

32 Castle Street, Lisburn

A History

Foreword.

This is a history of a single property. In the course of uncovering the narrative it became apparent that as well as being a profoundly local story it also reflected the broader canvas of Irish history. In a sense the story of the property is a microcosm of a larger narrative. But it also deviates significantly from that narrative in key places. This is important as it serves to illustrate that the narrative of Irish history should perhaps be a loose fitting smock rather than a tight corset.

Beginnings

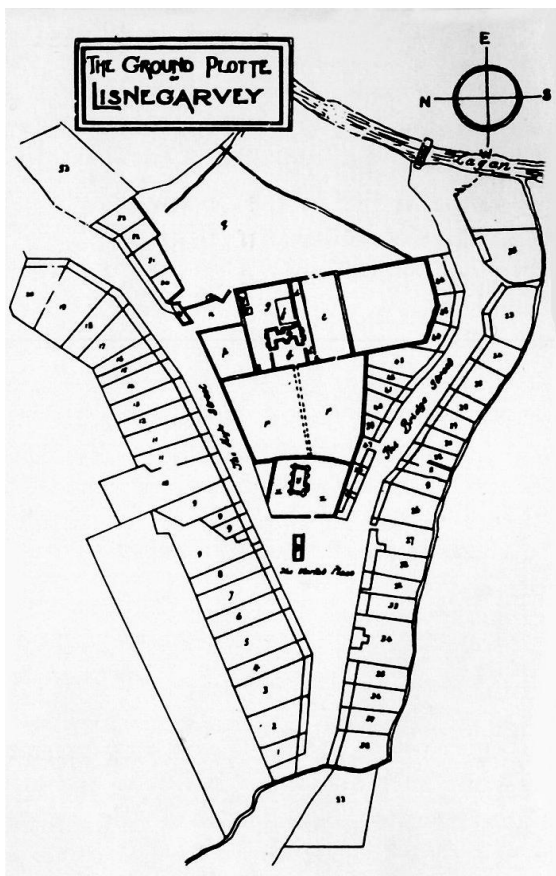
The origins of 32 Castle Street lie in the early 17th century, during the Plantation period. Contrary to popular myth, the planters in Ulster did not build towns from scratch on green fields. Usually they were built on sites of existing settlement; some, like Newtownards, were medieval communities gathered around a monastic complex of abbey, priory and granges. The planters used the earlier stone, timber and other materials to redesign the area and create an ordered renaissance town. Straight streets and neat timber framed houses with gardens and fences to keep the chickens in. Common wells and a common pasture for the burgesses; an Anglican church and a manor house or fortified stronghold with a manorial court. Reality, however, seldom reflected this vision of order. ¹

From the beginning plantation towns were obliged to compromise with the existing population. Urban Catholics were supposed to be coerced into the Church of Ireland but religious thought is not easy to police. The town authorities encouraged urban Catholics who were key to the town's prosperity to remain where they were. They turned a blind eye to their practising their religion discretely. Nor were the settlers from Scotland always willing to join the Church of Ireland either. Where a town's lord was a Scottish Presbyterian or an English puritan, the Presbyterians and

Quakers were often allowed to build themselves meeting houses. There were also tensions between the pre-existing Irish members of the Church of Ireland and the newcomers. The Church of Ireland was the established Church, the state church of the Kingdom of Ireland. Other religious groups were not allowed to use the word 'Church' to describe their places of worship, (hence the use of the word 'chapel' to describe a Catholic Church to this day). Protestant meant Church of Ireland and all those who belonged to the reformed tradition but didn't conform to the established church such as Presbyterians and Quakers were described as 'Dissenters'.

Nevertheless the role of denominational conflict should not be overstated. While this conflict was of great interest to 19th and 20th century Ireland, land not faith was the key issue in 17th century Ireland.

Many plantation towns have an English Street (where the governing institutions were located: the principal residences, the Church, the law courts, schools providing a classical education and the land agent's offices). There is usually an Irish Street, which according to the government's plantation scheme shouldn't have existed at all, but was

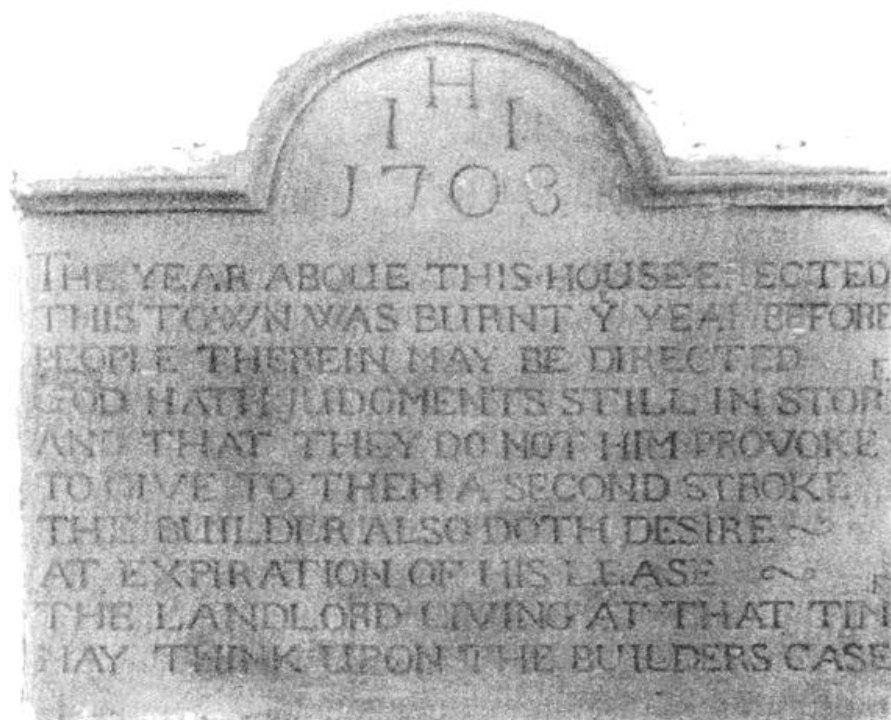


often where the sub-agents who actually collected the rents and tythes and who mediated between English and Irish speakers had their offices and homes. There was also a Scotch Street. In Scotch Street the Presbyterian Meeting House stood and sometimes a school with an opposing curriculum to the Anglican one. Downpatrick, Armagh and Dungannon are all examples. Castle Street was Lisburn's English Street.

In the 1620's, a Welsh gentleman Sir Fulke Conway built a plantation settlement in what is now Lisburn. He built a fortified residence located in Castle Gardens and a triangle of

streets. He called his town Lisnagarvey. Almost certainly much of the stone and building materials were already in the vicinity from earlier buildings. Sir Fulke owned Conway in North Wales and was no stranger to the impregnable Welsh castle. He seems to have attempted a Conway in miniature at Lisnagarvey. The first building to have stood on the site of 32, Castle Street was probably a two story timber framed house. It would have been painted black and white and glazed with small diamond shaped panes of glass. It did not last long. While the Planters faced no serious opposition for a generation, in 1641 the groundswell of civil war in England gave the sons and grandsons of the former Irish aristocracy an opportunity to reclaim their own. They formed a confederacy which became the de facto government of Ireland and threw the plantation scheme into reverse. The plantation towns were attacked and many, including Lisnagarvey, were destroyed. The confederacy was itself overthrown by Cromwell with great ruthlessness in the 1650's. Following which Lisnagarvey was rebuilt and the term Lisburn starts to appear more frequently in documents from then on. In the 18th century the name Lisburn overtook that of Lisnagarvey. Blaris was the alternative but despite its manifest Irish provenance, it was considered to be the English name.

The second building to stand on the site lasted until 1707 when a devastating fire tore through the town destroying it almost completely.



This suggests that the houses built after the previous destruction had also been timber. The fire was so devastating that collections were made to relieve the townsfolk's distress throughout Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales. This time stone and brick were used in the rebuilding. In the 1780's when Rev. Beaumont travelled through Lisburn he noted in his diary:

“The cottages of the poor are better and brighter than in most places. Lisburn a prodigious pretty town, chiefly brick”

The early 18th century house lasted until the major rebuilding of 1784, which has itself lasted to the present day. It's possible that the stone cellars are survivals from this earlier building. Little can be known for sure about the 1708-80 building but the deeds describe it as being of the same proportion in width and depth. The house at the front facing Castle Street had no connection with the outbuildings and stables at the rear. Gardens are mentioned. These probably lay to the south of the property extending into what are now the Cathedral grounds. The tenement to the south west of the property was called 'Nicholson's'.

Although little is known of the property in this early phase, quite a lot can be pieced together about Castle Street generally. It was a high status part of the town with substantial and prosperous houses. The residents paid above average in the hearth tax: 4 to 5 fireplaces per house whereas 2 was the norm. Later they paid above average on the window tax. Some VIP's lived there: Jeremy Taylor the celebrated divine and Bishop of Down and Connor died at no 13, Castle Street in 1667. In 1697 William III invited the French Huguenot and linen expert Louis Crommelin to settle in Lisburn. Huguenots were French Protestants who settled in a number of Irish towns and added to the ethnic and linguistic mix. The extended Crommelin family settled in Castle Street and gave Ulster's linen trade its initial impetus. The Crommelins were joined by other Huguenot families and soon a French Huguenot Church, directly opposite no 32, opened in Castle Street to accommodate them. It is not going to too far to say that Castle Street became Lisburn's French Quarter in the years after the fire.

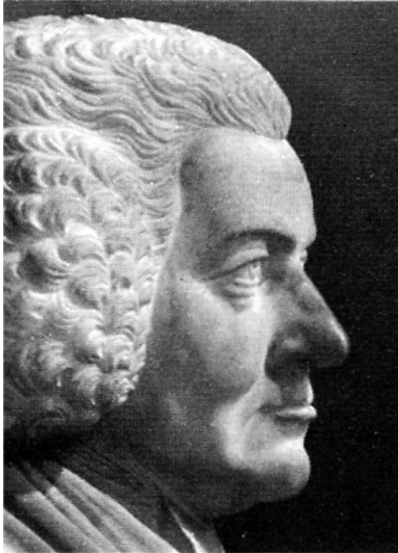


William Hogarth's Noon. Stylish and well-to-do Huguenots leaving church in 1738.

to James Crommelin for £300. Little is recoverable about James Crommelin personally but he was the nephew of Louis Crommelin He and his brother Samuel had married two Huguenot sisters and James's wife was Esther Gisot². He was described as a gentleman in a 1734 Act creating a turnpike trust for the highway through Banbridge. In this he is listed as a trustee along with the great and good of the county and many of his Crommelin relations. We can imagine him speaking accented English and fluent French, trading in linen, attending the

The Huguenots were a distinct but somewhat inward looking group. They married amongst their own wherever they could. Although closer doctrinally to the Presbyterians (Huguenots were fairly Calvinist), they seldom married them, preferring to accommodate themselves to the Church of Ireland when no French match was possible. The Church of Ireland took a paternal and protective interest in the Huguenot community to the irritation of their Presbyterian and Quaker neighbours whom they severely repressed.

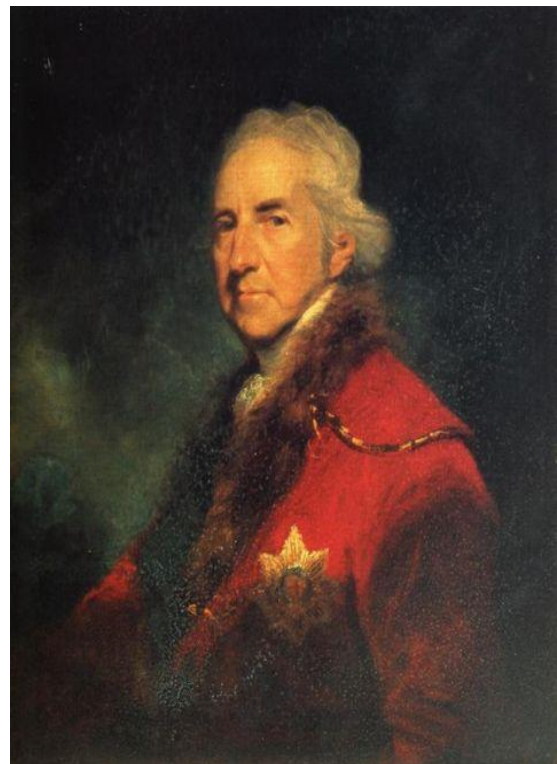
It is in 1741 that 32 Castle Street emerges into the records in it's own right for the first time. At this point the town was largely owned by Sir Fulke's descendant Lord Conway and Killultagh. In 1741 the property was leased



Rev. Saumarez Dubourdieu

Huguenot Chapel across the road, living the life of an early 18th century gentleman. The Huguenot community slowly assimilated into Irish society as the 18th century went on. An example of this is one of the Huguenot chaplains, Rev. Saumarez Dubourdieu. He also ran the Classical School in Lisburn, beginning in the 1740's, he taught Greek and Latin for 56 years. In 1812 Rev Dubourdieu died aged 96. But by then he was the Vicar of Glenavy and had settled comfortably into the Anglican establishment.

Lord Conway was an improving landlord. The lease to James Crommelin mentions his intention of bringing piped water through the streets of Lisburn. The idea was that each householder would themselves pay for the laying of lead pipes into their houses from the main street. For this they paid Lord Conway £1. The lease itself cost Crommelin £1 5/- 9d These were Irish pounds payable in two instalments: May 1st and November 1st (Irish estates maintained the ancient custom of Bealtinne and Samhain). In 1757 the lease was extended but it changed hands in 1759/



Lord Conway and Killultagh

In 1759 William Higginson Esq took over the lease. By now Lord Conway had become the Earl of Hertford. Higginson was Hertford's agent and receiver of rents for his lands in Antrim and Down. He purchased the lease for £300 and his salary from Lord Hertford was also £300 per annum. Higginson came from a family of well educated and prosperous Anglican townsmen. The family probably originated in Leicestershire but

seems to have come to Co. Antrim a little before the Plantations. His family produced several clergymen including the Rev. Thomas Higginson who was rector of Lisburn between 1775 and 1781. By the middle of the 18th century the family had acquired a coat of arms. It contained three stone towers on the shield and another as part of the crest. The motto is:

Malo Mori quam Foedari.

William married Jane Gayer in the early 1750's. She belonged to the Huguenot Gayer family, so Castle Street would have been the perfect



Friends School c.1830

home for her. Their daughter Agnes was born in 1755. In 1770 she married, at the young age of 15, the fiery Edward Smyth. Smyth was a young clergyman with excellent prospects in the Church. He was a nephew of the Archbishop of Dublin and the son of the Archdeacon of Limerick. He blew it however by espousing an overly evangelical fervour. He

was expelled from the Church of Ireland, drifted into itinerant preaching and ended up as a friend of John Wesley. His father in law was unlikely to have approved. Yet William Higginson played a role in mediating between the town's Quaker community and Lord Hertford over acquiring land for a Quaker school. These negotiations eventually succeeded and the new foundation later evolved into Friends Grammar School. Nevill H Newhouse, the Friend's schools' historian writes:

“Early in 1776 an approach was made to the agent for the Hertford Estate, and Robert Bradshaw reported to Thomas Greer that he and others `waited on William Higginson Esquire'. The Earl of Hertford was in Lisburn on his own affairs and the Trustees asked his agent to present

their written request. There must have been some argument with William Higginson, but eventually the trustees 'prevailed on him to go and prefer our proposals which he did about ten o'clock'. After an hour William Higginson came out again to say that the Earl would not entertain the idea since the Quakers wanted the land as 'a thing for ever'. The agent therefore returned the paper to Robert Bradshaw in the presence of another well-known Lisburn Friend, William Nevill ... suggesting that the trustees should 'amend the proposals'. At this, Robert Bradshaw became indignant - Quakers always meant what they said and were not prepared to bargain. He sent a letter to Thomas Greer ending with the words:

. . . on the whole we must now quit thoughts of having the school settled within the bounds of Lisburn Meeting. I need not tell thee what a disagreeable task it is for me to write thee in this stile.

Far from 'quitting' this scheme, Thomas Greer saw it through within two months of this deadlock. He did so by having the applications made in Dublin. A letter to Thomas Greer from John Hill, the only trustee from Lisburn itself and a cousin of Robert Bradshaw, records the fact that John Hill waited twice on William Higginson after 19th April 1776 and eventually got another message to the Earl. It was to the effect that the trustees would soon be in Dublin (almost certainly in order to attend National Meeting), and to ask whether his Lordship would see them there on 20th May about the land on Prospect Hill. The noble Earl returned answer that he was 'full and willing' to treat in Dublin or in Lisburn.

The result was that a lease dated 9th June 1776 was signed by the Earl of Hertford in the presence of three Quakers in Dublin, and by the four trustees in the presence of William Higginson in Lisburn. Its main provision was to lease twenty acres of land to the trustees, the lease to be renewed for ever if, within six years, a schoolhouse was built, hedges and 'timber trees' were planted, and a straight road twenty-one feet wide, with an additional six feet for ditches, was constructed."

The 1760's and 70's were a nerve wracking time for land agents. Agrarian discontent over increased rents, land clearances, enclosure of common land and heavy tythe payments to the Established Church boiled over into civil unrest. Beginning on Lord Donegall's estate, the movement – if something so sporadic and uncoordinated can be called that – soon crystallised into the Hearts of Steel and in other parts of Ulster the

Hearts of Oak. Hayricks were burned and cattle were killed The killing of cattle was in protest by tenants who were being evicted to increase pasture for beef and mutton. Sub-agents, collectors and bailiffs were attacked or threatened and arson attacks were frequent. The disaffected were perceived by the landowners and their milieu as mainly consisting of Dissenters and Catholics but this may have been the paranoia of those in the Established Church; the disaffected could easily have included as many Anglicans. Rewards were offered to informers and steadily the situation was brought under control.

The disturbances go to show that 17th century politics with its ethno-religious struggles were dead by this time. Settlers huddled around a Planter landlord, or an indigenous people forming the warband of a Gaelic chief was a thing of the past. This conflict was about the power of the elite to exact the financial maximum from the rural workforce, and that workforce's capacity to resist the elite. In some ways it was a rehearsal for the much bigger uprising of 1798.



