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**Incidents of the 1798 Rebellion in South Dublin,**

by

**Maria O'Sullivan**

in fulfilment of the requirement for the award of  
College Diploma in Local History  
Summer 1997.

Department of Modern History.

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Sincere thanks also to South Dublin County Council for assisting me in the course and in particular to South Dublin Library Service for encouraging my interest. To the staff at Ballyroan Library, many many thanks for all your help, advice and 'covering'.

The staff of the National Library of Ireland, the National Archives, the Gilbert Library and the Representative Church Body Library have always been particularly helpful.

Finally, to my husband and family, a very special thanks, life will soon return to normal.

*Go raibh mile mile maith agaibh go leir.*

## LIST OF MAPS

1. The administrative county of South Dublin
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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

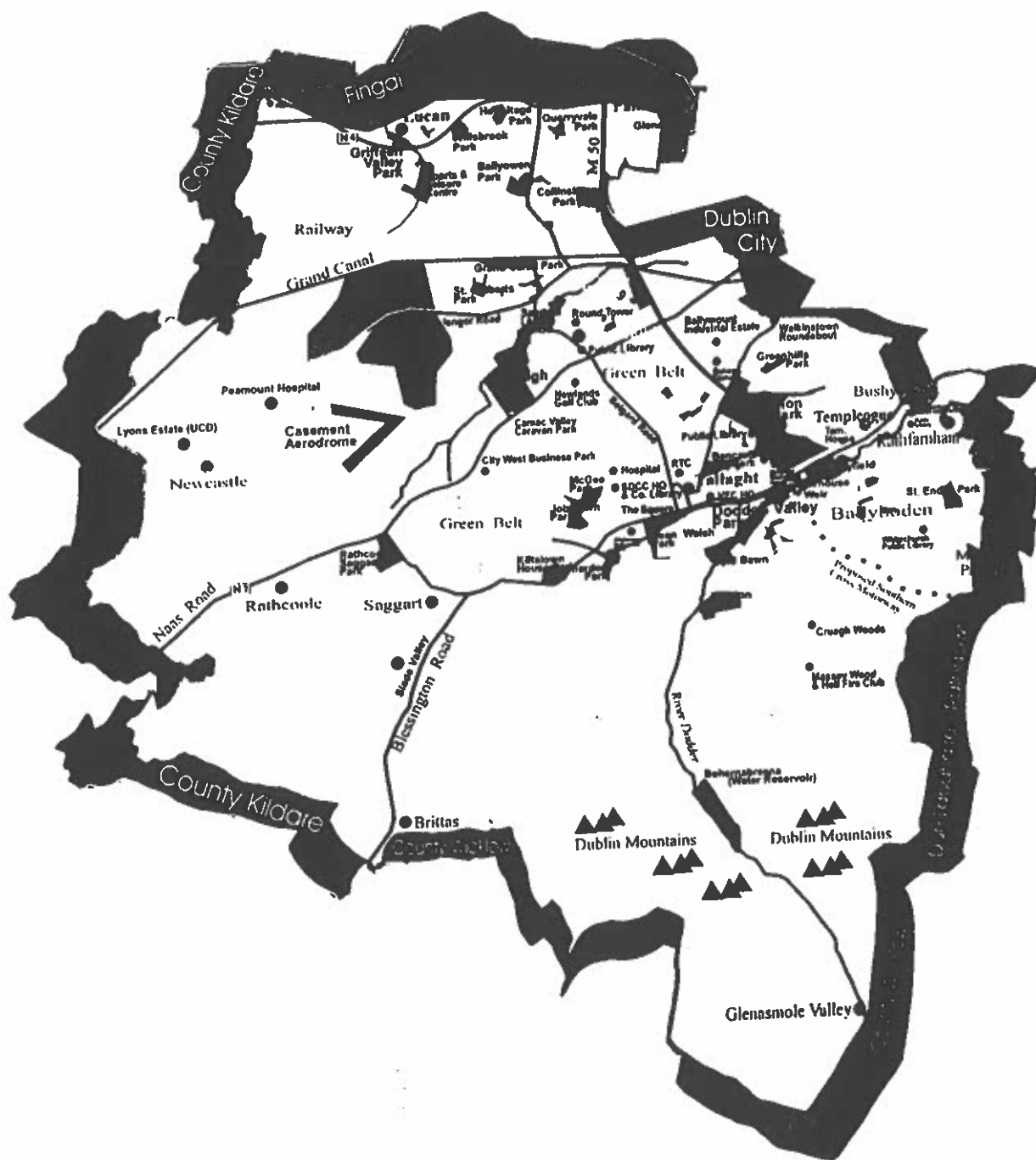
N.A. National Archives, Dublin.

R.C.B. Representative Church Body.

Reb. Pap. Rebellion Papers.

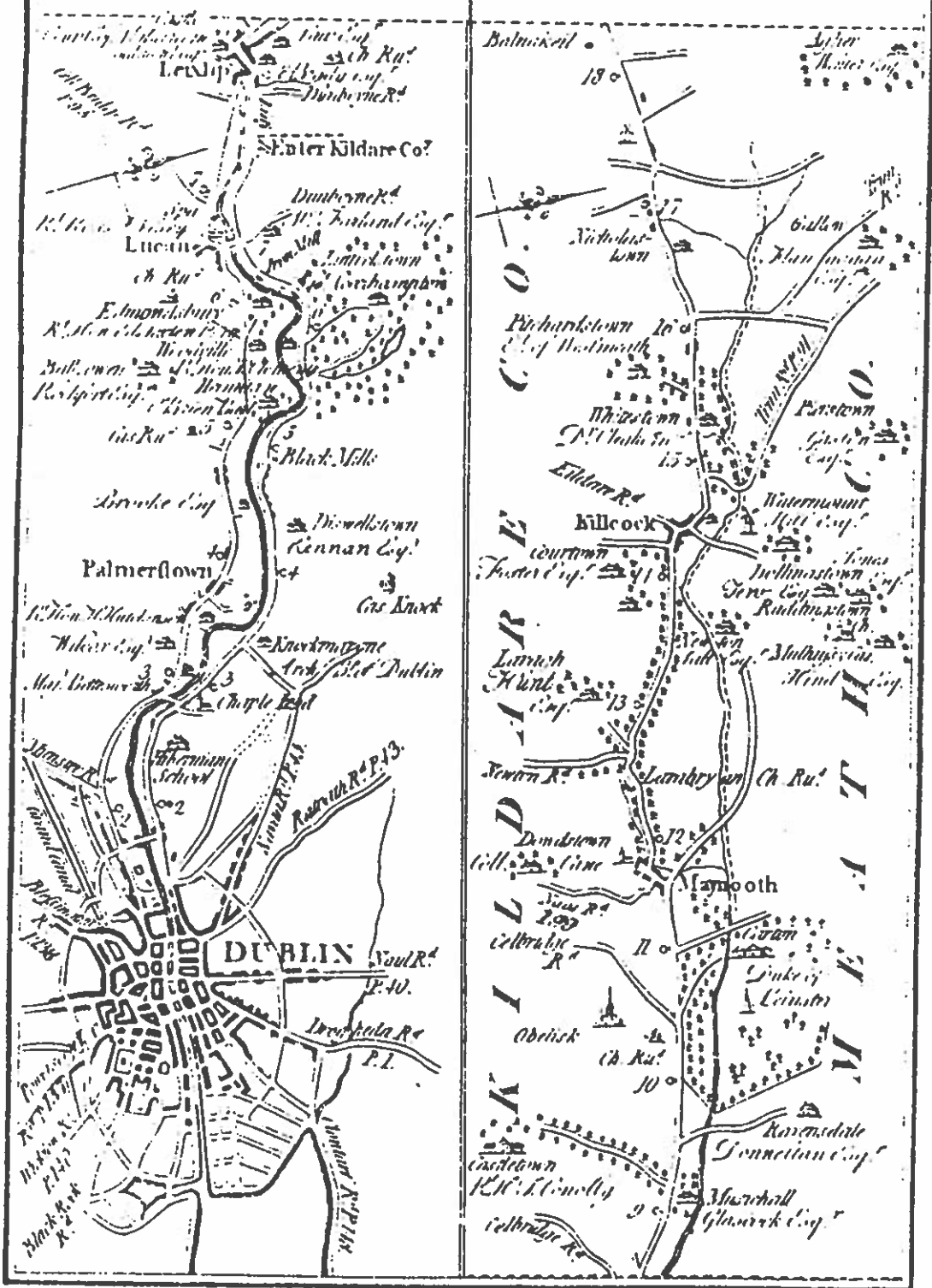
### South Dublin.

