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**THE IMPACT OF THE PARTITION CRISIS
ON CAVAN AND MONAGHAN, 1914-1926.**

by

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THESIS FOR THE DEGREE OF M.A.
DEPARTMENT OF MODERN HISTORY
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July 1999.

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The impact of the partition crisis on Cavan and Monaghan, 1914-1926.

The aim of this thesis is to illustrate the impact of partition on the border counties of Cavan and Monaghan in the period 1914 to 1926. Partition had a profound impact on this region in political, economic and social terms. People from all walks of life in the region were adversely affected by the partition of Ireland which was brought about by the Government of Ireland Act of December 1920. The period 1914-1920 which witnessed the imposition of partition was extremely fraught in Cavan and Monaghan as tensions mounted between nationalists and unionists over the regions future. This work examines these tensions and shows how sectarian animosities built up in the region. The reactions of different sections of the community to the partition settlement is also examined.

The final imposition of partition ushered in an immensely turbulent period for the region as it coincided with the outbreak of the War of Independence. Sectarian tensions mounted and by 1920 open sectarian hostilities engulfed the region. These animosities in tandem with the Belfast Boycott created deep sectarian divisions.

Another period of violence followed for residents of the region. This time, however, this violence took the form of border warfare. This work examines the open warfare which broke out between rival forces operating on either side of the borderline and its implications for Cavan and Monaghan.

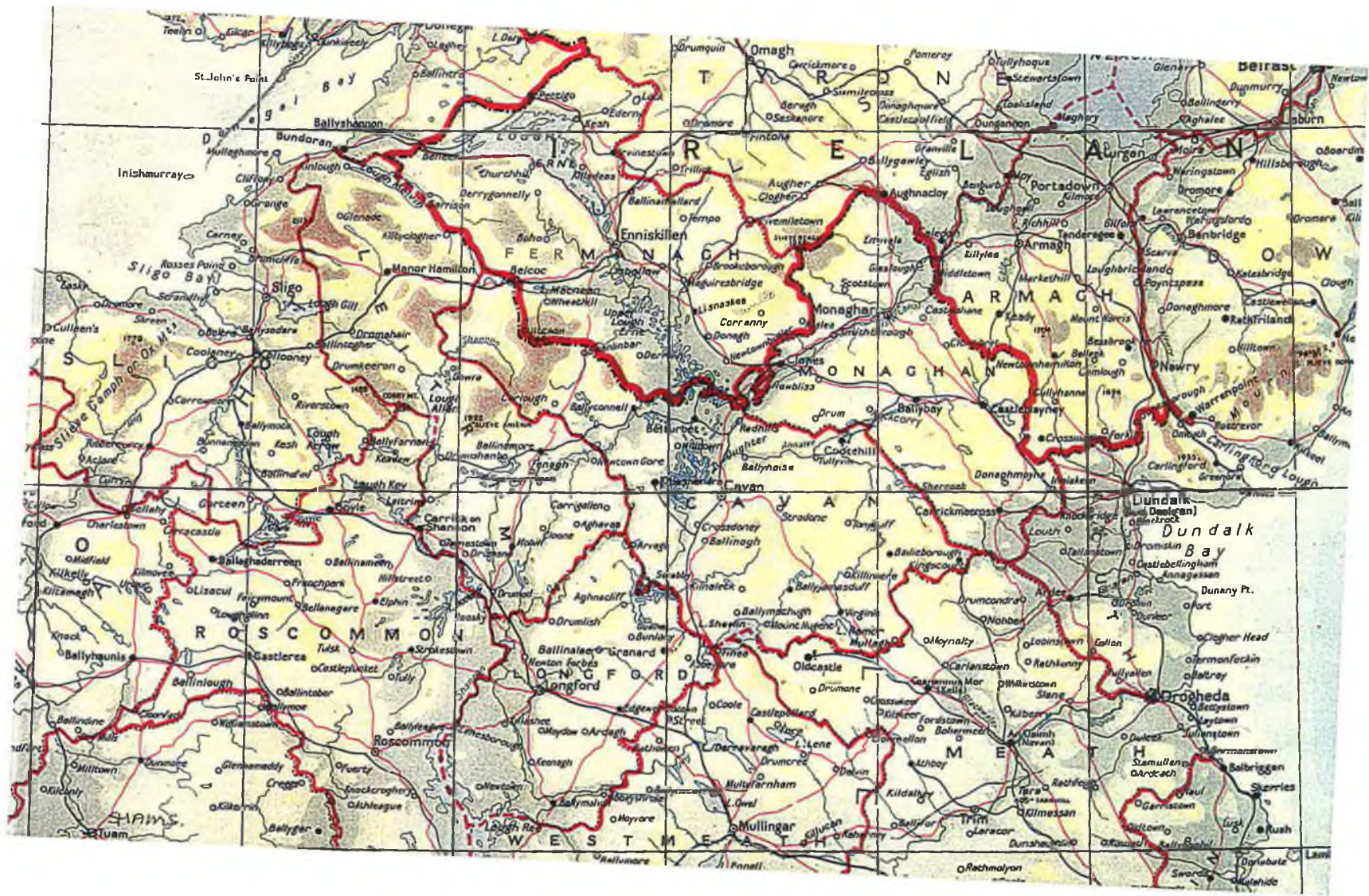
The final section of this thesis explores the economic and social ramifications of partition in depth. The final period under consideration, i.e. 1923-1925, witnessed the creation of fiscal separation between North and South. The impact of this economic partition and the concurrent closure of border roads is analyzed. Specific attention is given to the border towns which suffered the most from the creation of the customs posts. This work concludes with an examination of the changes which the Boundary Commission recommended for the region and the effect these changes would have had on the region.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

I owe a great debt of gratitude to Dr. Denise Dunne for her invaluable advice and direction and as supervisor of my thesis. This work would never had been completed on time without this advice and direction. I would like to thank Professor R.V. Comerford for his encouragement and advice throughout the course of my studies at N.U.I. Maynooth. I am extremely grateful to Dr. Enda Delaney who offered me a great deal of help during the initial stages of my research. In particular Dr. Delaney pointed me in the direction of a number of extremely useful sources. I would also like to thank all the staff of the Department of Modern History, N.U.I. Maynooth, and my fellow postgraduates for their advice and helpfulness during the course of this work.

I am deeply grateful to the people of the border regions of Cavan and Monaghan who I conducted interviews with during the course of my research. The insight provided by these people were invaluable.

This work would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of my family, my parents Patrick Joseph and Bernadette, my sister Martina and my brothers Patrick and Michael.



INTRODUCTION.

The partition of Ireland was the most cataclysmic event to have occurred in the twentieth century history of the island. Even today the implications of partition are all too clearly visible throughout the length and breadth of the island. For this reason, partition is an extremely difficult subject to broach without getting caught up in the arguments of old, about the rights and wrongs of partition, and where to lay the blame for this 'intolerable situation' as it is seen by traditional nationalist writers.¹

This work will not get caught up in this argument but will present an objective account of the events which led up to partition. Specifically the thesis examines the effects of partition on the border counties of Cavan and Monaghan in the period 1914-1926. For the purpose of this work partition is treated as an historical fact which occurred in December 1920, by the passing of the Government of Ireland Act, which set up the northern state comprising six of the nine counties of the historic province of Ulster, that is Derry, Down, Antrim, Tyrone, Armagh and Fermanagh.

It is necessary as a background to the subject to study the events which led up to the Government of Ireland Act, and this will be done as succinctly as possible. Following on from this the effects of partition on the border counties of Cavan and Monaghan will be analysed at length.

The history of Northern Ireland since the Government of Ireland Act of 1920 and the background to this legislation have been the subject of innumerable works. However most historians have tended to neglect the fact that the historic province of Ulster contains nine counties, and not just the six counties which constitute Northern Ireland. This study is unique because it is the first study to consider the effects of partition on Free State Ulster. The study will therefore help to redress the imbalance of historical writing on the subject of partition by examining its impact on Cavan and Monaghan.

It is important at this point to state that Donegal is not part of the subject matter of this current study for a number of reasons. To begin with Donegal is unique, as regards partition, in that the city of Derry played a massive role in the history of Donegal in both social and economic terms. Moreover the counties of Cavan and Monaghan have many links, primary among these being a geographical one. To include Donegal in this study would have fragmented the study of the effects of partition on this homogenous region.

As well as examining the political history of the events which occurred between 1914 and 1926, the thesis will also chart the social and economic effects of partition on the region and assess the ways in which the border impacted on the lives of people living in this region. Partition left a deep scar on the region in political, economic and social terms and by 1926 these scars had not fully healed. The problems caused by partition during this period haunted the region for many years afterwards. It can be argued that economically Cavan and Monaghan never recovered from partition. This is why this is a subject which deserves an in depth study.

Chapter one is concerned with the period from 1914 to 1919. This period covers the proposal to introduce partition in a bid to solve the home rule crisis. This chapter illustrates how partition was brought about and the reaction of the different sections of the community of Cavan and Monaghan to this process. Chapter two is concerned with the period 1919 to 1921 which saw the final imposition of the partition settlement and the creation of a border in the region. This was a great period of unrest in the region as sectarian tensions mounted. By mid 1920 much of the Cavan and Monaghan region witnessed open sectarian hostilities between nationalists and unionists. This was an immensely violent period in the history of the region. The divisions which were created during this period left a deep scar on the region.

The focus in chapter three is placed on the Belfast boycott which lasted in various forms from 1920 until 1922. The Belfast boycott was a crucial event as it was one

of the first manifestations of partition, ironically carried out by the provisional government of the Irish Republic, which was so opposed to any form of partition. The boycott had a serious effect on Cavan and Monaghan due to the close economic ties of the region with Belfast and North East Ulster. The boycott also served to deepen animosities between the Catholic and Protestant communities.

Chapter four consists of a study of another dramatic period for the Cavan and Monaghan region, namely the period of the so-called 'border wars'. There was a violent backlash against the border and more specifically the new northern state by members of the I.R.A. The implications of the 'border wars' for the region are analysed. It is ironic that it was the outbreak of civil war that brought a large measure of relief to this much beleaguered region, as the focus of attention turned away from Northern Ireland. The impact of civil war on partition will also be considered.

Chapter five focuses on a new form of partition which started with the setting up of a customs barrier between Northern Ireland and the Irish Free State. This was initiated by the Free State when it set up the first customs post on 1 April 1923. This step introduced a new form of partition and thus created a whole new set of problems for the border region. With the customs posts came fiscal separation between the two states, and for the first time people in the border region were restricted in their movements across the frontier. The problems caused by this new form of partition to border towns such as Clones, Belturbet and Swanlinbar will receive special attention. Up to late 1925 partition was still perceived as a temporary measure by most people living in the border region. With the ending of the Boundary Commission and the subsequent agreement of December 1925 to leave the border as it was, partition was finalised. Chapter five also considers this and looks at the changes to the boundary of Cavan and Monaghan which were recommended by the Boundary Commission.

Primary sources on this subject are plentiful and rich in content. As with any study of local history the first crucial source to be examined are the relevant

contemporary local and national newspapers. The *Irish Times*, consulted on microfilm in John Paul II library in Maynooth, is essential for an overview of happenings on the broader national scale, in the period under consideration. Local newspapers are an unique watermark of public opinion for the period under study. The local newspapers also contain a wealth of information on County Council meetings, as well as reports of local incidents relating to the border. In the period after partition, local newspapers provide invaluable accounts of court proceedings against people caught in violation of the customs act. Three newspapers need to be considered for the Cavan and Monaghan area. The *Anglo-Celt*, as the only newspaper in circulation in Cavan, which was printed in Cavan, at the time provides the principal source for Cavan. This was consulted on microfilm in Cavan County library. For Monaghan the *Northern Standard* is an essential guide. However this newspaper had a pro-unionist slant which was offset by examining the *Dundalk Democrat*, which despite its title had a wide readership among nationalists in the region, especially in south Monaghan.²

The Colonial Office Dublin Castle records provide another invaluable source for cataloguing the strength of various organisations, such as the Irish Volunteers and the Ulster Volunteers during the period up to 1921.³ The Inspector General and County Inspector's monthly reports on the state of each county during the period up to 1921 are absolutely crucial for building a picture of how each county changed from month to month. The Dail Eireann ministry and cabinet minutes available in the National Archives, Dublin are essential for Irish government opinion and policy on partition before the civil war. The Dail Eireann files are also essential for the records of the Belfast Boycott Committee, which was set up by the first Dail. The treaty debates are also crucial for the government's attitude to the form of partition espoused in the treaty. The records of the Department of Taoiseach contain a great wealth of information on the border question, including government policy on partition, correspondence with the northern government on border incidents, and reports of violence in the border region. The work of

the North East Boundary Bureau, including its weekly bulletins, is also contained in the Department of Taoiseach records. The North East Boundary Bureau, headed by Kevin O' Shiel was set up by the Irish government as a propaganda machine to present the case of the Irish people as regards partition, to the Boundary Commission. The Department of Justice files also contain a great deal of valuable information on crimes and breaches in the border region. Amongst these files are records of smuggling and the blocking of roads on the border, which caused great restrictions on the residents of the area.

Much information on the impact of partition can be found in the departmental and cabinet records of the Northern government, held in the Public Records office of Northern Ireland. However, a problem exists with these records, in that a portion of them are closed for 75 years.⁴ That material which is available, however, is extremely useful, and this is especially true of the Ministry of Home Affairs files. Included in these files is information on border outrages on both sides, and also information on blocking of roads by the Special Constabulary.

The Boundary Commission papers, consulted on microfilm in the National Library in Dublin give an invaluable insight into the workings of the border in the first years of its existence. Interviews were carried out with residents of the border regions likely to be affected by any realignment of the boundary. The representations made by the residents of the border regions paint a unique picture of the daily problems encountered by the people living along the border. The representations made by numerous businesses and traders serves to illustrate the economic effects of partition.

The printed sources used in this work are supplemented by interviews held with people who lived near the border in Cavan and Monaghan in the nineteen twenties. Oral sources are of particular value on subjects about which there is little printed material, such as smuggling.

ENDNOTES:

1. Gwynn, Denis. *The History of partition*(Dublin,1950), p.10.
2. Consulted on microfilm in N.L.I. and Monaghan County Library.
3. Colonial Office, Dublin Castle Records, CO 904 Part IV- VI, Consulted on microfilm in N.L.I. and John Paul II Library, NUI Maynooth.
4. The following records were unavailable. CUS/1/7/1: Registry of Seizures, CUS/1/7/2: Reports of the Surveyor / Enniskillen, CUS/1/7/3: Land Boundary with Eire, CUS/1/4/7: Confidential letter book relating to staff, disciplinary matters etc, CUS/1/9/3: 'The Northern Ireland Boundary with Eire'.

**CHAPTER ONE:
THE PARTITION QUESTION, 1912 - 1919.**

The period 1912 to 1919 was an immensely turbulent period for Ireland. It was a period of great upheaval, uncertainty and revolution. It was also a period of great change and division. 'In 1911 Irishmen of all political opinions would have been amazed if they could have foreseen the division of Ireland into two separate states ten years later.'¹ Nowhere was this immense upheaval and transformation felt more than in Cavan and Monaghan. In 1911 Cavan and Monaghan formed an integral part of the United Kingdom. The nationalists of both counties, comprising almost 74% and 81% of the population, respectively were looking forward to the prospect of home rule.² Unionists of the area looked towards Belfast and were confident of their positions in unionist Ulster.

The Government of Ireland Act of December 1920 changed all this. Cavan and Monaghan became part of a border region on the edge of nationalist southern Ireland. This region had become a hiatus or no-mans land between north and south, unsure of its own future. More importantly it had no control over the Boundary Commission which brought the possibility of a shifting of the frontier, in which direction no one could say for sure.

The partition of Ireland was by no means an overnight phenomenon, rather it can be seen as the consequence, or a by product of events on a global, as well as a local and national scale. Partition came about as a solution to the long and protracted political wranglings over the home rule bill and more specifically unionist opposition to home rule. Opposition to home rule was mostly confined to north east Ulster.

At the time it seemed that an exclusion of certain counties of Ulster which contained unionist majorities totally opposed to any breaking of the Act of Union was the only possible solution acceptable to both sides. It was not an ideal solution to any side but both Edward Carson, leader of the Ulster Unionist Party and John Redmond, leader of Irish nationalists in Westminster, had accepted some form of partition as a compromise solution by 1914. What proved to be a more significant stumbling block was the area to be excluded and the duration of any exclusion.

A number of events influenced this settlement and transformed the political scene. Foremost among these was the outbreak of the first world war when home rule for Ireland, with certain concessions for north east Ulster, seemed inevitable. The outbreak of war postponed the implementation of home rule until hostilities ceased, by which time the Irish political scene had been transformed. The Easter rising of 1916 and the subsequent execution of the rising leaders precipitated the rise of Sinn Fein. This heralded the demise of Redmond's party. Home rule was no longer enough to satisfy Irish people and anything short of a republic would be seen as unacceptable to the Irish nation. Britain also witnessed a change in political scene and emerged from the war with a strong government no longer reliant on Irish support to stay in power. Following Sinn Fein's decision to abstain from Westminster, Britain was now free to frame policies in the House of Commons with the unionists as the only Irish representatives.

Traditional unionist thinking on partition has maintained that Ulster has been separate from the rest of Ireland since time immemorial. Some unionist historians such as Ronald McNeill and William A. Carson have traced Ulster's unique separate identity back to mythological times.³ While these traditional unionist views have been considerably revised, notably by the works of A.T.Q. Stewart and Patrick Buckland, there is a strong element of truth in the notion of Ulster's separate identity. The uniqueness of Ulster can be traced back to the early seventeenth century and the plantation of Ulster during the reign of James I. This plantation was far and away the most successful attempt at colonising Ireland. Ulster was soon replanted with hundreds of Scots and English settlers. This policy of redistribution of land in Ulster was aided by the flight of the earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnell with nearly one hundred chieftains in 1607.⁵ Another factor which was to have a huge bearing on the success of the Ulster plantation was the proximity of Ulster to Scotland. Scots came over in great numbers and proved themselves in some ways the more efficient colonists. They were more willing than the English to sink labour and capital in tillage. Within a generation a large part of counties Antrim and

Down had been transformed in population and way of life into a sort of extension of the Scottish lowlands.⁶

This was the beginning of a strong and cohesive protestant ascendancy in Ulster and this colony grew stronger as the decades passed. Ulster was now seen as a strongly loyal and protestant area and Ulster's distinctiveness was exacerbated by the rapid growth of industrialisation which was focused on Belfast throughout the nineteenth century. This growth was based around the linen, engineering and shipbuilding industries. In the words of Michael Laffan 'in economic terms Belfast was an anomaly, a British outpost in agrarian Ireland.'⁷ The might of Ulster was perpetuated by unionist myths. Protestant Ulster with its booming industries and efficiency was seen in contrast to backward, rural, agrarian, catholic, southern Ireland. This image grew in the Ulster mind and it seemed as if Ulster's survival was dependent on the maintenance of the union. A Dublin government with its emphasis on tariff autonomy and protectionism would ruin all that Ulster had built up in the previous century.

It is fair to say that the counties of Cavan and Monaghan although a constituent part of the historical province of Ulster were more closely aligned to southern Ireland in both religious and economic terms. Both counties had a sizeable protestant minority which throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries monopolised both local power and land ownership. However the industrialisation of the north east never really influenced Cavan or Monaghan. Therefore it was a lot easier to break down unionist domination. As the region had a considerable nationalist majority it soon became obvious that unionists could not dominate the land or politics forever. A number of events turned the tide of protestant control in both political circles and land ownership in favour of nationalists in both Cavan and Monaghan. Gladstone's Land Acts of 1870, 1881 and 1885 precipitated a change in land ownership which was continued by the Tory policy of 'killing home rule with kindness', which resulted in catholics owning more land in the region.⁸

Another crucial event was the passing of the Local Government Act in 1898 which replaced the traditional grand jury system and for the first time gave nationalists power in both counties. Monaghan and Cavan were therefore different from north east Ulster which had a majority of people in control at local government level and in the controllers of industry, opposed to home rule. This urban industrial power base was not as easy to displace as unionist power in Cavan and Monaghan. Having sketched the motivations behind unionist demands for separate treatment and the reasons for unionist opposition to home rule the political background to partition will now be examined.

Some historians trace the 'Ulster question which led to partition back to the times of Daniel O Connell and the repeal of the Union.⁹ However, for the purposes of this study 1886 and Gladstone's first Home Rule Bill is taken as the starting point politically of the Ulster question. ¹⁰ Protestants joined together to oppose any form of home rule and found allies among the conservative party notably in this instance Lord Randolph Churchill. Ulster protestants were to have the support of conservatives throughout the home rule crisis. This led to much bitterness among Irish nationalists and led to the misinformed view that it was part of a British policy of 'divide and rule.'

The enforced partition of Ireland appears so obviously as a direct application of that policy, that many people in Ireland take it for granted that partition was deliberately devised by English politicians as a means of retaining a grip on Irish territory which could at any time be expanded.¹¹

Gladstone relying on the support of the Irish nationalists introduced a second Home Rule Bill in 1893. This time it passed through the House of Commons but was defeated by the House of Lords. Home rule at this point seemed a very distant possibility especially with the return to power of the pro-unionist conservative party in 1895. The conservatives remained in power for the following ten years and there was a

marked decline in public interest in home rule in Ireland. The conservative policy of 'killing home rule with kindness' was a conciliatory measure to give Ireland a number of important concessions.

The policy had its desired effect and home rule took a back seat. There was also a growth in awareness of a distinctive Irish identity which manifested itself under the agency of the Gaelic League. This also contributed to the demise of the home rule issue in popular opinion. The Irish Parliamentary Party was weak and had suffered badly from the Parnell - Kitty O Shea divorce scandal and divisions in party ranks. Therefore at the turn of the century home rule was relegated to a position of less prominence in public opinion. However the general election of 1906 brought a sweeping victory for the liberal party and gave another glimmer of hope to the Irish party. However the liberal party did not at this point need to rely on Irish nationalist support. The liberals did subscribe to a piecemeal approach to home rule to appease the Irish party. Home rule was, after a lapse of twenty years, dramatically put to the top of the agenda as a result of a change in the balance of power in the House of Commons. This was brought about by the rejection of David Lloyd George's 1909 budget following the conservatives use of blocking tactics in the house of lords.¹²

Two general elections followed in quick succession with almost identical results. The December election left the liberals along with a labour alliance with a majority of fifty nine seats over the conservatives. With eighty four home rulers Redmond now held the balance of power.¹³ Redmond could join with the conservatives to overthrow the government but once again joined with the liberal party. This was done after Redmond got assurances of Herbert H. Asquith that home rule would be top of the governments agenda. What convinced Redmond in his decision was the determination of Asquith to curb the power of the House of Lords and end their power to veto bills. This Parliament Act of 1911 was crucial to the cause of home rule as the House of Lords could no longer veto home rule but could only delay its passage for two years. The third home

rule bill was finally introduced by Asquith on 11 April 1912. It now seemed as if home rule was virtually assured and all the House of Lords could do was delay it coming into law until 1914.

It was at this stage that Ulster Unionists made a concerted effort to act against home rule. Unionists had always been opposed to home rule for a number of very important reasons but now it seemed as if home rule would become a reality. Unionists feared that as a minority under a Dublin government they would be oppressed. They especially feared that a Dublin government would merely be a puppet of the catholic hierarchy. This belief was summed up in the slogan 'home rule is Rome rule'. Unionists also feared the economic repercussions of coming under a protectionist Irish government.

Under the leadership of Sir Edward Carson Ulster unionists formed a cohesive force willing to fight home rule by whatever means necessary. In September 1911 a huge meeting of the Ulster Unionist Council was held and 'four hundred delegates unanimously agreed upon a policy to resist the establishment of a home rule parliament, and appointed a committee to submit a constitution for a provisional government to operate when the third home rule bill passed through parliament.'¹⁴ Tension was now rife in Belfast and this was manifested in a number of sectarian attacks. Catholics were expelled from the ship yards. As civil disorder became more and more likely Ulster unionists decided on a show of force to illustrate to the government that they were totally opposed to home rule. This show of force took the form of the Solemn League and Covenant. The twenty eight of September, Covenant day, was declared a public holiday. The Solemn League and Covenant was signed by three quarters of all protestant Ulstermen over the age of sixteen, a total of nearly 250,000 signatories.¹⁵ More than 5,000 Monaghan protestants and a similar number of Cavan protestants signed the Solemn League and Covenant.¹⁶

To show their determination and willingness to resist home rule an active army would be needed to defend Ulster if home rule was imposed. In January 1912 plans

were afoot for such a force and 'some Ulster unionists had begun openly to raise and drill a military force, keeping within the letter of the law by applying for and obtaining the sanction of local magistrates.¹⁷ In late 1912 these different units were brought together to form a united front against home rule and on 31 January 1913 the Ulster Volunteers were formed under the leadership of Sir George Richardson.

It was now clear at a parliamentary level that some form of compromise would need to be formulated if home rule were to be peacefully passed in Ireland. It also became increasingly clear that any compromise would take the form of some form of exclusion of certain parts of north east Ulster from the Home Rule Bill. An amendment was first moved by a liberal backbencher, Agar Robartes, that the four mainly protestant counties of Antrim, Down, Derry and Armagh should be excluded from the Home Rule Bill. This move was backed by some unionist M.P.'s but Redmond was totally opposed to this move. Carson however stated that he would not consider giving up Fermanagh and Tyrone. Despite this the first tentative steps towards a compromise had been taken.

The home rule bill introduced in April 1912 passed its third reading in the Commons on 16 January 1913 but as expected was rejected by the House of Lords.¹⁸ By 1914 however it was clear that home rule was on its way. At this stage Ulster was on the brink of civil war. In September 1913 the Ulster Unionist Council announced publicly its plans for the formation of a new government in Ulster if home rule was passed.¹⁹ Another ominous sign of the looming crisis in Ireland was seen in the setting up of the Irish volunteers on 25 November with Eoin Mac Neill as president. What was most sinister about this development was the infiltration into the provisional committee of the volunteers by members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and Padraig Pearse. The I.R.B. were a direct link with the fenian movement of the nineteenth century and had already advocated direct action against British rule. Pearse was also a known extremist who admired the idea of a glorious blood sacrifice to gain Irish freedom.

At the start of 1914 it was clear that a critical point had been reached in Irish history and partition now appeared to be the only practical solution of the problem. It became increasingly clear that the counties of Cavan and Monaghan, along with Donegal would become the focus of attention over what area was to be excluded.

The area of Cavan and Monaghan was particularly tense as unionists and nationalists squared up to each other over the forthcoming home rule bill. People on both sides of the religious divide were anxious about the area to be excluded. Unionists in both counties were adamant that they should be included in the excluded area. The *Dublin Castle Intelligence Notes* for the year report that there was increasing unrest in both counties due to the political situation. The Ulster Volunteers set up a camp on the estate of the leading figure in Cavan unionism, Lord Farnham.²⁰ This camp was seen as a training ground for volunteers 'who have been nominated as likely to become efficient as non commissioned officers'.²¹ Dublin castle recorded a number of incidents which heightened tensions. In January an attempt was made to ambush Lord Farnham by blocking the road he was travelling on his return from a drill of the Ulster Volunteers.²² In February and March the national volunteer movement was started in the region. By May the National Volunteers had grown rapidly and numbered 2,279 in Monaghan and 2,000 strong in Cavan, and with 3,000 Ulster Volunteers in Cavan alone at this time the high level of tensions in the area is vividly illustrated.²³ Numerous rallies were held by unionists throughout both counties to reiterate their opposition to home rule. Unionist leaders stated their total opposition to being left out of any excluded area. One example of such is the following resolution passed at the annual general meeting of Monaghan Unionist Club on 16 February 1914.

We the members of Monaghan Unionist Club... desire to make it plain to the government that no suggestion of settlement which does not provide for the total exclusion of Ulster will be accepted by us, and that we are still determined to remain true to our covenant, and if necessary

to go to the greatest extremes to carry out its provisions and the protection of our civil and religious liberties.²⁴

Nationalists were in no mood for conciliation and were fearful for the future of the area if it was to be included in a partitioned nine county Ulster. The clearest statement of nationalist opposition in the two counties to inclusion in a partitioned Ulster was published in the *Anglo Celt*. This paper reacted violently to the idea of Cavan and Monaghan being included under an Ulster parliament.

within a week the rest of Ulster would call upon the counties of Ireland to aid them in starving out Belfast. In the first place county meetings would be called at which a solemn covenant would be entered into that no goods were to be purchased in the local shops that dealt with the north east corner. Traders would exhibit in their shop windows a recognised sign that no goods from the obnoxious quarter were sold there. Here at a comparatively small expense you would hold up the north of Ireland. There is one thing that all parties rest assured of - that if the pace is forced it will be war to a finish to kill the trade of the north east.²⁵

It is clear from this that tension was high and feelings were running very high in the area. Neither party were in any mood to compromise and the threat of 'war to a finish' was to be heard at many rallies throughout the area in the early months of 1914. There was a great deal of uncertainty about the future but although tensions were running extremely high both areas were quite peaceful and the prevailing tension did not cause any open physical hostilities between the rival parties.

Although it had become increasingly obvious to Asquith and the government that some form of exclusion would have to be put forward as a compromise to placate unionists. Asquith waited until the Home Rule Bill was before parliament in March 1914 before suggesting an amendment to the bill after pressure from the

conservative and unionist opposition in Westminster. In his speech in the house of commons on 9 March on the third reading of the home rule bill, Asquith put forward the following proposal.

Between the date of the passage of the home rule bill and the actual setting up of the Dublin parliament, each of the counties of Ulster (including the county boroughs) may vote upon the question of exclusion for a period of six years, and any self excluded county, at the end of that period, may only be forced to come within the administration of the Dublin parliament with the consent of the electoral of the United Kingdom.²⁶

He added that in the course of the six years of exclusion at least two general elections would be held. 'Asquith made it clear that the cabinet had investigated every other possible proposal for a settlement of the Irish question, ultimately deciding upon the course they have chosen to pursue simply because they believed that, even if it fails to provide a lasting settlement, it will afford a guarantee against civil turmoil.'²⁷ The leader of the opposition Andrew Bonar Law refused to accept these proposals unless exclusion was provided for all of Ulster. Carson refused to consider the amendment while there was a time limit attached to exclusion. He would not accept 'a sentence of death with stay of execution for six years.'²⁸ This rejection prompted the Ulster volunteers and the U.U.C into threats of action and statements of their readiness to defend 'the rights of Ulster'. At this point the government resolved on a policy of getting tough with the unionists. Although there was no attempts to suppress the volunteers or arrest any leaders, orders were given to the army to strengthen the position of the crown forces in Ulster.²⁹

This move had disastrous consequences and talk in the press abounded of the 'Curragh mutiny'. There was no mutiny as such as at no time did any of the army officers refuse to obey orders. What did happen was that orders were confused and a number of misunderstandings occurred between the war office and General Paget, the

commander in chief in Ireland. The war office was aware that it would be impossible to force the army, which was known to have strong unionist sympathies, to move against the volunteers. 'The army authority decided that officers whose homes were in Ulster need not be involved in any measure which might result in their fighting friends and relatives, but that they would be allowed to 'disappear' for the course of any operations.'³⁰ Paget however gave these instructions misleadingly and implied that those who could not claim Ulster residence had a choice between obeying an order to move against Ulster or else be dismissed.

The crisis was eventually difused and the misunderstandings were cleared up but the incident had two important and far reaching reprecussions. Firstly it indicated to both the British government and to unionists the sympathies of the army for Ulster. Secondly it seemed to confirm nationalist feeling that the unionists or army could not be trusted. Nationalists in Cavan and Monaghan saw this as a sinister last attempt by Carson to avert home rule.

Every move to impede the passage of the Home Rule Bill has ended in failure for the unionists, the last attempt proving the most appalingly disastrous of all. It was nothing else than enlisting the assistance of the officers of the British army in the political campaign with which Carsonism is identified.³¹

Nationalists in the region were still confident of the passing of home rule while unionists in the region were prepared to fight to the last to defend the union. A problem for the volunteers up to this point was a lack of arms and ammunition but with the Larne gun running in April 1914 the volunteers brought in about 25,000 firearms and three million rounds of ammunition.³² Rifles were widely distributed in north Monaghan in Clones, Newbliss, Scotshouse, Smithborough and Drum and in Cootehill and Redhills

in County Cavan. The rifles were brought in by motor car from Armagh.³³ The volunteers were now a well armed force and now constituted a considerable challenge to the government.

The third reading of the home rule bill was passed by a majority of 77 in the Commons on 26 May 1914. The amending bill allowing for each county of Ulster to vote themselves out of the home rule bill for six years was introduced into the House of Lords on 23 June 1914. The lords returned the bill with the amendment changed to an exclusion of all nine counties of Ulster from home rule permanently. This was of course unacceptable to Redmond but at least there was room for negotiation. Carson had as it were stated his minimum terms for negotiation. It is important to remember that the House of Lords contained a conservative and unionist majority and therefore Carson had a lot of influence. With the view prevailing that any compromise would be based on partition Asquith agreed to a conference on the issue between the main political leaders.

In the House of Commons on 20 July instead of proceeding with the second reading of the Government of Ireland Amendment Bill, Asquith announced to the Commons that 'in view of the grave situation which had arisen the King had thought it right to summon representatives of parties, both British and Irish, to a conference at Buckingham Palace, with the object of discussing the outstanding points in relation to the problem of Irish government.'³⁴ Despite the best efforts of the King no progress was made at the conference. Almost immediately the conference floundered as the parties could not agree on procedure, what was to be discussed, what area was to be excluded, or the time limit of any such exclusion. It was very difficult to expect agreement at this conference as both Carson and Redmond were under enormous pressure from their followers. Carson was demanding a clean cut of Ulster permanently, as unionists in Cavan, Monaghan and Donegal demanded exclusion from home rule. Redmond had little room to manoeuvre and could only accept exclusion by county option.³⁵

While the conference was in sitting the country was on the brink of civil war and Cavan and Monaghan were no exception. At the time of the conference in Cavan the Ulster Volunteers were reported to be 3,461 strong and the National Volunteers 6,366. In Monaghan the Ulster Volunteers had 2,188 members in two battalions and the National Volunteer's membership was 5,019.³⁶ Both sides participated in numerous parades, mobilizations and shows of force but no confrontations occurred between the rival factions.

