

CHAPTER 15

Patrick O'Kelly and the Interpretation of the 1798 Rebellion in County Kildare

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Introduction

The bicentenary of the 1798 rebellion witnessed enormous popular and academic interest. Kildare was well served among the huge range of publications that appeared to coincide with the anniversary.¹ This marked another stage in the long process of telling and retelling the story of 1798, which stretches back to the immediate aftermath of the rebellion. Indeed, much of the recent reappraisal of the 1790s has been based on a critical re-evaluation of nineteenth century and twentieth century histories of the period.² This article continues the process by assessing the historiography of the 1790s and the rebellion in County Kildare. The intention is not to create a canon of Kildare historians of the rebellion, but rather to re-assess the ways in which the stories of 1798 were told and retold in Kildare and, in particular, to examine a number of historians who have heretofore received little attention from modern historians of the 1790s. The article concentrates on written, mainly published, narratives of the rebellion, though it should be borne in mind that other, non-written, ways of remembering 1798 were often as important, sometimes more important, than these written texts. Most significantly, the centenary of the rebellion witnessed meetings and rallies in various parts of County Kildare, while the grave of Theobald Wolfe Tone, at Bodenstown, slowly became an important site for nationalist and republican commemoration from the middle of the nineteenth century.³

The rebellion in Kildare did not feature prominently in the voluminous accounts of the insurrection published in the decades following 1798. Most nineteenth century historians of the rebellion concentrated on the action in Wexford, the rising elsewhere in Leinster appeared in many histories as an introductory chapter, that of Ulster as a puzzling side-show and the French invasion of Connaught as an epilogue.⁴ The scale of the rebellion in Wexford, as well as the degree of rebel success there, explains the historical concentration

on that county, particularly by those who wished to make a political point. However, this does not adequately explain why so little was written about Kildare, particularly by prominent ex-rebel leaders such as William Aylmer, George Lube and Hugh Ware, the Timahoe-based trio who remained in the field for almost two months. Indeed, both Aylmer and Ware established successful military careers in Europe in the early nineteenth century and were therefore ideally placed to provide an assessment of the Irish rebellion. Aylmer died prematurely (aged 42) in Jamaica in 1820 of wounds received at the battle of Rio de la Hache.⁵ George Lube, it appears, also died quite young, possibly after his arrival in the United States in the early nineteenth century.⁶ Hugh Ware died in France in 1846 and, according to Miles Byrne, had prepared some material on the 1798 rebellion in Kildare for William James MacNeven, intended for publication, but to date not located.⁷

Though in some senses accidental, the silence of Aylmer, Lube and Ware also reflected the fact that there was no public post-rebellion debate in Kildare about the events of 1798. In part, this resulted from divisions within the political establishment in the county, dominated by the Fitzgerald (Leinster) interest, which were neither as pronounced nor as even sided in Kildare as they were in Wexford. In Kildare, the rebellion was best forgotten. Liberals such as Thomas Wogan Browne, Maurice Keatinge and Thomas Fitzgerald had been tainted with rebellion, while John Esmonde had been executed for his role at Prosperous. Even the duke of Leinster was not beyond suspicion.⁸ However at a local level there was no wish on the part of loyalists to oust the duke from his position of political pre-eminence, an impossible task given the sheer scale of the duke's influence. The small but powerful group of conservatives in the county, centred on the commander of the Kildare Militia, John Wolfe, looked to Dublin Castle for support. They did not seek to use the rebellion as a springboard for political opportunism locally, though Wolfe ran unsuccessfully for parliament in 1802. Indeed Thomas Rawson of Glasealy, one of the duke's most ardent political opponents, later acknowledged the importance of the duke's mere residence in the county.⁹ In addition, the debate about the union upset political allegiances in Kildare. Conservatives such as John Wolfe or the La Touche family were joined by the Leinster influence in opposing the union, while pro-unionists counted among their ranks liberals like Maurice Keatinge and Fenton Aylmer, as well as conservatives like the marquis of Drogheda and the earl of Mayo. Such divisions reduced the possibility of a unified response to the rebellion, particularly as a public response was not in the interest of either political grouping.¹⁰

Two historians produced significant interpretations of the 1798 rebellion in Kildare in the early and mid nineteenth century. Richard Musgrave's exhaustively detailed account of the rebellion typified the 'loyalist' interpretation of 1798. Even more important was the history produced by the Kildare born academic Patrick O'Kelly. It will be argued that his presentation of events informed what Mario Corrigan has termed the 'fiercely nationalistic'

centenary commemorations in the county, and indeed constituted the basic interpretation of the 1798 rebellion in Kildare which dominated until quite recently.¹¹ However, alternative portrayals of events by witnesses were also provided during the nineteenth century, including the accounts of informers like Thomas Reynolds (in a work written by his son) and Bernard Duggan, as well as the localised accounts of Quakers such as Mary Leadbeater, Abraham Shackleton and Elizabeth Pim. This article suggests that these accounts of 1798 deserve more attention than they have traditionally received.

The Loyalist Interpretation

Richard Musgrave's massive *Memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland from the arrival of the English* contained the most exhaustive account of events in Kildare in 1798 produced during the nineteenth century.¹² His celebrated ultra-loyalist analysis was first published in 1801 and quickly ran through three editions. One of his prime concerns was the possibility that an act of union would be accompanied by Catholic emancipation in an attempt to woo support from the Catholic gentry and clergy. For Musgrave, the 1798 rebellion was essentially sectarian, another example of the unreliability of Irish Catholics, in the tradition of Sir John Temple's work on the 1641 rebellion.¹³ Despite its ideological limitations, Musgrave's work provided a detailed, if jaundiced, account of the rebellion by locality. Local informants from all over the country provided him with a wealth of information, embodying the stories of the suffering of Protestant communities, which emerged after the rebellion. For instance, the section dealing with the Athy region bears the hallmark of the local loyalist Thomas Rawson, whose Loyal Athy Infantry garrisoned the town throughout the rebellion.¹⁴

Instances of extreme sectarian slaughter in Wexford, most notably at Scullabogue and Wexford Bridge, as well as the leadership role exerted by a number of Catholic priests facilitated the construction of a religious reading of the rebellion in that county. Kildare did not afford Musgrave such stark examples of sectarianism. However, a number of such episodes did occur on a smaller scale: the murders of Brewer and Stamer at Prosperous, the killing of nineteen Protestant Yeoman at Rathangan (including the elderly land agent James Spencer) and the murder of James Crawford and his granddaughter at Kildare town.¹⁵ In addition, Musgrave embellished his accounts of sectarian attacks for maximum effect. Following the murder of Crawford, he commented, 'While these blood hounds continued their sanguinary orgies in the night, they constantly exclaimed against hereticks [*sic*] and orangemen'.¹⁶ He related that at Rathangan: 'They killed one Coyle a shoemaker, far advanced in years because he could not cross himself; but on finding him to be a heretick [*sic*], they compelled him to cross himself as well as he could with his left hand, superstitiously believing, that the doing so would inevitably doom him to eternal damnation'.¹⁷ Musgrave's account reads as a series of isolated incidents narrated by town, based presumably on the information he received

from informants in a given area. Thus, while the rebellion was the result of a popish plot, it was carried out in a frenzy of sectarian bloodlust, and exhibited little overall coherence or political motivation beyond the extermination of Irish Protestants and 'their' administration.

