



THE RYANS OF INCH AND THEIR WORLD: A CATHOLIC GENTRY FAMILY
FROM DISPOSSESSION TO INTEGRATION, C.1650–1831

by

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Abbreviations

AHPC	Archivo historico provincial de Cádiz
BL	British Library
Boole	Boole Library, University College Cork
COFL	Cardinal Ó Fiaich Library, Armagh
<i>CSPD</i>	<i>Calendar of State Papers Domestic</i>
<i>CSPI</i>	<i>Calendar of State Papers Ireland</i>
<i>CTB</i>	<i>Calendar of Treasury Books</i>
<i>DIB</i>	James McGuire and James Quinn (eds), <i>Dictionary of Irish biography: from the earliest times to 2002, vols i-iv</i> (Cambridge, 2009).
<i>EOFF</i>	<i>Exchequer, Office of First Fruits and Tenths, and the Court of Augmentations</i>
<i>Grehan papers</i>	<i>Grehan family papers</i>
<i>HCAP</i>	<i>High Court of Admiralty: Prize Court</i>
HMC	Historical Manuscripts Commission
IMC	Irish Manuscripts Commission
<i>JOHL</i>	<i>Journal of the House of Lords [of England], vol. xvii, 1701–1705</i> (London, 1767–1830)
NAI	National Archives of Ireland
NLI	National Library of Ireland
<i>PCC</i>	<i>Records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury</i>
<i>POI</i>	James Kelly and Mary Ann Lyons (eds), <i>The proclamations of Ireland 1600–1820, vol. ii</i> (Dublin, IMC, 2014)
RIA	Royal Irish Academy
<i>ROD</i>	<i>Registry of Deeds, Dublin</i>
<i>Ryan Collection</i>	<i>Ryan of Inch Collection</i>
<i>SPD</i>	<i>State Papers Domestic</i>
<i>SPI</i>	<i>State Papers Ireland</i>

<i>Stat. Ireland</i>	<i>The statutes at large, passed in the Parliaments held in Ireland: from the third year of Edward the Second, A.D. 1310 to the twenty sixth year of George III, A.D. 1786 (Dublin, 1786–1804).</i>
<i>TBP</i>	<i>Treasury Board Papers & In-Letters</i>
TCLT	Tipperary County Library, Thurles
TNA	The National Archives, Kew
UCC	University College Cork
WPA	The Palace of Westminster Parliamentary Archives

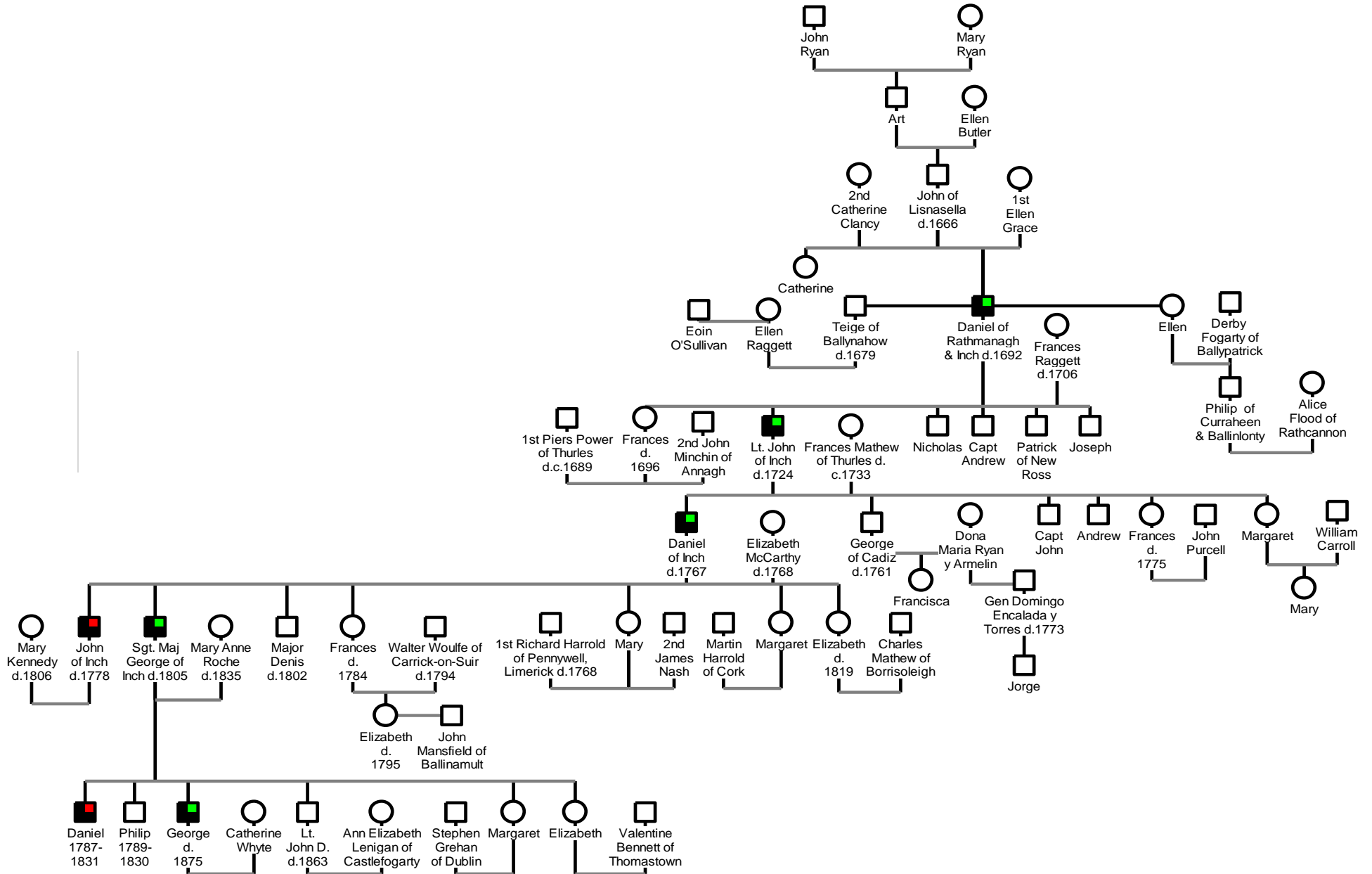
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Glossary

Bond	A written promise used as security for a loan.
Common recovery	A contrived legal proceeding involving an action and a judgment at law, usually to break an entail and convert an estate in fee tail into an estate in fee simple so that it could be freely sold or otherwise disposed of.
Dower	A widow's share of an estate following her husband's death.
Entail	A form of trust established to prevent property from being sold, devised by will or otherwise alienated by the holder, and instead caused it to pass automatically to an heir predetermined by a settlement. An estate is then said to be held in fee tail.
Fee simple	Absolute title to land, free of any other claims against the title, which one can sell or pass to another by will or inheritance. However, under the 1704 Popery Act lands held in fee by a Catholic were liable to subdivision between all male heirs.
Fee tail	An estate which may be inherited only by a specified class of heirs, usually the natural children of the owner.
Jointure	An estate settled on a wife for the period during which she survives her husband. This could equate to an annual monetary payment usually stipulated in a marriage settlement.
Lease and release	The most popular and widespread way to record sales of property from the seventeenth century up to 1845. The lease and release format was also used to convey property for the purposes of mortgages and settlements.
Portion	The property a bride takes into marriage (marriage portion/dowry) and the provision for younger members of a family (child's portion).
Remainder	A future interest held by a person (the remainderman) in the property of another under a settlement and entail.

Ryan of Inch family tree c.1600–1839



Introduction

In October 1767 a Tipperary landowner named Daniel Ryan of Inch passed away. Word of his demise spread beyond the immediate locality, and eventually newspapers as far away as Belfast would recount how his ‘plentiful estate’ had been in the family ‘above 500 years’.¹ Based on the surviving records, there is good reason to believe that Ryan’s ancestors first arrived in County Tipperary during the thirteenth century, when they settled on the frontier between two worlds, that of the native Gaelic Irish and Norman newcomers.² Although the religious and ethnic character of the region evolved over the ensuing centuries, the Ryans continued to inhabit a divided world. Daniel Ryan was a Catholic landowner who had lived in an area and on an island governed by what would become known as the Protestant Ascendancy.³ Three wars of conquest and associated bouts of land confiscations during the seventeenth century brought this confessional minority to power, while penal legislation introduced after 1691 sought to maintain their dominance over Ireland and its largely Catholic population. However, what distinguished Daniel Ryan from a number of other Catholic gentlemen whose obits were reported in the press was the fact his family had retained their landowning status.⁴ The apparent interest shown in Belfast towards Ryan and his heritage further hints at a more complex picture and process of interaction. Therefore, the main aim of this thesis is to explore the Ryans’ world in greater detail, and in so doing to ascertain how the family maintained their status as members of the landowning Catholic gentry during the period c.1650 to 1831.

The Ryans’ identity was inextricably linked to their landowning status, and at the outset it is beneficial to provide a brief outline of the Inch estate’s location and extent. The family seat, Inch House, sits roughly halfway between the town of Thurles and village of Borrisoleigh in mid-to-north-western Tipperary. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the Inch estate consisted of approximately 2,940 plantation acres,

¹ *Faulkner’s Dublin Journal*, 7 Nov. 1767; *Belfast Newsletter*, 10 Nov. 1767; Philip D. Vigers (ed.), ‘County Tipperary’ in *Journal of the Association for the Preservation of the Memorials of the Dead in Ireland*, v, no. 1, part 2 (1901), p. 106.

² The O’Mulryans appear to have migrated from Co. Carlow to the frontier or march of north-western Tipperary during the thirteenth century, possibly under the direction of Richard de Burgh, the Earl of Ulster: Dáithí Ó hÓgáin, *Irish family names: Ryan: Ó Maoilriain* (Dublin, 2003), pp 37–40; Martin Callanan, *Records of four Tipperary septs: the O’Kennedys, O’Dwyers, O’Mulryans, O’Meaghers* (Galway, 2nd ed., 1995), p. 8.

³ James Kelly, ‘Eighteenth-century Ascendancy: a commentary’ in *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá chultúr*, v (1990), p. 187; S.J. Connolly, *Religion, law and power: the making of Protestant Ireland, 1660–1760* (Oxford, 1992), p. 104.

⁴ Kevin Whelan, ‘An underground gentry? Catholic Middlemen in eighteenth-century Ireland’ in *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá chultúr*, x (1995), p. 21.

which in turn was divided into two main units (Fig. 1). The first encompassed 770 acres centred on Inch House and was situated on the north-western limit of one of the county's exceedingly fertile limestone plains. Although comprising just over a quarter of the estate's total acreage, the excellent quality of these lands was reflected in the fact they produced over half of the Ryans' total rental income. Furthermore, during the 1700s the Ryans would acquire the near-by lands of Liscreagh and Coolderry (196 acres) under an illegal 999-year leasehold. Located several kilometres to the south-west, the remainder of the estate consisted of the manor of Coolkill. This represented the old mensal lands of the O'Mulryan clan who once ruled over the territory of Kilnelongurty (later incorporated into the barony of Kilnamanagh Upper).⁵ With some exceptions, these lands were made up of coarser upland pasture, but they nevertheless conferred a degree of prestige upon the Ryans of Inch due to their ancestral links to the territory's historic chief, Shane Glasse O'Mulryan.

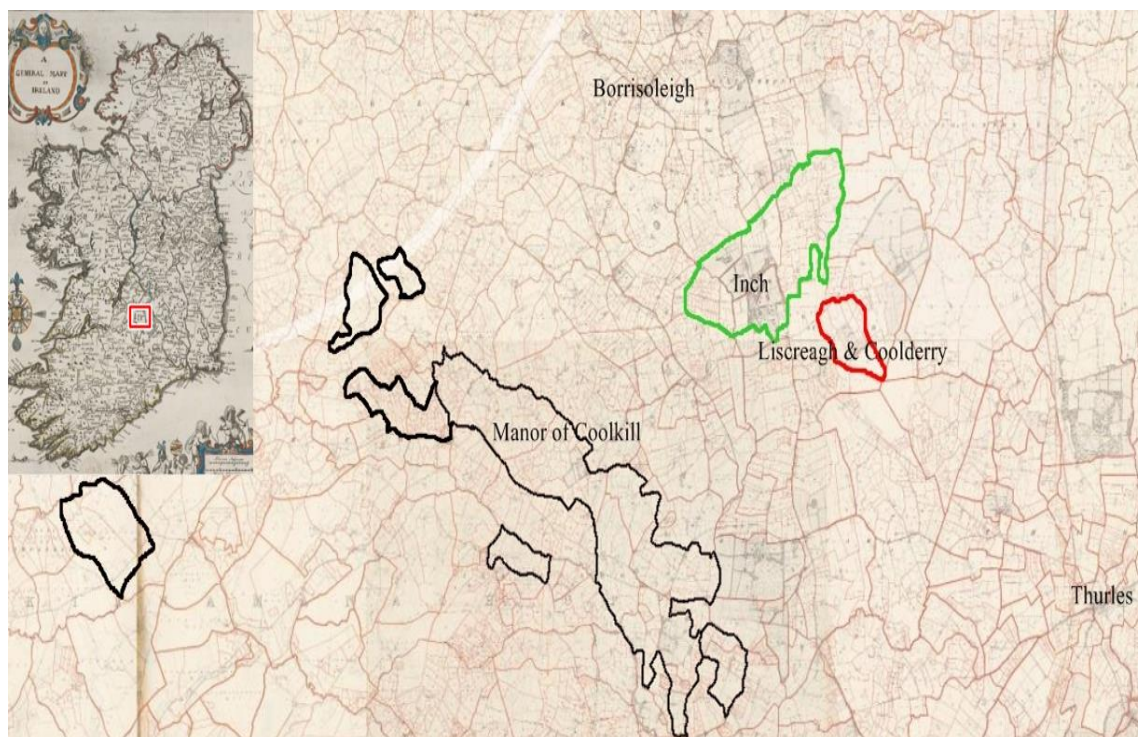


Figure 1– Map giving the location and extent of the Inch estate in 1704 with the later illegal leasehold of Liscreagh and Coolderry included (red).⁶

⁵ For the earliest known reference to the O'Mulryans settling the monastic lands of Kilnelongurty in Tipperary in 1352, see: Finbarr Donovan (ed.), Colmcille Ó Conbhuidhe, OSCO, *The Cistercians Abbeys of Tipperary* (Dublin, 1999), p. 182.

⁶ The maps utilised can be found at: *Down Survey Maps*, available at: Trinity College Dublin, <http://downsurvey.tcd.ie/down-survey-maps.php> [12 Sept. 2015]; *Ask about Ireland: Griffith's Valuation*, available at: <http://www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/index.xml?action=nameSearch> [15 Sept. 2018].

The chronological scope of the study encompasses six generations of the Ryan family (c.1650–1831). This in turn corresponds, generally speaking, to the period in Irish history when Catholics were dispossessed and politically marginalised up until the passing of Catholic Emancipation in 1829. However, as this thesis will demonstrate, the Ryans' world and lived experience do not always reflect a traditional narrative based on persecution and dispossession. Distinctions such as coloniser/colonised, oppressor/oppressed and Protestant/Catholic were certainly not absent, but neither did they act as absolutes. Instead the family's position — physical, social, legal and cultural — was supported by a family network and mentality that permitted the Ryans to adapt to changing circumstances, evade the penal laws and ultimately integrate as fully fledged members of the landowning elite.

As was the case with the majority of Catholic landowners in Ireland, the Ryans were dispossessed following the Cromwellian conquest and subsequent land settlements. Nevertheless, the family quickly acquired a new landed estate, and by the early 1700s they had risen to the middling ranks of the landowning elite. The first objective of this thesis is to chart how the family accomplished this, with particular emphasis being placed on the strong links they maintained with families closely allied to the Ormond interest, and on the wealth the Ryans amassed outside their position as landowners. This includes a consideration of their role as agents and commercial interests the family had established by the beginning of the eighteenth century.

As Catholic landowners the Ryans were targeted by the penal laws, yet they resisted even nominal conversion to the Established Church. A second objective, therefore, is to establish how the family successfully circumvented these legal restrictions. Central to achieving this objective is an understanding of the bonds of kinship that framed the family's world. Marriage and affinity created these bonds and provided access to specialised knowledge and protection that transcended confessional boundaries. With this expertise and protection in place, the Ryans could look to resolve concerns surrounding inheritance laws, estate management, education and the need to provide for younger sons in trade and foreign service. To help accomplish these goals, it also became necessary for the Ryans to look beyond Ireland towards their extended kinship network on the European Continent.

Retaining their gentry status was central to the Ryans' identity. Paradoxically, the need to embody and project this status ultimately became the greatest threat to their survival. Explaining, or understanding, how the family struck a balance between living and

surviving as members of the gentry is the third objective of this thesis. This issue takes the emphasis off the penal laws and considers the family as members of the landed elite in general. With the assistance of knowledgeable relatives and the patronage of well-connected allies, the Ryans supplemented their rental income through work as agents, merchants and farmers. As time progressed however, new generations of the family became increasingly reliant on credit to maintain their genteel status. This stemmed from their lifestyle and the necessity of providing portions for younger children and jointures for widows. Eventually, these mounting encumbrances would prevent the Inch estate from surviving intact.

The *Ryan of Inch Collection*, held in University College Cork's Boole Library, represents the main archive that informs this study.⁷ The volume and scope of the material that has survived within the family archive is relatively unusual within the context of Tipperary landed estates during the early modern period.⁸ This is even more so the case in relation to the lesser gentry and Catholic estates in the county.⁹ Although imperfect, rental and other estate accounts, alongside a steady run of lease agreements, permit insights into the management of this medium-sized estate. However, the Ryan collection is incomplete in many areas, and this limits what can and cannot be examined. For example, the level of analysis achieved by Miriam Lambe concerning landlord-tenant relations on the neighbouring Otway estate cannot be replicated here.¹⁰ This is due to the nature of the surviving evidence and the fact the Ryans practiced a leasing strategy that favoured large graziers and middlemen.¹¹ By extension, this has meant that discernible references to labourers, cottiers and artisans on the Inch estate are limited during the period covered by this study.

Family correspondence in the Ryan papers is very irregular until 1780. As a result, it remains unclear to what extent the Ryans' close connection to the Mathews of Thomastown may have drawn the family into the political intrigues and sectarian tensions

⁷ UCC, Boole, *Ryan Collection*, BL/EP/R. Additional source material relating to the Ryan family has been consulted in: UCC, Boole, *Grehan papers*, BL/EP/G.

⁸ The *Ryan Collection* contains 876 catalogued manuscript items that include fourteen allied families covering the period 1656 to 1964: Descriptive list of the Ryan of Inch Collection, available at: University College Cork, *Boole Library*, https://booleweb.ucc.ie/documents/Ryan_of_Inch.pdf [12 July 2018].

⁹ For a list of estate papers (including copies) held in the Tipperary Studies Department in Tipperary County Library, Thurles, see: Denis G. Marnane and Mary Guinan Darmody, *Finding Tipperary: a guide to the resources of the Tipperary Studies Department, Tipperary County Library, Thurles, County Tipperary* (Tipperary, 2008). For papers relating to the estates of the upper gentry and aristocracy in Tipperary, see: NLI, *Ormonde family papers*; TCD, *MS Donoughmore Deposit*; TCD, *MS Barker Ponsonby Deposit*.

¹⁰ Miriam Lambe, *A Tipperary landed estate: Castle Otway 1750–1853* (Dublin, 1998).

¹¹ Louis Cullen, 'Catholics under the Penal Laws' in *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá chultúr*, i (1986), p. 27.

that characterised county Tipperary during the early 1760s.¹² Furthermore, as might be expected, there is no direct evidence of Jacobite involvement in the Ryan papers after 1691.¹³ The mere fact that the family and many other members of the ‘New Catholic’ interest chose to remain in Ireland after 1691 suggests that they were of moderate views and more concerned with retaining their estates.¹⁴ However, this is not to say that the Ryans simply abandoned the Jacobite cause after the war’s end: two younger sons and several relatives would serve in Irish regiments in France before 1745. The problem that presents itself is determining the degree to which their enlistment was motivated by political ideology or the practical necessity of providing careers for younger children.¹⁵ As this study is concerned with ascertaining how the Ryans retained their landowning status, such instances of enlistment will be considered within the context of the penal laws. After 1704, the Inch estate was liable to subdivision between all male children within the family, and this study will highlight how dispatching younger sons abroad to act as merchants and soldiers was part of a strategy that sought to ensure these individuals did not press their claims to portions of the Inch estate. Nevertheless, from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards, it is possible to chart how, like other members of the Catholic gentry, the Ryans sought accommodation within the Hanoverian state and ultimately rallied to its defence.¹⁶ This examination is assisted by a large collection of correspondence that has survived within the Ryan archive for the period after 1780. These

¹² Maurice J. Bric, ‘The Whiteboy movement, 1760–1780’ in William Nolan and Thomas G. McGrath (eds), *Tipperary: history and society: interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county* (Dublin, 1985), pp 149–151; Thomas P. Power, *Land, politics and society in eighteenth-century Tipperary* (Oxford, 1993), pp 228–31; David Dickson, ‘Novel spectacle? The birth of the Whiteboys, 1761–2’ in D.W. Hayton and Andrew R. Holmes (eds), *Ourselves alone? Religion, society and politics in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Ireland: essays presented to S.J. Connolly* (Dublin, 2016), pp 67–73.

¹³ Éamon Ó Ciardha, *Ireland and the Jacobite cause, 1685–1766: a fatal attachment* (Dublin, 2002), pp 38–9.

¹⁴ Eoin Kinsella, *Catholic survival in Protestant Ireland 1660–1711: Colonel John Browne, landownership and the Articles of Limerick* (Woodbridge, 2018), pp 6–8.

¹⁵ For example, John Ryan (b.1723) and his two Mathew cousins, George and Francis, entered French service aged between thirteen and eleven in 1736–7. They would take part in the failed Jacobite invasion of Scotland in 1745, but their initial enlistment in the French army was probably more down to practical than political concerns. Apart from trade or joining the Church, military service was a common career path for younger sons within the gentry. Catholics were debarred from service in the British army making the French, Spanish and Austrian militaries the only other real alternatives. Furthermore, due to the penal laws, John Ryan and George Mathew were entitled to a share in their family estates once they came of age. Therefore, their establishment in suitable careers abroad at an early age was one way their families could seek to guard against their possible claims: A return of prisoners of Buckley's, Clare's and Berwick's Regiments confined in the Citadell of Hull, 6 Nov. 1746 (TNA, *SPD, George II, SP 36/89/1, f. 38*); List of 148 prisoners in the French Service, held at Hull, to be delivered to Captain De Cosne, Nov. 1746 (*ibid.*, SP 36/89/3, f. 106). For the enlistment of Tipperary Catholics in the French army during this period, see: L.M. Cullen, ‘The Irish diaspora of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries’ in Nicholas Canny (ed.), *Europeans on the move: studies on European migration, 1500–1800* (Oxford, 1994), p. 123.

¹⁶ James Kelly, ‘Disappointing the boundless ambition of France’: Irish Protestants and the fear of invasion, 1661–1815’ in *Studia Hibernica*, no. 37 (2011), pp 78–9.

letters also permit an analysis of the family's epistolary practices and the strategies utilised by successive heads of the family to manage their inherited encumbrances.

To help compensate for the gaps in the Ryan archive, particularly for the seventeenth century, papers relating to allied families and the collections of three Tipperary antiquarians have been utilised.¹⁷ Where possible, additional collections located in Ireland's main repositories in Dublin have also been integrated into this study. This, for example, includes two letter books belonging to the Carrick-on-Suir merchant Walter Woulfe held in the *Mansfield papers* in the National Library of Ireland.¹⁸ These letter books assist in the study of a younger son, George Ryan, and his attempts to establish himself as a colonial merchant during the 1760s. Ryan eventually travelled to Peru and took up employment as a colonial administrator in a frontier province. The survival of his personal papers (in Spanish) in the family archive permits the study of his colonial career.¹⁹ This in turn will help to demonstrate that the Ryans' world expanded far beyond Tipperary and Ireland. To support the study of family members who travelled abroad and were engaged in trade and foreign service, the *Irish Overseas Archive* held in Armagh and several pertinent collections located in London have also been consulted.²⁰ As the range of archival sources cited suggests, the Ryans' world was a complex one that embraced different places and multiple spaces.

To date, there have been three extended studies of landowning Catholic families in Ireland during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.²¹ Two of these studies have been structured thematically, while the third adopted a mixed chronological/thematic approach. From the reader's perspective however, these approaches have the effect at times of detaching topics from their generational contexts. As a result, attempts to decipher and separate one family member from another, and to place them within the generational structure and kinship network of their respective families, becomes a time-

¹⁷ RIA, *Purcell papers*, SR 4/A/42; NLI, *O'Byrne papers*, MS 27,327; NLI, *Fitzpatrick papers*, MS 8099; NLI, *Papers of Dr Martin Callanan*, Mss 11,421–11,422; NLI, *Callanan MS*, microfilm, p4546, p5489; TCLT, *The papers of Rev. Father Walter G. Skehan*, typescript copy, vols i–xcii; TCLT, *Fogarty papers*, typescript copy, vols i–lxiv.

¹⁸ Two letter books of Walter Woulfe of Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary, 1764–1769 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, Mss 9629–9630).

¹⁹ Records concerning George Ryan in Spanish service, 1764–1780 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, Mss 373–4).

²⁰ For example: COFL, *Irish Overseas Archive*; TNA, *HCAP*, HCA 32; WPA, *Records of the House of Lords, Journal Office: Main Papers*, HL/PO/JO; BL, *Blenheim papers*, Add MS 61621.

²¹ Karen Harvey, *The Bellevs of Mount Bellew: a Catholic gentry family in eighteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 1998); Emma Lyons, 'Morrinstown Lattin: a case study of the Lattin and Mansfield families in County Kildare, c.1600–1860' (PhD thesis, University College Dublin, 2011); Philip Walsh, 'The Blakes of Ballyglunin: Catholic merchants and landowners of Galway town and county in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries' (PhD thesis, University College Dublin, 2017).

consuming and sometimes frustrating endeavour. To address this problem, this thesis will take the form of a chronological, generation-based study. This approach also offers the most coherent way of examining the Ryan family and will allow the different topics to rise and fall as they become relevant to different generations of the family, while at the same time allowing maximum flexibility. Thus, individual themes will be integrated once they become relevant to different generations of the family, as they attempted to retain their position in society by responding to the broader processes and interactions at work in Ireland and further afield.

Studies of regional Ireland have been carried out along a number of different set divisions, including the county, port/hinterland and topographical levels, and each in turn has made important contributions to their areas of study.²² A common preoccupation among these studies has been deciding upon the most basic unit or division that best reflects society of the time, while at the same time permitting a realistic and cohesive study area that matches actual lived experience and ideas of space and place among inhabitants. This thesis attempts to strike a workable and insightful balance between the local, regional and (inter)national spheres via a particular family and the world they inhabited.²³ This approach builds on Karen Harvey's view that 'family history, subject to proper methods of analysis, can reflect in microcosm the social, religious, and economic

²² For example: Eoghan Ó Neill, *The Golden Vale of Ivowen: between Slievenamon and Suir* (Dublin, 2000); William Nolan, *Fassadinin: Land, settlement and society in Southeast Ireland 1600–1850* (Dublin, 1979); Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*; Denis G. Marnane, *Land and Violence: A History of West Tipperary from 1660* (Tipperary, 1985); idem, *Land and settlement: a history of West Tipperary to 1660* (Tipperary, 2003); David J. Butler, *South Tipperary, 1570–1841: religion, land and rivalry* (Dublin, 2007); William Nolan and Thomas G. McGrath (eds), *Tipperary: history and society: interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county* (Dublin, 1985); David Dickson, *Old world colony: Cork and South Munster, 1630–1830* (Cork, 2005); John Morrissey, *Negotiating colonialism: Gaelic-Irish reaction to New English expansion in early modern Tipperary, c.1541–1641* (Galway, 2003); T.C. Barnard, 'The political, material and mental culture of the Cork settlers, c.1650–1700' in Patrick O'Flanagan and Cornelius G. Buttimer (eds), *Cork: history & society: interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county* (Dublin, 1993), pp 311–315.

²³ This mirrors theoretical approaches that have emerged in anthropology concerning field sites and areas of study. George Marcus, for example, has argued that place specific studies alone do not adequately explain the lives of their inhabitants. Instead, he rightly highlights how people do not make decisions and live their lives in isolation from outside factors and a larger system or systems. Marcus also admits that ethnography (or any academic study) is in reality a type of fiction, simply because it is impossible to recreate and fully explain the complete lives of a study group. This is just as relevant to historiography through the belief that the past and history are two different things. Marcus' methodological approach is therefore focused on different modes of construction and the idea that a study should follow ('tracking strategies') a particular topic or entity in order to discover the world within which they operate: follow the idea, follow the person/social group or follow the object etcetera. This allows studies to cut-across and in and out of dichotomies such as the local, lifeworld and global: George E. Marcus, 'Ethnography in/of the World System: the emergence of multi-sited ethnography' in *Annual Review of Anthropology*, xxiv (1995), pp 95–117. See also: Nicholas Canny, 'Writing Early Modern history: Ireland, Britain and the wider world' in *The Historical Journal*, xxxvi, no. 3 (Sept., 2003), p. 746.

environment of a particular period'.²⁴ This study of the Ryans of Inch will illustrate how the experiences of the family can provide new insights into topics such as kinship, debt management, interdenominational relations, the penal laws and foreign trade. These different topics will in turn contribute to a number of debates in the historiography of Ireland and the wider Atlantic world.

County Tipperary has been well served by previous authors; the two most relevant examples here being Thomas Power and his study of the county as a whole during the eighteenth century, followed by David J. Butler's examination of the southern half of the county from 1570–1841. As regional studies, both works were concerned with identifying and examining broader processes that were in operation in the county during their respective periods. As a historical geographer, Butler, in particular, showed a preoccupation with wider strategies as different religious communities 'met, clashed and grappled with each other'. Butler's focus was on rivalry and contestation in an 'attempt to recover the geographies of the colonized world'.²⁵ The resulting study has been generally well received as an important contribution to the historiography of the county and period in general, while also highlighting the benefits of regional and interdisciplinary studies. However, the author covered all the main historical events over two and a half centuries with a narrative style that tended towards an older interpretation clearly in favour of a Catholic perspective that, as John Bradley noted, resolutely refused to consider 'nuance and with it the complexity of humanity'.²⁶ Butler's examination, in essence, was too fixated on conflict and rivalry to consider instances of co-operation, collusion and outright friendship that could and did exist in many instances despite the differing confessions of the individuals and families involved. This study will reinforce the latter point through an examination of the Ryans and the different families they interacted with, several of whom were Protestants. The Ryans' experience will highlight how rigid distinctions between Catholics and Protestants could be mediated through different factors such as conversion, kinship and shared social status.

A second limitation to Butler's study was the issue of studying the southern part of the county in isolation from the north. The author could have argued that primary source material is much scarcer for the county's northern baronies, and that this area witnessed much denser New English settlement after 1650. However, by choosing to delineate his

²⁴ Harvey, *The Bellews of Mount Bellew*, p. 15.

²⁵ Butler, *South Tipperary, 1570–1840*, p. 17, 20.

²⁶ John Bradley, 'Review: South Tipperary 1570–1841: Religion, Land and Rivalry by David J. Butler' in *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, xxxix, no. 1 (Spring, 2008), p. 216.

study along barony lines, Butler excluded at least eleven Catholic landowning families that were situated, in some cases, literally a couple of hundred metres or so above this boundary and who were tied socially, politically and economically to one another and to their southern neighbours (for example, the Ryans of Inch, Mathews of Thurles and Annefield, Purcells of Loughmoe and the Fogartys of Garranroe (Castle Fogarty), Ballinlonty and Fishmoynes). If nothing else, these closely connected families sat on the frontline of what the author himself identified as the physical frontier between the predominantly Catholic friendly Butler lands in the south and the ‘quite rabid’ flanking regions of mainly Protestant landownership.²⁷ Whether or not this geographical frontier continued to exist during the eighteenth century is unclear, but the question still remains as to whether the inclusion of these families within his study would have supported a purely conflict and rivalry orientated approach.

Thomas Power’s seminal study of eighteenth-century Tipperary focuses on economic, social and political factors, within both rural and urban areas, as a way of explaining life within a large and diverse county. He convincingly shows how Catholics came to hold a large percentage of the county’s land as head tenants, some of whom achieved levels of wealth that eclipsed many landowners. Although not a central preoccupation of his research, Power does adequately reflect the impact of the penal laws on landowning Catholics.²⁸ His analysis also includes references to the Ryans of Inch, but his conclusions on two particular points generate more questions than answers. First, he stated that the Ryans were fortunate in that John Ryan (d. 1724) died leaving only one son, which in turn permitted the family to avoid inheritance restrictions under the penal laws. However, John Ryan had four sons, which meant that his eldest heir, Daniel, would either have to convert or face the prospect of gaveling the estate with his younger siblings. Daniel Ryan did not convert and still managed to inherit the entire estate. How the family successfully circumvented inheritance restrictions will be addressed by this thesis.²⁹

The second point that requires further investigation is Power’s examination of the Ryans’ finances during the period 1778 to 1818, and his statement that ‘successful financial management can be documented in the case of the Ryans of Inch’.³⁰ This analysis relied solely on intermittent and basic accounts of debts and charges affecting

²⁷ Butler, *South Tipperary, 1570–1840*, p. 203.

²⁸ T.P. Power, ‘Land, politics and society in eighteenth-century Tipperary, vol. i’ (PhD thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 1987), pp 106–111, 126–133, 148–153; idem, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, pp 126–133.

²⁹ Idem, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, p. 108.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 103; idem, ‘Land, politics and society in Tipperary, i’, pp 60–1.

the estate after 1778. As a result, Power's examination offers only limited insights into how exactly the family sought to discharge the debts attached to their estate. Furthermore, the author's statement concerning successful financial management can be somewhat misleading, as these encumbrances were a significant factor behind why the Ryans sold over half of the Inch estate by the early 1820s. By drawing on a wider range of source material, including a large collection of correspondence, this study will add nuance and detail to our understanding of this process of debt management. It will be shown that the process of debt management at Inch proved to be far from straight forward, never guaranteed to succeed and was complicated by personal relationships and legal issues.

Apart from coming to grips with this forty year period in the family's finances, this thesis will also consider the view offered by two other authors that Daniel Ryan (d.1767) was extravagant and a bad manager of his estate, while his son John (d.1778) was worse.³¹ In reality, this sweeping argument, accounting for almost fifty years of the family's history and finances, says little about the management of the Inch estate. From 1724 to 1756 evidence shows that the Inch estate was competently managed with the assistance of extended family members. Indeed, its income was boosted through commercialised demesne farming. The worsening financial situation of the family during the decade leading up to Daniel Ryan's death also requires further investigation. Was Ryan extravagant and a bad estate manager, or were his growing financial problems primarily a product of his position as a member of the landed gentry? What effect did providing portions for his numerous children have on the Inch estate's finances? Furthermore, Daniel Ryan's heir, John, has also been labelled an extravagant gentleman, and this study will examine if this is an accurate portrayal or whether these accusations obscure a far more complex situation.

Paddy Ryan has recently examined John Ryan's tour of Northern Europe during the 1770s, and his brother George's stay on the continent after his inheritance of the Inch estate in 1780.³² Ryan's study provides many useful insights, but fails to fully assess and contextualise several documents found in the Ryan collection. This includes a travel journal thought to have been penned by John Ryan.³³ However, evidence within the journal itself and from other sources strongly suggest that it was penned by Ryan's future

³¹ Charles Chenevix Trench, *Grace's card: Irish Catholic landlords, 1690–1800* (Dublin, 1997), p. 154; James Condon, 'Don Jorge Rian of Inch, Co. Tipperary (1748–1805)' in *The Irish Ancestor*, no. 1 (1986), p. 9.

³² Paddy Ryan, 'Accommodation and frustration: eighteenth century Irish Catholic landed gentry' (MPhil thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 2015), pp 27–77.

³³ Travel journal kept by J.R., 1775–6 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 371).

brother-in-law, John Roche of Limerick (see Appendix 4). Although the observations made by Paddy Ryan in his thesis concerning the Catholic gentry remain valid, the implications of the journal's authorship further calls into question the veracity of the claim that John Ryan was simply an extravagant gentleman.

In addition to the areas identified above, this study of the Ryans of Inch will also contribute to three of the main debates in Irish historiography. The first, and perhaps most fundamental, is whether Ireland during the early modern period is to be viewed as a colonial society or an *ancien régime*. Generally speaking, this has created a debate between authors with backgrounds in historical geography and post-colonial studies, who favour a colonial interpretation, and professional historians, such as S.J. Connolly, who have highlighted the many parallels between Ireland and European *ancien régimes*.³⁴ However, what is most striking about this debate is the fact that there are large areas of agreement between both sides.³⁵ Thus, Connolly has suggested the key feature of eighteenth-century Ireland was 'its ambiguous status', while Kevin Whelan's identification of 'ambiguities' in the same period undermines a purely *ancien régime* model and forces a consideration of 'colonial contexts'.³⁶ Furthermore, William Smyth has stated that Ireland was 'at once both colonial and early modern'.³⁷ Smyth's findings strongly favour a colonial interpretation, yet the consideration of an early modern perspective acknowledges the uncertainties any commentator must confront in the case of Ireland. As a result, Ian McBride has concluded that 'there is no need, then, to cast the *ancien régime* and the colonial frameworks as mutually exclusive approaches'.³⁸ The

³⁴ For example: Whelan, 'An underground gentry?', p. 7, 68; Butler, *South Tipperary, 1570–1840*, p. 16; Connolly, *Religion, law and power*, pp 103–14; William J. Smyth, 'Ireland a colony: settlement implication of the revolution in military-administrative, urban and ecclesiastical structures c.1550 to c.1730' in Terry Barry (ed.), *A history of settlement in Ireland* (London, 2000), p. 158; idem, *Map-making, landscapes and memory: a geography of colonial and early modern Ireland c. 1530–1750* (Cork, 2006), pp 9–17; Ian McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland: the isle of slaves* (Dublin, 2009), pp 100–2; Toby Barnard, 'The gentrification of eighteenth-century Ireland' in *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá chultúr*, xxii (1997), pp 137–155; C.D.A. Leighton, *Catholicism in a Protestant kingdom: a study of the Irish ancien régime* (Basingstoke, 1994); D.W. Hayton and James Kelly, 'Introduction' in D.W. Hayton, James Kelly and John Bergin (eds), *The eighteenth-century composite state: representative institutions in Ireland and Europe, 1689–1800* (Basingstoke, 2010), pp 7–8. For a one-sided pro-colonial interpretation of nineteenth-century Ireland, see: Terence McDonogh (ed.), *Was Ireland a colony? Economics, politics and culture in nineteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 2005).

³⁵ McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland*, p. 102.

³⁶ In a later publication, however, Whelan was more forceful in his belief that colonial contexts should be 'a defining feature of eighteenth-century Irish life': Whelan, 'An underground gentry?', p. 7, 68; idem, *The tree of liberty: radicalism, Catholicism and the construction of Irish identity, 1760–1830* (Cork, 1996), p. 56; S.J. Connolly, 'Eighteenth-century Ireland: colony or *ancien régime*?' in D. George Boyce and Alan O'Day (eds), *The making of modern Irish history: revisionism and the revisionist controversy* (London, 1996), p. 26.

³⁷ Smyth, *Map-making, landscapes and memory*, p. 469.

³⁸ McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland*, p. 102.

differences, McBride observed, are not so much about the ‘facts’ but about ‘how much weight should be placed upon them’.³⁹ Compared to the macro level analysis provided by previous authors, this study of the Ryans of Inch will contribute to this debate by examining the family’s world and how they ‘lived their lives’ as members of the landowning Catholic gentry. It will be shown that the experiences of the Ryans as Catholic landowners reflects the ‘in-betweenness’ of Ireland during this period and supports a more nuanced interpretation.⁴⁰

Any study of a Catholic landowning family during the eighteenth century must enter into the discussion and debate over the penal laws. The historiography of the penal laws dates back to the early 1800s, but serious scholarly debate and analysis did not emerge until Maureen Wall highlighted the fact that penal legislation had little effect on economic matters pertaining to trade and commerce.⁴¹ This in turn led to the growth of a wealthy urban Catholic middleclass.⁴² Although Wall’s argument was not without its limitations, her publications represented a point where the perspective of Catholic nationalism began to steadily lose its ascendancy in Irish historiography.⁴³ Within the sphere of church history there also emerged a challenge to the prevailing interpretation of the Catholic Church under the penal laws. John Brady and P.J. Cornish dealt a ‘devastating blow’ to the traditional depiction of the eighteenth century as an era of intense, enduring persecution by claiming that the worst of the religious repression was over by 1730, and that the Catholic Church did possess a functioning episcopacy and sufficient clergy by that date.⁴⁴ The authors took the emphasis off the penal laws as an attempt to destroy the

³⁹ Ibid.; Dickson, *Old world colony*, p. xiii

⁴⁰ McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland*, p. 103.

⁴¹ For the previous interpretations of the penal laws, particularly from a nationalistic perspective, see: James Kelly, ‘The historiography of the Penal laws’ in John Bergin, Eoin MacGennis, Lesa Ní Mhughhaile and Patrick Walsh (eds), *New Perspectives on the Penal Laws* (Dublin, 2011), pp 27–45; Seamus McManus, *The story of the Irish race: a popular history of Ireland* (New York, 1921), p. 398; Patrick O’Kelly, *History of Ireland since the expulsion of James II* (Dublin, 1855), p. 16, 18; P.W. Joyce, *A concise history of Ireland* (New York, 1903), pp 386–7; Martin Haverty, *The history of Ireland: ancient and modern* (Dublin, 1860), pp 674–5; William P. Burke, *History of Clonmel* (Clonmel, 3rd ed., 2010), p. 150.

⁴² Maureen Wall, ‘The rise of a Catholic middle class in eighteenth-century Ireland’ in *Irish Historical Studies*, xi, no. 42 (Sept., 1958), pp 91–115; eadem, *The penal laws, 1691–1760* (Dundalk, 1961); eadem, ‘Catholics in economic life’ in L.M. Cullen (ed.), *The formation of the Irish economy* (Cork, 1968), pp 37–51. See also: Cullen, ‘Catholics under the Penal Laws’, pp 23–36; 36; idem, ‘Catholic social classes under the penal law’ in Thomas P. Power and Kevin Whelan (eds), *Endurance and Emergence: Catholics in Ireland in the eighteenth century* (Dublin, 1990) pp 57–84.

⁴³ David Dickson, ‘Catholics and trade in eighteenth-century Ireland: an old debate revisited’ in Thomas P. Power and Kevin Whelan (eds), *Endurance and emergence: Catholics in Ireland in the eighteenth century* (Dublin, 1990), pp 85–100; Eamon O’Flaherty, ‘An urban community and the Penal Laws: Limerick 1690–1830’ in John Bergin, Eoin MacGennis, Lesa Ní Mhughhaile and Patrick Walsh (eds), *New Perspectives on the Penal Laws* (Dublin, 2011), p. 206; Kelly, ‘historiography of the Penal laws’, pp 38–9.

⁴⁴ Kelly, ‘historiography of the Penal laws’, pp 46–7; John Brady and P.J. Cornish, ‘The Church under the penal code’ in P.J. Cornish (ed.), *A history of Irish Catholicism, vol. iv* (Dublin, 1971), pp 1–88; Patrick Corish, *The Catholic community in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (Dublin, 1981), pp 73–81.

Catholic Church and instead viewed them as an effort by the Protestant minority to maintain their control over property, power and privilege.⁴⁵

Over the ensuing decades, historians such as S.J. Connolly, James Kelly and Ian McBride have added to our understanding of the penal laws by providing further analysis of the reasoning behind their introduction, subsequent enforcement and place within a wider European context.⁴⁶ Although Connolly has voiced reservations over the penal laws as a coherent code or ‘unitary corpus of law’, he has observed that ‘most of the laws relating to the Catholic laity were consistently and rigorously applied’.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, although the restrictions against the Catholic laity remained in operation, it is clear that in some areas, such as Catholics participating in the legal profession, that circumvention could be achieved in certain instances up until the 1720s.⁴⁸ This study will add to our knowledge of this subject by highlighting the activities of a Ryan family member who continued to offer his legal expertise despite these restrictions against Catholics. The ability of Catholics to evade restrictions on inheritance and land purchases has also received increasing attention from historians. Emma Lyons’ study of the Lattin family of Co. Kildare highlights how illegal land acquisitions could be protected from discovery through the use of statute staple loans.⁴⁹ Furthermore, Philip Walsh has recently argued that the Blakes of Ballyglunin in Co. Galway frustrated the claims of younger sons and the subdivision of the family estate through the use of fines and recoveries.⁵⁰ Walsh is perhaps half correct in his assertion, and this study will help clarify the issue through an

⁴⁵ For Tipperary, primary source material concerning the Catholic Church supports the arguments put forward by Brady and Cornish: Christopher O’Dwyer (ed.), ‘Archbishop Butler’s visitation book’ in *Archivium Hibernicum*, xxxiii (1975), pp 1–90; idem, ‘Archbishop Butler’s visitation book’ in *ibid.*, xxxiv (1977), pp 1–49; J. MacCaffrey (ed.), ‘Report on the State of Popery in Ireland, 1731: Dioceses of Cashel and Emly’ in *Archivium Hibernicum*, ii (1913), pp 108–117. See also: Eoin Magennis (ed.), ‘Select document: ‘The present state of Ireland’, 1749’ in *Irish Historical Studies*, xxxvi, no. 144 (Nov., 2009), pp 594–5.

⁴⁶ McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland*, pp 195–245; James Kelly, ‘Sustaining a confessional state: Irish parliament and Catholicism’ in D.W. Hayton, James Kelly and John Bergin (eds), *The eighteenth-century composite state: representative institutions in Ireland and Europe, 1689–1800* (Basingstoke, 2010), pp 44–63; Thomas O’Connor, ‘The Catholic Church and Catholics in an era of sanctions and restraints, 1690–1790’ in James Kelly (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Ireland, vol. iii, 1730–1880* (Cambridge, 2018), pp 257–279. For the framing and subsequent interpretation of the penal laws, particularly the 1704 and 1709 Popery Acts, see: W.N. Osborough, ‘Catholics, land and the Popery Acts of Anne’ in Thomas P. Power and Kevin Whelan (eds), *Endurance and emergence: Catholics in Ireland in the eighteenth century* (Dublin, 1990), pp 21–56; J.G. Simms, ‘The making of a penal law (2 Anne, c.6), 1703–4’ in *Irish Historical Studies*, xii, no. 46 (Oct., 1960), pp 105–118.

⁴⁷ Connolly, *Religion, law and power*, p. 263; idem, *Divided kingdom: 1630–1800* (Oxford, 2008), p. 255; Kelly, ‘historiography of the Penal laws’, pp 49–50; McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland*, pp 194–232.

⁴⁸ W.N. Osborough, *An island’s law: a biographical guide to Ireland’s legal past* (Dublin, 2013), p. 91; Thomas P. Power, ‘Conversions among the legal profession in Ireland in the eighteenth-century’ in Daire Hogan and W.N. Osborough (eds), *Brehons, serjeants and attorneys: studies in the history of the Irish legal profession* (Dublin, 1990), pp 154–6.

⁴⁹ Lyons, ‘Morristown Lattin, c.1600–1860’, pp 209–247.

⁵⁰ Walsh, ‘The Blakes of Ballyglunin’, pp 129–30, 203.

examination of pre-1704 family settlements on Catholic estates and their importance in relation to the circumvention of legal restrictions.

Despite this growing literature on the penal laws, several key issues still require further clarification. As observed previously, Connolly has noted that restrictions against lay Catholics were consistently enforced, but the exact conditions under which estates of inheritance could be forcefully divided or lost to discovery proceedings remains unclear. These are issues this study will seek to clarify, and it will be argued that estates of inheritance were safe from discovery except under very specific conditions, while the subdivision of an estate was only possible if an entitled relative pressed a claim in court. This latter point is important, as it serves to highlight the role played by kinship and family cohesion if an estate was to remain in the possession of a single Catholic heir. The importance of kinship within landed families is often acknowledged by historians, but its study, particularly in relation to the penal laws, remains underdeveloped within Irish historiography. Although conversion was the most common route by which a family could circumvent the penal laws, the assistance these individuals could in turn offer their Catholic relatives who continued to face restrictions is an area open to further study.⁵¹ The role of Protestant relatives will be shown to have been central to frustrating inheritance restrictions regarding Catholic minors and in attempts to protect illegal interests in land from genuine discovery.

The psychological impact of the penal laws on Catholics also represents a point of contention among historians.⁵² The penal laws undoubtedly had a psychological impact on Catholics, the Ryans included, but this study will highlight how legal loopholes, combined with the support of a powerful family network, could act as effective ways of mitigating these fears among Catholic landowners such as the Ryans. Indeed, it will be argued that kinship and family cohesion are the most important factors when accounting for the survival of the Inch estate under the penal laws.

The third big issue this study will contribute to is interdenominational relations in eighteenth-century Ireland. In his examination of the ‘popular mind’ in eighteenth-century Ireland, Vincent Morley has argued that Catholic sentiments towards Protestants, particularly towards those who had established themselves as landowners following the

⁵¹ Thomas P. Power, ‘Converts’ in Tomas P. Power and Kevin Whelan (eds), *Endurance and emergence: Catholics in Ireland in the eighteenth century* (Dublin, 1990), pp 101–3.

⁵² For the response to the revisionist school of thought concerning the penal laws, see: Ó Ciardha, *Ireland and the Jacobite cause*, pp 26–28, 26n–27n.

Cromwellian conquest, were resolutely hostile.⁵³ Likewise, Kevin Whelan has charted the resentment of dispossessed Catholics towards the Cromwellian families who had replaced them as Ireland's landowning elite.⁵⁴ However, in response to Whelan's assertions, Toby Barnard has observed that Catholics and Protestants operated under a common definition of what constituted gentility and notions of rank, and alluded to the strong possibility that these shared ideas may have helped to moderate religious and ethnic divisions between members of rural Ireland's landed gentry.⁵⁵ This study will contribute to this debate by arguing that the Ryans and their relatives, the McCarthys of Springhouse, used shared social status and ideas surrounding hospitality and polite refinement as effective ways of bridging differences with some Protestant families. It will be shown that this interdenominational sociability at Inch stretched back to 1738 at the very latest, but with good reason to suspect that Catholics and 'New' Protestant families had been sharing a dining table at Inch as far back as the 1710s, and perhaps even as early as the 1690s.

As noted, this thesis will proceed chronologically and has been divided into seven main chapters. Chapter one focuses on the Ryans' fortunes during a period of upheaval and change in Ireland following the Cromwellian and Restoration land settlements of 1652 and 1662/1665 respectively. The percentage of land in Catholic hands in county Tipperary had fallen from approximately 80 percent in 1641 to 20 percent by 1670.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, research has shown that the Catholic share of land may have risen to approximately 30 percent of the national average by the late 1670s, as Catholics, particularly a 'New Catholic' interest, acquired lands within a favourable land market.⁵⁷ Philip Walsh has added to our knowledge of this process through his study of the Blakes of Ballyglunin in Co. Galway, which shows how, in 1666, the family sought to protect the title to some of their newly acquired estate by conveying the lands to Richard Butler,

⁵³ Vincent Morley, *The popular mind in eighteenth-century Ireland* (Cork, 2017), pp 209–217.

⁵⁴ Whelan, 'An underground gentry?', pp 7–8, 14–24; idem, *The tree of liberty*, pp 10–12.

⁵⁵ Barnard, 'The gentrification of Ireland', p. 141, 144, 150, 155. See also: idem, 'The languages of politeness and sociability in eighteenth-century Ireland' in D. George Boyce, Robert Eccleshall and Vincent Geoghegan (eds), *Political discourse in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Ireland* (Basingstoke, 2001), pp 202–5.

⁵⁶ Kevin McKenny, 'The Restoration land settlement in Ireland: a statistical interpretation' in Coleman A. Dennehy (ed.), *Restoration Ireland: always settling and never settled* (Aldershot, 2008), pp 42–3.

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp 39–40; Eoin Kinsella, 'Dividing the bear's skin before she is taken': Irish Catholics and land in the late Stuart Monarchy' in Coleman A. Dennehy (ed.), *Restoration Ireland: always settling and never settled* (Aldershot, 2008), p. 161; idem, 'The articles of surrender and the Williamite settlement of Ireland: a case study of Colonel John Browne (1640–1711)' (PhD Thesis, University College Dublin, 2011), pp 9–10; idem, *Catholic survival in Protestant Ireland 1660–1711*, p. 3, 21–23; J.G. Simms, 'Mayo landowners in the seventeenth century' in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, xcvi, no. 1/2 (1965), p. 245, 247.

the Earl of Arran.⁵⁸ The Ryans also purchased a new estate that included Inch during this period, and they too benefitted from ties to the Ormond interest, which included the Duke of Ormond's half-brother Captain George Mathew of Rehill and Thomastown. Chapter one will examine how the Ryans re-acquired their landowning status, and it will be shown that their transactions with Mathew were complex and represented the culmination of a relationship with the wider Ormond interest dating back to the Interregnum at least. Furthermore, it will also be shown how these ties assisted Daniel Ryan (d.1692) in acquiring the necessary capital to purchase his new estate, while this patronage was to continue to benefit the Ryan family into the next generation and century.

Chapter two focuses on the tenure of Daniel Ryan's son and heir as head of the Inch estate. John Ryan (d.1724) would acquire the majority of the family estate, build Inch House and further strengthen his family's ties to the Mathew dynasty through marriage. The main aim of this chapter is to chart how he accomplished this, in particular how he attained the wealth to acquire the majority of the Inch estate at a time when Catholics had been roundly defeated during the Williamite War and subsequently faced mounting religious discrimination under the penal laws. It will be seen that the ways in which Ryan accomplished this were numerous and often controversial, and the success of his efforts would depend in no small part on his ability to exploit grey areas in the law. The status and family network he acquired in the process were to be central factors in his family's survival as Catholic landowners over the ensuing generation.

Chapter three will focus on kinship in the Ryans' affairs at a time when their estate was threatened by the penal laws and the family lacked the guidance of an experienced male head. The importance of kinship is usually acknowledged or inferred by historians, but its actual definition and role within landed families remains chronically under-analysed in Irish historiography. It will be highlighted that the manifestation of kinship could at times go beyond close blood ties to become something more malleable and experiential. What mattered most when a bond of kinship was created or invoked was that the affiliation was agreed upon by the parties involved. It will also be argued that family cohesion was the most important factor in ensuring the sole inheritance of Catholic estates, and that kinship also acted as one way to negate religious differences between landed families. Furthermore, a detailed examination of the penal laws and how they related to the Inch estate will highlight different strategies and legal loopholes that were

⁵⁸ Walsh, 'The Blakes of Ballyglunin', pp 44–5, 202.

open to Catholics. This in turn will help to clarify several factors that have gone largely unacknowledged by historians. It will also be shown that the support of a strong family network was crucial regarding economic matters on the Inch estate. This included the assistance offered by Daniel Ryan's (d.1767) father-in-law, Justin McCarthy, which permitted the family to supplement their rental income through commercialised demesne farming, a topic that is also relatively under-analysed in Irish historiography.

Chapter four concerns the tenure of John Ryan (d.1778) as head of the Inch estate. Previous commentators have viewed Ryan as extravagant and as a bad manager of his estate, who accumulated significant debts by the time of his passing in 1778. This stands in sharp contrast to John Ryan's own belief that he was a loyal administrator of his estate. This chapter will add to our wider understanding of the complexity of the world inhabited by members of the gentry, in particular revealing how shared social status and ideas surrounding hospitality and polite refinement could act as an effective ways of bridging differences between Catholic and Protestant members of Ireland's landed elite. It will also be seen that concerns surrounding status, specifically the need to guarantee portions for siblings and attempts to make the right impression following marriage and inheritance, were the main reasons behind the Ryans' indebtedness. As a result, it will be argued that John Ryan cannot be simply seen as extravagant and a bad manager of Inch, but instead he should be viewed as a typical gentleman of his time.

The Ryans' world stretched beyond county Tipperary and operated on numerous frontiers as family members travelled, traded and campaigned across Europe and South America. Younger sons played a prominent role in this process, the best documented and most widely travelled of whom was Daniel Ryan's second son George (d.1805). Chapter five examines the fortunes of George Ryan as a younger son and his career as a merchant and colonial administrator in Peru. Irish communities residing in Spanish ports, Cadiz especially, have received the sustained attention of historians over the previous two decades. However, largely absent from this analysis has been the involvement of Irish merchants in Spain's Atlantic trade. The study of George Ryan's attempts to become a colonial merchant will help correct this imbalance, while also adding to the wider discussion of how long distance trade networks were formed and operated. The presence of Irishmen in Spain's American colonies has also received the growing attention of historians. Political connections stemming from the ministry of Ricardo Wall have acted as the main way of explaining why Irishmen found success in Spain's colonies, while studies have tended to concentrate on the latter part of these individuals' careers, once

they had attained high ranking positions. As a result, the early careers of these individuals have been largely overlooked, as also have the ways in which their own abilities, reputations and other sources of patronage could act as important contributors to their success. An examination of George Ryan's career in Peru will once again help correct this imbalance. In doing so, it will highlight how Irishmen operating on frontiers, whether it be in relation to expanding markets or colonial administration, were highly responsive to, and capable of immersing themselves within, the particular colonial systems they navigated. This included their willingness to circumvent the law when necessity dictated.

Chapter six returns to Inch following George Ryan's inheritance in 1780. His tenure would above all be defined by a preoccupation with the estate's finances and discharging his numerous inherited debts. Unlike his brother before him, Ryan was not a typical Irish gentleman of his time, and his prolonged absence in Spain and her colonies meant he lacked a deep understanding of several of the key concerns that framed the world of an Irish landowning family. This was particularly the case in relation to Irish law, which was to frustrate attempts to discharge his debts, and Ryan would eventually be forced to flee Ireland in order to escape his creditors. In theory, his subsequent financial strategy should have spelt an end to his financial woes. In practice, however, Ryan's efforts would be hampered by legal issues and a frayed relationship with his father-in-law. George Ryan's travails as head of the Inch estate add an interesting chapter to the family's history, but his status as a relative outsider also provides insights into the legal obstacles faced by the gentry when it came to financial issues, debt management in particular. As a result, despite his best efforts, Ryan's financial strategy was destined never to fully succeed; a situation reflected in his own belief that 'law & honesty do not allways go tog[ethe]r'.⁵⁹

The seventh and final chapter examines the fortunes of the Inch estate under George Ryan's eldest son Daniel (d.1831). As the penal laws were steadily repealed during the final quarter of the eighteenth century, this opened up new possibilities for the Ryans as they attempted to integrate as fully fledged members of Ireland's landowning elite. However, this integration meant that the family's outlook diverged from those of most Catholics in Ireland; a point that will be illustrated by Daniel Ryan's decision not to support Daniel O'Connell and the Catholic Association in their attempts to gain Catholic Emancipation. Their status as landowners was key to the Ryans' identity, and this chapter will also examine how the family's epistolary practices sought to instil within the Ryan

⁵⁹ Draft letter. George Ryan to [Dr James Fogarty], 27 Feb. 1787 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 395).

children, Daniel in particular, the importance of kinship bonds and a sense of duty to the estate and its management. Daniel Ryan would prove to be a loyal administrator of the Inch estate, and as the years passed it appeared that attempts to discharge his inherited encumbrances would succeed. However, legal issues concerning the estate's most valuable property caused these attempts to first falter, while economic depression within the Atlantic world would ultimately spell failure for Ryan's financial strategy. This would lead to the sale of over half of the family estate. Nevertheless, the fact Daniel Ryan had managed to discharge most of his debts by the time of his passing in 1831, placed his brother and successor George on a more solid financial footing to meet the upheavals that characterised the following decades in Irish history.

In summation, this study of the Ryans of Inch will provide a number of different layers of analysis. These in turn will make several original contributions to the historiography of Ireland and the wider Atlantic world. Apart from providing a detailed and accurate family history, an examination of how the Ryans lived their lives and managed their estate across six generations of the family will yield insights into the far less documented and researched mid or 'middling' Irish gentry. Finally, by approaching these topics from the perspective of a specific family, this thesis will contribute to several of the most important discussions and debates in Irish history.

Chapter 1

The emergence of the Ryans during an age of upheavals, c.1650–1684

In c.1717 work was completed on John Ryan's new country seat, Inch House.¹ Built from local limestone, dressed in sandstone and conforming to the Queen Anne style, this country mansion boasted all the trimmings concurrent with ideas of genteel fashion and civility that were taking root within regional Ireland during the early eighteenth century.² This imposing edifice crowned the family's 2,940-acre estate and inscribed their presence into the rural landscape of north Tipperary. No passer-by could be left in doubt, be they local or stranger, as to who the landlords in the immediate area were, or where they resided — in essence, the Ryans of Inch were lords over all they surveyed.

Appearances, of course, can be misleading, and by delving into the family's background it becomes apparent that their position within society had not always been so secure. What emerges are two contrasting images of the family separated by a relatively short period of time. John Ryan and the message Inch House conveyed about him can be juxtaposed with his father Daniel, whose family had resided until the mid-1650s in a 'thatcht house' on a soon-to-be-confiscated estate. Moreover, John Ryan himself may have spent his early years in a comparable one-hearth structure.³ Within the space of two generations the family had gone from being descendants of a minor Gaelic chief, to a position where they could hang a portrait of Elizabeth Butler, Lady Thurles at Inch and claim a common ancestry with, among others, the illustrious Dukes of Ormond. The Ryans had weathered the turmoil of the seventeenth century and emerged at the other end in a position unrecognisable from that 50 years earlier. Therefore, a seventeenth century starting point has been chosen in order to explain how, unlike the majority of Catholics, the Ryans profited from the upheavals of this period and in so doing expanded their position in society.

¹ The dating of the house's construction ranges from 1715–1720. The approximate completion year of 1717 has been chosen based on the date provided at: 'Inch House, Tipperary North', available at: *The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage*, <http://www.buildingsofireland.ie/niah/search.jsp?type=record&county=TN®no=22403413> [9 Dec. 2014].

² Toby Barnard, *Making the grand figure: lives and possessions in Ireland, 1641–1770* (London, 2004), pp 21–22.

³ If John Ryan was born after 1666 he would have lived in a two hearth building in the townland of Fertiana: R.C. Simington (ed.), *Civil Survey of Co. Tipperary, vol. ii: western and northern baronies* (Dublin, IMC, 1931), p. 119; Thomas Laffan (ed.), *Tipperary families: being the hearth money records for 1665–6–7* (Dublin, 1911), pp 16–17, 143.

The following chapter will be split into four main sections. First, the emergence of the Ryans as a distinct family of land proprietors after 1603 will be briefly outlined. Next, the loss of the family estate during the 1650s will be considered. This will highlight how, despite eventual dispossession and transplantation, the Ryans were not passive victims under the Cromwellian regime. Conversely, during this period the family laid the early foundations of their eventual re-emergence through the relationships they maintained among the old order that remained within the region. Sections two and three will examine the experiences of the family during the Restoration period. Ingrained prejudices toward Catholics within the law and political system were to frustrate the Ryans' attempts to regain their old estate, but the expertise and social networking of a younger son, Daniel Ryan, was to furnish the family with the means to re-establish their landowning status. The concluding section will further discuss Ryan's activities as an agent and explore how the patronage of his new allies assisted him in acquiring a new landed estate. Overall, this examination will highlight how, in spite of remaining dispossessed, there were paths open to Catholics seeking a return to landed status. In Daniel Ryan's case, his success put in place the foundations upon which the succeeding generation could build in order to reach the middling ranks of the landed elite by the early eighteenth century.

I

'... the best of them to be pitied, but not to be trusted'⁴

The Ryans were of Gaelic or Old Irish extraction and descended from a distinct branch of the O'Mulryan clan located in the territory of Kilnelongurty (later incorporated into the barony of Kilnamanagh Upper) in mid-to-north-western Tipperary (Fig. 1.1 & 1.2). During the sixteenth century Kilnelongurty was described as the 'contre' of a Gaelic chief named Shane Glasse O'Mulryan.⁵ However, the Ryans' exact relationship to this individual and his successors is unclear. The Tipperary antiquarian, Dr Martin Callanan, has stated that the Ryans were descended from Shane Glasse's younger son Teige of Lisnasella. This conclusion is based on the fact the Ryans were in possession of Lisnasella by 1641.⁶ Conversely, a family pedigree completed in 1708 makes no reference to Teige of Lisnasella or Shane Glasse. Instead, it records the Ryans' descent from an individual

⁴ Charles Fleetwood quoted in John Cunningham, *Conquest and land in Ireland: the transplantation to Connacht, 1649–1680* (Suffolk, 2011), p. 68.

⁵ John O'Donovan, 'A letter from Sir Charles O'Carroll to Lord Mountjoy, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland' in *The Journal of the Kilkenny and South-East of Ireland Archaeological Society, New Series*, i, no. 2 (1857), p. 313.

⁶ Martin Callanan, *Records of four Tipperary septs*, p. 59, 62–83.

named Art, son of John.⁷ This former individual was a small freeholder in Kilnelongurty in 1611 at the same time Teige McShane Glasse was in possession of the lands of Lisnasella.⁸ Despite the uncertainty of their exact lineage, it is clear that the Ryans were not the successors of Shane Glasse. This distinction was held by the latter individual's grandson, also called Shane Glasse, who was in possession of the clan's old mensal lands by 1611.⁹

Although the Ryans lacked the status of their kinsman Shane Glasse, they were nevertheless presented with the opportunity to increase their standing in society following the end of the Nine Years War in 1603. The subsequent spread of English centralised authority over the entirety of Ireland introduced the conjoined factors of common law, a market economy and English tenurial practices into the area, which steadily supplanted the primacy of the Gaelic corporate and redistributive system.¹⁰ The heads of many Gaelic clans in the region, such as the O'Dwyers of Kilnamanagh, used English common law and the Surrender and Regrant system to successfully transition from Gaelic lords to landlords with rent paying tenants.¹¹ However, the example of Shane Glasse O'Mulryan highlights how this process did not always end in success for the old elite. Despite having secured the clan's mensal lands and the payment of chief rents from freeholders elsewhere in the territory, Shane Glasse was eventually forced to sell his lands in c.1631 to a neighbouring Old English lord, Baron Theobald Purcell of Loughmoe (modern Loughmore).¹² Furthermore, Shane Glasse's failure to secure all the lands that constituted the territory of Kilnelongurty meant that junior branches of the clan were also presented with opportunities as individual landowners via the new legal system and socio-economic environment. Consequently, it was during this period that the Ryans (later of Inch) began to emerge as a distinct family of land proprietors, and by the eve of the 1641 Rebellion, John Ryan of Inch's grandfather, John of Lisnasella and Cooldotia, had emerged as the

⁷ Tyrry pedigrees (NLI, *Papers of Dr Martin Callanan* MS 11,422(7c)); Charles Edmund Lart (ed.), *The pedigrees and papers of James Terry, Athlone herald at the court of James II in France (1690-1725): together with other pedigrees, and naturalisations from the mss. d'Hozier and other sources in France* (Exeter, 1938), p. 135.

⁸ An inquisition taken at Clonmel in the 14th day October 1611 concerning seising of lands at Coolkyl by Shane Glass O'Mulryan (ibid., MS 11,422(8)e).

⁹ This Shane Glasse was the son of Donal MacShane Glasse: ibid.; James Morrin (ed.), *Calendar of the patent and close rolls of chancery in Ireland in the reign of Charles the First, vol. ii, 1625-1633* (London, 1863), p. 586.

¹⁰ Michelle O'Riordan, *The Gaelic mind and collapse of the Gaelic world* (Cork, 1990), p. 12; Raymond Gillespie, *The transformation of the Irish economy, 1550-1700* (Dundalk, 1991), pp 25-26; idem, 'Economic life, 1550-1730' in Jane H. Ohlmeyer (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Ireland, vol. ii, 1550-1730* (Cambridge, 2018), pp 539, 553; Smyth, 'Ireland a colony', p. 164.

¹¹ Morrissey, *Negotiating colonialism*, pp 70-83.

¹² Morrin (ed.), *Calendar of patent and close rolls in Ireland in the reign of Charles the First, ii*, p. 586.

largest freeholder in the territory among the Old Irish inhabitants with an estimated 720 plantation acres (Fig. 1.3).¹³ Given the lack of documentary evidence, the exact process by which the Ryans expanded their landholdings remains unclear. Based on other examples, however, it is highly likely that the Ryans were quick to recognise and exploit the benefits offered by the common law system and market economy. This conclusion is supported by the fact that the family were well versed in the law and estate management by the 1650s, and as the following examination will show, these skills were to be central factors in the Ryans' ability to emerge out of the upheavals of 1650s and 1660s as landowners once again.

The changes that occurred in Kilnelongurty after 1603 also permitted the Ryans of Lisnasella the opportunity to establish links to the powerful Purcell of Loughmoe interest. The Baron of Loughmoe's land acquisition in Kilnelongurty during the 1630s made him the largest landowner in the territory. The Ryans of Lisnasella and other families continued to pay their chief rents to Purcell, and this suggests that his status and power were recognised and respected in the territory. This is perhaps unsurprising, as the Purcells had been powerful marcher lords in the region for centuries. Furthermore, New English encroachment into northern Tipperary had been building in the decades prior to 1641, and Purcell presented the Ryans and their kinsmen with a powerful ally within the ranks of the Old English Catholic elite in the area. Indeed, Theobald Purcell was among the first in county Tipperary to take up arms in response to the excesses carried out near Cashel in early December 1641 by the Lord President of Munster, Sir William St. Leger.¹⁴ However, it has not proven possible to tie the Ryans of Lisnasella directly to the 1641 Rebellion. The lack of English settlers in Kilnelongurty at the outbreak of hostilities

¹³ Richard Bentley to John Ryan, 23 Mar. 1656[7] (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 1); Simington (ed.), *Civil Survey of Tipperary*, ii, pp 117–128; Callanan, *Records of four Tipperary septs*, p. 75; Tyrry pedigrees (NLI, *Callanan papers*, MS 11,422(7c)); Jim Condon, 'The Inch correspondences: a selection' in *Tipperary Historical Journal*, no. 2 (1989), p. 127; Terrier of part of the parishes of Moalliffe and Ballaghcahill, Killnelongurty, Tipperary, available at: Down Survey Maps, TCD, <http://downsurvey.tcd.ie/down-survey-maps.php#bm=Killnelongurty&c=Tipperary&indexOfObjectValue=-1&indexOfObjectValueSubstring=-1&p=Moalliffe> [27 Feb. 2015]; Terrier of Templeoughteragh and Templebegg parishes, Killnelongurty, Tipperary, available at: *ibid.*, <http://downsurvey.tcd.ie/down-survey-maps.php#bm=Killnelongurty&c=Tipperary&indexOfObjectValue=-1&indexOfObjectValueSubstring=-1&p=Templeoughteragh> [27 Feb. 2015].

¹⁴ 'Lord Justices and Council to the Earl of Leicester, Lord Lieutenant, 26 Dec. 1641' in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Marquess of Ormonde preserved at Kilkenny Castle. New Series, vol. ii, 1641–1653* (London, HMC, 1903), pp 48–9; Thomas Carte, *The life of James, Duke of Ormond; containing an account of the most remarkable affairs of his time, and particularly of Ireland under his government: with appendix and a collection of letters, serving to verify the most material facts in the said history, vol. ii* (Oxford, 1851), pp 148–190; Philip D. Vigers (ed.), 'Rebellion of 1641–2, described in a letter of Rev. Urban Vigers to Rev. Henry Jones, dated July, 1642. With a note of officers engaged at the Battle of Liscarroll' in *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, ii, no. 19 (1896), pp 290–291.

meant that no depositions were generated for the territory. What evidence that has emerged from the surrounding area, albeit circumstantial (from the 1641 Depositions for example), does point to their involvement: a kinsman from Lisnasella and most of their neighbours are directly incriminated. The family's connection to Baron Theobald Purcell would also suggest that they were drawn into the conflict at an early stage.¹⁵



Fig. 1.1– Down Survey Map of County Tipperary with Kilnelongurty highlighted.
Source: Down Survey Maps TCD.

Although it may seem somewhat contradictory at a first glance, the Cromwellian reconquest of the island and subsequent land settlement in 1652 provided the starting point for the Ryans' gradual ascent to the middling ranks of the landed elite by the early eighteenth century. The vast majority of landowning Catholics in county Tipperary were dispossessed and ordered to transplant to Connacht by the new Cromwellian authorities. This was the case for the Ryans also, but a closer examination of the family's fortunes during this period uncovers a set of relationships that helped lay the foundations of their eventual re-emergence as considerable landowners.

¹⁵ For example: The Examination of John Hackett, 25 Aug. 1652 (Trinity College Dublin, *1641 Depositions*, MS 821, ff 249r–250v), available at: Trinity College Library Dublin, *1641 Depositions*, <http://1641.tcd.ie/> [17 Apr. 2015].

Based on what is known about the process of dispossession, John Ryan of Lisnasella would have remained in occupation of his estate until he received the order to transplant. For Tipperary, 221 recorded certificates were issued between October 1653 and May 1654, with 8,635 individuals having transplanted to Connacht by June. Although he had probably lodged his certificate with the commissioners at Loughrea during this period, it is clear that John Ryan and several of his landowning kinsmen were still residing in county Tipperary almost a year after the 1 May 1654 deadline for transplantation.¹⁶ Why Ryan did not transplant any sooner was linked to attempts by the authorities to implement the Act of Settlement (1652). This sought to dispossess Catholics and others guilty of rebellion, while their confiscated estates provided Parliament in London with a means to satisfy arrears among the army and repay civilian investment (adventurers) that had lain unsatisfied since the 1640s.¹⁷ Before land grants could be accurately set out to incoming proprietors, however, forfeited estates needed to be surveyed or ‘admeasured’. The Civil Survey was the product of the statutory commitment in England to distribute confiscated lands, a form of ‘stocktaking made by the conquerors with the help of the conquered’, and a precursor to Dr William Petty’s mapped Down Survey.¹⁸ Significantly, the panel of ‘good and lawfull men’ that assembled at Clonmel on 25 February 1654[5] to divulge the necessary facts on Kilnelongurty included John Ryan and some of his kinsmen, alongside an equal number of individuals who were drafted in from outside the territory. The

¹⁶ Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, p. 68; W.H. Hardinge, ‘On Circumstances Attending the Outbreak of the Civil War in Ireland on 23rd October, 1641, and Its Continuance to the 12th May, 1652; the Numerical Extent and Manner of the Transplantation of Irish into Connaught and Clare; the Extent, Value, and Distribution of the Forfeited Lands; their Insufficiency to Satisfy the Debts and Arrears Due to Adventurers and Soldiers; the Solution of That Difficulty under the Acts of Sett...’ in *The Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, xxiv, Antiquities (1873), pp 415–6; John Cunningham, ‘The transplanters’ certificates and the historiography of Cromwellian Ireland’ in *Irish Historical Studies*, xxxvii, no. 147 (May, 2011), p. 392; Simington (ed.), *Civil Survey of Tipperary*, ii, p. 115.

¹⁷ ‘Charles I, 1640: An Act for the speedy and effectually reducing of the Rebels in his Majesties Kingdome of Ireland to their due obedience to his Majesty & the Crowne of England’ in John Raithby (ed.), *Statutes of the Realm*, vol. v, 1628–80 (London, 1819), pp 168–172; ‘July 1643: An Ordinance for the encouragement of Adventurers, to make new Subscriptions for Towns, Cities, and Lands in Ireland’ in C.H. Firth and R.S. Rait (eds), *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642–1660* (London, 1911), pp 192–197; ‘August 1652: An Act for the Settling of Ireland’ in *ibid.*, p. 599; ‘September 1653: An Act for the speedy and effectual Satisfaction of the Adventurers for Lands in Ireland, and of the Arrears due to Soldiery there, and of other Publique Debts, and for the Encouragement of Protestants to plant and inhabit Ireland’ in *ibid.*, pp 722–753; J.R. MacCormack, ‘The Irish Adventurers and the English Civil War’ in *Irish Historical Studies*, x, no. 37 (Mar., 1956), pp 21–58.

¹⁸ J.G. Simms, ‘The Civil Survey, 1654–6’ in *Irish Historical Studies*, ix, no. 35 (Mar., 1955), p. 255; R.C. Simington (ed.), *Civil Survey of Co. Tipperary, vol. i: eastern and southern baronies* (Dublin, IMC, 1931), p. iii; W. H. Hardinge, ‘On manuscript mapped and other townland surveys in Ireland of a public character, embracing the Gross, Civil, and Down Surveys, from 1640 to 1688’ in *The Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, xxiv, Antiquities (1873), pp 14–15.

inquisition into Kilnelongurty was the last carried out in county Tipperary, and given the late date John Ryan had likely received a dispensation to remain in the county.¹⁹



Fig. 1.2– Copy of Down Survey Map of the Territory of Kilnelongurty. Source: Down Survey Maps TCD.

There is also reason to suspect that John Ryan may have remained in Tipperary until late 1655 based on the activities of the surveyor Dr Patrick Raggett, whose two daughters would eventually marry Ryan's sons. Once the civil authority's survey by informed estimation was completed, it was the turn of Dr Petty and his surveying teams to physically admeasure and map the same areas. Lands were to be granted to incoming proprietors based on the divisions and acreages returned by the Down Survey, the accuracy of which, it was hoped, would dispel any further disputes over allotments.²⁰ Within Tipperary, the confiscated lands set aside to satisfy the army included the Old Irish areas of settlement situated in the western and north-western baronies and territories of the county, such as Kilnelongurty.²¹ The survival for this region of the earlier Strafford Survey offered the means by which to negate the need for a new admeasurement. This survey was regarded as a formidable achievement and a 1653 report found that 'nothing

¹⁹ It is notable that 23 jurymen were required for such a small territory as Kilnelongurty with an estimated 2,527 profitable acres of land: Simington (ed.), *Civil Survey of Tipperary*, ii, p. xix, 115, 129.

²⁰ Hardinge, 'On manuscript mapped, 1640 to 1688', p. 20

²¹ Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, p. 68; J.G. Simms, 'The Cromwellian settlement of Tipperary' in *Tipperary Historical Journal*, no. 2 (1989), pp 29–30; Smyth, *Map-making, landscapes and memory*, p. 192.

can be expected more exact then [*sic*] what may be found'.²² However, to use the '1639' survey as Petty called it, would save on time and expense, but risked criticism and disagreement with its findings in the future.²³ As a result, Petty argued he could neither simply adopt the existing survey outright nor abandon it completely, and he thus decided on the middle course. This involved comparing the old returns with those of the Civil Survey while also walking and, if necessary, admeasuring portions of the lands in question in order to resolve any inconsistencies before mapping.²⁴ As the procedure was different from his ordinary mode of proceeding, Petty required a more highly qualified individual — 'some able artist' — rather than the average soldier-surveyor under his charge. This led him to seek out Dr Patrick Raggett, a resident of Thurles 'conversant in those parts' and, significantly, a Catholic. Raggett, perhaps having worked on the Strafford Survey during the 1630s, received from Petty a list of instructions to be observed as part of his new task.²⁵ Of particular significance here was the order to proceed 'by the help of the respective jurymen, who did lately give information to the Commissioners for the Civill Survey'.²⁶ Raggett's statement of completion dated 10 January 1655[6] confirmed that he had adhered to the order after enlisting the assistance of a 'jury of the countrey'. Given the de-population that had already occurred in county Tipperary due to transplantation, and that John Ryan resided in the area Raggett was reviewing, there is reason to suspect that Ryan may have received a second or extended dispensation in order to accompany Raggett during his surveying work. Indeed, it was reported that the territory of Kilnelongurty had been de-populated to such an extent that 'Four native Irish recently removed to Connacht were ordered to return to assist in the surveying of the barony'.²⁷

²² For the background to this survey and the proposed Plantation of Ormond, see: John P. Prendergast, 'On the projected Plantation of Ormond by King Charles I' in *Transactions of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society*, i, no. 3 (1851), pp 390–409; Thomas Aiskew Larcom (ed.), *The History of the survey of Ireland, commonly called the Down Survey, by Doctor William Petty, AD 1655–6* (Dublin, 1851), p. 57; J.H. Andrews, *Plantation acres: an historical study of the Irish land surveyor and his maps* (Omagh, 1985), p. 65; idem, *Shapes of Ireland: maps and their makers, 1564–1839* (Dublin, 1997), pp 118–121; Smyth, *Map-making, landscapes and memory*, pp 107–9; 'Sir William St. Leger to Philip Percivall, 16 Nov. 1630' in *Report on the manuscripts of the Earl of Egmont, vol. i* (London, HMC, 1905), pp 66–7; William Knowler (ed.), *The Earl of Strafforde's letters and dispatches, with an essay towards his life, by Sir George Radcliffe. From the originals in the possession of his great grandson ... Thomas, earl of Malton, knight of the Bath. By William Knowler, vol. ii* (London, 1739), pp 90–93.

²³ The survey was carried out in c.1637: Seán Ó Domhnaill, 'The maps of the Down Survey' in *Irish Historical Studies*, iii, no. 12 (Sept., 1943), p. 382; Smyth, *Map-making, landscapes and memory*, p. 101.

²⁴ Larcom (ed.), *History of the survey, commonly the Down Survey*, pp 60–61.

²⁵ Matthew Boland has previously stated that Raggett worked on the Strafford Survey during the 1630s, which is quiet possible, but no corroborating evidence was offered or could be located to confirm this point. J.H. Andrews has also stated that nothing is known of Dr Raggett apart from his surveying work with Dr Petty: Matthew Boland, 'Land and settlement in the Ormond baronies of Tipperary, 1620–1703' (M.A. thesis, St. Patrick's College Maynooth, 1992), p. 55; Andrews, *Shapes of Ireland*, p. 151.

²⁶ Larcom (ed.), *History of the survey, commonly the Down Survey*, pp 61–2.

²⁷ Power, 'Land, politics and society in Tipperary, i', p. 5; *ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 349.

That John Ryan may have been one of these individuals was even more likely given the fact that by 1660 his two sons had married the daughters of Dr Raggett.²⁸

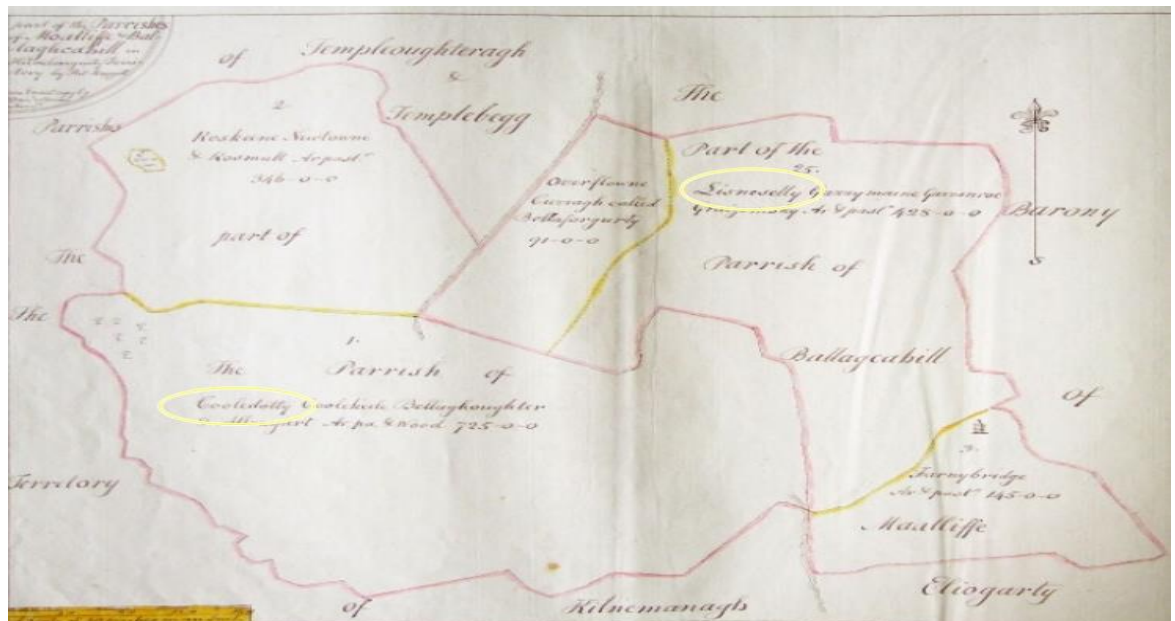


Fig. 1.3– Copy of survey by Dr Patrick Raggett of portions of the parishes of Moyliffe and Ballycahill situated in Kilnelongurty. Portions of Ryan estate highlighted. Source: Down Survey Maps TCD.

For Kilnelongurty as a whole, Raggett returned nearly double the profitable land compared to the civil returns, alongside an extra six and a half thousand acres of unprofitable land in the territory.²⁹ Despite the apparent accuracy of this work, Petty was accused of exploiting his position to make money and accumulate debentures. In one particular instance, Petty's most vocal critic, Colonel Hierome Sankey, 'a thorough-paced anabaptist' and Member of Parliament for Tipperary, launched a protracted assault in the House on the Doctor's dealings in the county, including his supposed misuse of the Strafford Survey:

²⁸ Larcom (ed.), *History of the survey, commonly the Down Survey*, p. 60; Robert Dunlop (ed.), *Ireland under the Commonwealth: being a selection of documents relating to the government of Ireland from 1651 to 1659, vol. i* (Manchester, 1913), p. cxlv; Marriage settlement between Daniel Ryan of Rathmanagh and Frances Raggett, 1 Dec. 1660 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 8); Will of Teige Ryan of Ballynahow, 30 Jun. 1679 (ibid., MS 19).

²⁹ Raggett returned 4,575 acres of profitable land compared to 2,527 acres in the Civil Survey: Terrier of Moalliffe and Ballaghcahill, available at: Down Survey Maps, TCD, <http://downsurvey.tcd.ie/down-survey-maps.php#bm=Killnelongurty&c=Tipperary&indexOfObjectValue=-1&indexOfObjectValueSubstring=-1&p=Moalliffe> [27 Feb. 2015]; Map of part of the parrishes of Moalliffe and Ballaghcahill in Kilnelongurty territory, available at: ibid., <http://downsurvey.tcd.ie/down-survey-maps.php#bm=Killnelongurty&c=Tipperary&indexOfObjectValue=-1&indexOfObjectValueSubstring=-1&p=Moalliffe> [27 Feb. 2015]; Simington (ed.), *Civil Survey of Tipperary*, ii, p. 129.

Mr Speaker, I must speake, for I have foule things... Mr Speaker, I have it here in my papers, and that is Straffords survey; the Dr gives in a duplicate of Straffords survey, which never cost him 20*li*, and receives 1100*li* for itt. These bee foule things.³⁰

In a second instance, Petty's assistant and future rival, Thomas Taylor, would later claim that Petty submitted the Strafford Survey but 'left out here and there a line to disguise the work ... and Patrick Raggett the surveyor did it, as I remember, and never surveyed the land and yet was paid for it'.³¹ Petty, on the other hand, would claim that his experiment with the Strafford Survey gave him 'only an occasion to play at hazard', and that he had 'the good fortune to win, though not one hundred pounds'. Whatever the actual truth of the matter there was money to be made, and Raggett's surveying venture eventually encompassed fourteen baronies and territories across three counties (Fig. 1.4).³² But of course, whether Raggett was paid above the grade of a simple soldier surveyor to match his qualifications and more complex work, or, indeed, whether Petty, always with an eye to his own profits, paid Raggett less as a Catholic on hard times are both unknown. Nevertheless, money there was and this would have proven a major enticement to John Ryan when considering the marriages of his sons to the daughters of Raggett.³³

³⁰ Petty incorporated the Strafford Survey into the Down Survey for most of Connacht, but where he suspected the accuracy of the latter survey (Sligo, Leitrim and part of Mayo), he chose to resurvey the regions: Brendan M. Ó Bric, 'Galway townsmen as the owners of land in Connacht, 1585–1641' (M.A. thesis, University College Galway, 1974), pp 215–6, 334; Larcom (ed.), *History of the survey, commonly the Down Survey*, p. 300; William Petty, *Reflections upon some Persons and things in Ireland, by letters to and from Dr. Petty: with Sir Hierom Sankey's speech in Parliament* (Dublin, [1660]1790), pp 63–75; W.R. Williams, *The parliamentary history of the county of Oxford including the city and university of Oxford, and the boroughs of Banbury, ... with biographical and genealogical notices of the members* (Brecknock, 1899), p. 207; Edmond Fitzmaurice, *The life of Sir William Petty* (London, 1895), pp 69–78; Peter Beresford Ellis, *Hell or Connaught: the Cromwellian colonisation of Ireland, 1652–1660* (London, 1975), pp 210–212. See also: William Petty, *A brief of proceedings between Sr. Hierom Sankey and Dr. William Petty* (London, 1659).

³¹ Thomas Taylor quoted in Micheál Ó Siochrú and David Brown, 'The Down Survey and the Cromwellian Land Settlement' in Jane H. Ohlmeyer (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Ireland, vol. ii, 1550–1730* (Cambridge, 2018), pp 598–599; Andrews, *Shapes of Ireland*, p. 137.

³² The names of the baronies and territories surveyed by Raggett can be found in: Larcom (ed.), *History of the survey, commonly the Down Survey*, pp 62–3; Hardinge, 'On manuscript mapped, 1640 to 1688', p. 53, 87, 90–2.

³³ Marriage settlement between D. Ryan and F. Raggett, 1 Dec. 1660 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 8); Will of Teige Ryan, 30 Jun. 1679 (ibid., MS 19).

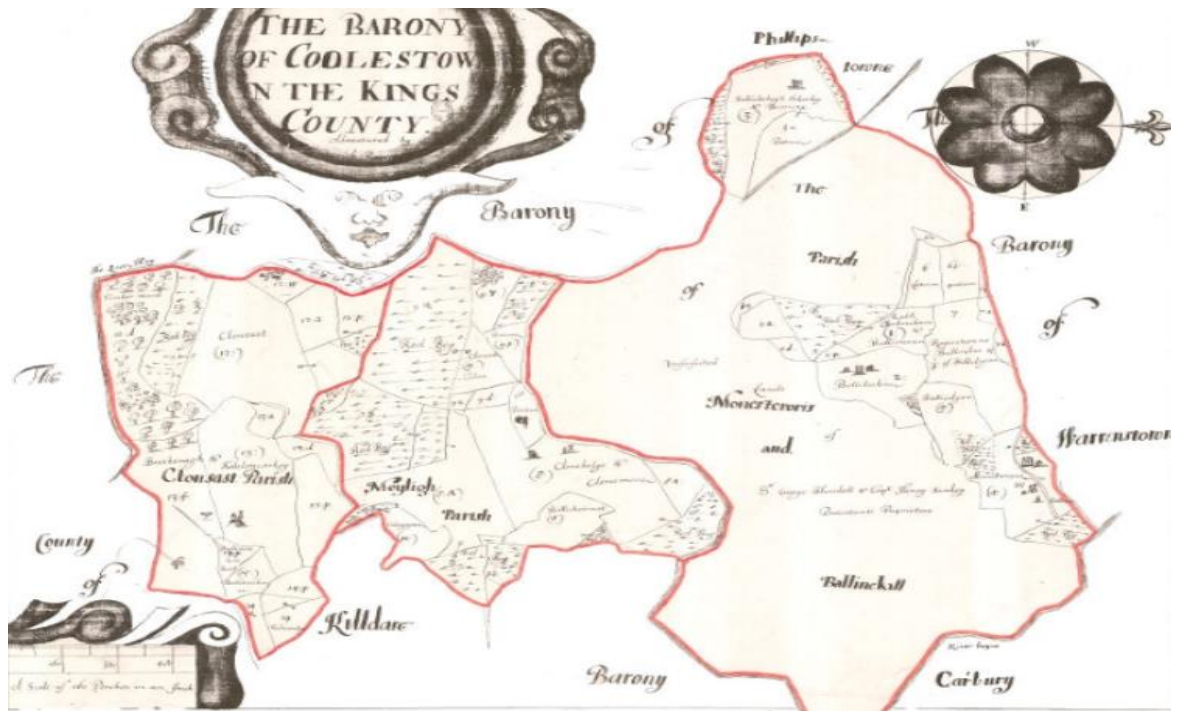


Fig. 1.4– Barony of Coolestown in King’s County (Offaly) surveyed by Dr Patrick Raggett. Source: Down Survey Maps TCD.

Patrick Raggett’s surveying in northern Tipperary was completed by the beginning of 1656, and his reliance on local informants suggests that John Ryan may have remained in the area until this late date. Even so, the gears of the administrative apparatus in Ireland ground on, and in May 1656 Ryan was allotted 239 plantation acres of land in Coolagh in the parish of Kilseily, barony of Tullough, Co. Clare.³⁴ It appears that Ryan resided on his new estate for less than a year, because in March 1657 he provided an individual named Richard Bentley with a power of attorney to oversee his lands in the parish of Kilseily. John Ryan is not recoded in the ‘1659 Census’ of Co. Clare, but it is unclear whether or not he had returned to county Tipperary before 1660.³⁵ However, what is known is that Ryan’s second and youngest son, Daniel, did not transplant and remained in the Thurles area.

An important reason as to why Daniel Ryan and other Catholics individuals were allowed to remain in their home regions comes to light when the composition and

³⁴ R. Bentley to J. Ryan, 23 Mar. 1656[7] (ibid., MS 1); Callanan, *Records of four Tipperary septs*, p. 75; Condon, ‘Inch correspondences: a selection’, p. 127; *Report on the manuscripts of the Marquess of Ormonde K.P., preserved at the castle, Kilkenny, vol. ii* (London, HMC, 1899), p. 157.

³⁵ John Ryan should not be mistaken with the John Ryan in the 1659 census located in the neighbouring parish of Killuran who received the lands of Moanogeenagh, Killavoy, Iragh South and Cloongaheen following his transplantation. This latter individual’s family can be traced up to the early 1700s: R. Bentley to J. Ryan, 23 Mar. 1656[7] (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 1); James Frost, *The history and topography of the County of Clare, from the earliest times to the beginning of the 18th century* (Dublin, 1893), pp 511–513, 585–6; Séamus Pender (ed.), *A Census of Ireland, circa 1659: with essential materials from the poll money ordinances 1660–1661* (Dublin, IMC, 1939), p. 169.

situation of the new settler community in Ireland, and specifically Tipperary is examined. Tipperary had the highest percentage of land in any county confiscated and re-granted to Cromwellian soldiers and adventurers.³⁶ The fact that many grantees had no intention of settling in the county created a vibrant land market.³⁷ This glut of cheap land afforded New English settlers that did decide to build a life in Ireland the opportunity to increase their station in society from lowly merchants and soldiers to the ranks of the landed gentry. One example of this social mobility is provided by the English merchant Richard Hamerton. In 1654 he held a miniscule plot in Clonmel and continued to build his fortune as a timber merchant, buying up parcels of land in the region until by the time of his death in 1692 he owned an estate of over two thousand acres. The rate at which land changed hands was itself illustrated in Hamerton's will, as he distinguished portions of his real estate accumulated through 'original adventurer[s]' from those parts procured second or third hand from other English land speculators.³⁸ Many of the New English that did settle in the county used their commercial backgrounds and foreign contacts to exploit economic opportunities and facilitate their rise to landed gentry status.³⁹

The main group that benefited under the Act of Settlement consisted of members of the New Model Army, who were, to begin with, generally less well equipped or inclined towards their new landed station in society. The average soldier, understandably weary following the deprivations of prolonged service did not wish to remain in Ireland. Many had not wanted to serve there in the first instance, and the idea of becoming farmers in a hostile and desolate environment held little appeal. Most were satisfied to sell their debentures at reduced rates and carry the proceeds back to mainland Britain. Officers, on the other hand, could supplement their personal land grants by purchasing the lands due to their enlisted men, usually at half or a third of the amount owed in pay or in debentures.⁴⁰ But, it was the Cromwellians' perceived lack of education and nobility of

³⁶ Karl. S. Bottigheimer, *English money and Irish land: the 'adventurers' in the Cromwellian settlement of Ireland* (Oxford, 1971), pp 144–48; Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, p. 67.

³⁷ Monica Brennan, 'The changing composition of Kilkenny landowners, 1641–1700' in W. Nolan and K. Whelan (eds), *Kilkenny: history and society: interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county* (Dublin, 1990), p. 175.

³⁸ Burke, *History of Clonmel*, p. 91, 246; Will of Richard Hamerton of Clonmel, 30 Jun. 1692 (TNA, PCC, PROB 11/417/307).

³⁹ 'Sir James Lee to Sir Edward Scott, 26 Feb. 1671[2]' in F.H. Blackburne Daniel (ed.), *Calendar of state papers, domestic series, preserved in the Public Record Office, Oct. 1672–Feb. 1673* (Norwich, 1901), p. 568; Burke, *History of Clonmel*, p. 91; Butler, *South Tipperary, 1570–1841*, pp 106–7.

⁴⁰ List of Cromwellian grantees in Co. Tipperary compiled by Thomas Ulick Sadleir (NLI, *Genealogical Office*, GO MS 571); Toby Barnard, *The Kingdom of Ireland, 1641–1760* (Basingstoke, 2004), p. 30; Dermot F. Gleeson, 'An unpublished Cromwellian document' in *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, i, no. 2 (1937), pp 78–81; John P. Prendergast, *The Cromwellian settlement in Ireland* (London, 2nd ed., 1870), pp 222–3, 234–5; Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, p. 68; Boland, 'Land and settlement in the Ormond baronies of Tipp', pp 69–71; Lambe, *A Tipperary landed estate*, p. 12; John Rushworth,

blood that caused many Irish commentators to recoil at the idea of the new social elite. They were condemned in one instance as ‘a base born band’, while another commentator went further still and labelled them ‘the odorous remnants of churlish craftsmen descended from harlot’s monsters and rebels of whom nobody in Europe knew what dog had excreted them’.⁴¹ Even William Petty’s critic Col. Heriome Sankey, who was ‘born of a genteel family’ and ‘bred in Cambridge’ did not escape contempt: he was accused of throwing off logic and philosophy in pursuit of ‘cudgelling and foot-ball playing’, and was said to have been ‘more fit in all respects to be a rude soldier than a scholar or man of polite party’.⁴² At the less educated end of the scale was Capt. William Hewlett of Hewson’s Regiment of Foot, who was granted part of the former Ryan lands of Lisnasella and Cooldotia in lieu of pay, and who, by his own admission could ‘write but a very little’.⁴³

Daniel Ryan and his family would have viewed these men of ‘low origin’ such as Capt. Hewlett and Col. John Hewson — both alleged regicides, the latter a cobbler by trade — as upstarts, unworthy of the lands that were symbolic of the Ryans’ deep-rooted relationship with the area that stretched back centuries.⁴⁴ This contempt, however, cut both ways. From a Cromwellian perspective the Old Irish and Old English (‘the Irish’) were treacherous, barbaric papists, ‘the best of them to be pitied, but not to be trusted’.⁴⁵ The massacre of Protestant settlers in Ireland in 1641/2 played a major role in sculpting this view among the incoming Cromwellians and their belief that the Irish held a national ‘blood guilt’ for their sins. However, the arrival in Ireland of Oliver Cromwell’s conservative son, Henry, heralded a change in official policy: the uncompromising Baptist party, ‘whose ways and principles were inconsisted [*sic*] with settlement and our interest’, were the first to meet with his disfavour.⁴⁶ Parallel to this development, many ‘Old Protestants’ who had settled in Ireland before 1649 began to occupy positions of

Historical collections in two volumes, volume the first, containing the principal matters which happen'd from the beginning of the year 1645, to the death of King Charles the First, 1648 (London, 1722), pp 468–72.

⁴¹ Shean O Duichir na Gleanna (NLI, *Callanan papers*, MS 11,421(7c)); Éamon an Dúna quoted in Raymond Gillespie, *Seventeenth-century Ireland: making Ireland modern* (Dublin, 2006), p. 185.

⁴² Williams, *Parliamentary history of the county of Oxford, 1213–1899*, p. 206.

⁴³ *The indictment, arraignment, tryal, and judgment, at large, of twenty-nine regicides, the murderers of His Most Sacred Majesty King Charles the Ist, ... To which is added, their speeches* (Dublin, 1730), p. 224.

⁴⁴ Henry B. Wheatley (ed.), *The Diary of Samuel Pepys, vol. i, Jan. 1 1660–June 1 1660* (New York, 1892), p. 30; Anon, *Colonel Huson’s (or the cobbler’s) confession, in a fit of despair. Taken in short-hand by the pen of a ready-writer* (London, 1660?). For several of the murders and massacres allegedly carried out by Cromwellian soldiers in Tipperary, see: R.S., *A collection of some of the murthers and massacres committed on the Irish in Ireland since the 23d of October 1641 with some observations and falsifications on a late printed abstract of murthers said to be committed by the Irish* (London, 1662), pp 19–21.

⁴⁵ Charles Fleetwood quoted in Cunningham, *Conquest and land*, p. 68.

⁴⁶ Henry Cromwell quoted in Beresford Ellis, *the Cromwellian colonisation*, p. 184.

importance in the administration of Ireland.⁴⁷ In turn, what occurred in practice among Catholics and Protestants in county Tipperary, for example, was in many instances a compromise between mutual ideological contempt and practical economic necessity.