Higginson undoubtedly faced trouble in some of Lord Hertford's rural tenancies, though Lisburn itself seems to have been quiet enough during the period. There is some suggestion Higginson may have been a moderating influence on the rapacity of the elite. Tythes were reasonable in the parish of Lisburn and rents had not increased notably since the

1740's. We also have the testimony of Higginson's deputy agent and eventual successor John Moore Johnston that his conduct as agent was 'judicious, liberal and disinterested'. He testifies to Higginson's popularity in the town.

But for all this the details of Higginson's life and career are sketchy. In James Crommelin's case this is due to there being little reason for a merchant family to archive their records. But in Higginson's it is due to a catastrophic fall from grace which resulted in a veil being deliberately drawn across his memory.

In 1780, after 21 years of service to Lord Hertford, a tripartite indenture shows that Higginson was in debt to his employer for the staggering sum of £9,515 6/- 1/2^d. How on earth did this happen? Lord Hertford is unlikely to have loaned such a large sum to an employee who earned only £300 a year unless he was certain he would receive it back. Sometimes very large sums did change hands in deals over linen. More than one trader failed for sums of £5,000 or so. Perhaps Higginson encountered the linen deal of a lifetime, borrowed the money from his Lordship to speculate and lost. A more sinister alternative is also possible. Some agents' contracts contained a clause that when a shortfall occurred in the total rental income due from an estate, the agent was liable for the shortfall. Perhaps Lord Hertford added up the total sum of arrears and bad debts from the last 20 years to create an unpayable debt, thus obliging Higginson to sell the lease on his house. The reason may have been the desire of Lord Hertford to oblige the Bishop of Down and Connor by creating a rectory in the town for his nephew.

We are speculating ourselves here of course and while the cause of Higginson's debt cannot at present be discovered, we do know it's consequences.

Higginson was removed from his office as agent and required to hand his home, 32 Castle St, to a trustee. This was John Hunter Esq, Lisburn's auctioneer. The lease was to be sold at auction and the money put towards the payment of the debt. Presumably the Higginsons also had to sell their furniture and possessions. At the same time Higginson's kinsman Rev. Thomas Higginson resigned the rectorship of Lisburn. The

disgrace didn't just fall on William; it fell on the whole family. The family motto now became ironic:

Malo Mori quam Feodati: Death before Disgrace.

What happened to the Higginsons afterwards is hard to uncover. There was a William Higginson described as a writing clerk in a trade directory of Lisburn in 1818, living in Bow Lane. A lowly occupation writing letters for the illiterate. But there was also a Margaret Higginson still living in Castle Street, so perhaps not everyone in the family was dragged into the disgrace. Higginson was remembered with affection by his friends. John Moore Johnston who worked with him from 1764 to 1780 thought of him as a model agent and wrote of him:

A man he was, to all the Country dear,
And only had three hundred pounds a year;
His like again I ne'er perhaps shall see,
His greatest fault was much generosity.

At this point two other families enter the story: The Dobbs and the Trails. The Dobbs family, whose seat was Castle Dobbs in Carrickfergus, were well known to the Higginsons and Lord Hertford. Richard Dobbs was Dean of Connor but his father had been rector of Lisburn between 1743 and 1775 before Rev. Thomas Higginson took over. He himself was born around 1740 and had been assistant curate at Lisburn between 1764 and 1769 before becoming rector at Carrickfergus. The records show that Richard Dobbs was well known throughout Ireland. A very sociable family, (Richard's father had been a friend of Jonathan Swift), he himself was a very active man who pops up in many different parts of Ulster in many different contexts. He was known and trusted by the Bishop of Down and Connor and seems to have been the diocesan fixer. He was the man the gentry could rely on to arrange an election victory and he was definitely the man to sort out a clerical scandal or a financial crisis.

The Trails were an old landowning Episcopalian family from Scotland. The head of the family in Ireland, James Trail, was Bishop of Down and Connor between 1765 and 1783. They were an extensive family and typify the kind of Anglican clerical dynasty of the day. They were ruthlessly ambitious, grandiose and flamboyant in their tastes, exceptionally well

educated and some of them were exemplars of enlightenment intellectualism. They were also nepotistic and financially predatory to a degree that would not be acceptable today anywhere outside of politics.

James Trail saw his accession to the episcopacy in the light of a lottery winner. He immediately installed his closest relatives in the key offices of the diocese. Having no children himself he appointed his nephew Antony Trail to be Archdeacon of Connor; Antony's brother Robert Trail was made Rector of Ballintoy and their older brother William Trail was made Chancellor of the diocese. Another relative, Hamilton Trail became Vicar General. Bishop Trail scattered livings on his family and most held more than one. Some were outside the diocese; Antony Trail held one living as far south as Cork. Robert had come to Ireland at his Uncle's behest after leaving St Andrew's University in 1777. He was deacon at Ballintoy for a week before his Uncle bumped him up to rector. The Bishop also transferred diocesan lands to his relatives "for charitable purposes". William Trail became rector of Lisburn in 1781 and received lands in the lower Ards: Marlefield, Johnstown and Ballmackanisky (sic) in the manor of Ardquin (today Ardkeen). This deed was witnessed by Antony and Robert.

This was normal behaviour among clerical dynasties at the time and it was not until well into the next century that such behaviour would be considered rapacious. It should not blind us to the family's virtues. The Bishop was also a founding member of the Aberdeen Philosophical Society and advised William Hunter to warn John Hume the (reputedly atheistical) philosopher against visiting Ireland where he was "an object of universal disgust, not to say detestation". The family's virtues will be more fully considered in the next chapter.

On 4th January 1781, no 32 Castle Street was auctioned in the town. According to the tripartite agreement 'several persons attended'. One of whom was Richard Dobbs, no doubt acting on behalf of the Bishop. An agreement seems to have been made between Lord Hertford and the Church that Higginson's home should be turned into a rectory (or glebe house) for successive rectors of Lisburn. It would be awful to think that Higginson had objected to surrendering his lease for this project and was ruined in order to compel him. The auction price of £300 was reached,

which was still considered to be the value of the property, but Dobbs clinched it at £322. On the 7th and 8th January John Hunter transferred the property over to Dean Dobbs. Dobbs held it on behalf of the Church but granted occupancy to Dr Trail. It would remain in the possession of the Church of Ireland until the 20th century.

[Image of James Crommelin & Esther, should they exist, from Delacherois family or Huguenot Society]

The Rectory

Dr William Trail was to live in the property for one year; thereafter he would live elsewhere while major reconstruction occurred. After the rebuilding he would move back in. The tripartite agreement states that the rebuilding was to take no more than five years. In practise work did not begin on the property until 1784. Almost certainly it was the Trails that pushed for the reconstruction and aggrandisement of what was to be the rectory. They were inveterate builders. Robert Trail built Mount Druid as his rectory in Ballintoy.



Mount Druid House built by Robert Trail

As a family the Trails typify the Scottish enlightenment and demonstrate how its ideas, aesthetics and pre-occupations made their way into Ulster in the 18th century. The agreement stipulates that the new rectory was to be slate roofed and sash windowed. The roof timbers were to be oak or 'fir' (ie pine). The walls were to be stone or brick and lime mortar was to be used. The buildings to the rear were to be joined up to the house at the front. Proportion and Georgian symmetry. The Trails were nothing if not neo-classical in their tastes.

The agreement makes it clear that Trail had civic obligations as the resident. A pavement was to be constructed outside the property and Trail was to agree to have it swept once a day. If he failed Dobbs was to fine him 4d for every day he missed. He was also responsible for the road up to the midpoint of the street from his door. If the rectors left any 'ashes, dung, filth or dirt' on the street Dobbs would fine them a shilling a day for every day it lay there. The entire rebuilding project cost £600. Records written for public consumption say Trail himself raised this by a 'memorial' or public collection. It is likely though that much of it was met by their lordships, Hertford and Connor. We'll come back to look at daily life in the rectory after considering the first clerical resident of 32.

William Trail was born in 1746 in Kincardineshire, Scotland. He studied at Marischal College at the University of Aberdeen between 1759 and 1763. Then he went to Glasgow University to gain an MA in Mathematics. In 1766 at the age of 20 he returned to Aberdeen and became Professor of Mathematics facing down some stiff competition for the post. In 1770 he published '*Elements of Algebra*'. It was not to be his only published work, but it continued in print until at least 1789 and maybe later. In 1774 he was awarded an LLD and, unexpectedly for a mathematician, given a doctorate of divinity. He was made a deacon in the Church of Ireland and ordained a priest within a week - his Uncle's gift. The Bishop also made him prebendary of Cairnscastle which increased his modest income. Up until then it would have been around £120 a year: £50 for his Chair in Mathematics and £70 in class fees. Not enough to marry on, especially given his family's ambitious nature.



32 Castle Street in 2000 and 1884. In the below, 32 is third down on the left hand side.



In 1779 Dr Trail was made Chancellor of the Diocese of Down and Connor with an income of £900 a year. Together with his prebend this now made him a gentleman of standing. He couldn't throw his books out of the window fast enough. Resigning his University appointments he left for Ireland. Having made the acquaintance of the ubiquitous Dean Dobbs he joined his brothers on the ecclesiastical gravy train.

Academia did not quite forget him though. His reputation remained strong as a founding father of Scottish science. In 1783 he was a founder member of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. On becoming rector of Lisburn in 1780 he resigned his prebend at Cairnscastle. The living at Lisburn brought him in £300, so together with the Chancellorship he had £1,200 even without other rents and tythes. Dr Trail was now a wealthy man. The tythes were collected in two instalments a year. He had £160 worth of tythes for his Chancellorship and in 1828 his tythes for Lisburn amounted to £1,040. Of course expenses to the tythe collection companies had to be paid first, but it still left him with a broad income of £2,000 before taxes. Sadly, Bishop Trail the family benefactor died in 1783. His death brought a check to the Trails rapid advance towards wealth and influence. There is an account, although unsubstantiated by the burial records, that Bishop Trail was interred in Lisburn Cathedral's chancel.

William Trail was popular amongst his flock as well as with the clergy and gentry. While he watched carefully over his interests, his surviving correspondence suggests a man willing to do the best he can for the poor and disadvantaged. A visitor to Ulster, the Rev. Daniel Beaufort met Dr Trail during a tour of Ulster in 1787; (he who had praised the cottages of the poor in the previous chapter). Impressed by Lisburn, Beaufort noted in his journal when he arrived on November 23rd that:

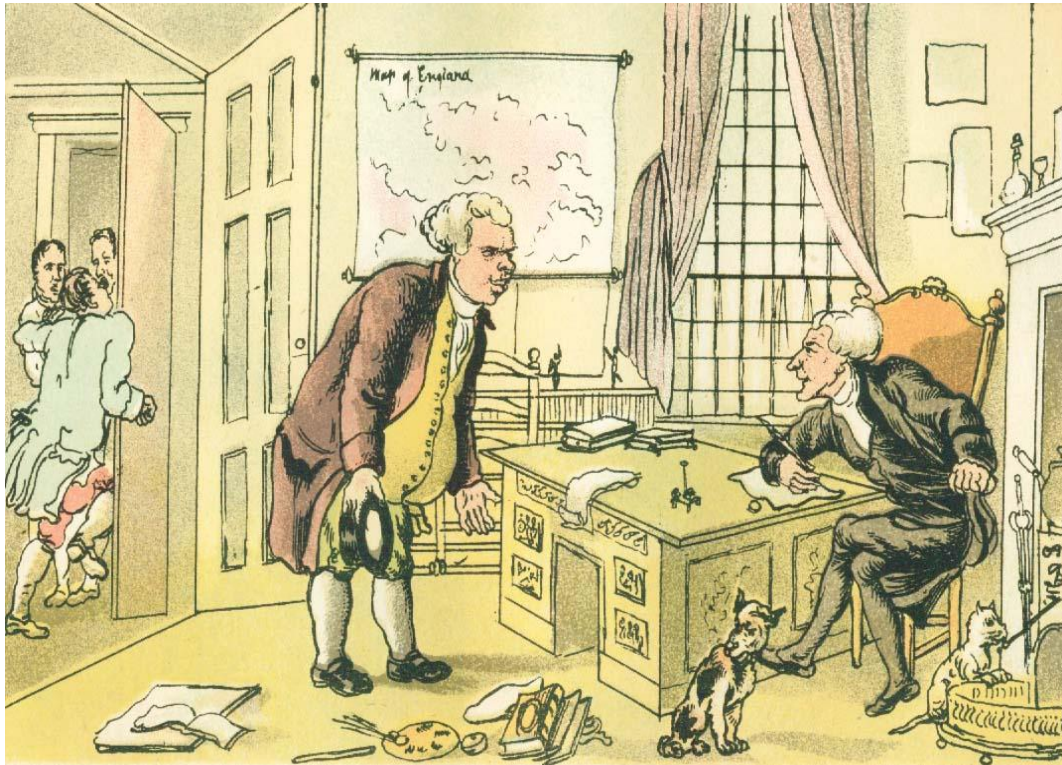
“...a number of genteel houses contain as many good families who live in a very pleasing society.....Supp'd at Dr Trails', introduced by Dean Dobbs, who came to me immediately after dinner and drank a bottle of wine with me at the Inn.

Nov. 24th: Breakfast at Dr Trails', a very sensible, modest, civil and attentive man. The Bishop of Down came into Dr Trails' just before we went – I was introduced to him – but he took no notice of me... Then Dobbs and I go to Belfast and dine with the Minister and Sovereign, Will Bristow ... “

They returned to Lisburn the following day. Instead of the Inn, Beaufort was now hospitably invited to stay at the rectory; he was shown over the Cathedral and Dr Trail showed him the Cathedral's charter from Charles II. He met some of the Doctor's wider family including Rev. Robert Trail and one Archibald Trail. In the evening they visited Robert's father in law Dr Gayer.³ They played cards, listened to music and drank wine.

This might be an appropriate place to consider what life was like in the rectory. Dr Trail was unmarried at this point, a mature bachelor of 40. His servants therefore would have been principally male; those who drove his carriage, waited on him at table and helped him to dress. Any female servants, such as a cook or laundry maid, were supposed to be elderly or married persons so as not to 'occasion speculation, gossip or scandal'. It did not always work out like this in practise. The easy-going 18th century Church of Ireland did not get as steamed up over illegitimate children born to overly amorous clergy as their 20th century successors; a leniency which often shocked English visitors. The avoidance of scandal was more important than the thing itself (plus ça, change).

The large ground floor room at the front of the house was where Dr Trail saw his parishioners, held meetings, received deputations etc. In essence this was where he worked. It is possible the room was partitioned to create a private area where Dr Trail had his desk and met people tete-a-tete, and a separate more public waiting room. The partition would be pushed back when he needed to host a larger gathering of people. The below cartoon by Rowlandson shows just such a partitioned room in a clergyman's house. This room for public business would, in the intensely hierarchical society of the time, have been reserved for those people Dr Trail considered his inferiors. Those above him such as Lord Hertford, Lord Downshire and the Bishop he would have had shown into the large drawing room upstairs. This would have been a display room with the best of his paintings, clocks and perhaps a musical instrument or two, such as a gilded harp or a piano.



There was no disrespect or arrogance intended by this division; most people in 18th century society saw such social divisions as a natural thing, like the difference between dogs and cats. Even future revolutionaries would accept them as normal.

This is not to say that the socially ambitious were not plentiful and keen to disturb this 'natural' order. Much of the comedy in the novels of the period derives from people trying to gatecrash the drawing rooms of those above them. It was a time in Ulster when families could prosper very suddenly. Linen traders or careful farmers could find themselves in a position where their wealth was in advance of their status. Similarly the well bred but feckless could find themselves moving from Castle Street to a cottage. Dr Trail would have had to make decisions about which room was appropriate to whom.

Meals were important and plentiful. People rose early, around 5.00am or even earlier and often worked a few hours before breakfast. Consequently breakfast was robust. Beefsteaks were common but also game birds, kidneys, liver or gammon. Tea was beginning to replace buttermilk or small ale as a breakfast drink. Small ale was a very low alcohol beer (around 2 or 3%) which was even given to schoolchildren

(sometimes it was known as boys' bitter). Breakfast was eaten around 9 or 10.00 in the morning. Lunch was called dinner and occurred around 2.00 or 3.00 in the afternoon. This was the largest meal of the day. By now the bulk of the day's work was over so stronger ale or wine was drunk.

For a bachelor dining alone dinner could be simple enough. A dish of mutton chops, followed by a meat pie, potatoes and a fruit pie or cheese. Sometimes single men were loathe to put their servants even to this trouble and went out to a tavern to dine. Company was all. If people came to dinner - and 18th century society was fiercely social - a great display occurred even with small family parties.

