This package contains 17 facsimile documents relating to the rebellion of the United Irishmen in 1798. It is hoped that their presentation in this form might contribute to an understanding both of the events to which they relate and of the problems which arise in working with historical documents to reconstruct an episode of this kind.

A separate note has been included on the use of documents for teaching purposes.
The Rebel Attack on Prosperous, county Kildare. Illustration by George Cruikshank to Maxwell's History of the Irish Rebellion (1845)
NOTE ON NAVIGATION

You can use the bookmarks on the left side of the screen to navigate between each facsimile.

Click on the facsimile title in bold to view the actual facsimile image.

Hyperlinks (in blue) are also embedded in each page.
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You can also employ the built-in Acrobat navigation buttons
The events of the rebellion are well known. For more than three years previous to the rebellion, the Society of United Irishmen had been working to bring about a revolution in Ireland, building up a secret organisation in different parts of the country and also seeking the aid of France (facsimiles nos. 1, 3). In the spring of 1798 the government sought to crush the conspiracy, arresting the principal leaders (nos. 2, 5) and going on to disarm their followers (nos. 4, 6). However these measures failed to avert the threatened revolt. On the night of 23 - 24 May 1798 the United Irishmen of Kildare, Meath and Dublin rose in rebellion (no. 7). This was followed two days later by a rising in Co. Wexford (no. 8). The Meath and Kildare rebels, with the exception of one group (no. 11), were defeated and dispersed within a week of their appearance (no. 9). The Wexford rebels, on the other hand, remained in control of a large part of the south-east until 21 June 1798, when their camp at Vinegar Hill, near Enniscorthy, was stormed by government troops. By this time the United Irishmen of Antrim and Down had also risen and been suppressed (no. 12). The unexpected arrival of a French invasion force in Killala Bay on 23 August 1798 sparked off further outbreaks in Mayo, Longford, and Westmeath, but by the end of September these too had been suppressed (no. 15).

The facsimiles in this pack have been chosen from documents in the National Archives (formerly Public Record Office and State Paper Office) to illustrate different aspects of the events of 1798. The printed bulletin reproduced as part of facsimile 9 and the drawing by George Cruikshank (page 2) are from the National Library of Ireland and are reproduced here by kind permission of the Director.
In the Ausec presence of God,
I, A.B., do voluntarily declare, that since forsewer
in theaduecouring to fome a Brotherhood of Affection,
among Christians of every Religious persuasion, and
that I wil Also persever in my endeavors to obtein an
equal, full, adequate representation of all the people of
Ireland.

I further declare that neither threat nor fear, rewards or
punishments shall ever induce me, directly or indirectly,
to Inform on or give evidence against any officer or
members of this or similar Societies for any Act or
expulsion of their done or made Collectively or
Individually nor out of this Society in pursuance of
the Spirit of this Obligation.
LIST OF FACSIMILES

1. Report by Earl Camden, the lord lieutenant, on the state of Ireland, 6 August 1796.

2. Information concerning the activities of the United Irishmen, received by government on 6 March 1798.

3. Map showing activities of the United Irishmen in the parish of Baltinglass, Co. Wicklow, 7 May 1798.


7. Sworn information of James Jordan, 27 May 1798, describing the conduct of the rebels at Prosperous, Co. Kildare.

8. Letter from Ebenezer Jacob, deputy mayor of Wexford, 27 May 1798, reporting the defeat of government troops by rebels at Oulart Hill.


10. General Orders for the United army of Wexford, 6 June 1798.

11. Letter from Oliver Barker, Clonard, Co. Meath, 6 June 1798, describing an engagement with the rebels.

12. Letter from Thomas Whinnery, Belfast, 13 June 1798, reporting the defeat of the rebels at Ballynahinch.

13. Printed copy of the information of Richard Grandy, 23 June 1798, describing his experiences as a prisoner of the rebels.

14. Copy of a proclamation signed by James Napper Tandy, 19 September 1798.

15. Extract from a letter by Joshua Kemmis, Ballina, 25 September 1798, describing the capture of Killala from the rebels.

16. Extract from proceedings at the court martial of Patrick Beaghan at Waterford, 16 July 1799.

Camden's report, written two years before the rebellion of 1798, describes the background without which the events of that year cannot be understood. The Society of United Irishmen had been founded in Belfast in 1791. Its founders were middle class radicals who sought to unite Catholics and Protestants in a campaign for parliamentary reform. By 1796, however, the leaders of the society had given up hope of achieving their aims by constitutional agitation. Instead they had begun to work for a revolution in Ireland, to be achieved with the aid of France. Camden's report discusses the spread of a secret United Irish organisation dedicated to these aims in the eastern half of Ulster.

Outside Ulster the United Irishmen had also begun to recruit supporters. Here, however, what Camden's report describes is an alliance with an existing secret society, the Defenders. This society had first appeared in Co. Armagh, as the Catholic party in the serious fighting between Catholics and Protestants which began in that county in 1784. By 1796 it had spread not only into other counties of Ulster but also into the three southern provinces, where it acted as an agrarian secret society, concerned with grievances over rent, tithes and similar issues. According to Camden's account the United Irishmen had now begun to persuade the Defenders of the counties around Dublin to join their society and prepare for a French invasion.

Camden's report also discusses the more serious turn which the continued fighting between the Catholics and Protestants of Co. Armagh had taken in the preceding year, 1795. The Protestants, alarmed at the growing strength of the Defenders, had formed a new association, the Orange Order, in September 1795. They had also engaged in a campaign of terror against the Catholics of the county in the autumn and winter of that year and the spring of 1796. Camden suggests that the United Irishmen had made use of the resentment and the fears aroused by these outrages to increase support for their society. If so they were unleashing forces which - as the events of 1798 were to show - they were completely unable to control.

Rebellion Papers 620/18/11.
Dublin Castle 6 August 1796

My Lord -

Your Grace has been long informed of the unfortunate state which for several years has prevailed in the County of Armagh between the Dissenter and Roman Catholic of the inferior classes. The former in the course of last summer having after some petty conflict gained an ascendency in that county over the Catholic and every respectable body of Protestants in their arms and unarmed by soldiers and by means to drive them from the county. Those Outlaws of the lower Dissenters after much contention of Government were at length stopped, but equal Multitudes Families fled from the county and were obliged to resort for new settlement to other parts of the Kingdom, where they evade their sufferings and I fear have excited a spirit of revenge among their Catholic Brethren.

The Revd. Eustace of Dalgan who had been long engaged for forming democratic societies and Clubs upon the Principles of the French Revolution took advantage of this ill conduct of the
Defendants is brought to form a Union
with the Societies of Defenders in the
Western and Midland Counties, and
to revive their Committees & Assemblies
which the Vizors of Government had
almost entirely suppressed - And I am
concerned to add that their intrigues
have been attended with moral
Success.