The colonists, both old and new, required a large workforce to farm and improve their estates in order to make them economically viable following the widespread destruction of the war. Problematically, the envisaged settler workforce did not materialise, because as one Old Protestant settler explained: ‘Husbandmen and Tradesmen that are laborious, can subsist by their Labours and Trade comfortably in England, and most will not probably leave their native soyl on any terms’.⁴⁸ Consequently, colonists depended upon in-situ husbandmen and labourers, and this dynamic was repeated in relation to head tenants. This was because settlers once again lacked the necessary English tenants to match their newly acquired estates. As with labourers, the only viable alternative to answer this requirement came from among the old inhabitants themselves, and this provided an opening in the new social hierarchy that enabled members of dispossessed families, such as the Ryans, to take up these positions as head tenants. The so-called *Census of Ireland*, completed in c.1659, adds substance to this observation. Within the barony of Eliogarty, out of a total of sixty eight named *Tituladoes* (men of consequence), over half were from pre-1641 stock, including John Ryan’s second son Daniel, who was leasing the lands of Rathmanagh from an English adventurer named Nicholas Baxter.⁴⁹ The presence of these families on lands granted to English adventurers, eager to extract an income from their investments, would have helped to further moderate ideological concerns. The Ryans, therefore, might have remained barbaric papists in the eyes of their English counterparts, but they were also willing to lease land and pay rents under less than ideal circumstances. In essence, practical economic necessity had trumped uncompromising ideology.⁵⁰ The authorities for their part called an effective halt to the transplantation initiative in June 1657, frustrated by the sheer scale and confusion

⁴⁷ Barnard, *The Kingdom of Ireland*, p. 30; idem, *Cromwellian Ireland: English government and reform in Ireland, 1649–1660* (Oxford, 1975), pp 14–15, 106–108, 298–300; Pádraig Lenihan, *Consolidating Conquest: Ireland, 1603–1727* (Harlow, 2008), p. 144.

⁴⁸ Vincent Gookin, *The great case of transplantation in Ireland discussed* (London, 1655), p. 18; Barnard, *Kingdom of Ireland*, p. 30; Smyth, *Map-making, landscapes and memory*, pp 162–3, 182; Ó’Siochrú and Brown, ‘The Down Survey and the Cromwellian Land Settlement’, p. 592.

⁴⁹ Tituladoes were the principal individuals in a specific area, either the owners of the land or large head tenants. Evidence suggests that below this level there were many more old inhabitants leasing land in the area: Pender (ed.), *A Census of Ireland, circa 1659*, pp 315–19; The state of ye accompt between Mr Barker & Mr Pilkington for ye arrears for Loughmoe & Turkoloe lott, 19 Dec. 1661 (RIA, *Purcell papers*, SR 4/A/42 MS 2f).

⁵⁰ Prendergast, *Cromwellian settlement*, pp 266–7; Cunningham, *Conquest and land*, p. 35; idem, ‘The transplanters’ certificates’, pp 391–2.

generated by the task at hand, and in a face-saving move proclaimed it a success. Catholics were given a final deadline of between three and six months to take up their new estates across the River Shannon or forfeit their claims and face banishment overseas.⁵¹ Whether every transplantee rigidly adhered to the terms of the 1657 act and remained in Connacht is doubtful.

As noted, the Ryans put in place the initial building blocks of their future prosperity during the Cromwellian period. Their possible interaction with Dr Patrick Raggett and its future consequences have already been alluded to. However, the decisive influence on their re-emergence was based on the links they forged with others who remained among the old order in the area that carried through to the Restoration period. Central to this was Daniel Ryan of Rathmanagh and the patronage he attracted from a particular family, the Purcells of Loughmoe.

The Baron of Loughmoe, Theobald Purcell, helped lead the insurrection in north Tipperary from its inception in December 1641, and was reputedly wounded during the disastrous battle of Liscarroll in 1642. Whether due to sickness, as a result of his wounds, or a mixture of both, the baron died in 1644 at the age of 49.⁵² He was succeeded by his only son James Purcell, but he himself died in December 1652 while in the service of the exiled King Charles II, leaving a wife, four daughters and a three month old heir to face the prospect of dispossession and transplantation under the Cromwellian regime.⁵³ On the eve of losing the Loughmoe estate, the widow Elizabeth Purcell was in a precarious financial position. A document detailing her late husband's personal estate in May 1653 found that this amounted to £131 19s 6d, all of which went towards paying estate taxes or to satisfying the creditors with whom Lady Elizabeth had agreed to have the examination carried out. Besides the two independent assessors who scrutinised the

⁵¹ Gillespie, *Seventeenth Century Ireland*, p. 191; 'June 1657: An Act for the Attainder of the Rebels in Ireland' in Firth and Rait (eds), *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum*, pp 1250–1262.

⁵² 'Lord Justices and Council to the Earl of Leicester, Lord Lieutenant, 26 Dec. 1641' in *Calendar of Manuscripts of the Marquess of Ormonde, ii, 1641–1653*, pp 48–9; Richard Gething, *Digitus dei, or, A miraculous victory gained by the English, upon the rebels in Munster: exprest in two letters, written to Lievtenant Colonell St. Leger, sonne and heire to the Right Honourable Sir William St. Leger ... September 20 1642* (London, 1642), p. 5; Anon, *A true relation of divers great defeats given against the rebells of Ireland, by the Earle of Ormond, lieutenant-generall of all His Majesties forces in that kingdom: with a map describing the order of a battell lately fought there. Published by His Majesties command* (London, 1642), p. 6; Micheál Ó Siochrú, *Confederate Ireland, 1642–1649: a constitutional and political analysis* (Dublin, 2008), p. 255; Vigors (ed.), 'Rebellion of 1641–2,' pp 290–291; Herbert Webb Gillman (ed.), 'The rise and progress in Munster of the rebellion, 1642 (contd)' in *Journal of the Cork Historical Archaeological Society*, ii, no. 13 (1896), p. 27.

⁵³ James Purcell was specifically exempted from pardon of life and estate by Parliament: 'August 1652: An Act for the Setling of Ireland' in Firth and Rait (eds), *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum*, p. 599; History of the Barony of Eliogarty by Dr Martin Callanan (NLI, *Callanan MS*, microfilm, p4546), pp 776–79.

Loughmoe accounts, the document also notes the presence of Daniel Ryan, which would suggest he was overseeing Purcell's interest in the matter. This early link between Ryan and the Purcell interest was reinforced two years later, in February 1655, when Lady Elizabeth's half-brother, Captain George Mathew of Rehill, purchased land from a Cromwellian officer at Thurles and Ryan acted as witness to the transaction.⁵⁴

Less than a week after her half-brother's land purchase in February 1655, Lady Purcell was declared an innocent papist and granted an estate in Co. Galway, worth £200 a year to represent two-thirds of her original marriage jointure.⁵⁵ Soon after, however, the authorities discovered the allotted lands contained a valuable timber supply and later resettled Purcell's claim on the castle and lands centred on Tynagh in the south-eastern corner of Galway.⁵⁶ Due to problems attached to her Galway estate, Lady Purcell directed her attention back towards Tipperary, taking a lease on lands bordering her husband's former estate in October 1656. Her new landlord was a London merchant by the name of Nicholas Blake. Akin to most adventurers, Blake had no design to settle in the area and empowered Richard Glene, general agent and 'surveyor for all ye adventurers of ye Barony of Eliogarty', to dispose of the allotted 333 acres as he saw fit upon new tenants. This he did and Lady Purcell took a lease on 222 acres for two years (an individual named John Grace took the remainder).⁵⁷ Daniel Ryan continued to lease land at Rathmanagh, and the services he had provided to the Purcell interest were to see him well placed to benefit once the old order returned with the Restoration of Charles II in 1660.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ An account of the personal estate of James Purcell, 19 May 1653 (RIA, *Purcell papers*, MS 2h); Prendergast, *Cromwellian settlement*, p. 210; History of Eliogarty (NLI, *Callanan MS*, p4546), p. 138.

⁵⁵ Lady Purcell's favourable treatment by the authorities likely stemmed from the kindness and support shown by her mother, Elizabeth Butler, Lady Thurles, to English inhabitants of the Thurles area after the outbreak of the 1641 Rebellion: R.H. Long, 'The last of the Purcells of Loughmoe, Co. Tipperary, Colonel Nicholas Purcell, d. 1722' in *Journal of the Waterford and South-East of Ireland Archaeological Society*, iv (1898), p. 113; Robert Dunlop (ed.), *Ireland under the Commonwealth: being a selection of documents relating to the government of Ireland from 1651 to 1659, vol. ii* (Manchester, 1913), pp 606–7; *Report on the manuscripts of the Marquess of Ormonde, ii* (1899), p. 173.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Ye accompt between Barker & Pilkington for ye arrears, 19 Dec. 1661 (RIA *Purcell papers*, SR 4/A/42 MS 2f).

⁵⁸ Pender (ed), *A Census of Ireland, circa 1659*, p. 315.

II

*'I have laboured as much as I could to come to a perfect understanding of it'*⁵⁹

The Restoration brought with it a sense of hope among Catholics that the Cromwellian land settlement would be reversed and estates restored upon their former owners.⁶⁰ The Purcells occupied a favourable position in this regard. The last baron had died in the service of the King and his Protestant brother-in-law, James Butler, the Marquis of Ormond, acted as guardian to the young heir to Loughmoe, Nicholas Purcell.⁶¹ As a result of Ormond's influence at court, the King ordered the Master of Wards and Livery to enquire by commission into their title over the lands and body of Nicholas Purcell of Loughmoe as early as November 1660.⁶² As guardian Ormond was duly granted title to over eleven thousand plantation acres, including the 1641 estate centred on Loughmoe and the 'Baron's colpe' to the west in Kilnelongurty.⁶³

The nine-year-old Nicholas Purcell was reinstated in Loughmoe soon after. That his guardian was the most powerful figure in Ireland, deeply involved in Irish governance and administrative matters, meant Purcell's welfare passed through a network of trustworthy individuals that ultimately led back to the newly created Duke. Needless to say this was a very important matter given the powerful extended family and interests involved. This in turn relays the value of Daniel Ryan's previous interaction with Lady Purcell, and indeed George Mathew, because after October 1661 he was appointed steward on the Loughmoe estate.

Apart from providing links between both families that were to profit the Ryans into the next generation and century, this relationship highlights a number of points. Daniel Ryan's involvement in the management of the Purcell estate shows he was trusted and that his knowledge in such matters was respected also. Due to the lack of surviving evidence it is not possible to ascertain how or where Ryan acquired the necessary skills

⁵⁹ Daniel Ryan to [Col. John Fitzpatrick], 19 Dec. 1661 (RIA, *Purcell papers*, MS 2g).

⁶⁰ Tim Harris, 'Restoration Ireland – themes and problems' in Coleman A. Dennehy (ed.), *Restoration Ireland: always settling and never settled* (Aldershot, 2008), p. 10.

⁶¹ St John D. Seymour, 'Family papers belonging to the Purcells of Loughmoe. Co. Tipperary' in *Journal of the North Munster Archaeological Society*, iii (1913–15), p. 127.

⁶² King Charles II to the Master of Wards and Livery, 20 Nov. 1660 (RIA, *Purcell papers*, MS 2e); Long, 'Last of the Purcells of Loughmoe', p. 114.

⁶³ King Charles II to the Lords Justices of Ireland, 9 Aug. 1661 (Bodleian Library, *Carte Calendar*, xxxii, MS 42, f. 350), available at: <http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/projects/carte/carte32.html> [2 Mar. 2015]; King Charles II to the Lords Justices of Ireland, 31 Oct. 1661 (Ibid., f. 423); History of Eliogarty (NLI, *Callanan MS*, p4546), pp 776–78; C.W. Russell and J.P. Prendergast (eds), *The Carte manuscripts in the Bodleian Library*, Oxford (London, 1871), p. 215.

to fulfil the role as estate steward. Yet, it is possible to offer some general remarks based on the context of the time. Primogeniture, or a type of partible inheritance approaching primogeniture, had been the dominant form of inheritance practiced by the Ryans. They had managed to first consolidate and then maintain the bulk of their lands under a single heir prior to their dispossession during the 1650s. Thus, as a second son Daniel Ryan would not have been entitled to inherit a portion of his father's estate upon the latter's demise. It therefore became necessary for him to acquire the necessary education and skills to forge a living as a younger son. Although concerned primarily with the Irish aristocracy, Jane Ohlmeyer's observations concerning the investment a family made in education can be applied in the case of the Ryans, especially when 'it came to a younger son, which helped to secure his future and was of wider benefit to the lineage'.⁶⁴ Evidence of this view of education can be identified in the career of the family's neighbour, William Fogarty of Inchyfogarty (Inch), who was sent to France as a younger son to study medicine and took his degree in Anjou in 1645.⁶⁵ What is more, John Morrissey's examination of the Ryans' other neighbours, the O'Dwyers of Kilnamanagh, has highlighted that the ability to incorporate estates into the emerging market economy and a strong grasp of English law were prerequisites for the Old Irish in the region if they were to adapt to their post-1603 environment.⁶⁶ Hazel Maynard supports this view by identifying an upsurge in admissions to the English Inns of Court during the 1630s among members of Old Irish and Old English families in the region, and she equates this increase to the arbitrary policies of lord deputy Thomas Wentworth, the Earl of Strafford.⁶⁷ The importance of understanding the new law of the land would not have been lost on the Ryans either, particularly during the 1630s, when the region was surveyed and mapped via the Strafford Survey for inclusion in the proposed Plantation of Ormond — at the very least the Ryans stood to lose a quarter of their lands if title to the same could not be proven

⁶⁴ Jane Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English: the Irish aristocracy in the seventeenth-century* (London, 2012), p. 441.

⁶⁵ History of Eliogarty (NLI, *Callanan MS*, p4546), p. 668; The Fogartys of Inch (TCLT, *Fogarty papers*, typescript copy, vol. xxix), p. 18.

⁶⁶ John Morrissey, 'Kilnamanagh and the frontier: surviving the New English of the early seventeenth century' in *Tipperary Historical Journal*, no. 17 (2004), pp 102–4.

⁶⁷ London Inns of Court were also a type of finishing school for young gentlemen, and Theobald Purcell, the future baron of Loughmoe, was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1615. Other Tipperary names from Wentworth's time were John Grace and Edmond Ryan (see below), James Butler, Edmond and Richard Power of Powerstown and Theobald Mathew (elder brother of Capt. George Mathew): Hazel Maynard, 'Irish membership of the English Inns of Court, 1660–1699: lawyers, litigation and the legal profession' (PhD thesis, University College Dublin, 2006), p. 71; Joseph Foster (ed.), *The register of admissions to Gray's Inn, 1521–1889, together with the register of marriages in Gray's Inn Chapel, 1695–1754* (London, 1889), p. 137, 221, 228; William Henry Cooke, *Students admitted to the Inner Temple, 1571–1625* (London, 1868), p. 93, 119.

via the proper procedures.⁶⁸ As a result, John Ryan would have realised that knowledge of the law and efficient estate management were fundamental to the education of his two sons, Daniel especially, if they were to prosper in life.

Putting his education aside, the question remains as to why Daniel Ryan was chosen and not another respected and competent gentleman. An important factor in the Purcell interest's decision to trust Ryan was the fact that both families had been associated with one another prior to the outbreak of war. As stated previously, Lady Purcell's father-in-law, Baron Theobald, purchased in c.1631 the old mensal lands of the last known direct descendant of the chief of Kilnelongurty, Shane alias John Glasse O'Mulryan.⁶⁹ This land transfer made the Ryans of Lisnasella next door neighbours to the new 'Baron's colpe' and the largest Old Irish proprietors resident in the territory. Good relations would have been beneficial to both families, the Ryans especially, since the threat of the Ormond plantation loomed large at this time and Purcell would have represented a powerful ally in efforts to stave off New English encroachment. Traditional bonds of affinity were increasingly under stress, but Purcell's expansion into the area, as opposed to English settlers, ensured that dynastic collapse — evident in the case of Shane Glasse O'Mulryan in this instance — was shored up quickly by 'the rise of a new lord'. This is seen in the relationship that existed between the Baron and John Ryan, where the latter paid the chief rent of £6 to Purcell annually. By agreeing to pay the rent, either wilfully or otherwise, John Ryan showed that his family were within the Purcell sphere of influence.⁷⁰ This would suggest a further reason as to why Daniel Ryan was later trusted to handle the interests of the Loughmoe estate. One could even speculate that Daniel Ryan may have learnt his trade as an agent working on the Loughmoe estate before the Cromwellian conquest.

⁶⁸ 'Lord Esmond to Lord Dorchester, 16 Sept. 1630' in *CSPI, 1625–1632*, p. 577; Prendergast, 'Projected Plantation of Ormond', pp 390–409.

⁶⁹ Shane Glasse was the son of Donald/Donal, son of Shane Glasse, with the latter individual apparently having died during the 1570s. After 1660 the clan's old mensal lands were granted manorial status by the King (the manor of Coolkill): Morrin (ed.), *Calendar of patent and close rolls in Ireland in the reign of Charles the First*, ii, p. 586; O'Donovan, 'Letter from Sir Charles O'Carroll to Lord Mountjoy', p. 313; Callanan, *Records of four Tipperary septs*, p. 78; G.A. Hayes-McCoy, 'Gaelic society in Ireland in the late sixteenth century' in G.A. Hayes-McCoy (ed.), *Historical Studies*, iv (London, 1963), p. 48.

⁷⁰ Dr Martin Callanan's copy of an inquisition into the Loughmoe estate in 1661 recorded the chief rent paid by John Ryan as equating to £60. However, the sum of £6 was later recorded in a grant of the manor by Charles II held in the Ryan papers. The Civil Survey's yearly value of Cooldotia and Lisnasella was just £50: History of Eliogarty (NLI, *Callanan MS*, p 4546), pp 777–8; Ledger relating to the Manorial Court of Coolkill, 1785–90 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 12); Simington (ed.), *Civil Survey of Tipperary*, ii, pp 118–9; Bernadette Cunningham and Raymond Gillespie, 'Englishmen in sixteenth-century Irish annals' in *Irish Economic and Social History*, xvii (1990), p. 15.

A 1662 rental account for Loughmoe drawn up by Daniel Ryan records the presence of New English settlers on the estate, and it was this community that presented Ryan with his earliest challenge as estate steward.⁷¹ These new families (Rogers, Smallbone, Roberts, Howard and White) can be identified as adventurers or subsequent purchasers who held as their individual lots portions of the Purcell estate.⁷² Following the King's re-granting of the estate to Ormond in 1661 as guardian to Nicholas Purcell, the settlers quickly found themselves facing dispossession. In reality, there was little the families could do at this stage due to the involvement of the King and Ormond, yet some initially refused to accept their new status as rent paying tenants.⁷³ The problem was such that Ryan was forced to go to Dublin and then Ossory to petition the Lord Justices of Ireland to grant a repossession order for the estate. Even then, he informed Lady Purcell's new husband, Col. John 'Jack' Fitzpatrick, that the 'last Order will not be enough to put a periott [*period?*] to this business', and that he was 'still of the opinion that two words of a letter from my Lord to his Grace's [*Ormond's*] Comrs. will not be a misse'.⁷⁴ Ryan also decided that once the order had been impressed upon the inhabitants of Loughmoe he would return to Dublin to attend a law 'suite' on Fitzpatrick's behalf, and 'least any of ye persons upon Mr. Purcell's estate would shew any cause against our Order' within the ten day period granted by the Justices.⁷⁵

Daniel Ryan returned to Loughmoe in late December 1661 and seems to have gained the submission of the settler community, the exception being Thomas White, who alongside Thomas Roberts had taken up joint possession of the castle and lands at Beakstown. In early January 1662 Ryan and Ormond's commissioner, Edward Butler, approached White and Roberts, advising them to surrender their holdings per the order for repossession.⁷⁶ When shown the order White asked for a week to consider his position. Roberts complied outright, gave quiet possession of the castle at Beakstown and provided

⁷¹ Daniel Ryan's rental and domestic accounts of Mr Purcell's estate of Loughmoe, Easter 1662 (NLI, *Fitzpatrick papers*, MS 8099).

⁷² Sir Martin Noell had also received part of the Purcell estate as an original adventurer: *CSPI, 1666–1669*, p. 380; Prendergast, *Cromwellian settlement*, pp 397–8; Martin O'Duyser, *A biographical dictionary of Tipperary* (Cashel, 1999), p. 347.

⁷³ Cf. Pender (ed.), *A Census of Ireland, circa 1659*, pp 315–6; Rental and domestic accounts of Loughmoe, Easter 1662 (NLI, *Fitzpatrick papers*, MS 8099).

⁷⁴ Col. Fitzpatrick wrote to Ormond concerning his recent marriage: 'There could be nothing wanting to complete the transcendent honour and happiness which the writer apprehends in his late addresses & acceptance with the Duke's noble sister: Colonel Fitzpatrick to Ormond, 18 May 1661 (Bodleian Library, *Carte Calendar*, xxxi, MS 31, f. 181), available at: <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/projects/carte/carte31.html> [5 Mar., 2015]; Copy of Lord Justices' order for the possession of Mr Purcell's estate, signed Matthew Eustace, Mountrath, 5 Dec. 1661 (R.I.A., *Purcell Papers*, MS 2f); D. Ryan to Col. Fitzpatrick, 19 Dec. 1661 (*ibid.*, MS 2g).

⁷⁵ D. Ryan to Col. Fitzpatrick, 19 Dec. 1661 (RIA, *Purcell papers*, MS 2g).

⁷⁶ Deposition of Daniel Ryane, June 1662 (*ibid.*, MS 2f).

six pence ‘in toaken’ of his acquiescence, whereupon he was reinstated as tenant. Butler and Ryan returned on the agreed date to hear White’s answer and found, as Ryan would later depose, that ‘Mr White was not at home’. He subsequently detained possession of the lands from Ryan.⁷⁷ The elapsing of the ten days after first viewing the order was not enough to allow outright repossession of White’s holdings. Ryan was forced to wait until June for the court of assize’s circuit of the region, during which time he entertained the Justices at dinner in Beakstown castle at a cost of £2 and deposed as to the facts of White’s transgressions. With the support of the law, Ryan had White’s cattle appraised in order to cover the £12 owed in rent, and by July the county sheriff and bailiffs had repossessed Beakstown.⁷⁸

Beyond dealing with troublesome tenants on the estate, Ryan also supervised the affairs of different individuals connected with Loughmoe. He acted as personal agent for Col. Fitzpatrick who was in the process of regaining his own estate at Castletown, Co. Laois, alongside attending to the concerns of Elizabeth Purcell, now Lady Fitzpatrick.⁷⁹ The estate Lady Fitzpatrick had been granted in Galway continued to create problems, with her tenants refusing to pay their rents under orders from the newly returned Richard Bourke, 6th Earl of Clanricarde. Having sent his own man to Connacht to look into the matter ‘to little purpose’, Ryan planned further recourse to the law, ‘this tyme to get writts against all the ten[an]ts’.⁸⁰ Ryan was busy indeed, and added to this he was engaged in another dispute on Lady Fitzpatrick’s behalf concerning the lands she had leased near Loughmoe in 1656.

Understanding and charting this latter dispute is important, for it provides an excellent example of Ryan’s level of expertise when it came to estate matters and by relation his value to the wider Purcell interest. The particulars of the dispute were, as Ryan himself

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ It would appear that Thomas White brought a case over the issue against Ryan and two other individuals at the Palatinate Court of Tipperary in 1666, though the outcome is unknown: *The 6th Report of the Deputy Keeper of Public Records in Ireland* (Dublin, 1874), p. 72; Rental and domestic accounts of Loughmoe, Easter 1662 (NLI, *Fitzpatrick papers*, MS 8099); Deposition of Daniel Ryane, June 1662 (RIA, *Purcell papers*, MS 2f); John Davis White, *Anthologia Tipperariensis: being some account of the abbeyes, priories, churches, castles and other objects of interest in the county of Tipperary* (Cashel, 1892), p. 143.

⁷⁹ The King ordered that Fitzpatrick be specifically restored unto his estate. This had been ‘in the possession of one [Col. Peter] Stubbers, a halberdier, that assisted at that execrable murder of our royal Father... and so exempted by Our “Declaration” from pardon’. Daniel Ryan later reported to Fitzpatrick concerning his lands that a ‘young Stubers [possibly Edward, son of the above] and others did reinter upon us, but ye Sherriffe broake open their doors and repossessed us’: D. Ryan to Col. Fitzpatrick, 19 Dec. 1661 (RIA, *Purcell papers*, MS 2g); King Charles II to the Lord Justices of Ireland, 11 Mar. 1660[1] (Bodleian Library, *Carte Calendar*, xxxi, MS 42, f. 3), available at: <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/projects/carte/carte31.html> [4 Mar., 2015]; Russell and Prendergast (eds), *The Carte manuscripts*, p. 221; Beresford Ellis, *the Cromwellian colonisation*, p. 242.

⁸⁰ D. Ryan to Col. Fitzpatrick, 19 Dec. 1661 (RIA, *Purcell papers*, MS 2g).

confessed, 'somewhat intricate', but the crux of the matter stemmed from Lady Fitzpatrick's original lease in October 1656 via Nicholas Blake's agent Richard Glene. Blake later sold his allotment to another adventurer, Alderman William Barker of London. The alderman in turn leased the lands in May 1657 to an Edward Pilkington, also of London, for 21 years at £50 per annum, 'without taking into account ye former setting' between Lady Purcell (as she then was) and Glene. The reason why the new lease had not taken into account the Glene-Purcell agreement was that the details were probably unknown to Pilkington and Barker, since no written articles existed between the former parties until Purcell had them drawn up with Glene in June 1657 to incorporate their original October 1656 pact. Therefore, Purcell could argue that only £5 rent for the final year of her original lease was owed, whereas Barker could claim £50 was due for the same period per his contract with Pilkington. The question remained unresolved and by late 1661 Purcell (now Fitzpatrick) had become 'much troubled about ye arrears' as Pilkington had written from London that 'Barker is like to arrest him for ye rent'. It was only then that the issue was brought to Ryan's attention. After looking into the affair and locating copies of both 1657 leases, Ryan informed Col. Fitzpatrick that 'I have laboured as much as I could to come to a perfect understanding of it', and had drawn up an account 'wch wilbe your directory upon ballancing the accompts'.⁸¹

The account or directory was indeed complicated, and Ryan believed the only way to resolve the matter was a face-to-face meeting with Barker. Ryan's brief provided the attorney or lawyer who would have to travel to London for this meeting with a list of answers to the foreseeable claims that the alderman may put forward. This included the issue as to who was now liable to pay the rent on the 333 acres that turned out to be 700 in reality — a fact undoubtedly known to the Purcell interest when the original tenancy was entered into in 1656. Ryan further suggested that before the above meeting took place, it would be beneficial 'to get Mr. Walsh [*Ormond's lawyer and seneschal of his estate*], or another understanding person, to accompt with Barker' to forestall legal proceedings. This would allow time for the meeting to be arranged followed by payment of what was owed, 'whereby Mr. Pilkington might not be troubled'. In concluding, however, Ryan counselled the reader of the directory that if Barker should claim £20 above what he felt was outstanding, then 'I would not have you stand with him'.⁸²

⁸¹ Ibid.; Ye accompt between Barker & Pilkington for ye arrears, 19 Dec. 1661 (Ibid., MS 2f).

⁸² Ibid.

Barker, who had previously sat in the Long Parliament, was a shrewd individual when it came to matters pertaining to land and unlikely to compromise.⁸³ From his point of view the validity of the 1657 lease between Purcell and Glene was debatable, and the issue would likely hinge on whether a court of law believed these articles had authority over those entered into by Barker and Pilkington in London six weeks prior: did Glene, as a general agent, not in the direct employ of Barker, have the ‘likely authoritie’ to demise lands without the knowledge of the new owner based on a previous verbal agreement with Purcell in 1656? Consequently, Barker brought a law suit against the Loughmoe estate, whereupon Col. Fitzpatrick dispatched an agent in 1664 to ‘anser Mr. Barkers Shute in London’. The Loughmoe party apparently came off second best in this instance, as an account entry below the agent’s voyage and expenses in London recorded the payment of £100 ‘given to ye sd Barker composition [*composition*]’.⁸⁴ The eventual outcome is, however, beside the point, for the whole affair illustrates the importance of Ryan to the Loughmoe estate, and by extension his value to several other parties tied to the family. Furthermore, the survival of a single letter penned by him to Col. Fitzpatrick highlights the calibre of the individuals he could turn to within the Ormond interest when matters were outside his personal control and/or level of expertise. Apart from Fitzpatrick himself and the Duke’s half-brothers, Theobald and George Mathew, these included Edward Butler, Mathew Harrison, Sir William Flower and John Walsh. But, as Ryan’s skills and connections would lead to his own advancement, the fortunes of his father and elder brother were to follow a different path and reach the impasse experienced by the vast majority of dispossessed Catholic landowners following the Restoration.

As has been noted, the prospects of Catholics in Ireland following the Restoration in 1660 appeared promising. Charles II had pledged religious toleration under the Declaration of Breda, while Catholics believed their service to the Royalist cause against Parliament would be rewarded with the reversal of the 1652 land settlement.⁸⁵ The question of the role of many of the same in the earlier 1641 Rebellion looked to have been

⁸³ William Barker, later Sir and Baronet (1678), went on to marry Elizabeth Alexander, and with her came the estate of Kilcooley Abbey in eastern Tipperary: McKenny, ‘Restoration land settlement’, p. 50; W.G. Neely, *Kilcooley: land and people in Tipperary* (Belfast, 1983), p. 40; Bottigheimer, *English money and Irish land*, p. 74n.

⁸⁴ Up to half of this sum may have been additional rent owed to Barker as Lady Fitzpatrick and her half-brother Theobald Mathew had continued renting the land after the initial lease expired after two years. Once the dispute over the original lease emerged, Daniel Ryan noted that Fitzpatrick and Mathew had decided not to pay their current year’s rent (£50) until the dispute had been settled: Disbursements paid out for Mr Purcell’s estate May 1664 to May 1665 (RIA, *Purcell papers*, MS 2b); D. Ryan to Col. Fitzpatrick, 19 Dec. 1661 (ibid., MS 2g); Ye accompt between Barker & Pilkington for ye arrears, 19 Dec. 1661 (Ibid., MS 2f).

⁸⁵ Harris, ‘Restoration Ireland’, p. 10.

addressed also. Articles of peace concluded between Ormond and the Catholic Confederacy in 1649 had united both sides against the impending invasion by the New Model Army, and a number of articles specifically addressed the question of those who had taken up arms in rebellion. A full pardon was guaranteed for all offences committed by Catholics since August 1641, and all acts, orders or ordinances of both houses of Parliament that had arisen as a result of the rebellion to the ‘blemish, dishonour or prejudice to his Majesties Roman Catholicke Subjects’ were also vacated. All this was extremely beneficial from a Catholic perspective in 1660, and to ensure that the agreement would be honoured and passed under a parliament that would sit in Ireland, it was further declared that all impediments would be removed ‘which may hinder the said Roman Catholikes to sit or vote in the next intended Parliament’.⁸⁶

Since John Ryan submitted and adhered to the above articles and peace, he had cause to be optimistic.⁸⁷ Moreover, a clause was inserted to confirm the still pending concessions from the late 1620s to Catholics, ‘the Graces’, where specific reference was made to upholding the rights of landholders in Connacht and Tipperary. In short, the spectre of the plantation of Connacht/Ormond was to be dispelled once and for all.⁸⁸ Viewed against this backdrop, the marriages of Ryan’s two sons to the daughters of Dr Patrick Raggett can be taken as an overall sign of renewed optimism. Daniel Ryan’s marriage settlement with Frances Raggett from December 1660 referred to the hope that John Ryan would be ‘restored unto his former estate’. Even though Daniel Ryan as a younger son did not stand to inherit a portion of the said estate, he was to benefit from its repossession through a marriage portion of £100 from his father, followed by a guaranteed £100 from Dr Raggett.⁸⁹ This constituted a solid foundation upon which the newlywed couple could potentially become landowners in their own right in the future. Teige Ryan’s marriage settlement with Ellen Raggett has not survived, but as the eldest son and heir to the Ryan estate, it can be inferred that he married before his younger brother and received a larger marriage portion from his wealthy new father-in-law.⁹⁰ Of the six hundred or so

⁸⁶ John Milton, *Articles of peace, made and concluded with the Irish rebels, and papists, by James Earle of Ormond, for and in behalfe of the late King, and by vertue of his autoritie. Also a letter sent by Ormond to Col. Jones, Governour of Dublin, with his answer thereunto. And a representation of the Scotch Presbytery at Belfast in Ireland. Upon all which are added observations. Publisht by authority* (London, 1649), pp 6–7; Cunningham, *Conquest and land*, p. 120.

⁸⁷ ‘The dispossessed landowners of Ireland, 1664, part II’ in *The Irish Genealogist*, iv, no. 5 (1972), p. 433.

⁸⁸ Milton, *Articles of peace*, p. 8.

⁸⁹ If John Ryan was confirmed in his estate and defaulted on payment of the marriage portion, then Daniel was to receive a third of the estate. If Ryan did not reclaim his old estate, Daniel was to receive just £36: Marriage settlement between D. Ryan and F. Ragget, 1 Dec. 1660 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 8).

⁹⁰ Will of Teige Ryan, 30 Jun. 1679 (ibid., MS 19).

dispossessed Catholic landowners in county Tipperary vying to regain their former status, Dr Raggett had placed the posterity of his line, by way of his only children, in the hands of John Ryan's sons. Both choices had their potential merits: one in land and the other in skill and good connections, each of which would have appealed to Raggett as an educated man practiced in arithmetic and the vagaries of the world.

III

*'The ancient natives ... will no doubt bear the heaviest burden'*⁹¹

For most Catholics the political promises made to them during the late 1640s failed to be honoured following the King's restoration. The army and Parliament, including the crucial support of many old and new Protestants in Ireland, had opened the way for Charles' return. As a result, the King could ill afford to alienate these still powerful interests if he was to maintain some semblance of order and avoid being sent on his travels once again. Charles, nevertheless, did realise that those who had supported his father, both Protestants and Catholics, should be rewarded with repossession of their estates. Consequently, he issued a declaration in November 1660 stating that all Catholics innocent of involvement in the 1641 Rebellion would recover their property, but the same declaration, problematically, made provision that all soldiers and adventurers were to keep their acquisitions or be compensated with other lands. This was an unrealistic attempt to appease the different competing groups in Ireland, and many contemporaries were well aware that to satisfy such a proposal meant double or triple the amount of land available in Ireland was needed.⁹²

The ensuing Act of Settlement of May 1662 was passed by the first ever all-Protestant House of Commons in Ireland and gave statutory force to the King's declaration of 1660.⁹³ A seven-man committee, all English-born, was then installed to execute the act and settlement under a court of claims. Over eight months the court heard approximately

⁹¹ 'James Butler, Marquis of Ormond to Dr Gerald Fennell, 13 Dec. 1660' in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Marquess of Ormonde, K.P. Preserved at Kilkenny Castle, New Series, vol. iii* (London, HMC, 1904), p. 10.

⁹² Tim Harris, *Restoration: Charles II and his kingdoms, 1660–1685* (London, 2006), pp 92–3; J.G. Simms, 'The Restoration, 1660–85' in T.W. Moody, F.X. Martin and F.J. Byrne (eds), *A new history of Ireland, vol. iii: early modern Ireland, 1534–1691* (Oxford, 3rd ed., 1991), pp 420–21; Connolly, *Divided kingdom*, p. 133; Lenihan, *Consolidating Conquest*, pp 154–5; 'His Majesty's Gracious Declaration, 30 Nov. 1660' in *CSPI, 1600–1662*, p. 104.

⁹³ A third of the House of Lords appear to have been Catholic, while the 14 seats held by bishops with the casting vote when the house was split were all 'true friends to ye Protestant interest': Coleman A. Dennehy, 'The Restoration Irish Parliament, 1661–6' in Coleman A. Dennehy (ed.), *Restoration Ireland: always settling and never settled* (Aldershot, 2008), pp 54–5.

900 cases, and the majority of Catholic claimants were found innocent — much to the alarm of the Irish Parliament and the Protestant landed interest in general: such decrees of innocence entitled the holder to immediate repossession without the Cromwellian owners being first ‘reprised’ or compensated elsewhere. The court sat for only eight months (Jan. – Aug. 1663), and it became clear that if more claims were to be heard in the future, based on the previous results, this would seriously undermine Protestant interests. Consequently, the short-lived court of claims closed its doors permanently and left upwards of 8,000 claims unheard, which, needless to say, became a major source of discontent among Catholics for the remainder of Charles’ reign.⁹⁴

Based on the terms of the 1662 act itself, John Ryan’s prospects looked grim. ‘Articlemen’ from the peace treaties of 1646 and 1649 merited restoration under the act, where preference was to be shown to the ‘ensignmen’ who had joined the King in exile, but only after the Cromwellian settlers were reprised; in reality, physically dispossessing the latter proved almost impossible. Worse prospects were faced by those among the articlemen who had remained in Ireland during the Interregnum and received lands in Connacht. These individuals and their families, including the Ryans, were to forfeit all claims to restoration.⁹⁵ The pre-ambule to the 1662 settlement was worded in a manner that suggests that the sins of 1641 were neither forgotten nor forgiven, and the specific clause that affected Ryan provided a convenient, if not cynical justification to forestall his claim and those of nearly 200 other known articlemen in Tipperary:

... as to those who embraced the said articles, and submitted to the said peace and constantly adhered thereunto, and remaining at home sued out decrees and obtained possession of lands in the province of Connaught, or county of Clare, that they are to stand bound by them, and not to be relieved against their own act, ... and yet if the conditions of those seem hard, they can no more reasonably expect that we should further relieve them, than our friends in England and Ireland can expect we should pay back to them all the moneys they were compelled in the evil times to pay for their compositions which they would have avoided had it been in their power.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Karl S. Bottigheimer, ‘The Restoration land settlement in Ireland’ in *Irish Historical Studies*, xviii, no. 69 (Mar., 1969), pp 9–18; L.J. Arnold, ‘The Irish Court of Claims of 1663’ in *Irish Historical Studies*, xxiv, no. 96 (Nov., 1985), p. 418, 427; Cunningham, *Conquest and land*, p. 148; Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, pp 68–9; Dennehy, ‘Restoration Irish Parliament, 1661–6’, p. 60; Geraldine Tallon (ed.), *Court of Claims: submissions and evidence, 1663* (Dublin, IMC, 2006), pp x–xi.

⁹⁵ Bottigheimer, ‘The Restoration land settlement in Ireland’, p. 20.

⁹⁶ ‘The Act of Settlement, 1662: An act for the better execution of his majesty’s gracious declaration for the settlement of his kingdom of Ireland, and satisfaction of the several interests of adventurers, soldiers, and other his subjects, there’ in Edmund Curtis and R. B. McDowell (eds), *Irish Historical Documents, 1172–1922* (London, 2nd ed., 1977), pp 166–7; ‘The dispossessed landowners of Ireland, 1664, part I’ in *The Irish Genealogist*, iv, no. 4 (1971), pp 277–302; ‘Dispossessed landowners, 1664, II’, pp 429–49; Arnold, ‘Court of Claims, 1663’, p. 418; Simms, ‘The Restoration, 1660–85’, pp 424–5.

The character of the ensuing land settlement in county Tipperary was directly influenced by the Duke of Ormond. As one of the King's most loyal and trusted confidants, he commanded enormous prestige and power. He was installed as lord lieutenant as a result, and also held the status of being the largest landowner in the county, which cumulatively ensured he was uniquely positioned to influence decision-making when it came to the land question.⁹⁷ As such, Ormond became the only viable alternative for John Ryan and the other articlemen seeking redress of their grievances. Thus in late May 1664, the Duke's agent John Walsh delivered lists of the articlemen seeking his recommendation to be restored under the Acts of Settlement and upcoming Explanation. Of the 200 names provided for Tipperary, very few were to receive his favour, and successful petitioners were mainly limited to members of cadet branches of the Butler family.⁹⁸ Ormond's overall record concerning Catholics and land in the county was to follow a similar pattern, and he was to receive severe criticism from commentators among the dispossessed.⁹⁹ Even so Protestants, especially the 'godly' New English, felt he had shown too much favour to papists. Favouritism did occur, usually in the form of nepotism — the Purcells being a case in point, and even though he loathed many of the new settlers, there was only so far the Duke could, or wanted to, stretch political reality to accommodate Catholics, especially the Old Irish. Indeed, as early as December 1660 Ormond held few illusions about the future, and he spoke plainly about the fortunes of Old Irish families and their estates:

The ancient natives ... will no doubt bear the heaviest burden ... I am not afraid to say I am sorry for them, nor that anybody should conclude from thence that I would help them if I could; what was in my power I have done, and what shall be I will, to relieve such as in my judgement merit it, to which there will need no greater inducement than that they are afflicted and repentant. In this case I speak only of those that can claim least of my ear.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, p. 69.

⁹⁸ 'Dispossessed landowners, 1664, II', pp 429–434; A schedule of the Irish claimants to lands, under the 'Acts of Settlement and Explanation', for the several counties comprised within the province of Munster, 29 May 1664 (Bodleian Library, *Carte Calendar*, xxxix, MS 44, ff 56–77), available at: <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/projects/carte/carte39.html> [4 Mar. 2015]; John P. Prendergast, 'The Butlers, Lords Ikerrin, before the Court of Transplantation, at Athlone, A. D. 1656, and at the First and Second Court of Claims, King's Inns, Dublin, 1662–1666' in *The Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland, Fourth Series*, vii, no. 68/69 (Oct., 1886 – Jan., 1887), p. 601.

⁹⁹ Michael Perceval-Maxwell, 'The Irish Restoration Land Settlement and its Historians' in Coleman A. Dennehy (ed.), *Restoration Ireland: always settling and never settled* (Aldershot, 2008), pp 21–2; Toby Barnard, 'Irish images of Cromwell' in R.C. Richardson (ed.), *Images of Oliver Cromwell. Essays for and by Roger Howell* (Manchester, 1993), p. 183; Beresford Ellis, *the Cromwellian colonisation*, pp 245–9; Ted McCormick, 'Restoration politics, 1660–1691' in Jane H. Ohlmeyer (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Ireland, vol. ii, 1550–1730* (Cambridge, 2018), p. 107.

¹⁰⁰ 'Ormond to Dr Fennell, 13 Dec. 1660' in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of Ormonde*, iii, p. 10.

Overall, Ormond saw to the dominant Protestant interest, which was to alter permanently the landowning pattern of the county as a whole. The policy he adopted in county Tipperary was to confirm the New English in their estates first, followed by (in descending order) the interests of his own family, his relatives and close connections among the leading Old English families.¹⁰¹ Ormond still managed to double his own holdings in Tipperary and the combined acreage of his immediate family (including his wife and two sons) reached almost 300,000 acres spread mainly across the south-eastern counties of Munster and Leinster.¹⁰²

With only intermittent support from Ormond, the Old English landed interest in the county was seriously eroded, and long established families such as the Stapletons, Comerfords, Tobins and Archers, alongside numerous junior branches of the Butlers and Purcells, were locked out of their former castles and estates for good. The Old Irish, without any support from the Duke when it came to repossession, were practically erased as a landowning class. The western and northern territories of the county, the traditional heartland of Old Irish settlement, witnessed an almost complete revolution in landownership. As has been noted, these areas had been set aside to satisfy army arrears among the Cromwellians. These settlers had shown their willingness to accept the King's authority and the subsequent 1662 settlement would eventually see their claims confirmed, minus those of a number of regicides. What remained, 'the scraps' as Dermot F. Gleeson termed them, went to exceptional cases where the old proprietors managed to reclaim their estates or portions thereof.¹⁰³ Among the Ryans in the area only Daniel of Ballymackeogh (barony of Owey) is known to have had his estate restored following his son William's service abroad as ensign to the King and his marriage to the daughter of the Cromwellian grantee Col. John Ewer.¹⁰⁴ As a result, hundreds of separate landowners were to remain dispossessed of what they believed was their birth right.

¹⁰¹ Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, pp 69–70.

¹⁰² Boland, 'Land and settlement in the Ormond baronies', pp 132–49; Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English*, p. 311; McKenny, 'Restoration Land Settlement', p. 47.

¹⁰³ For further analysis of how the Old Irish fared in the Ormond baronies during the Restoration, see: Boland, 'Land and settlement in the Ormond baronies', pp 101–127, 159–60; Dermot F. Gleeson, *The last lords of Ormond – Cromwellian plantation, prelude and aftermath in the countries of the three O'Kennedies* (Nenagh, 2nd ed., 2001), pp 98–104, 110–14, 270–277.

¹⁰⁴ An Edmond Ryan was granted 222 acres in eastern Eliogarty at Castletown. He was the son of John Ryan of Cashel, and the former's legal training probably played a role in his grant: Foster (ed.), *Register of admissions to Gray's Inn*, p. 303; *The eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth, and the fourteenth and fifteenth reports from the commissioners appointed by His Majesty to execute the measures recommended in an address of the House of Commons, respecting the public records of Ireland. 1821–1823, and 1824–1825* (London, 1824–5), p. 134; Genealogical notes re families of Lalor, Carden, Ryan and Mores (NLI, *Callanan papers*, MS 11,422(7f)).

Catholics in general felt cheated and indignant towards their treatment, and it is as members of this marginalised group that John Ryan and his heir Teige likely identified themselves.¹⁰⁵ Their personal views have not survived, but it is possible to speculate on the sense of the hypocrisy and injustice they may have felt based on the fortunes of one individual who had profited from their loss, Capt. William Hewlett. As an army officer he had received part of the Ryan estate during the 1650s. This was bad enough, but Hewlett was not just a lowborn Cromwellian in the family's eyes, he was also allegedly guilty of regicide. Hewlett was duly confined to the Tower of London following the Restoration. He was later put on trial for high treason in October 1660, accused of being 'one of those which came with a frock on his body, and a vizor on his face, to do the work... upon the scaffold ... that it was he that gave the fatal blow'.¹⁰⁶ Thus, Hewlett (or Hulet) was accused of literally having the King's blood upon his hands.¹⁰⁷ He was eventually condemned 'to be hanged for murdering the late King', but the court remained unsure of his guilt as executioner and eventually granted him a reprieve, thereby 'possibly saving the life of a man who did assist in the death of the king'. Hewlett went on to be confirmed in his estate of approximately 1,000 acres in county Tipperary in 1666, including a share of the lands of Lisnasella and Cooldotia.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ For a sample of Catholic dissatisfaction, see: 'Memorandum criticising the Restoration Settlement in Ireland, c.1667' in *CSPI, 1666–1669*, pp 543–59; 'Print of the Faithful Protestation and Humble Remonstrance of the Roman Catholic Nobility and Gentry of Ireland to the King, c. April 1666' in *CSPI, 1669–70*, pp 560–3.

¹⁰⁶ *The indictment, arraignment, tryal, and judgment of twenty-nine regicides, the murtherers of King Charles the Ist*, p. 225.

¹⁰⁷ Hewlett was specifically exempted from pardon upon the restoration of the King: 'Charles II, 1660: An Act of Free and Generall Pardon Indempnity and Oblivion' in Raithby (ed.), *Statutes of the Realm*, vol. v, 1628–80, p. 230; 'Charles II, 1660: An Act for the Attainder of severall persons guilty of the horrid Murther of his late Sacred Majestie King Charles the first' in *ibid.*, p. 288; Charles Spencer, *Killers of the King: The men who dared to execute Charles I* (London, 2014), p. 111, 129; *CSPI, 1660–1662*, p. 681.

¹⁰⁸ Hewlett's woes did not end there, because in April 1663 it was alleged that he was engaged in a plot to seize Dublin Castle. For the crime, again alleged, he was 'taken out of his bedd [*sic*] and committed a close prisoner in his Majesties Castle of Dublin, and hath been soe kept languishing in irons' for at least a year. There is reason to suspect that Ormond inflated the threat of Blood's plot in 1663 to incriminate critics of the government, and he may have seen in Hewlett a legitimate target because of his previous record. Hewlett does not appear in a list of conspirators and eventually attained his freedom once again, but in 1667 he was incriminated in a case involving 'purgerry and forgerry' of several thousand acres of land, besides losing land in Fingal, 'which by some means came to one Hewlet': Petitions and answers to James Butler, 1st Duke of Ormond, 1663 (NLI, *Ormonde papers*, MS 2511, f. 88); Desmond J. Byrne, 'Land and survival in Fingal, 1630–1703' (PhD thesis, NUI Maynooth, 2009), p. 289; *Eight report of the Royal Commission on historical manuscripts* (London, 1881), p. 512; *CSPI, 1666–1669*, pp 487–8; *CTB, 1660–67*, vol. viii, part 2, p. 549; Book of Survey and Distribution for county Tipperary, 19th century transcript (NLI, MS 977), pp 185–87; *The Horrid Conspiracies of Such Impenitent Traitors as Intended a New Rebellion in the Kingdom of Ireland* (London, 1663), p. 11, 13–15; *CSPI, 1669–1670*, pp 454–6, 527, 680; Richard L. Greaves, *Deliver us from evil: the radical underground in Britain, 1660–1663* (Oxford, 1986), p. 141; Don Jordan and Michael Walsh, *The King's revenge: Charles II and the greatest manhunt in British history* (London, 2012), p. 128; *Memoirs of Edmund Ludlow, Esq; Lieutenant-General of the Horse, & C., vol. iii* (Edinburgh, 3rd ed., 1751), p. 74; Russell and Prendergast (eds), *The Carte manuscripts*, p. 203.

Guilty or otherwise, it is highly likely that the Ryans were convinced of Hewlett's past given that his conduct and nickname 'Grandfire Greybeard' had apparently been widely rumoured among the army in the region.¹⁰⁹ To the Ryans, therefore, the King's executioner had escaped without punishment and received part of their estate as his reward. Thus, once again, John and Teige Ryan would have failed to see the benefits of the new King's mercy and justice. On the one hand, the Ryans' situation was the product of a prejudiced system. On the other, an important factor in their negative fortunes was their inability to make the system work to their own advantage. As small Gaelic landowners from a peripheral part of the county, John and Teige Ryan did not have the resources or social connections to gain the support of who mattered most, the Duke of Ormond. Theobald Purcell had offered the family a well-placed ally during the 1630s, but the lack of a favourable voice at Loughmoe after the Restoration to support their case — Nicholas Purcell being a minor — meant the vital link to the ducal interest was never established. Furthermore, the role of the Ryans of Lisnasella in the 1641 Rebellion is unclear. However, John Ryan and 40 other landowners in his immediate area, the vast majority Old Irish, only submitted to the 1649 peace, which may point to their unflinching hostility to the royalist cause for most of the conflict. Therefore, parallel to being of Old Irish descent, the family's conduct and allegiances may have played a role in determining their subsequent fate during the Restoration.¹¹⁰

The Ryans were not alone in their frustrations. By 1670 the mass transfer in landownership instigated by the Cromwellians had been finalised under the Restoration. In 1641 there had been an estimated 603 Catholic landowners in county Tipperary with 80% of the profitable land (446,911 acres). This had fallen by 1670 to 69 owners with 20% (109,357 acres); approximately 10 percent of this figure was held by the Purcells of Loughmoe.¹¹¹ Conversely, in 1641 there were 26 Protestant landowners in the county with 14% of the total acreage — the largest by far being Ormond — and by 1670 this had

¹⁰⁹ *The indictment, arraignment, tryal, and judgment of twenty-nine regicides, the murtherers of King Charles the Ist*, pp 228–232.

¹¹⁰ 'Dispossessed landowners, 1664, II', pp 432–3; Byrne, 'Land and survival in Fingal', p. 6, 14–15, 366–7; Connolly, *Divided kingdom*, p. 133; The Examination of John Hackett, 25 Aug. 1652 (Trinity College Dublin, *1641 Depositions*, MS 821, ff 249r–250v), available at: Trinity College Library Dublin, *1641 Depositions*, <http://1641.tcd.ie/> [17 Apr. 2015].

¹¹¹ Thomas Power places the number of pre-1641 Catholic landowners in the county at over 1200 with 60% of the land based on the Civil Survey (900 Old Irish and 300 Old English), which disagrees with Kevin McKenny's statistics given above. The most recent figures and findings that draw on a wider range of source material by McKenny have been utilised here: Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, p. 66; McKenny, 'Restoration Land Settlement', pp 42–3.

risen to 349 owners with 75% of the land (417,814 acres).¹¹² The resulting figures from Tipperary mirrored the national average, and what had transpired was to form the basis of the landowning structure in Ireland for the next two hundred years.¹¹³ Furthermore, this physical transfer of property acted as a symbol of the transference of power from one group to another, because wealth, prestige and political power depended on access to land within a predominantly agrarian society. At least 500 Catholic families in Tipperary alone were dispossessed, and many were left to farm their old estates as tenants under the new owners or leave the land altogether and seek out livings elsewhere.¹¹⁴ Of course, the loss of ownership did not mean an automatic descent into poverty for these families. Many could carve out comfortable livings as large head tenants, combined in certain instances with their role as agents on estates that were now on average larger than their pre-rebellion predecessors.¹¹⁵ A minority of Catholics could use these dual concerns to re-establish their landed status, and one excellent example of an individual profiting in such a manner was Daniel Ryan on the Purcell estate.

IV

‘... myne owne house at Rossmult’¹¹⁶

Despite having had the estate re-granted through Ormond so soon after the Restoration, keeping financial matters under control at Loughmoe proved to be a difficult task for the Purcells and their representatives. Accounts kept from May 1662 onwards by Nicholas Purcell’s new step-father, Col. John Fitzpatrick, highlight the difficulty of keeping expenditure in line with depressed estate income and discharging encumbrances inherited by the minor Nicholas Purcell.¹¹⁷ For his part, Fitzpatrick had the full confidence and

¹¹² The discrepancy of 5–6% was made up of mountain and bog: McKenny, ‘Restoration Land Settlement’, pp 42–3.

¹¹³ As a result of the transplantation initiative, Catholic landowners in Galway retained upwards of 70 percent of the county’s land: Walsh, ‘The Blakes of Ballyglunin’, p. 78; Barnard, *The Kingdom of Ireland*, p. 4; Simms, ‘The Restoration, 1660–85’, p. 427.

¹¹⁴ For example: Petition of William Ryan, of Tobburbryen in the county of Tipperary, to the Duke of Ormond, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, [1664?] (Bodleian Library, *Carte Calendar*, xl, MS 60, f. 386), available at: <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/projects/carte/carte40.html> [10 Apr. 2015]; Ronald Hoffman, “‘Marylando-Hibernus’: Charles Carroll the Settler, 1660-1720’ in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, xlv, no. 2 (Apr. 1988), pp 207–36.

¹¹⁵ For a good outline of agents, their responsibilities and diverse backgrounds, see: Toby Barnard, *A new anatomy of Ireland: the Irish Protestants, 1649–1770* (London, 2004), pp 208–238.

¹¹⁶ History of Eliogarty (NLI, *Callanan MS*, p4546), p. 681.

¹¹⁷ Seymour, ‘Family papers belonging to the Purcells of Loughmoe’, pp 124–129, 191–203; White, *Anthologia Tipperariensis*, pp 129–148; Long, ‘Last of the Purcells of Loughmoe’, pp 113–15.

respect of his new brother-in-law, since Ormond, ever conscious of loyalty, would later write regarding his ‘brother’ Fitzpatrick’s service before and during the Interregnum:

He served the King at home & in Spain in a way more chargeable to him than it could have been to most of his countrymen – very few of whom are in the capacity to do as he did.¹¹⁸

Although less frequent references are made to him by name in Fitzpatrick’s accounts, it is apparent that Daniel Ryan retained many of the same responsibilities on the estate. He continued to receive the same yearly wage of £20 for example, and it is probable that Ryan persisted as one of Fitzpatrick’s agents in regard to Castletown, besides his official capacity as Nicholas Purcell’s ‘constant agent’. The concerns of all parties were now very much intertwined.¹¹⁹

The greatest strain on estate finances at Loughmoe were the charges accruing from the maintenance of other family members, who as yet were without the use of their own estates. Three of Nicholas Purcell’s married sisters, Catherine Darcy, Marie O’Dwyer and Mrs Cheevers were each due £50 per annum for their maintenance, followed by the yearly payment of Lady Fitzpatrick’s £300 jointure. Added were annuities payable to other female family members, and total charges in 1663 amounted to £680 out of a total estate rental of £863, with ‘ye residue’ going to the maintenance of ‘Mr Purcell’, ‘ye most nede creditors’ and repairing the castle at Loughmoe.¹²⁰ As the years passed, however, different

¹¹⁸ Col. Fitzpatrick ‘was feared and did much mischief’ during the rebellion. He continued for a short period as a tory leader around Nenagh and later came to agreement with the Cromwellian authorities to surrender and raise a regiment of Irish to accompany him to Spain. For surrendering he was supposedly excommunicated by the Catholic Church and became a target for the still disaffected rebels, while his less compliant mother, Bridget Fitzpatrick (nee Darcy), was apparently executed by burning under the machinations of General Edmund Ludlow and Col. Daniel Axtell. Fitzpatrick forged a trusted relationship with Ormond while in exile, to such an extent that the latter ordered future correspondence for himself or the king be directed through Fitzpatrick at the royal palace in Brussels: Ormond to Sir Henry Coventry, 3 Feb. 1674[5] (Bodleian Library, *Carte Calendar*, liii, MS 50, f. 232), available at: <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/projects/carte/carte53.html> [4 Mar. 2015]; Transporting of Irish soldiers to Spain, 1652-4 (NLI, *Fitzpatrick papers*, MS 8099); Correspondence regarding Irish troops in Spain, 1655 (Ibid., MS 8832); William Carrigan, *The history and antiquities of Ossory, vol. i* (Dublin, 1905), pp 102–6; Lenihan, *Consolidating Conquest*, pp 132–34; Dunlop (ed.), *Ireland under the Commonwealth, i*, p. 33, 154–8; Anne Creighton, ‘Fitzpatrick, John (‘Jack’)’ in *DIB, vol. iii*, p. 964.

¹¹⁹ Ryan’s income of £20 per annum would have placed his income in the top 14 percent in Ireland as calculated by William Petty: Disbursements made in ye prosecution of ye wardship of Nicholas Purcell, Esq. since the 17th of March, 1662 (RIA, *Purcell papers*, MS 2d); Disbursement by Coll Fitzpat sense yt time [May 1662] (ibid.); Disbursements made out of Mr Purcells estate due on him and for his use layed out since ye beginning of May last until this 20th of October 1663 (ibid., MS 2b); Russell and Prendergast (eds), *The Carte manuscripts*, p. 225; L.A. Clarkson and E. Margaret Crawford, *Feast and famine: a history of food and nutrition in Ireland 1500–1920* (Oxford, 2005), p. 29.

¹²⁰ In 1663 the estate’s yearly value had still not recovered to its 1640 level of £878: An abstract of Mr Purcells estate, setting forte ye quantity thereof in plantation acres, ye yearely vallue in ano 1640 according ye Civill Survey, together wite the yearely vallue in ano 1662 and in ano 1663 (RIA, *Purcell papers*, MS 2c); An Arbitus[means/way?] afored how to setil Mr Pursels estate (Ibid., MS 2d).

family members came to receive the benefits of their estates once again. The account from 1663, for instance, concluded by stating that once ‘Mr Darcy and Mr Cheevers are settled in their estates Mr Purcell will be eased of ye pension’.¹²¹ Nevertheless, the upheavals of the previous twenty years had meant that multiple marriage portions due out of the estate under the different barons had gone unsatisfied. Compounding these estate encumbrances were debts carried over from before the dispossession of the family, with the result that total encumbrances minus money owed to Fitzpatrick had reached approximately £4,840 by the end of 1663.¹²²

Having the wardship of the Duke officially confirmed, and seeing to subsequent legal considerations, invited further outlays of money also. Legal costs came to a total of £154 for the first year and a half following repossession, and Fitzpatrick had to cover the expense out of his own purse. This included two letters from the King for the wardship (£20)¹²³, an inquisition into the estate (£30)¹²⁴ and miscellaneous disbursements made by Daniel Ryan soliciting over the course of eighteen months (£30).¹²⁵ The next flurry of activity came in 1663 when the antiquated and unpopular Court of Wards and Liveries was finally abolished.¹²⁶ This meant a fresh round of legal proceedings and petitioning was necessary to have the estate granted to the juvenile Nicholas. Daniel Ryan repeated his soliciting routine and every palm in the process had to be crossed with silver and gold in order to receive a new patent for the estate. The latter cost £60 by itself and was preceded by other expenses, such as £9 10s to the King’s Attorney, £2 to his man and a further two plate pieces to Sir Nicholas Plunkett’s man (£6 9s). Even the Attorney General’s ‘mans man’ received 2s 6d for his trouble. Added to these charges was a further £50 spent in ‘several sutes in law at ye Curte of Claymes and els whear [*sic*]’.¹²⁷ Overall

¹²¹ Ibid.; Tallon (ed.), *Court of Claims: submissions and evidence*, pp 108–9, 208–9.

¹²² Debts challenged by the undernamed out of Mr Purcells estate, c.1663 (RIA, *Purcell papers*, MS 2b).

¹²³ Lord Lieutenant for the King’s signature, 12 Mar. 1663[4] (TNA, *SPI*, SP 63/313, f. 134); King Charles II to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 20 Mar. 1663[4] (Ibid., SP 63/313, f. 158).

¹²⁴ This inquisition is reproduced in: History of Eliogarty (NLI, *Callanan MS*, p4546), pp 776–79.

¹²⁵ Disbursemts for Coll Fitzpatricke in michae tearme 1663 on behalf of Mr Purcell (RIA, *Purcell papers*, MS 2b); Disbursements made in prosecution of ye Wardshipp of Nicholas Purcell Esq. since the 17th of March 1662 (Ibid., MS 2d).

¹²⁶ For the background to the Court of Wards, see: H.F. Kearney, ‘The Court of Wards and Liveries in Ireland, 1622–41’ in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, lvii, sect. C, no. 2 (1955/56), pp 29–68; idem, *Strafford in Ireland, 1633–41* (Manchester, 1959), pp 69–74; V.W. Treadwell, ‘The Irish Court of Wards under James I’ in *Irish Historical Studies*, xii, no. 45 (1960), pp 1–27.

¹²⁷ Extracts and notes relating to the history of Tipperary collected by Dr M. Callanan of Thurles (NLI, *Callanan MS*, microfilm, p5489); History of Eliogarty (ibid., p4546), pp 784–5; Disbursements in prosecution of ye Wardshipp of Purcell Esq. since 17th of March 1662 (RIA, *Purcell papers*, MS 2d); Disbursements out of Mr Purcells estate since May last until this 20th of October 1663 (ibid., MS 2b); Disbursement of £50 recd. by me from Mrs Frances 1 July, 1663 (ibid.); Russell and Prendergast (eds), *The Carte manuscripts*, p. 217, 223; Lord Lieutenant to England for the King’s signature, 12 Mar. 1663[4]

disbursements had outstripped estate income to such an extent that Fitzpatrick pointed out to Ormond that £600 was due to him for covering the shortfall up to the end of 1663.¹²⁸

Daniel Ryan continued to provide his services regarding other matters of estate administration. Account entries show he was collecting rents and disposing of them ‘to ye use of ye house’ in conjunction with other agents, who split their time between Loughmoe and Castletown. Furthermore, Ryan’s wife Frances appears alternatively as ‘Mrs Frances’ and ‘my wife’ in her husband’s 1662 account, which reveal her making payments out of her own purse when ready money was short on the estate, having Nicholas’ clothes mended and buying ‘ribbons’ to furnish a bed befitting a young gentleman and nephew of the Duke of Ormond. To help cultivate this image of nobility, Ryan bought Nicholas what was probably his first fitted periwig for £1 — the latest continental fashion brought back by men such as Ormond — plus a new suit of clothes and two pairs of worsted stockings, a total of £8 3s that also included sugar for his diet.¹²⁹ Nicholas Purcell was in receipt of a varied and rich diet and wardrobe, while it was also necessary for him to consume ideas befitting his station. Frances Ryan and another individual by the name of Mrs Isabella appear by name intermittently during the extant accounts, and one or the other received payments for the ‘schooling’ of Nicholas — it can be imagined that Dr Raggett’s daughter was well placed to supervise Purcell’s preliminary education before specialised tutors were called for.¹³⁰

Colonel Fitzpatrick and Daniel Ryan were equally pre-occupied repairing and improving the demesne lands and castle at Loughmoe following their decay during the Interregnum. Over £300 alone was spent restoring Loughmoe Castle to its former glory, with new glazed windows installed, alongside the procurement of lead for the roof and large quantities of timber for the use of carpenters within the house. To help economic recovery the demesne lands were re-stocked and improved also. Ryan began this process during the spring of 1662 by spending £45 in order to procure 340 English lambs from

(TNA, *SPI*, SP 63/313, f. 134); King Charles II to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 20 Mar. 1663[4] (Ibid., SP 63/313, f. 158).

¹²⁸ Debts challenged by the undernamed out of Mr Purcells estate, c.1663 (RIA, *Purcell papers*, MS 2b).

¹²⁹ For a discussion of the material world of the Ormonds, see: Jane Fenlon, ‘Episodes of magnificence: the material worlds of the Dukes of Ormond’ in Toby Barnard and Jane Fenlon (eds), *The Dukes of Ormond, 1610–1745* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp 137–159; Rental and domestic accounts of Loughmoe, Easter 1662 (NLI, *Fitzpatrick papers*, MS 8099).

¹³⁰ Disbursement recd. from Mrs Frances 1 July, 1663 (RIA, *Purcell papers*, MS 2b); Oct 27 1663 Disposition made by Coll Fitzpatrick of ye last michelmas rent of Mr Purcells estate (Ibid., MS 4i) Rental and domestic accounts of Loughmoe, Easter 1662 (NLI, *Fitzpatrick papers*, MS 8099).

John Grace, the tenant of Rathelty and Athnid.¹³¹ Cattle remained equally important for landlord and tenants alike, as each sought to profit by exploiting the London market's insatiable appetite for beef. A cow-boy was maintained for £2 (the shepherd received £1 8s), and barns and cow houses were repaired at Loughmoe to help meet demand, while new enclosures and meadows were set out as well.¹³² However, the cattle disease that struck Ireland in 1665 equally visited the estate. The stock of many tenants died and this forced them 'to run away', leading Fitzpatrick to abate £84 from the estate rental due to 'poverté'.¹³³

Both the Colonel and Ryan had devoted much of their time and energy attempting to repair the estate's finances, but in the long run their efforts proved unsuccessful. Ryan continued his services to Nicholas Purcell, while Fitzpatrick departed Loughmoe during the early 1670s once his step-son came of age.¹³⁴ The encumbrances on the estate remained and over time intensified. Of course, the difficulties of one man came to profit another, and gradually portions of the estate were sold or mortgaged.¹³⁵ Those who profited in the early years were two Catholic tenants of Loughmoe, John Grace and Matthew Shanahan. Grace procured approximately 400 acres that were incorporated into an estate that eventually reached almost 2,000 acres centred on Brittas, having had the latter granted through the favour of Ormond.¹³⁶ Shanahan came to possess approximately

¹³¹ English lambs introduced into the region by pre-rebellion English settlers were viewed as a better breed compared to the native stock, while attempts to restock Ireland from 1652 with English breeds were initiated. Raymond Gillespie has also noted how 'the 1650s saw a restocking of Ireland not only with people and livestock, but also with new ideas about how the economy could be developed'. Thus, Daniel Ryan's purchase of a large flock of sheep points to the increasingly commercialised and export driven mode of agriculture ushered in by the New English, from which many were to establish their fortunes: Gillespie, *The transformation of the Irish economy*, p. 41; Burke, *History of Clonmel*, pp 101–2; A.M. Fraser, 'The Damer family in County Tipperary' in *Proceedings of the Clonmel Historical and Archaeological Society*, i, no. 2 (1953–4), pp 52–4; Disbursements paid out for Mr Purcells estate May 1664 to May 1665 (RIA, *Purcell papers*, MS 2b); Rental and domestic accounts of Loughmoe, Easter 1662 (NLI, *Fitzpatrick papers*, MS 8099); Donald Woodward, 'The Anglo-Irish livestock trade of the seventeenth century' in *Irish Historical Studies*, xviii, no. 72 (Sept. 1973), p. 491, 497.

¹³² Rental and domestic accounts of Loughmoe, Easter 1662 (NLI, *Fitzpatrick papers*, MS 8099); L.M. Cullen, *An economic history of Ireland since 1660* (London, 2nd ed., 1987), p. 11; White, *Anthologia Tipperariensis*, p. 144.

¹³³ White, *Anthologia Tipperariensis*, p. 144.

¹³⁴ For Fitzpatrick's subsequent exploits, see: Creighton, 'Fitzpatrick, John' in *DIB*, iii, p. 965.

¹³⁵ Piers Power of Thurles, for example, claimed in 1689 that £300 plus interest was still due to him from Purcell's father Baron James (d.1652): Will of Piers Power of Thurles, 26 Jun. 1689 (NLI, *Callanan papers*, MS 11,422(8a)); Debts challenged out of Mr Purcells estate, c.1663 (RIA, *Purcell papers*, MS 2b).

¹³⁶ Daniel Ryan was made a trustee of John Grace's estate in 1677, and Grace had previously acted as witness to Ryan's marriage settlement in 1660. As Daniel's mother was a Grace, this would suggest both men were related to one another. John Grace was reputedly the son of James Grace of Rath and the grandson of John Grace (the Generous), Baron of Courtstown, Co. Kilkenny. It was probably due to this pedigree and family influence that he found favour with Ormond, while his legal training at Gray's Inn may have swayed the Duke also. He may have been the John Grace of Ballylensy, Co. Kilkenny who held 600 acres in the barony of Lower Ormond (John Purcell held Brittas) before the 1641 Rebellion: *The 6th Report of the Deputy Keeper of Public Records in Ireland*, p. 83; 'History of Eliogarty' (NLI, *Callanan Ms*, p 4546),

100 acres, plus two other townlands elsewhere, which were supplemented by the extensive farms he leased in the area, including 500 acres at Fishmoine — the owner was Dr William Fogarty who resided in London and left the management of his Tipperary estate to his kinsman Daniel Ryan.¹³⁷ Ryan himself leased extensive property in the region, including several hundred acres on the Loughmoe estate, while his brother Teige concluded his life as Purcell's tenant at Ballynahow.¹³⁸

Historians are agreed that the Cromwellian conquest and settlement of Ireland removed the remaining constraints of the feudal past in Ireland, and after 1660 it became increasingly viable for landowners to develop and consolidate their estates.¹³⁹ This was equally the case for individuals, such as Daniel Ryan, seeking to become landowners in their own right for the first time. On 18 September 1668 Ryan purchased Inchyfogarty (Inch) alongside several other allotments in the area during the same period. The procurement of lands did not, however, guarantee that the titles that came with them were secure. Ryan had purchased newly confirmed land titles, and this potentially meant protecting what he had acquired from the claims of the previous owners, which in this instance meant dispossessed kinsmen among the Ryans and Fogartys.¹⁴⁰ Consequently, he concealed the purchases behind Nicholas Purcell's uncle Capt. George Mathew.¹⁴¹ This was an astute tactic on his behalf. It has been shown that both men knew each other since at least 1655, and it is clear that they continued to have regular dealings with one another. Indeed, on 18 October 1664, Ryan purchased portions of the lands of

pp 319–320; *The eleventh – fifteenth reports from the commissioners respecting the public records of Ireland*, p. 46; John Burke, *A genealogical and heraldic history of the commoners of Great Britain and Ireland, enjoying territorial possessions or high official rank; but uninvested with heritable honours*, vol. ii (London, 1835), p. 352; Simington (ed.), *Civil Survey of Tipperary*, ii, p. 303; Foster (ed.), *Register of admissions to Gray's Inn*, p. 218; Brittas past and present. The Butlers, Graces etc. (TCLT, *Fogarty papers*, vol. xxx), p. 38.

¹³⁷ Daniel Ryan's sister Eleanor married Dr Fogarty's brother Derby. The estate Ryan managed on behalf of Dr Fogarty also included the lands of Drom which Fogarty leased from James Butler of Drom: Will of Derby Fogarty of Patrickstowne, 22 Jan. 1674 (NLI, *Callanan papers*, MS 11,422(8c)); History of Eliogarty (NLI, *Callanan MS*, p4546), p. 630, 637, 641; 'Nugent Papers, no. 136' in J.F. Ainsworth (ed.), *National Library reports on private collections, nos 120–147*, vol. v, p. 1261; 'James Butler of Drom Co Tipp' in *Blake Butler Collection*, vol. vi (NLI, MS 12,027), p.3; The book of Distribution (TCLT, *Fogarty papers*, vol. xxix), p. 12.

¹³⁸ Teige Ryan mortgaged his estate in Connacht to Edmond Ryan of Cashel in 1677. The original allotment of 239 acres had been reduced to 101 acres. The reduction was probably due to the claims of Henry Bridgman, who was in dispute with John Ryan over the lands in 1656: *The eleventh – fifteenth reports from the commissioners*, p. 276; Will of Teige Ryan, 30 Jun. 1679 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 19); R. Bentley to J. Ryan, 23 Mar. 1656[7] (*ibid.*, MS 1); Articles of Agreement. Thady Ryan, Culeloty, Co. Tipperary to Edmond Ryan, Cashell, regarding lands in Coylagh, Co. Clare, 26 Apr. 1677 (*ibid.*, MS 2).

¹³⁹ McKenny, 'Restoration Land Settlement', p. 198; Tim Harris, 'Restoration Ireland – themes and problems', p. 11.

¹⁴⁰ Kinsella, 'Dividing the bear's skin before she is taken', p. 161; 'The Earl of Essex to William Harbord, 28 Mar. 1678' in Osmund Airy (ed.), *Essex papers*, vol. i, 1672–1679 (London, 1890), pp 201–2.

¹⁴¹ For similar transactions in Co. Galway between a Catholic landowner and member of the Ormond interest, see: Walsh, 'The Blakes of Ballyglunin', pp 44–5, 202.

Rathmanagh and Archerstown from their English owner Nicholas Baxter, and a fortnight later Ryan conveyed the land outright to Mathew. Similar transactions also took place in 1670 when Ryan purchased lands in counties Tipperary, Kilkenny and Offaly from their New English owners and later conveyed them to Mathew.¹⁴² In return, Mathew held the legal ownership of approximately half of Ryan's new estate until 1684.

This agreement was of particular benefit to Daniel Ryan as George Mathew was among the best placed individuals in the region to provide assistance and protection during this period when titles to land were still in dispute. As Ormond's half-brother and one of his main agents, Mathew held a prominent position within the household-come-official administration of the Duke and Ireland, which worked to his own advantage.¹⁴³ He was granted the former property of Athassel Abbey through Ormond's influence and continued to amass lands as part of his role within the ducal interest, until he emerged as one of the largest and most influential Catholic landowners in the county seated at Thomastown.¹⁴⁴ Daniel Ryan was thus afforded the opportunity to benefit from Capt. Mathew's personal protection alongside his influence within the ducal administration. Mathew profited also from this arrangement. Both he and Ryan were younger sons and members of the 'New Catholic' landed interest (their titles were dependent upon the land acts of 1662 and 1665), and as his family name had shallow roots in Ireland, Mathew was forced to build his own powerbase in the region to reflect and support his newfound status. He did so by developing the contacts he made within the Ormond interest. Ryan, for instance, had proven his loyalty and worth to the family, and the form their agreement took meant that he was tied to Mathew for the foreseeable future.

¹⁴² List of lands in Co. Tipperary held by the Mathew family, [1812?] (NLI, *O'Byrne papers*, MS 27,327, f. 1, 3, 13); List of various legal transactions connected with Mathew property in Co. Tipperary, 1628–1798 (ibid, MS 27,329); Indenture whereby John Sadler, grocer of London, grants to Daniel Ryan of Fertuary, Co. Tipperary, his share of lands in Co. Tipperary, Kilkenny and King's County, 1670 (BL, *Miscellaneous Charters*, Add Ch 76603).

¹⁴³ George Mathew was also the fifth highest claimant of arrears in pay (£12,047 10s 5d) as a 1649 army officer. However, the fact that all but £333 8s 2d of this was held in trust by him would suggest he did so on behalf of other individuals, perhaps the Duke of Ormond among them. Mathew was a Catholic and his claims run contrary to the belief that 1649 claimants were solely Protestants: Kevin Mckenny, 'A 17th century "real estate company": The 1649 offices and the Irish land settlements, 1641–1681' (M.A. thesis, St. Patrick's College Maynooth, 1989), pp 106–6, 223, 232, 272; Walsh, 'The Blakes of Ballyglunin', pp 37–8.

¹⁴⁴ Marnane, *Land and violence*, p. 13; Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English*, p. 372; Barnard, *A new anatomy of Ireland*, p. 314; *The eleventh – fifteenth reports from the commissioners*, p. 46; History of Eliogarty (NLI, *Callanan MS*, p4546), p. 155; George Hatchell (ed.), *Abstract of grants of lands and other hereditaments under the Commission of Grace, 36–37 Charles II., and 1–4 James II., 1684–1688; compiled from the original inrolments in the Rolls Office* (Dublin, 1839), p. 36; Tallon (ed.), *Court of Claims: submissions and evidence*, p. 390; *Calendar of the Manuscripts of Ormonde*, iii, p. xiii.

The property in question was comprised of approximately 440 acres that were drawn from a number of separate transactions from across the spectrum of landed interests following the Restoration. Anne Ball, widow of the adventurer Samuel Ball, sold her allotment of Inchyfogarty (92 acres) in 1668.¹⁴⁵ Sir Theophilus Jones, who had varied his allegiances like many others between the Royalist and Parliamentary causes, and the Royalist Colonel Edward Vernon, added a combined 149 acres adjacent to the old Ryan estate in Kilnelongurty. Moreover, Capt. Mathew sold 34 acres in the same area. The final quantity of land, approximately 165 acres was purchased from Edward Annesley, another London adventurer.¹⁴⁶ Within the broader scheme of events, the lands transferred were miniscule pieces of property, yet they added up to more than their sum parts.¹⁴⁷ Of the numerous descendants of Shane Glasse O'Mulryan, the historic chief of Kilnelongurty, only Daniel Ryan emerged as a landowner in the territory after 1660. Ryan had restored his family to their former status, but had also adapted and expanded their position within society. Perhaps, most importantly, his status as a landowner tied to the Ormond interest would have afforded his family the protection they had previously lacked.

A commission of grace was established in 1684 in the hope of ending the contentious question of land titles in Ireland.¹⁴⁸ Shortly after the commission came into operation, Mathew conveyed the lands outright to Ryan, whereby he likely planned to have the

¹⁴⁵ Before his death Samuel Ball was appointed an attorney with the authority to practice before the land commissioners in 1666. It could be in this capacity that he became acquainted with Daniel Ryan: *CSPI, 1666–1669*, p. 389; *The eleventh – fifteenth reports from the commissioners*, p. 136; Bottigheimer, *English money and Irish land*, p. 176; Prendergast, *Cromwellian settlement*, p. 397; Petition of Daniel Ryan gentle on behalf of Thomas Barker and Anne Balle, relict of Samule Balle, dec., 18 Mar. 1666[7] (NLI, *Callanan papers*, MS 11,421(7b)); History of Eliogarty (NLI, *Callanan MS*, p4546), p. 319, 696.

¹⁴⁶ One secondary piece of literature makes passing reference as to how the Ryans procured their estate in Tipperary, and this suggests that it was purchased entirely from Edward Annesley. In fact, their land purchase from Annesley represented approximately 4% of the family's final landholding by the early eighteenth century. The vast majority of the estate came from a transaction between Nicholas Purcell and Daniel Ryan's son John in 1704: Grace Neville, 'French connections from Tipperary to Toulouse in the Ryan of Inch Papers, 1820' in *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium*, xxii (2002), p. 173; Bottigheimer, *English money and Irish land*, p. 175; John O'Hart, *The Irish and Anglo-Irish landed gentry, when Cromwell came to Ireland* (Dublin, 1884), p. 222, 452; Book of Survey and Distribution, Tipperary (NLI, MS 977), p. 34, 185–6; *The eleventh – fifteenth reports from the commissioners*, p. 209; Aidan Clarke, 'Jones, Sir Theophilus' in *DIB*, iv, pp 1039–40; Deed of lease between George Mathew, Thomastown, and Daniel Ryan, Inchiofogarty, 6 Aug. 1684' (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 3); Deed of release between George Mathew, Thomastown to Daniel Ryan, Inchiofogarty, 7 Aug. 1684 (ibid., MS 4); Deed of Sale of the Manor of Coolkill. Nicolas Purcell, Loughmoe, Co. Tipperary and Sir Stephen Rice, Dublin, 1st part; John Ryan of Inch 2nd part, 18 Mar. 1703[4] (ibid., MS 778).

¹⁴⁷ Daniel Ryan procured a further 51 acres at Fishmoynes from Capt. Mathew in 1675. Questions over this transaction were raised by Matthew Shanahan, the tenant of Fishmoynes, when he brought cases in the Palatine Court of Tipperary in 1681/2 against Ryan, Roger and Teige Fogarty, Edward Pilkington and Nicholas Purcell: History of Eliogarty (NLI, *Callanan MS*, p4546), p. 677; *The 6th Report of the Deputy Keeper of Public Records in Ireland*, p. 70.

¹⁴⁸ Col. John Fitzpatrick is credited with having proposed and promoted the idea of a commission of grace in 1684: Creighton, 'Fitzpatrick, John' in *DIB*, iii, p. 965.

property confirmed in his own name by purchasing a clean title.¹⁴⁹ Ryan is not, however, recorded as having had a new title granted during 1684-88. It is highly probable that he did not petition the commission in time before the death of King Charles in February 1685, and subsequent grants under King James II covered the remaining submissions left over from his late brother's reign only. Furthermore, the surviving documentation from the transaction in 1684 makes no reference as to how much the land had originally cost, but an approximate figure can be arrived at based on a similar purchase next door to Inch in c.1665 by Dr William Fogarty. Acting as an intermediary for Fogarty, Edward Pilkington bought 500 acres at Fishmoyne from the adventurer George Underwood for £300 (12s per acre).¹⁵⁰ It can be figured that Ryan's procurement of 440 acres of similar quality land cost approximately £264. The source of the money to purchase the land can also be deduced. As his father did not re-claim his estate, Daniel Ryan's marriage settlement stated he was to receive the lesser amount of £36 on top of Dr Raggett's £100. It is unknown how much Ryan received from his leases on land, but his seven and a half years as agent on the Purcell estate up to the end of 1668 brought with it £150 in wages. Discounting income from the extensive lands he leased, £286 at the very least was available to Ryan by late 1668.¹⁵¹ Furthermore, Daniel Ryan apparently purchased an

¹⁴⁹ It is interesting to note that Daniel Ryan, as a member of the New Catholic landed interest, would have supported the commission, but at the same time this meant any chance his brother's family had of regaining their old estate would be finally at an end. This highlights that Catholic interests, even within individual families, were not unified when it came to the land question: Kinsella, 'Irish Catholics and land in the late Stuart Monarchy', pp 164-5, 170-1; Deed of Lease G. Mathew to D. Ryan, 6 Aug. 1684 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 3); Deed of release G. Mathew to D. Ryan, 7 Aug. 1684 (ibid., MS 4); Byrne, 'Land and survival in Fingal', p. 333; Hatchell (ed.), *Abstract of grants of lands and hereditaments under the Commission of Grace*, p. i.

¹⁵⁰ Fishmoyne was not officially granted by letters patent to Pilkington until 13 Dec. 1668, but it is clear from Fogarty's 1665 will that the purchase had already taken place. Fogarty and Pilkington, who may be recalled from the Barker affair, were both apothecaries in London. Dr Fogarty was later implicated as one of the main conspirators in the 1678 Popish Plot and was also alleged to have orchestrated the Southwark fire of 1676 — Col. Fitzpatrick, who resided in London at the time, was also accused in the former plot and forced into exile in Europe for a time. Fogarty was confined to Newgate Prison where he died before reaching trial in 1680. He died unmarried and without issue, and his estate at Fishmoyne was eventually split between his brother and two nephews after a lengthy legal dispute. Daniel Ryan was involved in the dispute and his nephew, Patrick Fogarty of Curraheen and Ballinlonty, came to hold a third share in the estate: Titus Oates, *A true narrative of the horrid plot and conspiracy of the popish party against the life of His Sacred Majestie, the government, and the Protestant religion with a list of such noblemen, gentlemen and others, as were the conspirators* (Dublin, 1679); Bottigheimer, *English money and Irish land*, p. 211; John Gibney, *Ireland and the Popish Plot* (Basingstoke, 2009), p. 28; History of Eliogarty (NLI, *Callanan MS*, p4546), pp 631-44, 668-676; *CSPI, 1666-1669*, p. 280; List of lands in Co. Tipperary held by Mathew family (NLI, *O'Byrne papers*, MS 27,327), p. 8; Will of William Fogarty of Tipperary, 7 Sept. 1665 (TNA, *PCC*, PROB 20/951); Notes by Williamson, 28 Sept. 1678 (TNA, *SPD*, *Charles II*, SP 29/406, f. 215); Notes by Williamson, 29 Sept. 1678 (Ibid., f. 219); The Fogartys of Inch (TCLT, *Fogarty papers*, vol. xxix), p. 18.

¹⁵¹ It could also be the case that little or no money passed between Ryan and Mathew for some of the land transactions. Desmond Byrne has highlighted how some land transfers during this period were payments for services rendered. Mathew may have been repaying Ryan for the services he had provided and for his (continued) loyalty: Byrne, 'Land and survival in Fingal', pp 335-6.

additional 480 acres by the time of his death in 1692. Although it is unknown how much this land had cost, the Inch estate consisted of a total of approximately 920 acres by 1692.¹⁵²

How typical was Daniel Ryan's achievement after the Restoration? It has been shown that within his immediate social circle there were at least five other new Catholic landowners. All of them were tied in one form or another to the pre-1641 or Old Catholic landed interest, but their acquisitions after the Restoration placed them firmly within the New Catholic concern. The purchase of land by Catholics after the Restoration was by no means confined to Tipperary, and it has been suggested that by the late 1670s Catholic landholdings had risen to upwards of 30 percent of the national total.¹⁵³ This rise was split between new landowners, such as Daniel Ryan, and the re-possessed, each of whom were establishing and/or expanding their estates via the favourable land market. Desmond Byrne's study of land transfers in Fingal, Co. Dublin during this period highlights how more Catholics than Protestants were selling property, but cross-denominational transactions showed a two-to-one gain in acreage in favour of Catholics.¹⁵⁴ Broadly speaking, a similar dynamic can be applied to the area of county Tipperary under examination: Catholics were transferring lands between one another (Purcell and Grace for example), while the willingness of Protestant grantees to sell to Catholics provided the means by which the latter steadily increased their holdings. In this instance a particular clique that included Ryan can be identified. What connected them in the beginning was their interaction with the Purcells during the 1650s and 1660s, and this ultimately led to varying degrees and forms of assistance based on their standing within the ducal interest. John Grace, for example, ended up with a larger estate than Daniel Ryan due primarily to his more favourable links with Ormond, while George Mathew emerged higher still because of his close blood ties to the upper echelons of the Butler dynasty. It must not be forgotten, however, that they were all very capable individuals who had shown the ability to adapt to their new environment; it was, indeed, the upheavals of the period that allowed them to improve their positions within society. What eventually took form was a distinct interest with its own hierarchy. The base was occupied by smaller local landowners that included Ryan, the Fogartys, Shanahan and Grace. In the middle were regional men of

¹⁵² The total of approximately 920 acres is based on the acreage recorded in a common recovery suffered by Daniel Ryan's grandson in 1738: Attested copy of exemplification of common recovery suffered by Daniel Ryan of lands in Co. Tipperary, Hilary term 1738 (Boole, *Grehan papers*, MS 175/2).

¹⁵³ Kinsella, 'Irish Catholics and land in the late Stuart Monarchy', p. 161; Connolly, *Divided kingdom*, p. 137n; McKenny, 'Restoration Land Settlement', pp 39–40.

¹⁵⁴ Byrne, 'Land and survival in Fingal', pp 336–7; L.J. Arnold, *The Restoration land settlement in County Dublin, 1660-1688* (Dublin, 1993), pp 135–41; Simms, 'Mayo landowners in the seventeenth', p. 245, 247.

power like the Mathews, Purcell and Fitzpatrick — all kinsmen of the Duke, who sat at the apex of this social pyramid. Ormond may not have shown support to the majority of Catholics when it came to repossession, but by ensuring his Catholic kinsmen emerged out of the settlement as powerful landlords, the flow of his favour and patronage, by extension, trickled down to benefit Catholics loyal to the interests of his wider family.

Family	Seat	Ethnic Background
1 Ryan	Inch	Old Irish
2 Dalton	Grenanstown	Old English
3 Egan*	Annameadle	Old Irish
4 Purcell	Loughmoe	Old English
5 Grace*	Brittas	Old English
6 Mathew*	Thurles	Welsh
7 Kennedy	Pollanorman	Old Irish
8 Mathew*	Annfield	Welsh
9 Fogarty*	Garranroe/Castle Fogarty	Old Irish
10 Fogarty*	Ballinlonty ¹⁵⁵	Old Irish
11 Fogarty	Fishmoyne ¹⁵⁶	Old Irish

Fig. 1.5– Partial list of Catholic landowning families in mid and northern Tipperary, c.1700.
*denotes conversion of the head of the family by 1770.

Teige Ryan’s fortunes during this period were less favourable; by the time he came to write his will in 1679, he had resigned the fate of his ‘ancient reall estate’ into the hands of God and its recovery ‘if he be pleased’.¹⁵⁷ Due to his reduced circumstances it could be presumed that John Ryan went to his grave in 1666 with sentiments similar to those of his heir Teige over a decade later. His will, of 25 May 1666, was written ‘at myne owne house at Rossmult’ within touching distance of his old estate, and confirms the idea that many dispossessed landowners died on or near their old lands as much reduced tenants. However, the document was produced in a context that offered a father in failing health a glimmer of hope for the posterity of his line. Rosmult was the small portion of land Capt. Mathew sold to Daniel Ryan, and since Mathew had had this land confirmed to him the day before John Ryan wrote his will, this would strongly suggest that the sale of Rosmult was a contemporaneous and celebrated event. It can be supposed, therefore, that Ryan wrote his will with some satisfaction on his family’s new estate. Added to this, he would have known other matters pertaining to land were afoot, as Daniel Ryan was

¹⁵⁵ Daniel Ryan of Inch’s nephew Philip Fogarty of Curraheen and Ballinlonty apparently converted to the Established Church in 1710.

¹⁵⁶ The Fogartys of Fishmoyne lost their estate (300 acres) to discovery proceeding during the 1740s to John Carden of Templemore (see Chapter 3 & Appendix 2). This represented a third share of the estate that belonged to Dr William Fogarty at the time of his death. The other shares of his estate went to his relatives at Garranroe and Ballinlonty.

¹⁵⁷ Will of Teige Ryan, 30 Jun. 1679 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 19).

positioning himself to buy Inch at this time. He petitioned the Court of Claims shortly after his father's death on behalf of Anne Ball to have her landholdings at Inch confirmed and was duly granted in March 1668. Thus, John Ryan passed away surrounded by his wife and their young daughter, in his own house on the family's new estate; circumstances that must have gone some way towards softening the successive disappointments he experienced over the previous decade and a half.¹⁵⁸

By the 1680s Daniel Ryan was established as a comfortable gentleman farmer. This was reflected in the family's new home build at Inch during this period, most likely a five-bay two storey farmhouse, with a slated roof and chimneystacks at the gable ends.¹⁵⁹ The family had therefore reached the mid-point between the two contrasting images identified at the outset of this chapter. However, arriving at their final abode during the early 1700s was not just a matter of time: responsibility lay squarely at the feet of Daniel's son and heir, John Ryan. A foothold in the land market, knowledge of the law and an established social network were the keys to success. By passing on the benefits of these, Daniel Ryan ensured that his heir could combine the best of both worlds as a man proficient in the law and head of a landed estate. As the following chapter will show, given the right opportunities, the Ryans were to expand their interests in county Tipperary and beyond into mainland Europe.

¹⁵⁸ John Ryan married his second wife Catherine Clancy during his time in Connacht, and their daughter, also Catherine, was under ten years of age when her father died. It is also possible that John Ryan lived long enough to witness the birth of Daniel Ryan's eldest son John, who went on to build Inch House in c.1717: Manuscript and printed material relating to Ryan family history and the history of the Inch Estate (ibid., MS 662/33); History of Eliogarty (NLI, *Callanan MS*, p4546), p. 681; Petition of D. Ryan on behalf of T. Barker and A. Balle, 18 Mar. 1666[7] (NLI, *Callanan papers*, MS 11,421(7b)); Callanan, *Records of four Tipperary septs*, p. 104; *The eleventh – fifteenth reports from the commissioners*, p. 136; Laffan (ed.), *Tipperary families: being the hearth money records*, p. 39.

¹⁵⁹ There is evidence of this older structure in the rear wall of Inch House.

Chapter 2

Building Inch, 1688–1724

In July 1681, Michael Bath of Inchyfogarty bequeathed his ‘long sword, belt and all my owne bookes to John Ryon’.¹ Nothing further is known about Bath’s life other than what can be gleaned from his will. He was unmarried and without issue, and it would appear that he was a young man, as he lived with his sister and their father William. Given that he owned three periwigs at the time of his death, Bath was clearly an aspiring gentleman of some substance, and it is quite possible, therefore, that his family acted as head tenants on the Inch estate. Due to the reference made to ‘debts’ owed to ‘doctors and apothecaries’ in his will, Bath seems also to have lingered for some time before his death, and it is evident that a lot of time and thought had gone into making the nineteen separate bequests that constituted his last will and testament. Thus, as his mortality became ever clearer, Bath chose to leave his ‘nagg’ to John Ryan’s sister ‘Mrs Frances Ryone, ye younger’, while his endowment to Ryan himself was deeply symbolic and instructive as to how he viewed his young friend and neighbour. Without an heir or young male relative to pass his effects onto, he left Ryan the two main instruments — a sword and books — that a gentleman required to protect himself, his family, their honour and their patrimony in seventeenth-century Ireland. As the following chapter will show, Michael Bath was to be proven a good judge of character, and John Ryan would have recourse to wield both sword and knowledge during his lifetime. However, it was the latter that was to prove the most effective as he took up the mantle of responsibility and led his family into the eighteenth century.

The end of the Williamite War in 1691 spelled defeat, both politically and militarily, for Catholic supporters of the Jacobite cause. The thousands of ‘wild geese’ who subsequently chose exile on the continent have received much attention from historians. Far less common, as Eoin Kinsella has observed, has been the study of the lives of the Catholic gentry who chose to remain on the island in order to retain their estates and sue out the terms promised to them under the different articles of surrender.² John Ryan was one such individual, and this chapter will help to redress this imbalance by shedding light

¹ Will of Michael Bath of Inchyfogarty, 6 July 1681 (TCLT, *Ryan papers*, microfilm, TL/F/21).

² Kinsella, ‘The articles and Williamite settlement of Ireland’, p. 14.

on the fortunes of a Catholic who, like many of his closest allies, chose accommodation under the new regime rather than exile and continued conflict.³

John Ryan's life does not sit neatly within a popular narrative that focuses on the defeat and wholesale persecution of Catholics in Ireland during the early eighteenth century. It is true that his world was not without its limiting factors: as an ex-Jacobite officer numbered among 'the chief of the Papists' in north Tipperary, Ryan was imprisoned amidst fears of Jacobite invasions in 1692, and again in 1715/16.⁴ Nevertheless, as this chapter will demonstrate, the post-1691 environment did still present opportunities for a capable and well-connected individual like Ryan. By the time of his death in 1724, John Ryan had built Inch House and expanded the family estate to 2,940 acres. The land alone had reputedly cost over £1,600 at a time when his rental income may have been as low as £150. Ryan clearly had other sources of income available at this time, and the main goal of this chapter is to chart how John Ryan accumulated his wealth. Family tradition holds that Ryan acquired his fortune through 'commerce and from shares in a privateer'.⁵ Although this explanation appears somewhat embellished, there is, as in all traditions, a basis of truth in the story. John Ryan and his brother Patrick were involved in illicit trade with France and Spain during the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–14). Ryan also acted as a legal agent and continued to offer his expertise even after Catholics were disabled from doing so under the penal laws. Finally, at the time of his death Ryan was farming his demesne lands on a commercial basis. Although the exact sums of money generated from these different activities cannot be ascertained for certain, cumulatively they will help account for the fortune amassed by Ryan.

In order to understand John Ryan's rise to prominence, including both the opportunities and challenges he faced, the following chapter will be split into three main sections. First, Ryan's situation following the Williamite War in Ireland will be examined. His presence in London will then be considered and placed within its context through a discussion of Nicholas Purcell of Loughmoe's efforts to gain favour from the new English Monarchy during the 1690s. The second section looks at Ryan's legal career following his return to Ireland in 1699. Details regarding Catholics practicing the law

³ John Bergin, 'Purcell, Nicholas' in *DIB*, vol. viii, p. 320.

⁴ History of the Barony of Eliogarty by Dr Martin Callanan (NLI, *Callanan MS*, microfilm, p4546), p. 702, 791; Extracts and notes relating to the history of Tipperary collected by Dr M. Callanan of Thurles (ibid., p5489); 'A list of such Roman Catholic Officers as have been taken up by virtue of the late General Order, dated the 17th day of December, 1692' in *CSPD*, 1693, p. 17; William P. Burke, *The Irish priests in the penal times, 1660–1760* (Dublin, 2nd ed., 1968), p. 349.

⁵ Chenevix Trench, *Grace's card*, p. 153.

become increasingly limited following the introduction of penal legislation from 1690s onwards that was aimed at stemming their participation within the profession. The known activities of Ryan will help highlight that non-converts did still retain an active role working within the profession, although increasingly at a remove from the judicial system and official scrutiny. What will emerge also is that disunity within the family signified a perceived legal threat to the Inch estate that could not go unanswered. In turn, an examination of this family dispute will help build a picture of Ryan's level of expertise and his connections within the legal profession. Finally, the Ryans turned to trade to help bolster their fortunes. This commerce was, for the most part, illegal, yet should not be viewed automatically as evidence of their disloyalty as Catholic subjects. Instead, it will be argued that this trade was situated within a broader mercantile context that viewed political considerations during times of war as barriers to maintaining livelihoods and habitual business relationships. The Ryans, in essence, were willing to navigate and exploit commercial and legal grey areas in order to guarantee their success.

I

*'... the matter thereof solicited with all the earnestness and diligence [sic] possible'*⁶

As is well known, having lost the English throne in 1688, James II still remained king of Ireland and Scotland.⁷ In an attempt to regain what he had lost, James landed in Ireland in March 1689. A Parliament met in Dublin soon after, and in return for their support, Catholics sought redress of their many grievances, the land question in particular. Two important pieces of legislation were eventually passed with the King's reluctant approval. First, the Acts of Settlement and Explanation were to be reversed. This would allow landowners from 1641, or their heirs, to take steps to recover their confiscated property. Secondly, in order to repossess Catholics and to compensate the New Catholic interest, whose land titles were procured after 1660, the Act of Attainder confiscated the estates of approximately 2,000 individuals, primarily Protestants, who had left the country or not declared for James and were labelled traitors. If put into effect, this legislation would essentially end the dominant Protestant interest and herald nothing short of the complete

⁶ Petition of Nicholas Purcell to King William III, March 1694 (TNA, *State papers of Ireland*, SP 365/4/8, f. 21).

⁷ For conditions in Ireland during King James' reign, see: John Miller, 'The earl of Tyrconnel and James II's Irish policy, 1685–1688' in *Historical Journal*, xx, no. 4 (Dec., 1977), pp 808–9; James McGuire, 'Richard Talbot, earl of Tyrconnell (1630–91) and the Catholic counter-revolution' in Ciaran Brady (ed.), *Worsted in the game: losers in Irish history* (Dublin, 1989), pp 72–83; 'Thanksgiving for the birth of a royal prince, 23 June 1688' in *POI*, pp 55–6; Gillespie, *Seventeenth-century Ireland*, p. 282; J.G. Simms, *Jacobite Ireland, 1685–91* (London, 1969).

Catholic resettlement of Ireland.⁸ Daniel Ryan, for example, could attempt to recover the old family estate centred on Lisnasella, while his status as a new Catholic meant that he would likely lose Inch and be reprimed with confiscated lands elsewhere. Therefore, in theory, the family's overall estate would all but double in size.⁹

On an island consumed by a belief in the importance of land and its possession, the Ryans like many other Catholics were presented with a cause, if not an incentive, worth fighting for. Daniel Ryan was by now too old to serve, but his heir was dispatched — perhaps with Michael Bath's long sword by his side — to serve the Jacobite cause. John Ryan eventually attained the rank of lieutenant and he may have served in Hugh Sutherland's regiment of horse alongside Captain George Mathew's son and heir, Theobald. This regiment saw service throughout the war, including at the battle of the Boyne in 1690.¹⁰

The treaty subsequent to the Jacobite surrender at Limerick, as an alternative to transportation to France, offered Catholics who swore allegiance to William and Mary the same religious toleration they had enjoyed under Charles II.¹¹ This was followed by an indemnity from prosecution, freedom to practice their respective professions and, most importantly, a guarantee of their property rights.¹² As a result of this final clause, a court of claims was established in Dublin in April 1692 to hear and decide upon the claims of

⁸ J.G. Simms, *The Williamite confiscation in Ireland, 1690–1703* (London, 1959), pp 21–2; Gillespie, *Seventeenth-century Ireland*, pp 287–8; 'Proclamation calling on all loyal subjects to rise against William of Orange, 1 April 1689' in *POI*, pp 92–5; 'Proclamation declaring those who support William of Orange rebels and traitors, 4 May 1689' in *ibid.*, pp 96–7; Charles Gavan Duffy (ed.), *The Patriot Parliament of 1689: with its statutes, votes, and proceedings by Thomas Davis* (London, 2nd e., 1893), pp 43–61; Lenihan, *Consolidating Conquest*, pp 177–8; Kinsella, *Catholic survival in Protestant Ireland 1660–1711*, p. 35.