With this backdrop it was perhaps inevitable that the conference would be a failure and after three days the conference broke down. The following statement was issued to the press to explain the failure of the conference.

The conference held meetings on the 21, 22, 23 and 24 July respectively. The possibility of defining an area to be excluded from the Government of Ireland Bill was considered. The conference being unable to agree either in principle or in detail upon such an area brought its meetings to a conclusion.³⁷

The height of the crisis had now been reached. Parliament was due to end its session in August and home rule would have to be dealt with definitely by then. 'Asquith decided on a final compromise. He would repeat his offer of county option but allow for continued exclusion after the end of the six year period.³⁸

Outside events however dispersed the crisis when the first world war broke out on 4 August 1914. The outbreak of war had a number of effects on the crisis. The foremost of these was the fact that the war unified all the parties as a united national front had to be presented to ensure a successful war effort. Both British parliamentary parties called a truce and both Carson and Redmond gave full support to the government. They also pledged the support of the respective volunteers to the war effort. Asquith seemed only too relieved and delighted to take the opportunity to shelve the Irish problem

but extensive lobbying from both Redmond and Carson ensured that this would not be possible. The home rule bill was enacted in September 1914 and on the following day Asquith introduced an amending bill with the provision that the home rule bill would not become law until the war was over and special provision had been made for Ulster.

The outbreak of war allowed for home rule to be passed and thus satisfy Redmond and the nationalists. The amending bill went some way towards placating Carson and the Ulster unionists. Both parties now tried to outdo each other by showing loyalty to the King by aiding the effort. Little outward signs of celebration were seen in counties Cavan and Monaghan where the war had managed to relieve political tension. 'Much of the bitterness existing between unionists and nationalists was obliterated and all danger of collision between the rival parties disappeared.'³⁹ There was some celebrating and rejoicing at the placing of home rule on the statute books but the occasion was seen by many to be an anticlimax due to the fact that home rule would not come into operation until the conclusion of the war.

The importance of the first world war and its effect on the subsequent course of Irish history cannot be overestimated. Although Ireland played no direct role in the war it changed Irish history in a number of far reaching ways. At the outbreak of war home rule was put on hold and this worked to the advantage of Asquith and the British government. The war diffused the issue of home rule and had the immediate impact of uniting all parties in the Commons for the war effort. Redmond had much reason to be content. He had just won for Ireland what Butt and Parnell before him had failed to achieve. Home rule was now on the statute books and would be implemented upon the cessation of hostilities in Europe. Carson too could be satisfied after winning from Asquith a special provision for Ulster in any settlement. Asquith and his government could now justifiably turn their attention from negotiations on Ulster and focus on the more pressing matter of European war.

It can be argued that the war initially had a calming influence on the partition question. It had helped to diffuse tensions and had taken Ireland from the brink of civil war. It was also hoped that war would unite Irishmen in a common struggle. This was Redmond's great hope and he offered 'full Irish support for the war effort, and suggested that all troops be withdrawn for active service leaving Ireland to be guarded by the volunteers, north and south'.⁴⁰ The war also had a positive effect on the Irish economy, 'there was soon plenty of money in circulation, and the farmers had never been so prosperous. Nationalist Ireland as a whole seemed quite happy to wait for peace to bring home rule, and in the meantime to enjoy the profits of war.'⁴¹

In both Cavan and Monaghan the outbreak of war also had a positive effect in drawing the region back from the brink of civil unrest. As reported in the *Intelligence Notes* for the year 1914, 'on the outbreak of war the political tension was at once relieved.' and 'much of the bitterness existing between unionists and nationalists was obliterated and all danger of collision between the rival parties disappeared.'⁴² Both volunteer forces scaled activities down considerably and the tensions which had accumulated in the previous months had now been diffused.⁴³ All would change shortly however. The initial benefits which can be attributed to the war were soon overshadowed by the changes afoot in all realms of Irish political thought. The lull brought about by the war created a void which was soon filled by the growth of a revolutionary nationalistic and republican movement. To quote W.B. Yeats soon everything had changed, 'changed utterly', and Ireland was once again on the brink of revolution.⁴⁴

The start of the first world war marks a significant turning point in the struggle for home rule. Until 1914 the struggle for home rule was focused on the constitutional and parliamentary methods of the Irish party. This process had reached its climax at the outset of war. Redmond seemed lost in the political lull which followed the outbreak of war. His party had no issues to fight and therefore lost its *raison d'etre*. 'In mid 1915 Redmond told Asquith that since the outbreak of war he had not made one

political speech in Ireland.⁴⁵ Redmond was becoming increasingly alienated from the opinions of the masses of Irish people who grew impatient with the lack of results of the parliamentary party. He did not help himself with his policy of supporting the British war effort. Redmond grievously miscalculated the feelings of the majority of Irish people. He dug his own political grave with his speeches calling for Irish recruits for the British war effort. The most disastrous of the recruitment drives occurred at Woodenbridge, Co. Wicklow on 20 September 1914, when according to Foster 'here he pledged the Irish volunteers to support the war effort wherever needed, rather than defending Ireland alongside their northern brethren, they were to be consigned to Flanders as British cannon fodder.'⁴⁶

It was this speech that led to the splitting of the volunteers. Those who wished to remain with Redmond became known as the 'National Volunteers'. They comprised a majority of 150,000. Although in the minority those volunteers who split from Redmond, numbering between 3,000 and 10,000 soon became the focus of revolutionary change in Ireland. Led by Eoin Mac Neill these Irish volunteers quickly aligned with the republican ideas of Sinn Fein. The volunteer ranks were soon infiltrated with the radical and revolutionary ideas of Padraig Pearse and the I.R.B. It was this group that organised the rising of Easter 1916, which precipitated the ultimate collapse of the Irish parliamentary party and confirmed the superiority of Sinn Fein among the Irish electorate.

The outbreak of war also facilitated a major change in British political circles. The liberals who were traditional allies of Irish causes suffered a major downturn in fortunes. The conservative party on the other hand went from strength to strength in the coalition government formed after the collapse of the liberal government in May 1915. After the elections of December 1916 and December 1918 the conservatives 'became first the senior and then the dominant force in the government.'⁴⁷ Irish nationalists had now lost their main ally in the House of Commons. After the general

election of November 1918 owing to the abstentionist policy of Sinn Fein Irish nationalists had no voice in Westminster.

It was the Ulster unionists who benefitted from the changes in both the Irish and British balance of power. The conservative party, long seen as the friends of Ulster emerged from the war as the strongest party in the House of Commons. The fact that Sinn Fein refused to take its seats in the House of Commons meant that the Unionists were the only Irish party present in Westminster. Thus it was the views of Carson and Craig which shaped government policy towards Ireland in the aftermath of the war. The war at a national level at any rate was kind to unionists who won many allies after their 'supreme sacrifice' at the Somme. They were the sole Irish voice influencing the shaping of government policy in Westminster after the general election of 1918.

This however was not the case for unionists in the Cavan - Monaghan region in the period during and immediately following the great war. The monumental work on unionism in county Monaghan undertaken by Terence Dooley clearly illustrates the decline of the unionist ascendancy in county Monaghan as a direct result of the war.⁴⁸ World war I had stripped unionism in the region of many of its leaders. The 'big houses' or homes of the gentry were emptied of many of the men of fighting age who had traditionally shown the necessary leadership qualities in organising local unionist clubs and the Ulster volunteers. Even those who remained at home concentrated on the war effort to the exclusion of unionist activities.⁴⁹ The inability of the leaders of unionism in Cavan and Monaghan, notably M.E. Knight and Lord Farnham, to have the area included in excluded Ulster had a detrimental effect on unionism in the region.⁵⁰

The change afoot in Ireland from the outbreak of the first world war manifested itself in the Easter rising of 1916. The rising was not a rising of the masses but instead organised by extremists such as Padraig Pearse. The proclamation of the Irish Republic read by Pearse and his comrades from the steps of the G.P.O. on Easter Monday 1916 was met by at most curiosity on the parts of the people of Dublin. The rising was

almost exclusively Dublin based and was quickly suppressed by the military. The rising was planned by fanatics from the I.R.B. and had little support among the people of the country. It was the response of the British government to the rising that made the rising into a celebration of Irish martyrdom. The reaction of the British government to the perpetrators of the insurrection, against the judgement of their advisors, such as Bernard Shaw, can be traced back to the wartime policy they took on Irish affairs.

The major player in British rule over Ireland was the chief secretary Augustine Birrell, a man widely regarded as incompetent in his duties.⁵¹ He did not take a great deal of interest in Irish affairs at Westminster. As chief secretary in wartime Ireland he was happy to maintain a policy of *laissez faire* towards the Irish situation and especially the growth of Sinn Fein. He seemed oblivious to the menace posed by the I.R.B. leaders who were planning the rising. This is despite the fact that it is widely recognised that the British authorities, through their vast network of infiltrators, had ample knowledge of the plans being laid for an insurrection. He gravely underestimated the strength of the volunteer movement and believed that it would be folly to try to suppress the volunteers. Birrell resigned shortly after the rising and the British authorities were determined to bring tougher control to Ireland. The war however was at a critical juncture and Britain could not focus its attention on Irish problems. The cabinet made the fatal mistake of passing control of the country to the military. Martial law had been proclaimed at the outbreak of the rising, and the captured rebel leaders were tried by court martial between 3 May and 12 May. Fifteen including all the signatories of the republican proclamation were executed.⁵²

Public opinion in Ireland was outraged and the leaders of the rising who upon their arrest had been jeered by Irish people now became national heroes. The rising thus became the final nail in the Irish Parliamentary Party's coffin as Sinn Fein became the party of the masses. In one fatal error of judgement the British cabinet had transformed the Irish political scene. People were stirred from their political slumber as

the masses backed Sinn Fein. Another British political blunder confirmed the mass appeal of Sinn Fein, after efforts to enforce conscription in Ireland. The elections of November 1918 which Sinn Fein fought on an anti-conscription manifesto confirmed their position as the only significant political voice in post war Ireland.

The Easter rising had the effect of refocusing attention on the Irish question which had been put on hold at the outbreak of war in 1914. Asquith undertook a brief tour of Ireland to assess the situation and when he returned from his trip, he informed the House of Commons in a speech on May 11 that.

The government has come to the conclusion that the system under which Ireland has been governed has completely broken down. The only satisfactory alternative, in their judgement, is the creation at the earliest possible moment, of an Irish government responsible to the Irish people.⁵³

It was of vital significance to Asquith and the government that the Irish question was satisfactorily dealt with as American opinion needed to be appeased. Britain was waiting for America to enter the war and therefore needed to quickly address the Irish question, in order to appease the considerable Irish - American lobby in Washington. At first the signs were encouraging as by the end of May Asquith had selected Lloyd George as the man to bring together the two Irish parties. All sides were willing to negotiate and Britain was now eager to bring about a lasting solution and Lloyd George seemed the most likely man to do this. Redmond was desperate to gain some immediate results and was encouraged by signs that the government were willing to grant immediate home rule for Ireland. Carson believed that the disloyalty shown by the insurgents of Easter week could only mean a more favourable settlement for Ulster.

A veteran of the Buckingham palace conference Lloyd George decided on a new approach to negotiations between the two sides. Lloyd George at no time brought the two parties together in a round table discussion. Instead he met the rival leaders,

Redmond and Carson, individually pressing on them the need for an urgent solution to the problem. Lloyd George's solution was destined to failure as he made vastly different promises to Redmond and Carson. He led Redmond to believe that any exclusion would be a temporary measure which would be concluded on the ending of the war. Carson however had a written agreement with Lloyd George that Ulster would not 'whether she wills it or not, merge in the rest of Ireland.'⁵⁴

What is crucial in regard to these proposals was not the insurmountable problem of the duration of any exclusion. What is however of vital significance is that Lloyd George got both parties to agree on the area of exclusion. This was a significant victory for Carson as he had won by these negotiations that which in 1914 he had been prepared to go to war over. Carson had long preferred a six county Ulster as it would contain a safer majority of unionists as opposed to a nine county Ulster which could only guarantee a slight unionist majority. On 6 June Carson put these proposals before the U.U.C. which unanimously accepted these proposals. It was a hard decision for the council to make to abandon their fellow unionists in Donegal, Cavan and Monaghan. After much soul searching and anguish unionists members from these three counties stated that 'if the unionists of the six north eastern counties considered the safety of the empire to be dependant on the continuance of the negotiations proposed by the government, then they would abide by their decision.'⁵⁵ Carson was delighted with this and 'he believed that they would find in the long run that they had established themselves in an impregnable position, and through the sacrifice of the three counties led by Lord Farnham would have attained a position of which no man need feel ashamed.'⁵⁶

While Carson had marked the area which he would fight for and could now feel justified in celebrating his achievement these negotiations were a disaster for Redmond. Redmond in sheer desperation for his political career was willing to sacrifice nationalists in Derry City, Tyrone and Fermanagh in order to gain immediate home rule. Already losing popularity among the Irish people he had difficulty convincing his own

party of the benefit of accepting Lloyd George's proposals. He was also facing a backlash from the press and the general public as well as northern nationalists and even more worryingly for Redmond, the catholic church. 'Cardinal Logue declared it would be better remain under English rule for fifty years to come than to accept the Lloyd George scheme.'⁵⁷

Local nationalist opinion in Cavan and Monaghan voiced through the newspapers was suspicious of the moves being made between Redmond and Lloyd George from an early stage. The *Anglo Celt* at an early stage in negotiations believed that it was 'inconceivable that Mr. Lloyd George will not keep at the business in hand until there is some arrangement arrived at, without including any portion of the conscription programme which he has aided in such a prominent manner to have extended to England.'⁵⁸ However even at this point nationalists in the area believed that any excluded area would only include the four north eastern counties. The proposals accepted by Redmond were seen in no uncertain terms by nationalists in the region as 'merely a repetition of the well known demands of the covenanters of the north east of Ulster and not at all the statesmanlike effort which we were led to expect.'⁵⁹

Redmond did eventually secure acceptance of Lloyd George proposals by a margin of 475 votes to 265 at a conference of nationalists in Belfast on 23 June 1916. Agreement on the surface at any rate was reached thanks to Lloyd George's skilful manoeuvres and negotiations. The proposals were never implemented as when it came to light that Lloyd George had offered vastly differing terms to both parties the agreements were repudiated. The negotiations do however mark a significant turning point in the history of partition. Redmond, to the further detriment of his reputation had agreed on a six county excluded area. Lloyd George had brought the parties together on this point and Carson had got this passed by the U.U.C.. He was now free to wash his hands of the three counties of Cavan, Monaghan and Donegal.

Nationalists in the region were relieved that negotiations had broken down. Cavan Urban Council passed a resolution in early July demanding an all Ireland conference 'before they vote or commit the Irish people to an expediency measure, which might have most damaging results on the future permanent government of the country.'⁶⁰ There was much genuine concern in the border region among the various local representative bodies about the future of Cavan and Monaghan following partition.

Take it from us, representing the people in the Gap of the North, that there is no one, unionist or nationalist in favour of a division of Ireland...⁶¹

The question seemed to him to be, were the Ulster nationalists in favour of the proposals of Lloyd George but people in Cavan were not consulted, although they had believed that they were living in Ulster. Where were they now?

Chairman - In No-man's land...⁶²

The terminology used in reference to the future of the region following partition vividly conveys the concerns held by nationalists as well as unionists about the future of the area.

The failure of these negotiations to find a solution to the Irish question forced Lloyd George to take another approach to the problem. Lloyd George had become British prime minister in December 1916 and still needed to deal with the Irish Question. He still had to appease and conciliate Irish - American feeling in the United States, which was an ally of Britain in the war effort. The approach taken by Lloyd George was to convene an Irish Convention of the Irish parliamentary party, southern unionists and the Ulster Unionist party. Sinn Fein which was by now far and away the dominant party in Irish political life, boycotted the convention. The convention because of this fatal flaw was doomed to failure. It was also doomed as Ulster unionists had no real interest in negotiating the position they had won following the discussions of 1916.

The convention met at Trinity College Dublin from 25 July 1917 until March 1918 but had virtually no historical impact. To quote R.B. Mc Dowell 'The convention which met in 1917 was one of the most striking failures in Irish history. Indeed if the intellectual calibre of many of its members is taken into account, it may reasonably be called a brilliant failure.'⁶¹ The conventions report was made on 5 April 1918 but had no practical function. It was soon forgotten as a new crisis was to break in Ireland, with the introduction of a Military Service Bill with a clause extending conscription to Ireland.

It was this crisis over conscription that finally confirmed the death of the Irish parliamentary party, now led by John Dillon after the death of Redmond in March 1918. The crisis was another victory for Sinn Fein, 'It provided the final legitimisation of Sinn Fein as a national political party, and the culmination of the wartime governments record of disastrous Irish decisions.'⁶⁴

Even while the Irish Convention was in session public attention was firmly focused on Sinn Fein as Arthur Griffith stood aside to let de Valera become leader of Sinn Fein. At the Ard Fheis of October 1917 Sinn Fein clearly stated their policies. The first of these was abstention from Westminster, their second being to have Ireland recognised as an independent republic based on democratic principles. The Irish volunteers were also growing in numbers as new recruits flooded in. The steady build up of support for Sinn Fein was converted into an avalanche of support.

The Military Service Bill which envisaged conscription for Ireland was introduced on 9 April 1918 in the House of Commons. It was introduced to compensate for the appalling losses suffered by the allied forces on the western front in March 1918. Since virtually the first month of the war there was a stalemate on the western front. The Germans had however made a major breakthrough in March 1918 pushing the allies back a considerable distance. The allies were now suffering appalling losses and desperately needed new recruits for the front. Lloyd George amongst others warned against the

introduction of the bill due to the effect it would have in Ireland and the controversy it would arouse. All these arguments were put aside as the cabinet grew more desperate for Irish recruits. The Military Service Bill became law on 18 April 1918, again illustrating the powerlessness of the Irish nationalists in Westminster.

Nationalist Ireland was united in indignation against the act. The Irish party followed the policy of Sinn Fein and withdrew from Westminster in protest against conscription. A convention was called in the mansion house by the lord mayor of Dublin, which stated that the proposal was 'a declaration of war on the Irish nation.'⁶⁵ The catholic bishops condemned the attempts to bring conscription 'by all means that are consonant with the laws of God.'⁶⁶ A one day strike was held on 23 April 1918 to show opposition to the bill. The pledge which was approved by Sinn Fein was signed by hundreds of thousand Irish people outside the church gates after Sunday mass. The support of the catholic hierarchy for Sinn Fein was crucial in the parties rise in public opinion. Irish political persuasion could still be controlled from the pulpit. It was therefore a massive boost for Sinn Fein to be seen to be working in tandem with the catholic bishops. However the role of the church in the conscription crisis also had the effect of furthering the distance between north and south. One could sympathise with the unionist viewpoint that 'home rule was Rome rule.'

The British government was surprised and alarmed by the united opposition it encountered and abandoned the idea of forcing conscription on Ireland. The British administration in Dublin Castle were determined to act against Sinn Fein and the volunteers. The castle invented a 'German plot' as pretext for arresting republican leaders. Among the chief figures to be arrested were de Valera, Griffith as well as Ernest Blythe, a future T.D. for north Monaghan. This plot also backfired on the British administration and in June Arthur Griffith won a by-election in East Cavan. This was after Sinn Fein, the volunteers, the Gaelic League and Cumann na mBan were declared illegal.

The war finally ended in allied victory in November 1918 and parliament was dissolved on 25 December 1918. The general election of December 1918 was a resounding endorsement of Sinn Fein policies as they won seventy three seats while the Irish party only won six. As expected the Unionist party swept the board in Ulster. Partition of the country was thus confirmed. The intervention of Cardinal Logue to secure an election pact between Sinn Fein and the Irish party to not oppose each other in nationalist areas of Ulster seemed to confirm unionist suspicions of a vatican led plot against Ulster. In Cavan both constituencies returned Sinn Feiners unopposed, Peter Paul Galligan in west Cavan and in east Cavan Arthur Griffith.⁶⁵ Monaghan also returned two Sinn Feiners, Ernest Blythe with a convincing majority of 2,245 votes won the seat for north Monaghan over M.E. Knight, the unionist candidate. In south Monaghan Sean Mac Entee also won a convincing majority of 3,111 votes over the Irish parliamentary party candidate, Thomas Campbell.⁶⁶

The Sinn Fein policy of abstention from Westminster led to the party setting up their own parliament, Dail Eireann, in January 1919. This was to mark a violent and bloody period of Irish history and nowhere was this more deeply felt than in Cavan and Monaghan. This period was to leave a deep scar on the region for many years to come and will be illustrated in chapter two.

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**CHAPTER TWO:
THE IMPOSITION OF PARTITION AND SECTARIAN
WARFARE, 1919-1921.**

The political importance of the period 1919-1921 which is examined in this chapter is immeasurable. It was without doubt the most important and significant period in the history of Cavan and Monaghan. On the political stage it was the period which saw the final imposition of the partition settlement and the creation of a border in the region. This period also witnessed the first ramifications of partition which were manifest in the outbreak of sectarian violence and hostilities in the region. Its implications were to be far reaching and profound. The attacks on unionists and the crown forces by the I.R.A from 1920 seemed to confirm all the deep seated unionists fears of living under a Dublin parliament. It was a disastrous period for all those living in Cavan and Mongahan. The imposition of the border led to violence and hostility as the region became embroiled in border warfare between the I.R.A operating on the Free State side and the U.V.F. and specials on the six county side.

Secondary sources on the period of sectarian violence in the Cavan - Monaghan region are extremely sparse. Nothing at all has been written about the Cavan region during this period. For Monaghan two works in particular provide good background material for the period. The first of these was published by the Clogher Historical Society entitled *The war of Independence in Monaghan*. This work uses good primary sources, including recollections of those involved in the I.R.A. during the period 1919 - 1921.¹ Edward Micheau's article entitled *Sectarian Conflict in Monaghan* is also a good study of life in Monaghan during this period.² The work of Terence Dooley is also extremely useful.³

Secondary sources for events on the national scale are more widespread. Works on the crisis within unionism and the decision to accept a six county northern parliament include the work of Jonathon Bardon and Patrick Buckland.⁴ The work of Patrick Buckland in particular is indispensable for the crisis within the U.U.C. and the decision to accept a six county state. The final imposition of the partition settlement has been examined by numerous historians. The best and most reliable accounts however are

given by Michael Laffan and David Fitzpatrick.⁵ Primary sources on the period for the Cavan - Monaghan region are abundant. Again the local newspapers are indispensable. The information found in the local papers is supplemented by the Dublin Castle Colonial Office records.⁶ These records give a month by month account of the state of each county.

This period is bewildering and confusing in many aspects as a number of different processes occur in conjunction. Political direction came from either Dublin or Westminster depending on political affiliation, although at most stages no direction came from either government. In the period under examination two police forces and judicial systems were in operation. It was therefore an immensely complex period. This chapter draws a vivid picture of the intimidation, fear and desperation felt by both Catholics and Protestants in the region.

The first period which is examined is the period 1919 - 1920 when the region witnessed little overt violence between nationalist and unionist camps as both were deeply divided internally. Despite the impression conveyed by the results of the 1918 general election, in which Sinn Fein won all four seats in each county, Sinn Fein did not have the full support of nationalists in the Cavan - Monaghan region. Unionism was also suffering from divisions as it became increasingly obvious that the unionists of Cavan and Monaghan would be cast adrift from any northern state.

The decision of Sinn Fein to set up Dail Eireann, a parliament for Ireland, in the Mansion house on 21 January 1919 did not meet with universal approval among nationalists in the area. The *Dundalk Democrat* which was to become the political organ for the Nationalist party denounced the setting up of the Dail : 'No practical man believes in the possibility of anything but trouble resulting from an attempt to set up a parliament in Ireland without the authority of a majority of the Irish people.'⁷ Supporters of the old Nationalist party in the region were very bitter about the victory of Sinn Fein. In a speech

made to supporters of the Nationalist party in Carrickmacross, made by T.J. Campbell, the tension which was building in nationalist ranks is vividly portrayed.

At the next election south Monaghan [will] wipe the slate clean of the policy of Sinn Fein. The Nationalists of Monaghan had fought as they never fought before, but he had been beaten by a neglected register, by imported mobs, by misrepresentation and lying the most gross, and intimidation the most widespread. On the polling day the election in certain districts was the mockery of a free election. The new ascendancy with which the nationalists were threatened promised to be worse than the old ascendancy in its intolerance and persecution.⁸

Nationalists who were bitter about their alienation from political power quickly joined the ranks of the Ancient Order of Hibernians(A.O.H.) and the Gaelic League in large numbers. Tables one and two show the number of members in political associations in both Cavan and Monaghan in January 1919.

Both areas were relatively peaceful, according to the county inspector but one outrage reported in Monaghan illustrated the tensions brewing and internal conflict among nationalists. This was the breaking in to an A.O.H hall by a Sinn Feiner, damaging the building and a banner and removing some of the band instruments.⁹ Throughout the year demonstrations denouncing one another were held in the region as there was a palpable tension among nationalists. National leaders of high profile on both sides spoke in the region during 1919, reminding people of their duty to the cause. Arthur Griffith spoke in Cootehill in April, to a large crowd of Sinn Feiners.¹⁰ Over 5,000 people took part in a parade in Carrickmacross to mark the anniversary of Redmond's death.¹¹ Two incidents in particular highlighted the growing tensions between Sinn Fein and the Nationalist party. The first of these occurred in Gowra on 6 March when 'three men, two dressed as policemen and the third dressed as a soldier knocked at the door of the house

of Thomas Mc Kiernan, J.P., Gowra subdistrict, and when he opened the door, presented a paper purporting to be signed by the county inspector demanding arms.¹² According to the county inspector Mc Kiernan was a member of the A.O.H and was opposed to Sinn Fein.' Relations between the Ancient Order of Hibernians and Sinn Fein were particularly fraught in Castleblayney and came to a head on 15 August, when upon the return of the Nationalist band from a demonstration in Dundalk, it was attacked' by a crowd of local Sinn Fein rowdies with stones.¹³ 'Stone throwing between the two parties continued for a considerable time, until eventually two police men came on the scene and succeeded in getting between the two sections. However the crowds again came in close contact and free fights took place, sticks and band instruments being freely used as weapons.' Sinn Feiners later attacked the A.O.H hall with stones and also attacked the houses of several prominent local nationalists.¹⁴

There was also divisions among unionists ranks, but these were of a different nature, as illustrated in the last chapter. Unionists in Cavan and Monaghan became increasingly aware that they would be excluded from any partitioned northern unionist state. They were in a weak and vulnerable position throughout 1919, but were at least spared from attack by Sinn Fein and the I.R.A., as they seemed content to fight it out with the Nationalist party and the A.O.H. This however was not to last indefinitely and from late 1919 an increasingly violent polarization of the two communities, unionist and nationalist, manifested itself. This brought an end to the relative peacefulness and lack of tension between unionists and nationalists which had been evident from late 1918. A number of reasons can be put forward for the lack of sectarian tensions in the Cavan and Monaghan region for much of 1919. Primary among these was the tensions among nationalist ranks examined above. Another crucial reason for the less hostile relationship between unionists and nationalists was the stalemate in political activity, as both Dublin and Westminster, for vastly different reasons awaited the outcome of the Versailles peace conference.

Upon the opening of the first Dail in January 1919 and the outbreak of the War of Independence which commenced the same day, the Dail put all its faith in its 'Message to the free nations of the world', and an appeal to the Paris peace conference which had opened the previous day.¹⁵ Sinn Fein had no policies or plans for northeast Ulster, and had no policy on partition, save ignorance of it. In putting forward its proposals to the peace conference under the arbitration of President Wilson, Sinn Fein ignored the reality of unionist opposition to an all - Ireland parliament. It was a trait of Sinn Fein which was to last through the Treaty debates and through successive governments during the twenties and thirties. As the Versailles conference did not conclude its deliberations until June 1919 Dail Eireann had no real relevance for the main problem which was affecting the Cavan Monaghan region, that of partition. From a unionist perspective partition was not to the forefront of political consciousness either, as the 'Ulster question' would not be dealt with until wartime was over. Wartime was interpreted as including the peace conference.¹⁶ Therefore as there was no activity on the Ulster question, Cavan and Monaghan were relatively peaceful throughout the first half of 1919 and the region was spared the widespread violence which was frequent in much of the rest of Ireland as the war of independence swept the country.

After the signing of the Versailles treaty in June 1919, the wartime period was officially at an end and it became clear that the British government, after a reprieve of five years, would have to turn their attention once again to the Ulster question. As stated by Churchill:

Great empires have been overturned. The whole map of Europe has been changed.. but as the deluge subsides and the waters fall we see the dreary steeples of Fermanagh and Tyrone emerging once again. The integrity of their quarrel is one of the few institutions that have been unaltered in the cataclysm which has swept the world.¹⁷

However, a number of things had changed notably in the balance of power in Westminster and nationalists no longer had any influence in the making of policies in Westminster. With the abstention of Sinn Fein from Westminster Irish nationalism had no voice in Westminster, where like it or not the legislation to settle the Ulster question would be drafted. The unionists on the other hand were in a very strong position as the sole Irish voice advising cabinet policies on Ulster. Craig and the other unionists in government on the backbenches were the only voices to be heard as the settlement of the Ulster question was thrashed out. It was in October 1919 that the Cabinet selected a committee to draft the fourth home rule bill. Unionists had every reason to feel confident about the outcome of this committee's deliberations on the bill as it was chaired by Sir Walter Long, erstwhile leader of the Ulster Unionists.

Exclusion was the only viable policy, according to this committee and two parliaments were proposed for Ireland. This bill became known as the Government of Ireland Bill and was formally introduced into the House of Commons on 25 February 1920.¹⁸ Indeed it was not in the House of Commons that the area to be excluded was debated, but rather amongst the chambers of the Ulster Unionist Council. Carson had always argued that a six county split was more viable and had a safer majority and was thus easier to control than a nine county Ulster. The delegates of the U.U.C argued that an extra 260,000 Catholics from the three counties of Cavan, Monaghan and Donegal would only leave a very precarious majority.

The unionists of Cavan, Monaghan and Donegal felt bitterly betrayed and published a pamphlet entitled 'Ulster and Home Rule, No partition of Ulster', in early 1920 outlining their objections to the six county split.¹⁹ Their arguments were based on economics and geography. It was stated that partition on a six county basis would be disastrous for the economies of Cavan and Monaghan.

Belfast is the commercial capital of Ulster. All our trade, business and railways are connected with it. The G.N.R runs direct from the town of Cavan through the county of Monaghan. If a barrier is to be erected between our counties and Belfast it will be injurious to all.²⁰

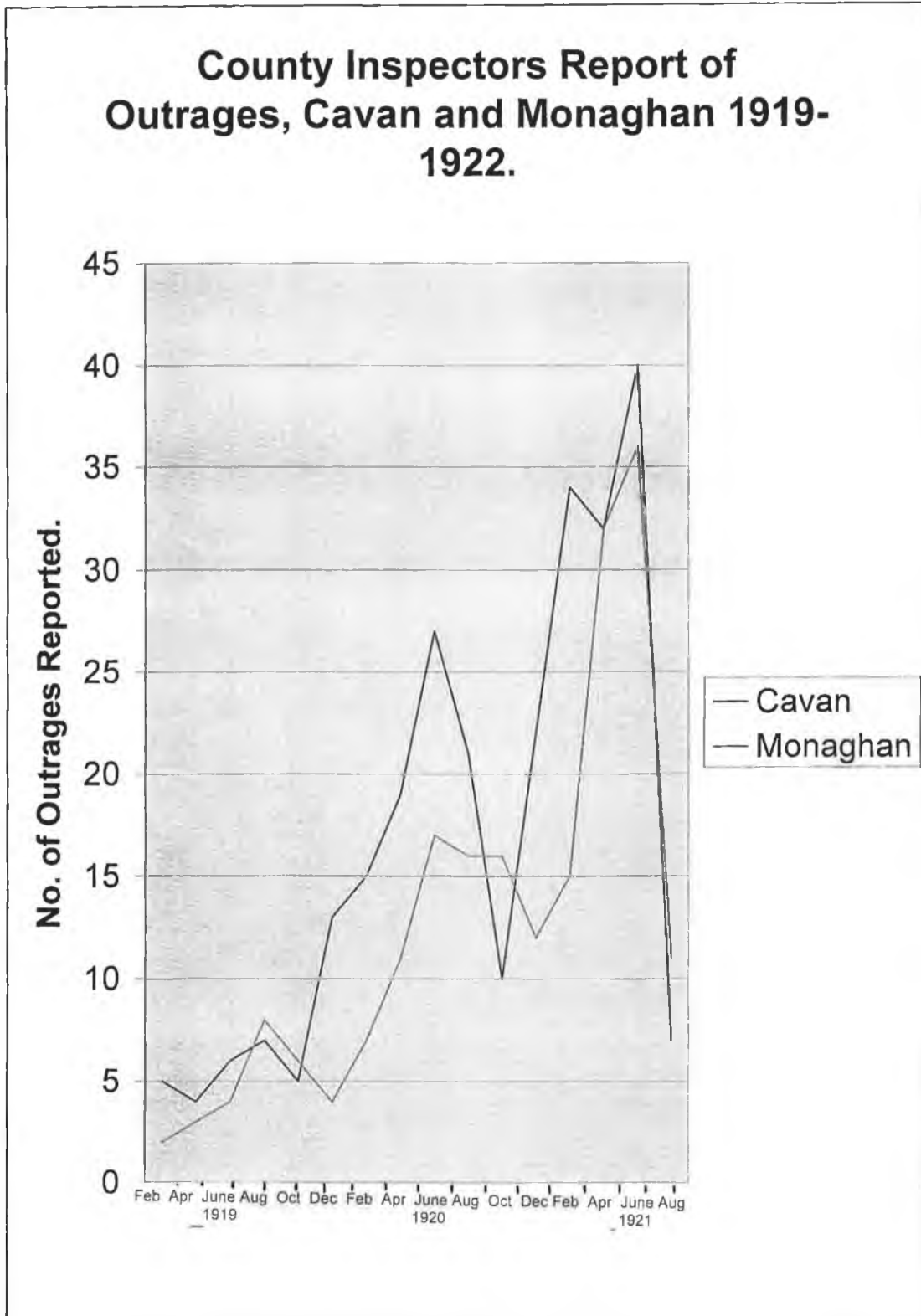
On 10 March the U.U.C accepted the Government of Ireland Bill for a six county northern parliament. The two leaders of unionism in Cavan and Monaghan, Lord Farnham and M.E. Knight, made one last effort to have the council accept a nine county split by putting forward the motion:

That this council abiding by its covenant refuses to accept any form of government which does not include the whole geographical province of Ulster and calls upon its parliamentary leaders to take such steps as may be necessary to see that the term Northern Ireland in the permanent bill is altered to include the whole province of Ulster.²¹

On 9 April the Monaghan and Cavan delegates resigned from the Ulster Unionist Council.²² They had every reason to feel angry and betrayed. They also felt increasingly threatened by a series of sectarian attacks which were taking place in the region from late 1919.