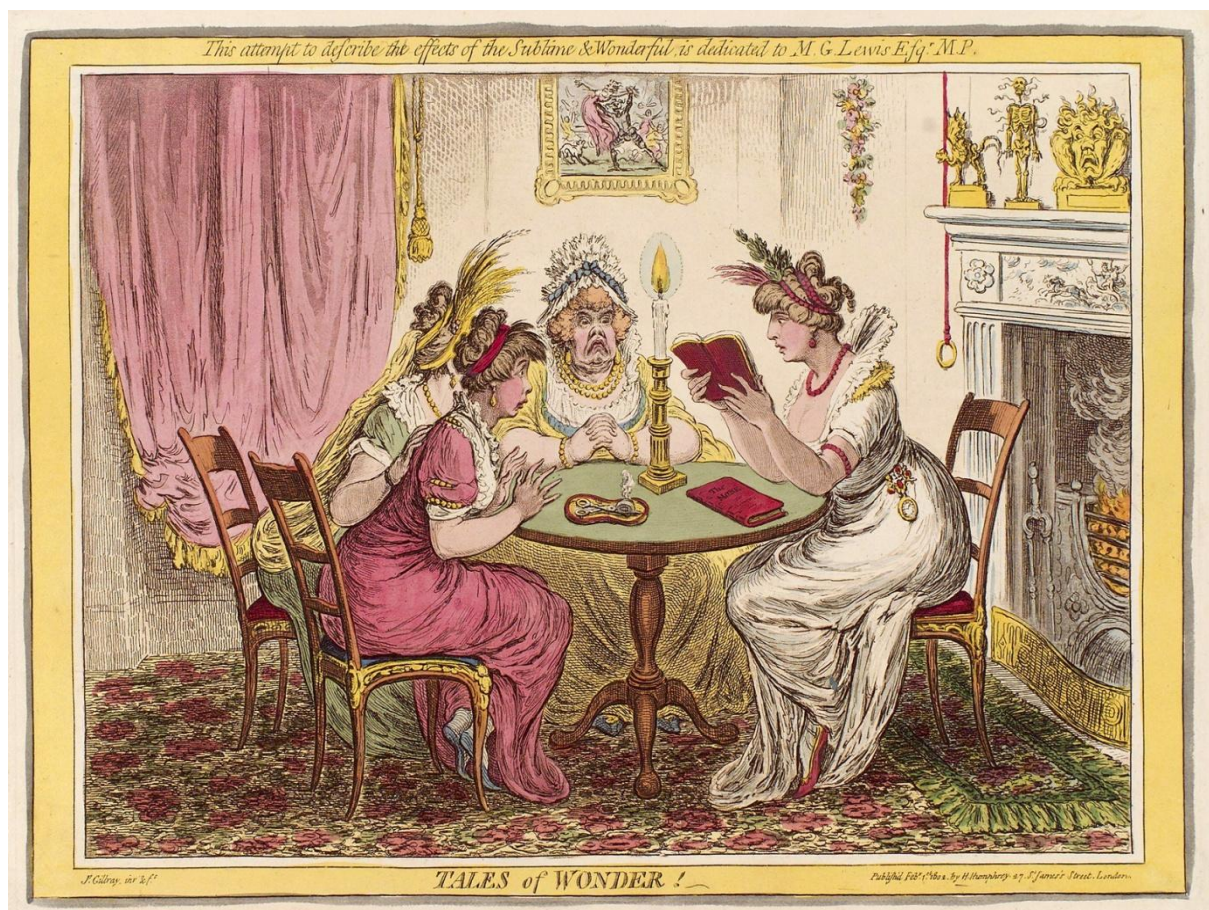
Dinners were served in two courses in a manner known as service *a la Français*. The first contained a central dish such as a large joint of mutton or a ham; on special occasions such as Michaelmas and Christmas, a goose. Then there were supplementary dishes placed around the main one. These would usually include fish of some sort, one or more alternative meats to the main dish and some vegetables. A second course would then be laid, pretty much the same as the first. If poultry had been the main dish previously and red meats the side dishes, this was now reversed. Fruit, tarts and pastries sometimes made their appearance as part of the second course, but in very grand dinners the dessert was served as a separate and final course. Silverware was important and comparatively cheap compared to modern pricing. A family's 'plate' and dinner service said much about them. Grander homes had dining rooms but the practise in many town houses was for a tilt-top dining table to be used for meals in the parlour or drawing room.



They stood upright against the wall when not being used. As shown opposite.



The custom of ladies leaving the gentlemen after dinner had the practical reason that, in the late Georgian period, this was when everyone relieved themselves. Ladies visited the water closet or disappeared discreetly behind a drawing room screen, (19th century etiquette was to forbid ladies to do even this). In the dining room the footman brought in chamber pots and lined them up on the sideboard for the gentlemen. The sexes stayed apart for a while, the gentlemen finishing the wine and the ladies drinking homemade cordials such as cherry brandy, sloe gin or currant wine. They discussed matters of concern to each gender and then when the gentlemen rejoined the ladies tea was served somewhere around 5.00 or 6.00pm in the afternoon. Supper, the final meal was eaten somewhere between 7 and 8.00pm in country towns. Most people were in bed by 10.00pm at the latest.



Ladies after dinner reading one of the new gothic novels. James Gilray.



Gentlemen after dinner, failing to join the ladies. James Gilray.

Guest rooms for the numerous Trail family members would have been fitted out according to family or bachelor status. Guests had servants who also needed to be accommodated. The stable at the rear had extra stalls for guest horses. The rectory would have been a very busy and bustling place. In addition to his desk on the ground floor Dr Trail would have had a small private study where he wrote his sermons and answered his correspondence. A gentleman's study, by tradition, was where he was not to be disturbed.

Much of Dr Trail's social life would have marked out his denominational identity in contrast to Catholics and Dissenters. Playing cards, attending the theatre, balls and dances were all looked at askance by Presbyterians and Quakers. The rector's life would



have seemed dangerously sybaritic. While Catholics were probably less censorious of his social life, his intellectual pursuits appeared Faustian. The Catholic Church in Ireland greatly desired to build up a Catholic bourgeoisie, but at the same time there was deep anxiety about allowing the laity to read books written by Protestants. Academic texts were particularly suspect. Lists of approved and unapproved books circulated in each Catholic diocese. Dr Trail's *Elements of Algebra* was not approved.

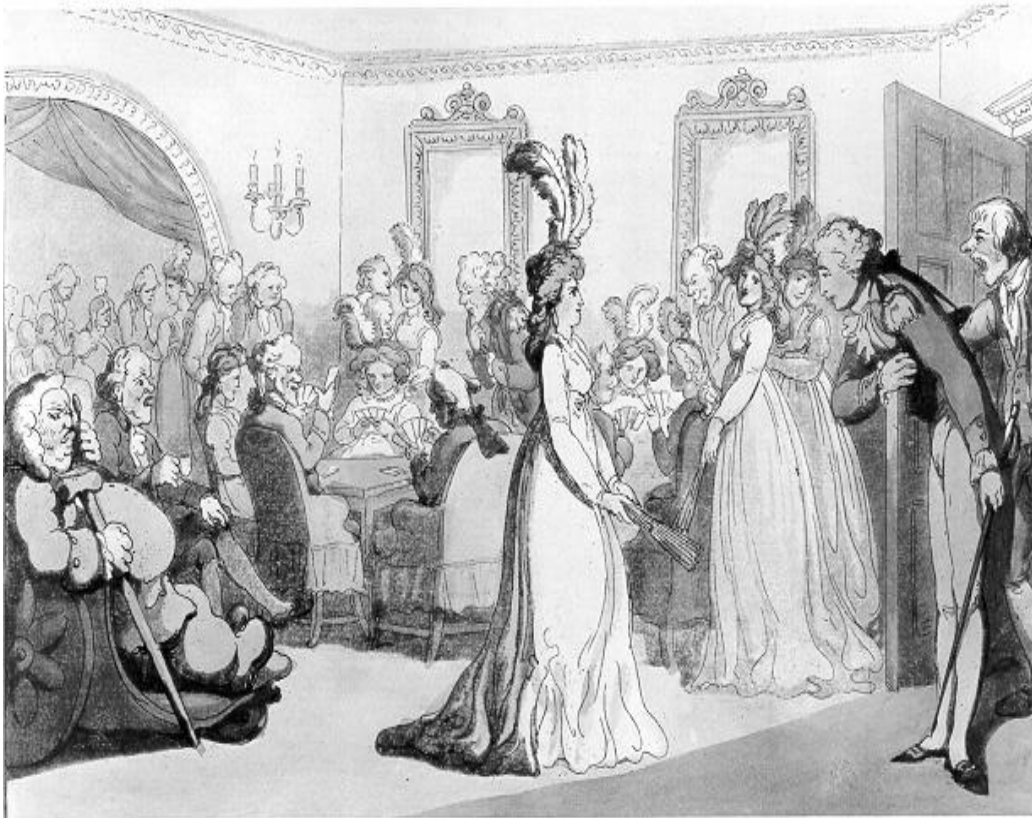
The safe hierarchical world of neo-classical order and symmetry had evolved in part as a reaction against the chaos of the religious wars in the previous century. Instead of fanatical fury and righteous fulmination, the 18th century had preferred a very formal cool-headed civil society where to lose one's temper in polite company was unforgivable. The passions which the age of religion had delighted in were firmly locked behind a formality of expression and propriety of conduct. A row about religion was an unpardonable breach of manners in the 18th century.

But as the period drew towards its close discontent with these structures became widespread. The same enlightenment values which inspired architecture, music, science, rationalism and philosophy also informed the American revolt and the French Revolution. Religious thought was changing too. New forms of dissent were emerging which would lead to Methodism, the Baptist denominations, and many others. Within Catholicism a divergence began between modernisers and conservatives. Across Europe concepts of equality were posited against hierarchy. The authoritarianism inherent in every level of society was opposed on philosophical grounds: masters against servants, tradesmen against apprentices, officers against sailors or soldiers, husbands against wives. And especially the authoritarianism of Kings against their subjects: in the schools and universities, progressive scholars argued that the perceived virtues of the Roman republic were preferable to the venal and corrupting rule of the Emperors.

Ireland was changing along with the rest of Europe and a groundswell against the status quo was slowly gathering. William Trail's sermons have not survived but we can imagine they were constructed in the enlightenment mode: proto-rationalist; intending to improve his

congregation's morals and expand their understanding. He would have been appalled at the lessons that at least one of his congregation were drawing from them. Henry Munroe listened to Dr Trail every Sunday, and he was the man who would lead the United Irishmen at the Battle of Ballynahinch in 1798.

Before the uprising burst out Dr Trail resigned his rectorship due to ill health in 1796. He revisited Edinburgh and eventually went to live in Bath, yet he retained his Chancellorship along with its tythes. Bath at this period was known as a health resort. One went to drink the spa waters, but it was also a marriage market for the young and a meat market for old. Some of the best thinkers of age congregated there and Dr Trail would have found much intellectual stimulation. He certainly recovered his health. In this rich, cultivated and cosmopolitan environment he lived on for another 30 years.



The Comforts of Bath. Thomas Rowlandson

He even abandoned the state of bachelorhood and married Lady Frances Charteris in 1799. He kept abreast of affairs in Ireland through regular correspondence with his family and contributed to a reward, for instance, for the capture of a United Irishman who fired at his old friend, the Rev Philip Johnson, Vicar of Deriaghy. In 1812 he wrote another book. *The Life and Work of Robert Simson*. This was a biography and exposition of the work of this mathematician, his old mentor at Glasgow. Dr Trail died in 1830 aged 84 years. As his academic colleague at Edinburgh, the contemporary mathematician Professor John Playfair said of him:

“He was a man of great capacity for science, entirely extinguished, together with his taste for its pursuits by the sinecure emoluments of the Irish Church.”

The Cupples Family

The Reverend Dr Snowdon Cupples was instituted as Rector of Lisburn on 30th May 1796 and moved into the rectory the same month. He was only 5 years younger than William Trail but was nevertheless of a different generation. The Cupples's were also a very different family to the Trails. In his obituary it was his goodness, his unaffected simplicity and straightforward kindness that was stressed. The impression of Snowdon Cupples is of a man too humane for the rigidly authoritarian elite he served.

He was energetic, obliging and profoundly competent. Lord Hertford, now a Marquess, had died in 1793 and it was his heir who presented Dr Cupples to the living. At his institution by the Bishop, Dr Cupples took an oath to use only the liturgy and prayer book of the Church of Ireland as authorised by the Irish Parliament and the Crown. He swore to serve and obey his Bishop and took another oath of fidelity to the reigning monarch, George III, and his dynasty. He swore to defend the King, uphold the law of the land and of course abjure the Pope and the Pretender. In a country that would soon be consumed by revolution Snowdon nailed his colours firmly to the establishment mast.

He was born in Kilmore, Co Armagh in 1750. According to Snowdon's granddaughter at the turn of the 20th century, the family had been in Armagh for several generations but their distant origins lay in Lancashire. Her great grandfather (Snowdon's father) had been embroiled in a law suit to recover Ognall Hall in Lancashire as late as the mid 18th century. The family were staunchly Anglican. Snowdon's father, William Cupples was a well-to-do farmer from Mullahead and the family had lived at Prospect House. William Cupples managed to pay for a very good education for both his male children, Snowdon and Thomas, both of whom achieved doctorates. William Cupples died in 1788 when Snowdon was 38 years old but his mother, Eleanor had died in 1765 when he was 15.

Snowdon Cupples went to study at Glasgow where he almost certainly knew William Trail. He left in 1771 with – at the tender age of 21 – an MA and a doctorate in divinity, neither of which were the consequence of family influence. He returned to Ireland where he became a deacon in the diocese of Connor in 1773. With no Bishop in the family to bump him up quickly he became a priest in 1776 after the customary 3 years. In 1781 he became a curate in Carrickfergus where he would certainly have known the Dobbs family. He married Elinor Ross and had eight children altogether, four when the family moved into 32 Castle Street in 1796: Ezekiel was one, Charles was five, Thomas was seven and Edward eleven. A daughter, Maria, had just died aged 8 years old. The Cupples would have two more daughters, another Maria, and Frances. There was also another son William Cupples, doubtless named after Snowdon's father.

On the wider canvas, Irish society was separating itself into two polarities; those who wished to oppose the status quo and those who perceived it as their duty to defend it. By 1796 vast numbers had joined the United Irishmen. Although the leadership modelled their movement on the French Revolution and espoused ideas of social equality, secularism, universal brotherhood, freedom of thought and of expression, the rank and file had more local concerns.

Essentially they wished to see an end to dominance by the landlord. They wanted a more fluid market in land rather than an economy where only a handful of extremely rich men could afford to buy and sell land freehold.

Others believed that those who worked the land should own the land they farmed. The precariousness of tenancies with the capriciousness of the landlords and their agents were a constant source of grievance. Following the French example, many wished to see Ireland's aristocrats and their lackeys were to go under the guillotine.

Tythes were also resented. Tythes were a church tax left over from the middle ages and were designed to fund the Established Church. Although both Trail and Cupples demanded comparatively light tythe payments, Dissenters and Catholics resented it as it meant paying for the maintenance of a Church to which they did not belong. In addition to paying for the national Church they also had to pay voluntarily to support the churches and clergy to which they did belong. Many within the Anglican fold also questioned the tythe system as inefficient, unpopular and a cause of resentment.

To ensure that the country's elite remained Anglican the Test Acts had been passed in 1678, this excluded Presbyterians, Quakers, Dissenters generally and all Catholics from voting, holding commissions in the army, attending university, becoming judges, government officials or members of parliament. Some relaxations had come in the early 1790's



but only for the very well off. Marriages had to be solemnised in the Church of Ireland or they were not considered legally valid; Catholics and Presbyterians had to be buried according to Anglican rites in the parish churchyard. Private graveyards were only allowed under special license or through loopholes in the law. Dissenting ministers and Catholic priests were not deemed to be clergymen in law; that was reserved for Anglican priests alone.

Aside from religion, land and money, the structures of power in Ireland were very discriminatory and oppressive. In terms of justice there was a huge disparity between the laws applied to the rich and those applied to the poor. In 1817 an illiterate man was charged with passing on a forged banknote. He explained that he was unable to read the note and had only seen two or three in life anyway. The judge sympathised but sentenced him to death anyway, explaining apologetically that the law left him no choice.

Dr Cupples was an important functionary in the system. He became Vicar General of the Diocese in 1809. Among his duties were declaring marriages between Catholics with Protestants to be invalid unless they had first been married by the Anglican priest before being married by the Catholic one. He also enforced public penances on people found guilty in the Bishop's consistory court of fornication, adultery or other sexual misdemeanours. This involved standing up in church, when it was full, and declaring one's indiscretions including all the details, with whom, where and what it was. The penitent then apologised to all present including God. In essence, public humiliation. There were no cases of elite persons enduring such penances of course. To be fair, use was made of public humiliation by all denominations, but by the 1790's the whole oppressive machinery was beginning to appear absurd even to those who operated it. Nevertheless Dr Cupples felt bound by duty and conscience to make it work as best he could.

The elite were greatly exercised in combating the spread of revolutionary ideas. To oppose secret societies such as the United Irishmen, loyalist societies were founded to counter their influence, such as the Orange Order. Dr Cupples joined the newly created Orange Order in 1795 or early 1796 and by 1799 he was Grand Master of Co. Antrim. In these

early days the Orange Order stood for the Established Church, the Test Acts and for full control of society by the aristocracy. Dissenters feared the Order as much as Catholics. Several Presbyterian meeting houses applied to local magistrates for protection against being ‘raised to the ground by Orange mobs’⁴. It would be a number of years before Presbyterians were fully admitted. A sermon survives which Dr Cupples gave on the 12th of July 1799. It gives us a flavour of his rhetorical style as well as illustrating the direction in which he hoped to swing the Order:

“... If a steady opposition to French principles and republican theories of government, which have deluged many nations of Europe with blood, be criminal, we plead guilty of the charge. If unshaken loyalty to our beloved and excellent sovereign be a crime, we confess our guilt. If an inviolable attachment to the Protestant religion, with liberality of sentiment towards those who differ from us, [some text missing] and this disavow any species and degree of persecution. These, and these only, are the principles of Orangemen and we are neither afraid nor ashamed to acknowledge them. They are not the visionary ephemeral productions of metaphysical subtlety; they have been long tried and approved by the sure tests of reason and experience. They are old Whig principles, and held by us in common with every good Protestant in these islands...”

To a man of the enlightenment the ideals of the United Irishmen seemed hopelessly romantic. But Cupples is cheeky too in co-opting Orangism for the Whig cause, which was clearly his own. In reality Whig principles were not ‘held in common with every good Protestant’; the Order’s governors were arch-Tories such as Lord Cavan, John Foster and the Beresfords. He is attempting to sign his auditors up for a vision of Protestant Ireland which is less sectarian and more liberal than many of the movement’s leaders intended. Elsewhere Dr Cupples is at pains to distance the movement from the Peep o Day Boys, a paramilitary group who attacked Catholic homes in retaliation for the activities of the Catholic Defenders. He was definitely a loyalist but also something of a liberal influence.