⁹ Given John Ryan was in possession of the family's lands in Connacht by 1696, it is evident that Teige Ryan's children did not live into adulthood. This would have meant that the Ryans of Inch became the next in line to inherit the family's old estate: Will of Teige Ryan of Ballynahow, 30 Jun. 1679 (UCC, Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 19); Deed by which Henry Bridgman, Castle Bridgman, Co. Clare, proposes to purchase land in Co. Clare from John Ryan of Inch, 26 July 1696 (*ibid.*, MS 5).

¹⁰ No John Ryan is listed as having served in Nicholas Purcell's regiment of dragoons 'yellow horse', though a cadet John Ryan is listed in Sutherland's regiment: John D'Alton, *Illustrations, historical and genealogical, of King James's Irish army list, 1689* (Dublin, 1855), pp 209–10, 217–8; 'Proclamation publishing a list of Catholics permitted to bear arms, 18 Mar. 1700' in *POI*, p. 485.

¹¹ For a discussion of the several other articles of surrender signed in different parts of Ireland, see: Eoin Kinsella, 'In pursuit of a positive construction: Irish Catholics and the Williamite articles of surrender, 1690–1701' in *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an Dá Chultúr*, xxiv (2009), pp 11–35.

¹² For the views of Irish Protestants concerning the articles of surrender and their fear of Jacobitism after the war, see: D.W. Hayton, *Ruling Ireland, 1685–1742: politics, politicians and parties* (Woodstock, 2004), p. 23; J.G. Simms, 'Williamite peace tactics, 1690–1' in *Irish Historical Studies*, viii, no. 32 (Sept., 1953), p. 304, 316, 322–3; Kelly, 'Disappointing the boundless ambition of France', pp 39–46; Simms, *Jacobite Ireland*, p. 258; *idem*, 'The original draft of the civil Articles of Limerick', pp 38–9; Ó Ciardha, *Ireland and the Jacobite cause*, pp 100–5.

the different articlemen.¹³ Daniel Ryan is not listed as having been outlawed by the Palatinate Court of Tipperary or any other Irish court.¹⁴ Instead, it is known that Ryan led a delegation of local gentlemen to the Williamite camp near Thurles on 1 August 1690 in order to surrender their arms and submit.¹⁵ This was originally the final date under which King William's controversial declaration at Finglas — although aimed at the 'meaner sort' of Irish — promised a pardon to those who surrendered.¹⁶ After the war, however, protectees who had been previously attainted for treason found little favour when it came to retaining their landed estates. This stemmed from the Dublin authority's strict interpretation of the terms granted to those who submitted. Within the 1690 proclamation at Finglas there was only a promise to secure those who submitted 'in their goods, their stocks of cattle, and all their chattels personal whatsoever'. This excluded estates of inheritance and freehold since they were not classed as chattels. Therefore, men of the first rank, whose outlawries remained intact, could claim 'no pretence or right to their estates' and the best they could expect was simply the retention of their lives.¹⁷ However, as observed previously, Daniel Ryan was not outlawed during the war, and this meant he escaped indictment for high treason and preserved his estate from forfeiture. The next important factor was John Ryan's legal status once his father passed away in May 1692.¹⁸ Ryan had been outlawed as a result of his service during the war, but this issue was addressed two years after his father's death, when he was adjudicated as coming under the Articles of Limerick during the second sitting of the court of claims on 15 November 1694.¹⁹

As the new head of the family John Ryan had succeeded in protecting the Inch estate from confiscation. Problematically for Ryan, however, his ability to subsist on the

¹³ Kinsella, 'The articles and Williamite settlement of Ireland', p. 262; 'On the hearing of claims arising from the Articles of Limerick and Galway from 1 April 1692, 23 March 1692' in *POI*, pp 293–4.

¹⁴ A list of outlawries compiled by J.G Simms does not include Tipperary as the county's palatinate court, by whose authority Daniel Ryan would have been outlawed, failed to return its own list to the Dublin administration. However, a list of individuals outlawed in Tipperary' can be found in Westminster's Parliamentary Archives: A book containing the several persons outlawed in the County Palatine of Tipperary, 1702 (WPA, *Records of the House of Lords, Journal Office: Main Papers*, HL/PO/JO/10/14/19b); J.G. Simms, 'Irish Jacobites' in *Analecta Hibernica*, no. 22 (1960), p. 15.

¹⁵ Richard Caulfield (ed.), *Journal of the very Rev. Rowland Davies, LL.D. Dean of Ross (and afterwards Dean of Cork) from March 8, 1688–9, to September 29, 1690* (London, 1857), pp 133–4.

¹⁶ 'Declaration of Finglas promising a pardon and protection to those who accept Williamite authority, 7 July 1690' in *POI*, pp 195–6; 'Proclamation reaffirming order that Catholics surrender all arms, 31 July 1690' in *ibid.*, pp 201–2.

¹⁷ Kinsella, 'The articles and Williamite settlement of Ireland', pp 50–3, 293.

¹⁸ Will of Daniel Ryan of Inchiofогarty, 22 April 1692 (TCLT, *Ryan papers*, TL/F/21).

¹⁹ Several persons outlawed in the County Palatine of Tipperary (WPA, *House of Lords*, HL/PO/JO/10/14/19b); Simms, 'Irish Jacobites', p. 102; *idem*, *Jacobite Ireland*, p. 160; Kinsella, 'The articles and Williamite settlement of Ireland', p. 282.

proceeds from the land was less assured. Daniel Ryan had settled on his widow Frances a life interest in the lands of Inch (300 acres), which represented approximately a third of the overall estate and a significant portion of its income. The upheavals and consequent economic downturn brought about by the war meant that John Ryan would have been fortunate to receive enough money to subsist as a gentleman from his portion of the estate. Furthermore, a significant portion of the assets left behind by his father were needed to establish and support John Ryan's four younger brothers in suitable careers. Patrick Ryan was apprenticed to a merchant in 1693, while another brother, Andrew, entered French service as an ensign in McCarthy's (later Lee's) regiment of foot in 1696. Both individuals would have depended on the financial support of their eldest brother until they reached positions/ranks that permitted their financial independence.²⁰ Simply put, John Ryan needed to find another source of income. Ryan, however, like his father before him, had been instructed in both the law and the role of an agent before the war. The post-war environments of both Ireland and London would afford him the opportunity to utilise his additional, non-martial skillset in order to advance his family's fortunes.

The first aspect of John Ryan's activities that will be examined is his presence in London during the 1690s. The exact duration of his residence in the city is unknown. Ryan would later state that he was resident in England in May 1698, while just under a year later, in March 1699, he was admitted to the Inner Temple in London shortly before his return to Inch.²¹ His actual whereabouts up to 1697 are less clear, and there is no reason to believe that his presence across the Irish Sea did not extend back at least partially into this period. The next question — 'given the obstacles and expense' — is why venture to London in the first instance?²² His main motivation in the beginning, it can be assumed, was the hope of making an income that was linked to the wider political setting that drew many other Catholics to the city at this time. As John Bergin has noted: 'King William's government and Parliament were making momentous decisions about the conditions

²⁰ Papers relating to the officers of the Régiment de Lee, Régiment de Dillon and Régiment de Bulkeley, 1704–1790 (NLI, microfilm, p163); Richard Butler v. Elizabeth Power, widow of Thomas Power, 8 Mar. 1710 – 7 Mar. 1711 (TNA, *E OFF*, E 134/9Anne/East9); John Cornelius O'Callaghan, *The Irish brigades in the service of France: one hundred years of European history in court, and camp, and battlefield* (London, 1886), pp 33–5; Lart (ed.), *The pedigrees and papers of James Terry*, p. 135; Cullen, 'Catholics under the Penal Laws', p. 28; idem, 'The Irish diaspora of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries', p. 134.

²¹ Draft petition by John Ryan to Sir John Meade of the Regal and Liberties of Co. Tipperary, 1699 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 8); John Ryan, 16 March 1699, available at: *The Inner Temple admissions database*, <http://www.innertemplearchives.org.uk/detail.asp?id=6840> [4 Sept. 2015].

²² Toby Barnard, 'The Irish in London and "the London Irish", ca. 1660–1780' in *Eighteenth-Century Life*, xxxix, no. 1 (Jan., 2015), p. 21.

under which Catholics in Ireland could hold property and practice their religion'.²³ The English Privy Council had the right to reject or amend any legislation proposed in Ireland and 'Catholics proved to be a most persistent lobby' once successive bouts of penal legislation were proposed by Parliament in Dublin after 1691.²⁴

Attempts to influence these momentous events were undertaken by groups of Catholics who banded together in an *ad hoc* fashion in Dublin and London when mutual necessity dictated. A second, far more common occurrence was for Catholics and their agents to pursue their separate interests under the different articles of surrender.²⁵ Indeed, John Ryan had travelled an already well-worn path when he arrived in London during the 1690s. Many fellow Tipperarymen had made the same journey in order to take up work as agents and/or to join one of the English Inns of Court. For the three years leading up to Ryan's admittance to the Inner Temple in early 1699 for example, three other men from the county were also admitted to the Inn: John Grantham, Peter Sexton and Thomas Hackett. Connections between Ryan and the two former individuals can be traced: they not only knew one another, but also mixed within the same social milieu over the next twenty years. Two other individuals from the county within this circle in England were Ryan's future brother-in-law, Justin Mathew, and their mutual acquaintance, Robert White (possibly Grantham's cousin). Three further individuals from the county were also admitted to Gray's Inn during the 1690s.²⁶

Given what is known about the activities of the Irish in London, it is not implausible to suggest that Ryan may have expended at least some of his time and energy acting as an agent on behalf of two of his family's closest friends, Nicholas Purcell of Loughmoe and Lady Anne Bagenal (nee Mathew), the daughter of Captain George Mathew of Thomastown. A later member of the Ryans would recall that John Ryan was 'a great

²³ John Bergin, 'Irish Catholics and their networks in eighteenth-century London' in *Eighteenth-Century Life*, xxix, no. 1 (Jan., 2015), p. 69.

²⁴ Irish Protestants, and their Catholic agents in many instances, were also actively lobbying in London and Dublin at this time: idem, 'The Quaker lobby and its influence on Irish legislation, 1692–1705' in *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, xix (2004), pp 9–36; Francis G. James, 'The Irish lobby in the early eighteenth century' in *The English Historical Review*, lxxxi, no. 320 (Jul., 1966), pp 543–557.

²⁵ Kinsella, 'The articles and Williamite settlement of Ireland', pp 54–5.

²⁶ Robert White to John Ryan, 1 Aug. 1719 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 341); Foster (ed.), *Register of admissions to Gray's Inn*, p. 344, 350; Bergin, 'Catholics and their networks in London', pp 75–6; idem, 'The Irish Catholic interest at the London inns of court, 1674–1800' in *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá chultúr*, xxiv (2009), pp 36–61; *The Inner Temple admission database*, available at: http://www.innertemplearchives.org.uk/address_data.asp?date1=1547&date2=1940&address=Tipperary&sort=bydate&searchtype=names [12 September 2015]. For an example of an Irish agent in London, see: John Bergin, 'The world of Richard Lahy, an Irish law agent in eighteenth-century London' in Raymond Gillespie and R.F. Foster (eds), *Irish provincial cultures in the long eighteenth century: making the middle sort. Essays for Toby Barnard* (Dublin, 2012), pp 75–92.

friend' of Lady Bagenal and may have been ward to two of her daughters, possibly during her husband Dudley's exile in France until 1702. Perhaps the most revealing evidence of the close connections between Ryan and Lady Bagenal was the fact that portraits of her two daughters, Helen Hales and Ann Clifton, later hung at Inch House.²⁷ Both Lady Bagenal and Purcell actively sought royal favour in London at this time. However, given the nature of the work carried out by agents, and the lack of family papers for the Purcells, Mathews, Bagenals and Ryans during this period, it is not possible to tie John Ryan directly to these individuals or their interests while he resided in England. Nevertheless, once he returned to Ireland, Ryan acted as Purcell's agent regarding the Loughmoe estate.

Despite the lack of documentary evidence connecting John Ryan and Nicholas Purcell during their time in London, a brief examination of Purcell's attempts to gain royal assistance will serve to shed light on Ryan's world and the type of work he may have concerned himself with while in the city. Indeed, the close ties their families had maintained up to this period, and the dealings Ryan and Purcell had with one another once they returned to Tipperary at the turn of the century, suggest that parallels may be drawn.

Like many prominent Catholics, Nicholas Purcell found favourable opportunities under King James' brief reign. In 1686 he was appointed to the Irish Privy Council, and he later sat for county Tipperary in the 1689 Parliament. Indeed, the renewed status of his family in Irish affairs was reflected in King James' reported ennoblement of Purcell as Baron of Loughmoe, which up until then had been simply titular in nature. Purcell was a leading supporter of Patrick Sarsfield during the war and eventually acted as a negotiator and signatory of the Articles of Limerick.²⁸ Having 'shewed himself zealous for his

²⁷ List of licenses under ye privy seal for any person to return out of France to England or Ireland, 1702–1704 (WPA, *House of Lords*, HL/PO/JO/10/6/71); Ledger kept by George and Daniel Ryan, 1778–1811 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 175); Edward Hasted, *The history and topographical survey of the county of Kent*, vol. vi (Canterbury, 2nd ed., 1798), p. 91; *The English baronetage: containing a genealogical and historical account of all the English now existing...* (London, 1741), p. 50.

²⁸ Samuel Weller Singer (ed.), *The correspondence of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, and his brother Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester; with the diary of Lord Clarendon from 1687 to 1690, containing minute particulars of the events attending the revolution and the diary of Lord Rochester during his embassy to Poland in 1676*, vol. i (London, 1828), p. 400; Gavan Duffy (ed.), *The Patriot Parliament of 1689*, p. 35, 37; Marquis of Ruvigny and Raineval, *The Jacobite peerage, baronetage, knightage and grants of honour* (London, 1904), p. 81; D'Alton, *King James's Irish army list*, pp 241–3; 'Earl of Roscommon to Ormond, 18 Feb. 1686[7]' in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Marquess of Ormonde, K.P. Preserved at Kilkenny Castle, New Series*, vol. vii (London, HMC, 1912), p. 486; 'Commissions in the army in Ireland, 1 Mar. 1686' in *CSPD*, vol. ii, 1686–7, p. 59; John T. Gilbert (ed.), *A Jacobite narrative of the war in Ireland* (Shannon, 2nd ed., 1971), pp 105–6; *The civil articles of Lymerick, exactly printed from the letters patents, wherein they are ratified and exemplified by their Majesties under the Great Seal of England* (London, 1692), p. 4; Appointment of accessors for Tipperary, 10 April 1690 (NLI, *Callanan papers*, MS 11,422(7)d); Simms, 'Williamite peace tactics', pp 303–323; idem, *Jacobite Ireland*, p. 185, 203–5; idem, *Williamite confiscation*, p. 26. idem, 'Irish Jacobites', p. 101.

Majesty' King William through his involvement in bringing the war to an end, Purcell was among the first Catholics to have his status as an articleman confirmed by the court of claims in May 1692.²⁹ To some, his decision to stay in Ireland made him a potentially valuable ally to the authorities who sought to reintroduce stability into a post-war environment that was racked by the lawlessness of rapparee bands and Jacobite sympathies.³⁰ In April 1693, the English government was advised that the provision of reasonable pensions to Purcell and his new brother-in-law, Nicholas Browne, Lord Kenmare, would ensure that 'nothing could be transacted in the province of Munster to the prejudice of the peace of that kingdom, but what they would either prevent or discover'.³¹ This advice, however, had already been overtaken by events in Ireland. In December 1692, Purcell and several hundred ex-Jacobite officers, including John Ryan, were 'taken up' and imprisoned upon the pretext of a Jacobite invasion. To add insult to injury, and making 'him appear obnoxious to the government', Purcell's home at Loughmoe Castle was also garrisoned by soldiers in 1693, where they were to remain until 1700 and cause an alleged £2,000 worth of damage. What had concerned Purcell 'still more' was that the Irish authorities had singled him out and acted in a manner 'contrary to H[is]. M[ajesty's]. Instructions'.³²

When Purcell sought subsequent favour from the authorities, he removed himself and his family to London in order to deal directly with the monarchy. His reason for travelling to London arose following his recent second marriage to Eliza Browne, daughter of Sir Valentine Browne, 1st Viscount Kenmare. With his new wife came a marriage portion of £3,000.³³ The problem faced by Purcell was that Sir Valentine had died during the war and had been attainted. The Kenmare estate was now forfeit, but the Browne-Purcell interest argued that a family settlement and Sir Valentine's will had been made before outlawry in 1684 and 1690 respectively, which meant his children were still liable to receive their separate portions out of the estate's income.

²⁹ Petition of Nicholas Purcell to the King, 1 July 1700 (TNA, *SPD, William III*, SP 44/238/435).

³⁰ For example, John Ryan's reputed kinsman, Eamon Ryan of Athshanboy, alias Eamon an Cnoic or 'Edmond Knock Ryan', was a noted rapparee and romantic figure: 'Reward for the apprehension, dead or alive, of the following rebels, who have fled to the mountains and other places where they "stand upon their keeping"' in *CSPD, 1694-5*, pp 348-374; Eamonn an Chnoic (NLI, *Papers of Dr Martin Callanan*, MS 11,422(7c)); Callanan, *Records of four Tipperary septs*, p. 80; Kevin Haddick-Flynn, *Sarsfield and the Jacobites* (Cork, 2003), pp 140-1; Ó Ciardha, *Ireland and the Jacobite cause*, pp 88-92.

³¹ 'Colonel Fitzpatrick's papers, 22 April 1693' in *CSPD, 1693*, p. 98.

³² Petition of Nicholas Purcell to the King, 1 July 1700 (TNA, *SPD, William III*, SP 44/238/435); 'A list of Roman Catholic Officers taken up, 17 Dec. 1692' in *CSPD, 1693*, pp 15-18.

³³ Purcell's first wife was Rose, daughter of Marcus Trevor, Viscount Dungannon: Genealogical notes on the Purcells, Barons of Loughmore (TCLT, *The papers of Rev. Father Walter G. Skehan*, typescript copy, vol. vii), p. 130.

Consequently, on 21 August 1693, Nicholas and Eliza Purcell had a petition submitted on their behalf to Queen Mary. They requested that the outlawry of Sir Valentine be reversed and that a payment of the £3,000 portion be made out of the estate's rental, since both husband and wife were comprised under the Articles of Limerick and within their right.³⁴ The Queen showed herself amenable to their request and had the issue referred to the Lords Justices of Ireland for their investigation and report.³⁵ From there the matter was transmitted to the Solicitor General of Ireland, Richard Levinge, and his opinion followed soon after. Levinge found that if Sir Valentine's outlawry was reversed, then his estate would remain 'undoubtedly forfeited' since his son and heir, Nicholas Browne, had also been attainted of high treason and did not come under any articles of capitulation. Of greater importance to the Purcells was that Sir Valentine's will, which had settled the sum of £3,000 on Eliza, was also found to be void given his outlawry and subsequent forfeiture. Levinge, therefore, was of the opinion that the Purcells had 'no tittle at Law at all, butt only a right to sue in Equity', but he knew of no example in 'this Kingdome' taken against the Crown upon a 'meer matter of Equity'. In concluding, Levinge believed this matter was one of 'grace and favor' and 'not att all of right', and simply rested upon royal pleasure; a kindness the Irish Lords Justices believed the petitioners were in no way justly entitled to.³⁶

The Lords Justices of Ireland continued to block Purcell's advances at every turn over the following years, but at the King's discretion a compromise was eventually struck by mid-1699 between all the parties involved. Purcell was granted the £3,000 portion plus interest (at 10 percent) from the rental on the Kenmare estate once the claims of Lady Kenmare and several of the King's favourites were satisfied.³⁷ What this case study

³⁴ Petition of Nicholas Purcell and Eliza, his wife to the Queen, 21 August 1693 (TNA, *SPD*, *William & Mary*, SP 44/237/12).

³⁵ Order referring the petition to the Lords Justices of Ireland, 21 August, 1693 (ibid., *SPI*, SP 365/4/2, f. 10).

³⁶ Purcell's representatives would later point out regarding the matter of equity that 'in Ireland there is no statute like that of H[enr]y. VIII that gives the subject equity against the King': 'Minute book: 26 November 1695' in *CTB*, x, 1693–1696, pp 1,412; Order by the Lords Justices referring the petition to the Solicitor General of Ireland for report, 7 September 1693 (TNA, *SPI*, SP 365/4/3, f. 11); Report of the Solicitor General upon the said petition, 23 September 1693 (ibid., SP 365/4/4, ff 13–15); Letter of the Lords Justices to the Earl of Nottingham, transmitting reports upon the petitioner, 23 September 1693 (ibid., SP 365/4/6, f. 17).

³⁷ Abstract of the petition and case of Colonel Nicholas Purcell and Eliza, his wife, late 1693 (ibid., SP 365/4/9, f. 23); Opinions of Sir Bartholomew Shower and Francis Pemberton of the illegality of the attainder of Sir Valentine, late 1693 (ibid., 365/4/5, f. 15); Petition of Nicholas Purcell to the King, March 1694 (ibid., SP 365/4/8, f. 21); 'Minute book: 16–30 November 1695' in *CTB*, x, 1693–1696, pp 1412–7; 'Warrant (in duplicate) for the reversal of the outlawry of Sir Valentine Browne, late Viscount Kenmare, 9 January 1694' in *CSPD*, 1694–5, p. 4; 'Petition of Col. Nicholas Purcell, 17 May 1699' in *CTB*, xiv, 1698–1699, p. 368; 'Royal warrant to the Lords Justices of Ireland for the payment to Col. Nicholas Purcell the balance of the rents of the forfeited estate of Valentine Browne, 26 May 1699' in *CSPD*, 1699–1700, p.

highlights is that this type of matter took time and a lot of soliciting outside Whitehall and between the different departments of government. It is easy, therefore, to discern a family's need for a trustworthy agent in such matters, and this, by extension highlights the possibilities open to a capable gentleman such as John Ryan. Indeed, the extent of these possibilities will become clearer in future sections.

Upon his return to Ireland in 1699, John Ryan acted as Nicholas Purcell's agent. What defined Purcell and his estate above all during this period was unremitting debt, and this state of affairs would eventually provide Ryan with the opportunity to establish his own fortunes as a large landowner. Purcell's costly stay in London added to the precarious nature of his finances, and resulted in his reliance on raising loans and mortgages on the Loughmoe estate in order to stay financially afloat. Indeed, the claims of creditors and the need for ready money appears to have been so pressing that Purcell conveyed his hard won interest in the Kenmare estate's rental to his wife's brother-in-law, John Asgill, a man who would become notorious for his financial misdealing among the Browne family.³⁸ Purcell would discontinue their agreement in 1710, but before this occurred he also sold an equity of redemption on part of his mortgaged estate to Asgill and John Marshall of Clonmel.³⁹ John Ryan's involvement in this matter, and in Purcell's affairs in general, becomes clearer once it is realised that the surviving draft deed was executed in Ryan's handwriting and survives within his personal papers. Ryan would continue to offer his services to Purcell over the next twenty years, particularly in relation to legal issues.⁴⁰

Although the Act of Resumption in 1700 cancelled royal grants affecting the Browne estate, it also opened the way for the claims of other members of the family to be satisfied. Purcell, as a result, met with continued difficulties in attempting to receive his wife's portion out of the Kenmare estate, and around the time of his death in 1723 it was noted

195; 'Abstract of a letter from the King to the Lords Justices of Ireland, 13 Dec. 1699' in *Journal of the House of Commons [of England], 16 November 1699–25 May 1702*, xiii (London, 1803), p. 55.

³⁸ Edward MacLysaght (ed.), *The Kenmare manuscripts* (Dublin, IMC, 1942), p. x, 328, 334; Patrick A. Walsh, 'Asgill, John' in *DIB*, i, p. 173.

³⁹ Purcell's debts were numerous and included a loan of £1,300 from Joseph Damer of Shronell and Dublin, a notorious usurer who went as far as to attract the criticism of Jonathan Swift upon his death in 1720. Draft deed of sale. Nicolas Purcell of Loughmoe, Co. Tipperary to John Asgill of Ross Castle and John Marshall, Clonmel Co. Tipperary, early 1700s (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 783); Patrick Walsh, *The South Sea Bubble and Ireland: money, banking and investment, 1690–1721* (Woodbridge, 2014), p. 48; Tom Tattler [Jonathan Swift], *The life and character of Mr Joseph Damer* (London, 1720); Extracts and notes relating to the history of Tipperary (*Callanan MS*, p5489); A.M. Fraser, 'Joseph Damer: A Banker of Old Dublin' in *Dublin Historical Record*, iii, no. 3 (Mar. – May, 1941), pp 41–53.

⁴⁰ Warrant to appear on behalf of Nicholas Purcell, Loughmore, Co. Tipperary, on foot of a claim against him, 30 May 1700 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 777); Account of monies paid out by John Ryan on behalf of Nicholas Purcell, 16 May 1721 (*ibid.*, MS 342).

that £3,671 12s still remained due to him.⁴¹ Faced with no other alternative, a new mortgage worth £1,300 from his associate, Sir Stephen Rice, was agreed upon in mid-March 1704. This mortgage was tied to Purcell's lands in Kilnelongurty and five other townlands located elsewhere on the Loughmoe estate. In an attempt to help discharge this encumbrance, Purcell now turned to John Ryan. On 18 March 1704, a mere seven days before a clause in the 'Act to prevent the further growth of Popery' became active and debarred Catholics from purchasing land, Purcell sold his lands in Kilnelongurty (the manor of Coolkill), approximately 2,000 acres, to John Ryan for the princely sum of £1,620 (ten years purchase). Ryan reportedly paid the money to Purcell 'in hand before the p[er]fection of these presents', and it is clear that Ryan must have made a lot of money over the preceding years outside the meagre income from his estate.⁴² The sources of his money were varied, including the period he spent in London, his legal work upon his return to Ireland (section 2) and profits from a trading venture he held an interest in with his brother, Patrick Ryan, which had completed its first known voyage by the end of 1703 (section 3).

It is clear that Nicholas Purcell never paid any of the sale money to Rice, because the full mortgage remained on the Loughmoe estate until 1764. It was subsequently ordered by the courts that the heirs to the estate were to sell the remaining lands in order to discharge the £13,620 3s now due.⁴³ As a Catholic, it remains to be seen whether John Ryan's purchase of land from Purcell in 1704 was a common occurrence in Tipperary at that time.⁴⁴ However, comparisons can be drawn within the broader context of changes in landownership in the county after 1692. Thomas Power has observed that the effect of the Williamite land confiscation in county Tipperary was in fact limited when compared to previous land settlements. Instead, the main factor that introduced and/or increased the

⁴¹ Purcell's difficulties receiving his wife's portion can be understood by the fact that in late 1702, it was estimated that the total encumbrances on the Kenmare estate stood at £22,807: MacLysaght (ed.), *The Kenmare manuscripts*, pp 396–7, 408.

⁴² Deed of Sale of the Manor of Coolkill. Nicolas Purcell, Loughmoe, Co. Tipperary and Sir Stephen Rice, Dublin, 1st part; John Ryan of Inch 2nd part, 18 Mar. 1703[4] (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 778); Memorial of deed of assignment. Dame Mary Rice and Honora Daly alias Rice, 16 Apr. 1723 [registered 9 June 1724] (*ROD*, vol. xxxix, p. 438, no. 26256); 2 Anne, c. 6, s. 6 (1703[4]): 'An Act to prevent the further growth of Popery' in *Stat. Ireland*, iv, p. 17.

⁴³ By November 1723, the sum owed by Purcell to Rice's heirs had risen to £3,700: Statement of the judgment in the case Augustine and Susanna Ivers (née Rice) heirs of James Rice v. Hellen Cooke, Charles White and Donal O'Callaghan, heirs of Nicholas Purcell, 28 Jan. 1764 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 782); Articles of agreement. James Rice and William Lawrence, 19 June 1721 [reg. 30 June 1721] (*ROD*, vol. xxxi, p. 178, no. 18682); Memorial of deed of assignment. M. Rice to H. Daly, 16 Apr. 1723 [reg. 9 June 1724] (*ibid.*, vol. xxxix, p. 438, no. 26256).

⁴⁴ The acquisition of land by an agent from his patron in Co. Galway can be seen in Bryan Mahon's relationship with the Earl of Clanricarde: Patrick Melvin, *Estates and landed society in Galway* (Dublin, 2012), pp 58–9.

landed interests of many families in the county over the same period was debt. Similar to Purcell, yet on a much grander scale, were the encumbrances attached to the estate of his uncle and cousin, the Dukes of Ormond. A mixture of the effects of war, mismanagement by estate agents, ‘parasitism’ and extravagant living in particular, forced the 2nd Duke to dispose of tens of thousands of acres in the county in an attempt to settle his stricken finances. The vast majority of this land found its way into the hands of Protestants, but the lack of Protestant tenants and a favourable leasing strategy resulted in the growth of a substantial and wealthy class of Catholic head tenants and middlemen in the county. As will be seen in the next chapter, which follows a subsequent generation of the family, when it came to making new marriage alliances and safeguarding the family estate, the Ryans would turn to the most prominent of these families among their co-religionists, the McCarthys of Springhouse.⁴⁵

II

‘... *such ... Clandestine contrivancis [sic]*’⁴⁶

John Ryan’s admittance to an English Inn of Court in March 1699 signalled his intent to practice the law in some capacity upon his future return to Ireland. Key to enabling this decision was his status as an articlemans of Limerick. An English statute that came into effect in 1692 required Irish legal practitioners to swear a new oath of supremacy and make a declaration against transubstantiation in order to continue in their positions. Ryan was spared this decision through a clause that permitted Limerick articlemen to continue in their profession provided a claim to exemption was made in court. This status allowed him to escape further restrictions in 1698.⁴⁷ Similar to many of his Irish contemporaries, it is unlikely that Ryan intended to follow up his admission to the Inner Temple with a formal legal education in order to obtain a call to the bar. His presence in London was, nevertheless, about to come to a premature end. Shortly after his admittance in 1699, word was received from Ireland that all was not well on the Inch estate. His widowed mother

⁴⁵ Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, pp 73–82, 125–133, 148–153; D.W. Hayton, ‘Dependence, clientage and affinity: the political following of the second Duke of Ormond’ in Toby Barnard and Jane Fenlon (eds), *The Dukes of Ormond, 1610–1745* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp 213–240. For the disintegration of the Ormond estate in Kilkenny, see: William Neely, ‘The Ormond Butlers in County Kilkenny’ in William Nolan and Kevin Whelan (eds), *Kilkenny: history and society* (Dublin, 1990), pp 123–6.

⁴⁶ Draft petition J. Ryan to J. Meade, 1699 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 8).

⁴⁷ Column Kenny, ‘The exclusion of Catholics from the legal profession in Ireland, 1537–1829’ in *Irish Historical Studies*, xxv, no. 100 (Nov., 1987), p. 352; Power, ‘Conversions among the legal profession in Ireland’, pp 154–6; 10 Will III c.13 (1698): ‘An act to prevent Papists being Solicitors’ in *Stat. Ireland*, iii, pp 512–14.

Frances had allegedly re-married in secret during his extended stay in London, and to Ryan this signified a threat to the Inch estate — a threat that could not go unanswered.

What was to follow is significant for a number of reasons. Information concerning Ryan's legal career is scarce, as is the case with most Irish legal practitioners during the eighteenth century. In an Irish context, therefore, it is not just simply enough to state that Ryan was practicing within the profession. It is necessary, given the opportunity, to ascertain as best as is possible, how skilled, knowledgeable and professionally connected he was. The course of action taken by him upon 'coming over out of Engl[an]d into this Contry' provides a starting point in allowing his professional network and level of legal expertise to be uncovered and accessed.⁴⁸ Furthermore, his decisions provide an insight into the motivations and concerns that drove a landed family when internal conflict and fears emerged over property. In this instance, Frances Ryan, a turn of eighteenth century widow, initiated the dispute with her son by allegedly breaking the conditions within her husband's will.

Several sources of information have survived to help inform the analysis of this family dispute. The most important are two legal documents: the first a draft petition, the other a plaintiff's bill entered in the Palatinate Court of Tipperary against Frances by John Ryan and his confederate Pierce Purcell.⁴⁹ Given the individuals who generated the documents, and their motivations for doing so, there are inherent questions of bias connected to the information they provide, but the several other sources that are available corroborate, as far as is possible, the events put forward by Ryan and Purcell.⁵⁰

We begin this analysis with the marriage settlement concluded between Daniel Ryan and Frances Raggett in December 1660.⁵¹ This agreement made no strict accommodation should Frances outlive her husband. The absence of a set jointure or annuity payment made sense in this particular instance. Daniel Ryan's fortunes were as yet unestablished, and any annual payment promised to Frances during her widowhood ran the risk of outstripping the means of her husband's estate at a later date. The common approach

⁴⁸ Draft petition J. Ryan to J. Meade, 1699 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 8).

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*; Plaintiff's brief in the case Pierce Purcell lessee of John Ryan v. Frances Ryan, c.1702 (*ibid.*, MS 9).

⁵⁰ Will of Daniel Ryan of Inchiofogarty, 22 April 1692 (TCLT, *Ryan papers*, TL/F/21); Copy answer by Frances Ryan to a bill of complaint lodged by John Ryan, 11 April 1702 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 10); Probate copy of the will of Frances Ryan, 13 Aug. 1706 (*ibid.*, MS 21); Will of Teige Ryan, 30 Jun. 1679 (*ibid.*, MS 19); History of Eliogarty (*Callanan MS*, p4546), pp 171–2; *The 6th Report of the Deputy Keeper of Public Records in Ireland*, p. 71.

⁵¹ Marriage settlement between Daniel Ryan of Rathmanagh and Frances Raggett, 1 Dec. 1660 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 8).

during the seventeenth century, as seen in the will of Ryan's brother Teige, written in 1679, was to bequeath a third share or moiety of the estate to the widow during the remainder of her natural life. Daniel Ryan died in May 1692, and his accommodation of Frances during her 'widuity' went a step further by bequeathing to her the use of the lands of Inch, which represented 300 acres and 'Considerably more then [*sic*] one moyty of the Estate of inheritance'.⁵² The remainder of the estate, approximately 300 acres, went to the use of John Ryan until his mother's death, whereby the entire estate would revert to him and his future male heirs. A clause in the will, however, stated that if Frances remarried, then she 'shall ipso facto stand and remain deprived of ye estate for the term of her life'.⁵³ Teige Ryan had made a similar stipulation in 1679 to his own wife Ellen (Frances' sister), but soon after Teige's death Ellen re-married against her late husband's wishes. This initiated a legal dispute over the lands of Ballynahow between Owen and Ellen O'Sullivan, as she then was, and her recently widowed mother, Anastace Raggett, alongside all the adult members of Daniel Ryan's family. John Ryan's motivation for returning so quickly from England in 1699 was undoubtedly tied to his memory of the family's past experience with his aunt.⁵⁴ Similarly, upon remarrying, Frances herself now 'challenged the supremacy of her late husband by replacing him', and the clandestine form of the marriage would have heightened this fear in John Ryan's mind.⁵⁵ Also, as a woman, Frances relinquished her legal identity in favour of her new husband, Charles McCarthy, and his potential interference with the family estate was a prospect John Ryan would have sought to quash as quickly as possible.⁵⁶ Therefore, the presence of a new male figure on the estate, and a man of questionable character at that, was likely the guiding consideration behind John Ryan's return to Inch.

Having learnt of Ryan's imminent arrival in Tipperary, Charles McCarthy 'did absent himselfe' from Inch and returned to Dublin, leaving his new wife to carry on the pretence that nothing was amiss.⁵⁷ It would appear that the couple did intend to inform Ryan about their marriage, but only after Frances was given the chance of making 'advantagious [*sic*] Conditions' with her son.⁵⁸ Frances would likely admit to the marriage and surrender Inch

⁵² Will of D. Ryan, 22 April 1692 (TCLT, *Ryan papers*, TL/F/21); Draft petition J. Ryan to J. Meade, 1699 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 8).

⁵³ Will of D. Ryan, 22 April 1692 (TCLT, *Ryan papers*, TL/F/21).

⁵⁴ Draft petition J. Ryan to J. Meade, 1699 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 8); History of Eliogarty (*Callanan MS*, p4546), pp 171–2; *The 6th Report of the Deputy Keeper of Public Records in Ireland*, p. 71.

⁵⁵ Deborah Wilson, *Women, marriage and property in wealthy landed families in Ireland, 1750–1850* (Manchester, 2008), p. 170.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Draft petition J. Ryan to J. Meade, 1699 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 8).

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

to John Ryan per the conditions of her late husband's will, in return for a generous fixed annual payment during the remainder of her life. This way a mutually beneficial agreement could be arrived at. Ryan would come into possession of the entire estate, thereby consolidating his inheritance and increasing his income. In turn, Frances could combine the annuity with her new husband's support in order to maintain her comfort into old age. In theory, the plan would succeed as long as the deception was maintained. This design was, however, quickly frustrated once Ryan returned and confronted his mother, telling her that he was 'fully informed' about her clandestine marriage and that 'it would be to no purpose to Endeavour to conceale ye same'.⁵⁹ Frances soon relented and freely acknowledged her marriage to McCarthy. She produced letters from her new husband to illustrate the same, and to show how they had managed to conceal it over the previous year: McCarthy would apply an outer cover to each letter and address them to Frances Ryan, while the enclosed letters were inscribed to Frances McCarthy, wherein Charles would finish by styling himself her 'loveing husband'. Once the truth was out in the open, Ryan referred the matter to the arbitration of Major George Mathew of Thurles and Edmond Ryan of Cashel. The former gentleman was the head of the senior branch of the Mathew family and Ryan's future father-in-law, and the latter, a prominent Catholic lawyer with over thirty years of experience.⁶⁰ The facts were supplied and Frances 'avowed the sd. Marriage before them', whereupon it was ordered that John Ryan should pay his mother a 'Certayne yearly sume' in lieu of her dower. In return, Frances was to deliver up possession of the lands of Inch to her son.⁶¹

A fairer outcome could not be expected by both parties given the circumstances, and Frances 'Seemed well satisfyd [*sic*]' with the referees' award at that time and for some time afterwards. However, once she informed her husband of the agreement, it quickly became clear that 'he did not prove so good a husband to her as she expected': he decided to unceremoniously desert his wife and leave her to her fate.⁶² Frances Ryan, or indeed McCarthy, found herself in a difficult position. Without the support of her husband, who 'neglected her and refused to cohabit with her', the annuity payment from John Ryan alone was not enough to maintain Frances in her twilight years. It was now that she began to have second thoughts concerning the verbal agreement she had entered into with her son. To better understand her position and options, Frances sought the counsel of a

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Maynard, 'Irish membership of the English Inns of Court, 1660–1699', p. 104.

⁶¹ Draft petition J. Ryan to J. Meade, 1699 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 8).

⁶² Ibid.

number of individuals, whom Ryan would later term ‘sinister advisors’ who ‘pretended to understand the law’. Based on this advice, Frances decided to claim that she was not married after all, and thereby refused to perform the award formerly made by the arbitrators.⁶³

John Ryan was undoubtedly angered by the news of his mother’s about-face. At the time, it would appear that he was also unaware that his mother had been abandoned by her new husband. A petition to the palatinate court drafted by Ryan shortly after related his fervent belief that Frances and McCarthy did ‘combine & confederate’ to keep him from the benefit of his father’s will and the lands of Inch. Nevertheless, he decided to try and recover the situation by giving his mother one final opportunity to come to terms before seeking redress under common law. To help in the matter, and to provide Frances with the option of a second legal opinion, Ryan drafted in the assistance of two of Ireland’s most experienced and respected Catholic gentlemen at law, Sir Stephen Rice and Sir Toby Butler. Both men were probably in the region for the upcoming Munster circuit, or perhaps, were looking to the strained affairs of their mutual friend Nicholas Purcell, who still resided in London at this time. The extrovert and jovial Toby Butler in particular was a distinguished practitioner at the county’s palatinate court in Clonmel.⁶⁴ Rice and Butler arbitrated over the dispute once again and eventually reiterated the opinion given by George Mathew and Edmond Ryan some time previously. Frances was advised to ‘stand to ye arbitration formerly made’, but ‘contrary to all Equity and good Conscience’, as John Ryan would later complain, she refused to do so and continued to disavow that any marriage had ever taken place.⁶⁵

John Ryan’s attempts to settle the dispute in an amicable and private manner had been frustrated. Now faced with what he described as a ‘sinister’ conspiracy to ‘defraud’ him of his ‘just right’, Ryan took the issue to court. The most obvious course of action for Ryan was to bring the dispute to ‘Tryall at Comon Law for ye Remedy of his right’, though a problem quickly presented itself. By ‘ye strict rules’ of common law, the

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Toby Butler had also handled the sale of the Ryans’ lands in Co. Clare on behalf of John Ryan in 1696: *ibid.*; Deed by which H. Bridgman proposes to purchase land from J. Ryan, 26 July 1696 (*ibid.*, MS 5); Hazel Maynard, ‘Butler, Sir Theobald (Toby)’ in *DIB*, ii, pp 180–2. See also: Patrick Melvin, ‘Letters of Lord Longford and others on Irish affairs, 1689–1702’ in *Analecta Hibernica*, no. 32 (1985), p. 108; George Butler, ‘Sir Toby Butler, Solicitor-General in Ireland, 1689–90’ in *Dublin Historical Record*, xxiii, no. 4 (Jul., 1970), pp 113–126; Toby Butler, ‘Sir Toby Butler’ in *Journal of the Butler Society*, v, no. 5 (1974), pp 361–76; *idem*, ‘Sir Toby Butler. Part II: the Jacobite war and the treaty of Limerick’ in *Journal of the Butler Society*, vi, no. 6 (1976), pp 455–64; J.R. O’Flanagan, *The Munster Circuit. Tales, trials, and traditions* (London, 1880), pp 71–2.

⁶⁵ Draft petition J. Ryan to J. Meade, 1699 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 8).

testimony of witnesses present at the marriage were required in order to prove that it had taken place. The problem was that these witnesses were either ‘totally unknown’ to Ryan, dead or dispersed in ‘places remote beyond ye Seas’.⁶⁶ Frances and Charles McCarthy had taken care to cover their tracks in order to maintain the secrecy surrounding their marriage, and given McCarthy resided in Dublin, it is likely that the intermarriage had taken place in the city. This was even more so likely since it was reported that the couple had cohabited and ‘bedded together’ there for a ‘considerable time’ during Ryan’s absence in England. Frances’ advisors believed that without witnesses John Ryan could not pursue or receive the benefit of a judgement in the palatinate court to recover the lands of Inch. They were initially proven correct, when Ryan attempted to have an order of ‘trespass & ejectment’ issue against Frances, but this was unsuccessful since he did not possess the necessary evidence to enforce it. As matters stood, Ryan’s prospects looked grim, while the strategy of his mother and her counsel had gained the upper hand.⁶⁷

It was now that Ryan’s legal knowledge came into play. The strategy of Frances at this time relied solely on the lack of witnesses to keep the case from ever progressing as far as trial. Problematically for her, Ryan would have known that seldom was a grievance left without further recourse to proceed under the law, and in an attempt to receive the trial he craved he took a new approach. Ryan prepared a petition to the court to have a bill of discovery granted to assist him in the prosecution of the action against Frances. This bill represented a supporting procedure to his pending case at law, and if granted by the court, then Frances would be compelled to state under oath ‘upon ye holy Evangelist’ whether or not she was married to Charles McCarthy. The surviving draft of this petition made for gripping reading. The information it contained, however, was provided by Ryan to satisfy a number of legal requirements that the chief justice of the court, Sir John Meade, would require if the discovery was to be allowed. The overall objective was to show that a discovery of information was needed in order to allow the main case to proceed in court. Ryan, therefore, submitted to be given the aid ‘as is usual in such cases against such ... Clandestine contrivancis [*sic*]’, while also seeking to be ‘at liberty to insert in this Bill’ McCarthy and the other unknown witnesses if and once they were located.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

John Ryan's petition was successful and discovery proceedings were duly brought in court. However, Frances and her counsel, Anthony Carroll, were far from bested, and in reply, delivered a rebuke that must have incensed Ryan more than a little and added greater animosity to the dispute. Frances' reply, in April 1702, took 'demur' or objected to the order to appear under oath by stating:

The Complainant cannot by the Law of the land or by Rules of this honourable courte compel the Defendant Frances to betray herselfe or to discover on her oath whether or no[t] she has not broken the conditions ... unto her estate, it being contrary to the rules ... of the Common Law and against conscience that any person should be obliged to betray himself or discover any matter or thing which may subject him to the breach of a condition that goes in Destruction of his Estate all which matters & things this Defendant doth averr.⁶⁹

This objection was a valid one: Frances' counsel reasoned that she held a life interest in the lands of Inch and, as such, she could not be compelled to provide self-incriminating evidence that would jeopardise her estate. Ryan, for his part, had outlined in his earlier petition the limitations of his mother's interest in the lands of Inch. Her claim, as argued by Ryan, did not fall under this status, because she was 'no purchaser upon any vulluable consideration'. He continued elsewhere in the same document that her basic legal right as a widow, 'were it not for ye sd. will', was a third part or share of the estate, and overall, she simply held the position of a 'voluntary guest' on the estate.⁷⁰ Both arguments had their strengths and limitations, while the discretion of the court eventually sided with Frances and allowed her objection. Thus, Ryan found another avenue of approach blocked to him unless he could locate and compel McCarthy and/or the witnesses to appear under oath, which was proving less than fruitful.

Despite another failed attempt, and finding his direct path to prosecuting the case blocked, Ryan nevertheless took a new bearing in his determined pursuit of his mother. It was now that an individual named Pierce Purcell arrived on the scene and entered a bill of complaint against Frances. It is clear from the information provided in Purcell's subsequent account that he was closely coached by Ryan. Purcell's value was that he represented an individual other than John Ryan who had a grievance with Frances' actions and could bring legal proceedings against her. In May 1699, Purcell had allegedly leased from Ryan the lands of Inch for ten years. Soon after, Frances had had Purcell ejected from the lands, making him an injured party at a loss of £100 since the event. Furthermore,

⁶⁹ Copy answer by F. Ryan to a bill of complaint lodged by J. Ryan, 11 April 1702 (ibid., MS 10).

⁷⁰ Draft petition J. Ryan to J. Meade, 1699 (ibid., MS 8).

even though Ryan had not been able to locate any witnesses to the marriage, Purcell could testify as to the content of the letters between Frances and McCarthy. Purcell also claimed that he could ‘prove’ that Frances had admitted to several individuals in private that she had married McCarthy. It is also clear from his account that it was now intended to use the fact that Frances had taken demur against the bill of discovery as evidence, or a ‘material circumstance to a jury’, to prove that she was in fact married. It was reasoned, quite correctly, that ‘if she were not married it would be no prejudice to her to declare it, but on the contrary an advantage’.⁷¹

The eventual outcome of the trial is unknown, and the dispute may very well have dragged on until Frances’ death in 1706. Her will does, however, provide some clues as to her familial situation at the time of her passing. In the will, Frances simply described herself as the widow and relict of Daniel Ryan, late of Inch, which statement continued the illusion that she had not remarried after his death. Furthermore, of her four children known to have been living at the time, only her youngest son Joseph is mentioned and made sole beneficiary and executor of the will. Therefore, it can be assumed that Frances’ relationship with other members of her family may have been strained due to her clandestine marriage and the resulting dispute over the lands of Inch.⁷²

Ryan’s treatment of his mother left very little room for sentiment and can appear harsh. One could even go as far as to suggest that Ryan fabricated the entire story and had persecuted his elderly mother in an attempt to claim his inheritance and its income. Money, however, can be eliminated as the motivating factor, given that Ryan had a small fortune at hand to buy land at this time. Instead, one is drawn back to Pierce Purcell’s bill of complaint and the concluding observation as to why Frances refused to state that she had not married McCarthy, when it was clearly in her interest to do so, unless of course, the opposite was in fact the case. John Ryan’s world was defined by three basic interrelated affiliations: family, land and religious denomination. Frances’ disloyalty to her male dominated family ran contrary to the overarching goal of retaining their lands intact, and Ryan’s response was, at base, an attempt to rectify this in order to protect the family estate for his and future generations. As will be seen in following chapters, the guiding aspiration across every generation of the Ryan family was for the Inch estate to survive intact.

⁷¹ Plaintiff’s brief in the case *P. Purcell v. F. Ryan*, c.1702 (ibid., MS 9).

⁷² Will of F. Ryan, 13 Aug. 1706 (ibid., MS 21).

John Ryan's actions over the course of the dispute illustrate that he held, at the very least, a proficient understanding of the law and its application. What stands most in Ryan's favour was the professional network and pool of knowledge he had access to at the beginning of his career in Ireland. The cumulative legal experience of Rice, Butler and Ryan of Cashel, for example, was over eighty years in duration. This represented a well of knowledge that anybody in the profession would have been glad to have had at their disposal. Ryan's conduct and new found reputation concerning marital and inheritance law must have made an impression within the local community itself, because in 1705 he was hired as co-counsel for the plaintiff in a similar case.⁷³ Practicing in the palatinate court meant dealing with local disputes of this nature, and Ryan could hardly hope to gain the type of expertise and fame that matched the renowned Rice and Butler. This form of employment did, however, offer him a steady income and the experience from which a sound knowledge of the law could be accumulated and applied to the running of his own estate and personal business affairs.

Despite the numerous restrictions implemented by 1709 against Catholics practicing the law, John Ryan and many others continued to offer their legal expertise.⁷⁴ This is highlighted in a letter Ryan received shortly before his death in 1724. In the letter his Dublin correspondent, Thomas Hussey, informed Ryan about legal and political business in the capital, and concluded by referring to a legal bill he had received from the successful convert lawyer Cornelius O'Callaghan. Hussey related how Callaghan had 'read it all over & made some amendments in ye. language' of the bill, and 'This I mention yt. you may see yt. you are no stranger to business, for ye. bill was really owing to yr. own instructions'.⁷⁵ Based on his petition to the palatine court in 1699, we may assume that the amendments made in the language of the 1724 bill by Callaghan may have stemmed, at least in part, from Ryan's preference for the melodramatic in his legal arguments.⁷⁶

⁷³ Matthew Shanahan, who may be recalled from the previous chapter, had recently passed away and his widow remarried soon after. A dispute subsequently broke out between Shanahan's son and heir, John, and his new step-father, Richard Rowleigh, over the contents of a house worth £100 and livestock that the latter had seized and concealed in the county and across the border in Limerick: Deposition of Witnesses taken before John Ryan and James Butler, counsel for the plaintiff in the case John Shanaghan (Plaintiff) v. Richard Rowleigh (Defendant), 13 April 1705 (ibid., MS 336); Dispositions of witnesses taken at Ffarinbridsge the 13th day of April 1705 (NLI, *Callanan papers*, MS 11,422(7i)).

⁷⁴ Power, 'Conversions among the legal profession in Ireland', pp 154–159.

⁷⁵ T. Hussey to J. Ryan, 23 Jan. 1723[4] (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 344); Dickson, *Old World colony*, p. 273.

⁷⁶ Draft petition J. Ryan to J. Meade, 1699 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 8).

John Ryan's status when dealing with legal matters was above those employed as agents, 'sufficiently conversant with the law to scan and draft leases', and below the lawyers who, after a formal education at an English Inn of Court, were called to the bar.⁷⁷ Because Ryan was never called to the bar, his place within the middle ground of the profession can be located between that of a solicitor and an attorney. No record of him being afforded either title survives. Yet the ambiguity and lack of clear definition between his roles happens to reflect rather than obscure the nature of his work, where comparisons can be drawn with his counterparts in Augustan England.⁷⁸ The vagueness in regard to the activities of Catholic non-converts employed in the law after 1692 tends to verge on obscurity once they were debarred, in theory, from the legal profession. In reality, as suggested by John Ryan's known activities, Catholics who did not convert to the Established Church could, in a non-litigious capacity, still offer their services in the private chambers, taverns and coffee houses that were all part of the judicial system's wider environment.⁷⁹ Many did convert in order to pursue rewarding careers, but what separated John Ryan from these individuals was, in many instances, his status as an articled man and the fact that he did not depend on this profession's status and its income alone. His main persona would always remain that of a landowner, a country gentleman. But as the following section will show, for every shilling Ryan made legally from these two sources of income, there was probably as much money accruing in his hands from the proceeds of illicit trade.

III

*'... but a sham ac[coun]t'*⁸⁰

During the eighteenth century the inhabitants of Ireland, the gentry in particular, enjoyed the reputation for excess alcohol consumption and drunkenness. The often quoted Philip Stanhope, Lord Chesterfield, best encapsulated this view and the resulting deplorable effect on the gentry and improvement of Ireland when he stated:

⁷⁷ Geoffrey Holmes, *Augustan England: professions, state and society, 1680–1730* (London, 1982), p. 118.

⁷⁸ A known attorney called John Ryan was active in Dublin during the 1720s. He had dealings with John Ryan of Inch on behalf of Nicholas Purcell in 1721 and joined the King's Inn of Dublin in 1726. He may have been the John Ryan, son and heir of Thady Ryan of Cullen, Co. Tipperary, who was admitted to Gray's Inn on 3 May 1726: Account by J. Ryan on behalf of N. Purcell, 16 May 1721 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 342); Lists of members and officers of the Honourable Society of the King's Inns 1607–1771, compiled by Denis O'Callaghan Fisher' (NLI, MS 288); Holmes, *Augustan England*, pp 118–120.

⁷⁹ Osborough, *An island's law*, p. 91.

⁸⁰ Latter part of account, c.1703–1724 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 217, f. 13).

Drinking is a most beastly vice in every country, but it is really a ruinous one in Ireland; nine gentlemen out of every ten are impoverished by the great quantity of claret which, from the mistaken notions of hospitality and dignity, they think it necessary should be drunk in their houses; this expense leaves them no room to improve their estates by proper indulgence upon proper conditions to their tenants, who pay them to the full, and upon the very day, that they may pay their wine-merchants.⁸¹

Historically this stereotype of hospitable excess was limited to the ‘native’ Irish, mirroring the liberty with which families of old and noble stock dispensed hospitality and the attendant prestige that it conferred. As the eighteenth century progressed, however, this adverse condition of the gentry and body politic in general, as many contemporary commentators believed, came to increasingly incorporate and define the Protestant elite.⁸² Recent research has challenged this propensity for excess by showing that perpetual drunkenness among the upper echelons of Irish society was a stereotype not always deserved, and was by no means confined to Ireland alone. L.A. Clarkson and Margaret Crawford have argued that the Irish gentry, as a class, ‘did not live in a perpetual state of alcoholic stupor’ as the ‘jaundiced pen’ of Lord Chertierfield would have had one believe, and that the excess that did occur, was ‘no more so than their English counterparts’.⁸³ Therefore, the upper strata of eighteenth-century Irish society can be said to have consumed alcohol regularly, but they were not unique in this regard.

When Ireland’s upper classes did partake, their preferred libation during this period was wine. Total imports of wine in 1700 are estimated at 2,000 tuns (252 gallons per tun) and this is judged to have doubled by the 1720s.⁸⁴ The main stimulus for this ever growing demand for wine and spirits, such as brandy, was the end of hostilities on the island and the ensuing peace. Following the end of the war in 1691, it has been observed how quickly the Irish economy recovered. Compared to other wars that had devastated the country

⁸¹ Philip Stanhope quoted in Clarkson and Crawford, *Feast and famine*, p. 53.

⁸² Burke, *History of Clonmel*, pp 151–2; Martyn J. Powell, *The politics of consumption in eighteenth-century Ireland* (Basingstoke, 2005), p. 29; David Ryan, *Blasphemers & Blackguards: the Irish Hellfire Clubs* (Dublin, 2012), pp 12–15; L.A. Clarkson, ‘Hospitality, housekeeping and high living in eighteenth-century Ireland’ in Jacqueline Hill and Colm Lennon (eds), *Luxury and austerity: Historical Studies xxi: papers read before the 23rd Irish conference of Historians, held at St Patrick’s College, Maynooth, 16–18 May 1997* (Dublin, 1999), p. 84, 100.

⁸³ Clarkson and Crawford, *Feast and famine*, p. 55; James Kelly, ‘The consumption and social use of alcohol in eighteenth-century Ireland’ in Elizabeth FitzPatrick and James Kelly (eds), *Food and drink in Ireland* (Dublin, 2016), pp 240–3; Roy Porter, ‘Consumption: disease of the consumer society?’ in John Brewer and Roy Porter (eds), *Consumption and the world of goods* (London, 1994), pp 58–71.

⁸⁴ Marie-Louise Legg, ‘Irish wine’: the import of claret from Bordeaux to provincial Ireland in the eighteenth century’ in Raymond Gillespie and R.F. Foster (eds), *Irish provincial cultures in the long eighteenth-century: making the middle sort, essays for Toby Barnard* (Dublin, 2012), p. 98; L.M. Cullen, ‘The Irish merchant communities of Bordeaux, La Rochelle and Cognac in the eighteenth century’ in L.M. Cullen and P. Butel (eds), *Négoce et industrie en France et en Irlande aux xviii et xix siècles* (Paris, 1980), p. 53; Kelly, ‘The consumption and social use of alcohol’, p. 229.

during the seventeenth century, this conflict was relatively short in duration. As a result, the destruction it wrought, although significant, was less severe than its predecessors, while more importantly, famine and pestilence did not decimate the island's population as was the case during the early 1650s. International warfare from 1702 until 1714 saw a slump in economic activity once again.⁸⁵ However, the absence of direct conflict on the island meant that members of the gentry and aristocracy at least, could plan and enjoy a standard of living that matched and regularly outstripped their incomes derived from the land.

Lord Chesterfield's attack on the excesses of the gentry made it clear that those who profited from this unbecoming consumption habit were the numerous wine merchants that catered to this ever growing domestic market. John Ryan recognised this demand, and alongside aiding Nicholas Purcell and battling his own mother in court during the early 1700s, established an interest in this lucrative, although at the time largely illicit, trade. Key to enabling this were Ryan's brother Patrick and the veteran merchant Richard Butler of New Ross. In 1693 Patrick Ryan was apprenticed to Butler, and being the fourth son of a Catholic gentleman, he had chosen the profession that, apart from foreign military service, best suited his circumstances through 'a branch of trade compatible with gentility'.⁸⁶

Richard Butler began trading out of New Ross and Waterford by the early 1670s.⁸⁷ During what can be termed the 'good times' for Catholics under the brief reign of James II, he appeared in the corporation records of New Ross in late 1686, and again the following year as a burgess elected under the town's new charter. This position of civic pre-eminence was short lived though, and the last reference to Butler in the records came in February 1689. This was because as P.D. Vigors relates, he 'disappeared, with many others, after the battle of the Boyne', to be replaced by newly admitted Protestants, such

⁸⁵ Gillespie, *The transformation of the Irish economy*, p. 49; idem, 'Economic life, 1550–1730', pp 551–3; L.M. Cullen, 'Economic development' in T.W. Moody, F.X. Martin and F.J. Byrne (eds), *A new history of Ireland, vol. iv: eighteenth-century Ireland* (Oxford, 1986), pp 132–3.

⁸⁶ David Dickson identifies the entry of younger sons into trade in Ireland primarily with Protestant landowning families since they had access to the necessary capital to do so, but the landowning status of the Ryans would have made this possible for Patrick Ryan: David Dickson, 'Catholics and trade in eighteenth-century Ireland: an old debate revisited' in Thomas P. Power and Kevin Whelan (eds) *Endurance and emergence: Catholics in Ireland in the eighteenth century* (Dublin, 1990), pp 93–5; Barnard, *A new anatomy of Ireland*, p. 78; R. Butler v. E. Power, 1710–1711 (TNA, *EOFF*, E 134/9Anne/East9).

⁸⁷ Petition to Queen Anne from Richard Butler, 18 Dec. 1710 (ibid., *SPD, Anne*, SP 34/28/88, ff 151–2); The port of Barnstaple: customer overseas, 25 Dec. 1671 – 25 Dec. 1672 (ibid., *Exchequer: King's Remembrancer: Port Books*, E 190/955/5, f. 3, 3a).

as James Hackett, ‘a souldier in Derry during ye Siege’.⁸⁸ Despite finding himself disenfranchised from civic office over the coming years, Butler returned to his extensive trade, with his reputation and influence in the community seemingly little affected by the political changes in Ireland after the war.⁸⁹ In times of personal difficulty, the Protestant corporation and inhabitants of New Ross and 25 Irish MPs would come to his aid in recognition of the importance of his trade and the kindness he had shown Protestants during ‘the late troubles in Ireland’.⁹⁰ Exact details surrounding Butler’s foreign network are limited, but what is clear is that his ships frequented ‘most ports in Europ[e]’, including those of North Devon, Brittany in France, Rotterdam and the Iberian Peninsula. An idea of the scale of this trade is provided in a petition by Butler to the lord lieutenant of Ireland, James Butler, 2nd Duke of Ormond in 1705. Butler informed the Duke that he was a ‘Considerable dealer in this kingdom’ since 1670, while the total amount of customs duties he claimed to have paid in that time on imported and exported goods was ‘above the sum of £35,000 sterling’.⁹¹

Richard Butler’s trade appears to have been seriously affected once England entered the War of the Spanish Succession in 1702. Within three years he claimed to have lost several ships and their cargoes to French privateers, which in turn meant he ran into

⁸⁸ P.D. Vigors (ed.), ‘An account of the reception of a new charter from King James II. to the town of New Ross, County Wexford, in March, 1687’ in *The Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland*, Fourth Series, ix, no. 79 (Apr. – Jul., 1889), p. 135; idem, ‘Alphabetical List of the Free Burgesses of New Ross, Co. Wexford, from 1658 to 30th September, 1839. From H. L. Tottenham, Esq.’s, MS’ in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Fifth Series, i, no. 4 (4th Quarter, 1890), p. 300; idem, ‘Extracts from the books of the old corporation of Ross, County Wexford. (Part III)’ in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Fifth Series, iv, no. 2 (Jun., 1894), p. 178; idem, ‘Extracts from the old corporation books of New Ross, County Wexford’ in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Fifth Series, xi, no. 1 (Mar., 1901), p. 54.

⁸⁹ For example, Butler continued business dealings with his factor Thomas Power, a prominent merchant of Bideford in North Devon: R. Butler v. Thomas and Elizabeth Power, 8 Mar. 1710 – 7 Mar. 1712 (TNA, EOFF, E 134/9and10Anne/Hil24); Alison Grant, *North Devon Pottery: the seventeenth century* (Exeter, 1983), p. 99.

⁹⁰ This was partially due, it was claimed, to the ‘great services rendered’ by Butler to his ‘Protestant neighbours, in their greatest distresse’. He was credited with having saved New Ross from looting and burning by retreating French and Irish troops after the battle of the Boyne, while he also protected many local Protestants and their goods from being ‘rappareed’. A second reason why different corporations and MPs would later lend their support was because of the ‘many familys’ that depended ‘upon his traffick’ for their livelihoods in the town of New Ross: Petition to Queen Anne from R. Butler, 18 Dec. 1710 (TNA, SPD, Anne, SP 34/28/88, ff 151–2); ‘Petition & case of Richard Butler for recompence for his services & hardships, 28 Oct. 1708’ in *CTB*, xxii, 1708, p. 422; Certificate of members of the Irish House of Commons, 6 June 1709 (ibid., *TBP*, T 1/115/29D); Certified copy of certificate provided by the Sovereign, Burgess and inhabitants of Kinsale, 2 Feb. 1690 [23 Apr. 1707] (ibid., T 1/115/15/29f); Certificate of the Sovereign, Burgess and inhabitants of New Ross, 23 May 1709 (ibid., T 1/115/15/29c).

⁹¹ Philip Herbert Hore, *History of the Town and County of Wexford: Old and New Ross, vol. i, comprised principally from the state papers, the public records, and mss. of the late Herbert F. Hore. ed. by his son, Philip Herbert Hore* (London, 1900), p. 375.

arrears paying custom duties to the Irish revenue to the sum of £800.⁹² Fearing imprisonment and ‘any Blemish to his Credit or Reputation’, Butler eventually fled Ireland and took up residence in London, from where he sought royal favour.⁹³ However, before departing New Ross, Butler transferred his property and goods to Patrick Ryan in a successful attempt to ‘preserve my Concerns from my Creditors’ and to convince the authorities he had insufficient effects to answer his debts. This also included, Butler would later state, the drawing up of at least one ‘sham ac[coun]t to preserve my effects from ye Courts & C.’.⁹⁴ In turn, Patrick Ryan, with the assistance of his brother John and Butler’s son Thomas, continued to trade out of New Ross.⁹⁵

Much of the information concerning the subsequent trading venture is gleaned from a collection of accounts furnished by Richard Butler to John Ryan. Although the final date in the account is January 1724, the vast majority of transactions took place prior to 1713. These transactions amounted to £3,662 7s 11½d, and this figure is based solely on the twenty-one pages that have survived out of what was, at the very least, an eighty-one-page account in total. The scale of their business dealings can also be understood by the fact that most of the transactions noted by Butler were outstanding debts he felt were owed by the Ryans or transactions he was unsure of.⁹⁶ Thus, given the nature of the accounts, only fragmentary yet informative glimpses are offered into this particular business relationship.

Trade, of course, is a two-way process, and in order to obtain the alcohol and other foreign goods sought by their customers, the ever expanding and lucrative provisions trade offered the means by which Butler and the Ryans could accomplish this. Following the complete ban on the export of live Irish cattle to England and Scotland in 1667, Irish producers and exporters adapted relatively quickly by refocusing their efforts on the

⁹² Ibid. For one of Butler’s ships that was captured by French privateers but subsequently retaken by the English navy, see: Captured ship: St. Michael of Ross, 1704 (TNA, HCAP, HCA 32/72/80). See also: ‘Thomas Beecher to Ormonde, 20 Apr. 1704’ in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Marquess of Ormonde, K.P. Preserved at Kilkenny Castle, New Series, vol. viii* (London, HMC, 1920), p. 63; ‘Lord Justices of Ireland to Ormonde, 4 Apr. 1704’ in *ibid.*, p. 63.

⁹³ Petition to Queen Anne from R. Butler, 18 Dec. 1710 (TNA, SPD, Anne, SP 34/28/88, f. 152).

⁹⁴ Report of the Irish Revenue Commissioners concerning the case of Richard Butler of New Ross, 22 July 1709 (TNA, TBP, T 1/115/29a); Latter part of account, c.1703–1724 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 217, ff 15–16).

⁹⁵ Thomas Butler, son of Don Ricardo Butler and Dona Maria Malbrahan [Malbranck?] of Ross, later came to reside permanently at Cadiz: Brian Foley, ‘Butler testamentary records in Cadiz’ in *Journal of the Butler Society*, iii, no. 4 (1994), p. 486, 490; *idem*, ‘Butler testamentary dispositions and some related legal records in the city and province of Cadiz’ in *Journal of the Butler Society*, iv, no. 1 (1997), p. 151.

⁹⁶ Latter part of account, c.1703–1724 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 217).

growing demand for provisions within the wider Atlantic world.⁹⁷ Colonies in the Americas, both fledgling and established plantation based economies, were not self-supporting and depended upon manufactured goods and preserved foodstuffs dispatched from the Old World to subsist. The southern ports of Ireland were well positioned to exploit this passing trade by provisioning, for example, ships from Bristol and the ports of North Devon en route to the Caribbean and the North American fisheries. Preserved foodstuffs such as salted beef and butter were also in high demand among European countries to supply their navies and for re-export to their respective colonies. By maintaining relations with the large Irish émigré communities present on the continent, merchants from Ireland were well placed to market their goods abroad. Besides Dublin, the southern ports of Waterford and Cork, the latter especially, came to control the lion's share of this trade as the eighteenth century progressed. Early in the century, however, smaller ports such as New Ross or Ross still maintained a lucrative stake in this international trade.⁹⁸ Located just south of the confluence point of the navigable Nore and Barrow rivers, and north of Waterford City and the Suir estuary, New Ross could draw on a large, fertile and accessible agricultural hinterland to supply its customers in return for wine and other foreign goods.⁹⁹

The earliest date provided concerning the trading venture was the balance of an account, dated May 1704, following the 'Lisbon voyage'.¹⁰⁰ Based on the system and calendar under which the Irish provisions trade operated, this voyage would have taken place during the last quarter of 1703.¹⁰¹ The ship first called at Milford Haven and then

⁹⁷ L.M. Cullen, *Anglo-Irish trade, 1660–1800* (Manchester, 1968), pp 18–9; Woodward, 'The Anglo-Irish livestock trade', pp 499–500; Gillespie 'Economic life, 1550–1730', p. 547; John Mannion, 'Irish migration and settlement in Newfoundland: the formative phase, 1697–1732' in *Newfoundland Studies*, xvii, no. 2 (2001), p. 261; idem, 'Victualling a fishery: Newfoundland diet and the origins of the Irish provisions trade, 1675–1700' in *International Journal of Maritime History, St. John's, Newfoundland*, xii, no. 1 (2000), pp 1–60.

⁹⁸ Cullen, *Anglo-Irish trade*, pp 11–2; David Dickson, 'The Cork merchant community in the eighteenth-century: a regional perspective' in L.M. Cullen and P. Butel (eds), *Négoce et industrie en France et en Irlande aux xviii et xix siècles* (Paris, 1980), p. 45; idem, *Old world colony*, pp 136–7; Francis G. James, 'Irish colonial trade in the eighteenth century' in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, xx, no. 4 (Oct., 1963), pp 576–7; Grant, *North Devon Pottery*, pp 101–13; Sarah Stevens, 'a brief examination of a site at Coal Quay, Waterford city' in *Old Waterford Society: Decies*, xxx (Autumn, 1985), p. 52; Thomas M. Truxes, *Irish-American trade, 1660–1783* (Cambridge, 1988), pp 7–28.

⁹⁹ As the eighteenth century progressed, New Ross' trade came to increasingly focus on supplying English fishing vessels with crews and provisions destined for Newfoundland: Legg, 'Irish wine': claret from Bordeaux', p. 95; John Mannion, 'Irish merchants abroad: the Newfoundland experience, 1750–1850' in *Newfoundland Studies*, ii, no. 2 (1986); p. 160; idem, 'Old World antecedents: New World adaptations: Inistioige (Co. Kilkenny) immigrants in Newfoundland' in *Newfoundland Studies*, v, no. 2 (1989), p. 127, 131; Grant, *North Devon Pottery*, p. 110; Peter Barry (ed.), 'The Journey of Samuel Molyneux in Ireland, 1708–1709' in *Analecta Hibernica*, no. 46 (2015), p. 69.

¹⁰⁰ Latter part of account, c.1703–1724 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 217, f. 4).

¹⁰¹ Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, p. 26; Ralph Davis, 'Merchant shipping in the economy of the late seventeenth century' in *The Economic History Review*, New Series, ix, no. 1 (1956), pp 63–4.

Plymouth before the goods were eventually shipped to Lisbon in Portugal. Here beef and butter would have been disposed of and different goods such as wine, sugar and Portuguese salt procured for the return journey.¹⁰² England had entered the War of the Spanish Succession in 1702 against Spain and France, and by late 1703 was ferrying troops and supplies to her new Portuguese ally.¹⁰³ Most importantly for Butler and the Ryans, this destination was now one of the very few legal sources of wine and other continental goods open to Irish merchants.

It would appear, however, that the ship only called at Lisbon on a couple of occasions; it possibly being the case that Portuguese wine was not as popular in Ireland and thereby difficult to market.¹⁰⁴ What is more, Irish merchants had their reservations about trade with Portugal, with it being stated in one early instance ‘we have but little trading thither’.¹⁰⁵ In response, Irish merchants, like many others, either developed new trade routes or simply decided to carry on trading with their well-established contacts in France and Spain, which of course was illegal.¹⁰⁶ Patrick Ryan was nevertheless dispatched to Saint-Malo on the Brittany coast in 1705, most likely to secure a pass to trade and to re-establish business contacts with the resident and well established merchant community originally from the south-east of Ireland. Moreover, over the following two years voyages to Cadiz by Patrick Ryan and Butler’s son Thomas were referred to in the account.¹⁰⁷ This commerce with France and Spain was largely prohibited (see below), and it has been rightly noted that, based on customs records, little or no wine was imported into Ireland direct from the continent during hostilities.¹⁰⁸ However, the lack of official figures

¹⁰² Latter part of account, c.1703–1724 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 217, f. 14).

¹⁰³ ‘Proclamation announcing the outbreak of war with France and Spain, 11 May 1702’ in *POI*, pp 543–5; *CSPD, 1703–4*, pp 71–106; Papers relating to the transportation of troops from Ireland into Portugal, 1703 (NLI, microfilm, p770), pp 119–30.

¹⁰⁴ June Palmer (ed.), *Cornwall, the Canaries and the Atlantic: the letter book of Valentine Enys, 1704–1719* (Exeter, 1997), p. 207; Kelly, ‘The consumption and social use of alcohol’, p. 227.

¹⁰⁵ Bartholomew Van Homrigh to Commissioners of Transportation, 3 Aug. 1703 (NLI, p770), p. 120.

¹⁰⁶ Portugal also became the destination for smuggled Spanish and French goods during the war, but it is unclear if Butler and the Ryans benefited from this trade: Giada Pizzoni, ‘British Catholics’ commercial strategies in times of international warfare (1688–1705)’ in *The Seventeenth Century*, xxxii, no. 1 (2017), pp 91–2.

¹⁰⁷ Mary Ann Lyons, ‘The emergence of an Irish community in Saint-Malo, 1550–1710’ in Thomas O’Connor (ed.), *The Irish in Europe, 1580–1815* (Dublin, 2001), pp 119–20; Mary Ann Lyons and Thomas O’Connor, *Strangers to citizens: the Irish in Europe, 1600–1800* (Dublin, 2008), p. 97; Foley, ‘Butler testamentary records in Cadiz’, p. 486, 490; idem, ‘Butler testamentary dispositions of Cadiz’, p. 151; J.S. Bromley, *Corsairs and Navies, 1600–1760* (London, 1987), p. 281; Liam Murphy, *Waterford merchants and their families on distant shores: traders in Spain and France from 1660 to 1800* (Dublin, 2018), pp 180–185; Latter part of account, c.1703–1724 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 217, ff 15–17).

¹⁰⁸ Legg, ‘Irish wine’: claret from Bordeaux’, p. 98.

obscure the fact that an extensive and illegal trade in wine and provisions was carried on between Ireland and England's rivals during the war years.

Several New Ross merchants were directly incriminated in this 'Clandestine Trade' during the war and, from an Irish perspective, one English observer was correct in his assertion that it was primarily 'Irish Papists' who operated on the frontline of this illegal trade.¹⁰⁹ This was because Irish Catholics occupied a favourable position during the war years due to their shared confession and strong historical links with France and Spain. These links were accentuated by the presence of large, established and increasingly naturalised Irish communities within the ports of both kingdoms.¹¹⁰ Despite being technically at war with one another, France officially re-opened trade with Ireland in September 1703, and in Spain Irish Catholics could claim 'their status of privileged nation vis-à-vis the Spanish authorities'.¹¹¹ Thus, when English traders were expelled from ports such as Cadiz at the outbreak of hostilities, smaller Irish trading firms were left unmolested and able to increase their share of trade.¹¹²

Securing passes from the French and Spanish authorities was a relatively straightforward process for Catholic merchants.¹¹³ The greatest difficulty they faced was ensuring their cargoes and papers would pass inspection by customs officials in Irish ports or, most importantly, if stopped and boarded by British licensed privateers cruising off the French and Iberian coasts. As a result, Irish merchants developed a variety of

¹⁰⁹ It must be noted that it is clear that Irish Protestants were heavily involved in this trade also, but they tended to ship their goods via Catholic merchants and their vessels: Captured ship: St. Brigid, 1704 (TNA, HCAP, HCA 32/52/40); Captured ship: Aylward of Youghal, 1705–7 (ibid., HCA 32/48/26); An extract of Capt'n: William Nunns letter to Mr. Knox Dated June: 8th: 1708 (TNA, SPD, Anne, SP 34/4/85); Mr Benjamin Edwards's account of his coming through France from Martinico into England, 1 June 1704 (WPA, *House of Lords*, HL/PO/JO/10/6/71); 'Report of the committee, in relation to naval affairs, 1 March 1705' in *JOHL*, xvii, 1701–1705, pp 682–685; *The manuscripts of the House of Lords*, vi, new series, 1704–1706 (London, 1966), pp 111–115, 189–222; 'Lord Justices of Ireland to Ormonde, 13 Apr. 1703' in *Calendar of the Manuscripts of Ormonde*, viii, p.65.

¹¹⁰ For an in-depth discussion of Irish merchants, many originally from the south-east of the island, who settled in the Southern Netherlands and carried out extensive trade across Europe and further afield at this time, see: Jan Parmentier, 'The Irish connection: the Irish merchant community in Ostend and Bruges during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries' in *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá chultúr*, xx (2005), pp 31–54.

¹¹¹ Óscar Recio Morales, *Ireland and the Spanish empire, 1600-1825* (Dublin, 2010), pp 258–9.

¹¹² Lyons and O'Connor, *The Irish in Europe*, p. 95; Siobhan Talbott, 'Such unjustifiable practices'? Irish trade, settlement, and society in 1688–1715' in *The Economic History Review*, lxxvii, no. 2 (2014), p. 564; Maria Del Carmen Lario, 'The Irish traders of eighteenth-century Cádiz' in David Dickson, Jan Parmentier, and Jane H. Ohlmeyer (eds), *Irish and Scottish mercantile networks in Europe and overseas in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (Gent, 2007), p. 215; Samuel Fannin, 'The Irish community in eighteenth-century Cádiz' in Thomas O'Connor and Mary Ann Lyons (eds), *Irish migration in Europe after Kinsale, 1602–1820* (Dublin, 2003), pp 135–6.

¹¹³ For example: Giada Pizzoni, 'A pass ... is not denied to any Romanist': the strategies of the Catholic merchant community in the early Atlantic World' in *Cultural and Social History*, xi, no. 3 (2014), pp 349–362.

strategies. In August 1704 the *Aylward of Youghal*, Andrew Gallway master, departed its home port carrying a cargo of beef and butter. The stated recipient of the ship's cargo was Richard Aylward of Porto, but using a French pass the ship sailed to La Rochelle and Bordeaux, where the cargo was landed and replaced by a large quantity of wine worth over £1,000. To avoid suspicion if searched on the return voyage, Gallway had on-board several falsified documents, including bills of lading and cockets (custom receipts) in Portuguese and English seemingly signed by port officials and the English consul in Porto.¹¹⁴ A further apparent ploy of merchants was to disguise the French wines in 'Cask[s] being all made Portugal fashion', and the scale of this trade with Bordeaux appears to have been such that one English captain stated that the 'Irish Papists who use this Clandestine Trade' had 'named a place Viana in the River of Burdaux, from which they carry great Quantities of wines for Ireland as Inbred from Viana in Portugall'.¹¹⁵

The ploys used by Patrick Ryan and Thomas Butler during their voyages to Cadiz in October 1707 and September 1708 respectively are unclear. Nevertheless, the activities of Richard Butler in London suggests a possible approach that could circumvent restrictions. In November 1708 Butler petitioned Queen Anne for a pass to enable Patrick Ryan and the 50 ton *Mary of London* to sail from New Ross to San Sebastian in Spain.¹¹⁶ For several years previously limited trade with Spain's northern ports had been permitted with royal assent. However, merchants had quickly figured out how to use these passes for different purposes. In 1705 the Cornish merchant Valentine Enys informed a friend about 'a small project in my head' wherein he intended to use English, French and Spanish passes to sail first to Bordeaux for wine. Next, the ship would travel the short distance to San Sebastian and take on lemons, oranges and iron. The wine could then be passed off as Spanish upon returning to England, but 'if deemed by nice palates to be French, the penalty is only paying French wine duty without confiscation of ship or any other goods'.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ Captured ship: *Aylward of Youghal*, 1705–7 (TNA, *HCAP*, HCA 32/48/26).

¹¹⁵ Capt'n: William Nunns letter to Mr. Knox, 1708 (TNA, *SPD, Anne*, SP 34/4/85); 'Report of the committee, 1 March 1705' in *JOHL*, xvii, 1701–1705, p. 684.

¹¹⁶ In 1707/8 Butler petitioned the Queen for a pass for another ship to sail to San Sebastian. The *John of Dublin*, Richard Dobbin master, was a larger vessel of 100 tons and armed with six guns. It is unclear whether this ship had a letter of marque to operate as a privateer, but it may add some credence to Ryan family tradition and how John Ryan made his fortune. A Joshua Dobbin had been apprenticed to Butler previously and was established as a London merchant by this time: Petition of Richard Butler to Queen Anne, 6 Nov. 1708 (BL, *Blenheim papers*, vol. dxxi, Add MS 61621, f. 173); Petition of Richard Butler to Queen Anne, 1707/8 (*ibid.*, f. 40). My sincere thanks to John Bergin for supplying these previous references. See also: Deposition of Joshua Dobbin, 28 Dec. 1708 (TNA, *TBP*, T 1/115/29g).

¹¹⁷ Palmer (ed.), *the letter book of V. Enys, 1704–1719*, pp 113–4.

Iberian wines and spirits were generally of good quality, but the previous examples highlight the lengths merchants were willing to go in order to acquire their French equivalents.¹¹⁸ This was the case for Butler and the Ryans during a voyage between New Ross and Nantes. Having arrived in the French port in early 1709, Patrick Ryan feared being stopped by Guernsey privateers on his return voyage to Ireland. Fortunately, another Irish captain named Thomas Harper had recently arrived from New Ross (illegally) at the helm of the Dutch registered *Wexford Galley*. The ship's Rotterdam-based owner, Patrick Harper, had supplied two Dutch passes to permit safe transit to Rotterdam. Such a voyage was deemed legal because, although the Dutch Republic and France were on opposing sides during the war, free trade was permitted between both nations. However, the true destination of the salt, wine and brandy carried by the *Wexford Galley* was Dublin, where Harper was ordered to sail 'with all speed ... [*and to*] keep no letters on b[*oar*]d. for fear of being brought to trouble'.¹¹⁹ How this was to benefit Patrick Ryan was subsequently explained in a letter by Patrick Harper to the galley's captain:

If Mr Patrick Ryan has one or two Dutch men onboard that can write you may give him your old pass which may clear him of the Guernsey Privateers that he says are on that Coast in such case he must have his bills of lading in Dutch as bound for Holland and so must you have yours and keep no pass on b[*oar*]d. that can cause any suspicion you must tell or advise said Mr Ryan as much but oblige him to returne your said pass on your and his arrival in Ireland being I would not have such things wander up and down.¹²⁰

The *Wexford Galley* was subsequently captured by a privateer and brought into Guernsey. Despite the incriminating evidence found on-board, including the correspondence quoted above, it appears the ship and its cargo were later released. During interrogations the ship's crew had maintained their intended destination was Rotterdam as their French and Dutch passes stated, while Thomas Harper dismissed the evidence that suggested otherwise, by observing 'that there was propositions, to him, to goe to Ireland, but wine and brandy being so dear, they could not agree [*sic*] thereupon'.¹²¹ As a result, the authorities could not prove that the ship's intended destination was Ireland,

¹¹⁸ For Irish involvement in the French wine and brandy trade and its growth during the eighteenth century, see: Cullen, 'The Irish merchant communities', pp 51–62.

¹¹⁹ Captured ship: *Wexford Galley of Rotterdam, 1709* (TNA, *HCAP*, HCA 32/86/6); Douglas Coombs, 'Dr Davenant and the Debate on Franco-Dutch Trade' in *The Economic History Review*, x, no. 1 (1957), p. 96; P.W. Klein, '“Little London”: British merchants in Rotterdam during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries' in D.C. Coleman and Peter Mathias (eds), *Enterprise and history: essays in honour of Charles Wilson* (Cambridge, 1984), p. 125; David Ormrod, *The rise of commercial empires: England and the Netherlands in the age of mercantilism, 1650–1770* (Cambridge, 2003), pp 299–300.

¹²⁰ *Wexford Galley, 1709* (TNA, *HCAP*, HCA 32/86/6).

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

which meant Peter Harper's subsequent claim for the ship and its cargo was apparently permitted.¹²² There is also no evidence to suggest Patrick Ryan and his ship were captured by privateers on his return voyage.

How should the actions of Butler, the Ryans and Catholic merchants in general be viewed? Is the above evidence unequivocal proof of their disloyalty to the English Crown as Catholic subjects, perhaps even closet Jacobites? From a purely political perspective this would certainly appear to have been the case, mirroring as it does the later nationalistic view that England's difficulty was Ireland's opportunity. However, a number of historians have contended that for the majority of merchants during times of war, the guiding motivation behind their actions were far from political or sectarian in nature, and at base, were simply a matter of business as usual and turning a profit where possible.¹²³ Why many merchants decided to continue in their business dealings in spite of, rather than because of, the political interests of their respective governments becomes clearer, when it is observed that European powers went to war with one another no-less than seventeen times during the eighteenth century. If war can be termed the 'normal means of intercourse between states' at this time, for Irish merchants then the key concern was maintaining cultural and commercial relations that just so happened to crisscross these warring political entities.¹²⁴ It is through a similar lens that the actions of Butler and the Ryans can be interpreted.¹²⁵ Therefore, in an overall sense, the Ryans and other Catholics viewed the law at different times in at least one of two ways. Either it was an ally that could be called upon through words and deeds to attain the required effect. Or, as was increasingly the case, it was an obstacle of circumstance facing non-conformists that could, if not should, be circumvented as the means to an exceptional end, that of

¹²² The records concerning the *Wexford Galley* contain a claim by Peter Harper and no official court judgement (usually in latin). The papers quoted in the text were copies, and one would expect to find the originals and other documents within the court records if the ship had been seized and sold. Therefore, it appears that the ship was later released to Peter Harper.

¹²³ Talbott, 'Irish trade, settlement, and society', p. 567; Thomas M. Truxes, 'The case of the snow *Johnson*: New York City's Irish merchants and trade with the enemy during the Seven Years War' in David Dickson and Cormac Ó Grada (eds), *Refiguring Ireland: essays in honour of L.M. Cullen* (Dublin, 2003), p. 148; Pauline Croft, 'Trading with the enemy, 1585–1604', *Historical Journal*, xxxii, no. 2 (Jun., 1989), pp 281–302; Palmer (ed.), *the letter book of V. Enys, 1704–1719*, pp 10–11.

¹²⁴ Tim Blanning quoted in McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland*, pp 25–6; Talbott, 'Irish trade, settlement, and society', p. 557.

¹²⁵ The scale of trade carried out between France and Ireland during the war can be understood by the fact that French currency was made legal tender in Ireland in 1714: 'For making new species of French coin currency, 24 July 1714' in *POI*, pp 695–7; Talbott, 'Irish trade, settlement, and society', p. 565; Walsh, *The South Sea Bubble and Ireland*, p. 49.

normality. The willingness of the Ryans and their allies to circumvent legal restrictions will be further discussed in the following chapter.

The reward for pursuing this questionable commerce, as long as apprehension by the authorities could be avoided, was potential profits, which could be considerable at times if Richard Butler is to be taken at his word: in one instance he estimated the value of one of his ship's cargoes of 'wyne brandy and other goods' during the early 1690s at £3,500.¹²⁶ Apart from likely handling goods on his brother's account, John Ryan fulfilled a number of roles for Richard Butler. This included selling wine and brandy, such as 24 hogsheads of claret sent to a Cork merchant in May 1708. Ryan also acted as Butler's agent concerning the legal issues he faced in Ireland. This included provisioning 'Councillis upon sevll. occassions' with 'six Dozen of Clarrett', alongside a further six dozen bottles supplied during a stint Butler had apparently spent in 'gaol' as a result of his debts.¹²⁷ Ryan managed lands Butler leased from the Duke of Ormond in county Tipperary, while his own demesne farm at Inch may have supplied Butler and other merchants with cattle. In 1724/5, for instance, the demesne was stocked with 130 fattened bullocks.¹²⁸ A number of other known merchants appear in Ryan's financial records. Edward Fitzgerald and another John Ryan, both merchants of Waterford, and John Ryan of Inch's close friend, Pierce Boyton of Dublin, owed Ryan a total of £820 by the time of his death in 1724.¹²⁹ In another notable example, Richard Perry, a Presbyterian merchant of Clonmel, whose family had strong mercantile links with London, was recorded as possibly having owed Ryan a total of £2,000, and the executors of Ryan's will would

¹²⁶ Butler provided this valuation for his ship's cargo in a petition to Queen Anne during his time in London. Although the victim of contrary winds, Butler's ship, the *Anne & Mary*, had suffered a similar fate to a 'French ship, of thirty tons, laden with brandy and salt', which arrived in Kinsale in November 1690, 'supposing the place to be in the hands of King James's adherents'. One of the regiments that requisitioned the ship's cargo shortly after the town's capture by the Williamite army was the Princess Anne of Denmark's Regiment of Foot: Richard Cannon, *Historical records of the eight, or the king's regiment of foot: containing an account of the regiment in 1685, and of its subsequent services to 1844* (London, 1844), p. 19; John Boyle, *The battlefields of Ireland, from 1688 to 1691: including Limerick and Athlone, Aughrim and the Boyne. Being an outline history of the Jacobite war in Ireland, and the causes which led to it* (New York, 1887), p. 203; Petition to Queen Anne from R. Butler, 18 Dec. 1710 (TNA, SPD, Anne, SP 34/28/88, ff 151–2); Petition of Richard Butler, New Ross, merchant, for compensation for a ship and cargo seized by officers of King William's army when Kinsale surrendered, undated (TNA, SPI, SP 63/417/3397b); Deposition of J. Dobbin, 28 Dec. 1708 (ibid., TBP, T 1/115/29g); Certified copy of certificate provided by the Sovereign, Burgess and inhabitants of Kinsale, 2 Feb. 1690[1] (ibid., T 1/115/15/29f).

¹²⁷ Latter part of account, c.1703–1724 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 217, f. 2, 7).

¹²⁸ Ibid., f. 1, 11; Howard Egan to Frances Ryan, 15 June 1725 (ibid., MS 356); Hugh Kennedy to Frances Ryan, 19 Oct. 1725 (ibid., MS 358); Petition of Richard Butler to James Butler, 2nd Duke of Ormond, 3 Feb. 1710[11] (NLI, *Ormonde Mss*, MS 2474, vol. 174, f. 203).

¹²⁹ Executors' account of notes and bonds payable to the estate of John Ryan of Inch, deceased, 28 Mar. 1724 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 222); Will of John Ryan of Inch, 2 Mar. 1723[4] (TCLT, *Ryan papers*, microfilm, TL/F/21); Parmentier, 'The Irish connection', pp 46–7.

rightly note beside this account entry ‘Quer[y]. whether paid’.¹³⁰ This sum was made up of about fifty notes from Perry, and one would suspect the money stemmed at least in part from wool sales from Inch farm.

The combination of John Ryan’s dealings outside his position as a landlord in commerce and the law generated a lot of extra capital. The question he faced was what to do with it. Age old wisdom in Ireland, and contemporary fears over currency instability, would have favoured purchasing land as the safest investment, but Ryan’s status as a Catholic made this choice illegal and extremely risky after the 1704 and 1709 Popery Acts.¹³¹ Taking leases on land for a maximum of 31 years did not appeal to Ryan, and so, one solution he decided upon was money lending.¹³² Ryan’s extra sources of income meant that he made a considerable amount of money during a period already noted for international warfare and economic depression, coupled with extravagant living among many members of the gentry and aristocracy. Thus, for every gentleman with extra capital at hand, there were many more in need of it. Surviving bonds within the family’s papers and executor’s accounts show that the larger loans made by Ryan ranged from between £50 and £300. Furthermore, Ryan was also a source of credit for many local farmers, lending sums ranging anywhere from a couple of shillings up to loans of £30 taken in partnership.¹³³

Over the course of his lifetime it has been seen that John Ryan turned his hand to numerous pursuits and moved within different social circles that included both Catholics and Protestants.¹³⁴ Even from his limited surviving papers, one is left with the distinct impression that if someone was worth knowing, be it a modest tenant, a merchant or a landlord, then Ryan made it his business to know them, and somehow nearly always managed to turn a profit in the process. The result was that after thirty years, despite the effects of war, family conflict and mounting religious discrimination, he had developed his father’s respectable landholdings into an enviable 2,940-acre estate. Besides using

¹³⁰ Jacob M. Price, *Perry of London: a family and a firm on the seaborne frontier, 1615–1753* (Harvard, 1992), pp 16–18; Executors’ account payable to J. Ryan, 28 Mar. 1724 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 222).

¹³¹ Catholics who purchased or held mortgages on land, or leaseholds above 31 years, faced the risk of detection through Protestant discoverers who became entitled to the interest in the land or lease under the law. False or collusive discoveries by friendly Protestants are known to have been used by Catholics to thwart the genuine proceedings of others: Thomas P. O’Neill, ‘Discoverers and discoveries: the penal laws and Dublin property’ in *Dublin Historical Record*, xxxvii, no. 1 (Dec., 1983), p. 3; Harvey, *The Bellevs of Mount Bellew*, pp 43–4; Osborough, ‘Catholics, land and the Popery Acts of Anne’, pp 26–8, 36–9.

¹³² The leases held by Ryan were for townlands members of his family had held since after the Restoration (Cormackstown and Ballynahow).

¹³³ Executors’ account payable to J. Ryan, 28 Mar. 1724 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 222).

¹³⁴ For an example of the Protestant individuals Ryan interacted with, see: R. White to J. Ryan, 1 Aug. 1719 (ibid., MS 341); R. White to J. Ryan, 10 June 1721 (ibid., MS 343).

acreage and monetary value to gauge his accomplishments and worth, Ryan had also realised a number of achievements that were deeply symbolic and beyond simple and exact measurement, be it in pounds or acres. At face value alone his purchase of approximately 2,000 acres in Kilnelongurty from Nicholas Purcell in 1704 for £1,620 was an impressive feat. However, it may be recalled from the previous chapter that this area was known as the ‘Baron’s colpe’ following its purchase in c.1631 by Baron Theobald Purcell from the heir to the territory’s historic chief, Shane Glasse O’Mulryan. Three generations previous to 1704, John Ryan’s great-grandfather, Art O’Mulryan, was a modest freeholder next door to these, the clan’s mensal lands, which were held to be inalienable from the ruling bloodline.¹³⁵ A further century of warfare and upheavals later, and the Ryans who now resided at Inch had emerged as the only landowners descended from the clan and proprietors of what was once the heartland of their ‘country’. One is therefore given an overall sense of the value that John Ryan and his family, both living and deceased, would have placed in the 1704 land transaction. Indeed, the status that the family could now claim within the local community was reflected in John Ryan’s reputed title of ‘Ryan Glas’, while his grandson, another John Ryan, may have carried the title of ‘Shane na Glasse’ during his lifetime (see Chapter 4).¹³⁶ John Ryan’s land acquisitions continued a trend whereby his family profited from the upheavals of the seventeenth century. Therefore, over the course of one century (1603-1704), the Ryans emerged after three separate wars with a larger estate than they previously had and with stronger links to leading families in the area. This trend, of course, ran contrary to the fortunes of the majority of Catholics in Ireland, but nevertheless serves to highlight how some families did adapt to their changing environment and managed to increase their station in society.

John Ryan’s land purchase in 1704 represented the culmination of the relationship his family had maintained with the Purcells since the mid-1600s, and so too, in a similar manner, did his marriage into the Mathew family in c.1714. Frances Mathew of Thurles brought with her a portion of up to £1,000, but more important was the pedigree and social connections that the Ryans of Inch now had access to.¹³⁷ Over the course of ten years of

¹³⁵ An inquisition taken at Clonmel in the 14th day October 1611 concerning seising of lands at Coolkyll by Shane Glass O’Mulryan (NLI, *Callanan papers*, MS 11,422(8e)); Tyrry pedigrees (ibid., MS 11,422(7c)); Morrin (ed.), *Calendar of patent and close rolls in Ireland in the reign of Charles the First*, ii, p. 586; Shane Glasse O’MullRyan (TCLT, *Skehan papers*, typescript copy, vol. liii), pp 70–71.

¹³⁶ Notes relating to the will of John Ryan (also known as Shane na Glasse), c.1778 (NLI, *Callanan papers*, MS 11,422(8a)); The Ryans of Inch (TCLT, *Fogarty papers*, vol. xxxiii), p. 15.

¹³⁷ Burke’s genealogy mistakenly identifies John Ryan’s marriage as being to Mary, daughter of Thomas Mathew of Annfield. Frances was one of three children from Major George Mathew’s second marriage in 1686 to Mary, the widow of Sir Simon Eaton and daughter of Sir Richard Aldworth of Newcastle, Co. Cork: John Burke, *Burke’s Irish family records: genealogical histories of notable Irish families*

marriage, Frances bore her husband six children, four of whom were sons. Like their mother, these children could now claim descent from Elizabeth Butler, Lady Thurles and her second husband, George Mathew of Radyr. Succeeding generations of the Ryan family could, as a result, claim a common descent with the once mighty Dukes of Ormond, direct kinship with all three branches of the Mathew family and the prestige attached to their ancestral lands in Kilnelongurty.

Due to her pedigree and standing in society, it could hardly be expected that Frances Ryan should reside in a farmhouse. In order to literally cement and reflect his family's newfound status, John Ryan began work on erecting Inch House soon after his marriage. The result was a compact yet imposing structure in the Queen Anne style which Frances' discerning cousin, 'Grand George' Mathew of Thomastown, would have appreciated.¹³⁸ While the building work at Inch was likely underway, John Ryan, his father-in-law Major George Mathew and Nicholas Purcell were all imprisoned in Clonmel Gaol due to fears of a Jacobite invasion.¹³⁹ They were being persecuted for their Jacobite backgrounds, but the mere fact Inch House was being built during this period complicates the view that by the eighteenth century 'many Catholics, whether from preference or necessity, eschewed display ... [*and*] calculated politically that riches were better concealed than advertised in high living'.¹⁴⁰ The lifestyle practiced at Inch House during the years immediately after its construction is unknown, but it is clear that John Ryan believed his new status deserved a befitting countryseat despite wider political events.

The legality of the manner in which John Ryan acquired his wealth was dubious at times and, in the end, it would be a question of the legality of his conduct that led to Ryan's demise. Following Nicholas Purcell's death in 1723 without male issue, his son-in-law, John Whyte of Leixlip, accused Ryan of underhanded dealings in relation to his purchase in 1704 of the Baron's colpe (manor of Coolkill) in Kilnelongurty. As may be recalled, Stephen Rice held a mortgage on the Loughmoe estate, and Whyte, it seems,

(Buckingham, 5th ed., 1976), p. 1002; History of Eliogarty (NLI, *Callanan MS*, p4546), p. 398, 416; Mathew family settlement, 11 Mar. 1713[14] (NAI, MS 5302/4); 'Reason for Maintaining a Clause in the Popery Bill, notwithstanding the objections of George Matthews, Esq., 1703' in *CSPD*, 1702-3, pp 258-60; 'George Mathew and Martha his wife v. Chichester Phillips et al, 1 Jan. 1703' in *The English law reports*, vol. i (London, 1900), pp 319-20.

¹³⁸ Owners of Inch (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 662/14); Mark Bence-Jones, *A guide to Irish country houses* (London, 2nd ed., 1988), p. xiii, xxxi; Condon, 'The Inch correspondences: a selection', p. 9; Barnard, *Making the grand figure*, p. 21; Marnane, *Land and violence*, pp 21-2.

¹³⁹ History Eliogarty (NLI, *Callanan MS*, p 4546), p. 702, 791; Extracts and notes relating to the history of Tipperary (NLI, *Callanan MS*, p5489); Burke, *Irish priests in the penal times*, p. 349.

¹⁴⁰ Toby Barnard, 'Public and private uses of wealth in Ireland, c.1660-1760' in Jacqueline Hill and Colm Lennon (eds), *Luxury and austerity: Historical Studies xxi: papers read before the 23rd Irish conference of Historians, held at St Patrick's College, Maynooth, 16-18 May 1997* (Dublin, 1999), pp 72-3.

maintained that Rice had not signed any deed in which he was a named party to the sale. This was certainly correct in relation to the surviving deed of sale (executed in Ryan's hand) held in the Ryan papers.¹⁴¹ Furthermore, whether Purcell was actually in Ireland when he supposedly signed the deed is unclear, because in November 1703 he had reportedly 'kist her majesties hand' (Queen Anne) before departing to serve in Portugal.¹⁴² However, Ryan's acquaintance, Thomas Hussey, believed he had 'seen a deed to this purpose' in Dublin, and an investigation into the Ryans' title to the manor of Coolkill in 1834 quoted from deeds of lease and release agreed on 15 and 18 March 1704 between Ryan, Purcell and Rice over the sale.¹⁴³ Nevertheless, in early 1724, John Ryan was informed by Hussey that Whyte was in the capital and raising questions over the legality of the sale. In turn, Ryan travelled to Dublin to confront Whyte, and soon after a duel was fought in which Ryan was killed.¹⁴⁴ John Ryan's acquisition of land from Purcell in 1704 was somewhat suspicious, but whether it was actually illegal is doubtful, especially as Whyte and Stephen Rice's heirs did not press the issue further following Ryan's death. The most likely explanation is that Rice agreed to the sale of the manor to Ryan, but Purcell never paid the sale money to Rice, thereby leaving the existing mortgage on the five townlands that were not included in the sale.¹⁴⁵ It would appear, therefore, that Ryan fought the duel not so much to cover up any wrongdoing on his part, but instead to protect his personal reputation and family name; the two things he had spent his life attempting to maintain and advance in Tipperary.¹⁴⁶ However, his premature death itself would pose serious problems for his young family over the coming years. Apart from accommodating his widow and avoiding a potential repeat of conflict over inheritance, Ryan needed to ensure that the ability of the Inch estate to remain intact was not impeded by penal legislation. Central to this were kinship bonds and the individuals

¹⁴¹ Deed of Sale. N. Purcell, S. Rice and J. Ryan, 18 Mar. 1703[4] (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 778).