They have been vedulously
enticing into their Association by Bount.
of Money the lower Orders in the Count.
of Antrim, Down, Tyrone, and Downe,
and they divide themselves into Societies
of about 36 each, the Engagement, or as
it is called the Constitution of each Society
is kept by the Secretary, who is then
able to fast with it, a small money
Subscription is collected for general
Purposes, the Members are ordered to
provide themselves with Arms if possible.
Baronial and County Meeting are
held by Delegation, and the general
Information is transmitted by limebox,
& Postfoot, all writing and correspondence
being systematically avoided.
From the effects of military Interposition, of successful Insurrection and from the Terror of the late Acts of Parliament; the Defenders were till lately entirely inactive. Within these two Months however, Meetings of them have recommenced, and as one Outrage have taken place yet at Tarin and Patwon they have resumed their Engagement with each other. This Information extends to the Country of Dublin Meath and Kildare. Deputy Smythe, have been among them, to inflame them against the Defenders of Armagh, to instil into their Minds that the Assent of the Catholics is protected by Government, to invite them to join the United Irishmen, and to fill them with hopes of a French Invasion. And I have Intelligence that a mass Meeting of Delegates both of United Irishmen and Defenders will shortly be held in Dublin, chosen from the different Provinces for the purpose of enacting the Means of composing some general Plan.
Almost from the foundation of the United Irishmen the authorities followed their activities through the reports of informers. The information passed on here came from Thomas Reynolds, a United Irishman who had become alarmed at the growing violence of the movement. Reynolds did not communicate directly with the Castle, but sent his messages through a merchant named Cope - the 'C' referred to on the bottom left-hand side of the page. His information here concerns a proposed meeting of the Provincial Directory, made up of delegates from the United Irishmen in all the counties of Leinster. Reynolds knew of this meeting because he was himself a delegate for Co. Kildare.

The house described in the first four lines of the letter was that of Oliver Bond, a woollen merchant, situated in Bridge Street, Dublin. Reynolds's information enabled the Government to raid Bond's house on the morning of 12 March and arrest ten members of the Leinster Provincial Directory, along with two members of the Supreme Executive. Other leaders in the capital, whom the Government had been watching for some time, were taken up on the same day.

Reynolds's report discusses the continuing disagreement between those United Irish leaders who favoured an immediate rising, and those who believed it was essential to await assistance from France. The arguments of the former place great faith in the readiness of the Irish militia to support a rebellion. When the rising did come, however, the bulk of the militia remained loyal. Indeed it was this force, entirely Irish and predominantly Catholic, which bore the brunt of the fighting against the rebels.

There is a room on the first flight, at the head of the stairs, in which the company dined last Monday. The other flight leads up to the drawing rooms & other parts of the upper rooms in the house.

The meeting will certainly be on Monday morning. Not know for certain till 12 o'clo: on Sunday the hour - but thinks it will be 10.

The parties for an immediate rising are violent and are to bring their papers demonstrating their force. They assert & say will prove, that 2700 soldiers in the barrack, and the majority of Lehauinstown Camp are at their side, and will immediately join a rising & desire but 20 min notice to seize the camp & march off to Dublin.

If the meeting takes effect on Monday and the partys taken it is supposed there will be county meetings all over the Kingd. immediately held. If information can be obtained where the meetings are held in the different places all the prinl. persons concerned in the respective counties it is probable will attend. Will obtain what information & communicate it.

Rebellion Papers 620/32/26
The meeting will certainly be on Monday morning. I shall know for certain about 12 or so on Sunday. The hour—let it be 10.

The parties for an immediate rising are inclined and will, if this propose be demonstrated to them, very speedily and prompt, that 2,000 soldiers in the barracks and the majority of laborers at Camp and other hands and supernumeraries join a rising about 20 or 20 min. after twelve. The Camp E.

March up to Dublin.

If the meeting is not held on Monday, it will be on the following Friday. I am to be expected there. I am told that one thousand men, if information be obtained which the meetings have been held, will proceed there and assist them. As to the supplies, we have about 200 pounds of provisions, and the rest will be sent over when they are wanted. It is probable that they will attend, but it is not certain.
Map of the parish of Baltinglass, Co. Wicklow, forwarded to the government by a correspondent in the parish, 7 May 1798.

The purpose of the map is explained in the unsigned letter which accompanies it:

The inclosed paper is a rough scetch of all the townlands in the parish of Baltinglass, and as the County Wicklow upon the late general return of men, arms & subscriptions, made about 2 months since, to furnish Mr. Arthur O'Conner with authoritative credentials, excelled in these points any other county Ireland in proportion to its extent; and as I have reasons to think the parish of Baltinglass, exceeded any other parish in that county in its number of United men, arms &c it may probably prove a satisfaction by and by to you, in case you should think proper to send any army into that quarter to compel the surrender of arms, to have a draft immediately taken of its extent and a few of the principal inhabitants; particularly such as have already suffered or such as have contributed to this horrible conspiracy & impending rebellion.

Arthur O'Connor, a United Irish leader, had been arrested in England on 28 February, while on his way to France to discuss plans for an invasion.

The map in question illustrates the state of a disturbed part of Ireland on the eve of the rebellion, as it appeared to a concerned loyalist. The United Irishmen of this area had clearly devoted most of their energies to building up their stock of weapons, by raiding the houses of yeomen and others who had arms in their possession. However there is also a case of cattle being maimed, a practice normally associated with agrarian secret societies such as the Whiteboys rather than with the United Irishmen, as well as references to the theft of sheep and liquor. The cutting down of trees was almost certainly done to provide handles for pikes.

Rebellion Papers 620/37/35.

Having arrested most of the United Irish leaders in Leinster the government turned to the task of disarming their followers. Troops were sent into areas in which the United Irishmen had been active, with instructions to live at 'free quarters', requisitioning whatever they needed for their support from the inhabitants. It was hoped that this collective punishment would induce the people to surrender the arms in their possession. Subsequently more severe methods were employed - in particular the flogging of suspected United Irishmen, to extract information from them.

These measures taken by the government in April and May 1798 were later criticised for provoking the rebellion they were designed to prevent. But with reports like this coming in from commanders in the field the government can hardly be criticised for believing that harsh measures were the most effective means of averting a rebellion, or for turning a blind eye to the excesses of their supporters in some areas (see facsimile 6).

Mr. Barnwall was presumably a local gentleman who had applied to Cooke for a protection exempting him from having soldiers billeted in his house or being interfered with in other ways.

Castle Martin, 16th May 1798.

Dear Sir,

I am much obliged to you for giving me an opportunity of shewing with what pleasure and alacrity I shall at all times obey your commands---. By this time Mr. ----- Barnwall is in possession of a protection.

The last four days have furnished me with many very affecting scenes - my house filled with the poor deluded people, giving up their arms, receiving protections, and declaring that moment to be the happiest in their lives. Be assured that the head of the Hydra is off, and the County of Kildare will, for a long while, enjoy profound peace and quiet.

With the greatest regard & truth

I am, my dear sir,

Your very faithful & obedient servant

R. Dundas.

Edwd. Cooke, Esqre.

Rebellion Papers 620/37/90.
Dear Sir,

I am much obliged to you for giving me an opportunity of seeing with what pleasure and alacrity I shall at all times obey your Commands — by this time Dr. Percival is in proof of a protection, the last four days have promised me both money affording wares — my house filled with respectable people, giving up their lives to taking provisions, and business, that some will take the happiness in their lives. On hearing that the head of the Phoena is off — and the Country of Hills we held for a long while, a pay jaw from Opaque and Great, with the greatest Regard towards.