Throughout May in 1798, the military presence in Lisburn was considerable (though highly nervous). Courts Martial and public floggings in the Market Square began on the 29th May. The brutality of these focused the minds of many who had been undecided about which

side they were on. Thousands left the town and even the surrounding farms were deserted. While some no doubt sought the safety of relatives' homes in quieter areas, many more made their way to join the United Irish armies. Only around 1,200 loyalists remained in what must have felt like a ghost town. On June 3rd Snowdon wrote to the magistrate Foster Archer:

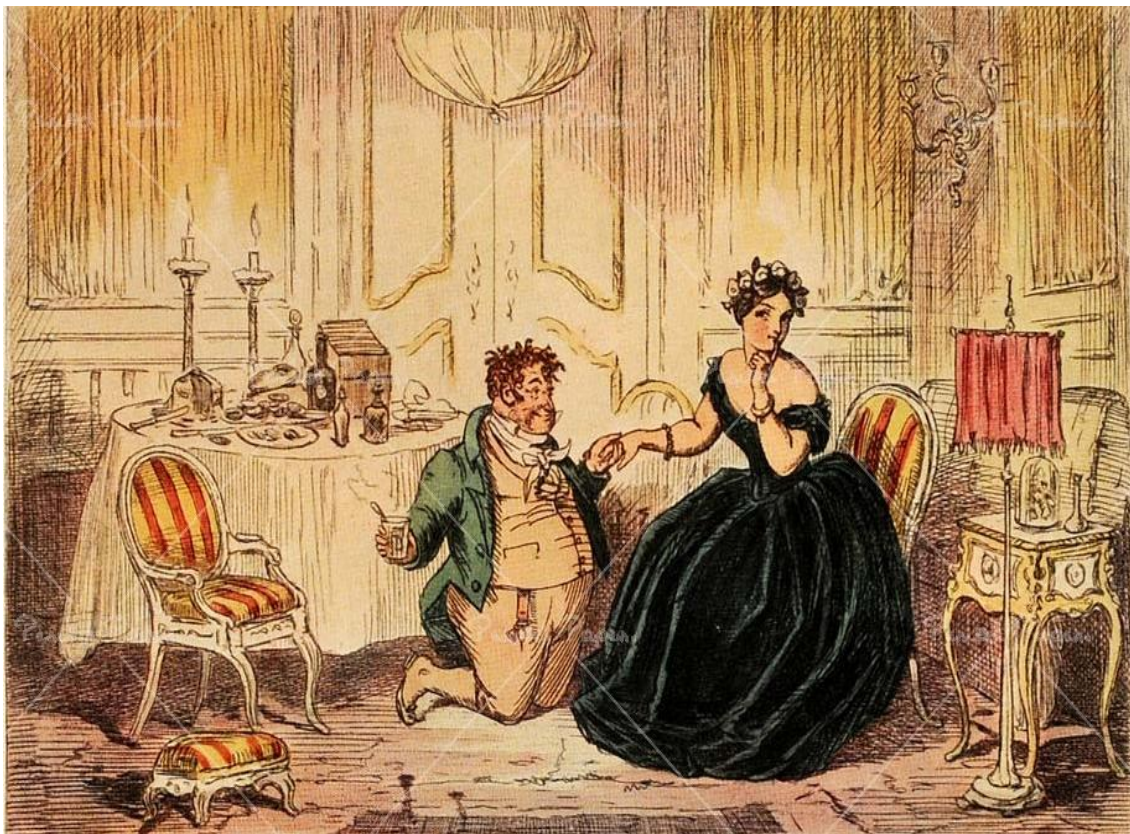
“Tho' we remain quiet hitherto, some apprehensions are entertained that an Insurrection is now in contemplation, several Bodies of men having been observed exercising at the White Mountain two miles from Lisburn, on the evenings of last Thursday and Friday. The troops in Blaris Camp and here have, in consequence, been kept in redress to act at a moment's warning.”

Henry Munroe, Dr Cupples's parishioner, led the United Irishmen in the Battle of Ballynahinch on the 9th June. During their occupation of Montalto, a Committee of Public Safety was set up following the example of the French Directory. This body dealt with counter-revolutionaries and was principal body responsible for sending functionaries of the old regime to the guillotine. Had the United Irishmen won it would have been an open question whether Snowdon Cupples would have ended his life under the blade in Lisburn Market Square. Given this, what happened next is all the more remarkable.

After the United Irishmen's defeat by General Nugent, Munroe was captured a few days later. He was brought, tightly bound and guarded to Lisburn when he was imprisoned in the old Huguenot Chapel across the road from the rectory. Preparations were made for his show trial and execution. He was visited by his mother during this time and given fresh clothes by an old friend from the linen trade⁵. His meals however were provided by Snowdon Cupples from the rectory kitchen. Munroe's trial was not a particularly heroic affair and the United Irish leader appeared to be less than wholly convinced by his own cause. Nevertheless General Nugent sentenced him to hang. A scaffold was constructed in Market Square, built high enough for him to see his family home. On the 16th June, he was led out from the church into the rectory where Dr Cupples administered Holy Communion. He did not have to do this himself, but chose to perform this act for a man who was, quite literally, his enemy. Dr Cupples then accompanied Munroe to the gallows.

Munroe's reputation as a good linen trader was important to him and he brought his account books with him. Before mounting the scaffold he opened these books using a barrel as a table and paid any remaining debts to his neighbours and fellow tradesmen. It shows how the uprising had fractured Lisburn society that among those he paid was a Captain of the Deriaghly Infantry⁶ who was there to help police his execution.

The years after the revolt saw a different Ireland slowly evolve. But to turn from the broad canvas back to 32 Castle Street, the early 19th century also saw changes in domestic taste and style. Unlike political reform these were more abrupt. The regency style was less conspicuously opulent, especially in clerical homes, than the late 18th century style had been. Gilded furniture and picture frames, ormolu and florid rococo were replaced by restraint and clean lines. Absence of clutter was the key regency note. The minimalism of its day, regency decor was considered very austere by the older Georgian generation and by the Victorians who came later (and who adored clutter). In one of Snowdon's obituaries the rectory is described as being 'simply but becomingly furnished'.



John Leech cartoon illustrating regency decor and an indecent proposal.

By now the downstairs room was almost certainly a dining room and according to Snowdon's granddaughter the family was well supplied with silverware. The drawing room had a piano. This can be stated with some certainty as Snowdon's daughter Fanny was a celebrated local musician. Some of her songbooks survive from the 1830's along with those of his sister Maria and of her husbands' family the Corkens of Ingram. Dr Cupples' political work with the Orange Order was his personal choice whereas that which he carried out on behalf of Lords Downshire, Hertford and Massareene were part of his duty. Clergy were called upon to use their influence (shamelessly) to secure the election of parliamentary candidates chosen by the landlord. Before the reform movements of the 19th century slowly delivered a democracy, the political world was dominated by large landowners who operated a system roughly as follows:

(i) You were supposed to vote for your landlord or a candidate nominated by him.

(ii) Ideally nobody else stood for the seat and the landlord's nominee was returned 'unopposed'. If anybody else did stand for the seat they were to be considered dangerous, radical adventurers and carpetbaggers.

(iii) Everyone voted in public so the landlord's agent recorded which way the tenants voted. If anyone voted against the landlord's wishes they could be punished with raised rents, terminated leases etc.

(iv) If you had a vote but were not a tenant of the landlord, you could be bribed to vote for the landlord's choice. Bribery was legal. As late as the 1830's Disraeli's electors took him to court over unpaid bribes.

It seems strange to modern eyes that clergymen should carry out political work on behalf of landowners, but clergy were key functionaries in the Protestant landed ascendancy. The 1811 Co. Antrim by-election was held in Carrickfergus where Snowdon Cupples was well known from his days as a curate, (he had been made a burgess there in 1809). Lord Downshire used Dr Cupples as his principal agent in getting his candidate elected. The politics are labyrinthine but essentially there were two county seats. One was held by the Tory, John O'Neill (an O'Neill of

the Shane's Castle family), while Lord Downshire and Lord Massareene were keen to field a candidate for the second seat (Lord Hertford was absentee at this time; beyond keeping Lisburn in his own pocket he had no wider ambitions in the political field).

Dr Cupples' role was to summon a meeting of the principal gentry at Carrickfergus and agree on a candidate whom they all felt they could support, and who would be acceptable to Lord Downshire. Trying to do even this was like herding cats, but eventually they settled on a Mr Wilson. Dr Cupples then had to convince Wilson that he really did want to stand for Parliament as Lord Downshire's nominee. His next job was to rattle all over the county in his carriage persuading the landowners to instruct those of their tenants who could vote, to vote for Wilson. Amusingly, Wilson was referred to as the 'independent' candidate. It never occurred to the landowners that the tenants might be evolving their own electoral views; an assumption which was to prove catastrophic a generation later for Dr Cupples' successor.

The correspondence shows that from the late summer of 1811 up to October, Dr Cupples was constantly dining at Hillsborough Castle, calling in at Antrim Castle, cutting over to Carrickfergus and only calling in at Lisburn to pick up his mail. Dean Dobbs had recently died naming him along with Lord Massareene and others as his executors. Lord Massareene agreed that Dr Cupples could arrange for Lord Downshire to borrow £24,000 from the late Dean's estate, presumably to defray the election costs among other things. The loan was to be secured on some of Lord Downshire's lands. This must have been a very anxious time for Mrs Dobbs and her children, yet they were not in a position to veto the actions of such powerful men.

Nor did things go well. By October 2nd Dr Cupples was writing to Lord Downshire that things were looking desperate for Wilson and asking for his help, though what kind of help he specifically needed he doesn't say. On top of everything else his letters show that he was worried the election would degenerate into rioting or revolutionary disturbances. George III had been reported as being virtually *in extremis* in the newspapers. Dr Cupples feared that the King's death might be a trigger for disorder But King George survived and at the election O'Neill was

returned with no other candidate standing. Wilson had dropped out of the election despite all Dr Cupples' work on his behalf.

Among his many political and religious interests, Snowdon Cupples was a founding member of the Literary Society of Belfast, being among the first 12 luminaries in December 1801. He was President in 1806-7 and his particular interests are given as history and antiquities. Among its other interests the Society was absorbed in an exploration of the Irish language and the preservation of medieval Irish manuscripts. Irish music too was of great interest. Below is a list of topics on which Dr Cupples delivered papers to the Society, revealing his interests and preoccupations:

Oct. 1803: On the First Peopling of Ireland, and the Ancient State of
Carrickfergus

Nov. 1804: Continuation of the History of Carrickfergus.

Oct. 1806: Discourse on the History of Carrickfergus

May 1808: The Principles of Commerce

Nov. 1809: The Principles of Commerce.

Dec. 1810: An Account of Glenavy

Dec. 1811: The Respective Claims of Scotland and Ireland to Priority in
Point of Antiquity.

May 3rd 1813: An Account of the Town of Lisburn.

April 1815: Whether there be any Real Standard of Taste, and how that

April 1816: " Standard is to be Obtained.

May 1816: "

April 1818: On the Beautiful.

He wrote to Sir John Foster in 1807 to seek his help in securing a parliamentary grant for the Society. Part of the money was to be used to found:

‘an institution for the better education of youth’



Silhouette of Dr Snowdon Cupples now in Lisburn Museum, believed to have been taken by his daughter Maria.

Which would diffuse a

‘...taste for knowledge, morals and good government among all classes of people.’

The lucky youths would study

‘..belle lettres, chemistry, experimental philosophy and native history.’

Dr Cupples was a great admirer of the arts and had the spire added to Lisburn Cathedral in 1804. In 1808 – 9 The artist Thomas Romney Robinson was in Lisburn and painted the famous portrait of the town. He was a guest of the Cupples and also the Smyth family. The painting remained in the Johnston Smyth family until the 1930’s.

Dr Cupples manuscript book from his work as Vicar General survives. It shows him conscientiously mastering the complexities of consistory courts and the arcane twists of canon law. More secular responsibility came his way in 1812 to 1816 as he and Archdeacon Trail worked together to fulfil the land agents’ role on the Hertford estate. In 1817 he was relieved of this burden when James Stannus was appointed land agent. From 1812 to 1834 he was the Seneschal for the Manor of Killultagh and Derryvolgie, which involved holding leet courts on behalf of Lord Hertford. In 1820, at the age of 70 we find him supported in his rectorial duties by his brother Thomas who was curate at Lisburn Cathedral. His son Edward became Vicar of Glenavy in 1813 and eventually succeeded his father as Vicar General. His son Thomas became rector of Ballyrashane in 1826. In 1828 Snowdon’s wife Elinor

died so it is possible that only his daughter Frances still lived with him at the rectory for the last seven years of his life. Dr Cupples survived Dr Trail by 5 years dying at the age of 85 in 1835.

His obituaries make it plain how much he was admired and how much he was missed. The last glow of the enlightenment faded out with him. Snowdon Cupples's life spanned a huge change in Irish society. He was born when the young Pretender was still a real threat to the Hanoverians and still appointed Ireland's Catholic Bishops; he died when the first railway tracks were being laid, just a few years before photography was invented. For most of his life he wore a powdered wig, lacy cuffs and knee breeches, yet he died in trousers. It is unlikely that Dr Cupples supported the reform movements that came to replace revolutionary politics, but he undoubtedly typified the liberal spirit which they embodied. His son Edward Cupples came back to live in Castle Street and also a Mrs Cupples is listed in the local directory, who lived in Railway Street. They were there in 1852 and lived to see the election riots that tore their former home apart.

James Stannus

Dean Stannus, as he was universally known, has not had a good press. He usually appears as an arch-villain in local histories and some national ones too. He was a figure of Olympian hauteur and considered arrogant even by members of the aristocracy. He viewed the world through the prism of class, minutely judging levels of gentility. He was the archetypal Victorian Dad. James Stannus was of course a product of his age, his upbringing and the prejudices of a narrow elite. But his political decisions were his own and they were not always wise ones.

He was born in 1788 at the family seat in Queen's County (now Co. Laois). His father was a former army officer and member of the Irish Parliament; James Stannus was virtually born to the landed interest. He attended Trinity College Dublin, graduating with an AB in 1809. Then he spent some time in the army himself before entering the Church,



whereupon he matriculated with an MA. Having no proper living at first, he accepted the 2nd Marquess of Hertford's offer to become the land agent on his Co. Antrim estates in 1817. The Marquess also presented him with the rectorship of Ballinderry in 1820. In 1830 Lord Hertford made Rev. Stannus the Dean of Ross in Co. Cork. This sinecure provided him with only £80 odd pounds a year but it also gave him a title which, in the clerical society of the time, counted for much more. In 1835 the 3rd Marquess gave him the rectorship of Lisburn. Holding both the key secular and ecclesiastical offices in the town, Stannus was able to re-enforce his temporal power with moral and spiritual authority. A combination of offices which periodically occurred in Ireland at the time, but which Dean Stannus balanced very badly. His critics were very keen to accuse him of having two masters and preferring to side with the temporal one.

Leaving aside the authority which his two offices gave him, his own personality ensured that his influence remained paramount in the community. Dean Stannus was a high Tory. He was a man of black and white temperament who held the landowners' interest to be the bedrock on which civilisation was founded. He was unswervingly loyal to Lord Hertford and served his interests with utter conviction. His letters to others of the nobility are always affable, courteous, unstuffy, and urbane. Written in his imaginative florid script, they are judged perfectly; he is never impatient or impertinent, never over-familiar or obsequious. They are the letters of a near-nobleman. One who knows he is not equal with his patrons but is only a half a step away. His letters suggest that he considered the gulf between himself and those beneath him to be considerably greater. Yet for all their perfect modesty, Dean Stannus's letters leave the reader in no doubt about who is in ultimate control.

He married Elizabeth Burrowes in 1816, the daughter of Sir Erasmus Dixon Burrowes. He had four sons and three daughters. One son, Walter Stannus became a substantial landowner in his own right and also took over much of his father's agency work in his old age. The Stannus family moved into 32 Castle Street in 1835 and the clear spaces and bright colours of the regency period were soon no doubt replaced by the heavy mahogany and light-excluding curtains of the mid 19th century. Georgian or Regency room partitions would have been swept away. The Victorians liked rooms to have scale. There were more servants now and they were uniformed so that their functions and hierarchical positions could be distinguished. Dr Trail could have asked a manservant to do anything from groom his horse to wait at table, but Dean Stannus could not ask his valet to do a footman's task, still less a groom's.

Meals in the rectory were now served *a la Russe*; dishes succeeded each other individually in courses. Dinner usually began with soup or an hors d'oeuvres, followed by fish, followed by meat, (followed by game if it was a grand dinner), followed by dessert, followed by a savoury dessert such as stilton tart or cheese pudding. The daily routine had altered too. The family now rose later, around 7.00 or 8.00am, no work was done before breakfast, other than to open the mail. Breakfast was between 8.00 and 9.00pm. A new meal called luncheon happened around 1.00pm with at

least three courses. Tea was served at 4.00 or 5.00pm and this was accompanied with scones, cakes, toast, plover's eggs etc. This was taken in the drawing room rather than the dining room. Dinner was now at 8.00pm and consisted of four or five courses. At the end of the evening supper was a light meal consisting of snacks and savouries; like tea it could be served in the drawing room. As the famous Italian satire went:

Man eats three times a day to stay alive
Or if we happen to be English, five.⁷

True for Ireland also. In the 18th century people had only changed their clothes in the evening if guests were expected or important people were staying. In the mid 19th century evening dress became de rigueur. For women, crinoline dresses increased dramatically in circumference and doorways were sometimes widened to accommodate them. Clergymen fought a rearguard action against them from the pulpit complaining that a bench pew which had previously accommodated nine or ten people now sat only three ladies.



John Leech. Punch 1840's

In the 1820's the Test Acts had been gradually repealed and by the end of the decade there were no religious barriers to voting or standing for Parliament.⁸ In 1832 the electorate was increased considerably in a

further reform which scrapped some of the property qualifications. The Dean was deeply hostile to all these trends.