¹⁴² Narcissus Luttrell, *A brief historical relation of state affairs from September 1678 to April 1714*, vol. v (Oxford, 1857), p. 355; Bergin, 'Irish Catholics and their networks', p. 70.

¹⁴³ T. Hussey to J. Ryan, 23 Jan. 1723[4] (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 344); Copies of documents asserting the rights of George and Daniel Ryan to title of the manor of Coolkill, 1834 (*ibid.*, MS 13).

¹⁴⁴ John Whyte was suffering financial difficulties (he later sold the manor of Leixlip to William Connolly) and he stood to inherit half of the Loughmoe estate through his wife as one of Purcell's two surviving daughters: T. Hussey to J. Ryan, 23 Jan. 1723[4] (*ibid.*, MS 344); The Ryans of Inch (TCLT, *Fogarty papers*, vol. xxxiii), p. 15; History of the parish of Loughmore (TCLT, *Skehan papers*, vol. lii), p. 120; *Journals of the House of Commons, of the Kingdom of Ireland, containing the Reign of her Majesty Queen Anne*, vol. iii (Dublin, 1763), p. 624, 745, 755, 762–3, 768; Patrick Walsh, *The making of the Irish Protestant Ascendancy: the life of William Connolly, 1662–1729* (Dublin, 2010), p. 75.

¹⁴⁵ Memorial of deed of assignment. M. Rice to H. Daly, 16 Apr. 1723 [reg. 9 June 1724] (*ROD*, vol. xxxix, p. 438, no. 26256).

¹⁴⁶ James Kelly, 'That damn'd thing called honour': *Duelling in Ireland 1570–1860* (Cork, 1995), pp 12–13; Dickson, *Old World colony*, p. 85.

Ryan entrusted with the safeguarding of the estate and its future inheritance by his heir, 'the minor' Daniel Ryan.

Chapter 3

‘Man is ... suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun’: kinship and the shaping of the Ryans’ world, 1724–1756¹

Keith Wrightson has observed that among the English gentry ‘kinship was undoubtedly a matter of great practical significance’. Similarly, Anthony Fletcher has concluded that kinship was ‘the dominant principle’ shaping the lives of England’s early modern elite.² Such arguments have yet to be adequately tested within an Irish context, but the significance of kinship and the trust it engendered are certainly evident in the affairs of the Ryans of Inch. This can be seen in the period shortly after John Ryan’s demise when his widow Frances was advised of ‘some secrets in ye. affairs of yr family yt. must not be known but to fast friends’.³ Her advisor was Howard Egan of Annameadle, Co. Tipperary, a ‘kinsman’ who had written to offer his services ‘to answr. that confidence my dr. decd. friend’ had ‘reposed in me’ as an executor of his will. Egan never disclosed what these ‘secrets’ were. However, it is known that Ryan, described as ‘soe carefull & prud[en]t a man’, placed great faith in Egan’s discretion and abilities, entrusting him with the family’s confidence and welfare.⁴ What stands out about the decision to trust Egan with such an important matter are the very obscure familial links that existed between both families. John Ryan of Inch’s (d.1724) 1st cousin, Philip Fogarty of Curraheen and Ballinlonty, married Alice Flood of Rathcannon, Co. Tipperary. Howard Egan’s sister was married to another Flood of Rathcannon. Therefore, the closest association that could have existed between both men was that Howard Egan’s niece was married to John Ryan’s 1st cousin.⁵ Consequently, the Ryan-Egan relationship highlights not just the trust engendered by familial bonds, but also the extent to which kinship could manifest itself among distantly related members of the landed gentry. As will be

¹ Max Weber cited in Clifford Geertz, *The interpretation of cultures: selected essays* (New York, 2000), p. 5.

² Keith Wrightson, *English society, 1580–1680* (London, 1990), p. 29; Anthony Fletcher, *A County Community in Peace and War: Sussex 1600–1660* (London, 1975), pp 44–8, 53. See also: David Cressy, ‘Kinship and kin interaction in Early Modern England’ in *Past & Present*, no. 113 (Nov. 1986), pp 38–69.

³ Howard Egan to Frances Ryan, 21 Mar. 1723[4] (UCC, Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 345); Hugh Kennedy to Frances Ryan, 22 Mar. 1723[4] (ibid., MS 346); Will of John Ryan of Inch, 2 Mar. 1723[4] (TCLT, *Ryan papers*, microfilm, TL/F/21).

⁴ H. Egan to F. Ryan, 21 Mar. 1723[4] (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 345); Howard Egan to Frances Ryan, 23 May 1724 (ibid., MS 349).

⁵ The Fogartys of Ballinlonty (TCLT, *Fogarty papers*, typescript copy, vol. xxix), p. 10; Will of Howard Egan of Annameadle, Co. Tipp (ibid., *The papers of Rev. Father Walter G. Skehan*, typescript copy, vol. lxxv), pp 104–5; History of the Barony of Eliogarty by Dr Martin Callanan (NLI, *Callanan MS*, microfilm, p4546), p. 641; Howard Egan to Frances Ryan, 23 May 1724 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 349).

demonstrated, these bonds were to be of the utmost importance to John Ryan's family following his death.

One concern faced by the Ryans was penal legislation, which dictated the Inch estate be equally divided between John Ryan's four sons unless the eldest converted to the Established Church and became the sole heir.⁶ But Egan was not just concerned with legal interference. 'I hope', he added in his letter to Frances Ryan, 'the proper care is taken of all ye papers & other Effects to prevent Embeazlem[en]t'.⁷ Egan was clearly aware that problems could just as easily arise among less scrupulous associates and family members. As will emerge, John Ryan's family faced many challenges over the coming years, but they were not alone. Besides Egan, Ryan had assembled a trusted group of extended family members who, for almost three decades, cumulatively formed a unified body resembling a 'composite' John Ryan. The main aim of this chapter is to demonstrate the importance of extended family and kinship in safeguarding the Ryan family and their estate, and in doing so to shed light on the workings of kinship and the world the Ryans inhabited as members of the Catholic gentry.

As Catholic landowners during a period of penal legislation, the Ryans of Inch were faced with a number of challenges. After 1724 inheritance was a key concern, as the family sought to ensure that the penal laws did not prevent John Ryan's eldest son Daniel from inheriting the entire Inch estate. As a minor at the time of his father's death, the law also dictated that Daniel Ryan's welfare and education should come under the supervision of a Protestant guardian, which in theory would lead to his future conversion to the Established Church. However, the fact he did not convert opened up further problems for the family, with the law dictating the estate be equally divided between John Ryan's four sons. It will be demonstrated the family prevented Daniel Ryan's conversion, and the subsequent sub-division of his estate by exploiting both kinship and legal loopholes largely unappreciated by historians. Moving beyond the penal laws, there was the matter of ensuring competent management of the Inch estate when the family lacked guidance from an experienced male head. This was by no means a secondary consideration: successful circumvention of the penal laws would have counted for little if the family

⁶ Charles Ivar McGrath, 'The provisions for conversion in the penal laws, 1695–1750' in Michael Brown, Charles Ivar McGrath and Thomas P. Power (eds), *Converts and Conversion in Ireland, 1650–1850* (Dublin, 2005), pp 41–2.

⁷ H. Egan to F. Ryan, 21 Mar. 1724 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 345).

could not keep their finances in order. Central to understanding the Ryans' success in all these matters was kinship, which shaped their world.

The importance of family networks and kinship among eighteenth-century Ireland's gentry is often identified or at least inferred by historians, but discussions rarely exceeds broad generalisations.⁸ Less attention still has been directed towards the role played by family and kinship networks in Irish Catholics' attempts to circumvent and negate the penal laws.⁹ This is understandable, given that most studies are regional or national in their focus; that evidence is, in many instances, scarce; and that most Catholics fell outside the direct focus of the penal laws or conformed to the Established Church to escape restrictions. The study of kinship, therefore, is typically confined to discernible links as expressed through genealogical trees: the closer the connection through blood and marriage, the stronger the bond of kinship. However, how people estimated and defined kin is not always adequately reflected by a two-dimensional study of lineages. In what follows, it will be argued that the manifestation of kinship could at times go beyond close blood ties to become something more malleable and experiential. What mattered most when a bond of kinship was created or invoked was that the affiliation was agreed between the parties involved. In practical terms, this greatly enlarged the pool of kin available to the Ryans to assist them in their future endeavours.

In order to shed light on the Ryans' circumvention of penal legislation and the overall importance of kinship networks in their affairs, the ensuing discussion will explore several specific areas. First, the competence of John Ryan's executors, who managed the Inch estate pending Daniel Ryan's inheritance, will be discussed. Next, the effect of the penal laws on the family's affairs will be considered. Here, attention will focus on how the Ryans managed to circumvent legal restrictions without suffering prosecution. The final section will return to considerations of estate management at Inch, showing how an inexperienced Daniel Ryan turned to relatives for their expertise and assistance in

⁸ For example: William Nolan, 'Patterns of living in county Tipperary' in William Nolan and Thomas G. McGrath (eds), *Tipperary: history and society: interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county* (Dublin, 1985), p. 301; Whelan, *The tree of liberty*, pp 29–30; idem, 'The Catholic Church in County Tipperary 1700–1900' in William Nolan and Thomas G. McGrath (eds), *Tipperary: history and society: interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county* (Dublin, 1985), pp 215–6. For the importance of kinship in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Ireland, see: Patrick Little, "'Blood and Friendship": the Earl of Essex's Protection of the Earl of Clanricarde's Interests, 1641–6' in *English Historical Review*, cxi (1997), 927–41; Rhys Morgan, 'From soldier to settler: the Welsh in Ireland, 1558–1641' (PhD thesis, Cardiff University, 2011), pp 152–177.

⁹ In her analysis of the Lattin Family's illegal acquisitions of land, and their subsequent attempts to protect them from discovery, Emma Lyons has identified the assistance of relatives, but her discussion involves only a passing appreciation of the role of kinship: Lyons, 'Morristown Lattin, c.1600–1860', pp 209–247.

maximising the estate's economic potential. Examining these three areas together will produce a detailed case study of kinship in operation, thus helping to illuminate the workings of the Ryans' world.

I

*'... as my executors shall think fit'*¹⁰

When John Ryan passed away in his fifties, his wife Frances (nee Mathew) was at least twenty years younger and still of child bearing age. Therefore, an immediate concern arising after Ryan's death was the accommodation of his widow. John Ryan's will, however, was uncharacteristically vague on the subject of provisions for his widow, stating that his 'reall and personall Estate of what nature or kind' were to be divided 'among my Wife and Children as they my Executors shall think fit'. The likely solution was that the executors either lodged a dower claim in court or turned to the marriage settlement agreed between Ryan and Frances in c.1714 to guide their decision.¹¹ Thus, out of a total rental of £397 3s in 1725, Frances eventually received, even after remarriage, the sum of £132 7s 8d per annum for life, though this was reduced to £114 once an earlier claim on the estate was satisfied in 1726.¹² Uncommonly for this period, Frances was also to benefit from a share in her late husband's personal assets (£500). Because this latter legacy went 'over and above' what was expected of him, Ryan further sought to prevent any future dissent among his six children. His will stated that should any of 'my Children' not be 'satisfyed' with the share or proportion appointed for him or her, then 'such Child as disagreeing shall be cut off from haveing any share of my reall or personall Estate'.¹³ As will be seen, this stipulation had a second application in relation to the penal

¹⁰ Will of J. Ryan, 2 Mar. 1723[4] (TCLT, *Ryan papers*, TL/F/21).

¹¹ There is no surviving evidence of this marriage settlement. Therefore, whether or not the third share in the estate's income eventually received by Frances Ryan stemmed from this agreement or her dower right under common law is unclear. The approximate date for the marriage of c.1714 is based on Daniel Ryan being 53 at the time of his death on 20 October 1767: Vigers (ed.), 'County Tipperary', p. 106; Wilson, *Women, marriage and property*, p. 46.

¹² Thomas Power has provided the sum of £204 as the total rental for the Inch estate in 1724. However, this figure represents just the income from the manor of Coolkill, which alongside the income from two leaseholds brought a total of £218. Alongside the lands surrounding Inch (excluding the demesne), this brought a total rental of £342 at the time of John Ryan's death in 1724. Once the two leaseholds were discontinued in 1725, the manor's rental came to £187 3s. The rental for the demesne added a further £86 3s 6d in 1725, providing a total rental income for the Inch estate of £397 3s in 1725: Account presented by Howard Egan as guardian of Daniel Ryan, 24 Feb. 1730[1] (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 368); Executors' account detailing payments from the estate of John Ryan, 12 Jan. 1729[30] (*ibid.*, MS 367); Rent roll of the lands of Kilnagorty, property of John Ryan, deceased, maintained by his executors Major George Mathew, Howard Egan and Hugh Kennedy, 1724–1730 (*ibid.*, MS 172); Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, p. 88.

¹³ Executors' account, 12 Jan. 1730 (*ibid.*, MS 367); Will of J. Ryan, 2 Mar. 1723[4] (TCLT, *Ryan papers*, TL/F/21); Wilson, *Women, marriage and property*, p. 154, 171.

laws, but here it can also be interpreted as a final attempt by Ryan to prevent a dispute between generations of the family as had transpired earlier in his lifetime.

As a man for whom honour was important — as discussed in chapter two, he died in a duel — Ryan would have been all the more bound to ensure suitable provisions for his ‘beloved wife’.¹⁴ He also left his widow free to make decisions concerning her future without fear of legal repercussions and loss of income. When her share of his personal assets is included, the overall sense that emerges is that John Ryan held great respect and affection for his wife. Besides respect and affection, it must also be remembered that Ryan showed shrewdness in extending this freedom to Frances, seeking to ensure that his widow, unlike his mother, could not compromise the estate through future choices. The success of this strategy is seen by the fact that a year after Ryan’s death, Frances’ new suitor, Charles Creagh, arrived at Inch. Within two years they married and settled in Dangin, Co. Clare. Instead of voicing alarm over this situation, Howard Egan informed Frances he was ‘fully persuaded you made a good choice in the change of your condition’ by marrying ‘a Man of honour’. Moreover, the executors were ‘eager’ for Creagh’s ‘advice and assistance’ in managing the Inch estate.¹⁵

Finally, a significant consideration behind the settlement made on Frances was that she provided access to a family network crucial to the protection of the Ryans and their estate. Therefore, it was vital not to estrange the widow Ryan or her family from the affairs of Inch. This preoccupation is suggested by the choice of Frances’ father as executor of Ryan’s will. Major George Mathew of Thurles was head of the senior branch of the Mathew dynasty, and maintained good relations with his influential kinsmen among the Butlers. Mathew also brought a direct link to the Annfield and Thomastown branches of his family. The latter branch under ‘Grand’ George Mathew, sometime MP for Tipperary, offered a powerful ally within the ranks of Protestant society, while the Mathews located at Annfield (near Inch) would figure prominently in the affairs of the Ryans in future.¹⁶

Major Mathew was joined as executor by two of the family’s cousins, Howard Egan and Hugh Kennedy of Pollanorman, both of whom held extensive lands in north Tipperary. The Kennedys appear like the Ryans to have accumulated their wealth as large

¹⁴ Will of J. Ryan, 2 Mar. 1723[4] (TCLT, *Ryan papers*, TL/F/21).

¹⁵ Howard Egan to Frances Ryan, 16 Mar. 1724[5] (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 348); Howard Egan to Frances Creagh, 3 Jun. 1727 (ibid., MS 366).

¹⁶ Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, pp 222–23.

head tenants and agents who eventually acquired a landed estate of their own.¹⁷ Egan's landholdings, centring on Annameadle, may have surpassed the Inch estate in size. It remains unclear how exactly he had amassed this considerable fortune, but it is apparent from a number of deeds that he was linked to the Dawsons and other landed families in county Tipperary.¹⁸ In case any of these executors 'should dye', Ryan nominated two substitutes 'in the room' of such individuals. Justin McCarthy of Springhouse was a 'kinsman' who could, and indeed did, bring his considerable business acumen and social standing to bear on the Ryans' affairs and estate. The final substitute, the well regarded Redmond Purcell of Fethard, was employed as agent among different landed families in the area that made up the Ryans' social milieu.¹⁹ Purcell witnessed John Ryan's will in Dublin and was related through marriage to Howard Egan; he had also married Justin McCarthy's widowed sister Elizabeth in 1720.²⁰ Thus Ryan had chosen a close knit group to link his family's future, a group that provided access to a family network of considerable expertise and status stretching across Tipperary and into neighbouring counties.

The executors' first priority was securing John Ryan's private papers and thus assessing his personal assets. They were aware that part of his effects entailed '£314 in gold and about £18 in silver' that was to be found 'in different places' in his 'closet at Inch'. Next, the executors drew up an account 'Exclusive of book Debts and Arrears of Rent' of what 'is due to Mr. Ryan of Inch'. Discounting several considerable sums they were unsure of, they calculated that money owed to Ryan in bonds and notes by at least 140 individuals came to £2,167 18s 9d — cumulatively, these sums amounted to over

¹⁷ Memorial of an indented deed of release between Christian, Alice and Mary Kennedy the 1st part, Robert Going the elder the 2nd part and Robert Going the younger of the 3rd part, 11 Aug. 1764 [reg. 28 Aug. 1764] (*ROD*, vol. ccxxxviii, pp 43–4, no. 152212); Hervey de Montmorency–Morres, *Genealogical memoir of the family of Montmorency, styled De Marisco or Morres* (Paris, 1817), p. ccviiij; Gleeson, *The last lords of Ormond*, p. 219.

¹⁸ Memorial of the marriage settlement of John Dawson of Armagh and Elinor Dawson of Ballynacourty, Co. Tipperary, 15 Dec. 1716 [reg. 20 Feb. 1720[1]] (*ROD*, vol. xxviii, p. 356, no. 17881); Memorial of the agreement for the release of the lands of Iskeboy etc. William Burke, Redmond Archdekin and James Horan, 6 May 1713 (*ibid.*, vol. xiii, p. 227, no. 5642); Memorial to indenture between Richard Dawson of Ballyneiciaty, Co. Tipperary and John Boles of Woodhouse, Co. Tipperary, 19 Mar. 1716[7] (*ibid.*, vol. xvii, p. 393, no. 9214).

¹⁹ Redmond Purcell was employed by Redmond Everard of Fethard and Cornelius O'Callaghan, alongside the Mathews and their relatives including the Bagenals of Co. Carlow: Pocket notebook kept by [Redmond Purcell], 1716–1727 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 369); Will of J. Ryan, 2 Mar. 1724 (TCLT, *Ryan papers*, TL/F/21).

²⁰ Elizabeth's first husband was Michael Kearney (d.1709): Pocket notebook kept by R. Purcell, 1716–1727 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 369); Samuel Trant McCarthy, *The McCarthys of Munster: the story of an Irish sept* (Dundalk, 1922), p. 153.

seven times the annual rental (£342) of his 2,940-acre estate in 1724.²¹ Armed with this information, the executors actively sought satisfaction of these debts, and if necessary were willing to pursue debtors and put them ‘to Trouble’ in court for the smallest of sums.²² They also faced the unenviable task of recovering the sum of £300 from John Whyte of Leixlip, the man responsible for John Ryan’s death.²³ There is no record of sizable debts being paid from Ryan’s assets in either executor accounts or their correspondence with the widow Ryan. Financially speaking, therefore, the family and their estate appeared solvent and in a healthy state, showing the executors to be not just competent but also steadfast in their service to the Ryans.

Correspondence from Howard Egan — frequently with ‘cousen’ Kennedy by his ‘elbow’ — to Frances Ryan reinforces this impression of faithful service. Indeed, his letters provide many insights into problems the executors faced when managing the Inch estate.²⁴ Claims made by extended, even obscure family members figured prominently in early correspondence. The executors clearly disapproved of these individuals and doubted the veracity of their claims. Egan, for example, found himself besieged by letters from female relations, including one ‘by long post’ from Joan Mathew, ‘complayneing & desireing money may be remitted’, followed by a similar ‘learned Epistle from Mrs. Roch on the same subject’. Egan was quick to inform the widow Ryan that these individuals ‘think they are intitled to all ye bread of your Children’, and what he meant when he stated that he had answered their assertions ‘properly’ can be left to be surmised.²⁵ One claim on the estate could not, however, be so easily dismissed. Nicholas Purcell of Loughmoe’s widow, Eliza, put forward a dower claim out of the lands in Kilnelongurty (the manor of Coolkill) which John Ryan had purchased from her late husband in 1704. An ‘amicable agreement’ was proposed back in Tipperary in 1724, but behind the scenes both parties were jostling for an advantage in the courts.²⁶ Apart from potentially compromising just

²¹ Will of J. Ryan, 2 Mar. 1724 (TCLT, *Ryan papers*, TL/F/21); Executors’ account of notes and bonds payable to the estate of John Ryan of Inch, deceased, 28 Mar. 1724 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 222).

²² Howard Egan to Frances Ryan, 5 July 1725 (*ibid.*, MS 357); Judgment for payment of a debt of £4 7s 5d in the case Howard Egan and Hugh Kennedy v. James Downey and Philip Purcell, 15 July 1727 (*ibid.*, MS 223).

²³ Executors’ account payable to J. Ryan, 28 Mar. 1724 (*ibid.*, MS 222).

²⁴ Howard Egan to Frances Ryan, 29 May 1724 (*ibid.*, MS 350).

²⁵ Howard Egan to Frances Ryan, 25 Oct. 1725 (*ibid.*, MS 359); Howard Egan to Frances Ryan, 21 Feb. 1725[6] (*ibid.*, MS 352).

²⁶ Keeping an eye on developments in Dublin and reporting back to Egan was his brother Terence, a notary public residing in the capital: Howard Egan to Frances Ryan, 9 Apr. 1725 (*ibid.*, MS 354); H. Egan to F. Ryan, 5 July 1725 (*ibid.*, MS 357); Howard Egan to Frances Ryan, 31 Oct. 1725 (*ibid.*, MS 361); Howard Egan to Frances Ryan, 26 Dec. 1725 (*ibid.*, MS 362); H. Egan to F. Ryan, 21 Feb. 1725[6] (*ibid.*, MS 352); Marriage settlement of J. Dawson and E. Dawson, 15 Dec. 1716 [reg. 20 Feb. 1720[1]] (*ROD*, vol. xxviii, p. 356, no. 17881); Eileen O’Byrne and Anne Chamney (eds), *The convert rolls: the calendar of the convert rolls, 1703–1838 with Fr Wallace Clare’s annotated list of converts, 1703–78* (Dublin, IMC, 2005), p. 340.

over half of the estate's income, any payment out of the lands in favour of the widow Purcell would diminish the widow Ryan's annual income. This added greater purpose and resolve to contesting the matter, which included hiring the well regarded Eaton Stannard as counsel for the Ryan interest. Eventually, by 1726, one-third of the manor of Coolkill's income, equating to £57, was granted annually to the widow Purcell.²⁷ This settlement was the only known successful claim made on the Inch estate under the management of the executors.

While claims made on the estate concerned the executors, they also had to contend with the everyday management of a 2,940-acre estate supplemented by two leaseholds. Indeed, the latter gave Egan cause to suspect 'embeazlement', when the lease of Cormackstown went missing. Egan informed Frances Ryan that 'I never saw it nor doe I know in whose hands was it left', adding that he would 'with proper caution inform myself' as to whose hands it now lay. He suspected 'twas amongst' John Ryan's 'papers at Boytons' in Dublin, but upon enquiry he found Ryan's old business acquaintance Pierce Boyton to be 'ungenerous & foolish'. Eventually, his suspicions were confirmed, when he discovered that the lease and 'more papers' belonging to John Ryan 'were detained at his lodgeing' in Dublin by Boyton or 'Embeazled by ye treachery of his serv[an]t'. There was 'foule play' suspected in relation to the second leasehold also. Ultimately, the executors discontinued both leases once they expired, even though the lands in question were held by the Ryan family since the early 1660s.²⁸

Managing a 2,940-acre estate, it was unsurprising that the executors chose to discontinue two troublesome leases. Major Mathew, Egan and Kennedy had at least two dozen head tenants of their own to contend with on the Inch estate, and they began the unenviable task of rent collecting just over a month after assuming their position as executors.²⁹ Much day-to-day business at Inch was left to the estate manager, Ned Carroll, but the executors held overall responsibility, with Hugh Kennedy supervising Carroll and other agents, including overseeing the sale of livestock from Inch demesne in 1725.

²⁷ The discrepancy of £16 3s with the manor's rental income of £187 3s stemmed from the fact that its income included land purchased by Daniel Ryan during the 1660s. Howard Egan to Frances Ryan, 20 Apr. 1726 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 364); Executors' account, 12 Jan. 1730 (ibid., MS 367); A.R. Hart, *History of the King's Serjeant at law in Ireland* (Dublin, 2000), p. 182.

²⁸ Perhaps in compensation for the loss of the two leases (Cormackstown and Ballynahow), Egan offered to purchase Major Mathew's interest in a near-by townland for £300 'on behalf of ye Children': H. Egan to F. Ryan, 23 May 1724 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 349); H. Egan to F. Ryan, 29 May 1724 (ibid., MS 350); Howard Egan to Frances Ryan, 2 June 1724 (ibid., MS 351); H. Egan to F. Ryan, 25 Oct. 1725 (ibid., MS 359).

²⁹ Rent roll of the lands of Kilnagorty, 1724–1730 (ibid., MS 172).

Despite a ‘shake’ in his right hand and having ‘being bledd this morning’, Kennedy informed his ‘cozen’ Frances Ryan that he would ensure the best price for the livestock, ‘either in money or good Dublin Bills’, besides ‘a gold cobb to you over’.³⁰ Subsequently, the lands of Inch were leased out by the executors, reducing income but saving the costly efforts of running a demesne farm. They also coped with the death of Major Mathew in 1725. Thereafter, Redmond Purcell was ‘present’ during important events on the estate, while Egan and Kennedy worked closely with the widow Ryan’s future husband, Charles Creagh, a prominent agent on the estate of Sir Edward O’Brien of Dromoland in County Clare.³¹

By the time he reached 21 years of age in 1735, Daniel Ryan had taken possession of his inheritance of 2,940 acres. This signalled the departure of Howard Egan and Hugh Kennedy from Inch. What has been demonstrated is their important role in managing the affairs of the Ryans and their estate. All claims on John Ryan’s estate had been satisfied or successfully rebuffed, while £983 of the estate’s income had been loaned out in 1730 by Egan ‘on good security’ and was due to be repaid before Daniel Ryan came into his inheritance.³² Therefore, in an economic sense, the executors left the Inch estate in a very strong position. As the following section will show, Daniel Ryan’s kinsmen, both Catholics and Protestants, were also willing to undermine the law to protect the Ryan family and Inch estate from penal legislation.

II

‘... for otherwise, the true intent of the act would easily be evaded’³³

There are a number of known instances where the Ryans acted contrary to the penal laws. Despite this, they appear never to have been prosecuted in court.³⁴ Problems arise,

³⁰ This sale of 130 bullocks brought £369. The remaining livestock was sold in 1726 for £194: H. Egan to F. Ryan, 21 Feb. 1725[6] (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 352); Howard Egan to Frances Ryan, 15 June 1725 (ibid., MS 356); Hugh Kennedy to Frances Ryan, 19 Oct. 1725 (ibid., MS 358); H. Egan to F. Ryan, 25 Oct. 1725 (ibid., MS 359); Executors’ account, 12 Jan. 1730 (ibid., MS 367).

³¹ Executors’ account, 12 Jan. 1730 (ibid., MS 367); Copy bill of complaint in the case of Sir Edward O’Brien, 2nd Bart. v. James Fitzgerald of Stonehall, County Clare, Daniel Ryan and James Comyn, executors of Charles Creagh’s will, 17 June 1746 (NLI, *Inchiquin papers*, MS 45,365/7).

³² Account by H. Egan as guardian of D. Ryan, 24 Feb. 1731 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 368).

³³ Josiah Brown, *Reports of cases, upon appeals and writs of errors, in the High Court of Parliament; from the year 1701, to the year 1779, vol. ii* (London, 1779), p. 183.

³⁴ For example, several legal searches carried out during the early 1820s in various Irish courts found no cases relating to the Inch estate and the penal laws. These searches were undertaken prior to the sale of part of the estate. One would expect that any claim or case prosecuted under the penal laws against the estate would have been located by these searches: Legal searches covering the period 1700–1821 carried out within various Irish courts relating to the Ryan family of Inch, 1821–2 (UCC, Boole, *Grehan papers*, BL/EP/G MS 178/1–10).

however, when attempting to explain how this successful circumvention of the law was achieved. The bulk of direct evidence concerning strategies utilised by Catholics to evade the penal laws was generated when their actions were contested and legal proceedings brought against them; understanding how the Ryans escaped restrictions is made more complicated by the absence of such records. Thus, the explanations offered here must sometimes remain speculative, particularly in relation to how the family escaped discovery proceedings discussed in Section III. Nevertheless, what will be shown is that kinship and the protection of a powerful family network counted highly in the Ryans' successful circumvention of the penal laws.

John Ryan's death represented the first instance where there was a danger that the Inch estate would not survive intact. Earlier scholars have suggested that the reason why the family escaped inheritance restrictions after 1724 was that Ryan had left a single heir, Daniel Ryan.³⁵ However, the family papers reveal that Ryan had a total of four sons, which dramatically changes how conditions on the estate should be viewed.³⁶ A clause in the 1704 Popery Act stipulated that when a Catholic who held land in fee-simple or fee-tail died and left more than one son, as was the case with John Ryan, then the landed estate should ultimately be divided equally among them per 'the nature of gavelkind'.³⁷ This was to ensure the progressive diminution of the wealth and power of Catholic landowners over the ensuing generations. The only solution left open by the authorities was for the eldest son to gain 'the positive merit and quality of being a Protestant' through conversion to the Established Church in order to inherit the entire landed estate.³⁸

As Daniel Ryan was legally an orphan following his father's death, the family also had to contend with his guardianship and education as specified under the law. The problem they faced once again stemmed from the 1704 Popery Act. A clause in the law stipulated that 'no person of the popish religion shall or may be guardian unto, or have the tuition or custody' of any child under twenty-one years of age. Therefore, the family were legally obliged to have a Protestant relative appointed as guardian who was 'fit to have the education of such child'. This individual was then required to 'use his utmost care to educate and bring up such child or minor in the Protestant religion'. In theory, this would

³⁵ Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, p. 108.

³⁶ John Ryan's sons were Daniel, George, John and Andrew. His two daughters were Frances (m. John Purcell c.1733) and Margaret (m. William Carroll c.1738): Rent roll of Daniel Ryan's estate and accounts kept by William Carroll, 1735–38 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 173, f. 7); Executors' account, 12 Jan. 1730 (*ibid.*, MS 367); *Finn's Leinster Journal*, 5 Apr. 1775.

³⁷ 2 Anne, c. 6, s. 10 (1703[4]): 'An Act to prevent the further growth of Popery' in *Stat. Ireland*, iv, p. 19.

³⁸ G.E. Howard, *Several special cases on the laws against the further growth of popery in Ireland* (Dublin, 1775), pp 271–2.

lead to the child's conversion within a year of reaching twenty-one years of age.³⁹ The concern the Ryans faced was that the court-appointed guardian would actively educate Daniel as a Protestant.⁴⁰ Because the family likely sought to avoid his conversion if possible, they required a relative acting as guardian who was sympathetic towards his Catholic relatives and willing to mislead the authorities.

A suitable candidate emerged in Howard Egan, a convert to the Established Church since January 1710.⁴¹ The date of his conversion automatically raises questions over its authenticity, coming as it did less than six months after a parliamentary act closed many loopholes exploited by Catholics in earlier penal legislation.⁴² Howard Egan's case was by no means exceptional, and fits within a broader trend of increased conversions among Catholics during this period. In most cases it was less a matter of spiritual salvation that motivated conformity than an appreciation that conversion opened up avenues of advancement and material benefits for individuals and their families.⁴³ After his conversion in 1710 for instance, Egan purchased over 2,000 acres of land.⁴⁴ His 1737 will further supports the view that his conversion had more practical than spiritual roots, or at the very least, it shows family concerns taking priority over religious and legal considerations in this instance. As his children had predeceased him, Egan bequeathed his estate to his extended family, many of whom were clearly Catholics. For example, about a third of his lands were left to the eldest son of his brother-in-law, Captain Daniel Carroll, who fled to France in 1691 and returned to Ireland in c.1730.⁴⁵ Capt. Carroll

³⁹ Ibid., p. 272; 2 Anne, c. 6, s. 4 (1703[4]) in *Stat. Ireland*, iv, pp 15–6.

⁴⁰ For example: Brown, *Reports of cases, upon appeals and writs of errors*, ii, pp 179–183; Hubert Gallwey, *The Wall family in Ireland, 1170–1970: 800-year history of a distinguished Norman family* (Dublin, 2nd ed., 2011), pp 108–9.

⁴¹ Eileen O'Byrne (ed.), *The convert rolls* (Dublin, IMC, 1981), p. 89.

⁴² Osborough, 'Catholics, land and the Popery Acts of Anne', p. 26.

⁴³ Although less frequent, genuine instances of religious conversion are now beginning to receive more attention from historians: Michael Brown, Charles Ivar McGrath and Thomas P. Power, 'Introduction' in Michael Brown, Charles Ivar McGrath and Thomas P. Power (eds), *Converts and Conversion in Ireland, 1650–1850* (Dublin, 2005), p. 12; Power, 'Converts', p. 102, 110–1; Cullen, 'Catholics under the Penal Laws', p. 27; McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland*, pp 234–6.

⁴⁴ Memorial of deeds of lease and release of the lands of Blane, Co. Tipperary. Daniel Carroll, late of Blane, to Howard Egan, 14-15 Feb. 1714[5] [reg. 19 Mar. 1714[5]] (*ROD*, vol. xiii, p. 394, no. 6113); Memorial of deeds of lease and release of the lands of Sheragh, Co. Tipperary. Cormack McEgan and Anthony Carroll of the 1st part and Howard Egan of the 2nd part, 22–23 May 1722 [reg. 30 May 1722] (ibid., vol. xxxiii, pp 426–7, no. 20783); Gleeson, *The last lords of Ormond*, pp 230–1.

⁴⁵ Capt. Carroll had returned to Ireland in order to prosecute Egan for supposedly defrauding him of his inheritance (see first source cited in preceding footnote), but Egan's bequests would suggest that what grievance there was had been resolved by 1737: Will of Howard Egan of Anameadle, 4 June 1737 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 39); Abstract of The Lord Justices, Dublin Castle, to Dorset, no date (*Public Record Office for Northern Ireland*, T3019/67), available at PRONI eCatalogue, http://apps.proni.gov.uk/DCAL_PRONI_eCatNI_IE/ResultDetails.aspx [16 July 2016]; Abstract of a copy of the petition of Daniel Carroll, no date (ibid., T3019/68), available at: http://apps.proni.gov.uk/DCAL_PRONI_eCatNI_IE/ResultDetails.aspx [16 July 2016].

himself received Egan's 'silver mounted gun & best silver mounted pistols which cost 48 guineas', while his 'other silver mounted, screwed barrel pistols' went to his 'cozen, Daniel Ryan of Inch'.⁴⁶ Without the required certificate of conformity and licences to carry arms, these bequests were technically illegal under the terms of different restrictions passed against Catholics in 1695 and 1704.⁴⁷ Therefore, Egan's words and actions indicate that he held few reservations when it came to undermining the penal laws in his family's favour. It is in this context that his decision to assist the Ryans must be understood.⁴⁸

Documentary evidence concerning Howard Egan's guardianship of Daniel Ryan is limited, and what survives comes from a copy of an account drawn up by Egan in February 1731.⁴⁹ Based on evidence from the guardianship of another minor, Egan would have petitioned the Court of Chancery in Dublin to put himself forward as Daniel Ryan's guardian in 1724.⁵⁰ He would have needed to convince the court he was the nearest Protestant relative 'fit' to direct Ryan's education.⁵¹ To help demonstrate this, Egan could have pointed out that his two sons, Charles and Terence, had both received a preliminary English education in Tipperary before being enrolled in the University of Dublin in November 1723.⁵² The court would have sought a similar education for Daniel Ryan, thereby helping to allay any reservations over entrusting him to Egan. This was significant since the Lord Chancellor of Ireland held the power:

⁴⁶ Carroll's heir was to receive the lands of Annameadle once he paid the trustees of Egan's estate £2,500. This was to cover the money Egan had spent 'building and improving the said lands'. If he refused to raise the money or was 'not qualified to accept this device', then the trustees were to sell the land and pay Carroll's heir £2,500 from the proceeds: Will of H. Egan, 4 June 1737 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 39).

⁴⁷ The issue of Catholics holding unlicensed 'arms, armour and ammunition' became such a concern that a new law was passed in late March 1740 to clarify and reinforce previous restrictions: 7 Will. III, c. 5 (1695): 'An act for the better securing the government, by disarming papists'; in *Stat. Ireland*, iii, pp 260–7; 2 Anne, c. 6, s. 7 (1703[4]) in *Stat. Ireland*, iv, pp 17–8; 13 Geo. II, c. 6 (1739[40]): To explain, amend, and make more effectual an act passed in the 7th year of the reign of his late majesty King William III, of glorious memory, entitled, an act for the better securing the government by disarming Papists' in *Stat. Ireland*, vi, pp 495–504.

⁴⁸ Will of H. Egan, 4 June 1737 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 39); H. Egan to F. Ryan, 25 Oct. 1725 (ibid., MS 359). Extracts from Egan's will can be found in: Will of H. Egan (TCLT, *Skehan papers*, vol. lxxv), pp 103–5; Will of H. Egan, 4 June 1737 (NLI, *Papers of Dr Martin Callanan*, MS 11,422(8a)); Whelan, *The tree of liberty*, p. 6; Cullen, 'Catholics under the Penal Laws', pp 27–8.

⁴⁹ Account by H. Egan as guardian of D. Ryan, 24 Feb. 1731 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 368).

⁵⁰ Letter of guardianship issued by the Court of Chancery concerning the younger children of Henry Sandford of Castlerea, County Roscommon, 15 May 1771 (NLI, *Pakenham-Mahon papers*, MS 48,355/61).

⁵¹ 2 Anne, c. 6, s. 4 (1703[4]) in *Stat. Ireland*, iv, p. 16.

⁵² George Dames Burtchaell and Thomas Ulick Sadleir (eds), *Alumni Dublinenses: a register of the students, graduates, professors and provosts of Trinity College in the University of Dublin, 1593–1860* (Dublin, 1935), pp 259–60.

To appoint a relation, or other person guardian, as he might judge would best execute the office, and was the most likely person to educate the infant in the Protestant religion; for otherwise, the true intent of the act would easily be evaded.⁵³

The Ryans and their allies would have been particularly aware of the significance of this, as Frances Ryan's brother-in-law, James Cotter Junior of Co. Cork, was made the ward of a Protestant who later entrusted Cotter's education to a Catholic. The authorities became aware of this deception, and a resolution making Protestants educate their wards is said to have come as a direct result of the Cotter case.⁵⁴ Thus, Frances Ryan and her wider family had placed great trust in Egan as guardian.⁵⁵

Once appointed guardian, Howard Egan had to deal with several considerations. He was not in a position to send Daniel Ryan to the continent to receive his education. Although this was illegal for Catholics since 1695, other wealthy Catholic families were not discouraged from doing so.⁵⁶ This was the case for Ryan's youngest brothers, 'the two boys' John and Andrew, who were sent to France in late 1737.⁵⁷ Due to the guardianship, however, Daniel's movements were under much more official scrutiny than those of other Catholic children. The example of Ryan's cousin, Elizabeth Mathew of Thomastown, highlights that a child's guardian was legally compelled 'every Michaelmass [*sic*] term and as often as required by the Court upon oath' to justify 'disbursements as should be at for or on acct. of the said minor'.⁵⁸ The penalties for contravening the law could be severe. In 1704 it was enacted that any parent or guardian who could not present a child to the court within two months or 'give good proof that the said child is resident somewhere within the Kingdom of England or Scotland' would be penalised through forfeiture of all their goods, annuities and property.⁵⁹ In Tipperary there was the option of the Erasmus Smith School set up during the 1680s, followed by a Kilkenny grammar school, both offering a classical education designed to 'fit their scholars for the university, if desired'.⁶⁰ The university in question was the University of Dublin, but there is no evidence to suggest that Daniel Ryan attended any of these

⁵³ Brown, *Reports of cases, upon appeals and writs of errors, ii*, p. 183.

⁵⁴ Transcripts of Cotter family papers by Rev. George E. Cotter, c.1878 (NLI, MS 711, ff 129–31); William Hogan and Liam Ó Buachalla, 'The letters and papers of James Cotter, Junior, 1689–1720' in *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, lxxviii (Jan.–Dec., 1963), pp 67–8.

⁵⁵ Connolly, *Religion, law and power*, p. 309.

⁵⁶ 7 Will. III, c. 4 (1695): 'An Act to Restrain Foreign Education' in *Stat. Ireland, iii*, p. 254–6; Lyons, 'Morristown Lattin, c.1600–1860', pp 252–268; Harvey, *The Bellews of Mount Bellew*, p. 92.

⁵⁷ Rent roll and accounts kept by W. Carroll, 1735–38 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 173, f. 5).

⁵⁸ Recognizance of Charles O'Hara, Kean O'Hara and Loftus Jones, appointing Charles O'Hara (the elder) as the legal guardian of Elizabeth Mathew, 7 March 1737[8] (NLI, *O'Hara papers*, MS 36,389/1).

⁵⁹ 7 Will. III, c. 4 (1695) in *Stat. Ireland, iii*, p. 255; 2 Anne, c. 6, s. 2 (1703[4]) in *Stat. Ireland, iv*, p. 14.

⁶⁰ David Hannigan, 'The University of Dublin, 1685–1750: a study of matriculation records' (M.A. thesis, Saint Patrick's College Maynooth, 1995), p. 33.

institutions, and it must be concluded that he was schooled at Inch by private tutors. The cost of his upkeep would support this view, being £60 from 1725 to 1727, and thereafter £30 per annum. This may not appear a large sum of money, but these costs were always double those incurred by his siblings, while the price of a ‘respectable life’ for a young gentleman attending university in Dublin at this time was calculated at £50 per annum.⁶¹

Leaving aside the question of where he was educated, the more important issue was to what extent his education, as legally specified, equated to his instruction in the Protestant religion. The 1704 Popery Act made it clear that the main goal regarding the heirs of deceased Catholics was their education ‘in the communion of the church of Ireland as by law established’, followed by their future conversion. For his part, Egan was ‘required to use his utmost care to educate and bring up such child or minor in the protestant religion’ while under the direction of the Court of Chancery.⁶² To what extent the court guided Ryan’s religious education, and the degree to which Egan’s definition of ‘utmost care’ covered this, are both unknown. What is clear, however, is that Daniel Ryan did not convert on coming of age.

To appreciate how Ryan and Egan accomplished this feat without suffering prosecution requires an understanding of what the law did and did not state concerning the matter of inheritance by a Catholic. As observed previously, the main goal behind the 1704 act as regards minors was their education under a Protestant guardian and future conversion. If the guardian disobeyed this instruction, he could face heavy fines and the granting of the guardianship to another court appointed individual. However, once a Catholic child came of age and chose not to convert, there was no immediate legal punishment specified, except for the future subdivision of the estate between all Catholic sons.⁶³ This differed from the infamous discovery clause within the 1709 Popery Act, where it was stated that a Protestant discoverer could ‘prefer one or more bill or bills in her Majesty’s high court of Chancery, or Chancery of the Exchequer, against any person or persons’ involved in purchasing or concealing an interest in land acquired by a Catholic

⁶¹ The cost of Daniel Ryan’s education and upkeep reflects that of other children from landowning backgrounds during this period: *ibid.*, p. 59; Executors’ account, 12 Jan. 1730 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 367); Accounts relating to the diet & upkeep of the children of Henry Flower of Durrow, Co. Laois, 1728–30 (NLI, *Flower papers*, MS 11,470/6); William Jackson to Eleanor O’Hara, 6 May 1720 (NLI, *O’Hara papers*, MS 20,278); Toby Barnard, *Improving Ireland? Projectors, prophets and profiteers, 1641–1786* (Dublin, 2008), p. 147.

⁶² 2 Anne, c. 6, s. 4 (1703[4]) in *Stat. Ireland*, iv, pp 15–6.

⁶³ For clarification of this point, see the discussion corresponding to footnotes nos 67 to 71 below.

in contradiction of the 1704 act.⁶⁴ Thus, if a Catholic purchased land or a leasehold above 31 years after 1704, a Protestant could file a bill of discovery in court and receive the forfeited interest in the land. In contrast, if a Catholic heir failed to convert within a year of reaching 21, there was no legal avenue open to Protestant discoverers by which he could be prosecuted and dispossessed. In reality, the law sought the appointment of ‘the most likely’ Protestant to educate the child in the Protestant religion, ‘otherwise the true intent of the act would easily be evaded’.⁶⁵ By ‘true intent’ it was meant the wilful choice by the child to convert ‘as the Act was only meant as an encouragement for persons to renounce popery’.⁶⁶

The lack of immediate legal consequences facing Irish Catholics who did not conform once they came of age differed from England, where an act passed in 1698 compelled Catholics to take the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy and the declaration against transubstantiation within six months of reaching eighteen. In the English context, until these requirements were met, an estate could not be inherited and would pass instead to the nearest Protestant relative.⁶⁷ A similar restriction had apparently been proposed during the drafting of the 1704 Popery Act in order to bring Irish law in line with its English equivalent.⁶⁸ However, the belief that a comparable restriction did exist in Ireland is based on the misinterpretation of Clause 7 of the 1704 act. Based on this clause, previous commentators have stated that any Catholic who took property by devise, descent or gift etcetera had six months in which to conform to the Established Church. Until this requirement was met, the inheritance passed to the nearest Protestant relative.⁶⁹ Conversely, the wording of Clause 7 of the act,⁷⁰ clearly shows that this restriction only

⁶⁴ 8 Anne, c. 3, s. 30 (1709): ‘An Act for explaining and amending an Act intituled, An Act to prevent the further Growth of Popery’ in *Stat. Ireland*, iv, pp 194–5.

⁶⁵ Brown, *Reports of cases, upon appeals and writs of errors*, ii, p. 183.

⁶⁶ Andrew Lyall (ed.), *Irish Exchequer reports: reports of cases in the Courts of Exchequer and Chancery in Ireland, 1716–1734* (London, 2009), p. 10; *The English law reports*, vol. ii (London, 1901), p. 734.

⁶⁷ 11 William III, c. 4 s. 4 (1698): ‘An Act for the further preventing the Growth of Popery’ in John Raithby (ed.), *Statutes of the Realm*, vol. vii, 1695–1701 (London, 1820), p. 586; Carys Brown, ‘Militant Catholicism, inter-confessional relations, and the Rookwood family of Stanningfield Suffolk, c.1689–1737’ in *The Historical Journal*, lx, no. 1 (Mar., 2017), p. 32.

⁶⁸ Simms, ‘The making of a penal law (2 Anne, c.6), 1703–4’, p. 108.

⁶⁹ Osborough, ‘Catholics and Popery Acts’, p. 24; Power, ‘Converts’, p. 107; McGrath, ‘The provisions for conversion, 1695–1750’, p. 41.

⁷⁰ The pertinent section of the clause reads as follows: ‘... no papist, or person professing the popish religion, who shall not within six months after he and she shall become intituled to enter, or to take, or have the profits by descent, or by vertue of any devise or gift, or of any remainder already limited, or at any time hereafter to be limited, or by vertue of any trust of any lands, tenements, or hereditaments, whereof any protestant now is, or hereafter shall be, seized in fee simple absolute, or fee-tail, or in such manner that after his death, or the death of him and his wife, the freehold is to come immediately to his son or sons, or issue in tail’. This heir was also compelled to convert if he was to inherit. Until this requirement was met, the inheritance passed to the nearest Protestant relative: 2 Anne, c. 6, s. 7 (1703[4]) in *Stat. Ireland*, iv, pp 17–18.

applied to an inheritance that came to a Catholic from a Protestant via descent, gift or devise etcetera.⁷¹ Two further points also support this argument. First, if the law extended to all Catholic inheritances and required conversion within six months on penalty of the inheritance passing to the nearest Protestant relative, this would have made the gaveling clause within the same law unnecessary. Secondly, if the clause encompassed any and all inheritances to which a Catholic became entitled, why then did Irish legislators think it necessary to specifically identify Protestant inheritances that passed to Catholics via descent, gift or devise etcetera? Therefore, it can be concluded that in Ireland if an heir to a Catholic chose not to conform to the Established Church, then the authorities were satisfied that his future punishment would extend to the gaveling or division of the estate with his male siblings. But, as will be seen, this too proved less than effective in reality.

The 1704 Popery Act was quite clear on the subject of partible inheritance among the heirs of a Catholic landowner. Clause 10 of the act, the infamous ‘gaveling clause’, stated:

That all lands, tenements, or hereditaments, whereof any papist now is, or hereafter shall be, seized in fee-simple or fee-tail, shall from henceforth, so long as any papist shall be seized of or intituled to the same in fee-simple or fee-tail, be of the nature of gavelkind... and be inherited by, all and every the sons of such papist any way inheritable to such estate, share and share alike.⁷²

The corpus of previously published analysis and discussion of this clause has, however, largely overlooked two key issues in relation to Catholic inheritance: the importance of pre-1704 family settlements, and the extent to which the law permitted the discovery of Catholic estates that were liable to subdivision.

The power of pre-1704 settlements to nullify inheritance restrictions was derived from the presumption under common law that any agreement deemed to have been within the limits of the law at the time of its making was to be considered valid and to hold ‘dominion’ over any subsequent act or law unless ‘expressly mentioned’.⁷³ This presumption under common law, a ‘natural Justice’, had been upheld by courts since

⁷¹ Perhaps one reason why historians have misinterpreted the clause is that the annotations/marginal notes that accompany the 1765 and 1786 printed versions of the law exclude references to Protestant estates: *ibid.*; *The statutes at large, passed in the Parliaments held in Ireland: from the third year of Edward the Second, A. D. 1310, to the first year of George the Third, A.D. 1761, vol. iv* (Dublin, 1765), p. 17. See also the cases of *Stone v. Rice* (1720) and *Farrell v. Crosbie* (1773): Howard, *Several special cases against popery*, pp 71–2, 256–8.

⁷² 2 Anne, c. 6, s. 10 (1703[4]) in *Stat. Ireland, iv*, p. 19.

⁷³ The significance of pre-1704 settlements has only been referred to briefly in: Osborough, ‘Catholics and Popery Acts’, p. 35; *idem*, *Studies in Irish legal history* (Dublin, 1999), p. 224; Chenevix Trench, *Grace’s card*, p. 63–4. See also: Howard, *Several special cases against popery*, p. 55, 116–7.

Elizabethan times at least and still applied to estates entailed before inheritance restrictions were introduced against Catholics in 1704.⁷⁴ An entail was a form of trust established to prevent property from being sold, devised by will or otherwise alienated by the holder, and instead caused it to pass automatically to an heir pre-determined by the settlement. Landed property (held in fee simple) was commonly settled by the owner on his eldest son, with the remainder going to the issue male of his body in fee tail, and failing this, the second son and his male issue and so on. The lands were then said to be held in fee tail or fee tail male.⁷⁵

The example of the Ryans' neighbour, Dr Thomas Fogarty of Garranroe, highlights how this benefitted Catholics when it came to sole inheritance after 1704.⁷⁶ Following the death of his elder brother Timothy without issue in 1747, Dr Fogarty sought legal counsel as to whether he was legally entitled to inherit the entire estate as a Catholic who had two younger brothers, all of whom 'were always papists or persons professing ye popish religion'. His legal counsel was of the opinion that because his grandfather Teige Fogarty had entailed the estate in 1697, Dr Fogarty was after his brother's death 'lawfully and rightfully seised of and instituted unto an estate in taylor male'. After reciting the gaveling clause from the 1704 Popery Act, the opinion concluded by stating that 'the intention of ye sd. Act was not to have a retrospect so as to avoid remainders limited by former settlements but was only to pr[e]vent limitations by future settlements or wills'.⁷⁷ The act did not expressly mention that previous settlements were to come under newly imposed limitations. Indeed, confusion existed after the law was passed concerning 'what time that clause, or part of the said act, was to take effect'. In 1709 it was clarified that restrictions regarding settlements came into operation on the first day of the sessions of parliament in which the 1704 act was passed (21 September 1703). This, it was later claimed, restored

⁷⁴ Howard, *Several special cases against popery*, p. 115; Sir Thomas Jones, *The reports of several special cases adjudged in the Courts of King's Bench and Common Pleas ... in the reign of King Charles II* (London, 1729), pp 108–9; William Leonard, *The third part of the reports of severall excellent action grounded on statute after claim is made cases of law, ... in the time of the late Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1686), p. 92; Richard Hutton, *The reports of that reverend and learned judge Sir Richard Hutton, Knight sometimes one of the judges of the common pleas, ... in the several reigns of King James and King Charles* (London, 1862), p. 22.

⁷⁵ J.C.W. Wylie, *Irish land law* (Dublin, 3rd ed., 2005), p. 179; Lloyd Bonfield, *Marriage settlements, 1601–1740: the adoption of the strict settlement* (Cambridge, 1983), pp 8–9; A.W.B. Simpson, *Legal theory and legal history: essays on the common law* (London, 1987), pp 146–8, 153; Zouheir Jamoussi, *Primogeniture and entail in England: a survey of their history and representation in literature* (Cambridge, 1999), p. 16; Zephaniah Swift, *A digest of the laws of the state of Connecticut, vol. i* (New Haven, 1822), pp 78–9.

⁷⁶ Dr Thomas Fogarty's 1st cousin Margaret Fogarty was married to Daniel Ryan's 2nd cousin Roger Fogarty of Ballinlonty (see Appendix 7): History of Eliogarty (NLI, *Callanan MS*, p4546), p. 641.

⁷⁷ Dr T. Fogarty's Case, 20 Feb. 1748 (NLI, *Fogarty family papers*, GO MS 171, microfilm, p8304), pp 203–4.

the ‘ancient dominion’ of previous agreements by making the law remedial rather than retrospective. The entitled party ‘therefore, might have exercised this dominion, as he might if the 2d of Anne had not taken place’.⁷⁸ As a result, based on the 1697 entail, Dr Fogarty was legally entitled to inherit the entire family estate as a Catholic, despite the fact he had two younger brothers.

How this related to the Inch estate and Daniel Ryan’s inheritance is highlighted by two key pieces of information. First, in the 1692 will of Ryan’s grandfather, also called Daniel, it was stated that once his wife passed away, John Ryan inherited the entire estate as his eldest son. After the latter’s death, the estate was to descend ‘in fee tail ... to ye use and behoof of heirs male of the body of the said John Ryan lawfully to be begotten’. Secondly, when the marriage settlement of Daniel the younger was drawn up in early 1738, it was stated that he was to suffer a common recovery of ‘all lands tenements hereditaments which he is seized of in ffee [*sic*] tail’.⁷⁹

However, the estate Daniel Ryan held in fee tail covered just the lands owned by his grandfather at the time of his death in 1692. The problem for the Ryans, therefore, was that the 1692 settlement encompassed just under a third of the lands that constituted the Inch estate in 1724, for John Ryan purchased the majority of the estate from Nicholas Purcell of Loughmoe on 18 March 1704, a week before Catholics were prohibited from purchasing land.⁸⁰ The 1692 settlement made John Ryan tenant-for-life, powerless to break the entail until his eldest son (the tenant-in-tail) was 21 and agreed to a common recovery. This meant Ryan did not have legal authority in March 1704 to break the existing entail and make a new all-inclusive settlement.⁸¹ Furthermore, a clause in the later 1709 Popery Act operated retrospectively to ‘catch’ all new settlements drawn up

⁷⁸ 8 Anne, c. 3, s. 9 (1709) in *Stat. Ireland*, iv, p. 209; Howard, *Several special cases against popery*, p. 55, 116–7.

⁷⁹ Will of Daniel Ryan of Inchiofogarty, 22 April 1692 (TCLT, *Ryan papers*, TL/F/21); Draft petition by John Ryan to Sir John Meade of the Regal and Liberties of Co. Tipperary, 1699 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 8); Marriage settlement between Daniel Ryan of Inch and Elizabeth MacCarthy of Springhouse, Co. Tipperary, 2 Feb. 1737[8] (*ibid.*, MS 45).

⁸⁰ Attested copy of exemplification of common recovery suffered by Daniel Ryan of lands in Co. Tipperary, Hilary term 1738 (Boole, *Grehan papers*, MS 175/2); Anne, c. 6, s. 6 (1703[4]) in *Stat. Ireland*, iv, p. 17; Deed of Sale of the Manor of Coolkill. Nicolas Purcell, Loughmoe, Co. Tipperary and Sir Stephen Rice, Dublin 1st part; John Ryan of Inch 2nd part, 18 Mar. 1703[4] (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 778).

⁸¹ Josiah Brown, *Reports of cases, upon appeals and writs of errors, in the High Court of Parliament; from the year 1701, to the year 1779, vol. v* (London, 1779), p. 263; H.J. Habakkuk, ‘marriage settlements in the eighteenth century’ in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, xxxii (1950), pp 15–16; Barbara English and John Saville, ‘Family settlement and the “Rise of Great Estates”’ in *The Economic History Review*, New Series, xxxiii, no. 4 (Nov., 1980), pp 556–8; Richard Burn, *A new law dictionary: intended for general use, as well as for gentlemen of the profession. By Richard Burn, LL.D. late chancellor of the diocese of Carlisle. And continued to the present time by John Burn, Esq. his son, one of His Majesty's justices of the peace for the counties of Westmorland and Cumberland* (Dublin, 1792), p. 598.

between 1 January and 23 March 1704 that sought ‘to defeat and elude’ inheritance restrictions within the original popery act. This also extended to future settlements.⁸² Any new settlement and entail seeking to limit the inheritance of the Inch estate would have fallen under this definition, thereby making it illegal and void. The 1692 settlement may, then, have protected approximately 920 acres of the Ryan estate from being gavelled; however, a note of caution must be sounded over whether the entailed lands were not liable to be gavelled. The wording of Daniel Ryan’s will may have been an issue, as he specified his estate was to pass after his heir’s death ‘in fee tail ... to ye use and behoof of heirs male of the body of the said John Ryan lawfully to be begotten’. Nowhere was it stated that John Ryan’s eldest son was to be preferred over all others. One could argue, therefore, that the entail made provisions for the gavelling of the estate.⁸³ To what extent pre-1704 settlements benefitted other Catholics regarding issues of inheritance is unclear. That two examples have been identified here, one certain (Fogarty), the other possible (Ryan), transpiring in parishes bordering one another in county Tipperary, points to it having been a relatively frequent occurrence in the decades subsequent to the passing of the 1704 Popery Act.⁸⁴ Furthermore, a third example found elsewhere in Ireland will be discussed in due course in order to help clarify and reinforce this point.⁸⁵

Despite the entail of the Inch estate, considerable problems persisted. At least 2,000 acres were open to being gavelled if any of John Ryan’s younger sons decided to break ranks and register a claim as was their legal right. This latter point further helps to explain why John Ryan made the stipulation in his 1724 will regarding his children facing disinheritance if they disagreed with their share of the distribution of his estate. This warning to his children can be understood through the later will of his heir, Daniel, who found himself in a similar position regarding inheritance and his sons. In 1767 Daniel Ryan settled legacies on his two younger sons provided they did not ‘sue disturb or molest’ their eldest brother ‘for any other or future fortune estate or interest’.⁸⁶ If a claim

⁸² 8 Anne, c. 3, s. 6 (1709) in *Stat. Ireland, iv*, p. 193; Osborough, ‘Catholics and Popery Acts’, p. 35.

⁸³ The case of *Butler v. Butler* (1773) observed that a Catholic estate held partially in tail was open to subdivision. However, no precise information on the wording and terms of the family settlement affecting the particular estate were given in the report: Howard, *Several special cases against popery*, pp 270–5; Will of D. Ryan, 22 April 1692 (TCLT, *Ryan papers*, TL/F/21).

⁸⁴ Although the family ultimately choose conversion during the early eighteenth century, the Graces of near-by Brittas could also depend on a pre-1704 family settlement. The entail of his estate by John Grace of Brittas occurred in 1677, with Daniel Ryan of Inch (d.1692) acting as a trustee. The family settlement was still in operation in 1709: *The 6th Report of the Deputy Keeper of Public Records in Ireland*, p. 83; *History of Eliogarty* (NLI, *Callanan MS*, p4546), pp 319–323.

⁸⁵ See also: Howard, *Several special cases against popery*, pp 81–4, 102–117.

⁸⁶ The oldest surviving example of Daniel Ryan’s will is a probate copy made in 1773. The clerk appears to have made an error when copying the will, because it is dated 22 Aug. 1757. However, most of the information contained in the will supports a later date. For example, Ryan referred to his daughters Frances

was pressed against their brother, the penalty was the repayment with interest of the legacies and any money advanced to his younger sons during his lifetime. However, such disabilities in no way barred a younger son's legal right to his share of an estate under the gavelling clause. A sense of loyalty, followed by the added burden of family disharmony and protracted, thereby expensive legal proceedings may have been off-putting enough to forestall claims in many instances.⁸⁷ Furthermore, younger sons were also set up in suitable professions, usually abroad, in order to guarantee their livelihoods and economic independence. Thus, on 12 February 1737, Daniel Ryan's brother George was apprenticed to Edward Fitzgerald of Waterford, a merchant who had had business dealings with their father, and by 1741 he was based in Puerto de Santa Maria near Cadiz in Spain. Costs were also accrued in December 1737 'on Shipping' John and Andrew Ryan from Waterford to France to continue their education.⁸⁸ In both instances Daniel Ryan was investing in his siblings' futures abroad, which meant they were less likely to return home and make a claim on the Inch estate.

John Ryan remained in France and enlisted in the French army.⁸⁹ His younger brother Andrew, on the other hand, had returned to Ireland by 1743.⁹⁰ It could be imagined that if his existence had been brought to light in court, there was the possibility of his share of the Inch estate being lost to a Protestant discoverer. However, this was not possible under the penal laws except in one discernible instance. This was a law passed in 1746 whereby any Irish Catholic in the service of France or Spain could, through discovery proceedings brought against them, lose 'any real or personal estate of what nature or kind soever, or ... any property, benefit, estate, or interest whatsoever in, to, upon, or out of the same by descent'.⁹¹ Apart from this, no example or case that permitted the discovery of lands due

Woulfe and Margaret Harrold, whose marriages did not occur until 1759. Furthermore, in September 1767 Walter Woulfe referred to Daniel Ryan's will as being 'lately made'. Therefore, the correct date of the will was 22 Aug. 1767, a month before Ryan passed away: Probate copy of the will of Daniel Ryan of Inch, 22 Aug. 1767 [probate 4 Nov. 1773] (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 23); Copy will of Daniel Ryan, 1757[1767] (Boole, *Grehan papers*, MS 175/3); Walter Woulfe to George Ryan, 20 Sept. 1767 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 9630); Vigers (ed.), 'County Tipperary', p. 106.

⁸⁷ Osborough, 'Catholics and Popery Acts', p. 23, 35; Connolly, *Religion, law and power*, p. 308.

⁸⁸ Daniel Ryan's account with Justin McCarthy, 1738–1756 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 198, f. 3); Rent roll and accounts kept by W. Carroll, 1735–38 (ibid., MS 173, f. 3, 5); Marriage articles between Jorge Ryan and Maria Ryan y Armelin, April 1746 (COFL, *Irish Overseas Archive*); Kevin Whelan, 'The Catholic community in eighteenth-century County Wexford' in Thomas P. Power and Kevin Whelan (eds), *Endurance and emergence: Catholics in Ireland in the eighteenth century* (Dublin, 1990), pp 135–6; Parmentier, 'The Irish connection', pp 46–7.

⁸⁹ A return of prisoners of Buckley's, Clare's and Berwick's Regiments confined in the Citadell of Hull, 6 Nov. 1746 (TNA, *SPD, George II*, SP 36/89/1, f. 38); List of 148 prisoners in the French Service, held at Hull, to be delivered to Captain De Cosne, Nov. 1746 (ibid., SP 36/89/3, f. 106).

⁹⁰ Ledger kept by Daniel and John Ryan, 1742–1773 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 174, f. 2).

⁹¹ A main reason behind the enactment of this law stemmed from the recent Jacobite invasion of Scotland where a regiment made up of Irish Catholic volunteers, such as John Ryan and his Mathew cousins, from

to a younger son under the gaveling clause could be located. Commentators at the time rarely provided an in-depth discussion of the issue of partible inheritance, while analysis of the topic by subsequent historians has tended to simply quote or paraphrase the wording of the clause itself. Indeed, publications by Thomas O'Neill and Charles Chenevix Trench appear to be the only existing works that make direct reference to the inheritance of Catholic estates held in fee being exempted from discovery.⁹² Furthermore, in 1774 it was observed that 'there is nothing so much wanting to strike effectually at the root of Popery, as to have a bill brought into Parliament, giving the benefit of such lands to any Protestant discoverer, as younger brothers of any Popish family do not possess themselves of and enjoy the benefit under the gavel act'.⁹³ The reason why discovery proceedings could not be brought against younger sons (except in the case of foreign service) can be understood from the legal distinction between descent and purchase, the two modes of acquiring property: 'a title by descent is vested in a man by the single operation of the law, and by purchase his own act or agreement ... by conveyance for money or other consideration'.⁹⁴ The gaveling of an estate was triggered by descent and the operation of law, while discovery proceedings stemmed from a purchase of an illegal interest in property by a Catholic.⁹⁵ Therefore, Protestant discoverers had no *locus standi* in relation to estates held in fee that were liable to subdivision.⁹⁶ The law simply stated that Catholic estates should be shared and shared alike between all male heirs. As a result,

different French regiments had taken part: 19 Geo. II, c. 7 s. 1 (1746): 'An act for the more effectual preventing his majesty's subjects from entering into foreign service, and for publishing an act of the seventh year of King William the Third, intituled, an act to prevent foreign education' in *Stat. Ireland*, vi, p. 744–5; A return of prisoners of Buckley's, Clare's and Berwick's Regiments, 6 Nov. 1746 (TNA, SPD, George II, SP 36/89/1, f. 38); List of 148 prisoners in the French Service, Nov. 1746 (ibid., SP 36/89/3, f. 106); McGrath, 'The provisions for conversion, 1695–1750', p. 56.

⁹² O'Neill, 'Discoverers and discoveries', p. 3; Chenevix Trench, *Grace's card*, p. 65; Howard, *Several special cases against popery*, p. 243. My thanks also to S.J. Connolly for his views on this topic.

⁹³ John Brady (ed.), *Catholics and Catholicism in the eighteenth-century press* (Maynooth, 1965), p. 161.

⁹⁴ Leonard Shelford, *The real property statutes passed in the reigns of William IV and Victoria; including prescription, limitations of actions, abolition of fines & c. and judgements & c. & c. With copious notes, and forms of deeds* (London, 4th ed., 1842), p. 438; Swift, *A digest of the laws of Connecticut*, i, p. 112, 119. Although relating to the state of Connecticut, this latter digest by Zephaniah Swift acknowledges that the differences between descent and purchase were the same under English common law.

⁹⁵ A devise or gift of an interest in land was to be considered a purchase under the penal laws, but whether or not it was to be considered a discoverable interest depended on a number of factors. For example, if a Catholic, seized in fee, devised to another Catholic, 'the devise is not discoverable, but the lands gavel notwithstanding the devise, and as in the case of Papist estates'. If a Catholic with lands held by lease above 31 years devised the same to a Catholic, then that interest was discoverable. The devise of land by a Protestant to a Catholic had a different interpretation under the 1704 act: Howard, *Several special cases against popery*, pp 71–2, 76, 243, 262–5; Osborough, 'Catholics and Popery Acts', p. 29; E. Barry, 'Barrymore: records of the Barrys' in *Journal of the Cork Historical & Archaeological Society*, viii, no. 53 (Jan.–Mar., 1902), p. 16.

⁹⁶ Chenevix Trench, *Grace's card*, p. 65.

apart from the 1746 act regarding foreign service, the only discernible way for a freehold estate to be subdivided was if an entitled relative filed a claim in court.

What the previous discussion highlights is that the main threat to the sole inheritance of an estate by a Catholic was from his younger brothers (or possibly their children in turn).⁹⁷ Although several instances are known, the gavelling of an estate was a relatively rare event, and S.J. Connolly has observed that ‘social pressures and a sense of family loyalty seem in many cases to have ensured that younger sons simply refrained from asserting their claims under the Act’.⁹⁸ The example of Daniel Ryan’s younger brother John adds an additional, albeit unforeseen way of preventing a possible claim under the gavelling clause. At the time the 1746 act regarding foreign service was passed in Ireland, Lieutenant John Ryan (later captain) was sitting in prison in Hull in Yorkshire following his capture during the failed Jacobite invasion of Scotland. Alongside him were his two cousins, Cadets Francis and George Mathew of Annfield near ‘ye Rag’ (Bouladuff).⁹⁹ Based on the act, John Ryan’s share of the Inch estate, equating to several hundred acres, was open to discovery.¹⁰⁰ However, Ryan and 120 other captured individuals were later pardoned in July 1747 on condition of their permanent banishment ‘out of this our Realm’.¹⁰¹ Therefore, apart from securing the Inch estate from discovery proceedings under the 1746 act, John Ryan’s pardon and the conditions attached to it would have prevented him from returning to Ireland to register his claim to part of the Inch estate. Finally, Philip Walsh has recently argued that the use of fines and recoveries and more

⁹⁷ The perceived threat to the sole inheritance of an estate caused by the claims of a nephew is observable in 1767 in the case of the Blakes of Ballyglunin, Co. Galway. However, these fears proved unfounded until the family suffered a recovery of their estate in 1768. The problem thereafter was whether several younger sons could seek to gavel the estate after their father’s death. See also Appendix 1: Walsh, ‘The Blakes of Ballyglunin’, p. 131, 131n; L.M. Cullen, *The emergence of modern Ireland, 1600–1900* (London, 1981), p. 196; Copy of the case sent to Rome, 23 Dec. 1769 (NAI, *Blake papers*, P 6935/73/5). This latter source has been misplaced within the National Archives of Ireland.

⁹⁸ Connolly, *Religion, law and power*, p. 308; Osborough, ‘Catholics and Popery Acts’, p. 35; Dickson, *Old world colony*, p. 273; Daniel Owen-Madden, *Revelations of Ireland in the past generation* (Dublin, 1848), pp 170–173.

⁹⁹ Francis Mathew is said to have been George Mathew’s first cousin. John Ryan and his cousins were captured on-board the *Louis XV* on 28 November 1745 off Montrose. The two Mathews were later discharged, but there is no record of them having been pardoned: A return of prisoners of Buckley’s, Clare’s and Berwick’s Regiments, 6 Nov. 1746 (TNA, *SPD, George II*, SP 36/89/1, f. 38); List of 148 prisoners in the French Service, Nov. 1746 (ibid., SP 36/89/3, f. 106); Bric, ‘The Whiteboy movement, 1760–1780’, p. 448n; *The Scots Magazine*, Nov. 1745, p. 541; G.B. Seton and J.B. Arnot (eds), *The prisoners of the 45, vol. iii: Publications of the Scottish History Society, Third Series, vol. xv* (Edinburgh, 1929), p. 14, 294.

¹⁰⁰ A year previously, Thomas Mathew (later of Thomastown – converted 1755) had inherited the Annfield estate as a Catholic. Due to his brother George’s service in the French army, this meant that the Annfield estate was also open to discovery proceedings under the 1746 act: 19 Geo. II, c. 7 s. 1 (1746) in *Stat. Ireland, vi*, p. 744; Howard, *Several special cases against popery*, p. 182; Osborough, ‘Catholics and Popery Acts’, p. 39.

¹⁰¹ Seton and Arnot (eds), *The prisoners of the 45, vol. iii*, p. 294; G.B. Seton and J.B. Arnot (eds), *The prisoners of the 45, vol. i: Publications of the Scottish History Society, Third Series, vol. xiii* (Edinburgh, 1928), p. 29, 40; 19 Geo. II, c. 7 s. 1 (1746) in *Stat. Ireland, vi*, p. 744.

complete common recoveries frustrated the claims by younger brothers and their children under the penal laws on the Blake of Ballyglunin estate in Co. Galway.¹⁰² However, Walsh misjudged where the family's power to nullify inheritance restrictions originated from. In reality, the Blakes could rely on a pre-1704 family settlement and entail to frustrate inheritance laws and the sub-division of their estate up until 1768. Furthermore, any fine and recovery levied and suffered by the family that deviated from the articles of the original settlement, in contradiction of the 1704 and 1709 popery acts, would have been deemed illegal and declared void if brought before a court. Whether or not this was the case with the Blakes is impossible to say for certain based on the surviving deeds (see Appendix 1).¹⁰³

Not every Catholic family could rely on the luxury of a pre-1704 settlement, while those that could may have thought it more expedient to break their entails in order to sell land or to legally guarantee articles within a marriage settlement.¹⁰⁴ Once entails were broken, families were left dependent on younger sons not pressing their claims in court, which reinforces the importance of S.J. Connolly's argument concerning social pressures and family loyalty. Financial inducements in the way of portions to younger sons must also be added to this list: a destitute and jealous younger brother was undoubtedly something a family sought to avoid at all costs. Therefore, the wills of John and Daniel Ryan both made settlements on their younger sons with the provisos of disinheritance or repayment respectively should the children dispute the inheritance of the Inch estate. However, it is doubtful whether these restrictions would have stood up under legal scrutiny if a son did press a claim, simply because the bequests sought to limit the estate's inheritance in contradiction of the 1704 and 1709 popery acts.

Indeed, a younger Ryan son did eventually register a claim on the Inch estate under the gavelling act. In 1778, Daniel Ryan's eldest son and successor John died without issue. His next brother, the 'immediate heir', George Ryan resided in Peru at the time and his return was uncertain. However, their youngest brother, Denis MulRyan, a captain in the Austrian Service, was the first to arrive in Ireland to act as an executor of his brother's

¹⁰² Walsh, 'The Blakes of Ballyglunin', pp 129–30, 203.

¹⁰³ Howard, *Several special cases against popery*, pp 81–4, 115–6.

¹⁰⁴ Daniel Ryan and Thomas Fogarty broke their entails in 1738 and 1747 respectively. A reason why Ryan may have suffered the recovery was that he sought to fell woodland near Inch in order to raise £1,500 per his marriage agreement. The entail may have barred Ryan, the tenant-in-tail, from committing 'waste' by felling the timber on the lands of Pollagh: Marriage settlement D. Ryan and E. MacCarthy, 2 Feb. 1738 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 45); Common recovery suffered by D. Ryan, 1738 (Boole, *Grehan papers*, MS 175/2); Dr T. Fogarty's Case, 1748 (NLI, *Fogarty papers*, p8304), p. 204; Miscellaneous (TCLT, *Skehan papers*, vol. xxxvii), p.112.

will. Notwithstanding the restrictions set out in his father's will, Denis filed a bill in the Court of Chancery on 28 October 1778 'under an act of Queen Anne, commonly called the Gavel Act', whereby he sought to have half of the Inch estate decreed to him as was his right. This came just three days before such a claim would have become impossible under the 1778 Catholic Relief Act.¹⁰⁵ Despite his military rank in the Imperial Army, the prospect of Denis MulRyan's marriage into a respectable family in Austria/Germany was deemed impossible, 'being in the Army, being a foreigner & having no settlement to make on children'. His income at the time was apparently as little as £50, and so financial insecurity and the allure of a share in a landed estate, worth £1,368 per year, may have proved too great an opportunity to pass over.¹⁰⁶ Also, for many years previous there had been 'a long silence' from George Ryan in Peru, making the family doubt if he was still alive. If George did not return after a period of time, Denis would become heir to the estate.¹⁰⁷ If, on the other hand, George did return to Ireland, Denis' pending bill in Chancery provided him with a bargaining chip through which to improve his finances. By August 1780, George Ryan had arrived in Ireland. Thereafter, Denis offered to relinquish his claim for an annuity of £100, and for 'family peace and amity' his elder brother accepted.¹⁰⁸ This did not sour relations between the brothers: George Ryan felt for his brother over his limited prospects, and their affection was such that Denis MulRyan invited George to live in Ghent where 'we could take a House, live comfortably and I believe be happy together'.¹⁰⁹

The previous discussion instances several reasons why younger sons did not, or could not, press claims to parts of family estates. As opposed to discovery proceedings related to illegal purchases of land and leaseholds, there was no legal mechanism by which to forcefully gavel estates or punish younger sons for not claiming their share. Excluding pre-1704 family settlements, this meant that the most important factor in frustrating partible inheritance was family and sibling loyalty underpinned by tradition and a sense of kinship. As will be seen, this latter factor was crucial when the Ryans attempted to protect the Inch estate from discovery proceedings. These are important findings as they

¹⁰⁵ 18 Geo. III, c. 41 (1778): 'An act for the relief of his Majesty's subjects of this kingdom professing the popish religion' in *Stat. Ireland*, xi, p. 301.

¹⁰⁶ Denis MulRyan to George Ryan, 18 Dec. 1782 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 469); Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, p. 88.

¹⁰⁷ William Thompson to George Ryan, 4 Sept. 1778 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 374/88).

¹⁰⁸ Deed of annuity for £100 from George Ryan to Denis Ryan, 4 Aug. 1780 (*ibid.*, MS 14); Title to Rossmult (NAI, M 5306/7).

¹⁰⁹ D. MulRyan to G. Ryan, 18 Dec. 1782 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 469).

highlight several inheritance loopholes that were open to Catholics during their attempts to retain estates under a single heir during the penal era.

III

*‘... nuance and with it the complexity of humanity’*¹¹⁰

The Ryans and their allies successfully coped with inheritance restrictions following John Ryan’s death in 1724. However, during the period in which the penal laws were in operation, it is known that the family were open to discovery due to an illegal 999-year leasehold they held from their convert cousin Thomas Mathew of Annfield/Thomastown. The lands of Liscreagh and Coolderry, a total of 196 acres, were of very good quality and situated in the parish of Inch.¹¹¹ There is no evidence to suggest legal proceedings were brought against either the Inch or Annfield/Thomastown estates. That legitimate discovery proceeding were not brought over this issue appears all the more surprising when it is considered that the Ryans were situated on the frontline between what has been described as the largely Catholic friendly Butler lands in the south and the ‘quite rabid’ flanking regions of mainly Protestant landownership.¹¹² This should have made the family prime targets for discovery and prosecution. What was it that insulated the family from the penal laws in these instances?

As in most parts of the island, county Tipperary experienced underlying sectarian tensions that intermittently bubbled to the surface and flared into outright hostility. Such instances of conflict have received sustained attention from historians.¹¹³ The problem with studies that delineate human interaction along set political, geographical and confessional lines, however, is that commentators can become too fixated on conflict and rivalry without giving due consideration to what one historian has termed ‘nuance and with it the complexity of humanity’.¹¹⁴ The alternative approach would take account of instances of co-operation, friendship, outright collusion and begrudging acceptance that existed despite the differing confessions of the individuals and families involved. Such an approach is central to an appreciation of how the Ryans went unmolested as Catholic

¹¹⁰ Bradley, ‘Review: South Tipperary 1570–1841’, p. 216.

¹¹¹ Memorandum concerning the lands of Liscreagh and Cooldergevin, c.1830 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 17).

¹¹² Butler, *South Tipperary, 1570–1841*, p. 203.

¹¹³ For example: *ibid.*, pp 16–20; Burke, *The Irish priests in the penal times*, pp 348–411; Bric, ‘The Whiteboy movement, 1760–1780’, pp 149–151; Thomas G. McGrath, ‘Interdenominational relations in pre-famine Tipperary’ in William Nolan and Thomas G. McGrath (eds), *Tipperary: history and society: interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county* (Dublin, 1985), pp 256–282.

¹¹⁴ Bradley, ‘Review: South Tipperary 1570–1841’, p. 216.

landowners, and requires an understanding of their family network and the power of kinship.

The actual date on which the Ryans first took their illegal leasehold of the lands of Liscreagh and Coolderry is unknown. Even once the penal laws were relaxed, descriptions of the family's tenure remained consistently vague until the lands were sold under the Land Commission during the twentieth century.¹¹⁵ The earliest, and only precise reference to the lease was in the 1783 marriage settlement of George Ryan of Inch. This stated that in 1768 Thomas Mathew agreed to lease the lands for 999 years to Andrew Creagh in trust for John Ryan (d.1778), with the lease set to begin on 1 November 1798.¹¹⁶ Both the term of the lease and the trust were illegal and discoverable. However, the illegal leasehold the family held may have pre-dated 1768, as the Ryans had been paying rent for the lands of Liscreagh since the early 1750s. Furthermore, a year before the 1768 lease was agreed, Daniel Ryan of Inch passed away, and in his will stated that any rent and arrears due from his labouring tenants in Liscreagh and Coolderry was to be forgiven.¹¹⁷ A second reason to suspect that an illegal leasehold may have extended back into this period derives from the strategies employed by other Catholic families and their Protestant allies when it came to discoverable lands. The example of the Ryans' neighbours, the Fogartys of Fishmoynes, provide a case in point. The family would eventually lose their lands (300 acres) to genuine discovery proceedings brought by a neighbouring landowner, John Carden of Templemore. However, in an effort to protect their property, the Fogartys had used trusts and several collusive discoveries involving no less than a dozen Protestants, several of whom were friends and family members, over a twenty-year period (see Appendix 2).¹¹⁸ Of further significance regarding the Ryans was the fact that the Fogartys entered into new agreements following the death of any individual involved in the concealment of the lands. Therefore, it is not implausible to suggest that the illegal leasehold extended back before 1768 and that the Ryans put in place among their kin several agreements to help better protect the lands from genuine discovery.

¹¹⁵ List of lands in Co. Tipperary held by the Mathew family [1812?], with related documents [mostly 17th century] (NLI, *O'Byrne papers*, MS 27,327); Correspondence file relating to the proposed purchase of lands at Liscreagh by the Irish Land Commission, 1926–1953 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 171).

¹¹⁶ Marriage Settlement between George Ryan and Mary Anne Roche, 16 July 1783 (Ibid., MS 51).

¹¹⁷ Will of D. Ryan, 22 Aug. 1767 (ibid., MS 23); Ryan account with McCarthy, 1738–1756 (ibid., MS 198, f. 3),

¹¹⁸ History of Eliogarty (NLI, *Callanan MS*, p4546), pp 638–9; The Fogartys of Drom (TCLT, *Fogarty papers*, vol. xxix), pp 9–10; Power, 'Land, politics and society in eighteenth-century Tipperary, pp 74–5.

One possible explanation as to how the Ryans prevented the discovery of their estate is suggested by family tradition. The story told is that, finding themselves threatened by the penal laws, a Protestant named Amyas Bushe agreed to loan Daniel Ryan £100 secured on the Inch property. Ryan then defaulted and Bushe sued for legal possession of the estate. The Ryan family then removed to the continent and later reclaimed their lands on repayment of the £100.¹¹⁹

At first glance, Amyas Bushe of Kilfane, Co. Kilkenny, the product of a family deeply invested in the maintenance of a Protestant State in Ireland, seems an unlikely ally for the Ryans. Bushe's family were of Cromwellian stock and his grandfather, also Amyas (d.1724), had sat in parliament and served as high sheriff of Kilkenny. Amyas the younger (d.1773) was no less a gentleman of the Protestant Ascendancy.¹²⁰ He received his B.A. (1726) and M.A. (1729) from the University of Dublin, and acted as High Sheriff of his home county in 1733. Four years later he married Elizabeth, daughter and heir of General Gervase Parker, commander-in-chief in Ireland, while Bushe himself would eventually hold the rank of colonel in the Kilkenny Dragoons (militia).¹²¹ Set against all this, however, Bushe was later described as a gentleman accomplished in the 'practice of every benevolent and humane action', and despite their conflicting religious and family backgrounds, both he and Ryan were trusted friends.¹²² This is adequately expressed by the fact that Bushe's portrait once hung at Inch House. Moreover, both families came to regard each another as cousins by 1760s, and this kin relationship may have originated as far back as Daniel Ryan's intermarriage with the McCarthys of Springhouse in 1738.¹²³ Bushe was named as party to the marriage settlement and agreed to help Ryan suffer the common recovery of part of his estate the same year. Furthermore, while only a single letter survives within the Ryan family papers for the fifty-year period ending 1777, it is, tellingly, a letter in 1766 from Amyas Bushe to Daniel Ryan, which shows that Bushe

¹¹⁹ Chenevix Trench, *Grace's card*, p. 153; 'Descriptive list of the Ryan of Inch Collection' (UCC, Boole), p. 29n.

¹²⁰ Although the term 'Protestant Ascendancy' did not emerge until the 1780s, it is used here to describe the Protestant governing elite who dominated Ireland economically, politically and socially throughout the eighteenth century: Kelly, 'Eighteenth-century Ascendancy', p. 187.

¹²¹ Pedigree of Bushe of Kilfane, Kilmurry and Dangen, Co. Kilkenny, 1670–c.1812 (NLI, *Genealogical Office*, GO MS 168, microfilm, p8302), pp 238–9; George Dames Burtchaell, *Genealogical memoirs of the members of Parliament for the county and city of Kilkenny from the earliest on record to the present time ...* (Dublin, 1888), p. 99, 110–2; Dames Burtchaell and Ulick Sadleir (eds), *Alumni Dublinenses*, p. 120.

¹²² *Finn's Leinster Journal*, 25 May 1773.

¹²³ Amyas Bushe to Daniel Ryan, 12 July 1766 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 370); Ledger kept by George and Daniel Ryan, 1778–1811 (*ibid.*, MS 175); Ryan account with McCarthy, 1738–1756 (*ibid.*, MS 198, f. 2); Marriage settlement D. Ryan and E. MacCarthy, 2 Feb. 1738 (*ibid.*, MS 45); *Finn's Leinster Journal*, 25 May 1773.

continued to be actively involved in the family's affairs.¹²⁴ Although no supporting evidence could be located to support Bushe's involvement with the illegal leasehold of the lands of Liscreagh and Coolderry, it is not implausible to suggest that some arrangement did occur at some stage given the close bonds between both families.¹²⁵

If the illegal leasehold of Liscreagh and Coolderry did date back to the before 1768, a second factor to take into account when accounting for the Ryans' successful concealment of the lands arises from Daniel Ryan's marriage to Elizabeth McCarthy in 1738. Despite being a Catholic head tenant, Elizabeth's father, Justin McCarthy, was one of the wealthiest commoners in the county and used his excess wealth to provide loans to local landowners. 'Grand' George Mathew of Thomastown for instance, MP for Tipperary from 1727 to 1736, was sufficiently dependent on his tenant McCarthy as a source of credit that the latter was granted administration of Mathew's estate when he died intestate in 1738. Soon after, Daniel Ryan's first cousin, George Mathew the youngest of Thurles (d.1760), inherited the Thomastown estate, and it was found that the considerable sum of £9,000 (minus interest) was owed to McCarthy.¹²⁶ This was apparently not an isolated incident, and the best evidence to highlight the power and influence McCarthy may have wielded because of these loans came several years after his death. In 1764, Sir James Caldwell published a pamphlet in opposition to an upcoming bill in parliament that would grant Catholics the right to lend money on landed security. Caldwell argued that easing commercial restrictions against Catholics would be damaging to the Protestant interest in Ireland, because 'Every Debtor is a slave to his Creditor'. The author was alarmed by this prospect based on what had already 'happened in a well known Instance':

¹²⁴ A. Bushe to D. Ryan, 12 July 1766 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 370); Common recovery suffered by D. Ryan, 1738 (Boole, *Grehan papers*, MS 175/2).

¹²⁵ A second possible explanation for the Ryan family tradition concerning Bushe may have stemmed from his role as tenant to the praecipe during the common recovery of part of the Inch estate in 1738. Although a fictitious legal procedure, a common recovery was not illegal under the penal laws, which saw Ryan convey the lands to Bushe in order to suffer the recovery in court. A possible second case that may have seen Amyas Bushe assist his Catholic allies in their attempts to circumvent the penal laws can be seen in a deed he entered into with the McCarthys of Springhouse two years after the death of Justin McCarty in 1756: Indenture of release between Amyas Bushe and Denis McCarthy for the lands, etc. of Swiffen, Kilshane, Curroges, Clekyle, Laganstown, and Springhouse, alias Tubberconglis, 13 May 1758 (NLI, *MacCarthy Reagh papers*, MS 50,561/6); Common recovery suffered by D. Ryan, 1738 (Boole, *Grehan papers*, MS 175/2).

¹²⁶ The granting of administration of a Protestant's estate to a Catholic was illegal. Therefore, administration of the Mathew estate was later re-granted to a Protestant cousin, Kean O'Hara of Co. Sligo: Grant of administration over the estate of Elizabeth Matthew, daughter of George Matthew, a minor, by the prerogative court to her guardian, Kean O'Hara, 1740 (NLI, *O'Hara papers*, MS 36,488/2); The Mathew genealogy (TCLT, *Fogarty papers*, vol. xxx), p. 30; The Mathew properties (TCLT, *Skehan papers*, vol. lxvi), p. 54.

... for Justin Mac-Carty, merely by the Number of Protestants that were his Debtors, kept all Persons of that Religion in Awe, throughout the whole County where he lived, and effectually prevented them by mere intimidation from putting any of the Popish Laws in Execution for some years.¹²⁷

One could dismiss Caldwell's comments as scaremongering when sectarian tensions were high in Tipperary due to agrarian violence and the questionable electioneering tactics employed by Thomas Mathew (inherited Thomastown and Thurles estates in 1760), whose Catholic supporters allegedly voted illegally and intimidated Protestant voters during the 1761 county elections.¹²⁸ However, the mere fact that Caldwell's local informants pointed to McCarthy and the power he held over his debtors does suggest a certain amount of truth in the matter.¹²⁹ Of course, McCarthy could not have prevented the wholesale implementation of the penal laws even if he had wanted to, but when it came to his son-in-law's estate at Inch, McCarthy would have certainly represented an imposing figure and potent deterrent to any potential discoverer up until his death in 1756.¹³⁰ Thereafter, perhaps, the Ryans may have turned to Amyas Bushe for his assistance and protection. Furthermore, even if this had not been the case, and the illegal lease was initially agreed in 1768, the importance of family members and kinship was no less important. As the Ryan-Creagh agreement was a collusive trust between a Catholic and Protestant, an act of fraud had been committed, and a precedent set in 1762 compelled a discoverer to produce proof in writing of the trust.¹³¹ Therefore, John Ryan would have depended upon his half-uncle Andrew Creagh and Mathew cousin, both converts, to prevent the necessary written proof of the transaction from emerging.¹³² This highlights the level of trust that could engender even among collateral family members, and further supports the argument that kinship and family cohesion are of paramount importance when accounting for attempts by Catholics to circumvent the penal laws.

¹²⁷ Sir James Caldwell, *A brief examination of the question whether it is expedient either in a religious or political view, to pass an act to enable papists to take real securities for money which they may lend* (Dublin, 2nd ed., 1764), p. 11, 13; Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, pp 247–8; idem, 'Land, politics and society in Tipperary, i', p. 169.

¹²⁸ Bric, 'The Whiteboy movement, 1760–1780', pp 149–151; Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, pp 228–31; idem, 'Land, politics and society in Tipperary, i', pp 136–137, 161–163; Dickson, 'Novel spectacle?', pp 67–73.

¹²⁹ Power, 'Land, politics and society in Tipperary, i', pp 169–70.

¹³⁰ One commentator on discovery cases stated that the ability to contest a case and tie it up in expensive legal proceedings for years was an effective means of protecting lands from successful discovery. The prospect of facing McCarthy's resources may have been reason enough for a discoverer not to file a bill of discovery against the Ryans: *The extraordinary case of James Ph. Trant* (Cork, 1777), pp 15–16.

¹³¹ Osborough, 'Catholics and Popery Acts', p. 43.

¹³² Andrew Creagh has been mistakenly identified as the son of Charles Creagh and his wife Ann, daughter of George Mathew, brother of the Earl of Landaff (Mathew of Thomastown). Charles Creagh's wife was Frances Ryan (nee Mathew of Thurles), the widow of John Ryan of Inch (d.1724) and daughter of Major George Mathew (d.1725): O'Byrne and Chamney (eds), *The convert rolls, 1703–1838*, p. 53, 324.

Another individual often mentioned in relation to the Ryans was Thomas Mathew of Annfield (later Thomastown). It was Mathew who granted the Ryans the illegal leasehold on the lands of Liscreagh and Coolderry. Besides the fact that the demesnes of Inch and Annfield bordered one another, Daniel Ryan and Mathew were also second cousins, and both families later strengthened these bonds further, when Ryan's youngest daughter, Elizabeth, married Mathew's brother, Charles of Borrisoleigh, in 1773.¹³³ Thomas Mathew was an influential figure in the area as a prominent freemason and provincial grand master of Munster from 1757. Freemasonry was particularly strong in the Thurles area, but it is unclear whether any of the Ryans were members of either of the two lodges in the town. Even if the lodges were divided along religious lines, one can assume that Mathew's influence within the Protestant example may have offered benefits to the Ryans and their interests.¹³⁴ Overall, it can be concluded that the power and influence of their kinsmen would have helped to insulate the Ryans and their estate from genuine discovery proceedings.

In relation to the Inch estate, the Ryans are never known to have been prosecuted under any of the penal laws.¹³⁵ Apart from the use of legal strategies, the explanation for this has been family cohesion and the assistance offered by influential family members. It may be impossible to pin point the exact role played by particular individuals, but, what has been shown is that across the entire period when the Ryans were open to discovery and prosecution, there were relatives who were present, willing and in a position to assist the family at Inch. There being no personal correspondence, it is impossible to fully gauge the psychological effect of the laws on the family. There would surely have been heightened tensions at times, such as when John Carden successfully discovered the nearby lands of Fishmoynes. On the other hand, in 1773 John Ryan was confident enough to lease the demesne of Inch to Carden's son at a time when the Ryans themselves were open to discovery.¹³⁶ One can also imagine that the period between the passing of the

¹³³ *Finn's Leinster Journal*, 2 June 1773.

¹³⁴ Mathew was also elected grand master of England in 1766: John Herron Lepper and Philip Crossle, *History of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ireland*, vol. i (Dublin, 1925), p. 85; *Dublin Gazette*, 16 July 1757; Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, pp 228–9; idem, 'Land, politics and society in Tipperary, i', p. 161; Dickson, *Old world colony*, p. 275, T.C. Barnard, 'Sites and rites of associational life in eighteenth-century Ireland' in Jennifer Kelly and R.V. Comerford (eds), *Associational culture in Ireland and abroad* (Dublin, 2010), p. 13.

¹³⁵ A bill of discovery was brought against Daniel Ryan and three other individuals in 1742 in relation to the estate of his recently deceased step-father, Charles Creagh. However, given the individuals involved, this may have been a collusive bill of discovery: Memorial of deed poll. Thomas Warren of Dublin, George Clancy, Daniel Ryan, James Comyn, James Fitzgerald and Edmond Comyn, 6 Apr. 1743 [reg. 9 July 1743] (*ROD*, cxii, p. 48, no. 76971).

¹³⁶ Lease of the Domain of Inch, Moheragh and the Calf Park. John Ryan to Minchin Carden of Fishmayne, Co. Tipperary, 13 Oct. 1773 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 99).

1746 act concerning foreign service and John Ryan's pardon in 1747 represented a time of stress and uncertainty for his elder brother back at Inch. Furthermore, in relation to Catholic inheritance, it has been shown that the greatest issue encountered by a family was not the threat presented by some faceless Protestant, but instead from a younger son or his children. Therefore, in this instance, the psychological impact of the penal laws was deeply personal and stemmed from a family's uncertainty over whether or not an entitled relative would break rank and file a claim in court. In this sense the Ryans inhabited 'a world of contingency', as they could only plan for, but never ensure against such a claim being pressed.¹³⁷ The most effective way of guarding against these possible claims was the maintenance of kinship bonds and a sense of tradition and loyalty within the family. In practical terms, this meant providing younger sons with portions and suitable careers, usually abroad.

The Ryans would undoubtedly have felt frustrated by the restrictions placed on their civil and political rights. Nevertheless, as the following chapter will show, their immediate social milieu was one in which shared social status and individual personalities came to be valued above rigid religious distinctions. The Ryans were also unexposed to the unending litigation experienced by some Irish Catholic families. This would tend to reinforce Karen Harvey's view that the situation of a Catholic family in Tipperary was not always the same as that of a family in Galway, or Ulster.¹³⁸ Within county Tipperary itself, Catholic families did of course experience intermittent prosecution under the penal laws. The Fogartys of Fishmoynes are one such example. Although the family were apparently safe from discovery proceedings initially, a trust they entered into with a neighbouring Protestant appears to have had the unintended effect of exposing the family and their estate to discovery proceedings (see Appendix 2). Nevertheless, the network the family called upon provides a sense of the protection affordable to even a small landowning family. Overall, a powerful kinship network and family cohesion offered the Ryans of Inch one way of offsetting religious and legal issues that would have otherwise made evasion of the penal laws extremely difficult, if not impossible to achieve.

¹³⁷ Bjørn Thomassen, 'The uses and meanings of liminality' in *International Political Anthropology*, ii, no. 1 (2009), p. 5.

¹³⁸ Harvey, *Bellews of Mount Bellew*, pp 14–15, 53.

IV

*‘... extravagant and a bad manager of his estate’*¹³⁹

As stated in the introduction to this chapter, the ability of the Ryans to maintain their estate under a single heir would have counted for little if their finances were not kept in order. Mismanagement and debt were as much of a menace to their estate as penal legislation. On this subject, Charles Chenevix Trench has offered the view that Daniel Ryan was extravagant and a bad manager of his estate, while his eldest son, John, was worse.¹⁴⁰ In reality, this sweeping statement, accounting for almost fifty years of the family’s history and finances, says little about the management of the Inch estate. It is correct that the Ryans faced mounting financial problems from the late 1750s onwards, while Daniel Ryan’s successor was a gentleman who came to live beyond his means. But as a closer examination will show, Daniel Ryan made shrewd use of kinship to manage his estate effectively and increase its income up until 1756.

Following Daniel Ryan’s inheritance there would have been natural concerns among his family regarding his ability to balance the allure of his newfound wealth with successful management of his inheritance. Without the support and guidance of his guardian and his father’s executors, the prospect of his achieving this balance appeared doubtful. However, Ryan was not alone, and central to the successful management of the Inch estate were the new bonds of kinship he acquired after his inheritance.

The first bond of kinship Ryan established was reminiscent of his family’s experience as estate agents who used loyalty and ability to increase their social status. Even though the executors departed Inch by 1735, there remained a dependable figure on the estate in the form of William Carroll. In c.1733 Carroll replaced his father Ned as manager of Inch, and for five years William took into his home four of Daniel Ryan’s siblings. Carroll, in essence, acted as a surrogate parent to the children once their mother Frances passed away during the early 1730s. As reward for his family’s loyalty and value to Inch, Carroll married Daniel’s sister Margaret in c.1738. From that point on William Carroll could refer to Daniel Ryan as his ‘br[o]ther’, while Ryan drew a trustworthy person into his family.¹⁴¹ Without the benefit and support of blood relatives, Daniel Ryan had shown an

¹³⁹ Chenevix Trench, *Grace’s card*, p. 154.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ Rent roll and accounts kept by W. Carroll, 1735–38 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 173, f. 10).

astute awareness of his predicament by transforming a valued business relationship into a formal kinship bond through marriage.

Why William Carroll was a significant addition to the Ryan family can be understood from a surviving account he kept with Daniel Ryan from 1735 to 1738. This shows the important role he played in managing the Inch estate, while highlighting the financial issues Ryan faced. From a total estate rental of £1,503 from 1735–38, Carroll paid out £1,317, leaving £186 in Daniel Ryan's hands.¹⁴² On the one hand, Carroll successfully kept the estate's expenses in line with income, and it must be noted that the account appears to include most of Ryan's personal expenses. These included payments to a Cork merchant, John Comerford, for wine and other goods, followed by £169 5s 6d paid to Ryan 'when going to France' in 1736.¹⁴³ On the other hand, however, £186 was not a sizable surplus from four and a half years' income. After her death in c.1733, Frances Creagh's yearly dower payment of £114 ceased in the accounts, but Lady Purcell's dower claim of £57 per annum remained until her death in 1736.¹⁴⁴ Like his father during the 1690s, Daniel Ryan's responsibilities extended to the maintenance and education of his siblings until they married, reached twenty-one or were established in a profession. This involved payments for their 'dyet washing & lodgeing' at Carroll's house, totalling £156 9s 6d over five and a half years, plus wages to a 'fenceing Master' and 'Demp[s]e]y the danceing Master for teaching Miss Molly & the two boys'. Most of these payments continued into the 1740s and probably included legacies left to the children by their parents.¹⁴⁵ This represented a noticeable drain on Ryan's finances even before he fathered his own brood of seven children during the 1740s and 1750s.¹⁴⁶ Ryan's finances therefore, were precariously balanced between profit and loss.

Daniel Ryan once again sought to address concerns by establishing new bonds of kinship. He achieved this through his marriage to Elizabeth McCarthy in 1738. Ryan did not just welcome her lucrative dowry worth £1,500 but the knowledge of her father, Justin

¹⁴² The figure for income excludes money from Daniel Ryan's inheritance paid to him by Charles Creagh, while expenditure excludes £369 paid to Justin McCarthy for livestock: *ibid.*, f. 1, 9.

¹⁴³ Ryan was absent from Inch for approximately three months in 1736. His trip to France may have related to the education of his two youngest brothers who departed Waterford in late 1737 for France: *ibid.*, ff 1–7.

¹⁴⁴ Will of Ellen Purcell of Loughmoe, 8 Oct. 1732 (NLI, *Callanan papers*, MS 11,422(8d)); Sir Arthur Vicars (ed.), *Index to the prerogative wills of Ireland, 1536–1810* (Dublin, 1897), p. 387.

