1880/4259.

[19] (copy of) John Ross Mahon to Rev. P. Healy, NLI Clonbrock, Ms 35,727 (11).

Galway estate.[20] In 1880 alone, over £106 was spent on meal supplied to distressed tenants on the estates and £420 was spent purchasing and distributing sixty-eight tons of seed potatoes to tenants for the following year's crop.[21]

Abatements

Part of the normal paternal response of landlords during a time of difficulty was to temporarily reduce rents for some tenants. In July 1879, the earl of Erne wrote the following cordial note to his tenants:

> My friends – As I hope never to forget the good old motto, 'Live and let live,' and as I always wish to sympathise with my tenants and assist them in every way in my power when under difficulties, I have on my return to Ireland taken much trouble to ascertain how much each marketable commodity that you are in the habit of disposing of has fallen in price during the present year. I find in some of them there has been great depression, and consequently many of you have sustained considerable loss. As I hope, however, that the present prices are only temporary, and that better times are in store for you, I wish to assist you this year in getting through the present crisis, and I have accordingly given instructions to my agents to allow all my tenants (except those who hold leases), 10 per cent. on their year's rent at the next yearly or half yearly payments of rent, if paid at the appointed time, according to the rules of the estate. – I remain your landlord, Erne.[22]

Erne's abatement preceded the devastating floods of August around Lough Erne, and the advent of the land agitation in the west of Ireland. Even before the rise of the Land League and a climate of forceful tenant farmer demands

---

[20] Diary of Lady Augusta Caroline Dillon, 1880. NLI Clonbrock, Ms 35,788 (7).

[21] Clonbrock Account, 1880. NLI Clonbrock, Ms 19,633.

[22] *The Irish Farmers' Gazette*, 26 July 1879.

for rent reductions, there were public calls for abatements. In June 1879 in Tipperary, for instance, both the Tipperary Tenant Farmers' Club and the Tipperary board of guardians publicly petitioned local landlords to temporarily reduce their rents. The farmers' club pointed to the 'failure of the crops and bad harvests in general', and the competition from North America to Irish farmers, and claimed 'the tenant farmers of Ireland are driven to a state of depression and insolvency well nigh verging on that of the famine years', and thus solicited landlords 'individually, and as a body, [to] reduce the present rents of your tenants in such proportions as will meet the exigencies of each individual case for, at least, this year'.[23] In the same month, the secular and regular clergy of the diocese of Galway called for abatements to 'the good landlords of this diocese', linking distress of farmers with the proliferation of 'illegal combinations against the rights of property'.[24]

Responses of landlords to the distress of their tenants varied according to personality and circumstances. Robert W. Kirkpatrick has identified four landlord reactions to public and private calls for abatements that probably held true before, during and after the land war.[25] The first was an immediate, perhaps unsolicited, abatement to tenants in difficulty. As a matter of course most landlords temporarily reduced the rent of, for instance, a woman recently widowed, or upon the death of a cow to a small tenant. A more sympathetic landlord might also abate the rents of a much larger number of tenants as the

[23] *Tipperary Advocate*, 21 June 1879.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Kirkpatrick, 'Landed Estates in Mid-Ulster and the Irish Land War, 1879-85', p. 71.

earl of Erne did. As already noted he gave a ten percent reduction to his Fermanagh yearly tenants in July 1879, but after the Lough Erne floods a month later he remitted the entire year's rent to tenants whose lands were in the flooded area.[26] It is impossible to determine what percentage of landlords were in each of these four categories of responses, but if most landlords followed Erne's example, the land agitation might have withered away rather than blossomed into a forceful national movement.

The second reaction to calls for abatements Kirkpatrick termed 'benevolent pragmatism', which was characterised by landlords waiting to see if their tenants requested abatements and if neighbouring landlords granted them. In September 1879 land agent John Pomeroy wrote to Hugh de Fellenburg Montgomery, a counties Tyrone and Fermanagh landlord, that 'the principal excitement here at present is the abatement question', noting that neighbouring landowner Captain Mervyn Archdale was giving a twenty percent reduction on rents under £5, a fifteen percent reduction on rents under £10 and a ten percent reduction on the rest, also mentioning that Lord Ely was fixing his abatements on a sliding scale, 'but more liberally'.[27] Pomeroy concluded that an abatement on the estate would be necessary, 'partly really & partly to avoid serious bad feeling if the other landlords do the same'. As such he suggested granting fifteen percent on rents under £10 and ten percent on rents over £10 a year, which was in line with Archdale's

[26] *The Tipperary Advocate*, 20 Sept. 1879. Following the flooding, Erne and neighbouring landlords initiated a drainage system for the area. Kirkpatrick, 'Landed Estates in Mid-Ulster and the Irish Land War, 1879-85', p. 31.

[27] Pomeroy to Montgomery, 5 Sept. 1879. PRONI D627/281B.

reductions. Indicative of how attuned Pomeroy was to peer pressure, he added to Montgomery that the abatement might have to be doubled if other landlords did so or if the state of the country made it necessary.[28] On the one hand, this might be taken as a cautious and thorough land agent preparing his employer, who had been away from his estate for over two years for heath reasons, for the worst, and wrangling for himself some future negotiating power to deal with tenants. On the other hand, both landlord and agent could have been indecisive and overly anxious to be in accordance with prevailing practices on neighbouring estates.

Too much stress can be laid on the 'benevolent' part of 'benevolent pragmatism' however. While many landlords did offer abatements with the earnest desire to temporarily alleviate the conditions of tenants in times of agricultural depression, they did so to ensure the payment of rent. If the landlord or agent offered no abatement he might not receive rent from the particular tenant. One would need to examine individual cases of abatement in great detail to discern the motives of landlords or agents to determine whether the granting of an abatement showed benevolence or simply pragmatism.

A third type of response was to grant abatements for motives other than the primary distress of tenants, often as a pre-emptive strategy to prevent tenants from joining the League or combining to demand rent reductions.

[28] Ibid.

Many Ulster landlords employed this tactic in 1880 and 1881.[29] It is difficult to prove this as the motivation behind an abatement; landlords and agents no doubt had a variety of factors behind decisions to temporarily reduce rents, perhaps a combination of all three responses at the same time.

The fourth type of response was not to grant abatements at all. This reaction was typified by landlords who opposed abatements on the grounds that the distress experienced by tenants was exaggerated, often accompanied by arguments that rents were low, had not been raised in more than a generation, and that farmers had enjoyed two decades of rising agricultural prices. This was a very principled opposition to the question of abatement which often hung on the rights of property, the obligations of contract and the independent attitude of standing on one's own two feet. Landlords who fell into this category were usually not on cordial relations with their tenants to begin with. John George Adair, notorious for the strained relations with his tenants in Donegal,[30] was one such landlord. In response to a memorial for abatement by some of his Queen's County tenants in October 1879, Adair stated his position that he was unable to abate their rents because of circumstance and inclination. He received no reductions on the taxes or incumbrances on his estate and so could not afford to give his tenants an abatement without, he claimed, being 'driven to abandon my property. This I

[29] Thompson, *The End of Liberal Ulster*, p. 232.

[30] W. E. Vaughan, *Sin, Sheep and Scotsmen: John George Adair and the Derryveagh Evictions, 1861* (Belfast, 1983).

am not prepared to do, and consequently cannot grant their request…'.[31] More to the point, Adair argued that the tenants involved in the request did not deserve an abatement as they had gotten themselves into difficult straits through an over-reliance on credit: 'My personal knowledge of all the signers of this address enables me to state … that where inability or difficulty to pay their rents exists, it has been produced by want of industry, bad habits, and the extravagance consequent on the facility of continuous borrowing at exorbitant rates of interest from banks and local usurers…'.[32] Apparently Adair did not judge his own difficulty with incumbrances on his estate to be comparable with his tenants' reliance on credit. He did, however, see the land agitation behind the memorial, and made it perfectly clear that he held his property rights paramount:

> I trust for their own sake as well as mine that the tenantry will not be misled by the wicked and unfounded agitation so prevalent, and which lies at the bottom of this address. It can only end, if they do, in their certain ruin, for I will, at all costs, maintain my rights. For myself, if driven to part with my property…I can fortunately turn to America where the good sense and honesty of the people have taught the Irish race that a socialist revolution or the robbery of one class is impossible.[33]

Whereas Erne's unsolicited abatement before the Lough Erne floods evinced benevolent paternalism, Adair's response to his tenants' request displayed paternal condescension.

---

[31] *Leinster Express*, 1 Nov. 1879, cited in J. W. H. Carter, *The Land War and Its Leaders in Queen's County, 1879-82* (Portlaoise, 1994), p. 85.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid., pp. 85-86.

The cantankerous earl of Charlemont was another landlord who had no time for abatements. A relatively impoverished and bitter old man, Charlemont saw abatements as a sign of weakness and was proud to hold out against calls for reductions. Writing to his agent, Hugh Boyle, from Rome in December 1880, he boasted: 'I believe I was the only owner who held out against giving any reduction and most certainly I will not give way now'.[34] Charlemont saw his resistance to tenant demands for rent reductions as antagonising the Land League but in the process revealing himself as a stalwart adversary. He waged a personal fight against the League, instructing Boyle in January 1881 that any tenant participating in the League was to be served a notice to quit: 'I had written to Buchanan [his County Tyrone estate sub-agent] that any tenant taking part in the Land League meeting was to be at once noticed. If I am to be interfered with after all the low rents and arrears allowed to accrue … I must now know the reasons – you will do the same in Armagh County, the sooner the better. I have for some time seen it was coming and, as this movement is certainly communistic, no time is to be lost'.[35] As discussed below, an ejectment on title allowed a landlord to eject a tenant for any reason, including indignation, by serving a notice to quit.

There was the occasional landlord who became the victim of intimidation for refusing abatements. Charles Stoughton, JP and County

---

[34] Charlemont to Boyle, 16 Dec. 1880. PRONI D266/367/57 cited in Kirkpatrick, 'Landed Estates in Mid-Ulster and the Irish Land War, 1879-85', p. 388. Charlemont had estates in counties Tyrone and Armagh.

[35] Charlemont to Boyle, 9 Jan. 1881. PRONI D266/367/48 cited in Kirkpatrick, 'Landed Estates in Mid-Ulster and the Irish Land War, 1879-85', p. 388.

Kerry landlord, was at home with his daughter in September 1880 when someone fired a shot through the window. The previous Sunday a threatening notice had been posted on his avenue gate warning him that he would be killed if he did not reduce his rents by twenty-five percent, and also warned tenants on the estate not to pay any rent without the abatement. In between the time of the posting of the threatening notice and the shooting, no tenants came to the rent office to pay their rents, although one woman paid in private, afraid of being seen by the other tenants. Following the shooting, two RIC constables were placed on night-watch at Stoughton's residence.[36]

The financial circumstances of a landlord were crucial to his ability to weather the storm of the land agitation and determined the extent to which he could grant abatements. As L. P. Curtis has illustrated, landlords as a class became more incumbered from the 1850s onwards, building new houses, taking on marriage settlements, arranging portions for children and generally striving to maintain an elevated or aristocratic lifestyle. The Cloncurry estate, for instance, had family charges of £3,380 a year, including a £1,000 jointure to Lady Cloncurry.[37] In addition to family charges, estates were burdened with various rents and taxes landlords paid each year, such as income tax, head rents, quit rents, county cess and poor rates.[38] Terence Dooley has commented that during the agricultural boom years from the mid-1850s to the mid-1870s many landlords had 'gone in search of mortgages' but 'put very

[36] R. A. Massy, RM, to T. H. Burke 14 Sept 1880. CSORP/1880/22493.
[37] Cloncurry Account, 1880. NLI Cloncurry Ms 12,898.
[38] L. P. Curtis, 'Incumbered Wealth: Landed Indebtedness in Post-Famine Ireland', *AHR* 85: 2 (Apr. 1980).

little aside for what were literally to be the rainy days' of the late 1870s.[39] To what extent the burden of mortgages and jointures prevented landlords from offering abatements for more than one year, or at all, is difficult to judge, but it did give an excuse for not granting reductions. This was Lord Cloncurry's reply to the request of his tenants on his County Limerick estate for a twenty percent abatement in 1881: 'The Annual sum which I pay to the trustees of Maynooth Roman Catholic college as interest upon mortgages of land in Ireland is as large as the whole rental of my property in Limerick, and if you can persuade the trustees of Maynooth college to give me an abatement of 20 per cent in the half year's interest now accruing to them I will have pleasure in giving a similar abatement to my tenants in Limerick'.[40] Cloncurry's claim was that landlords were also in financial difficulty, and that his ability to relieve the rents of his tenants was contingent on him receiving temporary respite from his mortgages.

The Irish Farmers' Gazette, a high-farming newspaper, took a narrower view of the abatement question, arguing that calls for abatement were a distraction from the business of improved farming and suggested the financial position of many smaller landowners made reductions of rent impossible. To make its point, the paper provided a hypothetical case of a landlord with a £1,000 a year rental who had mortgages and family charges. It suggested that interest on incumbrances would take up two-thirds, or £666 13*s* 4*d* of the

[39] Terence Dooley, *The Decline of the Big House in Ireland*, pp. 79-80.

[40] *Irish Times,* 2 May 1881, cited in *Terence* Dooley, 'Landlords and the Land Question, 1879-1909' in Carla King (ed.), *Famine, Land and Culture in Ireland* (Dublin, 2000), p. 123.

gross rental, leaving a net income of £333 6*s* 8*d*. Thus, granting a twenty percent reduction to his tenants would leave the landlord £133 6*s* 8*d* a year, 'something less than the salary of a bank clerk'.[41] While two thirds of the gross rental taken up by interest was not representative of average encumbrances, Curtis has illustrated a link between estates size and mortgage rate, such that the larger the landowner, the lower the rate of interest on mortgages, and he demonstrated that the most heavily incumbered estates tended to be those with a net rental of less than £1,000 a year.[42]

One of the most interesting things about abatements was the multiplicity of mechanisms used by landowners to determine the level of reduction. There was, however, one condition that applied to all offers of abatement: rent had to be paid in order for the reduction of rent to take effect. Another general practice was to exclude leaseholders from abatements because their rents were deemed to have been low and stable, and because the lease was a written contract. The numbers of leaseholders had declined throughout the nineteenth century and by 1870 there were 57,432 leases ranging from one to ninety-nine years.[43] If leaseholders were not numerous on an estate, however, they might be included in a general abatement, as they were on the earl of Gosford's Cavan estate in 1879 in which all tenants received a fifteen

---

[41] *The Irish Farmers' Gazette*, 25 Jan. 1879.

[42] Curtis, 'Incumbered Wealth: Landed Indebtedness in Post-Famine Ireland', p. 363. Curtis also showed that wealthier estates carried the lightest debt burdens, and that Ulster landowners were generally the most solvent. Ibid, pp. 363, 366.

[43] *Returns Showing the Number of Agricultural Holdings in Ireland, and the Tenure by which They are Held by the Occupiers* [C 32]. HC 1870, lvi. 737.

percent abatement.[44] Lord Leitrim's agent, George Stewart, sent Leitrim a list of tenants who held leases since 1868 and marked the names of those he thought worthy of a reduction.[45] Graziers on Colonel Clement's Manorhamilton, County Leitrim, estate received a ten percent abatement on their rents due 1 November 1879, though Stewart reminded the estate bailiff James McCulla, 'of course if the rents are not punctually paid the allowance [will] not be given'.[46]

The most common mechanism for determining abatements was a sliding scale of reductions based on the tenant's yearly or half-yearly rent. In February 1881 Hugh de F. Montgomery circulated a printed notice of abatement to his tenants, explaining that 'notwithstanding the good harvest of last year, many tenant farmers have not yet recovered from the effects of the preceding bad times' and offered abatements of twenty percent on the half year's rent for yearly tenants with yearly rents of £10 or less, and ten percent abatement to those with yearly rents over £10. The reduction was contingent upon punctual payment by 30 April 1882. He also offered twenty percent abatement on all arrears due from 1879 to tenants with £10 rent and under who paid their arrears by the same date.[47] Montgomery's reductions fit the pattern of the lower the rent, the higher the percentage of reduction, thereby

---

[44] Kirkpatrick, 'Landed Estates in Mid-Ulster and the Irish Land War, 1879-85', p. 353.

[45] George Stewart to Leitrim, 9 Oct. 1879. Stewart Letter book, Leitrim papers NLI Ms 32, 656.

[46] Stewart to McCulla, 27 Oct. 1879. Stewart Letter book, Leitrim papers NLI Ms 32, 656.

[47] Printed notice, 10 Feb. 1881. PRONI D627/307A.

affording the most relief to the most vulnerable farmers, though, as was often pointed out during the land war, the issue for the smallest tenants, particularly in Galway and Mayo, was often not the ability to pay the normal rent, but the ability to pay any rent.

The fact that a sliding scale of rent per farm, in which the lower the rent the higher the percentage of abatement, was used to determine the level of abatement suggests landlords were pragmatic in dealing with the smallest tenants on their estates. Landlords could have given abatements on a per acre scale, such as a 5*s.* per acre abatement on the half yearly rent, but this would have benefited the largest tenants over the smallest ones. Using the farm's rent rather than acreage showed better management in giving higher abatements to smaller tenants who generally were more numerous on estates than large tenants, and also illustrated some recognition that those tenants with smaller farms had a smaller margin of solvency than large tenants. While a general estate-wide abatement per acre might be deemed most fair to all tenants because it did not positively or negatively discriminate for or against any particular tenants, the sliding scale based on yearly rent was much more beneficial to the smallest tenants.

Although the sliding scale based on rents was by far the most common mechanism for determining abatements there were many other variations and individual practices. Lord Lurgan's offer of abatement was based on the tenant paying both rent and arrears on time. If punctually paid, the tenant received a 12.5 percent abatement on the year's rent; if paid within a month

after the date he received a ten percent reduction, and if paid within a further month he received 7.5 percent.[48] To qualify for J. G. Vesey Porter's abatement, his Fermanagh tenants' farms and buildings had to be in good condition.[49]

Tenants on the Shirley estate in County Monaghan were offered a twenty percent reduction on any farm the rent of which had been raised above the 1834 estate valuation and ten percent on rents not raised since 1834.[50] The earl of Rosse devised a plan to relieve his King's County tenants while at the same time getting them to improve their farms. In December 1879 he offered a thirty percent reduction in rent on farms rented at £30 a year and under, and fifteen percent on farms rented over £30 a year, to tenants who undertook draining, building, fencing 'or any such improvements as shall be approved by me or Mr. [Toler R.] Garvey before being undertaken, and which shall be completed before the rent-call next spring'.[51] Lord Rosse's scheme was also intended to provide employment for local and estate labourers during the winter months.

Whatever the mechanism for determining the level of temporary reduction, the landlord also had to decide whether it was to be a general estate-wide abatement or bestowed upon an individual basis. John Pomeroy advised Montgomery against endeavouring to give individual abatements according to the perceived necessity of each tenant, since it would be 'quite

---

[48] *The Irish Farmers' Gazette*, 15 Nov. 1879.
[49] Ibid., 6 Sept. 1879.
[50] *Tipperary Advocate*, 18 Oct. 1879.
[51] *The Irish Farmers' Gazette*, 6 Dec. 1879.

out of the power of any landlord to do fairly & every instance of injustice would cause endless bad feeling & lying'.[52] As already noted, tenants were mindful of abatement levels on neighbouring estates but they would be even more conscious of abatements offered on their own estate and would not appreciate an adjacent farmer receiving a higher percentage reduction. The earl of Leitrim's agent for his Donegal estate advised him against a general abatement in 1879, though added, 'your tenants will accept any arrangement you make with gratitude'.[53]

Reports of abatements were commonly featured in most newspapers, however, as a source, published reports on abatements, especially during the land war, must be taken with some scepticism. One concern with these accounts is that they were often vague or misleading, such as the report in July 1879 announcing that C. F. Crichton had granted a ten percent reduction to the tenants on his Kildare estate.[54] It is unclear from the report if the abatement applied to all tenants on the estate, or whether there were particular conditions attached, such that tenants had to pay by a specific date or clear all of their arrears to receive the abatement. This raises the question of why abatements, especially vague ones, were published in the first place. The practice of publishing reductions in rent predated the land war and, depending on the political bent of the newspaper involved, could be seen either to highlight the benevolence of landlords or shame reluctant and parsimonious

---

[52] Pomeroy to Montgomery, 20 Sept. 1879. PRONI D627/282.

[53] Stewart to Leitrim, 30 Sept. 1879. Stewart Letter book, Leitrim papers NLI Ms 32, 656.

[54] *The Irish Farmers' Gazette*, 27 July, 1879.

landlords into granting reductions through peer pressure. As one County Tyrone landlord complained of the effect of published abatements: 'I consider this late practice of publishing reductions of rent to be most mischievous: it leads the tenants to think it a hardship that they should be expected to pay their debts like honest men, and it strengthens the hands of those agitators who are endeavouring to persuade the people that it is an injustice that they should be called on to pay any rent at all'.[55] It seems clear, however, that some landlords sought the publicity. A Mr. Kelly, from Ballina, bought Burresheale Glebe, near Newport, County Mayo, from the church temporalities commission in 1877. Although he 'bought it very dear', he 'never charged anything extra to the five poor tenants' and 'regrets that he can't give them the half year's rent'.[56] Such a notice was self-serving and raises the question: to what extent did landlords or their agents voluntarily send notices of their reductions to the local and national press for positive publicity.

Even examining estate rentals does not present as clear a picture of abatements during the land war as one would wish. Part of this was to do with the idiosyncrasies of accounting techniques of estate clerks. Although all rentals recorded rents due and received as well as arrears, abatements were not always clearly identified from other allowances such as the payment of poor rates. What emerges upon examining estate rentals is the great difference

---

[55] Anonymous letter to the editor, *Tyrone Constitution*, 17 Oct. 1879, cited in Kirkpatrick, 'Landed Estates in Mid-Ulster and the Irish Land War, 1879-85', pp. 60-61.

[56] *The Irish Farmers' Gazette*, 25 Oct. 1879.

among landowners to the extent of abatements, and even among different estates in the same county, of the same landowner. In 1879 and 1880, the earl of Kenmare allowed abatements totalling 6.5 percent and 4 percent respectively of yearly rents due on his County Limerick estate, which amounted to £450 and £258 respectively. On his County Kerry estate, his primary estate, with its 1,700 tenants, his reductions totalled only £53 in 1879, but rose to £1,440 in 1880, representing 0.2 percent and 5 percent, respectively, of the yearly rent due. On his County Cork estate, the smallest of the three, he gave only £10 in 1879 and £15 in 1880, or 0.3 percent and 0.4 percent of the yearly rent due.[57]

On Colonel Henry Clement's Lough Rynne, County Leitrim estate, particularly the portion in the parish of Cloone, tenants received a twenty percent abatement in 1879. Not all tenants received the reduction however. Out of 106 tenants (excluding farms or meadows surrendered to or held by Clements) forty-five tenants received an abatement of twenty percent. Thirty-seven tenants on the estate were in arrears and of these only eight received the abatement, which is easily accounted for by the fact that none of the other twenty-nine tenants paid any rent.[58] In 1881 individual abatements to tenants ranged from six percent to fifty percent without any identifiable pattern; smaller tenants did not necessarily receive a higher percentage reduction,

---

[57] Kenmare papers. PRONI D4151/H/13-16.

[58] Leitrim Papers. NLI Ms 32, 644. Upon the murder of the third earl of Leitrim in 1878, Colonel Clements inherited all the earl's estates but through compromise to avoid litigation, retained the counties Leitrim, Cavan, Galway and Kildare estates and gave Robert Clements, 4th earl of Leitrim, the Co. Donegal estate. See Brigid Clesham, NLI Collection List No. 49.

which was usually the case elsewhere. James Wilson, who held a three acre farm at a yearly rent of £6, received an 8*s* or six percent abatement, whereas in the same townland, Edward Wilson, who had a farm of twenty-seven acres and a yearly rent of £38 received an £11 or twenty-nine percent reduction.[59] The practice seems to have been for Stewart and Clements to determine the individual abatement, which would then be communicated to the tenant by the estate bailiff. Landlord and agent sought to keep abatements a private matter between landlord and tenant. As Stewart informed bailiff William Gibson in November 1879, 'I wish you to go around the estate & tell each tenant the amounts he must pay immediately after the fair … All tenants not mentioned in this list will have to pay their usual rents. You need not tell any tenant what his neighbour is paying and I am most anxious that there should not be any notice in the papers on the subject of the abatement'.[60] Abatements on Colonel Clement's County Leitrim estates seem to have been at the high end of the scale compared to other landowners. As a percentage of yearly rents due, abatements ranged from ten percent in 1879, fourteen percent in 1880 to fifty-two percent in 1881, falling back down to fourteen percent in 1882.[61] On his Lough Rynne estate, he wiped off all the arrears of forty-five tenants in four townlands.[62]

---

[59] Leitrim Papers. NLI Ms 32, 644.

[60] Stewart to Gibson, 10 Nov. 1879. Stewart letter book, Leitrim papers NLI Ms 32, 656.

[61] Leitrim Papers. NLI Ms 32,644-32,646; 4,138.

[62] Ibid., NLI Ms 32,646.

The granting of abatements was part of the normal paternal response of landlords to the distress of their tenants, much the same as many landlords distributed blankets and clothing to their poorest tenants.[63] It is difficult to assess the extent to which this response of abating rents was affected or interrupted by the land agitation from 1880 onwards. There is much convincing anecdotal evidence that landlords resented being called upon to grant abatements from tenants on their estates, or even worse, from a land meeting. The reaction of Robert Pigott to a request for a twenty-five percent abatement in December 1881 was perhaps typical in sentiment if harsh in action: 'It is to be regretted that, in accordance with the demands of the land league, you have, by a demand preposterous and uncalled-for, broken the golden links that have hitherto bound us together. As a good and patriotic landlord is placed on the same footing in Ireland with the harsh and unyielding, I have directed Mr Reeves [Pigott's agent] to place his books in the hands of my solicitors, and I will lay out no more money or give no more allowances than those the law compel me'.[64] Landlords viewed their relationship with their tenants as a private one which should not be interfered with by outsiders.

---

[63] Augusta Dillon did on the Clonbrock estate throughout January 1880 and Charles Stewart did on the Leitrim estates in January 1879. Augusta Dillon Diary, 1 Jan.; 16 Jan. 1880. Clonbrock papers. NLI Ms 35, 788 (7). Dillon was the wife of Gerald Dillon, later 4th Baron Clonbrock and the landlord defence leader in Co. Galway. Stewart to James McCulla, 10 Jan. 1879. Stewart Letter book, Leitrim papers NLI Ms 32, 656.

[64] *Leinster Express,* 24 Dec. 1881, cited in J. W. H. Carter, *The Land War and Its Leaders in Queen's County, 1879-82* (Portlaoise, 1994), p. 215.

The following table presents the data of abatements expressed as a percentage of rent due from rentals throughout Ireland during the land war. Since not all of the rentals had complete series for the four years from 1879 to 1882, the data has been divided into observations of complete and incomplete data series. The second column of observations in the table presents the median of the eight observations which had complete rental series from 1879 to 1882. The observations in column three represent data of both complete and incomplete data series for the 1879 to 1882 period. The division of observations into those from complete and those from incomplete data series was necessary to get the most information from the data on abatements and at the same time to present the most accurate data. This methodology was also used in tables below dealing with rent receipts and arrears.

Table 2. Abatements as percentage of rents due on twenty estates, 1879-82[65]

Year	Median of 8 complete observations	Median of all available observations	Number of observations used in column 3
1879	1.5	1.5	12
1880	1.3	3.7	18
1881	1.5	5.5	20
1882	1.75	7.75	16

[65] The following rentals were used for this calculation; for complete references see appendix below: Brooke, Bruen, Clements (Leitrim), Clonbrock, Cloncurry, Erne, Headfort, Humphry, Kenmare, Mansfield, Pratt, Shirley, St. George Johnston, Tighe, Whyte.

Surprisingly, this table shows that abatements increased in size as the land war progressed, whereas it has been assumed that higher abatements were sought and given more frequently in 1879 and 1880 than 1881 and 1882. It might have been the case that more abatements were sought in 1879 and 1880 but more reductions were given in 1881 and 1882. The most common demand of resolutions adopted at land meetings in 1879 was for reduction in rents, although from 1880 to 1881 they dropped to one of the least common demands.[66] It would have made sense that abatements were higher during the agricultural depression and prior to the growth of the land agitation and the proliferation of the Land League in 1880 and 1881. This earlier period also corresponded to more cordial and paternal relations between landlords and tenants before landlords were commonly denounced as cold-hearted exterminators and tenants were accused of feigning distress and withholding their rents.

The fact that rent payment improved[67] at the same time that abatements increased suggests that abatements were increasingly offered more to get rents in than to help tenants. Offering abatements was a shrewd policy because it motivated tenants to pay their rents on time. Clark described the strategy a little more harshly: 'Almost all landlords tried to use abatements to wring rents from tenants; they did this by making reductions conditional on

[66] Clark, *Social Origins of the Irish Land War*, Table 19, p. 298.
[67] See Table 3 below p. 98.

prompt payment of the abated rent and perhaps also on the liquidation of arrears'.[68]

Using the reports in two newspapers, Donald Jordan identified seventy-six Mayo landlords who gave abatements in the first six months of 1879. These landlords owned around a fifth of the county and represented about a fifth of landowners of 100 acres or more. The abatements seem to have been fairly high: seventy-one percent of these landlords granted reductions of the 1879 rent of twenty to twenty-five percent, while fourteen percent of the landlords gave fifty percent reductions or more.[69] What is most surprising about Jordan's findings is that smaller landlords appear to have been more generous than larger landlords, since smaller landlords generally had a smaller percentage of net income to live off and were more heavily incumbered than larger landlords. The vast majority of landlords (eighty-eight percent) who gave reductions held estates 5,000 acres and less; of the twenty largest landowners in the county, who together owned forty-seven percent of the county, only four were reported to have granted reductions.[70] Too much, however, can be made of such a study of only two newspapers covering only the first six months of 1879. Donnelly, also using newspapers, suggested that landowners in County Cork granted abatements averaging twenty-five percent in the period of the autumn gale of 1879, August to December. He also

---

[68] Clark, *Social Origins of the Irish Land War*, p. 306.
[69] Donald Jordan, *Land and Popular Politics in Ireland*, p. 207.
[70] Ibid.

claimed that the larger landowners lagged behind smaller landlords in granting abatements. [71]

Clark has been sceptical of the extent to which abatements were offered and to which they were effective in relieving conditions for tenant farmers. He concluded that abatements in 1879 'manifestly failed to meet the needs of tenants', arguing that a thirty percent abatement would only reduce a tenant's total expenditure by less than five percent.[72] Clark's conclusion regarding the effects of a thirty percent abatement was perhaps unjust; much more important was the amount by which a farmer's income fell due to the poor weather and falling prices. Clark did not state what would have been an acceptable level of reduction for landlords to have offered; it seems that a thirty percent reduction on a year or half-year's rent would not prevent an insolvent tenant from 'going to the wall', or losing his farm through ejectment or sheriff's sale. However, a tenant in arrears of rent to his landlord was probably also heavily in debt to shopkeepers. Gilbert de L. Willis, who worked for twenty years in the Munster Bank before it failed in 1885, claimed that probably half of all tenant farmers were heavily in debt, from the easy availability inflated credit which began around 1866 and collapsed in 1877.[73]

---

[71] Donnelly, *The Land and the People of Nineteenth-Century Cork*, p. 255.

[72] Clark, *Social Origins of the Irish Land War*, p. 239. Clark's figure is based on family budget estimates made in the 1890s by the Congested Districts Board, in which rent was reckoned to represent 15 percent of a family's total expenditure.

[73] Gilbert de L. Willis, Paper No. 3. Appendix D, *Report of the Royal Commission on the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881, and the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1885. Minutes of Evidence and Appendices* [C 4969-I] HC 1887 xxvi. 25, p. 976.

Rents

Paul Bew has argued that the two key Land League policies regarding rents in 1880 were the advocation of 'rent at the point of the bayonet' and the offering of Griffith's valuation in lieu of contracted rents.[74] As discussed in the following chapter, the rent at the bayonet strategy, in which tenants resisted payment of rent until the imminent loss of farm or livestock through auction at a sheriff's sale or eviction, was not successful. The strategy favoured larger tenants who could hold out longer against the law process and was ultimately divisive to the land agitation. Bew argued that it was, however, a necessary price to pay for the support of the larger farmers in the Land League. If the rent at the point of the bayonet strategy was promoted as much as Bew suggests, this should be reflected in the rentals; rents received should be low, as tenants held out to await the sometimes lengthy process of payment enforcement through ejectment or sheriff's sale. In 1880 the League also strongly advocated that tenants offer their landlords the government valuation as a just rent for the times, as T. D. Sullivan's ballad on Griffith's valuation made clear:

> That's the word to say;
> Down with confiscation!
> Not a cent we'll pay
> But Griffith's Valuation.[75]

---

[74] Bew, *Land and the National Question*, p. 125.

[75] Sullivan, 'Griffith's Valuation', cited in Palmer, *The Irish Land League Crisis*, p. 178.

Of course the two strategies were linked in that the offering of only the valuation for rent, if refused by the landlord, could lead to the tenant adopting the rent at the bayonet tactic.

Most commentators on the land war have emphasised the notion of a general withholding of rents, particularly in 1880 and 1881. According to Bew, by the end of 1880, 'the League was successful in that the demand for Griffith's valuation had been made by tenants in most of southern and western Ireland'.[76] As Palmer put it: 'The cry, "Pay only Griffith's Valuation!" therefore, resounded throughout the country in the latter part of 1880. By the following autumn the League was advising the tenant-farmers to pay no rent at all'.[77] Moody noted that when the League closed its relief account to help tenant farmers in distress at the end of August 1880, it directed tenants to pay only what rent and arrears they could afford to pay, according to the times, and which, he noted 'commonly took the form of tendering only the amount of Griffith's valuation to the landlords'.[78] Carter cited the report of a Queen's County land agent for 1880, that 'At the November collections a complete strike against the payment of rent higher than Griffith's valuation was universal … In the face of the failure of [the enforcement of] the law the landlords agreed in many cases to accept Griffith's valuation…'.[79] In November 1880 the *Leinster Express* remarked that 'refusals to pay more than

---

[76] Bew, *Land and the National Question in Ireland*, p. 125.

[77] Palmer, *The Irish Land League Crisis*, pp. 178-179.

[78] Moody, *Davitt and Irish Revolution*, p. 416.

[79] Crosby papers [no further information], cited in Carter, *The Land War and Its Leaders in Queen's County*, p. 89.

Griffith's valuation' were becoming 'daily more numerous' and, between 20 November and 25 December, reported on tenants demanding the valuation on estates which Carter calculated to represent nearly 91,000 acres or twenty-one percent of the land in Queen's County.[80] Dooley claimed that landlords 'who procrastinated or refused to meet tenants' demands became subject to rent strikes which subsequently denied them a sizable proportion of their rental income'.[81]

Most historians agree that the official 'no rent manifesto' issued by the Land League leaders in Kilmainham gaol in October 1881 in response to the arrest of League leaders was a failure, condemned by the catholic clergy and ignored by farmers who wanted lower rents which the land courts seemed to offer. Setting aside that failed programme, was there a general withholding of rents during the land war, 1879 to 1882? This is important in assessing the strength of the land agitation and the influence of the Land League. It will also have ramifications for assessing the claims of landlords that they were facing financial ruin at the hands of tenants who were unwilling rather than unable to pay their full rents.

Forster's intelligence-gathering reports from RIC county inspectors and RMs in October 1880 indicated that rents would be paid, but not rents *and* arrears. The county inspector for Monaghan estimated that eighty percent of rents would be paid, adding that tenants appeared to have the money to pay

---

[80] *Leinster Express*, 20 Nov. 1880, cited in Carter, *The Land War and Its Leaders in Queen's County*, p. 88.

[81] Dooley, 'Landlords and the land question, 1989-1909', p. 120.

the rents but not their arrears.[82] The Waterford inspector was optimistic, suggesting that tenants were 'in a better position to pay their rents than they have been for years back; from the very good crops, and the high prices of butter, cattle, hay, and corn'.[83] The inspector for Clare also thought the tenants there better able to pay their rents than in the previous years but added that some would inevitably hold out against paying rent.[84] The Mayo inspector was less sanguine about the collection of rents and reported that only reduced rents would likely be paid: 'Unabated rents will not be paid except by large leaseholders, or under pressure of law'.[85]

Examination of twenty-six estates from across the country during the four years of the land war (1879-82) refutes the customary view of tenant farmers in large numbers withholding their rents. It is, of course, impossible to determine from rentals the numbers of tenants who had the ability to pay but withheld their rents from the tenants who simply could not pay their rents, though from the comparison of ejectments and evictions below, it suggests that many who did not pay were withholding and when pressed by the law, paid. Tabulating the amount of rent received as a percentage of the amount of yearly rent due during the 1879-82 period provides the surprisingly high

---

[82] *Condition of Ireland. Reports of County Inspectors of Royal Irish Constabulary, Arranged by Province*, p. 26. CSORP 1880/4481.

[83] Ibid., p. 32. CSORP 1880/4481.

[84] Ibid., p. 28. CSORP 1880/4481.

[85] Ibid., p. 16. CSORP 1880/4481.

number of ninety-three percent.[86] Ninety-three percent of rents due were paid during the land war, a remarkable figure.

The sample from which these figures are derived are representative of the country, with estates in counties Antrim, Cavan, Cork, Donegal, Fermanagh, Galway, Kerry, Leitrim, Limerick, Longford, Meath, Monaghan, Roscommon, Wicklow, and Wexford. There were a variety of size of estates and numbers of tenants, from the earl of Kenmare's Kerry estate of 91,000 acres, yearly rental in 1879 of £27,313 and 1,700 tenants, to the Reverend Henry Scott estate in Donegal, with 815 acres, eighty tenants and an 1879 rental of £593.[87] Where possible, identifiable portions of estates were taken separately, so that the Clonbrock estates in County Galway were taken as five separate estates on the supposition that if each estate was accorded a separate entry in the rental it indicated it was treated as a separate administrative entity. Also where possible, town, grazing and meadow tenancies were excluded from the calculations to reflect a more accurate picture of farming tenancies.

On the basis of this data it is clear that there was no rent strike during the land war. Rents were not withheld; on the contrary they were quite well paid, and punctual payment actually improved as the agitation progressed.

---

[86] This figure is corroborated by Vaughan, who found a figure of 94.5 percent average rent receipts as a percentage of annual rents due on estates during the land war. Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, Appendix 8: 'Rent Receipts on Twelve Estates', pp. 244-246. There was overlap between my sample and Vaughan's in only two estates: Clonbrock and Erne.

[87] See Appendix 1, p. 317.

Table 3. Comparison of Irish, English and Scottish estates rent receipts, 1879-82[88]

	Receipts of rent as percentage of rent due*			
Year	Median of 16 observations (Irish estates)	Median of all observations (Irish estates)	Number of observations used in column 3	Median of 20 English and Scottish estates
1879	91.5	88.5	20	97
1880	93.5	92	27	93
1881	87.5	92	28	90
1882	100.5	100	27	93.5

**Rent due is the yearly rent due exclusive of arrears and abatements; receipts include rent and arrears*

To take the Irish figures alone, it is not surprising that rent receipts during the land war were below normal,[89] although even the figure for 1879 is high in the context of a year of bad weather and poor harvests for tenant farmers. Abatements were, however, successful in motivating tenants to pay their rents. The fact that rents were so well paid in 1882 is accounted for by the arrears act, which to benefit from, tenants had to pay a full year's rent, and between August 1882 and October 1883 there were nearly 136,000 applications for

[88] The sixteen observations in column 2 represent data for estates which had complete rental series during the 1879-82 period. The observations in column 3 represent data of both complete and incomplete data series for the 1879-82 period. The twenty observations in column 5 represent complete rental series on English and Scottish estates. The following Irish rentals were used for this calculation; for complete references see appendix below: Antrim, Brooke, Bruen, Clements (Leitrim), Clonbrock, Cloncurry, Dopping-Hepenstal, Erne, Headfort, Humphry, Kenmare, Mansfield, Pratt, Ross Mahon, Scott, Shirley, Johnston, Tighe, and Whyte. The rents from the English and Scottish estates are derived from 20 estate rentals submitted to the royal commission on agriculture. *Particulars of Expenditure and Outgoings on Certain Estates in Great Britain and Farm Accounts. Reprinted from the Reports of the Assistant Commissioners.* (London, 1906), pp. 6-43.

[89] Rent receipts on Vaughan's sample of estates for the period 1869-78 averaged 99%. Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland,* appendix 8, pp. 245-46.

relief under the arrears act.[90] The information on the Scottish and English estates comes from the rentals of twenty-two estates submitted to the royal commission on agriculture and adds a comparison to rent receipts within the United Kingdom during the land war years. Although there was not as extreme an agrarian agitation in the rest of the United Kingdom, the agricultural depression affected each nation. The table shows that rent payment, not surprisingly, was an issue throughout the United Kingdom during these years, but even more importantly, buttresses the claim that rent payment in Ireland was really quite good.

[90] 44 & 45 Vict., c. 47 (18 Aug. 1882); *Report of the Irish Land Commissioners for the period from 22nd August, 1882, to 22nd August 1883, and as to Proceedings under the Arrears of Rent (Ireland) Act, 1882, to the 27th October, 1883* HC [3897], 1884.

Table 4. Yearly rents due compared to government valuation

Estate*	Valuation	Yearly Rental	Rental as % above or below valuation
Antrim	20,837	16,057	- 23
Belmore	3,474	2,080	- 40
Brooke	2,676	3,185	+ 19
Bruen	3,288	4,310	+ 31
Erne	17,039	18,095	+ 6
Clonbrock	11,442	10,756	- 6
Headfort	17,631	19,636	+ 11
Humphrys	6,246	7,882	+ 26
Kenmare	34,473	37,551	+ 9
Mansfield	5,285	6,005	+ 14
Ross Mahon	3,788	4,067	+ 7
Scott	358	593	+ 65
Shirley	20,744	20,897	+ 1
Tighe	2,538	2,415	- 5
Whyte	934	1,043	+ 12
	150,753	**154,572**	**Average: + 8**

** These estates represent whole units which in later tables are broken down to individual units. Where possible towns, meadows and grazing tenancies have been added to more accurately reflect the rental as a comparison to the valuation. Where a portion of an estate could not be factored into the rent, the whole estate was excluded. The yearly rent is taken from the first year (in the series 1879-82) for which there is a rental extant. The valuation is taken from Bateman's guide and the 1876 government return on landowners and includes buildings and lands.*

According to these figures, yearly rents on these estates were, on average, only eight percent above the government valuation (inclusive of buildings), much lower than supposed by Land League rhetoric but well within the range discussed in most landlord propaganda. In one of its pamphlets defending estate practices of Irish landlords, the Irish Land Committee claimed that a low level of renting was a rent that was not more than a third above the valuation.[91] Griffith's valuation was not tendered during the land war on most estates, unless the normal rent due was Griffith's valuation to begin with.

[91] ILC *The Land Question, Ireland. No. III. Facts and Figures*, p. 14.

If rents were well paid during the land war what is one to make of the common complaints from landlords that they were not getting their full rents in, and the Land League rhetoric of tenant farmers bravely confronting their landlords by only offering Griffith's valuation? How common an experience was the rent collection day of Samuel Johnson, a County Wexford landlord, who wrote to Forster in November 1880 explaining that twenty farmers had just been to see him and who told him that they were not allowed to pay their full rents, offering him the government valuation, which he refused? According to Johnson, 'their deportment was perfectly respectful, [and] they made no complaint of the rent being excessive'. It was Johnson's view that the farmers were pressured or intimidated into withholding their rent.[92]

More than one landlord in the winter of 1880-81 wrote to Dublin Castle complaining of being taxed for an income which was not received. Two landlords, Myles Jordan and Thomas Budgen, advised the Castle that the tax collector should collect the income tax due from their rentals directly from the occupying tenants, and a third, W. Worthington, solicited a loan from the government of £1,000 because he could not collect rents and complained that he was forced to live in poverty, 'which landlords in England know nothing about'.[93]

On the other side, how common was it for tenants to surreptitiously send their rents by night or by post while maintaining a public stance of unity

---

[92] Johnson to Forster, 19 Nov. 1880 CSORP/1880/28972.

[93] Myles Jordan to Earl Cowper, 15 Dec., 1880 CSORP/1880/32017; Budgen to Forster, 1 Jan. 1881 CSORP/1881/137; Worthington to Forster, 1 Jan. 1881 CSORP/1881/172.

with fellow tenants in withholding rents? In January 1880, Peter Gibbon, a tenant of the marquess of Sligo's estate near Westport, County Mayo, sent an unusual memorial to the duke of Marlborough: 'Your memst begs to State that he does not wish to be numbered amongst Tenants that feels [sic.] reluctant in paying their Rents to the Marquis of Sligo'. Gibbon beseeched Marlborough to write to the estate agent asking him to accept his rent. The tenant paid his rent jointly with seven other tenants and it appears that his co-tenants had refused to pay their portions. In a typical response to requests involving government intervention into the relations between landlord and tenant, the under-secretary, T. H. Burke, was to reply to Gibbon that the lord lieutenant had no power to interfere in the matter.[94]

Arrears

While rents were reliably paid throughout the land war most landlords allowed arrears to accumulate on their estates, itself a form of relief to tenants. Arrears levels varied quite considerably among landowners. Few landlords would have been able to withstand the levels of arrears which the earl of Kenmare allowed on his County Kerry estate during the land war. Arrears of just £1,482 in 1877 rose to £10,145 in 1880 and leaped to £23,756 in 1881. Expressed as a percentage of yearly rents due, arrears in 1877 were six percent of the rental but in 1881 represented eighty-eight percent of the rental.[95] Kenmare's agent, Samuel Hussy, became more alarmed and defensive about the arrears on the

[94] Gibbon to Marlborough, Jan. 1880. CSORP/1880/2108.
[95] Kenmare rentals. PRONI D4151/H/9-18.

Kenmare estate as the land war progressed. In July 1879 he informed Kenmare that arrears on the estate had almost tripled from the previous half year's rental, but he sought to reassure his employer: 'Several of these arrears are under special circumstances, which may not occur again, but I fear most estates in Great Britain and Ireland will suffer an equally great loss, if not much greater in proportion to rental and number of tenants on the estate'.[96] Six months later Hussy tried to downplay the almost doubling again of arrears, noting that the amount was still less than when he took charge of the Kenmare agency in 1874.[97] By 1881 he placed all the blame on the high estate arrears on the Land League:

> There can be no doubt but that farmers suffered severely in '78 & '79 but still 1880 was a prosperous year and thus with the abatements given and other assistance in the way of drainage would I am sure enable the tenants to pay up and that they would have done so but for the dangerous state of the country, in fact, there is no law in Kerry but the Land League law and no tenant can pay his rent without danger to his life & property and I anticipate that this will be on the increase.[98]

Carrying arrears forward on rentals was a widespread practice even in years of prosperity such as from the mid 1860s to the mid 1870s, although Vaughan has noted an inclination among landlords after the famine to clear arrears from their estates and to phase out hanging gales.[99] During the land war landlords had no choice but to allow arrears to accumulate, though this was somewhat

---

[96] Samuel Hussy note to Kenmare, Kenmare rental, half year ending 30th June 1879. Kenmare papers, PRONI D4151/H/13.

[97] Hussy note to Kenmare, Kenmare rental, half year ending 31st Dec. 1879. Ibid., PRONI D4151/H/14.

[98] Hussy note to Kenmare, Kenmare rental, half year ending 31st Dec. 1880. Kenmare papers, PRONI D4151/H/16.

[99] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland,* p. 113.

offset by well-paid rents. It is surprising that arrears did not grow more than they did since arrears tended to quickly mount: ten percent arrears a year easily became thirty percent in three years.

Table 5. Arrears of rent on twenty-nine estates, 1879-82[100]

		Arrears as percentage of rent due*	
Year	Median of 11 observations	Median of all available observations	Number of observations used in column 3
1877	8	6	14
1878	12	8.5	16
1879	20	14	19
1880	39	30	25
1881	40	40	29
1882	52	39.5	26

**Rent due is the yearly rent due exclusive of arrears and abatements*

A standing grievance among tenant farmers with the 1881 land law act was its exclusion of tenants in arrears from the judicial rent tribunals. Under the arrears act, passed in August 1882, a tenant with a holding valued at not more than £30 a year was eligible to have his arrears extinguished if he met certain conditions. The first was that he had to be unable to clear his arrears without losing his holding or the ability to cultivate his farm. A second condition was that the tenant had to pay a full year's rent, at the 1881 level, to his landlord. With these conditions met the tenant could apply to the land commission,

[100] The eleven observations in column 2 represent data for estates which had complete rental series during the 1879-82 period. The observations in column 3 represent data of both complete and incomplete data series for the 1879-82 period. The following rentals were used for this calculation; for complete references see appendix below: Antrim, Brooke, Bruen, Clements (Leitrim), Clonbrock, Cloncurry, Dopping-Hepenstal, Erne, Headfort, Humphry, Kenmare, Mansfield, Pratt, Ross Mahon, Scott, Shirley, St. George Johnston, Tighe, Whyte.

which paid the landlord one half of the tenant's arrears up to the amount of the yearly rent of 1880. Crucially, the landlord thereby lost all claim to any remaining arrears accrued.[101] Thus, out of £1.76 million in arrears extinguished, approximately £767,000 was recovered by landlords.[102] On the one hand, this was certainly confiscation of £1 million owed to landlords; on the other, landlords were lucky to get the money that they did, which probably would have been written off anyway. Commenting on the act, Vaughan described it as 'by far the most original and sensible piece of land legislation' passed in the settlement of the land question.[103] It was sensible legislation because it lifted thousands of tenants from sinking in arrears and insured at least one good year of rent payment for landlords.

Evictions

In February 1881 Lord Crofton issued a circular to his tenants complaining of their avoidance of his rent office: 'most of my tenants seem to think that to pay rent is a compliment quite unnecessary to pay their landlord'. He warned them that his patience was at an end and that he was 'not disposed to wait longer for the arrears of rent so long due' and would soon take steps to enforce the payment of rent and arrears.[104] The two principal methods for a landlord to enforce the payment of rent and arrears from a tenant were by

---

[101] 44 &45 Vict., c. 47 (18 Aug. 1882). Larger tenants could also avail of the act: a tenant with a holding valued up to £50 yearly was eligible if his landlord conjointly applied under the act.

[102] Dooley, *Decline of the Big House in Ireland*, p. 96.

[103] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, p. 225.

[104] Printed circular, 24 Feb. 1881. Clonbrock Papers, NLI Ms 19,665.

proceeding by sheriff's sale or by ejectment. A sheriff's sale was the forced sale of a tenant's goods (most often cattle) or the interest in his farm, to recover arrears as a debt. Upon receiving a civil bill decree or high court writ, the sheriff was empowered to seize and sell the tenant's goods or interest in his tenancy and to pay the landlord out of the sale's proceeds. If the tenant's interest in his farm was sold the landlord would then begin ejectment proceedings to oust the former tenant to allow entry of the new tenant. Since the use of sheriffs' sales was a novel and integral tactic of landlords in forcing their tenants to pay rent, and because so little has been written on the sheriff's sale procedure, it is analysed in more detail in the following chapter.

An eviction was the physical expulsion of the tenant from his holding by the sheriff making entry onto the premises, the end result of the ejectment process.[105] Ejectments could either be for the non-payment of rent or on title. To be ejected for non-payment of rent the tenant had to owe at least one year's rent.[106] All other ejectments were on title, such as where the landlord asserted that the tenancy had been determined by breach of condition of tenancy, death of tenant or by notice to quit. James Whelon, a small tenant on Earl Fitzwilliam's estate, for example, was served a notice to quit before March 1879 because his holding was dilapidated.[107] If the landlord simply wanted to end the tenancy, and thereby regain possession of the holding, he gave the tenant six months notice to quit the farm, after which time the tenant could be

[105] 27 & 28 Vict., c. 99 (29 July 1864).
[106] 23 & 24 Vict., c. 154. (28 Aug. 1860).
[107] Fitzwilliam ejectment book, NLI, Ms 4992.

ejected for overholding.[108] In both types of ejectments the tenant was issued a summons to appear in court to explain why he had not paid his rent or vacated his holding; the civil bills court or high court judge, depending in which court the action was sought, would then decide in favour of the landlord or tenant. Ejectment for non-payment of rent could only be halted if the tenant paid his rent and legal costs. The tenant could only prevent ejectment on title in the technical sense of actually vacating his farm before the ejectment was executed.[109]

Ejectments were sought either in the local civil bills court or in the high court. Most ejectments were sought in the civil bill's court: 53,022 civil bill ejectments were entered, compared to 4,519 high court ejectments executed between 1879 and 1882.[110] Created in 1796, civil bills courts were popular because they had smaller legal costs attached to them than the high court, indicative of the fact that civil bills courts could only deal with matters involving smaller debts (under £40). If the landlord sought an ejectment for non-payment of rent where the amount due totalled £100 or more, he had to pursue the matter in the high court.[111] Civil bill ejectments received priority before execution of other decrees for the recovery of debt, and had to be executed within one month of the sheriff receiving the decree. There were

---

[108] Thomas de Moleyns, *The Landowner's and Agent's Practical Guide,* 7th edn. (Dublin, 1877), pp. 163-66.

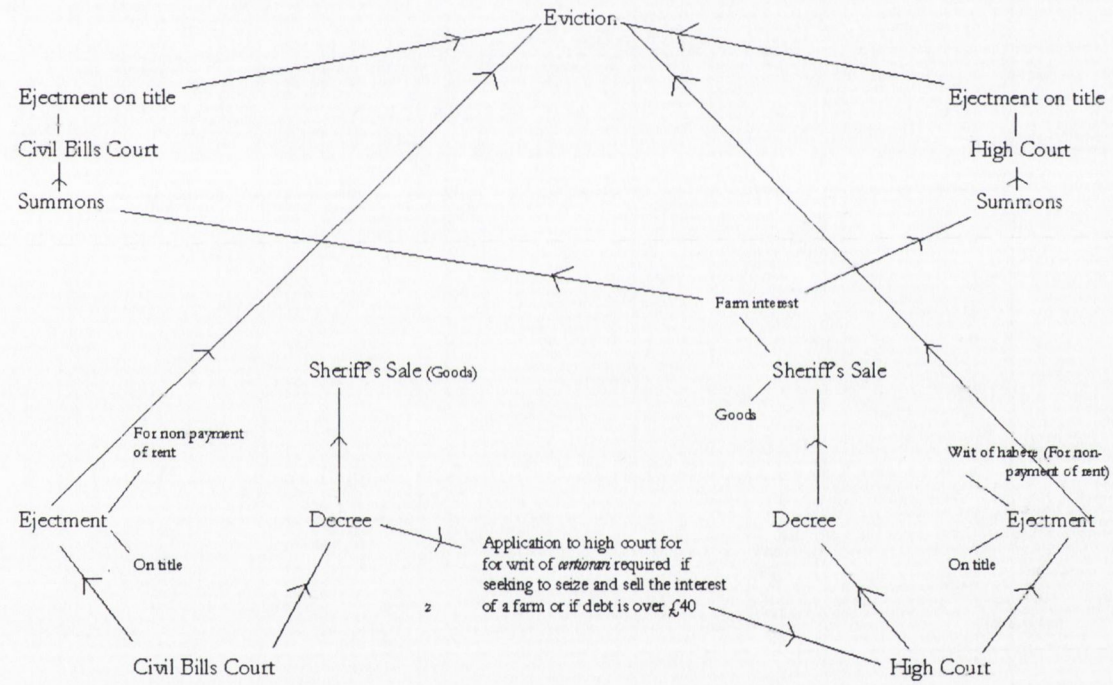
[109] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, p. 22.

[110] *Judicial Statistics, 1879-82.* The number of high court actions for ejectment were not recorded, only the number executed by sheriffs or sheriffs' bailiffs.

[111] Dodd, 'Prize Essay on the Jurisdiction of the Local Courts in Ireland, Scotland, and England compared,' in *JSSIS* Vol. VII. part LI (Dec. 1876 - Apr.1877), pp. 100, 104.

also stringent conditions regarding the execution of a decree for possession, as entry by the sheriff could only be made onto the premises between 9 am and 3 pm; and there could be no entry on a Sunday, Good Friday, or Christmas day.[112]

Figure 1. Legal remedies for landlords to enforce payment of rent



Before the establishment of the Irish National Land League in October 1879 landlords were undertaking ejectment proceedings to enforce the payment of rent; this was common estate management practice. George Stewart, agent on Colonel Clement's County Leitrim estates, obtained civil bill ejectments for non-payment of rent in March 1879, strategically choosing the larger tenants

[112] 27 & 28 Vict., c. 99. (29 July 1864).

on the estate to set an example to the smaller ones. As Stewart told Clements: 'They are the leading men of the only four townlands which have not paid anything at all yet & I hope will have a good effect on the estate generally'.[113] The supposition here, which also applied to sheriffs' sales, was that smaller tenants would be over-awed into paying their rent or coming to terms with the landlord once they saw that larger tenants, who generally had more resources and could be more independent of the landlord's good will, were processed or had their goods seized. Two months later, Stewart complained that the process server 'has effectually prevented the processes being of any use in frightening the tenants into paying by telling everyone that I have stopped any more being issued'.[114]

Throughout the nineteenth century there had been a strong link between high arrears, low agricultural output and high rates of eviction, particularly in the years 1847 to 1853, 1861 to 1864, and 1878 to 1882.[115] Evictions were inextricably linked to insolvency; tenants who could not pay their rents due to agricultural depression, and whose arrears accumulated, were more likely to be evicted. Arrears were debt, and the ejectment and eviction

---

[113] Stewart to Clements, 3 April, 1879. Stewart letter book, Leitrim papers NLI Ms 32, 656.

[114] Stewart to R. J. Slack, 5 June, 1879. Stewart letter book, Leitrim papers NLI Ms 32, 656. The primary reason why the tenants on the estate were reluctant to pay their rents was because of the question of whether Colonel Henry Clements was legitimately their landlord. Under the third earl of Leitrim's 1875 will, Clements, his nephew, was made heir to all the earl's estates rather than his son, Robert, who succeeded the earldom on Leitrim's death in 1878. To avoid litigation, a compromise between Colonel Clements and Robert, 4th earl, was reached whereby Robert would have the Donegal estates and Clements would have the rest. Brigid Clesham, NLI Collection List No. 49, p. vi.

[115] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, p. 23.

was part of the normal process of enforcing the payment of a debt in a society highly attuned to the notions of contract and debt. Evictions, of course, were highly emotive events and the most traumatic form of debt enforcement, especially after the abolition of imprisonment for debt in 1872.[116]

Table 6. Civil bills and civil bill ejectments, 1878-1883[117]

Year	Civil Bills other than Ejectments	Civil Bill Ejectments
1878	309,634	8,381
1879	347,909	9,703
1880	289,358	10,663
1881	240,366	13,621
1882	220,943	19,035
1883	231,762	22,706
Total	**1,639,972**	**84,109**

Interestingly, this table shows that civil bill ejectments never accounted for more than ten percent of ordinary civil bills, which underscores the notion that there was a squeeze of creditors during the land war. Examining the County Wexford sheriff's decree and order book makes it plain that in attempts to recover debt by civil bill, the creditors were overwhelmingly shopkeepers and merchants, and the debtors overwhelmingly farmers. In the 1879 decree and order book, out of 862 creditors, 227 were recorded in their occupation as shopkeepers, and 334 as merchants; only twenty-two were recorded as gentlemen, and thirty-nine as farmers. Out of 853 debtors, 653

[116] 35 & 36 Vict., c. 57 (6 Aug. 1872).

[117] *Judicial Statistics, 1879-83.* These figures represent civil bill ejectments served by process servers.

were farmers.[118] The extent to which shopkeepers were pressing creditors during the land war is a topic which merits greater attention, particularly because of Clark's emphasis on the leadership of townsmen in a 'rural-urban coalition against a landed elite'.[119] Focus has usually been on the more traumatic ejectment and eviction, whereas a farmer was far more likely to have a decree taken out against him by a shopkeeper. Debts to shopkeepers and merchants varied in size just as arrears to landlords depended on the yearly rent due. In July 1880, Michael O'Dempsey, an Enniscorthy merchant, took out twenty-two decrees against local farmers for debt and the sums were not trifling with a median debt of nearly £14.[120]

Landlords were much more likely to seek an ejectment for non-payment of rent than on title. In 1879 and 1880, the only years for which there are a detailed breakdown of numbers, this is clear. In 1879 there were 6,744 civil bill ejectments entered for non-payment of rent compared with 1,755 ejectments entered on title, and in 1880 there was a similar pattern of 7,507 entered for non-payment of rent and 1,590 on title.[121] The high court numbers are similar: 1,359 actions for ejectment for non-payment of rent compared to 242 actions for ejectment on title in 1879, and 2,292 actions for

---

[118] Sheriff's ejectment and decree book (Co. Wexford), vol. 1, 1879-85. NAI, IC 43 72.

[119] Clark, *Social Origins of the Irish Land War*, p. 263.

[120] Sheriff's ejectment and decree book (Co. Wexford), 1880, vol. 16, NAI IC 43 57.

[121] *Return, 'in Tabular Form, as under, of the Number of Civil Bill Ejectments, distinguishing Ejectments on the Title from those for Non-payment of Rent, Tried and Determined in each County in Ireland, for each of the Four Years ending the 31st day of December 1880, exclusive of Ejectments for Premises situate in the Counties of Cities, Boroughs, and Towns under the Act 9 Geo. 4, c. 82, or "The Towns Improvement (Ireland) Act, 1854", or any Local Act'*, HC 1881 (90) lxxvii. 685.

ejectment for non-payment of rent and only 128 on title commenced in 1880.[122]

It is interesting that landlords overwhelmingly sought ejectment for non-payment of rent rather than on title since there were several advantages to ejecting on title. An ejectment for non-payment of rent could only be sought once the tenant became a year's rent in arrears, which only happened once every six months since tenants paid bi-annually. Ejectments for non-payment of rent also carried a right of redemption for the tenant, such that he had a full six months following the ejectment to pay the amount due plus legal costs to resume his tenancy.[123] Thus, if a landlord sought to eject a tenant who was six months in arrears, and who paid his rent in March and November, the landlord would have to wait a minimum until the November gale was due, and often a two months grace after that, before beginning ejectment proceedings for non-payment of rent. Civil bills courts only sat four times a year, although they continued sitting until all the business for each session was dealt with, which might delay the process further.[124] Thus, depending on when the ejectment was entered for hearing with the clerk of the peace, when it was heard and decided by the judge, and when it was executed by the sheriff or his

---

[122] *Return, 'in Tabular Form, as under, of the Number of Actions of Ejectment in Superior Courts commenced, distinguishing Ejectments on the Title from those for Non-payment of Rent; and those Tried and Determined in each County in Ireland, for each of the Four Years ending the 31st day of December 1880, and the Number of Haberes issued, and the Number executed, in the same period',* HC 1881 (90) lxxvii. 685.

[123] De Moleyns, *The Landlord's and Agent's Practical* Guide, , p. 197; 23 & 24 Vict, c. 154 (28 Aug. 1860).

[124] Dodd, 'Prize Essay on the Jurisdiction of the Local Courts in Ireland, Scotland, and England compared,' in *JSSIS* Vol. VII. part LI (Dec. 1876 - Apr.1877), p. 101.

bailiff, the tenant had six months on top of all of this to redeem his holding. These safeguards existed, of course, to allow a reasonable time for a farmer to get back his holding. Landlords could avoid this long, protracted, process by ejecting on title since it forced recalcitrant tenants to pay their rent, come to an accommodation with their landlords, or be evicted. Thus, if landlords were really intent on clearing troublesome tenants from their estates as quickly as possible, ejectment on title would have been used far more frequently.

Probably the main reason why landlords did not frequently eject on title was because of the compensation requirements under the 1870 land act. Under the act, a tenant evicted, or 'disturbed', from his holding was entitled to compensation. However, tenants evicted for the non-payment of rent were not deemed to have been disturbed, and therefore were not entitled to compensation. Thus, landlords could choose the longer but potentially less expensive option of ejectment for non-payment of rent to avoid paying any compensation for disturbance.[125] One qualification concerning the foregoing reasoning was that an insolvent tenant evicted for non-payment of rent, especially where there was no tenant-right to sell, would leave his landlord with unpaid arrears, which would be lost.[126]

The predilection of landlords to eject for non-payment of rent suggests that their primary objective was to collect their rent and arrears rather than to rid insolvent or troublesome tenants from their estates. As discussed in the following chapter, the Land League was very successful in reinforcing a moral

[125] 45 & 46 Vict., c. 46 (1 Aug. 1870).
[126] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, p. 38.

code of farmer solidarity that stressed the immorality of landgrabbing – taking a farm from which a tenant had been evicted.

Table 7. Civil bill ejectments served, and executed, 1878-83[127]

	Civil bill ejectments		
Year	Processes	Executed	% executed
1878	8,381	1,995	24
1879	9,703	2,670	28
1880	10,663	2,407	23
1881	13,621	3,177	23
1882	19,035	5,190	27
1883	22,706	3,924	17

According to these figures, never more than a third of all civil bill ejectment processes served during the land war were actually executed. More than two-thirds of the civil bill ejectment cases initiated did not proceed beyond summoning the tenant to court. If one examines the number of civil bill ejectment executions as a percentage of civil bill ejectment processes in the decade preceding the land war, however, it is clear that this was the normal pattern. Although the number of processes were significantly higher (57,616 served between 1869 and 1878, and 53,022 served just between 1879 and 1882),[128] between 1869 and 1878 the ratio executed was twenty-three percent;

[127] *Judicial Statistics, 1878*-83. It should be noted that the number of civil bill ejectments processes underestimates the actual number served, for as W. Neilson Hancock, superintendent of the judicial and criminal statistics office in Dublin, pointed out, these figures only represented ejectments served by sheriff's bailiffs whereas ejectments could be served by the landlord's bailiff as well. *Judicial Statistics, 1870. Ireland: pt. ii,* p. 310.

[128] *Judicial Statistics, 1869-78.*

during the land war it averaged twenty-five percent. Thus, it would appear that landlords were simply doing what they normally did in initiating ejectment proceedings against tenants who withheld or fell behind in their rents. It suggests that landlords were not particularly punitive debt collectors, but rather sought to determine whether their tenants could not pay or were simply reluctant to pay their rents.

Table 8. High court ejectments executed, distinguishing those for non-payment of rent (writs of habere), 1879-82[129]

Year	Ejectments executed	Writs of habere executed	Writs of habere as % of total high court ejectments
1879	856	600	70
1880	905	666	74
1881	1,351	1,000	74
1882	1,407	945	67

This table illustrates that most high court ejectments were for non-payment of rent, and since high court actions dealt with higher sums of money than could be entered into a civil bills court, suggests that these ejectments were either for smaller tenants chronically in arrear, or for larger tenants who may have been targeted to set an example for the rest of the estate. From his analysis of County Cork, Donnelly interpreted the increased number of superior court decrees in 1881 as evidence that landlords consciously sought to burden their

[129] Note that the eviction figures do not account for readmissions. *Judicial Statistics, 1879-82.*

tenants with higher court costs and to 'overawe further resistance'.[130] Certainly an action for ejectment on title in the high court could be costly to defend since a landlord could obtain a court order compelling the tenant to give security for costs.[131] Although taking action through the high court could be a punitive strategy towards tenants, it is not so clear that this was what was happening. As already noted, if the amount of rent due in an action for non-payment of rent exceeded £100, the matter had to be pursued in the high court.

Adding the civil bill and high court ejectments executed during the land war together and expressing the figure as a percentage of evictions, it is clear that as the land war progressed, landlords who had ejectments executed were more likely to follow through with eviction. Expressed the other way, tenants who had ejectments executed against them were less likely to come to terms with their landlords and escape eviction.

---

[130] Donnelly, *The Land and the People of Nineteenth-Century Cork*, p. 277.

[131] Thomas de Moleyns, *The Landlord's and Agent's Practical* Guide, 7th ed., (Dublin, 1877), p. 185.

Table 9. Total ejectments executed as percentage of evictions, 1879-82[132]

Year	Total ejectments executed	Evictions	Evictions executed as % of ejectments
1879	3,526	1,238	35
1880	3,312	2,110	64
1881	4,527	3,415	75
1882	6,597	5,201	79
Total	**17,962**	**11,964**	**67**

Most evictions resulted from ejectments executed for the non-payment of rent. In 1879 and the first six months of 1880, the only years of the land war for which there are reliable statistics, this was clearly the case. Out of 1,238 evictions, 903, or seventy-three per cent were for non-payment of rent, and for the first half of June, out of 1,241 evictions, 995, or eighty percent of evictions were for non-payment of rent.[133]

---

[132] Note that the eviction figures do not account for readmissions. *Return, 'by Provinces and Counties (Compiled from Returns Made to the Inspector-General, Royal Irish Constabulary) of Cases of Evictions which have Come to the Knowledge of the Constabulary in Each of the Years 1849 to 1880, inclusive,* HC 1881 (185), lxxvii. 725; *Return '(Compiled from Returns Made to the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary) of Cases of Eviction which have Come to the Knowledge of the Constabulary in Each Quarter of the Year Ending 31 Dec. 1880, Showing the Number of Families Evicted in Each County in Ireland during Each Quarter of Families Evicted in Each County in Ireland during Each Quarter, Number Readmitted as Tenants, and the Number Readmitted as Caretakers'* HC 1881 (2) lxxvii. 713; *Return... to 31 Dec. 1881*, HC 1882 (9), lv. 229; *Return...to 31 Dec. 1882* [C 3465], HC 1883, lvi; *Judicial Statistics, 1879-82.*

[133] *Return '(compiled from Returns made to the Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary) in each Quarter of the Year ended the 31st day of December 1880, showing the Number of Families Evicted in each County in Ireland during each Quarter, the Number Re-admitted as Tenants, and the Number Re-admitted as Caretakers',* HC 1881 lxxvii. 713*; Returns showing (1) The number of Families Evicted in each County in Ireland for Non-payment of Rent, and the Number of these Families Re-admitted as Caretakers for the Years 1877, 1878, 1879, and the Half-year ended the 30th day of June 1880; and (2) The Number of Families Evicted for Non-payment of Rent and other Causes for the Quarter ended the 30th day of June 1880'* HC 1880 (317), lx. 367.