It was from about June 1919 that ancient hatreds began to rear their ugly heads in Cavan and Monaghan. Initially it was along predictable lines of removing flags and taunting such as the case of Mr. William Martin, who lodged a claim with Monaghan Urban District Council for damages amounting to £5 5s for malicious injury to a union jack.²³ In September Ballybay town court dealt with the case of William Thompson whose house was pelted with stones. A witness gave evidence that Thompson caused a lot of trouble in the area by 'cursing the pope and priests. This cursing of the pope by Thompson was at the root of the trouble on peace day and on other occasions.'²⁴ In

Figure One



Source: Colonial Office, Dublin Castle Records, CO 904. (N.L.I.)

December William Mc Kenna was charged, after an incident in which he attacked Mary Cairns 'a mother of one of the rebels.'²⁵

This bickering was also in evidence in the political sphere, and one incident in particular vividly illustrates this. Monaghan County Council, which was by now controlled by Sinn Fein, 'invited the commission of Inquiry, which was appointed by Dail Eireann to meet in Monaghan and appear before the council. On the agenda was the item: -'to receive deputation from Sinn Fein Commission of Inquiry'.²⁶ Two unionists, William Martin and M.E. Knight objected to this, by writing to the Monaghan unionist organ the *Northern Standard*. They declined to take part in the proceedings of the council on account of this item being on the agenda. Sinn Fein accused the unionists of trying to obstruct the business of the council, and being against the economic development of the county. According to the report in the *Irish Times*, 'the meeting then broke up, and snatches of the soldiers song were heard, as well as cries of up Dublin.'²⁷

Sectarian conflicts began to appear in all aspects of life and from June incidents of attacks on unionists and searches for arms became commonplace in the region. Figure One shows the marked increases in outrages reported in the region. At midnight on 2 June in the Cavan district Robert Carson, a protestant was entering his house when shots were fired at him. Three masked men followed him into his house and searched for arms, three guns, a revolver and about sixteen sporting cartridges were carried off by the men.²⁸ It was widely known to the I.R.A. that the homes of unionists contained arms, dating back to the days of the U.V.F. in 1914 and from the first world war. Numerous searches were carried out on the homes of unionists throughout the second half of 1919. As well as raiding protestant homes, from about October the I.R.A. began to attack the local R.I.C., who were long seen as the defenders of the unionist community in the region. Intimidation of the police first appeared in November when the inspector general reported that 'D.I. Allen received a letter warning him that he would be killed unless he left Cavan'²⁹. On 9 December while cycling near Castleblayney

Constable Fox was attacked and overpowered by 5 men who robbed him of his carbine, sword bayonet and ammunition.³⁰

The *Irish Times* reported that as a consequence of this incident 300 military and about 100 police were drafted into Castleblayney. They proceeded to make a systematic search of all the houses of prominent Sinn Feiners. Numerous searches of the houses of prominent Sinn Feiners occurred during the closing months of 1919. These raids served only to antagonise the I.R.A. even further and to increase attacks on unionists and their protectors, the police and military. After the arrest of a prominent Sinn Feiner in Belturbet a crowd gathered on the streets in preparation for an attack on the police barracks. The crowd were only dispersed when they were baton charged.³¹

The start of 1920 saw a more concerted effort by the I.R.A. in their attacks on unionists and the police force. This was especially true in county Monaghan where the volunteers were led by General Eoin O'Duffy, who was later to become commissioner of the Garda Síochána. In early 1920 he was joined in Monaghan by Ernie O'Malley. It was O'Duffy along with O'Malley that planned a spectacular attack on Shantonagh military barracks in February 1920. This was an intricately planned and well coordinated attack. Shantonagh was a small village on the borders of Cavan and Monaghan. It originated as a raid for arms and vividly illustrated the strength of the I.R.A. in the region. The raid occurred on the night of 15 February about 50 men surrounded the barracks and demanded its surrender. When this was not forthcoming the barracks was blown up and the I.R.A. entered the barracks and secured the arms and ammunition therein. As the I.R.A. continued their attacks on military barracks unionists felt more and more isolated and threatened. It was not until later in the year, however, that unionists started to fight back and defend themselves from intimidation, as in March political events came to the fore. These political events temporarily united nationalists and unionists in their opposition to partition.

In February 1920 the cabinet committee chaired by Sir Walter Long submitted to the government its deliberations on the future of Ulster. It recommended that the whole province of Ulster be excluded as this would facilitate ultimate reunion. This advice was rejected by the government which took Craigs advice that only six counties should form the new northern state.³² The Government of Ireland Bill was introduced into the House of Commons on 25 February with provision for two Irish parliaments, one for southern Ireland, and one for the six counties which would comprise Northern Ireland. Craig who at first opposed to the bill, eventually came round to the idea and decided not to oppose it. On 31 March the bill was passed by 348 votes for it as opposed to 94 votes against.³³ Leading Ulster unionists had decided that a six county split was the best option. This increased the sense of isolation and betrayal felt by unionists in Cavan and Monaghan.

The hardest part of the decision to accept was the fact that they had been betrayed by their fellow covenanters. The editorial column of the *Northern Standard* fully conveyed the frustration felt by Cavan and Monaghan unionists who were left to deal with life as a minority in an increasingly hostile southern 'catholic' state.

We deplore the decision of the Ulster Unionist Council to accept a parliament for six of the Ulster counties instead of the whole of the province. Taking everything into consideration, we cannot regard it otherwise than a deliberate betrayal of the Unionists of Monaghan, Cavan and Donegal... The one argument that ought to have prevailed is that the Ulster Covenant is still as binding upon them as when it was signed..But it seems that the Covenant was a mere 'scrap of paper'. That is a harsh term to use, but it seems to us that the selfish policy decided upon in Belfast deserves nothing more flattering. 'We have done our best for you' the council says in effect 'and in future you will have to look after yourselves.'³⁴

The *Dundalk Democrat*, the mouthpiece of moderate nationalist opinion in the Cavan / Monaghan region sympathised with unionists in the region. In an editorial on 13 March 1920 it stated that:

We for quite a different reason from that influencing the Monaghan and Cavan unionists, favour the 'All Ulster' scheme as against the 'clean cut' of the six alleged protestant counties. We think either proposal unwise and unpatriotic. We believe partition to be a calamity whose evil effects will very likely be felt for generations to come. But, as promising a local parliament more evenly balanced, and as giving hope of an earlier union of the two parts of Ireland, we should much prefer to see 'Northern Ireland' include the nine counties of Ulster rather than the six counties as proposed.

The signs for the future were ominous and as stated by the *Democrat* 'the bill does not satisfy even moderate opinion in Ireland. It does not please any political party. It seems to promise only new trouble for this sufficiently troubled country.'³⁵ The *Anglo Celt* was equally opposed to the bill, saying that 'nobody in Ireland has said a good word for the bill. Indeed the greater number have not given it the smallest consideration.'³⁶ Public bodies in the region were also quick to voice their opposition to the proposed partitioning of the province. Cavan County Council on the motion of the chairman adopted a resolution 'emphatically protesting against the proposed partition of Ireland. to which the people of county Cavan would never submit.'³⁷ Monaghan County Council also passed a resolution against the partition of Ulster:

We the elected representatives of a population consisting entirely of Ulstermen, emphatically as Irishmen, protest against any scheme of severing our country and people from our fellow countrymen of the south and west. We are Irishmen, and inside Ireland we know of but one nation inhabiting it. We, as Ulstermen, though proud of our province, recognise no Ulster nation any more than we

recognise a Munster nation. The division of a whole people of the bidding of a small minority of zealots and political wire pullers is at once unnational and unnatural, and we pledge ourselves and our constituents never to submit to it.'³⁸

This same resolution was passed by Cavan Urban Council, Clones Urban Council and Monaghan District Council. It became increasingly clear that nationalists in the region would ignore the bill and fight for the republic proclaimed by Sinn Fein. Even the United Irish League traditionally a moderate voice of Irish nationalism, aligned to the A.O.H denounced the new bill. They referred to the six counties as the 'Orange Free State' and at a rally in south Monaghan, J.P. Convery the U.I.L organiser for Newry 'came to take counsel with the good and true men of Monaghan and to renew with them 'a solemn league and covenant' never to lower the banner of green till a broad measure of legislature had been granted to Ireland, one and indivisible. It is up to us to use every means at our disposal to fire out this coalition government that seeks to perpetuate strife and discord in this country.'³⁹

On 30 March a meeting of the County Cavan Unionist Association was held in Cavan. Here a resolution was unanimously passed 'protesting against the breach of the Ulster Covenant by the Ulster Unionist Council in deserting their fellow covenanters in the three counties of Cavan, Donegal and Monaghan, and calling on the delegates from the Cavan Unionist Association to the Ulster Council to resign their membership of the last mentioned body.'⁴⁰ The Irish party at Westminster withdrew from the House of Commons in protest against the bill, and thus there was now no nationalist voice to protest against the bill or to offer any amendments to the bill.

At any rate it was clear that Sinn Fein paid scant regard to Westminster policy and lawlessness intensified from June. While it is fair to say that government policies from Westminster had little impact on the region from June 1920 the influence

of Dail Eireann increased rapidly. Elections for local government were held in June and this resulted in large Sinn Fein majorities. The inspector general for both Cavan and Monaghan attributed the victory of Sinn Fein to 'good organization and intimidation'.⁴¹ There is much evidence of this fact and one report in the *Irish Times* shows how a nationalist candidate, Mr Philip Magee, Inniskeen, was forced to withdraw from the elections:

Mr. Magee was about retiring the night when a knock came to the door. Advancing outwards he was suddenly caught by the arms and hustled by other men towards the centre of the roadway. The leader of the party called upon Mr. Magee for a promise that he would withdraw his candidature next day. Realising his position, the required promise was given. Mr Magee called upon the returning officer yesterday and withdrew his name.⁴²

Sinn Fein swept the board in Cavan winning 20 of the 21 seats on the county council, the other seat going to a nationalist.⁴³ In Monaghan Sinn Fein also won a majority, but the presence of unionists in the council meant that the bickering between nationalists and unionists in the region would continue in the council chambers. A resolution was passed recognising the authority of Dail Eireann as the lawful and elected government of the country.⁴⁴ Almost immediately an argument broke out about a Sinn Fein flag which had been hoisted on the courthouse. Colonel Madden, a unionist objected to the Sinn Fein flag and stated that:

His view was that Ireland would be far better to remain in the Union, just as they were now. Just because he and others held those views he hoped that they would not have their work on the council made more difficult, and have all sorts of slights thrown at them, such as having Sinn Fein flags flown over the courthouse when the council was sitting.⁴⁵

There was much heated debates and insults traded between the unionist and Sinn Fein members of the council.

On 29 June Dail Eireann decreed the establishment of courts of justice and equity throughout the land. Cavan and Monaghan, in line with the rest of the country had Dail Eireann courts set up and these quickly replaced the British system in the area. The new courts were given a good deal of respectability among nationalists by their organisation along church and parish lines, but this only increased unionist suspicions of the courts. The *Anglo-Celt* reported that at a convention held in north Monaghan to select arbitrators there were priests present from every parish in the constituency.⁴⁶

The courts owed much of their success to the system of policing offered by the I.R.A. who enforced penalties passed out by the courts. The county inspector for Monaghan complained in July that attempts were being made to form Sinn Fein courts and to oust the ordinary law of the land.⁴⁷ The I.R.A. also made sure that the Sinn Fein courts would be well patronized by attacking the British system. In Cavan about 15 magistrates were obliged, mainly by intimidation to resign their commissions and the county inspector complained that the I.R.A. were active in preventing persons from taking their cases to the petty sessions.⁴⁸

The importance of the court system introduced by Sinn Fein cannot be overemphasised. Its success gave a great deal of credibility to Sinn Fein and as time went by the courts gained the respect of most of the inhabitants and they gained a reputation for fairmindedness. On a national scale even unionists gave respect to the courts as they were seen as a way of controlling the lawlessness which was rampant in the country as a whole. David Fitzpatrick proffers the view that 'this achievement [of controlling lawlessness] was widely praised even by the remaining resident gentry, whose disgust at the collapse of civil administration sometimes outweighed their political aversion to republicanism.'⁴⁹

As their popularity increased the British system became obsolete and the *Dundalk Democrat* reported in October 1920 that the petty sessions had not been held in

Castleblayney for six weeks. Orders made by the I.R.A in regards to policing and especially on the matter of consumption of alcohol were adhered to. Notices such as the following were regularly posted on the doors of public houses.

Irish Republican Army (Co. Monaghan). Headquarters 5th Batallion, Castleblayney. Take notice that you are hereby forbidden to serve any drink whatever to any persons of the tramp class from today. Non compliance with this order will be severely dealt with. Signed Competent Military Authority.

Dated 7 August 1920.⁵⁰

The *Dundalk Democrat* reported that no breaches of this order by local publicans was known. However in the deeply divided Cavan - Monaghan region, where sectarian animosities had reached an all time high unionists often felt agrieved by the arbitration courts and often complained to the military when they were called before the Dail courts.

An arbitration court about to be held in Shercock was interrupted by the military. It appears that the door was burst in and the arbitrators made their escape by the rear, no arrests being made. The story goes that a Sinn Feiner and a unionist, both women, had a battle of tongues one day previously and the Sinn Fein woman summoned the unionist for too free use of the womans weapon. There upon the latter showed the summons to the police, and hence the raid as the court was about to begin.⁵¹

It was not just the justice system that the I.R.A. tried to undermine, but also the R.I.C themselves by attacking barracks both occupied and unoccupied. These attacks were carried out with the intention of clearing the region of the R.I.C., as this would make it easier for the I.R.A to control the region. Such attacks had begun at an early stage of the troubles in Cavan and Monaghan. The attack on Shantonagh barracks in February was the first of a series of attacks on barracks in the area. As early as March

1920 it was reported that when Newbliss barracks was closed that with the exception of Stranooden, there was not another rural police barracks in the county Monaghan that had not been shut up.⁵² The inspector general complained that the forces of the crown in Cavan were 'wholly inadequate to cope with the situation and that the British government was gradually being ousted from any semblance of control.'⁵³ When the R.I.C vacated a barracks it was soon burned to ensure that the military could not regain it.

Attacks on occupied barracks were well planned and co ordinated exercises with the greatest precautions being taken to ensure success. The first attack on an occupied barracks in Cavan occurred at Arva in September 1920. The usual precautions were taken by the raiders, blocking all roads into the town so as to completely isolate the barracks. The raiders surrounded the barracks and the garrison, which consisted of eight constables and two sergeants, was soon overpowered. The barracks was set on fire and completely gutted.⁵⁴ Cavan was soon without a rural barracks and the I.R.A. were free to patrol without threat from the military. Aligned to these attacks on police barracks a new trend of ambushing police on patrol soon became apparent in the region from mid 1920. These led to a marked decrease in police patrols. In July the number of attacks on police patrols increased markedly. On 22 July as sergeants Conroy and Mara and constables McNicholas and Lynch were returning off patrol duty at Stackhall railway bridge a shot was fired wounding sergeant Conroy in the left hand, and a second bullet passed through his cape and uniform.⁵⁵

The I.R.A also carried out a systematic policy of ostracizing the police force by ordering people to boycott them. In Swanlinbar locals were warned not to supply the police with meat or turf. A further series of campaigns were carried out against the families of R.I.C men, which struck terror into the hearts of protestants in the region, as the great majority of R.I.C men were seen as protectors of their community. What alarmed the protestant population even more was the fact that their attackers were well known to them. In Crosserlough, county Cavan nine men were arrested after Mrs Mary

Boylan identified them as the masked men who threatened her. The incident occurred when late one night the men surrounded her house telling her to take her son home from the R.I.C.⁵⁶

On a national scale the intelligence network which was masterminded by Michael Collins and his squad was crucial in the success of the I.R.A. in gaining control of administration networks. This was no different in the Cavan - Monaghan region. The robbing of the mails had become a very effective weapon to disrupt the communications network throughout the country. By stopping and intercepting the mails the I.R.A. could gain a useful source of revenue, but could also find out the names of people giving evidence against them. Therefore it was very difficult for protestants in the region to report intimidation or other crimes against them to Dublin Castle. The I.R.A. even had agents working in the post office as confirmed by Dr. Conn Ward, an intelligence officer for the I.R.A., who had agents in Monaghan post office who intercepted messages, letters and telegrams and passed them on to him for decoding.⁵⁷

The effectiveness of the intelligence system was a crucial factor in the success of the I.R.A. in crippling the British system in Ireland. The effectiveness of this intelligence network is vividly illustrated by the following account given by an intelligence officer in Monaghan.

The day after the shooting in Ballybay a coded telegram was intercepted. It was from the Belfast H.Q. to the R.I.C. in Monaghan. I had great difficulty in decoding it due to errors in the code, but finally succeeded. It read 'apprehend at once and bring to Victoria Barracks, Packie Coyle of Ballybay and Anthony Daly of Drumselt.' The two men were alerted immediately. The following day we intercepted a telegram from the R.I.C. in Monaghan. 'Please repeat message'. Later that day we intercepted the repeated message which was the same as the first one but without errors. It means that in this instance, we had the message almost two days before the R.I.C. had it.⁵⁸

By the summer of 1920 the I.R.A. was in almost complete control of the region. It was the volunteers who were policing the region, the British judicial system had ceased to function and the intelligence system employed meant that they were always one step ahead of the police. A further method employed to cripple the British administration was the burning of records of the key local authorities. On 13 May Ballymachugh excise office, Kilnaleck was raided and all books and records were destroyed.⁵⁹ In the same week Cootehill excise office was broken into and all income tax, excise and estate duty records, except old age pensions taken.⁶⁰ The I.R.A. were also able to further hinder the work of the R.I.C by denying them a supply of ammunition by stopping and searching trains coming to Cavan and Monaghan from Dublin and Belfast. When a train was stopped the driver was taken into 'custody' and if no arms were found the train was allowed to proceed, 'the officials being made to promise not to work in future on any train carrying arms or ammunition.'⁶¹

The strength of the I.R.A in the region reached its zenith in August 1920 and proportional to this was the depth of fear and intimidation felt in the area. It was during August that a boycott of Belfast goods commenced in the region which further polarized the two communities. Eoin O Duffy, following a period of imprisonment in Crumlin road jail returned to Monaghan in August. Upon his return he set about organising a widespread raid on unionists homes in the Monaghan region. This move was to have a disastrous effect on protestant catholic relations in Monaghan for many years to come. On the night of Tuesday 31 August O Duffy coordinated the raids with the intention of gaining arms for the volunteers in the county.

Raids were carried out in Kilnadrain, Monaghan town, Stranooden, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Newbliss, Clones and Ballybay. In north Monaghan, where there was a considerable unionist population a fierce resistance was put up to the raiders. Three volunteers, Marron, Reilly and Mc Kenna died outright and a fourth Owen

Kennan lived only a few weeks. Many more were also wounded.⁶² A number of gun battles and confrontations took place between unionists and the I.R.A. At Kilnadrain, near Monaghan town the house of John Hazlett was raided. Hazlett resisted the raiders and was shot in the neck. The raiders were also fired on at the residence of Mc Clean brothers, horse dealers from Tattindronagh and a man named Nesbitt shot a raider in his home.⁶³ The sister of a prominent Monaghan unionist John Beresford Madden, who lived near Clones was accidentally shot by raiders when resistance was offered to them.⁶⁴ The raiders only procured a small number of arms and small amounts of ammunition. The raids however had far reaching effects and heralded a period of open sectarian conflict in the region. The raids could be directly attributed to the murder on 1 October of Michael Kelly, who was murdered by a group of unionists on his journey from Enniskillen to Monaghan near Tydavnet.⁶⁵

Tensions between nationalist and unionists were now at their highest point as unionists fought back against the terror and intimidation they suffered at the hands of the I.R.A. It was the twelfth of July meetings in the area which spurred unionists to unite and attempt to overcome the difficulties of their situation. The unionists of the area were up to this point virtually inactive in unionists clubs or the orange lodges as their *raison d'etre* had been taken away, after their 'betrayal' by the Ulster Unionist Council. The Ulster volunteers were also inactive and unionists received little direction or cause for optimism from leaders since their resignation from the U.U.C in March. The twelfth of July had always been the focal point in the calendar of Unionism and a day when unionists turned out in their masses to receive messages from their leaders. The twelfth of July 1920 was no different for unionists in Cavan and Monaghan. Mass demonstrations were held in Clones, Ballybay, Killeshandra and Derrylane. The largest demonstration, however, was held at Drum in county Monaghan and was a united demonstration of the orangemen of Cavan and Monaghan.⁶⁶

The importance of these meetings cannot be underestimated in the understanding of the revival of unionism and the Ulster volunteers in Cavan and Monaghan in the second half of 1920. In Clones the demonstration was officiated by the county Grand Master M.E. Knight who stressed the need for unionists in the region to stand united

never in the history of this institution has there been a greater need to stand together and resist by every means in their power any attempt to encroach on their rights and privileges. They in Monaghan together with their brethren in Cavan, were dependant absolutely on themselves opposed not alone by those who had always opposed them but it was with a sad heart he said it, deserted by those whom they should call their friends.⁶⁷

It was obvious that unionists in the area were ready to accept the fact that they would not remain part of the union. They were even willing to accept a southern parliament if they could be assured of their future.

Should a southern parliament be started I would say we should all owe allegiance to it and do our part to help in every way we can to carry on the business of the country and this county. We must not presume that there will be oppression. We must not presume that wrong will be done to any one. It looks as if the British parliament is determined to pass the home rule bill and we must act the part of good citizens and hope that all will be for the best. Yet if oppression and wrong come we must stand up against it like men and help will surely come to us.⁶⁸

The message espoused by unionist leaders was clear, they were willing to turn their back on their erstwhile comrades in the six counties who had betrayed them. They realised the difficulties of their position and were willing to embrace a southern parliament if they were not oppressed or persecuted. However it was made clear that unionists would react

to any oppression and intimidation. This intimidation manifested itself in the widespread raids on the homes of unionists on the night of 31 August 1920, and the determination of unionists to resist these hostilities was clearly seen in the resistance offered to the raiders. The deaths of four volunteers bears testimony to unionists readiness to defend themselves and fightback. On 17 September a large meeting of Monaghan unionists was held at the canal field. The tone of the meeting was set by the fact that those attending the meeting marched in formation from the local orange hall to the place of meeting.⁶⁹

The meeting saw the passing of a series of crucial resolutions. The meeting condemned the violence in Monaghan as well as the growing violence in Belfast and Lisburn. The Belfast boycott was also condemned as were the attacks on protestants throughout the region. Unionists were now determined to protect their community and in this regard the following resolution was passed.

That this meeting is of the opinion that matters have now come to such a pass, that it is incumbent upon the loyal inhabitants of the county to take all necessary steps to protect themselves and their families from these attacks, and this meeting now decides to appoint committees with authority to take such steps as may be necessary for that purpose.⁷⁰

On the same date, 17 September the *Northern Standard* recorded the setting up of a town guard in Drum 'for the sole purpose of defending our homes and our property against the marauding bands of ruffians who, under the guise of a political organisation, are robbing and terrorising the peaceful inhabitants'.⁷¹ A meeting held in Smithborough saw the formation of a Defence Association for the county of Monaghan to safeguard the interests of loyalists.⁷² The county inspector for Monaghan reported that party feeling continues to run very high and little provocation from either side may cause a serious outbreak at any moment.⁷³ Attempts were made to form protection committees

in Cavan but these failed due to intimidation by the I.R.A. Defence Associations were unsuccessful in Cavan and south Monaghan due to the dispersed nature of the unionist population. North Monaghan, on the other hand contained large concentrations of unionists and this explains the success of the Defence associations in this region.

Sectarian tensions increased further with the shooting of a protestant farmer, Thomas Hill, in Carrickmacross. This occurred on 2 October, and was part of a pattern of attacks on protestants who were isolated, living in catholic areas. In Cavan on 27 October another protestant was singled out, this time the victim was a 26 year old protestant woman who worked as a temporary organist in Cavan protestant church. These attacks brought an influx of the military into the region and as can be seen from Figure One this did bring some respite to the area for a short while. About 100 extra troops arrived in Cavan in October and conducted wide spread searches of the houses of I.R.A suspects. A party of Auxiliaries also arrived in Monaghan during October, carrying out a number of searches and several arrests were made.⁷⁴ The month of October also saw the arrival of the Black and Tans in the region.

The Ulster Volunteer Force was also becoming more active and this was an ominous sign for the region as the period from January 1921 until the truce would see numerous battles between the I.R.A. and the Black and Tans. In strongly protestant regions such as north Monaghan the U.V.F became openly active and assisted the military and operated like a fifth column. This acted to transfer the terror and intimidation from protestants to catholics, as in some regions the U.V.F openly patrolled and policed areas which the I.R.A had previously terrorised. In north Monaghan a 'curfew' was imposed by members of the U.V.F.. Protestants in the region received a private notice of the curfew so that 'none but nationalists may be the victims of it'.⁷⁵ The circular stated that 'motorists out after a certain hour are to be fired at without warning or challenge'.⁷⁶ Widespread raids on the homes of prominent nationalists were now carried out as the Black and Tans and military spread widespread terror throughout the region. The Ulster volunteers now

accompanied the military in searches of nationalist homes. Numerous allegations were made by catholics that property was carried off during these searches. After one such series of searches in the district of Rockcorry the owners of the houses alleged that the military carried away turkeys and eggs, while a lamp in another case was missed.⁷⁷ These raids caused futher bitterness between the two communities.

The Auxiliaries aligned with the Black and Tans and the U.V.F also began to search and confiscate the records of Dail Eireann courts and the county council offices. On 20 November the I.R.A fired on the Black and Tans in Monaghan. The Black and Tans set out to reprise the attack and on the following night the house of James Mc Mahon, chairman of the Poor Law Guardians was visited, and on Monday 22 November the County council offices were seached.

The border regions of Cavan and Monaghan had from November 1920, another new force to contend with. Churchill decided to form the Ulster Special Constabulary to maintain law and order in the six counties. The Specials were seen by many catholics in the border region as a very menancing force, being almost exclusively protestant. Recruitment for the specials began in November and was very much based on the U.V.F. The Special Constabulary were divided into three categories: Class A; Permament police, uniformed and paid like the R.I.C; Class B; part time, uniformed and unpaid they were by far the largest category, numbering 19,500. Finally the C class specials were an unpaid reserve force to be used in emergencies.⁷⁸ The B Specials were especially hated by nationalists along the border in Cavan and Monaghan especially after their frequent excursions into the south, and were the focus of frequent attacks by the I.R.A.

The existence of these well armed and highly organised groups lined up against each other caused much friction in the area, and the region was to see a marked increase in the number of outrages from November 1920 until the truce of July 1921. December was a particularly violent month in county Cavan with the number of outrages

reported increasing from 15 in November to 22 in December. In Swanlinbar a police patrol was ambushed and a constable was killed and a sergeant injured. The county inspector reported that vast areas in west Cavan along the Fermanagh border were devoid of policing especially around Ballyconnell and Arva. The I.R.A. and the U.V.F were active throughout the whole county.⁷⁹ The murder of constable Shannon in Swanlinbar brought much condemnation from the public in the region and prompted much condemnation from the catholic clergy. The church had up to this point kept relatively quiet about the violence which was widespread in the region. The Bishop of Kilmore, Dr. Finegan, recognizing the alarming growth of sectarian violence and its concurrent sectarian hatred spoke out against the murder. He condemned the attacks on the military and police, he also described the war being waged in the region as unjust and unlawful.

And if it be unlaful, as it is, every life taken in pursuance of it is murder. Those deluded young men, who took the life of a constable in Swanlinbar committed a murderous act. Those who in the same place ordered out constables from their houses and ruthlessly fired at them committed an act of attempted murder. The many young men over the county who on Friday night felled trees and tore up roads that these crimes might be with more security and safety committed in Swanlinbar and other intended places, were, in a degree, according to the amount of the co operation, aiders and abettors in murder..⁸⁰

The local parish priest in Swanlinbar also openly condemned the reign of terror being waged in the area. The priest stated that neither the murderers nor their relatives could expect any luck either in this world or in the next. The voice from the pulpit was certainly the most highly regarded voice among catholics in Ireland at this time and especially so in this district. The denouncement of the murderers, who were well known in the area as the two Leonard brothers who went on the run after the incident, had a great impact on the state of the region. The inspector general's report for May 1921

stated that Swanlinbar was comparatively quiet owing to a strange coincident. Shortly after the murder of Shannon the Leonard brothers left the area. The brothers had lived with their two sisters up to the time of the ambush. In the space of two months 'the sisters who up to the time of the ambush had been perfectly healthy pined away and died. The father and mother were also stricken down with serious illness and were not expected to recover.'⁸¹ This was attributed by people in the locality to the priests warning. The sudden wiping out of the entire family save for the two brothers was attributed to 'Acts of vengeance from on high for the murder and ambush of the police'.⁸² This was a serious blow to the morale of the I.R.A in the region, and Swanlinbar was relatively free from outrage over the next few months.

Monaghan was also in a much disturbed condition throughout December, the military here were more active though and had some success. A number of I.R.A men on the run in the Brogan mountains in north Monaghan were apprehended by the military.

The new year started on much the same note. Tensions between the I.R.A. and the Black and Tans increased. On new years day sixteen volunteers ambushed a patrol of four men on the main street in Ballybay. One constable named Malone was shot dead, along with a passer by named Somerville, a protestant who came out to alert the police of the ambush. A gun battle broke out sending by passers fleeing from the town. The next morning Black and Tan reinforcements arrived in the town. A number of shots were fired by the tans and one house was burned down by them. On Sunday many catholics and protestants fled from the town fearing reprisals. 'Men and women with large families left their homes and fled to the houses of friends in the relative safety of the countryside.'⁸³

On the following night the Black and Tans caused much fear when they terrorised the village of Newbliss. While passing through the village they fired several shots into the catholic club, narrowly missing the caretaker. They also demanded drink from some publicans in the village and in one case 'the publican was dragged across the

counter, marched into the street and made stand there with his hands up.⁸⁴ Numerous other shops were raided and a number of people on the street were held up with revolvers. Incidents like these caused much hatred and fear among catholics in the region. A number of premises of catholic business men were burnt throughout the region, including the flax mills of a Mr O Reilly in Virginia. On 2 January the Black and Tans stopped a hearse in Bailieborough and opened the coffin to satisfy themselves that no it contained no arms.⁸⁵

On 24 January two policemen were murdered at Stranooden, about four miles from Monaghan. Sectarian animosity continued throughout the entire region and a threatening notice was posted to a Sinn Fein sympathiser in Cavan, giving him twenty four hours to leave the area. There was further division and tension in Belturbet over the flying of flags on the town hall. The town hall had been closed for some time owing to the District Council's refusal to remove a republican flag and the slogan 'vote for Galligan, an Irish Republic and freedom' from the town hall. On 23 January this was removed and the republican flag replaced by a skull and crossbones. A union jack was also hoisted on the clock tower.⁸⁶

As the sectarian war intensified throughout the region in late 1920 and 1921, partition was imposed in Ireland. The Government of Ireland Act, passed in December 1920, established two parliaments in Ireland, one for the twenty six counties and one for the six counties of Derry, Antrim, Armagh, Tyrone, Down and Fermanagh. Thus the fate of Cavan and Monaghan was sealed as a border region on the edge of a much troubled six county state. The passing of the act which brought a border to the area was condemned throughout the region. The actual imposition of the border had little immediate impact on the region on a political, social or economic level, due mainly to the lack of law and order or semblance of normality in the region. The imposition of an artificial border on the doorstep of Cavan and Monaghan did however have the effect of increasing levels of violence in the border regions of the two counties. Numerous incursions were made by the specials into the new southern state. These were followed, in

a by now familiar pattern, of reprisals carried out by the I.R.A on the specials and the protestant population living in the six counties.