¹⁴⁵ For example, from 1742–1748, Daniel Ryan paid £91 6s 10d to or on behalf of his youngest brother Andrew: Rent roll and accounts kept by W. Carroll, 1735–38 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 173, ff 1–7); Ledger kept by D. and J. Ryan, 1742–1773 (*ibid.*, MS 174, ff 1–4).

¹⁴⁶ Added to this was his 'natural child', Honora Mullockey: Will of George Ryan, 7 April 1804 [probate 1805] (*ibid.*, MS 26).

McCarthy of Springhouse, one of the country's largest tenant farmers. The McCarthys built their fortune as graziers, rearing sheep to supply the domestic and English woollen industries, while cattle helped supply the provisions trade.¹⁴⁷ In 1776, the English travel writer, Arthur Young, famously described the McCarthy farm centred on Springhouse as 'I suppose the most considerable one in the world'. The farm consisted of 9,000 acres stocked with 8,000 sheep, 2,000 lambs and over 1,300 cattle of various descriptions, with a total stock valuation of £20,000.¹⁴⁸ McCarthy would have had natural concerns about the economic welfare of his daughter and future grandchildren. As one of the largest creditors to landowners in the county, he was undoubtedly well aware that few landed gentlemen could avoid debt by relying on rentals alone. As a result, it was likely McCarthy who encouraged Ryan to re-establish and later expand his demesne farm to increase the estate's income. Apart from bringing farming knowledge to Inch, McCarthy also gave Ryan access to his well-established business network of local livestock farmers and merchants in the port of Cork. Economic factors favoured the re-establishment of the demesne farm under landlord rather than tenant management. Grazing required minimal labour costs, allowing for large profits. From 1735 pasture lands also became tithe free at a time of rising cattle and beef prices.¹⁴⁹



Fig. 3.1– Demesne lands of Inch (nos 4, 5 & 6) as surveyed in 1724. Source: Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 306.

In May 1738 the demesne lands at Inch (286 acres) came back under Daniel Ryan's control, and a flurry of activity ensued as Justin McCarthy and the estate's agents began

¹⁴⁷ Kevin Whelan, 'Settlement and society in eighteenth-century Ireland' in Terry Barry (ed.), *A history of settlement in Ireland* (London, 2000), pp 191–2; idem, *The tree of liberty*, pp 4–5; Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, pp 125–131. See also: James A. Donoghue, 'The Scullys of Kilfeacle – Catholic middlemen of the 1770s' in *Tipperary Historical Journal*, no. 2 (1989), pp 38–49.

¹⁴⁸ Arthur Wollaston Hutton (ed.), *Arthur Young's tour in Ireland, 1776–1779, vol. i* (London, 1892), p. 390.

¹⁴⁹ Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, p. 22.

restocking Inch farm (Fig. 3.1). Between May and June 1738 alone, Ryan's agent, Tom Glascock, moved between local fairs and farms disbursing a total of £183 10s ½d for cattle and sheep. William Carroll was also active buying cattle, with every transaction ultimately passing through McCarthy's hands. In 1738 a known total of £414 2s 3½d was spent restocking Inch demesne, a figure exceeding the estate's yearly rental of £343 7s 4d. How Ryan managed to raise this capital depended once more on newly acquired bonds of kinship. His marriage settlement stipulated that Elizabeth's £1,500 dowry would be matched with £1,500 from Ryan by May 1738. This he undoubtedly tried to help raise by advertising 50 acres of woodland for sale that year. The total amount of £3,000 was lodged in the hands of trustees, with interest paid out yearly to Ryan during the marriage. This astute arrangement furnished Ryan with perhaps £150 (5 per cent interest) each year to supplement his rental income, besides possibly contributing to the future cost of portions for his children. However, Ryan could not realistically fund the entire 1738 restocking. Justin McCarthy once again offered the solution by extending credit, on interest free terms, amounting to over £12,000 over the next eighteen years. This also allowed McCarthy to keep a watchful eye on his son-in-law's finances and business affairs.¹⁵⁰

In October 1739 the demesne lands of Inch are known to have produced 60 bullocks, sold for £225 to Henry Leake, merchant of Cork City.¹⁵¹ The same two year-old bullocks purchased by McCarthy eighteen months earlier had cost £92 10s, producing a gross profit of £132 10s. This additional income excluded the sale of cows worth £104 1s 2d and the unrecorded sale of wool and other cattle at Inch in 1739. This gives an idea of the profits the demesne could deliver when compared to the annual rental of £86 3s 1d Ryan had received for the same lands up to 1738.¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ By May 1738 Ryan had paid a total of £369 5s to McCarthy, primarily one would suspect for livestock, but at least a further £150 worth of livestock was covered by McCarthy during the remainder of 1738: Marriage settlement D. Ryan and E. MacCarthy, 2 Feb. 17378 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 45); Ryan account with McCarthy, 1738–1756 (ibid., MS 198, f. 1); Rent roll and accounts kept by W. Carroll, 1735–38 (ibid., MS 173, f. 9); Miscellaneous (TCLT, *Skehan papers*, vol. xxxvii), p. 112.

¹⁵¹ Although McCarthy recorded the sale of 60 three year-old bullocks in 1739, the Ryan–McCarthy account shows that at least 104 two year-old bullocks were purchased for Inch farm the previous year. Therefore, it can be assumed that Ryan handled the sale of the remaining 44 bullocks in 1739. These sales would have occurred before the harsh frost of late 1739: Ryan account with McCarthy, 1738–1756 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 198, f. 1, 19); *The Journals of the House of Commons of the Kingdom of Ireland from the first day of May, 1613, in the Eleventh Year of the Reign of James the First, inclusive, to the Second Day of June, 1772, inclusive; in the Thirteenth Year of the Reign of his Majesty, King George the Third*, vol. xv (Dublin, 1772), p. 241.

¹⁵² The prices of two-year-old bullocks up to 1741 are reflected by those recorded in the diary of John Lucas: Brian Ó Dálaigh (ed.), 'The Lucas Diary 1740–41' in *Analecta Hibernica*, no. 40 (2007), p. 88, 154; Rent roll and accounts kept by W. Carroll, 1735–38 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 173, f. 1).

To further increase profits Ryan and McCarthy needed to increase the scale of their operation. As noted, their system of grazing involved buying two year-old bullocks in May or June, followed by their sale eighteen months later. With just 286 acres at their disposal, there was insufficient land available to develop a more profitable system of producing more bullocks and wool consistently for market each year. To address this issue, Ryan began leasing additional land.¹⁵³ Again he turned to kinsmen for assistance. His first cousin, George Mathew the youngest, who had recently combined the family's Thurles and Thomastown estates through inheritance, leased him approximately 200 acres of coarse pasture at £40 per year. Ryan's second cousin, Thomas Mathew of Annfield, leased his own demesne lands (212 acres) adjoining Inch at an annual rent of £60. By 1750 Ryan appears to have surrendered this lease, and in its stead Mathew let out the nearby lands of Liscreagh (at least 100 acres). This townland was of excellent quality, and a much later valuation explains why Ryan and McCarthy sought the lease:

The lands of Liscreagh... [*are*] particularly sound and very prime grazing land, affording dry lying and first class shelter for the owner whose home farm [*at Inch*] is low-lying and not desirable winter land.¹⁵⁴

With the Inch demesne farm expanded to approximately 680 acres by 1740, it was possible to improve profits on grazing. To facilitate this, a new agent, John Ryan, was hired, while McCarthy's sons, Denis and John, also provided their assistance.¹⁵⁵ The Inch grazing system no doubt subsequently mirrored farming elsewhere in county Tipperary. Younger cattle were kept initially on coarser ground following their purchase in May or June, while older bullocks were given preference on the best pasture lands and fattened until sale in late autumn. All the cattle were maintained on hay during winter and common practice also dictated grazing the bullocks and sheep together resulting in higher overall growth rates and output.¹⁵⁶ The success of farming on this scale boiled down to margins,

¹⁵³ The expansion of a demesne farm through leasing additional land was not uncommon during this period and can be seen in the case of Patrick French of Monivea: Denis A. Cronin, *A Galway gentleman in the age of improvement: Robert French of Monivea, 1716–79* (Dublin, 1995), p. 21.

¹⁵⁴ Memorandum Liscreagh and Cooldergevin, c.1830 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 17); Lease of Annfield for 31 years, Thomas Mathew of Dublin to Daniel Ryan, 20 June 1740 (*ibid.*, MS 82); Ryan account with McCarthy, 1738–1756 (*ibid.*, MS 198, f. 3); Maps of the estate of John Ryan, 1770 (*ibid.*, MS 317); Valuation made of Liscreagh, 17 Oct. 1927 (*ibid.*, MS 171/25); An old Thurles rental, 4 Nov. 1744 (TCLT, *Skehan papers*, vol. xxi), p. 90.

¹⁵⁵ As with Thomas Glascock and William Carroll, John Ryan was also a head tenant on the Inch estate. There is no evidence to suggest that John Ryan was related to the Ryans of Inch: Ryan account with McCarthy, 1738–56 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 198); Survey and rough map by James Shanahan of Thomas Glascock's holdings, estate of Daniel Ryan, 25 June 1733 (*ibid.*, MS 308); Lease of lands of Gortkelly. Daniel Ryan of Inch to John Ryan of Gortkelly for 31 years, 2 Aug. 1746 (*ibid.*, MS 84).

¹⁵⁶ Typescript copy of the journal of James Scully of Kilfeacle, Co. Tipperary, Dec. 1773–June 1814 (NLI, *Scully papers*, MS 27,579, f. 1); Power, *Tipperary*, p. 26; Wollaston Hutton (ed.), *Young's tour*, i, p. 451.

and the extra land available after 1740 meant profits at Inch could also be increased by stocking yearling bullocks. Depending on quality, graziers in 1744 needed to pay from 10s to £1 3s for a ‘good yearling’ in the Thurles area. Two years later it was recorded that the same bullocks were sold ‘att three year oulds att four pounds a piece clear of expences [sic]’.¹⁵⁷ Extra land moreover allowed for a larger herd of cows to be maintained. Increased numbers of bull and heifer calves annually would have improved profit margins further by decreasing the number of cattle purchased at market.

Most striking about the decision to expand Inch’s demesne farm was that it coincided with the Great Frost and Famine of 1739–41 in Ireland. The winter of 1739–40 witnessed severe frost, followed by a spring drought that led to high livestock mortality and devastated crops. Black cattle appear to have been particularly affected in the south, with one report from County Waterford in March 1740 stating ‘the cattle are all dying’.¹⁵⁸ Famine and mortality rates were at their worst during 1741, becoming known as *bliain an áir* or ‘the year of slaughter’ in folk memory. The suffering in Tipperary was such that Justin McCarthy’s neighbour, Thomas Dawson, writing in 1741 under the pseudonym of Publicola, described how he had ‘seen the aged father eating grass like a beast ...the hungry infant sucking at the breast of the already expired parent’. He continued in a second pamphlet the same year by observing that the ‘deep distress’ of the previous two years had seen ‘one third part, by moderate computation, of the common people, perished by fevers, fluxes, or cruel want’.¹⁵⁹ Compared to the ‘common people’, head tenants were better placed to cope with the initial drought and famine, but further agricultural crises during the 1740s compounded the situation and led to the resetting of leases, or the inability to set new ones on some estates. It appears that this protracted economic

¹⁵⁷ The high price achieved by these bullocks was probably due to the fact they were sold a year after a famine when demand and prices were at a high: Herd and farm accounts, Kilnarnagh (NLI, MS 498, f. 21); Dickson, *Old World colony*, p. 648; David Dickson and David Fleming (eds), ‘Charles O’Hara’s observations on County Sligo, 1752–1773’, in *Analecta Hibernica*, xxxvii (2015), pp 97–8.

¹⁵⁸ John Usher quoted in David Dickson, *Arctic Ireland: the extraordinary story of the Great Frost and forgotten famine of 1740–41* (Belfast, 1997), pp 23–4; Richard Purcell to the Earl of Egmont, 29 Jan. 1739[40] (NLI, *Egmont papers*, microfilm, p4679 [original BL, Add MS 47005]), p. 14; Richard Purcell to the Earl of Egmont, 6 May 1740 (ibid.), p. 43; David Dickson, ‘The gap in famines: a useful myth?’, in Margaret E. Crawford (ed.), *Famine: the Irish experience, 900–1900: subsistence crises and famine in Ireland* (Edinburgh, 1989), p. 97; Clarkson and Crawford, *Feast and famine*, p. 126; James Kelly, ‘Coping with Crisis: The response to the Famine of 1740–41’ in *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá chultúr*, xxvii (2012), pp 102–3.

¹⁵⁹ It is estimated that the twenty-one month crisis killed between 250,000 and 400,000 people out of an estimated population of 2.4 million: Publicola [Thomas Dawson], *A dissertation on the enlargment of tillage, the erecting of public granaries, and the regulating, employing, and supporting the poor in this kingdom: addressed to his Grace the Lord Primate of all Ireland* (Dublin, 1741), p. 5; Publicola, *A letter from a country gentleman in the province of Munster, to his Grace the Lord Primate of all Ireland* (Cashel[?], 1741), p. 3; Butler, *South Tipperary, 1570–1841*, p. 171; Dickson, ‘The gap in famines’, p. 97; G.F. Mandeville (ed.), *Retrospections of Dorothea Herbert 1770–1789, vol. i* (London, 1929), p. 1, 3.

uncertainty among head tenants was the main reason why landlords' rentals did not escape the 1740s unscathed.¹⁶⁰

Munster was perhaps the province worst affected by the famine, and Daniel Ryan's income undoubtedly suffered, but at the same time no evidence exists of leases being reset at Inch as might be expected if such a calamity befell his tenants.¹⁶¹ Indeed, the only indication of the severe conditions that assailed the Thurles area in the Ryan papers is an account entry for a 'warming pan' procured from a Cork merchant, John Comerford, in February 1741. As with many landowners, the Ryans may have contributed to local relief schemes such as at Cashel, but at the same time as this scheme was reported in the Dublin press in May 1741, Daniel Ryan purchased 2 hogsheads of claret (approx. 500 litres). Further outlays for pewter, silk, a coffee pot and sugar during the crisis would indicate that the family maintained a comfortable, even detached, lifestyle at Inch House despite the appalling suffering that surrounded them.¹⁶²

The Ryans were not unique in this. Working from another account book, Marion Rogan has highlighted how Charles Tisdall of County Meath enjoyed a genteel lifestyle seemingly unperturbed by the famine. Having recently returned from his Grand Tour of Europe, Tisdall attended the races at Trim in April 1741, followed by a ball and supper in December. In between these excursions he gambled heavily and purchased expensive wares for his country home.¹⁶³ It was a similar case of life as usual for Blayney Townley Balfour of County Louth. In 1740 he visited London before undertaking an 'expedition' to Paris and Spa during the height of the famine. Townley Balfour spent lavishly during his sojourn abroad, including the acquisition of several paintings and 'a head of Oliver Cromwell' for his personal collection. In all, his fifteen month tour cost £1,701 14s 9d and exceeded his pre-famine rental by £200.¹⁶⁴ For the remainder of the decade, whether or not their rentals were up to the task, the impetus to spend among Ryan, Tisdall and Townley Balfour remained undiminished. Even in cases where decreased incomes are in evidence, such as on the estate of Robert French of Monivea in Co. Galway, notions of

¹⁶⁰ Lyons, 'Morrinstown Lattin, c.1600–1860', p. 107; Marion Rogan, *Charles Tisdall of County Meath, 1740–51* (Dublin, 2014), p. 35.

¹⁶¹ Dickson, *Arctic Ireland*, pp 64–69; Padraig Lenihan, *Consolidating conquest*, p. 232.

¹⁶² Ryan account with McCarthy, 1738–56 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 198, ff 2–3); *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, 19–23 May, 1741; Kelly, 'Coping with crisis', pp 102–121.

¹⁶³ Rogan, *Charles Tisdall*, pp 16–17, 21.

¹⁶⁴ Account book of Blayney Townley Balfour, c.1734–1770 (NLI, *Townley Hall papers*, MS 11,922, f. 65, 71, 100, 114).

gentility, display and the need to make the right impression still prevailed.¹⁶⁵ These different individuals had all recently inherited their estates, and the level of expenditure indicates attempts to establish their social standing (see Chapter 4). Another commonality was that their estates maintained demesne farms during the period in question.¹⁶⁶ The level of commercialisation achieved by these farms varied of course, but as the following discussion shows, the example of Inch suggests that the financial effects of this spending were not as detrimental as might be supposed.

The existing evidence for the Thurles area during the crisis of 1739-41, albeit in short supply, reveals that some small farmers were still able to produce good quality livestock for market. This included a sub-tenant on the Inch estate who continued to sell cattle to a grazier in the vicinity of nearby Clonoulty during the crisis.¹⁶⁷ The situation at Inch appears to have been no different. At a time of increased demand and high prices during the War of Jenkins' Ear and 1740 drought, Ryan sold bullocks for £566. Following the famine a year later, Ryan sold a further 120 bullocks to McCarthy himself for £444 (£3 14s each).¹⁶⁸ For 1743 only tallow sales (£109) were recorded by McCarthy, but based on its percentage value the previous year (18.72 percent), bullock sales may have exceeded £580 in 1743.¹⁶⁹ This would suggest a further increase in numbers sold that year. Although the level of livestock mortality at Inch is unknown, the income achieved by Ryan's cattle would suggest that losses were negligible. Furthermore, losses recorded on other demesne farms and by large graziers were certainly not as severe as those seen among black cattle, less hardy cows in particular, held by small dairy farmers in places such as Cork and Waterford. In relation to sheep, Munster and Leinster appear to have fared much better than Connacht, with one estimate stating 40,000 had died within a two month period in 1740 alone.¹⁷⁰ What is clear, however, is that profits in bullocks from 1739 to

¹⁶⁵ Account book of Blayney Townley Balfour, 1745–1759 (ibid., MS 9601, ff 87–116); Barnard, *Improving Ireland*, pp 148–152, 166; idem, *Making the grand figure: lives and possessions in Ireland, 1641–1770* (London, 2004), p. xxi; Cronin, *A Galway gentleman*, p. 17.

¹⁶⁶ For instance, at the time of his death in 1744, Robert French's father had stocked his demesne lands with over 5,000 sheep: Barnard, *Improving Ireland*, p. 146.

¹⁶⁷ This unnamed grazier was a tenant on the estate of Morgan Jones of Clonoulty: Herd book and farm accounts from the Kilnamanagh area, Co. Tipperary, 1734–1780 (NLI, MS 498).

¹⁶⁸ Ryan account with McCarthy, 1738–56 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 198, f. 19); Richard Purcell to the Earl of Egmont, 2 June 1740 (NLI, *Egmont papers*, microfilm, p4679 [BL, Add MSS 47005 & 47006]), p. 29; Richard Purcell to the Earl of Egmont, 1 May 1741 (ibid., f. 51); L.M. Cullen, 'The Irish food crisis of the early 1740s: the economic conjecture' in *Irish Economic and Social History*, xxxvii, no. 1 (2010), p. 11.

¹⁶⁹ An estimate in 1741 suggested a relative value of 17.8 percent for tallow out of a bullock's total value. Based on this figure, bullock sales at Inch would have reached an estimated £612 in 1743: Dickson, *Old World Colony*, p. 142.

¹⁷⁰ However, one account does show that the losses on the Brown estate in Co. Mayo during the famine of 1745 were considerable and amounted to 25 cattle: Account of John Brown's stock in 1745 (NLI, *Westport*

1741 sufficed to offset rental shortfalls experienced by Ryan as a result of drought and famine (see Fig. 3.2). The favourable prices achieved at Inch would also suggest that other large graziers were insulated from the worst effects of the crisis.

Bullocks	2 year olds	3 year olds	Increase	Numbers	Income	Gross profit	% of 1739 rental (£343)
Year	Purchased	Sold					
1738	30s 10d	–	–	–	–	–	–
1739	29s	75s	44s 10d	60	£225	£132 10s (58.88%)	38.6
1740	26s	77s 8d	48s 8d	146	£566	£355 5s (62.75%)	103.5
1741	50s 3d	74s	48s	120	£444	£288 (64.86%)	84
1742	–	75s 6d	25s 3d	123	£464 18s 6d	£155 5s 9d (33.4%)	45.27
1743	48s	[75s?]	–	[155?]	[£582?]	–	–

Fig. 3.2– Cattle purchases and sales at Inch, 1738–1743. Source: Ryan account with McCarthy, 1738–56 (*Ryan Collection*, MS 198).¹⁷¹

After 1743, Ryan and McCarthy altered their system of grazing. Instead of purchasing bullocks in early summer, they waited until autumn. The sale of cattle every twelve months, as opposed to eighteen months previously, allowed for quicker turnover of stock and the freeing up of extra land. One disadvantage was that Ryan paid a higher price for bullocks in the autumn 1743, while war with France in 1744 led to the average price paid for beef in Cork dropping significantly (75d per cwt. as opposed to 132d the previous year).¹⁷² Furthermore, intermittent embargoes on beef exports and another famine in 1745, alleged to have been ‘more devilish’ than in ‘the summer of 1741’, saw prices fluctuate in Ireland until the late 1740s. Prices achieved during the 1745 crisis remained low due, it seems, to a weak external market, with one Limerick merchant noting that prices for ‘3 turning 4 year olds’ bullocks — the backbone of Ryan’s business — were only making between £2 5s and £3 5s. It was not until the second half of the 1740s that prices achieved by cattle began to consistently match and ultimately exceed those seen at the beginning of the decade.¹⁷³

papers, MS 40,910/8(7)); Account book for cattle and sheep on the St. Leger estate, Co. Cork, 1734–1802 (NLI, *Doneraile papers*, MS 19,682, ff 29–117); Accounts of Benjamin Pratt, 1726–42 (NLI, *Pratt papers*, MS 5248); Herd and farm accounts, Kilnarnagh (NLI, MS 498); Accounts relating to H. Flower, 1711–50 (NLI, *Flower papers*, MS 11,470/2); Farm and stock accounts kept by Ross Mahon of Castlegar, Co. Galway, 1724–1745 (NLI, *Mahon papers*, MS 19,965); Account and stock book of the Vesey family, 1734–1762 (NLI, *De Vesey papers*, MS 32,287); Ó Dálaigh (ed.), ‘The Lucas Diary 1740–41’, pp 86–140; Cullen, ‘The Irish food crisis of the early 1740s’, p. 11n.

¹⁷¹ Where available, the purchase prices for bullocks in certain years represent averages, while in other instances prices relate to single entries in the account. Therefore, the figures provided in this table should be treated as indicative.

¹⁷² Ryan account with McCarthy, 1738–56 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 198, f. 5, 21); Dickson, *Old World colony*, pp 157–8, 648, 657–8.

¹⁷³ John Kelly to Stephen Schamp, 12 Nov. 1745 (NLI, *Kelly papers*, MS 827); Cullen, ‘The Irish food crisis of the early 1740s’, pp 10–11, 14, 17–18; Nini Rodgers, *Ireland, slavery and anti-slavery: 1612–*

As observed previously, the 1743 switch to a twelve-month cycle freed up land. This allowed Ryan and McCarthy to respond to changing market conditions by stocking additional sheep. Wool prices in Ireland declined severely during the mid-1730s, but the expansion of wool combing, especially around Cork, induced higher, more stable prices after 1742. At a time when profits from cattle may have been less advantageous, sheep numbers at Inch, based on wool sales (454 stone), reached perhaps as many as 1,450 in 1748. The woollen and worsted yarn trade with England was controlled by Quaker merchants and sales at Inch sometimes went to two prominent families, the Newenhams and Newsoms of Cork.¹⁷⁴ Increased wool production would have helped to offset the lower profits Ryan's bullocks may have achieved after 1742. Once beef prices stabilised and began to increase after 1748, sheep numbers at Inch dropped to the still significant number of approximately 850 (268 stone) by 1753.¹⁷⁵

To some extent, every important business decision on Inch farm could be attributed to Justin McCarthy, and when one talks about the positive fortunes of the Ryans of Inch from 1738–56, one must highlight the importance of a generous and well-connected father-in-law. However, Daniel Ryan did not simply leave the running of the demesne farm to relatives and servants. During the early years of the Ryan-McCarthy account, the vast majority of livestock purchases were made by McCarthy and the estate's agents. Soon Ryan accompanied the agents to local fairs, and by 1739 he himself was purchasing livestock at Cahir and Templemore. Apart from buying directly from neighbouring farms and local cants, Ryan and his agents eventually frequented nearly every fair in the west and north of Tipperary, besides occasional trips to neighbouring counties Limerick, Galway and Offaly.¹⁷⁶ From the mid-1740s onwards, the farm's business came increasingly under Ryan's direct control.

1865 (Basingstoke, 2007), p. 136; David Dickson, *New Foundations: Ireland 1600–1800* (Dublin, 1987), p. 85; Charles O'Connor of Belanagare quoted in Lyons, 'Morristown Lattin, c.1600–1860', p. 108.

¹⁷⁴ The figures for sheep numbers at Inch are based on the average fleece weighing 5 pounds, with a stone in weight equating to sixteen pounds based on the observations of McCarthy and Edward Willes. Fleece weights had increased by the mid-1770s, and this stemmed from improved English sheep breeds being imported into the county from the 1760s onwards. In the 1770s and 1780s for instance, James Scully of Kilfeacle purchased English rams and over the next twenty years average fleece weights on the farm increased from 5.4 to 6 pounds: Ryan account with McCarthy, 1738–56 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 198, ff 20–22); Journal of J. Scully, 1773–1814 (NLI, *Scully papers*, MS 27,579, f. 4, 15–17, 42, 52, 147, 154); Stock book belonging to James Scully of Kilfeacle, 1775–1782 (*ibid.*, MS 27,480); John O'Donovan, *The economic history of livestock in Ireland* (Cork, 1940), p. 100; Power, *Tipperary*, p. 24; Dickson, *Old World colony*, p. 80, 134; Cullen, *Anglo-Irish trade*, p. 55, 93; James Kelly (ed.), *The letters of Lord Chief Baron Edward Willes* (Kilkenny, 1990), p. 53.

¹⁷⁵ Ryan account with McCarthy, 1738–56 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 198, f. 23).

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, ff 1–18.

Due to the nature of the account between Ryan and McCarthy, it is impossible to gauge the farm's profits exactly. It is clear from cattle sales alone from 1739–41 that the Ryans benefitted enormously from high prices as a result of wartime demand and possible shortages due to severe climatic conditions. However, as Ryan came to handle more of the farm's business as the 1740s progressed, McCarthy's direct involvement was less necessary. This meant a decrease in account entries for the farm. Nevertheless, one particularly informative set of transactions suggest an approximate figure for one year. In 1753, 120 bullocks were sold for £555, the sale of wool came to £192 6s 6d and £69 17s 6d came from the sale of 13 cows. While the sale of other livestock and wool may have gone unrecorded, Inch farm nevertheless produced a known gross income of £817 4s in 1753.¹⁷⁷ Erring on the side of caution, a net profit of at least 20 percent (or approximately £160) would be expected after subtracting the rental on lands leased after 1750, the cost of livestock and wages to two agents, herdsman and labourers.¹⁷⁸ An Inch rental account covering the 1750s does not exist, but based on leases set after 1738, the rental in 1753 did not surpass £400. Consequently, it can be estimated that Daniel Ryan may have increased his income in 1753 by at least 40 percent through the demesne farm. Moreover, this estimate excludes interest paid to him annually from the £3,000 put in trust after his marriage.¹⁷⁹

Finally, it is necessary to consider how Daniel Ryan's extravagance affected his estate. The best surviving evidence dates from 1746–50 when Ryan carried out renovations on his country seat. The project cost several hundred pounds at least and the building work commenced just a year after another famine. The interior and exterior of Inch House were renovated and remodelled extensively during the early nineteenth century (see Appendix 3), but the disruption caused by the building work commissioned by Daniel Ryan was such that the family apparently relocated for a time to nearby Annfield House in 1747.¹⁸⁰ Over four years £400 was known to have been spent on the project, and this figure excludes payments made by Ryan himself. McCarthy's intermittent account entries show masons directed by another Daniel Ryan were employed, as were 'sawyers', a

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, ff 24–5.

¹⁷⁸ Besides their expenses, the agents employed by 1753 (John Ryan of Gortkelly and Tom Glascock) would have received between £20 and £40 each per annum in wages. This figure also takes into account the work these individuals would have carried out on the estate dealing with tenants and collecting rents. The lands leased after 1750 cost £65 per annum: Marie-Louise Legg (ed.), *The diary of Nicholas Peacock, 1740–1751: the world of a County Limerick farmer and agent* (Dublin, 2005), p. 16; Accidental and necessary disbursements made by James Loughlin, 1740–1 (NLI, *Flower papers*, MS 11,463/1).

¹⁷⁹ Ryan account with McCarthy, 1738–56 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 198, f. 19).

¹⁸⁰ Lease of Athshanbohy. D. Ryan of Annfield to Rev. R. Purcell, W. Purcell and P. Purcell, 16 Jan. 1747[8] (*ibid.*, MS 85).

‘stonecutter’, ‘Norris the plaisterer’ and ‘Stapleton the glazier’. The cost of building materials was also considerable. John Keating of Clonmel alone supplied timber and boards worth over £200 for use within the house. Further outlays of money went towards lead, slates, glass, ‘nailes’ and iron.¹⁸¹

Justin McCarthy’s surviving account does not provide exact details concerning internal renovations during the late 1740s. Nevertheless, from 1748–50 it is known that McCarthy paid money on three occasions, totalling £343 5s 6½d, on Ryan’s behalf to his kinsman, the merchant John Comerford of Cork.¹⁸² The nature of the goods paid for went unrecorded by McCarthy. However, since they coincided with the latter stages of the building work at Inch, it is possible the payments related to updating the house’s contents to complement its internal and external renovation.¹⁸³ Therefore, it can be estimated that Ryan may have spent perhaps as much as £750 on the project.

By 1756 Ryan’s account showed £2,135 2s 4d owed to McCarthy. However, the account was merely a list of transactions between them over eighteen years, not a record of accounts for the estate. Ryan’s rental income never figured directly in the account. Furthermore, as time passed Ryan’s control of the demesne’s management increased, and livestock sales passed only intermittently through McCarthy’s hands. Therefore, this account excludes much of Daniel Ryan’s actual income. There was probably little pressure put on him to repay loans provided interest-free by his wealthy father-in-law. These considerations mostly explain the deficit. When balancing accounts just before his death in 1756, McCarthy offset the deficit with his daughter’s £1,500 dowry, while the final £635 2s 4d was forgiven Ryan in his will. Daniel Ryan could well be termed extravagant as Trench claims, but the extent to which his rental income was supplemented till 1756 meant no significant debts accumulated from the family’s very privileged lifestyle.¹⁸⁴

In conclusion, William Nolan is affirmed in stating that ‘kin networks articulated a carefully manipulated marriage field designed to have the maximum impact on economic

¹⁸¹ Ryan account with McCarthy, 1738–1756 (ibid., MS 198, ff 7–13).

¹⁸² John Comerford (the elder) married Justin McCarthy’s niece, Bridget, daughter of Michael Kearney. Comerford traded considerably with the Caribbean during the 1740s and also purchased Ryan’s cattle on several occasions. There is the strong possibility therefore that the beef reared at Inch went towards provisioning these islands, their planter communities in particular: ibid., passim; James Grove White, *Historical and topographical notes, etc. on Buttevant, Castletownroche, Doneraile, Mallow, and places in their vicinity* (Cork, 1905), p. 253; Truxes, *Irish-American trade*, p. 77; Cullen, *Anglo-Irish trade*, p. 12.

¹⁸³ Ryan account with McCarthy, 1738–1756 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 198, ff 11–13).

¹⁸⁴ Will of Justin McCarthy, Springhouse, Co. Tipperary, 15 July 1752, [administration 7 May 1756] (ibid., MS 40); Ryan account with McCarthy, 1738–1756 (ibid., MS 198, f. 19).

and political linkages'.¹⁸⁵ This can be observed in the case of the Ryans' intermarriages with the Mathew and McCarthy families. However, this research shows that how families defined kinship cannot be solely confined to discernible links as expressed through genealogical trees and the study of two-dimensional lineages. There remains a need to explain kin relationships that appear much more tentative, but no less crucial to the Ryans' affairs. Individuals such as Hugh Kennedy and Amyas Bushe considered themselves cousins to the Ryans, but would not appear in a standard family genealogy. Neither would Daniel Ryan's guardian, Howard Egan, an individual who was willing to subvert the law for the Ryans, yet who had no recognisable family or material benefits motivating his actions. Similarly, from afar, Amyas Bushe represented the type of figure in society the Ryans should have feared rather than revered by displaying his portrait at Inch House. What bound these individuals to one another was the recognition that kin could be 'flexible':

Some individuals recognized a wide-ranging cousinage. Others concentrated their attention upon their closest kin. Moreover, such differences could be influenced by the needs and circumstances of particular social groups and the peculiarities of particular local conditions.¹⁸⁶

The Ryans' recognition of kin was wide-ranging and illuminated by the obstacles presented by the penal laws and John Ryan's premature death in 1724. The familial links that bound Kennedy to the Ryans were vague and perhaps even fictive, based on friendship and the recognition of sharing a similar social position. To solidify trust and friendship further usually meant a future marriage alliance, as seen when Kennedy's granddaughter married John Ryan (d.1778) in 1765.¹⁸⁷ In relation to the Mathews, the Ryans were rewarded by the c.1714 marriage with improved social standing, which they then exploited to establish more concrete bonds of affinity with other families. This was illustrated in 1724 when John Ryan considered Justin McCarthy his kinsman a full fourteen years before the intermarriage of their children.¹⁸⁸ Amyas Bushe was determined a cousin to Daniel Ryan based, it seems, on Justin McCarthy's 'sister Bushe', who does not figure in any extant genealogies of the Kilkenny or Tipperary based families.¹⁸⁹ It was

¹⁸⁵ Nolan, 'Patterns of living in Tipperary', p. 301.

¹⁸⁶ Wrightson, *English society*, p. 28.

¹⁸⁷ Marriage agreement between J. Ryan and M. Kennedy, 5 June 1765 (Boole, *Grehan papers*, MS 175/4).

¹⁸⁸ The early Ryan-McCarthy link came through Frances Ryan's widowed aunt Elizabeth, Lady Cahir, who married Justin McCarthy's widowed father during the 1680s: Will of J. Ryan, 2 Mar. 1724 (TCLT, *Ryan papers*, TL/F/21); Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, p. 332.

¹⁸⁹ Bernard Burke, *Genealogical and heraldic history of the landed gentry of Ireland* (London, 1912), p. 92; Dames Burtchaell, *Genealogical memoirs of the members of Parliament Kilkenny*, p. 112; Ryan account with McCarthy, 1738–1756 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 198, f. 2); Pedigree of Bushe of Kilkenny, 1670–

upon such bonds of kinship that families could depend in order to maintain and advance social positions. Recognition of kin, therefore, could at times represent something malleable and experiential, and it has been shown that many individuals and families of substance, both Catholics and Protestants, inhabited the Ryans' sphere of affinity and acted in their interest. What mattered most when a bond of kinship was created or invoked was that the affiliation was agreed between all involved. As the following chapter will show, kinship remained central to the family's world, but the need to guarantee his seven children's futures caused Daniel Ryan's debts to steadily mount over following years.

This chapter has highlighted the difficulties the Ryans faced as a result of the penal laws. However, an in-depth analysis of the laws themselves, and how they were subsequently interpreted by Irish courts, has shown that several loopholes did exist, particularly in relation to the inheritance of Catholic estates. Pre-1704 family settlements permitted some Catholic families to circumvent inheritance restrictions. Furthermore, where entails did not exist or had been broken, discovery proceedings could only be brought against an estate of inheritance under very particular circumstances, such as if a son was in French or Spanish service. The main threat, therefore, to an estate remaining intact under a single Catholic heir was if younger brothers, or their children in turn, registered claims in court. This clearly represented a threat to estates, and it has been shown that the most effective way of guarding against such claims was through family cohesion and the maintenance of kinship bonds. By highlighting how the laws operated, these findings will, it is hoped, go some way towards dispelling several of the inaccuracies that persist surrounding the penal laws. The penal laws were a threat to Catholic landowners, but it is necessary to be clear about what those threats were, how they could manifest themselves in reality and the ways in which Catholics could in turn respond.

c.1812 (NLI, *Genealogical Office*, GO MS 168, p8302), pp 238–9; Pedigree of MacCarthy of Springhouse, Co. Tipperary, c.1630–1792 (ibid., GO MS 164, microfilm, p8301), pp 158–168; Pedigree of MacCarthy of Spring House, Co. Tipperary, 950–1772 (ibid., GO MS 165, microfilm, p8302), pp 173–179; Pedigree of MacCarthy of Toulouse, France, and Spring House, Co. Tipperary, 1744–1842 (ibid., GO MS 175, microfilm, p8305), pp 63–4; Pedigree of MacCarthy of Springhouse, Co. Tipperary, c.1630–1792 (ibid., GO MS 164, microfilm, p8301), pp 158–168.

Chapter 4

Making the right impression: the world of an Irish gentry family, 1757–1778

By early 1779, following many years of silence, George Ryan received word that his elder brother John had passed away. Residing in Peru, George was now heir to the family estate at Inch, and as far as he was aware it was still the source of wealth and privilege he had known as a child over twenty years earlier. This belief was no doubt confirmed when he read that his late brother had ‘lead an exemplary life, suffering his woes with resignation and only spending on the precise’. John Ryan had, indeed, viewed himself as a ‘loyal administrator’ and made clear that ‘he did not want to harm the immediate heir’.¹ Such remarks are, however, in sharp contrast to the prevailing image of John Ryan. Charles Chenevix Trench has portrayed him as having been more extravagant than his father Daniel and a worse manager of Inch. James Condon echoes this assessment, observing that Ryan was a prodigal son with an equally prodigal father.² These views stem from the fact that the family estate was left heavily indebted at the time of John Ryan’s passing. In 1778 John Ryan may have appeared to be a good administrator of his estate, but the debts he passed on to his successor suggest a more complex picture. The main aim of this chapter, therefore, is to discuss Ryan’s management of the estate in more detail and to explain this apparent contradiction.

The previous chapter has shown how, although an ever present consideration, the penal laws were successfully circumvented by the Ryans. Despite a growing corpus of literature that supports this finding and suggests that the Ryans were far from unique,³ a tendency nevertheless remains to focus on the penal laws as the root of every major concern faced by Catholics in attempts to retain their landowning status. Consequently, these families’ experiences as members of the landed gentry and the extent to which they shared anxieties with their Protestant counterparts are areas that have been overlooked. Yet preoccupations with ideas of status and the resulting financial problems these could create were issues that arose among the landed elite regardless of religious belief. This was the case for the Ryans also, and the ensuing chapter will highlight both the speed with which a landed family’s healthy finances could deteriorate, and the strategies that could be employed in an attempt to stem this decline. Furthermore, the Ryans’ attempts to make the right

¹ William Thompson to George Ryan, 4 Sept. 1778 (UCC, Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 374/88).

² Chenevix Trench, *Grace’s card*, p. 154; Condon, ‘Don Jorge Rian’, p. 9.

³ For example: Harvey, *The Bellevs of Mount Bellew*; Lyons, ‘Morrinstown Lattin’; Walsh, ‘The Blakes of Ballyglunin’.

impression will highlight how shared ideas surrounding gentility and notions of rank helped to moderate religious and ethnic divisions between some members of rural Ireland's landed gentry. In this sense, the following discussion will build on the analysis provided in Chapter 3 concerning interdenominational relations among eighteenth-century Ireland's landed gentry.

The study of debt and retrenchment at Inch from 1756 until 1778 is central to interpreting the contrasting images of John Ryan as a simultaneously economising and extravagant gentleman. In order to draw out this duality, the following discussion will be divided into three main sections. The first section will examine the steady deterioration of the Ryans' finances after 1756, suggesting that, at root, this occurred due to the obligation Daniel Ryan had been under to provide for the futures of his numerous offspring (his younger children in particular). Here affection and honour were obvious considerations, but beyond these Ryan knew that his decisions would have far-reaching implications for the estate during the tenure of his successor. As observed in the previous chapter, financial inducements, usually in the form of a carrot and stick approach, were used to try and prevent his younger sons from pressing their right to a share of the Inch estate under the penal laws. The marital prospects of his daughters was an additional issue facing Ryan, and the fortunes he eventually laid out in the form of dowries highlight the lengths he was willing to go to in order to bolster the family's kinship network.

Daniel Ryan's decisions regarding his children would survive him, but so too would the debts they incurred. The responsibility for discharging these encumbrances fell on the shoulders of his heir, yet the state of John Ryan's finances after his succession point to extravagance rather than the requisite frugality and restraint. By the time of his premature death in 1778, Ryan's debts compounded those of his father, leaving his brother and eventual successor in a precarious financial position. Bearing this in mind, section two will examine the family's identity as a gentry family. While retaining their genteel status was central to the Ryans' identity, the need to embody and project this status paradoxically became the greatest threat to their survival. This stemmed from the fact that identity was, among the gentry, something in constant need of improvement, projection and reaffirmation. This depended on a day-to-day basis on ideas of gentility and 'quality' that were attached to specific types of behaviour, material goods and consumption practices. For the Ryans, these expensive considerations were tied up in prevailing sensibilities stimulated by Irish, English and continental cultural influences. These overall

concerns were linked to what Toby Barnard has described as ‘making the right impression’ or ‘the grand figure’.⁴

Projecting the right impression did not come cheaply, and John Ryan quickly found himself facing financial issues that far outstripped his resources. His answer to this problem was to become an absentee landlord. The final section will discuss Ryan’s situation as a gentleman abroad, and while it will be shown that he attempted to live an economising lifestyle while absent from Inch, it will be argued that this must be viewed as a gentleman’s solution to a gentleman’s problem. Between 1773 and 1775, and again in 1778, Ryan resided in England, and there his anonymity would have offered some hope of avoiding the excess that had forced his exodus from Ireland. Problematically, however, he also suffered from ill health. This obliged him to make at least two trips to the continent, and the cost of convalescing and living a lifestyle relative to his genteel status were still considerable. Overall, examining these different areas will reveal John Ryan as a typical gentleman of his time. By moving beyond simplistic explanations concerning extravagance, a full exploration of his fortunes will illustrate the complexity of the world he inhabited and the tensions and difficulties faced by those who sought to preserve their genteel status.

I

‘... to provide for and prefer his sd. younger Children’⁵

As highlighted in the previous chapter, Daniel Ryan had successfully managed his estate and supplemented its rental income through demesne farming and the assistance of his father-in-law, Justin McCarthy of Springhouse. There is no evidence to suggest that the revenue of Inch estate deteriorated after McCarthy’s death in 1756. On the contrary, Daniel Ryan was by then an experienced landlord and he could still rely on the assistance of Tom Glascock and John Ryan as agents. Leases set at Inch during the 1760s support this view, showing a marked increase in the estate’s rental income. As the majority of their tenants were Catholics who could only hold leases for a maximum of thirty-one years, the Ryans had opportunities to reset leases at shorter intervals in order to keep pace with increasing land values. Fortunately for the Ryans, land values increased significantly during the 1760s at a time when the leases of the Inch estate’s most profitable lands

⁴ Barnard, *Making the grand figure*, pp xx–xxi.

⁵ Deed of assignment. John Ryan to Daniel Ryan, 1 May 1765 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 191).

expired.⁶ For example, the most valuable property on the estate at Ballypatrick, a total of 318 acres, brought a rental of £112 in 1735 (7s per acre). By the time the lease was reset in 1763 it was worth £318 annually to Ryan (20s per acre).⁷ This increase reflected the exceptional nature of the property in question: the 770 acres centred on Inch were situated on the northern limit of one of the county's exceedingly fertile limestone plains. Slightly further to the south-west in Kilnelongurty, the remainder of the estate, approximately 2,170 acres, was made up primarily of coarser upland pasture.⁸ While less profitable, these lands still made modest yet comparably good increases for their quality. The lands of Rossoulty (150 acres) for instance, rose from a rental of £16 (2s 1½d per acre) during the 1730s to £50 (6s 6d per acre) in 1767.⁹ The rental value of most of Inch estate's property may have paled in comparison to the best land available in the county by the mid-1770s (25s per acre), but at the same time, the estate's poorest quality land was still worth midway between the average prices paid per acre in Cork (5s) and Waterford (7s 10d).¹⁰ Thus, compared to £343 in 1739, the rental of the Inch estate had more than doubled to approximately £850 by the 1760s. Added to this, the Ryans decided to rent out the illegally held lands of Liscreagh and Coolderry (196 acres). These lands were of good quality, and after payment of the head rent to Thomas Mathew, the estate's overall rental grew by a further £127 15s 6d to an estimated £1,037 by 1768 (see Fig. 4.1).¹¹ These

⁶ Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, p. 90; Cronin, *A Galway gentleman*, p. 21; David Large, 'The Wealth of the Greater Irish Landowners, 1750–1815' in *Irish Historical Studies*, xv, no. 57 (Mar., 1966), pp 28–9.

⁷ A lease from June 1765 suggests that these lands were reset once again for 30s per acre, but there is no evidence that the lease was put into effect. Therefore, the rental figure for Ballypatrick of £318 rather than £477 is provided here. The earlier lease may have been affected by the end of the Seven Years War in early 1763 and a subsequent drop in land values once the demand for provisions fell. The later lease may have been an attempt to rectify this once land values increased again: Rent roll of Daniel Ryan's estate and accounts kept by William Carroll, 1735–38 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 173); Lease of Ballypatrick and the Pollough (410a). John Ryan of Inch to Richard Doherty of Kedra, Co. Tipperary, for a term of 31 years at an annual rent of 20 shillings per acre, 29 Sept. 1763 (*ibid.*, MS 94); Lease of Ballypatrick and the Pollough (410a). John Ryan of Inch to Richard Doherty of Kedra, Co. Tipperary, for a term of 30 years at an annual rent of 30 shillings per acre, 12 June 1765 (*ibid.*, MS 95); Dickson, *Old World colony*, p. 158.

⁸ Nolan, 'Patterns of living in County Tipperary', pp 289–292.

⁹ Lease of Rosoulty (150a 2r). John Ryan of Inch to Patrick Ryan, Valentine Ryan and Teig Dwyer, Farmers, for a term of 31 years at £50 per annum, 7 Dec. 1767 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 96); Rent roll and accounts kept by W. Carroll, 1735–38 (*ibid.*, MS 173).

¹⁰ The value of land per acre on the Inch estate far exceeded the average in Ulster: Peter Roebuck, 'landlord indebtedness in Ulster in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries' in J.M. Goldstream and L.A. Clarkson (eds), *Irish population, economy, and society: essays in honour of the late K.H. Connell* (Oxford, 1981), pp 149–50; Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, p. 90; Wollaston Hutton (ed.), *Young's tour*, i, p. 451.

¹¹ In the marriage settlement of John Ryan in 1765 it was stated that his father's estate was producing a rental income of £1,100 'or thereabouts'. This figure may have been stated in anticipation of the resetting of the lease of Ballypatrick a week after the settlement was drawn up. However, this new lease does not appear to have been put into effect (see footnote no. 7): Copy of the marriage agreement between John Ryan and Mary Kennedy, 5 June 1765 (UCC, Boole, *Grehan papers*, BL/EP/G MS 175/4); Ledger kept by Daniel and John Ryan, 1742–1773 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 174, ff 5–9, 11–3); Ledger kept by George

figures show that the leasing strategy at Inch maximised the economic potential of the estate's rental income. From this point of view, therefore, it is incorrect to state that Ryan and his heir were bad managers of their estate.

Lands	Date of lease	Total acreage	Worth per annum in 1768
Demesne of Inch*	–	176a 1r 1p	–
Ballypatrick*	1763	318a 2r 9p	£318
Pollagh/Inches*	1763	113a 2r 3p	£110
Magherareagh*	1768	107a 0r 31p	£107
Inch Bog*	1768	56a 0r 37p	£6 6s
Coolkill	1763	124a 1 18p	£96
Moher	1758	366a 1r 38p	£14
Roskeen	1759	249a 0r 12p	£40
Rosmult	1757	225a 2r 30p	£40
Rosoutly	1766/7	174a 0r 9p	£50
Gortkelly	1759	94a 3r 24p	£6 16s 6d
Glanbeg/Caumbeg	1757	179a 3r 7p	£30
Seskin	1751	139a 1r 32p	£15
Knocknabansha	1751	320a 0r 10p	£11
Atshanboy	1747	96a 0r 35p	£17
Knockane	?	115a 0r 25p	£16 2s
Glanfinchnaugh	c.1751	56a 1r 30p	£18
Killenleigh	1768	36a 2r 32p	£14
Liscreagh*	1768	103a 0r 0p	£145 10s
Coolderry*	1768	93a 0r 0p	£60
* Located in Inch parish		3,137a 1r 23p	£1,114 14s 6d – £77 14s 6d ¹² £1,037 0s 0d

Fig. 4.1– Inch estate acreage and rental, 1768.¹³

The situation of the demesne farm after 1756 is less certain. The lands Daniel Ryan had leased at Longford Pass do not figure in accounts after this date, though part of the demesne farm itself, the lands of Magherareagh, were rented out by 1768. Viewed alongside this, the fact that Liscreagh was leased to tenants at this time supports the view that the Ryans scaled back their demesne farm to encompass just the lands of Inch (176 acres).¹⁴ This decision was unsurprising, given the rise in land values and the fact that their rental now yielded a much higher income without the added effort of a large grazing operation. Indeed, the Ryans' rental now far exceeded the approximate sum of £560, which their combined estate rental and demesne farm had produced in 1753 (see Chapter

and Daniel Ryan, 1778–1811 (ibid., MS 175); Rent roll and accounts kept by W. Carroll, 1735–38 (ibid., MS 173); Cullen, *The emergence of modern Ireland*, p. 43.

¹² Head rent for Liscreagh and Coolderry paid to Thomas Mathew of Thomastown.

¹³ Ledger kept by Daniel and John Ryan, 1742–1773 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 174); Rent roll of Daniel Ryan's estate and accounts kept by William Carroll, 1735–38 (ibid., MS 173); Various lease agreements (ibid., Mss 84–96); Maps of the estate of John Ryan, 1770 (ibid., MS 317).

¹⁴ Ledger kept by D. and J. Ryan, 1742–1773 (ibid., MS 174); Ledger kept by G. and D. Ryan, 1778–1811 (ibid., MS 175).

3). The family did nevertheless continue to keep livestock on the lands of Inch, not least to feed the household at Inch.

During the 1760s the estate's finances were thus healthy. Why then did the Ryans accumulate so much debt? One possible answer is suggested by a household account for Inch in 1763. The account supplies details of the types and quantities of staple foods consumed by the Ryan family. In 1763 'mutton for the use of the house' totalled 11 barren ewes and 32 wethers (approximately £35 6s),¹⁵ followed by 12 cows and bullocks (£49), over 30 barrels of wheat (£32 10s), 11 'hoggs' (£8 2s), malt (£3 6s) and 12 crocks, 1 cask and 2 tubs of butter (£12 2s).¹⁶ Over the course of one year it can be calculated that the family's staple diet cost at least £140. Omitted from the Ryans' recorded expenditure were other food items found in similar examples, including fish, game and poultry.¹⁷ The family were also no strangers to life's 'decencies', and the figure of £140 excludes imported and expensive goods the family were known to have been consuming, such as wine, rum, brandy, oranges, sugar, tea and coffee.¹⁸ Apart from explaining why gout was a 'complaint' that 'runs in the family', these different examples help illustrate the costs involved in maintaining a family that at one stage totalled nine individuals, to say nothing of the hospitality expected of the Ryans as members of the gentry.¹⁹ There was also the cost of education, clothing and all the other paraphernalia that went towards kitting out seven children as budding members of the landed elite.²⁰ As will be discussed in due

¹⁵ On the Pratt farm at Agher in Co. Meath in 1761, a wether was worth 18s and a barren ewe 11s 9d. Based on these prices, this would give an approximate valuation of the sheep consumed at Inch in 1763 of £28 16s for 32 wethers and £6 10s for 11 barren ewes. A total of £35 6s. One of these ewes was given to the shearers at Inch on 27 June: Farming accounts of John Pratt and Samuel Winter, of Agher, Co. Meath, 1759–1772 (NLI, *Pratt papers*, MS 5249, f. 14); Ledger kept by D. and J. Ryan, 1742–1773 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 174).

¹⁶ Ledger kept by D. and J. Ryan, 1742–1773 (Ibid., MS 174).

¹⁷ Clarkson, 'Hospitality, housekeeping and high living', p. 88; David Fleming, 'Cycles, seasons and the everyday in mid-eighteenth-century provincial Ireland' in Raymond Gillespie and R.F. Foster (eds), *Irish provincial cultures in the long eighteenth century: making the middle sort, essays for Toby Barnard* (Dublin, 2012), pp 142–3; Daniel Matthew Beaumont, 'The gentry of the King's and Queen's counties: Protestant landed society, 1690–1760, vol. i' (PhD thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 1999), pp 182–189; Receipt book of Charles O'Hara (the elder) and Lady Mary O'Hara, June 1756–Dec. 1758 (NLI, *O'Hara papers*, MS 16,707); Farming and domestic accounts of Benjamin Pratt of Agher, Co. Meath, 1726–1742 (NLI, *Pratt papers*, MS 5248).

¹⁸ Daniel Ryan's account with Justin McCarthy, 1738–1756 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 198); Walter Woulfe to Daniel Ryan, 11 Dec. 1764 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 9629); Walter Woulfe to Daniel Ryan, 28 Dec. 1764 (ibid.); Walter Woulfe to Elizabeth Ryan, 5 Aug. 1765 (ibid.); L.A. Clarkson and E.M. Crawford, *Ways to wealth: the Cust family of eighteenth-century Armagh* (Belfast, 1985), p. 8.

¹⁹ Denis Ryan to George Ryan, 10 Aug. 1784 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 470).

²⁰ During the late 1750s and 1760s Daniel Ryan's Spanish-born niece, Dona Francisca Ryan, also resided at Inch. In return, Daniel Ryan's second son George resided in Cadiz with his uncle during the same period (see Chapter 5): Walter Woulfe to Philip Smith, 30 Sept. 1767 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 9630); Reciprocal power of attorney, Jorge Ryan and Maria Ryan y Ryan, 7 May 1758 (COFL, *Irish Overseas Archive* [original AHPC, protocol no. 5753, ff 214–17]).

course, additional expenditure was required for the upkeep of the Ryans' countryseat and its grounds and, lastly, a significant claim on Daniel Ryan's annual income was the £400 paid annually to his heir following his marriage in 1765.²¹ The estate's income might have been healthy but, in reality, Daniel Ryan was probably left with little extra money to cover larger capital expenses once all costs were deducted from his rental income. As a result, he became reliant on loans during a period when claims on his estate rose dramatically.

What had the most damaging effect on Daniel Ryan's finances were the marriages of his children, his daughters in particular.²² Two of his daughters, Mary and Frances, married in 1759, and with them went dowries worth £1,500 each.²³ Ryan could no longer depend on the financial support of his recently deceased father-in-law, Justin McCarthy, and it is clear that he struggled to raise the necessary capital to furnish one of his daughters with her dowry. This was illustrated when his new son-in-law, Walter Woulfe of Carrick-on-Suir, had to accept Ryan's bond of £1,500 to guarantee future payment of his daughter's dowry. Even though no interest was apparently charged on the sum, it still took the Ryans fourteen years to pay.²⁴ Ryan's third daughter Margaret married in 1766, again with a dowry of £1,500, while a further £1,200 was earmarked in 1767 to secure his youngest daughter Elizabeth's future.²⁵ Discounting interest payments, Daniel Ryan's estate was charged with £5,700 to cover the marriage portions of his four daughters in less than ten years. When this considerable sum is added to the other annual charges on his estate, it becomes clearer as to why Ryan's finances deteriorated so quickly after 1756.

Daniel Ryan's willingness to encumber his estate in this manner stemmed from the fact that arranged marriages conferred benefits that went beyond strictly monetary considerations. Elizabeth Ryan's marriage in 1773 to her cousin, Charles Mathew of Borrisoleigh, reinforced the close bonds that had existed between both families since the

²¹ Deed of assignment. J. Ryan to D. Ryan, 1 May 1765 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 191); Marriage agreement between J. Ryan and M. Kennedy, 5 June 1765 (Boole, *Grehan papers*, MS 175/4).

²² A.P.W. Malcomson, *The pursuit of the heiress: aristocratic marriage in Ireland, 1750–1820* (Antrim, 1982), pp 4–5.

²³ The Harrolds of Pennywell in Limerick City were later described as one of 'the most ancient families' in the city: Marriage settlement between Richard Harrold, Pennywell, Limerick and Mary Ryan, 27 Feb. 1759 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 46); Marriage settlement between Walter Woulfe, Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary and Frances Ryan, 11 June 1759 (*ibid.*, MS 47); Diarmaid Ó Catháin, 'General Baron Edmund Harold (1737–1808): a 'Celtic' writer in Germany' in *Studia Hibernica*, no. 30 (1998/1999), p. 140.

²⁴ Bond between Daniel Ryan of Inch and Walter Woulfe for the sum of £3,000 [£1,500], 11 June 1759 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 228).

²⁵ Marriage settlement between Martin Harrold, Cork, and Margaret Ryan, 20 Nov. 1766 (*ibid.*, MS 50); Probate copy of the will of Daniel Ryan of Inch, 22 Aug. 1767 [probate 4 Nov. 1773] (*ibid.*, MS 23); *The Gentleman's and London magazine, for December 1766*, p. 780; *Belfast Newsletter*, 5 Dec. 1766.

mid-seventeenth century.²⁶ The other three unions differed in that Ryan's daughters married into mercantile families. The Woulfes of Carrick and the Harrollds of Cork and Limerick would have welcomed separate dowries of £1,500, but what these families sought most of all was the status their new wives conferred. As ambitious merchants they sought to use commercial success and intermarriage with the gentry to advance their social standing. The Woulfes were, indeed, so eager for the marriage to take place that they agreed to bind themselves to Daniel Ryan to the sum of £20,000, the obligation being that if Mathew Woulfe and his son Walter did not 'well & truly observe' the articles agreed in the marriage settlement, the payment of the bond was to 'remain in full force & virtue in law'.²⁷ To Daniel Ryan, his new 'sons' were successful merchants whose skills and business networks could be used in service of the Ryans and their estate. This is evident from the assistance Walter Woulfe extended to Daniel Ryan's second son George during his attempts to become a colonial merchant (see Chapter 5). The standard of living befitting their pedigree and social standing would also be secured for Ryan's daughters and future grandchildren via the respective marriage settlements. As it would transpire, Mary Ryan's husband Richard Harrold of Pennywell died prematurely in 1768, leaving his widow in occupation of a valuable estate, including a tannery and brewery.²⁸ Prior to their marriage, Margaret Ryan's future husband Martin Harrold of Cork was described as 'a gentleman much to be liked of good fortune and great expectations', and it appears that they eventually settled in England.²⁹ Frances Ryan's husband Walter Woulfe emerged as a prominent wine merchant and brewery owner, and by the time of his death in 1794, he had made the transition from urban merchant to a landed gentleman.³⁰

To help offset the financial burden of his daughters' dowries, Daniel Ryan could look forward to the prospect of negotiating a good match for his son and heir. The young lady

²⁶ *Finn's Leinster Journal*, 2 June 1773.

²⁷ A schedule of Mathew Woulfe's effects in 1759 totalled £15,201: John F. Ainsworth and Edward MacLysaght, 'Survey of Documents in Private Keeping, Second Series' in *Analecta Hibernica*, no. 20, Survey of Documents in Private Keeping: Second Series (1958), p. 118; Warrant and Bond by which Mathew Woulfe, Carrick-on-Suir and his son Walter declare a debt of £20,000 to Daniel Ryan, 11 June 1749 [1759?] (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 226).

²⁸ It has been claimed that the annual profit from Harrold's tannery alone was £1,000: Edward MacLysaght, 'Harrold-Barry papers' in *Analecta Hibernica*, no. 15, Survey of Documents in Private Keeping: First Series (Nov., 1944), pp 131–2.

²⁹ Walter Woulfe to George Ryan, 19 Oct. 1765 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 9629); John Ryan Esqr. his acct. with John McCarthy, 1773–1778 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 245); *Freemans Journal*, 26 July 1768.

³⁰ Two letter books of Walter Woulfe of Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary, 1764–69 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, Mss 9629–9630); *Clonmel Gazette*, 1 Oct. 1794; Louis Cullen, *The Irish brandy houses of eighteenth-century France* (Dublin, 2000), p. 55, 57; James Ryan's Commonplace Book – "A Carrickman's Diary" – 1787–1809 (Carrick-on-Suir Heritage Centre, typescript copy, p. 65, MS f. 120); Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, p. 48.

in question would have to come from genteel stock with good social connections and, of course, offer a large dowry. Such a match was found, and in June 1765 John Ryan, the heir to Inch, married Mary Kennedy, daughter and co-heiress of John Kennedy (d.1764), whose father was Daniel Ryan's 'cousen', Hugh Kennedy of Pollanorman (d.1739).³¹ Before the marriage in 1765, the Pollanorman estate was sold to Robert Going of Tipperary to raise marriage portions for Mary and her sister Alice.³² This occurred just in time, as the Ryans were apparently in desperate need of money. A year previously Daniel Ryan sold most of the timber and woods on his estate for £2,940 to a partnership that included his heir and three other locals.³³ This arrangement can be interpreted as an attempt to keep as much of the profit as possible from the sale within the family. A year later, however, 'a great part' of the woods were as yet 'uncut to source the payment' to Ryan. To better guarantee the sale, John Ryan agreed to convey to his father a legacy of £500 left to the former by his grandfather Justin McCarthy. The reason why Daniel Ryan was willing to accept the legacy as partial payment was that the sale of the woodland represented the only way he could 'provide for and prefer his sd. younger Children'.³⁴ Once again, it can be seen that the need to provide for his children continued to create significant financial problems for Daniel Ryan. Furthermore, Mary Kennedy's dowry of £1,500 did not bring the immediate financial relief that one would suspect either, since £1,000 of the total sum was not to be paid to John Ryan until the marriage produced a child or following the death of his mother-in-law, Christine Kennedy. Problematically, the marriage failed to produce issue and Ryan was outlived by his mother-in-law, which meant the £1,000 ultimately reverted to his widow.³⁵ The conditions attached to the payment of his wife's dowry would suggest that the Ryans occupied a relatively weak

³¹ Mary Kennedy's mother was Christine, sister of George Lattin of Morrinstown Lattin, Co. Kildare: Abstract of the memorial of settlement on the intermarriage of John Ryan and Mary Kennedy of Morrinstown, Co. Kildare, 1765 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 49); Marriage agreement between J. Ryan and M. Kennedy, 5 June 1765 (Boole, *Grehan papers*, MS 175/4); Draft marriage settlement of John Kennedy and Christine Lattin, 1735 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 38,449/2); Vicars (ed.), *Index to the prerogative wills of Ireland*, p. 265.

³² Memorial of an indented deed of release between Christian, Alice and Mary Kennedy the 1st part, Robert Going the elder the 2nd part and Robert Going the younger of the 3rd part, 11 Aug. 1764 [reg. 28 Aug. 1764] (*ROD*, vol. ccxxxviii, pp 43–4, no. 152212); Ryan, 'Accommodation and frustration', p. 29; Will of John Ryan of Inch, 21 May 1773–26 July 1778 [probate 12 Feb. 1779] (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 25).

³³ Deed of Assignment. Daniel Ryan of Inch, Co. Tipperary, 1st part, John Ryan of Inch, William Gleason of Mothar and Patrick Connelly of Rossoutly and William Armstrong of Cummer 2nd part, 16 Jan. 1764 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 190).

³⁴ Deed of assignment. J. Ryan to D. Ryan, 1 May 1765 (*ibid.*, MS 191).

³⁵ Will of J. Ryan, 26 July 1778 (*ibid.*, MS 25); Mary Going to Mary Ryan, 6 Sept. 1788 (*ibid.*, MS 452); Thomas Going to Mary Ryan, 18 Aug. 1789 (*ibid.*, MS 454); Marriage agreement between J. Ryan and M. Kennedy, 5 June 1765 (Boole, *Grehan papers*, MS 175/4).

position when negotiating the match. A possible explanation for this was John Ryan's health and potential reservations among the Kennedys over his longevity.

On the eve of his death in October 1767, Daniel Ryan's debts stood at approximately £3,500.³⁶ Documents from the 1780s suggest a rate of 6 percent interest was charged on these loans.³⁷ This meant the annual payment needed to satisfy the interest this sum accrued was £210 or just over one-fifth of the estate's estimated rental income in 1768. This was by no means a crippling encumbrance for his heir. Having passed away in 1768 'after a tedious illness', the widow Elizabeth Ryan's jointure of £150 lasted just one year also.³⁸ However, John Ryan was faced with additional claims following his father's death. A total of £1,300 had to be raised to pay legacies left to his two younger brothers, while a portion of £1,200 was charged on the estate for his youngest sister Elizabeth. The death of the widow Ryan seemingly caused an additional £600 to be added to the latter legacy.³⁹ His need for money continued to be such that John Ryan sought to sell a further seven acres of timber on the estate, including 'several Oak and Ash trees about the house of Inch'.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, by the time John Ryan departed Inch in late 1773, an additional £1,700 of debt was accumulated.⁴¹ Why so much debt was accumulated by John Ryan within such a short period of time is not immediately apparent from the surviving family papers. However, as will become clear, an exploration of wider social and cultural factors provides one way of explaining the impetus behind this spending and the resultant debt it incurred.

³⁶ 'Daniel Ryan of Inch, Esq., died October 20, 1767, aged 53': Vigors (ed.), 'County Tipperary', p. 106; *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, 7 Nov. 1767; Schedule of unsatisfied judgments against the estate of George Ryan, c.1783 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 224); Marriage Settlement between George Ryan and Mary Anne Roche, 16 July 1783 (ibid., MS 51); Schedule of unsatisfied judgments against the Inch estate, c.1783 (ibid., MS 244).

³⁷ Ledger kept by G. and D. Ryan, 1778–1811 (ibid., MS 175).

³⁸ *Freemans Journal*, 18 Oct. 1768.

³⁹ An additional £100 per annum was required to support his youngest brother and sister until they reached twenty-one years of age: Will of D. Ryan, 22 Aug. 1767 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 23); Bond whereby John Ryan and John Doe acknowledge a debt of £3,600 [£1,800] due to Elizabeth Ryan, 5 May 1773 (ibid., MS 243); Will of J. McCarthy, 15 July 1752 (ibid., MS 40).

⁴⁰ For example: *Finn's Leinster Journal*, 6 Mar. 1771; ibid., 29 Jan. 1772.

⁴¹ File of legal searches for judgments of debts entered against members of the Ryan family, 1765–1791 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 233/2–5); Bond by which John Ryan, Inch and Mrs. Christian Kennedy acknowledge a debt of £2,000 [£1,000] due to Robert Going of Tullamoylan, 1 Feb. 1773 (ibid., MS 242); Schedule of unsatisfied judgments against the Inch estate, c.1783 (ibid., MS 244); Schedule of debts attached to the Inch estate upon the marriage of George Ryan and Mary Anne Roche, 16 July 1783 (ibid., MS 51/2).

II

*'a prodigal son'*⁴²

Of all the heads of the Ryan family addressed by this study, John Ryan is the most elusive. A paucity of documentary evidence makes it difficult to ascertain the factors that lead to his overspending and subsequent debts. However, by considering his position as a member of the landed gentry it is possible to offer an explanation. Terence Dooley's observation that even if a landlord was Catholic, his lifestyle was invariably that of the Protestant Ascendancy, provides a starting point.⁴³ To understand Ryan's world within a rigid and simplistic Catholic/Protestant dichotomy is misleading. Rather than focusing on his confessional identity, it is far more beneficial to concentrate on Ryan's status or rank as a landowner. Viewed within this context, John Ryan's decision to leave Inch in an attempt to repair his stricken finances was not uncommon. As Toby Barnard has noted, absenteeism could stem from the necessity felt by an Irish 'squire' to escape the costly obligations of 'maintaining open house in the countryside, by retiring to the obscurity of Britain or the continent'.⁴⁴ Members of the Ascendancy were indeed frequently admonished for their ostentatious display and hospitable excess, whereas in a reversal of stereotypes, Irish Catholics were being characterised by their thrift, industry and restraint by the mid-1700s.⁴⁵ However, as will be seen, this characterisation of Catholics applied to certain members of its urban and rural middle classes, not members of the old landed elite such as the Ryans. Therefore, an examination of the family's status and lifestyle will in turn permit a deeper understanding of John Ryan's world and the consequent deterioration of his finances.

A suitable example to begin with when examining John Ryan's status as a gentleman is an account published by Samuel Johnson in a 1752 issue of *The Rambler*. Writing under the persona of a mid-century English gentleman, Johnson recounted the attitudes and series of events that had led to the steady deterioration of his family's fortunes. The author observed the hospitality of his ancestor, who with 'thoughtless liberality' kept a table 'covered with continual profusion', eventually leaving a third part of the estate mortgaged. The folly of one ancestor became the custom of his heir. Another mortgage

⁴² Condon, 'Don Jorge Rian', p. 9.

⁴³ Terence Dooley, *The big houses and landed estates of Ireland: a research guide* (Dublin, 2008), p. 16.

⁴⁴ Barnard, 'Public and private uses of wealth in Ireland', p. 68; idem, 'The gentrification of Ireland', p. 144; A.P.W. Malcomson, 'Absenteeism in eighteenth century Ireland' in *Irish Economic and Social History*, I (1974), pp 17–8.

⁴⁵ Barnard, 'Public and private uses of wealth', pp 66–8; Whelan, *The tree of liberty*, p. 28.

was to follow, and from generation to generation, every man boasted the antiquity of his family, ‘resolved to support the dignity of his birth, and lived in splendour and plenty at the expense of his heir’. Sometimes by a wealthy marriage, and sometimes by ‘lucky legacies’, the heir managed to discharge part of his encumbrances. However, he then thought himself entitled to contract new debts and to leave to his children the same ‘inheritance of embarrassment and distress’. Thus, the estate perpetually decayed; ‘the woods were felled by one, the park ploughed by another, the fishery let to farmers by a third’.⁴⁶ Even though the estate remained intact for several generations, behind a veneer of wealth and respectability lay a family and estate floundering in debt. A much later catalogue of the library at Inch included ‘The Rambler 1752’, and it is quite possible that Daniel Ryan and his heir had read this tale of woe.⁴⁷ But whether they did or not, strong parallels existed between the *Rambler*’s story and John Ryan’s lived experience.

As has been highlighted, both contemporary and modern writers have noted the obligation felt by members of the gentry to show liberality at their tables and towards their guests. In an Irish context, hospitality traditionally conferred prestige and acted as a marker of social status among the old elite.⁴⁸ As noted, Catholics by the mid-1700s were increasingly characterised by their frugality and restraint. However, as Kevin Whelan has shown, in rural Ireland this thrifty predisposition belonged to Catholics who had emerged from relative obscurity during the 1700s, having gained substantial wealth through farming. Excluded from this grouping were Catholic middlemen; large head tenants and descendants of the dispossessed elite who clung tenaciously to the social pre-eminence afforded by their ancient and noble lineages. Indeed, such was the social power and prestige conferred by ancestry among Catholics that many became ‘obsessed, almost to the point of neurosis’ with the matter.⁴⁹ Hospitality remained key to projecting this image, and notable proponents of the tradition were the Ryans’ cousins, the McCarthys of Springhouse.

⁴⁶ Arthur Murphy (ed.), *The works of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.*, vol. vi (London, 1820), pp 299–300.

⁴⁷ Hardback volume listing the library at Inch, 1899 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 335).

⁴⁸ Edward MacLysaght, *Irish life in the seventeenth century* (Dublin, 3rd ed., 1969), pp 89–90. See also: Katharine Simms, ‘Guesting and feasting in Gaelic Ireland’ in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, cviii (1978), pp 67–100.

⁴⁹ Whelan, *The tree of liberty*, pp 7–29; idem, ‘The Catholic community in eighteenth-century County Wexford’, pp 140–1; Patrick Maume, ‘Daniel Corkery: a reassessment’ in *Studia Hibernica*, no. 26 (1992), p. 158; For a discussion of middlemen and the different types of tenants that came under this label, see: David Dickson, ‘Middlemen’ in Thomas Bartlett and D.W. Hayton (eds), *Penal era and golden age: essays in Irish history, 1690–1800* (Belfast, 1979), pp 162–185.

Writing under the guise of an Englishman on tour in Southern Ireland, the Rev. Thomas Campbell of Co. Tyrone, was suitably impressed by what he found at Springhouse in 1775, ‘where hospitality was displayed in its best manner’: wine flowed liberally, as did whiskey punch, while at every lavish meal the Reverend was ‘regaled with the bag-pipe’. This led the author to stress, as the McCarthy’s had hoped, their status as being of ‘large property and great influence, descended from the once royal family of the Macartys’, onetime ‘Hiberian Kings’.⁵⁰ The Ryans of Inch were likewise noted for the antiquity of their lineage. Thus, on the occasion of Daniel Ryan’s death in 1767, newspapers as far away as Belfast recounted how his ‘plentiful estate’ had been in the family ‘above 500 years’.⁵¹ John Ryan himself could claim descent from the McCarthy Reaghs through his mother, while his ancestral link to Shane Glasse (Shane/Seán – *glas/green*) O’Mulryan, the historic chief of Kinelongurty, offered a more direct and functional connection to the Gaelic past. Ryan’s nephew and eventual successor at Inch would later be identified as the descendant of this ancestor, but whether John Ryan held the title of ‘Shane na Glasse’ during his lifetime is unclear.⁵² Nevertheless, the Ryans of Inch held the necessary social rank and estate, including the heartland of the clan’s old territory in Kinelongurty.⁵³ This would have been reason enough for John Ryan to enjoy the prestige of his ancestry, if not the title of Shane na Glasse itself. As with the McCarthys, whose hospitality so impressed the Rev Campbell, the Ryans were expected to employ hospitality as a means to express the antiquity of their family. An idea of the scale of the conviviality practiced by the Ryans might be derived from a 1780 inventory of Inch House. This listed eighteen ‘leather bottom ... chairs’ and ‘2 dining tables’.

⁵⁰ The family’s first cousin, Justin McCarthy of Toulouse, held the title of Count McCarthy Reagh at this time: [Thomas Campbell], *A philosophical survey of the south of Ireland, in a series of letters to John Watkinson, M.D.* (Dublin, 1778), pp 140–143; Pedigree of MacCarthy of Springhouse, Co. Tipperary, c.1630–1792’ (NLI, *Genealogical Office*, GO MS 164, microfilm, p8301), p. 164; Pedigree of MacCarthy of Toulouse, France, and Spring House, Co. Tipperary, 1744–1842 (ibid., GO MS 175, microfilm, p8305), pp 63–4.

⁵¹ *Faulkner’s Dublin Journal*, 7 Nov. 1767; *Belfast Newsletter*, 10 Nov. 1767.

⁵² Dr Martin Callanan has claimed that Ryan held the title: Probate of the last will & four codicils of John Ryan, late of Inch, 12 Feb. 1779 (TCLT, *The papers of Rev. Father Walter G. Skehan*, typescript copy, lxvi), p. 31; [?] to John O’Donovan, 7 Oct. 1859 (RIA, *Graves Collection*, MS 24 O 39/JOD/392/16); O’Donovan, ‘A letter from Sir Charles O’Carroll to Lord Mountjoy’, p. 313.

⁵³ Extracts and notes relating to the history of Tipperary collected by Dr M. Callanan of Thurles (NLI, *Callanan MS*, microfilm, p5489); An inquisition taken at Clonmel in the 14th day October 1611 concerning seising of lands at Coolkyll by Shane Glass O’Mulryan (NLI, *Callanan papers*, MS 11,422(8e)); Tyrry pedigrees (ibid., MS 11,422(7c)); Morrin (ed.), *Calendar of patent and close rolls in Ireland in the reign of Charles the First*, ii, p. 586.

Likewise the presence of imported ‘china plates & dishes’ and ‘14 wine glasses ... & 3 decanters’ further points to the occurrence of large and convivial gatherings.⁵⁴

Kevin Whelan has argued that for most of the eighteenth century the old Catholic elite, bolstered by notions of ancestry and hospitality, undermined the social authority and legitimacy of their Protestant counterparts.⁵⁵ Many of these latter families arrived in Ireland during the Cromwellian period, and through conquest had displaced the previous social elite. To Catholics, what these ‘men of straw’ and ‘rascally spawn of damned Cromwell’ lacked were noble blood, social legitimacy and valid titles to their ill-gotten estates.⁵⁶ This created two competing, parallel power structures in Irish society, but absent from this diametrically opposed view is a sense of how, at times, these opposing groups could be brought together through common interests. Common sociability was by no means a constant or all-inclusive inclination, but a more nuanced approach highlights how social interaction and lived experience were not always rigidly defined along the divisions as set out by observers at the time and in many subsequent historical studies (for example: Irish/English, Catholic/Protestant, Jacobite/Hanoverian, coloniser/colonised). In essence, there is always a middle ground and exceptions to the rule.

Just as Catholics utilised hospitality as a means to express and solidify their gentility and positions in regional society, so too did many of the Protestant families who had replaced them as Ireland’s landowning elite.⁵⁷ At face value this represented two distinct traditions of hospitality between Catholics and Protestants. The evidence, however, does not always support this explanation. The Rev. Campbell’s positive description of the McCarthys, indeed his presence at their dinner table, jars with this mutually exclusive interpretation.⁵⁸ This could be explained as an attempt by the McCarthys to jettison any residual Jacobite leanings they may have had in favour of a ‘Hanoverian line’, once full property rights for Catholics appeared on the horizon during the 1770s.⁵⁹ However, the

⁵⁴ Ledger kept by G. and D. Ryan, 1778–1811 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 175); Walter Woulfe to John Ryan, 27 Nov. 1767 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 9630); Lambert Power to John Ryan, 13 Mar. 1768 (ibid.).

⁵⁵ Whelan, ‘An underground gentry?’, pp 7–8, 14–24; idem, *The tree of liberty*, p. 3.

⁵⁶ Denis Taffe and Rickard O’Connell quoted in Whelan, *The tree of liberty*, p. 10; Morley, *The popular mind*, pp 209–217.

⁵⁷ Toby Barnard, ‘Integration or separation? Hospitality and display in Protestant Ireland, 1660–1800’ in Laurence Brockliss and David Eastwood (eds), *A union of multiple identities: the British Isles, c.1750–c.1850* (Manchester, 1997), p. 129; Beaumont, ‘The gentry of the King’s and Queen’s counties, 1690–1760, i’, pp 182–191; A.P.W. Malcomson, ‘A house divided: the Loftus family, earls and marquesses of Ely, c.1600–c.1900’ in David Dickson and Cormac Ó Grada (eds), *Refiguring Ireland; essays in honour of L.M. Cullen* (Dublin, 2003), p. 187.

⁵⁸ Moreover, Campbell’s account refers to a second Anglican minister, Mr Baker, at the McCarthys’ dinner table the same evening: Campbell, *A philosophical survey of the south of Ireland*, p. 142.

⁵⁹ Whelan, *The tree of liberty*, p. 38.

issue is not the actions of the McCarthys themselves, but rather the willing acceptance and admiration of their standing and ancestry by a minister and pillar of the Protestant community in Ireland. In relation to the Ryans, it is doubtful that they would have held any residual Jacobite leaning by the 1770s, and what is perhaps telling about the family's loyalties was the presence at Inch House of framed prints of English monarchs from William the Conqueror up to William III. How long these images hung at Inch is unclear, but the inclusion of William III shows that the family appear to have accepted the legitimacy of the Glorious Revolution by the early 1770s.⁶⁰ Therefore, instead of relying on preoccupations that may have divided Catholic and Protestant landowners, such as religion and dynastic loyalties, it is necessary to highlight the ideas that connected them.

Although they could not boast the Milesian ancestries of their Catholic neighbours, the *arriviste* elite were just as preoccupied with their own titles and genealogies.⁶¹ Furthermore, the growth of antiquarianism across the British Isles during the 1700s created a positive view of Gaelic civilisation among English-speaking readerships, offering some educated Protestants a legitimate reason to respect this ancestry.⁶² That this may have been the case for the Ryans and the neighbouring Fogartys of Garranroe/Castle Fogarty is suggested by their friend and neighbour, the Reverend John Armstrong of Moyliffe (d.1781), whom the Rev. Campbell described as 'a gentleman curious in the antiquities of his county, and furnished with one of the best libraries in the kingdom'.⁶³ Of course, a link to Catholicism and the Gaelic past could just as easily be used to the opposite effect during periods of heightened tensions, such as the political and agrarian upheavals of the early 1760s in county Tipperary.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, the Rev. Campbell's reference to the McCarthys as 'Roman catholic[s]', rather than the more derogatory 'Papists', reflects how in certain respects attitudes towards Catholics were steadily

⁶⁰ Although the inventory that recorded the presence of these portraits at Inch was undertaken in 1780, the fact no member of the family had resided there since late 1773 meant the portraits could not have been acquired later than this date: Ledger kept by G. and D. Ryan, 1778–1811 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 175).

⁶¹ Barnard, *A new anatomy of Ireland*, pp 44–48; Malcomson, *The pursuit of the heiress*, p. 1.

⁶² Jacqueline R. Hill, 'Popery and Protestantism, civil and religious liberty: the disputed lessons of Irish history 1690–1812' in *Past & Present*, no. 118 (Feb., 1988), pp 102–3; idem, 'Irish identities before and after the Act of Union' in *Radharc*, ii (Nov., 2001), pp 53–4, 58–9.

⁶³ Campbell, *A philosophical survey of the south of Ireland*, p. 142; The Fogartys of Castle Fogarty (TCLT, *Fogarty papers*, typescript copy, vol. xxix), p. 24.

⁶⁴ Bric, 'The Whiteboy movement, 1760–1780', pp 149–151; Thomas Bartlett, *The fall and rise of the Irish nation: the Catholic question, 1690–1830* (Dublin, 1992), pp 69–70; Thomas P. Power, 'Publishing and sectarian tension in South Munster in the 1760s' in *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá chultúr*, xix (2004), pp 80–3; Maria Luddy, 'Whiteboy support in Co. Tipperary: 1761–1789' in *Tipperary Historical Journal*, no. 2 (1989), pp 71–73.

softening.⁶⁵ This raises the question, therefore, as to how novel the presence of Catholics and Protestants at each other's dinner tables was by the time the McCarthys entertained the Rev. Campbell in 1775?

Toby Barnard's analysis of Laurence Whyte's 1740 publication, *Original poems on several subjects*, highlights how members of the old and new elite were equally extolled by the author for their genteel conduct. The list of subscribers to the work, drawn from across different religious, ethnic and social backgrounds, also point to the idea that each operated under a similar definition of what constituted gentility and notions of rank. Barnard concluded that there is abundant evidence to confirm the view that gentility was defined by how a person lived and behaved, and that those of equivalent social status but of differing 'vintages' within the landed castes adopted identical strategies to attain this goal.⁶⁶ It could be, therefore, that the practice of hospitality — as an indicator of gentility — helped to bridge religious and cultural divisions between some members of rural Ireland's landed gentry. This is suggested by one example from county Tipperary during the 1760s, where it was reported that the Protestant gentry and their Catholic neighbours 'lived in the highest hospitality, frequently receiving and returning visits'.⁶⁷ The Ryans and McCarthys were very likely part of this social milieu, and their close connection since 1738 with Amyas Bushe, a descendant of a Cromwellian era family, would support the opinion that shared social status and affinity were reason enough to place some members of the new and old elite at each other's dinner tables by the late 1730s.⁶⁸ Furthermore, in 1719 Robert White of London informed John Ryan of Inch (d.1724) about 'Our Good Friend Mr [Thomas] Armstrong [of Moyliffe]', while two years later he referred to a second mutual acquaintance, John Damer of Shronell, 'who I am told is not Altered from being of yt. Good Temper he was, by the vast Riches left him'.⁶⁹ Based on these positive descriptions of two neighbouring Protestant families, one can speculate that Protestants and Catholics may have been breaking break together at Inch as far back as the 1710s.

⁶⁵ Kelly, 'The historiography of the Penal laws', pp 32–3; idem, 'Inter-denominational relations and religious toleration in late eighteenth-century Ireland: the 'Paper War' of 1786–88' in *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá chultúr*, iii (1988), pp 43–4.

⁶⁶ Barnard, 'The gentrification of Ireland', p. 141, 144, 150, 155; idem, *A new anatomy of Ireland*, pp 42–3; idem, 'The languages of politeness and sociability', pp 202–5.

⁶⁷ McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland*, p. 122.

⁶⁸ Marriage settlement between Daniel Ryan of Inch and Elizabeth MacCarthy of Springhouse, Co. Tipperary, 2 Feb. 1737[8] (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 45); Amyas Bushe to Daniel Ryan, 12 July 1766 (ibid., MS 370); Ledger kept by G. and D. Ryan, 1778–1811 (ibid., MS 175). For a discussion of sociability in early eighteenth-century Ireland and the problems it presents, see: David A. Fleming, 'Divisions of the people: sociability among the orders of early eighteenth-century Ireland' in *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá chultúr*, xvii (2002), pp 99–101, 110.

⁶⁹ Robert White to John Ryan, 1 Aug. 1719 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 341); Robert White to John Ryan, 10 June 1721 (ibid., MS 343).

Indeed, the intermarriage between the only daughter of Daniel Ryan (d.1692) and John Minchin of Annagh, the son of a Cromwellian officer, may have seen this sociability date back into the 1690s.⁷⁰ The relationships the Ryans and McCarthys maintained with some members of the Protestant landed elite in turn reflects what Ian McBride has described as the ‘complex ways in which ethnic’, and indeed religious, ‘differences were moderated by notions of social hierarchy’.⁷¹ In a practical sense, this more inclusive view of social interaction means that the Ryans probably had little trouble filling every seat at their two dining tables with genteel individuals, several of whom on occasion were Protestants.

At a time when official participation in civic and political life was still delineated along confessional lines, hospitality was an important factor in the social lives of the Ryans, McCarthys and other members of the Catholic gentry. The problem, however, was that such conviviality and social ambitions represented a significant financial drain. This was especially the case for ‘pinched’ Catholics like the Ryans, who were incapable of matching the resources of the wealthier families within their social milieu.⁷² Thus, as in Samuel Johnson’s English example, John Ryan’s finances likely strained under the need to project the antiquity of his family and a table of continual profusion that catered to Catholics and some Protestants. This is a significant factor in accounting for the deterioration of Ryan’s finances after his inheritance in 1767.

If, however, hospitality was expected of John Ryan as a landed gentleman, it was not the only socio-cultural factor that impacted on his identity or finances. Distinct from, but by no means exclusive of hospitality were the fashions and etiquette of polite society. Indeed, to truly make the right impression in eighteenth-century Irish society, a landed family of substance was expected to be able to fuse and exercise both seamlessly. An example of this synthesis in operation can be seen in the Rev. Campbell’s account of his visit to the McCarthys. Campbell not only reflected on their hospitality and Gaelic pedigree, but noted that, in their home, ‘there was as much ease as in the House of an English Duke’. In his eyes the McCarthys had attained the proper balance between

⁷⁰ Genealogical report re: Minchin family (NLI, *Genealogical Office*, GO MS 815/11); Tombstones in Nenagh graveyard (TCLT, *The papers of Rev. Father Walter G. Skehan*, typescript copy, vol. xxix), p. 9.

⁷¹ McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland*, p. 115.

⁷² Powell, *The politics of consumption*, pp 203–4; Barnard, ‘The gentrification of Ireland’, p. 139.

relaxed conviviality and polite refinement, thereby reinforcing their gentility, civility and granting access, one would suspect, to the ranks of the ‘quality’ in society.⁷³

To automatically place John Ryan among the quality without direct contemporary evidence would be unwise. However, one way of reflecting his social standing, and the subsequent need to make the right impression, emerges from a consideration of his title as an esquire. This ranked Ryan above a gentleman and was dependent not just on his ownership of a plentiful estate.⁷⁴ Even after he had assembled 2,940 acres of land by 1704, Ryan’s grandfather for instance, did not progress from gentleman to esquire. Once he had married into the powerful Mathew family, built Inch House and advanced his social capital and wealth in several other ways, then he could claim the rank and title. Both his son and grandson did so also, but this was not a guaranteed privilege. As was highlighted in the previous chapter, the impetus to spend lavishly among young gentlemen once they inherited and married appeared as a guiding preoccupation even at a time of profound socio-economic crisis during the Great Frost and famine of 1739–41. This was undertaken in order to establish their standing in society, and John Ryan would have faced a similar preoccupation following his marriage and inheritance of the Inch estate. The more positive economic and political climate of the late 1760s may have only served to loosen purse strings further, leading Ryan to accumulate the bulk of his personal debts within the first six years of his inheritance. The result of Ryan’s spending and his overall attempts to make the right impression created the situation where he was considered among the leading Catholics in Tipperary. Therefore, although they could not partake directly in local politics in theory, John Ryan and five other Catholic individuals (all closely connected and all squires) were identified in a 1775 electioneering list — not because they could vote but because of their wealth, standing and influence among freeholders and within the county’s increasingly assertive Catholic interest.⁷⁵ Furthermore, the growing prominence of his ‘cousin’ Gervase ‘Gervy’ Parker Bushe in Irish politics and the patriot movement suggests a possible further aspect of John Ryan’s

⁷³ Barnard, *A new anatomy of Ireland*, pp 41–80; Arthur Wollaston Hutton (ed.), *Arthur Young’s tour in Ireland, 1776–1779, vol. ii* (London, 1892), p. 152; Campbell, *A philosophical survey of the south of Ireland*, p. 141.

⁷⁴ Barnard, *A new anatomy of Ireland*, pp 51–2, 57.

⁷⁵ The five individuals were Walter Woulfe, ‘a rich Roman Catholick’, John McCarthy of Springhouse, Peter and John Dalton of Grenanstown and John Galwey of Carrick-on-Suir. Apart from Galwey, all of these individuals were related to John Ryan: T.U. Sadleir, ‘Manuscripts at Kilbooy, Co. Tipperary’ in *Analecta Hibernica*, no. 12 (Jan., 1943), pp 140–1. William Nolan’s comments on this latter list contains several errors: Nolan, ‘Patterns of living in County Tipperary’, p. 296; Cullen, *The emergence of modern Ireland*, pp 43–4; Power, ‘Land, politics and society in eighteenth-century Tipperary, i’, pp 137–39, 146–7; idem, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, p. 329; Walter Woulfe to Francis Mathew, 24 Feb. 1768 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 9630); Walter Woulfe to Henry Prittie, 13 July 1768 (ibid.).

political interests – could this help account for the portrait of King William III hanging at Inch by the early 1770s?⁷⁶ Whatever the case may have been, the example of John Ryan and his wider family shows that religious differences were increasingly less of a barrier to relationships between members of the gentry within his community. The problem this presented for John Ryan, however, was that inclusion and participation within this social environment cost significant amounts of money and led him to accumulate the majority of his personal debts by 1773.

III

*'a loyal administrator'*⁷⁷

By 1773 it is clear that John Ryan was aware that his current position at Inch was economically untenable. His solution was to become an absentee landlord. This decision ran contrary to the actions of his father and grandfather, both of whom had supplemented their incomes in different ways, be it through acting as agents or demesne farmers. John Ryan, therefore, can be said to have been the first head of the Inch estate to have lived a truly genteel existence. Indeed, the leasing out of most of the lands that had constituted Inch farm by 1768 reflects the view that many landowners would have increasingly come to believe that profitable farms required a 'degree of personal supervision that placed unwelcome restrictions on the style of life which most ... felt appropriate to their status, and to which most "gentlemen" aspired'.⁷⁸ Within a wider context, John Ryan's decision to depart Inch ran contrary to prevailing notions of what constituted a good landlord. Ryan would not be present to oversee and improve his estate, while the remittance of his income abroad meant that the locality or country did not benefit from his spending.⁷⁹ None of these considerations likely made too great an impression on Ryan's mind, and his decision to leave Inch was not without its own logic. Residing outside Ireland meant Ryan could escape his numerous creditors, a preoccupation discernible by the fact that his exodus

⁷⁶ A. Bushe to D. Ryan, 12 July 1766 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 370); Powell, *The politics of consumption*, pp 84–5; James Quinn, 'Bushe, Gervase Parker' in *DIB*, vol. ii, p. 96; Henry Grattan, *Memoirs of the life and times of the Rt. Hon. Henry Grattan. By his son, Henry Grattan, Esq., M.P.*, vol. i (London, 1839), p. 123, 134; Martyn J. Powell, 'Beef, claret and communication': convivial clubs in the public sphere, 1750–1800' in James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell (eds), *Clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Ireland* (Dublin, 2010), p. 365.

⁷⁷ W. Thompson to G. Ryan, 4 Sept. 1778 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 374/88).

⁷⁸ Dickson, *Old World colony*, p. 173.

⁷⁹ McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland*, pp 115–6; Thomas Prior, *A list of the absentees of Ireland. And an estimate of the yearly value of their estates and incomes spent abroad. With Observations on the Trade and Manufactures of Ireland, and the Means to encourage, improve, and extend them ...* (Dublin, 3rd ed., 1769), p. 29.

occurred shortly after his father's will was proved in 1773.⁸⁰ Just prior to his departure, Ryan leased out the demesne of Inch to his neighbour, Minchin Carden of Fishmoyne. This yielded £279 11s 6d during the first year of the lease, followed by £400 6s 10d for the second. A proviso was added that should Ryan not wish to return to Inch, the lease was to be extended annually at a rent equal to the first year of the agreement. A later reference to his rental shows that Ryan could then expect to receive £2,594 19s 8d during the first two years of his absence, an average of £1,297 9s 10d per annum. With this extra money in hand, he could now attempt to live a lifestyle that better matched his circumstances.⁸¹

John Ryan may have lived for a time in Dublin, but the fact money was remitted to him via the Dublin bank of Gleadowe-Newcomen would suggest that he resided primarily outside Ireland.⁸² This conclusion is further supported by the fact that deteriorating health was a second reason for his departure from Inch. It has previously been believed that Ryan undertook a tour of Europe between 1775 and 1776. This is based on the erroneous identification of Ryan as the author of a travel journal contained within the family's archive (see Appendix 4).⁸³ Moreover, other evidence from the family's papers shows that in 1775 and 1777 he spent time in France and Germany (probably Spa in Belgium), where he visited 'los baños principales' in an attempt to recover his broken health, before travelling to Windsor outside London where he passed away on 17 July 1778.⁸⁴ Furthermore, a bill was paid on Ryan's behalf in Bristol by his brother-in-law Martin Harrold in January 1775.⁸⁵ Due to the presence of Hotwells springs in Bristol, and the Harrold family's long established association with near-by Bath, both resorts were a likely prelude to his trip to the Continent.⁸⁶

⁸⁰ Will of D. Ryan, 22 Aug. 1767 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 23); Vicars (ed.), *Index to the prerogative wills of Ireland*, p. 410.

⁸¹ Lease of the Domain of Inch, Moheragh and the Calf Park. John Ryan to Minchin Carden of Fishmayne, Co. Tipperary, 13 Oct. 1773 (ibid., MS 99); Payments made by William Gleeson to John McCarthy on account of John Ryan Esquire, deceased, c.1773–1778 (ibid., MS 246).

⁸² Large, 'The wealth of the greater Irish landowners', pp 22–3; L.M. Cullen, 'Landlords, bankers and merchants: the early Irish banking world, 1700–1820' in Antoin E. Murphy (ed.), *Economists and the Irish economy* (Dublin, 1984), pp 30–1.

⁸³ Travel journal kept by J.R., 1775–6 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 371).

⁸⁴ W. Thompson to G. Ryan, 4 Sept. 1778 (ibid., MS 374/88); Will of J. Ryan, 26 July 1778 (ibid., MS 25); Walter Woulfe to George Ryan, 28 Dec. 1779 (ibid., MS 375); Case with counsel's opinion concerning the right of Mary Ryan to dower from the estate of her late husband John Ryan, 27 May 1779 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 38,306/7); *Finn's Leinster Journal*, 5 Aug. 1778.

⁸⁵ J. Ryan acct. with J. McCarthy, 1773–1778 (ibid., MS 245).

⁸⁶ Will of Jane Harrold, 26 June 1787 (TNA, PCC, PROB 11/1150/364); Barnard, 'The Irish in London and "the London Irish," ca. 1660–1780', p. 21; idem, *Making the grand figure*, pp 337–9; James Kelly, 'Drinking The Waters': Balneotherapeutic Medicine in Ireland, 1660–1850' in *Studia Hibernica*, no. 35 (2008–9), p. 113.

The principal information concerning Ryan's financial situation during his absence from Inch is provided by an account kept by his uncle, John McCarthy of Springhouse. McCarthy honoured his father's plea that his sons and Daniel Ryan would 'always assist each other' after his death and, once Ryan passed away in 1767, continued to support his nieces and nephews. Following the death of Richard Harrold for instance, his debtors were ordered to deal directly with McCarthy on behalf of his widowed niece, while he also oversaw most of the Inch estate's financial management once John Ryan departed Tipperary in 1773.⁸⁷ McCarthy's assistance must have been a welcome addition in both cases, as he was an experienced businessman whose standing can be gauged from the description of his farm at this time as 'the most considerable in the world'. A second account by one of Inch's main agents, William Gleeson, also survives and covers most of this period. Through both accounts it is possible to offer insights into Ryan's economising efforts.⁸⁸

As previously stated, John Ryan's annual rental in 1773 stood at approximately £1,297 9s 10d, and by the time of his death nearly five years later had risen to £1,368.⁸⁹ The total encumbrances attached to the Inch estate in 1773 totalled roughly £8,300. Even though the money remitted to Ryan by McCarthy fluctuated from year to year, such as £350 in 1774 and £900 in 1776, the total sum over four and a half years came to £2,885. Added to this, Ryan would have carried with him part of his November rental, £400 at most, when he departed Inch in late 1773. A further £400 was outstanding on his Gleadowe-Newcomen account at the time of his death, which provides an estimated annual average for his personal expenditure of £818. Typically, about one-third of the Inch estate's income each year went towards either interest payments or discharging the principal sums from different loans and accounts. Over the period in question, McCarthy and Gleeson disbursed a total of £2,000 in this manner, with £1,200 paid in interest and the remainder going on the principal amount. This excludes money Ryan may have personally paid his

⁸⁷ *Limerick Chronicle*, 25 Feb. 1771; Will of J. McCarthy, 15 July 1752 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 40); J. Ryan acct. with J. McCarthy, 1773–1778 (*ibid.*, MS 245).

⁸⁸ William Gleeson was probably made the estate steward following what John Ryan described in 1777 as the 'bad behaviour' of the previous steward Oliver Grace: Will of J. Ryan, 26 July 1778 (*ibid.*, MS 25); Payments made by W. Gleeson on account of J. Ryan, c.1773–1778 (*ibid.*, MS 246); Wollaston Hutton (ed.), *Young's tour*, i, p. 390.

⁸⁹ These figures correspond with the estimate of 'about £1200' provided for John Ryan's income in 1775: Sadleir, 'Manuscripts at Kilboy', p. 139; Ledger kept by G. and D. Ryan, 1778–1811 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 175).

creditors, and the known use of approximately a third of the estate's income to service his debts and the interest they accrued represented a relatively sound financial strategy.⁹⁰

The disbursement of the residue of the estate's income by William Gleeson illustrates how, despite John Ryan's absenteeism, the upkeep costs of Inch House and its grounds remained substantial. The single largest cost was clearing the drains of Inch demesne, totalling over £100, while the remaining expenses were smaller but more numerous. These included recurring annual expenses, such as the quit rent for the estate during Gleeson's stewardship (£36 5s 5d), hearth money (£4 16s) and 'taxs paid for the yard of Inch' (12s 6d). Fires were also kept lit at Inch House, apparently in an attempt to ward off dampness: apart from coal, 'the cutting saving and carry home' to Inch of at least 'three hundred. [*weight of*] kishes of turff' was required each year. The house and its offices were also painted in 1777, while other maintenance work required the intermittent employment of a mason, two blacksmiths, a glazer and the tenants of nearby Coolderry. Overall, despite the fact no member of the Ryan family resided at Inch during this period, costs of the house and grounds still amounted to at least £300.⁹¹

The main drain on John Ryan's finances during his absence from Inch were his trips to the Continent. As noted he was a patient, 'taking the waters', rather than a tourist, as previously thought, but this was no less expensive. Estimating the costs of the average trip abroad is difficult since individuals lived according to their varying means. What is clear, however, is that the greater concentration of tourists in Northern Europe placed the cost of living well above that of southern areas. Thus, the rent of a house in Spa during the 1780s was almost four times that of a similar example located further south in Toulouse.⁹² Ryan was not the only member of his family to spend time on the continent. His brother George had also done so, and during his residence in France in 1788 he complained that 'the idea we have at home of the cheapness of those places is an egregeous [*sic*] mistake' as every 'article of living is just on a par with us'.⁹³ To substantiate this claim, Ryan pointed to the 'fact' he had been charged in Bordeaux 45 sous a bottle 'for good Clarett', which made it 'next to a prohibition in our cellars'. He continued by observing the only way a gentleman of 'rank & large fortune' could save

⁹⁰ J. Ryan acct. with J. McCarthy, 1773–1778 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 245); Ledger kept by G. and D. Ryan, 1778–1811 (Ibid., MS 175); John Ryan's account with John McCarthy, c.1778 (Ibid., MS 25/2).

⁹¹ Payments made by W. Gleeson on account of J. Ryan, c.1773–1778 (ibid., MS 246).

⁹² Pocket notebook recording expenses kept by George Ryan, 1786–1790 (ibid., MS 256); Jeremy Black, *The British abroad: the Grand Tour in the eighteenth century* (Stroud, 2009), pp 91–2.