The issues of 1798 had not gone away. There was still resentment at the Established Church's privileged position, but by now the other denominations had grown in confidence and challenges were being made. These were both political, dogmatic and denominationalist. Internal pressures were also building: Liberals within the Established Church were uncomfortable with its constitutional monopoly. Varying styles of worship were emerging within the Church of Ireland and these clashed both with each other and with a deeply conservative hierarchy. But religion was only one issue. Even people who were religiously conservative sometimes bucked and chaffed at the tight grip the aristocracy held over land.

By now there were prosperous and educated Catholic and Presbyterian farmers who had outgrown benevolent paternalism. The core land issue was security of tenure. Farmers wanted to hold their land sure in the knowledge that it would be re-granted to them when their tenancies expired. They couldn't afford to pay large sums for renewals either and above all they wanted any improvements which they had made to their holding to be recognised. This last was a catch 22 situation. If a tenant increased the value of his holding with new barns or better fencing, then the landlord wanted to charge him more rent.

In Ulster it was the custom to either compensate the tenant for the improvements or, if they were made wholly at the tenant's expense, agree not to raise the rent in advance. These benefits went under the general name of 'tenant right'. Dean Stannus saw tenant right as a commercial product. He decided the estate should sell a farmer the tenant right on his holding at a hefty £10 an acre. He utterly rejected the notion that the tenant held these benefits as a right deriving from ancient custom. Writing in 1870 James Godkin⁹ says:

“It transpired in the course of the examination⁹ that a man who had purchased tenant-right, and paid a fine of £10 an acre, on getting a lease would have to pay a similar fine over again when getting the lease renewed. The result of these heavy advances was that the middle-class farmers lived in constant pecuniary difficulties. They were obliged to

borrow money at six per cent to pay the rent, but they borrowed it under circumstances which made it nearly 40 per cent, for it was lent by dealers in oatmeal and other things, from whom they were obliged to purchase large quantities of goods at such a high rate that they sold them again at a sacrifice of 33 per cent.”

Dean Stannus is being held up here as an example of the tyranny of the system. Lisburn certainly had a politicised and erudite tenantry who made organised attempts to resist this new policy of the Hertford estate. They held meetings where horror stories about the Dean’s oppression circulated. James Godkin is a prejudiced source but the incidents he relates are too profuse and varied to be wholly fabricated.

“Many other incidents in the management of the estate have been constantly occurring more recently, tending to show that the most valuable properties created by the tenants-at-will are at the mercy of the landlord, and that tenant-right, so called, is not regarded by him as a matter of right at all, but merely as a favour, to be granted to those who are dutiful and submissive to the office in all matters, political and social. For instance, one farmer was refused permission to sell his tenant-right till he consented to sink £100 or £200 in the shares of the Lisburn and Antrim railway, so that, as he believed, he was obliged to throw away his money in order to get his right. “

The clash, when it came, was about many things including tenant right and tythes, but on the surface it was about being told whom to vote for. James Millar, a well-to-do townsman, scholar and linen trader is quoted by Godkin:

'I have at various times purchased places held from year to year, relying on the custom of the country, and on the declared determination of the landlord and his agent to respect such customary rights of property for the continued possession of it. I have besides taken under the same landlord several fields as town parks, which were in very bad order. These fields I have drained and very much improved. I have always punctually paid the rent charged for the several holdings, and, I think I may venture to say, performed all the duties of a good tenant. At the last election, however, I exercised my right as a citizen of a free country, by giving my votes at Hillsborough and Lisburn in favour of the tenant-right candidates, without reference to the desires or orders of those who have no legal or constitutional right to control the use of my franchise. I have

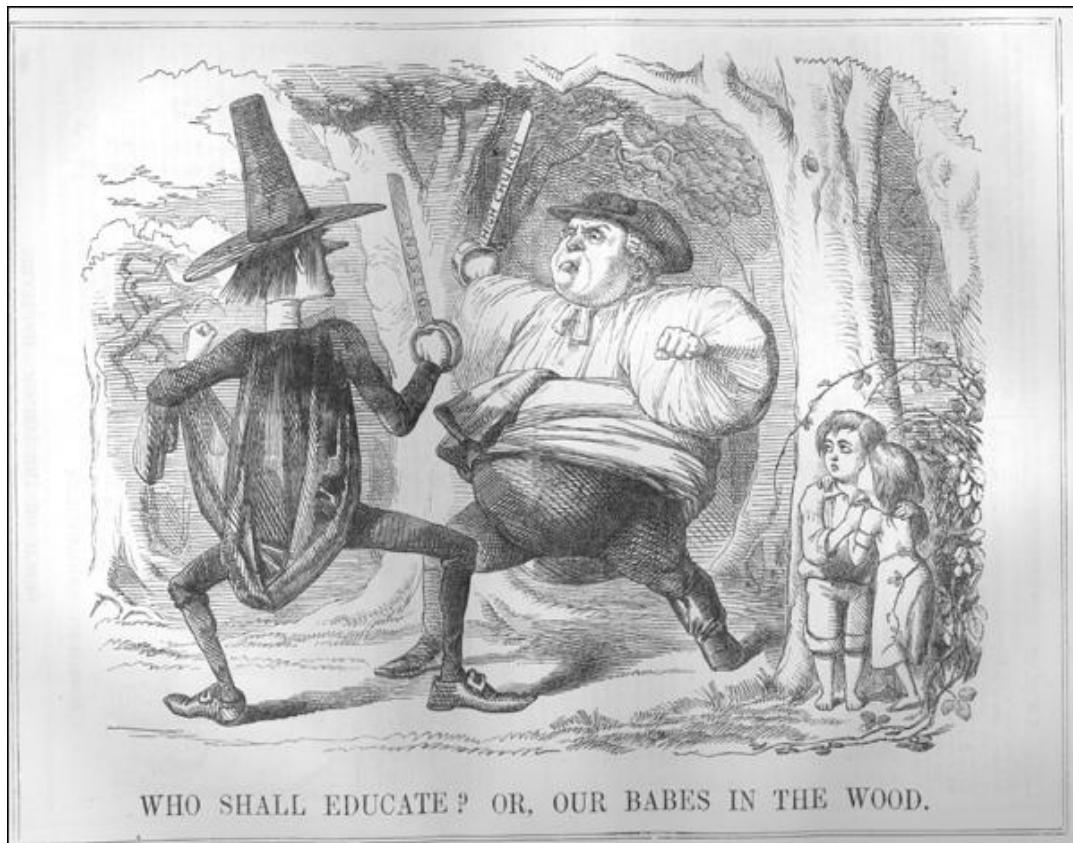
since received from the office a notice to quit, desiring me to give up possession of all my holdings, as tenant from year to year, in the counties of Down and Antrim, without any intimation that I shall receive compensation, and without being able to obtain any explanation of this conduct towards me except by popular rumour.'

One of Dean Stannus's principal enemies was a Captain Bolton. This Presbyterian gentleman owned four houses on the estate. He apparently owned the buildings but not the ground on which they stood. Because he voted against the estate office's preferred candidate at the 1852 election, Dean Stannus hounded him through the courts until he handed over his property to the estate. All of this had questionable legality, but the estate could afford high legal fees and Captain Bolton could not. When at the next election Bolton voted for Hogg, who was the candidate the estate office favoured, Dean Stannus returned his houses. But that was not the Dean's last persecutory action towards Captain Bolton. They also clashed over schools, and this is another occasion where local events in Lisburn reflect in microcosm a more general process occurring across Britain and Ireland.

There was a struggle between denominations for control of schools. Secular education – which was never all that secular – was only provided by the state in 1870. Demand for a centrally controlled state education system was partly deferred in the mid century by a plethora of religious schools set up by different denominations. Schools set up by boroughs or by landlords saw fierce competition by local clergy to control their religious orientation. Rivalry was rife, and as the following account demonstrates the Established Church fought hard (and sometimes dirty) to maintain its ascendancy.

“Captain Bolton bequeathed four houses to trustees for the support of a school which he had established in Lisburn. The school, it appears, had been placed in connection with the (Anglican) Church Education Society, and as it did not go on to his satisfaction, he placed it in connection with the (Presbyterian) National Board of Education, having appointed as his trustees John Campbell, Esq., M.D., William Coulson, Esq., and the Rev. W.J. Clarke, Presbyterian minister, all of Lisburn. Dr. Campbell died soon after, and Mr. Coulson refused to act, so that the burden of the trust fell upon Mr. Clarke, who felt it to be his duty to carry it out to the best of his ability. Dean Stannus, however, was greatly dissatisfied with the last

will and testament of Captain Bolton. Yet the dying man had no reason to anticipate that his affectionate pastor would labour with all his might to abolish the trust.



Punch cartoon depicting conflict over education between the dissenters, portrayed as a bandy legged puritan, and the Established Church, portrayed as a corpulent High Churchman.

Dean Stannus paid the captain a visit on his deathbed, and while administering the consolations of religion he seemed moved even to tears. To a friend who subsequently expressed doubt, the simple-minded old Christian said: 'I will trust the Dean that he will do nothing in opposition to my will. He was here a few days ago and wept over me. He loves me, and will carry out my wishes.' The Captain died in April, 1867.

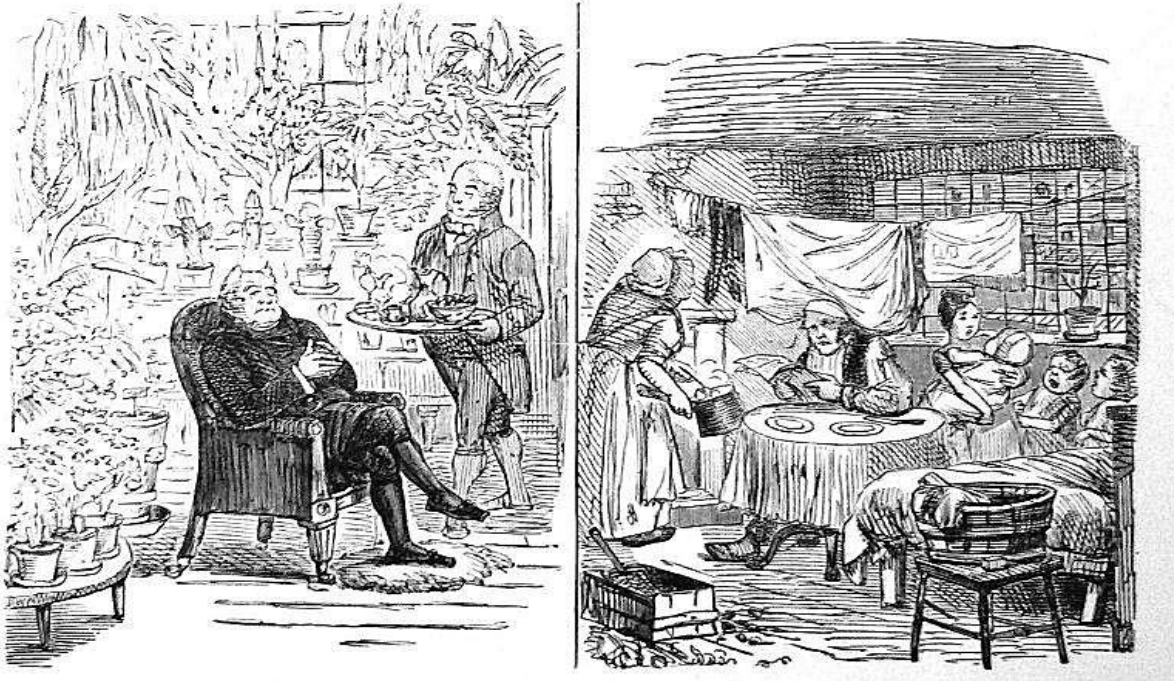
He was scarcely cold in his grave when the agent of Lord Hertford took proceedings to eject his trustees, and deprive the schools of the property bequeathed for their support. Not content with this, he took proceedings to get possession of the schoolhouse also, deeming it a sufficient reason for this appropriation of another man's property, this setting aside of a will, this abolition of a trust, that, in his opinion, the schools ought to be under the patronage of the rector, and in connection with the Church Education Society. He had a perfect right to think and say this, and it

might be his conscientious conviction that the property would be thus better employed; but he ought to know that the end does not sanctify the means; that he had no right to substitute his own will for that of Captain Bolton, and that he had no right to take advantage of the absence of an act of parliament to possess himself of the rightful property of other people. Unfortunately, too, he was a judge in his own case, and he did not find it easy to separate the rector of the parish from the agent of the estate.”

Relishing such black propaganda Godkin even gives us cruelty to animals:

“George Beattie, jun, a grocer's assistant in Lisburn, possessed a beautiful greyhound which he left in charge of George Beattie, sen, his uncle, on departing for America. This uncle possessed a farm on the Hertfort estate, the tenant-right of which he wanted to sell. Having applied to Mr. Stannus for permission, the answer he received was that he would not be allowed to sell until the head of the greyhound was brought to the office. The tenant remonstrated and offered to send the dog away off the estate to relatives, but to no effect. He was obliged to kill the greyhound, and to send its head in a bag to Lord Hertfort's office. It was a great triumph for the agent. What a pretty sensational story he had to tell the young ladies in the refined circles in which he moves. How edifying the recital must have been to the peasantry around him! How it must have exalted their ideas of the civilising influence of land agency.”¹⁰

There is something suspicious about this last story. Stannus’s motives are not given which suggest they may have weakened the story if they were told. It may be that the family in question had used their greyhound for illicit hare coursing, which was considered a form of poaching. While the evidence for oppressive behaviour is too numerous to acquit Stannus, it is the case that tyranny is sometimes in the eye of the beholder. In one case Dean Stannus walked into some premises where buildings were being erected. He ordered some changes and the improvements were carried out under his inspection as an architect, for which he charged nothing. Whether one resented the insolence of his walking in and assuming control, or were grateful for his professional expertise which resulted in better buildings, would depend very much on the kind of person one was.



John Leech 1852

The issues came to a head in 1852. Hitherto Lord Hertford had not shown a great deal of interest in whom his MP for Lisburn should be. But that year he had a conversation with the Conservative Party leader, Lord Derby. Derby mentioned that he was looking for a safe seat for the Lord Advocate of Scotland, a Mr Inglis. Hertford chivalrously offered Lisburn and notified Dean Stannus to make the necessary arrangements. Stannus thought he could bring Inglis in fairly smoothly without any difficulty. When he attempted this all the fires of Hades burst out and Stannus was caught completely off guard. The more substantial tenant farmers in Lisburn had been given the vote in the 1832 reform act and now they found their own independent voice. They selected a local man, Roger Johnson Smyth, and put him up as an opposing Liberal candidate. This was unprecedented and the gentry and Anglican clergy were stupefied by the impertinence. Forced to defend the landlords' control of boroughs they found they had no arguments and were reduced to rehashing concepts of the divine right of Kings. One cleric said:

“God has placed Lord Hertford over the people of Lisburn in matters political”

Inevitably it got ugly. Riots and attacks between the supporters of the rival candidates grew in intensity as the election drew nearer. In December 1852, 150 soldiers and police entered the town. They consisted of infantry from the 46th regiment of foot, mounted soldiers from the 16th lancers and a substantial body of the Belfast Constabulary (the local constabulary were already too partisan). The election was held in the Market House. The greater part of the crowd were for Smyth, but an Anglican mob (if such a thing is imaginable) surged in and fought with them. They were described as ‘retainers of the Hertford estate’ and were for Inglis. They were almost certainly put up by Dean Stannus from Lord Hertford’s own estate workers and probably corralled and lead by the estate bailiffs so Stannus would not be directly implicated. The military got between the two groups, although the Smyth supporters claimed to have ‘seen off’ the other side. Most of those rioting were still excluded



No. IX.—THE BEGINNING

Leader. "HOORAY! VEEVE LER LIBERTY!! HARM YOURSELVES!!! TO THE PALIS!! DOWN WITH HEAVERTHINK!!!!"

from actually voting. Inside the Market House things were equally chaotic, but eventually it was announced that Smyth had polled 99 votes and Inglis 81. Another burst of lawlessness was occasioned by the celebration of this Liberal victory.

But this was not the end. The following year Smyth died unexpectedly. This resulted in a by-election in October 1853. The tenants’ candidate this time was Jonathan Richardson who had been

Smyth’s election agent. He was a Quaker. Once again rioting and violence marked the proceedings but this time it touched Stannus personally. 32 Castle Street was wrecked. The windows were smashed by stones and the wooden sashes ripped out. Stannus had moved his family and servants to his property at Springfield, but it is reasonable to suppose that some policemen were stationed inside the rectory to

prevent ransacking. When the building was restored, the current windows were installed.



Example of Georgian sashes



Victorian sashes installed by Dean Stannus.

It was not to be last time Castle Street was to see a stone-throwing mob as we shall see during the campaign for Women's Suffrage. A letter from a Mrs Johnson to a family member describes what happened to the Dean

“...Mr Richardson has got in and Lisburn seems to have gone mad, for the destruction of property is very great. They acted like madmen and fiends. I can [word] the account of the proceedings and nothing else, and the poor Dean dragged by the legs nearly out of his carriage. It's a disgraceful shock, and these not allowed to vote! I am so glad that William kept clear of all these doings...”

According to Godkin, Stannus wanted to punish the tenantry with increased rents but was prevailed upon to let matters lie. It was probably around this time that the Stannus family moved out of Castle Street and into the Manor House where the family were to live until the 20th century. The rectory was then used to house the Cathedral curates. The whole incident was a staging post in the decline of the power of the Anglican elite in Irish society.

Control was an enormously important issue for James Stannus politically, but also psychologically. There are many more instances where Stannus's dread of losing control lie behind his tenacious grip on local power, but one event suffices to illustrate his emotional motivation. In 1869 Gladstone and the Liberal Party at the behest of Catholic and

Dissenting MP's moved to disestablish the Church of Ireland.¹¹ This meant that it was no longer the state church. Stripped of its monopoly one could now be married or buried where one liked. One clergyman was now as good as another and the denominations were, at least in the eyes of the law, equal. Disestablishment was followed by disendowment. Many of the vast estates which the Church of Ireland had possessed since the plantation period were taken away and re-distributed. The long-resented tythe system was virtually abolished. This sent shock waves through the Protestant Ascendancy.