Yours, Very respectful,

[Signature]

[Address]
Official bulletin reporting the arrest of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, 20 May 1798.

When the Leinster Directory and other leaders were arrested on 12 March one important figure had escaped. This was Lord Edward Fitzgerald, to whom the military organisation of the United Irishmen in Leinster had been chiefly entrusted. Lord Edward had been one of the strongest supporters of an immediate rising, without wafting for French aid. Now he went into hiding in Dublin while preparations for an insurrection continued. On the evening of 19 May he was tracked down to a house in Thomas Street and arrested after a violent struggle. Both Captain Ryan and Lord Edward later died of the wounds they received.

As a younger brother of the Duke of Leinster, Lord Edward Fitzgerald was a member of the most important aristocratic family in Ireland. He had served as an officer during the American War of Independence, but was dismissed from the army in 1792, following an episode during a visit to the radical writer Thomas Paine in Paris, when he had taken part in a toast to the universal triumph of the principles of the French revolution. By 1798 his enthusiasm for the same principles had made him the aristocratic commander-in-chief of a secret army composed mainly of farmers, labourers and tradesmen.

Frazer Mss. II/73.
DUBLIN CASTLE, 15th MAY, 1798

The Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council of Ireland have issued a proclamation declaring that they have received information upon oath, that Lord Edward Fitzgerald has been guilty of High Treason, and offer a reward of £1000 sterling, to any person who shall discover, apprehend, or commit him to prison.

An unexpected event has taken place in this city, namely a session made by the Corporation for the improvement of Dublin Harbour, of their property in the Pigeon-house Dock, and the newly-constructed Hotel to Government, for the purpose of a place of arms and military post, if not for ever, at least during the present war. The part allotted for this place of arms is, we hear, to be insulated by strong redoubts mounted with cannon.

Dublin, May 20th.

Yesterday evening information having been given of the place in which Lord Edward Fitzgerald had concealed himself, Mr. Justice Swan, Major Sirr, and Captain Ryan, with a small guard, went in two coaches to the house of one Murphy, a leather merchant, in Thomas-street. Major Sirr instantly proceeded to plant sentinels on the different doors of the house; Mr. Swan and Captain Ryan rushed in, and ran up to a room two pair of stairs backwards, Mr. Swan having first reached the door, opened it, and told Lord Edward, who lay upon a bed in his dressing gown and breeches, that he had a warrant against him; adding, “You know me, my Lord, and I know you, it will be in vain to resist! They approached each other, his Lordship, on their meeting, stabbed Mr. Swan, with a dagger; the latter fled, they struggled; Lord Edward, in the struggle, wounded him a second time in the back; the dagger glanced upon his ribs; Mr. Swan staggered back, crying out that he was killed. Captain Ryan by this time arrived, and rushed in, he presented a pocket pistol, it missed fire, he drew a sword from his stick, the sword bent double upon the body of Lord Edward, the latter staggered, and fell backwards on the bed, Captain Ryan, threw himself upon him, Lord Edward plunged the dagger into Captain Ryan, they grappled with each other, Captain Ryan endeavouring to wrest the dagger, Lord Edward stabbed him and eluded his grasp. The whole business was so instantaneous, that Major Sirr had only time to reach the room door, from hearing the discharge of the first shot, which had alarmed him, he rushed in, saw Captain Ryan and Lord Edward struggling and entwined upon the floor, Major Sirr discharged a pistol, wounding Lord Edward in the shoulder, the latter then cried out for mercy, and was secured. Some of Captain Ryan’s wounds are of the most alarming nature, he has received no less than 14 stab wounds in different parts of his body, of these, one is particularly alarming, it is situated under his left rib, and though there is every reason to hope that the intestines are uninjured, we cannot venture to pronounce him out of danger. Mr. Swan’s wounds are not so serious, they are likely soon to heal. Lord Edward was sent from the Castle, after a short examination, to Newgate, his wounds are supposed to be but slight.

Dublin: Printed by Grierson Printer to the King’s Most Excellent Majesty.
Letter from W. Kildal, Arklow, to John Lees, secretary of the Irish Post Office, 24 May 1798, describing measures against United Irishmen in the counties of Wicklow and Wexford.

The county of Wicklow was believed to have one of the strongest and best organised United Irish movements in Leinster [see no. 3]. United Irishmen had been active in the northern part of Co. Wexford, although elsewhere in that county the movement was weak. In May 1798 troops and local loyalists made a determined effort to break the United Irish organisation in these areas. Kildal's letter reveals something of the spirit in which they set about the task, and the methods they employed. The name 'Croppy' was popularly applied to the United Irishmen because many of them had adopted the fashion, popular in revolutionary France, of having their hair cut very short. The 'pitch cap' was a form of torture, in which the prisoner's head was smeared with pitch which was then set on fire.

Kildal, like General Dundas in Co. Kildare, is confident that the United Irish organization in his area has been broken. He was clearly not aware that even as he wrote rebellion had broken out in the counties around Dublin.

Arklow May the 24th 1798.

Dr Sir,

Since my last we are taken men evry day ad get infermesions and more piks 2 hundred ball cartridges but not the gons yet but I hope we will soon the gords on the houses continu and live wel1 both men & horshes a mr pery was taken yesterday a united ofeser and is in gorey as the King of united men is takem lord Eeward I trust in God we will soon pull down the Crapys We put on piched capes on some of them there is a great many of the vilins run a way I remain sir yr most obant

humble sarvnt

W. Kildal

Rebellion Papers 620/37/11.
Since my last we are taken men Tangay and got informations and more pist Thundered Ball Cartridges Just out the gate yet But I hope we will soon be gone on the house contin and live still both men & horses are very well taken yesterday a united of 800 and 200 gone out the king of united men It Jackson lord coward I hated he God we will soon pull down the Corups we pull on arched cops on some of them there is a great many of the villains been a boy I remain in your most humble servant

Pruddel
The rebellion began on the night of 23 - 24 May 1798, with attacks on a number of centres in Kildare, Dublin and Meath. One of these centres was Prosperous in Co. Kildare, where 500 rebels occupied the town, killing 38 of the 57 soldiers stationed there. The commander of the garrison, Capt. Swayne of the City of Cork militia, was said to have been particularly brutal in his methods of disarming the surrounding countryside. He was killed and his body burned in a barrel of tar.

Jordan's information, along with that of another man who had witnessed the attack, was forwarded to Edward Cooke at Dublin Castle on 27 May by Roger North. The statement names a number of people whom Jordan recognised among the rebels, with gaps in cases where he cannot give the christian name. The places he mentions are all in Co. Kildare, including 'Cork', which is almost certainly the townland of Corkerah in the parish of Ballynafagh.

Notes: The ancient Britons were a Welsh fencible or militia regiment stationed in Ireland. (George Cruikshank's drawing of the attack on Prosperous, prepared as an illustration for Maxwell's History of the Irish Rebellion (1845), is reproduced on the second page of this pack.)