⁹³ Draft letter. George Ryan to [Philip Roche John], 25 May 1788 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 408).

money in France was by ‘curtailing that show & parade wth. wch. he must appear’ in Ireland, but he would ‘defy any man ... who has been accustomed to any kind of decency, to exist on less than six hundrd. £ a year’.⁹⁴ Through much effort, George Ryan eventually reduced his expenditure below £600, but before travelling south, he stayed at Spa on account of his health, and visited Brussels and Paris (see Chapter 6). Overall, his first year abroad cost £789 2s 4d and is comparable to the estimated £818 needed to maintain his elder brother a decade earlier.⁹⁵ This helps to highlight that John Ryan’s lifestyle among the tourists and spas of Northern France and Germany was indeed expensive, but similar to his economising brother who kept ‘a very minute acc[ou]nt.’ of every livre he spent.⁹⁶

Once John McCarthy came to balance his account after John Ryan’s death in 1778, he found a deficit of £528 17s 7d, primarily the head rent due to the Mathews for the lands of Liscreagh and Coolderry during Ryan’s absence.⁹⁷ John Ryan had managed to reduce his standing bond and judgement debts to £7,500, but when the money owed to the Mathews and several generous bequests from his will were later included, total encumbrances had risen to approximately £9,400 by 1778. Therefore, during his tenure as head of the Inch estate, John Ryan increased his family’s debts by £3,400 or 56 percent. However, a further £1,250 was owed by the time his brother George returned to Inch in 1780. These additional debts were not as a result of renewed overspending by John Ryan, but down to the fact that no money was paid out of his estate until his successor returned to Ireland two years later. During the interim, McCarthy and Walter Woulfe covered additional expenses amounting to £618, while unpaid interest on debts came to £640. As a result, by the time George Ryan arrived at Inch to take up his inheritance in 1780, total encumbrances attached to the estate equalled £10,660 9s 8d.⁹⁸

At face value, it would appear that John Ryan was extremely careless regarding his expenditure, thereby contradicting his claim to have been a loyal administrator of his rents and estate. By the time of his death, the family’s debts had risen by approximately 56 percent, and the parallels with Samuel Johnson’s gentleman are clear to be seen. At the

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Based on a codicil attached to his will, John Ryan travelled as far south as Montauban in 1777, probably in search of a better climate and to visit his first cousin, Justin McCarthy, the Count of Toulouse: Pocket notebook kept by G. Ryan, 1786–1790 (ibid., MS 256), Will of J. Ryan, 26 July 1778 (ibid., MS 25).

⁹⁶ Draft letter. George Ryan to Philip Roche John, 1 Oct. 1788 (ibid., MS 411).

⁹⁷ J. Ryan acct. with J. McCarthy, 1773–1778 (ibid., MS 245); Ledger kept by G. and D. Ryan, 1778–1811 (ibid., MS 175); John Ryan’s account with John McCarthy, c.1778 (ibid., MS 25/2).

⁹⁸ The widow Ryan was also to receive the outstanding £1,000 of her dowry held by Robert Going: Will of J. Ryan, 26 July 1778 (ibid., MS 25); Ledger kept by G. and D. Ryan, 177–1811 (ibid., MS 175); Condon, ‘Don Jorge Rian’, p. 7.

same time, this represented an outcome Ryan had planned for since 1775 at least. In that year, while in France, Ryan informed Walter Woulfe that he would ‘settle very handsomely’ £400 per year on his brother George if he returned home and settled at Inch. As matters stood in July 1778, the interest payments on debts alongside other annual charges totalled approximately £951, leaving £417 of the estate’s rental in his brother’s hands each year. John Ryan also ordered his interest in the lease of Liscreagh and Coolderry to be sold as soon as possible to help discharge his personal debts.⁹⁹ This leasehold was estimated to be worth at least £1,200 in 1787, and its sale would have further helped to reduce debts and increase estate income.¹⁰⁰ As events would transpire, the suspension of payments from the estate’s income for the two years following his death would nullify this plan, but as far as Ryan was aware at the time of his passing the promised income was assured.

Extravagance denotes living beyond one’s means and is applicable to John Ryan during the six years following his inheritance. The problem with such a label, however, is that it represents a modern judgement that bears little resemblance to the opinions of John Ryan’s contemporaries. Frugality was not a trait lauded among the gentry, and Ryan’s story has highlighted the social and cultural factors that made this spending a necessity and led many to live beyond their means. This created an environment where the accumulation of debt became an acceptable, if not necessary feature of life as long as it could be kept at a manageable level relative to an estate’s income.¹⁰¹ Here again, the example of John Ryan adds substance to this point of view by highlighting his financial strategy of planned indebtedness. Thus, of the thousands of pounds that passed in and out of his coffers over a period of eleven years, Ryan left his finances in a state where the planned income for his brother had been achieved. Nevertheless, as observed previously, this strategy was frustrated by subsequent events, leaving the successor to Inch in a position where his inherited encumbrances appeared, on paper at least, to be just short of crippling. It was this unforeseen accumulation of debt that changes the image of John Ryan from that of a good administrator of his rents in 1778, to that of a spendthrift and

⁹⁹ Ledger kept by G. and D. Ryan, 1778–1811 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 175); Walter Woulfe to George Ryan, 28 Dec. 1779 (ibid., MS 375); Case with counsel’s opinion concerning the right of M. Ryan to dower from the estate of J. Ryan, 27 May 1779 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 38,306/7).

¹⁰⁰ By 1787 the ‘intrinsic’ value of the leasehold was estimated at £1,200 and was sold in 1790 for £1,400: Draft letter. George Ryan to [Dr Fogarty], 27 Feb. 1787 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 395); Draft letter. George Ryan to [Philip Roche John], late March 1787 (ibid., MS 439); Ledger kept by G. and D. Ryan, 1778–1811 (ibid., MS 175).

¹⁰¹ For example: W.A. Maguire, *The Downshire estates in Ireland, 1801–1845: the management of Irish landed estates in the early nineteenth century* (Oxford, 1972), pp 65–106.

irresponsible gentleman by the time his brother returned home two years later. Therefore, previous scholars' portrayal of John Ryan as an extravagant, prodigal son, and a bad manager of his estate, is understandable. This examination has, however, shown that such statements obscure a far more complex situation. John Ryan inherited significant debts resulting from his siblings' portions, which were compounded by his own overspending as he attempted to affirm his rank in society after his marriage and inheritance of Inch. Ryan followed this with a period of retrenchment to ensure he did not jeopardise the prospects of his brother, the immediate heir. It was, as David Dickson has pointed out, the occurrence of such dynastic 'embarrassment' — accumulated inheritance and marriage costs — rather than an individual's indebtedness per se that was the most important factor in threatening the survival of an estate.¹⁰² As a result, John Ryan's experience as head of the Inch estate was characterised by a conflict between living and surviving as a member of the landed elite, and as Chapter 6 will show, this preoccupation was no-less of an issue for George Ryan following his return to Inch in 1780.

The financial issues the Ryans faced after 1756 would have far-reaching implications for the Inch estate. This chapter has shown that the reasons for the family's spending and increasing reliance on credit were complex, and arose from the synthesis of various social and cultural factors stemming from their status as members of the landed gentry. Apart from the necessity of providing portions for younger children, it has been seen that issues surrounding hospitality and polite refinement were a concern for the Ryans and their McCarthy cousins as leading members of the Catholic gentry. Furthermore, the Protestant gentry were equally preoccupied with these issues, and the example of the Ryans and McCarthys has highlighted how mutual concerns surrounding status could act as effective ways of bridging religious and ethnic differences between some members of the Catholic and Protestant landowning elite. This created a situation where John Ryan and his relatives were highly respected by many of their peers, both Catholics and Protestants. This respect came at a cost however, particularly for 'pinched' Catholics like the Ryans, whose finances strained under their attempts to make the right impression.

¹⁰² Dickson, *Old World colony*, pp 93–4.

Chapter 5

Don Jorge Rian: an Irishman of credit in Spain and colonial Peru, 1757–1780

In September 1767, George Ryan was preparing to depart Cadiz and cross the Atlantic for Peru. Despite the hazards of the voyage facing him, he was filled with a ‘leaving Spirit & resolution to advance’ himself ‘in the world’. This was a significant event for his family back in Ireland also, and as Ryan’s father was too ill to write, his brother-in-law, Walter Woulfe, elected to offer some advice on his future as a colonial merchant. ‘I think’, Woulfe wrote, ‘you do right to go on your intended voyage & have great hopes ... [you] will meet with suitable success’. But, he added, ‘the most essential mains [*sic*] of your Prosperity in this world [*is*] to lead a Temperate, Moral & Frugal life’. Having adopted the persona of a father-figure in his letter, Woulfe’s advice to live a ‘Christian’ life mirrored the sentiments contained within countless other letters received by young men about to embark on similar ventures to advance themselves in the world.¹ Nevertheless, this was still sound business advice, with Woulfe concluding by observing that Ryan’s character and trustworthiness would be key if he was to procure ‘good Commissions & good Friends’ among merchants back in Europe. However, once George Ryan arrived in South America, his career did not turn out as expected, and instead he would find himself acting as a colonial administrator in ‘the bowells [*sic*] of Peru’.² Ryan’s fortunes during this period were by no means exceptional, as a small but noticeable number of Irishmen were drawn to the Spanish Americas at this time on the back of wider political and economic developments. This has led one historian to observe that one of the most promising fields for the study of Hispano-Irish relations is without doubt Latin America.³

Thus far, the historiography of the Irish in Latin America during the eighteenth century has been largely limited to the study of individuals who rose to prominence in the Americas by holding high ranking administrative and military posts (Ambrosio O’Higgins, Alejandro O’Reilly and Hugo O’Connor for example).⁴ These studies have concentrated most of their attention on the latter part of these individuals’ careers, by

¹ Walter Woulfe to George Ryan, 30 Sept. 1767 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 9630); John Black to Alexander Black, 7 Feb. 1750 (Public Records Office for Northern Ireland, *Black family papers*, D 719/29); John Hill, *The young secretary's guide: or, a speedy help to learning, in writing of letters, &c. In two parts* (London, 27th ed., 1764), p. 54.

² Draft letter. George Ryan to Philip Roche John, 31 Aug. 1788 (UCC, Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 410).

³ Recio Morales, *Ireland and the Spanish empire, 1600–1825*, p. 284.

⁴ For example: Tim Fanning, *Paisanos: the forgotten Irish who changed the face of Latin America* (Dublin, 2016), pp 32–53; Allan J. Kuethe and Kenneth J. Andrien, *The Spanish Atlantic World in the eighteenth century: war and the Bourbon Reforms, 1713–1796* (Cambridge, 2014), pp 239–247; Recio Morales, *Ireland and the Spanish empire, 1600–1825*, pp 286–291.

which point they had attained success. Their early exploits tend, however, to be covered in a general manner.⁵ This focus, of course, reflects both the increased availability of source material and the impact these individuals would have in implementing reforms as viceroys, generals, governors and inspectors in the New World. Politically, the reasons why they rose to prominence can be traced back to the ‘Irish hour’ in Spain and the Spanish court under the ministry of Ricardo Wall (1754-63). Wall was instrumental in promoting his *paisanos* (countrymen) to positions of power within the army and civil administration (O’Higgins and O’Reilly for example), with the Bourbon Reforms under Carlos III of Spain offering a platform through which these individuals could distinguish themselves in Spain and the Americas.⁶ Several other Irish army officers would also cross the Atlantic and take up administrative postings during the late 1760s and 1770s. Although the circumstances that led to his arrival in Peru differed slightly, the study of George Ryan’s career will, of course, shed light on figures such as him. This in turn will highlight how factors such as personal aptitude, family and diasporic connections and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances were all important contributors to the early success of these individuals. Furthermore, George Ryan’s exploits will also serve to highlight how his family’s world was not solely Irish. Indeed, Ryan would spend a large portion of his life living in Spain and her colonies, and this experience would impact on the Inch estate once Ryan returned to inherit following his brother’s death in 1778.

Prior to his arrival in Peru in 1768, George Ryan had spent the previous decade residing in Cadiz in the south of Spain, in the expectation that he would enter a career as a merchant. As a younger son, Ryan followed an established tradition within his family and among other members of the Catholic gentry by departing Ireland at an early age to

⁵ A notable recent study in Spanish of the early careers of Ambrosio O’Higgins, Juan Garland and Antonio O’Brien as army engineers and reformers in Chile has been provided by: Jorge Chauca García, ‘De Indios “Bárbaros” a vasallos en la frontera meridional Chilena durante el Reformismo Barbónico’ (PhD thesis, Universidad de Sevilla, 2015). See also: idem, ‘Redes de poder irlandesas en la América de la Ilustración: el dominio de la frontera’ in Óscar Recio Morales (ed.), *Redes de nación y espacios de poder: La comunidad irlandesa en España y la América española, 1600–1825. Power strategies: Spain and Ireland 1600–1825* (Valencia, 2012), pp 291-310.

⁶ Inmaculada Arias de Saavedra Alías, ‘Irlandeses en la alta administración Española del siglo XVIII’ in Maria Begoña Villar García (ed.), *La emigración irlandesa en el siglo XVIII* (Malaga, 2000), pp 45–61; Diego Téllez Alarcia, ‘Richard Wall, the Irish-Spanish Minister’ in *Irish Migration Studies in Latin America*, v, no. 2 (July, 2007), p. 132; Óscar Recio Morales, ‘El papel de los irlandeses peninsulares en las reformas de la América española del XVIII’ in Igor Pérez Tostado and Enrique García Hernán (eds), *Ireland and the Iberian Atlantic: mobility, involvement and cross-cultural exchange (1580–1823)* (Valencia, 2010), p. 178; Diego Téllez Alarcia, ‘Ricardo Wall, the forgotten minister of the eighteenth century’ in Declan M. Downey and Julio Crespo MacLennan (eds), *Spanish-Irish relations through the ages* (Dublin, 2008), pp 139–148; Liam Chambers, ‘The Irish in Europe in the eighteenth century, 1691–1815’ in James Kelly (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Ireland, vol. iii, 1730–1880* (Cambridge, 2018), p. 588.

pursue a career in trade.⁷ His destination, the Spanish port of Cadiz, has received the sustained attention of historians over the previous two decades, which in turn has revealed a small yet prosperous Irish community within a port that rose to prominence through the monopoly it held on Spain's transatlantic trade.⁸ An important feature behind the success of Irish merchants in Cadiz and other Iberian ports were the familial based business connections they maintained across Europe.⁹ However, historians interested in Cadiz's Irish community have tended to overlook their involvement in trade with Spain's American colonies.¹⁰ This is surprising, as changes to this system of trade permitted increasing numbers of Irish merchants to partake in transatlantic trade, albeit largely illegally, from the late 1730s onwards. This new opportunity did not come without its

⁷ Harvey, *The Bellevs of Mount Bellew*, p. 111; Walsh, 'The Blakes of Ballyglunin', pp 168–9; Bartlett, *The fall and rise of the Irish nation*, p. 46.

⁸ Julian Walton, 'Census records for the Irish in eighteenth-century Cadiz' in *The Irish Genealogist*, vi, no. 6 (1985), pp 748–56; María del Carmen Lario de Oñate, *La colonia mercantil británica e irlandesa en Cádiz a finales del siglo XVIII* (Cadiz, 2000); Paloma Fernández Pérez, 'Comercio y familia en la España pre-industrial: redes y estrategias de inmigrantes Irlandeses en el Cádiz del siglo XVIII' in María Begoña Villar García (ed.), *La emigración irlandesa en el siglo XVIII* (Malaga, 2000), pp 127–142; Samuel Fannin, 'The Irish community in eighteenth-century Cadiz' in Thomas O'Connor and Mary Ann Lyons (eds), *Irish migrants in Europe after Kinsale, 1602–1820* (Dublin, 2003), pp 135–148; Samuel Fannin, 'Carew, Langton and Power, an Irish trading house in Cádiz, 1745–1761' in María Begoña Villar García and Pilar Pezzi Cristóbal (eds), *Los extranjeros en la España moderna: actas del I Coloquio Internacional, celebrado en Málaga del 28 al 30 de noviembre de 2002, vol. i* (Malaga, 2003), pp 347–352; María del Carmen Lario de Oñate, 'Irlandeses y Británicos en Cádiz en el siglo XVIII' in María Begoña Villar García and Pilar Pezzi Cristóbal (eds), *Los extranjeros en la España moderna: actas del I Coloquio Internacional, celebrado en Málaga del 28 al 30 de noviembre de 2002, vol. i* (Malaga, 2003), pp 417–425; Patrick O'Flanagan and Julain Walton, 'The Irish community at Cadiz during the late eighteenth century' in Howard B. Clark, Jacinta Prunty and Mark Hennessy (eds), *Surveying Ireland's past: multidisciplinary essays in honour of Annagret Simms* (Dublin, 2004), pp 353–383; María Nérida García Fernández, *Comunidad extranjera y Puerto privilegiado: los Británicos en Cádiz en el s. xviii* (Cadiz, 2005); Del Carmen Lario, 'The Irish traders of eighteenth-century Cadiz', pp 211–230, Lyons and O'Connor, *Strangers to citizens*, pp 95–97; Murphy, *Waterford merchants and their families on distant shores*, pp 75–106.

⁹ Jim McCrohan, 'The world of John Aylward: Irish emigré merchant in the late seventeenth century' (PhD thesis, University College Dublin, 2011); idem, 'An Irish merchant in late seventeenth-century Malaga' in Igor Pérez Tostado and Enrique García Hernán (eds), *Ireland and the Iberian Atlantic: mobility, involvement and cross-cultural exchange (1580–1823)* (Valencia, 2010), pp 23–33; Pedro O'Neill Teixeira, 'The Lisbon Irish in the 18th century' in Igor Pérez Tostado and Enrique García Hernán (eds), *Ireland and the Iberian Atlantic: mobility, involvement and cross-cultural exchange (1580–1823)* (Valencia, 2010), pp 253–266; Amaia Bilbao Acedos, *The Irish community in the Basque country c.1700–1800* (Dublin, 2003), pp 30–1; Recio Morales, *Ireland and the Spanish empire, 1600–1825*, pp 257–63; María Begoña Villar García, 'Irish migration and exiles in Spain: refugees, soldiers, traders and statesmen' in Thomas O'Connor and Mary Ann Lyons (eds), *Irish communities in early modern Europe* (Dublin, 2006), pp 172–99; Manuel Fernández Chaves and Mercedes Gamero Rojas, 'A description of the Irish in Seville merchants of the eighteenth century' in *Irish Migration Studies in Latin America*, v, no. 2 (July, 2007), pp 106–111; Pizzoni, 'A pass ... is not denied to any Romanist', pp 349–362; Bartlett, *Fall and rise of the Irish nation*, p. 46; Murphy, *Waterford merchants and their families on distant shores*, p. 108, 117, 162, 188, 191, 235,

¹⁰ For an overview of Irish merchants present in Peru and their connections with Cadiz during the eighteenth century, see: Xabier Lamikiz, "'No Irán más encomendero que Gringos y los españoles Guardarán cabra": comercio transatlántico y comerciantes extranjeros en el Perú virreinal (1740-1780)' in Óscar Recio Morales (ed.), *Redes de nación y espacios de poder: La comunidad irlandesa en España y la América española, 1600–1825. Power strategies: Spain and Ireland 1600–1825* (Valencia, 2012), pp 327–344. For the exploits of members of the Murphy and Cranisborough families as merchants in the Spanish Americas, see: Murphy, *Waterford merchants and their families on distant shores*, pp 67–73, 93–95.

own set of challenges, however, as merchants could not rely on the same established familial networks that had framed their dealings with other European ports. Therefore, when it comes to long distance colonial trade, historians cannot depend on family connections alone to help frame and explain the operation of these ventures.¹¹ As a result, the ways in which these long distance networks were created and operated requires more in-depth analysis, in particular regarding the pivotal roles played not just by family but also by other factors such as trust and credit. Accordingly, this chapter will help add to our understanding of this process by examining George Ryan's attempts to establish his own trading venture between London and Peru via Cadiz.

The first section of this chapter will begin by highlighting the familial connections that led to George Ryan's arrival in Cadiz in 1758. Next, Ryan's attempts to establish himself as a colonial merchant will be discussed. Apart from examining his own personal circumstances in relation to this matter, wider political and economic developments within the Spanish world will also be highlighted. A discussion of Spain's system of trade with the Americas, for instance, is necessary as historians interested in the Irish community in Cadiz have rarely commented on the business links they maintained across the Atlantic. This has meant that the institutions and systems that guided trade between Spain and her American colonies remain under-analysed within Irish historiography. By examining the wider context within which George Ryan and other Irishmen operated, what will emerge is an understanding of their ability to identify and exploit new, not strictly legal business opportunities for foreigners in Spain and Latin America during the middle decades of the eighteenth century.

George Ryan's career as a colonial merchant did not eventually come to pass, but at the same time, his business acumen and family connections provided him with the opportunity to become an administrator within provincial Peru. Therefore, the second section of this chapter will begin by discussing Ryan's journey to Peru and the reasons why he eventually discarded his attempts to become a colonial merchant. His skills as a merchant did not go to waste however, and this analysis will continue by discussing the years Ryan spent as an administrator in the frontier province of Huanta, showing him to have been a capable individual operating within a controversial colonial system. Furthermore, this was also a period when implementing reforms in Peru was a major

¹¹ Xabier Lamikiz, 'Social capital, networks and trust in early modern long-distance trade: a critical appraisal' in Manuel Herrero Sánchez and Klemens Kaps (eds), *Merchants and trade networks in the Atlantic and Mediterranean, 1550–1800* (London, 2017), p. 45.

concern among the Spanish authorities, which created further opportunities for Irishmen like Ryan. Although his presence in Peru would be cut short by the death of his elder brother back in Europe, it will be argued that Ryan's administrative skills, reputation and ability to count on diasporic connects had placed him on a path to wider success within a colonial setting.

I

***'... having great reliance on your principles, assiduity to business & good conduct'*¹²**

As has been highlighted in chapter three, it was a rare occurrence after a Catholic landowner's death for his estate to be subdivided among his sons per the 1704 gavelling act. This meant that younger sons required professions to guarantee their future survival and prosperity. This was the case for George Ryan as the second son of Daniel Ryan of Inch (d.1767), and to ensure his future livelihood his parents looked to their wider family network for a solution. This came in the form of George Ryan's uncle, also called George Ryan (b.1721), a merchant based in Cadiz. In early 1737, at the age of sixteen, George Ryan the elder had been apprenticed to a Waterford merchant, Edward Fitzgerald (d.1737), the youngest brother of the prominent London based merchant George Fitzgerald (d.1744).¹³ As a result, George Ryan the elder was inducted into a promising business network and career. In 1740/1 he moved to Puerto de Santa Maria in the bay of Cadiz and later relocated to Cadiz itself. The typical Irish migrant to the port at this time, Ryan was young, male and single, and took up the position of *dependiente* (bookkeeper/clerk) in the trading house of Juan Smith y Robinson, where he would 'start learning all matters relating to business'. Born in Bruges, but of Irish parentage, Smith had married Elena, the daughter of Raymundo Geraldino (Fitzgerald), the latter a native of Waterford and an 'exchange broker' in Cadiz who may have had ties to the wider Fitzgerald trading dynasty.¹⁴ Following Smith's death in 1743, Ryan handled most of the company's business, and his growing sense of independence was illustrated by his

¹² Walter Woulfe to George Ryan, 19 Oct. 1766 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 9629).

¹³ Will of John Ryan of Inch, 2 Mar. 1723[4] (TCLT, *Ryan papers*, microfilm, TL/F/21); Rent roll and accounts kept by William Carroll, 1735–38 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 173, f. 3); Daniel Ryan's account with Justin McCarthy, 1738–1756 (ibid., MS 198, f. 3); Jacob M. Price, *France and the Chesapeake: a history of the French Tobacco monopoly, 1674–1791, and of its relationship to the British and American tobacco trades, vol. i* (Ann Arbor, 1973), pp 558–564; George Fitzgerald to Xaviera Walsh, 27 May 1738 (Private collection – my thanks to John Bergin for supplying a transcript of this source).

¹⁴ O'Flanagan and Walton, 'The Irish community at Cadiz', p. 364; Vicente de Cadenas y Vicent, *Extracto de los expedientes de la Orden de Carlos 3, 1771–1847* (Madrid, 1985), pp 48–9; Murphy, *Waterford merchants and their families on distant shores*, p. 77, 241; Marriage articles between Jorge Ryan and Maria Ryan y Armelin, April 1746 (COFL, *Irish Overseas Archive*).

marriage in 1746 to Maria Ryan y Armelin, the daughter of a Connacht native, Thomas Ryan, who had set up trading in Puerto de Santa Maria in 1740.¹⁵ There is no evidence of prior connections between both Ryan families, but what the marriage did essentially represent was the establishment of a business partnership. Therefore, with his father-in-law's assistance and his new wife's dowry of 4,000 pesos escudos, George Ryan the elder progressed to become a fully-fledged *hombre de negocios* (businessman) over the coming years.¹⁶

In 1757, apparently at just nine years of age, George Ryan the younger was dispatched to live with his uncle in Cadiz.¹⁷ By that time George the elder was living in the one of city's merchant quarters on *Calle de Flamencos Borrachos* (Street of the drunken Flemings).¹⁸ The port was also by this stage home to a small yet prosperous contingent of Irish merchants, estimated in 1763 to number 27 traders with the third largest share in the port's trade.¹⁹ The Irish community was close-knit, and very quickly Ryan would have come to know many of his uncle's acquaintances and fellow merchants, such as Domingo Terry, Felipe Smith, Guillermo Malone, Roberto Valois (Walsh) and Alexis Macnamara. However, in 1761, at just forty years of age, George Ryan the elder passed away, leaving George the younger to reside with his widowed aunt Dona Maria Ryan.²⁰ That George Ryan did not return home was surprising, given the absence of a direct blood relative to watch over him, but instead it appears he was placed under the supervision of another Irish merchant, Felipe (Philip) Smith, 'a Gentleman of Character & Fortune'. Smith was

¹⁵ This Thomas Ryan should not be confused with a second Thomas Ryan, a native of Kilkenny who was established in Cadiz as a merchant at this time: Marriage articles J. Ryan and M. Ryan y Armelin, April 1746 (COFL, *Irish Overseas Archive*); Samuel Fannin, 'The Ryan and Terry families in Spain' in *The Irish Genealogist*, x, no. 2 (1999), pp 245–258; O'Flanagan and Walton, 'The Irish community at Cadiz', p. 359.

¹⁶ Daniel Ryan also remitted several hundred pounds to his brother during the early 1740s: D. Ryan's account with J. McCarthy, 1738–1756 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 198, f. 3); García Fernández, *Comunidad extranjera y Puerto privilegiado*, p. 69n; Reciprocal power of attorney between Jorge Ryan and Maria Ryan y Ryan, 7 May 1758 (COFL, *Irish Overseas Archive* [original AHPC, protocol no. 5753, ff 241–5]). See also: Samuel Fannin, 'Index of wills made by Irish residents in the Archivo Historico Provincial de Cádiz [with index]' in *Archivium Hibernicum*, lxxix (2016), p. 184.

¹⁷ In 1780 George Ryan stated he had spent the previous twenty-three years living within the kingdom of Spain 'out of the 32 I have spent in this world'. This provides his birth date as 1748 and his arrival in Cadiz at the age of nine in 1757: George Ryan to Luis de Peralta, 25 Apr. 1780 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 373/6).

¹⁸ In 1758 it was stated that George Ryan's marriage to Dona Maria Ryan y Armelin had produced several children, but 'they died young' except for his daughter, Dona Francisca Ryan, who was six years old and had been sent to live with her uncle Daniel Ryan back at Inch. She may have been sent to Inch in place of George Ryan the younger: Reciprocal power of attorney between J. Ryan and M. Ryan y Ryan, 7 May 1758 (COFL, *Irish Overseas Archive* [AHPC, protocol no. 5753, ff 217–17])

¹⁹ In 1773, a census of Cadiz recorded 127 Irish heads of households, with over 70% involved in commerce. The number of Irish merchants involved directly in trade by this time had risen to roughly 44 individuals (including some English) who held an estimated 15.45% of the port's trade: Lario, 'The Irish traders of eighteenth-century Cadiz', p. 216; Julián B. Ruiz Rivera (ed.), *El Consulado de Cadiz: matricula de comerciantes 1730–1823* (Cadiz, 1988), p. 72.

²⁰ Certificate of the death of Jorge Ryan, 28 Sept. 1761 (COFL, *Irish Overseas Archive*).

indeed deemed a trustworthy individual by the Ryans, having been named as one of George Ryan the elder's executors at the time of his death in 1761, while several years later Daniel Ryan of Inch would also thank Smith for the 'Friendship' he had shown both his deceased brother and son.²¹ Alongside Smith, three other individuals would play important roles in shaping George Ryan's future move to become a colonial merchant. The first of these was a *creole*²² naval officer named Lt. Domingo Encalada Tello de Guzmán y Torres, who married the widow Maria Ryan in 1764.²³ The second individual, Guillermo (William) Thompson, was a native of Waterford and recently established as a merchant in Cadiz. The final individual was Ryan's brother-in-law, Walter Woulfe, a well-connected and successful wine merchant based in Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary.²⁴

The reason why Cadiz attracted ever increasing numbers of foreigners during the eighteenth century was that it held the monopoly on Spain's trade with her colonies (1717-1778).²⁵ This meant that any goods exported to the Americas or imported back into Spain had to pass through Cadiz first, making it the European entrepôt for the silver and gold mined in the Viceroyalties of Peru and New Spain (Mexico). Due to royal decrees passed by the Spanish monarchy in 1689 and 1701, Irish Catholics could live and work in Spain without restrictions. However, participation in transatlantic trade was restricted to Spaniards and members of Cadiz's *Consulado*. In order to legally partake in the Indies trade, foreign merchants required Spanish citizenship or at least a residency permit (*carta de naturaleza*) and royal license. To attain these a Catholic had to own assets worth above 4,000 ducats and had to have resided in Spain for twenty years (later reduced to ten years in 1759).²⁶ Thus, in 1753, Felipe Smith successfully acquired residency and a license to trade with the Americas based on having lived in Spain since 1730 and on having accumulated property in the city of Jerez (near Cadiz) worth 59,000 reales.²⁷

²¹ Ibid.; W. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 19 Oct. 1766 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 9629); Walter Woulfe to Philip Smith, 30 Sept. 1767 (ibid., MS 9630).

²² Creole refers to an individual born in the Americas but of Spanish descent.

²³ Copy of certificate regarding the marriage of Domingo Encalada y Torres and Dona Maria Ryan, 30 Aug. 1764 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 373/11).

²⁴ Woulfe's business premises were located on the town's northern (Tipperary) bank of the Suir river, while he resided at Coolnamuck Lodge several kilometres outside the town in Co. Waterford.

²⁵ Stanley J. Stein and Barbara H. Stein, *Silver, trade and war: Spain and America in the making of early modern Europe* (Baltimore, 2000), p. 181.

²⁶ O'Flanagan and Walton, 'The Irish community at Cadiz', p. 370; Jorge Chauca García, 'Irlandeses en el comercio gaditano-Americano del setecientos' in María Begoña Villar García and Pilar Pezzi Cristóbal (eds), *Los extranjeros en la España moderna: actas del I Coloquio Internacional, celebrado en Málaga del 28 al 30 de noviembre de 2002, vol. i* (Malaga, 2003), p. 270.

²⁷ Manuel Bustos Rodríguez, *Cadiz en el sistema Atlántico: la ciudad, sus comerciantes y la actividad mercantil (1659-1830)* (Madrid, 2005), p. 195; Ruiz Rivera (ed.), *El Consulado de Cadiz*, p. 56, 205; María Begoña Villar García, 'Los Irlandeses en la Andalucía del siglo XVIII' in María Begoña Villar García (ed.), *La emigración irlandesa en el siglo XVIII* (Malaga, 2000), p. 256.

Felipe Smith's exploits highlight that there were opportunities open to Irish merchants in Cadiz and the Americas, but at the same time, given George Ryan's recent arrival in the city, he would not be in a position to trade legally with the Indies for some time to come. Nevertheless, after 1739 changes to this trading system presented new opportunities to foreign merchants. Prior to this, Spain's colonial system of trade with the Americas (*Carrera de Indias*) utilised two fleets of merchantmen and galleons escorted by warships that departed Cadiz each year, in theory, and travelled to fixed locations on the Atlantic coast (Cartagena, Portobelo and Veracruz for instance). Merchants generally travelled with their goods, and the highly controlled nature of the trade made it difficult for foreigners to partake directly.²⁸ The high cost of organising the *flotas de Indias* (Indies fleets), alongside Spain's involvement in several wars during the first half of the century, meant that the departure of fleets dwindled and gave way to a considerable interloping trade by French and British merchants with the Americas. In an attempt to recover its trade and make it more reliable and profitable, the Spanish authorities and *Casa da Contratación* (House of Trade) based in Cadiz suspended the fleet system in 1739 in favour of single licensed or registered ships (*navíos de registro*) sailing between Cadiz and ports on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of the Americas.²⁹ Although one Irish merchant in Cadiz yearned for a return to 'ye known & beaten path of flotas & galeones' over the following years, historians have described the transfer to the *registro* system as 'the greatest innovation in two centuries of colonial trade'.³⁰ A major result of this innovation was that the Indies trade was opened up to a far wider range of participants who, although breaking the law in doing so, were far less likely to be discovered by the authorities.

The commercial opportunities presented by the transfer to the register system was likely a factor behind a new generation of Irish emigrants arriving in Cadiz either side of 1750.³¹ Among the earliest arrivals were George Ryan the elder and his future father-in-

²⁸ George Juan and Antonio de Ulloa, *A voyage to South-America: describing at large the Spanish cities, towns, provinces, & c. on that extensive continent*, vol. ii (Dublin, 1758), pp 88–9; Xabier Lamikiz, *Trade and trust in the eighteenth-century Atlantic World: Spanish merchants and their overseas networks* (London, 2010), pp 74–8, 85; Jeremy Baskes, *Staying afloat: risk and uncertainty in Spanish Atlantic world trade, 1760–1820* (Stanford, 2013), pp 61–3.

²⁹ Lamikiz, *Trade and trust in the eighteenth-century Atlantic World*, pp 77–82; Baskes, *Staying afloat*, p. 61; Geoffrey J. Walker, *Spanish politics and imperial trade, 1700–1789* (London, 1979), pp 4–5, 211–9; Adrian J. Pearce, *The origins of Bourbon reforms in Spanish South America, 1700–1763* (Basingstoke, 2014), pp 126–28; McCrohan, 'The world of John Aylward', p. 165; Kuethe and Andrien, *The Spanish Atlantic*, pp 52–3.

³⁰ James Comerford to Wargent Nicholson, 8 June 1752 (TNA, *Chancery: Master Brougham's Exhibits*, C 111/200); Pearce, *The origins of Bourbon reforms*, p. 127.

³¹ Lyons and O'Connor, *Strangers to citizens*, p. 96.

law, Thomas Ryan of Alicante, both of whom had arrived in the Bay of Cadiz by 1741.³² A further direct result of this reform saw Irish merchants from Cadiz begin to travel to Peru to act as traders and factors.³³ To help conceal their illegal presence and commercial practices, these merchants utilised Spanish strawmen to front their businesses. Thus, the Waterford native, Joseph Valois (Walsh), travelled to Peru in 1753, and within a decade it was said he had become the most important transatlantic merchant in Lima by using two Spanish brothers, Antonio and José Matías de Elizalde, as his front-men.³⁴

During the 1760s there were several other Irishmen operating illegally in Peru as merchants, and in early 1766 George Ryan the younger began to contemplate a similar career.³⁵ By October of that year he had dispatched several letters to Ireland communicating this intent to his father and Walter Woulfe. Both approved of the venture and were glad to hear that his new step-uncle, Domingo Encalada, intended to travel with him. Woulfe's belief that Encalada and Ryan could 'repose a confidence in each other' was a recognition of the important role Encalada would play in several ways if the venture was to succeed.³⁶ Apart from the practical assistance he could offer as a native of Peru, there was the problem of a decree issued during the early 1760s by the Spanish authorities seeking to clamp down on illegal trade by foreigners. Ships arriving in the port of Callao (near Lima) became subject to searches on their arrival, and foreigners, if discovered, would appear before a court and risked being expelled from the Americas. This must have represented a major concern for Ryan and Encalada, as they would have undoubtedly been aware that Joseph Valois and several other Irishmen were expelled from Peru in 1764.³⁷ Indeed, it may well have been the case that Ryan and Encalada recognised the expulsion of these individuals as an opportunity to establish their own lucrative transatlantic trading venture. Based on later evidence, Encalada's solution to the problem

³² Marriage articles between J. Ryan and M. Ryan y Armelin, 1746 (COFL, *Irish Overseas Archive*).

³³ Scarlett O'Phelan Godoy, 'Una doble inserción los Irlandeses bajo los Borbones: del Puerto de Cádiz al Perú' in Scarlett O'Phelan Godoy and Carmen Salazar-Soler (eds), *Passeurs, mediadores culturales y agentes de la primera globalización en el mundo Ibérico, siglo xvi-xix* (Lima, 2005), p. 429.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 433; Lamikiz, *Trade and trust in the eighteenth-century Atlantic*, p. 173.

³⁵ In 1765 another young merchant of Irish parentage, Pedro Alonso O'Crowley y O'Donnell (b.1740), departed Cadiz and travelled to New Spain. There is a strong possibility that George Ryan knew O'Crowley personally as Felipe Smith and Alexis Macnamara (George the elder's friends) were named executors of his will. However, the difference between Ryan and O'Crowley was that the latter was born in Spain and from an established mercantile family. This meant that there were fewer barriers to his trading legally with the Indies: Salvador Bernabéu Albert, 'Pedro Alonso de O'Crowley y O'Donnell (1740–1817)' in Igor Pérez Tostado and Enrique García Hernán (eds), *Ireland and the Iberian Atlantic: mobility, involvement and cross-cultural exchange (1580–1823)* (Valencia, 2010), pp 234–5; Sean Galvin (ed.), *Pedro Alonso O'Crowley, a description of the Kingdom of New Spain* (Dublin, 1972).

³⁶ W. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 19 Oct. 1766 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 6929).

³⁷ O'Phelan Godoy, 'Una doble inserción los Irlandeses bajo los Borbones', pp 427–33; Lamikiz, "No Irán más encomendero que Gringos y los españoles Guardarán cabra", p. 330.

of detection by the authorities if they landed at Callao was to disembark with Ryan at Buenos Aires instead, and travel the 2,000 miles overland to Lima with their merchandise.³⁸ Furthermore, as a creole and *limeño* (native of Lima), Encalada was well placed to help protect Ryan from future discovery and expulsion: he was the son of Lieutenant Colonel Pedro Encalada Tello de Guzmán and María Constanza de Torres y Manrique, both of whom were members of influential creole families, while his brother, Juan Félix Encalada, would later become mayor of Lima and inherit from his maternal uncle the titles of Conde de la Dehesa de Velayos and Marqués de Santiago.³⁹ Alongside the access he offered to Lima's powerful creole community, Encalada could assist Ryan in locating a merchant in Lima, most likely Spanish-born, to act as the front-man in his transatlantic business dealings.⁴⁰

An important change brought about by the register system was the switch from merchants meeting face-to-face at annual fairs like at Portobelo in Panama, to a situation where traders paid licence holders to ship their goods to factors or agents residing in ports on the Pacific and Atlantic coasts of the Americas. This meant that apart from the inherent risk of shipping goods over such long distances, the reliance on credit increased significantly, and merchants were faced with the issue of trust when consigning goods to agents and the recovery of debts.⁴¹ Therefore, George Ryan and the merchant who would act as his correspondent back in Cadiz would have to be individuals who trusted one another implicitly. Although it is not stated directly in the surviving evidence, Felipe Smith would appear, at first glance, to have been the most likely choice to act as Ryan's correspondent, given he could trade legally with the Indies and was judged a close friend to the Ryans. However, in the years leading up to his departure from Cadiz in 1767, it is apparent that George Ryan was more closely connected to another Irish merchant, Guillermo Thompson.⁴² Prior to his departure, Ryan was involved in Thompson's business affairs, and although he was a foreigner, Thompson traded with the Spanish

³⁸ Walter Woulfe to Francis Dillon & Francis Cruise, 28 Oct. 1767 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 6930).

³⁹ Will of General Domingo de Encalada Torres, 12 June 1774 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 373/14); Mark A. Burkholder and D.S. Chandler (eds), *Biographical dictionary of Audiencia Ministers in the Americas, 1687–1821* (London, 1982), p. 84; Alfonso de Figueroa y Melgar (ed.), *Estudio Histórico Sobre Algunas Familias Españolas, vol. ii* (Madrid, 1965), p. 74.

⁴⁰ Recent research has shown that the majority of merchants located in Lima involved in transatlantic trade were Spanish-born: Lamikiz, *Trade and trust in the eighteenth-century Atlantic*, p. 116–121.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp 88–90, 168–9; John Smail, 'Credit, risk, and honor in eighteenth-century commerce' in *Journal of British Studies*, xlv, no. 3 (July, 2005), p. 446, 451.

⁴² This individual is not to be confused with a different English-born Guillermo Thompson who arrived in Cadiz during the 1750s and later travelled to Buenos Aires: María Sáenz Quesada, *Mariquita Sánchez: vida política y sentimental* (Buenos Aires, 2011), p. 15.

Americas over the following years.⁴³ Similar to Ryan, Thompson had arrived in Cadiz as a child and recently set up trading. Nevertheless, Thompson was quickly building a business concern to equal medium sized and long established Irish trading houses in the port.⁴⁴ By 1773, six of the ships that arrived in Cadiz belonged to Thompson, making him eight highest among Irish merchants, while a year later he was ranked joint seventh with a total of eleven ships.⁴⁵ Perhaps the most important sign that Ryan had chosen Thompson, rather than Smith or another trusted merchant as his Cadiz correspondent, was the fact that Ryan named him as the sole Spanish-based executor of his will just prior to his departure for Peru in late 1767.⁴⁶

Securing trusted contacts in Lima and Cadiz were just two considerations in Ryan's prospective venture, as business connections would also be required elsewhere in Europe. Merchants from counties such as England, Italy, France and Holland supplied the American market with different manufactured goods, such as iron, spices and glass, but Cadiz's primary export were *ropas* – a collective term indicating both raw fabrics and finished clothing. An idea of the scale and value of this trade can be seen in the fact that, by the mid-eighteenth century, ropas amounted to as much as 90 per cent of the value of goods shipped to the Americas from Cadiz. The main reason behind this demand is apparent from travellers' accounts of eighteenth-century Lima, many of which emphasise the extravagance of the clothing worn by the city's inhabitants.⁴⁷ However, attempts to supply this lucrative market with the latest European fashions were met once again with the interrelated issues of distance and trust. In relation to the former, a voyage between Cadiz and Peru took up to six months, and an English manufacturer or merchant, for instance, would have to wait at least a year before receiving word or payment from his factor in Lima via their mutual correspondent in Cadiz. A strong degree of trust, therefore, underpinned business networks, especially as the activities of these ventures were often illegal under Spanish law and involved individuals of different nationalities and religious

⁴³ Walter Woulfe to George Ryan, 1 May 1765 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 6929); Stanley J. Stein and Barbara H. Stein, *Apogee of empire: Spain and New Spain in the age of Charles III, 1759–1789* (London, 2003), p. 192.

⁴⁴ Murphy, *Waterford merchants and their families on distant shores*, p. 105.

⁴⁵ Thompson does not appear in the 1763 list of Irish merchants in Cadiz, which suggests he had only begun trading in his own name in the years following: Lario, 'The Irish traders of eighteenth-century Cadiz', p. 216, 221–2.

⁴⁶ Will of Jorge Ryan, 13 Sept. 1767 (COFL, *Irish Overseas Archive* [AHPC, protocol no. 5761, ff 923–4]).

⁴⁷ Juan and de Ulloa, *A voyage to South-America*, ii, pp 51–4; Lario de Oñate, *La colonia mercantil británica e irlandesa en Cádiz*, p. 162; Stein and Stein, *Silver, trade and war*, p. 77; Lamikiz, *Trade and trust in the eighteenth-century Atlantic*, pp 83–4, 108–9; Rebecca Earle, 'Luxury, clothing and race in colonial Spanish America' in Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger (eds), *Luxury in the eighteenth century: debates, desires and delectable goods* (Basingstoke, 2007), pp 219–220.

faiths unknown to one another except through correspondence and reputation. This problem was evident in the case of Richard Gurney, a Quaker woollen manufacturer based in Norwich. In 1771 Gurney dispatched woollen camblets to the Spanish Elizaldes brothers in Lima on the advice of his Cadiz correspondent, Alexis Macnamara, an Irish Catholic. A year later Gurney had still to receive news and had become suspicious of the Elizaldes despite Macnamara's assurances that the two brothers 'have the character of being as active, diligent, industrious and honest young fellows as there are this day perhaps in the city of Lima'. Within two months Gurney's fears would prove unfounded, when Macnamara informed him that the Elizaldes brothers had, for 8 per cent commission, sold his goods and recovered most of the debts. Gurney proved fortunate in this instance, given the difficulty he would have faced attempting to recover outstanding debts via legal means over such long distances, alongside the fact that it was not uncommon for debtors to simply vanish in Peru. This essentially meant that building relationships of trust between all the parties involved was perhaps the greatest requirement for successful participation in this transatlantic trade.⁴⁸

At just eighteen years of age, and a novice when it came to long distance trade, George Ryan did not represent the type of individual merchants or manufacturers would readily trust with their goods. Fortunately, when it came to establishing the requisite business connections back in Northern Europe, Ryan could depend on the assistance of a fellow merchant, his brother-in-law Walter Woulfe. Once he had been informed of Ryan's intended voyage to Lima, Woulfe assured his young brother-in-law that 'nothing on my part will be wanting to Sollicit [*sic*] commission for you having great reliance on your principles, assiduity to business & good conduct'.⁴⁹ True to his word, Woulfe applied to several mercantile friends and family members in Cork and Limerick to entrust goods to Ryan's care. The interest shown by these individuals did not eventually bear fruit, possibly because such a venture was outside the scope of their usual business, but one Irish trading house, that of Francis Dillon and Francis Cruise of London, did respond favourably to Woulfe's letters of enquiry. In return for Ryan's commission, Woulfe offered to take a half concern in £500 worth of goods with Dillon and Cruise.⁵⁰ As

⁴⁸ Alexis Macnamara to Richard Gurney, 19 June 1772 (NLI, *Gurney papers*, Section II, microfilm, p4012); Alexis Macnamara to Richard Gurney, 14 Aug. 1772 (ibid.); Lamikiz, *Trade and trust in the eighteenth-century Atlantic*, p. 173; idem, 'Social capital, networks and trust', p. 42.

⁴⁹ W. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 19 Oct. 1766 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 6929).

⁵⁰ Ibid.

‘Spanish merchants’, he also proposed their London house should ship the type of goods chosen by Ryan to Cadiz from where they would be loaded onto a register ship for Lima.⁵¹

What emerges from Woulfe’s correspondence on the matter was the fact that Dillon and Cruise were basing their decision to deal with Ryan entirely on the confidence Woulfe had in his young brother-in-law. Thus, in one letter, Woulfe assured his London counterparts that ‘I have [*no*]⁵² doubt of our property being [*in*] safe hands when it goes by Geo. Ryan & in case of his death into the hands of Domingo Encalada’. The inclusion of Encalada in the letter added an extra layer of security to the venture, while in a later letter, Woulfe went to lengths once again to assure Dillon and Cruise that once the goods came into Ryan’s hands, ‘make no doubt from the Character he has had in Cadiz ... he will exert himself for your interest & give you every way content’. This, Woulfe hoped, would ‘recommend him to yours & friends further countenance’.⁵³ As a result, it can be seen that, apart from Woulfe’s initial involvement, where his own assets and reputation were being used to help build and support Ryan’s character, this long distance business network would not depend on bonds of kinship between relatives alone. Instead, success would depend on the conjoined factors of trust, reputation and personal credit between individuals largely unknown to one another.

In early 1767, however, Woulfe was obliged to inform Dillon and Cruise that for ‘reasons not worth your attention’ George Ryan’s intended voyage to Lima had been cancelled.⁵⁴ The reasons for this cancellation are unknown, and Ryan subsequently decided to return home to Ireland, but at the last minute changed his mind in favour of travelling to Peru once again with his step-uncle. This was because Domingo Encalada had been recently appointed *corregidor* or governor of Pisco, a wealthy coastal province where Ryan would likely find a ready market for his European goods.⁵⁵ In response to this news, Ryan was informed that his father back at Inch, who was ill and close to death,

⁵¹ Ibid.; Walter Woulfe to Francis Dillon & Francis Cruise, 22 Oct. 1766 (ibid.); Craig Bailey, *Irish London: middle-class migration in the global eighteenth century* (Liverpool, 2013), p. 181.

⁵² Walter Woulfe’s surviving letter books contain copies of his correspondence with many abbreviations used and words missing.

⁵³ W. Woulfe to Dillon & Cruise, 22 Oct. 1766 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 6929); W. Woulfe to Dillon & Cruise, 28 Oct. 1767 (ibid., MS 6930).

⁵⁴ Walter Woulfe to Francis Dillon & Francis Cruise, 9 Jan. 1767 (ibid., MS 6929).

⁵⁵ Encalada’s appointment in 1767 as *corregidor* of Pisco, a province famous for the brandy of the same name, coincided with the expulsion of the Jesuit Order from Peru the same year. The Jesuits had been the main vineyard owners in Pisco, and the resulting sale of their property, alongside the province’s prosperity in general, would have ensured Encalada a lucrative governorship: W. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 30 Sept. 1767 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 9630); Will of Jorge Ryan, 13 Sept. 1767 (COFL, *Irish Overseas Archive* [AHPC, protocol no. 5761, ff 923–4]); Nicholas P. Cushner, *Lords of the land: sugar, wine and Jesuit estates of coastal Peru, 1600–1767* (New York, 1980), p. 125.

‘seemed a little displeased with you & imagined you were somewhat fickle’. However, during ‘a long discourse’ Woulfe and Ryan’s uncle John McCarthy of Springhouse attempted to reason with Daniel Ryan about the merits of his son’s intended voyage. Both men would have undoubtedly pointed out that his return to Ireland would likely signal his failure as a merchant, a career the family had been investing in for a decade. Without a guaranteed livelihood back in Ireland, George Ryan would become ever more reliant on his family’s support. This represented a problem, as Woulfe and McCarthy were aware that Daniel Ryan would ‘not live long’, which raised the question and possibility of his son making a claim to part of the Inch estate under the penal laws if he returned to Ireland. As two successful businessmen, Woulfe and McCarthy may have also argued that Ryan’s voyage to the Americas represented the best hope of making his fortune, or at the very least his reputation as a merchant. Indeed, in 1766 Woulfe had gone as far as to ask Ryan if he could secure a berth on his Peru-bound ship for his young nephew Thomas Woulfe. Eventually, through their ‘reasoning’, Daniel Ryan became ‘better satisfied’ with his son’s plan, and he agreed that £500 was to be given to Ryan on the condition of Felipe Smith’s approbation of his voyage.⁵⁶ Always a steadfast friend to Ryan and his family at Inch, Woulfe had also re-established contact with Dillon and Cruise in relation to their previous agreement. Some months previously their London house had dispatched goods to Lima, and upon hearing of Ryan’s renewed intentions to travel, they agreed that he could sell what remained of the cargo on commission once he arrived in Peru.⁵⁷

With Daniel Ryan unable to write to his son in Cadiz due to infirmity, it was at this time that Walter Woulfe adopted the persona of a father-figure in his correspondence and beseeched George Ryan ‘to lead a Temperate, Moral & Frugal life’ once he reached Peru:

... since any who dont observe the two first [*don’t*] live many months in the Climate you are going to, & whoever neglects the last must soon be a Beggar in a Country where every thing is & has close application to your Business & to that of yr. employers which I believe I need not hint.⁵⁸

Woulfe’s goal, and that of countless other father-figures who wrote similar letters of instruction to their sons and relatives, was to instil a sense of industry and to warn against the vice and idleness that had proven ‘the ruin of thousands of easy-minded Youths’. If Ryan heeded this advice, and conducted himself and his business affairs accordingly, he

⁵⁶ W. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 19 Oct. 1766 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 6929); W. Woulfe to P. Smith, 30 Sept. 1767 (ibid., MS 9630); W. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 30 Sept. 1767 (ibid.).

⁵⁷ W. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 30 Sept. 1767 (ibid.).

⁵⁸ Ibid.

would become a ‘man of credit’ and a ‘man of business’.⁵⁹ Woulfe was once again very aware of this fact, and made clear to Ryan that his success in this regard would ‘establish the good Character that has been conceived of you’. Essentially, Ryan needed to live up to his reputation, as his failure to do so risked damaging Woulfe’s own reputation among his London-based counterparts. Woulfe concluded his advice by assuring Ryan that his good character would secure ‘good commissions & good friends & you’ll come doubly recommended when you come to sollicit [*sic*] them in England & Ireland after having made & returned from your intended voyage’.⁶⁰

The example of George Ryan highlights how, when it came to long distance colonial trade, a young merchant was initially heavily reliant on family members to supply the necessary capital and to vouch for his character in order to establish the required business contacts. Once his reputation had been sufficiently acquired, the expectation was that Ryan would support his own independent venture with minimal involvement by relatives. This form of arrangement made practical business sense. On the one hand, it limited the risk of the failure of one member or branch of a family, involved in a particular market, from affecting another located elsewhere. On the other hand, success would contribute to the wider family’s overall wealth and reputation while also opening up further opportunities for future generations of the family. This dynamic can be observed in the case of John Kelly, a Limerick-based merchant who had acquired his personal wealth and reputation trading provisions, tobacco and West Indian rum. Instead of joining his father’s business and trading on his account, Kelly’s son Martin was dispatched to Cadiz, a port and market with which his father had no discernible commercial interests. However, in 1747 Martin’s business failed completely as a result of concealed dealings with his brother-in-law back in Dublin. Nevertheless, despite his obvious anguish and sense of disappointment over the matter, John Kelly’s business and reputation suffered no apparent setbacks as a result of these misfortunes.⁶¹ Therefore, although it cannot be stated for certain, one can speculate that with the transfer to the register system in Spain after 1739, the two George Ryans and the Kellys were presented with a major enticement to venture to Cadiz to act as merchants. Indeed, the fact that George Ryan the elder, his father-in-law Thomas Ryan and Martin Kelly had arrived in the Bay of Cadiz by the early

⁵⁹ Sarah M.S. Pearsall, *Atlantic families: lives and letters in the later eighteenth century* (Oxford, 2010), p. 132.

⁶⁰ W. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 30 Sept. 1767 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 9630).

⁶¹ Another Kelly, son or cousin of John Kelly, appears to have fallen on hard times in Cadiz at this time also: Rodgers, *Ireland, slavery and anti-slavery*, p. 141; John Kelly to Dominick Kelly, 15 Dec. 1746 (NLI, *Kelly papers*, MS 827); John Kelly to Blake & Lynch, 20 Feb. 1746[7] (*ibid.*); John Kelly to Nicholas Langton, 20 Feb. 1747[8] (*ibid.*); John Kelly to Nicholas Langton, 4 Nov. 1748 (*ibid.*).

1740s, may indicate how quickly families and individuals recognised and responded to new opportunities within the wider Atlantic world. George Ryan the younger's decision to travel to Peru represented the natural progression of this process, as a member of a new generation of the family sought to exploit the opportunities presented by expanding colonial markets.

II

*'the bowells of Peru'*⁶²

By the beginning of 1768, George Ryan and Domingo Encalada had crossed the Atlantic and disembarked at Buenos Aires. With them they reputedly carried 'a good many sum of goods' worth up to £200.⁶³ This would have necessitated hiring mules, 'usually mischievous', and their drivers for the arduous journey ahead.⁶⁴ The exact route they adopted is unclear, but realistically they had just two choices. The first was a postal route as described in detail during the early 1770s in Don Alonso Carrió de la Vandra's *El Lazarillo*.⁶⁵ This led north and crossed the Andes near the silver mines at Potosí in modern-day Bolivia. This journey took no less than nine months to reach Lima, whereas the second, far more likely route, took five months. This followed another postal route east across Argentine's vast pampas grasslands, crossing the Andes at Puente del Inca before reaching Santiago in Chile.⁶⁶ From there Ryan and Encalada would have travelled north along the coast until they reached the coastal province of Pisco south of Lima. However, their stay in the province would prove to be short-lived, as Encalada's governorship had been relocated several hundred miles further inland to the frontier province of Huanta (Fig. 5.1).

⁶² G. Ryan to P. Roche, 31 Aug. 1788 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 410).

⁶³ George Ryan stated that he and Encalada were departing Cadiz on 16 September 1767 for Buenos Aires. Their journey across the Atlantic would have taken approximately three months: W. Woulfe to Dillon & Cruise, 28 Oct. 1767 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 6930); W. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 30 Sept. 1767 (*ibid.*).

⁶⁴ Walter D. Kline (trans), *El Lazarillo: a guide for inexperienced travellers between Buenos Aires and Lima, 1773* (Bloomington, 1965), p. 31.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp 28–202.

⁶⁶ Lamikiz, *Trade and trust in the eighteenth-century Atlantic*, p. 99.



Fig. 5.1– 1760 map of South America with George Ryan’s probable route from Buenos Aires to Huanta highlighted. Source: New York Public Library Digital Collection.⁶⁷

The northernmost province of the Bishopric of Huamanga (modern day department of Ayacucho), Huanta is situated in an area of the Peruvian Andes referred to as the south-central sierra. During the colonial period the province was much larger than its modern equivalent and embraced parts of the neighbouring provinces of La Mar, Huamanga and Tayacaja. This made it equivalent in size to the island of Puerto Rico or more than double the size of Ryan’s home county of Tipperary.⁶⁸ Characterised by a rugged and jagged landscape interspersed with flat, fertile valleys, the region incorporated a wide variety of environments. Thus, beginning west in the ‘very happy’ climate and fertile valley of Huanta itself, a traveller heading north or east would quickly gain altitude and come upon the still fertile *quechua* and *suní* uplands. Above the *sunis* are the *punas*, the highest areas of human settlement, but their poor soil was subject to erosion and the least suitable for

⁶⁷ L’Amerique: divisée en ses principaux etats, assujettie aux observations astronomiques, 1760, available at: New York Public Library Digital Collection, <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47db-b218-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99> [15 Sept. 2018].

⁶⁸ The portion of Tayacaja attached to the corregimiento of Huanta was referred to during the colonial period as the *Isla de Tayacaxa* and is described in Don Alonso Carrió’s *El Lazarillo*. However, the 1965 English translation of this work excluded the pertinent chapter no. 25. Tayacaja was known for its production of a herb called *caca* and its lead mines: Don Alonso Carrió de la Vandera, *El lazarillo de ciegos caminantes desde Buenos Aires hasta Lima 1773* (Buenos Aires, 1942), p. 380; Kline (trans), *El Lazarillo*, p. 279; Juan and de Ulloa, *A voyage to South-America*, ii, p. 102; Cecilia Méndez, *The Plebeian Republic: The Huanta Rebellion and the making of the Peruvian State, 1820–1850* (London, 2005), p. 15.

agriculture. From these inhospitable peaks, one descended into the humid and increasingly warm climate of the *ceja de selva* (literally ‘eyebrow of the jungle’), also called *montaña* or *selva alta* (upper jungle). In this sloped, forested ecological niche coca was grown as Huanta’s main agricultural product. Further to the east the river Apurímac marked the border of the province and demarcated the frontier with the tropical and sparsely populated *selva baja* (lower jungle).⁶⁹

Despite the unforgiving nature of its terrain, Huanta was relatively highly populated for a frontier province. A 1795 census recorded it as having a total of 27,337 inhabitants, making it the most populous of the seven provinces within the Bishopric of Huamanga. Of these, 10,080 or 36 per cent were *mestizos* (mixed Indian/Spanish), 17,000 or approximately 62 percent were native *indios* (Indians) and just over 1 per cent consisted of *mulattos* (mixed white/black) and *morenos* (blacks). The remaining 219, less than 1 per cent, were identified as *españoles*. This latter term referred to Spaniards, creoles or anyone of Spanish culture or status such as George Ryan. It must be observed, however, that this census of Huanta occurred following a period of increased migration into the area by Spaniards during the late colonial period. Therefore, the actual population of *españoles* in the province during the late 1760s and 1770s was probably far lower than the figure provided for 1795.⁷⁰

Following his arrival in the province, it is unclear whether George Ryan adapted his business plan to his new surroundings and began trading. The small number of *españoles* in the province may have been an issue for Ryan when it came to marketing his European goods. However, the craze for European fashions was not the reserve of the Peruvian elite, and there would have been some demand for these goods among Huanta’s large mestizo population. During his visit to the area, Don Carrió commented on this fact in *El Lazarillo*, noting that north of Huanta, in Tarma, the lucrative trade in mules had produced ‘many showy people who, although they can easily supply themselves in Lima with belts, cambric, and laces, do not refuse to pay a higher price for those things which they see before their eyes’.⁷¹ There were several similar mestizo towns and villages in the province of Huanta involved in the mule trade through supplying the mercury mines of neighbouring Huancavélica with coca and other necessities. Added to this, San Pedro de

⁶⁹ Kline (trans), *El Lazarillo*, pp 269–70; Juan and de Ulloa, *A voyage to South-America*, ii, p. 102; Méndez, *The Plebeian Republic*, pp 14–15; Steve J. Stern, *Peru's Indian peoples and the challenge of Spanish conquest: Huamanga to 1640* (London, 2nd ed., 1993), p. 36, 161.

⁷⁰ Méndez, *The Plebeian Republic*, pp 16–18.

⁷¹ Kline (trans), *El Lazarillo*, pp 36–7.

Hunta, the provincial capital, was where ‘Some things are sold also’, while the regional capital of Huamanga, ten miles south of Huanta town, was where ‘some products are bought by the canons and priests for their own use and that of their households’. Lastly, ‘a few trinkets never fail to be lacking’ in Huancavélica and sold ‘at greater value ... than in larger cities’.⁷² Due to Encalada’s position as corregidor and his control over the *repartimiento de mercancías* (distribution of merchandise) in Huanta, Ryan would have been in a position to market his European goods.

Two sources suggest that Ryan did indeed begin trading, but a note of caution must be sounded when interpreting their actual significance. The will drawn up by Ryan before his departure from Peru in 1779 stated that he owed a debt of 1,600 pesos to William Thompson, which the Peruvian historian Scarlett O’Phelan Godoy took as evidence of his trading activities. However, this figure was most likely part of the 3,000 pesos (£540 Irish approximately) that Thompson had extended Ryan in credit to help fund his journey back to Europe.⁷³ A second document listing the worth of Irish merchants in Cadiz in 1771 valued ‘Jorge Riam’ at 3,000 pesos. Once again, the actual significance of this information can be misleading. Ryan had been residing in Peru for almost four years by this time, and once converted into Irish pounds, the figure closely matches the £500 granted by Daniel Ryan to his son in late 1767. As Daniel Ryan’s death had occurred soon after, it is known that difficulties were encountered remitting the money.⁷⁴ Therefore, it is not implausible to suggest that George Ryan had yet to draw on the money and that this sum was credited to him by Thompson in 1778. Working against the possibility that Ryan set up as a wholesale merchant was his distance from Lima and the port of Callao, which would have presented problems of communication when dealing with his correspondent back in Cadiz. Further complicating Ryan’s business plans was the fact that his main contact back in Northern Europe, the trading house of Dillon and Cruise of London, went bankrupt in 1769.⁷⁵ Lastly, Ryan does not appear in a 1775 list of foreign merchants, mechanics and artisans residing in the Viceroyalty of Peru.⁷⁶ Therefore, on balance, it seems likely that Ryan sold the merchandise he had carried with

⁷² Ibid.; Joseph A. Gagliano, *Coca prohibition in Peru: the historical debates* (London, 1994), p. 81.

⁷³ The conversion rate used here is 5 pesos to 1 English pound sterling, with 1 Irish pound equating to 18s English. Therefore, 3,000 pesos would equal £540 Irish: Harvey, *The Bellews of Mount Bellew*, p. 199; William Thompson to George Ryan, 4 Sept. 1778 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 374/88). O’Phelan Godoy, ‘Una doble inserción los Irlandeses bajo los Borbones’, p. 425.

⁷⁴ Walter Woulfe to Francis Dillon & Francis Cruise, 13 Jan. 1768 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 6930); Ruiz Rivera (ed.), *El Consulado de Cadiz*, p. 68.

⁷⁵ *Court Miscellany: Or, Gentleman and Lady's New Magazine*, vol. v (1769), p. 264.

⁷⁶ Leon G. Campbell, ‘The foreigners in Peruvian society during the eighteenth century’ in *Revista de Historia de América*, no. 73/74 (Jan.–Dec. 1972), pp 153–163.

him to Peru, and thereafter spent the next number of years working within his step-uncle's administration.

Following their arrival in the province of Huanta sometime in June 1768, George Ryan's business skills were put to work in the service of his step-uncle as governor of the province.⁷⁷ However, there remained the issue of his status as an illegal foreigner and his potential expulsion from Peru if discovered. In answer to this, Domingo Encalada sought to have Ryan commissioned as a sergeant major in Huanta's militia, since any foreigner serving in the military in Spain's colonies was exempted from expulsion.⁷⁸ Following Britain's capture of Havana during the Seven Years War (1756–1763), the militia system was introduced as an attempt to protect Spain's colonial possessions from future attack. The rank of sergeant major was reserved for regular army officers sent to help form and instruct militia companies, but of course, George Ryan had no known formal military training. Nevertheless, in November 1770, under the authority of the Viceroy of Peru, General Manuel de Amat y Junyent, Ryan was commissioned as sergeant major in Huanta's militia 'since it is necessary to appoint a trustful person, with good behaviour and military experience'.⁷⁹ Encalada had obviously used his influence in Lima to secure the promotion, and a benefit of this can be seen a year later, when Encalada openly elected Ryan as 'a suitable and meritorious person' during periods of his absence to deliver 'justice in this province in the same way that I could and would do it'. As will be seen, Ryan would come to represent one of his step-uncle's most trusted and capable lieutenants.⁸⁰

As corregidor of Huanta, Domingo Encalada held wide-ranging judicial, administrative and legislative powers, thereby making him the most powerful figure within the province. His five-year term in office was designed to permit the holder to recuperate the significant costs of relocating to the Americas. A provincial governor could not, however, expect to recover these costs through the meagre salary offered by the office of corregidor alone. Instead, corregidores were legally permitted after 1751 to utilise a system called the *repartimiento de mercancías* (distribution of merchandise) to increase

⁷⁷ Sergeant Major Jorge Ryan's account since June 1768 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 374/57).

⁷⁸ O'Phelan Godoy, 'Una doble inserción los Irlandeses bajo los Borbones', p. 429.

⁷⁹ Commission of Jorge Ryan as sergeant major of the militia regiment of the province of Huanta, 28 Nov. 1770 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 374); Kuethe and Andrien, *The Spanish Atlantic*, p. 240, 253; Christon I. Archer, 'Pardos, Indians, and the army of New Spain: inter-relationships and conflicts, 1780–1810' in *Journal of Latin American Studies*, vi, no. 2 (1974), pp 232–3; idem, 'The role of the military in colonial Latin America' in *The History Teacher*, xiv, no. 3 (May, 1981), p. 414.

⁸⁰ Deed between Domingo Encalada and Jorge Ryan, 11 Dec. 1771 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 374/28); Deed between Domingo Encalada and Jorge Ryan, 18 May 1773 (ibid., MS 374/29).

their personal income. Essentially, the *repartimiento* or *reparto* permitted corregidores to forcibly sell goods at above market value to members of the local Indian population and mestizos who were artisans or involved in the mule trade. A second form the reparto could take was the advancing of small cash loans. In both instances, a future date for repayment would be agreed between the parties, with payment coming in the form of cash or in-kind, such as coca in the case of Huanta. Where payment could not be extracted, debtors would be obliged to work off the debt by supplying their labour to local *haciendas* (plantations) or *obrajes* (textile mills). In turn, hacienda and obraje owners compensated the corregidor for the services rendered by the debtor.⁸¹ As early as December 1768, Encalada provided Ryan with a full power of attorney to handle matters relating to the repartimiento, including the power to buy and sell goods and to recover debts on behalf of the grantor.⁸² Having been granted this power, George Ryan became involved in one of the most controversial aspects of colonial rule in Peru.

Given Encalada's wide-ranging powers as governor, and the fact that the reparto system permitted the distribution of goods at inflated prices to thousands of Huanta's inhabitants, the scope for profits could go well beyond simply covering the shortfall in his salary. Commentators at the time observed how the reparto was open to widespread abuse by corregidores who were subject to little official oversight, and who subsequently used the system to accumulate as much wealth as possible during their terms in office. Thus, during his official investigation of conditions in the Viceroyalty of Peru beginning in 1776, Visitor General Don Jose Antonio de Areche was shocked by the level of corruption among officials and the abuse of the Indian population. In particular, he singled out the activities of corregidores and their misuse of the reparto system. Areche observed how instead of supplying goods best suited to the needs of the Indians and selling them at reasonable prices, corregidores sold expensive European articles, such as silk stockings, frilled shirts and lace at highly inflated prices. These items were of no use to the poverty stricken Indians, and the debts they accumulated forced them into a condition little better than slavery. As a result, during their term in office, corregidores were allegedly able to

⁸¹ John R. Fisher, *Government and society in colonial Peru: the intendant system 1784–1814* (London, 2nd ed., 2015), p. 14; C.E. Castañeda, 'The Corregidor in Spanish Colonial Administration' in *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, ix, no. 4 (Nov., 1929), pp 450–1, 468–9; Robert Patch, *Maya revolt and revolution in the eighteenth century* (London, 2015), p. 8; Scarlett O'Phelan Godoy, *Rebellions and revolts in eighteenth century Peru and Upper Peru* (Cologne, 1985), p. 102.

⁸² Power of attorney granted by Domingo Encalada to Jorge Ryan, 18 Dec 1768 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 374/27).

make gains of between thirty and two hundred thousand pesos (£6,000 to £40,000 sterling).⁸³

With very few exceptions, historians have echoed this view of the reparto as a system of forced production and consumption in which the corregidor used physical coercion and intimidation in order to accumulate as much wealth as possible. There is ample evidence to support this view, particularly in relation to the Viceroyalty of Peru, but certain revisionists have attempted to offer a more nuanced understanding of the system and the part played by corregidores, based on the belief that ‘the topic has generated an entrenched mythology, but what is known about the actual operation of repartos is actually very little’.⁸⁴ In her analysis of rebellions and revolts in eighteenth-century Peru, Scarlett O’Phelan Godoy highlights the fact that there was a distinct economic rationality behind the repartimiento system and the involvement of corregidores. In Peru, mining represented the ‘sinews’ of colonisation, with all other economic activities geared towards supplying mining areas. The legalisation of the reparto was used as a means to draw Indians into the market through their purchases of goods, while the repayment of their debts, usually in labour or in-kind, contributed to the operation of the mining-based economy. The supply of mules by the reparto to muleteers, amounting to 2,000 mules over the course of five years in the case of Huanta, was also seen as necessary if the economy was to function properly.⁸⁵ Next, Jeremy Baskes has argued against the idea that a corregidor and a couple of *tenientes* (lieutenants) could forcefully compel thousands of individuals to partake within an exploitative system, particularly within a society where the state’s power was limited. Furthermore, Baskes pointed to the traditional interpretations of the repartimiento as being illogical and incomplete: if the system was nothing more than ‘robbery’, why would a corregidor entrust valued and expensive items to Indians always on credit, when there was the chance of the recipient simply fleeing with the goods or cash payment? Finally, as most reparto distributions were for small amounts and numbered in their thousands within a single province, this made attaining alternative sources of credit, such as from private merchants, an unrealistic proposition for most individuals. This was particularly the case if creditors were faced with resorting to legal means to collect unpaid

⁸³ Stanley J. Stein, ‘Bureaucracy and business in the Spanish Empire, 1759–1804: failure of a Bourbon reform in Mexico and Peru’ in *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, lxi, no. 1 (Feb., 1981), p. 6; Eunice Joiner Gates, ‘Don José Antonio de Areche: his own defense’ in *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, viii, no. 1 (Feb., 1928), p. 16, 22; Roy Fisher, *Bourbon Peru, 1750–1820* (Liverpool, 2003), p. 29.

⁸⁴ James Lockhart and Stuart B. Schwartz quoted in Jeremy Baskes, ‘Coerced or voluntary? The repartimiento and market participation of Peasants in late colonial Oaxaca’ in *Journal of Latin American Studies*, xxviii, no. 1 (Feb., 1996), p. 4; Fisher, *Government and society in colonial Peru*, pp. 13–4.

⁸⁵ O’Phelan Godoy, *Rebellions and revolts in eighteenth century Peru*, pp. 1–2, 99–102, 108.

debts. To Baskes, therefore, the repartimiento reduced transaction costs, the cost of debt collection, to a level which made profitable the provision of credit within a high risk environment.⁸⁶

Within George Ryan's surviving personal papers are a number of documents relating to the role he played within his step-uncles administration. Chief among these are several documents pertaining to the province's finances, including the reparto. Problematically, however, the information provided within these documents is too ambiguous to draw a conclusion as to whether the reparto in the province was simply an exercise in exploitation or operated as a high risk system of credit. Nevertheless, the surviving evidence does permit a discussion of Ryan's responsibilities as part of the reparto, which in turn provides insights into his value to Encalada's governorship.

Even though it was unlikely that corregidores adhered rigidly to official quotas, the limit placed on the repartimiento of goods in Huanta was 119,200 pesos, of which the distribution of mules made up 76,000 pesos, with the remainder consisting primarily of ropas. In relation to the latter goods, Huanta was charged with 1,200 *varas*⁸⁷ of *paños de Quito* (from Ecuador) worth 6,800 pesos, followed by 20,000 *varas* of *ropa de la tierra* (coarse textiles) acquired from local traders and obrajes, including examples apparently owned by the Catholic Church. Although there are very few clear references to expensive European goods being purchased or distributed in Ryan's accounts, Huanta's official reparto included 20 different imported goods worth up to 14,000 pesos, such as *ruanes*, *bretañas*, paper and steel.⁸⁸ Thus, Ryan recorded in one instance the purchase of '16 pairs of shoes' and '18 pairs of women's stockings bought in Lima'.⁸⁹ However, the distribution of these types of goods appears, in general, to have caused corregidores problems. In his analysis of the correspondence between merchants in Cadiz and their Lima based factors in 1779, Xabier Lamikiz has noted that the latter's business did not count on the reparto to dispose of European merchandise. This is not to say that corregidores did not acquire goods from these merchants: several corregidores were mentioned within correspondence, but even with the alleged power they held over local

⁸⁶ Baskes, 'Coerced or voluntary?', pp 9–13, 26; idem, 'Colonial institutions and cross-cultural trade: repartimiento credit and indigenous production of cochineal in eighteenth-century Oaxaca, Mexico' in *The Journal of Economic History*, lxxv, no. 1 (March, 2005), p. 191; Kline (trans), *El Lazarillo*, p. 217.

⁸⁷ A vara was approximately 33 inches in length: Jonathan D. Amith, *The Möbius Strip: a spatial history of colonial society in Guerrero, Mexico* (Stanford, 2005), p. 236.

⁸⁸ Alfredo Moreno Cebrián, *El corregidor de indios y la economía peruana del siglo XVIII (los repartos forzosos de mercancías)* (Madrid, 1977), p. 337; Kenneth J. Andrien, *The Kingdom of Quito, 1690–1830: the state and regional development* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 38.

⁸⁹ Jorge Ryan's account since June 1768 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 374/57).

communities, they did not represent totally secure business for their creditors. The corregidor of Huanta in 1779, Gregorio Xalavera, was one debtor who was unable to repay 2,992 pesos to his Cadiz creditor. Another trading house was faced with six bad debts at the same time, half of which were due from corregidores.⁹⁰ Therefore, when Encalada and Ryan did attempt to distribute more expensive textiles or goods, successful repayment would have depended on the judicious selection of individuals deemed capable of bearing the expense. This can be observed in Acos Vinchos, a *pueblo* (town) with a mixed population involved in the mule trade. Of the twenty-four individuals in receipt of a distribution of cloth, twenty-one received goods worth 21 pesos or less each, while the remaining three received quantities worth between 25 and 40 pesos.⁹¹ This would suggest that Ryan selected these latter individuals based on his assessment of their ability to pay, or indeed, that the goods were actively sought after by the different parties.

Given the nature of the reparto system, securing repayment was a time-consuming and on occasion no doubt an intimidating process for the different parties involved. George Ryan would have travelled the length and breadth of the province several times, probably only with the support of a servant, the local *teniente* — of whom there were only four spread across the province — and native *caciques* (chiefs).⁹² As Encalada's main debt collector (*teniente recaudador*), Ryan had several options open to him when faced with individuals or whole communities unable or unwilling to meet their obligations on time. The first, and most common accusation against corregidores and their debt collectors, was the use of intimidation and violence. Indeed, Ryan apparently chose to go down this path on at least one occasion in relation to an individual who had failed to repay his reparto of mules. In his list of debtors, Ryan noted after the individual's name 'revisit (to scare) owner'. However, Ryan's ominous words should be understood in relation to the person he was referring to, Don Eugenius Canales, who was one of only two men afforded the title of 'Don' in the reparto list of fifty individuals for Acos Vinchos. Spanish officials often did resort to violent means or imprisonment to collect debts owed to them, especially when they believed that the debtor was resisting repayment of a debt that he could in fact meet. This latter point may have been the case for Don Canales, given his status and the probability he was a prosperous muleteer with three servants receiving

⁹⁰ Lamikiz, *Trade and trust in the eighteenth-century Atlantic*, pp 111–2.

⁹¹ List of individuals in receipt of repartimiento goods in the town of Acos Vinchos, c.1768–1774 (*Ryan Collection*, MS 374/54).

⁹² It is unclear whether or not Ryan would have had the local militia at his disposal during his debt collecting. Indeed, Ryan's accounts for Encalada's governorship contain very few references to military matters, and it is therefore unclear whether a militia company of any size was in existence in Huanta during this period.

mules and cloth within the reparto also. Furthermore, Ryan did resort on different occasions to jailing two other gentlemen for their debts.⁹³

The second option open to Ryan when he faced non-payment was the refinancing of the relevant party in the hope they could meet a new date for repayment, while the third possibility entailed providing extra time for payment. Ryans use of these options can be seen in his dealing with the Indian community of Acocro. Here, in February 1773, a year after they had received their separate loans, the Indians informed Ryan that they were unable to repay the outstanding sum of 1,278 pesos due to ‘their delays’. They requested the term of the loan be extended to the following June as this was the time their crops, probably coca, would be ready for harvest. The extension was ‘indeed granted’, as were additional loans to several individuals. In turn, the Indians ‘bound themselves and the goods they have and may acquire to its compliance, in any form ... waiving each and every law to their favour’. However, before the bond was agreed and signed, Ryan gathered the eighty-four concerned individuals together and

... this document was read to them and its content was explained to them by their chief Don Joseph Antonio García, with the assistance of the mayors and councillors of the town and before the whole community and other witnesses which were present.⁹⁴

The previous examples do not permit a clear distinction to be made between whether Huanta’s reparto was coercive in nature or a high risk system of credit catering to market demand. Perhaps the most plausible assessment was that it contained aspects of both. Whatever the case may have been, the process required discretion on Ryan’s part and an understanding of the different individuals and communities he was interacting with. His other activities, in particular the collection of thousands of *arrobas*⁹⁵ of coca via the reparto, and its subsequent distribution to the mines at Huancavelica, also helped contribute to the smooth operation of area’s mining-based economy. Beyond the reparto, Ryan’s responsibilities involved accounting for Huanta’s income and expenditure which amounted to several hundred thousand pesos during Encalada’s tenure as corregidor. He also carried out a royal *revisita* or census of the eligible male Indian population under the province’s *mita mineral*.⁹⁶ Nepotism was clearly a factor in Ryan’s fortunes, but having

⁹³ Ibid., List of silver and coca distributed, c.1768–1774 (ibid., MS 374/51); Baskes, ‘Coerced or voluntary?’, p. 7.

⁹⁴ Bond between the Indians of Acocxo and Jorge Ryan on behalf of Domingo Encalada, 17 Feb. 1773 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 374/53).

⁹⁵ An arroba is a unit of measurement weighing approximately 25 pounds.

⁹⁶ Huanta’s mita mineral involved a quota of Indian labourers sent each year to the mercury mines of Huancavelica: Deed appointing Jorge Ryan to carry out a revisita in Huanta, 16 March 1775 (ibid., MS 374/41); J. Ryan’s account since June 1768 (ibid., MS 374/57); Money owed by Governor Domingo

a highly placed relative and patron to guarantee one's advancement was a well-established practice in Europe and her colonies. This was a factor discernible in the fortunes of other Irishmen in the Spanish Americas at this time also, a practice best encapsulated in the popular saying *quien no tiene padrino, no tiene bautizo* (he who doesn't have a godfather, doesn't get baptised).⁹⁷ Furthermore, this was a two-way process, as Ryan was clearly a very capable and trustworthy individual whose mercantile background and accounting skills were put to good use by Encalada.

The importance of his character and good conduct as a merchant appear to have been lessons George Ryan carried with him during his time as an administrator. In turn, this gained him the respect and support of prominent members of Huanta's community. This came to light following Encalada's death during his second term as corregidor in 1774. As the main executor of his will, Ryan was faced with the unenviable task of disentangling his step-uncle's personal and official affairs and reporting back to Lima. However, Ryan appears to have made an enemy in Diego Antonio de la Vega y Barcenas, a co-executor of Encalada's will and the Lima-based judge tasked with overseeing the matter. Conflict arose when De la Vega accused Ryan of failing to account for certain reparto goods. As a result, De la Vega refused to issue Ryan a receipt not just for Encalada's personal goods and assets, but also for reparto goods and accounts lodged in his care. This in turn prevented the new corregidor of Huanta, Don Juan Chrisostomo de Zubiaux, from carrying out a new reparto distribution. In reply Ryan submitted to the authorities in Lima a 100-page report on the issue, including the written testimony of several corregidores.⁹⁸ The matter was apparently taken up at the highest echelons of Peru's administration, and eventually Ryan was ordered to appear before the Bishop of Huamanga, Juan Amat. In his report back to Lima, Amat declared that Ryan put his case forward 'quoting ... ecclesiastic and secular information and certificates attesting just the opposite to what you have been told'. Public notaries had also been called before the bishop and stated 'that there is no civil or criminal complaint whatsoever in their records against him or not even any verbal reports'. 'Indeed', the bishop continued, 'I understand the enemy of Don Jorge has been surprised' by his 'good nature and strength', having 'never been reprehended or reprimanded' for his conduct. Added to this, many people of

Encalada to Don Jorge Ryan, 1773 (ibid., MS 374/44); Jorge Ryan's accounts since 1773 (ibid., MS 374/58); O'Phelan Godoy, *Rebellions and revolts in eighteenth century Peru*, p. 11, 14, 15–16, 36, 38.

⁹⁷ Donald C. Cutter, *The defences of Northern New Spain: Hugo O'Conor's report Teodoro de Croix, July 22 1777* (Dallas, 1994), p. 13.

⁹⁸ Jorge Ryan's report regarding his role as executor of the will of Domingo Encalada y Torres, 12 March 1775 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 374/44).

the ‘first distinction’ in both Huamanga and Huanta, alongside various priests in both provinces, submitted statements in support of Ryan’s conduct and character. Therefore, Amat was of the opinion that the ‘slanderer’ should provide evidence to support his accusations or else Ryan should receive justice, ‘which he demands against the false complainant’.⁹⁹

It is not possible to state for certain whether or not George Ryan had been guilty of some wrongdoing, and the surviving documentation may simply highlight that his allies in Huanta and Huamanga were willing to protect him from the accusations of an outsider. However, once Ryan returned to Ireland to inherit the Inch estate, a strong and constant preoccupation with honour and honesty in his dealings emerged as two of his most defining characteristics (see Chapter 6). Whatever the case may have been back in Huanta, Ryan was clearly respected by leading members of the province’s different communities. Alongside his ability as an administrator, this ensured a continued demand for his services following Encalada’s death. Furthermore, Ryan later extended his services to the corregidor of neighbouring Huamanga, a fellow Irishman Captain Juan Savage.¹⁰⁰ During his dispute with De la Vega, Savage was one of the corregidores who had supported Ryan’s cause, and he later went as far as to elect Ryan and another Irishman, Lt. Hugo O’Falvey, as two individuals to help guarantee the ‘best success’ of his ‘mission’ in Huamanga.¹⁰¹

That George Ryan started to gravitate towards Savage is suggestive of a concern he faced following Encalada’s death. No longer able to rely on family bonds to help guarantee his fortunes, Ryan instead looked towards connections with the Irish diaspora for the necessary patronage. In a wider sense, this move was also indicative of changing conditions in Peru. Beginning as early as the 1710s, though gaining in importance from the late 1740s onwards, Bourbon Spain sought to implement a series of reforms in order to boost royal revenue and strengthen control over its colonial possessions. Having come to dominate many of Peru’s institutions of power, creoles were increasingly seen by the authorities back in Madrid as corrupt and antithetical to their planned reforms. In

⁹⁹ Copy of Letter. Juan Amat to Pedro de Oreta, Secretary of the Chamber of the Viceroyalty of Peru, 5 May 1776 (ibid., MS 374/62); Jorge Ryan to Don Domingo de Echaveouxen[?] and Don Miguel Sanchez de Barreda-Spinozza, 17 Feb. 1777 (ibid., MS 374/31).

¹⁰⁰ Juan Savages’s brother Patricio had also been appointed corregidor of Huamanga in 1769: O’Phelan Godoy, ‘Una doble inserción los Irlandeses bajo los Borbones’, pp 434–5; Recio Morales, *Ireland and the Spanish empire, 1600–1825*, p. 286.

¹⁰¹ Copy of certificate granted by Pedro De Oreta, Secretary of the Chamber of the Viceroyalty of Peru, 6 Aug. 1777 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 374/75); J. Ryan’s report regarding his role as executor of the will of D. Encalada, 12 March 1775 (ibid., MS 374/44).

response, growing numbers of *peninsulares*, bureaucrats from the Spanish mainland, were dispatched to replace creoles in order to begin implementing new royal policies.¹⁰² It remains unclear as to what extent the new wave of Irish army officers who arrived in Peru from the late 1760s onwards, such as the Savage brothers, Juan and Patricio, were part of this reform process. Nevertheless, both Juan Savage and Hugo O’Falvey continued to find success over the coming years. Savage was appointed corregidor of Camaná in 1780, while O’Falvey was described at the time of his death in 1786 as possessed ‘of a considerable property in South America’.¹⁰³

Given the success of his companions, George Ryan may have also advanced in his career as an administrator over the following years. However, in early 1779 he received word from Cadiz of his elder brother’s death without issue and his subsequent inheritance of the Inch estate.¹⁰⁴ Of course, unforeseen issues may have intervened and frustrated Ryan’s advancement if he had remained in Peru. One such development was the introduction of the intendants system in 1784, which abolished the office of corregidor and divided Peru into large administrative units called intendancies.¹⁰⁵ This may have led to fewer administrative opportunities for individuals like Ryan, but Juan Savage’s subsequent exploits provide an idea of the type of solution that could be adopted. In 1785 Savage returned to Lima and began trading, via his front-man Matías de Elizalde, with Miguel Langton of Cadiz.¹⁰⁶ Juan Savage, like George Ryan, illustrates the ways in which the Irish could switch between roles as merchants, soldiers and bureaucrats as circumstances dictated in order to exploit the opportunities presented by the particular colonial system they navigated.

George Ryan’s career in Peru, though lasting just 10 years, was certainly eventful, and it helps provide insights into the complex and changing colonial world that he and others like him inhabited during this period. His activities and good reputation, whether relating to colonial trade or administrative matters, provide an excellent example of how Irish émigrés could excel in different frontier environments. Indeed, their understanding of, and level of immersion within this world stands out as a common characteristic among

¹⁰² Mark A. Burkholder, ‘From creole to peninsular: the transformation of the Audiencia of Lima’ in *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, lii, no. 3 (Aug. 1972), pp 395–415; Fisher, *Bourbon Peru*, pp 29–31; Kuethe and Andrien, *The Spanish Atlantic*, passim.

¹⁰³ J. Ryan to D. de Echaveouxen[?] and M. de Barrera-Spinozza, 17 Feb. 1777 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 374/31); Dickson, *Old world colony*, p. 551; O’Phelan Godoy, ‘Una doble inserción Los Irlandeses bajo los Borbones’, p. 434.

¹⁰⁴ W. Thompson to G. Ryan, 4 Sept. 1778 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 374/88).

¹⁰⁵ Fisher, *Government and society in colonial Peru*, p. 28.

¹⁰⁶ O’Phelan Godoy, ‘Una doble inserción los Irlandeses bajo los Borbones’, p. 434.

Ryan and other Irish individuals. The fact they were Irish had presented opportunities, but the fact that George Ryan had lived so much of his life in Spain and her colonies meant he was a relative stranger to Ireland and the new world he came to inhabit as an Irish landowner. This, as will be seen in the following chapter, was to have a noticeable impact on attempts to manage effectively the Inch estate and Ryan's inherited debts.

George Ryan departed Lima in April 1779 on-board the register ship *Nuestra Señora de Buen Consejo*. After a four month voyage the ship arrived at the port of Fayal in the Azores, whereupon Ryan and his travelling companions were informed that Britain and Spain had gone to war during their transit across the Atlantic. English privateers were already active in the area, no doubt searching for an unsuspecting and richly laden prize such as the *Buen Consejo*. As a precaution, the ship's cargo of silver was brought ashore, as were its sails in the hope of deterring any privateer that might enter the harbour. However, soon after a violent storm wreaked havoc in the port, sinking all the ships at anchor in the bay except the *Buen Consejo*, which was forced to cut its cables and was blown out to sea. Without its sails, the ship was set adrift at sea for several days before being attacked by English privateers, and after an engagement lasting several hours, the *Buen Consejo* surrendered and was brought into Lisbon as a prize. Ryan remained stranded in Fayal for a total of six months and was struck by the idleness of the local male population, and their grandiose dress and manner; his barber wore 'a wig so fashionable you wish you could grab it to present yourself before the Vicereine of Peru'. In February 1780 Ryan finally got passage on the Portuguese sloop, *Monte Carmelo*, arriving safely in neutral Lisbon in March. There he remained for several more months corresponding with Spanish officials in the hope of securing a pass to travel to Ireland. It was not until the late summer of 1780 that Ryan arrived back in his native country following an absence of twenty-three years.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁷ Captured ship: *Nuestra Señora de Buen Consejo*, 1779–1781 (TNA, *HCAP*, HCA 32/413/8); Draft letter. George Ryan to [?], early 1780 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 373/6); Walter Woulfe to George Ryan, 28 Dec. 1779 (ibid., MS 375); Condon, 'Don Jorge Rian', pp 8–9.

Chapter 6

‘... law & honesty do not allways go tog[*ethe*]r’: debt management at Inch, 1780–1805¹

In October 1779, having departed Peru, crossed the Atlantic and arrived at the Azores, George Ryan dispatched word to his brother-in-law, Walter Woulfe, that he was returning to Ireland to take up his inheritance of the Inch estate. On receipt of this news two months later, Woulfe rejoiced to find his friend was ‘perfectly well ... as twas such a length of time since there was any certain account from you in Ireland’. He proceeded to inform Ryan that it was still too early to go into the ‘minute particulars relative’ to the estate, except to say that he had been left ‘a very good bone, notwithstanding [*sic*] tis encumbered with bond & judgement debts of above six thousand pounds’. The existence of these encumbrances must have come as a shock to Ryan, who was informed in a previous letter of his late brother’s claim that he was ‘a loyal administrator’ of the family estate.² Indeed, what George Ryan read fell short in his estimation of the situation awaiting him in Ireland, and it would eventually come to light that his inherited encumbrances exceeded £10,000.³ This financial burden would plague George Ryan and his affairs for many years after his return, a situation that was compounded by the fact that Ryan came to inhabit the same world of rank and display as his predecessors. This new status was a hindrance rather than a support when it came to his future economising efforts. Further complicating the situation was the fact that, unlike his brother before him, Ryan was not a typical Irish gentleman of his time, which meant he was unfamiliar with many aspects of life as an Irish landowner. The main aim of this chapter, therefore, is to chart how Ryan attempted to discharge his numerous debts while simultaneously contending with his new status as an Irish gentleman.

The financial problems George Ryan faced were far from unique. Within county Tipperary alone, debt was an issue for numerous estates during this period, and Thomas Power has highlighted that families could successfully manage their encumbrances and recover to a relatively healthy financial position. Power has, indeed, cited the Ryans of Inch as one example of such successful financial management, but his analysis relied

¹ Draft letter. George Ryan to [Dr James Fogarty], 27 Feb. 1787 (UCC, Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 395).

² Walter Woulfe to George Ryan, 28 Dec. 1779 (*ibid.*, MS 375); Draft letter. George Ryan to [?], early 1780 (*ibid.*, MS 373/6); William Thompson to George Ryan, 4 Sept. 1778 (*Ibid.*, MS 374/88); Case with counsel’s opinion concerning the right of Mary Ryan to dower in the estate of her late husband, John Ryan, 1779 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 38,306/7).

³ Ledger kept by George and Daniel Ryan, 1778–1811 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 175, f. 3).

solely on intermittent and basic accounts of debts and charges affecting the estate after 1778. As a result, Power's examination offers only limited insights into how exactly the family sought to reverse their fortunes.⁴ By drawing on a wider range of source material, including a large collection of correspondence, this chapter will add nuance and detail to our understanding of this process of debt management. It will be shown that the support of family members, or the lack thereof at times, was central to George Ryan's world as head of the Inch estate. Correspondence from female relatives helped Ryan to acclimatise to his new status as an Irish gentleman and member of a close knit family circle. But when it mattered most, Ryan could not always count on the same level of family cohesion and support his predecessors at Inch had enjoyed. This meant that the process of debt management at Inch would prove to be far from straight forward, never guaranteed to succeed and complicated by personal relationships and legal issues.

The accumulation of debt represented an acceptable, if not necessary feature of life among the landed elite so long as it could be kept at a manageable level relative to an estate's income. Problematically, on paper, George Ryan's inherited encumbrances were just short of crippling, and the first section of this chapter covers the initial challenges he faced from his arrival back at Inch in 1780 up until his marriage three years later. This represents the most confusing period in relation to his finances, simply because the surviving evidence does not align with what is known to have eventually occurred. Despite his diminished income, Ryan reduced his debts by a significant amount within three years of his return. Given his prolonged absence from Ireland, Ryan also needed to build and strengthen bonds of kinship with family members once he returned to Inch. Section two will examine how female relatives used correspondence and different epistolary practices to help Ryan to acclimatise to his new position as a landed gentleman and member of a close-knit family circle. However, in order to reflect his new standing in society, Ryan also found himself obliged to spend heavily, which in turn began anew the process responsible for his family's financial problems.

Following this, section three will show how, notwithstanding the reduction of his debts, George Ryan's financial position remained far from secure and was complicated further by ill health. In 1786 a number of the family's creditors became impatient and threatened to call in their loans. Finding his 'purse empty' and his health deteriorating, Ryan decided to depart for the continent in order, as he later put it, to 'save my life'.⁵

⁴ Power, 'Land, politics and society in eighteenth-century Tipperary, i', pp 60–1.

⁵ Draft letter. George Ryan to [Philip Roche John], late March 1787 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 439).

Once abroad, his prospects looked good based on a new strategy he devised to discharge a significant portion of these debts. However, a frayed relationship with his father-in-law, legal issues and ill fortune would conspire to create a situation where Ryan eventually found himself feeling isolated, gripped by anxiety and almost penniless. Nevertheless, a chance death in the family had the unexpected effect of improving Ryan's prospects, and this permitted him to accomplish part of his financial strategy once he returned to Ireland in 1790. George Ryan's finances were thus seemingly on the road to recovery by late 1790. However, two more deaths were to have a negative impact on the family's finances: Ryan's relationship with his father-in-law would end on a negative note, while his own demise in 1805 would saddle the Inch estate with significant encumbrances once more.



Fig. 6.1– Portrait of George Ryan, c.1782, possibly by Robert Home.⁶

⁶ George Ryan commissioned a portrait by Robert Home in 1782, but this appears to have been destroyed at a later date. The portrait above is said to be a copy from a miniature. This image was reproduced on the front cover of: *The Irish Ancestor*, no. 1 (1986). See also: Ledger kept by G. and D. Ryan, 1778–1811 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 175, f. 10).

I

*'8 unmercifull widows ... on my back'*⁷

What George Ryan discovered upon his arrival back at Inch in 1780 was less than heartening. His deceased brother had bequeathed to his widow what contents of Inch House 'she shall chuse to take', and a 1780 inventory illustrates how the house had been stripped of every item of value. Even so, George Ryan went about the inventory with his characteristic attention to detail, recording the diverse items, mostly rubbish, which remained. This included '2½ china Bowls in 5 pieces & 2 spoutless teapotts, an air pump & microscope, both out of order' and 'a strim stram without strings & a long necked Violin'. As his 'thoroughly disenchanted' inventory continued, Ryan came to recognise the amusing side of his predicament, commenting in a droll manner on the possessions he had inherited: in the stables he recorded 'An old Curr Bitch with 9 pupps', followed by 'an old woman & a Greyhound ... in the kitchen'; under stock he listed '8 unmercifull widows ... on my back, and a Law-suit about the Widow's Dower or thirds'.⁸

George Ryan's comments about the widows in his life, although humorous, nevertheless reflected a real sense of concern regarding the claims on his estate. The most pressing of these related to his widowed sister-in-law, Mary Ryan (nee Kennedy). George Ryan's older brother John had shown the same devotion to his wife and her future wellbeing as his predecessors had theirs, but as was the case with previous generations, this placed the successor to the estate in an awkward financial position. Besides receiving the contents of Inch House and £1,000 of her marriage portion, the widow Ryan was entitled to half a year's rent from the estate and a yearly jointure payment of £300.⁹ The lawsuit Ryan referred to was threatened by the widow in order to protect her dower from being reduced by several factors. These included the right of her late husband's creditor's to affect her payment, and the possibility that a claim under the gavelling act by John Ryan's youngest brother Denis could have a similar impact. Her counsel, James Bradstreet, was of the opinion that she occupied a strong position in relation to these issues, and within a year of his return George Ryan and the widow had come to terms

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid. For a transcription of this inventory, see: Condon, 'Don Jorge Rian', pp 9–10.

⁹ Will of John Ryan of Inch, 21 May 1773–26 July 1778 [probate 12 Feb. 1779] (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 25); Copy of marriage agreement between John Ryan and Mary Kennedy, 5 June 1765 (UCC, Boole, *Grehan papers*, BL/EP/G MS 175/4).

outside of court.¹⁰ But Ryan's problems did not end there. The executors of John Ryan's will had suspended payments out of the estate for the two years prior to George Ryan's return to Ireland, bringing total debts to £10,660 in 1780. Added to this was an annuity of £100 Ryan granted to his younger brother in order to forestall the latter's claim to a share of the estate (see Chapter 3).¹¹ Therefore, once all annual charges attached to the Inch estate were deducted from his rental of £1,368, Ryan's personal income fell to as little as £194 9s 9d (see Appendix 5A). This was less than half the annual income of £400 previously promised by his late brother, and would mean, at face value at least, that the only way George Ryan could guarantee his subsistence as a gentleman was through further loans or the sale of part of the estate to service his inherited debts.¹²

On paper, George Ryan's prospects thus appeared grim in late 1780. However, as he familiarised himself with his new estate over the coming months, Ryan would have realised that his situation, although indeed problematic, was certainly not irremediable. Certain steps could be taken to help alleviate both the immediate need for extra money and his inherited debts. Re-examining the leases held by his tenants was one of the first actions taken by Ryan in order to increase his income. Fortunately for him, the most valuable property on the estate at Ballypatrick had become the subject of a dispute between the leaseholder and his tenants over rent. With the assistance of the sheriff, Ryan's agent, William Gleeson, regained possession of the lands in 1781 and subsequently re-let them at an increase of 5 shilling per acre. This brought an extra £79 to Ryan's income which was assigned to pay off one of his creditors.¹³ A further nine leases were reset the same year. Most of these had last been set during the 1760s at a time when the penal laws restricted leases to a maximum term of 31 years. By 1781 these restrictions against Catholics had been relaxed, and in return for a rental increase that matched current land values, Ryan offered his tenants more beneficial terms on their leases, ranging from 31 years to three lives or 99 years.¹⁴ Although the increases in rent

¹⁰ Lease of several townlands belonging to the Inch estate, the dower of Mary Ryan, to George Ryan for the term of 99 years at an annual rental of £300, 19 May 1781 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 100); Case concerning the right of M. Ryan to dower from the estate of J. Ryan, 27 May 1779 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 38,306/7).

¹¹ Deed of annuity for £100 from George Ryan to Denis Ryan, 4 Aug. 1780 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 14).

¹² Ledger kept by G. and D. Ryan, 1778–1811 (*ibid.*, MS 175, f. 2); W. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 28 Dec. 1779 (*ibid.*, MS 375); Will of J. Ryan 26 July 1778 (*ibid.*, MS 25).

¹³ William Gleeson to George Ryan, 18 June 1781 (*ibid.*, MS 380); Lease of Ballypatrick. George Ryan and Gerard Butler of the 1st part and William Bourke & c. 2nd part for 31 years, 16 Oct. 1781 (*ibid.*, MS 106).