One such incursion of the specials into county Monaghan resulted in the death of special constable Mc Cullagh in Clones. Ironically he was shot dead by the R.I.C. The incident occurred on 23 January, when a platoon of A specials based in Newtownbutler in Co. Fermanagh arrived in Clones and raided the public house of John O Reilly in Fermangh street. The specials proceeded to raid and loot the pub, the landlord having fled in fear. The R.I.C in Clones were alerted by the landlord and presuming the raiders to be members of the I.R.A., proceeded to the scene and when the raiders refused to surrender, the R.I.C opened fire killing special constable Mc Cullagh. The affair was a deeply embarrassing one for the British government, as the men were supposed to be patrolling the new frontier from incursions. The Specials were already faced with much allegations of indiscipline and attacks on nationalists in the six counties. The platoon was subsequently disbanded and orders were issued for stern disciplinary action.⁸⁷

In Ballinagh on 5 February an auxillary policeman constable Stanfield was shot. An hour later several shots were fired throughout the village and the premises of catholics fired into. The house of Peter Finnegan, of Gortahurk was burned to the ground, the occupants only narrowly escaping.⁸⁸

The deep divisions caused by the growing sectarian animosities and the partition of Ulster are vividly conveyed by the events which occurred in the village of Rosslea on the Monaghan-Fermanagh border in March 1921. One month previous to the incident catholic homes in the region had been burned by the specials. Protestants in the area had been living in fear waiting for the expected reprisals. These reprisals duly came in mid March 1921, in the form of extensive terrorising and burning of protestant homes. One protestant died in the incident and on the 22 March four houses occupied by unionists in the adjoining district of Clones, were visited by the I.R.A. Fire was opened on the houses and in two instances the fire was returned, resulting in gun battles between

the two sides.⁸⁹ The *Irish Times* reported on the same day that the village of Rosslea was virtually deserted following the attacks. 'The village last night was as silent as the grave, save for the tread of crown forces on guard, as almost every resident had cleared out of the place during the afternoon.'⁹⁰

The attacks on Rosslea received much condemnation and the *Dundalk Democrat* spoke out against the arming of rival nationalist and unionist population. In its editorial of 26 March it spoke of the significance of the Rosslea attacks.

The recent history of the village of Rosslea proves the folly of arming opposing sections of a people so bitterly divided as are those of Ulster, where old hatreds and rivalries have been so carefully nurtured and where an inflammable people are too prone to respond to the zealots call to arms... It this thing spreads which God forbid nothing can save Ireland from a hideous war of extermination in which catholic and protestant will suffer as have those of Rosslea.⁹¹

Two more sectarian murders followed on 30 March when the I.R.A visited the home of a protestant farmer in Castleblayney and demanded him to surrender to the I.R.A. He refused and his house was set on fire. The farmer W.J Fleming finally surrendered with his son, and was asked where he kept his arms and bombs. When he stated that he had none the farmer and his son were marched to the road, and directed to stand against a ditch. As they did so shots were fired at them. The son was killed outright, and his father was badly wounded and subsequently died.⁹² The following day another protestant, this time Hugh Duffy, an army pensioner who was a post office messenger was shot dead in Clones.⁹³

The violence in the region reached its climax by May and attacks were now more and more confined to the border areas, and many signs abounded that people in the region were longing for an end to hostilities. The nationalist population especially

were now bearing the brunt of violence as the Black and Tans were carrying out a more concerted and ruthless policy of reprisals and curfews. The Black and Tans unorthodox method of policing was effective in confining violence by the I.R.A to isolated attacks.

Following threats on the lives of the military and unionists in the Carrickmacross, this message was pinned up in the town for everyone to read as they went to do their daily business in the town.

The twenty Black and Tans of Carrickmacross hereby challenge the whole strength of the Carrickmacross brigade, to name a day, place and time to meet them. All Sinn Fein members and persons having Sinn Fein Sympathies in this district are well known to the Black and Tans, who have respected them and their property, but upon the I.R.A threat being carried out, or even attempted, we the said Black and Tans, are determined to carry out the just punishment that will be due for such outrages.

Signed Black and Tans, Carrickmacross.⁹⁴

Public opinion was rapidly turning against the I.R.A, especially after the I.R.A, in an attempt to curtail informers, began a campaign of terror on anyone suspected of giving information to the crown forces. The first of these attacks was the murder of a forty year old, protestant single woman, Kate Carroll in Aughameena, county Monaghan. She was shot dead and left on the side of a public road and a card pinned to her clothing reading 'Spies and informers beware. Tried, convicted and executed by the I.R.A'.⁹⁵ A similar incident occurred in Mullahoran, county Cavan when a sixty year old shoemaker Patrick Briody, who was suspected of giving information to the R.I.C was taken out and shot by the I.R.A.. A similar warning was placed on the body which was left on a public road.⁹⁶ The brutality of these attacks and the scant regard shown for the bodies of the dead caused much repulsion in the region.

As with all times of war and violence there was a significant economic fall out in the Cavan - Monaghan region. Farmers and business men were especially hard hit

as normal day to day life in the region became impossible. There was also significant economic ramifications from the sectarian nature of the violence in the region. Catholics by and large refused to do business with protestant merchants. People in the region were finding it virtually impossible to carry out normal everyday life. Indeed the situation became so bad that by June 1921 it was reported by the inspector general that Cavan was approaching bankruptcy if the violence continued. He believed that it was quite apparent that should murder and destruction of property continue much longer, the great majority of decent people will have to sell out and quit the county.⁹⁷ Most people were anxious for peace and a return to normality. With this in mind a new spirit was noticeable at a peace conference held in Clones to bring about co operation between the two warring communities. The conference was well represented by members of the clergy on both sides. The conference held on 1 April 1921, 'pledged to use their best efforts to preserve the peace in the respective districts, and to prevent everything calculated to lead either to loss of life or to destruction of property'.⁹⁸

Knowing that the tide of public support in the region was turning against them, the I.R.A went on the run, hiding out in border regions. The military were by now gaining the upper hand. In early June an extensive concentration of the military and R.I.C assembled in north Monaghan and carried out searches of the mountaineous areas of north Monaghan. It was known that a flying squad of the I.R.A had been on the run and were hiding out in the area. The combined crown forces of specials, Auxiliaries, Black and Tans and R.I.C surrounded the mountains and carried out a sweep of the area. About 12 people were arrested in this sweep and it brought much relief to this troubled area.⁹⁹ A similar operation was launched in the south Monaghan / east Cavan region on 13 June. All the male inhabitants of the region stretching from Cootehill in Cavan, to Ballybay, Castleblayney and Carrickmacross were said to have been questioned and about 50 - 60 men were brought to the Auxiliary police headquarters at Castleblayney.¹⁰⁰ Sweeps by the military were also carried out in June in the Shercock district. Another large operation

involving forty military lorries attempted to sweep out the Corlough and Swanlinbar area of west Cavan, bordering on county Fermanagh.

Although this chapter has focused on events on a regional scale, these events were not entirely divorced from events on a national scale. At a national level, events were also leading to peace. Elections were held in May for the two separate parliaments constituted under the Government of Ireland Act. In the new northern state unionists won 40 out of the 52 seats. The new northern parliament forged ahead with the creation of a separate state and the new parliament was opened on 22 June 1921. The Government of Ireland Act was ignored in the twenty six counties, but the elections were held and a new Dail was elected. On a national scale Sinn Fein won 124 out of the 128 seats. Sinn Fein won all the seats in the Cavan and Monaghan region. The southern parliament envisaged under the Government of Ireland act never operated. Partition, however, was imposed and was a fact of life for the people of Cavan and Monaghan.

The northern parliament was opened by King George V in Belfast on 22 June 1921. He made a strong plea for peace in Ireland. Hurried negotiations for peace began between Lloyd George and de Valera. People throughout the country were anxious for peace and a return to normality. I.R.A. morale was at an all time low in Cavan and Monaghan, owing to the success of military operations against them. They were further ostracized by the people of Cavan, after the murder of the 79 year old retired protestant Dean of Leighin, John Finlay in Bawnboy. The Dean was taken out of his home on 12 June by masked men and shot dead. It was a particularly gruesome murder, and 'after being shot he was beaten around the head with a blunt object.'¹⁰¹ Public opinion on all sides was outraged by this murder and was condemned on all sides. Shops and business places in Swanlinbar, Bawnboy and Ballyconnell closed for an hour on the occasion of the Deans funeral, as a mark of respect. It was somewhat ironic that it was a crime such as this that united the two communities in their determination to end sectarian violence. In the House of Commons, the chief secretary for Ireland said ' it was difficult to suggest a

motive for the murder as deceased was intensely popular in the district and a generous friend of the poor.'¹⁰²

De Valera and Lloyd George agreed to hold negotiations upon the cessation of violence in Ireland. A truce was called and it was to commence on 11 July 1921 at noon. It was perhaps fitting that the inspector general reported that the last shot in the Anglo Irish war was fired at five minutes before noon at two policemen on duty in Kingscourt, Co. Cavan. The truce was greeted with much joy and relief in the Cavan and Monaghan region. It brought an end to a deeply disturbing period in the history of the region. It would take a long time for the region to recover from the deep sectarian divisions that had opened between unionists and nationalists.

The truce was generally upheld in the region. During a fact finding mission to Ulster, the Dail Eireann liaison officer with the nine Ulster counties, Eoin O Duffy, encountered 'not a single breach of the truce.'¹⁰³ However the truce would only provide a brief respite for the region, as the I.R.A soon turned their attention to attacking the new boundary with Ulster. Chapter three considers the Belfast boycott, which lasted from August 1920 to February 1922. This was a event which served to further sectarian animosities in the region, and deserves special attention.

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80. *Anglo Celt*, 25 December 1920.
81. I.G.C.M.R., May 1921.
82. *ibid.*
83. *Dundalk Democrat*, 8 January 1921.
84. *ibid.*
85. *ibid.*
86. *Anglo Celt*, 29 January 1921.
87. Account taken from *Anglo Celt*, 29 January 1921. *Irish Times*, 24,25 January 1921.
88. *Anglo Celt*, 12 February 1920.
89. *Irish Times*, 24 March 1920.
90. *ibid.*
91. *Dundalk Democrat*, 26 March 1921.
92. *Irish Times*, 31 March 1921.
93. *Irish Times*, 4 April 1921.
94. *Northern Standard*, 6 May 1921. *Anglo Celt*, 14 May 1921.
95. *Irish Times*, 19 April 1921. *Northern Standard*, 22 April 1921.
96. *Anglo Celt*, 28 May 1921.
97. I.G.C.M.R., June 1921.
98. *Northern Standard*, 8 April 1921.
99. *Northern Standard*, 10 June 1921. *Irish Times*, 11 June 1921.
100. *Northern Standard*, 14 June 1921.
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**CHAPTER THREE:
THE BELFAST BOYCOTT AND THE TREATY,
1920 - 1922.**

In tandem with the unravelling of the sectarian animosities and hostilities in Cavan and Monaghan, a highly significant episode occurred which was to have serious ramifications, namely the 'Belfast boycott'. As the name suggests it consisted of a boycott of goods manufactured in or originating from Belfast. The boycott commenced in August 1920 and continued until mid - January 1922 when it was officially terminated by the first Craig - Collins pact. This boycott had a serious impact on the Cavan and Monaghan region for a number of reasons. The first was that it gave the people of Cavan and Monaghan their first taste of the economic impact of partition. National the boycott further polarized north-south relations and reinforced partition.

On a purely economic basis the boycott was disastrous for the Cavan and Monaghan region, which suffered more than any other area of the country as a result of the boycott. The importance of Belfast in the economies of Cavan and Monaghan had been clearly stated by Unionists in the region in the pamphlet, 'Ulster and Home rule; No partition of Ulster.'

Belfast is the commercial capital of Ulster. All our trade, business and railways are connected with it. The G.N.R runs direct from the town of Cavan through the county of Monaghan. If a barrier is to be erected between our counties and Belfast it will be injurious to all.¹

It was somewhat ironic that this barrier was initially erected by Dail Eireann. The third and, most serious, implication of the Belfast boycott for the region, was the fact that it furthered animosities between the already deeply divided Catholic and Protestant communities.

The boycott originated as a protest against the expulsion of catholic workers from the shipyards and the increased growth of violence against catholics in

Belfast and Lisburn. It also had another motive and this was 'to illustrate the importance of the south as a market for northern goods and thereby to demonstrate the folly of the division of the country.'² The Belfast boycott was first brought up in the Dail by Sean McEntee, T.D. for south Monaghan, in August 1920 when he read out a 'petition by four Sinn Fein members of Belfast Corporation and other prominent catholics in the city. They appealed for help in 'the war of extermination being waged against us, and called for a boycott of goods from Belfast and a withdrawal of funds from Belfast based banks by people in the rest of Ireland.'³ Mc Entee further moved the motion that:

it be and is hereby declared that an embargo be laid, upon the manufactures of the aforesaid city of Belfast; that all trade and commerce with it by citizens of the Irish Republic be forbidden and that the government of the republic calls upon all its loyal citizens to rigorously enforce the provision of this decree.⁴

The motion was seconded by Cavan west T.D. Paul Galligan. It was another delegate from the region, Monaghan protestant Ernest Blythe, who spoke out against the motion. He was 'entirely opposed to a blockade against Belfast.' He believed that 'to declare an economic blockade of Belfast would be the worst possible step to take. If it were taken it would destroy for ever the possibility of any union.'⁵

Blythe eventually succeeded in getting an amendment added to the motion that 'the ministry be directed to consider what action can be taken by way of a commercial embargo against individuals responsible for inciting the recent pogroms in Belfast.'⁶ The boycott commenced soon after as violence in Belfast worsened. Indeed on 17 September 1920 in the acting president's opening statement to the cabinet he stated that:

The general boycott instituted against Belfast was being stringently felt, especially by the banks... In order that [the

boycott] might be properly carried out it was essential to place a man in charge of operations in Dublin.⁷

The Belfast boycott committee, which was set up was a well coordinated body, which maintained good contact with local boycott committees. The records of this committee, which are held in the National Archives, are a vital source in studying the boycott.⁸

The boycott was taken up with much enthusiasm in the Cavan and Monaghan region. Indeed the *Dundalk Democrat* in its editorial column of 7 August 1920, even before the Dail ratified a boycott of Belfast goods, was urging traders of the region to boycott Belfast goods. Following the imposition of the boycott, Monaghan County Council passed a resolution in support of the boycott.

That as An Dail has declared the imposition of religious or political tests for industrial employment in Ireland, illegal, we call upon the people of county Monaghan to refuse to have any dealings with the firms in Belfast or any other part of Ireland which are guilty of this illegality, that the attention of all public bodies in the county is particularly directed to this matter when considering tenders for supplies.⁹

Local bodies throughout the region also passed resolutions in support of the boycott. In late August a large meeting of Cavan traders was held in the town hall, to discuss what action should be taken in support of the boycott. It was attended by both catholic and protestant traders and it seemed as if the boycott initiative could be kept free of any sectarian animosities in the region. Mr. P. Galligan, a member of the county council, said he was delighted to welcome their non catholic townsmen as a sign of the friendly feelings that existed in Cavan, 'there was not, he felt certain, a right thinking protestant in the town who did not object to the course being taken in Belfast.'¹⁰ In

Killeshandra the traders passed a resolution condemning 'the barbarous treatment of the Belfast workers on account of their religion and politics.'¹¹

It was also hoped that the boycott campaign could be kept free from sectarian animosities in Monaghan. This was always likely to be more difficult in north Monaghan where unionists owned a considerable amount of businesses. Any hopes of keeping the boycott campaign free from sectarian animosities in the region quickly evaporated over an argument between catholic and unionist traders in Monaghan. The *Northern Standard's* editorial column of 28 August 1920, mirrored the alarm in the county when it stated that the situation was most grave.

It may be that we are on the eve of a series of events which will have far reaching and calamitous results. The catholic traders have regretted that religious rancour should be stirred up - they are not alone. It is regretted by all and, catholic and protestant, we may shortly regret it more.¹²

Tensions between catholic and protestant traders began over a series of resolutions passed by the rival trading associations. Catholics felt much aggrieved when the unionist traders decided not to adhere to the Belfast boycott. The reason given by the unionist traders for this course of action was that, 'we cannot see our way to sign any undertaking in reference to the conduct of our business which would limit our capacity to buy in the best markets, and which would indirectly punish those as innocent of persecution as we are ourselves.'¹³ It is interesting that unionists in Monaghan opposed the boycott on these two grounds. On the first ground, that is economic, it is fair to say that unionists had every justification in not supporting the boycott. Unionist traders in Monaghan had already suffered a significant loss in business during the sectarian violence that had engulfed the region. They were a minority whose position was already extremely precarious and it would have been foolhardy for them to further disadvantage themselves

by not buying in the best markets. Secondly, loyalty to their co-religionists was to be expected from unionists in Monaghan. The wording of their reply is significant. To take the second part of this 'which would indirectly punish those as innocent of persecution as we are ourselves.' It was not just unionists who had voiced reservations about imposing a boycott on Belfast goods. It was argued by many opponents of the boycott including Ernest Blythe, T.D. for north Monaghan, that many nationalists would suffer indirectly from it. It was also recognised that it was extremely naive for people to expect the boycott to exclusively punish those responsible for the atrocities in Belfast. In any case unionists in Monaghan themselves suffered from their fair share of sectarian hostilities. Therefore their position was totally justified.

This decision however incensed the catholic traders and brought the following response from the catholic traders who believed they were,

now reluctantly compelled to take all measures within their power to prevent the sale of Belfast goods in this town... They deeply deplore the religious rancour, but consider that their proposal, which was the product of moderate men and meant to avoid trouble should have had a more favourable response and they will therefore accept no responsibility for subsequent happenings.¹⁴

The veiled threat in this response was an ominous sign for the region as it became increasingly clear, even at this early stage of the boycott, that in areas with a significant protestant population, the boycott would cause serious sectarian hostilities. In Newbliss, in north Monaghan, unionists took action against the boycotting of protestant premises. After the refusal of unionist shopkeepers to sign a document prohibiting dealings with Belfast firms, the local branch of the I.T.G.W.U. picketed protestant shops, and prevented catholics from entering these premises. Protestants in the region were encouraged not to trade with catholic businesses. On 23 August a meeting of protestants was held in

Newbliss, which decided to obtain a supply of bread from Belfast for protestant residents of Newbliss. To safeguard the delivery of the bread about 50 Ulster volunteers turned out to escort carts of Belfast bread to the protestant shopkeepers of the village.¹⁵ This incident caused much distrust and animosity between catholics and protestants in Newbliss.

While, at this early stage of the boycott, there was little organization on a national scale, and initiative for the boycott came from local bodies, it was already causing significant hardship in the region. A Cavan newspaper *The Irish Post*, was forced to go out of business as a result of the boycott. Fairs in the region also suffered from a dearth of goods and it was reported by the *Northern Standard* on 28 August that 'not within memory has there been a fair in Clones deficient in general demand. The unhappy taboo of Belfast buyers and the effect such a proceeding left many sellers careless of whether they took stock out or not.' The boycott was also causing much hardship in the region owing to a shortage of bread, which formerly came from Belfast, and had now to be sent from Dublin. This difficulty was discussed by a committee in Cavan which also stated that 'the price of the 2lb loaf is from a penny to twopence dearer than that formerly paid for the Belfast bread. This is a matter which some committee in Dublin should see into, as the poor cannot afford the extra money.'¹⁶

Without central administration of the boycott and lack of coherent policy from Dublin in this early stage of the boycott, it was only sporadically enforced in the period up to January 1921. As early as October it was reported by the county inspector for Monaghan that the boycott was showing signs of weakening.¹⁷ The *Northern Standard* also reported a similar occurrence stating that 'the picketing of the protestant traders shops in Monaghan was not so completely carried out during the past week as heretofore.'¹⁸ Where pickets were still carried out they were not openly enforced.¹⁹ A similar situation was reported in county Cavan, where the boycotts imposition was based on local initiative, and 'no cases of intimidation in connection with it were reported.'²⁰

The boycott was still causing economic hardship in the region, and it was still difficult to obtain goods from Belfast. Trains and lorries carrying goods into the region were also stopped regularly by the I.R.A. and searched. One such incident occurred near Carrickmacross in late November when lorries conveying goods between Dundalk and Carrickmacross were held up and searched for Belfast goods. 'Some goods consigned from Belfast were, it is stated, removed. It is also stated that a motor which failed to pull up was fired on.'²¹

Coherent administration for the boycott campaign eventually came from Dail Eireann in January 1921. This had the effect of politicising the campaign as it became express government policy. This also had the effect of further alienating the protestant community of Cavan and Monaghan. It led protestants in the region to believe that they could never receive fair treatment under a Dublin government. Thus it would now appear that the worst fear of Ernest Blythe had been confirmed. Blythe had told the Dail in August 1920 that 'to declare a boycott of Belfast would be the worst possible step to take as it would destroy for ever the possibility of any union. They could not afford to range any section of the community against [the government], the basis of every trouble in the North was sectarian and it was that fact that made possible the fury of anti catholic forces.'²²

This more concerted effort to enforce the boycott coincided with the appointment of Joseph Mac Donagh as substitute Minister for Labour.²³ Mac Donagh was keen to effectively organize the boycott from Dublin and to set up regional committees, which were inevitably made up exclusively of nationalists. He wanted to

have appointed a boycott committee in every town in Ireland. These committees could be composed of merchants, shop assistants and transport recorders. Vigilance committees would have to be formed to spot goods on railway stations to find out if any shopkeepers are getting

through other towns and to find out when Belfast travellers arrive in town and give him notice to quit.²⁴

The Belfast boycott committee was also very effective in providing central administration for the boycott.²⁵ The records of the Belfast boycott committee's correspondence with the Department of Finance show that there was much communication between the local boycott committee's and the central committees.²⁶ Much information is contained in this correspondence and the committee aimed to impress on the local committees the necessity of keeping good records. One example of this is a letter sent to the Minister for Finance by the Director of the Boycott in November 1921.

I also enclose cheque for £50 from our Cootehill committee, it is accompanied by a sheet showing lists of fines and expenses incurred by the committee. This whole thing is irregular, but as the fines have been paid for a considerable period, we have decided to allow it to pass. The best thing to do is to issue a receipt to the secretary for £50.²⁷

An important weapon used by the boycott committee was the issuing of 'Black lists' of firms that were acting as distributors for Belfast goods. The first of these black lists was issued in February 1921. It included the names of firms in Scotland, England, Dublin and the six counties. The boycott was being severely felt in Belfast and throughout the six counties as is evidenced by a statement issued by the west Belfast Unionist club to the loyal traders of Belfast. The statement contained a copy of the black list and admitted that 'in every case it is being rigorously enforced by the terrorist gunmen of Sinn Fein, who will stop at nothing in carrying out their fell purpose of endeavouring to injure the trade of Belfast, and spread unemployment throughout the six counties, which comprise the northern parliamentary area of Ireland.'²⁸

The effective and coherent organisation of the boycott had an almost instantaneous effect in the Cavan and Monaghan region. In January the county inspector for Cavan reported the holding up of a goods train between Crossdoney and Cavan and that two cases of bread were taken out and destroyed.²⁹ The county inspector for Monaghan reported that the 'boycott of Belfast goods was hardening' after the relative peacefulness of the previous months.³⁰ On the night of 28 January 1921, a goods train was held up near Cavan, by the I.R.A., and its contents were inspected. Goods found to have originated from Belfast such as a hamper of bread consigned from Messrs. Inglis, Belfast were thrown out of the train.³¹

A noticeable trend was discernable in regards to the boycott from January, it was now much more coherently organised. Even at a local level it was easy to see that there was a structure to the organisation of the boycott, as local committees reported to the central committee headquarters in Dublin. The I.R.A. and the republican court system were crucial in the effective organisation of the boycott. It can be clearly seen that up to the time of the truce in July 1921 that the boycott was hardening. A number of crucial methods were used to ensure the effectiveness of the boycott and these will now be examined in detail.

The first method used to enforce the boycott was the destruction of goods which arrived in the region from Belfast firms. This was carried out by the I.R.A., who also intimidated merchants from Belfast who came to the region. Breadvans were especially targetted by the I.R.A. as certain shopkeepers in the region refused to boycott Belfast bread, owing to the high price of, and difficulty in obtaining bread from Dublin. In Monaghan the county inspector reported that on 'four occasions bread vans belonging to a trader in Monaghan who has refused to submit to the boycott have been burned.'³² In April it was reported that in Cavan 'the Belfast boycott still continues with vigour and there have been seven cases of destruction of goods consigned from Belfast.'³³ At Cavan quarter sessions in April Messrs. Inglis and Co., Belfast, made a claim for the burning out

of two bread vans at Cavan and Killeshandra. Beside one of the vans was found the notice : 'Your turn next ; clear out - I.R.A.'³⁴ The company was awarded £80 and £55 for the two vans. This claim was served on Cootehill Urban council, on behalf of the firm. The council decided to take no notice of the claim. At Monaghan quarter sessions Mc Caldins, another bread company, 'who had refused to sign a Belfast boycott paper' were awarded a total of £2,098 for the burning out of four bread vans in Monaghan. While the quarter sessions were proceeding the firm got word that another van had been burned out.³⁵

As well as attacking bread vans the I.R.A also carried out systematic searches of goods trains entering the region, which were suspected of carrying goods from Belfast. The most spectacular of these attacks occurred in late April at Glasslough station in north Monaghan. The train contained mails and parcels for shopkeepers in Cavan and Fermanagh, and when it was found that it contained goods from boycotted firms, it was set alight by the I.R.A. Twenty wagons were burned out and it made 'a scene of destruction probably never seen before in the north.'³⁶ Another train was raided by armed and disguised men at Inniskeen railway station on 14 March. 'They emptied a waggon containing sugar, bacon, bread and hardware and burnt the goods after sprinkling them with paraffin stolen from some local business premises.'³⁷ A statement made by Dublin Castle dated 11 May 1921, stated that 'Cavan is one of the most active centres of this boycott, and large quantities of valuable food stuffs have recently been destroyed by armed men in the neighbourhood because they believed the goods to have come from Belfast.'³⁸

Premises which were suspected of containing goods obtained from Belfast were also targetted by the I.R.A. On 5 March members of the I.R.A. visited the houses of Mr. Elliot, stationmaster on the Cavan and Leitrim Railway at Bawnboy road. They searched the goods store. They obtained three tons of Indian meal from a Belfast firm, consigned to a south Leitrim shopkeeper. A note was left stating - 'No partition wanted -

No Belfast goods'³⁹ In Monaghan the county inspector reported that on the nights of 4 and 5 June two houses were entered and Belfast goods destroyed.⁴⁰

Numerous claims were made by Belfast firms to the quarter sessions for compensation for damage caused in the Cavan and Monaghan region. At Clones quarter sessions on 18 June 1921 the entire session was taken up by claims made by Belfast firms for damages suffered due to the boycott. This vividly illustrates the strength of the boycott in the region and the destruction of Belfast goods wrought by the boycott. The most serious case was the burning of a train in Glasslough. The judge gave a decree for rolling stock amounting to £7,756 and £25 expenses, all levied on county Monaghan.⁴¹

While the matters described above did cause much financial and economic hardship for businesses of the region, it was the picketing of shops and the imposition of fines on businesses which dealt with Belfast firms which ensured the success of the boycott in the region. From early January 1921 notices were posted by the local boycott committees to shopkeepers in the region warning them not to deal with certain firms. Notices were also posted up warning people not to deal with certain shops in the locality. Any shop which ignored the boycott was picketed by the I.R.A. and this caused much economic hardship for shopkeepers. The *Anglo Celt* reported on 29 January that written notices were received by Cavan shopkeepers, who sold bread, warning them against selling bread made in Belfast or Portadown. Further notices were posted from Belturbet in February, reminding traders in Cavan that the boycott was still in force and that failure to comply with it would involve penalties.⁴²

'Black lists' of merchants to be boycotted, owing to their purchasing of Belfast goods were widely circulated throughout the region. In March handbills were distributed and posted in Monaghan, warning people against dealing with persons who sold Belfast goods.⁴³ A 'Black list' of business places in Ballybay, containing the names of 25 merchants who were trading with Belfast, was served to the public in March 1921. The *Dundalk Democrat* reported that much confusion abounded in connection with the

list and that 'it did not appear that all in sundry were taking friendly to the order.'⁴⁴ However the following week it was reported that the boycott was now in full force owing to the public being well acquainted with the regulations.⁴⁵ Locals were now also encouraged to stop dealing with Belfast banks and numerous cases occurred where people withdrew their money from these banks. The banks were also targets for attack by the I.R.A. and in March it was reported that the Belfast bank in Monaghan was set on fire.⁴⁶

In north Monaghan the boycott was directed almost exclusively at protestant traders and the picketing of protestant shops caused much economic hardship for protestants and also further fueled sectarian animosities. One particular flashpoint occurred in Cattleblayney when a black list was circulated by the local boycott committee of merchants alleged to be still dealing with Belfast firms.⁴⁷ Following this notice being pinned up in the town, the Anti Belfast Boycott Society pinned up a notice 'warning any merchant who subscribed to the organiser of the Belfast boycott that he would have his goods burned over his head.'⁴⁸

Notices were pinned up throughout the region during the period up to the truce and these were successful in ensuring that the boycott continued unabated. Numerous pamphlets were also distributed throughout the region reminding people of the aims of the boycott and their duties to aid their co - religionists in Belfast. An example of these pamphlets is one intercepted by the R.I.C. in Cavan which was signed 'Parish Priest'.

Former boycotts were not successful because the nationalists were too tolerant; but I think by this time it must have penetrated even the heads of the pogramists that Sinn Feiners can be quite as stubborn and at least a hundred times as clever as these 'dour and hard headed Orangemen'.. To make the boycott absolutely successful and permanent all people in the west of Ireland should take the matter up.. the screw must not only be kept on but turned ruthlessly until these 'latter day saints' squeal for mercy.⁴⁹

While pamphlets such as these were in circulation in the region, and especially those carrying the signature of a parish priest, the boycott was always likely to remain to the forefront of public opinion. It was also clear that firms in the area were feeling the pinch due to the effective enforcement of the boycott. Traders were now willing to pay the £20 fine for trading with Belfast firms to have their names kept off the boycott lists. Notices were often sent to traders, and from the numerous accounts of money being sent to the central boycott committee in Dublin, it is clear that they were more often than not paid. An example of these notices was one sent by the West Cavan Boycott Committee. This notice stated that 'after fully investigating your case the above committee have fined you £20 for trading with firms within the prohibited area. This fine must be paid before the 14 October, otherwise your name will again appear on the Black list.⁴⁹ The list of fines in table three which were paid by traders in Cavan for breach of the Boycott vividly illustrates the effectiveness of local committees in imposing and collecting fines.

Some traders even resorted to placing advertisements in the local newspapers, claiming to be innocent of breaching the boycott, so that they would not lose customers. The following notice, printed in the *Anglo Celt* on 2 July 1921, is an excellent example of this.

APOLOGY:

Having learned that some of my wholesale customers have been notified not to deal with me owing to my having procured some goods from Belfast, I hereby apologise for having done so, and agree not to do so again.

Signed.

J.A. Forster,
Ballyconnell.

Thus by the time of the truce in July 1921, the boycott was being stringently felt throughout the region. The inspector general for Cavan reported that 'the boycott of Belfast goods and Northern banks still continues but violent acts in connection therewith have fallen off.'⁵¹

Any hopes of the truce bringing an end to the enforcement of the boycott in the Cavan and Monaghan region, however, were quickly dashed. Even from a superficial glance at the records of the boycott central committee, it can be clearly seen that fines continued to come into the committee from the Cavan and Monaghan region at a brisk pace. In Cavan on the night of 23 July a raid was carried out by the I.R.A. on Drumhowna railway station. The keys of the store were demanded and two rolls of tobacco, from Belfast, valued at £50 were taken.⁵² In Monaghan the boycott also continued but the county inspector reported that 'no reports of action to enforce it have come in except in Carrickmacross where a man is said to have been fined 10/- for dealing with a northern bank.'⁵³ It would appear to be the case that the I.R.A. in the region used the period immediately after the truce to regroup and reform. The Inspector General believed that Sinn Fein was 'taking every advantage afforded by the truce to enforce the boycott.'⁵⁴

By September the boycott was tougher than ever and in Cavan it was so bad that, 'at Belturbet, Killeshandra and Bailieboro, that fairs and markets at those places have almost died out. The country people find it more convenient to transfer their custom to towns where there are fewer shopkeepers on the boycott black list.'⁵⁵ The small ads section of the *Anglo Celt* also saw an increase in the number of apologies sent in by traders found to be in breach of the boycott. In the 10 September issue alone, seven apologies, of which the following is typical, were printed.

Belfast Boycott:

On looking over my invoices I notice an item of goods received from Belfast, for which I apologise and guarantee not to accept any more goods from the above area.

Signed John Kelly.

Main Street, Belturbet.

In Monaghan attempts were also made to harden the boycott, but this only served to increase sectarian animosities as 'the anti - boycott of Ireland committee had come into the county.'⁵⁶ Incidents of posting boycott black lists up in north Monaghan further incensed protestants, as the lists predominantly named protestant traders. For example the black list, contained in Appendix One, pinned up in Castleblayney, contained almost exclusively the names of protestant traders, with the exception of three, i.e. Michael Mc Ardle, F. Carragher and Bernard Lynch. A boycott was also carried out on J and J. Pattons Glasslough. It was reported that the boycott had its desired effect, with few catholics entering the premises.

