

National Archives of Ireland

# THE REBELLION OF 1798

## facsimile documents

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contribute to an understanding both of the events to which they relate and of the problems which arise in working with historical documents to reconstruct an episode of this kind.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.

Also: - click anywhere in the left margin of any page to return to the previous view/page.  
- cross references between pages are hyperlinked

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.

The oath of the United Irishmen, as given in the sworn  
information of John Smyth of Ballymote, county Down, who  
became a member of the Society in July 1796  
(Frazer Mss, 11/56).

“ In the awful presence of God,  
“ I, A, B, do voluntarily declare, that I will persevere  
“ in endeavouring to form a Brotherhood of Affection  
“ among Irishmen of every Religious persuasion, and  
“ that I will also persevere in my endeavours to obtain an  
“ equal, full, & adequate representation of all the people of  
“ Ireland,  
“ I do further declare that neither hopes fears Rewards or  
“ punishments shall ever induce me, directly or indirectly  
“ to Inform on or give Evidence against any Member or  
“ Members of this or Similar Societies for any Act or  
“ expression of theirs done or made Collectively or  
“ Individually in or 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.
4. Letter from General Sir Ralph Dundas, 16 May 1798, on the disarming of Co. Kildare.
5. Official bulletin announcing the arrest of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, 20 May 1798.
6. Letter from W. Kildal, Arklow, 24 May 1798, describing proceedings against the United Irishmen.
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.
9. Despatch from General Sir James Duff, 29 May 1798, describing the dispersal of rebels at the Curragh.
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.
17. Letter from John Thomas Troy, Catholic archbishop of Dublin, to Lord Castlereagh, 5 August 1800, complaining of continued outrages in Co. Wexford.

**Copy of a letter from Earl Camden, lord lieutenant of Ireland, to the prime minister, the Duke of Portland, 6 August 1796.**

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 Feud which for several years has prevailed in the County of Armagh between the Dissenters and Roman Catholics of the inferior Claps - The Former in the course of last Summer having after some petty conflicts gained an Ascendancy in that County over the Catholics exercised every revengeful Power in their Power and endeavoured by Violence and by Threats to drive them from the County. These Outrages of the lower Dissenters after much Lotion of Government were at length stopped, but several Military Families fled from the County and were obliged to seek for new Settlements to other Parts of the Kingdom, where they relate their Sufferings and I fear have excited a spirit of Revenge among their Catholic Brethren.

The United Sincere of Belfast 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

Defenders in Armagh to form a Junction  
with the Societies of Defenders in the  
Western and Midland Counties, and  
to revive their Committees & Assemblies  
which the Vigour of Government had  
almost entirely suppressed - And I am  
concerned to add that their Proceedings  
have been attended with much  
Success -

They have been sedulously  
enlisting into their Association by Oaths  
of Secrecy the Lower Orders in the County  
of Antrim, Derry, Tyrone, and Down,  
and they divide themselves into Societies  
of about 30 each, the Engagement, or as  
it is called the Constitution of each Society  
is kept by the Secretary, who is sworn  
not to part with it, a small monthly  
Subscription is collected for general  
Purposes, the Members are ordered to  
provide themselves with Arms if possible,  
Parochial and County Meetings are  
held by Delegation, and the general  
Information is transmitted by Siniperies  
to Belfast, all writing and Correspondence  
being systematically avoided

From the Effect of Military  
Interposition, of successful Prosecution,  
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 tho'  
no Outrages have taken place, yet  
at Fair and Bation they have renewed  
their Engagements with each other - This  
Information extends to the Counties of  
Dublin Meath and Kildare - Recently  
Societies have been among them, to  
inflame them against the Defenders  
of Armagh, to instil into their Minds  
that the Prosecution of the Catholics  
is protected by Government, to excite  
them to join the United Irishmen, and  
to fill them with Hopes of a French  
Invasion. And I have Intelligence  
that a secret Meeting of Delegates  
both of United Irishmen and Defenders  
will shortly be held in Dublin,  
chosen from the different Provinces  
for the purpose of concerting the Means  
of conspiring some general Plan -