Weaver, who been duely sworn & examined on oath saith that he was in the town of Prosperous about the hour of three or four o'clock of Thursday morning the 24th day of May inst or at day break where he saw sevll. bodys of his Majestys regiment of the City of Cork militia and Anttent Britons lying dead in the street of Prosperous and at the same time this examinant sayth he saw the sevll. persons following with arms in their hands, parading & exulting and who he verily belvs. were the persons aided and assisted by others unknown to exat who murdered and assassinated the soldiers who examinant saw dead to witt George Fane of Cork - Fox - & Fox sons to John Fox of Healy Bridge or Newtown - Poor of the same place Patrick Farrel Michl Leeson James Tobin Denis Killy Christr Buggel Robt Hooks & - Courthey all of Prosperous aforesd. Laurence Grammam of Timahoe Michl. Huges Henry Hugges of Staplestown & Helys Bridge John McManus of Killybegs Edwd Hanlon Donore - Fleming Peter French of Blackwood turf men (?) or labourers & Andrew Farrell son to Daniel Farrell of Helys Bridge who told examt. he should have his hands in blood. This examinant sayth the above named persons aided and assisted by sevll. others murdered and assassinated the sevlt. soldiers who were on sd. morning murdered &c Jas Jordan

I acknowledge to be bound to our Sovereign Ld. the King in the sum of 500 to prosecute when called on or at next assizes

Sworn before me this 27th May 1798

Roger North

Jas Jordan

Rebellion Papers 620/37/176.
The sworn deposition of James Fordan of Brougham in the county of Lincoln, who was a trusted servant in the household of Charles Burrell, the mayor of Lincoln, who was killed in the street of Brougham on the 15th of May, 1790, at twelve o'clock noon, in the presence of the mayor, aldermen, and commonalty of the city of Lincoln, and of the officers of the peace. The deposition was taken by Mr. Samson, the clerk of the peace, and signed by the mayor and aldermen of the city. The deposition states that a man named John Fox, who was known as a soldier, was found dead in the street of Brougham with a sword and a musket in his hands. The body was searched and no weapons were found. The deposition concludes with the mayor's signature and the date of the deposition.
Letter from Ebenezer Jacob, deputy mayor of Wexford, 27 May 1798, describing the defeat of government troops by rebels at Oulart Hill

The rebellion in Wexford began on the afternoon of Saturday, 26 May, when some of the inhabitants of a parish called Boulavogue, led by the Catholic curate, Fr. John Murphy, attacked a party of yeoman cavalry, killing the commander. This outbreak was not the work of the United Irishmen, who had never been as strong or as active in Wexford as in other parts of Leinster. Instead Fr. Murphy and his followers were influenced partly by news of the rebellion in Co. Kildare, and partly by the ruthless tactics employed by the loyalists of this area (see no. 6).

On Sunday 27 May the force of 100 North Cork Militia described in Jacob's letter set out to disperse the rebels where they had made camp on Oulart Hill, nine miles from Wexford. The results were disastrous. The militia attacked the 4,000 rebels assembled on the hill, apparently confident that they would have no trouble dispersing a poorly armed and disorganised rabble. Instead, as Jacob reports, they were all but annihilated.

Jacob's predictions for what was to follow proved to be correct. On 28 May the rebels occupied the town of Enniscorthy (see no. 16). Two days later the garrison of Wexford withdrew from the town, leaving it to be occupied by the United army.

My Lord

This has turned out a most unfortunate day. A party of rebels appearing in great force a few miles from Wexford, on the Dublin road, were attacked by the Grenadier company and other picked men to the amount of one hundred of the N. C. militia. The major, four or five officers, & all the party except three were curt off. Of the officers Col. Foote only escaped. The rebels, confident in their strength & flushed with their success, are determined on the attack of the town of Wexford. By the loss of this day our numbers are so reduced that we much fear the event & request most earnestly that you will order such a reinforcement as may be sufficient: to oppose them.

I have the honor to be

Wexford 27th May 1798

Yr Lordship's most obedt servt.

Eben Jacob

D. Mayor

Rebellion Papers 620/37/178.
May Lord

This has turned out a most unfor-
tunate day. A party of Rebels at the head of
their forces, a few miles from Westford on
the Dublin Road, were attacked by the Grenadiers
Company & other forces, and to the amount of
one hundred of the N.C. militia, the forces
four or five Officers & all the Party except
Three were cut off. Of the Officers Colonel
only escaped. The Rebels, confident in their
strength & flushed with their success, are de-
termined on the attack of the Town of Westford.
By the end of this day our numbers are
so reduced that we must fear the event.
I request most earnestly that you will
order such a reinforcement as may be
sufficient to oppose them.

Tham the honor to be
Yr. Lordship's
most obedient
servant

Westford 20th May
1798

Elizabeth Drayton
Despatch from General Sir James Duff, Kildare, 29 May 1798, reporting the dispersal of rebels assembled at the Curragh, with the printed version of the same despatch issued as a government bulletin.

General Duff’s despatch relates to one of the many controversial episodes in the history of the rebellion. Duff and his men had marched from their base in Limerick with the intention of clearing the road to Dublin. On the morning of 29 May they reached the town of Kildare, which they knew had been captured by the rebels. What they did not know was that General Dundas had just agreed to surrender terms, under which the rebels encamped around Kildare would be permitted to give up their arms and disperse unhindered. When Duff’s men arrived at the Curragh, they fell on the rebels and scattered them. In his despatch Duff maintains that the rebels provoked the attack by firing on his men. What followed, however, seems to have been a massacre rather than a battle. Duff admits that his troops were able to kill between two and three hundred of the rebels while losing only three men themselves.

Comparison between the original despatch and the printed version reveals some minor changes of wording and one possibly more significant one. Duff stresses that he met the rebels coming out of the town of Kildare still carrying their arms. This was later interpreted as meaning that the rebels had violated the terms agreed for their surrender. But the surrender was supposed to take place, not in the town, but at a place outside it called Gibbet Rath. Rebels wishing to avail of the surrender, therefore, would have had to come out of the town, with their arms, in order to do so. Is this why Duff, in his despatch, crossed out the sentence: “They intended, we were told, to lay down their arms to General Dundas’?

Printed bulletin, National Library of Ireland; original despatch, Rebellion Papers 620/37/211.
Tuesday 28th. Kildare.

My Dearest,

I have written a melancholy letter. We found the Rebels retiring from the Town on our arrival armed. We followed them with the Dragoons; but on seeing some of the Yeomen to tell them, in laying down their Arms, they should not be hurt. Unfortunately some of them died on the Roof; from that moment they were attacked on all sides, nothing could stop the rage of the Troops. I believe from two to three hundred of the Rebels were killed. The executed present day.

When I came back I found several wounded, I am too tired to enlarge upon my coming.

I have forwarded the Mills to Dublin.

P.S. Two o’Clock, P. M. Kildare.