Musgrave's interpretation found an echo among sections of the Protestant population in Kildare. When the Church of Ireland bishop, Charles Lindsay, visited Rathangan in 1804, he found that the church was still 'a kind of citadel', with 'the windows half built up with loop holes for firing upon an attacking populace'. He added: 'As yet the remembrance of the treason is too fresh to be overruled by reason and decency'.¹⁸ The rebels had briefly occupied Rathangan, which helps to explain the continuing fear of attack in subsequent years. A similar attitude can be found in some written accounts of the rebellion emanating from the county. Thomas Rawson, probably one of Musgrave's most important Kildare informants, used his *Statistical survey of the county of Kildare*, published by the Dublin Society in 1807, as an opportunity to comment on the events of 1798. He provided a basic and brief outline of the major engagements in his county, adding little to the stock of information provided by Musgrave.¹⁹ Rawson severely criticised what he considered the lenient attitude to the rebels, implicitly of the Lord Lieutenant Cornwallis, and explicitly of the midlands government commander General Dundas, whose extremely defensive policy during the rebellion had left Athy in a precarious position during late May 1798. Commenting on the surrender of rebels to Dundas at Kilcullen he wrote: '...they gave up such arms as were completely useless; and three out of four thousand immediately joined their friends at Vinegar Hill in the county of Wexford'.²⁰ Like Musgrave, Rawson saw the rebellion in terms of a popish plot and continually reported to government signs of impending massacre of Protestants in the years after the rebellion.²¹

A similar loyalist perspective of events in Kildare emerges in a work published by J. Jones in Dublin the year after the rebellion entitled: *An impartial narrative of the most important engagements which took place between His Majesty's forces and the rebels during the Irish rebellion, 1798*.²² This short and rather uneven publication contained a remarkably detailed account of events in the barony of Carbery, in north-west Kildare, during the rebellion.²³ This suggests an unidentified local source, closely linked to the Tyrrell family of Clonard who play a prominent role in the author's account. 'The action centred on the Tyrrell residence and the threat posed by rebels based at Timahoe who 'had collected a very considerable force, and every night committed some outrage or depredation'.²⁴ The author suggested that the counter-offensive launched by government forces against the Timahoe rebels in early June was a complete success, whereas in reality it temporarily dispersed one group of rebels.²⁵ The centrepiece of the narrative is a lengthy account of the battle of Clonard, outlining the suffering of Mrs Tyrrell, for a short period a rebel prisoner.²⁶ Rich in local detail, the key point of the narrative was to stress the battle for survival faced by isolated Protestant communities.

An interesting illustration of how the rebellion was interpreted by ultra-loyalists is provided by the case of Maynooth College, which had been established in 1795. In 1799, Patrick Duignan launched a bitter attack on the College's supposed involvement in the rebellion. 'It was currently reported, and very generally believed,' he wrote, 'that about thirty six Romanish students from this monastery, had on the breaking out of the rebellion, joined the insurgents, and fought at Kilcock and other places against the King's troops'.²⁷ He also asserted that up to seventeen students had been expelled 'on account of the rebellion'.²⁸ His underlying argument questioned the wisdom of state support for the nascent Catholic institution, but he also re-enforced the sectarian rebellion argument. The president of the college, Revd Peter Flood, directly countered his accusations in a pamphlet published in 1800. He rejected totally the allegations that any of the sixty-nine students under his authority had been involved in the rebellion. He also carefully pointed out that ten students had been expelled from the college before the rebellion, on 12 May 1798, for United Irish membership or, in the case of two students, for refusing to answer questions.²⁹ In reality the college found itself in an impossible position between rebel threats to force students to participate in the conflict and the accusations of Duignan and the Dublin newspapers.³⁰ As Patrick Corish has pointed out, the teaching staff (both French and Irish) were undeniably hostile to both the French Revolution and its Irish manifestations, though this failed to halt the accusers.³¹

Kevin Whelan has noted that loyalist histories of 1798 were not those of 'a monolithic protestant community, but a faction within it'.³² For James Alexander, a native of Harristown in King's County (on the Kildare border), the roots of the rebellion, or the 'mischief in embryo', were clearly traceable to the growing political awareness and disaffection of the lower orders as far back as 1793.³³ Alexander and other liberal protestants argued that the blocking of political reform in the mid-1790s and the military excesses of the later 1790s were crucial to understanding the rebellion, thus providing a counterweight to the analysis of loyalists like Musgrave and contemporary support for leniency and reform as the surest methods of pacification.³⁴

The 'Rebel' Analysis

This analysis of the rebellion was surprisingly similar to that of many ex-rebels who wrote about the events of 1798. Thomas Addis Emmet, for instance, claimed that the immediate reason for the outbreak of rebellion was the excessive force employed by government forces in County Kildare.³⁵ A conspicuous example of military excess in Kildare was provided by Watty Cox's *Irish Magazine*. In 1810 a short article appeared which portrayed Captain Swayne as the archetypal pitchcapper, a form of torture which involved pouring pitch on the victim's head and setting it alight. Swayne's barbarity was depicted as the reason for the attack on the garrison at Prosperous on 24 May 1798 by the 'wretched peasants', which resulted in the annihilation of the

militia force stationed there. Meanwhile the humane doctor, John Esmonde, led the rebels because of his horror at Swayne's cruelty.³⁶ It is worth noting at this point that the Prosperous rebel Bernard Duggan informed R.R. Madden that Cox's account was untrue and that Swayne had not used the pitchcap as a method of torture at Prosperous.³⁷