The administrative county of South Dublin comprises almost 223 square kilometres and is situated approximately ten miles south west of Dublin city centre. It is bounded by the Dublin Mountains and the River Liffey and encompasses Brittas, Clondalkin, Lucan, Newcastle, Rathcoole, Rathfarnham, Saggart, Tallaght and Templeogue. This modern county approximately equates with the region being studied in this project.



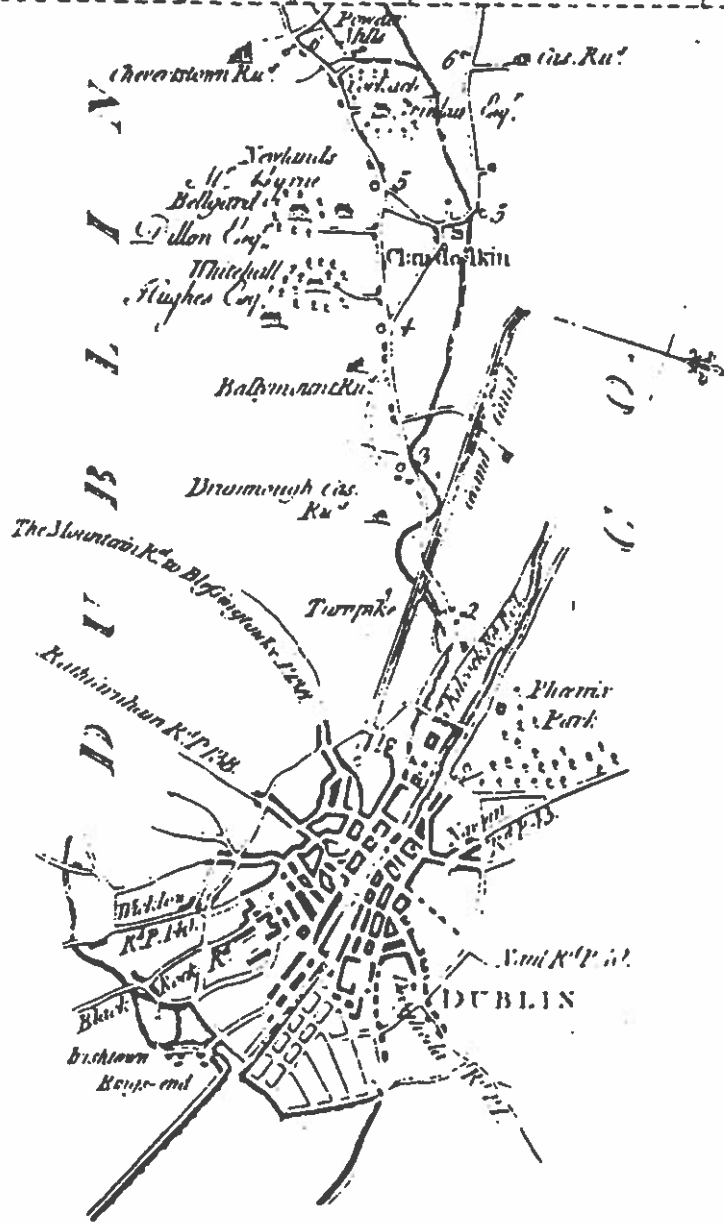
ROAD from DUBLIN to SLIGO by LONGFORD.

	M	F	M	F		M	F	M	F
Leixlip	8		8		Stallinvar	8	6	30	2
Marinoth	3	5	11	5	Longford	20	1	58	3
Billicock	2	7	14	4	Carrick	18	5	77	
View Inn	5	4	20		Boyle	7	5	34	5
Stinnyard	0	4	29	4	Sligo	19	1	103	6



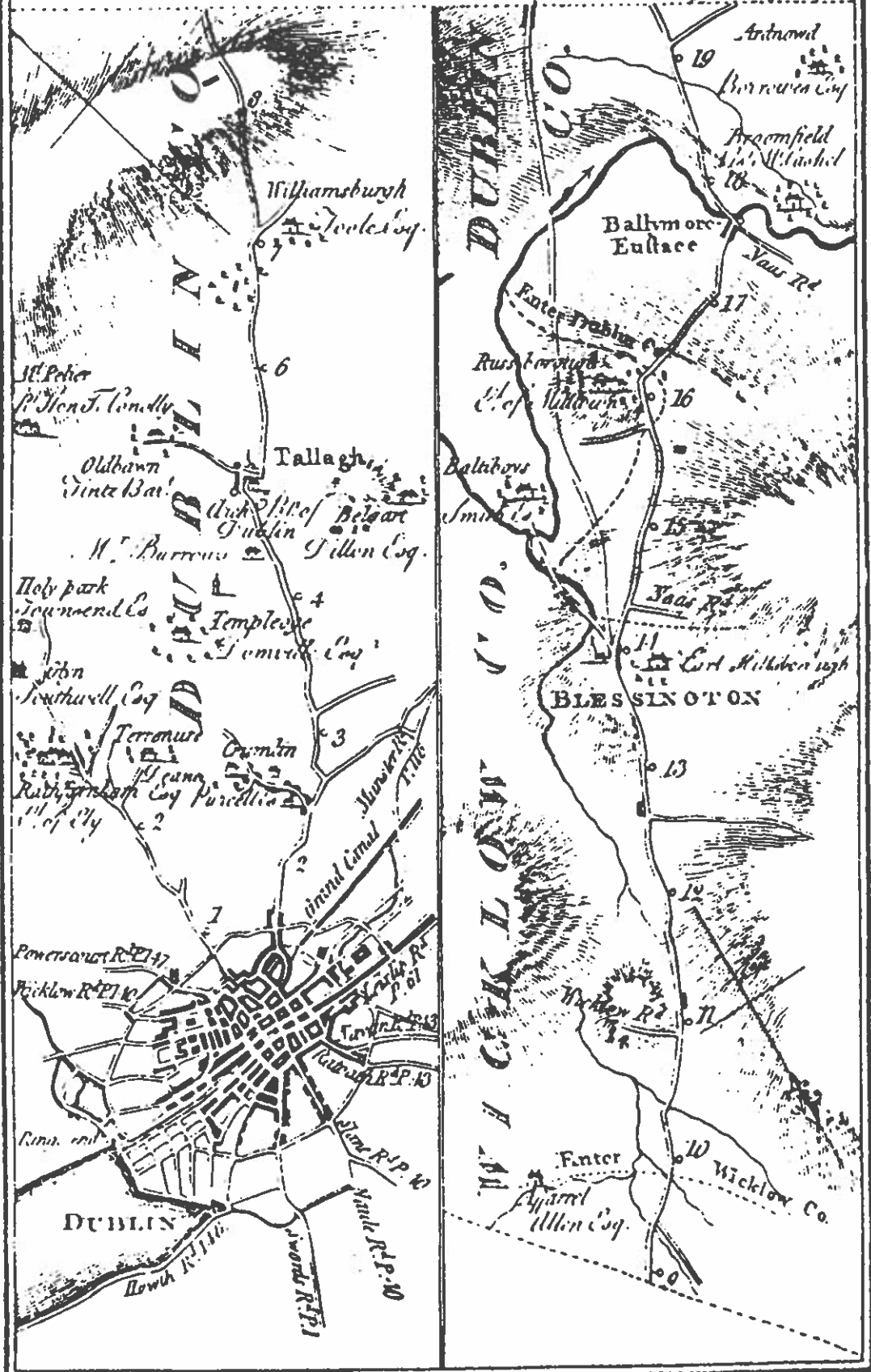
ROAD from DUBLIN to CORK, and from DUBLIN to