The fact that ejectments which were executed were more likely to result in eviction fits with the overall pattern of the landlord response to the land agitation. For most of 1879 landlords were inactive in defending their interests as a class. Only with the establishment of the Irish Land Committee in November, and its burgeoning propagandist activities, did many landlords begin to look beyond their demesnes to a more common class cause. The compensation for disturbance bill introduced into the House of Commons in June 1880 signalled to landlords that the government's understanding of the land agitation was as a response to heartless landlords evicting during a time of distress. The government view was that landlords needed restraining. Interestingly, the introduction of the compensation for disturbance bill did not result in a surge of evictions in the summer of 1880, as it might have been expected that landlords in the scheduled districts of the bill, contemplating eviction, would evict their tenants before the implementation of a scheme which could award money compensation to insolvent evicted tenants. Of the 2,110 evictions in 1880, 1,241 occurred by 30 June. The bill had been introduced twelve days earlier, so the majority of evictions in 1880 occurred before the bill was even introduced.[134]

[134] *Return...of cases of Eviction which have come to the knowledge of the Constabulary in each Quarter of the year ended the 31st day of December 1880* ... HC 1881 (2) lxxvii. 713.

Table 10. Quarterly returns of evictions during the land war, 1879-82 [135]

Period	1879*	1880	1881	1882
1 Jan – 31 Mar	261	554	350	1,317
1 Apr – 30 June	354	687	1,065	1,732
1 July – 30 Sept	284	671	1,282	1,443
1 Oct – 31 Dec	199	198	718	719
Total	**1,098**	**2,110**	**3,415**	**5,211**

**These number are the number of actual evictions; the other figures are evictions before readmissions.*

From the summer of 1880 onwards landlords began to take the threat of the Land League seriously, as well as the seeming reluctance or inability of the government to enforce the law and punish those guilty of intimidation. Throughout 1880 the Irish Land Committee publicised the landlords' case in the press and in pamphlets, and in December 1880 the Property Defence Association and the Orange Emergency Committee were established to provide effective defense of landlord interests. Collective landlord defense was most active and effective during 1881 and 1882 and this also corresponds with the high percentage of ejectments executed and highest numbers of evictions.

Since the Land League advised tenants to withhold rents, it bore some responsibility when tenants followed its dictates and were evicted. As part of its programme endorsed for the April 1880 land conference at the Rotunda in

[135] *Copy of 'Return prepared from Reports made to the Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary of Cases of Eviction which have come under the Knowledge of the Constabulary, showing the Number of Families Evicted in each County in Ireland in each of the Four Quarters of the Years 1877, 1878, 1879, First Quarter of the Year 1880, and up to the 20th day of June 1880'* HC 1880 (254). lx 361*; Return … of cases of Eviction which have come to the knowledge of the Constabulary in each Quarter of the year ended the 31st day of December 1880* …HC 1881 (2) lxxvii. 713*;* Ibid., to 31 Dec. 1881, HC 1882 (9), lv. 229; Ibid., to 31 Dec. 1882 [C. 3465], HC 1883, lvi. 99.

Dublin, the League called for the suspension, for two years, of a landlord's power to eject tenants from holdings valued at £10 a year and under.[136] More practically, the League sought to support those who resisted the service of ejectment processes and evictions, particularly those who were League members. In March 1880 the executive assumed responsibility for maintaining the families of all those persons who had recently been sentenced to gaol for resisting the service of ejectment processes at the Castlebar assizes, and soon this principle was extended throughout County Galway.[137] During the debate on the compensation for disturbance bill in the summer of 1880 the League earmarked £10,000 of relief money which had been raised in America for supporting evicted families, and Anna Parnell claimed that the Ladies Land League (founded 31 December 1881) spent over £20,000 supporting evicted families.[138]

An intriguing question is the extent to which the two coercion bills and Gladstone's land bill affected landlords' propensity to evict in 1881. It has been assumed that landlords seized the opportunity of clearing insolvent or troublesome tenants before the new land legislation was passed. Stephen Ball stressed a link between numbers of evictions and coercion, with the sharp rise in evictions following the suspension of *habeas corpus* in March 1881.[139] Jordan

---

[136] Moody, *Davitt and Irish Revolution*, p. 374.

[137] Ibid., p. 368. For resistance to the service of ejectments and evictions see Ball, 'Crowd Activity during the Irish Land War, 1879-90'.

[138] Ibid., p. 392; Carter, *The Land War and Its Leaders in Queen's County*, p. 108. Many of the Ladies Land League eviction forms are available in the National Library of Ireland. See for example: Land League Papers, Clare: NLI Ms 17,709 (3).

[139] Ball, 'Crowd Activity during the Irish Land War, 1879-90', p. 238.

argued that 1881 had the highest number of evictions in Mayo since 1855 because landlords took advantage of the coercion legislation, the consequent temporary imprisonment of the League's national and local leaders, and the opportunity to 'be rid of their arrear-laden tenants before the soon-to-be introduced land bill went into effect'.[140] Thompson also made a connection between the weakness of the League and higher evictions, arguing that evictions which were high in Ulster in 1880 began to drop throughout the province as the League branches and its influence spread.[141] Although the period from the beginning of April to the end of September during each year of the land war had the highest number of evictions of the year, the numerical leap of almost a third more evictions in the second quarter of 1881 and an even higher third quarter requires explanation.

With the failure of the state prosecutions of Land League leaders in January 1881, Forster introduced his coercion measure, the protection of person and property bill, which allowed for the suspension of *habeas corpus* in proclaimed districts and which empowered the government to detain, without trial, persons suspected of agrarian or treasonable offences.[142] The peace preservation bill, known as the arms bill, prohibited the possession of arms in proclaimed districts and empowered the government to search suspected persons and houses.[143] These two bills, against much resistance and obstruction from Parnell and his party in parliament, became law in March

---

[140] Jordan, *Land and Popular Politics in Ireland*, p. 301.
[141] Thompson, *The End of Liberal Ulster*, p. 235.
[142] 44 Vict., c. 4 (2 Mar. 1881).
[143] 44 Vict., c. 5 (21 Mar. 1881).

1881. From the point of view of landlords, the government was finally taking seriously its duty to protect life and property. However, less than a month later Gladstone introduced his land law bill which was both feared and loathed by most landlords as an unwarranted intrusion into the rights of property and worse, seen as giving into the demands of lawless agitation at their expense. Thus, in a heady climate of coercion and conciliation, landlords began to press their brief advantage and carried this on until 1882. Certainly the coercion and arms acts would embolden landlords to evict, if they were contemplating doing so. However, the fact that evictions were not higher belies the fact of the Land League success in stifling the market for evicted farms, and points to the more successful strategy of the sheriff's sale.

Table 11. Evictions by province, 1879-82[144]

Year	Ulster	Leinster	Connacht	Munster	Ireland
1879	172	354	313	399	1,238
1880	497	484	387	742	2,110
1881	1,219	692	784	720	3,415
1882	1,176	1,091	1,457	1,477	5,201

The rise in evictions in Ulster is significant since the province historically always had the fewest evictions. Out of 68,767 evictions recorded in Ireland between 1849 and 1880, only 8,791 occurred in Ulster.[145] The fact

[144] *Return, 'by Provinces and Counties (Compiled from Returns Made to the Inspector-General, Royal Irish Constabulary) of Cases of Evictions which have Come to the Knowledge of the Constabulary in Each of the Years 1849 to 1880, inclusive,* HC 1881 (185), lxxvii. 725; *Return ... of Cases of Eviction which have Come to the Knowledge of the Constabulary in Each Quarter of the Year Ending 31 Dec. 1880 ...* HC 1881 (2) lxxvii. 713; *Return... to 31 Dec. 1881*, HC 1882 (9), lv. 229; *Return...to 31 Dec. 1882* [C 3465], HC 1883, lvi.

[145] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, p. 70.

that Ulster had the highest rates of re-admission during the land war suggests that ejectment and eviction were not meant to clear tenants from their holdings. County Tyrone had the highest number of evictions in 1881, with 309 evictions; however, three-quarters of those families evicted were reinstated (mainly as caretakers).[146] In his study of the land war in mid-Ulster, Kirkpatrick grappled with the relationship between agrarian outrages and evictions, coming to an unsatisfactory hypothesis that 'Ulster, slow to adopt the ideas and methods of the Land League, suffered severe numbers of evictions and only then did tenants organise'. Agrarian outrages were fewer and less violent in Ulster, than in the other provinces. The large numbers of evictions there also preceded spikes in agrarian outrages, which contravened the trend, for example in Kerry and Galway, in which high numbers of agrarian outrages preceded, and therefore probably influenced, evictions.[147] Since agrarian outrages did not seem to unduly influence landlords' propensity to evict, Kirkpatrick suggested that landlords evicted as a preventative measure to curb the growth of the land agitation and spread of the Land League in Ulster.[148]

Thompson, like Ball and Jordan, saw increased evictions as a sign of landlords seizing the opportunity afforded by coercion in 1881 to press their tenants for rent before the land bill became law. Thompson also pointed to the importance of tenant-right in Ulster as a contributing factor in landlords'

---

[146] Kirkpatrick, 'Landed Estates in Mid-Ulster and the Irish Land War, 1879-85', pp. 147-48.

[147] Ibid., pp. 150-51.

[148] Ibid., pp. 151-52.

inclination to evict since their arrears could be recovered by the sale of tenant-right.[149] Support for this contention is the fact that in the first quarter of 1881, eighty-five percent of evictions were for non-payment of rent.[150]

Just as landlords granted abatements for different reasons – part of the normal paternal response to tenant distress, to prevent tenants from joining the League, because neighbouring landlords were doing so – so too did landlords have different motives for evicting tenants. Evictions were a fact of life in a land system where the large majority rented their farms from a tiny minority, and evictions occurred in prosperous years as well as during years of agricultural depression. The proliferation of credit opportunities available to tenant farmers, especially following the 1870 land act and its recognition of tenant right, meant thousands of farmers fell heavily into debt. As Gilbert de L. Willis pointed out, many farmers had two rents: one to their landlord and the other to the town shopkeepers. He suggested that a tenant with a yearly rent of £18 5*s* probably owed five times that much, £90, to creditors.[151] A certain number of tenants would lose their farms each year to insolvency and this would increase following a time of agricultural depression such as that from 1877 to 1879.

What seems clear is that landlords increasingly used ejectments to force tenants to pay their rents and to determine whether the tenants were unable to

---

[149] Thompson. *The End of Liberal Ulster*, pp. 235-37.

[150] *'Return showing number and particulars of evictions in Ulster 1 Jan – 31 March* 1881', Harcourt Mss., cited in Thompson. *The End of Liberal Ulster,* p. 237.

[151] Willis, Paper No.3. Appendix D, *Report of the Royal Commission on the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881, and the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1885. Minutes of Evidence and Appendices,*, [C 4969-I] HC 1887 xxvi. 25, p. 979.

pay or were withholding their rents at the implied or explicit behest of the Land League. Rents were well paid, which points to a combination of kicks and kindness – ejectment and abatement – to threaten and induce tenants to pay their rents. Although evictions were higher than normal during the land war, they were nowhere near the levels of the famine and its immediate aftermath. Between 1849 and 1852, for example, there were 57,239 evictions compared with 11,964 evictions between 1879 and 1882.[152] Of course, there were many more tenancies in the famine period compared to the land war period and there were more restraints in place to prevent and disincline landlords from clearing estates. During the land war the Land League was successful in propagating a moral code to prevent landgrabbing, without which campaign there would undoubtedly have been more evictions. There was no market for evicted farms. Landlords, however, realised this early on in the land war and undertook a legal strategy of enforcing arrears payment by forced auction.

---

[152] *Return, 'by Provinces and Counties (Compiled from Returns Made to the Inspector-General, Royal Irish Constabulary) of Cases of Evictions which have Come to the Knowledge of the Constabulary in Each of the Years 1849 to 1880, inclusive*, HC 1881 (185), lxxvii. 725; *Return … of Cases of Eviction which have Come to the Knowledge of the Constabulary in Each Quarter of the Year Ending 31 Dec. 1880* … HC 1881 (2) lxxvii. 713; *Return... to 31 Dec. 1881*, HC 1882 (9), lv. 229; *Return … to 31 Dec. 1882* [C 3465], HC 1883, lvi.

Chapter 4:

Sheriffs' Sales during the land war

On Saturday 12 February 1881, two horses belong to Andrew Kettle, executive member of the Land League, were auctioned at a sheriff's sale at his residence, Kilmore Cottage, Artane, County Dublin. Lord Talbot de Malahide, Kettle's landlord, obtained a decree to have Kettle's goods seized and sold to obtain the £40 in rent Kettle had refused to pay. Norris Goddard, solicitor and legal director of the Property Defence Association, opened the bidding on the first horse at £5 but was soon outbid by Kettle's brother at £20. A second draught horse was then auctioned to Kettle's brother for £30, thus raising enough to cover the debt and costs. The assembled crowd then gave three cheers for the Land League, C. S. Parnell, Andrew Kettle, and Michael Davitt.[1] Kettle had delayed his landlord getting it, but in the end, he paid his rent plus several extra pounds in costs.

Although there was not a general withholding of rents during the land war tenants did not promptly pay their rents either. The traditional methods of enforcing rent payment and debt collection were to serve ejectment processes and evict insolvent tenants. Contrary to the traditional view of the landlord reaction to the agrarian agitation, however, landowners did not

---

[1] *Freeman's Journal* [hereafter *FJ*], 14 Feb. 1881; *The Times* 14 Feb. 1881; L. J. Kettle (ed.), *The Material For Victory: being the memoirs of Andrew J. Kettle* (Dublin, 1958), pp. xi-xii.

simply opt for widespread ejectment and eviction. The landlord response was more sophisticated than clearing troublesome or financially ruined tenants from estates. Indeed, eviction became almost untenable with the successful counter-action of the boycott in which the Land League pressed for the ostracism of evicting landlords and the so-called 'landgrabbers' who took the vacant farms. Landlords, therefore, adopted a more successful legal strategy to recover arrears of rent and thereby combat the Land League by seeking to recover the rent through the sheriff's sale of the farmer's livestock or farm interest. The purpose of this chapter will be to examine sheriffs' sales in 1881, the most volatile year of the land war, and determine how they fit into this battle between landlords and tenants. An analysis of sales illustrates that a highly effective strategy to collect debt, and thereby challenge the supremacy of the Land League, was for landlords to seek debt recovery as an ordinary creditor. In so doing, landlords mounted their largest challenge to the League and the land agitation. The successful use of this legal strategy, strongly aided by the Property Defence Association (PDA) and the Orange Emergency Committee (OEC), also points to a vigorous landlord collective action in response to the agitation.

Sheriffs' sales were one of the most common events of the land war. The sales were far more frequent than agrarian crimes or evictions. Evictions were more contentious, more heart-wrenching and more violent than sheriffs' sales, though they both had several things in common. They were both means by which the landlord sought to enforce the payment of rent or recover

possession of property. They were both public events that drew the larger rural community into what was, on paper at least, a private matter of contract between two parties, the landlord who let his farm, and the tenant who rented it. Sheriffs' sales and evictions were linked in that the one could lead to the other: the sale of the farmer's interest in the farm could lead to his being legally ejected and then evicted when the sheriff transferred possession of the holding. Both events could also spark public condemnation of the use of the law on behalf of the landlord against the tenant.

The sale of a farmer's goods by the sheriff developed from the common law practice of distraint – the customary right of a landlord to enter, secure, and impound goods found on his tenant's lands for security of arrears.[2] If the tenant did not reclaim the seized property by settling the arrears, the landlord could sell the goods and recoup the debt out of the proceeds of the sale. A 1710 statute fixed the landlord in a privileged position among all other creditors: the goods of a tenant could not be seized for any debt – such as that owed to a shopkeeper or local merchant – until arrears of up to one year's rent were paid to the landlord.[3] This placed landlords in an extraordinary position in both rural and urban society: if a creditor of a tenant sought to recover a debt, and paid the necessary fees to acquire and have executed a civil bill decree or high court writ, the landlord would get all of the advantage with none of the risk or cost. However, this depended on the sheriff receiving

[2] Distraint was the act of executing the law of distress, that is, seizing and selling goods for the recovery of debt.

[3] 9 Anne c. 8 (1710). In the 1870s and 1880s the act applied to executions of county court decrees as well as those from superior courts.

timely notice of the tenant's arrears. If the sheriff received such notice, he was required to pay, or order the creditor to pay, the landlord his year's rent before even seizing the tenant's goods. Land agent George Stewart wrote to George Marsham, the County Leitrim sheriff, in October 1879: 'As I understand there is some likelihood of you selling the goods of Thomas Lawdon … I beg to give you notice that the sum of thirteen pounds ten shillings being one years rent of the holding to 29th September 1878 is due…'.[4]

The landlord's status as a special creditor derived from the nature of the debt as rent rather than a cash loan or credit which could be instantly called in. As a witness before the select committee on the law of distress in England in 1882 explained, 'the rent is something that keeps growing, and yet is not due, and cannot be recovered until a particular day, the tenant during the whole time having use of the land, for which he is incurring an increasing liability. An ordinary creditor, on the contrary, can at once claim payment for goods delivered; it is by his own agreement if the day of payment is postponed'.[5] English landlords had an even stronger position than Irish landlords, able to distrain for up to six years rent in arrears, which would have undoubtedly destroyed any farmer against whom the action was taken. In Scotland, under the law of hypothec, the landlord had a similar means of securing debt: the tenant pledged crops or cattle as security for rent, which the

[4] Stewart to Marsham, 19 Oct. 1879. Stewart Letter book, Leitrim papers NLI Ms 32, 656.

[5] S. B. L. Druce, witness; *Report from the Select Committee on Law of Distress; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix*, HC 1882 (284), viii, pp. 39-40.

landlord could seize and sell if the rent was unpaid. Scottish landlords' hypothec for agricultural tenancies over two acres was abolished in 1880.[6]

It is not clear to what extent Irish landlords used distraint in the later nineteenth century; it would have been unlikely and extremely hazardous to their employees' lives to attempt private seizure for rents during such a volatile time as the land war. The leading landowner's guide of the day, written by county court judge Thomas de Moleyns, while explaining the rights and practice of distraint, lamented that it had not yet been abolished, describing it as a 'remedy anomalous in its character, demoralizing to the tenant, and which has found a silent corrective in its practical repudiation by landlords of the better class'.[7] Another witness before the select committee on the law of distress commented that distraint in Ireland was a strong contributing factor in the breakdown of landlord and tenant relations borne out so acrimoniously and violently during the land war.[8]

The Irish solicitor-general advised against landlords using distraint in 1881, giving his judgement that: 'In my opinion a landlord to whom rent is

---

[6] W. M. Gloag and R. Candlish Henderson, *The Law of Scotland*, 11th edn. (Edinburgh, 2001), p.639; *Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Law of Hypothec in Scotland; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes Of Evidence, and Appendix* HC 1869 (367), ix, pp. iv-v.

[7] Thomas de Moleyns, *The Landowner's and Agent's Practical Guide,* 7th edn. (Dublin, 1877), pp. 129-130.

[8] *Report from the Select Committee on Law of Distress,* pp. 136, 139. For a discussion of distraint in Ireland in the late 1860s, see John Sproule, *'On the Effects of the Law of Distress and the Feudal Rule as regards Improvements in the relation between Landlord and Tenant', Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland,* [hereafter, JSSIS], vol. V, part XXXV (July 1868), pp. 5-12. See also Alan Dowling, *'A Parliamentary History of the Law of Distress for Rent from 1845',* in Norma Dawson, Desmond Greer and Peter Ingram (eds.), *One Hundred and Fifty Years of Irish Law.* (Dublin, 1996), pp. 171-90.

due acts prudently & as a rule properly in not distraining for it'.[9] Also indicative of the infrequency of the use of distraint was the fact that a report of a landlord distraining was brought up in the House of Commons, albeit by a Land League executive member. In August 1881, County Sligo MP Thomas Sexton gave notice of a question concerning Mr. Lloyd-Apjohn, a County Limerick landlord, who had recently evicted several of his tenants and had the interests of the farms of several other tenants sold at a sheriff's sale.[10] Sexton wondered whether the landlord 'is now engaging himself in midnight raids on the cattle of the latter tenants, seizing and carrying off the cattle and selling them by public auction?' Clearly, part of the problem was that Lloyd-Apjohn was considered obnoxious in the community; he was said to 'be in the habit of brandishing firearms in public, threatening to shoot people, and making use of such exclamations as "To Hell with the Pope"'. Sexton questioned whether by seizing and selling the cattle of his tenants, Lloyd-Apjohn was usurping the sheriff's functions. It turned out that the sub-sheriff of Limerick had deputed Lloyd-Apjohn to execute writs for Lloyd-Apjohn's cousin, a fellow landlord.[11] The case was inflammatory and had political currency, but the fact that Lloyd-Apjohn's behaviour in seizing the cattle was questioned points to the practice's infrequency.

Anecdotal references aside, the problem remains that since the distraint of goods by the landlord was a private matter there are no official records

---

[9] CSORP/1881/13058.

[10] 25 Aug. 1881. *Hansard 3,* ccclxv (365).

[11] Sub-Inspector Turner to G. E. Hillier, 25 Aug. 1881. CSORP/1881/29092.

documenting it as a method of debt recovery. One indication of its disuse is in the corresponding decline in the number of replevins, or actions for wrongful distraint sought by tenants, recorded in the government judicial statistics. Commenting on the decreased number of replevins in 1870 (from fifty-five in 1869 to seven in 1870), W. Neilson Hancock, economist and superintendent of the judicial and criminal statistics office in Dublin noted: 'If [diminished numbers of replevins] should continue, it will tend to show that the Land Act, while not abolishing the law of distress, will have a large effect in checking litigation in connexion with distress for rent'.[12] The 1870 land act introduced compensation for disturbance to tenant farmers although under the act a tenant was not deemed to have been disturbed if ejected for non-payment of rent. Ejectment for non-payment of rent did not, however, exclude the tenant from claiming compensation for improvements to the holding. The legal recognition of a tenant's interest in his holding provided the landlord with a substantial sum that could be seized and sold as an ordinary debt, thereby avoiding private seizure.

As with distraint there is a similar problem in estimating reliable numbers of sheriffs' sales, for although they involved either the sheriff or sub-sheriff in the proceedings, and the actions initiating the sales began in either the local civil bills or high court, there are no records of the number of actual sales conducted by sheriffs. Victorian government had a penchant for recording the minutiae of life, from detailed regional crop reports, to the

[12] *Judicial Statistics 1870* [C 443], HC 1871, lxiv. 301.

number of rooms in houses, illegitimacy rates, and figures of public drunkenness, but they were silent on the numbers of sales of farm interests and stock by sheriffs. The exhaustive annual judicial statistics collected and published by the government recorded only the issue of high court writs or local court decrees – that is, orders from courts directing the sheriff to seize and sell the debtor's goods. The number of seizures are not as useful as they initially seem; firstly because they make no distinction between rural and urban tenants, that is, the number of seizures executed against farmers versus the number against city and town residents; and secondly, and more importantly, the recorded numbers do not reliably provide the number of actual sales. The numbers of writs or decrees issued do not correlate to actual sales, for the writ or decree could be executed by the sheriff and be duly recorded, but the sale could be avoided simply by the debtor (the tenant) paying the debt and costs prior to the sale; the execution of the one did not necessarily lead to the execution of the other.[13] In this way it is similar to the way in which numbers of evictions were always less than numbers of ejectment decrees issued, and ejectment decrees issued were always fewer than summonses.

After the abolition of imprisonment for debt in 1872,[14] creditors increasingly turned to the high court writ of *fieri facias* (*fi. fa.*) to recover their debts. Writs of *fi. fa.* were not restricted to landlords seeking to recover arrears of rent; many other creditors used this method as well, even forcing

---

[13] George Atkinson, *A Treatise on the Office of High Sheriff, Undersheriff', Bailiff, &c. Including their Duties at Elections of Members of Parliament and Coroners; Also on Railway Compensation Cases, and the Execution of Writs,* 6th edn. (London, 1878), p. 303.

[14] 35 & 36 Vict., c. 57 (6 Aug. 1872).

the sale of the interests of farms for large debts. In 1876 the superintendent of judicial statistics in Dublin commented on the link between the number of *fi. fa.*'s with the rise in ejectments other than for non-payment of rent: 'In connexion with the increase of other ejectments, the large increase in writs of *fieri facias* is to be borne in mind, as in the case of a sale under one of these writs, the process of recovering possession, if refused, is for the purchaser from the Sheriff to bring an ejectment. These proceedings, arising out of writs sued by the creditors of the tenant, have nothing to do with the relation of landlord and tenant'.[15]

There certainly were problems with sales of the interest of farms by *fi. fa*, particularly with respect to the purchaser of the farm's title. In 1875, Hancock described sales of a leasehold or yearly tenancy under a writ of *fi. fa.* as an 'antiquated remedy and a most defective and expensive procedure'.[16] The 1879 parliamentary commission on the registration of deeds in Ireland recommended that sales of chattels real (interest or tenancy of land) under *fi. fa.* be discontinued, in particular because there was no registry of writs of execution (writs founded on a court judgement or order) such as there was in England, and as such both creditor and debtor could suffer.[17] Significantly, there was no real examination or guarantee of title. Hancock commented on

---

[15] *Judicial Statistics 1875* [1536], HC 1876, lxxix. 353.

[16] W. Neilson Hancock, 'The Law of Judgements and the Jurisdiction of the Sheriffs' in selling Land, considered with reference to the complaints of the County Down people on the subject....', *JSSIS*, (Dec. 1875), p. 491.

[17] *Registration of Deeds and Assurances in Ireland Commission. First Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Law Relating to the Registration of Deeds and Assurances in Ireland, with Appendix*, HC 1878-79 (405), xxxi, p. xxxvii.

the potential entanglements that followed from farm sales by *fi. fa.*: 'as the title is not examined, as the purchase-money is not administered to satisfy claimants, as the landlord is not consulted beforehand, as there is no lengthened notice to the occupier, the purchaser buys, not an ascertained interest in a holding, but a lawsuit'.[18]

The procedure for sheriffs' sales was set out by the 1864 act amending the procedure of civil bill courts in Ireland.[19] The most common courts for small debt collection, under £40, were the civil bill courts. Securing higher debts – £40 and over, or those involving seizure of a farm interest – had to be initiated or sent to the high court in Dublin, or on circuit.[20] The initial step in small debt recovery was to serve a civil bill process (a summons) on the tenant, requiring him to pay the debt or to appear before the assistant barrister, or as he was later known, the county court judge. The process needed only to be signed by the landlord, or by his agent or solicitor, and delivered to the tenant. This procedure sounds simple but during the land war process servers were repeatedly chased and assaulted by angry farmers.[21] On

---

[18] Hancock, 'The Law of Judgements and the Jurisdiction of the Sheriff…', p. 492.

[19] 27 & 28 Vict., c. 99 (29 July 1864).

[20] Ibid.; W. Neilson Hancock, 'The Law of Judgements and the Jurisdiction of the Sheriffs'...', *JSSIS,* (Dec. 1875), pp.491-2; W. H. Dodd, 'On the Law Relating to the realization of Judgements and Decrees, with special reference to Judgements and Decrees against Tenant-farmers', *JSSIS,* vol. vii, part lv, (Nov. 1878 June 1879), pp. 391-96; Idem., 'Prize Essay on the Jurisdiction of the Local Courts in Ireland, Scotland, and England compared,' *JSSIS* vol. vii, part li (Dec. 1876-Apr.1877).

[21] Proclamations issued by chief secretary W. E. Forster from May 1881 warned that persons assembling for the purpose of obstructing the execution of the law would be dispersed with force; 45 & 46 Vict., c. 25 (12 July 1882) allowed for the special prosecution of persons assaulting bailiffs attempting to deliver decrees. For

31 December, process server John Brett was robbed of 145 processes for the non-payment of rent on the properties of his cousin, Henry Brett, and Colonel Cooper. He had served four processes and was crossing a field when he was surrounded by 200 persons who took the processes from him, tore them up and stomped them into the ground. The four processes he had already served were brought back to him and he was forced to tear them up himself.[22] J. W. Carter has commented that 'After the spring gale of 1881 it was a very impudent process-server or deputy sub-sheriff who tried to do his job without protection from either the police or the military'.[23] Thomas Corscadden, a County Leitrim landowner, was one such reckless landlord. Already under police protection from an attempted assassination, he delivered his own writs in person.[24]

If the assistant barrister found in favour of the plaintiff (the landlord) in the civil bills court, the sheriff was directed to execute the civil bill decree to obtain the debt owed. Under a civil bill decree the sheriff, or in practice one of his bailiffs, would seize the tenant's goods and sell them. Seizure was legal only between sunrise and sunset; the most common goods seized were livestock, in particular cattle, which were the most saleable commodity. If the bailiff removed the livestock from the farm the animals were to be kept in a pound under paid guard for feeding and care until the sale; this ensured the

---

crowd activity in the land war, see Ball, 'Crowd Activity during the Irish Land War', pp. 212-49.

[22] Report of Outrage, 1 Jan. 1880. CSORP/1880/800.

[23] Carter, *The Land War and its Leaders in Queen's County*, p. 163.

[24] Diary of Eliza Corscadden, 31 May 1881. PRONI T 3764/2.

animals were neither neglected nor removed by the tenant. In February 1881, the Waterford Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals wrote to chief secretary W. E. Forster suggesting that instructions on the proper care of seized livestock, in particular, that the animals had enough food and water, and enough space to lie down, be distributed to police.[25] Tenants could prevent the seizure and sale of their goods by either paying the debt or arrears, and costs, before the auction, or resorting to the illicit method of 'rescuing' their impounded goods, or preventing their seizure in the first place. An act of George I (1717) noted that goods liable for seizure were 'rescued' by 'obscure and unknown persons' and, therefore, instituted fines for the 'liberators', which if not paid, would land them in prison.[26] Four years later, further action to prevent this illicit activity empowered justices of the peace to order the creation of pounds and the hiring of men to guard them, to keep the distrained goods in safe possession.[27] Penalties for tenants caught rescuing their seized property could be quite severe. Under a 1741 act, a tenant caught removing seized goods forfeited double their value to his landlord. With enough warning from neighbours, farmers could evade seizure by driving the cattle to a neighbour's farm, where they could not be taken. Writing on crime and the criminal law in the eighteenth century, Neal Garnham has commented that 'rescue was a relatively common offence in Ireland,' and Stephen Ball has

---

[25] Mr. Harvry to Forster, 12 Feb. 1881. CSORP/1881/5813.

[26] 4 Geo. I c. V (1717).

[27] 8 Geo. I c. II (1721). The chief secretary's office gave a law opinion in 1880 that a publican's stables could be used as a pound for seized animals. CSORP/1880/28148.

noted that, 'Rural communities often proved adept at dispersing and hiding livestock whenever the civil authorities attempted to seize property in default of debt'.[28]

A sheriff's sale of goods, such as cattle or farm implements, was to take place at least three days from the date of seizure, at a spot not more than five miles from the place of seizure, between the hours of 10 am and 3 pm.[29] The tenant could prevent the auction of his goods at any point up to the conclusion of the sale by paying the sheriff or bailiff the full debt due and costs, or as much of the debt as the creditor would agree to accept. The auction was conducted by the sub-sheriff or an auctioneer by 'public Cant to the highest and best bidder'.[30] The most common sites for the sale of livestock were in the town square or courthouse yard, though sales of the interest of farms were most often conducted within the courthouse.[31]

What any tenant's interest was in his land was a nebulous matter even for contemporaries. Partly this was to do with its customary nature in that practices had arisen over generations and received implicit and sometimes explicit acceptance from landlords and the wider community. The 1870 land act recognised the tenant's interest in his farm by sanctioning tenant-right in

---

[28] Neal Garnham, *The Courts, Crime and the Criminal Law in Ireland, 1692-1760* (Dublin, 1996), p. 205; Ball, 'Crowd Activity during the Irish Land War', p. 215.

[29] 27 & 28 Vict. c. 99 (29 July 1864).

[30] Ibid.

[31] *Freeman's Journal,* 9 Jan., 1882; *Gorey Correspondent & Arklow Standard* [hereafter *GC & AS*], 21 May, 1881; Ibid., 23 July, 1881, Ibid., 27 Aug., 1881; *King's County Chronicle* [hereafter *KCC*], 19 May, 1881; Ibid., 16 June, 1881; Ibid., 23 June, 1881; Ibid., 30 June, 1881; Ibid., 21 July, 1881; Ibid., 11 Aug., 1881; Ibid., 25 Aug., 1881; Ibid., 1 Sept., 1881; *The Times,* 16 July, 1881; Ibid., 1 Aug., 1881; Ibid., 11 Aug., 1881; Ibid., 26 Aug., 1881; Ibid., 8 Jan., 1882.

Ulster and similar customs elsewhere. Thus, what was sold at a sheriff's sale of the interest of a farm was the value of improvements, and to some extent, particularly in Ulster, payment for goodwill and peaceable enjoyment of the farm.[32] Certainly contemporaries recognised this interest as having value, as it could be bought and sold, held as security for loans, and, of course, auctioned to realise money for debt.[33]

When possible, it is likely that the goods of a tenant were auctioned instead of the interest in his farm. On the one hand, livestock or farm implements were worth less than the tenant's interest in his holding; on the other hand, these goods were less contentious to seize and sell and had smaller legal costs attached to them. A tenant's interest in his farm, for instance, could not be seized and sold by a decree from the civil bills court; civil bills courts had the other restriction that they could not deal with decrees for amounts above £40.[34] So, if the landlord wished to secure a year's rent of £45, he could obtain a decree for the amount in the civil bills court and have it raised to a superior court judge by a writ of *certiorari* if the judge was satisfied that the debtor had no goods or chattels that could be conveniently taken to satisfy the judgement. If convinced, the high court judge could thereby order the sheriff, by a writ of *fi. fa.*, to levy the amount from the debtor's goods or

---

[32] Thompson, *The End of Liberal Ulster*, p. 36. The interest in farms in Ulster were sold which did not have improvements and those that had even deteriorated, thus illustrating a component of payment for goodwill in the transaction.

[33] 33 & 34 Vict., c. 46 (1 Aug. 1870); Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland,* pp. 93-102; Martin W. Dowling, *Tenant Right and Agrarian Society in Ulster, 1600-1870* (Dublin, 1999).

[34] 27 & 28 Vict., c. 99 (28 July 1864); Dodd, 'Prize Essay on the Jurisdiction of the Local Courts in Ireland, Scotland, and England compared', p.103.

chattel interest in his lands. This, however, was far more expensive than going through the local court.

The sale of a tenant's interest at a sheriff's sale was further complicated in that it was only a preliminary step to the transfer of title. The sheriff could sell the interest in a holding but could not give possession of the farm to the buyer; the purchaser would have to begin the thorny business of proceeding by ejectment to get possession of the holding.[35] This particular ejectment scenario was problematic because of the number of persons antagonistically involved with the farm: the tenant, the landlord, the purchaser and the sheriff; it was no longer simply a landlord seeking to recover possession of his farm. Although there were many potential problems and pitfalls with the procedure, sheriffs' sales for the interest of farms and for livestock were successful strategy for landowners to enforce the payment of rent and were a common occurrence in rural society and during the land war.

[35] Dodd, 'On the Law Relating to the realization of Judgements, and Decrees, with special reference to Judgements and Decrees against Tenant-Farmers', p. 392.

Table 12. High court writs for eviction and for the recovery of rent, ejectments for non-payment of rent, evictions and agrarian outrages, 1879-82[36]

Year	Evictions returned by the RIC	Writs for eviction issued	Ejectments for non-payment of rent executed	Writs for Rent	Writs of *fi. fa.* issued	Agrarian Outrages
1879	1,238	2,603	2,677	961	9,020	863
1880	2,110	3,043	2,646	1,738	7,223	2,585
1881	3,415	5,067	3,786	14,087	9,180	4,439
1882	5,201	2,833	5,447	12,598	10,180	3,433
Total	**11,964**	**13,546**	**14,556**	**29,384**	**35,603**	**11,320**

The figures for evictions in the table above contain both civil bill and high court ejectments that became evictions and were recorded by the constabulary; this included ejectments other than simply for non-payment of rent such as for over-holding or breach of tenancy. 'Writs for rent' is a bit cryptic as a category: these figures are based on returns of writs of summons initiating actions for the recovery of rent and land. Before 1882 the published judicial statistics did not record the cause of action of writs issued, that is, they did not distinguish an action for the recovery of rent from any other claim.

[36] *Return of the Number of Writs for Eviction, and for the Recovery of Rent, issued out of each Division of the High Court of Justice in Ireland, during each three months, from 1st day of January 1878 to the present.* HC 1886 (105) liii. 401; *Return by Provinces of Cases of Eviction which come to the knowledge of the Constabulary in each of the years from 1849 to 1880 inclusive; Return of Cases of Eviction under Knowledge of the Constabulary in Ireland* 1881. 1882 (9) LV. 229; Jan - Mar. 1882. 1882 (145) LV. 237; April 1882. 1882 (199) LV. 241; May 1882. 1882 [C.3240] LV. 245; June 1882. 1882 [C.3277] LV. 249; July 1882. 1882 [C.3416] LV. 257; Oct - Dec 1882. 1883 [C.3465] LVI. 99; *Judicial Statistics 1879* [C 2698], HC 1880, lxxvii. 251; *Judicial Statistics 1880* [C 3208], HC 1881, xcv. 243; *Judicial Statistics 1881* [C 3355], HC 1882, lxxv. 243; *Judicial Statistics 1882* [C 3803], HC, lxxvii. 243. Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland,* Appendix 19, 'Agrarian Outrages and Other Outrages Returned by the Constabulary, 1844 - 1893'.

Thus, although for this return all the writs filed between 1878 and 1881 in the high court were examined, the numbers are only approximate. Actions for the recovery of rent and land could have been settled after the issue of writs, as in the not uncommon case in which a tenant would only settle his arrears after eviction proceedings were finally undertaken. It is clear from the examination of ejectments that the force of the law was often needed during the land war and throughout the rest of the 1880s to make tenants pay their rents.

The above table illustrates a dramatic rise in writs for rent during the land war. From 1879 to 1880 high court actions increased by eighty-one percent; from 1880 to 1881 they soared, increasing by 710 percent. From 1881 to 1882 the numbers fell by eleven percent. How can this phenomenon be accounted for? The numbers are not problematic until the dramatic increase in 1881. In January of that year the Bessborough Commission published the report of its inquiry into landlord and tenant relations and the 1870 land act, recommending the 'Three F's' (the perceived panacea of the day), granting farmers fixity of tenure, free sale and fair rents, and the improved facilitation of peasant proprietorship.[37] In early March, the implementation of the protection of person and property act suspended *habeas corpus* in proclaimed districts and empowered the government to detain

[37] *Report of Her Majesty's Commission of Inquiry into the Working of the Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, and the Acts Amending the Same* [C 2779], HC 1881, xviii. 1. Fixity of tenure meant that no rent-paying farmer could be evicted. Free sale referred to the custom of out-going tenants selling the 'interest' in their farms (value of improvements) to the incoming farmer. Fair rent was a vague term referring to a 'just' rent, usually below market levels.

without trial persons suspected of agrarian or treasonable offences.[38] Later the same month the peace preservation act dealt with the sale and possession of arms in proclaimed districts.[39] On their own, these coercion acts could not account for the dramatic rise in numbers of writs for rent, but should be seen as contributing factors in the deteriorating relations between landlords and tenants. The acts also heightened the militancy of the land agitation which thereby influenced the propensity of tenants not to pay their rents and of landlords to seek debt recovery in the courts. In April, Prime Minister W. E. Gladstone introduced his land law bill, which included the 'Three F's', that many hoped would halt the rural agitation and bring some lasting solution to the land question. Perhaps as important, the land agitation's faltering following the passage of the land act, the arrest and imprisonment of Parnell and other League leaders and the proclamation of the Land League in October, prompted landlords to seize the moment and press their, perhaps fleeting, advantage. It is significant that writs for eviction so dramatically increased in 1881, at a time of momentous legislation for Ireland, the highest numbers of agrarian outrages[40] and frequent sheriffs' sales, leading to the conclusion that 1881 was the most volatile year of the land war and critical year for success or failure of the land agitation.

---

[38] 45 Vict. c. 4 (2 Mar. 1881).

[39] 45 Vict. c. 5 (21 Mar. 1881).

[40] In 1879 there were 863; in 1880 there were 2,585; in 1881 there were 4,439; and in 1882 there were 3,433. Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, Appendix 19, p. 280.

The numbers of writs for rent and eviction and the numbers of actual evictions are somewhat surprising since evictions have traditionally been seen as the common response of landlords to the agitation, yet the writs for ejectment issued from the high court were substantially fewer than the writs for rent. From 1879 to 1882 there were 13,546 writs for eviction and 20,376 writs for the recovery of rent issued from the high court. Evictions were, of course, far more devastating to the thousands of families effected; as Vaughan has justly commented, 'It would be hard to exaggerate the emotional significance of evictions in nineteenth-century Ireland'.[41] However, there is a need to reassess the importance of eviction as a common experience throughout the land agitation, and instead look at the more utilised method of suing for rent by forced sales. This may go some way to re-assessing how landowners have been perceived as reacting to the land agitation and their declining rentals in that they did not automatically opt for eviction but sought to secure their rent as a debt like any other creditor. Of course, if the tenant's farm interest was seized and sold then the landlord would then begin ejectment proceedings to remove the tenant and to transfer the holding to the purchaser.

A characteristic description of a sheriff's sale appeared in the *Freeman's Journal* on 9 January, 1882:

> Today under writ of fi. fa., the cattle and horses of four tenants on the estate of Sir Erasmus Dixon Burrowes, were offered for sale in the public square of the town of Kildare. The tenants were – Mr. Thomas Lee, Mrs. Lee, James Bourke, and James Clinch, and the seizure was

[41] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, p. 21.

> made for rent. All held farms of considerable extent, the former at Grey Abbey, Kildare, and the three latter at Newton. Sixteen head of cattle, the property of Mrs. Lee, worth about eleven pounds a head, were bought in at prices ranging from £5, £7 to £10 10s. Three horses, the property of Mr. Bourke, were bought in by Mr. Stephen O'Leary. One horse was sold for £5, a second for £10 10s, and a third to the Emergency man, a Mr. White, who was the object of considerable banter and badinage, at £8. The animal was offered to the tenant at a reduced rate, but he refused to give more than £1 for what the Emergency Man gave £8. Mr. Clinch's lot consisted of three cows and a bull, which he bought in himself. He gave £35 for the three cows and £15 for the bull. Mr. Henry A. Lee, sub-sheriff, disposed of the cattle and horses. About 350 persons were present, and a number of police under the command of the Hon. W. Forbes.

In many ways the above description of a sheriff's sale in Kildare was typical of sales in general. It is striking how the event was both public and private; it was an auction in the town square and was obviously public, yet none of the 350 spectators, who would have been neighbouring tenant farmers, bid on the stock. This was certainly due to the moral code in the community fostered by the Land League: not to bid for the goods which might have been regarded as, though not unlawfully, certainly unjustly or immorally, seized and auctioned. Parnell's infamous 'moral Coventry' speech on 19 September 1880 at Ennis, County Clare, made it clear that the community had to work together to enforce proper behaviour. A large presence of neighbouring farmers would also deter outsiders from bidding. In other sales, spectators did bid for and buy livestock and the interest in farms,

although in almost every case this was done on behalf of the tenant, sometimes by Land League representatives; open bidding was rare.[42]

The sale was also made public as there was a newspaper reporter present to record the details of the landlord on whose estate the goods were seized, and, in particular, to name the tenants and estimate the worth of their stock. The amount of debt owed was also often recorded – a private matter made very public. However, from those part of, or sympathetic to, the Land League, the recording of debt and involvement in a sheriff's sale might have been seen as a badge of honour by resisting the landlord's 'unjust' rent. The fact that all of the farms sold in the Kildare sale were 'of considerable extent' indicates that these tenants were chosen to be made examples of. If larger tenants could have legal action taken against them for non-payment of rent, smaller tenants would have little chance of forcing demands for an abatement by withholding their rent, if such was their objective rather than inability to pay. Landlords showed strategic planning in this respect; in many cases there was probably also a feeling that larger tenants were less dependent on the landlord's good will and paternal indulgences. A similar strategy was used in serving ejectments on an estate in which rents were being withheld – the larger tenants were often targeted first. A final element of the Kildare sale that was increasingly common throughout 1881 was the presence of agents

[42] *G.C. & A. S.*, 19 Mar., 1881; Ibid., 16 Apr., 1881; Ibid., 30 July, 1881; *K. C. C.*, 24 Mar., 1881; Ibid., 9 June, 1881; Ibid., 30 June, 1881; Ibid., 7 July, 1881; *The Times*, 10 Aug., 1881.

from either the Property Defence Association (PDA) or Orange Emergency Committee (OEC) to prevent the sale being aborted for lack of bidders.

Although the Land League sought to guide rural Ireland into a social revolution, it did not do so simply from a central command at the League offices in Middle Abbey Street in Dublin. It was present on the ground at evictions and sheriffs' sales as part of the League's mission from its earlier incarnation as the National Land League of Mayo.[43] In a sample of sheriffs' sales from March to December 1881, there were representatives of the executive and local branches of the Land League at thirty out of forty-two auctions (each one of which may have included five, ten or even twenty individual sheriffs' sales). One important reason why League officials attended sales with such frequency was that the League distributed funds to members who followed their dictates and who fell prey to pressing landlords.[44] In particular the League might defray some of the costs associated with a sale: sheriff's fees for seizure; bailiff's fees for the impounding and guarding of goods; and auction fees if the sale was conducted by an auctioneer rather than the sub-sheriff. This was part of the League's advocacy of paying rent only 'at the point of the bayonet'. George MacCarthy, RM, concluded in March 1881 that League representatives attended sales 'not to resort to violence to prevent sale of cattle, but rather to assemble in such numbers as will impose on the Government the obligation of having an armed force present in order that it may appear that rents which they consider unjust,

[43] T. W. Moody, *Davitt and the Irish Revolution*, p. 317.
[44] Ibid., p. 108.

and consequently they object to, cannot be collected except "at the point of the bayonet"'.[45] Stephen Ball, on the other hand, has argued that League officials attended to keep the proceedings peaceful, deterring improper or violent behaviour; to 'publicly demonstrate Land League policy rather than openly confront authority'.[46] The League had perfected an ability to straddle a line between violence and the threat of violence. One could argue that the presence of League officials at sales was both to evince the threat of violence (never far below the surface in acts of intimidation) and to deter actual violence.

Not only might the League pay costs if the tenant bid according to its policy, but there was also publicity to be gained, as throughout 1881 reporters increasingly attended the sales. Exposure of League activities in supporting the farmers also brought chances to further besmirch the landlord or his representatives and in some cases to defame legal officials as being in collusion with the landed interest. This was an important part of the League's propaganda programme. Commenting on a sheriff's sale in Waterford city in September 1881, Joseph Fisher, a local League member, described sheriffs as 'a class whose sympathies are with the oppressors'.[47] Of course, he was correct that sheriffs were usually large landowners, or at the least very

[45] NAI, CSORP, 1881/10358 in 1881/10430, George MacCarthy to Thomas Burke, 31 March 1881, cited in Ball, 'Crowd Activity during the Irish Land War'. pp. 215-16.

[46] Ball, 'Crowd Activity during the Irish Land War', p. 215.

[47] *Irish Farmers' Gazette,* 24 Sept., 1881.

prominent county men, though no peer or sitting MP could hold the office.[48] At a sheriff's sale in Tullamore, King's County, in June 1881, one farmer protested that the bids of the landlord's man 'were a humbug as he was but the tool of Buckshot Forster,'[49] referring to a perceived complicity between the coercion law and the landlord. At a sale at the courthouse in Wicklow in August 1881, the League issued placards calling on farmers to assemble and witness the 'evaporation of the ghost of feudal landlordism'.[50] If the sheriff was seen to be on the side of the landlord, at those sales in which the auction was not conducted by the sheriff himself, there was the opportunity for the League to intimidate or influence the auctioneer. A sale in Loughrea, County Galway, in April 1881, was initially aborted when Lewis Ballingar, the auctioneer, refused to sell the interest of two farms, claiming that while on the road coming into the town to the auction he had been threatened by two men. Benjamin Hill, RM, did not believe the story, convinced that the auctioneer was in collusion with the League to abort the sale, which was eventually conducted by the sub-sheriff.[51]

A clear pattern of tactical bidding emerged at sheriffs' sales whereby proxies of the landlords, PDA and OEC men, opened the bidding with substantial sums and Land League representatives or neighbouring tenant

---

[48] One could, however, be elevated to the peerage while in office. George Y. Dixon and W. L. Gilliland, *The Law Relating to Sheriffs in Ireland, with an Appendix of Statutes and Forms* (Dublin, 1888), p. 2.

[49] *KCC,* 21 June, 1881. Forster was chief secretary of Ireland from April 1880 to May 1882 but the 'buckshot' reference was to a decree by James Lowther, the previous chief secretary, ordering the RIC to use buckshot instead of shot in dealing with crowds during the agitation.

[50] *The Times*, 26 Aug., 1881.

[51] Hill to Burke, 19 Apr. 1881. CSORP/1881/12465.

farmers would raise the bid by perhaps a shilling at a time. At a sale of a farm's interest at Tullamore in June 1881, the OEC agent opened the bidding by tendering the full debt owed and costs, and the Land League representatives raised the bid by two pence and got the farm. The whole sale lasted less than five minutes from start to finish.[52] The OEC agent's bid forced the hand of the Land League representative who had to decide whether to buy back the farm at a price slightly above the debt and costs, or let the farm be sold to the landlord defence group and financially support the tenant when evicted.

The League seems to have vacillated between admonishing farmers to refrain from bidding, at times, and assuring them, at others, that the League would aid in the costs arising from following League policy of paying rent 'at the point of the bayonet'. In February 1881 Parnell commented on his delight to find that 'the people persist not to bid for stock offered for sale in cases of distraint for unjust rent' and, more optimistically, that 'only in a very few instances can the organisation of the landlords and the focus of the Government be sufficient to enable an oppressive landlord to collect his rent by these means'.[53] Even more confidently, John Dillon, MP for Tipperary and executive member of the League, told his audience at Thurles at the end of March that 'they must remember that each sale cost the landlords a lot of money; and the landlords had less money than the League had, and the people; and if they kept up the fight they would wear out the Emergency

[52] *KCC*, 30 June, 1881.
[53] *FJ*, 1 Mar., 1881.

Committee before they wore the League out'.[54] Clearly this was intended to reassure farmers that the League was solvent and was there to support them at the sales. In the same month, however, Sexton warned that although solidarity was paramount, the League's coffers were not bottomless and farmers should not bid for their seized farms out of self-interest: 'Farmers might do what they pleased, but if they set what they considered their private interest over the public good, they need not from that day forward expect this League to pay their law costs if they bought in their own farms'.[55]

By June 1881, the League was expending large, unsustainable sums for legal costs for farmers, relief to evicted tenants, and payment of costs at sheriffs' sales, and it was not clear how much longer this rate of expenditure could be sustained.[56] This threat of insolvency, according to Paul Bew, explains the shift in the League's approach to get farmers to 'let their farms go'; that is, farmers who had not made substantial improvements on their farms – drainage, land reclamation, or construction of fences and buildings – and who, therefore, did not have valuable interests to be sold, should not bid on their farms but rather let them fall into the hands of the PDA and OEC men. The presumption was that all costs associated with a successful bid at the sale would necessarily have to be paid by the landlord rather than by the farmer with the assistance of the League, and that soon the tenant would be readmitted to his holding since no one in the community would touch the

[54] Ibid., 29 Mar., 1881.
[55] Ibid., 20 Mar., 1881.
[56] Bew, *Land and the National Question in Ireland*, pp. 171-73.

vacated farm.[57] By mid-July, Sexton admonished farmers to 'Let these farms go to the Emergency men at the rate of one hundred a week'.[58] This instruction was taken to heart at a sheriff's sale in Limerick in late August 1881, when Land League members directed the farmers present not to bid for their thirty-three farms on auction. Most toed the line but, in the words of a conservative newspaper, three farmers 'who had the courage to buy in their farms were groaned, and threats were freely uttered towards them as to what would follow on their conduct'.[59] It, no doubt, took great faith in the League to allow one's farm to be sold from underneath oneself.

It appears that this policy of tactical abstention was successful. In a sample of sheriffs' sales between March and December 1881, 171 out of 222 or seventy-seven percent of sales for the interests of farms were bought by the landlord interest – that is by landlords, their agents, or the PDA and OEC men. Thus out of the 222 sales, only fifty-one, or twenty-three percent were bought by the tenant interest – which included the occupying tenant farmer, his or her neighbours, or members of the Land League.[60]

Although farmers seem to have shown solidarity in following League policy to resist bidding for farms out of self-interest, there seems to have been

---

[57] Ibid.

[58] *FJ*, 13 July, 1881.

[59] *KCC*, 1 Sept., 1881.

[60] *KCC*: 21 May, 1881; 28 May, 1881; 23 July, 1881; 30 July, 1881; 6 Aug., 1881; 27 Aug., 1881; 10 Sept., 1881; *KCC*: 24 Mar., 1881; 19 May, 1881; 26 May , 1881; 2 June, 1881; 9 June, 1881; 16 June, 1881; 23 June, 1881; 30 June, 1881; 1 July, 1881; 14 July, 1881; 21 July, 1881; 4 Aug., 1881; 11 Aug., 1881; 25 Aug, 1881; 1 Sept., 1881; 8 Sept., 1881; 15 Sept., 1881; 6 Oct., 1881; 13 Oct., 1881; 24 Nov., 1881, 15 Dec., 1881; *The Times*: 16 July, 1881; 1 Aug., 1881; 8 Aug., 1881; 10 Aug., 1881; 11 Aug., 1881; 13 Aug., 1881; 26 Aug., 1881.

no qualms over the bidding for and purchase of livestock. From a sample of 105 sheriffs' sales for stock, sixty-nine percent of the lots (mostly cattle) were bought by the tenant interest, and thirty-one percent by the landlord interest.[61] What could account for this divergence? On the one hand, it could be that by refusing to bid for farms, tenant farmers were shifting more and more of the costs to the landlord, who would have to pay for the auction, the sheriff's fees, as well as the costs for ejectment and conveyance of the holding. However, similar, though not as substantial, costs would be attached to the purchase of livestock: auction fees; sheriff's fees for seizure; and pound fees for maintaining the livestock from seizure to sale. Thus, legal costs alone cannot account for the policy divide. What is most likely is that livestock were a saleable commodity whereas recently vacated farms were not. If there was animosity at local markets towards the sale of cattle bought at a sheriff's sale, the livestock could easily be transported to the next market town, or beyond, and sold. Cattle bought by the PDA at a sheriff's sale in Dungarvan, County Waterford, in February 1881 were boycotted in the Dublin markets but were eventually sold throughout several Ulster counties.[62] Farms were a different matter altogether. A fundamental League tenet was the tenant farmer's moral right to the land he tilled, and Parnell had advised farmers to 'keep a firm grip on their homesteads,' and to morally ostracize the landgrabbers who rented

---

[61] *GC & AS*, 26 Mar., 1881; 16 Apr., 1881; 6 Aug., 1881; *KCC*, 24 Mar., 1881; 30 June, 1881; 1 July, 1881; 14 July , 1881; 4 Aug., 1881; 13 Oct., 1881; *The Times*, 8 Aug., 1881; 10 Aug., 1881.

[62] *The Times*, 15 Feb. 1881.

evicted holdings.[63] The programme to force farms onto the hands of landlords was to burden them with unrentable farms at a volatile time when much was expected for tenant farmers from Gladstone's land law bill and when many landlords' financial solvency was in jeopardy. It was probably a common belief that evicted tenants would eventually be re-admitted to their holdings whether by legislation or the forces of the land market and public opinion.

Not only did the sales provide an opportunity to show solidarity among the farming community by strategically abstaining from buying back the interest of farms and thereby displaying communal strength, the sales also provided an opportunity for pageantry and political procession. At a sale of cattle in Portlarington, Queen's County, in March 1881, in which the livestock were bought by tenant farmers, the League made the most of the opportunity: 'At the close of the sale the Land League managed rather ingeniously to put a good face on the defeat, and even transform it into the semblance of a triumph by decorating the horns of the repurchased cattle with evergreens, and forming a procession in which the horses of the tenant were ridden by their friends with the writs displayed in their hats'.[64] A single cow bought by OEC men at a sheriff's sale in Howth, County Dublin, was driven by the OEC men to Dublin city to be transported by rail outside the county. The Dublin Metropolitan Police estimated the crowd following the single beast

[63] Parnell used this phrase at the 8 June 1879 meeting at Westport. Michael Davitt, *The Fall of Feudalism in Ireland: or, the story of the Land League revolution* (London, 1904), p. 154.

[64] *GC & AS*, 26 Mar. 1881.

and five OEC men on the road from Howth to Dublin, to have been 400 persons, accompanied by the Howth Amateur Band, and preceded by two men in a car with a green placard that read 'rack rent'. By the time the party reached the Midland Railway Company the crowd had reached 1,000 persons, and before the cow was admitted to the railway, there were impromptu speeches made by John Dillon and Andrew Kettle.[65]

The use of bands became so disruptive to proceedings that in May 1881 the RIC developed guidelines to disperse them: 'The mere playing of music by a band is not of course an offence, but if the band be part of an "unlawful assembly", the persons composing the band commit an offence against the criminal law, and may be dealt with accordingly'. An assembly of persons became unlawful when 'from its general appearance and accompanying circumstances' it was calculated to 'excite terror and alarm'.[66] One RIC county inspector suggested taking pre-emptive action against the growing trend of bands disrupting sales by issuing instructions against the unlawful assemblies to magistrates, claiming that this technique had worked in England in 1838 during the Chartist agitation.[67]

As successful as the Land League was at sheriffs' sales, it did not run roughshod over the proceedings, and by 1881 was increasingly and successfully challenged by landlord representatives. The PDA was formed in

---

[65] Thomas Devin to Captain George Talbot, 30 Apr. 1881. CSORP/1881/13987.

[66] Circular from J. Naish, 20 May 1881, in Henry Smith to George Hillier, 25 May, 1881. CSORP/1881/17313.

[67] Smith to Hillier, 25 May, 1881. CSORP/1881/17313.

Dublin in December 1880 to assist landlords targeted by the Land League or by the rural agitation in general. It served writs on tenants, provided (often armed) caretakers for evicted holdings, supplied labourers to boycotted landlords, and bought stock and farms at sheriffs' sales. The Orange OEC, established by the Grand Orange Lodge, also in December 1880, had similar functions to the PDA and will be examined in detail in chapter six.

Men from these associations played a vital role at sheriffs' sales, ensuring that sales were not aborted for lack of bidders which allowed the tenants to evade further debt collection. The agents also took control of the bidding. Farmers and Leaguers usually bid in reaction to emergency men; in cases of the sale of livestock, emergency men bid high to raise prices to competition or market levels, although in the case of farms, the first bid was often the last. In Tullamore in September 1881, the interests of seven farms were sold: the combined rent of the farms was £404 19*s* 3*d*; the combined debt owed on the farms was £710 13*s* 0*d*. OEC men purchased six of the seven farms. Thus, whereas the landlord was due £710 13*s* 0*d*, the sale only brought in £311 2*s* 1*d*, excluding costs; in other words the landlord recovered less than forty-four percent of the debt owed to him and most likely was left with unlettable farms.[68] Did the employment of emergency men really serve a meaningful purpose if they could not bring in the full debt owed to the landlord? On the one hand, forty-four percent of a debt was better than

[68] The problem posed by unlettable farms was addressed by the establishment of the Land Corporation in 1882 by Arthur MacMurrough Kavanagh, to purchase boycotted holdings from landlords.

nothing, and on the other, landlords, as property owners filling the ranks of the magistracy, the grand juries and deputy lieutenancy, were firm believers in the sanctity of property and the absolute necessity of law and order to prevent the fraying fabric of society tearing beyond repair. It was thus important for landlords to be represented at these sales.

The emergency men also played a vital role at the sales by directing anger and frustration with the land system, agricultural depression and landlordism in general, towards the landlords' proxies rather than at the landlords themselves or their families. Commonly commented upon in reports of sheriffs' sales was the necessity of police and military presence to protect the emergency men and in many cases to escort them from the train to the sale and back. In March 1881, Athol Dudgeon, secretary of the OEC, wrote to undersecretary T. H. Burke requesting the presence of police at a sheriff's sale of livestock at Cloyne, County Cork 'for the better protection of our agents, and to prevent the sale being abortive'. [69] At a sale in Tullamore in June 1881, one emergency man was met at the train by fifty RIC and a detachment of the 47th Foot, and escorted to the courthouse.[70] In May, at a sale at Thurles, the authorities expected trouble and sent 200 police and 260 soldiers; composed of 100 men from the 64th Regiment, 100 from the 48th Regiment, and sixty from the 20th Hussars. After the sale adjourned, the PDA men were showered with stones until soldiers intervened and escorted them to

[69] Dudgeon to Burke, 19 Mar., 1881. CSORP/1881/9048.
[70] *KCC*, 23 June, 1881.

the train.[71] Later that year at a sale in Gorey, County Wexford, three emergency men were 'received with groans from all quarters' when they arrived at the sale and were subsequently jostled by the crowd. One emergency man was knocked down and was in peril until his companions drew their revolvers on the crowd.[72] If these landlord proxies had not been present as often as they were frustration might well have been unleashed on law officials such as the sub-sheriff or bailiff.

The threat of violence was a real possibility at sheriffs' sales for several reasons: the sales were advertised in advance, they were attended by local League leaders and emergency men, and from the farmer's point of view, the cruelty and oppression of the legal system was reinforced by the presence of dozens of RIC and military to add the air of oppression. Violence directed at the military erupted at a sheriff's sale in Clonmel, County Tipperary, in May 1881, in which stones were thrown at the police and military. It is not clear what precipitated the violence but one factor was the presence of PDA men at the sale. The statement of an eyewitness suggests that some excitement had been planned, for all the shops in the town were closed early, because, he was told, it was the day of the emergency men coming to town.[73] One report described the courthouse scene: 'The Court-house was filled with a crowd who kept up an incessant uproar after Mr. Goddard's name was known'.[74] The fact

---

[71] *GC & AS*, 28 May, 1881.

[72] Ibid., 6 Aug., 1881.

[73] Nicholas Pound to Forster, 1 June 1881. CSORP/1881/18564 (in 1881/19414).

[74] *The Times*, 1 June 1881.

that Goddard bought nineteen of the twenty-one farms on auction probably ignited the crowd outside at the sale's conclusion. Three military and one policeman were injured by the volley of stones. Private T. Atkins was knocked off his horse by a blow to the right temple. Private O. Brunicardi was also felled from his horse, dislocating his arm from the fall. Private J. Ropkins was cut on the forehead and face from 'an iron missile', and constable John Fennell was cut on his face by a stone.[75] When the men were hit, the resident magistrate, Colonel Shapland Carew, who was in charge, read the riot act and advanced a line of police against the crowd, but after the stone-throwing continued he advanced the cavalry, which charged three times and eventually dispersed the crowd.[76]

A study of four newspapers in 1881 has suggested that sales began to wane, if not in numbers, than certainly in the enthusiasm of participants, by the latter part of that year. At a sale in Tullamore in June, one emergency man had to be met by fifty police and a detachment of soldiers to ensure his safety; however, less than a month later, a newspaper noted that 'The usual guard of soldiers and police were at the station, but even the semblance of interest in the proceedings appears to be now lost, as there were not half a dozen persons on the platform when the train arrived'.[77] Three months later, again at Tullamore, the same paper wryly commented: 'Dull as was the proceedings at previous displays of Mr. Sub-Sheriff Whelan's amateur auctioneering, the

[75] Report of Sackville Hamilton, 8 June 1881. CSORP/1881 19264 (in 1881/19414).

[76] Carew to Burke, 1 June 1881. CSORP/1881/18137 (in 1881/19414).

[77] *KCC*, 14 July, 1881.

torpidity evidenced at a few sales on Saturday capped the climax, and showed that "familiarity" has bred at least "indifference"'.[78]

What then was the significance of the sheriff's sale during the land war? It was a structured battleground between proxies of the landlord and tenant, where there was little chance of serious violence – far less than on back roads in the countryside, where ambushes and shootings went more easily undetected. Substantial police and military presence kept the proceedings generally peaceful, though their presence itself could exacerbate an already taut situation and they themselves could become the targets of violence. The sales were important testing grounds for Land League policies, in which the solidarity of the farming classes was put through a trial by fire as collective bond vied with self-interest. Sheriffs' sales were also a key area where the League prominently took control of public situations on behalf of the tenant farmer; it was one thing to espouse ideological phrases in open-air meetings, but it was another to support and direct farmers and the agitation on the ground in a practical manner where self-interest was painfully clear.

From the landlord's perspective the sales were an integral part of the rent and law and order questions; they indicated that landlords would – often through proxies – attempt to secure debts that were owed to them, and would not be intimidated by the violence indirectly propagated by the Land League. The high number of writs for rent during the land war point to a trend of landlords seeking to recover rent as a debt rather than opting for the more

[78] Ibid., 13 Oct., 1881.

contentious process of ejectment and eviction. This is significant not only because it illustrates the extent to which the land agitation had successfully closed the rental market for farms, but also, importantly, it revises commonly held notions that landlords automatically turned to ejectment and eviction during the land war.

Sheriffs' sales also were indicative of the general increase in legal action taken by landlords against their recalcitrant tenants. One obvious reason for this was that landlords were under a greater financial strain as rents were initially withheld, and just as farmers were squeezed between landlords and shopkeepers as creditors, so too landlords felt the pinch from their banks and lending institutions who demanded payments on loans and mortgages. Irish landlords were commonly refused new loans during the land war – the means by which they had traditionally extricated themselves from financial stress in the past.[79] A second factor for the increased legal action by landlords was that the 1881 land law act had diminished landlords' social responsibility and benevolent paternalism to their tenants, and were consequently more likely to resort to legal strategies to deal with them in matters of arrears.[80] The state had intervened so far into landlord and tenant relations, and had, to the landowner's mind, waded so deeply into property rights that any kind of social contract between landlord and tenant was, if not broken, then hanging by threads.

---

[79] Dooley, *Decline of the Big House in Ireland*, pp. 99-101.
[80] Thompson, *The End of Liberal Ulster*, pp. 262-265.

At a time when Gladstone's government was renewing coercion, landlords asserted their proprietorial rights and stood against the tide of agitation that lapped the shores of their rural authority. To pacify the agitation Gladstone's government made large incursions into the property rights of landowners in Ireland that would not have been tolerated in England and Scotland, even though many Irish landowners also had estates in England and Scotland[81]. It is interesting that landlords were stigmatized as unmerciful debt collectors through their persistence at sheriffs' sales, yet shopkeepers and merchants – those who, according Samuel Clark, were in solidarity with the tenants and filled the ranks of local League branches[82] – were by far the greatest creditors of the farmers, and throughout the land war sought to recover their debts in large numbers through the civil bill courts.[83] One observer in December 1879 predicted that 'the coming Quarter Sessions will be the monopoly of the Merchant class'.[84]

---

[81] Crofters in Scotland did get similar 'fair' rent and security of tenure provisions under the Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Act. 49 & 50 Vict., c. 29 (25 June 1886).

[82] Clark, 'The Social Composition of the Land League,' *IHS*, 17: 68 (Sept. 1971), 447-69 and *Social Origins of the Irish Land War*.

[83] NAI, Sheriffs' Decree and Order Books, Co. Wexford, vol. 15, 1879, IC 43 56; vol. 16, 1880, IC 43 57; vol. 17, 1881, IC 43 58; vol. 18, 1882, IC 43 59.

[84] Rev. J. N. Constable to James Lowther, 9 Dec. 1879. NAI, CSORP, 1879/22801.

Chapter 5

The Irish Land Committee and the public defence of Irish landlordism

Any attempt to regulate rent by Act of Parliament would be as futile as the efforts of our forefathers to control dress by sumptuary laws.

Irish Land Committee, *The Land Question, Ireland No. 1. 'Notes upon the Government Valuation of Land in Ireland, Commonly known as Griffith's Valuation'* (June, 1880), p. 32

Unused to attack and accustomed by birth and habit to stand upon their dignity and to suffer without retort the widespread calumnies of their foe, the Irish landowners' efforts were unavailing to stem the current of Gladstonian legislation. The Land Act of 1881 was passed, and political economy was banished to Jupiter and Saturn, where she has ever since been enjoying her inevitable revenge, and the Land Committee disappeared.