**Information concerning the plans of the United Irishmen, marked 'recd from C. 6 March'.**

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'clock 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 Lehaunstown 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.

at the head of the stairs

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  
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and are to bring their papers demonstrating their force  
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Barracks, and the Majority of Leinstermen Camp  
are of their side, and will immediately join a rising  
& desert in 20 min: notice to seize the Camp &  
March off to Dublin. —

If the meeting takes effect on Monday and the party  
taken it is supposed that will be <sup>County</sup> meetings all over the Kingdom  
immediately held — If information can be obtained where  
the meetings are held in the different places — all  
the principal persons concerned in the respective Counties it  
is probable would attend — will obtain what  
information & communicate it

Recd. 6/11/1790

**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.



FACSIMILE 4

**Letter from General Sir Ralph Dundas, Castle Martin, Co. Kildare, to Edward Cooke, under-secretary at Dublin Castle, 16 May 1798, on the disarming of Co. Kildare.**

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.

Castle Martin 16<sup>th</sup> May 1790 —

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. Barronall is in possession of a protection

The last four days have furnished me with many very affecting scenes — my Horn filled with the poor wretched people, getting up their arms, receiving protections, and declaring that it would be the happiest in their lives. We 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 & thanks,

I am, Sir, Dear Sir,

Yours very faithful, &  
Obedient servant,  
W. D. Mordaunt

Dep. Secy, &c. <sup>me</sup>

FACSIMILE 5

**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 waiving 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 cession 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 feather 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 fired, 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 stabs in different parts of his body, of these, one is particularly alarming, it is situate under his left ribs, 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.

FACSIMILE 6

**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 wil soon the gords on the houses continu and live well 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.

Dr Sir

am Klow may the 24th 1740

Since my last we are taken men very  
day and get Informations and more goods  
I hundred Ball Cartridges But not the goods  
yet But I hope we will soon be goods  
in the houses continue and live well  
Both men & horses as my party was  
Taken yesterday a united force and  
Dr money as the King of united men  
Is taken Lord Edward I trust for  
God we will soon pull down the

Crapys we put on quaked Capes  
on some of them there is a great  
many of the vitins Run a way  
I remain sir yr most pliant

humble servant

J. K. D.

**Sworn examination of James Jordan of Prosperous, Co. Kildare, 27 May 1798.**

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.)

King's County to witt

The examns. of James Jourdan of Prosperous in the County Kildare,

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 sevell. bodys of his Majesty's regiment of the City of Cork militia and Anttent Brttons lying dead in the street of Prosperous and at the same time this examinant sayth he saw the sevell. 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 Grannam 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 sevell. others murdered and assassinated the sevl. soldiers who were on sd. morning murdered &c Jas Jordan

Sworn before me this 27th May 1798

Roger North

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

Jas Jordan

Rebellion Papers 620/37/176.

Things contrary to  
 the Sworn of James Jordan of Prosperous  
 in the County Kildare weaver who being duly  
 Sworn & examined <sup>sworn</sup> ~~sworn~~ that he was in the town of  
 Prosperous about the hour of three or four o'clock of Thursday  
 morning the 24<sup>th</sup> day of May <sup>1790</sup> at day break when he saw  
 sev<sup>l</sup> bodies of his Majesty's regiment of the City of Cork Militia  
 and Ancient Brittons lying dead in the street of Prosperous  
 and at the same time this Examinant sayth he saw the  
 sev<sup>l</sup> persons following with arms in their hands —  
 parading & insulting and who he verily believeth were the  
 persons ~~who~~ aided and assisted by others unknown to him  
 who murdered and assassinated the Soldiers who Examinant  
 saw dead <sup>James</sup> ~~with~~ George of Cork Tox & Tox sons  
 to John Tox of Healy bridge or Newtown Coor. of  
 the same place Patrick Farrell <sup>with</sup> ~~with~~ <sup>son</sup> James  
 Tobin Denis Kelly <sup>Christ?</sup> Puggal Rob<sup>t</sup> Hookes  
 Country all of Prosperous afores<sup>d</sup>. Lawrence  
 Gramann of Thomastown Mich<sup>l</sup> Hayes Henry Hugges  
 of Haplstown & Healy's bridge John M<sup>c</sup> Manus of Healy's <sup>bridge</sup>  
 Edw<sup>d</sup> Hanlon Donore Thomas Eden Deemuck of  
 Blackwood <sup>supperman</sup> Labourers & Andrew Farrell  
 son to Daniel Farrell of Healy's bridge who <sup>sworn</sup> ~~sworn~~  
 to have his hands in blood <sup>to be sworn</sup> This Examinant  
 sayth the above named persons aided and assisted by  
 sev<sup>l</sup> others ~~was~~ murdered and assassinated the sev<sup>l</sup>  
 Soldiers who were on 2<sup>d</sup> morning murdered &