¹⁴ 18 Geo. III, c. 41 (1778): 'An act for the relief of his Majesty's subjects of this kingdom professing the popish religion' in *Stat. Ireland*, xi, pp 301–2.

were not as substantial as that of Ballypatrick, Ryan's income grew by at least £189 in 1781. The sale of the remaining woodland on the estate at Inch and Ballypatrick the same year added an additional £400.¹⁵ Finally, just after his return to Inch in 1780, Ryan took a loan of £800 from James O'Reilly, a resident of Cadiz lately returned to Carrick-on-Suir.¹⁶ This loan, combined with the sale of woodland and his increased rental would have helped to cover the shortfall in Ryan's income from 1780 onwards. However, Ryan was still faced with the far more problematic issue of his inherited debts.

Once again, on paper, in 1780 it appeared doubtful that George Ryan would have been capable of discharging his inherited debts which stood at £10,660. Even though he had increased his rental income to approximately £1,557 per year by 1782, three-quarters of this amount was still required to cover interest payments and several annuities. Realistically, once Ryan's cost of living was deducted from this figure, next to nothing would have been left to discharge the principal owed to his creditors. Nevertheless, the fact remains that by the eve of his marriage in 1783, Ryan's inherited debts had been reduced to £7,500.¹⁷ The only logical explanation for this reduction of at least £3,000 is based on two points. First, as no money was paid out of the estate rental from 1778–80, the combined income of approximately £2,736 remained intact. Over half of this sum was paid to the widow Ryan in the form of outstanding jointure payments and a legacy left by her husband. The remainder most likely went towards reimbursing the estate expenses covered by the executors of John Ryan's will since 1778. Secondly, once this sum was deducted from Ryan's debts, the savings in interest payments meant his net income had reached approximately £537 by 1783. Cumulatively, these two points help account for the £3,000 (28 percent) reduction of Ryan's inherited debts to £7,500 by the time of his marriage in 1783 (Appendix 5B).¹⁸

As the previous discussion helps to illustrate, the figures recorded within accounts relating to the Inch estate do not always accurately reflect the reality of George Ryan's

¹⁵ Between 1780 and 1786, George Ryan reset all but two of the twenty leases that made up his landed estate. Therefore, his rental rose from £1,386 in 1778 to £1,631 by 1785: Memorandum of Agreement between George Ryan of Inch and George Stony of Grayfort, Co. Tipperary, 12 Nov. 1781 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 192); Various leases set on the Inch estate, 1 Aug. 1781–28 Oct. 1786 (ibid., Mss 101–116).

¹⁶ Bond by which George Ryan and Walter Woulfe acknowledge a debt of £800 to James O'Reilly, 26 Sept. 1780 (ibid., MS 248).

¹⁷ When Ryan's personal debts of £1,200 are added to this figure, total encumbrances in early 1783 amounted to £8,700: Schedule of debts attached to the Inch estate upon the marriage of George Ryan and Mary Anne Roche, 16 July 1783 (ibid., MS 51/2).

¹⁸ Will of J. Ryan, 26 July 1778 (ibid., MS 25); Case concerning the right of M. Ryan to dower from the estate of J. Ryan, 27 May 1779 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 38,306/7).

financial situation. Nevertheless, to state that Ryan governed over his affairs without difficulty is misleading. For a year following his return to Ireland, for example, Ryan's attempts to sort his finances were impeded until a legally binding agreement could be reached with the widow Mary Ryan over her claims on the Inch estate.¹⁹ Furthermore, it also took him over a year to identify all of his creditors and the sums they were actually owed. The initial information on his encumbrances provided by individuals such as Walter Woulfe and William Gleeson had proven limited. This obliged Ryan to dispatch letters of enquiry to many of his late brother's acquaintances, but rarely did their replies offer good news. A letter Ryan received in June 1781 from his deceased brother's mother-in-law, the widow Christine Kennedy, informed him £1,000 was owed to a local landowning family and was being called in, with payment required within six weeks. Although Mrs Kennedy declared herself 'sorry to retard your happiness a Moment', she was nevertheless firm in her assertion that the debt was to be paid on time, telling Ryan 'I repeat – you'l do the necessary at that day'. The widow further added that she would be glad if Ryan could pay her the £100 'Trifle' she was also owed.²⁰ Such correspondence no doubt explains why Ryan sought to wring every last penny out of his rental beginning in the late summer of 1781.

The process of clarifying his finances was further complicated by Ryan's lack of familiarity with many aspects of life as an Irish landowner. One issue in particular that left him bemused on several occasions was the workings of Irish law. Thus, in one instance, having written to a suspected creditor, Ryan was informed by his brother-in-law, James Nash, that he found it 'rather necessary' to deliver the letter personally and explain its contents to the recipient on account of 'your Little Knowledge of Law business'.²¹ Over the coming years Ryan found his attempts to deal with his affairs along the 'straightest road' possible were usually frustrated by legal issues, thereby leading him to conclude that 'law & honesty do not allways go tog[ethe]r'.²²

¹⁹ Lease agreement between George Ryan and Mary Ryan, 19 May 1781 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 100).

²⁰ Ryan managed to pay off £400 of the £1,000 debt owed to the Going family in early 1782, while the remainder was discharged a year later using money from his wife's dowry: Christine Kennedy to George Ryan, 18 June 1781 (*ibid.*, MS 249); W. Gleeson to G. Ryan, 18 June 1781 (*ibid.*, MS 380); John McCarthy to George Ryan, 28 June 1781 (*ibid.*, MS 383); Bond by which John Ryan and Christine Kennedy acknowledge a debt of £1,000 to Robert Going, 1 Feb. 1773 (*ibid.*, MS 242).

²¹ George Ryan's widowed sister Mary Harrold married James Nash of Bellevue, Co. Cork in 1771: *Limerick Chronicle*, 8 July 1771; James Nash to George Ryan, 20 June 1781 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 381).

²² G. Ryan to Dr Fogarty, 27 Feb. 1787 (*ibid.*, MS 395).

In a final move to help place his finances on a more secure footing, George Ryan decided to seek out a wife with a suitable dowry. The search for such a bride began in earnest, and in one early instance John McCarthy of Springhouse wished his nephew luck with his matrimonial endeavours and every ‘success making legs for childrens stockings’.²³ Several friends and family members offered their assistance with the search, and an incomplete letter from c.1781 shows that one such young lady had caught their attention. Apart from the belief that ‘ye Girl ... wd. make you happy in the Matrimonial Way’, Ryan was informed that ‘if this Connection could be brought abt. on terms’, the subsequent dowry would be enough to clear the estate of ‘Cash Incumbrances’ of several thousand pounds. This, the author of the letter believed, ‘wd. be an object of Consequence’ to Ryan, as it would provide an income of at least £1,000 to live on after the payment of existing annuities. Although this ‘Topick’ was to be kept a ‘profound Secrett’, the rumour back in Tipperary was that he had resolved to marry either a Miss Taylor of Swords or Miss Browne of Castle Browne. It is not known for sure whether Ryan’s secret and his eventual wife were the same person, but by 1783 he had settled his attention on ‘a not inferiour [*sic*]’ family, the Roches of Limerick City.²⁴

George Ryan’s prospective father-in-law, Philip Roche John, was described by one contemporary as ‘a merchant prince and venturer’, having made his fortune trading rum, cereals, sugar and provisions. With such wealth came social ambitions, and the family’s claims to gentility are readily seen in the travel journal of Roche’s only son from the mid-1770s, held in the Ryan papers (see Appendix 4).²⁵ The purchase of a landed estate in Co. Limerick was a further sign of their growing social pretensions and, to cement the social standing of his family, Philip Roche John sought to marry his children to individuals of suitable rank and pedigree. George Ryan was one such eligible bachelor, and in exchange Roche offered the substantial dowry of £5,000 with his daughter Mary Anne. However, Ryan’s niece, Elizabeth ‘Bess’ Woulfe, hinted at his subsequent conundrum when she observed: ‘So my poor Don is really & sincerely ... most desperately in love with the sister of the one he intended to like’. Ryan had apparently become ‘Smitten’ with Roche’s

²³ John McCarthy to George Ryan, 7 June 1781 (ibid., MS 379).

²⁴ Incomplete letter. Laurence Strange to George Ryan, c.1781 (ibid., MS 443); Mary Nash to George Ryan, 14 June 1783 (ibid., MS 387); E. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 7 June 1783 (ibid., MS 386).

²⁵ Travel journal kept by J.R., 1775–6 (ibid., MS 371); Rodgers, *Ireland, slavery and anti-slavery*, p. 137; eadem, ‘Ireland and the Black Atlantic in the Eighteenth Century’ in *Irish Historical Studies*, xxxii, no. 126 (Nov., 2000), p. 176; Jim Kemmy, ‘The Granary’ in *The Old Limerick Journal* (Winter, 1992), p. 5; Maurice Lenihan, *Limerick: its history and antiquities* (Dublin, 1866), pp 398–99; Truxes, *Irish-American trade*, p. 87.

daughter Margaret, whereas her father had sought 'to first dispose of' his eldest daughter Mary Anne.²⁶

George Ryan spent several months travelling back and forth to Limerick and Dublin attending to the business of the marriage, a process which was undoubtedly complicated by the indecision over his bride. Fortunately, Ryan had by his side at different times friends and family members well versed in business and the politics of marriage, including Walter Woulfe, Count Edward D'Alton and Dr James Fogarty of Castle Fogarty. Even William Thompson of Cadiz was on hand in 1783 to offer Ryan his advice.²⁷ With this assistance reason ultimately triumphed over romantic notions, and Mary Nash (previously Harrold) wrote to her brother in late June 1783, congratulating her 'Darling Don' on his choice of brides and their impending wedding. Having known Mary Anne Roche from 'infancy to this hour', Mrs Nash felt deprived of 'every doubt & uneasyness in this business', and if she did have any hesitations over the marriage 'you know I wd: be singularly plain & very miserable'. Instead, she felt that once 'the final amen was put to the business', two worthy people and two 'not unworthy familys' would be made 'assuredly happy'.²⁸ A month later, in July 1783, newspapers were announcing the marriage of George Ryan and Mary Anne Roche.²⁹ Over the coming years a strong bond of affection developed between George and Mary Ryan. Initially, however, George Ryan's choice of wife was sealed by the large dowry on offer and its potential impact on his finances. A schedule of debts, both inherited and personal, amounting to £8,700 accompanied the 1783 marriage agreement. A clause within the articles stated that £3,500 of the £5,000 dowry was to be used towards discharging these encumbrances.³⁰ Therefore, his marriage in 1783 provided George Ryan with some much needed money in order to service his debts (Appendix 5C).

George Ryan's attempts to settle his finances during the three years after his inheritance of the Inch estate were both assisted and exasperated by his relatives. Several close family members had offered what advice they could about issues relating to the Inch

²⁶ E. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 19 May 1783 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 384).

²⁷ M. Nash to G. Ryan, 14 June 1783 (ibid., MS 387); Marriage settlement between George Ryan, Inch and Mary Anne Roche, Limerick, 16 July 1783 (ibid., MS 51).

²⁸ M. Nash to G. Ryan, 14 June 1783 (ibid., MS 387); John McCarthy to George Ryan, 17 July 1783 (ibid., MS 388).

²⁹ *Limerick Chronicle*, 17 July 1783; *Finn's Leinster Journal*, 23 July 1783; Marriage settlement between G. Ryan and M. Roche, 16 July 1783 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 51); Memorial of the marriage settlement between George Ryan and Mary Anne Roche, 15 July 1783 (*ROD*, vol. cccliv, pp 191–2, no. 237455).

³⁰ Of the £8,700 owed before his marriage in 1783, £7,500 of this was made up of Ryan's inherited debts: Schedule of debts attached to the Inch estate upon the marriage of George Ryan and Mary Anne Roche, 16 July 1783 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 51/2).

estate, but Ryan also quickly found that he owed several relatives considerable sums of money. Indeed, the most problematic issue that Ryan came to face was the fact that just under half of his inherited debts of £10,660 were owed to relatives, and except for his closest kin by blood, the entitled individuals showed little leniency when pressing their claims. This was illustrated in the case of the widow Mary Ryan (nee Kennedy). Her marriage had failed to produce children, and once her husband John passed away in 1778, this signalled the end of any meaningful relationship with her Ryan relatives and she pressed her dower and inheritance claims with the utmost vigour. Indeed, George Ryan apparently found dealing with the many widows who were owed money out of the Inch estate to be among the most taxing in the early years after his return.³¹ However, these individuals had simply sought to receive or guarantee what was theirs by right, and Ryan was fortunate in that all of these issues were eventually resolved outside of court.

II

*'Look at what you do or you are a lost man forever'*³²

In a letter dated 28 September 1778, informing George Ryan of his inheritance of the Inch estate, his acquaintance William Thompson of Cadiz concluded by urging him to 'Look at what you do or you are a lost man forever'. Thompson's advice stemmed from word he had received from Ireland that Ryan's late brother, John, had 'complained of your long silence' which had placed in doubt whether or not 'you were alive'.³³ Even after he reached Ireland in 1780, George Ryan remained something of 'lost man' in his family's eyes. He had spent the previous twenty-three years residing outside Ireland, including a decade in Peru apparently without any contact with his family back in Ireland. This lack of communication ran counter to established notions surrounding family and kinship, as the separation of individuals over long distances during the eighteenth century was a relatively common feature of family life. Correspondence acted as the sole means to mitigate distance, dispel anxieties over prolonged separation and help bind fractured families together.³⁴ This had not occurred in the case of George Ryan and his family, and upon his return to Inch therefore, Ryan needed to build relationships between himself and

³¹ Denis MulRyan to George Ryan, 18 Dec. 1782 (ibid., MS 469); Draft letter. George Ryan to [Dr James Fogarty], 26 Apr. 1787 (ibid., MS 396).

³² W. Thompson to G. Ryan, 4 Sept. 1778 (ibid., MS 374/88).

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Pearsall, *Atlantic families*, p. 47; James Livesey, *Civil society and empire: Ireland and Scotland in the eighteenth-century Atlantic world* (London, 2009), p. 133.

individuals with whom he had not had contact in over a decade or, in some instances, had never previously met.

The earliest surviving letters to George Ryan following his arrival back at Inch signalled this preoccupation with re-establishing familial bonds. Although this was probably the first time they had ever communicated with one another, Peter Dalton of Grenanstown congratulated Ryan on his ‘safe Arrival in your native county’ and was quick to impress upon his kinsman ‘The Friendship and Intimacy which subsisted between your Father & me’. Accordingly, Dalton hoped Ryan would make him ‘a partaker of the joy thereby occasioned to all your friends by a call at Grenanstown’.³⁵ No doubt Ryan was called upon to visit numerous friends over the following weeks and months. This process of building relationships took time however, because, having not maintained a correspondence with his relatives in a decade, Ryan only gradually became aware of the vital significance of regular family communication.

Letter writing, usually driven by female members, was the glue that helped hold this close-knit family network together, and the emphasis placed on maintaining this correspondence was such that George Ryan’s young niece, Elizabeth Woulfe, informed her uncle that ‘it is Barbarous to be silent & in a female it is certainly an unpardonable crime’.³⁶ However, when it came to reciprocating personal and familial bonds, Ryan’s early letters were found lacking. For instance, during the weeks leading up to his marriage in 1783, a time of great excitement in the family, Ryan was scolded by his older sister Frances Woulfe for not writing a detailed account of his endeavours. This, she pointed out, was something ‘unpardonable as you must be sensible how interested we must be about you in your present situation’. Mrs Woulfe continued her letter to Ryan by observing ‘I suppose you’l [*sic*] scarce read half this scroll before you comit [*sic*] it to the flames’.³⁷ Following his sister’s criticism, Ryan attempted to mend his ‘barbarous’ ways by dispatching several letters to his niece Elizabeth Woulfe in the subsequent weeks. Woulfe’s response contained her usual whimsical sense of humour and obvious affection towards her ‘dear Don’, but she could not help but express how unimpressed she was with the contents of his recent letters, consisting in each instance of ‘a single leaf of paper three parts inked, of which the title took up two parts the remainder being filled with his elbow

³⁵ Peter Dalton’s nephew Count Edward D’Alton had married George Ryan’s first cousin Maria McCarthy of Springhouse: Peter Dalton to George Ryan, 18 Jan. 1781 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 376); Peter Dalton to George Ryan, 6 Feb. 1781 (ibid., MS 377).

³⁶ Elizabeth Woulfe to George Ryan, c.1783 (ibid., MS 441).

³⁷ Frances Woulfe to George Ryan, 17 May 1783 (ibid., MS 378).

furniture'. As with her mother, Miss Woulfe chastised her 'dire Compadre' and warned that 'you shall not have one word of anything entertaining or interesting from me till you mend your manners'. It was only out of a sense of 'Common Charity' that she continued her current letter and supplied Ryan with '4 pence worth' of news.³⁸

The comments made by George Ryan's female relatives highlight how epistolary practices could be used not just to express and maintain relationships, but also as a means to censure and regulate acceptable modes of behaviour within the family.³⁹ Given their more limited scope for social self-expression compared to their male counterparts, women used letters to exercise powers of observation, express ideas and often tutor male relatives in matters of social protocol. Like the supposedly harmless visit, the innocent letter was, as highlighted by Susan Whyman, 'a place where women carved out niches of power'.⁴⁰ Even Elizabeth Woulfe, who was essentially still a child, was aware of, and made use of this power: she pointed out to her uncle that if she did not write letters regularly, it was socially 'unpardonable' and a 'crime', while Ryan's own silence was viewed as 'barbarous' or uncivilised.⁴¹ Essentially, by expressing their positions in this manner, Miss Woulfe was making it clear that social conventions dictated that she must write her uncle, and he in turn must respond in the appropriate manner.

To simply disapprove of Ryan's actions was not, however, enough. Indeed, it risked the opposite effect of estranging him even further. To help prevent this, it was necessary for his female relatives to strike an effective balance between criticism and sentiment in their letters. Thus, Ryan's two older sisters, Mrs Woulfe and Mrs Nash, adopted a maternal approach in their correspondence, with Mrs Woulfe, 'an old fashioned lady', scolding Ryan for not keeping her informed about his upcoming marriage. However, she offset this criticism by stating in the next sentence 'my Dr George believe me no one loves you more sincerely'.⁴² Likewise, Mrs Nash wrote to her brother regularly, sometimes from her sister Woulfe's table, under the epistolary persona of a caring mother or aunt. She too voiced her reservations about his silence at times, but on the eve of his

³⁸ Elizabeth Woulfe to George Ryan, 7 June 1783 (ibid., MS 386).

³⁹ Babs Boter and Suzanne M. Sinke, 'Adjusting and fulfilling masculine roles: the epistolary persona in Dutch transatlantic letters' in *The History of the Family*, xxi, no. 3 (2016), p. 337.

⁴⁰ Susan Whyman, 'Paper visits': the post-Restoration letter as seen through the Verney family archive' in Rebecca Earle (ed.), *Epistolary selves: letters and letter-writers, 1600–1945* (Aldershot, 1999), pp 21–2.

⁴¹ E. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 7 June 1783 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 386); Jane Maxwell, 'The personal letter as a source for the history of women in Ireland, 1750-1830' (PhD thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 2016), pp 82–108.

⁴² F. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 17 May 1783 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 378).

marriage in 1783 expressed how ‘in truth my Dear George when I salute you a married man I will be ever happier [*sic*] than when I wellcomed [*sic*] you from the other world’.⁴³

The fact that George Ryan did not initially reciprocate the type of letters deemed acceptable by his relatives was not a sign that he did not care for them; in 1782, for instance, he spent £64 6s on portraits of his numerous nieces.⁴⁴ Instead, it reflected a lack of knowledge surrounding the etiquette of writing familial letters. As Toby Ditz has highlighted, the familial letter placed a premium on ‘personal emotive response’ and equated sincerity with a morally desirable alignment of inner self and second nature. But, most importantly, this ease and immediacy of ‘voice’ was a style and a trained capacity that acted as a mark of gentility.⁴⁵ Ryan had not acquired this ‘style’ and thus his letters were more formal. Therefore, the early instances where George Ryan did elect to correspond with his female relatives saw a propensity to write short and unembellished letters akin to a merchant or colonial administrator, more the ‘laconis [*sic*] Trader, than [*sic*] the gentleman or friend’.⁴⁶ However, one family member, his niece Elizabeth Woulfe, did prove relatively successful in eliciting the required response from Ryan. Humour was a central feature of her letters and she teased her uncle ‘Don Horhe [*sic*]’ using a Spanish style he would have recognised and no doubt found amusing. Thus, in one instance, she copied and exaggerated the Spanish propensity for lengthy titles at the beginning of official documents, a tendency with which Ryan was also apparently guilty in his personal correspondence:

The latter End of the seventeenth century [*sic*] in the year of our Lord one Thousand seven hundred and eighty three May the twenty seventh old stile [*sic*] & June the seventh Gregorian or commonly called new stile. Lodge one measured mile seven perches 2 roods & a half from Carrick on Suir County of Waterford Barony of Uppertird Province of Munster – Saturday morning [?] fifty eight & a half minutes after eleven o clock in the forenoon.⁴⁷

Further copying the template that one might expect from a Spanish notarised document, Miss Woulfe continued by stating ‘I EW do solemnly declare that ...’.⁴⁸

⁴³ M. Nash to G. Ryan, 14 June 1783 (ibid., MS 387); John McCarthy to George Ryan, 17 July 1783 (ibid., MS 388).

⁴⁴ Ledger kept by G. and D. Ryan, 1778–1811 (ibid., MS 175, f. 10).

⁴⁵ Toby L. Ditz, ‘Formative ventures: eighteenth-century commercial letters and the articulation of experience’ in Rebecca Earle (ed.), *Epistolary selves: letters and letter-writers, 1600–1945* (Aldershot, 1999), p. 69.

⁴⁶ E. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 7 June 1783 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 386); Mary Nash to Daniel Ryan, 8 Feb. 1810 (ibid., MS 515).

⁴⁷ E. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 7 June 1783 (ibid., MS 386).

⁴⁸ Ibid.

Elizabeth Woulfe's letters to George Ryan did include sentimental reflections that surpassed those of her mother and aunt, but where she succeeded was in her ability to convey her criticism of Ryan in a humorous manner. Furthermore, she was also able to relate to Ryan based on common interests. Both, for instance, were willing to confide in one another about their personal reservations over their intended marriages. As noted, Ryan had become 'Smitten' with the wrong Roche daughter, and his 'Romantic Adventures' led Woulfe to pronounce him the 'worthy successor of the Immortal Don Quixote... the Hibernian Knight', and joked 'I doubt not if a Second Cervantes Should Spring up, to illustrate thy Achievements'.⁴⁹

In spite of her teasing, Miss Woulfe respected her uncle's honesty and his preference for affection when choosing a wife. Ryan did, of course, eventually do what was financially expedient and settled on the sister he was intended to marry. However, the fact he had voiced his reservations over the matter made Elizabeth Woulfe seek out his advice about her own intended husband in 1785. Her mother Frances had passed away suddenly during the previous year, while her own health had subsequently deteriorated, necessitating a period of convalescence in Bath. Her father Walter Woulfe had yet to arrive from Ireland, but present in Bath at the time was Elizabeth's potential husband, John Mansfield of Ballinamult, Co. Waterford. Miss Woulfe was subsequently racked by indecision and she confessed in a letter to 'my Don' that 'my mind is more agitated than you can conceive or I wish to let appear'. If other relatives had let their 'real sentiments' be known on the matter, she felt they would 'not be in favour of Mr M[ansfield] for various reasons', leading her to inform Ryan that 'if you were here I should feel it (I think) much easier to form a resolution one way or the other'.⁵⁰ Once Walter Woulfe arrived in Bath soon after, he recognised that his daughter's 'Spirits' were flagging, and he informed Ryan that 'I believe she wd. not be displeas'd a certain transaction was postponed from being completed till you come over to laugh at her'.⁵¹

Elizabeth Woulfe obviously held great affection towards her uncle and valued his friendship and advice. This was particularly evident in the lead up to her marriage when she had been torn between what was expected of her as 'an heiress' — a good match and marriage into a landowning family — and her own desire to marry out of mutual respect

⁴⁹ E. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 19 May 1783 (ibid., MS 384).

⁵⁰ Elizabeth Woulfe to George Ryan, 16 July 1785 (ibid., MS 390).

⁵¹ Walter Woulfe to George Ryan, 16 Aug. 1785 (ibid., MS 391).

and affection.⁵² Her uncle appears to have been one of the few individuals she could confide in about her reservations, while in the initial years after his return to Ireland, ‘dear Bess’ was seen as George Ryan’s only source of consolation from ‘a parcell [*sic*] of Widows, and an attainted Peer, who have taken into their heads to tax you ever since you set foot on your native soil’.⁵³ Therefore, parallel to the financial strategies he had employed to help rescue his finances upon inheriting Inch, Ryan was also faced with the no-less important process of learning established social and familial conventions in order to help build kin relationships and assist his integration back into his family. In return, with the help and advice of these individuals, Ryan settled into his new position as a landed gentleman. However, to fully attain this status, Ryan needed to follow the advice of relatives that did not always agree with his economising efforts. Therefore, although Ryan apparently disliked living at Inch and ‘intertaining’, his sister Mary Nash reminded him in 1781 of the necessity of refurnishing Inch House and contracting an honest creditor in order to accomplish all those other things ‘necessary to you whilst you wear a shirt’.⁵⁴

Ryan took heed of his sister’s advice, and in the two years before his marriage he spent a total of £1,119 on a myriad of goods, including furniture, plate, glass, linen and, among a selection of other books, four volumes of *Don Quixote* in Spanish. The list of goods purchased for the house and its stables was extensive, and a small selection of these items helps to illustrate the lifestyle Ryan was now expected to lead. Three dozen china plates, a tea and coffee service, four dozen soup and dessert plates, and four dozen knives and forks reflect both the hospitable excess and polite refinement typical of a genteel existence. To help extend this impression beyond the estate, Ryan spent over £300 on a second-hand chaise, a new post chaise and nine horses of various quality.⁵⁵ As a result, it can be seen that George Ryan’s integration into Irish landed society also meant that he was drawn very quickly into the same world and lifestyle that had helped cause his family’s financial problems. Indeed, the money spent refurnishing Inch House

⁵² E. Woulfe to George Ryan, 16 July 1785 (ibid., MS 390); Mandeville (ed.), *Retrospections of Dorothea Herbert*, i, p. 11; Malcomson, *The pursuit of the heiress*, p. 141. For the travails of another young woman concerning her marriage in late Georgian Belfast, see: Jonathan Jeffrey Wright, ‘Love, loss and learning in late Georgian Belfast: the case of Eliza McCracken’ in D.W. Hayton and Andrew R. Holmes (eds), *Ourselves alone? Religion, society and politics in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Ireland: essays presented to S.J. Connolly* (Dublin, 2016), pp 169–191.

⁵³ The ‘attainted Peer’ referred to by Denis MulRyan was probably their cousin Francis Mathew, the future earl of Landaff, who was owed money by John Ryan at the time of his death in 1778: D. MulRyan to G. Ryan, 18 Dec. 1782 (ibid., MS 469).

⁵⁴ Mary Nash to George Ryan, 24 Apr. 1781 (ibid., MS 392a).

⁵⁵ E. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 19 May 1783 (ibid., MS 384); Ledger kept by G. and D. Ryan, 1778–1811 (ibid., MS 175, ff 4-11).

represented the majority of the £1,200 of personal debt that Ryan had racked up by the time of his marriage in 1783.

III

‘Thus abandoned & left entirely to myself’⁵⁶

George Ryan’s marriage in 1783 provided some much needed money to service his debts. However, this proved to be a double edged sword, and it is clear that the remaining £1,500 of his wife’s dowry did not last long. As was the case with previous generations of the family, marriage brought with it the impetus to spend in order to mark the occasion and cement the newlywed couple’s standing in society. Ryan’s grandfather John, for instance, had built Inch House shortly after his own marriage; in turn, Daniel Ryan and his wife Elizabeth added their mark to the house and spent heavily on entertaining. Their eldest son John faced a similar situation upon his marriage and inheritance during the 1760s. Despite the financial issues this had caused his brother, George was expected to follow suit. Inch House once again became a destination for friends and family members on their circuit of country seats across Munster and Leinster. The costs could be significant, and this hospitality necessitated, among other things, the restocking of Inch’s wine cellar, which helped to further diminish Ryan’s coffers.⁵⁷ Ryan also suffered from regular bouts of debilitating gout, a ‘family affliction’, while a chest complaint forced him to travel in search of relief. In late 1783 he and his young wife travelled to Bath in the south of England, ‘a place of pleasure butt [*sic*] expensive’, while two years later Ryan stayed at Ballyspellan spa in Co. Kilkenny. This former trip alone was undertaken at significant cost and helped to steadily erode what remained of his wife’s dowry.⁵⁸ Therefore, although his inherited debts had been significantly reduced by his marriage in 1783, ill health and increased social expectations meant Ryan’s cost of living increased. The effect was that his personal debts began to steadily mount during the first three years of his marriage.

By late 1786, George Ryan’s finances nevertheless appeared to be in a relatively stable condition. As Thomas Power has shown, the estate’s rental stood at £1,596, debts totalled

⁵⁶ G. Ryan to P. Roche, late March 1787 (ibid., MS 439).

⁵⁷ Ledger kept by G. and D. Ryan, 1778–1811 (ibid., MS 175, f. 13).

⁵⁸ George Ryan may have visited Bath once again in 1785: ibid.; Notebook kept by George Ryan, 1783–1786 (ibid., MS 447); Denis MulRyan to George Ryan, 10 Aug. 1784 (ibid., MS 470); E. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 16 July 1785 (ibid., MS 390); W. Woulfe to G. Ryan, 16 Aug. 1785 (ibid., MS 391); Mary Nash to Daniel Ryan, 8 Feb. 1810 (ibid., MS 515); Peter Browne to John Browne, 23 Aug. 1718 (NLI, *Westport papers*, MS 40,909/6/6); Kelly, “Drinking the waters”, pp 112–3, 116.

£6,539 with an annual charge running at £845 making the latter 53% of income (Appendix 5E).⁵⁹ However, these figures simplify a more complex situation, and upon closer examination Ryan's correspondence paint a very different picture. In late 1786, having apparently returned from Lisbon on some unknown business, George Ryan found himself in dire straits.⁶⁰ Several of his late brother's creditors had become impatient and threatened to call in their loans, which totalled £2,400. In response, Ryan made his 'distress known to such friends as were at hand', but only found 'good advice & strong reasoning', which were at best 'poor resources for a money conflict'. As a result, he turned to his father-in-law Philip Roche John for his assistance. Ryan's most pressing need was £400 to satisfy a 'parcel of crying creditors'. Roche's reply, however, gave the impression that he 'could do no more for me in my present situation', thereby giving Ryan 'every reason' to think that 'both myself & my affairs had become equally disagreeable' to Roche. 'Thus abandoned & left entirely to myself', Ryan was forced to turn to one of his head tenants, Nicholas Meagher, for the money. Ryan apparently held a low opinion of Meagher, but always 'conscious' of the need to act with 'honour' and 'honesty' when it came to his creditors, he applied for the £400 as 'I would to a usurer or to any other necessary evil'. Despite having obtained the money from Meagher, Ryan's finances remained far from secure. With three other pressing creditors still to satisfy, and with only a 'general expression of offer of advice' from his wealthy father-in-law, Ryan would later muse 'what then to be done'? Winter was closing in, his purse was empty and time was too short for either 'comment or deliberation'. Once his failing health was taken into consideration, Ryan decided to depart for the continent in order, as he put it, to 'save my life'.⁶¹ Contrary to the relatively positive image of Ryan's finances provided by his accounts, it is quite apparent that 1786 was a time of stress and uncertainty which led him to eventually flee the country. George Ryan would spend the subsequent three years abroad attempting to implement a financial strategy that would ease the pressure on his finances.

In early November 1786, George and Mary Anne Ryan departed Inch for London. Ryan had secured a loan of £300 from a friend to help 'expedite their departure'. In turn,

⁵⁹ Power, 'Land, politics and society in Tipperary, i', p. 61; Statement of claims and encumbrances etc. on the estate of George Ryan ending May 1787 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 257).

⁶⁰ Ryan may have travelled to Lisbon or Spain following the death of his old acquaintance Hugo O'Falvey, who had drowned returning from Peru in early 1786, or perhaps 1785: Dickson, *Old world colony*, p. 551.

⁶¹ The correspondence of George Ryan utilised in this section are mainly draft letters with many abbreviations used. Therefore, the spelling of the material referenced hereafter has been modernised: G. Ryan to Dr Fogarty, 27 Feb. 1787 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 395); G. Ryan to P. Roche, late March 1787 (ibid., MS 439).

he planned to use the November gale of his rental, worth £788, to discharge several annuities and most of the interest due to his creditors in 1786.⁶² However, whether his personal funds would hold out until his rental became due once again in early summer appeared increasingly doubtful. The couples' travelling expenses to London alone came to £33, and their eight-day stay at Osborne's Hotel, alongside the cost of other amenities in the city, claimed a further £18 18s. On top of this, £37 was laid out for new clothing. In one sense, this expenditure on clothes was not uncommon among Irish tourists who sought to discard their provincial hue by updating their wardrobes with the latest fashions.⁶³ For Ryan, however, the money required was perhaps more than he would have wished, since his luggage had remained on the quayside at Cork after their ship set sail for England.⁶⁴

Once the Ryans crossed the English Channel in December 1786 and settled at Brussels, half of their ready money had been exhausted at least four months before the Inch rental could be of any assistance. Fortunately, among family members they met in the city were Ryan's niece Eliza Woulfe and her new husband, John Mansfield. It was subsequently decided between both parties that they would share expenses. This agreement came just in time, as Mary Anne Ryan had fallen pregnant, leading her husband to decide that Brussels or Spa would be the only places where 'Mary could possibly remain with any comfort or safety'. As a result, Ryan estimated their expenses would not, even with the 'strictest economy', fall below sixty guineas a month.⁶⁵ By early spring 1787, he found his present finances were 'just expiring', and the need for money was such that Ryan ordered his steward back in Ireland to dispose of the furniture in Inch House 'as quick as possible' to raise a couple of hundred pounds.⁶⁶ This decision to sell the furniture at Inch, although it did not apparently occur in the end, shows that Ryan was scraping the bottom of the barrel in relation to his resources in order to guarantee his family's day-to-day subsistence.

⁶² The November gale of his rental would cover 90 percent of the charge: G. Ryan to P. Roche, late March 1787 (ibid., MS 439); Pocket notebook recording expenses kept by George Ryan, 1786–1790 (ibid., MS 256).

⁶³ Barnard, *Making the grand figure*, p. 328.

⁶⁴ In February 1787 their luggage was apparently still in Cork: G. Ryan to Dr Fogarty, 27 Feb. 1787 (*Ryan Collection*, MS 395); Pocket notebook kept by G. Ryan, 1786–1790 (ibid., MS 256); Pocket account book kept by George Ryan and Daniel Ryan, 1786–1808 (ibid., MS 448).

⁶⁵ Ryan qualified this figure by comparing it to the 100 guineas he estimated was spent per month by the Mansfields: Draft letter. George Ryan to [Philip Roche John], 1 July 1787 (ibid., MS 397).

⁶⁶ G. Ryan to P. Roche, late March 1787 (ibid., MS 439); G. Ryan to Dr J. Fogarty, 26 Apr. 1787 (ibid., MS 396).

George Ryan's management of his affairs thus far would appear to have been short sighted and rather haphazard. However, Ryan had designed a financial strategy during the winter of 1786–7 which, at worst, would satisfy his most pressing creditors and, at best, would discharge the majority of his debts. As matters stood, he believed the only people from whom 'any attack on the Estate might be expected' were his family's three oldest creditors, and this, he continued, 'may certainly be dreaded if something is not done'. With his resources so reduced, the only reserve of consequence that Ryan had at his disposal was the leasehold of the lands of Liscreagh and Coolderry. This property was of good quality and held on an advantageous 999-year lease from his Mathew cousins at Thomastown. It was estimated the sale of the lease would generate at least £1,200, and Ryan believed his tenant Nicholas Meagher 'would give the money'. Ryan, therefore, empowered the steward of his estate, Dr James Fogarty of Castle Fogarty, to sell the interest in 'Mathew's Grounds' as quickly as possible. The sale of the lease would, Ryan estimated, be enough to pay two creditors outright (£912) and the accumulated interest owed to a third (£386). This latter individual had written that if the interest was paid, he would leave Ryan to pay the principal amount (£1,000) at his convenience. To discharge the majority of his remaining debts, it 'always occurred' to Ryan that the 'most eligible way of making matters easy' was the sale of part of his landed estate. If, for instance, he sold land equating to £200 of his rental income at 18 years purchase, this 'would at once wipe off all the old Debts' except the £1,800 marriage portion owed to his widowed and youngest sister Elizabeth Mathew. This latter encumbrance was the least pressing, as Mrs Mathew resided with the Ryans and was contented to live off the yearly interest the sum accrued. What would remain, his 'after marriage' debts, could then be partially discharged by the 'entire surplus of the present years rents', and in a further 18 months or so, Ryan estimated all of his debts would be paid.⁶⁷

In theory, George Ryan's strategy to pay his debts offered the most practical way of meeting his creditors on the 'straightest road to their payment', thereby leading him to believe that 'no one will be a sufferer by me for should I die without issue every one is secured'.⁶⁸ Here, Ryan's statements are insightful, because they show his continued

⁶⁷ In relation to the sale of part of the Inch estate, Ryan had crossed paths with his father-in-law's brother, Thomas Roche, a wealthy Rotterdam merchant. Ryan had mentioned 'this business' to Thomas Roche because the latter was returning to Ireland at the time to purchase land: G. Ryan to Dr Fogarty, 27 Feb. 1787 (ibid., MS 395); G. Ryan to P. Roche, late March 1787 (ibid., MS 439); Mary Casteleyn, 'Thomas Roche of Limerick and Rotterdam 1736–1788' in *The Old Limerick Journal* (Winter, 2011), p. 36.

⁶⁸ G. Ryan to Dr Fogarty, 27 Feb. 1787 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 395); G. Ryan to P. Roche, late March 1787 (ibid., Mss 439 & 426).

preoccupation with honour and honesty in relation to his dealings, while also highlighting that ill health and his possible death guided his decision making process. However, despite his best intentions, Ryan's preferred course of action was frustrated, both by legal issues and by his father-in-law. When he informed Philip Roche John about his idea to sell part of the Inch estate in order to service his debts, Ryan learned that this was not possible, as the 1783 marriage articles he had entered into prohibited the sale of land. This was because the agreement had entailed or placed in trust the estate for the eldest surviving male heir produced by the marriage. Ryan was once more left bemused by the workings of the law, and highlights how his new status as an Irish gentleman conflicted with the world he had once inhabited as a merchant and debt collector in Peru, where the inability to maintain one's credit could have serious reputational and legal consequences. As a result, in 1787, Ryan complained that he 'could never comprehend' how it was that his 'marriage articles ... could interfere or how any act of mine could exclude the property from paying its just & lawful debts'. Ryan wondered 'where can the difficulty lie', when the sale of the land would be a matter 'pleasing & beneficial' to him as the debtor. More importantly, this would also secure the estate in the strongest manner for any 'future issue' from the 'depredations of usury & lawsuits which will be the natural consequence' of not tackling the issue directly.⁶⁹

The entail of the Inch estate meant George Ryan became tenant-for-life, with legal ownership technically held by the trustees of the settlement. Ryan could not break the entail via a common recovery until his eldest (as yet unborn) son came of age and agreed to the recovery. However, there did exist the possibility that, with the trustees' agreement, Ryan could sell part of the estate, and he believed Walter Woulfe, 'as an honest man' and trustee of the settlement, would support his plan. Nevertheless, Philip Roche John remained firm in his decision that no part of the estate would be sold. Legally speaking, Roche occupied a much stronger position via the settlement, and he could use the £1,000 bond Ryan had 'fool like' entered into at the time of the marriage as a potent deterrent. The main goal behind all strict settlements was to ensure estates would pass intact from one heir to the next while also guaranteeing suitable portions for younger children and a widow's jointure. Roche's decision, therefore, was undoubtedly motivated by the belief

⁶⁹ Ibid.

that his young daughter would outlive Ryan and that the Inch estate would one-day descend to one of his Ryan grandchildren.⁷⁰

A second factor that likely influenced Philip Roche John's decision not to support the sale of land was the nature by which Ryan's inherited debts were attached to the Inch estate. Ryan's predecessors had used bonds or written promises as security for the loans they had acquired during the 1760s and 1770s. In doing so they created judgments 'which overrode the whole of the property, however extensive, rendering it impossible' for the owner 'to disencumber himself by selling off a portion of such property'. This differed from England where a landowner wishing to borrow money 'gave a mortgage of a particular farm or township: the mortgage affected that part of his property alone, leaving the remainder free'.⁷¹ Therefore, if Ryan sold land and repaid a creditor, this did not mean the land in question had been divested of other bond debts, meaning a new owner's title could be contested by the other creditors.

George Ryan and Philip Roche John had clearly reached an impasse when it came to the sale of part of the Inch estate. Nevertheless, Roche did eventually show himself sensible to the problems faced by his son-in-law. Up until March 1787 he had remained divorced from Ryan's affairs, but a subsequent letter to his daughter Mary Anne gave the impression that he was willing to extend his direct assistance to Ryan. Emboldened by this news, Ryan took up his pen to address his father-in-law. The letter that followed ran to several pages as he 'very candidly laid open' to Roche his affairs and 'the state of my mind'. The merits of selling part of the Inch estate were discussed once more, but Ryan did not press the issue too closely. However, the point was made that something needed to be done to help settle his finances.⁷² In reply, Roche 'once more reaffirmed the protection' of Ryan's affairs and offered his own strategy:

He [*Roche*] hopes of being able to raise money on a mortgage for payment of such of the old judgment debts as are calling in on condition that the rents should be made over to him & in such case as he will also strike out some plan with Regard to the other debts as well as our future prudent & economical subsistence.⁷³

⁷⁰ G. Ryan to Dr Fogarty, 26 Apr. 1787 (ibid., MS 396); Will of Philip Roche John, merchant of Limerick, 20 June 1791 – 27 Sept. 1793 [probate 2 Jan. 1798] (National Archives, Kew, *PCC*, PROB 11/1300/14); English and Saville, 'Family settlement and the "Rise of Great Estates"', pp 556–7.

⁷¹ File of legal searches entered for judgements for debts entered against members of the Ryan family, 1765–1795 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 233); Jacqueline Ann Crowley, 'The five year experiment': the Incumbered Estates Court, 1849–54' (Maynooth University, PhD thesis, 2017), p. 34; *Hansard's parliamentary debates (Commons), third series, 1830-91* (London, vol. lxxxix, 1847), col. 708.

⁷² G. Ryan to P. Roche, late March 1787 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 439).

⁷³ G. Ryan to Dr Fogarty, 26 Apr. 1787 (ibid., Mss 396 & 426).

Given Ryan's financial and legal predicament, this was the most logical solution to his problem: the mortgage would pay off his pressing bond debts and the resulting new debt would be tied to a specific piece of property. As a result, Ryan 'approved & accepted' of the offer 'with thanks'. He subsequently wrote to his creditors and representatives back in Ireland that Roche had taken control of his financial affairs.⁷⁴ At face value at least this was a move in the right direction for Ryan and his attempts to pay off his most pressing creditors. However, the idea of Roche's help would prove, in reality, less beneficial over the coming months, but as far as George Ryan was concerned during the spring of 1787, the agreement had added some much needed shape and balance to his world.

Just as George Ryan's financial prospects had seemingly improved by the spring of 1787, so too had his strength and spirits, which were 'as good as ever I knew them'. His attacks of gout and rheumatism had abated, but Ryan was still left with 'a kind of hurry or difficulty' in his breathing any time he attempted to speak or walk fast, which a physician would later describe as a 'tendency to asthma'. Smoke, the cold and foggy weather tended to exacerbate the problem, preventing his 'stirring from home at night' and making him dependent on his brother Captain Denis MulRyan to squire Mrs Ryan 'to our evening parties which are petty numerous'. Therefore, with his financial prospects appearing secure, and with his own health and that of his pregnant wife in mind, Ryan decided to take the Geronstere waters at Spa until their travelling companions, the Mansfields, returned to Ireland in late July.⁷⁵

As was the case with other fashionable Northern European towns and cities, Spa was popular with tourists and proved expensive.⁷⁶ As a result costs ran high for Ryan. These included hiring the house of a local doctor at 2 crowns per day (approx. 10 shillings), daily meals supplied by a *Traiteur* at half a crown per person, while wages to their new valet de louage, Clementine, cost a further 3 crowns per month. This led the costs of their three month stay at Spa to exceed £200.⁷⁷ Although some money had been remitted from

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Elizabeth Mansfield (nee Woulfe) passed away on 25 June 1795 at Tramore, Co. Waterford. Upon her death, James Ryan, resident of her home town of Carrick-on-Suir, would recount in his diary: 'She is much regretted, as she was respected when living, being consummately gentle and well bred! rich in Earthly possessions, but far more rich in GOOD WORKS! For which may she receive the Reward in that Kingdom which is not of this World!': James Ryan's *Commonplace Book* – "A Carrickman's Diary" – 1787–1809 (Carrick-on-Suir Heritage Centre, typescript copy, p. 66, MS f. 121); G. Ryan to Dr Fogarty, 27 Feb. 1787 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 395); G. Ryan to P. Roche, 1 July 1787 (ibid., MS 397); Pocket notebook kept by G. Ryan, 1786–1790 (ibid., MS 256).

⁷⁶ Black, *The British abroad*, pp 91–2.

⁷⁷ After 15 July the cost of the family's lodgings rose to 3 crowns per day: Pocket notebook kept by G. Ryan, 1786–1790 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 256); Pocket account book kept by G. Ryan and D. Ryan, 1786–1808 (ibid., MS 448).

his Irish rental, the only way George Ryan's finances could bear this expense was through sharing costs with the Mansfields. Therefore, once the latter couple were preparing to return home, Ryan was obliged to make plans for the coming winter. In a letter to his father-in-law in July, Ryan stated that their intended destination was the South of France, which had been chosen based on three considerations: 'I mean Mary's situation, my own health & our finances'. In relation to his own health, Ryan believed another winter in a northern climate was out of the question, due to his asthma and a fear of the return of his other ailments. Nice and Marseilles were ruled out as destinations because of their popularity with English tourists and the resulting high costs. Instead, Ryan had fixed on staying in the vicinity of Montpellier or Toulouse, this being the most desirable place for his health and for his wife to see out her first pregnancy. His cousin, Justin McCarthy, the Count of Toulouse, had also been in touch, informing Ryan that the small towns of Beziers and Pézenas a couple of leagues outside Montpellier and a few days ride from Toulouse were ideal, 'being pleasantly situated in a good climate & pretty good Society & ... have not yet much accustomed to English extravagance'. The Count concluded that the family could live as well as they could wish for about £400 yearly with every expense included.⁷⁸

George Ryan hoped to reach his final destination by the sixth month of his wife's pregnancy, but weighing on his mind once more were his finances. Based 'on the closest calculations' he believed that no less than 250 Louis d'or or English pounds would be necessary for the remainder of the year as their travelling and other additional expenses 'must necessarily run high'. By July, what money that had been remitted from his rental had been exhausted by their stay in Spa. This compelled Ryan to call on his father-in-law's offer of assistance. However, over the coming months, despite dispatching several increasingly anxious letters to Ireland, no reply or assistance was forthcoming from Roche.⁷⁹ With no word or money from his father-in-law, and with time against him, George Ryan was placed 'under the shameful necessity of borrowing a little money for

⁷⁸ Justin McCarthy was ennobled as the Count of Toulouse in 1776 or 1777 by Louis XIV of France. He assembled one of the best libraries in Europe which was sold after his death in 1811: G. Ryan to P. Roche, late March 1787 (ibid., MS 426); G. Ryan to P. Roche, 1 July 1787 (ibid., MS 397); Lettres de Nationalité et de reconnaissance de Noblesse pour M. le Comte de McCarthy, 5 April 1777 (NLI, *MacCarthy Reagh papers*, MS 50,561/12); Maggs brothers, *Bookbinding in the British Isles: sixteenth to the twentieth century. Sale catalogue 1212, Part II, summer 1996* (London, 1996), p. 10.

⁷⁹ Between 1 July and 22 October 1787, George Ryan wrote to Philip Roche John on five occasions without reply. A full list of the letters written by Ryan, amounting to 258 in total, during his stay on the Continent are recorded in: Pocket notebook kept by G. Ryan, 1786–1790 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 256); G. Ryan to P. Roche, 1 July 1787 (ibid., MS 397); Draft letter. George Ryan to [Philip Roche John], 30 July 1787 (ibid., MS 394); Draft letter. George Ryan to Philip Roche John, 30 Aug. 1787 (ibid., MS 399); Draft letter. George Ryan to [Philip Roche John], 18 Nov. 1787 (ibid., MS 400).

our expenses' until they reached Paris. Having arrived in the capital in late August, Roche remained silent and money was once more in short supply. Ryan was again forced to apply to two merchants for loans worth £200. Nevertheless, expenses for their eleven-day stay in Paris had 'run very high', and with Mary Ryan's 'situation' permitting no delay the Ryans departed Paris and arrived in Toulouse two weeks later. It was then decided to remain in the city close to their McCarthy relatives until Mary Ryan gave birth. A house was secured in rue du Conard for £4 per month (as opposed to £15 10s paid in Spa), while a servant, Pierre Combrett, and kitchen maid, Joannette, were also hired.⁸⁰

No money was seemingly forthcoming from Philip Roche John until the beginning of 1788, and a sign of Ryan's growing frustration with his father-in-law came once Mary Ryan 'was brought to bed' with her first child, Daniel, on 16 November 1787. Over the following days George Ryan dispatched letters to friends and family members, announcing as he did to Walter Woulfe in a distinctly mercantile manner that 'the credit of the family is again returned by Mary's safe delivery ... of a boy as big herself & as ugly as his father'. In contrast to the lengthy and joyous description supplied to Woulfe, the account provided to the child's grandfather, Philip Roche John, was matter of fact and extended to just one sentence.⁸¹ This brevity on Ryan's part undoubtedly stemmed from Roche's poor management of his affairs. The reason behind Roche's inactivity is not immediately apparent however. It is known that he had been suffering from a 'heavy rheumatism' in his shoulders and thighs, which Ryan, as a fellow sufferer, could not but have a 'lively fellow feeling' for. Compounding the situation further was the fact that during winter it took three weeks for one of Ryan's letters to reach Ireland, with the same amount of time required for a response.⁸² These issues aside, it still took Roche a total of five months to dispatch just £180 to Ryan. What this suggests is that Roche would only remit money as it became available from the rents collected at Inch and after interest payments were made to creditors. In other words, Roche refused to extend his son-in-law a line of credit.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the world of merchants and their business dealings was governed by the conjoined factors of trust, credit and reputation. However,

⁸⁰ G. Ryan to P. Roche, 30 Aug. 1787 (ibid., MS 399); G. Ryan to P. Roche, 18 Nov. 1787 (ibid., MS 400); Pocket notebook kept by G. Ryan, 1786–1790 (ibid., MS 256); Pocket account book kept by G. Ryan and D. Ryan, 1786–1808 (ibid., MS 448).

⁸¹ Pocket notebook kept by G. Ryan, 1786–1790 (ibid., MS 256); G. Ryan to P. Roche, 18 Nov. 1787 (ibid., MS 400); George Ryan to Walter Woulfe, 17 Nov. 1787 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 38,308/3).

⁸² G. Ryan to P. Roche, 18 Nov. 1787 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 400).

the lack of trust shown by Roche towards his son-in-law was probably not entirely personal, and likely stemmed from an understanding of class. Roche was a hardnosed merchant and businessman, who knew from personal experience that landed gentlemen, given the opportunity, had a tendency to rack up debt. Ryan's credentials as a merchant and colonial administrator once upon a time did not figure in Roche's estimation of the situation. Instead, to Roche, he was a gentleman whose financial predicament was a product of his station in society. Therefore, Roche probably mistrusted Ryan's status as a gentleman, because the need to make the right impression within society knew no bounds when it came to the expenditure of money. This stands in sharp contrast to the relationship Ryan's father had maintained with his own father-in-law, Justin McCarthy of Springhouse, who for almost two decades had advanced Daniel Ryan thousands of pounds without charging interest.⁸³ Both the Ryans and McCarthys were members of the old Catholic landed elite whose pedigrees stretched back centuries, and both families were well aware that their status necessitated spending that did not always make the strictest economic sense. In contrast, the Roches, urban merchants, had accumulated their wealth and standing over several generations through frugality, restraint and astute business partnerships. Indeed, marriage was a central tenet of good business among mercantile families, as seen in 1751 when Philip Roche John married the daughter of his father's business partner John Kelly. Philip Roche John was the first member of his family to make a foray into landed society by marrying his children into the old elite. This, as is evident with the example of George Ryan, brought about a clash of world views.⁸⁴

To George Ryan, of course, the lack of trust shown by Philip Roche John must have appeared personal, and this helps to explain why his letters to Roche were so detailed and always sought to explain his thoughts and actions when it came to his finances. Thus, in one instance, Ryan assured Roche that he kept 'a very minute account' of his expenses, and continued by providing a breakdown of his costs in which he concluded by stating 'I give you my honour there is not a single livre that could well be avoided' (see Fig. 6.2).⁸⁵ He attempted to qualify his position further at a different date by observing the 'idea we have at home of the cheapness' of places like France was an 'egregious mistake'. He admitted that a man of 'rank & large fortune' could save money by 'curtailing that show & parade with which he must appear in his own Country', but he would defy any man

⁸³ Daniel Ryan's account with Justin McCarthy, 1738–1756 (ibid., MS 198).

⁸⁴ Rodgers, *Ireland, slavery and anti-slavery*, p. 137; Wall, 'The rise of a Catholic middle class', pp 102–3.

⁸⁵ Draft letter. George Ryan to Philip Roche John, 31 Aug. 1788 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 410); Draft letter. George Ryan to [Philip Roche John], 1 Oct. 1788 (ibid., MS 411).

with a family accustomed ‘to any kind of decency, to exist on less than six hundred £ a year’.⁸⁶ Nevertheless, Ryan’s continual attempts to reason with his father-in-law fell on deaf ears.

Expense	£	Approx. % of expenditure
Diet	202 6s 4d	38.9
House rent	59	11.4
Firing	23 8s	4.5
Wine	26	5
Coach & chase hire	30	5.8
Washing	11 10s	2.2
Servants wages	32 10s	6.3
Expenses for Mrs Ryan & Child	36 8s	7
Household goods	19 10s	3.8
Personal expenses dress & c.	78 10s	15
Total	519 2s 4d	100

Fig. 6.2– Expenses incurred in France by the Ryans from 1 Nov. 1787 to 1 Oct. 1788.⁸⁷

By the beginning of 1788 Philip Roche John’s disinterest in George Ryan’s affairs had begun to take their toll. In March Ryan wrote to Dr James Fogarty, his steward at Inch, disheartened by the belief that ‘I am damned never to get a letter from Ireland that does not throw me into the Mulligrubs’. The previous April, Philip Roche John had promised a strategy that would discharge many of Ryan’s most pressing debts via a mortgage. No progress on the issue had been made eleven months later, and Ryan decided therefore to confront his father-in-law. He informed Roche that ‘it is now just eleven months that I have been building Castles in the air though on a foundation laid down by yourself’. He continued by observing that his affairs would remain in an unsettled condition ‘as long [as] you do not interest yourself in [an] off hand manner [sic]’. Ryan believed that if Roche and Dr Fogarty ‘could come together’ in Limerick a great deal ‘might be done ... in half an hour ... [than if] we were to be exchanging letters for a year’. However, if Roche ignored the request and ‘declares off again’, then Ryan would permit Fogarty ‘to exert every means’ in order to take greater control of his affairs in Ireland. If it came to this, Ryan was determined to jettison his father-in-law’s financial strategy. In its stead, he resurrected the sale of the lease of Liscreagh and Coolderry as the ‘only means on earth to pay off’ his pressing creditors, and declared himself ready to travel to Ireland at any time to sign off on the sale.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ G. Ryan to P. Roche, 25 May 1788 (ibid., MS 408).

⁸⁷ The original costs in French livre have been converted to pounds based on a conversion rate of 24 livres (1 Louis d’or) to a pound: G. Ryan to P. Roche, 1 Oct. 1788 (ibid., MS 411).

⁸⁸ Pocket notebook kept by G. Ryan, 1786–1790 (ibid., MS 256); Draft letter. George Ryan to [Philip Roche John], 12 Mar. 1788 (ibid., MS 401); Draft Letter. George Ryan to [Dr James Fogarty], 12 Mar. 1788 (ibid., MS 402).

Philip Roche John's response is unknown, but it is clear from subsequent events that Ryan remained hopeful of ending his father-in-law's involvement in his affairs. However, two months after he confronted Roche, a letter arrived from his agent at Inch, Philip Fogarty (Dr Fogarty's cousin), informing Ryan that Dr Fogarty had taken ill and gone to seek out the 'Bath Water'.⁸⁹ Dr Fogarty would later die at sea and, without his assistance, Ryan pondered the situation that confronted him. His own return to Ireland was considered and strongly opposed by his wife, due in no small part to their 'penniless situation'. Since March he had had to rely on 'a little pocket money of Mary's' to answer their day-to-day expenses, while larger outgoings were accumulating into debts. Stuck in France, Ryan lacked friends back in Ireland capable or willing to take up his cause. He observed that Walter Woulfe 'knows not my affairs' and was also owed money by Ryan, who felt ashamed because he could not repay his closest friend.⁹⁰ After deliberating on the issue, Ryan decided the only remaining person he could turn to was his brother-in-law John Roche. Therefore, Ryan wrote to Roche, entreating him to accept his power of attorney and to take charge of his affairs in Ireland. He apologised for the difficulty this might cause his one remaining friend, but he assured Roche that he would endeavour to make his request as little trouble as possible by placing his agent Philip Fogarty, 'an active & honest young man', entirely under his direction.⁹¹

John Roche agreed to his brother-in-law's proposal, and with his help secured George Ryan undoubtedly believed his affairs had finally turned a corner. However, ill fortune would once more frustrate his plans. By August no word had been received from John Roche for some time, while all of Ryan's other relatives back in Ireland also remained quiet. Given this, in a letter to Philip Roche John written at the end of August, uncertainty and a sense of isolation had crept into Ryan's words. He thought himself 'back in the

⁸⁹ Dr James Fogarty inherited the neighbouring estate of Castle Fogarty (Garranroe) in c.1770 from his father Dr Thomas Fogarty (Chapter 3). His cousin, Philip Fogarty of Ballinlonty, was agent on the Inch estate and related to George Ryan through his great grandmother, Ellen Fogarty, daughter of John Ryan of Lisnasella d.1666 (see Appendix 7): The Fogartys of Ballinlonty (TCLT, *Fogarty papers*, typescript copy, vol. xxix), pp 10–11; The Fogartys of Castle Fogarty (ibid.), pp 23–4; Draft letter. George Ryan to [Philip Fogarty], 20 May 1788 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 407).

⁹⁰ Upon his death, Dr James Fogarty's estate descended to his nephew Thomas Lenigan of Co. Kilkenny. The daughter of Lenigan went on to marry George Ryan's fourth son John in 1821: Draft letter. George Ryan to [John Roche Philip], 20 May 1788 (ibid., MS 406); Draft letter. George Ryan to [Philip Fogarty], 20 May 1788 (ibid., MS 407); Payments made by George Ryan to the representatives of Walter Woulfe, 1785–1799 (ibid., MS 255/2); Thomas Lenigan to George Ryan, 1 May 1788 (ibid., MS 404); John Burke, *A genealogical and heraldic history of the landed gentry; or commoners of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. iii (London, 1838), p. 701; The Fogartys of Castle Fogarty (TCLT, *Fogarty papers*, vol. xxix), pp 21–24.

⁹¹ G. Ryan to P. Roche, 4 May 1788 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 405); G. Ryan to J. Roche, 20 May 1788 (ibid., MS 406); G. Ryan to P. Fogarty, 20 May 1788 (ibid., MS 407); G. Ryan to P. Roche, 25 May 1788 (ibid., MS 208).

bowells [*sic*] of Peru forgotten ... by all my family', and often felt he was 'really dead these three & twenty months past & of course rotten & forgot'. However, Ryan was resolute that the silence of his relatives would not affect his wife, and he was determined to fill her 'thank [*tank*] with a thousand how d'ya does for you all & as many assurances of my true love & affection'. But, he continued, 'why the Deuce does not some of you write to us?'. He could excuse Philip Roche John as a busy man, 'but how can I excuse all them idle two legged girls of yours & your one nosed son of a (that blank is for you to fill)'.⁹² George Ryan's harsh language shows that he had come to appreciate the importance of maintaining familial correspondence in the five years since his marriage. Since then, his financial affairs had depended on the support of his relatives or 'friends', but his references to being dead and forgotten highlights the extent to which he felt such individuals had failed him. Moreover, and perhaps the final straw in Ryan's mind, it appeared that his wife had been abandoned by her female relatives, the very individuals whose role within the family was to help ensure bonds of kinship were expressed and maintained through correspondence.

George Ryan's growing frustration is clear to be seen, and his hopes were dealt a severe blow upon later learning that John Roche had also been struck down by illness 'which obliged him to go to the waters'.⁹³ Therefore, despite all of his plans over the previous months, Ryan was once more left solely reliant on his father-in-law's support. Nevertheless, Philip Roche John showed himself willing to continue his assistance and remitted £108 to Ryan. However, over the next three months no word or extra money were forthcoming from Ireland. Even though he had managed to reduce his monthly expenditure to below £50, George Ryan was once again facing serious financial problems; something he only managed to stave off for the time being by taking a loan of £60 from his wife.⁹⁴

A partial explanation for this silence from Ireland came in November 1788. The Ryans were informed that John Roche had succumbed to his illness and passed away, leading George Ryan to admit that his 'late hopes' of sorting his affair had been 'buried with my friend'. Added to this, the death of his only son dealt a particularly heavy blow to Philip

⁹² This is the only time George Ryan dropped his balanced demeanour within his surviving correspondence. However, these disparaging remarks were contained within a draft letter and they may not have remained in the final version posted by Ryan. It does, nevertheless, show that Ryan was feeling the stress of his situation: G. Ryan to P. Roche, 31 Aug. 1788 (*ibid.*, MS 410).

⁹³ G. Ryan to P. Roche, 1 Oct. 1788 (*ibid.*, MS 411).

⁹⁴ G. Ryan to P. Roche, 31 Aug. 1788 (*ibid.*, MS 410); Pocket notebook kept by G. Ryan, 1786–1790 (*ibid.*, MS 256).

Roche John's health: shortly after receiving the news he suffered a 'most severe stroke'. For nearly a month George Ryan awaited word over Philip Roche John's condition and, 'dreading the consequences' of his stroke, Mary Ryan's 'uneasiness' had been 'worked up to the highest pitch'. Fortunately, Roche's health recovered, but as matters stood George Ryan believed his presence back in Ireland was the only option left open to him. His affairs were 'now more confused than ever', and once spring arrived Ryan would gladly endure two long sea voyages, 'however unpleasant', if Roche felt they would be of purpose.⁹⁵ Nevertheless, Ryan was quickly faced with a new predicament, this time closer to home. Mary Anne Ryan was pregnant with their second child, and having successfully delivered one child in Toulouse, she had 'fixed her confidence' in the assistance the town had to offer.⁹⁶ George Ryan agreed wholeheartedly with his wife's choice and assured Roche that he would already be on route to Ireland if he could in 'any way reconcile Mary to my departure, but I might as well think of catching hold of the moon'.⁹⁷

Given what had occurred during the preceding months, George Ryan must have felt his prospects during 1789 would continue their decline. However, his fortunes finally took a positive turn. The death of his only son, followed by his own illness, appear to have caused Philip Roche John to reconsider his relationship with George Ryan. Roche finally took heed of his son-in-law's longstanding requests for assistance and began to remit money to France on a regular basis. The effect on Ryan's attitude towards Roche is clear to be seen in his correspondence, and from then he used words such as affectionate and esteemed when addressing his father-in-law. His thoughts also moved away from discussing his finances at length towards news of his young family. A steady supply of money meant that they could take up residence in a better house in the centre of Toulouse facing onto the public gardens, where the heavily pregnant Mrs Ryan and their eighteen-month old son Daniel both 'constantly parade & waddle as stoutly as possible'. Furthermore, by June 1789, George Ryan informed Roche that come the middle of the following month 'I hope to have the pleasure of announcing the safe delivery of a little namesake of yours or our dearest mother'.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ *Ennis Chronicle*, 17 Nov. 1788; Draft letter. George Roche to [Philip Roche John], 21 Jan. 1789 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 414).

⁹⁶ Draft letter. George Ryan to [Philip Roche John], 17 Mar. 1789 (ibid., MS 416).

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Draft letter. George Ryan to [Philip Roche John], 27 June 1789 (ibid., MS 418); G. Ryan to P. Roche, 17 Mar. 1789 (ibid., MS 416).

Both Mary Ryan and her new ‘brat’ Philip emerged from the pregnancy without complications, and the subsequent year the family spent in Toulouse was the most idyllic since their arrival on the continent in 1787.⁹⁹ Helping to underpin this situation was the settled nature of Ryan’s finances. A steady supply of money meant economising efforts could be continued by design, rather than pure necessity, and for the second year in a row the family’s annual expenses fell below £550. Indeed, the family’s comfortable existence continued despite wider events in France and the Austrian Netherlands (see Appendix 6). Come the beginning of 1790, George Ryan nevertheless felt it was time to return to Ireland with his young family. Mary Ryan was anxious to be with her elderly parents back in Limerick, and to help guarantee their return, Philip Roche John offered his son-in-law a deal he could not resist. The sale of Liscreagh and Coolderry was once more raised, but this time Philip Roche John offered to purchase the leasehold personally. Roche also advanced Ryan the money necessary for their return, and by July the Ryans had arrived back at Inch, before departing for Limerick City a few days later. Philip Roche John’s purchase of the leasehold of Liscreagh and Coolderry for £1,400 followed soon after, and with this money in hand, George Ryan set out for Cork in late November to discharge most of the sum owed to his family’s largest and longest standing creditors, the Comerfords of Cork. Added to this, over the coming years Roche agreed to purchase Ryan’s two other pressing inherited debts, thereby protecting him from any potential lawsuits.¹⁰⁰ Therefore, despite the very obvious vicissitudes George Ryan’s affairs had experienced during his self-imposed exile abroad, one part of his financial strategy was achieved shortly after he returned to Ireland. For better or for worse, the central figure who had enabled this was his father-in-law Philip Roche John, who for the time being had reconsidered his relationship with Ryan. As a result, a decade after his inheritance of the Inch estate in 1780, George Ryan had essentially halved his encumbrances to approximately £5,539 of which four-fifths was inherited debt.¹⁰¹

After his return to Ireland in 1790 George Ryan did not resume the lifestyle of a provincial landlord, a life of entertaining and hospitable excess that he clearly disliked on

⁹⁹ Draft letter. George Ryan to [Philip Roche John], 9 Aug. 1789 (*ibid.*, MS 419).

¹⁰⁰ Draft letter. George Ryan to [Philip Roche John], 19 Apr. 1790 (*ibid.*, MS 430); Philip Roche John to George Ryan, 2 Dec. 1790 (*ibid.*, MS 431); Pocket notebook kept by G. Ryan, 1786–1790 (*ibid.*, MS 256); Pocket account book kept by G. Ryan and D. Ryan, 1786–1808 (*ibid.*, MS 448); Schedule of costs incurred by George Ryan discharging money owed to Sir Roger Faulkner and John, Michael and Patrick Comerford of Cork, 31 Dec. 1790 (*ibid.*, MS 432); Assignment of debt owed by George Ryan to Sir William Gleadowe Newcomen to Philip Roche John, 16 May 1795 (*ibid.*, MS 261); Assignment of debt owed by George Ryan to heirs of John Comerford to Philip Roche John via his executor Standish Barry, 29 July 1796 (*ibid.*, MS 262); Will of P. Roche, 27 Sept. 1793 (TNA, *PCC*, PROB 11/1300/14).

¹⁰¹ Ledger kept by G. and D. Ryan, 1778–1811 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 175).

both personal and financial grounds. After a short stay at Inch in July 1790, Ryan would never reside there again, nor would any other member of his family until 1809. Instead, Ryan and his young family became internal absentees: Inch House and its grounds were leased to the estate's largest tenant and the Ryans relocated to Limerick City. The family took up residence in a Georgian townhouse in the city's newest and most fashionable quarter of Newtown Perry. Their new home at number 9 Rutland Street was situated on the same street as Philip Roche John's main office and adjacent to the city's imposing Palladian Custom House.¹⁰²

By the time of his death in early 1805, George Ryan's debts, amounting to £5,390, had remained largely static since his return to Ireland in 1790 (Appendix 5G). At first glance this is surprising, as Ryan's income, once all annual charges were deducted, had risen to £836 by 1800 (Appendix 5H). This would suggest that life among the upper echelons of Limerick society was indeed expensive, while the added cost of educating and supporting his six children eventually ran to several hundred pounds per year.¹⁰³ Furthermore, despite their improved relationship, or indeed because of it, Ryan was lured, once again, into a false sense of expectation by his father-in-law. Philip Roche John was a fabulously wealthy merchant at the time of his death, with assets worth over £100,000 before his extensive urban and country properties were taken into consideration. Therefore, following his death in June 1797, the loss to Limerick and his family was lamented in the local press:

... the industrious Farmer as well as the numerous Poor, have lost a valuable friend, his Family the best of Husbands and Fathers, and the World in general a good and wise man.¹⁰⁴

As Roche's only son had pre-deceased him, George Ryan represented one of the few family members he could count on to manage his estate after his passing. As such, he was described in Philip Roche John's will as one of 'the nearest friend[s] of my family'. Although he had never witnessed the will or any of its codicils, Ryan would have probably been aware that his future duties would extend to being an executor of Roche's will and co-guardian to his grandchildren, including his main heir, Philip Roche the younger. In

¹⁰² It is quite possible that Ryan rented this house from Philip Roche John: Lease of the house and demesne of Inch. George Ryan to McWalter Burke for 31 years, 12 Sept. 1794 (ibid., MS 122); Pocket notebook kept by G. Ryan, 1786–1790 (ibid., MS 256); Pocket account book kept by G. Ryan and D. Ryan, 1786–1808 (ibid., MS 448); Lenihan, *Limerick: its history and antiquities*, p. 398.

¹⁰³ For example: Bill for half a year's tuition and board for Daniel and Philip Ryan at Oscott School, 1802 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 449).

¹⁰⁴ Kemmy, 'The Granary', p. 5; *The Limerick Chronicle*, 7 June 1797; Statement of the effective property of Philip Roche John Esq of Limerick, 1 March 1803 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 801).

return, it appears Ryan and others felt he could expect a generous legacy from his father-in-law. However, once the will was read, George Ryan's hopes were quickly dashed as he was to receive nothing. At the very least he may have expected a return of his interest in the leasehold of Liscreagh and Coolderry. Instead, Roche left the income this lease produced to the 'sole and separate use and benefit' of his daughter Mary Anne Ryan 'without the control management or direction of her husband'.¹⁰⁵ Therefore, Philip Roche John had shown some generosity towards his daughter but to the noticeable exclusion of her husband. Word of the contents of the will quickly spread among the family, and in a letter to his elder brother back in Limerick, Major Denis MulRyan observed:

I own every friend of yours here [*in London*], find themselves much disappointed to see how he has acted in regard of some of his family but particularly towards you and Mary, for whom he always seemed to have a preference.¹⁰⁶

Major MulRyan could empathise with the sense of disappointment George Ryan was harbouring because of the will, informing him 'there can be no Remedy for what is past and done, but it leaves a Sting upon the Mind, which leads to Reflections which cannot be to the advantage of the Person who is the Subject of them'. In contrast to the adulation expressed towards Philip Roche John in the press, Major MulRyan offered his own judgement on the man, hoping 'he may meet with more indulgence in the other World then [*sic*] in general People seem to have for his Memory in this'. He concluded his opinion on the matter by reminding his brother that the executorship would be 'a very arduous Task' that could require more attention than his health would permit, and he implored Ryan not to let his exertions lead him beyond 'what is prudent or safe'.¹⁰⁷

George Ryan committed the mistake of assuming that he would receive a generous legacy from his father-in-law. Nevertheless, despite this disappointment, Ryan's preference towards honesty and honour in his dealings continued: he would spend the remaining years of his life as an executor of the will, dealing with debtors, both in Ireland and abroad, and managing vast sums of money on behalf of the estate and its beneficiaries. The main heir to the Roche fortune, Philip Roche the younger, also came under Ryan's

¹⁰⁵ Following Mary Anne Ryan's death, the leasehold was to descend to her second son Philip: Will of P. Roche, 27 Sept. 1793 (TNA, PCC, PROB 11/1300/14).

¹⁰⁶ Denis MulRyan to George Ryan, 26 June 1797 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 477).

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

guardianship, with the latter directing his education and managing his finances even after Roche came of age in 1802.¹⁰⁸

Following his return to Ireland in 1780, George Ryan, unlike his brother, was not a typical Irish gentleman of his time, and his prolonged absence in Spain and her colonies meant he lacked a deep understanding of several of the key concerns that framed the world of an Irish landowning family. Ryan was clearly a capable individual, but even his career as an administrator in a Peruvian frontier province did not prepare him fully for membership of an Irish gentry family and the management of a 3,100 acre Tipperary estate. This was particularly the case in relation to legal issues and debt management. On the one hand, Ryan's efforts to discharge his debts always appeared practical and offered, in his opinion, the 'straightest road' to their payment. On the other hand, one could argue that George Ryan had shown a certain amount of naivety in several instances, but it must be remembered that Ryan was never intended to be head of the Inch estate. Instead, he was educated from an early age to be a merchant, a career that placed a premium on practical thinking and one's personal credit. Ryan had attempted to apply this logic to his new position as a landed gentleman, yet the reality of his situation reflected several of the obstacles faced by Irish landowners when it came to debt management. Entails sought to protect estates for the benefit of widows and future generations, but the restrictions they placed on the sitting tenant-for-life meant that inherited encumbrances were more likely to rollover from one generation to the next. This could prolong, or indeed compound the indebtedness of heirs once portions for siblings and jointures for widows were included, thereby forcing stricter measures to be taken and the potential sale of a large portion of an estate.¹⁰⁹ Further complicating this situation could be the nature by which debts were held, while George Ryan's experience has highlighted how, once again, the fortunes of the Inch estate were tied to the assistance offered by relatives. In this instance, however, a frayed relationship with his father-in-law stemming from class differences, individual personalities and divergent interests further scuppered the chance of clearing the estate's encumbrances. Ryan's relationship with his father-in-law highlights that, in Ireland, divisions were not just between Catholic landowners and Protestant landowners as had been the case in Chapter 4, but between different classes of Catholics also. George Ryan

¹⁰⁸ For example: Philip Roche to George Ryan, 15 Dec. 1802 (ibid., MS 434); Draft letter. George Ryan to Philip Roche, Oct. 1803 (ibid., MS 435); Draft letter. George Ryan to Philip Roche, 10 Dec. 1803 (ibid., MS 437); Draft letter. George Ryan to the Rev. Thomas Chetwood Eustace, 18 Jan. 1800 (ibid., MS 795); George Ryan to Lewis Ward, 4 April 1801 (ibid., MS 797); Summary account of cash paid to and from the account of P. Roche Esq, 14 May 1803 – 31 May 1804 (ibid., MS 804).

¹⁰⁹ Maguire, *The Downshire estates*, pp 84–5.

had to learn these lessons the hard way, with the result that his heir Daniel would be equally preoccupied with inherited encumbrances once he succeeded his father in 1805. Nevertheless, George Ryan was deeply aware of these issues by the time his children came to be educated, and as will be seen in the following chapter, Ryan would spend the final years of his life attempting to ensure that his heir received an education to match his future status as head of the Inch estate.

Chapter 7

‘... the Most antient [*sic*] and most respectable Catholic family in this County’¹

Following the passing of Catholic emancipation in 1829, George Ryan’s (d.1805) eldest son and successor, Daniel, received a letter from a local delegate charged with raising funds for a national tribute to Daniel O’Connell. ‘Your family’, the writer observed, ‘are the Most antient [*sic*] and most respectable Catholic family in this County’, and ‘No man can better estimate the value of Emancipation than yourself’.² But while Daniel Ryan had contributed to O’Connell’s Catholic Board in 1813, and had also acted as a member for Tipperary itself, his reply in 1829 was not what one might first expect. He decided ‘most respectfully to decline contributing to the Fund’. No forthright explanation for this decision was offered by Ryan, except to say that it represented ‘a line of conduct wch. I conscientiously feel it my duty to adopt’.³ The most plausible explanation for this decision stemmed from Ryan’s support of ‘The Captain’, John Hely-Hutchinson, a Whig MP for Tipperary. Hely-Hutchinson was vocal in his support of Catholic emancipation, but he had come into conflict with the Catholic Association over their methods in achieving this goal. It might be concluded, therefore, that when it came to attaining Catholic emancipation, Ryan preferred established constitutional methods over those of the Catholic Association, whose ‘depraved ingenuity’, Hely-Hutchinson had warned in 1828, was driving Ireland towards a ‘state of insurrection’.⁴

Daniel Ryan’s decision not to support the fund for Daniel O’Connell adds weight to what Jennifer Ridden has termed the ‘hopelessly inadequate’ characterisation of Irish politics during the nineteenth century as a binary conflict between a British Protestant Unionist elite and the Irish Catholic populace in search of emancipation and the repeal of

¹ Patrick Ryan to Daniel Ryan, 7 May 1829 (UCC, Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 529/a).

² *Ibid.*

³ No member of the Ryan family at Inch is known to have contributed to the O’Connell tribute during the early 1830s as has been stated previously: Kevin Whelan, ‘The Catholic Church in Tipperary 1700–1900’ in William Nolan and Thomas G. McGrath (eds), *Tipperary: history and society: interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county* (Dublin, 1985), p. 240; Daniel O’Connell to Daniel Ryan, 13 July 1813 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 520); Draft letter. Daniel Ryan to Patrick Ryan, 8 May 1829 (*ibid.*, MS 529/b); *Freemans Journal*, 17 Aug. 1812; *Detailed report of contributions (parochial and personal) to the O’Connell National Annuity, for the year 1832(-1834)* (Dublin, 1833–35).

⁴ John Hely Hutchinson quoted in Philip Salmon, ‘Hely Hutchinson, John I (1787–1851), of Palmerston House, Dublin’, available at: <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/hely-hutchinson-john-1787-1851> [date accessed 1 Feb. 2018]; John Hely-Hutchinson, 2nd Earl of Donoughmore to George Ryan, c.1731 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 598).

the Act of Union.⁵ In reality, neither Protestants nor Catholics represented homogenous political groupings, and Daniel Ryan's remarks hint at a growing concern that emerged among wealthy Catholics once Daniel O'Connell began to be identified as a radical reformer after 1828. As a result of these concerns, Ridden has observed that wealthy Catholics sought to protect their own position as an established bourgeoisie and potential elite.⁶ However, Daniel Ryan was already a member of the elite. He had had the right to vote in county elections since 1793, and had been appointed as a magistrate for county Tipperary in 1815.⁷ This indicates that Ryan's reservations over O'Connell and the Catholic Association pre-dated the period 1828–9. Thus, neither does Ryan correspond with the over-simplified conservative/liberal division in terms of political outlook, and it is perhaps more accurate to term him a conservative liberal, or more specifically, a liberal with conservative leanings.⁸ The first section of this chapter, therefore, will examine the different factors that helped to form this specific outlook, an outlook that depended less on Ryan's status as a Catholic and more on his position as a member of the landowning elite.

The reference to the Ryans of Inch as 'the Most antient [*sic*] and most respectable Catholic family' in Tipperary indicated the esteem with which they were held within their community. The family's descent from the historic chief of Kilnelongurty, Shane Glasse O'Mulryan, was still acknowledged in the region,⁹ while their claims to respectability within the county had been renewed once Daniel Ryan ended his family's prolonged absenteeism and returned to live at Inch. Such accolades, however, were not automatically guaranteed to Daniel Ryan and, like his forbearers at Inch, he was required to embody certain ideas and act in a specific manner in order to cultivate the right impression. Ryan's involvement in local politics and the county's administration helped to project this image of respectability, as also did the extensive renovations he carried out at Inch House during the 1810s. Within the family itself, there had been a no-less important and prolonged process of imbuing Ryan and his siblings with ideas befitting their station in society and a sense of duty to the family itself. This process began during childhood, and grew in

⁵ Jennifer Ridden, 'Making good citizens': national identity, religion, and liberalism amongst the Irish elite, c.1800–1850' (PhD thesis, King's College, University of London, 1998), p. 191.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp 190–1; Elizabeth Anne Heggs, 'The nature and development of Liberal Protestantism in County Waterford, 1800–42' (PhD thesis, National University of Ireland Maynooth, 2008), p. 223.

⁷ Commission of the Peace for County Tipperary conferred upon Daniel Ryan, 21 Apr. 1815 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 535); McBride, *Eighteenth century Ireland*, p. 347; Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, pp 318–323.

⁸ Brian M. Walker (ed.), *Parliamentary election results in Ireland, 1801–1922* (Dublin, 1978), p. xiv.

⁹ [?] to John O'Donovan, 7 Oct. 1859 (RIA, *Graves Collection*, 24 O 39/JOD/392/16).

importance once the Ryan children departed for England to receive their educations. Picking up on a theme addressed in Chapter 6, the second section of this chapter will examine the Ryan family's epistolary practices and the ways they sought to instil the importance of kinship and a sense of duty among different family members. However, this respectability and sense of duty did not come without a cost and ultimately proved to be somewhat of a double-edged sword for Daniel Ryan and the Inch estate. The cost of renovating Inch House and encumbrances accumulated over several generations of the family, in particular those accruing from portions for younger siblings and jointures for widows, were compounded by economic depression and eventually led Ryan to sell just over 50 per cent of the Inch estate during the 1820s. Consequently, the concluding section of this chapter will examine Daniel Ryan's attempts to balance the management of his inheritance with the expectations placed upon him as a gentleman and head of a landed family.

I

*'It is painful to be obliged to differ in opinion from the great Majority of my R[oma]n. Cath[olic]. Brethren'*¹⁰

While still decked in the 'lively hues' of his 'Gay youth', Daniel Ryan penned a poem entitled 'The Life of Man', where he considered his future calling 'once Youth's inconstancies to Manhood yield'. Would he join the army and 'Flame in the field, or thunder at ye. bar' as a lawyer? Perhaps, he would 'Dive into Physic, or (oh nobler cause) Support religion & her sacred laws'.¹¹ Ryan's optimistic play on Sir Francis Bacon's original poem was a reflection of the greater opportunities open to Catholics following the steady repeal of the penal laws from 1778 onwards. Ryan may have penned this poem during his preliminary education in Limerick City, and by 1800 his parents were faced with the question of what school offered the suitable further education for a young member of the gentry.¹² The traditional route of sending Catholic sons to continental universities was impossible due to the ongoing hostilities between Britain and France. However, the repeal in 1793 of restrictions on Catholic education opened up new opportunities for the Ryan children.¹³ The decision was subsequently taken to dispatch

¹⁰ D. Ryan to P. Ryan, 8 May 1829 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 529/b).

¹¹ The Life of Man by Daniel Ryan, c.1800 (ibid., MS 662/14).

¹² George Ryan to Daniel Ryan, 25 Sept. 1802 (ibid., MS 493).

¹³ Ciaran O'Neill, 'Education, imperial careers and the Irish Catholic elite in the nineteenth century' in David Dickson, Justyna Pyz and Christopher Shepard (eds), *Irish classrooms and British Empire: imperial*

Daniel Ryan and his brother Philip to the newly established Oscott Catholic boys school near Birmingham. The decision to pick Oscott, which offered a public schooling along the lines of Eton or Worcester, reflected the hopes of the Ryans and many other members of the Catholic gentry who sought a more liberal education for their children.¹⁴

As has been demonstrated in previous chapters, and as will be further illustrated in the ensuing discussion, relations with Protestants were in the Ryans' case longstanding. These interactions are noticeable among the Ryans from the late 1710s at least, with the family maintaining close friendships with several Protestant families. Thus, in 1719 Robert White of London could inform John Ryan of Inch (d.1724) about 'Our Good Friend Mr Armstrong [*of Moyaliffe*]', while two years later he referred to a second mutual acquaintance, John Damer of Shronell, 'who I am told is not Altered from being of yt. Good Temper he was, by the vast Riches left him'.¹⁵ In contrast to this positive description of Damer, an Irish poet recounted upon the former's death how 'I'm not sorry that the churl is still and dead – this rabble dispersed forever'.¹⁶ Likewise, upon the death of Colonel James Dawson of Ballynacourty in 1738, a second poet proclaimed: 'Alas, my woe that thousands of your sort weren't strangled, with your son John, the wastrel, ... a mangy pack of dogs will be ravenously tearing at you'.¹⁷ Again, this negative portrayal probably did not reflect how the Ryans viewed the Dawsons, as their cousin and ally Howard Egan of Annameadle was in turn closely connected to the affairs of James Dawson and his heir.¹⁸ Therefore, one can conclude that the Ryans' worldview was, by and large, not reflected in 'popular' or 'jaundiced' literary depictions of the Protestant landowners who had settled much of county Tipperary after the Cromwellian conquest.¹⁹ Indeed, as early as the 1690s, Daniel Ryan's (d.1692) only daughter Frances had married John Minchin of Annagh, whose father had been a Cromwellian army officer. Added to this, the fact the Ryans would eventually hang a portrait of their 'cousin' Amyas Bushe, another descendant of a Cromwellian era family, at Inch House further highlights the

contexts in the origins of modern education (Dublin, 2012), p. 99; Ambrose Macaulay, *The Catholic Church and the campaign for emancipation in Ireland and England* (Dublin, 2016), p. 59.

¹⁴ Ciaran O'Neill, *Catholics of consequence: transnational education, social mobility, and the Irish Catholic elite 1850–1900* (Oxford, 2014), p. 77.

¹⁵ Robert White to John Ryan, 1 Aug. 1719 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 341); Robert White to John Ryan, 10 June 1721 (*ibid.*, MS 343).

¹⁶ Liam Dall Ó hÍfearnáin quoted in Morley, *The popular mind*, pp 213–4.

¹⁷ Clárach Mac Dónaill quoted in *ibid.*, p. 214.

¹⁸ Memorial of the marriage settlement of John Dawson of Armagh and Elinor Dawson of Ballynacourty, Co. Tipperary, 15 Dec. 1716 [registered 20 Feb. 1720[1]] (*ROD*, vol. xxviii, p. 356, no. 17881); Memorial to indenture between Richard Dawson of Ballyneciaty, Co. Tipperary and John Boles of Woodhouse, Co. Tipperary, 19 Mar. 1716[7] (*ibid.*, vol. xvii, p. 393, no. 9214).

¹⁹ Morley, *The popular mind*, p. 6

extent to which shared social standing and affinity could moderate differences based on religious and ethnic backgrounds.²⁰

Having survived, if not flourished at times, in county Tipperary since the early 1600s, the Ryans were undoubtedly aware of the dangers presented by an overzealous attachment to their religious and political beliefs. As suggested in Chapter 4, one way the family could find common ground with their Protestant neighbours was by focusing on and cultivating their status as members of the gentry. In turn, this interaction would have brought with it a more nuanced understanding of Protestantism, than views of Irish history based on conflict and enmity. This was by no means limited to the immediate Ryan family back in Tipperary, and an example of this overall awareness among their extended kin can be observed in a letter from John Mansfield to his wife Elizabeth (nee Woulfe) during the 1780s. Having left his wife in Liege with her uncle George Ryan, Mansfield undertook a tour of Switzerland, and in one instance he paused just outside Geneva to write:

There is no doubt, the Reformation or change of Doctrine adopted in a great part of Europe, has produced Consequences extremely advantageous to those States that embraced it[,] they added to their Political Liberty[,] a liberation from a foreign domination.²¹

John Mansfield's reference to foreign domination should not be interpreted through a Patriotic lens as a condemnation of England's legislative control over Ireland, but instead as a statement about the 'great political advantage' Protestant states 'have obtained by a separation from & independence of the (I well say) the Tyranny of the Church of Rome'.²² Mansfield would eventually act as a Waterford delegate for the Catholic Convention in 1792–3. In line with the ideas pioneered by its predecessors among the Catholic Committee, he may have believed during the 1780s that it was necessary to accept that Ireland was a Protestant nation, thereby making it necessary for Catholics to find accommodation within the state.²³ George Ryan's surviving papers do not contain any

²⁰ Ledger kept by George and Daniel Ryan, 1778–1811 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 175); Genealogical report re: Minchin family (NLI, *Genealogical Office*, GO MS 815/11); Tombstones in Nenagh graveyard (TCLT, *The papers of Rev. Father Walter G. Skehan*, typescript copy, vol. xxix), p. 9.

²¹ John Mansfield to Elizabeth Mansfield, c.1786 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 38,398/1).

²² *Ibid*; Connolly, *Divided Kingdom*, pp 434–449.

²³ Elizabeth Heggs, 'Liberal Catholic ideology: an exposition of the *Political catechism* by Thomas Wyse' in *History Studies: University of Limerick History Society Journal*, viii (2007), p. 17; eadem, 'Liberal Protestantism in County Waterford', p. 35; *Extracts from the proceedings of the General Committee of the Catholics of Ireland, which met on Tuesday April 16, and finally dissolved on Thursday April 25, 1793* (Dublin, 1796), p. 4; R. Dudley Edwards, 'Minute book of the Catholic Committee, 1773–92' in *Archivium Hibernicum*, ix (1942), p. 160; C.J. Wood, 'The social composition of the Catholic Convention, 1792–3' in David Dickson and Cormac Ó Grada (eds), *Refiguring Ireland: essays in honour of L.M. Cullen* (Dublin, 2003), p. 165, 168.

references to his own opinion on religion and the Catholic Church, but there is a likelihood that his and John Mansfield's views were akin to one another.²⁴ Apart from the fact Ryan was a student of both the Northern and Southern Enlightenments, a relatively uncommon accomplishment, both he and Mansfield elected to send their sons to Oscott together.²⁵ Moreover, a further sign both men may have held comparable liberal outlooks can be seen in the fact that Mansfield was trusted to act as Daniel Ryan's guardian following the death of his father in 1805.²⁶ A liberal education in England would, as a result, have helped to further redefine and strengthen the relationships the Ryans maintained with Protestants in their locality.

A second aspect of the decision to educate the Ryan and Mansfield children at Oscott stemmed from a question of loyalty. Since the end of the Williamite War in 1691, the issue of Catholic loyalty to the new monarchy was always a cause for concern, particularly as thousands of Irish Catholics flocked to join the armies of France and Spain over the following decades. Whether out of conviction or necessity, two members of the Ryans — besides many others from their extended family — followed a similar path. However, the defeat of Jacobitism in 1745–6 and its ultimate collapse as a political force led, as James Kelly has observed, to a willingness among elite and respectable Catholics not only to recognise the Protestant state but also rally to its defence.²⁷ Once again, whether initially out of a sense of conviction or practical necessity, the Ryans had accepted the defeat of Jacobitism, a point observable by the fact that a portrait of William III hung at Inch House from the early 1770s at least.²⁸ In turn, before service in the British military was an option for Catholics, George Ryan's brother Denis MulRyan, and his

²⁴ It has been said that George Ryan was actively involved in the Catholic Committee, though the evidence to support this view is limited: Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, p. 292.

²⁵ For example, following his return to Ireland in 1780, George Ryan purchased several volumes of the works of Spain's most popular enlightenment writer, Benito Jerónimo Feijóo. George Ryan frequented a library during his stay in Toulouse and could also write French 'comme un Ange'. The fact George Ryan had his two young sons inoculated against smallpox in 1789 points to his appreciation of scientific advances. Paddy Ryan has also recently observed that Ryan was a keen disciple of Rousseau: Ledger kept by G. and D. Ryan, 1778–1811 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 175, f. 10); Denis MulRyan to George Ryan, 18 Oct. 1782 (ibid., MS 468); Draft letter. George Ryan to Philip Roche John, 18 Oct. 1789 (ibid., MS 420); Pocket notebook recording expenses kept by George Ryan, 1786–1790 (ibid., MS 256); Clorinda Donato and Ricardo López (eds), *Enlightenment Spain and the Encyclopedre Methodique* (Oxford, 2015), pp 1–22; Ryan, 'Accommodation and frustration', p. 82.

²⁶ Will of George Ryan of Inch, 7 Apr. 1804 [probate 1805] (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 26); Elizabeth Mathew to Daniel Ryan, May 1803 (ibid., MS 498); Nicholas Maher to Daniel Ryan, 25 Mar. 1806 (ibid., MS 507).

²⁷ Kelly, 'Disappointing the boundless ambition of France', pp 78–9.

²⁸ Ledger kept by G. and D. Ryan, 1778–1811 (BL *Ryan Collection*, MS 175); Ó Ciardha, *Ireland and the Jacobite cause*, pp 324–5.

kinsmen Edmund Harrold, Edward D'Alton and his son, chose the legal route of service to the Austrian Hapsburgs over France or Spain.²⁹

Of course, given his service to the Spanish Crown and long absence in her colonies, it was doubtful George Ryan was initially as pronounced in his loyalties to Britain, which he described before his return to Ireland in 1780 as a 'chimerical and naïve nation'.³⁰ However, like his forbearers, Ryan adopted a pragmatic stance once he inherited the Inch estate. The right to vote in county elections was granted to Catholic freeholders in 1793, and in anticipation of this, Ryan and other Catholics from county Tipperary signed a declaration in 1792 affirming their loyalty to the king while also disavowing 'every Propensity to Tumult and Sedition'.³¹ The willingness of George Ryan and other Catholics to declare their loyalty to the British Monarchy was also a reflection of a commonly held aversion towards the increasingly violent and socially destructive actions of Revolutionary France. Ryan and several of his acquaintances among the Irish gentry had originally welcomed the possibility of reform in France in 1789, with one friend named Nicholas Marsh remarking: 'Be the Hok[e]y the French are getting a little English & Irish spirit of liberty'. This new sense of liberty, he argued, rather humorously, stemmed from the large number of French children born of English and Irish fathers who had toured the country over the previous forty years. 'It is therefore incumbent', Marsh continued, 'on all English who travels ... to leave a few plants behind them', with the result that one day the Estates General of France would be 'fill'd with the offspring of a Ryan, a Marsh, a Lyons – a Smyth – a Jackson, and many other Astmatic [*sic*] & Gouty voyagers'.³² This good humoured and positive description of events in France quickly subsided however, and was replaced over the coming years by revulsion among the gentry over the excesses carried out under the ideals of the revolution. Captain Denis MulRyan was one of the first Irishmen to face the physical manifestation of these principles on the battlefield during the Brabant Revolution in 1789, an encounter which cost him the use of an arm and a year 'kept like state prisoners Nay! like Criminals'.³³ This experience,

²⁹ Campbell, *A philosophical survey of the south of Ireland*, p. 141; Pedigree of MacCarthy of Springhouse, Co. Tipperary, c.1630–1792 (NLI, *Genealogical Office*, GO MS 164, microfilm, p8301), p. 167; Diarmaid Ó Catháin, 'General Baron Edmund Harold (1737–1808): a 'Celtic' writer in Germany' in *Studia Hibernica*, no. 30 (1998/1999), p. 140; Butler, *South Tipperary, 1570–1841*, pp 237–8.

³⁰ George Ryan to Luis de Peralta, 25 Apr. 1780 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 373/6).

³¹ Printed declaration by the Roman Catholics of Tipperary, 2 Oct. 1792 (ibid., MS 665); Nicolas Maher to George Ryan, 23 Jan. 1790 (ibid., MS 427); *Freemans Journal*, 8 May 1792; McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland*, p. 347; Heggs, 'Liberal Protestantism in County Waterford', pp 36–7; Power, *Land, politics and society in Tipperary*, pp 296–7.

³² Nicholas Marsh to George Ryan, 1 July 1789 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 422); Draft letter. George Ryan to [Philip Roche John], 9 Aug. 1789 (ibid., MS 419).

³³ J. Nash to George Ryan, 23 Dec. 1789 (ibid., MS 472).

followed by subsequent events he witnessed on the continent, left a lasting impression on MulRyan's mind, and eventually he would exclaim to his elder brother back in Ireland that if 'we don't succeed in exterminating to the very last of this execrable Race why then the Devil himself must undertake to do it'.³⁴

During the French revolutionary period, many wealthy Catholics in Ireland offered their loyalty to the government and monarchy in return for the lessening of legal restrictions and increased civil status.³⁵ In some cases, this support went beyond simple declarations of loyalty. The Catholic Scullys of Kilfeacle, for instance, saw a 'good deal' of cavalry service during the 1798 Rebellion. The family also proposed to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in 1803 to raise a regiment for service on the continent, with several family members to serve as officers, all of whom were active, energetic and loyal to the British cause.³⁶ In a similar light, George Ryan probably would have held few reservations over his relatives, including his youngest son John, serving in the British military; a tradition that would endure within the family for many years even after the founding of the Irish Free State in 1922.³⁷

The Ryans and their relatives were also quite vocal in their support of everything English by the 1770s. George Ryan's elder brother John (d.1778) decided to live out his final months 'in the royal place of Windsor', while their future brother-in-law, John Roche, preferred the company of 'English Gentlemen' during his tour of France and believed London 'superior' to Paris. Likewise, a widely travelled McCarthy cousin from Springhouse 'preferred England to every other country she had seen'.³⁸ As a result of their lifestyle, one author has termed the Ryans 'cultural chameleons, distinguishable only with difficulty from their Protestant Irish fellow landowners'.³⁹ This is certainly correct,

³⁴ Ibid.; Denis MulRyan to George Ryan, 9 Jan. 1794 (ibid., MS 476); J. Nash to George Ryan, 18 Dec. 1789 (ibid., MS 471); Denis MulRyan to George Ryan, 21 Dec. 1790 (ibid., MS 473).

³⁵ In the hope of securing the loyalty and support of Irish Catholics, the British government was willing to extend them increased political rights, including the vote, during the early 1790s: Jacqueline Hill, 'The legal profession and the defence of the ancien régime in Ireland, 1790–1840' in Daire Hogan and W.N. Osborough (eds), *Brehons, serjeants and attorneys: studies in the history of the Irish legal profession* (Dublin, 1990), pp 188–9; Eamon O'Flaherty, 'Irish Catholics and the French Revolution' in Hugh Gough and David Dickson (eds), *Ireland and the French Revolution* (Dublin, 1990), p. 65.

³⁶ Draft letter. Denys Scully to the Lord Lieutenant, Philip Yorke, 3rd Earl of Hardwicke, July 1803 (NLI, *Scully papers*, MS 27,488/6); Donoghue, 'The Scullys of Kilfeacle', p. 44.

³⁷ For example: Arthur Ryan to Molly Ryan, 17 Dec. 1916 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 620); Country gentleman's estate book and diary kept by Richard Ryan, 1944 (ibid., MS 651).

³⁸ Will of John Ryan of Inch, 21 May 1773–26 July 1778 [probate 12 Feb. 1779] (ibid., MS 25); William Thompson to George Ryan, 4 Sept. 1778 (ibid., MS 374/88); Travel journal kept by J.R., 1775–6 (ibid., MS 371, f. 32, 87); Campbell, *A philosophical survey of the south of Ireland*, p. 141; Ryan, 'Accommodation and frustration', pp 32–3.

³⁹ Grace Neville, 'Cultural chameleons: religion in the Ryan of Inch Papers' in Louise Fuller, John Littleton and Eamon Maher (eds), *Irish and Catholic? Towards an understanding of identity* (Dublin, 2006), p. 196.

but the reader must be careful not to equate the term cultural chameleon with mere imitation and a skin-deep attempt to simply blend in. Instead, as has been demonstrated throughout this study, the Ryans' world as landowners was, if nothing else, complex, and highlights an identity that undermines simplified and contrasting dichotomies, such as Catholic/Protestant, coloniser/colonised and oppressor/oppressed. None of these distinctions were missing, but neither did they act as absolutes. The Ryans' world speaks to what S.J. Connolly has suggested as the key to understanding eighteenth-century Ireland itself, its ambiguity:

... too physically close and too similar to Great Britain to be treated as a colony, but too separate and too different to be a region of the metropolitan centre; inheriting an undoubted division between settler and native, yet without the racial distinctions that could make these absolute.⁴⁰

This 'in-betweenness', as Ian McBride has observed, 'is precisely where the fascination of eighteenth-century Ireland lies'; an in-betweenness or liminality that equally existed and informed the Ryans' world as Irish landowners.⁴¹ Likewise, W.E.H. Lecky once pointed out that 'Irish history has many lights and shades', and 'the fascination of eighteenth-century Ireland', Thomas Bartlett continues, 'is that no one context appears to be wholly satisfactory'.⁴²

The decision by the Ryans and Mansfields to educate their children at Oscott by the early 1800s represented a course of action that would have helped them to better integrate as fully-fledged and loyal members of the Irish gentry. In return, fees and other costs proved high: in 1802 half a year's attendance at Oscott by his two eldest sons cost George Ryan £100 19s 9½d. The cost was nevertheless borne without complaint, leading Elizabeth Mathew to remind her nephews attending the school to

... ever repay with tender love and duty your remarkable good parents, who I am convinc'd wou'd ever lay themselves under many inconveniencys [*sic*] to allow you all every advantage for your future in every particular.⁴³

An idea of the future envisaged for the Ryan children might be derived from Ciaran O'Neill's examination of over one thousand Irish students attending English fee paying

⁴⁰ Connolly, 'Eighteenth-century Ireland: colony or *ancien régime*?', p. 26; idem, *Religion, law and power*, pp 103–14; McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland*, pp 102–3.

⁴¹ McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland*, p. 103.