The Times, 23 Sept. 1887

On 14 August 1879 Lord Beaconsfield's government appointed a royal commission to enquire into the 'depressed condition of the agricultural interest and the causes to which it is owing', whether those causes were permanent, and to what extent they could be rectified by legislation. Under the chairmanship of the duke of Richmond and Gordon, the commission's remit was the state of agriculture in Great Britain and Ireland, though a preliminary report of the Irish enquiry was to be produced at the earliest opportunity.[1] On 16 August 1879 the National Land League of Mayo was formed, and two months later, on 21 October, the Irish National Land League was established in Dublin. The constant denunciations of landlords at land

[1] The preliminary report was released 14 Jan. 1881. *Preliminary Report from her Majesty's Commissioners on Agriculture* [C 2778] HC 1881, xv. I.

meetings and in the press exasperated many landowners and the royal commission provided a public, formal, and parliamentary-sanctioned forum for landlords to try to redress many common accusations made against them as a class.

The Irish Land Committee (hereafter ILC) was the public face of Irish landlordism during the land war, the first example of landlord collective action, which brought together landowners from throughout the country to defend their class interests. Formed to collect and present evidence to the Richmond Commission, the ILC evolved into a large, information-gathering and propagandist organisation which published a series of pamphlets to publicly argue the Irish landlords' case. Following from its public propagandist functions, it lobbied MPs and peers by providing them with 'accurate' information on estates, rents, evictions, and landlord and tenant relations generally. ILC members were also active in both houses of parliament – effective in defeating chief secretary W. E. Forster's compensation for disturbance bill in the House of Lords in August 1880 but ultimately unsuccessful against Prime Minister W. E. Gladstone's land law bill in 1881. With the passage of the land law act the ILC became more practically focused. Through the formation of local sub-branches it expanded and attempted to contain the effects of the land act, especially the 'fair' rents arbitrated by the land commission. To this end, county and sub-county ILC branches were encouraged to pool resources to hire permanent and experienced counsel to defend landlords in the land courts. While this was a

pragmatic strategy rents adjudicated between 1881 and 1902 were generally reduced by an average of twenty percent.[2] Although ultimately unsuccessful in reforming public opinion and convincing Gladstone's government that Irish landlords did not need to be restrained, the ILC vigorously fought to protect the interests of Irish landlords.

Who supported the ILC?

In the autumn of 1879 a series of meetings in Dublin were convened by Irish landlords to form a group to publicly defend the reputation of landlords. Leadership came from the peerage, particularly from the earl of Courtown, and the marquess of Waterford, the marquess of Drogheda, and the marquess of Headfort. An initial meeting held at the Shelbourne Hotel on 28 October was inaugurated by Headfort, Courtown, the earl of Belmore, Sir Thomas Bateson, MP, Henry Bruen (former MP), and Arthur MacMurrough Kavanagh, MP, by distributing circulars to landowners throughout Ireland.[3] The fact that the meeting was not organised by public advertisement but by private contact illustrates the kind of associational structures that allowed landlords to combine to defend their class interests. Of the six organisers of the initial ILC meeting, all were members of the Carlton Club, and four were

---

[2] *A Return showing according to Provinces and Counties the number of cases in which Judicial Rents have been fixed by all the methods provided by the Land Law Acts for a First Statutory Term, during the period from the 22nd August, 1881 to the 31st day of December, 1902; also a Summary of the Acreages, Former Rents, and the Judicial Rents of the Holdings, and the Percentages of Reductions made in the Former Rents.* 1903 (91) lvii. 374.

[3] *Daily Express* (Dublin) 10 Nov. 1879.

members of the Sackville Street Club in Dublin. Bruen and Kavanagh, the two organisers with no Dublin club affiliation, had both been MPs for County Carlow.[4] Among the grandees who attended the meeting, and of whom personal information is easily ascertained from sources such as *Thom's Directory*, there was a very strong associational link, in that all but four of the seventeen nobles who attended were members of the Carlton Club. There was much less correlation among membership in Dublin clubs, with nine in the Kildare Street Club, three in the Sackville Street Club, one in both clubs, and three with no Dublin club affiliation at all.[5] The common link of the Carlton Club is a crude but probably accurate benchmark indicating the Conservative political leanings of most Irish landlords, particularly those willing to combine to protect their interests.

Using the ILC's list of subscriptions, published in November 1880, together with *Thom's Directory*, U. H. Hussey de Burgh, John Bateman's lists of landowners and the 1876 parliamentary return on landowners in Ireland, one can piece together who supported the ILC.[6] This is important to show who joined for collective landlord defence, particularly since the ILC was the first

---

[4] *Thom's Directory*, 1868, 1879.

[5] *Thom's Directory*, 1879.

[6] The sources used for this section: Irish Land Committee, *List of Subscriptions Received subsequent to meeting at Shelbourne Hotel, 22nd April, 1880* (Dublin, 1880); *Thom's Directory*, 1881, 1890; John Bateman, *The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1883); repr. with an introduction by David Springer (Leicester, 1971); U. H. Hussey de Burgh, *The Landowners of Ireland: an alphabetical list of the owners of estates of 500 acres or £500 valuation and upwards in Ireland, with the acreage and valuation in each county* (Dublin, [1878?]); *Copy 'of "a Return of the Names of Proprietors and the Area and Valuation of All Properties in the Several Counties in Ireland, Held in Fee or Perpetuity, or on Long Leases at Chief Rents", Prepared for the Use of Her Majesty's Government...'* HC 1876 (412), lxxx. 395.

and most publicly-oriented landlord defense organisation during the land war. There were 211 subscribers to the ILC by April 1880 pledging a total of £1,596. Forty-six were peers who pledged a total of £749, or a median subscription of £20. Of the other 165 non-peer subscribers who pledged a total of £847, the median subscription was £3. Of the 211 members, information on the acreage and valuation of their estates could be ascertained for 156 of them, and the alma mater and club affiliation could be identified for 120 of them. Acreage and valuation for estates outside of Ireland held by ILC subscribers was excluded in the calculations.

The ILC was a diverse group of landowners, from great landed magnates such as Colonel Edward King-Harman, who had nearly 73,000 acres in counties Longford, Roscommon, Sligo, Westmeath and Queen's valued at over £40,000, to small landowners such as Robert Henry, who owned only 412 acres in County Limerick valued at £713. Calculating a representative estate size is difficult since there are many subscribers about whom no estate information is available whereas the acreage and valuation of estates are available for all the large landowners. Thus, the other subscribers, of whom no information could be obtained, assuming they were all landlords, were likely to be small landowners, especially if they could not be clearly identified in Bateman or de Burgh, and thus would have lowered the average estate holding and valuation. It is possible that those in this category were land agents or the sons of landowners; such as Gerald Dillon, son of Lord Clonbrock. Dillon subscribed £2 while his father subscribed £20. From 156

subscribers with a total acreage of 1,817,444 acres and valuation of £1,145,983 one arrives at a median estate holding of 7,198 acres and a median valuation of £4,061. Thus the representative subscriber was a moderately-large landowner.

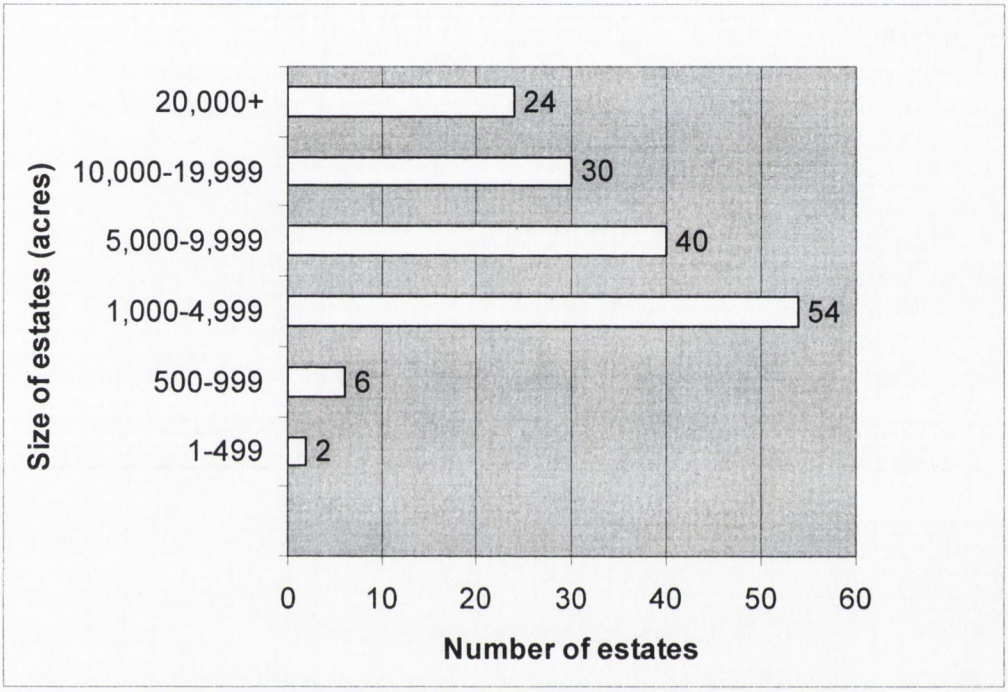
Forty-six peers together had a total acreage of 958,251 acres and a total valuation of £661,737. The median estate size for a peer subscriber was 17,860 acres and the median estate valuation was £10,601. One hundred and ten non-peer subscribers had a total acreage of 859,193 acres and a total valuation of £484,246, and the median estate size of a non-peer subscriber was 5,040 acres with an annual valuation of £2,889.

Taking either the median estate size of peer and non-peer subscribers together or just the non-peer subscribers – whose numbers represent over half of the total subscribers – shows that a representative subscriber was a moderately-large landowner. Also taking into consideration the information on the remaining subscribers, assuming that they were landowners, for whom data regarding estate holdings was unobtainable, this would point to an even lower estate holding median. Beyond the possibility that estates had changed hands or new estates had been acquired in the mid to late 1870s, it is safe to conclude that any estates held by these shadow subscribers would not be above the median of non-peer subscribers or the median of the whole subscriber group.

The following graph presents the distribution of estate sizes for the 156

ILC subscribers. Most estates were between 1,000 acres and 10,000 acres in size.[7]

Figure 2. Distribution of ILC subscribers' estates by acreage

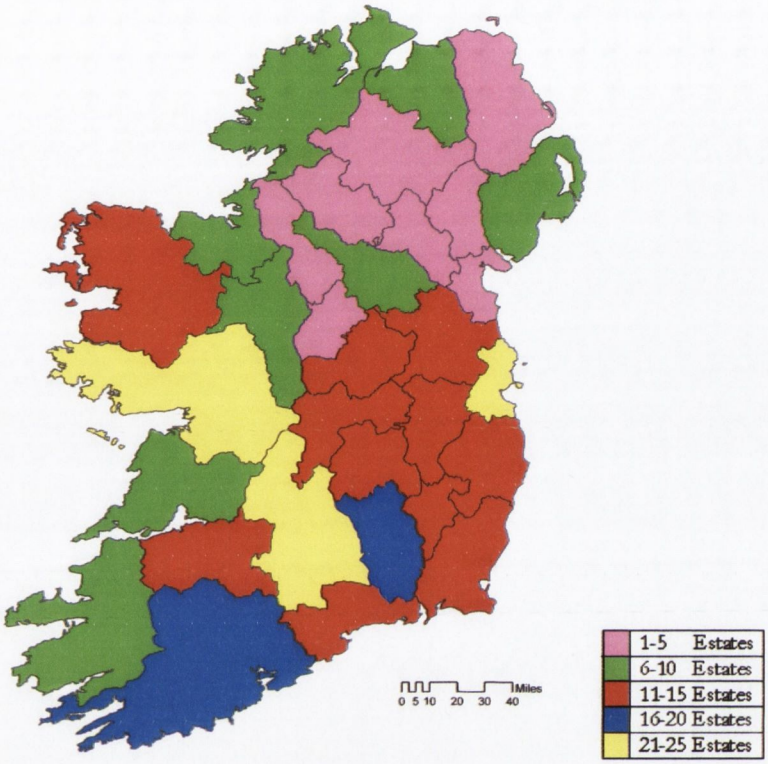


A fuller picture of ILC subscribers from the estate data illustrates a regional concentration of estates in the southeast of the country, although ranked in order, the counties with most estates represented in the ILC data were Galway, Tipperary and Dublin. Most estates were held in Leinster and the fewest in Ulster.

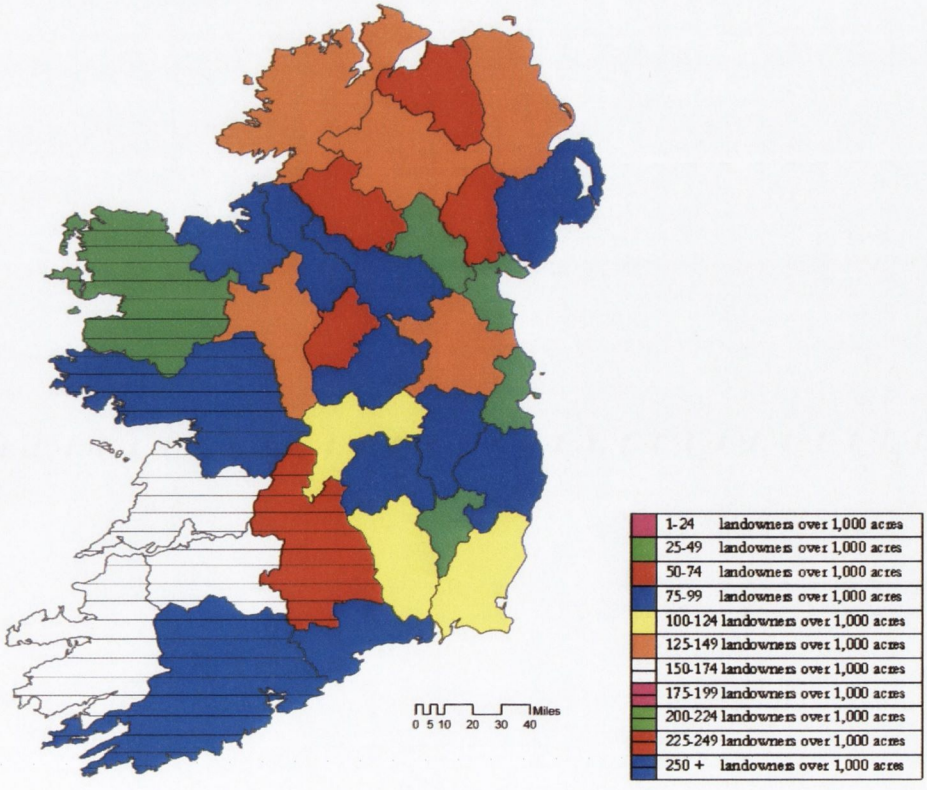
[7] See Appendix 6 for a detailed list of the landowners.

Figure 3 Distribution of ILC subscribers' estates and all landowners over 1,000 acres

i. Distribution of estates represented in the ILC subscribers' data



ii. Geographic distribution of owners of land of 1,000 acres and higher

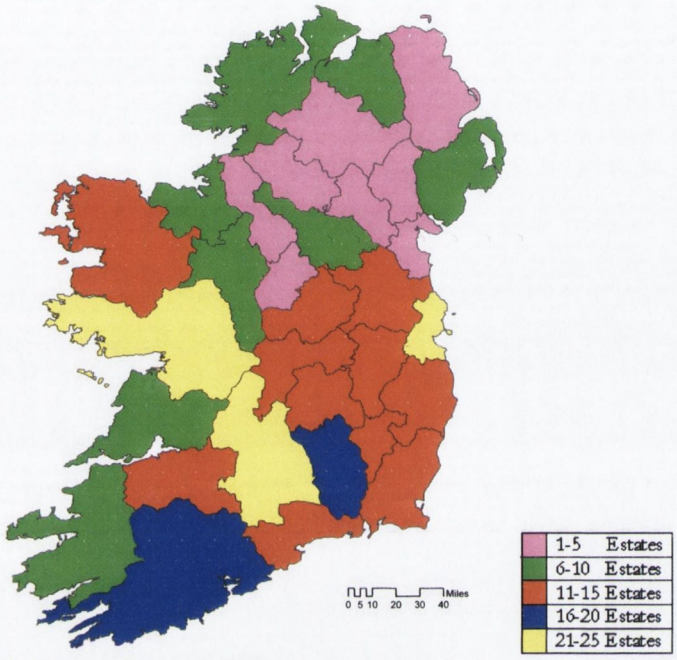


Comparing the distribution of the estates of ILC subscribers to that of all landowners in Ireland with over 1,000 acres illustrates a strong correlation between the high numbers of ILC subscriber estates and high numbers of estates over 1,000 acres in the south of the country. The ILC subscribers' estates, however, were more concentrated in the south and east in comparison to the concentration of estates over 1,000 acres in the south and west. Counties Tipperary and Galway both had high numbers of estates over 1,000 acres and high numbers of estates represented in the ILC data. County Galway, in particular, had the highest number of estates in the ILC data and was second only to County Cork in the numbers of owners of 1,000 acres and higher. According to the RIC's figures, County Galway had the highest number of agrarian outrages reported in 1880,[8] and as discussed below, Galway became an important county for local and regional landlord defense, in particular with the efforts of Gerald Dillon.[9]

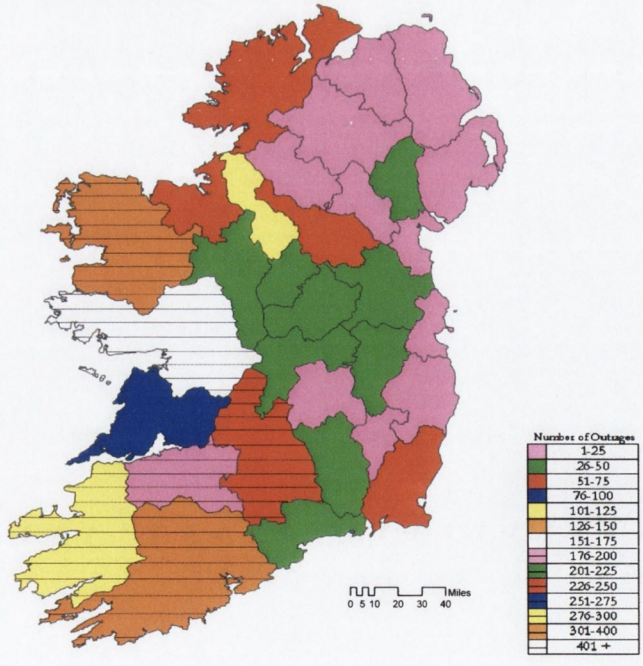
[8] See Figure 4, p. 172.
[9] See below, pp. 204-207.

Figure 4. Distribution of ILC subscribers' estates and Agrarian Outrages, 1880

i. Distribution of estates represented in the ILC subscribers' data



ii. Agrarian Outrages, 1880



Source: *Return 'by Provinces, of Agrarian Offences throughout Ireland Reported to the Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary between the 1st day of January 1880 and the 31st day of December 1880, showing the Number of Cases in which Offenders were Convicted; the Number of Cases in which Offenders were made Amenable but not Convicted; the Number of Cases in which Offenders are awaiting Trial; and the Number of Cases in which Offenders were neither Convicted nor made Amenable*, HC 1881 (13), lxxxvii.

Comparison of the distribution of the ILC subscribers' data with agrarian outrages in 1880 also illustrates that fewest outrages occurred in Ulster and ILC subscribers had fewest estates in Ulster. Leinster had the second lowest number of agrarian outrages in 1880 but had the highest number of estates represented in the ILC data. This could probably be explained in terms of the importance of Dublin for the ILC getting started. The landowners involved in the inaugural meeting on 28 October 1879 were overwhelmingly Leinster landowners; only the earl of Belmore and Sir Thomas Bateson had estates in Ulster. It is likely that in the first year of the ILC's existence these landowners reached out through their localities where their influence and ties were strongest amongst other landowning families.

Club membership and education are illustrative of the associational structures which contributed to landowners coming together and are therefore worthy of examination. Of the 120 ILC subscribers about whom college or club information was obtainable, and again which probably excludes the smallest landowners, almost half attended university: twenty-six at Trinity College, Dublin, fourteen at Oxford colleges, twelve at Cambridge colleges, and one each at Munich and Durham. Twenty-five landlords attended Eton. University attendance does not necessarily point to association – that landlords knew each other while at college, but is informative for prosopography of Irish landlords in the later nineteenth century.

Club affiliation was much more important since, in the case of membership at the Carlton Club, it showed political leaning and also indicated

a physical setting where landlords could meet. There was at least the possibility that their paths would cross; at the very least it meant landowners would know each other. Forty-nine ILC subscribers were members of the Kildare Street Club, forty-six of the Carlton Club, and twenty-four of the Sackville Street Club. However, there was, of course, much over-lapping and most landlords were members of more than one club. Fourteen were members of the Kildare Street and Carlton Clubs, thirteen of the Sackville Street and Carlton Clubs, twelve of the Carlton and other London clubs. Only five subscribers belonged to Irish county clubs: one each at the county clubs of Cork, Galway, Limerick, Tipperary and Wexford.

To round out the picture of ILC members, dates of birth were ascertainable for ninety of the subscribers. The median date of birth was 1828, so that in 1879 the average age of landowners in the ILC was fifty-one. Thus the representative ILC subscriber was fifty-one years old, belonged to the Carlton Club and either the Kildare Street or Sackville Street Clubs, had attended Oxford, Cambridge or Trinity College, Dublin, and owned estates of around 7,000 acres, mostly likely in Leinster, Connaught and Mayo.

Early activity of the ILC

The Dublin *Daily Express* lauded the formation of the ILC following the 28 October 1879 meeting in Dublin, noting the importance of refuting the injurious statements concerning Irish landlords bandied about in the press: 'If there were no reliable evidence to counteract the evil tendency of their representations, we could not be sure that even intelligent inquirers might not be deceived and public opinion misled'.[10] Indicative of most reports on the landlord defence cause throughout the land war, the non-partisan nature of the meeting was emphasised. The Dublin *Daily Express* depicted the non-political nature of the meeting in grandiose terms: 'Gentlemen of various shades of political opinion assembled, as if in obedience to a spontaneous impulse which brought them into harmonious cooperation for the defence of the properties and the characters of the great body of Irish landowners'.[11]

The ILC's purpose was indicated in the first of two resolutions passed at the meeting: owing to the verbal assaults on Irish landlords in the press, parliament, and meetings throughout the country, 'it is desirable that statistics should be obtained showing as far as possible the existing state of the relations between the great majority of the landowners and the tenants, in order that correct information on the subject may be laid before the Royal Commission on Agricultural Distress.'[12] This strategy reveals of the nature of the landlord

---

[10] *Daily Express* (Dublin) 10 Nov. 1879.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.

response to the land agitation at this time. Once empirical data supplied by landowners was placed in a sanctioned, public arena such as the Richmond Commission, a rational public would modify its negative perceptions of Irish landowners and the unwarranted class-wide denunciations would cease. There was, however, a danger with this strategy. In 1872 the earl of Derby moved in the House of Lords for an official inquiry into the pattern of landownership in the British Isles since he believed the evidence would refute claims by radicals that land was only owned by a tiny minority. The data was not as damning as many landowners had feared, but it did illustrate without a doubt that landownership was concentrated in the hands of the few rather than the many.[13] The ILC's strategy was open to the same potential danger, for although landlords believed that they and their neighbours rented their lands at reasonable levels, there was the potential that the evidence might show otherwise. Interpretation of the data was crucial, and the ILC became adept at explaining away worrying eviction statistics in its pamphlet campaign. A second problem with the tactic was relying on the findings of a royal commission, since, depending on its remit, it generally took at least a year to report. The Richmond commission was appointed in August 1879 but the preliminary report was not published until January 1881 and its findings did

[13] David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (2nd ed., London, 1996), pp. 54-55; 29 Feb. 1872. *Hansard* 3, ccix (209), pp. 639-641.

not carry much weight since the commission had been appointed under a Conservative administration but reported under a Liberal one.[14]

Pamphlet Campaign

In 1880 the ILC began its propaganda campaign to salvage the reputation of Irish landlords. Beginning in November 1880 the ILC published, mainly at the University Press, Dublin, and issued, in both Dublin and London at a nominal price (sixpence each), a succession of pamphlets under the series title 'The Land Question, Ireland'. The college was a fitting publisher, since, owning almost 200,000 acres, or about one percent of Ireland, it was one of the largest landowners in the United Kingdom.[15] Between November 1880 and February 1882 the ILC produced fourteen pamphlets on the most important topics of the land question commonly discussed in the press and in parliament. The first title, *Notes upon the Government Valuation of Land in Ireland, Commonly known as 'Griffith's Valuation'*, dealt with the issue of rent levels – a particularly relevant topic treated in a publication released in November, when the second half-yearly instalment of rent was normally due.[16] The second pamphlet was just as timely as the first. *The Anarchy in Ireland* appeared in December 1880 with a Liberal administration apprehensive about agrarian

---

[14] Richmond Commission, *Minutes of Evidence*, pt. I [C. 2778-I], 25 HC 1881, xv. I.

[15] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, p. 13.

[16] ILC, *The Land Question, Ireland. No. I. Notes upon the Government Valuation of Land in Ireland, Commonly known as 'Griffith's Valuation* (Dublin, 1880).

outrages in Ireland during the state prosecutions of Land League officials such as Parnell, Biggar, Dillon, Sexton and Sullivan, and at a time when Gladstone's cabinet was grappling with the decision to introduce a bill to suspend *habeas corpus*.[17]

The most important pamphlet produced, was the third, *Facts and Figures,* published in December 1880, using information originally sought for the Richmond Commission. To obtain information on estates, levels of evictions, rents and the extent of landlord expenditure on improvements, the ILC consulted U. H. Hussey de Burgh's *The Landowners of Ireland*, and sent query forms to every landowner whose estate was valued at not less than £500 a year.[18] Aptly, the purpose of de Burgh's book had been to 'correct erroneous statements' contained in the government's return on landowners.[19] By the time of the ILC's presentation of evidence before the Richmond Commission on 5 August 1880 the ILC had received and tabulated information from 1,536 estates, and for the publication of the pamphlet, 1,826 estates, or about half the number of owners who were likely contacted. To complete the returns, landowners were to exclude from consideration lands let to tenants in perpetuitety, lands in the landlords' own possession, town

---

[17] ILC, *The Land Question, Ireland. No. II. The Anarchy in Ireland* (Dublin, 1880); Margaret O'Callaghan, *British High Politics and a Nationalist Ireland*, pp. 62-73.

[18] U. H. Hussey de Burgh, *The Landowners of Ireland: an alphabetical list of the owners of estates of 500 acres or £500 valuation and upwards in Ireland, with the acreage and valuation in each county* (Dublin, [1878?]).

[19] De Burgh, *The Landowners of Ireland,* p. v; *Copy 'of a Return of the Names of Proprietors and the Area and Valuation of All properties in the Several Counties in Ireland, Held in Fee or Perpetuity, or on Long Leases at Chief Rents", Prepared for the Use of Her Majesty's Government…'* HC 1876 (412), lxxx. 395.

holdings and town parks and lands let for grazing for one year or less (the standard grazing tenancy).[20]

One of the few manuscript sources relating to the ILC's data collecting programme is a handwritten reply to the ILC questionnaire for the earl of Gosford's Armagh and Cavan estates completed in December 1879 and January 1880.[21] In reply to a query regarding the number of evictions in the previous ten years, it was stated: 'One eviction in 1878 – Parties not industrious, attended more to dealing in outside matters, got thereby into debt with many, mortgaged their holding, & paid no rent for 5½ years. The Mortgagee for his own safety paid the rent, and is now in possession'.[22] Interestingly, in response to the question, 'what evidence can you adduce to show how far these rents are reasonable or otherwise', the reply was, 'The rents being moderate, and invariable punctuality of payments'.[23]

It is impossible to verify the figures tabulated from the ILC's questionnaires because there are no papers or manuscript sources remaining, but the data generated from the ILC query forms covered seven million acres of tenanted lands, or about one-third to one-half of the whole area of Ireland.[24] Since the size of the survey was so substantial the ILC claimed the information to be representative 'if not indeed typical' of the whole of

---

[20] ILC, *The Land Question, Ireland. No. III. Facts and Figures*, p. 8.
[21] Gosford Papers. PRONI D 1606/12/15/758, 759, 761.
[22] Ibid., D 1606/12/15/758.
[23] Ibid.
[24] ILC, *The Land Question, Ireland. No. III. Facts and Figures*, pp. 8-9.

Ireland.[25] In a fairly rigorous manner the ILC sought to illustrate the extent to which the evidence was accurate and meaningful – concluding that in both area and number of tenants the estates tabulated were representative of each province and that the valuation of each estate to be within a penny per acre of the government valuation.[26] Regarding the numbers of tenants in the ILC returns, it was estimated that the returns accounted for forty-two percent of all agricultural tenants, and half of the tenants returned occupied farms valued at less than £10 a year.[27]

Rent levels were one of the most important public topics during the land war, and although evictions were more emotive, most evictions resulted from the non-payment of rent, so the two were linked. It was vital to the landlord's public defence that rents were shown not to be exorbitant, for that was the common, often anecdotal, perception, both in England and Ireland. Irish landlords were often seen as 'a heartless "rack-renting" class, intent on only screwing the last penny out of their unfortunate tenantry, and regardless even of their own interests in their selfish greed for gain'.[28]

Not surprisingly, landlords and tenants had opposing views on what was an acceptable rent. Landlords and their champions tended to argue that an acceptable rent was one that was freely accepted by the landlord and tenant relative to market forces. Tenants and their champions often argued that a just rent was one that did not take all of the tenant's resources, leaving enough

[25] Ibid., p. 9.
[26] Ibid., pp. 11-12.
[27] Ibid., p. 12.
[28] Ibid., pp. 17-18.

money to meet the needs of clothing, fuel and contributions towards other debts. A commonly accepted standard for rent among those supporting tenant farmers was the government valuation undertaken between 1852 and 1865, under the direction of Richard Griffith, and which was commonly referred to as 'Griffith's Valuation'. On the one hand, landowners pointed to the facts that the valuation was undertaken for tax purposes twenty or thirty years previously, that it was based on a fixed scale of agricultural prices from 1849-52, and that Griffith himself, at the time of the valuation, stated that the valuation was more or less around thirty-three percent below a competitive or open market rent. On the other hand, the fact that Griffith's valuation was constantly referred to in the press as a seemingly valid rent standard, and on some estates tenants offered the valuation amount in lieu of their actual rents, the ILC had to address rent levels in comparison to the valuation. From the data it received from landowners the ILC concluded that eighty-six percent of the estates were let at levels less than 33 percent above the valuation – therefore within the range the Griffith himself had set as a fair rent level – and therefore 'let at distinctly moderate rents'.[29] This figure is corroborated by the comparison of rentals and the government valuation above, in which rents were an average of eight percent above the government valuation – though this valuation figure included the value of buildings.[30]

It was in this light that landowners believed their rent levels reasonable. Without any evidence the ILC claimed it was rather the habits of the

[29] Ibid., p. 14.
[30] See Table 4 above, p. 100.

spendthrift tenants that were the cause of tenants' inability to pay rents: 'the prime cause of their suffering was not the rapacity of the landlords, but their own wasteful extravagance and want of thrift'.[31] The ILC sought to counter the claim that landlords had continually raised their rents over the past forty years. From the data of estates covering 4.75 million acres the results showed that 7seventy-four percent of the area had not raised rents in over twenty years; eight percent of current rents were fixed between 1870 and 1880; eighteen percent between 1860 and 1870, thirty-two percent between 1850 and 1860, and nineteen percent between 1840 and 1850.[32] A problem with this information, however, was that it did not allow for the fact that rents were raised twice between 1840 and 1880 – it only identified when current rents were set. So, whereas the information illustrated that only eight percent of current rents were established between 1870 and 1880, it did not preclude the fact that rents could have been raised fifteen years earlier as well. The rents on the earl of Leitrim's estates, for example, were raised in 1854 and again between 1863 and 1877.[33] The ILC's figures, however, can be corroborated by the findings of Vaughan's substantial study of over fifty estates between the famine and the land war. Vaughan concluded that there was an average rent increase of twenty percent and that most rents were only increased once within that period.[34]

---

[31] ILC, *The Land Question, Ireland. No. III. Facts and Figures*, p. 17.

[32] Ibid., Table III, p. 19.

[33] George Stewart to earl of Leitrim, 30 Sept., 1879. Stewart Letter book, Leitrim papers NLI Ms 32, 656.

[34] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, p. 48.

While the ILC admitted there certainly were landlords who charged high rents, it argued that they were the exception to the rule. To further distance the majority of landlords from this group the ILC baselessly argued that these high-renting landlords were the land speculators who purchased their estates in the Incumbered Estates Court established in 1849 to free-up the sale of lands from ruined owners. Showing their distaste for land legislation, the ILC repeatedly emphasised in the pamphlet the fact that the court was created by an act of parliament – the implication being that through creation by statute, these 'new' landlords were somehow artificial.[35] It was a common view that 'new' landlords who operated on a more business-like attitude were less indulgent and paternal than landlords who had had a longstanding bond and relationship with their tenants. Much of the ill feeling felt by landlords during the land war stemmed from what they saw as the breaking of the paternal bonds that had existed on their estates for generations.[36]

A noticeable omission from the pamphlet was the topic of abatements. It is not evident why the ILC solicited information pertaining to rent levels without also enquiring as to the level and rationale for abatements. It could, perhaps, be argued that large numbers and amounts of abatements indicated high rent levels – such that abatements were necessary because rents were too high to pay in a time of crisis. Abatements were, however, part of the normal,

---

[35] ILC, *The Land Question, Ireland. No. III. Facts and Figures,* p. 38.

[36] *Report of Her Majesty's Commission of Inquiry into the Working of the Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, and Acts amending the Same* [C 2779], HC 1881, xviii, p. 6.

paternal responses of landlords and were a widespread, if difficult to determine, phenomenon in 1879 and 1880.[37]

Information on evictions was of vital importance to the landlord's case, especially since it formed the avowed basis for the government's compensation for disturbance bill introduced in June 1880, and in the ILC's own words, landlords were commonly seen as 'exterminators'.[38] From the data of estates covering 6.7 million acres, the ILC returns showed 1,031 evictions for non-payment of rent between 1870 and 1880.[39] This figure is too low, especially if one compares it with the constabulary returns which showed 7,561 evictions (both for non-payment of rent and on title) for the same period, and 1,751 evictions for non-payment of rent for just 1877, 1878, 1879 and the first six months of 1880.[40] The ILC chose not to break down their figures, which would have shown the high number of evictions for 1879-80 relative to the fewer numbers for the rest of the decade. By simply presenting a (somewhat suspect) decade average, the recent high figures for evictions were compensated for by the low figures for most of the decade. By using their own statistics (which drew from a smaller number of larger sized estates) rather than official returns, the impression of fewer evictions was created.

---

[37] See chapter 3 above.

[38] ILC, *The Land Question, Ireland. No. III. Facts and Figures,* p. 23.

[39] Ibid., Table IV 'Showing the number of evictions which have taken place during the last ten years upon estates in Ireland with regard to which information has been obtained', pp. 24-25.

[40] These are actual evictions, that is, the number of evictions recorded by the constabulary less the number of tenants readmitted to their holdings. *Return showing the Number of Families Evicted in each County in Ireland for Non-payment of Rent, and the Number of Families Re-admitted as Caretakers for the Years 1877, 1878, 1879 and the Half-year ended the 30th day of June 1880* HC 1880 (317), lx. 367.

This, however, was the point. Several of the returns on evictions produced in the summer of 1880 were ordered by Forster for use during the compensation for disturbance bill debates and the ILC disputed the figures. The ILC's numbers, however, buttressed their over-all argument that evictions were rare but again appeared to disregard the problems of the agricultural depression which led to tenants falling into arrears.

The ILC also sought to refute the common charge that Irish landlords were chronic under-investors in their estates in comparison to English landlords, who commonly provided houses and farm buildings for their tenants. The ILC argued this was an unfair and unrealistic comparison since English farms were much larger than Irish farms. The average Irish farm in 1880 was less than thirty acres: seventy-two percent of Irish farms were less than thirty acres; fifty-two percent of all farms were between five and thirty acres.[41] The average size of holdings in the rest of the United Kingdom was much larger. In Wales it was forty-seven acres; in Scotland it was sixty-one acres; and in England it was sixty-five acres.[42] Since Irish farms were so small, the ILC argued that it simply did not make business-sense for Irish landlords to build houses on such small holdings with low valuations; no tenant would pay a yearly rent which would indemnify the landlord for his expenditure.[43]

---

[41] Table II. 'The Extent of Land in Statute Acres, and the proportionate Area, under Crops, Grass, Fallow, Woods and Plantation, and Bog, Waste, Water, &c., in each year from 1871 to 1880, also the Number of Holdings exceeding 1 Acre'. *The Agricultural Statistics of Ireland for the Year 1880* [C.2932], HC 1881, xciii. 685, p. 4.

[42] *Returns as to the number and size of agricultural holdings in Great Britain in the year 1895.* HC [C. 8243], lxvii. 501, p. x.

[43] ILC, *The Land Question, Ireland. No. III. Facts and Figures,* p. 32.

The *Facts and Figures* pamphlet cogently argued the defense of Irish landlords to the most common detractions. In contrast to the often highly emotive and anecdotal anti-landlord propaganda disseminated through the press and Land League meetings, the ILC's presentation was based largely on statistical data.

The Compensation for Disturbance Bill

While the logistically ambitious programme of soliciting information from landowners was underway in 1880 the ILC as an organisation, and individual members, were engaged in attempting to defeat Forster's compensation for disturbance bill. Alarmed by high numbers of evictions in 1880, the Liberal administration sought to protect tenants from eviction for non-payment of rent in a time of distress. Introduced by Forster on 18 June 1880, in hurried response to a private measure tabled by John O'Connor Power, Home Rule MP for County Mayo, the bill sought to compensate tenants evicted for non-payment of rent where the inability to pay resulted from the agricultural depression. Essentially, the bill was a temporary and geographically limited extension of the principle of compensation established in the 1870 act.[44] For a temporary period, within scheduled districts in the south and west of Ireland, county court judges would be empowered to order a landlord to compensate a tenant upon eviction for non-payment of rent if the tenant could prove his inability to pay rent was due to the agricultural depression rather than

[44] 33 & 34 Vict., 46 (1 Aug. 1870).

thriftlessness. The tenant had to be willing to continue in the tenancy on reasonable terms and these terms had to have been unreasonably refused by the landlord.[45] Introduced in response to an initiative from a home ruler, the bill seems to have been a palliative until the Bessborough Commission reported and Gladstone's cabinet recommended solutions to 'the land question'. A week after the bill's introduction, Gladstone wrote as much to Forster, also noting the problematic position of the duke of Argyll, a strong defender of property rights who would later resign from cabinet following the introduction of Gladstone's land law bill in April 1881: 'We have only kept Argyll by showing him how carefully our measure is framed to bar all interferences, all prejudices touching anything that lies beyond its own four corners – the Irish Land Act [of 1870] is a sort of Land Charter: and I think it is vital to our chances of steering through the rough water to show that every question arising under it will be held over until the Commission shall have reported'.[46] To Forster, the numbers of evictions and the growing necessity of police and army protection to enforce evictions brought the law into disrepute and he had little sympathy for Irish landlords exercising their legal rights to evict in a time of agricultural crisis. Despite his protestations to the contrary,

---

[45] *Bill to make temporary provision with respect to Compensation for Disturbance in certain cases of ejectment for non-payment of rent in parts of Irelan,* HC 1880 (232), i. 427.

[46] (Copy of) Gladstone to Forster, 25 June 1880. BL Ms Gladstone Papers, BL Add 44157 fol. 142.

the compensation for disturbance bill must be seen as an attempt to restrain Irish landlords.[47]

A week after the bill's introduction the ILC sent Forster a memorial calling on him to drop the bill, pointing out the government's inconsistency in that its bill had the same principles as O'Connor Power's bill, but the government refused to support the Land League executive member's bill. The ILC claimed that the government's bill had greater implications than temporary relief, and established a dangerous principle: that 'any man in occupation of land under contract to pay a stated rent becomes thereupon entitled to a quasi-right of possession independent of such contract'.[48] This principle could also, of course, be extended to the rest of the United Kingdom. Again seeming to turn a blind eye to the extent of the agricultural distress, the ILC argued, 'no emergency exists warranting the passing of a measure so destructive of the rights of property', especially when 'the Landlords as a body have shown the greatest leniency to their tenantry and have incurred serious burden in order to give them employment and means of support in spite of personal embarrassment'.[49] A similar memorial was sent by a group of County Kerry landowners in July, who made a case that while the government had compensation in mind, it should also implement a scheme for

---

[47] Richard Hawkins, for instance, has emphasised the importance of the Carraroe ejectments on the Kirwan estate in county Galway shortly before the bill's introduction in pushing Forster to introduce the measure. Hawkins, 'Liberals, land and coercion in the summer of 1880: the influence of the Carraroe ejectments'. *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society.* Vol. 34, 1974-75.

[48] 24 June 1880. CSORP/1880/15188.

[49] Ibid.

landlords financially strained by the bill: 'that in the event of its becoming Law, Land owners would, in Equity, be entitled to an advance from the Government, on favourable terms, of the funds necessary to meet the burdens so imposed on them'.[50]

Whereas Forster, Gladstone and other Liberals defended the bill as a temporary measure to prevent indefensible evictions during an agricultural depression, and which was not a departure from the principle of compensation established by the 1870 land act, the defenders of Irish landlords in the Commons and Lords argued otherwise. Arthur Loftus Tottenham, Conservative MP for County Leitrim, landlord and prominent ILC member, led the attack in the House of Commons, claiming to speak on behalf of Irish landowners against a 'further measure of confiscation and interference with the rights of property'.[51] His three main points were that the measure was unlikely to be temporary, had introduced an ill-conceived principle regarding property rights, and was unfair to landowners. Tottenham was correct that there was no guarantee that once the temporary measure was lifted there would not be insurmountable pressure to renew it again. His second point cut to the heart of the objection of Irish landowners to Gladstonian land legislation during the land war: it was palliative rather than principled and therefore should not be enacted: 'I ask English Members

---

[50] 15 July 1880. CSORP/1880/17470

[51] 29 June 1880. *Hansard 3*, ccliii (253), p. 1125. Tottenham had 14,500 acres in County Leitrim and 250 acres in County Clare. Bateman, *The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1883); repr. with an introduction by David Springer (Leicester, 1971), p. 443.

opposite, would they countenance such legislation, if it were proposed to apply it to England; and if not, why should they look calmly on and see a principle established which assuredly someday, not far distant will recoil on their own heads'.[52] His third point was that since the government proposed to take away a method of enforcing rent payment, it should give relief to landowners for the various taxes on land.[53]

The marquess of Waterford, chairman of the ILC, argued in the House of Lords that the government had relied on inaccurate eviction statistics in bringing forth the measure and were providing Irish tenants with an excuse not to pay rent: 'Why would tenants not pay their rent? They were brought up from their earliest infancy in the belief that rent was an unjust tax; they were told by the Land League to keep a grip of their holdings, and only pay such rent as they thought proper'.[54] Solvent tenants would simply swear for each other before the county court judge that they were unable to pay their rent. He also, unconvincingly, predicted destitution for landlords in the scheduled districts who would not receive their rents; many had not received rents in the past two years and had borrowed to meet the interest on their mortgage and other charges: 'The mortgagee would foreclose, their properties would be forced into the market and sold at a ridiculously reduced price, and the money they received would hardly pay their mortgages and charges, and they themselves would be turned out on the world perfectly ruined, beggared and

---

[52] 29 June 1880. *Hansard 3,* cclii (253), p. 1131.
[53] Ibid., p. 1135.
[54] 2 Aug. 1880. *Hansard 3,* cclii (253), p. 1908.

destroyed'.[55] The bill, he argued, was political, 'brought in as a sop to agitation'.[56]

Class interest won the day in the Lords and the bill was overwhelmingly defeated, 282 votes to 51. Only eight Irish peers voted for the bill, two of whom, Viscounts Powerscourt and Monck, were members of the ILC.[57] The bill's defeat is usually seen as a lost opportunity by landlords to engage with the problems and be part of the solution to the distress and political agitation in Ireland centred on landlord and tenant relations.[58] It is difficult to see, however, how the passing of the bill and the implementation of compensation for unwarranted eviction would have stemmed the tide of agrarian agitation or prevented landlords from evicting tenants they often saw as unwilling rather than unable to pay their full rents. Rather than being a missed chance, the Lords' vote illustrated a closing of ranks against an attempt to restrain landowners from exercising their legal rights, particularly against an administration led by Gladstone, the man who many landowners condemned as having, one by one, begun tearing down the pillars of the landed establishment in Ireland during his first administration. For the prominent role that Waterford played in the debate in the House of Lords, he received two threatening letters a month later, one of which warned: 'I feels [sic] great

---

[55] Ibid., p. 1910.

[56] Ibid., p. 1911.

[57] The other peers were: the duke of Leinster; the earl of Cork and Orrery; Lord Emly; the earl of Kenmare; Lord O'Hagan and Sir Henry Frederick Ponsonby. 3 Aug. 1880. *Hansard 3,* ccliv (254), p. 110.

[58] Bew, Land *the National Question in Ireland,* p. 120.

trouble in telling you Sir, that a meeting was held in part of this county yesterday private I am sorry to tell you but you will be shot'.[59]

The bill's defeat was a victory for landlords, preventing a measure which many English, Scottish and Irish landlords saw as unwarranted interference with freedom of contract and a prevention of a landlord, in Tottenham's words, 'being so unreasonable as to look for his just rights'.[60] Two days after the bill's defeat on 3 August 1880, the ILC finally got its long-awaited opportunity to present its data before the Richmond Committee, though from the record of the minutes of evidence, this was no triumphal culmination of effort. Colonel E. H. Cooper, a landlord in the counties of Sligo and Limerick, represented the ILC and in a very business-like manner, presented the evidence of the questionnaires sent to landowners on the extent to which rents on the estates were above or below the government valuation, the dates when current rents were set, the amount of monies expended by landlords on tenanted land, and numbers of evictions.[61] The information was more fully treated in the ILC's *Facts and Figures* pamphlet discussed above.

To judge from the commission's report, the ILC's data was influential. Landlords were not charged with contributing to the agricultural depression in Ireland; much of the blame for the poor position of tenant farmers was laid at their own door. Two of the four causes for the agricultural depression in Ireland cited by the commission were the expansion of available credit to

---

[59] Owen Slacke to Burke, 13 September 1880. CSORP/1880/22436.

[60] 29 June 1880. *Hansard 3*, cclii (253), p. 1131.

[61] Richmond Commission, *Minutes of Evidence,* pt. I [C. 2778-I], 25 HC 1881, xv. I. Cooper had 34,120 acres in County Sligo and 1,118 acres in County Limerick.

tenant farmers and their subsequent over-reliance on it, as well as excessive competition for land. The commissioners also supported the contention of the landlords that Griffith's Valuation was never meant as a benchmark for rent, and perhaps in a nod to the ILC, concluded their report: 'It is only fair to add that the evidence which has been brought before us shows that there are very many estates which are well-managed, and upon which the tenants have no just ground for complaint'.[62] The commission's report was published on 14 January 1881, but since the commission had been appointed under Beaconsfield's administration, Gladstone's government had no obligation to follow its recommendations. Besides, the Liberal-appointed Bessborough Commission, investigating the working of the land law, had delivered its report ten days earlier.

The ILC's deputation to the Bessborough Commission was most interesting, particularly since Arthur MacMurrough Kavanagh, an ILC subscriber and strong force in the landlord defence movement throughout the land war, was on the commission. The ILC presentation by Colonel Edward King-Harman, Tottenham, Henry Bruen and other ILC committee members on 29 November 1880 was much the same as that before the Richmond Commission, consisting of the presentation of collected data in tabular form.[63] Kavanagh asked the deputation several leading questions about the data such

---

[62] *Preliminary Report from Her Majesty's Commissioners on Agriculture.* HC [C. 2778], xv. 1, p. 9.

[63] *Report of Her Majesty's Commission of Inquiry into the Working of the Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, and the Acts Amending the Same; Minutes of Evidence and Appendices,* pt. ii [C 2779-II], HC 1881, xix, 1.

as whether it was true that the ILC returns did not include several large landowners who were acknowledged to run their estates well. He used the opportunity of asking a question at the end of the deputation evidence to make a point about the commission's remit of inquiry, asking: 'Is it not your opinion, Mr. Bruen, that our inquiry reaches to arbitrary acts on the part of the landlords to recover their rents, and that, therefore, it warrants the inquiry being extended to determine whether the means which a landlord now has are, under existing circumstances, efficacious for the recovery of rent?' Of course Bruen's reply was in the affirmative.[64] Kavanagh delivered his own report because he disagreed with recommendations in the official report, particularly regarding the arbitration of rents.[65]

The commission's main report claimed that Irish landlords were estranged from Irish tenants by history and culture: they were 'alienated from the mass of the people by differences of religion, manners, and sympathy, and were many of them strangers and "absentees".[66] The report singled out landlords who had purchased their estates in the encumbered estates court as particularly unworthy: 'Most of the purchasers were ignorant of the traditions of the soil; many of them were destitute of sympathy for the historic

---

[64] Ibid, evidence 40,143 and 40,173.

[65] 'Separate Report by A. McM. Kavanagh, Esq.' in *Report of Her Majesty's Commission of Inquiry into the Working of the Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, and Acts amending the Same* [C 2779], HC 1881, xviii, 1.

[66] *Report of Her Majesty's Commission of Inquiry into the Working of the Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, and Acts amending the Same* [C 2779], HC 1881, xviii, p. 4.

conditions of things', which contrasted with the 'ancient properties, previously managed in a more or less patriarchal fashion'.[67]

A central recommendation of the report was for arbitration of rent since the notions of security of tenure was meaningless without a 'fair' rent, and the 1870 land act's principle of compensation for disturbance presupposed the tenant had to leave his farm. Most interesting, however, was the commission's recognition that Griffith's Valuation could not be taken as a letting value of current rents.

> If anything has been clearly established on evidence during this inquiry, the fact that the present Government valuation is not a trustworthy standard for the settlement of rents has been most thoroughly demonstrated. Fair as it may have been for the purposes of local taxation in the years when it was made, the evidence shows that even then it was considered as below the fair letting value of the land.[68]

The commission's main report provided the Liberal government with the recommendation to reform the existing land law in Ireland on the basis of the 'Three F's'.

The Land Law Bill

Although in January 1881 many landlords took some comfort from the fact that the government had tabled a bill to suspend *habeas corpus* in proclaimed districts, the prospect of remedial land legislation – a second Gladstone land act no less – inspired dread, and the ILC began preparations by collecting

---

[67] Ibid., p. 6.
[68] Ibid., p. 26.

more information. In February, the ILC executive in South Frederick Street, Dublin, directed county sub-committees to contact local landowners to solicit up-to-date information on ejectments, since, it was argued, statements founded on inaccurate returns of evictions would be used in coming debates on 'the Irish Land Question'.[69] When Gladstone introduced his much anticipated land law bill on 7 April, he made it clear that Irish landlords as a class were paying for the sins of the few. He concluded that the majority of Irish landowners were on good relations with their tenants and did not charge exorbitant rents or capriciously evict, but he also made it clear that it was the actions of a few Irish landlords that necessitated new legislation which would curb the rights of all: 'It may seem hard, where there are so many landlords with whom we have not a shred of title to interference, were it possible to sever their case from other cases around them, that they must be liable to interference on account of the acts or omissions of the few; but so it is, and so it must be, under the iron necessity of public affairs'.[70] Expediency trumped sanctity of property rights.

The introduction of the bill spurred the ILC into action. On the same day as the bill's introduction it issued a circular seeking additional subscriptions for the opening of a Westminster branch in time for the second reading of the bill, fixed for 25 April. The branch would allow the ILC to lobby MPs, or as the ILC put it, to provide a place 'where Members of

[69] ILC circular, 19 Feb. 1881. Castletown Papers. NLI MS 35, 321 (2).
[70] Gladstone, 7 Apr. 1881. *Hansard 3*, cclx (260), p. 893.

Parliament, and those interested may obtain trustworthy information'.[71] To maximise the effectiveness of the lobby in Westminster, members of the ILC executive, who included only one MP, would attend the branch to give advice to members of both houses of parliament. [72]

During the Easter recess the ILC had almost daily meetings to consider the bill and discuss potential amendments.[73] On 22 April the ILC met at Leinster Hall in Dublin and recorded its objection to the bill, to what many landowners saw as the abandonment of the principles of free trade and contract in the relations of landlord and tenant. A 'fair rent' to be determined by a court, proposed to regulate 'the most important transactions between man and man in Ireland', was 'not such as to command the respect of the public'. Landlord and tenant relations should not be determined by 'the arbitrary discretion of individuals' but by a system of clear, fixed laws. Indeed, the lack of an apparent rationale behind the fixed judicial rents was a just complaint of many landowners once the land commission began operating.[74] The principles of fair rent and fixity of tenure represented serious encroachment on the rights of property without establishing a mechanism for

---

[71] ILC circular, 7 Apr. 1881. Castletown Papers. NLI MS 35, 321 (2).

[72] The branch office was at 26 Great George Street, Westminster. ILC circular, 7 Apr. 1881. Castletown Papers. NLI MS 35, 321 (2). The members of the ILC executive were: the marquess of Drogheda, the earl of Donoughmore, Lord Ardilaun, Lord Cloncurry, Colonel T. E. Taylor, Conservative MP for County Dublin, Robert Fowler, Colonel J. Ffolliott, J. Stewart Kincaid, J. Townsend Trench, T. Cooke Trench and T. E. Webb, QC. ILC *The Land Question, Ireland. No. VII. Mr. Gladstone and Three F's* (Dublin, 1881), (inside cover).

[73] *The Times,* 18 Apr.; 22 Apr. 1881. Donoughmore and Waterford were also active in the Conservative party's meetings to plan amendments to the land bill. *The Times,* 29 Apr. 1881; 1 June 1881.

[74] See below pp. 207-208.

compensation for the loss to landowners.[75] The perceived threat to property rights and regulation of free contract was seen by landlords as eroding the pillars that upheld society. Interestingly, although the ILC's condemnation of the land law bill focused on the likely future losses to landowners at the hands of those arbitrating rents, it also criticised the measure for altering the nature of agricultural tenancies but completely neglecting the interests of agricultural labourers.[76]

While passing resolutions at meetings was a part of the normal activity of associations, the declarations were little more than a public record. Showing great activity, however, the ILC published a pamphlet on the bill in its 'Land Question' series by 24 April, three weeks after the bill's first reading in parliament. Written by T. E. Webb, barrister, and regius professor of law at Trinity College, Dublin, and executive member of the ILC, *Mr. Gladstone's Land Bill* argued that the legislation marked 'a turning point in the history of the Nation' and focused on the uncertainty engendered by the fact that rents 'should henceforward be committed to the arbitrary discretion of individuals of whom we know nothing…'.[77] During the bill's debate and considerable amendment stages the ILC continued its propaganda campaign against the bill, publishing two more pamphlets, the first of which drew from Lord Carlingford's report from the Richmond Commission, and the second was

---

[75] *The Times,* 22 Apr. 1881.

[76] Ibid.,

[77] ILC, *The Land Question, Ireland. No. X Mr. Gladstone's Bill* (Dublin, 1881), pp. 3, 4. Webb also wrote the ILC pamphlets: *Confiscation or Contract,* (Dublin, 1880) and *The Land Question, Ireland. No. VII. Mr. Gladstone and the Three F's'* (Dublin, 1881) among others. *The Times*, 23 Apr. 1881.

another attempt to show that landlords really did not evict many families.[78] The pamphlet, *More Facts and Figures. Evictions,* was an exercise in explaining away eviction figures, the logic being that if eviction rates were the basis for the government seeking to tamper with the land laws, and if these figures could be shown to be flawed or inflated, than the extent to which the relations of landlord and tenant needed to be reformed could be questioned. Beginning with a figure of 2,888 civil bill and high court ejectments executed in Ireland in 1880, it was argued that of these 405 were not agricultural tenants, and 1,413 were not removed from the holding, presumably becoming caretakers. It also argued that ten percent of the tenants were not resident on their farms, no doubt taking great satisfaction in being able to say, 'there can be absentee Tenants as well as absentee Landlords'.[79] Through the manipulation of the figures the ILC arrived at a number of only 231 tenants evicted for non-payment of rent in the first half of 1881, or what sounded even better, only one in every 1,840 tenants were evicted.[80] The RIC returns for the first half of 1881, however, showed 1,415 evictions[81] Published in July, the pamphlet was yet another attempt to illustrate that once one got beyond the commonly held

---

[78] ILC, *The Land Question, Ireland. No. XII. The Richmond Commission. Notes on Lord Carlingford's Report* (Dublin, 1881). Carlingford replaced Earl Spencer when he resigned from the commission. ILC, *The Land Question, Ireland. No. XIII. More Facts and Figures. Evictions* (Dublin, 1881).

[79] ILC, *The Land Question, Ireland. No. XIII. More Facts and Figures. Evictions,* p. 10.

[80] Ibid., p. 12.

[81] *Return (compiled from Returns made to the Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary) of cases of Eviction which have come to the knowledge of the Constabulary in each Quarter of the year ended the 31st day of December 1880, showing the Number of Families Evicted in each County in Ireland during each Quarter, the Number Readmitted as Tenants, and the Number Re-admitted as Caretakers* HC 1881 (2) lxxvii. 713.

views on landlord and tenant relations, particularly ejectments and evictions, and actually analysed the figures, one would see that Irish landlords were not receiving fair play. The ILC pointed out that the Bessborough Commission reports made clear the fact that few rent paying tenants were evicted, which was a bit of a red herring, since it removed from discussion the issue of whether or not rents were exorbitant. However, from the ILC's logic, if evictions were in fact much rarer than commonly supposed, this realisation should be proclaimed to the public and parliament:

> And yet, day after day the Land Law Bill proceeds through Committee, apparently on the assumption that no portion of the allegations made against Irish Landlords has been challenged, much less refuted; that they are the grasping tyrants and exterminators the Land League represents them to be, whom no moral obligation, no human sympathy can bind; and who can be restrained only by a special code of laws, that violates the soundest principles of economic science, and outrages the most sacred traditions of the British Parliament.[82]

There was too much momentum for an outright rejection of the bill and so efforts centred on making the best of the committee stage to round off the sharpest edges through amendments.[83] Frank Thompson has shown that there was a regional split among Irish landlords over the bill, in which Tory Ulster landlords, generally supporting the bill, sought to limit the application of the bill in areas in which tenant-right was not as prevalent and in which the bill represented a much more serious incursion to landlord's property rights. For supporting the bill, Ulster MPs were seen as self-centred, as Sir John

---

[82] ILC, *The Land Question, Ireland. No. XIII. More Facts and Figures. Evictions* (Dublin, 1881), p. 20.

[83] There were 834 notices for amendment to the bill. *Annual Register 1881*, p. 99.

Gorston, MP for Chatham, commented in July 1881: 'The Ulster landowners do not seem to me to be capable of regarding the land bill from any but a selfish point of view, and are apparently ready on every occasion to sacrifice both sound policy and common sense to their fancied interests…'.[84] The main Irish opponents of the bill, on the other hand, were Conservative MPs from the three southern provinces. Ulster landlords were seen as selfish for not determinedly opposing the bill and many Conservative Irish MPs supported the bill because they believed defeating it would have intensified the land agitation.[85]

Following the passage of the bill the ILC took stock of its efforts to influence the course of the bill's debate. At a general meeting of the ILC in September, Waterford contended that the ILC's efforts had been of great importance in giving systematic opposition to the bill and the introduction of several amendments. He also reiterated the influence exerted by the Westminster branch of the ILC as an information source at the time of the bill's debates. The public propaganda campaign maintained through the publication of numerous pamphlets on key topics in the land question had been instrumental for the English public to understand the intricacies of the land question and consequently 'the injury which might otherwise have been

---

[84] Gorst to W. H. Smith, 14 July 1881, in Alan O'Day, *The English face of Irish Nationalism* (Dublin, 1977), p. 98, cited in Francis Thompson, 'Attitudes to reform: political parties in Ulster and the Irish land bill of 1881', *IHS*, xxiv, no. 95 (1985), p. 340.

[85] Thompson, 'Attitudes to reform', pp. 333-338.

done was mitigated'.[86] That the ILC claimed to have done its best to present accurate information on landlord and tenant relations to MPs and the English and Irish public was cold comfort; they could congratulate themselves on a good effort but it is difficult to see their lobby and propaganda activities as successful in this instance.

The land law act established a land commission to fix rents and make loans to tenants seeking to purchase their holdings. If the landlord and tenant could not agree upon a rent, either could appeal to the commission to fix a rent, which was set for fifteen years. The land commission consisted of one judicial commissioner, who had the status of a high court judge, and two other commissioners.[87] Since three men could hardly deal with the thousands of rent cases expected for arbitration, they delegated their powers to assistant commissioners, who were barristers or men experienced with valuing land. Assistant commissioners were grouped into sub-commissions and sent on circuit, each sub-commission consisting of one legal assistant commissioner and two lay commissioners who were generally land agents and farmers. Usually the two lay commissioners would inspect the holdings and sit with the legal assistant commissioner. From a decision of the sub-commission there

---

[86] *The Times*, 2 Sept. 1881.

[87] The judicial commissioner was John O'Hagan, QC; the other two commissioners were Edward Falconer Litton, QC and J. E. Vernon. R. B. McDowell, 'Administration and the Public Services, 1870-1921' in W. E. Vaughan (ed.), *A New History of Ireland, vi: Ireland Under the Union, II, 1870-1921*(Oxford, 1996), p. 583.

was an appeal to the commission, and from the commission to a court of appeal. [88]

Following the passage of the land act there was reflection among landlords as to whether the ILC's time had past as an effective organisation representing the interest of Irish landlords, and whether it should merge with the other landlord defence groups. At the end of July, ILC secretary C. G. Tottenham wrote to Courtown explaining his hesitation in joining the committee of the PDA because it might have compromised the work of the ILC, but pointed out that the work of the ILC was drawing to a close. Both men were in favour of the two organisations amalgamating.[89] Kavanagh thought that the purpose of the ILC had passed, but while in London he met Waterford and some other Irish landlords who wished to keep it going for another year, to watch over the administration of the act.[90] Kavanagh also had been in favour of a merger with the PDA, fearing that it would be impossible to keep both organisations adequately funded. Although he thought the ILC did important work, he saw the PDA as the premier landlord defence group – the most 'direct and efficient' group to deal with the Land League – and suggested that most funds should go to it.[91] Merger, of the ILC, the PDA and

[88] Ibid., p. 584.

[89] Tottenham to Courtown, 23 July, 1881. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/44; same to same, 26 July 1881. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/48.

[90] Kavanagh to Dillon, 12 Oct. 1881. Clonbrock Papers NLI MS 35, 770 (1).

[91] Ibid.

the OEC, however, had been discussed and rejected in August 1881 and the ILC continued to work on behalf of landowners.[92]

Unable to secure the defeat of the land bill in parliament, the ILC sought to protect landlord interests in rent arbitration by attempting to contain the administration of the land act in the land courts. The ILC again reached out to the counties for information and the establishment of local committees in every county. Imperative to the ILC's effectiveness protecting the interests of landowners was its expansion from the central body in Dublin to the creation of local branches in the counties. The formation of local branches allowed the ILC to incorporate local gentry in the counties into the cause of landlord defence, as the central body was dominated by national advocates, MPs and peers. Much of the information on the relationship between local branches and the central branch comes from the papers of Gerald Dillon, later 4th Baron Clonbrock, who was the leading figure in landlord defense in County Galway, as founder of both the Galway branches of the ILC and the PDA.[93] Dillon had established the Galway ILC sub-committee by May 1880 and was in regular correspondence for the next three years with Walter Gyles, secretary of the ILC in Dublin.[94] In September 1881 Gyles wrote to prominent local men in counties without branches advising the formation of sub-committees and emphasised the necessity of doing so before the new land

---

[92] *The Times,* 22 Aug. 1881.

[93] Dillon also became an executive member of the Irish Landowners' Convention, formed in 1887 to protect landowners' interests and check legislation inimical to Irish landlords.

[94] Hugh D'Arcy to Dillon, 8 May 1880. Clonbrock Papers. NLI MS 35, 770 (1).

courts began to sit.[95] The ILC strategy was to present a vigorous defence of landlords in the land courts at the very first sittings. To help landlords present a strong defense, the ILC again sought its most important commodity, information: it wanted lists of all cases submitted to the land courts, with particulars on the value of the land, and a detailed assessment of the landlord's estate.[96] The local committee was to keep a record of every local case coming before the courts, recording the names of landlords and tenants, the size, location and valuation of the holding, the amount of increase or decrease in rent being sought and the decision of the court. The executive in Dublin sought to keep its finger on the pulse of the proceedings in the counties in order that, as Henry Bruen wrote to Dillon, the ILC will 'be able to appeal from what they consider a wrong decision and that they may then as far as possible prevent such a decision being adopted as a precedent and ruling.'[97]

Counsel retained by the ILC would attend each sub-commission circuit and be in daily contact with the ILC office in Dublin, to be kept informed as to points raised before, and decisions made by, assistant commissioners on the other three sub-commission circuits.[98] Counsel would be made available to landlords who were ILC members or who were recommended by the local sub-committee.[99] Each county sub-committee contributed to a central legal

---

[95] ILC circular, 13 Sept. 1881. Clonbrock Papers NLI MS 35, 770 (1).

[96] Gyles to Dillon, Nov. 1881 (date missing). Clonbrock Papers NLI MS 35, 770 (1). Attached to the letter are examples of the two forms: the 'valuator's report' and 'statement on behalf of the landlord'. If the completed forms are found they will be a great record for historians of landed estates.

[97] Bruen to Dillon, 3 Oct. 1881. Clonbrock Papers NLI MS 35, 770 (1).

[98] ILC circular, 11 Nov. 1881. Clonbrock Papers NLI MS 35, 770 (1).

[99] ILC circular, 26 Oct. 1881. Clonbrock Papers NLI MS 35, 770 (1).

fund which would in turn pay the fees for the counsel employed on circuit in that particular county. It was no trifling expense to retain a QC for a number of weeks: The MacDermot, QC, and future attorney-general for Ireland, sought a retainer of 100 guineas and the guarantee of a refresher of twelve guineas a day.[100] Plentiful subscription to the legal fund became more urgent when in early November 1881 the four sub-commissions were increased and the ILC doubled the county subscription counsel fee to £200.[101]

Colonel O'Hara, treasurer of the County Galway sub-committee, wrote to Gyles discussing which counsel to retain for the Galway circuit, and noted the importance of retaining well-known and formidable men as a show of force before the assistant commissioners, whom he clearly held in low esteem: 'the moral effect of the presence and experienced ability of [men of] such standing on the minds of inferior men clothed with extraordinary powers will have great weight and prevent much arrogant use of their power.'[102] Many landowners in the county wanted The MacDermot, QC, but O'Hara wanted T. E. Webb, QC, ILC executive member, the author of several ILC pamphlets and law professor at Trinity College, Dublin: 'I myself fancy the sort of man we want to put a little wholesome dread into the hearts of these puffed up land judges would be found in Dr. Webb'.[103] O'Hara's depictions of the

---

[100] Gyles to O'Hara, 18 Nov. 1881. Clonbrock Papers NLI MS 35, 770 (1).

[101] Gyles to Dillon, 7 Nov. 1881. Clonbrock Papers NLI MS 35, 770 (1).

[102] (Copy of) Col. O'Hara to Gyles, 15 Nov. 1881. Clonbrock Papers NLI MS 35, 770 (3).

[103] Ibid. William S. Bird, who was not a QC, was eventually retained for the Galway circuit in December 1881 for a retainer 25 guineas. Gyles to Dillon, 25 Nov. 1881. Clonbrock Papers NLI MS 35, 770 (1); *Thom's Directory*, 1881.

assistant commissioners as men with inferior minds and being 'puffed up land judges' conveys the sense of indignation many landowners felt towards the entire rent arbitration process and which became focused on the assistant commissioners.

By early November the tactic of retaining counsel was judged to be effective.[104] Optimism, however, soon faded and by December there were loud grumbles that the ILC had to do more to voice its dissatisfaction of the administration of the land act, since the arbitration of rents effectively meant the reduction of rents. Dillon forwarded to the central ILC a resolution passed by the County Galway sub-committee on 30 November: '[that] whatever the intentions of the framers of that measure may have been, its working appears to involve the absolute confiscation of property, by the reduction of rents, and that this reduction is conducted not on any definite or scientific basis, but arbitrarily according to the more or less accurate impressions of the s[ub] commissioners'.[105]

The first government return on judicial rents covered all rents fixed, by both civil bills courts and by the sub-commission, up to the end of January 1882, and clearly showed what Irish landlords had complained of in the Dublin and London press over the previous two months: 'fair' rents meant reduced rents.

---

[104] ILC circular, 2 Nov. 1881. Clonbrock Papers NLI MS 35, 770 (1). Gyles wrote to Dillon: 'Our Counsel at Belfast raised a most important point in the first case'. 3 Nov. 1881. Clonbrock Papers NLI MS 35,770 (1).

[105] (Copy of) Dillon to Gyles, 1 Dec. 1881. Clonbrock Papers NLI MS 35, 770 (1).