The sheer ferocity of the battle at Prosperous and the role played by John Esmonde within it were the subject of some debate in the nineteenth century, during the course of which it became one of the most celebrated incidents of the rebellion in Kildare, not least because it provided the United Irishmen with their first substantial victory. The Carlow rebel William Farrell agreed with the account published in *The Irish Magazine*, that 'Swayne [was] so confident of his power that he ravaged the country without mercy, putting pitchcaps on the people's heads and setting them on fire for mere merriment'.³⁸ For Farrell, Swayne's activities were the direct cause of the rebellion, though he implicitly suggests that the United Irish organisation formed the basis of the counter-attack.³⁹

This minimisation of the role of the United Irishmen is further evident in writings by, and about, two of Kildare's most famous revolutionary figures: Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Valentine Lawless, second Lord Cloncurry after his father's death in 1799. Neither participated in the 1798 rebellion, but both were deeply involved in the United Irish organisation and intimately linked with County Kildare. Thomas Moore's *The life and death of Lord Edward Fitzgerald*, which appeared in 1831, was effectively presented as Fitzgerald's memoirs (and was in fact republished under that title by Martin MacDermott in 1897).⁴⁰ The work tells us as much about Moore and his informants as it does about the subject. Essentially, Moore presents Fitzgerald as a heroic, romantic aristocrat, not a military man nor an ardent revolutionary. As Whelan puts it, Fitzgerald was 'cleaned up ... for edifying Whig consumption'.⁴¹ The reader gains little impression of the revolutionary atmosphere created by Fitzgerald in Kildare, which is clearly presented elsewhere, for example in the diary of his radical sister Lucy.⁴² This was exacerbated by the increasingly mundane nature of Fitzgerald's letters to his mother, Emily, duchess of Leinster, after 1794, though papers recently made available to the public should facilitate a reappraisal of Fitzgerald's activities in the 1790s.⁴³ Fitzgerald's entrance into a pantheon of romantic nationalist heroes at Moore's hands inspired a plethora of other inadequate biographies, including works by Ida Taylor, John Lindsay and Patrick Byrne.⁴⁴ Valentine Lawless published his *Personal recollections* in 1849, shortly before his death.⁴⁵ It distanced him from the revolutionary militancy of the United Irishmen in the 1790s. He claimed to have taken the United Irish oath before it was 'rendered illegal', later being unwittingly elected a member of the executive directory (autumn 1797) of which he attended one meeting in October 1797.⁴⁶ He stressed his role in Kildare's liberal political scene during 1797 and placed the genesis of the rebellion in the intransigent blocking of constitutional opposition politics. On

a personal level he blamed his two terms of imprisonment in the later 1790s on his public anti-union stance and for good measure included a reprint of his 1797 anti-union pamphlet, *Thoughts on the projected union between Great Britain and Ireland*.⁴⁷ Two years after his death, in 1853, W.J. Fitzpatrick produced a biography, which failed to uncover the extent of Cloncurry's United Irish involvement (indeed this remains a problematic question) despite the inclusion of much fresh material.⁴⁸ The process of romanticisation, most clearly exhibited in the posthumous treatment of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, obscures the political reality of Kildare's United Irish organisation. One could add further examples of the de-politicisation of leading Kildare radicals. William Drummond's edited *Autobiography of Archibald Hamilton Rowan*, first published in 1840, six years after its subject's death, actively downplayed Hamilton Rowan's radicalism in the early 1790s.⁴⁹ Meanwhile Charles Hamilton Teeling described the north Kildare rebel leader, William Aylmer, 'at the head of his invincible band; winning by his courage and his conduct the admiration of hostile ranks'.⁵⁰

The image of the rebels in Kildare which emerged from most of the histories discussed above, both at the leadership level and among the rank and file, was one of ferocity rather than organisation, bravery rather than political principle. A similar presentation emerges from the pages of arguably the most important history of the rebellion in Kildare: Patrick O'Kelly's *General history* published in 1842. In many senses O'Kelly's work was a classic example of the retreat from radicalism symptomatic of so many ex-rebel histories. The response to the rebellion by many conservative former United Irishmen was to place the rising in the context of military excesses and contingent factors rather than in the United Irish organisation.

Patrick O'Kelly's *General history* (1842)

Patrick O'Kelly was the only ex-rebel from Kildare who published a full account of the 1798 rebellion. 'My father,' he wrote at the start of his *General history*, 'Sylvester O'Kelly of Kilcoo, was one of the old tenantry on the Leinster estate, occupying two large farms, Kilcoo and Coolroe, which lie within a mile or thereabouts of the town of Athy'.⁵¹ As a young man he became involved in the United Irishmen and 'took my stand among the people'.⁵² During the rebellion he participated in what he termed 'two days of marching and countermarching with the Athy men' before playing a rather curious role in the mass surrender of United Irishmen at Knockallen near Kilcullen.⁵³ He succeeded to his father's estate in 1803, but left his brother John and his mother in charge of the farms and emigrated with his wife and children to the United States.⁵⁴ According to his own testimony O'Kelly founded a 'flourishing academy' at Baltimore. On the death of his brother John, O'Kelly returned to Ireland, hoping to renew the leases on the family's land. However, on 1 May 1825 the leases expired and were not renewed. Interestingly, O'Kelly pointed out that the duke of Leinster's land agent, Harry Hamilton, had announced:

'Don't send for the Colonel; he shall never get a perch of the Duke [of Leinster]'s land'.⁵⁵ He emigrated later to France, where he taught languages at Versailles for seven years. He returned to Ireland around 1832, and while he may have resided intermittently in France, notably after the publication of the *General history* in 1842, he remained largely in Dublin until his death on 11 July 1858.⁵⁶

O'Kelly's most celebrated publication was undoubtedly his translation of Abbé MacGeoghegan's *Histoire de l'Irlande, ancienne et moderne, tiré des monumens les plus authentiques*, originally published in three volumes in Paris between 1758 and 1762. O'Kelly's edition first appeared in 1831 and quickly went through multiple reprints and re-editions.⁵⁷ Vincent Geoghegan has argued that MacGeoghegan's text with its themes of 'land, religion and national integrity' appealed to nineteenth century Irish nationalists. He suggests that this was particularly pertinent to the construction of an Irish 'conservative radicalism' given the collapse of the 1798 rebellion.⁵⁸ It is possible that O'Kelly's interest in the work derived in part from his own personal retreat from the radicalism of the United Irishmen, so evident in his *General history*. In 1855 O'Kelly published a continuation of MacGeoghegan's *Histoire*, covering the period 1692 to 1855. In reality much of the text deals with the years 1790-1803 (over 200 of the 384 pages). By way of introduction he quoted from the conclusion to MacGeoghegan's work, a passage that had caused controversy during the initial publication of the *Histoire* for its apparent anti-English and Jacobite vehemence.⁵⁹ O'Kelly made a similar statement in his own introduction: "The estates of the Irish were literally robbed from them, to satiate his [William of Orange] Dutch and English followers with the fortunes of the Irish people. Their religion was trampled upon, their valiant defenders, known to every ear as the Irish brigade, were forced to become exiles in a foreign land, their privations and wrongs have descended upon us their posterity".⁶⁰