	Distance from the Ins. Sta.					Distance from the Ins. Sta.			
	M		F			M		F	
	M	F	M	F		M	F	M	F
Naas.....	15	4	15	4	(As from Naas to the				
Brownstown (du or)					by power and				
10 Mile Stone.....	4	4	20	..	Bennets Bridge				
Kilcullen Bridge.....	1	-	21	..	to Callan 1 Mile				
Timolin.....	8	6	29	6	shorter than by (1)				
Castle Devenot.....	4	1	33	7	Highway				
Carlow.....	5	1	39	..	Highway				
Highway Bridge.....	6	-	45	..	Highway				
Dulkeany.....	12	4	57	4	as before.....	45	..	45	..
Callan.....	7	7	63	9	Highway	7	..	52	..
Five mile Stone.....	3	5	71	..	Bennets Bridge.....	4	7	56	7
Comwell.....	10	0	81	6	Highway.....	10	1	67	..
Cloughan.....	11	4	93	2	Carriage on Stone.....	7	5	74	5
Dulworth.....	11	4	104	6					
Rathwormuck.....	6	2	111	..	from Dublin to.....				
Cork.....	13	1	124	1	Highway	8	..		

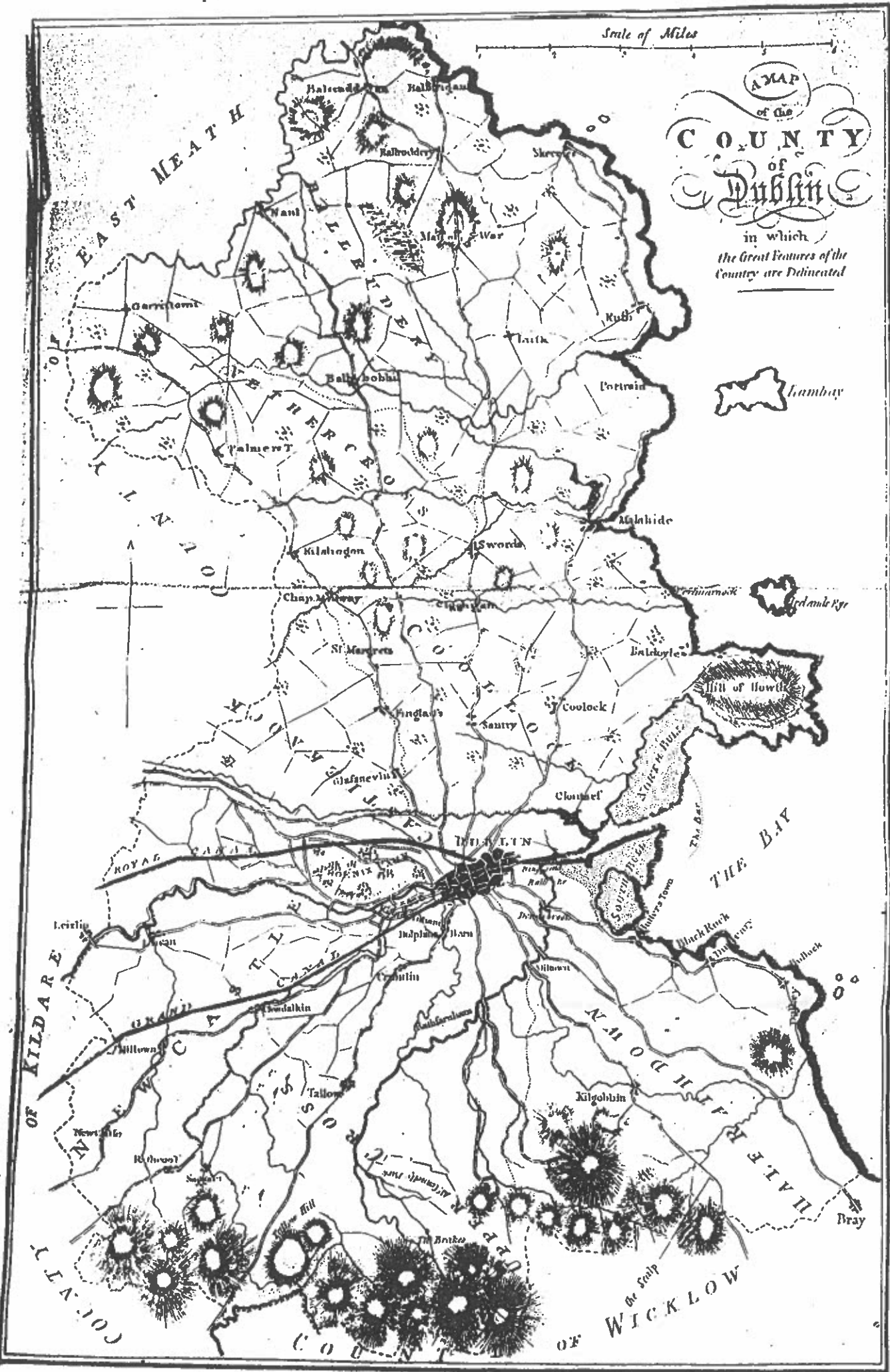


ROAD from DUBLIN to TULLOW

	M	F	M	F
Lilleshington	14		14	
Ballyingloph	15	2	29	2
suburb	8	6	38	
Rathfarnham			2	6







Scale of Miles

A MAP  
of the  
COUNTY  
of  
Dublin

in which  
the Great Features of the  
Country are delineated

EAST MEATH

KILKENNY

OF KILDARE  
NEWCASTLE

HALSCADDAN  
RATHFRIGAN  
RATHCRODERY  
WANT  
MILLMOUTH  
WAR  
GARRISTOWN  
RATHBOBHA  
PALMERSTOWN  
KILLAGHOGAN  
CHAP. MOUNT  
ST. MARGARET  
INGLIS  
ST. JAMES  
DUBLIN

SHREVE  
LASK  
KUBB  
PORTRIN  
ALPHIDE  
SWORDS  
ST. VINCENT  
BALCKYLES  
COOLOCK  
SAUNTRY  
CLONMEL  
DUBLIN

THE BAY  
DUBLIN  
BLACK ROCK  
BRAY  
WICKLOW  
OF WICKLOW

Lambay

Irish Lake

Slit of Howth

Silver Hill

Sovereign Hill

St. Vincent

Black Rock

Black Rock

Black Rock

Black Rock

Black Rock

Black Rock

Black Rock

Black Rock

## INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

'Partial battles and skirmishes were incessant, but general engagements were not numerous'.<sup>1</sup> Thus spoke Barrington referring, in *Rise and Fall of an Irish Nation*, to the Irish Rebellion of 1798. The aim of this study is to show that it was certainly the case in South Dublin, the area that forms the focal point of this project. This area extends to include Lucan, Tallaght, Rathfarnham and the Dublin mountains.