J. J. Jordan Sworn before me this 27<sup>th</sup> May 1790

Fortmores Lodge when bound 1790  
 known to own & d<sup>d</sup> the King  
 in the sum of 500 £ to servants  
 when called on or at next year  
 J. J. Jordan

500  


**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 cut 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.

Wexford 27th May 1798

I have the honor to be

Yr Lordship's most obedt servt.

Eben Jacob

D. Mayor

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 & other picked men to the amount of one hundred of the N. C. militia, the major's four or five Officers & all the Party except three were cut off. Of the Officers Col. Lott 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 must 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  
Yr. Lordship's  
most Obedt. Servt

Wexford 27<sup>th</sup> May  
1798

C. M. Jacob  
Major

**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 2 o'Clock Kildare

My Dear Genl. I have witnessed a melancholy scene. We found the Rebels retiring from this Town on our approach armed, we followed them with the Dragoons; I sent on some of the Yeomen to tell them, on laying down their Arms, they should not be hurt. Unfortunately some of them fired on the Troops, from that moment they were attacked on all sides, nothing could stop the ~~rage~~ <sup>rage</sup> of the Troops. I believe from ~~two~~ <sup>two</sup> to ~~three~~ <sup>three</sup> hundred of the Rebels was killed. ~~I have forwarded the Mails to Dublin~~ ~~down their arms by the Dragoons.~~ We have 3 Men killed & several wounded. I am too fatigued to enlarge.

Yours sincerely

L. L.

Robt Duff.

I have forwarded

The Mails 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 sent on some of the Yeomen to tell  
" them, on laying down their Arms, they should not be hurt. Unfortunately  
" some of them fired on the Troops; 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 Mails 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 :

**R**ESOLVED, That the Commander in Chief shall send Guards to certain Baronies for the Purpose of bringing in all Men they shall find loitering 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 loitering 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 different 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 Houses, 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 6, 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 Dreed 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 Killcock 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 with 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

100  
Post Office, Blenheim, Jamaica

This Morn at 10 after Two  
o'clock, we attacked a party of the  
Rebels in a place called Dances in  
the County of St. Andrew, to a party of the  
Imperial Militia, the Royal Infantry,  
Balm and Grenade Cavalry, they  
were soon put to flight, and took to  
a Bog, where many of them fell by  
the Infantry - it is remarkable, that they  
they had Horses, Cows, Sheep, &c. were  
found after them, with <sup>the</sup> arms of fire  
and weapons. They stood to receive but  
one fire from the Infantry side. 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  
Kilbuck attacked the Rebels at Timbo,  
(which lay the other side of the Bog)  
at the same time we did. I believe  
the place in like manner as <sup>to</sup> we did,  
I can't tell the Men killed, but the  
King's Troops, provided many Horses  
which were deserted by the owners

I am Sir  
Yours Most Obedt  
Obert Parker

**Letter from Thomas Whinnery at the post office, Belfast, to John Lees, 13 June 1798, reporting the defeat of the rebels at Ballynahinch, Co. Down.**

In the three years before the rebellion the United Irishmen had built up a strong organisation in the eastern half of Ulster (no. 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.

O Sir

Post Office Outpost  
June 13 1798  
3 o'clock P.M.