Dean Stannus took it personally. He seems to have behaved as if the Church of Ireland had been abolished rather than politically disempowered. He never attended another vestry meeting. Stannus also refused to work with the Act which provided compensation to parishes and Cathedrals which had lost income. As one of his successors Canon Carmody said:

“He did not commute nor compound, and so no composition balance came to the parish through him.”

Disestablishment brought about the most seismic shift in Irish society. As the Catholic population vastly outnumbered those in the Established Church and the Dissenters, there was a re-configuration of alliances. The Established Church, now desperate to make up the numbers, conceded that Presbyterians, Quakers, Methodists and Baptists might conceivably be Protestants after all. The word steadily changed from something which just described members of the Church of Ireland to cover anyone who was vaguely Christian but wasn't Catholic. This thaw with the Dissenters even saw Dean Stannus sharing a platform with them in the 1870's to open a joint Protestant Hall. The Catholic Church, used to being the most constitutionally disempowered of the denominations, discovered it had potentially vast influence on the government of Ireland, on Parliament and on the process of political reform.

The United Irishmen had striven to rise above denominational politics with a vision for a new Ireland based on French revolutionary principles. After the 1869-72 Acts however, and the development of home rule and unionist movements, this vision was sunk forever in a welter of denominational politics. Before the repeal of the Test Acts in the 1820's,

those operating outside the Established Church had had much in common. Strange as it may seem today, Catholic and Presbyterian often acted in concert politically. Relations were cordial enough for joint petitions to be made and joint delegations to be sent in their efforts to get the Test Acts repealed. There is even some evidence that in Ireland Catholics and Dissenters influenced each other's architecture and shared a fondness for simplicity of ritual.

The repeal of the Test Acts had ended these alignments and inaugurated a period of denominational struggle. The disestablishment of the Anglican Church in 1869-72 intensified this competition for social and political influence. Disestablishment seemed like a patently just reform. The English Liberal party behind disestablishment had assumed that once Anglican 'tyranny' was removed, Irish civil society would be greatly enhanced and sectarian issues would diminish. In fact the reverse happened. Civil society diminished and everything came to be seen through the prism of religion. This was an unexpected consequence. Any 19th century proposal for reform in Ireland, whether constitutional, social or economic, had first of all to convince people in religious and denominational terms rather than political ones. Everything from school curriculae, education acts, medical advances, electoral reform and scientific innovation had to pick its way through a minefield of Bishops, priests and moderators.

But to return to the last years of Dean Stannus's rule in Lisburn; on the positive side of his reputation it should be remembered that much of the Victorian church building in the district originated with him. He built Ballinderry Church and restored several others. In 1867 a large public dinner was given by the tenants of the Hertford estate to celebrate the 50th anniversary of his agency. He was a genuinely popular public speaker and much in demand.

He was sociable. A member of the Sackville Street Club in Dublin, he attended levees in Dublin Castle and was known and liked by the aristocracy throughout Ireland. He was not without diplomatic skills and as Lord Hertford died slowly and painfully of cancer in the 1870's the peer became reclusive and irascible. Yet even now James Stannus managed his patron better than anyone else. Their last interview was not

a success though. Dean Stannus had travelled – in his 80's - to Paris, accompanied by his son. They tried to persuade Lord Hertford to invest in the railway that was being built across his estate. The other estate owners had all invested vast sums and the railway company needed only a comparatively trifling £15,000 to complete the work. Yet Hertford stubbornly refused and the Dean left saying:

“I go away in very bad spirits. You never refused me anything before”

An old man's petulance perhaps, but also a testament to how thoroughly Lord Hertford had been managed by his agent throughout their relationship. The Dean died in 1876 aged 88. He was succeeded by Dr Hartley Hodson who was rector until 1884.

Dr Hartley Hodson

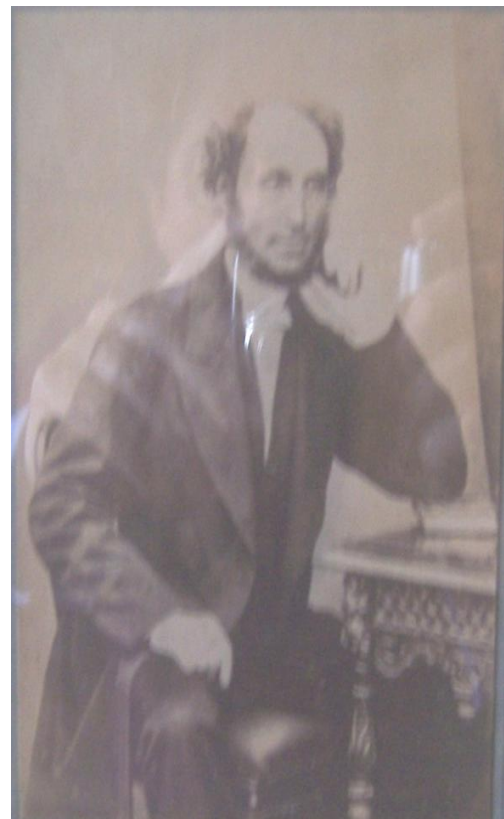
Dr Hodson was the first rector of Lisburn to be born in the 19th century and he was appointed in 1876! He was a new kind of clergyman very distinct from those who had gone before him. There were shifts within Christianity as a whole in late 19th century as it struggled with scientific discoveries and concepts, such as evolution. Across all the denominations a process of change and renewal gathered pace as the battle for constitutional supremacy gave way to a battle for the hearts and minds of congregation members. This development of evangelicalism is typified in the 1859 revival and also Vatican I¹¹ In every denomination those who had new visions for their mission faced suspicion from their more conservative hierarchies.

Hartley Hodson typified the new air of change. He was born in Bray in 1818 and according to Canon Carmody, was descended from Dr John Hodson, a distinguished Royalist in the English civil war who later became Bishop of Elphin. When Dr Hodson moved into the rectory in 1876, it may not have been his first period of occupancy. The Stannus's had left Castle Street in the 1850's and the house was used for the Cathedral clergy, of which Dr Hodson was one, before he was preferred to the rectorship of Derrykeighan in 1863.

Dr Hodson had been made a deacon in 1841 and a priest in 1842 at St Anne's Cathedral in Belfast. He then held various curacies: Derriaghy, Stoneyford, and Lisburn, all of which paid around £160 per annum before he became rector of Derrykeighan at £374 per annum. He was also Prebend of Cairnscastle which Dr Trail had held 90 years earlier. Between 1846 and 1863 he was the Perpetual Curate of a Chapel of Ease at Lisburn, which had been built to accommodate increased numbers of Anglicans as the town had expanded. It being the 19th century and Dean Stannus reigning supreme, who went where was sharply divided along social and economic lines. The older Lisburn families who owned or leased pews stayed at the Cathedral, while the newcomers and working people were hived off to the overflow church. It was called the 'Free Church' by the town's elite as no pew rents were paid and the 'New Church' by those who went there. It says much that this is where Hartley Hodson chose to minister. This was his preferred flock.

During his period as a curate in Lisburn Dr Hodson carried out much of Dean Stannus's ecclesiastical work for him. His reward was the rectorship of Derrykeighan in 1863, but after the Dean's death he was the natural choice for Lisburn. He knew the town, was popular and, from the Bishop's point of view, was an uncontroversial figure. Unencumbered with temporal power, Dr Hodson returned the focus of the rectorship to religion, which was a welcome change.

In 1850 he had married Hannah Gregory, the daughter of a Dublin physician. They had five children, three sons and two daughters. The Disendowment Act had set up an organisation called The Representative Body to handle the Church's financial and property affairs. In the past a rector had paid a sum of money to his predecessor for the lease of 32 Castle



Street. Now the Representative Body owned the building and the rector was a kind of privileged tenant. Dr Hodson accepted this with equanimity and arranged for 32 Castle Street to be modernised and improved. The Representative Body oversaw and paid for these changes.

Given that earlier renovations had been made to the rectory after the election riots, it is not easy to ascertain which were made in Dr Hodson's day. It's possible some partitions were put up to make the larger rooms a little smaller and easier to heat. Certainly bathrooms were put in and the Georgian plumbing was overhauled. Shower baths were still rare but examples do exist from Ulster at this period.¹² Flush lavatories had probably been installed as early as the Cupples' time. The Hodsons had fewer servants than the Stannus's, so shared rooms among the servants probably ended at this time.



Punch cartoon of early showering arrangements

Further changes occurred in the daily routine. Gentlemen were still shaved in the morning by their manservant and ladies had their hair dressed by their maid, but in the evening they usually took a bath before dinner. In the earlier part of the century, baths had occurred a couple of times a week at most. The bath had been brought into the bedroom and filled by heating water on the bedroom fire. If gas lighting had not been previously installed by the Stannus's, it would have been put in at this

point. In the kitchen a late Victorian range would have replaced the kitchen fireplace. The furnishings were doubtless those of modest late Victorian respectability and would have seemed depressingly middle class to the Stannus's.



THE PLEASURES OF FOLDING DOORS.

Hearing "The Battle of Prague" played, with a running accompaniment of—One, and Two, and Three ;—and One, and Two, and Three ;—and

Once again Lisburn had an academically sound rector with intellectual interests. Dr Hodson was a long standing member of the Lisburn Literary Society. This organisation was founded in 1851 by the Dean's old adversaries John Millar and Hugh McCall¹³ and included many of the

dissenting clergy. The Society's aim was to further adult education by providing talks and lectures on popular and scientific subjects. Political and religious discussion was to be avoided so that the Society could appeal to all denominations and social classes. It was to have a library and a newspaper reading room.

Because of the membership of its committee, Dean Stannus was very suspicious of the Society but Dr Hodson joined it and was elected to the committee in March 1851. In April 1851 Dean Stannus withheld £200 from the Society. They had successfully lobbied the trustees of the former fever hospital for this money, but the Dean clearly disapproved of the organisation. Dr Hodson on the other hand felt very differently and was an enthusiast in the cause of education. He had taken part in a public debate on education which had been held at the Music Hall, Belfast in 1849. This debate had been written up and printed in Dublin.

The Society's resolution to stay non-political didn't last however. A series of lectures on 'Political Economy' were given by Professor Moffat of Queen's, Galway, during the explosive month of October 1852. Dr Hodson was also Secretary of the Down and Connor Clergy Aid and Additional Curates Society, which gave financial assistance to indigent clerics. It also helped struggling families of young curates and ensured that clerical 'cover' was available when clergy were absent.

The Hodson family shared the political anxieties of the Protestant elite about the nascent home rule movement and he attended the great Protestant Demonstration convened by Lord Downshire at Hillsborough on October 30th 1867.

When he became rector of Lisburn after disestablishment and disendowment Dr Hodson was assuming a greatly diminished role. His income, for example was less than that of his predecessors. The rectorship had been £402 per annum before disestablishment but was now around £300, although the figures vary. No longer was the rector of Lisburn a key player in county politics and still less did he have to manage elections to sustain the influence of a landed patron. Yet Hartley Hodson did not mind the diminished status, and was instrumental in

shaping a new role for the rectors of Lisburn which positioned them in the community rather than over it.

Dr Hodson was one of those clerics who made the new arrangements work. But his willingness to do so was not typical of clergy in Down and Connor. Seething resentment bubbled against what was seen as the deliberate humiliation of the Church. Disestablishment dealt a profound blow to the Church of Ireland's confidence. The communal sense of its identity was disturbed and this uncertainty spilled over into the Church's sense of mission. Some clerics were very bitter indeed, accusing the Liberal government of the 'Rape of the Irish Church'¹⁴, Dean Stannus, as we have seen saw a disestablished Church as virtually no Church at all.

But for all the negative consequences there were positive ones too. What the Church lost in authority it gained in pastoral ability. The Church discovered its social conscience. It's distinctive role among Protestant denominations as a defender of the powerless and vulnerable against the insolence of the authorities originates from this time. Hartley Hodson was one of a new breed of clerics who had been imbibing the 19th century's process of religious renewal throughout his career. There is relatively little recorded about his rectorship - which only lasted 8 years - but what remains shows that he was willing to engage with the wider community on terms which his predecessor would never have countenanced. He was known to be warm, friendly and convivial with all classes of people and made a point of having cordial relations with the dissenting ministers and Catholic clergy. His dedication to the community is reflected in his practical memorial, the church hall, which commenced under his rectorship. After a comparatively short incumbency he died in 1884. His popularity in Ulster is an indicator of his personality.

In 1863 a meeting was held to raise a relief fund to aid the vast numbers of destitute textile workers during the "cotton famine" of 1862-4. Dr Hodson arrived late and knowing that he would soon be leaving Lisburn to take up the rectorship of Derrykeighan he paid a tribute to the town:¹⁵

"Rev. Hartley Hodson wished to say a few words. He had only that moment returned to town, having been in the country on special business, and but for having had that duty on hand he would have been

among the earliest of those assembled at the commencement of the meeting. Many of the gentlemen present were aware that having been promoted to a rectory in a distant part of the county, his immediate connection with Lisburn, as one of its pastors, would very soon cease; but the interest he felt in his dear friends, the people of the town in which he had spent so many happy days, would only end with his life. (Applause.)

He felt rejoiced in stating that, during his long period of labour among them, he had experienced much kindly feeling from all sects of people, and it gladdened his heart to see there that day the representatives of so many creeds, met for the noble purpose of benevolence. Lisburn had always exhibited the utmost sympathy with distress, and had come forward nobly and liberally to respond to calls from other places, and it was not the first time they had brought out the influence and property of their good town to meet that occasion. He had only to say that the Secretary might put his name down for ten pounds. He might add to his dear friends that, no matter what part of the world his future lot should be cast, or wherever he might reside, there never should be destitution affecting the community of Lisburn in which his heart, pocket, and hand would not be always open. (Applause.)”

Cultural Changes at 32

It is worth taking a moment to consider the enormous changes in the domestic culture of the succeeding families who occupied 32 Castle Street in the hundred and thirty odd years between 1784 and 1917.

Changing accents are easily discerned from the occupants’ letters. Dr Trail spoke with a Scottish accent and Dr Cupples with a Co. Armagh one, though no doubt rather posh and polished. The Stannus family and Canon Pouden on the other hand used the standardised high status accent which was widespread across Britain and Ireland from the late 18th to early 20th centuries. Increased transport, frequent communication and greater mobility had allowed the elite to create a more or less shared accent which marked out class identity (although in reality this accent was shared by a wide diversity of people from royalty to butlers). This accent differed from modern RP in having more open and longer vowels.

The nasal twang still sometimes heard today only began as a fashion in the 1870's. Phonograph recordings of Florence Nightingale and Oscar Wilde are a fair example of how the 19th century elite sounded.

Canon Carmody's family shows this process beginning to reverse itself. While they were clearly brought up with the standard elite accent, the inflections of returning dialect are discernible. Although the Carmodys came from Waterford, an acquired Ulster twang appears in Canon Carmody's writing. Greater interaction between the social classes towards the end of the 19th century, together with a more democratic society, meant that the elite had to sound more approachable and less removed. To his congregation Canon Carmody would have sounded very English, but in England his Irish inflections would have been more noticeable.

We have seen that diet, dining customs, mealtimes and attitudes to servants all changed, but gender relations also changed dramatically during this period along with the very definitions of masculinity and femininity. Yet the women in 32 Castle Street are surprisingly unrecorded. Certainly the period did not allow women the kind of scope which would have brought them into property records, newspapers or learned societies in any great numbers. Nevertheless the women of the rector's family in a town like Lisburn would have been very prominent. They would have been key players in charitable organisations, and any political clubs or societies where women's voluntary work was welcomed. Fund raising events, sales, bazaars and parish concerts were also activities the rectory's women would have been involved with. Yet the textual evidence of their lives appears thin. One explanation, unfortunately, is that the Public Record Office in Northern Ireland, does not seem to have made any gender updates in the catalogue of persons mentioned in its documents.¹⁶ By and large men's names typed into the search engine result in a number of 'hits' while women's names often produce none even when they are actually mentioned in the same documents.



Louisa Stannus 1890's.

It is known that Frances Cupples and her sister Maria were keen musicians. Their music scores survive, mostly from the early 1830's. Dean Stannus's granddaughter, Louisa, was a very well known if rather eccentric figure in Lisburn up to her death in 1933. She joined the Lisburn Suffrage Society which is an astonishing thing for the granddaughter of someone so profoundly opposed to democracy in any form. An independent woman, she drove her own trap and ran her

household with traditional Stannus rigour. She was taken to court in 1914 by one of her gardeners (his description) or odd-job man (her description). With questionable justice, the magistrate sided with her but cautioned her against behaving high handedly in future. Her decision not to marry was undoubtedly influenced by a strong desire to retain her autonomy of action. Of Mary and Hannah Hodson there is seemingly nothing to be found.

The approved canon of Irish history has milestones such as the famine, industrialisation, mass emigration, the growth of the Home Rule and Unionist movements, the break up of the landed estates and the First World War. Certainly the rectors of Lisburn and their families were touched by or played roles in these events, but to explore them properly would require a study for each and this history offers an overview rather than a series of detailed essays. It can be seen however that in general terms the period saw a change in the role of rectors from being apparatchiks in the landed regime, appointed by and serving the interests of Lord Hertford, to being members and supporters of a growing Protestant opposition to Home Rule. Membership of a movement rather than service to an individual marks the fundamental change in the political life of 32 Castle Street.

Canon Pouden

William Dawson Pouden was born at Ballywater House, Co. Wexford in 1830. He had graduated from Trinity College, Dublin in 1854. The son of Rev Patrick Pouden, the Rector of Westport, his family had a long clerical tradition. His mother was Elizabeth Dawson, also of Co. Wexford. His brother, John Colley Pouden entered the military as a surgeon. The Poudens believed their name to be, distantly, of German origin. William remained unmarried, though his name survives as a consequence of his nephews and great nephews being named after him. He was well to do, and owned 324 acres in Monaghan in the 1870's. He also held a living at Ballyhuskard, Co. Wexford in 1861. Like Dr Hodson, William Pouden had been the Perpetual Curate in charge of the 'New Church', taking over from him in 1863. Again like Dr Hodson he then succeeded to the rectorship.