Many factors conspired to bring about the events of 1798, including a fast growing population, agrarian unrest and the influence of the American and French revolutions. The Irish Parliament in the 1790s was exclusively Protestant, but the majority of the population of the country as a whole was Catholic. The anti-Catholic laws had been removed by legislation in 1778, 1782 and 1793, but political and economic power rested firmly in the hands of the Protestants who still controlled the army, finance and education. The legacy of the Penal laws remained in force and this helped to create clear and dangerous distinctions between the Catholic minority and the Protestant majority in the island. Between 1767 and 1800 the population of the country almost doubled from 2.5 million to just under 5 million.<sup>2</sup> Increased competition for land caused agrarian violence and the origins of many secret societies, such as the Whiteboys, can be attributed to this. There was a considerable amount of violence at a local level in Ireland during the latter half of the century but until the last decade of the period there was no movement to effectively channel popular feeling into a united cause.

Among the most important outside influences on Irish affairs during the late eighteenth century were the American War of Independence and the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789. These brought additional factors into play. The concepts of liberty, equality and fraternity carried with them a radical vision of a re-organised society. This new French model in particular, involving the creation of a secular republic, became

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in James Carty (ed.), *Ireland from Grattan's Parliament to the Great Famine: a documentary record* (Dublin, 1949), p. 85.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Kenny, *The 1798 Rebellion, photographs and memorabilia from the national museum of Ireland* (Dublin 1996), p. 5.

the model of a group of Irishmen. In 1791 they founded the Society of United Irishmen in Belfast. It was not long before the authorities in Ireland began to view the Society with hostility. By 1794 the United Irishmen were suppressed although they reconstituted as a secret oath-bound society in 1795. They began to develop a military structure and contact was made with agrarian societies.

The authorities, having declared the society illegal, initiated a campaign of suppression against the known, or merely suspected, members of the organisation. Military commanders throughout the country were charged with carrying out the campaign. They were aided by forces of the regular army, the native Irish militia, corps of yeomanry and soldiers in English service. They were given a free hand to discover United Irishmen and their supporters and many of them acquired a reputation for violence and brutality. Flogging and pitchcapping were extensively practised all around the country, but particularly in Dublin 'under the very eyes of the government, and under the direction of men who were closely connected with it. The Riding School of Beresford was well known as the chief scene of torture'.<sup>3</sup> So the backdrop to the year 1798 saw a country with a growing population, agrarian unrest, a corrupt government and a reign of terror by the authorities in their search for United Irishmen. It would appear that it was this reign of terror that fanned the flames of rebellion at ground level.

There are many descriptions of life in Ireland for this period and the general feeling is one of well being. Lord Cloncurry, a wealthy landowner and patron of the arts, imprisoned in London as a United Irishman from 1798 to 1801, paints this picture:

Dublin in 1797 was, perhaps, one of the most agreeable places of residence in Europe.... amongst the lower classes the extreme destitution of latter years was generally speaking unknown.... I must characterise those days as days of kindness, and good feeling and national happiness, when compared with those that succeeded them.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> W.E.H. Lecky, *A History of Ireland in the eighteenth century Vol. IV* (London, 1909) p. 276.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in James Carty (ed.), *Ireland from Grattan's Parliament to the Great Famine: a documentary record* (Dublin, 1949), pp 30-31.

Rev. Patrick Kavanagh O.F.M. recalls a conversation with his grandfather regarding the condition of the country in the decade before the rebellion:

I think the country was very much better off then it has been ever since. It is true that we Catholics - or papists, as they call us in contempt, had no votes and were governed by a Protestant Parliament. Still everyone had enough to eat and drink, and the common people had better food and more of it then they have now. They were better clad too... No young person was put to hard work till he was fully grown, so that what with amusement and exercise they grew up to be men indeed.... Besides people were charitable and the well to do and rich helped the poor.... There was too a good feeling between Catholics and Protestants, and although they had the upper hand so far as law went, most of them were good neighbours.<sup>5</sup>

Kavanagh proceeds to discuss the regime imposed by the government in its search for United Irishmen and their arms, to which his grandfather replies....

No one in this country thought of fighting until our houses were burned, I may say, over our heads; till our chapels were burned down, and innocent people were pitchcapped and flogged to death without trial by the command of Orange Yeomen captains; till everything was done the Government could think of, however cruel and horrible, to drive us into madness.<sup>6</sup>

Both of these commentators were members of the better off sectors of society. Joseph Archer presents a different and more neutral account, particularly of the lower class. Archer undertook a survey of County Dublin in 1801. The survey was commissioned by the Royal Dublin Society and in it a picture of poor housing and sanitation and bad

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp 90-94.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp 90-94.

diet emerges. Archer states that the housing was mainly thatched, that diet consisted mainly of milk and potatoes and that hedges were being demolished for use as fuel.<sup>7</sup>

Although primarily a rural society, the latter half of the century saw a rapid growth in Ireland's population and increased urbanisation. In 1798 there were 58 borough towns with 300 houses or more.<sup>8</sup> At the end of the century Dublin had a population of almost 200,000 and was the most important city on the island. It was the seat of government, the centre of commercial and social life. Rents in Dublin averaged £1 8s for a cabin and garden, below the national average, while the wages were above average - a carpenter and mason both earning over 2s.<sup>9</sup>

Joseph Archer undertook a statistical survey of County Dublin in 1801 and from it a clear picture of the county emerges. Rathfarnham is described as 'a large handsome village'<sup>10</sup>; Tallaght 'a large village or town....situate in fine country'<sup>11</sup>; and Lucan 'a handsome town'.<sup>12</sup> Archer speaks highly of many of the estates in the area listing improvements that had been undertaken, for example, Woodtown, the seat of George Grierson is described as being 'improved to the highest state of perfection'.<sup>13</sup> Marlay, Rathfarnham Castle and Hollypark are described in similar terms. Marlay was the seat of Right Hon. David La Touche. The La Touche family were prominent in banking circles at this time. Rathfarnham Castle was in the possession of Lord Ely who had a corp. of yeomen garrisoned there for some time prior to, and during, the rebellion.

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<sup>7</sup> *Statistical Survey of the County Dublin with observations on the means of improvement*, Joseph Archer (Dublin, 1801), p. 110.

<sup>8</sup> L.M. Cullen, *An economic history of Ireland since 1660* (London, 1981), p. 85.

<sup>9</sup> *Arthur Young's Tour in Ireland (1776 - 1779) Vol. 3*, ed. A.W. Hutton (London, 1892), pp 36-52.

<sup>10</sup> *Statistical survey of the County Dublin with observations on the means of improvement*, Joseph Archer (Dublin, 1801), p. 95.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 100.

**TABLE 1: PRIESTS AND VICARS, 1766**

Place	Vicar	Papish Priest	Friar
Rathfarnham	George Thomas	1	0
Rathcoole	George Philips	0*	0
Tallaght	Owen Shields	3**	0

Source: Transcript of 1766 Religious Census.<sup>14</sup>

\* No priest residing but one resident 'officiating priest'.

\*\* Two of them residing.

In the Protestant Church at Rathfarnham Rev Mac Lean was the curate at the time of the rebellion and his memorial is a testament to the man 'whose kindly manners, strict integrity and unostentatious charity endear him to the rich and poor of an extensive neighbourhood'.<sup>15</sup> Mac Lean was a magistrate for County Dublin for a period of forty four years. The vicar of Rathcoole was Joseph Elwood, with William Jones assisting as curate. In Clondalkin Charles Mosse, a son of Bartholomew Mosse the founder of Lying in Hospital, Dublin, was vicar.<sup>16</sup>

The 1766 religious census gives some indication of the population of these areas thirty two years prior to the outbreak of the rebellion.

**TABLE 2: INDICATIONS OF POPULATION, 1766**

Place	Protestants	No. Of Prot. Families	Papists	No. Of Papist Families
Rathfarnham	347	82	797	154
Rathcoole - preband of Saggart		22		150
		6		190
Tallaght		60		400

Source: Transcript of 1766 Religious Census.