While the Belfast boycott continued unabated throughout the period of the truce and the period after the signing of the Treaty, the truce was welcomed by all sides in the Cavan and Monaghan region. All sides were anxious for peace and a return to normality in the region. People were tired of the violence which made day to day life extremely hazardous and difficult. Economically the truce was welcomed by all sides, especially by the farming community and business classes, who were approaching financial ruin. Apart from in relation to the Belfast boycott, discussed above, and the continued drilling and setting up of I.R.A camps in the region, the truce was impeccably maintained throughout the region. This fact was confirmed by the inspector general who states that in Cavan 'the great majority is anxious for a settlement and quite willing to accept what has been offered.'⁵⁷ He also reported that in Monaghan, 'there is but one prayer amongst all in the county... 'Peace'.⁵⁸ People in the region kept themselves well

informed on negotiations towards a settlement, mainly via the local and national newspapers and waited anxiously for peace.

There was a noticeable air of resignation in the region about the negotiations for peace and the partitioning of Ulster. It is important to emphasize that partition was a fact of life for people in the region even before negotiations had begun in July between De Valera and Lloyd George. Partition had been imposed by the Government of Ireland Act in December. Northern Ireland was already in existence and its parliament in operation when De Valera rejected the British proposals for a settlement on 20 July 1921. These proposals offered a restricted form of dominion self government for the 26 counties, but required 'full recognition of the existing powers and privileges of the parliament of Northern Ireland which cannot be abrogated by their own consent.'⁵⁹ This met with the predictable Dail reply that 'we cannot admit the right of the British government to mutilate our country either in its own interest or at the call of any section of our population.'⁶⁰

Although the Dail refused to accept that the country was already 'mutilated', this fact was accepted, however wrong it was believed to be, by the vast majority of people in Cavan and Monaghan who were anxious to come to terms with the problems posed by partition. We can see the nature of these problems by looking at the local newspapers. It can be clearly seen that despite the Dail's refusal to 'allow any mutilation of the country', partition was a fact of life in the Cavan and Monaghan region. One of the first problems to occur was one of a legal nature and occurred at Monaghan quarter sessions when a breadvan, the property of Messrs. Inglis and Co. Belfast, was attacked at Edragole, near the Monaghan border, while in transit from Newtownbutler towards Cavan. The case rose numerous legal difficulties as testified by Major Falls: - 'The attack began first in Co. Fermanagh and ended in Co. Monaghan. Four of the men arrested were from Co. Monaghan, and the other three from Fermanagh.' The judge wished to allocate portion of an award on Co. Fermanagh, which produced much legal

debate. Major Falls believed that the judge could not do this as 'his honors jurisdiction as county court judge for southern Ireland did not extend to Northern Ireland.' The judge had been at this time county judge for both counties Monaghan and Fermanagh, but it was held that the 'jurisdiction of his honour must be in southern Ireland when he is sitting there and in Northern Ireland when sitting there.'⁶¹

It is clear that partition was by now a fact of life accepted by the people of Cavan and Monaghan who were anxious for a peaceful settlement. Statements such as the following, made by de Valera, at a public session of Dail Eireann were regarded in the region as counterproductive and not conducive to peace.

The geographical fact was that the Almighty had placed this island as a unity beside another island. The relations between Ireland and Britain constituted a problem which was found in daily life, where a strong and powerful person wished to encroach on the rights and property of his neighbour. That was the fundamental problem that had to be settled. It was not in the nature of a man to be content as long as injustice was done to him, and so in the case of a nation there could be no contentment, happiness, or prosperity if there was that thorn of injustice continually pricking into it.⁶²

Formal negotiations between the British government and plenipotentiaries appointed by Dail Eireann, did however commence on 11 October 1921. There was a very general feeling of relief at de Valera's acceptance of the conference, in the region.⁶³ The feelings of the vast majority of residents of the region were very aptly appraised in the following editorial contained in the *Northern Standard* of 14 October 1921.

The fateful conference which may decide the future of Ireland has at last begun its sittings in Downing Street. In regard to its outcome there is a general feeling of pessimism, produced to a great extent, by the 'no surrender' manifesto issued by the republican leader on the eve of the first

meeting. It is evident that if the Irish representatives go to the conference, with a determination to give up nothing, then the conference will not last very long. The fact that there is a feeling of pessimism amongst men of all shades of opinion in Ireland proves that all want peace. Therefore, if the Dail delegates wish to represent the views of the country, they must go to London prepared to take any reasonable peace which is offered them.

These negotiations did finally lead to peace and what is usually referred to as 'The Treaty' between Great Britain and Ireland was signed on 6 December 1921. The long and protracted negotiations which led to the signing of the treaty are not directly relevant to the issues being considered in this thesis. They have been discussed at length by other historians, notably by Pakenham.⁶⁴

The treaty provided for a Free State of Ireland having Dominion status, and associated with the Commonwealth of nations known as the British empire.⁶⁵ The position of Ulster was left more ambiguous, giving the six counties the power to enter the Free State within a month, or to remain outside it. The primary problem created by the treaty in relation to partition was the vagueness of the proposed Boundary Commission, to redraw the border of Northern Ireland. The extent of the realignment of the boundary by the proposed commission was ambiguous and left open to personal interpretation. This was to cause many problems when the Boundary Commission was eventually set up. The actual wording of the treaty in relation to the Boundary Commission is reproduced below, to illustrate its ambiguous nature.

A commission shall determine, in accordance with the wishes of the inhabitants, so far as may be compatible with economic and geographic conditions, the boundaries between Northern Ireland and the rest of Ireland, and for the purposes of the Government of Ireland Act, 1920, and of this instrument, the boundary of Northern Ireland shall be such as may be determined by such commission.⁶⁶

It can be argued that because the provisions for a Boundary Commission were left so vague and open to personal interpretation, this was instrumental in ensuring the acceptance of the treaty by the majority of people in Ireland. Initial reaction in the Cavan and Monaghan region was overwhelmingly in favour of ratification of the treaty. People of the region firmly believed that the Boundary Commission would quickly restore Tyrone, Fermanagh and large tracts of south Armagh to the Free State. Divisions, however, soon became apparent at both governmental level and within the republican movement. The Irish cabinet was split by the treaty, with four votes in favour of it, and three, including de Valera against it. Some extreme republicans were against the treaty but Collins' support of it, ensured that it was accepted by a majority.

Public bodies in Cavan and Monaghan, without exception, strongly urged ratification of the treaty. At a special meeting of Cavan urban council the following resolution was passed:

That we place on record our high appreciation of the terms of the treaty entered into by our nations plenipotentiaries and while recognising the great services rendered, by the members of An Dail who are in opposition, we unanimously request them for the sake of our dear country to bury their differences, and stand with Arthur Griffith and Sean Mac Keon for the ratification of the treaty.⁶⁷

Similar resolutions were passed by public bodies throughout Cavan and Monaghan.

Dail Eireann began debating the treaty on 14 December 1921. The debates on the treaty are remarkable for their neglect of the subject of partition, 'Ulster and the boundary commission were hardly mentioned and there was a virtual consensus that the treaty provided a means for making the Northern Irish state unviable.'⁶⁸ The neglect of the question of partition in the treaty debates is best summed up by Maureen Wall, 'of 338 pages of debate, nine only are devoted to the subject of partition and of these nine pages

the deputies for county Monaghan, deputies Blythe, Mac Entee and O' Duffy, contribute two thirds.⁶⁹

Those who did speak on the subject of partition, worked on the assumption that eventual unity was inevitable. This was an extremely naive attitude to hold, and it can be said that the treaty debates, were so full of lofty ideologies, rhetoric and romanticisation of Ireland's problems that most of the deputies seemed to have no grasp on the realities of partition and the Ulster question. Even Sean Milroy, T.D. for west Cavan, speaking in favour of the treaty, seemed to have little grasp of the situation. His own constituents, and the public bodies of his constituency, had long ago realised that partition was a fact of life which could not be changed overnight. In a speech full of misunderstandings of the situation and blind optimism, Milroy maintained that:

The fact is that the provisions of the treaty are not partition provisions, but they ensure eventual unity in Ireland. But as a matter of fact, whether there were partition provisions or not, the economic position and the effects on the six counties area is this: that sooner or later isolation from the rest of Ireland would have so much weight on the economic state of these six counties as to compel them to renew their association with the rest of Ireland.⁷⁰

While the debates on the treaty continued, people in the Cavan and Monaghan region waited anxiously for ratification of the treaty. Resolutions were passed strongly urging ratification of the treaty and the debates were the subject of most public meetings in the region. Special meetings were held of both Cavan and Monaghan county councils early in the new year to discuss the treaty. The chairman of Monaghan county council believed that 'a hundred per cent of the people of county Monaghan were in favour of ratification. It was the first step towards freedom, and it was the duty of the county council to instruct their representatives to support the treaty.'⁷¹ Cavan county

council were also in favour of the treaty and the following resolution was passed by 18 votes to 2.

The Cavan county council, whilst feeling that the present treaty does not realise all the hopes of the Irish people, believe that it safe guards the best interests of the gaelic nation, and the alternative is such that acting in the name of our constituents we now formally by resolution pronounce in its favour.⁷²

One public representative in the region, Sean Mc Entee, T.D. for south Monaghan, did speak out against the treaty and was ultimately forced to resign his seat in the Dail. This was indicative of the overwhelming support for the treaty in his constituency. The treaty was finally ratified by the Dail on 14 January 1922 by 64 votes to 57. It was an extremely narrow margin and illustrated the split emerging, not only in the corridors of power, but also in the country at large. The Irish Free State was born but started on an immensely precarious footing. Collins became president of the provisional government and a general election was called. This election was to be crucial for the infant state, and as will be seen in the next chapter, this election confirmed the fact that Ireland was slipping towards civil war. This was to herald the start of more troubled times for Ireland, and also the Cavan and Monaghan region.

Following the establishment of a provisional government under Collins the Belfast boycott finally came to an end in late January 1922. The boycott was officially brought to an end by the Collins - Craig pact which was signed on 21 January. The boycott had been ineffective at a national level as was admitted by Collins himself.

Mr Collins (Provisional Government minutes 30 Jan 1922) pointed out that the boycott was comparatively ineffective, and that if it became necessary to fight the Northern parliament they could set up an effective tarrif barrier in its stead.⁷³

Collins and Craig met in London on 21 January and signed an agreement which became known as the first Craig Collins pact. In this agreement they agreed to work together on the boundary issue, the council of Ireland, the railway dispute and the question of post truce prisoners. The second point of the agreement brought the boycott to an end and stated that:

Without prejudice to the future consideration of his government on the question of tarrifs, Mr. Collins undertakes that the Belfast boycott is to be discontinued immediately, and Sir James Craig undertakes to facilitate in every possible way the return of Catholic workmen without tests to the shipyards, as and when trade revival enables the firms concerned to absorb the present unemployed. In the meantime a system of relief on a large scale is being arranged to carry over the period of distress.⁷⁴

The ending of the boycott was welcomed by all sides. It had been a complete failure in what it set out to achieve and was in fact counter productive. The boycott was the first from of partition witnessed between north and south and severely damaged north south relations. While the boycott did seriously hamper the trade of certain Belfast firms, it also hit southern firms. 'Southern traders were driven to markets where prices were higher and credits shorter than in Belfast. The increased cost was passed on to their customers, with the result that the whole southern community paid for the upkeep of the boycott.'⁷⁵ The lifting of the boycott was met with great relief in Cavan and Monaghan. The region was one of the few where the boycott was rigourously and successfully enforced. People in the region recognised the failure of the boycott in achieving its aims and the hardship which it was causing to themselves.

It was obvious that this campaign of attrition could not last indefinitely, for while the boycott had sufficient power to hamper and irritate those against whom it was directed, yet it

had not sufficient power to crush them. On the other hand, those who directed it were themselves hampered, and irritated by the stoppage of supplies from a centre which a great deal of trade in southern Ireland had been done.⁷⁶

The boycott had a number of highly significant and far reaching effects on the Cavan and Monaghan region, which need careful consideration. One of the main reasons behind Dail Eireann's decision to initiate a boycott of Belfast goods, was to force Belfast to realise that it could not survive without the trade of southern Ireland. This move was totally counterproductive and instead of fostering unity the boycott was 'very steadily erecting a new barrier between north and south , it was no more really effective towards a union of hearts and minds and interests than an invasion of 'Ulster' by a southern army would have been, and therefore not conducive to real or lasting peace.'⁷⁷ The boycott also gave the people of the region their first view of what living in a partitioned province would be like. The boycott implanted for the first time partition in the minds and consciousness of people in the region. It created hostilities between the two states before the border had even been drawn.

In some areas of the region, such as north Monaghan, the boycott had a disastrous effect on catholic-protestant relations. In many cases the boycott was used to further sectarian divisions, and in conjunction with the Anglo Irish war it created great hardship for protestants in the region. In many cases large numbers of protestants moved north of the border during this period. Protestant businesses were especially hit in Monaghan, Newbliss and Ballybay. The boycott also saw mass destruction of goods and property and 'in a time of high prices and slackened production, Ireland could not afford, any more than any other country to have such a campaign of destruction carried on.'⁷⁸ The boycott hit consumers in the region very badly and it would seem that some shopkeepers and 'wholesalers utilised the exclusion of Belfast from the southern market as an opportunity to put up prices.'⁷⁹ The inspector general reported for September 1921

that in Cavan 'their is no doubt that the boycott is being made use of by greedy and unscrupulous traders to bring custom to their own shops.'⁸⁰ There were numerous reports in the *Northern Standard* that consumers were being exploited, one report stating that 'in a small place like Ballybay where only a limited number of traders are engaged in the different branches of business it is only natural in the case of a boycott to find the consumers exploited when half the sources of supply are cut off or blacklisted.'⁸¹

The boycott hit the pockets of people in every walk of life in the region, 'in the town of Monaghan the working men who observed the Belfast boycott had to pay 5s per week more for his living than he might have paid if the boycott had not existed.'⁸² The inflated prices in existence during the period of the boycott also severely hit farmers in the area. Overall it is fair to say that the boycott had serious effects on the region which were not envisaged by Sean Mc Entee T.D., when he proposed the boycott in August 1920.

The ratification of the treaty and the ending of the boycott brought new hope to the region as evidenced by the following editorial in the *Dundalk Democrat* on 28 January 1922.

There is here, we think, the genesis of a new spirit of mutual good feeling and toleration which may easily grow to friendship, and from that to complete understanding and full partnership between the Irish of the north and of the south. They are one people, with common interests. Their seperation is like the Belfast boycott a purely artificial thing, repugnant to both and injurious to both and it can only be maintained by artificial means. Remove these and the two parties will come together and stay together.

Despite the lifting of the boycott relations between North and South quickly deteriorated as both countries plunged towards crisis as the so called 'border wars' commenced in 1922, which would have a dramatic effect on Cavan and Monaghan.

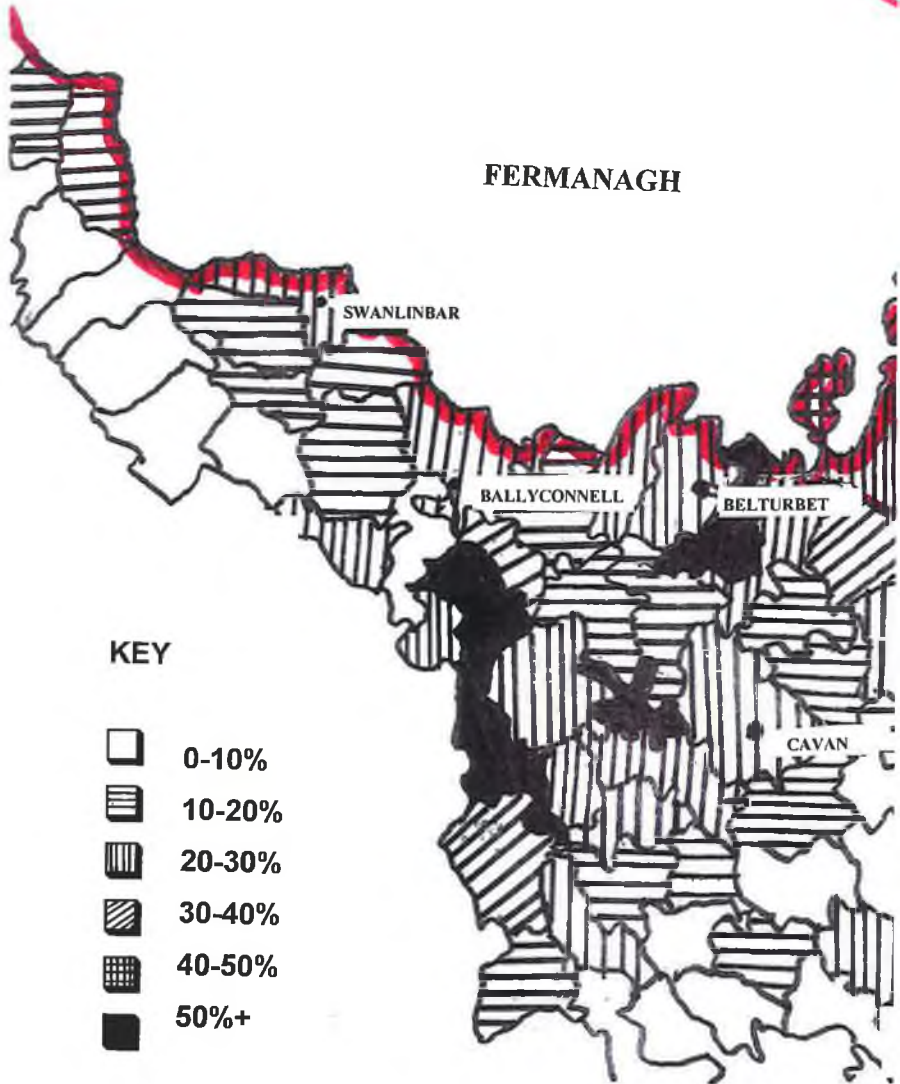
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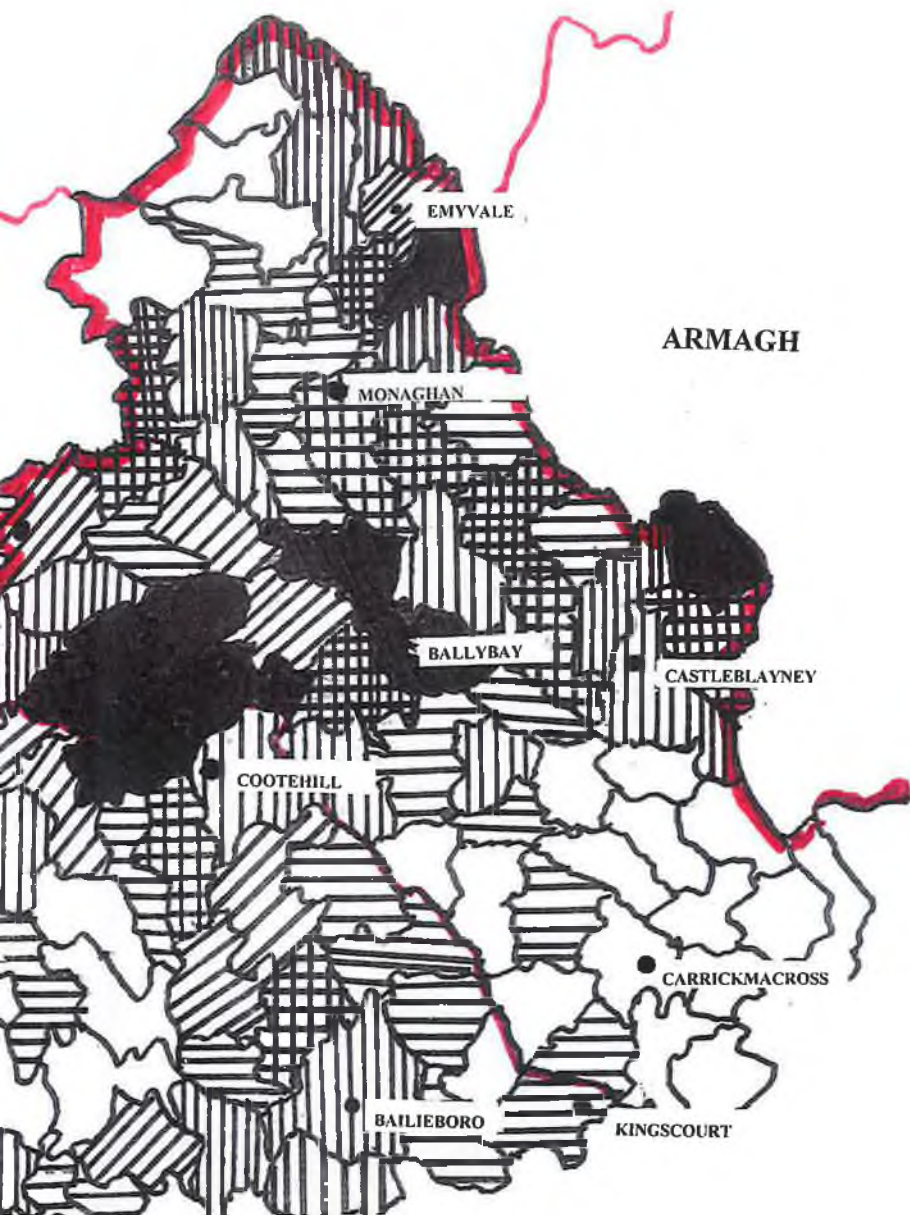
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43. *Anglo Celt*, 19 March 1921.
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45. *Dundalk Democrat*, 2 April 1921.
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**CHAPTER FOUR:
THE BORDER WARS AND CIVIL WAR,
1922-1923.**

MAP SHOWING CONCENTRATION OF PROTESTANT POPULATION IN THE REGION BY D.E.D.





Source: based on 1918 general election results, taken from North East Boundary Bureau, *Handbook of the Ulster Question*(Dublin,1923).

The start of a new year in January 1922 heralded a new era for the people of Cavan and Monaghan. There was much cause for optimism and hope for a fresh start for a people who had witnessed an immensely turbulent and bloody passage of history over the previous years. The treaty had been ratified by the Dail on 7 January 1922 and promised a return to normality and stability for the Cavan and Monaghan region. The signing of the Craig - Collins pact gave much cause for optimism and it appeared that North and South would live in harmony and peace. It was believed that the Boundary Commission would quickly restore large tracts of south Armagh, Tyrone and Fermanagh to the Irish Free State. This would mean that Cavan and Monaghan would no longer have a border with the Northern state and would, it was hoped, bring stability to her border regions. This new feeling of optimism was mirrored by the local press.

There is here, we think, the genesis of a new spirit of mutual good feeling and toleration which may easily grow to friendship, and from that to complete understanding and full partnership between the Irish of the north and the Irish of the south.¹

This was to prove a false dawn as relations between North and South steadily deteriorated. This chapter explores the most serious ramifications of the partition settlement in political terms. The short period studied in this chapter proved a very significant one for the border regions of Cavan and Monaghan. With the ending of the Belfast boycott some elements of the I.R.A. began to focus their attention on attacking the new Northern state. Following the ratification of the Treaty by the Dail, the realisation that partition was now a fact of life began to dawn on the I.R.A.. Therefore attention was now turned on destabilising the new state by attacking its borders. This period had a number of severe repercussions for the region. The border regions of Cavan and Monaghan became the scene of great violence and hostilities between opposing forces north and south of the border.

This period which lasted until the onset of the civil war in June, became known as the 'border wars'. It was clear by mid January that relations between North and South were becoming increasingly fraught during negotiations between Craig and Collins. Tensions were also mounting in the border areas, as the newly reformed Specials and the I.R.A. faced each other over the borderline. Both forces were inspired by a mutual hatred of each other and were anxious to settle old scores. This made it virtually impossible for Collins and Craig to control their respective forces in the border regions, who more often than not operated on their own initiative and without sanction from headquarters.

This had economic ramifications for the region. During this period there was virtually no economic interchange over the boundary line. This had serious effects on market towns such as Belturbet, Ballyconnell and Clones which were dependent on northern customers. The decision of the Northern authorities to close many of the border roads leading into Northern Ireland in an effort to curb I.R.A. raids across the border caused great difficulties in the region. Farmers and traders in the border regions were severely hampered by the closure of the border roads and communications with the Northern state diminished alarmingly during this period. The impact of these events was profound in both economic and political terms. This period caused untold damage to relations in the border regions North and South.

The incident which sparked hostilities North and South occurred on 21 January 1922 when the Monaghan G.A.A. team was stopped and many of the players arrested while on their way to play the Ulster gaelic football final in Derry. Fearing that they might be held up by the railway strike, the players left for Derry in six motor cars. When the team reached the village of Dromore in county Tyrone, they were stopped by the special constabulary.² 'Many of the Monaghan players were I.R.A. men and as the border had barely begun to exist, they travelled armed with their usual revolvers.'³ The party included a prominent member of the I.R.A., Dan Hogan, who had initiated many

attacks on the specials during the Anglo-Irish war. Ten of the men were arrested and at a special sitting of Omagh district court they were charged with having arms and ammunition. The men were later interned in Derry jail and this caused outrage and furious protests in Monaghan. The chief of staff of the I.R.A. Owen O Duffy was incensed and protested to the British authorities. He stated that he had 'taken the matter up with the British authorities and unless the men are released forthwith, I will take my own action.'⁴

Tensions in the border regions increased further when negotiations between Craig and Collins reached a deadlock over the boundary question. Collins and Craig had decided to resolve the boundary question between themselves, under the conditions of the Craig - Collins pact. Collins however insisted that 'under the Treaty, readjustment of the boundary meant the cession to southern Ireland of the whole of Tyrone and Fermanagh, together with large areas in Derry, Down and Armagh.'⁵ It was impossible for Collins to give way on this issue, as to do so would turn public opinion in Ireland against him. Craig was also in no mood to cede large tracts of the six counties to the Free State. A further conference was held on 2 February 1922 between Craig and Collins and at this conference it became clear that compromise on the boundary question was impossible, and the following statement was released after the conference:

Owing to the fact of Mr Collins stand on the Boundary Commission and the Irish delegations agreements with Mr. Lloyd George, that large territories were involved in the Commission, and not merely a boundary line, as Sir James Craig was given to understand privately by several British ministers and from statements of Mr. Lloyd George in the House of Commons, no further agreement was reached and a very serious situation has consequently arisen.⁶

Further conferences were held at Downing Street in the following days but failed to resolve the issue and in a letter to the Prime Minister, Craig informed him that 'we cannot

consent to any alteration of our boundary except by mutual agreement, failing which in respect of any territory in dispute the boundary to stand as defined in the Government of Ireland Act, 1920.⁷

The following day witnessed the opening of the British parliament and Lloyd George seemed willing to wash his hands of the boundary question in public. In a speech punctuated with considerable laughter, Lloyd George attempted to make light of the growing tensions in the border regions over the boundary question.

Do let us have a little patience. Do not let us rush to the conclusion that because there is one failure at a meeting that, therefore, the whole thing is over, and that we must start drawing our swords and attacking each other for the sake of peace in Ireland (laughter). They are two Irishmen (laughter). I have seen Irishmen bargain.... one puts forward demands of so preposterous a character that the other cannot accept them.... Let us have more patience, and proceed more deliberately.⁸

The tensions which had been building in the border regions reached a new height on the night of 8 February 1922. Flying columns of the I.R.A., based in Monaghan 'invaded' the six county area and carried off 43 hostages from the northern state. The hostages included numerous prominent unionists living in the six counties and also 28 members of the special constabulary along with a member of the R.I.C.⁹ The men were captured partly as a reprisal for the internment of the Monaghan footballers in Derry jail, and also because of the breakdown of the Craig - Collins pact which failed to secure the release of republican prisoners in the six counties. The raids caused much terror in the border regions and left the residents of the border regions living in fear of intimidation and reprisals. Much of the fighting on the night of 8 February, occurred around the Clones region, and many people witnessed the attacks by the I.R.A. on the Specials. At Wattlebridge, near the border, a party of I.R.A. men met a crossley tender carrying A

specials, whom they called upon to stop.¹⁰ The specials opened fire and in the ensuing skirmish the crossley tender along with arms and ammunition were captured by the I.R.A..¹¹

Two specials were killed in a further encounter with the I.R.A. between Clones and Newtownbutler. Numerous homes of unionists in the border regions were raided and prominent loyalists kidnapped and taken to Monaghan. The situation considerably worsened when another serious confrontation occurred between specials and the I.R.A.. The incident occurred when a party of eighteen specials were travelling from Newtownbutler to Enniskillen to strengthen three platoons which were engaged in patrolling the border on 11 February. The specials who were armed, had to change trains at Clones station. As soon as they reached Clones, word was sent to the local I.R.A. commandant, Matt Fitzpatrick. Fitzpatrick decided to arrest the men and ordered them to put their hands up. Fitzpatrick was, however, shot dead by one of the specials, which prompted the I.R.A. to open fire using a machine gun. In the ensuing melee five specials were killed and six were wounded. Five of the specials were held prisoner by the I.R.A..¹²

This incident had a disastrous effect on an already fraught situation in the six counties. Tensions in Belfast were extremely high and the shooting of the specials in Clones station precipitated the outbreak of fresh violence in Belfast. In the week following the incident at Clones station 34 people were wounded and 100 injured in Belfast.¹³ The people of Clones were also living in fear and terror as they awaited another serious confrontation between the specials and the I.R.A.. Following the incident the people of Clones were fearful of reprisals and as the following report vividly illustrates, the situation in Clones was akin to that of a war zone.

The town lighting was extinguished, and in shops and private houses the order was given 'lights out'. The streets and approaches of the town were put under control by the I.R.A., who came flooding in from other parts of county Monaghan as well as from Fermanagh and Cavan. The

greatest excitement reigned in the town during the night, and nothing could be heard but the march of armed men and sharp military orders.¹⁴

Frantic negotiations took place between Churchill and Collins in an attempt to bring the region back from the brink of chaos and violence. In addition to attempting to secure the release of all hostages taken in the border region, Churchill was anxious to placate public opinion in London. Churchill was concerned that rifles and motor transport supplied to the provisional government from R.I.C. stocks had been used in the recent border raids.¹⁵ Collins moved quickly to reassure Churchill on this matter and relations between Dublin and London quickly improved on this issue. Both men were also anxious to secure the release of the Derry footballers and the hostages taken by the I.R.A. in the border raids. Collins assured the British government that he would do his utmost to secure the release of the hostages and as an act of good will immediately secured the release of fifteen of the civilian hostages.

In the House of Commons on 15 February, Churchill spoke of improved relations between London and Dublin concerning violence in the six counties. He also spoke of his concern at the

attitude of mutual suspicion which has been growing up on both sides of the border. There is a great apprehension in Northern Ireland that there may be some violent incursion, and a great suspicion that large numbers of the I.R.A. are accumulating and concentrating in the villages of county Monaghan. On the other hand, there is a considerable movement of armed constables taking place north of the line, and similar apprehensions are entertained by those in the south.¹⁶

With this in mind Churchill proposed to both northern and southern governments that a border liaison commission should be set up. This commission would consist of

several British officers and officers from the forces on either side of the border and that those two liaison commissions should move about on either side of the frontier, and that they should be in constant communication with each other and interchange information constantly in order to allay suspicions which might easily arise.¹⁷

The setting up of the commission and the concurrent release of hostages by the I.R.A. did have the effect of calming the situation on the border. A *Dundalk Democrat* editorial on 25 February entitled 'peace on the border' reported that all hostages held by the I.R.A. had been released. The Monaghan footballers were also released. The editorial however expressed the concerns of the residents of the border regions and was pessimistic about the 'makeshift arrangement of border patrol.' In a somewhat prophetic article the gravity of the situation was vividly expressed.

The frontier of the six counties divides people who are at bitter enmity. It is plain that so long as the division of Ireland continues, there will remain the constant danger of a flare up along the border, and the further danger of the conflagration spreading to the sea at either side.

The impact of the border liaison commissions on relations between north and south and tensions in the border region has been neglected in secondary sources. Primary material on the commission is virtually non-existent, save for reports made by the commission which were documented in the local newspapers. It is fair to say that the commission had little impact on improving North-South relations or tensions in the border region. The reports of the commission which were documented in local newspapers, are however useful for accounts of the difficulties experienced by residents living in the border region, and deserve analysis. It was reported to the commission on 20

February that 'forty of fifty people had fled [from Monaghan] across the border into the north east for safety.'¹⁸

The reports of the commissions show the increase of enmity and hostility in the border regions of Cavan and Monaghan during March. Movement across the border was virtually non-existent and this caused great inconvenience for farmers and residents of the region. It also had severe effects on business in border towns such as Clones and Swanlinbar. It was now unsafe to cross the border as patrols of specials on the northern side, and the I.R.A. on the southern side made interchange between the two areas extremely dangerous. On 3 March, a bread van owned by Messrs. E. Brady and Co. was shot at, when it failed to stop at a specials checkpoint at Castlesaunderson, near Belturbet, resulting in gunshot injuries being received by the driver. As a result of this incident 'Messrs Brady and Co's men have all given notice that they will not risk their lives any longer by crossing the border.'¹⁹ The *Northern Standard* reported that 'no neighbourly dealings are transacted between the opposing parties, nor is there any likelihood of ordinary relations being renewed until some agreement is reached. Commercial intercourse is also interrupted and farmers and others are greatly inconvenienced.'²⁰

Commercial intercourse between North and South was severely impinged upon by the policy of the northern government of cutting communications between North and South. The *Anglo Celt* reported that early in March 'trenches were cut over the six county border in county Fermanagh at Swanlinbar on the Kinawley and Derrylin roads, and another 400 yards over the border at Ballyconnell. Specials are reported busy along the roads, and farmers in the Fermanagh district going to the markets at Ballyconnell have been questioned as to why they go into Free State territory.'²¹ Similar incidents were reported along the Monaghan-Fermanagh border, with all by-roads between Fermanagh and the Free State being trenched and bridges blown up. The main roads were left unharmed, but as these were extensively patrolled by specials, they were effectively

closed to traffic from the Free State. It was reported that 'Fermanagh is now isolated from the Free State. Farmers who formerly patronised Clones market and fair are said to be arranging a fair and market for their own use at Newtownbutler.'²²

The situation along the border was rapidly deteriorating and the people of the border regions were facing ruin. The local newspapers were full of stories about the horror and gravity of the situation as 'the residents on either side have now learned to restrict their dealings to their own area, and armed men face each other with rifle in hand, with complete distrust if not defiance. This serious condition exists all along the frontier, the situation being a truly terrible one.'²³ The hopelessness of the people of the region can be gauged from letters sent by businesses to the provisional government about the gravity of their situation.²⁴ Complaints were sent in to the government by traders in the region whose trade had been severely damaged by intimidation from the special constabulary. Edward Brady, baker, whose drivers refused to travel inside the six counties owing to intimidation suffered at the hands of the specials, sought compensation from the provisional government. The provisional government considered 'the suggestion that we should take the matter up with Belfast impracticable' and that he should 'lodge a claim against the county council under the Criminal Injuries Act. If the people of the six counties find the lawlessness of the specials results in a charge on the rates, they may discourage the activities of the latter.'²⁵ Replies such as these only served to increase the feelings of despair, frustration and isolation of the people living along the border regions of Cavan and Monaghan.