O'Kelly's *General history* remains one of the more obscure histories of the 1798 rebellion. The author was a relatively minor figure from a region which produced an ineffectual mobilisation in 1798. Works by more prominent ex-rebels (Charles Hamilton Teeling, Thomas Cloney, Edward Hay or Joseph Holt) had already appeared. Moreover, the *General history* was published in the same year as the first volumes of R.R. Madden's popular *The United Irishmen: their lives and times* in 1842. The rebellion in Kildare portrayed by O'Kelly was a poorly led, spontaneous and disorganised revolt, but was nonetheless heroic. He had to acknowledge the existence of a strong United Irish organisation but stressed the level of pre-rebellion establishment violence as the key contributing factor to the outbreak, which he describes as follows: "The opening of the rebellion in all its horrifying shapes devolved upon the county of Kildare *more from chance than design* ... there was an exemption for that county not to take the field so soon as the other counties and cities of the kingdom, in consequence of the commander and chief Lord Edward, and many others, who

had been elected by their respective baronies to command the United Irish army [having been arrested].⁶¹ Thus Michael Reynolds of Johnstown in attacking Naas on 24 May 'acted solely from himself' and the rebellion in Properous was the result of the 'tyrannical sway of Captain Swayne'.⁶² Throughout his account O'Kelly stressed the reactive nature of the rebellion carried out by a 'brave and dauntless peasantry'.

In common with the histories of many other former rebels, O'Kelly's was a personal and political *apologia*. Following the failure of the United Irishmen, including O'Kelly, to mount an attack on Athy between 24 and 26 May 1798, O'Kelly tells us that he was deputed to make contact with rebels encamped at Knockallen outside Kilcullen. The camp had already sued for peace with General Dundas and O'Kelly's mission was probably connected to the plans of the government commander at Athy, Colonel Campbell, to march his force north, to subdue the rebels.⁶³ O'Kelly was involved in the surrender that was duly concluded at Knockallen on 28 May. No other historian (not even the detailed Musgrave) mentions his role in the episode but it would surely have been a curious story to fabricate.⁶⁴ His claim to have been 'in his 17th year' certainly appears to have been bogus, probably an attempt to excuse his United Irish activities through immaturity. The combined evidence of cemetery records and an obituary notice in the *Freeman's Journal* suggest he was between 22 and 25 in 1798.⁶⁵ O'Kelly suggested further that he had received a promotion within the United Irish army (Colonel) in conjunction with the specific task of concluding the surrender at Knockallen. This was quite clearly an attempt at vindication and possibly related to the loss of his family lands in 1825 ('Don't send for the Colonel').⁶⁶ He claimed that he 'remained tranquilly at home'⁶⁷ after the Knockallen surrender and his knowledge of events in the north Kildare area is certainly sketchy. However his comment that one of those to fight in the vicinity of Timahoe was 'eminent for his classical effusions, [and] frequently quoted lines from a lyrical poet', a device which O'Kelly repeatedly used in his own work, is quite possibly a reference to himself.⁶⁸ O'Kelly's history of the 1798 rebellion in Kildare was an attempt at personal and general vindication. Its publication was probably linked to his attempts to re-establish himself in Ireland from the 1830s. He never adequately explained his departure from Ireland in 1803 and he veiled his United Irish involvement, notably behind the role of peacemaker at Knockallen. His retreat from militant republicanism is plainly reflected in the *General history*.

Alternative Interpretations: Reynolds and Duggan

The sectarian and reactive models of interpretation of 1798 in Kildare (and elsewhere) came to dominate the historiography of the subject during the early nineteenth century. But from the early and mid-nineteenth century a number of writers began to provide alternative narratives of the 1790s and the rebellion in Kildare, however these were frequently overlooked as too compromised or too localised to be of serious historical value. Moreover, the fact that they failed

to fit neatly into either of the dominant historiographical camps ensured that they were sidelined. Accounts produced by Thomas Reynolds and Bernard Duggan were considered highly unreliable because of their activities as government informers. While Patrick O'Kelly was concerned to re-package his part within the United Irishmen, and their role within the rebellion as a whole, Reynolds and Duggan had no need to so. In fact, their involvement in the United Irish organisation and the rebellion indicated their importance, and in Duggan's case assisted his attempts to ingratiate himself with nationalist sympathisers. Meanwhile, the apparently neutral accounts of three Quakers, the celebrated Mary Leadbeater, her brother Abraham Shackleton and the more obscure Elizabeth Pim provided highly personal but extremely localised versions of events, which outlined their difficulties in maintaining their pacifist convictions.⁶⁹

The life of Thomas Reynolds (the subject died in 1836) was written by his son, also named Thomas, and published in 1839. The work tells us little about the rebellion, but is particularly informative on the Kildare United Irishmen in the years before 1798. Reynolds, a Dublin silk manufacturer, had been involved in the Catholic agitation of the early 1790s. Despite siding with the conservative faction of the Catholic movement during the temporary split in 1792, he was elected to the Catholic Convention or Back Lane parliament later in the same year. In early 1797 he became a member of the United Irish organisation. His son later unconvincingly claimed that Reynolds believed that the society was primarily constitutional, its avowed aims, Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform. Later claims that Reynolds had intentionally infiltrated the United Irishmen for financial reward are inconclusive. It is more likely that he became involved from a viewpoint of social mobility, with little commitment to radical politics (or militancy). At a number of Dublin meetings he quickly realised the level of violent republicanism involved, and informally disassociated himself from the group.⁷⁰

Towards the end of 1797 Reynolds was granted possession of Kilkea Castle in south Kildare by the Leinster family. In November of the same year he was approached by Lord Edward Fitzgerald who asked Reynolds to replace him as Colonel of the United Irishmen of the barony of Kilkea and Moone, to which Reynolds agreed. Reynolds appears to have viewed the approach as a dangerous invitation to social prestige in his new locality, one he could hardly refuse given its origin. He rose quickly in the United Irish ranks in the county and by February 1798 attended a county meeting where he was appointed county treasurer and thereby a delegate to the Leinster provincial of the United Irishmen.⁷¹ It was at this point, claimed his son, that Reynolds began to have serious doubts about his new role, given a growing awareness of developing United Irish militancy, and he started to pass information to government via an acquaintance named William Cope. Most spectacularly, this resulted in the arrest of most of the Leinster provincial delegates who assembled at Oliver Bond's house in Dublin on 12 March 1798.⁷² Reynolds anonymity was blown

in May 1798 when his house was free-quartered by an unsuspecting military force, which eventually arrested him, forcing him to reveal himself as the Bond informant.⁷³ Unlike other 1798 informers, Reynolds agreed to testify in open court and his evidence was crucial in securing capital convictions against Oliver Bond, John McCann and William Michael Byrne.⁷⁴ In hindsight Fitzgerald's approach was a massive tactical error made from a viewpoint of expediency. Reynolds had proved neither his abilities as a radical politician nor a militant revolutionary.