"We found the Rebels retiring from the Town on our arrival, armed; we followed them with the Dragoons. I left some of the Yeomen to tell them, on laying down their Arms, they should not be hurt. Unfortunately some of them died on the Roof; from that moment they were attacked on all sides; nothing could stop the rage of the Troops. I believe from two to three hundred of the Rebels were killed. We have three men killed and several wounded. I am too much fatigued to enlarge.

"I have forwarded the Mills to Dublin."
General orders for the United army of Wexford, 6 June 1798.

This impressive-looking document represents the last desperate effort of Bagenal Harvey, commander of the Wexford rebels, to impose some form of discipline on the forces under his nominal control. Harvey, a Protestant landlord, had been a member of the Wexford United Irishmen, but does not appear to have taken any part in the preparations for a rebellion. He had been imprisoned when the fighting began, and released by the rebels who occupied the town of Wexford. Although the rebels had made him their commander-in-chief his task was an impossible one. The thousands who flocked to join the United army not only lacked any experience of military discipline, but in most cases were not even members of the United Irish Society. The massacre at Scullabogue (no. 13) and similar incidents (no. 16) demonstrated the inability of any commander to restrain the forces that had been let loose.

Soon after issuing this notice Bagenal Harvey was deposed as leader of the United army, his place being taken by more extreme men. He was later executed for his part in the rebellion, in spite of his claim to have acted under duress.

Rebellion Papers 620/38/72.
GENERAL ORDERS.

At a Meeting of the GENERAL and several OFFICERS of the UNITED ARMY of the COUNTY of WEXFORD, the following Resolutions were agreed upon:

RESOLVED, That the Commander in Chief shall send Guards to certain Baronies for the Purpose of bringing in all Men they shall find idling and delaying at home, or elsewhere; and if any Resistance be given to those Guards so to be sent by the commanding Officer's Orders, it is our Desire and Orders, that such Persons so giving Resistance, shall be liable to be put to Death by the Guards, who are to bear a Commission for that Purpose; and all such Persons so to be found idling and delaying at Home, when brought in by the Guards, shall be tried by a Court Martial, appointed and chosen from amongst the Commanders of all the different Corps, and be punished with Death.

RESOLVED, That all Officers shall immediately repair to their respective Quarters, and remain with their respective Corps, and not depart therefrom under Pain of Death, unless authorized to quit by written Orders from the Commander in Chief for that Purpose.

It is also ordered, that a Guard shall be kept in the rear of the different Armies, with Orders to shoot all Persons who shall fly or desert from any Engagement, and that these Orders shall be taken Notice of by all Officers commanding such Engagements.

All Men refusing to obey their superior Officers, to be tried by a Court Martial, and punished according to their Sentence.

It is also ordered, That all Men who shall attempt to leave their respective Quarters when they have been halted by the Commander in Chief, shall suffer Death, unless they shall have leave from their Officers for so doing.

It is ordered by the Commander in Chief, that all Persons who have stolen or taken away any Horse or Horses, shall immediately bring in all such Horses to the Camp, at Head Quarters, otherwise any Horse that shall be seen or found in the Possession of any Person to whom he does not belong, shall, on being convicted thereof, suffer Death.

AND any Goods that shall have been plundered from any House, if not brought in to Head Quarters, or returned immediately to the Owners, or Owners, that all Persons so plundering as aforesaid, shall, on being convicted thereof, suffer Death.

It is also resolved, That any Person or Persons who shall take upon him or them to kill or murder any Person or Prisoner, burn any House, or commit any Plunder, without special written Orders from the Commander in Chief, shall suffer Death.

Head Quarters, Carrick Burn Camp, June 8, 1798.

By Order of

B. B. HARVEY, Commander in Chief.

FRANCIS BREEN, Secretary and Adjutant.
Letter from Oliver Barker at the post office, Clonard, Co. Meath, to John Lees, 6 June 1798, describing an engagement with the rebels.

In the counties around Dublin rebellion had been speedily crushed, with the defeat of one force of rebels at Tara on 26 May and the dispersal of another at the Curragh four days later (no. 9). However one section of the Kildare rebels, led by William Aylmer, withdrew to the village of Timahoe in the centre of the Bog of Allen. In this natural stronghold they remained in arms for almost a month after the collapse of the rebellion in Meath and in other parts of Kildare.

Barker’s letter is an account of a clash with one section of this rebel force. The horses, sheep and cows he mentions may have been brought with them by people fleeing to join the rebel army, but it is more likely that they were seized from the inhabitants of the surrounding countryside.

Aylmer and his army were well rewarded for their perseverance. When they surrendered on 20 July the rank and file were allowed to give up their arms and disperse unmolested, while the leaders, although arrested, also escaped with their lives.

Post Office, Clonard, June 6 : 98

Sir

This morn at after two o clock, we attacked a party of the rebels, in a place called Dreead in the County Kildare, with a party of the Limerick militia, the Canal infantry, Balina and Clonard cavalry. They were soon put to flight, and took to a bog, where many of them fell by the infantry. It is incredible, the way they lived. Horses, cows, sheep &c were found after them, with a numr of offensive weapons. They stood to receive but one fire from the infantry when they fled in every direction in the bog which prevented the cavalry being of any assistance. They lay under the ditches like pigs, without a tent or any covering. The soldiers from Kilcoock attacked the rebels at Timaho (which lay the other side of the bog) at the same time we did. I believe they fled in like manner as wth us. I cant tell the numr kill’d, but the King’s troops burn’d many houses which were deserted by the owners.

I am Sir

Your Humble Servt

Oliver Barker

Rebellion Papers 620/38/73.
This being at 2 o’clock two ambushes were attacking a party of the Indians at a place called Decase in the County of Niles, to the front of the Seminole Indian, the Canal infantry, Colonel and Barrows cavalry. They were soon put to flight and taken as they were many of them fell by the Beylery men as numerous they were. And after they were taken they were of course. They stood to receive one arrow from the infantry when they killed all were directed in the bag which presented the cavalry being in many sections they lay under the Indian’s rifles high without a tent or any covering. The soldiers from Willschuck attacked the Rebels at the same time as the 3rd. They fell in like manner as usual I come to the Indian’s body, but the King’s rifles and many Indian birds were directed by the Indians.

[Signature]

[Signature]
In the three years before the rebellion the United Irishmen had built up a strong organisation in the eastern half of Ulster\(^{(1)}\). A vigorous campaign of disarming carried out by General Lake in 1797 had seriously weakened the Ulster movement, and no attempt was made to rise in concert with the United Irishmen of Leinster. By the beginning of June, however, the United Irishmen of Antrim and Down were ready to join in the rebellion. In Co. Antrim on 7 June Henry Joy McCracken led a rising which briefly succeeded in capturing the greater part of the county. However failure to take the strategic town of Antrim robbed the rebels of any prospect of success and the rising rapidly collapsed. In Co. Down the rebellion began two days later, and continued until 13 June, when the rebels were decisively defeated at Ballynahinch.

Whinnery's letter, written on the afternoon of the day the battle was fought, confines itself to reporting the result. The proclamation he mentions was issued by General Nugent on 9 June: it promised that if the rebels surrendered they would be allowed to go unmolested, but that if they remained in arms the army would wreak 'indiscriminate vengeance' on them. A similar threat the day before had successfully dispersed the greater part of the Antrim rebels. When the Co. Down rebels did not respond in the same way, the towns of Saintfield and Ballynahinch, as well as farms and houses in the surrounding area, were destroyed as a reprisal.