Farmers and businessmen along the border were the hardest hit by the escalation of tensions between the specials and the I.R.A.. It was reported by the *Anglo Celt* that:

Business trading is at a standstill on either side and merchants in Clones, Rosslea and Newtownbutler say there is nothing doing and they might as well close their shops.

The situation is ruinous and becoming desperate. As it is farmers along the borderline for a score of miles or more are not going to take the risk of going into the fields to till or put in a crop. The whole affair reads like a page from the story of Mexican border life instead of a sober story of what is happening in Ireland.²⁶

Trouble was also brewing on the Monaghan-Tyrone border, as specials began blocking by-roads and destroying bridges leading into the Free State. This was authorised by the Northern government in an attempt to halt incursions by the I.R.A. into the six counties. A more sinister development occurred when about 500 I.R.A. men arrived in the region and took up positions along the border between Aughnacloy and Caledon. There were also reports of 'heavy rifle and machine gun firing in the region.'²⁷ The sniping resulted in the death of a 65 year old protestant farmer, Robert Scott, from Caledon.²⁸

The situation made it impossible for residents to get on with day to day life and 'along the border efforts were made by many farmers to remove their stock from the danger zone, and some of them had narrow escapes from being shot when engaged in this work.'²⁹ This period had a very severe impact on commercial and agrarian life. The concerns of the farming community were voiced at a meeting of the Irish Farmers Union in Ballybay. A protest was made against the shootings in Belfast and along the border, which if not stopped, 'civil war must break out on our borders, to the destruction of the farming community north and south.'³⁰ Matters were also made worse by a noticeable growth of sectarianism in attacks made by the specials and the I.R.A. This was severely complicated by the nature of the boundary which left isolated areas of catholics in the six counties, such as was the case in the district around Clones which contained large concentrations of catholics in the six county area, isolated from their natural hinterland of Clones. The growth of sectarianism in the campaign of terror carried out by opposing

forces along the border can be seen from the following statement contained in a *Dundalk Democrat* editorial on 25 March.

For many miles north of the town Clones is the market centre. However, the Specials have seen to it that the usual frequenters of Clones fairs and markets will no longer pass from Carsonia into the Free State. This vast area from Smithboro to Newtownbutler and along the foot of the Carnmore mountains, wholly nationalist in feeling, is isolated from Clones, by the destruction of the highways, and the inhabitants generally subjected to every inconvenience and insolence that the specials can devise.

This sectarianism was not one sided, and numerous reports abound of protestants being forced out of the Free State by the I.R.A. In late March three protestant men were ordered out of Clones 'on the grounds that their movements had created suspicion.'³¹ Some of these protestants who were ordered out of the Free State by the I.R.A. applied to the Northern government for employment. One instance of this was a solicitor, Louis de Montfort, who lived in Drumully, who made the following statement to the northern government.

I am a solicitor and land agent having an office in Clones. This afternoon [25 March] when leaving my office, I was accosted by two men in uniform (I suppose I.R.A.) and informed that orders had been issued for me to clear out.³²

Attached to this statement was a letter from the Divisional Commissioner in Belfast urging the Northern government to 'consider giving assistance to refugees from across the border, many of whom are without means of livelihood and living at the moment on charity.'³³ A further serious confrontation took place between specials and the I.R.A. near Culloville on the Monaghan-Armagh border. The affray resulted in the deaths of two special constables from Crossmaglen.³⁴

As the violence along the border and in Belfast escalated, there were numerous calls from public figures in the region for a re-imposition of the Belfast boycott. The I.R.A. in the region were burning goods and attacking goods trains from Belfast. This led the South Monaghan Comhairle Ceanntair to unanimously call for a reimposition of the boycott.³⁵ The reimposition of the boycott was discussed extensively by the provisional government throughout March as violence in Belfast escalated. This was the subject of four separate meetings of the provisional government and it was finally decided on 4 April that 'resolutions regarding the Ulster boycott be dealt with on the basis that an agreement having been arrived at with the Northern government time must be given to see if that agreement would be honoured.'³⁶

At the end of March, Churchill had called both Collins and Craig to London for negotiations and a second Craig - Collins pact was signed on 31 March. Under this pact 'both governments agreed to co-operate to restore peace in the North, a special 'mixed' police force would police 'mixed' districts in Belfast; fair trials were guaranteed, refugees would be settled and the release of political prisoners negotiated... and fresh attempts would be made to resolve the border issue without reference to the boundary commission.'³⁷ The provisional government, and notably Collins' policy with regard to the situation in the six counties and along the border, has been discussed at length in numerous secondary sources notably by both Ronan Fanning and David Fitzpatrick.³⁸ These secondary sources are supplemented by looking at cabinet records and also the minutes of the provisional government.³⁹

As violence in Belfast continued, the Craig - Collins pact soon became a dead letter and it became increasingly obvious that the provisional government could do nothing to help Catholics in Belfast. The government were virtually powerless to avert tensions along the border as well as in the six counties. Various schemes were put forward to Collins as regards policy towards the Northern government. At an official

level Collins adopted 'schemes of non-cooperation with, and obstruction of the Belfast government.'⁴⁰

On an unofficial level it is widely recognised that as the violence in the six counties continued from April, Collins cooperated with the anti - treaty forces in supplying arms to the north. 'The treatyites were getting arms from the British but they did not want to send these north, because they could be traced by their serial numbers, so they exchanged some consignments of British guns with the anti Treaty units, for unmarked or captured ones.'⁴¹ The North East Advisory Committee, which was set up by Collins to advise him on policy towards the north east, were calling on a policy 'of destruction of ways of transport. to so tie up roads and avenues of communication as to completely block up their [northern government] transport system.'⁴² The tense political situation in the twenty-six counties, as the country was on the verge of civil war, served to limit the energy which Collins could devote to the northern issue. If anything, it has been put forward by some historians that it was Collins eagerness to avert civil war that urged him to provide the northern anti - treatyites with arms, in order to focus their attention towards the north.⁴³

Although it was reported that the border region was quiet, following the publishment of the terms of the Craig - Collins pact, tension was soon running high again as sniping in the region continued. The *Northern Standard* reported that three separate incidents of border violence occurred on the evening of the signing of the pact. 'At a late hour some hundreds of rounds of rifle and machine gun ammunition were fired at the police quarters at Emyvale road station.'⁴⁴ Further incidents were reported near the Monaghan Tyrone border, when a specials patrol from Aughnacloy was fired at, and the house of a prominent unionist Vaughan Montgomery, J.P. was fired at near the border.⁴⁵ The following week a resident of Emyvale wrote to the press about the difficulties encountered by farmers living in the border region.

At present work here in this agricultural district is at a standstill, as gunmen on the six county side of the border have not ceased firing and catholic farm houses are their principal objective. On the Tyrone side, where the catholics are in a minority, there are eight catholic families who have been expelled from their holdings by specials and who have sought refuge in county Monaghan These are all extensive farmers, who have reluctantly left their horses and cattle untended.⁴⁶

These incidents, which all occurred within a week of the signing of the second Craig- Collins pact, illustrate the difficulties both leaders had in controlling their respective forces. Despite both leaders making protestations to London about the failure of the other to control his forces, the startling reality was that neither leader could effectively control their own forces. Attacks along the border were inspired by deep seated hatred, sometimes overtly sectarian, and attacks were more often carried out on personal initiative and motivation.

As relations between North and South plummeted, sniping and ambushing of patrols in the border region continued unabated. An extraordinary incident that occurred on the Monaghan-Tyrone border on 21 April highlighted the lawlessness which existed in the border region. This episode involved the ambushing of a joint meeting of the border liaison commission at Cullamore, about two miles from Clogher. The border liaison were on the whole ineffective in their aim of fostering better relations in the border regions, but repeatedly strove to emphasize the fact that conditions on the border were gravely exaggerated by the press, and were in fact not that bad. The gravity of the situation was, however, highlighted by an attack on them by the I.R.A. The commissioners meeting was held up by twenty four armed I.R.A. men 'and a valuable Vauxhall car and a Sunbeam car, which were flying the customary blue and white flag of the commission were carried off into county Monaghan.'⁴⁷ The commission broke down in the following days, amid mutual accusations of non cooperation from Michael Collins

and Sir James Craig. The breakdown of the commission was followed by numerous attacks on the special constabulary as they were in the process of cutting communications between north and south.

As the troubles wore on in the six counties, particularly in Belfast, a further problem presented itself for the border towns. By early June, hundreds of refugees from the north were arriving in the border towns and it was difficult to find accommodation for these. At Newbliss the old R.I.C. barracks was provided to house some of these refugees.⁴⁸ The problem was more acute in Clones, where it was reported that:

Refugees continue to arrive at Clones daily from the Northern area, and houses in some cases are being commandeered for their use. Very expensive premises in the Diamond, Clones recently purchased, and which formerly belonged to Dr. Gillespie, have been taken over.⁴⁹

This problem was discussed by Clones Urban Council, when the clerk stated 'as there were no available housing at Clones, and as the local workhouse was utilised by the Dail troops he sent the refugees application on to the Minister for Home Affairs, who in reply wrote that Castleblayney vacant workhouse was being put in order for that purpose.'⁵⁰ There was also a considerable number of refugees in Dublin, and at a provisional government meeting on 9 June 1922, it was decided to grant a sum of £10,000 to meet the immediate needs of these 1,500 refugees. It was also decided that the British government should be held responsible for all expenditure incurred.⁵¹ As the country was on the verge of civil war it was also decided by the provisional government that 'a policy of peaceful obstruction should be adopted towards the Belfast government and that no troops from the twenty six counties, either those under official control, or attached to the executive should be permitted to invade the six county area.'⁵² This was, as explained by Ronan Fanning, 'a step back from the brink as I.R.A. units had moved

into the Beleek 'triangle' (in Fermanagh) a few days before and British troops were to occupy the adjoining village of Pettigo (parts of which were in Donegal) in order to dislodge them on the following day: the crisis was averted.⁵³ At a further provisional government meeting on 9 June 'it was arranged that the Minister of Defence should obtain daily reports from every post on the twenty six county side of the border, and that particular care should be taken to ensure that there would be no border conflicts.'⁵⁴

The situation did not improve in early June, as the Free State approached crisis point. The I.R.A. as well as the Dail were split down the middle over the treaty. The Irregulars or anti treaty forces were already in possession of the Four Courts in Dublin, while sectarian atrocities in Belfast and throughout the six counties continued. It was only with the outbreak of civil war in the south, following the shelling of the Four Courts on 27 June that the border situation was pulled back from the brink. The attention of most of the northern units were removed to the civil war and the crisis was averted. The threat of open warfare between the forces of the North and South, along the borders of Cavan and Monaghan, vanished almost overnight.

The civil war was a cataclysmic event in Irish history and its repercussions were both long lasting and deep rooted. Its first impact was to once again to bring a state of war and violence to Irish soil. Moreover the civil war was far more brutal than any campaign waged against the forces of the crown. In what has sometimes been termed 'the delirium of the brave' brother fought against brother and Irish towns, villages and indeed families were torn apart by the conflict. It is important to emphasize that the civil war was not fought on the issue of partition. Partition had, as demonstrated, become largely irrelevant in the treaty debates. Rather the motivation behind the civil war was the refusal of de Valera and the anti-treatyites to take an oath of allegiance to a foreign monarch. It is doubtful at any rate if many of those who fought and died in the struggle fully realised what they were fighting for.

The civil war was a disaster as far as partition was concerned. By the time the civil war had ended in 1923, partition was copper fastened. The struggle also robbed Ireland of many fine politicians and statesmen, notably Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith, Cavan's representative in Dail Eireann. Collins who died in an ambush in his native Cork, has been seen by many historians as the one man who could have overturned partition. This view is a controversial one but is held by many eminent historians, such as Tim Pat Coogan, who believed that;

The importance of Collins's death to the partition issue only became generally known long afterwards...Collins, in his capacity as head of government, commander in chief of the Free State Army, and possibly more importantly, head of the I.R.B, had used the 'stepping stone' as a base for undeclared military actions against the north.. he abhorred partition and intended using the treaty to end it either by fair means or foul.⁵⁵

While this is mere supposition and speculation, it is a widely acknowledged fact that the civil war was a massive boost for the northern state. With the energies of the Free State government tied up with a struggle from within, Collins and his cabinet were powerless to act on the northern situation. This gave the much troubled northern state the breathing space it needed to consolidate and reinforce its borders. The boundary commission was put on hold and the threat of border conflicts or invasions virtually vanished overnight.

On a local level the immediate impact of the civil war was to bring a large measure of relief to the much beleaguered inhabitants of Cavan and Monaghan. It is fair to say that the impact of civil war in Cavan and Monaghan was minor, as the region was away from the main centres of fighting. The people of the region were kept informed of events unfolding through the national and local newspapers but by and large believed that the struggle was pointless. It was felt in the region that the civil war was averting

attention away from the crucial question of readjusting the border through the boundary commission. Monaghan, the more northerly of the two counties in the region witnessed very little in the way of bloodshed or violence in connection with the civil war. The local historian Peadar Livingstone confirms this.

The civil war did not upset the life of Monaghan very much, nor did the Irregulars fight a vigorous campaign. Some of the anti treatyites, like P.J. O Daly of Carrickmacross and Pady Corrigan of Lisdoonan, withdrew from the I.R.A. altogether rather than take up arms against their former comrades. Many of the other activists were quickly arrested and detained.⁵⁶

There were a number of incidents in the county, such as a raid on Monaghan town on 18 August 1922, when a party of about 60 Irregulars seized a number of buildings and attacked the barrack of Free State soldiers.⁵⁷ An officer of the national forces, Lieutenant Gillanders, was shot dead, and it was reported by the *Irish Times* that 'during the attack there was intense excitement in the town. Nothing could be heard but heavy firing, the crash of broken glass, and the screams of women.'⁵⁸ Incidents such as this were however few, and by and large Monaghan on a whole came out unscathed from the horrors of civil war.

Cavan also escaped much of the terror of destruction wrought by civil war, but a number of incidents in the county brought home the terrors of the campaign. These incidents also served to keep the conflict very much to the forefront of peoples consciousness. The first civil war related incident came very early in the campaign when in early July, Bailieborough barrack was raided by Irregulars. 'When the Irregulars were in position, bombs were hurled at the building and fire was opened on the barrack.'⁵⁹ This incident caused great excitement and brought out great crowds to the town, motivated more by curiosity than anything else.

At about six p.m. large numbers of National troops arrived in lorries and a fleet of motor cars, and great enthusiasm was manifested by the townspeople. The soldiers went to the Knockbride district, where they arrested seven men. Large crowds assembled outside the barrack on the return of the troops with the prisoners.⁶⁰

Other barracks in the region were also attacked, including Ballyjamesduff barrack on 14 July 1922, and an unsuccessful attempt was made to capture Cavan barrack on 2 October 1922. Two incidents occurred in the region which did bring home some of the civil war to the people of Cavan. The first incident occurred in mid November 1922, when a young man named James Martin was shot dead in his home while 'saying the rosary' with his family. This happened near Killeshandra and caused great shock and outrage among people of the region.⁶¹

The most horrific civil war related incident occurred in the village of Ballyconnell in west Cavan, near the borders with Fermanagh and Leitrim. 'Two men were killed, and one was seriously wounded - all three in particularly brutal circumstances - shops were wrecked and looted, and the villagers were terrorised.'⁶² This raid was carried out by about 50 Irregulars, as a reprisal for the death of an Irregular during a previous raid, and occurred in February 1923. The raid caused widespread shock and revulsion among the residents of Ballyconnell. It was the subject of a discussion in the Dail, and Sean Milroy, T.D. for Cavan stated that:

a gang of 80 armed men swept down upon the little town of Ballyconnell, and proceeded to engage in one of those exploits that were of common occurrence in the days of the 'Black and Tans', before the treaty put an end to their terrorism. Two civilians were shot dead and one was so injured that his life was in jeopardy. Business houses were destroyed, a bank was raided, and wild panic among the inhabitants followed.⁶³

The civil war had by early Spring 1923 reached its climax and the country witnessed a return to normality. This return to normality allowed the government to divert its attention back to the northern question. The death of Collins undoubtedly left a huge void in government policy towards the northern state. Cosgrave, who became head of the government, following the death of Collins ended the governments policy of non recognition of the northern state. Cosgrave actually met Craig in London on 10 November 1922, which gave the clearest indication that the policy of non recognition was dead.

The Irish Free State officially came into existence on 6 December 1922 and on the following day 'the Northern parliament duly availed of its rights under the treaty to petition the king that the powers of the Free State should not extend to Northern Ireland. Thus was partition reaffirmed.'⁶⁴ The firmest action taken by Cosgrave's government on partition was to set up the North Eastern Boundary Bureau to produce propaganda on the Northern question. The North Eastern Boundary Bureau produced a weekly bulletin and a much larger publication *The Handbook of the Ulster question*.⁶⁵ The bureau collected detailed information on the wishes of inhabitants and the geographical and economic conditions, which were set down by the treaty as the criteria for realignment of the boundary line. The bureau continued to function throughout the period up to the boundary commission and was finally dissolved in 1926.

Although the work of the bureau was heavily biased and was motivated by an attempt to influence the Boundary Commission, its maps on the 'wishes of inhabitants' and 'economic conditions' are indispensable for a consideration of the problems wrought by partition. Other pamphlets and propaganda was also produced by the government, including a pamphlet by Cavan T.D. Sean Milroy entitled *The Case of Ulster: An analysis of four partition arguments*.⁶⁶ This pamphlet contained the by now traditional southern misrepresentation of the partition issue. It is little wonder that the

southern government had little chance of solving the issue of partition when the following was the depth of their understanding of the issue.

The fact is there that the root source of present conditions in this corner of Ulster is nothing more or less than an antiquated medieval tradition of religious ascendancy and bigotry projecting itself into the political, social and economic life of this section of Ireland today.⁶⁷

This was the sum of the Cosgrave administration's attempt to address the boundary problem until early 1923. This had given the Northern state the breathing space it required to strengthen its position, hold elections which by a complex process of jerrymandering ensured a unionist majority at all government levels.

The civil war had also lessened tensions in the border regions. Although some sniping continued over the borderline, and passage between the two states remained hazardous, a more pacifying attitude was discernable along the border. This is evidenced by looking at the local press. The *Northern Standard* reported in October that 'there was a general state of peace in the border regions.'⁶⁸ In the following weeks headlines such as 'The friendly border' and 'Border fraternity' were printed, something which seemed unthinkable only a matter of months previous.⁶⁹ It was now evident that some form of peace and normality was returning to the border regions after many years of tension and hostilities, which have been documented in previous chapters.

It is somewhat ironic that the civil war, which left such a violent and bloody birth scar on the Irish Free State, helped bring a return to peacefulness for the residents of the border regions. Although peace had returned to the region, the border was now a fact of life, a realization which had by now dawned on the inhabitants of the region. The following chapter considers the economic problems which partition imposed on the lives of the people in the border regions of Cavan and Monaghan. These derived

in no small measure from the imposition of the first customs barrier by the Irish Free State on 1 April 1923, which marked the beginning of economic partition. Other problems such as smuggling, the closing of the border roads and the changes in population along the border regions are also considered.

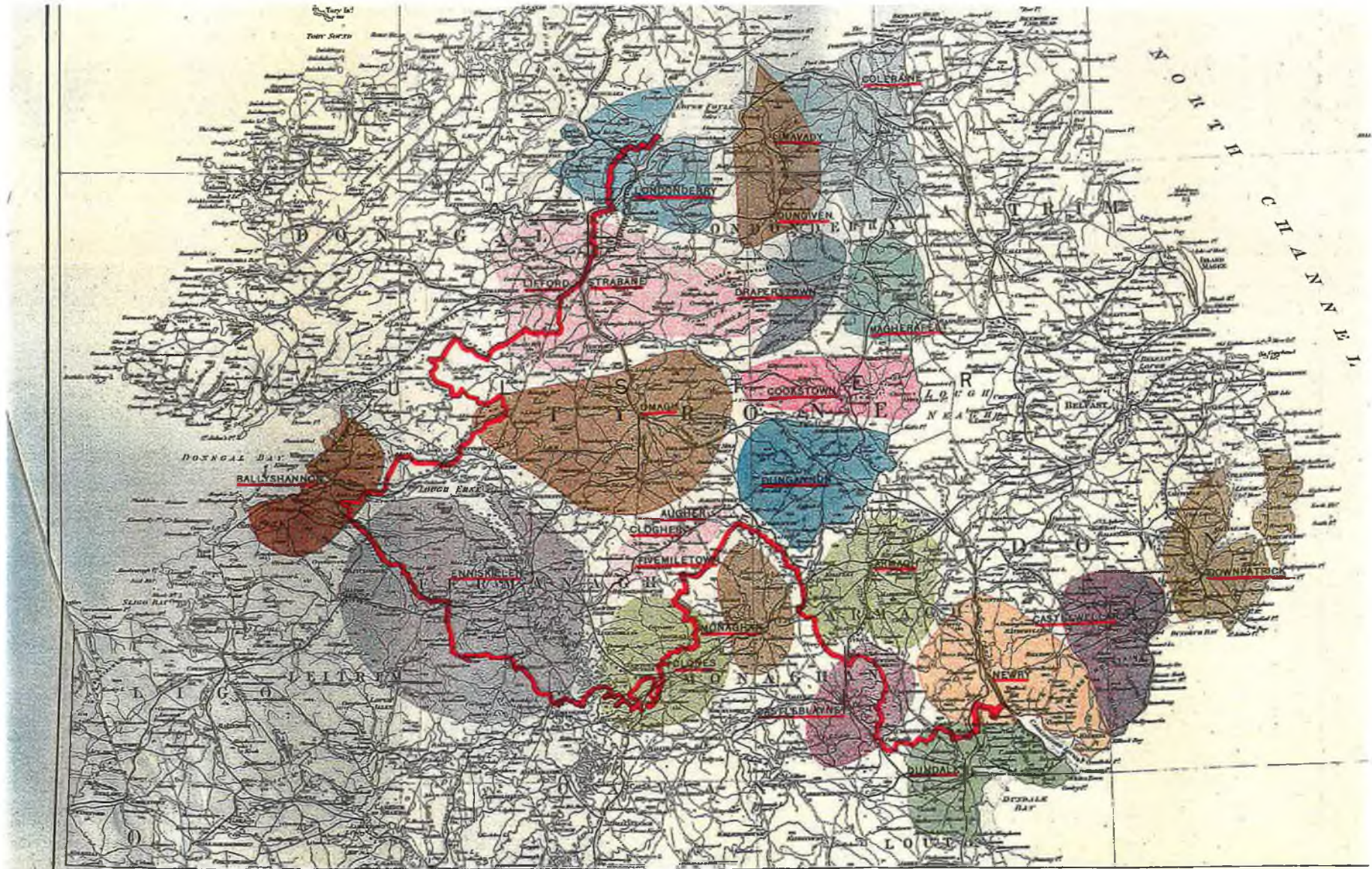
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CHAPTER FIVE:
THE IMPOSITION OF THE CUSTOMS BARRIER AND THE
FINDINGS OF THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION, 1923 - 1925.

Map Two: The market areas of certain border towns before partition.



Source: Map taken from North East Boundary Bureau, *Handbook of the Ulster Question*(Dublin, 1923).

By early 1923 conditions had returned to a degree of normality for the inhabitants of the Cavan-Monaghan region. The sectarian violence and border warfare which had engulfed the region in previous years had abated. This heralded the start of a new phase in the history of Cavan and Monaghan. People began to come to terms with the fact that the region was now a borderland with the new northern state. This position was to cause much hardship and inconvenience for residents of border areas. This chapter examines the ramifications of a new form of partition, which derived from the setting up of a customs barrier between the states by the Free State government on 1 April 1923. The effects of the customs barrier and economic partition on the lives of inhabitants in the border regions of Cavan and Monaghan will be studied in depth. Following on from this the work of the Boundary Commission will be considered. The findings of the Commission which were directly relevant to the region under study will be discussed. How these findings would have benefited the region will be discussed.

Secondary sources are virtually non-existent on the customs barrier and the problems wrought by partition for those who were most directly affected by it. There is one notable exception to this, and this is the work of the eminent economic historian D.S. Johnson. In his article 'Partition and Cross border trade in the 1920's' Johnson examines how partition affected cross border trade between north and south.¹ Although this work gives a good background to the topic by examining trade between the two states, it does not examine the specific areas which were most affected by partition. There is an impressive amount of primary source material available. As usual the three local newspapers the *Northern Standard*, *Dundalk Democrat*, and *Anglo Celt* provide a wealth of information on the effects of partition and the customs barrier on life in the region. This information is supplemented by the *Irish Times* which documented the problems imposed by the customs barrier in a series of articles on 2-4 July 1930. The *Irish Press*

also undertook a study of how life in Clones was affected by partition.² The *Anglo Celt* also carried out a similar study on how life in Clones was affected by partition.³

The records of the Free State government are also a rich source of information on the customs barrier and other problems wrought by partition. The Dail debates highlight some of the problems which residents of the border regions brought to the attention of their local T.D.'s.⁴ The records of the Department of An Taoiseach and the Department of Finance are also very useful. The records of the Northern government are also very significant, especially the records of the Ministry for Home Affairs for the closure of border roads, and other concurrent boundary problems.⁵ The records of the Boundary Commission are a unique and indispensable source for painting a picture of how the customs barrier and partition impinged upon life in the border regions.⁶ The Boundary Commission which toured the border region during 1924 gives a unique picture, told by inhabitants of the region, of how day to day life was affected by partition and the imposition of the customs barrier.

By early 1923 the civil war had effectively ended although it was not until 27 April that de Valera ordered a cessation of republican activities. The Free State government headed by Cosgrave had from late 1922 begun to put in place the machinery of government and bodies necessary for the functioning of the infant state. As the country emerged from the shadows of civil war, attention turned to the functioning of the Free State. It was also becoming increasingly obvious that the Free State government would impose some form of economic partition. This was at the time an extremely controversial decision, especially among unionists who blamed the Free State government for reinforcing partition.

Thus in March 1923, Craig told a meeting of the Belfast Wholesale Merchant and Manufacturers Association that a fiscal frontier was 'a great error of judgement.... For partition was nothing; there was no such thing as partition if they [the Free State government] did not erect a customs barrier between north and south.'⁷ It was

realised in the south that some form of fiscal barrier was required to determine the income of the Free State. Although a customs barrier was a necessary part of the Free States protectionist policy and was also necessary to accurately measure the Free States trade, the government had an ulterior motive in erecting a customs barrier. The imposition of the customs barrier was clearly part of the Free state governments policy on Northern Ireland. In a memo entitled 'Customs Imperial Preference and the North East' the customs barrier was seen as one of the cards held by the Free State 'which if used with full effect will in my opinion produce far reaching effects.'⁸ It was considered by Cosgrave that 'What the future position of the six counties will be for the next decade, whether they will cut off more and more from us or tend to seek a closer relationship with us will depend very largely on our wise and careful use of the valuable cards we hold in our hands during this period.'⁹

It was considered by the government that the ideal situation would be that rates would be lower in the Free State than in Northern Ireland. This would, it was hoped 'stop automatically and almost completely the large and important retail trade done by such border towns as Derry, Strabane, Enniskillen and Newry.'¹⁰ It was also hoped to 'stop eventually the large and lucrative wholesale trade in dutiable articles done with Saorstát from the six county towns' and 'to stop ultimately the trade in non dutiable goods as well.'¹¹ Even more extraordinary was the governments aim 'to create and foster a great smuggling trade along the 240 miles of irregular and impossible border from Saorstát Eireann into the six counties, much to the discomfiture and commercial disorganization of the latter.'¹² All this it was hoped would force the six counties to seek reunification with the Free State.

This rather extraordinary policy of using economic instruments to achieve political goals, by using the customs barrier to cause major discomfort for the trade of Northern Ireland was a complete failure. The customs barrier, while a necessary part of the governments accounting machinery created great hardship for residents of the border

counties of Cavan and Monaghan. The customs barrier created great difficulties for traders in border towns such as Clones, Belturbet and Swanlinbar. Prices in the Free State were in fact higher for dutiable goods than in the six counties and smuggling goods such as sugar, tobacco and alcohol from northern Ireland became a part of life for people living in the border regions of Cavan and Monaghan. This will be discussed at length in this chapter.

Residents of the border regions first became aware that a customs barrier would be imposed between north and south early in March 1923. The initial reaction to the government's decision to impose a customs barrier was one of confusion and great anxiety. A good illustration of this feeling is the following resolution passed by a representative of the Great Northern Brewery at a meeting of Dundalk merchants and manufacturers:

This meeting views with alarm the proposal to set up customs barriers, at such short notice, and fears that they will result in hopeless confusion and very serious delay to goods crossing the frontier and will be most detrimental generally to business and lead to further serious unemployment.¹³

This feeling was mirrored throughout the region and special concern was voiced as to the future of towns such as Clones and Belturbet which had a good deal of trade with people living in the six counties. This predicament was aptly summed up by the *Northern Standard*.

Clones trade is mostly with Fermanagh, and it was just recovering from the bad effects of the murders of the constabulary of a year ago when this new restriction was placed upon the town, and as one dealer said to a representative. 'This is the last straw.' A farmer cannot do his shopping from Fermanagh in Clones, as the quantities permitted to be brought home are so small.¹⁴

A further immediate effect of the news of the imminent customs barrier was to create panic buying among residents of the border region, who formerly frequented the towns of Northern Ireland such as Enniskillen, Newry and Armagh. It was announced that a duty equal to one third the price of vehicles coming from Northern Ireland would be placed on motors imported into the Free State. This had the effect of forcing many dealers within the Free State to buy up any cars they could get their hands on. 'People within the twenty six counties who had for months or even years, been merely thinking of getting cars, suddenly made up their minds. And it was to satisfy these requirements that scores of cars, of every make and price flitted through the town during the past few days.'¹⁵

The *Dundalk Democrat* also reported that traders throughout the region accepted mass orders of tobacco and alcohol in the week before the customs barrier was imposed. It reported a flurry of bicycles travelling across the border to bring in supplies of alcohol and tobacco. 'There were consignments of whiskey and tobacco which a layman would estimate to keep the region going for a twelvemonth, and there were scores of other parcels and packages all rushed across the border before the Irish government came along for its pound of flesh.'¹⁶ This mass panic buying had a number of immediate serious implications for the region. The first effect was that the trade of shopkeepers, tobacconists, off-licences and motor garages suffered an immediate slump in business. This stock piling carried out by residents of the region caused a great recession for these businessmen and forced many people to sell up. Another effect of this mass buying was that people were disposing of most of their income and some which they didn't really have. It was already a time of great hardship for people in the region following the turmoil of the previous years of violence, agricultural prices were also extremely low. As would be verified by any economist, a lack of money circulating through a region such as this, when times were already bad was a recipe for disaster.

The customs barrier came into effect on 1 April 1923 and this placed serious inconveniences on the movement of people and merchandise throughout the border regions. Lists of dutiable and prohibited articles were published throughout the region. (see Appendix II). The main dutiable goods were tobacco, spirits, perfume, tea, coffee, motor cars and accessories and sugar. Customs posts were to be set up on 'approved roads' throughout the region, by which people were obliged to travel on when entering or leaving the Free State. Merchandise crossing the land frontier, if not conveyed by the railways was also obliged to go by the approved roads. Only fifteen roads were approved along the 240 miles of boundary between north and south. Only these only five were along the borders of Cavan and Monaghan. The five roads were as follows:

Armagh- Middletown, Monaghan; Tyholland, Monaghan.

Aughnacloy- Monaghan, Moy, Monaghan.

Newtownbutler- Clones.

Enniskillen - Swanlinbar,

Enniskillen- Manorhamilton, Blacklion, Manorhamilton.¹⁷

These restrictions on travel created severe difficulties for residents in border regions. Another serious problem caused by the customs barrier was the restricted nature of the opening hours of the customs posts. People who wished to cross the frontier, whether conveying merchandise or not were obliged to do so between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Saturday, and the border effectively remained closed to traffic outside these hours. This again caused great difficulties for border towns and especially for merchants who wished to travel between the two states. The *Irish Times* highlighted the following example of a doctor living in Belcoo in county Fermanagh.

Belcoo is separated from Blacklion, which is in the Free State, by a bridge. The doctor may need to cross that bridge every day in the week in order to attend to his patients, and it is absurd to expect him to go through the formality of securing a pass for every journey. The same applies to shopkeepers in border towns who distribute the necessities of life in areas in the other side of the border.¹⁸

Sunday motoring across the border was also strictly prohibited by the customs regulations and this again caused serious implications for border residents.