Reynold's son's biography was intended as an *apologia* designed to clear his father's tarnished reputation. However, it was the traitorous image presented later, in the work of R.R. Madden and W.J. Fitzpatrick, which endured.⁷⁵ The fact that the apparently financially stretched Reynolds was handsomely rewarded for his services (though he viewed an official appointment as British consul to Iceland in 1817 as a dubious honour) seemed to discount his son's information or the fact that he had not initially set out to infiltrate the United Irishmen. His son went to great lengths, again unconvincingly, to prove his father was in a stable financial position and therefore in no need of government support.⁷⁶ In his son's *Life* the threatening existence of a powerful United Irish organisation proved the necessity of Thomas Reynolds' betrayal. Therefore his son had no need to distance his subject from or downplay the level of radical politics. A strong United Irish force, discussing realistic plans for rebellion, with or without the French, emerges from the biography. In Kildare, the role of Lord Edward Fitzgerald was crucial, connected with figures like Michael Reynolds, Matthew Kenna, Malachi Delany and George Cummins. More importantly, Reynolds connected a more articulate, influential and affluent group of liberals including Daniel Caulfield, John Esmond, Maurice Keatinge, Thomas Fitzgerald, Charles Lumm and Thomas Wogan Browne to the United Irishmen. Of course, it could be argued that the biography is an exaggeration in retrospect. However, Reynolds had personally presented an even stronger and more dangerous impression of the United Irishmen in Kildare during information given to the Privy Council in May 1798.⁷⁷ It is not intended to suggest that Reynolds was a thoroughly reliable source, simply that he had no need to conceal his United Irish involvement. In his doomed portrayal of his father as 'Irish saviour' not 'Irish traitor' Thomas Reynolds junior presents the Kildare United Irishmen as a strongly organised, well-led movement, preparing for insurrection – in stark contrast to the brave but doomed rebels depicted by O'Kelly.

Of course the information supplied by Reynolds does not relate to the rebellion but to its genesis. The little-known Prosperous participant Bernard Duggan wrote the only published account of the rebellion by a former Kildare rebel, other than Patrick O'Kelly, in the mid-nineteenth century. Two narratives composed by Duggan survive. The most substantial was written for R.R. Madden in 1838 and published in his *The United Irishmen: their lives and times* in 1846.⁷⁸ A second narrative was prepared for John Cornelius

O'Callaghan in the early 1840s and published by W.J. Fitzpatrick in *The sham squire*. The latter deals exclusively with the 1803 rising and its aftermath.⁷⁹ Duggan was born in County Tyrone, six miles from the Armagh border, in 1774.⁸⁰ During the 1790s he was involved in cotton manufacturing in Prosperous where he participated in the rebellion in 1798. He was later involved closely in Robert Emmet's plans for insurrection in 1803. He eluded capture after the abortive rising that took place, but was finally taken in Dublin in February 1805.⁸¹ He was released from prison on 12 July 1806.⁸² When Madden received Duggan's account he initially considered him 'a man of the very stamp of [William Putnam] McCabe'⁸³, but he learned later that Duggan had been an informer in the pay of Major Sirr since at least 1819.⁸⁴ In fact, Fitzpatrick claimed in *The sham squire* that Duggan, 'a master of duplicity', had been exposed as an informer by Sir John Gray in the early 1840s. Gray had discovered voluminous correspondence from Duggan to Major Sirr (among papers in the possession of Sirr's son, Revd Joseph Darcy Sirr) including a receipt dating from 1806 which suggests Duggan was released on condition that he provide information to government.⁸⁵ Duggan's accounts were undoubtedly designed to ingratiate him, as a brave old patriot, with nineteenth century political activists, particularly those who wished to resurrect the memory of 1798. In common with Reynolds he actively acknowledged his own importance and had no reason to downplay his role within the United Irishmen in 1798.

While Duggan's account is narrowly local, its general thrust is important. He stated that the rising which commenced at Prosperous on 24 May 1798 was the result of an order from 'the United men's committee' not a spontaneous reaction; John Esmonde was 'commanding general over the people' not a man motivated simply by the plight of his neighbours. In fact, when specifically asked about Cox's article (discussed above) Duggan denied that Swayne had used pitchcapping in Prosperous, though he had certainly flogged suspects to extract information, burned houses and made a number of arrests.⁸⁶ Unfortunately Duggan inexplicably glossed over the events at Timahoe during June and July 1798. While he made little attempt to analyse the underlying motivation for the events of 1798 or 1803, the rising in Prosperous which he portrayed was more organised than the reactive revolt of O'Kelly.⁸⁷

Alternative Interpretations: Quaker Accounts

While the reputations of Reynolds and Duggan were certainly compromised, the accounts of the Quakers Mary Leadbeater, Abraham Shackleton and Elizabeth Pim appear to be those of neutral observers.⁸⁸ Leadbeater's accounts of the events in the small Quaker village of Ballitore were not published until 1862, as the *Annals of Ballitore*, part of *The Leadbeater papers*.⁸⁹ Kevin O'Neill has argued that Leadbeater is best understood as a 'peaceful rebel'. In general, her religious viewpoint lent a natural sympathy towards late eighteenth century Irish republicanism. Specific examples, such as her relationship with the United

Irish activist Malachi Delany, indicate an attraction to radical politics.⁹⁰ O'Neill has concluded that Leadbeater's activities during the 1790s 'provide evidence of a far deeper engagement with the revolutionary politics of the 1790s than other sources would lead us to suspect from a woman in a small Irish village'.⁹¹ As he notes, however, her committed, religion-based pacifism informed her view of the rebellion as a disastrous event. Leadbeater's account of the rebellion reveals the confusion, panic and horror, which it unleashed. She was in an advantageous position to record the activities of the United Irishmen who used Ballitore as a temporary base from 24 May (under Malachi Delany, whom she effectively exonerates) until it was retaken by government forces three days later. Some Quaker property was destroyed and Mary's family was personally threatened, but she made no attempt to cast the rebellion as a sectarian affair, recording the excesses perpetrated by both sides. For instance, the killings of Squire Yeates, a Yeoman, by the rebels, and Frank Johnson, possibly a United Irishman, by government troops, are both detailed.⁹² In this sense Leadbeater provides a valuable, human and, perhaps, as neutral an account as possible of the events of 1798.