Table 13. Judicial rents fixed by sub-commissions and civil bills courts up to 28 January, 1882 [106]

Province	Number of rents fixed	Acreage	Tenement Valuation £	Former Rent £	Judicial Rent £	Amount of reduction %
Ulster	530	14,282	9,800	12,958	9,796	25
Leinster	258	11,595	6,618	9,620	7,541	22
Connaught	221	5,033	1,877	2,866	2,050	28
Munster	304	11,892	7,554	11,997	9,199	23
Ireland	**1,313**	**42,802**	**25,849**	**37,441**	**28,586**	**25**

On average, rents were reduced by a quarter; no small decrease on paper but modest enough given the fall in agricultural prices. A second consideration to take into account is the fact that the reductions only affected 42,802 acres which, taking the average ILC member, only represented the size of three estates. It would take a long time to get around to adjudicating rents across the whole country of twenty million acres; it took over twenty years to get through over ten million acres.[107] However, it was the principle of the reductions that was the point for landowners.

The unofficial reports of judicial rents published in the newspapers roused Irish landowners' indignation, and in mid-December the ILC decided a public, unified, statement on the administration of the land act was imperative.

[106] *Return according to provinces and counties of judicial rents fixed by subcommissions and civil bills courts as notified to the Irish Land Commission up to and including the 28th day of January, 1882,* HC [c. 3120], lvi. 1.

[107] *A Return showing according to Provinces and Counties the number of cases in which Judicial Rents have been fixed by all the methods provided by the Land Law Acts for a First Statutory Term, during the period from the 22nd August, 1881 to the 31st day of December, 1902; also a Summary of the Acreages, Former Rents, and the Judicial Rents of the Holdings, and the Percentages of Reductions made in the Former Rents.* 1903 (91) lvii. 374.

Dillon wrote to Gyles on 13 December reinforcing the importance of pressing the landlords' case publicly that the sub-commissions were unjustly reducing rents across the board, arguing that some unified stance had to be made sooner than later, because the head commissioners might modify decisions on points of law, but would unlikely do so on the value of rents.[108] The ILC decided on a large meeting of landowners be held in Dublin, 3 January, 1882, under the chairmanship of the duke of Abercorn, 'to elicit a general expression of opinion as to the manner in which the Land Law Act is being administered'.[109] Preparations for what was to be a very large and representative meeting were, however, disrupted by public notice given by Standish O'Grady, who wrote for the Dublin *Daily Express* at the time, and who had proposed his own meeting for the same purpose to be held on 22 December in Dublin. The ILC met with O'Grady on 15 December to try and persuade him to abandon his plans – pointing out that the ILC meeting would be larger and that they had secured the duke of Abercorn, a former chief secretary of Ireland, to preside whereas O'Grady had the lesser earl of Desart.[110] The fact that two large meetings to be held within eleven days of each other in Dublin, and each of which purported to represent the voice of landowners in Ireland, was divisive and caused confusion. Lieutenant-Colonel J. A. Daly, a County Galway landowner wrote to Dillon complaining of the

---

[108] (Copy of) Dillon to Gyles, 13 Dec. 1881. Clonbrock Papers NLI MS 35, 770 (1).

[109] Gyles to Dillon, 14 Dec. 1881; ILC circular, 16 Dec. 1881. Clonbrock Papers NLI MS 35, 770 (1).

[110] Gyles to Dillon, 16 Dec. 1881. Clonbrock Papers NLI MS 35, 770 (1).

actions of O'Grady and the confusion it caused him, as he thought O'Grady's meeting was connected with the Galway ILC sub-committee. He told Dillon that he recently received a letter from 'a Mr. S. O'Grady' to attend a meeting of landlords in Dublin, and promised to give O'Grady a sharp rebuke: 'I shall withdraw my name if I can find Mr. O'Grady's letter, and tell him what I think of his very uncalled for meddling in a business of this sort'.[111]

Undeterred, O'Grady held his meeting at the Rotunda and drew 500 landowners from across the country. While it was more well-attended than could have been expected, the irritation caused by the meeting as a pre-emptory one was evident, as there was more than one attempt at the meeting to postpone discussion of any significant resolutions until the 3 January meeting.[112] *The Times* clearly viewed O'Grady's meeting as valuable but ultimately intrusive in its attempt to express the unified, public voice of Irish landowners, which was achieved by the ILC meeting.[113]

The ILC meeting, held on 3 January, 1882, was, according to *The Times'* favourable reporting, 'one of the largest and most influential and representative assemblies ever held in this city'.[114] The Dublin *Daily Express* asserted that 'nothing like yesterday's demonstration, for numbers, weight, and the dignity and social eminence of those present combined, has been witnessed in Dublin since the Irish Parliament ceased to be'.[115] Held at the

---

[111] Daly to Dillon, [c. 17] Dec. 1881. Clonbrock Papers NLI MS 35, 770 (3).
[112] *The Times*, 23 Dec. 1881.
[113] Ibid.
[114] Ibid., 4 Jan. 1882.
[115] *Daily Express* (Dublin), 4 Jan. 1882.

Exhibition Palace (the current National Concert Hall) under the chairmanship of the duke of Abercorn, the meeting drew an estimated 3,000-4,000 men and women, among them six marquesses, twenty-two earls, eight viscounts, twenty-five barons, as well as 'a very large number of baronets, knights, deputy-lieutenants, magistrates, clergymen, members of Parliament, and others representing the rank and educated intelligence as well as property of the country'.[116] This was a show of class solidarity and landed interest rare for landowners in Ireland, representing probably a quarter of landowners with estates of 500 acres or more. The meeting's purpose was clearly stated by Abercorn: to denounce the administration of the land act by the sub-commissioners. Particular exasperation was directed at the valuations. Abercorn argued that the wholesale reduction of rents indicated that the sub-commissioners were 'endeavouring to buy off the Land League agitation by the sacrifice of the landlords' income'.[117] He also complained that many of the sub-commissioners had no practical experience valuing land, but regardless of this 'undertake to do in two or three hours what professional valuators of the highest reputation would scarcely do in as many days'. Hasty valuations were made 'in the depth of winter, the ground partially covered with snow, often the lands saturated with moisture, and the crops blackened and turned with the frost'.[118] Colonel King-Harman complained of valuators who had stuck a

[116] *The Times*, 4 Jan. 1882.

[117] *The Morning* [Post?], 4 Jan. 1882. Newspaper clipping in Clonbrock Papers, NLI MS 19,666.

[118] *The Times*, 4 Jan. 1882.

knife into some rich grazing land and smelled as if it were cheese.[119] With an air of conspiracy, Kavangh suggested that the government had given secret instructions to sub-commissioners to obtain general reduction of rents.[120]

What most critics of the administration of the land act complained of, besides the fact that rents were generally reduced, was that there was no clear rationale behind the decisions. Lord Donoughmore, active in both the ILC and the PDA, successfully moved in the House of Lords on 17 February 1882 for a select committee to inquire into the working of the land act, and the ILC contacted sub-committees seeking names of witnesses to appear before the lords' committee.[121] Gyles wrote to Dillon that the kind of evidence the ILC sought from witnesses was 'to show the practical effect of the reduction of rent under the Courts, upon a large class of Irish landowners'. The best witnesses would be those whose properties received large rent reductions and consequently, whose margin of mortgages and family charges 'have been nearly swept away'.[122] The first report of the select committee, dated 22 April 1882, highlighted the 'great uncertainty as to the principles on which the tribunal proceed'. There was no reason given for the decisions and thus no guarantee that all the sub-commissions were acting on the same principles; the select committee, therefore, recommended that the assistant commissioners should follow the rule of other judicial proceedings, where the judge stated the

---

[119] Ibid.

[120] *The Farmers' Gazette*, 7 Jan. 1882. Note that *The Irish Farmers' Gazette* was renamed *The Farmers' Gazette* in 1882.

[121] *Hansard 3*, cclxvi (266), pp. 889-903.

[122] Gyles to Dillon, 3 June 1882. Clonbrock Papers NLI MS 35, 770 (2).

reason for his decision. The point was also made that, without a clear statement of principles, it was far less likely that landlords and tenants would be able to settle upon a rent outside of court.[123]

Corroboration by the select committee of Irish landowners' complaints against the administration of the land act, specifically the principles guiding arbitration of judicially fixed rents before the various sub-commissions, changed nothing. Neither had the two indignation meetings held in Dublin in December and January. It is difficult to judge how effective the retention of counsel was for ILC landlords before the land courts. The retention of counsel who appeared in dozens of cases and who had the benefit of liasing with the central office in Dublin to receive advice on points of law and tactic surely was a great advantage for landlords before the commission. Judicial rents, however, over the next twenty years were consistently reduced by the commission.

[123] *First Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Land Law (Ireland) Act; together with the proceedings of the committee, minutes of evidence, and appendix.* HC 1882 (249) xi. 1, pp. iii, v.

Table 14. Judicial Rents fixed by all the methods provided by the Land Law Acts for a First Statutory Term, during the period from 22 August, 1881 to the 31 December, 1902[124]

Province	Number of cases	Acreage	Former Rent £	Judicial Rent £	Percentage reduction
Ulster	150,767	3,333,739	2,189,955	1,755,051	19.8
Leinster	54,371	2,274,735	1,903,062	1,514,112	20.4
Connaught	76,664	1,729,579	857,417	676,035	21.1
Munster	60,217	2,890,690	1,980,732	1,538,358	22.3
Ireland	342,019	10,228,744	6,931,168	5,483,558	20.8

The effect of the land commission arbitrating rents was greater than it appears by the judicial rents lodged in court motivating many landlords to voluntarily reduce their rents. K. Buckley has suggested that a large percentage of landlords may have made voluntary reductions in addition to the first term judicial rents to dissuade their tenants from seeking to have a second term judicial rent fixed. 'If this is so' Buckley concluded, 'it means that the total financial losses sustained by Irish landlords as a result of the rent-fixing acts are greater than those shown in statistics of judicial rents'.[125]

It is difficult to see what more Irish landlords could have done to protect their public interest and clear their names. Of course they could have

[124] *A Return showing according to Provinces and Counties the number of cases in which Judicial Rents have been fixed by all the methods provided by the Land Law Acts for a First Statutory Term, during the period from the 22nd August, 1881 to the 31st day of December, 1902; also a Summary of the Acreages, Former Rents, and the Judicial Rents of the Holdings, and the Percentages of Reductions made in the Former Rents.* 1903 (91) lvii. 374.

[125] K. Buckley, 'The Fixing of Rents by Agreement in Co. Galway, 1881-85', *IHS*, 7: 27 (Mar. 1951), p. 179.

stopped evicting tenants. But the strongly held belief in the sanctity of property rights was not given up lightly. The intrusions into property rights evident in the land law act would not have been accepted if they were attempted to be applied to other landowners in the United Kingdom at this time.[126] The failure of Irish landlords to win their case in the court of public opinion was partly a result of their strategy and tactics. They assumed that statistical data and facts, once placed in an open forum, would sway public opinion. The manipulation of eviction statistics allowed them to claim that evictions were, proportionate to the number of tenant farmers, quite low. This was central to their case against calls for legislation to restrain landowners.

Part of the problem with the pamphlet campaign was that it tended to preach to the converted. Full of Latinisms and references to classical literature, the pamphlets were aimed at the classically educated, a public who read *The Times* and the Dublin *Daily Express*. The pamphlets did, however, provide a ready source of statistics and lines of argument for landowners in both houses of parliament during the debate against the compensation for disturbance and land law bills.

Although unsuccessful in much of its campaign to sway public opinion and prevent legislative incursions into property rights, the ILC was extremely important because it drew landlords from throughout the country together in a

[126] This would change within five years with the Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Act, which gave crofters similar advantages of 'fair' rents and security of tenure to Irish tenant farmers under the 1881 land law act. 49 & 50 Vict. c. 29 (25 June 1886).

public defence association. It showed that the landed class – a declining elite, but an elite nonetheless – could combine to protect its own interest. While the ILC was mostly engaged in a public forum in defending landowners as a class, two other more practical organisation, the Property Defence Association and the Orange Emergency Committee, undertook a more vigorous defence of individual landlords and was very effective in combating the Land League.

Chapter 6

Landlord defence groups: Property Defence Association and the Orange Emergency Committee

'The majesty the law was defied by the Land League, which would have rendered it a farce but for our combination in defence of it'.

The earl of Courtown to the editor, *The Times* 24 Dec. 1881.

'By combination alone can these difficulties be met, and by combination the landlords have attempted to meet them'.

Lord Ardilaun to the editor, *The Times*, 8 Dec. 1881

The deeds of Maxwell and Goddard and others, we know them here,
In defence of the laws of England they were cowards who knew no fear,
Holding their lives as nothing in such terrible days as these,
While the Government *bravely* follows with protests and trembling knees

BJM, *Days of the Land League* (London, 1882).

At a banquet held in his honour at Leeds on 7 October 1881, W. E. Gladstone gave a speech which infuriated landowners throughout the United Kingdom. According to the Prime Minister, the landed class in Ireland had frozen in the wake of the land agitation: 'The upper class, the landowners, are silent or are refugees, and their power is gone ... A general cowardice seems to prevail among all the classes who possess property, and the Government is expected to preserve peace with no moral force behind it'.[1] A flurry of letters from irate landowners to the editors of the Dublin *Daily Express*, the *Irish Times*, and *The Times* followed. Lord Ardilaun wished to remind readers of Gladstone's

[1] *The Times* 8 Oct. 1881. Most historians who refer to Gladstone's words here fail to note that he is quoting an unnamed source. His words are preceded by the statement: 'I will give you one more brief quotation from one who writes thus upon the condition of Ireland'.

record in upholding the pillars of the Irish landed class: 'Surely Gladstone is the last man who should thus attack and traduce the Irish landlords and loyalists, he who has aided to annihilate their political power, then impoverished them, by spoliation of their Church, and thirdly thrown a large portion of their property as a sop to Cerberus, by an extreme Land Bill'.[2] He went on to point out the effectiveness of two landlord defence groups 'to aid in upholding and enforcing law': the Property Defence Association and the Orange Emergency Committee. 'At this moment about 500 men are employed by these associations in saving the crops of those who have been "Boycotted," in attending sheriffs' sales, and serving processes – in fact, in every way assisting in carrying out the law, which has been paralyzed by the action of the Land League'.[3] To many landowners it was the ultimate betrayal to be accused of cowardice and inactivity by the very man who was systematically eroding the basis of their pre-eminent social, political and economic position in Irish society.

Although landlords were slow to react collectively to the challenge of the Land League once they did they provided a concerted defence of what they believed held Irish society together: law and order to protect life and the sanctity of property rights. Landowners developed effective collective strategies and organisations which enabled them to counter Land League challenges. The Property Defence Association (PDA) and the Orange Emergency Committee (OEC) were novel organisations for the landlord cause

[2] Ardilaun to the editor. *The Times* 13 Oct. 1881.
[3] Ibid.

and were integral to the defence of the landed class during the land war. From December 1880 to the land agitation's implosion in 1882, they checked the unbridled power of the Land League and illustrated that the landed class could effectively combine to protect their interests.

While the land agitation might be said to have dated either from the formation of the National Land League of Mayo (16 August 1879) or the Irish National Land League (21 October 1879), anything resembling an extra-parliamentary collective response from landowners, beyond the propaganda and lobby activities of the Irish Land Committee, did not begin until the end of 1880. The initial landlord reaction from the autumn of 1879 to the autumn of 1880 could be described as a profound scepticism; scepticism of the deteriorating material conditions of their tenants and their tenants' ability to pay rent, and dubiety that the land agitation under the Land League posed any serious or long term challenge to their financial solvency or their privileged place in the rural society and economy. This scepticism was largely reinforced by the editorial bias of conservative newspapers such as *The Times* and the *Irish Times,* which told landlords what they wanted to hear.[4] However, from the autumn of 1880, landowners began to clearly see the power and influence of the land agitation around them. On 25 September 1880, the body of Viscount Mountmorres, a small County Galway landlord, was found riddled with bullets on the road after he had attended a meeting of magistrates. Mountmorres' murder, and the fact that it remained unsolved, sent a mild shock wave

[4] Robert W. Kirkpatrick, 'Landed Estates in Mid-Ulster and the Irish Land War 1879-85', p. 12.

through the landed classes in England and Ireland, though it took a vivid imagination to see in one murder a planned extermination of landlords throughout the country. Although Mountmorres' murder was a shock, it was the plight of the earl of Erne's land agent Captain Boycott at Lough Mask, County Mayo, which girded many landlords into combining for mutual assistance and shaped the two most successful examples of landlord collective action during the land war.

The Boycott Expedition

Captain Cunningham Charles Boycott, a retired army officer from Norfolk, had been the agent of the earl of Erne's Lough Mask, County Mayo estate since 1873 and had also been the estate's largest tenant farmer, renting 500 acres.[5] The dispute between Boycott and Erne's tenants which erupted in the autumn of 1880 was based on personal animosity, as Boycott ran the estate by a strict disciplinary code with fines imposed for minor offences. In August 1880 Erne volunteered a ten percent abatement in the half year's rent which was refused by the tenants who demanded a twenty-five percent reduction. Haggling over abatements continued for a month and resulted in ejectment proceedings being initiated.[6] On 22 September process server David Shears was attacked by a group of tenants from the estate, pelted with stones and

[5] Erne's Lough Mask estate was not valuable, with a rental of only £430. Gerard Moran, 'The Origins and Development of Boycotting' *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society*, vol. xxx (1985-86), p. 52.

[6] Norman Dunbar Palmer, *The Irish Land League Crisis*, (New Haven, 1940), pp. 198-99.

mud, and was forced to flee after serving only three processes. Two days later, in retaliation for the initiation of ejectment proceedings, another combination of local tenants forced Boycott's labourers to leave his employment.[7] Thus began Boycott's ostracism. The campaign was a local operation organised by the Ballinrobe branch of the Land League under its president, Father John O'Malley.[8] With no labourers to help tend to the crops and livestock, and the denial of all services by local shopkeepers and artisans, the future of Boycott's large farming operation was in jeopardy. He and his wife toiled in the fields but could not make a dent in the substantial crop of potatoes, turnips, and corn to be harvested.

Boycott's plight received national press attention by 2 October 1880,[9] and his letter to the editor of *The Times* describing his predicament was printed on 18 October.[10] The 29 October edition of the Dublin *Daily Express* printed a letter proposing the establishment of a fund to raise £500 to hire labourers to save Boycott's crops, and by 3 November a relief fund was established to take public subscriptions.[11] Erne himself thoroughly supported Boycott and the fund, remarking to W. A. Day, the Boycott Fund Committee organiser, that 'I always found him doing his duty by me & my tenants & they never complained of him any way until lately when they brought most frivolous

---

[7] Moran, 'The Origins and Development of Boycotting', pp. 53-54.

[8] Palmer, *The Irish Land League Crisis*, p. 200 n. 12. O'Malley coined the term 'boycott' in an interview with American journalist James Redpath.

[9] *The Times*, 2 Oct. 1880.

[10] Ibid., 18 Oct. 1880.

[11] Joyce Marlow, *Captain Boycott and the Irish* (London, 1973), pp. 151-152.

Charges against him'.[12] Two groups of labourers, one predominantly from County Monaghan and the other from County Cavan, left for Lough Mask on 11 November as the 'Boycott Relief Expedition', under the command of the solicitor Norris Goddard and former army officer Captain Somerset Maxwell, the two men who would later direct the PDA. The fifty labourers, reportedly Orangemen, were all given revolvers for their protection but were warned to conceal them to avoid initiating a confrontation while in the hostile community. *The Times* described the Ulster labourers as 'men of the agricultural class, not unworthy in physique and spirit to represent the loyal yeoman of Ulster ... men of peace, but not altogether unaccustomed to warlike exercises...'.[13] Throughout its coverage of the Boycott expedition *The Times* referred to the labourers as Orangemen. Describing the local sentiment at Ballinrobe upon the arrival of the labourers, the paper noted a 'bitter hatred of the Orangemen, and a feeling of resentment at their intrusion'.[14] That the labourers were not Orangemen, or at least were not organised as an expedition of Orangemen *per se,* is suggested from the lack of an acknowledgement in the December 1880 report of the GOLI. A resolution was adopted at the half-yearly meeting of the GOLI expressing 'deep admiration of the devoted and brave conduct of the Leaders and Men of the Boycott Relief Expedition' but it

[12] Erne to Day, 12 Nov. 1879. PRONI D3681/Acc14820. Erne personally contributed £200 to the fund. Erne to Day, 28 Feb. 1880. PRONI D3681/Acc14820.

[13] *The Times*, 11 Nov. 1880.

[14] Ibid., 13 Nov. 1880.

did not identify the men as Orangemen, which if they were, would certainly have been a feather in the Lodge's hat to publicise.[15]

Special arrangements were made for the expedition: the Midland Great Western Railway provided a pilot engine to precede the train transporting the labourers to Claremorris, and at the lord lieutenant's request, a strong military escort met the train upon its arrival.[16] Temporarily living within a hostile community necessitated a large amount of supplies for the men of the expedition because they could not rely upon the goodwill of the community. The proprietor of the Dublin *Daily Express* equipped the expedition with the substantial provisions:

> 2 sacks of oatmeal, 3 barrels and 1 sack of biscuits, 3 cwt of tinned meat in cans, 2 ½ cwt of bacon, 2 large hams, 1 large cheese, 25lb butter, 25 lb tea, 1 cwt of sugar, 25 tins of Swiss condensed milk, 25 of concentrated coffee and milk, 6 drums of salt, 30 lb tobacco, 14 gallons of whiskey, 6 stoves, 2 cooking stoves ... blankets, towels, soap, candles, tins for drinking, plates, knives and forks, with carvers, flare lanterns, dark lanterns, a gross of lucifer matches, four foghorns for signalling purposes, 100 empty sacks...[17].

The labourers camped in tents on Boycott's muddy land and eventually did harvest his crops, though at great expense to the tax payer, since the government supplied the protection of hundreds of constabulary and soldiers.

---

[15] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, held in the Orange Hall, York St., Dublin, on Wednesday, the 1st, and Thursday, the 2nd days of December, 1880*, p. 26.

[16] Secretary of MGW Railway to T. H. Burke. CSORP/1880/27876; Burke memo, 10 Nov. 1879. CSORP/1880/27699.

[17] Marlow, *Captain Boycott and the Irish*, p. 177.

It is estimated that the Boycott expedition cost £3,500, whereas Boycott's crops were worth a tenth of that figure.[18]

The Boycott affair is significant in the land war in general and motivating landlords to collective defence in particular, as it showed the power of collective ostracism as practised by the Lough Mask community in rendering a farmer practically helpless. Landowners too were impressed by the local power of the Land League and soon came to the realisation that a tenant combination could only be met and defeated by a landlord combination. Many key lessons were learned in the Boycott expedition that would become standard practice with the PDA and OEC, in particular the arming of labourers or those employed in landlord defence, the suitable provisioning of caretakers, and the transportation of goods beyond locally boycotted markets. On 23 November 1880, army wagons transported Boycott's newly-thrashed corn to Cong, County Mayo, en route for sale in Dublin.[19] Not least, the Boycott expedition was important simply because it was successful, although at a great cost. However, this was indicative of the landlord class, for whom principle, especially in regards to the sanctity of property and freedom of contract, were close to the heart. This is an important point that should not be lost sight of in assessing the actions of landlords during the land war. The principle at stake was what was important

---

[18] Bew, *Land and the National Question in Ireland*, p. 133.

[19] Marlow, *Captain Boycott and the Irish*, p. 207. The government had to sanction the use of army wagons for the purpose which Forster did on 18 Nov. Sir Thomas Steele, general commander of the forces in Ireland, clearly did not want the army service corps involved in the matter. Note of Forster, 18 Nov. 1880. CSORP/1880/28281; Steele to Forster, 16 Nov. 1880. CSORP/1880/2821.

and this was also evident in the lengths to which landowners would go to have summonses, processes, and decrees served and executed under police protection where necessary. The importance of principle, especially in respect to property rights, helps explain the extent to which the landlord defence movement was supported in England by people without Irish estates. The Boycott expedition was a one-off event but prompted many landlords to consider a permanent defence group.

Gladstone himself privately wondered why landlords had not combined for mutual defense and whether they would need to be prompted to do so. Writing to Forster in December 1880 concerning the highly publicised troubles of boycotted County Cork landlord William Bence Jones in shipping his livestock, Gladstone wondered if some Irish landlords 'might be moved – as they do not move themselves – to consider some defensive combination … Is it really true that all the men of property and creditors in a country are so powerless in the face of so much daring that they can do nothing except call for extra national, which will be represented as anti-national, help?'[20]

Property Defence Association

By the autumn of 1880 there was a growing strain of paranoia among landowners, as evident by the Wexford magistrate John Pounden's letter to James George Henry Stopford, 5th earl of Courtown, and PDA president, in

[20] (copy of) Gladstone to Forster, 18 Dec. 1880. Gladstone Papers, BL ADD 44158 fol. 76.

which Pounden predicted a 'regular system of boycotting everyone – connected or not with land – who does not join the Land League' to begin on 1 January'.[21] This universal campaign never did materialise but the fact that such a discourse of fear was growing in private and public forums girded many landowners to move beyond their initial denial that the agitation was growing and would neither simply go away, nor, be rooted out by government legislation. Gladstone's new administration, after all, had allowed the government's special powers relating to arrest and arms control to lapse in June 1880.

Following shortly after the successful Boycott expedition was the formation of the ultimately most influential landlord defence group, the PDA, founded in Dublin on 6 December 1880.[22] The group was initiated by mainly southern landlords already meeting in Dublin with the ILC. Following an ILC meeting on 2 December 1880, an assembly was convened at the Kildare Street Club and measures were adopted to submit to a larger meeting to be held for the defence of property in Ireland.[23] A policy of secrecy ensued throughout the month of December, and the PDA only became public at a meeting on 11 January 1881.[24]

---

[21] Pounden to Courtown, 11 Dec. 1880. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/2.

[22] Earl of Courtown's journal, 6 Dec. 1880. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. 11183/v. 17; *The Times*, 1 Nov. 1881.

[23] Courtown's journal, 2 Dec. 1880. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. 11183/v.17.

[24] *The Times* 1 Nov. 1881.

Who supported the PDA?

The issue of initial secrecy raises an interesting question about the commitment of individual landowners, or those in solidarity with landed proprietors, in being publicly linked to the PDA. Normally, organisations funded by public subscription printed the names and often the amount of money subscribed in a public format, such as by pamphlet or press release, and as the PDA was later to do in December 1881.[25] However, from the beginning there was reluctance by many subscribers to have their name publicly associated with the group. Edward Guinness wrote to the earl of Courtown at the end of December 1880 advising Courtown that his name could not be publicly connected with the PDA because 'of my business being so peculiarly open to reprisals'.[26] At the end of January 1881, Lord Rosse withdrew permission to have his name published, making his case that, 'I feel convinced that the publication of names will do us no good. We want greater unanimity of opinion of landowners and more determination to stand together above all'.[27] Rosse's logic is curious since it is not clear that anonymity would evince unanimity. In September 1881 the marquess of Waterford wrote to Courtown advising him to list Waterford's contribution as a subscriber under

[25] PDA, *Annual Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 20th November, 1881. Also a List of Subscribers* (Dublin, 1881), pp. 9-23.

[26] Guinness to Courtown, 31 Dec. 1880. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/5.

[27] Rosse to Courtown, 26 Jan. 1880. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/15.

the pseudonym 'a friend', and went even further, warning Courtown, 'do not mention my subscription to anyone'.[28]

Lord Waterford, a large landowner with 35,000 acres, was considered a 'good' landlord and so it is not clear why he, and others like him, were so adamant in keeping their names off the printed subscription list.[29] As he was the chair of the ILC, perhaps he wished to keep public knowledge of his participation in the PDA separate and private. There was, also, of course, the matter of the threatening letters sent to Waterford in September 1880, for his prominent role in the defeat of the compensation for disturbance bill in the House of Lords.[30] The on-going debate among many landowners concerning the publication of names suggests that many would more gladly have given their money than their names to the cause, perhaps fearing reprisals or unwanted bad press. As the earl of Donoughmore wrote to Forster concerning a landlord deputation to the lord lieutenant at Dublin Castle in October 1880, 'The necessity of making such a communication a private one will, no doubt, be apparent to you, owing to the very great personal risk which many gentlemen would undergo should their names appear in connection with any public memorial'.[31] The public support of many of the titled landowners

---

[28] Waterford to Courtown, 14 Sept. 1881. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/60.

[29] By 1882 Waterford allowed his name to appear as a subscriber. PDA, *Mansion House Fund. Reports Read at a Meeting of the Committee, On November 7th, 1882.* (London, 1882). For Waterford as a landlord see Finlay Dun, *Landlords and Tenants in Ireland* (London, 1881), pp. 43-53.

[30] Owen Slacke, RM, to Burke, 13 Sept. 1880. CSORP/1880/22436.

[31] Donoughmore to Forster, 8 Oct. 1880, 'Letters to Mr. Forster on the State of the Country'. (Bodleian Library, Harcourt Papers, W.V.H. 17/2), cited in Francis

was particularly desirous in giving prestige and authority to the organisation, which it eventually received.[32]

Similarly to the study of ILC members in chapter five, one can create a profile of PDA members using the December 1881 published list of PDA subscriptions in conjunction with *Thom's Directory*, U. H. Hussey de Burgh, John Bateman's lists of landowners, and the 1876 parliamentary return on landowners in Ireland.[33] The list of subscribers up to November 1881 was far greater than that of the ILC subscription list so a sample was taken from the 1,604 PDA subscriptions. A benchmark of a £5 subscription was chosen for this sample, which was suitable for two reasons: the first was that a £5 subscription was the PDA's basis for full membership and the right to vote at meetings, and the second was that the £5 level demarcated a large section of subscribers for whom information such as estate holdings, club affiliation, colleges attended as well as date of birth, was most likely to be available. Subscriptions from a group such as an office of land agents, or from PDA

Thompson, 'The Landed Classes, the Orange Order and the Anti-League Campaign in Ulster 1880-81, *Eire-Ireland* (Spring, 1987), p. 104.

[32] PDA, *Annual Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 20th November, 1881*, pp. 9-23.

[33] PDA, *Annual Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 20th November, 1881. Also a List of Subscribers* (Dublin, 1881); *Thom's Directory*, 1881, 1890; John Bateman, *The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1883); repr. with an introduction by David Springer (Leicester, 1971); U. H. Hussey de Burgh, *The Landowners of Ireland: an alphabetical list of the owners of estates of 500 acres or £500 valuation and upwards in Ireland, with the acreage and valuation in each county* (Dublin, [1878?]); *Copy 'of "a Return of the Names of Proprietors and the Area and Valuation of All Properties in the Several Counties in Ireland, Held in Fee or Perpetuity, or on Long Leases at Chief Rents", Prepared for the Use of Her Majesty's Government...'* HC 1876 (412), lxxx. 395.

branch associations, such as the Abbeyleix, Queen's County, were excluded from the sample.

From the full subscriptions database of 1,604 subscribers there were 1,009 subscriptions of £5 and higher. The eight branch associations were removed, as were the seventy-eight anonymous subscriptions and the one group subscription, leaving a sample database of 922 individuals. Of these 922 individuals seventy (or 7.6%) were women, twenty-four (or 2.6%) were clergymen,[34] and 157 (or 17%) were peers or a member of a peerage family. Of the 157 individuals in the peer group only seven were identifiably catholic,[35] not a high number though it is difficult without delving into the biography of each peer family to know precisely how many families were catholic. Clearly the majority of peers in the sample, at least, were protestant. To briefly examine this small catholic sub group, the median estate size was 6,281 acres and the median valuation was £5,092; regionally these catholic peers had six estates in Leinster, six in Connaught, three in Munster and one in Ulster. Their total subscription to the PDA was £48 and median subscription was £5.

---

[34] Using the clerical lists in *Thom's Directory, The Irish Church Directory for 1881,* and *Crockford's Clerical Directory*, twenty-one clergymen were as Anglican (fourteen of whom were identified as Church of Ireland and seven as Church of England) and three could not be positively identified. Taking the subscription list as a whole there were fifty-six Anglican clergymen (forty-five of whom were Church of Ireland and eleven who were Church of England) and eleven clergymen whose denomination could not be determined, often because of the fact that only one initial of the first name was provided in the subscription list.

[35] Canon Keogh, *The Irish Catholic Directory* (Dublin, 1880). The catholic peers were: Sir Henry Barron; Lord Bellew; Lord De Freyne; Sir Gerald Fitzgerald, Viscount Gormanston; the earl of Granard; and Lord Louth.

To return to the larger PDA members sample of 922 individuals, there was a total subscription of £12,513 10*s.* and a median subscription of £5. Of the 922 subscribers, estate information was ascertainable for 426 individuals, club membership for 270 individuals, the alma mater for 212 individuals, and the date of birth for 194 individuals, thus providing a substantial amount of data for prosopography of Irish landlords in the later Victorian period. The total subscription of this subgroup of 426 individuals was £8,337 and a median subscription of £10.

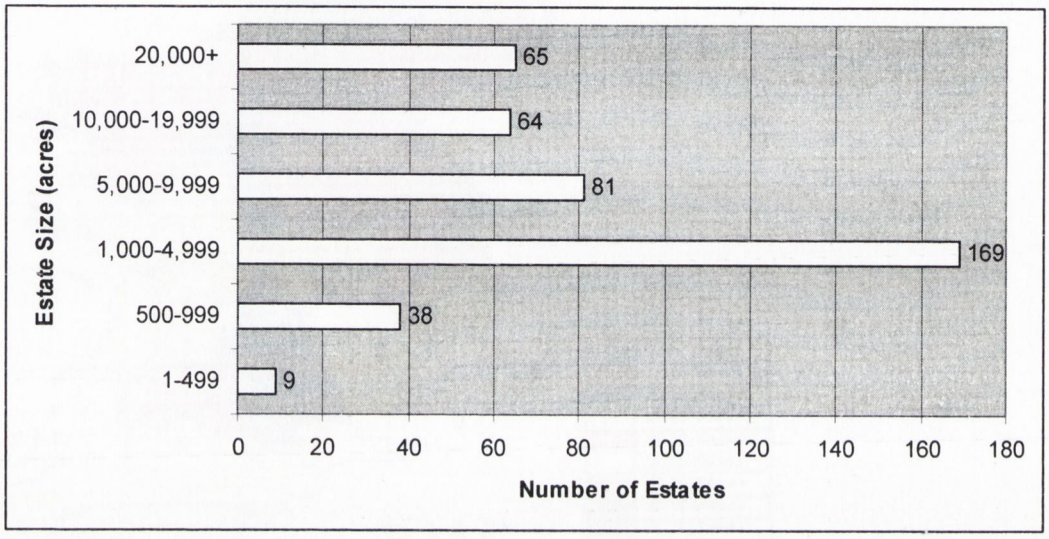
Like the ILC, the PDA was a diverse group of landowners, from Samuel Law who owned 126 acres in County Down valued at £562, to the marquess of Lansdowne who owned 121, 349 acres in counties Dublin, Kerry, King's, Limerick, Meath and Queen's, valued at £32,342. The total acreage for the 426 individuals (which is also the total acreage for the whole 922 individuals) was 4,626,672 acres with a valuation of £2,513,917, representing over one quarter of the land of Ireland and one fifth of the national rental.[36] The median estate size was 4,618 acres and median valuation was £2,756, lower than the median estate size and valuation of ILC subscribers, which was 7,198 acres and £4,061. Removing the peer from the non-peer PDA members reduces the median estate size to 3,147 acres and the median valuation to £1,907, not a significant decrease.

---

[36] A national rental of £12.1 million is taken from Vaughan's estimate of the national rental in 1881. See Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, Appendix 9: 'Agricultural Output, Rents, Potatoes, and the Cost of Labour, 1850-1886'. The acreage of Ireland is taken to be 20,327,764 from the 1880 *Agricultural Statistics*, p. 687.

The following graph presents the distribution of estate sizes of the 426 PDA members for whom information was available.

Figure 5. Distribution of PDA members' estates by acreage

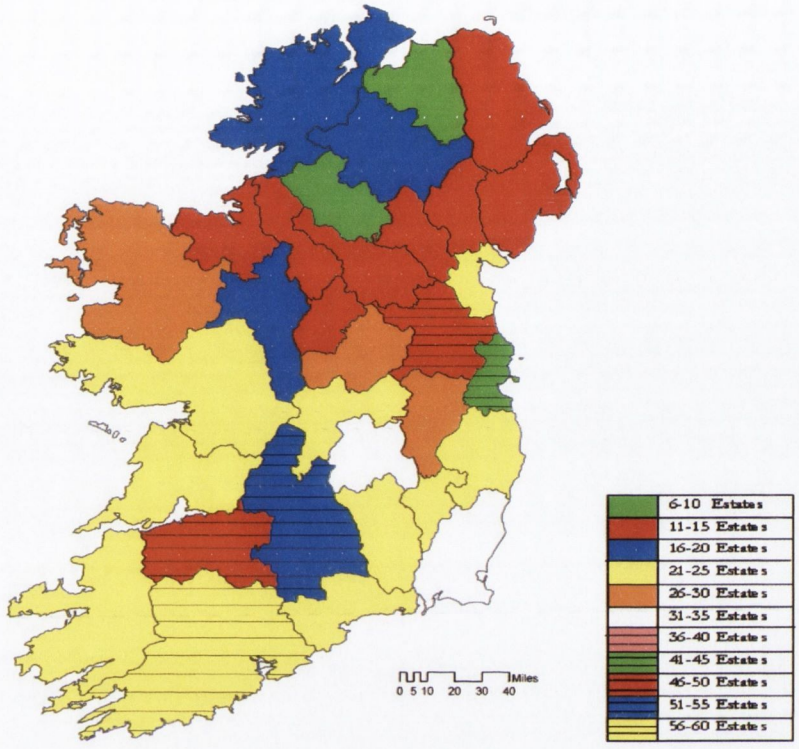


Looking at the categories of estate size distribution, most estates were between 1,000 acres and 5,000 acres in size though just over one half of the members held estates under 5,000 acres. Thus, while a representative member might be said to own an estate of between 1,000 and 5,000 acres, there were almost as many large as small estate owners, illustrating a great diversity of landowners among PDA members.[37] The geographic distribution of the estates of PDA members shows regional concentration of estates in the south and east of the country, with the highest numbers of estates in counties Cork, Tipperary, Meath, Limerick and Dublin. Fewest estates were found in Ulster and in Connaught.

[37] See Appendix 7 for a detailed list of the landowners.

Figure 6. Distribution of PDA members' estates and all landowners over 1,000 acres

i. Distribution of estates represented in the PDA members' data



ii. Distribution of owners of 1,000 acres and higher

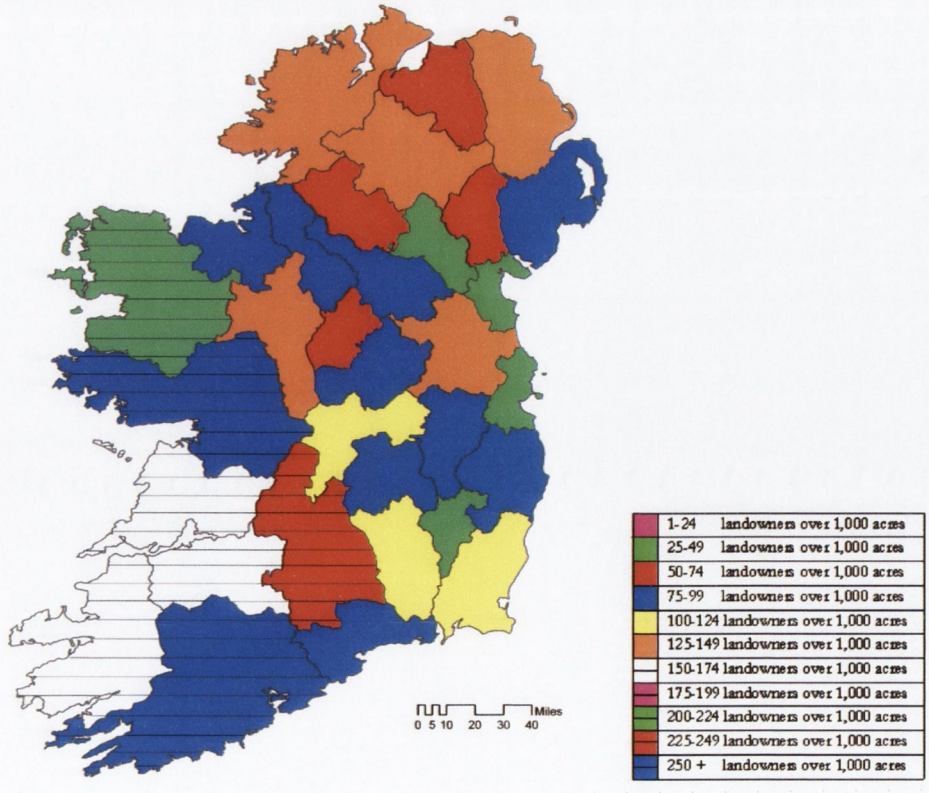
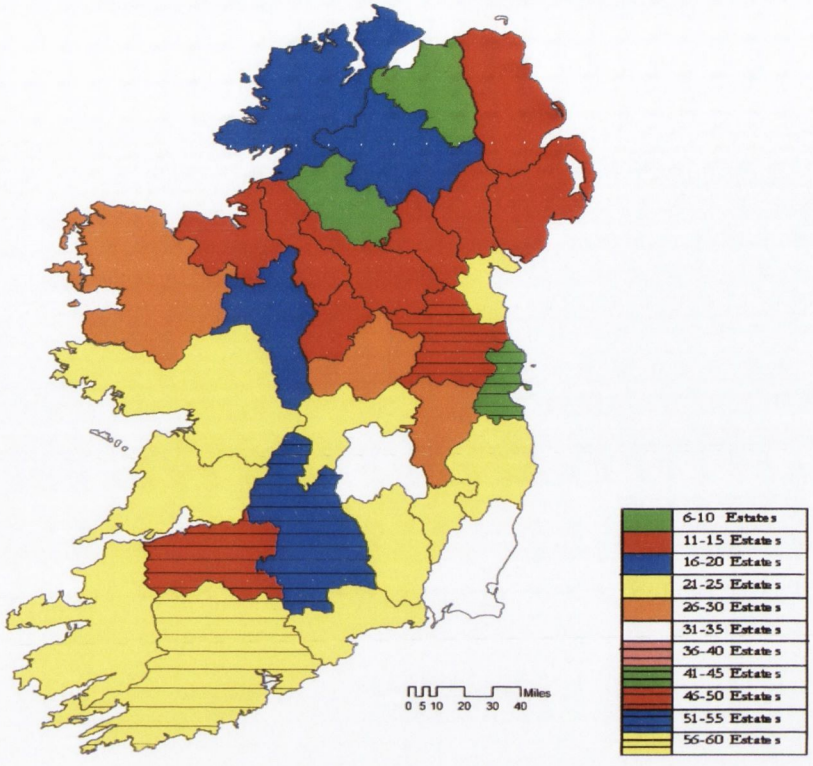
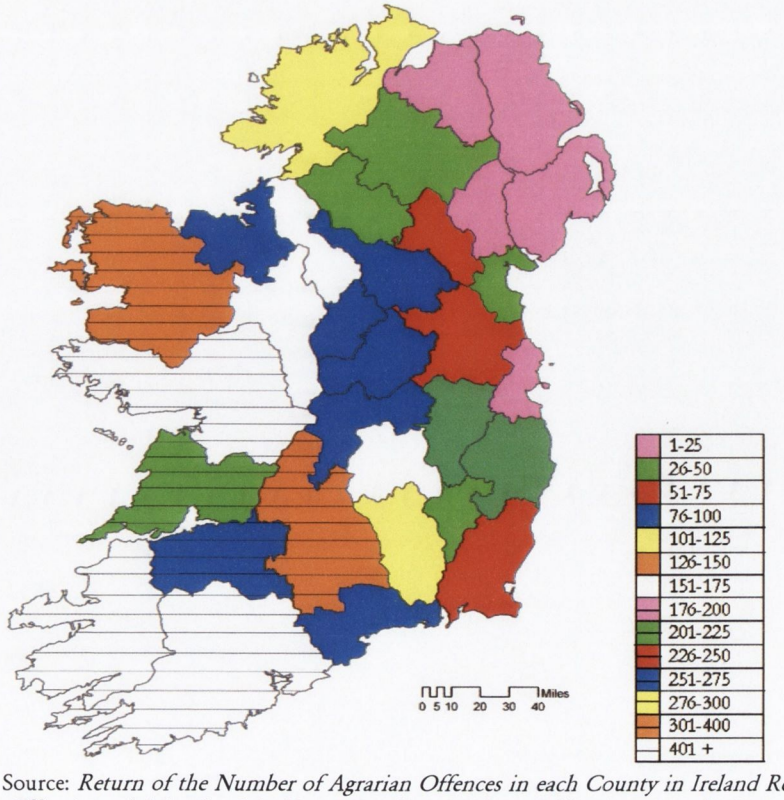


Figure 7. Distribution of PDA members' estates and Agrarian Outrages, 1881

i. Distribution of estates represented in the PDA members' data



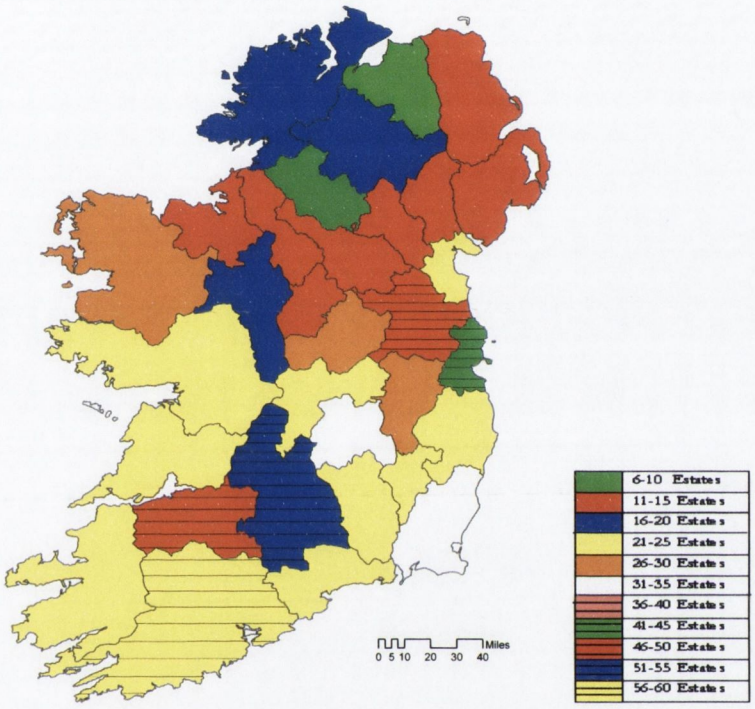
ii. Agrarian Outrages, 1881



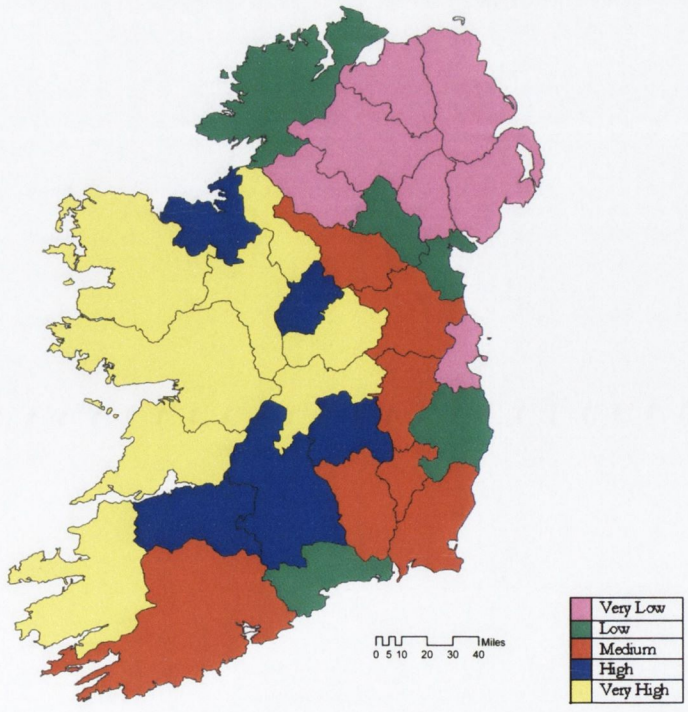
Source: *Return of the Number of Agrarian Offences in each County in Ireland Reported to the Constabulary Office in each Month of the Year 1881, distinguishing Offences against the Person, Offences against Property, and Offences against the Public Peace, with Summary for each County for the Year,* HC 1882 (72) LV.

Figure 8. Distribution of PDA members' estates and Strength of the land movement using Samuel Clark's Agitation Scale

i. Distribution of estates represented in the PDA members' data



ii. Strength of the land movement as measured by Samuel Clark's Agitation Scale



Source: Figure 5: Strength of the Land Movement of 1879-1882 as measured by Agitation Scale. Clark, *Social Origins of the Irish Land War*, p. 256.

Comparing the distribution of PDA member estates to that of all owners of estates of 1,000 acres and higher in Figure 6 shows high numbers of PDA member estates in counties Meath, Dublin, Cork, Tipperary, and Limerick, and corresponding high numbers of owners of estates over 1,000 acres in Cork and Tipperary. While counties Meath and Dublin were on the higher end of counties with PDA member estates, they were not counties with high numbers of owners of 1,000 acres and higher, reflecting the high value per acre of land in those counties. Ranking the provinces by most number of estates in the PDA members' data shows in order: Leinster, Munster, Ulster, and Connaught whereas the ranking of the provinces by the most owners of estates over 1,000 acres shows in order: Munster, Leinster, Ulster and Connaught.

Both the return of agrarian outrages for 1881 and Clark's agitation scale show Connaught and Munster to be the two areas of highest activity in terms of agrarian crime and the land movement. Clark's agitation scale consisted of three equally-weighted variables: the number of land meetings per capita in 1879 and 1880; the number of agrarian crimes per capita in 1879 and 1880; and the number of arrests per capita under the 1881 Protection of Person and Property Act.[38] Clark's agitation scale clearly highlights Connaught as the area of major agrarian crime and land meetings in 1879 and 1880 whereas the distribution of PDA members' estates was only of a moderate level there. There is a higher correlation between the high level of agrarian crime in Munster in 1881 and the high numbers of estates represented in the PDA

[38] 44 & 45 Vict. c. 14 [2 Aug. 1881]; Clark, *Social Origins of the Irish Land War,* p. 252.

members' data, although one must be wary to draw direct conclusions of cause and effect between the two. Agrarian outrages in Leinster were low during the land war but Leinster landowners were most numerous in the PDA members' data. Again, a factor contributing to the high numbers of Leinster landowners active in the PDA, as well as the ILC, was the importance of Dublin as the focus of the political and social life of landowners in Ireland.

Club affiliation was determined for 270 PDA members and membership at one of the Dublin clubs was important for political and social unity of Irish landowners. Overwhelmingly most landowners were members of the Kildare Street Club, the Sackville Street Club or the Carlton Club, or all three. Over half of the PDA members for whom club membership was ascertainable were members of the Kildare Street Club – 142 out of the 270. The Carlton Club in London had the next highest number of PDA members at ninety-three, and the other important Dublin club, the Sackville Street Club had sixty-five members. Many PDA members were members of more than one club which also increased the chances for landowners' paths to cross and thereby combine for collective landlord defence. Thirty-two PDA members were members of both the Kildare Street and Carlton clubs, twenty-one were members of both the Sackville Street and Carlton clubs, seven were members of both the Kildare Street and Sackville Street clubs, and thirteen were members of all three clubs. Ten belonged to Irish county clubs, and another fifty belonged to a variety of other Dublin and London clubs.

members' data, although one must be wary to draw direct conclusions of cause and effect between the two. Agrarian outrages in Leinster were low during the land war but Leinster landowners were most numerous in the PDA members' data. Again, a factor contributing to the high numbers of Leinster landowners active in the PDA, as well as the ILC, was the importance of Dublin as the focus of the political and social life of landowners in Ireland.

Club affiliation was determined for 270 PDA members and membership at one of the Dublin clubs was important for political and social unity of Irish landowners. Overwhelmingly most landowners were members of the Kildare Street Club, the Sackville Street Club or the Carlton Club, or all three. Over half of the PDA members for whom club membership was ascertainable were members of the Kildare Street Club – 142 out of the 270. The Carlton Club in London had the next highest number of PDA members at ninety-three, and the other important Dublin club, the Sackville Street Club had sixty-five members. Many PDA members were members of more than one club which also increased the chances for landowners' paths to cross and thereby combine for collective landlord defence. Thirty-two PDA members were members of both the Kildare Street and Carlton clubs, twenty-one were members of both the Sackville Street and Carlton clubs, seven were members of both the Kildare Street and Sackville Street clubs, and thirteen were members of all three clubs. Ten belonged to Irish county clubs, and another fifty belonged to a variety of other Dublin and London clubs.

Determining the alma maters and dates of birth for PDA members is less significant for accounting for aggregation of landlords in collective defence but is worthy of record for prosopographical reasons. The public school or university alma maters were determined for 212 PDA members. A surprisingly high number attended university: 155 out of the 212. Even more interesting is the fact the more Irish landlords attended Trinity College, Dublin, than Oxford or Cambridge: sixty-seven went to Trinity; forty-nine to Oxford; thirty-six to Cambridge; two to Edinburgh; and one to University College, London. The high number of Irish landlords attending Trinity contradicts Vaughan's assertion that only a minority of Victorian Irish landlords attended Trinity.[39] Among English public schools, by far most PDA members attended Eton: sixty-two attended the school while twenty attended Harrow, four attended Winchester, three attended Sandhurst, three attended Rugby, and a further thirteen attended other public schools in England and Ireland.

To complete the prosopographical picture of PDA members, the dates of birth were ascertainable for 194 members. The median date of birth was 1827, so that in 1881 the average age of PDA members was fifty-four. Thus, a representative PDA member was fifty-four years old, belonged to either the Kildare Street, Sackville Street or Carlton Clubs, had attended an English

[39] According to Vaughan: 'indeed, going to Trinity was almost accidental among the socially prominent'. Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, pp. 11-12. Hoppen has also commented: 'The richer gentry, with the help of awesomely tuned antennae, saw to it that their sons missed Trinity College Dublin's brief period of late Victorian brilliance in favour of the more social delights of Oxford and Cambridge. Hoppen, *Elections, Politics and Society*, p. 116.

public school and either Trinity College, Dublin, Oxford or Cambridge. He owned an estate of between 1,000 and 5,000 acres in counties Cork, Tipperary, Meath, Limerick or Dublin. He was less likely to have estates in Ulster or Connaught. To compare this to the ILC data, a representative ILC subscriber was a larger landowner with a median estate average of 7,198 acres and £4,061 valuation, most likely in counties Galway, Tipperary and Dublin.

Organisation of the PDA

In order to effectively run the PDA a general committee was appointed in Dublin to oversee operations of the organisation: to correspond with clients and to dispatch caretakers and agents throughout Ireland. This general committee was comprised of mostly large landowners with estates in Leinster and Munster.[40] The following were the members of the general committee with the location of their primary estates in parentheses: marquess of Ormonde (Leinster and Munster); earl of Bandon (Munster); earl of Carysfort (Leinster); earl of Donoughmore (Leinster and Munster); earl of Leitrim (Ulster and Connaught); earl of Meath (Leinster); earl of Rosse (Leinster and Munster); Lord Ardilaun (Connaught); Lord Farnham (Ulster); Lord Talbot de Malahide (Leinster); Bernard Edward Barnaby Fitzpatrick (became second Baron Castletown in January 1883 with estates in Leinster); Sir George St.

[40] PDA, *Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 30th Nov., 1882, and the Director's Report to the London Mansion House Committee, Together with an Abstract of Accounts, and a List of Subscribers; for same period* (Dublin, 1882).

John Colthurst, Bart. (Munster); Sir Edward Synge Hutchinson, Bart. (Munster); Colonel H. Alcock (Leinster); Colonel Edward Robert King-Harman (Connaught and Leinster); Major Hugh L. Barton (Leinster); T. St. John Blacker-Douglas (Munster); J. C. Bloomfield (Ulster); William Y. Donnelly; Charles. M. Doyne (Leinster); Captain J. McCalmont; Henry A. Hamilton (Leinster); Henry A. Johnston; Arthur MacMurrough Kavanagh (Leinster); R. J. Mahony (Munster); M. W. O'Connor (Leinster). Captain Somerset H. Maxwell[41] (Ulster) was the PDA director, Norris Goddard was the legal director, Peter Marshall the secretary, and Henry Jones was the accountant. The median acreage of twenty-two individuals on the general committee for whom estate information was obtainable was 11,144 acres and the median valuation was £7,063, illustrating that the general committee was comprised of larger landowners than the rank-and-file members of the PDA. Club membership, obtained for sixteen individuals, conforms to the PDA member and ILC subscriber preference for the Carlton, Kildare Street and Sackville Street clubs: ten were members of the Kildare Street, seven of the Carlton, and five of the Sackville Street.

The PDA had five stated aims, only the first of which was explicitly intended to assist landlords as a class: to aid landlords 'by effecting service of

---

[41] Maxwell unsuccessfully contested the County Cavan seat as a Conservative in 1880 against two Home Rulers, the only two seats the party took in Ulster. Maxwell succeeded his uncle as 10th Baron Farnham in 1884 and inherited his Cavan and English estates. In 1882 he became a member of GOLI's Grand Committee. B. M. Walker, *Ulster Politics. The Formative Years, 1868-86* (Belfast, 1989), p. 134; *The Times,* 18 Oct. 1884; GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting on Wednesday the 6th day, and Thursday, the 7th, days of December, 1882. In the Orange Hall, Dublin* (Dublin, 1883).

Writs in cases of fraudulent combination to withhold payment of rents; by ensuring purchasers for goods to be sold under Decrees, where otherwise no purchasers could be had through intimidation; by procuring Tenants for, or otherwise utilizing evicted premises now lying waste in various parts of the country'. The second aim was to assist tenant farmers 'by insuring purchase of goods otherwise unsaleable through combination; by procuring labourers, herds, and other farm servants, at ordinary wages, where those previously employed have left their services through intimidation'. The third was to help shopkeepers by giving legal assistance and protection against hostile combination. The fourth was to aid labourers 'by affording such protection as may be possible to those desirous of remaining in employments which they have been warned to leave'. Lastly, the fifth was to relieve anyone boycotted by local tradespeople.[42] Although the aims encompassed all of rural society, even, surprisingly, agricultural labourers, in practice the PDA focused almost entirely on the defence of landlord interests where challenged by the Land League.

Qualification for membership in the PDA was set at £5 per year, though a subscription of from £1 to £5 would permit attendance at meetings in Dublin with liberty to express opinion but not to vote.[43] Expenditure of the association, however, ran very high and by the end of August 1881 the PDA was looking for much larger promises for funding from subscribers and,

---

[42] PDA, *Annual Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 20th November, 1881*, p. 2.

[43] Wentworth Erck to Courtown, 4 Mar. 1881, Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/23.

therefore, sent circulars to every member asking for a commitment of one half of one percent of the government valuation of their estates for three years.[44] By the end of November 1881, £15,800 had been subscribed to the PDA, but it is not clear how much of this was from one-off subscriptions and how much was the first of the yearly instalments of one half of one percent of an estate's valuation.[45] Estimating the number of landlords of over 500 acres in Ireland to be 6,500 and taking the valuation at £10,000,000, the PDA estimated that if all these landowners subscribed one half of one percent, it would produce a subscription of £25,000 a year. By the end of November 1881, at least 800 landowners had pledged to pay the one half of one percent of the government valuation of their property for three years.[46] It is not known how many honoured their pledges.

It is interesting that the government valuation rather than yearly rent was set as the desired benchmark for subscription. It could be the case that exact rents would be difficult to determine for 1881 and the following two years because of abatements, arrears, evictions and vacant farms. An estate's valuation was easily verifiable whereas a private rental was not, though this would hardly be an issue in such a 'gentlemanly' organisation. It is curious though that the valuation, the very level that so many tenant farmers and agitators claimed as the only fair or just rent, and which landlords as a group denied as a fair letting value in 1881, was the very standard landlords chose.

---

[44] *The Times* 1 Nov. 1881.

[45] PDA *Annual Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 20th November, 1881*, p. 7.

[46] *The Times* 22 Nov. 1881.

PDA headquarters were established in Dublin which made sense because of the established connections with the Kildare Street club, the ILC, and most importantly for practical purposes, because of the central postal and rail depots. A central depot made for quick deployment of agents, labourers and caretakers from Dublin by rail to anywhere in the country.[47] The PDA took offices at 8 Westmoreland Street in 1881 but in 1882 moved to cheaper premises at 4 Henrietta Street where horses could be stabled, carts, implements and machinery stored. Previously, reserve men, agents and labourers, had been lodged at hotels at a great cost, and lodging them at the new premises was estimated to reduce accommodation costs by seventy-five percent.[48] A central reserve of men and equipment was necessary to aid boycotted landlords since local labour and machinery in the field was unavailable or unreliable. The Dublin depot was supplemented by smaller stations dotted throughout the country, which also housed labourers and which were under the direction of experienced agents who supervised the men and liased with the landlord contracting the services, the RIC and local magistrates.[49] The labour costs for the PDA were quite high as men had to be hired from a distance and at wages usually considerably higher than going local rates – as it was not particularly pleasant, and certainly risky, work. Supplying

---

[47] For a map of railroads in Ireland in 1870, see Oliver Doyle and Stephen Hirsch, *Railways in Ireland, 1834-1984* (Dublin, 1983), p. 37.

[48] PDA, *Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 30th Nov., 1882, and The Director's Report to the London Mansion House Committee, Together with an abstract of accounts, and a list of subscribers; for the same period* (Dublin, 1882), p. 7.

[49] PDA, 'Director's Report to the London Mansion House Committee', p. 2, in *Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 30th Nov., 1882.*

the local or regional stations was also costly as almost all provisions had to come from Dublin because of the inability to rely on local markets.

To obtain assistance a landlord or agent contacted the PDA in Dublin or a local branch and explained their particular plight, whether it was the need for labourers to harvest crops, men to serve writs and processes, caretakers to mind holdings from which a family had been evicted, blacksmiths to shoe horses, or agents to attend the forced sales of livestock or the interest of farms. In May 1882 the boycotted landlord John Lambert wrote to Gerald Dillon, founder of the County Galway branch of the PDA, pleading for help: 'Unless the Property [D]efence Association do something for me I will be ruined. I have been so long boycotted and have so many farms thrown up which no one will be allowed to take and am not able to stock myself that I do not know what to do.' Lambert was so desperate that he added: 'I am willing to give the land to the Property Defence Association at whatever they say is a fair rent, or do anything they require'.[50] The PDA did not rent farms from clients but the Land Corporation, established by Arthur MacMurrough Kavanagh in 1882, did.[51]

Initially all successful applicants obtaining assistance from the PDA were not charged for the services though this became financially untenable and in August 1881 this policy was reversed so that all members availing of assistance were charged cost value for the service of the PDA and non-

[50] Lambert to Dillon, 3 May 1882. Clonbrock Papers, NLI, Ms 35,771 (2).
[51] Land Corporation of Ireland, Limited. Prospectus, 4th proof, 14 June 1882. Castletown Papers, NLI, Ms 35, 321 (2).

members were charged a twenty percent premium.[52] Consequently, a list of charges for services was adopted.

Table 15. PDA Charges for services rendered, August. 1881[53]

Item	£	s
For attendance of agent at sheriff's sale of tenant's interest in farm	3	0
For attendance of agent at sheriff's sale of livestock	4	0
Service of writs, not exceeding two in number	2	0
For each additional writ, if served on same estate, locality & occasion	1	0

Table 16. Legal expenses associated with PDA work[54]

Item	£	s
Approval fee to sheriff's solicitor on conveyance of tenant's interest in farm from sheriff to PDA agent	2	2
PDA solicitor's fee	2	2
Conveyance from PDA agent to landlord	1	10

The high fees, for instance, the fee of £2 per delivery of writ or notice to quit, illustrated the danger of the activity. A regular civil bill process server only

[52] Wentworth Erck to Courtown, 5 Aug. 1881. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/52.

[53] PDA, 'Charges for services rendered by the Property Defence Association, adopted by the Committee, at their meeting on 11th August, 1881'. Loose sheet in PDA *Reports, 1881-1887* in NLI.

[54] Ibid.

received an annual salary of £10.[55] The delivery of writs became increasingly important as resistance to the serving of processes grew more intense. However, as *The Times* commented in February 1881, the PDA and OEC proved effective in this regard: 'There is comparatively little difficulty now felt in getting writs served … Writs are being scattered broadcast in many places where the tenants have positively refused to come to any terms, and the result of prompt and resolute action is in most instances that the rent and costs are at once paid'.[56] Although PDA process servers undertook this challenging work, they generally did so only with police protection. To obtain protection, Dublin Castle would be contacted two days before the intended service would occur. In April 1881, George Scott wrote to under-secretary, T. H. Burke: 'Will you kindly give instructions that the police at Roscommon meet and afford protection to our process server Robert Costello who will arrive by the train which reaches Roscommon at one o'clock on Monday the 25th inst. The man is going to Strokestown'.[57] The service of writs, processes and notices to quit was important work but was not the greatest function of the PDA, as it only served a total of 614 writs and notices in 1881 and 1882, whereas in the same period agents attended 930 sheriffs' sales and 1,070 caretakers were supplied to farms.[58]

---

[55] Timothy Sullivan to duke of Marlborough, 3 Feb. 1880. CSORP/1880/2970.

[56] *The Times*, 28 Feb. 1881.

[57] Scott to Burke, 23 Apr. 1881. CSORP/1881/13036. Scott was a secretary of the OEC, but the procedure was the same for both defence organisations.

[58] PDA, *Annual Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 20th November, 1881*, p. 4; *Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 30th Nov., 1882*, p. 10.

The most dangerous job in the PDA was that of a caretaker for a farm from which a family had been evicted, whether or not the local branch of the Land League or the local community had declared that the farm should not be rented and therefore lay waste. Caretakers had to prevent the damage to crops and meadow through general trespass by local farmers and had to deal with the likely problems and potential dangers that would arise if the evicted family was installed in an adjoining farm in a temporary Land League hut. Parties of from two to six men were employed to live at evicted farms or, if the farm was less contentious in the neighbourhood, one armed guard to prevent trespass and to keep fences in repair.[59]

Caretakers had to face several problems, all stemming from their unwelcome presence in the community. Wells were occasionally poisoned necessitating the transportation of barrels of water over large distances; in many districts food could not be obtained locally and therefore had to be sent from further afield at great cost.[60] The greatest danger was of physical attack which necessitated the arming of caretakers, a practice initiated with the Boycott Expedition. There seems to have been a gradual withdrawal of police protection for PDA and OEC caretakers from the end of 1881. In September 1881 there were 280 constables employed in protecting 102 PDA caretakers

[59] PDA, 'Director's Report to the London Mansion House Committee', p. 2, in *Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 30th Nov., 1882*, p. 5.

[60] *The Times* 2 Dec. 1881.

and thirty-three OEC caretakers.[61] By January 1882, either the resources or the inclination of the government to protect caretakers was drying up, possibly because the 1881 land act was to be the solution to the land question. When E. S. Gonormor planned to evict some tenants from his County Limerick estate in January 1882, he contacted the local magistrate, Thomas Sanders, and requested police protection for the caretakers he was going to employ from the PDA following the evictions. The local RIC sub inspector wrote to Sanders, 'I have no men available for such purposes and you should therefore provide sufficient Caretakers to protect themselves.'[62] Seeking further clarification on the constabulary's position regarding individual protection, the PDA director Captain Somerset Maxwell wrote to RIC headquarters at Dublin Castle and was informed that individual protection was no longer possible but caretakers would receive the 'general' protection of patrols, adding that in counties Clare and Limerick, 'individual protection is not only not being given, but the Police so serving are being gradually withdrawn as far as possible'.[63] Indeed, it was the RIC's position that caretakers 'should be armed and told to protect themselves if any one dare to attack them'.[64] This position was reinforced by chief secretary W. E. Forster's comments in the House of Commons at the end of February 1882, when he clarified the government's

[61] 'Return of Police specially employed in each County in Ireland in giving Personal Protection to Caretakers of Lands or Houses from which persons have been evicted'. 6 Sept. 1881. CSORP/1881/30414.

[62] Sub Inspector Liscott to Sanders, 31 Jan. 1882. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/95 (3).

[63] Andrew Reed to Maxwell, 6 Feb. 1882. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/95 (4).

[64] Sub Inspector Carter to Sanders, 3 Feb. 1882. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/95 (6).

position that while it was the duty of the government to provide police protection for those whose life or property was threatened, the government also had a right to expect individuals to do something for themselves. Without stating that the government could not afford to protect every individual who solicited police protection, Forster argued that the best protection for caretakers was by patrol, so that police might be called upon at any moment.[65] A somewhat unsatisfactory compromise was arrived at by the end of March whereby, in the event that police protection was removed from a specific caretaker house, notice would be given to the director of the PDA.[66] One can imagine that the need for police protection by caretakers, let alone landlords and their families, put a heavy strain on the resources of the RIC and that although professionals, the rank-and-file constables' sympathies were with the Land League rather than the PDA.[67] It is curious that police protection was reduced during the year of highest evictions during the land war: evictions in 1882 were the highest since 1851.[68]

Since caretakers could not rely upon police protection when on remote farms they had to be armed, know how to use the guns, and be adaptable to living in isolation and possibly surviving sieges. Some estates that took on caretakers in 1881 were still employing caretakers continuously through

---

[65] *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates: Forming a Continuation of the 'Parliamentary History of England, from the Earliest Times to the Year 1803'.* 3rd series, 1882, vol. 266, p. 1396.

[66] *The Times*, 31 Mar. 1882.

[67] See Thomas Fennell, *The Royal Irish Constabulary. A History and personal memoir* (Dublin, 2003).