<sup>14</sup> Transcript of 1766 Religious Census, Nos. 1268, 1271, 1278, (R.C.B. Library, Mns. No. 23).

<sup>15</sup> Association for the preservation of the memorials of the dead, *Journal for the year 1898* iv, no. 1, p. 56.

<sup>16</sup> James Leslie, Clerical Succession List for the diocese of Dublin (R.C.B. Library 61.2.4).

These figures are for mid-1766 and it must be remembered that the population was increasing rapidly towards the end of the century. By the 1830s for example, Lewis notes that the population of Rathfarnham was 4573, with 1572 actually living in the village.<sup>17</sup>

Villages and small towns all over the country flourished around markets and many improving landlords established local fairs. Fairs were held in Tallaght on 6 March, 7 July and 17 September. There were three fairs a year in Saggart, two in Newcastle and one in Palmerstown (21 August) and Rathfarnham (10 July).<sup>18</sup> Water power attracted industry and where available water-mills congregated in the hinterland of the larger towns and cities. An example of this concentration was the mills congregated along the Dodder river and upstream of the Liffey. Archer<sup>19</sup> notes a flour mill, a corn mill and two paper mills in the Rathfarnham area.

During the later part of the eighteenth century many landlords sought to improve the quality of their holdings and raise the general standard of agriculture. Landowners in South Dublin were no exception. At Marlay, David La Touche constructed a large boiler which could steam seven hundredweight of mash.<sup>20</sup> He also had a large threshing mill on his demesne which 'consists of upwards of 300 acres, and is beautifully laid out with fine walks, well wooded, remarkably well watered, and skilfully planted'.<sup>21</sup> Agriculture, therefore, would appear to have been thriving in this area.

Allied industries, principally textile and paper making were also very much in evidence, particularly along the banks of the River Dodder. Paper mills were particularly common, and the paper produced was to a very high standard. Irish paper was used for some official publications and there are many South Dublin watermarked leaves in the Journals of the Irish House of Commons, including IA (John Archbold of Tallaght), a

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<sup>17</sup> *A History and Topography of Dublin City and County*, Samuel Lewis (Cork, 1980, originally published in *A History and Topography of Ireland*, 1837), p. 213.

<sup>18</sup> *Almanac for the year 1798*, (N.A., no title given first pages missing).

<sup>19</sup> *Statistical survey of the County Dublin with observations on the means of improvement*, Joseph Archer (Dublin, 1801), p. 207.

<sup>20</sup> R.B. Mc Dowell, *Ireland in the age of imperialism and revolution, 1760-1801* (United States, 1979), p. 8.

mark with a device of the harp and crown used by Thomas Slator of Rathfarnham, Pierce Archbold of Tallaght and Moses Verney of Whitechurch. The Mc Donnell family were one of the leading paper manufacturers in the country from 1750-1850 and operated, amongst others, mills at Saggart, Old Bawn, Killeen and Drimnagh, employing nearly 300 people in early 1830.<sup>22</sup> The textile industry was also well served by the river Dodder. Samuel Lewis notes in 1837 a woollen mill in operation at Rathfarnham employing 100 persons.<sup>23</sup> Further upstream, at Old Bawn in Tallaght, were the Haarlem mills, with a famous bleach-green; they were named from Haarlem & Co., who were operating them in 1776 for calico printing.<sup>24</sup>

### THE REBELLION IN SOUTH DUBLIN

There would appear to have been organised rebel activity in the general area of South Dublin prior to the actual rebellion. We know from informers accounts that John Clinch, one of the principal leaders in Rathcoole, was a member of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen as early as March 1792. Thomas Addis Emmet is listed as a member shortly afterwards in December 1792.<sup>25</sup> They were also organised in the Tallaght area. Richard Annesley, writing to Edward Cooke in May 1798 seemed to be well aware of the intentions of this group of United Irishmen.<sup>26</sup> It would appear that they met regularly at the house of Mourne, a publican, who was a sergeant in the group. Mourne also kept arms hidden near his house. These arms were being made by a blacksmith, Hyland, who lived in Bohernabreena, a village near Tallaght, while uniforms were made by a nearby tailor. The informers account names people living near the mills - James Brown and J. Burne - the latter apparently manufactured ammunition in the kiln belonging to a paper mill. Annesley warns Cooke of the necessity of searching these mills and the area around the bleach green.

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<sup>21</sup> *Statistical survey of the County Dublin with observations on the means of improvement*, Joseph Archer (Dublin, 1801), p. 101.

<sup>22</sup> A.H. Shorter, *Papermaking in the British Isles, an historical and geographical study* (London, 1971), pp 226-236.

<sup>23</sup> *A History and Topography of Dublin City and County*, Samuel Lewis (Cork, 1980), p. 213.

<sup>24</sup> James Hegarty, 'The Dodder Valley' in *Dublin Historical Record*, ii, (1939-40), p. 62.

<sup>25</sup> R.B. Mc Dowell, 'The Personnel of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen, 1791-4' in *Irish Historical Studies*, ii, no. 5 (Mar. 1940), pp 12-53.



The bleach green referred to in the account is more than likely that located at Old Bawn in Tallaght. Old Bawn House was built in 1635 by Archdeacon William Bulkeley, son of the Church of Ireland archbishop of Dublin and the grounds included a large garden with walks and ponds. It was, according to local lore, the scene of some action during the rebellion. In the grounds was a large cypress tree called the 'Informers Tree'. The story goes that a rebel, about to be hanged from the tree, was pardoned for having given information.<sup>27</sup>

Although the rebels were organised, armed - at least with pikes and apparently kitted out with uniforms, their ranks were riddled with informers. The Rebellion Papers for the weeks prior to the uprising have numerous such reports. One informer, Joseph Nugent, informed Edward Cooke, in April 1798 about one G. Johnson of Templeogue who 'is busily employed in stirring up the people of Rathfarnham, Templeogue, Tallaght and Crumlin'.<sup>28</sup> James Ormsby, also writing to Cooke, informs that there are many pikes hidden in the villages of Newcastle, Saggart and Rathcoole. He suggests that the priests of both Newcastle and Rathcoole are involved in the rebellious activity.<sup>29</sup>

The government was also quite aware of the intended date of the rising. An informer known as Sproule wrote to Cooke on 17 May 1798 saying that 'rising to be on Wednesday or Thursday night'<sup>30</sup> and suggesting that nearly 10,000 men would rise in County Dublin. Secret information was also received on the 18 May 1798 alleging that 'Thursday is the day'.<sup>31</sup> The information supplied was almost accurate and despite the arrest some days previously of the Leinster Directory of the United Irishmen, and Lord Edward Fitzgerald, the rising began on Wednesday the 23 May 1798. The signal for the outbreak of rebellion, the stopping of the mail coaches, failed in some instances as the rebels did not succeed in hijacking the coaches and many went out unhindered.

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<sup>26</sup> Annesley to Cooke, 23 May 1798 (N.A., Reb. Pap. 620/37/130; Cal. Reb. Pap. Ire., Vol.4 p. 630).

<sup>27</sup> Blackrock Teachers Centre, *Tallaght a resource pack for teachers* (Dublin, c1984), p. 67.

<sup>28</sup> Nugent to Cooke, 2 Apr. 1798 (N.A., Reb. Pap. 620/36/114; Cal. Reb. Pap. Ire., Vol.4 p. 598).

<sup>29</sup> Ormsby to Cooke, 7 May 1798 (N.A., Reb. Pap. 620/37/33; Cal. Reb. Pap. Ire., Vol.4 p. 618).

<sup>30</sup> Sproule to Cooke, 17 May 1798 (N.A., Reb. Pap. 620/37/97; Cal. Reb. Pap. Ire., Vol.4 p. 627).