⁴² W.E.H. Lecky quoted in Thomas Bartlett, 'Review: Catholicism in a Protestant kingdom: a study of the Irish *ancien régime* by C.D.A. Leighton' in *The English Historical Review*, xi, no. 443 (Sept., 1996), p. 994; Dickson, *Old world colony*, p. xiii.

⁴³ Elizabeth Mathew to Daniel Ryan, 19 March 1803 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 497); Bill for half a year's tuition and board for Daniel and Philip Ryan at Oscott School, 1802 (ibid., MS 449).

schools during the nineteenth century. O'Neill found that instead of pursuing careers in the British Empire, the vast majority returned to Ireland and became either medium or large-sized landowners, barristers, solicitors or doctors. As was eventually the case with two of George Ryan's sons, many of these English educated individuals also served as justices of the peace, deputy lieutenants or high sheriffs of their counties, 'all prestigious roles more usually the type of responsibility of Protestant landowners'.⁴⁴ Daniel Ryan's future decision to enrol in Trinity College, Dublin, although a decision not taken lightly by the family, represented the next step in his family's attempts to integrate as fully fledged members of the ruling elite. Daniel Ryan entered Trinity College in June 1804, where he probably came to know John Hely-Hutchinson, who had matriculated a year previously. Ryan graduated in 1810, was admitted to the King's Inn of Dublin and qualified as a barrister.⁴⁵

From one point of view, Daniel Ryan's decision to support John Hely-Hutchinson, the future 3rd Earl of Donoughmore, during the push for Catholic Emancipation can be seen as an attempt to forward the interests of Irish Catholics in a more progressive and less radical manner against the backdrop of the mass agitation of the Catholic Association. In another sense, however, Ryan and many other members of the gentry and nobility, whether Catholics or Protestants, were concerned with protecting their privileged political and social positions as members of the ruling elite. Mass movements were viewed, quite naturally, as a threat to the established order. This was particularly the case with Daniel O'Connell and the emphasis he placed on Catholics' common 'nonprivileged' status, their common suffering at the hands of a privileged minority and their common ethnic distinctiveness. It was with little surprise, therefore, that the Catholic gentry and nobility quickly rejected the Catholic Association following its establishment in 1823.⁴⁶ The 'us versus them' ideology promoted by O'Connell did not fit with the Ryans' outlook: the

⁴⁴ O'Neill, 'Education, imperial careers and the Irish Catholic elite', pp 102–3; Commission of the Peace conferred upon D. Ryan, 21 Apr. 1815 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 535); Commission of the Peace for County Tipperary conferred upon George Ryan, 18 May 1829 (ibid., MS 595); Document signed by Lord Donoughmore appointing George Ryan Deputy Lieutenant for County Tipperary, 1832 (ibid., MS 597); Bond of indemnity between George Ryan, High Sheriff of Tipperary, and Edward Lalor Cambie, 25 Jan. 1851 (ibid., MS 600).

⁴⁵ Philip Roche to Daniel Ryan, 2 June 1803 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 500); George Ryan to Daniel Ryan, 8 March 1803 (ibid., MS 496); Mary Nash to Mary Anne Ryan, 19 Aug. 1807 (ibid., MS 461); Dames Burtchaell and Ulick Sadleir (eds), *Alumni Dublinenses*, p. 723; James H. Todd (ed.), *Trinity College Graduates 1595–1868* (Dublin, 1869), p. 499; *Freemans Journal*, 28 July 1812; List of admissions to the King's Inn, Dublin, 1607–1835, compiled by Thomas Ulick Sadleir (NLI, *Genealogical Office*, GO MS 555).

⁴⁶ Brian Jenkins, *Era of Emancipation: British government of Ireland, 1812–1830* (Montreal, 1988), pp 216–7.

family were members of a privileged minority, their lives as Catholics, even under the penal laws, were not characterised by suffering and persecution, while their status as the ‘the Most antient [*sic*] and most respectable Catholic family’ in Tipperary suggests that the Ryans were respected by the different sections of their community. Indeed, an idea of the family’s standing might be gleaned from an account in 1830 of the funeral of Daniel Ryan’s younger brother Philip, where it was reported that ‘the high estimation he was held in was strongly marked by the long line of splendid equipages of the neighbouring gentry & the thousands who mournfully followed his hearse’.⁴⁷

Daniel Ryan passed away in April 1831. This left his second brother and successor George to reap the reward for the loyalty shown to the Hely-Hutchinson interest, which was reflected in his appointment as Deputy Lieutenant for county Tipperary the following year.⁴⁸ After the issue of emancipation was resolved, it would appear that the Ryans supported a political ideology along the lines of that expounded by Richard Lalor Sheil, a close acquaintance and patron to the family, and Thomas Wyse, both of whom were educated in England and later attended Trinity College. Lalor Sheil and Wyse had been major figures within the Catholic Association up until 1829, but thereafter took a less radical stance on issues such as the push to abolish the Act of Union. Essentially, these individuals were unionists aiming at modest reform of the existing political order.⁴⁹ As a result, one can see that the Ryans used liberalism as a way to forward their interests as Catholics, but this was tempered by a conservative streak that sought to protect their privileged position as members of the landowning elite. However, once the Ryans had integrated fully into landed society, they came to occupy a divided world once again. The issues they faced stemmed once again from the tension created by their status as Catholics and landowners, but this time the family sought to navigate a world that was increasingly characterised by popular national movements and a Catholic Church in the ascendancy. One of the most notable examples of this tension arose during the 1930s when the Ryans refused requests by the Catholic Church to cease educating the heir to the estate at Trinity

⁴⁷ Account of the death and burial of Philip Ryan, 1830 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 540).

⁴⁸ John Hely-Hutchinson, 2nd Earl of Donoughmore to George Ryan, 6 Oct. 1831 (*ibid.*, MS 596); Document signed by Lord Donoughmore appointing George Ryan Deputy Lieutenant for County Tipperary, 1832 (*ibid.*, MS 597).

⁴⁹ John Ryan to George Ryan, 8 June 1835 (*ibid.*, MS 551); John Ryan to George Ryan, 30 Apr. 1836 (*ibid.*, MS 566); Heggs, ‘Liberal Protestantism in County Waterford’, pp 222–3, 232; Ridden, ‘“Making good citizens”’, p. 150; McGrath, ‘Interdenominational relations in pre-famine Ireland’, p. 267.

College. For this refusal, the Archbishop of Cashel, John Harty, withdrew the privilege to house the blessed sacrament at Inch House.⁵⁰

II

*‘... that I may live to see you as respectable as your Worldly Father and Grand
Father were at Inch’⁵¹*

The previous section has highlighted that the Ryans’ world was rooted in certain principles based on their landowning status. Accordingly, there existed within the family a process of imbuing succeeding generations with ideas befitting their station in society and a sense of duty to the family itself. As a result, once Daniel and Philip Ryan arrived in Oscott in 1801 there were natural anxieties among their parents and relatives over their conduct and the necessity of maintaining familial bonds. To help address these concerns, the Ryan children were expected to write their parents at least once a week, while it was also expected that they keep up a steady correspondence with their numerous relatives spread across Britain and Ireland. Indeed, such was the scope of this correspondence that Daniel Ryan was left bemused in one early instance by a letter from a relative he had never heard of, leading him to ask his father to explain their connection.⁵²

As discussed in the previous chapter, upon his return from Peru in 1780, George Ryan himself had lacked an appreciation of the necessity of corresponding with his numerous relatives on a regular basis. The criticism of his female relatives, followed by his own steady realisation that a landed gentleman required the support and advice of his relatives, led Ryan to understand the importance of maintaining familial bonds via correspondence.⁵³ In turn, this was a lesson he sought to pass onto his children residing at Oscott. His eldest son Daniel emerged as the most dutiful in this regard, with his parents and relatives always grateful for his steady stream of ‘polite & affectionate letters’.⁵⁴ Conversely, the absence of letters from his younger brother Philip became a constant source for comment by their father. How George Ryan dealt with the matter reveals an approach to parenting that largely, but not always, rejected the approach of an old-style

⁵⁰ File of correspondence relating to the decision by Church authorities, in response to the attendance by Arthur Ryan at Trinity College Dublin, not to renew permission for the Blessed Sacrament to be housed in the Oratory at Inch, 1932–1939 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 302); E. Armstrong to Vivian Ryan Lenigan, 30 Apr. 1887 (ibid., MS 744); Country gentleman’s estate book and diary kept by Richard Ryan, 1937 (ibid., MS 648); Neville, ‘Cultural chameleons’, pp 201–207.

⁵¹ Elizabeth Mathew to Daniel Ryan, 14 July 1814 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 521).

⁵² George Ryan to Daniel Ryan, 18 Sept. 1801 (ibid., MS 490).

⁵³ Livesey, *Civil society and empire*, p. 133.

⁵⁴ Mary Anne Roche to Daniel Ryan, 25 Oct. 1801 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 492).

patriarch in favour of a new-style paternalist.⁵⁵ Thus, instead of severely chastising his son Philip for his silence, Ryan adopted an attitude that was more personal and dependent upon respect between a father and son and two gentlemen. In one early instance it was observed: ‘Phil’s promised letter has not appeared & I shou’d be inclined to be angry with him for breaking his word’. ‘But’, his father added, ‘I suppose & hope his time is so much taken up in atoneing [*sic*] for that which he lost in his marble days’. Although the letter was addressed to Daniel Ryan, their father concluded it with ‘adieu my dr. Danl, Phil’, knowing only too well the letter and his sentiments would find their way into the hands of his younger son.⁵⁶ A gentleman’s word was, of course, linked to his honour and trustworthiness, a constant preoccupation for George Ryan throughout his life and a criticism Philip would have understood. Having read the letter, Daniel Ryan would have been a party to his father’s lesson also. Furthermore, Ryan’s inclination to explain away Philip’s indiscretion as a sign of his study, rather than his idleness and playing of games, provided his son both with a valid apology for his silence and a clear warning that his father was not to be fooled. However, Philip does not appear to have mended his ways over the following year, leading his father to comment: ‘I cannot conceive why Phil does not write now & then’.⁵⁷

George Ryan tended not to force the issue of Philip’s studies too forcefully, but he did emphasise on at least two occasions the necessity that his son should ‘take every oportunity [*sic*] to improve yourself in arithmetic’. As a younger son, Philip did not stand to inherit the family estate, and his father’s belief that he should improve ‘in his figures’ pointed to the realisation that Philip would one day enter a career as a merchant or, as was the case eventually, an estate agent.⁵⁸ In contrast to his younger brother, Daniel Ryan was of a more serious disposition when it came to his education. Indeed, after just two years’ attendance at Oscott, Daniel was anxious to advance his education by entering Trinity College, Dublin. Hinting at possible religious differences, Philip Roche the younger warned his cousin that if he was to attend the university he should be wary of who he associates with, as ‘there is a greater mixture there than in any other university’.⁵⁹ George Ryan gave much thought to the matter also. He informed Daniel that he was mindful that

⁵⁵ Pearsall, *Atlantic families*, p. 111.

⁵⁶ George Ryan to Daniel Ryan, 23 Sept. 1801 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 491).

⁵⁷ George Ryan to Daniel Ryan, 11 Jan. 1803 (*ibid.*, MS 495).

⁵⁸ George Ryan to Philip Ryan, 7 May 1802 (*ibid.*, MS 537); George Ryan to Daniel Ryan, 23 May 1803 (*ibid.*, MS 499/2); Correspondence relating to the Annfield estate of Thomas Kelly, July 1822 – Jan. 1827 (*ibid.*, MS 68); Letters re: rents collected by Philip and George Ryan on behalf of Thomas Kelly, 1826–1847 (NLI, *O’Byrne papers*, MS 27,400).

⁵⁹ P. Roche to D. Ryan, 2 June 1803 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 500).

the question of his attendance appeared to ‘engross all your anxiety & attention at present & indeed, most naturally, engages a great share of my own’. Ryan continued by acknowledging the ‘laudable desire of improvent [*sic*]’ that prompted his son’s request, something his father was always anxious to facilitate. However, due to his son’s age (15), several friends believed him too young for a ‘protestant university’, but George Ryan promised his son that he would travel to Dublin and ‘take every oportunity [*sic*] of enquiring & consulting with my friends then on the subject’. Nevertheless, as matters stood, his decision tended to side with his son’s request, and to help facilitate his entry, Ryan provided a list of works in Greek and Latin he was ‘informed are among those that are particularly recommended’.⁶⁰

The chief functions of a letter, Jane Maxwell has observed, was the maintenance of a relationship and as an exercise in identity creation within that relationship.⁶¹ Therefore, in addition to his formal education, it was also necessary to instil in Daniel Ryan the importance of maintaining good relationships with his numerous family members, his female relatives in particular. Thus, having received a lengthy poem of ‘tribute’ from his son as a Christmas present in 1802, George Ryan was ‘very much gratified [*sic*] by your address, which has also been much approved by all your friends here’. But, he continued, ‘I hope there is another on its way to your mother who seemed somewhat jealous of you making no mention of her’, even though ‘she so justly conceives herself equally or even more entitled to your attentions & gratitude, having nursed you, wch is a circumstance never to be forgotten’. ‘I shall’, Ryan added, ‘be on the look out for your address to her’, while in a postscript he made the point that ‘your mother does not know of my writing to you on this occasion’.⁶²

George Ryan’s correspondence to his sons reflected a preoccupation with the necessity of maintaining good relationships with their relatives. One consequence of this was that family members could offer their advice and assistance concerning the affairs of the Inch estate. This can be observed following the death of George Ryan in 1805. The widow Mary Anne appears to have been overwhelmed by the loss of her husband and the prospect of raising their six children, all of whom were under age. Initially, this sense of anxiety was fuelled by the belief that it was her sole responsibility to manage her

⁶⁰ G. Ryan to D. Ryan, 11 Jan. 1803 (*ibid.*, MS 495); G. Ryan to D. Ryan, 8 March 1803 (*ibid.*, MS 496).

⁶¹ Maxwell, ‘The personal letter as a source for the history of women in Ireland’, p. 60.

⁶² Daniel Ryan to George Ryan, 1 Dec. 1802 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 494); G. Ryan to D. Ryan, 11 Jan. 1803 (*ibid.*, MS 495).

children's affairs and those of the Inch estate. Several legal concerns had quickly presented themselves after her husband's death, and the widow felt that bringing the issues to court without delay was the best course of action. Fortunately, however, Mary Anne Ryan could count on the advice and support of her elderly sister-in-law, Mary Nash. The widow Nash was a veteran of two marriages and several court cases as a result of managing her family's often tumultuous affairs. She subsequently advised caution and to 'take care my beloved Mary how you introduce your affairs into Chancery'. She qualified this position by observing 'you know I have been trained to the courts for some years, & tho merely on the defensive, still the loss of peace & money ... has given me ample power of offering my advice'. Mrs Nash recommended several lawyers based on her experience, but in general she warned against 'advising ... with the law tribe' as most would encourage 'you to contention untill [*sic*] they have drained the last penny from your income'. Mrs Nash was indeed a capable student of the law, and her legal opinion on a contentious lease agreement on the Inch estate would eventually be proven correct by the Attorney General of Ireland, William Saurin. Ultimately, she concluded that it would be most prudent to wait until Daniel Ryan came of age before recourse to the law was sought on any issue.⁶³

Beyond legal affairs, Mrs Nash offered her advice on the futures of the Ryan children and disputes that had arisen with other family members. The former issue was the source of greatest anxiety for Mary Anne Ryan, in particular the cost of educating her sons in England, but Mrs Nash pleaded with her to 'try & calm your mind' as 'you will not find in that Country so good a school as Oscot [*sic*] on such moderate terms'.⁶⁴ The prospect of sending her daughter Margaret to school in Winchester was also considered, but before offering her opinion on the matter, Mrs Nash would 'better inform' herself by writing to relatives who had knowledge of the school.⁶⁵ The importance of maintaining good relationships with other family members, and the assistance they could in turn offer the Ryans, was a second lesson Mrs Nash sought to impress upon her sister-in-law. A debt of £147 was owed to Philip Roche the younger by George Ryan at the time of his passing, and the widow Ryan felt offended by her nephew's refusal to forgive the debt. Mrs Nash, however, pointed out that 'I never met a friend or relative to forgive £147 when it was due to them'. She continued by stating that 'the other branches are good and amiable

⁶³ Mary Nash to Mary Anne Ryan, 15 May 1805 (*ibid.*, MS 457); Case for the Opinion and Advice of William Saurin, Oct. 1806 (*ibid.*, MS 128).

⁶⁴ M. Nash to M. Ryan, 15 May 1805 (*ibid.*, MS 457).

⁶⁵ Mary Nash to Mary Anne Ryan, July 1805 (*ibid.*, MS 459).

people' and 'for heavens sake do not deprive yourself of the comforts such relatives as you possess are I am convinced anxious to afford you'.⁶⁶ In essence, Mrs Nash was attempting to convey the idea that money issues and relationships within the family were very much intertwined, but that disputing the former was not worth losing or compromising the support of other family members.

Following the death of their brother George, Mary Nash and Elizabeth Mathew continued to reiterate to the Ryan children many of the lessons their father had sought to instil over the preceding years. This was particularly the case for Daniel Ryan as heir to the Inch estate. He had proven the most dutiful regarding his father's wish for his sons to write their relatives on a regular basis, but once George Ryan passed away, the lack of letters from Daniel became a source of concern for his aunts. In one early instance, Mrs Nash related to Mary Anne Ryan that 'as my darling Dan is with you will you have the goodness to pull his nose for not answering my long letter'.⁶⁷ As with his father before him, once Daniel Ryan inherited Inch, his preoccupation with estate matters only exacerbated matters, and Mrs Nash was once again quick to criticise her nephew's letters, 'being merely on money matters ... so much more of the laconis Trader, than [*sic*] the gentleman or friend, I own I held then [*sic*] in great contempt'. 'Visit your mother', she continued, 'see your friends as you along & then settle at Inch, as you get forward in life you will be aware of the value of respectable relatives & good friends'.⁶⁸ Once again, it can be seen that Mrs Nash was attempting to convey the idea that financial and estate matters, although indeed a concern, should not come at the expense of maintaining close bonds with friends and relatives. These individuals, she pointed out, could one day have a role to play in assisting Ryan and the affairs of the Inch estate.

Nevertheless, once Daniel Ryan announced his plans to take up residence at Inch and undertake extensive renovations, Mrs Nash conveyed her delight at his return to 'the House of your Fathers' where she hoped he would 'tread in their footsteps ... [*and*] be as they were loved & respected by all in your country'.⁶⁹ Elizabeth Mathew reiterated these sentiments to her nephew and expressed the hope that 'I may live to see you as respectable as your Worldly Father and Grand Father were at Inch'.⁷⁰ Beginning in 1809, the

⁶⁶ M. Nash to M. Ryan, 15 May 1805 (*ibid.*, MS 457); Elizabeth Mathew to Mary Anne Ryan, 29 July 1805 (*ibid.*, MS 460).

⁶⁷ M. Nash to M. Ryan, July 1805 (*ibid.*, MS 459).

⁶⁸ Mary Nash to Daniel Ryan, 8 Feb. 1810 (*ibid.*, MS 515).

⁶⁹ Mary Nash to Mary Anne Ryan, 15 May 1805 (*ibid.*, MS 457); Mary Nash to Daniel Ryan, 12 Oct. 1809 (*ibid.*, MS 512).

⁷⁰ E. Mathew to D. Ryan, 14 July 1814 (*ibid.*, MS 521).

renovations were indeed extensive and lasted into 1814 at least (see Appendix 3). The money involved in renovating the house was apparently considerable, so much so that Elizabeth Mathew had felt it her duty to warn against such expenditure:

I own to you I was often griev'd to hear you were expending so much in that way, particularly in taking the oppinion [*sic*] of those first rate Projectors and Improvers ... I call those People pick pockets and I trust your Dear deceas'd Fathers son will not be taken in by them again.⁷¹

What stands out in these examples are the attempts of Ryan's aunts to encourage him to act in a manner reminiscent of his father and grandfather. These expressions were, of course, somewhat formulaic, but by invoking the memory of his forbearers at Inch, they were reminding Ryan of family tradition and his duty as the new head of the Inch estate. Although their claims represented a considerable strain on his finances, Ryan's duty extended to providing for his siblings and their widowed mother in order to guarantee their futures. Thus, correspondence and the epistolary practices utilised by his relatives acted as an effective way of instilling in Ryan the importance of kinship and his duty as head of the Inch estate.⁷² In turn, this would have helped to temper the animosity Ryan may have otherwise felt over the financial difficulties created by these claims.

III

*'... there is little probability of your extracting rents'*⁷³

Although still apparently under the legal guardianship of John Mansfield, Daniel Ryan was eighteen when he took up the responsibility of running the family estate. Even so, he was well educated and quickly developed a good grasp of estate business. As with his father before him, Ryan also became fully preoccupied with financial and legal matters. Though he had never resided there, Ryan also realised the need to take up residence at Inch in order to more effectively manage his affairs. However, having stood largely unoccupied since the mid-1780s, Inch House was in a dilapidated state, with Mary Nash wishing 'the great fabric would fall to the ground' as it would 'cost more to pull it down than to build a comfortable house'.⁷⁴ The money expended renovating the house was apparently considerable, but due to a lack of documentary evidence it is difficult to gauge the exact cost. However, a list of Daniel Ryan's debts in 1818 refers to an unexplained

⁷¹ Ibid.; M. Nash to D. Ryan, 12 Oct. 1809 (ibid., MS 512).

⁷² Whyman, "Paper visits", p. 20, 25.

⁷³ Mary Nash to George Ryan, 28 Oct. 1815 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 523).

⁷⁴ M. Nash to M. Ryan, 15 May 1805 (ibid., MS 457).

loan of £3,100. Based on the interest owed by 1818 (approximately £1,000), and a notional interest rate of 5 percent, this would date the loan to c.1812.⁷⁵ Therefore, one can surmise that Ryan took this loan to cover the costs of renovating Inch House.

Whatever the true intention behind this loan, it was still a considerable sum of money, and perhaps one reason why Daniel Ryan was willing to shoulder this added financial burden was that his income was improving with the passing of each year. In 1806 Ryan's widowed aunt Mary Ryan (nee Kennedy) passed away. This spelt the end of her twenty-eight year widowhood that had cost the estate £300 per annum, and by 1807 Ryan's debts had decreased to £10,703, with an annual charge of £1,024 (52.75 percent of income).⁷⁶ Furthermore, ongoing hostilities on the continent since the 1790s witnessed continual high demand for Irish agricultural products in Britain and among her army and navy.⁷⁷ Consequently, land values continued to rise, and like his father before him, Daniel Ryan's income benefitted from the resetting of leases on the estate. The demand for land among local farmers was indeed high, and many were willing to pay hefty fines at times and agree to much higher rents in return for leases. Thus, in 1809, Ryan leased the Pollagh of Inch (110 acres) for the term of two lives at £500 per annum (£4 11s per acre, 300 percent increase since 1785). At the same time, the Paddock of Inch (38 acres) was set for one life (21 years) at a yearly rent of £172 18s (£4 11s per acre, 408 percent increase since 1794).⁷⁸ Situated within Inch parish, these last denominations of land were among the estate's most valuable. Although less profitable, the lands located further west in Kilnelongurty (incorporated into the barony of Kilnamanagh Upper) also made noticeable increases. For instance, the least productive townland on the estate at Knocknabansha, 'a large mountainy farm' comprising 320 acres, was leased by two farmers in 1810 at £80 per annum, quadruple what the previous tenant had agreed to pay twenty years earlier. Added to this, the new tenants were willing to pay a fine of £100 upfront for their 21-year lease.⁷⁹ As a result, the resetting of a dozen leases from 1800–1811, comprising 31 percent of the estate's total acreage, saw the Inch rental grow in turn by 41 percent to £2,132 with

⁷⁵ E. Mathew to G. Ryan, 14 July 1814 (ibid., MS 521); Memorandum of debts belonging to Daniel Ryan and valuation of lands, April 1818 (ibid., MS 276).

⁷⁶ Rental of the estate of Inch, property of Daniel Ryan, May 1807 (ibid., MS 176); Statement of title to the lands of Rossmult (NAI, M 5306/5).

⁷⁷ Samuel Clark, *Social origins of the Irish Land War* (Princeton, 1979), p. 28; Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh, *Ireland before the famine, 1798–1848* (Dublin, 2nd ed., 1990), pp 127–8.

⁷⁸ Lease of the Pollagh of Inch. Daniel Ryan to Philip Fogarty for 2 lives, 10 Oct. 1809 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 135/1); Lease of the Paddock of Inch. Daniel Ryan to David Phelan for 21 years, 10 Oct. 1809 (ibid., MS 135/3).

⁷⁹ Lease of Knocknabansha. Daniel Ryan to Brian and William Phelan for 21 years, 2 March 1810 (ibid., MS 138); Lease of Gortkelly. Daniel Ryan to John Ryan for 21 years, 20 May 1814 (ibid., MS 142); Nolan, 'Patterns of living in County Tipperary', pp 289–292.

an annual charge equating to 46 percent of the latter (Appendix 5K).⁸⁰ Furthermore, if the unexplained debt of £3,100 is factored into his finances from 1812 onwards, the combined annual charge paid out by Ryan equated to a respectable 55 percent of his income.

Daniel Ryan's finances were thus in a relatively good position, and he probably figured that if land prices continued to rise, as they had done almost continually since the 1750s, his income would continue to grow over the following years.⁸¹ However, the mere fact he sought to reset so many leases up until 1811, several of which had years yet to run, hints at an underlying problem he faced. In theory, if his creditors were content to accept just interest payments, Ryan could use part of his increased income each year to steadily pay off the principal owed. The problem was, however, that over half of these encumbrances were owed to his siblings in the shape of their portions. By 1816, his three brothers would be of age, while their eldest sister Margaret married in 1809. This meant Ryan was faced with raising at least £4,800 within a ten year period, which in turn offers one reason as to why he sought to reset several leases after his inheritance.⁸²

Daniel Ryan's attempts to increase his rental income, however, did not always go according to plan. Shortly after his inheritance Ryan questioned whether several leases set by his father were valid. George Ryan had set these different lands for three lives or 31 years, and his son realised that the terms offered may have run contrary to his parents' marriage settlement. One lease in particular Ryan had his eye on was that of Ballypatrick: this was the most valuable property on the estate, which if reset at current land values would be worth at least £1,437 per annum.⁸³ Potentially, if Ryan could reset this lease, its rental alone would have been enough to clear all his debts within eight years.

George Ryan had set the lease of Ballypatrick in 1786 shortly before he departed for the continent, and his sister Mary Nash would later remark how 'I had every reason to know he was fully convinced' the lease was 'very much beneath the value of his grounds,

⁸⁰ This meant that the Inch rental had doubled since the 1760s: Rental of the estate of Inch, property of Daniel Ryan, May 1811 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 177).

⁸¹ Ó Tuataigh, *Ireland before the famine*, p. 128; Large, 'The Wealth of the Greater Irish Landowners', pp 28–9.

⁸² Copy of the Marriage Settlement between Stephen Grehan and Margaret Ryan, 12 May 1809 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 52); Details of the dates and places of birth for the children of George Ryan and Mary Anne Roche (*ibid.*, MS 199).

⁸³ This valuation of Ballypatrick is based on the fact that previous leases of the townland were always much higher than any other piece of land on the estate. Therefore, a valuation of just £4 11s per acre, similar to the other lands surrounding Inch, would amount to £1,437 18s per annum: Lease of Ballypatrick. George Ryan to McWalter Bourke for 3 lives or 31 years, 28 Oct. 1786 (*ibid.*, MS 116); Case for the Opinion and Advice of William Saurin, Oct. 1806 (*ibid.*, MS 128).

& this he attributed to his own ignorance at the time'.⁸⁴ Here, it can be seen how George Ryan's lack of experience as a landlord had a detrimental impact on the management of the Inch estate. Furthermore, Ryan's inexperience was reflected in the duration of the lease itself. It is clear from rental accounts that he viewed the term of three lives as equivalent to just 31 years; an opinion shared by another Irish landlord during the early part of the eighteenth century.⁸⁵ However, a precedent upheld in 1774 (*Commons v. Marshall*) found that the law now favoured the leasee in this instance, meaning the lease extended to three lives and 31 years, whichever lasted longest.⁸⁶ As a result, Daniel Ryan sought the advice of William Saurin, the Attorney General of Ireland. In reply, Saurin stated the leases could not be valid for the extent of 3 lives or 31 years as the power of the lessor only extended to make leases for one term or the other. However, Saurin believed the law favoured the leasee in this instance, meaning the agreement stood and the tenants could not be evicted. Mary Nash had supplied the same legal opinion on the lease to the widow Ryan a year previously. In simple terms, both leases were to run consecutively and the agreement would either expire after 31 years (1817) or the death of the third person named in the lease, whichever lasted longest.⁸⁷ This meant that Daniel Ryan was realistically faced with raising new loans to satisfy his siblings' portions. However, as these encumbrances were already on the books at Inch, any new loans would keep debts at their current level except with the possibility of paying an extra percent or two in interest above the four percent already being paid by Ryan (Fig. 7.1).

⁸⁴ M. Nash to M. Ryan, 15 May 1805 (ibid., MS 457).

⁸⁵ Dickson, *Old world colony*, p. 556.

⁸⁶ Josiah Brown, *Reports of cases, upon appeals and writs of errors, in the High Court of Parliament; from the year 1701, to the year 1779, vol. vii* (Dublin, 1784), pp 111–120.

⁸⁷ The lease eventually expired in 1841 following the death of the third person named (Milo Bourke): O'Fogarty family (TCLT, *Fogarty papers*, vol. xxxiii), p. 6; Parish of Drom and Inch (ibid., vol. xxxix), p. 22, 24; Memorial of settlement G. Ryan and M. Roche, 15 July 1783 (*ROD*, vol. cccliv, p. 192, no. 237455); Copy of Mr Saurin's opinion, 1806 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 128/2); M. Nash to M. Ryan, 15 May 1805 (ibid., MS 457).

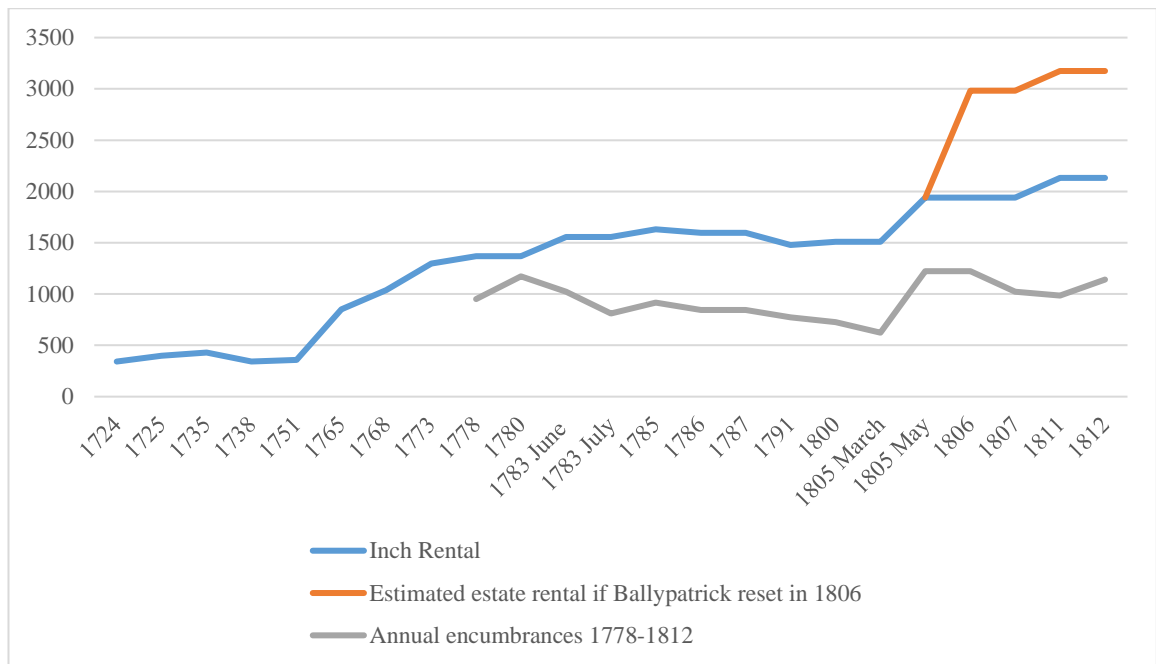


Fig. 7.1– Inch rental and annual encumbrances, 1724–1812.

Wider events were to also intervene and leave Daniel Ryan’s finances in a far more precarious situation. The end of the Napoleonic War in 1815 saw agricultural prices plummet and led to economic depression within the Atlantic world. The initial downturn appears to have been such that Mary Nash informed her nephew in late 1815 that ‘there is little probability of your extracting rents’ and ‘I should think Inch a bad place for safety this winter’.⁸⁸ By early 1816, it was reported that landlords in Tipperary and elsewhere were abating rents to help alleviate the hopeless situation of their tenants, and it seems Daniel Ryan may have followed a similar example. At least two leaseholds were surrendered and reset at lower rents, while the head tenants of at least ten other townlands were still in occupation of their lands by 1818.⁸⁹ Whatever the true extent of the compassion shown towards his tenants, Ryan’s income plummeted, leaving him in a very precarious financial position.⁹⁰ In June 1816 he agreed to an annual rent charge of £50 on the estate in return for £300 upfront from another landowner. This was essentially a loan at 16.5 percent interest set to run for the duration of both Ryan’s life and that of his brother Philip. Another loan of £300 followed in August, and Ryan’s position became so

⁸⁸ M. Nash to G. Ryan, 28 Oct. 1815 (ibid., MS 523); *Belfast Newsletter*, 16 Apr. 1816; Mary E. Daly, *Social and economic history of Ireland since 1800* (Dublin, 1981), pp 13–15; Cormac Ó Gráda, *Ireland: a new economic history, 1780–1939* (Oxford, 1994), pp 158–9; Catherine Anne Wilson, *A new lease on life: landlords, tenants, and immigrants in Ireland and Canada* (London, 1994), p. 9, 159–61; Lambe, *A Tipperary landed estate*, p. 39.

⁸⁹ *Freemans Journal*, 19 Jan. 1816; Printed schedule of lands for sale, part of the estate of Daniel Ryan of Inch, c.1818 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 197/b/1).

⁹⁰ Miriam Lambe’s study of the neighbouring Otway estate provides a good picture of the economic problems that tenants and landlords faced after 1815. This includes the various ways a landlord reacted to the inability of tenants to pay their rents: Lambe, *A Tipperary landed estate*, pp 39–40.

desperate that he attempted to sell 1,000 acres of his estate the same year. Given the state of the economy, he must have known his prospects of selling were slim, and in the end his attempts proved unsuccessful. The pressure on his income remained over the coming years, with Ryan apparently even failing to make interest payments on his siblings' portions and to pay their mother's yearly jointure of £400. As a result, between 1811 and 1818 his debts doubled to £20,374 (Fig. 7.2).⁹¹

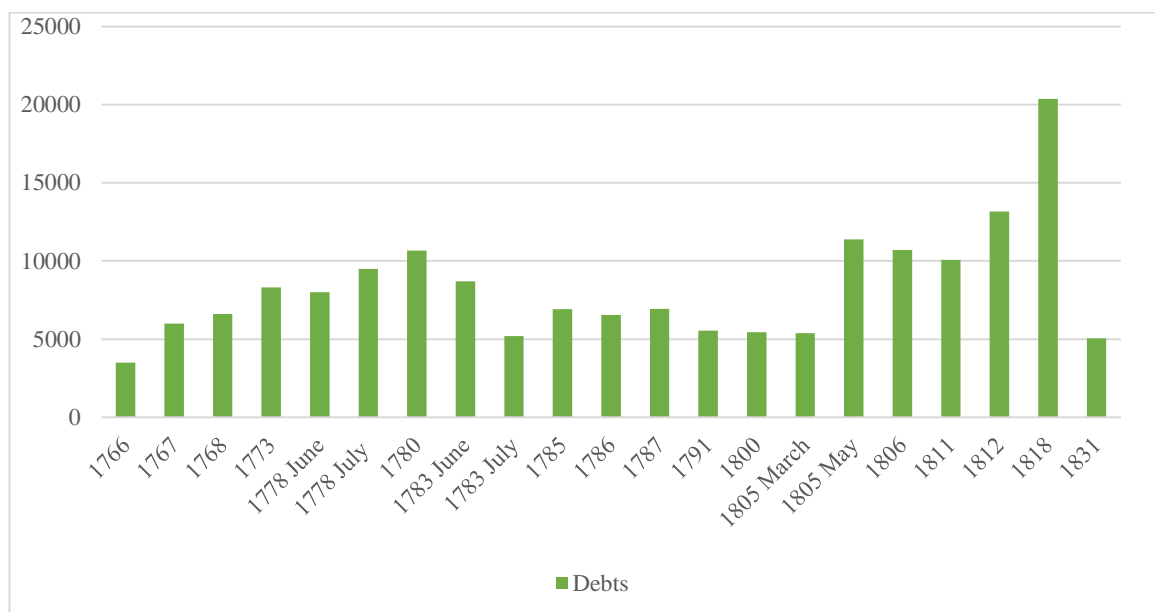


Fig. 7.2– Ryan family debts, 1766–1818.

Approximately 62 percent of Daniel Ryan's increased debts were owed to immediate family members. The calls by his younger siblings for their portions continued, while the death of Ryan's aunt Elizabeth Mathew in 1819 left her longstanding marriage portion of £1,800 to be divided among her numerous nieces and nephews. Therefore, with his resources stretched to their limit, Ryan decided once again to attempt the sale of part of the Inch estate. In 1818 he drew up a list of twelve townlands, a total of 2,129 plantation acres or 73 percent of the estate. These lands equated to half his notional income and had an estimated sale price of £19,700.⁹² A printed list of the lands for sale was published soon after.⁹³ However, Ryan was probably faced with the same issue regarding his debts

⁹¹ Debts belonging to Daniel Ryan and valuation of lands, Apr. 1818 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 276); Deed of annuity agreed between Daniel Ryan and Ewer Ryan, 8 June 1816 (ibid., MS 274); Bond by which Daniel Ryan acknowledges a debt of £300 to John Mulcahy, 12 Aug. 1816 (ibid., MS 275); Power, 'Land, politics and society in eighteenth-century Tipperary, i', p. 61.

⁹² Debts of D. Ryan and valuation of lands, Apr. 1818 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 276); Will of Elizabeth Mathew, 20 Nov. 1812 [probate 2 Aug. 1819] (ibid., MS 747); Schedule of lands for sale, the estate of Daniel Ryan, c.1818 (ibid., MS 197/b/1).

⁹³ In order to permit the sale, Ryan went to court and suffered a common recovery of his estate, thereby breaking the entail set up under his parents' marriage settlement in 1783: Deed making John Carroll tenant to the freehold of the Inch estate, 27 Apr. 1818 (ibid., MS 145); Schedule of lands for sale, the estate of

and the sale of land as his father during the 1780s. Upwards of £9,500 of the encumbrances attached to the Inch estate in 1818 consisted of bond debts and, as opposed to mortgages, these created judgements secured upon the whole of the estate. Therefore, if land was sold to repay a specific debt, there was the possibility that other creditors could dispute this and thus compromise the title held by the new owner of the land.⁹⁴ Fortunately for Ryan, the fact that a higher proportion of his debts were owed to family members offered a solution. If these individuals were willing to purchase portions of the estate, the price could be offset by their respective debts, while any additional money raised by the sales could be used to satisfy Ryan's other outstanding creditors. The most important factor behind the success of such a strategy would have been the need to either conceal these land sales from the other creditors or reach an agreement with them pending the payment of their respective debts. Therefore, by the early 1820s, one townland was sold to his brother George in order to discharge his claims on the estate, while their new brother-in-law, James Lenigan of Castle Fogarty, purchased a second.⁹⁵ Finally, although several hundred acres went unsold, a further 1,300 acres were purchased by Daniel Ryan's other brother-in-law, the Dublin banker Stephen Grehan. The amount of money generated by the sale of 55 percent of the estate may not have matched Ryan's earlier expectations, but by the time of his premature death in April 1831, the Inch estate's encumbrances had been reduced back to £5,050.⁹⁶ Of this sum, £3,500 was owed to Ryan's youngest brother John (d.1863), who in turn appears to have taken over the lease of Liscreagh and Coolderry in order to service the debt.⁹⁷

Daniel Ryan, c.1818 (ibid., MS 197/b/1); Attested copy of exemplification of recovery suffered by Daniel Ryan of lands in Co. Tipperary, Trinity term 1818 (UCC, Boole, *Grehan papers*, BL/EP/G MS 175/7).

⁹⁴ Crowley, "The five year experiment", p. 34.

⁹⁵ File relating to the sale of Roskeen, 22 Mar. 1820–7 Jan. 1822 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 194); James Lenigan to Daniel Ryan, 6 Dec. 1821 (ibid., MS 195); Title to Rossmult (NAI, M 5306/6); Copy of marriage settlement between John Denis Ryan and Ann Elizabeth Lenigan, 8 Jan. 1821 (Boole, *Grehan papers*, MS 175/9).

⁹⁶ Deed of Exoneration. George Ryan, Rev. William Armstrong and Valentine Maher of the 1st part, John Ryan 2nd part and Daniel Ryan 3rd part, 20 Dec. 1821 (ibid., MS 179); Confidential letter. Daniel Ryan to George Ryan, 16 Nov. 1830 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 29); Stephen Grehan to Daniel Ryan, 4 Dec. 1821 (ibid., MS 278); Stephen Grehan to Daniel Ryan, 29 Nov. 1822 (ibid., MS 294); Note from Stephen Grehan to Daniel Ryan, 31 Dec. 1823 (ibid., MS 64); *Griffith's valuation for the county of Tipperary, N.R., Barony of Kilnamanagh, Upper. Primary valuation of the several tenements comprising said barony* (Dublin, 1851), p. 41, 46, 53, 56–7, 70, 80, 87; *Freemans Journal*, 12 April 1831.

⁹⁷ Following the death of Mary Anne Ryan, the leasehold of Liscreagh and Coolderry was to pass to her son George, who in turn inherited the Inch estate in 1831: Will of Mary Anne Ryan, 1 June 1830 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 28); Daniel Ryan to George Ryan, 16 Nov. 1830 (ibid., MS 29); John Ryan to George Ryan, 12 Nov. 1836 (ibid., MS 583); Marriage settlement between J. Ryan and A. Lenigan, 8 Jan. 1821 (Boole, *Grehan papers*, MS 175/9); *Griffith's valuation for Kilnamanagh, Upper*, p. 19; *Griffith's valuation for the county of Tipperary, N.R., Barony of Eliogarty. Primary valuation of the several parishes, townlands and tenements contained in the said barony* (Dublin, 1850), p. 30.

Philip Ryan had predeceased his older brother a year earlier in 1830, and since both men died unmarried and without issue, the estate passed to their next brother George (d.1875).⁹⁸ The loss of a significant proportion of the estate had reduced his inheritance to just 1,315 plantation acres (2,191 statute acres).⁹⁹ Nevertheless, what George Ryan retained was excellent land, including the demesne lands of Inch and the townland of near-by Ballypatrick. George Ryan's situation after his inheritance was thus relatively stable, and the sale of a further 500 statute acres of less productive land in Kilnelongurty by 1870 was enough to secure the estate's finances. Thereafter, the Inch estate remained intact until large sections were sold to tenants under the Land Commission, while the Ryans continued to reside at Inch House until 1985.¹⁰⁰

This chapter has shown that Daniel Ryan was prepared from an early age for his future as the head of a landowning family. An elite education in England and Ireland reflected the increased opportunities that would be available to him as a member of the landed elite, while also equipping him with many of the skills required in the management of a landed estate. Parallel to his formal education, it had also been necessary to imbue Ryan with a sense of duty to his family, the memory of his forbearers and the management of the Inch estate. However, when combined, these factors created friction and impacted on his management of the Inch estate and the overarching goal of maintaining it intact.

If George Ryan had successfully discharged all of his debts by 1805, there was the strong possibility that the family estate under his heir would have survived the initial post-1815 downturn intact. However, the ensuing period of deflation and reduced incomes, followed by the cataclysmic Great Famine, finally broke the back of thousands of estates and led to their sale through the Incumbered Estates Court.¹⁰¹ In hindsight, it was perhaps a fortuitous event that Daniel Ryan sold over half of the estate during the early 1820s.

⁹⁸ D. Ryan to G. Ryan, 16 Nov. 1830 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 29); Account of the death and burial of Philip Ryan, [1830] (ibid., MS 540); R. Meagher to George Ryan, May 1830 (ibid., MS 541).

⁹⁹ The acreages provided for the lands sold reflect those given in the Ryan papers (plantation acres), which do not match Griffith's valuation (statute acres) during the 1850s. Griffith's valuation states that George Ryan held 2,191 statute acres by 1851. This includes his purchase of Roskeen from his brother before he inherited in 1831 and excludes the leasehold of Liscreagh and Coolderry. The Grehan family in turn held 2,107 statute acres, the Lenigans 360 and Sir Richard Burke 362 acres that formerly belonged to the Inch estate: *Griffith's valuation for Kilnamanagh, Upper*, p. 41, 46, 49–51, 53, 56, 57, 70, 80, 85, 87; *Griffith's valuation for Eliogarty*, pp 27–1.

¹⁰⁰ *Parliamentary papers. Return of owners of land of one acre and upwards, in the several counties, counties of cities, and counties of towns in Ireland, lxxx* (London, 1876), p. 169; U.H. Hussey De Burgh, *The Landowners of Ireland. An alphabetical list of the owners of estates of 500 acres or £500 valuation and upwards in Ireland* (Dublin, 1878), p. 399; File relating to the sale of land belonging to the estate of George Edward Ryan, 1904–1907 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 167); File kept by Commander Richard Ryan relating to the proposed sale of lands at Liscreagh, 1926–1953 (ibid., MS 171).

¹⁰¹ Crowley, 'The five year experiment', pp 269–70; Roebuck, 'landlord indebtedness in Ulster', pp 135–6.

This placed his brother George on a more solid financial footing to meet the upheavals that characterised the following decades in Irish history.

It is quite apparent also that a significant amount of the financial problems the Ryans faced were due to the legal obligations they were under via family settlements. Two generations of the family, twelve individuals in total, cost the heads of the estate approximately £13,600 in portions, followed by £22,750 in jointure and annuity payments. This excludes decades of interest payments, which in the longest running case, that of the widow Elizabeth Mathew's marriage portion, cost a further £4,100 over a forty-five-year period. To help offset these expenses, three successive heads of the estate could count on a total of just £7,000 in the form of dowries over a sixty-year period. In essence, the Ryans met every requirement expected of them as members of the landowning elite, but their success in this regard was a major reason for their financial difficulties. Wider events from 1815 onwards would accentuate these difficulties beyond control and lead to the sale of just over half of the Inch estate by 1825.

Conclusion

In 1809 Mary Nash, now in her sixty fifth year, looked back upon her father's tenure at Inch as a golden age in her family's history, and expressed the hope 'that old as I am, I may yet see or hear of Inch as Some knew it in the Hands of Danl. Ryan'.¹ Mrs Nash recounted this hope in a letter to her nephew Daniel shortly after he had inherited the family estate and taken up residence in a dilapidated Inch House. Her sentiments were, of course, somewhat formulaic and part of an epistolary strategy that attempted to instil in Ryan a sense of duty as the new head of the family estate by tying his exploits to those of his illustrious forbearers. However, Mrs Nash's nostalgic recollection of her father's tenure was by no means a fiction, and it is perhaps illuminating to recall the world she had known before departing Inch as a young married woman in 1759.

Her earliest memories would have included the extensive renovations and refurbishment work carried out at Inch House from 1746 to 1750. What followed was a privileged childhood unfathomable to most Irish people at the time. Imported goods such as tea, coffee, sugar, chocolate and oranges were by no means a rarity at Inch. Furthermore, a small herd of cattle and flock of sheep, besides fish and fowl of every description, passed through the kitchen each year to meet an insatiable demand. Butter was consumed by the crock and tub, wheat by the barrel, while hogsheads, casks and pipes of every type of alcohol imaginable were dispensed liberally at lavish meals and gatherings.² Besides her ever growing family, eventually totalling nine individuals, those who partook in this sociability included her grandfather Justin McCarthy, a man as generous as he was astute at business; her 'cousin' Amyas Bushe, a man of letters fond of classically inspired poetry, and his equally enlightened son 'Gervy' (Gervase).³ There were also regular visits to her other relatives and their country seats. These included Thomas Mathew of neighbouring Annfield, provincial Grand Master of the masonic order, and the grand Mathews of Thomastown and their equally grand house and demesne, which in 1748 a discerning English traveller termed 'a paradise' and struggled

¹ Mary Nash to Daniel Ryan, 12 Oct. 1809 (UCC, Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 512).

² Ledger kept by Daniel and John Ryan, 1742–1773 (*ibid.*, MS 174); Daniel Ryan's account with Justin McCarthy, 1738–1756 (*ibid.*, MS 198); Walter Woulfe to Elizabeth Ryan, 5 Aug. 1765 (NLI, *Mansfield papers*, MS 9629); Walter Woulfe to John Ryan, 27 Nov. 1767 (*ibid.*, MS 9630); Lambert Power to John Ryan, 13 Mar. 1768 (*ibid.*).

³ Amyas Bushe, *Socrates, a dramatic poem*. By Amyas Bushe, Esq; A.M. And Fellow of the Royal Society (London, 1758); James Quinn, 'Bushe, Gervase Parker' in *DIB*, vol. ii, p. 96; Grattan, *Memoirs of the life and times of the Rt. Hon. Henry Grattan*, p. 123, 134; Amyas Bushe to Daniel Ryan, 12 July 1766 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 370).

to ‘find words to describe’.⁴ Inch House, in contrast, was surrounded by hundreds of sheep and cattle. Nevertheless, these too were a reflection of the Ryans’ wealth and status. The sale of wool every summer and cattle in autumn, alongside the collection of rents, would have stirred a sense of excitement in the house and the opportunity to break periods of monotony with visits to local fairs, towns and cities.⁵ Deference and respect would have been shown to the family along the way, not just because of their landed status, but as was also due their descent from Lady Thurles, the McCarthy Reaghs and Shane na Glasse.

Mary Nash had every reason to remember Inch in the hands of her father as a golden age in the family’s history. At one time or another during the eighteenth century, a not too dissimilar experience could be claimed by the five thousand or so other families that made up the Irish landowning elite. But of course, Mary Nash and her family were also Catholics, and she had grown up at a time when legal restrictions against those of her faith, and particularly of her class, were in operation in Ireland. Mary Nash’s father had inherited the Inch estate in contravention of the law. Furthermore, her uncle and two Mathew cousins participated in the invasion of Scotland in 1745 in an attempt to overthrow the Hanoverian Succession, whereas her father or eldest brother would one day hang a portrait of King William III at Inch House. At face value, each of these examples reflect what one historian has described as the ‘profound contradiction’ observable in the lives of another landowning Catholic family.⁶

Faced with such apparent contradictions, this thesis has sought to ascertain how the Ryans of Inch maintained their status as members of the landowning Catholic gentry during the period c.1650 to 1831. This in turn has offered explanations for the many ambiguities and contradictions that emerged in the family’s story. Expanding and then retaining their position as members of the landed gentry was the family’s overarching goal, but their full integration into the ranks of the landed elite was hampered by their status as Catholics. This was particularly the case during the period in which the penal laws were in operation in Ireland. Chapter 3 has shown the different ways Catholic landowners could respond to restrictions in attempts to preserve their estates. This could depend in some instances on a pre-1704 family settlement. However, as this thesis has highlighted, successful circumvention relied primarily upon the collusion of relatives, both Protestant and Catholics, which in turn underscores the importance of kinship and

⁴ ‘A tour through the south eastern counties in 174–’ in *Journal of the Waterford & South-East of Ireland Archaeological Society*, vii (1901), p. 45.

⁵ Fleming, ‘Cycles, seasons and the everyday’, p. 142.

⁶ Harvey, *The Bellevs of Mount Bellew*, p. 11.

family cohesion if an estate was to survive intact. The main threat to the Inch estate were potential claims by younger brothers and the subdivision of the estate. This meant that the most important factor when it came to frustrating partible inheritance was family and sibling loyalty underpinned by tradition and a sense of kinship. These relationships were bolstered by providing younger sons and brothers with portions and suitable careers, usually abroad, which meant they were less likely to return to Ireland and make a claim on the estate. Furthermore, the portion of an estate due to a younger son could only be lost to discovery proceedings if he served in the French or Spanish military.

Discovery was a concern faced by the Ryans in at least one instance, but how exactly the family prevented this is difficult to ascertain for certain due to the lack of surviving evidence. Nevertheless, it has been argued that this relied in one form or another on collusion and the protection of influential family members from among the ranks of the Catholic and Protestant gentry. One need only refer back to the relatives Mary Nash interacted with as a child to gain an idea of the standing of these individuals and the different ways their influence could be exercised in service of the Ryans and their estate.

The typicality of the Ryans' experience under the penal laws is also a topic worth reflecting upon. As the eighteenth century progressed, the family at Inch were members of an ever shrinking group of Catholic landowners in the county. Of the ten other identifiable Catholic estates located near Inch, one was lost to discovery, two were sold, while six more families ultimately chose the path of conversion to the Established Church. However, in the latter examples, the opportunity to enlarge estates, either through purchase or inheritance, access to a larger marriage pool and/or the prospect of political office — rather than the fear of discovery or subdivision — appear as the motivating factors behind their conversions (Fig. 1.5). Why the Ryans never chose a similar path must have stemmed from the belief that none of the previous factors were deemed attractive or threatening enough to warrant such a decision. Supporting this situation was the fact that the several conversions that did occur within their extended kinship network conveyed benefits upon the Ryans in their attempts to circumvent legal restrictions.

Apart from its central role regarding the penal laws, this study has shown the importance of kinship and a powerful family network in the Ryans' overall affairs. The family's marriage strategy sought in every instance to advance or protect the Ryans' standing in society. Once the penal laws restricted the potential marriage pool, the Ryans looked to prominent families among head tenants and the urban middle class. The Ryans clearly did not consider these families as their inferiors, and these marriages in turn

conferred different benefits upon the family at Inch. This included the financial support of a generous father-in-law and a brother-in-law's assistance in establishing a younger son in colonial trade. Discounting the widow Purcell's dower claim on the Inch estate and the conflict between John Ryan and his widowed mother during the early eighteenth century, what stands out in the case of the Ryans was the absence of legal disputes between members of the family or with any external parties. Here, good fortune was undoubtedly a factor, but the absence of any known legal conflict over more than a century of the Ryans' history further suggests the emphasis the family placed on internal cohesion. Jointures and portions for widows and younger siblings caused the greatest financial difficulties for successive heads of the estate. However, their payment helped to offset any potential legal claims, particularly by younger sons under the penal laws. This in turn helped to ensure that the Inch estate remained intact and provided the Ryans with access to a wide-ranging and powerful family network.

The powerful kinship network to which the Ryans of Inch had access to during the eighteenth century stemmed from their landowning status. How the family acquired this status has been charted in Chapters 1 and 2. The Ryans demonstrated an ability to profit from the upheavals that had rocked Ireland during the seventeenth century. Over the course of one century (1603-1704), the Ryans emerged after three separate wars with a larger estate than they previously had and with stronger links to leading families in the area. In essence, the Ryans had profited from conflict and their estate was an unintended effect of the incomplete and uneven colonisation of Ireland. They were not unique in Tipperary either, and it has been shown how the Ryans and several other Catholic families emerged after the Restoration as landowners.

The Ryans' survival as Catholic landowners meant that they straddled two different worlds, and Chapter 4 has highlighted how their landed gentry status assisted the family in bridging religious and ethnic divisions with some members of Ireland's *arriviste* elite. This was aided through the cultivation of common ideas surrounding gentility and the prestige afforded to the family based on their ancestry. In this sense at least, the colonial character of the Ryans' world could be moderated by 'notions of social hierarchy'.⁷ When, and to what extent these ideas facilitated such bonds elsewhere in Ireland is a topic open to further study. That being said, it is clear that interdenominational sociability at Inch stretched back to 1738 at least, though there is good reason to believe that Catholics

⁷ McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland*, p. 115.

and 'New' Protestant families had been breaking bread together at Inch as far back as the 1710s, and perhaps even as early as the 1690s. Therefore, once restrictions against Catholics were repealed from 1778 onwards, the process of the Ryans' integration into landed society was already well underway. Thereafter, the family looked to education, political patronage and positions within the county's administration to ensure their full integration into the ranks of the Irish landowning elite.

Chapter 4 has also highlighted how the Ryans' attempts to embody and protect their status and identity as members of the gentry was the source of their financial difficulties. Making the right impression was a concern on a day-to-day basis, but grew in importance following marriage and inheritance as family members sought to establish their standing in society. Maintaining this lifestyle was clearly a drain on the family's coffers, yet the greatest source of financial difficulty resulted from the necessity of providing jointures for widows and suitable portions for numerous younger children — between 1714 and 1805, three generations of the Ryan family produced a total of 16 younger children that lived into adulthood and four widows who outlived their husbands. As a result, one can point to the late 1750s and 1760s as the period when the family's finances began their decline. It was no coincidence that this period also saw the family cease to supplement their income through other sources and instead rely entirely on their rentals. It was from this period onwards that the family lived a truly genteel existence, where their exploits contrasted markedly with their earlier dynamism as farmers, agents and merchants. These factors had all contributed to the family's success and emergence as considerable landowners, but from the 1760s onward the Ryans' world as members of the gentry was arguably unsustainable and destined to failure. However, their attempts to discharge their encumbrances across three generations of the family has highlighted the strategies that could be employed. The sale of the estate's woodland, a lucrative dowry from a new wife, absenteeism and the resetting of leases to match rising land values were all factors in the Ryans' efforts, but none of these ever offered a final solution to the problem. Illness and George Ryan's frayed relationship with his father-in-law undoubtedly complicated matters, but it was to be legal issues that scuppered the Ryans' financial strategies. An entail on the estate, the nature by which the family held their debts and a poorly executed lease of the estate's most profitable land all contributed to the family's inability to discharge these encumbrances. Nevertheless, although economic depression would ultimately force the sale of over half of the Inch estate during the 1820s, the consolidation

of the family's finances meant that they were well placed to meet the upheavals that characterised the ensuing decades in Irish history.

In summation, the Ryans' story is one in which simplistic dichotomies and broad generalisations have been shown to obscure far more than they reveal. Their world and lived experience as Catholic landowners undermine the view that Ireland was simply a colonial society, which in turn adds weight to the argument that the colonial/*ancien regime* debate can represent a 'red herring' that distracts from more important issues.⁸ One such issue identified and discussed by this thesis was how the Ryans and their relatives, the McCarthys of Springhouse, used affinity, shared social status and ideas surrounding hospitality and polite refinement as effective ways of bridging ethnic and religious differences with some of their Protestant neighbours. This has highlighted how local history, specifically the study of individual families in this instance, can provide historians with new insights into life and interdenominational relations in provincial Ireland.

This thesis has also shown how considerations surrounding status, whether guaranteeing portions for children, widows' jointures or the necessity of making the right impression following inheritance or marriage, were central concerns for the Ryans as landowners. It was the debts and encumbrances generated by these issues, as opposed to the penal laws, that became the greatest threat to the survival of the Inch estate. Therefore, it was in this sense also that the Ryans shared a common experience with their Protestant counterparts within the landed elite.

The effects of the penal laws on Catholics have been, and will probably remain, one of the foremost points of contention among historians of eighteenth-century Ireland. The detailed case study of the Ryans of Inch provided by this thesis has added to the debate by clarifying several issues concerning the laws. S.J. Connolly's observation, that 'most of the laws relating to the Catholic laity were consistently and rigorously applied', remains valid.⁹ However, this thesis has highlighted several legal loopholes that families could exploit in order to maintain their estates under a single Catholic heir. At base, the ability to circumvent legal restrictions stemmed from the fact that the state's power in eighteenth-century Ireland was limited when it came to the enforcement of the law. Instead, the authorities placed the capacity to enforce restrictions on the inheritance and purchase of land in the hands of individuals who stood to profit from their application,

⁸ Hayton and Kelly, 'Introduction', pp 7–8.

⁹ Connolly, *Divided kingdom*, p. 255.

younger brothers and Protestant discoverers. Combined with legal loopholes, it has been shown how factors such as kinship, family cohesion and the collusion of relatives, both Catholics and Protestants, effectively counteracted these threats and helped to ensure that no part of the Inch estate was lost during the period in which the laws were in operation. With the benefit of hindsight one could go too far and dismiss the penal laws as a threat to Catholics. This would be unwise, as fears among Catholics, whether real or imaginary, did exist and clearly occupied the thoughts of landowners. Even where a pre-1704 settlement and entail existed, fear, if not outright panic, could ensue over the mere rumour of a relative pressing a claim to an estate.¹⁰ Similarly, uncertainty over how the laws applied in particular instances could force Catholics to make hasty legal decisions in the belief that they were protecting their lands from genuine discovery, when the opposite could in fact be the case.¹¹ The Ryans, like other Catholics, inhabited a world of contingency when it came to attempts to guard against subdivision or discovery.

¹⁰ The situation relative to the estate of Edmond Blake of Ballyglunin, July 1773 (NAI, *Blake papers*, M 6935/66, ff 7–9).

¹¹ See Appendix 2.

Appendix 1: Pre-1704 family settlements and the penal laws

The 1709 Popery Act invalidated any settlement of an estate made between 1 January and 24 March 1704 that sought to evade inheritance restrictions. This was because many Catholics had levied fines and suffered recoveries on their estates before the 1704 Popery Act came into operation ‘in order to bar all remainders that were then vested, or afterwards might vest, in any protestants’. Added to this, Catholic landowners created new settlements and entails whereby it was expressly the intention that estates might never ‘come to any English-man or protestant, or any that should turn protestant, and qualify themselves according to the intent, purpose, and encouragement’ of the 1704 Popery Act.¹ As such, the 1709 Popery Act was retrospective in nature and invalidated these settlements and deeds, while any future examples that equally sought to limit or influence the inheritance of any estate, in contradiction of both acts, were also to be considered null and void.

It was not illegal for a Catholic to make a settlement or levy a fine and suffer a recovery so long as they did not impede inheritance as specified under the penal laws. However, on Blake of Ballyglunin estate in Co. Galway, Philip Walsh has argued that settlements and other deeds that contravened the law did still occur and avoided being invalidated simply because it was unlikely to be proven in court that their intent was evading these different acts.² Granted, many families did settle their estates after 1704 and escaped legal challenges, but most of these agreements did not, at face value at least, prevent the division of estates per the nature of gavelkind. This was the case in relation to a family settlement drawn up in 1714 by Daniel Ryan’s grandfather, Major George Mathew of Thurles.³ However, in other instances where an entitled relative pressed a claim to an

¹ 8 Anne, c. 3, s. 6 (1709): ‘An Act for explaining and amending an Act intituled, An Act to prevent the further Growth of Popery’ in *Stat. Ireland*, iv, p. 193; Dr T. Fogarty’s Case, 1747[8] (NLI, *Fogarty family papers*, GO MS 171, microfilm, p8304), p. 204; Power, ‘Converts’, pp 108–9; Osborough, ‘Catholics, land and Popery Acts’, p. 35.

² Walsh, ‘The Blakes of Ballyglunin’, p. 129.

³ Granted, many families did settle their estates after 1704 and escaped legal challenges by entitled relatives. This was the case in relation to a family settlement drawn up in 1714 by Dr Fogarty’s neighbour, Major George Mathew of Thurles. Major Mathew set out the descent of the estate by acknowledging his two sons, George the younger and the ‘half blood’ Justin, followed by their future issue with remainders going to successive male relatives and their children. There was the possibility that the validity of the settlement could have been challenged by Justin Mathew after his father’s death in 1725. However, Justin did not press a claim and his elder brother George the younger entered into possession of the family estate. George the younger outlived his half-brother and thereafter the settlement remained within the limits of the law because George had just one son, George the youngest. George the youngest also converted soon after in order to inherit the estate of his Protestant great granduncle, ‘Grand’ George Mathew of Thomastown. George the youngest’s lack of issue at the time of his own death in 1760 meant his estate passed, per the 1714 settlement, to his cousin, Thomas Mathew of Annefield, who was also a convert. Therefore, it was good fortune and strategic conversion that permitted the settlement to remain in operation and avoid any legal

estate, courts did distinguish in cases between settlements that were lawful or void based on whether or not they acted contrary to the gaveling clause and later 1709 act.⁴

On the Blake of Ballyglunin estate after 1704, the use of fines and recoveries to limit the inheritance of the estate to a single male heir would, without doubt, have been deemed illegal if brought before a court.⁵ That the settlements and deeds the family entered into were not invalid was based on the most important piece of information overlooked by Walsh: the Blakes could depend on a family settlement and entail set up prior to 1704. Thus, upon his marriage in 1691, Martin Blake Fitz Peter settled his estate in tail male, thereby becoming tenant-for-life in equity. Once his eldest son Edmond Blake Fitz Martin married in 1724, it was agreed that upon his reaching 21 years of age a common recovery would be suffered in order to better guarantee the articles in his marriage agreement.⁶ In its most characteristic form, a common recovery was used to break or bar an entail and revert the estate to being held in fee simple.⁷ In an Irish context, this meant that the lands became liable to subdivision under the penal laws. Dr Thomas Fogarty undertook the same procedure once he came into possession of the family estate at Garranroe in 1747, and his legal counsel pointed out the consequences of this as:

... he has thereby barred not only his own issue but all the subsequent remainders limited by ye. sd. Settlement [*of 1697*] and is become tena[*nt*]⁸ in fee simple of the sd. lands & prmisses [*sic*].⁹

Otherwise, the possible uses of recoveries (and fines) were various and complex, and ‘might be applied and directed to give efficacy to an infinite variety of movements, in the vast and intricate machine of a voluminous family settlement’.¹⁰ The particular purpose or uses of the recovery or fine would be stated in deeds either before (to lead) or after (to declare) it was suffered or levied in court.¹¹ Thus, in 1726 Martin Blake Fitz Peter settled

challenges. Mathew family settlement, 11 Mar. 1713[14] (NAI, M 5302); The Mathew properties (T.C.L.T., *The papers of Rev. Father Walter G. Skehan*, typescript copy, vol. lxvi), pp 52–3.

⁴ Howard, *Several special cases against popery*, pp 81–4, 102–117.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Marriage settlement between Martin Blake and Margaret French, 28 Nov. 1691 (NAI, *Blake papers*, M 6931/46); Marriage settlement between Edmond Blake and Mary French, 27 Mar. 1724 (*ibid.*, M 6931/64(a&b)).

⁷ Burn, *A new law dictionary*, p. 600.

⁸ Manuscript soiled.

⁹ Dr T. Fogarty’s Case, 20 Feb. 1747[8] (NLI, *Fogarty papers*, p8304), p. 204; Burn, *A new law dictionary*, p. 600.

¹⁰ Thomas Edlyne Tomlins, *The law dictionary, explaining the rise, progress, and present state of the British law: defining and interpreting the terms or words of art, and comprising also copious information on the subjects of trade and government*, vol. iii (Philadelphia, 1836), p. 311; Burn, *A new law dictionary*, p. 598.

¹¹ It is possible in the case of the Blakes that a fine was levied as opposed to a common recovery in 1726. Neither type of deed survives and it must be assumed that one or the other was the case: Tomlins, *The law dictionary*, p. 311.

his entailed estate via deeds of lease and release ‘pursuant to his original marriage articles in 1691 ... on himself for life, remainder to [*his eldest son*] Edmd. & his Issue male remainder to his Second son & so on, whereby he made himself ten[*an*]t. for life at law’. Therefore, the 1726 deeds were still operating under the authority and within the confines of the earlier 1691 agreement, which had stated that the entail was to be guaranteed in ‘a legal manner of supporting without [*waste?*]¹² to be specified’ at a future date. To further ensure the 1724 marriage articles were adhered to, bonds worth several thousand pounds were entered into between the different parties.¹³ Therefore, the Blakes’ ‘dominion over the estate had been preserved, as far as the limitations in the [*1691*] Articles had extended, notwithstanding the subsequent law of the 2d Anne’.¹⁴ If, however, the Blakes had diverged from the limitations within the 1691 settlement, then any new settlement that sought to limit the inheritance of the estate would have been invalid.

The consequences of the lawful 1726 settlement can be seen in 1768, when it was rumoured that a son of Edmond Blake’s deceased brother was about to file a bill under the gavelling clause in order to acquire a share of the estate. This created great alarm within the family, but a friend pointed out, quite rightly, that the attempt to gavel would be impossible due to the 1691 settlement and entail. Therefore, another individual, ‘deemed very knowledgeable in law’, advised the Blakes to prove the handwriting of the witnesses and parties involved in the various settlements and deeds affecting the estate dating back to 1691.¹⁵

The attempt to gavel the Blake estate eventually turned out to be a hoax, but enraged by the whole event, Edmond Blake fumed in relation to his nephew: ‘I will show the chap he has no right and I will cut him short of any chance of remainder he might have [*vis-à-vis the entail*], little as his chance is’. Although the recovery was technically unnecessary, since Blake’s son and heir Martin had male issue to succeed him, Edmond out of a sense of anger levied a fine and suffered a recovery on his estate in 1768, thereby barring all

¹² Manuscript damaged.

¹³ Marriage settlement M. Blake and M. French, 28 Nov. 1691 (NAI, *Blake papers*, M 6931/46); Marriage settlement E. Blake and M. French, 27 Mar. 1724 (ibid., M 6931/64(a&b)); Deed of release between Martin Blake 1st part and John French and Francis Coghlan 2nd part, 13 Aug. 1726 (ibid., M 6931/65); Booklet containing notes of deeds affecting the Blake of Ballyglunin estate, 1658–1771 (ibid., M 6935/65, ff 13–4); The situation relative to the estate of Edmond Blake of Ballyglunin, July 1773 (ibid., M 6935/66, f. 5); Memorial of the deeds of lease and release between Martin Blake 1st part and John French and Francis Coghlan 2nd part, 12–13 Aug. 1726 (*ROD*, vol. lii, pp 372, no. 349161); Howard, *Several special cases against popery*, p. 108, 116–7; Walsh, ‘The Blakes of Ballyglunin’, p. 129.

¹⁴ Howard, *Several special cases against popery*, p. 108, 116–7.

¹⁵ The situation relative to the estate of E. Blake of Ballyglunin, July 1773 (NAI, *Blake papers*, M 6935/66, f. 9); Walsh, ‘The Blakes of Ballyglunin’, pp 119–20.

remainders. Further fines were suffered by Martin once he inherited the estate. A number of agreements made with Martin's younger brothers before the second recovery may have insulated his estate from any potential attempts to gavel. However, the actual legal consequences of these fines and recoveries in relation to the penal laws cannot be stated for certain, as the surviving deeds are formulaic and say little or nothing about the actual settlement of the estate. One would require supporting documentation, such as deeds of lease and release, to explain the actual nature of the transfers and whether they were legal or permitted the gaveling of the estate. For example, if the 1768 fine and recovery had made Martin Blake tenant-for-life, as opposed to tenant-in-tail under the 1691 and 1726 settlements, then 'it postponed the gaveling one degree, and therefore the deed, fine and recovery, were null and void, according to the 8th *Anne*, ch 3, as being made to hinder the gavel'. If this had been the case, then the 1691 and 1726 settlements would have remained in operation, meaning Martin Blake would have reverted to being tenant-in-tail and there would have been no danger of the estate being gavelled.¹⁶

As a result, Philip Walsh's argument that the Blakes utilised strict family settlements and fines and recoveries to circumvent inheritance restrictions was correct at face value. However, his failure to identify the importance of a pre-1704 settlement and entail, and the fact a later settlement relied upon these for its validity, meant he misjudged the full implications of the law and how it related to Catholic estates. If their 1691 family settlement had not remained in operation, the use of fines and recoveries by the Blakes to frustrate the gaveling clause would have been declared null and void if brought before a court. Furthermore, in 1768, the objective behind barring the remaindmen within the family settlement was not to frustrate their attempts to gavel the estate, which was impossible due to the entail. Instead, by barring the remainders, Edmond Blake sought to ensure that his nephew would not inherit under the settlement, little as his chances were. The example of the Ryans' relatives, the Mathews, also highlight that family settlements made after 1704 could remain intact and go unchallenged, but for the Mathews this was due to the careful wording of their settlement, followed by good fortune to a point and strategic conversion in order to enjoy the temporal benefits set out in the family settlement.

¹⁶ Howard, *Several special cases against*, pp 81–4, 116; The situation relative to the estate of E. Blake, July 1773 (NAI, Blake papers, M 6935/66, f. 9); Walsh, 'The Blakes of Ballyglunin', p. 130.

Appendix 2: The Fogartys of Fishmoyne

In his 1710 will, Roger Fogarty devised the lands of Fishmoyne (300 acres) to his nephew Thady. This was despite the fact both individuals were Catholics and that Thady was not the rightful heir by descent. The lands should have been gavelled between Roger Fogarty's two surviving brothers. However, the lands do not appear to have been open to discovery at this stage.¹ Nevertheless, perhaps fearing discovery, Thady Fogarty transferred Fishmoyne in 1719 to his family's 'good & trusty' Protestant friend and neighbour Thomas Armstrong of Moyaliffe. A year later Armstrong agreed to hold the lands in trust for Fogarty, his wife and their three children. Such a trust was illegal, and perhaps having realised their mistake, Fogarty sold the lands in 1727 to Armstrong's son William of Farneybridge.² However, the fear of potential discovery persisted, and in 1730 Fogarty's Catholic brother-in-law, Dr Thomas Fogarty of near-by Garranroe, induced his own Protestant brother-in-law, William Meyler of Wexford, to file a bill of discovery against Thady Fogarty. In the meantime, Thady died and a fresh collusive bill was filed in 1734 against his son Denis, a minor, his guardian Edward Murphy (Dr Fogarty's nephew) and Thomas Armstrong. Meyler obtained a decree, but upon suspicion of being a dubious Protestant, two further discoverers, Robert Collier and Denis' cousin James Fogarty of Ballinlonty,³ took up the case again. Fishmoyne was finally decreed to Collier in late 1740, and to help ensure the protection of the lands, Collier sold his right in Fishmoyne to Denis Fogarty's uncle, Brian Fogarty of Barracurragh, and an individual called Hyacinth Burke, both of whom were apparently recent converts. Thereafter, Denis

¹ A devise or gift of an interest in land was to be considered a purchase under the penal laws, but whether or not it was to be considered a discoverable interest was based on a number of factors. For example, if a Catholic, seized in fee, devised to another Catholic, 'the devise is not discoverable, but the lands gavel notwithstanding the devise, and as in the case of Papist estates'. This was applicable to the Fogarty case. If a Catholic with lands held by lease above 31 years devised the same to a Catholic, then that interest was discoverable. The devise of land by a Protestant to a Catholic had a different interpretation under the 1704 act: History of the Barony of Eliogarty by Dr Martin Callanan (NLI, *Callanan MS*, microfilm, p4546), pp 637–8; The Fogartys of Drom (TCLT, *Fogarty papers*, vol. xxix), p. 9; Howard, *Several special cases against popery*, pp 264–5; Osborough, 'Catholics, land and Popery Acts', p. 29.

² Thomas Power's analysis of the Fogarty case begins in 1730 and did not take into account any of the previous agreements with the Armstrongs and failed to identify the reason why the lands of Fishmoyne were discoverable. Furthermore, although they were deeply involved in the concealment of Fishmoyne, the case did not directly involve the estate of the Fogartys of Garranroe: Power, 'Land, politics and society in eighteenth century Tipperary, i', pp 74–5; Memorial of deeds of lease and release. Thady Fogarty of Fittmone, Co. Tipperary to Thomas Armstrong of Meyaliff, Co. Tipperary, 5 Apr. 1719 [reg. 6 Oct. 1719] (*ROD*, vol. xxiii, p. 447, no. 14009); Memorial of conveyance. Thady Fogarty of Fittmoane to Thomas Armstrong of Farney Bridge, Co. Tipperary, 9 Apr. 1720 [reg. 14 May 1720] (*ibid.*, vol. xxv, pp 495–6, no. 15665); Memorial of indented deed. Thady Fogarty to William Armstrong, 23 Oct. 1727 [reg. 29 Feb. 1727[8]] (*ibid.*, vol. lvi, p. 84, no. 37059); Will of Cornelius Fogarty, 4 Jan. 1730 (NLI, *Fogarty family papers*, GO MS 171, microfilm, p8304), p. 202; Dr T. Fogarty's Case, 20 Feb. 1747[8] (*ibid.*), p. 203.

³ James Fogarty of Ballinlonty was Daniel Ryan of Inch's (d.1767) second cousin through the former's grandmother Ellen Fogarty (nee Ryan): See Appendix 7.

Fogarty remained in occupation of the land and received all its benefits, the income in particular, while legal ownership lay in the hands of two ‘Protestants’. However, the family’s attempts to protect the lands were not enough, and in 1741 genuine discovery proceedings were brought against all the parties involved. The lands were eventually decreed to Benjamin Murray acting on behalf of John Carden of Templemore. Murray and Carden may have been able to prove the lands were discoverable based on the 1720 illegal trust and several other deeds registered by the Fogartys in the Registry of Deeds in Dublin. Indeed, it is quite possible that the conversion of Bryan Fogarty in 1740 may have precipitated discovery proceeding, because in 1747 it was stated that he and his brothers ‘were always papists or persons professing ye popish religion’. It is possible, therefore, that Bryan Fogarty had not met the legal requirements concerning conversion by the time he purchased Fishmoynne from his nephew, thereby making the lands liable to discovery proceedings. Whatever the case may have been, Denis Fogarty lost his inheritance and thereafter relied on the charity of his uncle Dr Thomas Fogarty and other family members.⁴

⁴ Memorial of deed. William Meyler to Andrew Browne, 13 Oct. 1738 [reg. 10 June 1740] (*ROD*, vol. xcvi, p. 428, no. 69028); Memorial of deed of release. William Meyler to Robert Collier, 30 Aug. 1740 [reg. 1 Sept. 1740] (*ibid.*, vol. cii, p. 31, no. 69576); Memorial of deeds of lease and release. Denis Fogarty to Bryan Fogarty of Graignesky, Co. Tipperary, 8–9 Dec. 1740 [reg. 13 Dec. 1740] (*ibid.*, vol. ci, pp 151–2, no. 70329); Memorial of an article of instruments. Benjamin Murray, Thomas Bunbury and Bryan Fogarty, 23 Nov. 1741 [reg. 10 Dec. 1741] (*ibid.*, vol. cv, p. 129, no. 72857); Memorial of deeds of lease and release. Denis Fogarty of Fittmone to John Carden of Templemore, Co. Tipperary, 13 July 1743 [reg. 13 July 1743] (*ibid.*, vol. cxi, p. 367, no. 77009); Memorial of deeds of lease and release. Dr Thomas O’Fogarty to Paul Minchin, Ballynakill, Co. Tipperary in trust for John Carden of Templemore, 11 July 1743 [reg. 10 July 1743] (*ibid.*, no. 770100); Memorial of deeds of lease and release. Benjamin Murray of Lisenhall, Co. Dublin to John Carden of Templemore, Co. Tipperary, 13 July 1743 [reg. 14 July 1743] (*ibid.*, vol. cx, p. 253, no. 77018); Memorial of deed poll or memorandum. Timothy, Bryan and Malachy Fogarty of Garrane, Co. Tipperary and Dr Thomas Fogarty of Wexford town, Co. Wexford to John Carden of Templemore, Co. Tipperary, 24 Jan. 1746[7] [reg. 17 Feb. 1746[7]] (*ibid.*, vol. cxxii, pp 517–8, no. 85184); History of Eliogarty (NLI, *Callanan MS*, p4546), pp 638–9; The Fogartys of Drom (TCLT, *Fogarty papers*, vol. xxix), pp 9–10; O’Byrne (ed.), *The convert rolls*, p. 29, 107; Will of Dr Thomas Fogarty, 20 Nov. 1757 – 7 July 1758 (NLI, *Fogarty family papers*, p8304), p. 207; John Brady (ed.), *Catholics and Catholicism in the eighteenth-century press* (Maynooth, 1965), p. 58.

Appendix 3: The changing face of Inch House

The renovations carried out on Inch House by Daniel Ryan from 1809–1814 included the raising of the sweep leading up to the house, which in turn removed the twelve steps that had previously led up to the front door. A Venetian doorway in carved sandstone was added, as were two bay windows on the ground floor. The central portion of the structure had previously formed a recess into the building. This was extended out to create a breakfront with the flanking portions of the structure. The house was apparently re-roofed, while several changes to the interior were also made, including a new staircase, plasterwork and fireplaces. A description of the renovations completed by Daniel Ryan was provided by his nephew George Edward Ryan during the early twentieth century.¹



Fig. 8– Inch House. Source: Author’s collection.

¹ Ledger kept by George and Daniel Ryan, 1778–1811 (UCC, Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 175); Mary Nash to Daniel Ryan, 12 Oct. 1809 (ibid., MS 512); Elizabeth Mathew to Daniel Ryan, 14 July 1814 (ibid., MS 521).

Appendix 4: Travel journal by J.R.

It can be stated with a strong degree of certainty that the author of the travel journal held in the Ryan papers was John Philip Roche, son of the prominent Catholic merchant, Philip Roche John of Limerick. This is based on a number of telling points contained within the journal itself. Apart from its presence in the Ryan of Inch papers, the initials of the journal's author, J.R., is the only evidence that links the document to John Ryan. Conversely, the author makes only three references to family members, all of which undermine the belief that this individual and John Ryan were the same person.

First, the author makes two references to his father:

The Sunday before I left town I visited Lord Clare, and deliver'd him a letter of Introduction from my father, sent me to London for that purpose.¹

I cou'd wish to have remain'd longer but absolute orders from my father, to be in England, early in June ...²

John Ryan's father, Daniel Ryan, died on 20 October 1767, whereas the author of the journal refers to his father as living in 1775 and 1776. Furthermore the will of John Ryan's father-in-law, John Kennedy, was proved in 1764.³

Secondly, the author mentions his uncle in the journal:

His reception [*Lord Clare*] to me was very gracious, and he acknowled'g to have receiv'd great civility, from my Uncle Waters of Cork ...⁴

The Ryans of Inch were not related to the Waters family, and the reference to an uncle is less ambiguous in its meaning compared to if he had stated his cousin or kinsman. The identification of John Roche as author is based on him having the correct initials, and his family's later connection with the Ryan family. Roche's sister, Mary Anne, married John Ryan's brother and successor, George Ryan, in 1783.⁵ Following John Roche's death in 1788, and that of his father in 1797, George Ryan became guardian to the former's sons and supervised their educations.⁶ Ryan also resided in France for a number of years and may have read the journal as a guide before or during his residence there. Overall, these

¹ Travel journal kept by J.R., 1775–6 (UCC, Boole, *Ryan Collection*, BL/EP/R MS 371), p. 5.

² *Ibid.*, p. 68.

³ Vigors (ed.), 'County Tipperary', p. 106; Vicars (ed.), *Index to the prerogative wills of Ireland*, p. 265.

⁴ Journal of J.R. (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 371), p. 5.

⁵ Marriage Settlement of George Ryan and Mary Anne Roche, 16 July 1783 (*ibid.*, MS 51).

⁶ *Ennis Chronicle*, 17 Nov. 1788; *ibid.*, 5 June 1797.

connections offer a plausible explanation as to why the travel journal came to be in the Ryan papers.

Moreover, the reference by the journal's author to his uncle Waters of Cork can only be interpreted as meaning one of his aunts had married a member of the Waters family in that city. This was John Roche's aunt Eleanor, who married in 1750 Dominick Waters the elder of Cork (d.1792), another prominent Catholic merchant.⁷ John Roche was also a much more likely candidate to have undertaken an extensive tour of Northern Europe in 1775–6. When the journal begins in 1775, Roche was between twenty-one and twenty-two years of age (this fits with the tour being a type of education and finishing process for a young gentleman).⁸ Also, the journal ends in September 1776 once the author arrived back in Dublin, and the following month Roche married Margaret Whyte, daughter of Charles Whyte of Dublin.⁹ John Ryan, on the other hand, was in his mid-thirties when the journal was written. Ryan was on the Continent in 1775 and 1777, not as a tourist per se, but as a patient convalescing after illness. Both the dates of his trips and the state of his health would undermine the belief that Ryan could have carried out the hectic travel itinerary of the author. Finally, if the author was John Ryan, it is peculiar that he should neglect to record meeting his cousin, Count Justin McCarthy of Toulouse, and his brother-in-law, Walter Woulfe, during the tour.¹⁰

It can be stated with a strong degree of certainty that John Roche was the author of the travel journal held in the Ryan papers. In a broader sense, the significance of the journal increases, perhaps, due to the realisation that its young Catholic author hailed from the

⁷ Eaton W. Waters, 'The Waters family of Cork' in *Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, xxxvi, no. 143 (Jan. – June 1931), p. 32; idem, *The Waters or Walter family of Cork* (Cork, 1939); pp 74-5; Extracts and papers re. the Kelly family of Co. Limerick compiled by T. Kelly (NLI, *Kelly papers*, microfilm, p5329), p. 229.

⁸ John Roche was 35 when he died in 1788: Will of Philip Roche John, merchant of Limerick, 20 June 1791 – 27 Sept. 1793 [probate 2 Jan. 1798] (TNA, PCC, PROB 11/1300/14); Black, *The British abroad*, pp 318–325; Barnard, *Making the grand figure*, p. 311; Rachel Finnegan (ed.), *Letters from abroad: the Grand Tour correspondence of Richard Pococke & Jeremiah Milles, vol. i: letters from the Continent (1733–34)* (Piltown, 2011), p. 7.

⁹ In 1724 Mary Whyte's grandfather was responsible for the death of John Ryan's grandfather in a duel: *Finn's Leinster Journal*, 30 Oct. 1776; Henry Farrar (ed.), *Irish marriages: being an index to the marriages in Walker's Hibernian Magazine, 1771–1812. With an appendix, from the notes of Sir Arthur Vicars ... Ulster King of Arms, of the births, marriages, and deaths in the Anthologia Hibernica, 1793 and 1794, vol. ii* (London, 1897), p. 381; History of the parish of Loughmore (TCLT, *The papers of Rev. Father Walter G. Skehan*, typescript copy, vol. lii), p. 120; Burke, *Genealogical and heraldic history of the landed gentry of Ireland*, p. 770.

¹⁰ Walter Woulfe to George Ryan, 28 Dec. 1779 (Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 375); William Thompson to George Ryan, 4 Sept. 1778 (ibid., MS 374/88); Will of John Ryan of Inch, 21 May 1773 – 26 July 1778 [probate 12 Feb. 1779] (ibid., MS 25).

upper echelons of the 'middling sort', and whose points of view make manifest the ambitions of an individual eager to attain the mark of gentility.

Appendix 5: The Inch estate's finances, 1778–1818

(A) Rental & finances of the Inch estate, 1778-80

Land	Acres	Term of lease	Tenant	Worth per annum
Ballypatrick	316	31 years (1763)	Richard Doherty	£316
Pollagh of Inch	110	31 years (1763)	Richard Doherty	£110
Coolkill	124	31 years (1763)	John Ryan	£96
Moher	365	?	William Gleeson	£57 14s 2d
Roskeen	241	31 years (1771)	Widow Dwyer	£42
Rosmult	225	?	Dr James Fogarty	£60
Rosoulty	174	31 years (1766/7)	John Connolly	£50
Gortkelly	271	?	Andrew Kelly	£52 16s 6d
Seskin	139	?	David Bourke	£15
Knocknabansha	320	(1751?)	Michael Bourke	£11
Atshanboy	96	31 years (1771)	James Purcell	£24
Knockane	115	?	James Murphy	£16 2s
Glanfinchnaugh	56	?	Andrew Kennedy	£18
Bog of Inch	28	?	Philip Darmody	£6 16s
Magherareagh & Demesne	228	(1773)	Minchin Carden	£273 16s 4d
Liscreagh	102	(1768)	James Hannell	£145 10s 4d
Coolderry	96	(1768)	'Sundrys'	£60
Killenleigh	36	?	Andrew Purcell	£14
Total acreage				3,144 acres
Total rental				£1,368 16s 6d
Total debts				£10,660 9s 8d
Interest (@ 6 p/c)				£639 12s
Annuities & c.				£534 14s 9d
Annual encumbrance				£1,174 (85.7% of income)
Remainder				£194 9s 9d

(B) Rental etc. 1783 (pre-marriage)

Estimated rental	£1,559 3s
Total debts (inherited & personal)	£8,700
Interest (@ 6 p/c)	£522
Annuities & c.	£500
Annual encumbrance	£1,022 (65.5% of income)
Remainder	£537 3s

(C) Rental etc. 1783 (post-marriage)

Estimated rental	£1,559 3s
Total debts	£5,200
Interest (@ 6 p/c)	£312
Annuities & c.	£500
Annual encumbrance	£812 (52% of income)
Remainder	£747

(D) Rental etc. 1785

Land	Acres	Term of lease	Tenant	Worth per annum
Ballypatrick	316	14 years (1781)	William Bourke & c.	£395
Pollagh of Inch	110	31 years (1785)	Daniel Fogarty	£125 2s 6d
Coolkill	124	31 years/3 lives (1781)	John Ryan	£100
Moher	365	99 years (1781)	William Gleeson	£57 14s 2d
Roskeen	205	41 years (1782)	Widow Dwyer	£42
Rosmult	224	99 years (1783)	Dr James Fogarty	£60
Rosoulty	174	31 years (1766/7)	John Connolly	£50
Gortkelly	271	3 lives (1781)	Andrew Kelly	£110
Seskin	139	3 lives (1781)	David Bourke	£30
Knocknabansha	320	31 years (1784)	William Gleeson	£20
Atshanboy	96	31 years (1781)	James Purcell	£38
Knockane	115	31 years (1781)	James Murphy	£20
Glanfinchnaugh	56	31 years (1782)	Mathew Kennedy	£14
Bog of Inch	28	21 years (1781)	Philip Darmody	£10
Magherareagh	160	20 years (1784)	Nicholas Meagher	£160
Paddock of Inch	40	21 years (1784)	Same	£10
Liscreagh	102	21 years (1768)	James Hannell	£145 10s 4d
Coolderry	96	31 years (1784)	Henry Jones	£50
Killenleigh	36	21 years (1781)	Michael Purcell	£18
Wood of Roskeen	36	No term (1781)	Derby Long	£10
Demesne, orchards & c.	84	No term	George Ryan	£126

Total rental	£1,631
Total debts	£6,907
Interest (@ 6 p/c)	£414
Annuities & c.	£503
Annual encumbrance	£917 (56.2% of income)
Remainder	£714

(F) Rental etc. 1787

Total rental	£1,574
Total debts	£6,939 4s (interest charged on £5,562)
Interest (@ 6 p/c)	£319
Annuities & c.	£525
Annual encumbrance	£844 (53.6% of income)
Remainder	£730

(E) Rental etc. 1786

Total rental	£1,596 6s
Total debts	£6,539 (interest charged on £6,100)
Interest (@ 6 p/c)	£348
Annuities & c.	£497
Annual encumbrance	£845 (53% of income)
Remainder	£751 9s

(G) Rental etc. 1800

Land	Acres	Term of lease	Tenant	Worth per annum
Ballypatrick	316	14 years (1781)	McWalter Bourke	£395
Pollagh of Inch	110	31 years (1785)	Daniel Fogarty	£125 2s 6d
Coolkill	124	31 years (1792)	Thomas Dwyer	£100
Moher	365	99 years (1781)	William Gleeson	£57 14s 2d
Roskeen	205	41 years (1782)	John & Anthony Dwyer	£52
Rosmult	224	99 years (1783)	Dr James Fogarty (in trust)	£60
Rosoulty	174	31 years (1766/7)	John Connolly & c.	£60
Gortkelly	271	3 lives (1781)	Andrew Kelly	£110
Seskin	139	3 lives (1781)	David Bourke	£30
Knocknabansha	320	31 years (1784)	William Gleeson	£20
Atshanboy	96	31 years (1781)	James Purcell	£38
Knockane	115	31 years (1781)	James Murphy	£20
Glanfinchnaugh	56	31 years (1782)	Mathew Kennedy	£14
Bog of Inch	40	21 years (1802)	Philip Darmody	£22 15s
Magherareagh	160	3 lives	Nicholas Meagher	£160
Paddock of Inch	40	15 years (1794)	Same	£34
Killenleigh	36	3 lives (1800)	Michael Purcell(?)	£40
Wood of Roskeen	36	31 years (1794)	Mich. & Ths. Ryan	£10
Inch House & lands	80	14 years (1794)	McWalter Bourke	£160

Interest in Liscreagh & Coolderry sold to Philip Roche John for £1,400 in 1790

Total acreage	2,907 acres
Total rental	£1,508
Total debts	£5,446
Interest (@ 6 p/c)	£326 15s
Annuities & c.	£400
Annual encumbrance	£726 (48.17% of income)
Remainder	£781 5s

(H) Rental etc. April 1805

Total rental	£1,508 11s 8d
Interest (@ 6 p/c)	£5,390 13s
Portions for children (@ 4 p/c)	£6,000
Total debts	£11,390 13s
Annuities & c.	£700
Annual encumbrance	£1,223 (81% of income)
Remainder	£285 11s 8d

(I) Rental etc. May 1805

Land	Acres	Term of lease	Tenant	Worth per annum
Ballypatrick	316	14 years (1781)	McWalter Bourke	£395
Pollagh of Inch	110	4 years (1805)	Philip Fogarty	£440
Coolkill	124	31 years (1792)	Thomas Dwyer	£100
Moher	365	99 years (1781)	William Gleeson (in trust)	£57 14s 2d
Roskeen	205	41 years (1782)	John & Anthony Dwyer	£52
Rosmult	224	99 years (1783)	Dr James Fogarty (in trust)	£60
Rosoulty	174	31 years (1766/7)	John Connolly & c.	£60
Gortkelly	271	3 lives (1781)	Andrew Kelly	£110
Seskin	139	3 lives (1781)	David Bourke	£30
Knocknabansha	320	31 years (1784)	William Gleeson	£20
Atshanboy	96	31 years (1781)	James Purcell	£38
Knockane	115	31 years (1781)	James Murphy	£20
Glanfinchnaugh	56	31 years (1782)	Mathew Kennedy	£14
Bog of Inch	40	21 years (1802)	Philip Darmody	£22 15s
Magherareagh	160	3 lives	Nicholas Meagher	£160
Paddock of Inch	40	4 years (1805)	Nicholas Meagher(?)	£34
Killenleigh	36	3 lives (1800)	Michael Purcell(?)	£40
Wood of Roskeen	36	31 years (1794)	Mich. & Ths. Ryan	£10
Inch House & lands	80	14 years (1794)	McWalter Bourke	£160

Total rental	£1,941 9s 2d
Interest on (@ 6 p/c)	£5,390 13s
Portions for children (@ 4 p/c)	£6,000
Total debts	£11, 390 13s
Annuities & c.	£700
Annual encumbrance	£1,223 (63% of income)
Remainder	£678 13s

(J) Rental etc. 1807

Total rental	£1,941 9s 2d
Total debts	£10,703
Annuities & c.	£400
Annual encumbrance	£1,024 (52.7% of income)
Remainder	£917 9s 2d

(K) Rental etc. 1811

Total rental	£2,132 7s 2d
Total debts	£10,070 14s 11d
Annuities & c.	£400
Annual encumbrance	£986 (46.24% of income)
Remainder	£1,146 7s2d

(L) Rental etc. 1818

Notional rental income	£2,132 7s 2d
Debts	£20,374
Annuities & c.	£400
Estimated sale of land	£19,700

Appendix 6: Captain Denis MulRyan and the Brabant Revolution

In June 1789, the French Third Estate formed the revolutionary National Assembly in Paris, seeking widespread reforms and the lessening of royal, autocratic power. On 14 July, the same day as George Ryan's second son Philip was born, events escalated in the capital, when a Parisian mob stormed the Bastille, thereby beginning the French Revolution. However, George Ryan was not overly worried by these events. Despite the 'horrid scenes' witnessed in Paris, Ryan believed the violence had not spread outside the capital. In Toulouse, he noted that everyone was armed and wore 'the cockade of Liberty', but instead of riots and violence, he observed how 'the most perfect tranquillity reigns' in the southern provinces of France. Ryan gave credit to the mobs, whose members were never drunk and allowed people 'not nearly concerned in the object of their rage' to go about their business unmolested. In contrast, English newspapers reported widespread bloodshed had taken place in Toulouse, but to assuage the fears of his family in Ireland, Ryan assured Philip Roche John that he was 'pretty certain there is more blood spilt at a Gingerbread pattern in Ireland' than all over France, Paris excepted.¹ However, not every member of the Ryan family would escape the upheavals of the following months unscathed.

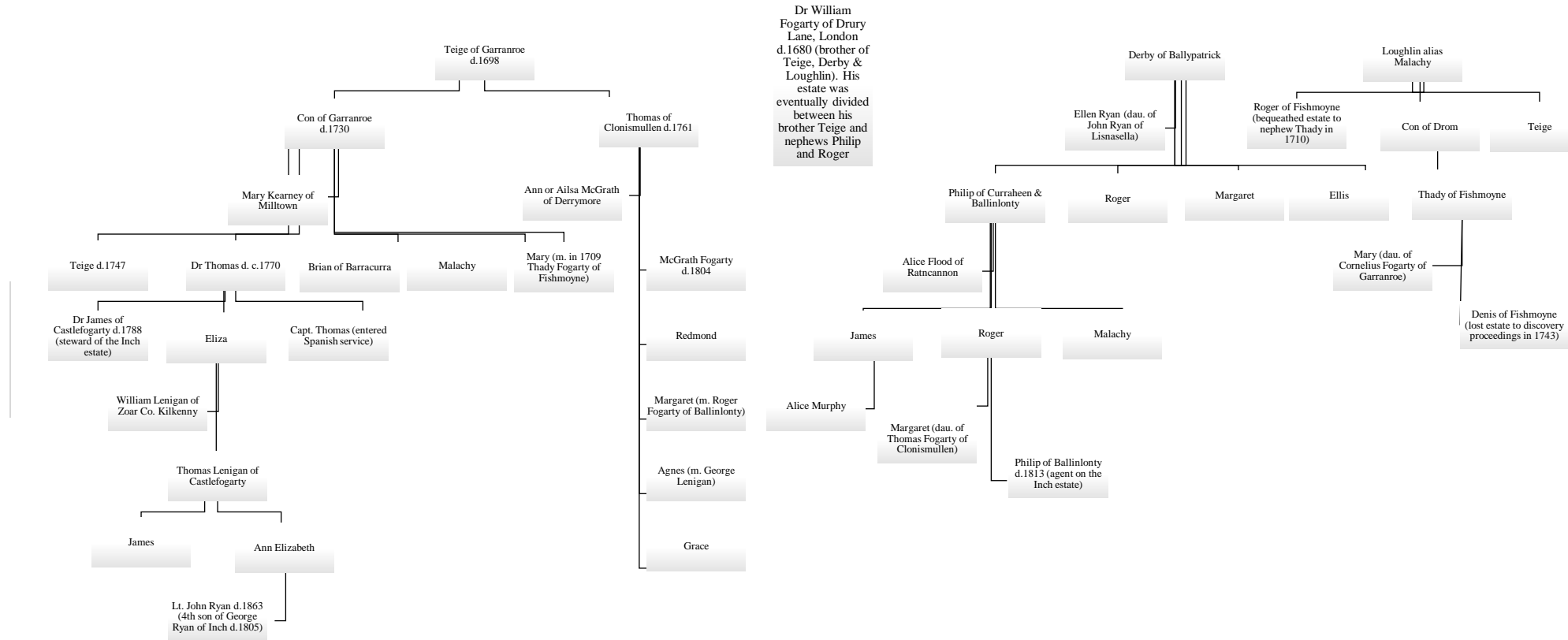
In October 1789, emboldened by events in France and in opposition to Austrian reforms, the Brabant Revolution broke out in the Austrian Netherlands. George Ryan's brother Captain Denis MulRyan was serving in the Austrian army at the time and was later wounded and captured, either at the Battle of Tournhout in October or the capture of Ghent the following month. Captain MulRyan would remain imprisoned for over a year, 'kept like state prisoners Nay! like Criminals, not being allowed to write or to see a soul'. Due to his wounds, he suffered from fever at night and surgeons concluded he had lost the use of a hand for life. In December 1790 Capt. MulRyan finally attained his freedom. However, he related to his brother George back in Limerick that upon his release he found himself in a 'strange place', penniless and close to starvation, a situation 'I must acknowledge is beyond Description'. Forced to retire because of his wounds, but with the rank of Major, Denis MulRyan became ever more reliant on the £100 annuity George Ryan had granted him in 1780. He also, rather understandably, developed a passionate dislike for the revolutionary ideas of France, and would later inform his brother that if

¹ Draft letter. George Ryan to [Philip Roche John], 9 Aug. 1789 (UCC, Boole, *Ryan Collection*, MS 419); Nicholas Marsh to George Ryan, 1 July 178[9] (*ibid.*, MS 422).

‘we don’t succeed in exterminating to the very last of this execrable Race why then the Devil himself must undertake to do it’. Major MulRyan passed away in Hamburg in 1802.²

² J. Nash to George Ryan, 18 Dec. 1789 (ibid., MS 471); J. Nash to George Ryan, 23 Dec. 1789 (ibid., MS 472); Denis MulRyan to George Ryan, 21 Dec. 1790 (ibid., MS 473); Denis MulRyan to George Ryan, 9 Jan. 1794 (ibid., MS 476); Thomas Kirkpatrick to George Ryan, 16 Mar. 1802 (ibid., MS 481); Thomas Kirkpatrick to George Ryan, 23 Mar. 1802 (ibid., MS 482); Count Dillon O’Kelly to George Ryan, 18 Dec. 1802 (ibid., MS 483).

Appendix 7: Fogarty family tree 1660–1830



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