[68] *Return '(Compiled from Returns Made to the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary) of Cases of Eviction which have Come to the Knowledge of the Constabulary in Each Quarter of the Year Ending 31 Dec. 1882* [C 3465], HC 1883, lvi.

1884.[69] It is most likely that the PDA employed ex-servicemen as the OEC are known to have done, which would explain their familiarity with guns and their discipline to spend lengthy periods of time on remote farms among a hostile community.

Caretakers were periodically attacked. William Buchanan, a caretaker with the PDA, was in charge of a group of caretakers on a farm at Ballywilliam, County Wexford. One evening in January 1882 the house they were occupying was attacked by a group of men who claimed to be police and ordered the caretakers to open their door. When the request was refused the attackers threatened to burn down the house and were only dispersed by gunshot. The attackers returned at three am and began ripping slates off the roof, again to be dispersed by gunshot. Following these events Buchanan wrote to the PDA office in Dublin pleading for rifles, 'or if not we cannot stay here... [for] ... we have only a few Bullets, and we are in danger of our lives here'.[70] It is not clear if the caretakers were under-supplied and if they were, whether it was an over-sight or a cost-cutting measure. PDA receipts and expenditures do not suggest tremendous financial difficulties.[71]

According to its first annual report, from January to November 1881, the PDA supplied 410 caretakers, which taking an average number of three caretakers per farm, would be just over 136 farms, not an insubstantial

---

[69] PDA, *Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 31st December, 1884, Together with an Abstract of Accounts, and a List of Subscribers for same period* (Dublin, 1885), p. 9.

[70] William Buchanan to PDA, 13 Jan. 1882. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/95 (10)

[71] See Table 17 below, p. 294.

number.[72] Taken as a percentage of evictions for the year, PDA caretakers were employed on five percent of evicted farms. The number of caretakers increased to 660 in 1882 but fell dramatically in 1883 to 108, coinciding with the decline in the land agitation following the successful operation of the 1881 land law act, particularly the land courts which reduced rents nationwide.[73]

Caretakers provided a vital service to landlords with farms that could not be rented in a hostile community, but a more general service that also supported landowners as well as farmers was the supplying of labourers to boycotted farms. The PDA presented its views on boycotting in its 1882 report:

> In many instances individuals, for acting independently and ... refusing to obey the law of the Land League, have been placed under its ban, and have been unable to procure labourers to save their crops. The edict had gone forth that the latter should rot in the ground, and such is the terror inspired by the means used by the agents of the Land League to enforce their orders, that money would not procure men in the neighbourhood daring enough to disobey them ... The Property Defence Association is in a position, by supplying labourers at short notice in any part of Ireland, to checkmate the dishonest and lawless in their effort to starve others into submission to their commands, and to render harmless the once dreaded weapon of boycotting'.[74]

Labourers were supplied by the PDA executive at varying rates based on the size of crop harvested rather than a weekly rate. Farmers, for example, were charged £1 5*s* per statute acre for the cutting and saving of hay. If, as would

---

[72] PDA, *Annual Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 20th November, 1881*, p. 4; *The Times*, 3 July 1882.

[73] PDA, *Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 30th Nov., 1882, and The Director's Report to the London Mansion House Committee, Together with an abstract of accounts, and a list of subscribers; for the same period; Report of the Committee for the Thirteen months ended 31st December, 1883.*

[74] PDA, 'Director's Report to the London Mansion House Committee', p. 2, in *Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 30th Nov., 1882.*

most likely be the case, the PDA labourers would be called upon to sell the harvested crop as well, no additional charge was levied; the proceeds of the sale less the harvesting fee per acre and transportation costs were handed back to the owner. Non-members could still avail of PDA labourers at a twenty percent premium.[75] Local branches seem to have determined their own labour rates. Those employed by the County Galway PDA received twenty shillings a week, whether they were labourers or caretakers.[76]

Little is known about what kinds of men were hired as labourers or from where in the country or how they were recruited. One possibility is that the labourers might have had employment connections through the estates of landlords prominent in landlord defence. Another is that labourers might have been recruited from some of the Ulster counties where landlord and tenant relations were generally better than in the south and west of Ireland. To relieve the boycotted County Cork landlord William Bence Jones, Goddard secured labourers from County Cavan.[77] Certainly employment with the PDA would have been dangerous but financially attractive in a time of depressed agricultural economy where employment was at reduced levels. Another factor that might have influenced labourers to work for the PDA was that the Land League programme, and the land agitation in general, was focused on

---

[75] PDA, 'Charges for services rendered by the Property Defence Association, adopted by the Committee, at their meeting on 11th August, 1881', Loose sheet in PDA *Reports, 1881-1887* in NLI.

[76] Robert Martin to Gerald Dillon, undated letter [c. Feb. 1882], Clonbrock Papers, NLI, Ms. 35,771 (1).

[77] William Bence Jones to Courtown, 26 Jan. 1881. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/17.

improving the lot of the farming classes and was in fact led by larger farmers. The plight of farm labourers was very low on the League's agenda. As well, landlords were known to give higher wages and charge lower cottage rents to labourers than farmers did. These factors might account for the relative ease with which the PDA was able to hire labourers.

The last area in which the PDA were instrumental in landlord defence was in sending agents to sheriff's sales. The first and in many ways most important single sheriff's sale involving the PDA took place in Dungarvan, County Waterford in February 1881. On 1 February, under a high court writ of *fieri facias*, the livestock of Michael Walsh, a large dairy farmer, were seized for arrears and kept in a pound at Dungarvan. The stock consisted of twenty-eight milch cows, three weanlings, a two year old bull, a draft mare, a horse and two colts, which were all to be auctioned to realise the two years' arrears of rent, at a rent of £80 a year that Walsh owed to the Royal College of Surgeons.[78] Walsh was one of several tenants on the estate who were in arrears of rent and who offered only Griffith's valuation on rent day, which was rejected. After a postponement for lack of bidders, the stock was auctioned off on Monday 7 November before a large group of tenant farmers, estimated in their hundreds, who did not bid for a single cow.[79] It was only a 'stranger', who stepped into the ring, and, facing the crowd, offered £1 for the

[78] *The Waterford Mail and Daily Telegraph*, 5 Feb. 1881; *The Waterford News and General Advertiser*, 11 Feb. 1881.

[79] *The Waterford Mail and Daily Telegraph*, 10 Feb. 1881.

first cow.[80] Although the stock was estimated to be worth around £500, each animal was sold for between £1 and £5 10*s*. The twenty-eight milch cows alone might have produced £10 a head in milk and butter later in the year. Since the 'stranger' purchased all of the stock, this led the locals to question the legality of a sale to a single bidder.[81] No one knew who the purchaser was; it was assumed that he was the agent or solicitor of the landlord. It was only a few days later that the connection was made between the stranger, who was Norris Goddard, and the PDA.[82] Along with Courtown and Waterford, though on a far more practical level, Goddard was one of the leaders of the landlord defence movement. Involved from the very beginning of the landlord defence movement, he led one of the two groups of Ulster labourers on the Boycott expedition. A Dublin solicitor, Goddard was also the PDA legal director and directed bidding for cattle and the interest of farms at sheriff's sales. Indeed, Goddard was to become such a familiar figure at sheriffs' sales throughout the country that he gained near mythic status among tenant farmers in his seeming ubiquity.[83]

---

[80] *The Waterford News and General Advertiser*, 11 Feb. 1881.
[81] *The Waterford Mail and Daily Telegraph*, 9 Feb. 1881.
[82] Ibid., 10 Feb. 1881.
[83] Palmer, *Irish Land League Crisis*, p. 230.

Local Branches

Like the Land League, the PDA had an executive in Dublin and local branches throughout the country. When Gerald Dillon established the County Galway branch of the PDA in January 1882, he received valuable advice from others involved in local branches throughout the country. He wrote to R. U. P. Fitzgerald, involved in the County Cork PDA, who advised Dillon to contact the central PDA in Dublin to obtain a list of all landowners in his district and to apply to them directly for subscriptions, and if the landowners did not respond, to apply some more pressure by visiting them personally.[84] Richard Bagwell, historian and secretary of the PDA branch in South Tipperary based at Clonmel, urged Dillon to avoid controversial statements in his circular sent to local landowners, and to be persistent in getting landowners to subscribe to the organisation. In Bagwell's own circular (which he sent to Dillon), he 'avoided anything polemical so as to catch various fish'.[85] Much more practical advice was how to handle punctilious landowners. Dillon was advised to be flexible in the terms of subscription with landowners but there was one cardinal rule: never return money.[86]

Although the practical advice of those involved in running local branches was particularly valuable there was also central direction from the

---

[84] Fitzgerald to Dillon, 29 Jan. 1882. Clonbrock Papers, NLI, Ms. 35,771 (1).

[85] Bagwell to Dillon, 16 Jan. 1882. Clonbrock Papers, NLI, Ms. 35, 771 (1). County Tipperary had three local PDA branches. The Clonmel branch was established in November 1881. Bagwell to Dillon, 25 Jan. 1882. Clonbrock Papers, NLI, Ms 35, 771 (1). Bagwell's main historical work was *Ireland Under the Tudors* (3 vols., 1885-90).

[86] Bagwell to Dillon, 16 Jan. 1882. Clonbrock Papers, NLI, Ms. 35, 771 (1).

PDA executive in Dublin, who in October 1881 issued a circular of 'Suggestions to Local Committees' which set out the relationship between the central branch and satellites. To maintain some uniformity and consistency, local secretaries were to send their rules to Dublin and distribute papers received from the central office. Local branches were also to keep regular correspondence with Dublin, forwarding weekly sums and updated lists of subscribers. Demonstrating a strong link with the ILC, local PDA branches were also to assist the ILC when requested and even to act as local committees of the ILC.[87] This also illustrates the importance of the local branches in raising funds for the central organisation, much like local branches of the Land League did for the executive in Dublin. Bagwell emphasised the subordinate role of the local branches to Gerald Dillon: 'I think it hopeless, & no doubt do you, to work the thing locally. The caretakers & labourers are not to be had. We should aim at being corresponding Committees giving information to, & receiving information from those in Dublin'.[88] In a similar tone R.U.P. Fitzgerald told Dillon of the relationship of his County Cork branch to the executive: 'Of course we are only a branch and are in all ways under and in strict harmony with head Committee in Dublin'.[89]

---

[87] PDA, 'Suggestions to Local Committees', 20 Oct. 1881. Clonbrock Papers, NLI, Ms. 35, 771 (2).

[88] Bagwell to Dillon, 16 Jan. 1882. Clonbrock Papers, NLI, Ms. 35,771 (1).

[89] Fitzgerald to Dillon, 29 Jan. 1882. Clonbrock Papers, NLI, Ms. 35,771 (1).

It is difficult to determine the number of local PDA branches though there were probably around seventy-five to 100 of them.[90] By the autumn of 1881 there were three in Queen's County: the Abbeyleix Defence League, as well as branches at Stradbally and Mountmellick.[91] Two of the more unlikely branches were in counties Fermanagh and Dublin. The Dublin County and City Branch of the PDA, formed in October or November 1881, was unusual because it was jointly composed of landowners and merchants, and the Fermanagh Mutual Defence Association, founded at Enniskillen under the chairmanship of the earl of Erne, was even more so because it illustrates one of the few examples of cooperation between the PDA and the OEC.[92] Perhaps trying to appeal to a spectrum of those willing to support landlord defence in the county, those who joined the Fermanagh group could direct their subscription to either the PDA or the OEC.

---

[90] The PDA did at least have branches in the following places: Abbeyleix, Ballina, Bray, Clonmel, Edenderry, Enniscorthy, Fermoy, Gorey, Mountmellick, Shilleagh, Stradbally, Wicklow East, as well as Counties Cavan, Cork, Donegal, Galway, Kerry, Kildare, King's, Longford, Louth, Monaghan, Queen's, Tipperary South, Wexford and Wicklow. County Galway was a particularly active county for landlord defence, with branches at Athenry, Ballinasloe, Dunsmere, Gort, Loughrea, Mount Bellew, Portuna, and Tuam. This is far from a complete list, gathered only from incidental references. 'Gorey Union Mutual Defence Association' TCD MS 11183 v. 235; 'Minute book of the Galway Irish Land Committee and Property Defence Association' (1881-2), Clonbrock Papers, NLI, Ms. 19,678; PDA, *Annual Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 20th November, 1881. Also a List of Subscriptions, p. 7; Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 30th Nov., 1882*, p. 22; *Report of the Committee for the Thirteen months ended 31st December, 1883*, p. 19; *Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 31st December, 1884*, p. 15, *The Times* 1 Dec. 1881.

[91] J. W. H. Carter, *The Land War and its Leaders in Queen's County, 1879-82* (Portlaoise, 1994), pp. 198-202.

[92] Dublin County and City Branch of the Property Defence Association circular; undated newspaper clipping on the Fermanagh Mutual Defence Association. Clonbrock Papers, NLI, Ms 35, 771 (1). The Fermanagh association was established 22 Oct. 1881. Erne to Forster, 23 Oct. 1881. CSORP/1881/36236.

The Orange Emergency Committee

The OEC was formed by the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland (GOLI) in response to the Land League incursions in Ulster, coupled with a reaction to the new Liberal administration's lack of a coherent Irish policy in the spring and summer of 1880. Although there was a major land meeting in Fermanagh in November 1879, the Land League did not make serious inroads into mid-Ulster until the autumn of 1880, with the establishment of branches in Down, Armagh, Tyrone and Londonderry.[93] The Orange Order provided the most effective opposition to the League through a campaign of propaganda and the organisation of counter-demonstrations to League meetings. A directive of the Fermanagh Grand Lodge of November 1880 stated that every League meeting in the county should be met with an Orange counter meeting on the same day.[94] An Orange counter meeting was planned for 9 December in Monaghan. The poster announcing the meeting ominously read: 'Orangemen of Monaghan, Remember Lough Mask. Drive Parnell and his crew out of your County. On Thursday, 9th Instant, Assemble at Scotstown, in your thousands on that day, and let the world see that when the Government refuse to stop Treason you know how to treat those who teach it. Give Parnell and his associates a warm reception. God save the Queen'.[95]

---

[93] R.W. Kirkpatrick, 'Landed estates in mid-Ulster and the Irish land war, 1879-85' (Ph.D. thesis, Trinity College, Dublin, 1976), pp. 169-170.

[94] Fermanagh Grand Orange Lodge minutes, 20 Nov. 1880, PRONI D 1402/I.

[95] Poster, Dec. 1880. CSORP/1880/30950.

Although there is no doubt that the Orange Order sought a policy of containment, it is not clear the extent to which Ulster landlords were involved in the earliest stages of the Order's anti-League activities. R. W. Kirkpatrick has argued that Ulster landlords feared their protestant tenants would join the League and allow it to spread throughout the province, and that therefore landlords were instrumental in mobilising the Orange Order to combat the League.[96] Frank Thompson, on the other hand, has emphasised the initial discord between the landed classes and the Orangemen, citing the 'openly hostile attitude of many of the Orange speakers to the landed classes' and arguing that 'the irresponsible and embarrassing extremism' of some of the Orange speakers may explain the initial reluctance of many landowners to get involved in combating the spread of the League in Ulster.[97] Without giving a time frame for when this shift occurred, Thompson, concluded that Ulster landlords, even those who refused to join the Order, saw the indispensability of the Order in combating the League, particularly in maintaining the support of their protestant tenantry against the League.[98] By early 1881, northern landowners came to see the absolute necessity of the Order in preventing what they saw as the spread of the League throughout Ulster. For instance, Colonel Edward Saunderson, a founder of modern unionism and a County Cavan

---

[96] R.W. Kirkpatrick, 'Landed estates in mid-Ulster and the Irish land war, 1879-85', p. 171.

[97] Frank Thompson, *The End of Liberal Ulster: Land agitation and land reform, 1868-1886* (Belfast, 2001), p. 223.

[98] Thompson, *The End of Liberal Ulster*, pp. 223-224, and 'The Landed classes, the Orange Order and the Anti-Land League Campaign in Ulster 1880-81', in *Eire-Ireland* xxii, no. 1 (Spring 1987), p. 106.

landowner, had repudiated the Orange Order in the 1870s but joined it in 1882.[99]

The decision of Gladstone's administration not to renew coercion in the summer of 1880 was the second major factor in the formation of an active defence group as part of the GOLI, and although predating the spread of the Land League into Ulster, the two factors were intertwined. Gladstone's second administration took office in April 1880 at a time of rising numbers of evictions[100] and declining agrarian crimes[101] in Ulster, and significantly, coercion powers open to the Irish government since 1875 were due to lapse on 1 June 1880.[102] The peace preservation act of 1875 prolonged sections of the 1870 peace preservation act, and the protection of life and property in

---

[99] Alvin Jackson, *Colonel Edward Saunderson. Land and Loyalty in Victorian Ireland* (Oxford, 1995), p. 33.

[100] The RIC recorded 110 evictions in Ulster during the first quarter of 1880, 141 in the second quarter, and 191 in the third quarter. *Return (compiled from Returns made to the Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary) of cases of Eviction which have come to the knowledge of the Constabulary in each Quarter of the year ended the 31st day of December 1880, showing the Number of Families Evicted in each County in Ireland during each Quarter, the Number Readmitted as Tenants, and the Number Re-admitted as Caretaker,* HC 1881 (2), lxxvii. 713.

[101] For the province of Ulster the RIC recorded 16 agrarian crimes in January, 17 in February, 7 in March, 10 in April, 6 in May, 5 in June, and 6 in July. Thereafter the numbers began to rise again, reaching 109 in December. Ulster had the fewest agrarian outrages, behind Leinster, Connaught, and Munster. *Return of the Number of Agrarian Offences in each County in Ireland Reported to the Constabulary Office in each Month of the Year, 1880, distinguishing Offences against the Person, Offences against Property, and Offences against the Public Peace, with Summary for each County for the Year,* HC 1881 (12), lxxvii. 619.

[102] Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act. 38 Vict., c. 14 (28 May 1875). For discussion on the early Liberal policy on Ireland in Gladstone's second administration, see Margaret O'Callaghan, *British High Politics and a Nationalist Ireland: Criminality, Land and the Law under Forster and Balfour* (Cork, 1994); Allen Warren, 'Forster, the Liberals and New Directions in Irish Policy, 1880-1882' in *Parliamentary History* vol. 6, pt. I (1987), pp. 95-126, and Richard Hawkins, 'Liberals, land and coercion in the summer of 1880: the influence of the Carraroe ejectments' in *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society*, vol. 34 (1974-75), pp. 40-57.

certain parts of Ireland act, provisions of the latter act lapsing in 1877.[103] Among the most important powers of the 1875 act due to lapse in the first two months of the new government's tenure were; arms licensing and search powers, the levying cost of extra police from disturbed districts (determined by the lord lieutenant), and compensation to victims of outrage. Allowing the powers to lapse was indicative of an incoherent Irish policy. As Allen Warren has commented: 'During his first month of office Forster, with the full support of his colleagues in London, attempted to avoid any decision in relation to the Irish issues, presenting the government's approach as benignly disinterested, even though opinions in Ireland were shouting, albeit discordantly, for action'.[104]

Forster went to Dublin in the first week of May where he learned that both Castle officials and magistrates wanted the maintenance of at least some coercion powers. It was clear that those involved in the practicalities of overseeing law and order in Ireland were apprehensive about the effectiveness of the ordinary law in maintaining stability in a disturbed country.[105] Forster, however, was convinced that there had to be at least a break in the continuity of coercive powers, even if only for a matter of weeks, since there had been exceptional acts in operation for Ireland since 1847, and previous to that,

[103] Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act, 33 Vict., c. 9 (4 April 1870); Protection of Life and Property in Certain Parts of Ireland Act, 34 Vict., c. 25 (16 June 1871).

[104] Warren, 'Forster, the Liberals and New Directions in Irish Policy, 1880-1882' in *Parliamentary History* vol. 6, pt. I (1987), pp. 98-99.

[105] Ibid., p. 98.

special powers in relation to the possession of arms from 1796 to 1840.[106] After taking the legal opinion of Lord O'Hagan, the Irish lord chancellor, Hugh Law, Irish attorney-general, and Mr. Justice Charles Barry, Forster informed the cabinet on 14 May that coercion would not be renewed, and the policy was publicly announced in the Queen's speech on 21 May 1880.[107] It was not, however, simply that the government allowed the special powers to slip from their hands when Ireland was relatively peaceful in the summer of 1880, but that, with the coming of autumn, calls for rents and a corresponding rise in widespread resistance to rent payment and rapidly increasing numbers of agrarian crime and acts of intimidation, the cabinet refused to be proactive and seize the powers again by demanding an autumn session of parliament.[108]

The GOLI cited the failure of the new administration to maintain special powers in the summer and summon parliament in the autumn as necessitating the formation of the defensive OEC: 'Had Mr. Gladstone thought fit to summon Parliament in November last, or even in December, the labours of our Committee would have been greatly lightened … Ministerial imbecility had, however, allowed the Westmeath Protection Act to expire'.[109] The Westmeath act, introduced to combat agrarian outrages in counties Westmeath, Meath and King's County in 1871, empowered the lord lieutenant

---

[106] Margaret O'Callaghan, *British High Politics and a Nationalist Ireland: Criminality, Land and the Law under Forster and Balfour* (Cork, 1994), pp. 22-24.

[107] Ibid., p. 25.

[108] Warren, 'Forster, the Liberals and New Directions in Irish Policy, 1880-1882', p. 102.

[109] Irish Emergency Committee, *List of Subscriptions to April 20th, 1881* (Dublin, 1881), p. 2.

to arrest and detain without trial those suspected of Ribbon activity.[110] Although limited to the three specified counties, having the extraordinary powers was symbolic of the government's authority. Whether or not the powers were used, the fact that the government had them illustrated its willingness to deal with agrarian crime. According to the GOLI, if the government would not retain the necessary tools to combat lawlessness, then people would have to protect themselves.

Who Supported the OEC?

A prosopography of OEC supporters, like that of the ILC and PDA, was created using a list of subscriptions up to October 1881, in conjunction with *Thom's Directory*, U. H. Hussey de Burgh, John Bateman's lists of landowners and the 1876 parliamentary return on landowners in Ireland.[111] Two interesting observations can be made about the full list of 1,043 subscriptions before turning to a detailed examination of a workable subgroup. One is immediately struck by the large number of anonymous

---

[110] 34 & 35 Vict., c. 65 (14 Aug. 1871); Charles Townshend, *Political Violence in Ireland. Government and Resistance since 1848* (Oxford, 1983), p. 63.

[111] Irish Emergency Committee, *List of Subscriptions, Received Up to the 20th of October, 1881* (Dublin, 1881); *Thom's Directory*, 1881, 1890; John Bateman, *The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1883); repr. with an introduction by David Springer (Leicester, 1971); U. H. Hussey de Burgh, *The Landowners of Ireland: an alphabetical list of the owners of estates of 500 acres or £500 valuation and upwards in Ireland, with the acreage and valuation in each county* (Dublin, [1878?]); *Copy 'of "a Return of the Names of Proprietors and the Area and Valuation of All Properties in the Several Counties in Ireland, Held in Fee or Perpetuity, or on Long Leases at Chief Rents", Prepared for the Use of Her Majesty's Government...'* HC 1876 (412), lxxx. 395.

subscriptions to the OEC. There were 265 anonymous subscriptions out of the 1,043 subscriptions, representing twenty-five percent of all subscriptions. To compare this to the PDA figures, only eight percent, or 134 out of the 1,604 subscriptions were anonymous. The high number of anonymous subscriptions in the OEC list suggests a greater reluctance of subscribers to have themselves publicly identified as supporting the OEC. The likely reason for this was the OEC's sectarian character, for by early 1881 both the OEC and PDA were performing the same functions of landlord defence and support to boycotted persons; the essential public difference between the two groups was the sectarian character of the OEC and its parent GOLI. Since the protestant sectarian character was essential to the OEC identity it is not surprising that there were many clergymen subscribers. There were seventy-five clergymen subscribers (representing 7.2% of all subscribers) and of whom forty-seven were Anglican. Of these forty-seven Anglican clergymen it can definitely be determined that forty-two were Church of Ireland; the other five could not be positively identified as either Church of Ireland or Church of England. It is almost certain that of the remaining clergymen for whom denominational affiliation could not be determined in the various clergy lists included in *Thom's Directory, The Irish Church Directory of 1881* and *Crockford's Clerical Directory*, were also Church of Ireland. Cross-referencing these clergy subscribers with the GOLI bi-annual reports shows that there were eleven Deputy Grand Chaplains and one Grand Chaplain of the GOLI among OEC subscribers in 1881. Finally, there was at least one identifiable catholic

subscriber to the OEC: Count Edmond de la Poer, a count of the Holy Roman States, who subscribed £15 and who received assistance on his estate from the OEC in February 1881.[112]

Just as in the study of the PDA members, a subgroup of individuals subscribing £5 or more to the OEC was chosen to delineate a group about whom the most information could be found. From the full subscription list of 1,043 subscribers, there were 343 subscribers of £5 and greater, and by removing the fifty-seven anonymous subscriptions, fifteen group or association subscriptions and three subscriptions from Orange lodges in Ireland, England and Scotland, and Australia and New Zealand, a subgroup of 259 individuals was left. Of this subgroup twenty-one (or 8%) were women, eight (or 3%) were clergymen (of whom four were identifiable as Church of Ireland and two were Church of England),[113] and forty-three (or 17%) were peers or from peer families. The total subscription of this group was £2,259 16*s.* and the median subscription was £5. Of the subgroup of 259 individuals estate information was obtainable for 104 individuals, club membership for sixty-nine individuals, the alma maters for forty-six individuals, and the date of birth for fifty-six individuals.

Lord Ventry was the largest landowner to subscribe to the OEC, owning over 93,000 acres in County Kerry but which were not particularly valuable lands, only valued at £17,067 a year. Sir Richard Wallace had much more valuable estates in Ulster, with 58,365 acres in Antrim and 2,693 acres in

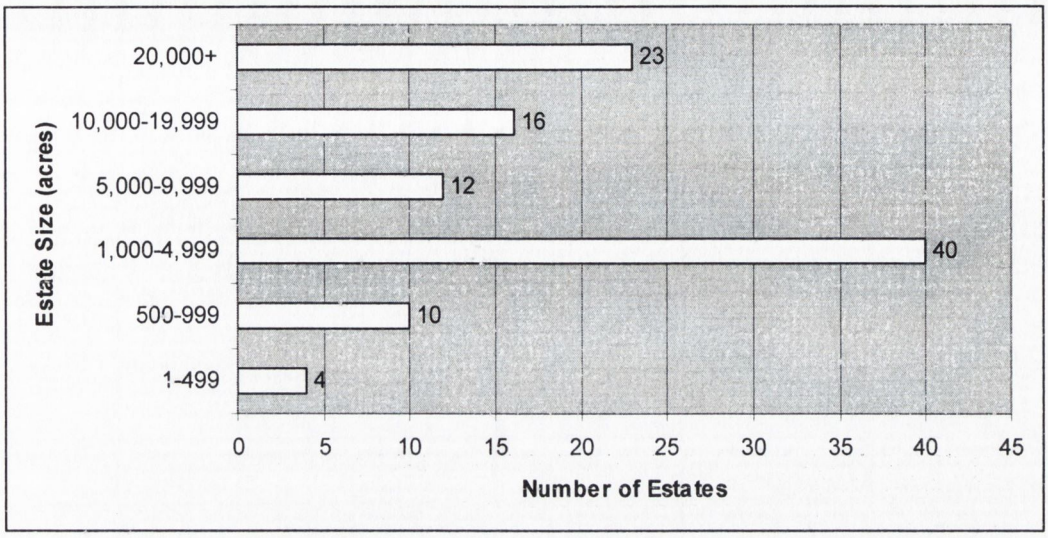
[112] See below p. 286.

[113] The other two clergymen could not be identified.

Down, together valued at £74,189 a year. The smallest landowner in the OEC subgroup was Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Arthur Cole who held 227 acres in County Fermanagh valued at £300 a year. Cole, the second son of the second earl of Enniskillen, was a Grand Secretary of the GOLI, and uncle to the third earl of Enniskillen, the Imperial Grand Master of the GOLI. The total acreage for the 104 individuals in the OEC subgroup was 1,184,332 acres and the total valuation was £730,424, representing around six percent of the land of Ireland and six percent of the national rental.[114] The median estate size for this subgroup was 4,521 acres and the median estate valuation was £2,442, figures very close to the estate medians of PDA members of 4,618 acres and £2,746, and below the ILC median estate acreage of 7,198 acres and £4,061 valuation. Removing the peer subscribers reduces the OEC estate median to 2,890 acres and valuation to £1,749 a year which represents a significant decrease.

[114] The national rental of £12.1 million is taken from Vaughan's estimate of the national rental in 1881. See Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, appendix 9: 'Agricultural Output, Rents, Potatoes, and the Cost of Labour, 1850-1886'. The acreage of Ireland is taken to be 20,327,764 from the 1880 *Agricultural Statistics*, p. 687.

Figure 9. Distribution of OEC subscribers' estates by acreage



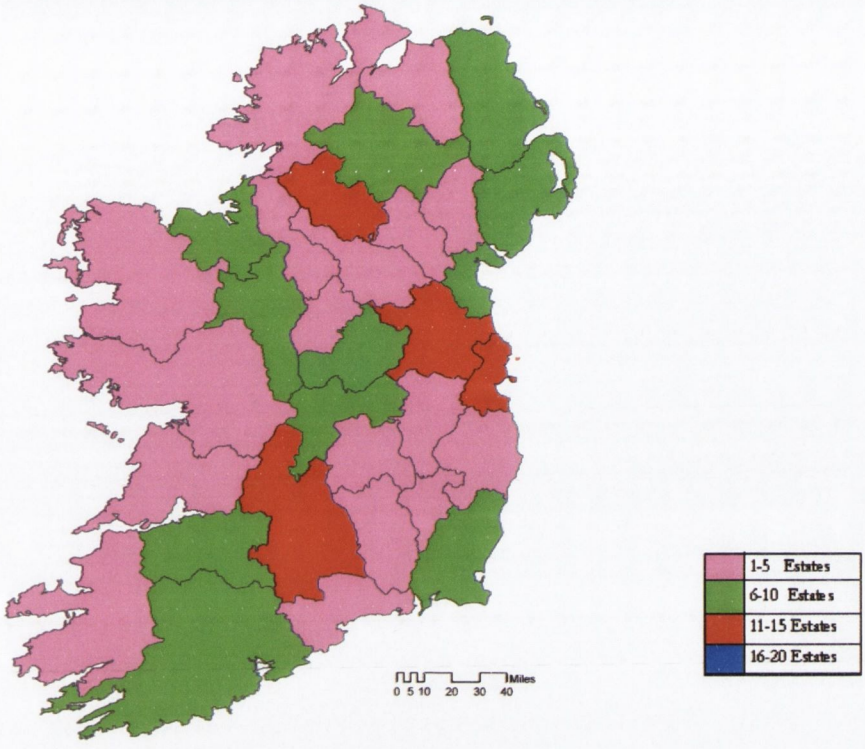
Like the distribution of estates for PDA members, just over half of the OEC subscribers in the subgroup owned estates of moderate size, under 5,000 acres. The OEC data also illustrates that like the PDA data, estate sizes were much more likely to be over 1,000 acres than under 1,000 acres, although the maxim should always be remembered that the larger the estate the more likely it is to find information about it and its owner. There could very well be OEC subscribers with estates under 1,000 acres about whom no information can be attained whereas it is extremely unlikely that any landowner with estates over 10,000 acres will be missed.

The geographic distribution of estates in the OEC data shows a fairly even distribution of estates throughout the centre of the country, with counties Meath, Dublin, Tipperary and Cavan containing the highest numbers of estates. It is interesting that, again like the PDA data, both counties Meath and Dublin landowners figured prominently in the numbers of estates. The

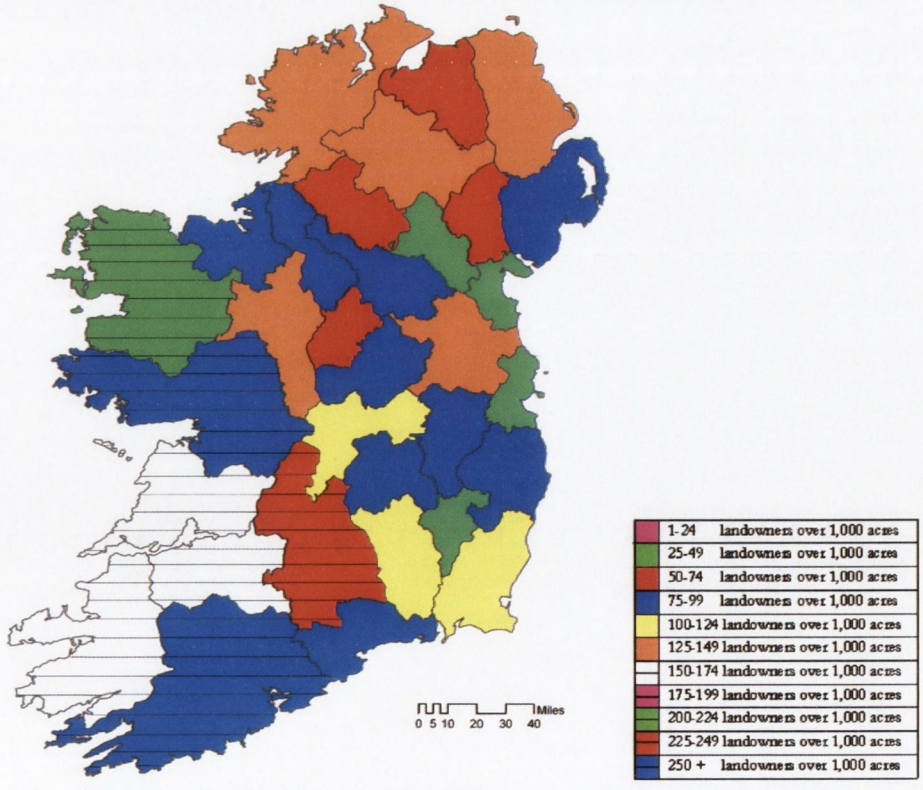
concentration of estates was clearly weakest among western landowners, although the paucity of estates in Ulster is surprising.

Figure 10. Distribution of OEC members' estates & all landowners over 1,000 acres

i. Distribution of estates represented in the OEC subscribers' data



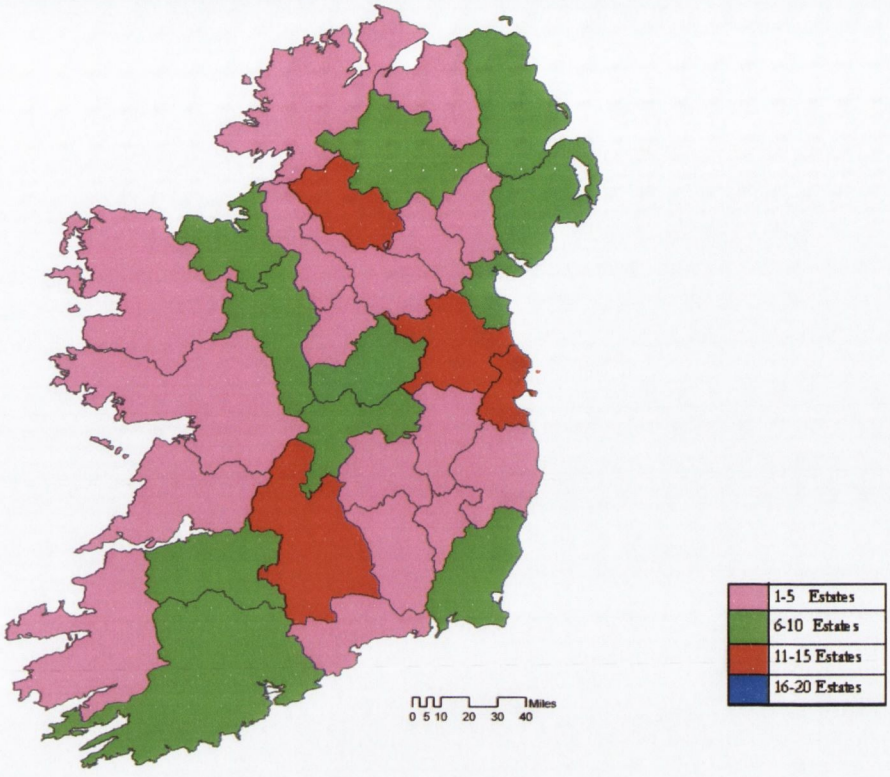
ii. Geographic distribution of owners of land of 1,000 acres and higher



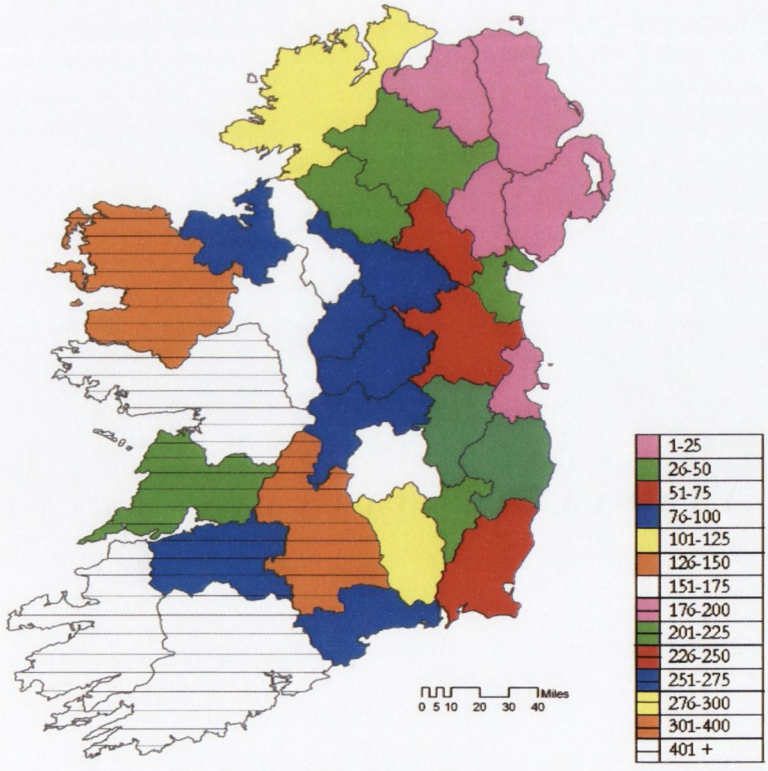
Source: 'Landowners in Ireland of 1,000 acres and upwards, with their Valuation in 1873'. *Thoms's Directory*, 1881.

Figure 11. Distribution of OEC subscribers' estates and Agrarian Outrages, 1881

i. Distribution of estates represented in the OEC subscribers' data



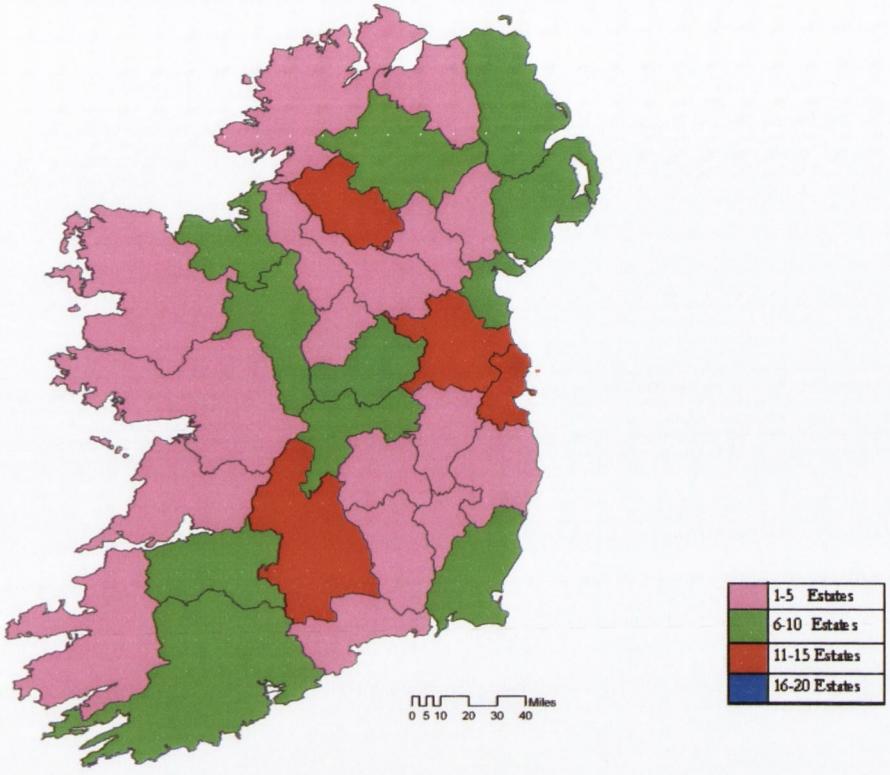
ii. Agrarian Outrages, 1881



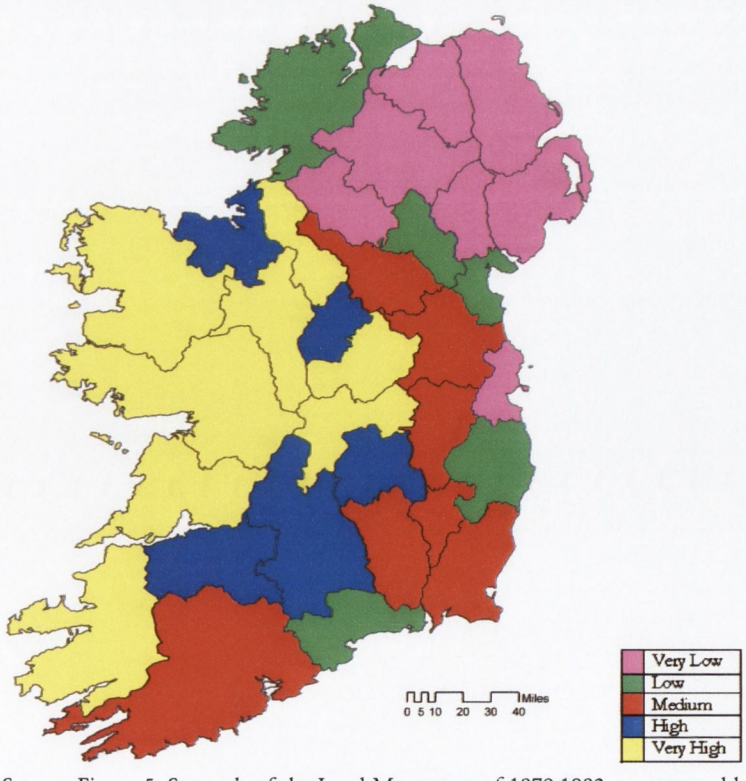
Source: *Return of the Number of Agrarian Offences in each County in Ireland Reported to the Constabulary Office in each Month of the Year 1881, distinguishing Offences against the Person, Offences against Property, and Offences against the Public Peace, with Summary for each County for the Year,* HC 1882 (72) LV.

Figure 12. Distribution of OEC subscribers' estates and strength of the land movement using Samuel Clark's Agitation Scale

i. Distribution of estates represented in the OEC subscribers' data



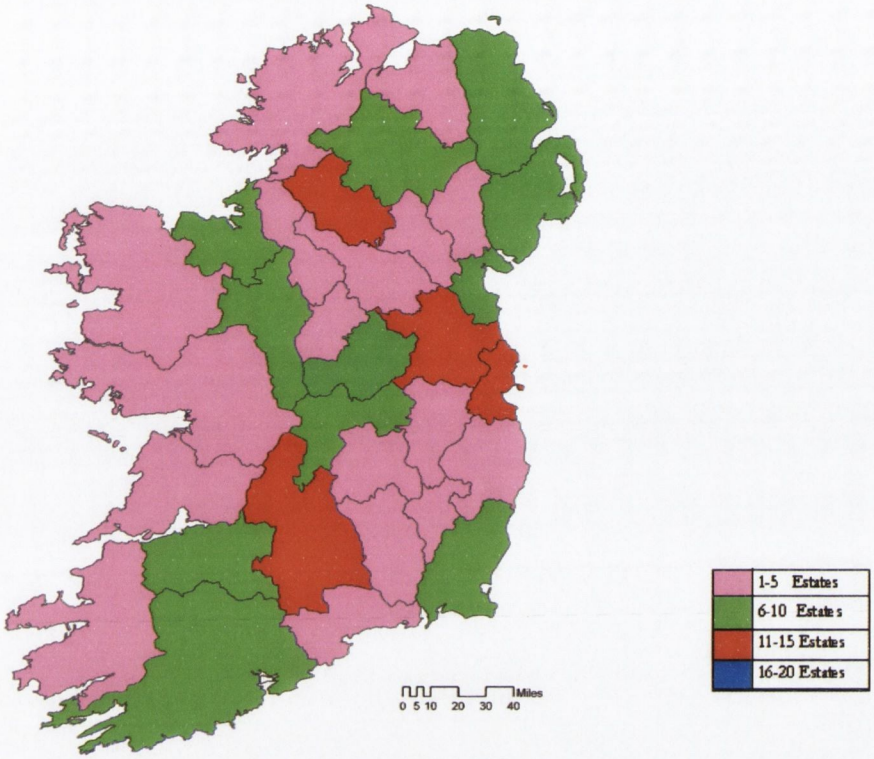
ii. Strength of the land movement as measured by Samuel Clark's Agitation Scale



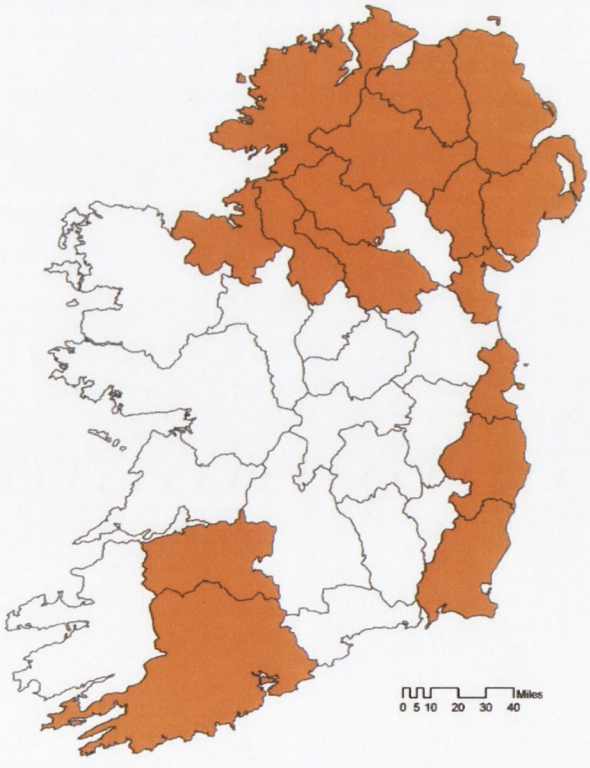
Source: Figure 5: Strength of the Land Movement of 1879-1882 as measured by Agitation Scale. Clark, *Social Origins of the Irish Land War*, p. 256.

Figure 13. Distribution of OEC subscribers' estates and County Grand Orange Lodges

i. Distribution of estates represented in the OEC subscribers' data



ii. Distribution of County Grand Orange Lodges in 1880



Source: GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the Special Meeting held in the Orange Hall, 48 York Street, Dublin, on Wednesday, 3rd day of November, 1880*, p. 10

Comparing the distribution of estates in the OEC data and the distribution of estates of 1,000 acres and higher in Figure 10 shows that while the south and west of the country had the highest concentration of landowners, this was not represented in the OEC data, although County Tipperary stands out, as it did in the PDA and ILC data, as a county with high numbers of landowners supporting landlord defence causes. The maps in Figures 11 and 12 compare the distribution of OEC estates in comparison to the distribution of agrarian outrages and level of the land agitation. Regions with the greatest levels of agrarian crime and land agitation, particularly the western counties, have the fewest numbers of estates held by OEC subscribers in the subgroup data, although County Tipperary stands out as a county with high numbers of estates held by OEC subscribers and high levels of agrarian crime and activity of the land movement. As discussed below, the OEC's activities in aiding landlords and farmers were nearly exclusively outside of Ulster. Figure 13, which illustrates the number of counties with County Orange Lodges shows that not all counties with a County Lodge figured prominently in the number of estates in the OEC data, and even counties such as Meath and Tipperary which had no County Lodges, were among the counties with the highest number of estates in the OEC data. Many of the landlords in the OEC subgroup had estates in more than one county so too much could be made out of this. OEC subscriber Viscount Massereene, whose seat was Antrim Castle, in County Antrim, for example, had estates in Meath which had no County Orange Lodge, but also had estates in three counties which did have lodges,

Antrim, Louth and Monaghan. The fact that a particular county did not have its own County Lodge did not mean that there was no lodge activity in the area for the men might have been part of neighbouring County Lodges. The distribution of County Lodges is indicative of areas in which there were enough Orangemen to support a County Lodge.

Returning to the prosopography of OEC members, club membership was determined for sixty-nine subscribers in the subgroup of 259 individuals. While, like the ILC and PDA members, most OEC subscribers were members of the Kildare Street, Sackville Street, or Carlton clubs, the OEC data showed that fewer were members of the Kildare Street club than among the other two organisations. Thirty-five were members of the Sackville Street Club, thirty-four of the Carlton Club, and only twenty-two of the Kildare Street Club. Several OEC subscribers were members of more than one of these three clubs. Thirteen were members of both the Sackville Street and Carlton Clubs, eight were members of the Kildare Street and Carlton Clubs, four were members of all three clubs, and two were members of the Kildare Street and Sackville Street Clubs. Two subscribers belonged to Irish county clubs and a further eight to other London and Dublin clubs. The alma maters were determined for forty-six individuals, apart from the clergy, virtually all of whom were graduates of Trinity College, Dublin, and like the PDA members, the highest number of individuals, fourteen, attended Trinity College, Dublin, although the numbers for Oxford and Cambridge were not far behind, with twelve and nine respectively. Among public schools, twelve individuals had

attended Eton, while ten attended Harrow, three Rugby, two Exeter, and one each for Sandhurst and Cheltenham.

The dates of birth were ascertainable for fifty-six OEC subscribers, with a median birth date of 1824. Thus, a representative OEC subscriber in 1881 was fifty-seven years old, belonged to the Sackville Street, Carlton or Kildare Street Clubs, and had attended an English public school and university at Trinity College, Dublin, Oxford or Cambridge. This representative OEC subscriber owned an estate of between 1,000 and 5,000 acres which was least likely to be situated on the western seaboard.

Organisation of the OEC

The idea for a defence committee originated at a 19 October 1880, meeting of the GOLI, where a committee was formed. This was subsequently ratified and given the name of the 'Emergency Committee' at the half-yearly meeting of the GOLI, on 2 December 1880 in Dublin.[115] Fourteen individuals were appointed to form this committee, individuals much less grand than those of the PDA general committee, but almost all of whom had a

[115] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting on Wednesday the 6th day, and Thursday, the 7th, days of December, 1882. In the Orange Hall, Dublin* (Dublin, 1883). Appendix II, p. 48.

strong connection to Dublin.[116] William Johnston, a Deputy Grand Master (DGM) of the GOLI was a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin (TCD), owned 866 acres in County Down and had been a Conservative MP for Belfast from 1868 to 1878. Thomas Fulton Caldbeck, DGM, Deputy Grand Treasurer, Grand Master for Dublin City, and a member of the important GOLI central committee (MCC), was a magistrate for County Dublin, where he owned 1,162 acres and was a member of the TCD Grand Lodge. Edward Wingfield Verner, DGM, MCC, was also a member of the TCD Grand Lodge, and owned 1,752 acres in County Dublin and 518 acres in County Armagh. He had attended Eton and Oxford, and had sat as a Conservative for Lisburn from 1863 to 1873 and for County Armagh from 1873 to 1880. Philip R. Patman, DGM, MCC, was Grand Secretary for Dublin City Grand Lodge, and was a house, land and estate agent, auctioneer and valuator. Thomas H. Thompson, DGM, graduated from TCD and was also a member of the Trinity Lodge. He owned a total of 8,890 acres in counties Dublin, Meath, Mayo and Sligo. George Scott, DGM, lived in Dublin City. William F. Lawlor, DGM was elected to the GOLI central committee in December 1880.

---

[116] The information for this section comes from the following sources: GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, held in the Orange Hall, York St., Dublin, on Wednesday, the 1st, and Thursday, the 2nd days of December, 1880; Thom's Directory; Copy 'of "a Return of the Names of Proprietors and the Area and Valuation of All Properties in the Several Counties in Ireland, Held in Fee or Perpetuity, or on Long Leases at Chief Rents", Prepared for the Use of Her Majesty's Government...'* HC 1876 (412), lxxx. 395; LV. Brian M. Walker (Ed.), *Parliamentary Election Results in Ireland, 1801*-1922 (Dublin, 1978); and Michael Stenton (ed.), *Who's who of British Members of Parliament: a biographical dictionary of the House of Commons based on annual volumes of 'Dod's parliamentary companion' and other sources.* Vol.1, 1832-1885 (Hassocks, 1976); Idem., (ed.), *Who's who of British Members of Parliament*...Vol.2, 1886-1918 (Hassocks, 1978).

William Milward Jones, DGM, was a Dublin solicitor. Reverend James Jones, a Deputy Grand Chaplain, was also Grand Chaplain for Dublin City. Thomas Merrick, DGM for County Dublin, was a Dublin solicitor and agent for three life insurance companies, no doubt making him adept at risk assessment and, therefore, valuable in assessing potential clients of the OEC. Thomas J. Bowers, Assistant Deputy Grand Secretary for Dublin City, was an agent of the National Assurance Company. Athol J. Dudgeon, honorary secretary of the OEC, was a solicitor in Dublin with offices on Ormond Quay. William E. Caldbeck, Deputy Grand Secretary for Dublin City, a magistrate and deputy lieutenant for County Dublin, owned 415 acres in County Dublin and was selected as treasurer for the OEC. Finally, William H. Camlin was appointed OEC secretary. A year later at the 1881 GOLI general meeting two more men were added to the OEC: James Forrest, a county officer for the Dublin City Grand Lodge, a printer, bookbinder and lithographer; and Samuel L. Stevenson, DGM, MCC, and Grand Secretary for the County Dublin Grand Lodge.

It is significant that most of the committee members had estates in County Dublin or resided in Dublin city, because it facilitated the work of the OEC directed from Dublin city. Containing a number of magistrates, solicitors and insurance agents, the OEC was less weighed-down with grandees than the PDA, seeming to opt more for energetic businessmen than influential landowners. The business-orientated composition of the OEC may

help explain how the OEC could be so energetic with smaller resources than the PDA.[117]

At a 15 December executive meeting of the GOLI a resolution was adopted to raise a fund to provide protection for 'loyal men living in remote districts.'[118] Initially, the OEC focused on protecting and arming lodge members: 'providing the means of defence for such of our Brethren as could not procure arms for themselves'.[119] At a special GOLI meeting in Dublin on 3 November 1880, an address was adopted which noted the threat of land agitation directed by the Land League, warning that 'Arms have been imported into this country, and distributed wholesale; drillings have taken place, and all the foundations for an internecine war are being laid'.[120] The siege mentality of the GOLI was evident in a 3 November 1880 circular: 'Let the Private Lodges be in constant communication with their respective District Masters, and arrange on the best mode of defending themselves from any sudden aggression, by appointing a place of meeting, and signals for meeting, under an emergency, by night, as well as by day'. The circular went on to emphasise that every lodge member should 'provide the means of protection for himself, his Brethern, and their Families, as far as possible'.[121]

---

[117] See Table 17, p. 294 below.

[118] *The Times,* 16 Dec. 1880.

[119] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting on Wednesday the 6th day, and Thursday, the 7th, days of December, 1882. In the Orange Hall, Dublin.* Appendix II, p. 47.

[120] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the Special Meeting held in the Orange Hall, 49 York Street, Dublin, on Wednesday, 3rd day of November, 1880.* Appendix I, p. 9.

[121] Philip R Patman, D.G.S. GOLI circular. Fermanagh Grand Orange Lodge minutes, 9 Dec. 1880, PRONI D 1402/I.

For farmers and others in need of arms, the network of local lodges certainly provided an ideal distribution network. In December 1880, for example, the Fermanagh County Grand Lodge appointed a committee to obtain and distribute arms.[122] The fixation on arming fellow Orangemen in the first year of the OEC's existence is borne out by the amounts expended for this purpose. From total receipts of £9,699 19*s* 3*d* received from 8 December 1880 to 4 November 1881, the OEC spent £3,572 18*s* 5*d* on the 'purchase of arms, ammunition and accoutrements'.[123] Thus, nearly a third of its initial budget was spent on arming Orangemen.

With the expiration of special powers controlling arms in proclaimed districts, there were no prohibitions on acquiring or owning a gun, and guns seemed to have been prevalent throughout Ireland. T. M. Healy, nationalist MP for Wexford, took exception to Mr. Justice John Fitzgerald's remark to the grand jury at the 1881 Cork winter assizes, that every farmer's son in the country seemed to carry a gun.[124] What R. V. Comerford has suggested in relation to the arming of IRB men in rural areas probably holds true for Orangemen in Ulster – that too much can be read into the extensive procurement of arms: 'The evidence of widespread acquisition of arms during the land war is no proof of a popular thrust towards political revolution. The

---

[122] Fermanagh Grand Orange Lodge minutes, 9 Dec. 1880, PRONI D 1402/I.

[123] *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, on Wednesday 7th, and Thursday 8th December, 1881, in the Orange Hall, Dublin* (Dublin, 1882). Appendix II, p. 47.

[124] 18 Feb. 1881. *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates: Forming a Continuation of the 'Parliamentary History of England, from the Earliest Times to the Year 1803'.* 3rd series, 1881, vol. 258, p. 1224.

desire to possess a gun was a recurrent nineteenth-century fad and one not by any means confined to Ireland'.[125]

Arms certainly were appearing in increased numbers in Ireland in September and October 1880. From a number of 3,284 known rifles imported into Ireland by 11 September 1880, that number had increased to 5,246 by the end of October 1880 and reached 9,658 by 1 January 1881.[126] The guns were not imported from America or the continent but from England. They were predominantly a converted government rifle which could be purchased in England for 6*s* 6*d* each. Revolvers were not as much in demand and generally came from America or Belgium.[127] More research needs to be carried out on gun possession and regulation in Victorian Ireland and Britain.

By early 1881 the OEC began to broaden its activities, focusing on the defence of landed interests and providing similar relief efforts as the PDA: sending agents to attend sheriff sales, providing labourers to boycotted farms, supplying bailiffs to serve writs, and eventually providing caretakers to guard evicted holdings. According to its earliest pamphlet, the OEC described the importance of dispatching agents to the sheriff's sales of cattle and the interest

---

[125] R. V. Comerford, 'The land war and the politics of distress, 1877-82', p. 45 in W. E. Vaughan (ed.), *A New History of Ireland, vi: Ireland Under the Union, II, 1870-1921* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 26-52.

[126] 'Numerical Summary of Returns of Arms, &c., for the week ending 11th day of September 1880'. CSORP/1880/23087; 'Numerical Summary of Returns of Arms, &c., for the week ending 30th day of October 1880'. CSORP/1880/27949; 'Numerical Summary of Returns of Arms, &c., for the week ending 1st day of January 1881'. CSORP/1881/4490.

[127] John Mallon to Dublin Castle, 3 Mar. 1880 CSORP/1880/5772.

of farms: 'To grapple with the unscrupulous organisation of the Land League, it is often necessary to meet it on its own ground; and when the League has arranged to boycott those Sheriff's Sales, by which alone the rights of property can be vindicated against tenants whose rent is kept back by fraud, it is needful to supply fearless bidders who will thwart the evasion'.[128] Unlike the PDA, the OEC relied upon unpaid labour in challenging the League at sheriff's sales. Agents volunteered and were instructed to bid on auctioned items to prevent aborted sales.[129] OEC men were also involved in the seizures of cattle from defaulting tenants on behalf of landlords, and obtaining special warrants from the sheriff to legally seize the cattle.[130]

The organisation of labour for service in the OEC began in December 1880 when the GOLI gave permission for the Committee to send men to harvest crops or guard boycotted persons. One of the first protection expeditions was the dispatch of men to watch over Ebor Hall, the seat of the murdered Viscount Mountmorres.[131] There is some discrepancy over the OEC's first labour relief expedition. The 1881 OEC report to the GOLI cited the expedition to relieve Canon Fleming at Ballinakill, County Galway, as the first, whereas the 1882 OEC report cited an expedition to relieve Colonel

---

[128] OEC, *List of Subscriptions to April 20th, 1881* (Dublin, 1881), p. 5.

[129] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting on Wednesday the 6th day, and Thursday, the 7th, days of December, 1882. In the Orange Hall, Dublin.* Appendix II, p. 52.

[130] Ibid.

[131] *The Times*, 24 Dec. 1880; OEC, *List of Subscriptions to April 20th, 1881* (Dublin, 1881), p. 5.

Charles O'Callaghan, a County Clare landowner of some 8,270 acres.[132] O'Callaghan was most likely the first to receive labour, in January 1881; it is at least known that the Fleming expedition of Ulster labourers departed Ballinakill on 26 March 1881.[133] Fleming, rector of Ballinakill, denounced at a League meeting in December 1880, had been shot at with an Enfield rifle, and his servants and labourers ordered to leave his employment.[134] One of the most intriguing aspects of the Fleming expedition of OEC labourers was that they were ferried from Galway to Ballinakill by H. M. *Merlin.* This is all the more interesting since the expedition was not to enforce a legal judgement such as to seize goods for a debt or to evict a family, as the *Merlin* had been used in June 1881.[135] The Fleming expedition was a private affair that used hired men from a sectarian organization on no government or even court business. Boycotting or intimidation was not officially made illegal until a proclamation of October 1881, which declared that 'all such practices of intimidation are unlawful and criminal, and that any persons engaging in any of such practices, or inciting thereto, is liable to be arrested and imprisoned'.[136]

---

[132] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, on Wednesday 7th, and Thursday 8th December, 1881, in the Orange Hall, Dublin.* 'Appendix II, pp. 47-8; *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting on Wednesday the 6th day, and Thursday, the 7th, days of December, 1882. In the Orange Hall, Dublin.* 'Appendix II, p. 49; *Copy 'of "a Return of the Names of Proprietors and the Area and Valuation of All Properties in the Several Counties in Ireland, Held in Fee or Perpetuity, or on Long Leases at Chief Rents", Prepared for the Use of Her Majesty's Government...'.* HC 1876 (412), lxxx. 395.

[133] *The Times*, 28 Mar. 1881.

[134] Ibid., 29 Dec. 1880; Ibid., 30 Dec. 1880.

[135] Ibid., 21 Mar. 1881; Ibid., 24 June 1881.

[136] Proclamation by the Lords Justices-General and General Governors of Ireland. 14 Oct. 1881.

Obtaining labour for service in the OEC seems to have been easier than it was for the PDA. This had much to do with the importance of the lodge networks throughout Ulster from which men could be easily and safely recruited. Men from local lodges were hired on relatively short notice and transported to Dublin from where they would be dispatched to the towns and eventually farms throughout Ireland.[137] Dublin, of course, was the central depot for access to all areas of the country by rail, and both the PDA and OEC had central offices in the city for that reason. Unlike the PDA, the OEC did not maintain a reserve of men in Dublin for quick deployment throughout the country. Since men were so easily obtained with just a few hours notice it was not necessary to pay labourers to be on call, and thus labourers were only paid when they worked or travelled.[138] This cost-cutting policy illustrates how the OEC had a slimmer organisation than the PDA: all staff and officers were unpaid except for the labourers and caretakers who were dispatched, and two clerks in the central office. Men who attended sheriff sales for the OEC did so voluntarily, though their expenses would be reimbursed.[139]

Caretakers, as has already been noted in regards to the PDA, had, perhaps besides bailiffs and constabulary, the most hazardous occupation during the land war. Since the position was so dangerous the OEC recruited

---

[137] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, on Wednesday 7th, and Thursday 8th December, 1881, in the Orange Hall, Dublin.* Appendix II, p. 50.

[138] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting on Wednesday the 6th day, and Thursday, the 7th, days of December, 1882. In the Orange Hall, Dublin.* Appendix II, p. 50.

[139] For comparison of OEC and PDA expenditure and salaries see below p. 281.

former army, navy, army reserve and RIC men, because they were disciplined and familiar with firearms.[140] Some of the men employed were not young. Richard Roache, former sergeant of the 3rd Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment), was sixty years old when he was shot and killed with his own revolver while employed as a caretaker on the Caldwell estate, near Kilteely, County Limerick on 17 April 1882. Roache was one of four caretakers guarding a farm from which a family had recently been evicted. After the eviction two of the landlord's bailiffs were placed in charge of the farm but Clifford Lloyd, Special Resident Magistrate, refused them police protection; the bailiffs withdrew, and the OEC sent four caretakers to the farm. The OEC paid for the cost of transporting Roache's remains to Dublin and also his funeral expenses.[141]

The case of Richard Roache's murder allows a glimpse into the extent to which the OEC was active throughout the country rather than only in Ulster, which had Orange lodges or landowners with some connection to the Order. Clearly the initial focus of the OEC was in Ulster, however, within a few months of its formation, labourers and caretakers were sent throughout the country. Local 'battles' of the land war, in terms of boycotting, and acts of intimidation against landlords were not as prevalent in Ulster as in Munster or

---

[140] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting on Wednesday the 6th day, and Thursday, the 7th, days of December, 1882. In the Orange Hall, Dublin.* Appendix II, p. 50.

[141] Ibid., Appendix II, p. 53; *The Times*, 19 Apr. 1882. This *The Times* article is a good example of how often the OEC and PDA were confused in the popular media. The article began: 'It is reported from Limerick that a bailiff named Richard Roache, employed by the Property Defence Association, was murdered last night at Cloverfield, near Kilteely, county Limerick'.

Connacht.[142] As Thompson has commented, 'agrarian outrage, despite the widely publicised complaints of landlords and despite the increase in number, was never a really formidable problem in Ulster'.[143] This explains why in the OEC's report of activities in December 1882, no Ulster counties were included in a list of the counties to which caretakers had been dispatched: Clare, Cork, Dublin, Galway, Kerry, King's, Limerick, Longford, Louth, Mayo, Queen's, Tipperary, Westmeath, Wexford and Wicklow.[144] The 1883 report cited 101 caretakers, labourers and bailiffs supplied in many different counties: Clare, Cork, Dublin, Galway, Kilkenny, King's, Leitrim, Longford, South Mayo, Meath, Queen's, Roscommon, Tipperary, Westmeath, Wexford and Wicklow.[145]

While it is clear the OEC was active outside Ulster aiding boycotted landlords, it is not clear who these landlords were. There seems to have been a range of persons, from Viscount Lismore who owned 42,000 acres in counties Tipperary, Cork and Limerick to Edward Hill who owned 221 acres in County Tipperary. From the OEC reports thirty-six individuals have been identified as having received aid during the land war and of these some biographical and estate information was obtainable for twenty-five

---

[142] Appendix 22, 'Counties Ranked According to Agrarian Outrages Committed during Four Crises, 1848-82' in Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, pp. 285-86.

[143] Thompson, *The End of Liberal Ulster*, p. 211.

[144] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting on Wednesday the 6th day, and Thursday, the 7th, days of December, 1882. In the Orange Hall, Dublin.* Appendix II, p. 51.

[145] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, held on Wednesday. the 6th, and Thursday, the 7th, days of December, 1883. In the Orange Hall, York-St., Dublin* (Dublin, 1883). Appendix II, p. 46.

individuals.[146] The landowners aided by the OEC appear to have been much like the OEC subscribers in terms of estate size: the median estate size of those persons aided was 2,879 acres with a valuation of £1,486.

Of great interest is the fact that at least two of the landowners aided were catholic, one of whom was a papal count and the other was a former Home Rule MP. In its December 1881 report the OEC noted that in 'extending its aid the Committee were actuated by a desire to assist victims of Land League tyranny and mob law irrespective of creed or political tenets, and those assisted include number of Roman Catholics'.[147] In February 1881 Athol Dudgeon and William Caldbeck attended a sheriff's sale of cattle seized for rent on behalf of County Waterford landlord Count Edmond de la Poer. De la Poer, who was created a count of the Holy Roman States in 1864, had sat as a Liberal for County Waterford from 1867 to 1873 and owned over 13,000 acres in the county. The fact that a protestant sectarian organisation such at the GOLI would aid a prominent catholic – one who was a papal count no less – was surely remarkable. Perhaps even more remarkable was the fact that the OEC also aided another individual and former MP, Henry Owen Lewis, who was not only catholic but had also been a Home Rule MP for the borough of Carlow from 1874 to 1880. The OEC reports did not specify that Lewis was catholic and noted de la Poer's catholicism almost in passing: 'notwithstanding the presence of a large mob, the full amount due was realised

---

[146] See below Appendix 9 for the list of individuals.

[147] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, on Wednesday 7th, and Thursday 8th December, 1881, in the Orange Hall, Dublin* Appendix II, p. 49.

[by the sheriff's sale] for the plaintiff, Count de la Poer, a Roman Catholic gentlemen of property in the County Waterford'.[148] The fact that the OEC aided catholics highlights the class rather than sectarian nature of the landlord defence movement during the land war.