Rebellion Papers 620/38/138A.
Post Office, Dublin
June 13, 1798
3 o'clock P.M.

I have the pleasure to inform you that General Brudenell got up with the Rebels at Brudenell, killed 100, took from them six pieces of Cannon & totally routed them. The General is returned to Town & has left his Corps to destroy the places mentioned in the Proclamation.

That active officer Capt. Dally of the 10th foot, of the 10th foot, was killed by a shot from a window in Brudenell (which place is now a heap of rubble) another officer with a gun was wounded — No other

[Signature]

Your most obedient Servant
The Whig

John Lees Dally
Printed copy of the deposition of Richard Grandy of Ballyshan, Co. Wexford, describing his experiences as a prisoner of the rebels, 23 June 1798.

This copy of Grandy's deposition was clearly printed for wide circulation. Its contents leave no doubt about why this was done. What it describes was one of the ugliest incidents in the rebellion, the massacre of more than one hundred loyalist prisoners at Scullabogue, an abandoned country house near New Ross, Co. Wexford. Some of the details of Grandy's account may be fictitious, but the massacre did take place in the way he describes. The cause of the killings was apparently a report that government forces at New Ross were killing all rebel prisoners, and that the loyalists held in Scullabogue were to be killed in retaliation.

Frazer Mss. 1/30.
Richard GRANDY, of Baillyman, in said County, came this day before Mr. Richard's Judges of the Peace, and now Orten on the Holy Evangelists, that he this Examiant was attacked and seized at the Cross-roads of Killewicke, on Sunday the 9th of June, between the hours of nine and ten of clock in the morning, as he was returning from a farm he had on the Lands of Killewicke, by several persons armed with Gun, Pikes, and Spears—that amongst the number were Michael Poore, Thomas Poore, Martin White, Richard Shaw, Martin Collis, Nicholas Brown, Richard White, John Moran and Lawrence Mowden, who, with many others, while Examiant did not know though their faces were very familiar to him; he was conductcd from hence to the Rebel Camp at Breckington, in said County, and in the afternoon of the same day was brought to Mr. Rine's house at Scolby, that he was introduced into a room where he saw Bagel Harvey, of Burgie Castle, Ess. William Deverux, of Tagborne, Francis Beaven, Nicholas Sweeney, of New Bawn, with a few more whom he did not know, but believes that John Colbough, of Baillyman, and one of Wm. Deverux's adherents, were of the number; that he was closely examined by Bagel Harvey as to the state of Roth and Dummerman Ports, and whether he was an Orange Man or a United Man; that said Bagel Harvey extorted him to take the United Man's Oath and become one of their Community; that at that time he obtained a Pass from said Bagel Harvey, with which he came as far as Ballykilly, where he was stopped by the Rebel Guard raised for that purpose, and conducted back to Collynew, where he met with said Bagel Harvey, and said Nicholas Sweeney, against the Public Heretics. B. Harvey before that he had not gone far before the Pass had been taken from him and that again he was taken Prisoner to Collynew, where he was confined until Tuesday morning, with several other Protestant; that about Nine o'clock John Murphy of Loughmanger, (who had the command of the Repe Guard and Rebel Corps,) and was the Officer of the Guards over the Passions,) had ordered them out by four to two o'clock by his company all Thirteen were massacred, that the Spears-men used to take pleasure in piercing the victims through and with exclamation making them bloody Spears, that whilst this horrid crime was acting, the Barn in which were above Three Hundred Protestants as Examiant heard the Squeezes, was set on fire, and all continued to assert that Examiant was feared because Murphy knew that Bagel Harvey had given him a Pass, and that through his interference with Murphy, Louis Priens was likewise falsely that they were both tied and conveyed within a Mile and a Half of the Ports, where they met Bagel Harvey, Cornelius Gregor of Johnstown, in said County, William Deverux's adherent, and many others tending from the Beast-kin Ports. That day, Harvey ordered the said Murphy to take two Prisoners to his Lodging at Collynew, where he had given a Pass to Louis Priens, but refused to give one to Examiant, for fear he would come and report what he had seen and heard at Dunaman Port, that Deponent heard and believes it to be a fact that said Cornelius Gregor had the command of the Beast-kin Ports, Rebel Troops at the Battle of Ports; that Deponent was taken to the Round Hills that night, where he remained for two days, under a Guard, during the woundings—that he was afterwards conveyed to Collynew, where he obtained a Pass from Edward Murphy of the Port, to pass through his district for the purpose of curing the wounded—that he was led to Tagborne, where the lying Rebel Ministers, John Brown, James Harpur, Joseph Collis, and others, were of opinion, that he might with the Round Hills have gone back again and remain there; that he talked along the Round Hills, after that he refished his escape across the Ferry of Brinning to Penhird on Friday the 21st, and from thence to Dunaman Port that morning, that he often heard it reported that he thought, that John Colbough and Thomas Mowden, both of Tintern in said County, were very active in promoting the Rebellion—that he saw John Deverux, John, of Ballynagin in said County at Collynew, on Monday the 22nd, and that he seemed, and believes he had a Principal Command in the Rebel Army. He licitly saw Charles Kelby of Namers-Grange, in said County, at the General in Carrick-Bram amongst the Rebels, very busy and active to promote their Cause. Deponent further states, that he attended Mass celebrated by Edward Murphy afterwards, Parish Priest of Barning, and that after Mass he heard him preach a Ser- mon, in which he said, "Be bluetooth, ye saw ye are Victors everywhere, where is the Rote of the Holy Church, about you without harrying you—that love of you have fallen within the bounds of the Holy Order of the sanctuary, and that the few of you that have followed me have deviated from our Clerics, and went of Faith—that this is the word of God, who now is determined that all who have Royalist upwards of an Hundred Years, should be excepted, and the True Church of England be established." And Deponent states, that this Sermon was preached after the Battle of Ports, and that he heard several Sermons preached by the Priests, of the same effect; that he likewise heard many Priests who had been at the Battle of Bannockburn and elsewhere, declare: that the East Scotch, a Rebel General, did constantly catch the Bullens that came from his Majesty's Army, and gave them to the men to load their pieces with. Deponent further states, that every Protestant that was admist into the Rebel Corps, was first Baptized by a Priest, and that every Protestant that refused to be Baptized was put to Death; and that many, to save their Lives, did suffer themselves to be Baptized.

Richard GRANDY. Sworn before Us, this 23d of June, 1798.

A True Copy.

GEORGE O'KEE, ISAAC CORNICK.

JOHN A. LYSTIE, JOHN KENNEDY.
Copy of a proclamation by James Napper Tandy, forwarded to government by Francis Mansfield, collector of customs at Ballyraine, Co. Donegal, 19 September 1798.