Businesses and trade in general throughout the border region suffered immensely during the first months of the imposition of the customs posts. The great difficulties caused by the infrastructural changes brought about by the customs barrier had a massive impact on the socio-economic life of the region. It is obvious that the customs barrier affected people from all walks of life in the region. Business people and merchants travelling between the two states found the delays very irksome and time consuming. The working class people of the region who had frequented markets in the six counties for a lifetime, found the customs barrier bewildering and confusing. At the frontier post, the customs officer would stop travellers and ask them to declare their dutiable goods. In order to do this they must enter these goods on special forms, and many people found these technical difficulties too much trouble and patronised less convenient towns in their own territory. This fact was illustrated by a study of ordinary folk using the customs posts carried out by the *Northern Standard*.¹⁹ The study found that the forms which had to be filled in were 'very confusing to the semi illiterate country folk who have an inherent dislike to filling in an official document.'²⁰

Although farm produce was free to be carried by any route and at any time without restrictions or customs duties the border severely hampered farmers living along the border. Many farmers who had parts of farms in one state and part of a farm in the other found it virtually impossible to travel between their farms. This was a frequent

complaint made to the boundary commission on its tour of the Monaghan and Cavan border. One farmer, Mr. Andrews from Clogh on the north Monaghan border with Tyrone, had a farm totally in Northern Ireland and a farm in the Free State in Bullogbreen. He explained to the commissioners that he found it hard to get to it as the road was blocked off. He lost a crop in the Free State the previous year due to this inconvenience.²¹ Further complaints were made by Monaghan farmers living near Clones in May 1923 a road was closed near Clones at Anny Bridge which led into northern territory. This was a great inconvenience to Monaghan farmers as they needed the road to be open so that they could pass through a portion of Fermanagh to their bogs. Fermanagh farmers also needed the road open so that they could sell bog to Monaghan farmers.²²

The case of Drumully Salient is an example of the difficulties encountered by farmers who had land in both states, and also the difficulties of reaching their former market towns.²³ Drumully was a loop of county Monaghan which was almost completely surrounded by county Fermanagh. The area was connected to the Free State by a narrow cordon through which there was no road. The people of the region could therefore not reach their natural market town of Clones without passing through northern territory. Securing direct access to Clones would involve bridging the Finn river from Annaghraw to Clonfad, and to also construct a road. This however was blocked by the Special constabulary. Apart from this, the road to Clones formerly used by farmers in Drumully was trenched by the Specials during the border wars in 1922. This forced farmers in the region to take their produce and cattle to Newtownbutler in county Fermanagh which involved travelling a considerable extra distance.²⁴ This was one of the primary grievances made by inhabitants of county Monaghan to the Boundary Commission.

The example of Drumully Salient also illustrates how border towns, Clones in this instance, were adversely affected by the border when parts of their catchment area were cut off by the border. The border did severe damage to certain towns near the border which formerly had catchment areas in both the Free State and Northern

Ireland. Map One vividly illustrates this point for both Clones and Castleblayney in county Monaghan. Thomas Smith, a farmer from Kinawley in county Fermanagh told the boundary commission that Ballyconnell and Belturbet were sorely hit by the customs barrier. In the course of his evidence Smith contended that 'Ballyconnell was sore hit by the border as it is a bit of a drawback for fairs.- When a dealer buys a number of cattle, there is no money in the bank at Ballyconnell, it is only a branch bank and you have to have a cheque and go to Enniskillen to get it cashed.'²⁵ The Free State government were also made aware of the effect which the customs barrier had on the border town of Belturbet in county Cavan, which prior to the border, practically 75% of the business of the town was done with the people of Fermanagh. This hinterland is now completely cut off and business has suffered accordingly'.²⁶

The story of Clones since 1922 is a vivid illustration of the effect of partition on the border region of Cavan and Monaghan. The effect of partition on Clones has been the subject of two excellent articles, by Tom Carron and Darach Mac Donald.²⁷ The position of Clones was also foremost on the agenda of the boundary Commission as it was finalising its report on the readjustments to the boundary. The immediate effect of partition was aptly summed up by Carron.

The coming into being of partition in 1922 had a profound effect on Clones. Cut off from its natural hinterland in the North, the people, and more particularly the business life of the town, endeavoured to adjust as best they could to the new, unfavourable situation. While it continued to be a market town for a catchment area on both sides of the border, the imposition of customs controls and the intermittent outbreak of the political troubles meant that the town had to compete in an adverse economic climate.²⁸

The implications of being cut off from its catchment area have continued since and as contended by Mac Donald 'In particular, the once bustling town of Clones

became a victim, cut off not only from an economic hinterland, but from its parish.²⁹ Clones was undoubtedly the town in the Cavan-Monaghan region which was most severely affected by partition and the customs barrier. The effect of partition on Clones was the subject of numerous reports made by the North Eastern Boundary Bureau which was commissioned by the Free State government to influence the findings of the Boundary Commission. While the findings of this bureau have an inherent bias due to the motivation and control of the bureau, their reports on Clones can be verified by consulting local newspapers and the secondary sources mentioned above. The Bureau conducted a tour of the Clones region to examine the effects of partition on the town and its environs in September 1923. In a document entitled 'The effect of the fiscal barrier on neighbouring market towns' presented by the bureau to the Free State government it was stated that Clones was;

The only important town in our area which has lost heavily on balance as a result of fiscal separation. It seems likely that in non dutiable articles as well as in dutiable articles the county Fermanagh peasant has largely ceased to shop in Clones.³⁰

Clones was further disadvantaged by the fact that five of the eight roads which led from the town went almost immediately into northern territory. Only one of these roads was an approved route and the remainder of the roads leading into the six counties had been rendered impassable by the Special Constabulary. This caused many problems for the town of Clones, as it was extremely difficult for farmers or traders to bring their produce to Clones. It was also extremely difficult for customers who had previously patronised Clones to get to the town. This was the subject of frequent representations made by residents of the Clones catchment area to both the Free State government and also the Boundary Commission.

The area of Bunnoe which was just inside the Northern State was severely hampered by these road closures. The people of Bunnoe got their turf from a bog in county Fermanagh but to gain access to this they had to cross into Free State territory. The direct route to their bogs was via the Anny Bridge which had been barricaded by the Specials using trees and stones. The residents of the region, however, endeavoured to overcome this difficulty by fording the river Finn just beside the bridge. The ford was blocked on the Fermanagh side early in July 1923 by Specials using barbed wire. As reported to the North Eastern Boundary Bureau this forced Bunnoe farmers to 'make a journey of about 20 miles via Clones and the approved road which is not obstructed in order to obtain a load of turf from a bog about 7 miles distant.'³¹ As turf was classified as farm produce, under the customs regulations, it was allowed to be exported or imported by any road and at any time. There was, therefore, no fiscal justification for the actions of the Specials in blocking the Anny Bridge and this caused anger and resentment among farmers in Bunnoe.

It is clear that Clones suffered immensely from the imposition of the customs barrier, a fact which was highlighted during the Boundary Commissions deliberations. 'With the small county Donegal village of Pettigo, Clones had been singled out as the town most likely to suffer from the adverse social and economic effects of the border it now found on its very doorstep.'³²

The situation in Swanlinbar brought about by partition and the customs barrier has not been documented at all in secondary sources. At the time of the imposition of the customs barrier it seemed that by way of contrast on balance Swanlinbar benefitted from fiscal separation as it brought additional retail trade to Swanlinbar as a local market town. It can be seen from Map Three that the catchment area of Enniskillen extended across the border and into large tracts of west Cavan. With the imposition of the customs barrier, Swanlinbar lost about one third of its previous customers who lived in county

Fermanagh. As against this the customs barrier diverted to Swanlinbar some of the retail trade which formerly went from county Cavan to Enniskillen.³³

Although it would seem that Swanlinbar on the whole gained from partition, traders and farmers in the region who formerly frequented the larger market of Enniskillen suffered great inconveniences. It was now much more difficult for farmers to send their produce to Enniskillen or to receive produce from Enniskillen. A lot of further difficulties were encountered by farmers and traders living in the Swanlinbar region, due to the closure of roads leading into the six counties by the Special Constabulary. In March 1922, at the height of the border troubles the Specials under orders from the Belfast government blocked roads in county Fermanagh leading into counties Cavan and Monaghan. Various bridges were also blown up in an effort to stop kidnappings of prominent unionists and Specials living in Northern Ireland by the I.R.A. operating from the Free State side of the border. This caused great inconveniences for farmers and merchants in the west Cavan region, and also cut off pockets of communities in the north from their former market place.

Swanlinbar was only a local market town with about 600 inhabitants, about 12 miles from Enniskillen, upon which it was dependent both for supplies to local merchants and also as a market for their goods. The main Swanlinbar - Enniskillen road was one of those which had been obstructed by Specials in March 1922. While this did cause inconveniences the problem was surmounted as vehicular transport between the towns was possible via a mountain by road which circumvented the obstruction. The Swanlinbar - Enniskillen road was one of the roads approved by both the Free State government and the Northern government after the imposition of the customs barrier. However on the 16 June 1923 the by road bridge was destroyed by Specials. This rendered the situation intolerable for Swanlinbar merchants.

The problems caused by the closure of this approved road from Swanlinbar to Enniskillen is well documented in primary sources. Local people felt very

angry and resentful about the situation and various representations were made to the Free State government about the situation. From the government files on the situation it can be seen that the Free State authorities viewed the situation with great concern. Letters were sent to the British government outlining the inconveniences caused to local people and the Free State government was concerned that this situation could lead to a renewal of animosities and conflict in this border region. The problem was outlined by the Free State government as follows:

Practically all the Swanlinbar merchants buy their goods beer, stout, spirits, meal, flour, groceries.... from wholesale houses in Enniskillen. Similarly agricultural produce, mostly eggs, butter and poultry is either sold by Swanlinbar merchants to Enniskillen merchants or shipped from Enniskillen station. Goods from Enniskillen are now brought on Enniskillen lorries to the broken bridge and then transhiped to Swanlinbar lorries or carts. Whereas formerly Swanlinbar merchants sent their own lorries for them all the way. This profits the owners of Enniskillen lorries.³⁴

To reinforce the argument that great damage was done to Swanlinbar by the closure, the local customs officer supplied figures to the North Eastern Boundary Bureau which illustrated the effect of all this on the volume of trade through the customs post at Swanlinbar. They estimated that in the first two weeks of June exports were in the region of £870 whilst imports amounted to £585. In the last two weeks of June exports had fallen to £394 and imports to £482.³⁵

The Free State government made strong representations to the British customs authorities to have the bridge repaired and for this approved road to be reopened. The Free State government was very aware of the fact that they would have to tread carefully in this matter as it was 'economically most convenient that the Swanlinbar - Enniskillen route should be an approved road and any change in that respect would have a bad political effect on the people in the Swanlinbar district.'³⁶

Local farmers also suffered in another way from the closure of this important route. Swanlinbar had a separating station for milk which was supplied with milk from both sides of the border. One Fermanagh milk carrier was actually arrested by the Specials for helping to repair the broken bridge on the approved road. What little milk which still came from county Fermanagh now had to be transhipped at the bridge and this again caused immenses inconveniences. Further hardship and expense was incurred by farmers owing to the fact that the separating station in Swanlinbar formerly sent its cream to the central creamery at Kinawley in county Fermanagh, about 7 miles away. This cream was now sent to Killeshandra in county Cavan, 30 miles away from Swanlinbar.

The above case studies illustrate the different ways in which border communities were affected by partition. Clones lost a great deal of its commercial hinterland and was devastated by fiscal separation, from which it arguably has never really recovered. It can be said that Swanlinbar on the whole gained from fiscal separation by gaining customers in west Cavan who would have normally patronised Enniskillen. However the town paid a heavy price for this and both traders and farmers suffered immense difficulties from losing its lifeline to Enniskillen. Swanlinbar had for decades been dependant on the large markets in Enniskillen. To lose this lifeline for the region was a massive blow. In the process of researching this chapter interviews were conducted with residents in the Swanlinbar area, who remember these times of hardship, who concur that Swanlinbar had suffered great difficulties from partition, and more specifically the imposition of the customs barrier in April 1923.

The case of Swanlinbar also illustrates how border communities suffered from the closure of border roads. The towns of Ballyconnell and Belturbet were also cut off from former Fermanagh customers who now had to turn their attention to markets in the six counties. An excellent study of this problem was the representations made to made to the North Eastern Boundary Bureau by two local T.D.'s Mr. Cole and Mr. Baxter on the question of having the road from Belturbet to Enniskillen made an approved road.

This representation was made to the bureau on behalf 'of the town of Belturbet and the people of the Derrylin district of Fermanagh who formerly were in the habit of marketing in Belturbet.'³⁷

Derrylin was a small rural district less than five miles from Belturbet in county Cavan. Derrylin had traditionally been closely linked to Belturbet and with the closure of the main Enniskillen - Belturbet this link was severed. Derrylin contained a considerable number of small country shops, which acted as collecting centre for much of the agricultural produce of the district, of which eggs would have been the most important. Before the imposition of the customs posts these shops would send their produce to merchants in Belturbet where they would in turn purchase wholesale 'a considerable portion of the goods they retailed, and in any case, whether sold to Belturbet merchants or not the goods they had for sale would be sent off from Belturbet station.'³⁸ Under the customs regulations there was of course nothing to prevent Derrylin farmers from bringing their produce to Belturbet, but they could only bring back 'small domestic supplies of non dutiable goods' from Belturbet.

If any farmer or shopkeeper from Derrylin wished to bring any considerable quantity of merchandise from Belturbet to Derrylin, he would have to make a detour of 30 miles by Swanlinbar or Clones. As this was totally impractical, the net result was that the inhabitants of Derrylin ceased to use Belturbet as their market town. This of course was a great inconvenience to themselves but also had a disastrous effect on Belturbet and Messrs. Cole and Baxter reported to the North Eastern Boundary Bureau that 'in consequence of this certain Belturbet merchants are threatened with bankruptcy. Belturbet is only 2 miles from the border and it grew up supplying the wants of a large area, a considerable portion of which it has now suddenly been deprived of.'³⁹

All representations to have the road reopened as an approved road ultimately failed as the revenue commissioners for the Free State believed that 'on investigation of the case the commissioners were not at all satisfied that the volume of

traffic on this road would justify its approval.⁴⁰ The failure to have this road opened as an approved route caused considerable damage to the town of Belturbet, and along with the fact that two of the approved roads in the region; that of Clones and Swanlinbar to Enniskillen, had been rendered impassable, the customs barrier caused immense inconveniences for this region.

The west Cavan and north west Monaghan regions had already borne the brunt of much of the violence which encapsulated the region in the early twenties, and now suffered immensely from a loss of trade from which it never really recovered from. To illustrate just how extensive the closure of border roads was, a list of border roads closed in the Cavan-Monaghan region is contained in Appendix III. This list shows the border roads and bridges which were rendered impassable by the Specials during the border troubles, in county Fermanagh and county Tyrone. It was not until December 1925 after the Boundary Commission and the disbandment of the A Specials and the withdrawal of border patrols that the Northern government moved to reopen these roads. The roads and bridges in question had been closed for almost three years and caused untold damage to the economic life of this already poor region. Farmers, traders, shopkeepers and people of all walks of life in the region were greatly inconvenienced by the closure of these roads and it proved disastrous for the region.

Great inconveniences were undoubtedly caused by the imposition of the customs barrier but the people of Cavan and Monaghan who lived in the border regions strove to overcome at least some of these problems. The people of the region were very resilient after years of hardship and were also very resourceful. In time they got used to the inconveniences caused by the customs posts. As the border became part and parcel of every day life for the people of the region they began to try and get around paying customs duties, by smuggling goods which were cheaper in Northern Ireland into the Free State. This caused a great headache for the Free State customs officers as it proved very difficult to patrol such an irregular frontier. This fact was readily admitted by customs

men. In the course of his evidence to the Boundary Commission P. O Golain, a Free State customs officer, admitted the difficulty of patrolling the border ; 'Whenever a road crosses a frontier it presents a problem from a customs point of view. If you approve it, it is an expense; if you do not you have to watch it or close it.'⁴²

The *Irish Times* survey on the border line also highlighted the difficulties of preventing smuggling. This report carried out seven years after the customs posts were in place pointed out that 'Smuggling had almost disappeared on the main road, but there were the fields and the by roads between the two states, over which people could come by foot.'⁴³ There was also a number of anomalies along the frontier where the borderline passes through shops or houses. Two such 'kinks' in the line between Dundalk and Castleblayney were highlighted in the *Irish Times* survey. One of these places was Jonesboro in county Armagh, 'a hamlet of a few houses, one of which has its front in the Free State and its rear portion with some land in Northern Ireland. The owners of that particular house run a small shop, and from a customs point of view, it is impossible to supervise what may pass from one side to the other.'⁴⁴ The village of Cullaville on the Monaghan - Armagh border also posed similar problems. Here Northern Ireland territory juts into Free State area in a 'V' shape. Through this 'V' a public road ran which takes people through Northern Ireland and back into the Free State. In the village of Cullaville itself there were two public houses over which the Free State customs official had no authority, but those who had no pass into Northern Ireland were not permitted to stop there.

It is of course, extremely difficult to quantify the level of smuggling which went on between Northern Ireland and the Free State. There are no facts or figures for this contraband traffic to illustrate what harm smuggling had on local economies or otherwise. Secondary sources on the subject are sparse, again D.S. Johnsons work proving to be a notable exception.⁴⁵ Oral sources on the subject are readily available, but with the scarcity of other primary sources to back them up it is difficult to separate fact from the

legends that have grown up in border regions concerning smuggling. Local newspaper reports are indispensable for cases of those who had been caught smuggling and the penalties imposed on them by the courts. At any rate, it cannot be denied that smuggling in the early years of the customs barrier existed in the Cavan and Monaghan. Two types of smuggling can be discerned when looking at this subject. The first kind being that which was of a petty nature, involving a bottle of whiskey or other such articles. Prosecutions in these instances were extremely rare and the extent of this is very hard to quantify. Smuggling of a more organized and serious nature was at times attempted and local newspapers abound of cases involving customs prosecutions in these instances.

By 1925, it was recognized that smuggling of a petty nature was rife in the border regions. Border residents had nothing to lose by trying to evade the customs duties, for even if they were caught with dutiable goods on an unapproved road, no crime was committed unless they attempted to conceal the dutiable goods. If they were caught they just had to pay the duty they would have had to pay at the customs post. Thus smuggling had become a recognized game in the border region by the time the Boundary Commission began its tour of the border in 1925.⁴⁶

Soon after the customs posts came into existence the *Northern Standard* carried out an interesting study of smuggling along the Monaghan border.⁴⁷ This study however concentrates on attempts to smuggle in dutiable goods past the customs posts without paying the duty, and as the border residents became familiar with the customs posts and the other ways of smuggling goods into the Free State, this practice almost completely died out. Numerous attempts were however made in the early years of the customs post to smuggle small quantities of spirits, tobacco, tea and sugar across the frontier. 'When interrogated the smugglers innocently assert that they haven't anything to declare. Nevertheless, a search of their carts or market baskets often results in the discovery of dutiable goods.'⁴⁸ The duty would subsequently be paid with a very bad grace.

These early attempts to evade the customs duties caused considerable amusement to the customs men. The following story, told by a customs officer on the north Monaghan border, bears testimony to this fact.

The other day a man was caught carrying a large bottle. 'What's in the bottle?' inquired the officer. 'Shure it's me medicine what I got from me dhactor,' replied the man. However; when the cork was drawn the officer charged him 9s duty on it. It was whisky, of course.⁴⁹

Numerous more organized and serious attempts at smuggling were often made and this caused more severe problems for the Free State government. Indeed at one stage the *Northern Whig* reported that 'drastic action was being contemplated by the Free State authorities, including 'barbed wire entanglements' on cross border roads. Furthermore because of the embarrassment caused to customs officers, the use of female searchers was being contemplated.⁵⁰ P. O. Golain informed the Boundary Commission that smuggling motor cars was a widespread phenomenon in west Cavan at Swanlinbar and Aghalane.⁵¹ This was due to the way in which the roads ran adjacent to the border. There was quite a wide road from Enniskillen and motor cars were smuggled into the Free State from Enniskillen by this route.

Any other records which do exist of smuggling on a larger scale are found in local newspapers. These reports however were based on the results of court cases which means that the offenders were caught. There is however no records of those who evaded the customs duties and got away with it. It is clear that at the beginning of the customs barrier security was a lot tighter and a high percentage of prospective smugglers were caught. In any case as time went by the likelihood of conviction for smuggling was minimal. As D.S. Johnson contends 'whereas in 1923 there was one conviction for every 4.5 seizures of goods, by 1929 only one of every 74 seizures of dutiable goods resulted in a successful state prosecution.'⁵²

In the early years of the customs barrier those who were caught and convicted of attempted smuggling suffered severe penalties. The three local newspapers abounded of cases of attempted smuggling before the local courts, where severe handed down. In the majority of cases these fines were handed down to act as a deterrent to other residents of the border regions who might attempt large scale smuggling. One of the first customs prosecutions in the Cavan - Monaghan region occurred at Clones district court on 28 July 1923 when a motor garage owner, George Robinson was charged with importing a Ford motor car on which the customs duty had not been paid. Robinson was found guilty of the charge and was fined £70 and also had the car forfeited.⁵³

Castleblayneys first serious smuggling case came the following week and aroused much public interest. The case involved a farm labourer named Patrick Collins of Mullyash, who was charged with 'removing and carrying certain dutiable goods, viz. a quantity of cigarettes and tobacco from Northern Ireland into Saorstát Éireann with the intent to defraud the customs officers of Saorstát Éireann.'⁵⁴ When stopped on an unapproved road by customs officials, the accused was found to be concealing under a sack of potatoes 'a quantity of dutiable goods, 45lbs. 10ozs. weight of tobacco, 10,000 Woodbine cigarettes and 7,000 Player's cigarettes.'⁵⁵ The man was found guilty of smuggling and was fined the maximum amount of three times the value of tobacco and the customs duty, a total fine of £169 4s 3d or in default of payment six months in jail. This was an extremely large amount of money for a farm labourer to pay and the fine was obviously expected to act as a deterrent to other border residents.

By December 1923 the fines for smuggling became less severe and at Castleblayney district court, Mr. Keenan solicitor stated 'it was the desire of the commissioners to let it be known that the [previous] prosecutions were by way of warning, and a different attitude could be taken in regard to future cases.'⁵⁷ By 1930 it was admitted that a regular trade in smuggling had grown up all along the border and the customs regulations were being defied under the very noses of the preventative officers.

The preventative officers themselves were also disillusioned with the process and one customs officer labelled the border a 'farce':

'I have been five years on the border and the only conclusion I can form is that the whole thing is a farce. Very few, except those immediately concerned, have any idea how it is upsetting and injuring the trade of the country'Asked, if the people were getting used to the regulations, his reply was an emphatic 'No'. 'Even after seven years, the border gives as much trouble as it did at the outset. The people do not seem to be able to grasp it.'⁵⁸

It is evident that the border caused immense difficulties for the people of Cavan and Monaghan. It can also be seen from the above passage that this trouble had not abated after seven years. The people of the region still did not see the necessity for the forms to be filled in at the customs post and detested the long delays suffered in travelling across the border by approved routes. However in 1924 and 1925 the people of the region held high hopes that the Boundary Commission would recommend a realignment of the borderline and make life much easier for residents in the region.

The Boundary Commission was provided for by Article XII of the Treaty between Great Britain and Ireland. It was to determine in accordance with the wishes of the inhabitants so far as may be compatible with economic and geographic conditions, the boundary between Northern Ireland and the rest of Ireland. Secondary sources on the subject are plentiful and the story of the Boundary Commission has been studied in depth by numerous historians.⁵⁹ It is not the purpose of this work to add to the debate on the failure of the Boundary Commission. However the findings of the Commission which were directly related to the borders of Cavan and Monaghan with the Northern state will be analysed as they are directly relevant to the issues being discussed in this thesis.

Residents in the region were anxious to have the Commission set up so that the problems caused by the border could be rectified. However it was almost three

and a half years after the signing of the Treaty before the Commission finally met. A number of reasons contributed to this long delay which benefitted the Northern state. The fact that Northern Ireland had been functioning for over three years meant that it was difficult to foresee large changes in the boundary line. The Boundary Commission finally met for the first time on 6 November 1924 at Clement's Inn London.⁶⁰ The commissioners were Eoin Mac Neill, representing the Free State government, J.R. Fisher who had been appointed by the British government on behalf of Northern Ireland. Richard Feetham, a judge of the supreme court of South Africa was appointed chairman of the Commission.

The residents of the border regions of Cavan and Monaghan were relieved when the Boundary Commission finally met. Opinion in the region was however divided as to the extent of alterations to the boundary line which the commission would recommend. Most people hoped that the Boundary Commission would bring about a settlement which would bring about a more friendly feeling between North and South. This in turn would bring about conditions more conducive to economic interchange between North and South. The feelings of people in the region was very aptly summed up in the following editorial in the *Dundalk Democrat* after Fisher had been appointed to the Boundary Commission.

Some people do not expect much from [the commission] Some even expect acuter trouble. But at least let us give this tribunal, provided by the Treaty for the settlement of this vexed boundary, a fair chance. It may disappoint some, it may even - and very easily- displease all parties by its decisions. But it will complete one stage towards the eventual reunion, which every good Irishman on either side of the border hopes for.⁶¹

The great controversy which was to surround the deliberations of the Boundary Commission, was the interpretation which the chairman, Justice Feetham

would take from Article XII. It has already been shown in this work how the Collins - Craig negotiations broke down over the interpretation of Article XII. The Irish Free State interpreted Article XII to mean that large tracts of Northern Ireland, including the entire counties of Tyrone and Fermanagh would be transferred to the Free State. The Northern government believed that modifications to the boundary would be slight. Craig believed that the commissions purpose was merely to adjust glaring anomalies on either side of the boundary.⁶² Feetham was given the unenviable position of choosing which one of these interpretations he would use. Feetham eventually chose the latter interpretation. 'His basic proposition was that Northern Ireland should remain the same provincial entity, capable of maintaining a parliament and government, and that the onus of proof lay with those who wanted to change the border.'⁶³

The commission began its enquiries and investigations on the wishes of inhabitants in November 1924 and used three elements to reach their conclusions. The returns of the 1911 census were used as the fundamental guide to the wishes of the inhabitants. These figures were used on the traditional interpretation that protestant equals unionist and catholic equals nationalist.⁶⁴ They also carried out their own study of economic and geographic conditions with the aid of a permanent staff in London. Finally, on the 28 November 1924 the commission decided to issue an invitation for 'written representation from public bodies, associations, or individuals resident in Ireland with reference to the work with which the commission is charged.'⁶⁵

In February 1925, the commission decided to proceed on a tour of the border regions, with the purpose of holding sittings to hear evidence from those who had submitted representations. The sittings were held in March, and residents of Monaghan got a chance to put forward their claims at the sitting held in Armagh from 3 to 7 March 1925. Representations from residents in the border regions of Cavan were made at the sittings held at Kellyhevlín, Enniskillen, from 22 April to 6 May. Claims made to the commission were broken into two categories, positive and negative. Positive claims were

those made by people in favour of changes of jurisdiction, while negative claims were against such changes of jurisdiction.⁶⁶ A number of claims were made in relation to the border regions of Cavan and Monaghan.

The first claim in relation to the Cavan Monaghan region was before the Commission on 4 March 1925, and was made by 'a group of inhabitants of Glaslough and the adjoining district of county Monaghan which borders on county Armagh.'⁶⁷ The first representation was made by unionist inhabitants of the region who wished to see the area of Glaslough transferred to Northern Ireland. This representation was headed by Rev. John Ritchie a presbyterian minister from Glennan in Glaslough.⁶⁸ Reverend Ritchie complained to the commission that his parish included ground on either side of the existing border and he wished to see all of his parish in the one county. Further evidence was given by Mr. Skelton, a land agent for Sir John Leslie in Glaslough, on behalf of the unionist inhabitants of Glaslough. Skelton pointed out that feeding stuffs were dearer in Monaghan than in Northern Ireland. He also contended that taxation was 5/6 in the Free State and 4/6 in Northern Ireland. Skelton stated that the 'principle points I have to make are those of taxation and cost of living and of course I would much rather be under the Union Jack.'⁶⁹

A highly significant trend was therefore emerging in the motivation behind such claims and counterclaims put forward to the Boundary Commission. It was becoming increasingly clear that although economic and geographic conditions were put forward in support of claims, the main motivation was political. This was especially true in north Monaghan, where as we have previously seen, there was a large concentration of unionists. The memories of the sectarian warfare and tensions which engulfed the region during the early part of the decade were obviously still very much alive in the region. There is little doubt that these memories had a massive influence on the representations made to the commission by rival groups. A counterclaim to the evidence put forward by the unionist inhabitants of Glaslough was made to the commission by the nationalist

inhabitants of Glaslough. As was the case with the unionist deputation the nationalist deputation was also headed by the local clergyman, Rev. J. Marron P.P.⁷⁰ Reverend Marron stated that the vast majority of residents in his parish were rigorously opposed to any transfer to the Northern state. Further evidence was given by business people in the region, including two directors of Mullan Mills. Although the directors Mc Kenna and Mc Cluskey admitted to the inconveniences caused by the border, he contended that the business people in the region wanted to remain in the Free State.

Mullan Mills, which was a boot factory in north Monaghan, also wrote to the secretary of the commission contesting claims that the area should be transferred to the Northern State. Mullan Mills claimed that transference of the region to the northern state would be disastrous for the factory. However a political motivation can be seen throughout the letter sent to the commission.

It has come to the knowledge of the directors that the 'Glaslough unionists' who have claimed before your commission at Omagh in the Northern area seem to think that because in one particular corner of the Free State boundary they happen to be large landowners they speak for the 'Glaslough district' which includes a large area and several electoral divisions, in which about 90% are nationalists and all opposed to joining the northern area.⁷¹

It can be seen that political tensions were still very much alive in north Monaghan, three years after sectarian conflict had ceased in the region. This fact was further in evidence in Armagh on 7 March 1925 when the committee of inhabitants of Mullyash district came before the Commission.⁷² Again economic factors were to the forefront and the secretary of the committee Samuel Stoops highlighted the higher costs of living in the Free State. This list illustrating the differences in cost of living between the two states is reproduced in Table four. It is clear that the cost of living was higher in the Free State and the residents of border regions had every justification in seeking

transference to the northern state. However it was unionists who put forward these arguments while nationalists were anxious to remain in the Free State. Reverend Canon T.G. Rudd, canon and rector of Castleblayney, in the course of his evidence on behalf of the Mullish unionists highlighted this point. Canon Rudd came to the conclusion that:

a very large number of Roman Catholics here are now very strong unionists in the Free State. I have several instances of it. If they found it expedient to express their views publicly, they would state that. In conversation with people, they of course state their mind on the subject, but would not care to state it publicly. A great many people are not quite satisfied with the financial position of the Free State.⁷³

It is very difficult to ascertain if the nationalists living in the border regions of north Monaghan did actually feel this way, although it would seem highly unlikely that they did. This viewpoint is corroborated by a petition organised by Clones Urban District Council claiming that the majority of people in the Clones and Drumully region wished to remain in the Irish Free State. The petition, while admitting the economic difficulties of residents in Drumully Salient due to the position of the border, stated that the people wished to remain in the Free State. the petition stated that

We and the majority whom we represent desire to remain in Saorstát Éireann. Firstly, because the system of government and institutions of Saorstát Éireann commend themselves to us and we are happy under its constitution, no discrimination on account of religious or political views being made in Saorstát Éireann while in Northern Ireland, Catholics are in practice though professedly not in theory under grave disabilities. In Saorstát Éireann minorities are protected by P.R. while in Northern Ireland all protection is withdrawn from the minority by the abolition of that P.R. which existed prior to partition.⁷⁴

The contending views of residents which were presented to the Boundary Commission were undoubtedly political in motivation and this is again vividly illustrated in the case of Drumully. The motivations behind this desire to be transferred to the Northern State highlighted the fact that the feelings of distrust held by unionists, first engendered during the border wars, was still very much alive. The unionist inhabitants of Drumully were adamant that they should not be turned over to the 'misrule of men who had always been their enemies.'⁷⁵

The position along the Cavan border with Northern Ireland as regards the Boundary Commission differed markedly from that of County Monaghan. The Boundary Commission was undoubtedly much less contentious for the Cavan region for a number of significant reasons. There were no groups in county Cavan which petitioned the commission for transference to Northern Ireland. There was however a petition made by a number of unionist residents of the district electoral division of Castle Saunderson for transference to the Northern state. Castle Saunderson was a small district electoral division near Belturbet and close to the Fermanagh border. It consisted almost entirely of the former estate of a wealthy unionist landlord. It had a large majority of protestants and their claims for transference had no geographic or economic basis. This claim was therefore based purely on political grounds.⁷⁶ This claim was countered by Belturbet Urban District Council who protested to the commission against this claim. Apart from this isolated case no other representations were made to the Boundary Commission by Cavan residents seeking transference to Northern Ireland.

The explanation for this can be based on the three terms of reference upon which the Boundary Commission was to deliberate. The first of these was the 'wishes of inhabitants'. In contrast to much of north Monaghan the border regions of Cavan were bereft of large concentrations of unionists. With the exception of Castlesaunderson the Cavan Fermanagh border had a majority of nationalists living along it. On the Fermanagh side there was also a high concentration of nationalist residents who wished to be

transferred to the Irish Free State. Unlike the eastern section of county Fermanagh which bordered on county Monaghan the southern section of the county had a significant majority of catholics. Therefore on political grounds any claims which were made about the Cavan Fermanagh border, were in relation to having certain portions of county Fermanagh transferred to the Free State.