<sup>31</sup> Secret information received by Alderman James, 18 May 1798 (N.A., Reb. Pap. 620/37/100; Cal. Reb. Pap. Ire., Vol.4 p. 627).

However they were stopped at Lucan. An account of the stoppage at Lucan is included in Appendix II and the correspondent notes 'from this town all is confusion'.<sup>32</sup>

Many of the farmers and labourers in the area around Dublin were in a state of readiness, awaiting this signal to enter the city and assist their fellow rebels. They were spread out in a crescent shape around the capital and numbered approximately 10,000 men and women. On the outskirts of the city people had been gathering in the foothills of the Dublin and Wicklow mountains. Other parties assembled near Tallaght and Rathcoole along the strategic road south.<sup>33</sup> Early in the evening of 23 May 1798 small parties of rebels began their attacks. At The Grange, near Rathfarnham, a party attacked the house of Mr. Minchin which was occupied at the time by Major Sirr, the elder, and a female servant by the name of Middleton. The staff at the Grange actively supported the rebels who were headed by Curran - the gardener, and Mc Donagh - the gatekeeper. The rebel party also included several women.<sup>34</sup>

Nearby, on the same evening, a party of approximately sixty rebels headed by a Martin Byrne, were proceeding towards Rathfarnham from Tallaght. *En route*, at Tibbradden, they met Mr. Richard Davis and demanded his gun. Davis, fearing for his life, gave over his gun and the party proceeded. Within a few yards of Davis' they met Mr. Philip Prosser, an eminent silk throwster, and likewise demanded his gun. Prosser refused to hand over his weapon and was murdered. The rebels continued towards Rathfarnham and eventually joined up with their comrades at Clondalkin.<sup>35</sup> The rebels assembled as large a group in Rathfarnham, at a place in the village known as The Ponds. They now numbered approximately 500, were armed with pikes, muskets and pistols, and intended to march towards Dublin City. They were led by a man named Edward Keogh who lived in the vicinity and 'who had good prospects from the industry of his

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<sup>32</sup> W. Wilson to \_\_\_\_\_, 24 May 1798 (N.A., Reb. Pap. 620/37/142; Cal. Reb. Pap. Ire., Vol.4 p. 632).

<sup>33</sup> Thomas Pakenham, *Year of liberty, the history of the great Irish rebellion of 1798* (London, 1969), p. 108.

<sup>34</sup> *Memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland*, Richard Musgrave (reprint, with introduction by David Dickson, ed. Steven Myers and Delores Mc Knight, U.S., 1995, of 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 1802), p. 203.

<sup>35</sup> Medlicott to Cooke, 16 Aug. 1798 (N.A., Reb. Pap. 620/39/176; Cal. Reb. Pap. Ire., Vol.4 p. 709) see also Reb. Pap. 620/3/16/3 and *Memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland*, Richard Musgrave (U.S., 1995), p. 203.

parents'.<sup>36</sup> Other leaders included James Byrne, James Keely, Ledwich and Wade, all deserters from Lord Ely's corps of yeomen who were based at Rathfarnham Castle.<sup>37</sup>

*En route* to the city via Crumlin and Clondalkin the rebels came up against the fifth Dragoons and a battle ensued. The rebels were no match for the military skill of the Dragoons and many of them were killed and wounded. Keogh, although badly wounded, was taken prisoner. Two others, Byrne and Keely, were killed. Graphic descriptions of their injuries were given in the *Freemans Journal* of the following day.

One got a back stroke of a sword across his two eyes and nose, that almost divided the head, and had his hands nearly cut to pieces, in endearing to guard his head. The other was killed by another stroke of a sword on the side of the skull that clove it, and he received also a ball in the side of the head, and another in the groin.<sup>38</sup>

The *Dublin Journal* reported that Ledwich and Wade were hanged on Queen's Bridge following a court martial.<sup>39</sup>

On the same night (23 May) a party of insurgents were pursued by the military in the area around Clondalkin, and the following night saw more action in this area. One of the rebels, Thomas Langan, from nearby Clover Hill, was, having been injured, left lying in a ditch on the lands of James Bond. In a subsequent correspondence Bond informed Edward Cooke about this party of rebels. He assumed that they had also been engaged on the previous night and noted that they included women. The rebels included one woman named Fennel. Others involved on this night included James Plunkett who lived at Neilstown Bridge, and men named KIELTY, Ryan and Fennel who all lived at cabins belonging to Bond. The gardener, James Morgan, was reported by Bond to have been missing from his regular duties but 'has appeared to be deranged in his senses for some time past which induces me not to suspect his having been out that night'.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> *Freeman's Journal* 26 May 1798.

<sup>37</sup> *Memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland*, Richard Musgrave (U.S., 1995), p. 191; F.J. 26 May 1798.

<sup>38</sup> *Freeman's Journal* 26 May 1798.

<sup>39</sup> *Dublin Journal* 29 May 1798; *Freeman's Journal* 26 May 1798 and 29 May 1798.

<sup>40</sup> Bond to Cooke, 26 May 1798 (N.A., Reb. Pap. 620/37/172; Cal. Reb. Pap. Ire., Vol.4 p. 636).

On the night of Friday 25 May some rebels attacked and entered the iron works in Lucan. The iron works, owned by a Mr. Blair, were attacked by approximately 100 rebels armed with guns, pikes and swords. They were headed by George Cummins, a Catholic yeoman attached to the Clonsilla corps, and succeeded in carrying off a considerable amount of arms and ammunition. Taking some of the staff as prisoners they proceeded to join the rebels at Tara.<sup>41</sup>

An intended insurrection in Rathcoole was foiled by a chance discovery. The Rathcoole Infantry, who were commanded by Captain Ormsby, found themselves short of provisions and a party was sent out to forage. On the hills they found a shepherd boy and, having been subject to some torture, he informed on the rebels. It would appear that once again the rebels had infiltrated the yeomen. Sergeant Walsh, Corporals Dillon and Byrne, and Privates John Shee and William Harvey were believed to be rebel leaders and eventually all confessed.<sup>42</sup>

From these confessions other names became known to the military, amongst them John Clinch and Felix Rourke, a sergeant and colonel respectively in the rebel forces. Clinch was the son of a wealthy farmer, and had been educated. He was arrested on 1 June and charged with being an officer in the rebel army.<sup>43</sup> He was subsequently executed having confessed that he was sworn in by his parish priest. The Catholic priest in Rathcoole was Fr. Harold at whose instigation the inhabitants of Rathcoole, and all the adjacent country, had joined the rebel cause. Harold himself was subsequently arrested and deported to Botany Bay.<sup>44</sup>

The rebels had dispersed all over the county by early June although wandering groups continued to plague the authorities. Many of these seem to have taken refuge in the Dublin and Wicklow mountains and congregated there. At Mount Venus two rebels

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<sup>41</sup> Court martial Dublin City and County, 1798 (N.A., Reb. Pap. 620/3/16/9; Cal/ Reb/ Pap. Ire., 1790-1807 Vol.1 p. 4); *Memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland*, Richard Musgrave (U.S., 1995), p. 205.

<sup>42</sup> *Memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland*, Richard Musgrave (U.S., 1995), p. 207.

<sup>43</sup> *Freeman's Journal* 2 June 1798.