Mary Leadbeater's brother, Abraham Shackleton, who had taken charge of the school in Ballitore in 1779, also produced a short account of the events of 1798, which appeared anonymously in Thomas Hancock's *The principles of peace* in 1826.⁹³ Shackleton outlined his attempts to pacify the rebels, protect the villagers who sought sanctuary in his home and intervene in potentially dangerous situations, resulting in his semi-official role as an intermediary between the United Irish rebels and the government forces at Athy under Colonel Campbell. He indicated that the re-occupation of the village resulted in as much destruction as had been perpetrated by the rebels. Shackleton claimed to have commented in a contemporary letter to Colonel Campbell: 'It is said, that they had formed a conspiracy for general massacre: no such disposition was apparent the two days that we of this town were entirely in their power ... A.S. believes that no such conspiracy exists, and that it is conceived only in the fears of men of property, who are alarmed at thoughts of losing it'.⁹⁴

A second Quaker woman, Elizabeth Pim, recorded her experiences of the rebellion in Rathangan. Unfortunately we know very little about Pim's life, nor do we know when the account was written. Elizabeth Pim was married in or before 1798 to William Pim. The account was probably written in the early to mid-nineteenth century, when the author was 'in her ninety first year'.⁹⁵ Elizabeth Pim was certainly related to Robert Goodbody who recorded his own experiences of the rebellion in his unpublished autobiography written in 1855. Goodbody's account provides some corroborating evidence for Pim's. For instance Goodbody records how one Robert Woodcock was shielded from government soldiers by 'Eliza Pim', almost certainly the author, who recounts a similar scenario.⁹⁶ The passage of time between the events detailed and their recording must cast some doubt on the reliability of Pim's account, particularly

since the dates recorded appear to be confused and inaccurate. Indeed, Pim's narrative is much shorter than that of Mary Leadbeater. Like Ballitore, the United Irishmen occupied Rathangan, in this case under the leadership of John Doorly (curiously Pim does not mention him) during the first week of the rebellion, from the morning of 26 May to 28 May.⁹⁷ Pim stressed the difficulties in maintaining Quaker neutrality, though her own family pointedly refused to leave the town when the regular forces retreated, or to enter a protective garrison. She recorded the murder of nineteen Protestants by the rebels when they took the town, remarking that: 'Those who went out of the garrison being Protestants were murdered'.⁹⁸ In general the Pims were not seriously threatened by the United Irish occupation, though Elizabeth creates the impression of a disorganised, and indeed intoxicated, rebel presence reflective of the fact that they had achieved their short term objectives.⁹⁹ In common with the experience at Ballitore, the re-occupation was accompanied by a period of panic-stricken vandalism on the part of rank and file soldiers who seriously wounded Robert Woodcock, one of the Pim's apprentices. To the soldiers Elizabeth Pim described her family as: 'not rebels but prisoners in our own houses'.¹⁰⁰ In general, Elizabeth Pim had less sympathy for the United Irish cause than Mary Leadbeater. She makes no attempt to account for the rebellion, though she clearly illustrates the violence unleashed by both sides during the conflict.

Modern Interpretations

While the testimonies of Reynolds, Duggan, Leadbeater, Shackleton and Pim suggested that Kildare's rebellion was not the sectarian plot of Musgrave or the protective rising of O'Kelly, none managed to produce a sustained account of the entire rebellion. The most prominent nineteenth century debunking of the 'reactive rebellion', outlined in Miles Byrne's *Memoirs*, published in 1863, was strongly rejected by the key history of 1798 written in the late 1800s, by Father Patrick Kavanagh. Byrne's presentation of a non-sectarian rebellion inspired by a well organised secret society proved deeply subversive given the nature of the Fenian organisation in the Irish political landscape of the 1860s. Therefore, it has been argued that Kavanagh's work, which first appeared in 1870 and reached a fourth edition by the centenary anniversary of the rebellion in 1898, sought to eschew the moral acceptability of a secret revolutionary movement in favour of Catholic leadership. He presents the rising as the reaction of a 'defenceless people' to barbaric religious persecution in which Father John Murphy played the central heroic role.¹⁰¹ Kavanagh's account also concentrated on the Wexford theatre of events (which occupies 217 of the 288 pages in the 1898 edition), thus downplaying events on a national scale. If Kevin Whelan is correct in arguing that Kavanagh's 'perspective dominated the interpretation of 1798 both in the lead up to the centenary and in the creation of the new state itself' then his work was pivotal.¹⁰² Kavanagh's presentation of events in Kildare relies almost entirely on previously published material and most of it consists of a lengthy verbatim quotation from O'Kelly's *General history*.¹⁰³ O'Kelly's presentation of a reactive

rebellion suited Kavanagh's overall interpretation with its implicit rejection of Fenianism. Thus, through Kavanagh, it was O'Kelly's analysis which emerged as the dominant one during the late nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century, as evidenced by the writings of two Kildare priests on the rebellion in the county: Seosamh O'Muirthuile and Peadar MacSuibhne.¹⁰⁴ O'Muirthuile's work on the rising in Kildare was serialised in the Irish language magazine *Feasta* during 1948 and 1949 and a short bi-lingual version of his work was published by the National Graves Association in 1948 to mark the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the rebellion. The articles published in *Feasta* examined the origins of the rebellion in the Defenders and the United Irishmen. The account of the rebellion was based on local tradition as well as some primary and secondary sources, but the author failed to move beyond the interpretations of O'Kelly. O'Muirthuile viewed the rising as a 'heroic failure' which 'no Kildare man need ever be ashamed of'.¹⁰⁵ He concluded: 'It is not because they fanned the flame that we praise them, but because they kept the fight up for two long months longer than in any other county except the mountains of Wicklow'.¹⁰⁶

Peadar MacSuibhne's *Kildare in '98* was, according to the author, intended as 'an interim history of 1798 in Kildare'.¹⁰⁷ He carefully noted the inherent bias present in Patrick O'Kelly's history of the rebellion (not least at a personal level), but nonetheless concluded that it remained the 'most satisfactory account we have of the rising in Kildare and the adjoining counties'.¹⁰⁸ MacSuibhne's work is less a narrative of the rebellion in the county than a series of narratives organised by geographical location, borrowing extensively from Musgrave, O'Kelly and O'Muirthuile, as well as Thomas Pakenham's *The year of liberty: the great Irish rebellion of 1798* (London, 1969), with no attempt to present an overall analysis. It is worth noting that MacSuibhne included a substantial amount of important folk memory of the rebellion, collected by the author in Kildare.