James Napper Tandy, one of the founders of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen, had fled Ireland in 1793 to escape arrest on a charge of having taken the oath of the Defenders. He returned to Ireland in September 1798, on board the French ship Anacreon, to bring fresh supplies to the invasion force of General Humbert (no. 15). He arrived at the island of Rutland, on the coast of Donegal, on 16 September, to discover that Humbert had landed in Mayo rather than in Donegal as expected, and that he had surrendered to government forces at Ballinamuck eight days before. Tandy and his party spent about six hours on shore, then returned to the Anacreon and sailed back to France.

Tandy can hardly be blamed for the lack of information which prevented him linking up with Humbert. But his proclamation suggests that in other ways too he was badly informed. The high-flown language and elaborate imagery of his appeal can hardly have meant much to the inhabitants of Rutland Island - especially since the majority of these spoke nothing but Irish. Tandy’s document, in fact, is a striking reminder of the gap which existed between the United Irish leaders and the people they hoped to lead into rebellion.

Rebellion Papers 620/40/73.
Liberity (bring back) or Death
Northern Army of Avengers

Head Quarters The first year of Irish Liberty
General J. N. Todd
To His Countrymen

United Irishmen

What do I hear the British government have said to speak of concessions. Would you accept of them,

Can a man think of entering into a treaty with a British Minister, a Minister to, who has bled you at the hands of an English Sottery, who has took your little Watts, and prepared inhumanely your last Citzens ... a Minister the Base of Society and the Source of mankind ... Behold Unitedmen ... He holds in his hand the Yoke of Peace, he awakes his other hand lies concealed armed both a friend to Unitedmen, no ... you shall not be the dupe of this base intriguer, capable to destroy your courage the attempts to deceive you, let his efforts be vain. Armed because have been perpetrated in your country, your friends have fallen, according to their description for your cause, than shadows are around you and call blood for vengeance.

Is your heart to avenge their Death, it is your Duty to strike on their blood corrupted theories the ruins of your friends.

Listen to no proposals. Unitedmen, Wage a war of extermination against your oppressors, the War of Liberty Against Tyranny and Liberty shall Triumph

(End)

J. N. Todd
On 23 August a French expedition of 1100 men commanded by General Humbert landed at Killala Bay. They were joined by several thousand of the local inhabitants and quickly occupied most of Co. Mayo.

Humbert and the greater part of his army surrendered to General Lake at Ballinamuck, Co. Longford, on 8 September 1798. However it was more than two weeks before the government forces made a decisive attack on the garrison of Mayo rebels, commanded by French officers, which Humbert had left behind him in Killala.

Joshua Kemmis's letter reports the progress of one regiment of militia from Sligo to Killala, involving three encounters with the rebels and a 'dreadful slaughter' which, he keeps insisting, it is impossible for him to describe.

Ballina 25th Sept 1798

Dear Tom

I wrote to you from Ballishannon some time ago inclosing you my will which I hope you have got as I have not since heard from you. I hope it has not miscarried, as I have since that time been marching day & night to this country. The fatigue was beyond my description to you. I suppose you must have heard this town as well as Killala has been in possession of the rebells ever since the French landed here. We happened to be the only regiment that they first engaged on Friday last on our way from Sligo to this town. They had a large camp near a place called Esker Bridge which we knew nothing of. They sallied out in an immense number and met us on a large piece of ground when they immediately fired a great volley at us which done us no harm which we returned and then they regularly drew up for us, but such a desperate fire as we gave them obliged them to fly when we killed I suppose 4 or 500. That night we were obliged to sleep on the ground as they sent word they would maintain their ground at Ballina. They met us again on Saturday within 7 miles of this town commanded by a French officer of rank. They engaged us for half an hour when such dreadful slaughter took place as is impossible for me to describe to you. I suppose we killed several hundreds. We then pushed on to Ballina where we met General Trench with a large force to assist us to take Killala where they all fled to make a stand, where there were several thousands under the command of three French officers. On Sunday we marched to Killala. When we came to the town their fire was great, upon which General Trench gave orders to force the town upon which the Queens County Regiment stormed it in such a way as is impossible for me to describe to you it was so violent. We then took the French officers who commanded and such terrible slaughter as took place is impossible for me to describe.

Frazer Mss. II/89.
I wrote to you from Ballina on the 5th inst. Since then you have not received any letter from me. I hope it is not through any negligence of mine, but because there has been no opportunity for me to write to you. If you have not heard from me, I have been in the situation of the inhabitants of the district since the French landed there. We have been the only regiment that they have seen and they have engaged us in a battle. We have been surrounded and forced to take up a large body of ground when they immediately fired a grape volley at us which drove us into the woods. After that, we have returned and taken up a regular position of ours, but such a deep-rooted fear in the hearts of the people has spread through the land that they would maintain their ground at Ballina. We met again on Sunday, within 7 miles of the town, commanded by a French officer. They engaged us to half past five in the afternoon. They took such a heavy toll, as is incredible, for us to decide to give up. They have killed several hundred, and then pushed on to Ballina. When the first general French with a large force, we set out to take Ballina. When they all fled to make a stand where they have some small houses and under the command of French officers, on Sunday, we marched to Ballina, when we came to the town there were two men, great hopes that they would furnish French grave orders to take the town when the French county regiment advanced it on such a day as is indefatigable for me to describe. I beg you, do not believe me, for I have to describe things it is too terrible. I must not speak of the French officers who commanded and such terrible slaughter, I know, there is indefatigable for me to describe.
Extract from the proceedings at the court martial of Patrick Beaghan at Waterford, 16 July 1799.

On 28 May 1798 a rebel army variously estimated at between 6,000 and 10,000 men attacked the town of Enniscorthy and captured it after three hours of fighting. The Rev. John Sutton's account vividly describes the scenes that followed. The assaults on Mr. Left and Mr. Haydon reveal the spirit of sectarian hostility which influenced many of the rank and file of the United army, while the failure of the rebel captain to restrain their attackers illustrates the lack of discipline within the United army which allowed such incidents to take place.

Sutton's evidence also reminds us that while some Catholic priests were active supporters of the rebellion others were equally active as loyalists. Appearing as a witness before a military tribunal Sutton had of course good reason to stress the part he had played in attempting to restrain the rebels. But the unequivocal manner in which he incriminates Beaghan leaves little doubt of where his sympathies lay.

Sutton was the only witness for the prosecution. Beaghan offered no evidence in his defence, other than witnesses to his character. He was convicted and sentenced to death.

Proceedings of a General Court Martial, held at the County Court House, Waterford on the 16th day of July 1793.

Ref: Act of an Order from Lieutenant General Pope—

Patrick Bracken, charged with treason and rebellion, and also with being present aiding and abetting in the murder of the Reverend Samuel Hepdorn—

To which charge the prisoner pleaded Not Guilty.

The Reverend John Sillars, D.D.