<sup>44</sup> *Memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland*, Richard Musgrave (U.S., 1995), p. 499.

were arrested by the Crumlin cavalry in mid June.<sup>45</sup> Some of these rebels were by now willing to surrender. The Freeman's Journal 14 June 1798 reported that a large number of 'refugee rebels, with destitute women and children'<sup>46</sup> had gathered near Tallaght. Robert Bates, who lived at Old Bawn, apparently acted as intermediary and attempted to negotiate a surrender for the rebels.<sup>47</sup> These rebels may have been on the point of surrender but the Dublin Journal of 14 June reports that they succeeded in destroying some property in the area, most notably some houses near Ballinascorney belonging to Mr. Stuckey Simon.<sup>48</sup>

On the same day of the reported gathering of these rebels, the Freeman's Journal noted the arrest of a priest named Martin at Arklow.<sup>49</sup> Fr. John Martin was a friar from Drogheda and was arrested near Rathdrum, Co. Wicklow on 11 June 1798. His confession makes interesting reading as it appears he had come from Rathfarnham through Roundwood and the mountains with the specific intention of summoning all the United Irishmen to another attack on Dublin. He had been in contact with Father Ledwich, the priest of Rathfarnham, and with another person named Gilligan.<sup>50</sup> Ledwich, the rebel leader executed on the night of 23 May, was a nephew of the priest Fr. Ledwich and well known to Fr. Martin. Fr Martin had excited both Ledwich and Wade to rebellion.<sup>51</sup>

Minor skirmishes continued throughout the month of June 1798 including an attack on the premises of one Mr. Mc Donald at Old Bawn, the burning of a Mr. Smith's house near Rathfarnham and an attack on the country residence of Alderman Foote near Mount Venus. The house of a man named Thomas Brunion, near Rathcoole, was also attacked.<sup>52</sup> The rebels appear to have remained quite active in the Rathcoole area, despite the failure of their attempt on 23 May. Their plan in June seems to have been to

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<sup>45</sup> Freeman's Journal 14 June 1798.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Secret information, 9 June 1798 (N.A., Reb. Pap. 620/7/74/34; Cal. Reb. Pap. Ire., 1790-1807 Vol.2 p. 27).

<sup>48</sup> Dublin Journal 14 June 1798.

<sup>49</sup> Freeman's Journal 14 June 1798.

<sup>50</sup> Confession of John Martin, 16 June 1798 (N.A., Reb. Pap. 620/38/160; Cal. Reb. Pap. Ire., Vol.4 p. 669) see also Reb. Pap. 620/38/136.

<sup>51</sup> *Memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland*, Richard Musgrave (U.S., 1995), p. 297.

<sup>52</sup> Freeman's Journal 23 June 1798; 28 June 1798.

poison the garrison stationed there and then attack. On 22 June several soldiers, their wives and children became seriously ill having eaten some bread.<sup>53</sup> The commanding officer ordered the arrest of the baker and his assistant, and another man named Doyle. Doyle 'kept a low public house'<sup>54</sup> and many of the soldiers had been entertained there. The baker and his assistant were immediately shot. Another attack on Rathcoole had been foiled.

The Dublin mountains remained the preferred hiding place of the insurgents and on the 9 July another incident occurred near Rathfarnham. A small detachment of Captain Beresford's Dublin Cavalry marched to the neighbourhood of Rathfarnham having heard rumours that the rebels were still active. They came across a group of rebels carrying a green flag and wearing uniforms.<sup>55</sup> They were apparently carrying arms and ammunition to the colleagues congregated in the hills. A battle ensued following which three or four rebels were hanged at Rathfarnham.<sup>56</sup> The hanging place, according to local tradition, was at a house known as Chilham. In the retaining wall to the garden at Chilham there is a part of a tower which contains an aperture, and it was here that the unfortunate rebels were supposedly hung.<sup>57</sup> The leader of this group of rebels was actually killed during the battle but was later identified as the servant of another person, already confined and awaiting trial for treason. Two other members of the party were Hurley and Turner 'a young desperado'<sup>58</sup> both of whom had already seen action.

The following week a group of the Rathfarnham and Dundrum Yeomanry were again in the mountains searching for the rebels. They came upon a small group of them and arrested some. One of those arrested was Gilligan who had the previous month met up with Fr. Martin in Rathfarnham. Gilligan, when he was arrested, was dressed in a rebel uniform of sorts, but claimed that he had been forced to join the insurgents by a man

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<sup>53</sup> *Memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland*, Richard Musgrave (U.S., 1995), p. 262.

<sup>54</sup> Freeman's Journal 23 June 1798.

<sup>55</sup> Freeman's Journal 10 July 1798.

<sup>56</sup> *Memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland*, Richard Musgrave (U.S., 1995), p. 499.

<sup>57</sup> Local History Group, Rathfarnham I.C.A., *Rathfarnham Gateway to the hills* (Dublin, 1991), p. 15.

<sup>58</sup> Freeman's Journal 12 July 1798.

named Traynor - 'a young man of mean appearance, and a croppy' according to the Freeman's Journal.<sup>59</sup>

### AFTERMATH

During that eventful summer of 1798 a considerable amount of damage was caused to property and a commission was established to examine the losses sustained by loyal subjects. The following chart gives some indication of claims arising from the rebel attacks in South Dublin.

**TABLE 3: CLAIMS FOR DAMAGE CAUSED IN SOUTH DUBLIN, 1798**

Claimants Name	Place Where Loss Sustained	Damage	Amount		
			£	s	d
Bagnall, Rose	Ballinascorney	Cattle	18	4	0
Boyle, Peter	Mt. Pelier	Cattle and Provisions	22	6	9
Donahue, Michael	Ballinascorney	3 cows	17	1	3
Goucher, William	Brittas	House and cattle	430	1	$\frac{1}{2}$
Healy, Michael	Tallaght Hill	Cattle	13	8	3
Irwin, Phibbs Wm.	Mt. Pelier	Bullocks, Sheep, Lambs & Cattle	365	10	0
Lennon, William	Crumlin	Tea, Liquor, clothing & a watch	31	12	2
Minchin, Humphry	Little Grange	Cart & Geers, a musket and food	27	10	6
Mullen, John	Rathcoole	House & offices	174	3	11
O'Brien, Henry & Thomas	Brittas	House, furniture, cows and calves	285	7	1
O'Brien, J & T	Brittas	Rent	231		

<sup>59</sup> Freeman's Journal 19 July 1798.

O'Brien, John	Brittas	House, furniture, oatmeal & potatoes	158 14 5
Ord, Arthur	Crumlin	House, furniture, horse & cart	225 17 4
Phillips, George	Killenardin	House, furniture & clothing	224 16 3
Richmond, James	Tallaght Hill	Horses, clothing & cash	42 0 6
Sirr, Joseph	Little Grange	1 sword, clothing & port	16 3 9½
Smith, Thomas	Crumlin	Cash, clothing & furniture	66 4 9
Smith, Henry	Ballycreagh	House & offices, sheep & rack & manger	69 18 3
Smyth, William	Saggart	Horses	20
Toole, James	Greenhills	Hay	40

Source: A list of persons who suffered loss of property 1798.<sup>60</sup>

The total amount claimed for County Dublin was £24,710 0s 11d. This compares favourably with Kildare at £93,22 6s 3½d and Wexford at £311,341 1s 7d<sup>61</sup> - a clear indication that damage caused in Dublin was minor in comparison with other parts of the country. None the less the rebels of South Dublin remained active and despite the defeats at Wexford and the failure of the French forces in Mayo there is evidence to suggest that they intended to attack Dublin as late as September 1798.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>60</sup> A list of persons who suffered loss of property 1798. (Nat. Lib., JLB94107).

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Letter from Richard Frizell, 4 Sept. 1798 (N.A., Reb. Pap. 620/3/32/15; Cal. Reb. Pap. 1790-1804 Ire., Vol.1, p. 8).



## CONCLUSION

Within South Dublin there is no doubt that the rebellion began with a series of major skirmishes at Rathfarnham, Lucan and Clondalkin. In this respect South Dublin was no different from other areas of County Dublin. Maxwell, Musgrave<sup>63</sup> and other commentators provide evidence of this. However the extent to which a type of guerrilla warfare was carried out in South Dublin was far greater than in other parts of the county as may be seen by a study of the newspapers of the time. These newspaper reports of the rebellion in Dublin chronicle a series of incidents, and occurrences, most of them emanating from the southern end of the county.