Conclusion

Despite the alternative accounts produced by Reynolds, Duggan and Quaker sources, it was the rebellion of O'Kelly viewed through the prism of Kavanagh, O'Muirthuile and MacSuibhne, that came to dominate Kildare's historiography of 1798. This interpretation consciously rejected the sectarian perspective offered by Musgrave and others. Clearly, there were a number of sectarian murders in the course of the rebellion in Kildare, including the killings of Brewer and Sramer at Prosperous, James Spencer at Rathangan and George Crawford and his granddaughter at Kildare town, but this does not justify describing the entire rebellion in Kildare as 'sectarian'. Such incidents could also be explained in terms of loss of discipline and authority in the United Irish army. While it would be misleading to ignore the potency of sectarianism in late eighteenth century Ireland, the 1798 rebellion in Kildare was not a religious inspired pogrom. Ultimately, a monocausal sectarian interpretation fails to explain the geographical breadth of the rebellion. Clearly, the United Irish army in Kildare was largely Catholic, but this simply reflected

the religious composition of the county. Many of the envisaged leaders were in fact Protestant, most notably Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Valentine Lawless, Maurice Keatinge, Charles Lumm and Thomas Wogan Browne, though they had been arrested or placed under close observation prior to 24 May.¹⁰⁹ Lady Louisa Conolly, who had actively campaigned against Defenderism in Celbridge, and had watched hundreds of rebels quietly cross her lawn at Castletown in the early days of the rising, commented in June 1798: 'This business is too deep for a political head as mine to judge of but I still think it does not proceed from a religious cause...'¹¹⁰

If Musgrave and others had difficulty in welding the rebellion in Kildare to a sectarian plot, clearly O'Kelly and other rebel apologists had a similar problem in proving their case. Unlike Wexford, Kildare was openly recognised as a strong United Irish county with a well-organised rebel army. The reactive analysis, a rising forced on a suffering people by an undisciplined military, as enunciated by O'Kelly, is no more convincing than the sectarian. The extent of Captain Swayne's barbarity in the Prosperous area might explain the ferocity of the rising there but this does not explain why the equally brutalised region around Athy hesitated and failed. It is important to note that the areas where the United Irishmen were weakest: Carbery barony (which had been proclaimed under the terms of the draconian Insurrection Act in May 1797, thereby placing it under virtual martial law), Kilkea and Moone barony and West Narragh and Rheban barony, witnessed the most ineffectual rebel activity in the county. The crucial difference between Athy (or Castledermot) and Prosperous was that in the former the structures of the United Irish organisation had been decimated by the information supplied by Thomas Reynolds, and those arrested on that information, while in the latter the leadership remained intact, albeit under extreme pressure. To take another example, in the area around Kildare town the initial hesitancy of the rebels is best explained by the loss of its baronial representatives, George Cummins and Lord Edward Fitzgerald, placing the next in command, the more unreliable Roger McGarry, in control. It was shared membership of the United Irishmen that linked leaders such as Michael Reynolds (Naas), John Esmonde (Prosperous), John Doorly (Rathangan), Roger McGarry (Kildare town) and Malachi Delany (Narraghmore and Ballitore) with the rank and file participants in the rebellion. In other words, the rebellion was more than a simple backlash against military excesses during the spring of 1798.

Rejection of the sectarian and reactive models of interpretation, and an alternative emphasis on the military and political organisation of the United Irishmen, is not new. Marginalised writers in the nineteenth century made a similar case. Quakers like Mary Leadbeater refused to see the rebellion in simple sectarian terms.¹¹¹ Thomas Reynolds's son rejected the apologetic interpretation offered by ex-rebels to excuse their culpability and instead emphasised the strength of the United Irishmen in Kildare. To re-emphasise the importance of the United Irishmen is not to suggest that individual rebels

participated only for political ideals; social opportunism, personal vendetta, religious hatred or a simple spirit of adventure undoubtedly motivated some. But it is important to recognise why the United Irishmen were disconnected from the rebellion in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by authors such as O'Kelly. Future work on the social memory of rebellion in Kildare will, no doubt, provide further insights on the process of remembering the rebellion (and, indeed, forgetting it) in the county. More recently, historians have once again highlighted the role of the United Irishmen in the period 1791 to 1803. By rejecting the self-serving sectarian and reactive explanations, this will, hopefully, permit the emergence of a more nuanced and multi-causal analysis of the rebellion.