From Sillars to Mr. Emmett, who is Parish Priest of Larne, in the county of Down—

I have seen the prisoner and known him for about five years. On the 28th day of May 1793, the rebels took refuge in a farmstead near the prisoner's farm. That day between eleven and twelve in the morning, I had been with Mr. Blacker, the Magistrate, and his family, and went with them, with the intention to prevent the plundering and burning houses by the rebels. Having returned to my office on the same day to several houses to prevent burning. I believe thirteen, and returning to Mr. Blacker according to my promise, and coming up the castle, Mr. Emmett, Mr. Stephen Lett, of Larne, and Mr. Blacker, in the possession of the prisoner and two others, they were followed with people resembling the rebels. But I do not recollect whether there were stakes on them or not. Present to the assistance of Mr. Lett that he being an intimate acquaintance of mine, the prisoner had and Mr. Lett of actually in his possession—A mob between prisoner and Mr. Lett. I interrupted the Rebels not to kill or hurt Mr. Lett, but they still persisted, and coming down near Mr. Lett, they took my right arm round his neck, and then received three single shots on my arm from the points of Irish muskets. One shot was mortal.
were gone with a vise handle. I found my arm quite stiff in a quarter or half an hour after. The strokes were not aimed at me, but I think at Mr. Letts head—the fourth blow came on his head, which staggered him very much—I thought he would have fallen and caught my left arm under his breast—I got Mr. Letts awn with the greatest difficulty, and some times going down on my knees—the party of which prisoner was one still pursuing us—At length we came to Mr. Letts house and the door being fortunately open, he went in and shut the door—Mr. Letts is about 60 years of age.—As we came along the prisoner and his party was standing in the garden, saying they would kill every person of Mr. Letts description—meaning no Boers—Then went about twelve or fourteen yards towards Mr. Blackburn's and hearing some noise behind me, I turned about and saw the Mr. Letts, Hendon about sixteen yards below me, and surrounded by about fourteen rebels—the case standing on a rising ground, and the rebels were surrounding him with their fingers, thrusting to his abdomen, and restraining him to desist, they still offered violence—the prisoner was not of that party—At length I forced between the rebels and Mr. Hendon, and got him close to a wall on one side, and remained close to him—The other between him and the Rebels—Said Mr. Hendon where he wished to go, and he said he thought he would be safe at Mr. William Coote's—Then went about twelve yards towards Mr. Coote's house and their saw the prisoner and six or seven others armed with oxes, standing opposite to us in the direction we came to go—Prisoner and his party prevented us from passing—they flanked at our front with their oxes, and made us turn about—the prisoner and his party were then behind us, and followed us—we stopped at some doors in hopes to get in—\
admission, and placing my right arm about Mr. Heydon's neck,
a knife was thrust from the direction in which the prisoner and his
party were, over my right shoulder, and took Mr. Heydon at the
bottom of the left jaw, and laid the cheek open upwards entirely, it
bled very much over himself, and part came — Arabik Captain
then came up and kept the prisoner and his party off, with his
sword, doing what he could, to save our lives, but at length they
closed in on us, and two persons came up and presented their
muskets at us declaring they would shoot us. I turned aside,
one of their muskets with my left hand (my right arm being
then round Mr. Heydon's neck) and just as I did so, Mr. Heydon
received a stab of a Pike from the direction in which the prisoner
and his party were, and fell, and in a few minutes expired — when
he fell expletives were made use of from the party, against me
for attempting to save his life — Mr. Heydon was an old man
about seventy years of age and feeble — he belonged to the Established
Church — I have always thought that I could have brought
Mr. Heydon to a place of safety, and to Mr. Coote's house, had
not been prevented by the prisoner and his party — the two
stabs of Pikes, one of which took effect in Mr. Heydon's chest,
and the other of which killed him, came from the direction
where the prisoner and his party were, and I think came from
that party — The prisoner appeared to act with more violence
than any other of the party, when we first met the party — I
am sure I could have saved the life of Mr. Heydon, had it not
been for the Violence of the party with which prisoner was,
Letter from John Thomas Troy, Catholic archbishop of Dublin, to the chief secretary, Viscount Castlereagh, 5 August 1800, complaining of continued outrages in Co. Wexford.

The hatred and distrust created by the events of 1798 were slow to fade. This was especially true of Co. Wexford, where the rebellion had lasted longest and where sectarian hostility had played a particularly prominent part. Troy's letter, written two years after the rebellion had been suppressed, describes the continued troubles of the county. Since Troy was one of the most strongly loyalist members of the Catholic hierarchy of this period, he is unlikely to have exaggerated the outrages he complains of.

The government, like the United Irish leaders two years before, had at best only limited control over its supporters, and it could do little to prevent incidents of this kind. However it compensated Catholic congregations whose chapels were maliciously destroyed, out of the fund established for the relief of 'suffering loyalists'.

Rebellion Papers 620/58/100.
Ampfield near Luttrellstown  
5th August 1800.

My Lord,

Since I had the honor (writing to your Lordship) yesterday, received letters from the County Wexford mentioning that a new slated Chapel in Bantry on Mr. Carco's estate, the building of which he had liberally contributed, was burned about three weeks ago. An attempt had been made to burn another Chapel in the Duffery, but the neighbouring people extinguished the flames and prevented much damage. In many parts of that disputed County the priests have officiated. In others they cannot even appear: in all, they are daily threatened.

I think it my duty to communicate these particulars, however disagreeable, for the information of Government. And have the honor to be with great respect,

My Lord,  
your Lordship's much obliged obedient servant,  
J.T. Boy.
Note to teachers

Historical documents of the kind reproduced in this pack are being used increasingly in the teaching of history at all levels. The way in which such documents are used must of course vary with the age and ability of the pupils and the nature of the course being taught. For this reason no attempt has been made to suggest any single set of questions or exercises based on the documents in this pack. However a few general suggestions might be helpful.

(1) The most straightforward exercises which can be based on documents of this kind are those which require the pupil to extract concrete facts. For example pupils might be asked what it is James Jordan undertakes to do in no. 7 or how many days it took Joshua Kemmis and his regiment to reach the town of Killala (no. 15). Pupils might also be asked to use dictionaries or other reference books to clarify some of the terms used in the documents e.g. 'patron' in no. 1, 'The head of the Hydra' in no. 4. Other exercises would involve using a map to locate places mentioned in the documents, or drawing up a timetable of the events referred to.

(2) Documents can also be used to raise broader questions about the period under discussion. For example the account of Capt. Ryan's wounds (no. 5) could be used to introduce the issue of what sort of medical treatment was available at this time.

(3) A more advanced use of documents brings in an element of interpretation. Pupils might be asked whether they would trust the accounts of events given by Richard Grandy (no. 13) or Sir James Duff (no. 9) or whether they would have found the prisoner whose trial is reported in no. 16 guilty.

(4) Documents can also be made the basis for exercises involving an imaginative reconstruction of events. For example pupils might be asked to write a letter from a resident of Baltinglass to a friend describing the different incidents mentioned in no. 3, or to rewrite the account of the arrest of Lord Edward FitzGerald (no. 5) from the point of view of one of the participants.

Finally it should be stressed that the documents in this pack vary both in length and in character. Some of the items included - notably the two long documents reproduced as no. 1 and no. 16 - are probably suitable only for fairly advanced students, while others should be capable of being adapted for use with a wider range of ages and abilities. It is hoped that this variety will enable teachers to use their judgement and experience to select the material best suited to their individual needs.
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