By 1884 the lineaments of modern Lisburn had come into being. It was an industrial town with a substantial urban population. The workers were mostly housed in red brick terraced housing with running water, some of which had outside flush lavatories. The older rural town still peeped out between the chinks though. Chickens were kept in back yards, pigs still foraged in the alleys until the town commissioners banned them. Cock fighting continued, although Dean Stannus had attempted to ban it (more out of anxiety about the poorer classes combining together than anything as modern as concern about animal welfare). In late Victorian Lisburn, industrial



and rural were polysemes of the same society. No stark cultural gulf separated them and many mill workers were the children and siblings of farmers. In Castle Street, Canon Pouden kept a carriage and horses up to 1917. He never owned a motor car. He had a groom who cared for his horses and drove his carriage. This servant also served as a handyman. He had a manservant, a cook and a maid-of-all-work. He did not have electricity put in, still less radiators. The impression of a domestically conservative rector is inescapable. This is also true of Canon Pouden politically. Unlike his predecessor he was not of a reforming disposition.

By now the older pre-famine Ireland was falling out of living memory and the United Irishmen were still more remote. The question of home rule became the focus of the political agenda. Canon Pouden was an active Orangeman. He was among 600 members of the United Defence Union in 1893. Because nationalism and unionism are with us today it is tempting to collapse time and see late 19th century's nationalists and unionists as similar to those of today. Actually they were dramatically different. Unionists saw themselves as Irish at this point and many cultural societies such those for the preservation of the Irish language and traditional music societies, including Feis and Fleadh committees, were still dominated by Protestants. Not all home rulers wanted complete separation from Britain and a wide spectrum of devolution models were promoted by different Home Rule leaders, each with their own adherents. The early Home Rule movement was also divided between those who saw it as a vehicle for creating a national identity which was separate from religion (as with German nationalism), and this wing, whose best representative was probably Parnell, enjoyed some support amongst Irish Protestants. The other wing saw Home Rule as a vehicle for creating a Catholic Ireland.

The rectors of Lisburn were not just opposed to Home Rule on religious grounds however. At this point in its development the Home Rule movement had a marked hostility to the 'dark Satanic mills' of industrialisation. Across 19th century Europe antiquarianism and literature had come together to create a deeply romantic vision of the medieval past. All nationalist movements tapped into this and exalted the peasant as the conduit of a timeless cultural purity. The peasant

became the icon of national identity and traditional peasant dress was invented in many countries by nationalist movements around this time.

But all this was never going to play well in a linen town like Lisburn. Successive rectors were staunchly pro-industrial and saw it as progressive. Even neo-feudalists like Dean Stannus were convinced of its benefits. Both the Home Rule movement and its opposition would crystallise in the early 20th century, but up to the 1890's they remained fluid. The Orange Order took quite a while to identify exactly where it stood on the home rule issue as this speech by Crommelin Irwin to Lisburn Orangemen in 1848 shows:

“If Home Rule is desired, let the Roman Catholics first shake off their slavery and become free men - (cheers) - like the Italians and Spaniards.* (Cheers). Let them, I say, assert their freedom, and then they will be in a position to ask the Irish Protestants to join them. (Cheers) I grant freely, were Ireland a Protestant nation, England would have no right, from her treatment towards this country, to expect Protestants to delay asking for Home Rule - (cheers) - under which this country would, I know, reap many advantages. (Cheers) And unless England changes her treatment towards us it may become a matter of consideration. (Cheers) Brother Orangemen, a great deal has been said about our giving offence. we mean none to our Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen. (Cheers) If they have any battles or worthy deeds to commemorate, let them do so, and we will join them - (cheers) - but if they have nothing but the burial of the bones of a rebel **, we cannot agree with them. (Loud and prolonged cheers)”

* Italy was moving towards unification in the teeth of Vatican disapproval. The Spanish government had also recently defied the Holy See.

** It was the 50th anniversary of the '98 and the Young Ireland Movement were claiming to be heirs of the rebellion by reburying some of the executed leaders.

Modern clergymen are discouraged, either officially or subtly from joining political organisations, but in the late 19th century the role of Church of Ireland clergy in political movements opposed to Home Rule was a natural development from the political role they had played in the regime of the landowners earlier in the century. Indeed the Unionist movement, as it became, was itself lead by the same landed families the rectors and clergy had previously served. The Londonderry's, Downshires, Wallaces, Massareenes, Abercorns etc.

Canon Pouden held many views, common at the time, which would seem strange to a modern Orangeman or Unionist. For example he was a member of the Society of St Patrick. This organisation sought to create dialogue over Home Rule. They were a discussion society which explored models of Irish government that would be acceptable to both Catholics and Protestants. Carson squashed the Society when he became Party leader as being likely to muddy the message. Canon Pouden was, like his predecessors, a man who saw his faith as having directly political consequences. Nevertheless he was not as interested in politics in general. There is no evidence of him taking an interest in education as an issue; he also seems to have avoided discussion of contentious issues such as worker's conditions, prostitution and the teetotalism movement. He did sit on several committees for good works though and was a trustee of Thompson House, the home for 'Incurables'.



Yet when the women's suffrage movement burst upon Ulster he was dragged into modern politics whether he would or no. In 1908, a middle aged widow, Mrs Lilian Metge, founded the Lisburn Suffrage Society. She was one of Canon Pouden's closest neighbours, possibly his next door neighbour, as well as one of his parishioners. The society met at the Temperance Institute ¹⁷ and enjoyed the very substantial membership of 80. This rivalled the suffrage societies of Belfast and Dublin. Diane Urquhart has pointed out that the women's suffrage movement was

larger in Antrim and Down than any other part of Ireland.¹⁸ The scale of the women's suffrage movement in Ulster has been greatly underestimated, partly due to the focus of modern male historians on the home rule crisis and the First World War. The Irish suffrage movement has been airbrushed out of the picture by many modern historians even though it was highly visible at the time. It had its own journal, the Irish Citizen, and over 20 societies were formed in Antrim and Down alone, of varying shades of militancy.

[Picture of Mrs Metge. National Museum of Ireland. Photograph of Bridge Street Community Centre]

The Churches in Ulster generally reacted with horror. There were some notable exceptions: St George's in Belfast had a pro-suffrage group, but mainly it was felt that vote-wielding women were flying in the face of nature. The bible warned the conservative against the dangers of independent female action, Leviticus in particular. The politicians were more divided¹⁹. This hostility of the Churches created a tension between the movement and the clergy which exploded, (literally) when female militancy hit the streets of Ulster. Canon Pouden reacted to suffragism with profound conservative disapproval. It is likely that he opposed the movement from the pulpit. Thereafter his card was marked.

Usually portrayed as generically 'middle class', the membership of the Lisburn Suffrage Society included a wide social and economic spectrum. The wives and daughters of shopkeepers were members as was Mrs Barbour the wife of the town's largest mill owner. In this they were no different to any other political movement of the day. The Society heard speakers including Helen Frazer from Scotland on the evils of sweated labour in the mills and a Miss Abadam on white slavery (sex trafficking). As well as talks and discussions members performed theatre sequences, Miss Greene of the grocer's shop family performed the balcony scene from Romeo and Juliet. Others sang. The gramophone was listened to and, it being a Temperance Hall, they drank tea. The society was earnest and sincere but also very social. It was a fashionable cause patronised by the town's great and good, and while this heightened the respectability of the cause, it also served to inhibit radical approaches in furthering the cause.

The Women's Social and Political Union, founded in England, was committed to radical and direct action. In 1913 the WSPU sent Dorothy Evans to Belfast as a specific reaction to unionist dilatoriness on the issue. She intended to stiffen the local movement's resolve and begin a militant campaign. The accounts of daring WSPU outrages soon allowed the media to portray the suffrage movement as occupying two neatly defined camps: moderate and militant. This obscures the complexity of the movement. As Dr Margaret Ward points out Ulster had its own militants such as Margaret McCoubrey who were active before the WSPU arrived ²⁰. Also people who appeared to be doyennes of moderacy, such as Mrs Metge, could change tactics.

Precisely what converted Mrs Metge to militancy is unknown but she did describe it in terms of a religious conversion. She wrote in the Irish Citizen in October 1913 that she could not be one of those who, "having seen the light, turned back". Like Dr Trail before him, Canon Pouden was to find his religious precepts put to unexpectedly radical use. Mrs Metge resigned the presidency of her Suffrage Society and joined a cell of four determined suffragettes. Lead by Dorothy Evans with the unblinking stare of the true revolutionary, the cell also included Maud Wickham, the niece of the Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, and Emily Carson.

The government had passed a bill making it legal to force feed women prisoners who were on hunger strike. This was often violent and sometimes caused permanent damage to the victims' health. The Churches failed utterly to condemn this law despite a widespread public outcry at the barbarity. Embarrassed into retreat, the government introduced the 'cat and mouse' act instead which released women from prison when they fell below a certain weight but then re-arrested them when they recovered their health. Again the Churches were deafeningly silent. Noting that clergy of all denominations were very voluble in condemning suffragists as unfeminine, but utterly muted in condemning brutal treatment against women as unmanly, the militants perceived the clergy as politically partisan. They argued that such double standards had shorn the clergy of their moral authority over the issue. They were henceforth seen as fair game.

THAT RAGTIME SUFFRAGETTE

ZIEGFELD FOLLIES

OF
1913



WORDS BY
HARRY WILLIAMS

MUSIC BY
NAT. D. AYER

AS PRESENTED
AT
THE
NEW AMSTERDAM
THEATRE
NEW YORK



HARRY WILLIAMS MUSIC Co.
154 WEST 46TH STREET
NEW YORK

6

Poster illustrating how the suffrage movement had captured widespread imagination. It was social as much as political in Lisburn.

The WSPU had targeted several churches in Ulster. They burned Ballylesson Church and disrupted services at St Anne's Cathedral. Among several empty mansions which they burned down, one belonged to the Catholic Bishop of Down and Connor. In August 1914, the four militants met at Mrs Metge's house. They purchased dynamite from a local hardware shop, (who was holding excessive quantities of it, probably on behalf of the UVF), and stole at night from the back of her house across the Cathedral grounds. They packed the dynamite up against the east wall and stuck a lighted candle in it for a fuse. They scattered suffragette literature around the scene to identify their cause and returned home.

There was a huge explosion in the night and the east window of the Cathedral along with its stanchions were destroyed. The police arrived and traced the suffragettes' footprints in the dew to Mrs Metge's house. There they found muddy boots, paraffin and other 'incendiariest's materials'. The women were arrested and taken to Crumlin Road jail in Belfast. In their absence a mob gathered. They pelted Mrs Metge's house with stones and broke every window, and no doubt much of what lay behind the windows. A few weeks later the suffragettes were released on the orders of the Secretary of State at the Home office and Mrs Metge returned home.

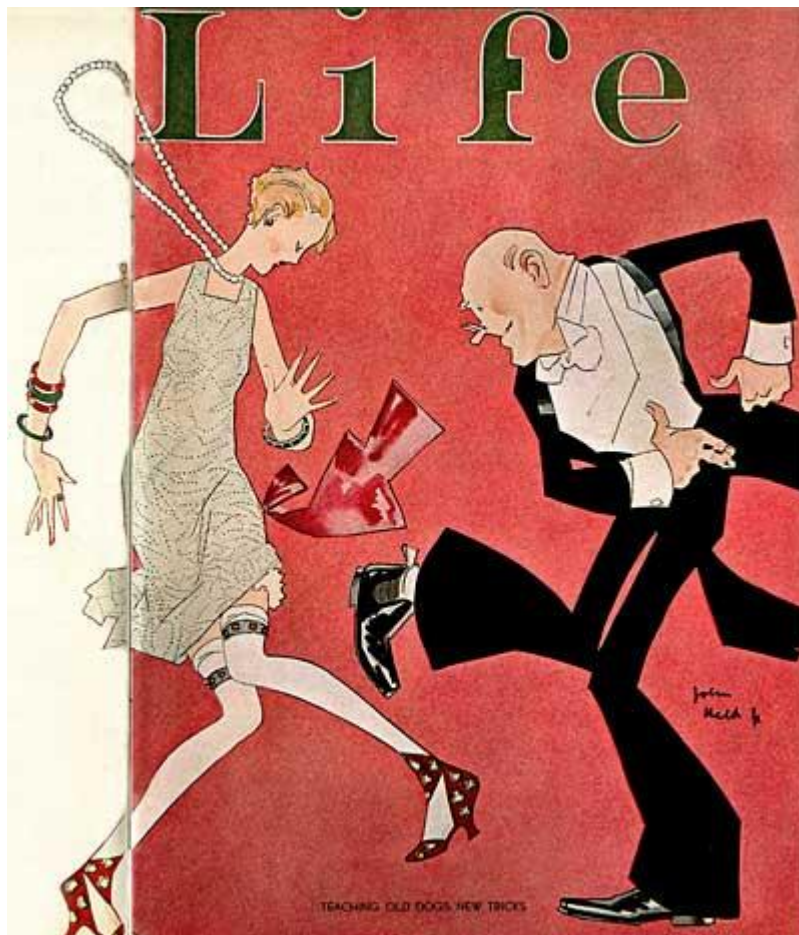


A degree of social awkwardness is occasioned by blowing up one's neighbour's Cathedral and it is unlikely that relations between Canon Pouden and Mrs Metge were ever the same. There is nothing to suggest that Canon Pouden was able to show his suffragette neighbour the same Christian charity which Dr Cupples had shown Henry Munroe. On the other hand he was 84 years old by this time and had hoped to be spared such an event. Mrs Metge moved away from Lisburn to Dublin and Canon Pouden died in 1917. He had a nephew or great nephew named after him called William

Dawson Pouden Bartholomew. This nephew died aged 27 in 1918 at the same time as other relatives. Probably the flu epidemic. Canon Pouden had always remained close to his Co. Wexford relatives and he was clearly a great favourite with them.

The Later Rectory

1917 - 1950



Canon Pouden was succeeded by Canon Carmody, a very different personality. Born just after 1860, Canon Carmody was a recognisably modern clergyman. Still a child when the Church was disestablished he

had no personal experience of the old national church. In his time the rectory was fitted with electricity by the Representative Body and a boiler and radiators were installed. He was the first inhabitant to wear pyjamas in bed rather than a gown and nightcap.

He came from Comeragh in Co. Waterford where his father was Vicar. William Patrick Carmody left Trinity in 1886. The Carmody family do not seem to have been particularly well off in comparison with previous rectorial families. He was a sizar which meant he was spared the college fees in exchange for doing a certain amount of work for the college. Sometimes this involved waiting on tables, copying documents or carrying messages, but it could also involve giving tutorials to undergraduates who were struggling.

He came north in 1892 and was made a deacon at St John's in Holywood. He was ordained a priest at Lisburn Cathedral in 1895. William Carmody was a man of clear sightedness, exactitude and enormous self-discipline. He was alarmingly efficient and sickeningly competent. These traits showed many of his fellow clergy up of course, so he was not as popular in the diocese as the easy going Canon Pouden had been. But his superiors did recognise his abilities and his advance was swift. He was rector of Connor in 1898; rector of Carrowdore in 1904; rector of knockbreda in 1908 and rural dean of Hillsborough in 1913. He became a member of the diocesan council in 1912 and was a solid support to the Bishop. He became a Canon on his accession to Lisburn in 1917. Canon Carmody took control of the rectorship of Lisburn like Germanicus taking control of the Rhine army.

In 1899 William Carmody had married Ethelwyn Thompson, the daughter of the rector of Cushendall. They had four children, William Raymond, Catherine Sarah, Ethelwyn Caroline and Dermot Mahon. This last son's name shows the influence of the Celtic revival which saw Gaelic, Welsh and Scottish names return in popularity. Saxon names were similarly revived in England. It also accords the pride men like Canon Carmody had in being both Irish and Protestant. He often went to stay with his in-laws and wrote a book called *Cushendall and its Neighbourhood* in 1925. The book shows Carmody's excellent abilities as an historian. Many of Lisburn's rectors had another career inside them,

with Dr Trail it was mathematics, with Canon Carmody it was history. He also published *Antiquities of Northern Ireland and Lisburn Cathedral and its Past Rectors*. This last was a very thorough account of the Cathedral from its founding. His research was meticulous and stands out for its professionalism nearly a hundred years later. A member of the Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, he collected books, documents, photographs and memorabilia about the Cathedral, its incumbents and its history. His aim was to establish a Cathedral Library. Long after he'd left Lisburn to go on to greater things, he deposited occasional items in the archive. His intention was to turn Christ Church into a 'proper' Cathedral if he possibly could.



The renovations he made to 32, Castle Street brought the building into the modern era. Canon Pouden's rectory was described in a letter by Mrs Barbour as being very much a bachelor's home. Gloomily Victorian, many of the guest rooms were shut up. Only Canon Pouden's manservant lived at the rectory; the rest of his staff lived in the town. His servants had aged along with him so the bigger tasks of maintenance, such as lifting the very large carpets and beating them, laundering the curtains, etc went by the board. Desultory letters passed between him and the Representative Body about unspecified 'improvements'. Yet nothing much was done save the odd window repair. After his death Miss Pouden, the Canon's sister, auctioned the late rector's effects.²¹

Immediately on taking possession of the rectory the Carmody's swept away all traces of the previous regime. Whatever they found in the rectory of historical value, such as Dr Cupples's sermon book, they passed to the Cathedral archive, anything else was forced on the poor. A campaign of re-plastering, painting, wallpapering, re-carpeting, and the



Father Mackonochie by 'Spy' in Vanity Fair

and designer who created neo-medieval buildings and decor. The design element of the movement sought to give Church rituals the same medieval flavour that the buildings had. Vestments, genuflection, the elevation of the Host, chanting parts of the service, anthems sung in Latin, Bishops back in mitres and kneeling to pray all were innovations of the movement.