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75. W.J. Fitzpatrick, *The sham squire and the informants of 1798* (Dublin, 1895), 230-46; Madden, *The United Irishmen*, 3rd series, ii, 285-350.
76. Reynolds junior, *The life of Thomas Reynolds*, i, 53; for a different opinion see: *Dictionary of national biography*, xlviii, 75-7. Reynolds received £5,000 payment for his information between September 1798 and March 1799. The sum had apparently been agreed during early negotiations with William Cope, to whom he was in debt. Reynolds also received an annual pension of £1,000. It should be pointed out, at this rate, Reynolds did not recover his stated losses during the freequartering of his house until the early nineteenth century. However, Fitzgerald calculated that Reynolds had received £45,740 by the time of his death in 1836. The key point to bear in mind is that Reynolds was already highly placed within United Irish structures before he turned informer. See: John T. Gilbert, *Documents relating to Ireland, 1795-1804* (Dublin, 1893, reprinted Shannon, 1970), 18, 21, 23, 25, 26, 31; Fitzpatrick, *The sham squire*, 301-8.
77. Thomas Reynolds, information before the Privy Council, 1798 (National Archives, Rebellion Papers, 620/3/32/23); Reynolds junior, *The life of Thomas Reynolds*, i, 183-223.
78. 'Narrative of Bernard Duggan and notices of his associates' in Madden, *The United Irishmen*, iii, 96-116. Madden presented a slightly amended version of the original manuscript (Trinity College, Dublin, Madden Papers, 873/26, 30).
79. 'Personal narrative of Bernard Duggan' in Fitzpatrick, *The sham squire*, 279-286
80. Duggan's narrative, 1838 (Trinity College, Dublin, Madden Papers, 873/30), f. 25.
81. Chambers, *Rebellion in Kildare*, 118; Papers of Bernard Doogan [sic], Kilmainham Prison, 1805 (National Archives, Rebellion Papers, 620/14/136/6).
82. Cullen, *The Emmet Rising in Kildare*, 180.
83. Duggan's narrative, 1838 (Trinity College, Dublin, Madden Papers, 873/30), f. 19 [in Madden's hand].
84. W.H. Cogan to R.R. Madden, n.d. (Trinity College, Dublin, Madden Papers, 873/28).
85. Fitzpatrick, *The sham squire*, 272-9. The leading Kildare United Irishman in 1803, Michael Quigly, had quickly turned informer following his arrest. See: Chambers, *Rebellion in Kildare*, 118, and for a more sympathetic analysis, Cullen, *The Emmet Rising in Kildare*, 133-55.
86. 'Narrative of Bernard Duggan and notices of his associates' in Madden, *The United Irishmen*, iii, 98.
87. A 'patriotic' poem written by Duggan seems to argue that 'discord' or disorganisation ultimately defeated the rebels. Untitled, n.d. (Trinity College, Dublin, Madden Papers, 873/27).
88. For an analysis of some of the accounts of the rebellion written by women see: John Beatty, 'Protestant women of County Wexford and their narratives of the rebellion of 1798' in Daire Keogh and Nicholas Furlong (eds), *The women of 1798* (Dublin, 1998), 113-36, especially on the Quaker Dinah Goff, 118-21; John Beatty (ed.), *Protestant women's narratives of the Irish rebellion of 1798* (Dublin, 2001).

89. On the rebellion see: Leadbeater, *Papers*, i, 211-70; the original diaries are held in the National Library (MSS 9330-46). Recent work on Leadbeater includes: Nini Rodgers, 'Two Quakers and a utilitarian: the reaction of three Irish women writers to the problem of slavery, 1789-1807' in *Royal Irish Academy Proceedings*, C, 4 (2000), pp 137-57; Kevin O'Neill, 'Almost a gentlewoman: gender and adolescence in the diary of Mary Leadbeater' in Mary O'Dowd and Sabine Wichert (eds), *Chattel, servant or citizen: women's status in church, state and society* (Belfast, 1995), pp 91-102.
90. Kevin O'Neill, 'Mary Leadbeater: peaceful rebel' in Keogh and Purlong (eds), *The women of 1798*, 137-62; Leadbeater, *Papers*, i, 197-210.
91. O'Neill, 'Mary Leadbeater: peaceful rebel', 162.
92. Leadbeater, *Papers*, i, 221, 234-5. Similar conclusions, based on more extensive research, have been reached by Kevin O'Neill, who concludes that Leadbeater 'rejects a sectarian characterization of both the rising and its aftermath'. See: "'Woe to the oppressor of the poor!": Post-rebellion violence in Ballitore, County Kildare' in Bartlett, Dickson, Keogh and Whelan (eds), *1798: A bicentenary perspective*, pp 363-77.
93. For internal evidence that Shackleton was the author see: Hancock, *The principles of peace*, 23; *Dictionary of national biography*, li, 336; on Hancock see: Richard S. Harrison, *Biographical dictionary of Irish Quakers* (Dublin, 1997), 5. See also: Glynn Douglas, *Friends and 1798: Quaker witness to non-violence in 18th century Ireland* (Dublin, 1998), 59-67, 85-7.
94. Hancock, *The principles of peace*, 30-1.
95. On the Pim family see: Harrison, *Biographical dictionary*, 82-6; *Burke's Irish family records* (London, 1976), 476-84, especially 478; 'Recollections of Elizabeth Pim of Rathangan'.
96. 'Recollections of Elizabeth Pim of Rathangan'; Robert Goodbody's comments on the rebellion are quoted in Douglas, *Friends and 1798*, 35-8, the original autobiography is held at the Religious Society of Friends Historical Library, Dublin. Robert Goodbody's mother was also called Elizabeth Pim, but her husband's name was Mark not William, she died aged 82 on 16 November 1833, see: J.E. Ainsworth, 'Report on a typescript copy of a diary by Robert Goodbody covering the years 1788 to 1855' (National Library of Ireland reports on private collections, 445).
97. Chambers, *Rebellion in Kildare*, 80, 84.
98. 'Recollections of Elizabeth Pim of Rathangan'.
99. 'Recollections of Elizabeth Pim of Rathangan'.
100. 'Recollections of Elizabeth Pim of Rathangan'.
101. Kevin Whelan, '98 after '98: the politics of memory', 167-73; Anna Kinsella, "'Who fears to speak of '98": the nineteenth century interpretation of 1798' (M.Litt, T.C.D., 1991).
102. Kevin Whelan, '98 after '98: the politics of memory', 170
103. Kavanagh, *A popular history*, 25-52 deals with Counties Kildare, Dublin, Carlow, Meath, Westmeath and Cork; pages 31-7 contain a quotation from O'Kelly.
104. Seosamh O'Muirthuile, 'An t-ciri amach i gCill Dara 1798' in *Feastas*, iml. 1, uimh. 2-12 (Bealtaine 1948-Márta 1949), iml. 2, uimh. 1 (Aibreán, 1949); idem, *Kildare 1798 commemoration* (Kildare, 1948); Peadar MacSuibhne, *Kildare in '98* (Naas, 1978).
105. O'Muirthuile, *Kildare 1798 commemoration*, 13.
106. O'Muirthuile, *Kildare 1798 commemoration*, 14.
107. MacSuibhne, *Kildare in '98*, preface [unpaginated].
108. MacSuibhne, *Kildare in '98*, 8, on O'Kelly see pages 8-17.
109. Chambers, *Rebellion in Kildare*, 20-1, 59-62.
110. Lady Louisa Conolly to duke of Richmond, 18 June 1798 (Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, McPeake Papers, T.3048/B/27). For a nuanced re-assessment of the role of sectarianism in the Wexford rebellion see: Daniel Gahan, 'Class, religion and rebellion: Wexford in 1798' in Jim Smyth (ed.), *Revolution, counter-revolution and union: Ireland in the 1790s* (Cambridge, 2000), 83-98.
111. This extended even to extreme episodes such as the massacre at Scullabogue. See: O'Neill, "'Woe to the oppressor of the poor!": Post-rebellion violence in Ballitore, County Kildare', 376-7.