Like many individuals and organisations in Victorian Ireland, the OEC was more than willing to give unsolicited advice to the government. In mid-October 1881, it sent a list of recommendations to Dublin Castle on 'the state of Ireland'. Among the usual suggestions one would expect from a landlord group, such as suppressing the Land League and arresting its leaders, were some very interesting and practical recommendations for dealing with boycotting – an issue which directly effected OEC labourers, caretakers and agents at work throughout the country. OEC men were often refused service or accommodation at public houses in the communities where they were temporarily employed. The OEC suggested solution to this issue was for holders of public house licenses to forfeit their licenses on proof before one or more magistrates that the publican refused to supply police or others engaged in their lawful business with a car or service usually furnished to travellers.[149] Similarly, shop owners who refused to sell to police, the OEC, or others engaged in lawful business, should be fined or imprisoned. These were in fact

---

[148] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting on Wednesday the 6th day, and Thursday, the 7th, days of December, 1882. In the Orange Hall, Dublin.* Appendix II, p. 49. Lewis' denominational affiliation was determined from an 1889 *The Times* article entitled 'Irish Roman Catholics and Monsignor Persico'. *The Times,* 25 April 1889.

[149] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, on Wednesday 7th, and Thursday 8th December, 1881, in the Orange Hall, Dublin.* Appendix VII, p. 63.

very shrewd proposals. PDA and OEC men in the field quite frequently encountered this kind of ostracism in the communities in which they temporarily worked and it obviously hindered their jobs. Although caretakers and labourers would normally be accommodated in permanent or temporary shelter on or near the given property on which they were engaged, the men who attended sheriff's sales as agents occasionally needed accommodation in the town in which the sales were to take place depending on the time of the scheduled sale. On 15 March, 1881, Norris Goddard and other PDA men were expelled from their hotel at 10 pm once John O'Gorman, the owner of the Imperial Hotel in Charleville, County Cork, realised the men worked for the PDA and were in town for a sheriff's sale for rent. The men were also refused accommodation in Lincoln's Hotel the same night. When informed of the incident, the castle law advisor, John Naish, recommended prosecuting the two hotel keepers for refusing to accommodate paying customers.[150] Goddard consequently brought a civil action against O'Gorman at the Charleville petty sessions in April 1881 for refusing to accommodate them, O'Gorman was returned for trial at the following assizes at Cork, paying his own bail of £40.[151] Thus, a crackdown on this kind of discrimination would have practically benefited individual OEC men in the field. Perhaps more important, however, was the recognition by the OEC that publicans and shopkeepers were key members in the local leadership of the Land League throughout the country and that a crackdown would give magistrates (who

[150] Law opinion of John Naish. CSORP/1881/13269.
[151] CSORP/1881/13269.

were landowners or related to or employed by them as agents) a legitimate means of penalising local League leaders. Magistrates already had the power to refuse certificates of renewal for licenses to publicans on various grounds other than those relating to the adulteration of beer and spirits, selling spirits to the drunk or under-aged or hours of operation.

Publican licenses had to be renewed each year, which required obtaining two certificates: one signed by two magistrates at petty sessions and the other signed by six householders of the parish. The certificates attested to the good character of the publican and the orderly operation of his public house over the previous twelve months.[152] After 1874 anyone could object to the renewal of a publican's license as long as it was done in advance of the sessions and in writing.[153] According to Carter, the RIC in Queen's County were well aware of the key position of publicans in local League branches, that their premises were often used for League meetings, and that boycotted persons were refused drink and services by these publicans, but that magistrates lost their nerve at the licensing sessions and in almost all cases approved the renewal of licenses opposed by the RIC.[154] Naish's opinion on how to deal with the two hotel keepers who refused Goddard accommodation was also to oppose the renewal certificates of the two men at the next licensing sessions.[155]

---

[152] Elizabeth Malcolm, *'Ireland Sober, Ireland Free'. Drink and Temperance in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin, 1986), pp. 206-207.

[153] 17 & 18 Vict., c. 89 (10 Aug. 1854); 37 & 38 Vict., c. 69 (7 Aug. 1874).

[154] Carter, *The Land War and its Leaders in Queen's County, 1879-82*, pp. 165-66.

[155] Law opinion of John Naish. CSORP/1881/13269.

Since the OEC and PDA performed the same functions it was not surprising that there were calls for the two organisations to merge, thereby saving money in administrative costs. Early in the existence of both organisations, in the winter of 1880-81, there was the possibility of cooperation. Wexford magistrate and GOLI DGM John Pounden wrote to Courtown in December 1880, suggesting that Pounden's contacts with the GOLI might be useful for the embryonic PDA: 'I can promise very material help from members of the Orange Institution in Dublin in the way of procuring suppliers & sending them down, without in any way requiring a recognition from some or any one else of the Institution but simply as a carrying out of our principles'.[156] The ease with which the OEC procured labourers at short notice was also seen as a reason for good relations and cooperation between the two groups.[157] Wentworth Erck, astronomer and Wicklow landowner, wrote to Courtown in June 1881 suggesting they consider 'on what terms we should admit the Emergency [Committee]; for they will have nothing t[o] d[o] with us on any terms'. He went on to advise that Ireland could not sufficiently support two similar organisations, and since the PDA was the larger of the two organisations, was well funded and was intended to be permanent, the OEC should be subsumed into it.[158] By the

---

[156] Pounden to Courtown, 11 Dec. 1880. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/2.

[157] Thomas Lefroy to Courtown, 1 Jan. 1881. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/6.

[158] Erck to Courtown, 6 June 1881. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/25. The reference to the impermanence of the OEC is unclear other than perhaps the 'emergency' denoted in its name.

summer of 1881, however, it was clear that the two organisations wished to retain their own identity and neither wished to be subsumed into the other. The two groups were competing for the same kind of funds and so union might have made sense, but a sticking point was the Orange identity of the OEC, and the PDA's public affirmation of its non-partisanship. In its first annual report the OEC declared as much: 'While gladly admitting the good work which has been accomplished by the Property Defence Association, the Committee believe that the Orange Institution, from its organization, is more suitable for opposing successfully the designs of the disaffected, and affording aid to persecuted loyalists than any other body which can be instituted, no matter how influential…'.[159] Thus, by the winter of 1881 the question of merger was off the table and each organisation continued its work separately. The OEC was eventually dissolved in December 1887 whereas the PDA continued to be active during the plan of campaign and did not fold until at least 1919.[160]

Structurally, there were many similarities between the OEC and the PDA. Like the PDA, the OEC had a central office in Dublin, at the Orange Hall at 49 York Street, where the committee met weekly on Wednesday

---

[159] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, on Wednesday 7th, and Thursday 8th December, 1881, in the Orange Hall, Dublin*, p. 50.

[160] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, held in the Grand Orange Hall of Ireland, 10 Rutland Square, E., Dublin, on Wednesday, the 7th, and Thursday, 8th, days of December, 1887* (Dublin, 1888), Appendix II, p. 42; Clonbrock Papers, NLI, MS 35,771 (3).

afternoons.[161] Unlike the PDA, the OEC also had an office in London, at 38 Parliament Street, Westminster, directed by Lord Crichton, MP (the earl of Erne's son), to get subscriptions for the activities of the OEC in Ireland and to perhaps lobby Gladstone's government.[162] Certainly a London connection was vital to the success of both groups, especially with the formation of the London Mansion House fund for the defence of property in Ireland in December 1881, under the initiative of the London mayor, John Whitaker Ellis.[163] Interestingly, this London Mansion House Fund raised over £18,000 for the relief of landlords in Ireland, whereas two years earlier another such fund had raised over £34,000 for the relief of farmers and labourers.[164] The London Mansion House Fund for landlord relief certainly had one of the most prestigious committees of its day, as it included six dukes, six marquesses, and eight earls.[165] Support from the mayoral fund seems to have been an integral source of funding for the PDA, as in 1882, its £13,000 contribution represented thirty-six percent of the PDA's budget, although the following year the £3,000 grant accounted for just seven percent of its budget.[166] The

---

[161] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, on Wednesday 7th, and Thursday 8th December, 1881, in the Orange Hall, Dublin,* p. 27.

[162] Irish Emergency Committee, *List of Subscriptions, received up to the 20th of October, 1881* (Dublin, 1881).

[163] *The Times* 17 Dec. 1881.

[164] Ibid., 20 Feb. 1915.

[165] *The Defence of Property in Ireland. Mansion House Fund. Reports Read at a Meeting of the Committee, On November 7th, 1882* (London, 1882), pp. 3-4.

[166] PDA, *Report of the Committee for the Year ended 30th Nov., 1882, and The Director's Report to the London Mansion House Committee, Together with an abstract of accounts, and a list of subscribers; for the same period* (Dublin, 1882); Idem, *Report of the Committee for the Thirteen months ended 31st December, 1883, and Honorary Director's Report on the*

OEC, however, was the poorer sister in its relationship with the London fund, since it only received £987 from it in 1882 and £528 for the first half of 1883.[167] Given its sectarianism, the fact that the OEC received that much money is somewhat surprising. The most likely reason why the PDA received much more funding from the London fund was its inclusiveness and non-partisanship. One could join the PDA by subscribing £5, whereas to be an OEC member one had to be elected by the GOLI.[168] This basic difference between the two landlord defence groups accounts for why the PDA was a larger and more successful organisation. Certainly the Orange Order was getting stronger since its low point of the 1850s and 1860s, following the 1850 Party Processions Act,[169] but its sectarian character, although integral to its identity, hampered its effectiveness in generating funds from outside of the Order itself. To compare the accounts of the OEC and PDA this is clear:

Operations of the Executive Department, Together with an Abstract of Accounts, and a List of Subscribers for same period (Dublin, 1884).

[167] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, held in the Corporation Hall, Coleraine, on Wednesday the 6th day of June, 1883* (Dublin, 1883), Appendix IV, p. 31.

[168] OEC circular, 10 Dec. 1880. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms P46/1/1.

[169] 13 Vict., c. 2 (12 March 1850). Aiken McClelland, 'The Later Orange Order' in T. Desmond Williams (ed.), *Secret Societies in Ireland* (Dublin, 1973), pp. 126-127.

Table 17. Receipts for OEC (Dec. 1880–Nov. 1883) and PDA (Nov. 1881-Dec 1883)[170]

Source	OEC £	s.	d.	PDA £	s.	d.
Orange Lodges in UK & abroad, & from individual Orange members	3,342	9	8		n / r	
Balance from previous account (Dec 1880 – Oct 1881)		n / r		493	1	1
General public	8,173	6	5	24,897	17	7
London Mansion House Fund	1,515	0	0	16,000	0	0
Services rendered	4,348	1	9	13,766	19	1
Sale of livestock	12	14	0	1,584	13	8
Miscellaneous	4	10	9	393	15	6
Total	**17,396**	**2**	**7**	**57,136**	**6**	**11**

From the above table it is clear the extent to which the PDA was a wealthier and more active organisation, especially bearing in mind that the PDA figures cited are only for two years whereas the OEC figures are for three. All lodge members were automatically honorary OEC members which might have dampened financial support for the organisation from with in the

[170] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, held in the Corporation Hall, Coleraine, on Wednesday the 6th day of June, 1883* (Dublin, 1883). Appendix IV, p. 31; Idem, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, held on Wednesday, the 6th, and Thursday, the 7th, days of December, 1883. In the Orange Hall, York-St., Dublin* (Dublin, 1883). Appendix II, p. 49; PDA, *Report of the Committee for the Year ended 30th Nov., 1882, and The Director's Report to the London Mansion House Committee, Together with an abstract of accounts, and a list of subscribers; for the same period* (Dublin, 1882); Idem, *Report of the Committee for the Thirteen months ended 31st December, 1883, and Honorary Director's Report on the Operations of the Executive Department, Together with an Abstract of Accounts, and a List of Subscribers for same period* (Dublin, 1884).

Lodge, since there was no fee to join.[171] In the list of subscriptions up to October 1881 there were subscriptions from groups of lodges to the OEC. Irish Orange lodges subscribed £1985 10*s.* as well as £414 3*s.* from lodges in England and Scotland and another £451 15*s.* from lodges in Australia and New Zealand.

Turning to expenditure of the two groups, Table 16 below illustrates that the PDA spent over three times as much money between 1881 and 1883 as the OEC did. As previously noted, a large part of the OEC's total expenditure was directed to arming Orangemen in 1881 – £3,474, which represented over one fifth of the total expenditure between 1881 and 1883. The PDA spent the highest percentages of its funds on labour, salaries and provisions for the men employed at all levels of the PDA, from directors and clerks to caretakers and labourers. Over one-half of its total expenditure was on wages alone. Arthur MacMurrough Kavanagh warned Courtown in January 1883 that the PDA was in danger of collapsing under financial strain and suggested to Courtown that the PDA could not maintain either Maxwell or Goddard's salaries under the current circumstances. Two months later Maxwell submitted his resignation to the PDA over the issue of his salary but was persuaded to withdraw his resignation and remain as director.[172]

---

[171] OEC circular, 10 Dec. 1880. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms P46/1/1.

[172] Kavanagh to Courtown, 22 Jan. 1883. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/109; Maxwell to Courtown, 7 May 1883. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/118; P46/1/120.

Table 18. Expenditure: OEC (Dec. 1880–Nov. 1883) and PDA (Nov. 1881–Dec. 1883)[1]

OEC Source	£	s.	d.	PDA	£	s.	d.
Wages and expenses of caretakers, labourers, bailiffs; purchase of horses, farm implements & machinery	12,037	1	3.5	Wages of administrative directors, clerks caretakers, labourers and agents	27,428	10	11
Provisions, bedding and expenses for caretakers	215	4	8.5	Board, travelling expenses, bedding, car hire & & expenses of caretakers, labourers & agents	19,197	6	10
Administrative costs and clerks' salaries	896	14	1	Administrative costs, rent and taxes	1,524	18	5
Arms and ammunition distributed to 'loyal subjects' and to OEC bailiffs and caretakers	3,497	17	0	n / r			
Money given to persons who suffered loss from the Land League	425	14	2	n / r			
n / a				Cattle purchased	1,261	18	3
n / a				Machinery & tool purchases	1,533	6	6
n / a				Legal charges	497	13	8
				Miscellaneous charges	2,534	12	4
Total	**17,072**	**11**	**3**	**Total**	**53,978**	**6**	**1**

[1] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, held in the Corporation Hall, Coleraine, on Wednesday the 6th day of June, 1883,* Appendix IV, p. 31; Idem, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, held on Wednesday, the 6th, and Thursday, the 7th, days of December, 1883,* Appendix II, p. 49; PDA, *Report of the Committee for the Year ended 30th Nov., 1882, and The Director's Report to the London Mansion House Committee, Together with an abstract of accounts, and a list of subscribers; for the same period* (Dublin, 1882); Idem, *Report of the Committee for the Thirteen months ended 31st December, 1883, and Honorary Director's Report on the Operations of the Executive Department, Together with an Abstract of Accounts, and a List of Subscribers for same period* (Dublin, 1884).

Table 19. Activities of the PDA and OEC compared, 1881-1883

i. Activities of the PDA, 1881-1883[173]

Year	Writs and notices served	Sheriff's sales attended	Caretakers supplied to farms	Bailiffs to assist at cattle seizures	Labourers supplied to boycotted farms
1881	357	708*	410	n/a	n/a
1882	257	222	660	226	324
1883	23	21	108	41	81

* Breaks down to 629 sales of the interest of farms and 79 of cattle.

ii. Activities of the OEC, 1881-1883[174]

Year	Writs and notices served	Sheriff's sales attended	Caretakers supplied to farms	Bailiffs to assist at cattle seizures	Labourers supplied to boycotted farms
1881	----- 2,000-----		n/a	n/a	n/a
1882	833	420	158	299	86
1883	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

The figures from Table 19 above point to the activity and efficiency of the OEC as the smaller of the two organisations. The OEC seems to have been

[173] PDA, *Annual Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 20th November, 1881*, p. 4; Idem, *Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 30th Nov., 1882*…., p. 9; Idem, *Report of the Committee for the Thirteen months ended 31st December, 1883*, pp. 16-17.

[174] GOLI, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, on Wednesday 7th, and Thursday 8th December, 1881, in the Orange Hall, Dublin.* Appendix VII, p. 66; Idem, *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting on Wednesday the 6th day, and Thursday, the 7th, days of December, 1882. In the Orange Hall, Dublin.* Appendix II. The figure of 2,000 in 1881 covers the service of writs and attendance of sheriffs' sales.

extremely vigorous in its role of serving writs and notices on behalf of landlords, serving 833 in 1882 compared to 257 by the PDA in the same year. It is difficult to make conclusions on OEC activities during the land war since there is much data missing, but it appears that OEC was especially committed to serving writs and sending agents to sheriffs' sales, and less focused on supplying caretakers or labourers to boycotted farms. Interestingly the two activities in which the OEC seems to have been most prominent were the two which preceded the ultimate penalty of eviction: the service of writs or notices to quit and attendance of sheriff's sales for debt. One could argue that these activities represented more offensive tactics in fighting the Land League whereas the supplying of caretakers and labourers to boycotted farms were essentially defensive and reactionary – a response to a neighbourhood boycott. The PDA activity was much more evenly spread out among the range of defence activities. While the higher numbers of caretakers employed by the PDA than numbers of sheriff's sales attended might suggest that the PDA was focused on supplying caretakers and that evictions rather than the sheriff's sales were the primary mode of landlord resistance, it must be remembered that each farm had more than one caretaker. The PDA normally supplied two to six caretakers per evicted farm and less frequently one man was employed to keep fences in repair and trespassers off the land.[175]

[175] PDA, *Report of the Committee for the Year ended 30th Nov., 1882, and The Director's Report to the London Mansion House Committee, Together with an abstract of accounts, and a list of subscribers; for the same period* (Dublin, 1882), p. 5.

Comparison of OEC and PDA with the Land League

As the OEC and PDA were established as the most practical response by the landowning class to the land agitation directed by the Land League, and in many ways developed specific functions to challenge League policies, such as sending agents to sheriff's sales to combat the programme of 'paying rent only at the point of the bayonet', it is fruitful to make a comparison of these three organisations. An immediate problem is that the OEC and PDA were open groups whose activities were reported in the press and whose annual reports were published. The League, on the other hand, although its executive committee activities were reported upon in the Dublin daily *Freeman's Journal*, has left few papers behind. Partly this was due to the dispersion of its papers following the League's suppression in October 1881, although there has been the accusation that papers were destroyed before the *Times*-Parnell commission in 1889.[176] One of the few sources of the League's central body finances is a letter from treasurer Patrick Egan in Paris to Parnell in Dublin in October 1882, printed in Davitt's *Fall of Feudalism,* roughly noting receipts and expenditure.

[176] T. W. Moody, *Davitt and Irish Revolution, 1846-82* (Oxford, 1981), p. 360.

Table 20. Receipts of Land League executive, Oct. 1879 – Oct. 1882. [177]

Item	£	s.	d.
Relief fund	59,178	14	3
Land League fund to 3 Feb. 1881	30,825	0	7
Defence fund per Land League	6,563	8	5
Defence fund per *Freeman's Journal*	14,514	0	0
Land League income 3 Feb. 1881 to Oct. 1882	129,907	0	0
Amount coupons on investments	2,582	0	0
Profit on sale of $91,000 (US) 4% bonds	1,250	0	0
Total	**244,820**	**3**	**3**

Table 21. Expenditure of Land League executive, Oct. 1879 – Oct. 1882. [178]

Item	£	s.	d.
Relief of distress	50,000	0	0
State trials of Dec. 1880 – Jan. 1881	15,000	0	0
Support of evicted tenants and general expenses	148,000	0	0
Total	**213,000**	**0**	**0**

When one compares these, admittedly rough, receipts of the League with either the OEC and PDA or even the two landlord groups combined, it is

[177] Michael Davitt, *The Fall of Feudalism in Ireland: or the story of the Land League revolution* (London, 1904), p. 373.

[178] These figures, rounded, are not as accurate as the receipts, as Egan notes in the letter: 'I have not the exact figures at the moment, as the books are in Dublin'. Ibid.

clear how much more money the League's central branch had at its disposal, and this is not surprising. The League had over a thousand local branches in Ireland with around 200,000 members along with another 200,000 members in North America and Australia passing on local subscriptions.[179] Parnell's American tour in the winter and spring of 1880 alone raised around £70,000 for relief distribution through the League and to support the agitation.[180] The PDA executive contemplated soliciting funds from the wealthier classes in America and were informed from a contact in Boston that it might be possible to target the wealthier classes there, 'who are naturally conservative, and, among whom there are many who regard the condition into which things have been allowed to drift in Ireland by the present administration with painful surprise'.[181] Philip H. Bagenal, who had recently written on the political influence of Irish-Americans in Ireland, however, was much less sanguine about this prospect when he wrote to Courtown in March 1882: 'The Americans do not in the least care for the Irish question except so far as it affects the Irish vote in America … If the PDA goes to America they will appear distinctly as a group of men who ask for money for a beaten cause which could not raise a sufficient fund in London to carry on operations across the channel'. In a dark analogy, though, Bagenal suggested they might fare better in the south: 'With regard to the Southern States you might meet

[179] Palmer, *Irish Land League Crisis*, p. 280; Moody, *Davitt and the Irish Revolution*, p. 458.

[180] Moody, *Davitt and the Irish Revolution*, p. 356.

[181] George Chase to earl of Meath, 20 Feb. 1882. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/96.

with more sympathy inasmuch as the fate of the slaveholders nearly resemble that of the landlords in Ireland'.[182] The PDA did not end up seeking American funds.

Clearly the PDA and OEC could not compete with the Land League for funding or influence, but with the resources they did have they were effective in their limited goals. The use of defence groups successfully countered the effects of the Land League at every point in which League activities threatened landlord interests: initiating legal proceedings to enforce rent payment, guarding evicted holdings and labouring on the land where it had been boycotted. Although landlords expected the government to uphold the ordinary law and protect life and property and wanted the government to maintain its extraordinary powers in relation to the control of arms and suspension of *habeas corpus*, once landlords realised the government's inability or unwillingness to halt the agitation they combined to defend their own interests. Interestingly, both Gladstone and Forster privately supported the notion of landlords combining for defence. As already noted, in 1880 Gladstone found it hard to fathom that the aristocratic class had not organised and put up a fight against the land agitation.[183] Privately, Forster was very supportive of the landlord defence movement in general and the PDA in particular. In early December 1881, he wrote to Gladstone: 'I entirely approve

---

[182] Bagenal to Courtown, 2 Mar. 1882. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1/99. Bagenal's *The American Irish and their influence in Irish politics* was published in 1882.

[183] (copy of) Gladstone to Forster, 18 Dec. 1880. Gladstone Papers, BL ADD 44158 fol. 76.

of the Property Defence Association as an Irish movement. It has not been so energetically managed as the Orange Emergency Committee but it is free from the partisan character of the latter. If I were an Irishman I should feel it my duty to join it'.[184] Forster saw the PDA as an Irish movement and queried whether the English should interfere into the battle between landlords and tenants in Ireland. 'Is it desirable' he asked Gladstone, 'for England to interfere in an Irish class struggle?' He answered by noting the American support of the land agitation, and suggested that if the Americans propped up one side of the conflict, why should not the English prop up the other?[185] Forster went as far as to suggest to Gladstone that a telegram should be sent to the London mayor stating that either the Irish government, or Forster personally, 'considers the Property Defence Association a justifiable movement and believes that Irishmen do right to join it'.[186]

In the long term, and related to this last point, the activities of the Emergency Committee marked a resurgence of the Orange Order into a more prominent role in the political life of Ulster, and a closer identification between the interests of Ulster landowners and the Order. With the campaign of the more overtly political National League in Ulster in 1883, many of the protestant interests in Ulster, both landlord and tenant, more easily coalesced behind the Tory party.

---

[184] Forster to Gladstone, 7 Dec. 1881. Gladstone Papers, BL ADD 44158 fol. 126.

[185] Ibid.

[186] Ibid.

The activities of the PDA and OEC were indicative of a much more vigorous collective landlord response than is normally supposed of that class. Although they were slow to mobilise in defense of their interests, and the broader aim of ensuring the maintenance of society by protecting and enforcing property rights, once the defense groups were operational, landowners were more commonly united in purpose as a class than they had been for decades. This growing class unity and experience in collective protection would be needed for the forthcoming challenges of the plan of campaign and the home rule crisis.

Chapter 7:

Conclusion: Why did landlords lose the land war?

Throughout this study the argument has been made that landowners were much more effective in their responses to the land agitation than has normally been accorded to them. Both in the public sphere, by attempting to influence public opinion, and in the private sphere, by combating the land agitation on their estates, landlords vigorously defended their collective interests. Through the energetic use of the PDA and OEC, landlords combated the strategies of the Land League to thwart their rights of land ownership. While landlords still evicted several thousand tenants during the land war, this was not done nearly on the scale of the famine, and points, on the one hand, to a successful moratorium on evicted farms in the community fostered by the Land League, and on the other, to the use of sheriffs' sales as another strategy to induce recalcitrant tenants to pay their rents. This is corroborated by the significant finding that, contrary to contemporary rhetoric and current historiography, there was not a general withholding of rents during the land war; in fact, rents were very well paid considering the extent of the agricultural depression affecting Ireland and the United Kingdom as a whole. This finding needs to be taken into consideration in future assessments of the effectiveness of the Land League during the land war.

The use of PDA and OEC men to enforce property rights successfully challenged the 'rent at the point of the bayonet' strategy, particularly regarding

the sales of the interests of farms. The interest of four farms, for example, were bought by the PDA at a sale on 8 June 1881 and three days later the conveyance was made to transfer the holding by the sheriff. Ejectment proceedings were to begin the following week to complete the transfer of the holding to the purchaser, resulting in the local League representative coming to terms with the PDA, paying around £5 in costs per farm on behalf of the tenants who faced ejectment. As *The Times* queried: 'It is hard to understand why the Land League should persist in advising the tenants to play what is manifestly a losing game when proceedings are taken to enforce the landlord's rights.'[1]

Through the examination of rents, abatements, evictions, and sheriffs' sales during the land war, it is clear that landlords successfully used legal strategies to enforce their property rights. The use of sheriffs' sales was a novel method for breaking the resistance of tenants who held out against paying rent, especially when it became increasingly difficult for landlords to let farms from which tenants had been evicted for the non-payment of rent. Sheriffs' sales also had the advantage of not solely being a method of debt recovery for landlords, and therefore were less likely to draw the ire of the community and even parliament.

If landlords effectively combined to protect their class interests, and forced the payment of rent on their estates, why did they lose the land war? While the PDA and OEC were not as powerful, did not have as many

[1] *The Times*, 14 June 1881.

resources, or as many branches as the Land League, the two landlord groups successfully minimized the effects of the League. Where labour was boycotted, emergency men were brought in to reap, transport and sell the crop. Where local process servers were intimidated into refusing to serve summonses, emergency servers were found and delivered the processes under police guard. Where the community placed a ban on anyone renting a farm from which a tenant had been evicted, armed caretakers were found to protect the land, buildings and fences and to present a visible symbol of the landlord's determination to enforce his property rights. Where sheriffs' sales might be aborted for lack of bidders, agents were sent to force tenants to bid for their own livestock or farm interest, or let them go to the emergency men. These efforts were instrumental in checking the power of the Land League but did not defeat it.

There were approximately 6,500 landowners of 500 acres or more and roughly 500,000 tenant farmers at the time of the land war.[2] The Land League had over a thousand branches throughout the country and a membership of around 200,000.[3] It is difficult to estimate the total number of PDA and ILC branches, as they were sometimes combined into one local organisation. The number of defence branches was probably 150, with a combined membership of both organisations of roughly 4,000. Despite such a numerical disadvantage, landlord defence groups were remarkably effective in protecting

---

[2] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, p. 6.

[3] Palmer, *Irish Land League Crisis*, p. 280; Moody, *Davitt and the Irish Revolution*, p. 458.

their estates and farming interest throughout the land war. The Land League did not defeat landlords. Rents were paid, crops were harvested, and recalcitrant tenants had their cattle seized and sold or they were summoned to court for non-payment of rent. The basic functions of estates and the landowning business continued.

Landlords did not lose the land war on the battleground of their estates but ultimately in the corridors of parliament. The Liberal government's 1881 land law act was most responsible for ending the land agitation directed by the Land League, since it held out the prospect of lower rents which smaller tenant farmers wanted above all else. Gladstone himself was a rather late convert to accepting the 'Three F's', the central feature of the eventual legislation. According to Allen Warren, 'it was Fixity of Tenure which Gladstone found most difficult to accept, undermining as it did in his view the ultimate right of the landlord to control his own property, which he saw as the basic moral and social foundation of the landed system'.[4] However hesitant Gladstone had been to curb the property rights of Irish landowners, he had overcome this obstacle by early 1881 and introduced the land law bill to halt the land agitation in Ireland. The agitation in March and April 1881 was not waning and it was highly unlikely that it would cease without some legislative palliative. The 1881 land law bill was a political and social expedient; Lord Ardilaun was surely correct when in 1881 he called it 'a sop to Cerebus.'[5]

---

[4] Allen Warren, 'Forster, the Liberals and New Directions in Irish Policy, 1880-1882' in *Parliamentary History,* vol. 6, pt. I (1987), p. 106.

[5] Ardilaun to the editor. *The Times* 13 Oct. 1881.

W. E. Forster and Gladstone's mission to pacify Ireland was based on assumptions that landlords had to be restrained in the manner in which they exercised their property rights. The compensation for disturbance bill introduced in June 1880 aimed to restrain landowners in prescribed districts from evicting tenants who could not pay their rents because of the agricultural depression. The landowner-dominated House of Lords defeated the bill in August 1880 in an assertive gesture against the Liberal administration's floundering policy on law and order in Ireland, particularly the decision not to renew coercion in the summer of that year.

While the defeat of the compensation for disturbance bill could have been a rallying event for landlords to become more assertive in the protection of their class interests, it was not. Immediately following the bill's defeat, the Irish Land Committee presented its evidence before the Richmond commission, and although the commission looked favourably upon the actions of Irish landowners based on the ILC's data, its report was not influential. The commission had been appointed under Beaconsfield but reported under Gladstone, who, in the meantime, had appointed his own royal commission to examine landlord and tenant relations that eventually reported in January 1881, and which became the tenant farmers' riposte. It was only in the winter of 1880 that landlords took the active steps to challenge the Land League. The formation of the PDA and OEC in December 1880 proved to be the most effective collective actions taken by landlords during the land war, and although the two organisations successfully challenged the tactics of the

Land League, they did so too late. By the time these defence groups began effective operations in the spring of 1881, Gladstone was framing legislation to significantly curb the very powers landlords were fighting to enforce.

The 1881 land law act, however, was not unwittingly thrust upon landlords. Irish landlords were instrumental in defeating the compensation for disturbance bill in August 1880 but they could not muster support to defeat the land law bill in 1881. Most Irish landlords were Conservative, but the Conservative party opposition was particularly weak in early 1881 following the death of Beaconsfield on 19 April, 1881. Many Ulster Tory MPs supported the legislation because of the belief that its provisions would not substantially alter existing practices on the majority of Ulster estates where tenant-right was so prevalent.[6] However, many more MPs supported the bill because defeating it might intensify the land agitation. As Thompson concluded: 'the Irish conservatives were, in the final analysis, more fearful of the consequences of defeating the bill than of it being passed'.[7]

This study has shown how landlords were successful in combating the Land League and forcing the payment of rents on their estates. However, the cost of this success, in terms of the resources needed to supply armed caretakers and police-escorted process deliverers, as well as the wider public support both in Ireland and England, contributed to the ultimate loss of political support for the landlords' cause. While this study has stressed that principle, rather than monetary cost, was often paramount in the motivation

[6] Thompson, 'Attitudes to Reform', p. 333.
[7] Ibid., p. 338.

behind the enforcement of property rights for landowners during the land war, this was not sustainable in the longer term. The passage of the land law bill, even after the myriad of amendments, illustrated a consensus that the land agitation had to be stopped. While many landowners viewed the land law act as eroding their property rights, it did curb the land agitation by providing what tenant farmers really wanted: lower rents.

The Liberal government's land law act satisfied smaller tenant farmers but demoralised landowners throughout the United Kingdom. The establishment of tribunals to set legally-binding rents appropriated a fundamental part of landownership. The argument has been made, however, that this was not necessarily a bad thing. If agricultural prices had steadily climbed during the 1880s, a fixed rent for fifteen years might have been desirable as it would have more or less guaranteed steady payment of rents during this period, and judicial rents eventually might even have been raised.[8] Vaughan has argued that prospects might have been much better for the longevity and position of landowners in Irish society if agricultural prices had improved: 'It is possible that the land war might have been only an incident in the history of landlord-tenant relations, if it had not coincided with a decisive turning-point in agricultural incomes'.[9] Agricultural prices, however, did not improve and the decline of Irish landowners was part of a general European decline in landed elites from the 1880s.[10]

---

[8] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, p. 227.
[9] Ibid., pp. 226-227.
[10] Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, pp. 26-28.

The victory of the Land League agitation for lower rents during the 1879-82 period was, of course, neither the end of tenant-farmer agitation nor the end of the landlord defence movement. The defence of landowners' interest in Ireland following the land war continued over the next twenty years but with diminishing returns. The Irish Defence Union was formed in London in 1885 to assist boycotted landowners and publicise attacks on landowners. The Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union, also established in 1885, was a lobbyist and propaganda group pledged to protect the union. The Irish Landowner's Convention, formed in 1887, under the chairmanship of the duke of Abercorn, also lobbied in Westminster when bills touching Irish land laws were tabled.[11] Both of these groups carried on essentially the same activities as the Irish Land Committee did in trying to defend the causes of Irish landlords in public and parliamentary opinion.

While this study has examined collective landlord defense by focusing on three landlord groups, there are several other groups worthy of attention. In the summer of 1882 Arthur MacMurrough Kavanagh established the Land Corporation of Ireland, a joint-stock company, which bought and leased evicted holdings from landlords which could not be re-let, and where landlords were desirous of working their farms, capital was advanced so that

[11] Curtis, 'Landlord Responses to the Irish Land War', pp. 182-185. Curtis notes that the Irish Landowner's Convention was active until the first world war, but his claim that it was the longest-lived landlord organisation must go to the Property Defence Association which was established in 1881 and was active until at least 1919.

the landlord could stock the farm.[12] The corporation also took an active role in combating estate combinations withholding rents during the 'plan of campaign'. On The O'Grady's county Limerick estate in 1887, for example, the corporation took over farming operations, stocked the estate, undertook all farming expenses and paid The O'Grady seventy-five percent of the net profit as rent, on condition that he did not settle with his tenants other than on terms approved by the Corporation.[13] Kavanagh's Land Corporation again illustrates that landowners were not moribund but did develop innovative and practical solutions to the problems resulting from the longer term effects of the land agitation, and deserves more study.[14]

The role of women in the landlord defence movement was largely absent from this study, and although it was natural for male landowners to take the most active and open fight against the agrarian agitation, there is room to study the role of women. One of the most fascinating landlord defence organisations was one which focused solely on the plight of women landlords. The Association for the Relief of Ladies in Distress through Non-Payment of Rent in Ireland was established in Dublin on 28 October 1881 with the object of providing relief to widows or unmarried landowners whose incomes had failed due to the non-payment of rent. Nothing seems to be written on this popular association which was headed by Countess Cowper,

---

[12] *The Times*, 24 June, 1881; Land Corporation circular 3 June 1882, Castletown Papers, NLI Ms 35,321 (4).

[13] Laurence Geary, *The Plan of Campaign, 1886-1891* (Cork, 1986), pp. 102-103.

[14] Curtis briefly discussed the Land Corporation in his study. 'Landlord Responses to the Irish Land War, 1879-87', pp. 181-82.

wife of the Lord Lieutenant, and to which Gladstone and his wife donated £60 and Queen Victoria herself donated £200.[15] The association had 300 claims in its first two months of operations and by November 1882 it had raised over £36,000 of which over £15,000 was remitted from the lord mayor of London's Mansion House fund.[16]

Another fruitful area of inquiry for further study of the collective landlord defence groups would be to examine in more detail the leadership of the defence movements to determine to what extent the same men were leaders in various groups. L. P. Curtis raised this idea with a few lines in his study of landlord defence groups but only listed a few names.[17] Wicklow landowner Wentworth Erck established the Irish Landlords and Incumbrancers' Association in 1885 as a coalition of groups with vested interests in Irish land and he had also been treasurer of the Property Defence Association and the confidant of the president, the earl of Courtown.[18] Luke Gerald Dillon, 4th Baron Clonbrock, was the pivotal figure of landlord defence in County Galway, establishing branches of the PDA and ILC, and later became chairman of the Irish Landowners Convention. Indeed, a study of Dillon would make for insightful understanding of landlord defence movements at the local levels from 1880 to 1915.

---

[15] *The Times*, 29 Oct. 1881; 8 Dec. 1881; 13 Dec. 1881. In December 1881 the lord mayor of London established his own fund for the relief of women landowners in distress from the non-payment of rent. See *The Times* 20 and 22 Dec. 1881.

[16] *The Times,* 5 Jan. 1882; 3 Nov. 1882. The association was still in operation in 1888. See *The Times*, 8 June 1888.

[17] Curtis, 'Landlord Responses to the Irish Land War, 1879-87', p. 186.

[18] See for correspondence between Erck and Courtown. Courtown Papers, TCD Ms. P46/1-324.

It is hoped that this study of the response of landlords to the Irish land war has helped fill a glaring gap in the historiography of the Irish land question in general and the land war in particular. Much more should be written on the decline of the landed elite in Ireland, Britain and the continent. While David Cannadine's *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (1996) was a masterful narrative of the decline of the landed elite in the United Kingdom, primarily England, there is a need for further comparative analysis initiated with David Spring's editorship of *European Landed Elites in the Nineteenth Century* (1977) and Ralph Gibson and Martin Blinkhorn's editorship of *Landownership and Power in Modern Europe* (1991).

Appendix 1: Rental, acres, valuation, and number of tenants on the estates used in this study

Name	*County*	*Estate Name*	*Acres*	*†Valuation (£)*	*Rental (£)*	*Tenants*
Antrim	Antrim	North	(34,292)*	(20,837)*	12,291	1,150
Antrim	Antrim	South	(34,292)*	(20,837)*	3,765	510
Belmore	Fermanagh	-----	5,041	3,474	2,076	117
Brooke	Wexford	-----	5,797	2,676	3,185	-----
Bruen	Wexford	-----	6,932	3,288	4,310	266
Clements	Leitrim	Lough Rynn	-----	-----	6,501	-----
Clements	Leitrim	Manorhamilton	5,750	(11,442)*	4,654	-----
Clonbrock	Galway	Clonbrock	(28,246)*	(11,442)*	3,177	253
Clonbrock	Galway	Doone	(28,246)*	(11,442)*	580	20
Clonbrock	Galway	Pallas	(28,246)*	(11,442)*	308	1
Clonbrock	Galway	Ballydonelan	(28,246)*	(11,442)*	2601	127

** Figures in brackets represent the total estate figure which cannot accurately be broken-down into the smaller estate units*
----- No information available/ not relevant
†Valuation includes buildings and lands

Name	*County*	*Estate Name*	*Acres*	*†Valuation (£)*	*Rental (£)*	*Tenants*
Clonbrock	Galway	Quansburry	(28,246)*	(11,442)*	2617	121
Cloncurry	Limerick		5,137	2,563	3,783	85
Cloncurry	Kildare		6,121	6,202	5,462	-----
Dopping-Hepenstal	Longford	-----	-----	-----	697	-----
Erne	Fermanagh	-----	31,389	17,039	14,460	768
Headfort	Cavan	-----	14,251	9,011	8,682	500
Headfort	Meath	Meath	(7,443)*	(10,188)*	4,037	-----
Headfort	Meath	Ardamagh	(7,443)*	(7,443)*	1,241	-----
Humphrys	Cavan	-----	5,146	4,010	4,292	280
Humphrys	Westmeath	-----	3,164	1,719	2,678	110
Humphrys	Wexford	-----	1,398	517	912	45
Johnston	Galway		1,139	406		44

** Figures in brackets represent the total estate figure which cannot accurately be broken-down into the smaller estate units*
----- No information available/ not relevant
† Valuation includes buildings and lands

Name	*County*	*Estate Name*	*Acres*	*†Valuation (£)*	*Rental (£)*	*Tenants*
Johnston	Leitrim		217	129		
Kenmare	Cork	-----	22,000	3,497	3,343	250
Kenmare	Kerry	-----	91,000	25,252	27,313	1,720
Kenmare	Limerick	-----	4,800	5,724	6,895	290
Mansfield	Limerick	-----	-----	-----	444	5
Pratt	Cavan	-----	8,095	5,285	6,005	562
Ross Mahon	Galway	-----	8,619	3,788	4,067	290
Scott	Donegal	-----	815	358	593	80
Shirley	Monaghan	-----	26,386	20,744	20,897	-----
Tighe	Wicklow	-----	3,456	2,538	2,415	70
Whyte	Roscommon	-----	1,293	934	1,043	-----

** Figures in brackets represent the total estate figure which cannot accurately be broken-down into the smaller estate units*
----- No information available/ not relevant
† Valuation includes buildings and lands

Appendix 2: Abatements on Twenty-two Estates

Abatements are given as percentages of the annual rents due

Year	Brooke	Bruen	Clements Leitrim	Clonbrock	Cloncurry Kildare	Cloncurry Limerick
1877	7				0.5	0.2
1878	1	2.6			2	0.2
1879	3		10		0.4	0.1
1880	2	15.8	14	2.5	8	3
1881	2	9.7	52	5	1	0.8
1882	2	12.5	14	4.5	0.4	0.9
1883	12	7.7		3		
1884	12.5			2		

Year	Erne Fermanagh	Headfort Ardamagh	Headfort's Meath	Headfort's Cavan	Humphry's Cavan	Humphry's Westmeath
1877		0	0.3	4		
1878		0	0.3	2		
1879		20	0.3	2		
1880	3.4	15	0.3	0.5		
1881		47	0.3	8	7	18
1882		26	0.7	4	13	14
1883		14	0.3	4		
1884						

Appendix 2: Abatements on Twenty-two Estates

Abatements are given as percentages of the annual rents due

Year	Humphry's Wexford	Kenmare Cork	Kenmare Kerry	Kenmare Limerick	Mansfield Limerick	Year
1877			0.06			1877
1878			0.2			1878
1879		0.3	0.2	6.5	1	1879
1880		0.4	5	4	0	1880
1881	17	4	3		4	1881
1882	15				1.5	1882
1883					2	1883
1884					2	1884

Year	Pratt Cavan	Shirley Monaghan	St George Johnston	Tighe Wicklow	Whyte Roscommon	Year
1877						1877
1878						1878
1879				2		1879
1880		4	8.5	0.7	6	1880
1881	13	3	11	0.7	6	1881
1882	3			22	11	1882
1883				0.4		1883
1884				17		1884

Appendix 2: Abatements on Twenty-two Estates

Abatements are given as percentages of the annual rents due

Year	Humphry's Wexford	Kenmare Cork	Kenmare Kerry	Kenmare Limerick	Mansfield Limerick	Year
1877			0.06			1877
1878			0.2			1878
1879		0.3	0.2	6.5	1	1879
1880		0.4	5	4	0	1880
1881	17	4	3		4	1881
1882	15				1.5	1882
1883					2	1883
1884					2	1884

Year	Pratt Cavan	Shirley Monaghan	St George Johnston	Tighe Wicklow	Whyte Roscommon	Year
1877						1877
1878						1878
1879				2		1879
1880		4	8.5	0.7	6	1880
1881	13	3	11	0.7	6	1881
1882	3			22	11	1882
1883				0.4		1883
1884				17		1884

Appendix 3: Rents on Thirty-one Estates

Rents received are given as percentages of the annual rents due

Year	Antrim North Estate	Antrim South Estate	Brooke	Bruen	Clements Leitrim	Clonbrock Ballydonelan
1877	98	98		98		
1878	97	94		96		
1879	87	90		80	80	
1880	94	96		99	85	98
1881	93	88	95	93	119	95
1882	99	105	90	97	104	98
1883	106	103	98	81		99
1884			103			98

Year	Clonbrock Clonbrock	Clonbrock Doone	Clonbrock Pallas	Clonbrock Quansburry	Cloncurry Kildare	Cloncurry Limerick
1877					97	95
1878					95	98
1879					97	97
1880	88	98	100	98	88	92
1881	91	99	100	95	96	60
1882	99	100	100	102	95	56
1883	98	99	100	98	66	67
1884	97	99	100	99	98	60

Appendix 3 Rents on Thirty-one Estates

Rents received are given as percentages of the annual rents due

Year	Dop.-Hep.Longford	Erne Fermanagh	Headfort Ardamagh	Headfort Cavan	Headfort Meath	Humphry Cavan
1877	97	88	81	90	97	
1878	94	105	78	92	99	
1879	87	100	41	77	82	
1880	79	98	70	100	96	
1881	71	101	79	85	90	103
1882	33	125	140	97	88	122
1883		113	101	96	102	
1884		101				

Year	Humphry Westmeath	Humphry Wexford	Kenmare Cork	Kenmare Kerry	Kenmare Limerick	Mansfield Limerick
1877						
1878						96
1879			86	87	92	93
1880			79	86	57	95
1881	108	104				87
1882	122	111				132
1883						
1884						

Appendix 3: Rents on Thirty-one Estates

Rents received are given as percentages of the annual rents due

Year	Pratt Cavan	Ross Mahon Galway	Scott Dongeal	Shirley Monaghan	St George Johnston	Tighe Wickl	Year
1877		99	103	99			1877
1878		99	97	79			1878
1879		98	93	98		93	1879
1880	85	93	91	90	42	85	1880
1881	91	91	105	84	31	85	1881
1882	78	88	102	121		114	1882
1883		94				92	1883
1884						108	1884

Year	Whyte Roscommon	Year
1877		1877
1878	74	1878
1879	60	1879
1880	94	1880
1881	69	1881
1882	106	1882
1883		1883
1884		1884

Appendix 4: Arrears on Twenty-eight Estates

Arrears are given as percentages of the annual rents due

Year	Antrim North Estate	Antrim South Estate	Brooke Wexford	Bruen Wexford	Clements Leitrim	Clonbrock Ballydonelan
1877	2	7		26		
1878	2	3		27		
1879	4	7		31	33	
1880	15	14		51	48	6
1881	16	13	49	51	68	7
1882	21	24	43	56	13	13
1883	17	14	54	59		13
1884			43			4

Year	Clonbrock Clonbrock	Clonbrock Doone	Clonbrock Pallas	Clonbrock Quansburry	Cloncurry Limerick	Dopp.-Hep. Longford
1877						0
1878					8	1
1879					6	11
1880	14	2	0	7	1	21
1881	23	5	0	10	5	29
1882	32	5	0	15	42	66
1883	19	2	0	5	14	
1884	20	2	0	7		

Appendix 4: Arrears on Twenty-eight Estates

Arrears are given as percentages of the annual rents due

Year	Erne Fermanagh	Headfort Ardamagh	Headfort Cavan	Headfort Meath	Humphrys Cavan	Humphrys Westmeath
1877	14	5	8	9		
1878	26	41	12	9		
1879	20	110	26	8		
1880	39	221	44	35		
1881	40	225	44	28	42	56
1882	38	264	53	52	52	51
1883	13	75	29	43	12	6
1884	6				12	11

Year	Humphrys Wexford	Kenmare Cork	Kenmare Kerry	Kemnare Limerick	Mansfield Limerick	Pratt Cavan
1877		2	5	3		
1878		3	5	9	4	
1879		15	9	14	7	
1880		55	37	30	5	127
1881	25	72	88	73	13	164
1882	28				41	187
1883	5					
1884	9					

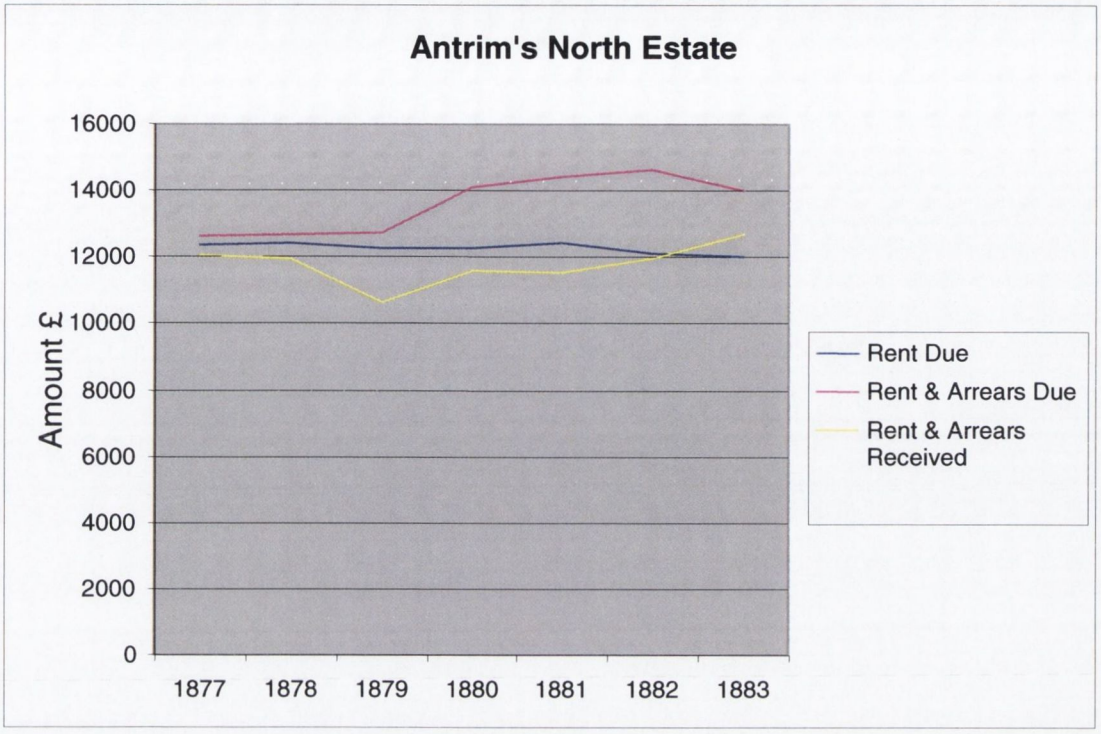
Appendix 4: Arrears on Twenty-eight Estates

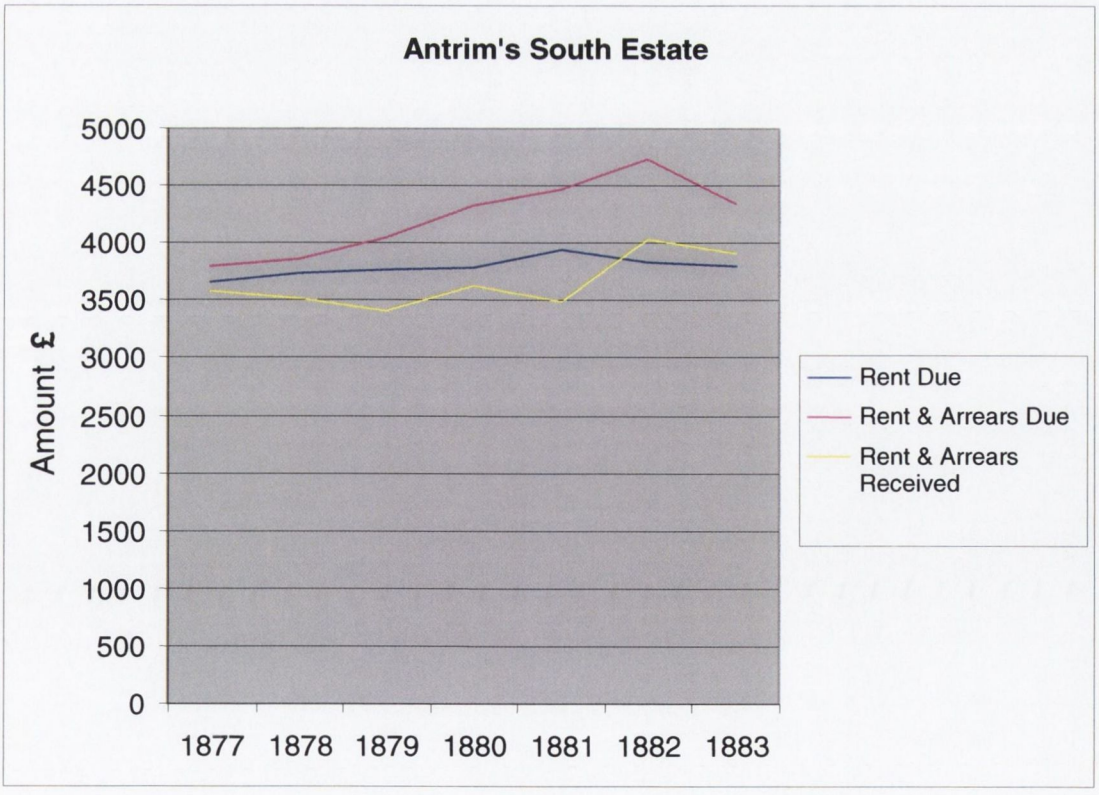
Arrears are given as percentages of the annual rents due

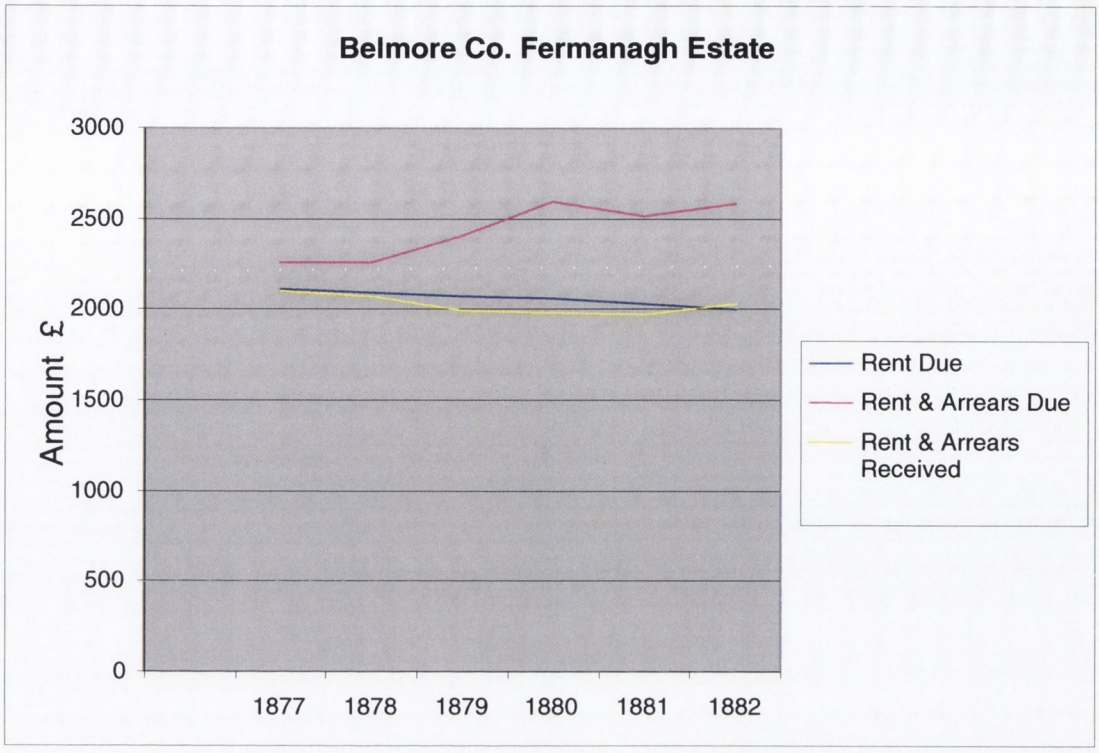
Year	Ross Mahon Galway	Scott Donegal	Shirley Monaghan	Tighe Wicklow
1877	3	148	15	
1878	3	128	22	
1879	3	150	57	33
1880	5	155	74	40
1881	17	156	84	40
1882	25	29	93	56
1883	21			45
1884				60

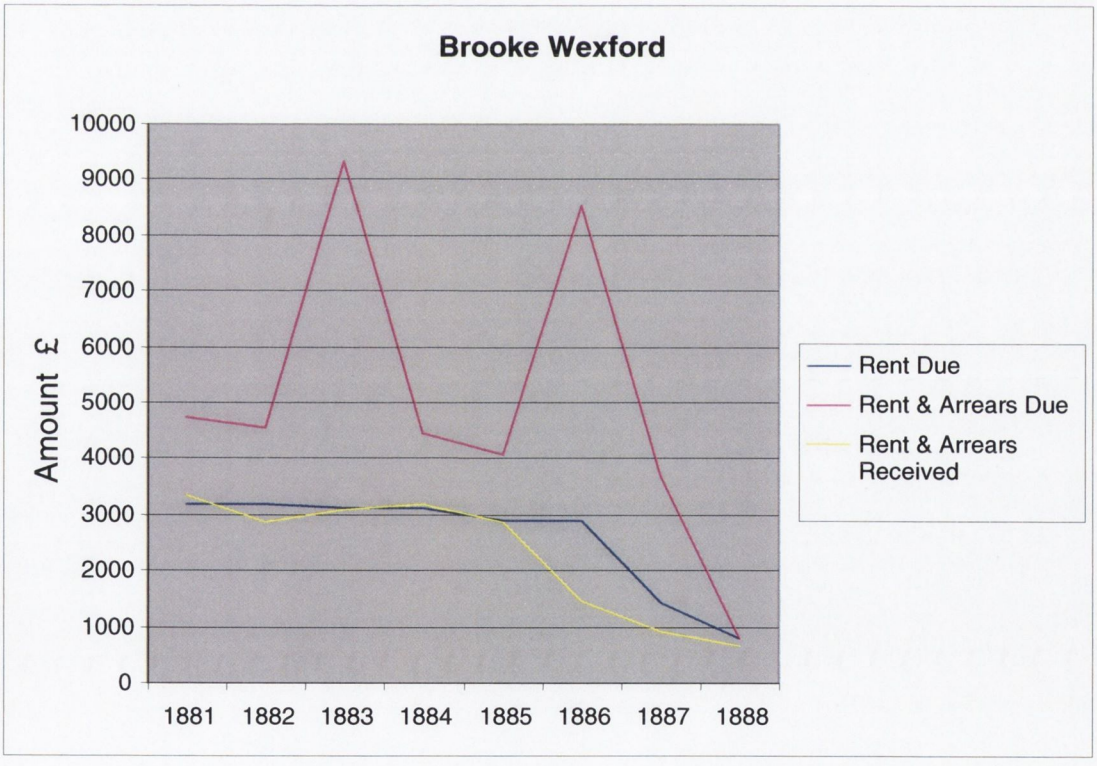
Year	Whyte Roscommon
1877	
1878	5
1879	12
1880	0
1881	8
1882	38
1883	
1884	

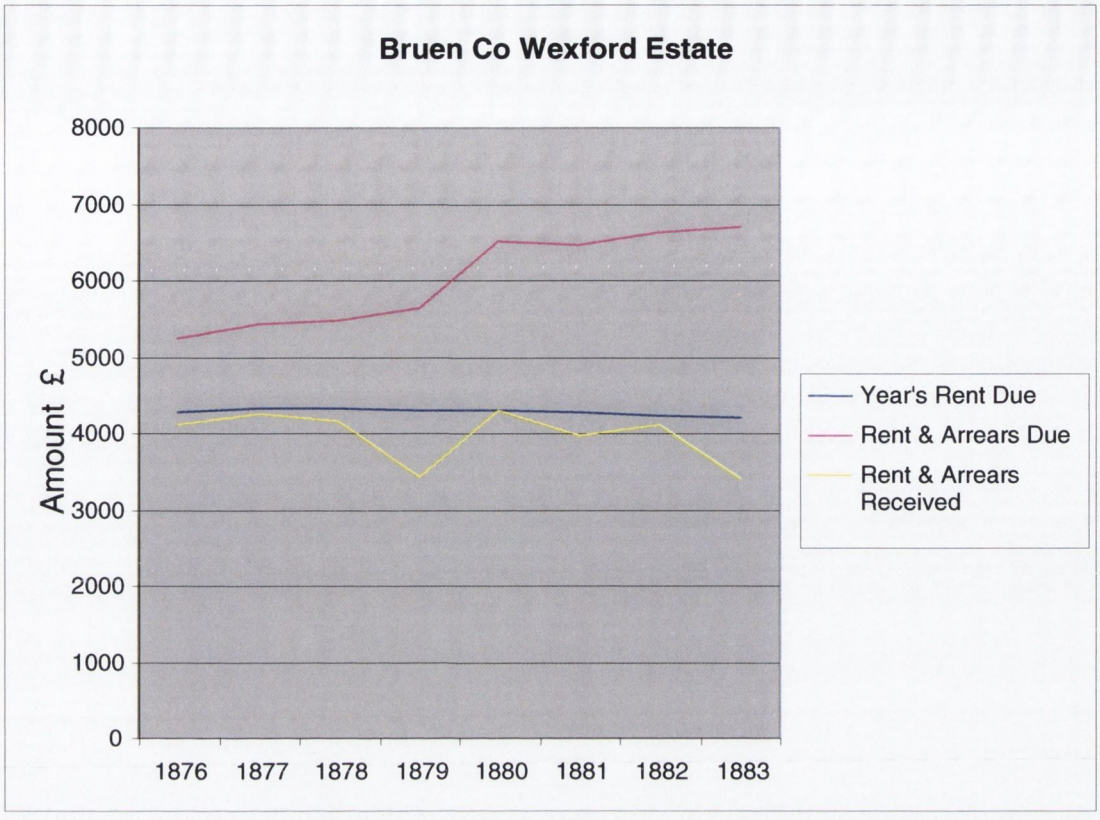
Appendix 5: Rent receipts and arrears on estates used in this study



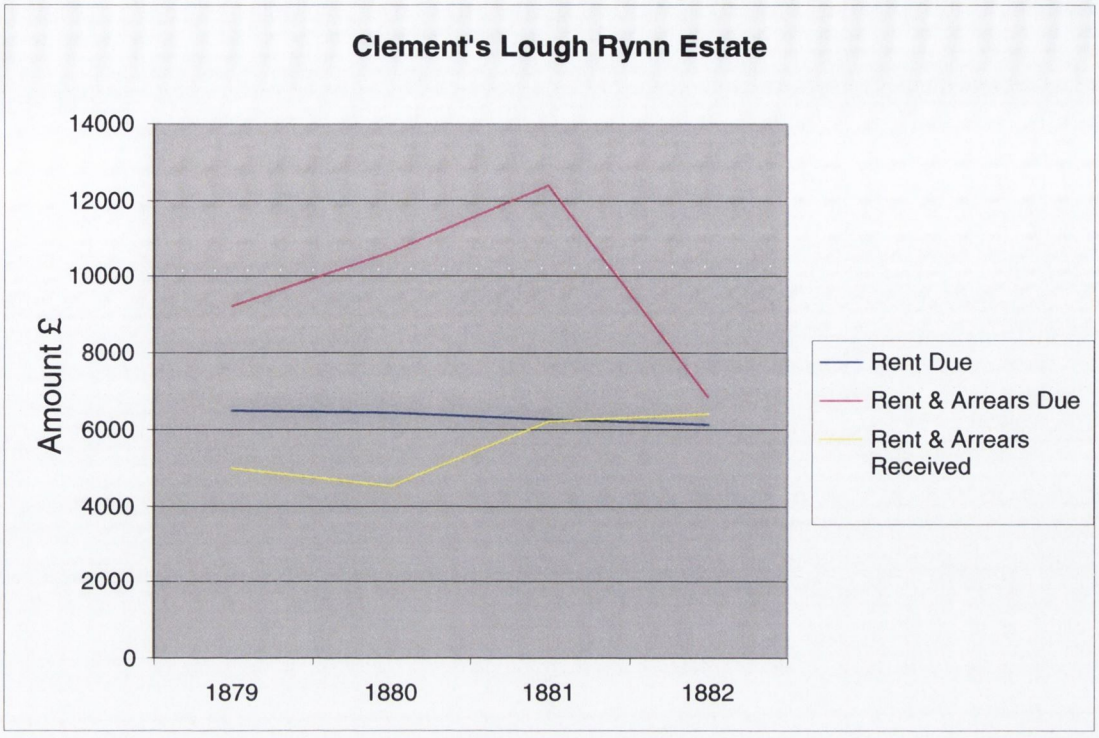


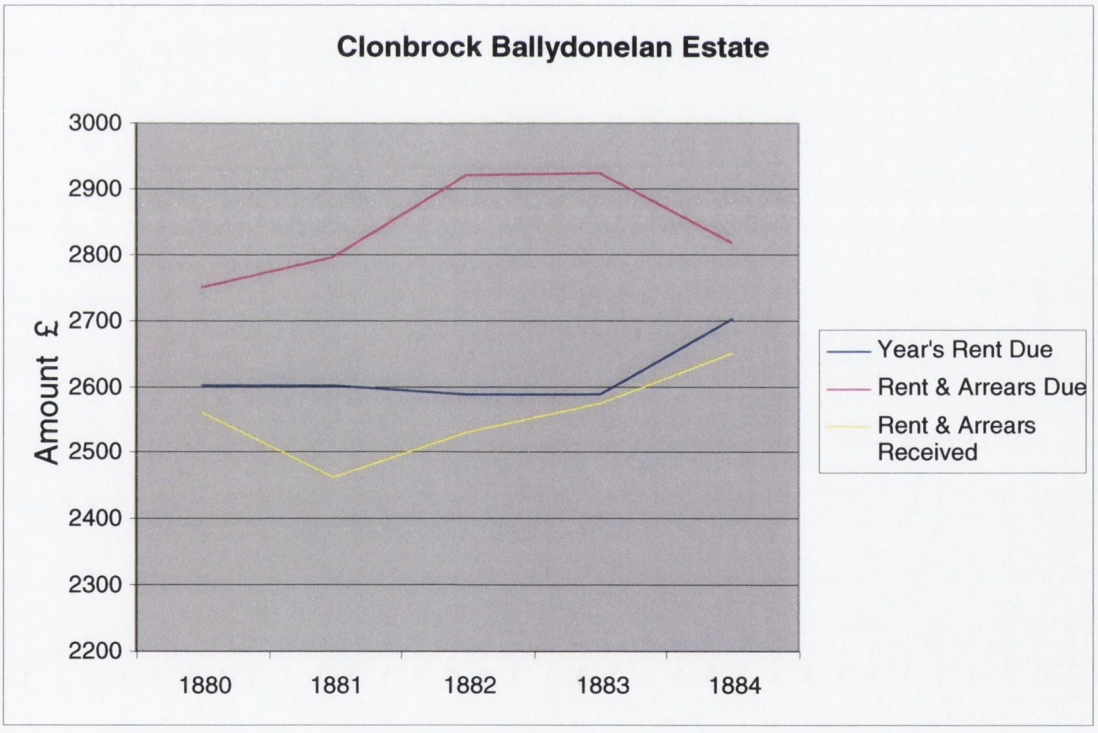

Belmore Co. Fermanagh Estate
Amount £
3000
2500
2000
1500
1000
500
0
1877
1878
1879
1880
1881
1882
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

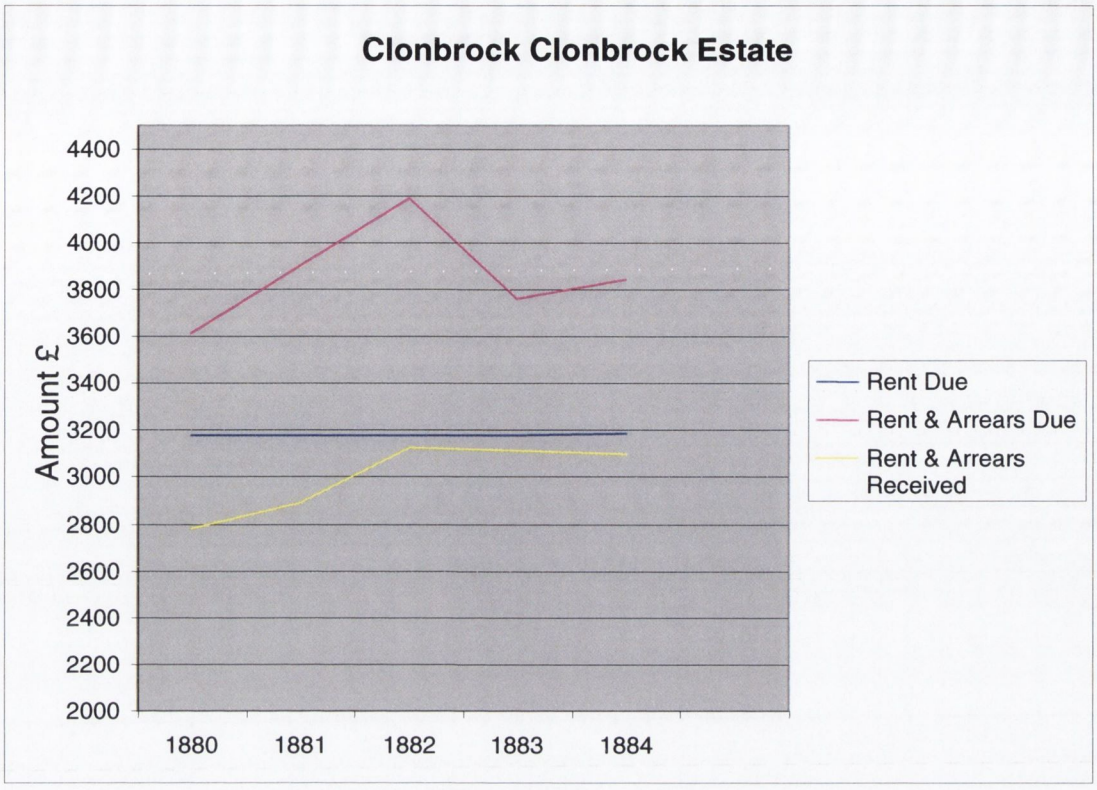

Brooke Wexford
Amount £
10000
9000
8000
7000
6000
5000
4000
3000
2000
1000
0
1881
1882
1883
1884
1885
1886
1887
1888
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