The mountains separating Dublin and Wicklow provided plenty of cover for the rebels. This area was relatively uncharted territory to the government forces and no doubt contributed greatly to the guerrilla warfare that continued in South Dublin throughout the summer of 1798. The construction of the Military Road from Rathfarnham, over these mountains, to Wicklow began shortly after the rebellion.<sup>64</sup>

In so far as may be discerned from fragmentary sources, the members of the rebel forces in South Dublin comprised many wealthy farmers and their sons. Artisan and servant classes were also very much in evidence and there are indications of female as well as male involvement. The catholic priests of the area were also active, in particular the priests at Rathfarnham, Rathcoole, Saggart and Newcastle.

The rebels remained active throughout the summer and as has been mentioned, continued planning attacks on the city right up to September 1798. The rebellion was, however, crushed and the Act of Union passed in 1800. The next major uprising in Irish History was carried out in 1803, the rebels in this case led by Robert Emmet. One wonders was it pure coincidence that Emmet should be residing in Rathfarnham at the time of his failed rebellion, or whether this might be a legacy of the rebellious

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<sup>63</sup> *Memoirs of the different rebellions in Ireland*, Richard Musgrave (U.S., 1995); W.H. Maxwell, *History of the Irish Rebellion in 1798* (London, 1903).

campaigning in the area in 1798. There is certainly evidence that many of those involved in 1798 were again active in 1803<sup>65</sup>.

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<sup>64</sup> William Nolan, 'Some civil and ecclesiastical territorial divisions and their geographic significance' in L.M. Cullen (ed.), *Man, landscape and roads: the changing eighteenth century* (Dublin, 1986).

<sup>65</sup> Cal. Reb. Pap. Ire., 1790-1807, Vol.i p. 77.

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(ii) National Museum

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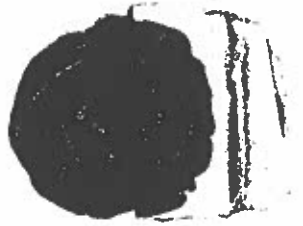
**APPENDIX I**

**Re: Mourne from Tallaght and  
United Irishmen in that area.**



Hon. Mr. Connelley  
with Brown  
James Brown

Edward Cook Esq  
& J  
Carth



620/37/130

130

23 March 1798

Dear Cook

The Person giving this Information can be brought forth  
at any Time privately, publicly he will not  
appear, he has got the figures of the Strated Dept:  
= men. he says when I write, if You wish any  
thing done in consequence or to see him let me  
know. Last Night my informers a go. One that is  
Monday next through Despatches they wanted to know  
how to flock to Dublin from all quarters and as  
well as they care an in full confidence of a Revolt  
from the Militia, he says in his letter how the  
Artillery judiciously placed under his command You can  
depend & give us quarters. I give you the words of my  
Informers letter. The Cavalry Troop must not be put  
the first man is one of the Troop at Courteen. The  
Attorneys ~~and~~ ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~Bar~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~County~~ ~~of~~ ~~Down~~ ~~is~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ ~~sent~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~Attorneys~~  
and Courteen or ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~Bar~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~County~~ ~~of~~ ~~Down~~. I have been kept

Am your flight in the Moon? ready to mark  
off no Majesty has appeared. This is absurd?  
My Men, do not consider me complaining  
or boasting, for by God there is nothing I can  
be of service in that I will not to My utmost  
do.

Yours truly  
P. Beverley

half past One May 23. 1790 Dept  
forenoon

— Mourne, Publican, Tallow, has all the  
Papers belonging to the Society of United Irish-  
men in and about Tallow, who hold their  
meeting at his House every Sunday at the  
hour of one o'clock, has Arms concealed in &  
about his House, & at the end of a long Field  
behind his Garden, near the Mill race are  
a great number of Pikes buried, is a Sergeant  
in their Army—

James Brown of the Corn Mills has  
both Pikes and Bullets concealed in his Mills  
and keeps a Manufactory of Balls in the kiln  
belonging to S. Mills, is likewise a Sergeant.

J. Burne lives at the Bishops Gate & was  
one of the Men who assisted to rob the Bishop  
of his Arms, is also a Sergeant.

M. Walker, a Sergeant.  
Bays, Coach D.  
— Menton, D. of Tallow

— O'Connell, a Blacksmith lives at Boornabun  
near

near the Chapel is the Person who makes the  
Pikes - A Man who goes by the name of  
the Taylor makes their uniforms -

When you go search the  
Black Green, do not stop until you get to  
the upper end of it, where in an Arch way  
that communicates with the Pond, which  
was formerly occupied by a Mill wheel  
but now covered over with Timber, and is  
very near, if not under the first of the Cabins,  
are a great number of Pikes; the Foreman of  
the Black Green, name is Devery, is a Lieut.  
in their Army & has a great number of uniforms  
concealed - Do not touch a Man of the name  
of Barley that belongs to the Green -

In the Orchard belonging to  
Lawler of the Green Hills, Publican, are buried  
the arms taken from the Bishop - Search  
the Garden of Allen Publican of the same  
Place also -

**APPENDIX II**

Re: Robbing of Mail Coach at Lucan.

Post Office & Telegraph  
Office No. 142

Mar 24

620/37/142

142

24 Mar 1898

104  
Post Office, Maynooth  
May 24 98

This day I am informed the male  
from Dublin was stopped at Lutter by  
a numerous set of people armed & robbed  
of all the males of & for this order  
the Guard, called who gave the  
information the company of foot  
of the B. Regiment of Berwickers com-  
by Col Curwin are both of this day  
from this town all is confusion  
in this Country Dunbar four four men  
of one gate, there left night shot  
the men were on guard the houses, where  
the war was sent on fire by the country  
people, I do not account for the  
claim of the persons it is hard to say what  
may not be the case in this of the adjoin-  
ing Country I am, your very  
obedient servant  
Wm. W. W.



**APPENDIX III**

Re: Rising in Clondalkin area.

Gov. Cooke 1798  
Gen. G. W. B. B. B.  
Castle



26 May 1798

620/37/172

172  
26 May 1798

Merriam Square  
26<sup>th</sup> May 1798

Sr.

I think proper to inform you,  
that I am well & am; that on the 24<sup>th</sup> of  
night, one of my labourers at Green Hill,  
named Tho<sup>s</sup> Langan, was wounded  
by a party of the Army commanded  
by Col<sup>l</sup> Fortney on that night, engaged  
with a great number of other Rebels  
in a bog near Chindalish; and that  
this fellow has been lying in a ditch  
on my lands these two days since -  
A woman by name Ferial was  
wounded at the same time, adding  
that she is in the Rebel Party. - And  
the following labourers were absent  
on that night from their Houses,

**APPENDIX IV**

Re: Suspected attack on Dublin from Rathfarnham.

Letter dated 4 September 1798.

Sep<sup>r</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 1790 Bath

My Lord

There is to be a General Insurrection of the  
Rebels tomorrow night they intend to attack  
the City of Dublin Castle Magazine &c  
& there has been Notices served amongst them  
to that Effect they had Messengers from Dublin  
to give such Notices & My Lord its necessary  
to be prepared for it in the most Effectual  
manner by King Guards & any other  
Respect, I have had by Information of the  
Rising on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May but think it most  
proper to make you acquainted with it I keep it  
so far as from the person who gives you Information  
to get it or would be alive in the Morning  
as My Lord my son & I have a sum of 100000  
in the Rebellion I have not been communicated  
this

To the Bear my son I have the Honour  
to be with perfect regard & esteem my Lord  
yours faithfull Affection

Rich: Boyle  
OOOOO