I have the pleasure to inform you that  
General Muzant got up with the Rebels at Whatabinch  
killed 400, took from them six pieces of Cannon &  
totally razed them. The General is returned to  
Ison & has left the Troops to destroy the places  
mentioned in the proclamation.

That active Officer Capt Smith of the Montgomery  
Militia was killed by a shot from a window in  
Whatabinch (which place is now a heap of rubbish)  
another Officer with a few men wounded - No other  
loss -

John Lewis Esqr

I have the Honor to be  
O Sir Your most obedt  
The Whatabinch -

**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.

COUNTY of WEXFORD,  
to wit.

**R**ICHARD GRANDY, of BALLYSHAN, in said County, came this day before us his Majesty's Justices of the Peace, and made Oath on the Holy Evangelists, that he this Examinant was attacked and seized at the Cross-roads of Kilbride, on Sunday the 3d of June, between the hours of nine and ten o'clock in the morning as he was returning from a Farm he has on the Lands of Kilbride, by several persons armed with Guns, Pikes and Spears---that amongst the number were Michael Poor, Thomas Poor, Martin White, Richard Slue, Martin Colhoun, Nicholas Brown, Michael White, John Moran and Lawrence Moran, all of Kilbride, aforesaid, with many others whose names Examinant did not know though their faces were very familiar to him; he was conducted from thence to the Rebel Camp at Carrickburn, in said County, and in the afternoon of the same day was brought to Mr. King's house at Scolloboge, that he was introduced into a room where he saw Bagenal Harvey, of Bary Castle, Esq; William Devereux of Taghmon, Francis Breen, Nicholas Sweetman of New Bawn, with a few more whom he did not know, but believes that John Colclough, of Ballyteigue, and a son of Wm. Devereux aforesaid, were of the number; that he was closely examined by Bagenal Harvey as to the state of Rofs and Duncannon Fort, and whether he was an Orange Man or a United Man; that said Bagenal Harvey pressed him to take the United Man's Oath and become one of their Community; that at last he obtained a Pass from said Bagenal Harvey, with which he came as far as Bryanstown, where he was stopped by the Rebel Guard stationed there; that he was conducted back again to Collinstown, where he met with said Bagenal Harvey and said Nicholas Sweetman; that Nicholas Sweetman figured the Pass he got from B. Harvey before; that he had not gone far before the Pass had been taken from him and torn, upon which he was taken Prisoner to Scolloboge House, where he was confined till Tuesday morning with several other Protestants; that about Nine o'clock John Murphy of Loughnagery, (who had the command of the Rose-garland Rebel Corps, and was the Officer of the Guard over the Prisoners) had ordered them out by fours to be shot by his company all Thirty-five were massacred; that the Spear-men used to take pleasure in piercing the victims through, and with exultation licking their bloody Spears; that whilst this horrid scene was acting, the Barn in which were above One Hundred Protestants as Examinant heard and believes, was set on fire, and all consumed to ashes; that Examinant's life was spared because Murphy knew that Bagenal Harvey had given him a Pass, and that through his intercession with Murphy, Lotius Frizzle was likewise spared; that they were both tied and conveyed within a Mile and a Half of Rofs, where they met Bagenal Harvey, Cornelius Grogan of Johnstown, in said County, William Devereux aforesaid, and many others retreating from the Battle of Rofs.