But it also had a spiritual agenda and the inspiration for this owes more to the habit of travelling to Italy for holidays and the grand tour. Aristocrats such as Theodore Talbot felt the Anglican Church to be lacking in otherworldliness. In Italy, Catholic services created a sense of a separated space with rites of holiness and sacred mystery. There was

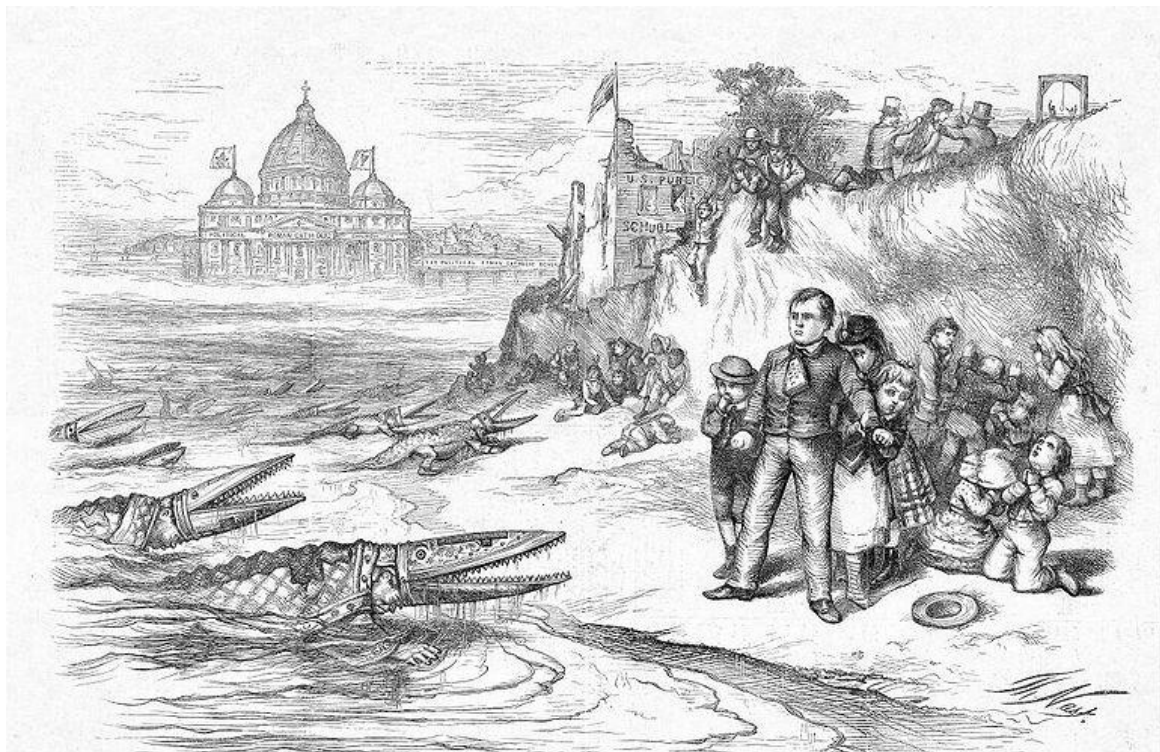
laying of electric cables began that created a new family home that was fit for purpose. A telephone was installed. The 19th century thus came to an abrupt end at 32 Castle Street. Securing workmen for these renovations cannot have been easy as it was the height of the First World War.

As well as the rectory, Canon Carmody modernised the Cathedral services. Until the late 19th century the Church of Ireland had vehemently opposed 'Puseyism'. This was a movement which originated in the 1830's and 40's, and sought to restore some of the Catholic practises to Anglican Church services. The Movement also went by names such as 'the Oxford Movement', 'Anglo-Catholicism' etc but congregations often fell back on the old term 'High Church'.

It owed its inspiration to the Victorian passion for antiquarianism and all things Gothick. Pusey was an architect

a sense of reverence and veneration. In Ireland and Britain by contrast services were prosaic. Altars, for example, were simply treated as hall tables in the 19th century. The privileged ladies and gentlemen in a congregation left their coats and umbrellas on it during services. At Queen Victoria's coronation drinks and sandwiches were put on the High Altar of Westminster Abbey so that the clergy could take a snack during the anthems. The Anglo-Catholic movement sought to restore dignity to the Church. They were not above the theatrical and insisted that prayer should take place kneeling and with the hands in the position used by medieval people when swearing oaths of fealty to their lord. A sense of veneration was the aim.

In Ireland the fear of a Protestant minority about being subsumed by a Catholic majority meant that much of the movement's agenda was vigorously opposed as being Popery by stealth.



High Church Bishops in mitres and vestments portrayed as Crocodiles in Harper's Weekly by Thomas Nast.

Nevertheless Canon Pouden had built a chancel onto the Cathedral to enhance the status of the altar, and included choir seats. Canon Carmody continued these moves towards greater reverence. Vestments returned along with processions to and from the altar. A musical dimension

was sustained by a full choir who sung Tallis, Byrd, Bach and Mozart. Latin was reclaimed as an Anglican tongue. Not everyone liked this of course and some members of the congregation left to join the Presbyterians, Methodists or other dissenting churches where ritual formed little part of the service. Ritual has its own appeal though and others joined the congregation because of it, particularly those who, like Canon Carmody, were interested in church history and heritage. As Dr Myrtle Hill points out, this process must be considered just as much one of the outcomes of the evangelical transformation of religion in 19th century as the tradition we call evangelicalism today.

The Church of Ireland battled amongst itself over the 'ornaments rubric' as ritual practice was called. 'Catholic' practises were introduced very warily in the Church of Ireland and the Irish Church never developed a full Anglo-Catholic tradition with incense and images of the Saints as Welsh and English Churches did. The canons of the Church of Ireland forbade a cross to be placed on the altar until 1967 and incense is still forbidden. Canon Carmody stood in what was, for the Irish Church, a comparatively Catholic position.

He left Lisburn to become Dean of Down in 1923. Canon Carmody held a number of other church appointments; sitting on the diocesan council and becoming Treasurer of the diocese of Connor. He became the Bishop's examining chaplain and later the diocesan nominator, both positions involving the appointment of clergy to livings. He became a Canon of St Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin in 1920, when it was still technically the Chapel Royal for the Kingdom of Ireland and in 1926 the Select Preacher at the University of Dublin in the new devolved Ireland. He became the driving force behind the Ecclesiastical records Committee in 1925, dedicated to preserving historical data. This was felt to be particularly important given that the public records office had been burned down in the recent troubles. That he never got a mitre is due to ill circumstance rather than any deficiency of merit, but still also owes something to the hostility of those who envied his intellectual capacity.

He was succeeded by Canon John Sinclair Taylor in 1923. Canon Taylor was rector until 1950 and with him the clerical phase of 32 Castle Street moves into living memory. He was the son of Robert Taylor and Harriet Sinclair. Born around 1880, he grew up in Diamond House in

Portadown, attending the Royal School in Armagh before going to Trinity College Dublin. Here he studied Logic and English Literature. He came first in the Divinity test and was ordained in 1902. He received his BA in 1903 and matriculated to an MA in 1911.

Throughout the Edwardian period he rattled through a series of curacies: Drumgath with Drumballyrone in 1902, Kilkeel in 1904, Seagoe 1905 and St Thomas's Belfast in 1907. He became rector of All Saints in Eglantine Avenue, Belfast in 1915. He then became rector of St Jude's Bredaville also in south Belfast in 1917. He became rector of Lisburn in 1923 and a member of the Cathedral Chapter of St Anne's, Belfast in 1926 (and thus a Canon). He joined some of his predecessors by becoming Prebendary of Cairnscastle in 1924.

He was a very different kind of clergyman to Canon Carmody. Fervent rather than priestly, he accepted the innovations the Oxford movement had brought to the Church, but did not develop them further. It seems likely that Canon Carmody had pushed Lisburn as far in the direction of Anglican popery as it was willing to go. The Vestry probably made it plain that they were willing to accept someone less academically brilliant if they were also less High Church. By now the numbers of Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists and Quakers had increased in Ulster to such an extent that the recognised signifiers of what constituted a Protestant identity were changing. It was no longer the Anglo Irish accents and studied gentility of 'Horse Protestants' that formed these signifiers. It became the Calvinistic and austere sobriety of the Dissenters. Very much on the back foot, the Church of Ireland was aware that it was losing the initiative – and congregation members. The Oxford movement had attracted the well educated, but the Church felt it also needed to compete with the dissenters on their own terms. Energetic clergy were sought who would form youth clubs, church societies and missions to the poor. This wing of the Church put more focus on Scripture and less on Reason and Tradition. Canon Taylor falls very much into this category.

The Cathedral has a photograph of Canon Taylor's bible class in 1929. Astonishingly, it is 120 strong. All the members are male and it is unknown whether there was a bible class for women. Canon Taylor was



unmarried, but during the war years in Belfast, his congregations must have been overwhelmingly female in composition. Marrying 'well' was still a consideration in the first two decades of the 20th century and if Canon Taylor felt he did not have the resources to marry during his curacies, he could easily have done so after becoming a rector in 1915. One must conclude that it was a personal choice. Once again the rectory became a bachelor's residence, but unlike Canon Pouden's occupancy, it did not become stuck in time. Canon Taylor negotiated successfully with the Representative Body to update the decor (at least in those rooms he used) as time went on.

Machines proliferated in post war homes. Washing machines, vacuum cleaners, fridges, gas stoves and motor cars all began to obviate the need for so many servants. Also domestic service itself became less popular



"The food's nothin' extra—but you meet some awful nice people."

Depression era cartoon. Churches sometimes provided meals for the unemployed.

after the war as trades unionism and left wing thought challenged assumptions of deference. Servants' wages rose to levels which less well off employers found hard to pay. Instead of the faithful live-in retainer, families now had cooks, cleaners or 'char women' who called in a few times a week. Canon Taylor was the first occupant of 32 Castle St not to

have a manservant. It is not certain whether Canon Carmody had a motor car but Canon Taylor certainly did.

The photograph of Canon Taylor shows a modern clergyman with a black jacket and a celluloid collar. We are very familiar with the image today but it was new at the time. Similarly when Canon Taylor visited the homes or work places of Lisburn's industrial poor, it was a footing of trust and equality which he sought. Certainly he expected to be shown respect and treated with some degree of deference to his office, but the bowing and curtsying of an earlier age was something he eschewed. He espoused a muscular Christianity and wanted to galvanise, to stimulate involvement with the Anglican vision of Christianity, but essentially he wanted that involvement to take place in a context of social equality. Out came the box pews with their entrenched vested positions of local families. In came benches where everyone could sit side by side. To the elderly people of the town who remembered Dean Stannus's regime this would have seemed radical indeed.

Again, it is important not to collapse time. Canon Taylor was not a fully fledged example of the modern evangelical group within Anglicanism. His innovations can be seen as a reaction against the assumptions of pre-war society, rather than an early harbinger of the microphone and tambourine. And Canon Taylor was very aware of church heritage and the links with the past which his office gave him. In 1935 he celebrated the 250th anniversary of the revoking of the Edict of Nantes.²¹ This was a Huguenot jamboree with many descendants of the old French congregation convening for the occasion. He was very interested in history and unveiled the plaque to General Nicholson which still stands. It is more accurate, perhaps, to see him as the kind of cleric who descends from the mid-century renewal and is a staging post to other interpretations of priesthood later on in the 20th century.

One of the biggest testaments to how things had changed between Anglicans and Dissenters since the hostilities around disestablishment, was the joint Armistice Day services at the War Memorial in Castle Gardens. The clergy divided the service between them. It was a gracious acceptance that the Church of Ireland had no higher authority than the other denominations. Nevertheless the absence of Canon Taylor's

Catholic counterpart shows that Ireland's biggest religious hostilities and suspicions still went unchallenged. No progress was made in this direction in Canon Taylor's time. It could be argued that the want of any formal process of interaction between Protestant and Catholic clergy in the first half of 20th century sowed many of the seeds for what happened in the latter half. In his day though, and it is only therein that he can be assessed, Canon Taylor enjoyed vast popularity as a progressive and modernising cleric.

Epilogue

In 1950, after 170 years, the Representative Body decided to sell the rectory. The reasons for doing so were several. On the one hand it had been a vast building to maintain for one man and a housekeeper who didn't live there. On the other hand the rectory was too small to be used for things like the bible class, where even the church hall was packed to the gunwales. It was not a useful building in an age when rectors were no longer doyens of county society. The rateable value of the property, the fuel costs and repair costs had become substantial. Also there was a general sea change among the elite in the years after the Second World War. The austerity years saw the virtual collapse of 'entertaining' as it had been known before the war. Notices appeared in country house bedrooms asking guests to make their own beds as there were no longer any staff to do it for them. Large properties were seen as a burden rather than marks of status. Warm, easy-to-maintain bungalows with all the mod-cons appealed to the elite more than chilly grandeur. All over Ireland and Britain, the grand rectories, episcopal palaces, country mansions and Georgian town houses were vacated and sold off.

32 Castle Street was luckier than many. Instead of being pulled down or gutted, it was bought by James Leslie Boyle in 1953. Castle Street was returning to its early Georgian origins: a place of commercial usage rather than elite residence. Having shed itself of the burden of maintenance, the Church of Ireland left James Boyle with a plethora of problems: leaking roofs, drafty fireplaces, insufficiently sealed fireplaces

in which birds nested, jammed sash windows and so on. With calm perseverance he steadily improved, mended, renovated and held back the forces of deterioration. The ground floor front of the property was converted into two shops: Chapman's the Chemist's and Jessina's Clothing Shop. James's wife Norah Boyle began her own wholesale business selling clocks and jewellery from the building in 1958. Other shops were set up in the rear of the property: Brenda's hairdressers, B & B Electrics and a travel agency, all of which were active in the 1960's.

[Family pictures of 32 Castle Street and the shops]

Once again the house became a family home. The Boyles moved into the upstairs rooms with their five daughters, Hilary, Christine, Janet, Yvonne and Anthea. The property remains in the family and now, in 2011, Anthea is converting it along with Robert Martin, into an exciting new arts space for many types of artform.

Notes

1. (page 1). The Plantations were a scheme devised by the government in England to remove the existing aristocracy in Ireland almost *en bloc* and replace them with English, Welsh and Scottish landowners. It was considered a shortcut to creating an Anglican Ireland, with English style towns, roads, trading and legal systems. It was intended that this new ruling class would be a landed gentry, loyal to and dependent on the Crown. The indigenous Irish aristocracy had been characterised by medieval style semi-autonomy and feudal armies. They were growing in confidence as a nobility and were culturally distinct from England. They were mostly Catholic and from the second half of the 16th century they had been inclined to intrigue with Scotland, France and Spain against England. It is sometime, wrongly, believed that the majority of settlers in Ulster were Scottish, although they were an important factor a majority is unlikely.

2. (page 5).



3. (page 17). It is curious that Robert Trail should marry into the Huguenot Gayer family. The Gayers were connected to William Higginson of course through marriage. One wonders if Higginson's disgrace was a taboo subject in the Gayer household or whether all three families, Higginsons, Trails and Gayers remained on good terms.

4. (page 28). Rev. Archibald Warwick of Kircubbin.

5. (page 29). George Whitla.

6. (page 30) Captain Poyntz Stewart of the Deriagh Infantry.

7. (page 38) Giuseppe Gioacchino Belli, Italian sonnet writer.

8. (page 39) Although non Christians were still excluded,

9. (page 40) The Devon Commission enquired into the Hertford estate in Antrim, along with many others in 1845.

10. (page 44) *The Land War in Ireland* by James Godkin 1870

11. (page 50) The term evangelicalism is here used for the whole renewal process across the denominations and does not refer to modern fundamentalist evangelicalism although that too is a descendant of the 19th century renewal. The 1859 revival brought a large swing of conversions from the Anglican Church into the dissenter faiths. Similar revivals can be found in Wales, Cornwall and in parts of England. Pope Pius IX convened the church council which became known as Vatican I in 1868. Far from being a restatement of the Church's traditional position, it propounded a new approach to the Church's relationship with society, tackling science and mass politics head on.

12. (page 51) Victorian shower systems still stand in the bathrooms at Castle Leslie. They were also at Antrim and Hillsborough Castles, but the former was burnt down and the latter destroyed by civil servants modernising.

13. (page 52) These were two of the substantial tenant farmers quoted above who rebelled against the estate's control of elections.

14. (page 54) Richard Chenevix Trench, Dean of Christ Church, Dublin

15. (page 55) *The Cotton Famine of 1862-3, with some sketch of the Proceedings that took Place in Connection with the Lisburn Relief Committee.* Hugh McCall 1872.

16. (page 57) When the names of Dr Cupples or Dean Stannus are entered in the search engine, there are numerous hits, but when Frances Cupples or any of the Stannus ladies are entered 'No Hits' is the response, even when documents are held which definitely mention them. This may be wrong, but it deserves PRONI's attention.

17. (page 62) Currently the Bridge Street Community Centre. Mrs Lilian M. Metge nee Grubb came from Rosemount in Dunmurry.

18. (page 62) Diane Urquhart, *Women in Ulster Politics 1890 -1940*. 2000

19. (page 62) For example Carson was against women's suffrage while James Craig was in favour of it and even addressed a suffrage meeting. Connolly supported suffrage while Arthur Griffith, Dillon and McKenna were vehemently against, the latter even voting for the force feeding of women prisoners.

20. (page 65) Dr Margaret Ward.

21. (page 69) After his death his furniture and effects were sold at auction on the 8th November. Among other items was a French clock which had been presented to Sir Richard Wallace, which was bought by R.E. Herdman. It was sold again recently at auction for £780.



A 19th Century French marble and gilt bronze mantel clock
The arched case surmounted by a horn and quiver of arrows over a front panel applied with a couple in an embrace flanked by running ivy leaves, on a plinth base and block feet, the 4.25 inch Roman dial with engine turned centre and Breguet-style hands, the movement with outside countwheel strike on a bell 42cms (16.5ins) high.

22. (page 76) Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685. It was law that had been in force since 1598 and granted toleration to Protestants in an overwhelmingly Catholic country. When the law was revoked many French Protestants, the Huguenots fled France.

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