It can also be argued that many protestants who were living in the border regions of Cavan moved to Northern Ireland during the period of sectarian hostilities. This is verified by a private census of protestants who had moved to Fermanagh during the period 1920-25. This list was supplied to the Boundary Commission by James Cooper and sons, solicitors from Enniskillen, and is the only such documentation which charts population movement from the Free State to Northern Ireland during the period under study.⁷⁷ It is extremely difficult to accurately trace population movement between the two states during this period from the census returns. This is mainly due to the fact that there was a fifteen year gap between the 1911 and 1926 census'. Household returns are unavailable for the 1926 census and it is therefore extremely difficult to calculate population movement during this period. The reliability of the above list is also open to debate but was probably a good indication of the migration of protestants from the Cavan and Monaghan region.

Geographic conditions also played a crucial part in the lack of representations to the boundary commission. The Cavan Fermanagh border for many miles consisted of a natural frontier. The boundary followed a natural line of northern foothills of Slieve Rushen. Any areas which were disadvantaged by the boundary line were in county Fermanagh. The final consideration which was taken into account by the Boundary Commission was economic conditions. On the larger scale it was northern residents who formerly patronized the markets of Swanlinbar who were more severely handicapped by the position of the borderline.

Following its tour of the border the commission returned to London to begin its deliberations. By October the commissioners were reaching agreement and the new borderline was decided upon in a series of meetings from 13 to 17 October 1925. The commissioners approved a first draft of the terms of the award and agreed to call the governments into consultation.⁷⁸ On 7 November an extremely accurate report and map of the new borderline was published in a London tory newspaper the *Morning Post*. Cosgrave later described this journal as 'an English newspaper which has been consistently and fiercely hostile to Irish nationality, to Irish sentiment and to Irish existence generally.'⁷⁹ It is widely believed that Fisher precipitated this leak. The report showed that the changes recommended by the Boundary Commission were minute and consisted merely of correcting the glaring anomalies thrown up by the border. The south was to gain 31,000 people and 281 square miles, losing 7,500 people and 78 square miles. More importantly the borderline would have been shortened from 280 to 229 miles.⁸⁰

The report however was met with fury in the Free State. The report gave little land to the Free State and even took some land away. This had not been contemplated by the Free State government, which had always rejected any possibility of losing territory. This view was also held by the chairman of Monaghan County Council who held that 'the Boundary Commission had no right to interfere with Free State territory. As their representative he intended to resist to the last any attempt to interfere with the boundary of Monaghan, Donegal or any other Free State county.'⁸¹ The leaking of the report caused a major crisis for the Dublin government as people throughout the border regions felt cheated by the report. People in east Donegal and parts of north Monaghan were furious that part of their territory would be taken from them. With this in mind Monaghan County Council passed the following resolution:

We the County Council of Monaghan, hereby pledge ourselves to resist to the last, and to the utmost, the attempt, if such be contemplated, to dismember our county, and to

bind in perpetual bondage, in defiance of the wishes of the inhabitants... We call upon the President and the executive council to stand with us and with the people, and show the forces hostile to us that the people and the government will never acquiesce in the refusal of the hearts desire of our people in disregard of their economic interests, and in ignoring geographic relations.⁸²

A public meeting was also called in the region to protest against any infringement of Free State territory by the Boundary Commission. The meeting was held in the small village of Emyvale in north Monaghan on Sunday 22 November 1925. However matters had changed markedly between the calling of the meeting and the day it was to be held. On 20 November Eoin Mac Neill, the Free States representative on the Boundary Commission, in an attempt to undo the damage caused by the report resigned from the commission and ultimately from the Government. Therefore all attention was now very much centered on the tiny village of Emyvale for the meeting. Indeed the importance of the meeting can be gauged from the fact that president of the executive council, Cosgrave arrived 'uninvited and unexpected.'⁸³

In the course of his speech Cosgrave pointed out, as he had done in the Dail debates, that it had always been the view of the executive council that the Boundary Commission had no right to take away any Free State territory. He also went on to say that 'if the terms of reference contained in the Treaty were properly interpreted and effect given to the wishes of the inhabitants, this question could never arise.'⁸⁴ He believed that no boundary line could possibly be drawn consonant with the terms of Article XII 'which would infringe Free State territory even if in the abstract such power did in fact exist.'⁸⁵

Cosgrave laid the blame at the door of the commissioners who 'did not place a value of impartial justice, who did not respect the considerations which had been laid down for their guidance and direction, and who were prepared to allow themselves to be swayed from the path of judicial rectitude by out side considerations.'⁸⁶ Doctor Mac

Neill, according to Cosgrave, had proved himself exonerated and an honourable man by resigning from the commission. Cosgrave urged the people of Monaghan to exercise calm and restraint in this grave situation. He expressed the hope that damage would not be done to the good relationship which had been built up between Catholics and Protestants on both sides of the border in recent times. He stressed that the Free State government would do everything in its power to 'prevent the infliction of injustice upon our people.'⁸⁷

The meeting broke up with promises that the people of Monaghan would not stand by while part of their territory was transferred to Northern Ireland. This meeting was highly significant for a number of reasons. Firstly it highlighted the determination of the people of Monaghan to resist the transference of any part of their territory to the Northern state. The uninvited presence of Cosgrave also highlighted the growing crisis which surrounded the *Morning Post* leak. Cosgrave's calls for the people of Monaghan to exercise calm and restraint proves that a highly volatile situation had arisen. Partition had been especially difficult for people in the region but a return to the sectarian violence of the early years of the decade would have spelt economic as well as political disaster for the region. It is important to note here that there was no such protestations against the leaked report in County Cavan. No land had been taken from the county and the crisis which followed the *Morning Post* leak did not even make front page or headline news in Cavan. It was far down the list of priorities for the county.

In the aftermath of the Emyvale meeting Cosgrave tried desperately to rectify the situation. He demanded an immediate conference between the leaders of the three states. Cosgrave was deeply worried that the two remaining commissioners could press ahead and release their report which would be binding. Negotiations were held at Chequers, the country residence of the British Prime Minister. The Free State was represented at these negotiations by Cosgrave and Kevin O Higgins. Agreement between the three governments was reached on 3 December 1925. It was decided that the report of the Boundary Commission would be suppressed. Indeed it was not released until 1968

and then only as an historical document. The border was to remain unaltered and all powers of the council of Ireland relating to Northern Ireland under the 1920 act were to be transferred to the Northern Ireland government.

The agreement was undoubtedly a huge blow for the Free State government and nationalists throughout the country. The Boundary Commission, which so much hope and expectation had been placed on, had now failed to deliver a united Ireland. The border remained as it was and north south relations were virtually at a standstill. No longer was there provision for a council of Ireland but Cosgrave tried to appear upbeat about the outcome of the Chequers agreement. He believed 'that this agreement, signed in the spirit of goodwill which prevailed between all parties lays the foundation of a new era in Irish history, an era in which North and South will make a united effort for the betterment and development of the country as a whole.'⁸⁸

Turning back to the Boundary Commission and the Cavan - Monaghan region, it now remains to examine the changes the Boundary Commission made for the region and how these if implemented would have effected the region. It is ironic that the changes recommended by the Commission would have actually helped the region. The anomalies thrown up by the existing boundary would have been alleviated, and the border shortened considerably. The border proposed by the Commission's report would have been a much more natural frontier line.

The first border area in the region to be considered by the Commission was the border of west Cavan and south Fermanagh. This region of west Cavan and notably the towns of Ballyconnell, Swanlinbar and Belturbet had suffered immense economic damage due to partition. In this region the report of the Boundary Commission would have benefitted the west Cavan region immensely. The Boundary Commission recommended the transference of parts of the district electoral divisions of Cuilcagh, Derrylester, Kinawley, Springtown, Doon, Aghyoule and Crum to the Free State.⁸⁹ This area consisted of 16,167 acres of land with a population of over two and a half thousand

people.⁹⁰ This transference would have restored large tracts of the former market areas of Swanlinbar, Ballyconnell and Belturbet and would have benefitted the area considerably.

The next part of the region to be considered was the east Fermanagh north Monaghan region. Of specific interest to the Commission in this area was the devastating effect which partition had on the economic life of partition, and this is reflected in the changes proposed. The Boundary Commission recommended the transference of an area consisting of over 30,000 acres and 3,000 people to the Free State.⁹¹ This region included large tracts of the former market area of Clones and would have benefitted the town enormously. The Commission also recommended the transference of an area south of Newtownbutler consisting of 787 people to the Free State. This area had prior to partition traditionally patronized the markets of Belturbet and Clones, and again would have been a boost for the economy of the region. The Commission did however recommend the transferal of Drumully salient to Northern Ireland. This region was as all but separated from the Free State by northern territory. It consisted of an area of 336 acres, mainly of bogland with a population of just 51 people. The loss of this territory was to be expected under the three terms of the Commission's deliberations. The first of these terms was the wishes of the inhabitants and the area had 38 protestants as opposed to 13 catholics. The region had no geographical link with county Monaghan. The third term was economic considerations, and the loss of Drumully salient would in any case have had no economic repercussions for the Free State. The north Monaghan - Tyrone boundary was to be left as it stood as there was 'no practicable method by which the wishes of the catholic inhabitants could be gratified without including considerable areas from neighbouring which show protestant majorities.'⁹²

The final series of boundary changes recommended by the Boundary Commission affecting the region to be made were those on the north east Monaghan border with Armagh. This area saw the most controversial recommendations in the Monaghan border region. The Commission here recommended the transferral of portions

of the district electoral divisions of Mullyash, Chuch hill and Carrickaslane from Monaghan to Northern Ireland. The area did have a significant protestant majority but the main considerations here were geographic. The transferal of this area would have shortened the Monaghan - Armagh border by some considerable distance.⁹³ However it would have meant that the town of Castleblayney would have been deprived of some of its former market area. In any case the vast majority of people in Monaghan refused to consider the possibility of the Free State losing territory to Northern Ireland.

In this region the Free State stood to gain a significant amount of territory which would have far outweighed the territory it stood to lose. The Commission recommended the transfer of the district electoral divisions of Tynan, Middletown and Derrynoose, an area of 8,928 acres. The Free State would also have gained 2,000 people 1,764 of whom were catholic. This would have benefitted the market areas of both Glaslough and Monaghan town. Whereas the Free State would have lost 995 people, two thirds of whom were protestant, it would have gained 2,000 people. In south Armagh Monaghan was also to gain Crossmaglen and its hinterland which would have involved the transferal of about four and a half thousand to the Free State.⁹⁴ This would have been of immeasurable advantage to the region as a whole. It would have restored to the people of east and south Monaghan their former market town of Crossmaglen. This would also have been of great economic advantage to county Monaghan.

In any case the above arguments were rendered hypothetical by the agreement on 3 December 1925 to leave the borderline as it was. Monaghan nationalists in their indignant protestations over the loss of about 6,500 acres of land, which in any case had a large protestant majority failed to see what they would have gained. The Boundary Commission's recommendations for the Cavan Monaghan region would have benefitted the region enormously. As it was the border regions of Cavan and Monaghan fell into further decline, especially in the period of the economic war from 1932 - 38.

The ending of the Boundary Commission did close the chapter on a very disturbing period in the history of both counties. Faced with the finality of the borderline people in the region struggled to get on with day to day life and to make the best they could out of a bad situation. Partition had always been hard on the market towns of the region such as Swanlinbar, Belturbet and Clones and continued to be so. It is hard to quantify how many people migrated out of the region in these difficult times, but it is very probable that this was the option chosen by many during this difficult period.

ENDNOTES:

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4. Dail Eireann, Debates, vol. i -xxxiii.
5. Consulted in P.R.O.N.I.
6. N.L.I. Boundary Commission Papers.
7. quoted in Johnson, op.cit., p.232.
8. N.A. Department of Taoiseach Records, S 1955A. Memo entitled 'Customs Imperial Preference and the North East, 24 March 1923.'
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11. *ibid.*
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13. *Dundalk Democrat*, 3 March 1923.
14. *Northern Standard*, 6 April 1923.
15. *Dundalk Democrat*, 31 March 1923.
16. *Dundalk Democrat*, 7 April 1923.
17. *Anglo Celt*, 31 March 1923.
18. *Irish Times*, 16 May 1923.
19. *Northern Standard*, 27 July 1923.
20. *ibid.*
21. N.L.I. Boundary Commission papers, CAB 61 /39, evidence of Mr Andrews.
22. *Dundalk Democrat*, 19 May 1923.
23. A Salient is defined as a projecting part of a front line. In geographical terms a salient occurs where a portion of the border of one country juts into another country in a 'V' shape. It is therefore completely surrounded by the territory of another country. This makes access to it extremely difficult.
24. N.A. Dept. of Taoiseach Records, S 2027 Northern Ireland boundary secret documents based on report by Mr Mc Cartan on visit to Clones to N.E.B.B., 17 July 1923.
25. N.L.I. Boundary Commission papers, CAB 61/133. Evidence of Thomas Smith, farmer Kinawley.
26. N.A. Dept of Taoiseach Records, S 1955A, Customs barrier between Irish Free State and Northern Ireland.
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29. Mc Donald, op.cit.,
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60. Minutes and Proceedings of the Irish Boundary Commission. Consulted on Microfilm in N.L.I. Pos. 6509 -32.
61. *Dundalk Democrat*, 25 October 1924.
62. Laffan, *op cit.*, p.101.
63. Quoted in Laffan, p.101.
64. Hand, *op. cit.*, p.xvi.
65. *ibid*, p.8.
66. *ibid*, p.15.

67. *ibid.*, p.19.
68. N.L.I B.C. Papers, CAB 61/70.
69. *ibid.*
70. N.L.I B. C. Papers. CAB 61/71.
71. N.L.I. B C Papers, CAB 61/110.
72. N.L.I. B C Papers, CAB 61/111.
73. *ibid.*
74. N.L.I. B C Papers, CAB 61/42. Petition of Clones Urban District Council.
75. N.L.I. B C Papers, Cab 61/13. Memo on Drumully salient.
76. Hand, *op cit.*, p.16.
77. N.L.I. B. C. Papers CAB 61/65. List of Protestants who have come into county Fermanagh in the last five years. List provided by J Cooper and sons, Solicitors, Enniskillen.
78. Hand, *op cit.*, p.16.
79. *Anglo Celt*, 28 November 1925.
80. Laffan, *op cit.*, p.103.
81. *Dundalk Democrat*, 21 November 1925.
82. *ibid.*
83. based on report in *Anglo Celt*, 28 November 1925.
84. *ibid.*
85. *ibid.*
86. *ibid.*
87. *ibid.*
88. *Irish Times*, 5 December 1925.
89. Changes affecting the Cavan Monaghan region are laid out in Appendix IV.
90. Hand, *op cit.*, p.109.
91. See Appendix IV.
92. Hand, *op cit.*, p.113.
93. *ibid.*
94. *ibid.*

CONCLUSION.

The aim of this thesis was to assess the impact of partition on Cavan and Monaghan in the period 1914-1926. This work has illustrated the ways in which partition impacted on the Cavan-Monaghan region in political, economic and social terms. The Government of Ireland Act and the imposition of partition in December 1920 ushered in an era of great political and economic uncertainty for the people of the region. Partition was a very divisive force in the Cavan-Monaghan region. Different religious groups reacted differently to the imposition of partition, laying the seeds for the sectarian animosities which engulfed the region in the following years. The period immediately before the outbreak of World War I was immensely turbulent. The Ulster Volunteers and the Irish Volunteers faced one another in an uneasy standoff, as the country was on the verge of Civil war.

The period 1919-1921 saw the imposition of the partition settlement and was a very bloody period in the history of Ireland as a whole. The War of Independence also contributed to provoking sectarian animosities in the Cavan-Monaghan region. By mid 1920 much of the region was embroiled in open sectarian hostility. It was a very bloody period which left a deep scar on the region. Sectarian divisions between unionists and nationalists were deepened and it would take a long time for the region to recover from the violence and sectarian hostilities which erupted. Moreover, the Belfast boycott which took place in tandem with these events further inflamed sectarian animosities, especially in areas such as north Monaghan which had a high concentration of protestants. In north Monaghan the boycott became openly sectarian as nationalists refused to trade with unionist traders or businesses. This had severe economic repercussions for protestants in the region. The boycott also had a severe effect on the economy of the region as a whole. The region traditionally had close economic links with Belfast and North East Ulster which were not severed. Basic everyday items such as bread which had traditionally come from Belfast now came from Dublin, which added to the expense.

The border regions of Cavan and Monaghan suffered immensely during the period of the border wars in 1922-1923. The borderline between the region and Northern Ireland became a battleground. Raids across the borderline by both the I.R.A and the B Specials became a common occurrence as people lived in fear of attack and reprisals. This period also had devastating economic effects on the region. Commercial intercourse between North and South was severely hampered. This was especially the case after the Northern government, in an attempt to curb I.R.A. incursions, cut off border roads between North and South. This did untold damage to border towns in the region which were previously patronised by northern customers. It was only with the outbreak of the civil war, which left such a violent and bloody birth scar on the Irish Free State, which helped bring a return to peacefulness for the residents of the border regions.

Although peace had returned to the region by 1923 the border was now a fact of life for residents of the region. A new form of partition was initiated by the setting up of the customs barrier between north and south on 1 April 1923. This new form of partition had a profound impact on the economy of the region. It severely hit border towns such as Belturbet, Swanlinbar, Ballyconnell and Clones. These towns had traditionally drawn a lot of customers from the six counties. With the imposition of the customs barrier and the concurrent restrictions on movement between the two states, much of this was lost. The economic repercussions of this were immense.

The final act in the history of partition came with the setting up of the Boundary Commission in November 1924. The Boundary Commission papers and the recommendations made by the Commission for the Cavan - Monaghan region are important on two levels. The representations made by residents of the region to the Commission highlighted the fact that sectarian bitterness and mistrust still existed in the region. Although all the representations made to the Commission from people in the region stressed economic conditions as their main motivation, political overtones were

easily discernable. This highlighted the fact that certain amounts of sectarian feelings still existed in the region.

The findings of the Commission which were directly relevant to the Cavan - Monaghan region are also highly significant. If the findings of the Commission had been allowed to stand they would have enormously benefitted the region. The Commission had restored the market areas of Swanlinbar, Belturbet and Clones. The breakdown of the Commission and the subsequent agreement to leave the boundary line as it was concludes this period of history.

This period had a profound effect on the subsequent history of the region. On a political level the animosities which arose between nationalists and unionists did eventually cease. Unionists either migrated out of the region or came to terms with living as a minority in the Free State. Unionists continued to sit on the county councils and by and large became involved with the functioning of local government. By the start of the 1930's sectarian animosity in the region was non-existent. On the national political stage the failure of the Boundary Commission had a major impact on North South relations.

Cosgrave hoped that the agreement to leave the boundary as it was would usher in an era of co-operation between North and South. This was to prove a false aspiration. The transference of the powers of the Council of Ireland to the Northern government meant that there was no longer even the machinery in place for cross border co-operation. Cosgrave's government, or any subsequent Irish government had no real effective Northern policy. For forty years following the Chequers agreement ' what passed for the northern policy of the Dublin government consisted of little more than inveighing impotently against the evils of partition.'¹

It was the economic ramifications of partition in the period under study which had a longer lasting effect on the region. The border and in particular the customs barrier severely impinged upon the economic life of the region. The closure of border roads caused much hardship and continued to be a controversial subject in the region.

Farmers and traders suffered immensely from the closure of these border roads, some of which remain closed to this day. Indeed it was not until March 1999 that the main throughfare between Enniskillen and Belturbet was reopened. Part of the main road was Aghalane bridge which from the period of the border wars was intermittently closed and reopened. The last of these closures came in the early 1970's and the bridge remained closed for nearly thirty years.² An article in the *Anglo Celt* dated 1 April 1999 summed up the devastating effect of the closure of border roads. The article which could have been written at any time in the previous 75 years stated that:

The re- opening of the bridge is a real boon to the town of Belturbet which lost approximately one quarter of its hinterland when the central arch of the Aghalane bridge was demolished.. The most striking effect locally was that the communities on each side of the border were physically divided and contact was severely curtailed. Many landowners owned land on both sides of the border and to get from one part of land to the other involved a trip of up to 40km instead of 1km.³

It is important to re-emphasize the fact that this article was written over 75 years after the period under examination in this work. This fact alone vividly illustrates the problems encountered by residents of the border regions of Cavan and Monaghan. Arguably the border towns studied at length throughout this work never really recovered from partition. To cite the example of Clones, Darach Mac Donald wrote in 1985 that Clones,

on the front line of partition, that episode had implications which have continued since. In particular, the once bustling town of Clones became a victim, cut off not only from an economic hinterland, but its parish.⁴

The Cavan-Monaghan region as a whole suffered immensely from partition and continued to do so. The region was severely hit by the Economic War between Great

Britain and Ireland from 1932 -1938. Smuggling became a massive industry during this period as the region further slumped behind the rest of the country. It is therefore difficult to overstate the importance of the period 1914 - 1925 on the subsequent history of the region.

ENDNOTES:

1. Fanning, Ronan, *Independent Ireland*(Dublin,1983), p.92.
2. The bridge was reopened as the 'George Mitchell Peace Bridge' in March 1999.
3. *Anglo Celt*, 1 April 1999.
4. *Irish Press*, 5 November 1985.

APPENDIX I: Belfast Boycott Castleblayney Black List. Posted up in Castleblayney 31 October 1921.

The following MERCHANTS, etc., in Castleblayney and District are still trading with Belfast firms, their agents and distributors:

James Craig, O.C.,	Main Street,
Charles Craig,	do.
D. Boyd,	do.
R. Spencer,	do.
William J. Fleming,	do.
Hope Arms Hotel,	do.
James Gray & Co.	Muckno Street.
Andrew Wilson,	do.
Robert Watson,	do.
John Mc Kee,	do.
Thomas Campbell,	do.
James Leathem,	do.
James Mc Clelland,	do.
Mrs. Stewart,	do.
George Higgins,	Market Square,
Mrs. Parkes,	do.
Michael Mc Ardle,	Clorbane,
F. Carragher,	Broomfield,
William J. Hill,	Craighanroe,
J.B. Martin,	Drumacrib,
Bernard Lynch, Blacksmith,	Castleblayney,

A list of those who patronise any of the above houses will be published repeatedly as also

a list of those dealing with Belfast Banks.

Source: Dublin Castle, Colonial Office Records, CO 904, Part V. William O' Conell (head Constable, Carrickmacross) to County Inspectors office, Monaghan.

APPENDIX II: Principal dutiable articles on customs frontier between the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland:

The principal dutiable articles were:

Tobacco, cigars, cigarettes, spirits, liquors, perfumery, beer, tea, coffee, chicory, dried fruit, cocoa, chocolate, sugar and confectionery, molasses and glucose, saccharine, wine, playing cards, matches, mineral waters and cider, motor cars and accessories, motor cycles, parts and accessories, musical instruments (including gramophones), cinematography films, clocks and watches, gramophone records, wireless valves, vacuum tubes, metallic tungsten, compounds of thorium, synthetic organic chemicals, optical instruments, optical glass, scientific glassware, scientific instruments, gauges, arc lamp carbons, hosiery latch needles, analytical reagents and other fine chemicals, laboratory porcelain, ignition magnetos, permanent magnets (including gramophones).

The principal articles prohibited or restricted on importation are:- Extracts of tea, coffee, chicory and tobacco, foreign reprints of registered copyright works, including music, dogs (unless covered by a licence issued by Ministry of Agriculture), arms, ammunition and explosives (unless covered by licence), prepared opium, cocaine, morphine, ecogime, diamorphine (heroin), and raw and medicinal opium (except under a licence issued by the Ministry of Home affairs).

Attempts to evade the prohibitions or restrictions render offenders liable to severe penalties.

Source: *Anglo Celt*, 31 March 1923.

APPENDIX III: Border roads closed in counties Fermanagh and Tyrone 1922-1924.

BORDER ROADS CLOSED IN COUNTY FERMANAGH:

Road Class	Bridges, Iron, Townland, Steel, etc.	Impassable* (yes/no).	Authority for closing it.	Remarks.
2nd Class	-----	Drumully yes	C.S.P.A 1922 & R.O.I.A ¹	Trench in centre of road.
1st Class	Stonework	Mullaghbane yes	do.	Centre Stonework of bridge removed.
1st Class	Stonework	Glass- drummond yes	do.	Locally known as Spring- field bridge.
2nd Class	Stonebridge	Springtown yes	do.	Locally known as Caldragh bridge.
2nd Class	Stonebridge	Greaghvocka yes	do.	Partly damaged.
2nd Class	Wooden footbridge	Derrylea yes	do.	
2nd Class	Stonebridge	Legaduff yes	do.	
2nd Class	Stonebridge	Keenaghan yes	do.	Road not much used.
1st Class	-----	Gortanedden yes	do.	Trench cut.
2nd Class	Stonebridge	Mucknagh yes	do.	
2nd Class	Stonebridge	Rushinbane yes	do.	Temporarily repaired for light traffic.
2nd Class	Stonebridge	Movarren yes	do.	do.
2nd Class	Stonebridge	Innisclin yes	do.	do.
3rd Class	Stonebridge	Drumbogena yes	do.	Border bridge, Newtownbutler.
2nd Class	Stonebridge	Anaghmullen yes	do.	Border bridge, over Finn River.
2nd Class	-----	Hermitage yes	do.	Border trench.
2nd Class	Stonebridge	Molena no	do.	Border bridge, over Finn River.
2nd Class	Stonebridge	Clonfad no	do.	bridge over Ulster canal.
1st Class	-----	Drumrainey yes	do.	
1st Class	Stonebridge	Lackey yes	do.	border bridge, Rosslea.
1st Class	Stonebridge	Mullina- hinch yes	do.	border bridge on main Clones road.
2nd Class	Stonebridge	Rathkeevan yes	do.	known as new bridge.

1st Class	Stonebridge	Cloghmore	yes	do.	Temporarily repaired for light traffic.
1st Class	-----	Rellan	yes	do.	border trench.
2nd Class	Stonebridge	Tattymore	yes	do.	border trench.
2nd Class	Stonebridge	Derryvolan	yes	do.	border trench.
2nd Class	Stonebridge	Cregawarren	yes	do.	border bridge.
2nd Class	Stonebridge	Corragunt	yes	do.	border bridge.
2nd Class	Stonebridge	Mullaghfad	yes	do.	border bridge.
2nd Class	Stonebridge	Mullynavale	yes	do.	border bridge.
3rd Class	Stonebridge	Mullynavale	yes	do.	

* Impassable- whether rendered impassable by material damage (yes or no)

Source: Report entitled 'Reopening of roads' Northern Ireland Ministry of Home Affairs, HA /5/1923. P.R.O.N.I.

1. Civil Authorities (Special Powers) Act, 1922. Restoration of Order in Ireland Act.

BORDER ROADS CLOSED IN COUNTY TYRONE.

Road Class	Bridges, Iron, Townland, Steel, etc.	Impassable (yes/no.)	Authority for closing it.	Remarks.
	Stone Single Arch	Fymore yes	verbal by conference 1924.	Durlass White Bridge 300 yards east of Fymore Lough.
2nd Class	-----	Cullamore yes	do.	Trenched since filled up.
2nd Class	-----	Cullamore yes	do.	Trenched W.S.W. of benchmark 844.
	Stone Culvert	Derrynascrabble yes	do.	Longhill Derrynascrabble road.
2nd Class	-----	Aghindaragh yes	do.	Trenched.
2nd Class	-----	Loughblayneybane yes	do.	Clogher Monaghan road.
	Stone Single Arch	do. yes	do.	Clogher Monaghan road.
2nd Class	-----	do. yes	do.	

	Stone Single Arch	Corcloghy	yes
	Stone single Arch	Crockclavin	yes
2nd Class	Culvert Stone -----	Annaghroe Knockaginny	yes yes
	Wooden foot bridge	Ballagh	yes
	Two arch stone bridge	Ballagh	yes
2nd Class	-----	Ballagh	yes
2nd Class	-----	Ballagh	yes
	Single stone arch Stone	Ravella Lismore	yes yes
	Single stone arch	Mt. Forest	yes
2nd Class	Stone culvert	Clady	yes
4th Class	Stone Culvert	Dunnygowan	yes
2nd Class	Stone Bridge	do.	no
4th Class	Stone Culvert	Lisdoo	yes
3rd Class	Stone Culvert	Innisclan	yes
3rd Class	Trench	Ballyfoliard	yes
3rd Class	Trench	Priestsesagh	yes
3rd Class	Trench	Froughlough	yes
3rd Class	Stone Culvert	Kilclean	yes
3rd Class	Stone Culvert	Pollyarnon	yes
3rd Class	Stone Culvert	Pollyarnon	yes
3rd Class	Stone Bridge	Carnoughter	yes
3rd Class	Stone Culvert	Garvagh	yes
3rd Class	Stone Culvert	Laughtmorris	yes
4th Class	Stone Culvert	Laughtfoggy	yes
4th Class	Stone Culvert	4th Corgary	yes

do.	1/4 mile east of Corleaghan school.
do.	Fivemilestown - Scotstown road.
Verbal ¹ do 22/2/22 do May 22	Caledon - Glasslough road Remakit -Glannan road. Over Blackwater. since repaired.
do 21/1/22	Burns bridge. One arch partially destroyed.
do 24/2/22 do May 22 do March 22	since filled in.
do.	Arch damaged.
do.	
Specials	Strabane Clady road.
do.	at Clady Creamery.
do	over Finn river.
do.	
do.	
do.	Strabane Castlederg old road.
do.	Castlederg Clady road.
do.	
do.	East Moneygall bog.
do.	North Moneygall bog.
do.	West Moneygall bog.
do.	Over Dreenan Burn.
do.	
do.	On border.
do.	
do.	

4th Class	Trench	5th Corgary	yes	do.	Near Croagh Bridge.
4th Class	Stone Culvert	6th Corgary	yes	do.	Near Croagh Wood.
4th Class	Trench	6th Corgary	yes	do.	On border.
4th Class	Trench	Tullynashoe	yes	do.	Near River Derg.
4th Class	Stone Culvert	Tievanmenta	yes	do.	Killeter Pettigo road.
3rd Class	Stone Bridge	Meena- clogher	yes	do.	On Castlederg - Pettigo road.

Source: Report entitled 'Reopening of roads' Northern Ireland Ministry of Home Affairs. HA /5/1923. P.R.O.N.I.

¹ 21/2/22 Verbal from Colonel Miller.

APPENDIX IV: Findings of the Boundary Commission which affected the border of Cavan and Monaghan.

Section C(iv).

Two areas in Southern part of County Fermanagh lying East and North of Swanlinbar and Ballyconnell.

(Transferred to Irish Free State.)

County.	D.E.D.	Catholics.	Non-Catholics.	Area.
FERMANAGH.	Cuilceagh*	40	15	1,619.
	Derrylester*	186	28	1,562.
	Kinawley*	568	112	2,775.
	Springtown*	276	18	1,852.
	Doon*	249	8	1,779.
	Aghyoule*	707	145	4,994.
	Crum*	196	43	1,586.
	Total	2,222	369	16,167.

* Portion of.

Section C(v).

Five areas in Eastern part of County Fermanagh mainly in the District Electoral Divisions of Clonkeelan, Magheraveely and Rosslea.

(Transferred to Irish Free State.)

County.	D.E.D.	Catholics.	Non-Catholics.	Area.
FERMANAGH	Crum*	14	3	237.
	Derrysteaton*	608	161	4,651.
	Newtown butler*	9	2	71.
	Clonkeelan*	392	226	2,986.
	Magheraveely*	71	9	268.
	Magheraveely*	21	7	151.
	Magheraveely*	8	8	37.
	Dresternan*	243	8	1,041.
	Rosslea*	1,781	237	9,181.
	Total	3,147	661	18,623.

* Portion of.

Section C(vi).

Area in County Monaghan forming part of District Electoral Division of Drummully.

(Transferred to Northern Ireland.)

County.	D.E.D.	Catholics.	Non-Catholics.	Area.
MONAGHAN	Drummully (portion).	13	38	336.

Section E(i).

Area in County Armagh comprising parts of District Electoral Divisions of Tynan, Middletown and Derrynoose.

(Transferred to Irish Free State.)

County.	D.E.D.	Catholics.	Non-Catholics.	Area.
ARMAGH	Tynan*	23	10	205.
	Middletown*	896	247	4,215.
	Derrynoose*	845	79	4,508.
	Total.	1,764	336	8,928.

* Portion of.

Section E(ii).

Area in County Monaghan comprising parts of District Electoral Divisions of Mullyash, Church Hill and Carrickaslane.

(Transferred to Northern Ireland.)

County.	D.E.D.	Catholics.	Non-Catholics.	Area.
MONAGHAN	Mullyash*	262	552	5,336.
	Church Hill*	58	102	814.
	Carrickaslane*	15	6	129.
	Total.	335	660	6,279.

* Portion of.

Section E(iii).

Area in Southern part of County Armagh including greater part of former Rural District of Crossmaglen and adjoining portion of that of Newry No. 2.

(Transferred to Irish Free State.)

County.	D.E.D.	Catholics.	Non-Catholics.	Area.
ARMAGH	Lower Greggan	1,245	29	5,238.
	Moybane	854	10	3,027.
	Crossmaglen	1,931	113	4,769.
	Cloghoge	530	155	2,961.
	Cullyhanna	630	26	3,008.
	Lisleitrim*	456	93	2,484.
	Dorsy*	1,192	53	5,039.
	Newtown hamilton*	2	6	40.
	Camly*	206	31	1,447.
	Ballybot*	312	3	1,007.
	Killevy*	1,547	14	4,973.
	Jonesborough	1,741	101	6,018.
	Latbriget	1,344	6	5,764.
	Forkhill	1,507	114	5,737.
	Camlough*	339	55	2,021.
	Belleek*	23	8	161.

Total 13.859 817 53.694.

* Portion of

Source: Hand, G.J. (ed.), *Report of the Irish Boundary Commission 1925*(Shannon,1969) pp. 108-13.

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