That Bag. Harvey ordered the said Murphy to take the two Prisoners to his Lodging at Collinstown, where he had given a pass to Lotius Frizzle, but refused to give one to Examinant, for fear he would come and report what he had seen and heard at Duncannon Fort; that Deponent heard and believes it to be a fact that said Cornelius Grogan had the command of the Bary Castle Rebel Troops at the Battle of Rofs; that Deponent was taken to Foulkes's Mills that night, where he continued for two days under a Guard, dressing the wounded; that he was afterwards conveyed to Ballymitty, where he obtained a Pass from Edward Murphy of said place to pass and repass through his district for the purpose of curing the wounded---that he was sent to Taghmon, where the sitting Rebel Magistrates, John Breen, James Harpur, Joseph Cullonere, and Matthew Commons, were of opinion, that he might with the Priests Pass have gone back again and remain there; that he strolled along the sea-side, till at last he effected his escape across the Ferry of Bannow to Feathard on Friday the 22d inst, and from thence to Duncannon Fort this morning, that he often heard it reported whilst in custody, that John Colclough and Thomas Macord, both of Tintern in said County, were very active in promoting the Rebellion---that he saw John Devereux, jun. of Sullbeggan in said County at Scolloboge, on Monday the 24th instant, and that he seemed, and believes that he had a Principal Command in the Rebel Army. He likewise saw Charles Reily, of Ramers-Grange, in said County, at the Camp at Carrick-Born amongst the Rebels, very busy and active to promote their Cause. Deponent further saith, that he attended Mass celebrated by Edward Murphy aforesaid, Parish Priest of Bannow; and that after Mass he heard him preach a Sermon, in which he said, "Brethren, you see you are Victorious every where---that the Balls of the Heretics fly about you without hurting you---that few of you have fallen whilst thousands of the Heretics are dead, and that the few of you that have fallen was from deviating from our Cause, and want of Faith---that this visibly is the Work of God, who now is determined that the Heretics, who have reigned upwards of an Hundred Years, should be extirpated, and the True Catholic Religion be Established."---And Deponent saith, this Sermon was Preached after the Battle of Rofs, and that he heard several Sermons Preached by the Priests to the same effect; that he likewise heard many Rebels who had been at the Battle of Eniscorthy and elsewhere, declare, that Father Roach, a Rebel General, did constantly Catch the Bullets that came from his Majesty's Arms, and gave them to his men to load their pieces with. Deponent further saith, that every Protestant that was admitted 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 OGLE,  
ISAAC CORNICK,  
JOHN H. LYSTER,  
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/?3.

Liberty (bring us back) or Death -

Northern Army of Avengers

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

United Irishmen

What do I hear, the British government have dared  
to speak of concessions, would you accept of them,

Can you think of entering into a treaty  
with a British Minister, a Minister too, who has kept  
you at the mercy of an English Soldier, who has laid  
your Cities waste, and massacred inhumanely your best  
Citizens . . . a Minister the base of Society, and  
the scourge of mankind . . . behold, Irishmen . . .

he holds in his hand the Olive of peace, be aware, his  
other hand lies concealed armed with a poniard No  
Irishmen, no . . . you shall not be the dupes  
of his base intrigues, unable to subdue your courage  
he attempts to seduce you, let his efforts be vain

Should crimes have been perpetrated in your  
country, your friends have fallen a sacrifice to their de-  
votion for your cause their shadows are around you  
and call aloud for vengeance.

It is your duty to avenge their Death, it is your  
duty to strike on their blood-concited thrones the murder-  
ers of your friends,

Listen to no proposals. Irishmen, wage  
a war of extermination against your oppressors,  
the war of Liberty against tyranny and Liberty  
shall triumph

(copy)

J. N. Tandy

**Extract from a letter by Joshua Kemmis, Ballina, 25 September 1798, describing actions against the rebels in Mayo.**

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 rebels 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.

Dear Son

Ballinacree 25<sup>th</sup> Sept 1790

I wrote to you from Ballinacree ~~some~~ <sup>some</sup> time ago including you my Will which I hope you have got a - I have not since heard from you I hope it has not miscarried, as I have seen that times been marching Day or Night to the Country the Soldiers been beyond my description to you - I suppose you must have heard the Town as well as Killaloe has been in Possession of the Rebels have since the French landed here - He happened to be the only Regiment that they first engaged on Friday last on our way from Sligo to the Town they had a Large Camp near a Place called Peter's Bridge which we know nothing of, they sallied out in an enormous 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 thought they would maintain their Ground at Ballinacree 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 hundred - we then pushed on to Ballinacree when we met General French with a Large Force to assist us to take Killaloe where they all fled to make a third where there were several thousands under the Command of three French Officers, on Sunday we marched to Killaloe when we came to the Town their Fire was Great, upon which General French 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 beyond it was so violently we then took the French Officers who Commanded and such terrible Slaughter in took place is impossible 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.