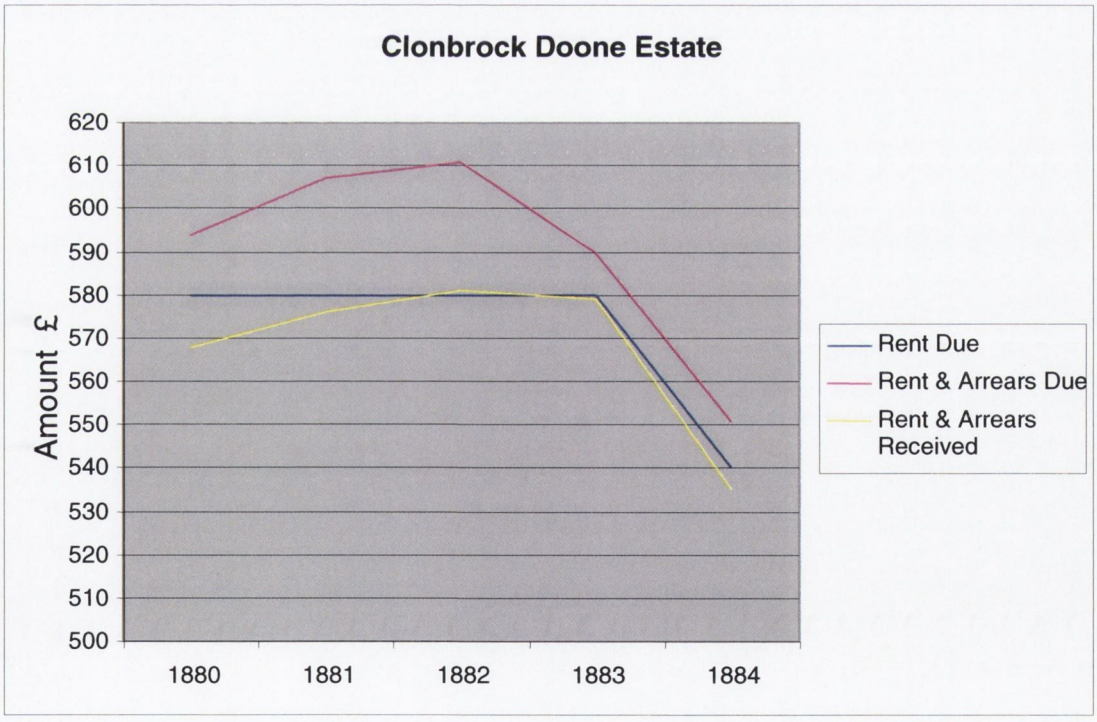

Bruen Co Wexford Estate
Amount £
8000
7000
6000
5000
4000
3000
2000
1000
0
1876
1877
1878
1879
1880
1881
1882
1883
Year's Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

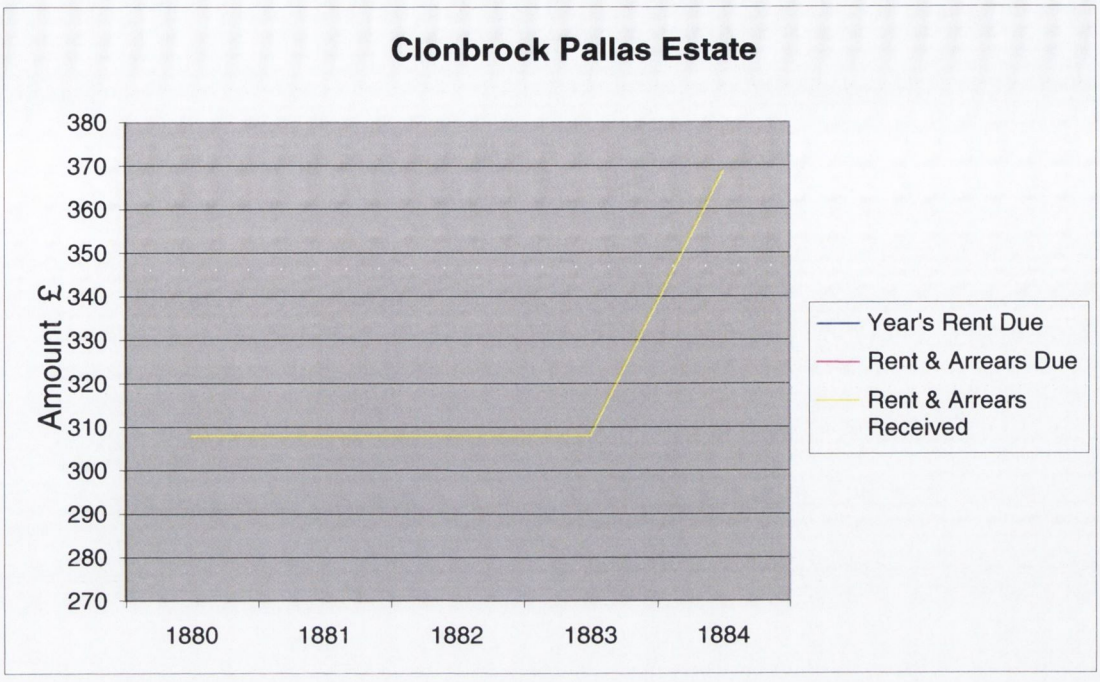
Clements' Co. Leitrim Estates
Amount £
20000
18000
16000
14000
12000
10000
8000
6000
4000
2000
0
1879
1880
1881
1882
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

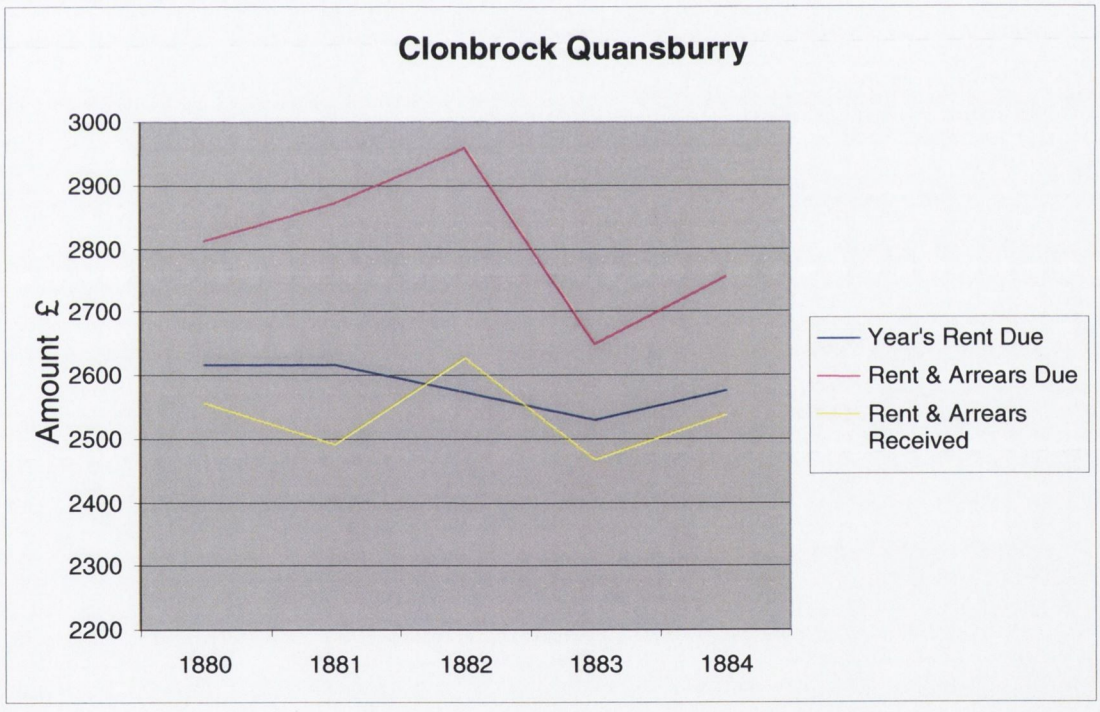

Clement's Lough Rynn Estate
Amount £
14000
12000
10000
8000
6000
4000
2000
0
1879
1880
1881
1882
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

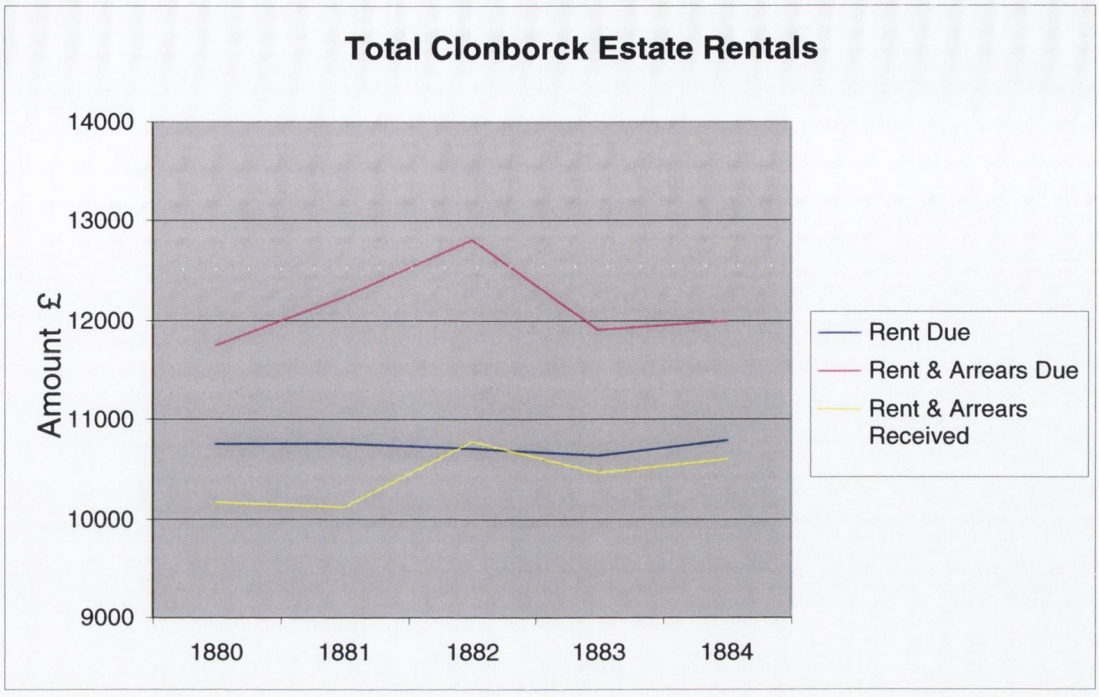

Clonbrock Ballydonelan Estate
Amount £
3000
2900
2800
2700
2600
2500
2400
2300
2200
1880
1881
1882
1883
1884
Year's Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

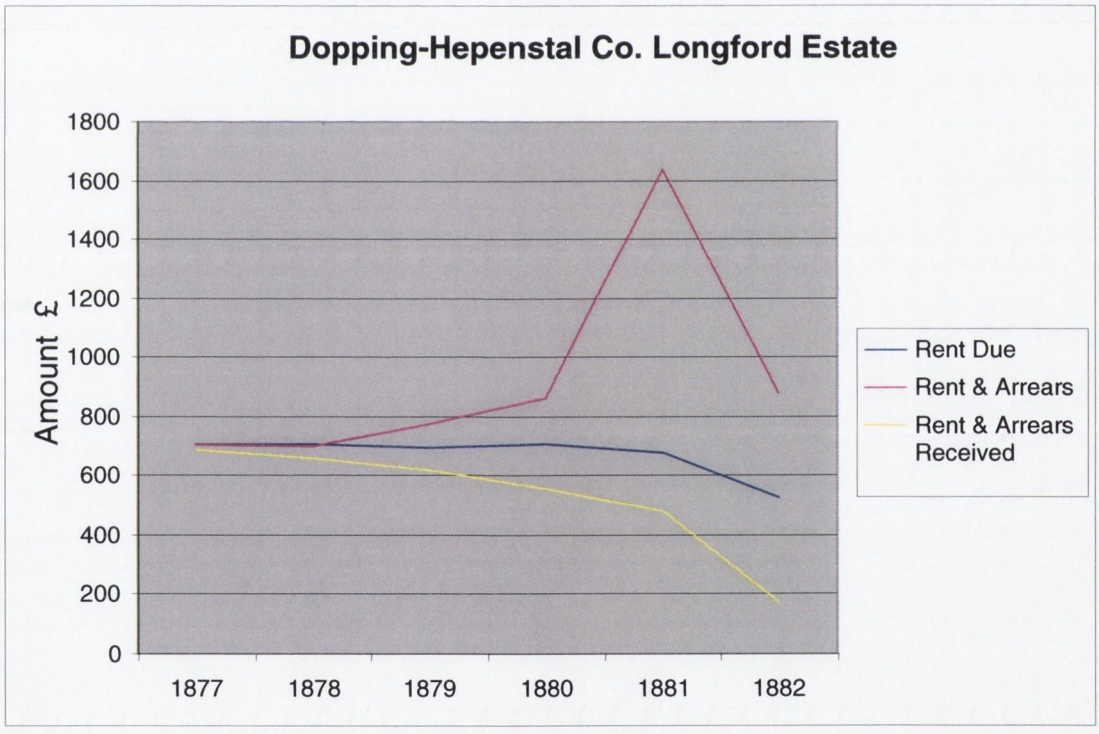

Clonbrock Clonbrock Estate
Amount £
4400
4200
4000
3800
3600
3400
3200
3000
2800
2600
2400
2200
2000
1880
1881
1882
1883
1884
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

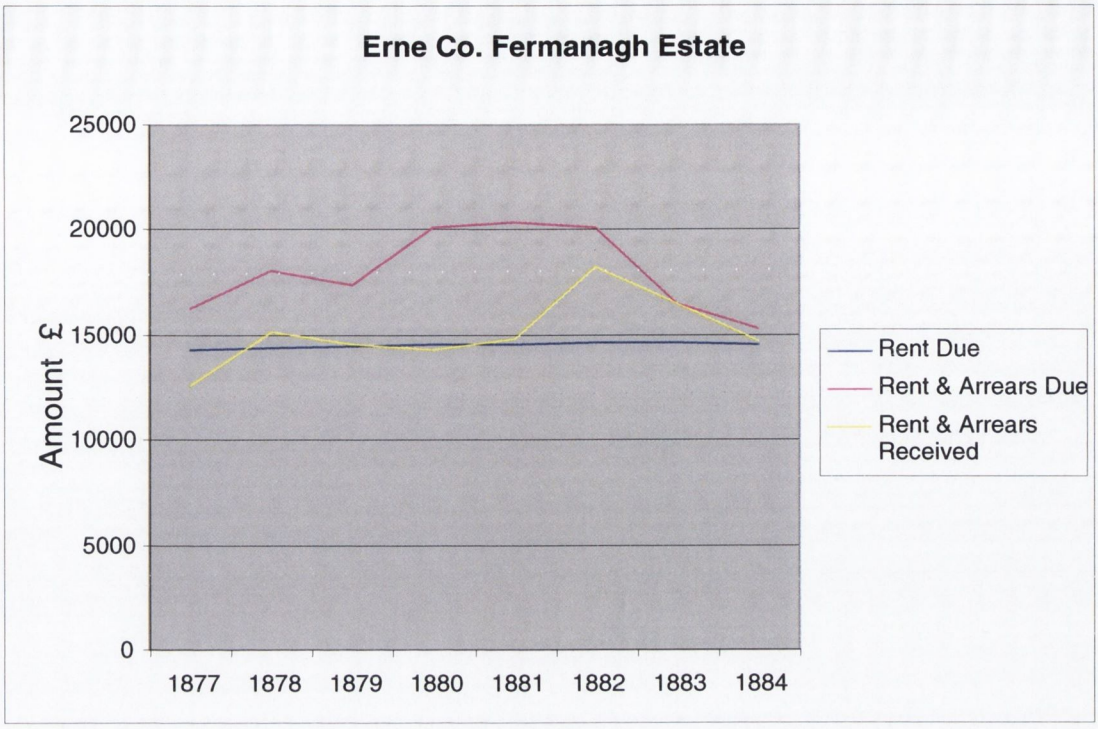

Clonbrock Doone Estate
Amount £
620
610
600
590
580
570
560
550
540
530
520
510
500
1880
1881
1882
1883
1884
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

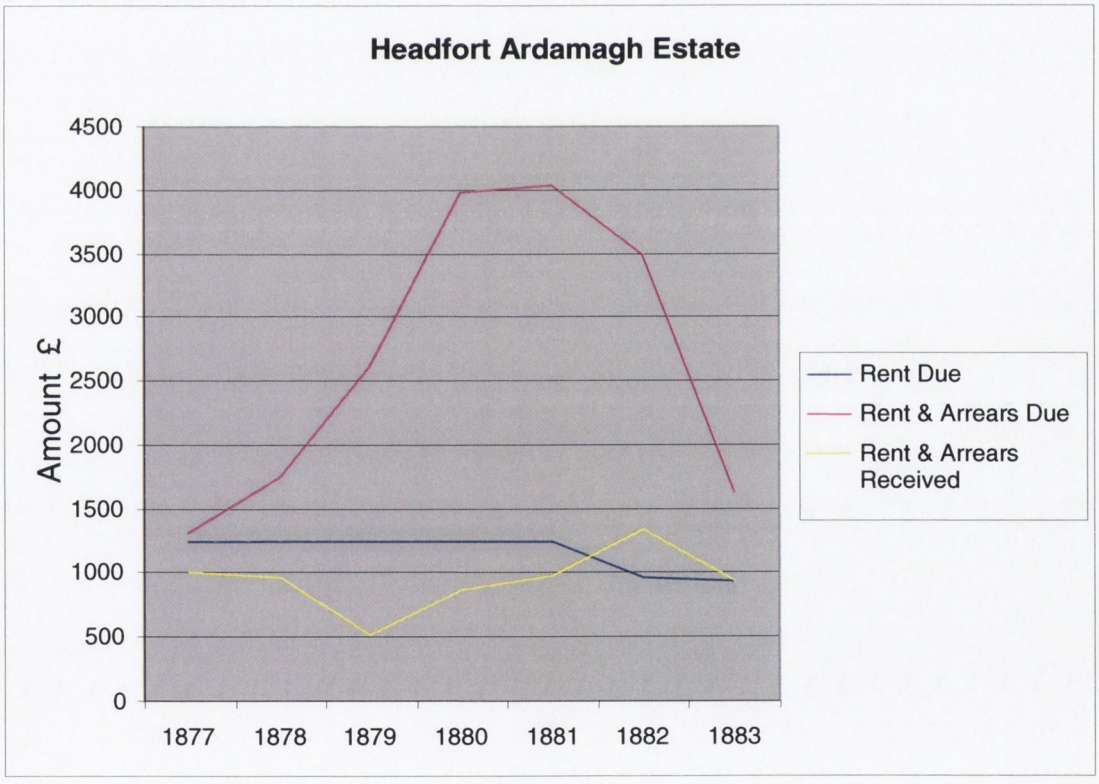

Clonbrock Pallas Estate
Amount £
380
370
360
350
340
330
320
310
300
290
280
270
1880
1881
1882
1883
1884
Year's Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

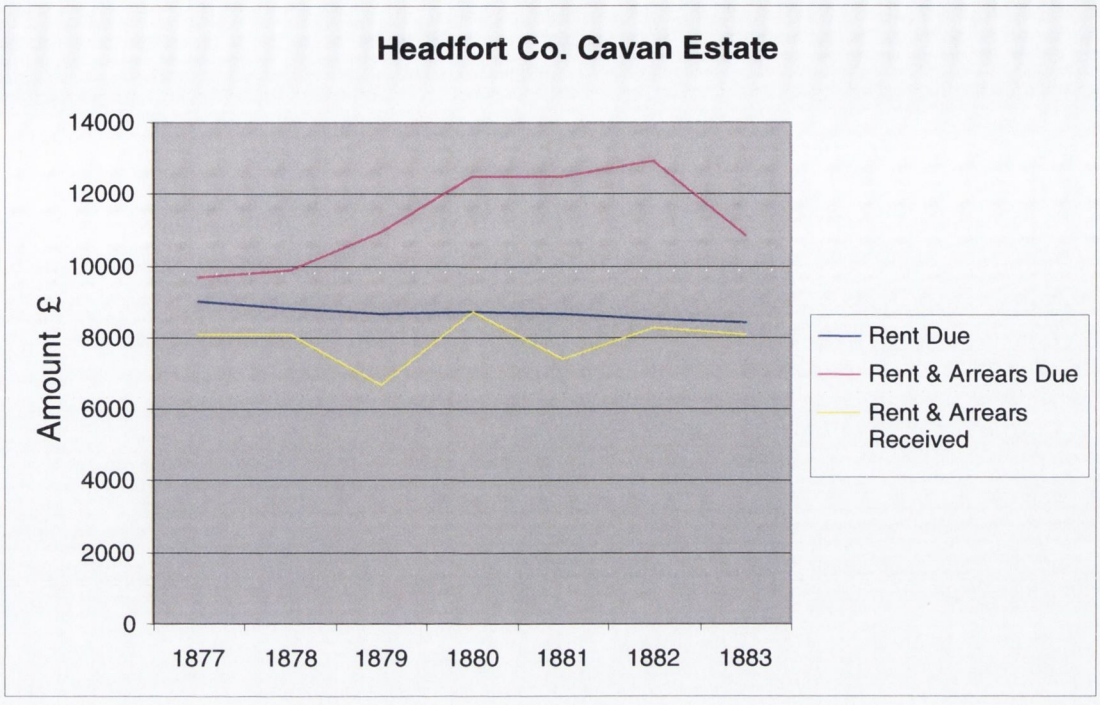

Clonbrock Quansburry
Amount £
3000
2900
2800
2700
2600
2500
2400
2300
2200
1880
1881
1882
1883
1884
Year's Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

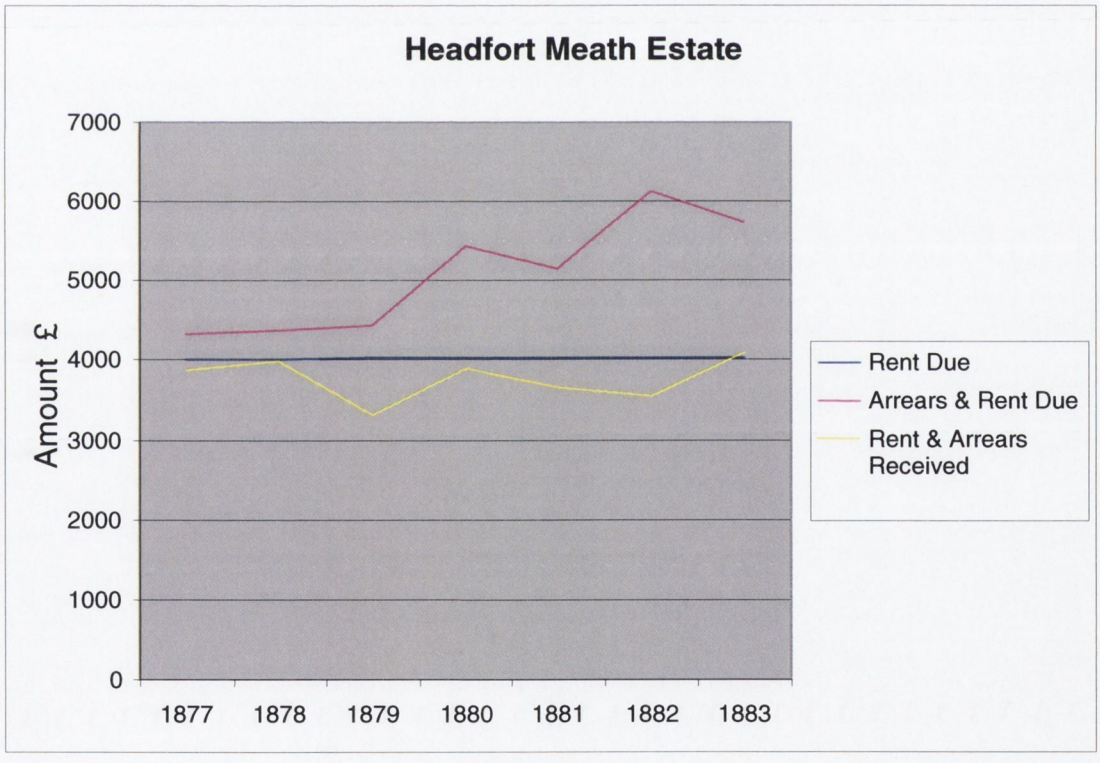

Total Clonborck Estate Rentals
Amount £
14000
13000
12000
11000
10000
9000
1880
1881
1882
1883
1884
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

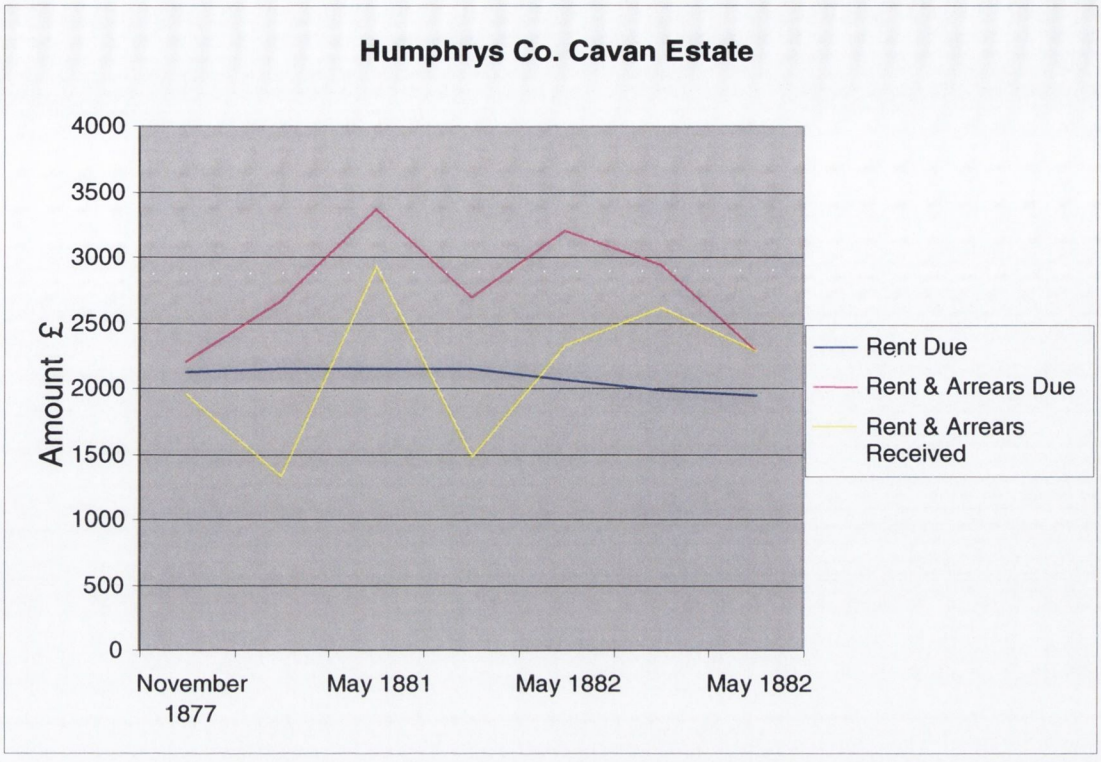

Dopping-Hepenstal Co. Longford Estate
Amount £
1800
1600
1400
1200
1000
800
600
400
200
0
1877
1878
1879
1880
1881
1882
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears
Rent & Arrears Received

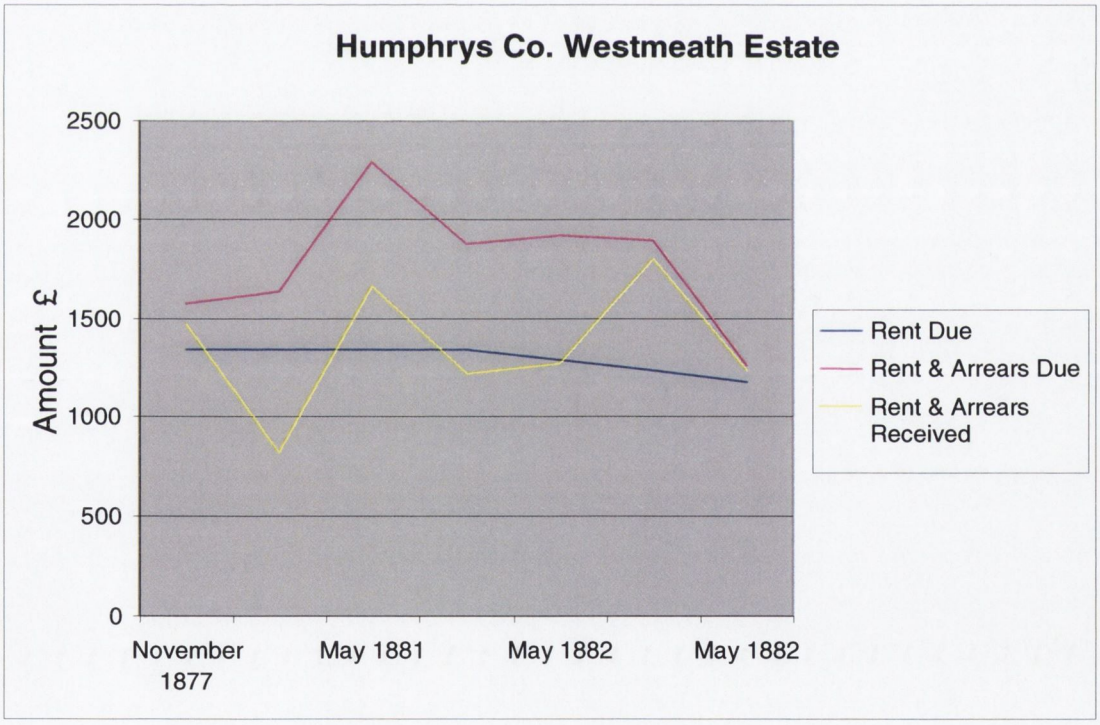

Erne Co. Fermanagh Estate
Amount £
25000
20000
15000
10000
5000
0
1877
1878
1879
1880
1881
1882
1883
1884
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

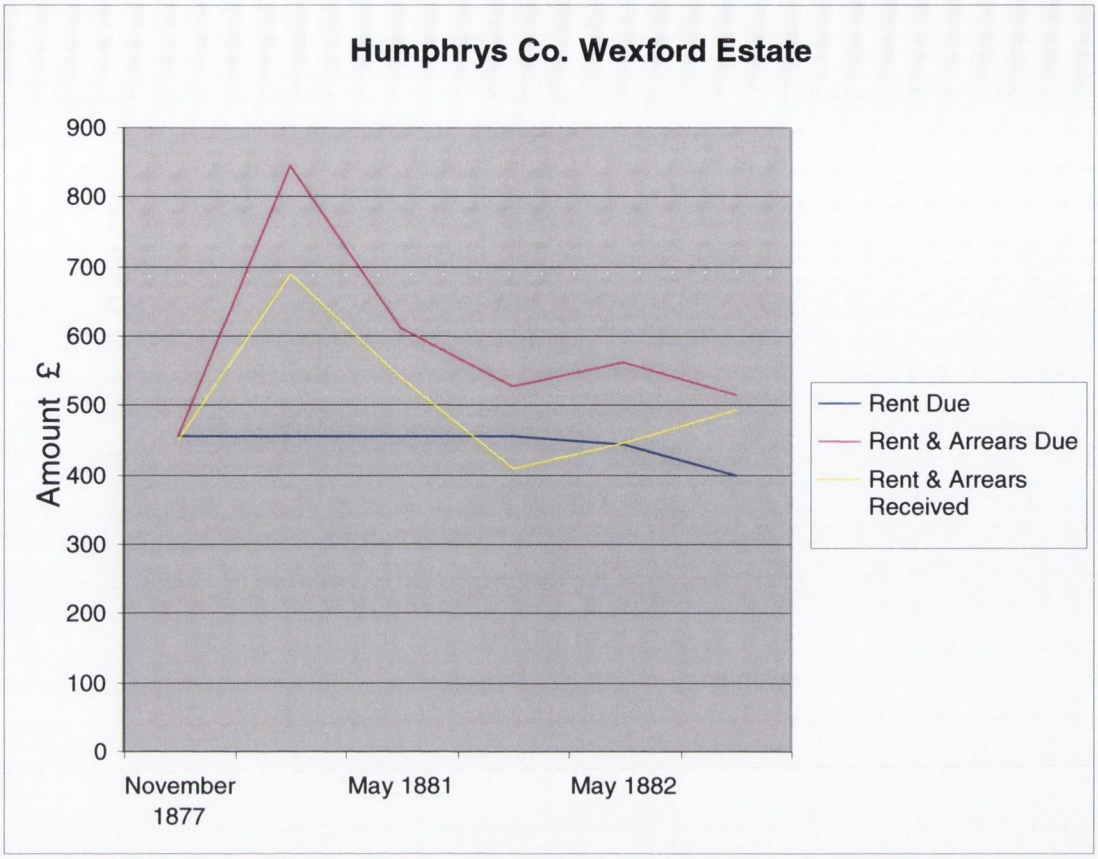

Headfort Ardamagh Estate
Amount £
4500
4000
3500
3000
2500
2000
1500
1000
500
0
1877
1878
1879
1880
1881
1882
1883
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

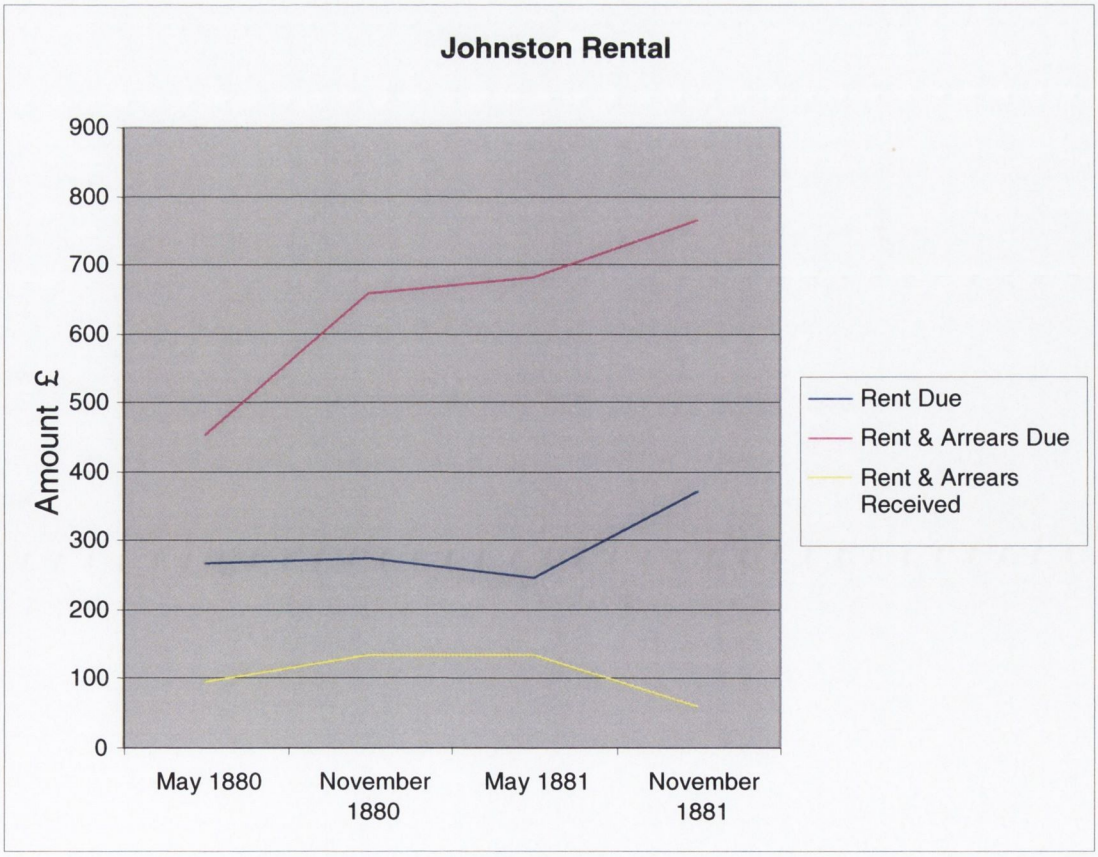

Headfort Co. Cavan Estate
Amount £
14000
12000
10000
8000
6000
4000
2000
0
1877
1878
1879
1880
1881
1882
1883
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

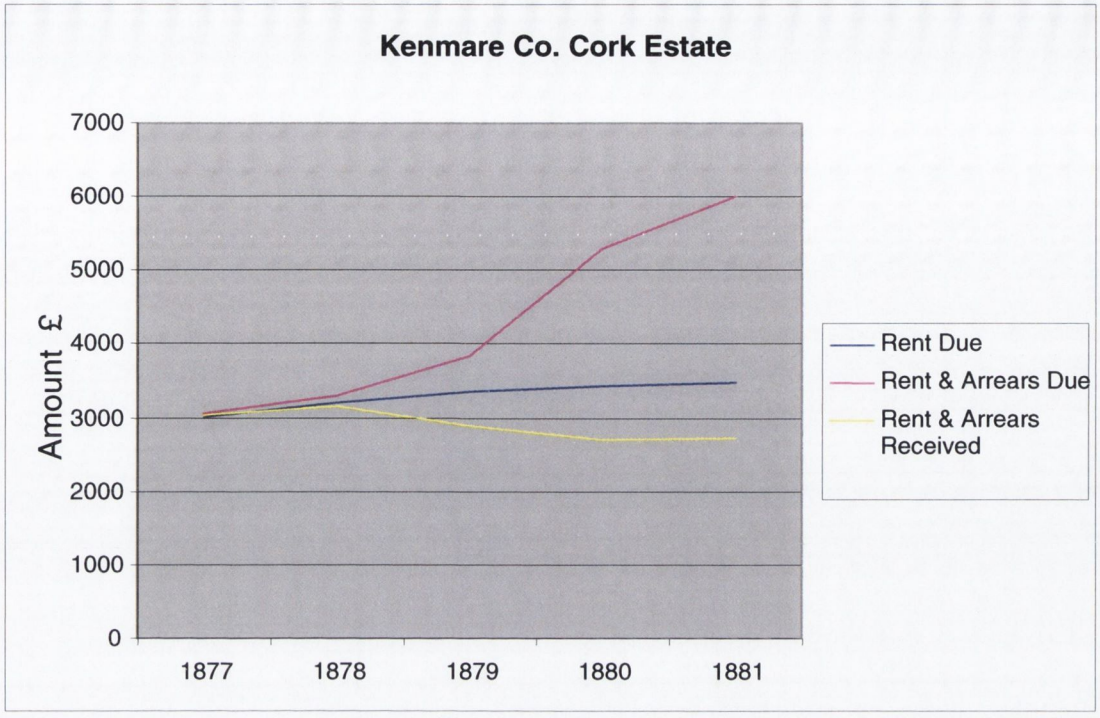

Headfort Meath Estate
Amount £
7000
6000
5000
4000
3000
2000
1000
0
1877
1878
1879
1880
1881
1882
1883
Rent Due
Arrears & Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Received

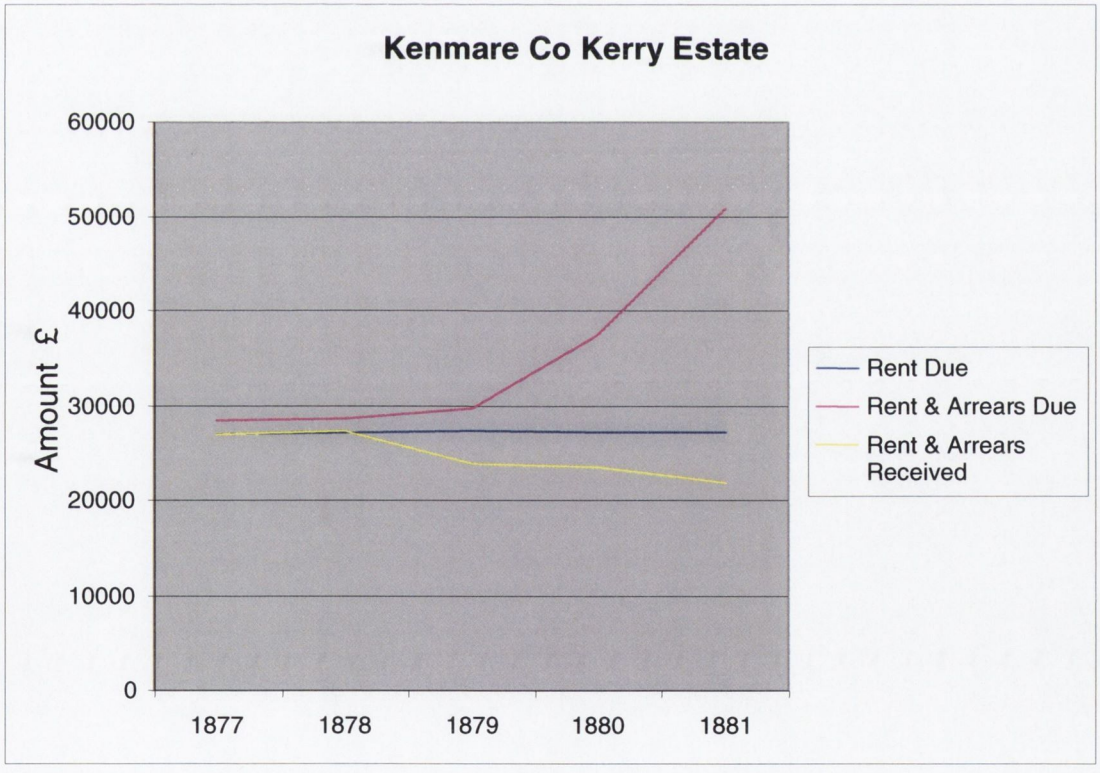

Humphrys Co. Cavan Estate
Amount £
4000
3500
3000
2500
2000
1500
1000
500
0
November 1877
May 1881
May 1882
May 1882
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

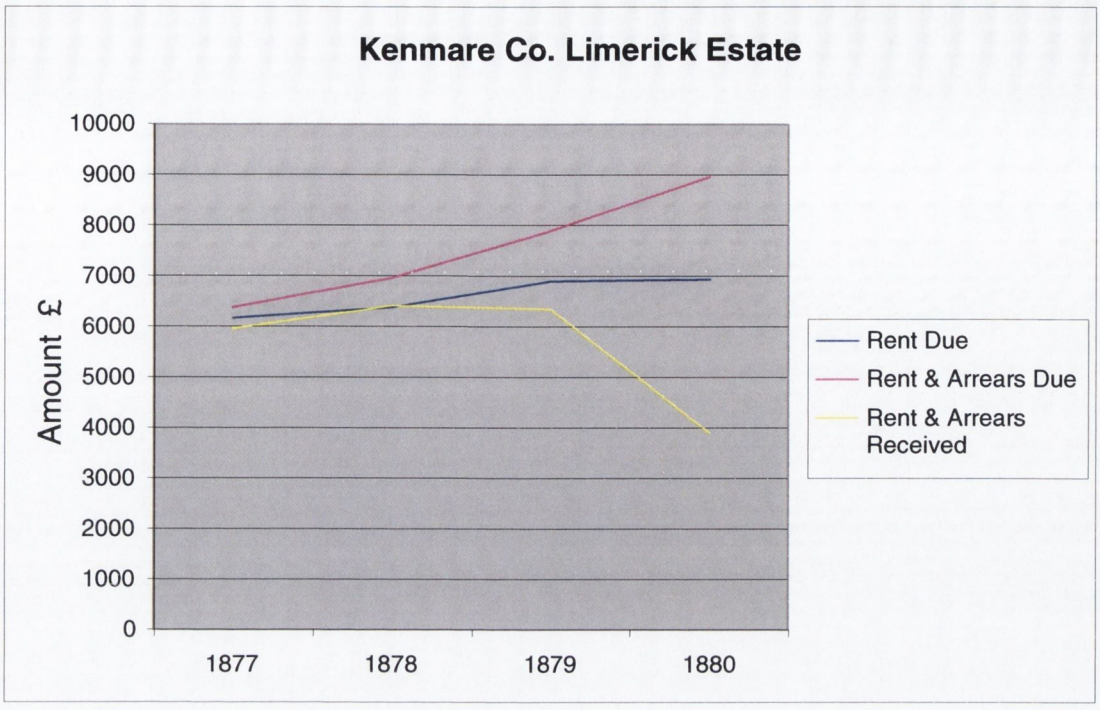

Humphrys Co. Westmeath Estate
Amount £
2500
2000
1500
1000
500
0
November 1877
May 1881
May 1882
May 1882
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

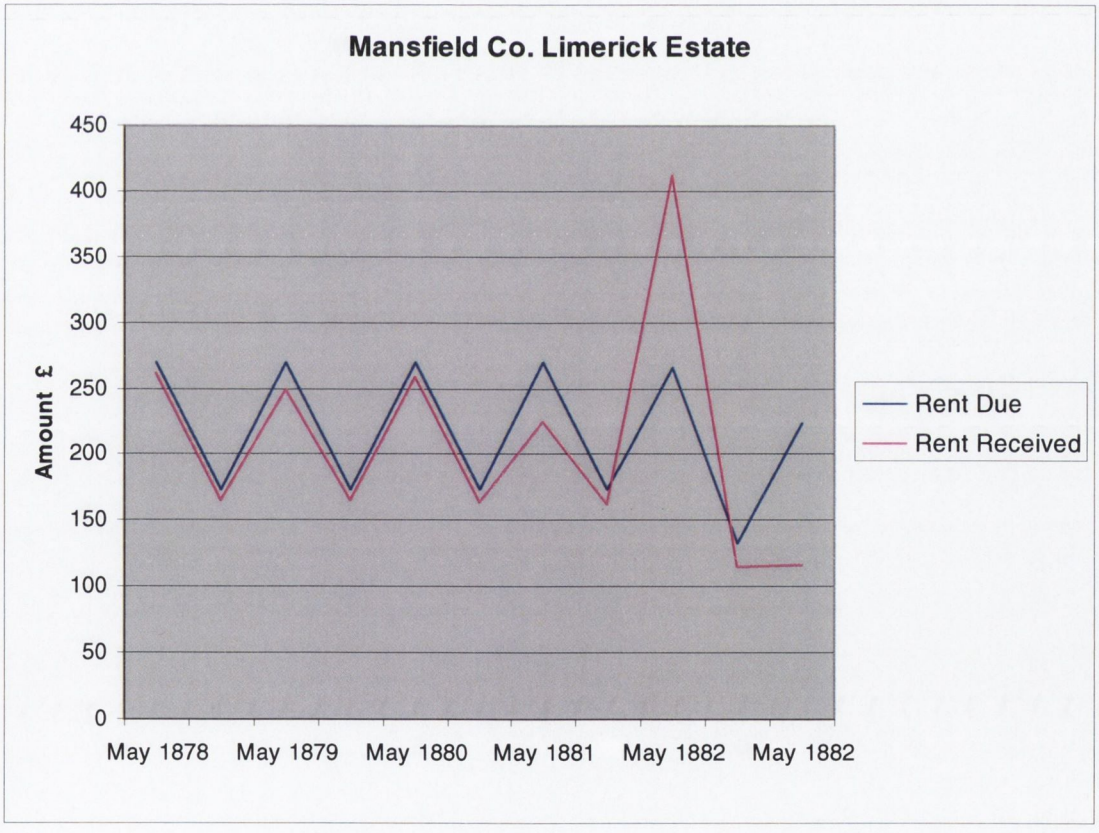

Humphrys Co. Wexford Estate
Amount £
900
800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
0
November 1877
May 1881
May 1882
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

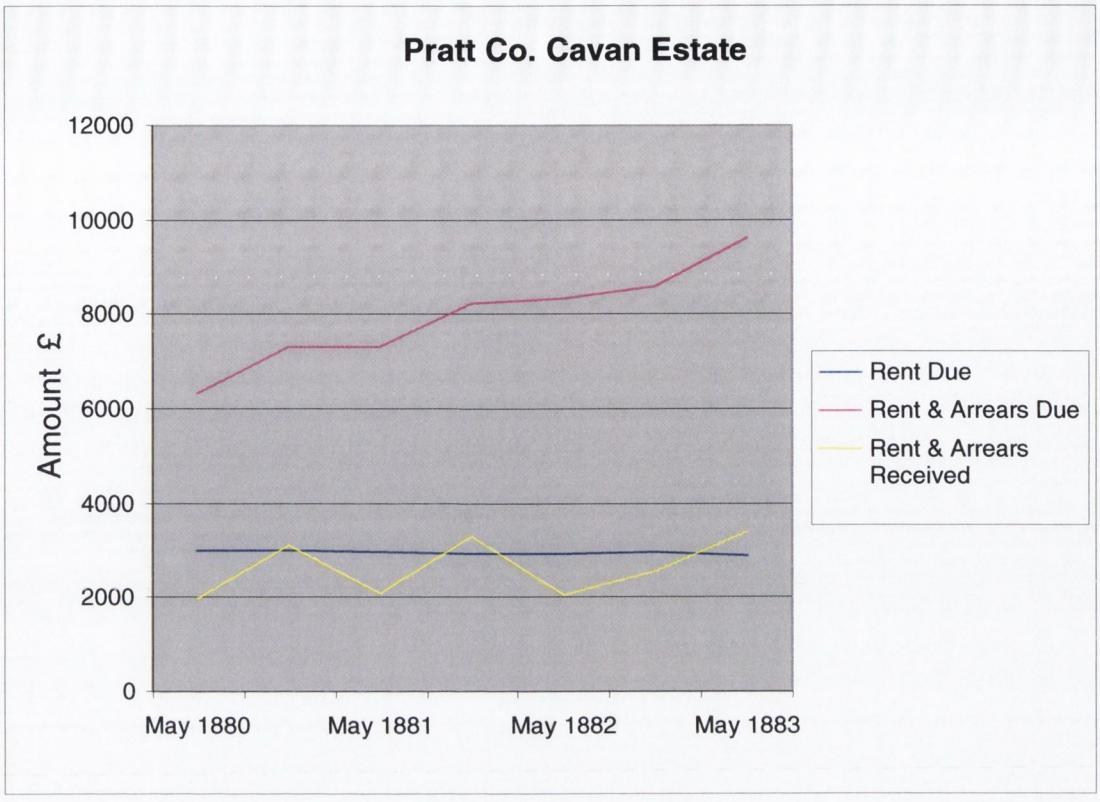

Johnston Rental
Amount £
900
800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
0
May 1880
November 1880
May 1881
November 1881
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

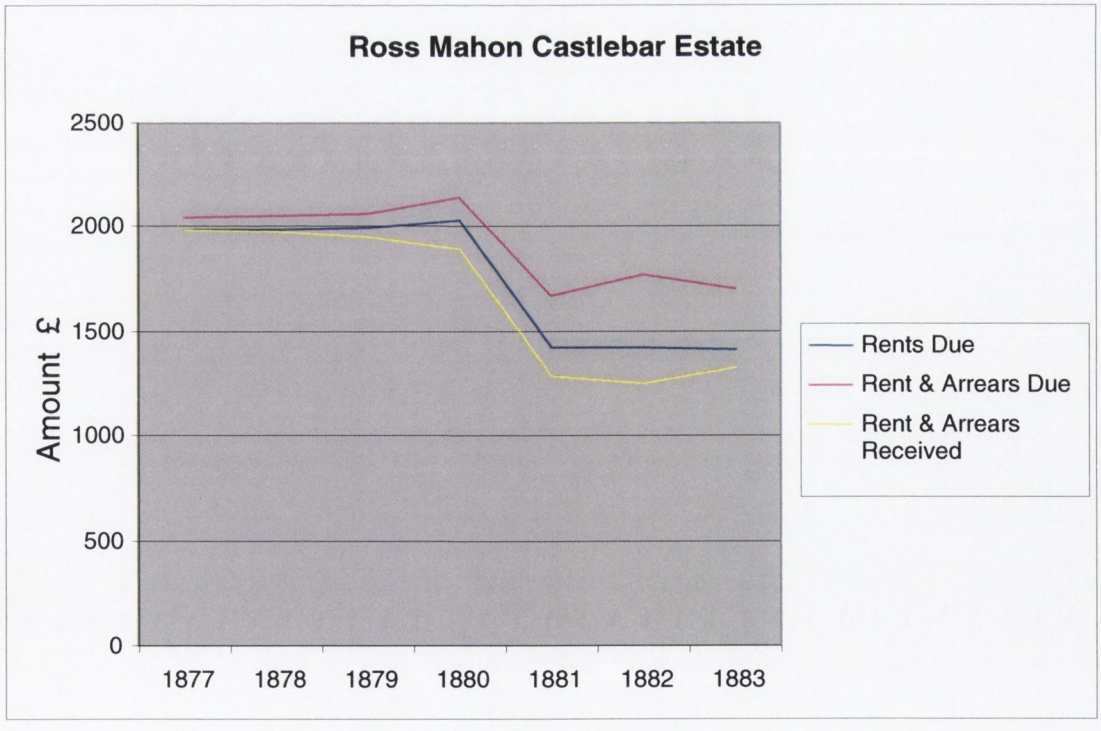

Kenmare Co. Cork Estate
Amount £
7000
6000
5000
4000
3000
2000
1000
0
1877
1878
1879
1880
1881
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

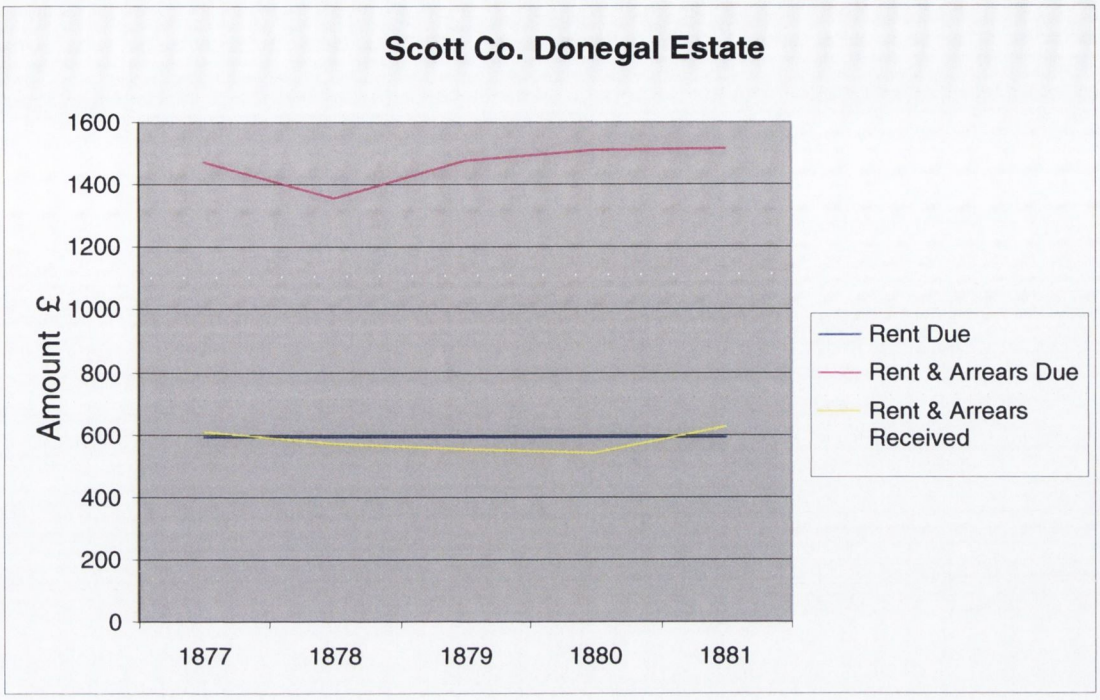

Kenmare Co Kerry Estate
Amount £
60000
50000
40000
30000
20000
10000
0
1877
1878
1879
1880
1881
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

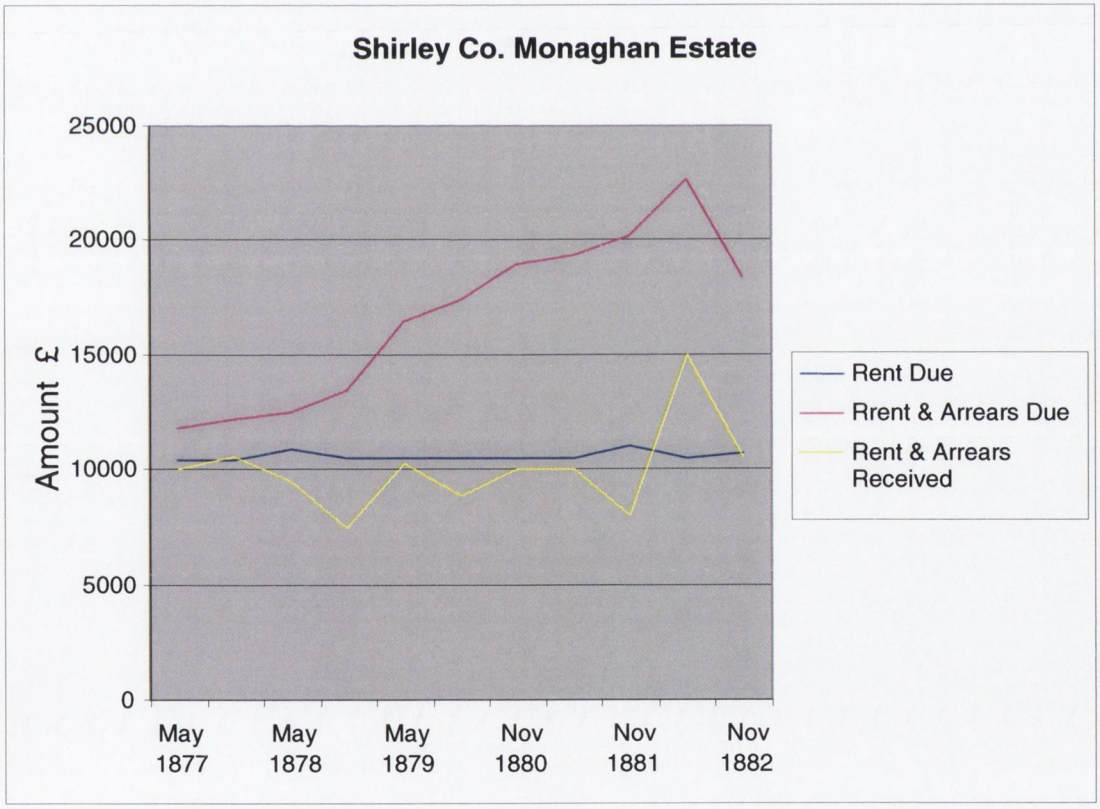

Kenmare Co. Limerick Estate
Amount £
10000
9000
8000
7000
6000
5000
4000
3000
2000
1000
0
1877
1878
1879
1880
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received


Mansfield Co. Limerick Estate
Amount £
450
400
350
300
250
200
150
100
50
0
May 1878
May 1879
May 1880
May 1881
May 1882
May 1882
Rent Due
Rent Received


Pratt Co. Cavan Estate
12000
10000
8000
6000
4000
2000
0
Amount £
May 1880
May 1881
May 1882
May 1883
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received


Ross Mahon Castlebar Estate
2500
2000
1500
1000
500
0
Amount £
1877
1878
1879
1880
1881
1882
1883
Rents Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received


Scott Co. Donegal Estate
Amount £
1600
1400
1200
1000
800
600
400
200
0
1877
1878
1879
1880
1881
Rent Due
Rent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received


Shirley Co. Monaghan Estate
Amount £
25000
20000
15000
10000
5000
0
May 1877
May 1878
May 1879
Nov 1880
Nov 1881
Nov 1882
Rent Due
Rrent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

Tighe Estate Co. Wicklow
Amount £
4000
3500
3000
2500
2000
1500
1000
500
0
1879
1880
1881
1882
1883
1884
Rent Due
Rrent & Arrears Due
Rent & Arrears Received

Appendix 6: Names and estates used in ILC data

1-499 acres

Name	County
Henry, Robert	Limerick

500-999 acres

Name	County
Bainbridge, J.H.	Cork
Bennett, John	King's
Blake, J.H.	Galway
Lloyd, Col. Jessie	Monaghan
Phillips, William	Queen's
Shiel, Robert	Tyrone; Meath
Trench, J. Townsend	Westmeath
Erck, Wentworth	Wicklow

1,000-4,999 acres

Name	County
Armstrong, H.B.	Armagh; Longford
Armstrong, J.W. DL	Sligo
Borrowes, Maj, Sir E.D., Bart.	Queen's
Brady, J Cornwall	Clare
Burdett, Arthur, JP	King's
Caldwell, Captain C.B.	Meath
Casement, Julius, JP	Wicklow; Antrim; Londonderry
Coddington, H.B.	Wicklow; Meath
Comyn, Andrew, JP	Wicklow
Conyngham, Col. W.F. Lennox, DL	Londonderry; Tyrone
Coote, C. John, JP	Cork
Cowan, Captain	Galway
Dennis, Meade, C., JP	Kerry; Wicklow; Dublin
De Ros, Lord	Down; Meath
Erck, Wentworth	Fermanagh
Fetherston-Haugh., R.S. DL	Westmeath
Garvey, Toler R.	King's
Gaussen, Charles	Tipperary; Kilkenny; Dublin
Gerrard, Thomas	Meath
Glascott, W.M.	Kilkenny; Wexford
Graves, Lieut-Col. W. Grogan	King's
Hatton, Lieut-Col V.L., DL	Wexford
Hewson, J.B, JP	Limerick
Hutchinson, Sir E. S., Bart	Wicklow; Dublin
Jackson, H.V.	Kings; Tipperary
Joyce, Walter	Clare; Mayo; Galway
Lalor, Thomas, DL	Tipperary, Waterford
Lambart, Gustavus W., DL	Meath; Westmeath
Langley, George	Tipperary
Lloyd, John	King's; Tipperary
Lyle, J.A., jun., DL	Londonderry

Meares, General Devenish	Westmeath
Montgomery, George	Cork
Moore, Stephen, DL	Tipperary; Cork:
Mulock, Thomas, JP	King's
Murphy, John, JP	Armagh; Wicklow; Louth
Nicolls, George, A., JP	Kildare
O'Hara, J., DL	Galway
Palmer, C.C., JP	Kildare
Paul, Sir R., Bart., DL	Kerry; Waterford; Carlow
Purdon, Rev. W.J.	Westmeath
Reade, Philip, J.P.	Galway
Richards, E.M.	Wexford
Richardson, N.G., JP	Galway
Sarsfield, Captain D.R.P.	Cork
Stoney, T.B., JP	Tipperary
Stuart, Col. H. Villiers	Kilkenny; Cork; Tipperary Waterford
Talbot de Malahide, Lord	Dublin; Cavan; Westmeath
Trench, Thomas C., JP	Kildare
Usborne, T.M. (J)	Kerry; Cork ; Clare
Waring, John, JP	Kilkenny
Waring, Lieut-Col. Thomas, JP	Down
Webber, W.D.	Queen's; Sligo

5,000-9,999 acres

Name	County
Bangor, Viscount	Down
Bennett, F.V.	King's
Beresford, D.W. Pack, JP, DL	Carlow
Bodkin, Robert, DL	Mayo; Galway
Boyd, John R., DL	Donegal
Brooke, George F	Wexford
Browne-Clayton, R.C.	Wexford; Kilkenny
Bruce, James	Tyrone
Butler, Sir T.P., Bart.	Carlow
Carden, Sir J.C., Bart.	Tipperary
Cliffe, Anthony J	Wexford; Kilkenny; Cork ; Meath
Congreve, Ambrose, DL	Kilkenny; Waterford; Cork
De Robeck, Baron, DL	Dublin; Kildare; Wicklow
Dunsany, Lord	Meath; Kilkenny; Cavan
Ferrall, Lieu.-Col. H.T., DL	Cavan
ffolliott, Col. John, DL	Sligo; Donegal; Leitrim
FitzGerald, R.U.P., DL	Cork; Queen's
Fowler. R., DL	Meath
Hamilton, Ion, T., DL, MP	Dublin; Queen's; Down; Meath
Hamilton, Major James, JP	Donegal
Hely, Captain Gorges	Kilkenny
Heygate Sir F. , Bart	Londonderry; Donegal
Howth, Earl of	Dublin; Meath
Hussey, S.M., JP	Kerry
Knox, Utred A.	Mayo; Sligo
Leigh, F.A.	Wexford
Low, F.W.	Tipperary; Cork
Lynch, Major Wilson	Clare; Galway
Musgrave, Sir R.J. Bart,	Waterford; Kilkenny
Newman, John A.R.	Cork
O'Shee, N. Power, DL	Waterford; Kilkenny
Roche, T.R.	Galway; Kilkenny; Limerick; Mayo
Smythe, W.B., DL	Galway; Meath
Staples, Robert, DL	Londonderry; Queen's; Mayo
Stoney, R. Vesey, JP	Mayo

Stubber, R. Hamilton, DL	Queen's
Synnott, M. Seaton, DL	Armagh
Taylor, Col. The Right Hon. T.E., MP	Meath; Dublin; Louth
Thompson, T.H	Meath
Wolseley, Sir. C., Bart.	Carlow; Wexford

10,000-19,999 acres

Name	County
Bagot, J.L.	Galway; Roscommon
Bellingham, Sir A.E., Bart	Louth; Mayo
Belmore, Earl of	Tyrone; Fermanagh
Blennerhassett, A.B.	Kerry
Clanmorris, Lord	Mayo; Galway
Cloncurry, Lord	Kildare; Limerick; Dublin; Meath
Conyngham, Marquis of	Donegal; Clare; Meath
Crosbie, Lieu.Col. James, DL	Kerry
Daly, Lieutenant-Col. J.A.	Galway
D'Arcy, Hyacinth, DL	Galway; Mayo; Clare
De la Poer, Count E., DL	Waterford; Tipperary
Donoughmore, Earl of	Tipperary; Waterford; Cork; Wexford; Kilkenny ; Monaghan; Dublin
Drogheda, Marquis of	Kildare; Queen's
Gore, Lieut-Col. Sir C. Knox, Bart.	Mayo
Heard, Robert	Tipperary
Huntingdon, Earl of	Waterford; Kings; Galway
Longfield, R.E	Cork; Limerick
Longford, Earl of	Dublin; Westmeath; Longford
Manchester, Duke of	Armagh
Muskerry, Lord	Wexford; Limerick; Tipperary; Waterford Kilkenny; Cork
Persse, R.P. Burton, DL	Galway; Kings; Kilkenny; Roscommon
Ponsonby, C.B., DL	Tipperary; Limerick; Kilkenny
Rathdonnell, Lord	Carlow; Louth; Fermanagh; Monaghan Tyrone; Meath; Dublin; Kildare
Redington, C.T	Galway; Wexford
Rochfort-Boyd, G.A., DL	Westmeath
Roden, Earl of	Down; Louth
Rossmore, Lord	Monaghan
Tottenham, A. Loftus, DL, MP	Leitrim; Clare
Tottenham, Col. C.G., DL	Wicklow; Wexford; Carlow; Sligo
Trench, Henry	Tipperary; Kings; Limerick; Galway; Clare; Queens; Roscommon

20,000 and above

Name	County
Ardilaun	Galway; Mayo; Dublin
Blosse, Sir R. Lynch, Bart.	Mayo
Bruen, Right Hon. Henry	Carlow; Wexford; Kildare
Clancarty, Earl of	Galway; Roscommon
Clements, Col. H.T., DL	Cavan; Leitrim; Waterford; Galway; Kildare
Clonbrock, Lord	Galway
Clonmell, Earl of	Tipperary; Kildare; Kilkenny; Carlow; Monaghan; Limerick; Dublin
Colthurst, Sir George, Bart.	Cork
Courtown, Earl of	Wexford; Carlow
Dunsandle, Lord	Galway; Tipperary

Erne, Earl of	Fermanagh; Donegal; Mayo; Sligo
Farnham, Lord	Cavan
Hayes, Sir Samuel H. Bart.	Donegal
Headfort, Marquis of	Cavan; Meath
Kavanagh, Arthur M., JP	Carlow; Kilkenny; Wexford; Westmeath
King-Harman, Col. E.R., DL	Longford; Roscommon; Sligo; Westmeath; Queens
Leconfield, Lord	Clare; Limerick; Tipperary
Mahon, H.S.P.	Westmeath; Roscommon
O'Neill, Lord	Antrim
Ormonde, Marquis of	Tipperary; Kilkenny
Pollock, John	Galway; Dublin
Rosse, Earl of	King's; Tipperary
Wallace, Sir R., Bart., MP	Antrim; Down
Waterford, Marquis of	Waterford; Wicklow; Kilkenny; Cavan; Kildare

Appendix 7. Names and estates used in PDA data

1-499 acres

Name	County
Apjohn, James, MD	Dublin
Borrer, Dawson JP	[county unclear]
Boxwell, John H.	Wexford
Chute, Captain R.R., JP	[county unclear]
Cole, Hon. Henry A., MP	Fermanagh
Cooper, Henry A.	Meath
Drought, Thomas A.	King's
Law, Samuel, JP	Down
Lindsay, Thomas	Antrim