Rebellion Papers 620/6/70/28.

Proceedings of a General County Court, held at the County  
Court House, Waterford on the 16<sup>th</sup> day of July 1799, and by  
Virtue of an Order from Lieutenant General Lake --  
Patrick Beagham,

Charged with treason and rebellion, and also with being present aiding and  
Assisting in the murder of the Reverend Samuel Hepburn --

To which Charge the Prisoner pleaded Not Guilty. --

The Reverend John Sutton,  
Tutor

I am Curate to Mr. Emmett who is Parish Priest of Enniscorthy, in the  
County of Wexford -- I have seen the Prisoner and known him for four  
or five years -- On the 28<sup>th</sup> day of May 1798, the rebels took possession of  
Enniscorthy -- I saw the Prisoner that day between seven and eight in  
the evening -- I had been with Mr. Blacker the Magistrate and his  
family, and went at their desire to endeavour to prevent the plunder  
and burning houses by the rebels, thinking from my Office I might  
have influence on them -- I went to several houses to prevent burning  
I believe sixteen, and returning to Mr. Blacker according to my  
promise, and coming up the Castle Hill I met Mr. Stephen Lett of  
Enniscorthy in the possession of the Prisoner and two others -- they were  
armed with poles resembling Pike handles but I do not recollect  
whether there were Spikes on them or not -- I went to the assistance  
of Mr. Lett he being an intimate acquaintance of mine -- Prisoner  
had Mr. Lett then actually in his possession -- I went between  
Prisoner and Mr. Lett -- I instructed the Rebels not to kill or illtreat  
Mr. Lett, but they still persisted, and coming down near Mr. Lett's  
door, I got my right arm round his neck, and I then received three  
strokes on my arm from the party of which Prisoner was one -- the strokes

were given with a Pike 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. Lett's head. The fourth blow came on his head, which staggered  
him very much. I thought he would have fallen and I got my left  
arm under his breast. I got Mr. Lett on 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. Lett's house  
and the door being fortunately open, he went in and shut the door; -  
Mr. Lett is above 60 years of age. - Also went along the Prisoner  
and his Party used terms of violence, saying they would kill every  
person of Mr. Lett's description meaning an Orangeman - Then  
went about Twelve or fourteen yards towards Mr. Blacker's and heard  
my noise behind me. I turned about and saw the Reverend Samuel  
Heydon about sixteen yards below me, and surrounded by about  
fourteen rebels - He was standing on a rising ground, and the rebels  
were surrounding him with their pikes. I ran to his assistance, and  
intreated them to desist, they still offered violence - The Prisoner  
was not of that party - At length I forced between the rebels and  
Mr. Heydon, and got him close to a wall on one side, and I remain-  
ed close to him on the other between him and the Rebels. - I asked  
Mr. Heydon where he wished to go, and he said he thought he would  
be safe at Mr. William Codd's - I went about Twelve yards  
towards Mr. Codd's house, and there saw the Prisoner and six or  
seven others armed with Pikes, standing opposite to us in the direction  
we were to go - Prisoner and his party prevented us from passing -  
they pointed at our front with their pikes, and made us turn  
about - The Prisoner and his party were then behind us, and  
followed us - we rapped at some doors in hopes to get -

admission, and throwing my right arm about Mr. Heydon's neck, a pike 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 on me - A Rebel 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 expressions 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. Coole's house, had I not been prevented by the Prisoner and his party - The two stabs of Pikes, one of which took effect in Mr. Heydon's cheek, 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.

Annfield near Luttrellstown  
5<sup>th</sup> August 1800.

My Lord

Since I had the honor of writing to your Lordship yesterday, I received letters from the County Wexford, mentioning that a new slated Chapel in Bantry, on Mr. Carew's estate, to 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 Duffry; but the neighbouring people extinguished the flames, and prevented much damage. In many parts of that ill-fated County, no Priest dare officiate: 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  
of your Lordship's  
much obliged & obedient Servant  
J. J. Troy

Lord Viscount Castlereagh.

### 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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