500-999 acres

Name	County
Adams, Randal	Westmeath; Tyrone
Blackburne, F.W., JP	Meath
Bolton, Henry	Wexford
Bredin, William JP	Limerick
Burton, N.	Cavan
Burton, Sir Charles, Bart., JP	Carlow
Cairnes, Thomas P., JP	Meath
Carden, Lieut.-Col., JP DL	Tipperary
Carroll, George F.	Dublin
De Burgh, Ulick G.	Monaghan
Decies, Lord	Meath
Greg, Thomas JP	Carrickfergus Town; Tyrone
Griffin, E. Lysaght JP	Limerick
Hancock, Hon. R.J.	Westmeath
Hare, R.D. JP	Cork
Hudson, Henry, MD	Queen's; Wexford
Hudson, Charles	Roscommon
Hughes, Sir Frederick, DL	Wexford
Hunt, Percival	Cork
Hunt, Vere, JP	Tipperary
Hutchinson, Joseph F., JP	King's; Queen's; Wexford
Hutchinson, J.H., JP	Dublin
Keaveny, Malachy	Galway
Kingston, Earl of JP DL	Roscommon
Lett, B.	Wexford
Lloyd, Col. Jesse, DL JP	Monaghan
Lloyd, Captain E.F.	Tipperary
Milward, Dawson, JP	Kilkenny
Murphy, George F.	Meath
Nagle, Garrett	Cork
Ormsby, Rev. W.G.	Roscommon
Pottinger, Eldred	Antrim
Randall, Rev. W.	Tipperary
Sandes, George, JP	Kerry
Smith, Henry St. G.	Louth
Taylor, Godfrey L., JP	Tipperary
Waller, Bolton JP	King's; Tipperary
Woodley, Captain F.W., JP	Cork

1,000-4,999 acres

Name	County
Acton, Thomas, D.L .	Wicklow
Acton, William, JP	Leitrim
Aldworth, Colonel R.	Cork
Armstrong, Captain JW DL	Sligo
Armstrong, HB, JP, DL	Armagh; Longford
Armstrong, William JP	Limerick; Tipperary; Waterford
Atkinson, James N, JP	Tipperary
Bagenal, B.F.	Carlow
Bateson, Colonel	Limerick
Bayly, John DL	Tipperary
Bellew, Lord DL (Baron)	Louth; Meath:
Beresford, Robert H, JP	Waterford
Blennerhassett, John, JP	Kerry
Blackburne, Captain J.H.	Clare
Blood, Bagot	Clare
Blood, W.B. JP	Clare
Blunden, Sir John, Bart., JP, DL	Kilkenny
Booth, George JP	Wicklow
Browne, Lieut.-Col. E. G.J. JP	Limerick
Burgess, John Y., JP, DL	Tyrone; Armagh; Down
Burke, G.E.	Galway; Galway town; Limerick
Carew, R.T., DL JP	Waterford
Carden, Andrew M.	Tipperary
Carlingford, Lord, DL	Louth; Carlow
Carroll, Coote Alexander	Dublin City; Wicklow
Chester, F., JP	Drogheda Town; Limerick City; Louth; Meath
Chester, H.	Louth
Clarina, Major-General Lord	Limerick
Coddington, H.B., JP	Wicklow; Meath
Collis, Stephen .E., JP	Kerry
Collins, John S., JP	Kildare; Cork
Connellan, Peter, DL	Kilkenny
Connolly, Eugene JP	Carlow
Cooper, Lieut.-Col. R.A.	Limerick; Mayo; Tipperary
Coote, C. John, JP	Limerick:
Coote, C. Pounden, DL	Cork
Cox, Lt.-Col. Wolseley C., JP	King's
Cramsie, Capt. James	Antrim; Londonderry
Croker, Edward, JP DL	Limerick
Daly, Hon. Skeffington.	Galway
Daly, Hon. Bowes JP DL	Tipperary
DeBurgh, Thomas J., JP	Kildare; Longford
De La Cherois, Daniel, DL	Down
D'Esterre, H.V.	Clare; Limerick
Dick, W. Fitzwilliam W., DL	Wicklow
Dillon, Sir John F., Bart	Meath
Edgeworth, Rev. Essex	Longford; Meath
Ellis, George, MD	Leitrim; Roscommon; Tyrone
Erck, Wentworth, LLD	Fermanagh; Wicklow
Eustace, James	Carlow
Everard, Nugent, JP	Meath
Fetherston-Haugh, Richard, JP	Westmeath; Meath
Filgate, Townley, JP	Dublin, Louth
Fitzgerald, F.L.	Kildare
Fitzgerald, Rev. R.	Fermanagh; Queen's
Fitzgerald, Sir Gerald, Bart.	Cork; Tipperary
Foley, Edward H. JP	Kerry
Forster, Captain	Galway
Fortescue, Earl JP DL	Waterford

Fosberry, Thomas	Limerick
Fox, C. De B., JP	Cavan
Franks, Thomas J.	Cork; Limerick
Frewen, Richard	Cork
Gabbett, Rev. J.	Limerick; Limerick City; Tipperary
Garvey, T.R., JP	King's; Tipperary
Gaskell, Peter P.	Cork
Gibson, William, JP	Wexford
Goff, Strangman D., JP	Wexford
Gregory, Sir. W.H. JP DL	Galway
Grove, J.E.C.	Donegal; Sligo
Gulliamore, Viscount	Cork; Limerick
Guise, Major-General, C.B., V.C JP.	Carlow; King's; Wexford
Gun, Wilson, DL JP	Longford; Roscommon
Hackett, Major W.W.	Dublin
Hankey, Lady Emily	Tipperary
Harden, Richard J., DL JP	Armagh
Hare, Hon. Colonel Richard	Limerick
Harkness, W.H.	Limerick
Harrison, Henry JP	Cork
Hatton, Lieut-Colonel, DL	Waterford; Wexford
Heighington, Captain W.	Wicklow
Hervey, Charles, J.V., JP	Wexford
Holmes, R.W.A.	Westmeath
Hort, Sir John, Bart., CB	Cavan; Fermanagh; Kildare; Queen's
Hunt, Edward L.	Cork; Dublin
Hussey, Samuel M., JP	Kerry
Izod, I.N., DL JP	Kilkenny
Joly. Jasper R., LL.D., JP	Clare; King's; Meath
Jones, W. Bence, JP	Cork
Jones, W.R.	Tipperary
Keatinge, M. Den, DL, JP	Galway; Kilkenny
Keily, J.	Waterford
Kirkpatrick, Alexander R. JP	Kildare; Wicklow
Lalor, Thomas, DL JP	Tipperary; Waterford
Lambert, J.W.H.	Galway
Langford, Arthur	Cork
Lawrenson, Edward JP	Dublin; Kildare
Lefroy, Anthony, DL JP MP	Kilkenny; Longford
Levinge, William	Tipperary
Levis, John S., MD JP	Cork
Lidwell, Major George, JP	Queen's; Tipperary
Littledale, W.F.	Armagh; Meath; Wicklow
Lloyd, George W. JP DL	Cork; Limerick; Waterford
Lloyd, John, DL JP	King's; Tipperary
Louth, Lord JP DL (baron)	Galway, Louth; Monaghan
MacAdam, Lt.-Col. T., JP	Clare
McClintock-Bunbury, Hon. J.	Carlow
McDonnell, John, MD	Antrim
Magan, Percy, JP	Roscommon
Magill, Captain James JP	Meath; Kerry
Massy, Dowager Lady M.	Clare
Maude, Captain Hon. F., RN	Longford
Maunsell, George Woods, DL JP	Dublin City; Dublin; Kildare; Meath; Limerick; Westmeath; Wexford
Maxwell, W.P. JP	Waterford
Meade, J.F.	Mayo; Wicklow
Meares-Devinish, Major-General	Westmeath
Minchin, J. Falkiner, JP	Tipperary
Montgomery, George, JP	Cork
Montgomery, Richard T., JP	Louth
Moore, J.B. Gunning, JP	Tyrone
Moore, Stephen, JP DL MP	Cork; Tipperary
Morgan, Anthony J. JP	Clare; Cork
Muskerry, Lord	Cork; Limerick; Tipperary; Wexford
Nason, Rev. W.H.	Cork

Newenham, W.H.	Limerick
Newton, Capt. P.C., JP	Carlow
Nugent, Col. J.J., DL JP	Westmeath
Nugent, Major-General St. G.	Galway; Cork; Cavan
O'Brien, E.W. JP DL	Limerick
O'Donovan, The (Henry Winthrop)	Cork
O'Grady, Edward S.	Limerick
O'Grady, Gilbert	Clare; Limerick
Ormsby, Anthony, DL JP	Mayo
Paul, Sir Robert, Bart., DL JP	Carlow; Kerry; Waterford
Pembroke, Earl of	Dublin; Dublin City, Wicklow
Pentland, G.H., JP	Drogheda; Louth; Meath
Perrott, John	Cork
Perry, Samuel W. JP DL	Tipperary
Plunkett, Lord (Bishop of Meath)	Cork; Dublin; Monaghan
Power, N.A. JP	Kilkenny
Ram., Rev. Cannon	Wexford
Rochfort, Horace, DL (Wm H-R)	Carlow; Dublin; Queen's
Roberts, Thomas, JP	Meath
Sanders, Thomas, JP	Cork; Limerick
Sheil, James	Tyrone
Smyth, Skeffington, DL JP	King's; Longford; Monaghan; Queen's;
Stanhope, Earl of MP	Queen's
Stobart, Rev. H.	Louth
Stoughton, Chas. W. M., JP	Kerry
Studdert, Robert A., DL JP	Clare
Sullivan, John J. JP	Limerick
Synge-Hutchinson, Sir E. Bart.	Cork
Talbot de Malahide, lord JP DL	Cavan; Dublin; Westmeath
Thompson, W.T.	Dublin; Kildare
Tombe, Rev. Canon	Antrim
Tottenham, Mrs. A.M.	Westmeath
Trench, Thomas Cooke, JP	Dublin; Dublin City; Kildare
Upton, Lewis JP	Louth
Usborne, Thomas M.	Clare; Cork; Cork City; Kerry
Ussher, John	Waterford
Vaughan, W.P.H.L., DL JP	King's; Tipperary
Verschoyle, Mrs.	Meath
Vesey, Col. Charles C. JP DL	Dublin; Kildare
Waller, Wm. N JP.	Meath
Walsh, Rev. Robert	Clare; Dublin City; Wicklow
Waterpark, Lord	Tipperary
Webber, W.D. JP	Kildare; Leitrim; Queen's; Sligo
White, Luke	Longford
Weldon, Sir A. Bart. JP DL	Kildare; Queen's

5,000-9,999 acres

Name	County
Alcock, Colonel H., D.L.	Wexford
Armstrong, E., JP	Tipperary
Balfour, B.F., JP, DL	Louth; Meath; Westmeath; Armagh; Tyrone; Down
Bandon, Earl of	Cork
Barron, Sir Henry P., Bart.	Waterford
Barton, Major Hugh L., DL	Kildare
Barton, Samuel H., DL	Tipperary
Bennett, Francis V., DL JP	King's
Beresford, Denis W. Pack	Carlow
Bond, James W., JP, DL	Longford; Meath; Westmeath
Borrowes, Major, DL	Kildare:
Boyle, The Ladies	Cork
Butler, Sir Thomas, Bart., DL	Carlow
Cannon, William J, JP	Mayo; Galway:

Carden, Sir John C., Bart.	Tipperary
Clements, Lieut. Col., JP DL	Leitrim; Cavan; Waterford
Cliffe, Anthony J., DL	Wexford; Kilkenny; Cork; Meath
Congreve, Ambrose, DL	Waterford; Kilkenny; Cork
Dames, Thomas Lougworth, DL	King's:
Delap, Rev. Robert	Donegal
De Robeck, Baron, DL	Dublin; Kildare; Wicklow
Desart, The Earl of	Kilkenny; Tipperary
Dickins, Charles J.S., JP	Mayo
Dunsany, Lord	Meath; Kilkenny; Cavan
Ffolliott, Colonel J.	Sligo; Donegal; Leitrim
Fitzgerald, Penrose JP DL	Cork; Queen's
Fitzgerald, W.H. Wilson, JP	Clare
Foster, W.O. JP DL	Wexford
Fowler, Robert, DL	Meath
Galbraith, John S. JP DL	Longford; Tyrone
Grogan, Major Wm., JP	Westmeath; Wicklow
Hamilton,, Ion Trant, MP	Dublin; Down; Meath; Queen's
Harbeton, Viscount	Kildare
Hely, Captain Gorges, DL JP	Kilkenny
Henry, Frederick H.	Antrim; Dublin; Galway; Kildare; Meath
Houston, John B.	Antrim; Down
Howth, Earl of, JP, DL, MP	Dublin; Meath
Humble, Sir N., Bart., JP, DL	Tipperary; Waterford
Hyde, John, DL	Cork
Irwin, Burton, DL, JP	Donegal; Sligo
King, Sir Gilbert, Bart., DL	Leitrim; Roscommon; Sligo
Kirk, William M. JP	Monaghan; Queen's; Wexford
Leahy, John W., JP	Kerry
Leigh, F.A. JP	Wexford
Limerick, Earl of JP DL	Clare; Cork; Limerick; Limerick City
Macnaghten, Sir. F., Bart. JP DL	Antrim; Armagh; Londonderry
Midleton, Viscount, JP, DL	Cork
Mundy, Major General	Kerry
Murdoch, Robert	Monaghan; Tipperary
Musgrave, Sir R.J., Bart.	Kilkenny; Waterford
Newman, John A.R., JP	Cork
Newton, P.J., DL JP	Carlow
Nicholson, Chris A., DL JP	Meath
Nugent, Col. A.	Down; Westmeath
Nugent, Lady	Meath; Tipperary; Westmeath
O'Gilby, Robert L., JP DL	Londonderry
Oranmore, Lord	Mayo; Westmeath
Power, Sir Richard, Bart.	Dublin; Kilkenny; Tipperary; Waterford; Wicklow
Potts, W.T. JP	Roscommon; Westmeath
Primate, The Lord (Arch of Armagh) Marcus Gervais Beresford	Cavan; King's; Leitrim; Meath; Tyrone
Purefoy, Lt.-Colonel E. .Bagwell	Tipperary
Ryan, Valentine	Donegal; Limerick; Queen's; Tipperary
Seaton, General Lord	Carlow; Kildare; King's
Sinclair, William, DL JP	Donegal; Tyrone
Singleton, H.S.	Cavan; Drogheda; Louth; Meath
Smythe, W.B , DL JP	Galway; Meath; Westmeath
Smyth, Hon. C.W., JP DL	Limerick; Waterford
Staples, Robert, DL	Queen's; Londonderry; Mayo
Stewart, H.G. Murray	Donegal
St. George, Richard J., JP	Galway
Stoney, R. Vesey, JP	Mayo; Roscommon
Stubber, R. Hamilton, DL JP	Queen's
Swanton, J.H , JP	Cork
Vesey, George JP	Galway; Mayo
Waller, Rev. J.T.	Limerick
Warren, Sir Augustus R., Bt., DL	Cork
White, W.H.	Leitrim
Wilson, George O.	Kildare; Wexford

Wolseley, Sir C.J., Bart., JP	Carlow; Wexford
Wood, Col., DL	Cork
Wood, George A., JP	Clare; Cork; Waterford

10,000-19,999 acres

Name	County
Annaly, Lord	Longford; Dublin
Bateson, Sir Thomas, Bart. MP	Down; Limerick; Londonderry; Antrim
Beecher, Sir H.W., Bart., JP, DL	Cork; Tipperary
Bellingham, Sir Alan E., Bart. JP. DL	Louth; Mayo
Blennerhassett, A. DL	Kerry
Browne, Thomas.R., DL	Tyrone
Carbery, Lord	Cork; Queen's; Limerick
Carysfort, Earl of	Wicklow; Dublin; Kildare
Castlemaine, Viscount	Westmeath; Roscommon
Chapman, Sir Benj. J., Bart., JP DL	Westmeath; Meath; Mayo
Chute, Francis B., JP	Kerry
Cloncurry, Lord	Kildare; Limerick; Dublin; Meath
Close, Maxwell C., DL, MP	Armagh; Queen's
Cobbe, Charles, DL JP	Dublin; Louth
Cosby, Captain DL JP	Queen's
Crosbie, Lieut.-Col. James, DL	Kerry
Crosbie, Talbot W.	Kerry
Crofton, Lord	Roscommon
Dawson G. Massy, DL	Tipperary; Limerick
De Vesci, Viscount	Dublin; Queen's; Cork:
Doyne, Charles, M. DL	Wexford; Carlow; Kildare
Drogheda, Marquis	Kildare;; Queen's
Dunraven, Earl	Limerick; Kerry; Clare
Egmont, Earl of	Cork
Ferrall, John N., JP	Roscommon; Mayo
Fitzgerald, Lord Maurice	Wexford
Fitzgerald, Sir. A., Bart.	Clare
Fitzgibbon, Lady	Limerick; Tipperary
Forde, Colonel, DL JP	Down; Dublin City
Gormanston, Viscount, DL JP	Dublin; Meath
Granard, Earl of	Leitrim; Longford
Heard, Robert, JP	Cork; Tipperary
Hope, Mrs.	Monaghan
Kilmaine, Lord, JP DL	Galway; Mayo; Roscommon; Westmeath; Wexford
King, John G., JP DL	King's; Roscommon
Leslie, Robert, DL JP	Kerry; Meath; Monaghan;
Lifford, Lord JP DL	Donegal; Tyrone
Longfield, J.C. Monifort	Cork
Longford, Earl of JP DL	Dublin; Longford; Westmeath
Malone, John, DL MP	Westmeath
Manchester, Duke of JP DL	Armagh
Meath, Earl of, JP, DL, MP	Dublin; Dublin City; Wicklow
Molony, Major W.M., JP DL	Clare
Morgan, Hon. Mrs. Deane	Wexford: Kilkenny
Naper, James L., DL JP	Meath
Newton, A.W., JP	Leitrim; Donegal; Tyrone
Normanton, Earl of DL, MP	Kilkenny; Limerick; Tipperary
Ormathwaite, Lord	Cork; Kerry
Palliser, John, DL JP	Kildare; Tipperary; Waterford
Ponsonby, Chambre B., DL	Tipperary; Limerick; Kilkenny; Dublin
Portlarington, Earl of , JP DL	King's; Queen's; Tipperary;
Rathdonnell, Lord	Dublin; Fermanagh; Kildare; Louth; Meath; Monaghan; Tyrone
Rochfort-Boyd, G.A., DL	Westmeath
Rossmore, Lord	Monaghan
Shannon, Earl of	Cork
Shuldham, Col. E.A., DL	Cork

Smyth, Ralph, DL	Westmeath; Antrim
Smyth, Thomas J. JP	Kildare; King's; Meath; Westmeath
Stratford, J. Wingfield	Clare; Dublin City; Limerick; Mayo; Sligo; Wicklow
Stronge, Sir James M., Bart., DL, JP MP	Armagh; Londonderry; Tyrone
Taylor, Right Hon. Colonel, MP	Dublin; Meath; Louth
Tottenham, Lieut-Colonel, DL	Carlow; Sligo; Wexford; Wicklow
Warburton, Richard, DL JP	King's; Queen's
White, R.H.E., JP, Jun.	Cork

20,000 and above

Name	County
Abercorn, the Duke of	Tyrone; Donegal
Adair, J.G.	Donegal; Queen's; Kilkenny:
Annesley, Earl	Cavan; Down; Queen's
Ardilaun, Lord, JP	Galway; Mayo; Dublin
Ashbrook, Viscount	Kilkenny; King's; Queen's; Limerick; Dublin
Bantry, Earl of, JP DL	Cork
Barry, A.H.S.	Cork City; Cork; Louth; Tipperary
Blosse, Sir Robert L. Bart., JP, DL	Mayo
Brooke, Sir Victor, A., Bart., JP DL:	Fermanagh
Bruen, Right Hon. H., JP, DL	Carlow; Wexford; Kildare
Castletown, Lord	Queen's
Carew, Lord	Wexford; Waterford; Queen's
Charlemont, Earl of	Armagh; Tyrone; Dublin
Clancarty, Earl of	Galway; Roscommon
Clanrickarde, Marquis of	Galway
Clermont, Lord	Louth; Armagh
Clonbrock, Lord	Galway
Clonmell, Earl of	Tipperary; Kildare; Kilkenny; Carlow; Monaghan; Limerick; Dublin:
Cooper, Edward, DL	Sligo; Limerick
Courtown, Earl of JP DL	Wexford; Carlow
Darnley, Earl of	Meath
Dartrey, Earl	Monaghan; Waterford; Armagh; Louth
De Freyne, Lord (Baron)	Roscommon: Sligo; Galway; Mayo
Digby, Lord	King's; Queen's; Mayo
Doneraille, Viscount	Cork; Waterford
Dunsandle, Lord	Galway; Tipperary
Ely, Marquis of	Fermanagh; Wexford
Erne, the earl of	Fermanagh; Donegal; Mayo; Sligo
Essex, Earl of	Roscommon; Meath; Dublin; Wicklow
Farnham, Lord	Cavan
Fermoy, Lord	Cork; Waterford; Limerick
Fitzwilliam, Earl	Kildare; Wexford; Wicklow
Gore, Sir C.K., Bart.	Mayo; Sligo
Harlech, Lord	Leitrim; Mayo; Roscommon; Sligo; Westmeath
Hayes, Sir Samuel, Bart., DL JP	Donegal
Headfort, Marquis JP, DL, Mp	Cavan; Meath
Herbert, Henry Arthur, DL, JP, MP	Kerry
Inchiquin, Lord, JP, DL	Clare
Kavanagh A M., DL	Carlow; Kilkenny; Westmeath; Wexford
King-Harman, Col. E. R., JP, DL, MP	Longford; Roscommon; Sligo; Westmeath; Queen's
Knox, C.H., DL	Mayo; Donegal
Lansdowne, Marquis of	Limerick City; Meath; Queen's; Dublin, Kerry; King's, Limerick
Leconfield, Lord, JP DL	Clare; Limerick; Tipperary
Leitrim, Earl of	Donegal; Leitrim
Leslie, Sir J., Bart., DL, JP, MP	Cavan; Donegal; Down; Fermanagh: Tyrone
Listowel, Earl of JP	Cork; Kerry
Lucan, Earl of JP MP	Dublin; Mayo
Mahon, H.S Pakenham, JP DL	Roscommon; Westmeath
Mahony, R.J., DL JP	Kerry
Massarene, Lord JP DL	Antrim; Louth; Meath; Monaghan

Massy, Lord JP DL	Leitrim; Limerick; Tipperary
O'Neill, Lord (Rev Wm)	Antrim
Ormonde, Marquis of	Kilkenny; Kilkenny City; Tipperary
Palmer, General Sir R. Bart.	Dublin; Mayo; Sligo
Powerscourt, Viscount	Armagh; Cork; Wexford; Wicklow
Pratt, Mervyn, JP DL	Cavan; Mayo; Meath
Rosse, Earl of JP DL	King's; Tipperary
Shirley, Evelyn P., DL JP MP	Monaghan
Sligo, Marquis of [Lord Monteagle]	Mayo
Style, Sir William, Bart.,	Donegal
Templemore, Lord	Donegal; Down; Londonderry; Wexford
Ventry, Lord JP DL	Kerry
Wallace, Sir Richard, Bart., JP DL MP	Antrim; Down
White, Hon. Col. W.C. MP	Clare; Tipperary
Wicklow, Earl of	Wicklow; Donegal; Westmeath

Appendix 8. Names and estates used in OEC data

1-499 acres

Name	County
Brown, Clayton N., JP, DL	Dublin
Cole, Colonel The Hon H.A.	Fermanagh
Caldbeck, William E. Esq JP DL	Dublin
Lee, Rev. S.	Dublin City

500-999 acres

Name	County
Bunburry, Sir John Bart., DL	Tyrone
Frith, Rev. J.B.	Fermanagh; Louth
Gradwell, Richard, Esq, JP	Meath
Handcock, The Hon. R.J.	Westmeath
Leathley, Forde, Esq	Dublin
Mitchell, Adam, Esq	King's; Tipperary
Nugent, Major Andrew.	Down
Orpin, John, Esq	Cork
Revington, Thomas, Esq JP	Wexford
Smith, R.A., Esq	Louth; Drogheda; Meath

1,000-4,999 acres

Name	County
Acton, Thomas, Esq., DL	Wicklow
Barton, Major C.R., JP, DL	Fermanagh
Blacker, Major Stewart, JP DL	Armagh
Bloomfield, J.G. Esq, JP	Fermanagh, Donegal
Cairnes, T.P. Esq JP, DL	Meath
Caldbeck, Thomas F. Esq JP	Dublin
Cramsie, Captain J.S.	Antrim; Londonderry
Cavan, The Earl of	Cavan
Cooper, Colonel J.H. JP	Cork; Westmeath
Cusack, T.A. Esq	Longford
D'Esterre, H.V., Esq	Clare; Limerick
Delacherois, Daniel, Esq, DL	Down
Foster, F.J., Esq JP DL	Louth
Garvey, Toler R, Esq, JP	King's; Tipperary
Goff, S.D., Esq JP	Wexford
Garnett, Samuel, Esq, JP	Meath
Hutchinson, Sir E.S., Bart.	Dublin; Wicklow
Hunt, E.L., Esq.	Cork; Dublin
Hackett, Colonel Simpson	Tipperary
Jackson, H.V., Esq.	King's; Tipperary
Johnston, Lady	Antrim; Roscommon
Kilmore, the Dean of (John M Massy-Beresford, JP	Fermanagh; Limerick; Tipperary
Low, F.W., Esq. JP DL	Cork; Tipperary
Levinge, M.A, Esq JP	Meath; Roscommon; Westmeath
Lambert, Gustavus William, Esq, JP, DL	Meath; Westmeath
Leckey, Hugh, Esq, JP	Antrim; Roscommon
Nason, Rev. W.H.	Cork
Orr, James, Esq.	Londonderry

O'Callaghan, Colonel John, DL	Clare
Plunkett, Lady L.	Monaghan
Poe, W.T., Esq	Tipperary
Powell, Colonel H.C. JP	Cork
Richards, E.M., Esq, JP	Wexford
Singleton, E., Esq JP	Louth
Stoney, T.B, Esq JP	Tipperary
Seymour, Thomas, Esq, JP	Galway; King's
Truell, H.T. Esq, LLD, DL JP	Wexford; Wicklow
Thompson, G.W., Esq JP	Cork; Meath; Westmeath
Verner, E.W., Esq, JP MP	Armagh; Dublin

5,000-9,999 acres

Name	County
Cope F.R. Esq	Armagh
Hutchinson, John D, Esq JP	Queen's Tipperary
Hillas, Robert W, Esq, JP, DL	Dublin; Sligo
Harberton, Lord (Viscount)	Kildare
Henry, Frederick, H, Esq, JP	Antrim; Dublin; Galway; Kildare; Meath
Lowry, R.W., Esq, DL	Tyrone
Nicholson, Christopher Armitage, Esq JP, DL	Meath
Nugent, Colonel A., JP, DL	Down; Westmeath
Staples, Robert Esq, JP, DL	Queen's; Londonderry; Mayo
Singleton, Henry S, Esq	Cavan; Drogheda; Louth; Meath
Tisdall, John, Esq JP DL	Kilkenny; Limerick; Meath

10,000-19,999 acres

Name	County
Belmore, The Earl of	Tyrone; Fermanagh
Batt, R.N. Esq, DL	Down
Castlemaine, Lord	Westmeath; Roscommon
Duckett, William Esq, JP	Carlow; Wicklow; Dublin; Kildare; Wexford; Queen's
Forde, Colonel, JP, DL (MP)	Down; Dublin City
Lanesborough, The earl of	Cavan; Fermanagh
La Touche, W.R, Esq	Dublin; Leitrim; Tipperary; Wicklow
Manchester, the Duke of JP DL	Armagh
Mulholland, John, Esq, MP	Down; Tyrone
Norbury, The Earl of	Clare; Mayo; Sligo; Tipperary
Poer, Count de la, DL	Tipperary; Waterford
Roden, Earl of	Louth; Down
Rossmore, Lord	Monaghan
Ranfurley, The Earl of	Tyrone; Fermanagh
Trevor, Lord Hill JP DL MP	Antrim; Armagh; Down

20,000 and above

Name	County
Ardilaun, Lord	Galway; Mayo; Dublin
Ashbrook, Lord	Kilkenny; King's; Queen's Limerick; Dublin
Archdale, Capt. M., JP, Dl	Fermanagh; Tyrone
Bruen, Henry, Esq, JP, DL	Carlow; Wexford; Kildare
Brooke, Sir Victor A., Bart.	Fermanagh
Cooper, Colonel Edward	Sligo; Limerick
Darnley, The Earl of	Meath
Enniskillen, The Earl of	Fermanagh

Erne, The Earl of	Fermanagh; Mayo; Donegal; Sligo
Farnham, Lord	Cavan
King-Harman, Colonel, E.R., JP, DL	Longford; Roscommon; Sligo; Westmeath; Queen's
Leslie, Sir John, Bart., DL JP MP	Cavan; Donegal; Down; Fermanagh; Tyrone
Massereene, Viscount JP DL	Antrim; Louth; Meath; Monaghan
Massy, Lord JP DL	Leitrim; Limerick; Tipperary
Ormonde, The Marquis of	Kilkenny; Kilkenny City; Tipperary
Pakenham, Mahon, H.S., Esq, DL JP	Roscommon; Westmeath
Rosse, The Earl of	King's; Tipperary
Templeton, Major Gen. Lord JP DL	Antrim; Monaghan
Ventry, Lord	Kerry
Wallace, Sir Richard. Bart. JP DL MP	Antrim; Down
Wynne, Owen, Esq, JP, DL	Leitrim; Sligo
Wandesforde, C.B., Esq, JP, DL	Kilkenny

Appendix 9. Persons Receiving OEC Aid during the land war

Name	Location of Estates	Acreage	Valuation	Club	Alma Mater	Date of birth	Other info
Henry owen Lewis	Dublin, Monaghan, Longford, Meath	3733	2863		TCD		catholic
Col Charles William White	Tipperary, Clare	23997	9458	Kildare St.; Reform			
Viscount Hawarden	Tipperary, Clare	15272	8781	Carlton	Eton	1817	
Lord Mount-Temple	Dublin, Monaghan, Longford, Meath	738	6788	Reform	Eton	1811	
Viscount Guillamore	Cork, Limerick	4846	2381			1841	
Lord Kilmaine	Mayo, Westmeath, Roscommon	14665	7499	Carlton; Kildare St	TCD	1843	
Viscount Lismore	Tipperary, Cork, Limerick	42206	16354	Kildare St.; Reform	Oxon	1815	
earl of Egmont	Cork, Limerick	16766	16810	Carlton	Radley; Oxon	1845	
William Potts	Westmeath, Roscommon	402	647	Sackville	TCD		
Henry Westropp	Limerick	583	507				
Robert Jason Mooney	King's	4344	1582		TCD		
Edward Tipping	Louth	1245	1055				
George Twiss	Tipperary, Cork	3518	2078				
John Cornwall Brady	Clare, Carlow, Queen's	3003	1390	Kildare St.; Reform			
Robert Ferguson	Limerick	1435	470				
Robert John Handcock	Westmeath	502	262				
Count Edmond de la Poer	Tipperary, Waterford	13524	4982	Kildare St.; Reform			catholic
Robert Owen	Queen's	360	n/a				
Charles George O'Callaghan	Clare	8735	3590		Oxford		COI
Rev. Thomas H. Fleming	Galway	38	27				
Viscount Gough	Galway, Queen's, Tipperary, Dublin, Kildare	13708	7903	Carlton, Kildare St.		1815	
Francis MacDonagh	Kilkenny	544	n/a				
Walter Bourke	Mayo	2755	95				
Arthur Bingham	Mayo	1662	222				
Edward Hill	Tipperary	221	140				
Viscount Mountmorres	Galway	300	121	University Club	TCD	1832	

Appendix 9. Persons Receiving OEC Aid during the land war

Name	Location of Estates	Acreage	Valuation	Club	Alma Mater	Date of birth	Other info
Wk Marshall							
John Neville Bagot							
E.A. Neville							
Dean John West							COI
Rev. Edward Denny							COI
Mrs. Murray							
Dr. Balwin							
N. Caldwell							

Select Bibliography

1. Primary Sources

i. Manuscript

British Library

Gladstone Papers, ADD 44157-44160.

National Library of Ireland

Ashtown Papers. Ms. 5825.
George Brooke Papers. Ms. 5760.
Castletown Papers, Mss. 35317; 35321.
Clonbrock Papers. Mss. 19633-19637; 19678; 35721; 35770; 35771; 35788
Cloncurry Papers. Mss. 12893-12908.
Crofton Papers. Mss. 4087-4099.
Doneraile Papers. Ms. 34007.
Dopping-Hepenstal Papers. Ms. 9993.
Fitzwilliam Papers. Ms 4992.
Headfort Papers. Ms. 25410 (1-29).
Humphreys Papers. Mss. 5014-5015.
Inchiquin Papers. Mss. 14546-14552.
Johnston Papers. Ms. 25052
Leitrim Papers. Mss. 4138; 32644-32646; 32656;
Mahon Papers. Mss. 23348-23349.
Mansfield Papers. Ms. 14308.
Ormonde Papers. Mss. 23 797-23801; 23668-23721; 25016-25023.
Pratt Papers. Mss. 5090-5091.
Tighe Papers. Mss. 29634-29683.
Whyte Papers. Mss. 4024-4043.

National Archives of Ireland

Chief Secretary's Office, Registered Papers.
Sheriffs' Decree and Order Books, Co. Wexford, vol. 15, 1879, IC 43 56; vol. 16, 1880, IC 43 57; vol. 17, 1881, IC 43 58; vol. 18, 1882, IC 1882, IC 43 59.

The Library of Trinity College, Dublin

Courtown Papers. MS 111883 v/17-18; 11183 v/23; 11183 v/61-64; 11183 v/120; 11183 v/235; P46/1/1-324.

Public Record Office of Northern Ireland

Belmore Papers. D 3007/B/4/8/2.
Boycott Fund Committee Letters. D3681/Acc14820.
Corscadden Diary, 1878-83. T 3764/2.
Erne Papers. D 1939.
Farnham Papers. D 3975 and D 422.
Fermanagh Grand Orange Lodge Minutes. D 1402/I.
Gosford Papers. D 1606 and D 2259.
Kenmare Papers. D 4151.
Shirley Papers. D 3531.
Villiers-Stuart Papers. Co. Waterford. MIC/464 and T/3131.

ii. House of Commons Sessional Papers

(a) *Royal Commissions, Select Committees, and Special Returns*

Returns Showing the Number of Agricultural Holdings in Ireland, and the Tenure by which They are Held by the Occupiers [C 32]. HC 1870, lvi. 737.

Return for the Year 1870, of the Number of Landed Proprietors in Each County, Classed according to Residence, Showing the Extent and Value of the Property Held by Each Class HC 1872 (167), xlvii. 775.

Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Landlord and tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870; together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, Appendix, and Index, HC 1872 (403), xi. 1.

Copy 'of "a Return of the Names of Proprietors and the Area and Valuation of All Properties in the Several Counties in Ireland, Held in Fee or Perpetuity, or on Long Leases at Chief Rents", Prepared for the Use of Her Majesty's Government...'. HC 1876 (412), lxxx. 395.

Summary 'of the Returns of Owners of Land in Ireland, Showing with Respect to Each County, the Number of Owners Below an Acre, and in Classes up to 100,000 Acres and Upwards, with the Aggregate Acreage and Valuation of Each Class', HC 1876 (422), lxxx. 335.

Report from the Select Committee on [the] *Irish Land Act, 1870; together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, Appendix, and Index,* HC 1878 (249), xv. 1

Supplement to the Return of Owners of Land in the Several Counties, Counties of Cities, and Counties of Towns in Ireland...Comprising a Statement of Changes in the Entries in the Return, which on Inquiry Made since the Publication of the Return have been Found Necessary [C 2022], HC 1878, lxxix. 501.

Registration of Deeds and Assurances in Ireland Commission. First Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Law Relating to the Registration of Deeds and Assurances in Ireland, with Appendix, HC 1878-79 (405), xxxi, p. xxxvii.

Return of the Number of Agrarian Offences in each County in Ireland Reported to the Constabulary Office in each Month of the Year, 1880, distinguishing Offences against the Person, Offences against Property, and Offences against the Public Peace, with Summary for each County for the Year, HC 1881 (12), lxxvii. 619.

Preliminary Report of her Majesty's Commissioners on Agriculture [C 2778], HC 1881, xv. I.

----- *Minutes of Evidence*, pt. i, [C 2778-I], 25.

----- *Digest and Appendix to Minutes of Evidence,* pt I, *with Reports of Assistant Commissioners* [C 2778-II], HC 1881, xvi. i.

----- *Minutes of Evidence,* pt. ii [C 3096], HC 1881, xvii. 1.

Particulars of Expenditure and Outgoings on Certain Estates in Great Britain and Farm Accounts. Reprinted from the Reports of the Assistant Commissioners. (London, 1906).

Report of Her Majesty's Commission of Inquiry into the Working of the Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870, and the Acts Amending the Same [C 2779], HC 1881, xviii. 1.

----- *Minutes of Evidence,* pt. i [C2779-I], HC 1881, xviii. 73.

----- *Minutes of Evidence and Appendices,* pt. ii [C 2779-II], HC 1881, xix, 1.

----- *Index to Minutes of Evidence and Appendices* [C 2779-III], HC 1881, xix.

First Report from the Select Committee of [the] *House of Lords on the Land Law (Ireland) Act; together with Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, Appendix, and Index,* HC 1882 (249), xi. 1.

----- *Second Report*, ibid. (379), 547.

----- *Third Report*, HC 1883 (204), xiii. 443.

----- *Fourth Report, and Index*, ibid. (279), 653.

Report from the Select Committee on Law of Distress; together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix HC 1882 (284), viii. 269.

Report of the Royal Commission on the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881, and the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1885 [C 4969], HC 1887, xxvi. 1.

A Return showing according to Provinces and Counties the number of cases in which Judicial Rents have been fixed by all the methods provided by the Land Law Acts for a First Statutory Term, during the period from the 22nd August, 1881 to the 31st day of December, 1902; also a Summary of the Acreages, Former Rents, and the Judicial Rents of the Holdings, and the Percentages of Reductions made in the Former Rents. 1903 (91) lvii. 374.

(b) *Judicial Statistics, Censuses, Evictions, Judicial Rents, Agrarian Outrages and Agricultural Statistics*

Judicial Statistics 1875. Ireland: pt. i, *Police, Criminal Proceedings, Prisons;* pt. ii, *Common Law, Equity, Civil and Canon Law* [C 1536], HC 1876, lxxix, 273.

----- 1876 [C 1822], HC 1877, lxxxvi. 261.

----- 1877 [C 2152], HC 1878, lxxix. 265.

----- 1878 [C 2429], HC 1878-9, lxvi. 569.

----- 1879 [C 2698], HC 1880, lxxvii. 251.

----- 1880 [C 3028], HC 1881, xcv. 243.

----- 1881 [C 3355], HC 1882, lxxv. 243.

----- 1882 [C 3803], HC 1883, lxxvii. 243.

----- 1883 [C 4181], HC 1884, lxxxvi. 243.

----- 1884 [C 4554], HC 1884-5, lxxxvi. 243.

----- 1885 [C 4796], HC 1886, lxxii. 233.

Return of the Number of Writs for Eviction, and for the Recovery of Rent, issued out of each Division of the High Court of Justice in Ireland, during each three months, from 1st day of January 1878 to the present, HC 1886 (105) liii. 401.

Census of Ireland, 1871, pt i: *Area, houses and population; also the ages, civil condition, occupations, birthplaces, religion, and education of the people,* vol. i, *provinces of Leinster, with summary tables and indixes* [C 662-I to XIII], HC 1872, lxvii, 1; vol. ii, *province of Munster,* [C 873-I to IV], HC 1873, lxxii, pt i, 1; *summary tables and indexes* [C 873-V to VII], HC 1873, lxxii, pt ii, 1; vol. iii, *province of Ulster, with summary tables and indexes* [C 964-I to X], HC 1874, lxxiv, pt i, 1; vol. iv, *province of Connaught with summary tables and indexes, and summary tables for Ireland* [C 1106-I to VII] HC 1874, lxxiv, pt ii, 1.

----- pt iii: *General Report, with illustrated maps and diagrams, summary tables and appendix* [C 1377], HC 1876, lxxxi, 1.

Census of Ireland, 1881, pt i: *Area, houses and population; also the ages, civil condition, occupations, birthplaces, religion, and education of the people,* vol. i, *provinces of Leinster, with summary tables and indixes* [C 3042], HC 1881, xcvii, 1; vol. ii, *province of Munster,* [C 3148], HC 1882, lxxxvii, 1; vol. iii, *province of Ulster* [C 3204], HC 1882, lxxviii, 1; vol. iv, *province of Connaught* [C 3268], HC 1882, lxxix, 1.

----- pt. ii: *General report, with illustrative maps and diagrams, tables, and appendix* [C 3365], HC 1882, lxxvi, 385.

Return, 'in Tabular Form, as under, of the Number of Civil Bill Ejectments, distinguishing Ejectments on the Title from those for Non-payment of Rent, Tried and Determined in each County in Ireland, for each of the Four Years ending the 31st day of December 1880, exclusive of Ejectments for Premises situate in the Counties of Cities, Boroughs, and Towns under the Act 9 Geo. 4, c. 82, or "The Towns Improvement (Ireland) Act, 1854", or any Local Act', HC 1881 (90) lxxvii. 685.

Return, 'in Tabular Form, as under, of the Number of Actions of Ejectment in Superior Courts commenced, distinguishing Ejectments on the Title from those for Non-payment of Rent; and those Tried and Determined in each County in Ireland, for each of the Four Years ending the 31st day of December 1880, and the Number of Haberes issued, and the Number executed, in the same period', HC 1881 (90) lxxvii. 685.

Returns showing (1) The number of Families Evicted in each County in Ireland for Non-payment of Rent and the Number of these Families Re-admitted as Caretakers for the Years 1877, 1878,1879, and the Half-year ended the 30th day of June 1880; and (2) The Number of Families Evicted for Non-payment of Rent and other Causes for the Quarter ended the 30th day of June 1880' HC 1880 (317), lx. 367.

Return (compiled from Returns made to the Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary) of cases of Eviction which have come to the knowledge of the Constabulary in each Quarter of the year ended the 31st day of December 1880, showing the Number of Families Evicted in each County in Ireland during each Quarter, the Number Readmitted as Tenants, and the Number Re-admitted as Caretaker, HC 1881 (2), lxxvii. 713.

----- to 31 Dec. 1881, HC 1882 (9), lv. 229.

----- to 31 Dec. 1882 [C 3465], HC 1883, lvi. 99.

Copy of 'Return prepared from Reports made to the Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary of Cases of Eviction which have come under the Knowledge of the Constabulary, showing the Number of Families Evicted in each County in Ireland in each of the Four Quarters of the Years 1877, 1878, 1879, First Quarter of the Year 1880, and up to the 20th day of June 1880' HC 1880 (254). LX 361

Return, 'by Provinces and Counties (Compiled from Returns Made to the Inspector-General, Royal Irish Constabulary) of Cases of Evictions which have Come to the Knowledge of the Constabulary in Each of the Years 1849 to 1880, inclusive, HC 1881 (185), lxxvii. 725

Return according to provinces and counties of judicial rents fixed by subcommissions and civil bills courts as notified to the Irish Land Commission up to and including the 28th day of January, 1882, HC [c. 3120], lvi. 1

A Return showing according to Provinces and Counties the number of cases in which Judicial Rents have been fixed by all the methods provided by the Land Law Acts for a First Statutory Term, during the period from the 22nd August, 1881 to the 31st day of December, 1902; also a Summary of the Acreages, Former Rents, and the Judicial Rents of the Holdings, and the Percentages of Reductions made in the Former Rents. 1903 (91) lvii. 374

Return of the Number of Agrarian Offences in each County in Ireland Reported to the Constabulary Office in each Month of the Year 1881, distinguishing Offences against the Person, Offences against Property, and Offences against the Public Peace, with Summary for each County for the Year, HC 1882 (72) LV. 13.

Return 'by Provinces, of Agrarian Offences throughout Ireland Reported to the Inspector

General of the Royal Irish Constabulary between the 1st day of January 1880 and the 31st day of December 1880, showing the Number of Cases in which Offenders were Convicted; the Number of Cases in which Offenders were made Amenable but not Convicted; the Number of Cases in which Offenders are awaiting Trial; and the Number of Cases in which Offenders were neither Convicted nor made Amenable, HC 1881 (13), lxxxvii.

The Agricultural Statistics of Ireland for the year 1879 [C 2534], HC 1880, lxxvi. 815

Returns as to the number and size of agricultural holdings in Great Britain in the year 1895. HC [C. 8243], lxvii. 501

(c) *Bills of Parliament*

Bill to make temporary provision with respect to Compensation for Disturbance in certain cases of ejectment for non-payment of rent in parts of Ireland, HC 1880 (232), i. 427.

iii. Official Publications

A Collection of the Public General Statutes, Passed…in the Reign of Her Majesty Queen Victoria… London, 1848-1887

Hansard's Parliamentary Debates: Forming a Continuation of the 'Parliamentary History of England, from the Earliest Times to the Year 1803'. 3rd series, 356 vols. London, 1831-91.

The Irish Statutes. Rev. edn., 3 Edward II to the Union, AD 1300-1800, with an introduction by W. N. Osborough (Blackrock, Co. Dublin, 1995).

iv. Newspapers

The Connaught Telegraph
The Cork Examiner
The Daily Express (Dublin)
Freeman's Journal
Gorey Correspondent & Arklow Standard
King's County Chronicle
The Irish Farmers' Gazette and Journal of Practical Husbandry

The Irish Times
The Irish Law Times and Solicitors' Journal
The Times
The Tipperary Advocate
The Waterford Mail and Daily Telegraph
The Waterford News and General Advertiser

v. Contemporary Works

Atkinson, George. *A Treatise on the Offices of High Sheriff, Undersheriff, Bailiff, &c. Including their Duties at Elections of Members of Parliament and Coroners; Also on Railway Compensation Cases, and the Execution of Writs.* 6th edn. (London, 1878).

Bence Jones, William. *The Life's Work in Ireland of a Landlord who Tried to Do his Duty* (London, 1880).

----- 'Ireland, 1840-80', *Macmillan's Magazine*, vol. xli (Nov. 1879 to Apr. 1880).

----- 'Ireland – Its Social State', *Macmillan's Magazine* (July 1880).

----- 'Landowning as a Business', *Nineteenth Century* (March, 1882).

Carleton, J. W. *The Jurisdiction and Procedure of the County Courts in Ireland* (Dublin, 1878).

Davitt, Michael. *The Fall of Feudalism in Ireland: Or the Story of the Land League Revolution* (London and New York, 1904).

De Moleyns, Thomas. *The Landlowner's and Agent's Practical Guide*, 7th edn., (Dublin, 1877).

Di Gargano, Michael, *Irish and English Freemasons and their Foreign Brothers: Their System, Oaths, Ceremonies, Secretes, Grips, Signs, and Passwords…with Official list of Names* (Dublin, 1876).

Dixon, George Y. and W. L. Gilliland, *The Law Relating to Sheriffs in Ireland, with an Appendix of Statutes and Forms* (Dublin, 1888).

Dodd, W. H. 'On the Law Relating to the realization of Judgements and Decrees, with special reference to Judgements and Decrees against Tenant-farmers' in *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland* vol. vii, part lv, (Nov. 1878- June 1879), pp. 391-96.

----- 'Prize Essay on the Jurisdiction of the Local Courts in Ireland, Scotland, and England compared,' in *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland.* vol. vii, part li (Dec. 1876-Apr.1877).

Dun, Finaly. *Landlords and Tenant in Ireland* (London, 1881).

Emergency Committee *The Defence of Property in Ireland. Mansion House Fund. Reports Read at a Meeting of the Committee, On November 7th, 1882* (London, 1882).

Foot, Charles H. *The Grand Jury Laws of Ireland; comprising all the statutes relating to the powers and duties of grand juries, including orders in council relating to presentments and all matters connected therewith: to which are added copious notes, tables of cases reported under various acts, forms of procedure, criminal jurisdiction, and an index* (Dublin, 1884).

Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland. *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the Special Meeting held in the Orange Hall, 49 York Street, Dublin, On Wednesday, 3rd day of November, 1880* (Dublin, 1880).

----- *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, held in the Orange Hall, York St., Dublin, on Wednesday, the 1st, and Thursday, the 2nd days of December, 1880* (Dublin, 1881).

----- *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, on Wednesday 7th, and Thursday 8th December, 1881, in the Orange Hall, Dublin* (Dublin, 1882).

----- *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting on Wednesday the 6th day, and Thursday, the 7th, days of December, 1882. In the Orange Hall, Dublin* (Dublin, 1883).

----- *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, held in the Corporation Hall, Coleraine, on Wednesday the 6th day of June, 1883* (Dublin, 1883).

----- *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, held on Wednesday, the 6th, and Thursday, the 7th, days of December, 1883. In the Orange Hall, York-St., Dublin* (Dublin, 1884).

----- *Report of the Proceedings of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, at the General Half-Yearly Meeting, held in the Grand Orange Hall of Ireland, 10 Rutland Square, E., Dublin, on Wednesday, the 7th, and Thursday, 8th, days of December, 1887* (Dublin, 1888).

Green G. Garrow. *In the Royal Irish Constabulary* (London, [1905?]).

Grimshaw, Thomase Wrigley. *Facts and Figures about Ireland, Comprising a Summary and Analysis of the Principal Statistics of Ireland for the fifty years, 1841-90* (London and Dublin, 1893).

Hamilton, John. *Sixty Years' Experience as an Irish Landlord: Memoirs of John Hamilton, DL, of St. Ernan's, Donegal* (London, [1894]).

Hancock, W. Neilson. 'The Law of Judgements and the Jurisdiction of the Sheriff in selling Land, considered with reference to the complaints of the County Down people on the subject...', *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland* (Dec. 1875).

Humphreys, Henry. *The Justice of the Peace for Ireland: giving, in an abridged and alphabetical form and orders, the several offences and other causes of complaint; the subjects of summary adjudication; the statutes relating thereto; the extent of jurisdiction; and whether triable by one or more justices.* 5th ed. (Dublin, 1876).

Hussey, S. M. *The Reminiscences of an Irish land Agent* (London, 1904).

Irish Emergency Committee. *List of Subscriptions, received up to the 20th of October, 1881* (Dublin, 1881).

Irish Land Committee, *Confiscation or Contract* (Dublin, 1880)

----- *Extracts from Parliamentary Speeches on the Irish Land Question* (Dublin, 1881).

----- *List of Subscriptions Received subsequent to meeting at Shelbourne Hotel, 22nd April, 1880,* (Dublin, 1880).

----- *The Land Question, Ireland* No. I *'Notes upon the Government Valuation of Land in Ireland, Commonly known as 'Griffith's Valuation'* (Dublin, 1880).

----- *The Land Question, Ireland. No. II. The Anarchy in Ireland* (Dublin, 1880).

----- *The Land Question, Ireland. No. III. Facts and Figures* (Dublin, 1880).

----- *The Land Question, Ireland. No. IV. 'French Opinion on the Irish Crisis* (Dublin, n.d.).

----- *The Land Question, Ireland. No. V. Arrested Progress* (Dublin, 1881).

----- *The Land Question, Ireland. No. VI. Lord Dufferin on the Three F's'* (Dublin, 1881).

----- *The Land Question, Ireland. No. VII. Mr. Gladstone and the Three F's'* (Dublin, 1881).

----- *The Land Question, Ireland. No. VIII. Mr. Bonamy Price on the Three F's* (Dublin, 1881).

----- *The Land Question, Ireland. No. IX. Mr. Gladstone's Commissioners and Mr. Gladstone* (Dublin, 1881).

----- *The Land Question, Ireland. No. X. Mr. Gladstone's Bill* (Dublin, 1881).

----- *The Land Question, Ireland. No. XI. Foregone Conclusions: The Bessborough Commission* (Dublin, 1881).

----- *The Land Question, Ireland. No. XII. The Richmond Commission. Notes on Lord Carlingford's Report* (Dublin, 1881).

----- *The Land Question, Ireland. No. XIII. More Facts and Figures. Evictions* (Dublin, 1881).

----- *The Land Question, Ireland. No. XIV. The Working of the Land Law Act* (Dublin, 1882).

Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union. *Local Government in Ireland. A Sketch of the Present System and Methods of Procedure* (Dublin, n.d.).

Longfield, Robert. *The Law of Distress and Replevin in Ireland.* (Dublin, 1841).

Malley, George Orme. 'On the Expediency of the Total Abolition of Grand Juries in Ireland' *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland*, vol. vi, pt. xl, (July, 1871).

Property Defence Association, *Annual Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 20th November, 1881. Also a List of Subscribers* (Dublin, 1881).

----- *Mansion House Fund. Reports at a Meeting of the Committee, On November 7th, 1882* (Dublin, 1882).

----- *Report of the Committee for the Year Ended 20th November, 1881* (Dublin, 1881).

----- *Report of the Committee for the Year ended 30th Nov., 1882, and The Director's Report to the London Mansion House Committee, Together with an abstract of accounts, and a list of subscribers; for the same period* (Dublin, 1882).

----- *Report of the Committee for the Thirteen months ended 31st December, 1883, and*

Honorary Director's Report on the Operations of the Executive Department, Together with an Abstract of Accounts, and a List of Subscribers for same period (Dublin, 1884).

Richey, Alexander G. *The Irish Land Laws* (London, 1880).

Sproule, John. 'On the Effects of the Law of Distress and the Feudal Rule as regards Improvements in the relations between Landlord and Tenant', *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland,* (July 1868), vol. v, part xxxv.

vi. Works of Reference

Bateman, John. *The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland,* 4th edn. (London,1883); repr. with an introduction by David Spring (Leicester, 1971).

Burgh, U. H. Hussey De. *The Landowners of Ireland: An Alphabetical List of the Owners of 500 Acres or £500 Valuation and upwards, in Ireland* (Dublin, 1881).

Burke, Sir Bernard. *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Landed Gentry of Great Britain and Ireland,* 6th edn. with supplement (2 vols.; London, 1882).

Keogh, Rev. Canon. *The Irish Catholic Directory, Almanac and Registry; with Complete Ordo in English* (Dublin, 1880).

Crockford's Clerical Directory.

The Irish Church Directory for 1881 (Dublin, 1881).

Thom's Almanac and Official Dictionary of the United Kingdom and Ireland (Dublin, 1845 -).

Walker, Brian M. *Parliamentary Election Results in Ireland, 1801-1922* (Dublin, 1978).

vii. Memoirs

Cowper, Katrina, Countess Cowper. *Earl Cowper, KG: A Memoir by his Wife* (1913).

Fennell, Rosemary (ed.). Thomas Fennell, *The Royal Irish Constabulary. A history and personal memoir* (Dublin, 2003).

Kettle, L. J. (ed.). *The Material for Victory: being the memoirs of Andrew J. Kettle* (Dublin, 1958).

Moody, T. W. and Richard Hawkins (eds.). *Florence Arnold-Forster's Irish Journal* (Oxford, 1988).

2. Secondary Works

Ball, Stephen. 'Crowd Activity During the Irish Land War, 1879-90' in Peter Jupp and Eoin Magennis (eds.), *Crowds in Ireland, c. 1720-1920* (Basingstoke, 2000), pp. 212-48.

Bartlett, Thomas. 'An End to Moral Economy: The Irish Militia Disturbances of 1793' in C. H. E. Philpin (ed.), *Nationalism and Popular Protest in the Nineteenth-Century* (London, 1992).

Bence-Jones, Mark. *Twilight of the Ascendancy* (London, 1998).

Bew, Paul. *Land and the National Question in Ireland, 1858-82* (Dublin, 1978).

----- and Frank Wright, 'The Agrarian Opposition in Ulster Politics, 1868-86' in Samuel Clark and James S. Donnelly, Jr., (eds.) *Irish Peasants: Violence and Political Unrest, 1780-1914* (Madison, 1983).

Black, R. D. *Economic Thought and the Irish Question, 1817-1870* (Cambridge, 1960).

----- *A Catalogue of Pamphlets on Economic Subjects, Published between 1750 and 1900 and Now Housed in Irish Libraries* (Belfast, 1969).

Bonsall, Penny. *The Irish RMs. The Resident Magistrates in the British Administration of Ireland* (Dublin, 1997).

Boylan, Thomas A. and Timothy P. Foley (eds.), *Political Economy and Colonial Ireland. The Propagation and Ideological Function of Economic Discourse in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1992).

Brady, J.C. 'Legal Developments, 1801-1879', in W.E. Vaughan (ed.), *A New History of Ireland,* v. *Ireland under the Union, 1. 1801-70* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 451-81.

Buckley, K. 'The Fixing of Rents by Agreement in Co. Galway, 1881-85', *IHS*, 7: 27 (Mar. 1951), pp. 149-79.

Bull, Philip. *Land, Politics and Nationalism. A Study of the Irish Land Question* (Dublin, 1998).

Cannadine, David. *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (London, 1996).

Carter, J. W. H. *The Land War and Its Leaders in Queen's County, 1879-82* (Portlaoise, 1994).

Clark, Samuel. 'The Social Composition of the Land League' *IHS,* 17: 68 (Sept. 1971), pp. 447-69.

----- *Social Origins of the Irish Land War* (Princeton, NJ, 1979).

----- 'Landlord Domination in Nineteenth-Century Ireland', *UNESCO Yearbook on Peace and Conflict Studies, 1986* (Paris, 1988), pp. 5-29.

Collins, M. E. *The Land Question, 1879-1882* (Dublin, 1974).

Comerford, R. V. 'The land war and the politics of distress, 1877-82' in W. E. Vaughan (ed.), *A New History of Ireland*, vi: *Ireland Under the Union, II, 1870-1921* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 26-52.

Connell, K. H. 'The Land Legislation and Irish Social Life', *Econ. Hist. Rev.* 2nd ser. II: I (Aug. 1958), pp. 1-7.

Crossman, Virginia. *Local Government in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Belfast, 1994).

----- *Politics, Law and Order in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin, 1996).

Curtis, L. P., jun.. 'Incumbered Wealth: Landed Indebtedness in Post-Famine Ireland', in *AHR* 85: 2 (Apr. 1980), pp. 332-67.

----- 'Landlord Responses to the Irish Land War, 1879-87', in *Eire-Ireland*, xxxviii, no. 3-4 (2003), pp. 134-189.

----- 'Stopping the Hunt, 1881-2: An Aspect of the Irish Land War', in C.H.E. Philipin (ed.), *Nationalism and Popular Protest in Ireland* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 349-402.

Donnelly, James S., jun. *Landlord and Tenant in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin, 1973).

----- 'The Irish Agricultural Depression of 1859-64', *Irish Economic and Social History* 3 (1976), pp. 33-54.

----- *The Land and the People of Nineteenth-Century Cork: The Rural Economy and the Land Question* (London, 1975).

----- 'Landlords and Tenants' in W. E. Vaughan (ed.), *A New History of Ireland,* v. *Ireland under the Union, I. 1801-70* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 332-49.

Dooley, Terence A. M. 'Landlords and the Land Question, 1879-1909' in Carla King (ed.), *Famine, Land and Culture in Ireland* (Dublin, 2000), pp. 116-139.

----- *Sources for the History of Landed Estates in Ireland* (Dublin, 2000).

----- *The Decline of the Big House in Ireland* (Dublin, 2001).

Dowling, Alan. 'A Parliamentary History of the Law of Distress for Rent From 1845' in Norma Dawson, Desmond Greer, Peter Ingram (eds.), *One Hundred and Fifty Years of Irish Law* (Dublin, 1996) pp. 171-90.

Dowling, Martin. *Tenant Right and Agrarian Society in Ulster, 1600-1870* (Dublin, 1999).

Doyle, Oliver and Stephen Hirsch, *Railways in Ireland, 1834-1984* (Dublin, 1983).

Dunleavy, J. C. and G. W. 'The Hidden Ireland of Irish Landlords: Manuscript Evidence Of Oral Traditions', *Anglo-Irish Studies,* 4 (1979), pp. 47-58.

Feingold, W. L. 'Land League Power: The Tralee Poor-Law Election of 1881', in Samuel Clark and James S. Donnelly (eds.). *Irish Peasants: Violence and Political Unrest, 1780-1914*(Manchester, 1983), pp. 285-310.

----- *The First Hurrah: The Rise of Tenant Leadership in the Irish Localities, 1870-1886* (St. Louis, 1976).

----- *The Revolt of the Tenantry: The Transformation of Local Government in Ireland, 1872-1886* (Boston, 1984).

----- 'The Tenants' Movement to Capture the Irish Poor Law Boards, 1877-1886', *Albion*, 7: 3 (Dec. 1975), pp. 216-31.

Garnham, Neal. *The Courts, Crime and the Criminal Law in Ireland, 1692-1760* (Dublin, 1996).

Geary, Laurence. *The Plan of Campaign, 1886-1891*(Cork, 1986).

Gloag, W. M. and R. Candlish Henderson, *The Law of Scotland*, 11th edn. (Edinburgh, 2000).

Hawkins, Richard. 'Liberals, land and coercion in the summer of 1880: the influence of the Carraroe ejectments' in *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society*, vol. 34 (1974-75), pp. 40-57.

Hoppen, K. Theodore. 'Landlords, Society, and Electoral Politics in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Ireland', *Past & Present*, no. 75 (May 1977), pp. 62-93.

----- *Elections, Politics, and Society in Ireland, 1832-1885* (Oxford, 1984).

----- 'Landownership and Power in Nineteenth-Century Ireland: The Decline of an Elite', in Ralph Gibson and Martin Blinkhorn (eds.), *Landownership and Power In Modern Europe* (London, 1991), pp. 164-80.

----- *The Mid-Victorian Generation, 1846-1886* (Oxford, 1998).

Jackson, Alvin. *Colonel Edward Saunderson. Land and loyalty in Victorian Ireland* (Oxford, 1995).

Jones, David Seth. *Graziers, Land Reform and Political Conflict in Ireland* (Washington, D.C., 1995).

Jordan, Donald E. *Land Popular Politics in Ireland. County Mayo from the Plantation to the Land War* (Cambridge, 1994).

----- 'Merchants, "Strong Farmers" and Fenians: The Post-Famine Political Elite and the Irish Land War', in C. H. E. Philpin (ed.), *Nationalism and Popular Protest in the Nineteenth-Century* (London, 1992). pp. 320-48.

----- *Land and Popular Politics in Ireland. County Mayo from the Plantation to the Land War* (Cambridge, 1994).

Kirkpatrick, R. W. 'Origins and Development of the Land War in Mid-Ulster', in F. S. L. Lyons and R.A.J. Hawkins (eds.), *Ireland under the Union: Varieties of Tension: Essays in Honour of T.W. Moody* (Oxford, 1980), pp. 201-35.

Lee, Joseph. 'The Land War', in Liam de Paor (ed.), *Milestones in Irish History* (Dublin and Cork, 1986), pp. 106-16.

Lowe, W. J. 'Landlord and Tenant on the Estate of Trinity College, Dublin, 1851-1903', *Hermathena*, 120 (1976), pp. 5-24.

MacCarthy, Robert Brian. *The Trinity College Estates, 1800-1923: Corporate Management in an Age of Reform* (Dundalk, 1992).

Malcolm, Elizabeth, *'Ireland Sober, Ireland Free'. Drink and Temperance in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin, 1986).

Marlow, Joyce. *Captain Boycott and the Irish* (London, 1973).

Maume, Patrick. *The Long Gestation: Irish Nationalist Life, 1891-1918* (Dublin, 1999).

McClelland, Aiken. 'The Later Orange Order' in T. Desmond Williams (ed.), *Secret Societies in Ireland* (Dublin, 1973), pp. 126-137.

McDowell, R. B. 'Administration and the Public Services, 1870-1921'. in W. E. Vaughan (ed.), *A New History of Ireland,* vi: *Ireland Under the Union, II, 1870-1921* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 571-605.

----- *The Irish Administration, 1801-1914* (Westport, Conn., 1964).

Moody, T. W. *Davitt and the Irish Revolution, 1846-82* (Oxford, 1981).

Moran, Gerard P. 'Absentee Landlordism in Mayo in the 1870s' *Cathair na Mart,* 2: 1 (1982), pp. 30-52.

----- 'An Assessment of the Land League Meeting at Westport, 8 June 1879' *Cathair na Mart,* 3: 1 (1983), pp. 54-9.

----- 'Famine and the Land War Relief and Distress in Mayo, 1879-81', *Cathair na Mart,* 5: 1 (1985), pp. 54-66; 6: 1 (1986), pp. 111-27.

----- 'The Origins and Development of Boycotting', *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society*, xxxx (1985-6), pp. 49-64.

Murphy, Desmond. 'The Land War in Donegal, 1879-1891', *Donegal Annual,* 32 (1980), pp. 476-86.

Murray, A. C. 'Nationality and Local Politics in Late Nineteenth-Century Ireland: The Case of County Westmeath', *IHS* 25: 98 (Nov. 1986), pp. 144-58.

O'Callaghan, Margaret. *British High Politics and a Nationalist Ireland: Criminality, Land and the Law under Forster and Balfour* (Cork, 1994).

O Grada, Cormac. *Ireland Before and After the Famine: Explorations in Economic History, 1800-1925* (Manchester, 1988).

Palmer, Norman Dunbar. *The Irish Land League Crisis* (New Haven, 1940).

Parkinson, R. E. *History of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ireland,* vol. ii (Dublin, 1957).

Pomfret, John E. *The Struggle for Land In Ireland, 1800-1923* (Princeton, 1930).

Proudfoot, Lindsay. 'The Management of a Great Estate: Patronage, Income and Expenditure on the Duke of Devonshire's Irish Property, c. 1816-1891', *Irish Economic and Social History* 18 (1986), pp. 32-55.

Solow, B. L. *The Land Question and the Irish Economy, 1870-1903* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971).

----- 'A New Look at the Irish Land Question', *Economic and Social Review,* 12: 4 (July, 1981), pp. 301-14.

Thompson, F. 'Attitudes to reform: political parties in Ulster and the Irish land bill of 1881', *IHS*, xxiv, no. 95 (May, 1985), pp. 327-340.

----- *The End of Liberal Ulster. Land agitation and land reform, 1868-1886* (Belfast, 2001).

----- 'The Landed classes, the Orange Order and the Anti-Land League Campaign in Ulster 1880-81' in *Eire-Ireland,* xxii, no. 1 (Spring 1987), pp. 102-21.

Townshend, Charles. *Political Violence in Ireland: Government and Resistance since 1848* (Oxford, 1983).

Turner, Michael. *After the Famine. Irish Agriculture, 1850-1914* (Cambridge, 1996).

Vaughan, W. E. 'An Assessment of the Economic Performance of Irish Landlords, 1851-81', in F.S.L. Lyons and R.A.J Hawkins (eds.), *Ireland under the Union: Varieties of Tension. Essays in Honour of T.W. Moody* (Oxford, 1980), pp. 173-99.

----- 'Agricultural Output, Rents and Wages in Ireland, 1850-80', in L.M. Cullen and F. Furet (eds.), *Ireland and France, 17th-20th Centuries: Towards a Comparative Study of Rural History* (Paris, 1980), pp. 85-97.

----- 'Farmer, Grazier and Gentleman: Edward Delany of Woodtown, 1851-99', *Irish Economic and Social History* 9 (1982), pp. 53-72.

----- *Landlords and Tenants in Ireland, 1848-1904* (Studies in Irish Economic and Social History, 2; Dundalk, 1984).

----- *Landlords and Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland* (Oxford, 1994).

----- 'Landlord and Tenant Relations in Ireland Between the Famine and the Land War, 1850-1870', in L.M. Cullen and T.C. Smout (eds.), *Comparative Aspects of Scottish ad Irish Economic and Social History 1600-1900* (Edinburgh, 1977), pp. 216-26.

----- 'Richard Griffith and the Tenement Valuation', in G.L. Herries Davies and R. Charles Mollan (eds.), *Richard Griffith, 1784-1878: Papers Presented at the Cententary Symposium Organized by the Royal Dublin Society, 21 and 22 Sept. 1978* (Dublin, 1980), pp. 103-22.

Walker, Brian M. 'The Land Question in Elections in Ulster, 1868-86', in Samuel Clark and James S. Donnelly (eds.), *Irish Peasants: Violence and Political Unrest 1780-1914* (Manchester, 1983), pp. 230-68.

----- *Ulster Politics. The Formative Years, 1868-86* (Belfast, 1989).

Warren, Allen. 'Forster, the Liberals and New Directions in Irish Policy, 1880-1882' in *Parliamentary History,* vol. 6, pt. I (1987), pp. 95-126.

Winstantley, Michael J. *Ireland and the Land Question, 1800-1922* (London and New York, 1984).

Williams, T. Desmond (ed.), *Secret Societies in Ireland* (Dublin, 1973).

Unpublished Theses

Feingold, William Leo. 'The Irish Boards of Poor Law Guardians, 1872-86. A Revolution in Local Government' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Chicago, 1974).

Kirkpatrick, R. W. 'Landed estates in mid-Ulster and the Irish land war, 1879-85' (Ph.D. thesis, Trinity College, Dublin, 1976).

Melvin, Patrick. 'The Landed gentry of Galway, 1820-1880' (Ph.D. thesis, Trinity College, Dublin, 1991).

Zinck, Mildred Kathleen. 'Two Nations in Ireland: The Land War and the Making of an Irish National Political Culture, 1879-1890' (Ph.D. thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 2000).